

26th Scripps National Spelling Bee

The **26th Scripps National Spelling Bee** was held in Washington, District of Columbia on May 21, 1953, sponsored by the E.W. Scripps Company.

The winner was 13-year-old Elizabeth Hess of Arizona, correctly spelling the word *soubrette*.^[1] 11-year-old Raymond A. Sokolov of Detroit, Michigan placed second, falling on "spermaceti", after finishing 22nd the prior year.^[1] Third place went to 13-year-old David Hudson of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, who had placed sixth the prior year.^[1]

There were 53 contestants this year, 37 girls and 16 boys. Four were returning spellers, and the youngest speller this year was 11.^[2] 541 words were used. The contest started at 8:45 am and continued until 5:40pm except for a lunch break and brief recesses.^{[3][4][5]}

As of 2018, Hess is the only speller from Arizona to have ever won the Bee.^[6]

References

- (22 May 1953). Lizzie Lost Her Concinnity But Soubrette Spells Victory (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1368&dat=19530522&id=9pQxAAAAIBAJ&sjid=rQ8EAAAAIBAJ&pg=1941,5653921&hl=en>), *Milwaukee Sentinel* (Associated Press)
- (21 May 1953). Spelling Bee Under Way (<https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/38976185/>), *San Mateo Times*
- (20 June 1953). "Soubrette" Takes Catholic Student To Victory In National Spelling Bee (<http://scr.stparchive.com/Archive/SCR/SCR06201953p09.php>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20150613022240/http://scr.stparchive.com/Archive/SCR/SCR06201953p09.php>) 2015-06-13 at the Wayback Machine, *The Bulletin* (Augusta, Georgia)
- (21 May 1953). Kids Line Up To Do Battle With Webster (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1310&dat=19530521&id=cmxWAAAAlBAJ&sjid=ueIDAAAAIBAJ&pg=5495,3099734&hl=en>), *Eugene Register-Guard* (Associated Press)
- (22 May 1953). Lubbock Girl Vows To Try Again (<https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/6293010/>), *Lubbock Evening Journal* ("The bee was held in the auditorium of the Department of Commerce Building. Among the 541 words called ... Contestants began spelling at 8:45 a.m. and continued, except for a lunch hour and brief rests, until 5:40 p.m.")
- Cordova, Gilbert (25 March 2016). Scottsdale speller nails the word 'recumbent', heads to Scripps National Spelling Bee (<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/phoenix/2016/03/25/valley-speller-nails-word-recumbent-heads-scripps-national-spelling-bee/82260262/>), *Azcentral.com*, Cronkite News

26th Scripps National Spelling Bee



Department of Commerce auditorium

Date	May 21, 1953
Location	Department of Commerce auditorium, Washington, D.C.
Winner	Elizabeth Hess
Age	13
Residence	Arizona
Sponsor	<i>Arizona Republic</i>
Sponsor location	Phoenix, Arizona
Winning word	soubrette
No. of contestants	53
Pronouncer	Benson S. Alleman
Preceded by	25th Scripps National Spelling Bee
Followed by	27th Scripps National Spelling Bee

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