

Winning essayist reads to City Council; Seafood Festival this weekend

By Jarrett Whitener
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At the May regular meeting of Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby and City Council, Towns County student Eli Fulford presented his essay that he submitted for the "If I Were Mayor" Contest.

"If I were mayor, I would do many things to help my city thrive," said Fulford. "I would create an environment that is

comfortable and very peaceful, and also very welcoming to visitors from all over the world who are looking for a home.

"One innovation I would make for my city would be to improve and create parks. I would do this to make a more comfortable environment for kids and young adults alike."

The If I were Mayor Contest is a countywide contest, with essays having been sent to the city halls of Young

Harris and Hiawassee to be selected as the winner for that city.

For his winning submission, Fulford was awarded a \$25 gift certificate to Fieldstone Cinemas 6.

Following Fulford, the council discussed adjusting city water rates so that revenues more accurately align with expenditures.

"We need to get Turnipseed (Engineers) to go back and

look and give us a new analysis on where our water rates should be, so we can pay our bills a little more efficiently," said Council Member Steve Clark.

More discussion will be had on the subject when the council gets more information on the analysis.

The council discussed the Annual Watershed Report, which requires cities to have their water tested every year.

The decision was made to go ahead and pay a company to do the testing while a city employee accompanies the group to determine if the city would be able to do the testing themselves in future years to save money.

Also pertaining to water and sewer finances, Gibby used her emergency powers as mayor recently to replace a broken variable frequency drive at the water treatment plant.

"I think in the last 10 years I have made this decision less than five times, but there are times where we have to be able to make some decisions," Gibby said.

After speculating that the damage may have been caused by recent storms, and that the cost may be eligible



Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby with "If I Were Mayor" Essay Contest winner Eli Fulford.
Photo by Jarrett Whitener

for insurance coverage if that is the case, the council ratified the expenditure.

Bathrooms for Cupid Falls have been ordered, with work beginning on them soon, and the council is still working on getting contracts for the pavilions, with hopes to have numbers in play by next

month's meeting.

Starting this weekend, from May 31 through June 2, the annual North Georgia Highlands Seafood and Wine Festival will return, bringing with it live music, seafood and vendors to Mayors Park.

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love and what we want to do."

Added Gray, "People keep knocking our generation for being lazy and entitled, and I don't know if you have heard that, but I want to defend us, because we are such an innovative and smart generation, and we have so much to offer."

The guest speaker for the event was Tony Lowden, who is the former manager of the Faith and Justice Initiative within the Reentry Services Unit of the Department of Community Supervision.

"My topic today is that I don't want you to lose your signal," said Lowden. "These cellphones, and especially my cellphone, if the signal was lost, I would feel like I have lost everything."

"My calendar, texting my wife and my wife checking on me, paying my bills on the phone, navigation and getting back and forth around the state - if I lost the signal on my cellphone, I would feel like I'm lost."

Added Lowden, "Every now and then, you have people that tell you that you are not going to make it, and you have



MECHS Union Site Administrators Roy Perren and Teena Atkins at the May 25 MECHS graduation.
Photo by Jarrett Whitener

a choice on whether or not you give up on yourself, give up on life, give up on the things that you want to do in life. And I want to tell you, as a man of God, that if you lose your signal on the inside, when you stop thinking that you can make it, you walk into a nightmare."

The Union Site had a total of 16 graduates: Chance

Botts, Kimberly Bowen, Jessi Bracken, Calli Burgwardt, Bradley Fairless, Alondra Gonzalez, Haley Goodwin, Victoria Hilbish, Skylar Huggins, Michael Johnston, Taylor Jones, Audrey Justice, Steven Meador, Cameron Moore, Christian Salinas and Victoria Singleton.

Woodard...from Page 1A

seasons in the Enchanted Valley building the Mountain Lions' cheer program around North

Georgia talent.

Twenty-two of the 34 members on Williams' 2018-

2019 squad hail from North Georgia, featuring cheerleaders from northeast Georgia schools like Union County, Chestatee, Lanier, Winder, Forsyth Central and Oglethorpe County.

Williams' old stomping grounds of Northwest Georgia are also well-represented, with team members from in and around Marietta, Chatsworth, Dalton, Cartersville and Rome.

For more on Woodard's special signing ceremony, check out this week's Sports Section.

Benefit yard sale



Benefit yard sale: 2134 Pine Lake Rd., Hiawassee, off Mull Rd. June 1st from 9 - 2. Clothes for the whole family, some new w/ tags! Walker, porta potty, new camo hats & t-shirts, some tools. Proceeds to send children to summer camp. T(May29.G1)SH