

# Sidewalk addition and fixes coming to Hiawassee



Elijah Moody was invited to the June meeting of the Hiawassee City Council to give a speech. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

By Shawn Jarrard  
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Hiawassee City Council approved three contracts in its June monthly meeting, though first, it heard from 11-year-old Elijah Moody.

Moody, a sixth-grader at Eastgate Life Academy, won First Place for his grade in the Top of Georgia Student Speech Contest in April.

Hiawassee Mayor Pro Tem Liz Ordiales attended that contest, and has been inviting contestants to give their speeches at the beginnings of council meetings.

Thoughtfully delivered and expertly executed, Moody's speech focused on the lack of wholesome films coming out of Hollywood, and his personal ambitions to alter the entertainment landscape by making his own programs one day.

"Did any of you know, almost 90 percent of movies today are not family, Christian movies?" asked Moody. "That's right, I said 90 percent. When I get older, I want to change this."

In the motions portion of the meeting, the council first approved a contract with C&G Concrete to fix several lengths of sidewalks throughout the city, and also to install a new stretch of sidewalk on Main Street.

The cost of the contract is \$63,891, to be paid for with SPLOST funds, as well as money from the Georgia Department of Transportation's Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant (LMIG).

C&G Concrete is the company behind the installation of the crosswalk at the Hiawassee Post Office, and along with the sidewalk fixes, C&G will be putting in a brand-new sidewalk from Sims Circle to Hiawassee Hardware.

"It will cross over Kim Farmer Insurance, Larry Sorgen, Bacchus, Susan De Vries Insurance, C&J Outfitters, Noblet's, and that's kind of where it ends, right around there," said Ordiales. "There's a portion right around Mull's Inn where the lake has



Hiawassee Mayor Pro Tem Liz Ordiales welcomes everyone to the June council meeting. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

a cove that comes right up to that area.

"So, when we take the grass out and put the sidewalk in, it's going to get real close to that cove, so we're going to have to put a guardrail up."

Furthermore, the contract also includes the creation of a double set of stairs out front of the main entrance to Hiawassee City Hall, leading up from street level for people crossing from the Towns County Courthouse.

City Hall is hopeful that work on the C&G contract will begin in the next few weeks, once the Atlanta-based company is able to clear its schedule.

The council approved another contract in the meeting, totaling \$5,059, to pay to service the generators of the city's generator-run lift stations.

It's been at least two years since this service was last completed, and according to Ordiales, the scope of the work requires outsourcing.

"We agreed to have a contract with a company that will come in and service the generators, replace the oil filters, replace the gas filters, make sure that they run, make sure that the levels are okay," said Ordiales.

Also in the meeting, the city approved a \$33,461 contract to secure alarms for lift stations located around the

county, which will include the purchase of the alarms along with two years of monitoring and data management.

The city is currently getting quotes for the cost of installing the alarms.

"We have 21 lift stations throughout the county to help us with our sewer management," said Ordiales. "We currently have alarms on eight of them. The reason those eight were selected (initially) is because those are the eight lift stations that are closest to the lake.

"These other 13 do not have alarms on them, so, should something go wrong, while they're smaller lift stations, it's still a problem. We felt it was the right thing to do to put alarms on all of the lift stations."

The alarms are important, Ordiales pointed out, because they act as preventive measures to safeguard against malfunctions that could potentially cause sewage to enter Lake Chatuge.

Prior to adjourning the meeting, the council met in an executive session to discuss threatened litigation.

To accommodate the Fourth of July holiday, the next regular meeting will be held on Thursday, July 6, with the next council work session scheduled for Thursday, June 29. All meetings start at 6 p.m.

## Forgetting to stash your trash could encourage a roaming bear to stay for snacks

Garbage is irresistible to a hungry black bear. The presence of available garbage encourages bears to change their normal movement patterns and "hang out" in non-traditional range areas. What can you do? One of the first, and most important, things to do is to stash your trash to resolve potential human-bear conflicts.

"Feeding bears, whether intentional or not, creates habituated bears," explains Adam Hammond, wildlife biologist with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Division. "When a bear learns that it can get a 'free meal' from garbage, it's going to return again and again until eventually it loses its natural fear of humans, which can lead to potential conflict issues."

Garbage is just one of the many non-natural food items that attract bears. Birdseed and pet food round out the top three most common types of attractants. Homeowners in known bear areas, or in areas where bears have been sighted, are advised to bring pet food indoors and remove birdfeeders during spring and summer.

Homeowners and business owners can help by taking these important steps:

Convert to bear-proof garbage containers, or se-



The black bear is a symbol of Georgia's natural diversity in the state and a high-priority species in the state's Wildlife Action Plan, a comprehensive conservation strategy. Though now considered the most common bear in North America, the species was nearly eradicated from Georgia by the 1930s due to unregulated market hunting, poaching and large-scale habitat loss. Sound wildlife management practices have restored Georgia's black bears to a thriving population estimated at 5,100 bears statewide.

For more information, visit [www.georgiawildlife.com/blackbearfacts](http://www.georgiawildlife.com/blackbearfacts), or contact a Wildlife Resources Division game management office. A video titled "Black Bears in Georgia: Sightings and Tips" available at <https://www.youtube.com/user/GeorgiaWildlife>.

The black bear is a symbol of Georgia's natural diversity, the only bear found

## Fishing...from Page 1A



Anglers set out early for the 2017 Bass Nation High School Classic Fishing Tournament. Photo/Paul Poteete

By Lily Avery  
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Boats dotted Lake Chatuge last weekend as more than 100 high school fishing teams from all over the state took to the lake for the Georgia Bass Nation High School 2017 State Classic Tournament.

The tournament spanned two days of gorgeous fishing weather on Saturday, June 10, and Sunday, June 11.

"This is our year-ending tournament," said Michelle Volk, Georgia Bass Nation Youth Director. "The kids that are fishing this weekend are fishing to get into nationals, which are held in a couple of weeks in Paris, Tennessee.

"These kids are from everywhere, all across the state. We have regular season tournaments, and we had nine of them this year that these kids have already completed.

"They've competed in these nine tournaments all over the place, from Alabama to South Georgia."

Teams from as far away as Bainbridge set out on Lake Chatuge at 7 a.m. Saturday for the first day of the tournament, hunkering down for a long day of fishing, each angler all the while hoping to bring in the biggest, best fish.

During the tournament, the teams were separated into the High School Division, which included eighth-graders through high school seniors, and the Junior Division, or second-through seventh-grade students.

Each school could bring a high school team and a junior division team, and these teams were split up by division



Lake Chatuge is an excellent lake for both fishing and boating enthusiasts. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

into boats consisting of three members – two anglers and a boat captain.

The teams were given roughly eight hours to reel in up to five fish to be measured, weighed and tallied to see who caught the biggest and the best.

Although there was no qualifying weight limit for fish – some teams brought in fish totaling up to 16 pounds – there was a length requirement of 14 inches, to make sure that the fish were full-grown.

After each weigh-in, the teams were required to toss the fish back into the lake, and were docked points if a fish died between being caught and the weigh-in.

"These kids are judged on the weight of their fish, and it's cumulative for the two days," said Volk. "So, what they have added together from Saturday and Sunday, that's how they'll know if they make it to nationals or not.

"These kids don't really

get prizes for this. They'll sometimes get a rod and reel or a plaque, but they're all gunning for nationals. That's why they're here."

The following high school division teams were in the lead after Saturday's competition: North Oconee Tightline Titans, with 16.96 pounds of fish; Pickens High School, with 16.02 pounds; Mount Bethel Christian Academy, with 15.88 pounds; North Hall High School, with 14.99 pounds; Hebron Christian Academy, with 12.30 pounds; Fannin County High School, with 12.03 pounds; and Appling Christian Academy, with 10.77 pounds.

For the junior division on Saturday, Dawson Christian Academy and Bainbridge had taken the lead, each with weigh-ins of more than 5 pounds.

Final results of the tournament were not available by press time. For more information, visit the tournament website at [www.gabassnationhs.com](http://www.gabassnationhs.com).

## Concerts...from Page 1A



The Bauman Family Band. Photo/Lily Avery

"Now, it's grown over the years to bigger music groups and a much bigger crowd. People seem to really enjoy it."

While the season is only in its third weekend, the booked music has been strong, drawing in larger crowds than ever before. Last Saturday's musical selection was no different, bringing in dozens of locals to listen to the musical styling of a crowd favorite, The Bauman Family Band.

The six-member band consists of Jeff and Diane Bauman and their four children, Kenna, Adele, Cora and Milo. All four children, and parents, alternate singing and playing lead guitar, with Milo, Cora and Jeff playing percussion as well, which makes sure to keep things interesting as the band plays musical chairs between sets.

While the six will forever be family, they began practicing as a band back in 2003. Diane shared with the crowd on Saturday that, before work and before school, the six practiced at 7 each morning to get where they are now.

First performing at their church, First United Methodist Church of Union County, the group now books shows for community events and local fundraisers – like the Music on the Square in Hiawassee.

While enjoying the folk tune covers, such as Billy Bragg's "Way Over Yonder In The Minor Key," patrons could also purchase hand-dipped ice cream and barbeque from Rib Country in Hiawassee.

Although the Music on the Square is a free event, open to anyone in the public, it is also a volunteer-ran organization that often needs community donations to continue to provide this beloved Saturday tradition.

"There's just a small group of us volunteers that keep it going," said White. "Right now, it's out of love and memory for Eugene. People in Towns County just love it and support us. We're really supported through the audience donations. Everyone is so generous and I think it's because they really do want to keep this tradition going.

"We just ask for donations to help pay for the musicians because we're a self-funded organization. Though this year, we are going to get

some help from the City of Hiawassee, which we're very grateful for."

And for those who wish to provide more than just financial assistance, White said that they are always in need of volunteers to help make sure each Saturday continues to be smooth running and enjoyable.

"We're always looking for volunteers," said White. "In fact, we're actually looking for people who might be interested in stepping up and taking this over. But, if anyone is interested, they can just come see me during any of the Saturday evenings and I would be happy to get them involved."

Don't miss out on next week's Music on the Square, featuring the band Night Lite, beginning at 6:30 p.m.