

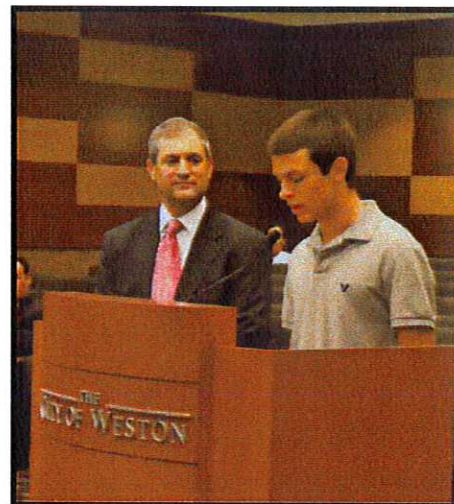


WESTON TEEN RECEIVES \$1,000 PRIZE

Weston resident, and now Cypress Bay High School graduate, Jesse Mutschler, is \$1,000 richer on account of his prose.

Jesse's submission was selected as the winning entry in an essay contest sponsored by the law firm of Weiss Serota Helfman Pastoriza Cole & Boniske, P.L., in honor of its 20th anniversary.

The contest was open to any high school senior that was a resident of the city. Students had to write an essay, limited to 500 words, on "Why My City Is Special."



Jesse's winning essay was selected by a panel of three judges: City Attorney Jamie Alan Cole, Attorney Brooke Dolara and Commissioner Toby Feuer. They all agreed that his insightful reflection of his moving to Weston as a young boy and love for the city that he now calls home came through in his writing as genuine and expressive. *The essay accompanies this article.*



L-R: Commissioner Angel Gomez, Commissioner Toby Feuer, Geraldine Mutschler, Mayor Eric Hersh, Jesse Mutschler, City Attorney Jamie Cole, Commissioner Mercedes Henriksson, Commissioner Jim Norton



Why My City Is Special

Like any eight-year-old, my natural response when I first heard I was moving from New York to Weston, Florida, was to cry. I cried in bed, I cried on my last day of school, I cried saying goodbye to my friends, and I cried at the airport. I cried even harder as I unpacked the mountains of boxes in the new place I was supposed to call "home." Fortunately, it took me only a couple of days to realize that I didn't set foot in just any old town. Weston was the idyllic place people dreamed of moving to. A special place with a strong sense of community, a variety of family oriented activities, and great schools.

One of the most striking things about Weston is the small town feel you get even though it is home to over 60,000 people. Neighbors are always willing to lend a hand and striving to make the community a clean, safe, and beautiful place to be enjoyed by all. We are also always involved in charity and raising money, whether it is for national organizations or to help the families out in our very own community. There's no place in America where citizens come together so readily and in such great numbers. We may not all know each other, but we all know when we need each other.

Personally, what I can thank Weston for is for making my childhood a memorable experience. There's no greater gift than being able to have fun and be happy, both of which Weston has given me. My city stands out from the rest of the pack as being family friendly. I'll reminisce about playing flag football in Regional Park, hunting for Easter eggs in The Ridges, and catching fish in one of the many lakes.

Weston has not only shaped my past, but has played a vital role in providing me with a promising future. Our great schools, something most of us teens take for granted, have afforded me many opportunities. It's because of them, and because of the unparalleled efforts of teachers and administrators who help create a conducive learning environment, that I have decided to further my education by going to college. Not every town has educators who are so committed to helping kids learn and are willing to sacrifice their personal time to ensure every student has the potential for success.

Weston is the city where the elements of a strong sense of community, a variety of family oriented activities, and great schools come together to create a thriving, vibrant community. It is a place inhabited by people of the highest caliber and of the most diverse backgrounds. It is a place where families can prosper. It is a place that inspires even the youngest of students. It is this place that I call home.

Jesse Mutschler
Cypress Bay High School