



Essay writing competition – Buntingford Civic Society

On taking on the role of editor of the Buntingford Journal, one of my biggest aims was to get more input from the youth in the area, as they are our future. A local twelve-year old young lady submitted an article for publication, which was just what we needed. This is now a regular article, and prompted the idea for an essay writing competition. The Buntingford Journal, although editorially independent, is published by the Buntingford Civic Society, and the Society kindly offered the prize money.

The decision was made to open the competition to 11 – 13 year olds, which would cover our local schools: Edwinstree Middle School in Buntingford, and Ralph Sadlier Middle School in Puckeridge. The idea was to get the views from this age group of what they think of Buntingford and what they would like to see changed.

The competition was advertised in the December/January edition of the Journal, and in the Buntingford and Royston Mercury. The schools were contacted and asked to promote internally. Additional posters were placed around the Town (public notice board, Post Office, Library and some retail outlets), and on the Civic Societies website, together with a downloadable entry form.

The title of the 450 – 500 word essay was, “If I ruled Buntingford, what would I change?” An entry form appeared with the advert in the Journal, for the entrants to complete and get signed by their parent / guardian.

Closing date for entries was 31st January 2009 with the winning essay receiving £50 and two runners-up receive £25 each. The essays could be submitted electronically in a Word document via email, or in hard copy and most came in hard copy together with entry form.

Our panel of five judges (which consists of three teachers, a local councilor and the editor of the Journal) will choose the top three, and the winners announced in the April 2009 edition of Buntingford Journal. The winning essay will be printed in that edition along with and the winner’s name and possibly a photograph.

The winners were presented with a certificate together with the prize money at the Buntingford Civic Society AGM on 22nd April 2009 with the winning essay being posted on the Buntingford Civic Society website.

We received 12 essays to be entered into the competition, and the majority all outline what is lacking for the youth in our area, together with their solutions and ideas for some of the Town’s ‘problems’, such as parking, litter, recycling, amenities etc.

A really good overview of what our 11 – 13 year olds think of our Town and what they would like to see in the future.

Mrs Aliya Chowney
Editor – Buntingford Journal