

Windstream...from Page 1A

vertised offer included high-speed Internet packages with speeds of "up to 12 Mbps."

Windstream also allegedly advertised a free 6-month "Hulu Plus" subscription but did not clearly disclose that consumers who failed to cancel the subscription at or before the 6-month period would be charged membership fees every month thereafter, until the membership was cancelled, the agency charged.

In a resolution of these allegations, Windstream will pay a total of \$600,000, which includes a \$175,000 civil pen-

alty, \$175,000 in administrative fees and expenses, and \$250,000 in cy pres restitution to be used for the purchase of new computer equipment for the Technical College System of Georgia.

Windstream has represented to the Governor's Office of Consumer Protection that it is in the process of investing approximately \$14 million to upgrade its fiber-supported areas in Georgia.

The company says that 90 percent or more of these upgrades were completed by the end of 2013, with the re-

maining upgrades slated for completion by mid-2014.

The company expects the upgrades to address systemic download speed issues in the areas undergoing the upgrades.

It is also seeking federal funding as well as exploring other options for upgrading the Internet service for consumers who are served by network equipment supported by copper-fed wires.

"This is essentially a truth in advertising case," Sours said. "What consumers thought they were getting

from a major company was significantly different from what they allegedly received.

"People need to be able to make informed choices about buying the services they need to communicate and do business," Sours said. "We are confident that this settlement will ensure that will now occur here."

For more details about the FCC's national broadband plan, visit www.broadband.gov.

For more details, contact Shawn Conroy, Governor's Office of Consumer Protection, at (404) 656-3790.

Gala...from Page 1A

generous award, including a weekend beach retreat.

"We're going to try to make the recipients feel as good about this as possible," she said.

Right now, Windham is seeking nominations for the five categories.

In selecting these five individuals, their services for the past 12 months will be considered.

Individual civic, charitable, professional and business service performed is preferred, Windham said.

The highest merit will be given to those activities performed at some personal or professional sacrifice, and for which the individual received no general compensation.

Simply doing a superlative job in one's own vocation would not be sufficient quali-

fication for the award, although unusual professional or business achievement to the benefit of the community is part of the big picture, Windham said.

Call Windham for more details and nomination forms at (706) 781-3230.

Once completed, the nomination forms for the inaugural gala must be received by Windham by e-mail: Ku-

vasz@windstream.net or mailed P.O. Box 1669, Blairsville, GA 30514.

In addition to the information requested in the nomination form, no more than three letters of endorsement may be submitted.

Deadline for receiving nomination forms is March 30.

Qualify...from Page 1A

is seeking his second term as circuit district attorney.

Langley represents Union, Towns, Lumpkin and White counties.

U.S. Rep. Doug Collins, a Gainesville Republican, is seeking his second term as 9th District Congressman.

Collins qualified for reelection on Monday.

Also qualifying on Monday were Gov. Nathan Deal, a Hall County Republi-

can.

The governor is seeking his second term as the state's chief executive officer.

Also, Georgia House Speaker, David Ralston, a Blue Ridge Republican, who represents Georgia's House District 7, also is seeking re-

election.

Towns County's District 50 State Sen. John Wilkinson also qualified for reelection on Monday.

Qualifying for local, state and federal offices ends on Friday, March 7.

Arbor...from Page 1A

nity as Blairsville celebrated its platinum anniversary as a "Tree City USA."

At the event, GFC District Manager Ken Masten, along with Rangers Tony Harkins and Cody Rogers, represented the Forestry Commission.

Retired United Methodist Minister Earl Bishop, who gave the invocation, recited Joyce Kilmer's 1913 poem titled, "Trees."

"We all know the first line, and we all know the last line, but very few of us know what's in the middle," Bishop said.

Harkins touched briefly on Kilmer's poem before Masten presented Blairsville Mayor Pro Tem Buddy Moore and others with the new Tree City flag and road sign.

"It's been a pleasure to work with all of you," Harkins told the audience. "The 20th year is a big deal to me and I hope you hang this sign up where everyone can see it. Blairsville is my town.

"I'm proud of it, I like my job, and I hope that I'm making a difference in the world," he said. "Some communities you have to prod, push and pull their teeth, but our County Commissioner and Mayor are both tree lovers and we appreciate them.

"We can all take pride in our community by planting trees and being a tree's best friend," Harkins said.

The Junior Garden Club, who led the Pledge of Allegiance, also drew praise from Harkins.

"This is something (The Junior Garden Club) will always remember," he said. "They are the future and will keep this going and make this community a better place."

Before everyone emptied the Mock House and adjourned onto the front lawn to a young dogwood tree, Mayor Pro Tem Buddy Moore read the Arbor Day Proclamation, signed by Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley and Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris.

Commissioner Paris and Mayor Conley declared Feb. 21st as Arbor Day, commending the observance to all citizens of Union County.

"National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April," Moore said. "Georgia celebrates the third Friday in February. The states observe Arbor Day during the best tree planting time in their state.

"The Blairsville Garden Club recognizes that the third

Friday in February is designated as Arbor Day in Georgia," Moore said. "A tree was planted at the Mock House last month to commemorate the 142nd anniversary of Arbor Day and the 20th year in Union County, in cooperation with the Georgia Forestry Commission, City of Blairsville, Blairsville Garden Club, Blairsville Junior Garden Club, and the Union County Commissioner's Office."

Others who deserve a thank you and played an integral role in making this event possible were, Bud Akins and JoAnne Sales of the Union County Historical Society.

Arbor Day Chairman Lou Ann Bleakley, Blairsville Garden Club President Kay Bryant, and Ranger Roy Fortenberry also were honored.

"I thank everyone for

being here on this windy day," Sales told the audience. "This is such a good turnout. During the Heritage Festival, you can sit out on the porch in a rocking chair and see all the beautiful trees."

The National Arbor Day Foundation sponsors the "Tree City USA" program.

It recognizes cities, without regard to size, which meet certain requirements.

The city must establish a Tree Board; issue a Tree Care ordinance, allocating the budget to allow for the care of the trees, and an Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation.

The annual Arbor Day celebration was delayed by the snowstorm that paralyzed much of North Georgia.

The belated event might be a sign that spring is just around the corner.

Scam Alert

The Union County Sheriff's Office reports that an ongoing scam is targeting residents identity information.

A man purporting to be Union County Sheriff's Lt. Davis is calling residents and seeking vital personal information.

Chief Deputy John George urges residents to call (706) 439-6066 to report any information about the caller. The Sheriff's Office doesn't solicit over the phone.