

# Haggerty's talent gets him far – to Houston

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All it took was a bookmark for ninth grader William "Matthew" Haggerty to visit the famous WrestleMania stars in Houston, Texas.

Haggerty's artistic design of a bookmark won him and his cousin, Chris Murphrey, the three-day, all-expense paid trip sponsored by World Wrestling Entertainment and the Young Adult Library Services Association in April.

He had to read 10 books, magazines or graphic novels to qualify. He also had to read the book "Shift" by Jennifer Bradbury and answer questions from the author about it in order to get front row seats. While he came in fourth place on the questions, he didn't get the front row seats.

He did become one of 15 winners out of more than 1,800 participating libraries across the nation and the only winner in the state.

After making his bookmark and turning it in, Haggerty said he gave up the idea of winning in a couple of months. Then he got the call he least expected. He answered it, al-



Submitted Photo

"Matthew" Haggerty poses with Diva Layla and Matt Hardy at WrestleMania XXV.

though he said he doesn't usually answer unknown caller calls.

"I was jumping off the wall," he said about hearing the news he had won. "I was calling up all my friends, screaming at them."

Haggerty's winning bookmark had to portray the theme "Why Reading is Important." His colorful bookmark featured a little book man with arms and legs holding a sign that stated, "Reading got me here. Where can it take you?" He drew numerous fans holding up signs with messages such as "We love to read."

"The whole thing was filled up. It took me about three weeks to make," he said.

Haggerty loves wrestling

and plans to major in art when he graduates.

"I've watched wrestling pretty much ever since I was little," he said.

The trip turned out to be worth the wait. WrestleMania XXV was the highlight, he said. He also attended a pizza party benefitting the Make a Wish Foundation, got \$300 cash, and got a private tour of the Fan Access area with Jimmy "The Mouth of the South" Hart.

The Greene Central High School library received \$2,000 for his win.

Haggerty said that winning the reading contest has motivated him to do more drawing.

"I feel on top of the world. I can do anything," he said. "People actually like my art."

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