



A Historic Session in the Commonwealth

John Donohue, Marshall

This year's session of Virginia Boys State is an exceptional one, in that this is the 75th session (1939-2017). 75 years of anything is commendable. Point in case, The American Legion's Boys State was recognized by Virginia's House of Delegates through House Joint Resolution NO. 806. This House Joint Resolution was agreed upon by the House of Delegates on January 27 and by the Senate on February 2 of this year. The Resolution is a very high honor for this revered program.

House Joint Resolution NO. 806, presented by (Ret) Col. Richard L. Anderson, begins by stating, "WHEREAS, the American Legion Virginia Boys State is celebrating its 75th year of developing high school boys across the Commonwealth into civic leaders, teaching them about how government works and the importance of good citizenship." This opening line simply sums up the purpose of Boys State. It then goes on to remark the beginning of the Boys State program as well as the first year of Virginia Boys State organized in 1939 in cooperation with Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

The Resolution then discusses the unique current events of the modern Boys State. Finally, the Resolution ends with,

"RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Gerald Rhoads, director of the American Legion Virginia Boys State, as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the program's storied 75-year history of educating generations of good citizens and future leaders across the Commonwealth."

Needless to say, this is a milestone and a point of pride for the American Legion's Virginia Boys State and Virginia as a commonwealth.

Out and About

Nolan Hall, Henry

Cities have selected nominees' and for the following positions: City Mayor, Delegates, as well as Senators, leading us a step further to functioning city governments and eventually a great and prosperous state-wide government. Be prepared to vote and choose the candidate that you feel best suits you and your ideals.

"I feel that we have a strong core of candidates that will unify Henry City" - Ian Waite

"I feel that our two party system does not divide our city, we are one people" - Hunter Cowden

The Boys State Experience: Day 3

By: Owen Ferguson

Tuesday started off the same way Monday had. Another early morning with little sleep. This morning seemed to flow better than Monday, as we now know what to do for morning inspections. After inspections we headed to breakfast. Nothing really special happened in the morning hours. Following breakfast comes the flag raising, as we all know by now. There were some interesting chats among the cities as always. My favorite coming from Burke City.

Next we headed to the Religious service, which was excellent as usual. After came the time to vote. The votes were for Mayors, Senators and Delegates. After completing this all important task, we headed back to the auditorium. Next we had Hon. R. Edwin Burnette speak to us about the different levels of the court system. It was a very informative speech.

After this, all cities reported back to Preston to find out our election results. Everyone was very excited to see who would be leading them and for some, to see if they would be able to lead. After finding out who our leaders and elected officials would be, we headed to lunch.

Following lunch was one of the most exciting times this week so far. Hon. Mark Herring, Attorney General of Virginia, spoke to us over Skype. Although it would have been amazing to see him speak in person, we were content with him taking time out of his day to talk with us. After Mr. Herring's speech, ending ahead of schedule, we were released early for afternoon activities.

Everyone was very happy to actually begin outdoor activities today and they went very well. Next was dinner and some fellow citizens and I were able to get in early and get first servings of food. During this meal time, there were a lot of citizens going around and campaigning for themselves and their city's candidates.

Next was the flag lowering and flag Retirement Ceremony. The chants during roll call were hilarious as they are every day and got even more creative. Following the flag lowering was the flag retirement ceremony. This was an interesting event to experience for the first time. Everyone was very respectful as expected. The next part of our day was going to be a lot more intense than some might have thought.

The party conventions were some of the most governmental activities we have participated in to date. I am a member of the Nationalist party so we were stationed in Preston. The Nationalist Party Convention was very intense and funny at times. It was great to see people take lead and work with other cities. After this we met back up with our cities and went to vote on more city positions. Today has been another great day at Boy's State. We stride into the next day full of hope and ambition.

Federalist Party Convention

John Donohue, Marshall

The Federalist Party's first convention took place Tuesday at the same time as the Nationalists'. The chaotic convention enjoyed the presence of all 16 cities in the loud auditorium. The total number of votes for the Federalist Party is 294 to the Nationalist's well over three hundred votes. The Platform Committee proposed three planks: veteran affairs, environmental conservation, and merchandise for Boys State participants (ie. Shirts, socks, and jackets). The party then nominated 12 candidates for Party Chair from the 16 cities. The speeches focused on party unity, strong leadership, environmental issues, a Donald Trump impersonator, and even featured a persisting pig noise. At the end of the convention, Cody Taylor was elected to Federalist Party Chair. The Convention will continue tomorrow in a two part session.

Welcome to the Jungle, Nationalist Party Convention

Jordan Houston, MacArthur

After two and a half days of listening to speakers from all around the Commonwealth, the Nationalist citizens of Boys State finally got the chance to speak their minds at their Party Convention. The room was electric; Lee City's Campbell Hogg described it as "A passionate gathering of individuals with diverse viewpoints." When asked for his opinion on the night, he simply described it as, "A mess."

To many, the highlight of the night was the process of debating the planks in the Nationalist platform. The crowd was ruthless; any mistake made during a presentation made the speaker the subject of a chorus of mockery. At one point, a citizen approached the microphone to ask only for more civility in the auditorium, and was met with resounding boos from all sides. "It was chaotic, fun, and loud. Probably not as orderly as the Blue Shirts would have liked it," Puller City's Nicolas Hausey said.

Do you wish to submit an article that highlights your city? Send an email to boysstatetoday@gmail.com to learn more.

The Art of Winning Public Office

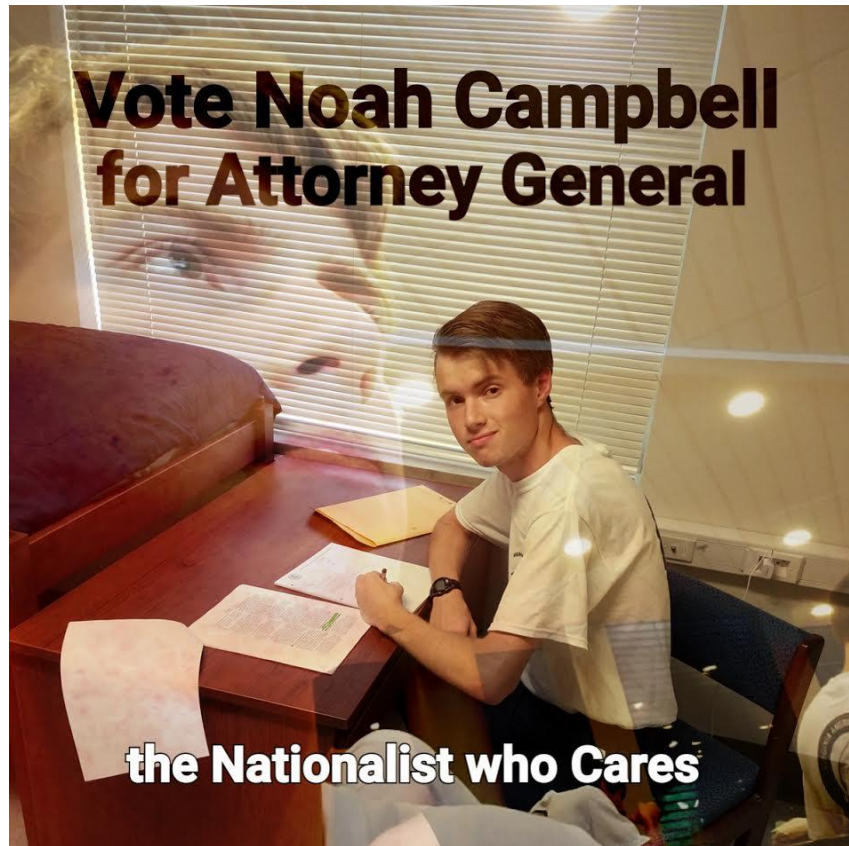
By: Nathnael Alazar

Public office is on everyone's mind. It lurks in the corners of our dorms, in the hallways of our cities and behind every conversation we have with a stranger.

So, what is the key to winning public office? According to Mr. Gogan of Jackson City, a true leader is one who, "demonstrates knowledge, respect, motivation, oratorical skills and most importantly, can think outside the box." Justin Ford, sheriff at Maury City, articulated that reading off a long list of accomplishments is unnecessary for public office, considering we are all more than qualified to attend Boys State in the first place. Rather than listing all of his accomplishments, he emphasized the importance of relating to his peers and subsequently won the election.

What about some important tips from an expert on public speaking? Dale Jenkins, instructor of the "Better Speaking" afternoon session, provided three tips for crafting a persuasive speech. Initially, one must put forth an attention-getting device that immediately captures the interest of voters. Then, a focused problem must be discussed followed by a specific solution. After, a candidate must look at the implementation of the solution and how it will impact the lives of citizens. Lastly, a candidate must make a call to action pertaining to what he will do if chosen for the respected position as well as what voters should do to help him get there.

In the coming days, we will all be subject to the scrutiny of our peers and the elections for city and state office. Understanding how to relate to our constituents will make or break the outcome of these elections. Take note in the coming week



DR. RALPH NORTHAM'S VISIT TO BOYS STATE

By: John Hancock

The governor's race is the marquee event. Virginia is one of just two states - along with New Jersey - holding gubernatorial election contests in 2017, and the Virginia race has drawn intense national interest as a precursor of the 2018 midterms and a test of politics in the era of President Trump.

Dr. Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam, a modest pediatric neurologist, won running as a pragmatist with Virginia's Democratic establishment's firm support. He has also vowed to challenge President Trump; however, he pledges to work with state Republican lawmakers on issues like a tax overhaul. Northam has been campaigning for years, forging critical contacts with influential power brokers such as eminent politicians and religious leaders to garner a cash advantage that let him outspend his opponent on television advertising in the final weeks of the race.

Northam's tone holds a more traditional rhetoric focused heavily on his biography, rural upbringing, Army veteran, pediatric neurologist, as well as his endorsements from key progressive groups that make up the Democratic base including teachers and abortion-rights groups.

Today's Trivia 75 : What was the original name of Virginia Boys State?

*Send your response via email to boysstatetoday@gmail.com, along with your name and city name.
First response will be highlighted in the next publication of Boys State Today.*

Congratulations to Chet Heppin of Henry City for answering Tuesday's question correctly.

The Tools for a successful Candidacy: Night One Keynote

Corwin Matthews and Chris Oglesby

Preston Hall Auditorium was filled with many words of wisdom and enlightenment for all citizens of the 75th American Legion

Boys State who poured into the venue. These generous words came from none other than Brian Hemphill (President of Radford University), Bruce Brown (Mayor of Radford) and Delegate Richard L. Anderson (Retired from the United States Air Force).

Along with each of these established men came a new point of perspective and realization for every audience member and counselor in the auditorium. After a short but appreciated introduction and welcome of the speakers, Mr. Hemphill initiated the opening session by speaking about the quality of education and empowerment for everyone and their experiences here at the Boys State. Along with these statements came a hunger for a sense of accomplishment from the young future leaders. Next up to the podium was Mayor Brown of Radford, whose words came from more of an inspirational standpoint. Some of the main key points suggested by Mr. Bruce included making a significant impact on all individuals wherever you're at, and to not focus on success but rather a significance left behind. These points correlate with the advice claimed by Delegate Mr. Anderson later in the program. Delegate Anderson was the primary Keynote speaker and he delivered a professional but accessible message of Leadership. In his presentation, he highlighted the pivotal essence of public service and moral courage. These three aspects of leadership, service, and courage undoubtedly coincide for without courage one lacks integrity and fortitude, which leaves his ability to fulfilling serve vacant. If one cannot serve, than he is incapable of leading wholeheartedly.

Therefore, the most helpful members of society are quality individuals who focus on helping others rather than only themselves. His overall message was conveyed through stories and a logical flow of dialogue. All who were attentively engaged took away the maximal benefit from an enriching first night of Keynote.

Tuesday's Service

Jordan Houston

Tuesday morning's service highlighted the importance of peace, and the decidedly unpeaceful methods sometimes necessary to maintain it.

The service was based on two biblical parables: that of Abraham and Lot's conflict, and that of Jesus' Cleansing of the Temple. These texts were juxtaposed to show how peace is complicated and sometimes requires aggressive or, as Henry City Chaplain Ian Waite put it, "disruptive" behavior.

"Sometimes peace is exactly where you find it," Waite said, listing music, driving, and sports among other things as common simple methods to peace. Waite cited the parable of Abraham and Lot's conflict as one such time: a time when peace was straightforward, easy, and required only communication between conflicting parties.

"But in many situations, keeping the peace requires courage and bravery," Waite said. "Sometimes keeping the peace and moral order requires being disruptive to the status quo." Waite mentioned the Cleansing of the Temple as an occasion that required disruptive action and described how the typically peaceful Jesus was forced to act in a non-peaceful manner, upending the tables of those who turned the place of worship into a place of commerce and ordering them to destroy the structure.

Waite then turned to the congregation. "You're all here for a purpose," he said. "Either a teacher, a counselor, or even your parent believed in you." Waite stressed that each student has a personal issue that they believe in and that they should fight for what they believe in, even if it meant being disruptive. "Find your injustice...make your whip of cords."

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My name is Matthew Hua from Washington City and I am running for Attorney General for this year's Boys State. To me the study of the law and its applications is just as important to me as how athletes continually want to play their respective sport. I have several years of experience starting in 2013 when I attended Johns Hopkins University's Center for Talented Youth Program and studied their Great Cases in American Law. This was a three-week intensive study program which focused solely on the Supreme Court and some of its most monumental cases. Since then, I have participated in my school's Model Judiciary Mock Trial Club from freshmen to junior year of high school. Each year, the Model Judiciary simulates a murder trial and each school send their prosecution and defense team to compete other schools with their own teams. In my freshmen year, I was the defendant of the case, sophomore year I was the lead defense attorney and in junior year I was the lead prosecution attorney. In both of the years that I was the lead attorney, my team won the case, Outside of school I have continued my studied of law by obtaining an internship at my county courthouse where I met with judges and received lectures, organized Court case file and worked with the clerks to fulfill day-to-day duties of the courthouse. During this internship I was exposed to traffic court and civil court and how each court functions differently. **I hope you will vote for me as your Boys State Attorney General because with my experience and education about the Supreme Court, criminal trials, traffic court and civil court, I am certain that I can I would be able to easily apply my vast legal experience to the legal scenarios of Boys State. Vote Matthew Hua as your Attorney General!**

75th Session of The American Legion Boy State of Virginia - Boys State Today -Wednesday June 21

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Jason Tyree for Governor as an Independent Candidate

This year marks the 75th Session of the American Legion Boys State. Instead of voting the normal way for Nationalists and Federalists, vote Independent. Let's make a difference. I come from Franklin County and for those who don't know it is a very diverse area. I've lived in most way of lives. I've served in leadership positions in my AFJROTC program such as Wing and Vice-Wing Commander, Inspector General, Squadron and Vice-Squadron Commander, Admin CO, and Flags CO, in my first two years. I also participate in Boy Scouts, currently holding the rank of Life Scout. I'm the Vice President for FFA and an NHS member.

Today, I would like to inform you of my platform. I support legislation to increase funding for Career and Technical Education and increase funding for Law Enforcement. Also, I would create legislation to bring jobs in Business/Industry and Agriculture. I also would fight for increasing activities in our Virginia Boys State Program to keep us active and willing to participate with guest speakers. I ask you to be a part of the difference and vote Independent Thursday for Governor.

Commonwealth Attorney Mike Doucette

Q: “Hey Mr. Doucette, thank you so much for coming out and joining us today here at Boy’s State! I just wanted to ask you a couple of questions. First of all, how do you serve the Commonwealth of Virginia and what does it take to be a good service member of our society?”

A: “Well, I serve the Commonwealth of Virginia as the Commonwealth’s Attorney for the City of Lynchburg. It’s an elected position and I’ve been elected for the last 12 years. I was an assistant for 22 years before that. So, I’ve been doing this for a very, very, long time and I enjoy doing it very much. You know, it’s challenging but it’s sort of rewarding at the same time.”

Q: “Yes sir, what do you feel are the qualities or traits you must possess to be successful as the Commonwealth attorney?”

A: “Well, number one, you gotta be ethical. The steepest challenge for any prosecutor is to get used to the idea of being ethical. And it sort of sounds odd, but the reason I say that is this - our justice system is an adversarial system. So basically, we view winning as a judgement in our favor. As a prosecutor, that is not necessarily justice. I mean sometimes people are not guilty, or sometimes the evidence has some problems, some weaknesses to it. And we have an obligation to make sure that those are at least disclosed to the defense attorney. And so, our job is to see that justice is done - not just win cases by getting convictions. I think that that dichotomy between the adversarial system and doing justice is difficult for some. And so the number one requirement to be a good prosecutor is to have a good sense of ethics. You know you also have to have a presence and ability to speak in public. You have to have, you know, a fairly good memory, because a lot of times things come up in a hurry where you know you don’t have time to research things. You basically have to pull them out of your head, whether its cases, or particular facts, or whatever it might be. So, there are a number of attributes to a good prosecutor, but those are prime.”

Q: “Yes sir. Do you feel that you already had those attributes attained or that you developed them?”

A: “I, you know, I think I had the memory side of it, and I think I had the ethical side of it as well. It does take some getting used to - that difference between the adversarial system and doing justice. You know, I think I was raised right so that certainly helped in that. But as far as, you know, was I ready to go from day one, you know it’s amazing what little law school teaches you. I mean it’s basically this; law school teaches you how to think like a lawyer, how to speak like a lawyer, and how to do research. As far as the actual law is concerned, it’s only when you go to whatever office you’re in, whatever your practice might be, that you actually learn the nuts and bolts of what you need to do. And so, I mean a lot of what I do, whether it’s the elements of a crime, whether it’s search and seizure law, those sort of things, I had to learn over a period of time. It takes reading a lot of cases and a lot of statutes and that sort of stuff, and then sort of filing it away in your head.”

Q: “Yes sir. So after your 33 years you’re obviously a well-seasoned lawyer; you’ve had plenty of practice. What do you think you’ve learned from your career - what have you taken away as a person from your experience in the work force?”

A: “You know I, it’s very easy to get jaded in what I do. I mean I see the senior side of what goes on in our city and in our Commonwealth. But, all in all I’ve come away with the concept of ‘There’s an awful lot of good out there as well.’ I see, you know, I see people who are doing an awful lot of good things, doing the right things for the right reasons. Yeah, do I see bad things and people being, you know doing bad things? Absolutely. I think after 33 years my optimism in humankind has not diminished at all.”



Jack's Got Your Back.

Jack Sherman for Governor

Burke City • Nationalist • Roanoke, VA Native • Ready To Work With Everyone

Got Questions? Follow us and DM your inquiries to Jack on our official city Instagram page:
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