



VA General Assembly Visits Boys State



By: Justin Carminucci and Grey Cashwell

Day two of Boys State began with an informative visit from several members of the Virginia General Assembly. Both senators and delegates were present to talk about their political experience and give insight into what it really takes to be an elected official. These officials included Senator Charles Carrico, Senator Rosalyn Dance, Delegate Richard Bell, Delegate Nick Freitas, Delegate T. Scott Garrett, Delegate Christopher Hurst, and Delegate Sam Rasoul.

Senator Carrico, a former Virginia Senior Trooper and member of the Virginia House of Delegates, began his session by explaining the tasks that the Virginia Senate must accomplish, including proposing an annual budget that encompasses funding for essential needs such as education, infrastructure, transportation and the state police. He also delved into the process of proposing and passing bills,

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Senator Carrico tween 2,500 and

When hold town halls Senator Carrico days, it is more phone town halls larger number of hear their con-exemplifies how, in the modern



Top: Officials are introduced



Left: Senator Carrico

Right: Delegate Rasoul

adapt to the technological society that we live in. Senator Carrico was also asked about the struggles he faced in his transition from a State Trooper to the political world as a member of the House of Delegates. The senator responded by noting the difficult transition he faced from the straightforward laws enforced by the State Troopers, to the areas of grey that are often prevalent in the state legislature. Unlike his service as a Trooper, in the House, Senator Carrico had to navigate the 99 other opinions that were voiced when debating the proposed bills. This interesting insight showed the complex political web that serving in the legislature entails.

Delegate Sam Rasoul also provided a unique perspective with his audience, by focusing not on the divisions between the Republican and Democratic parties as they directly affect his work in the Virginia House of Delegates, but rather on how the duopoly of the two political groups have prevented fair and reasonable compromises from being made in Virginia state government.

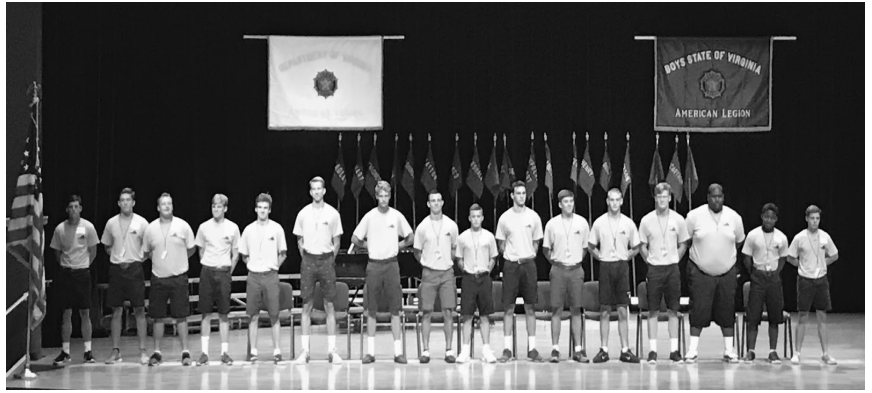
The younger delegate also provided the opportunity of fascinating dialogue with the citizens of Boys State by offering a question and answer section to his presentation. Questions varied from how his personal business as a healthcare administrator has affected his political work to what advice he had regarding the future of American politics and challenges which future governors will face. Throughout this session his underlying message was the same--the future of American politics is one which will ultimately rely on a new system of governing, of which the current political atmosphere of hostility between the two parties will prove obsolete. Above all, Delegate Rasoul emphasized that the American youth of today will have to be the generation to drive this change through a genuine and unwavering commitment to their values.

from their introduction their debate and final of the senate. This highlighted by the bills that the senators week session, which estimated to be between 3,000. asked how often he for his constituents, explained that these effective to host tele-in order to reach a his constituents and cerns. This answer like any other job field age, politics has had to

Sheriffs Sworn In | By: William Helms

During today's afternoon assembly each city's Sheriff was sworn in. These are the role models who are the quintessential example of what a citizen should act like. After taking their oath of office each Sheriff received a resounding round of applause that reverberated throughout the room. They are the first of many to be sworn in to the many offices at Boys State. However, Boys State is more than just being elected to different offices, it is about executing the position to its fullest potential.

It is imperative that each Sheriff hold their citizens to higher standards. Such responsibilities include making sure that citizens move about the Radford campus in a proper and orderly manner. Secondly, the Sheriff must uphold order and discipline upon the citizens when they overstep boundaries and break rules. Most importantly, the Sheriff must be the role model for all citizens if a city is to be fun and functional while maintaining order. Rules and obligations are the foundation on which society is built, and without a Sheriff to enforce them it would be as if society didn't have them at all.



Above: Sheriffs presented to Boys State

Surviving and Thriving | By: William Cashwell

My first day at the Virginia Boys State with the American Legion has certainly been a tumultuous one, but one that has surprisingly left me wanting more. Like many opportunities that come with extracurricular camps and spending lengthy periods away from home, Boys State has thus far provided a diverse experience. The schedule is overcrowded at best and at times seemingly overwhelming. However, I have also already come to find a remarkable and admirable sense of camaraderie amongst the other boys in my city, an observation which seems to extend also to the interactions between the boys that I've seen in other cities.

I will confess that I came to the summer program with something of an anxious and prejudiced attitude. I was nervous to have to spend my first week of summer break with the American Legion rather than on a beach somewhere, or even sleeping in. I was disappointed with the idea that Boys State was a kind of military camp, an assumption which has only proven to be partially true (it is run by past veterans or second generation members of the American Legion, but still carries a lighthearted and forgiving feel to it). Yet, for those negative presumptions which have come to bear fruition, I have undeniably eaten my words on more than a few occasions.

The other young men that I've met have immediately made me feel as if, for all of my discomfort with the rigorous scheduling and traditionalist military aspects for the program, I am in a place where I will indeed survive, learn, and even make friends. The most comforting aspect of my day-one Boys State experience hasn't been the campaigning, or the guest speakers, or the long and well-earned lunch break, but rather, it has been just the small amount of time I've spent around new faces from around the state, all of whom are eager to learn, participate, and thrive. These rising seniors, though sometimes displaying the same timidity that I have, especially during the initial hours of our first day, are the glue that keeps Boys State together. Friendship, camaraderie, and a drive not only to participate, but to inspire each other to do the same are what makes Boys State so special and enjoyable.

And so, for all of my discretions, I still look forward to the week to come and urge anyone else who feels as cautious as I about the program to stick it out with me, and if nothing else, make some new friends.

Social Aspects of a New Environment | By: Brooks Pollard

New experiences are a great thing for children and, more generally, humans of all ages. New experiences offer a chance for new types of learning experiences or opportunities, but more importantly, offer a chance for people to meet a more diverse community. While meeting new people is a positive thing, for some it can be nerve-racking. The anxiety of meeting new people and becoming acclimated to new routines can sometimes take over and inhibit the positive aspects of a new experience. While this can happen, it does not have to be the way things actually turn out. It is critical for the citizens of the Boys State program to actively consider how others may feel during this adjustment period.

How can people do this? A way to answer this question is to look at introverted and extroverted people and how they can best play off each other's strengths and weaknesses. Consider an extroverted person who does not have a problem with meeting new individuals. Now consider the opposite. A person who is not comfortable expressing themselves in front of others so they stay silent and do not join in on the fun. All it takes is for one extroverted individual to reach out and communicate with people who may be struggling to fit in.

For the people who do not feel comfortable in new experiences, the best way to make things better is to be yourself. This is not to be confused with the cliché "be yourself" speech as it is important to note that the qualities each person has are valuable to everyone around you. Projecting one's best qualities is a good way to express yourself and let others know who someone is. One cannot settle for less than they deserve. Therefore, it stands to reason that over the stay at Boys State, no one should be afraid of what others think. Boys State fosters unity and a sense of community that can only be achieved if everyone brings their best qualities to the table. Everyone should not think of this new experience as daunting, but rather one that will allow all to excel and grow as humans.

Professor's Speech Inspires Citizens | By: Samuel Gardner

Dr. Stephen Farnsworth, a published professor of political science at the University of Mary Washington, delivered a lecture on Monday afternoon regarding the different methods of candidate selection. Dr. Farnsworth's address inspired several Boys State citizens to join the microphone lines and ask their questions on a variety of subjects, ranging from speculation into the effects of Virginia's changing population to requests for advice for young Republican activists.

Dr. Farnsworth began his lecture by sharing his research into voting trends and statistics, and he continued with an exhibition of several graphics. These graphics, created by Dr. Farnsworth with a colleague at Mary Washington, are intended to "illustrate politics," according to Dr. Farnsworth. The professor continued by discussing the future of Virginian politics, focusing on the gradual leftward shift dubbed the "Blue Wave," and the effect which this political shift has had on both major parties. "It creates a very difficult identity crisis for parties, when they have to deal with these changes," said Dr. Farnsworth. He stressed the need for the parties to evolve with the constituents, lest they cease to operate. After elaborating on the cause of the change (an influx of those born out-of-state, or "new" Virginians), Dr. Farnsworth concluded the lecture portion with a more optimistic assertion. Said Farnsworth, "Virginia is really appealing to people around the country and around the world."

During the next half of the lecture, citizens were allowed to join one of the two microphone queues, in hopes of asking their questions. The questions took on a variety of subjects, beginning with a prediction that the 2018 midterms could be "rough" for Republicans. Other citizens requested advice on how to counter the "Blue Wave," while some asked for elaboration on certain points which Dr. Farnsworth had made. One citizen challenged Dr. Farnsworth's assertion that 2013 Republican gubernatorial nominee Ken Cuccinelli was "anti-gay," which led to a revision by Dr. Farnsworth. The Professor clarified that his assertion that Cuccinelli was "anti-gay" was better described as "anti-gay marriage and gay rights and status, like adoption."

Dr. Farnsworth answered dozens more citizens' questions, and he even provided some advice to a young Republican activist seeking to revitalize the party. "I think the Republican Party, like the Democrats... adjust, and they win. Parties change with their constituents," said Dr. Farnsworth, "Think about what matters to people and what they care about." Much to the chagrin of several citizens, the lecture ended before all of the questions could be asked.

After a round of copious applause, Dr. Farnsworth was presented with an honorary blue shirt by the Boys State administration. The citizens of Boys State then rose to provide the Professor with a standing ovation, concluding the evidently inspiring session.



Above: Professor Farnsworth answers questions.



Respect for the Flag | By: Ronan Donovan

As the bugles sound and the sick call is played, the United States flag is raised for all to see. The members of the Boys State community place their hands on their chests and enthusiastically state the national anthem. These words have been passed from generation to generation, and the meaning resonates with each and every young man. Today marks the first full day of the 76th session of the Virginia Boys State conference, and the mood is reflective of everyone's hopes for the coming week.

While friendly competition is encouraged within and between the cities of Boys State, the raising of the flag serves as a time in which we all stand together in unison and put aside our own personal ambitions. This bond is only made stronger by the genuine love of country and desire to serve what is common among all the citizens present.



City Manager Visits | By: Carter Bailey

Mike Hamp, the City Manager of Waynesboro, came to Boys State Monday to discuss the important roles of local government and his role as city manager. As a city manager he said he enjoyed the diversity of people he worked with in the city. His responsibilities as city manager included hiring new employees for the city and making sure the city departments are running smoothly and doing their jobs. He also told us the greatest advice he ever received was to be a humble leader.

Within the local government he discussed the challenges that the city of Waynesboro faced and how they were facing those challenges. One challenge the city faces is attraction to new residence. With bigger cities such as Charlottesville within an hour's drive of Waynesboro they are having trouble keeping productive citizens in their community. The solution he says is bringing in new businesses to help their local economy and keeping their city's living cost affordable. Other challenges he said the local government faced were anti-government groups and state regulations limiting local government's power to fix problems. Some benefits he mentioned that were positives of working in the local government was the lack of partisanship and that local governments could work together for the community more efficiently.

Left: City Manager Mike Hamp addresses citizens

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