

The Boys State Dispatch

Volume 80, Issue 6

- Gavin Jarvis - **Editors** - James Rioux -

June 24, 2023

Lemon Juice and Cough Drops

Aiden Sowers - Bradley City

When I first signed up for choir, I walked into a room of men just as anxious as me about participating. Some men in the choir had little to no experience singing, while others participated in All State Choir events. I was directly in the middle of skill ranges; I could read sheet music, but my vocal technique was lacking. However, I was determined to give it my all. When we arrived at the choir room in Covington, I was taken aback at my own incompetence upon reading through the arrangement of “The Star Spangled Banner”. I was under the impression that I would be able to easily sing through the pieces presented to me; however, I quickly realized I was going to have to work on my vocal relaxation, if I was going to make it through this week without sounding like a donald duck impersonator on saturday.

Mr. Boudreaux combined lemon juice and water into a spray bottle and told me to spray it into my uvula. I was extremely confused as to why I should put citrus on the back of my throat, however I reluctantly obliged. Miraculously, my throat cleared and I was able to sing competently for the remaining duration of rehearsal.

Mr. Boudreaux has provided extremely helpful insights and utilities that have taken us from sounding unfortunate to sounding like a full fledged men's choir. I am extremely grateful for our boys state choir, as I believe it has improved me as both a singer and a musician. I would highly recommend that anyone interested join the Boys State choir, as it has been a truly transformative experience.

Farewell Boys State

Joshua Coleman - Eisenhower City

This week has been many things to many people. Though I think it is fair to say that regardless of what one’s opinion on the manner is, Boys State is a once in a lifetime event.

We began the week with little to no knowledge of what this place even was. No familiarity of the people in our cities and dorms, and without having much of an idea on much of the government and political spheres that influence us daily. With that knowledge in mind, we went through a week full of intense emotions, events and experiences. We walked, chanted, laughed, cried, prayed, listened to speeches, sang (and oh boy, did we sing) and ate

From the casual sports, to the intense courtrooms and conventions. From rainy days to sudden sunny weather, we have experienced it all. Every position, whether citizen, mayor, or sheriff, has its ups and down. However, the point of those positions is not to teach you how to be a part of society or fit into a role. Rather, those positions were given out to make us realize that we are *already* a part of society. This is our moment, why wait? We will soon be out of highschool and into the “real world.” There is no stopping time, there is no going back, and there is nothing to lose besides an opportunity. It is alright to not have everything figured out, the point is that we can do something regardless of where we are to serve our nation, our fellow citizens, our friends and our government.

Each speaker has had their own wisdom, stories and inspirations. Which they have so kindly decided to share with us. They took time out of their day to speak to a bunch of high schoolers rather than doing something a bit more “invigorating.” It is truly an honor that we have the chance to host such distinguished guests.

All of this, of course, would have never come to pass if not for the hard and tiring work of the countries and staff of the Virginia Boys State program. Each and

every one of them played their part and it shows in the meticulousness of this week.

And although we might have made “enemies” with the opposing party, or city, or maybe even person, we must remember that this is not just our experience, but the experience of a diverse cast of individuals hailing from all over Virginia. Each and every one of us are here for a reason, and I don’t say that as an excuse to brag, but rather to point out the honor we have been bestowed.

If anything can be taken away from this week, I think it is quite simple. To put it in the words of the chorus: “What does the Lord require of you?”

On behalf of The Boys State Dispatch, it was an honor to have been at your service. Go out into the world and make the best out of your life. Thank you and God bless.

A Letter From The Editors

The last week has been nothing short of incredible for many of us. Having the opportunity to document some of the special moments we shared has been a treasure. For many of you, The Boys State Dispatch was a minimal part of your experience here this week, but being able to see the interest and

laughs from all of you will always be a cherished memory for us.

We tried to ensure a neutral and fair newsletter, not trying to give any unfair bias; hopefully, we accomplished our goal. As Governor Jonathan Bernard thanked us for, slander would not be tolerated. We never wanted the Dispatch to be a source of malice or misinformation – we're proud of our efforts and that of our team. Even with this goal and many long nights, we were not infallible. Mistakes were made, errors were put into print and our oversight failed. For this, we apologize to you, the citizens of the 80th Virginia Boys State, and any other readers.

We were honored yesterday by our Virginia Governor, Glenn Youngkin; in his speech, addressing our state, he mentioned the Dispatch as a source he used to learn about our week. Having the Governor, no less all of you, read what we've put out each night means more words than this page can hold.

The Dispatch will, now, rest in digital archives, meeting the same fate as its predecessors. Though it will never be mass printed again and read through by hundreds, our paper now serves as a small time capsule, preserving our experience. Virginia Boys State will go on and our time with it

will remain in memory. With this last action, I hope future generations of leaders can look back, laugh, and smile at all we did. Maybe, they'll even find us, and our blunders, enough to inspire them, carrying this year's legacy even further. We know we did – a special thanks goes to The Boys Daily, The State Journal and The Legion for giving us our own inspiration. Thank you again for reading. We will always be friends, brothers and *now* men.

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