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VOLUME LXVI, ISSUE II JUNE 22, 2011

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remember
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POW MIA
Petitions

I'm Winning...Governor!

Austin J. Kruger

Drifting through the halls of Rider University are rumors of delegates running for ALJBS Governor. The 65th Governor of Boy's State, Anthony Covington, has a unique opinion regarding the election process for governor.

Initially, the Governor lost the positions of flag bearer, Jefferson City Mayor, and being part of the state senate by 7 votes. After this unfortunate line of unsuccessful campaigns, Covington felt "tired, nervous, and timid" about running for Governor. Despite these hesitations, Covington ran. Governor Covington learned from his mistakes by asking all of the people who did not vote for him for pointers. Covington made it a point to say, "They gave me tips and helped me out. I listened. I finally ran." This started Covington's major campaign efforts.

Covington woke up at 5 a.m., made posters all night, and created a staff of 6 core people to work for him. He called this his "Real Support System." They traveled to different cities to gather funds. With so many people helping one person, the camaraderie Covington created ought to be noted. The Governor convinced people to sign over signatures and not run against him through making deals.

In his pursuit of leadership, Governor Covington learned the art of speech-making. The first step is to stay true to oneself. Covington noticed that "many opponents interjected humor into their speeches. After I made a really bad joke, I decided to be more of an individual. From that moment on I would go on my own ideologies and accords. Unlike my opponents who spoke about Xbox or girls, I stayed serious." Later, the Governor went on to say that both humor or being serious can help someone get elected because there is such a diverse group of people at Boys' State. So make sure you choose wisely.

Whether you are an outspoken leader or shy statesman consider running for Governor. Governor Covington will always be an inspiration for those trying to live up to his legacy. As a present staff member, Covington can be found helping many, especially from those in his party affiliation. When closing the interview Covington spoke these words... "Go Feds!"



Wednesday Schedule Highlights

8:15 A.M. Gubernatorial
Petitions Due

8:30 A.M. State Party
Conventions
Fed- Yvonne Theatre
Nat- BLC-Cavalla Room

12:30-2:00 P.M.
Gubernatorial Primary
Election - Alumni Gym

11:30 P.M. Lights Out

Forecast

Today: High-85° F
Low-70° F
60% Chance of Rain
Chance of Thunderstorms

Tonight: 70° F
60% Chance of Rain
Chance of Thunderstorms

Tomorrow: High-88° F
Low-67° F
40% Chance of Rain
Chance of Thunderstorms



Boys' State News

Landmark Bill Flies Through NJ Senate

Walter Burkat and Danny Moallem

The New Jersey Pension and Health Benefits Bill was approved by the New Jersey State Senate on Monday by a 24-15 vote. This legislation will force public employees to pay more money for their pensions and health insurance benefits. Although the support for the bill was mainly Republican, many Democrats also signed on for approval. Governor Chris Christie referred to the vote as a “watershed moment for New Jersey” and affirmed, “I’m encouraged by the bipartisan Senate vote today and the continued display of support for common sense-pension and health benefits reform...”. Senate President Stephen Sweeney was in agreement.

According to nj.com, the bill would require police and firefighters to contribute up to 10% of their salaries to benefit packages and non-uniformed workers would contribute up to 7.5%. In relation to benefits, the cost-of-living adjustments will ultimately be eliminated for current and future retirees until the pension system becomes stable, believed to occur in 2040. The current retirement age in New Jersey is 60, as opposed to the new system, in which the retirement age would be raised to 65, due to the ever-increasing lifespan of the typical American. For police officers and firefighters, the pensions will be approximately 60% of the salary at 25 years and 65% of the salary at 30 years.

Public employees would pay a certain percentage of health care premiums in a tiered system based on their salaries. As a note, current retirees would not be affected by this new legislation. In an effort to reach out to unions, the legislation allows for unions to renegotiate contribution levels, but the workers in the unions would have to adapt to the new system for the next four years. Lastly, a board would be established to create new health plans by January 1st, offering fewer benefits at lower prices. Although some may feel slighted by the proposed legislation, the bill offers many benefits to the economic welfare of the state and supports the rights of unions.

Fillmore Dam "Filibustered"

Ryan Persichilli and Nick Sun

Early Tuesday morning, residents of Fillmore found their city in a state of emergency. Around 11:30 the night before, the massive Fillmore Dam adjacent to the city sprung several large leaks. The immense Powhatan River, usually held back by the Fillmore Dam, quickly flooded the city. Citizens awoke to a surge of water coursing through the middle of the metropolis, flooding several citizens' homes, ruining many valuable possessions and eventually pooling at Main Street.

A city-wide evacuation was quickly initiated around midnight after a recall of all citizens was successful. Residents of nearby Taylor City were also evacuated due to concerns that the flood would bring deadly toxic waste into the homes of Taylor City citizens. All evacuees were transported by boat to the local Fillmore High School Gymnasium, which is situated on a hill at a level that saved the gymnasium from the disaster. There the refugees remained until the workers from UNICCO were sent to assist in patching up the dam.

Water damage was assessed by the town engineer and was deemed minimal, therefore infrastructure integrity has not been compromised. The cause of the leaks remains unknown. Local authorities speculate that it was a simple “wear-and-tear” situation and deny any accusations of mischief. Authorities are still investigating.

County Elections

Walter Burkat

As the week progressed at ALJBS, the sixteen cities of Jersey Boys State have convened to create the eight county governments that are necessary in the political hierarchy of Boys State. The eight counties-Halsey, Marshall, Nimitz, MacArthur, Ridgeway, Vandenberg, Eisenhower, and Bradley- assembled to showcase the hardworking delegates who stepped up to the plate to lead their fellow delegates to success. Some delegates stressed the importance of communication between the people and the county government while others stated that if elected, they would make sure that the citizens of the county would be heard.

After many hours of counting votes due to two mishaps (“The Political Desk can't confirm nor deny this,” said Rob Lasky), the results were announced. The Political Desk is proud to announce that cities 10, 11, 12, and 16 had 100% voter-turnout. In Halsey County for executive positions, Nationalists Sam Berzok (County Exec.), Max Burns, Nathanael Aragon (Freeholders), Matt Bearden (Sheriff) and Michael Atkinson (County Clerk) were victorious. Federalists Mitchell Benyon, Ahmed Anwar, Brandon Bellero (Freeholders) and Jose Belen (County Registrar) gained seats in Halsey County government. The delegates will now have to prove their merit in their respective positions during the course of the week.

Statesmen's Swag

Party at Rider!

Walter Burkat, Danny Moallem, and Kevin Roberts

Were you wondering what that “rave” was the other night? Or how about those girls wearing those cowboy-hats in Daly Dining Hall? Rider University has created a program, titled “Study Tours”, in which students from Europe attend the university to better understand American culture. This organization teaches the students, not only in the classroom, but also through hands-on experiences in our country. On Sunday their teachers put together a disco, misinterpreted by us statesmen as a “rave”, as well as a Western BBQ, in order to introduce American cuisine. But it doesn't stop there! Within the students' two weeks here at the university, they embark upon trips and outings to such events as Broadway shows and Central Park. Not only are they learning but they're also creating memories that will last a lifetime.

This program is not exclusively a Rider-program, but is also present in many Eastern city colleges and certain areas in the U.S. Each branch teaches American language and customs to better benefit their pupils. “...American customs help [students] learn culture, breaking the language barrier.”, revealed the Study Tours website. So don't intimidate our foreign guests for they are here to learn, just as we are.

Sports-Day 2

Adam Zielonka

The Statesmen have been competing fiercely in all sports over the last two days. After the second day of competition, it has become clear which counties are dominating. Vandenburg won first place Monday and tied for second Tuesday. Bradley went 5-1 Tuesday for a first-place victory. MacArthur is also hovering near the top of the leaderboards. Tuesday's complete rankings are posted to the right, underneath Monday's records. The Statesmen are not given cumulative rankings until after Friday's marathon, but based on what we know we can speculate on how the counties currently stand overall.



Public Speaking 101

Danny Moallem

Shane Mata, SCC for Tyler City and Dean of Sports is a self-taught public speaker. His priceless wisdom on public speaking has inspired many to take a risk and run for office here at Boys' State. Some of his tips for success in public speaking include:

Know your audience and address the right issues

Be concise

Make sure to breathe and relax

Take time and pace yourself

Mata also observed that a top reason that good speeches fail is due to lack of eye-contact. He said “I've seen countless speeches where the writing was good, but the meaning was lost because the speaker didn't look up from his paper.” During the Ridgeway County Nationalist Party meeting, the minimum amount of positions for Freeholder were filled. Although each candidate would automatically be nominated, Mata encouraged everyone to deliver a short speech to practice their speaking skills. He commented, “If you can speak in front of a bunch of high school-age guys, everything else is easy.”

Scores

Tuesday's Rankings

1 Bradley

T-2 MacArthur

T-2 Vandenburg

T-2 Marshall

5 Eisenhower

T-6 Nimitz

T-6 Halsey

8 Ridgeway

Approximated Overall Rankings

1 Vandenburg

2 Bradley

3 MacArthur

T-4 Halsey

T-4 Eisenhower

T-6 Marshall

T-6 Nimitz

8 Ridgeway

Opinion

A Different Kind of Party

Kevin Karol

The first week of Summer for many is spent celebrating the completion of an intense academic year. However, the delegates of the 66th annual ALJBS are experiencing a different kind of “partying.” Since their arrival, the delegates have managed to establish order out of the initial chaos created by the random assignment of parties. These bodies have elected leadership, established platforms, and battled tirelessly to prove their superiority over the opposing party. But what lies in store for parties as the week progresses? The answer to this question will have a profound impact on the rest of the week. Additionally, it raises questions regarding what the Boys State experience should be about. In the event that partisan politics rule the day and one of the parties sweeps the higher positions of government, some will say this echoes the harsh reality of politics while others may argue that the program should teach good citizenship and, therefore, voting for the best candidate should outweigh partisan bias.

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ASST. PUBLISHER: KEVIN CAMERON

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Boys' State Blood

Gibson Oakely

The Blood Drive is Thursday in the Bart Luedeke Center-Cavalla Room. Remember to sign up and give the gift of life - unless you're gay.

In 1983, when AIDS was running rampant, the Food and Drug Administration determined that, because men who have sex with other men are at a higher risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, gay men should not be allowed to donate blood. The law asserts that any man who has engaged in any sexual contact with another man anytime since 1977, even once, is permanently banned from giving blood. Twenty-eight years later this law is still in place, even with the new technologies that allow for quick accurate blood tests, which practically eliminate the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS through a transfusion. The government is turning away blood-donors based on sexual orientation rather than risk. This law is outdated, discriminatory, and, in a time when blood donations are sorely needed, counterproductive.

While it is true that gay men are at an increased risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, there are many other “at-risk” demographics that are not “banned-for-life” from donating blood. For example, a person who knowingly engaged in sexual acts with an HIV-positive partner of the opposite sex is only required to wait twelve months from the date of said contact before giving blood.

If the gay-blood ban is amended to replace a lifetime deferral with a twelve month-waiting period, it is estimated that 219,000 more pints of blood will be donated each year, saving over 650,000 lives according to University of California, Los Angeles researchers. If the ban is lifted entirely, the amount of donated blood will skyrocket with little increase in the risk of receiving infected blood due to new, more accurate testing methods. How can blood banks deny hundreds of thousands of pints of blood from gay men who practice safe sex with monogamous partners?

Obviously, it is essential to donate blood. However, it is also important to keep in mind that there are some who are not allowed to perform this selfless act because of old prejudices and outdated laws.