Cornhusker Boys' State
Bulletin

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Governor-Elect Noll!

Congratulations to Governor-Elect Lucas Noll of Westside High School and Omaha, Nebraska!

The People of the Valley
By: Jacob Cover

As 2025 Boys' State comes to an end, so too do things wind down for the town of Valley Forge. Counselors continue to be cautious about the social event with the Girls' Staters, reaffirming that there WILL BE a punishment if any shenanigans go down. Valley Forge passes the time in between sessions by watching Now You See Me and Now You See Me 2 on the lounge's television, and the town is consistently bonding over soft serve ice cream, sports, and discussions about the gubernatorial candidates. Valley Forge feels like family, and although much of the town's population is ready for Boys' State to end, the friends and experiences made here really will last a lifetime.

Owennn
By: Case Richardson

Throughout the week, some Alamo residents, specifically Owen Weber and Brett Woollen, have started a trend: every time they see Owen, they go, "Yoooo, Owen where have you been? I haven't seen you in forever." Owen will respond with "around." They do this very often despite seeing each other two minutes beforehand. This trend has since spread to the rest of Alamo, both in participants and targets. It has also been solidified by the "Owennnnn" city ordinance, in which every Alamo resident has to participate in the trend.

Bataan Town Report
By: Hayden Reznicek

It's hard to believe that we are on the closing stretch of our time at Corn Husker Boys State. We've all made new friends, gained new experiences, and learned so much. This week has absolutely impacted our lives in a positive way. We opened our day with the flag raising ceremony and a trip over to Hawks hall to listen to our governor elect candidates campaign and list off their policies to there nationalist and federalist parties. Afterward, we got to experience a remarkable speech from Thomas Christie and Judi M. Gaiabshkibos titled "courageous conversations about race" which made everyone question their opinions, identities, and beliefs.

Belleau Wood Floor Comradery
By: Cael Wiegert

At the June 5th floor meeting before bed the Belleau Wood boys had a lengthy conversation about boys' state and how it has changed how they view leadership and life in general. Many Belleau Woods members were surprised by the experience, seeing as they came in with very little knowledge of what they were going to learn. An overall consensus came over the group that everyone there was able to step out of their comfort zones, make new friends, and show the power of a united group of citizens.

Manila Bay Town Report
By: Brody Maurer

Last night's leadership discussion sparked wide discourse and especially on one topic: developing interpersonal connections. Today the football and basketball teams fight for championships with only Manila Bay and Belleau Wood having two 3-0 team records only heightening the excitement and anticipation. The flag commission has finally unveiled a beautiful rendition of this year's flag taking inspiration from the USS Olympia and town colors capturing the town's heritage and pride.

Meaning Behind the Flag
By: Asa Summers, Yorktown

Since the first full day of Boys' State, the Staters have been presented with many responsibilities. The days begin with waking bright and early before attending the dining hall for breakfast. Then the flag is raised during morning muster, which raises the question: what is the importance of the flag raising? Flag raising, regarding Boys' State, upholds several different core values that the organization strives to portray. It starts with patriotism, which teaches Staters a strong sense of civic duty, as well as flag etiquette. It promotes unity within the different towns and prepares Staters to respect our national symbol and the sacrifices it took to allow the flag to stand.

Raising the flag has also just been a tradition with Boys' State for decades, starting the days off strong by paying respect, and representing Americanism, especially around the anniversary of D-Day, which took place 81 years ago.

CBS Fashion Statements
By: Matthew Monnich, Yorktown

Throughout the week, staters have repurposed their t-shirts to show athletic involvement, express their campaign slogans, and even create town memorabilia that will be mentioned for years to come! For many members of the athletic program, the t-shirt sleeves were cut off and phrases were written on the back to show enthusiasm and creativity out on the desired sports venues. For campaigns, slogans and names were written on the back to catch the wandering eyes of the citizens of Boys State. One included: "Save a Penny, Vote Benny!" Much to the surprise of other towns, Belleau Wood used a discovered stick and a t-shirt that was taped together to form a town flag that has been seen at almost every event and campaign event across Boys State. It's been a true joy to see how staters have embodied the excitement and compassion for their town and campaign!

One Last Speech:
By: Christian Maurer

The day began with the gubernatorial debate. Rodney Tuttle Jr. of Alamo represented the Federalist Party and Lucas Noll of Belleau Wood represented the Nationalist Party. Governor Ruma presented the candidates to the crowd and from there the candidates gave their opening statements. After that, the news staff proceeded to ask questions to the candidates. These questions challenged each candidate's views on policies, solutions, and stance on moral issues. There was a wide range of questions that covered party policy, education, healthcare, and more. Though the candidates agreed on most questions regarding policy, there were a couple of differences. The first instance that we saw a divide was over healthcare.

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Cont. One Last Speech

When asked about tax cuts for Medicaid, Noll remarked that we should not cut Medicaid. He drew from his relationship with his mother, who is a medical researcher at Creighton University. Tuttle rebutted with the belief that we should cut prices of products from "predatory" pharmaceutical companies and also leaned more towards cutting Medicaid. Another area that the candidates chose to expand on was regarding support for Trump and issues overseas. Noll took a stance of believing that issues such as Gaza and Ukraine should be left to the Federal government and that Nebraska needs to work on fixing our own problems before we provide aid. Tuttle responded by saying that he thinks that Nebraska should follow the lead of DC and follow into the wars.

To end our session of questions, the newsletter members asked what each candidate's stance was on abortion. This topic perked the ears of many members of the crowd. However in the end the candidates found that each other stood on common ground on yet another issue. Governor Ruma then moved to closing remarks, which allowed one last chance on the big stage before the general election. Tension on the 7th and 10th floors were high as results were still underway.

The Age of Generative AI
By: Lucas Skalberg

Victor Winter, who has a PhD and is the professor of computer science at the University of Nebraska-Omaha, is self-proclaimed "obsessed with AI." He has observed and worked with tech for a long time and is very excited about this new era ushered in by generative AI chatbots: "with the arrival of generative AI, we are coming to some existing times." During his presentation he used an AI chatbot to explain what AI is and to show some of its practice applications. He explained how ChatGPT, one of the most well-known models, is getting better and better. Additionally, he showed data on those who used AI to study for AP exams compared to those who didn't. The ones who used AI scored higher.

For the rest of his workshop, he dove into history and attempted to predict a very uncertain future. To emphasize the speed at which this technology was developed, he used transitions and music to keep the audience's sole focus on the minimal number of years and months it took to develop this technology. The AI races started in 2023 with many companies making their own models. He explained that AI could have a larger impact on the world than the introduction of smartphones… and even further beyond that. Current AI models can outperform some human experts in PhD-level science questions. This brings in the idea of Average General Intelligence (AGI). AGI is the point where an AI model will be better than human experts at everything. Some experts say, with the very intense speed this technology is improving, that AGI is going to be here within 5 years. However, these predictions are very uncertain.

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The Loss of the Phillippines: The Battle of Bataan and its Infamous Death March
By: Kendall Heidemann, Belleau Wood

Bataan is a province located in the Philippines, and was a part of a most intense Japanese incursion there. This particular battle refers to the one that took place in 1942, known as the Recapture of Bataan. The battle started in January of 1942, not even a month after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The troops stationed in Bataan were severely lacking in supplies. Despite this, they still managed to hold out and fight the Japanese for 3 whole months. One of the more notable individuals who were involved in fighting was one Arthur Wermuth, a.k.a "The Lion of Bataan" or "The One Man Army of Bataan." Arthur Wermuth would sneak out and perform guerrilla-style attacks with a group of 185 Filipino snipers that were dubbed "suicide snipers". This group would rack up over 500 confirmed kills, with Arthur Wermuth being responsible for a mind -boggling 116 of them. Unfortunately, despite their best efforts, the Allied forces would lose and would be forced into what is now known as the Bataan Death March. The Death March was brutal, to put it mildly. First, the Japanese were the captors, and they viewed surrender or capture as the ultimate form of dishonor. Second, there were horrible conditions all around, leading to between 5,000 and 18,000 Filipino deaths and 500 to 600 American deaths. Third was the marching to a prisoner of war or P.O.W. camp. Bataan was later liberated during the Recapture of Bataan in 1945.

Cont. The Age of Generative AI

Winter explained that our imaginations are limited, citing that many predictions about the digital age have been wrong. Winter himself boldly claimed that with AI, software engineers' jobs will change over the next 6 months. This is because the top AI models are very good at coding. Tech growth is exponential: Moore's law states that for tech it takes 30 years for something to be 1000 times better. Nvidia has changed this in recent times to 10 years. Winter predicted that AI will be 1 million times better over the next 10 years. This tech is being spearheaded by Nvidia and its H100 chip, which is being produced in quantities in the hundreds of thousands. These chips are joined together to create super clusters of chips, which is what runs the models. These chips take a lot of energy to run, and many companies have to separate their clusters to keep the local power grids from going down. Winter ended his workshop by humorously remarking, "If you ever find a Time Machine, go back to the day generative AI started; November 30, 2022."

An Interview with Aaron Zabawa
By: Evan Zhang

Friday marks the last full day of Cornhusker Boys State. As everybody reminisces on the week, many fond memories inevitably come to all of our minds. It's been a busy week, and each of us have learned a lot from this experience. What have we learned about the people running Boys State though? Aaron Zabawa, co-chief counselor of Boys State, shares his thoughts on the program. When asked about what he loves about Boys State, he quotes, "it's a huge bucket filler for me" because of the positivity and enthusiasm shown by all of the boys. He's very proud that so many of the boys support each other and the lack of negative energy. One of the other important qualities of Boys State, he continues, is doing things in person and being able to surround yourself with people of different backgrounds. He personally says the younger generation is able to bring new ideas and it's something that people can learn from. With how long the Boys State program has been around, Zabawa adds that they place strong importance on being grounded in our past while keeping themselves fresh and new.

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Cont. An Interview with Aaron Zabawa

Boys State offers many different opportunities for its participants, and its sessions are a major part of it. When asked about how they decide these sessions, he says that it's about seeing what's relevant in today's age and having those connections, whether from Boys State or other programs, that give them the ability to host all of these unique events. Zabawa elaborates that even if they talk often about how life-changing Boys State can be, they truly want people to leave with the motivation to get involved in their community. He closes off with some truly inspiring words: today's youth is some of the most encouraging people he's met. Older generations might not understand teenagers, but it's about what we can learn from each, from both sides, that allow us to grow. Boys Staters gather around from all over the state to spend this one week here that can change us for a lifetime, so spend these last moments proud and leave with a smile.

Seeking Discomfort
By: Eli Moody, Gettysburg

On the 6th of June, J.P. Richardson, CEO of Exodus cryptocurrency wallet, shared with Boys' Staters his life experiences and struggles that got him where he is now. His message revolved on where success comes from and how to achieve it.

According to Richardson, success in life is usually found after much trial and error. His story consistently included examples of failure and hardship. Attached to this is the need for persistence. Richardson expressed that finding a good idea or opportunity takes time, and that with each failure personal growth is fostered. Such growth can equip a person with the skills to finally find success.

Richardson also covered the difficulty of finding life balance, specifically between a business and family. In his words, both require inputs to sustain, and being aware when one is struggling more than another is key.

He emphasized putting boundaries on himself to ensure that both could thrive. Most notably, Richardson focused on becoming a better person and not seeking easy contentment, but the less-travelled road of discomfort. He said this was done through hard work and a focus on the future. He expressed that life's ups and downs are natural; the greatest success comes from using those times of hardship and misfortune to lead a fulfilling life is to be prepared and to spend time on that which matters. Such requires much hard work and the maturity to learn, but this is where success is found.

Agribusiness Issues in Nebraska
By: Case Richardson, Alamo

On Friday we had a session on one of the most important topics in Nebraska, agriculture. Nebraska's number one industry in agriculture, and takes up the majority of land used and produces $30 billion in products every year. Ag is also an industry and field that affects everyone who wears clothes, lives in a house, or eats. Erik Hoegemeyer is an Assistant Professor of Agribusiness and Economics at Midland University. He also comes from a long line of farmers and people involved in agriculture.

The first main point was that there will be major changes in global population dynamics. As many know the population of the world is increasing, but it is not increasing evenly. Many rich countries such as Japan, Korea, China, and Europe have declining populations, while many African countries have increasing populations. This leads to many problems because many of the countries that are growing can not produce enough food in order to support themselves. This will cause changes in where exports of agricultural products will go. It will also change what products will be produced. One great example is pork. Countries that are declining like China, Japan, and Korea are some of the biggest consumers of pork in the world, however, those countries that are growing in Africa will consume much much less pork, primarily because they are muslim majority countries.

The second point covered was the security of global trade and ag. The vast majority of global trade is done over water and sea routes. Much of trade done on ocean routes is protected by so called blue water navies, or navies that have aircraft carriers and are capable of battle on open water. These navies have protected global trade routes for many years, but this is likely to change soon. This is due primarily due to the proliferation of drones. Many of the aircraft carriers that make up these navies are extremely expensive, and they can only carry so many missiles, and this is in conjunction with the cheapness of many drones. This will likely lead to a decrease in the importance of the blue water navies as they can so easily be destroyed.

The final point is why do we care? The big thing is that much of the industry throughout the world will change drastically. Many of the crops will change due to changing demographics, as well as where the products will go.

There will also be severe restructuring of how trade is done throughout the world. Many countries, because they have such severe issues with debt will instead of negotiating with money will negotiate with commodities.

Throwers Relay
By: Jack Aden, Gettysburg

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's…a My Little Pony figurine? Who would've thought that a simple track meet could break out into buffoonery and shenanigans so quickly? The 2025 annual Cornhusker Boys' State track meet was one for the history books. Throughout the track meet, you could hear hushed voices around the track about a last-minute event entry: The "Big Man's Relay." It looks just like a regular 4x1 relay, but the catch: the runners have more of them to love. Many Boys' State towns quickly signed up their best men for the event. But this was no regular "Fat Man's Relay" with the introduction of the "Bring Your Own Baton." Groups brought items from cowboy boots, pony figurines, and everything in between. The relay reminded us that Boys' State isn't just about politics, but it's also about embracing the absurd, running with it (literally), and making memories that'll last far longer than any stopwatch reading.