Cornhusker Boys' State
Bulletin

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Staters Tour National Guard Base

By: Matt Monnich, Yorktown and Asa Summers, Yorktown

The buses were loaded at 6:00 PM, with the hubbub of the Staters anxiously discussing the base. The bus pulled through the gates, with audible excitement as hangars and helicopters came into view. The bus departure was followed by a tour of the hangar and four different stations, each manned by a different member of the Nebraska National Guard. Staters inspected numerous carbines and assault rifles, explored the Black Hawk Helicopter of the 155th Medical Group, learned how to wield the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, M2 Browning, and the MK-19 Automatic Grenade Launcher, and ended by learning about the two different wreckers that are used by the Guard. A fun moment during the experience arose when the Boys' Staters learned how to honk the horn of the wreckers; every few minutes, you would hear the loud horn echo throughout the hangar, no matter where you stood. Ethan Ransdell sums it up best: "It was really cool to hold the guns and see the inside of the helicopters and trucks. It was also cool to learn about the National Guard and how they function." After leaving the hangar, Staters entered the central office of the base and received some water bottles with the emblem of the Nebraska National Guard and filled out some paperwork that reflected on the experience at the base. As the Boys Staters reboarded the bus to return to HSS, you could hear the disappointed groans arise as we pulled back onto the interstate and had to leave the experience behind us. As stated by Grant Kuta, "It was really cool to see the equipment they work with on a daily basis."

Adversity, Ancestry, and Afghanistan
By: Jacob Cover, Valley Forge

"Imagine yourself in a country that's been at war since 1973. What do you think that does to the young people?" This deeply troubling question is one that Robert Holbert, Immersion Seminar Coordinator for the Center for Afghanistan and Regional Studies International Programs at the University of Nebraska Omaha, proposed this morning during his seminar "Lessons from Afghanistan." Throughout the symposium, Holbert led Boys' Staters in an exploration of Afghan culture, history, and how they continue to affect the chaotic country we see today.

Afghanistan is very diverse in terms of both geography and ethnicity; Holbert explained that "all the diversity and tribal differences make democracy hard." An array of forests, deserts, and mountains makes the land of the Afghans alluring; however, because of conflicts between tribes, the opium drug trade, a long history of being exploited by foreign powers, and finally the 1973 Afghan coup, warlords and Islamic terrorist groups continue to fight for land and resources throughout Afghanistan to this day. From Afghanistan's Persian roots to its modern-day political and economic troubles, Staters had a lot to learn about what makes this disordered yet beautiful country so interesting.

Perspectives on Immigration in Nebraska
By: Case Richardson, Alamo

On Wednesday, we were treated to a session on one of the hottest topics currently in American politics: immigration. The speakers present were Jonathan Rubio, a member of The Center for Legal Immigration Assistance (CLIA), John Gage, the State Director of Americans for Prosperity, Darcy Tromanhauser, the Program Director for Immigrants & Communities at Nebraska Appleseed, and César Garciá, the Senior Community Organizer of the same organization.

They opened up the session with a presentation on how many immigrants have to give up or suppress a part of their identity and culture, such as a name that is not typical for Americans or a language, in order to fit in and assimilate to American culture. Another stressed topic was the large number of immigrants' children, who often become crutches for their parents in the form of translators. The main topics discussed during the session were the difficulties and frustrations that have arisen with the immigration system.

One of the main points was that many people who are in programs such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and those on Temporary Protected Status (TPS) have been in America long enough that they have fully assimilated into American society and have gained education, jobs, and started families in America, as well as many in DACA that have only known life in America. However, many of these people are in legal limbo, due to the other main point in the topic, which is that the immigration system is severely outdated.

The current immigration system was put best as using a landline from the 70s in today's day and age. Many of the laws and regulations that go with regulations have not been updated in nearly forty years. This has left many of those seeking to apply for residency and citizenship without a way to do so. There has also been a severe backlog on many of the cases and applicants, with some cases which were filled in the early 2000s only being processed this year. And due to recent cuts in many of the systems and agencies that deal with the cases and applications of those seeking citizenship, the problems with them are likely to continue worsening.

Alamo Town Report
By: Christian Maurer

The town of Alamo is continuing with policy and partying this week. In the Pink Pony Club members have been busy with legislative bills and election campaigns. Nevertheless they are still finding time to talk and learn how to be a better citizen and member of Alamo and Boys State each night. However, continuing tradition this year by playing Left Hand Five Stone and running laps around the floor. Keyton Reck took the floor record of 15 seconds.

UNIVERSITY FOOD!

Eli Moody, Gettysburg

UNL's Harper Dining Hall has better food than any high school. To be clear, THIS IS NOT AN OPINION, but fact. This can easily be proven by the curly fries, infinite pizza, sunflower seeds (no, really), and guaranteed desserts. The soft-serve ice cream machine must also be recognized as the only good way to get "to-go" food… as well as the reason why room and board costs so much at colleges.

The allergen-free menu is also noteworthy. Basically anything beats high school vegetarian food, but the Harper Dining Hall is even better than "basically anything." Big thanks to the cafeteria workers and the exceptional, restaurant-quality food they prepare. It's very difficult to satisfy the hunger of 300+ teenage boys… so they do a very good job.

Gettysburg Town Report
By: Jonathan Wiesenfeld

Wednesday morning and early afternoon saw business as usual in Gettysburg with a morning rendition of the national anthem. Students split up to participate in varying sessions; most Gettysburg residents opted for either the political third-parties presentation or the presentation on athlete Name, Image, and Likeness. The school board was especially lively this afternoon, discussing issues like transgender athletes and child labor. Afterwards, the city council passed a slew of ordinances that banned whistling, required citizens to hold the door open, established the Gettysburg KGB, and mandated mayor and counselor tuck-ins (and good-night kisses).

Manila Bay Town Report
By: Brody Maurer

Tuesday's visit to the National Guard Air Base prompted dual-wielding assault rifles posing for the next Call of Duty cover. The leadership talk that night focused on personal and societal issues, prompting endearing discussions about men's mental health and family issues. Manila Bay is thriving with seven candidates running in the general election and one candidate in the court interviews. Manila Bay's flag committee has been working tirelessly to create a patriotic flag incorporating their town and battle history. City Council has passed ordinances punishing late arrivals to events, talking without the special football, and counselors who forget resident names.

Let the Debates Begin
By Keston Rubeck, Manila Bay

Cornhuskers Boys' State is off to a great start. The legislature had to break into its five committees and debate a total of 96 bills. Each committee had differing numbers of bills to debate. For simplicity, they combined similar bills to save time, taking the best qualities of each to make sure everything got represented.

Each committee was able to find three priority bills and at least five secondary bills. They started the session by debating LB 78, the Nebraska Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Act, sponsored by John Gilmore (Valley Forge) in the Appropriations/Veterans/Natural Resources Committee. Speaker Aziz Allam (Gettysburg) has been making sure the Legislature moves smoothly; he wants bills that will bring a strong debate in order to bring a fun experience to Boys' State.

The legislature has many great members, and they all have great questions to ask and ideas to debate about. The Cornhusker Boys' State legislature is truly learning how the legislative system works.

All in the Name of the Belleau Wood Brotherhood
By: Cael Wiegert

The June 4th sports games, against our rivals at Alamo, came with a few extra stipulations attached. To invigorate Belleau Wood and light the fire for more wins, punishments were made during the council meeting. If the football team was to lose, they would do push-ups; likewise, the volleyball and softball teams would need to enter the talent show and sing Bruno Mars.

Bataan Town Report
By: Hayden Reznicek

Today was the first round of voting, and the candidates did not disappoint. Many set out on the campaign trail this morning, working toward their goals of attaining state and county offices. We faced setbacks with the rain, enjoyed each other's presence at the lunch table, and networked with other floors, during which everyone campaigned for themselves and others. We ended our evening with electing our "Bataan of the Day" which is a daily award we give out to someone we believe worked the hardest to better in prove the city and our brotherhood as a whole. Keep an eye out for the men in grey and don't be surprised if you're approached by a couple of them as they work toward securing positions in state, county, and governor positions.

The First Major Battle of the Revolutionary War: Bunker Hill
By: Kendall Heidemann, Belleau Wood

As the title implies, Bunker Hill was the first major battle of the American Revolutionary War. The Battle, named after Bunker Hill outside of Charlestown, Massachusetts, was fought during the Siege of Boston. Interestingly, most of the fighting took place on Breed's Hill, with Bunker Hill being the original objective of both the Colonial and British troops. Colonial troops had besieged Boston, rendering the British troops garrisoned there incapable of moving further inland. On June 13, 1775, the colonial forces got wind that the British would try to send troops from Boston to capture and control the unoccupied hills (Breed's Hill and Bunker Hill being among them).

This would grant them control over Boston Harbor, as well as granting them the high ground, and if you do not believe in the power of the high ground, just ask Anakin.

In response, the Colonial command sent a force 1,200 troops strong, and the true fighting began on June 17, 1775. After 2 unsuccessful assaults, the British achieved a pyrrhic victory on their 3rd and final assault. A pyrrhic victory is a victory that is achieved at such a high cost, that it ultimately leaves the victory in a worse state that they are left significantly worse than when they started. In simpler terms, it is a victory that makes one wonder if it was truly worth the cost.

Yorktown Town Report
By: Dierck White

They started off the morning watching the presentation of colors. After this amazing performance, the staters were able to choose between a few different sessions they could attend. The sessions included "Beyond the Two Party System," "Perspectives on Immigration in Nebraska," "Lessons from Afghanistan," and "More Than a Game: The Business of Being an Athlete in Name, Image, and Likeness." The counselors made sure that each session had kids from Yorktown; that helped to divide the group up, and it allowed diversity in each session.

The staters also had two more surprises: Bob Evnen, Nebraska Secretary of State, and Doug Peterson, former Nebraska Attorney General. They each gave about fifty-minute speeches and the staters even got to ask them questions as well. Overall the staters had a great day and they are looking forward to see what happens tomorrow.

Philosophy of Elections
By: Christian Maurer, Alamo

"Ignore Tik Tok." This one phrase got our discussion started on why elections are important with Secretary of State Bob Evnen. Secretary Evnen attended law school at the University of Southern California and later went on to be a clerk for the Nebraska Attorney General. He grabbed everybody's attention by prompting the crowd with one question, "What was the great philosophical and political breakthrough in the United States in the last quarter of the 18th century?". After going around the room for a couple of rounds of answers, there was finally a consensus.

Philosophically, we made a movement to lead ourselves rather than be led by a king. Politically, a shift was made from having a king dictate everything you own and everything you do to the luxury of self-governance. Instead of divine right and the lack of representation from peers, we get the chance to vote and have voices and opinions heard. Throughout the history of elections, Nebraska has been able to maintain its status as one of the most secure and accurate state elections in the country.

As the Secretary of State, Secretary Evnen is charged with the duty of running and supervising all elections in the state of Nebraska. In the past, there have been many scandals and faults with elections in the past. One example that Secretary Evnen used was the 1960 Presidential election. JFK and Nixon were running against each other and a Chicago Mayor manufactured votes to Kennedy's favor.

All senators and representatives participate in the elections to help ensure their states' validity; that's 535 people going over votes and confirming them! As a final thought for this article, and a quote from Secretary Evnen, "you are the bedrock of democracy."

The Importance of Public Service
By: Evan Zhang, Bataan

Today, Boys' State was treated to a special appearance by former Nebraska Attorney General Doug Peterson. He began by asking the Staters why they decided to go to Boys' State. Some might have just been told to by their teachers, but others genuinely believe that Boys' State offers them the opportunity to learn about how to get involved in their government. He then talked about how he never performed as well in academic courses and had a teacher tell him that he could do better. He was encouraged to do better, and he told the boys that they can take this lesson to heart: Never let people tell you that you aren't fit for the job. Peterson explained how he went to serve under Robert Spire for two years and then went into private practice and litigation.

Afterwards, he campaigned for Attorney General with his wife, believing that he would be able to bring something to the community after seeing so many others that were influenced by power. During his campaign, he raised a comparatively meager $155,000 compared to other candidates who had raised $600,000+. Even with this disadvantage, he wanted to make himself known, making calls to people around to let them know he was running for the Republican nominee. One of these calls reached an elderly woman of the age of 97 who did not know any of the Republican candidates and minutes later received a call from them after praying. This encouraged Peterson to keep going and eventually win. He then explained how there are three kinds of people in government: those who serve their community, those who serve their community but are influenceable and eventually lose their original vision, and those who serve their own self-interest from the start.

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Cont. The Importance of Public Service

He placed importance on the former and criticized how he's seen others who act like the latter. In the Q&A, many staters were eager to ask questions. One asked Peterson about his biggest priority as Attorney General, to which he responded that it was his work on solving the human and sex trafficking problem. When asked about why he didn't go for a third term, he responded that he never thought it was necessary for him to run for more than two, as his goals could be accomplished in just eight years. He was also asked why campaigns were so costly and what his most proud accomplishment as Attorney General was. He responded with the competitiveness of getting that ad space and staff and his efforts in the Whiteclay situation, Biden v. Nebraska, and the Google antitrust case.

As the session came to a close, all the boys gave a hearty applause to Doug Peterson. His experiences as Attorney General and his passion in his cause was clearly seen in his speech and gave a good impression on how a public service position can bring so much to a community.

Sounds of the Valley
By: John Gilmore, Valley Forge

Music has always been present in the Valley, but a collective peak has been reached. While discussing the talent show, Edwin and Boston began signing and playing the guitar; it ended with Edwin playing the chords for Viva La Vida. Then an idea came to fruition: the choir. We refer to ourselves as the Valley Forge Marching Band in one of our chants, so a vocal aspect would work well. Singing is often commonplace during down time, and the thought of all 40 members singing at once was enticing. To say the least, Valley Forge is looking to make a statement at the talent show.

Bulletin state hard at work!

The Business of Being an Athlete in a New Era
By: Lucas Skalberg, Bunker Hill

Carson Schott, the CEO of 1890 Nebraska, spoke to Boys' State about the importance of being a personable athlete and marketing yourself. Schott explained, "It's almost like a business for yourself." He dove into the idea of the new era of sports, in which professional athletes have to market for themselves and the NCAA no longer controls their likeness.

This new era of athletics has been ushered in by a series of court cases. In 2014, Ed. O'Bannon v. The NCAA established the idea that athletes are in charge of their own image. In 2021, the case NCAA v. Alston et al. established that athletes can receive items from schools that are not strictly education-based. Before this, athletes couldn't borrow transportation from schools or receive other benefits.

A current ongoing case is the 2024 House v. The NCAA, which would ensure that athletes can be given any amount of money. It would also limit universities from paying more than $20.5 million to their student athletes. It may also include roster limits on sports teams, reducing the number of 'walk-on' players. Because of this, some division one athletes may be encouraged to move to lower division schools who may have more room or money to pay for their sports programs.

Schott encouraged the Boys' State audience to advocate for themselves and create a strong social media presence as well as to network with local businesses and communities to make the most of the college athletics experience.