

# American Legion Boys' State of Kansas Staters' Union

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## A letter of eloquence from Suelter

Tyler Suelter  
GOODNOW HALL  
COORDINATOR

As a coordinator, I am honored to welcome you to the 2006 session of Kansas Boys State. A meme amongst our staff this year has been "good to great," an idea focusing on the continued improvement and refinement of our amazing program. I would like to relate this idea to your experience this week: for many, the Boys State program is an inflection point in their lives. These young

men depart from the road that they are on to a path of greatness. We hope that this week will present you with challenges that you have never faced before and, therefore, help you to grow and learn. Ultimately, we hope that we set you on the path of greatness.

As with any things in life, how much you get out of Boys State is directly correlated to how much you give to the program. Don't be afraid to run for office, push your own policies, or vote for what you believe. To get the most out of

this "week to change a lifetime" I challenge you to immerse yourself in the program and engage the other delegates, your counselors, and coordinators. Try to meet new people, with new thoughts and ideas. The friendships that you develop this week can truly last a lifetime.

In our program, just as in our commonwealth, the efforts of one person can affect the lives of all of its citizens. You are empowered to shape this simulation and the real world in any way that you want. Consider carefully

the repercussions of your ideas, and the ways in which those actions will play out in the future. Ensure that the ends and the means of your decisions are justified, and that they serve the greater good.

When you leave on Saturday, I hope that you will be motivated to participate in our own great democracy. Whether or not you pursue politics in your

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The Staters' Union apologizes for forgetting to print this article in Sunday's issue.

## Mentors, what mentors?

Riley Ross  
Harris, King  
Staters' Union

Some of you may be wondering, "Who are those people walking around in yellow polos?" Some are mentors and they are here for many reasons. The first being that most are former



staters, who then moved on to be counselors, and eventually needed a position to come back to, this position became known as mentor.

One such example is Troy Fowler who was a stater back in 1987; this will be his 20<sup>th</sup> year on staff. Now you may think, "So what has he

been doing as a mentor the last couple years?" The answer to this question may seem allusive, but there are certainly many things they do behind the scenes (or the curtain).

Mentors start their job off by preparing your counselors.

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What is your favorite part about boys' state so far?

"Meeting a lot of new people."

-Todd Sharkey-Crum, Eisenhower

"The food was really good."

-Zach Widen-Kyle, Marshall

"Meeting some new guys and planning co-op ideas."

-Elliot Silva-Janssen, Macarthur

"Sleeping during the power point."

-Matt Minnis-Wiles, Seitz

What is your least favorite part of boys' state so far?

"We can only play one sport."

Ben Swenson-Kyle, Marshall

"Lots of stress in trying to get organized."

Luke Snyder-Sullivan, Seitz

"Marching because it was hot and sweaty."

Brian Williams-Icenogle, Macarthur

"Losing the governor race."

Wesley Callahan-Aylward, Bradley

Michael Chang  
Johnson, McCarthur  
Staters' Union

As the light burst through my window yesterday morning, the first thought that ran through my head was: man, I have to go to Boys State today. Attending a camp about politics was not how I was planning to

Bar and Grill felt like my last meal before my imprisonment at politics camp.

When I arrived, the enthusiasm of the check-in counselors only barely affected my downed spirits though it seemed to pump everyone else up. Meeting the people in my wing was the first thing to

county from the opening ceremony. Maybe it was my stubborn resistance to embrace the camp finally crumbling? Maybe it was the goofy topics my fellow marchers discussed on the way back that wore away at my shell? Maybe it was the time spent in city meetings or the ridiculous speeches that my fellow Staters gave just to win a position? Whatever it was, I began to invest in my time spent at the camp and opened myself up to the group. My appointment to the Newspaper staff gave me purpose and further improved my attitude toward the camp in general.

It was almost as if I was born again. I began seeing the camp in a different light, one that was untainted by assumptions and prejudices. Finally realizing the phrase, "You get out of Boys State only what you

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spend my well-deserved and precious summer days. Not to mention the fact that I don't have the slightest interest in what goes on behind the scenes in Washington. As I sat through the long, boring ride through the plains of Kansas, I thought only of how many hours were left before I could return home. Dining at Kite's

stifle my growing feelings of not wanting to be here, but as the day progressed to marching practice, I returned to my original outlook. My feelings of geekiness reached their peak as we marched back and forth in the parking lot to the commands of our advisors.

Something happened when I returned to my

## Staters' make motion for Green Party

Dale Owen  
Newman, Patton  
Staters' Union

Daniel Huet-Vaughn and Mark Sundahl might start an uprising, but not against Boys State. Instead, their ideas could revolutionize the system. In Boys State history, and even today, everyone is assigned one of two political parties. But what happens when you don't agree with where the two assigned parties stand? According to Huet-Vaughn and Sundahl, you make a new one.

County representa-

tives from Powell, they have begun to gather followers for a new political party, the Green Party. This new party really came to life when Huet-Vaughn, during a Spigarelli city council meeting, discussed how democracy is in fact made up of multiple parties.

"Being that we are trying to replicate Democracy, is it not in fact inhibiting Democracy through set parties?" questioned Daniel.

This alternative view has already begun to gain followers from the other two parties. The Green Party professes a desire

to break away from the more formal activities offered at Boys State, and focus more on enjoyable things. After all, according to Mark, Boys State is supposed to be a fun, learning experience.

"The Green Party stands for everything that is not restrictive or abusive," exclaimed Sundahl.

Our short interview with the founders of the Green Party was interrupted by Mike Gross, a candidate running for Attorney General in Pershing County. He too spoke about how he is displeased with the two parties. He believes, "Our

parties need to return to moral stances. The people running for office say what they think their party will want to stand for, not what they will actually do once they are elected."

As soon as Huet-Vaughn began a quick speech about the Green Party, Gross immediately agreed with the idea. He soon voiced his support for this new third party.

"Right is right, and wrong is wrong. It doesn't matter what your party is," said Gross.

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## 70th Anniversary, KBS Logo Design Contest



Winning design will be published and used on coming years t-shirts

Bring entries to the drop box by the Newspaper Office.

121D, Kramer Dining Hall

All submissions become the full property of American Legion Boys' State of Kansas



# Marching on and on and on...

Carey Gabbert  
Kyle, Marshall  
Staters' Union

The cross-campus commute of the 500 boys staters on Sunday has brought about many complaints from the newly arrived delegates. Questions such as, "What is the point of marching?" have been arising. However hated this routine is by the masses, the reasons behind it are quite rational.

Since the opening of Boys State 70 years ago by the American Legion, marching to-

and-fro has been a big part of the everyday schedule. Russ Worley,

march everywhere; to the auditorium, to meals, everywhere."



an attendee of the Boys State program in 1959, recalled, "We used to

Practicing this ritual is a way of respecting the members of the legion,

that has sponsored and monitored Boys State for so long.

In addition to it being a huge tradition, marching around campus is also the most efficient way of moving all staters from point A to point B, in a fast and safe manner. First of all, it is a way of making 500 juniors into a unit of one. They move at the same constant speed, their formation is clean-cut and solid, and ultimately, no one is left out. There's a

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**SEE MICAH IN NEWS ROOM FOR AD DESIGN**



## Marching from page 4

reason why the Legion started this, and it isn't to look cool.

Another reason is that supervising 500 boys staters is an almost impossible task. There is not the means available to provide the amount of babysitters all these guys need. Moving in formation, or "boot-camp style", as some have called it, is a very competent method of monitoring this specific lot of hooligans. Without order, the crowd of teens could roam freely and most likely wreak havoc upon the campus. Keeping them in single file is the only way to fix this problem, or at least

it's the way that makes the most sense. In light of this, the staff receives as much from this march as the staters do in a way. They get an easier way to watch the boys, as well as a way to burn calories!

As the week drags on, and young bodies wear down, staters will come to realize how much of a benefit this practice is to them. It won't kill them to get out of the air conditioning and away from their TV's for a week this summer. The boys may not think it yet, but that "strenuous" march made everyday has more to offer to them than they think. Trading a march to the auditorium for a sense of pride and unity is quite a bargain to all of the delegates, they just don't see it yet.

## State gets high profile speakers

Wire Report

### Staters' Union

Manhattan—The 2006 session of the American Legion Boys State of Kansas kicked off Sunday afternoon with an opening ceremony highlighted by a speech from United States Senator Sam Brownback.

Brownback told over 450 delegates from across the state about the importance of reaching for their dreams even if the dream seemed farfetched or unattainable. His college roommate laughed at him when as they sat in front of a TV watching a debate including then senator Bob Dole and Brownback blurted out, "that's what I want to do."

"You can change the world," Brownback said as he addressed the staters, "but it's far from certain of whether you will or not."

Brownback said after his speech that he enjoys speaking at events such as Boys State because they offer a hands-on experience in civics and can stimulate those who attend the camps to shoot for big things in life. "It's a chance to really engage the young people

of Kansas," he said.

Staters got the message. "It showed that you can really do something that other people don't think you can," Scott City resident Travis Reece said.

Brownback's presence also lent credibility to the program in participants' eyes.

"Honestly I didn't know what to expect," Oberlin resident Kurt Olson said, "but [Brownback's speech] gave me a higher expectation for the week."

Boys state officials were pleased to have a guest such as Brownback present at the opening of this weeklong program. "It has been a long time since we've had as distinguished a guest," Executive Director Scott Johnson said prior to Brownback's introduction.

Boys State officials present Brownback with a clock bearing the inscription "...in appreciation: American Legion Boys State" and an adviser's polo. Brownback received a standing ovation upon both his entrance and exit.

### Stater's Union

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## Bathroom dispute puts campers on edge

Curtis Thom  
Whorley, Seitz  
Staters' Union  
Executive Editor

Upon entering one's dorm for the beginning of the 2006 Boy State year, many staters were confronted with baron conditions, and unfamiliar surroundings. Yet, several campers found a particular feature that moved them a little closer to home, an individually attached bathroom.

With such news spreading quickly amongst staters, many views have arisen

on the topic, leading to an assorted array of outlooks.

When I first arrived on campus, and was assigned my room, I was initially bummed by the fact that I had been separated from my friends. Although, my discomfort was quickly relieved by discovering my own bathroom to be shared by my roommate and I. At first, I simply thought that everyone was issued a standard bathroom, such as the one that I had inherited. Once I shared this information with my newly acquired lunch table crowd, their

anger mounted and reached a peak. Thinking to myself, I began to detect that this was actually a big deal to people, and decided to take a closer look.

"We're in the same building, why can't we receive the same accommodations," stated a disgruntled Marlett citizen, Josh Gross. Following a discussion between his associates, they finally decided that the rooms that were paired with the restrooms, came with they own set of cons.

"When you have single

bathroom," declared Isaac Clarke, "you lose the connection that you form with people when you shower with them."

This is a prime example of a valid point that is shared by the fellow members of the Goodnow housing projects.

"Another problem that I see with the connected room, is the fact that it could begin to smell pretty raunchy after a long day," cited Chris Korbe.

By the information that I gathered by talking with

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**National Fantastic Four**

Kevin Sanders

Kyle Miller

Kurt Lehner

Lee Gibbs



**"Money Man" "Miller Time" "Governator" "The General"**

**Treasurer Secretary of State Governor Attorney General**

**Vote For One, Vote For Them All**

**Super Nationalism**

Clay Phillips  
appointed official



Logan Shoup  
state treasurer



Ayo Amadi  
Governor



Eric Jones  
attorney general



Ben Bohning  
appointed official

Joseph Nogle

Wesley Callahan

Joshua Harzman



**Three names,  
Three officers,  
Three ways to a  
better tomorrow!**

**Suelter from  
page 1**

own great democracy. Whether or not you pursue politics in your future, I encourage you to participate in service to others through volunteerism. I cannot imagine a more benevolent enterprise than benefiting the lives of others. You can effect changes in ways that you may have never before imagined. I challenge you to take what you learn this week and apply it to your own school, city, county, state, and country. Share your experience with others in your school and community. Actively debate and discuss policies that you are interested in, write your elected officials, vote, run, whatever. However you decide to participate, you will be able to make things happen when you put your heart into it.

**Mentors  
from page 1**

That's not even scratching the surface; the mentors are also constantly roaming and

offering advice to your counselors. In the case that they should make a mistake (which we all know never happens) they are there to offer their experience and a possible solution by supplying information.

"Comically we're here to harass to councilors", says Troy Fowler.

Rex Gardner should be a mentor you recognize. He is the one that introduced all of us to Boys' State, just one more of the endless services your mentors provide you with.

To top all this off the mentors also provide an evaluation of the councilors at the end of the session. They try to better the next year's experience from day one.

Hopefully, the next time you run across one of those yellow polos you'll understand the amount of work that the person behind it has put in to ensure that this week runs smooth and makes it an enjoyable experience for everyone. Maybe you'll need some advice, and that's what they are here for. They want to help the person that is determined, but doesn't quite know what the next step is, or how to take it.

Gain some knowledge from their experiences, after all that's what keeps them coming back.

**Green from  
page 3**

With the added voice of Gross, the Green Party's influence could stimulate a migration of dissatisfied delegates. Could you be the next supporter of the Green Party, or will you start your own?

**Bathroom  
from page 6**

other fellow staters, this is a large issue. Although some are unhappy with their current conditions, others are quite relieved to be able to avoid the problems that are carried with the extra room.

While some might become overly violent and loud over the situation, just realize that there are others that share your pain. Whereas it might be a wonderful privilege to have such a room, there are many others that would not like to share in its glory.

All stories pertaining to Boys' State within these pages refer to a simulated society, and editorial license may have been used to report the 'facts' of such stories.

**Impressions  
from page 2**

put in." No longer was I the close-minded boy I was a mere five or six hours before. I began trying to make the most out of the experience and take advantage of the situations I was placed in, and as if a new person was born inside me, every intricate detail used here at Boys State began to make sense and carried an emotional sense of respect.

There is still a lot of time left in the camp and instead of dreading what it has to offer, I find myself wondering, with excited anticipation, what will happen in the coming days, though I still personally have no interest in what goes on behind the scenes in Washington.

**Letters to the editor  
policy**

Letters to the editor are encouraged and accepted. Letters must be signed to be considered for publication. All letters will be edited for space, grammar and legality. Letters should be taken to the Stater's Union office.