

# American Legion Boys' State of Kansas Staters Union

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## Senator Brownback takes stage for staters

**By Dean Symes**

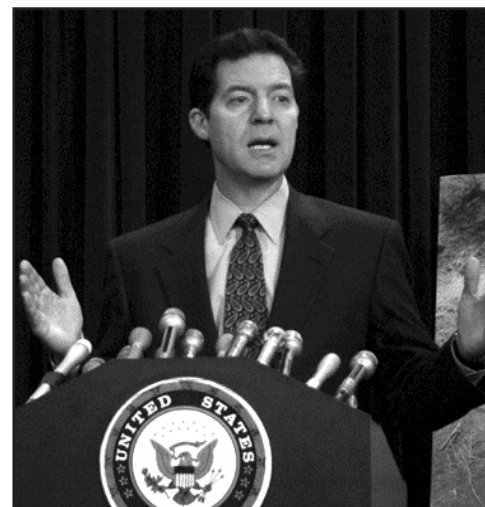
Just a short time after being ushered through the registration process, the staters will have their first of many unique experiences. Opening ceremony, an assembly which will explain many of the processes followed throughout their week spent in Manhattan, will include a special treat. Highlighting,

and filling the role as keynote speaker will be Kansas' own, Senator Sam Brownback. Brownback has spoken at State twice before, once in 1997 to the State House and Senate and again in 2000 to the State as a whole.

Born in Parker, Kansas, Brownback has spent time in both the House of Representatives

and the Senate. His first political venture was in the White House, as the Secretary of Agriculture in the First Bush Administration, becoming the youngest such Secretary in Kansas History. He was then elected to the House in 1994, then to the Senate in 1996.

Brownback



Brownback giving a speech. Courtesy of Sam Brownback.

## Johnson wishes the best of luck to staters

**By Scott Johnson**  
*Executive Director*

Welcome to Boys State. If you haven't already heard that said many times, you will. But we mean it very sincerely. Many people work throughout the year getting ready for this week, so it would be pretty disappointing if nobody shows up. So if you start to think we don't really mean it, I assure you, we truly are very glad you are here.

So now what? A lot will have happened to you by the time you read this, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. I would guess most of you will be busier in the next few days than you ever have in the past. But that's a good thing, because the "real world" (whatever that is!) is also very busy. This is great practice.

However, the fact that we tell you it's busy doesn't mean much if you don't get involved. So heed the

suggestion of your counselors to get involved; it's another well-used phrase, but it's very important. Since our schedule is so busy and the week is so short, you don't have time to sit back and say "I'll see how things go and then get involved". Trust me, if you do that, it will be too late.

Lastly, here are some personal ideas for how I think you can help enjoy your week

Get to know the

people around you, especially your roommate, your city and county counselors and as many guys as possible in your city.

Support your fellow staters, whether it's with their campaign, on a government problem or when they're on stage for the talent show. Seek out a legionnaire and ask them about their military history. Try the chocolate milk, it's great! When the week is over, if you liked it,

tell everyone; if something needs to be fixed, tell us. And be sure to thank those who helped you this week, trust me, it will mean so much to them and is one of the best "payments" we can give them.

Good luck and have a great week. If there's something any of us can do to make this a better experience for you, let us know.

Scott Johnson

# Raven gives words of wisdom

**By Rick Raven**

*State Events Coordinator*

Welcome to Boys State! Cliché intro statement out of the way, let me tell you the best I know how, what I think. I know that you have come from different areas, different beliefs, and different families - but you are here. Here you will face difficult challenges, great victories, and bitter disappointments. Such is the nature of life, and thus it is the nature of this program.

You are about to embark upon a week that I guarantee will change your life. Someone saw in you a great potential and has sent you here to help realize that. You have been given an opportunity that is unlike anything else you will ever experience. You

will make friends that will last the rest of your life. You will see the world from a different point of view. You will be able to reach levels that you may previously never have imagined! What's the catch? *Carpe Diem*. You must seize the day. You have to make the most of what is available.

Mark Twain once said that "I was seldom able to see an opportunity until it had ceased to be one." Don't let these words describe your experience. You will be given chance after chance to excel at something and to try something new. Win or lose, succeed or fail, you will be a greater person because of the experience.

Life doesn't often afford us opportunities to take a chance with limited repercussions. Take advantage of this one. Nine years

ago, I made the choice to seize the day, and my life has never been the same. I return to this program every year to offer you the same chances that I was given. I can honestly say that above all else in my life, there is nothing that I do that is more important. All I ask of you is that you take a chance, broaden your horizons, be yourself, and leave here Saturday without regrets, having made the most of the time that you have.

Rick Raven

## Sward welcomes new staters

**By Spencer Sward**

*Marlatt Coordinator*

My educational background is in the field of Social. Next May, I will graduate with a bachelor's degree in social work from Bethel College. The professional actions of all social workers are governed by the Social Work Code of Ethics. The first line of the preamble to the code of ethics states:

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well being and help

meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.

I seen in this statement are 1) enhancing human well-being, and 2) empowering people to help themselves become better. I see a great deal of connection between this and Boys State. The counselors want to

## Bley challenges staters to excell

**By Scott Bley**

*Local Events Coordinator*

Welcome to the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the American Legion Boys State of Kansas. An army of volunteers has dedicated many hours in the off-season to improving various aspects of the program so that each of you has a positive experience. The fruits of our labors will soon

be revealed during the course of this single week. In short, we are excited that you are here.

I can distinctly remember my first day of Boys State back when I was a delegate in 2000. I had a lot of feelings bottled up inside me, but excitement definitely wasn't one of them... more like uncertainty,

confusion, and fear. Many of you are probably experiencing some of those same feelings. Don't worry - you are not alone.

You may be asking yourselves the same questions I asked myself five years ago. What is Boys State? Why am I here? Is this

## Zimmers gives advice from experience

**By Mike Zimmers**  
*Program Coordinator*

Gentlemen, welcome to Boys State (I'm sure you've heard it a million times by now, but I must get mine in too). My name is Mike Zimmers and I am the Program Coordinator for the 2006 session of Boys State. I would like to commend you on your choice to come to this year's session at K-State. Not all who apply to come to Boys State make it,

so it is truly an honor for you to be selected to be a delegate. This week will be full of challenges, triumphs, failures, and in the end, moments that you will never forget. If there was only one piece of advice that I would give you, I would tell you to be active this week. Boys State is a learning-by-doing lesson on America's democratic system and you will only take away from this experience what you put into it. No matter

what position you get, become active in the discussions that take place. After all, it is your Boys State and you are responsible for taking a proactive position on decisions that run the state. You will be the city councilmen, the county commissioners, the senators and the Supreme Court justices. You will also be Governor, Secretary of State, and Commissioner of Insurance candidates. You will be the ones

making the state, so I challenge you to interact with you fellow delegates and make the best state that you can. Also, I hope that during this week you all fail at something. I hope you then get back up, dust yourself off, learn from the defeat and then go out and try again. Only then will you truly know how sweet success can be. If you get involved, you will come away from this experience as a better person. You will not

only have learned about Democracy, but you will have learned a few things about yourself. Also, you will have made memories that you will last you a life time, as well as friends in which you will never lose contact. So with that information, I wish you luck for the upcoming week. It can truly be a week that changes your life forever.

Mike Zimmers  
Program  
Coordinator

### Want to make a difference?



To celebrate Boys State's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Next Year, we're hosting a KBS Logo Design Contest

The winning design will be published, and have a chance to be on all Stater shirts in coming years!

Please bring entries to the drop box by the Newspaper Office.  
121D, Kramer Dining Hall

All submissions become the full property of American Legions Boys State of Kansas.



**Bley from  
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a conspiracy by my parents to get rid of me for a week? Did I get sent here because I failed my history class?

Unfortunately, I can't answer those questions for you. Boys State means different things to different people, and in the end, the reasons that delegates give for being here are as numerous as the delegates themselves. Regardless of why you are here, the realization is that *you are here*. Someone back home thought enough of you and your abilities to sponsor your participation in Boys State.

Now each of you is faced with a choice. What will you do with the week you have been given? A world of opportunities awaits you. You alone must choose how you will spend your week at Boys State. In the end, you will get out of the week what you put into it. Will you take an active part in the Boys State simulation and government process? Will you

work with one another to solve the problems that confront your cities and counties?

The choice is up to you. We wish you well in your decision. We wish you courage to face your fears. We wish you success for your week at Boys State.

**Sward from  
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enhance the lives of all the delegates that attend the program. This is why we all come back every year, giving up a week of our summer, volunteering our time to be a part of this program. This is why many of the advisors have dedicated 30+ years of their lives to the program – helping it grow and be the best it can be. It is my hope that all of you have the best possible experience you could have. I hope the each of you walk away from this program profoundly changed in a positive way by your experience here.

The goal of the Boys State Staff is to empower each and every one of you to become the best

leader you can be. We want to help give you the skills to become the best you can be in whatever position you are elected or appointed to. I believe that each of you have the potential to be great. Another major concept in social work is the strengths perspective. The idea behind this concept is that every individual had strengths that help them survive and thrive in their environment. All of you were selected or recommended to attend this session of Boys State because of your leadership potential. You all possess strengths that will help you be the best leader you can be.

This week will be filled with debates about all kinds of issues. Keep in mind that we are a nation of diverse people. We come from many backgrounds, and have many different perspectives.

As Maya Angelou said, "Diversity makes for a rich tapestry. We must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value, no matter

their color; equal in importance no matter their texture."

A core value of social work is a belief in the dignity and worth of each person, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or political view. As you debate, work with, and interact with other individuals this week, remember to treat each other with dignity and respect.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." (Anonymous source)

I trust you all will make everyone feel as though they have worth and dignity.

This session of Boys State is my first year as a coordinator, and I am very excited about it. I am looking forward to working with you all. I know it is going to be awesome! Good Luck, gentlemen.

Spencer Sward

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.

**Brownback  
from page 1**

attended Kansas State University and was the Student Body President. He was also the President of his class at The University of Kansas Law School while in attendance.

Brownback has never been one to lose sight of his goals and personal beliefs. Since attending K-State and KU, he has been a senator, congressman, attorney, radio broadcaster, teacher and administrator. Soon he will be able to add "three-time keynote speaker at Boys State of Kansas" to that already staggering list.

**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.