

AND THE WINNER IS ...



Claire Gwak, the Federalist Party gubernatorial candidate from Clark City, was elected as the American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State governor during Thursday's statewide general election.



John Holt (right), the Federalist Party candidate for governor from Weyer City, raises his fist in celebration as he makes his way to the stage after being announced as the next Missouri Boys State governor during the statewide election results announcement Thursday afternoon at Scheidegger Theatre.

ALA MGS 2024 will 'Walk with Gwak'

BY THE LEADER STAFF

Claire Gwak of Clark City's promise of inclusivity won over the citizens of the American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State, making Gwak the 81st governor of MGS.

Gwak describes being elected as "a little weird." Her last name is constantly being shouted by supporters of her campaign. Gwak said her election still feels unreal, and she "feels like a pseudo-celeb, a D-lister."

The citizens erupted with cheers of "Walk with Gwak!" as Gwak's name was announced from the stage. Overall, MGS has shouted nothing but love for their newly elected governor.

Gwak said in order to have an effective government, she thinks it's important to bond with her attorney general, lieutenant and especially her superintendent.

Allison Zhang of Crowder City, the newly elected attorney general, said she voted for Gwak because she "liked her campaign style."

"It was very authentic," Zhang said. "You could tell (Gwak) was being very upfront with everyone and confident with her abilities."

Gwak's campaign revolved around the inclusivity of all those who attend MGS, especially those who find themselves feeling left out. Many of her fellow citizens cited her stance on inclusivity as one of the main reasons they felt confident in voting for her.

Lailah Green of Bradley City said she voted for Gwak because she saw something in her and thinks Gwak will be an excellent governor. Green cannot wait to see Gwak achieve more inclusivity, especially for those of color and the LGBTQ+

PLEASE SEE **GWAK**, P. 5

Holt holds highest honor as governor of MBS

BY CALEB WRIGHT

RICHARDSON CITY

AND XAVIER WILSON

RICHARDSON CITY

On Thursday afternoon, the population of Missouri Boys State crammed into the maroon rows of Scheidegger Theatre, not-so-patiently awaiting the results of the statewide general election.

In the hours preceding the announcement, a particularly extroverted splinter of citizens stood before the stage, channeling snake charmer persuasion as they guided mock roller coasters and simulated waves.

As the event started and results were announced, the emcee on the afternoon — Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft — let slip, in response to Richardson City candidate Jayden Hicks' victory in the MBS treasurer race, "I think

we have someone else from Richardson City." That led many to believe Jakweli Gist, a Richardson native, was guaranteed as governor.

After winners at every other position all received their fair share of applause, one position was still yet to be announced: the governor. Nationalists, going off Ashcroft's remark, thought Gist's victory was in the bag and reclined in relief, while Federalists anxiously pushed forward.

In no time, the big win was announced. Both parties erupted, both heard what they wanted to hear — Nationalists misheard "Jak" and Federalists heard "John."

It took seconds for the look of mortification to spread across Nationalists' faces as they saw the words "John Holt" emblazoned on the projector screen above the stage.

PLEASE SEE **HOLT**, P. 4

MGS delegates discuss bills at Missouri Capitol

BY MADISON PUCKETT

CROWDER CITY

On Thursday, senators, representatives and lobbyists with this year's session of American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State traveled to Jefferson City to discuss their bills at the state Capitol.

Amongst the 32 delegates in the Senate and the 80 delegates in the House of Representatives, many of these girls had strong opinions on which causes and bills were important to them.

One example would be MGS delegate Sen. Mikayla Hammer, the creator of Bill 6 entitled "Promoting Patriotism of MGS Political Parties." This bill discussed allowing MGS delegates better access to clothing in the color of their political party and a dedicated spirit day so citizens can recognize both the Federalist and Nationalist candidates.

"I really love the fact that we are separated by political parties," Hammer said. "The healthy competition at assemblies makes me want to see more."

Whether or not the bills were accepted, rejected or still undecided, delegates remain hopeful and look forward to making a change. The Senate voted on accepting Hammer's bill and while there is still some deciding to do so, Hammer remains hopeful.

PLEASE SEE **CAPITOL**, P. 5



Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft speaks to Missouri Boys State citizens before announcing the statewide election results Thursday afternoon at Scheidegger Theatre.

Ashcroft speaks to citizens, announces election results

BY CALEB WRIGHT

RICHARDSON CITY

The Missouri Boys State general election was Thursday, and Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft was on hand to announce the results at Scheidegger Theatre.

In the top-billed race for governor, Federalist John Holt of Weyer City won the election. The rest of the slate of win-

ning candidates is as follows: Nationalist Jayden Hicks of Richardson City was elected treasurer; Nationalist Donovan Frost of Clark City was elected attorney general; Federalist Will Feng of Clark City was elected auditor; Federalist Martin Olmedo of Lewis City was elected secretary of state; and Nationalist Tarek Al Hussein of Pershing City was elected lieutenant governor.

PLEASE SEE **ASHCROFT**, P. 4

MBS Chamber honors five award winners

BY CONNER PATTERSON

BOONE CITY

AND URIAH KOESTER

LEWIS CITY

Each year, the Missouri Boys State Chamber of Commerce hosts an awards ceremony for the businesses that have achieved the most in their short time of existence.

MBS Chamber of Commerce President Sawyer Burgess said this when asked the purpose of the awards ceremony.

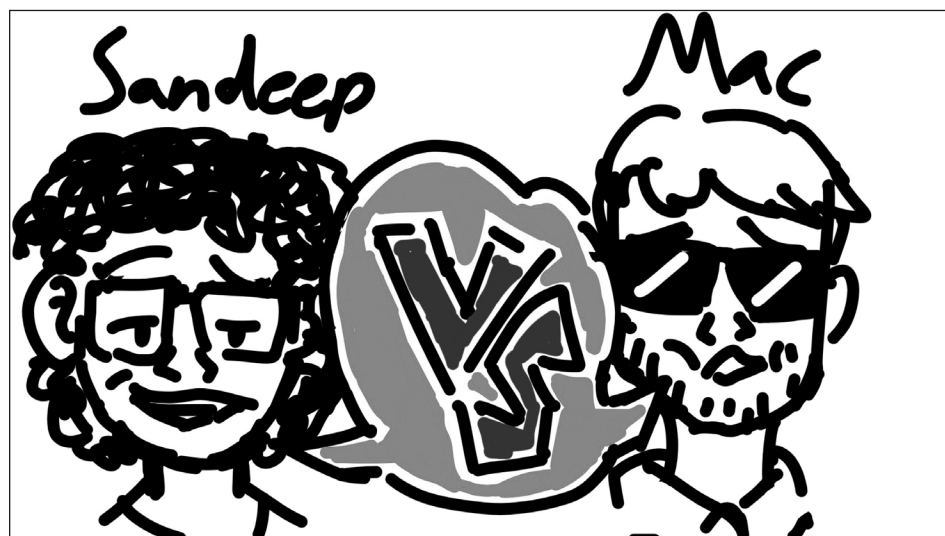
"(We're) recognizing all of our businesses that are registered with us and recognizing all of their hard work," Burgess said. "And what they've done for the economy and what they've done for the future Boys State and building that economy. We're also giving updates as to what the Chamber of Commerce is doing to all of the mayors who are attending as well, and it's just overall recognizing the businesses who are putting in the hard work and driving the economy this year."

On Thursday, the Chamber of Commerce handed out five awards:

- The Innovation Award: An award for the business with the most innovation and creativity in their business model. Logan Compton's Hot and Steamy Ironing won the award.

PLEASE SEE **CHAMBER**, P. 5

Editorials and commentary



Citizen poll: Is MBS perfect length, or does it need trimming?

BY MAC PROSSER
CROWDER CITY
AND SANDEEP MAHARJAN
CROWDER CITY

With Missouri Boys State soon coming to an end, some citizens may prefer extending the session a little longer, while others may think MBS has lasted the perfect amount of time.

Though it has been a long week for some, the majority seems to think that MBS could thrive if it lasted longer. On Thursday, *The Leader* asked the citizens of MBS if they thought the session should last longer or if it is perfect the way it is. Out of about 20 citizens interviewed, 74 percent agreed that they would prefer the session to be longer.

Many who wanted MBS to last longer commented that their daily schedules were crammed with too many activities and it is exhausting trying to keep up with their daily trials. They figured that if there were more days in the schedule, activities could be more spread out.

Michael Earnest of Pershing City noted that if there were more hours to sleep and more time for officials to do their jobs, the daily schedule would be easier to catch up with. He said that if there were more days, MBS could start a little later in the day and there would be more opportunities to have free time and get extra work done.

Zachary Gullick of Boone City mentioned that if there were more days included in the schedule, there would be more opportunities for diverse sports.

Nicholas Russel of Whitfield City was another to agree that there is not enough

time for ordinances to be passed or enough time to put things into motion once they are finally passed.

While many agreed they would like the week to be extended a few days, there were few who thought the time spent was perfect.

For example, Elias Glen Tucker of Crowder City said that having a shorter amount of time to get things done resulted in a time crunch for citizens. He feels that if this was not the case and the boys had as long as they needed, they would likely slack off and not take things as seriously.

Tallyn Henderson of Carver City commented that he and his family miss each other and he wants to get back to his job so he can make some real money rather than Boys State Bucks.

Dawson Hoagland of Crowder City said that it is a long week already and eventually, the citizens would run out of stuff to do. He felt that a week was just enough time because the first few days were perfect for getting things started and the last few days allowed for people to get things wrapped up nicely.

Crowder City Mayor Bryson Saathoff took a different approach for his answer.

"There's not enough time for city mayors to conduct their meetings and business and there is a serious lack of supplies considering we are not allowed to bring our own," Saathoff said.

He thought that eight days was plenty of time, but added that the time was not scheduled with any consideration for the time it takes for city officials and mayors to do their jobs.

Most of the citizens who did not want a longer week said they were exhausted and homesick.

Get to know the 2023 Girls State staff

College or University Sorority

Antoinette Bates – Delta Sigma Theta Inc
Anna Eitel – Kappa Alpha Theta
Sylvia Harding – Sigma Sigma Sigma
Grace Vandall – Sigma Kappa
Samara Lewis – Little Sisters of

the Gold Rose (service sorority)
Lynnea Wooten – Sigma Alpha Iota
Gwyneth Wororbec – Delta Gamma
Jackie Dunn – Alpha Gamma Delta
Marissa Nowling – Alpha Gamma Delta
Natalie Riley – Kappa Delta
Sarah Dubbert – Kappa Delta

Low taxes aren't the answer

BY KEITH RORABAUGH
CROWDER CITY

Throughout the 83rd session of Missouri Boys State, seemingly every citizen has called for low taxes, and every politician has agreed.

On paper, this sounds right. But I do not believe that it is.

Low taxes, even if leading to low government spending, sounds like a good thing. The issue is a decisive one in the real world, but MBS is not the real world — it is a simulation of it.

In this week-long simulation, are low taxes the answer? Our newly elected governor, John Holt, thinks so.

"(I stand for) low taxes, low spending," Holt said. "We've introduced legislation to help with (a smaller budget). There's going to be an opportunity for citizens to donate to the next session, the 84th session, of MBS. Additionally, we're just going to have

less money. I'm okay with that. Low taxes, less government. That means there will be less taxes and less spending."

This might sound great to some, like Boone City residents Cooper Davis and Ryland Hedges, who both said they wanted low taxes.

But when asked if they believed they could spend all their money before Saturday, they both said no. They were then asked if they would rather have leftover money at the end of the week or a larger and wealthier government. They said they would prefer a wealthier government with more citizen-oriented programs. Even if we donate all the left over money to the next session, most of us will never see its effects.

At the end of this week, I believe that citizens will wish that taxes had been higher and that there had been more citizen-oriented programs created by the government. This can only be done with high taxes.

MGS citizens bring talents to the biggest stage

BY EMERSON NORTON
BRADLEY CITY
AND MARIAM NEEB
CARVER CITY

Though the week at American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State races to the finish line, everything is still in full swing.

On Wednesday evening in Scheidegger Theatre, the MGS Talent Show was held. The attendees saw may unique and thrilling acts.

In the beginning portion of the show, citizens enjoyed performances from Elle Zinn of Clark City, Tegan Quinsenberg of Benton City, Alexandra Chandler of Compton City, Emily Boyd of Lewis City, Sonya Rodekohr of Benton City, Kate Downy of Clark City, Alieah Youngblood of Drake City, Kaitlyn Jones of Bradley City and Arianna Nunez of Anthony City.

Shortly following these ladies in the second act, Emerson Rankin of Carver City, Katie Bernicky of Clark City, Evie Miller of Broeg City, Trinity Battles of Stephens City, Noelle Porter of Carver City, Addie Jacoby of Anthony City, Ayiana Baynes of Adreon City and Gen Gordon of Covington City performed.

These talented young women brought so much energy to the stage and really got the crowd pumped up. Zinn's aerial acrobatics were a real crowd pleaser. Her talent included showing a video of her on aerial silks, due to the fact that she legally could not perform in person. Zinn said this was inspired by her dad, but she also intends to inspire girls of all ages and show them that anyone can do what they put their mind to.

Even though Zinn has been practicing her talent for seven years, she still felt the nerves Wednesday night along with many others.

"I was nervous that people weren't going to like it, and I was nervous that my act wasn't going to be what they all expected," Zinn said.

But a standing ovation made it clear that MGS citizens thought Zinn brought an insane amount of talent to the stage, even though it was all projected on a screen.

Opposing that emotion, Alieah Youngblood was excited backstage. Youngblood was aiming to give her talent "what it deserved."

"It was an incredible poem," Youngblood said wryly. "It really inspired me to choose my men well, and I hope it inspired all of you guys, too."

Youngblood had the crowd laughing and smiling the entire time she performed. The Drake City resident was inspired by her literature teacher to show everyone her interpretation of Cinderella's "real story," and she didn't disappoint.

Leading into the second act, MGS got to enjoy yet another humorous act from Noelle Porter of Carver City. She presented a humorous interpretation of the classic Shakespeare tragedy "Romeo and Juliet" and had the whole crowd laughing and truly entertained.

Porter said that she has been performing that piece specifically since October of 2022 and has performed in front of her school before. Her favorite part of humorous interpretation is getting to transition between characters and doing different mannerisms and voices.

"It's really high-energy and fun," Porter said.

Toward the end of the show, Ayiana Baynes of Adreon City presented a beautiful performance of the song "Easy on Me" by Adele. Baynes said that she was definitely nervous before going on stage, but the cheering and spirit from the crowd made her feel a little less nervous. Baynes had the crowd singing along and to be in the theater at that moment was really something spectacular.

This talent show was definitely an exciting event to kick MGS into high gear and finish the week strong, and hopefully has everyone looking forward to the final nights at MGS.

MBS & MGS LEADER

Where you get your morning news at MBS and ALA MGS.



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MBS sports hall of fame in the works

BY JOHN COOKE
CROWDER CITY

There is something interesting in the works for all the athletes here at Missouri Boys State — a sports hall of fame.

Kohn City Mayor Trevor Johnson said a hall of fame is in the process of being made, and soccer, basketball, softball and pickleball athletes will soon be eligible for nominations.

"Each mayor can submit one proposal of an athlete for each of the athletics," Johnson said. "They will be displayed in our 'Kohnference' room."

And the hall of fame will also give an opportunity for a big award called the "Kohnquerer," a \$2,500 BSB award that goes to the best athlete overall, as voted on by the mayors.

"You can submit the same person for multiple categories but you cannot put multiple people in the same category, so you can't have two softball guys but you can have the same guy for softball and soccer," Johnson clarified.

Those who want a chance at the award should talk to their mayor before the end of Schools of Instruction on Friday.

Day 4 of MBS athletics competition



THURSDAY'S RESULTS

- Soccer
 - Carnahan City def. Blair City
 - Carver City def. Boone City
- Softball
 - Richardson City def. Whitfield City
 - Weyer City def. Pershing City
- Basketball
 - Clark City def. Doniphan City
 - Crowder City def. Duggan City
- Pickleball
 - Gambrel City 15, Kohn City 5
 - Ingle City 15, Lewis City 5

CUMULATIVE SCORES GOING INTO THE DODECATHLON

- Carver City **30 points**
- Blair City, Gambrel City, Ingle City **25 points**
- Carnahan City, Clark City, Kohn City, Weyer City **20 points**
- Boone City, Crowder City, Duggan City, Lewis City, Richardson City **15 points**
- Pershing City, Whitfield City **10 points**
- Doniphan City **5 points**



Mass marriage in Whitfield City

BY STEVEN COX JR.
WHITFIELD CITY

Thursday morning in Whitfield City, the entire populace struck an agreement to be legally married to Mayor Moe Farmer.

And that's not all — in the meeting, the group came to the conclusion that a marriage of this stature and size has not yet been conducted at any point in Missouri Boys State history.

Farmer said there's one key reason for the marriage — the bonds among his city.

"The reason for getting married is not

for any sort of tax break, it's to show the entirety of Boys State that we're a family and we've built a bond that will not just last through Boys State but through our entire lives," Farmer said.

The entire city who has trusted their mayor was overjoyed and thought this would be an extremely neat idea.

The marriage will work as such: Farmer will be married to every citizen of his city in a Mormon-fashion relationship. This means that Farmer will be married to each one of the citizens, whilst every other citizen will not be married to one another.

Lewis and Richardson cities make amends

BY URIAH KOESTER
LEWIS CITY

After tensions earlier in the week between Richardson City and citizens throughout the rest of Missouri Boys State, Lewis City Mayor Brady O'Hara took a step to form a bond with the mayor of Richardson on Thursday.

O'Hara said he wanted to bring the cities together and he thought there was no better way to do that than to visit Richard-

son City itself. He said he found "love and beauty" in the city, along with lots of wonderful businesses that made him want to form a close bond with the rival city.

After a long chat with Richardson City Mayor Noah Warner, O'Hara said he finds him to be a great leader and the two mayors have declared an official friendship between the cities.

O'Hara said he loves Richardson City and is sad they ever had tensions. He added that he is very glad to have been the one to fix the relationships between the cities.

Odd law causes contention in Boone City

BY CONNER PATTERSON
BOONE CITY

Boone City recently passed — and overturned — its infamous "We Love American's And Britain's Streets" ordinance.

The law aimed to create a need for law enforcement in Boone City, which has been almost entirely crime-free during the 83rd session of Missouri Boys State.

The law, if still in effect, would make it so on even hours of the day citizens would be required to walk on the right side of the hallway, and on odd hours would be required to walk on the left side of the hall-

way. When the law was announced, it faced an incredible amount of backlash from the citizens of Boone City.

"This law is kinda bull and is only a law so our cops have something to do," one citizen said.

The law was removed by the next city meeting and replaced with the "We Love Britain's Streets" ordinance, which made it so citizens would be required to walk on the left side of the hallway at all times, else they face a \$50 BSB fine.

The author of the two ordinances, Kaden Carter, has a simple defense for his laws: "They're kind of funny, I think."



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REC

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ALA Missouri Girls State

2023 Media Pass

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Finalizing the MBS state government



The winners of the 2023 Missouri Boys State statewide election pose for a picture Thursday afternoon on the stage at Scheidegger Theatre. They are (from left): Gov. John Holt (Federalist, Weyer City); State Treasurer Jayden Hicks (Nationalist, Richardson City); Attorney General Donovan Frost (Nationalist, Clark City); State Auditor Will Feng (Federalist, Clark City); Secretary of State Martin Olmedo (Federalist, Lewis City); and Lt. Gov. Tarek Al Hussein (Nationalist, Pershing City).

Holt: Takes over for Barron as governor

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

Despite the caveat, Holt soaked in the unanimous applause of his citizenry, walking to the stage in a statesman-like manner as he reaped his reward.

On his way to the stage, Holt was met by Gist, and the two shook hands and congratulated each other on a hard-fought campaign.

Holt was sworn in immediately by Ashcroft, along with the other statewide candidates: Lt. Gov. Tarek Al Hussein, Secretary of State Martin Olmedo, Attorney General Donovan Frost, State Auditor Will Feng and Hicks as state treasurer.

Holt takes over as governor for Cooper Barron, who was elected MBS governor during last year's session.

Pictures were taken, hands were shaken and the candidates were whisked off to speak to the press.

"It's an honor and a privilege," Holt said. "I am grateful of the people of Missouri Boys State for selecting me."

On whether or not he was prepared to handle the duties of the position, Holt said, "you have to go before you are ready, I will do my very best."

Ashcroft: Had words of encouragement

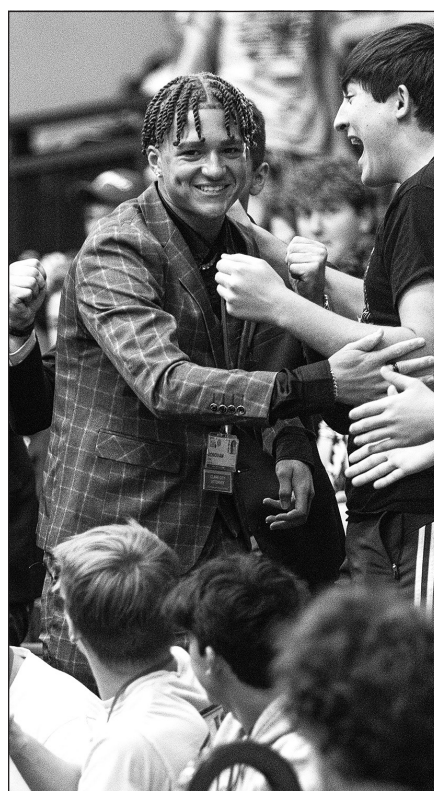
CONTINUED FROM P. 1

Citizens expressed excitement for their favorite candidates and brought an atmosphere of energy and suspense, which was only amplified by Ashcroft's charismatic hosting.

"I was energized by you all; to me this is a celebration, it is somewhat a culmination of all the work, not just this last week, but the work you all had to do so that you were selected and asked to come to Boys State," Ashcroft told *The Leader*. "I'm excited by the promise of the generation that I saw in front of me, and the changes that you can make. ... I just fed off of your energy. I mean, how could you not go into that room and get excited?"

Those who didn't win their race — and even those who lost an election earlier in the week — still have the opportunity to learn from their defeat. Ashcroft offered some words of encouragement on that front.

"(I would say) 'Thank you for running,'" Ashcroft said. "It's not fun to lose — I've done that, but I think everyone that has ideas, that puts their name forward, they help everyone else get better."



Frost hits Boys State with a winter storm

BY CALEB WRIGHT
RICHARDSON CITY

AND XAVIER WILSON
RICHARDSON CITY

Throughout the week, Missouri Boys State citizens may have been feeling cold. But instead of from the air conditioning, it's more likely to have been coming from the ice that newly elected MBS Attorney General Donovan Frost wears around his neck.

Frost was one of six statewide officials elected in the general election Thursday. Shortly after learning the results, Frost told *The*

Leader it was all part of the plan.

"I'm feeling pretty good," Frost said. "I was really nervous before I came to Boys State. I came with one thing in mind and thought of it as a business trip. I came and gave my all out there."

Citizens see Frost as a fashion icon at MBS, and as someone with a classiness they can strive for.

"I appreciate it, I pursue modeling back at home," Frost said. "I have a lot of good things and love to dress up."

Frost received a standing ovation proving that he is a favorite among the citizens of MBS.

Citizens Choice MOST LIVABLE CITY

1	WEYER.....	83 pts
2	CROWDER.....	79 pts
3	RICHARDSON.....	78 pts
4	DUGGAN.....	77 pts
5	GAMBREL.....	76 pts
6	KOHN.....	75 pts
7	CLARK.....	74 pts
8	INGLE.....	73 pts
9	WHITFIELD.....	72 pts
10	PERSHING.....	68 pts
11	LEWIS.....	67pts
12	CARNAHAN.....	64pts
13	BOONE.....	57pts
14	CARVER.....	55pts
15	BLAIR.....	51pts
16	DONIPHAN.....	35pts

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Members of the American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State House of Representatives and Senate visit the Capitol in Jefferson City to debate bills on their respective chamber's floors.

Counselors fondly recall time at MBS

BY CONNER HILL
WHITFIELD CITY

Whitfield Assistant City Counselor Noah Mosher has made it his mission to help every Missouri Boys State citizen have a good experience.

“What I like about the job is to personally ensure that every citizen inside of my city has just the same experience than I did my citizen year so many years ago,” Mosher said.

This is one out of the many people I’ve had the pleasure of meeting during my time here. For several days, I’ve been interviewing staff members and learning about their personal experiences at MBS. All of the people that I personally interviewed said that they loved their time at MBS and felt a call to serve — they wanted to give back to the program that most said “changed their lives.”

“I played football when I was in high school and that week I was going to go to football camp, but my dad said, ‘Nope, you’re going to Boys State,’” Charles Satnan, part of the Local Government team, said. “(I thought) ‘Dang it! I don’t want to,’ but when I got here it was amazing.”

As Satnan started getting used to it, he had an amazing experience. I definitely was in his shoes at first because I really didn’t want to go to MBS and felt forced to go. But I got to have “my eyes open to a whole new world” in the same way.

Before I got to MBS I wanted to be a computer programmer, but when I got to MBS I found a new interest in journalism.

Satnan is also a man “who loves to be uncomfortable.”

“You guys are fixated to your friends and to the people that are in your schools and to the people that are in your community,” he said. “You definitely get to be involved with your community, especially in your school, and it’s very comfortable. I’m one of those guys who love to be uncomfortable so when I was shoved into a city with 60 other people from all across the state and you’re told that these will be your brothers and you have to interact with them, it’s daunting at first, but I took it as kind of a challenge.”

Chinonye Omefie, an Assistant City Counselor in Kohn City, felt similarly. Omefie said as he starts to get to know more MBS citizens, he starts to relate and see himself in the people he’s looking after.

This is what Ian McHugh, a counselor for Whitfield City, said when asked if he loved his time here.

“I think love is an understatement,” McHugh said. “We say this is a week that changes a lifetime and it certainly was for me. I’d say that for me it was highlighted by the speakers and being here feeling the energy and experiencing the togetherness of my city lit a fire of service in my heart and in my soul that has brought me back on staff since.”

Even MBS Director Brad Lear agrees. Lear was a citizen at MBS in 1993 and has spent three decades on staff. He said coming from a humble background and from an environment where he never lost a school election, to lose elections at MBS was an important learning experience.

“... In another way, I never lost an election for my own school and losing an election for the first time at Boys State really taught me a lot about my ability to bounce back and taught me how to lose gracefully,” Lear said.

MBS even helped Lear spark his “love for the law” — he’s now an attorney, and said that started here at MBS.

I would like to thank to all the staff members that allowed me to interview them and give a special thanks to Austin Hornbostel. For those who don’t know, he is one of the staff members that helps with the School of Journalism and the newspaper, and he has kindled my lost love for journalism and media.

Capitol: House, Senate want to implement changes

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

“I would be very honored. I hope it all goes well,” Hammer said

The House of Representatives also had many bills brought up on the floor, such as one from Rep. Sophie Ni, who sent in a bill entitled “Plastic Not Fantastic,” a bill to raise awareness on what materials MGS citizens use and how it affects the world around them.

“It reduces plastic waste, which is something I’m very passionate about,” Ni said. “Plastic waste has a huge effect on climate change. The bill is to save our planet.”

Whether or not MGS delegates are in the Senate or the House of Representatives, they all want to make a change in common after the session.

“I would feel super excited (to see this beyond MGS),” Ni said. “It could ban the use of plastic bags in grocery stores. If we could implement this on a federal level, we could cause a huge change.”

The state of Ni’s bill is undecided, but she still remains hopeful.

Some delegates did not get the chance to share their bill on the floor of the Capitol, but still stand by the cause they believe in.

MGS delegate and Rep. Tarini Karnati is one participant who did not get the chance to share her bill at the Capitol. Her bill would include changing up the meal time procedures to make meal time more smooth.



A member of Dewitt County raises her placard in order to be recognized by the chair to speak on the current bill being debated on the Capitol floor in Jefferson City.

“One bill would be about more lunch shifts for future sessions,” Karnati said.

Even though Karnati was unable to share her bill, she stands by her beliefs.

“I think it would be good because we would have more time to eat and take a break,” she said.

“I think it would be good because we would have more time to eat and take a break,” she said.

Chamber: ‘Men Near Me’ wins Venture Capitalist

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

- The People’s Choice Award: Awarded to the business that has done the best in sales. Logan Kennedy’s Media and Adds Consulting Firm won the award.

- The Advertising Creativity Award: An award for the best advertising strategy, not necessarily just in commercials but in general posters as well. Chengle Qian’s Chen-

gle’s Photo House won the award.

- The Chamber’s Choice Award: Awarded to the business that is the most well-rounded and shows all the characteristics the Chamber of Commerce is looking for. A group of Andy’s Frozen Custard business owners — with a special thank you speech from the president of Andy’s himself — won the award.

- The Venture Capitalist Award: Award-

ed to the business that had secured the most funding from Wolverine Capital as of Wednesday. Akhil Muthyla’s “Men Near Me” campaign won the award.

To win any of these awards would mean the business owner was a prime example of leadership and hard work, Burgess said, for each award is a statement of the blood, sweat and tears it took for the business to be a success.

Gwak: City encouraged her run for MGS governor

CONTINUED FROM P. 1

community. Green recognized that MGS is working toward more inclusivity and hopes Gwak can be a major supporter in that goal.

Katherine Fournier of Bradley City said

she voted for Gwak because she said Gwak is “funny and will represent all citizens equally.”

Gwak gave praise to her city, whose encouragement helped her make the decision to run for governor and also thanked “MSA people,” stating “if you know you know.”

Also elected as statewide officials were Lt. Gov. Caroline Leonard of Broeg City, Secretary of State Katie Bernicky of Clark City, State Auditor McKelvey McDaniel of Crowder City, Attorney General Allison Zhang of Crowder City and State Treasurer Grace Edney of Pershing City.



Having a good time at the State Fair

Citizens from Missouri Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State enjoyed several games and activities on offer Thursday night during the annual State Fair at Lindenwood University’s Hunter Stadium.

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Senate and House members push for legislation for people with disabilities

AUDREY MITCHELL
CROWDER CITY

U.S. Sen. Eric Schmitt spoke with the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State and Missouri Boys State in a joint assembly on Monday. During his address, he explained his original motivation for seeking a spot in politics: his son Stephen, who was born with a rare condition that gives him health issues, made him non-verbal, and put him on the autism spectrum.

Throughout his career, Schmitt has continued to push for disability reform.

"... Autism insurance reform is a big piece. When I was still in the state Senate we created ABLE accounts, which are like 529 college savings plans for individuals with disabilities. Then when I was state treasurer we were able to implement that. As attorney general, we took on those

fighters...it's sort of a core of who I am and we're looking to team up with whoever we can to be effective," Schmitt said.

As much as Schmitt is invested in the realm of disability and exceptional education, so too is another politician currently serving in the House of Representatives for the 28th District, Jerome Barnes. He is working on a bill to improve deaf education and language. In an email interview with MGS, he talked about why this bill was important.

"I have a deaf daughter, and the deaf community asked me to file this bill," Barnes said. "The legislation will improve the language access for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (DHH) children. DHH children will be better prepared for school. This bill will identify and address language deprivation before DHH children enter school so they can be on the same track as their hearing peers."

Barnes wants to ensure that every child,

regardless of disability, has a fighting chance and an opportunity to have a better education that will prepare them for the world.

"The bill will provide parents with information about language milestones for DHH children and assessments to measure their early language acquisition in English, American Sign Language, or both. Specifically, ages 0-5 are the most critical years for brain development. The legislation will ensure every child who is DHH has a functional language for kindergarten readiness," Barnes said.

This is important work, and seeing members of the government be invested in different people and their challenges is inspiring. The new bill would be impactful and influential for the deaf community and would ensure that we as a state are closer to having equal opportunity and education for all.

A busy week in Richardson City

BY XAVIER RICE
RICHARDSON CITY

It's been a busy week in Richardson City, with some happenings humorous and others downright questionable.

One story coming from Richardson is toilet paper being thrown across a room, as citizens from another city were paid \$500 BSB by an unknown source to do the deed. Richardson citizens are hoping the suspects will be found by the end of the week.

Another story would be the city park and its renovations thanks to city members adding a desert and jungle section to the park and lights to create an atmosphere for the park.

Richardson citizens are also doing plenty of suing. Citizens have sued the mayor and each other for everything from accusations of tax evasion to failure to pay city officials. Richardson City itself has also faced five other pending lawsuits.

Boone City counselor cleared of charges in traffic case

BY KAEEL HOLLOWAY
BOONE CITY

On Wednesday, Boone City Counselor Justin Kennedy was found not guilty in municipal court for a traffic infraction, after an incident where he crossed into the wrong side of the road and was cited for the infraction.

Kennedy was accused of violating a

Boone City traffic ordinance and was issued a ticket by Chief of Police Kaiden Biehl.

The traffic ordinance violated states that on odd hours of the day, citizens must walk on the left side of the road, and on even hours they must walk on the right side. Kennedy was charged for walking on the left side of the road at 2:52 p.m.

During the trial, Kennedy claimed that

he saw a fly on the ground in his path and stepped into the left side of the road to avoid it. Under Missouri Boys State law, killing of any kind is prohibited.

"I took the lesser of two evils and violated the ordinance instead of killing the fly," Kennedy said.

A video of the violation was shown but unfortunately, due to glare created by the lights, the court was unable to see if there was or wasn't a fly in his path.

The Seven Wonders of MGS

BY GRACE SANDERS
BOONE CITY
AND MYNAH WELDON
BROEG CITY

The American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State tourism commission is hosting something called "The Seven Wonders of MGS," which is happening this week on Main Street and has a goal of showing that MGS is more than just dorms and sidewalks.

Tourism commission vice chairperson and Adreon City resident Riley Langner hopes to show more of the beauty within MGS.

"We hope to highlight some of the best parts of Missouri Girl State and show that we aren't just dorms and sidewalks. We have a lot of amazing pieces," Langner said.

The commission hopes to achieve this by collaborating with commerce leaders to create a booth on Main Street that will promote different spots around MGS.

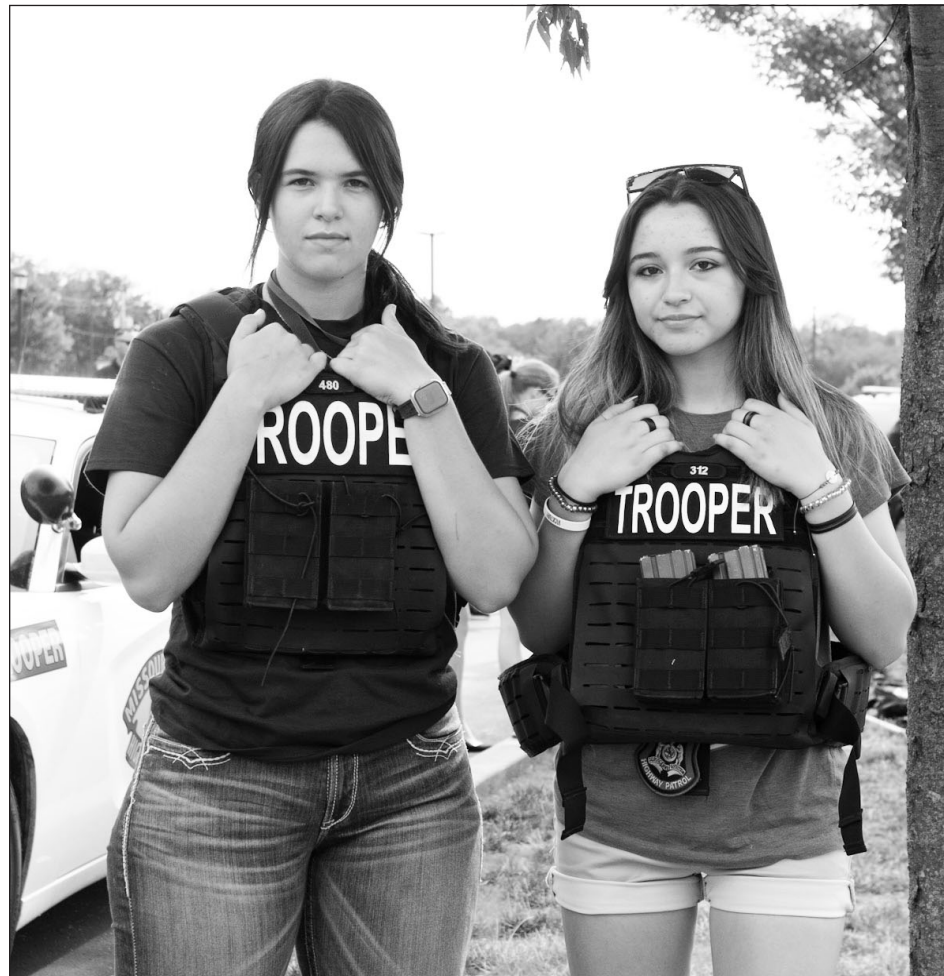
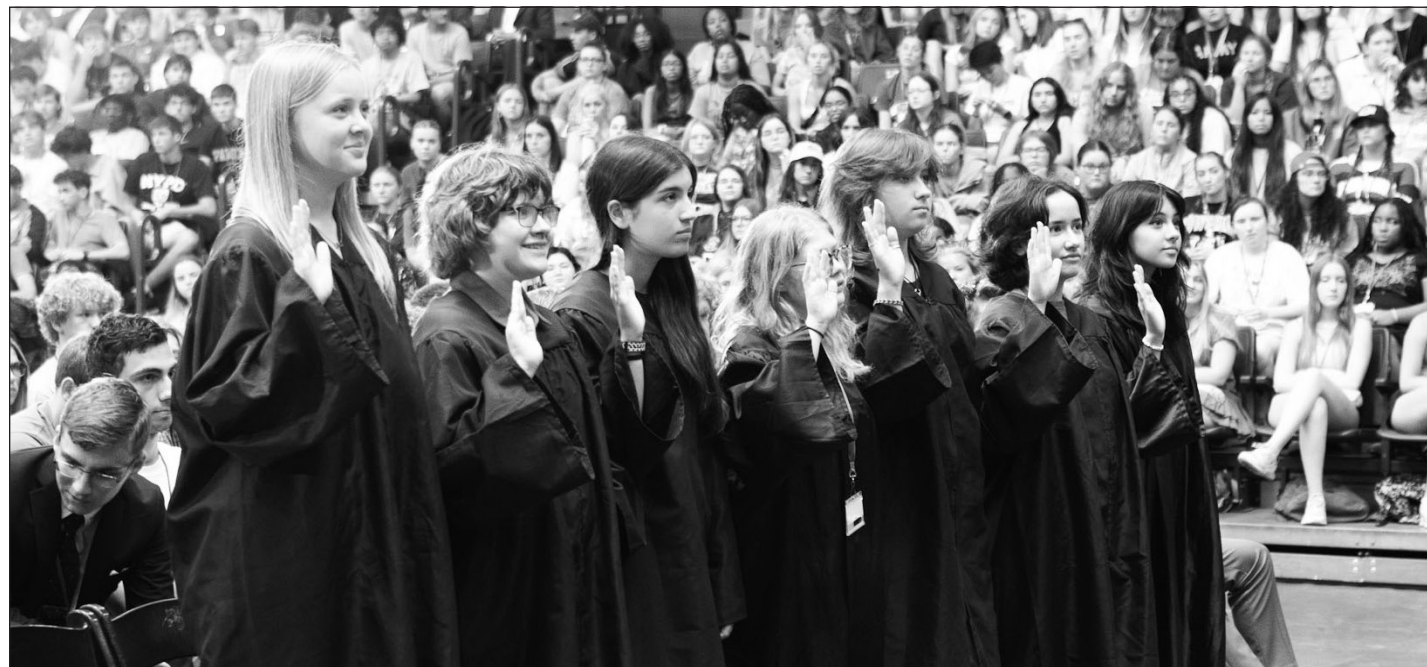
"We'll be there [on Main Street] every single day, talking to people, getting to know them and finding out what they love about Girls State," Langner said.

Tourisms' main goal is to unite the citizens of MGS by creating spots for interaction between counties

"We hope to unite all the different cities and counties by creating centralized areas like the seven wonders to just hang out and have those areas where we can all go," Langner said.

They also are holding a contest called a "selfie hunt." The citizens of each city will take pictures around MGS and tag the tourism Instagram with their name and city. The tourism commission's treasurer, Diana Lam of Stephens City, is working to provide information about this contest in the booth on Main Street.

"Whichever city has the most posts will get an award for the best interactive tourist city ... and the booth is going to be the places and information for that," Lam said.



Cleaning business has ‘maid’ bad choices, citizens claim

BY JONATHON FISH
CARNAHAN CITY
AND DANIEL HAVERSTICK
CARNAHAN CITY

Citizens in Carnahan City are stunned at the swift downfall of one local business. Those citizens say Ryan Ervin, the founder of American Maid cleaning service in Carnahan City, has made countless financial mistakes that he can't come back from. The business had promising beginnings, with Ervin putting in many hours and Boys State Bucks to achieve his dream. But before long, Carnahan citizens reported the business brings in no money and that Ervin is wasting time and resources for the city for his own gain. "I was baffled and shocked to realize that I got paid \$5 BSB per room cleaned when he was charging \$50 BSB per room; I knew I was getting screwed," said one local employee, who asked to remain anonymous. American Maid has had a total of four customers this week, one of which paid for the service just for cleaners to leave the room. Ervin allegedly has been taking

90% of total income, underpaying his two employees and leading to the demise of his business. Employees say their work is undervalued and Ervin is losing customers while the rest of the city strives to earn the Model City title. They also say the business' failure was eminent. But Ervin disagrees and claims he just needed more room to find success. "My business would have done well if we had more time here," Ervin said. He firmly believes that he had potential with his idea but lacked time, money and business partners. As of Thursday, Ervin said he doesn't know how much longer his business can last; he is on his last leg with little resources and may have to resort to terminating the business. Ervin said he is looking for anything to help his business flourish but with lack of management and motivation, it seems to be an impossible task and it's become uncertain what will become of him and his business. Both former employees have left with no thought or reason for coming back to the failing business. Some citizens in Carnahan City even believe it is the worst business in the state.



Kohn City the setting for landmark MBS court case

BY LUCAS PATTERSON
KOHN CITY

There was trouble in Kohn City Wednesday afternoon as Kohn City had its very first civil court case. This was very significant, as it was a big kickoff for a Missouri Boys State court system that had not had any action up to that point. In the case, Micah Federwitz accused Travis Snider of assault. Snider was represented by Thomas Bugala while Federwitz was represented by Eli Brakensiek. This was also a big break for both attorneys, as

it was their first case. Federwitz told the jury that Snider threw a sticker at him in an attempt to hit him. Bugala argued that the throw of the sticker was an attempt to dispose of it and that the sticker isn't capable of causing assault. Brakensiek argued that the sole attempt to strike another person is assault. After the cross examination of the evidence and some testimonies, it came to the jurors' decision. The jury came to a quick decision, finding Snider guilty of assault and fining him \$100 BSB. However, Bugala appealed the decision and plans to take his client and this case to a higher court.

The good, the bad and the in-between

BY DIONNA LYNCH
DRAKE CITY
AND LILLIAN CLYMER
BOONE CITY

Reporters with *The Leader* walked around Lindenwood University's campus Thursday asking citizens of the Missouri Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State programs about their overall experiences with each program. During this year's sessions of MGS and MBS, everybody has had a unique and different experience. Lola Hofmann from Drake City at MGS said that she enjoyed her experience at the program and was so happy that all of the citizens in Drake City have remained so close and supportive. If she could change one thing about the program for next year she said she would like to have "I voted" stickers because "it incentivizes voting like in the real world." Kael Holloway from Boone City in MBS said that he is "more here for the guest speakers and the learning experiences." Both he and Jack Dunard of Weyer City said they enjoyed Bob Costas the most out of the speakers. "Everyone around me just had really good energy when we were sitting there and listening to him," Holloway said.

Gabriel Derks said he is enjoying the law enforcement School of Instruction because that is what he wants to do for a future career and it gave an inside look to what that might entail. Riley Langner from Adreon City said that the MGS program is way more citizen-led than she expected and it's really exciting that all of the girls are taking charge. She said that the girls who don't run are always there to support their peers. One common overall theme that each girl realized about the program was the overwhelming encouragement and support felt for all their peers. Addison Beussink from Boone City in MGS noticed how supportive all the girls are of each other. "We don't feel judgment from anybody," Beussink said. When asking what individuals would change about the program, almost every MBS citizen said that they would like more transition and rest time between activities and events. Everyone that was interviewed had a great outlook on the programs and overall experience. Some even said that when they start the 2024 school year, they will definitely be encouraging their friends and peers in the year behind them at school to apply to MBS and MGS.

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Media scandal rocks Missouri Boys State

BY KARA BOLLIN
STEPHENS CITY

A shocking scandal has rocked Missouri Boys State, causing outrage among the Federalist and Nationalist political parties.

Some members of the media team, responsible for fairness and honesty, has been accused of deceitful practices that have deeply affected the program.

The scandal emerged when it was discovered that the media team intentionally misled the Federalist Party about advertising costs. They falsely claimed that rates were much higher than they actually were, potentially harming the Federalists' campaign. Additionally, they informed the Federalists that they couldn't air two ads, while secretly planning to allow the Nationalists to do so. This sparked accusations of favoritism and discrimination.

What's more surprising is that the media team didn't stop at deceiving the Federalists. They used the same dishonest tactics against the Nationalists, worsening the political divide within the MBS community. Both parties feel betrayed and manipulated, leading them to take legal action

against the entire media platform, seeking justice for this misconduct.

The consequences of this scandal have affected the entire MBS community. The Federalist Party, losing trust in the media team, has decided to boycott all media-related activities. They want to protect their campaign interests and express their lack of faith in the media's integrity.

This scandal raises important questions about transparency and fairness in media practices at MBS. Students hoped for an impartial platform to express their political beliefs, but instead, they find themselves caught up in controversy and legal battles. It reminds citizens of the significance of ethics and integrity in media, particularly in politics.

As legal proceedings unfold and the political fallout continues, the MBS community anxiously awaits answers and demands justice. The scandal has cast a shadow over what should have been an educational and inspiring experience for young future leaders, emphasizing the need for transparency, accountability and ethical behavior in all aspects of society.

Brotherly love is in the air

BY JAYENN WARFIELD
KOHNS CITY

Missouri Boys State citizens have come to enjoy the shared living experience here at MBS, with some saying they prefer the arrangements in Lindenwood University's dormitories rather than the prospect of being housed in a dorm room alone.

Some citizens have said they enjoyed the opportunity to form lasting friendships within their community and talk to people they typically would not. Citizens also expressed their enjoyment of an unusual opportunity to meet kind strangers of different backgrounds.

"I've gotten the opportunity to connect with other citizens and so far, everyone has been very

kind and welcoming, which I appreciate," Gage Tooley of Kohn City said.

As citizens at this point know, most of their peers had no clue who their fellow roommates were when introduced.

Other citizens, however, have expressed their growth in comfortability in regards to their roommates.

"It was very awkward at first but I've really grown to love my roommates," Luke Patterson of Kohn City said. "Me and my roommates have impacted each other by motivating each other to work out at night. We do push-ups and more."

Roommates here at MBS have grown to encourage, lift up, and most of all willingly impact each other in many positive ways.

Significance in the flag

BY CONNER PATTERSON
BOONE CITY

Rep. Roy Briggs of Blair City holds being a part of the Missouri Boys State color guard close to his heart.

The evening flag ceremony has been held in Harlen C. Hunter Stadium every night here at MBS and is carried out by a group of volunteers whose roles range from playing taps to folding the American and Missouri flags. Briggs is one of those volunteers.

When asked about what being in the ceremony meant to him, Briggs had this to say.

"It's about showing respect

to our country, our veterans and especially the American Legion, the people who make this whole thing possible," Briggs said.

He went on to say the flag ceremony is important because it comes from the military, where it signifies the end of the day and the beginning of nighttime activities.

"Even though we can't end our days at the flag ceremony, maintaining that tradition is still important to many Americans," Briggs said.

Briggs said he's been involved with a color guard before and finds it an enjoyable way to show respect — and, in this case, to give back to the American Legion.

State senators discuss bipartisanship



Missouri state Sens. John Rizzo (left) and Caleb Rowden (right) spoke Thursday night to a joint assembly of Missouri Boys State and American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State at Hyland Arena.

Interviewing the interviewers

BY ELLA GRACE
CRONIN CITY

The journalism crew here at American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State has worked long and hard during the past week to create stories, write, film and edit for our daily newspaper, broadcast and podcast, but what really goes on behind the scenes?

At MGS, there are a plethora of girls who take hours out of their jam-packed schedules to complete newsworthy stories in the form of writing, video and audio. The deadlines are tight, which can become a cause for stress, but they persevere and always put out the best report that they can.

Everyone's writing process is different, but the girls here all have their own specific tendencies

when it comes to gathering information. Bradley City's Emerson Dorton is a perfect example of this.

"To get the base for all of my questions, I use the who, what, where and why method," Dorton said. "Usually, I do around two to three interviews, and I feel like that gives me enough information to cover everything I need for the story."

She also went into detail about her revision process, which can be a very difficult part of writing.

"I go through double-checking my sources and listen to interviews again to make sure I have all of my information correct, and I also make sure it's grammatically correct," Dorton said.

Grace Bozarth of Cronin City has been a reporter for the MGS

broadcast during the past week. She explained the habits she likes to use when she is in work mode.

"I try to think of what other people would be interested in, if it's going to make people laugh, or if it's going to be a big hit," she said.

Bozarth said when coming up with pitch ideas, she tries to think of what will get people's attention to get the ideas flowing.

One crucial part of being a broadcaster is making sure people are comfortable when interviewing. However, Bozarth seems to have no problem with that.

"I always introduce myself and start conversations, I tell them what to kind of expect without telling them the questions so that I can get an accurate response," Bozarth said.

Closing it out at ALA MGS

BY IRIS ALVAREZ
CROWDER CITY

As this week at American Legion Auxiliary Missouri Girls State comes to a close, emotions are running high for citizens. Despite the fact that most girls and staff are ready to go back to their homes, lifelong bonds have been formed and excitement is still in the air.

From day one, delegates and candidates have been eagerly awaiting events like the State Fair, the trip to the Missouri state capital in Jefferson City, Talent Show and the announcement of statewide positions.

"I enjoyed making lifelong friendships here and the many opportunities we have been

exposed to at MGS," one MGS citizen said.

But unfortunately, not all girls feel quite as positively about MGS. Some are feeling sadness from missing their family and friends while others never really found their "groove" in the program.

"Coming into ALA MGS, I wasn't necessarily excited. My older sister had attended years prior and enjoyed it so my family strongly encouraged me to come as well," Highley Debert said. "Being here now, I'm loving the people I've met. However, I feel as if elections and running for positions is just something I'm not interested in."

Whether delegates enjoyed their experience at ALA MGS or not, every single person

has matured in their own way. There are lessons to be learned through all experiences: losing an election, making new friends, feeling uncomfortable, being called on in class, sharing a room, writing a bill, respectfully disagreeing with someone and more.

"Time management was something that I learned this week, finding time to make all of the meetings and also finding time to decompress and relax," Sophia Peters said.

Many other girls might say the same as Peters, as the busy schedule has been a stress point for everyone. MGS citizens should continue to enjoy every bit of the process for growth this week and end with lifted spirits.

Richardson City beautification efforts yield high quality results

BY BENJAMIN TUCKER
RICHARDSON CITY

Richardson City has been working to finish several projects to improve the city's decorations.

By Thursday afternoon, the city park reached completion, stop signs and street signs were

added, a road was taped out and a quote was written onto the walls.

The Richardson City Park was completed by Gabriel Baker, Aiden Wilson, Trevor Richards and several others. The completed design, featuring a river with a wooded area on one side and a desert area on the other, features a bridge and a model pyramid.

Lt. Col. Dan Rooney motto, "Dark visor down," has been adapted by Richardson as a city motto. As such, today it was written in construction paper onto the wall of their City Hall.

As the end of the week nears, beautification efforts will begin wrapping up in other cities.

MGS SELFIE HUNT
Entries Due Friday at 1pm

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Ben Tucker's Cat

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