

The Boys State Dispatch

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Rooster and Breiner - An Eternal Friendship

Jaden Barnes - Gravelly City

Roger Caras once said, “Dogs are not our whole lives, but they make our lives whole.” Dogs are one of the world’s most precious creatures. They constantly show their love for us by having a sense of liveliness and joy whenever we simply walk through the door. Rooster is but one example of how dogs show their affection for their owners.

Chuck Breiner is a counselor for Gravelly City at Boys State and Rooster’s owner. This is the story of how they built the eternal friendship they now have:

Rooster’s story started in an abusive family. He was often neglected by the people he loved most and was never cared for in the way he truly deserved. A nearby citizen, observing the treatment, decided to give Rooster another shot at life. Her name was Alexis Worley.

Alexis started to treat Rooster to the life that he has been yearning for. Rooster began to get exercise, the proper nutrition, and the attention that any dog should get from their owners. Sadly, due to scheduling issues and work, Alexis was unable to

provide the best life for Rooster. Not wanting to see Rooster be neglected again, she offered him her last hope: Chuck



Breiner, her grandfather.

Mr. Breiner took Rooster in and brought him to Boys State as a service dog. Rooster is the first ever mascot for a city in VA Boys State history. Now, Rooster has been bringing joy and happiness to the staff, members, and those even outside of Gravelly. We’ll have to see how much more Rooster impacts Boys State in the future. What I do know is that the friendship between Mr. Breiner and Rooster is an eternal friendship.

Collin Lee: Profile

Maleeq Jennings - Washington City

Lee is a former citizen of Washington city of Boys State and also a citizen of The League Nation of 2017. He is now the media coordinator of Boys State

and has been returning for six years. Lee expresses that Boys State has had a really big impact on his life and came back because he felt Boys State and Nation put a lot of time and money in his success and looks forward to coming back every year. Lee admits it is the highlight of his summer because it gives him the chance to see and shape the minds of the future. It also gives him an idea of what people are informed and not informed about and makes it Boys State's mission to inform the future minds about the commonwealth. The biggest difference between now and the time Lee went is the amount of students attended which was eight hundred plus. The decline of students was due to COVID. But the numbers are slowly but surely rising once again. The only changes Lee would like to see is the modernization of the Boys State program. Which is why he encourages past attendees to come back and counsel. But there are also key parts of the program that he thinks should not be changed. Lee is very grateful to Boys State and Nation because they paid a way for him to attend and it helped him get multiple scholarship offers from different colleges. It also helped him because he did not have the best grades due to working at the Virginia Journal Assembly. And with Boys State and Nations on his

resume, Lee was able to get into the University of Miami which Lee graduated from with a degree in marketing and a major in entrepreneurship. Lee began to work as a marketer for a brand new start up and was quickly promoted and now is the product manager. Lee decided to become the media coordinator because he wants to share the story of Boys State with others who can not go or do not have the chance to go. He wants to show the impact it makes on people. "Until you come and live it, it's hard for you to understand what it is and what it's about," expressed Lee.

The Importance of Honorguard

Patriotic Pal - America City

Most people have seen them before, maybe in parades or at important national ceremonies. Typically, four or five individuals in uniform, holding the flags and rifles. Each acting together with precision and unity.

This is Honorguard: a group of trained individuals appointed to render honors by presenting, displaying, and accompanying the National Ensign in ceremonial events.

Boys State has its own Honorguard; all citizens who make up the Honorguard are JROTC cadets.

You will see them at the flag raising and lowering ceremonies in the morning and evening. The center of the guard is the American Flag. To the commander's left is the state flag, and on either end of the Honorguard are two riflemen symbolically protecting the flags.

So next time you attend our flag raising or lowering ceremony, look out for Honorguard, paying respect to our national emblem.

Jake's Jambalaya: Vol. 4

Jake Janus - MacArthur City

A tornado abruptly arrived in Radford, a swirling, whirling tornado. The citizens lay asleep in their firm and unsupportive mattresses. The tornado woke all those trying to catch their insufficient slumber — it howled, whistled and groaned — beckoning to everything in its path to join the billowing and churning twister, pulling all its obstacles in. This tornado, however, was actually just a toilet within a Boys State dorm. These particular toilets are notorious for rousing the drowsy citizens upon being flushed by a dorm mate. The toilets appear to be able to suck just about anything sent their way with gusto, which leads to their resemblance to tornadoes. The toilets

themselves have been in very high demand. The food is likely to blame.

Here we are again, breakfast, so far the most consistently passable meal. Breakfast consisted of scrambled eggs (again, seasoning was something of fiction), french toast, hash browns, corned beef hash and biscuits. There is also an increasingly popular alternative in that of the cereal bar — due to the fact that it is slightly kinder to the bowels. The breakfast was relatively standard, but a new form of spud climbed to the top in today's breakfast. "The hash browns are the best potatoes I've had all week," stated MacArthur resident Jeremy McInerney. The corned beef hash went unwanted, and the biscuits were respected. There is a niche of avid biscuit consumers



among the citizens, which was made apparent through the steady need for refills. "The biscuits smack," noted

Gravely resident James Russo in a satisfied tone. Breakfast did its job, it fed the

ravenous, voracious mouths of almost 500 hungry hippos. Lunch — took things up a notch — a few notches.

Fried chicken sandwiches... Fried chicken sandwiches... a staple of American cuisine, an unfailing symbolism of America's knack for creating fattening, yet oh so appetizing dishes. Lunch was a well-rounded meal, but the sandwiches topped the charts, skyrocketing to food fame and swift stardom. "With each bite I took, my depression was cured a little bit, but not much," stated Burke resident JP Janus. "I'm still sleep deprived and mentally fatigued." The other lunch 'delicacies' were broccoli mac 'n' cheese, french fries and a subpar steamed squash. The mac was adequate and some thought it was even better than the previous day's plain mac. "The 'broc' mac was better than the mac yesterday," mentioned Patton resident Caleb Dodd. "Today's food tasted like food." The cookies also made some double-edged appearances, they were well-loved from a taste standpoint, but the byproducts of consumption may be slightly negative. "Despite the delectability of the double chocolate chip cookie, my toilet is going to be double chocolate tonight," claimed JP Janus of the 'bathroom bop' he was soon to endure. There have been many other

complaints in the direction of the food's effects on citizens' digestive destinies. "I had a bowel blast," noted Washington resident Edgardo Gonzales. Another citizen, James resident John Talton, noted of a previous meal, "I paid the price for the Spanish rice."

'Dinner: The Digestive Disaster' was an unwanted sequel to the movies 'Lunch: A Toilet Terror' and 'Breakfast: A Lavatory Landslide'... stomachs of many citizens could be equated to a knot, a jumbled, messy knot. The knot was like a python, slithering around its prey, tying itself into a confused and unsolvable puzzle. Dinner's menu included the Boys State staple of squash, chicken parm and penne pasta. "Squash isn't it," noted MacArthur resident Connor Madison of the lifeless, limp and wilted yellow veg. Another citizen, Henry Koerner of Puller, stated, "Pasta hit". The chicken parm was awarded minimal praise due to its unbreaded and potentially half-raw chicken. "The chicken was possibly undercooked," noticed McInerney.

This food fiesta is over for today, but only time will tell what the cafeteria will bring, to both mouths and poor little tummies.

Nelson Smith: Making a Change

Colin Miller - Puller City

At the second Instructional Section of the day, Boys State attendees were greeted by the notable Nelson Smith. Smith has a background in many different fields, going from military service to hospital CEO to mental health and youth resources advocate. Smith shared a heartfelt story about his damaged mental health coming out of the military, and how he had to learn how to open up and heal emotionally with the support of others. Smith used his own mental health journey and applied the methodology he used to support the youth of Virginia, focusing his time on working with organizations that would provide better and more accessible mental health resources to students.

The specific organization that Smith was promoting was the Right Help, Right Time program centered around the 988 crisis hotline. The hotline and program are both fairly new. The hotline is currently expanding through setting up relief facilities in areas of need to provide a safe space for children and teens in hostile home environments. The crisis hotline also offers a person to talk to, on the phone or in person. This isn't just a person though, it's a professionally trained counselor with the

ability to help others work through a mental health issue. The Right Help, Right Time campaign involves implementing the 988 crisis hotline mission across the state of Virginia and promoting within schools. Smith linked poor mental health conditions to high suicide rates and drug usage, which solidified the need for the program he advocated for.

Smith's speech resonated strongly with the Boys State attendees. After a standing applause, many used the question time to commend the efforts of Smith. Noah Petras, who told Smith that he was inspired to start a mental health awareness organization at his school, said "The importance of awareness in all schools runs deep. Public, private, boarding, and anything else, all kids suffer from mental health issues and these talks from Smith go a long way in helping." Nelson Smith was the first speaker to talk about mental health issues in Virginia's youth, and the Boys State program is thankful to have hosted him.

James Kim: Profile

Alexander Owen - Marshall City

Coming out of Patton city, James Kim was initially thought to be the underdog candidate for the federalist nomination of Governor. However, with clever political

negotiation and a platform based on improvement and equality, Kim was able to secure the federalist nomination for Governor. "The path I tried to take was the most honest route I can go. I believe in honesty. I feel like other candidates' kind of broken promises are very bad, so my whole campaign was, "I'm running, for what you see, is what you hear from me, is what you see in person is what you will get as a governor."

Kim plans to specifically focus on boys' state and reform how it is run. He elaborated "free time, where if you want to play sports, you can play sports if you want to go to sleep, you can sleep." Continuing he mentioned several issues he is passionate about such as "Flag book reform" and "seminar choice". James Kim additionally expressed his concern for better education and equality between counties.

"I feel like first of all, if you are able to make a system of education where we can teach them how to be connected back into the society where we can teach them the second language, we can teach them how the government works," said Kim. "then they will have a better opportunity to achieve success where they've achieved the same equal opportunities that we all have, and so that's what I'm pushing for is that our

funding can often be the same, all education to be the same because definitely like in my county, Loudoun County, Fairfax County is what I see. They are only like 20 minutes apart, but if you compare that on county, they are the second. Basically their second or third richest county in the United States. Fairfax is for federalism United States, but if you see a difference, Loudoun County gets a high education than general that then Fairfax County students. This gives them a higher chance of making to the higher colleges because they already have so much knowledge about what they're going to be learning. That is not fair." Lastly, James Kim concluded with "I hope people see and believe in my vision tomorrow."

Jonathan Bernard: Profile

Edgardo Bernard - Washington City

Jonathan Bernard from Marshall city is a governor nominee for the Nationalist party whose campaign prides itself on its focus on being for the people.

His platform consists of allowing the present members of the Boy's State program to have a full review of the flag book and giving the Boys of Boys State a voice for change. Bernard has a drive for creating a more cohesive Boys State atmosphere by

“building bridges” between peoples differing ideals. He strives to create a more united group of young men in the program amongst all the divisions.

“First I think people should vote for who they think fits their values the best and, and things like that,” said Bernard.

”I think personally what I'm trying to bring to the table is my striving to be a bridge builder. I'm striving to kind of bridge these divides and bring us together as a voice state and just create a more cohesive atmosphere.”

Dawson Moody: Profile

Gavin Jarvis - Eisenhower

Dawson Moody is the Lieutenant Governor nominee for the federalist party. Utilizing his first speech on the need for better toilet paper to win the hearts of nationalists.

“My Boys State Experience has been very helpful in developing stronger leadership skills.” said Moody

Moody focuses his main principle of his campaign on the quality of life of Boys State.

He believes that the separation of his opponent is based on his care for the smaller, simpler things that affect the common people of Boy's State.”

Luke Pelletier: Profile

James Kennedy - Nimitz

Luke Pelletier is the Federalist candidate for the Lieutenant Governor position, coming from Nimitz City. He wants to fix Boys State by reforming the schedule and organization of electives and sports. He wants to give citizens the opportunity to play a sport *and* take an elective, not just one or the other. Pelletier is also passionate about increasing opportunities for higher learning, activities within the community and internships at disadvantaged schools in Virginia. By doing this, Pelletier will be able



to structure a more equal and fair Virginia education system.

According to Pelletier, “I aim at being a personable candidate and being a voice of the people.” By reforming Virginia’s

education system, Pelletier will be able to become that ‘voice of the people’, creating a more equal Virginia for all.

Trevor Darr: Profile

Joshua Davidson - Burke City

Trevor Darr is running for the position of Attorney General under the Nationalist Party nomination. The Boys State Dispatch had the opportunity to interview him on his positions and viewpoints. When asked about what his plan was if he became Attorney General, he mainly focused on upholding the integrity of the constitution.

He wants to defend Boys States' freedom and liberties and defend the constitution from ignorance. He said that since day two, he has been set on the position, and has appreciated the added education that the Boys State program has provided not only to him, but to all participants in their understanding of politics. He also added that he has been focused on gaining the support of those around him through honesty instead of lies. "My campaign is only designed for the people, and of that you can be assured," said Darr

Zach Wagner: Profile

Joshua Davidson - Burke City

Zach Wagner is a citizen of MacArthur City, and is running for the position of Attorney General under the Federalist Party nomination.

He mainly focuses on his backing of the eventual governor, saying that he will support the governor and his positions, but

also commented on him wanting to push some of his own ideas through. One such position surrounded mental health;

"I know that there was a mental health bill passed in the Senate. I understand that there's a huge problem with that in Virginia with a lack of mental health care. I know that 93 Out of the 133 localities in Virginia lack adequate access to mental health care," said Wagner. "I think we need to support that more." He also commented on his honesty, saying that he would be speaking from the heart and not making any alliances that go against his word

Art Spotlight

-A Polar Bear in a Blizzard

College Day Registered Schools

- Belmont Abbey College
- Bluefield State University
- Bridgewater College
- Bryant University
- Catholic University of America
- Chowan University
- Christopher Newport University
- Concord University
- East Carolina University
- East Tennessee State University
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- Emory & Henry College
- Fairmont State University
- Geneva College
- Glenville State College
- Hampden-Sydney College
- Hood College
- James Madison University
- Johns Hopkins University
- Liberty University
- Longwood University
- Marshall University
- Mary Baldwin University
- Marymount University
- Old Dominion University
- Radford University
- Randolph College
- Randolph Macon College
- Regent University
- Roanoke College
- Shenandoah University
- University of South Carolina
- U.S. Merchant Marine Academy
- U.S. Military Academy at West Point
- U.S. Naval Academy
- University of Alabama
- University of Lynchburg
- University of Mississippi (Ole Miss)
- University of Richmond
- University of Virginia
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Virginia Military Institute
- Virginia State Police
- Virginia Tech
- Virginia Tech Army ROTC (VT Corps of Cadets)
- Virginia Wesleyan University
- West Liberty University
- West Virginia University
- York College of Pennsylvania