

THE OBSERVER

Governor Cajindos signs first bill

KATE SULLIVAN

On Saturday, the first bill was signed by newly-elected Governor Justin Cajindos. The bill, HB-O-25, from Mt. Vernon DuQuoin, pertained to the voting age during primary and general elections.

Under the new law, persons who are seventeen during the primary elections but will be eighteen years old during the general elections will have the right to vote in the primaries.

Governor Cajindos said, "I support this bill because voter participation is extremely low in both Illinois as well as our country as a whole. By allowing people under eighteen to vote in the primary, people would be encouraged to participate in government. I am

proud that this is the first bill that I have signed."

The bill group, Kandace Hagston, Jill Freeman, Marshall Davis, and Emily Cooper were very excited to sponsor the first bill signed by the governor.

"I think that it is very important that people this age could have the chance to vote in the primaries and get more involved in the process," said Hagston. "It seemed like everyone here was positive about the bill because it would benefit people our age."

The group attributed the success to the bill's format and content. Hagston said, "It was very cut and dry, so the bill was easily understood."

Everyone in the group was very excited about the bill's passage.

"After participating in the program for three years, it finally paid off," Hagston said.



Photo by Christen Gates

Scandal erupts in Governor's office

LISA BIERNAT and KRISTIN ROHRBECK

"Not everyone in politics gets along," said Lieutenant Governor Janine Fricano. This could prove to be one of the largest controversies in Y&G 2003.

As of noon Saturday, newly elected Governor Justin Cajindos has done little to convince other elected officials of his competence.

"He alienates...the main goal of Y&G is to unite all the schools and branches of government. He only has his school as executive council members," said Fricano. "I feel it would benefit all to have everyone's points of view-maybe from North and South rather than his best friends."

In defense, Fricano went on to say, "I fully support Cajindos as Governor if he upholds the ideals of his speech."

Supreme Court Chief Justice Erin Wilson had the

same view as the Lieutenant Governor.

"I don't feel Cajindos is completely fulfilling his duties. I supported Eric England's campaign and his ideas because I didn't fully know Justin's. Justin made it clear that he would involve England if elected, and he has not done this as of yet (as of 1:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon)," said Wilson.

"I feel he's very qualified, but an important part of being an official is fulfilling your promises. Don't make them (promises) if you can't stick to them," said Wilson. "He is doing a good job, but it's not right for him to say so much about adding England, then not fulfilling this."

(Continued on Page 2)

Special committee bill supports war on Iraq

SAMANTHA KLEIN and KARLY KUPFERBERG

As avid participants in the government, members of Y&G are composing bills that both advocate and oppose the declaration of war on Iraq.

Lobbyist Kenneth Baker from Heritage Naperville Central compiled a special committee bill supporting a war in Iraq.

"Saddam is the root of all evil," Baker said. "He's threatened neighbors, used chemical and biological weapons, and showed utmost disrespect to the world's community. The U.N. should go there and remove Saddam from power."

The bill searched the United Nation's influence thus far. The U.N. tried to settle the matter diplomatically, but failed. Additionally, there have been 17 UN resolutions, but Hussein hasn't complied with any yet.

An informal survey among Y&G participants regarding the war showed results portraying conflicting feelings.

"Saddam Hussein is not fit to be dictating a Middle Eastern country. He shouldn't be dictating period, but he's crazy so it makes the situation even worse," said Harper Essensfeld, lobbyist from Heritage Waubonsie Valley. "He has ignored the UN sanctions for 12 years, and I think it's time to end the terrorization of the Iraqi people and the threat he continues to pose to the surrounding

countries."

Jim Smolevitz, attorney from McGaw Evanston, said, "I agree that Saddam Hussein needs to be removed from power, but dropping bombs on innocent Iraqis, the ones we're supposedly trying to help, isn't going to do anything."

"The war can go both ways," said Adam Beaty, Clerk of the Blue House from Heritage Neuqua Valley. "We have the evidence that Saddam has weapons and it's honestly better to see what's going on with as little evidence as possible. It is our duty to protect our country, and if Saddam has these weapons and ends up using them, what country is there to defend?"

As an informed citizen of the U.S., representative Amanda Carlson from McGaw Evanston said, "I feel like there hasn't been enough proof to the American public to justify a war against Iraq. Plus, it's the true US citizens who will be fighting in the war."

"Saddam is the root of all evil." - Lobbyist Kenneth Baker, Heritage Naperville Central

Interested in judicial happenings? See page 8 for the inside scoop.

Controversy lives on in Y&G

**Continued from Page 1*

Speaker of the House Philip Storm said, "The governor should include people from all ends of the state...we all have different ideas and environments. We can all learn from each other."

When asked to respond to the allegations, Governor Cajindos said, "The governor is allotted only four people as his council, people whom you want to know well. One of my pages is from another school, and I think executive boards and councils slow down my process and create a barrier."

"I have made sure the lieutenant governor sits in on meetings and handles meetings, as well as supported all the bills I have said I would," said Governor Cajindos. "Also, I still plan on meeting with Eric England later on today, when our schedules match."

"We can all learn from each other."

- Philip Storm



The "Roadkill Bill" plans to "run over" its competition.

Photo by Christen Gates

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PHOTOS - Christen Gates

Bill HB-G-05 cracks down on rapists

KATIE MERGEN

Should minors be made to endure the same harsh punishments for criminal actions as adults? The authors of HB-G-05 believe so. Current legislation allows for many adolescents guilty of rape to be sentenced to a misdemeanor charge, and possibly receive a sentence of a year or less.

"We need to implement sentences that are harsh enough so they will never consider trying to rape again," said B.R. Ryall Wheaton Warrenville's Bill Kimball, the House sponsor for this bill.

The bill's lobbyist, Elizabeth Sneed, states in her position paper "It is proven that out of 23 rapes, 21 of them will be committed by a repeat rapist. If we get the offenders off the streets, this number will reduce dramatically."

This bill will not affect cases of consensual sex between a minor and an adult, as in a statutory rape case. The bill was also amended since it was first written; the minimum sentencing time was lowered to allow judges discretion in cases involving very young children and the mentally retarded.

The passage of this bill could make way for more severe rulings across the board in cases where minors have traditionally been granted some leniency. But some think the start of this trend is a change for the better.

"In certain cases minors can, and should, be tried as adults," said Kimball.

Is censorship correct?

MATT ROSSOW

Is freedom of speech important to us? A bill that would eliminate a school's right to censor the student newspaper failed in its committee. The bill has already been passed in nine states. It was given second priority in Pre-Leg I, first priority in Pre-Leg II and third priority coming into committee.

The Senate sponsor, Brian Kalish, Elmhurst Lake Park, was outraged. Kalish said, "This is the first amendment compared to whether they serve tacos in the cafeteria! So many people told me they liked it and would support it, there was no chance for it to fail. People are being shrouded in ignorance by restricting their first amendment rights."

Mike Fournier, the House sponsor, said, "Right now the newspaper has the right to censor you. If I were to say [people] who opposed our bill [were weirdos] and many people agreed with me, my opinion would not be voiced. This is unconstitutional."

Kalish believes that the people don't understand that schools "dictate exactly what goes into the newspaper."

The argument that the bill was no different than those that already exist was the reason that not a single person said yea.

"People don't understand that this shift in policy has a dramatic change," Kalish said. "It creates a statute that [students] can base suits off of. Students are being restricted as to what they can write, when they get to the real world and leave the bubble that the school has set, they won't know what to do."

A day in the life of a page

SAADIA AHMAD

Where can you find the following statements?

"It passed!"

"We got fifth priority!"

"Let's order pizza for dinner tonight."

Give up? You can find these messages in notes carried by pages.

Pages may seem insignificant compared to the legislators, but you may be surprised to find that they are anything but insignificant.

Alishe White from Heritage Wau-bonsie Valley said, "They [the pages] bring me notes if I want to know how my bill is doing. I like to know what's happening. I don't think that the program could survive without

them because it wouldn't run as smoothly."

Lobbyist Nicole Riek from South Suburban Seton Academy said, "We have written quite a few notes to people in our bill groups for updates."

From the perspective of a page, it seems like most are enjoying it.

"I learn so much from being a page, and it is preparing me to do something else next year. It's a good experience and I've learned a lot," said Nikki Ramey from Mt.Vernon Sesser-Valier.

Alyssa Amedei from Heritage Nequa Valley said, "I guess I don't mind it."

"I think it's a good chance for me

to see everything," said Mallory Miller from Mt. Vernon Sesser-Valier.

A whole different view on pages came from first year page Sabeen Haque, of Network Carl Sandburg. "Ninety-seven percent of the notes I get are invalid." When Haque was asked whether or not being a page was worth the money to participate in the program, she said, "No."

She also said she did not want to be a page next year.

Venetia Morris from Network Shepard High School had a more positive view on the system. "They're the magic behind the system," Morris said.

Editorials

Letters to the Editor

While reading *The Observer* at breakfast this morning, we were disappointed to see how inaccurately SB-G-27 was portrayed in an editorial. This bill was written to benefit the child by holding the non-custodial parent financially responsible. Following a missed payment, the parent has 30 days to pay their child support or "submit a valid explanation to the court stating why the payment could not be paid" (Line 7). Valid reasons would include, but are not limited to, unemployment and receiving welfare benefits. Other reasons could be submitted to the court, where the decision of granting visitation would be left to the judge's discretion. We urge all delegates to carefully read bills and ask questions before forming their opinions.

Thank you,

Danielle Leggans

Jessica Farrar

Molly Johnson

Emily Wurth

Mt. Vernon

Top 10 List

KRISTIN ROHRBECK

The "war" with Iraq has caused much controversy over American relations with many nations. One of the most prominent nations that opposes the interactions between Iraq and the U.S.A. is France. We have compiled a list of the top ten things that will be missed if the United States loses French support (or vice versa):

10- Berets (No more will our names be embroidered on our hats.)

9- Escargot

(No more of "those slippery little suckers.")

8- Jacques Cousteau documentaries (Did anyone watch them anyway?)

7- Champagne (We aren't supposed to care about this.)

6- Crepes (At least we'll still have the strawberries!)

5- Truffles (Just ask any female.)

4- Pepe La Pu (Elmer Fudd now hunts skunks as well.)

3- French Fries (The would-be demise of the fast food franchise.)

2- Nude Beaches (If you need to ask, don't.)

1- Hairy Female Armpits (Wait, I don't think anyone would miss this.)

Candidates engaged in a friendly game of dodge ball

KRISHNA PATTISAPU

The candidate steps into the circle, clears his thoughts, and stares anxiously at the formation of intimidating Y&G members positioned around him.

Reporter one launches her first question, causing the candidate's palms to dampen and his heart to race. "What is your stance on same-sex marriages?" she asks.

With disabled concentration, the candidate beats around the bush, attempting to conceal his honest opinions.

All too often, the game of dodge ball is played during political speeches. Quite often, candidates camouflage their personal beliefs surrounding controversial issues for the purpose of avoiding uncomfort-

able situations. While some speakers answer straightforwardly and promptly, others run away from questioning, hiding from potential embarrassment.

As a result of such hesitation, seemingly truthful and outspoken politicians can be viewed as "stealthy" or "reclusive." With these stereotypes comes an aura of public mystery, which can inevitably affect a candidate's mass appeal.

A politician's success relies solely upon public support and endorsement. Failure to respond to public interest can induce electoral fatality.

Dodge ball can be an interesting and fulfilling game for grade school children. For those wishing to obtain a political office, however, this game

can be extremely damaging.

The next time you watch a series of political speeches, consider which candidates are confident enough to answer any question presented before them. Then, decide which ones would be the best additions to your dodge ball team.

Please feel free to submit letters to the editor.

We appreciate your feedback.

Sex for sale ... is that legal?

BRITTANY LEGGANS

"Selling is legal and sex is legal, so selling sex should be legal," reasoned Madhur Paharia, lobbyist from BR Ryall Warrenville South.

The legalization of prostitution is an issue Y&G delegates have a variety of opinions on. Thirty-nine percent of delegates, like Paharia, support this issue. However, 54 percent strongly oppose any legislation legalizing this practice, and seven percent remain undecided.

"I don't think the legalization of prostitution is right," said Alisha White, representative from Heritage Waubonsie Valley. "It is just another excuse for men and women to get away with something I feel is morally wrong, not to mention the countless diseases that [prostitution] can spread."

"It is an unsafe health practice," said Josh Heigert, a senator from Springfield Williamsville.

Camyya Nickerson, a representative from Champaign Centennial, disagrees, but feels there should be health regulations.

"[Legalization of prostitution] would be healthier and safer for the prostitutes and their customers. At least they would be practicing safe sex and healthy measures if the government [took] an interest in it," she said.

"[Prostitution] is a huge underground enterprise and has been for thousands of years," Yumi Crass, a senator from Champaign Centennial said. "Legalizing prostitution could help with the workers' safety and rights."

"Prostitution is sinful; a degrading act that not only harms society, but the dignity of females," said Robert Griegoliet, a representative from Lombard Willowbrook.

Representative James Prister, from Springfield Williamsville, feels that this is more of a women's rights issue. "A woman can do what a woman wants to do," he said.

"Most prostitutes are unskilled individuals who are low on income," said lobbyist Cynthia Sun, Heritage Naperville Central. "Legalizing prostitution would be an opportunity for those individuals to earn a living, however unethical."

"While some women are driven to this practice by desperate economic status, on a whole it leads to the degradation of humanity," said Chandan Khandai, a senator from Heritage Waubonsie Valley.

"The government has no right to protect citizens from themselves," said Representative Shaneal Manek from Heritage Naperville Central. "If two consent-

ing adults chose to commit to a mutually beneficial transaction, that is their business, not the government's."

"Prostitution is wrong," said Kevin Chang, a page from Mt. Vernon. "Sex is a God-given gift and it should be shared only between two intimate people. Prostitution is selling God's gift."

"Sex out of marriage is wrong and should not be supported," said Emily Fornof, a page from Edwardsville.

Even though she doesn't believe prostitution is right, Emily Cooper, a representative from Mt. Vernon DuQuoin, feels it should be legal.

"It would be a good way to tax something that is happening anyway," Cooper said.

"The legalization of prostitution is only a desperate measure to raise money," said Michael Komalarajun, a senator from Heritage Waubonsie Valley. He, too, thinks that passing legislation legalizing prostitution is degrading human dignity.

"[Prostitution leads to] the weakening of basic morals in our society," Khandai said, "A society without morals is like a ship without a compass—doomed to sail upon the rocks."

Pro-life or pro-choice: should the choice be yours?

KRISTIN NAWARA

Undoubtedly, abortion rights have been one of the hot issues relating to society. This issue sways voters to vote for certain candidates. Pro-life? Pro-choice? The issue is highly debatable.

When deciding which side to take on the matter of abortion, one must take into consideration morals, values, rape, incest, and statistics.

Y&G members feel strongly about this issue. Many feel the decision should be the mother's choice.

"I am pro-choice because I believe that a woman should have the right to choose whether or not to have the baby," said Representative Matt Sweeten, Indian Boundary Westmont.

"I think there are so many exceptions, like rape, although I don't think you should have an abortion just because you weren't thinking straight at the time," said Elmhurst East Leyden senator Joanne Schreiner.

"It should be a woman's choice, except when it is late in pregnancy," said

lobbyist Katreva Martin from Network Stagg.

Other members of Y&G were strictly against abortions.

"I am against abortions because of my morals. It is killing a living person. If they made the choice, they should suffer the consequences," said Senator Nathan Molby, Westmont.

"If you are having an abortion just to do it, then it is wrong," said Charity Jones, a lobbyist from Mt. Vernon.

Springfield Williamsville legislators Heather Goetsh, Sarah McMillan, and Rachel Redenius have proposed a bill mandating that any minor wishing to have an abortion must notify her parents or legal guardian and have them approve the decision by signature. Also, the bill says a guardian must be present with the minor during the procedure.

Many members were unsure on how to sort out their feelings on this topic. Others were eager to speak their opinions.

"I think this is a good bill. It shouldn't be a secret. A parent needs to help their daughter through this tough time. It will make people more aware," said Giselle Hernandez, a senator from Elmhurst West Leyden.

"I don't think this legislation will pass because a parent could force their child to have a baby even if it is against their wishes," said Gill Caston, a representative from Indian Boundary Hinsdale Central.

Some members of Y&G felt this bill would invade the privacy of the minor, and that this information should be held confidential between patient and doctor.

"You could be the perfect student, perfect child, and one mistake could shatter your good image and cost you all of your parents' respect. Most people will feel guilty enough and will not need the added stress from their parents," said Michelle Ricci, a lobbyist from Network Stagg.

Officials shed light on responsibility

AREFA PATEL

Throughout Saturday of the Y&G assembly, all delegates have one thing in common- direction.

Remember Friday's lax atmosphere and campaigning? As we all rush to fulfill our Y&G duties, we must ask ourselves, "What happened to the elected officials of yesterday's chaos?"

"I don't feel very informed at all. I'm sure they're all really busy, but personally I'm very confused," said Taylor Hornung, a lobbyist from Mt. Vernon.

Generally most delegates are unaware and uninformed when it comes to the officials' actions and roles. Nonetheless, the officials have certainly been busy this week-

end.

The governor went to work immediately, signing the first bill before 11 a.m.

Governor Cajindos said his is "the most visible and influential role. I am only required to sign or veto bills, but I feel I can do more. What I am trying to do is interact with all parts of the assembly and be a uniting force."

The Lieutenant Governor, Janine Fricano, has been filling her position by serving as "a means of communication and a fallback for the governor. I also have my own duties with the special committee."

The Secretary of State has been consumed by bills and controlling

bill flow. Colleen Carroll feels the purpose of her role "is to know and understand every bill so the bills move as fast as possible. Then more bills will reach the governor's desk."

Erin Wilson, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, has been rushing throughout the capitol. She knows that her role "is to make sure that everyone knows what they do, and to be a primary leader and role model for the judicial participants."

"Basically, I coordinate things for the lobbyists," Colin Clark, Executive Director of the Lobbyists, said, "I'm here to be a liaison between the lobbyists and legislators to make sure everyone knows what's going on."

Recount provides hope for promise land

MATT ROSSOW

This year the race for Executive Director of Lobbyists was extremely close. The final vote came down to Colin Clark with 63 votes and Akif Irfan with 60 votes.

This three count difference means that if only two people had changed their vote, Colin Clark would not be in office. There were also seven lobbyist votes that were not accounted for. There has been a mixed reaction to this turn of events. Some students were even in support of a recount.

"Akif roused us. I don't even know who he was opposing. He had

a better personality. Him losing by three votes deserves a recount", said Kevin Samir, a senator from Elmhurst Lake Park.

When commenting on the ballots, Samir said, "The number system that they had was very confusing. I lost count after two. If Florida can screw up, so can Y&G."

Network Carl Sandburg Senator Chuck Prochaske said, "I think Akif was the most impassioned of all the candidates and he was fun to watch in his speeches. As for a recount, I think it is a little too late, but initially

there should have been one."

Senator Chris Davis from Indian Boundary Hinsdale Central said, "I personally believe he was the better candidate. I was disappointed that he lost. I am against a recount because Colin Clark certainly won half the votes."

Mt. Vernon lobbyist Matt Smith said, "I am opposed to a recount because we don't have three months to figure it out like Florida did in 2000. Besides, Colin is qualified for the position and is doing a fantastic job as the Executive Director."

"Mandatory Fun" not so fun

LOGAN LENKER

According to many Y&G students, adventure fun night is anything but fun. Actually, according to some, it is not fun at all.

Known as "Mandatory Fun Night" to students in Springfield, they all seem to have one opinion that speaks for everyone. Delegates would rather be doing something else.

"Forced fun is a ridiculous thing," said Cory Hopkins, a senator from Heritage Naperville North. "We work all day and then it's mandatory to

stay out. That doesn't sound like fun to me."

"The phrase, 'mandatory,' is a paradox in itself," said Jeff Skender, a senator from Network Stagg.

Whitney Bevis, a page from Mt. Vernon, thinks students should have a choice of whether or not to attend "Mandatory Fun Night."

"I would rather chill with friends in my room," said Bevis.

There are some students who did have good things to say about

"Mandatory Fun Night."

"I like mandatory fun night because it brings everyone out of their reclusive bubbles, so I get to know other people that I would not normally get to meet," said Sphruha Baxi, a representative from Network Carl Sandburg.

"I think that the fun night is a good idea for those who want to attend, but I would like to have access to our room," said Mark Graff, senator from Mt. Vernon Murphysboro.

I cannot tell a lie ... or can I?

JINA HASSAN

Most delegates agree that legislators will stretch the truth in order to advance their own bills.

This issue of factual misrepresentation is a common one among Y&G delegates.

"When a legislator doesn't know how to answer a question, we'll make something up," said Michelle Reed, a lobbyist from Network Stagg.

Some delegates believe that "fibbing" is a defense mechanism, a response to an attack on their bill.

"When people get defensive about their bill, they tend to overstate the facts," said Carrie Goebel, a Lombard Willowbrook representative.

Other delegates say that bending the facts is a normal part of politics.

"Basic facts are often twisted to serve one purpose or another," said Representative Sonia Aujlia of Lombard Willowbrook. "The essence of politics is to satisfy your aims using generalities."

On the other hand, many delegates held a more romantic opinion about the importance of political honesty.

"We have a moral responsibility to uphold the truth," said Chandan Khandai, a senator from Heritage Waubonsie Valley. "But there's a fine line between simple support and misrepresentation."

Chuck Prochaska, a representative from Network Carl Sandburg, commented on the significance of political integrity.

"I feel that there are many untruths existing within current proposed legislation. Delegates must be assertive enough to oppose faulty legislation and keep the integrity of Y&G alive."

Death penalty eliminated for mentally handicapped

KRISTIN NAWARA

Legislators from Heritage Naperville Central are celebrating the passage of their bill on death penalty reform for the mentally handicapped.

The bill states that the death penalty will not be sought if the defendant is considered mentally retarded. The condition must be documented in medical history and a court of law.

Sponsors Richa Bhala, Katie Houghtlin, Shaneal Manek, and Adam Misra argued in their opening statements on the Grey House floor that 13 people have already been released after false convictions. Some of those people served over 18 years on death row.

The sponsors said they wished to make sure that no innocent person is convicted. To ensure this, the bill states that the defendant may not be solely convicted on a single eyewitness or accomplice testimony. More than one witness must be available.

Also, to reduce wrongful convictions, the entire police interrogation of the defendant must be videotaped. The Supreme Court will also have the opportunity to review all death sentences.

The bill was signed by Governor Justin Cajindos on Saturday afternoon.

Look for the fourth issue of THE OBSERVER later this Spring in a mailbox near you!

Clark keeps delegates out of dark

LAURA WITTNEBEN



Photo by Christen Gates

"Lobbyists are like the third house. They relay messages and get people to vote on certain bills," said Colin Clark, Executive Director of the Lobbyists. He was speaking of the vital role lobbyists play in the Y&G program.

At the press conference Saturday, Clark clarified a few issues.

When asked what he thought of false campaign promises he said, "First, I want to make clear that the flyer I gave out during my speech on Friday was just a joke." He continued by saying, "If you're going to promise something you're not going to do, don't say it at all. Because if you say it, you're going to have to do it."

He also wanted to make clear that "lobbyists can send in special committee bills in February. If they do this then they will be included in the docket. When they do this, it gives them a lot more time to research."

Clark commented extensively at the conference about these special committee bills.

"Nine bills and resolutions were passed all together," he said. "The resolution on the war in Iraq is very well thought out. Kenneth Baker, the author, has done a great job. Everyone was really supportive of it."

THE JUDICIAL OBSERVER

First-year frustrations plague attorneys

JESSICA HARVATH

First year attorneys at Y&G face an extremely daunting task: learn the appeals process, prepare an extensive brief (a misnomer if there ever was one), and face the dreaded Supreme Court justices in a no-punches-barred battle in the arena of the Supreme Court.

That's right. Young attorneys, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, must convince seven cynical peers that their case is best with a comprehensive oral argument.

Most attorneys spend a sleepless Friday night fretting over oral arguments and the presentation ahead.

"I stayed up until 1:30 last night preparing my oral argument," said Karen DuBois, a first-year attorney from Springfield Williamsville.

"I stayed up to 2:00 or 3:00, probably," said rookie attorney Ken Beaver of Network Stagg.

Rewrites are numerous, but revised oral arguments often fail to inspire confidence in inexperienced attorneys.

"We've written the oral argument about four or five times this weekend," said Christina Lees, a new attorney from Elmhurst Lake Park.

Lees and her partner, Nicole Hamblin, decided to play

a relaxing game of cards while other attorneys panicked over flawed oral arguments.

"We were very nervous, so we decided to play some cards," said Lees.

"We needed something to take our minds off of it [the oral argument]," said Hamblin.

Some fresh attorneys, however, were actually eager to present their arguments.

"I like the argument better than writing the brief," said Stefani Veselinovic of Heritage Waubonsie Valley.

"The brief is tedious," agreed Stavroula Xinos, partner to Veselinovic.

Many attorneys just look forward to celebrating after the argument and reveling in learned life lessons and experiences.

"Experience is the whole thing. It leads to understanding. Even if I don't grow up to be an attorney, I'll understand what's going on," said Xinos.

"We're going to order pizza and throw a party when it's done. It will be such a relief," said Hamblin.

Arguing the case - attorneys in action

BRITTANY LEGGANS

Imagine yourself a raw cut of Grade A beef laid before a pack of nine hungry wolves. This is similar to the situation Y&G attorneys must face while presenting their oral arguments.

Attorneys are presented with two criminal cases at the beginning of the year. They prepare the case that has been selected and hold a mock trial in December. At Pre-Leg II, the attorneys must begin preparing a brief for the case's appeal.

The oral arguments for the appeals take place on Saturday of the Y&G weekend. Oral arguments clarify for the court what was said in the brief, as well as answer any questions justices may have regarding the appeal.

Attorneys alternate giving their oral arguments and serving as youth justices. Justices hear the appeal for the case they did not prepare and judge attorneys on five basic criteria: professionalism, language, legal reasoning, delivery, and response to questions.

The attorneys must research and refer to a minimum of eight cases relative to the situation they are appealing. They must also be familiar with a variety of cases that support the opposing counsel's side, so that they will be adequately prepared for intense questioning from

the justices.

In the first of this year's cases, Ronald Weaver was found guilty of the murder of Fern Berrett and is appealing the admission of six photographs of the victim's body and the denial of defense's motion to exclude a statement made by the defendant to a police officer.

The second case involves Albert Jordan, who was found guilty of the murder of Linda Kent. His appeal concerns a denial of change of venue due to a large amount of press coverage before the trial and the admission of a prior criminal conviction into evidence during the trial.

Though the role of an attorney can be a very stressful, time-pressing position, participating youth enjoy the experience.

"It's a lot of last minute (activity)," said Lara Katlan, Heritage Neuqua Valley.

"It's a little too much last minute," said Anna Elazan, Heritage Naperville North said in reply.

Caitlin Schwamberger, Heritage Neugua Valley, had a different viewpoint.

"We're a group of people who thrive best under pressure," Schwamberger stated.