

Delegates ponder what 2005 holds

by Krishna Pattisapu

As the lights fade on this year's Y&G experience, elected officials prepare to walk away from an extremely eventful weekend during which they had the opportunity to make a difference. Legislators, pages, lobbyists, and various other members of the Y&G program contemplate their prospective roles in the upcoming year.

A Sunday afternoon conference for delegates considering running for office drew a group of eager individuals seeking leadership positions. Richard Stubblefield, a member of the Board of Directors, spoke to the group on the

art of running for an office, emphasizing that the key to success is motivation.

Mr. Stubblefield also stressed the importance of determination, capability, and a positive personality. The group absorbed his words, considering the various possibilities of their prospective candidacies.

Some prospective candidates explained their desire to campaign as a personal interest, while others suggested other forms of inspiration.

"As a lobbyist, I saw what happened in Springfield and wished to be able to do more. I did not like having to sit by idly and make little or no difference. I hope to be able to

change viewpoints, open minds, and more importantly, become a very active participant," said Matt Abhay of Elmhurst Lake Park.

While all participants of Y&G are vital to the program's success, certain delegates crave the excitement of possessing an influential voice, one that has the potential to single-handedly modify the entire Springfield experience.

"My motivation for running for office is that I truly enjoy this program, and I want to see it run successfully. I feel I could help the program the best by running for office and trying to make a difference," said Jalpit Amin, a lobbyist

from Elmhurst Lake Park.

Akif Irfan, a legislator from Heritage Naperville North, added, "My motivation for running for office stems from my desire to leave the world as a better place than I have found it."

In addition to standard rules and codes, Mr. Stubblefield shed light on the many advantages and highlights of running for office. He encouraged prospective candidates to be creative with their campaigns in an effort to draw attention and gain votes, as well as fellow delegates' trust.

For some delegates, the desire to achieve political

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Did governor take too long to sign bills into law?

by Rachel Redenius

It seemed like a normal, uneventful day for *The Observer* crew until a mad rush of delegates stormed into the press room issuing attacks against Governor Herr.

"I think it's absurd that he promised to sign as many bills as possible but waits until the next morning to sign 50-60% of the bills that had been passed,"

said Stephanie Stiff, a legislator from Heritage Naperville North. She was angry because although her bill received first priority and passed the House and Senate, it had not yet been signed by Governor Herr.

She was told that her bill would be one of the first bills signed but was frustrated when four hours later the bill has now been signed by Governor Herr,

but she was unhappy with how the situation was handled.

As of Saturday, only eleven bills had been signed, causing anger and rumors to spread through capitol like wildfire. Some said that the Governor planned to pocket veto a majority of the bills. Others said that he was only passing bills that favored Southern delegations. Those rumors appear to

be false.

"I instructed pages," said Governor Herr, "to tell bill groups to get here so I could sign their bills. Groups wouldn't show up and everything was getting behind schedule. I ended up with a stack of bills on my desk."

At the time this article was written, forty-five bills had been signed.

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WHY CAN'T WE DRIVE TO Y&G?

by Christen Gates

"The real reason why the Y&G delegates can't drive to these events is due to school policy," said Craig Garner, adviser from Mt. Vernon DuQuoin.

"If you are on a school field trip, then you are under school liability," said John Martens, an advisor from Indian Boundary Westmont. Although, he notes that every school has its own rules.

Andy Wells, an advisor from Mt. Vernon, said there are two reasons why students can't drive to the assembly. "It's a school liability issue when it's a school sponsored event and it's a safety issue, only because of the distance," said Wells.

Kraig Koch, a senator from Mt. Vernon, suggested the idea of driving anyway. He said, "Sometimes you can bend the rules."

"But not at the ex-

pense of someone else's life," interjected Wells in response to Koch's suggestion.

"I don't mind the bus. The bus is fun," said Therese Bonoma, a senator from Network Stagg.

Delegates seem to have mixed reactions.

"It's part of the experience," said Stephanie Stiff, a senator from Heritage Naperville North. She feels riding the bus is more fun.

"It keeps things together and organized," said Gabriel Haywood, a representative from Network Stagg.

"It's too much risk," said Ryan Hoffman, a senator from Network Carl Sandburg. He agrees that because people have to drive so far, it's safer to take the bus.

"Besides," adds Kunal Gandhi, a representative from Network Carl Sandburg, "It's a waste of gas."

Who might be seen in 2005?

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success originates long before they step onto the elegant marble floor of the Capitol building. "My family has a judicial background because my dad was a lawyer for several years and is currently a circuit judge for Perry County," said Calen Campanella of Mt. Vernon DuQuoin.

Other delegates wish to acquire valuable skills for the future through campaigning for an office. Travis Iles of Mt. Vernon stated, "I think that the reason I am running for office next year is because it gives you an accurate depiction of what real life candidates go through."

Regardless of motivation, delegates are clearly very eager to establish themselves early in the elections game. Many have chosen to publicize themselves and their motives in an effort to make

the general Y&G population aware of their intentions.

As a delegate who has already experienced the thrill of a candidacy, Secretary of State Scott Gibbs said, "I decided to run for office because I thought I would have a lot more to do and that I would have more fun. I was right. I had a great weekend."

With the dawn of next year's Y&G program, delegates will no doubt witness the determination and sincerity of candidates wishing to make a difference for everyone involved. Like any other program, Y&G is based upon effective leadership.

And prospective candidates would have it no other way.

Irfan, added, "When I run for governor next year, I hope that my desire to do what is best for this youth government bears fruit."

Delegates talk about which bills were just plain ridiculous in 2004

by Brittany Leggans

While flipping through the bill book one can find a variety of well-written, well-intentioned, and well-researched bills.

But then there is that one bill-the one that doesn't quite make sense. The bill ridicules an important issue or just simply lacks the approval of a majority of delegates.

"The most ridiculous

bill is the chain gang bill. (SB-O-13) It dehumanizes people." stated Denis Dupee, a legislator from Network Andrew. The bill was signed by the Governor.

The Governor also signed H-O-13. Many delegates feel that this bill, which allows people convicted to death row to choose organ donation as their method of execution,

inhumane and absurd.

"This is a person," said Dupee, "We're taking organs out of healthy people."

"They're just harvesting [the prisoners] organs, like a bounty of wheat," Indian Boundary Westmont legislator Anne Royston stated.

Most bills listed by delegates as a "waste of time" were quickly dis-

missed in committee or in legislative session.

SB-G-09, which sought to end funeral procession right-of-way, was cited by many delegates as "extremely disrespectful."

"Anyone with common decency knows they should stop and wait a few minutes to pay respect for someone who has lost

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Fun can be had just being an observer

As I was sitting up in the gallery of the orange house on Sunday afternoon writing my editorial, I started to listen in on what was going on. I was already a good way into my editorial about the rising cost of college tuition, which had taken me forever to decide it in the first place, when I decided that I had to change my mind.

Just listening to the delegates was entertaining. Sunday afternoons are al-

ways the best days to watch from the gallery. One delegate asked to replace the speaker's wooden gavel with a squeaky gavel that made a very funny and cool sound.

Sadly it was not allowed by Y&G standards, but it would have been funny if it was allowed.

Co-editor
Laura Wittneben

On the same note, a bill was brought back up to debate because the author was not present in the morning. When someone asked why he wasn't there, he replied, "A mix up in the schedule."

The person who asked the question quickly came back, "But don't we all have the same schedule."

Everyone laughed.

The final thing to occur in the Orange House was beyond all others.

A bill was brought up to make the spork the state utensil, and the committee chair of Education began to sing "I'm a Little Teapot."

The bill passed.

The speaker called for the end of the Orange House, and the chamber decided to sing "I'm a Little Teapot" in unison.

I learned so much this year at Y&G

Wow, what a weekend it has been!

I never expected anything like this back in October when it was first suggested that I join Y&G.

Mrs. Barb Sullivan, my chief advisor from the Springfield Williamsville delegation, was the main push for my campaign.

She persuaded me not

to just join the press but also run for the co-editor position.

I am so glad that I did.

I enjoyed meeting many new people, and the writing staff

on the press was great.

The advisors Erika Grubb, Michael Gudwien,

Co-editor
Cory Pelc

Jay Martens, and Chris Kirk were each key contributors to the organization and quality of our publication.

Surviving the negative comments and controversy through the weekend was a life-changing event.

It gave me more confidence and allowed me to experience a realm of life unknown to me.

I'm proud to have been the co-editor and hope that I fulfilled my intent to make and entertaining and informative newspaper for all the people involved in Y&G.

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CO-EDITORS

CORY PELC
LAURA WITTEBEN

REPORTERS

VICTORIA FREEDLUND
MEGAN FRENCH
CHRISTEN GATES
JUSTIN GIBSON
NICOLE GLEESON

DAVID GORDON
JUSTIN HORTON
ROBIN KENDRICK
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ABBY OITZMAN
KRISHNA PATTISAPU
RACHEL REDENIUS
STEPHANIE REHM
KRISTY RIPKA

VICTORIA SO
ANDREW VEACH

ADVISORS

ERIKA GRUBB
MICHAEL GUDWIEN
CHRIS KIRK
JAY MARTENS

Interesting bills found at assembly

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their life,” said Alex Hurst, a legislator from Mt. Vernon.

This bill failed in the committee.

HB-O-18, which failed in the House, attempted to lower the drinking age to eighteen, if a parent or guardian is present at the time of the alcohol purchase. Delegates expressed concern that the passage of this bill would encourage alcoholism.

HB-O-02 attempted to set limits on the starting and ending times of schools.

Many delegates felt that the bill did not take into account the different reasons schools have varying

hours. Before this bill failed in the House, the delegates attempted to amend the bill. The bill originally called for school hours of no earlier than 8:00 AM to no later than 3:40 PM.

The proposed amendment would have restricted school ending times to between 3:00 PM to 3:40 PM, to allow for “maximum sleep time” for students. Other ridiculous amendments were proposed to once legitimate bills.

HB-O-16 once called for thirty hours for community service for people convicted of vandalism. The bill was amended to change the punishment

from community service to the death penalty.

The bill was later amended again, reducing the penalty for vandalism to 15 hours.

The most ridiculous amendment made to a bill was added to HB-O-06. All sections of this bill, once regarding school locker searches, were stricken.

The bill now requires Committee Chairs to sing “I’m a Little Teapot” at a given time and makes the spork the official utensil of Illinois.

The bill, which was pending Governor signature at press time, would go into effect after the Equestrian Diving Competition.

Gov’s impeachment rumors abound

by Uma Krishnan

Rumors had been going around, stating that the proceedings were being taken to impeach the Youth Governor Dustin Herr. These suspicions have not been confirmed, though many delegates seem to be aware of it. Governor Herr said that it was “an unfortunate situation” and said, “I apologize if I’ve offended anybody, but I can’t do anything about it.”

Reactions to the impeachment vary both in a positive and negative man-

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Delegates weigh in on the effectiveness of Y&G elected officers

by Justin Gibson

The elected officials put into power are always being judged and critiqued. You have probably heard both positive and negative comments about all of them. *The Observer* conducted a poll that asked “what did you think about our elected leaders?”

Governor Dustin Herr, was the only official to have a higher disapproval rating than approval. Governor Herr held a 42 percent approval rating with 49 percent disapproval rating. Nine Percent were undecided.

Heather Goetsch, from Springfield Williamsville reflected on her negative feeling towards the Governor’s job. “He signed our bill without making an appointment with us. He said that he wanted to speak with everyone before acting on a bill, but he didn’t with us,” she said.

Others did not feel the same way. “Heaven to Betsy, he’s just dandy,” said Patrick Mitsdarfer from Paris Heritage.

Lt. Governor, Bryan Raymond, had a 44 percent approval rating with a 24 percent disapproval

rating. Thirty-two percent were undecided on his position. “What does he do? Does he even do anything?” Exclaimed a delegate who wished to remain anonymous.

Secretary of State, Scott Gibbs, had a high approval rating of 59 percent. Mr. Gibbs held a 21 percent disapproval rating with 20 percent being undecided

Yoshio Adachi, from Elmhurst Lake Park was one of the few to have poor feeling towards Scott Gibbs. “He sings I didn’t like that. He should have

had a speech with issues in it. He turned it into a popularity contest rather than an election”, he said.

Executive Director of Lobbyists Rachel Thompson had the highest approval rating with 88 percent. Her disapproval rating was 3 percent, while 9 percent were undecided.

“She did a great job. Her book she passed out was very helpful,” said an anonymous delegate who did not want to be named. All results were tabulated by a random sampling of delegates from many schools.

Blood donation age lowered to fifteen

by Justin Horton

Blood is a valuable resource among hospitals, where complications involving blood loss often appear.

A recently passed South Suburban Seton Academy bill might possibly increase the amount available.

The bill lowered the legal age to donate blood from sixteen to fifteen. This would logically increase the donor base by thousands.

Elmhurst Lake Park Representative Roshani Patel said, "I can see nothing wrong with it if they meet the requirements."

Some find the law unnecessary.

For instance, Xiao

Tan, a Heritage Naperville Central representative, said, "I don't see much of a reason, unless there is a high demand for blood. Seventeen year-olds are heavier and can produce more blood."

Others disagreed all together.

Kunal Gandhi, a Network Carl Sandburg representative, argued, "No, you shouldn't allow people that young. They are too immature."

But for some people age is not the determining factor in blood donation.

Valerie Pemberton, a representative from Mount Vernon admitted, "I don't give blood; I'm just a little too scared."

GOVERNOR WORKS HARD AT PASSING BILLS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Governor Herr claimed that he didn't say in his speech that he wanted to get as many bills passed as possible but that he wanted to get as many bills heard on the floor as possible.

The Governor tried to send notes to all the bill groups, giving them appointments to meet with him and witness the signing of their bills. The Governor wanted the whole process to be more personal and felt that it was important for delegates to see their bills signed. He wasn't angry about the missed appointments and said that it was "understandable."

"I just feel bad that they couldn't see their bills signed," he said, "but it had to get done."

Christina Priovolos, legislator from Network

Carl Sandburg, said, "I think he is doing a good job. At first our group was in doubt about whether or not our bill would get signed, but it has been signed, and he met with us twice to discuss it. I think he is following a good process."

Akrif Irfan, legislator from Heritage Naperville North, said, "Although I was originally concerned about bill flow, I am now impressed by the Governor's ability to work through issues and find an answer to problems."

Delegates shouldn't jump to conclusions so quickly and need to understand that patience is a "must have."

The job of Governor is very hectic and stressful. Governor Herr must take the time to read all the bills placed before him and give them the proper consideration.

Delegates learn a lot about government policy; plan return in 05

by Abby Oitzman

"[Before participating in Y&G] I thought it would be a good experience to learn a little bit more about the government," said Ladan Nikravan from Heritage Neuqua Valley.

Nikravan is a first year member in Y&G and said she had a fun experience and did, indeed, learn more about the government.

Many people don't know what Y&G is about.

The suspicion often

leaves first year members nervous and excited.

Renee Queen, legislator from Network Carl Sandburg thought Y&G would be "strict and serious."

Queen didn't even think she would be allowed to laugh without getting into trouble. However, Queen said her favorite part of the weekend was her committee.

"My committee was awesome and my chair-

person was funny," said Queen.

Although she had a blast during the committee, she mentioned that, "mandatory fun night was a joke."

As many people had observed on Sunday, mostly everyone was exhausted.

A lobbyist from Heritage Neuqua Valley said, "I didn't like how we had to stay up so late at night, and then wake up really

early the next day."

Y&G 2004 was a great success.

Fortunately, nothing major happened, but some people did get their feelings hurt.

It sounds like all the first year members had a blast, despite late nights and early mornings.

Most of them will be back next year, when the fun will start all over.

OBSERVER STAFF ASKS DELEGATES HOW THE PAPER WAS THIS YEAR

By Robin Kendrick

The past few days have been busy ones for the newspaper section of Y&G.

Whether they are researching, brain-storming, or writing, members of the press can be found walking around in search of possible quotations or holed-up in the press room.

The "newspaper process" includes busily try-

ing to sort through tips, rumors, and facts before ultimately writing it out and fighting for an open computer, so the paper can read off to the advisor by deadline.

All of this happens so that delegates can eat their breakfast every morning while catching up on the weekend's news.

Overall, the delegates seemed to enjoy the paper.

"This year's newspaper is definitely better [than previous years]," said Stephanie Stiff, committee chair from Heritage Naperville North.

"They did an excellent job of covering the stories," said James Reece of Elmhurst Lake Park.

Agreeing with Reece was Brandon Hirsch of DuQuoin Mt. Vernon.

"They covered all of the [stories] people wanted to know about," said Hirsch.

Willie Urish, a delegate from Springfield Williamsville commented on the issue of scandal.

"I think it's fun to read because it's very controversial," said Urish.

The scandals of the paper have also been popular debate involved within the Y&G press.

Whether it be the Fu controversy to the Williamsville Mt. Vernon scandal, you can be sure people are talking about it, and the press is listening.

When questioned whether or not the press should be able to cover scandals or if they should stick to bills and such, former Youth Governor of 1986, Tom Rooney, was not afraid to comment.

"I think it's fair game for reporting and covering. If it's something the people want to know about then by all means," said Rooney.

How did '04 Y&G rank and compare to years past, participants debate

By Andrew Veach

Over 900 students filed in and out of the Illinois Capitol this weekend hoping for success in Y&G. Tensions have been high at times, but positive attitudes have been higher.

When compared to past years, Rob Jaspers, a legislator from Danville Schlarman, believed that this year was "more exciting, with a lot of healthy positive fire in the chambers."

However, Jaspers contributed the "lack of sleep" as a negative this year.

A general consensus among the student was that things were running smoothly.

"If there is a problem,

the students have been patient," said Kathy West, Vice-Chair of the board and advisor of Mt. Vernon DuQuoin.

She also felt that Jesse White's appearance was a nice addition to this year's program.

Y&G has had its share of likes and dislikes.

Major complaints have been the bill signing process along with the uncontested governor's race.

"The Governor has ruined the process which has become a tainted one," said Chase Glisson, a legislator from Heritage Naperville North.

For those in Y&G for the first time, there was an abundance of action pro-

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Delegates respond to "mandatory fun night"

By Kristy Ripka

Saturday Night from 9:30-11:30 PM, Y&G created a time period for delegates to have fun and let loose from the hustle-bustle earlier in the day.

A lot of delegates did not like that it was mandatory.

Liz Ignowski of Network Carl Sandburg said, "It was the biggest waste of money."

Others did not like the fact that advisors would not let anyone leave before 11PM to get some sleep.

Kristin Rohrbeck of Elmhurst Lake Park said, "It wasn't bad, but they do need to like let us back to our rooms."

The people that liked the night really enjoyed the dancing.

Both Agnieszka Kwiecien and Catherine Doyle from Network Stagg said, "The dance party was the best."

Other delegates though that with "mandatory fun night" they should be able to have "free food and ice cream" instead of having to pay for snacks.

Delegates overturn Herr's veto of gay marriage ban; delegates react

By Uma Krishnan

The rights of homosexual couples has been and still remains a very controversial issue.

On Saturday, March 20 the blue legislative assembly passed through bill SB-B-27 legalizing gay marriages.

However, Governor Dustin Herr vetoed the bill.

Later that day, the Governor's veto was overridden, sparking both supporting and opposing sentiments.

"The governor is a conservative," said Katie O'Grady, a representative from Heritage Naperville North. O'Grady, similar to many other delegates believed that Governor Herr was letting his personal feelings get in the way of what was best for the state of Illinois.

However, Governor Herr clarified why he vetoed the bill, saying that "Section II of the Gay Marriage [was] a clear violation."

The "unconstitutionality" of the bill also received mixed feelings.

"It was unprofessional for him to say that the bill was unconstitutional," stated a representative from Heritage Waubonsie Valley, Sandy Roznovsky.

Lt. Governor Bryan Raymond expressed his views saying that he "encouraged the bill group to take measures to override [Governor Herr's] veto."

While some supported the override, many other delegates stood by Governor Herr's decision.

"I think it was vetoed on good grounds," said

Dustin Keele, the Chaplain for the Blue House from Mt. Vernon West Frankfort.

"The veto was the right thing to do."

Keele was present in the chambers when the legislature overrode the veto, and added that "a division was called, but ignored."

Brandon Nash, a representative from Paris Marshall felt strongly about the legislative decision,

saying that "the [veto] should not have been overridden."

While delegates felt either for or against the overriding of the veto, there were others who simply sat on the fence. David Ediger, a speaker of the House from Heritage Waubonsie Valley, felt that "what happened was parliamentary procedure. The Governor had a right to veto the bill, and that's what he did."

Special committee bills important part of Y&G - "Harlem Shake" gets new life at assembly

By Megan French

Special Committee bills may be regarded as, "not as serious" by Lt. Governor Bryan Raymond of Mt. Vernon, but they make an impact on the Y&G experience.

Special committee bills range in seriousness. This weekend the bills spanned from abolishing the death penalty to revising Illinois' official song and dance.

The bills are generally written by lobbyists who get committee chairs to sponsor them. The bills have to pass a special

committee led by the Lt. Governor, and then pass the House and Senate.

Although the bill proposing to change the Illinois State Song from "Sweet Home Chicago" failed, a bill proposing to change the state dance to the Harlem Shake did pass.

"It's actually a good tension releaser; you get the whole body flowing," said Shawn Corbet, a lobbyist from Network Stagg.

"It's directed towards the younger people to keep them interested."

Gov's impeachment is debated

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ner. An anonymous student stated that "Governor Herr makes false promises and if positive we should impeach him." On the other hand Maria Thompson, a representative from Network Stagg said, "He's doing the best he can."

Delegates have fun at assembly

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viding fun for everyone.

There were mixed feelings about "mandatory fun night."

Joanne Schreiner, a legislator from Elmhurst Leyden thought that "mandatory fun was better last year."