

Moores retiring after 35 years of service

Samantha Pelc
Springfield Williamsville

After serving as the Y&G Executive Director and President for 35 years, Mr. Allen Moore is retiring. Moore has been very instrumental in the program for several decades, and his work is much appreciated.

Moore started out as an advisor in the program and has since worked his way up.

Andy Paul, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, started working with Moore 33 years ago, where they met at the program. Since then, they have become close friends outside of Y&G.

"Last year my father died, and Allen and Sue came to the funeral and were there for me," said Paul. "It meant a lot to me that they were able to stay, and it showed how much they truly did care."

Along with working with his close friends, Moore has the privilege of working with his wife, Sue Moore, the Program Director.

"She is the best critic and my best support," said Moore. "She is always very dedicated and she has moved the program forward in many ways."

Sue Moore believes that she and Allen "really work well together be-

cause we are both so committed to this program that we love."

The Moores have opened many opportunities up for the youth of Illinois throughout their years of working.

"The program needed a lot of changes in the mid-70s when [Allen Moore] took over," commented Paul. "He brought consistency and made the program overall better."

Allen and Sue believe in the youth and love watching the weekend unravel.

"I love once everyone is registered on Friday morning because the program takes on its own life," said Sue Moore. "I love watching the youth mature and in turn give back to the program. It's truly a special thing."

Allen Moore feels the same way about the delegates, every year looking forward to the "moving experience of watching the leaders of tomorrow created."

"Even though this is my last year as President, I know I will always keep the memories, friendships, and experiences I have made," said Moore. "The program has become part of [our] lives, and I hope to see these same delegates of today years from now."



The advisors and Board of Directors toast Allen and Sue Moore after the banquet. At the toast, the Moores were presented with a video retrospective of their service to Youth and Government, a book of memories, and a retirement gift, a cruise to a destination of their choice.

Chief justice is a first from Network Andrew

Kurt Fowler
Springfield Williamsville

Yesterday, delegates elected Megan Godette from Network Andrew as their Chief Justice. Godette became the first elected official from her high school.

After serving in the judicial program for her first two years, Godette decided to run for Chief Justice. "I decided I liked what I was doing," she said. "It was the next step to take."

Godette had to do most of the campaigning by herself. "My school didn't show up until about 20 minutes before the speeches," she said. "So I was mostly by myself."

While Chief Justice is seen as the second highest elected office at Y&G, it is also the least understood, according to Godette. "[The Chief Justice] heads judicial

review, makes sure debates are fair, helps write opinions, and gives the opinions to the public," said Godette.

As Chief Justice, Godette has a tremendous amount of power over the judicial program, and she hopes to use that power to assist the other delegates. "I hope to make sure that everybody understands each branch of government," she said. "I also want to be very helpful to my fellow attorneys."

Most non-attorney delegates are familiar with the judicial program because of Sunday's judicial review of bills that have been passed and signed. The Chief Justice does not choose the bills that will be reviewed but said if she were to pick, she would select "ones that are controversial with two good sides to argue."

COME ON PEOPLE . . . SHOW SOME RESPECT

The etiquette of the delegates during the candidate speeches yesterday was less than perfect.

During the speeches given by newly elected Lieutenant Governor Antonio Clinton, from McHenry County Faith Lutheran, and Secretary of State Janesh Rahlan, from Heritage Waubonsie Valley, the delegates responded in an acceptable way to the parts they found humorous.

The delegates laughed and cheered when something was said by the candidates that they found to be funny or entertaining.

On the other hand, when the delegates found the jokes to be less than humorous, they responded

with very little respect.

Rather than saying nothing when they believed the jokes were not funny, many delegates responded with loud heckling. I completely understand the fact that some jokes were meant to be a lot funnier than they were.

Yes, the response of the delegates was embarrassing and reflects poorly on the Y&G program.

I was disappointed to hear booing, coughing,

and other negative comments during candidates' speeches.



Samantha Pelc
The Observer
Editor

It takes a lot of confidence to be able to speak in front of over a thousand students, and respect should be given to those who had the nerve to participate in the campaigns.

Those sitting in the chairs have no room to judge or look down upon the speakers.

The delegates running for office have worked extremely hard in campaigning for a position. I know

some speeches were more effective than others, but I also know that everyone put in time and effort.

The purpose of the weekend is build strong leaders for the future.

A strong leader is one that respects others work and understands that at times things will fail.

Hopefully, for the remainder of the weekend the delegates will start to respect the attempts of others. With respect for each other, I truly believe that the weekend will be more successful.

More ideas can be introduced when delegates have the confidence that their peers will give them the respect they need.

July - Male American History Month?

Zach Mierzejewski
Springfield Williamsville

A bill sponsored by Senator Mark Sojka and Representative Adam Hutnick of Network Carl Sandburg has been met with strong reactions from both male and female delegates at the 2009 assembly.

The bill (HB-G-25) proposes naming July "Male American History Month."

John Peskind, a representative from Heritage Batavia said he would not support the bill. "That is dumb," said Peskind. Peskind, however, was one of the few male delegates questioned who opposed the bill outright.

On the other end of the spectrum, Jake McNamara, a representative from Springfield Williamsville, thought the bill made sense. "We live in a male dominated society," said McNamara. "I think ev-

ery month should be Male American History Month."

Alec Schu, a page from Kankakee BBCHS, had a less extreme view but still supported the bill. "[The bill's] kind of cool," said Schu.

The support will come as welcome news for Hutnick, who believes the bill promotes equality. "It is very important it [the bill] gets passed in order to make the people of Illinois equally recognized."

Sojka said that the bill has received a mixed response in the preliminary stages of Y&G. "People thought it was either humorous or were offended by it."

Overall, however, Sojka believed there was general acceptance for the bill.

Although Hutnick felt there was consensus for the bill's passage, he definitely saw a clear divide

along gender lines.

"The opposition was mostly females," said Hutnick, "[Some of it was] very fierce."

Such a response was exemplified by Katie Leevy, a senator from Jefferson County Mt. Vernon.

"I just think the bill itself is ridiculous," she said.

Marta Ortiz, a page from Network Stagg, voiced a question echoed by most of the female delegates who responded to the bill.

"Is there a Female American History Month?"

Actually, Women's History Month is March in the United States.

Hutnick hopes to create the same honor for men.

"Our main premise was equality. We felt because there is a Women's History Month, there should be a male history month," said Hutnick.

PEOPLE TO GO LEGALLY NUDE IF BILL BECOMES LAW

Drew Lazar
Springfield Williamsville

A bill (SB-B-21) pertaining to public nudity provoked interesting questions and debate in committee Friday afternoon.

Occasionally, the audience members even could hear laughter and snickering in the committee room.

House sponsor Aimee Karstens from Network Carl Sandburg said, "This bill honestly did start as a joke, but as I read and researched deeper into it, I became very passionate about it. Before [people] go judging this bill, [they] need to see where we are coming from and need to keep an open mind."

This bill states that people should be able to walk around naked in certain marked areas deemed appropriate by the state.

Their argument for this

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LEGALLY NUDE

Rahlan takes the vote for Secretary of State

Sarah Schneider
Mattoon Arcola

Janesh Rahlan is the new Secretary of State.

When asked after his speech why he wanted to hold the office, he said, "I would love to be secretary of state to prevent as many bill flow hiccups as possible." Rahlan is a legislator from Heritage Waubonsie Valley.

Rahlan defeated Trevor Thompson of Springfield Williamsville and Kristen Vilimek of Network Stagg.

Rahlan recognizes the need for a secretary of state in the program.

"I will get the bill where it needs to be, and passed as fast as possible" stated Rahlan.

He went on to state that his "leadership skills" will help him in his new office. Currently, he is Vice President of Speech at Waubonsie Valley High School.

The main duty of secretary of state is to oversee the bill flow process.

"The analogy I made about the bill flow relating to a drug deal was meant to be humorous," stated Rahlan. "The three levels of the bill flow are committee who make the bill,

secretary of state who pass and sell the bill, and the governor who buys the bill."

Rahlan said the position of secretary of state is one of big responsibility.

"No other candidate physically handles all three legislatures. The secretary of state is the only one with that responsibility," he said.

Delegates were impressed with Rahlan, especially with his humor.

Ninamarie Basilo, a lobbyist from Network Eisenhower, said, "Janesh related his speech to stuff we are familiar with and he was funny."

Paul Schmidt, a page from Elmhurst Leyden, said, "I think Janesh [will win] because he was more upbeat and got everyone's attention because he was talking about something serious and was still funny."

Ultimately, Rahlan sees Y&G as a great experience and one that impacts current political debate.

"What we accomplish here doesn't just stay with this weekend," he said. "There are similar bills in the Illinois legislature that are being discussed here at Y&G."

"I will get the bill where it needs to be, and passed as fast as possible."

LEGALLY NUDE

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bill is that they feel it is their natural right to be naked.

Lobbyist Taylor Mathis, also from Network Carl Sandburg, said, "Everyone is born naked, so why can't we walk around naked? It is only natural; it is just part of our society."

The group felt that they would get the governor's sup-

port because the bill deals with natural human rights.

Moreover, the group feels the bill will benefit society.

"If the bill is passed and people start walking around naked, our society will become less nervous about people's bodies, and that might reduce the rate of sexual harassment and molestation," said Karstens.

2009 Y&G Ballot

GOVERNOR

- 421 David Pileski - Elmhurst Lake Park
- 151 Matt Shine - Network Stagg
- 341 Stephen Vercellino - Jefferson Co. Sesser-Valier

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

- 559 Antonio Clinton - McHenry Co. Faith Lutheran
- 350 John Miller - Network Carl Sandburg

SECRETARY OF STATE

- 507 Janesh Rahlan - Heritage Waubonsie Valley
- 188 Trevor Thompson - Springfield Williamsville
- 225 Kristen Vilimek - Network Stagg

CHIEF JUSTICE

- 680 Megan Godette - Network Andrew
- 235 Scott Nelson - Heritage Neuqua Valley

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

- 146 Thomas Argires - Network Carl Sandburg
- 207 Kristen Flatt - Jefferson Co. Sesser-Valier
- 86 Pranav Gade - Elmhurst Lake Park
- 210 Jessa Hawkins - Jefferson Co. Mt. Vernon
- 91 Nicole Su - Heritage Neuqua Valley
- 46 Brenden Witry - Network Andrew

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

- 111 Tyler Chance - Jefferson Co. West Frankfurt
- 54 Joelle Jach - Elmhurst Lake Park
- 113 Chris Mork - BR Ryall Wheaton W'ville South
- 95 John Palmer Rea - Jefferson Co. Sesser-Valier
- 36 Lara Wasilkoff - Network Carl Sandburg

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LOBBYISTS

- 109 Noah Thacker - BR Ryall Wheaton W'ville South

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Bill groups are having some fun with legislation

Kurt Fowler
Springfield Williamsville

As you flip through this year's bill book, you may come across several bills that bring a smile to your face. While most groups submit legislation that they hope will bring serious change to Illinois, some bill groups have decided to use their bills as a way to lighten the mood during the intense Springfield weekend.

Among this year's less serious bills are proposals that would make ice cream the official State snack food, designate Apples to Apples as the state's official

party game, and mandate that all students hoping to attend college in Illinois must complete the video game Super Mario 64.

"Our bill will break up the serious debate," said Shannon Buckley from Network Carl Sandburg, sponsor of SB-O-20, which would make ice cream the state snack food. "We wanted to do something fun and kind of silly because we were sick of the seriousness [of the program]."

It may come as a surprise to some that these bills were able to make it to the weekend, especially

past the censorship of the advisors, but the groups did not find it too difficult. "Our advisor lets us do whatever bills we want," said Natalie Fisher, a legislator from Network Andrew whose bill focuses on Apples to Apples. "He let us pick."

For a bill group from Network Carl Sandburg that hopes to make the Nintendo game Super Mario 64 a prerequisite for attending college the bill started as a joke, but after research, they realized that the requirement could have some benefits.

Nonetheless, their ex-

pectations for the bill remain low.

"I don't think it's going to pass," said the bill's lobbyist Lauren Mrozek. "It's absolutely ludicrous, but if we could get it through that would be really awesome."

While it may seem that those sponsoring a bill lacking serious intent are trying to lessen their workload, Erick Lipkowski, the senate sponsor of the Super Mario 64 bill, disagreed.

"It's hard to argue it as a serious thing," he said. "It does have some legitimacy though."

Possible vote to end affirmative action policies

TWO BILL GROUPS WANT TO END AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROCESSES FOR COLLEGE ADMISSION

Jordan Durham
Christian County Taylorville

Affirmative action is a pressing issue in the 2009 Y&G general assembly.

Several bills in the House and Senate seek to ban the practice of affirmative action.

Sponsors from Springfield Williamsville and McHenry County Crystal Lake South are adamant about eliminating unequal admission processes in universities.

Lauren Brandt, of Springfield Williamsville, is the house sponsor of a bill seeking to ban affirmative action.

"Our bill is based on [the belief that] all people are equal," said Brandt. "Right now it gives preference on admissions, and it shouldn't be based on

superficial characteristics. Students should only be accepted based on student's achievements."

One statistic brought up in the Gray Education Committee was that 81% of Caucasian students graduate from high school, compared to only 53% of African-Americans.

Sierra Hilt of McHenry County Crystal Lake South is the House sponsor of another bill dealing with affirmative action.

Although the bill does

not specifically mention affirmative action, the bill focuses on the consideration of a student's race, religion, gender, and income in the collegiate admissions process.

Hilt believes that the bill will not have a negative impact on diversity. "I don't think it takes away from diversity," said Hilt. "There's just an unwritten quota we're trying to get rid of."

As of Friday after-

noon's committee meetings, both affirmative action bills seem to have strong support, making bill sponsors and lobbyists hopeful for their days at the Capitol.

"Overall we do have support," said Springfield Williamsville Senate Sponsor Chelsea Nichols. "We need to really be specific about small details like income and where it's coming from."

Both bills focus on achievement-based acceptance into colleges and universities, and bill sponsors seem to share similar hopes for the future of Illinois universities and their students.

"Once we get it all set in stone it is giving an equal opportunity," said Nichols.

"I don't think it takes away from diversity . . . There's just an unwritten quota we're trying to get rid of."

Lt. Governor wowed audience with words



Jake Buescher
Springfield/Williamsville

Antonio "Heavy" Clinton, newly elected Lt. Governor, used his passion to carry him into the spotlight.

Though most people could remember little more than the P.O.D. song "Youth of a Nation" after his speech, Clinton's energy and charisma put him over the top in the ballot boxes.

Clinton ad-libbed the entire speech while trying to convey his message that young people are often underestimated. "A lot of people think that because we're young, we aren't capable of doing meaningful things," said Clinton.

Clinton chose to run for Lt. Governor because he could "talk to people more" while "helping bills pass."

Mary Novokhovskiy, a Senator from Lake County Stevenson based her vote for Clinton on his charisma. "It was difficult to understand what he was saying,

but he said it with style." Novokhovskiy was also disappointed in the speech of Clinton's competitor, John Miller, of Network Carl Sandburg. "The dull climax of John Miller's speech was asking a girl to prom," said Novokhovskiy.

Megan Mitchell, a House member also from Lake County Stevenson agreed that Clinton's speech was more effective. "The theme was better than Mr. Miller's," said Mitchell.

Neil Patel, a Committee Chairperson from Jefferson County DuQuoin and former Y&G roommate of Clinton, supports the new Lt. Governor wholeheartedly. "When he tried to get on topic, he was a little confusing but got the point across," said Patel.

Drew Bennett, a page from Jefferson County DuQuoin summed up what was on everyone's mind. "Clinton gave one of the best speeches of the day."

Newly elected Lieutenant Governor Antonio Clinton really impressed the delegates during his speech Friday afternoon. Clinton, who speaks in a very animated, passionate manner, drew tremendous amounts of applause throughout his address. This enthusiasm made its way to the ballot box.

Several groups aim to curb use of plastic bags

Mark Podeschi
Christian County Taylorville

One of the hot topics this year at Y&G is the regulation of plastic bags. With the environment a national and international concern, many students believe that this is a step towards cutting down on pollution and other damage to the environment.

With the help of her fellow delegates, Taylor Bryant, a representative from Jefferson County Murphysboro is hoping to pass a bill that will put a tax on consumers that use plastic bags in retail stores.

"Plastic accounts for about 10% of pollution just in the ocean," said Bryant.

"Plastic is just very harmful because it is synthetic and never biodegrades. It just is turned into more toxins which harm the environment."

The law calls for a fine that would increase the sales tax by 20% for the use of plastic bags.

Bryant hopes that the bill will dramatically reduce the amount of plastic bags used by consumers.

"We hope by doing this it will at least cut down on the amount of plastic used, but we can't expect to completely stop it," said Bryant. "We're hoping that people say 'Hey, that person's saving money by not using plastic. Maybe we should do the same.'"

The group has sug-

gested using alternatives to the plastic bags. There will be no fine placed on paper bags because they are biodegradable, and there will be no tax on canvas bags because they can be reused.

Aaron Erbes, the Senate sponsor of the bill, believes that switch from plastic bags will be a smooth transition. "I think it will be easier to switch over to canvas because they are kind of a fad now," said Erbes. "This makes the bags easier to access, and so hopefully people will want to switch over to using something more environmentally friendly."

This bill is just one of five bill that address plastic bag regulation that is up for

consideration in the Y&G legislature. Others discuss matters including changing to biodegradable bags in schools, putting a tax on businesses that distribute plastic and paper bags, or requiring that paper bags be distributed along with plastic bags so customers have a choice. One bill even proposes outlawing plastic bags completely.

Alissa Baker, a Senator of Kankakee BBCHS is a sponsor of another bill regulating the use of plastic bags.

"I think it is good that we're doing something about plastic bags," said Baker. "They really harm the environment and I'm glad we're looking for solutions."

Bill calls for students to perform mental health screenings on peers

Bricklin Welch
Springfield Williamsville

A bill group from Elmhurst York is proposing a bill (SB-O-07) which relates to mental health screenings and increased security at public institutions of higher learning.

When asked why she chose to write this legislation, Kristina Murray replied, "It started when I was watching the NIU shooting on the news.

This event was very disturbing to me because of the fact that it could have been prevented. Everyone knew that the shooter was having problems and no one reported him."

The bill states that "[t]he warning categories for mental health screenings are: 1) the student has a previous or current psychiatric diagnosis or, 2) the student has been referred to the institution's mental health services by faculty, staff, or a fellow student."

Under this legislation, a classmate can determine the mental stability of his/her peers. When Matthew Germino, a lobbyist from Network Marist, was asked about the bill, he replied, "I think a student should be able to recommend someone to be screened, but the administration should have the final decision whether or not the student needs

help."

Trevor Thompson, a representative from Springfield Williamsville, disagreed.

"Students should not be able to recommend someone for services because I don't think a student should make that big of a decision because some people could take advantage of this and play mean jokes on people."

The bill group wants to make it mandatory for all public institutions of higher learning to conduct these mental health screenings.

According to the legislation, if the institution does not conduct the screening for students who have met one of the two warning categories, it will face a fine of \$10,000 per semester. The legislation will also require the schools to pay the cost of a psychiatrist.

According to Benson, his bill group had some trouble getting the legislation through Pre-Leg I.

"Pre-Leg I was pretty rough," said Benson. "For Pre-Leg II, we were much more prepared, yet we had to make a lot of amendments," added Knoerzer.

"We worked to include the punishment for removing squatters forcibly and also added the two-year standard in which a building will be deemed 'abandoned.'"

Pileski is ready to serve in 2009

Samantha Pelc
Springfield Williamsville

David Pileski, from Elmhurst Lake Park, was elected the 2009 Youth Governor yesterday afternoon and was formerly announced to all the delegates following the banquet Friday evening.

Pileski, who is in his third year of the program, is looking forward to his position because he loves to "reach out and help everyone."

Serving as our governor, Pileski knows that his dedication will help make the weekend run smoothly. Some of his first goals are to set everything in place so things will run smoothly early right from the start.

He has set up a panel consisting of someone from every "[legislative] color, role, and region within the program."

Governor Pileski knows that he will be experiencing a busy weekend, but that does not in-

timidate him at all.

"I'm really excited. I love meeting new people and working with everyone. The role of governor affects everyone here and that's important to me."

When it comes to the luxuries of the governorship, Paleski loves the suite that he gets for the weekend and especially the Jacuzzi tub.

Paleski was also impressed with the other perks of the job.

"The \$5000 scholarship [that] was offered was amazing, and then all the pictures and the suite- everything just keeps getting better and better tonight," he said.

And even though the Governor will be working hard all day like the rest of us, he will still try to relax.

"Mandatory fun night is a great after a long day at the Capitol. It's a great place to be able to unwind and make memories," said the Governor.

NETWORK SHEPARD DELEGATION WANTS TO LIMIT STD'S, DEMANDS TESTING OF STUDENTS

Savanna James
Jefferson County DuQuoin

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, Illinois ranks in the top ten of U.S. reported sexually transmitted diseases.

Because of this statistic, a group from Network Shepard has introduced a bill requiring high school students to have an annual physical that includes

an STD test for Syphilis, Chlamydia, and Gonorrhea in order to register for high school.

Carla Faustino, Senate sponsor of the bill, admits that the topic is controversial. "At Pre-Leg I and II delegates seemed to be shocked that we wanted to compose something so

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STD TESTING

STD TESTING

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secretive and guarded into a law for Illinois, but we all just need to keep an open mind."

Kailah Kelly, a legislator from Jefferson County Du Quoin believes that the bill could be an effective health measure. "I agree with this bill because we need to save the world one STD at a time!"

During committee, delegates questioned who would be responsible for paying for treatment in the case of a positive test. Faustino answered promptly, saying that the STDs which are being tested are in fact treatable with a \$21 antibiotic.

If a student was unable to pay for the treatment, schools would use their own individual waiver to pay for the treatment.

Gabe Cralley, a legislator and committee chairperson from Jefferson County Mt. Vernon feels that this bill would threaten individual rights. "This is an invasion of privacy and will only make our students another statistic and look like sex crazed teenagers," he said.

However, Charles Parrilla a legislator from Heritage Batavia disagrees.

"I think this is a good precaution to take for high school students," said Parrilla

Faustino, however, believes that this legislation is important, even beyond Y&G.

"This bill is imperative to be passed, so perhaps the government may see this and literally take action about this increasing epidemic."

Attorneys gear up for tough weekend of work

Dylan Woods
Mitch Gaffney
Springfield Williamsville

Attorneys have one of the most unknown and under appreciated jobs in Y&G.

However, attorneys actually have a very busy weekend.

On Friday, after the speeches, the attorneys all attend a meeting laying out their itinerary for the weekend.

Soon after, they break into individual groups for training in judging and arguing cases. Next, they begin to prep their oral arguments, which is the culmination of their PreLeg I and PreLeg II work.

On Saturday, the attorneys must be in the courtroom by 8:50. At 9:00 they begin their Supreme Court Sessions.

This could be considered the highlight of the weekend for the attorneys. During these Supreme Court sessions, the attorneys argue the constitutionality of bills. Those not arguing get to act as judges during the trials.

These sessions last from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and are held on Saturday and Sunday.

This year's Supreme Court arguments will represent a first in Y&G history. The two candidates for Chief Justice, Megan Godette and Scott Nelson, will each argue the same case before the Supreme Court; however, it will be from opposing sides.

Although no points will be awarded and the battle will count only for bragging rights, the arguments should provide some friendly, competitive fireworks.

Elmhurst York bill to raise statutory rape age

Jenna Hansen
Springfield Williamsville

A bill group from Elmhurst York is trying to pass a bill (HB-B-22) changing the definition of statutory rape.

Currently, anyone above the age of 18 years-old who has sexual intercourse with someone below the age of 17 years-old can be charged with statutory rape. The new proposal changes the upper age limit to 20 years-old and the lower age limit to 16.

Senate sponsor Lauren Clay said that the purpose of the bill is to focus on individual rights. "Our group made this bill because we want teenagers to have more freedom in their decisions. The government has too much control over teenagers' lives and sexual activity shouldn't be controlled [to this] extent," explained Clay.

Throughout the PreLeg stages of Y&G, the bill received mixed sup-

port.

"This bill has been extremely controversial because it is dealing with sex," explained Clay.

Despite the reservations, Clay feels confident that the bill will pass.

"I feel this bill only aids teens becoming more responsible for their actions."

Despite Clay's confidence, the bill has also provoked strong opposition.

Brianna Whittler, a page from Kankakee BBCHS, is one Y&G member who opposes the bill.

"I don't support the bill because at 18 years old teens should be responsible for their actions, especially as an adult," said Whittler.

Rachael Wooten, a representative from Network Stagg agrees with Whittler.

"The current legislation shouldn't be changed, but if it were to be passed at Y&G, changes should be made."

Bill proposes aid to visually impaired

Ashley Davis
Springfield Williamsville

Bill SB-O-22 proposes the installation of auditory devices at major intersections in order to help visually impaired pedestrians.

The devices would make one sound when it is safe to cross the street, and another sound ten seconds before the light changes.

Because the bill calls for state funding, each device would draw approximately five hundred to one thousand

dollars from the state budget.

Although the bill came under fire during committee, with several delegates mocking the legislation openly, Senate sponsor Ryan Libert of B.R. Ryall Wheaton Warrenville South defended his bill and responded to several questions, many of which focused on the funding of the

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VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Video press reports the news for Y&G

Jordan Durham
Mark Podeschi
Christian County Taylorville

Although most delegates in Y&G work and then play, the same cannot be said for the members of video press.

While most of Friday's activity is found on the first and second floors of the Crown Plaza, video press members spend most of their day cutting, editing, and preparing film for the upcoming night's broadcast.

"Video press is just a unique area of the program," said Michael Wojtyla, Video Press Advisor and Vice Chair of the Board of Directors. "Our kids are working when others play and sleep. We're usually shooting the show."

One case in particular is that of Patrick Flannery, Network Morgan Park Academy. In two years as a member of Y&G, he has not been able to attend

Saturday night's Mandatory Fun Night events.

"I probably won't get to attend this year either," said Flannery, "because I'm Saturday's anchor, and we'll be shooting the broadcast."

Throughout the day, video press can be found recording and interviewing delegates from all aspects of the program, ranging anywhere from lobbyists to advisors and coordinators of the program.

Once they are finished interviewing, members view and edit the footage in preparation for the broadcast.

Early morning anchor shots and introduction clips are shot later on in the day.

Flannery especially likes preparing for special reports. "Last year we shot a special report on why delegates shouldn't wear pants," said Flannery. "This



Video press reporters get ready to do a rehearsal broadcast from their headquarters on fourteenth floor of the Crowne Plaza. The video press produces two evening news shows, one on Friday and one on Saturday, that are broadcast to the delegates over the hotel's closed-circuit television channel.

year on our way down to Springfield we heard the song 'They are zombie, they are neighbors' and thought zombies would be a good one, and we all like zombies."

When asked how the weekend would unfold for

the video press area of the program, Wojtyla stated, "I don't know. I don't predict. I don't judge."

Although the program airs on Friday night, delegates are still able to catch a re-run of the program on channel 2 at 12:25 a.m.

Group wants to legalize "squatting"

Mitch Gaffney
Springfield Williamsville

Network Shepard bill, HB-O-15, will legalize "squatting," or the act of assuming residence, in abandoned buildings that have met a certain criteria, thereby making them abandoned.

Co-sponsor Kelly Hayes proposed the bill for altruistic reasons. "Our bill is basically just giving people who don't have a place to stay a variety of different places to stay," said Hayes.

House sponsor Mohammad About claimed

they were trying to be "original and creative."

Senate sponsor Andrew Benson said that they were just making it legal to do something that is already common occurrence in many big cities. "People already do it all the time," Benson said. "Our bill just finally makes it legal."

Furthermore, the bill sponsors say that now is the time for this legislation. "With the way our economy is heading, more people are becoming homeless," said co-sponsor Sean Knoerzer. "This bill will put a roof over their head."

However, not everyone agrees with this bill, including Aaron Trockman, a legislator from BR Ryall Wheaton Warrensville South.

"I think this bill is dumb. If someone owns the property being occupied, then it would be trespassing," he said.

Katherine Ripka, a legislator from Springfield Williamsville, agrees with Trockman.

"I don't entirely agree with this bill," stated Ripka. "It could be private property that has specific reasons it is not in use."

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bill.

Despite the debate, Ericka Opalecky from Jefferson County Mt. Vernon felt that the bill represented a valid use of taxpayer money.

"Money used for safety is money well spent," said Opalecky.

Although Carl Holst from Network Marist supported the bill, he was unsure about the bill's implementation. "I agree with the bill, but these devices should be tested [first] at popular intersections."