

TENNESSEE AMERICAN LEGION

BOYS STATE

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DELEGATES VIE FOR BOYS' NATION

At the conclusion of Boys' State, two delegates will be selected to represent Tennessee as Boys' Nation senators in Washington, D.C., later this summer. A select 100 delegates from Boys' State programs across the nation will travel to Marymount University in Arlington, Va., to learn how the federal government operates. The two delegates will be privileged to participate in a number of events including a special memorial service at Arlington National Cemetery, a visit to the Pentagon complete with a briefing with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a day on Capitol Hill with lunch in the Senate dining room and a visit to the White House. Traditionally, the President has been available to greet Boys' Nation delegates. The trip also offers an excellent opportunity for delegates interested in the U.S. service academies to meet and talk with representatives.

Joseph Riley, the 2008 Tennessee Boys' State governor, was the first Tennessee delegate to be elected president of Boys' Nation. The following candidates are competing for the opportunity to represent their state and the chance to become the next Boys' Nation president from Tennessee: James Isaac Kay, Cain City; Jonathan Greer, Hammer City; Arthur Liu, Kreider City, Elmer Smith, Lahiere City; Joseph Totherow, Levi City; Joshua Anderson, Loring City; Marlon Brown, Maddux City; Marcus Hill, McCollum City; Josey Janow, Reel City; David Adams, Roberts City; Vignesh Balasundaram, Summitt City; Nikhil Basutkar, Young City.

SATURDAY'S EVENTS. . . Tennessee Adjutant General Max Haston will speak at the final day of Boys' State during the inauguration ceremony for Boys' State Governor-elect Logan Parsons. The names of the Boys' Nation delegates and the results of the city competition will be announced. The finalist for the Samsung American Legion scholarship award will also be announced. Samsung established the scholarship in honor of those who served in the Korean War. Only descendants of U.S. veterans who served during wartime are eligible. The winner will join other state finalists, each of whom receives a \$1,000 scholarship, in competition for 12 \$20,000 national scholarships.

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BOYS' STATE HAS GOT TALENT: Some of the most memorable moments of the week happen at the Thursday night talent show and this year was no exception. The variety of performances included hilarious efforts and unbelievable talent. Kreider City won this year's competition, followed by Maddux in second, Roberts in third, Reel in fourth and Cain in fifth.

Ken Danilson encourages delegates to volunteer

Thursday evening, Ken Danilson, National Chairman of the American Legion Finance Commission, received a standing ovation for his service and his advice to delegates about the importance of volunteering.

Danilson, an Iowa native, was a member of the U.S. Marine Corps, as were his mother and father. He served two tours in Vietnam and earned a bachelor's degree in political science and history from Iowa State University, using the G.I. bill. He retired from a career in banking and finance to his family's farm, which is more than 100 years old.

Since retiring, Danilson has dedicated himself to volunteer service. He spoke about the importance of volunteerism in good citizenship and effective democracy.

"You can usually learn something about a state from its nickname," he said, pointing out some are named for flowers, landmarks and other iconic images.

"But Tennessee is different; Tennessee is the volunteer state," he said. "Its name can be traced back to the War of 1812, when this country had to raise arms against the British. At the closing scene of the Battle of New Orleans, Andrew Jackson led the fight that would close the book on the British crown.

"Volunteers are responsible for your attendance here today," he said.

Danilson explained that in 2012, American Legion posts across the country contributed more than 4 million hours and more than \$5 million.

"Individual members contributed millions more in hours and funds alike because it is the right thing to do," he said. "You are poised to lead your generation, and you can help change lives for the benefit of the whole country. Remember to give something back."

Danilson played a visually powerful slideshow showing how the American Legion came to the aid of Oklahoma tornado victims in May. The American Legion gave \$1 million to aid veterans and families and fulfilled needs through a new partner organization, Soldier's Wish.

"We set up a command center and provided food, water and supplies to veterans, their families and others," he said, "along with a hotline for donations and help requests. Danilson said one of the biggest needs was for boxes to salvage belongings, so the American Legion provided free boxes to victims.

Danilson concluded with a simple request to delegates.

"Say a prayer tonight for our troops and their families."

