

The Capitol CHRONICLE

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Issue 3

Editor in Chief Kate Mancini

Decriminalization of Marijuana

By: Alex Sanna

For years, Pennsylvania has slowly been moving towards the decriminalization of marijuana. Cities such as Philadelphia, State College, and

Pittsburgh have made the first steps, and the rest of the state is quickly catching up. But some say just

decriminalization is not enough. In fact, there are several proposed bills urging the full decriminalization of recreational marijuana, and Governor Rishin

Sharma is on board. At the Governor's Press Conference, Sharma stated his main goals for the Commonwealth. He stated that decriminalization is vital to Pennsylvania's health because "Individuals who are petty criminals are becoming hardened criminals due to repeated, nonviolent offenses and time in prison. We need to integrate these

individuals back into our society and bring them back to be productive members of our society". Not only will decriminalization alleviate the



Photo By Jana Skowvron

overcrowding of prisons, but it will also better the lives of thousands of people. From Hanover to Erie, decriminalization could soon be a reality for all Pennsylvania residents.

Dave John Conspiracy Theories:

The Man. The Myth. The Legend. Dave John and his story.

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Content or Controversy?

Are there bills out there that are controversial rather than well written?

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Put on The Wrong Side?:

An attorney team finds that their year-long work is for nothing.

Find out why in The Wrong Side page 7

Constitutional Challenge Issued

This article was written by the Governor's Administration

With each year's annual Constitutional Challenge, the Governor's administration main motive is to continually work towards integrating the branches of the Youth and Government program. Integration is essential to empower the stream of networking through a framework to give important information to benefit the capacity of the program. To further motivate unification, the cabinet will be conducting yet another challenge, but this time, on a bigger platform. Overall, the aim of the Constitutional Challenge is to show the several sides of the



Photo By Kate Henning

YAG program through friendly, yet serious debate. Blue Senate bill 932 entitled "My Shot," written by Senator Sam Condrick and Representative Connor McDonald, will be the bill used in the administration's challenge this year. The bill aims to strengthen general public health within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The challenge will question the constitutionality of its concept, as it proposes to eliminate the religious exemption when it comes to vaccinating children within schools. The Constitutional Challenge debate will take place on Sunday during closing ceremonies and will involve: Chief Justice Abby Han, the bill authors, and representing the Governor's administration, Jerusha George, the Judicial Asset, and Attorney General Ethan Sniderman.

A Day in the Life of an Administrator and a Page

By: Ashlea Eaton and Alivia Clawson

Throughout the chaos of Model weekend, it is easy to forget that everyone's experience of the convention is so different. A day in the life of delegates from different branches varies in many ways, making the weekend a



Administrator Katie Bablak By Malia Gray

memorable experience for everyone involved. Although the branches of Judicial, Legislative, and Press are the most well-known, the position of an Administrator is also important to the program. Admin plays a critical role in

the success of the Model Convention. Not only do they have a lot of flexibility throughout the day, but they get to advocate bills that reflect their beliefs. Upon arriving at the Capitol, Admin meets with each other and plans out which delegates are speaking on behalf of which bills. Following this meeting, Admin spends their days running between committee rooms speaking on behalf of bills.

Another unique job at Model is that of Pages. Natalie Maneval is one of two Pages at this year's convention. Her job is to make sure that all the bill debates run smoothly. She runs to committee rooms and takes the bills that have been passed to the next stage of the process. Each Page has a specific number of rooms they have to get to each day. When committees are finished, Maneval is able to help out in the chambers. Each job at Model is unique and different. However, every job is important and vital to the success of the weekend.

Dave John: The Man, The Myth, The Legend

By: Savannah Sauers

Those who are veteran delegates of Youth and Government will be familiar with the sparkly-eyed, white-haired ball of friendliness that is the vessel for the spirit of Dave John. However, if one peels back his outer layer, one can see the holes that pepper his story. Here are the conspiracy theories and rumors about one of YAG's most beloved advisors.

Every aspect of Dave John's life is littered with speculation, but this may be able to be attributed to the powers gifted to him by various deities and alien royalty. However, one thing is certain: Dave John was born on

April 1, 1878, or perhaps hatched is the more appropriate terminology. From a clam shell found in the Susquehanna River by a local fisherman, he started his life with a splash, which drew the attention of a seemingly innocuous man dressed in a plain black suit.

The man collected him for a secret government operation called the Dragon Project, which is where the tattoo of a fire-breathing dragon on his left bicep came from. Due to a budget oversight, however, the project was shut down, and the children were placed in cryogenic freezers until the project could be restarted. When the Communist threat began to appear in the 1950s, the project was revitalized and made a subsection under the CIA. For years, he was fed super-serum, making him the equivalent of Captain America, but the government wanted more than a bodybuilder- they needed a hero. Various chemicals and treatments left Dave John with electric blue hair that refuses to be dyed and fear of silver, probably from the metal instruments that were used by the faceless

scientists. When the heads of the program decided the men, if they could even be called that anymore, were ready for battle, they were sent to survey the Russian threat in the Arctic Sea. But as fate would have it, weather interfered, plunging the rest of the unit into the icy waters leaving Dave John as the only survivor. Deciding to take his fate into his own hands, Dave John let the world believe he died and lived out his dream as a world-class death metal xylophonist.

Feeling lost in the world, Dave John attempted to find purpose. This is where the stories diverge, dear readers, as there were many sightings of his elusive person, but none

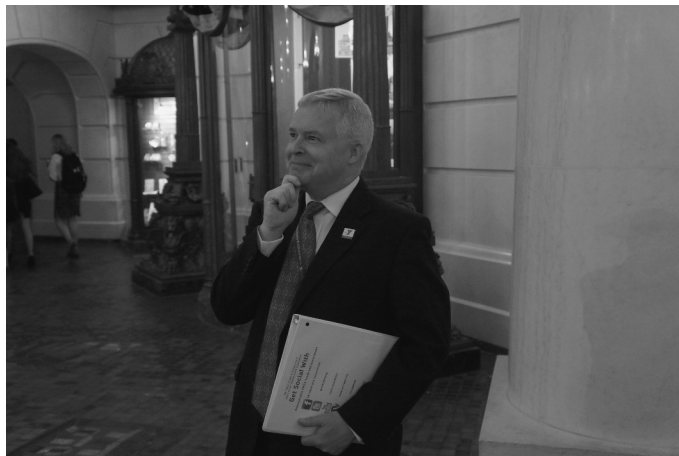


Photo By Kate Henning

can be confirmed. Some put him climbing the Berlin Wall, others recollect stories of a strange man with a pet trout named Sir Elton John that would wander the Susquehanna River. Others say he was in the Olympics, where he was set to beat Usain Bolt until jaundice struck him the night before he was to race. Some people swear he had a reality TV show entitled

Digging Deep with Dave, a philosophical landscaping show. Others swear he impersonated the Queen of England and acted as her stunt double. The paths converge when Dave John began working as an advisor in YAG, though for what purpose, there is no clear answer. Perhaps he found a love of government and engaging the youth, or perhaps he is looking to recruit for his own secret project.

One thing is true: Dave John is a figure shrouded in mystery and intrigue. So when you see him crack a small smile or click his heels before vanishing into thin air, know that he is a permanent fixture in the YAG community and will always be there to help any delegate.

BREAKING NEWS: Smoothie-Gate Scandal Hits the Gold House

By: William Petsinger

Recent reports alleging that Gold Speaker of the House Terrance Jefferson is accepting bribes are raising concerns among several delegates at Model this year. This sort of unacceptable behavior has only recently been brought to light, causing many to call for Jefferson to be exposed and suffer the consequences needed for such nefarious deeds. The reported bribes, becoming more and more common every day, have shown to consistently be made up of fruit smoothies, a drink that Jefferson has



Speaker Jefferson By Elena Lee

announced a taste for among his political cohorts. These sweet bribes have raised many questions as to the legitimacy of Jefferson's position of authority within the Gold House. Many alarmed delegates claim it to be difficult to trust a man so easily persuaded by a simple fruit smoothie to hold a position with so much responsibility, such as Gold House Speaker.

Visit the Whova app for the complete article

Lost and Confused

By: Lizzie Scabilloni and Chloe Hsing-Smith

A delegate finding their way through the Capitol can be a stressful experience, especially for first-year members. Elevated nerves mixed with being lost can result in a stressful Model experience that no one wants. In order to ensure a smoothly flowing Model weekend, interviewers have conducted a short catalog of information and suggestions to benefit newer members of Youth and Government. Many people refer to the information desk at the front of the building when they are confused. According to Belinda Bowers, who works at the information desk, many people ask her for directions, especially tour groups. She mentions that "it's a very confusing building." A tip that she gave to anyone who is in the Capitol is to always have a map. Physical maps are always good to have, but there is also a map available on the Capitol website. Bowers added that one should never be afraid to ask someone for directions, as it saves them time. Liz Guenther, a third-year delegate, recalls her first time at



Belinda Bowers By in
Meera Rathod

Model. At the time, she was Press and was assigned to take pictures at the Rotunda for an event at 4:00. Being unfamiliar with the Capitol, she accidentally took the elevator to the basement and could not find her way upstairs. When she did, she missed her chance to take the photo. It is important for delegates to be able to navigate the Capitol to avoid situations like these. Getting lost is never a fun thing, especially at an intense event like Model. The best way to maximize one's Model experience is to stay organized and stay aware.

Content or Controversy?

Editorial By: Grace Randall and Sofia Roque

Within Youth and Government, each bill has its own levels of debatability and quality, but there are bills that end up sacrificing one for the sake of the other.



Photo By Katie Murders

This has different implications for each delegate, but the question still stands— which bills, controversial or well-written, are the fittest for the Senate and House floors? Generally, delegates report that a well-rounded bill is a combination of these two components, but even still, each trait has a different tier of significance to each legislator.

Any bill that sparks debate will undoubtedly spark interest and excitement within the debaters. Luke Reinhard, a member of the Blue House and of the East Shore delegation explained, “Bills can never be too controversial. Controversial bills make for good debate, and good debates end up being more fun for delegates.” For Reinhard, a bill being debatable “has a higher priority over being well-written, because if a bill is not debatable and people cannot talk about it, then it is pointless.” Many delegates agree with Reinhard’s statements, including John Wesesky, another member of the Blue House from the Obama delegation. He said, “A well-rounded bill for me is debatable.” Debatable bills give delegates the chance to talk about and explain

both sides to something, allowing them to use critical thinking skills to elaborate on their arguments.

On the other hand, bills that are written with quality are also prioritized by members of the legislature, including Youth Governor Rishin Sharma. In his remarks during the April 12th press conference, Sharma said that well-written bills with real-world significance should be every delegate’s priority. “It is an absolute necessity, a bare minimum requirement to make sure that every single bill is well-written,” he said on the emphasis of quality over debatability. Elijah Burtner, Gold Committee Chair from the Somerset delegation, also believes that the quality content in these bills deserves a chance in the spotlight, saying that “it’s important for the people who write the practical bills to have a fair shot.”

At Model, each bill in the calendar ends up in a committee and then, perhaps, on the floor of the beautiful chambers of the Capitol. In the end, it is up to the Presiding Officer as to how their chamber will run.



Photo By Olivia Dreon

New Delegations

By: *Gina Denny and Julia Lingenfelter*

Youth and Government is constantly growing with more members joining each year. There are currently over 700 students involved in this year's Model Government Convention. While this rise in numbers can be due to recruitment from individual clubs, the growth is also attributed to the addition of new delegations. This year, the program welcomes four new delegations: Erie YMCA, Garnet Valley High School, Plymouth Whitemarsh High School, and the YMCA of Indiana County.

One of the new delegations, Erie, was reintroduced by Chris Gotsch, an advisor of the delegation. He explained, "I am an alumni of the program, and when I moved back to the area I wanted to get the program started again." The club was pitched to students already involved in leadership skill classes, so they would have an idea of what to expect and how to deal with it. This year, they are focusing on getting used to the program, but hope to have more student leaders in the future.

Coming to model for the first time can be an intimidating experience, especially when the delegation as a whole is new. Erie delegates found that they were experiencing many of same problems younger members face. It can be hard to find the confidence to speak up in a room full of people or not let the constant work overwhelm them. It



can also be difficult *Chris Gotsch By Elizabeth Wallace*

to learn skills such as bill and brief writing, even more so without the assistance of experienced students. But as the convention progresses, it becomes easier to build up the confidence and skills and handle the responsibility. Looking forward to the growth of the delegation, Gotsch stated, "Hopefully we continue to grow. I know we have a lot of strong students, and we just want to keep them motivated and getting out and recruiting more people." By the end, Erie and younger delegates alike will be seasoned YAG members with a model convention under their belt.

The encouraging growth of YAG in recent years is very promising for the club. New members are discovering what sparks their interest and old members are reigniting the flame that drives them. All in all, the integration of

Smile Project Updates

By: *Press Secretary Emma Lamoreaux and Blue Senator Fahad Jahangir*

With the first few days of Model already behind us, the Smile Project team has been working hard to engage delegates in participating. The Smile Project is a statewide project aimed towards promoting a positive, integrated, welcoming culture in Youth and Government. Smiles and compliments go a long way in making someone's day the very best it can be. During the Thursday sessions, the videography team got together and started their ongoing Instagram video series. The Smile Project team is given full creative control in producing and executing this project, making all work a collaborative effort. During the program's first day at the Capitol, The Smile Project team

went around spreading positive comments to delegates and gaining testimonials from participants, regardless if they had met the delegates before or not. The primary belief for the project is to incentivize quiet delegates to feel confident stepping out of their comfort zone to slowly become social butterflies. Delegates within the program are urged to express themselves, and their work without a facade, and this project would like to build upon that. With two more days left at Model Convention, the team hopes that more people join this easy project and do more for this program.

The Wrong Side

Editorial By: Emily Goetz and Isaiah Feggins

In recent years, the Judicial branch has been growing at a rapid pace. With this fast-paced growth, the chance for mistakes has also grown. This year, a judicial team from the Hershey delegation was unfortunate enough to endure the results of one such mistake. The team, made up of two first years, Vince Andrews-Newhouse and Luke Goldstein, prepared their argument in defense of the appellees but were actually supposed to defend the appellants. This debacle started back in January. The two were told by their advisor that they were assigned to defend the Hospital and Mother's side of the case and based their whole arguments on this. Andrews-Newhouse claimed that he was absent at a later meeting when one of their advisors told Goldstein that he and his partner were given the wrong side to argue. Goldstein immediately forgot, and Andrews-Newhouse was never informed. Therefore, the mistake was never corrected. It wasn't until Thursday night, an hour or so before preliminary arguments, the two received their lanyards and name tags and saw the positions given underneath their names reading "CYS and Singer"(appellants). The team immediately went to talk with their advisors who apologized profusely. There was nothing anyone could do, they had to completely scratch everything they had



Photo By Ethan Barna

already done. Their response was full of shock and panic. The two spent the remainder of Thursday completely rewriting their arguments. Goldstein thought it was easier because he was now arguing for the side that he thought was right. Andrews-Newhouse, on the other hand, found it more difficult because the two now had to comb through new case law and look at the case in a different way in order to make a good argument. Goldstein and Andrews-Newhouse explained to the justices that their advisors had mixed up the two cases, and it still didn't do the two delegates any justice. Goldstein ended up doing the brief right which gave the two a little bump in their score, but overall, it wasn't a good outcome. Hopefully, Goldstein and Andrews-Newhouse will have had enough time to prepare.

Press Release

By: PA Press Corps

The release of a recent article stirred some controversy amongst delegates. A written reporter misinterpreted the meaning behind Blue Senate bill #386, "Imperative Immunizations", while writing an editorial piece. It is never the intention of the Press Corps to wrongly discuss the purpose of a fellow delegates bill. The Press Corps has been working diligently to prevent further incidents, and the Editors are ensuring that all future editorial pieces are backed up with factual information and checked thoroughly. The Press Corps deeply apologizes for the factual inaccuracies in yesterday's paper.



Editor-in-Chief Kate Mancini By Elena Lee

Check out @ymcapayag on Instagram for the full video.

The Search for Dave John

D B W P G J N D N X T E S N L
A I A R H H E A O B J C D H A
N C U R J N H X J U U Q A J O
J K P V J J S D V E J P V A G
H X A H V G N D E W V N J D X
E D E E N J N D A E V J H O N
N N A T H H H D D V N T M F R
N D C E E X O Z A I J H G M E
E H N N M T J J E V N H V V Z
J Y O X W S V H V V E X E A Y
G S U J V E E J A E X J T X D
D A H N E U A D A S D P H J M
U Y U W X V D A E J H N I E W
I N H O J E A D N O J V E D N
P A L W J X T D K S F W F E Q

There are 20 spellings of Dave John in this search. Only one is correct. The search for Dave John begins.

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