

YAG



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EXCITING MORNING AT STATE CONVENTION

By Molly Miller, Charles Page HS

This morning, YAG Delegates and Advisors were treated to a continental breakfast with several of our State legislators.

Following breakfast, a question and answer session with Representative Guy Liebmann, Senator Debbie Leftwich, and Senator Jim Reynolds gave a few delegates a chance to get straight-forward answers to some of their most burning questions about politics.

During the Q&A session, legislators outlined legislative priorities for the students. Topping the agenda were issues such as fixing roads and bridges, funding pay increases and benefits for teachers, and raising the minimum wage for Oklahoma if the federal legislature does not approve a bill to do so.

The legislators also answered questions about money being spent on the Centennial celebration (\$32 million total) and what would have to happen in order for State legislators to pardon the days of school that students missed due to this winter's snow and ice storms (according to them, legislators don't have this power).

The Q&A session was a great opportunity for students to learn about what's going on in the Legislature by speaking with those who are actually representing us, and was a great way to get everyone excited about today's activities at the Capitol.

IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES

By Su Hong, Stillwater HS

While the rest of today has gone fairly smoothly, breakfast wasn't the biggest of hits. The dissatisfied delegates boil the chaos down to two main problems: there wasn't enough food and also not enough manpower to make the food. Many people, including Youth & Government Secretary of State Olymp Nola, couldn't eat breakfast because of the food situation. District Judge Matt Ward commented that while the breakfast issue might have been "pretty crazy," the orange juice was "tasteful and good." The desserts last night were a far cry from the havoc of this morning. Carlos Koglin, a delegate from Putnam City West HS, tried two of the much lusted-over cakes. He exclaimed that the cheesecake was "freakin' amazing!" and was definitely his favorite. On the other hand, he said that the carrot cake was good but "a little nutty" for him.



A group of children from Cherokee Elementary School takes a tour of the Capitol building.

GOVERNOR'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS TAKES DELEGATES BACK TO BASICS

By Courtney Barfoot, Charles Page HS

The inaugural address began the early morning, despite the sleepy-eyed delegates. Ruby Coyle kicked off the day with an upbeat speech. Coyle pulled inspiration for her speech from the Youth and Government program's purpose. Coyle emphasized the leadership opportunities offered by the program. She takes pride in being such an active part of the government process, saying how exciting it is to be "actually sitting in the room and doing it." Youth and Government opens doors to gain self-confidence and experience in the political process. Coyle believes participation in the program allows delegates to meet new and diverse people. It allows for the opportunity to have the "opinions of others help shape your opinions." Governor Coyle's speech reminded all delegates of the fundamental reason they are all a part of this great organization.

"The future belongs to those who believe in their dreams."—Eleanor Roosevelt

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