

SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN

By Molly Miller, Charles Page HS

Each year, the judicial branch of Youth and Government culminates in the Judicial Showcase, which features the two best attorney teams in the entire conference.

The road to the showcase is long and grueling, involving two days of competition. On the first day of the conference, each team is evaluated during trials by a point system and the eight teams with the highest amount of points move on to a finals round in which they continue to be ranked on a point system based on their level of performance. After the finals round, the top two teams (based on points from previous rounds) move on to perform in the showcase round, which takes place in the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

The showcase gives the judicial branch a more competitive feel than any of the other branches because in order to make it to the final event, it is a must to perform well in all of one's trials. "The competition makes the judicial branch more cutthroat than other branches. If my partner and I see someone doing something wrong we always try to use it to our advantage," said Westmoore senior Chase Hopkins. Although there is a small amount of competitiveness in the legislative branch, with each legislator trying to get their bills passed, this level of competition is unique to the judicial branch.

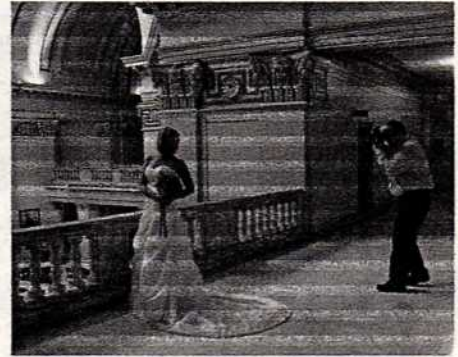
Each Youth and Government delegate is given an opportunity to showcase their abilities in their respective branches, with legislators running for different offices and News Media presenting a newspaper and video for the entire conference. However, Judicial Showcase is something like the Super Bowl of the Youth and Government Conference. Showcase offers a whole new level of prestige to participants, which is definitely something to think about for next year!

INTERESTING BILLS

By Su Hong, Stillwater HS

As we all know, the legislative branch of the government proposes bills and makes laws. During the YAG conference, the legislative delegates have been aptly debating the bills that are going to be passed. Although many bills are serious, there are some bills that are quite unique. House Bill number 19 written by Vaughan and Ferguson said that all state highways should be replaced with an autobahn. Ferguson said he thought of this idea because it was crazy and because nobody had done it before. Another House Bill (House Bill number 10) said that every male and female citizen of the U.S. should be sterilized if charged with a DUI. The author of this bill (Elena Hight) said she created this bill because DUIs are a serious problem and need to be dealt with. She said that the threat of sterilization would keep people from driving under the influence.

Jennifer Reed gets her bridal portrait taken in the rotunda.



Picture by Sydney Caswell, Westmoore

MASSACRE OF DARFURIANS CONTINUES IN SUDAN

By Sydney Caswell, Westmoore HS

On April 19, 1995,

168 people died because of a horrible terrorist attack. Now imagine the Murrah Federal Building being bombed three times a day, every day. On September 11, 2001, another terrorist attack claimed another 2,973 lives. Now imagine 9-11 happening every six days. This is a situation happening right now.

Darfur, a western region in Sudan, is plagued by the Janjaweed, which is a Muslim militant group supported by the Sudanese government. 400,000 people have died so far, with 500 more people dying every day.

"The systematic removal of a race or people" is the definition of the word "genocide." The Janjaweed do not simply kill the Darfurians. The Janjaweed have caused thousands upon thousands of Darfurians to leave their homes and move to poorly supported refugee camps where they eventually die of sickness and starvation. Men are given a choice: join the Janjaweed, or be killed and have their wives and daughters be raped. If they do join, the Janjaweed gets more terrorists and the women are still violated. The women are not necessarily killed, but they are bitten on the neck and left with a permanent scar that marks them forever as an outcast. The only Darfurians that have no chance of survival are the babies. Any infant discovered has its head promptly bashed in. All hope for future generations of Darfur is quickly being diminished. If this is not the systematic removal of a people or race, then what is? The United Nations has failed to recognize it as such.

One of the biggest problems about the Darfur situation is the fact that not many people know what is going on. Someone might say that they are only one person and can't do anything to help. That person would be correct—one person cannot do much. But if that one person tells another person and the other person another and so on, then there is not one person anymore. There is a group of people that can do a huge amount.