

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families



Charlotte's City meeting. Looks like they are working hard with campaign materials on the tables; everyone is all smiles and happy to be there. The girls quickly bonded with others in their cities as well as Senate, House and Party members.



Federal Party

Party Chair - Julia Doski, City I
Vice Chair - Megan Nguyen, City I
House Whip - Tatum Hapes, City I
Senate Whip - Maddy Malek, City E



National Party

Party Chair - Zion Tesfaye, City N
Vice Chair - Omolade Dada, City I
House Whip - Taylor Reid, City K
Senate Whip - Sarah Chang, City G



Today was an exciting day as citizens held their first flag raising ceremony. Citizens also filed for and prepared their campaigns, took part in Senate and House sessions, introduced initial legislation complete with debates, and built their political parties. Colors designate the political parties, blue for the Federal Party and red for the National Party. Citizens used the powers of parliamentary procedures to defend positions. A record number of candidates filed for county, state and party office.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families

Citizens adorned the hallway walls with campaign posters running for various offices. Precinct and county chairs were elected as well as party officials. The day ended with the election of Party officials.

In their cities, the Citizens made significant strides by forming their own mythical political parties, electing precinct and county chairs, discussing their passions, and voting for party officials. Every inch of the halls and walls were adorned with campaign posters from candidates representing cities across the 51st state. The day concluded with the State Party meetings, where the Citizens elected their Party officials.

During State Party elections, National Party Sponsor Rian Morris stated "I was thrilled to see the citizens excited to come together and build a party that they can each take pride in."

Elena King, Federal Party sponsor, shared her thoughts "I loved seeing the citizens get passionate about supporting their party and forming platforms based off of issues that are pertinent to not only their cities and counties, but the real world as well. It's great to see the citizens get excited about local government and discover that it can be educational and entertaining."

Tomorrow will prove to be another interesting and exciting day at Texas Bluebonnet Girls State with Primary Election Day where candidates will deliver their speeches and bills will be debated in the House and Senate.



Photo taken by Charlotte Anderson showing Citizens enthusiastically cheering on a candidate for office.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families



Citizens had a jam-packed schedule today but the rainy weather could not dampen any of their spirits as they began a jam-packed schedule. Everyone had to use more than an umbrella to cope with the downpour but their spirits and excitement ran high.



Our Girls State Citizen Charlotte Anderson took a photo (left) after the rains had stopped. Despite the downpours Citizens carried out their business with enthusiasm and joy. (Right)

The Federal and National Party kicked off the day with their primary speeches first, followed by City Council meetings where Citizens worked on city ordinances for each city's individual needs. Campaigns were launched for State and County offices. The Senate and the House convened with much business conducted as bills were introduced for their first reading. The Citizens were becoming more and more confident in their use of parliamentary procedure. Confidence ran high.

Citizens fully embraced today as it was Juneteenth, and they recognized the importance the Emancipation Proclamation made in the lives of many Texans. The rainstorm continued to follow

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families

Citizens around for the day but they kept busy with many runoff elections which ended with the announcements of election returns for the National and Federalist Parties.

General Election voting commences tomorrow where candidates will deliver speeches from both the Federalist and Nationalist parties.



L to R. Charlotte was assigned to City B. She poses with her City B Junior Counselor Lillia Bloomfield. Right you see participants on stage during a rally.



Today was General Election Day where National and Federalist party candidates for Governor, Lt. Governor and Attorney General were held. Nominees delivered thoughtful and eloquent speeches to fellow Citizens asking for their support and vote. Also today, debates in the Senate and House were held on a variety of topics to include increasing teachers' pay, expanding Medicaid eligibility and literacy courses. Participants were persuasive and forthright in their beliefs to persuade Citizens to vote for their bills.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families



Citizen Charlotte shows us a photo of candidates taking the floor to persuade fellow Citizens to vote for them.

Candidate Contessa Barron from City K, National Party nominee for Lieutenant Governor, stated why she and her fellow Citizens were at Girls State. She noted "We're here to be educated, to take that education with us to our communities, and change the future. We are the future. We represent the change that we want to see in the world." She encouraged her fellow Citizens to make changes in the world - together. This is exactly why the American Legion Auxiliary sends high school juniors to Texas Bluebonnet Girls State. We want to educate our youth, who are our future and who will make a difference in the world because we know that they are making a difference in their schools, communities and churches.

Citizens had the opportunity to ask Candidate Barron and the other nominees questions regarding their stance on various topics. Then it was time to vote. While the Citizens waited for the results, staff took the stage for some funny performances and the City Song Showdown was held. Director of Girls State Lori Swan closed the day by announcing Election Returns.

The newly elected state officials:

Governor: Adhia Da Silva Agostinho, City F

Lieutenant Governor: Contessa Barron, City K

Attorney General: Bareera Saif, City N

Comptroller of Public Accounts: Reagan McDonald, City M

Commissioner of General Land Office: Daniela Laing, City L

Commissioner of Agriculture: Harper Mau, City N

Railroad Commissioner: Carly Krothe, City A

Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals: Mary-Claire Finch, City I

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court: Adeline Shelton, City J

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families



Today was another busy day for our Citizens as they took to the floors of the Senate and House to give their final debates prior to the inauguration of state officers. They also heard a great speech from guest speaker former at-large Houston City Council Member Amanda Edwards, who discussed her efforts to improve public transit as well as cultivate innovation and technology in her city of Houston. She encouraged the Citizens to let their voices be heard through public service as they enter positions of servant leadership. Young and fresh voices with new ideas are needed to continue service to the citizens of Texas or wherever these Citizens choose to serve.

At noon a special joint session was held by the Senate and House to inaugurate the newly-elected state officials. Joining the State Legislature to administer the Oath of Office as well as swear in the 2024 Texas Bluebonnet Girls State elected officials, was the Honorable Jessica Crawford, Judge – 2nd 25th Judicial District Court. Her speech centered on the importance of women in patriotism and government. Following the inauguration, President of the Senate Sofi Udawala and Speaker of the House Claire Noel adjoined the session by closing out the Senate and the House.

County and State-wide Functioning took place in the afternoon with a career and college fair where representatives from area colleges held networking sessions for those Citizens interested in education, law/intelligence, medicine, business/finance, music and government/politics. County-wide dance parties were also held in many cities.

Texas Bluebonnet Girls State Citizens, Counselors and Staff closed the day out with a talent show in Jackson Auditorium. 16 citizens took to the stage to showcase their talents, followed by six special performances by Staff and Counselors. Fun was had by all. Following this the Citizens held final celebrations in their cities with their counselors, to include surprise cakes.



Left Charlotte captured some of the fun that took place on stage. Right she poses with Speaker of the House Claire Noel from Spring.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families



Closing ceremonies brought all of the Citizens, Staff and Counselors together for one final time, ending a week which was truly life-changing for all of the Citizens. They became sisters, they legislated together, they debated together, and they came together as one community - together. Not only have they learned more about the processes that take place in our form of government, but they ended the week as dear friends who will rely on each other in the future as they network and plan their future endeavors.

Newly-elected Governor Adhia Da Silva Agostinho of City F, of the 51st mythical state of Texas Bluebonnet State, addressed Citizens for the very first time, now as a State Elected Official. She stated that, "I'm going to run for Governor one day so this felt like I am one step closer to achieving my goal." She described her experience as part of the 80th session of Girls State, by remarking to her fellow citizens, "I want you to be open to this experience. Be happy and excited because this is a life changing opportunity to build sisterhood and feminism."



Charlotte took a picture of the newly-elected Governor of Texas Bluebonnet Girls State Adhia Da Silva Agostinho as she addressed the more than 600 Citizens who gave her a standing ovation.



A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families

Director Lori Swann announced the Outstanding Citizens as well as delegates to Girls Nation which will take place in Washington, DC in July, 2024. Those selected to Girls Nation were Alex Hant from City G and Contessa Barron from City K with alternates Anjy Fadairo and Saanvi Mylavarapu from City F.

OUTSTANDING CITIZENS WERE:

- City A: Chloe Wilkin
- City B: Ariel De Walt
- City C: Riya Sengupta
- City D: Desarea Zuniga
- City E: Skye Energy Gibbs
- City F: Sarah Miller
- City G: Deborah Garza
- City H: Lydia Salami
- City I: Tatum Hapes
- City J: Lucy Walker
- City K: Vivian Waldrop
- City L: Cadence Dornak
- City M: Katelyn Landolt
- City N: Bareera Saif

The final session of Girls State ended with cheers followed by hugs, tears and smiles as Citizens said farewell to their newly-made friends, Girls State Staff and Counselors. Family members were in attendance to experience the beautiful closing ceremony of the 80th Session of Girls State as well as see how their daughters have blossomed in one short week. Our Citizens leave knowing that their lives have been enriched and forever changed by this experience, as they join the thousands of women who attended Girls State before them. These young ladies are now more equipped with the skills and tools to go out in their communities - and the world- to make a definite difference for others.

This session would not have been possible without the 80+ women volunteers with the American Legion Auxiliary who come together from across the state to make Bluebonnet Girls State a reality. They have generously donated their energy, passion and time to make Bluebonnet Girls State the best experience it can be for our young leaders. Their dedication and passion to shepherding these Citizens is to be commended. However, without the support of our generous donors, this experience would not have been available to our young ladies, so we thank you once again for your support and your donations to make this possible for so many.