

Arizona Girls State Independent



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History and Symbolism of the Poppy

By Grace Wyant
Ironwood City Reporter

The delegates of Arizona Girls State may have wondered about the connection between the poppy making kit they were given earlier in the week.

They may have not understood it as a symbol of the American Legion. In this article, we're going to take a quick dive into the roots and symbolism of the poppy.

The poppy became associated with remembrance after World War I. Bright red poppies grew on battlefields in Europe where many soldiers had fought and died, and the blood-like appearance inspired people to use the flower as a symbol of sacrifice and memory.

The symbol gained popularity through the poem "In Flanders Fields," written by Canadian military physician Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae. The poem described

poppies growing among the graves of fallen soldiers and helped establish the flower as a lasting reminder of those who had served.

The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary later adopted the poppy as a symbol of support for veterans and military families. The poppies are often distributed before Memorial Day, and the donations that are received in return help fund programs that assist veterans and their communities.

The poppy continues to serve an important role in remembering and honoring those that have been lost, or who served.



City Books: A Beautiful Way to Highlight Arizona Girls State

By Ashanti Nevels
Mimosa City Reporter

The Arizona Girls State city and county books are due this upcoming Saturday. City books and county books both follow similar guidelines.

They are comprised of a few sections, but most notably, a map and a history section. Citizens at Girls State will split up into mini committees, like budgeting and planning and zoning.

After being split, the girls will complete their tasks. Specifically in the city book, there is an area for highlighting the girls' achievements. What a beautiful way to highlight the accomplishments of all of the girls, forever kept in city books

to be reviewed by all future Girls State Citizens.

From the governors and secretaries, to the city appointed positions, all girls have put in their all and are helping in their own unique ways.

Similarly, the books themselves show the skills of each of the girls, and how collaboration can make something beautiful. The map, take for example, is a large drawing attempting to display the fictional city or county in its full glory. Because of how large these pieces are, girls work together to make this incredible piece of artwork, displayed in the city book for all to see.

Likewise, with the budget. This piece of

the city book not only is an incredible display of hard work and discipline, but also of the practical skills Girls State teaches.

Multiple girls work together, using the city population and what the city offers to calculate exactly how much money the city would bring in, and how much it loses every year.

The budget committee works in tandem with all other committees to understand the ins and outs of the city, and make an accurate and mathematically correct report on how the city functions. This gives girls budgeting skills that will be applicable in the real world when we leave school, and is another beautiful show of community and group work.

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Talent Show Presents a Different Side of Girls State

By Shreya Raman
 Palo Verde City Reporter

After days filled with elections, Arizona Girls State delegates gathered for an evening dedicated to celebrating another kind of talent: creativity. The annual talent show provided participants with the opportunity to showcase their passions and abilities, resulting in a memorable night filled with music, dance, art, and laughter.

The evening began on a patriotic note as one delegate delivered an amazing rendition of the National Anthem, which was honestly the best version of the song that I've heard all week.

Music remained a central theme throughout the night. Another participant captivated Girls Staters with her performance of "Misty" by Ella Fitzgerald, bringing the song to life.

A different performer combined instrumental talent and singing as she accompanied herself on the ukulele while performing "Hey There Delilah," a song that honestly everybody knows. The performance caused many audience members to mouth along to the words, while people waved their flashlights in the air.

The talent show also highlighted the diversity of artistic expression represented at Girls State. One delegate performed a graceful ballet routine, showcasing years of dedication while reinforcing my belief that ballerinas are the coolest people ever.

Perhaps one of the most unique performances of the evening came from a delegate who created a LEGO stop-motion film.

The short animation followed a dinosaur as it built a LEGO house, combining humor and creativity. Audience members were awed as the



Mixed Media Art by Samantha Lika

story unfolded frame by frame, demonstrating the countless hours of patience required to produce stop-motion animation.

The visual arts were also represented through a presentation by a delegate who shared her mixed-media artwork. Beyond simply displaying her creations, she explained the meaning and symbolism behind each piece, offering insight into how art can be used to communicate personal experiences and political ideas.

Her presentation reminded attendees that creativity can take many forms, especially after multiple musical performances

The talent show served as a celebration of the diverse talents and interests that Girls State delegates bring from communities across Arizona.

Whether through music, dance, film, or visual art, each performer demonstrated the courage required to share something personal with an audience of peers and (former) competitors.

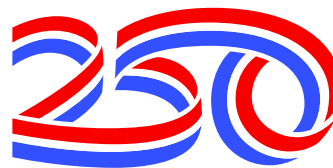
250 Years of Freedom

By Diana Euceda Campos
 Mimosa City Reporter

AMERICA

250 years ago our country was under the ruling of Great Britain. We did not know about freedom or liberty. And thanks to our founding fathers, we became our own country.

In the Constitution of The United States of America, there are three powerful words: "We the people" those words defined our country.



On July 4, 2026, The United States of America will turn 250 years old. 250 years of independence. 250 of freedom.

This day we will not just celebrate our birthday but honor those who fought and paid the price for our freedom. So for this day, don't just stay home and eat good food, honor

those who fought and died to make it possible for us to be free.

Wait, what day is it?

By Haedyn Johnson
Mesquite City Reporter

As we reach the homestretch of the 2026 session of Girls State, girls are going manic. All we want is to know what's for lunch and what place are we in line for dinner!

Today the girls had a pretty relaxing day, with county and state meetings in the morning, and the rest of the day until lunch to work on city maps, resolutions and reports.

Towards the end of the night the girls were look forward to their yummy dinner. According to a survey taken from four Mesquite City citizens, the most antici-

pated dinner selection is mac-n-cheese and kebabs?

Others aren't so sure but only time will tell.

Nearing the end of the once in a lifetime opportunity that is Girls State, we can look around and see an array of emotions. Some excited for Sunday as they miss their parents siblings and pets, as well as long hot showers without shoes. Others sad as the time to say goodbye to these memories made is nearing.

With all the learning, speakers, and friends we've made along the way, we can only hope that Girls State is a memory that

these girls will hold onto for the rest of their lives.

As we look forward to our last full day, girls will present the bills they created in hopes to get them approved by the governor and end the session with a magical evening along with the Pizza Party.

Come morning we will have a group breakfast with the presentation of Girls Nation results, as we anxiously await our very own citizen running and congratulate her for making it to top 8!

Thank you all sponsors and staff for once again a memorable and life changing seven days!

The Importance of the County

By Ella Diaz
Palo Verde City Reporter

Today many of the counties focused on writing their reports and crafting their county book. One of the most interesting parts of the county level is the various roles that each member plays and how they are vital to the county government.

While each person has a different job every job plays into each other and is important in the crafting of the programs going on within the county. Without each specific job the county would not run the way it does.

While Girls State is a fictional 51st state and the programs within it are not real, it gives vital information and knowledge for how county governments actually run.

The participants of Girls State can take this knowledge and use it in their future careers.

In addition while crafting the county ordinances you are taught how the county interacts with the government systems of the various cities within the county. It is important to focus on this because the cities have their own budgets that the

county must take into account when trying to improve their counties.

This also marks the near end of Girls State, while many I assume are desperate to get back to their own beds there is still an air of sadness as we all will soon depart from our new friends.

We all have forged unforgettable friendships that we feel have lasted a lifetime despite it being one short week here at Girls State. However the experience here will forever be unforgettable and something that everyone will truly cherish.

Constitution is a major guide for America

By Brielle Zeiler
Ironwood City Reporter

Yesterday's guest speaker, Aubrey Prestwich, highlighted various aspects of the American revolutionary era. She discussed the significance of the Declaration of Independence, highlighted the complexity of the United States Constitution, and explained the importance of the Bill of Rights. Her presentation reminded me of how these documents still affect the lives of Americans today.

To begin, the United States Constitution remains a major guide to the framework of the country. By dividing the government into the legislative, judicial, and executive branches, the constitution pre-

vents any one department from gaining too much power.

In the past, this was done to prevent replicating a government like Great Britain's, nowadays it serves a similar purpose despite its modernization. It divides the powers of government with checks and balances, preventing tyranny, while also splitting up power.

In addition, the Declaration of Independence continues to impact the everyday lives of citizens through its establishment of natural rights.

Following the enlightenment era, America's founding fathers were keen on devoting autonomy not only to the country itself, but also the citizens within it.

While at the time this was motivated by

the excessive taxing and the removal of salutary neglect from Great Britain, the modern era is still heavily impacted by this establishment. While the declaration does not create laws, its principles of natural rights have influenced movements from civil rights, equality, and democracy since its publication.

Overall, it is beyond clear that our country's foundational documents play a much larger role in our lives than meets the eye. Whether it's through our security in our natural rights or our system of checks and balances within our government, the impact of the foundational documents is undeniable.

Girls State is almost done!

By Jocelyn Kame
Cholla City Reporter

Hello ladies! Today was a great day! I'm the morning we started with a county meeting

And everyone's county is running quite smoothly I know ours is almost done. We had a pretty easy straight forward day our governor and secretary of state seemed more than busy.

After all the stress everything had seemed

to slowly come to end. The week that felt like a year was almost done. It seemed like I had spent so long with these girls yet we were leaving soon enough.

We had lots of leisure time and we were able to make friendship bracelets. After we were able to get all of our county stuff done, we had to go to the sixth floor.

After some printing mishaps and successes I got to see the entirety of UofA from the top and it was more than beautiful.

Me and the girls I had accompanied just sat there in awe as the motions had all worn off and we were able to look back and see the view.

After we were able to go back and rest and play card games then we attended the talent show! It was so entertaining and the girls that had all played a role were so talented in their own ways! I enjoyed myself way more than I thought I would've! That's a wrap for today!

