



The LEADer

Special Edition: Featured Articles

@leadwi

LEAD WI senators and representatives meet for legislative session

Legislative session demonstrates the talent, work and thoughtfulness of senators and representatives

By Anna Morken, Mary Ann Lazzell & LEAD Editorial Staff

Today, the week's work culminated in a legislative session for the LEAD Wisconsin Senate and Assembly in the Assembly Chamber at the Capitol in Madison. Campers sat in the seats of Wisconsin representatives and followed procedures just like real senators and representatives. Before the session began, Julaine Appling encouraged the campers saying, "Please light up the room with your thoughts and your energy."

The Senate session was held first, followed by the Assembly. Both sessions followed similar procedures. One by one, campers came forward to present their bills and arguments. Each bill began with the campers presenting the initial arguments explaining the basics of their bills. In the Senate sessions, the introduction and vote upon amendments followed the initial arguments. The Assembly did not have amendments. After the introduction of the bills by their authors, campers had the opportunity to debate their bills. The final arguments provided campers with one last chance to give a word upon their bill before the vote. Campers stood to vote "aye" or "nay" or to abstain from the vote.

The sessions began with Jack Hoogendyk giving the roll call, followed by Pastor Mark Robinson giving the invocation. Senator Bradley, a real Wisconsin Senator, acted as Senate President. Wisconsin Rep-

resentative Michael Schraa played the role of Speaker of the House.

Campers were eager to share anecdotes and well-researched facts in order to support or oppose their respective bills. The speeches and debates integrated multiple argumentation techniques. Some used statistics extensively. Senator Parmley, supporting SJR, 2 a resolution giving more rights to crime victims, argued, "After this bill was implemented in other states, complaints from crime victims went down 30%." Regarding another bill, one caucus brought up the \$3.6 trillion national debt and mentioned that 82% of voters want term limits.

Most senators and representatives also argued eloquently, often inserting clear, sharp statements that represented their view. Senator Jonathan Rush said, "Equal rights for all is not equal justice for all," and Senator Rose Stieve began her argument for the same bill by saying, "Who is the burning torch of Lady Liberty? Who is the most vulnerable? Children." In opposing other bills, senators and representatives were equally quick in their responses. Senator Deke Diefenbaugh, opposing Senate Bill 314, which limits cities' ability to designate historic landmarks, remarked, "This is frivolous legislation." And Senator Kia Osterwind described SB 42, a bill requiring local government to post minutes of public meeting to the internet instead of just

Forecast

Today

High of 75° & Scattered
Thunderstorms



In Today's Paper...

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paper copies, as "15 lines and 703 words of nonsense."

One moment stood out distinctly in the Senate session. When the vote was taken for SB 314, the count was 17 supporting and 18 opposing. Hoping to get the bill passed, Senator Harper called for a recount of the vote. But after the recount, it changed to 16 supporting and 20 opposing. "Sometimes it's better not to ask," the president of the Senate remarked.

Throughout, the campers showed that they could balance the seriousness of the law-making with a fun camp atmosphere. Near the end of the sessions, the Speaker of the House (a real Wisconsin Senator) called for the vote: "All representatives in favor will stand, raise their hand and yell 'Yay!' But when the time came for debate, the campers were watching, taking notes and thinking like legislators.

At the end of the Senate session, Senator Bradley closed out the session by remarking, "I believe there are future legislators in this room. I look forward to serving with you—and I hope none of you are running against me."

Featured Articles

In the Image of God

The Story of Amira Oser

By Mary Ann Lazzell

This week at LEAD, you may have met Amira Oser. She is an enthusiastic, 17-year-old high school graduate who loves speech and debate. Like most campers at LEAD Wisconsin, Oser is passionate about developing a Biblical worldview and American Christian values. On the surface, Oser seems to be just like the rest of us. However, a deeper look into Oser's life story sheds light on a personal, passionate message for the cause of the unborn. To properly explain Oser's story, we must start before her birth, when her life was saved for the first time.

Oser's mother was an unmarried 15-year-old Ethiopian, living on the streets of the capital city, Addis Ababa. Oser says, "My mother was severely impoverished. Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the entire world. She couldn't pay for food. She couldn't take care of a baby." Not only was she poor, Oser's mother had no family or friends to support her. When she discovered her pregnancy, she asked at the local hospital about aborting the baby. Providentially, Ethiopian law had outlawed abortions after a certain number of weeks, and Oser's mother was too far along to legally terminate her pregnancy. Because of God's grace and these laws, Oser is with us today. However, being born to an impoverished teenager with no family left Oser with a very low chance of survival. "There were multiple times I almost died by running away or running into traffic," shared Oser. "We didn't have a safe place for me. I probably would have been dead by the time I turned 10."

Thankfully, Dr. Ronald Alchin, a pastor from the States, was visiting Addis Ababa on a missions trip. He noticed young

Oser and her mother, remembering that his daughter and her husband had been trying to adopt internationally for quite some time. The Alchin's daughter reached out to Oser's mother, knowing that they could provide a loving, stable home for her. After a 2 two-year adoption process, Oser was given a beautiful second chance in the United States with loving parents and two older brothers. Oser explains, "I have had an amazing journey as a loved child in a wonderful Christian home. My parents have really worked hard over the last 15 years to prove that I am worthy of life, their love and their support. And there's nothing that could happen to change their love for me."

The beautiful gift of adoption saved Oser from a life of poverty and suffering, providing her with another chance to live and flourish. Oser explains why her story is so meaningful: "I was redeemed out of those circumstances and adopted into a loving family. (That is a picture of) us being redeemed and adopted into God's family. I think that's one of the biggest reasons why I am a Christian and why I love the Lord so much."

This February, Oser took the opportunity to share her Christian faith to someone she had been separated from most of her life. She traveled to Ethiopia and agreed to meet in a hotel restaurant. When she walked in the door, she saw her mother. They both dissolved into tears, enveloped in a big hug. "Through that hug I could just feel all those years of just love and acceptance that she hadn't been able to give me, and I felt like I was really cared for in that moment." Then Oser had the incredible opportunity to share the gospel with her own mom, who was receptive to the truth. She was able to use her story of adoption to explain

how God saves desperate, broken people. Oser said, "She was seeing me as a 17-year-old girl, having flourished in a loving home and having a beautiful relationship with God. I think that I could see that she wanted to change." Oser mentioned three messages she wants everyone to remember from her story. First, "Everyone matters because everyone is created in the Image of God, so there is no difference between the person who is born and the person who is conceived. As Christians, we have the responsibility to protect all those who are created in the image of God." Oser's second message echoed her past sentiments about adoption being a picture of salvation. Her parents had to make many sacrifices in adopting Oser, and those sacrifices came from the same heart of love that Christ had. The final truth Oser spoke about was the value of life. She's heard people excuse themselves from the cause of the unborn because they feel they can't really make a difference. Oser says, "You can save one life. One life is priceless, right? You can't put a price on one life. And so if you save one life, you've already won. You've won a treasure: a priceless, valuable person, an image-bearer of God."



Author's Bio



Mary Ann Lazzell

My name is Mary Ann Lazzell, and I am overjoyed to be a reporter at LEAD camp this year. I'm a 15-year-old from Watertown where I am currently a student at Maranatha Baptist Academy. I attend Fellowship Baptist Church, where I enjoy serving the Lord in the music ministry. But I also love public speaking, writing essays and reading. Other hobbies include working out, listening to The Daily Wire and The Charlie Kirk show, and discussing philosophical ideas with anyone who will listen. I work on the grounds crew and hold a part-time office job at Maranatha Baptist University. I hope to always be active in my local church, to continue developing music skills and to always be learning. Future dreams include working for Wisconsin Family Council, teaching and being involved in preserving conservative values in America.

Behind-the-scenes of LEAD WI

Unnoticed by campers, two individuals have been working long hours to make LEAD WI a success

By Sawyer Curtis

How do you arrange over 100 teenagers into a somewhat organized group? What goes on to make LEAD work? You may not even recognize or realize how much work some people put in to make this camp run smoothly. There are two specific people who give a lot of their time for this camp.

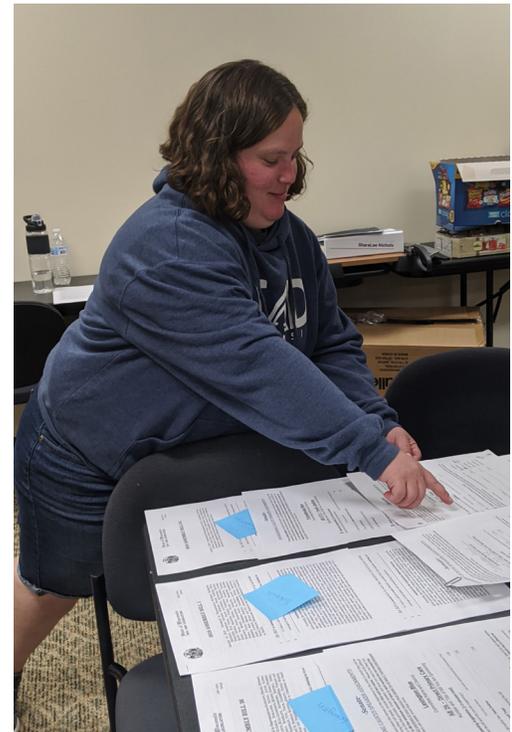
One of them is Hannah Stroup. Stroup is the co-director this year and does a lot of the organizing for the housing and where the sessions will be held. She also sends a lot of the emails and helps out with administration. "So a lot of it is computer work," she says, "Lots of emails. It's really fun, it sounds boring, but it's not." In fact, she sends more than 30 emails on an average day and receives even more emails than that.

Another vital part of LEAD is the other co-director Leslie Harrison. She does the printing that goes on before camp, assembles all the binders and organizes campers into caucus groups. Stroup explained Harrison's importance: "Leslie is my hero. She does everything that I don't know how to do and answers 5000 questions a day."

Both of them agree that the best part of camp is when the campers actually get here. Harrison said that SharaLee Nichols, director of LEAD last year, was definitely missed, because of her maternity leave. Harrison continued, "She's really good with every single detail and making sure it's covered. So her not being here this summer is definitely a big hole."

One camper said, "At camp I learned transcendent truths about the culture, Christianity and God's character. Dy-

amic speakers, hands-on experiences on government proceedings, this is a chance you shouldn't pass up! A challenge no matter where you are in life." Without these two women working to get this camp ready, camp doesn't happen.



Behind-the-scenes of LEAD WI cont.

Author's Bio



Sawyer Curtis

I am a 16-year-old freshman in high school. I have written several articles for a local news website. I am also the owner of three small businesses which include a lawn mowing business and a cookie business. In my free time, I enjoy playing basketball, solving Rubik's cubes, and reading. My favorite subjects in school are math and writing. Recently, I completed a course which completely changed my view of writing. I used to hate writing because the courses I had taken previously did everything for you. This course gave me much more freedom in what to write.

Lessons learned from Feats of Strength

By Hannah Mulvaine

In conclusion of the final Feats of Strength, it is necessary to take some time to reflect—not only reflect on all the fun and exciting things that took place but the things that we can and have learned from Feats of Strength.

While Feats of Strength has been a time for fun and physical exercise, it has also been a time where friendships were made, teamwork evolved, encouragement was abundant and spiritual grace was exercised. Co-director of Lead

Wisconsin, Hannah Stroup, said that, "God can use anything for his glory." As I have interviewed staff, crew and campers throughout this week, I have certainly seen that to be true.

Even when we are playing games, we can learn lessons and find ways through such activities to bring God the glory. One camper said that the biggest challenge for their team at the beginning of the week was the fact that the team wasn't getting along. But when I asked him what his highlight from Feats of Strength was, he said that it was getting closer to the people on his team. God used Feats of Strength to bring people together and make friendships, even though they may not have gotten along at first. Another camper said that at the beginning of the week their team's weakness was paying attention and again not being able to work together as a team, but throughout the week, God helped them accomplish attentiveness and teamwork.

Feats of Strength also gave many the opportunity to be a blessing to others. Many crew said they enjoyed being able to cheer their teams on in times of discouragement. When the Macaroni Ponies needed encouragement, crew member Lori Rush jumped to the occasion to bring back the energy to the Ponies. She said, "Somebody needs to be willing to be the first to have fun."

Josh Howard, Co- Feats of Strength Organizer, described Feats of Strength as "a type of fellowship where you're learning how to work together. You're learning how to channel our passions. In some ways if you're really competitive and learning how to do that in effective ways... definitely something like that God can use for future passion that you might have. It can teach you when to go all out, when to hold back, and try to work together as a team.

That was the goal of the activities, to build teamwork."

As we reach the end of this week, remember to reflect on the things you have learned this week, whether it be something God has taught you through the sessions, caucus meetings or Feats of Strength. Bring the lessons home with you and apply them to your life that you may bring glory to God in all that you do.



Author's Bio



Hannah Mulvaine

Hi, I am Hannah Mulvaine! I am an 18-year-old from Caro, Michigan. I am the middle child of seven kids—four brothers and two sisters. Outside of school and work, I spend most of my time cooking, baking and cleaning. I have always had many hobbies including writing, reading, singing and baking, but when I purchased a camera at 15, photography topped them all. I currently do photography for fun but have done some professional work such as senior photos, engagement shoots and second shooting at a wedding. Eventually, I plan to start my own business as a professional photographer.

Bold as a lion: Julaine Appling's inspiring example

“The older I’ve gotten, the more it sunk in that I’m not here by accident.”

By Josiah Scott



Julaine Appling prompted an emotional reaction from LEAD campers on Tuesday evening when she revealed that she was adopted. The room fell silent as Appling told her story. Appling's mother Mary Appling was in Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia and yearned to have children of her own. While viewing the newborn babies in the hospital nursery, Mary Appling noticed a baby, “with a very distinctive blonde curl right down the top of her head.” Five months later, Mary and her husband, Bob Appling, were called by an adoption agency; however, this baby girl looked all too familiar to Mary Appling. She inquired of one of the staff members to find out when and where she was born. At that moment, the staff member told her Appling was born in Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. Appling did not hear this story until she was a grown adult, but in that heartfelt moment, Appling's mother said to her, “Don't ever tell me that God didn't intend you to be mine.”

Camper Kia Osterwind is also an adopted child and was encouraged by Appling's story. Osterwind stated that “it was just really nice to know that someone I look up to (Appling) was also adopted.” Osterwind has also felt

emboldened by Appling's example and believes that it is extremely important that she share her reasons for being pro-life just as Appling did. Appling does not remember exactly when she first heard about abortion, but she does remember her reaction after her mother explained it to her. “I remember just naturally saying, who would do that?” While the pro-abortion movement tries to characterize pro-life organizations and individuals as caring only about the unborn child prior to birth, Appling made it clear that it is a distraction from what the pro-life movement truly believes. “We genuinely care for women (and) don't want them to go through the trauma of abortion.” Appling has explained that her organization, Wisconsin Family Action (WFA), is extremely invested in saving the lives of the unborn and in providing women with real and better solutions.

Although the WFA is vehemently pro-life, it is not the only issue addressed by this organization. That's why Appling was shocked to find her office in shambles on May 8th after a pro-abortion rioter started a fire. Providentially, no one was in the office when the attack happened, but the experience still sends chills to Appling whenever she sees her office. On the outside of WFA's building, the pro-abortion rioter graffitied, “If abortions aren't safe, then you aren't

either.”

Obviously, this attack was meant to intimidate Appling and WFA, but those intentions have failed as pro-life individuals and groups across the country watched her boldly appear on national news networks. In an appearance on Tucker Carlson Tonight, Appling stated that “this has made us stronger (and) this has made us bolder, we're not going to go away (and) we're not going to be quiet.”

On April 9th, Appling received the Bold as a Lion award from the Christian Home Educators of Wisconsin. In light of recent events Appling has proved exactly why she earned that award. Although Appling has said that she “doesn't see herself as bold,” many of the campers and LEAD staff disagree. Staff leader Noelle Friese said, “(Appling) is very special to me and is an example to everyone she meets,” LEAD co-director Hannah Stroup said that she “aspires to be her,” and staff leader Joshua Rush said that “her passion and willingness to never back down from a challenge is probably the thing that's inspired me most.”

Appling did not allow the pro-abortion mob to silence or intimidate her voice, but rather strengthened her resolve to fight for the rights of every unborn child and to keep providing the resources necessary to assist every mother facing an unplanned pregnan



Bold as a lion cont.

cy. Appling is an example of courage even in the face of danger and remains to this day as “bold as a lion.”

Author's Bio



Josiah Scott

My name is Josiah Scott and I am an 18-year-old highschool graduate. My interest in the media was sparked by watching fiery, combative debates between conservative and liberal commentators. Watching men like Scott Jennings on CNN defend conservative principles against the left was incredibly interesting to me. The greatest influence came from watching Meghan McCain holding her own every day on ABC's The View. To become a pro-life, pro-second amendment, conservative commentator in the mainstream media would provide a huge opportunity to share my views with people who may disagree with me. My life verse, 1 Corinthians 2:5, reminds me that my faith is the primary influence in my political ideology. As our world increasingly praises populism over values, it is extremely important that we as Christians reaffirm our true identity in Christ. Other than politics, I enjoy reading, hiking, coffee runs with friends, taking fun Instagram and VSCO photos, and volleyball. I am extremely excited for LEAD this year and look forward to learning more about the media and how it operates.

The Worldview of Joseph Backholm

Examining the story of LEAD WI's keynote speaker

By Anna Morken

Joseph Backholm doesn't remember a time when worldview was not an important issue in his life. Even as a child he enjoyed reading WORLD Magazine. His father, a pastor, taught him to view the things in the world around him as a result of either obedience or disobedience to God. Backholm and his father would read the news together, and his father would explain how outcomes would have been better for criminals if they had chosen to obey God. He says, “I began to just see the world through this lens of, when you obey God, things go better. When you disobey God, things are harder. . . . That helped me develop this sense that worldview matters and has a tremendous impact on people's lives.” And that fundamental worldview has led Backholm to surprising effectiveness, from speaking on worldview to hundreds all the way down to his role as keynote speaker this week at LEAD Wisconsin camp. Although Backholm realized the importance of worldview, he decided to enter the Air Force. However, the Air Force medically disqualified Backholm. “I basically wanted to go kill bad guys,” he says, “clearly, God had another battle for me to fight.” Since the Air

Force was no longer an option, Backholm decided upon law school. For a short time after graduating, he worked in a law firm and then went on to work for the Washington State Legislature. After three years, he became the head of Washington Family Policy Council. Four years ago, he began working for the Colson Center of Christian Worldview.

Backholm currently works for the Center for Biblical Worldview where he “talk(s) and write(s) about worldview.” He is also the guest host of Tony Perkins' radio show about worldview called Washington Watch. Backholm said, “I've been willing to do things that other people weren't willing to do in some cases that I thought mattered and that has opened doors. All I've done is just walk through doors that I felt like God was opening at that moment. There was never any plan other than let's just try to obey today, and let God take care of the details.”

Many people know Backholm from a video he created with Family Policy Council just over six years ago. Backholm tells the story of the video: “Washington state became the first state to basically redefine gender, and we were sitting in the office thinking, ‘They don't actually believe this stuff. They don't actually believe that you can just like self create your own identity, do they?’” Backholm decided the best way to find out was to interview college students at the University of Washington. He began asking students if they thought he could identify as a six foot five Chinese woman. And college students affirmed that he could. Since then, his video has been viewed over five million times. He never imagined the video would become so popular. He explains, “I was kind of amused. I was like, I just want to go find out what happens, and clearly we caught light



Author's Bio



Anna Morken

Hello! I am Anna Morken from Wauwatertown, Wisconsin. I grew up in rural northern Minnesota until my family moved here two years ago. I am the second oldest of five children. This spring I graduated from high school, and I am excited to attend Maranatha Baptist University this fall for a degree in English. I am generally known as a bubbly, talkative, and energetic person. My varied collection of interests and hobbies include running in the rain, reading classic novels, eating avocados, knitting sweaters, writing essays, and wearing patterned socks. One of my favorite verses is Psalm 84:11 which says, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." I'm encouraged to know that, even through the disappointments of life, God always looks out for my best and keeps me from nothing better than what He gives me.

ning in a bottle with that one because we were on the cutting edge of the issue." Since then he has created many YouTube videos dealing with many current cultural and worldview issues including abortion and homosexuality. Through his career, Backholm is on a quest to give people truth so they can live according to it. He says, "It really helps people's lives when they live according to the truth, and it also really harms people's lives when they don't live according to the truth." Backholm's presentation of truth has impacted people all over the world. "I've had young people tell me that they are no longer transgender because they watched videos that I've taken," he said. Some have contacted him from other countries to let him know that they chose not to have an abortion or that they think differently about worldview issues because they have attended events he's spoken at or watched his videos.

However, worldview is not just Backholm's job. It's his life. It's what fills his thoughts and comes out of his mouth. His daughter Savannah shared, "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34), and that (worldview) is what he thinks about. That's what he loves." Today, Savannah grows up with a father with similar interests to her father's father. Just as Backholm's father taught him about worldview from a young age, Savannah constantly learns it from her father. But when she flips open WORLD magazine and she turns to the opinions column, her piercing blue eyes, just like those of an eager young boy a few decades ago, alight on pieces by her own father. I asked Backholm how he felt the sessions went this week. He said, "I'll tell you in 10 years. This stuff impacts people's lives and how it affects the way they live, and that's really the measure of whether it was successful."

FOS Recap

Feats of Strength Monday's Big Ball Results

1st Place
Red Raccoons

2nd Place
Blue Bears

3rd Place
Green Gators

4th Place
Yellow Macaroni Ponies

Feats of Strength Tuesday's Trivia Results

1st Place
Yellow Macaroni Ponies

2nd Place
Green Gators

3rd Place
Red Raccoons

4th Place
Blue Bears

Feats of Strength Thursday's Rally Tally Baseball Results

1st Place
Green Gators

2nd Place
Yellow Macaroni Ponies

3rd Place
Blue Bears

4th Place
Red Raccoons

Final Bill Votes

Senate

AB 936

Supporting Amendment: 12-25

Opposing Amendment: 5-31-1

Final: 13-23

Result: Fail

SJR 2

Supporting Amendment: 12-20-5

Opposing Amendment: 9-25-2

Final: 13-24

Result: Fail

AB 26

Supporting Amendment: 16-19

Opposing Amendment: 5-29-2

Final: 23-12

Result: Pass

AB 48

Supporting Amendment: 10-25-1

Opposing Amendment: N/A

Final: 12-22

Result: Fail

AB 1

1st Supporting Amendment: 12-17

2nd Supporting Amendment: 19-15

Opposing Amendment: 10-21

Final: 18-16

Result: Pass

AB 515

Supporting Amendment: 11-12

Opposing Amendment: 14-3

Final: 27-9

Result: Pass

SB 42

Supporting Amendment: 19-7

Opposing Amendment: 23-13

Final: 25-7

Result: Pass

SB 314

Supporting Amendment: 13-19

Opposing Amendment: 10-24

Final: 16-20

Result: Fail

Assembly

SB 414

Final Vote: 33-16

Result: Pass

SJR 57

Final Vote: 18-43

Result: Fail

AB 703

Final Vote: 27-28

Result: Fail

SB 201

Final Vote: 34-22

Result: Pass

AB 246

Final Vote: 13-39

Result: Fail

SB 330

Final Vote: 34-21

Result: Pass

SJR 3

Final Vote: 12-41

Result: Fail

AB 616

Final Vote: 42-12

Result: Pass

