



**Boys State (Texas)  
Information Brief  
Paul Goymerac**

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, American Legion Post 593  
6 February 2018**

*"To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation . . ."*





# Outline



- What Is Texas Boys State?**
- Boys State Criteria**
- Characteristics of the “ideal” Boys Stater**
- What to Expect (Schedule)**
- Calendar of Events (Key Dates)**
- History of Boys State**
- Learn By Doing**
- Pledge**
- About Our Counselors**
- Meet The Staff**
- About The American Legion**
- FAQ**
- Testimonials**
- Questions/Dialogue**



# What is Texas Boys State



2018

THE AMERICAN LEGION



American Legion Boys State is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students. It is a participatory program where each student becomes a part of the operation of his local, county, and state government.

Boys State has been a program of The American Legion since 1935, when it organized to counter the fascist-inspired Young Pioneer Camps. The program was the idea of two Illinois Legionnaires, Hayes Kennedy and Harold Card, who organized the first Boys State at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield.

The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors a similar program for young women called Girls State. Contact Paul Goymerac for Girls State information at [paul.goymerac@gmail.com](mailto:paul.goymerac@gmail.com) or (210) 724-3754.

At American Legion Boys State, participants are exposed to the rights and privileges, the duties and the responsibilities, of a franchised citizen. The training is objective and practical, with city, county, and state governments operated by the students elected to the various offices.



***“Creating memories that will last a lifetime”***



# Boys State Criteria



To be selected for nomination or appointment as a Texas Boys State delegate, the candidate must demonstrate:

- Strong academic performance (e.g., a quick study) to thrive in this fast moving program
- Excellent Interpersonal skills (e.g., gets along very well with others from all backgrounds)
- Exhibited leadership (e.g., a leader of leaders)
- Solid Oratorical skills (e.g., a persuasive speaker and confidence shown in group settings)

*In addition, the candidate must:*

- be a male high school student
- have successfully completed his junior year
- have at least one semester remaining
- have not previously attended Boys State
- be recommended by his school officials
- have parents'/guardians' permission to attend
- be certified by the sponsoring American Legion post, and sign the Boys State Pledge



***“Forging Lifelong Friendships”***



# Characteristics of the “Ideal” Boys Stater



In the actual selection of Boys State citizens, merit and ability alone are the basis for selection. Boys State is not a program for underprivileged boys nor is it a summer camp for recreation. American Legion Posts or other community-minded organizations often pay fees, or "tuition," with little to no expense to the young men.

We wish to secure equal delegate representation from all areas of the State of Texas; therefore, the Department Boys State Committee asks for one or more boy(s) from each accredited high school (public or private) to be nominated by the school to attend.





# What is Expected (Schedule)



## Sunday

- Check-in delegates between 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Sunday in the Kinsolving Dormitory complex
- Host City Orientation with 1,100+ delegates from around our state!
- Hear from a keynote speaker on governmental topic
- Begin both our election politics (e.g., running for an elected office) as well as our party politics (e.g., setting a party platform)

## Monday

- Organize Party political process and choose party leaders
- Begin Boys State Marching Band activity and City Olympiad (7v7 football, 5v5 basketball, and dodgeball).
- Conduct Flag Lowering Ceremony and meet Visiting Dignitaries

## Tuesday

- Begin speeches for elected offices
- Start Talent Show tryouts and continue Band and City Olympiad
- Conduct Flag Lowering Ceremony and meet Visiting Dignitaries
- First full primary election process (we vote!) and finalize party platforms



# What is Expected (Schedule)



## Wednesday

- Conduct runoffs (we vote again!) during party political election process
- Continue Band, City Olympiad, and Talent Show Tryouts
- Conduct Flag Lowering Ceremony and meet Visiting Dignitaries

## Thursday

- Visit / Tour State Capitol
- Hear from a dignitary on governmental topic and have our Talent Show
- Have speeches for State offices (including the Attorney General, Lieutenant Governor, and Governor candidates -- top 3 offices at Texas Boys State)
- Complete election process to pick the general election winner for all offices

## Friday

- Have the College Fair with over 35 universities from around the country attending
- Conduct Flag Lowering Ceremony at UT Mall Area
- Conduct Closing Ceremonies for Texas Boys State!
- Conduct checkout and depart mid-afternoon on Friday from the Kinsolving Dormitory complex



THE  
AMERICAN  
LEGION

BOYS STATE  
OF Texas





# What is Expected (Schedule)



## Parents Day

The final day of the program is especially focused for parental involvement to view the program. On Friday morning, we are having a “come and go” College Fair for the Statesmen from 9:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. at a campus location on the UT-Austin campus (we will make sure you can locate it via signage that morning), and you are welcome to meet with college admissions professionals at that fair as well. Examples of scheduled schools that plan to be in attendance (subject to change, of course) are the following: Abilene Christian, Arkansas, Baylor, Florida, Iowa State, Michigan State, Mississippi State, North Texas, Ole Miss, SMU, Southwestern, Texas A&M, Texas State, Texas Tech, The Citadel, UT-Austin, and West Point, to name but a few.

In addition on Friday, we would love to have parents/guardians attend our closing ceremonies, which are scheduled to take place during the late morning hours. We will also make sure to point you to that campus location through signage. At the conclusion of the Closing Ceremonies, we will be gathering with parents to reflect on the week of what your sons have learned while they also have a similar meeting with their Boys State City members (we will direct you to that meeting location via signage). At the conclusion of this Parent Meeting, we will release you to pick up your sons and will provide direction on the best way to do that logistically, as all 1,100+ young men will be departing at the same time, and we want to make your checkout process as smooth as possible.





# Calendar of Events (Key Dates)



## EVENT

## DATE

### Registration Begins

Jan. 2, 2018

- Support from High School
- Interview by Post 593rd



### Registration Ends/Wait list begins

May 4, 2018

### District Orientation for Boys & Parents

May 9, 2018

- Post 2, 3518 Fredericksburg Rd.
- 6:30 until 8:00 pm
- Great information

### Boys State 2018

June 10 – 15, 2018

- Buses depart June 10th at 11 am. from Post 2
- Funding provided Post 593
  - \* Transportation (Buses)
  - \* Food and Lodging
  - \* Registration
  - \* \$25 cash for 4-5 extra shirts





# History of Boys State



The youth movement in the United States known as Boys State originated by the Illinois Department of The American Legion in 1934. The plan was adopted by the national organization in 1935, and has been put into operation in 48 states. Our two most recent states, Hawaii and Alaska, do not operate their own programs but do send delegates to other states. A Boys State is operated in the Panama Canal Zone and the District of Columbia. By authority of a mandate of the 1939 Department Convention held in Waco, the Americanism Committee met in Austin with Commander Lou Roberts of Borger and made plans for the first Boys State of Texas. Carrie Wilcox, Department Historian of The American Legion, Department of Texas, describes the first Lone Star Boys State in her book, *The American Legion in Texas*, as follows:

"This program was destined to grow in scope and value. Lee O. Smith of Beaumont headed a staff of capable, enthusiastic counselors as 108 boys registered for Lone Star Boys State in Austin, June 10, 1940. The boys, under the direction of the staff, were divided into three political parties. They elected a full complement of state, county, and city officials. Their elections were held on Tuesday and their state government functioned until the close of the meeting on Saturday, June 15. Conferences were held during the week in which counselors lectured on the Constitution and the separate branches of government. Citizenship bureaus and courts functioned and bills were drawn up and passed. The boys edited and published a daily paper, *The Lone Star Stater*, which became the official publication of the organization. The groups were housed in Prather Hall at The University of Texas. The climaxing affairs included the Governor's Ball, honoring the governor of Boys State and his staff. John Robert Lee Keig, Jr. of Beaumont was elected Governor and Grady Baskin of Cameron was elected as Lieutenant Governor. The boys told the counselors at the close of the program that they had learned more about the operation of the state and municipal governments in the brief period of Boys State than at any other time in their lives."

***Carrie Wilcox, Department Historian of The American Legion, Department of Texas***



# History of Boys State (Cont.)



From the beginning of Boys State described above, the Texas Boys State has grown in program and in numbers to meet the needs of the youth of Texas. The present program includes several hundred of the youth leaders of our state each year.

Participants are selected on a competitive basis by the local high schools and Legion Posts throughout the State of Texas.

The staff serving Boys State is made up of men and women of the Legion, Legislators and former Boys Staters who voluntarily give of their time and energies to this program of citizenship development. Most of these men are outstanding in the field of education, law and government who leave their busy jobs and come into Austin to serve their state and nation by helping the young leaders learn better how to perform their responsibilities of a free citizen. The staff will include many individuals serving in the capacities of counselors, junior counselors and administrative staff. Former Boys Staters are called upon to serve as junior counselors or advisors to the Boys Staters. Many have served faithfully for many years and are promoted to the senior status by the leadership team.

Thanks to The University of Texas, Boys State in Texas enjoys the finest facilities in which to carry out the program. The program has received the “red-carpet” treatment each year as it returns for another session. The University of Texas, the State Capitol and the City of Austin go all-out to provide the necessary services to make the program the tremendous success it enjoys from year to year.

***“Growing Tomorrow’s Future Today”***



# Learn by Doing



At Texas Boys State, the young citizen has the opportunity to learn for himself that his government is just what he makes it! Citizens of Texas Boys State use the “Learn By Doing” approach to leadership by taking part in the political process. This can supplement what they learn in the classroom. Texas Boys State is a practical opportunity to learn leadership skills through role-play civic exercises.

Citizens of Texas Boys State not only will be required to review knowledge already acquired concerning the political machinery of a state, but they will find themselves running for office as real candidates do in the everyday world. At Texas Boys State, citizens organize their own city, county and state governments, and they choose their own officials in accordance with regular election procedures. In addition, they learn the duties of the various city, county, and state officers, and they introduce and argue their own bills in a Legislature.





# Learn by Doing



The entire program is non-partisan. Problems will be considered without reference to any existing political party and will be free from propaganda. The sole purpose is to enable the boy to grasp the meaning of some of the responsibilities which he will be called upon to assume when he becomes an adult. It should be distinctly understood that the selection and assignment of the boys to parties is in no way connected with the existing political parties in Texas. The “political parties” in Texas Boys State are called “Nationalists” and “Federalists.” They are purely mythical and none of the principles typifying any of the existing parties will be adopted by Texas Boys State.

Judson HS  
Karen Wagner HS



Texas Military Institute  
Home-school Juniors



# Pledge



American Legion Boys State is designed to bring out the best in America's future leaders. Attendees are selected because they are the best representatives of both their schools and their communities. This pledge reminds all potential delegates of the honor and value that the American Legion has for and requires of each young man.

- I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands.
- I have never attended The American Legion Boys State.
- I sincerely want to attend Texas Boys State, and if accepted, will, to the best of my ability, take a serious and conscientious interest in discharging my duties as a citizen
- Obey the rules of Boys State
- Respect the judgment of the Boys State Director, Counselors and Staff
- Participate in all activities
- Seek election or appointment to office, and if elected or appointed, serve that office
- Keep myself neat and well groomed at all times
- Avoid the use of profane language and actions
- Refrain from injurious habits such as the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs, and
- Upon my return home from Boys State, I will make a formal oral or written report to my sponsor(s) and brief next year's Boys State nominee(s)



# About Our Counselors



The Boys State Staff is a 100% volunteer staff. The 100+ member volunteer staff reflects more than 783 years of Boys State experience. Blending this tenure of service with a young, enthusiastic junior staff is what makes the program as in-touch today as it has been for the past 70+ years. Nearly all of the staff attended Boys State when they were in high school, and many counselors are also members of the Legion Family. Counselors serve in a variety of roles. The Boys State Chairman and Director are supported by junior and senior Administrative Counselors and City Counselors. Their duties are:

## **Chairman**

- Sets overall program policy and procedures
- Conduct the business of Boys State throughout the year
- Is responsible to the Legion for the program

## **Director**

- Establish and control the week's program
- Recruit the senior and junior staff for the coming year
- Is responsible to the Legion for the program





# Meet the Staff



## ***Administrative Counselors***

- Maintain daily operations for all functions
- Provide Registration check-in as the program gets underway
- Schedule all meeting rooms on campus
- Supervise the House and Senate
- Oversee the political and election process
- Manage the City Olympiad (recreational) program
- Direct the band and other special afternoon activities
- Arrange for special seminars and the Visiting Dignitary Program
- Operate the Clinic
- Provide computer services for both enrollment and the election process

## ***City Counselors***

- Orient the delegates to the program, monitor their progress, and ensure their enjoyment of the program
- Maintain 24-hour a day supervision of the Boys Staters
- Manage the daily schedule by assuring that delegates are where they need to be for each activity
- Assure that the delegates under their supervision conduct themselves appropriately at all times
- Recruit candidates for the following year's Junior Counselors from the current Boys Staters





# About The American Legion



***The American Legion is a congressionally chartered patriotic, mutual-aid veteran's organization of the United States armed forces. It is the largest veteran organization in the world with 2.8 million members in the 50 United States, the District of Columbia, and several foreign countries. All members are current or former members of the U.S. Armed Forces with honorable service on active duty during periods of armed conflict.***

- In addition to organizing commemorative events and volunteer veteran support activities, the American Legion is active in U.S. politics. While its primary political activity is lobbying on the behalf of the interests of veterans and service members, including support for veteran's benefits such as pensions and the Veterans Affairs hospital system, it has also been involved in more general political issues.
- At the state level, the American Legion is organized into "departments," which run annual civic training events for American youth. Notable among these are, American Legion Baseball, the National High School Oratorical Contest, Scouting, and of course Boys State and Boys Nation.
- For more information about the American Legion and their programs, visit the American Legion Department of Texas web site at [txlegion.org](http://txlegion.org).



# Testimonials



Texas Boys State is a celebrated program having graduated several of America's leaders. Boys State programs around the U.S. count among their alumni such leaders as Bill Clinton, George Pataki, Harry Reid, Mike Huckabee, Neil Armstrong, and Michael Jordan.

**Below is but a sampling of praise Texas Boys State has received in recent years:**

*"I am a Boys' State alumni of 2013. Let me start off by saying that the Boys' State Program was a life changing experience. At the end of my junior year, I was presented with the opportunity to attend the esteemed American Legion Boys' State program in Austin, Texas. This was an experience that I first expected to be just another little activity in my high school career that would benefit me somehow later down the road, but ended up being an unbelievable experience in which I met a lot of different people from all over, from different backgrounds, and with very different points of view. We would have speakers day to day speak to us about government, citizenship, and how different political parties work. Upon listening to these speakers, we would proceed to collaborate amongst ourselves about our opinions. This kind of collaboration was extremely constructive. After opening my mind and listening to what others thought and had to say, I was able to get much more out of what was offered. Eventually, some of my own opinions even began to change, something that I never thought would happen. I still had many of my same conservative views, but after learning from some of those around me, I began to sympathize with some more different opinions. I found that opening my mind to what others think and believe would greatly benefit me and tremendously contribute to my success in the future."* **Boys State**

**Delegate 2013**



# Testimonials



*"Through Boys State, I took my first steps to becoming a man. I learned that standing for what you believe in is your responsibility and not doing so is failure. I learned that opportunity is a small window that will close if you don't take advantage of it. But if you do it opens up into incredible possibilities. I learned that if you really want something, you just have to go and get it, before somebody else does."* **Boys State Delegate 2012**

*"Boys State ranks among the top programs I have been privileged to be a part of. I'm reminded constantly about the unique bond I share with the select few. For example, over spring break, I was on a mission trip in Johannesburg, South Africa, when I was stopped by a man who attended Boys State over 50 years ago. During the same trip, a mother in the Baltimore-Washington International Airport stopped to tell me her son went to Boys State 10 years ago."* **Boys State Delegate 2012**

*During my experience at Boys State, I had the opportunity to seek and hold some of the 'coolest' positions: stateparty delegate, party whip and even Governor candidate. Though I lost in the general election for governor, I learned a very important and valuable lesson, reflected in one of my favorite quotes by Fred McClure — 'There is no progress without failure, and each failure is a lesson learned.'"* **Boys State Delegate 2012**



# Testimonials



*"Throughout my 36-year career as a high school teacher, Congressional aide, member of the Texas House of Representatives and as a university president, I have observed the results of the effective leadership experiences given to students who participate in Boys State. This outstanding program prepares young men for leadership in university student government organizations, giving participants a competitive edge when they enroll in their respective universities. I know of no better experiential learning programs for those who have a keen interest in government and politics. I recommend the Boys State experience without reservation!"* **Dr. Lanny Hall, President, Howard Payne University**

*"The American Legion Boys State Program is not an insignificant experience in the lives of the young men who participate. It's unfortunate that more young men cannot have this once in a lifetime opportunity. It has been a life altering event in the lives of many young men over the years. Friendships develop and flourish, dreams are born and human potential is stirred, memories are made while new personal challenges begin to govern career goals—all of this from one short, but powerful program. I highly recommend the Boys State Program."* **Dr. Dennis P. McCabe, President, Tarleton State University**

*"For admission into Texas A&M, we value leadership development in our applicants and look favorably on those who have been selected to attend the Boys State program. We view this program as one that brings together students who have exhibited strong academic potential, solid leadership skills, dedicated commitment to service, and strength in character."* **Dr. Alice Reinarz, Assistant Provost for Enrollment, Texas A&M University**



# Testimonials



*"51 years ago I stepped onto the UT Campus, a nervous young boy from Baytown, Texas. When I pulled on my white Boys State T-shirt with my Levi jeans, loafers and a fresh flattop haircut I started an incredible few days of what could only be called a civics reality show. I ran for state treasurer (and lost) but I did learn how to make political signs and overcome my fear of talking to strangers (not just talking but trying to convince them to vote for me). I yelled like crazy for my party's gubernatorial candidate. I saw an incredible performance by a hypnotist. I stared in wonder at the mustangs in the fountain on San Jacinto. I danced in Gregory Gym with a Girls State attendee from my high school (the two programs overlapped at that time). It seems that I remember more details from those few days 51 years ago than I remember about last month...that says something about how powerful the experience was. Because I now work at UT, last week I stepped out of the Texas Union to a parade of young men wearing their white Boys State T-shirt and jeans and starting their own few days of a civic reality show. What a rush of memories filled my heart and mind. These young men will do many important things in their lives as our future leaders but I am betting that the memory of Boys State will be among their most treasured. There is a sales slogan used by a local car dealership that states 'We couldn't have stuck around this long if we were doin' you wrong.' Amen to that and Go Boys State!"* **Bruce Walker, Vice Provost & Director of Admissions, University of Texas at Austin**



# Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)



## 1. What do I pack for Boys State?

*NOTE: You must have turned in your medical form according to procedures outlined in the registration package you received after being confirmed to attend Texas Boys State.*

### Dress Code

- *Trousers (long pants, jeans, khakis, etc.)* — Shorts are **not** allowed, except during rec time.
- *Belt* — The Boys State shirt is worn tucked in, except during recreation time.
- *Closed-toe shoes (tennis shoes, loafers, etc.)* — Flip-flops are **not** allowed, except during recreation time.
- *Socks*
- *The American Legion Boys State t-shirt* — these are available on site at a cost of \$8 each (if you buy 1 to 3 shirts), \$7.50 each (if you buy 4), or \$7 each (if you buy 5 or more shirts). Note: one shirt is provided as a part of the registration fee and it is recommended to purchase enough shirts to have 1 for each day of the session.
- *Hats / baseball caps* — **not** allowed, except during recreation time.
- *Laptop computers and tablets (e.g., iPads)* — **not** allowed, except during recreation time. (note: each Boys State delegate will have the opportunity to leave valuables in a Boys State safety deposit box upon registration. The American Legion is not responsible for lost valuables that are not deposited with the Safety Deposit area. As an aside, WiFi access is **not** widely available on campus.



# Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)



## Additional Items

- Funds for incidental purchases (Snacks, Boys State memorabilia from the Boys State Store, etc.)
- One roll of quarters (for vending machines that may not make change)
- Snacks/bottled water for storage in the dorm room (small refrigerators are found in each dorm room)
- Towels (2)
- Bath soap and shampoo
- Other personal hygiene supplies
- Appropriate clothing and shoes if participating in team sports (shorts are allowed, and official t-shirt is worn during the athletic period) — cleats are **not** allowed
- A few ballpoint pens for taking notes

If participating in the Boys State Band, bring your instrument (even if it is large) and foldable music stand

## Items Provided

- Sheets, blanket, and pillow
- One Boys State t-shirt with registration
- All meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) during the program (note: gluten free menu options are available in the dorm cafeteria)
- All political process materials (poster board, markers, etc.)



# Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)



## 1. Where Will the Boys Stay?

Texas Boys State is honored to continue its long relationship with the University of Texas at Austin. The Texas Boys State program is one of the largest summer camps to be hosted by the university. All of the Boys Statesmen attending will be housed in the Kinsolving Complex of dormitories on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin. During the week of Boys State, daily office hours for Monday -- Friday of Texas Boys State are from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

## 1. How Can I Send A Care Package?

To mail care packages to a delegate during the week of Boys State, use this format:

{Statesman Name}

American Legion Texas Boys State Program  
[Boy's State City Name and his Roster number]  
University Station Kinsolving Dormitory  
2605 Whitis Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78705



## 1. Is There A Marching Band?

Yes! Though we have a limited amount of musical instruments available to borrow, we always prefer that you bring your own (even large ones like drums and tubas) as well as your foldable music stand. We will keep them under lock and key when not in use. Percussionists should also bring their own sticks and specialized equipment. The Boys State band rehearses during recreation time each day





# Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)



## 1. Is There A Talent Show?

Near the end of the week, we will have a Boys State Talent Show. It is always amazing to see the Talent that exists with this group! Bring your props, instruments, and other items that are needed to showcase your various talents... we will keep these under lock and key when not in use.



## 1. Can Parents and Family Attend The Sessions?

We encourage parental/guardian involvement on Sunday during check-in and then again highly encourage participation of friends and family on Friday, when we have our final events. Bring your cameras!

## 1. Can I Bring a Cell Phone, Tablet or Laptop?

In a word – yes; however, there will be times where we do not allow usage (such as during Flag lowering, visiting dignitaries, plenary session speakers, etc.).

## 1. Can I Come and Go From the Program?

Boys State is a fast-paced program that requires your full attention and complete involvement for the week. Any unique circumstances requiring time away from the program must be cleared with both the Chairman and Director in advance of the program.





# Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)



## 1. What Happens if I Must Leave Early Due to an Emergency?

Unfortunately, things happen outside of the program that are beyond your control (such as a substantial health issue for a family member). In these situations, you will need to get the approval of both the Boys State Chairman and Boys State Director. Once approved, they will help arrange the logistics of getting the stater prepared to leave the program.

## • How Can My Family Follow Along with What is Happening?

The website will be updated daily with posts and pictures. Also, you can follow us via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#)

## 1. Who Do I Contact?

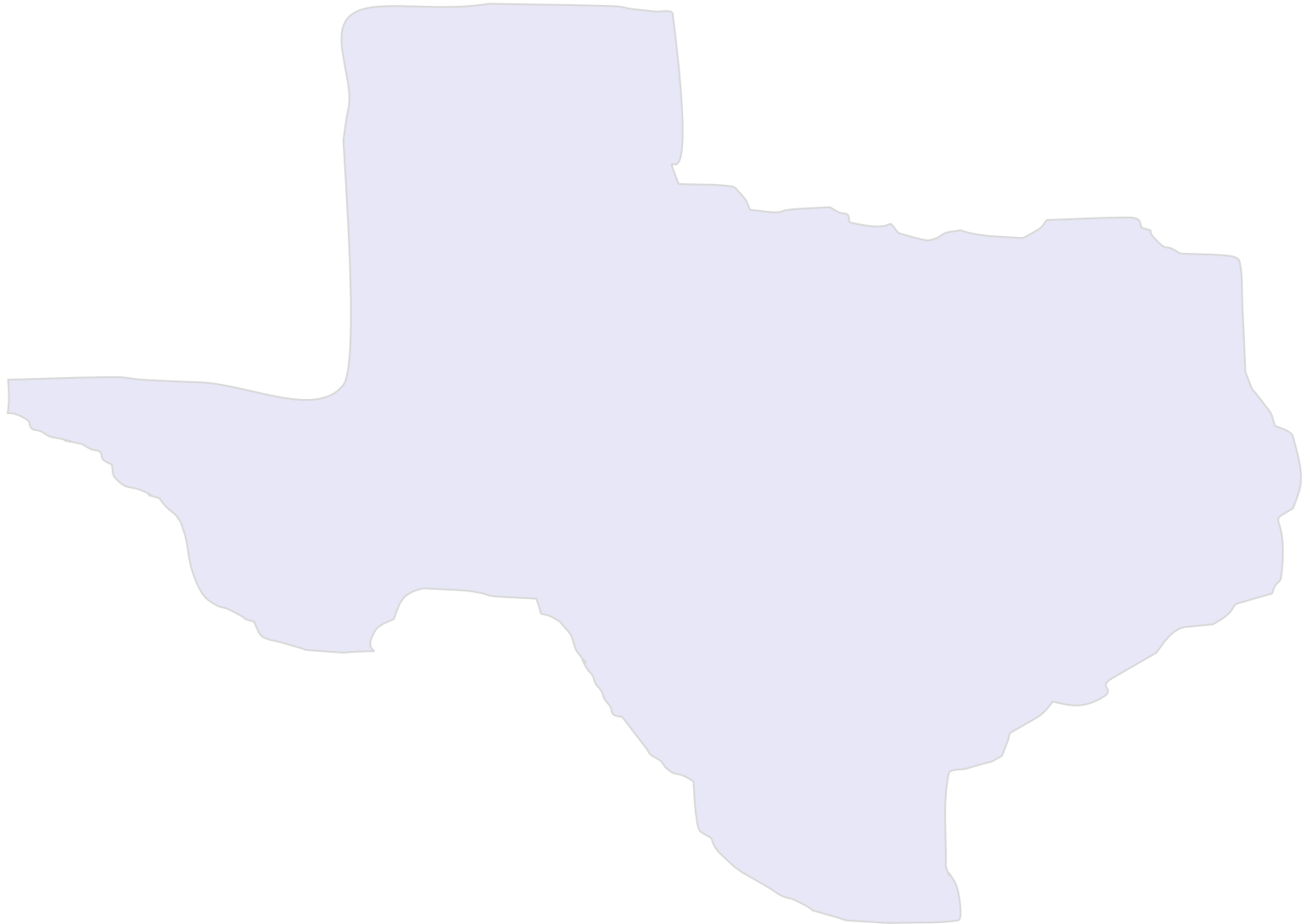
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, Paul Goymerac  
The American Legion Post 593, Converse, TX  
210-724-3754

<http://www.texasboysstate.com/what-is-boys-state.php>



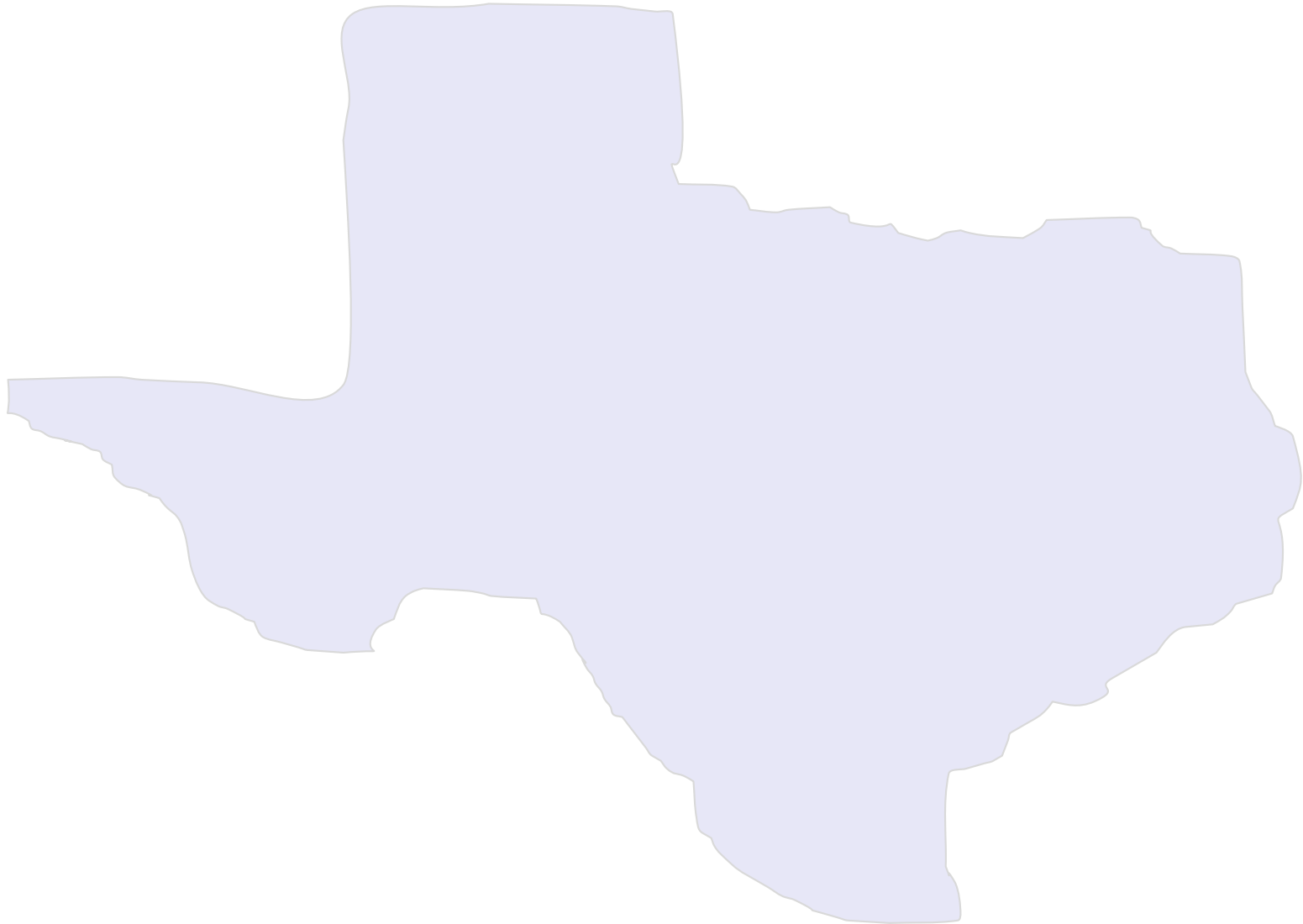


# Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)





# Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)





# Questions/Discussion

