



THE ★ BLUE RIDGE ★ JOURNAL

49TH YMCA CONFERENCE ON NATIONAL AFFAIRS

ISSUE 4 ★ 2016

LOVE IS LOVE IS LOVE IS LOVE

JACK DENSMORE, TX ★ STAFF WRITER

Three weeks ago in Orlando, Fla., tragedy struck when a gunman entered a gay nightclub, Pulse, and killed 49 people and wounded 53 others. It's the deadliest mass shooting nationwide by a single gunman. The attack was also the deadliest terrorist attack since 9/11.

"It's always a tragedy when America loses lives in any mass shooting, but the Orlando shooting hit very closely, because it was tied to the LGBT community," Delaware delegate Mimi Luo said.

In light of the tragedy, the Delaware delegation made bracelets to help support Orlando and the LGBT community for the Conference on National Affairs. On the bracelets is a quote from Lin-Manuel Miranda's Tony award acceptance speech, "love is love is love."

"Delaware is a family, because our state conference is so small everybody knows everybody," Delaware delegate Cody Edwards said. "When Orlando happened, we had everyone texting everyone to see if they were okay, and it was just such an intimate thing. So, we thought we have to do something to ensure, even on the mountain that everyone who is not from Delaware, understands we want to bring that family to everyone."



COMMUNITY SUPPORT ★ DELAWARE PRODUCED BRACELETS TO SUPPORT ORLANDO.

PHOTO BY JACK DENSMORE, TX

Luo said the support from the rest of CONA is a reminder that the conference is a safe place. "They're accepting of anyone and everyone no matter their race, nation of origin, religion, sexual orientation and gender identification," Luo said. "It's basically a reminder that people here do care about one another, no matter our political affiliation, or ideals. We believe that everyone is human, and everyone deserves a chance to live their lives out to the fullest."

Besides the bracelets, other delegates placed large, cardboard hearts in Eureka Hall that delegates can sign. Those will be sent to those affected by the Orlando shooting. ★

WEDNESDAY FREE TIME WILL PROVIDE PLETHORA OF CHOICES

AIJAH ISAACS, IN ★ STAFF WRITER

Even though all CONA delegates are busy working diligently and productively, it's important to take a break sometimes and enjoy yourself. On Wednesday afternoon, delegates will have a chance to rest and participate in several fun activities, including arts and crafts, hiking, swimming, and a trip to the Biltmore.

THE HIKE. To go on the hikes up the mountain, delegates must have signed up in advance. The first hike leaves at 1 p.m. The other leaves at 1:30. The hike is not for the weak of heart. If you do not think you can hike at least five miles it is not



RECREATION ★ WEATHER PERMITTING, POOL IS OPEN WEDNESDAY. PARTY WITH MISSOURI OR BELLY FLOP.

PHOTO BY MEAGAN HOLLOWAY-RAGLAND, AL

recommended by the Info Depot that you go on the hike but there are plenty of other things to do.

TRIP TO THE BILTMORE. The Biltmore is the biggest privately owned house in the country. It is 8,000 acres and has 250 rooms, and delegates also must have signed-up to participate. It is \$20 for students. The Biltmore was built in 1895 and is still owned by the Vanderbilts today.

SWIMMING. You do not have to sign up for swimming. There will be a lifeguard on duty. Join the Missouri pool party and participate in Blue Ridge's traditional belly flop competition. Just show up and sign up prior to the 4 p.m. belly flop contest.

ARTS AND CRAFTS. This takes place in the basement of Washburn Hall. You can paint a pot or make a leather bracelet to remember CONA. It's relaxing and you don't have to sign up, but you do have to pay for the materials you use.

There is plenty to do during your free time but if you don't wish to do any of the provided activities you can take some time to take a nap or simply sit in the rockers up at Eureka Hall with friends and eat Eureka Treats. There is plenty to do and tomorrow is a perfect time to do it. ★

CHAIR, CLERK SHARE FRIENDSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY, RESPECT

COLBIE COOK, IN ★ STAFF WRITER

Some might think of working side by side with complete strangers as an awkward and even frustrating task. With so many differences put upon states such as stereotypes and regional rivalries, it can be difficult for partnerships to work. Despite those differences, Committee Clerk Nora Ptacket (WI) and Committee Chair Andrew Jacobi (NY) broke down the barriers and fulfilled the four CONA core values.

Before CONA, Jacobi and Ptacket paved the way for the two to have a successful relationship. Jacobi messaged

Ptacek while she was at Governor’s Conference, telling her they would be chair and clerk together. “He approached me way before CONA started, and I thought that was really friendly.” Right off the bat, Ptacket said she knew the pairing would be a good fit.

Respect for each other is one of the reasons why the chair and clerk are such great partners and friends. Jacobi knew about Ptacket’s success as Wisconsin’s governor and developed an appreciation for the delegation. Jacobi believes his trust in Ptacket is well placed. ★

BLACK MOUNTAIN COLLEGE LEGACY LIVES AT BLUE RIDGE ASSEMBLY

SASKIA GHOSH, OK ★ STAFF WRITER

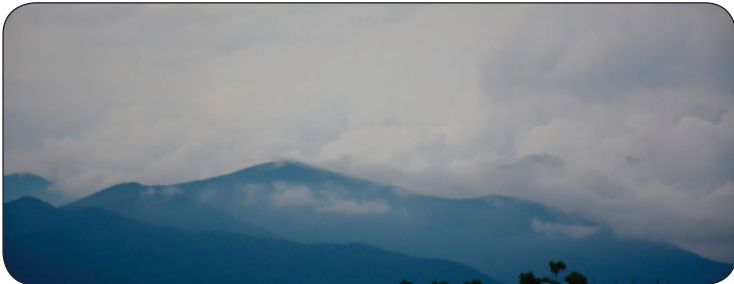
It seems fitting that the Youth Conference on National Affairs is held on the grounds of the now dormant Black Mountain College. Founded in 1933, Black Mountain College was somewhat of an experimental liberal arts school. Owned and operated by the faculty, the college revolved around the belief that the arts were central to one’s learning experience. One of the key founders, John Andrew Rice, was fired from his previous tenure at Rollins College for his objection to many policies in place at the college.

As written by author Alessandro Porco: “Rice [took] a stand against a new regimented eight-hour school day, the presence of sororities and fraternities on campus, and the practice of competitive debate. Instead, he followed a Progressive teaching creed. Rice espoused intellectual autonomy over objective measurement of standards. He valued personal engagement over

adherence to rigid instruction. Aiming to facilitate human capabilities, Rice insisted students pursue their own interests.”

Attracting up-and-coming poets, designers, artists and composers, Black Mountain was more of a community than a college; faculty and students thrived and created new ideas, living communally and working together. A multitude of great minds such as Joel Oppenheimer, John Cage and Clement Greenberg attended. However, due to its experimental nature, much of its creative output received backlash during the period it was published. Its countercultural, avant-garde product was labeled as misfit art and literature. Although frowned upon by many, great artists, composers, and writers eventually blossomed as geniuses in the artistic world for their uniqueness, new perspective and imaginative ideas.

As we congregate here this summer, one should have a certain level of awareness of the seemingly endless extent of creativity and positively impactful ideas that were cultivated at Black Mountain. We are not so different from the faculty and students who came to this very same spot only a few decades before us. We too have passion for what we enjoy and believe in. As youth, we have the chance to make a mark on the world we live in, be it in art, science, or politics. So, as we come here for this eventful week, let us remember why we are here: to make a difference through exchanging, cultivating, and supporting new ideas with our peers, to embrace the differences that we all have, and to feel comfortable in expressing oneself no matter the criticism faced. ★



BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS ★ HOME TO A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY AND IMPACTFULL IDEAS.

PHOTO BY SASKIA GHOSH, OK

PRESIDING OFFICER OF THE DAY: ANKITA SATPATHY

1. She goes to school at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, which is still in the Blue Ridge mountain range.
2. Her favorite snacks are goldfish and pretzels.
3. She loves to travel and is on her 21st country.
4. She’s passionate about education and works at an adaptive learning center.
5. Her (current) favorite author is Kurt Vonnegut.
6. She has no shame about (lovingly) using her baby cousins as props to see animated movies.



PHOTO BY NMEMKA AGBAFE, NC

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