During the week of June 14-19, approximately 200 outstanding high school junior girls attended the 62nd session of the Colorado Columbine Girls State Program at Western State College in Gunnison. One of these girls was Nora Roth of Holyoke.

The Girls State program, sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary of Colorado, consisted of an intensive week-long citizenship program.

The 200 girls were divided to create cities. Roth lived in the “town” of Crestone Needle. The theme this year was “Reaching for Higher Ground” and the theme song was, of course, John Denver’s “Reaching for Higher Ground.”

In her town of Crestone Needle, Roth ran for city council and was elected by the votes of her fellow townspeople.

Throughout the week at Girls State, members participate in various activities including campaigning, elections, legislative sessions, a flag program, parliamentary procedure instruction, newspaper, judicial presentation and extraordinary guest speakers. The week also featured a talent show and ice cream social.

Guest speakers at the 2009 Girls State included Colorado Speaker of the House Terrance Carroll and Jeffrey Pine, a singer/songwriter.

“Every morning we would all meet to raise the flag, and then every night we would retire it,” said Roth. She added, “During one of the special assemblies, we learned about flag etiquette and were each given a standard size flag of our own.”

Roth would recommend that upcoming juniors apply to attend the 2010 Girls State Session, saying, “Girls State was a great learning experience in a wonderful area.

Roth is the daughter of Martin and Laura Roth of Holyoke. She will be a senior at Holyoke High School in the fall.