

some recreation which our high school boys and girls can carry on when they go out into the work-a-day world.

### NEWS ITEMS

**Membership for 1931** has reached 373, the highest since the re-organization of the Association. It is possible to still affiliate and receive the thirty selections without the possibility of competing in the state contests.

**State Contests** are to be held in Madison at the State Capitol and at the University, May 7 and 8. Plan to attend. The capital city is very inviting and interesting at this time of year, and this year especially with the Legislature in session. See February, 1931, News Letter for information on special railroad rates and hotel accommodations. Be sure to secure railroad certificates from Mr. P. F. Neverman, Secretary of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, Marinette, in advance if there is a possibility of using them.

**The Northern Oratorical League** holds its annual contest in Madison this year, Friday evening, May 8, at which the contestants will be guests of the Speech Department of the University. This contest is held in Madison only once in six years; hence this is an unusual opportunity. It is hoped that many will plan to visit Madison May 7 and 8. Contestants and coaches will be entertained.

A luncheon conference will be scheduled—not to exceed 65c per plate—to which all interested are invited. Reservations should be made in advance.

#### Reports to Secretary:

**Debate:** The secretary has not yet received reports for all of the debates held on the Chain Store question from all member schools.

Please send in your report promptly—number of debates, entire number participating in try-outs as well as regular debates, and the estimated attendance at all debates.

**Declamation and Oration:** The reports on selections used are coming in, but many have not yet been received. Are you finding the selections furnished by the Association helpful? The Board would appreciate any comments. Please send in your report.

**Chairman of the Forensic Association:** Principal George J. Balzer was unanimously re-elected chairman of the Forensic Association at the meeting of the Board, March 27.

**Proposed Amendment to the Constitution:** By request, the Board voted to submit for consideration at the annual meeting of the Association in November, an amendment to the constitution regulating the participation by students of member schools in contests other than those sponsored by the Association.

**Debate Question for 1932:** Send to the secretary or to your district chairman, your suggestions for debate question for next year.

**Press Publicity:** You are privileged to use as printed, or to modify in any way, the articles printed in the News Letters, in your local press. The "Impressions" in this issue would be especially appropriate at the beginning of the season next fall, as well as at the close of this season.

**Declamatory Contest:** It has been suggested to the Board that a plan limiting the selections for declamatory contests to a single type would be desirable. This change would involve an amendment to the constitution. If you are interested pro or con, express your opinion to the secretary or to your district chairman.

# WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION NEWS LETTER

Vol. II.

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No. 4

Additional copies available to member schools at five cents each.  
Copies available to other than member schools at ten cents each.

### STATE CONTESTS—MADISON

Oratory ..... Thursday evening, May 7  
Declamatory ..... Friday morning, May 8  
Extemporaneous Reading ..... Friday morning, May 8  
Extemporaneous Speaking ..... Friday afternoon, May 8

### STATE CONTESTS IN DEBATE AND DRAMATICS, MADISON, MARCH 26, 27, 1931

Baraboo high school holds the state debate title for 1931, and Washington high school of Milwaukee is the trophy winner for high school dramatics, by virtue of decisions awarded at the state contests on March 26 and 27.

These contests were the culmination of the annual activities in these branches by the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association. Principal G. J. Balzer, Washington high school, Milwaukee, was re-elected chairman of the association, Miss Almere Scott, of the Department of Debating and Public Discussion, University Extension Division, and Bart E. McCormick, Secretary of the Wisconsin Teachers' Association, continue as secretary and treasurer, respectively.

In debating, Chippewa Falls high school was awarded second place and Milwaukee Washington high school third place. This was a triangular contest, with each school having two teams, debating both sides of the question, "Resolved, that chain stores are detrimental to the best interests of the American public."

In two out of three debates, the decision favored the side in opposition to chain stores.

In the dramatics contest, Milwaukee Washington high school won with the play "In the Zone," by Eugene O'Neill. River Falls high school, presenting "Neighbors," by Zona Gale, received second place, and Mosinee high school, with "Hearts," by Alice Gerstenberg, was placed third.

In both divisions the winning school was awarded a trophy cup. Each participant in the state contests received a medal, and each school a banner.

Judges of debates were Professors A. T. Weaver, H. L. Ewbank, and Gladys Borchers, of the university Department of Speech. The dramatics contest was judged by Professor Claude M. Wise, of the University of Louisiana.

The conference breakfasts, well attended not only by contestants but by others interested in forensics, were very much appreciated. A similar conference will be scheduled in connection with the May state contests, at not to exceed sixty-five cents per plate. You are all cordially invited. Time and place will be announced later.

### WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

G. J. BALZER, Chairman Wash. High School, Milwaukee	EAU CLAIRE DISTRICT C. W. Dodge, Stanley	RIVER FALLS DISTRICT H. C. Mason, River Falls
ALMERE SCOTT, Secretary Univ. Extension Div., Madison	LA CROSSE DISTRICT L. W. Fulton, Viroqua	STEVENS POINT DISTRICT J. E. Rohr, Nekoosa
B. E. McCORMICK, Treas. Sec., Wis. Teachers' Ass'n, Madison	OSHKOSH DISTRICT Wm. C. Hansen, Oconto	SUPERIOR DISTRICT G. A. Bassford, Ashland
PROF. A. T. WEAVER, Adviser in Speech	PLATTEVILLE DISTRICT M. A. Fischer, Dodgeville	WHITEWATER DISTRICT F. C. Bray, Fort Atkinson
	MISS ETHEL THEODORA ROCKWELL, Adviser in Dramatics.	

## IMPRESSIONS ON THE STATE CONTESTS

**From Henry A. Huber, Lieutenant-Governor, presiding:**

I write to congratulate you, and those associated with you in the movement, on the very high type of debates recently held between several high school organizations in the state capitol at Madison. Arguments made by the students were logical and I could scarcely believe that these were attendants at high schools. I have witnessed many university debates which did not disclose the same careful preparation.

High school debates will do much to stimulate students' interest in civic affairs. An understanding of one public question soon leads to a desire for information on other fundamental problems. I know of no single educational development in the past forty years that is doing more to make good citizens than the interests which the high school students, their parents, and friends are taking in debating public questions.

The free exchange of ideas at Gentryville, Indiana, stimulated Abraham Lincoln and made of him a great country lawyer and debater. The adoption of this same idea in our high schools will give us better trained youth to shoulder the burden of government.

I congratulate you for the fine work which your organization is doing.

**From Chas. B. Perry, Speaker, Wisconsin Assembly, presiding:**

The officers of the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association and the students participating in the debates at the Capitol building in Madison, March 25 last, are entitled to the heartiest of congratulations for their efforts.

The arrangements for these most interesting contests seemed perfect,

and the debaters acquitted themselves like veterans. Mastery of the subject matter and effective style in the discussion were especially noticeable. Such effort makes for an active and comprehending citizenship.

**From C. A. Fowler, Justice, Supreme Court, presiding:**

After presiding for two years at sections of the debates furthered by the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association, I am pleased to say that I consider the work of the Association of great value. The debates of both sessions were well reasoned and well presented and showed great care and study in preparation.

I have no doubt that the work done by the participants in the preparation of these debates was by far the most valuable item of their year's school work. The chief aim of education is so to train one as to enable him to conduct the affairs of life as he meets them, and no training, in my opinion, is more helpful in this way than that acquired in investigating the subject involved in such debates and in selecting, arranging, and stating the matters presented.

**From Professor A. T. Weaver, Department of Speech, Critic Judge:**

The 1930-31 season of Wisconsin High School Forensics has touched new levels in accomplishment and excellence. Behind the championship debates held in the State Capitol on March 26th before large and enthusiastic audiences which included many of our legislators, lay the numerous brilliantly-contested preliminary struggles which had been characterized all along the way by splendid debating and by admirable sportsmanship—graceful losing and generous winning. The finalists from Baraboo, Chippewa Falls, and Milwaukee (Washington)

demonstrated that type of technical skill in public discussion which can come only from arduous and faithful discipline under devoted and intelligent tutelage. They had been tried in the fires of protracted competition with many other splendid teams and they acquitted themselves like the veterans they were. Their performance reflected credit upon the whole pyramid to the top of which they had climbed. It has been a great year—a year of which the Association officers and all of the member schools may justly be very proud.

**From Professor H. L. Ewbank, Department of Speech, Critic Judge:**

Inter-school debating is an excellent educational device for students who may not be challenged to their best efforts by the activities of the classroom. Courses must be geared to the speed of the average, and more attention is usually devoted to the student who is failing than to the one who stands at the head of his class. The Forensic Association offers special training for these superior students.

The debate season just closed was, in my opinion, outstanding in that it produced a large number of teams of real championship caliber. A splendid spirit was shown by debaters and coaches in defeat as well as in victory.

**From Professor Gladys Borchers, Department of Speech, Critic Judge:**

It was my pleasure to judge the final debate between Chippewa Falls and Washington High Schools. In spite of the fact that I had coached two teams and judged numerous debates on the Chain Store question, I found this contest stimulating. Those boys and girls had fresh material. They had persuasive arguments. They had sincerity and communication in delivery. In my estimation any one of them may serve as an example not

only to high school students but to men and women who wish to participate in the public discussion of vital problems.

**From Professor C. M. Wise, University of Louisiana, Critic Judge:**

What are the next steps in drama? Once it was to choose good literature. Next to interpret it truly. Then to set the stage and light it artistically. Of late it has been to refine the whole dramatic process, from voice and pantomime to diction and character, into a synthesis of sincerity and beauty. But because only a few schools could do all these things, quality has become very uneven. What now?

Let us say that the desideratum now is to stabilize and regulate the whole dramatic situation through definite class instruction by thoroughly prepared teachers in every high school. An accredited, state-wide curriculum of drama and other speech subjects; a speech department in every large high school; a trained teacher of speech in every high school, whatever its size—those are the next steps.

**From Ethel Rockwell, Chief, Bureau of Dramatic Activities, presiding:**

No one could have witnessed the finals in High School dramatics in either the Wisconsin Forensic Association Contest or the tournament of the Wisconsin Dramatic Guild without being much encouraged by the progress that is being made in play production in high schools. Each year the drama shows a splendid development in the interpretation of character by the members of the casts; in a finer appreciation of beautiful speech; in a greater understanding of pantomime, and in the creation of effective settings and lighting.

Let us all co-operate in developing this great means of culture and whole-