

NEWSLETTER of the WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED WITH
BUREAU OF INFORMATION AND PROGRAM SERVICES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EXTENSION DIVISION
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Coming Events

Inter-Center Forensic Tournament
Univ. Extension Div., Sheboygan---- March 6-7
Delta Sigma Rho Disc. & Debate Conference
Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison ----- March 13-14
Spring Meeting of WHSFA Board of Control
Memorial Union, Madison ----- March 19
Wisconsin Idea Theatre Conference
University of Wisconsin, Madison ---April 10-12
State Speech Contest
University of Wisconsin, Madison ---April 11
Wis Ass'n for Better Radio and TV
Madison ----- April 11
Central States Speech Ass'n Convention
Chicago ----- April 17-19
Conference for Speech Teachers & Coaches
University of Wisconsin, Madison--Jul. 30-Aug. 1

Certificates of Merit

A post card for ordering Certificates of Merit for students having participated in one or more inter-school activities is included with this News Letter.

Latest Dates for Contests

	<u>Speech</u>
League Contests -----	March 14
District Contests -----	March 28
State Contest -----	April 11

Please try to avoid scheduling school programs on dates conflicting with those given above.

See the back cover for additional dates of interest to speech coaches.

Last call for dues! You will not receive the free declamations or Winning Orations until dues are paid.

BOARD OF CONTROL

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Advisor in Dramatics
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Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

We Need Your Help!

In the November News Letter we asked for your opinions and advice on several matters pertaining to the Association. Inasmuch as this organization is yours, and is operated for you, the Board of Control feels that you should have every opportunity to voice your opinion regarding Association affairs.

Please look at the November News Letter, and consider once again the items for which we asked an expression of opinion. On page 4 you will find a proposed change in institute procedure for next fall. On page 8 we asked for your suggestions for next year's one-act play list. On page 12 we explained a proposal to change the basis of rating at the State Debate Contest. (See page 6-8 of this News Letter).

On March 19 the Board of Control will meet, and these items will be up for discussion. If you favor the proposed change, or would like to keep things as they are, or have a new suggestion to offer, let us know about it so that we may accurately reflect your desires. Please give these items your careful consideration.

Themes for Your Prom

Are you looking for new and different ideas for your junior or senior prom? Or for any other school dance? The Bureau of Information and Program Services (BIPS) has mimeographed an article of this title by Beth Wallace Yates, which appeared in the Recreation magazine. BIPS will be glad to send you a copy upon request. The address is

Bureau of Information & Program Services
1327 University Avenue
Madison 5, Wis.

Table of Contents

We Need Your Help! -----	2
Themes for Your Prom -----	2
Winner of Original One-Act Play Contest-----	3
New Chairman for River Falls District -----	3
State Drama Contest -----	4
Drama Teachers--Wait! -----	4
State Debate Tournament -----	5
Coaches Reactions to Eau Claire Ballot --	
Experiment--Debate Tournament -- -----	6-8
National Debate Question -----	9
Wisconsin Coaches Vote on 53-54 Problem -----	9
Conference for Speech Teachers & Coaches ---	10
Extemporaneous Speaking -----	10
Coming Events -----	11

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

Winner of Original One-Act Play Contest

We are happy to announce that Miss Virginia Newell, Coach of dramatics at Adams-Friendship High School, has won the cash prize for the best original one-act play submitted to the Wisconsin Idea Theatre. Two original plays were submitted, and they were judged by the staff of the Wisconsin Idea Theatre.

Miss Newell's play, The Pillars of Gulcher's Gore, also received an "A" award at the State Drama Contest.

We extend our congratulations on her fine work.

New Chairman for River Falls District

Mr. F. M. Robey of Clayton High School, succeeds Mr. Daryl K. Lien of Amery, on our Board of Control. Mr. Lien, Board member since 1943, has been forced to resign on the recommendation of his doctor. Chairman H. F. Connors has appointed Mr. Robey to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Lien, who was elected to serve until the fall of 1953.

Our sincere thanks go to Mr. Lien for his generous service in furthering the cause of forensics in Wisconsin. We know you join us in wishing him well in the future.

We also want to welcome Mr. Robey to our Board, and hope he will enjoy his work with all of us.

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

State Drama Contest

An audience which at times was approximately two hundred people watched the State Drama Contest, held this year at Wisconsin State College, Eau Claire. The new College Theatre was an ideal place for the contest, and Mr. Kjer of the College, and his crew, deserve our thanks for the splendid job they did in making the contest a success.

Fourteen schools participated. Four of these schools, La Crosse Aquinas, Eau Claire Senior, Adams-Friendship, and Milwaukee Mercy received "A" ratings. These schools received plaques, which have replaced banners in WHSFA competition.

It is worthy of notice that Adams-Friendship received their "A" with an original play by the coach, Miss Virginia Shaw Newell.

The contest was judged by Mr. Ronald Gee, Assistant Director of The Wisconsin Idea Theatre.

"B" ratings in the contest were received by Eau Claire Regis, Superior Cathedral, Westfield, Loyal, West Lima, Milwaukee Marquette, and Bowler.

"C" ratings were received by Chippewa Falls Senior, Soldiers Grove, and Superior Central.

Drama Teachers--wait!

Before you throw away all those copies of one or three-act plays and operettas which were once given by your school and are now gathering dust on the shelf, select the copies which are in the best condition and send them to the Play Library of the Bureau of Information and Program Services (BIPS). The more copies and titles we have, the more service we can give to you and other coaches.

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

State Debate Tournament

Resolved: That the Atlantic Pact Nations should form a federal union.

For the second time in the history of the Forensic Association four schools tied for the State Debate Championship with identical records of 5 wins and 1 loss. Individual gold medals were given the champion debaters from Kenosha, Milwaukee Marquette, Eau Claire Senior, and Rhinelander. Marquette generously volunteered to take the remaining banner of the Association, and the other three schools received the new plaques.

Individual silver medals were given to the three second place schools with records of 4 wins and two losses. These schools were Tomah, Amery, and LaCrosse Aquinas.

Bronze medals were given to the debaters from West Bend, who won third place with a record of 3 wins and 3 losses.

The other schools with their wins and losses appear below.

	<u>Wins</u>	<u>Losses</u>
Grantsburg	2	4
New Richmond	2	4
Prairie du Chien Champion	2	4
Eau Claire Regis	2	4
Superior Cathedral	2	4
Rice Lake	0	6
Marshfield	0	6

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

Coaches Reactions to the Eau Claire Ballot Experiment--at Debate Tournament

By Grace Walsh

For some time there has been an undercurrent of doubt about the advisability of the present method used to select winners at the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament. With a narrow base of only six debates, counting nothing but winning or losing, it seemed to many coaches that the Madison results had little correlation with the quality of debating done by the teams at that tournament.

At the Milwaukee convention, after discussing this matter with Mr. Schacht, I suggested that the quality rating used in all other events sponsored by the Forensic Association be applied to debate as well. That is why I offered to run the annual high school debate tournament at Eau Claire using a modification of that principle in picking the winners of that tournament.

This tournament was held on January 10 and attended by ninety pairs of teams, or three-hundred sixty debaters, from a two-state area. Prior to that tournament an explanation of the new judging method for picking winners was sent to all participating schools. The method, briefly, was this:

Schools were rated Superior, Excellent, and Average, with a Superior team getting three points, an Excellent team two points, and an Average team one point. The winning team received three additional points for winning the debate. Final winners were determined by the highest winning points added to the team's total rating. A questionnaire was submitted to the coach of each school and this was filled out before any tournament results were announced. The items in the questionnaire, and the answers given by the coaches should be most interesting to debate coaches all over Wisconsin and especially to the officers of our organization.

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

The Synopsis of the questionnaire reveals the following information: Among the twenty-two Wisconsin coaches who responded, fourteen had had their teams participating in the state final debates. Seven of the twenty-two were satisfied with the present plan of six debates. Three did not respond to the question, and twelve were dissatisfied. Among the seven who considered the present plan satisfactory, four preferred the method used at Eau Claire; one who did not respond to the question preferred the Eau Claire method. All who did not like the present plan preferred the method used at Eau Claire.

From the comments given by the coaches, the members of the Board may get some other ideas about how winners should be picked. Here are some of the Wisconsin coaches' comments:

"I prefer a straight wins and losses method of picking a champion. If teams tie, then resort to individual ratings."

"Your new set of provisions should give us greater accuracy in choosing champions..."

"Prefer the principle used at Eau Claire but not the specific method--would prefer five rounds of debate to either. Five rounds--win/loss basis." (Editor's note: six coaches asked for more rounds of debate.)

"Could each debater be rated from 1-5 on points such as organization, refutation, etc? The system of team scoring could be left as it is, and individual debaters could still have a sum total of points between 1-20. This would show the individual debater where his weaknesses appear."

"It takes a little more of the 'chance element' away from the contest!"

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

"I believe the extra system of points will be more satisfactory."

Over one-hundred forty college students in speech courses at Wisconsin State College, Eau Claire, assisted with the administration of this tournament. The consensus of opinion here, including my own reaction, would support the following ideas:

1. Holding more rounds of debate at state finals.
2. A more detailed ballot than the one used at Eau Claire this year.
3. Definite preference for a system that includes a quality rating factor, but disapproval of the number of points given to the winning team. Realizing that the poorest winning team is still ahead of the best losing team, we would prefer to have the margin between the winner and the loser reduced to be one point instead of three.

Our annual high school debate tournament is to help motivate better debating. It is our hope that this response, representing a total school population of 20,774 (including Minnesota schools) may be some indication of the trend of thinking in high school circles in this area. Our college will welcome any opportunity to carry on any experiment that will serve the cause of better debate in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

National Debate Question

As Wisconsin goes, so goes the nation! This may not be true politically, but it was true this year in debate. The NUFA Committee on Debate and Discussion Materials, meeting in Cincinnati at the National Speech Convention, selected as the official high school debate question for this year the same question Wisconsin debate coaches selected earlier. That question is:

Resolved: That the Atlantic Pact Nations should form a federal union.

The Committee also voted, 15-6, to continue for another year the plan of choosing a general problem area in the spring and a specific debate proposition within that area the following December. One change was made: The question does not have to be one of the three suggested in the Handbook, but must lie within the problem area selected for the year.

Wisconsin Coaches Vote on 1953-54 Problem

The wording committee of the NUFA Committee on Discussion and Debate Materials met in Chicago on January 16 to frame questions within the three problem areas selected at the December NUFA Committee meeting. Wisconsin was well represented by our Secretary-Treasurer Robert Schacht and his Assistant Rod McPhee, and Bruno Jacob of the National Forensic League. Debating schools of the WHSFA voted on these three problem areas, with the following results in order of preference:

1. How can labor-management relations be improved?
 2. How can we preserve individual freedoms in U. S.?
 3. How should we select the President of the U. S.?
- These results will be tabulated with the votes of other state leagues to determine the problem area for next year.

Wisconsin High School Forensic Association

Conference for Speech Teachers and Coaches
July 30 - August 1

This third conference for speech teachers and coaches is sponsored jointly by the Department of Speech, the Department of Education, the University Extension Division, the Wisconsin Idea Theatre, and the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association. Its purpose this year is to provide teachers and coaches of debate, discussion, and drama with instruction and student demonstrations designed to promote greater understanding of and teaching effectiveness in these areas of speech. In addition to lectures by visiting authorities and resident faculty members, instruction in the areas of discussion and debate will include student demonstrations on the 1953-54 high school discussion-debate topic. The instruction in drama is designed to provide the high school drama coach with a basic understanding of play selection and direction. Emphasis will be placed on the problems of the beginner but will not exclude the more advanced director.

For additional information, address Winston L. Brembeck, Department of Speech, University of Wisconsin, Madison 6, Wisconsin.

Extemporaneous Speaking

Each school is responsible for securing the magazines from which the topics for extemporaneous speaking will be taken. Every school should subscribe to at least two or more of the magazines. Periodicals from which topics will be taken are given in the September News Letter as well as the addresses of the publishers and the subscription rates. If you have not already placed your subscription you should do so at once. The Bureau of Information and Program Services and the State Traveling Library can not lend magazines for the contest.