

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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Other Important Dates

Eau Claire State Teachers College
Speech Meet February ---16-17
State Debate Contest - Madison -February -----24
Freshman-Sophomore College Debates
Milwaukee Extension Center February -----24
State Speech Contest - Madison- April -----14
Central States Speech Ass'n
Milwaukee -----April ----- 20-21
Wisconsin Idea Theatre
Conference - Madison -----April ----- 21-22
Extension Center Forensic
Tournament-Green Bay ----- March ----- 3
Delta Sigma Rho Tournament
Madison -----march -----9-10
State Music Festival-Madison--- May ----- 12
State High School Band Clinic --July -----1-22
Band Director's Clinic ----- July -----9-13
State Orchestra and Chorus ---- July 23, Aug. ---11
Orchestra and Chorus Di- - - -
rectors' Clinic----- July 30, Aug. ---3
Conference for Speech Teachers
and Coaches ----- July 31, Aug. ---2

Please send suggestions for next year's four-minute speech topic to either E. J. Hill at South Wayne or A. J. Kriewald at Platteville.

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

Latest Dates for Contests

	<u>Debate</u>	<u>Speech</u>
League Contests -----		-----March 24
District Contests -----	Feb. 3	-----April 7
Sectional Contests -----	Feb. 10	
State Contests -----	Feb. 24	-----April 14*

*Please notice change of date from that announced.

Try to avoid scheduling school activities which conflict with the above dates.

See back cover for additional dates of interest to speech and drama teachers.

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Jones and Schacht Meet Lowell Fisher

Professor Lowell Fisher, Chairman of the Contest Committee of the North Central Association, participated in a panel on contests at the Annual Mid-Winter Music Clinic in Madison January 5th. We had a long informal talk with him concerning the implications of the report of his committee. This talk, as well as his participation on the music panel, convinces us that there is no major difference of opinion between what Mr. Fisher really believes and a position we can defend. We are all concerned with providing our boys and girls educationally sound learning experiences.

Mr. Fisher indicated that no action will be taken on the report of his committee at the coming meeting of the North Central Association. His committee has asked the Music Educators National Conference and the Speech Association of America to prepare statements of their own during the coming year. Bower Aly, Editor of The Debate Handbook, is a member of the Committee of the S. A. A.

It is important that we use this year, too, to examine our practices against our aims and objectives, which we believe, are educationally sound.

A. C. Jones.

R. H. Schacht

We suggest that you read "Retain and Improve Speech Contests" by Professor Glen E. Mills in The Nation's Schools for December 1950.

Moldenhauer Leaves—Bender Helps Out

Our congratulations go to Al Moldenhauer on his appointment, effective February 1, as Supervising Principal at Stoughton. We regret, of course, that he couldn't find such a nice advancement right within his own district. The Board accepted his resignation with considerable regret as we have grown to admire Al for his ability and personality.

Chairman A. C. Jones was fortunate in securing, on a temporary basis, the services of Harry Bender of Colby, who served as a member of the board from 1942 to 1946. We are happy to welcome Mr. Bender back.

Central States Speech Association

Speech teachers and coaches in Wisconsin will have an unusual opportunity to attend a stimulating professional convention when the Central States Speech Association comes to Milwaukee, April 20 and 21.

General sections feature Orville Hitchcock, Editor-elect of Speech Monographs, and Lionel Crocker of Denison University, Ohio. Sectional meetings are held Friday and Saturday, both morning and afternoon, at Hotel Schroeder. Plan now to attend.

Conference for Speech Teachers and Coaches

Plan now to attend the first annual conference for speech teachers and coaches to be held on the University campus July 31 to August 2. Sponsored by the University Speech Department, this conference is planned primarily to meet the needs of teachers of speech and coaches of debate, discussion, oratory, and extemporaneous speaking.

Gard and Schmidt Report On National Theatre Meet

In 1935 Congress granted a charter for "An American National Theatre and Academy." Actual details of a functioning body were delayed because of the war. In 1946 the American National Theatre and Academy, better known as ANTA began actual operation on a national scale.

In 1950 the National was divided into thirteen districts and a National Theatre Assembly was projected. The purpose: to survey the actual state of the American Theatre. Delegates from each district were elected. Chairman for the Wisconsin-Illinois District was Robert E. Gard, WHSFA Drama Adviser, while W. G. Schmidt was appointed by the Board of Control to represent the WHSFA plus the high schools of Illinois.

The National Theatre Assembly was held at the Fulton Theatre, New York, on January 2, 3, 4, 1951. Wisconsin representatives were Robert Gard, Martha Van Kleeck Knoke, W. G. Schmidt and Robert Friedel. The following legislation was passed.

1. The Assembly to be an annual affair with each district represented.
2. Federal subsidy would not be excluded by principle from fund-raising plans.
3. A Foundation be established to administer funds raised in the interest of all branches of American Theatre.
4. ANTA was to act as such Foundation.

The result of the meeting may well be increased opportunity for persons working in every branch or aspect of American Theatre.

Committee Evaluates Reading Contest

The committee appointed to evaluate the present experiment in the extemporaneous reading contest submits the following report:

Because the training received in extemporaneous reading has lasting values in everyday experiences, the committee believes:

1. The appropriate introductory remarks by the reader prepares the audience for the desired response. These remarks may be given at the beginning of the speech and at intervals throughout the reading where such remarks would be appropriate.

2. Training in selecting portions of an article and condensing and arranging them in a specified time limit is a desirable feature of the extemporaneous reading contest.

3. A wide field of literature is available in the two magazines (Coronet and Readers' Digest) now used. These magazines are available to most students at little or no additional expense. The articles are comparatively short, deal with timely subjects, and are written with a human interest appeal. The committee feels, however, that additional literature should be studied with the thought of including it in another season's forensic program.

On the basis of these considerations, the committee feels that the extemporaneous reading contest as currently conducted should be continued.

Gladys Borchers
Earl S. Kjer
Mrs. Lorna Lengfeld
Mabel A. Nelson, Chairman

Schacht, Jacob, and Hellman attend S. A. A. Section on Debate Topic

Three Wisconsin people, Bruno Jacob, Professor Hugo Hellman, and your Secretary-treasurer participated in the deliberations of the NWEA Committee on Debate Materials as it met in connection with the S. A. A. After four sessions, sixty coaches and administrators came up with the following propositions which have already been submitted to the schools registered for debate in Wisconsin. If you did not get a ballot, feel free to mail us your choice by February 20th.

The topics selected are:

1. RESOLVED: That All American Citizens should be subject to conscription for essential service in time of war.
2. RESOLVED: That the National Administration should be defeated in the coming election.
3. RESOLVED: That the Atlantic Pact Nations should form a Federal union.

Play List Evaluation

Eighteen schools have responded to our request for help in evaluating our official one-act play list. This evaluation form was sent out with the November News Letter and, frankly, we are a bit disappointed in the results so far. Eighteen out of five hundred is about 3½%. Help at this point is worth much more than criticism when the list is completed.

How about it? It's your move!

Improving Debate by Discussion

Bruno E. Jacob, Sec'y-
National Forensic League

There are uninformed or misinformed persons who believe that debating should be abolished and replaced by discussion. They reason that discussion is good because it teaches how to agree while debating is bad because it teaches how to disagree. Those who really know, know that both are tools used in a democracy for the solution of problems. Discussion is a method of inquiry; debate is a method of determination or decision. Both are essential, but each has its particular place and purpose.

Our interscholastic debate program would be measurably improved if a period of discussion were to precede the formal debates so as to give each debater a broader understanding of the fundamental nature of the problem for which the debate proposition proposes a certain solution. Genuine discussion, however, can not take place after a specific question for debate has been set up. Instead of inquiring into the cause and nature of the problem at hand, the requisites of a good solution, and the characteristics of solutions being advanced, the participants quickly align themselves as for or against the particular solution proposed by the resolution. They follow the forms of discussion, but use the techniques of debate and the result is far from satisfactory. Real discussions in the field of the debate subject can take place only before a specific question for debate has been announced.

To create a climate in which genuine discussions of the debate subject can flourish we need not change the method of selecting our debate questions. Simply change the time-table: Select the subject in March, but not a specific question for debate until the following December. This is the way it would work:

*Reprinted in part from The Rostrum, December 1950.

The Plan

1. At the December meeting of the NUEA Committee on Debate Materials select three subjects for debate -- discussion, but state them simply as problems: e. g. HOW SHALL WE MEET THE PROBLEM OF INFLATION or WORLD PEACE or COMMUNISM, etc. Select one such problem by ballot of the cooperating state leagues in February.
2. Prepare handbooks of source materials and special articles much like the present books except that they would present background material and several possible solutions of the problem at hand instead of centering largely on support of or opposition to any one particular solution.
3. At the beginning of the school term or even in the spring for that matter, encourage local and interscholastic discussions of the subject selected for study that year.
4. Hold practice debate tournaments in the fall as usual, the sponsor of each tournament phrasing a debatable proposition within the field of the problem under consideration.
5. At the December meeting of the NUEA COMMITTEE select and officially word a proposition for interscholastic debate within this problem area. At the same time repeat the foregoing process by choosing three new problems for discussion and debate the following year.

Editor's Note

The NUEA Committee voted to conduct a national referendum in March to see if the participating leagues wish to adopt the procedure outlined above. Watch for your ballot.

Debate

The State Debate Contest will be held in Bascom Hall on the University campus, on February 24.

Whether or not you qualify to come as a contestant, you are invited to attend. Bring a carload of freshmen and sophomore debaters or would-be debaters to show them what good high-school debating is really like.

Debate Materials

Transcripts of the debate held during Teacher's Convention in Milwaukee are still available. We apologize for sending them to you so late, but we mailed them three days after receiving the final copy. Single copies free (upon request) additional copies ten cents each.

If you have exhausted all of the references on The Welfare State which you have been given, or bought, or borrowed locally, write to the Bureau of Information and Program Services (BIPS) for a loan package of additional materials.

Participation in Debate

136 schools checked debate on the registration cards this year as compared with 129 last year.

State Drama Contest December 8-9, 1950

Sixteen entries in the state drama contest made it necessary to present three plays Friday evening, the day before the scheduled date. We sincerely appreciate the cooperation shown by Eau Claire, Jaupun, and Blanchardville in offering to accept the evening billing. The worst snow storm of the season made us question the advisability of going ahead with the contest but the impossibility of substituting another date satisfactory to all concerned forced us to go ahead. All Sixteen schools showed up and returned home without accident.

Professor Ronald E. Mitchell made this contest more of a learning experience than any other this writer has witnessed. His kindly and constructive criticism compensated for the B's and C's he felt obligated to award.

A awards were earned by: B awards were earned by:

Eau Claire Senior
Milwaukee Marquette
La Crosse Aquinas
Milwaukee Pius XI
Superior Cathedral
Superior Central

Jaupun
Green Lake
Marinette
Greenwood
Eau Claire St. Patrick
Mosinee
Stevens Point P. J. Jacob
Luxemburg

C awards were earned by:

Blanchardville
Lake Mills

Making a Real Educational Experience
Out of a State Drama Contest

By
Dale E. Krammes
Eau Claire High School

One of the most important events in our school year, so far as dramatics is concerned, has been the planning and preparation of our contest play. The students look forward eagerly to the tryouts for this play. They work hard so that perchance they may get into this all important play of the year. There is something about inter-school competition that they like, and they anticipate the enjoyable contest experiences they will have. At the outset of their planning, they talk of the Madison contest and what they will do when they get there just as if they were destined to go to Madison every time a state contest is held. That sort of attitude may be overconfidence, but it also exhibits a determination which attempts to accomplish a definite purpose. The ensuing enthusiasm and hard work are evidence that they do intend to reach their ultimate objective, the state contest in Madison.

Although we feel that very few people benefit from contest participation and a considerable amount of money is spent on those few people during their participation, we attempt to make their contest work a real educational experience. First of all, we attempt to select a quality play which challenges the abilities of those who will be cast in it. During rehearsals we attempt to maintain good actor-director relationships permitting the actors to bring to the play as much from their own experience and ability as can be used.

Before contest time the play is given during rehearsal to several groups for evaluation and suggestion. In this way we correlate our speech work with other departments of our school, and we attempt to interest other groups in our school in what we are doing for the drama contest.

In the sectional, district, and state contest one of the finest things is the intermingling with students from different schools in our state. They talk many things over freely among themselves. They seem to enjoy this informal fellowship very much. It is one of the most rewarding experiences of contest work.

This year when we discovered that the state drama contest was so large that it necessitated part of an extra day to complete it, we decided to volunteer our play for performance the evening before the full contest. Our time of arrival by train was good for such a decision. Our entire time spent in Madison was pleasurable and profitable. From the educational standpoint it was the ideal situation. After having completed our play performance on Friday night, December 8th, we were free to enjoy the rest of the plays which were presented on the following day. We didn't have to worry about luggage, our play performance, makeup, and time schedules on Saturday. We thoroughly enjoyed the day of plays. We had reserved tickets for the Wisconsin Players performance of "The Bartered Bride" for Saturday night. After the contest decisions were given late Saturday afternoon, we dined and relaxed at the Memorial Union until curtain time.

The cast felt that their experience in Madison at the state drama contest was well rounded and complete.

Speech Should Teach Listening, Too

By

Miss Leslie Spence
State Education Chairman
Wis. Ass'n for Better Radio Listening

Can You Judge News on the Air?

A host of people have been taken in by a good voice and tone of authority in radio news commentators. The result is that men with no qualifications in education, travel, or training flood the nation with their opinions. A few good and very helpful commentators also broadcast.

Every citizen should know the education, experience and character of the commentator he listens to. And, whoever the commentator, the listener should be alert when he listens.

1. Does the program present important news?
(News of events affecting many people deeply?)
2. Is the news accurate?
(Compare it with the New York Times.)
3. Are both sides given? The whole picture?
It is possible to inflate some details of a story and omit others more important. This gives a totally false impression, though the data on the insignificant items may be accurate.
4. Is the evidence conclusive?
a) One or two instances, taken by themselves, do not establish a general conclusion. Quotations from ten congressmen who express merely their opinions favoring one argument do not give evidence of much--except that the reporter is presenting only one side of a controversy. The vote next day may be 297 against those ten.

b) Alternatives. When a commentator says "We must do this or that," think whether these are the only alternatives. Isn't there something else we might do?

c) Loose Use of Words. Watch such words as freedom, democracy, liberty, tyranny, servitude, appeasement, etc. They are often used to mislead men. They may even be employed in the service of ideas exactly their contrary. In one state, broadcasters opposed the erecting of a university broadcasting station on the grounds of "freedom of speech"!

These same criteria should be used in listening to speeches and forums.

(Next issue: Are You a Good Judge of Plays?)

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 two or more of these sources for material. Periodicals from which topics will be taken are given in the September News Letter. The addresses of the publishers are given 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 cannot lend these periodicals to schools for this contest. The demand would greatly exceed the supply.

Successful High School Forensic Programs
In Wisconsin

A Continuation of the Survey
By Walter Ryan Smith

Extemporaneous Speaking

1. Do you frequently use debaters as extempore speakers and feel that there is a carry-over in skill and training?
Yes 19 schools
No 2 schools
2. In the reading preparation for extempore speaking, do your speakers make a subject index for the seven publications from which subjects are drawn?
Yes 15 schools
No 6 schools
3. Do your extempore speakers attempt to read all of the important articles appearing in the assigned seven publications for the four months from which subjects are supposed to be drawn?
Yes 12 schools
No 9 schools
4. On about how many of the various topics or subjects do your extempore speakers prepare a complete speech and present it to you for suggestions?
30 topics 2 schools
25 topics 2 schools
10 topics 3 schools
5 topics 8 schools
5. Do your extempore speakers frequently have similar experience and training in regular speech courses previous to the forensic season?
Yes 10 schools
No 11 schools

6. Would you say that extempore speaking requires a student with a higher intelligence quotient than other forensic events (excluding debate)?
Yes 19 schools
No 2 schools
7. In selecting students for extempore speaking which qualities would you rate most important?
High Intelligence 9 schools
Willingness to Work 11 schools
Speech Fluency 11 schools
Scholarly Reading Background 8 schools
Ability to Organize 10 schools
Vocal Pitch Quality and Volume 2 schools
Good English Usage 3 schools
Wide Vocabulary 2 schools
8. Do you ever have your extempore speakers write out their speeches for you for practice in organization, coherence, wording, introductions, conclusions, and transitions?
Yes 9 schools
No 12 schools
9. Do you have your extempore speakers outline many of the topics or articles from their reading for organization practice?
Yes 17 schools
No 10 schools
10. Do you allow your extempore speakers to use notes in the contests?
Yes 11 schools
No 10 schools
11. Do you urge your extempore speakers to give a preview outline or table of contents in their introduction and to number their main points?
Yes 15 schools
No 3 schools
Depends on Topic 2 schools

12. When your extempore speakers draw a controversial topic, do you instruct them to take one side or to summarize the whole problem generally?

One Side 6 schools
Summarize 14 schools

13. Do you teach your extempore speakers to anticipate the judge's question and do you drill on answering questions?

Yes 10 schools
No 11 schools

14. In judging extempore speaking, would you rate thought substance or polished delivery as the most important?

Thought Substance 18 schools
Polished Delivery 1 school
Both 2 schools

15. Are there any changes in the extempore speaking contests you would suggest?

None 10 schools
Suggestions. Eliminate judge's question
More general topics at
high school level.
Reduce number of topics.

16. In drawing topics for extempore speaking, do you instruct your speakers to avoid the too familiar or the too broad or the controversial subjects?

Too Familiar 2 schools
Too Broad 13 schools
Too Controversial 1 school
No Instruction 3 schools

17. How do you teach or emphasize the novel approach, the introduction that is different, or the speech organization that attracts attention, or don't you believe in this?

Emphasize This 14 schools
Opposed to This 5 schools

18. Do your extempore speakers ever use memorized attention-getting introductions or conclusions?

Yes 4 schools
No 17 schools

19. Do you feel the main appeal of the extempore speaker should be psychological and persuasive or logical and based on reason or strictly a factual report?

Persuasive 5 schools
Logical 10 schools
Factual Report 3 schools
Appeal varies with Subject 3 schools

20. Should the extempore speech include narrative, human interest material, dramatic word pictures, illustrations, and strong climax?

Yes 17 schools
No 3 schools