



2007-2008
**The American Legion High School Oratorical
Scholarship Program**
“A Constitutional Speech Contest”
The American Legion, Department of South Carolina

Sponsored by
DEPARTMENT AMERICANISM COMMISSION

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER
JOHN D. DELLINGER

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT
JIM HAWK

AMERICANISM COMMISSION GENERAL CHAIRMAN
CECIL “BUD” HENNIS

ORATORICAL CONTEST COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN
John E. Palmer, Jr.

Vice Chairmen
Frank Whittle John Coaxum

Committee Members
Bill Heil W. M. McLaughlin Patricia Marks

**Complies with the Guidelines Set up by the
South Carolina High School League**

General Information

The purpose of The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program “A Constitutional Speech Contest” is to develop a deeper knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States on the part of high school students. Other objectives of the contest include the development of leadership, the ability to think and speak clearly and intelligently, and the preparation for acceptance of the duties and responsibilities, the rights and privileges of American citizenship.

Scholarships

Zone winners will receive a **\$100 scholarship** payable to the college of their choice when they are properly registered in an institution of higher education. Zone winners will also receive an oratory medal.

The **State Contest winner** will be awarded a **\$3,500 scholarship** payable at the rate of \$875 per year payable to the college of their choice when they are properly registered. Additional awards are as follows: First Runner up will be awarded a **\$2,000 scholarship** payable at the rate of \$500 per year to the college of their choice upon certification that they are properly registered. Third and fourth place winners will receive a **\$1,000 scholarship** payable at the rate of \$250 per year to the college of their choice when they are properly registered.

Each Department (State) winner who is certified into and participates in the first round of the National Contest will receive a **\$1,500 scholarship**. Each first round winner who advances to and participates in the second round, but does not advance to the Final Round, will receive an additional **\$1,500 scholarship** to pursue education beyond high school.

Scholarship awards are presented to the three finalists in the Final Round of the National contest as follows: **1st place - \$18,000; 2nd place - \$16,000; 3rd place - \$14,000.**

Rule 1: Eligibility

Eligible participants in the contest shall be **citizens of or lawful permanent residents** of the United States.

All contestants must be bona fide students herein described as any student under the age of twenty (20) years on the date of the National Contest (April 6, 2008) and who is presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or state accredited home school) in which the curriculum of said high school is considered to be of high school level, commencing with grade nine (9) and terminating with grade twelve (12). Students must be enrolled in high school or junior high school during the time of participation at any level of the contest.

Contestants must either be legally domiciled within or attend an educational institution within the Department (State) that they enter competition. Contestants can enter competition through only one Department.

The three National Contest finalists will be ineligible for further participation at any level.

The student shall furnish for each contest in which he or she participates, an entrance/certification blank which will be supplied by the Post Commander of the local American Legion Post and a second portion of such blank to be signed by the high school principal attesting to the fact that the student is a regularly enrolled member of the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grades of that particular school.

Rule 2: Post and Zone Contests

POST CONTESTS must be concluded by **January 26, 2008**. Participants in Post Contests may be drawn from one or more high schools in the Post area. This contest will be under the direction and supervision of the **Post Commander or his representative**. Immediately upon conclusion of the Post Contest, the Post Commander shall certify the winner to the respective Zone Commander.

ALL ZONE CONTESTS will be held on FEBRUARY 9, 2008. NO exceptions will be allowed except for inclement weather.

All Post winners will participate in their respective Zone Contest. The Zone Contests will be organized by the respective **Zone Commanders** with the assistance of the District Commanders in the Zone. This contest will be under the direction and supervision of the Zone Commander and a member(s) of the Department Oratorical Contest Committee. The **Zone Commanders** will coordinate and plan the Zone Contest with the assistance of the Department Oratorical Contest Committee.

Zone winners must be reported to the Department Headquarters immediately following the Zone Contest.

The four Zones in the Department shall comprise the following Districts:

Zone No. 1 – District 4, 5, 6 and 7 (Michael D. Strauss, 1019 Fairfield Ave., North Augusta, SC 29841-3329 (803) 613-1011)

Zone No. 2 – District 8, 9, and 10 (Gary Mitchell, P. O. Box 2776, Rock Hill, SC 29732-4776 (803) 366-2081)

Zone No. 3 – District 1, 2, 3, and 10 (Thomas J. Blessinger, 108 Toms Creek Ct., Hopkins, SC 29061-9036 (803) 776-7899)

Zone No. 4 – District 11, 13 and 14 (William E. Heil, 46 Wood Lake Dr., Lugoff, SC 29078-9037 (803) 438-8614)

Rule 3: State Contest

The **State Contest** will be held on **March 1, 2008**. Time and place to be announced later. (The Committee reserves the right to change the date).

Rule 4: National Contest

The National Finals Contest will be conducted, April 4-6, 2008, at the Indiana University- Purdue University at Indianapolis Conference Center & Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana. Quarter-Final and Semi-Final Contests will be held Saturday, April 5. Championship Contest will be held Sunday, April 6.

Rule 5: Orations

Each contestant in Post contests shall present a prepared oration of not less than 8 nor more than 10 minutes and such oration must be without the aid of notes, and the original effort of each contestant. In Zone Contests and the State Finals, each contestant shall present the prepared oration and in addition will be required to speak on one of the “assigned topics” drawn, for not less than 3 nor more than 5 minutes. The purpose of the “assigned topic” discourse is to test the speaker’s knowledge of the subject, the extent of his research, and the ability to extemporaneously discuss the subject as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution. (See Rule 7)

CONTESTANTS ARE WARNED THAT EMOTIONAL TERMS AND EXPRESSIONS NOT HAVING BEARING ON THE SUBJECT MATTER WILL BE DISCOUNTED BY THE JUDGES.

The penalty for plagiarism will be disqualification.

Rule 6: Subject to be used for Prepared Oration

The Prepared Oration must be on some phase of the Constitution of the United States which will give emphasis to the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen to our government. The same subject and oration used in Department Contests must be used in the National Contest. It must be delivered in the English language.

Rule 7: “Assigned Topics” for 2007-2008

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

Article 1 Section 3 Clause 6

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Article I Section 6 Clause 1

The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

Article 2 Section 4

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

Amendment 14 Section 1

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Rule 8: Quotations

In the prepared orations as well as in the “assigned topic” discourse, quotations must be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than ten words in length, the author’s name must be given orally and in the manuscript.

Rule 9: Contest Regulations

A drawing shall be held by the official in charge of the contest to determine the order in which the contestants will appear. **He shall announce the title of the contestant’s Prepared Oration immediately after introducing him/her as Contestant No. 1, Contestant No. 2, etc.**

The name of the contestants may be released to the press for publicity purposes in advance of the contest, but the release of photographs or interviews in advance of the contest is not permitted.

The Chairman will be expected to introduce each contestant by name after the judges have surrendered their score cards and before the winner is announced.

All contestants must be prepared to deliver their written oration in duplicate to the Chairman or Judges upon call. These will be returned except in the case of winners.

As the program is of an educational nature, participating Posts are urged to open the contest to the general public without

admission charges and without the conducting of any sales offer or fund raising program in connection with such contest.

Informal dress shall be worn by all contestants and uniforms will be barred.

Substitutions for Disqualified Contestants or Contestants unable to compete for any reason are not permissible.

The Chairman will request the audience to refrain from applause until the Judges have made their decisions.

It is assumed that all Contests will be conducted in auditoriums having a stage or platform from which contestants will speak; however, the use of notes, amplification, lectern, or speaker's stand is not permitted.

PROMPTING IN ANY MANNER WILL DISQUALIFY THE CONTESTANT IN THE STATE FINALS. PROMPTING CAN BE PERMITTED IN CONTESTS BELOW THE STATE LEVEL.

Expenses of entrants must be borne by the sponsoring American Legion Post in State Contests. The National Organization of The American Legion will pay travel costs of Department winners as they progress in national competition. In the event the winner requires a companion or chaperone, this travel cost will be met by the National Organization.

Live Television and Radio Broadcasts are permitted in all Contests as well as KINESCOPIES, FILMING OR OTHER TYPES OF MEDIA FOR LATER SHOWING, provided:

1. The American Legion is in no way obligated financially.
2. Satisfactory arrangements are made in advance with the contest official.
3. The filming or broadcasts shall in no way distract the contestants or interfere with the pre-announced scheduled time of contest.
4. The normal speaking voice of the contestant is not interfered with or amplified within the auditorium.

Contestants shall speak in order of drawing. For the prepared oration, each contestant shall speak for at least eight minutes, but not more than ten minutes. Under or over time will be treated as provided in Rule 12.

In Post contests, judges shall render their decision after the delivery of prepared orations. In all other contests, after the delivery of prepared orations, the following shall govern:

Immediately prior to the delivery of the last contestant's prepared oration, a card upon which will be written the actual words of the paragraph of the Article or Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and upon which all contests will base the "assigned topic" discourse, will be drawn by some individual designated by the Chairman, but will not be made known at this time to the contestants.

Contestants are required to remain in a private room where the discourse of the other speakers cannot be heard until it is their turn to speak (contestants will be under the supervision of an individual appointed by the Chairman). As the contestants conclude their Prepared Orations, they must return to a soundproof waiting room. As each speaker concludes his/her "Assigned Topic" discourse, they shall not be allowed to associate with contestants who have not fulfilled the assigned topic requirement and must be escorted to a private holding area.

Approximately five minutes prior to the time of the delivery of the assigned topic discourse, contestant number one will be informed of the topic drawn for the "Assigned Topic" discourse and shall be permitted to retire to privacy, under the direction of an individual appointed by the Chairman, whose duty it shall be to see that no contestant is permitted to consult any text matter or notes having any connection with the subject matter upon which he is to speak, other than the actual words of the topic provided on the card drawn.

Each succeeding contestant will be called upon in the order in which he/she previously appeared. He/she shall also, in turn, be informed of the topic of the "Assigned Topic" discourse and shall

then be escorted to privacy in the manner as provided for contestant number one.

No deviation is allowed in rules and regulations without consent of the State Chairman.

Rule 10: Selecting Judges

Arrangements for judges will be made by the Chairman of each contest. Post contests shall require the services of not fewer than **three nor more than five judges**. Zone contests shall require the services of **five judges**.

Rule 11: Scoring

A division will be made on the score card for the maximum number of points each contestant may score for the prepared oration and the assigned topic feature. The manner of scoring and selecting the winner in all contests shall conform to the point schedule shown on the Score Card.

Rule 12: Penalties

A penalty of one point will be deducted for each minute or fraction thereof over or under the allotted time.

Rule 13: Judges and Tabulators

Good judgment will be exercised to select a well rounded group of judges and the Chairman should provide such judges with a copy of the rules well in advance. Judges' names should not be made public until the conclusion of the contest.

During the contest, the Judges shall be seated in different locations in the auditorium, and each Judge shall render his final decision without consultation with other Judges or any other person. Official Score Cards will be furnished by the Chairman.

Judges should give far more consideration to the treatment of the subject than to emotional topics or actions on the part of the contestant. This matter should be called to the attention of the judges in advance of the contest. The official score card will be used in all contests. In Post contests it will not be possible to score a breakdown between prepared and assigned topic orations. In this case, the total points will be used as a basis for perfection of the prepared oration alone.

Each judge shall insert the total number of points credited to the contestant and also insert in the proper column the standing of each contestant. The judge shall not confer prior to the announcement of their decision as to the standing of the contestants. The contestant receiving the low score total by combining the numerals of the "Record of Choice" column given each contestant by all the judges will be declared the winner. (For example, if one contestant received two firsts, two seconds and a third on the judges' score cards, his total score points will be nine. If the second contestant receives two firsts, two seconds and a fourth, his total score will be ten. Even though the second contestant receives two firsts, his total score of ten will place him second.)*

Lack of emphasis in the prepared oration and the assigned topic discourse on the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen must result in the judges downgrading the contestant involved. This will be effected in Section A of the judges' score card (content).

Judges will also downgrade contestants if they suspect parts of their assigned topic discourse have been memorized.

Public announcement of the first place winner only shall be made in the Post contest. The winner and first runner-up will be announced at the Zone Contests and at the State Finals.

THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES WILL BE FINAL.

*If two contestants receive the same placement point score total, the tie shall be broken by comparing the placement scores of the five Judges for the two contestants. One of the contestants will be the winner over the other contestant by three of the Judges' Record of

Choice when only the placement of the two contestants are considered.

If three or more contestants receive the same placement point score total, the tie shall be broken by reference to high total percentage points received from all Judges. The total percentage method shall be applied only to three or more contestants tied for any position on the basis of low score placement method. In the case of a tie on the percentage basis as well as the low placement score basis, the judges will then meet, compare their scores and discuss all features of the Contest in order to arrive at a final choice. **The decision of the judges will be final.**

Rule 14: Timing

An official timer shall be named by the Chairman whose duty it shall be to keep an accurate time record of each contestant, and he shall be located on the main floor in full view of the contestants. The timer should be equipped with a stop watch and time cards carrying the figures 8, 9 and 10. These cards should be large enough so as to be easily seen by the contestants and when eight minutes have been used, the time warning card with the figure 8 thereon shall be held up followed by 9 and 10 as the speaker progresses. The same procedure shall be used with cards bearing the figures 3, 4, and 5 during the assigned topic discourse in the Zone and State Contests.

Judging Criteria:

Prior to the contest, each Judge should have the opportunity to study carefully the criteria for scoring the presentation of the Prepared Oration and "Assigned Topic" discourse by each contestant, the *content of oration*, and *speaking skills*. The following items should be considered (see listing of point values on the furnished official Score Card).

A. CONTENT

1. Originality, Freshness, directness, Application of Knowledge to Topic.
Original fresh approach to topic.
Relevancy to subject.
Information flow to audience.
Speaker stays on topic.
Originality of "assigned topic" speech.
2. Skill in Selecting Examples, Description, Analogies, Specific Data.
Examples applicable, relevant.
Illustrations related to subject.
Adequate information on examples.
Proper credit to quotations or borrowed subject matter.
Utilization of specific data.
3. Logic (Correctness of Inference).
Comprehensiveness of knowledge of subject matter.
Plagiarism?
Speaker's grasp of subject.
Unity of thought or thoughts.
Topic significance.
Overall impression compared to component parts.
Discussion value of "assigned topic" speech.
Informational and educational to audience.

B. SPEAKING SKILLS

1. Voice and Diction.
Utilization of proper inflection.
Is speaker easily understood?
Proper voice volume for physical conditions.
Articulation.
Enunciation.
Pronunciation.
2. Style: Language Use, Word Arrangement, Transition, Word Selection.
Appropriate language use.
Succinct sentences.

Ease of interpretation. Grammar.

Extraneous clauses or phrases?

Smooth, continuous transition of sentences, paragraphs.

Speech structure: Introduction, main body, summary or conclusion.

3. Body action: poise, eye contact, posture, gestures.
Is speaker at ease while speaking?
Establish eye contact.
Alert nature of posture.
Is speaker too dramatic?

Chairperson, Judges, Tabulators:

Chairperson, Judges, Tabulators, Commanders and other contest officials are not permitted to divulge judges' score cards to anyone at the site of the contest.

Persons interested in the exact scoring for professional purposes may be furnished copies of cards with Judges' names deleted at the discretion of the Chairman (Post-Zone-State Finals), upon request in writing.

If further information is needed, contact the following:

CHAIRMAN:

John E. Palmer, Jr.
523 Brookside Acres Rd.
Mountain Rest, SC 29664
(864) 718-0086
todoll@bellsouth.net

DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS:

The American Legion, Department of South Carolina
P. O. Box 3309
Irmo, SC 29063
(803) 612-1171 ext. 22
(800) 642-7793 ext. 22
FAX (803) 213-9902
dept.programs@aldsc.org

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1939*	Fletcher Padgett, Jr.	Saluda	1976	Virginia Inman	Greenville
1940	Wade Weatherford	Florence	1977	Francis J. Rivers	Rock Hill
1941	Carolyn Collier	Spartanburg	1978	Francis J. Rivers	Rock Hill
1942	James L. Walker	Johnston	1979	John J. Hearn	Rock Hill
1943	Allen Watson	Ware Shoals	1980	John P. Roddey	Rock Hill
1944	Freddie Bolonkin	Greenville	1981	Richard S. Lackland	West Columbia
1945	James Gowen	Greenville	1982	Emmette J. Saleeby	Dillon
1946	Tom Kay	Anderson	1983	Sally Boatwright	Columbia
1947	John D. Long, III	Union	1984	Jeffrey S. Singleton	Florence
1948	Jane Gerard	Charleston	1985	Wanda McGuirt	Columbia
1949	Richard Garland	Mt. Pleasant	1986	David W. Garrison	Orangeburg
1950	Eugene Brantley	Chester	1987	David W. Garrison	Orangeburg
1951	Herma Hill	Lancaster	1988	Elizabeth Overcamp	Seneca
1952	Charles King	Easley	1989	Danielle P. Williams	Summerville
1953	Tedi Hoke	Blacksburg	1990	Melanie Page	Seneca
1954	Norman F. McLeod	Dalzell	1991**	Melanie Page	Seneca
1955	Nathan Saint-Armand	Gaffney	1992	Melissa Suarez	Seneca
1956	Broxie Nelson	Chester	1993	Warren Bazemore	Irmo
1957	Michael Sheehan	Camden	1994	Warren Bazemore	Irmo
1958	Mike Stein	Greenville	1995**	Whitney Jackson	Seneca
1959	Mike Stein	Greenville	1996	Julia Brackett	Fort Mill
1960	John P. Callahan	Lexington	1997	Katherine Overcamp	Seneca
1961	Jeanette N. Wall	Moncks Corner	1998**	Amanda Jill Bryant	Anderson
1962	Arthur B. Hartzog	Blackville	1999	Julie Moore	Anderson
1963	Frank G. Dunn	Conway	2000	Jamie D. Frazier	Moncks Corner
1964	Richard Allen Poole	Lexington	2001	Jamie D. Frazier	Moncks Corner
1965	Richard E. Johnson	Nesmith	2002	Jamie D. Frazier	Moncks Corner
1966	Violet Harrington	Florence	2003	Irene Smith	Summerville
1967	Johnathan S. Crowe	Rock Hill	2004	Jared T. O. Gorham	York
1968	Leon Dale Gilbert	Rock Hill	2005	Andrew C. Cooper	Beaufort
1969	Edward H. Smith	Lancaster	2006	Sarah H. Newman	Camden
1970	George M. Hearn, Jr.	Rock Hill	2007	Andrew McCumber	Anderson
1971	Gerald Caskey	Lancaster			
1972*	Thomas W. Joiner	Rock Hill			
1973	Michael P. Flanagan	York			
1974	William E. Spears, III	Beaufort			
1975	William E. Spears, III	Beaufort			

* National Winner

** National Runner-Up



The National Association of
Secondary School Principals has
placed this program on the
NASSP National Advisory List
of Contests and Activities for
2007-2008.