

Constitutional Speech Contest Report to MidWinter Conference

The purpose of The American Legion's National High School Oratorical 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 qualities, 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. These young people are the future of our great nation, and we need to encourage and mentor them!

The Contest Committee has been busy since last summer. Planning begins even before our Department Convention to secure our desired weekend at the BBCC venue for the upcoming year. The 2024 contest will be held – in its entirety – the weekend of March 22-23, 2024, at Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake. I have been busy lining up volunteers to participate as contest staff. I would like to thank Mike Montaney for his work in coordinating the facilities and the judges for the contest venue.

As of this writing, we have 7 prospective applicants of whom I am aware; however, the registration deadline is Sunday and the certification deadline is February 18th, so we will not know for several days yet how many contestants we will have registered and certified to compete this year.

You as members – especially those of you who are District Commanders – should remember that the Oratorical contest is a program that needs to hit the ground running early each Legion year so that students have time to research, write and memorize their speeches. That means we need to have volunteers/chairpersons in place for each District so that we can start sharing information with them as soon as Department Convention is over in July.

This program, and the many others we offer, cannot be fully successful without the buy in and FULL SUPPORT from the leadership of the Department, Areas, Districts and Posts.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Reed
Oratorical Chairman

“A Nation's best defense is an educated citizenry.”