



## TEXAS FORENSICS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER FALL/WINTER 2004

### IN THIS NEWSLETTER

You are receiving this newsletter because you were a member of the Texas Forensic Association this past year or have signed on again for a wonderful, fun-filled tournament season of long bus rides, colorful classrooms, stale donuts in the coaches lounge, and students wondering why judges have written the same things on the ballot that you have been telling them for the last two weeks. Yes, that's a little bit sarcastic, but there is some truth to it, isn't there?

We plan to distribute this newsletter by e-mail, by posting it on our website. Unlike past years, we will not be mailing copies of this newsletter to members with non-working e-mail addresses. Please help us out by explaining to people who say "Gee, I didn't get that information," that they need to take one of two actions. First, please direct them to the TFA website where they can read the newsletter at their leisure. Second, have them contact our secretary, David Huston, either by phone, mail, or e-mail ([hustond@hpsid.org](mailto:hustond@hpsid.org)) with a working e-mail address. We will add them to our ever increasing list of persons to contact with important information.

Since the last newsletter you received, we have had a number of things that have happened within the organization. First, we will tell you about the changes in the constitution and other items that occurred at the TSCA/TFA state coaches' convention. Second, we will remind you of upcoming deadlines. Finally, we will continue to let you know about contacts and important information you need to know about the continuing saga called the Texas forensic season.

### TSCA/TFA CONVENTION

At the end of this newsletter, you will find the minutes from the TFA business meetings that

took place at the TSCA/TFA convention in Dallas. Major changes and items included:

- Aaron Timmons was elected Vice President, Dave Huston was elected Secretary and Bill Schuetz was elected Treasurer of the organization. Shawn Mena, Julie Huntley, and Erin Stage were elected Region Representatives
- You will be receiving a ballot about the new interp event which we tried at the State Tournament this past year. Program of Oral Interpretation (POI) will be voted on by a mailed ballot to the membership. That item will be discussed later in this newsletter.
- Mutual judging preference was approved as part of the State Tournament process in the debate events. We have used that the past few years, but now it's an official part of the Constitution.
- Students who now qualify for the House in Student Congress will also be eligible to compete in other events for which they have qualified. Instead of having to choose between an Individual Event for which they have qualified and Congress, students may now compete in both. That provision will be used if the state tournament site is big enough to allow it and the schedule will work for that. Again, we will provide you with more information on that later.
- The body also approved the use of the base system when recording Student Congress results. An explanation of the system and the spreadsheet that can be used to do that are all on the TFA website.

The constitutional changes will be in effect for the 2005 state tournament. Other amendments that aren't directly related to the state tournament will take effect immediately. The current constitution posted on the TFA Website has been

updated to reflect these changes. **UNLESS DIRECTED OTHERWISE, THE ONLY MEANS YOU WILL HAVE TO GET A HARD COPY OF THE CONSTITUTION IS TO PRINT IT FROM THE WEBSITE.** In an attempt to save costs for the organization, this decision has been made. Please examine the current version of the Constitution on the website to keep up-to-date on what the current rules are. We have tried to assist in that regard by placing any rule changes in **bold print**. Hopefully, that will make it easier for you to find those changes.

## **MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS**

By the time you receive this newsletter (or shortly thereafter), the deadline for applying for membership in the TFA will have passed. The deadline is/was **October 31**. To be eligible to attend the state tournament, you or your school must be members of the TFA. Make sure that you have made application and have received membership.

If you are unsure of your status, please feel free to contact Bill Schuetz. Bill will be able to verify if you are a member. You may still become a member, you just have to be very nice to Bill. He may also make you pay some kind of penalty for your tardiness. Although he is a very mean person, we have trained him to be nice to potential members. Talk nice to him and I'm sure that he will be willing to help you.

Many benefits exist for the TFA membership. It is not only for the qualification for the state tournament, but also to belong to a professional organization which gives you a voice in what you teach in the classroom. As an affiliate with the National Federation of High School Organizations, it also provides liability insurance for you as well. That insurance applies when you are transporting and chaperoning students to and from competitions. That alone is worth the cost of membership. Please consider applying for or renewing your membership.

## **JUDGING AT THE STATE TOURNAMENT**

One of the goals of the state tournament committee is to host a fair and open tournament. That is accomplished by not only the manner in which persons are placed into debate and speech

rounds but also the manner in which those rounds are adjudicated. It is best if the persons judging those rounds come from a diverse and varied background. It also helps if they have a background and experience in these events as well.

To that end, we are asking two things of our member coaches. First, choose to judge at the tournament. You will be asked in January and February to register as a judge on the TFA website. As you may have found this past year, the website will be easy to use and hopefully, help us determine the number of judges that we will need to hire for the tournament. Please look for information about that early in January.

Second, we ask that you contact other persons in your area who might be interested in judging at the state tournament. As always, regardless of the tournament location, we need hired judges from different parts of the state. Our goal is a diverse pool and we would certainly entertain applications from those outside of the host region. Please think of college students who might also be qualified who are going to school close to or in the El Paso area who might be interested in judging. Think also of college students to whom you would be willing to provide transportation and/or housing at the tournament. Hired judges will be asked to follow the same process that we described above. Potential judges will be contacted by Dixie Waldo if we plan to use them at the tournament. Registering and contacting us through the website will be the most accurate means for hired judges to register. Please encourage any potential hired judges to contact us in that manner.

## **PROGRAM PROPOSALS FOR 2005 CONVENTION**

Your first response may be that we just finished the convention, why are we already talking about next year. Well, it does take some time to plan for programs plus it does take some time to get persons to commit to doing programs.

To that end, if you have program ideas, you may contact Dixie to discuss those with her. Program ideas should be diverse and cover not only debate and speech events, but may also be in the areas of squad management, time management,

dealing with difficult people, and fundraising concepts.

If you looked at this year's offerings and said, "There's nothing for me there," then this is a good chance to suggest a program of interest to you. Also, this is a good chance for you to volunteer to share some of your knowledge with your coaching colleagues. Even if you are a young coach, you have things to offer those of us who are more experienced. Many of us who have been in the profession for a long time think that there is only one way of doing something. We often lose that "thinking outside the box" feeling that we need to have. Hearing from younger coaches helps us with that.

## **DEADLINES, DEADLINES**

Please be aware that we are fast approaching many deadlines. The executive committee will be meeting in December to discuss the state tournament. If you have other things we need to consider at that time, please let us know and we will put it on the agenda. In addition, if you are interested in working at the state tournament in some capacity, please let us know.

**Congress legislation is due by December 15. If you fail to submit legislation, your school will be ineligible to compete in the House portion of the Student Congress.** Please don't miss this important deadline.

## **WHO SHOULD I CONTACT?**

Those of us on the Executive Committee are always interested in opening the "inbox" for our e-mail. After we have waded through the titles for new Canadian prescription drugs, various Viagra or male enhancement ads, or "for a good time call" ads, we then get to the really interesting stuff. Many of us end up with randomly selected questions from TFA members about various things we need to get done. There's nothing wrong with this, except we often are not the board person to whom the question ought to be addressed.

Here are some issues that ought to be directed to the correct areas:

**Membership and dues issues** ought to be addressed to **Bill Schuetz**. He is the Treasurer and is in charge of all the money. Not his own, ours. Although he has had some contact with the Mafia (it's a great internet website story that you have to ask Bill about), he will not break your legs or make you sleep with fishes (that's part of the story) if you ask him questions about dues or membership.

If you have questions about **ethics**, or think that tournaments have not been run properly, there are two people you can contact. First, you may go directly to your **Region Representative**. Ask the question of the Region Rep, and see what kind of answer you get. Believe me, most of them know a great deal and they work pretty hard. Plus they want to make sure all things are going well in their region.

Sometimes we don't get the answer we want or we think the individual to whom we are speaking is wrong. Then, you can **appeal** to the **President Rosemary Kincaid**. The normal process is the President contacts everybody by e-mail, we weigh in with varied opinions and thoughts and we reach a consensus as a group. Rosemary then communicates that to the parties involved.

If you have important **announcements, communication for the rest of the organization**, or questions about the content of this newsletter, then you need to contact the **Secretary, Dave Huston**. Dave is a very grumpy man, but will pretend to be polite as you talk with him. He will also accept cash donations for favorable rulings. Preferably in a non-descript bag containing bills in small denominations. Just kidding. Sort of.

If you have questions about the **IQT reports or name changes on the website or IQT qualifications, contact Cindi Saukel (aka Cindi Havron)**. Cindi is very patient and nice, but has been given a directive by the Executive Council to be very mean and strictly enforce the new rules that were outlined in the previous newsletter. Please understand what those rules are and visit the website frequently.

**If you have questions in any of those areas, please contact the person listed. DO NOT (it's in big, bold letters for a reason) CONTACT BRENT HINKLE, OUR WEBMASTER.**

Brent is one of the nicest people on the planet. However, his only official function with the TFA is to run the website. Although he attends all of our meetings, he is in no decision making capacity. Quite frankly, he's a lot smarter than the rest of us and we don't want him to show us up. He has been kind enough to answer some questions in the past, and forward e-mails to the appropriate persons.

However, doing all of that takes a great deal of time. We want him to continue to produce a great looking, informative website, not only for the TFA, but for his other customers as well. They pay him a heck of a lot more money than we do, and we don't want to give him an excuse to start charging us more money. It would be well worth it given the services that he provides, but then your dues would have to amount to the size of the national debt. That's an exaggeration but this is Texas and everything is supposed to be bigger here.

Hopefully, you are getting the message. Please, if you have questions about procedures, the Constitution, tournaments, or anything, contact an appropriate Executive Council person first. We promise we will do our best to answer your questions.

## **A REMINDER ABOUT IQT RESULTS SUBMISSIONS**

If you are hosting an IQT, please understand that you now are required to report your tournament results online. This is the only means now available for the reporting of points from an IQT. Here's how it works. Once you are sure you are hosting a tournament, you should log on to the website. Go to the section that says "Member Log-In." If you don't have a password, then you should open the link for "Recover Password." You will enter your e-mail and it will send you the password. If you were a TFA member last year, this process will work for you. If you were not a member last year, then you will need to contact Brent, who will help you with that process. Please do that well in advance of the tournament so that you are not having to do that along with the gazillion things that need to be done for a tournament.

Once the tournament is completed, you are to log on to the website and go to the section for

"Submitting IQT Reports." You will be prompted to enter your e-mail and password. Once you have done so, you will be taken to screens which allow you to submit the same data you would if you were going to fax the information to the IQT coordinator.

It's easy and efficient to use. You may do it at your leisure on the day after your tournament rather than waiting for access to a fax machine. The IQT Coordinator has access to the information as well. The Coordinator will notify you if mistakes have been made and you may then correct them.

You may recall that reports were submitted from time to time last year to help persons see students who were fully qualified for the state tournament. The process is made much simpler this year. Now, you may go to the website, find the section that has IQT results, go to the section where results are listed by school, find your school, and open the link. You then should have a list of students who have qualified you're your school

Keep in touch and let us know what you would like to have us do.

## **FINAL BUSINESS FROM THE TFA CONVENTION IN OCTOBER**

In most years, the TFA membership in attendance at the Convention is able to complete business in the time that is allotted. However, this year, the business of the body was not completed in a timely fashion. Due to the nature of two of the items on the agenda, the Executive Committee has decided that one of the alternative methods for voting for business items will be followed.

The TFA Constitution allows for a mailed ballot distributed to all TFA members on which they may vote for proposed changes in the TFA Constitution and the Standing Rules of the organization. The Executive Committee decided to wait until October 31 to distribute ballots so that we could accurately confirm the make-up of the TFA membership. Sometime after that date, the Secretary will distribute either in paper format or give instructions for electronic filing of

votes for two amendments to the Standing Rules. Those two amendments can be found at the end of the minutes for the Business Meeting. The two amendments deal with the adding of Program of Oral Interpretation (POI) as a TFA State Tournament qualifying event beginning with the 2005-06 competitive season and the closing of cross-examination in debate.

The communication that will be sent to the membership in November will include the amendments and their rationale and instructions on how to cast ballots for the proposals. Please be looking for those items in the coming weeks.

**REMEMBER: THE TFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WILL MEET IN DECEMBER TO BEGIN DISCUSSION OF THE STATE TOURNAMENT PLANS AND TO ADDRESS ISSUES RAISED DURING THIS FIRST SEMESTER. IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE**

**RAISED, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR REGION REPRESENTATIVE.**

**KEEP READING TO GET THE MINUTES FROM THE TFA BUSINESS MEETINGS WHICH TOOK PLACE AT THE TSCA CONVENTION IN OCTOBER.**

#### **MINUTES FROM THE BUSINESS MEETING OF THE TFA, SEPTEMBER 30, 2004**

The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

Rosemary Kincaid delivered a short address. She addressed the issue of “hidden agendas.” Her hidden agenda is that she wishes to create an atmosphere to serve students and coaches.

The minutes from last year’s business meeting were approved.

#### **President’s Report**

Rosemary allowed for a change in the agenda. A representative from the El Paso Convention’s Bureau made a presentation about the city and welcomed the tournament to the city. Shawn Mena made a presentation about the details for the state tournament and the plans they have made to welcome us to the city. Shawn told us that the Marriott would be the tournament hotel. There will also be plenty of rental vehicles available.

Rosemary spoke to the issue of who would be in charge of soliciting presentations for the TSCA/TFA convention. Rosemary reported that we have had no protests this year. She also complimented the Executive Committee on the professionalism that they have displayed and the hard work that they had done.

Moved and seconded to approve the report. Approved

#### **Past President’s Report**

Keith Townsend reported that the state tournament was a tremendous success. He recognized J.W. Lee, Rosemary Kincaid, and all coaches for the great job that they did in running the tournament.

#### **Vice President’s Report**

Dixie Waldo addressed the issue of recruiting judges for the TFA state tournament in El Paso. She also reported on the hotels that will be used for the judges and the tournament hotel. Dixie also assured that she would look at the interests of all involved.

Moved and seconded to approve the report. Approved

#### **Secretary’s Report**

Dave Huston reported on his efforts to continue to communicate with the membership. He will continue his efforts to communicate electronically with the membership.

Moved and seconded to approve the report. Approved

### **Treasurer's Report**

Bill Schuetz reported on the financial health of the organization. Bill reported that we have a balance in excess of \$20,000 with an increase of 7% in the membership. Bill also reported that we are financially supporting the Bluebonnet Nationals that will be held in Dallas in 2006

Moved and seconded to approve the report. Approved

### **Region Representatives' Reports**

No action items were reported by the region representatives.

### **IQT Coordinator**

Cindi Havron reported on the progress of the IQT's. She reported on the new procedures that are being followed this year on the processing of IQT reports. Cindi reminded the membership of needing to submit the report by Monday and by the Wednesday after the tournament that they would be declared delinquent and the fine system would then go into effect. Cindi also reported that the tournament results would be posted and that name changes would not be allowed once one week had passed.

### **Archivist**

Roberta asked for persons to continue to report on past winners

Rosemary also reported about new changes to the TFA website. Rosemary explained the new "Member Login" feature. That now allows us to use the site as a directory.

### **Nominating committee**

Gay Hollis reported on the slate of officers. The candidates are:

Vice President—J.W. Lee, King HS, Corpus Christi  
Aaron Timmons, The Greenhill School, Addison

Secretary-- Mary Green, Pasadena HS  
David Huston, Highland Park HS

Treasurer-- Bill Schuetz, Gregory Portland HS

Each candidate then was allowed a brief time to speak. After a brief time the elections results were announced. The winning candidates were:

Vice President—Aaron Timmons  
Secretary-David Huston  
Treasurer—Bill Schuetz

Moved and seconded to destroy the ballots. Motion passed.

The quorum was established. There were 164 members present.

### **Public Relations Committee**

No report

### **Professional Relations Committee**

No report

### **Debate Topic Selection Committee**

We had a great showing for the papers that were presented at the topic selection committee meeting. 3 out of the 5 topics that were chosen for consideration for next year's topic were written or co-written by Texas people

### **Finance Committee**

No report

### **Scholarship Committee**

Rosemary reported that the scholarship application is now on line

### **Emeritus Membership Committee**

No report

### **Old Business**

There was none

### **New Business**

#### **Late applications for IQT tournaments**

Rosemary explained that a process is in place to allow for late applications. Leticia Montelongo explained the circumstances for Clark High School in San Antonio making a late application. Clark is requesting the weekend of February 11-12, 2005. One other tournament exists in Region 3. Motion was made and seconded to approve the application. Motion passed

Raul Ruiz from John Jay HS spoke on behalf of the persons from John Marshall HS in San Antonio. Changes in administration led them to apply late. The tournament is scheduled for January 28-29, 2005. Motion was made and seconded to approve the application. Motion passed.

Time was taken to distribute ballots for the officer elections

Prior to the beginning of the debate on the amendments a motion was made to suspend the rules to limit any speech to 2 minutes and debates on topics to 20 minutes. It was moved to amend the time of debate to only 10 minutes. Question was called. Passed. Amendment failed. Motion was then considered. The motion passed.

### **Proposed amendments**

#### **Sweepstakes Information for Individual Qualifying Tournaments (Barbara McCain, Plano East)**

Barbara McCain spoke to the issue of the nebulous nature of many sweepstakes formulas. She is merely asking for information prior to the beginning of the tournament.

**Amendment passed**

**Proposed Change to the State Tournament Sweepstakes Formula (Barbara McCain, Plano East)**

Barbara McCain spoke to the issue that some semi-finalists should be recognized for sweepstakes points at the state tournament.

**Amendment passed**

**Guarantee that Debates Shall Be Open to the Public. (Russell Rach, Bellaire HS)**

Russell Rach spoke to the issue of other debaters from watching rounds. Russell sees such opportunities as educational ones.

**Amendment passed**

**Change Duet Acting to Duo Interpretation beginning with the 2005 school year (Ann Shofner, Tascosa HS)**

Ann Shofner spoke to the need to better prepare our Texas students for the NFL national tournament. Other areas of the country are following the NFL rules. Changing to these rules would allow for our students to be more competitive. Speakers discussed the schism that might exist between the theatre and speech communities if the amendment passed. They also expressed the concern that the organization is only here to prepare students for national competition. They also find that it is a diverse activity and a better education for students. Speakers also discussed the challenges of preparing the students for the differences in the competition.

**Amendment failed**

**Encourage the Executive Committee to avoid conflict with the State Mock Trial Competition (Martin Klein, Needville HS)**

Martin Klein explained the mock trial competition and the process of choosing a winner for that competition. Speakers against the amendment spoke to the difficulty of scheduling our competitions around the UIL calendar.

**Amendment failed**

**Prohibit the Use of Laptop Computers in Debate Rounds (Martin Klein, Needville HS)**

Martin Klein said that TFA rules say nothing about the use of laptop computers in rounds. Technology is great, but the concern is about competitive equity. Speakers against the amendment spoke to the equity issues and the concerns that are there. The amendment also creates a stigma for those persons with disabilities. That puts this organization in a very tenable situation. At the end of the debate, it was moved to suspend the rules to allow debate to continue for an additional five minutes. Motion failed.

**Amendment failed**

**Prohibit tournament hosts from restricting tournament entries (Jay Stubbs, Bellaire HS)**

After considerable debate, the motion was made to table the motion until the Friday session language issues and other concerns could be addressed. Motion to table was accepted. Motion to take from the table was made during the Friday meeting. The motion did not pass.

**Allow House Participants at the State Tournament to enter Individual Events (Dixie Waldo, Southlake Carroll HS)**

Dixie spoke to allowing students who qualify in other events may also double qualify in the Congress event.

**Amendment passed**

**Recommend the Use of the Base System in Scoring the Student Congress (Dixie Waldo, Southlake Carroll HS)**

Dixie explained the use of the base system. Speakers spoke to the base system allowing for fairness and equity in the Congress.

**Amendment passed**

**Proposal to Codify the Use of the Mutual Preference System of Judging in the Debate Events at the State Tournament (David Huston, Highland Park HS)**

The proposal was made to formalize procedures that have been used for the past few years at the state tournament. Speakers against the amendment spoke to the issue of not being able to have mutual preference in individual events. Concerns about the complete nature of the forms were also raised. Proponents of the amendment also promised greater coach education to help with the form.

**Amendment passed**

The meeting was recessed until the following day.

At the conclusion of the meeting, persons from Regions I, III, and V elected Region Representatives for their regions. Those persons are:

Region 1—Julie Huntley, Monterrey HS, Lubbock

Region 3--Erin Stage, Hays HS, Buda

Region 5—Shawn Mena, BelAire HS, El Paso

**MINUTES FROM THE BUSINESS MEETING OF THE TFA, OCTOBER 1, 2004**

At the beginning of the meeting the Executive Council addressed an issue that had been raised the previous evening. It was reported to the Executive Council that some persons who were not in possession of membership cards may have voted the previous evening. The issue was referred to the Professional Ethics committee. The committee report was submitted and discussed at the beginning of the meeting. The recommendation of the committee was that “The ethics committee has found that discrepancies in the voting procedures occurred, however we cannot determine if it was significant enough to affect the outcome of the voting results. We therefore move that as a TFA body you vote to reaffirm the results of a previous meeting as a whole.” **The motion passed.**

**Allow for the Use of Electronic Retrieval Devices in Debate Rounds (Jay Stubbs, Bellaire HS)**

Jay removed the phrase “and other electronic retrieval devices” from the amendment. The question was raised about the punishment for the use of restricted devices.

**Amendment failed**

Motion was made to reconsider. The motion was defeated

**Request to Have Tournament Quality as a part of the Code of Professional Standards (Jay Stubbs, Bellaire HS)**

The amendment was not seconded and therefore, could not be brought to the floor

**Allow for the Use of Laptops in Lincoln Douglas and CX Debate Rounds (Keith Swink, Lake Travis HS)**

General discussion of the merits of the bill. Questions about the interpretation of the accepted use of the computers

**Amendment failed because of previously established quorum from 1<sup>st</sup> business session (75-50). The amendment needed at least 83 votes to pass.**

**Approve Public Forum Debate as a Qualifying Event for the TFA State Tournament (Sally Squibb, Lewisville HS)**

Sally Squibb spoke to the merits of the amended amendment. Motion was made to refer the amendment to an ad-hoc, regionally balanced committee to report to the TFA business meeting next year. **Motion to move to committee passed**

**Formalize a Procedure for Dealing with Suspected Ethics Violations (J.W. Lee, Corpus Christi King HS)**

J.W. Lee asked persons to read the rationale. **Amendment passed**

A concern was raised about the method in which votes had been counted during the Friday meeting. The point was raised that the TFA Constitution only requires a vote of those persons that are present at the meeting. The chair was ruling that the quorum has been established and the votes should be counted using the quorum that had been established the previous evening. The result of that discussion became unclear and was unresolved.

Motion was made to adjourn The meeting was delayed for a decision by the Executive Committee. Motion was made to recess. Motion passed.

**MINUTES FROM THE BUSINESS MEETING OF THE TFA, OCTOBER 2, 2004**

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 p.m.

Charlene Strickland, the appointed Parliamentarian, explained the procedures that had been followed for the convention. The quorum for the legitimacy of any business session was established at the beginning of the first session which required 20% of the membership to be in attendance. The quorum, however, for votes established from the beginning were those individuals in attendance at the first session. Since we had begun with over 163 members in attendance and therefore, it would take a vote of 83 attending members to pass an amendment requiring a majority vote and 108 members to pass an amendment requiring a 3/4's vote. Any amendment, regardless of the session, would require those totals to pass. At the Saturday meeting a quorum was established, but there were questions about whether or not enough members were in attendance to conduct business. A count was taken and the number was established at 83 members present.

A general discussion followed about whether or not business could actually be conducted at the meeting. It was agreed that discussion could take place on the proposed amendments and new business items. Notice of these items and the procedure for voting for the items will be e-mailed to TFA members after October 31 (the deadline for renewal and application for new members). The deadline for voting will be December 1.

### **Proposal to Add “Performance of Oral Interpretation” as a TFA Qualifying Event**

Sammy Green presented the rationale of the event. General discussion then took place about the merits of the event. An amendment was offered to implement the event (if passed) for the 2005-06 competitive season. Concerns were expressed about the availability of rooms at tournament sites and the continued requests to add or change to the current offering of events.

### **Suggestion to remove the Student Congress rules from the TFA website**

Kim Falco explained that some of the items on the TFA website under “IQT rules” are not in the TFA Constitution. She requested that the Executive Council remove those items from the website.

### **Proposal to close the Cross-Examination Period in Debate**

Russell Rach explained the rationale for the proposed amendment. Concerns were expressed about the need when it is possible for the judge to control the actions of the debaters in the debate round. Persons also spoke to the amendment would allow for students would be able to think for themselves.

### **New Business Item—Committee Report**

Dixie Waldo discussed the concern of the Executive Council about the cancellation of IQT’s. Changes would be made in the application process to move such tournaments to the bottom of the priorities when they have applied for tournaments.

### **Texas National Tournament**

Jane Boyd addressed the body about the potential plans for the National Forensic League national tournament in 2006. The tournament site will be the Colleyville Heritage and Grapevine High Schools and their nearby campuses. Hotel rooms have been contracted for prices ranging from \$49-\$99. The official name of the tournament is the Bluebonnet Nationals. Jane requested that the membership consider in-kind, monetary, and volunteer investments. The idea of a “Bluebonnet” tree was suggested in which “blossoms” of needs for the tournament would be placed on the website and persons would volunteer to fulfill one of those needs.

Rosemary also announced that Taft tournament has postponed their tournament from November 5-6 and would like to re-schedule their tournament.

Barbara McClain asked that an ad-hoc committee to address the need to establish guidelines for the needs of technology in debate rounds. Rosemary said that they would establish that at the next Executive Council meeting.

Dixie Waldo also urged the members to submit their congress legislation to the Student Congress Coordinator by the December 15. She also announced that the application for hired judges would be posted on the TFA website sometime in January.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25.

**TEXAS FORENSICS ASSOCIATION  
TREASURER'S REPORT  
TSCA CONVENTION FALL 2004**

Current Bank Balance	\$20,174.88
Spring Officer's Retreat	\$ 1,447.22
Table Rental at NFL Nationals	\$ 100.00
Gifts for Texans at NFL Nationals	\$ 1,763.02
Membership Forms and Printing	\$ 587.26
Membership Postage	\$ 660.37
Scholarship Payments	\$2,000.00
Web Page and Webmaster	\$4,200.00
August Officer's Retreat	\$1,414.30
Site Visit to El Paso	\$1,429.73

## **Proposal to Add Performance of Oral Interpretation as a TFA State Tournament Qualifying Event**

### **Amendment:**

Add Performance of Oral Interpretation as a qualifying event effective the beginning of the 2005 – 2006 TFA tournament competition season. This will be added to the Standing Rules , Events Sanctioned by the Association, Individual Events, page 12 of the Constitution

**Description of Event: Performance of Oral Interpretation (POI) is a program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from a minimum two of the three recognized genres of competitive interpretation (prose/poetry/drama) used to call attention to a topic that merits discussion.**

### **Specific rules governing the event:**

1. The performer will choose a topic that merits discussion (similar to an oratory topic).
2. Through the use of a minimum of 2 of the 3 literary genres (prose, poetry, and drama) combined with original writing, the performer will address the topic and its importance to the audience.
3. Cuttings from prose, poetry and drama must be published or copyrighted. It may also **incorporate “outside” literature such as magazines, interviews, papers, internet files, etc.**
4. Original writing should be used as transitional material and to discuss the topic. This is not intended to be just a program of literature, but an opportunity to analyze a topic through personal opinion and the use of literature.
5. Titles and authors of all prose, poetry and drama must be stated in the introduction.
6. The performance must be performed from a binder.
7. The majority of the POI should be published works and the rest may be original writing.
8. The time limit is 10 minutes with a 30 second grace period.
9. A copy of the POI must be made available upon request. All original writing in the POI must be highlighted. A bibliography including title, author and publishing company of all published/copyrighted works must be included.

### Amendment

Under Selection of Invitational Qualifying Tournaments, section a), page 17 of the Constitution add Performance of Oral Interpretation (POI)

Rationale: Last year at convention we voted to add Performance of Oral Interpretation as the consolation event for the 2004 state meet. I think that this event should be added as a regular qualifying event. The event offers interpretation students the opportunity to not only perform the literature but research a topic and offer their view of the topic through both literature and self analysis. It is not intended to take the place of any event or combination of events. It is not intended to be just a program of literature, but an opportunity to analyze a topic through personal opinion and the use of literature.

I also think that it is important that interpretation students have the opportunity to enter more events at the state tournament. At the present there are only 3 events (dramatic, humorous and duet acting) available to these students, where speech students have the opportunity to enter 6 (foreign extemp, U S extemp, Original Oratory, LD Debate, CX Debate and Student Congress).

If you have any questions concerning the event, please contact Sammy Green at [sammyg@springisd.org](mailto:sammyg@springisd.org) or call me at 281-355-2190

## **PROPOSAL THAT CROSS-EXAMINATION IN DEBATE SHOULD BE CLOSED**

Proposed by Russell Rach

Add language to Standing Rules, Section 1: Debate, subsection A. Debate Rules, such that:

**CROSS EXAMINATION PERIOD.** During the questioning period, both opponents face the judge. Each debater shall question one opponent and only that opponent may respond. A debater may waive the cross-examination privilege but will lose that time waived. The questioner shall control the use of time during the period and shall only ask questions and may not comment on the answers or make any statement of his/her own views. Testimony acquired during cross-examination may be considered binding and used as the basis for arguments in rounds. Violations of this rule can result in loss of round, loss of speaker points, or loss of speaker ranks as determined by the judge.

### **RATIONALE:**

1. The activity IS CALLED CROSS EXAMINATION DEBATE FOR A REASON. The purpose of the questioning period is to : 1) Ask for information to gain clarification and understanding 2) Set up strategies to use in developing further argumentation 3) Discover fallacies or inconsistencies in opponent's argumentation
2. Open cross examination practices are making it hard for judges to follow the line of questioning in rounds due to simultaneous and multiple questions and answers. In trials or in congressional hearings, there are formal rules governing who may ask questions and their sequencing. This increases the coherence and order of the proceedings and allows for testimony to be properly evaluated as evidence.
3. Open cross examination is a failed experiment. The lack of standards for the cross-examination period have reduced its value and meaning for many TFA debate rounds, where opponents and judges regard it as additional prep time and "not binding."
4. The tag team nature of open cross examination allows weak partners to evade responsibility for arguments and for stronger partners to dominate the discussion. This reduces the educational value of participation for the weaker partner.
5. Many female voices are drowned out by their male partners, and vice versa.
6. Closed cross examination would restore value to the practice, allowing the testimony acquired to be properly evaluated
7. Speeches are divided in debate rounds to encourage equal participation by both partners. Cross examination periods should be likewise divided.

