

## Americanism Commission minutes/report

The Americanism Commission met on March 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Marriott Pere Marquette hotel in Peoria. All Five commission members were present along with oratorical coordinator Joy Wilson, Department Assistant Adjutant Gary Jenson, Department Treasurer Myron Kirby, Department Commander Cheri Stanton, and Cheri's Aide Edna Taylor.

Joy reported she had thirty three paid applications for the department's constitutional speech contest. Eight dropped out for various reasons leaving twenty five contestants to compete in the five semi final contests. Joy discussed the increasing costs of housing and food to host the contest. The \$125 sponsor fee may need to be increased for 2018. The department staff is looking at different locations. Joy will E-mail the five commission members an informational packet for hotels and cities to bid to host the 2018 contest.

The 2017 department constitutional speech contest was held on March 4<sup>th</sup> at the Peoria Civic Center. Twenty five high school contestants competed in the semi finals, with five advancing to the final contest. The commission thanks the department staff and the many volunteers from our American Legion family for another successful program. We congratulate all of our orators on a job well done. The contestant's names, cities, schools, post sponsors, grades, and placement are on the department's website. Ryan Park, a junior at Naperville High School will represent Illinois in the National finals on April 21-23 in Indianapolis, IN. Philip Mette, Mike Carder and others plan to attend to support Ryan.

The commission urges Legionnaires to recruit candidates for Premier Boys State and Illini Girls State. This is a week that shapes a lifetime.

The commission will next meet in July at the Department Convention.