

Americanism Commission

District and Division constitutional speech contests were held in January as the applications are due to oratorical program coordinator Joy Wilson by January 27th. Each of the five divisions are entitled to six contestants to compete in the department semi-final contest on March 4th in Peoria. Divisions may also have up to six alternates to fill any openings in the commission's goal of thirty contestants. Five contestants will advance to the department finals.

Many Legionnaires do not understand the oratorical scholarship program. Please consider attending one of the five department semi-final contests and the final contest at the Peoria Civic Center and you will witness the contest in action. You will be impressed with the knowledge and appreciation these youth have of our U.S. constitution.

Americanism essays are due to the local posts, units, and squadrons by February 3rd. The auxiliary judges the essays at the district, division, and department levels. The 2017 topic is "What The American Flag Means To Me".

Chairman Mette received an eBulletin from National as February is Americanism month and would like to share part of the message.

"As we pause during the month of February to reflect on what Americanism means to us, it is the perfect time for us to rededicate ourselves to engage in meaningful activities and programs in our own community that perpetuate a 100 percent Americanism. There is no need for you or your post to "reinvent the wheel" when it comes to promoting Americanism, as The American Legion already has a plethora of established, well respected programs to achieve this goal. Our proven and respected programs include American Legion Boys State/Nation, Baseball, Boy Scouts, Family Support Network, Flag Education, Get Out The Vote, Junior Shooting Sports Programs, Operation Comfort Warriors, Oratorical Contest, and Youth Cadet Law Enforcement just to name a few. A legacy of Americanism is a legacy worth imparting on our youth, to not only honor those men and women that have served and laid down their lives to secure freedom, but to ensure our freedoms and way of life are secured for generations to come. During Americanism month, let us rededicate ourselves to one hundred percent Americanism one hundred percent of the year".

It is time to contact your local high school to recruit candidates for Premier Boys State and Illini Girls State. Our youth are busy with sports, jobs, and school, but the week spent at EIU Charleston is "a week that shapes a lifetime".

The Americanism Commission will next meet on March 3rd in Peoria.