**NATIONAL ORATORICAL CONTEST**

**FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**  
A Constitutional Speech Contest

Don Hennessy, Contest Chairman for Naperville Post 43 at 630-355-4679

**"Essentials" At Naperville Contest Level for Jan. 4, 2020**

**Part 1:** **Draft in writing a "Prepared Oration"** on some aspect of the U.S. Constitution, with emphasis on a citizen’s duties and obligations to our government.  It must have a title.  It must be a speech that you create.  Quotations must always be indicated as such, and the author’s name must be given in the speech manuscript and cited orally.  The speech must be given in no less than 8 minutes, and no more than 10 minutes.  It does not have to be recited verbatim, but contestants must adhere closely to their manuscript.  Because no podium, no microphone, no notes or other aids are permitted, it is suggested that contestants memorize the beginning, the ending and an outline of their speech.   
        Practice with a teacher or parent who will check timing and give constructive comments. Common mistakes are (1) speaking too fast and (2) not giving good word separation, especially for names, titles and words the judges may not recognize.  There is a big difference between being heard and being understood by the judges and the audience. Because of the time requirements, and because one may speak at a different rate as you become more familiar with your speech by repetition, it is good to plan a 9 minute speech. Warning signs will appear at the 8, 9 and 10 minute marks. Use a timer when practicing.  You do not want to see the 10 minute warning! That results in a penalty!  
        Have a pleasant friendly facial expression.  Do not be a statue.  Be your natural self, but use expression and emphasis like good speakers do.  It is good to clearly state your title at the beginning, work it into your speech several times in the middle, and state it in your ending. That repetition should help the judges remember you. Attach a bibliography sheet at the end of your manuscript to show where your speech information was obtained.  You **must** bring a copy of your speech manuscript to each contest level.

**Part 2.** **The “Assigned Topic”** will bea part of the U.S. Constitution. It will be chosen at contest time from one of the four topics that are listed below.  One or more of the four may fit into part of your Prepared Oration, Part 1 above. You must speak no less than 3 minutes, and no more than 5 minutes, on the Assigned Topic chosen at contest time. Time warning signs will appear at the 3, 4, and 5 minute marks.  You do not want to see the 5 minute warning that results in penalty!

**Four “Assigned Topics” from U.S. Constitution for 2020 Oratorical Contest**

* **Amendment XII** – Electoral College
* **Amendment XXIV** – Citizens right to vote shall not be denied by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay poll tax or other tax.
* **Amendment XXVII** – No law, varying the compensation for the services of Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.
* **Amendment XX** – terms of President and Vice President.  When Congress shall assemble. Articles of Presidential succession.

**For the complete text of each of above Amendments see:** <https://www.legion.org/oratorical>

**3.  On or before December 1, 2019**, a Parent or School Representative is requested to confirm to the Contest Chairman mentioned below (1) the name, (2) phone number and (3) High School of the contestant that will appear and compete at the local 2020 contest on Jan. 4, 2020.  Earlier confirmations are appreciated. This information is needed for determining contest staff and set-ups. To be eligible, an applicant must be a bona fide high school student in a grade 9 thru 12, a U.S. Citizen or lawful permanent resident, and under the age of 20 years at the time of the National contest starting April 17, 2020.

**4. Appear in business attire** with a parent or teacher or chaperone. Bring a written copy of your "Prepared Oration" manuscript which must have a title.  "Sign In" at the American Legion Hall, 10 W. Chicago Ave., 2nd Floor, Naperville, on Saturday, January 4, 2020, at 1:30 PM. The District contest will probably be on Sunday January 5, the Division contest will probably be the following week-end, the State contest will be March 6-7 in Springfield, IL, and the National contest will be April 17-19, 2020 in Indianapolis, IN.

**5.** **The** **order of speaking** will be determined by lot at contest time. A contestant will not hear speeches of other contestants, but parents, teachers and guests may attend and hear all speeches of all contestants. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Winners and Prizes will be announced the same afternoon. The 1st Place Winner earns the right to compete at the next contest level. Lately, other contestants have been invited to fill vacancies at the next contest level in the order they are ranked by the speech judges.  We have been successful in the recent past in having our Post contestants fill vacancies in higher contest levels.  **When facts or figures are used**, have good back-up sources and references for them in your bibliography sheet. It would be cause for disqualification if a speech contained erroneous facts or figures.

**6.** **The purpose of this 83nd annual national contest,** started in 1938, is to instill in high school students a better knowledge and appreciation of the U.S. Constitution.  Other objectives include the development of leadership and speaking qualities.   The Illinois State Champion will compete against contestants from the other 49 States in the National Contest. In addition to cash prizes at local contest levels, State college tuition awards of $13,000 are spread among State contestants. National college tuition awards of $128,000 are spread among National contestants with $18,000, $16,000 and $14,000 going to the three national finalists. Post 43 will pay the $125 application fee for the State Contest. Hotel rooms are provided for contestants and parents at State and National contests. More information is available in websites: For Illinois: [www.illegion.org](http://www.illegion.org) under links for Resources, Scholarships, Oratorical Contest Program; For National: [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) under links for Programs, Oratorical Contest.  
  
**8. For answers to questions**, please contact Don Hennessy, Contest Chairman for Naperville Post 43 of American Legion, 630-355-4679 or email [gddh55@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gddh55@sbcglobal.net)

This is not an easy contest. It is a challenge that thousands of good students have been able to perform since its inception in 1938. See a partial Naperville list below. Are you a good student?

**PAST WINNERS at NAPERVILLE CONTEST LEVEL Since 2000**

2000 - 63rd Annual 1st Place Andrew Mondi, Naperville North HS, Senior  
2001 - 64th Annual 1st Place Ian Holzhauer, Naperville North HS, Senior  
2002 - 65th Annual 1st Place Jennifer L. Dierdorff, Naperville Central HS, Senior  
2003 - 66th Annual 1st Place Scott Musial, Benet Academy, Senior  
 2nd Place Alexis Maxwell, Naperville North, Senior  
 3rd Place Jessica Garvert, Benet Academy, Sophomore  
2004 - 67th Annual 1st Place Serena Raheja, Naperville North HS, Senior  
 2nd Place Melissa Entzminger, Home School, Junior  
 3rd Place Michael S. Leen, Benet Academy, Senior  
2005 - 68th Annual 1st Place Melissa Entzminger, Home School, Senior  
 2nd Place Casey Verkamp, Naperville North HS, Junior  
 3rd Place Jennifer Cota, Naperville Central HS, Senior  
2006 - 69th Annual 1st Place Casey Verkamp, Naperville North HS, Senior (\*)  
 2nd Place Danielle Gewurz, Nequa Valley HS, Senior  
2007 - 70th Annual 1st Place Jared Canfield, Home School, Junior  (\*\*)  
2008 - 71st Annual 1st Place Matthew Schuhriemen, a Home School Sophomore   
 2nd Place Kristin Hwu, a Naperville North HS Senior  
 3rd Place  Sunameeka Panigrahy, a Naperville Central HS Junior  
2009 - 72nd Annual 1st Place Miriam Canfield, a Home School Junior  
 2nd Place Matthew Schuhriemen, a Home School Junior  
 3rd Place Thomas Schuhriemen, a Home School Senior  
2010 - 73rd Annual 1st Place Matthew Schuhriemen, a Home School Senior     (\*)  
 2nd Place Katherine Rudolph, a Naperville Central HS Senior  
 3rd Place Micah Colbert, a Home School Senior  
 4th Place Ryan Macwan, a Home School Sophomore  
 5th Place Alyssa J. Peterson, a Benet Academy Senior    
2011 - 74th Annual 1st Place Anagha Sundararajan, Waubonsee Valley HS Senior  
 2nd Place Ryan Macwan, a Home School Junior  
 3rd Place Rianka Macwan, a Home School Sophomore  
 4th Place Jonathan Hogue, a Metea Valley Junior  
2012 - 75th Annual 1st Place Rianka Macwan, a Home School Junior  
 2nd Place Kirthi Bellamkonda, a Naperville Central HS Junior  
 3rd Place Ryan Macwan, a Home School Senior  
2013 - 76th Annual 1st Place Steven Harrison, a Waubonsie Valley HS Junior  
 2nd Place Rianka Macwan, a Home School Senior  
 3rd Place Sarvasva Raghuvanshi, a Neuqua Valley HS Freshman  
2014 - 77th Annual 1st Place Sarvasva Raghuvanshi, a Neuqua Valley HS Sophomore  (\*)  
 2nd Place Samantha Xu, a Naperville Central HS Sophomore  
 3rd Place Steven Harrison, a Waubonsie Valley HS Senior

2015 - 78th Annual 1st Place  Sarvasva Raghuvanshi, a Neuqua Valley HS Junior

2nd Place Rowan Macwan, a Home HS Junior (\*\*)

3rd Place Samantha XU, a Naperville Central HS Junior

2016 - 79th Annual 1st Place Regan Macwan, a Home School Freshman

2nd Place Abinaya Ramakrishnan, IL Science & Math Academy Sophomore

2017 - 80th Annual 1st Place Ryan Park, a Naperville Central HS Junior (\*)

2nd Place Regan Macwan, a Home School Sophomore

3rd Place Nicole Tong, a Naperville North HS Freshman

2018 - 81st Annual 1st Place Nicole Tong, a Naperville North HS Sophomore

2nd Place Regan Macwan, a Home School Junior

3rd Place Andy Wang, a Neuqua Valley HS Senior

2019 – 82nd Annual 1st Place Kate Li, a Naperville Central HS Sophomore

2nd Place Nicole Tong, a Naperville North HS Junior

3rd Place Aparna Ramakrishnan, a Naperville Central Freshman

(\*)  Also won State Contest and qualified to compete in Nationals  
(\*\*)  Also won State Contest and was one of three finalists at Nationals  
**NOTE: Jared Canfield won 3rd Place in 2007 National Contest  
 Rowan Macwan won 2nd Place in 2015 National Contest**