



SPEECH NOTES

The Official Newsletter of the PA Speech & Debate Association

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It's hard to believe, but the new school year is just around the corner, which means the annual PSDA conference isn't far behind! Once again, the program promises to offer educational ideas for both coaching and teaching. If you don't receive a registration form in the next month, contact one of the officers! The current officers are:

President:	Bob Casey, Trinity High School
Vice-President of Speech:	David Long, Southern Lehigh High School
Vice-President of Forensics:	Lisa Bompiani, Greater Latrobe High School
Treasurer:	Carl Askew, Shikellemy High School
Executive Secretary:	Mary Ann Berty, Trinity High School
Historian:	Jeff Smith, Lake-Lehman High School
Social Committee:	Kate O'Halloran, Norwin High School; Lisa Bompiani, & Alice Ursin, Bethel Park High School
Webmaster:	Sharon Volpe, North Allegheny High School

If you have any suggestions for future issues of SPEECH NOTES, please contact Lisa Bompiani at ozsomebs@msn.com.

WANT TO SEE YOUR NAME IN PRINT??

We need moderators for the PSDA Annual Conference! It's easy – you simply introduce the speaker, have everyone sign-in, and enjoy a wonderful presentation! Contact Mary Ann Berty at



The By-laws are Updated!

After much discussion and work, the by-laws have been updated! Visit www.paspeechanddebate.com and print out a copy of the by-laws; if there are any questions or concerns, please contact Lisa Bompiani at ozsomebs@msn.com.



You Better Watch Out! PSDA is Comin' to Town!



This fall's conference promises to be tons of fun as Santa Bob Casey and his elves come to town! You guessed it, the theme is Christmas in October! Or, as Lisa calls it, Christoberfest! So far, sessions include:

- * Speech activities that are applicable to all ability levels for the classroom. *Lisa Bompiani* will share ideas about how she differentiates lesson plans in her public speaking/communication skills classroom for all students.
- * *Bob Casey* will walk us through what to do when judging a round – how to take notes, pace oneself, and all the tips necessary for being an effective forensic judge.
- * *Beth Young* (fingers crossed!) will lead a Round Robin discussion exploring the creation of a new form of debate in PA, that will take the best of all debates and put them into one event.
- * A session on Public Forum and how to coach your students to success will be given by (fingers crossed!) *Stacey Givens-Cawley*.
- * *Sharon Volpe* will share her secrets to success in the coaching of extemp.
- * Other ideas are Classrooms of the Future, step-by-step guidelines for cutting in interp, supplemental events, promoting/developing a team, technology & tournaments, LD, New Coaches, and the Friday night Gala.

Mark your calendars now – October 10-11, 2008 – in State College, PA! And remember, PSDA is an ACT 48 provider, so you will earn hours for attending the sessions!

Your Opinion is Wanted . . . PHSSL Summer Camp Survey

For the last two years, the PHSSL Executive Committee has tried to organize a summer institute in order to prepare our students for the competition season. Both times, it has been canceled due to a lack of interest. The committee asks that you complete the following survey and return it to David Long. All responses will be kept confidential and simply used in an effort to design a camp that will suit the needs of our competitors, or to develop other services through PHSSL that meet the needs of our students. Thank you for your assistance.

David Long
Southern Lehigh H.S.
5800 Main Street
Center Valley, PA 18034
Fax: (610) 282-2653

1. Have any of your students in the last few years had an interest in attending a summer institute?
2. If so, did they consider the PHSSL Institute?
3. If they did not consider the PHSSL Institute, what were the specific reasons?
4. Is there a particular area, such as interp, debate, or speech, in which your students or team are interested?
5. Is there any aspect of a summer institute that may appeal to you or your team that may persuade them to attend a PHSSL Institute; ie, particular staff, length of time for the camp, areas of study, etc.?
6. In your opinion, is there any way we can better promote a PHSSL Institute to PA competitors?
7. Please add any other comments or suggestions below.



**MAKE YOUR
RESERVATIONS NOW!**

Before we know it, the PSDA conference will be here, and due to a large number of events happening in both our hotel and State College, attendees **MUST** make their reservations by September 8th! Call The Atherton and ask for the PSDA block of rooms: 125 South Atherton Street; State College, PA 16801; 800-832-0132, or 814-231-2100.



SPOTLIGHT ON .

coaching forensics

The benefits of forensics move outward from the student competitor like a ripple effect, ultimately changing their families, communities, and societies.

~Jennifer Billman

One of the most daunting challenges facing forensic coaches each year is the task of recruiting and keeping students as members of the school's team. Countless veteran coaches are able and willing to offer advice to new coaches, providing valuable information and techniques for establishing and maintaining a successful speech and debate team. One resource can be found on the National Forensic League's website, in the section for "coaching resources." The NFL Coach Guide offers excellent tips for both experienced and inexperienced coaches, such as:

- * Make a team website
- * Write letters to students
- * Visit classrooms
- * Showcase team trophies
- * Host team building activities
- * Plan public performances
- * Write press releases
- * Make announcements
- * Have a yearend banquet

Essentially, as a coach, you must determine your goals and the extent to which you want to recruit. Once you have answered those questions, there are no limits to the ways in which you can attract students to the team.

Another tip of many seasoned coaches is to be very clear and strict about the policies that you have in place for the team. Sharon Volpe, of North Allegheny, has several requirements that she demands, such as having varsity members participate in the "Words that Shook the World Contest" and submit a bill or resolution for congress. Also, students and parents must sign a contract, and students must follow the guidelines as written in the North Allegheny Forensics Constitution. The NFL Coach Guide reiterates the need for strict adherence to established rules so that the students who will cause problems on the team will leave on their own accord.

In his article, "Some Advice to New Coaches . . . and Maybe To Some Experienced Coaches as Well¹," Larry Smith shares the knowledge he gained during his 34 years of teaching, and 28 years of coaching. He states that good teaching and coaching is teaching students skills, making them aware of the world, and challenging them intellectually. Smith warns against allowing your ego to become involved in forensics; ego should never be the goal of a coach. If a coach remembers to be a teacher first, a coach second, and leave his/her ego out of it, then both coach and students will reap the benefits that forensics has to offer.

"Education of young minds is what it is all about. I decided very early that I was a teacher first and a coach second."

~ Larry Smith

In the end, a career as a forensic coach is an individual experience, as unique to each person as the students that one will coach. As John J. Buettler wrote², "the real reasons why we do forensics hasn't happened yet. And when forensics is all over, it's really just the beginning."

1. Mr. Smith's article was published in the Rostrum, December 1996, and can be found on the National Forensic League's website: <http://www.nflonline.org/Rostrum/TeachingForensics>.
2. <http://debate.uvm.edu/NFL/rostrumlib/coach%20Buettler%2003-03.pdf>