

# **NATIONAL CATHOLIC FORENSIC LEAGUE**

## **FALL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 23 AND 24, 2011 MARRIOTT RENAISSANCE BALTIMORE HARBORPLACE HOTEL BALTIMORE, MARYLAND**

**CALL TO ORDER:** 7:05 p.m. Catherine Luhr (Buffalo) also welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

**I. INVOCATION:** Kieran Larkin (Brooklyn)

**II. ROLL CALL**

**III. REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS:**

**PRESIDENT: CATHERINE LUHR**

- Ms. Luhr reminded meeting attendees that this year is an NCFL Election Year. Interested Directors should submit nominations by December 31<sup>st</sup>.
- A nominations committee will also be formed. The committee is structured to ensure geographic representation on the committee. Individuals who have submitted his/her name as a candidate are not eligible to serve on the nominations committee.
- Nominations for the Gaudette Award are due to Greg Cunningham by January 15, 2012.

**FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT: GREG CUNNINGHAM**

- The LD/PF Nationals topic process last year was very positive with many suggestions received. Michael Nailor chaired both topic committees and the committees did fantastic work utilizing wikis to collaborate.
- Suggestions for this year's LD/PF Nationals topic should be submitted to Greg by January 15, 2012.

**SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT: CHARLIE SLOAT**

- The LD National topic voting was successful, but the unique link approach did cause some initial issues.
- The PF National topic voting utilized a standard link, which was easier, and the integrity of the process was maintained with checks to confirm that no one voted more than once.
- There is a Bylaws proposal to be considered that recommends a preferential ballot approach for this year's voting. This will address similar topics competing with each other.
- This year in Extemp, we are inviting suggestions for Extemp topic areas by January 15, 2012. Suggestions for questions within the Extemp topic areas that

are published in February should be submitted by April 27, 2012. All suggestions should be submitted to [extemp@ncfl.org](mailto:extemp@ncfl.org). The goal is to get more of the questions from the community and fewer from the executive board.

**EXECUTIVE SEC/TREASURER: MIKE COLLETTI**

- Financial Report will be presented later in the meeting.

**PUBLICITY/RECORDING SEC: ROBERTA HYLAND**

- Thank you to everyone for attending NCFL Nationals in Arlington/Washington.

**TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR: ROLAND BURDETT**

- **Apology to Reid Waldman of Blue Valley North High School in Kansas:** It is with great apology, on behalf of the National Catholic Forensic League, that I write to confirm that an error was made recording the results of your Extemporaneous Speaking competition in the fourth round of the Saturday preliminary rounds in Washington, DC, at NCFL Grand Nationals 2011.

Because of a human error recording ballots, you should have received ranks of 1, 1, and 1 rather than the 1, 4, and 5 that were recorded. At your League Director and Coach's request we investigated the situation and confirm that indeed, your results were incorrectly recorded. This affected your final seeding at the conclusion of the preliminary rounds. You should have been announced as an Octofinalist competitor and given the opportunity to advance into Quarterfinals.

- Apology to Hayfield Secondary School, host site for Policy and Public Forum Debate at NCFL Grand Nationals 2011, for rooms whose contents were damaged/left in disarray.
- Directors are encouraged to communicate to their coaches, students, and judges that competition facilities need to be respected and treated with care.
- Thank you to George Mason University for providing speech competition facilities for NCFL Grand Nationals 2011 at no cost.
- Directors are reminded that registration changes from coaches need to be submitted to Tab as soon as possible. At Nationals, there were 15 changes submitted on Saturday morning that resulted in 26 room moves. These changes on Saturday morning created delays for the tournament.
- When submitting registrations using tabroom.com, please check the ADA box if a student requires accommodations. Details regarding the assistance needed should be emailed to Roland Burdett.
- The Executive Committee is recommending a change to the hotel reservation process used for the NCFL Grand National Tournament. Last year, NCFL mitigated overbooking issues by changing the timing for the opening of the hotel block and by attempting a deposit process. While the timing change for the opening of the hotel block was successful and the new approach will be continued, the deposit process did not go smoothly.

The Executive Committee is recommending that NCFL expand its relationship with Conference Direct, the organization that currently works with NCFL and National Tournament Hosts to negotiate hotel contracts. The expanded relationship will include use of Conference Direct's housing service at no additional cost. Conference Direct's housing service enables reservations via web or phone and will allow NCFL, NCFL Directors and Coaches to have more control and transparency throughout the hotel reservation process. A credit card guarantee will be utilized, but there will not be an immediate charge to the credit cards. Instead a change fee approach will be used.

- Confirmation numbers will be issued by Conference Direct with the reservation data transferring to the hotels electronically system to system on May 1st. This data transfer approach will eliminate errors as long as the person placing the reservation enters the information correctly.
- A sub-block process for reservations for large diocese or teams is supported by the Conference Direct process.
- Conference Direct will also have staff onsite at a designated tournament location on Thursday and Friday in order to assist with any hotel reservation issues that might occur.
- The Conference Direct process can be used year after year as it is not tied to a specific location's conference services bureau.
- Conversations with hotel management indicate that they prefer when large events utilize a process/service such as the one provided by Conference Direct as it provides a better experience for event attendees.
- Additional information will be provided in the future, including an answer to how school checks need to be handled.

#### TOURNAMENT REPORTS:

##### ARLINGTON/WASHINGTON, 2011

- Ms. Phillips thanked everyone who attended NCFL Nationals 2011 and noted the tournament went well.

##### BALTIMORE, 2012

- Mr. Donovan requested that meeting attendees keep Mr. Durkin's mother in their prayers as she was taken to the hospital unexpectedly.
- Mr. Donovan noted that the main tournament hotel is the Hilton and it will be the site for registration, the Directors' meeting, postings, the party, awards, and mass. Rates for the various hotels being used for the tournament are comparable.
- The Sheraton will be the host site for Student Congress.
- Events on Saturday will be held at a variety of school sites. The specific sites may change as the host site contracts are in the process of being finalized. Busses between the hotels and competition sites will be provided.
- All of the hotel sites will be utilized for elimination rounds on Sunday. The hotels are within walking distance of each other, but a bus loop will also be available.
- Please encourage tournament attendees to stay in the hotel block.
- The Baltimore Orioles baseball team will be in town and Ft. McHenry will be

- having events to mark the anniversary of the War of 1812.
- There is a light rail system from BWI airport that has a stop near the Hilton.

#### PHILADELPHIA, 2013

- Mr. Roosevelt advised that tournament planning is going well.
- There will be 4 tournament hotels and mass will be held across from the Sheraton. Awards are planned to be held at the convention center.
- Philadelphia is a very walkable and navigable city.

#### CHICAGO, 2014

- Mr. Colletti advised that tournament planning is going well.
- High schools may be used as competition sites and the downtown universities may set building use fees that are higher than those assessed previously due to challenging economic conditions.

#### POLICY DEBATE SELECTION COMMITTEE: CATHERINE LUHR

- 5 topics cleared out of the selection meeting and the ballot was provided to directors as part of the meeting materials.
- Directors should review the topics closely and indicate their topic preferences to Ms. Luhr by October 15, 2011. Ms. Luhr will then submit a vote on behalf of NCFL.
- The topics will then be narrowed down to two topics with the final vote being published.

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2010-2011: MIKE COLLETTI

- Mr. Colletti noted that the NCFL financial statement is starting from a better point this year than last year due to the increase in fees and dues adopted last year and due to a satisfactory cost approach with the National Tournament.
- Mr. Colletti noted that the tab food item includes hotel food costs and the costs from the other competition tab sites. Directors discussed that recent OIG investigation related to hotel food expenses incurred by the Dept. of Justice may eventually lead to hotel costs that are not as extreme as have been experienced to date.
- Directors discussed if NCFL should consider increasing the student entry cost from \$45 to \$50.
- Motion to accept the Financial Statement as presented made by Sister Mary Patricia Plumb (St. Petersburg/Tampa); seconded by Mr. Sexton (Milwaukee) – Passed by acclamation.

#### PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE NCFL CONSTITUTION:

NCFL CONSTITUTION PROPOSAL: Selection of the Location for the Fall Executive

## Committee Meeting

Constitution, Article V, Section D, Meetings, Para 1. Insert "The agenda may also include the selection of a site for the next Fall Executive Committee Meeting." at the end of the current paragraph.

Constitution, Article V, Section D, Meetings, Para 2. Insert "(If not already determined)" after the phrase "a site for the Fall Executive Committee Meeting".

Rationale: To allow the vote for the location of the Fall Executive Committee Meeting to be held at either the Fall or Spring Meeting. Currently it can only be voted on at the Spring Meeting, which is just 5 months before the Meeting. This is causing problems with booking hotels. Allowing us to select the site a year in advance, and sign contracts at that time, would be helpful.

Motion to accept the change to the NCFL Constitution as presented above made by Mr. Figliola (Philadelphia); seconded by Ms. Luce (Green Bay) – Passed by acclamation.

Motion by Mr. Roosevelt (Philadelphia) to have the fall meeting 2012 in Philadelphia on September 28/29, 2012; seconded by Ms. Phillips (Washington, DC) – Passed by acclamation.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned for the evening at 8:30 p.m. and resumed at 8:45 a.m. the next day, Saturday, September 24th.

## VIII. CHANGE IN THE BY-LAWS:

Ms. Luce (Green Bay) then presented a Bylaws change proposal that is being recommended by an adhoc committee chaired by Ms. Luce to address concerns regarding intertexting in Oral Interpretation of Literature. Participants on the Committee included: Jennifer Jerome (Omaha), Don Hitt (Richmond), Kristie Taylor (Palm Beach), Tony Figliola (Philadelphia), and Deb Simon.

Using a fish fry and Bass-o-matic analogy, Ms. Luce described the proposal as providing language that will require documentation/citation of the pieces being used, support respect for authors' literary works, and avoid literary obfuscation. The Bylaw proposal language indicates that the separate of individual works should be clear through use of voice, persona, or some other means. The presenter's goal should not be to create a whole new poem out of multiple literary works. Ms. Luce noted that the lack of documentation/citation of the literary works being used could result in a disqualification. If judges are not able to tell between the fish fry and the Bass-o-matic, then judges can make the decision to downgrade scores/rankings. Ms. Luce also noted that judge training on the difference will be important.

A. NCFL BY-LAW PROPOSAL: Changes in Oral Interpretation of Literature  
Section C Evaluations: Definitions and Procedures 1.d.1)

After "...published poetry." **Add:** "If using a series of poems, all titles and authors must be cited at the start in the order in which the poems were introduced. In case of a protest, the student must be able to provide a copy of all the poems used, including title and author. Failure to produce this documentation will result in a DQ. The performer has the burden, if juxtaposing poems, to be clear at all times which poem is being used. The performer is to create a program of pieces not a new poem."

Ballot change:

At the end of #4

**Add:** "The performer has the burden, if juxtaposing poems, to be clear at all times which poem is being used. The performer is to create a program of pieces not a new poem."

At the end of #2

**Add:** "If using a series of poems, all titles and authors must be cited at the start in the order in which the poems were introduced. In case of a protest, the student must be able to provide a copy of all the poems used, including title and author. Failure to produce this documentation will result in a DQ."

Motion to call to question made by Mr. Larkin (Brooklyn); seconded by Ms. Donnelly (Worcester). Then motion withdrawn by Mr. Larkin.

Motion to amend made by Mr. Roosevelt (Philadelphia), seconded by Ms. Luce (Green Bay). Amendment removes language, "at the start in the order in which the poems were introduced" in both places. Amendment passed.

Motion to amend made by Mr. Sexton (Milwaukee); seconded by Ms. Luce (Green Bay). Amendment removes language, "Failure to produce this documentation will result in a DQ" in both places. Amendment passed.

Motion to amend made by Mr. Figliola (Philadelphia); seconded by Sister Mary Patricia Plumb (St. Petersburg/Tampa). Amendment removes language, "The performer is to create a program of pieces not a new poem" in both places. Amendment passed.

Motion to amend made by Mr. Larkin (Brooklyn); seconded by Mr. Long (Allentown). Amendment removes language, "In case of a protest, the student must be able to provide a copy of all the poems used, including title and author" in both places. Amendment passed.

Motion to adopt as amended by Mr. Donovan (Baltimore); seconded by Ms. Jerome (Omaha). Motion passed unanimously.

**Proposal as Amended and Adopted**

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#### At the end of #4

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#### At the end of #2

If using a series of poems, all titles and authors must be cited.

Mr. Long (Allentown) and Mr. Burton (Seattle) then presented a proposal to revise sections of the Student Congress Manual. The revision would have the Top 3 students based upon judge scores qualify for Semifinals. Students will still be able to vote for 2 students and the Parliamentarian ranking will select one student. The goal of the changes is to move from popularity as the most influential factor for qualification to Semifinals to students advancing on the strength of the abilities assessed by the scorers.

### B. NCFL BY-LAW PROPOSAL: Changes in Student Congress Manual

Student Congress Manual pg 9 VI Instructions for scorers #7

Drop "Any student appearing as 1st or 2nd on all three nomination forms will be a Semi-Finalist. In the event of two students being in the top 2 on all three forms, the student with the best judges' preference will be in the Semi-Final. If a Semi-Finalist is obtained through the Scorer/Parliamentarian nominations, the Chamber will then vote on the remaining names. (All nominations will appear on the preferential ballot.) If no one appears in top 2 on all three forms, the 3 nominations from each Scorer plus the number needed from the Parliamentarian to bring the number from five to eight will be placed in nomination for the students to elect two to Semi-Finals.] "

Replace with "At the conclusion of the third session, the top three students in each chamber on the basis of total ranks from the scorers will be a Semifinalist. Additionally, the top eight students in each chamber on the basis of total ranks from the scorers will

comprise a nomination ballot presented to the students at the end of the third session. Students will then place the names on this ballot in the order that they prefer the nominees. The top two vote getters of the preferential election that follows who have not advanced on the basis of total ranks shall also be Semifinalists. The Parliamentarian will also separately rank the students in the chamber, and her/his top-ranked student who has not advanced by either total judge ranks or preferential voting shall also be a Semifinalist."

On pg. 11 VIII Election procedures - Presiding Officer and Outstanding Members #2, the dropped section is as follows and should be replaced with the same section above.

"Any student appearing as 1st or 2nd on all three nomination forms will be a Semi-Finalist. In the event of two students being in the top 2 on all three forms, the student with the best judges' preference will be in the Semi-Final. The 3 nominations from each Scorer, plus number needed from Parliamentarian to bring the number to eight will be placed in nomination for the students to elect to the Semi-Finals. This procedure is used to determine the two Semi-Finalists per Chamber per session. The congresspersons will vote from the slate (1 or 2 candidates) by numbering their preference on a ballot - #1 for first choice, etc. These ballots will be brought to the Clerk by the Parliamentarian. The Committee will then use preferential voting procedure to determine the 2 congresspersons who will advance to the Semi-Final Session."

also drop the following on pg. 11 #2

"Again, if the officials agree on one person, the Chamber, using preferential voting, votes for one more from the slate of 8. The Chamber votes on 2 if the officials do not agree on 1."

Rationale:

Unless a student earns top ranks on all judge rank forms in a session, student vote solely determines the current semifinalists (with the Parliamentarian breaking ties). Finalists are determined, however, primarily by judge rank with a proportionally smaller number advancing by student vote. This change will bring the process for advancement from preliminary debate to semifinals more in line with that from semifinals to finals. Additionally, this system will reward cumulative performance on the basis of three sessions of debate rather than a single strong performance in any one session.

Motion made to call to question by Mr. Cunningham (Boston); seconded by Ms. Phillips (Washington, DC). Motion passed. Proposal passed unanimously.

Mr. Sloat (New York) then presented a proposal to use preferential voting for the selection of the Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum debate topics. Diocesan Directors would rank the topics with the lowest vote recipient moving forward.



**C. NCFL BY-LAW PROPOSAL:** To use preferential voting for the selection of the Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum Debate Topics.

**ByLaws, Article II, Section C, Para 4, Debate Procedures, SubPara f.**

After the phrase "Diocesan Directors will return their vote, each voting not more than once, for the L-D Debate Topics not later than March 28."

Strike the sentence "The topic receiving the most number of votes will be the topic for the NCFL Grand National L-D Debate Tournament."

Replace it with "Each voter will rank the topics 1st through Last. When voting closes, the ranks will be totaled and the topic receiving the lowest total among all the ballots cast, will be the topic for the NCFL Grand National L-D Debate Tournament. In case of a tie, the topic receiving the highest number of first place votes would be chosen."

**ByLaws, Article II, Section C, Para 4, Debate Procedures, SubPara f.**

After the phrase "Diocesan Directors will return their vote, each voting not more than once, for the PF Debate Topics not later than April 11."

Strike the sentence "The topic receiving the most number of votes will be the topic for the NCFL Grand National PF Debate Tournament."

Replace it with "Each voter will rank the topics 1st through Last. When voting closes, the ranks will be totaled and the topic receiving the lowest total among all the ballots cast, will be the topic for the NCFL Grand National L-D Debate Tournament. In case of a tie, the topic receiving the highest number of first place votes would be chosen."

Motion made for previous question by Mr. Larkin (Brooklyn); seconded by Sister Mary Patricia Plumb (St. Petersburg/Tampa). Motion passed. Proposal passed unanimously.

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Figliola (Philadelphia) discussed the concern regarding students copying performance from tapes and/or YouTube. Mr. Figliola noted that in addition to the content, the physical movement is being mimicked. After discussion, the Directors noted that creativity is the goal of Speech events, not mimicry and that this concern should be brought to the attention of coaches. The Directors also noted that a Bylaw solution is not possible and unless the piece in question violates the rules, a disqualification would not be appropriate.

Ms. Glunt (Erie) then made a motion to reconsider the Motion to reconsider the Bylaws Proposal for Changes in Oral Interpretation of Literature; seconded by Mr. Larkin (Brooklyn).

The Amendment would delete the phrase, “if juxtaposing poems” and add back in the sentence, “The performer is to create a program of pieces not a new poem.”

Motion to Reconsider failed – 16 nays, 8 yeas, and 5 abstentions,

Mr. Donovan (Baltimore) then discussed the concern that audience laughter could cause students to exceed time limits and urged judges to use discretion if a prolonged audience reaction creates an “over time” situation. Mr. Donovan also requested that judges be informed that if students request time signals, that should not be viewed as an indication of a lack of preparation. The Directors discussed if a different standard on timing should be used for outrounds and determined that a different standard would not be appropriate. The 30 second grace period, coupled with verbal instruction to the judges to use discretion if a performance is impacted by laughter should be sufficient.

Mr. Figliola (Philadelphia) noted that the action taken at the last fall meeting regarding gaveling down had not yet been updated in the Congress manual. Mr. Roland Burdett noted that the update would be made as soon as possible.

Ms. Phillips (Washington, DC) noted that Directors who did not pick up their ballots and/or trophies from NCFL 2011 could pick them up from her after the meeting.

Several Directors, including Miami and Pittsburgh, noted that they are considering bidding for Nationals in 2015 or other years and were looking for suggestions from past hosts. Interested Directors were reminded to talk to Ms. Sarah Donnelly and Mr. Roland Burdett to make sure they are using the appropriate bid and hotel guidelines and process.

Mr. Donovan (Baltimore) reminded Directors regarding activities scheduled for the afternoon.

Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Fontenot (New Orleans) and seconded by Ms. Phillips (Washington, DC) was unanimously accepted at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roberta Hyland, Arlington  
Recording Secretary