WHAT TO DO
Write an oration, which takes not less than EIGHT (8) minutes nor more than TEN (10) minutes to deliver, on some phase of the Constitution of the United States which will give emphasis to the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen to our government.

In addition to the above prepared oration, each contestant must be prepared to speak extemporaneously for THREE (3) to FIVE (5) minutes on any of the Articles or Amendments of the Constitution, Assigned Topics for 2020 Contest.

DATES FOR ENTERING AND COMPLETING CONTEST
High school students who wish to enter the contest should decide promptly and notify their high school principal, who should notify local Post American Legion officials. If there is more than one entrant from a high school, there must be a Post contest conducted under the joint auspices of the high school and the American Legion Post to decide the local representative. Every high school conducting a local contest under the joint auspices of the school and local American Legion Post is authorized to enter a contestant in the district contest.

LOCAL CONTESTS
Contestants are not required to commit oration to memory for local contests, and during the preparation period for the extemporaneous talk, may make notes to be used during delivery. However, no notes or prompting will be allowed in contests above the Post level. All Post contests must be completed by January 19, 2020. Send the name of the Post first place winner to your District Americanism Chairperson.

DISTRICT CONTESTS
District American Legion Americanism Chairs, and the counties under the jurisdiction of each are as follows:

DIST. 1 – (Butte, Corson, Dewey, Harding, Lawrence, Meade, Perkins, Ziebach counties) Chair: Ken Sabers, (ksabers@rushmore.com) 1908 Butte View Dr. Sturgis, SD 57785. District Contest to be held at Sturgis American Legion Post 33, January 12, 2020, 1:00pm. Storm date, January 19, same time and place.

DIST. 2 – (Bennett, Custer, Fall River, Haakon, Jackson, Jones, Mellette, Pennington, Shannon, Todd counties) Chair: Paul Douglas, 622 Auburn Dr, Rapid City, SD 57701. District Contest to be held at Rapid City American Legion Post 22, 818 E. St. Patrick St., Rapid City, January 12, 2020 2:00 p.m. Storm date, January 19, 2020 2:00 p.m. same place.

DIST. 3 - (Gregory, Hand, Hughes, Hyde, Lyman, Potter, Stanley, Sully, Tripp counties) Chair: Larry Madsen, (larry_madsen@hotmail.com) or 906 E Commercial Ave., Gettysburg, SD 57442. District Contest to be held at the Faith Lutheran Church Christian Living Center, 714 N Grand Ave, Pierre, SD. January 12, 2020 2:00 p.m. Storm date, January 19 same time and place.

DIST. 4 – (Brown, Campbell, Edmunds, Faulk, McPherson, Spink, Walworth counties) Chair: Dale Strom, (dale_strom@yahoo.com) 115 N. Kline St, Aberdeen, SD 57401. District Contest to be held at the Plymouth Congregational United Church of Christ, 431 W Melgaard Rd, Aberdeen, SD 57401 January 5, 2020, 3:00 p.m. Storm date, January 12th, same time and place.

Pictured left to right above: Department Commander Denny Brenden, 2019 Department Champion Keilly Gunther of Aberdeen, Erica Houser of Rapid City, Shaina Determan of Alexandria, Elise Heesch of New Effington, Julia Ebbinga of Hartford, Morgan Roberts of Spearfish, Jaslee Kerner of Gregory and Americanism Commission Chairman Larry Madsen of Gettysburg, SD.
DIST. 5 – (Brookings, Clark, Codington, Day, Deuel, Grant, Hamlin, Marshall, Roberts counties) Chair: Shelli Romeu (shelli.romeu@gmail.com) PO Box 284, Watertown, SD 57201. District Contest will be held at Watertown Post home, Jan. 19, 2020, 1:30 p.m. Storm date, Jan. 26, same time and place.

DIST. 6 – (Aurora, Beadle, Brule, Buffalo, Davison, Hanson, Jerauld, Kingsbury, Miner, Sanborn counties) Chair: Tim Thomas, (photostoday@midstatesd.net) 112 S Merrill St Chamberlain SD 57325. District Contest to be held at the Chamberlain High School, 1000 Sorenson Dr., Chamberlain, SD, 57325, January 5th, 2020, 2:00 p.m. Storm date, Jan 12th, same time and place.

DIST. 7 – (Lake, Lincoln, McCook, Minnehaha, Moody, Union counties) Chair: Bill Huntimer, wphejh@siouxvalley.net, 509 W. 9th St., Dell Rapids, SD 57022. District Contest to be held at Humboldt American Legion Post Home, Humboldt, SD 57035, January 12, 2020, 2:00 p.m. Storm date January 19th same time and place.

DIST. 8 – (Bon Homme, Charles Mix, Clay, Douglas, Hutchinson, Turner, Yankton counties) Chair: District Contest to be held at the Yankton Public Library, 515 Walnut St, Yankton SD 57078, January 25, 2020, 10:00 a.m. Storm Date February 1, 2020, same time and place.

District Chairpersons are in charge of District Contests.

ALL District Contests must be completed on or before February 2, 2020.

EACH DISTRICT CHAIRPERSON MUST
Report the name of the District winner to, State Americanism Commission Chair, Doug Harris at doughnut@gmail.com or 970-231-8556, and to SD American Legion State Headquarters at: hq@sdlegion.org or 605-886-3604 upon the completion of their District Contest.

“All the great speakers were bad speakers at first” Ralph Waldo Emerson

Teachers of Government, History, Civics, English and Speech can all be of great assistance to students in helping to prepare for the contests. School and public librarians can be of help as well.

STATE CONTEST
The top contestant from each District will compete in the State Finals on Sunday, February 23, 2020. The contest will be held at the Cedar Shores Convention Center Oacoma, SD at 10:30 a.m. or at the conclusion of the non-denominational Sunday Service adjournment of the 2020 SD American Legion Mid-Winter Conference.

NATIONAL CONTEST SCHOLARSHIPS
Scholarship awards are presented to the three finalists in the Final Round of the National Contest as follows: 1st place - $20,000; 2nd place - $17,000; 3rd place - $15,000. Each Department (State) winner who is certified into and participates in the first round of the National Contest will receive a $2,000 scholarship. Each first-round winner who advances to and participates in the second round but does not advance to the Final Round will receive an additional $2,000 scholarship to pursue education beyond high school.

PRIZES AND AWARDS
Chairpersons of local contests will secure no less than three nor more than five competent local citizens to judge the local contest.

If there are local awards, they must be funded by the local American Legion Post.

Chairpersons of District contests will secure three or five competent citizens to judge the district contest. The winner of each District contest will receive a medal and have the right to represent the district in the State contest. Any other prizes at the District level are the responsibility of the individual District. Five judges of college status will evaluate the work of the contestants in the State Contest. The first-place winner will receive a $1,000 scholarship and a trophy, plus a plaque for display in his/her high school trophy case. Second place winner will receive a $500 scholarship and a trophy, and third place winner will receive a $300 scholarship and a trophy. Remaining finalists will each receive a $100 scholarship and a trophy. Award scholarships are redeemable in any school above high school level.

MATERIAL FOR STUDY
All contestants and coaches should be familiar with the rules for American Legion oratory as defined in the national brochure Annual High School Oratorical Scholarship Program, “A Constitutional Speech Contest” which are available on-line at: http://www.legion.org/publication or by writing State Headquarters, The American Legion, PO Box 67, Watertown, S.D. 57201