Thursday, September 05, 2013

ACTAA Fall Convention

Fort Smith Holiday Inn City Center

Executive Council Meeting

1. Dawn Tucker called the meeting to order.
2. Minutes from the last Executive Council meeting, which were put together brilliantly, were emailed to Mary and posted to the website. Each member of the Executive Council was given a notebook to hold all Council information. All were notably excited over the new nametags, which were described as “groovy.” Tim Peerbolte was unsure of the spelling of “President,” but was assured his name tag was correct. A motion was made by Peerbolte to accept minutes “as are,” which was seconded. Minutes were accepted. Mary kindly instructed us on how to place our minutes into the binder, but politely declined to assemble any TESS portfolios. Jennifer Akers may or may not hole punch her documents next time, which will be no problem because Mary will always carry a hole punch just in case.
3. Officer Reports
   1. President Tucker commended council on a successful summer conference. Madame President also thanked for the kind words sent to her this summer concerning her mother-in-law, whose health is improving.
   2. 1st Vice President Helen Strickland is happy, and thanked the council for helping to pull the conference together. Some attendance figures were mentioned, such as 70 members have RSVPed for dinner Friday night and 74 at Saturday’s luncheon. 35 members also said they would attend the Early Bird professional development on Thursday evening. Mary also commended Helen on her work so far. Helen proved to be very gullible, as 2nd Vice President Jannetta passed her new position of Sunday School Superintendent to Helen.
   3. 2nd Vice President, Jannetta Carney, thinks she is doing a better job with the Google calendar. All changes and additions are immediate, so the five hundred emails between her and Webmaster Hannah Sawyer are no longer necessary. The 2014 – 2015 school year is also active. She will ask those coaches hosting tournaments which weekend they want reserved earlier this year to avoid last-minute confusion. College tournament schedule and performances will be on the calendar and labeled in a way that won’t confuse the high school teachers. Sawyer promises that a list of tournaments (not a calendar) is also available on the website. Jannetta showed this list to 1st Vice President Strickland. You just have to click it.
   4. 1st Vice President-Elect Tim Peerbolte will take us back to The Mountain again next year. When asked about details of next year’s conference, he is unsure of next year’s color scheme. However, the 75th anniversary is the diamond anniversary and will somehow be incorporated into conference theme. Unfortunately, we will not be digging for diamonds in Murfreesboro as it is not a suitable location to host this size of conference. Brandon Higdem will be helping with planning through publicity and promotions. It was suggested that perhaps socks will be given for door prizes. It was reported that close to 40 members voted online in advance for the 1st vice president-elect, elect.
   5. 1st Vice President-Elect, Elect (yet to be elected)
   6. 2nd Vice President-Elect (yet to be elected)
   7. Executive Secretary Mary Richardson, thank you for name plates and name tags. She has a lot to report and brought handouts. Tim pointed out that he and Mary are not fighting. Just to clear things up. No one is mad at anyone. Beautiful Save the Date magnets were ordered for next year’s convention. Since July 16, 2013, Mary has:
      1. Obtained an address/mailbox for ACTAA
      2. Had 3 stamps made with the new address on it for the Exec. Secretary, Exec. Treasurer, and the 2nd Vice President
      3. Ordered/received the medals for honorary members and others
      4. Ordered the awards for Exec Sec/Exec Treasurer
      5. Revised constitution according to our summer meeting workshop participant changes
      6. Mailed the AAA envelopes for the new member potential. I gave Tim the job of asking how each new member heard about ACTAA at the New Member Breakfast.
      7. Updated the exec council and committee lists on a spread sheet
      8. Compiled Exec council members notebooks
      9. Ordered/received official Executive Council name badges
      10. Aided 1st VP in preparation for Fall conference
      11. Invited new honorary members to the awards luncheon
      12. Sent Letters to Claudia Beach/HSU and principals
      13. Sent out emails to chairs/committee members about attendance
      14. Sent out email to college committee members
      15. Invited Life time members to the conference
      16. Ordered and received gifts for John Gale and Debra Catton
      17. Counted the ballots to raise fees for Demo Day: 57 for raising fees, 20 against
      18. Encouraged Student Congress chair, demo day chair to have their info posted on the website and bring hard copy to the meeting

Attendee numbers since 2010:

2010: 113

2011: 111

2012: 82

2013: 65 so far…

* + 1. Because Labor Day, 2015 is on Sept. 7: Dates for Conference 2015 are September 10, 11, 12; Demo Day will be 9/19/15; Student Congress will be November 8, 9, 10, 2015. Those dates are nearest the Veterans Day Holiday
    2. Three centrally located places for conference 2015 include: Lake DeGray; Red Apple Inn; Winrock Institute on Petit Jean. Winrock Institute was a favorite option among those present.

Mary was unofficially named the “hardest working member of ACTAA.”

She also brought brochures, hoping that someone would make them “look better.” As if they needed it. Several possible uses for these brochures were discussed, including giving to them to new members, mailing to non-member schools, and giving to administrators who are reluctant to allow teachers to attend our professional events.

* 1. Executive Treasurer Jennifer Akers brought her report for the business meeting. She and Debra Catton met July 31st. Debra ran the report since she handled treasury at that time. Jennifer also included what she has done since July 31. Some schools have had difficulty with the change from one treasurer to another. Jennifer is handing the hiccups with the finesse that only she can bring. Mary is concerned with the cost of Student Congress versus the money that the event generates. We also looked at the cost of TOC t-shirts, which Jannetta explained. Extra shirts were ordered to be sold at TOC, but very few were actually purchased. Mail out fees for Demo Day were actually an office expense and should not be taken out of Demo Day.
  2. Recording Secretary is busy at work taking notes. I will email these minutes to Mary when completed.
  3. College Representative John Gale has contacted potential college presenters. We have six tables this weekend. Mr. Gale is pleased with the addition of the College Representative position. He has previously written every college instructor in the state in hopes to increase college participation. Fall conference is a difficult time for colleges to present research as projects are due in December and May, with the best presentations coming from the graduating seniors in the spring, who are no longer students come September. President Tucker mentioned that ASU may become more involved under a new dean and department chair. Should we have members emailing alma maters to increase college attendance?

The need for a new journal editor was also discussed. This is a great way for college students and professors to become published, which could lead to tenure for college professors. The difficulty is that we deal with speech communication and with theatre. Could we rename the journal the Journal of Communication and Theatre Arts?

How else could we incorporate our college students into the high school circuit? Could college students present research and publicize their schools on Friday night of TOC? Mary suggested that we hold a college TOC in conjunction with the high school TOC. Madame President would like to create a database of college professors who are willing to present at professional development opportunities. Mr. Gale said he could send out an email statewide asking if any college members are available for professional development.

* 1. High School Representative Debbie Ashcraft had more of a question than a report. How should she handle the high school meeting tomorrow? The high school meeting will be limited to only issues concerning high schools so that members will still have a need to attend the regular business meeting. A decision has to be made concerning TOC items this weekend. We also need more schools to register for Demo Day. We currently have 2 schools signed up for the event next weekend. .
  2. Lifetime Member Representative – Mrs. Balgavy is not in attendance this weekend. She is in Colorado and gleefully rubbing it in every one’s faces.
  3. Webmaster Hannah Sawyer said the website is running much smoother this year. Demo day has been registered through the website. Student Congress will also be registered through the website and will be open soon. The current concern is how to efficiently use the website for payment of events such as Student Congress and TOC. Mary has ideas that she will discuss with Hannah. Thanks to Madame President for catching the typo on the fall convention form.
  4. Professional Development Coordinator Jennifer Akers got all of this weekend’s professional development approved through the state. Mrs. Akers is unhappy with some administrators who do not want to accept our PD hours without extra communication and proof from her. She got a little snippy with some administrators and made a change to the forms to include “ADE” codes. Professional development this year is a very nice blend of all the different areas in which we specialize. Credit cannot be given during the day on Friday unless teachers take a personal day. It was discussed that the wait until 3:30 on Friday makes for a nice, relaxing morning. We also discussed maybe offering a social activity, like a nature tour, on the Friday morning of next year’s conference for those eager beavers who do not want, or need, to enjoy the quiet of a peaceful morning.
  5. Archivist Sara Cooke is not in attendance. She had a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. The recording secretary hopes the previous statement is not an infringement on an author’s copyright. Nevertheless, we may or may not have archival moments this weekend.
  6. Journal Editor – a journal editor is being sought tomorrow.
  7. Immediate Past President – The immediate past president has been warned to keep this report brief, with noted hopes of no additional handouts or power point presentations. Past President Richardson obliged.

1. Permanent Special Committees
   1. Recruitment and Mentoring chair reports plenty of new members. This is probably accredited to the number new hires this year, rather than the direct efforts of this committee. Mary has had to archive past members because we are getting close to our online limit of 250 current contacts. We are in need of mentors. We need a good method of recruiting mentors and defining responsibilities of those volunteers.
   2. Debate Topic Selection – Tim Peerbolte went to Portland. Five topics were selected, and he will email the five topics to all coaches tonight, which will be discussed in the high school meeting tomorrow. Next year’s meeting will be in South Dakota. Peerbolte seems to be excited about this excursion. Madame President has lots of good tourist information to pass along to Tim as she visited Mount Rushmore this summer. Tim is willing to step aside from this appointment if there is interest from other members. He was unsure about the process of appointing someone new and asked Mary of this process. Mary was playing on her phone and had to be caught up before she could give her official answer, which was that, according to the constitution, that could not be done for another two years. Akers suggested that this be brought up and discussed at the high school meeting and names given to the new nominations committee in order to make that happen as soon as possible. Mary had a sudden desire to read the constitution, which she indulged. Tim suggested that a second person be sent to the debate topic selection during the transition year. Mary’s final word was that the nominating committee would have to select someone this weekend. Madame President asked that the current nominating committee take volunteers at the high school meeting. Tim has decided to resign this position and open it up for new interest.

Jennifer Akers made a motion to recess. Hannah Sawyer seconded. Meeting was recessed until 11:15 tomorrow morning.

Friday, September 6, 2013

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Executive Council Meeting (continued)

President Tucker called the meeting back to order at 11:19 as food was being distributed and reviewed the members of the Publicity and Promotions Committee.

1. Publicity and Promotions Committee – Mr. Higdem delivered his report. He would like photos from each event this year to put together for fall convention 2014. They could also be used for displays, pamphlets, etc. He would like more members in his committee. Many members are looking for committees to be a part of, which will be presented at the high school meeting. He would also like to document his work for the year so that a handbook could be created and passed down to new chairs as needed. Could we contact our local papers pre- or post-tournament to get ACTAA’s name out in another way? He would like another $1000 to facilitate a stronger publicity package next year. The committee usually spends about $750 on the conference. This must come before the general membership and voted on at the business meeting. We will bring a motion for the P&P committee to receive $1750 for next year’s conference. Mr. Hidgem is artfully researching resourceful recommendations for ways that this committee can save money. The proposed budget was then raised to $2000. Mary requested that Brandon be added as an administrator to the ACTAA Facebook page.
2. Rosie Valdez, chair of the National Forensics League, has announced the new committee that includes herself, Debbie Ashcraft, Martene Mourning, Barrett Baber, and Chris Flowers. We sent students to Nationals this summer, where two LRC debate teams finished in the top 15. National tournament results and awards are to be shared with Brandon Higdem and Hannah Sawyer for publicity. Kathy Holladay was also rewarded her second diamond. Last year’s committee was recognized as the most efficient in the region. The uniqueness of ACTAA events have been brought to the regional representative with the question of should we integrate NFL events into our tournaments. Does a school have to be an NFL school in order to host and NFL tournament? Initial response was no. How do we recruit more schools? More integration of NFL may be a way to circumvent some of the problems we are having, including copyright issues and verification for our TOC. Mrs. Strickland has a concern…points have been stolen from her, how can she get those points back? Rosie says she can fix that this weekend. Mrs. Ashcraft was approached by two separate Texas schools, saying that if her tournament was an NFL tournament, they could attend. Opening our tournaments to NFL events could increase our out-of-state participation. What does it take for a school to come from Missouri to a tournament in Jonesboro? Can Mrs. Tucker have ACTAA events for those students? NFL only offers a limited number of individual events, HI, DI, Duo, Original Oratory, and Extemp. Mrs. Akers is concerned about the length of a tournament that has both ACTAA and NFL events. Little Rock Central will be doing this this year. Do we want to move toward becoming an NFL-driven organization? NFL rules are clear-cut and strict. So…let’s encourage schools to include NFL events. How does this effect TOC? These may be issues for the Tournament Advisory Committee to discuss and report to the Executive Council. President Tucker has additional questions for this committee before these issues go to the TAC.
3. Student Congress – Martene Mourning was asked to look for a new member for their committee. This will be done at the end of Student Congress this year. This committee was also asked to find ways to cut expenses by President Tucker. Martene was neither aware of their budges nor how much they made last year. The awards that are given based on what is written in the bylaws. The awards to be gives will not change, but the cost of awards purchased will be cut. The committee will price check this year. Cara Cloninger will be in charge of ordering awards and will look into how they can save money on those this year. T-shirts were a disaster last year, but will make money this year. Jannetta is sending the TOC trophy supplier to Martene as a possibility for this year. Mary happened to have four medallions in her big bag of stuff, which she gave to Martene to use for Student Congress. Student Congress last year was an overall success with a few small problems, including t-shirts and a scoring problem with the college congress. Martene corrected the scoring problem by sending one of her students’ awards to the student who was affected by the mistake. Could the new member of this committee possibly be a college coach? The committee has proposed one rule change: Delegates wishing to run for office must list their candidacy on their registration form. Changes may only be made if the candidate is completely dropped from the delegation. This rule change is to be discussed at the high school meeting. Can Student Congress be moved to the Tournaments tab on the website? The Webmaster made this change immediately.
4. Demonstration Day – President Tucker asked Mandy Taylor about Chelsea Massey’s participation on this committee. This committee now needs two new members. We have gone from two participating school to seven. Yay! The Baylor Debate Clinic always falls very close to Demo Day. Is this Baylor scheduling this, or members of ACTAA? Demo Day should be a priority if ACTAA members are scheduling these dates. Most positions have been filled for student presenters except for StuCo, Policy Debate, Storytelling, and Mime. Fliers have gone out and registration is online. Demo Day will be pushed at the high school meeting. Mandy Taylor would like to extend the deadline for registration. Mandy will be distributing DVDs at Demo Day this year. Copyright questions were raised about the legality of the distribution of DVDs. Mr. Gale brought up the conference on fair use that determined there are exceptions to the copyright laws that have been brought up. He distributed a Fair Use Checklist that will help to guide this association in this manner. Mr. Gale suggested that he and Mandy sit down and go through the checklist for the DVD before they decide to release it.
5. AR Thespians Liaison – Michelle Moss reported that over 800 attended this last thespian festival in Alma and awarded over $3 million in scholarships. This year, UCA will host Thespian Festival and well-over 40 troupes are expected to attend. ACTAA requested a table at the state Thespian Festival this year for publicity purposes, and was told that we could have one. This will be passed on to Publicity and Promotions. Michelle also asked if any of our teachers would like to host a workshop. Every presenter will be paid for their time. Those interested should email: [tmcgonigle@almasd.net](mailto:tmcgonigle@almasd.net)

We took a 5-minute break.

President Tucker brought the meeting back to order by reading a new law stating that a school district could embed courses, meaning that a student can get credit for two courses within one class. For example, a student could enroll in an English class that taught the English frameworks and the oral communications frameworks simultaneously. This could impact the oral communications course. The biggest hurdle for districts is licensure for both courses. 14 tech schools got together and wrote a course that embeds oral communications. Some charter schools have gotten waivers to not teach oral communications because they are making presentations in all of their classes. The next concern is that since the speaking and listening strands are listed in the English frameworks, English may absorb oral communications classes elsewhere. The work we have already started in this area needs to be elevated now that this law has been passed. We need to work with Chris Flowers’s committee to make this happen. Mr. Gale brought up the impact this could have on all fine arts classes. North Little Rock has produced a film about the arts in education. Hannah Sawyer suggested that we replicate this through ACTAA with our students. Mr. Gale suggested that we look at our resources to see what we can do to save oral communications. The process of gaining the alternative license is very simple for those teachers who already hold a standard license.

1. Oral Communication Ad-hoc Committee – Chris Flowers was filled in on this situation. Peerbolte asked Flowers if he had enough help from his committee. He replied that he did not. President Tucker wants this committee to address waivers because just giving speeches in class does not effectively cover standards. Mr. Gale brought up a past bill that would allow students to choose visual “or” musical arts. ACTAA was able to get that “or” changed back to “and.” Debbie Ashcraft mentioned that the National Forensics League has resources that can help in this situation. This committee needs to make their position statement clear and concise and disseminate it in mass quantities. Ashcraft suggested that Flowers ask his principal to put this information out to his professional listserve. Peerbolte is contacting a lobbyist concerning this issue. President Tucker suggested that this committee:
   * 1. Have a meeting with an agenda
     2. Line out contacts
     3. Add a member to this committee

Flowers wants his committee to meet with a plan of action with tangible steps they can take to make this successful. The members of his committee need to know what to do. This needs to be discussed at the high school meeting.

There was some discussion about who should be added to this committee.

Mary is working to bring some honorary, lifetime members back into the association for help on this oral communication issue.

Brandon Higdem joined the conversation at this time. President Tucker asked if Brandon would be willing to serve on this committee in an ex-oficio status for continuity. Hannah presented her idea for the film to Brandon. Brandon is interested in helping with this committee, but is not sure of the capacity in which he would be able to participate.

Executive Council then discussed what direction we want to go with this committee. We decided that a co-chair with at least 15 years of experience would be beneficial, and will ask Mr. Flowers if he agrees before we move forward. Mary has volunteered to take on this responsibility. Mr. Higdem has agreed that the information to be disseminated need to come through his Publicity and Promotions committee and then back to the committee for distribution.

1. TOC – Jannetta Carney will need one new member in April. This recommendation will be made to the executive council before the decision is made. Qualifications for this position were discussed. Should the members of this committee host their own tournament in order to be put on this committee? Should there be a membership participation requirement? Can we set up a tier system within our committees? Is it better to set up guidelines for each committee? Jennifer Akers suggested a Committee Committee to set these parameters. Mary Richardson asked that someone write up the recommendations from each committee to be sent to the constitution revision committee. Jannetta will do this for the TOC committee.

Jannetta began her report at this time. The biggest issue this committee has faced is the status of Words and Music. The research that has been done suggests that the piece will have to be one 3-5 minute chunk of musical, which is continuous, published for performance, and within legal guidelines. Tim Peerbolte reported that the latest information says that the only way we can perform Words and Music is if full rights to the show are purchased. The red and green light list may only be an agreement with EdTA and not applicable to all associations. Mr. Gale again brought up fair use rights and public domain rights. He suggested that we develop a broad policy. Another possibility is to put the responsibility back on the individual schools. President Tucker asked about material with events like prose and poetry. Hannah Sawyer believes that they won’t have the same issue with those events as with plays and musicals. Mr. Gale encourages the teaching of good ethics to our students. Tim Peerbolte reminded us all that “education use” means in your classroom only. This large issue won’t be resolved today, but we do have to solve the question about Words and Music now. He also strongly recommended that each teacher cover their bases concerning their own legal matters. Mr. Gale also suggested that we ask the ADE for assistance. Mr. Peerbolte requires his students to receive written consent from all publishers for pieces if they want to use them at a tournament. Cabot will also adopt this practice. Issues with Extemp will be presented. Extemporaneous speakers will be allowed to use computers and access the internet. However, host schools will not have to supply internet access. This is due to the nature of the event and the topics. Many topics are ever-changing and even the research done the previous week can be outdated by tournament day. Ashcraft is still not convinced that this is the correct way to go. The other issue at hand is the dress in reader’s theatre. The proposal is that students will wear all black to prevent costuming in the event. The other reader’s theatre question is whether or not the black binders can leave the performers’ hands. The final issue brought up is that there are members who are not here and will not have a say. It was discussed whether or not these members need to be informed of these changes again, and it was decided that this information has been made public for an extended time and those members have had ample opportunity to submit their thoughts and concerns and to attend this conference. The final decision concerning these issues will be sent via listserve once the vote has been made.

1. Permanent Standing Committees and Audit – Christy Armbrust send a report via Debbie Ashcraft. Mary recommended that Jennifer Akers become and ex-oficio member of this committee. Jennifer asked that the Audit committee give her direct guidelines concerning her reports.
2. Scholarship – there has been some poor communication in this committee in the recent years. Dana is going to email the committee to set up a meeting time for this committee. Mary passed out proposed changes to the scholarships made in the spring of 2012 and suggested that the committee discuss these changes. Tim Peerbolte suggested that there always be an active debate coach on this committee.
3. Tournament Advisory Committee – Jane is not here to report on behalf of this committee. Mary contacted Jane about stepping down to allow someone else to take this position. Tim asked if that position need to be filled by someone who does regularly compete or an outside party. Jennifer Akers pointed that this would be an ethics issue and any issues should be brought to the Ethics Committee.
4. Teacher Assessment – Mr. Gale presented our position to the AAE Consortium in April and they decided to meet on a regular basis. Mr. Gale will bring to this Consortium the idea of adding a Thespian representative to that association. New national theatre standards will be out September 30th. Lana Hallmark needs feedback from our teachers for the future of these courses. Hannah Sawyer reiterated that we, as teachers, need to be more proactive in general, but especially in these situations. If we don’t comment on these standards, Lana has nothing to take to the state.
5. Old Business – all is being taken care of.
6. New Business – TOC dress code. Mary suggested that people wear clothes. This will be handled in the high school meeting. There is a section on decorum in our constitution that needs to be reviewed. Recruitment brochure has been assembled. Lapel pin idea has been created. After consulting with a former business-owner in the field, the price we have been quoted is a good one.
7. Announcements – no new announcements
8. Adjournment – Jannetta moved that we recess. Jennifer Akers seconded. President Tucker, once again, recessed the meeting.