

October

“Polish American Heritage Month”

How to Sponsor an Essay Contest in Your Local Community

The national Polish American Heritage Month Committee encourages all organizations to sponsor an essay contest in their area parochial or public elementary or high schools. This is an excellent way for you to involve the teachers in your area schools in a project that can benefit all of us. Area business people and banks should be contacted to donate the prizes. **We have listed below some suggestions to help you organize your essay contest.**

TOPIC - Select a topic on Polish history or the accomplishments of Poles or Polish Americans. You can also select a topic on Poles who are presently making history through current events.

OBJECTIVES - The objectives of the contest are to help inform students of the importance of our past and to gain an understanding of the history and contributions of the Polish people.

ELIGIBILITY - Students could be selected from grades 4 through 10, or whatever grade level your area coordinators feel is appropriate.

ESSAY LENGTH - The essay should be a minimum of 200 to 250 words.

ANNOUNCING THE CONTEST - Select a day that the contest would be announced in all area schools. Request that teachers inform all those participating that the contest will begin on a particular day and be collected on a specific date. Teachers could help the committee by eliminating all but 10 essays from each of the grade levels that will be participating. When announcing the essay contest, be sure to list all of the prizes that will be awarded.

PRIZES - Three top winners should be selected from the overall amount of students that will participate. They could receive cash or other prizes; (i.e. U.S. Savings Bonds or gift certificates - 1st - \$100, 2nd - \$75, 3rd - \$50.) Other prizes could be awarded along with honorable mentions for those students who displayed special efforts in writing their essay.

ENTRY DEADLINES - All entries should be collected on the day announced by the committee allowing at least one week between the selection and announcement of prize winners.

IDENTIFICATION - The students should use the following guidelines when returning their essays. Cover pages should include their NAME, ADDRESS, TOPIC SELECTED, SCHOOL NAME, GRADE AND DATE SUBMITTED.

NOTIFICATION OF WINNERS - The top winning entries should be notified at least 10 days in advance of the presentation of the awards.

AWARD CEREMONY - Organize an award ceremony in one of the area school auditoriums, libraries or another suitable place. Invite representatives of the participating schools to attend, and invite your area elected officials to participate in presenting the awards.