

Dear Colleagues,

The annual Montana Forensic Educator Association meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn in Bozeman, March 8-10.

We highly recommend attendance and participation by all coaches. The conference is an opportunity to meet coaches, have a voice in the forensics program in Montana, create the calendar, receive collegial support, and gain a detailed understanding of the specific speech, debate and drama events.

Each year we work together in order to build a calendar of tournaments that attempts to provide every school with options regarding schedules. Please bring dates that would work for your school to host a tournament.

We have structured committees to allow as many coaches as possible to have a direct voice in the events that they coach.

As committees and as a body, we review the rules of the various events. We refine and work to improve them, in order to make participation more enjoyable for our competitors. Additionally, we review the events of the year and discuss, clarify, and solve any rules questions, so bring any questions to the meeting. Together, we'll brainstorm ways to build our programs and work together to continue to make forensics an educational program and a strong competitive activity.

One of the most important parts of our activity is the educational impact—fostering the life-long skill of quality public presentation and the ability to communicate with clarity. This conference is not just about competitive success, but about applying public speaking skills in the classroom as well.

At MFEA we recognize the hard work and successes of active coaches by presenting Coach of the Year awards, and we honor coaches who gave years of their time and energy to this activity by inducting honorees into the Hall of Fame. The evening is a great opportunity to hear from those who have poured their talents into competitors and programs, and to learn from their successful coaching philosophies. For many coaches, this is the highlight of the conference.

Your input is needed. We realize that taking time off is sometimes difficult, and that traveling is not convenient. However, we believe that the MFEA conference is an excellent opportunity to establish camaraderie between coaches and teachers from all classes and from all parts of the state. The time spent working together at this conference makes our activity stronger as a whole.

We look forward to a great 2017 conference!

Shannon O'Donnell – President

Bonnie Ortner – Vice-president

Kari Blaylock – Treasurer

Dee Hallock – Secretary