



Debate Team State Finalists Live It Up In Super 8 Hot Tub

OSHKOSH, WI—The 16 members of the Abbotsford High School debate team enjoyed a night of revelry in the hot tub of an Oshkosh Super 8 motel Sunday, celebrating their second-place finish in the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association state competition.

"This is it, guys," said team captain Ethan Howe, sinking back into the bubbling water and raising a can of Orange Slice high into the air. "This is what we've been working so hard for all year!"

On Jan. 11, the Abbotsford debate team qualified for the state competition, "killing" at the district level. The following day, Abbotsford Forensics Club advisor Sharon Knauf made lodging accommodations for the students in Oshkosh for the WHSFA Four-Speaker State Debate Tournament, held at 8 p.m. Sunday at University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh.

"For years, whenever we went to state, I always booked the Oshkosh Econolodge," said Knauf, 53, who has coached forensics for 18 years. "A few years ago, though, they opened up this Super 8 right off Hwy. 41, and I really like it better: There's no problem parking the bus, and it's quite a ways to downtown, so no one is tempted to try to sneak out."

Super 8 #2692 boasts an indoor heated pool and whirlpool, free HBO and ESPN, and a vending area with candy, chips, soda, and an ice machine. On weekends, the motel also offers a continental breakfast from 6 to 10 a.m.

"This place rocks," said Howe, a white towel draped around his neck as he swaggared to the button that restarts the whirlpool. "We are *livin' it up*."

Knauf reserved nine adjoining rooms on the east wing of the second floor, assigning two students to each room and giving her-



Above: Members of the Abbotsford High School debate team get psyched for a wild night at the Super 8.

self a single. The rooms were situated near the vending area, a spot frequented by the high-spirited students throughout the night.

"We took up a collection in an ice bucket—I put in, like, *seven dollars*—and we brought a bunch of snacks back to Party Central [Room 233]," Howe said. "Jim [Gamble] even had a CD player, which he technically wasn't allowed to bring. Shhh."

The mischief, sources report, was not limited to boom-box smuggling. Student and allergy sufferer John Greipentrog, claiming to be in desperate need of Benadryl, obtained Knauf's permission to leave the motel to walk to the Amoco sta-

tion down the road.

"I was lying," said Greipentrog, who actually made a "supply run" for food to add to the already copious amounts left over from the celebratory dinner at Olive Garden. "I had my Allegra with me. Of course, I was way nervous about lying to a teacher, but the rest of the team convinced me to live on the edge for once."

By 7 p.m., the motel's whirlpool had become the center of activity. Nearly all the students convened at the 10-person hot tub, enjoying the company of their fellow honor students in pampered luxury.

"I forgot my swimsuit, but I just wore

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