

District Newsletter

For additional information,
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T O A S T M A S T E R S I N T E R N A T I O N A L ®

Renewal Notice Alert...Pay Your Dues On Line

The Dues Renewal Invoice for the April 1, 2004, through September 30, 2004, period is being mailed to club president's of record the last week in February. The invoice contains a list of members in your club. Check the box to the left of the name of each renewing member and fill out the payment information on the bottom of the invoice.

Beginning with this reporting period, clubs who are paying for members listed on the renewal form now have the option of paying dues renewals online using a credit or check/debit card. Not only will your club receive a receipt confirmation, but the credit card and report will be processed immediately. Each club will receive a password in order to enter into the secure part of the Web site. The password will be included in the dues renewal mailing. The mailing will also include instructions on how to enter the secure site. WHQ accepts MasterCard, VISA, American Express and Discover. WHQ also accepts check/debit cards that have a MasterCard or VISA insignia.

To expedite the processing of renewals, we strongly suggest that you take advantage of paying your renewals on line. Renewals are due April 1, 2004. In order to receive on-time credit in the Distinguished District Program, your renewal must be received at WHQ by 5 p.m. Pacific Time, April 10.

Here are some helpful hints:

- Submit your dues by one method only. Please do not send duplicates. For example, if you submit your dues online, DO NOT mail a copy. Or, if you fax in your renewal, please don't mail another copy to WHQ.
- If your club is paying by check, you will need to submit your renewal by mail. The renewal is not counted as being here until the invoice and check are at WHQ. Faxing a copy of the dues renewal invoice and a copy of the check does not fulfill the submission requirements. In fact, duplication slows down the processing tremendously.
- Do not e-mail your renewal to WHQ. It is not secure to submit credit card information via e-mail. Online, FAX and mail submissions are secure.
- Do not submit your renewal in pieces, i.e., DO NOT submit your dues renewal invoice/list of members and payment separately. Include your complete payment information and list together. With almost 10,000 submissions, it is difficult to match up submissions when payments and lists are submitted separately. It also delays the processing of the renewal.
- Only submit dues for members who have paid your club. Dues are non-transferable and non-refundable, so you want to be sure the club has the money in hand before payment is sent to WHQ.
- Keep a copy of the invoice for your records.
- Clubs should submit all payments at one time, so we encourage you to collect and submit dues for all renewing members. However, dues for late-paying members can be submitted to WHQ after the initial submission. An easy way to submit late-paying members is to circle the names of the members paying late on a copy of the original invoice and submit the marked invoice along with the payment for dues. Or, the club can submit a completed membership application form, marking the circle next to the words "renewing." Clubs can also submit late-paying members in letter form.

If you haven't already collected dues...start doing so now!

The Proxies Are Coming...

The official Toastmasters International proxy certificates will be mailed to club presidents of record on March 31. Be on the look-out for this all important mailing. The certificates are being redesigned and will have a new look. The revised forms will have instructions on how to complete the proxies to ensure that club's votes are heard.

Take the following steps to help your district survive the annual proxy chase:

- Make sure club officer lists are current. Notify WHQ of any corrections.
- Advise clubs of the mailing to club presidents on March 31 in your district's Web site or newsletter.
- Contact club presidents in early April. Ask if they received their proxies and whether they will be sending a delegate to the Regional Conference and International Convention. If not, ask that the proxy be tendered to the district governor or another officer.
- If the club president claims not to have received a proxy, give a description to confirm that it was never received, set aside or accidentally thrown away. Sometimes the club officer list at WHQ is outdated and the proxy is sent to the former club president. Be sure the club president checks with the former officers to see if they received the proxy.
- Before contacting WHQ for a duplicate proxy, make sure you have the current president's name and address. Remember, WHQ can send only one duplicate proxy, which must be mailed to the club president.

Big Fun in Reno!!

Mark your calendars now and join Toastmasters from around the world in the fun and excitement of Reno, Nevada, USA, at the 73rd Annual International Convention, August 18-21, 2004, at The Reno Hilton.

Area Governor Club Visit Deadlines

Area governors should complete their club visits and mail their Area Report of Club Visit forms for the second round of visits to their district governors by April 30. The district governors should then forward a copy to WHQ. To receive credit in the Distinguished Area Program, forms must be postmarked by May 31 and received at WHQ by June 10.

Play It Safe at Meetings

District Conferences and Division and Area Speech Contests are exciting, fun-filled events where members gather to learn and experience the joy of Toastmasters. However, it is important that districts ensure these events are free from hazards that may cause injury.

Reasonable and prudent care must be taken in planning any district, division or area meeting. It's a good idea to designate one or more "safety officers" (the Sergeant-at-Arms can fill this role at small events). Safety officers are responsible for checking all facilities for obstructions or other potential hazards. Facilities should be checked before and after members enter the room. Here are just a few items that should be monitored:

- Are aisles wide enough to provide easy access, even after people have taken their seats?
- Are all electrical cords securely taped to the floor to prevent people from tripping?
- Are there any spilled drinks or puddles on non-carpeted surfaces?
- Are raised platforms and adjacent stairways secure?
- Is there enough room at the head table, particularly at the back and the sides, to allow guests to move to and from their seats without the risk of stepping off the platform?

Lighting should be adequate at every session, even when house lights are dimmed during the program. Steps should be well lit. Make a safety announcement such as this at the beginning of each session: "For the safety of others, we ask that you keep all aisles clear of obstructions such as packages, briefcases, purses and wires."

Don't neglect safety when planning your conference. A little preparation can prevent injury and eliminate the possibility of lawsuits.

Have a successful and safe meeting!

Why Are We Members Anyway?

There always seems to be some members who attend club meetings only to serve as timers and to participate in Table Topics. Consider the members of your own club – it's very likely there are several who are stuck in a rut. Sure, they gave a few speeches when they first joined, but they still haven't moved past their fifth or sixth speech.

What can be done? Remind them why they joined Toastmasters – to improve their skills by giving speeches! Sometimes it just takes a little push. Clubs should regularly display the basic and advanced program wall charts that visually chart the progress of each club member. A visual reminder might be what it takes to jump start a faltering member! Clubs can also distribute and discuss the Member Achievement record. This sheet helps each member track his or her progress through the Toastmasters two-track communication and leadership programs.

As a district officer, you know how important it is to have full participation and you're familiar with these tools that can help clubs keep their members motivated. But many members and club officers are not familiar with these tools. Please ensure that the clubs in your area, division and district serve their members by taking advantage of these items!

- **Progress Chart Kit** (for basic and advanced speeches, file and display copies), Catalog No. 227 D, \$4.75.
- **Member Achievement Record** (pad of 10), Catalog No. 1328, \$1.50

Toastmasters Is For Everyone

Just a reminder that Toastmasters International has a policy against discrimination:

"No person shall be excluded from membership in a Toastmasters club, and no member shall be deliberately discriminated against in the conduct of official Toastmasters programs because of age (except those persons under the age of 18), race, color, creed, gender, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or physical or mental disability so long as the individual, through his or her own efforts, is able to participate in the program."

Policy violation by an individual member, club, area, division, district or other official groups will subject the offending person or entity to disciplinary action, in accordance with the Bylaws of Toastmasters International, unless the offending party ends its own violations.

New Club

Scoreboard

Fifty-eight clubs were chartered in December, compared with 51 in 2002, and 45 in 2001. Our year-to-date total of new clubs is 307.

The leaders in Club Extension are:

District	# of Clubs
51	26
47	21
60	16

Company clubs were chartered at:
Company clubs were chartered at:
Toyota Motor Sales, Torrance, CA;
The Hartford Insurance, Atlanta, GA;
Boeing, Irving, TX; Micro Motion, Inc., Boulder, CO; International Truck and Engine Corporation, Warrenville, IL; American Society of Health-System Pharmacists, Alexandria, VA; Sun Microsystems, Somerset, NJ

Toastmasters International has approximately 200,000 members and 9,300 clubs worldwide.

District Checklist/Calendar

FEBRUARY

Distinguished Club Program Training Deadline

- ❑ Club Officer Training for December - February period must be completed by the end of February. Club Officer Training Reports for the December - February period must be sent to World Headquarters postmarked by March 31 for clubs to receive Distinguished Club Program credit.

Financial Deadlines

- ❑ Midyear audit report due at World Headquarters on or before February 15.
- ❑ Treasurer's report for the July 1 - December 31 period must be submitted to the district governor and lt. governors by February 15.

Membership and Club Growth

- ❑ Charter as many clubs as possible by March 31. Members in clubs chartering in February and March will also make per capita payments for the April semiannual dues period.
- ❑ Follow up on overdue semiannual reports.
- ❑ Semiannual reports mailed to clubs outside the United States.
- ❑ Promote Toastmasters International's Annual Membership Program.
- ❑ **Promote Talk Up Toastmasters!** Clubs adding five or more members, February through March, receive recognition.

Administrative

- ❑ Follow up on Club Officer lists not submitted.

MARCH

Distinguished Division and Distinguished Area Program Deadline

- ❑ Follow up on Area Visits and Area Report of Club Visit forms with area governors. Area governors must send forms to the district governor no later than April 30.

Distinguished Club Program Deadline

- ❑ Submit Club Officer Training Reports to World Headquarters. Club Officer Training Reports for the December - February period must be postmarked by March 31 for clubs to receive Distinguished Club Program credit.

Financial Deadline

- ❑ Treasurer's report for the July 1 - January 31 period must be submitted to the district governor and lt. governors by March 15.

Membership and Club Growth

- ❑ Charter as many clubs as possible by March 31. Members in clubs chartering in March will also make per capita payments for the April semiannual dues period.
- ❑ Semiannual reports mailed to clubs inside the United States.
- ❑ Begin follow-up of clubs' submission of April semiannual reports. Pay particular attention to clubs that submitted October semiannual reports late and ensure these clubs will not be late again submitting semis.
- ❑ Promote Toastmasters International's Annual Membership Program.

Mission-Focused Meetings

- ❑ District Executive Committee Meeting (including ongoing District officer training). Meeting should focus upon midyear adjustments made and action now needed to achieve goals in the Distinguished District, Division, Area and Club Programs. The following also must occur at the meeting (unless acted upon at a previous District Executive Committee Meeting):
 - Report of the Audit Committee and approval of the Midyear Audit
 - Approval of recommendations for the alignment of clubs within divisions and areas
 - Presentation of the most recent Treasurer's Report

2004 Regional Conferences

I	June 18-19	Seattle, WA Hilton Seattle Airport & Conference Center	Kyle Hall, ATM-S kyle.s.hall@att.net
II	June 11-12	Ontario, CA Ontario Airport Marriott Hotel	Paul Clark, DTM paulc25629@aol.com
III	June 18-19	Albuquerque, NM Albuquerque Marriott Hotel	Ralph Wallace, DTM rwallace@phs.org
IV	June 4-5	Des Moines, IA Renaissance Savery Hotel	Pat Amadeo, DTM pamadeo@cpmi.com
V	June 25-26	Milwaukee, WI Four Points by Sheraton Milwaukee Airport	Judith Bauer, DTM jbauertm@hotmail.com
VI	June 11-12	East Lansing, MI East Lansing Marriott	Bob Brentin, DTM rpbrentin@dow.com
VII	June 4-5	Westford, MA Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center	Carmen Lowe, DTM carmen.lowe@att.net
VIII	June 25-26	Jacksonville, FL Omni Jacksonville Hotel	Barbara Bergstrom, DTM leadship1@aol.com