

District Newsletter



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 ®

Reminders:

- ▶ **LAST CHANGE COT!:** Don't forget – **LAST DAY** for club officer training is February 29, 2008.
- ▶ **Alignments:** It is never too early to start planning for next year! Districts should begin discussing and planning their alignment for next year now!
The District Governors and Lt. Governors should have received an email communication that should help all districts plan accordingly!
- ▶ **Free District Resources:** Don't forget that as District Governors and Lt. Governors, you have resources to track your district's progress. Email districts@toastmasters.org for a club officer, club directory, members by district, non renewing members, and district officer lists or visit the TI Web site for district and club reports.
- ▶ **Membership Building Contests:** Share what you have learned and help others! You can track your district's progress on the TI Web site: members.toastmasters.org > **Officer Resources** > **District Officer Resources** > **Membership Building Contest Reports**.
- ▶ **Area Visits – Second Round:** Begin planning now! Don't wait until two weeks before deadline to submit reports – allow time for errors – check reports to make sure you get your credit!
- ▶ **Toastmasters International's Board of Directors Meeting** will be held at Toastmasters' World Headquarters on February 16, 2008, at 2 p.m. All members are invited to attend! The address is 23182 Arroyo Vista, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Does Your Club Have Its Contest Supplies?

RULES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST are posted on our Web site; however, all other contest supplies and rules for other contests must be purchased from TI. Be sure to check your club's contest supplies and confirm you have enough rulebooks, speech contest manuals, judges' guides and ballots, timing forms, certificates of eligibility and originality and other materials for the club contest season. Also, check out our great new acrylic awards!

Remember, awards *must* be ordered from Toastmasters International. All materials are protected by copyright and trademark laws. To order, visit our online store at members.toastmasters.org > **Shop**, e-mail supplyorders@toastmasters.org or call our Member Services Department at 949-858-8255.

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Don't Miss These Web Site Updates!

DISTRICT OFFICER – Have your clubs heard about this new tool? Club officers are now able to update members' contact information online!

Just log in to the **Conduct Club Business** section of the Web site: members.toastmasters.org > **Officer Resources** > **Club and District Business** > **Conduct Club Business**:

- ▶ Use your club number and club password to log in as a club officer
- ▶ Choose **View/Update my Club's Membership Roster**
- ▶ Two options: Edit Address or Edit other Contact Information

Make members.toastmasters.org Work for Your District!

Do you have questions that you find hard to get answers to?

- ▶ Where do I find TI policy on fundraising?
- ▶ What is a Gavel Club?
- ▶ Where can I get help with conflict resolution?
- ▶ Where can I find the District Performance Reports?

Simply visit members.toastmasters.org and type in what you are looking for, i.e. "fundraising", "gavel club", "conflict resolution", or "district performance reports".

Are Your Contestants Eligible?

BE SURE THAT YOUR DISTRICT'S SPEECH CONTEST CHAIRMEN confirm contestants' eligibility before each contest. Each year someone is disqualified at the area, division or district level because no one spent time to confirm their contestants' eligibility. Don't let this happen in your district!

Those ineligible to compete in the International Speech Contest are: incumbent International officers and directors; district officers (governor, any lieutenant governor, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, division governor or area governor) whose terms expire June 30; International officer and director candidates; immediate past district governors; district officers or announced candidates for the term beginning the upcoming July 1; presenters of educational sessions at the area, division and district event at which the contest will be held; presenters of educational sessions at regional conferences and/or the International Convention.

An individual may not be a judge at any level for a contest which they are still competing. A contestant must be a member in good standing of the club in which competing and the club must also be in good standing. A new, dual or reinstated member must have dues and membership application current with World Headquarters. Contest chairmen can call World Headquarters' Member Services Department or e-mail speechcontests@toastmasters.org to confirm contestants' eligibility or pose other questions about contests.

Contestants must maintain eligibility at all levels of the contest. If at any level it is discovered that a contestant was ineligible to compete at any previous level, the contestant will be disqualified even if the ineligibility is not discovered until a later level and has been corrected.

For other eligibility requirements, visit the Toastmasters International Web site, members.toastmasters.org > **Information for Members** > **Member Experience** > **Speech Contests** and click the Speech Contest Rulebook inline link to view a PDF or you can search for "speech contest rules"

Please respect our copyright and do not print or distribute the Speech Contest Rulebook. If you need copies of the rulebook to distribute to judges and contestants at a speech contest, please purchase them as well as judges' guides and ballots and other contest materials from the online store.

Promote TI while driving!

BUMPER STICKERS CAN BE A FUN and effective way of communicating with others. TI has two new stickers to spark interest and gain awareness of Toastmasters. Choose from our oval sticker (Item 372) featuring "What Do You Have to Say?" with Toastmasters at the bottom in blue on a silver background, or our 3"x9" rectangular sticker (Item 373) displaying "Toastmasters International. Because Communication *Isn't* Optional" with the Toastmasters emblem in blue and silver on a white background. Use these stickers to hand out at conferences, within your clubs or at any special events. Order yours today!

To purchase, please visit our online store at members.toastmasters.org/shop, or by contacting our Member Services Department at supplyorders@toastmasters.org or 949-858-8255.

New Information in "Club Business"

BE SURE TO SHARE this exciting news with your club leaders!

Historical award information (2003 to present) for clubs is now available in the new "View My Club's Awards" option on the Club Business menu of the TI Web site. Please visit: members.toastmasters.org > **Club Business** > [enter your club number and password] > **View my club's awards**.

Award history includes:

- ▶ The Distinguished Club Program
- ▶ Membership building programs:
*Smedley Award, Talk Up Toastmasters!
And Beat the Clock!*

Login and check it out today!

Talk Up Toastmasters! February 1-March 31

ATTENTION AREA GOVERNORS! It's that time of year again – time to Talk Up Toastmasters! During this membership-building contest, encourage your members to invite as many guests as possible to your club meetings. Consider conducting a special guest meeting – where during a regular meeting, you could also specifically discuss the benefits Toastmasters members receive as they participate.

Perhaps invite and include other members' testimonials. Add five new, dual or reinstated members to your club between February 1 and March 31 and receive a special Talk Up Toastmasters ribbon to display on your club's banner. In addition, your club will be eligible to select one item from *The Successful Club Series*, *The Better Speaker Series*, or *The Leadership Excellence Series*, free of charge. Start thinking today of who will benefit from the Toastmasters experience and invite them to your meeting. You never know: You could help change their lives! For complete details go to: members.toastmasters.org > **Membership Building** > **Brochures** > **Toastmasters Annual Membership Building Contest (Flier, Item 1620)**.

Alignments: Is Your District on Target?

EACH DISTRICT MUST REVIEW AND AMEND, if necessary, their alignment for clubs, areas and divisions. The alignment is subject to the approval of the district council at its annual business meeting in April/May. Changes cannot be made after the approval by the council, so it's important to ensure that the alignment is correct and will be effective throughout the year.

It is never too early to form an alignment committee. By now, your district should have this committee in place. The committee should consider an alignment that services the clubs in the most effective way possible and meets the TI policy requirements. It will be important for the district to consider club growth as well as club loss when thinking through a possible alignment. When an area has less than 4 clubs, we are concerned about long-term growth potential and when an area has more than 6 clubs, we are concerned that the district is over-extending human resources, via the area governor role, and that the clubs may not be effectively supported.

It will be important for the district leadership team to define expectations with the committee and ensure their efforts are appropriately executed. District leaders should take the necessary time to discuss strategy with the committee. Here's a proposed schedule for your district's use:

- ▶ **December:** Form an Alignment Committee. Orient the committee and ensure that they have the background, resources and information necessary to prepare an effective alignment. Has your district done this?
- ▶ **January-February:** The committee does its work. They should contact clubs and area and division governors for input, especially where changes are being considered.
- ▶ **February/March:** Working with the district leaders, the committee prepares the alignment proposal and provides it to the district executive committee for review and change, if necessary. If questions arise during the process, feel free to contact the Volunteer Support Services Department at WHQ at districts@toastmasters.org. The district needs to send out appropriate notice to clubs.
- ▶ **April/May:** Final alignment is approved by the district council.
- ▶ **June/July:** Report alignment to WHQ and provide clubs, areas and divisions with the final alignment.

Things to Consider While Aligning

- ▶ Remain within TI policy
- ▶ Each division must have a minimum of 3 areas
- ▶ Each area must have a minimum of 4 clubs and no more than 6 clubs
- ▶ Geographic aspects
- ▶ Plan for possible growth and possible loss
- ▶ Discuss potential changes with current district leaders and area and division governors
- ▶ Strategically align the clubs within areas and divisions with focus on the benefits for all
- ▶ Communicate the alignment with clubs, areas and divisions.
- ▶ Once the alignment has been approved by the district council, there can be no changes made, so make sure the alignment is correct.
- ▶ Provide the information to WHQ as soon as possible but no later than July 15.

Please note: Alignments that do not meet TI policy requirements cannot be accepted. The alignment committee will need to ensure that the alignment is within TI policy prior to bringing it forward to vote and submission to WHQ.

Corporate Clubs

HERE ARE SOME MATERIALS THAT ARE EFFECTIVE to take with you on corporate visits:

- ▶ Communication and Leadership manuals
- ▶ New Club Information Kit (123B)
- ▶ Clear Communication brochure (103)

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Congratulations to the corporate clubs started at these organizations in December 2007:

BAE Systems
Broadridge Investor Communication Solutions
City of Tracy
Delta Dental of California
Dirigo
Fraser Health Authority
Google
IBI Group
Interstate Battery Systems of America
Kraft Foods
Nucor Steel Decatur LLC
Perkins Eastman
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Ritchie Brothers
State Farm Insurance
Titan America
WLC Architects
XL Group

New District Report Available!

THERE IS A NEW DISTRICT REPORT available in the District Performance section of the Web site called Educational Achievement Archive. This report allows districts to access historical information about educational awards and is sure to be a great resource for district recognition! The report is updated annually and districts are able to access data through 2003. To access this new report visit us at members.toastmasters.org > **Officer Resources** > **District Officer Resources** > **District Performance Reports** > {enter your district number} > **Educational Achievements Archive.**

Nominating Committee Checklist

HAVE YOU CHECKED THE MEMBERS' WEB SITE for all of your district election and nominating committee needs? Go to **members.toastmasters.org > Officer Resources > District Officer Resources > Elections**. It's your one-stop-shop for district election information, resources, and templates. Use the checklist below to help determine if your district is on track. The checklist is a guideline and may vary from district to district.

January

- ▶ Publish a call for candidates in the district newsletter and on the district Web site. Be sure to include:
 - Officer descriptions, including the qualifications and responsibilities for each district position.
 - Copy of the District Officer Nominating Form.
 - Appoint nominating committee members

February through March

- ▶ Determine nominating committee meeting schedule and conduct meetings as defined
- ▶ Nominating committee members seek out qualified members, in addition to those candidates who announce their intention to run for office
- ▶ Nominating committee ensures all candidates meet minimum requirements
- ▶ Nominating committee interviews candidates
- ▶ All candidates sign and submit to committee their Officer Agreement and Release Form (required).
- ▶ Nominating committee completes the candidate checklist and evaluation form for each candidate.
- ▶ Nominating committee votes
- ▶ Candidates are notified. Confirm with selected candidates their agreement to assume the responsibilities of their new role. Candidates that are not selected should be informed of their eligibility to run for office from the floor at the district's annual business meeting.

April

- ▶ Nominating committee completes nominations report
- ▶ District distributes nominating committee report to members of the district council at least two weeks in advance of annual business meeting. Report is included:
 - With notice of meeting or:
 - In the district's newsletter and/or on the district's Web site. The notice of meeting should also be included.
- ▶ Nominating committee chairman provides district governor with all Officer Agreement and Release Forms
- ▶ After the district council meeting: district governor submits all Officer Agreement and Release Forms to TI.

April through May

- ▶ Submit new officer contact information to TI as soon as possible, but no later than July 15, 2008.

What Makes a Good Leader?

AS DISTRICTS BEGIN their election process and appoint a nominating committee, questions will arise around what makes a good leader, about leadership succession planning and how to identify and cultivate future leaders. There is no better time than now to start thinking about the district's future leadership.

District elections are not just about filling open officer positions. They involve identifying the district's long-term goals and selecting the best person(s) for each available officer position. Who can help you meet your district's goals?

Data available in the district performance reports will help you understand your district's growth. District conferences, leadership institutes, area governor club visits and other events are useful for identifying and fostering the next group of leaders for your district. District council meetings offer another opportunity for district leaders to identify long-term strategies for continued district success. Perhaps your district has achieved Distinguished District Status over the last three years and your long-term goal is to achieve President's Distinguished District. Use district meetings to ask and answer questions; How will the district achieve the desired goal? What kinds of leaders are needed to move forward? How can the leadership group work together to meet the needs of clubs, areas, and divisions?

Prospective candidates must meet the minimum requirements for each leadership position but should also exhibit skills in global and strategic thinking, project/program management, fiscal management, effective communication, leading teams and/or effective training. Most importantly, a district leader needs to have a core understanding of TI, including the mission, vision and how clubs, areas, divisions, and districts are interconnected. Every leader is unique with varying skills and contributions. If the district asks the right questions and accurately identifies its needs, the district will inevitably place the right person(s) in the available officer position(s) to move the district forward.

What kind of leadership does your district need? Consider this article; successful district elections depend on it! Remember, today decides tomorrow.

Conducting an Effective Club Visit

PART OF THE DISTRICT'S MISSION is to ensure every club fulfills its responsibilities to its members. To achieve this, the district must establish and maintain positive, supportive relationships with each club. Area governors play a critical role in preserving this relationship through club visits, which are required twice a year and should take place between July 1 – October 31 and again from January 1 – April 30.

As you prepare for your club visits:

- ▶ Familiarize yourself with the Area Report of Club Visit form online – it will act as your evaluation tool during your visit.
- ▶ Review the Distinguished Club Program report online and determine where the club is in relation to its goals.
- ▶ Contact the club president at least one month prior to your visit.
- ▶ Request a copy of the Club Success Plan from the club president and spend time reviewing it prior to the visit.
- ▶ Ask that the club president share the club's historical information and demographics.
- ▶ Work with the club president to determine the club's specific needs so you can customize your visit and

ensure the club is getting the most out of it.

Each club visit will vary depending on the arrangements you've made with the club president. Focus on those items that are applicable based on your agreements:

- ▶ Discuss the club mission.
- ▶ Discuss characteristics of successful clubs through best practices.
- ▶ Ask club leaders how they know when they are successfully meeting the needs of their members?
- ▶ If you give a speech, opt for a manual one.
- ▶ Review the Toastmasters programs (e.g., Membership Building, Distinguished Club Program).
- ▶ Identify prospective future leaders – talk about leadership opportunities within Toastmasters.
- ▶ Debrief your visit with the members. Ask these questions about the meeting – What worked well? What didn't work? How can you better meet the club's needs during your next visit? Use this feedback to plan future visits.

After your visit with the whole club, spend time with the club's leaders. Do a separate debrief with them. They may provide different feedback than

you receive from the members. Ask how communication between you and the club can improve. Discuss where the club is in relation to year-end goals and discuss strategies to ensure those goals are achieved. Use the Distinguished Club Program and Club Success Plan as your guide. Recommend methods for moving forward and point out opportunities for enhancement.

Although your visit with the club has ended there are some additional items you need to complete:

- ▶ Submit the Area Report of Club Visit form online at **members.toastmasters.org > District Officer > Conduct District Business > Area report of club visit**. A copy of the form will automatically be sent to your district leaders and the club president. Reports are due twice a year. Deadlines are November 30 and May 31.
- ▶ Write a thank-you note to the club.
- ▶ Follow up with the club and see how things have been since the visit. Ask if the club needs additional support then ensure you provide it.
- ▶ Keep records of your area club visits and pass them on to the next year's area governor. This will ensure clubs' needs are continually met.

The Proxies Are Coming...

THE OFFICIAL TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL PROXIES will be mailed to club presidents of record on March 31. They are being mailed in a blue envelope with the words "IMPORTANT PROXY INFORMATION" imprinted on the front of the envelope.

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

- ▶ In every way possible, encourage clubs to update their club officer information immediately through the Toastmasters Web site (club business portal) or notify WHQ by mail, fax or phone. This will ensure that the proxies are mailed to the appropriate person.
- ▶ Advise clubs of the mailing in your district's Web site and/or newsletter.
- ▶ Have area governors or a district team member contact club presidents in late 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 proxies be tendered to the district governor or another officer.
- ▶ If the club president claims not to have received the proxies, 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 proxies.
- ▶ Duplicate proxies can be requested by e-mail to **duplicateproxies@toastmasters.org**. We will start honoring requests for duplicate proxies starting on April 28. Include the club/district number and the current president's name and address. Remember, WHQ can send only one duplicate proxy, which must be mailed to the club president.

Do You Want District Success? Try This To-Do List:

As district leaders, you know that success is achieved by working together; that district success is achieved only through successful clubs, areas and divisions. The following To-Do list will help ensure that this will happen:

FEBRUARY

Checklist:

- Train club, area and division officers
- Prepare for proxy/credentials
- Complete area governor second-round club visits
- Order awards for speech contests (to order, email: supplyorders@toastmasters.org)

Deadlines/Important Dates:

February 15:

- Mid-year audit due to WHQ
- Monthly treasurer's report (July 1 – December 31) due to District Trio

February 28 (29 on leap years):

- Last day to complete club-officer training

MARCH

Checklist:

- Submit club membership dues renewals online
- Complete area governors' second-round club visits
- Order awards for speech contests (to order, email: supplyorders@toastmasters.org)

Deadlines/Important Dates:

March 15:

- Monthly treasurer's report (July 1 – January 30) due to District Trio

March 31:

- Report of club-officer training due to WHQ

Tips:

- Submit club-officer training online
- Confirm submissions with WHQ
- Delegate!
- Look ahead; what's coming up?
- Work on club-building efforts
- Stay on track; check your DPR reports regularly

E-MAIL DIRECTORY

New clubs:

newclubs@toastmasters.org

Orders:

supplyorders@toastmasters.org

District questions:

districts@toastmasters.org

District reserve statements:

statements@toastmasters.org

District budget, audit or treasurer's reports:

districtfinancialquestions@toastmasters.org

Speech contests:

speechcontests@toastmasters.org

Disciplinary matters:

districts@toastmasters.org

Duplicate proxies or other proxy questions:

duplicateproxies@toastmasters.org

Other questions:

See the *Contact Us* section of members.toastmasters.org or e-mail: tminfo@toastmasters.org

Renewal Notice Alert... Pay Dues Online!

THE DUES RENEWAL INVOICE for the April 1, 2008 through September 30, 2008, period is being mailed to club presidents of record the last week in February.

Clubs should be encouraged to pay dues online. Not only will the club receive a receipt confirmation, but the credit card and report will be processed immediately. Passwords will be included on the Dues Renewal Invoice.

As a reminder, clubs should submit their dues by one method only to avoid any delays. Clubs paying by check need to mail their renewals to WHQ. If a club has any questions they can send an email to renewals@toastmasters.org.

It is critical to have clubs in your area submit complete membership dues renewals by April 1, 2008, for your area to receive on-time credit in the Distinguished District Program.

The status of the April dues renewals is updated daily and reports are available by club, area and division, as well as by overall district performance. Visit members.toastmasters.org > **Officer Resources** > **Reports** > **District Reports**.