

The Cornerstone



*Official Bulletin of District 28 Toastmasters Serving
Southeast Michigan, Northwest Ohio, and Southwest Ontario*

Spring 2009

Volume XX, Issue IV

Spring Conference Success

*Stephanie Coleman, DTM
Spring 2009 Conference Chair*

For a short while in April, Toastmasters across District 28 came together for an amazing, record-breaking experience. First and foremost, we had our Toastmasters International President Jana Barnhill DTM, AS there along with her husband Bob Barnhill, DTM, AS (and Past International President). Jana gave two wonderful presentations at breakfast and dinner. One could easily see why she is an Accredited Speaker (the "AS" in her title.) She was informative, motivational and used humor with ease.

The other two primary areas of the conference continued the level of excellence set by Jana.



First, the workshops. Bob Barnhill and the rest of the workshop presenters gave wonderful presentations. In my opinion, the workshops alone are worth the time and money for the conference because of the learning and growth opportunities they provide. Many people commented that they

wished they could clone themselves to attend all of them on Saturday.

Second, the exciting contests. The Evaluation Contest, as I mentioned in a previous article, is my favorite. It did not disappoint. The test speaker (Kathey Batey, ATM-G, from District 62) gave an amazing speech on "The Someday Train". All eight competitors were outstanding and gave excellent suggestions. The reason I like this contest so much is that I know my own presentation skills will improve just by listening to the suggestions. Congratulations to Christy Eason on earning First Place.



International Speech Contest featured everything from massage tables to juggling balls to paper cuts. The eight contestants gave motivational and thought-provoking speeches. I am truly lucky that I was able to listen and watch them. Good luck to winner Kenny Wong at the Region VI contest in Cleveland on June 13.

There are two more areas that I would like to highlight. First is the First Timers group. Recent conferences have averaged about 12 First Timers.

(continued on next page)

Spring Conference Success – cont.

This spring, we welcomed a mind-blowing 53 First Timers!!! Many remarked that they loved the conference and the activities planned by the First Timer chairs John Voymas and Sharon Westwood. “More seasoned” conference attendees also felt involved in their experience by being invited to sign their autograph books all weekend.

The other item is the record-breaking experience of our Spring Conference. For the first time in District 28 history, we SOLD OUT many of the events. Anyone in the International Speech Contest audience would agree that the room was packed like sardines. It was a true testament to District 28 and our commitment to Toastmasters that we had so many people in attendance. We gave Jana a great impression of our district. I look forward for this trend to continue and our conferences to get bigger and bigger.

All of this was made possible by the hard work and dedication of our district leadership team, the presidential visit committee and the conference

planning team. Thank you to each and every one of you. Until next time on November 6-7 keep having “The Courage to Conquer and Create Your Destiny.”

Hear Ye! Here Ye!

The Fall 2009 District 28 Conference is scheduled for November 6-7, 2009, and will be held at the Park Inn in Toledo, Ohio.

Contact co-chairs Heather Lane (419-350-7510, hdltoast@gmail.com) or Stephanie Power (419-376-1332, stephpower123@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering to help make the Fall 2009 conference a success.

The Unsung Hero

At each District Conference, the District is pleased to present “The Unsung Hero Award” to a Toastmaster who, despite not being a current member of the District Executive Committee, has gone above and beyond the call of duty to be of service to our District.

This Spring’s Unsung Hero certainly fits this description. This Toastmaster:

- has participated as a presenter at many conferences
- conducted a number of training sessions for the Rising Star Program at a variety of TLIs
- orchestrated most the Rising Star sessions for 2008-2009
- was a Sponsor, and is the current club president of The Canadian Club of Southwestern Ontario

- serves as a marketing ambassador, helping in the building of other new clubs in the Canadian section of District 28

Please help congratulate our Spring 2009 Unsung Hero, Susan Stillman, CC/AL-B!



Speech Contest Winners

Congratulations to our Spring 2009 District 28 speech contest winners!

Evaluation Contest:

- 1st Place – Christine Eason (Dearborn Dynamic)
- 2nd Place – Todd List (Optimistic Orators)
- 3rd Place – Anthony Slawinski (Great Eastern)

International Speech Contest:

- 1st Place – Kenny Wong (Unity IV)
- 2nd Place – Emmitt Muckles (Canton Communicators)
- 3rd Place – Joseph Sparks (Westgate)



Good luck to Kenny Wong as he moves on to compete at the Region VI International Speech contest on Saturday, June 13, 2009, at the Region VI Conference in Cleveland, Ohio.

District Council Meeting Results

We are pleased to announce the results of the District 28 Officer elections. For terms running July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010, the following Toastmasters will lead our District:

District Governor - Nancy Zychowicz, DTM
Lt. Gov. Education & Training- Vera Johnson, DTM
Lt. Gov. Marketing - Robynn Diamond, DTM
Imm. Past District Governor - Kevin Olmstead, DTM

Division A Governor - Kathy Varga, CC
Division B Governor - Scott Lockhart, CTM/CL
Division C Governor - Kathy Schultz, CC/CL
Division D Governor - Ida Vance, AC-B/CL
Division E Governor - Jeanne Beauvais, AC-B/CL
Division F Governor - Miguel Pope, CTM
Division G Governor - Jeff Kirsch, AC-B/AL-B
Division H Governor - Anthony Ross, AC-G/AL-B
Division I Governor - Wellington Hepburn, AC-S/AL-B

Area Governor and other key appointments are still being made and will be announced in the near future.



Proxies (The Big Blue Envelope)

In late March, TI headquarters sent all club presidents a large powder blue envelope, containing the club's proxies for the Region VI Conference and International Convention. It's important that we collect as many of these as possible. If you have

not already done so, please sign and mail your club's Regional/International proxy cards to current District Governor Kevin Olmstead ASAP. (The address is on the card.)

Dues overdue?

Club dues were "due" on April 1, so please encourage your club members to pay their dues if they haven't already and PLEASE submit them to TI asap. Dues payments may be submitted on-line, via mail or fax. If your club is a corporate club whose dues are paid by the company, please make arrangements NOW to get and submit the invoice to get that check cut.

Club Officer Elections

It's time to elect club officers for 2009-2010! TI requires elections be held at the first meeting in May for clubs electing annually or semiannually.

Also, don't forget to submit your updated officer list to TI headquarters via <http://www.toastmasters.org/Members.aspx> (Club

Business section). Clubs must submit this list to TI no later than June 30, 2009, to receive credit in the Distinguished Club Program. These newly elected officers should plan to attend the Toastmasters Leadership Institute (a.k.a. club officer training) in the summer and next fall!

Submit Those Awards!

Please encourage your club members to complete those education and leadership projects to achieve their education and leadership awards (Competent or Advanced Communicator-Bronze/Silver/Gold, Competent or Advanced Leader-Bronze/Silver, or Distinguished Toastmaster). Reminder: Submit award applications asap, as the TI website and staff get REALLY busy in late June.

Sandbagging

Sandbagging (n): Holding back for the next Toastmasters administrative year.

It's OK if you have done it in the past, as long as you have since changed your ways. If you ever told a new member that you'd process his or her application on July 1, even though they signed up in early June, it's OK. If you decided to submit a member's CC award "next year" because your club doesn't need it right now, it's OK.

But that all stops now! We're talking about "sandbagging," a term often used by quota-bearing sales representatives who hold back reporting some of their excess sales until the next month so that they can start further ahead. But, the term is applicable to us, too, as Toastmasters. "Sandbagging" sets a bad example. If a family member was capable of acing a test, would you tell

him or her to just answer enough questions to pass the test? Of course not! You'd encourage them to do their very best. Would you encourage your club members to "achieve mediocrity" in their speeches? Of course not! Toastmasters is all about learning, encouraging, and growing.

We are entering the final stretch of the 2008-2009 Toastmasters year. Even though your club may have met its membership goals, our District still has a ways to go. Although your club may have met its educational goals, your Area Governor might need that extra CC to help your Area become Distinguished.

The bottom line is this: Do not hold back membership applications or educational or leadership awards. Another Toastmaster may be counting on you.

New Club Officer Kits

According to Toastmasters International Headquarters, 2009-2010 club officer kits (the ones with the handbooks for each of the club officers, entitled "When You Are the President" and so forth) are being mailed out to all clubs in early May. Current club presidents - please forward these materials to the incoming club presidents as soon as possible.

Toastmaster Leadership Institute – Summer 2009

Vera Johnson, DTM

Lt. Governor of Marketing

Lt. Governor of Education & Training -Elect

Your Toastmasters club has held club officer elections, and submitted the list of incoming officers for 2009-2010 to TI headquarters via the Club Business section of the web site (www.toastmasters.org), or by mail.

Now what? Arrange to get trained! Why? Because it's part of the job as a club officer, and because the trainings provide learning opportunities about being a club officer, running contests, and upcoming District and International events.

The main focus for the trainings will be "Back to the Basics" because focusing on basic Toastmasters skills can benefit:

- both newer and more "seasoned" speakers
- all clubs – regular and advanced, new and long-standing
- all members as they apply those basic skills to real life – work, family, etc.

ALL club officers are expected to attend training, but non-officers are welcome as well. Even if you've been an officer before, and attended training in the past, PLEASE attend again. There's always more to learn! Besides, more experienced officers can be a valuable "font of information" for the newer ones.

In addition to the specialized training for each club officer role, general sessions will include valuable information that all club members need to know, including: membership building and retention, effective evaluation techniques, club speech contests, help for struggling clubs, and much, much more!

The District Bookstore will be open at each TLI, so bring your shopping list and your checkbook or cash. Oh, and breakfast (including eggs) will be served, so please arrive on time. We hope to see you there!

TLI Schedule

Saturday, June 27, 2009, at the University of Michigan-Dearborn in the Social Sciences Building. A map and driving directions are at: http://www.umd.umich.edu/maps_directions/

Saturday, August 8, 2009, at Owens Community College (Toledo campus) in the Audio/Visual Building. A map and driving directions are at: https://www.owens.edu/about_owens/maps.html

For both sessions, the Registration Desk opens at 8:00 AM, the program begins at 8:30 AM, and we'll wrap up about 12:30 PM. By the way, it's FREE! Being properly trained is important for your development as a leader.

Help Wanted

Is it time for you to s-t-r-e-t-c-h beyond the comfort of your home club? We need Toastmasters who are interested in helping with the Fall 2009 conference, being an Area Governor, serving on a District-wide committee, participating in new club kick-off

meetings, etc. These positions provide excellent opportunities to improve your communication AND leadership skills. Contact a District Officer for more information.

Media Mention

The Speak Easy Club, under formation in Romeo (with the help of Brenda Meller of Warren Toastmasters and Lt. Governor of Marketing Vera Johnson) was visited on February 14 by reporter Rebecca McNulty, who posted a wonderful article in the February 22, 2009, issue of the Source Newspaper.

Playoff Time

*Kevin Olmstead, DTM
District 28 Governor*



As I write this in early May, both professional ice hockey and basketball teams are in the midst of playoff tournaments, ultimately leading to league championships where one team will see all of its goals for the season achieved. The level of play seems to become a bit more “intense”. The teams know that if they don’t push themselves to give that “little bit extra”, the other team probably will, and the result could be that the team members will NOT meet their goals for the year, but will be free to go play golf in late April or May rather than staying in the tournament until the 4th of July. (OK, the playoffs don’t quite go THAT long, but it’s close).

Similarly, we’re down to the last two months of the 2008-2009 Toastmasters year. While you, the individual member, can and should meet your goals of improved communication and leadership skills and get recognized for that anytime during the year, it’s NOW that YOUR team--your Toastmasters club--has a chance to prove itself through meeting the goals laid out in the Distinguished Club Program. The program measures clubs from July 1 to the following June 30, and works by setting out 10 goals or objectives. Attainment of at least 5 of the goals AND having paid membership at 20 (or a net gain of 5 members) as of June 30 demonstrate that the club is operating well and its members are attaining educational goals.

The June 30 deadline means that we’re coming to “crunch time” when many clubs do a big push to get awards in and members added. There is a statistic we were told at District Officer training that around a quarter of all Toastmaster awards are submitted during June. While the awards all count for the DCP whenever they are turned in during the year, it’s in May and June that a club gets a bit more “focused” on making it to the Distinguished goal, which is good eventually for club marketing as well giving the club officers and members the ability to say that they are leaders and members of a Distinguished club.

As I write this, District 28 has 20 clubs that are officially Distinguished already---congratulations to all of you and your members for doing that! Most of those clubs were able to participate in the Distinguished Club reception we had before the banquet at the recent District Conference. If your club wasn’t invited, that’s a goal your club could set for NEXT Toastmasters year.

With 20 clubs already Distinguished, that means there are 100 clubs in the District that may still have a chance of making Distinguished for the year, with two months left to accomplish that goal. A number of clubs actually have the paid member goal met, but need to get in an award or two to be Distinguished. Other clubs have the awards in, but need just a few added members. Some other clubs need both members and goals, with a few in the position of just adding perhaps ONE member and they AUTOMATICALLY make it by virtue of completing a “4 new members” goal. Your club officers can tell you where your club stands, and what the club needs to do to achieve Distinguished status. If you’re a club officer and require an explanation of what’s needed, feel free to contact your Area Governor, Division Governor, or me for a quick statement of need. We in District leadership promised to strive to see that every club is Distinguished, so if we can show you the “roadmap” to get there, we’re more than happy to do that.

I encourage your clubs to put on your “game faces” and make the push for Distinguished. Be assured, if you make the push and your club doesn’t quite make it, your club is not a failure---by making the push, you members were still getting in educational awards, and you were still adding members to the club. But if you DO make it, your club can be extremely proud of the accomplishment, as less than half the clubs in the WORLD actually make Distinguished each year. Now THERE’S something to shoot for--and you don’t even have to be able to ice skate!

Go Wings!

2008-2009 in District 28—The Story So Far

Kevin Olmstead, DTM
District 28 Governor

As clubs are set goals in the Distinguished Club Program, so Districts are set goals in the Distinguished District Program. As a District, our mission is to see that clubs are submitting awards and are getting membership dues paid, as well as increasing the number of clubs in the District. The mission is defined by meeting four Critical Success Factors. As of early May, I'm proud to say that we in the District have achieved two of the four goals already---we have collectively submitted 58 Advanced Communicator awards (goal was 43) and

we have 114 paid clubs so far, up from 109 at the end of last year. The other goals are membership payments, where we collectively have made over 4300 payments, with a goal near 4400, and Competent Communicator awards, where we need to submit another 30 or so to make the goal. With about two months to goal, I have every confidence that we'll do it, and continue the standard of excellence streak that District 28 has had for the past several years. You, the members of District 28, are a GREAT team!

Welcome to the District!

Comerica Toastmasters (#1270211) chartered on February 10, 2009. The company club, located in Livonia, Michigan, is in Division G, Area 34. Club Sponsors are Ida Vance, AC-B/CL and Vera Johnson, DTM. The Club Mentors are Vera and Ida, per the club's request.

Park Street Presenters (#1095801) chartered on March 17, 2009. The community club, which meets at Walsh College in Troy, Michigan, is in Division D, Area 17. Club Sponsors are Minesh Baxi and Mike Comfort, CTM/AL-B. The Club Mentors are Jeff Hampton, AC-B/CL and Vera Johnson, DTM.

The Canadian Club of Southwestern Ontario (#1263594) chartered on March 23, 2009. This advanced club meets in Essex, Ontario, and is in Division F, Area 27. Club Sponsors are Maureen Hurley, AC-B/CL and Susan Stillman, CC/AL-B. The Club Mentors are Edward Raymond, CC and Lynn Fitzsimmons, AC-B.

Welcome Missionary Baptist Church (#1152252) chartered on March 27, 2009. This community club located in Pontiac, Michigan, is in Division D, Area 16. Club Sponsors are T. Renea Battiste, DTM and Melvin Davis, AC-G/CL. The Club Mentors are Mary A. Comfort, ACS, CL and Mark Comfort.

ROADMASTERS (#1293342) chartered on March 27, 2009. This corporate club, connected to the Road Commission of Oakland County, meets in Lathrup Village, MI, and is located in Division D, Area 18. The Club Sponsor is Vera Johnson, DTM. The Club Mentors are Judith Heywood and Rick Saporsky.

Region VI: "Rockin' Round the Region"

Planning is underway for the 2009 Region VI Conference of Toastmasters International. This year's conference, sponsored by District 10, will be held June 12-13, 2009, at the Hilton Garden Inn in downtown Cleveland, Ohio.

A registration form is included in this issue, or may be downloaded by going to the Region VI website at: <http://regionvi.freetoasthost.us/>. On-line registration via Pay Pal will also be available at this website. Registrations are due by June 1, and the hotel "group rate" is available until May 22.

Farewell to Many Friends

Kevin Olmstead, DTM
District 28 Governor

Sadly, it falls to me to note the passing of several long-time District 28 Toastmasters during the past year. In alphabetical order:

Joanne Crotty passed in September. She was a member of the Bay Area Toastmasters. Joanne was a long-time Toastmasters supporter, and while she never held a District office, she was storytelling force to be reckoned with in Division B, as she often won the Area humorous speech contest. She also rode a Harley and was active in community theater.

Norman Esler passed in January. He was a member of the Northern club for over 25 years, president of club twice, and was several times an Area Governor and Division Governor in the 1970's and '80s.

Joe Forgione, Sr. passed in April. He was a member of the Fremont club. Joe was a firm believer in Toastmasters, and promoted Toastmasters wherever he was, and he got out a lot, as he was a member of Lions and the Knights of Columbus, and as a World War II vet, also the American Legion.

Cleet Melick passed away in February. He was a member of the Seneca club. He was active in the organization for retired Ohio public employees, and he was often a contest speaker. He was a poet, author, actor and storyteller.

Bill Roberts passed away in December. He was a member of Shores and Optimistic Orators. He was District Governor in 1996-97, and since then was a friend and mentor to many of us in the District. He will be missed for his good humor and his broad vocabulary, and we will miss him leading the National Anthems at the District Governor's Banquet. District 28 presented a Long Term Achievement Award in his memory, which was presented to his wife, Marge Roberts, at the Spring Conference.

Communication and Leadership Contests – Part III

Lead By Example

Use the various Toastmasters leadership programs to learn the skills necessary to become a more effective leader. You can “Lead By Example” by taking meeting and club officer roles, thus leading the club in achieving its goals. When you do that, you’ll be earning a Competent Leader (CL) or Advanced Leader-Bronze (AL-B) award.



If you submit a CL or AL (either the AL-Bronze or AL-Silver) award between January 1 and May 31, 2009, you’ll not only have helped both your club and yourself, you’ll also have at least a 1 in 10 chance of winning something beyond the undying gratitude of your fellow club members--a gift certificate for the Toastmasters International Bookstore. With that, you can get more materials to help you achieve your NEXT Toastmasters goal!

Ten Steps to Success

Just like steps build upon each other to help you reach the top, the ten projects in the Competent Communication (basic) manual build upon each other to help you reach your goal of becoming a good speaker. In the same way, completing projects in the various Advanced Communication manuals can help you become stronger in specific areas, like conducting technical presentations, humorous speaking, or even being interviewed on television!

Complete a CC or an AC (any type) and submit it to World Headquarters between January 1 and May 31, 2009. This will mean you have not only “made it to the top”, but you’ll also have at least a 1 in 10 chance of winning a gift certificate to the Toastmasters International Bookstore. You could use it to get more manuals so you can start in on your next goal.

For more information about either of these contests, contact District Governor Kevin Olmstead, DTM.

Please Save These Dates

Please mark the following dates on your calendar:

June 12-13, 2009

Region VI Conference – Hilton Garden Inn, Cleveland, Ohio
(<http://regionvi.freetoasthost.us/> - Registration form and flier in this issue!)

August 12-15, 2009

International Convention – MGM Grand At Foxwoods, Mashantucket, Connecticut
(Consult the TI website or the April 2009 issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine for more information.)

November 6-7, 2009

District 28 Fall Conference – Park Inn Hotel, Toledo, Ohio
(Flier in this issue! Registration form will soon be posted on the D28 website.)

Toastmasters – Needed More Today Than Ever

*Michael Poulos, President/CEO
Michigan First Credit Union*

Over 25 years ago, I found myself in my very first management position. As a new leader, I was expected to communicate with my team and others on a regular basis. Often, this communication was in a group format. Unfortunately, I was scared to death of speaking before any size group, large or small. It soon became clear to me that my career and effectiveness as a leader would be severely hampered by my inability to communicate.

Fortunately, I had a leader that cared about communications and leadership development. Without the support of the company, he organized on his own a local Toastmasters Club. Taking all the work on his own shoulders, he personally invited me to participate. Thus began the best three developmental years of my life. Being involved with a group of supportive colleagues that needed good communication skills as much as I did, the experience turned my life and career around. I gained confidence in speaking before all size and types of groups. That confidence gave me the courage to take on new assignments and even a new career. Today, while still a developing speaker, I am capable of doing what my position requires and even continue seeking regular feedback as I learned in Toastmasters over 25 years ago.

I have always wanted to see others in the workplace experience the growth and benefits that I have seen from being in Toastmasters. This past year, I had the opportunity to see that happen at Michigan First Credit Union. Our Human Resources team focused their passion on the area of public speaking and carried the



Michael Poulos

Photo by Max Kohr, DTM

ball in getting the club organized. A required part of our culture here is continual learning and team members validated that by signing up and participating in the new club. We actually have had enough interest to have two meeting times.

In just a short period of time, I cannot count the number of employees who have sought me out to express how much they are learning and how they see themselves and others grow in confidence and public speaking ability. For them, it is the key to seeing a more confident future. For me, it is just the reality of seeing a life long dream played out in front of my own eyes. Not many people get that gift, and I will be forever grateful for those that helped give that gift to me.

“We’re in the Home Stretch—and to help you with YOUR Toastmasters goal(s) the remainder of this Toastmasters year!”

“Complete YOUR Competent Communicator(s), and be entered into a drawing to win!”

Nancy Zychowicz (Nancy “Z”)

Lt. Governor of Education and Training

Are you just a few speeches away from attaining your Competent Communicator? Advanced Communicator Bronze or Silver or Gold? Competent Leader? Advanced Leader Bronze or Silver? Or even your DTM? We have a suggestion and an encouragement to help you reach your goal and perhaps help your club to reach ITS goals.

The suggestion: devote a club meeting to manual speeches.

To help get your members and your club “over the hump”, you can elect to make a meeting ALL speeches and evaluations, skipping table topics, club business, etc. for that meeting. This is sometimes called a “speech-a-thon”. Standard rules still apply: for that meeting, you can only get credit for one speech in a speaking manual, and you can only get credit for one item in a CL manual. All speeches should be the standard 5-7 minutes or less so as many speakers can get in as possible. The idea is to take full advantage of the additional stage time available with this event. If you wish, you might ask members to reserve slots, to ensure participation. If you can extend the meeting, you can do that as well. You can even make it a “special event” by inviting other clubs to join in the fun, and perhaps publicizing it that way!. Questions about running such an event? Don’t hesitate to call Gayle Lawson, (she’s already done one--and this was her idea as well: THANK YOU, GAYLE!) at 734-558-7941 or Nancy “Z” at 419-340-2666.

The encouragement: a special contest

For every Competent Communicator award submitted to and officially recognized by Toastmasters International between April 24 and June 30, 2009, the awardee’s name will be entered into a drawing. The prize will be a complete Fall Conference Package: all workshops, meals, contests, Friday Fun Night, the works, value over \$100. So, get those CC awards in soon, before the year runs out!

Fellow Toastmasters, we have many Members who are so close to attaining their personal goals, Clubs who are close to attaining their goals—and the same for Areas and Divisions as well! Let’s work together to see just how many of those “Home Stretch” goals we can make! You can do it—we know you can!

REMINDER! Form 990N Due by May 15, 2009

Last year a new law, the Pension Protection Act, resulted in the need for small non-profit organizations, including individual U.S. Toastmasters clubs, to annually file a Form 990-N with the IRS. The 990-N is a simple form that is comprised primarily of contact information for your club - it does not require you to report any of your club's financial information. This form **must be filed online by May 15, 2009**.

If your club has not yet filed a Form 990-N this year, instructions are at: http://www.toastmasters.org/irs_990n.aspx. Please read these instructions carefully as there is a specific way that things should be entered.

TI has established a dedicated email address (IRSquestions@Toastmasters.org) to address any questions that you have or report any problems you encounter.

NOTE: Failure to file by the due date could cause the club to lose their nonprofit tax exempt status as a subordinate under Toastmasters International.

TOASTMASTERS TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY GROUP: Coming July 1, 2009!

David R. Haslam
Area 13 Governor

Recently, Bil Moore presented a workshop at the Toastmasters International District 62 2009 Spring Conference. At the start of the workshop, Bil posed a question: Who IS your club's 2nd best salesperson? The answer: Your club's web site! A very accurate assessment in the information age we live in. There are additional questions that clubs should ask themselves. Is it active? Is it up-to-date? Is it interesting but not over-powering? These are questions that all clubs should answer.

During the visit of Toastmaster International President, Jana Barnhill, to the District 28 conference in April, she discussed Toastmasters increasing interest in web based communication AND training. A large focus is to help far flung members and clubs receive the same level of quality in support and training as those which are in larger metropolitan areas. TI is looking into several alternative approaches. We want District 28 to show the way!

In a new initiative for the 2009-2010 Toastmasters year, the Toastmasters Technology Advisory Group

(TTAG for short) is now being formed in District 28. According to the chairperson, David R Haslam, "We will use and prove technologies that will move Toastmasters, as a world leader in communication and leadership, into the 21st century..."

The primary goals of the TTAG will be to:

- Advise clubs on setting up websites (various options will be included)
- Advise clubs on improving existing websites if asked.
- Advise clubs on social networking technologies and the best ways to use them.

This group will be designed to help raise the plane of technological implementation across the District at the club level. It is not designed to actually create websites or social networks for the clubs, and nor is it designed to usurp the club's authority to create and maintain their own web presence as they see fit. TTAG will be there to support the clubs.

The Cornerstone goes Electronic

You are reading *The Cornerstone*, the official newsletter for our District. As such, it is the only communication that the District has directly with every member within our District, as we give YOU important information about upcoming contests, officer training conferences, and educational award opportunities.

We are committed to continuing to provide this crucial information link to our members. However, printing and mailing *The Cornerstone* is very expensive. In 2006, it cost us roughly \$1100 to print and mail each edition out to each of the roughly 1800 members of our District. To better utilize our resources, the District converted publication to a primarily electronic format, with a PDF posted on the District website, www.d28toastmasters.org. We do realize that some of our members have older computer systems or no computer at all, and so have limited or no access to the Internet. Others simply prefer to receive a printed copy of the newsletter.

If you would prefer to receive your issues of *The Cornerstone* in paper form, please let us know by sending an e-mail to PRO@d28toastmasters.org or by sending a note to the Cornerstone Editor. We will then happily put you on the list to receive a mailed or hand-delivered copy of the newsletter.

Membership Building Contests

Vera Johnson, DTM
Lt Governor of Marketing

Grow! Grow! Grow! – Part III Results

Congratulations to the following clubs that won \$15 TI gift certificates during the third phase of this District 28 membership building contest, designed to reward clubs that continue to GROW! (A total of 83 clubs added at least one new member between January 1 and March 31.) The winners for this period are:

- Trendsetters
- OHM Toastmasters
- Success Talkers
- Great Lakes Real Orators
- Powertalkers
- C-Notes Advanced
- Oak Park

Questions about membership building? Contact Vera Johnson at LGM@d28toastmasters.org

"Beat the Clock!" - TI Contest

Add five new, dual or reinstated members to your club between May 1 and June 30, and you will receive a special Beat the Clock! ribbon to display on your club's banner, and your club can choose one item from *The Better Speakers Series*, *The Leadership Excellence Series* or *The Successful Club Series*. These seven- to 15-minute modules focus on speaking, leadership and club success, with topics such as: Take the Terror Out of a Talk, Building a Team and Evaluate to Motivate.

Don't let time run out! We encourage you to "Beat the Clock!"

Annual Membership Program – TI Contest

This program runs July 1 – June 30, and acknowledges individuals who have sponsored five, 10, 15 or more members (new, dual or reinstated) during the program. Prizes include:

Find Your Voice. Serve Your World. Pin 5 members
Gold Star pin 10 members
Toastmasters necktie or scarf 15 members

Talk Up Toastmasters – TI Contest

Add five new, dual or reinstated members to your roster between February 1 and March 31 to receive a special Talk up Toastmasters! ribbon to display on your club's banner. The club will also earn a choice of one module from *The Better Speaker Series*, *The Successful Club Series* or *The Leadership Excellence Series*.

Congratulations to:

Oak Park Toastmasters	10
iTalk Toastmasters	9
Troy Toastmasters	6
Ann Arbor Toastmasters & Friends	5
Canton Communicators	5
DETROIT ROCKS!	5

For more information on the Annual Membership Program, Talk Up Toastmasters, and other TI-sponsored membership building contests, visit the TI web site:

<http://www.toastmasters.org/NonNavigableDocs/MembershipContests.aspx>

Club Officer Elections

It's time to elect club officers for 2009-2010! TI requires elections be held at the first meeting in May for clubs electing annually or semiannually.

Also, don't forget to submit your updated officer list to TI headquarters via <http://www.toastmasters.org/Members.aspx> (Club Business section). Clubs must submit this list to TI no later than June 30, 2009, to receive credit in the Distinguished Club Program. These newly elected officers should plan to attend the Toastmasters Leadership Institute (a.k.a. club officer training) in the summer and next fall!

Basics of Effective Listening

M. John Bustria, ATMG-CL

Unity IV and Optimistic Orators

A basic human need is to understand and be understood. The best way to understand other people is to listen to what they are saying.

If we observe conversations, we will notice that what is actually occurring is that many of us are not fully listening: we are simply waiting for our chance to speak. We are not really listening to the other person, but simply waiting for a lull or a gap—usually amounting to only a fraction of a second—to express our own view.

Furthermore, if we observe other people's conversations, we often hear one person say, "Yeah, yeah," or "I know," urging the other person to hurry up so he can have his turn. As a result, it seems that talking to one another is sometimes more like a game of Ping-Pong—a verbal sparring back and forth. If this situation occurs, we have lost the enjoyment from the conversation.

In order to improve our listening skills, we should understand the basics of effective listening. Based on the 1983 book *Effective Listening* by Lyman Sussman, Larry L. Baker, and Kittie W. Watson, below are seven principles that we should know and practice with anyone that we come into contact with:

1. Have a reason or purpose.

One must be motivated to listen well; it does not just happen. Without motivation, you will not use the other six principles, or you will not use them as well as you could.

But, you ask, what if I don't have a reason to listen? In such cases, it is a good idea to actively search for a reason to listen to what is being said. Ask yourself, "How can this information help me do my job better?" or "How can I use this information in some way, on the job or elsewhere?" Finding a reason to listen will provide the motivation to use all the other principles and techniques.

2. Suspend Judgment Initially

The key word in this phrase is "initially." You will obviously need to evaluate the material you listen to, but you should wait until you hear the entire message before you begin the evaluation.

To make a judgment before listening carefully to what someone is saying is the opposite of the "suspension" principle.

3. Resist Distractions

Many things can distract us when we are trying to listen. The "distraction" principle tells us to fight back, to actively resist whatever may be distracting us. Among the many things that distract us, various sounds are usually the most powerful.

Regardless of what type of sound is creating the distraction, the remedy is to resist, to try harder. In this case, "trying harder" means that you should be attentive, maintain constant eye contact, and increase your level of concentration.

4. Wait Before Responding

The "response" principle suggests that one relax and wait for natural opportunities to speak instead of jumping into the conversation immediately. Try to flow with the conversation as an event rather than interrupting.

5. Rephrase What You Listen To in Your Own Words

The "rephrasing" principle suggests an incredibly simple, yet powerful, way to check one's understanding. The idea is merely to take something you hear and put it into your own words.

6. Seek the Important Themes

The "thematic" principle indicates that the main ideas are more important than facts, so important that they are the general keys to understanding and retaining what is said.

7. Use the Thinking-Speaking Differential to Reflect and Find Meaning

The "meaning" principle reflects the fact that people think faster than they speak. This difference between thinking and speaking creates an opportunity to listen more effectively.

Effective listening is more than simply avoiding the bad habit of interrupting others, especially if they are speaking or finishing their sentences. It is being contented to listen to the entire thought of someone rather than waiting impatiently for our chance to respond. Remember, being listened to is one of the rarest and most treasure gifts we can offer.



HEAR YE!

HERE YE!

Toastmasters International District 28 - Fall 2009 Conference

**Friday-Saturday, November 6-7, 2009
Park Inn Hotel, Toledo, OH**

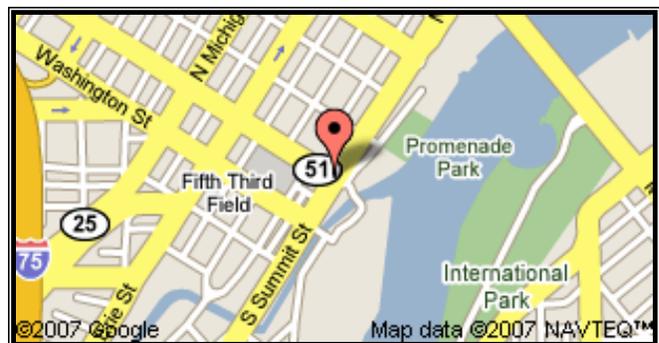
**Workshop presenters along the theme of
“Hear Ye! Here Ye!” are being sought. Ideas:**

- **Listening Skills**
- **Being Present in the Moment**
- **Evaluation Skills**
- **Judging Skills**
- **Conflict Resolution**

Nearby Attractions:

- **Promenade Park**
- **Fifth Third Field (home of the Toledo Mud Hens)**
- **Center of Science & Industry (a.k.a. “COSI”)**

The Navy Pier, the Toledo Zoo and the botanical gardens are a short drive from the hotel.



For more information, contact Conference Co-Chairs:

**Heather Lane, ACB/CL, (cell) 419-350-7510, hdltoast@gmail.com
Stephanie Power, ACB/CL, (cell) 419-376-1332, stephpower123@gmail.com**



Rockin' Round the Region Region VI 2009 conference June 12th and 13th, 2009



Watch Region VI website for updates as
available: regionvi.freetoasthost.us

Agenda

Friday, June 12, 2009

8:15-9:15	Opening Ceremonies
9:30-10:15	Educational Session I
10:30-11:15	Educational Session II
11:45-1:45	Humorous Speech Showcase with Buffet Luncheon
2:00-2:45	Craig Valentine, DTM - 1999 World Champion of Public Speaking
3:00-3:45	Educational Session III
4:00-5:00	Michael Notaro, DTM Toastmasters Int'l 3 rd Vice President
5:15-6:00	Candidates Forum
7:00-10:00	Social

Saturday, June 13, 2009

8:15-9:15	Opening Ceremonies
9:30-10:15	Educational Session IV
10:30-11:15	Educational Session V
11:45-1:45	Leslie Yerkes, C&L Award with Buffet Luncheon
2:00-2:45	Educational Session VI International Speech Contest Briefings
3:30-4:45	Region VI Business Meeting
5:00-6:30	International Speech Contest
6:30-7:00	Reception
7:00	Dinner

Guests of Honor:

Craig Valentine, DTM
1999 World Champion of
Public Speaking



Michael R. Notaro, DTM
Toastmasters Int'l 3rd Vice
President





Visit other Cleveland Area Attractions:

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum
Progressive Field – home of Cleveland Indians (home versus St. Louis)
Great Lakes Science Center
Tower City – shopping and movie theater
Quicken Loans Arena
Browns Stadium
The Flats and Warehouse Entertainment District
House of Blues, Cleveland
Pickwick & Frolic
Playhouse Square Theater District

Additional Cleveland Area Attractions accessible by RTA:

University Circle Cultural Area
Cleveland Museum of Natural History
Cleveland Art Museum
Crawford Auto Museum
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo & Rain Forest

Make your reservations at the:

Hilton Garden Inn
Cleveland Downtown
1100 Carnegie Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115
216-658-6400

Rooms available at \$125.00 + tax
until **May 22, 2009**

Reservation code:
Toastmasters international

**The Cleveland Indians are at home
this weekend – make your
reservations early to obtain a room
and the Toastmasters rate!**

← **Registration Deadline: June 1st** →

Additional information will be
posted to the Region VI
website when available.

- ◆ Educational Presenter opportunities Available – contact Gary Mull (gary@garymull.com, 937-252-9450) with session details
- ◆ Program Ads available – starting at \$25 for business card size – see Region VI website for details
- ◆ Silent Auction – contact Gina Cook (ginacook@pobox.com, 613-591-1456) to register your intent to submit a donation
- ◆ Friday Night Social – come dressed in your favorite music era



Interested in volunteering? Would you like to be included on Region VI 2009 announcements? – contact Co-chairs Barb Kaplan, DTM/PDG & Brenda Giguere DTM/PDG at:

***Brenda – gigbre@roadrunner.com
Barb – barbkaplandtm@yahoo.com***





Rockin' Round the Region Region VI 2009 conference June 12th and 13th, 2009



Name:			
Address:			
Phone :	(h) (c) (w)	Educational Level (circle highest)	CC ACB ACS ACG CL ALB ALS DTM
Email:			
District Office 2009/2010:			
Past District Governor: Y N Past International Director: Y N			

Registration Fees (in US Dollars)

Package	Qty	Price	Total
Full Package (Friday & Saturday, 6 meals)		\$200	
Friday only (all day, 3 meals)		\$110	
Saturday only (all day, 3 meals)		\$110	
Friday Social Night		\$35	
Saturday C&L Luncheon only		\$35	
Saturday Dinner only		\$40	
International Speech Contest only		\$15	
Total Payment			

Saturday Dinner Choice: Tilapia - Pork - Vegetarian (circle one)

Reservation and Payment Due by: June 1st, 2009

Register on line: regionvi@freetoasthost.us using Pay Pal - or -
Mail with completed form with check in U.S. Dollars payable to **Region VI Toastmasters** to:

Marge Albrecht, Region VI Treasurer
23903 Westwood Road, Westlake, OH 44145, USA





Menus

Continental Breakfast:

Fresh Fruit	Bagels/Muffins
Various Pastry	Coffee/Tea

Buffet Luncheons:

Two Meat Choices	
Soup	Salads
Bread	Dessert
Beverage	

Friday Night Social:

Sliders	Mini Dogs
Salad	Dessert
Beverage	

Saturday Dinner:

Tilapia, Pork or Vegetarian	
Vegetable	Potato
Salad	Rolls
Dessert	Beverage

Make your reservations at the:

Hilton Garden Inn
Cleveland downtown
1100 Carnegie Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115
216-658-6400

Rooms available at \$125.00 +
tax until **May 22, 2009**

Reservation code:

Toastmasters international

Parking fees:

Hotel guests - unlimited in/out
privileges, \$15 per night, will be
includes on room invoice

Others - maximum of \$5/day, no
in/out privileges

**The Cleveland Indians are at home
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and the Toastmasters rate!**

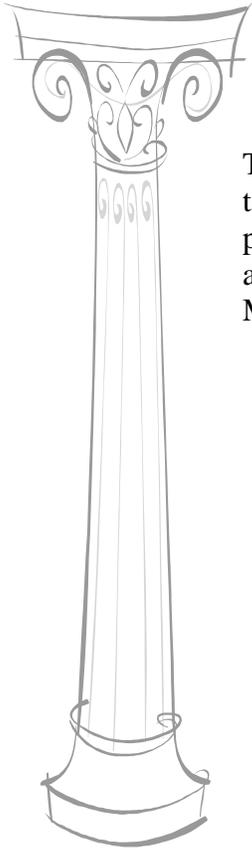


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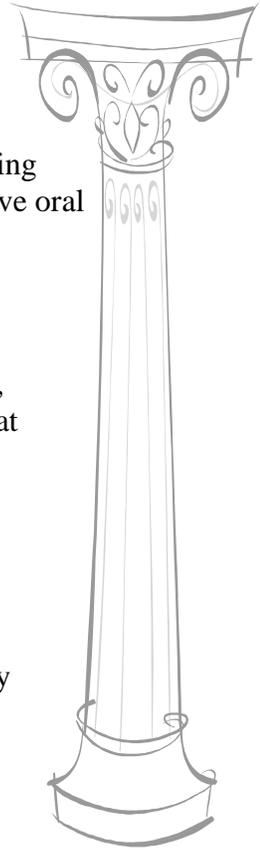
**Brenda - gigbre@roadrunner.com
Barb - barbkaplandtm@yahoo.com**

Co-chairs Barb Kaplan, DTM/PDG & Brenda Giguere DTM/PDG





Cornerstone Staff and Publishing Information



The Cornerstone is an information tool for members and the general public of District 28. Comments and ideas are always welcome.

Mail them to:

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22949 Columbia
Dearborn, MI 48124

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Managing Editor:

Karen Holland, DTM, IPDG

Lt. Governor Education & Training: Nancy Zychowicz,
DTM

Lt. Governor Marketing: Vera
Johnson, DTM

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member Clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of Clubs, thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.

District 28 of Toastmasters International
c/o 22949 Columbia
Dearborn, MI 48124