

FORUM 56

District 56 2007-2008
 Celebrating Its 50th Anniversary!

Recognition Of Development Enriches Opportunities!



GETTING IN SHAPE WITH TOASTMASTERS

In Toastmasters, we talk about positive feedback, motivation, self-

improvement and changing people's lives. As we journey toward these goals, we shape ourselves into better communicators and leaders through the many opportunities Toastmasters provides. We find the courage to begin our journey, create a goal to achieve and surround ourselves with the stimulus to succeed.

The only way to begin improving is to start. There is no need to plan your journey too far ahead when you are sure you are on the right road. Don't burden yourself with doubts and fears as to the obstacles that may hinder your progress. You can only take one-step at a time.

You don't need to know all the answers in advance. Just have a clear idea of the goal you want to reach. Always remember, if you can get up the courage to begin, you have the courage to succeed. It's the job you never start that takes the longest to finish. Go after what you want and you will get it.

The purpose of a goal is to focus your attention. Your mind reaches toward achievement when it has clear

objectives. Magic begins when you set goals. It is then that your internal switch is turned on, the current begins to flow and your power to accomplish becomes a reality.

Deciding what you want is the crucial step to acquiring the things you desire in life. If you don't know where you're going, how can you expect to get there? There is no achievement without goals.

Your environment is the mental feeding ground from which your mind is nourished. Choose your environment with care. Seek out surroundings that are positive, that lift you up and give you wings to soar.

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambition. Create favorable conditions through your associations. Your own inherent force and energy will compel things to turn out the way you desire when positive people surround you.

We shape our lives with our experiences. Our friends help shape our world and encourage us on our journey to succeed. Toastmasters are our friends. Why not let Toastmasters help us to shape ourselves while we shape our world? As we get in shape, we gain recognition and provide development to enrich our individual opportunities! Let's RODEO!

Cynthia St. Dennis, DTM
District 56 Governor



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50 YEARS IN HOUSTON & SOUTHEAST TEXAS!



FEAR

I was at an Area contest recently where the Contest Chair “banished” Fear from the room to allow the speakers to perform at their best. I was the Contest Toastmaster and I mentioned that I was disappointed that Fear was banished. I like Fear.

Without Fear and the constant battle with Fear, many of us may not be able to reach our full potential. It is the constant battle with Fear that makes us better. It is through facing Fear that we learn to overcome it. Hiding behind Fear are our greatest victories, our greatest strengths, and our most powerful

Message from the Lieutenant Governor Education and Training by *Eddie Merla, DTM*

stories. With each battle, we may claim another rung on the ladder to our individual perfections.

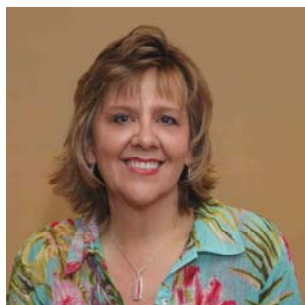
I once heard that FEAR is an acronym for False Expectations Appearing Real. Some beginning Toastmasters fear going to a meeting. The False Expectations in their minds assume that it will be difficult to answer a Table Topic question, or that the speech they will give will not be perfect or will not be “good enough” to give in front of an audience. Some individuals falsely expect that they will set a record for the most uhm’s and ah’s in a single meeting – fear not, I already hold that record!

False Expectations will hold you back. My friend, Ruben Gonzales, a professional speaker, once said: “The mind does not know the difference between fantasy and reality.” Since your thoughts lead to feelings and feelings lead to results, False Expectations may lead you to actualize those expectations and make them real.

The best way to fight False Expectations is to replace them with Great Expectations. Visualize a positive outcome of everything you do at Toastmasters and eventually the great expectations will become realities. The best way to battle Fear is to use it. Use your Fear to become a better communicator and leader. Use your Fear to try new things. Use your fear to achieve new levels of competence in Toastmasters and outside of Toastmasters.

Use your club environment to sharpen your skills in overcoming your fears. The lessons you learn in your club will not only help you overcome any anxiety you may have over speaking in public, but they will also help you overcome the greater fears that you may face in your personal life.

Do not banish Fear from Toastmasters or your life. Face Fear. Overcome it and you will find your personal greatness on the other side.



EFFECTIVE NEWSLETTER TIPS

It’s important to spread the Toastmasters word to your club members and to the community. One way of doing so is through a club newsletter. What a perfect way to RODEO this year. Use this method of communication to recognize and celebrate the achievements of the district, the club and your members.

Here are a few personal tips for a successful newsletter:

Message from the Public Relations Officer by *Kathy Miller, ACB, CL*

- Choosing design is key to good publication readability. It’s not always about being “pretty”.
- Be consistent in your fonts, colors and layout. Restrain yourself from using too much clip art. People relate to people.
- Stick with the “Rule of 2” fonts – one for the heading and one for the body.
- Choose an appropriate font for your project. A “serif” font is the easiest for reading in print (i.e., Times New Roman or Garamond). A “sans serif” font is easiest for reading on screen (i.e., Verdana, Tahoma or Arial).
- Stick with the “Rule of 3” colors. Black always works well for your body text and then use two accent colors that coordinate well with your project. Shades of these 3 colors are also acceptable to use. Avoid using red/green and yellow/blue combinations, as those with color blindness may have difficulty in reading.
- Be consistent with your layout. Repeating page elements is good. Break your articles into multiple columns instead of full page width columns. This makes for easier reading.
- Use effective white space. Don’t feel as if you have to fill every little space with something. White space provides for visual breathing, making a page less cramped, confusing and overwhelming. Practice white space between paragraphs, columns, in your margins and AROUND graphics.
- Lastly, content should be written at an 8th grade reading level to keep your reader’s attention and ensure understanding. Spell Check will help you identify the readability statistics of your written material.

Good luck with creating your club or office newsletter or any other future creative projects.

Message from the Lieutenant Governor Marketing by Charlie Pitts, DTM

DTM ON THE HORIZON!

It's a bird! No, it's a plane! No! IT'S A DTM - A DTM on the Horizon!

Is a DTM on your horizon? If not, look around. It may be around the corner.

If you have achieved an ACG and /or a CL, then the DTM award is tapping you on the shoulder. If you are not working on these designations, there are some projects that you will need to complete, and you could be working on them right now.

The DTM is earned when one has completed both the communication and leadership tracks that Toastmasters has to offer. Completion of both the ACG and the ALS designations results in a DTM.

The requirements for the ALS are as follows:

- ◆ Achieved Competent Leader award.
- ◆ Served as district officer.
- ◆ Completed the High Performance Leadership Project.
- ◆ Served successfully as a Club Sponsor, Club Mentor or a Club Coach or a Club Specialist.

You could be serving as a Club Sponsor, Club Mentor or Club Coach right now and you could combine this with a High Performance Leadership Project.

First, let me describe what being a Club Sponsor, Club Mentor and Club Coach entails. I will then tell you how you may combine this with a High Performance Leadership Project.

Club Sponsor:

A Club Sponsor simply assists in the process of creating a new club from conception to the demo meeting. Once the club is chartered,

the responsibilities of the Sponsor are completed.

Club Mentor:

A Club Mentor takes the baton from the Sponsor and will assist from the charter through the first 6-months. Rather than mentoring a single Toastmaster, the Club Mentor will mentor a group of Toastmasters.

Club Coach:

The Club Coach was created in 2003 to help struggling clubs. A struggling club is one with 12 or less members. The club coach will be committed for one year and his goal is to bring the club to distinguished status. When this goal is accomplished, the Club Coach will not only receive credit towards the ALS, but will also be awarded a pin from Toastmasters International.

Now let's package one of these in a High Performance Leadership Project, also known as the HPLP.

First, what on earth is this project known as the HPLP?

The HPLP is a complete project that requires one to create a vision, mission statement and core values. This project requires a speech at the start to share your vision. You must assemble an advisory team which will give you feedback on the impact and effectiveness of your actions and direction. And finally, this project crescendos into a final speech about the success of your project and what you have learned.

One could be a Club Sponsor and use the HPLP to create a successful demo. This would require an organizational meeting to motivate a core group to get the word out to ensure that at least 20 sign up at the demo. This project could include organizing a suc-



cessful demo meeting. You could even ask your Lt. Governor Marketing to be on your advisory team.

A Club Mentor could use the HPLP to bring a brand new club to Distinguished Status in the first 6 months. Hint – you could ask your Lt. Governor Marketing to be on your advisory team.

A Club Coach could also use the HPLP to assist a club in reaching Distinguished Status which is what a Club Coach is charged with anyhow. Hint, hint – your Lt Governor might just be interested in being on your advisory team.

There are many opportunities right now. Why not help a club, help the district and get rewarded in the process?

Is it a bird or a plane? No! But the opportunity could fly over. There is a DTM on the horizon. Snatch the opportunities that are available and make your DTM a reality.

Volunteer to be a Club Sponsor, Club Mentor, or Club Coach. Learn more about becoming a DTM. Send an email to Charlie Pitts LGM at lgm@toastmasters-d56.org now and begin to make a difference.

The GOLD RUSH is Coming!

Mark your calendars for the 2008 District 56 Spring Conference,
May 16th and May 17th.

Don't miss the chance to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of District 56!
Conference Chair Jan Poscovsky is already busy planning the event.

Interested in helping? Contact Jan at jan@janstan.com for this great opportunity.



Division L Report

by Karen Pitts, ACB, CL

Leading the Way in Leadership and Learning

We at division L are striving hard to ensure the success of our clubs, our areas, our division and our district. All of our clubs have renewed their dues completing one of their DCP goals. Due to the diligence of the area governors, all of the clubs were encouraged to start early to be able to finish on time. A simple action that had great results.

Division L is growing. We are proud to announce the charter of 3 new clubs: **Real Talks, We Deliver and CO Stars**. All of these clubs are well on their way to being distinguished their first year. We also have several more in the making. Special thanks to the demo teams, spon-

sors and mentors who have helped these clubs get started.

These first few months have been extremely eventful. What with the new clubs, speech contests and club visits, we have all been busy with the activities. Our area contests are over, the division contest is upcoming (check the district site for details).

Nora League, ACS CL (past Area L40 governor) joined the Division L team recently to fill the Area L44 governor's position. We welcome her to our team.

Division L has much more great news, but we'll save it for next time.

Division O Report

by Patricia Cotton, ATMS, CL

Division O kicked off the year with a meeting of all the Area Governors and club officers to go over what was in it for us in 2007-2008. Our goal is President's Distinguished and Only Outstanding Opportunities in Division O.

We soon had one AG, Karen Blake, placed on bed rest due to a broken hip, who worked from home sending out emails and making phone calls to her clubs. Fellow AGs, David White and Michael Masek, jumped in without hesitation to make the club visits for Karen.

Linda Jones took over Area O-10 on August 30th and has completed all but one club visit as well as served as

Toastmaster for the joint O-10 and O-11 contest held September 25th.

Division O hosted two highly successful TLIs with 31 officers attending the first one and 62 present at the second!

My Assistant Division O Governor is Hettie Allsup who is proving to be invaluable to me as she completes tasks when I cannot.

I have a fabulous, hard working team of whom I am proud. Together, they make Division O look great!

Division O "Talks Up Toastmasters" During H.E.R.E.

by Patricia Cotton, ATMS, CL

Saturday, September 22nd, the mayor's office hosted the first ever Housing and Employment Resources Expo for People with Disabilities, or H.E.R.E., at the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Toastmasters from Division O clubs were given the opportunity to man a free booth at the expo as long as we volunteered to help guide and direct the visitors, which we gladly did.

The best part of this inaugural event was the number of people who stopped by our booth inquiring about Toast-

masters. We spoke well of our various Toastmasters experiences and received several leads on new members, including the top two organizers of the Expo! We highlighted the downtown clubs in Division O, but also provided information about other clubs in District 56.

Naturally, we have been invited back as the organizers were delighted to know that Toastmasters is a great tool for persons with disabilities to build better speaking skills while building self worth and self esteem.

We had a great time "Talking up Toastmasters!"

ACKNOWLEDGE RECENT MEMBER EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

If you would like to suggest an achievement for the list on the Members Area of the District 56 website, send an email to publicrelations@toastmasters-d56.org with a brief sentence including the achievement date, first and last name of the member, club number and very brief achievement phrase.

International Director Visits District 56

by *Charlie Pitts, DTM and Pamela McCown, DTM*

The Region III International Director, Charlotte Howard, DTM, visited District 56 on October 12th and 13th. During her visit, she met with members from three clubs.

On Friday morning, Charlotte visited Baker Hughes Speakeasy with Immediate Past District Governor Pamela McCown, DTM. The purpose of the visit was to recognize this club for their exemplary achievement of President's Distinguished club for three years in a row. In addition, Charlotte made it clear to Mark Avery, Director, Human Resources for Baker Hughes, that District 56 is looking to them to help expand the network of clubs and to serve as a model for other corporate clubs.

Robert Estes, club president Baker Hughes Speakeasy, talked about the meeting where the Baker Hughes President and COO, Mr. James Clark, attended and a write up of his visit was published in the world wide corporate newsletter. That article prompted several emails requesting Toastmasters information to start clubs in Oklahoma, Dubai, and other locations. Charlotte was especially excited about the prospect of going home to Oklahoma with a new club lead!

In the afternoon, Charlie Pitts, DTM, Lt. Governor Marketing, joined the International Director and Immediate Past District Governor for a visit

to the Hewitt & Associates building. The purpose of this visit was to present the features, values and benefits of Toastmasters to the new Hewitt management team.

After meeting with Tom Earle, Process Excellence Coordinator, and Colleen Waymel, Woodlands Location Leader, the Toastmasters team discovered that employee satisfaction was currently being discussed among management.

With support from the Hewitt Headliners Club President, Anne Sever, Charlotte did a great job selling the value of Toastmasters. Both Tom and Colleen expressed their appreciation for the role Toastmasters could play in increasing employee satisfaction. Consequently, the two executives agreed to attend a company board meeting to discuss ways that Hewitt management could better support Toastmasters and possibly encourage membership in the Hewitt Headliners Club.

The International Director's visit to District 56 continued on Saturday, December 13th, with an inspirational message for the District 56 Division and Area Governors during their District Executive Committee meeting.

Later that afternoon, Charlotte participated in the charter ceremony for the Financially Speaking Club. Charlotte presented the Club Charter



Yu-Chu Chang, president Financially Speaking, accepts the Club Charter letter from visiting International Director Charlotte Howard, DTM.

letter to club president Yu-Chu Chang and distributed the individual charter member certificates. Fifteen of the twenty charter members were in attendance at the meeting along with some new members and guests.

After special messages from Lt. Governor Education and Training, Eddie Merla, DTM, Immediate Past District Governor Pamela McCown, DTM, and a speech about the battle of Midway from club member John Lee, the International Director took a few pictures with the charter members before concluding her District visit.

HALL OF FAME - AUGUST 31ST to OCTOBER 17TH

COMPETENT COMMUNICATOR

Barrett, Katie Lynn
Becroft, Gary
Briers, Annette
Carter, Carol A.
Clark, Chuck
Collins, Jesse Alan
Couch, Steve E
DeRosa, Tim A.
Direnzo, Hillary Margaret
Galan, Carlos D.
Hallam, Jerry L.
Harrington, Jim
Hines, Marilyn
Klander, Gretta
Lehman, Richard
Mercier, Christopher J.
Moffitt, Jill
Nasrullah, Ruth
Rasolovoahangy, Roseline
Reiner, Steven N.
Rugh, John A.
Smith, Mark F. (2)
Stenvall, Harry C.
Stevener, Brad

MORE COMPETENT COMMUNICATORS

Stephens, Elizabeth
Thurston, Timothy R
Turegano, Fernando
Van Patten, Sandra L.

ADVANCED COMMUNICATOR
BRONZE
Beck, Brian J.
Cowden, Carole S.
Hawkins, John A
Smith, Mark F.
Williams, Michael Dwayne
Willis, Kimaka Nicole

ADVANCED COMMUNICATOR SILVER

Smith, Mark F.

ADVANCED COMMUNICATOR
GOLD
Moffitt, John R.
Smith, Mark F.

OLD COMPETENT LEADER

Hayes, Stephanie Lynn
Olinger, Caroline
Turner, Patrick Ryan

COMPETENT LEADER

Fonseca, Patricia Helen
Gunderson, Carol A.
Jurek, Kenneth J.
Smith, Mark F. (5)

ADVANCED LEADER
BRONZE
Bhadra, Sunanda
League, Nora
Romeo, Aundrae Michael
Smith, Donald Scott
Yagi, Michele M.

ADVANCED LEADER SILVER

Dixon, Susan V.
Hebert, Rosalind
Merla, Eddie
Moffitt, Jill
Mueller, Ronald
Patel, Amish B.

DISTINGUISHED TOASTMASTER

Merla, Eddie
Patel, Amish B.

The information in this newsletter is for the sole use of Toastmasters members for Toastmasters business only. It is not to be used for solicitation or distribution of non-Toastmasters materials and information.



Tribute to Pamela McCown, DTM

Roast and Toast of the Immediate Past District Governor

by Jill Moffitt, DTM

Roasting & Toasting the Immediate Past District Governor is an annual tradition that began in District 56 in 2003. This tradition was started by Dining Out Toastmasters (DOT), one of the clubs that includes many district leaders. This year, the younger Clear Lake sister club, Spaced Out Toastmasters (SPOT), co-sponsored the event with a joint meeting on September 8th at Fudruckers on Kirkwood in Southwest Houston.

Having led very successful tribute programs in the past, I was honored when asked to serve as Roastmaster for this year's tribute to Immediate Past District Governor Pamela McCown, DTM.

The Roast & Toast followed the tradition of honoring the IPDG with tributes to her year as District Governor with a FLAG IT theme. However, the tribute also



John Martin explains one of Pamela's "multiple personalities" using a hat as he roasts the Immediate Past District Governor.

honored her time as "Dorothy" from Division O with her theme "There's No Place Like O." This was also one of those rare occasions where we heard a little bit about Pamela's childhood and a special dress she had.

This year's event was a showcase of 16 speakers contributing to a delightful evening.

Since there are always numerous advanced project requests out of the Special Occasions Manual, particularly the Roasts and Toasts, the speeches are short and peppy. However, this year there were many more requests for alternative full manual speeches than normal. These speakers didn't always heed the cues of our diligent timer, Peggie Pentecost, ACB. Only the Toastmaster and Timer fretted. All others were so entertained that the time seemed to go by quickly.

The only roasts for the evening included multi-topic chiding from Richard Ruchhoeft, DTM; an explanation of the multiple personalities of the IPDG by John Martin, DTM; and sisterhood memories from Paula Hooper, ACB. These were greatly appreciated for the entertaining balance required of an effective Tribute.

Also speaking were John Moffitt, DTM, ID; Max Rasquinha, DTM, PDG; Diane Niño, ACS, ALS; Mary Spain, DTM;



The charm bracelet presented to Pamela McCown, DTM, IPDG, during her Roast & Toast with all "tributes" attached.



Pamela takes her place of honor to make notes for her rebuttal.

Nancy Reingold, DTM; Cecelia Marlin, ATMB; Charlie Pitts, DTM; Mary George, CTM; Margaret Henck, DTM; Ola Joseph, DTM; Cynthia Wagner, ACG, CL; Allen Prescott, DTM, PDG; and Brenda Thorne, DTM.

As in all Roasts and Toasts, the honoree gets the last word. Pamela was feverishly writing responses as the speakers continued on.

She was showered with gifts and the piece d'resistance was the completed and packed charm bracelet that was presented to her with charms from those absent and present who offered a personalized charm choice that would bring back memories.

Not only did all of her top team and Division Governors provide unique charms, all of her Division Governors were in attendance to pay tribute. This turnout offered many warm "fuzzies," as Pamela glowed when giving a very pleasant rebuttal to all.

With over 60 Toastmasters and family members attending, this was an incredible tribute that will be remembered by Pamela and her team for a long, long time.

PROXIES EXPLAINED

During the District 56 Fall Round-Up, a meeting of the District Council will take place. The District Council consists of the President and VP Education from each Toastmasters Club in the District as well as the members of the District Executive Committee led by the District 56 Governor.

To have a voice during the business meeting, each club should send a representative to attend. The business meeting is open to all Toastmasters to attend at no charge; however, only those who are voting delegates may participate in the meeting. Only the District

Council members (or their proxy holders) bring votes as delegates of this group.

Each Toastmasters club gets two votes - one for the President and one for the VP Education. If either one of these club officers is unable to attend the business meeting, he or she may sign a proxy to allow another club member in good standing to attend in his or her place.

Only two club proxies may be carried by any Toastmaster and they MUST be a member of that club or clubs.

If a person is the President of more than one Toastmasters club, he or she may still carry only two votes and should try to proxy any

other votes off to other members of the clubs who will attend the council meeting.

If a person has the two proxies from two clubs (4 votes) and there is no one else at the Council meeting from those two clubs, he or she should bring in one vote from each club since the quorum is based on the number of clubs represented.

Members of the District Executive Committee may not proxy their vote to someone. They must attend the Council meeting in person or their vote will be lost.

Questions about proxies? Contact the credentials chairman, Pamela McCown, DTM, IPDG, at pamelamccown@hotmail.com.

PROXY FORMS FOR DISTRICT 56 BUSINESS MEETING

<p>Proxy District 56 Toastmasters Business Meeting</p>	<p>Proxy District 56 Toastmasters Business Meeting</p>
<p>November 10, 2007</p>	<p>November 10, 2007</p>
<p>I hereby authorize</p> <p>_____</p> <p>a member in good standing of</p> <p>Toastmasters Club Number _____</p> <p>Club Name: _____</p> <p>to cast my vote at the District 56 Toastmasters Business Meeting in Houston, Texas on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">November 10, 2007</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Signed by:</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Club President</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This proxy is for one vote only.</p> <p>You, as Club President, may designate, in writing, any other member of your club to vote in your place at the District 56 Toastmasters Business Meeting. Each club is entitled to two votes. One Toastmaster from your club may carry both proxies – yours and the one from the Club Vice President Education. District Officers entitled to one vote may cast a maximum of 3 votes. All other Toastmasters are limited to a maximum of 2 votes. Reproduction of this form is acceptable. The signature of the club officer may NOT be reproduced. The signature must be an original signature.</p> <p>A printed copy of an email from you designating a proxy is also permitted.</p>	<p>I hereby authorize</p> <p>_____</p> <p>a member in good standing of</p> <p>Toastmasters Club Number _____</p> <p>Club Name: _____</p> <p>to cast my vote at the District 56 Toastmasters Business Meeting in Houston, Texas on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">November 10, 2007</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Signed by:</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Club Vice President Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">This proxy is for one vote only.</p> <p>You, as Club Vice President Education, may designate, in writing, any other member of your club to vote in your place at the District 56 Toastmasters Business Meeting. Each club is entitled to two votes. One Toastmaster from your club may carry both proxies – yours and the one from the Club President. District Officers entitled to one vote may cast a maximum of 3 votes. All other Toastmasters are limited to a maximum of 2 votes. Reproduction of this form is acceptable. The signature of the club officer may NOT be reproduced. The signature must be an original signature.</p> <p>A printed copy of an email from you designating a proxy is also permitted.</p>

You may also visit the Document Center of the District 56 Website to download a copy of the 2007 Fall Conference Proxy forms.

FALL ROUND-UP NOVEMBER 10, 2007 THE E. B. CAPE CENTER

TOASTMASTERS REGISTRATION FORM

FIRST NAME _____ **LAST NAME** _____
Circle Designation(s) TM CTM CC CL ATM-B AC-B ATM-S AC-S ATM-G AC-G AL AL-B AL-S DTM Non-Toastmaster

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____ **PHONE** _____

EMAIL _____ **DISTRICT 56 HOME CLUB #** _____

My First Conference? YES NO Volunteer? YES NO

HAPPENIN'S

- Speech Shoot-outs
- Business Meetin'
- Chow
- Bookstor
- Teachin'

CONFERENCE FEES

- Full Conference \$49.00
- AM Session (includes lunch) \$30.00
- PM Session (includes dinner) \$30.00
- Business Meeting FREE

All registrations must include payment.
 Mail or give your registration to:
 Stephen Kane, ATMB, ALS
 13117 Point Drive Willis, TX 77318
 Phone: (832) 296-4977 stephen@frogland.com
 Make checks payable to District 56 Toastmasters

FOR INFORMATION

For more information contact the
 Conference Chairman
 Jessica Frost
 jessicat@metronational.com
 713-586-6267
 http://www.toastmasters-d56.org

RECOGNITION OF DEVELOPMENT ENRICHES OPPORTUNITIES!



DISTRICT 56 TOASTMASTERS FALL CONFERENCE

The District 56 Fall Conference is ridin' into town November 10th. So hop on your horse and join us at the E.B. Cape Center.

This Round-up is sure to be a yeehaw of a good time. It will feature professional level contestants as they duke it out in a Humorous Speech Contest and Table Topics Contest.

Join other Toastmaster cowpokes in spirited western activities that will surely get your heart a pumpin' and get your boots a scootin'!

Come enjoy the chow including the pastry and fruit breakfast bar, catered meals and dessert buffet!

Our line-up includes:

- Spirited activities fer first time cowboys and cowgirls!
- A keynote address by a seasoned cow boss that will surely knock your boots off!
- A Table Topics contest that will excite even the most seasoned cowpokes!
- Educational sessions presented by knowledgeable and talented speakers.
- A business meetin' fer the district.
- A Humorous Speech contest that is sure to have you hootin' and hollerin'!

Download a registration form from the Members Area of the District 56 website.

Register today as spaces are already limited!

DATE: November 10
TIME: 9:00 am - 8:00 pm
LOCATION: E.B. Cape Center
 4501 Leeland
 Houston, TX 77023

Fer more information or to hep' out, contact conference chairs:

Jessica Frost:
jessicaf@metronational.com (or)
 Carmen Melendez:
carmenmelendez@metronational.com

To register, contact Stephen Kane:
stephen@frogland.com

RUSTLE-UP CLUB BANNERS

Are you attending the Fall Round-up? If you are, be sure to rustle-up your club banner and banner stand to bring to the E.B. Cape Center on Saturday, November 10th.

Once you register and pick up your name badge, proceed to the "saloon" for some breakfast vittles and to set up your club banner.

Be sure the other cowpokes know your "ranch" is present!

CALLIN' ALL COWPOKES!

Time to come in from the trail and join the Fall Round-up by being a volunteer on Saturday, November 10th, at the E.B. Cape Center.

If you are registered to attend the conference and would like to spend a little time helping with registration, the bookstore, hospitality, or a contest, git in touch with the conference chairs:

Jessica Frost at
jessicaf@metronational.com or
 Carmen Melendez at
carmenmelendez@metronational.com.

A LA CARTE REGISTRATION



Will your chores keep you busy in the morning' of November 10th? Do you have a big square dance in the evenin'?

If you cain't make the full day at the Fall Round-up, you may register for either the A.M. or the P.M. portion of the day for just \$30.

A.M. REGISTRATION - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm \$30.00 per person

- Continental breakfast
- Opening ceremonies and keynote address
- Table Topics Contest
- Pick one of three Educational Sessions
- Lunch and Awards Ceremony

BUSINESS MEETING - 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm Free to Toastmasters

P.M. REGISTRATION - 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm \$30.00 per person

- Pick one of three Educational Sessions
- Pick one of another three Educational Sessions
- Dinner
- Humorous Speech Contest
- Dessert Round-up

Visit the Members Area of the District 56 website to download a copy of the Fall Round-up Registration Form, then send it with your payment to: Stephen Kane, District 56 Treasurer, 13117 Point Drive, Willis, TX 77318.

Make your check payable to: **District 56 Toastmasters**

REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS: NOVEMBER 5, 2007



Sara Pencil Blumenfeld conducts a Youth Leadership session for home-schooled students in the Clear Lake area.

Is fear of public speaking an anxiety restricted to adults? Many high school students say “No.”

That’s why Sara Pencil Blumenfeld and members of the Clear lake Area Chamber of Commerce Toastmasters Club have spent two hours a week for eight weeks coaching home-schooled students 13-17 years old through Toastmasters International’s Youth Leadership Program.

Blumenfeld, who is currently serving as the Area P-3 Governor, said the program supplements school and other established youth projects.



Youth Leadership participant Michael Gundling practices his public-speaking skills under the leadership of Sara Pencil Blumenfeld, Area P-3 Governor.

Youth Leadership for Home-Schooled Students

by Alice Adams

“The Youth Leadership Program emphasizes specialized skills as well as individual needs for young people who want to learn speaking and leadership skills that they will be able to use for the rest of their lives,” she said.

She recently led a group of home-schooled students who wanted to hone their ability to speak before groups. They attended the eight-week course, so they could increase their confidence when speaking in front of others.

“Meetings are run similar to Toastmasters Club meetings,” Blumenfeld said, “and we incorporate some of the aspects you’ll find at any Toastmasters meeting. For example, our students give timed speeches and are evaluated by other members. We also have a timekeeper and an evaluator. We do table topics at some meetings, in which the students discuss specific topics and are evaluated on what they contribute to the conversation.”

As a result of the 16-hour course, students learn to overcome nervousness when asked to speak before an audience, and they learn to organize and present their ideas logically and convincingly. They also learn to listen to the ideas of others and offer constructive advice to help others improve their speaking and leadership skills. Before the end of the course, they also have the opportunity to participate in, and even lead, group discussions and meetings.

Each student works from a Toastmasters handbook. Officers are selected and the remaining class members are assigned other duties on a rotation basis as with adult Toastmasters clubs.

Parliamentary procedure is used to allow orderly progress, adherence to the agenda and to foster knowledge of the use of the procedure.

Lecturing is minimal and discussion is held during each session. Participants deliver short impromptu and prepared speeches.

In every meeting, participants learn to apply the principle of listening, thinking and speaking.

Blumenfeld hopes more groups of young people — from schools, sports teams, Boy and Girl Scouts and other youth groups — will want to undertake the Toastmasters program.

“This program is available throughout the greater Houston area,” she said. “Any group of 14-20 students, attending eighth through 12th grades, who will commit to the eight-week program, may qualify. Each group will also need a Toastmasters Club to sponsor the program.”

“Typically, the Toastmasters Club that sponsors each Youth Leadership Program pays for the materials and provides leadership,” Blumenfeld said. “In some cases, if the sponsoring club is able only to provide a leader, the cost per student is \$3-4 to cover the cost of the workbook.”

Once students are 18, they qualify as members of Toastmasters International.

According to Eddie Merla, Lt. Governor Education and Training for District 56, any active Toastmasters may serve as Youth Leadership mentors by participating in a Youth Leadership Program. “As you inspire the young people with the power of communication, they are sure to inspire you with their youth and enthusiasm,” he said.

Participating in a Youth Leadership Program also gives a Toastmaster credit toward the Advanced Communicator Gold and Distinguished Toastmasters awards.

For more information, contact Eddie Merla, DTM, Lt. Governor Education and Training at lget@toastmasters-d56.org.

Alice Adams is a Reflections Writer for the Houston Chronicle.

Images courtesy of the Houston Chronicle.

The Old Competent Leader

by Jan Poscovsky, ACB, ALB

Does this title elicit visions of an elderly Toastmaster standing at the front of a room leading a meeting? If it does, then you'll be surprised to learn that it is the title of an educational award whose time will soon come to an end.

Before the new Competent Leader Manual was introduced, the leadership track for the Distinguished Toastmaster Award was quite different. People earned a Competent Leader award that is no longer available.

As a transition to the new leadership track, World Headquarters instituted another leadership award called the OCL which is the basis for this article. Anyone wishing to earn this award only has until June 30, 2008 to do so.

How does this impact you? If you currently hold a Competent Toastmaster (CTM) or Competent Communicator (CC) and have served, or are serving as a club officer, you may be able to achieve an OCL in a matter of a few hours. It's really quite simple. But first, some background:

Effective July 1, 2006, Toastmasters International launched a new track for Leadership Educational Awards. They instituted a first level award which required the completion of over 20 projects in a newly designed manual. Unlike the previous first level award, receipt of this first level leadership designation does not require the candidate to have achieved their CTM or CC designation. This change makes it possible for new Toastmasters to achieve their first level leadership award before earning any Communication Track awards.

What has caused some confusion is that although this new first level award is called The Competent Leader or CL, it has nothing in common with the OCL. In fact, if there are any similarities between the old leadership track and the new one, it is that the OCL Award has similar requirements to the new Advanced Leader Bronze (ALB) award with two serious exceptions.

1. You must have a current CL (via completion of the Competent Leader Manual) in order to qualify for the ALB.
2. You can only enter the ALB on-line, but MUST apply for an OCL manually using form 1209A.

What this all boils down to is the fact that ANY Toastmaster may achieve the OCL award if he or she:

- currently holds a CTM or CC award,
- has ever served as a TRAINED club officer for 6 months (this would include current officers whose terms expire 01-01-08),
- has worked on their club's DCP or successful club plan during the term of their club office

Many Toastmasters are under the false assumption that only those members, who hold the old CTM designation, are eligible to achieve the OCL award. This is not true. Any Toastmaster who holds a CTM or CC, or obtains their CC before June 30, 2008 and meets the above criteria, can obtain an OCL.

Having the CTM or CC designation is a prerequisite, but not part of the OCL award. That means that the achievement of only one CTM or CC award is all that is necessary to obtain multiple OCL's. As long as the candidate completes 2 more "canned" speeches from either the Successful Club Series and/or the Leadership Excellence Series for every different time they have served as a club officer under the criteria above, an additional OCL may be earned. The same "canned" speeches may be repeated, provided that they are delivered additional times.

As an example, a Toastmaster, who has one CTM or CC award and has served as a club officer for six months at 2 different times, would be eligible to obtain 2 unique OCL awards if he or she achieves the following all within his or her leadership term:

- attended 2 training sessions on different dates.
- participated in a club success plan or distinguished club plan 2 different times.
- delivered 4 speeches from the Successful Club Series and/or Leadership Excellence Series.

Why would someone want to earn 2 OCLs? One reason would be that each award would provide a Distinguished Club Point (DCP) for the Toastmasters' Club, perhaps helping his or her club achieve Distinguished status.

A Toastmaster, who is a member of multiple clubs, could provide a DCP point for each OCL earned to each club in which he or she is a member. The only restriction is that a member may provide only one OCL per club, per year for club DCP credit. Additionally, the OCL is a short cut to earning your Advanced Leader Silver (ALS) designation as no workbook is involved. Sadly, many members may not even realize that they have already met the entire criterion for the OCL award.



Another interesting point is that a Toastmaster, who has completed the new leadership track manual and received their CL designation, may still apply for the OCL award provided that they meet the 3 requirements listed above and complete the 2 additional required speeches.

As a side note, the next educational award on the leadership track after the OCL is the Advanced Leader Silver (ALS); for a new CL it's the Advanced Leader Bronze (ALB).

There is one other very important requirement. The OCL award application may not be submitted on-line. Form number 1209A must be completed and signed by the Vice President Education of the club receiving credit, and submitted either by regular mail, fax or as a scanned attachment to an email addressed to educationawards@toastmasters.org. **Since non-electronic submissions take extra time to process, it is imperative that your application be sent in weeks, if not months before the June 30, 2008 deadline.**

So to review, if you have your CTM or CC educational designation, have served as a club officer during any six month period (even if it was 40 years ago) but prior to January 1, 2008, planned for your club's success during that term and participated in a district sponsored training, while you were an officer, you may achieve your OCL. If you haven't already completed 2 speeches from either the Successful Club Series or the Leadership Excellence Series, arrange to do so right away and you will have met the requirements for earning the OCL.

And in case you hadn't noticed, being an "Old" Toastmaster is not one of the requirements for the OCL award!

Jan Poscovsky is currently serving as the Division M Governor.

Trailblazers

Accomplishments of Toastmasters in District 56



In the year I have been a Toastmaster, my communication style has been profoundly impacted in two ways: I am more authentic and assertive.

Be authentic. Allow the world to see you as you are - without fear of being judged. Feel comfortable around anyone, from a CEO to your teenage

Growing through Authentic and Assertive Communication

by Hallie Van Manen

stepdaughter. Display receptive and attentive body language. Authenticity puts other people at ease, and allows them to open up to you more freely. Be yourself. Don't try too hard. Ultimately, people and opportunities seek you out, because of your calm and confident demeanor.

Being assertive means getting your point across in a direct fashion. Instead of being manipulative or being a doormat, be confident in what you have to say. Control your inner dialogue and re-direct it in a way that supports you, instead of sabotaging you. Tell yourself, "I will be successful in this interaction" or "I have

something to contribute here." Compliment your assertive communication style by using appropriate eye contact, and be comfortable with pauses in conversation – don't rush to fill in the lulls.

For me, being authentic and assertive has benefited all my relationships. I smile more. I look forward to the new adventure that every day holds. How has Toastmasters helped you grow as a person?

Hallie Van Manen is VP Education, Baker Hughes Speakeasy Toastmasters, #4911



Limping into my first meeting, I felt not only scared, but beat up. MS was getting the best of me -- why was I doing this?

There, I found others who also felt beat up from failed relationships, grave illnesses, lost jobs and home-

The Land of Misfit Toastmasters

by John Mohler, Jr.

sickness. We worked and laughed well together. We became friends, and I learned they asked themselves the same question -- why am I doing this?

Remember the Land of Misfit Toys from the Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer claymation? Rudolph with his freakish nose finds himself in a lost land of toys that are unfortunately 'slightly off.' Not good enough for Christmas festivities, they cling to each other instead. And, as Rudolph eventually learns that his freakishness is in fact his talent I believe that his friends, the Misfit Toys, eventually become well-loved as unique stocking stuffers as well.

So, it is that my club of eccentrics now excels. We are challenging ourselves in new jobs and projects. Improving bad health. Directing plays. Publishing books. Purchasing homes. Engaging more with the community. Winning competitions. Starting new clubs.

To us, Toastmasters isn't just a program for speaking and leadership, it's a conduit to heal and rebuild ourselves into better and stronger individuals.

John Mohler, Jr., is VP Public Relations, Huntsville Noon Toasters, #1012269.

GET IN THE MOOD.....For Toastmasters!

Join the Team for the Region III Conference on June 13-14, 2008 in Houston, Texas. Help the Region III Conference Committee create a weekend that will make every Toastmaster say, "WOW!"

Contact Host District Conference Chair, Pamela McCown, DTM, at pamelamccown@hotmail.com to volunteer.

The Region III Conference comes to District 56 once every nine years! Take advantage of early registration to ensure your attendance at this unique event.

Visit the Members Area of the District 56 website at www.toastmasters-d56.org to download a copy of the conference registration form. Submit your payment early by check or credit card. Details are printed on the registration form.



Dress for Success Members Assist Career Gear Houston

by Hettie Allsup, ATMS, CL

Members of the newly chartered Dress for Success Toastmasters Club put their skills to work for the community by collecting men's clothing suitable for job interviews.

Michael Williams, a club member and employee of Career Gear Houston, organized this clothing drive among his fellow Toastmasters. Together, they collected boots, suits, shirts, shoes, regular slacks and really stylish ties to

prepare men for job interviews and to clothe them for success at the interview table.

This advanced club, that works to prepare its members for success, meets every third Wednesday of the month at the Bob Lanier Building, 611 Walker in downtown Houston. Meetings take place in the 20th floor Conference Room from Noon to 1 pm. Parking is validated when you park in the Tranquility Park



or Theatre District Parking with entrance on either side of Rusk Street.

Hettie Allsup is a charter member of Dress for Success and serves as the club Secretary and Treasurer.

Just Jump In

by Oscar Peña

Two articles in the July 2007 TOASTMASTER magazine, "It's Never Too Late to Join Toastmasters" and "Looking for Speech Ideas? Look at Your Life!" inspired me.

A first time visit to a Toastmasters meeting tells me you want to improve the way you communicate. If you wanted entertainment, you could have gone to a movie, or saved money and just browsed at Barnes and Noble, reading books and magazines, drinking a tall latte...well okay you just went from free to expensive.

Do you dread standing in front of co-workers to make a presentation? Do you sit quietly, keeping opinions and answers to yourself, so that no one notices you? Do your notes fan the first two rows of your audience because you shake? That's what I used to do.

When you attended that first Toastmasters meeting you cleared a big hurdle. Momentum is on your side. Stand up and participate in table topics. Hey! You like it. Yes you do.

Now you've attended three sessions, or is it eight or ten? It's not too late to join and use



your life story as a springboard to make that "ice breaker" speech. Come on, just jump in.

Oscar Peña is a member of the JSC Toastmasters Club, #3116.

Let's Go To Jail

by Shirley Gilbuena, DTM

We need more volunteers and I'm asking all of you to consider going to jail with me.

I am a volunteer with barely a handful of other Toastmasters who are helping in the prison system. We are forming/monitoring/coaching Gavel Clubs within the prison system helping to prepare offenders for re-entry into the "free world."

There has been a request from two more prisons in the District 56 area for Toastmasters clubs. We have leaders – Max Rasquinha and Jim Arnold, but we cannot commit to starting any more clubs without willing dependable volunteers.

"Why are volunteers important to corrections?" Volunteers play a significant role in the Criminal Justice setting. Because of their first hand experience and/or devoted interest in their field, volunteers have the ability to gain the attention and respect of offenders.

Volunteers are key players in programs designed for rehabilitation and re-entry of offenders into the community. The transition process seeks to produce offenders who are law-abiding citizens with the strengths and skills to successfully manage the problems they will face daily. Volunteers are the role models for this journey and are an invaluable addition to the Agency's limited resources.

What are the keys to success for a volunteer? Practice effective listening to give full attention to the offender and then be able to determine when feedback is appropriate.

- a. Provide time
- b. Eager to help
- c. Maintain a degree of separateness (This promotes healthy role boundaries.)
- d. Positive effects: Encourage the offender to share feelings and become more open, foster self-direction, independence, autonomy, personal growth and self-development.



By supporting the Gavel Clubs with our time and Toastmasters skills, we provide a valuable service to our community while gaining emotional rewards. There is also a sense of pride as you witness the transformation of the inmates from their ice-breaker to their tenth speech.

Think about how you can share your Toastmasters experiences and "Let's go to jail" together.

Shirley Gilbuena is a member of Fluor, Articulators and Dining Out Toastmasters Clubs.

50 YEARS IN HOUSTON & SOUTHEAST TEXAS!

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Submit ideas and/or articles to: Diane Niño, ACS/ALS
sisternino@yahoo.com or 713-560-2633

The Mission of the District

The Mission of the District is to enhance the performance and extend the networks of clubs, thereby offering greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from the Toastmasters educational program by:

- Focusing on the critical success factors as specified by the district educational goals and membership goals.
- Insuring that each club effectively fulfills its responsibilities to its members.
- Providing effective training and leadership development opportunities for club and district officers.

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Mark Your Calendar

NOVEMBER

Elections of Club Officers

Submit Officers Lists to Toastmasters International

November 10th - Fall Round-up!

District 56 Conference

Table Topics and Humorous Speech Contests

DECEMBER

December 1st - TLI/Club Officer Training

DEC Meeting

Recognition Of Development Enriches Opportunities!

District 56 Toastmasters - FORUM 56

P.O. Box 751983

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