

District Newsletter



T O A S T M A S T E R S I N T E R N A T I O N A L ®

Proposals for the Annual Business Meeting in August 2005

Clubs will vote on three important proposals to amend the Bylaws of Toastmasters International at the 2005 Annual Business Meeting on August 26, 2005. Following are descriptions of the proposals.

If approved, the changes will become effective October 1, 2005:

Proposal A: Dues Increase

Membership dues will increase from \$36 a year to \$54 a year (U.S.), payable \$27 per person each dues renewal period.

Subject to approval of this proposal, the Board made changes to policies as follows:

- ▶ Increase new member fee from \$16 to \$20
- ▶ Increase club reinstatement fee from \$108 to \$162
- ▶ Increase new club charter fee from \$95 to \$125
- ▶ Increase dues for undistricted clubs from \$27 to \$42, payable \$21 per person each dues renewal period.

The amount of funds provided to districts will increase from \$9 per member annually to \$13.50 annually (from \$4.50 each dues renewal period to \$6.75). The district's portion for prorated membership dues will increase from \$.75 per month per member to \$1.12 per month per member.

When discussing the need for a dues increase, the Board of Directors carefully considered a number of factors and studied several sets of financial projections. The Board analyzed five different possibilities for the amount of the increase and, based on multiple factors, the Board agreed that this amount is appropriate.

Toastmasters International hasn't had a dues increase since 1992. Using the consumer price index as a measure of inflation, something that cost U.S. \$36 in 1992 would typically cost more than \$50. If we used the CPI annually, dues would have increased a dollar each year. Because the organization did not increase dues accordingly, it has actually forgone large sums each year since 1992.

Revising the bylaws is a time consuming and expensive process. Our history shows it takes at least three years for a change in procedure to filter down to clubs. Changing dues frequently is also confusing to members. The Board believes that by increasing dues now to this amount (\$4.50 per month), the organization would be able to sustain its activities for a number of years before needing to consider another increase.

We ask that you support the dues increase. The Toastmasters program continues to be the best value in the self-development, self-improvement field. You have the organization's commitment to improve and enhance the program so that members will continue to learn, grow and achieve.

You will find additional information on the dues increase on the home page of the TI Web site. A special e-mail box has been set up for dues increase questions. The e-mail box is: duesincrease@toastmasters.org.

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The Proxies Are Coming...

The official Toastmasters International proxy certificates will be mailed to club presidents of record on March 31. Be on the look-out for this all important mailing. The forms will have instructions on how to complete the proxies to ensure that club's votes are heard. **Please be on the look-out for these important documents!**

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

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

Renewal Notice Alert... Pay Your Dues Online!

The Dues Renewal Invoice for the April 1, 2005, through September 30, 2005, period is being mailed to club president's of record the last week in February. The invoice contains a list of members in your club. Check the box to the left of the name of each renewing member and fill out the payment information on the bottom of the invoice.

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

To expedite the processing of renewals, we strongly suggest that you take advantage of paying your renewals online.

Renewals are due April 1, 2005. In order to receive on-time credit in the Distinguished District Program, your renewal must be received at WHQ by 5 p.m. Pacific Time, April 10.

Here are some helpful hints:

- ▶ Submit your dues by one method only. Please do not send duplicates. For example, if you submit your dues online, DO NOT mail a copy. Or, if you fax in your renewal, please don't mail another copy to WHQ.
- ▶ If your club is paying by check, you will need to submit your renewal by mail. The renewal is not counted as being here until the invoice and check are at WHQ. Faxing a copy of the dues renewal invoice and a copy of the check does not fulfill the submission requirements. In fact, duplication slows down the processing tremendously.
- ▶ Do not e-mail your renewal to WHQ. It is not secure to submit credit card information via e-mail. Online, FAX and mail submissions are secure.
- ▶ Do not submit your renewal in pieces, i.e., DO NOT submit your dues renewal invoice/list of members and payment separately. Include your complete payment information and list together. With more than 10,000 submissions, it is difficult to match up submissions when payments and lists are submitted separately. It also delays the processing of the renewal.
- ▶ Only submit dues for members who have paid your club. Dues are non-transferable and non-refundable, so you want to be sure the club has the money in hand before payment is sent to WHQ.
- ▶ Keep a copy of the invoice for your records.
- ▶ Clubs should submit all payments at one time, so we encourage you to collect and submit dues for all renewing members. However, dues for late-paying members can be submitted to WHQ after the initial submission.
- ▶ The fastest and easiest way to pay dues for member who paid their dues after the initial payment has been submitted to WHQ is to pay online.
 - ◆ Go to the secure Club Business section of our Web site.
 - ◆ After logging in, select Pay Membership Dues. Once your club has paid its initial dues, only those members who are still listed as unpaid will appear.
 - ◆ Check the box to the left of the name of the member(s) who are paying late.
 - ◆ Enter the credit card information and then complete the transaction.
- ▶ There is no limit to the number of times you can enter this screen to pay dues for late-paying members.

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

Check Your DCP Report

How close is your club to achieving its goals in the Distinguished Club Program?

You can review your club's progress on the Toastmasters International Web site, www.toastmasters.org. Updates are posted around the 11th of each month. Pay careful attention to club officer training statistics for the December-February training period. Contact your district officers if you believe there are errors in the information on the report. Districts *must* submit corrections to WHQ by May 31.

Please share this report with the entire club. If your club has misplaced its Distinguished Club Program/Club Success Plan booklet (Catalog No. 1111), you can find it on the Web site as well.

Toronto: A World Within a City!

Don't miss the 74th Annual Toastmasters International Convention, August 24-27, at The Westin Harbour Castle in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

- ▶ Enjoy a varied educational program presented in four tracks covering: *Communication, Skill Building, Leadership, and Club and District Success*. Mix, match and explore any of these tracks tailored to satisfy your educational interests.
- ▶ Attend the Golden Gavel Luncheon where this year's recipient is well-known speaker and author Marcus Buckingham.
- ▶ Witness the excitement of the World Championship of Public Speaking on Saturday, August 27.

Beginning in April, you may visit our Web site at www.toastmasters.org, and register online for the International Convention. Or mail your convention registration form to WHQ. Registration forms can be found in the April and May issues of *The Toastmaster* magazine. Either way, you're guaranteed an experience of a lifetime in Toronto!

Doing Things Right

Submitting fees accurately the first time will save time and prevent frustration. As a handy reference, Toastmasters' Board of Directors has established the following two policies to ensure that charter fees or dues renewals submitted for a club actually represent payment from that club:

- ▶ If WHQ receives documentation misrepresenting a club's dues renewal report, charter fees or membership applications, that club will be suspended from the district, division, area and club performance results for the remainder of the Toastmasters program year.
- ▶ Payment of charter fees or per capita dues made from any district funds (including, but not limited to area, division or district checking accounts) will be returned. Similarly, charter fees or dues payments will be returned if they are from the personal funds of a district officer who is not a president, vice president or treasurer of the club for which payment is made.

Wanted: Photos of New District Governors

Attention District Governors-elect of 2005-06: Please send a **professional-quality** photograph of yourself to the Publications Department at WHQ.

- ▶ If you send a photograph, it needs to be at least 3 x 5 inches.
- ▶ If you send a picture via e-mail, it must be scanned at a resolution of no less than 300 dpi and the image should also be scanned at **no less** than 3 x 5 inches. E-mail your pictures to kmurphy@toastmasters.org.

Your photo will be included in the "Your District Governors" article that will appear in the September issue of *The Toastmaster* magazine and in the district governor brochure distributed at the International Convention. **Photos must be received at WHQ no later than June 10.**

Top 5 District Newsletter Contest

At the convention in Reno, Nevada, Toastmasters International honored five districts with the Top 5 District Newsletter award. And we're doing it again in Toronto!

These newsletters should help achieve goals related to the district's mission, educational completions, officer training, membership growth and club building. Entries are judged for content, readability, layout and presentation and should be composed primarily of original material of educational value.

Send three issues of your newsletter—published between July 1, 2004, and April 25—with a cover letter to WHQ—Publications Department by the April 25, 2005, deadline.

A complete list of rules can be obtained by visiting the TI Web site.

New Club

Scoreboard

Sixty-one clubs were chartered in February, compared with 53 in 2004, and 63 in 2003. Our year-to-date total of new clubs is 373.

The leaders in Club Extension are:

District	# of Clubs
79	17
60, 51	13
55	12

Corporate Leads

Thinking of starting a corporate club? Here are some companies that already have:

REI, Kent, WA; Yolles Partnership Inc., Toronto, ON, Canada; State Farm Ins., Livonia, WY; Campbells Soup, Paris, TX; Integrated Fund Services Inc., Cincinnati, OH; Bayer Health Care, East Walpole, MA; and Applied Biosystems, Foster City, CA.

Turn Complaints into Kudos

Do your district's members complain that the best speakers aren't selected as the winners in speech contests? Do you wish your contest judges were more knowledgeable?

You can help your district's contests be the best possible by conducting Toastmasters International's Speech Contest Judges Training Program. The program offers practical tips for selecting a winner and addresses judging pitfalls that can stifle objectivity.

Conduct the program during district conferences and officer training to help your judges be the best possible.

Turn those contest complaints into kudos. To order your program visit the Toastmasters International Web site at www.toastmasters.org and click on "Online store."

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Proposal B: Electronic Technology

This proposal is presented in conjunction with changes in corporate law that allow electronic transmission to be used in conducting corporate business. This law went into effect January 1, 2005. This proposal allows Toastmasters International to take advantage of the new law and use email and other modern technologies to give official notices and take official action at the Board of Directors level.

Proposal C: Disciplinary Proceedings

This proposal protects the organization's disciplinary proceedings already contained in policy from legal challenge. To be accepted as fair and reasonable without question, the California nonprofit corporate law, under which all Toastmasters clubs no matter where domiciled operate, requires that the procedures either be spelled out either in the bylaws or be provided to every club and delegates at large each year. Providing this information annually would be administratively burdensome. The most efficient way to comply with the law is to describe the procedures in the bylaws. These amendments make no significant changes to the organization's disciplinary procedures, which have been in place since 1993.

The Board of Directors asks for your support by voting "FOR" all three proposals. Additional information on all three proposals will be sent with club proxies on March 31, 2005.

District Checklist/Calendar

MARCH

Distinguished Division and Distinguished Area Program Deadline

- ❑ Follow up on Area Visits and Area Report of Club Visit forms with area governors. Area governors must send forms to the district governor no later than April 30. Forms can be submitted online via the TI Web site.

Distinguished Club Program Deadline

- ❑ Submit Club Officer Training Reports to WHQ. Club Officer Training Reports for the December - February period must be post-marked by March 31 for clubs to receive Distinguished Club Program credit. Forms can be submitted online via the TI Web site.

Financial Deadline

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

Membership and Club Growth

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

Mission-Focused Meetings

District Executive Committee Meeting (including ongoing District officer training). Meeting should focus upon midyear adjustments made and action now needed to achieve goals in the Distinguished District, Division, Area and Club Programs. The following also must occur at the meeting (unless acted upon at a previous District Executive Committee Meeting):

- ❑ Report of the Audit Committee and approval of the Midyear Audit
- ❑ Approval of recommendations for the alignment of clubs within divisions and areas
- ❑ Presentation of the most recent Treasurer's Report

Nominations and Elections

- ❑ District Nominating Committee Report must be sent to members of the District Council no later than two weeks in advance of Annual District Council Meeting.
- ❑ Proxies for Regional Conferences and the International Convention mailed to clubs by March 31.

Administrative/Speech Contests

- ❑ Club, area and division speech contests should be conducted or completed.

APRIL

Distinguished Division and Area Programs Deadline

- ❑ Area governors must send forms to the district governor no later than April 30. Forms can be submitted online via the TI Web site.

Distinguished Club Program Deadline

- ❑ Dues renewals due at WHQ by April 10. Clubs receive Distinguished Club Program credit for submissions received on or before the deadline.

Financial Deadline

- ❑ Treasurer's report for July 1 - February 28 period must be submitted to the district governor and Lt. governors by April 15.

Membership and Club Growth

- ❑ Follow up on overdue dues renewals.
- ❑ Promote Toastmasters International's Annual Membership Program.

Mission-Focused Meetings

- ❑ Finalize District Conference. District Conference must be held after March 15 but before June 1.

Administrative/Speech Contests

- ❑ Finalize preparations for International Speech Contest and other speech contest (if any) to be held at the District Conference.
- ❑ Proxies: Begin follow-up with clubs. If clubs will not have a delegate attending Regional Conference and/or International Convention, ensure clubs send proxies to district governor.

MAY

Distinguished District Program

- ❑ URGENT! Review April District Performance Reports, compare progress to goals, and determine actions needed to ensure district achieves its Distinguished District Program goals by year end.
- ❑ URGENT! Begin a final push to achieve Distinguished District Program goals for membership, net club growth, CTMs and ATMs by June 30.

Distinguished Division and Area Program Deadlines

- ❑ April dues renewals are due May 15 for credit in the Distinguished Area Program. Complete April dues renewals must be received at WHQ no later than 5 p.m., May 15.
- ❑ District governor must submit Area Report of Club Visit forms to WHQ by May 31. Forms must be postmarked on or before May 31 and received at WHQ by June 10 in order to receive credit in the Distinguished Area Program. Forms can be submitted online via the TI Web site.

District Officer Training

- ❑ Division Governor Kits, Area Governor Kits, Club Officer Kits for incoming division/area governors mailed to Lt. Governor Education and Training.

Distinguished Club Program Deadlines

- ❑ All clubs must elect officers during the first meeting in May. WHQ must receive officer lists by 5 p.m. June 30 for clubs to receive credit in next year's Distinguished Club Program.

Financial Deadlines

- ❑ Treasurer's report for July 1 - March 31 period is due at WHQ on or before May 15.
- ❑ Treasurer's report for July 1 - March 31 period must be submitted to the district governor and Lt. governors by May 15.