

The District 57 Dispatch

There are many exciting things happening this summer, but do you know what is most exciting? Member accomplishments and club events!

We're thrilled to offer you the chance to be featured on the front page of our newsletter! We invite you to write a "Member Speaks" article, sharing your journey: why you joined Toastmasters, what you've accomplished since joining, and your goals for the coming year. This is a fantastic opportunity to inspire and connect with fellow members.

Don't miss out—submit your article soon! When can we expect your inspiring story? Our deadline is always the 15th. Please send to: news@d57tm.org.

We look forward to running your story!

Meet Program Quality Director, Linda Patten

The Dispatch is pleased to feature an interview with new Program Quality Director Linda Patten. Linda's background is well suited to fulfilling the vision of a thriving Toastmasters district on all levels. Here's what she had to say.

Q: Congratulations on your new role as Program Quality Director. Given your previous roles in district leadership, what experience is most important to leverage for your new role?

A: I believe that my ability to organize training and teams will be the most important skills I will use this year as PQD. I have many years in the training and development field and can definitely leverage that with the initiatives I plan for this year.



Q: Tell us a bit about yourself, both professionally and personally.

A: As an accomplished leader, successful entrepreneur, and gifted communicator, I have trained and mentored thousands of men and women to step into their natural leadership roles, build their teams for success, and achieve their dreams. I specialize in helping professionals move from a background in corporate, military, or government to shift from command to empowered leadership as an entrepreneur.

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A New DTM is Minted, by Venkat Raman, DTM

Praveena Raman, a member of City Speech Toastmasters, started the year off with a bang. On July 2, barely a day into the New Year, she was awarded her Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) credentials by Toastmasters International!

This well-deserved recognition might not have come to pass but for a fateful day in May 2019. Leading up to that day I had recommended Toastmasters to Praveena on multiple occasions, but the answer was always the same: "My commute is too long, I am not confident I can make it to the meeting on time," etc. As luck would have it, Praveena took up a job in the City in April 2019. This would mean that she commuted by BART and I was her ride to and from the BART station. On that fateful day in May, I had a brainwave. On picking her up in the evening, I told Praveena, "You are not going home. You are coming with me to City Speech Toastmasters meeting!" One intro to the club, and she was hooked. We must have done something right! Praveena started her membership on June 1, 2019.



The formal welcome email from Toastmasters asked a poignant question: *Are you ready to start your exciting journey?* Boy, was she ready! Once in, Praveena was all in. She signed up for her first path—Effective Coaching—and got cranking with her speeches. It's safe to say she never let up. In the five years since, she has completed four paths (Effective Coaching, Strategic Relationships, Engaging Humor, and Presentation Mastery) and is now working on her fifth path, Leadership Development.

Praveena's speaking style is so distinctive and captivating that she has been invited as a speaker at other clubs, the D57 Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI), and by organizations outside Toastmasters.

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BREAKING NEWS District 57

End of Year Celebration & Installation




Ed Cullen, DTM
Immediate Past
District Director

**Saturday, Aug 3, 2024
5PM-9PM PT**

Sally Philbin, DTM
2024-2025
District Director

BRENDAN MURPHY, DTM, MASTER OF CEREMONIES
ROSE KIRLAND, DTM, RA: KEYNOTE SPEAKER
MICHAEL NOTARO, DTM, PIP: INSTALLATION OFFICER

Together We Can! Soar!

Back Forty Bar-B-Que
Buffet with meat, vegi, & gluten free options
check out d57tm.org/calendar to register



It's Party Time!

It's not too late to enjoy an old-fashioned End of Year Party! Just a few days away, Saturday, August 3.

Those of us attending in-person will be enjoying the cuisine of the Back Forty Texas BBQ, complete with vegetarian and gluten-free options. Not only will we be eating in style, but we will also be celebrating the wonderful successes we had this past year under the leadership of Immediate Past District Director, Ed Cullen and his dedicated Executive Team that included Division Directors and Area Directors, to just identify a few of the legions of District members who didn't keep it to themselves.

We will be celebrating the 3 levels of Triple Crowns and Outstanding Toastmaster Awards that were earned by our members this past year. Yes, there's more: Past international President, our own Michael Notaro will be installing the incoming team of leaders as we kick off the new year in style. We will be celebrating 100 years of Toastmasters. To that end dress up in your fashionable 1920's attire. For those joining us virtually, be sure to dress up as well. You will want to stand up and be counted! Stand up and be recognized as your names are called in recognition of your achievements this past year. Check out the D57 calendar to register for this, sure to be amazing, event.

A Note for Division Directors

Why Division Council Meetings?

That old adage that 'It takes a village' is much more than an overused cliché. We are all about teamwork here in Toastmasters. What is the first step to take when building a team? It's building a network. What is one way to build a network in Toastmasters when you are the Division Director?...You hold Division Council meetings that are welcoming, inclusive, worthwhile...I could go on. And you hold these network building opportunities once every month. Why? Besides all of the obvious reasons, so that you can all work together to solve challenges, so that you can learn from each other, so that...wait for it...when it's time to put on your Division Contest, you already have a network of friends that will help put on an awesome contest (hybrid, remember?). To get the very most you can out of being a Division Director, Council Meetings are key.

Remember, *Together We Can! Soar!*

Sally Philbin, DTM
District Director

A Note to Area Directors

Why Club Visits?

Club visits are the foundational activity for bolstering our clubs and planning for Area Contests. By visiting your clubs often and early you have the opportunity to provide guidance that is in time to help your clubs thrive.

Now is the time to encourage your clubs to hold Open Houses and advertise to draw in new members. When you do this, you are meeting new people and expanding your network.

As you get to know the members of your clubs they are getting to know you. When you start looking for volunteers to organize and support your Area Contest you will already have the relationships necessary to expand your team.

As long as we are on the topic of networking, don't forget the importance of monthly Area Council Meetings for all of the same reasons and more.

Remember; *Together We Can! Soar!*

A New DTM is Minted (continued)

Praveena's foray into Toastmasters didn't stop at making speeches. Her first path concluded with a level 5 High Performance Leadership (HPL) project. It was time to look beyond the club. For this project Praveena teamed up with Gary McKinsey, as a co-chair, kicking off the D57 Speakers Bureau, a thriving institution today.

At the club level, her leadership journey was also gathering steam. She started as the Sergeant-at-Arms and has been a club officer since, holding the positions of VP Pathways (VPP) and VP Education (VPE). It was during her tenure as VPE that City Speech, for the first time ever, racked up enough DCP goals by December 31 to qualify for the President's Distinguished status. By year end City Speech had an enviable breadth in the level completions on the DCP dashboard. The key component of this success was Praveena instituting a Personal Development Plan and five-year goals for each club member. Inspired by her success, the subsequent VPEs have been continuing this tradition.

Praveena shared this plan in the VPE training that she presented at D57 Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI). Her presentation has been fondly referred to as the *VPE Bible*. Praveena is also the creator of the *VPEs and VPPs Forever* WhatsApp Chat group, an instant hit with heavy engagement enabling an exchange of ideas among past and present VPEs and VPPs.

It was a natural extension of her leadership journey that Praveena took on area directorship last year. During her tenure, she sponsored and mentored a new government club and nudged her area to become distinguished!

A consummate mentor, Praveena has completed her Pathways Mentor Program and has been mentoring Toastmasters both within and outside the club. Many of her proteges have taken up leadership roles in the club and in the district. Last year she mentored two Assistant Area Directors who have blossomed to become Area Directors this year. She is also proud of being a mentor of Jon Wolheim, the D57 International Speech Contest winner.

Praveena is an avid proponent of Assistant leadership positions as a paradigm for double benefit: assisting with the duties of the position today as well as getting the skills needed to take over the role the following year. It does wonders for succession planning!

Praveena took the Toastmasters training to her day job in a pharmaceutical company and created a highly successful fireside chat program that routinely drew over 100 attendees in each session. She was instrumental in recruiting one of her work colleagues as a D57 member.

Praveena's dedication to the Toastmasters program and her engagement in it is evidenced by her amassing 5 Triple Crowns and 4 OATMs (Outstanding Achievement Toastmaster) in the last 5 years. Not a mean feat! In fact, her infectious optimism and her planning regimen has resulted in elevated levels of accomplishment by City Speech members as a group: 3 OATMs, 7 Elite Triple Crowns, and 4 Triple Crowns in 2023-2024; and 5 OATMs and 10 Triple Crowns (equivalent to Elite Triple Crowns of last year) in 2022-2023!

Congratulations, Praveena! We are looking to see greater achievements by you in the coming years.

Speak, Lead Grow: Transform Your Toastmasters Journey with the D57 Podcast, by Hans Thoma, YouTube Channel Manager



Our exciting new Podcast, "Speak, Lead & Grow" has launched (see link below), and we want you to meet the dynamic duo that makes it all happen.

Say hello to D' Marie Shy-King, DTM, Podcast Chair and Co-host of Speak, Lead & Grow. D' Marie shares center stage with Alex Balish, Technical Manager and Co-Host.

Our viewers are in for an exciting season as we ask them to join us and they gain valuable insights, updates, and be truly inspired as they enhance communication skills and develop dynamic leadership qualities.

Our Podcast Chair, D' Marie Shy-King, brings her extensive experience and people skills as a Distinguished Toastmaster and seasoned speaker through her advocacy against Domestic Violence. Watch her as she demonstrates a

unique ability to connect with each guest, allowing them to share their most heartfelt personal qualities during each episode.

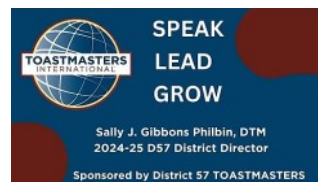
Alex Balish, Technical Manager and Co-Host, ensures that each episode runs flawlessly with state-of-the-art audio and seamless editing, allowing for brilliant content by the guests.

The first two episodes are now live on YouTube, with the inaugural episode featuring Sally Philbin, DTM, and District 57's District Director. Sally expertly laid out an ambitious and fun-filled upcoming year for the District.

The second episode features an engaging conversation with Leesa Thompson, DTM, and Public Relations Manager for District 57. Leesa was animated and passionate as she shared her journey and insights on effective communication.

The next two episodes will allow us to focus on the other members of the Trio. We want you, the viewer, to get to know the Trio up close and personal.

We invite you to subscribe to our YouTube channel so that you don't miss a single episode. As the title of our Podcast says, let's "Speak, Lead & Grow" together, one episode at a time!



[Podcasts](#)
[Youtube.com](#)

A Toastmaster's Journey, by Leesa Thompson, DTM. PRM

In the realm of words and guiding light,
Pathways shine, a beacon bright.
A journey crafted just for you,
With skills to learn and dreams to pursue.

A world of paths, eleven strong,
Where speech and leadership belong.
Online access, swift and clear,
Your growth is near, no need to fear.

From project plans to leading well,
In every task, new strengths will swell.
At your own pace, your time, your way,
Balance life and learn each day.

Interactive, engaging too,
With quizzes, vids, and tasks to do.
Recognition spurs you on,
With each new level, you are drawn.

Real-world skills, both broad and deep,
Into your life, these treasures seep.
A community, both kind and wise,
With feedback, mentors, hearts that rise.

In District 57's vibrant sphere,
Membership grows year by year.
Through Public Relations, clubs excel,
Sharing stories that we tell.

With integrity as our steadfast guide,
Respect and service side by side,
Excellence in all we strive to do,
Our values strong, our purpose true.

So step into the Pathways glow,
Let your abilities flourish and grow.
In every speech, in every lead,
You'll find the skills and strength you need.

With every member that we gain,
Our mission thrives, our goals sustain.
Together in this journey vast,
We build a future that will last.

On Volunteering in Toastmasters: A Promise to Do More and Be More, by Jeff Young, CGD

*Ready for the next level of
Toastmasters? We want to hear from you.*

One of the -other- core values of being a Toastmaster is volunteer spirit. We don't get paid for being a Toastmaster; just the opposite, we pay money into Toastmasters for various reasons. For some folks, it's a lot of money to be a member of Toastmasters, even if it breaks down to \$10 a month. For some folks, it's a lot of time to be spending every week to travel to a meeting and then take on a role. Or speak. So there's the preparation time in there too.

Now layer in those of us who volunteer (or in some cases, get voluntold) to do more - to step up and take on a role outside the club.

The higher the position, the more that is asked of you. I started as a Club President, and then an Area Director, and then a Division Director, and now I'm in the Trio.

There's lots and lots of paperwork, meetings, trainings, and that's before you get to the actual doing the work part. It can feel like a second job sometimes. Because it is. Not because of the work, but because of the responsibility. Being Club Growth Director includes coming up with a marketing plan, for example.

That was not the fun part. That was the prep work to get to the fun part. The laying out of a roadmap to move forward.

I signed up to be a Toastmaster to learn to be a better speaker. I chose -much- later to embrace the part about being a better leader.

But a lot of it is perspective and how much time you think you can commit.

Some of us overpromise and try very hard not to underdeliver. Because we think we can do everything and say yes to anyone who asks. Some of us could do more but are afraid of disappointing people. Because we worry about unexpected delays and disasters. Both of these people are also me.

I'm not the sort of person who craves -- or needs -- power, let alone prestige. Club Growth Director to me is not about me - it's about you.

It's about helping you make your clubs better, and it's about helping other folks make your clubs in the first place. It's about making the road easier rather than harder, like building roads and bridges to help get you across the difficult terrain of Pathways.



But I can't be everywhere and everyplace. I'm not a superhero; I'm just like a lot of you, with limited time and limited energy and yet a willingness to do more than just do my own thing. I picked this job because I think I can make a difference. And so can you.

Do you feel you've learned enough speaking skills and are comfortable passing those skills along? Then you're a teacher.

Do you, like me, enjoy mentoring other Toastmasters as they ask the same questions you remember asking when you first started? Then you're a leader.

Do you know the secret of reaching out to strangers and convincing them to become a Toastmaster? Then you're a rockstar.

And I want to know who you are.

Because the other superpower of Toastmasters is networking. It's knowing someone who knows someone who can do something at a certain time and place, with the confidence to talk in front of strangers again, to teach ably and well, to inspire and encourage.... and to assist yourself when the call comes.

And even if you're not available right now? There's always next year. I took two years off after being an Area Director to compete in contests. I take 'no' for an answer, but I'd rather hear 'not yet' because then I know to check back with you when you're ready.

One of the problems that gets laid in front of every Trio member is that we have to build a team. And it's an exercise in asking people we know and trust to do things that we haven't set out for them yet to do. Same as us. It's the start of a journey, the finding of adventuring gear, figuring out what to bring and what to leave behind for next time... the possibilities are dizzying and often competing. Which gets done first? It's like saying, 'which mountain do we need to climb first?'

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Upcoming Training Opportunities for Club Officers, by Maureen Filler

The importance of training for the seven Toastmaster officer roles, along with the Vice President of Pathways, cannot be overstated. This training is pivotal for developing the excellence of our clubs, which is our primary goal for this year. Properly trained officers lead to stronger, more vibrant clubs that can provide the best experience for all members.

Our recent Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI) on June 22nd was a phenomenal success. However, if you were unable to attend, don't worry! You still have three more opportunities to receive the necessary training to excel in your officer role.

Why Officer Training Matters

Each officer role carries specific responsibilities that are essential to the smooth functioning of the club. From the President's leadership to the Treasurer's financial management, every role plays a part in creating a supportive environment where members can achieve their personal and professional goals.

Upcoming Training Sessions— Don't miss these opportunities to develop your skills as a club leader. Here are the dates and times for the upcoming training sessions:

****August 19, 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM PT****

****August 29, 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM PT****

Each session is designed to provide you with the knowledge and tools you need to succeed in your role. Training is not just a requirement; it's an investment in your personal growth and the success of your club.

Benefits of Training— By attending officer training, you will:

- **Gain Role-Specific Knowledge:** Understand your responsibilities and how to effectively fulfill your role.
- **Learn Best Practices:** Discover proven strategies and techniques from experienced leaders that can help your club succeed.
- **Enhance Leadership Skills:** Develop your ability to lead, manage, and inspire club members.
- **Improve Communication:** Build stronger communication skills, essential for both your officer role and personal growth.
- **Network with Peers:** Connect with other club officers, share experiences, and learn from each other's successes and challenges.
- **Achieve Club Goals:** Help your club meet and exceed Distinguished Club Program (DCP) goals, contributing to its overall success.
- **Support Member Development:** Equip yourself with the tools to better support and guide club members on their Toastmasters journey.

Your participation will not only benefit you but also contribute significantly to the success and vibrancy of your club. Together, we can create an environment where every member has the opportunity to thrive.

- Register using this link: <https://mailchi.mp/0e6598f3bd08/d57-makeup-training>
- For more details, please contact: maureenfiller@att.net

Invest in your leadership journey today and help your club reach new heights of excellence!

Early Dues Renewal Incentive

Deadline Extended -- Early Dues Renewal Incentive -- Earn up to \$50 in Club Incentives for renewing before August 15th!

The Early Renewal Award is back! Get your club to renew at least 25% of its members before August 15th and earn Incentive awards for your club.

100% renewal: \$50
75% renewal: \$35
50% renewal: \$25
25% renewal: \$15

This offer covers standard \$60 member renewals for the October 2024-March 2025 dues period paid before August 15th. Proof of renewals must be turned in by midnight, August 15th on the [Incentives Tracker \(webwidgets.io\)](https://www.webwidgets.io/incentives-tracker)

Send questions to jeffrey@d57tm.org



Meet Linda Patten (continued)

Q: What is your vision for program quality initiatives?

A: I have responsibility for training the Area and Division Directors as well as providing training to the club leaders and club members. I want to bring training to the clubs with a team of world-class speakers and trainers. I am also responsible for the District International Speech Contest, which will be held in person in May 2025 at the Annual Conference. This is new for us since COVID and we are having to shift and determine how we are going to do this and yet encourage contestants who might not be able to be in person. This will take creativity and vision to make happen.

The District 57 Conference is also my responsibility. As someone who created and executed conferences throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico and Europe, I know how to plan, organize, and execute amazing conferences with exceptional training sessions, interactive technical sessions, presentation of awards and recognition to mention just a few. I want this to be a showcase for our members.

Q: What opportunities can be provided for members of all kinds (whether in leadership roles or not) to become involved in trainings, programs, or other opportunities that advance program quality?

A: I am looking for innovative and creative Toastmasters who would like to be a part of creating a memorable conference, of creating amazing speeches for the various contests from Club through District and who want to grow in their speaking expertise by bringing outstanding speeches and educational sessions to the clubs and to District-wide trainings. My dream is to have a team of Toastmasters who want to give back to the District by providing their speaking and training expertise to the members.

Q: What is your message to the average Toastmaster who may be wondering how they can make a difference in District 57?

A: In this Toastmaster year 2024-2025, step up and volunteer for a role -- be it large or small every role is important to the success of our District; step out and be recognized for your speaking and leadership skills and experience both inside and outside of your club and be ALL you can be as you are more than just a member of a club – YOU ARE A TOASTMASTER!



On Volunteering in Toastmasters, by Jeff Young , CGD (continued)

Sometimes it feels like it would have been easier to stay home.

But the District is about getting out there and saying yes, I'll speak. Yes, I can do training. Yes, I'm ready to make a difference for someone new.

Are you the kind of person who can get a club up to Distinguished with style and grace? There are over 30 clubs out there that could use a Club Coach. It's really just adopting a club with a smaller membership and helping them find and keep new members, and to help everyone stay on their Paths.

Feel like being the inspiration for a lot of Toastmasters just getting started? There is something on the order of 10 brand new clubs out there that will need a mentor or two. It's just a set of brand new Toastmasters (20 of them) that need someone to inspire and teach them. That's six months of attending a second meeting out of the week, and maybe some folks will need some extra advice along the way.

There are going to be some Toastmasters who want that 'small class' experience. Speechcraft is a set of lessons, and it's the stuff you already know. Typically six weeks, one day a week.

Are you one of those people who see young people are the future? The Youth Leadership Program is open for instructors.

Or maybe you don't feel you're ready to commit that level of time with that level of leadership. I have some interesting creative projects available for you too.

Oh, and then there's my signature call to action for you -- I'm looking to help 80 clubs run their Open Houses this year. You don't even have to leave your club to do it. My plan is to make it easier and fun so more clubs will be willing to do it. One more than none is what I'm asking for. Change up your meeting for a single day.

All it takes is a little extra time, planning, and saying 'yes'.

I did. Will you?

Drop me a line at jeffrev@d57tm.org.

Jeff Young,
Club Growth Director

Enhance Your Toastmasters Club Promotion with Canva

by Katie Pitts

Looking for a way to easily promote your club and special events? Try Canva!

Canva offers a range of benefits for creating promotional materials for a Toastmasters club. Its user-friendly interface and extensive library of templates, graphics, and fonts make it accessible to everyone, regardless of design experience. The drag-and-drop functionality simplifies the design process, saving time and effort. Customization options allow you to align materials with your club's branding, ensuring a consistent and polished look. This is particularly useful for creating flyers, social media posts, and event invitations that attract new members and engage the community effectively. Canva's collaborative features also enable multiple club members to contribute to and refine designs, fostering teamwork and creativity within the club.



Ready to get started with Canva? Here are a few tips to help you:

- **Create a free Canva account.** Head over to canva.com and create a free account for your club using a club email address. You can upgrade later to a Canva for Nonprofits account (canva.com/canva-for-nonprofits/) to gain all the Pro features at no cost.
- **Watch Tutorial Videos:** Check out the tutorial video “A Beginners Guide to Create Toastmasters Brand-Compliant Design Using Canva” (youtu.be/G73J4hIiK5I) on the “Tech for Toastmasters” YouTube page ([@TechforToastmasters](https://youtube.com/@TechforToastmasters)) by DTM Cajetan Barretto.
- **Access the Toastmaster Brand Portal:** Keep the Toastmaster Brand Portal (toastmasters.org/resources/brand-portal) open in a browser tab to access the Brand Manual and Branded Images for brand-compliant designs.
- **Use Canva Templates:** If starting from scratch feels intimidating, use Toastmasters Canva Templates (toastmasterscdn.azureedge.net/medias/files/brand-materials/canvatemplates.pdf) and customize them to fit your needs.

If you're already familiar with Canva or want to gain more experience, consider joining the District 57 Flyer Team. As a member of the Flyer Team, you'll create promotions for district events and receive guidance from experienced Canva users. To get involved or ask questions, reach out to me at flvers@d57tm.org.

By leveraging Canva's features, you can easily create attractive and effective promotional materials for your Toastmasters club.

Club Newsletter Contest

by Leesa Thompson, DTM, PRM

The Club Newsletter Contest aims to recognize and reward excellence in club newsletter creation. Like a speech contest, this competition is judged by a panel of anonymous judges based on a set of uniform criteria.

Awards will be given for the top three newsletters and for the most improved newsletter.

Awards: - 1st Place: \$100 - 2nd Place: \$75 - 3rd Place: \$50 - Most Improved: \$25

** Participants must submit their newsletters by the deadline to be eligible for judging. Newsletters will be evaluated on content quality, design, readability, and overall impact.

Timeline: -

Activity Start: August 1, 2024 -

Activity End: May 31, 2025 -

Submit Deadline: May 31, 2025

Open to all club officers and district admins.

Don't miss this opportunity to showcase your club's creativity and communication skills! Send your club newsletters to news@D57TM.org.

