

# The District 57 Dispatch

Greetings! You know what’s upon us, because we’ve reminded you about it so much. Everybody say, “Contest Season!” As contests are the highlight of many members’ Toastmasters experience, please ensure that your club either hosts a club contest (if more than one member is interested in competing), or that your club designates competitors for the international speech contest and evaluation contest. They’re coming up fast—Area speech contests are already being scheduled! Also, if you’re a club officer and you haven’t already received winter training, make sure you attend officer makeup training and show up for your club!

Lee Vaughan, Editor

## FEBRUARY, 2025

Saturday, February 1st: Heart 2 Heart Toastmasters Speech Contests, 4:00PM - 6:00 PM

Monday, February 3rd: Contest Training, Part 4, 6:00 - 8:00PM

Tuesday February 4th: Cre-Art Club Open House, 6:00 - 7:30PM

Saturday, February 8th: DECM, 9:00AM - 12:00PM

Tuesday, February 11th: Area A-35 Speech Contests, 7:00 - 9:00PM

Saturday, February 22nd: Area E-23 Speech and Evaluation Contests, 4:00PM - 6:00PM

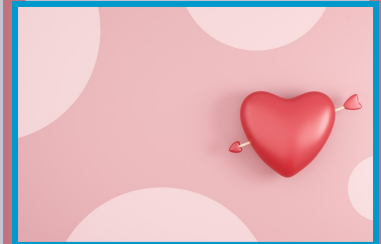
Sunday, February 23rd: Areas F-19, F-28, F-34 Combined Area Speech Contest, 1:30PM - 5:00PM

Monday, February 24th: Division A/B Club Officer Makeup Training, 6:30 - 8:30PM

Friday, February 28th: [EBMUD] Area Speech and Evaluation Contests, 6:30 - 9:00PM

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# **TIME TRAVELERS WANTED: EXPLORE YOUR GENEALOGY AND SHARE YOUR FAMILY'S AMAZING STORIES!**

## **BY SALLY PHILBIN, DISTRICT DIRECTOR**

Have you ever wondered about the lives of those who came before you? Could there be someone famous—or infamous—in your family tree? Whether you're a seasoned genealogist or just starting your journey into the past, uncovering your family's history is a captivating way to connect with your roots and bring the past to life.

### The What and the How.

Together, we'll explore:

- Famous (or Infamous) Connections: Unbury the family secrets...hero or villain? We all have them.
- Stories of Triumph and Resilience: Were your relatives pioneers, immigrants, or survivors of challenging times?
- Cultural Traditions and Secrets: From long-lost recipes to forgotten rituals, dive into the unique customs and tales that shaped your heritage.

We'll also explore engaging themes to add depth and excitement to your family research:

- Love Through the Ages: Discover romance stories in your family, from whirlwind courtships to tales of enduring love.
- Letters and Heirlooms: Uncover treasures like old letters, photos, or objects that tell stories no one knew.
- Hometown Heroes: Were your ancestors pivotal figures in their local communities? Let's celebrate them!
- The Mystery Files: Did anyone vanish, change their name, or have a family secret that begs to be unraveled?

### The What and the How:

Research your lineage and uncover fascinating figures who shaped your family's legacy.

Start with family stories and legends.

Learn the ins and outs of researching old census records, church records and more!

How to read between the lines to uncover new clues to your family's heritage.

Learn from each other through the stories shared at our weekly meetings.

We'll be meeting virtually from 6-7:30 PM PT on Thursday nights. Help us charter this incredible club and become a time traveler with us! This is your chance to dive into the past, uncover hidden stories, and share them with a group of enthusiastic explorers.



Come prepared to laugh, learn, and maybe even shed a tear as we weave together the threads of our family histories. Whether you dream of tracing your lineage back centuries or just want to celebrate the vibrant lives of those who came just before, this is your opportunity to connect with the past—and with each other.

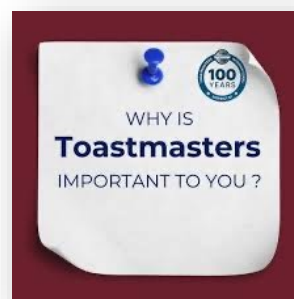
For more information, contact Sally Philbin at [philbintm@gmail.com].

Ready to start your adventure? Join us at our upcoming planning meeting, Thursday, January 30, starting at 6:00pm PT. To repeat, contact Sally Philbin at [philbintm@gmail.com] to register.

Together We Can! Uncover our Roots! By uncovering the stories that make us who we are!

## **ATTENTION ALL TOASTMASTERS**

It is only halfway through the 2024-2025 Toastmasters year and it is already time to start planning for next year. Time to step up to your full potential by not only finishing up your goals for this year, but also laying the groundwork for next year. Check out the new District Website at [D57TM.org](https://D57TM.org) for all of the details.



# HAPPY NEW YEAR 2025 BY LINDA PATTEN, PROGRAM QUALITY DIRECTOR



Hope that your holiday season was merry and bright and that you are looking forward to a very prosperous new year.

District 57 had a good first half that ended with almost 100% of our Area visits complete and with 91 club officers trained. As we move into the next six months, here are some important events coming up.

1. Club Officer Trainings – make-up training for those that missed the TLI in December
  2. Contest Season - Now is the time to schedule club contests and arrange for in-person Area and Division Contests. Get them on the calendar early.
  3. Incentives – let's not forget those Open Houses and other incentives that can be earned. Then the key is – how do we spend those District Bucks?
  4. Elections – as we move into Spring, there are key elections coming up.
    - a. Division Directors, now would be a good time to find your replacement for 2025-2026. Which of your Area Directors are ready to step up into this next leadership role? Having them shadow you during these months would be great mentoring.
    - b. Area Directors, like the Division Directors, now would be a good time to find your replacement for 2025-2026. It is also the time to schedule your Area visits for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. I don't know about you, but our last round was a nail biter for us at the District and I am sure for you in the Areas too. Let's have them all done by April 30<sup>th</sup>. While doing these reports, scout out ideal candidates for Area Director – not just your Area but others as well.
    - c. Conference – As you know, the conference as well as the District Contests and Business Meeting will be held May 16 and 17. We have selected a location and will reveal it to you soon. We also have one of our keynote speakers in place. My team is working on those breakout session speakers. If you are interested, contact me or Ashley Harkness on my team. Those of you who signed up for Table of Content to give a longer speech, this might be a great opportunity for you. More to come on this—watch for advertisements too!!
- That's all for now from the Program Quality Team – stay tuned for more to come.

## NEW CLUB IN DISTRICT 57!



**CRE-ART  
TOASTMASTERS CLUB**  
SUPPORT CREATE INSPIRE

*A vibrant community for creatives and artists to support each other, ignite creativity, and inspire the world.*

*Join us to unleash your artistic potential and be a beacon of creativity!*

**VIRTUAL MEETING TIME**  
Weekly Tuesday  
6:00 to 7:00pm PT

Register at  
[d57tm.org/creativity](https://d57tm.org/creativity) or  
Scan QR code:



What does Cre-Art mean? "Cre-Art" is a blend of "Creative" and "Art," symbolizing a space where creativity and artistic expression come together. It's a fitting name for a Toastmasters club that aims to foster communication and leadership skills through creative and artistic approaches. The name reflects the club's mission to inspire and empower members to express themselves creatively while honing their public speaking and leadership abilities. See the info above to inquire about attending!

## HELP SAVE DISTRICT 57 AND GET ON BOARD WITH STARTING NEW CLUBS

Only clubs can save clubs. The Trio+ (Sally, Linda, Jeff, Leesa, and Winnie) have provided all the tools necessary to build membership in our clubs through advertising, delivering excellent club meeting trainings and making sure our District Bucks get paid out. It's up to club officers to take it from here.

The next step is to START NEW CLUBS! Every and any member can start a new club. There is training posted on our website on how to do that. WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU? Credit toward your DTM (Distinguished Toastmaster award) and OTMA (Outstanding Toastmaster Award). You will help re-create a vibrant District filled with new high energy Toastmasters ready to meet their goals through building their communication and leadership skills by volunteering to help on the many committees needed to provide a quality experience for all our members. (How's that for a long sentence?!)

YOU NEED YOU TO SAVE TOASTMASTERS FOR YOU! JOIN THE TEAM. Contact me: [sally@d57tm.org](mailto:sally@d57tm.org).

# UNCHARTER[ED] WATERS AND YOU

## BY JEFF YOUNG, CLUB GROWTH DIRECTOR

Six months into being Club Growth Director, looking back, I thought I'd have at least two or three clubs chartered by now. But the reality is that we've just gotten our first one. (Congratulations to the Cre-Art Team for chartering the first club of the 2024-2025 season.) So, we're a tad behind.

There are four other clubs in the works, but there are also three clubs that we've lost in the past few months, and several more that are below the waterline -- they need to be at eight members by April or some of them will vanish completely.

In some cases, those clubs can be saved. A couple of members added from any source puts them back on an even footing. If you'd like to help a struggling club boost their numbers for a short period of time, let me know and I'll connect you.

However, I've been told that it's mainly up to the clubs to save themselves, and my primary role for the back half of the year is to focus on starting new clubs.

To date, I've been making corporate phone calls and sending emails, and coming up mostly empty.

That's where you come in - because I believe we can do both things - save existing clubs and charter new ones.

District 57 values its members, and its membership has largely embraced the ability to attend any meeting anywhere since the pandemic. I'm not saying that you all prefer it, but you can do it.

So I'd like to introduce an idea and a plan that I got from attending mid-year training in freezing Dallas while being crowded into an elevator with other Toastmasters: crowdsourcing some community clubs. Here's how it's going to work:

1) Look for a survey link in the upcoming Digest. Each week's survey contains the latest ideas for Specialty clubs.

If you like one or more ideas in the list and want to be informed as to when the first Kickoff meeting will be, vote for them. We will call a Kickoff meeting when we hit critical mass of interest.

2) If you don't see an idea you like on the list for the week, write it in with the Other choice. Each week we'll be rotating in fresh ideas and rotating out ones that nobody's interested in. So, vote every week. (It's like the Baseball Hall of Fame.) Get creative! (Okay, that idea's already been taken.)



3) Talk about the ideas you found interesting or fun to your club. Perhaps there's a shared interest there you didn't know about. If there are enough of you in the same club that like an idea, you and your club can run the Kickoff meeting, with the understanding that the plan is to start a new club. Think of it like the Adopt the Highway project, only for Specialty clubs. It's a different way of getting guests in your door. Of course, if more than one club wants to host the same idea, you'll have to work out a sharing agreement. (This is the equivalent of the club-to-be figuring out a time and place to meet regularly.)

4) The Kickoff Crowdsourcing period runs until March 30th. Any clubs that charter by then will get some special perks from the District.

In other words, we're Going Big and Going Forth. We've seen what the Cre-Art Team has done and we're going to be following their model. Look for an article from their sponsor and mentor in this Dispatch for a roadmap to charter a club.

Q: If I help charter a Specialty Club, do I have to pay dues again?

A: Yes. It's a second/dual membership, and it's a flat \$60 for existing Toastmasters members regardless of what month it is, but the next dues period (October) is prorated. There's also a one-time charter fee of \$125, which can be split between the charter members.

Q: Who will the officers of the Specialty Club be?

A: Decide among the people who are attending the meetings, like any other club chartering. You'll need an Officer list to charter. (But hey, when you attend Officer training, you get credit for both clubs.)

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## **UNCHARTER[ED] TERRITORIES AND YOU, CONTINUED**

Q: Will you provide speakers for our Specialty Clubs?

A: Maybe. Depends on the topic, but if you have enough interest, someone's bound to know someone; the survey asks if you are an expert or have connections. Don't forget about the Table of Content list, too! If you need it, we can also provide mentors.

Q: How many members do I need to charter?

A: Twenty, minimum, but you're getting a curated guest list handed to you. More qualifications are based on whether you want to be an Advanced club or not. We'll start scheduling Kickoff meetings with probably around 8-12 people.

Q: How long do we have to charter?

A: It took Cre-Art three months, but ideally, we'd like to charter as many clubs as possible this year. I'll be running the campaign at least through March, as stated above.

Q: I have an idea for a club. How do I tell you about it?

A: Answer the survey! I'm looking for cool ideas and awesome people to make those happen. I'll include new ideas in the weekly Digest and change the survey every week, with a running tally of how many people voted for an idea.

Q: Does this campaign have a name?

A: I'm calling it the March Membership Mobilization Madness, or 4M for short.

Q: Can we "steal" members from the charter group for our own club?

A: That would be piracy. But if the club doesn't look like it's going to charter after a few months, then you may politely invite the survivors back to potentially join your club if you need extra members. (And you are welcome to rebrand/repurpose your club with the theme if nobody else has been hosting it.)

The best way to regrow the District is to sail the uncharted ideas together.

I stand ready to assist you as we raise anchor as a District.

-Jeff "We're going to need a bigger boat." Young Club Growth Director, District 57

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO MARY BUSTAMANTE, OUR TALK UP TOASTMASTERS WINNER!**

This initiative is a fantastic way to showcase why our members love Toastmasters and how it has enriched their personal and professional lives. We encourage you to share your experiences with friends and family—better yet, bring them as guests to our meetings!

Stay tuned for more inspiring entries in future issues, and remember, it's never too late to share your own story. Thanks to all who participated!

### **Talk Up Toastmasters, by Mary Bustamante**

Life is all about timing! In 2012, my son was starting college, and I was no longer, "Drama Mom," "Carpool Mom," and "Volunteer for Everything Mom." I needed a new activity. I decided that each month I would try something new with my newfound free time.

I had heard about Toastmasters but honestly didn't think it was for me. I always thought it was for people in business. I am not a businesswoman so I really wasn't interested.

One morning all the stars aligned. I opened the local newspaper and there was an article with a picture of three people who had won a local Toastmasters' speech contest. The most important part of that article was the list of speech titles. Wait a minute, these are very interesting titles that would appeal to everyone! I discovered that Toastmasters had a creative side. Two days later I went to my first Toastmasters meeting and joined.

I gave my ice breaker the following month. It was all about having a common first name. When you are one of four first graders named Mary, you have to do something to make people notice you. I wanted to shine.

Being a member of North Bay Speech Masters and Mare Island Toastmasters in Vallejo, has given me the opportunity to do just that - shine. Public Speaking has become my hobby. I discovered I love to write. I have been in 15 speech contests. My speech, "The Empty Nest," was on Toastmasters TV, which was an amazing opportunity. You can watch it on YouTube.

While I joined Toastmasters because I love to talk, I also developed other skills. Being someone who talks a lot, I wasn't a great listener. Toastmasters has really improved my listening skills.

Toastmasters has also given me opportunities to hone my leadership skills by being Area C8 director in 2023. I have also learned a lot by being a club officer.

Toastmasters is more than just a bunch of clubs. Toastmasters has become my family. I have made lifelong friends in Toastmasters. I get excited when I see them out in the real world.

If you asked me in 2012, what I was going to do now that my kids were both in college, I would have said, "take piano lessons and work in the garden more." Although those are still things I love to do, my favorite hobby is public speaking. My favorite place to do that hobby is at Toastmasters!

## HOW PERSUASIVE ARE YOU? BY LEESA THOMPSON, PR MANAGER

What does it mean to be persuasive? Is it about crafting the perfect argument? Winning people over to your way of thinking? Or is it something deeper?

Through my experiences as a Toastmaster, I've learned that persuasion is not about convincing someone to do something for *me*—it's about showing them *what's in it for them*. It's about helping others see opportunities, understanding their value, and finding their motivation to take action.

Over the past six months, as Public Relations Manager (PRM), I've been on a journey of learning what true persuasion means. This journey has been filled with challenges, breakthroughs, and moments of profound inspiration—one of which came from a person who completely changed my perspective on connection and persuasion.

Today, I'll share three lessons my path has taught me about persuasion, and I hope they inspire you to reflect on your own experiences as a leader, communicator, and Toastmaster.

### Lesson 1: Build a Vision and Focus on the “Why”

When I became PRM, one of my biggest challenges was building a cohesive and motivated PR team. The team includes talented individuals working on vital projects like the revamped MeetUp platform, the District Dispatch newsletter, the weekly digest, the newly revised website, District and club calendars, graphics design, and our Speak Lead Grow podcast.

But despite their talent and dedication, it has been clear that the team needs a unifying vision. Without a clear “why,” it is hard to see how each piece of the puzzle fits into the larger picture.

To inspire them, I focus on identifying the purpose of their work. Why is the MeetUp platform important? It helps clubs attract new members. Why does the weekly digest matter? It connects members to opportunities to grow. Each role isn't just a task—it is an integral part of building connections and adding value to our Toastmasters community.

I also turn the question back to them: “What's in it for you?” By focusing on their goals and what they want to gain from this experience, I am able to align their motivations with our team's vision. This shift—from “Here's what I need” to “Here's how this helps you”—makes all the difference.

This experience continues to teach me that persuasion starts with showing others the bigger picture and connecting their efforts to a meaningful “why.” When people see the value in what they're doing and how it aligns with their own goals, they don't just work for you—they work with you.

### Lesson 2: Relationships Matter More Than Persuasion

If there's one moment that truly shaped my understanding of persuasion, it happened during the Toastmasters International Convention.



I had reluctantly purchased a virtual pass to attend. At the time, I wasn't sure it would be worth it, but everything changed when I watched the International Speech Contest. Luisa Montalvo's winning speech, *37 Strangers Saved My Life*, moved me to tears. It resonated deeply because of my own kidney transplant journey and how a complete stranger saved my life.

After the contest, I was so inspired that I wrote a poem reflecting on Luisa's speech and my own journey. I posted it on our District 57 Facebook feed. A fellow Toastmaster suggested I share it with the official Toastmasters International Facebook page.

When I did, something incredible happened—Luisa herself commented on the post. She shared how much my poem meant to her, and that simple interaction started a meaningful friendship.

Since then, Luisa has become an integral part of our District. We invited her to be a guest on a three-part podcast and to lead a District workshop on crafting winning speeches. But here's the surprising thing: it didn't take persuasion to bring her on board—it took a relationship.

What I learned from this experience is that relationships are the foundation of influence. People are far more willing to say “yes” when they feel seen, heard, and valued. Luisa didn't join us because of an impressive pitch or clever argument—she joined because we connected on a human level.

If you want to be truly persuasive, start by building relationships. Listen. Show genuine interest. And remember that the strongest connections are built on trust and shared experiences.

### Lesson 3: Empower Others by Turning Ideas into Shared Opportunities

Another example of the power of persuasion came with the creation of the Cre-Art Toastmasters Club. The idea wasn't mine—it came from the graphics designer on the PR team, who asked, “Could we create a specialty club for sharing art and creativity?”

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## HOW PERSUASIVE ARE YOU? CONTINUED

At first, I wasn't sure how this would connect to Toastmasters' mission. Why would people want to join a club focused on art and creativity? What would members gain from sharing their personal projects?

The key was to align the idea with a broader purpose. Creativity is at the heart of impactful speeches and inspiring messages. Cre-Art could be a space where members used their creative projects—whether painting, poetry, or photography—as a foundation for crafting speeches that connect with audiences on a deeper level.

The next step was empowering others to take ownership of the vision. I started asking potential members, “What does creativity mean to you? How could a club like this help you grow?” By involving them in shaping the club's purpose, Cre-Art became more than an idea—it became a shared community built around connection, storytelling, and personal growth.

This experience taught me that persuasion isn't about pushing your own agenda. It's about creating opportunities that resonate with others' passions and values. When people feel empowered to contribute, they don't just follow—they lead alongside you.

Reflection: How Persuasive Are You?

Looking back, I've realized that persuasion is much more than a skill—it's an act of service. It's about helping others see their potential and empowering them to take action for their own growth.

To recap the lessons:

1. Build a Vision: Show others the bigger picture and help them understand the “why.”
2. Build Relationships: Focus on connection and trust and remember that influence starts with genuine human interactions.
3. Empower Others: Turn ideas into shared opportunities that align with their goals and passions.

As you reflect on your own journey as a leader and speaker, I encourage you to think about the moments when you've had to persuade others. How did you approach it? Were you focused on your goals, or did you take the time to understand theirs?

The next time you're faced with an opportunity to persuade, ask yourself: *How can I show them what's in it for them?* When you lead with empathy, authenticity, and a focus on service, you won't just be persuasive—you'll be transformational.

## TOASTMASTERS D57 SPEAKERS BUREAU: A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR TOASTMASTERS CLUBS, BY GARY MCKINSEY, DISTRICT 57 SPEAKERS BUREAU CHAIR

Toastmasters' clubs thrive when meetings are dynamic, informative, and engaging. For special events, like open houses or themed meetings, a guest speaker can make all the difference.

The District 57 Speakers Bureau offers a quick and efficient way for club leaders to find skilled speakers who bring fresh insights and professional polish to club events.

By visiting the Speakers Bureau website, [Speakers Bureau Homepage - District 57 Toastmasters Speakers Bureau](#), leaders can browse a directory of experienced speakers and explore their areas of expertise.

With topics ranging from storytelling and leadership to public speaking, there's a perfect fit for any event. This resource allows clubs to benefit from a variety of voices without needing to seek out each speaker individually.

For an open house, in particular, a guest speaker can add credibility and excitement, giving prospective members a memorable first impression.

Bureau speakers are familiar with engaging diverse audiences, whether within the Toastmasters network or in larger public settings like nonprofits and companies.

Consider using the Speakers Bureau for your club's next event. With just a few clicks, you can connect with speakers who will elevate your meetings, enrich the member experience, and create an event that resonates with everyone in attendance.



# TEN STEPS TO CHARTER A NEW TOASTMASTERS CLUB, BY SREE GUDDREDI

Starting a Toastmasters club is an exciting and rewarding journey, but it requires planning, organization, and commitment. A recent success story comes from the newly chartered Cre-Art Toastmasters, which officially launched on January 14, 2025, after just three months of themed meetings.

Thanks to the vision of Alison Harris-Abott, who requested a club for creatives and artists, and the collaboration of Leesa Thompson, PRM, Sree Gudreddi, AD F28, and Eric Brucia, Calendar Master, this club followed these steps to turn their concept into a thriving community. Let their story inspire you to take the steps below and bring your own Toastmasters club to life.

## 1. Come Up with a Concept That Interests You and Others

Identify a theme or concept that resonates with potential members. Whether it's professional development, public speaking for a specific industry, or a unique interest group (e.g., storytelling, humor, or leadership), your concept should inspire and attract people. Talk to colleagues, friends, and community members to gauge interest and refine your idea.

## 2. Assemble a Team of Mentors and Sponsors

Reach out to experienced Toastmasters who can mentor and guide your club's development. Sponsors can help you navigate the chartering process and offer insights into club management. Engage with Toastmasters International early to ensure your plans align with their requirements.

## 3. Choose a Club Name and Club Type

Select a club name that reflects the theme or mission of your club. A creative and meaningful name can spark interest and communicate your club's identity to potential members.

Decide on the type of club you want to create:

- **Community Club:** Open to the general public and focused on personal development.
- **Corporate Club:** Formed within a company, often emphasizing leadership and communication skills for employees.
- **Specialty Club:** Focused on a niche or interest, such as storytelling, advanced speaking, or leadership development.
- **Advanced Club:** Tailored for experienced Toastmasters who want to refine and enhance their skills further.

## 4. Plan a Series of Themed Open House Meetings

Schedule a long list of meetings centered around your club's theme. These open houses will give potential members a taste of what the club offers. For example:

- **Week 1:** Introduction to Toastmasters and Your Club's Theme
- **Week 2:** How Toastmasters Builds Leaders
- **Week 3:** Practicing Impromptu Speaking

Invite guest speakers who have expertise in subjects related to your club's concept to add value and attract interest. Create a detailed agenda for each meeting, including speeches, table topics, and networking opportunities.

## 5. Produce Flyers for Each Meeting

Design professional flyers for each open house and include:

- Meeting theme and date
- Location (or virtual link)
- Contact information

Distribute these flyers in person, online, and through community networks to maximize visibility.

## 6. Promote the Club Concept and Meetings

Write articles for your local Toastmasters district newsletter, social media, and websites. Highlight your club's theme, its unique benefits, and how it meets members' needs. Use engaging stories, testimonials, and visuals to create excitement. Share information through community forums, company bulletins, and other networks to broaden your reach.

## 7. Keep Track of Interested Individuals

Create an email list to track everyone who expresses interest or attends a meeting. Use this list to send updates, meeting reminders, and club-related news. This ensures you maintain momentum and stay connected with potential members.

## 8. Keep Asking Who Wants to Join as a Charter Member

Until you get 20 members, persistence is key. Ask attendees, colleagues, and friends to join as charter members. Highlight the unique opportunity to be part of a founding team and shape the club's culture.

## TEN STEPS TO CHARTER A NEW TOASTMASTERS CLUB, CONTINUED

### 9. Continue Planning and Hosting Themed Meetings Until You Reach 20 Potential Members

Consistency is key to maintaining interest and attracting more members. Regularly host themed meetings that reflect your club's concept. Use feedback from attendees to refine the experience and ensure the meetings stay engaging and relevant. Promote these sessions widely to expand your reach and build momentum until you reach 20 committed members.

### 10. Charter the Club

Once you've gathered the required 20 members and completed the necessary paperwork, submit your application to Toastmasters International. Celebrate this milestone with a special charter ceremony and continue building momentum as an official club.

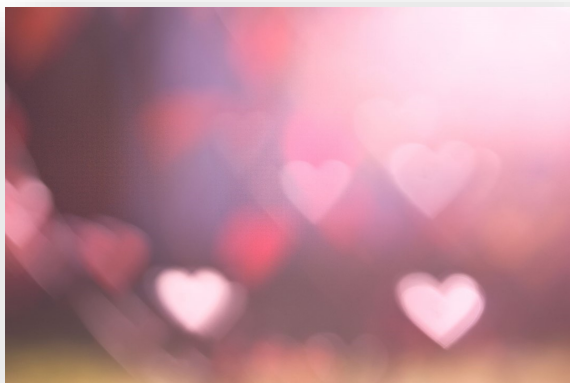
Starting and chartering a new club is a journey of dedication, creativity, and teamwork. You don't have to do it alone! For personalized guidance and support, reach out to:

- Jeff Young, Club Growth Director (CGD):

[jeffrey@d57tm.org](mailto:jeffrey@d57tm.org)

- Leesa Thompson, Public Relations Manager (PRM):

[PRM@d57tm.org](mailto:PRM@d57tm.org)



## LAKESIDE SPEAKEASY HOSTS FIRST HYBRID OPEN HOUSE MEETING TO ENERGIZE MEMBERSHIP, BY BETTY GUO, PH.D., LAKESIDE PRESIDENT

In an exciting step forward, the Officers of Lakeside Speakeasy Toastmasters, a Community Club partnering with the University of California Office of the President, hosted its first-ever hybrid Open House meeting on January 29, 2025, where it hosted 8 guests. Lakeside enjoys the direct support of the University while at the same time welcoming members from outside. This milestone event was designed to attract new members, bring fresh energy to the club, and strengthen its supportive speaking and leadership community.

The Open House, themed "Confidence Brews Success", focused on building confidence as the foundation for both personal and professional growth. Members and guests, whether attending in person or via Zoom, participated in an engaging and dynamic session filled with inspiring speeches, interactive discussions, and valuable feedback.

A highlight of the meeting was a keynote address by guest speaker Bett Bollhoefer, DTM, PDD, who delivered an insightful presentation, "Reconnect with Your Toastmaster's WHY." Her speech encouraged members to reflect on their personal motivations for joining Toastmasters and reignite their passion for public speaking and leadership.

The meeting also featured a Table Topics session, led by Jeet Sammi, giving attendees (both members and guests) the chance to practice impromptu speaking. Leesa Thompson guided the evaluation segment, ensuring speakers received constructive feedback to continue honing their skills. Special thanks to Club President Betty Guo, who served as Toastmaster of the Day, keeping the meeting organized and energetic.

By blending in-person and virtual participation, Lakeside Speakeasy successfully expanded its reach and accessibility, reinforcing its commitment to inclusivity and growth. The club looks forward to welcoming more new faces and continuing to provide a space where members can build confidence, sharpen their communication skills, and thrive as leaders.

For more information about Lakeside Speakeasy Toastmasters or to attend a future meeting, visit [our website](#).