**VENUE SELECTION FOR A SPEECH CONTEST**

**Club Contests – preferably held at the same venue as your club meeting**

**Area Contests – preferably held at a free venue that holds 45-60 people theatre style**

**Division Contests – preferably held at a free venue that holds 75-125 people theatre style**

**Must Haves:**

* **An indoor room large enough to accommodate the number of expected guests plus a speaking area for the contestants, a table for the awards, a table for the timers, and a table for the Opportunity Drawing prizes**
* **Ample, nearby parking**
* **An area where refreshments can be served and consumed**
* **An area where a registration table can be set up at the entrance to the contest room**
* **An area where the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters can tally the ballots**
* **An inexpensive or free rental fee**
* **Air conditioning / heating**
* **A secluded and quiet room to hold the contest where the general public cannot interrupt**
* **A venue that is accessible by non-US citizens**
* **If the venue has Security, alert them that a contest is being held in the facility**
* **Confirmation that an Opportunity Drawing can be held and registration fees can be charged**
* **Ample lighting, preferably lighter speaking area than audience area**

**Finding a Venue for an Area/Division Contest:**

* **Identify 1-3 potential dates for your contest**
* **Contact your Area and Division Clubs and ask if any of the clubs meet at a venue that has a room large enough to accommodate your contest**
* **Contact members of the clubs in your Area or Division and ask if any of the members work at a facility or otherwise know of a facility that could accommodate your contest**
* **Ask Past District Officers if they are aware of any venues that could accommodate your contest**
* **Contact local libraries, community centers, senior centers, churches, schools, colleges, businesses, city and county offices, residential centers, hospitals, and restaurants and ask if they can accommodate your contest**

**Lessons Learned:**

* **Ask if any restrictions exists for non-US citizens and service dogs – plan accordingly**
* **Do not schedule your contest at the same time as another contest**
* **If contests are held on the same day, stagger them by 2 hours to allow attendees to migrate between contests**
* **Combine two or more Area Contests and share resources on Saturdays and Sundays only**
* **Do not combine Area Contests on a weeknight**
* **Do not schedule contests on a religious holiday**
* **Ensure your venue will allow food to be served**
* **Ensure your venue allows for Opportunity Drawing tickets to be sold and registration fees to be charged**
* **Create a flier and publicize your club frequently to ensure the clubs are aware of the venue, date, and time**
* **Include a map and address to your contest venue on your flier**
* **Verify that the D5 Calendar has the correct venue, date, time, and other important information about your contest**
* **Ensure the venue is available before and after contest to allow set-up and cleanup**
* **Visit the venue prior to the contest on the same day of the week and at the same time of the day to assess what will happening on the day of the contest**
* **Inquire whether the venue has a lectern and a flag and arrange for both, if needed**