

# Organizing Area & Division Contests Guidebook



**Contestants, all contest officials, and the Evaluation Contest Test Speaker must be physically present to compete beyond the club level.**

It is imperative that you read the Speech Contest Rulebook on [Toastmasters.org](https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/speech-contests) for complete rules.  
<https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/speech-contests>



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Disclaimer:

This guidebook is intended to be a resource for members organizing area and division speech contests. All contests must follow the Toastmasters International Speech Contest Rulebook and Toastmasters International policies. If any part of this guidebook's contents is in conflict with TI's rules or policies then TI's rules and guidelines take precedence and should be followed. Please notify Mark Kramer of any errors so this guidebook may be corrected.

*Note: While this guidebook is intended for area and division contests, it may also be used for club contests.*

***Don't be fooled! This guidebook is not as long as it may appear!***

*Some contest chair's take one look at the number of pages of this guidebook, give up, and never read it – it's true; they've told me! Much of the guidebook is checklists and samples of emails, flyers, programs, ballots, and scripts. It's not as long as it appears at first glance. Those who have used the guidebook have consistently found it helpful and ultimately saved them a lot of time. Keep reading – you'll be glad you did!*

## Top 10 To Know



- 1) Start planning early – 8 weeks before the contest start.
- 2) Work with a team. Area & division directors should appoint a Contest Chair to organize the contest.
- 3) Read the Speech Contest Rulebook. This is imperative! You must understand the rules.
- 4) Read this Organizing Area & Division Contests Guidebook.
- 5) Fill functionary roles early.
  - a) Area directors should not take on a functionary role for their own contest – they will be very busy throughout the contest filling out forms and handling issues.
- 6) Email contestants and functionaries 4 weeks ahead of time so they know their role before they arrive and then send a reminder 1 week ahead of time.
- 7) Do NOT charge contestants. The Speech Contest Rulebook clearly states that contestants should NEVER be charged an entry fee. Ensure that registrars know this.
- 8) Start on time.
  - a) Start setting up at least 90 minutes before the contest starts.
  - b) The Opportunity Drawing Team should arrive 1 hour, 15 minutes before the start.
  - c) Registrars should arrive 1 hour, 15 minutes before the start.
  - d) Functionaries and contestants should arrive 45 minutes before the start.
- 9) End on time.
  - a) Top issue – forgetting to have contestant certificates available for the Toastmaster to hand out during contestant interviews.
  - b) Toastmasters should limit interviews; contestants should not be expected to make up a speech on the spot because of long and involved questions.
  - c) Schedule a 20-minute break. Less than 20 minutes will NOT work.
  - d) Have Timers time the break and notify Sergeants at Arms 5 minutes before the break is to end.
  - e) Sergeants at Arms should walk around announcing that there are less than 5 minutes left in the break.
  - f) Keep the Opportunity Drawing short (read the Opportunity Drawing Chair Guidebook).
  - g) Streamline the handing out of certificates of appreciation for functionaries.
- 10) The Contest Chair should earn High-Performance Leadership (HPL) credit for the contest.

## Words of Wisdom



Words of advice from past area and division directors:

*"You can't start too early, and you can't do it by yourself. Don't overspend your event."*

*"Spend your time two months prior to the contest recruiting people to chair the various roles such as food, venue, registration, opportunity drawing, advertising, printing, and staffing. Then lead this team during the contest. Too many area directors try to do too many of these roles themselves, and it can be overwhelming."*

*"Always have backups. In both my contests I had to get a new TM the week of the contest. On the day of the spring contest, I lost two functionaries. Have two extra judges and two extra people that can jump in at the last moment if needed."*

*"It is important to instill in the clubs under your purview that this is a volunteer organization and they need to actively volunteer their aid during contest season to include food, opportunity drawing items, their time, and participation."*

*"Visit your venue prior to the day of the contest on the same day of the week and time that the contest will be held in order to assess what will be going on at the time of the contest. If possible, ask people familiar with the venue if any special events are taking place at the time the contest will be held to avoid parking issues."*

*"To set a budget upfront, guesstimate attendance from the past and guesstimate opportunity drawing participation to recoup costs. You have to spend the money as if you're an owner of a business. Spend it like you're broke and be conservative. If you have no budget plan, I saw too many spend too much money. "*

*"Focus on a dynamic tone-setting Toastmaster who brings fun and a relaxed energy and is on time!!"*

*"Divide up the sections of the contest to have each club (or area for a division contest) have a responsibility (i.e. Area 9 finds all functionaries; Area 6 recruits and handles setup, etc.)."*

*"Personally, I think ALL area, division, and district contests should be listed in The Reader and other areas on things to do in San Diego this week. We need to draw on the public to bring in more people to the contests. I always see lectures and speaking engagements listed, we need to have an ongoing presence in the community at large when promoting Toastmasters events. For \$5 I think many people would come from the community if they knew about it."*

## Introduction



Contest chairs often struggle to plan their contests. If you view this as a daunting task, then this guidebook is meant for you. This guidebook provides helpful advice on organizing a successful contest built on many years of experience shared by former contest chairs.

You'll find additional information on the District 5 website speech contest page: <http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/>. The information in the guidebook draws from my own experiences organizing area and division contests, questions I've received on how to organize contests, examples from contests organized by other members, suggestions from other members, contest participants, and regular surveys of directors and contest attendees.

Sometimes you may only have one contestant for an entire area. You must still hold a full-fledged contest.

## Timeline



Start planning **8 weeks before** the contest date. **Seriously**. Make it easy on yourself by planning your contest early. It's more work than you might anticipate.

Weeks Before Contest	To Do
8 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divide up responsibilities. See section on the <i>Contest Committee</i>.</li> <li>• Secure a venue. See the section on <i>Finding a Location to Host the Contest</i>. Make sure you can get in at least 90 minutes early.</li> <li>• Optionally select a theme. See the section on <i>Themes</i>.</li> <li>• Create a contest flyer. See the section on <i>Flyers</i>.</li> <li>• Select a Chief Judge. See the section on <i>Filling Contest Roles</i>.</li> <li>• Decide on a budget. See the section on <i>Money Matters</i>.</li> <li>• Set entry fee for non-contestants. See the section on <i>Money Matters</i>.</li> <li>• IMPORTANT: DO NOT ORDER TROPHIES OR CERTIFICATES. The District will provide them. Check with the District Contest Chair for information.</li> </ul>
7 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the venue does not have a lectern, arrange for one.</li> <li>• Arrange for a projection unit just in case one is needed.</li> <li>• For a Table Topics contest ask the District Contest Chair who will supply the questions.</li> </ul>
6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write Presidents of each club in area / division requesting that they ask their members to volunteer for contest roles.</li> <li>• For area contests, ask club Presidents for the names and email addresses of winners and runners-ups.</li> </ul>

Weeks Before Contest	To Do
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For division contests, ask the Area Directors for the names and email addresses of winners and runners-ups.</li> </ul>
5 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the Chief Judge is not choosing a judging team, find judges from the area / division. See the section on <i>Filling Contest Roles</i>.</li> <li>For an Evaluation Contest locate a Test Speaker. A Test Speech may only be used for one area or division contest per contest season. See the section on <i>Filling Contest Roles</i>.</li> <li>Coordinate with the District 5 Treasurer how finances should be handled; this year's approach may not be the same as last year's.</li> </ul>
4 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email contestants and volunteers with details about their roles at the contest. Attach forms as indicated as well as a contest flyer. See the section on <i>Confirmations</i>.</li> <li>Begin searching for opportunity drawing items. See the section on <i>Opportunity Drawing</i>.</li> <li>Write Presidents of each club in area / division requesting that they ask their members for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers for roles</li> <li>The donations of one opportunity drawing item</li> </ul> </li> <li>For division contests, ask the District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director how long each plan to speak before the break – include this time in the program agenda.</li> </ul>
3 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write presidents again for volunteers &amp; donations. Send emails to new volunteers.</li> <li>Find something to use as a cash box.</li> <li>Purchase or arrange for opportunity drawing items: tickets, bags, tape, markers. The Division Director may already have these items.</li> </ul>
2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who is bringing the contest awards?</li> <li>Write presidents again for volunteers &amp; donations. Send emails to new volunteers.</li> <li>Confirm you can get into the venue 90 minutes before the start time.</li> <li>Create a draft program agenda &amp; send to the Chief Judge, Toastmaster, and area or division director for comment.</li> <li>Secure timing devices (lights – or cards – and a stopwatch).</li> </ul>
1 week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resend emails to all volunteers and contestants with details about their role at the contest. You would be surprised at how many will have forgotten the first email – and how many will tell you now that they cannot attend. Attach forms and the flyer. Ask contestants for their speech title and if they need a projection unit. Invite contestants to send in their profile and eligibility forms ahead of the contest.</li> <li>Have someone bring extension cords and wide tape in case of need.</li> <li>Directors should fill out and sign certificates for contest participants.</li> <li>Print programs.</li> <li>Print a dozen copies of the Photo Release form from the TI website.</li> <li>Print a dozen copies of the Video Release form from the TI website.</li> <li>Print Dignitary sign-in list from the District 5 website <a href="http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/">http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/</a>.</li> <li>Print out all functionary forms.</li> <li>Create judges' packets if the Chief Judge will not be doing it.</li> <li>Purchase decorations related to the theme.</li> </ul>

Weeks Before Contest	To Do
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pick up \$50 in \$1 &amp; \$5 bills to use as change.</li> <li>• Bring a deck of cards to select the order of contestants.</li> <li>• Print signs &amp; forms:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Directional signs</li> <li>○ Detailed information for Registrars about entry fees &amp; tickets opportunity drawing signs with the amount for tickets.</li> <li>○ Sign-in sheet for all attendees.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Confirm that you have not forgotten anything.</li> </ul>
Night Before Contest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pick up food &amp; paper goods.</li> <li>• Make sure that all forms, certificates, and signs are ready.</li> <li>• Bring copies of the contest rulebook.</li> </ul>
Day of contest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Contest:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Arrive at least 90 minutes before start of contest.</li> <li>○ Put up directional signs.</li> <li>○ Set up registration table (checks should be written to <i>D5 Toastmasters</i>).</li> <li>○ Put up decorations.</li> <li>○ Test all equipment to be used such as projection units and lights.</li> <li>○ Position timing lights where contestants can easily see them.</li> <li>○ Confirm board/flipchart markers work – throw away bad ones.</li> <li>○ Brief registration workers on to whom checks should be made out to and about the opportunity drawing.</li> <li>○ Arrange contest room.</li> <li>○ Have cards available or numbers on a sheet of paper so that contestants can select order.</li> <li>○ Ask contestants to complete Speech Contestant Profile forms and Speaker’s Certification of Eligibility and Originality.</li> <li>○ Toastmaster and Chief Judge meet with judges, contestants, and functionaries to go over rules and select contestant order.</li> <li>○ Put out food.</li> <li>○ Display awards.</li> <li>○ Display opportunity drawing prizes. The opportunity drawing tables should be set up outside of the contest room so that the Opportunity Drawing Team can draw tickets during the contest without disturbing contestants and judges.</li> <li>○ Put tape over any loose electrical wires someone might trip on.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• During the contest:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keep an eye on the food to see if anything needs to be replaced / covered / put out / thrown out.</li> <li>○ Have directors fill out certificates for last-minute contestants and functionaries.</li> <li>○ Collect registration and opportunity drawing money following the contest break.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• After contest:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide the next level (Division or District) Director the list of winners and runners up, along with their phone numbers, email addresses, eligibility forms, and profile forms.</li> <li>○ Put the room back the way it was.</li> <li>○ Clean up.</li> <li>○ Take down signs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Weeks Before Contest	To Do
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reimburse everyone from cash.</li> <li>○ Submit the "Toastmasters International District Five Contest Income and Expense Report" along with leftover funds to a director to give to the District Treasurer.</li> </ul>
Later after contest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Write all functionaries thanking them for their help.</li> <li>● Write the venue thanking them for its use.</li> </ul>

Some area and division directors recommend starting to plan as early as 3 months before the contest.

### How Long Is a Contest?



For some areas, the contest is a big deal among clubs, so all clubs compete. In other clubs, it isn't a big deal and only one or two clubs may compete. Use this as a very loose guideline: Find out how many contestants participated in the previous version of the contest then **estimate 15 minutes per contestant for an area contest and 20 minutes per contestant for a division contest** (*note that these guidelines only hold if you start the contest on time and run it efficiently*). As the contest date nears and you know exactly how many contestants, you'll be able to better estimate the contest end time.

If an area has less than 4 clubs the district may approve each club sending two contestants to the area contest, but this decision must be made at least 8 weeks prior to the area contest.



Combined area contests are not recommended. From 2010-2013 Toastmasters International stated: "We allow combined area contests; however, we strongly discourage against this practice. If you wish to combine area A and area B contests, you will need to complete the area A contest, announcing winners and all, before starting the area B contest. The two area contests must be separate of each other."

The 2025 Speech Contest Rulebook specifically states ""If there are multiple contests taking place at one event, each contest must be officially adjourned prior to the beginning of the next contest, even if winners have not yet been announced."

However, in the past, Toastmasters International stated that an integrated contest was "strongly discouraged" but not forbidden. Should you be interested in leading an integrated contest, it is highly recommended that you reach out to Toastmasters International and confirm that this has not changed. This type of format features all the contestants from area A to compete immediately followed by area B in one contest and then, again, all the contestants from area A immediately followed by area B for the other contest. This is a more streamlined approach but, again, it is strongly discouraged.

For division contests, plan on comments from the District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director prior to the break. Contact each before making the agenda to find out how long they need – often 5-10 minutes **each**. Be sure to instruct the Timers to time each so that they stay within the allotted time.

Time and again contests start late and end late; sometimes very late. Following these guidelines will help your contest stay on schedule:

- 1) Start on time.
  - a) Start setting up at least 90 minutes before the contest starts. It takes much longer to set up than you might think.
  - b) Registrars should arrive 1 hour 15 minutes before the start. Many attendees begin arriving 90 minutes before the start of the contest; if the registrars arrive 1 hour before the start of the contest, they may already be behind. Make certain that the registrars are entirely briefed on their role prior to contest day. See the section on *Confirmations* for an email you can send.
  - c) The Opportunity Drawing Team should arrive 1 hour 15 minutes before the start. As guests arrive, they'll immediately want to look over the items in the drawing and purchase opportunity drawing tickets. The team must arrive early to get organized and ready.
  - d) Functionaries and contestants should arrive 45 minutes before the start. You can count on many arriving half an hour late. It used to be common practice to ask them to arrive 30 minutes early but so many were 30 minutes late that contests would routinely start late. Ask them to arrive 45 minutes early. Be clear about this in the email you send them. See the section on *Confirmations* for an email you can send.
- 2) End on time.
  - a) A common reason we run late is because the Toastmaster does not have the contestant participant certificates needed for the interviews. The Toastmaster must be given all of the completed certificates before the contest begins.
  - b) The Toastmaster should limit interviews; contestants should not be expected to make up a speech on the spot. Don't spend 10-15 minutes interviewing each contestant. 1 minute is fine.
  - c) Schedule a 20-minute break. Less than 20 minutes will NOT work. Try as you might – and it seems that nearly every contest chair tries this – a 5- or 10-minute break does NOT work. The audience needs to stretch, get food and drink, socialize, and use the restroom. The audience needs and wants 20 minutes and that is what they're going to take so just plan for it.
  - d) If there are district announcements, be certain to coordinate the time with the district officers and then have the Timers time them. These announcements can go on for as long as 30 minutes unless they are timed. Allocate, perhaps, 5 minutes per officer. Tell the District Officers that's all the time they'll have, and then time it.
  - e) Have Timers time the break and notify the Sergeants at Arms 5 minutes before the break is to end. This ensures the contest stays to schedule.
  - f) Sergeants at Arms should announce to the audience when there are only 5 minutes left in the break. This is imperative. It is fine for the Timers to display the lights but almost no one is looking at the lights. The Sergeants at Arms should run around announcing that only 5 minutes are left. Then they should start the contest on time.
  - g) Keep the Opportunity Drawing short. It is not the focus of the contest. It should take up as little time as possible. See the *Opportunity Drawing* section for suggestions.
  - h) Streamline the handing out of certificates. It's already been a long day, and the audience wants to know who has won the contests. I've seen directors hand out so many certificates and

describe how each member contributed that, quite literally, the handing out of the certificates took longer than the rest of the contest itself! It's true! Get through this quickly.

On a side note, if you have an option for selecting when to hold your contest, consider that, in general, the best turnouts are for Friday night and Saturday morning contests; however, contests may be held any day and time, and it is not unusual for Monday and Thursday evening contests. To maximize attendance and participation of contests, avoid holidays:

- In March and April avoid the Christian holidays Good Friday and Easter. Dates vary from year to year so check the calendar.
- In March and April avoid the Jewish holiday Passover for the first two nights and the last night (it's an 8-night holiday). Dates vary from year to year so check the calendar.
- In September and October avoid the Jewish holidays Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Dates vary from year to year, and they start in the evening and go through the next day; most calendars will only show the day but you must avoid the evening before, too.
- In October avoid the Saturday mornings and afternoons closest to Halloween because schools often hold carnivals on that day.
- In late November and through December avoid evenings during the Jewish holiday Chanukah. Dates vary from year to year so check the calendar.

## The Contest Committee



**As an area or division director you should not run the contest.** You can, but it is preferable that a contest chair from your area or division serves as the contest chair.

Beyond a contest chair you will need a team to organize the contest. This provides opportunities for members to learn new leadership and organization skills including delegation and working as a team; and you get to know other Toastmasters better.

The contest chair should earn Pathways Level 4 or 5 credit for the work done. Many Toastmasters satisfy the requirement for a Level 5 High-Performance Leadership (HPL) project through chairing a contest.

Don't try to do this yourself. Have members help. Here's one way to form a team:

1. The Contest Chair: Finds a venue, finds other committee members, determines budget, gets names of contestants, creates the theme, creates the program, and provides all contestants and functionaries pre-contest information.
2. The Finding Committee Member: Find members to fill all the contest roles. This is the most difficult task and should begin early. The Contest Chair often does this.
3. The Opportunity Drawing Chair: Handles all aspects related to the Opportunity Drawing.
4. The Refreshment Committee Member: Buying the food and drink, setting up the food & drink area, replenishing and cleaning up the food and drink area between breaks, and cleaning up all the food and drink as soon as the final break is over.

Committee members may want to create their own teams. One director commented to me: "I wish I had asked a few people to help me as soon as I knew I was in charge of food and decorations!"

As soon as possible, the committee should identify who will be responsible for the following:

Responsibility Items	Who's Responsible?
Who is the Contest Chair?	
Who is Committee Member #1	
Who is Committee Member #2	
Who is Committee Member #3	
Who is Committee Member #4	
Who is Committee Member #5	
Who finds the Chief Judge? Is it the District Judging Chair or the Contest Chair?	
Who is the Chief Judge?	
Who finds the judges -- the Chief Judge or someone else?	
Who finds out how much the awards cost?	
Who will bring the awards?	
Who brings the blank certificates of appreciation and participation?	
Who fills out the certificates of appreciation and participation?	
Who gets the contestant names from the clubs or areas?	
Who runs the opportunity drawing and gets the prizes?	
Who brings the opportunity drawing tickets, bags, tape, and markers?	
Who brings the lectern if one is not available from the venue?	
Who brings the extension cords?	
Who brings wide tape to tape down electrical cords?	
Who brings the Time Record Sheet forms?	
Who brings the Counter Tally Sheet forms?	
Who brings the Evaluation Contestant Notes forms (item 1177) for an Eval contest?	
Who brings the Notification of Winners forms?	
Who brings the Speaker Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms?	
Who brings the Contestant Profile forms?	
Who brings the judging ballot forms?	
Who brings Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Ethics form?	
Who brings the Photo Release form?	
Who brings the Video Release form?	
Who brings the timing lights or timing cards?	
Who brings the stopwatch? (Note: The Chief Judge is often responsible)	
Who selects the theme? (Note: A theme is not necessary but helpful)	
Who handles the theme decorations? (Note: Not necessary but a nice touch)	
Who creates and distributes the flyer?	
Who creates and prints the programs (i.e. agendas)?	
Who brings the cash box?	
Who fills the cash box with change? (recommended 20 \$1 bills and 6 \$5 bills)	
Who brings the food and beverages?	
Who brings the paper goods (plates, etc.)?	
Who sets up?	
Who cleans up?	

Responsibility Items	Who's Responsible?
Who creates the sign-in sheet for all attendees?	
Who will download the dignitary sign-in sheet from the district website?	
Who is in charge of directional signs to help guests find the contest?	
Who prints out the detailed entry fee and Opportunity Drawing info for Registrars?	

The Contest Chair should request a weekly status from all committee members on each of their responsibilities and send out a weekly status to committee members as well as the directors. Ensuring that everyone on the team knows everyone's status each week is important to organizing a successful contest. You do not want to be in a position of someone needing assistance and the team not knowing about it until it is too late to do anything about it.

## Money Matters



Contest expenses may include the rental for a venue, food/drink/paper goods, opportunity drawing items, decorations, and printing. To cover these expenses, you'll need to charge admission and raise money through an opportunity drawing. **Your goal is to break even.** You do not want to make money or lose money.

If possible, get a detailed list of income and expenses from previous contests to help you prepare for yours. The District Financial Manager should be able to provide this information.

Most contests charge \$5 to \$7 for admission with some charging nothing and others charging \$10. Just because you've seen other contests charge \$5 does not mean that you should. Base the admission on your anticipated attendee count.

A good guideline to start with is attendance. Historically:

- Area contests bring in 25 attendees per area; a two-area contest would have 50.
- Division contests typically bring in 60 attendees.

Remember that **contestants are always free**. According to the Speech Contest Rulebook (see the Contest Chair's Checklist, Preparation): "If there is an entry fee for the contest, that fee must be waived for contestants. Contestants cannot be charged a fee to compete."

The opportunity drawing, on average, brings in \$2 per attendee.

The District pays for all awards.

You can use this worksheet for calculating a rough estimate of how much you should charge for admission. The example shown is for a two-area contest with no charge to rent the venue.

Opportunity Drawing Income:

Anticipated attendance: (average = 25 per area; 60 per division):	50
Opportunity Drawing Income (average = \$2 times total attendees):	\$ 100.00

Contest Expenses:

Rent for Venue	\$ 0.00
Food cost (approximately 1 area=\$100; 2 areas=\$150; 1 division=\$180):	\$ 150.00
Other expenses (decorations, opportunity drawing tickets and bags)	\$ 30.00
<i>Total expenses (there may be additional expenses for decorations and opportunity drawing tickets and bags):</i>	<i>\$ 180.00</i>

Admission Calculation:

<i>Shortfall = Total Expenses less Opportunity Drawing Income:</i>	<i>\$ 80.00</i>
Total Contestants from previous contest season (past avg = 5 per area; 8 per division):	10
Net Paying Attendees (Total Attendees less Total Contestants):	40
<i>Breakeven = Shortfall divided by Net Paying Attendees:</i>	<i>\$ 2.00</i>
<b>Admission to charge (Round up Breakeven to cover additional expenses)</b>	<b>\$ 3.00</b>

If you are planning a division contest, then find out if area contests within the division made profits. If so, then you should consider that as income for the division contest and reduce the price of admission accordingly – but confirm this with the District Financial Manager.

Remember that **your goal is to break even**; not make a profit. The average admission charge has been \$6. This may explain why 93% of contest chairs have reported a profit from their contests. This is a problem. You cannot control the amount attendees will pay for the opportunity drawing – if you have good prizes some contest chairs have reported attendees spending an average of \$2.50 instead of \$2. However, you do have control over the admission price. At one contest I was involved in, the calculations showed that admission should have been \$4 but the two area directors chose to charge \$5 because they felt it would be easier for attendees and the Registrars. I tried to persuade them against this, but they would not be swayed. Their decision, unfortunately, led to an unnecessary profit on the contest.

A way to boost income is to give away free opportunity drawing tickets such as 1 for each guest and 3 for each volunteer. This brings attendees to the opportunity drawing table who might not have stopped by otherwise. If they see something they really like they may purchase more tickets. I always recommend giving free opportunity drawing tickets to volunteers to thank them for their help.

You should not spend money on Opportunity Drawing prizes. Opportunity Drawing prizes should be donated to the contest by clubs in the area or division. You may need to buy tickets and bags for the drawing. The previous area director or division director may have leftovers you may use.

Some areas and divisions also pay entry fees for district officers; this is always an appreciated gesture since they are paying out of pocket and may be attending a dozen

contests. Some areas and divisions also pay for the functionaries. It's up to you. Adjust the admission charge accordingly so you break even.

All money matters should be concluded at the end of the contest. The District Financial Manager or a director will be there to help you complete the income and expense forms and to reimburse members for any expenses. All reimbursements should be made with the cash on hand provided that the member gives you a receipt for the purchase. You should write the member's name on the receipt and submit it to the Financial Manager or director.

If you find yourself with a profit, the money must be passed on to the next level director to be used to cover losses in other contests or to reduce the cost of future contests.

Contests are auditable events because the funds generated are District funds. You must complete and submit the "District 5 Contest Report of Income and Expenses" (along with the attendee list) to the District Financial Manager or next level director following the contest, along with receipts and any profit. The form is available on the D5 Speech Contest website at <http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/> (listed on the website as "District 5 Contest Report of Income")

Food, drink, and paper goods will probably be your highest expense. Historically, the average spent was:

- Area contest with 1 area = \$100
- Area contest with 2 areas = \$150
- Division contests = \$180

Plan food and drink very carefully – **it is better to overestimate the number of attendees and provide too much than to underestimate when it comes to food and drink. I cannot emphasize this enough – too many contests run out of food and drink before all the attendees arrive.** This is highly unfair given the entry fee; and it is cruel not to have anything available to drink throughout the contest on a hot day. Remember to purchase enough paper goods! Many contests run out of forks, spoons, and cups early. One contest had plenty of 2-liter soda bottles, but no one had thought to bring cups, so everyone went thirsty!

What food should you offer at contests? Here's a short list of what I've seen:

- Make-your-own sandwich bar
- Chinese food
- Fried chicken
- Danish, cookies, croissants, OJ, water
- Sandwiches, cookies/cakes, chips, soda, water, veggie dish, fruits
- Meatballs, chili, cupcakes, brownies, fruit, vegetables and dip, coffee and water
- Sandwiches, cookies, fruit, candy, coffee and water, raw vegetables and dip
- Pizza, soda, water, salad
- Water, cheese, hummus, crackers, croissants, veggies, and candy
- Costco sandwich rolls
- Veggie/dip platters, pineapple, grapes, pita chips/dip, wrap sandwiches, assorted chocolate mini bars, and bottled water
- Potluck
- A four-course sit-down meal of veggie tray appetizers, salad and rolls, spaghetti, and cookies with vanilla ice cream. Sparkling cider on the tables, as well as soda, coffee, and water.

Also recommended is to have a bottle or two of hand sanitizer at the food table.

Please **label main dish items** so guests will know what type of meat it is or if it is vegetarian. Some guests will not eat meat. Some may eat anything but red meat. Some are allergic to pork or chicken. The sign should clearly read "Pork" or "Chicken" or "Beef" or "Veggie" or whatever the item is.

One final comment about money matters: Make certain that registrars know if everyone pays an entry fee or if there are any exceptions to the rules. **Those volunteering for the contest sometimes assume that their entry fee is free. It is generally not free.** Except for the contestants, generally, everyone pays, including District Officers (unless the area or division decides to pay for them), yourself, and your committee. However, it is a nice gesture if you don't charge volunteers and district officers. Just makes sure to account for this in your budget.

I cannot emphasize enough this rule from the Speech Contest Rulebook:  
**"Contestants cannot be charged a fee to compete."**

## Finding A Venue



When I agreed to serve as an area director, I was clueless about where to find a venue or how to go about securing one. Here's a couple of ideas:

1. Ask previous area and division directors which venues they used and how they worked out.
2. Ask clubs in the area if their locations or another location in the building may be used to host a contest.

Some questions to ask about potential venues:

- May food and drink be brought in?
- Will there be a lectern?
- Is there a projection unit?
- Is there electricity for use with a microphone, projector, and timing lights?
- Are there white boards?
- Are there flip charts?
- Are there tables on which to place food, drink, timing lights, opportunity drawing prizes, etc.?
- Can the room be arranged ahead of time by the venue?
- May we rearrange the room? If so, must we return it to the way it looked?
- If we're setting up the night before the event, can arrangements be made so that the facility staff does not re-arrange the room and janitorial services do not throw out items? (This actually happened; one area spent the evening before a contest putting up decorations and setting up all the tables and then, overnight, the cleaning staff threw everything away and put the tables back in the closet!).
- Is there a separate, close by, secluded room that counters can use to count ballots and contestants in an evaluation contest may use to prepare their evaluations?
- How far are the restrooms from the contest room? Is an escort needed for them?
- Are there any security requirements such as having everyone sign in?

## Filling Contest Roles



Finding volunteers for the contest roles is **the most challenging aspect of a contest.**

Of primary importance is finding a Chief Judge no later than 6 weeks prior to the start of the contest. In some years, the District Judging Chair has assigned a Chief Judge for each

contest so ask the Judging Chair or the District Contest Chair before seeking one out. If you are responsible for finding a Chief Judge, know that there are a limited number of trained Chief Judges and the sooner you sign one up, the better. The District Judging Chair and District Contest Chair may have names of trained Chief Judges. Suggest your Chief Judge attend Judge’s Training (it is not required, though). The Chief Judge must have completed Levels 1 and 2 on a Pathways Path.

You’ll find it helpful to understand what the Chief Judge will be doing before and during the contest. See the Chief Judge Guidebook on the District 5 website Speech Contests page <http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/http://www.d5tm.org/contests/>).

Who will find the judges for the contest? Usually, the Chief Judge finds their own judges but sometimes the contest chair finds them. The Chief Judge will always select the Tiebreaker Judge for the contest. Only the Chief Judge is to know who the Tiebreaker Judge is – make certain that the Tiebreaking Judge understands this. Every judge must have completed at least Levels 1 and 2 on a Pathways path and, preferably, completed judges training. Judges may not be contestants at any area or higher level during the contest season.

**IMPORTANT:** Review section 2 of the Speech Contest Rulebook for eligibility information for contestants and as members of the contest team. There is an extensive list of members who may not compete because they are a district officer, they are a candidate for district office for the upcoming term beginning July 1, they are involved in the contest, or they are a contestant for another area. This is to avoid what could be seen as bias.

For an area contest there should be an equal number of judges from each area club with a minimum of 5 judges. The contest chair should contact clubs directly to request volunteers.

For a division contest there should be an equal number of judges from each area with a minimum of 7 judges. Be aware that some contestants may belong to multiple clubs in different divisions. No judge shall be from the same club as any of the contestants.

What roles need to be filled for a contest? Consider the roles listed below as well as three backups to fill in should someone not be able to attend the contest (you can be certain that at least one role player will not be able to attend).

Role	Who?	Email	Phone
Registrar 1			
Registrar 2			
Sergeant at Arms 1			
Sergeant at Arms 2			
Toastmaster			
Timer 1			
Timer 2			
Ballot Counter 1			
Ballot Counter 2			
Ballot Counter 3			
Opportunity Drawing Chair			
Opportunity Drawing Assistant #1			
Opportunity Drawing Assistant #2			
Chief Judge			
Judge 1			
Judge 2			

Role	Who?	Email	Phone
Judge 3			
Judge 4			
Judge 5			
Judge 6 (Division Contest only)			
Judge 7 (Division Contest only)			
Tie Breaker Judge	Selected by Chief Judge	Not allowed to know	Not allowed to know
Test Speaker (Evaluation Contest)			
Traffic Director if venue hard to find			
Food Chair			
Food Chair Assistant			
Backup 1			
Backup 2			
Backup 3			

Encourage volunteers by emphasizing that functionaries get experience and growth by taking on familiar roles but now can do so with a larger audience.

When selecting a Toastmaster for an area contest, look for someone who has had experience as a Toastmaster at a club contest. For a division contest, look for someone who has had experience as a Toastmaster at an area contest.

For evaluation contests, the Test Speaker should not be from the same area or division as those competing in the contest, may only be used once per contest season, and cannot be a contestant during the contest season. For area contests it is preferred to have a less experienced Test Speaker (i.e., someone still working Level 1 or Level 2 in Pathways) to provide more opportunities for contestants to suggest improvements. For division contests it is preferred to have a Test Speaker who is not yet a DTM. The Test Speaker must present a contest-type of speech from a Pathways path project.

For Table Topics contests, select a Toastmaster who has strong pronunciation skills. It is of the utmost importance that contestants be able to understand the question asked.

No one, including committee members, should take on multiple roles at a contest. The area/division director for a contest should not take any roles. For example, at one contest, the area director signed himself up as a judge and was not available to take care of matters that came up during his contest.

It is recommended that district officers do not have roles in contests. This provides more opportunities for other members to become involved in events beyond their club. Of course, if you are stuck, go ahead and ask district officers.

**Don't wait! Start filling roles well before the day of the contest!**

To find members to fill the roles I've used the following process successfully:

1. Ask the District Contest Chair or District Judging Chair for a list of experienced judges. Then exclude anyone on the list who is competing in contests themselves or is from your area or division. Ask early!
2. To find Test Speakers, ask area and division directors outside the area and division to suggest names from their areas and divisions.

3. Six (6) weeks prior to the contest, email the president of each club a request for volunteers (as well as opportunity drawing donations). Ask the president to forward the email to the club members. Follow up weekly until all roles are filled.
4. For area directors, visit clubs as part of your club visit and request volunteers.
5. Attach a contest flyer to every email.

How do you request volunteers for roles? Here's a sample email that has worked for me for several contests. The email was sent to each club president 6 weeks prior to the contest and then repeated every week and a half listing the remaining roles.

***If you choose to use the email below, be sure to change it to fit the particulars of your contest – it doesn't do any good to have your clubs email me!***

(Presidents – please forward to all club members as quickly as possible)

The **Area 16 Evaluation and International Speech Contests** are coming up **March 1, 2025!** The winners from **club contests** will compete against each other to determine the best in the **area**. To ensure a successful contest we need volunteers to assist with various aspects of the contests. Volunteering for a functionary role gives you the opportunity to expand your leadership and communication skills with a different and larger audience. Plus, it's a great opportunity to see the best contestants from the entire area. What functionary roles are available?

- Registration – Responsible for collecting entry fees from non-contestants and selling opportunity drawing tickets.
- Sergeant At Arms – Responsible for escorting contestants, calls for attention, makes safety announcements, helps contestants set up, and may lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Timer – Time the contests just like at the club.
- Ballot Counter – Collect and count the votes by the judges.
- Toastmaster – Emcee the contest, introduce contestants, and interview contestants; we'll provide a template to help. **You'll read the Table Topics questions during the Table Topics contest.**
- Opportunity Drawing Chair and Assistant – Organizes the opportunity drawing, requests donations, sells opportunity drawing tickets, maintains prize table, selects winning tickets, announces winners. We have a guidebook with step-by-step instructions.
- Food Chair and Assistant – Determines what food, drink, and paper goods to bring; sets up, cleans up.

The contest begins at **9:00am** and we'll need volunteers at the contest – being held at **Solar Turbines in Kearny Mesa at 4200 Ruffner – at 8:15am**. Registrars, the Opportunity Drawing team, and Food Team must arrive at **7:45am**. We anticipate that the contest will end before **noon**. Please note that volunteers must pay their own entry fee; although, some clubs will pay entry fees for anyone who volunteers at the contest.

**The contest flyer is attached for your reference. As a thank you for volunteering, all volunteers receive three free opportunity drawing tickets!**

Functionary roles are limited so don't wait to grab a role!

Please email Mark Kramer at [mkramer@flash.net](mailto:mkramer@flash.net) to let us know which role you are volunteering for.

Acknowledge volunteers immediately. If the role is filled, offer a different role or ask about serving as a backup in case a volunteer does not show up for the contest.

Send volunteers details about their role 4 weeks in advance and then again 1 week in advance. Attach a flyer (again) as well as information needed for the roles. On the next couple of pages there is a template email you can use.

Sometimes it's difficult to know just how successful someone will be in a role until you give them the opportunity. One director wrote me that she "wished there was a way to tell when you've picked a flaky contest chair." One contest chair told me "I wish that I had seen the Toastmaster perform as a Toastmaster prior to the contest." Providing volunteers with as much information as possible ahead of the contest helps.

Start your search for volunteers early; 6-8 weeks in advance is not too early. **I'd like to emphasize just how difficult it is to find volunteers.** It is often best for area directors to lead the search for volunteers since they have become familiar with the members of their clubs. One director wrote "[I wish I had known the] difficulty in securing judges and functionaries. People do not want to commit ahead of time. I made at least 3 visits to each of my 4 clubs trying to get commitments. Finally, people did show up to take jobs at the door." Here are some suggestions from directors about finding volunteers:

- "Advanced planning and club visits are important. The more one visits the clubs the more members of those clubs participate and attend the contests."
- "Encourage people in your area to step up and do the contest. Be positive at all times with club members and acknowledge them for what they do."
- "Visit area clubs so you are very familiar with your clubs, and they know who you are and want to do things for you such as be involved with the contest."
- "Start 3 months early and ask specific people to do specific tasks; general help emails just get ignored."
- "Start with your home club. Let them know that it's for a High Performance Leadership project that you're working on and that you could use their help."

## Confirmations



Four weeks prior to the contest and again one week before the contest it's important to send an email to everyone with a role in the contest. I use the following email for those with functionary roles. It's a bit long, but it works great, and I received a lot of comments of appreciation for it. Only send relevant information to each volunteer; for example, only send the Timer information to the Timers. Be sure to attach all related forms; for example, send the Timer a copy of the Timer's form.

***If you choose to use the email below, be sure to change it to fit the particulars of your contest and check the rulebook as the allowable times and other factors may have changed!***

Thank you very much for helping us out with the **Area 16 Contest on March 31, 2025** as **xxxxx(ex. Timer)xxxx!** Below you'll find details about the contest to help you with your role. If you have specific questions, please email me at [mkramer@flash.net](mailto:mkramer@flash.net).

This email includes information about your role but see the speech contest video tutorials available at [www.toastmasters.org/leadership-central/speech-contests/speech-contest-tutorials](http://www.toastmasters.org/leadership-central/speech-contests/speech-contest-tutorials).

#### **WHERE IS THE CONTEST?**

The contest begins at 9:00am at Audaexplore in Carmel Mountain by Interstate 15 located at 15030 Avenue of Science, San Diego, CA 92128. The cost to attend is \$5, including contest, food, and 3 opportunity drawing tickets for volunteers like you!

#### **WHAT TIME MUST I ARRIVE FOR THE CONTEST?**

The Registrars, Opportunity Drawing Team, and Food Team will arrive at 7:45am to set up; all other functionaries as well as the contestants will arrive at 8:15am. Briefings will begin at 8:30am for contestants, ballot counters, timers, sergeants at arms, and judges. The contest will begin at 9:00am.

#### **WHEN WILL THE CONTEST END?**

The length of the contest is based on the number of contestants which may not be known until just before the start of the contest. Estimate 15 minutes per contestant. We anticipate that the contest will be over by noon.

#### **WHAT DOES A JUDGE DO?**

At 8:30am the Chief Judge will call for all judges. You will be given you a folder with a "Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Ethics" and a "Judge's Guide and Ballot" for each contest (samples attached). You will also receive an envelope for each ballot. Please do not be late for the briefing. It is imperative that you sign the bottom of the Certification at the briefing and the bottom of each ballot – your votes do not count without your signature and name on the ballots.

To be eligible to serve as a judge, you must have completed Levels 1 and 2 of a Pathway path.

You do not need to use the Judge's Guide to rate each contestant, but you may find it helpful. You'll have 1 minute after each contestant to record your impression. At the end of each contest write on the bottom of the form who you feel came in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> and tear off the bottom of the form. Place the slip of paper in the supplied envelope and hold it in the air. A Ballot Counter will collect it from you.

As a judge you must remain anonymous. You may not tell anyone that you are a judge before, during, or after the contest. While it is not required, you may want to consider sitting elsewhere if you find yourself seated next to a contestant prior to the start of the contest. You may not show or tell anyone how you recorded your judging points at any time during *or after* the contest. You may recycle your notes *after* the next level of competition is completed.

#### **WHAT DOES THE TOASTMASTER DO?**

As the Toastmaster you'll emcee the contest. In the days prior to the contest, if I don't remember to send you a copy of the program, the names of the contestants, speech titles, and contestant profiles (if any profiles have been turned in), then send me an email requesting the information.

Remember that the most important part of the contest is the contestants. You should limit your opening remarks to no more than three minutes and your interview of each contestant to no more than one minute. This is very important to ensure that we finish in a reasonable amount of time. Toastmasters mistakenly try to conduct long interviews of the contestants than go on for over 5 minutes. Please try to avoid this. The contestant has just spoken for quite a bit and should not be expected to engage in a many-minute interview or to craft a new speech on the spot to answer your questions. One minute per contestant is about right.

When you arrive at the contest, ask for the contest certificates of participation, the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality, and Speech Contestant Profile forms. If this is an evaluation contest, ask the Contest Chair to show you where the contestant room is. If there is no contestant room, ensure that the Contest Chair has reserved seats in the back corner of the room for the evaluation contestants to work following the Test Speaker.

For this contest you will brief the contestants and the Sergeants at Arms. Call them to the front of the room at **8:30am** and identify who is a Sergeant at Arms and who is in which contest. It is helpful to group the contestants by their individual contests. Be aware that contestants have the right to skip the briefing. If they have submitted their forms and reported to you before you are introduced, they can compete. If a contestant missed the briefing but submitted the forms and spoke with you before your introduction, the speaking order must be modified to accommodate the contestant. The Contest Chair will decide if all the contestants must redraw their speaking order or if the contestant will go first, last, or in the middle. Any contestant who does not meet with you before you are introduced cannot compete.

The Toastmaster and Chief Judge should meet before the briefings to agree on the designated speaking area, sometimes referred to as the stage. The Toastmaster must relay this information to the contestants. The Chief Judge must relay this information to the judges.

Collect the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms for the contestants from the Contest Chair. If any are missing, you will need to ask the contestant to complete the form during the briefing.

For your contestant briefing, bring the contestants and Sergeants at Arms to the stage area and ensure the Timers are at the timing table. Then say:

1. Will all contestants and Sergeant at Arms join me on the stage. (repeat as often as necessary until everyone arrives; however, if someone cannot be found after a couple of minutes, continue with the briefing).
2. I want to make certain I have your name pronounced correctly. I'll read off all the names now. Correct my pronunciation if I get your name wrong.
3. **For a speech contest:**
  - a. I want to make certain I have your speech titles correct. I'll read off your titles now.
  - b. A reminder that you must be in a club in good standing.
  - c. **For an International speech contest:** You must have completed 2 levels on a Pathways path, unless your club was chartered after July 1.
4. The accepted speaking area for our contest is before the first row of the audience (**and you may not walk further to the left than hear and further to the right than here**). Judges may deduct points if you walk into the first row.
5. Will our Sergeants at Arms raise their hands? If you have any props, slide shows, stage setup, etc., please speak with them following the briefing. Your setup must not take longer than 1 minute.
6. *The Timers should be at the Timer's table.* Will our Timers show us the timing signals? Was everyone able to see the timing signals? Keep in mind that there will be an audience seated.
7. I will now hand out cards. We will select cards to determine the contestant order.
8. Please hand me your completed Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality Forms. If you did not bring it with you, remain with me after this briefing to fill out the form now.
9. That's it. Good luck contestants and remember to speak to the Sergeants at Arms following their briefing if you need their assistance with setting up the stage for you.

Once the contestants step away and you have all the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms from them, begin the Sergeants at Arms briefing:

1. As our Sergeants at Arms, you are to ensure that no one enters or leaves the room while a contestant is speaking.
2. For speech contests, one of you may want to sit directly in front of the door to control this while the other remains up front to assist contestants.

3. For evaluation and Table Topics contests, both of you should be at the back door.
4. You are responsible for speaking with the contestants to find out if they need any setup in preparation for their presentations. Any setup must be removed immediately after their speech.
5. When the contest is ready to begin, call everyone to order and quiet them.
6. *If there will be a Pledge of Allegiance and a US flag is available:* You will lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance by announcing "Please stand and, if you would like, join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance." Ask the audience to sit after the Pledge.
7. Tell the audience where the restrooms are located and where to exit in case of an emergency.
8. Announce the name of Director who will come up, shake your hand, and begin the contest. The Director will then introduce me.
9. Following this briefing, ask the Timers to notify you when the break has 5 minutes remaining.
10. During the break, check the remaining time with the Timers. Five minutes before the end of the break, walk around and notify the audience that the contest will resume in five minutes. Ask the Timers to let you know when the break is over.
11. After the break, call everyone to order and quiet them.
12. Announce my name this time (not the director). I will come up, shake your hand, and continue the contest.
13. *If this is an Evaluation Contest:* You will escort the contestants to the separate room after the Test Speaker speaks. If a separate room is not available, secure an area at the back of the room where Evaluators may write. After 5 minutes, collect all contestant materials. If the contestants are in the contest room, then escort them out of the room. One of you should remain out of the room with the contestants and one of you should remain in the room, at the door. Ensure that the contestants are far enough away from the door that they cannot hear anything other than clapping. Bring the first contestant into the room, then close the door. Stay with the contestant in the room in front of the door and hold your hand up to signal to me that the contestant is ready. When you hear me call a contestant's name, hand the contestant his or her notes and direct them to the front of the room. Do not let them come to the front of the room until their name is called. Follow me after this briefing to see where the separate room (or reserved seating area) is located.
14. *If this is Table Topics Contest:* You will escort the contestants out the back or side door. One of you should remain out of the room with the contestants and one of you should remain in the room, at the door. Ensure that the contestants are far enough away from the door that they cannot hear anything other than clapping. Bring the first contestant into the room, then close the door. Stay with the contestant in the room in front of the door and hold your hand up to signal to me that the contestant is ready. When you hear me call a contestant's name, direct them to the front of the room. Do not let them come to the front of the room until their name is called.
15. That's it. Please check with the contestants to see if they need assistance and speak with the Timers about letting you know when there are 5 minutes left in the break and when the break is over.

After the briefings, notify the Chief Judge of the speaking order for all contests and hand the Chief Judge the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms for the contestants.

If the director has not yet given you all the Certificates of Participation for all the contests, ask for them now.

The contest will proceed as follows:

1. The director will introduce you to the audience. As soon as your name is announced, any contestants who have not identified themselves to you earlier are disqualified from competing.
2. Limit your opening remark to no more than 3 minutes. Consider referencing the contest theme.
3. You should introduce the Chief Judge to present the rules of the competition.
4. After the Chief Judge returns control to you, announce any contestant changes on the program agenda. For example, a runner-up may be competing instead of the original contestant.
5. Begin the contest:
  - a. If the Chief Judge did not announce the allowable time for the contests, do so now.

- b. If the Chief Judge did not announce that there should be 1 minute of silence after each contestant for the judges to mark their ballots, do so now.
  - c. If this is a table topics contest and you do not have the envelope with the question (it might be a statement instead of a question), ask for it now, open it up, read it to yourself, and make certain you understand it.
  - d. Announce the speaking order for the contest.
  - e. Announce a contestant.
    - i. For a speaking contest, announce the name of the contestant. Wait for the contestant to come up and shake your hand. Then announce the title of the speech, the title of the speech again, and the contestant's name again. Then shake the contestant's hand and sit down.
    - ii. For an evaluation contest, announce the name of the contestant. Wait for the contestant to come up and shake your hand. Then announce the contestant's name again. Shake the contestant's hand and sit down.
    - iii. For a table topics contest, announce the name of the contestant. Wait for the contestant to come up and shake your hand. Say the question or statement, say the question or statement again, and then announce the contestant's name again. Shake the contestant's hand and sit down.
  - f. When the contestant finishes, shake the contestant's hand; the contestant will return to a seat.
  - g. If this is not the last contestant announce, "We'll observe 1 minute of silence while the judges complete their ballots." If this is the last contestant announce, "We'll remain silent until the judge's ballots have been collected." During this period of silence, do NOT say anything. "Silence" means everyone including you. I know this is uncomfortable for some but it's important that the judges have quiet. Never comment in any way on contestant's response.
  - h. If there are more contestants for this contest, repeat the process for announcing the next contestant.
  - i. Wait for the Chief Judge to announce that the ballots have been collected and then wait for the Chief Judge and Ballot Counters have left the room.
  - j. Call up all the contestants to the stage. Then call on each in the order they competed to interview them. Please limit your interview to one minute. They have already spoken plenty and should not be engaged in a long conversation. Hand each contestant their Certificate of Participation, shake their hand, and whisper to them that they may return to their seat.
    - i. **IMPORTANT:** If a contestant is competing in a second contest, you must NOT call the contestant to the stage and interview them. You can only interview them after their second speech. Explain to the audience why you are not interviewing a contestant after the first contest.
    - ii. Common interview questions are to ask for the contestant's club name, years in Toastmasters, and then a question from their profile or a question about their speech or a question related to the theme. Keep all of this down to less than a minute.
6. If it is time to start the next contest, announce "This ends the xxxxx contest and we now begin the xxxxx contest." Then repeat the process for the contest as outlined previously.
  7. If it is time for the break, then announce, "We will now take a **20**-minute break. This is your last opportunity for opportunity drawing tickets. Timers, please let us know when there are 5 minutes left in the break. Check the program to confirm the length of the break.
    - a. Following the break, the Sergeants at Arms will call the meeting back to order. Do as you did earlier: introduce the Chief Judge, announce changes to the agenda, announce the contestant order, introduce each contestant, and conduct interviews.
  8. After the final contestant interview has been completed, tell the audience that it's been your pleasure to serve as the Toastmaster for today's contest. Then introduce the Opportunity Drawing Chair to conduct the Opportunity Drawing.

After the contest, hand all the Speech Contestant Profile and Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms to the next level director.

## WHAT DOES A TIMER DO?

(I've attached the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet for you to review).

As a timer you'll be timing just like you do in your club. We'll have two timers at the contest. One of you will have a stopwatch and will run the timing signals. The other will fill out the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet. The timing signals may be green/yellow/red cards or green/yellow/red lights. Use green when the minimum time has been reached; yellow at the midpoint; and red at the maximum allowable time. Disregard fractions of a second.

The Chief Judge will meet with you at **8:30am** to brief you and to give you the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet. The Chief Judge's briefing will be a summary of your responsibilities and may not include everything. Here are complete details:

For an Evaluation contest, contestants are timed at 2 minutes (green), 2:30 (yellow), and 3 minutes (red). If a contestant speaks for less than 1:30 or for more than 3:30 you must write down on the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet "disqualified."

For a Humorous Speech contest, contestants are timed at 5 minutes (green), 6 minutes (yellow), 7 minutes (red). If a contestant speaks for less than 4:30 or for more than 7:30 you must write down on the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet "disqualified."

For an International Speech contest, contestants are timed at 5 minutes (green), 6 minutes (yellow), 7 minutes (red). If a contestant speaks for less than 4:30 or for more than 7:30 you must write down on the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet "disqualified."

For a Table Topics contest, contestants are timed at 1 minute (green), 1:30 (yellow), and 2 minutes (red). If a contestant speaks for less than 1:00 or for more than 2:30 you must write down on the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet "disqualified."

For a Tall Tales contest, contestants are timed at 3 minutes (green), 4:00 (yellow), and 5 minutes (red). If a contestant speaks for less than 2:30 or for more than 5:30 you must write down on the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet "disqualified."

The Timer with the stopwatch completes the Speech Contest Time Record Sheet and hands the sheet to the Chief Judge at the end of the contest.

After each contestant speaks, judges have 1 minute to record their scores. Please time this. At 1 minute, turn on all the lights and then turn them off when the Toastmaster continues the meeting.

Once all contestants have competed, the Toastmaster will interview each. Please turn on all lights or show the red card at 1 minute so the Toastmaster knows to end the interview and move on to the next contestant.

It is imperative that the break between contests not go on too long to ensure we end at a reasonable time. Please **time the break** for **20** minutes (check the program to confirm length). When there are just 5 minutes left, tell the Sergeants at Arms so they can ask everyone to return to their seats. It is also helpful if one of you also walks around asking attendees to take their seats.

At division contests, the District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director will want to speak just before the break. Please time each to ensure that each speaks no more than 10 minutes. Show the green light at 8 minutes, yellow at 9 minutes, and red at 10 minutes.

### **WHAT DOES A BALLOT COUNTER DO?**

(I've attached the Counter's Tally Sheet for you to review)

As a Ballot Counter your role is to collect and count ballots. We'll have three Ballot Counters at the contest. One of you will count while one of you reads off the ballots and the third will monitor. The Chief Judge will also monitor the count. Then you'll switch roles to confirm the results.

The Chief Judge will meet with you at **8:30am** to brief you and to give you the Counter's Tally Sheets. The Chief Judge's briefing will be a summary of your responsibilities. Here are complete details:

At the end of each contest, judges will hold their envelopes in the air. You and the other counters will collect them. Hold up your fingers to indicate to the Chief Judge how many you have collected so the Chief Judge knows when they have all been collected. Once all the ballots have been collected, you'll leave the room to add up the scores on the Counter's Tally Sheet. Each time a name is listed first, award that contestant 3 points. Each time a name is listed second, award that contestant 2 points. Each time a name is listed third, give that contestant 1 point. Then add up all the points. All counters should agree on the number of points. Then write down 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place on a slip of paper and hand it to the Chief Judge. If there is a tie, let the Chief Judge know.

When the winners are announced, be aware that the Chief Judge may have used the Tie-Breaker Judge's ballot or disqualified a contestant due to timing or other disqualification.

### **WHAT DOES A SERGEANT AT ARMS DO?**

As a Sergeant at Arms, you will help us in several ways. There will be two Sergeants at Arms at the contest, and you may divide up the tasks however you'd like.

At **8:30am** you should attend the Toastmaster's briefing. Check if contestants have special needs for their speeches; they will also attend the briefing. For example, one may want the lectern in the center, and another may want it off to the side. Or one speaker may need a flip chart or an overhead projection unit set up. Some may have props. The contestant must ensure the setup takes less than 1 minute.

The Toastmaster's briefing will be a summary of your responsibilities. Here are complete details:

After the briefing, meet with the Timers and remind them to let you know when there are only 5 minutes remaining during the break.

At **8:55am** you should give everyone a "5-minute warning" that the contest is about to begin.

At **9:00am** you should go on stage and ask the audience to please be quiet (hand gestures work well – hold your hands above your head then, with arms held straight, lower your arms down to your waist with palms pointing down). Once the room is quiet, continue. If you have been asked earlier to lead the Pledge of Allegiance, do so with this introductory wording: "Please stand and, if you would like, join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance." The reason for this is that many of our members are not United States citizens and they should not feel required to recite the pledge. Explain emergency exit procedures, point out where the restrooms are located, point out rules of the room (for example, food or drink may not be

allowed), and then introduce the director (you only need to say, "Please join me in welcoming our Director \_\_\_\_\_.")

One of you should remain at the entry door throughout the contest to prevent anyone from entering or leaving the room while a contestant is speaking. If anyone arrives late, tell them to turn off all noisemaking items, such as a cell phone, and to not use any photography, video, or other recording device.

**If this is a Speech Contest:** While one of you remains at the entry door, the other should remain seated near the front to help each contestant with set up and breakdown. You'll want to set up the stage, if needed for the first speaker, before the contest begins and before the break. After each speaker finishes there will be 1 minute of silence for the judges. During this 1 minute, remove props from the previous speaker and set it up for the next speaker.

**If this is an Evaluation Contest:** The Contest Chair or Toastmaster will show you the separate room where you'll take the evaluation contestants. If there is no separate room, then they will show you the reserved seating area for them in the back corner of the room – please a "reserved" sign on each chair if there already isn't one. If you see anyone sitting there, please ask them to move. Decide which one of you will be the "in the room" Sergeant at Arms (ITR SAA) and which one will be the "out of the room" Sergeant at Arms (OTR SAA). The Toastmaster will announce the order of the contestants. After the Test Speaker has concluded, both Sergeants at Arms will go to the back of the room. The OTR SAA escorts all contestants to the room next door. If we do not have a separate room, the OTR SAA escorts them to the area you secured at the back corner of the room. **IMPORTANT:** Please keep track of the time. After 5 minutes, the OTR SAA collects the notes from all the contestants, but does not take the first contestant's notes. If we do not have a separate room, the OTR SAA escorts the contestants out the door and closes the door. Ensure that the contestants are far enough away from the door that they cannot hear anything other than clapping. The first contestant should remain inside the room with the ITR SAA. The ITR SAA raises a hand to signal the Toastmaster that the contestant is ready. When the contestant's name is announced, the ITR SAA points out the quickest way for the contestant to reach the Toastmaster – this may be to walk down the center aisle to the front of the room. After the contestant completes, the judges will have one minute to fill out their ballots. During this time, the OTR SAA hands the notes back to the next contestant and asks them to step into the room. Once the door is closed, the ITR SAA raises a hand to signal that the next contestant is ready. Continue for all contestants.

**If this is a Table Topics Contest:** Decide which one of you will be the "in the room" Sergeant at Arms (ITR SAA) and which one will be the "out of the room" Sergeant at Arms (OTR SAA). The Toastmaster will announce the order of the contestants. After the Test Speaker has concluded, both Sergeants at Arms will go to the back of the room. The OTR SAA escorts all contestants out the door except for the first contestant. The first contestant should remain inside the room with the ITR SAA. The ITR SAA raises a hand to signal the Toastmaster that the contestant is ready. When the contestant's name is announced, the ITR SAA points out the quickest way for the contestant to reach the Toastmaster – this may be to walk down the center aisle to the front of the room. After the contestant completes, the judges will have one minute to fill out their ballots. During this time, the OTR SAA escorts the next contestant into the room and closes the door. Once the door is closed, the ITR SAA raises a hand to signal that the next contestant is ready. Continue for all contestants.

After the first contest there will be a 20-minute break (check the program to confirm length). At 5 minutes before the end of the break (the Timers will be timing), announce that the contest begins in 5 minutes and then start moving everyone back into the room. When the break is over, announce the name of the Toastmaster (not the director) from the front of the room.

### WHAT DOES A REGISTRAR DO?

As our registrar, you must arrive at **7:45am** so that you are prepared when the audience begins arriving about 15 minutes later.

Admission is **\$5** for everyone **except contestants**. Contestants are **NOT** charged. Checks should be written to "District 5 Toastmasters." **Every attendee receives 1 free Opportunity Drawing ticket.**

Give each attendee a program.

Ask each attendee these questions:

- Are you a contestant?
  - If yes, then there is no charge.
  - If yes, tell the contestant to be at the front of the room at **8:30** for the Toastmaster's contestant briefing.
- Are you a Dignitary?
  - If yes, have the attendee check their name on the dignitary list.
  - **\*\*\* Important – just before 9:00am** hand the dignitary list to the director. The director needs to introduce the dignitaries.
- Are you a volunteer (Ballot Counter, Chief Judge, Contest Chair, Food Team, Judge, Opportunity Drawing Team, Registrar, Sergeant at Arms, Timer, Toastmaster)?
  - **If yes, give them three free Opportunity Drawing tickets instead of one.**
  - If yes, tell Ballot Counters, Judges, and Timers to meet the Chief Judge at the front of the room at **8:30** for their briefing.
  - If yes, tell Sergeants at Arms to meet with the Toastmaster at the front of the room at **8:30** for their briefing.
- Would you like to purchase Opportunity Drawing Tickets?
  - If yes, ask them to sign the back of each ticket before using it.
  - The cost is:
    - **1 ticket = \$1**
    - **7 tickets = \$5**
    - **20 tickets = \$10**

Other questions that may come up:

- Where do I take my Opportunity Drawing donation?
  - Take it to the Opportunity Drawing table.
- If someone wants to video or photograph the contest:
  - Ask them to meet with the Contest Chair or Chief Judge prior to 8:30am to complete the release form.

To ease registration, tear off several bunches of Opportunity Drawing tickets in groups of five.

Please remain at the registration table until **9:10am**. At **9:10am** please give the cash box to the contest chair and enjoy the contest. Return at the break; you will be given the cash box back and sell the opportunity drawing tickets. After the break, give the cash box to the contest chair and enjoy the remainder of the contest.

### WHAT DOES AN OPPORTUNITY DRAWING TEAM DO?

If you are the Opportunity Drawing Chair, then you will be responsible for requesting donations for the contest and will be involved in all aspects of the opportunity drawing.

If you are the Opportunity Drawing Assistant, then you will be responsible for all aspects of the opportunity drawing except requesting donations.

Details about the Opportunity Drawing may be found on the District 5 Speech Contests website page <http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/>. Please read the Opportunity Drawing guidebook – it will make your role easier and will speed up the contest.

To summarize what you will do at the contest, you should arrive by **7:45am** so that you can set up the Opportunity Drawing prize table. You will need to arrange the donated items and pair a bag with each for the collection of tickets; be sure to write the donated item(s) on the bag. You should remain at the Opportunity Drawing table until the contest begins, during the break, and after the break– so make certain you have chairs. If the contest is in a public venue, someone must remain with the opportunity drawing prizes at all times. The Opportunity Drawing team should take turns watching the table.

The registrars will sell tickets for **1 for \$1, 7 for \$5, and 10 for \$7**. Ask guests to write their names on the backs of the tickets before dropping them in the bags. All prizes will be awarded towards the end of the contest.

During the interviews following the break, QUIETLY mix up the tickets in each bag and select a winning ticket. You do not want to be a distraction. Ideally, the audience will not hear you. Tape the winning ticket to each item or to the bag associated with each item.

After all contestants have competed and have been interviewed the Toastmaster will pass control of the contest to the Opportunity Drawing Chair. Announce to the audience that the winning tickets have been selected. Announce the winning prizes in order of least popular to most popular to build up excitement. Just announce the item and the winner's name. **Do not** go into a long description about the prize. **Do not** read the ticket number unless there is no name on it **Do not** ask the winner to come to you – the Opportunity Drawing Assistants will take the prize to them. **Do not** check the tickets to see if the person really has the winning ticket. Spending time checking each ticket is a significant waste of time, and anyway, you'll know there's an issue if more than one claims to have the winning ticket. We want to get through the opportunity drawing as quickly as possible.

Note: It is okay for the Opportunity Drawing team to purchase tickets.

Contestants received an email preparing them for the contest. Be sure to attach to the email the Speech Contestant Profile and Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms. You may download the forms from the speech contest or shopping area of [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org).

***If you choose to use the email below, be sure to change it to fit the particulars of your contest and check the rulebook as the allowable times and other factors may have changed!***

(Attached please find the Speech Contest Rulebook, Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality form, and the Speech Contestant's Profile form.)

Congratulations on winning your club contest! The **Area 16** Contest is on **March 4, 2025** and I bet you have lots of questions. I'll do my best to answer what I can in this email and ask that you please contact me [mkramer@flash.net](mailto:mkramer@flash.net) if you have any additional questions.

#### **WHERE IS THE CONTEST?**

The contest begins **at 9:00am at Solar Turbines in Kearny Mesa located at 4200 Ruffin Road, San Diego, CA 92123**. There is no charge for contestants. **All contestants must arrive by 8:15am** to receive official pre-contest information, to fill out pre-contest paperwork, and to select contestant order.

#### **SPEECH TITLE**

Please send me the title of your speech, now. It will help with our contest preparation. If you have any props, you must notify me prior to the contest, and they must take less than 1 minute to set up. Props will be set up by the Sergeant at Arms, but you may ask someone else to set them up for you.

#### **THE PAPERWORK**

Please print out the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality form as well as the Speech Contestant Profile form, fill the forms out, and bring them with you to the contest. If you would like, you can fill them out ahead of time and email them to me. You do not need to answer all questions on the Speech Contestant Profile form. This form is for the Toastmaster to use, if desired, during the 1-minute interview phase of the contest. Do not write down anything that you are not willing to talk about!

#### **WHAT HAPPENS AT 8:15AM?**

As soon as you arrive, notify the Toastmaster that you have arrived. This is just in case you do not hear the Toastmaster call contestants for their briefing, or you are late in arriving and missed the briefing. If the Toastmaster is introduced without you having spoken to the Toastmaster, you will be disqualified.

The Toastmaster will call for all contestants for a briefing. This will include a review of the rules, select the speaking order, ensure that you've filled out all paperwork, introduce you to the Sergeants at Arms in case you need assistance setting up for your presentation, ask if you can see the timing devices, and ask if you have any questions. Remember that props must take less than 1 minute to set up by the Sergeant at Arms. If you have asked someone else to do the setup, let the Sergeant at Arms know.

You will be asked to give your Speech Contestant Profile to the Toastmaster.

You will also be asked for your completed Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality form. To compete in a contest other than the International Speech Contest you must be a member with paid-up dues in a club that is in good standing. To compete in the International Speech Contest, you must be a member with paid up dues in a club that is in good standing and have completed at least 2 levels on a Pathways path. If you are a charter member in a club that was chartered after July 1 then the 2-level rule is waived.

When you meet with the Toastmaster, take this time to speak with our Sergeants at Arms – who will also be there -- to indicate if you have any special needs for your speech. For example: Do you want the lectern in the middle, to the side, or "off stage"? Do you need a table to place props on? Should your props be placed in a corner? Do you need a projection unit set up? How about a flip chart?

#### **WHEN WILL THE CONTEST END?**

On this date we do not know how many will be competing in the contest. We estimate that a contest takes 15 minutes per contestant for area contests and 20 minutes per contestant for division contestants. We anticipate that the contest will be over by **noon**.

#### **SHOULD I READ THE SPEECH CONTEST RULEBOOK?**

This is a given! It is each contestant's responsibility to read the Speech Contest Rulebook and know the rules. Find the rulebook on [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org). Search for "speech contest rulebook".

**MUST I GIVE THE SAME SPEECH I GAVE AT THE PREVIOUS CONTEST?**

You do not need to give the same speech you used previously.

**ANOTHER CONTEST SAID SOMETHING THAT I'D LIKE TO MENTION**

If you are not the first speaker and you heard another contestant say something that you'd like to mention, now, in your speech: Don't. You are not allowed to reference anything said by a previous contestant during the contest.

**I'M IN TWO CLUBS AND WON BOTH. MAY I COMPETE IN BOTH AREA CONTESTS?**

Per the Speech Contest Rulebook, while members may compete in more than one club contest for the same contest type (such as the Humorous Speech Contest), members may only compete in one area for the same contest type. "No contestant can compete in more than one (1) Area speech contest of a given type, even if the two (2) Areas are in different Divisions or Districts."

**CAN I RECEIVE CREDIT FOR MY SPEECH?**

Yes! Even if you give a speech, you've given before you may receive Pathways credit for it again as long as the speech fulfills the guidelines of the project. Bring your evaluation resource form and ask a member to complete it and give you an oral report after the contest.

**MAY I USE POWERPOINT PRESENTATION OR PROPS?**

Yes! You must notify me well in advance if you plan to use props or device. If you need us to provide anything special for your speech (projection unit, whiteboard, flip chart, etc.) please let me know immediately and we will do our best to accommodate you. If you want to bring your own equipment, please check with me first, so I can confirm that it is okay to do so at the facility.

Consider arriving 15 minutes early so you can test your equipment. During or before the briefing, be sure to let the Sergeants at Arms know any special arrangements you may need. It must take less than 1 minute to set up. You may ask someone else to do the set up; just let the Sergeant at Arms know.

**HOW WILL THE ROOM BE ARRANGED?**

The room is a flat, carpeted conference room. You will stand at the front of the room and there will be a lectern available for you to use if you wish. Directly down the center of the room is an aisle; at the end of the aisle will sit the Timers. On either side of the aisle there will be about 6 rows of 10 chairs each. For single area contests we estimate 25 attendees; for double area contests we estimate 50 attendees, and for division contests we estimate 60 attendees.

While you may wander around the room as part of your presentation, this is highly discouraged; it is strongly recommended that you remain towards the front, center of the room, before the first row.

**WILL THE INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST BE JUDGED IN THE SAME WAY IT WAS AT MY CLUB?**

Yes. The judges will use the standard ballot forms. Judges will evaluate you based on the following criteria (please see the Speech Contest Rulebook for specific judging details):

- Content (was it well developed, effective, and of value to the audience?) – 50% of the score
- Delivery (was body language, voice, enthusiasm, and interest in audience appropriate?) – 30% of the score
- Language (was proper grammar used and were words appropriate to the audience and message?) – 20% of the score

You may remain in the room to hear all the contestants, including those before you.

Speeches must be between 5-7 minutes. Any speeches less than 4:30 or over 7:30 are disqualified.

**WILL THE HUMOROUS SPEECH CONTEST BE JUDGED IN THE SAME WAY IT WAS AT MY CLUB?**

Yes. The judges will use the standard ballot forms. Judges will evaluate you based on the following criteria (please see the Speech Contest Rulebook for specific judging details):

- Content (was it well developed, effective, and of value to the audience?) – 55% of the score
- Delivery (was body language, voice, enthusiasm, and interest in audience appropriate?) – 30% of the score
- Language (was proper grammar used and were words appropriate to the audience and message?) – 15% of the score

You may remain in the room to hear all the contestants, including those before you.

Speeches must be between 5-7 minutes. Any speeches less than 4:30 or over 7:30 are disqualified.

**WILL THE TALL TALES SPEECH CONTEST BE JUDGED IN THE SAME WAY IT WAS AT MY CLUB?**

Yes. The judges will use the standard ballot forms. Judges will evaluate you based on the following criteria (please see the Speech Contest Rulebook for specific judging details):

- Content (was it well developed, effective, and of value to the audience?) – 30% of the score
- Delivery (was body language, voice, enthusiasm, and interest in audience appropriate?) – 55% of the score
- Language (was proper grammar used and were words appropriate to the audience and message?) – 15% of the score

You may remain in the room to hear all the contestants, including those before you.

Speeches must be between 3-5 minutes. Any speeches less than 2:30 or over 5:30 are disqualified.

**WILL THE EVALUATION CONTEST BE JUDGED IN THE SAME WAY IT WAS AT MY CLUB?**

Yes. The judges will use the standard ballot forms. Judges will evaluate you based on the following criteria (please see the Speech Contest Rulebook for specific judging details):

- Analytical Quality (was it clear and concise?) – 40% of the score
- Recommendations (were they positive, specific, and helpful?) – 30% of the score
- Technique (was it sympathetic, sensitive, and motivational?) – 15% of the score
- Summation (was it concise and encouraging?) – 15% of the score

If you want to take notes during the test speech or to prepare for your evaluation, **you may only use the Evaluation Contestant Notes sheet** (item 1177 in the Toastmasters website store). Please download this sheet in advance, print it, and bring it to the contest.

Once the test speech is complete you will be escorted to another room where you may prepare notes on the Evaluation Contestant Notes sheet for 5 minutes. Remember to bring something to write with. The Sergeant At Arms will take your notes away after 5 minutes and give them back to you when you are called into the room to give your evaluation. You should NOT walk out on stage until you hear the Toastmaster announce your name. Once you have given your evaluation you may remain in the room and hear others after you.

Evaluations must be between 2-3 minutes. Any evaluations less than 1:30 or over 3:30 are disqualified.

You may not use any digital or other devices for the contest. Evaluation contestants should not know the Test Speaker at the contest. If you do know the Test Speaker, you must alert the Chief Judge immediately. If you happen to run into the Test Speaker before the contest begins, do not speak with the Test Speaker. **Any pre-contest communication between Evaluation contestants and the Test Speaker may result in your disqualification.**

#### **WILL THE TABLE TOPICS CONTEST BE JUDGED IN THE SAME WAY IT WAS AT MY CLUB?**

Yes. The judges will use the standard ballot forms. Judges will evaluate you based on the following criteria (please see the Speech Contest Rulebook for specific judging details):

- Content (was it well developed, effective, and of value to the audience?) – 55% of the score
- Delivery (was body language, voice, enthusiasm, and interest in audience appropriate?) – 30% of the score
- Language (was proper grammar used and were words appropriate to the audience and message?) – 15% of the score

Except for the first contestant, all other contestants will be escorted outside the room. The Sergeant at Arms will escort you into the room when it is your turn to compete. You should NOT walk out on stage until you hear the Toastmaster announce your name. Each contestant will be asked the same question one at a time. Once you have responded, you may remain in the room. Table Topic will be timed from 1-2 minutes. Any response for less than 1 minute or more than 2:30 is disqualified.

You may not use any digital or other devices for the contest.

#### **IS THERE ANYTHING I SHOULDN'T SAY DURING THE CONTEST?**

Your presentation must primarily be original content. You must not mention any other contestants or reference another contestant's speech.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS AFTER ALL THE CONTESTANTS HAVE COMPETED?**

The Toastmaster will invite all contestants to the front of the room and interview you for a minute. The Toastmaster will probably ask you what your club's name is and how long you've been in Toastmasters. Then you'll probably either be asked a question from the Speech Contestant Profile form you submitted or be asked something like "Have you competed in other contests?" "What advice would you give to others from your contest experience?" "What have you learned from this experience?" or a question about your speech, evaluation, or response.

#### **SHOULD I PROVIDE AN INTRODUCTION FOR THE TOASTMASTER?**

No. The Toastmaster must adhere to strict guidelines for introductions. If you are giving a speech, the Toastmaster will announce your name, speech title, repeat the speech title, and repeat your name. If you are in the Table Topics contest, the Toastmaster will announce your name, the subject/question, repeat the subject/question, and repeat your name. If you are in the Evaluation contest, the Toastmaster will announce your name twice.

#### **WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?**

Contestants usually wear business casual attire but will sometimes wear clothes that enhance the speech; for example, a speech about baseball might be enhanced by wearing a baseball uniform.

Be aware that you may be hooked up to a microphone. Men and women should wear something to which the wireless microphone can be connected. Typically, the microphone will be attached to your lapel and

the transmitter to your belt (usually the back of the belt) and the two will be connected by a wire. This sometimes leads to uncomfortable situations as the Sergeant at Arms connects you. If you are wearing a coat, you will probably be asked to take off the coat while you are being connected.

Another consideration is jewelry. It is usually best to keep this at a minimum. For example, very large earrings might reflect light into the audience and distract them. It is suggested that you do not wear your Toastmasters badge; but a Toastmaster's pin is a nice touch, although some judges prefer not to see anything. Judges judge based on many things including how you present yourself.

#### **I CANNOT ATTEND THE CONTEST. WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

Let me know immediately so I can contact the runner-up, inform the Chief Judge and Toastmaster, and update the contest program.

#### **WILL I BE RECORDED?**

There are no plans to record the contest; however, someone may bring a recording device to the contest. If someone does, that person may only use the recording device after speaking with the Chief Judge and after obtaining your permission on a release form 30 minutes prior to the start of the contest. You are not obligated to sign the release form. Only those who sign the release form may be recorded.

If you want someone to record just your presentation, ensure that the person submits the Photo Release Form or Video Release Form 30 minutes before the contest begins. The Contest Chair and the Chief Judge will have the forms, and the forms must be turned in to the Chief Judge.

#### **WHO SHOULD I ASK IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?**

You can write me at [mkramer@flash.net](mailto:mkramer@flash.net).

*Note: Be sure to attach a copy of the Speech Contest Rulebook, Speech Contestant Profile, and Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms to the email to the contestants! You can download them from [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org). Also attach a copy of the contest flyer.*

**Be very clear with the directors about their roles at the contest.** They are to open or close their contests. Typically, the Sergeant at Arms brings everyone to attention, possibly leads the Pledge of Allegiance, shares safety information, and then introduces the director to welcome the audience. Then the director introduces the Toastmaster. At the end of the meeting, the Toastmaster thanks the audience and then re-introduces the director to hand out certificates of participation, hand out awards, and thank everyone for attending. At one contest, the director asked the Sergeant at Arms to introduce the Toastmaster instead. This took the Toastmaster by surprise; he was still organizing his notes thinking he still had time while the director welcomed everyone. Towards the end of the meeting, after the Toastmaster had introduced the director, the director handed out the awards and then returned the meeting back to the Toastmaster. The Toastmaster was entirely caught off guard, certificates of participation were never handed out, and the audience was not properly thanked for attending.

## **After The Contestants Compete**



*Contest Chairs – please share this entire section with the area/division director. Also send the director a list of all volunteers and their roles and a list of all contestants.*

In the case of multiple areas at one contest, each contest is intended to be organized as its own entity with awards handed out for the first area before starting the second area contest; however, it has become common practice to wait until all area contests conclude before handing out awards. This is not a violation of the rule book.

It is the responsibility of the director to thank contest volunteers and hand them certificates of appreciation. Each should have the volunteer's name and be signed and dated. Directors should do this in advance of the contest but keep some blank certificates available to fill out at the contest in case there are changes. Keep your acknowledgements short. I have witnessed contests where the acknowledgements went on longer than the rest of the contest! Remember, the focus of the contest should be on the contestants so directors should move through their acknowledgements quickly. Acknowledge functionaries and the contest committee orally and list others in the program. Always thank the venue and anyone else who made a significant contribution such as a corporation making special donations for the opportunity drawing.

To save time, directors should call up groups of functionaries, such as all the Timers and Ballot Counters, at one time. However, key roles, such as the Toastmaster, the Chief Judge, and the Contest Chair, should be acknowledged individually. Judges should NOT be publicly acknowledged; however, the director should discreetly hand them certificates – often they are given to the Chief Judge to give the judging team during the briefing. If the contest is running extremely late, ask volunteers to see you after the contest to receive their certificates.

To really save time, hand out all the certificates *before* the contest. At the end of the contest the director can just ask them to stand in place as they are named; ask the audience to hold applause until all have been acknowledged.

You'll find that you only have a limited number of certificates so do not try to thank everyone with a certificate. You'll run out of certificates and the audience will run out of patience. Keep *several* blank certificates in reserve for last-minute substitutions.

Contestant awards (referred to as trophies, here, but might be medals, ribbons, or other award) are awarded by the next level director. For an area contest, that's the Division Director. For a division contest, that's the District Director. You should introduce the next level director for the awards section.

Important: If there were any disqualifications due to originality or eligibility, the Chief Judge must discreetly notify the Contest Chair of the contestant who was disqualified and then the Contest Chair must speak with the contestant, discreetly, before awards are announced.

Before handing out the awards the next level director should announce if there were any disqualifications but not announce the names of anyone disqualified. Use this wording:

- "In the \_\_\_\_\_ contest there were no disqualifications due to time."
- "In the \_\_\_\_\_ contest there was 1 disqualification due to time."

The next level director should announce the 3<sup>rd</sup> place contestant (if there are three or more), then runner-up contestant (if there were 2 or more), and then announce the winner. The director whose contest this is, should hand the awards to contestants.

Once the award has been handed out, both directors should be ready to pose for a picture! Don't just let the winners get away. There is bound to be someone with a camera in the audience.

Once all awards have been handed out, the next level director should return control to the contest's director who can end the day with a statement like: "I'd like to congratulate our contestants for doing such an outstanding job. And I'd like to thank you, the audience, for helping to make this such a great contest. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at the \_\_\_\_\_(next level of competition)\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_(date)\_\_\_\_\_."

After the contest, hand the winners' and runners-ups' Speech Contestant Profile and Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality forms along with their contact information to the next level director.

Finally, the contest chair and team should clean up and work out expenses with a higher-level director or the District Financial Manager. Then take a few moments to record lessons learned. Please share this information with the next director.

Be sure to thank all those, again, who helped with the contest. I always do so through a personal email following the contest.

***If you choose to use the emails, below, be sure to change them to fit the particulars of your contest!***

Alice,

Thank you so much for helping as a registrar at the Area 16 Contest. The contest could not have gone off successfully without your help.

Thanks again!

Mark Kramer, DTM  
Area 16 Director

## Opportunity Drawing



Opportunity drawings ensure that contest expenses are covered; however, they sometimes are so drawn out that they take more time than the contest itself! Opportunity drawings should be simple and quick. Your goal is to get through it as quickly as you can so the audience can find out who won the contest.

The “Opportunity Drawing Chair Guide” provides the details on how to organize and run the opportunity drawing. It is available on the District 5 Speech Contests website page <http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/http://www.d5tm.org/contests/>.

Some suggestions:

- Give one free ticket to all guests; it encourages them to see the prize table and buy more tickets.
- Give away three free tickets to all volunteers. It is a way to thank them for helping.
- Don't use dark tickets such as red, green, or blue; they are difficult for those who are colorblind to read. Use light colored tickets such as white, pink, and yellow.
- Begin asking clubs for donations 4 weeks in advance of the contest.
- Arrive 1 hour and 15 minutes before the contest starts so you have time to set up and get organized when attendees begin arriving 1 hour prior to the contest start time.
- You'll need multiple tables and three chairs.
- Pair prizes with a bag and write on the bag which prize the bag is for.
- Try to limit the overall number of prizes to no more than 20. If you have more, group them (ex. group two bottles of wine together or three gift cards together).
- Ask guests to write their name on the back of each ticket before using them.
- Give away all prizes at the end of the contest; none before the break.
- As the Opportunity Drawing Chair calls out the name of the winner, the Opportunity Drawing Assistants run the prizes out to the winner.
- If you are in a public venue, make certain someone is always with the prizes.

## Theme



Themes are highly recommended but not required. Themes can be included on the flyer, the program, and gives the Toastmaster something to talk about throughout the contest. Should you decorate? It's rare but when there are decorations it adds to the atmosphere.

## Flyers



Advertising the contest is crucial to its success and the earlier you distribute the flyer the better. Send the flyer to the District Contest Chair, all directors represented in the contest, all presidents from clubs in the area or division competing, all contest volunteers and contestants.

You might also consider advertising in an online publication.

The flyer does not need to be fancy. If you include the basic information about What, When, Where, and How Much then you'll be fine. Incorporate the theme if there is a theme. Be clear on pricing information (including that checks should be made out to D5 Toastmasters), when everyone should arrive, whether there will be food, and if there will be an opportunity drawing. If there are free tickets given to some, specify them on the flyer. Get the flyer out no later than 4 weeks prior to the contest and attach it to all your emails to the directors, contestants, and volunteers.

Obtain written permission from everyone listed on the flyer to use their name, phone number, and/or email address on the flyer.

Important: Include a statement on the flyer about needing to sign the Photo Release and Video Release forms 30 minutes before the start of the contest if photos or video are to be taken. Members must agree to be photographed or videotaped.

Always have someone check the spelling on flyers and all promotional materials. You never want one to go out with misspellings.

Over the years I've seen a wide range of flyers. The next couple of pages show a couple of flyers from past contests.

## Area 16

# International Speech & Evaluation Contests



## "March Forth"

March 4, 2019

9:00am



Opportunity Drawing Team & Registrars please arrive at 7:45am  
Contestants, Judges, Functionaries please arrive at 8:15am

ABC Company (Kearny Mesa)  
4444 Oak Street, San Diego 92199



Just **\$5.00!**

Price includes contests, refreshments,  
and 1 free opportunity drawing ticket;  
volunteers receive 3!

*Checks payable to: D5 Toastmasters*

For information please contact:

Xxxx Xxxxxxx, 858-555-5555 [xxxxxxx@xxxxxx.com](mailto:xxxxxxx@xxxxxx.com)

*If you plan to shoot photos or videos you and the members you record must complete the appropriate Photo Release or Video Release form available on the TI website:*

Photos: <http://www.toastmasters.org/~media/0E7402AA7AC641589E49BBAB62909B6C.ashx>

Videos: <http://www.toastmasters.org/~media/A31F59C53EA548B98E795A9D58A66745.ashx>

# Central Division Humorous Speech & Table Topic Contests



## “Get ready to have a yabba dabba doo time!”

The *Flintstones* burst onto the screen on September 30, 1960 and has been there in one form or another ever since!



### Sept 30, 2019, 9:00am

Opportunity Drawing Team & Registrars: arrive 7:45am  
Contestants/Judges/Volunteers: arrive 8:15am

XYZ, Inc. (Rancho Bernardo)  
222 Walnut Court, San Diego 92199

### Just \$5.00!

Price includes contest, refreshments, and one free Opportunity Drawing ticket; volunteers receive 3!



*Checks payable to: D5 Toastmasters*

For information please contact:  
Xxxx Xxxxxxx, 858-555-5555 [xxxxxxx@xxxxxx.com](mailto:xxxxxxx@xxxxxx.com)

*If you plan to shoot photos or videos you and the members you record must complete the appropriate Photo Release or Video Release form available on the TI website:*

Photos: <http://www.toastmasters.org/~media/0E7402AA7AC641589E49BBAB62909B6C.ashx>

Videos: <http://www.toastmasters.org/~media/A31F59C53EA548B98E795A9D58A66745.ashx>

## Program Agenda



The program agenda sets the theme of the contest, lists the order of events, identifies the contestants in alphabetical order, and names key players in the contest. Programs can take any form, but most follow a 4-page template using one 8 ½ x 11-inch paper, printed in landscape, and folded in half. Think of a birthday card that is in landscape format rather than portrait.

- The front page contains the welcome and is illustrated with the theme.
- The inside left page includes the program for the first half of the contest.
- The inside right page includes the program for the second half of the contest.
- The back page lists the clubs participating in the contest, thank yous, and an invitation to see the winners at the next level of competition.

I also like to see a sample ballot included with the program agenda. The sample ballot is a miniature version of the official ballot used by the judges. Providing audience members with a sample ballot helps involve them more in the contest. Plus, it gives them something to do during those awkward moments of silence when the judges are completing their ballots. I've included sample ballots after the sample program agenda.

Can multiple area contests be combined? According to Toastmasters International (2010-2013), "We allow combined area contests; however, we strongly discourage against this practice. If you wish to combine area A and area B contests, you will need to complete the area A contest, announcing winners and all, before starting the area B contest. The two area contests must be separate of each other."

Toastmasters International says that an integrated area contest is "strongly discouraged" but is not strictly forbidden (2013). In an integrated format, both areas have distinct and separate contests, but they occur together rather than completing one before starting the next:

1. Open contest
2. Contest 1
  - a. Area A competes
  - b. Ballots collected for Area A
  - c. Area A is interviewed
  - d. Area B competes
  - e. Ballots collected for Area B
  - f. Area B is interviewed
3. Break
4. Contest 2
  - a. Area A competes
  - b. Ballots collected for Area A
  - c. Area A is interviewed
  - d. Area B competes
  - e. Ballots collected for Area B
  - f. Area B is interviewed
5. Announce winners of Area A Contest 1 then Contest 2; then announce winners of Area B Contest 1 then Contest 2. **Under no circumstances may you announce winners until all contests have concluded.**

**Be aware that some members will not support an integrated contest because of the strong discouragement by Toastmasters International and because the format runs contrary to the intent of Toastmaster International's speech contest guideline.**

Things to keep in mind when creating a program agenda:

- List contestants alphabetically -- **Spell everyone's name correctly!**
- **Check spelling.**
- Place underlines before contestant names for the audience to note speaking order.
- Do not include any information about the contestants other than their names. You may include speech titles but only if you know all the speech titles. If you don't know them all, then do not include any speech titles in the program.
- Do not include the club or area each contestant represents.
- Don't include the specific time that each segment of the contest occurs.
- For division contests, plan 20-30 minutes just before the break for the District Director, Program Quality Director, and Club Growth Director to update everyone on district happenings. Check each two weeks before the contest to find out how much time will be needed. Call this "District Announcements".
- Plan for a 20-minute break MINIMUM.
- Hold the International Speech Contest last if there is one. As one director told me, the other contest is the appetizer, the speech contest is the dessert.
- Print more copies than the attendance you anticipate – we often run short.
- Do not print the program with a dark background or on glossy paper. Audience members will want to write notes on the program. They won't be able to do that on a dark background or on glossy paper.
- Be very clear about who is responsible for printing and bringing the programs.

Important: Share the draft agenda with the Chief Judge and Toastmaster a week before the contest. They may request changes, and it is best to make them early. And they may spot grammatical or spelling issues.

Should you find that your area contest only has one contest (for example, none of the clubs are participating in one of the contests), skip the break.

You'll find a sample contest script you may use on the District 5 Speech Contest web page: <http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/>. You may also use this one used at a two-area integrated contest that began at 9am:

**At 7:45am, Before Contest**, the Contest Chair, directors, Opportunity Drawing team, Food team, and Registrars arrive and set up.

**By 8:15, Before Contest**, all contestants and functionaries should arrive.

**At 8:20, Before Contest**, Toastmaster meets with director(s) and Contest Chair to receive completed contestant profiles, contestant eligibility forms, and certificates of participation.

**At 8:30, Before Contest**, Toastmaster meets with contestants to brief on rules (including photography and video), select order of speaking for each of the 4 contests, ensures that contestants understand speaking area, and can see timing items. Ensure that every contestant has completed a profile and eligibility form.

**At 8:30, Before Contest**, Chief Judge meets with judges, timers, and counters to brief on rules

**At 8:55, Before Contest**, the director picks up the dignitary sign-in sheet from the registrars.

**At 9:00 Sergeant at Arms** calls for attention, explains emergency exit procedures, and introduces Area Director.

**Director** welcomes audience, acknowledges dignitaries, and introduces Toastmaster.

**Toastmaster** warms up the audience (< 3 minutes) and then introduces the Chief Judge.

**Chief Judge** reminds audience to turn off cell phones, there is no photography or videography of any kind unless release forms have been signed, and no one should get up when a contestant is speaking.

**Toastmaster** announces the order of the Area 10 Evaluation contestants. If a contestant in the program is not competing, the audience should be notified at this time.

**Area 10 Evaluation Contest – Toastmaster** introduces **Test Speaker** who presents a 5–7-minute speech.

**Area 10 Evaluation Contest –** Following the test speech, **Toastmaster** asks **Sergeant at Arms** to escort contestants out of room to prepare their evaluations.

**Area 10 Evaluation Contest –** Once contestants are out of the room, **Toastmaster** interviews **test speaker**.

**Area 10 Evaluation Contest –** Timers notify Toastmaster when 5 minutes are up.

**Area 10 Evaluation Contest –** Five minutes after the contestants were escorted out, **Toastmaster** requests that **Sergeant at Arms** escort the **contestants** into the room one at a time.

**Area 10 Evaluation Contest –** Toastmaster introduced each contestant by using the contest's name twice. Each contestant gives a presentation. Toastmaster asks for one minute of silence between contestants and then continued silence until all ballots have been collected after last contestant.

**Area 10 Evaluation Contest –** Ballot Counter and Chief Judge remain in the room after ballots collected from first contest.

**Area 25 Evaluation Contest –** After all ballots have been collected, **Toastmaster** introduces **Test Speaker** who presents a 5–7-minute speech.

**Area 25 Evaluation Contest –** Following the test speech, **Toastmaster** asks **Sergeant at Arms** to escort contestants out of room to prepare their evaluations.

**Area 25 Evaluation Contest –** Once contestants are out of the room, **Toastmaster** interviews **test speaker**.

**Area 25 Evaluation Contest –** Timers notify Toastmaster when 5 minutes are up.

**Area 25 Evaluation Contest –** Five minutes after the contestants were escorted out, **Toastmaster** requests that **Sergeant at Arms** escort the **contestants** into the room one at a time.

**Area 25 Evaluation Contest –** Toastmaster introduces each contestant by using the contest's name twice. Each contestant gives a presentation. Toastmaster asks for one minute of silence between contestants and then silence until all ballots submitted after last contestant.

**Area 16/25 Evaluation Contest** – After all ballots have been collected, the Ballot Counter and Chief Judge leave the room to count the ballots.

**Area 16/25 Evaluation Contest** – After all ballots have been collected, **Toastmaster** asks for a round of applause for all contestants then interviews each in the order of participation. If a contestant is competing in the second contest, do not interview the contestant at this time. Give each contestant a certificate of participation. Limit interviews to no more than one minute per contestant; this is not Table Topics so keep it simple. Ask their club, years in Toastmasters, if they've competed in an area contest before, and either something about their speech or something from their profiles. **DO NOT RUN LONG – KEEP IT TO UNDER 1 MINUTE PER CONTESTANT**; shorter is better!

**Toastmaster** announces break, the time that the meeting will continue 20 minutes later, and that this is the last chance to purchase opportunity drawing tickets.

**Timers** notify the **Sergeants at Arms** when there is 5 minutes left in the break. The **Sergeants at Arms** announce to attendees that the contest continues in 5 minutes.

**Sergeant at Arms** calls for attention after break and introduces the Toastmaster.

**Toastmaster** introduces the Chief Judge.

**Chief Judge** reminds audience to turn off cell phones, there is no photography or videography of any kind unless forms have been signed prior to contest, and no one should get up when a contestant is speaking.

**Area 10 International Speech Contest - Toastmaster** announces the order of the Area 10 International Speech contestants. If a contestant in the program is not competing, the audience should be notified at this time.

**Area 10 International Speech Contest - Toastmaster** asks for one minute of silence between contestants and then silence until all ballots are collected after last contestant.

**Area 10 International Speech Contest – Ballot Counters and Chief Judge** remain in the room after collecting all the ballots.

**Area 25 International Speech Contest - Toastmaster** announces the order of the Area 25 International Speech contestants. If a contestant in the program is not competing, the audience should be notified at this time.

**Area 25 International Speech Contest - Toastmaster** asks for one minute of silence between contestants and then silence until all ballots are collected after last contestant.

**Areas 10/25 International Speech Contest – Ballot Counters and Chief Judge** leave room to count the ballots.

**Areas 10/25 International Speech Contest – Toastmaster** asks for a round of applause for all contestants then interviews each in the order of participation. Give each contestant a certificate of participation. Limit interviews to no more than one minute per contestant; this is not Table Topics so keep it simple. Ask their club, years in Toastmasters, if they've competed in an area contest before, and either something about their speech or something from their profiles. **DO NOT RUN LONG – KEEP IT TO UNDER 1 MINUTE PER CONTESTANT**; shorter is better!

*If there were any disqualifications for originality or eligibility, the Chief Judge should discretely speak to the Contest Chair during this time and then the Contest Chair should discretely speak with the contestant. This must be done before the awards are announced.*

**Toastmaster** introduces Opportunity Drawing Chair.

**Opportunity Drawing Chair** conducts drawing; returns control to the Toastmaster.

**Toastmaster** thanks audience and introduces the director.

*(If this had been a division contest then the **Division Director** may, at this point, invite the District Director, Program Quality Director, or Club Growth Director to give a 5-minute maximum presentation timed by the Timers. This should **only** be included if pre-arranged prior to the contest and is listed on the agenda. If it is not pre-arranged and not listed on the agenda, skip this; don't ask in the middle of the division contest).*

**Director** presents certificates of appreciation thanking participants and thanks the venue. Keep the presentation of certificates short. The audience has had a long day, are anxious to learn who won, and want to head on to something else. Get through this as quickly as you can. You only need to state what role the member played (ex. Pat Smith for Timing); you do not need to say anything more. Introduce the next level director to hand out awards. (The Director should remain up front to assist).

**Next Level Director** announces if there were any disqualification and presents awards (awarding runner up then winner). Then introduces the Director for adjournment.

**Director** thanks audience, reminds them of the next level of competition, and adjourns.

The following two pages show a sample program. It is two pages and should be printed on a single sheet of paper, front and back. Be careful when printing to ensure that the front and back sides are facing the same direction after folding! The pages after the program are sample ballots for you to distribute to guests along with the program. Following the sample ballots is an alternate format ("strongly discouraged") for a combined contest.

## Area 16 Clubs:

Dynamic Speakers  
Hewlett Packard  
Innovative Speakers  
Like No Other Speakers

## Thank you to our volunteers!

*Toastmasters is a volunteer organization. Without the dedication, concern, and initiative shown by each club and its members this contest would not have been possible.*

Central Division Director – Janice Smith  
Area 16 Director – Krissy Smith  
Toastmaster - David Smith  
Sergeant at Arms - Cathy Smith  
Opportunity Drawing Chair – Paul Smith  
Timers – Al Smith, Betty Smith  
Ballot Counters – Chris Smith, Dale Smith  
Food Chair – Ed Smith

and the many others who made today's contests possible.



A special thank you to Solar Turbines for opening up their facilities to us once again!



Support our winners at the Central Division Contest on November 8!

## District 5 - Central Division

## AREA 16

presents

## LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!



## Evaluation & International Speech Contests

October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*If you plan to shoot photos or videos, you and the members you record must sign the Photo Release or Video Release form. See the Contest Chair or Chief Judge for the form.*

**AREA 16**  
**Evaluation & International Speech Contests**



Call for Attention / Pledge                      Sgt-at-Arms

Welcome    Area 16 Director

Toastmaster                                         Toastmaster

Contest Rules                                        Chief Judge

Evaluation Contest Test Speaker                Becky Smith

Area 16 Evaluation Contestants  
*(Alphabetical order)*                                \_\_\_Amy Smith  
    \_\_\_Dave Smith  
    \_\_\_Vlad Smith

*Please observe 1 minute of silence between each contestant and remain silent after the last contestant has spoken*

Test Speaker & Contestant Interviews              Toastmaster

**Break (20 minutes)**  
*Last chance to buy opportunity drawing tickets!*

Call for Attention                                      Sgt. At Arms

Toastmaster    Toastmaster

Contest rules    Chief Judge

Area 16 Speech Contest Contestants  
*(Alphabetical order)*                                \_\_\_Dane Smith  
    \_\_\_Ruth Smith

*Please observe 1 minute of silence between each contestant and remain silent after the last contestant has spoken*

Contestant Interviews                                Toastmaster

Opportunity Drawing                                 Opportunity Drawing Chair

Acknowledgments                                    Area 16 Director

Awards    Central Div. Director

Closing Words & Adjournment                    Area 16 Director

### Evaluation Contest Sample Ballot

Use this ballot to help you select a winner. Do not submit.

	Suggested Points				1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Judging Items</b>	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair						
<b>Analytical Quality</b> Clear, focused	40	28 - 39	17 - 27	0 - 16						
<b>Recommendations</b> Positive, specific, helpful	30	22 - 29	13 - 21	0 - 12						
<b>Technique</b> Sympathetic, sensitive, motivational	15	11 - 14	6 - 10	0 - 5						
<b>Summation</b> Concise, encouraging	15	11 - 14	6 - 10	0 - 5						
<b>Total Score (100 points possible)</b>										

### Humorous Speech Contest Sample Ballot

Use this ballot to help you select a winner. Do not submit.

		Suggested Points				1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Judging Items</b>	Excellent										
	Very Good										
	Good										
	Fair										
<b>Speech Development</b> Structure, organization, support material	15	12 - 14	10 - 11	0 - 9							
<b>Effectiveness</b> Achievement of purpose, interest, reception	10	8 - 9	6 - 7	0 - 5							
<b>Speech Value</b> Ideas, logic, original thought	15	12 - 14	10 - 11	0 - 9							
<b>Audience Response</b> Attentiveness, laughter, interest, reception	15	12 - 14	10 - 11	0 - 9							
<b>Physical</b> Appearance, body language, speaking area	10	8 - 9	6 - 7	0 - 5							
<b>Voice</b> Flexibility, volume	10	8 - 9	6 - 7	0 - 5							
<b>Manner</b> Directness, assurance, enthusiasm	10	8 - 9	6 - 7	0 - 5							
<b>Appropriateness</b> To speech purpose and audience	10	8 - 9	6 - 7	0 - 5							
<b>Correctness</b> Grammar, pronunciation, word selection	5	4	3	2							
<b>Total Score (100 points possible)</b>											

### International Speech Contest Sample Ballot

Use this ballot to help you select a winner. Do not submit.

	Suggested Points				1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Judging Items</b>	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair						
<b>Speech Development</b> Structure, organization, support material	20	14 -	9 -	0 -						
		19	13	8						
<b>Effectiveness</b> Achievement of purpose, interest, reception	15	11 -	6 -	0 -						
		14	10	5						
<b>Speech Value</b> Ideas, logic, original thought	15	11 -	6 -	0 -						
		14	10	5						
<b>Physical</b> Appearance, body language, speaking area	10	7 -	4 -	0 -						
		9	6	3						
<b>Voice</b> Flexibility, volume	10	7 -	4 -	0 -						
		9	6	3						
<b>Manner</b> Directness, assurance, enthusiasm	10	7 -	4 -	0 -						
		9	6	3						
<b>Appropriateness</b> To speech purpose and audience	10	7 -	4 -	0 -						
		9	6	3						
<b>Correctness</b> Grammar, pronunciation, word selection	10	7 -	4 -	0 -						
		9	6	3						
<b>Total Score (100 points possible)</b>										

**Table Topics Contest Sample Ballot**

*Use this ballot to help you select a winner. Do not submit.*

<b>Judging Items</b>	Suggested Points				1	2	3	4	5	6
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair						
<b>Speech Development</b> Opening, body, close, organization, smoothness	30	22 - 29	13 - 21	0 - 12						
<b>Effectiveness</b> Logic, direction, enthusiasm, achievement of purpose, audience response	25	18 - 24	11 - 17	0 - 10						
<b>Physical</b> Appearance, body language, speaking area	15	11 - 14	7 - 10	0 - 6						
<b>Voice</b> Flexibility, volume	15	11 - 14	7 - 10	0 - 6						
<b>Appropriateness</b> To speech purpose and audience	10	8 - 9	6 - 7	0 - 5						
<b>Correctness</b> Grammar, pronunciation, word selection	5	4	3	2						
<b>Total Score (100 points possible)</b>										

### Tall Tales Contest Sample Ballot

*Use this ballot to help you select a winner. Do not submit.*

		Suggested Points				1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Judging Items</b>		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair						
<b>Speech Development</b> Opening, build-up, climax, organization, smoothness	30	22 - 29	13 - 21	0 - 12							
<b>Effectiveness</b> Effective use of exaggeration, irony, pun, surprise twists, humor, slapstick, etc.	25	18 - 24	11 - 17	0 - 10							
<b>Physical</b> Appearance, body language	15	11 - 14	7 - 10	0 - 6							
<b>Voice</b> Flexibility, volume	15	11 - 14	7 - 10	0 - 6							
<b>Appropriateness</b> To speech purpose and audience, good grammar, pronunciation, and word selection	15	11 - 14	7 - 10	0 - 6							
<b>Total Score (100 points possible)</b>											

## AREAS 10 & 16 Evaluation & International Speech Contests



Call for Attention / Pledge                      *Sgt. At Arms*

Welcome    *Area 10 Director*

Toastmaster                                         *Toastmaster*  
Contest Rules                                       *Chief Judge*

Area 10 Test Speaker	Becky Smith
Area 10 Evaluation Contestants <i>(Alphabetical order)</i>	___ Amy Smith ___ Dave Smith ___ Vlad Smith
<i>Please observe 1 minute of silence between each contestant and remain silent after the last contestant has spoken</i>	
Area 10 Interviews	<i>Toastmaster</i>

Area 16 Test Speaker	Al Smith
Area 16 Evaluation Contestants <i>(Alphabetical order)</i>	___ Bob Smith ___ Candy Smith ___ Dale Smith
<i>Please observe 1 minute of silence between each contestant and remain silent after the last contestant has spoken</i>	
Area 16 Interviews	<i>Toastmaster</i>

**Break (20 minutes)**  
*Last chance to buy opportunity drawing tickets!*

Call for Attention                                 *Sgt. At Arms*

Toastmaster                                         *Toastmaster*  
Contest rules                                       *Chief Judge*

Area 10 Speech Contestants <i>(Alphabetical order)</i>	___ Dane Smith ___ Ruth Smith
<i>Please observe 1 minute of silence between each contestant and remain silent after the last contestant has spoken</i>	
Area 10 Interviews	<i>Toastmaster</i>

Area 16 Speech Contestants <i>(Alphabetical order)</i>	___ Fred Smith ___ Gayle Smith
<i>Please observe 1 minute of silence between each contestant and remain silent after the last contestant has spoken</i>	
Area 16 Interviews	<i>Toastmaster</i>

Opportunity Drawing                             *Opportunity Drawing Chair*

Acknowledgments                               *Area 16 Director*

Awards     *Central Division Director*

Closing Words & Adjournment             *Area 16 Director*

## Photography & Videotaping



Is photographing and videotaping allowed at contests? Yes! But only if certain guidelines are met. As the Contest Chair **you are responsible for ensuring that photography and videotaping is handled correctly.**

- **It is the Contest Chair's responsibility to print out** a dozen or so official Toastmasters' Video Release and Photo Release forms:
  - Photos: <http://www.toastmasters.org/~media/0E7402AA7AC641589E49BBAB62909B6C.ashx>
  - Videos: <http://www.toastmasters.org/~media/A31F59C53EA548B98E795A9D58A66745.ashx>
- The photographer or videographer must submit the forms to the Contest Chair before the start of the contest, preferably, 30 minutes before the start.
- Each member who potentially will be videotaped or photographed must be briefed by you about the recording and must be told how it will be used. For example, will it be posted on the internet?
- Photographers and videographers may only record those who have signed the Video Release or Photo Release form. If the Toastmaster does not give permission but a contestant does, any interaction between the Toastmaster and the contestant may not be recorded. If the director does not give written permission, then the director giving that contestant an award may not be recorded.
- Recording equipment must not cause a safety hazard to any in attendance and must not be a distraction to speakers or presenters.
- It is the Contest Chair's responsibility to ensure that the videographer only records those who have given written permission and only posts to the internet those who have given permission.
- If recordings are made available for sale, all profit goes to the district.
- Give the District Contest Chair a copy of the signed forms to hold for one year.

## Additional Comments



*The remainder of this guidebook focuses on miscellaneous contest items.*

## Certificates

The Chief Judge should be presented with all the judges' certificates of appreciation before the judges' briefing so that the Chief Judge can give them to the judges at that time.

## Contestant Changes

Once the Toastmaster is introduced, late contestants are automatically disqualified. If a runner-up will compete rather than someone listed in the program, the Toastmaster must announce this at the beginning of the contest right after the Chief Judge briefs the audience.

## Contestant Selection

Clubs may choose contestants anyway they wish. If a club holds a contest, the club must follow the format specified in the Speech Contest Rulebook.

## Directional Signage

Besides posting a sign directly in front of where the contest room is, consider posting several directional signs and having someone (wearing a Toastmaster badge or holding a sign that says "Toastmasters") direct traffic. Assume that the venue is difficult to find and put up several directional signs.

## Functionary Forms

If you are running the contest, bring all the forms – and bring extras just in case. For the judges, consider the following:

- Include Form 1170, Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics for each judge to sign.
- Place the judging forms into thick file folders so that the judges can both hide their forms during the contest and have something stiff to write on.
- Tear the bottom part of each form from both the left and right leaving only about an inch of attached paper in the center. This way the judges do not have to disturb others in the contest by tearing the forms.
- Include an envelope for each judging form.
- Attach to each judging form a pen. Many judges will not bring a pen with them.

## Lighting

Set the lighting correctly. If you have control of the lighting, it should be brighter on stage than in the audience.

## Name Tags

Not everyone likes name tags, but they are helpful when audience members do not wear their badges. Contestants should not wear name tags.

## Registration

It's very important that the registrars arrive early (at least 15 minutes before the functionaries and contestants are to arrive) and be provided with detailed information about entry fees and Opportunity Drawing tickets. Are anyone's fees (besides the contestants) already paid for? How much are Opportunity Drawing tickets excluding entry fees? At one contest, the registrars were given prices for combined entry fee and tickets (ex. For \$10 you get admission plus 7 tickets) but were not told what price to charge just for tickets when guests wanted to buy tickets during the break.

## **Registrar Instructions**

You should provide the Registrars with a list of the contestants and the functionaries. In addition, you should provide them a set of instructions similar to the one below, remembering to change the text for the particulars of your contest:

# Registrar Instructions

- Admission is **\$5** for everyone except contestants.
  - Checks should be written to “District 5 Toastmasters”.
  - Contestants are not charged.
  - **Every attendee receives 1 free Opportunity Drawing ticket.**
- Every attendee must sign in.
- Tear several Opportunity Drawing tickets into strips of 5. This will make it easier to sell.
- Ask each attendee these questions:
  - Are you a contestant?
    - If yes, then there is no charge.
    - If yes, tell the contestant to be at the front of the room at **8:15am** for the Toastmaster’s contestant briefing.
  - Are you a Dignitary?
    - If yes, ask the attendee to check off their name on the dignitary list.
    - **\*\*\* Important – just before 9am** hand the dignitary list to the director. The director needs to introduce the dignitaries.
  - Are you a volunteer (Ballot Counter, Chief Judge, Contest Chair, Food Team, Judge, Opportunity Drawing Team, Registrar, Sergeant at Arms, Timer, Toastmaster)?
    - **If yes, give them three free Opportunity Drawing tickets.**
    - If yes, tell Ballot Counters, Judges, and Timers to meet the Chief Judge at the front of the room at **8:30am** for their briefings.
    - If yes, tell Sergeants at Arms to meet the Toastmaster at the front of the room at **8:30am** for their briefings.
  - Would you like to purchase Opportunity Drawing Tickets?
    - If yes, ask them to sign the back of each ticket before using it.
    - The cost is:
      - **1 ticket = \$1**
      - **7 tickets = \$5**
      - **20 tickets = \$10**
- Other questions that may come up:
  - Where do I take my Opportunity Drawing donation?
    - Take it to the Opportunity Drawing table.
  - If someone wants to video or photograph the contest:
    - Ask them to meet with the Contest Chair or Chief Judge 30 minutes before the contest begins.
- **Please remain at the registration table until 9:10am.**
- **At 9:10am** please give the cash box to the contest chair; it will be returned at the break.
- **Please return to the registration table during the break to sell opportunity drawing tickets.**
- **After the break, give the cash box to the contest chair.**

## **Sign In Sheet For All Attendees**

Every attendee must sign-in and the sign-in sheet must be turned in to the Financial Manager following the contest.

## **Dignitary Sign In Sheets**

Have the dignitary list available for sign in at the registration desk. The latest list is available on the District 5 Speech Contest webpage <http://d5tm.org/education/speech-contests/>. The list should be read by the director during opening remarks. Any dignitaries serving as a judge cannot be announced.

## **Seating**

If you have flexibility with seating in a large room, don't put out too many chairs. The audience members will scatter, and it will make it more difficult for the contestants to connect with their audience. A good rule is to put out 50% more chairs than guests you expect. If you are expecting 40 to attend, put out 60 chairs. Be sure to reserve seats at the front or side of the room for the Toastmaster and Sergeants at Arms.

Everyone should be seated during the contest. Too often the Toastmaster and directors and contest chairs stand near the stage or roam around the room during contests. This is not only distracting to the contestants, but it is unfair if it is not done exactly the same way for every contestant. In one contest, I saw a Toastmaster stand to the side in front of the stage and block some of the audience's view of the contestants.

## **Table Topics Questions**

While the Speech Contest Rulebook states that it is the responsibility of the Contest Chair to write the questions for the contest it is usually the District Contest Chair who writes them. Be sure to find out who will supply the questions before the day of the contest.

## **Timing Lights**

Make certain that the contestants can see the timing lights from where they'll stand. Ask some audience members to sit down in front of the lights. Ask them to confirm that they can see the lights; bearing in mind that the audience will be seated. At one contest, a shorter contestant was able to see the lights before the contest but, once the audience was seated, the audience blocked the lights -- she ended up being disqualified for speaking too long. Also make certain that the stopwatch functions. Some stopwatches are very complicated or do not work well.

## **Donations**

Some may ask you for a donation form. You may use the one on the next page; be sure to modify it for your contest.



District 5 Toastmasters  
PO Box 1543  
El Cajon CA 91913  
www.d5tm.org

## Receipt of Charitable Donation

District 5 Toastmasters acknowledges and expresses appreciation for the following contribution:

Donation of goods: 8" x 10" photographic prints by Pat Smith donated for opportunity drawing at Toastmasters Northern Division Contests on 4/20/25.

4 pcs. Value \$20 each

UNI-0810 "Union"

MUS-0810 "Three Musicians"

WMD-0810 "When Memory Made Dreams"

INS-0810 "An Instant Past"

District 5 Toastmasters is a recognized 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization;  
Federal ID number: 95-1300076 KD 95

Donation Received by

\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## The End



Putting on a contest is a large effort, and your efforts are truly appreciated. One attendee said, "I think these contests are run unbelievably well considering the amount of work involved and the fact you are all volunteers!" And putting on a successful contest may make you feel good as well: "I had a great contest and was very proud to pull it off so well."

How do you pull a contest off well? One chair summed it up by saying, "Start early, ask for help, and keep the Tylenol close that day."

When I first agreed to join a committee to plan an area contest, none of us knew how to organize one. We had no guide, and it seemed overwhelming. The previous Area Director wasn't very helpful. All he said was "Don't worry, you'll figure it out" and that was that (really!). It is my hope that you won't have to figure it out on your own. Through this guidebook you will have a better understanding of what's involved in organizing a contest, find the contest easier to plan, have a lot of fun, and pull off a successful contest.

Good luck!

Mark Kramer, DTM