

ISSUE 10 April 2025



DISTRICT 71

NEWSLETTER

D71 BRANDBUILDERS



ENJOY | GROW | CELEBRATE

ANNE MARIE CURTIN

Engineers Club Dublin, Area 26, Division M

WWW.D71TOASTMASTERS.ORG

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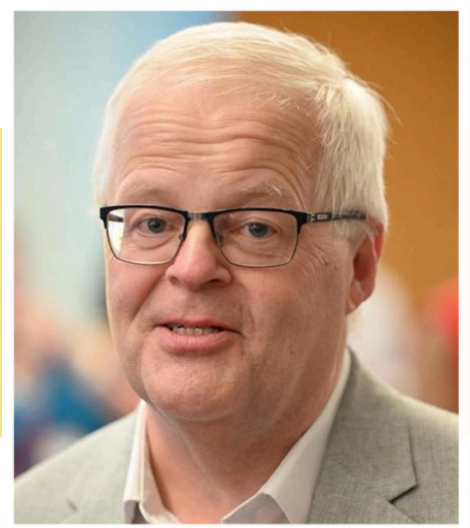
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FEEDBACK &
SUGGESTIONS



FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR



SPRING INTO GROWTH: BOOST YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND STRENGTHEN YOUR CLUB!

As the days grow longer and flowers begin to bloom, April is the perfect time for renewal and growth, not just in nature, but in our Toastmasters journey as well. With only a few months left in the programme year, now is the time for clubs to take action, build momentum, and finish strong!

Membership Growth and Retention: The Key to a Thriving Club

A strong membership base is the foundation of a successful Toastmasters club. Have you reached out to renewing members and encouraged guests to join? Engaging with inactive members, reconnecting with past guests, and promoting your club actively can make all the difference.

Now is the ideal time to host an open house, launch a membership campaign, and encourage members to bring friends or colleagues. Social media, word-of-mouth, and community engagement are powerful tools to expand your reach. Consider offering incentives such as guest speech opportunities or recognition for members who bring in new recruits.

Creating a Welcoming and Engaging Experience

Attracting members is just the first step—retaining them is equally important. Ensure that meetings are dynamic, inclusive, and valuable. Assign mentors to new members, celebrate achievements, and keep meetings fresh with engaging themes and varied speaking opportunities. When members feel supported and see progress, they stay committed.

The Final Push: Achieving Club Growth Goals

With the programme year nearing its end, every club has the opportunity to reach Distinguished status. Review your membership goals, assess progress, and take the necessary steps to finish strong. Even small efforts, such as following up with guests or organising special events, can make a big impact.

Spring is a season of new beginnings. Let's embrace this opportunity to grow, strengthen our clubs, and welcome more members into the enriching world of Toastmasters!



FROM THE PRM'S DESK



Fellow Members,

As the fresh breezes of spring usher in a season of renewal, our district continues to thrive on the steady dedication and enthusiasm of its members. This month, we are focusing on refining our communication skills and enhancing the value of our club meetings.

Tips for Effective Club Communication:

Consistency is Key: Maintain a regular schedule for your club communications. Consistent updates keep members connected and informed.

Celebrate Every Achievement: Whether it's a member completing their next speech project or a club executing a successful themed meeting, highlighting these achievements fosters a positive club atmosphere and motivates all members.

Educational Content: Continue to provide valuable tips on public speaking and leadership in your communications. Practical advice helps members apply their skills both in and outside of Toastmasters.

Visual Engagement: Use photos and visually engaging content in your communications to enhance readability and interest.

The PR Team is committed to supporting each club's efforts to showcase their unique activities and successes. Let's keep sharing our stories and successes, using the power of communication to grow individually and collectively.

Warm regards,

Angela Afieghe
PR Manager,
Toastmasters District 71



DISTRICT 71 LEADERSHIP TEAM

DISTRICT
DIRECTOR

PROGRAM QUALITY
DIRECTOR

CLUB GROWTH
DIRECTOR



DANNY BANKS

MAIREAD DILLON

STEVE CAMPION

IMMEDIATE PAST
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

ADMINISTRATION
MANAGER

FINANCE MANAGER

PUBLIC RELATIONS
MANAGER



ELIZABETH JORDAN

PAIGE SKELTON

WILLIAM KEARNEY

ANGELA AFIEGHE



DISTRICT 71

DIVISION DIRECTORS



TIM LEECH



NICHOLAS O'NEIL



PATRICIA GRAY



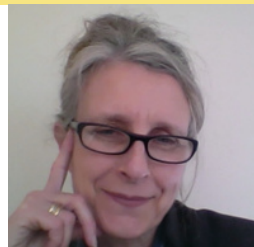
GEORGINA
HODGKINSON



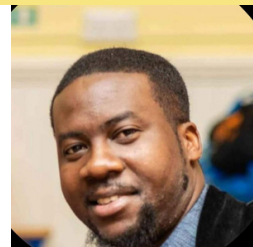
RANDY EKAKITIE



KEVIN O'REILLY



OLGA BYRNE



FEMI OLULAJA



PAUL MCCARTHY



DISTRICT 71

PR AMBASSADORS



Rob Partridge
Division F



Claire Downie
Division S



Katuta Lumpa
Division H



Aparna Sasikumar
Division N



Shantelle York
Division E



Sudepto kushary
Division M



Folasanmi Ajayi
Division D



Centennial Plus One Pledge



UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE MONTH



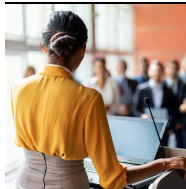
**Division N –
International Speech &
Evaluation
Competitions and
Summit**
10:30 AM

SAT
05



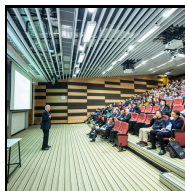
**Area 39 Division E
International and
Evaluation Speech
Contest**
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

SAT
05



**Division H –
International Speech &
Evaluation
Competitions and
Summit**
10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

SUN
06



**DIVISION A
INTERNATIONAL
SPEECH AND
EVALUATION CONTEST**
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

SUN
06



**DISTRICT EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE
MEETING**
7th April 2025
07:00 PM - 09:00 PM
Live on Zoom
Scan QR to register

MON
07



**TOASTMASTERS
UNPLUGGED: BACK
STAGE PASS!**
07:30 PM

TUE
08



**QUARTERLY
AWARDS**
07:00 PM

WED
09

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE MONTH



**CORPORATE CONNECT -
BUILDING AND
MAINTAINING
MEMBERSHIP**

**FRI
11**


12:30 PM - 1:30 PM



**DIVISION F
INTERNATIONAL
SPEECH AND
EVALUATION CONTEST**

**SAT
12**


10:30 AM - 3:00 PM



**DIVISION E
INTERNATIONAL
SPEECH AND
EVALUATION SPEECH
CONTEST**

**SAT
12**


11:00 AM - 2:00 PM



**PR Masterclass 009:
Using AI to enhance
PR**

**WED
16**


07:00 PM - 08:00PM



**Empower Your
Workforce (Online)**

**WED
24**

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM



**Empower Your
Workforce**

**WED
30**

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

DISTRICT CONFERENCE

SPRING CONFERENCE 2025



Toastmasters District 71 Spring Conference

Early Bird
Tickets
Available

Back to School Solihull Conference 2025



*Join us in Solihull, for the D71
Toastmasters Conference!*

9 - 11 May, 2025

 Voco St John's Hotels Solihull, B91 1AT

 www.solihull2025.co.uk

Early birds ticket available at Solihull2025.co.uk



DISTRICT CONFERENCE

SPRING CONFERENCE 2025

Buy your ticket to the Solihull 2025 Toastmaster Conference!

The Solihull 2025 "Back to School" District 71 Annual Conference is in just under 6 weeks on the 9th - 11th May 2025! Ticket sales will close in a few weeks, so make sure to buy your tickets today at www.solihull2025.co.uk

Tickets are on sale from just £20, but we highly recommend coming to the full Conference to gain the full experience, which includes:

- x 4 District Contests
- x 7 Masterclass Workshops
- Key Note Speech from our Region 10 International Director, Francesco Fedele
- District 71 Council Meeting
- Friday Night "School Disco"
- Saturday Night Black Tie Gala
- Networking with new and old friends
- All day Tea/Coffee and cakes!

<p>District Contests</p> <p>Watch the winners from each of your Club Contests, who have battled through Area and Division Contests, perform to win each of the District 71 Contest Finals! These are the centre of the Conference and are must see events!</p>	<p>Masterclass Workshops</p> <p>We highly recommend coming to the workshops. These are 1 hour masterclasses from experienced Toastmasters in a topic of their expertise and often unique to the Conference.</p>
<p>Key Note Speech</p> <p>Don't miss this amazing opportunity to gain real life insights and motivation from one who has truly lived Toastmasters. Francesco Fedele is our Region 10 International Director (above our District Director) and manages Toastmasters all across Europe!</p>	<p>District Council Meeting</p> <p>This is the District's AGM and the core of the District leadership roles. Next year's Officers are elected and motions are voted on by the District Council but it is open to everyone. Come in person to see Leadership at its best!</p>
<p>Friday and Saturday Evenings</p> <p>As with most meals, they are not just about food. It is a social time to enjoy with other Toastmasters. Dress up on Friday in your favourite School Disco outfits and get your Suits and Dresses ready for the Saturday Night Black Tie Gala</p>	<p>Networking</p> <p>The most important part of any event is the people and D71 Conferences are known for forging lifelong friendships. As with any Toastmaster event, it is a friendly, inviting and a safe place, even if you don't know anyone yet so come and make friends! If you already know everyone, come and say hello!</p>

DISTRICT EVENT



In today's rapidly changing world, connecting and learning from one another has never been more vital. Our Corporate Connect meetings are specifically designed to enhance collaboration and best practice sharing across corporate and organisational clubs.

Our latest session was our biggest yet, with representatives from 11 clubs attending. We explored the theme of **“Learning & Development – tied to professional development plans & engaging HR.”** By comparing experiences, we found that there were many ways of achieving success. The clubs that had higher levels of engagement with HR and related teams also benefited from having fees paid, meetings held during regular hours and more support in building and maintaining membership.

To further enhance engagement between Toastmasters clubs and HR teams, here are three key recommendations:

- **Show The Value:** Regularly share success stories and clearly demonstrate how Toastmasters adds value to the organisation by supporting HR objectives and employee development. Visit the [Show The Value](#) section of our website for examples.
- **Invite Participation:** Invite HR representatives to Toastmasters meetings and workshops to showcase the tangible benefits and foster stronger relationships.
- **Discuss Plans:** Actively involve HR in planning club activities, ensuring alignment with broader organisational development strategies.

Thank you to Shirley Marshall of Toastmasters in Travel and Ciara Clougher of Microsoft OneVoice for their leadership of this initiative.

Join our next Corporate Connect meeting on Friday, 11th April, focusing on the important topic of **“Building and Maintaining Membership”**.

Together, let's harness the collective wisdom of District 71's corporate clubs to empower our teams and organisations.

DISTRICT EVENT

EMPOWER YOUR WORKFORCE

Professional growth and effective communication are keys to success in the modern workplace. Our “Empower Your Workforce” series of webinars and in-person events is tailored specifically to HR professionals and business leaders, showcasing how Toastmasters equips teams with critical workplace skills.

Our most recent event featured insightful contributions from Declan Drummey from the club at Analog Devices and Pat Johnson, past President of Toastmasters International. If you missed it, you can watch the highlights on the [District's YouTube channel](#). Pat shared extremely useful insights with us. She highlighted three specific skills that are essential in any workplace and which our clubs help people develop:

- **Listening Skills:** Listening is foundational yet often overlooked. Toastmasters transforms members into active listeners who interpret nuances, detect gaps, and engage meaningfully, skills vital for informed decision-making and effective leadership.
- **Critical Thinking:** When active listening meets critical thinking, employees can critically assess ideas, offer constructive feedback, and enhance the quality of team decisions. This helps foster innovation and agility within organisations.
- **Speaking Skills:** Whether in business meetings, presentations, or impromptu interactions, speaking with clarity and confidence is crucial. Toastmasters sharpens these skills, equipping employees to handle different communication scenarios effectively and persuasively.

Find out more about the series and upcoming events at empoweryourworkforce.org. If you know HR leaders or colleagues who could benefit, ask them to attend. I'm sure they'll be glad you did!



DISTRICT DIALOGUES

MEET YOUR DYNAMIC NEW LEAD MANAGEMENT TEAM FOR DISTRICT 71

Hello Toastmasters! Are you excited? You should be! It's time to introduce the phenomenal Lead Management Team for District 71, your friendly, energetic go-to squad committed to nurturing new Toastmasters clubs across communities and corporate spaces.

So, What's Our Mission?

Our lively team is here to spark and nurture the creation of new Toastmasters clubs! When someone expresses interest in starting a community or corporate club, our enthusiastic Lead Managers jump right in. We guide potential leads every step of the way, ensuring they understand the wonderful benefits Toastmasters can bring to their group or organisation.

But wait, there's more! We're also proactively scouting opportunities and encouraging members across District 71 to share new leads with us.

Your New Lead Management Stars:

Kevin O'Reilly (Division F) – Your Lead Management Chair, here to keep the energy high!

Paul O'Mahony (Division A) – Bringing charm and enthusiasm to every conversation!

Brenda Lannon (Division C) – Our powerhouse connector and motivator!

Cormac Rowe (Division F) – Always upbeat and ready to turn possibilities into realities!

Dolores Brady (Division F) – Dedicated to helping leaders flourish into vibrant clubs!

Elizabeth Jordan (Division H) – Passionately guiding new clubs with her infectious positivity!

John Conroy (Division M) – Energising and inspiring communities to embrace Toastmasters!

Jim Gregory (Division N) – Committed and driven to make club-building fun and rewarding!

Nikita Parks (Division N) – Our dynamic, enthusiastic lead nurturer!

Brenda Bell (Division S) – Spreading excitement and fostering new club opportunities!

Andrew Klimaytys (Division S) – Empowering teams with optimism and unwavering support!



DISTRICT DIALOGUES

Let's Make It Happen – Together!

We're on a mission to make it as easy and simple as possible for anyone to reach out to the Lead Management Team. Whether you're a member with a spark of an idea or someone who knows a friend, colleague, or organisation that could benefit from Toastmasters, don't hesitate! Reaching out is quick, simple, and honestly, anyone can do it. We love hearing from you!

Let's Connect!

Got an idea for a new club? Know someone who's interested? We're eager to hear from you! You can connect with our vibrant team through our dedicated page here: <https://d71toastmasters.org/home/clubs/new-clubs/>

Prefer a face-to-face chat? Fantastic! Grab any of us at your next District event—we promise you'll walk away energised and excited!

Together, let's bring the incredible experience of Toastmasters to more communities and corporations throughout District 71.

Let's grow together!



KEVIN O'REILLY
LEAD MANAGEMENT CHAIR
07921823525



BEHIND THE BADGE: DIVISION DIRECTORS STORY

"Even if it's a bit edgy, a bit out of your comfort zone, saying yes means you'll do something new, meet someone new, and make a difference." Eric Schmidt
In my day job as a nutritionist, I work one-on-one with clients, guiding them through the complex world of food. Leadership isn't part of this brief. So, when the Division Director role came along, it was well outside my comfort zone. But I'm not one to stand still—physically or metaphorically speaking—so I jumped at the chance to dip my foot into the world of leadership.

What have I discovered? First, I've learned something new about myself: I'm not too shabby at leadership! Second, I've met some extraordinary people, particularly the amazing Area Directors on my Division C team. They've taught me that leadership is as much about collaboration as it is about guidance. One unexpected insight is that Toastmasters needs a fifth core value: Fellowship! This role has shown me the power of connection and shared purpose, something that isn't always easy to quantify but is hugely impactful. As for making a difference? That's still unfolding. But by saying yes to the role, I've already stepped into a more dynamic version of myself, and that's a difference worth celebrating.



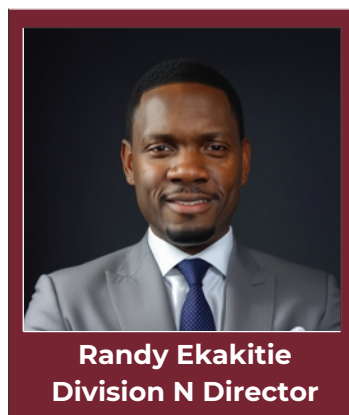
BEHIND THE BADGE: DIVISION DIRECTORS STORY

Growing up on a farm taught me the power of the HEN philosophy (Hard Work, Enthusiasm and Never Giving Up) as a tool to achieve pretty much everything in front of you. While I did not appreciate it at the time, every time I look back, I see the power of HEN at work in everything I do. It was HEN that drove me to toastmasters over 3 years ago and in particular Warrington Toastmasters. I was not sure what to expect, but in 3 years I have managed to navigate from being a secretary to VPE and then president of the club.

I had no ambition of moving on past that, but in 2023 I had the clarion call and accepted the role of Area Director for Area 15. Call me crazy or just living the HEN life, but what a journey it was, and I loved every moment of it. Learnt a great deal out of it and I hope I have given back to the organization in some way or another. I believe there is a huge correlation between HEN and the values of toastmasters of Integrity, respect, service, and excellence. Maybe that is why I find it so attractive.

My time as an Area Director showed me a different side of toastmasters and the values of toastmasters was evident when I was out and about visiting clubs. I met incredible people along the way and hope my life was enriched by the various encounters.

Any sensible person will stop there, but my HEN philosophy kept driving me on. Now as Division N Director, I have the opportunity to work with some fantastic Area Directors and assistant Division Directors to help shape the future of the Division. One major takeaway so far, is that of the power of teamwork and collaboration to get things done.



BEHIND THE BADGE: AREA DIRECTORS STORY

To the members of the District Leadership Team and all Toastmasters, my name is **Kevin Walsh**. I am a member of Bishopstown Toastmasters, and I am currently the Area 49 director. My main objective is to achieve DTM/Distinguished Toastmaster and 1 of the requirements is to be an area director for a complete term.

What I've enjoyed most about the role is where I was facilitating the club officer training with Nick, the Division Director, and the feedback I received from the club officers was positive and encouraging the text message I received from Nick was when he said, "I think you might've missed your call as a teacher".

It is around setting up for the contests and coming from a background of a disability that can't be properly detected, finding the support that I need, and I am the youngest area 49 director of Toastmasters. Hopefully, I have the other area directors who have a bit more experience than I have to help me.

What I have gained from the role is showing that despite having an intellectual disability, I can still do it.

Go for it, but always have help with you.



Kevin Walsh
Area 49 Director

BEHIND THE BADGE: AREA DIRECTORS STORY

Patricia Kelly - VPM of Foyle Speakers and MidUlster Toastmasters, is this year's Area Director of Area 4

"I'm enjoying the Area Director role this year as it's given me a reason to visit all the other clubs in Area 4. I've loved meeting the other Toastmasters from Belfast Toastmasters, Letterkenny, and Lagan Valley, and I'm figuring out strategies for all the members in the Area to meet more regularly. I think the Toastmasters community is a strongly supportive and encouraging community with great expertise in communication and leadership skills. So I'd love for all the members in the Area to have more opportunity to meet more regularly.

The main challenge for me in the Area Director role is to find a balance with my already busy life, but the Area Director role is well supported by this year's Division Director, Kevin O'Reilly. I'm grateful for his support and leadership. I would actively encourage any of my fellow Toastmasters wanting to grow in leadership to consider the Area Director role next year. I think they may surprise themselves with what they can achieve when given the opportunity and support."

Patricia Kelly
Area 4 Director



CLUB MILESTONE CELEBRATION



APRIL HONOREES



Bandon Club
1st April - 36 Years



Talk Club @ Letterkenny
1st April - 16 Years



Talking Heads
1st April - 35 Years



Raheen Club
1st April - 25 Years



Speak Easy Club
1st April - 32 Years



CLUB MILESTONE CELEBRATION



APRIL HONOREES



Tralee Club
1st April - 32 Years



Clonmel Club
1st April - 41 Years



Failte Club
1st April - 30 Years



Dublin Club
1st April - 66 Years



Cork Club
1st April - 58 Years



CLUB MILESTONE CELEBRATION



APRIL HONOREES



Cork Douglas Club
1st April - 34 Years



Greystones Club
1st April - 32 Years



West Cork Club
3rd April - 9 Years



Brandon Speakers Club
4th April - 24 Years



DLRC Group
5th April - 1 Year



CLUB MILESTONE CELEBRATION



APRIL HONOREES



EI Club
8th April - 12 Years



Wordsmiths Online
9th April - 1 Year



Cavan Club
16th April - 13 Years



Foyle Speakers Club
17th April - 10 Years



Chester Speaking Club
20th April - 7 Years



CLUB MILESTONE CELEBRATION



APRIL HONOREES



Tallaght Club
26th April - 7 Years



Grant Thornton Ireland
29th April - 5 Years



Deloitte Club
30th April - 1 Year



FEATURED CLUB EVENT

TOASTMASTERS4GOLF ON TOUR SPAIN 2025

Viva España 2025 Toastmasters Golf

For the most part, nothing was lost in translation for the Toastmaster4Golf trip to Torre Del Mar in Velez Malaga in March 2025. The members had planned, and they had prepared and were ready for action.

They travelled from Germany, Scotland, England and Ireland to join in the fun. Some had shipped their golf clubs while others had used them to carry their luggage onboard their flight. The group videographer and photographer, Michael Sennewald, a golfer in training, came equipped from Germany. His mission was clear, take great footage, film and save those magic moments. Paul O'Mahony waited in Cork for updates on action and results, ready to share on TikTok.

Day one, there could only be one winner, day two, there was one team that outshone the rest in a 4-ball scramble, day three, the decider, where competitors left their victims in their wake. El Presidente of Toastmasters4Golf, Ronan Neacy, took the overall honour as best golfer, Peter Williams' team were victorious in the 4-ball Scramble and CJ Cullen took the top prize in the higher handicap players category.



FEATURED CLUB EVENT



On Tuesday, 25th March, Toastmasters4Golf were special guests at David Clinton's Spanish/English group meeting "The Chat Cafe" at Tenencia de Alcaaldia, Mezquitilla y Lagos. Their challenge was to communicate with native Spanish speakers and teach/learn how to make a short introductory speech to welcome the Toastmasters4Golf members. The members of Toastmasters4Golf then delivered their speeches in Spanish. Congratulations to Gerry Dunn and Larry Lyons for stepping up in style. There were table topics in Spanish and English, and the evening was topped off with music from Gerry Dunn, a duet from Xavi and Daniel and a song from Larry Lyons, "Molly Malone" with an Irish medley of songs from David Clinton. An evening to remember for sure.

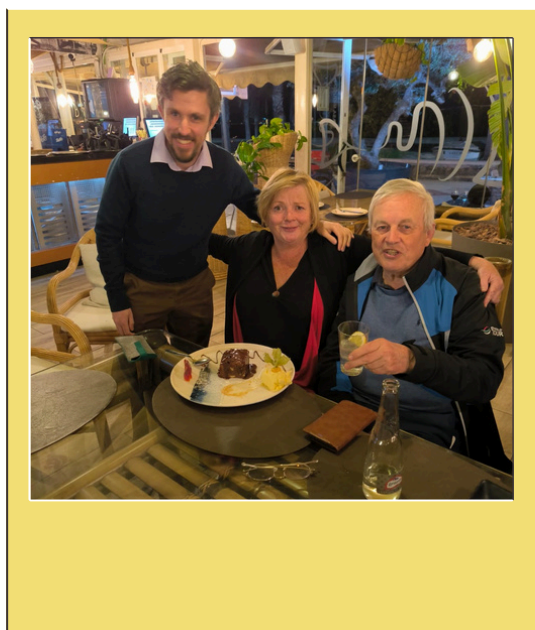
On their final night on the trip, the golfers retired to a chiringuito on the beach in Torre Del Mar. A moment of hilarity occurred when David and Mary's pizza arrived. It was pepperoni, pineapple and marshmallows. One word lost in translation. A request for mushrooms was inadvertently misinterpreted as marshmallows. A magic moment caught on film!

On Thursday, 27th March, the team departed, happier for the experience, memories to cherish and new communication skills acquired. All were of one opinion. A trip to be remembered and a promise to return. Viva España 2025.

Saludos,
Toastmasters4Golf.

FEATURED CLUB EVENT

TOASTMASTERS4GOLF ON TOUR SPAIN 2025



FEATURED CLUB EVENT

LARRY LYONS CONDUCTED SPEECHCRAFT PROGRAM ON BEHALF OF ROSCREA SPEAKERS

I recently conducted a 6-week Speechcraft program on behalf of my club, Roscrea Speakers.

Speechcraft is a proven hands-on program that provides the “how-to” and practical experience in Public Speaking and Communication. It consisted of a series of blended learning sessions delivered online via Zoom, and in person at our club meeting venue. It is primarily aimed at non-members of Toastmasters but can also be undertaken by newly recruited members.

It is facilitated by experienced Toastmasters in a safe and supportive environment, dedicated to the participants personal and professional development. Among the benefits one will achieve on completion of the course are: -

- Gain confidence in public speaking
- Develop communication and language skills
- Become an effective listener and offer effective feedback
- Use of body language, vocal variety, visual aids and speech structure
- Improve job or promotion prospects

Graduation day was on the 27th February, and District Director Danny Banks was on hand to congratulate all the participants, Barbara, Edel, Mary Bernadette and Liam. Barbara and Edel participated online, and the other three were in person.

The big benefit for me from running this program was the final piece of the jigsaw that I needed to achieve my DTM award.

A big thanks to all the assistance I received from my club President Una, club members and other Toastmasters my around Europe. A special mention to D71 IPDD Elizabeth who kept reminding me to get this DTM completed.



FACE OF DISTRICT 71



Celebrating Anne Marie Curtin.

Engineers Club Dublin, Area 26, Division M



My Toastmasters journey began during the pandemic, in a world of Zoom, at Engineers Club Dublin. What started as a way to improve my speaking skills became a transformative experience. When in-person meetings started back, I entered the Humorous Speech Contest. Against all odds, I made it to the finals in Liverpool in 2023—an incredible experience. I was a one-shot wonder, as I haven't advanced beyond my club since. Toastmasters remains an invaluable space for growth. Ironically, despite the club's name, most members are non-engineers—an amusing twist, but a story for another day.

Before the District final, I reached out to Verity Price for some coaching. Her guidance has been beyond amazing and has played a huge role in shaping my journey.

Toastmasters has introduced me to the power of storytelling and public speaking. I encouraged my fellow club members to step outside their comfort zones at the Dublin Story Slam, an open-mic storytelling event. One of our own, Ciaran Blair, made it to the Slam finals and onto the legendary Abbey Theatre stage — I'll admit I was beyond jealous. More than just competitions and storytelling slams, Toastmasters has revolutionized how I communicate at work. Whether pitching ideas, leading team meetings, or presenting in boardrooms, my confidence and clarity have soared. Without question, joining TM was the best career decision I've ever made.

From Zoom calls to competition finals, from local clubs to stages, my Toastmasters journey has been such fun, and I gained a few friends along the way.



DTM SPOTLIGHT

HONORING OUR HIGHEST ACHIEVERS



SHIRLEY GALLAGHER, DTM
GUARDIAN TOASTMASTERS



JOHN W. KENDALL, DTM
NORTH HERTS SPEAKERS



HEIDE DE WOLF, DTM
LINCOLNSHIRE SPEAKERS



HOWARD BALKIND, DTM
MANCHESTER COMMUNICATORS



DTM SPOTLIGHT

HONORING OUR HIGHEST ACHIEVERS



JONO POON, DTM

PEGASUS SPEAKERS
ADVANCED MILTON KEYNES



LARRY LYONS, DTM

ROSCREA SPEAKERS CLUB



CARMEL TURLEY, DTM

CORRIB ORANMORE
TOASTMASTERS

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Moira O'Brien is 80!!!

The Producer of the Irish Talkshow for Talkers Podcast, Moira O'Brien, celebrates her 80th birthday.

On behalf of District 71, we wish Moira many happy returns on her birthday.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



VPPR OF THE MONTH (March 2025)



**LOUISE
ROWELL**

**VPPR OF INNOVATIVE LEADERS
TOASTMASTERS**

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



PR AMBASSADOR OF THE MONTH (March 2025)



FOLASANMI AJAYI

**DIVISION D PR AMBASSADOR,
KILDARE TOASTMASTERS**

GUEST CONTRIBUTION

CONFESSIONS OF A PRM: A CONVERSATION WITH ALLEN

What inspired you to take on the role of District Public Relations Manager?

Back in the day, I was the Public Relations Manager in District 20. So, when I moved to the UK and joined Cardiff Toastmasters, my mentor Jean knew my love for creativity and communication. She encouraged me to step into this role. Honestly, it felt like the perfect blend: using my creativity, working with a fantastic team, and having a bit of fun along the way.

What more could I ask for?

What are some common mistakes clubs make in PR, and how can they fix them? The classic one? Thinking PR is just the VP PR's job. Nope! PR is everyone's responsibility – yes, even you reading this. Every time you talk about Toastmasters to your friends, share a photo, or post something on social media, you're doing PR. So next time you finish a meeting buzzing with inspiration, don't just keep it to yourself – tell someone!

How can clubs improve their public image and attract more guests?

Word of mouth still reigns supreme. You don't need a viral TikTok dance to get guests through the door (although... never say never). Just share how Toastmasters helped you – at work, in interviews, or even at weddings when you had to give that speech. Combine that with a strong presence on social media, and boom – your club starts to shine.

What role does social media play in your PR efforts, and which platforms have been most effective?

Instagram is my personal favourite – it's where my creative side thrives. But for District 91, Facebook is still king. It's where most of our members hang out. That said, I'm keeping my eye on Instagram – it's definitely where the future's heading. So don't be surprised if you see more reels, stories, and Canva magic popping up soon!

If you could launch any PR campaign for Toastmasters, what would it be?

Funny you should ask – I'm working with our Club Growth Director, Seema, on something exciting! I previously ran a campaign called "Advance Your Career," and we're looking to bring it back. It aligns perfectly with our current "Ditch the Nerves" campaign, especially for those job-hunting or preparing for interviews. It's PR with purpose – helping people grow professionally while discovering the benefits of Toastmasters.

GUEST CONTRIBUTION

What's the most unexpected thing you've learned in this role?

You'd think it's design or social media algorithms... but no, it's people management. You get questions, feedback, complaints, sometimes all in the same email! – and it teaches you patience, empathy, and how to keep calm. It's been incredibly rewarding.

If you could have dinner with any famous PR figure, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

Honestly? I don't know any famous PR figures! I work in tech – I'm all about software and solutions. But I've learned PR through doing: from being a club President to handling marketing for events. I've taken inspiration from fellow Toastmasters, creatives, and anyone who's made an impact. So dinner? I'd love to sit down with someone who's making waves – not necessarily famous, but definitely inspiring. Plus, I promise to bring dessert.



ALLEN PAUL
D91 PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER

CALL FOR SUPPORT

HELPING HOWARD BALKIND, DTM ATTEND THE CONFERENCE IN SOLIHULL

We have an urgent request for support from one of our dedicated Toastmasters members, **Howard Balkind, DTM, from Manchester Communicators**. In June 2023, Howard was struck by a sudden spinal abscess that left him paralyzed and reliant on a wheelchair. Despite these challenges, his spirit and dedication to Toastmasters remain strong, and he is eager to participate in the upcoming conference in Solihull this year.

To make this possible, we are seeking assistance from district members who can offer a lift to the conference. This is a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate the strength and compassion of our Toastmasters community. If you are attending the conference and have room to help Howard, who needs special accommodation, please consider lending your support.

For those able to assist, please reach out directly to Howard via email at [**howardbalkind@gmail.com**](mailto:howardbalkind@gmail.com) to coordinate. Your generosity can make a significant difference in ensuring that all members, including Howard, have the opportunity to grow, learn, and engage with our vibrant community.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to help a fellow Toastmaster in need. Your support embodies the true spirit of our organization.



QUIZ

CORNER

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete the following questions and submit your answers via email to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org (Subject of the email should be "Quiz Corner").

The winner will be randomly selected from the entries with the highest scores and will receive a special Toastmasters prize!

1. Which of the following is NOT a formal role at a typical Toastmasters meeting?

(A) Grammarian

(B) Ah-Counter

(C) Timekeeper

(D) Debater

2. Who can attend a Toastmasters Business Meeting at the International Convention?

(A) Only District Directors

(B) Any Toastmaster member

(C) Only voting delegates

(D) The general public

3. What is the maximum time allowed for a speech to qualify in the International Speech Contest?

(A) 5 minutes

(B) 7 minutes

(C) 10 minutes

(D) 12 minutes

4. What type of speech is designed to test a speaker's ability to adapt and think on their feet?

(A) An educational speech

(B) An impromptu speech

(C) A humorous speech

(D) A motivational speech

5. What is the primary goal of the "Ice Breaker" speech in Toastmasters?

(A) To persuade the audience

(B) To introduce yourself to the club

(C) To demonstrate advanced speaking skills

(D) To win a best speaker ribbon

6. Which role at a Toastmasters meeting provides feedback on the use of filler words and crutch phrases?

(A) General Evaluator

(B) Ah-Counter

(C) Grammarian

(D) Toastmaster of the Day

LAST MONTH'S QUIZ WINNER
Elizabeth Jordan, DTM, IPDD

PURPOSE PIONEERS

JOIN THE JOURNEY

Join Our Visionary Quest for Club Growth!

Step up and be part of an extraordinary movement within District 71 as we embark on a groundbreaking strategy to create new clubs! This is your chance to develop your skills, collaborate with visionary leaders, and play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Toastmasters in our community.

Seize this opportunity to transform your personal and professional landscape. Let's innovate, inspire, and drive success together.

To join, send an email to clubgrowthdirector@d71toastmasters.org and contribute to a legacy of excellence and achievement!

Join the Brand Builders Team!

Dive into a world of innovation, connect with fellow leaders, and leave your mark on our district's legacy in this Centennial year.

Supercharge your Toastmasters experience by joining our elite District Public Relations team! This is your golden opportunity to master new skills, influence our community, and accelerate your Pathways projects.

Don't just participate—lead and inspire! Send an email to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org to sign up today and transform your Toastmasters journey into an extraordinary adventure.



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

VPPR OF THE MONTH:

Are you ready to showcase your creativity, engage our community, and take your club's public relations to new heights? This is your chance to shine and bring €50 to your club!

How to Participate:

Every month, we're looking for a Vice President of Public Relations who stands out by boosting the club's visibility, engaging members, and innovating communication strategies. If you've got what it takes, dive into this exciting challenge!

Why Join the Challenge?

You will be the winning VPPR gain recognition across the district and increase your PR skills. You will also secure an additional €50 for our club, which can be used to enhance our Toastmasters experience & complete your pathways project!

Get Involved:

Start planning your strategies, engage with your club members, and let's make some noise about the great work you are doing!



VPPR OF
THE MONTH



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

Social Media Post of the Quarter Contest!

Ready to showcase your creativity and social media savvy? Enter our Social Media Post of the Quarter contest and you could win **€50** for your club!

Contest Details:

Create a post that embodies the spirit of Toastmasters, engages the community, and reflects your club's unique vibe. Whether it's an inspirational quote, a success story, a clever meme, or an event recap, make it impactful and make it shine!

Winning Criteria:

1. Creativity and Originality: Bring something new and exciting to the table. Surprise us!
2. Alignment with Toastmasters Values & Brand: Your post should be compliant with the TM brand, and embody and promote the values of leadership, communication, and personal growth.
3. Engagement: We're looking for likes, shares, comments, and overall interaction. Get the community talking!
4. Visual Appeal: Make sure your post is visually captivating. Use high-quality images or graphics that grab attention.
5. Message Clarity: Your post should communicate clearly and effectively, delivering its message in a powerful way.

How to Participate:

Simply tag your club's official social media account in your post and use the hashtag **#D71BrandBuilders** and **#D71PostOfTheQuarter**. Posts must be made within the current quarter to qualify. Send a link of your post to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

PR Ambassador of the Month Award:

Are you ready to elevate your Division's profile and showcase your PR prowess? Join the exciting PR Ambassador of the Month challenge and stand a chance to win €50 for your Division!

What's the Challenge?

Each month, we're on the lookout for a PR Ambassador who goes above and beyond to enhance your Division's visibility, engage the VPPRs & community, craft compelling narratives that resonate far and wide & comply with TM Brand guidelines.

Why Participate?

This is your opportunity to make a significant impact, gain recognition across our Toastmasters community, and bring a €50 bonus to help fund Division initiatives. Whether it's through innovative social media campaigns, dynamic press releases, or engaging community outreach, your efforts will not go unnoticed!

How to Win:

Show us how you can lead PR efforts that captivate and inspire. Excellence in communication, creativity in execution, and measurable impact on our community engagement will crown you as the PR Ambassador of the Month.



PR AMBASSADOR OF THE MONTH



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

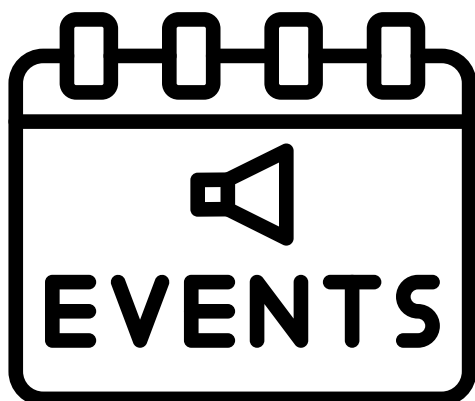
Open Night Incentive

Calling all Toastmasters! Put your event planning and publicity skills to the test. Host an open night within the toastmaster year that not only captivates but also attracts a crowd! If your event draws 20 or more attendees and gets featured in the local newspaper or on the radio, your club wins **€50!**

Incentive Details:

1. Organize an Event: Plan and execute an event that draws at least 20 attendees.
2. Capture the Moment: Take photos and videos to document the event's success.
3. Gain Media Coverage: Get your event published in a local newspaper or broadcast on a local radio station.
4. Submit Your Proof: Send in your pictures, videos, and a copy of the media coverage to claim your prize.

Note: Each club can claim this incentive once, so make it count! This is a fantastic opportunity to boost your club's visibility, engage the community, and showcase the vibrant spirit of Toastmasters.



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

#MyWhy Incentive: Share Your Story, Win €50 for Your Club!

Are you ready to inspire and engage? Participate in our #MyWhy drive by sharing a one-minute video detailing why you joined Toastmasters and why you continue to be a part of our incredible community. The most engaging story of the month will win €50 for their club and gain special recognition!

How to Participate:

1. Create Your Video: In one minute, tell us your Toastmasters journey. What drew you to join? What keeps you coming back? Make it heartfelt and inspiring!
2. Post & Tag: Share your video on social media using the hashtag #MyWhy. Make sure to tag our official page so we don't miss it!
3. Engage Your Audience: Encourage likes, shares, and comments. The post with the most engagement wins!

Prize Details:

The participant whose video garners the most engagement for the month will not only bring €50 to their club but will also be featured in our district communications, showcasing their story and their club.

Deadline: Get your videos posted and rack up engagement throughout the month. Submit the link by email to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org on or before the **28th of the month**. We'll tally the results and announce the winner at month's end.

Why Join the #MyWhy Drive?

This is your chance to highlight the impact Toastmasters has had on your life, connect with others on a similar journey, and contribute directly to your club's success. Let's fill our community with powerful stories and reasons that keep us all coming back for more.

Ready to share your why? Grab your phone, record your story, and let's show the world the power of our Toastmasters community!



CHALLENGES & REWARDS

Shine at the D71 Conference in Solihull on Us!

Calling all aspiring writers and Toastmasters enthusiasts! Here's an exciting opportunity to showcase your talents and potentially enjoy the thrill of our next D71 Conference in Solihull – **absolutely free!**

How to Enter:

Simply contribute an article, story, or any creative content to our district newsletter. Whether it's sharing insights, club successes, personal achievements in Toastmasters, or thoughtful reflections, your contribution not only enriches our community but also earns you a chance to win!

Prize Details:

Win a Free Ticket to the D71 Conference in Solihull worth **£300**. Immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere of one of the year's most anticipated Toastmasters events.

Drawing Process:

Every contributor's name will be entered into a draw. At the close of the submission period, one lucky winner will be selected to receive a free ticket to the conference, where you can network, learn, and celebrate your Toastmasters journey.

Don't Miss Out:

This is your chance to shine and be recognized. The more you contribute, the richer our newsletter becomes, and the closer you get to experiencing the excitement of the D71 Conference on us!

Ready to contribute and win? Submit your entries now to prmanager@d71toastmasters.org and join us in making the Toastmasters District 71 newsletter a source of pride and information.

Let your words take you places!



PR TIPS & TRICKS

Take Back Control: Protecting Your Smartphone Privacy

In a world where our phones are with us 24/7, it's easy to forget just how much access we've granted to apps and third-party platforms. During a recent speech at Kildare Toastmasters, I explored the topic: "Take Back Control: Simple Steps to Protect Your Smartphone Privacy."

While most of us have joked about our phones "listening" to us, the reality is more about data permissions than microphones. Apps often request unnecessary access to our cameras, microphones, locations, and even contacts. The good news? You can do something about it.

I shared four actionable steps to protect your data without giving up convenience:

- Audit your app permissions regularly
- Limit location access to "Only While Using the App"
- Turn off ad personalization in your settings
- Be mindful of free apps—your data may be the cost

For PR professionals and communicators, protecting our privacy isn't just personal, it's professional. Our devices contain sensitive contacts, confidential plans, and client conversations. A few small changes can go a long way.

Privacy is no longer a luxury; it's a digital necessity. Taking control of your smartphone settings is one small, empowering step toward safeguarding your personal and professional life in today's connected world.

So the next time your phone seems to know what you're thinking, take a look at your settings. You might just take back more control than you expected.

FOLASANMI GEORGE
KILDARE TOASTMASTERS
DIVISION D PR AMBASSADOR



POETIC PALETTE

LET US BEGIN HEALING

World Poetry Day,
A day to celebrate,
The way words make us feel,
And often help us heal,

The wounds of the past,
The scars that do last,
The shadows we remember,
From January to December,

Let your pen be your therapist,
Let your flow be your medicine,
Let your past inspire the present,
To the future be a blessing,

What a joy it is to be,
With Olga, Mike and Brian Greene,
Phillip and Aine and all the viewing team
Let the light of words illuminate your being,

The rhyme my needle,
The metre my thread,
The flow my pillow,
Where I rest my head,

Express your pain,
Express your joy,
Express your silence,
Express your noise,



PRINCE ACQUAH
DISTRICT 71 POET-IN-RESIDENCE



POETIC PALETTE

Express the rain,
Express the stain,
The ink that remains,
On your heart to this day,

No matter the emotion I write,
No matter the weather I write,
No matter the matter I write,
No matter no matter I write,

Expression is your express way to heal,
To feel, to deal, to allow to heal,

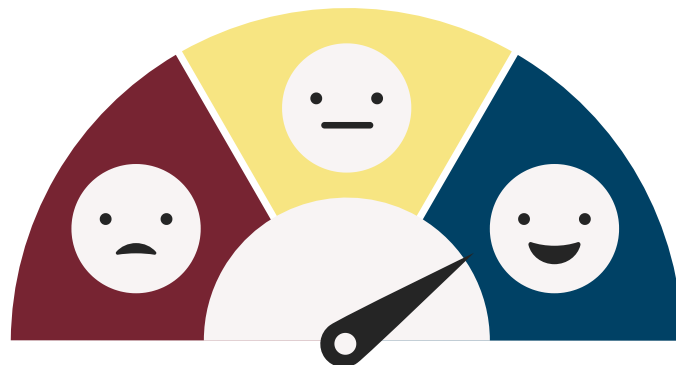
So lets enjoy world poetry day,
A day to celebrate,
The way words make us feel,
Let us begin to heal...



PRINCE ACQUAH
DISTRICT 71 POET-IN-RESIDENCE



FEEDBACK & SUGGESTIONS



WE VALUE YOUR INPUT!

HELP US IMPROVE YOUR NEWSLETTER

We're always striving to make our newsletter more engaging and valuable for you. Your feedback and suggestions play a crucial role in shaping the content and ensuring it meets your needs and interests. Here's how you can contribute:

Share Your Thoughts:

What did you enjoy in this issue? What would you like to see more of? Your insights help us tailor the newsletter to better serve our community.

Suggest Future Content:

Have ideas for articles, features, or topics? Would like to suggest clubs or individuals that are outstanding and deserve to be recognised? Let us know! Your suggestions can help us create content that resonates with you.

How to Provide Feedback:

Email your feedback and suggestions to prmanager@D71toastmasters.org or send us a message on our social media platforms. We're always listening!

Photo of the Month:

Submit your favourite moments captured during club meetings or events. The best photo will be featured in next month's newsletter!

Join the Conversation:

Engage with fellow members by discussing your favourite articles and sharing your thoughts on our [Facebook Group](#). Let's build a vibrant and interactive community!

THANKS TO OUR EDITORS!

Angela Afieghe
Elizabeth Jordan
Folasanmi Ajayi

Share with other members and non-member friends/colleagues that you know.

THANKS FOR READING!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

