



District 35

March 17, 2020

Speech Contests, Spring Convention & Annual Meeting, Virtual Club Meetings, and Future Announcements

Dear Club Officers, Leaders, and Members of District 35,

Changes continue to happen daily due to COVID-19 that are affecting us in our work, our home, our family, and even here in Toastmasters.

Your District leadership continues to have discussions daily with Toastmasters International and other Districts to make decisions that will best assist our members. On March 14, 2020, the Toastmasters International Board of Directors communicated to us that Area, Division, or District events can no longer be conducted in person on or prior to June 1, 2020.

As requested by Toastmasters International, each District was to conduct a meeting with their District Executive Committee (DEC) and discuss the option of continuing with contests virtually or not at all. We held our DEC meeting on March 16. It was decided that the remaining speech contests for the Area, Division, and District levels for 2019-2020 will be cancelled at this time.

This decision was not made lightly. Many of our members have been practicing their contest speeches and it is a tradition in our District to hold these contests. We decided to focus on working with our clubs and do what we can to ensure our members can stay connected, remain engaged, and continue to work towards their goals during these challenging times. Let's concentrate on the virtual aspect of our club meetings so as to not hinder the personal growth and journey of our members.

Because we cannot host a District event in person prior to June 1, 2020, the scheduled "Reach for the Stars" Spring Convention on May 1-2, 2020 in Waukesha will be cancelled. Any member or club that has already paid for their registration will receive a refund by Friday, March 20, 2020. Any member that has made a hotel room reservation is responsible for cancelling their own reservations. We will plan something for a District-wide Winter TLI that will encompass some aspects of the Spring Convention, most notably, the Hall of Fame and year-end award recognition.

The annual District Council Business Meeting **WILL STILL BE HELD on Saturday, May 2, 2020.**

NOTE: This will be virtual business meeting, similar to the District council meeting that was held in the fall. Details on the time and login information will be forwarded to all club presidents and vice presidents education. No proxies will be allowed at the virtual business meeting. Each club president and vice president education will need to log in individually and participate in the business meeting. You will be voting on the incoming District leadership as well as club realignment in our District. Please mark your calendar and plan to virtually attend on May 2.

On March 15, 2020 the District held a webinar to share various options for virtual club meetings (watch webinar here: <https://fccdl.in/LVp86ur4f4>). With the new recommendation on March 16 from President Trump and March 17 from Governor Evers to avoid groups of more than 10 people, virtual meetings seem to be the way to go. This is a new skill that we will develop and there will be a learning curve. Club Growth Director Teri McGregor has offered to host a couple of webinars to help members learn about holding virtual meetings. We also have some experienced members within our District we can reach out to for guidance.

If you visit the District website, we have added a few new sections to help you. First is the Coronavirus Action Center at <https://District35.org/coronavirus-action-center/>. We'll post updates as they occur as well as tips for holding virtual meetings on this page. You are invited to be proactive and visit this page regularly.

Another update to the website is the District 35 of Facebook section at <https://District35.org/District-35-on-facebook/> We know several of our members are not on Facebook, but we use our Facebook page to communicate regularly with the District. Going forward, we'll add those posts to the website so you can still get the information being shared, but just not any resulting comments.

As always you are encouraged to visit the Toastmasters websites for their announcements and changes that affect Toastmasters due to COVID-19.

<https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/news%20and%20announcements/covid-19>

Thank you again for your support and commitment to Toastmasters and District 35. We know this is a lot to take in at one time and we appreciate all that you do.

Please reach out to your District leadership team – Area Directors, Division Directors, and your Trio – with your questions and concerns. We'll help you as best as we can.

Together, we will get through this difficult time. Keep safe and stay positive.

Best regards from your District Trio,

Rozaline Janci, DTM – District Director
Kris Pool, DTM – Program Quality Director
Teri McGregor, VC4 – Club Growth Director

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