

District Officers

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Immediate Past

District Director

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Table of Contents

Program Quality Director . 2
Club Growth Director 3
Virtual District 8 Annual Conference 4
Meet the World Champion . 5
Immediate Past District Director 6
Alignment Committee . . . 7
VIC; Prison Clubs 9
District 8 Historian 10
Directors of the Quarter . 11
Member Spotlight . . . 12-13
Virtual Meetings 13
Toastimonials 14
Awards 15-16

The Power of Connection

District Director
James Childress—ACS, ALB



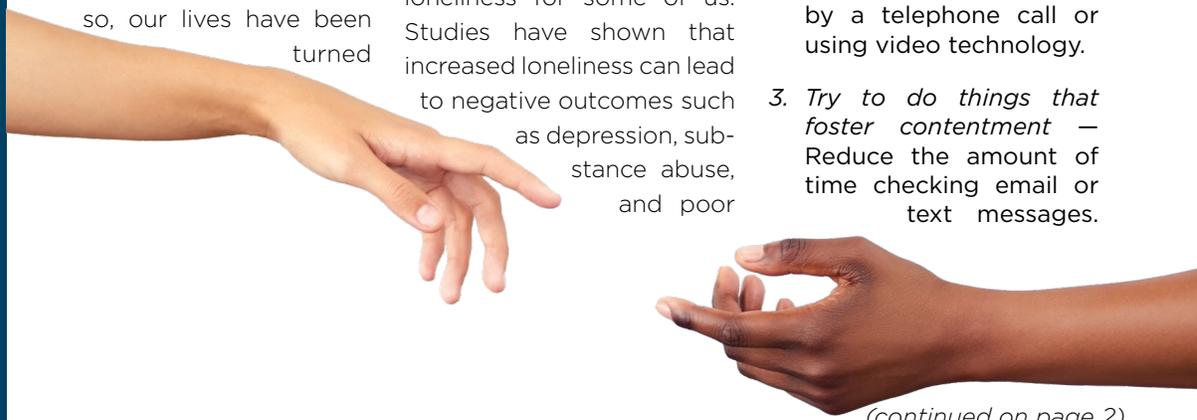
Greetings Fellow Toastmasters!

How are you? How are you feeling? Is everything okay? These burning questions are so pertinent in this day and time. In the past 6 weeks or so, our lives have been turned

topsy-turvy due to ramifications of the Coronavirus Pandemic. We have been forced to separate from one another -aka social distancing—in order to mitigate the spread of this horrible disease. This goes against the very innate thing that makes us human. The ability to connect and forge strong healthy relationships. We can no longer gather at coffee shops, watch our favorite sports teams play, or attend our local Toastmasters meeting to bask in the ambience of a supportive and positive learning environment. The unintended consequence of social distancing can cause an increase in feelings of loneliness for some of us. Studies have shown that increased loneliness can lead to negative outcomes such as depression, substance abuse, and poor

sleep quality. Social connection is a critical human need because loneliness can affect our lifespans. An example is a couple that had been married for decades, dying months, days, or even hours apart due to loneliness. Luckily, we can thwart the negative effects of loneliness by practicing these actions:

1. *Cultivate a connection mindset* — We must adopt a mindset that connection is desirable and necessary.
2. *Take care of yourself* — Get some exercise, eat healthy, and get plenty of sleep. Also make a habit of connecting with people who energize us by a telephone call or using video technology.
3. *Try to do things that foster contentment* — Reduce the amount of time checking email or text messages.



(continued on page 2)

District 8 Mission — We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

District 8 Vision — Create Culture, Strengthen Community, and Influence Change.



I Have A New Job Now!

Program Quality Director
Angela Breinin—ACB, ALS



I am really looking forward to our upcoming District 8 Virtual Conference — On Top of the World! I will be there to share in all of the celebrations for District 8 this year! We have many members and clubs who have achieved incentives. Don't forget about the Distinguished Club Program—we want to celebrate with YOUR club next month! I'm also looking forward to the keynote speeches by our Region 5 International Director and a World Champion of Public Speaking!

My baby boy, Emmett, may even make a special appearance! :)

Let's all finish this Toastmaster year STRONG! See you all on Zoom very soon!

Angie Breinin
Program Quality Director
District 8 Toastmasters 2019-2020

It is true. I have a new job now! Back in December, my husband Leo and I welcomed baby boy, Emmett, into our lives. It has been wonderful (albeit exhausting!) so far. We are so in love with our little man! It has been a slower transition back into the world of Toastmasters than I had anticipated, but I appreciate all of the outpouring of love and support—District 8 Toastmasters members ROCK! I am prepared to finish strong during this “home stretch” of the Toastmaster year. Be on the lookout for important dates regarding a Train the Trainer session and our upcoming Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI).



(continued from page 1)

- Focus on activities like reading, painting, and assembling puzzles.
- 4. *Take time for gratitude* —Write down three things you are grateful for each day.
- 5. *Go for walks* — Get out of the house for some fresh air and sunshine.

- 6. *Serve others* — Write a letter to an isolated family member or friend. Not only will it boost their spirits, but it will boost yours as well.

We have gone through a lot of surreal changes recently. Social distancing from our friends and love ones can

be quite the challenge. It is imperative that we constantly seek out ways to connect with each other. If we do, then the power of connection will give us the strength to combat the negative effects of loneliness.



In the Middle of Difficulty Lies Opportunity

Club Growth Director
RJ Stratton—DTM



Hello District 8 Family,

Instead of the usual Club Growth Director reports, . . . I'd like to focus my inputs to this newsletter on something I think needs to be said . . .

It is during times like these, that I am reminded of what Albert Einstein once said ***“In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.”***

With all the challenges that have come due to the Covid 19 pandemic and social distancing, District 8 managed to come together and rise to the occasion. So take heart in knowing, ***“Tomorrow Always Brings a Little Sunshine with it.”***

Let me point out just a few of these [recent accomplishments](#):

When it looked we were not going to be allowed to meet in person, a **District 8 Virtual Task Force**, chaired by Adrienne Pluss, was created to figure out *Best Practices for Virtual*

Club Meetings & Speech Contests (soon to have its own place on the D8 website). We are learning the how-to's and transitioning to the virtual world we now live in.

Our very first ever Virtual Division Speech Contests were conducted in April 2020 and in May 2020, we will hold our first ever Virtual District 8 Conference.

There are new members joining clubs after attending virtual club meetings and virtual open houses, as a virtual guest.

Check this out . . . During the process of trying to balance the distribution of district clubs by the Alignment Committee, District Maps were created. Allowing members to see where all clubs throughout the district were located on the map. Thanks to William Danchus, Patti Howard, and especially Tom Coscia . . .

They are now on the District 8 website, under [Resources/Club Maps](https://dist8tm.org/resources/club-maps) -<https://dist8tm.org/club-directory/>

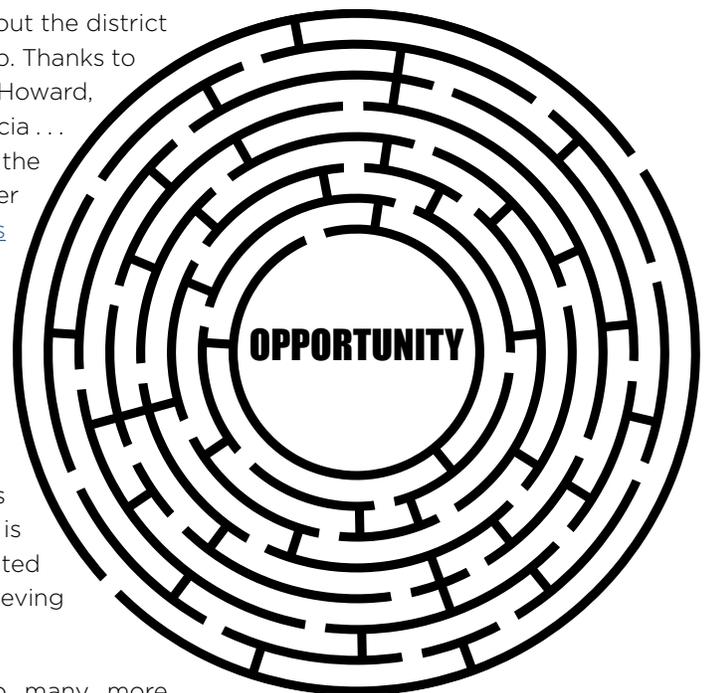
We chartered another new club on March 31, 2020—Quincy BCBS of IL Toastmasters, club #7580410. Pathways Educational Program is becoming more accepted and members are achieving Pathways DCP Goals.

With all these and so many more

challenges & changes we have faced and will face with the coming of the new Toastmaster's Year. I am filled with hope and pride in our district. The abundance of talent and great leadership that continue to come forward and assist in making District 8 the very best, never ceases to amaze me. So I am not worried about what the future holds . . . but waiting to see what the next challenge brings and Who, What, When and Where, of our little District 8 Village that will rise to the occasion.

We are truly blessed with some incredible people.

TAKECARE & BE SAFE
RJ Stratton, DTM
District 8 Club Growth Director



On Top of the World

Virtual District 8 Annual Conference

District 8 Conference Co-Chairs

Parshu Anantharam—DTM & Pam Marshall—ACB, ALB



Parshu Anantharam, DTM and Pam Marshall, ACB,ALB, co-chairs of this year's conference would like to **FREE** you of the CORONAVIRUS Pandemic by inviting you to attend the District 8 Annual Virtual Conference, **Friday & Saturday, May 15th & 16th, 2020**. This year's theme is **"On Top of the World."** We have made some adjustments to our original Live conference plan to maintain social distancing. However, we are still planning an exciting conference that will **Zoom you On Top of The World!!** We will have TWO distinguished guests — Pres Vasilev, 2013 World Champion Speaker (link to his winning World Championship of Public Speaking speech video: <https://youtu.be/Z8L68Ev8VPQ>) and Mohamad Qayoom, DTM, Region 5



Mohamad Qayoom

International Director. Pres Vasilev will do a 1-hour-long virtual storytelling workshop, **How to Uncover the Glory of Your Story™**, on Friday and Mohamad Qayoom, DTM will do a keynote, **Leading with Heart and Courage**, on Saturday.

Friday's keynote will be followed by an awards slide show recognizing our District Toastmaster members and clubs milestones achieved during 2019-2020. The night will wrap up with our District Humorous Speech Competition. Be sure to have your popcorn, or other favorite snack(s) and favorite beverage(s) because they are The Best of The Best and are guaranteed to entertain!!

James Childress, District Director will kick off Saturday with our business meeting. Be sure to tune in to vote for your officers for 2020-2021. You will also learn more about our district and changes that will occur July 1, 2020. Kat Mokriakow will lead a fun "Roast"



Pres Vasilev

of Elaine Curry, Immediate Past District Director. We will take a break to allow you time to do your own thing and refresh for more fun.

Mohamad Qayoom, DTM will kick off the 2nd half of Saturday with his keynote speech. You DON'T want to be late getting back!! After another very brief break, the International speech contest will begin. The winner of this contest will advance to the Region Quarterfinal and proudly represent District 8.

Mr. Childress will wrap up the evening with District Awards, DTM (Distinguished Toastmaster) Celebration and installation of officers.

Oh yeah, you **CAN NOT** beat the price. \$0.00. Where else can you go to receive so much for **FREE!!** Stay tuned for details on how you can be a part of this **Journey to The Top of The World!**



Meet the World Champion

2013 World Champion of Public Speaking

Pres Vasilev



Pres Vasilev rose above 30,000 contestants from 122 countries to become the 2013 World Champion of Public Speaking. He is the author of the popular online training program

[“How to Master Compelling Storytelling”](#)

For over a decade, Pres has studied, researched, and spoken on self-improvement, speaking and storytelling. Pres has coached hundreds of speakers from around the world to craft compelling stories, deliver powerful presentations and win speech contests.



Friday, May 15th

Virtual Storytelling Workshop:

How to Uncover the Glory of Your Story™

In this interactive storytelling workshop, the 2013 World Champion of Public Speaking Pres Vasilev will equip you with the tools and tactics you need to transform your speeches into captivating stories.

Watch Pres Vasilev's winning World Championship speech and engage in a dynamic discussion to explore its secrets. Ask your questions, share your insights and learn from the questions and insights of others.

You will pick up practical tools and tactics that will help you uncover the glory of your story so you can influence and inspire your audience.

Gain Free Access to Pres Vasilev's "Speaking Secrets" at PresSays.com/3



Time for a New Year

Immediate Past District Director
Elaine Curry—DTM IPDD



Greetings Fellow Toastmasters

It is a bitter sweet moment for me as I write this article. As my role of Intermediate Past District Director comes to an end I can reflect back to when I was elected Club Growth Director 4 years ago. Time flies. Those years have matured me and given me so much growth. I have built so many relationships inside and outside of District 8. It has been an

amazing journey that is not yet finished. Something that I cherished this year was leading the District Leadership Committee as chairperson. It afforded me the opportunity to help the District search for candidates to lead District 8 next year. I worked with a committee of wonderful Toastmasters. We collected nominations, performed interviews and submitted our candidate list to the District Director.

On May 16, during the District 8 Annual Business meeting our District Council (which consists of club Presidents, VP Education and DEC — District Executive Committee), will vote to elect next year's (2020–2021) District 8 Trio and Division Directors. The election this year will be held virtually for the first time. In the midst of "Stay Home, Stay Safe" mandates due to the Corona Virus pandemic we will use the virtual tool called Zoom, that many of you by now have experienced by conducting your club meetings virtually. I pray that this will open the door for good attendance and active participation of the District Council members at the Annual Meeting.

These are exciting and unprecedented times. We are chartering a new direction in Toastmasters. You are a part of history. I would like to thank you for trusting me to lead District 8 during my time in the Trio and Immediate Past District Director. I will continue to remain active and engaged as a PDD — Past District Director and hope to see you at the various District events in 2020–2021. I look forward to the lifting of the "Stay Home" ban in Illinois when it is deemed safe and for the chance to see you all and fellowship once again.

I will be conducting interviews on Zoom of our candidates running for office which will be recorded and made available to all District 8 members access to the interviews will be made available on the District 8 website dist8tm.org. Continue to reach high as you move forward in your Toastmasters journey. I will be around and willing to help wherever and whenever you need me.

Elaine Curry, DTM IPDD out.



What's Ahead for District 8 in FY 21?

Alignment Committee

Patti Howard—DTM



Every year, all Toastmaster Districts are required to review the distribution of their clubs within Areas and Divisions. I was asked by James Childress, DD, to chair this committee. There were two functions he wanted this committee to review and make recommendations. They were for the alignment of clubs for FY21 and to review District 54's proposal to annex 10 Illinois counties into their district.

I met with James and Kat Mokriakow, as she was last year's Realignment Committee Chair, to review the basis for alignment and when the report was needed. The guidelines for alignment are in the Toastmaster Bylaws, Protocol 7.0. Basically, Areas must have between 4-6 clubs and Divisions must have at least 3 Areas.

My first step was to get representation from each division. Like many of you, I didn't know who was in what divisions. I began reading the archived Commun-8s to find others who I could ask to join with me. Andrew Welter,

Division A; Cindy Larm, Division E; Elaine Curry, Division B; Herman, Koester, Division C; Natalie Meaghan, Division E; and Karen Leingang; Division F answered that call. I also asked RJ Stratton, CGD to join us as he would be aware of clubs in the chartering process.

Having served on last year's realignment committee, I was at a loss of where clubs were physically located. I began asking who could create maps for the committee. RJ reached out to Bill Danchus and he created Bing maps for the committee. This gave us a much better appreciation of where all clubs were located. Shared documents were added in Dropbox which allowed all the documentation to be kept together and referenced.

When we looked at the distribution of the Areas and Clubs, we found the following:

- Division A has 4 Areas with 21 clubs. 2 areas have 6 clubs and 2 with room to grow
- Division B has 5 Areas with 29 clubs. 4 areas have 6 clubs and 1 area had 5 clubs, leaving little room for growth in that Division
- Division C has 4 Areas with 21 clubs. 1 area had 6 clubs and 3 with room to grow
- Division E has 3 Areas with 10 clubs. 1 area has 2 clubs and 2 with room to grow
- Division F has 5 areas with 28 clubs. 3 areas have 6 clubs and 2 have room to grow

Our first decision was what to do

about Division E. There were two options. Either Division E would need to be disbanded and absorbed into other Divisions OR bring other clubs into Division E. With Division B physically located next to Division E, and Division B having room for only one more club, changes within those divisions would provide a win-win for both divisions to grow. Looking at the map, we saw the Missouri River as a natural dividing landmark. Division E would encompass all clubs west of the Missouri River, like Division C clubs are east of the Mississippi River.

Having gone through realignment last year with my club moving from Division A to Division C, I understand the hesitancy to make change. One develops friendships with the other clubs and sometimes there are club rivalries that bond clubs together. It is sometimes hard to accept the transition of change.

In making our realignment recommendations we looked at the growth opportunity for Areas/Divisions to have a greater opportunity for developing leaders; greater competition for speech contests and to fulfill functional roles; opportunities for chartering clubs into the areas; having support closer to clubs; and increasing the likelihood of eligibility for Distinguished Clubs, Areas and Divisions.

We then looked at the realigned clubs along with the Club Performance Dashboard. We wanted area to have a balance of aspiring and strong clubs, where aspiring clubs are working on building membership; educational

(continued on page 8)



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and leadership growth; and are below 20 members. We wanted the Area Director to easily support their clubs with minimal travel or their travel to be along major highways instead of 2 lane roads. The Alignment Report on the District website/Resources/DEC/Council Meeting Documents provides more detail.

Due to the Coronavirus restrictions, we couldn't present our recommendations at a DEC meeting. Conference calls were set up for all Division Directors along with the District Leadership Team, and the effected Area Directors.

Our alignment recommendations will affect 12 clubs this year. Area and Divisional changes will mean new faces at Officer make-up training sessions and at the Area/Division Speech Contests giving more opportunity for involvement. Our hope is that these recommendations will allow smaller

changes in the next few years with the hope that with additional club growth, Division D will once again be established. Our request is that you weigh the evidence for these recommendations and vote yes in saving Division E.

Our second function was to review the District 54 proposal of allowing them to annex 10 counties along our northern Illinois territory. Their premise was that they have a niche for starting rural clubs and that they would be better able to support those counties. After meeting with them, we felt that District 8 was in a better position to support the counties they requested since we have a strong leadership team in Springfield, IL along with chartering clubs in Quincy and Effingham this past year. Our request is that you vote no on annexing 10 counties to District 54.

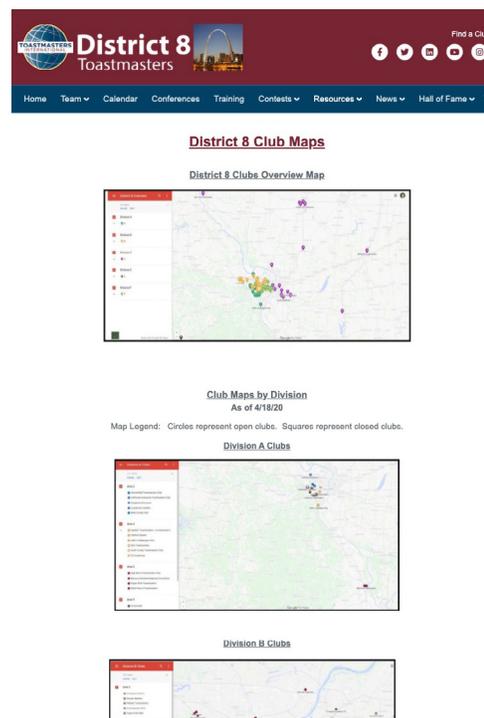
Additionally, we feel it necessary that we build on these recommendations by establishing "Hub Areas" in our outlying rural areas that will assist in the support and development of our rural clubs. This includes the use of Assistant Directors at both the Area and Division levels. Driving 2 to 2 ½ hours one way, does not lend itself to providing support for clubs. We need to find ways in which District 8 can assist in coordinating various public relations tools such as Speechcraft, Town Halls, partnerships with Rotary Clubs; Youth Leadership; corporate liaison and setting up Toastmaster information tables.

What's ahead for District 8 this next year? There is greater opportunity for us FY21. Not only for our personal growth but in utilizing our skills in sharing with others what Toastmasters is all about, Leadership in Excellence.

New Website Feature

Looking for ways to utilize his skills, Tom Coscia has once again stepped up to help us. He has created maps of our clubs within District 8. Don't know where Poplar Bluff is located? How about Midland Mid-Day Toastmasters Club? Tom spent many hours creating Google Maps for us and has shared them out to our website. We

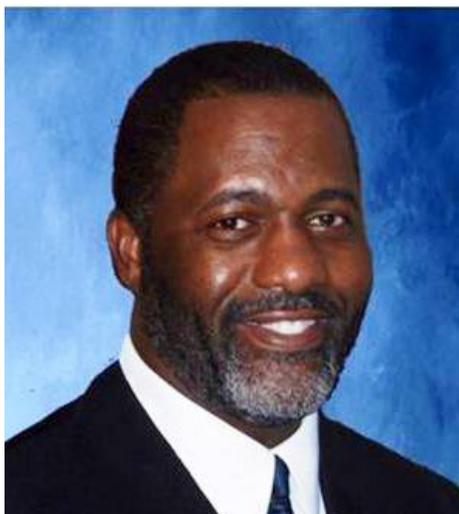
encourage you to look at these maps. Encourage family and friends to visit clubs. If you are passing through an area, stop by for a Toastmaster club visit. All the club information is listed right there.



Prison Clubs Need Your Help

VIC; Prison Clubs

Curtis Scroggins—DTM



Greetings, Fellow Toastmasters,

I hope everyone is protecting themselves and staying safe as we adjust to this new normal.

Toastmasters, like all organizations, is not exempt from the effects of the Covid-19 virus, though because of our protocols, we are affected differently. Communication, Leadership, and relationships are some of the core tenets of Toastmasters, and at this time, we must do all of these in a new way.

This change has affected all of our Clubs, whether corporate or community, college, or prison. And, it is the prison clubs that I am writing to you about. District 8 has a rich history of both chartered and Gavel prison Clubs. Did you know that the first prison Club in the world, Alpha Toastmasters, was chartered at the penitentiary in Jefferson City, Missouri?

How about the fact that, at one time, the Talu Toastmasters inmate club, also in Division E, was the #1 ranked Club in the world for Clubs their size in Toastmasters? We've also had several chartered and Gavel Clubs located at various correctional centers throughout the State.

As educational methods, policies, processes, and financial responsibilities have changed, Toastmasters, in general, have benefited positively. However, prison clubs have not always reaped the positive benefits intended by Toastmasters International as expected. The last two rounds of dues increases have created an unusual hardship on incarcerated Toastmasters. The cost of Toastmasters dues is the same for everyone. However, some inmates only get their income from "State Tip." State Tip is the amount of money unemployed inmates get as an income from the State, which is \$7.50 monthly. Imagine if your Toastmasters dues were the equivalent of a year's salary? That's precisely what these inmates are facing, and that is where you can help.

District 8 has established the Omer Roberts/Dori Drummond Inmate Scholarship Fund. The fund is named after Omer Roberts and Dori Drummond, two past District Governors (Directors) who were highly instrumental in establishing, supporting, and continuing inmate clubs in District 8. This fund was established to raise funds to assist in paying the dues, membership fees (and now Pathways

fees) for Toastmasters inmates located in District 8. The fund only pays half of the dues payment; the inmates are responsible for paying the other half.

Donations from the Basket Auction traditionally raised these scholarship funds during District Conferences. If you made a basket, donated toward one, contributed a cash donation, or participated in any way as part of the auction, we thank you for your support. With this year's conference being virtual, we will not have the opportunity to raise funds as we traditionally have. As a result, we are asking you to continue supporting our inmate clubs through your donations.

Those wishing to contribute to this fund can contact the District Director James Childress or District Finance Manager Tim Spezia.

Your contribution will allow us to continue our tradition of assisting the inmate Clubs in District 8 while allowing those inmates to continue helping the district achieve its goals and supporting men who are walking illustrations of the Toastmasters motto: "Where Leaders Are Made."

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me through email at scrogginscurtis@gmail.com or by telephone at 573-635-0924.

Thanks!
Curtis Scroggins
Omer Roberts/
Dori Drummond Fund Chair



Toastmasters Together

District 8 Historian

Elizabeth Link



“May you live in interesting times” is an expression often used ironically—most of us would agree that life is much more pleasant in times of peace, tranquility, and prosperity. Current statistics from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (www.cdc.gov) indicate that there are over 865,000 cases of COVID-19 in the US and territories, and the number of deaths is approximately 50,000. COVID-19 is causing suffering, death, and economic hardship in the United States and worldwide.

Toastmasters, and the rest of the world, are dealing with the challenges of sheltering in place, and taking other measures to protect ourselves and our loved ones. We’re encouraged to stay safe and stay home, abide by CDC guidelines for social distancing, wash our hands frequently and for at least 20 seconds, disinfect surfaces, and wear masks when around other people (while maintaining social distance). I can check a couple of the “high risk” boxes and it is not possible to tell just by looking whether other people are at risk. Following the CDC guidelines may seem onerous, but it helps keep all of us safe.

Although today’s problems feel unique, I am reminded that Toastmasters have always had challenges to overcome. Life in Southern California in the 1920s and 1930s wasn’t easy. Ralph Smedley was organizing Toastmasters clubs in a time and place when water wars stemmed from a huge internal migration into the area. There was violence and unrest due to labor troubles and civic corruption on an epic scale. The

Great Depression in the 1930s led to massive unemployment and hardship. But Toastmasters continued to grow, as evidence of the value of their training in public speaking and leadership.

Our own District 8 was founded in 1940 with 10 clubs across Missouri and Illinois. The District was affected in many ways by World War II, but the clubs coped. District Governor Clinton Sandusky was inducted into the military; another Toastmaster stepped up to finish his term. The club members and officers dealt with rationing of automobiles, gasoline and tires, not to mention food, coffee, and consumer goods until the end of the war. By 1949, District 8 had grown to the point where it could become two Districts. District 30 was formed in Northern Illinois, near Chicago, and District 8 comprised the area south of Chicago and the Saint Louis area. Toastmasters have persisted and prevailed, adapting as necessary, in order to continue to promote excellence in communication and leadership.

Now, Toastmasters is adapting to social distancing and working from home (WFH) — club meetings and events are using Zoom and other video conferencing platforms. Toastmasters International is establishing best practices for virtual meetings, contests and training events. Toastmasters in District 8 have been taking part in virtual club contests over the past few weeks and our district contest on May 15-16 will also be virtual. The skills we’re practicing are beneficial in the workplace. Many companies have enabled their employees to work from home and will reward the ones who can successfully and quickly adapt to virtual meetings and communication.

The Story of Toastmasters, Vol. I, by Dr. Raph C. Smedley and *Metamorphosis; 75 Years History of District 8*, by Farzana Chohan, Gary White, and Eileen Murphy were source material for this article.

From the early years, Toastmasters grew and became international — we will get through this challenge too. Dr. Smedley had a special message on the principles of Toastmasters for the 40th anniversary issue of *Toastmaster Magazine* in 1964. I have shortened, and paraphrased the highlights:

- 1. Keep it simple** – Toastmasters is based on the use of basic principles of effective oral communication (they really haven’t changed).
- 2. Do it yourself** – Toastmasters is a do-it-yourself activity. Nobody can do your thinking for you; Toastmasters form their own conclusions and speak for themselves.
- 3. Believe in yourself** – Toastmasters is based on a belief in the individual - and the ability to improve by developing those abilities to the fullest.
- 4. Enjoy yourself** - We learn best in moments of enjoyment—members stay in their clubs because they like each other and they are learning together.

Good communication skills and good leadership have never been more important than now. Social distancing does not have to lead to social isolation. Through maintaining our social contacts and networks, we can maintain hope in the future for ourselves, our families and our fellow Toastmasters.

C/Elizabeth M. Link
 Jeffco Challengers-9903
 Smedley Hometown Memorial
 Toastmasters-4115
 District 8 Historian



Division/Area Directors of the Quarter

Fellow Toastmasters, it takes a lot of effort to operate this district. There are over 100 clubs with approximately 2,000 members in our district. It can be a daunting task to stay abreast with what is going on daily. Fortunately, we have district leaders such as Division Directors and Area Directors to help lighten the load. We really appreciate their commitment and sacrifice to serve their fellow members. We want to recognize four of our finest leaders for the 2nd and 3rd quarters of this program year.

The Division Director of the Quarter for the 2nd Quarter (Oct-Dec) is Angela Brown, Division F Director.



Angela is the epitome of a selfless leader. At the beginning of the program year, we were trying to find an Area 17 Director in her division. Unfortunately, no one volunteered. Without hesitation, Angela volunteered to fill in as an Area Director. We even offered to help but she declined. Under Angela's leadership, 4 out of 5 areas in Division F submitted 100% of club visit reports which far exceeded Toastmasters International requirements, 21 out of 24 paid clubs had 4 or more club officers trained during the 1st round of club officer training, and her division was first out of five divisions, submitting 553 membership payments. As if she is not busy enough, Angela is Chief Executive Officer for the St. Louis Regional Health Commission and is part of a unified campaign, PrepareSTL, that provides COVID-19 messaging to the vulnerable and underserved communities. Angela has been a wonderful asset to our district this program year!

The Area Director of the Quarter for the 2nd Quarter (Oct-Dec) is Kathy Brennan, Area 1 Director.



Kathy is a hard charger who gets things done. Kathy completed 80% of the club visits for the 1st round. All five clubs in her area had at least 4 club officers trained during the 1st round of club officer training. Kathy was part of a demonstration team that helped charter a new club in Quincy, IL at Blue Cross Blue Shield. She also spearheaded the Division C club officer training. Always looking for ways to share the benefits of Toastmasters, Kathy organized a massive campaign that garnered publicity in the Springfield, IL region at the Career Connections Expo and the Businesswomen's Expo. Kathy is definitely a shining star in our district!

The Division Director of the Quarter for the 3rd Quarter (Jan-Mar) is Adrienne Pluss, Division A Director.



Adrienne is one of the most dedicated leaders in District 8. Adrienne taught the Presidents session at the Winter Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI). She had the most positive reviews of all the presenters at the TLI. Under Adrienne's leadership, Division A submitted 550 membership payments. Adrienne blazed a trail in our district by volunteering to chair the District 8 Virtual Task Force. The Virtual Task Force is working to develop guidelines and best practices to help clubs adjust to the new virtual environment. The task force under Adrienne's guidance provided a template on how to conduct a virtual club meeting and how to organize a virtual Division Contest. Adrienne also collaborated with Program Quality Director, Angie Breinin to author a TLI playbook that will facilitate planning and organizing for future TLI chairs. Adrienne's can-do spirit inspires other district leaders!

The Area Director of the Quarter for the 3rd Quarter (Jan-Mar) is Karen Leingang, Area 12 Director.



Karen is one of the most dynamic and dependable leaders in District 8. Karen had 5 out of 6 clubs get at least 4 club officers trained during the 1st and 2nd rounds of club officer training. Also 5 out of 6 clubs in her area submitted their club officer reports and membership dues payments on time. Karen went above and beyond and conducted all her 2nd round Area Club Visits two months ahead of schedule. Under Karen's leadership, her area has a combined 85.66% adoption rate in Pathways. Four of the clubs have over an 80% adoption rate! A valued team member who is very insightful, Karen is serving on the nascent District 8 Virtual Task Force, Alignment Committee, and the Corporate Liaison Committee. During her spare time, Karen completed a Triple Crown, achieving 4 education goals with two of those in Pathways. She also achieved the highest honor in Toastmasters International by becoming a Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM). Karen is a sterling example of leadership. We are so proud and honored to have her in District 8!



Member Spotlight

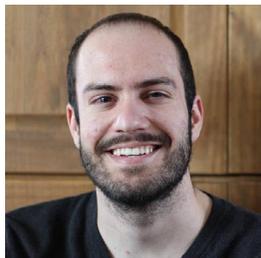
Division B Director

Suresh Gopalakrishnan—DL3



Thank you Team!

I would like to take a moment and recognize every single Area Director in my Division B for an excellent job they have done in successfully conducting their Area Contests in February.



Daniel Coker (Area 16 Director) and **Jennifer Jacobsen (Area 20 Director)** came together and collaborated their respective area contests effectively. They made the best use of everyone's time. Both the contests were attended by friends and family

members of the contestants. The success of this contest is a testament to the team efforts by both the area directors.



Chidu Subbiah (Area 18 Director) held his area contest separately. It was very well attended. He was creative in delegating some of the efforts to "non-toastmasters" (his wife and daughter). He too put in lot of effort and had support from some of the seasoned toastmasters!



Tonya Rivers (Area 3 Director) and **Will Rivers (Area 13 Director)** also had a collaborative and combined contest for their respective areas. They worked as a team and made the effort looked seamless. This gave an opportunity for contestants from one area to interact/listen to speeches from other area.



A BIG THANKS to all my Area Directors for their tireless efforts and successfully completing their area contests in February!!

Month of February seemed to be long time ago when we were having in-person club meetings, area contests and having a good laugh in each other's company. Things have change quite dramatically in the last two months. However, as Toastmasters we are all adapting to the new normal and continue to find creative ways to keep up our passion to learn and spread the art of public speaking and leadership!!

My special thanks to our District 8 Leadership team for always being there to help, guide and/or navigate difficult situation!



Member Spotlight

Division E Director
Artie Langston—ACG, ALB



Jason Johnson CC

Currently President of Capital Toastmasters 503, Jefferson City native Jason

Johnson bills himself as a communicator extraordinaire. In addition to Toastmasters, in competition at the national level he has received recognition for his “mad abilities” in marketing by the Future Business Leaders of America and Distributive Education Clubs of America.

Positions to his credit include promotions, television, and radio advertising

and teaching English as a Second Language. Currently, he operates a company which helps job seekers identify their strengths and communicate them to potential employers. Jason is also a superb mechanic, with a professional background in automobile maintenance and repair as well as in education, and likely may have saved his fellow toastmasters a lot of expense through some of his excellent speeches on the subject.

Jason feels Toastmasters helps him hone his leadership and communications skills, benefiting him both professionally, and personally.

Virtual Meetings

Area 13 Director
Will Rivers—MS, PMP, ITILv3



Greetings Fellow Toastmasters,

This has been a trying time for each of us. How are you doing? Are you as club leaders and your members in

good health? Along with employers and most professional organizations, Toastmasters International has made several shifts in our ways of working to offer every opportunity to remain connected while in quarantine.

Virtual Meetings

District 8 has established a Virtual Meeting Task Force where we are available to assist with virtual meeting planning, tools, and support to help you connect with one another during this time. At your earliest convenience, please respond to let me know if your club has decided to meet virtually or take a hiatus? If your club will meet virtually, how often will you meet

and when? If on hiatus, how long is the planned break? Are you open to meeting virtually with assistance? Please let me know how I can help in any way.

Update Your Online Meeting Status in Club Central:

<http://emails.toastmasters.org/c/11y-F7mcByDJFJiuwMT9yRlvteOy5>

Online Meeting Resources from Toastmasters International:

<https://www.toastmasters.org/resources/news%20and%20announcements/online%20meetings>



Toastimonials

How Toastmasters Has Impacted Lives

Fellow Toastmasters, we are going through a lot uncertainty in our country right now. A lot of us are taking this time at home to reflect on what is really important in our lives. For a lot of us, it is strengthening our relationships with our loved ones and friends. However, we cannot forget to strengthen our connection with ourselves and ask thought-provoking questions to help us better navigate the journey on the road to self-improvement and personal growth. We must consistently seek out our purpose and place in this vast universe. It can sometimes feel like we are in this by ourselves on this journey. Fortunately, we are a part of a community of like-minded individuals who are also traveling on this same journey. In this section, a couple of Toastmasters gave Toastimonials on how this great organization impacted their lives. Hopefully, after reading this, you will be more attuned with your purpose.

Robin Anderson—DTM



It's 10:00 AM and the auditorium is filled with 200 plus employees gathered for a quarterly town hall meeting. The CEO is speaking about coming changes and updates to software and processes. Suddenly you hear your name called, and the

entire room turns to look at you as the CEO instructs you to come to the front of the room, on the stage, to speak to the group. You are so nervous you're literally shaking like a leaf, your face is flushed and you're terrified to speak. When you finally do utter a sound, it's squeaky and full of um's, ahs, stutters and sputters.

My company had just chartered a new Toastmasters club. I joined at the next meeting making a commitment to myself to never again feel the embarrassment and terror felt

when asked to speak at a corporate gathering completely unprepared. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made. Toastmasters taught me to breathe, relax, and organize my thoughts to deliver a succinct message. Toastmasters has taught me the importance of body language, establishing a connection with your audience and learning to communicate in different venues, to a diverse audience. My current mission is to teach others these skills to enhance their communication and leadership skills.

Shannon Miller—IP1



Walking into my first Toastmasters meeting I was filled with excitement and anxiety. I had no clue what to expect yet there was a

feeling that I had nothing in my life that would remain the same.

The meeting room was full of strange faces and age groups. A virtual melting pot of knowledge that spanned many lifetimes. TableTopics was the most exciting opportunity that I had the

privilege to take part in. The fact that the group not only asked me to participate but listened as well made me feel recognized and accounted for. Here is a personal confession. TableTopics is still to date one my favorite segments of our meetings. It allows the guest and members to learn more about each other and sharpen their ability to think quickly and express your thoughts clearly.

I knew that Toastmasters was something that I wanted to be a part of and on October 1, 2018 the commitment was made. I was assigned a mentor (James Childress) to walk me through what Toastmasters had to offer and just what as a member The

FairviewHeights club expected of me. Since becoming a member I have learned the value of being present, teambuilding, assertiveness, and time management. All of these core values I have found to be quite useful not only in this learning arena but in my personal life as well.

Many members including myself are full-time employees, spouses, and parents. Whereabout often finding time to invest in yourself can be challenging. That is why Toastmasters is so unique there is an opportunity for personal investment that has assisted me in improving in all those areas mentioned above.

(continued on page 16)



Earned Education and Leadership

March–April 2020

Division A

Centene Speaks

- Dahm, Sara R.—DL1

Chesterfield Toastmasters

- Pluss, Adrienne R.—ACG

Crossroads

- Hammond, R. Barry—ALS, DTM
- Heaton, Robert M.—ALS, DTM,
- Miller, Dwayne A.—ALS, DTM, LDREXC

High-Noon Toastmasters Club

- Odden, Ellen Marie—MS3

Loquacious Leaders

- Desrosiers, Kevin M.—CC
- Voigt, Patricia D.—CC

RGA Toastmasters

- Raggio, Rob C.—CL

St. Francis Toastmasters

- Blattel, Andrew—IP2

South County Toastmaster

- Young, Debbie—CL, DL3

Speak Easy Toastmasters

- Ruzicka, Stephen F.—IP2
- Smithers, Ireen E.—SR1

Division B

Aerospace Orators

- Greenlee, Candice—IP1
- Ikeda, Yutaka—EC3

Mastertoasters Club

- Allen, Wayne—PWMENTORPGM
- Beck, Lauren E.—CL
- McChesney, Joseph L.—ALB
- O’Keefe, Kayli—PM1

Money Talks

- Burt, Marilyn—DL2

PMIMSL Toastmasters

- Rivers, Tonya S.—ACS

Shalom Church Toastmasters

- Jamerson, Keith H.—PM1, PM2
- Shaw, Kelly—VC3
- Troy, Donna R.—LD2

St Charles County Toastmasters Club

- Coker, Daniel I.—ACG

Techmasters

- Gopalakrishnan, Suresh—DL3

Division C

Capital City Toastmasters

- Smith, Donald S.—ALS, LDREXC

Fairview Heights Toastmasters Club

- Jordan, Rebecca J.—DL3
- Slovak, Suzanne A.—EC3

Gem City Toastmasters

- Williams, Margaret G.—ms2

Marion VA Toastmasters

- Martin, Carla—ALS, CL, DTM, LDREXC

McBrian Lincoln-Douglas Club

- Randall, Nathaniel H.—TC2

Mt Vernon Toastmasters

- Howard, Patti—ALS, DTM

O’Fallon Toastmasters

- Brown, Kirk H.—PI1
- Fries, Michael S.—ACB
- Heilig, Leslie—EC2
- Lambert, Warren Jay—IP1
- Woodside, Aimee G.—PI1

Mt Vernon Toastmasters

- Howard, Patti—ALS, DTM

Smedley Hometown Memorial Toastmasters Club

- Kincade, David—EH1

Southern Illinois Toastmasters Club

- Cupp, Karen D.—IP2M

St Clair Club

- Curry, Lemont—ACS, ACG, DTM

Top Talk Toastmasters!

- Nichols, Neva G.—LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4
- Turner, Caren D.—EC1, EC2

Educational Descriptions

DL	Dynamic Leadership	IP	Innovative Planning	MS	Motivational Strategies	PM	Presentation Mastery	TC	Team Collaboration
EC	Effective Coaching	LD	Leadership Development	PI	Persuasive Influence	SR	Strategic Relationships	VC	Visionary Communication
EH	Engaging Humor								



Earned Education and Leadership

November–December 2019

Division E

Downtown Toastmasters

- Howard, Genevieve A.—IP3

Ozark Orators Club

- Bowles, Elizabeth A.—CL
- Sharma, Meenakshi—ACS

Shelter Insurance Toastmasters

- Martindale, Don E.—ACG

Talu Toastmasters

- Davies, Jeffrey—IB1, IB2
- Meador, Bryan C.—ACB

Division F

Grand Center Club

- Marshall, Pam L.—ACS

Jacobs P3

- Munro, Phil S—LD4

Midtown Clayton Toastmasters Club

- Schoeneberg, Wayne T.—CC, LD1
- Sundt, Mark—DL1

Primary Conversations

- Canady, Annetta J.—MLS, DTM
- Womack, Nichelle B—ACB

SPEAK UP! Club

- Matousek, Paula J.—ALB

WashU Med Masters

- Dhawan, Anu—LD1
- Leingang, Karen A.—VC1

Webster Groves Toastmasters Club

- Babis, Catherine A.—EH1
- Moore, Dawna Lynn—PM1
- Taylor, Joseph D.—VC2

Wells Fargo Advisors Toastmasters

- Francis, Rachel M.—DL3, DL4, DL5

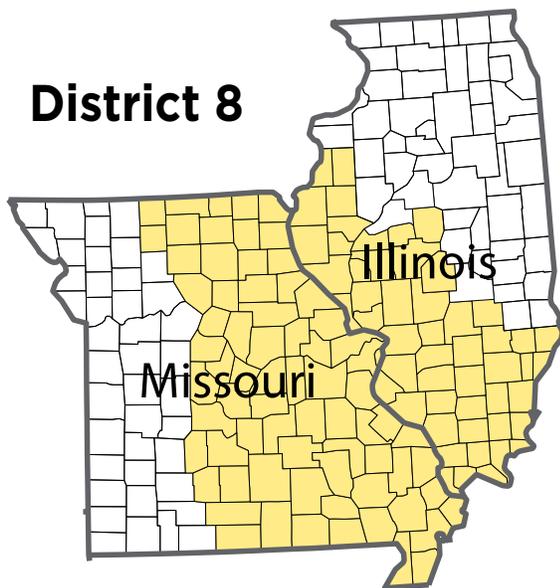
(continued on from 14)

Everytime a guest comes to visit it feels like showtime. This is when the rubber meets the road and it's time to present to someone the endless possibilities of personal growth that can and will take place if only they took a chance on themselves.

Fairview Heights Toastmasters fosters an environment of teambuilding and endless encouragement that I am excited for anyone to experience. Serving as president has aided me in the importance of leadership that has carried over to an increase of

endearment to face challenges head on and expect a successful outcome that follows intentional effort.

District 8



**Newsletter Editor
Dennis J. Fiorini, MS1**

If you have an event or news from your club that you would like to include in a future newsletter, please contact me at:

djf0414@gmail.com

Include *Toastmaster Newsletter* in the subject line please.



District 8 Mission — We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

District 8 Vision — Create Culture, Strengthen Community, and Influence Change.