

DISTRICT 107

Monthly Newsletter | Public speaking & Leadership

MAY- JUNE ISSUE. VOL 31

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keep sharing, and keep inspiring!

Dear District 107 Toastmasters Members,

As we publish the final edition of this term’s District 107 Toastmasters newsletter, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to every member, club officer, district officer, and our esteemed guests from outside the district.

Your contributions, stories, and experiences have been invaluable, inspiring others within our community. As an editor, I have learned so much from your stories. Your willingness to share has made my task a pleasure rather than a challenge.

Initially, I was anxious about finding resources and materials for the newsletter, as my vision was to launch it every month. Still, I was surprised by the enthusiasm and generosity of our members and guests. I am truly grateful and fortunate to be part of this wonderful District.

Please keep sharing and keep inspiring, as a lot of clubs and members are launching great initiatives, they just need to share it and make it visible to encourage and motivate even more people.

Finally, Thank you for making this journey remarkable and memorable. Together, we have built a community of inspiration and growth.

Hanane Bourehiyi, DTM- Public Relations Manager



2023- 2024 Core team

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Vera Margarida Cunha

Program Quality Director

Claudia Villarreal

Club Growth Director

Norberto Amaral

Public Relations Manager

Hanane Bourehiyi

Financial Manager

Gustavo Amaro

Administration Manager

Silvia Vilas

Parliamentarian

Ana Santos Carvalho

IT Manager

Fabricio Monteiro

Immediate Past District Director

Pablo Garcia

Alignment Manager

Sergio Agua

Newsletter Editor

Hanane Bourehiyi



VOICES OF THE MONTH

First Place Winners of the District 107 Speech Contest

Miguel Vieira

First place winner in the International Speech Contest 2024

1- What motivated you to compete this year?

I've always seen the Toastmasters competition as the next step for anyone's public speaking skills. It is the ultimate 'get out of your comfort zone' step in a Toastmaster's journey, where you no longer speak merely to your club, with people you're comfortable failing in front of, but with people you have never known or seen. What I learned from this competition, I can honestly say, is truly invaluable.

2- How did you feel when you won the first place?

When I heard my name, the typical "I'm speechless" feeling washed over me. It wasn't just the victory itself, but the way I effectively delivered my message—making people in the audience cry. That, undoubtedly, was the real win. The audience was visibly emotional as I presented; from that moment on, even if I had been in last place, I would have still left Porto as the happiest person in the room.

3- What advice would you give to members who want to compete next year?

A very simple piece of advice: Do you truly want to develop your public speaking skills, confidence and ultimately, yourself? Then there's no other way; by competing you'll fall deep out of your comfort zone, but will return way stronger and fulfilled. The competition, this year, changed my life. Time to change your.



Sandra May

First place winner in the Portuguese Speech Contest 2024

1- What motivated you to compete this year?

When I became a mother in 2023, I couldn't stop feeling that my life was on hold. Every aspect of it! And I was putting aside things that I truly love and enjoy. Like Toastmasters! I started to accept that... but this feeling slowly consumed me to my bones. It hit me when I was asked if I wanted to participate in the competition this year... and I said no.



I couldn't sleep afterwards. One or two weeks before the first competition, I fixed that mistake (and my soul) and said yes to the challenge!

2- How did you feel when you won the first place?

It was one of the strangest feelings that I ever experienced. In every phase of this competition, my sole purpose was to enjoy my 7 minutes on stage. I flavoured each second like it was my last speech. I ended up winning every phase, and I always felt like it was something that happened to me, not something that I conquered. And when it happens that way, we can't help but feel gratitude for such an unexpected gift. And I thank Toastmasters for this gift.

3- What advice would you give to members who want to compete next year?

Go for it! Whatever it is that is holding you back, ignore it! In Toastmasters we celebrate much more than great victorious speeches! We celebrate the courage to step on a stage, even with knees shacking and heart racing, because delivering a message is such an act of altruism. There are no losers in Toastmasters: only winners. And that is beautiful.

Jose Marti

First place winner in the Spanish Speech Contest 2024

1- What motivated you to compete this year?

To be honest, I was driven by a deep desire to share my story with a wider audience. I shared a personal story of what a little 6-year-old girl taught me while working in Disneyland. I never shared that story before with anyone so sharing it with my Toastmasters community was amazing.

2- How did you feel when you won the first place?

Winning first place was an incredible honour and a truly humbling experience. I felt a mix of joy, gratitude, and pride, knowing that all the hard work and dedication had paid off.



3- What advice would you give to members who want to compete next year?

My advice to future competitors is to practice consistently and seek feedback from experienced speakers. Stay true to your unique voice and message, and most importantly, enjoy the journey of personal growth and connection with your audience.

Yann Richoz

First place winner in the French Speech Contest 2024

1- What motivated you to compete this year?

I wasn't planning to participate in the contest, as I joined TM only in March 2023, I didn't feel I had any chance to go far. But my clubmates insisted, so I took the challenge.

2- How did you feel when you won the first place?

I couldn't believe it. I thought I had good chances to be on the podium, but I didn't think winning the first place. I felt really happy and proud, as it's the first time I am first in something. It brought me much more confidence, and now whatever I do, I remember that I won an international competition.

3- What advice would you give to members who want to compete next year?

I strongly encourage anyone to participate, especially new members. You can learn so much along the way, and you rapidly gain experience talking in front larger audience, which will give you more confidence in the future in any situation



Sónia Silva

First place winner in the English Evaluation Speech Contest 2024

1- What motivated you to compete this year?

I like to compete and set new goals. This year I challenged myself to really focus and perform all roles without notes, especially evaluation roles.



I ended up being an evaluator many times in my club because many new members joined and I became a mentor to some. It made sense for me to compete again in this category and expand my observation and critical thinking skills.

2- How did you feel when you won the first place?

Really happy. I was moved by the target speech (by Manel) and winning for having evaluated it was special. Having 14 members and friends of my club present and being recognized by peers from other clubs was worth all the investment.

3- What advice would you give members who want to compete next year?

If you think about it, evaluation and feedback is the task we do most on a daily basis. We need strong analytical, reasoning and output skills. You need to understand structure, language, delivery and have a balance between technique and emotional intelligence at that precise moment. You need to be mindfull. I think it's the most complete and relevant Toastmasters exercise: you communicate, you lead and you elevate the speaker. I can only see good reasons to compete in this contest where you have the luxury of learning from the best. So I ask you: what are you waiting for?





Shaking Up Tradition!

By Daniel Shvartsman
Valencia Toastmasters Club

We like the structure of Toastmasters meetings, which is both a blessing and a curse. There is a standard, time-tested agenda to follow. Each club might tweak things, but you can expect three speeches, a table topics session, evaluations, an ah-counter, and so on. Toastmaster sessions often run like clockwork (especially with a good timekeeper!).

While there's still fresh magic in each standard Toastmasters meeting, we benefit from shaking things up as well. One of Valencia Toastmasters's goals this year was to have more meetings or events outside of our usual space (a university classroom). This was a goal fulfilled, as we held two special sessions on holiday eves.

We started with a Halloween night outing in La Batisfera, a bookshop/bar/concert space in Cabanyal, the old fisherman neighbourhood near the sea. Our toastmasters that night – Alberto Lopez and Josep Marti – told scary stories and led a wonderful session including drinks and tapas.

Our next outing was on the eve of May Day, as we met in Radio City, a bar and concert space in the old town centre of Valencia. I was fortunate enough to host the session, which this time featured two prepared speeches as well as a table topics session.

Members and guests buzzed about the sessions. There's something extra about getting out of one's routine

It certainly doesn't hurt to have beverages available for purchase. The sessions came with some challenges, but good ones.

We got the idea of hosting "field trip" sessions from other clubs, and you all might have best practices already. For those who haven't tried, here are a few quick lessons we learned:

1. Promote! Meetup is our big platform for finding guests, and we emailed all our Meetup members to gin up interest, something we don't normally do.
2. Find a space where you can use the entire area, to minimize noise and allow the focus to be on the Toastmaster session.
3. Be ready to improvise. A different setting means you might have to meet the bar's needs (we had to make way for a flamenco show at the second event), or that people might arrive late, or that the sound system takes getting used to.



4. Tailor your session to your audience: a special event may attract more guests, and people may be less patient in a bar than a classroom. We explained less about Toastmasters' history or goals, and cut out some of the roles, like general evaluator or grammarian. We are a bilingual club, and both these sessions were bilingual, but we also tweaked things. At the first event we talked in both Spanish and English for everything, but in the second event, we stuck with Spanish except for table topics and welcoming any primarily English speakers
- As you plan for your next session or year in Toastmasters, I encourage you not to be afraid to change things up! It may be a little more work and come with surprises, but they only enrich the Toastmaster experience.



How COPYWRITING

Transformed My Role as a Toastmasters VPPR!

By Victor Macias Nunez
Excelencia Toastmasters

I've never thought I had any talent for writing.

I've never thought I could write something that people would want to read.

I never believed that I was the right person to run a club's social networks.

In mid-2023 I was elected VPPR in my Toastmasters club in Madrid. The first few months I didn't know how to approach the task...

I was totally lost.

One day while watching an interview on the Internet I heard a word that changed my life: "**copywriting**". The first time I read this word I thought it had to do with copyright or something about copying.

It has nothing to do with it.

Copywriting talks about writing a text in which you encourage the person who reads it to take action: it could be giving an email, buying a product or in my case joining a public speaking club.

I signed up for a course to understand this world of writing to sell.

It understood that everything I had thought until now was wrong. When I wrote I used a language that was difficult to understand, and excessively technical. An unemotional language that no one was going to stop and read.

The strategy that we have followed these months has been divided into three areas:

1) Instagram is an image-based social network. In all the sessions we do every Wednesday there is someone responsible for taking photographs and videos. Each photograph is accompanied by a comment.

2) LinkedIn is a text-based social network. Following the rules of copywriting, I write simple texts that attack my reader's pain point. I talk to them about the fear of speaking in public, about the doubts when approaching a girl, about how important communication is at work and then I offer Toastmasters as the solution.

3) Eventbrite, this platform is fantastic. You create a plan with all the sessions you are going to do throughout the year and people sign up.

Using each of the networks in the right direction you will be able to reach people and make Toastmasters bigger and bigger.



If you want to know the best public speaking club in the world, we meet every Wednesday at 8:00 p.m. in Abononavida, Madrid



My Toastmasters Leadership Journey



Back in 2001, I took a leap and joined Toastmasters with a simple goal: to level up my English, which is my second foreign language. Little did I know that this adventure would lead me to become a Region Advisor! It all started at a corporate Club where I signed on as a charter member. My journey kicked off as the treasurer, and from there, each year brought a new role for me to dive into. Who knew learning could be this much fun and rewarding?

In 2003, our Area Governor gave me a nudge to attend the District 55 Conference, and boy, am I glad she did! That first conference was like a burst of energy—learning, growing, and having a blast

But the real game-changer was a former District Governor who welcomed me with open arms and nudged me towards District leadership roles. Sneaky, right? I didn't even realize I was being primed for bigger things!

After soaking up enough Club wisdom, I jumped in as an Area Governor, and guess what? My Area rocked it and earned the President's Distinguished title. It was like being the coach of a winning team! I loved it so much that I ran for Division Governor the next year and aced it!

Taking a breather for a Master's degree put my Toastmasters leadership journey on hold. Once done with my studies, I answered the call of leadership and did another round as Division Director.

Both times, my Divisions earned the President's Distinguished status. Talk about a winning streak!

Helping out in my district isn't just a gig; it's my passion. I thrive on seeing others shine, which is why I dived into roles like Club Growth Director, Program Quality Director, and District Director. Each role was like unlocking a new level of skills, connections, and pure joy.

Big shoutout to my mentors for their encouragement and guidance. Without them, this journey would have been a lot bumpier. And to my mentees, they rock! Their trust in me as their guide has made me a better listener and a more insightful communicator.

Mentoring isn't just about giving—it's about receiving, too. Through these relationships, I've pinpointed areas to grow, honed my communication and leadership skills, and most importantly, had an absolute blast doing it.

I'm thrilled to be a current Region Advisor, supporting eight districts. Navigating through different District vibes and using all sorts of communication styles have been like playing a strategy game—they keep me on my toes! And let's not forget the motivational speeches I dish out to our leaders, cheering them on to District greatness. It's like being the coach of an epic team, minus the whistle. Talk about a workout for my social skills! The journey has been a wild ride, filled with tons of growth, challenges, and laughter.

Toastmasters isn't just about speeches and applause; it's a life-transforming experience. It's like hitting the upgrade button on my brain—critical thinking, check! Confidence, double-check! Leadership skills, on fire! I'm a better communicator and leader, thanks to Toastmasters that took me on a rollercoaster of learning and achievement, and I wouldn't trade those moments for the world!

So, here's my advice to all you fabulous members out there: Step out of your Club comfort zone and dive into District roles. Trust me; it's like rocket fuel for your development and career. Let's toast to endless growth and a whole lot of laughs along the way!

Wafae Tazi Owen, DTM 2022- 2024 Region Advisor

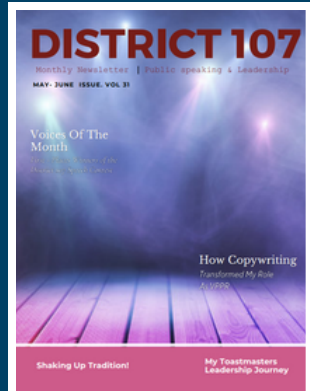
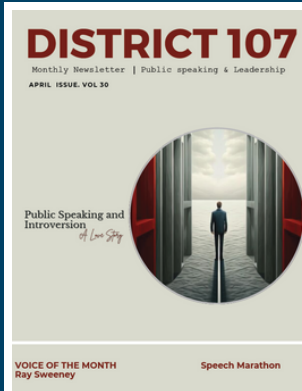
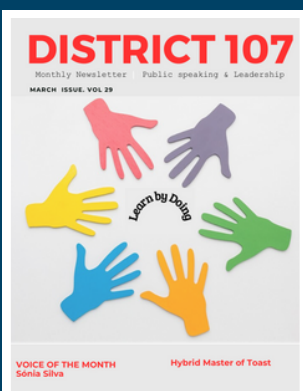
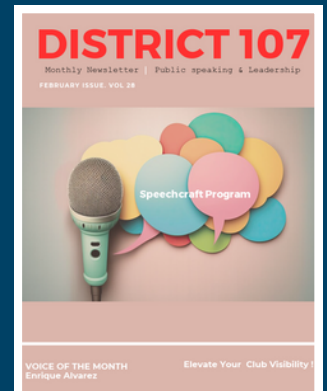
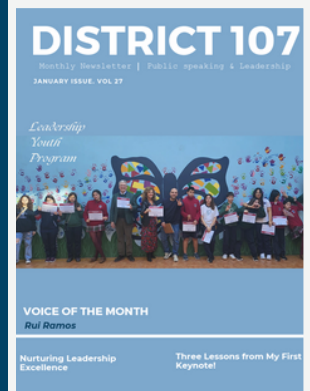
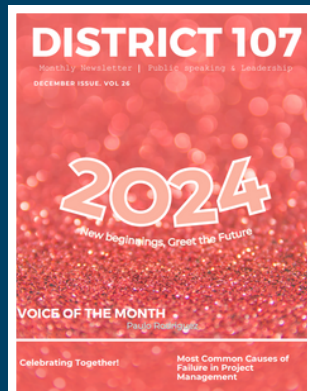
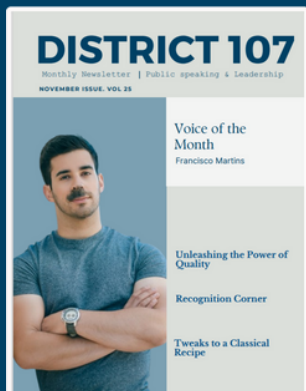




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