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Presidential Distinguished District 2002 - 2003

September 6, 2003

My Fellow Toastmasters,

Well, even though the temperatures remain fairly warm it's apparent to me that summer has ended. The days are growing shorter; in the street kick-ball games are starting later every day; and, I keep encountering smartly dressed and well scrubbed groups of children waiting for school buses on almost every corner I pass going to work in the morning. All of these are surefire indicators that summer has fled and fall is closing in on us.

I hope that each and every one of you had a great summer. May you have found time to spend with your families and loved ones. And may each of you have returned rested, renewed, and charged up for the challenges that lie ahead of us for the remainder of the year.

I ended my August letter announcing I was heading down to Atlanta, Georgia to represent you at the Toastmasters International Convention. As most of you know the convention was held August 20th through the 24th. It was a fantastic time. Toastmasters from all over the world, representing the more than 9000 clubs that comprise Toastmasters International, gathered in Atlanta during those 5 days. We came together to attend educational workshops; conduct the annual business meeting; participate in recognizing those Toastmasters and Districts who achieved great things last year; and select the World Champion of Public Speaking. We also gathered to network with Toastmasters from around the world - meeting old friends and making new ones. It was a fantastic time.

I wasn't the only Toastmaster representing the Empire District. Our Lt. Governor Education and Training Harry Carlson joined me at the business meeting - casting ballots for our newly elected International Officers. Also there were Past District Governors Marian Lamanna, DTM and Donna Sokolowski, DTM (When you see Donna be sure to congratulate her for receiving a Presidential Citation at the Hall of Fame.) The Eastern Division was also represented by Rita Beard, with Betty Saunders and Gloria Langston from Central Division there as well. And of course, Immediate Past District Governor DeWitt Henricks, soon to be DTM, lead us ont the Hall of Fame stage to receive the Districts accolades for achieving Presidential Distinguished status for the first time in a very long time. We were honored for placing number 5 in the world because of all the hard work each and every one of you put in last year.

If I missed any District 65 Toastmasters in attendance, I apologize and sincerely hope you had as great a time as I did. I returned extremely tired, but re-energized and ready to work with you to achieve your goals for this Toastmaster year.

District 65 Governor



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But what are the targets for this 2003/2004 Toastmaster Year. The District has been given targets from International the achievement of which will determine where we'll finish in the world standings. We're evaluated on 4 critical areas: CTMs, ATMs, Clubs and members. Our targets are determined mathematically using the end of the year number of members as the base number. District 65 targets are: 130 CTMs, 37 ATMs, 82 Clubs and 3864 paid memberships. If we meet those targetted numbers District 65 will be accorded the accolade of Distinguished. To become Select Distinguished or Presidential Distinguished the District will have to finish the year exceeding those minimum targets.

While it's nice to meet or beat targets that are levied, and we'll be checking to see how well we're progressing through the year, the our real mission is to facilitate your achieving your individual Toastmaster objectives, and, to bring the promise of Toastmasters to more people across our District this year. My challenge to each of you is to decide what you want to accomplish in Toastmasters this year. Set a plan that will allow you to accomplish it; and, work the plan to it's successful conclusion. If you need help doing that, your individual mentors are available, or work with your Distrcit Officers, the Area or Division Governors, or any of the District Staff. Part of what we signed on to do this year was to facilitate your journey down the Toastmaster Road.

As for bringing Toastmasters to more people in the Empire District, I've challenged the District to not just build individual clubs this year but to gro new areas. There are places inside the District boundaries where there are no Toastmaster Clubs. Places like Jamestown in the southwestern part of the District, or scattered throughout the route 81 corridor between Syracuse and Binghamton, or up near Utica or Rome, or in the long spaces between Syracuse and Rochester, or Rochester and Buffalo. There are also groups of people who are just waiting to be targeted. Did you know that the casinos in Las Vegas have Toastmaster Clubs associated with them to assist their employees in becoming more comfortable in communicating with the general public. I know there are casinos in the Eastern and Western Divisions...how about checking to see if we can't get a club started there. We all ready know that businesses are looking closely at Toastmasters as an effective wat to offer employee training in critical skill sets, especially so during these times of corporate cut backs and downsizing. How about targetng some of the smaller businesees in an area and seeing if they might not want to start a club using employees from two or three business that are close to one another? Share the resources and build a club where a cmpnay is too small to start one by itself. These ideas are just the tip of the iceberg that I know is floating out there amongst our membership. The key is there are people waiting for the ability to express themselves clearly and concisely. In other wrds they're just waiting for Toastasters to come along and help them accomplish their personal goals. It's what we do....

Take the challenge and experience the great feelings of accomplishment you get when you achieve one of your goals, or help someone to better communicate in public. It's what we're about. And remember, we're not asking you to do it alone. We're not asking any of us to do it alone.

District 65 Governor



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We're in this together, and we're going to do it together. We are because together we can do more; together we can be more; and together we can accomplish more.

Together, We Can!

On a separate note, on September 13th we'll be conducting the District Leadership Breakfast at the Holiday Inn in Waterloo, New York. This is an annual affair specifically targeted at the Club Officers from across the District. This year we've opened it up to any member who would like to attend. There will be reports from District Officers, as well as presentations on several different subjects. And, there will be an opportunity to network with Club Officers and District Officers from across the District that will allow you to gain an insight to how toastmastering is done in other clubs. While the basics are always the same, each club brings its own unique flavor to the way meetings are conducted. So, if you want to attend - please let Al Smith know by Wednesday the 10th that you are coming so we can give the hotel an accurate count. Registration starts at 8:30, with Breakfast at 9:00. The cost is \$5/person. We'll be adjourning at 12:30 and heading for home.

Another date to put on your calendar is Nov. 21 and 22nd. That's when we'll be holding the District 65 Fall Conference. This year we'll be in Owego, N.Y. At the Treadway Inn. But more on that in future letters.

Until then - set a plan; work the plan and accomplish your goals. And let's do it together.

Mike Slyck ATM-B, CL

District 65 Governor