

# December 2002 Bulletin

by [Betsy Kalweit](#), ATM-S, CL  
District 65 Public Relations Officer

Now in the midst of the holiday season, many of us look forward to good times with those important to us. Besides bringing home happy memories from these gatherings, we often gain a renewed sense of connection to those with whom we share a common bond. Similarly, those who attended the District 65 Fall Conference in Canandaigua not only brought home memories of the weekend but also were able to connect with Toastmasters sharing similar goals. We can thank Linda Jeroy and Bill Rothrock, the Fall Conference Chairs, everyone who attended the Conference, as well as all who contributed to it for its success. Be sure to check our Website in the coming weeks for pictures and more Conference highlights in our online version of the District Newsletter, when it is available.

Now that the Fall District Conference is past, the things we have learned through it become another part of our Toastmasters experience. The speakers in the Humorous Speech Contest, for example, gained valuable experience competing against other high quality speakers. Even before the Contest, much preparation went into these speeches. Unfortunately those Humorous Speeches frequently become part of history since the competition ends at the District. Rather than allowing all that good humor to be wasted, however, these speeches can be used as powerful public relations tools. Often community organizations will ask clubs with Speakers Bureaus to provide speakers for their meetings. These Humorous Speeches, with perhaps some reworking or adaptations to suit the group and occasion, can be a great way to introduce the fun of Toastmasters to others. And besides promoting good public relations, learning to speak well to outside groups benefits us personally by expanding our speaking experience. If your club doesn't have a Speakers Bureau but would like to start one, order the pamphlet, *Speakers Bureau*, available from TI. This publication contains valuable information about how to start and manage one. Other Clubs with established Speakers Bureaus will also be likely glad to offer suggestions if asked.

While we can use Speakers Bureaus year round to further good public relations, the holiday season sometimes offers increased opportunities. For instance, at a Rotary Club recently I presented an Entertaining Speech about getting ready for the holidays. Organizations hosting holiday parties may have similar needs for a speaker. Beyond the lectern, even our informal conversations at holiday gatherings can provide a chance to talk to others about Toastmasters. Conversations that we may view as insignificant can influence people more than a prepared speech. Many Toastmasters also use holidays to incorporate variety and fun with special meetings. Area 5 hosted such a dinner where Toastmasters and guests heard entertaining speeches and celebrated the season.

As we enjoy the holidays, let's use our public relations skills to not only bring good cheer, but to look for new opportunities to encourage one another and increase our membership. Wishing you wonderful holidays and a very happy New Year!