

DISTRICT 24 DOUBLE DOZEN **NEWSLETTER** District News and Events

District 24

May 2021

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HIGHLIGHTS

Speech Contest Winners

This year's speakers gave us a District contest to remember! Check out the results right here on page $1 \rightarrow$

Conference Wrap-Up

And just like that, District 24's first ever virtual Conference is in the books! Participants enjoyed Zoom games, rousing speeches, and even a talent show! See more on **pages 7-9**.

Checking Off the Boxes

Why did you decide to join Toastmasters? What have you gotten out of it? Rather than actively learning and taking on challenges, many members just check the boxes. Rebecca Fegan has advice on **page 11**.

2021 Online District Speech Contest Winners Declared

The 2021 District 24 Speech Contest is officially in the books! Tremale Berger and Jessica Steele-Codr placed first in their respective categories during the online District Speech Contest, held online April 17.

This year offered some of the most competitive contests District 24 has seen to date, with countless thrilling speeches in the Humorous and International categories from club- to District-level contests. Speech contests were held over Zoom and live-streamed to YouTube by our tech team. None of this could have been possible without behind-the-scenes efforts by Glenn Williams, Keith Jones, our contest chairs, and many more!



Jessica Steele-Codr *(left)* finished first in the Humorous category with "Zoom It Up a Notch," a priceless "informative" speech filled with the best Zoom tips that an excessively upbeat social media influencer could offer. The Humorous contest ends at District level.

Jessica is a "Systems Engineer" at Union Pacific Railroad, currently working on a visual mapping project called "UP

Vision." She is a member of Rail Talkers, Speak - First, Omaha Club 229, and has coached numerous clubs during her time in Toastmasters.

Tremale Berger *(right)* finished first in the International speech contest. Tremale captivated audiences with his speech entitled "A Warm Place," an emotional account of the struggles he faced in his search for love, and a reminder that love heals all.

Tremale will advance to the Regional Quarterfinals for the next round, where a video recording of his presentation will be judged against other speeches from across the Midwest and



central Canada. The first- and second-place winners of that contest will advance to the International Speech Contest Semifinals. Tremale works in architecture, construction, and real estate development in Los Angeles, California. He is a member of Road 2 DTM.

Good luck Tremale, and **congratulations** to all of our speakers who entertained us throughout March and April, and skillfully rose to the new challenge of an entirely digital speech contest season in 2021!



Thank You for Your Support!

Cindy Jenkins, DTM, Program Quality Director, 2021-2022 District Director

I am honored that District 24 has selected me to be the next District Director for 2021 - 2022. This District is truly blessed with energetic and talented Toastmasters who are driven to make it succeed. I am excited to lead all of you and am looking forward to visiting more clubs and meeting more of you.

Every District Director has a theme for their year and after much thought I have selected the following:

District 24: Alive and Strong!

This theme embodies the essence of District 24. The world changed for all of us last year and District 24 stood up to the challenge. We have all had to learn, grow, and thrive in the virtual world we now live in. Only Toastmasters could have made the adjustment as quickly as you did and found ways to keep moving forward. Keep that spirit alive as we move into the new challenge of a hybrid world.

I want to tell you a little about me. I live in Omaha and am a Systems Analyst. I started my Toastmasters journey in 2011 as a charter member of See Us Speak, a corporate club at CSG International. I am also a member of Advanced Toastmasters of Omaha where I continue to learn from experienced Toastmasters. My first District leadership role was an Area Director, followed by two years as Public Relations Manager, then Finance Manager, Club Growth Director, and currently Program Quality Director. Along the way I learned that District leaders have an important responsibility which is serving the member. Whether it is answering questions, helping with roles at club meetings, sending out awards, organizing training, or recognizing member accomplishments, it all comes down to serving the member in the best way possible.

I would like to visit as many clubs as possible during my year as District Director. I will begin reaching out to clubs soon but you can also contact me through the following email addresses:

pqd@d24tm.org - until June 30, 2021 dd@d24tm.org – beginning July 1, 2021

I am looking forward to working with all of you next year! Do not hesitate to contact me with questions, concerns, or ideas. Thank you again for your support.



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Toastmasters in the Zoom Era

Submitted by Mark Fegan, DTM, District Director

The Official Toastmasters Facebook group has been a source of inspiration for several of my Double Dozen columns. The past few weeks have provided additional food for thought.

Toastmasters, as an organization, has been around for nearly 100 years. In that time, much of the emphasis has been on helping members develop communication skills.

For most of those 100 years, communication has revolved around prepared and extemporaneous speaking within the comfortable setting of a Toastmasters Club.

Yes, there have been manual projects that have allowed members to experiment with other communication media, but in most cases, Toastmasters prepared and presented speeches in front of the same members of the same club.

That all changed in March 2020. Thanks to COVID, Toastmasters went *virtual*. How has this changed your thinking about "communication?"

From the Toastmasters Facebook group:

Is it a requirement now, in the era of Zoom, that every evaluation of a speaker who's seated must include: "Get up and move around and take advantage of your entire speaking area"?

This post really leads to a couple of observations:

- 1. Is it ever appropriate to suggest that a speaker "get up and move around"?
- 2. Why are attempting to force people to use old techniques in a new media?
- 3. Wouldn't it be better to learn to fit the presentation to the media, to take advantage of the opportunities that Zoom provides?



If you get a chance, watch Jessica Steele-Codr's District 24 winning speech and ask yourself: "Could she have given this speech on a traditional stage?"

Another post stated:

In recent times, club meetings focus a lot on fun elements. Aren't they supposed to be business meetings?

This raises the question: "What is the purpose of a Toastmasters club meeting?"

Perhaps the club mission provides the best answer to that one:

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

If that doesn't provide the answer, try this one:

We learn best in moments of enjoyment.

(That's from our founder, Ralph Smedley!)

Toastmasters does not impose a specific structure on a meeting other than to support the experiential learning model used by Toastmasters.

The important consideration is meeting the needs of the club members. The club can emphasize business meeting skills, but that's not required!

In short, structure your presentations and meetings to take advantage of the media and provide an enjoyable experience for your members.



Challenges

Submitted by Keith Jones, DTM, Club Growth Director

Challenges:

This year has been a challenge. When I submitted the paperwork to be a candidate for Club Growth Director in January of last year, little did I know I would spend the whole next year in front of my computer. But this year has allowed me to visit more clubs, attend more events, and engage more Toastmasters than ever before.



I look forward to this next year as your incoming Program Quality Director with confidence and resolve. The 2021-2022 year for District 24 will be a year of growth, excitement, and challenges. Even though this year has been a challenge, District 24 has achieved an amazing number of accomplishments. Let us look at some of those accomplishments.

Membership:

At the end of April 2021, District 24 had 743 membership payments as compared to 739 at the end of October of 2020. Are we holding steady? I would like to think so. Now is the time to recruit new members. The best way to gain members is "ASK." With all the social media opportunities available the number one guaranteed way to gain new members is asking either by face-to-face conversation or over some real time platform. Always remember the computer you carry around with you in your pocket has the capability to make a phone call. You remember, "Hey Siri, Call my BFF!" and you will be connected to a person to invite to your next Toastmasters meeting. Try it!

Meetings:

Now once you have invited that special person to your meeting, it has to be fun. Try something different. With the newest version of Zoom, 5.6.4 for Mac and 5.6.5 for Windows, you now can use "immersion" to create a new environment for your meeting. Try it out! You can even create your own virtual meeting space.

Contests:

The District speech contests were the best ever. Both the Humorous and the International speech contests were very competitive. The Competitive Speakers Group was successful in helping contestants to achieve their goals of making it to the District contests. Congratulations to our first-place winners, Jessica Steele-Codr in the Humorous Contest and Tremale Berger in the International Speech Contest. Tremale's District speech was submitted to Toastmasters International for judging in the Regional Quarterfinals video contest. Best of luck Tremale!

Looking Forward:

It is now time to look forward to next year. The calendar is starting to fill up. I kidded someone the other day, it is only 2021, but this decade is disappearing fast.

Mark your calendars, the first round of Club Officer Training will be the third week in July and the third week of August. Training will be a little different this year so pay attention to the notices as we get closer to those dates. The second round of Club Officer Training will be in November and January.

Next Year's Contests:

District 24 speech contests for 2022 will be the Evaluation Contest and International Speech Contest. Club contests will be held in February. The Area contests will be held in the first half of March and the Division contests will be held in the second half of March. The District speech contests will be held at the District Conference on April 22-23, 2022.

One More Thing:

Each club has the opportunity to excel at delivering the Toastmasters Education Program to their members. That program is facilitated by using Pathways. Progress on delivering the program to clubs is measured through the Distinguished Club Program and the Club Success Plan. Through education, membership building, training, and administration all clubs can have the opportunity to become Distinguished in District 24. At last glance of the District dashboard there are only five Districts in the World that are at least Distinguished. Could District 24 be one of those Districts next year? I can dream, can't I?

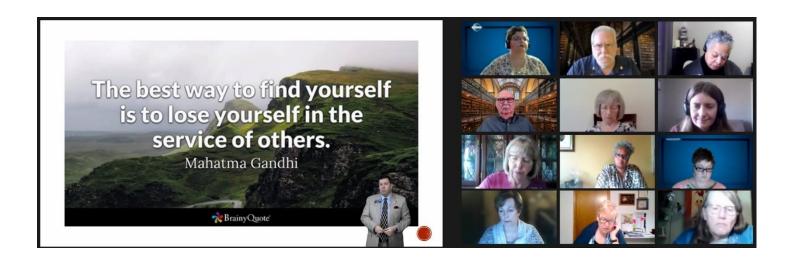
Finish the Year Strong

Cindy Jenkins, DTM, Program Quality Director

We are in the last two months of the Toastmasters year and District 24 is again teaming up with Toastmasters International to offer a **double incentive**. The Toastmasters incentive is Beat the Clock where clubs work to recruit new members. District 24 is once again offering an incentive of \$100 in Toastmasters gift certificates to the club or clubs that sign up the most new members during the months of May and June. New members are new, dual, and reinstated members. Each new member will also receive a coin with the Toastmasters core values on it.

Where can you find new members? Look through your old club rosters and contact members who left your club. Invite them to come back to visit in the virtual world. You may have friends or family out of state who may benefit from a membership in Toastmasters. Since there are no geographical boundaries in the virtual world, invite them to visit a club meeting and then invite them to join! The possibilities are virtually endless!





Upcoming District Leaders

At the Annual Business meeting on April 24, the Trio and Division leaders for the upcoming Toastmasters year were decided. The 2021-2022 District 24 elected leadership team is as follows:

District Director: Cindy Jenkins, DTM Program Quality Director: Keith Jones, DTM Club Growth Director: Pam Hughes Division A Director: Melinda Johnson Division B Director: Louis Lester Division C Director: Amy Hense Division D Director: Amy Bowen





Cindy Jenkins, DD-elect



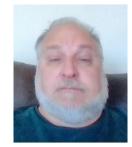
Keith Jones, PQD-elect



Pam Hughes, CGD-elect



Melinda Johnson, Div A



Louis Lester, Div B



Amy Hense, Div C



Amy Bowne, Div D

District 24 congratulates our upcoming District leaders, and thanks current District Director Mark Fegan for his leadership during his time in the Trio.

District 24: Alive and Strong!

District 24 Conference

Cindy Jenkins, DTM, 2021 District Conference Chair



Thank you to all who participated in the first ever virtual District 24 Annual Conference. Participants were treated to remarks on leadership from Nebraska's own Coach Tom Osborne. Coach Osborne was awarded the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership by Immediate Past District Director Linda Wilson.

Attendees also heard from Toastmasters International 1st Vice President Matt Kinsey on "Peloton Leadership" and "Are You a Leader?" Featured Speaker Johnny Campbell spoke on "The Winds of Change" and "Win the Crowd." Recordings of the breakout sessions led by our own District 24 leaders will be available soon through YouTube. Watch your email for an announcement. If you want to see pictures from the conference, here's the link:

2021 District 24 Toastmasters Conference

If you were a paid conference attendee, by now you should have received an email from Johnny Campbell announcing you are eligible to download his book, The Agent of Change, and his MP3, The 7 Breakthrough Principles for More Success, Money and Happiness. You will have until May 28 to download these items but have forever to enjoy them!

THE AGENT OF CHANGE

Strategies for getting people to embrace change

WITHOUT LOSING YOUR MIND OR BANK ACCOUNT



The conference raffle and auction are still open! Here is the link to look at and bid on the items:



https://www.32auctions.com/District242021

To bid or buy raffle tickets you will have to create an account on 32auctions.com but you will then have the opportunity to buy raffle tickets for a football autographed by Tom Osborne, and a handmade quilt donated by Floy Westermeier.

Tickets for the raffle are \$1.00 apiece or 6 for \$5.00.

There are all sorts of items to bid on in the auction like zoo tickets, movie tickets, books, and many other items. Take a few minutes and browse through the items and bid on one, two, or all of them!





Dr. (Coach) Tom Osborne Honored with District 24 Communication & Leadership Award

Submitted by Linda Wilson, DTM, Immediate Past District Director



On Friday, April 23, attendees at the virtual District 24 Annual Conference witnessed the presentation of the 2019-2020 Communication & Leadership Award to Dr. (Coach) Tom Osborne, in honor of his achievements, lifelong service and the difference he has made in so many lives.

Immediate Past District Director Linda Wilson presented the award to Dr. Osborne, noting that his accomplishments as a successful athlete, football coach, mentor, congressman, athletic director, college professor and author are all testament to his communication and leadership skills in serving the citizens of Nebraska.

"But what stands far and above these accomplishments has been the character, integrity, honor and compassion that Dr. Tom has shown towards others," said Wilson.

"Through his leadership and mentoring over the years, Dr. Tom has helped instill these values in the young people he has coached and developed relationships that have endured decades later. He truly cares and that is a rare commodity these days."

Dr. Osborne's ability to confront obstacles and turn them into positive results provides inspiration for current and aspiring leaders. One of his greatest accomplishments is the impact he has made as co-founder, along with his wife Nancy, of the TeamMates Mentoring Program in 1991. The program provides support and encouragement to school-aged youth through one-on-one mentoring for one hour each week, with the goal of seeing children graduate from high school and pursue a post-secondary education. This program has impacted thousands of lives over the past 30 years.

Following the award presentation, Dr. Osborne shared his thoughts on leadership acquired from a career spanning more than four decades, including his role as the former head football coach of the Nebraska Huskers from 1973 to 1997. He spoke about the crisis in leadership prevalent today and how it can be alleviated by embracing transformational leadership, which is synonymous with servant leadership.

"This style is based on core values, including integrity, loyalty and accountability, which is lacking in most organizations today," said Dr. Osborne. "Because the leader models the behaviors that they want others to follow and people are valued as individuals, this style of leadership is most likely to lead to success."

The Communication & Leadership Award is presented by District 24 to a non-Toastmaster who is an outstanding communicator or leader in their community. This may honor a media person, state or local politician, businessperson or other individual with exemplary achievements. Dr. Osborne is the 48th distinguished Nebraskan to receive the award since 1978.



Immediate Past District Director Linda Wilson presented the 2019-2020 District 24 Communication & Leadership Award to Dr. Tom Osborne in person after the virtual conference.

First Timers Sail to Success

Evelyn Mosley, First Timers Chair

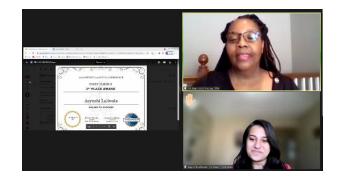
There were nineteen first timers that registered for Sailing to Success, District 24 Annual Conference. Captain Evelyn Mosley along with First Mate (also 1st timer) Aayushi Laliwala presented the participants with BINGO cards that were played like a scavenger hunt. The purpose was to learn more about Toastmasters while having fun networking with each other and other seasoned Toastmasters. The person with the most BINGO and correct answers won the game. Second and Third place winners respectively were Deborah Rodriguez and Aayushi Laliwala both from Why Not Speak Toastmasters Club. Amy Hense of Southwest Toastmasters Club took home the winning glass trophy. A perk with winning the First Timers award means you agree to chair the next First Timers at the 2022 Annual Conference. Amy happily accepted.

Better Late than Never, we all have heard that phrase. It applies to the time period of 2018-2019 when a certain Toastmaster poured all of her heart and soul into helping two other Toastmasters Gloria Harmon and Evelyn Mosley achieve their goals of starting a new Toastmasters Club. Gloria's came into fruition while some of the individuals Evelyn worked with joined already existing clubs. Gloria and Evelyn surprised Floy Westermeier with a plaque of appreciation.









Upcoming District and Club Events

See also: <u>https://d24tm.org/D24_Calendar.html</u>

Speech-A-Thons Are Still Happening!

Due to the speech contests and District 24 Conference, the April 10th Speech-A-Thon has been rescheduled to May 21, 6-8 p.m. Please begin signing up at the top of the <u>Google Sheet</u>. If you have a longer speech (i.e. more than 10 minutes) please contact me, your smiling TM Cynthia Coleman.

Upcoming dates:

- May 15th, 10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m.
- May 21st, 6:00 8:00 p.m.
- June 12th, 1:00 3:00 p.m.

I look forward to helping any member of D24 reach their goal this year to finish a level or complete a path. Your club will be added to the agenda as a sponsor.

Cynthia Coleman, DTM Why Not Speak VP-E <u>cc4ynotspeak@gmail.com</u> 402-707-3898



Social Media & Public Relations Discussion Group – May 19

Are you a current or potential club officer and looking to help grow your club? Do you have ideas of how District 24 can promote events and club meetings? We would love for you to join us on **Wednesday**, **May 19 from 8:00 - 8:45 p.m.** to discuss ways our District can embrace online promotion and find new members!



This discussion takes place on the third Wednesday of each month. If you are interested in joining, or have any questions, contact Public Relations Manager Calvin Custard at <u>prm.d24tm@gmail.com</u> or Social Media Coordinator Jessica Steele-Codr at <u>jcake2@gmail.com</u>.

District Officer Training – June 5

A new Toastmasters year is less than 2 months away, and with it comes new District leadership! District officers from this past year, and the upcoming Toastmasters year are invited to join us for District Officer Training on **Saturday**, **June 5 from 8:30 - 11:15 a.m.** We will discuss the expectations and outlook for the year ahead. There will also be valuable presentations, and discussions on how we can help District 24 continue to grow and thrive.

Happy Anniversary, Lincoln Toastmasters Club 403!

Earlier this month, Lincoln Toastmasters Club 403 entered into its 75th year! The club will be hosting a special meeting to celebrate 75 years of success, and information will be posted soon.

Keep an eye on their Facebook page at facebook.com/LincolnToastmasters403!







Submitted by Rebecca Fegan, DTM

Why did you decide you wanted to be a Toastmaster? Look at that question closely. Most of the time, people will ask why you joined the organization. Why did you join the softball team? Why did you join the company? Why did you join the choir? These are all starting points. They don't ask why you wanted to be a right fielder, or a middle manager, or the 2nd soprano. Those are ending points.

What are the benefits of becoming a Toastmaster? You would be at ease in front of a crowd. You would be able to persuade people to your point of view. You could have briefings that are...brief! **Nobody wants to be a Toastmaster:** that person that just runs a celebration with glowing speeches and inspirational messages and dinner. They want to become Communicators and Leaders. They want the skills that allow them to read people, to empathize, to accurately communicate a message that inspires, informs, or persuades. The people that search for experiential learning come here for the experience! You give a speech and get feedback.

Someone who has good listening skills is listening to your speech and watching you give it with a mind to how to improve your message, to present it well, and to think more deeply into a subject. The objective of these projects is to make use of them outside of Toastmasters. We want to use these in real life.

In education today, we design programs to move the student through various steps incrementally from beginner to master. You learn your alphabet; you learn the different sounds; you learn to write and read words and increase your vocabulary. Finally, you write your dissertation. But what do you write? How about "The Effect of Cocaine on Bees?" Have you considered, "The Unhidden Dangers of Sword Swallowing?" Of what possible use are these? **We have conditioned students to check off boxes.** The titles above are actual dissertations, not products of my twisted mind. They are just more boxes to check off.

Let's look at the Toastmasters educational programs. In the legacy program with the CC and CL manuals, *you did not have to be successful in your project to get credit for it.* But you were encouraged to progress through the Competent Communicator manual in the order of presentations so that in every new speech you wrote you were expected to make use of the previous projects.

- 1. Ice breaker get used to speaking in front of people
- 2. Organize your speech
- 3. Get to the point
- 4. How to say it
- 5. Body Language
- 6. Vocal Variety
- 7. Research
- 8. Visual Aids
- 9. Persuasion
- 10. Inspiration



By the time you got to Visual Aids, you were comfortable speaking in front of your audience, your speech was organized and concise with no filler words and no jargon. You didn't stand like a mannequin or sound like an auctioneer, and you knew what you were talking about. The idea was to add one skill at a time to make you a more effective communicator. But many just checked off boxes to finish the manual. According to research by TMI, the average time to complete the CC manual was 2 years, and the average new member quit in 18 months.

They devised a new educational program. They didn't devise new members. Some of them have every intention of becoming better speakers, but once they join the program, they just check off boxes. Are you learning new skills or checking off boxes? When you explore new areas of interest and develop new techniques, how do you go about USING this material? Does it matter how long it takes you to acquire it? Give yourself time to absorb and reflect. Look at the possible outcomes and see if this new perspective, this new skill, this new thought process can be applied in multiple areas. Don't just check off boxes.

Current Standings in the Distinguished Club Program (DCP)

District 24 now has **two Distinguished clubs** and counting! Congratulations to **Mutual of Omaha** and **Omaha Club 281** for already achieving **Select Distinguished status**!

Other District 24 clubs are close; the clubs below need one more goal or a few more paid members! See further details on the Distinguished Club Program at <u>dashboards.toastmasters.org/Club.aspx?id=24</u>.

- Advanced Traveling Toastmasters, Area A1 4 points
- Tally Ho, Area A2 7 points
- Prime Time Toastmasters, Area A2 7 points
- Kearney Toastmasters, Area A3 9 points
- Gateway Club, Area A3 4 points
- West Dodgers, Area B11 8 points
- Ameritoasters, Area B12 8 points
- Greater Communicators, Area B14 4 points
- River City Speakers, Area B14 4 points
- Road 2 DTM, Area B15 7 points
- Big Red Talkers, Area B15 4 points
- Strictly Speaking Club, Area C21 8 points
- Capital City Toastmasters, Area C21 6 points
- RoadToasters, Area C22 4 points
- Toast of the Town, Area C22 4 points

- International Friends, Area C23 8 points
- E.C. Speakers, Area C23 7 points
- Southeast Toasters, Area C23 6 points
- Lincoln Toastmasters, Area C23 5 points
- Capitol Voices Club, Area C24 8 points
- Sunrise Toastmasters, Area C24 5 points
- FirsTier Club, Area C24 4 points
- Rail Talkers Club, Area D31 7 points
- Blue Ah Busters Club, Area D32 7 points
- Why Not Speak, Area D33 9 points
- Mutual of Omaha, Area D33 8 points, Select Distinguished
- Omaha Club 281, Area D34 7 points, Select Distinguished
- Omaha Club 229, Area D34 5 points
- Ad-Libbers Club, Area D34 4 points

Member Educational Awards (4/1/2021-4/30/2021)

Awards key at reports.toastmasters.org/reports/ <u>850-EducationAwardsKey.pdf</u>

Todd Bray **MS1** 4/8 Jessica Codr **Pl1** 4/11 Yolanda Colin **DL2** 4/14 Mark Fegan **PM2** 4/5 Rebecca Fegan **EC2**, **IP5** 4/20 Melinda Haag **TC3**, **TC4** 4/19 Pete Hines **PM1**, **PM2** 4/3

- Justin Iske LD3 4/8 Deborah Jackson EC1 4/4 Richard Kirch EC3 4/3 Jean Kirch-Holliday DL2 4/3 Yuliya Kovalenko DL1 4/28 Pallabi Kundu EH3 4/25, EH4 4/28 Gwen Lavender PM1, PM2 4/7 Jacob Lawson PI2 4/27
- Louis Lester **PM1** 4/8 Gibril Mansaray **MS1** 4/7, **MS2** 4/7 Jeff Martin **PM2** 4/14 Krishna Muvva **DL2**, **DL3**, **DL4** 4/16 Gerald Posey **EH2** 4/4 Katie Rhone **PM1** 4/30 Thanh Dong Vo **PM1** 4/28 Kale Wolken **IP1** 4/8

For all the latest news and events, visit <u>d24tm.org</u> or <u>https://www.facebook.com/D24TM/</u>. Comments, questions, suggestions or corrections? Email <u>prm.d24tm@gmail.com</u>