

## **An Invitation to Rotary Clubs to Participate in the 2012 Rotary Against Drugs Speech Contest from Karen Morris, RAD District Chair**

For several years, District 7690 has participated in the Multi-District Rotary Against Drugs Speech Contest, started in 1993 as a part of Rotary's efforts to reduce drug and alcohol abuse among teens. The process starts with a contest in participating high schools. The winners of the high school contests advance to the District 7690 contest, and the top three winners of the district contest advance to the Multi-District Contest held in the Raleigh area in March.

The Rotary Against Drugs Speech Contest was conceived as a means for students to be educated about the dangers of drugs by their peers, rather than by adults. The concept was for several students in a school to present their speeches to as large a portion of the student body as possible. The speakers are to address their fellow students, not the adults who will be judging the contest. Winning the school contest and advancing to the District and Multi-District contests is a by-product of the main goal of the contest.

Some schools will grab on to this opportunity with a full blown contest, and others may provide only one contestant for your club to enter into the District contest. Some clubs have found contestants on their own without going through a school. While the educational objectives are better met through a school wide contest, any participation that increases teens' knowledge of the dangers of drugs works towards Rotary's goal.

The 2012 District event will be held at GTCC, 9 a.m. on Saturday, February 25 (location and directions to follow). Each club may send up to three participants, representing three different schools, to the District 7690 competition. The top three from this competition will be invited to the multi-district competition, which will be held on Sunday, March 20, location to be determined.

Sindy Martin, a long-time judge for our contest, past president of Toastmasters, and founder of Smartin International and The Smartin School of Protocol has offered to come to any club or school that would like to have her to speak about the contest or help students with their presentations. I will contact her for you if you're interested.

I challenge each club to establish a relationship with a local high school and to promote participation in this contest to principals, counselors and teachers. A suggested information sheet for participating schools is attached. Feel free to modify it for your needs, keeping the speech requirements and District and Multi-District contest dates intact. The sooner you provide the details to them, the longer they have to prepare. February/ March sounds like a long way off, but once you get through the holidays it will approach very quickly. I've also attached a time line for clubs which would like to send participants to the contest.

I will send future notices to the president of each club. Please pass my e-mails on to the person in charge of the Rotary Against Drugs speech contest in your club.

Please feel free to contact me if I can assist in any way. I can be reached at (336)887-7435 or [kmorris@triad.rr.com](mailto:kmorris@triad.rr.com).

Thanks for your help in making this vital educational opportunity available to students in your area.