**Public Relations Officer Report**

The year has started off on a positive note in the Northern sector, with Cairns having a booth at the Cairns Show, the Kickstart club running a Speechfest which attracted sixty guests, and Townsville clubs having a successful stall at the Jobs and Skills Expo. We have had the first training in PNG with all the clubs present which included brainstorming and comparing notes on how they could increase publicity and boost membership.

Marlin Coast ran another successful camping trip to Emu Creek on the Tablelands with twenty four Toastmasters from Area 9 and Area 32 present with a number of non-toastmaster spouses and friends. We have an advanced Toastmasters club on the cusp of being formed in Cairns plus there is a public meeting in Mt Isa on the 19th of September with a view to launch a club there. Cairns Club is about to start its second Speechcraft course for this year with Marlin Coast and Mt Sheridan scheduling Speechcraft courses in October.  All these projects have resulted in Toastmasters increasing its public profile and has made it easier to attract members to the clubs.

A selection of brochures have been ordered which will be distributed around the clubs in the coming weeks, to give them a snapshot of some of the rebranded publicity material available.

I missed the first training session due to a last minute unplanned work commitment, which has slowed my interaction with the clubs down south, however this will be rectified at the upcoming training. The aim this year is to have three major Toastmaster events during the year, outside our scheduled conferences, which will be newsworthy and involve a number of clubs in their organisation.

Given a small budget we are able to help with promotional material but we will be looking to inspire the organisation at club level to get out in the markets they know best, their local community. Publicity and building membership is an all-encompassing activity, starting from the inside, developing interesting, entertaining, educational meetings, a people magnet in their own right, supported by an ongoing promotional presence in a number of different media using different approaches. This year I will be aiming to support the clubs, together with the rest of the District team, in the sharing of their knowledge and inspiring them to try new avenues of publicity.

I am looking forward to the PRO webinar on the 21st of September run by Toastmasters International to see what other Districts are doing. Jenny one of the Toastmasters on the camping trip spends most of her time in Korea teaching English where she is a member of three clubs, she mentioned in passing that they have a District in Korea that consist of one high rise building, and many of the Districts in the US are a lot smaller than our Areas, so we do have some unique challenges in lifting our profile in a District of such a massive geographic spread.

We will be brainstorming at the training to generate new ideas for events and publicity, and we are looking forward to the outcome.

***David Burston***

***PRO 2012-2013 District 69***