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Dear TOPS Friends,

Congratulations to all chapter royalty and division winners. Your corrected chapter resume and certificates are enclosed for your winners. Be sure to ask your winners to share their success stories during your chapter's awards ceremony. They will certainly be motivational and help inspire others to reach their goals. I am pleased to tell you that the 40 counties in my area lost a total of 6,475.75 pounds in 2009.

S-51 forms are enclosed if I noticed you have a KOPS who will be eligible for a pendant for consecutive years of KOPS status. These should be filled out and returned to me when the anniversary of their KOPS date has been completed. If there are other KOPS who are eligible and did not receive a form, please contact me and I will send one to your chapter.

Please have your members check their renewal dates. I have had several from 2009 who are just now remembering to renew, stating they did not receive their renewals. If a member's renewal is due and they have not received a form from headquarters, fill out an L-3 application form and mark it "renewal" and send it in. **BE SURE TO SEND \$26 – EVEN IF IT IS FOR 2009. You also need to include the current weight and date on renewals and application forms so they get credit for weight loss from the beginning of their membership.**

Election of officers: You should be holding election of officers on the first meeting in March. All leaders will be receiving (if they have not already), the Master Chart (L-1). Be very careful to complete the form (especially the phone numbers and street address of your meeting place). The form has been completely redesigned and includes a place to put email addresses of officers. Many times I need to get hold of a chapter and it is much easier via email than by phone so I do appreciate the listing of email addresses if an officer has email access. **Be sure your March and April renewals are in to me as you must be paid-up members of TOPS in order to be nominated, vote or hold office. Mail the master chart to me as soon as you hold elections.** Officers take over at the first meeting in April.

Taking an office need not be a time consuming, scary or a difficult job. It's not up to just the leader, or other officers to make a chapter successful. They are there for the same reason everyone else is – to take off pounds sensibly. Consider getting involved in your chapter by offering to take an office. It could be just what you need to succeed in TOPS.

If funds permit, we suggest that chapters pay the membership dues for their leaders as a thank you for taking the office. I'm sure your leaders would appreciate the gesture.

Spring Workshop: The Area Captains all have dates and places lined up for their workshops and will be getting letters out to you within the next few weeks. They are all doing a power point program and will have time for questions and answers, as well as a time for sharing.



SRD – “TOPS Summer Olympics” will be held Friday and Saturday, May 21-22, 2010 at St. Cloud. Letters have been sent to all chapters and you should be making plans now to attend. Hold fundraisers in your chapters to help your members attend. It will be two days filled with fun, inspiration and motivation. The SRD letter has been posted on www.topspride.org.

IRD – “Set Your Sites on Harbour Lights” is the theme for IRD (International Recognition Days) to be held July 15-17, 2010 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Details for housing, events, registration are found in your TOPS News magazines, or online at www.tops.org. Regional Director Ruth Gielow also has organized a tour bus that will depart from Milwaukee July 8th. The tour is from July 8-22 and includes tours of the Halifax area. Details are posted on the website www.topspride.org. If you cannot access the internet and would like information, please let me know and I'll get the info to you.



www.topspride.org – check it out. It is Minnesota's website that members may go to for information and what's happening in our area. Just click on Minnesota and try the different sights. I, as well as the Area Captains, post our letters there so everyone has access to the information.

TOPS love,

Shari Kieper, Coordinator

