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NEWSLETTER – January 6, 2010

PLEASE COPY AND DISTRIBUTE TO EACH MEMBER
AND ALSO READ AT MEETING

Dear TOPS Chapters of Milwaukee County:

AREA MEETINGS: During 2010, there will be three countywide meetings, instead of two as in the past few years. The dates are May 3, August 2 and November 1. The weight report form for reporting successes to be honored at these meetings has changed. Enclosed is the newly revised form. Please pass immediately to your weight recorder. You will note it covers a calendar quarter, instead of six months at a time.

ATTENTION WEIGHT RECORDERS: Please use the enclosed revised **WEIGHT REPORT FORM** covering one calendar quarter at a time. Please destroy all old report forms. The report for the last quarter of 2009 is due to me by **2/1/10** please!

TOPS NEWS STORIES: Our magazine TOPS News is looking for stories from all of us on stress – coping strategies, success stories, overcoming it – all related to Stress Awareness Month. They also need any stories in general and welcome ideas for unique, informative and unusual topics. You can share stories of personal success, unique situations, anecdotes, publicity efforts – anything that might inspire members and encourage chapters. Simply email rough stories directly to headquarters before **1/25/10**, and include any pictures that support the idea. You need not worry that your item is not “perfect” enough, as the editors can polish and shape the article. Email stories to Beth Maniero, the Communications Manager at bmaniero@tops.org.

GUIDES: Just a reminder that all leaders received two sets of the 2010 combined Chapter Guide and Weight Recorder Guide in three-hole punch loose-leaf form, to be placed into separate three-ring binders. One should be kept by the leader and the other copy by the weight recorder. You may want to order or photocopy one for each officer. With this new format, small changes can be made to a page here and there, without reprinting entire guides. TOPS and KOPS rules were also combined and are in those guides for storing in the binders also.

WEIGHING IN: Reminder that members are allowed to attend their chapter meeting without weighing in, but they must be marked absent (AB) for that date on their chapter weight chart, unless they are on Medical Excuse from their doctor.

PRESENTING A PROGRAM: We are still looking for some chapter members to volunteer to visit area chapters upon the chapter's request, and present a program. You know how we all enjoy an outside speaker. As a volunteer you would simply present a program of your choice, such as you may now do in your own chapters. No other requirements or duties are involved. Please call Jackie Marks at 427.9309 or me if you are interested in exploring this idea.

TOPS WEBSITE: Remember, for use in a pinch, there is a "LEADER'S CORNER" on the www.TOPS.org website, with five quick program ideas at the bottom of the list on the left. There is also a tab CHAPTER PROGRAMS, which contains regular ones. Also, to see the **Wisconsin** TOPS website, simply click on the tab across the top of the home page marked OUR TEAM. Go to the bottom of the drop down list to find Wisconsin.

CUT & BURN CHALLENGE: Remember making small changes can produce big results. The August/Sept. issue of TOPS News had on page 27 the new program No. 64, "Cut & Burn," which every chapter was to establish and use for a year. Leaders and/or members, please review and present soon at a chapter meeting. For those chapters already up and running with this, email me about how it's going. Better yet, submit a story to TOPS News with ideas for tie-in and achievement of this challenge, progress reports, suggestions for recognition, and successes.

MY DAY ONE: There was a removable piece in the centerfold of the December/January TOPS News. Members are asked to bring that issue or just the My Day One to chapter, and spend a January meeting reviewing it together.

REMINDER ABOUT THE BIG IDEA: As I mentioned in my last newsletter, in 2011 IRD (the TOPS international convention) will be held here at the Milwaukee Theatre. This is a huge plus for local members, because of incurring no travel or hotel expenses. I hope chapters are discussing this often, at least monthly as a reminder. I am encouraging everyone to become a KOPS by December 2010, in order to graduate at the international convention. It is very dramatic and memorable, and it is your chance to be in a giant Circle of Light.

Additionally, each chapter should consider establishing an IRD treasury to build funds to help pay the registration fee for your chapter members who plan to attend. Here is a chance to experience TOPS at its most significant annual event. Call or email me with questions or concerns or about fundraising ideas.

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