



THE VOICE

DISTRICT 83 NEWSLETTER

August 2014

Hail, Hail, The Gang's All Here

By Lynda Starr, ACG, ALB



Military organizations have the tradition called the hail and farewell, which is a formal gathering of the troops, to say farewell to those who are leaving, and to welcome those who have just arrived. District 83 has adopted the Hail and Farewell as the name for our summer gathering during which we thank the past district, division, area and club officers and committee chairs and for their service and present them with awards, Toastmaster gift certificates and the like. The new district, division and area governors are installed and the highlight of the event is the good-hearted roasting of the outgoing district governor.

This year's event was held on Saturday, July 26 at the Galloping Hill Inn in Union. Paul Scharf, DTM 4 and PDG, was the installing officer and as do all good Toastmasters, he knows how to improvise on the spot. Unable to find the gavel, which is passed between those installed, Paul passed a fork.

Cyndi Wilson, outgoing district governor said farewell to 2013-2014 and thanked her team and gave kudos to the entire district, which earned Distinguished District designation at the last minute in June. We ended the year with 166 clubs, though it came down to the wire with the last club chartering on June 30. Cyndi also recognized Divisions C and F, which earned President's Distinguished status and President's Distinguished and Select Distinguished areas.

Anne Gilson, district governor for 2014-15 hailed the upcoming year and noted there are "3,700 reasons why the District 83 leadership is committed." There are 3,700 members in the district and each one is the key focus. Her motto for the year is "Every Member Matters" to underscore the responsibility every Toastmaster has for assuring individual and collective success.

Thanks to Janice Buffalow and her committee for a great event to kick off the year.



Above: Paul Scharf, (far right) installs the 2014-2015 District Officers. From left to right: Anne Gilson, DTM; Cyndi Wilson, DTM 2; Bill Hood, DTM; Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALB; Monica Helsel, ACS. (Not pictured: Paula Markert, DTM; and Gary Couitt, ACG, ALB.)

Below: Anne, Cyndi and Bill display the Distinguished District banner which will be on stage at the International Convention in Malaysia.

Photography by Lynda Starr, ACG, ALB



2014-2015 District Officers

District Governor	Anne Gilson, DTM
Lt. Governor Education & Training	Bill Hood, DTM
Lt. Governor Marketing	Paula Markert, DTM
Public Relations Officer	Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALB
Immediate Past District Governor	Cyndi Wilson, DTM 2
Treasurer	Monica Helsel, ACS
Secretary	Gary Couitt ACG, ALB

Welcome!

Welcome to *The Voice*, District's 83 newsletter. Our goal is to provide an interesting and informative publication that helps district members to gain a better feeling for what's happening in District 83, to get to know fellow Toastmasters and learn from their experiences and become more familiar with Toastmasters and how to gain the most from the program. Simply put, this means we will cover news events, so please send club, area, division news; member profiles and offer tips on such topics as what to say when called upon for Table Topics.

The Voice will publish online and via email in August, October, December, February, April and June. We welcome your comments, contributions and suggestions. **The deadline for the October 2014 issue is September 21, 2014.**

It's great to be a Toastmaster,

Su Brooks and Lynda Starr, Co-Editors

How to reach the District 83 Newsletter Co-Editors

Su Brooks: subrooksd83@gmail.com
Lynda Starr: lbstarr@optonline.net

Meet the District 83 Newsletter Co-Editors

Su Brooks, ACG, ALB, is a member of AT&T Middletown Toastmasters and No Limits Toastmasters. She has been a Toastmaster since 2000 and served as District Secretary during 2013-2014. Su enjoys participating in District Conferences as Publications Chair and on the Publicity and Contest Committees. Her professional background includes experience in art direction/graphic design, proofreading, production and editorial services.



Lynda Starr (left) and Su Brooks (right).
Photo by Margarita Estrada, ACG, ALB.

Lynda Starr, ACG, ALB, is a member of Dining to Speak Toastmasters, where she is currently president. She has

been a Toastmaster since 2006 and served as District Public Relations Officer (PRO) during 2013-2014. Previously, Lynda served as Area 64 Governor, Division F Governor and frequent trainer and contest official. Outside of Toastmasters, Lynda works at Vantage PR, a high-tech agency and is involved with community service.

In this Issue

Hail, Hail, The Gang's All Here	1	District Governor's Message	10
Welcome	2	Inspiration from Walt Disney	10
How to Reach the Co-Editors	2	Fall Conference 2014	11
Meet the Co-Editors	2	Table Topics Tips	12
Educationally Speaking	3-6	Summer Training: Last Call	12
Speech Topics Flyer	4-5	Evaluation Contest Winner	
Pocket Power Flyer	6	Ed Cruikshank	12
Take Me Out to the Ballgame	7	In the Limelight	
Speak and Lead Celebration	8-9	Lisa Altamore	14
Future Paved Upon the Past	9		

Educationally Speaking

By Fran Okeson, DTM 17, PDG (46)

I'm a DTM, What's Next?

When I heard that the District 83 newsletter, *The Voice*, was going to be reactivated, I offered to send in some of my educational flyers with advice on how to complete goals at your Toastmasters club meetings.

Co-Editor Su Brooks asked me to answer the following question in my first article, "After you earn a DTM, what's next?" The answer is simple – earn another one, and another and another. Challenge yourself to redo the program and see how much you have learned since your first one was achieved. "Distinguished Toastmaster" has such a nice ring to it, doesn't it?

How I started in my Toastmasters career

I joined the Corner House Toastmasters club #5757 in District 46 in October 1988 because my Women's Club of Tottenville was planning to honor Helen Hayes at a testimonial dinner, not for her work in the theatre, but for her interest in community service. Our Women's Club was founded in September 1985 to help in our community wherever we could. We held meetings at my home and invited people from around Staten Island to address the group. One snowy evening, Liz Militcher, a realtor, talked about "curbside appeal" and how to make your home attractive to a potential home buyer.

We decided to have our own members speak from then on. Move ahead three years and two of us, Julie Porowski, DTM, (whose mother was our first club speaker) and I decided to attend a Toastmasters meeting because I didn't want to make a fool of myself in front of Ms. Hayes. Then Ms. Hayes suffered a heart attack and wasn't permitted to attend functions for the next few months. When we found out that the Corner House club didn't meet during the summer, we visited the Richmond County club, chartered in 1976, and joined on the spot. The rest is part of our Toastmasters story.

Several of us attended a District 46 Conference one year and heard Past International President Jack Gillespie talk about carrying around a small notebook and jotting down speech ideas. I started tearing articles out of the *Staten Island Advance*, a habit I still have, and filled shoe boxes with ideas for speeches. I now carry around index cards for ideas while I'm away from home. It's hard for me to understand how members say they can't make a speech because they can't think of anything to talk about. Many years ago, I created a flyer with 320 speech ideas. Please see the flyer in this issue to learn how "Speech Topics à la Carte" can jazz up your meetings.

Right: Awards Chair Janice Buffalow (at right) presents the District Toastmaster of the Year Award for 2012-2013 to Fran Okeson (left).

Photo by Robert Bugai, CTM

Pocket Power

A valuable Toastmasters lesson is to always have a speech in your pocket, meaning be prepared with a speech in case a speaking spot at a meeting becomes available at the last minute. This is the story of literally a speech in your pocket.

Many years ago, I was presenting a workshop at a Regional Conference in Maryland and was explaining to the audience how easy it is to make an impromptu speech. I saw a gentleman sitting at the back of the room and I asked him if he would help me demonstrate the point. He agreed and I asked him to empty his pockets. He did and an idea came to me. I said, "would you please tell the audience what keys you carry on your key chain?"

He looked at the keys and explained what they opened – the usual things, house, car, office desk, garage, his locker at the gym, etc. He talked about why he carried the garage key on the key chain. He said he had many dangerous tools and equipment in his garage. He didn't want his two young sons to go into the garage and get hurt. The older boy wanted to help him with the yard work, but he felt the boy was too young.

Then he looked at the keys and looked at me and said, "you know, I go to the gym to work out and that takes some valuable father/son time away from my kids." A funny look came across his face and he said, "I think I'm going to give up my gym membership and teach my sons how to use tools carefully and spend more time with them." I'll never forget the quiet in the room.

When my No Limits club had monthly meetings at a local nursing home on Staten Island, a gentleman forgot his speech material and no one was available to take him back to his room. So I asked him to tell us what he carried in his wallet. He pulled out some photos and some old membership cards and related why he still carried them. He said they were to remind him that he worked for many years and those cards brought back memories for him.

For more ideas, call or email Fran Okeson.



SPEECH TOPICS ~ A LA CARTE

From the proven recipes of Fran Okeson DTM 17, PDG (46)

Do you pass up a chance to speak in your Toastmasters clubs because you can't think of anything new to speak about? After you've completed several CCs and want to add a bit of variety and spice to your presentations, try to complete a CC around a theme. For example: start a new CC about gardening. Speech # 1 can introduce your green thumb abilities to your audience. Then make the next eight speeches about different types of flowers or gardening techniques. The # 10 speech can inspire your audience to try to develop a green thumb of their own.

(Make sure you follow the speech objectives to make your speech is valid)

Here Are Some Ideas To Get You Started

Advertising/Media	Holidays and Observances	Slogans
Animal Care/Animal Antics	Cultural Activities/Cuisine	Higher Learning
Architectural Styles	Similarities/Differences	Presidents
Banking	Movies/Plays	Television Shows/Radio Shows
Construction	Postage Stamps	Appliances
Childcare/Eldercare	Foreign Currency	Recognitions/Awards
Communication	Library Services	Gestures
Consulting	Solar System/Planets	Pollution
Education	Leadership	Technology
Entertaining-Formal/Informal	Development	Club Visitors
Fashion Trends	Vitamins Natural/Synthetic	Outside Speeches
Financial Services	Nature vs Nurture	Opportunities
Foreign Service	Cars, Trucks, Vans	Props/Costumes
Funeral Services/Pre-planning	Auto Maintenance	Beverages
Environmental Issues	Art	Rules
Fund-raising	Jokes	Stereotypes
Homemaking	Greatness	Oral Hygiene
Hotels	Adversity	Picnics
Insurance	Magazines	Board Games
Interior Design	First Memories	Card Games
Landscaping/Gardening	Serendipity	Casinos
Law/Laws	Special Moments	Dancing
Marketing	Miracles	Performers/Performances
Ministry	Pleasure/Pain	Symbols
Nutrition	Grace	Baby Furniture
Human Resources	Fears/Dangers	Attics/Basements/Garages
Public Relations	Time	Storage
Real Estate	Time Management	Blackouts
Research and Development	Fabrics	U.S.O.
Sales	Facts	Wine Tasting
Science	Fiction	Beach parties
Sports	Faculty	Astronomy
Arts and Crafts	Famous People	Commitment
Transportation	Family	Cheeses
Travel and Tourism	Farming	Postage Stamps
Volunteerism	Lighthouses	The Forties
Writing	Mountains	The Fifties
Health Services	Volcanos	The Sixties
Aviation	Bridges	The Seventies

The Eighties
The Nineties
Turn Of The Century
Color Therapy
Artists
Teachers
Teaching Techniques
Quality Control
Men Named “George”
Fast Foods
Fashion Statements/Trends
Anniversaries
Birthdays
Literature
Souvenirs
Policy/Protocol
Vocations
Vacations
Emotions
Life’s Roadblocks
Circuses
Footwear
Zippers
Freezer Bags
Store Coupons
School Campuses
School Memories
Thunderstorms
Foreign Currency
Junk
Integrity
Frames
Flowers
Aquariums/Fish
Comics
Coach
Sewing/Knitting/Crocheting
Choices
Challenges
Change
Camping
New Adventures
Appreciation
Beliefs
Pleasure Boats
Clocks
Club Officers
Training
Discovering Yourself
Things In The Bag

Body Language
Cruise Ships
Team Building
Writing Implements
Proverbs
Old Wives Tales
Interpersonal Communications
Dinner Table Talk
Motives
Native Americans
Comics/Comedians
Aromatherapy
Housecleaning Tips
Endangered Species
Enthusiasm
Exercise
Delegation
Goals/Short & Long Term
Shredders
Sleepovers
Visual Aids
Wild Wild West
Wrappings
Zoos Around The World
Tools
Theme Meetings
Relaxation Techniques
Neighbors
The Oscars
Notions
Paper Clips
New Year’s Eve
Opportunity Knocking
“If I were...”
Plumbing
Pitfalls
Pocket Power
Dual Membership
Liberty
Scouting
Genealogy
Tea/Coffee
Sibling Rivalry
Screen Savers
Procrastinating
Old Photographs
Autographs
“Some Assembly Required”
Power Of Prayer
Favorite Gift

Worst Gift
Childhood Friend
Three Wishes
Holidays
Makeup Tips
Favorite Talk Show Hosts
Interviews
“Crazes”
Looking Back
Expectations
Gems/Jewelry
Castles
Song Titles
Classical Music/Composers
Scrapbooks
Options
Lists
Committees
Decisions
Childhood Capers
Lightening
Harmony
Workshops
Mind Power
Thoughts Positive/Negative
Signposts
Minerals
Healing Foods
Affirmations
Wheels
Olympic Records
In The Bookstore
Inventors/Inventions
Antiques/Auctions/e-Bay
Good Advice/Bad Advice
Around The Globe
Shopping Malls
Retirement
Inspiration
World Rulers
Good Habits/Bad Habits
Herbal Cures
Evaluations
Objectionable Behavior
Favorites
Buttons and Bows
The “Bard of Avon”
Opportunities Abound
Old Houses
Treasure Hunting

**P O C K E T
O
W
E
R**



*Do you know how much power you have in your pocket? Or purse?
Try working your way through the Communication and Leadership Manual by
preparing speeches about what you carry with you every day.*

*For example: KEYS. Gather some of the members' keys and make a speech
about their different personalities. (the people...not the keys!)*

*Be prepared to give these speeches whenever someone gives up a speaking spot
on the agenda. A challenge? Yes! But look how quickly you'll complete a CC
(Competent Communicator) if you're "always prepared."*

For more ideas call:

*PDG Fran Okeson DTM 17
Area 13 Governor 2014 - 2015
(H) 718-984-1339
(E) frantotten@verizon.net*

Take Me Out to the Ball Game (and Speakout!)

By Su Brooks, ACG, ALB

On Sunday, July 20, the Fourth Annual Speakout and Baseball Game hosted by the No Limits Toastmasters club (Area 13), took place. Our afternoon began with a speakout followed by a fun-filled game between the Staten Island Yankees and the Jamestown Jammers.



Above: Team mascot Scooter the Holy Cow joins us for a photo op!

Toastmasters and their guests enjoyed a beautiful afternoon filled with baseball and speeches. If you have never attended a speakout, here's how it works:

Toastmasters members prepare a manual speech prior to the speakout. We are instructed in advance to prepare speeches that can be completed in 5-7 minutes since we know that there will be many speakers. We fill out a short form for our introduction so the Toastmaster can keep the meeting running smoothly. This includes our name, name of our speech manual, speech project name and number, and title of our speech. Each person presenting a speech gives their speech manual to a fellow Toastmaster who serves as their evaluator. One person is chosen as the timer.

We heard ten (yes, ten!) great speeches from speakers ranging from those working on their first CC to seasoned DTMs. Our

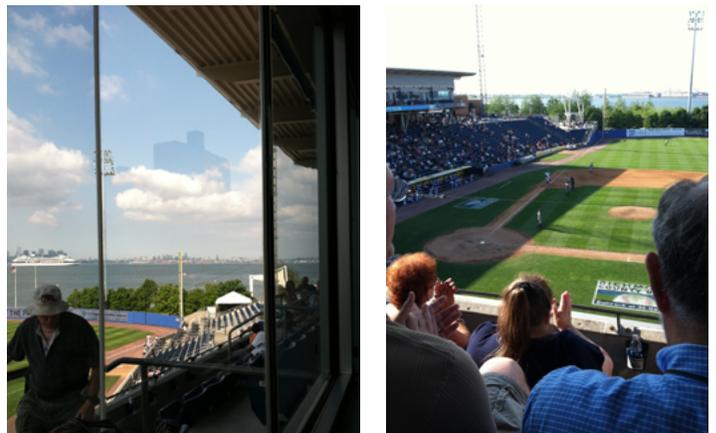
program included serious, informative speeches as well as humorous, lighthearted speeches.

Speeches were followed by evaluations. Evaluators were asked to highlight an area for improvement, since the written commentary was provided in the manual for the speaker to review on their own after the speakout.

That's it! During this speakout, the timer indicated the time with green, yellow and red flags, but did not present a timer's report at the end.



Our host, Bill, from the Staten Island Yankees staff (seated next to Anne Gilson), joins some of the speakers prior to the speakout.



Above: A building next to the stadium, reflected in the window enclosing the suite, appears to be rising from the clouds (left). Toastmasters and guests enjoy the baseball game (right).



Above: Lucy Kahn, DTM (left) and George Corrado, DTM (right).

Other meeting roles and reports were eliminated during this speakout, providing time for many speakers to hone their skills.

Some of us knew each other prior to the speakout. Some of us had the opportunity to make new Toastmasters friends and learn more about different clubs in the District.

Yes, there was a baseball game, too! The Staten Island Yankees won 7-4. Join us next year for a great afternoon of education and fellowship!

Photos by Su Brooks, ACG, ALB and courtesy Staten Island Yankees staff.

Speak and Lead Toastmasters Manages a Stunning Turnaround and Celebrates its Tenth Anniversary

By Carl Turso, CC, VPPR and Rita Reisman, DTM

On June 19, 2014, [Speak and Lead Toastmasters Club](#) of Rutherford, NJ celebrated its tenth anniversary and installed its incoming offices for 2014-2015 with a festive dinner meeting at the Greek Island Grill in Hackensack, NJ. Jim Samuel, Past District 46 Governor (PDG-D 46) and current District 38 Lieutenant Governor — Marketing & Membership (LGM), conducted the installation for the fourth consecutive year. In his inimitable style, he installed: Liza Vaca, president; Ashley Wilson, VPE; Javier Antela, VPM; Carl Turso, VPPR; Lynn Schatz, secretary; Phyllis Goldblatt, treasurer; and Myo Myaing, SAA.

The evening was filled with speeches celebrating Speak and Lead's history and its rise from a club on life support to one that is now thriving. Edward Goldblatt, the member who is most responsible for keeping Speak and Lead together delivered a history of the club. Ashley Wilson performed a moving poem she had written for the occasion.

Immediate past president, Javier Antela presented club members with awards for outstanding speaking achievements. Outgoing club president Rita Reisman delivered her farewell address and District Governor-elect, Anne Gilson, a close friend of the club, provided closing comments.

Speak and Lead Toastmasters had cause for celebration. Four years earlier, the club was struggling to survive. However, thanks to the vision of its small group of dedicated officers, it has rebounded beyond all expectations and has experienced significant growth. How did this club that was barely alive manage to turn around and become a Perfect Ten club with all 10 Distinguished Club Plan (DCP) goals completed for three years running?

Speak and Lead Toastmasters was chartered in 2004. But, by the summer of 2010, the club was down to seven members with just two active officers in regular attendance. In August, the president stepped down leaving the secretary Edward Goldblatt the sole officer of a club in serious trouble.

Edward would not walk away. He had been attending Toastmasters meetings with his mother since he was a young boy and had witnessed his first club disband. He was determined to prevent this from also happening to his second club. He quickly recruited a friend, Ashley Wilson (now District 83's Division F Governor) and his mother, Phyllis Goldblatt, to join the club as officers. He knew he would have their solid support but also welcomed the fact that they would not agree with him on every decision providing the necessary thrust to drive the club forward.

The job of rebuilding Speak and Lead was not an easy one. By the end of 2010, the club had whittled down to three members. Desperate to keep the club alive, the officers stayed

focused and eventually the club's fortune began to change. In December, two guests, Javier Antela and Liza Vaca became the fourth and fifth members. To help build membership, then Division Governor, Mary Ellen Burns, joined as a member and coach to the club. Slowly membership began to increase. The next members, Martin Klepach and Mary Elcock, were crucial to the club's growth. In 2012-2013, Javier became club president and Liza is currently serving in the role.

Perhaps the primary reason the club survived was that Edward insisted that they meet on a weekly basis. "I felt there needed to be consistent opportunities to speak and that could only happen with weekly meetings," said Edward. He also proposed a policy of never cancelling a meeting except during the most extreme weather conditions.

The hard work and dedication paid off. In June, 2011, Speak and Lead Toastmasters was a Distinguished Club with 15 members. By 2012, less than two years after its lowest moment, Speak and Lead Toastmasters was a President's Distinguished Club with 20 members. Later that year, District 83 awarded the club The Phoenix

Award. Like the mythical Phoenix, the club had risen from its ashes.

Speak and Lead is now a thriving club of 30 members. For three consecutive years it has been designated a President's Distinguished Club, fulfilling 10 of the 10 goals set by Toastmasters International. Club leaders increasingly play an important role in the larger Toastmasters community outside the club. Last year, Ashley Wilson served as Area Governor and is now our Division Governor. Edward Goldblatt is our current Area Governor.

The members of Speak and Lead Toastmasters are proud of their recent successes and the District roles they are pursuing. The club looks forward to many more years of strong leadership and continued mentoring of its newer members so they too can achieve their communication goals and reach their fullest leadership potential.



*Above: 2014-2015 Club Officer installation.
Photo by Tyrone Johnson, CC, CL*



*Above: Speak and Lead club members and guests.
Photo courtesy of Greek Island Grill staff.*

Future Paved Upon the Past

WE WEREN'T ALWAYS THIS WAY

WE WEREN'T ALWAYS WHAT YOU SEE TODAY

A LONG TIME AGO, WE TRAVERSED WITH NOTHING BUT HOPE – NOT EVEN SHOES

WE EVEN HAD TO FIND NEW HOMES

BUT THE EXPERIENCES ARE LONG LASTING AND INVALUABLE

TUCKED IN A BAG, WE WERE BROKEN AND DAMAGED, BUT WOULD NOT BE TRADED IN
SOMETHING UNTARNISHED

THROUGH THE COLD, WE FOUGHT LONG AND HARD AND SLOWLY GAINED MORE
COURAGE AND HEART

THE EXTRA BODIES IN THE ROOM PUT EXTRA SMILES IN OUR VIEW

AND EVEN WHEN THINGS WERE IN THE LINE OF FIRE, SOULS WERE QUICK AND READY
TO MARCH WHERE NEEDED

WHETHER ROVING BACKWARD OR FORWARD, THERE WAS ALWAYS LAUGHTER AS DAYS
GREW BRIGHTER

EVEN WHEN WE DIDN'T SPEAK LIKE EXACT LADIES AND GENTS, THE MANY MEMORIES
WERE BIRTHED BY MANY MOMENTS

NO MATTER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE SHARED OUR STORIES AND LIVES; EVEN IN
THE OPEN, UNDER THE MOON

WITH MEETINGS, AFTER THE MEETING MEETINGS, AND AFTER-PARTIES, WE COURSED
BEYOND OUR WILDEST DREAMS OF SCRAPING BY THE BARE MINIMUM

TEN YEARS STRONG, WE TURN AND HAND TO YOU, THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN THROUGH
THE BEST AND WORST, AND GIFT AN ETERNAL DIAMOND CARRYING YOUR WISHES
THROUGH THE YEARS TO COME
HAPPY 10TH ANNIVERSARY

IN MEMORIAM
MARTIN T. KLEPACH

THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND AND A WARM HEART AMONG MANY OTHER THINGS
TO SPEAK AND LEAD AS A CLUB AND INDIVIDUALS – AMONG MANY OTHERS.



Fellow Toastmasters,

Hello and welcome to another new Toastmasters year! Hopefully by now, our new club officers are starting to adjust to their roles. Your officer teams may be working on your Club Success Plans, planning

your club contests, or maybe starting to collect September dues (no, it's not too early for that).

The District 83 team members are also adjusting. The District Trio, which includes Lieutenant Governor Education & Training (LGET) Bill Hood, and Lieutenant Governor Marketing & Membership (LGM) Paula Markert and me, are very excited to be starting a new leadership adventure.

One item that our team has recently completed is our District Awards list, which can be found on our website (<http://www.toastmasters83.org>). I'd like to highlight a couple of club awards, which I hope your officer teams can use in goal setting for the year:

Back by popular demand is **Destination Distinguished**. Clubs can earn this award by accomplishing four goals:

- 1) Add 5 new members by December 15
- 2) Submit October dues for either their July 1 membership base or 20 members (whichever is less) by September 30
- 3) Submit April dues for 75% of their July 1 base membership by December 15
- 4) Earn at least 3 Distinguished Club Program (DCP) points' worth of educational awards. This means any 3 of the following DCP goals: 2 CCs, 2 more CCs, 1 leadership award, 1 more leadership award, 1 advanced communicator award, 1 more advanced communicator award.

Clubs that achieve Destination Distinguished win their choice of \$100 in Toastmasters money, a new banner or a banner stand. If your club still has a banner bearing the old Toastmasters logo, this would be a great opportunity to win a replacement.

The other new award I'd like to mention is our **Early Start Challenge**. For every new member your club adds between July 1 and September 30, your club wins \$5 in Toastmasters money. And as they say in infomercials, but wait, there's more! If your club earns the Smedley Award and adds 5 new members between August 1 and September 30, your club will earn \$30 – which includes a \$5 bonus. If your club adds all 8 of your DCP-required new members for the year, your club will earn \$50 – which includes a \$10 bonus. Participating in this challenge will also get your club on track to earn Destination Distinguished! Don't you love it when a plan comes together?

Why am I telling you this? Because my goal for District 83 this year is to focus on our most important resource: YOU, our members. My motto for this year is **Every Member Matters** – because you, your clubs, and your goals are critical. Those of you who attended the Spring 2014 conference will remember Dr. Dilip Abayasekara's advice for leaders, "Leadership is not about the leader being successful, it's about the individuals being successful. If our members are successful, then our clubs are successful. If our clubs are successful, then our areas and divisions are successful. If our areas and divisions are successful, we'll be unstoppable!"

Let's have a fantastic year!

Thanks,

Anne Gilson, DTM
District Governor

***“DO WHAT YOU DO SO WELL
THAT THEY WILL WANT TO SEE IT
AGAIN AND BRING THEIR FRIENDS.”***

– Walt Disney

Every time a guest or a member comes to a club meeting, contest, training session or conference, let's remember Walt Disney's words. Occasions should provide value and be fun so that those attending will want to come back, invite other guests and talk up the benefits of attending a Toastmasters event. Walt was a great marketer and we can all learn from him.

District 83 Fall 2014 Conference

By Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALB and Lynda Starr, ACG, ALB

Two of the biggest events of the Toastmasters year are the District Fall and Spring conferences. The District conference is an exciting educational and networking event for a district's clubs. The Fall conference will be Saturday, November 22:

Best Western Regency House Hotel
140 State Route 23, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444

The event provides the opportunity to:

- Provide communication and leadership training
- Celebrate the accomplishment of the District, clubs and members
- Conduct District business, and
- Hold the Humorous Speech and Table Topics contests



The theme for the Fall conference is **“Turn Inspiration into Action and Results.”** The idea came from conference co-chair Olga Berejnaia, who felt that it is important to convert dormant ideas into reality, through proactive application. She explained, “There are many of us who have an idea that we feel can contribute to Toastmasters, our jobs or even society, yet we put it aside. There can be many reasons for so doing – fear, lack of funds, or not having proper guidance.” Isaak Gelbinovich, conference co-chair adds, “Our aim in this conference is to wake up the ‘inner spark’ within those who attend and provide them with the resources necessary to help them achieve what they have envisioned.”

Why attend?

A conference provides the chance to learn something new and to take these new ideas away and not only use them for themselves, but share what they learn, with others.

What to Expect:

The day starts with separate sessions for First Timers and Repeat Attendees. While the former serves as an orientation, the latter gives returnees a chance to network, share ideas and have some fun. There will be workshops run by fellow Toastmasters and professionals with a choice of workshops across three tracks:

- Personal Development
- Professional Development; and
- Club Development

Other highlights include the Humorous and Table Topics impromptu speech contests, a parade of club banners, banquet, silent auction and keynote speech delivered by 1999 World Champion of Public Speaking, Craig Valentine.



There’s No Contest, Our Contests are the Best

We encourage Toastmaster members to challenge themselves, compete, and have fun by participating in the Humorous Speech and Table Topics contests! There is no minimum speech requirement to compete. Participating in a contest is important because it is the arena in which all the skills taught in Toastmasters are tested! It helps members to measure where their skill level is, and what they need to improve. Also, there is a camaraderie that develops between the contestants that is very special and supportive!



The contest begins with club contests, with winners moving on to compete at the Area and Division level. The District contests include the best of each of the seven District 83 divisions. There is still time to register or volunteer for the conference. Please find the registration form [here](#).

See you November 22.

District Conference photography by Robert Bugai, CTM

Tried and True Table Topics Tips

By Su Brooks, ACG, ALB

Here are some themes and ideas to try when you are the Table Topics Master. Table Topics is a terrific opportunity for both members and guests to participate in the meeting.

Color

Prior to the meeting, the Table Topics Master selects several colors and writes the name of the color on a piece of paper or an index card. Avoid complicated color names since not everyone may know the color “taupe” or “mauve,” especially if English is not their first language. Each participant chooses a card with a color name on it and discusses whatever they want related to that color.

Dates on Coins

The Table Topics Master brings a handful of coins to the meeting and asks each participant to describe something that took place that year. The dates can be from the recent past or possibly from one of the years before they were born! An alternative might be to write dates on cards or pieces of paper so the dates are easier than the dates on actual coins.

Round Robin Story

The Table Topics Master prepares an opening to a story prior to the meeting and calls upon a member or guest to develop the next lines in the story during the meeting. The topic or scene described should be general enough and not require detailed knowledge so that any participant can provide a response.

The Table Topics Master can call upon the next participant, the speaker can select the next participant or, if time permits, everyone at the meeting can respond. At the end, the Table Topics Master can provide a closing response before returning control of the meeting to the Toastmaster.

Assorted items, each in a brown paper bag

The opportunity for creativity abounds with this idea. Prior to the meeting, the Table Topics Master collects several small objects and places each object in a brown paper lunch bag. The bags are arranged on a table at the front of the room. Each participant selects a bag, opens it and reveals the object to the audience. The participant talks about the object. Objects can be random, small toys, cooking supplies, office supplies, selected to match the season, a holiday or a meeting theme. Make sure items are not sharp, dangerous, easily broken or too heavy.

Fortune Cookies

Prior to the meeting, the Table Topics Master purchases fortune cookies. At the meeting, participants select a cookie from a bag and crack open the cookie to reveal their fortune. They read the fortune aloud and provide comments about their fortune. The empty wrappers (and any “unwanted” fortunes or cookies) should be discarded in a separate bag.

When You are a Table Topics Speaker

Remember that you are giving a mini-speech. Strive to structure your response with an opening, a body and a conclusion. In a contest, you are judged in these categories: **Content:** Speech Development, Effectiveness; **Delivery:** Physical, Voice; **Language:** Appropriateness and Correctness.

Summer Training Reminder: Last Call

Why should you attend Club Officer Training?

- Clubs earn part of one DCP point for goal number 9: A minimum of four club officers trained during each of the two training periods (summer and winter training).
- In the summer you learn your job, in the winter you go over what went well, and what challenges you are experiencing as an officer.
- In addition to the Toastmasters training curriculum, you have the opportunity to network with other club officers and share your experiences.
- Even if you have held the office before, you learn so much from other Toastmasters.
- There is a general session with information for all officers, followed by breakout sessions where you learn about your specific officer role.
- You receive credit towards your ALB (Advanced Leader Bronze) award.

Please visit the District website Club Officer Training page for information about upcoming training sessions. Summer training concludes at the end of August.

<http://toastmasters83.org/officer-training/club-officer-training.html>

Reflections from Ed Cruikshank

District 83 Spring 2014 Evaluation Contest Winner

By Margarita Estrada and Lynda Starr

Ed Cruikshank of Toastmasters of Westfield won the District 83 Evaluation contest held at the Spring Conference. (He is also a member of Speakability, an advanced club started by Toastmasters of Westfield.) Here, he provides some impressions on the voyage to champion and some advice for potential competitors.

Competing in the contests was very a rewarding albeit trying experience. As I progressed, the tension and nervousness increased. By the end of this journey, I found myself as nervous as I was when making my first Competent Communicator Icebreaker speech. Using what I learned throughout my Toastmasters experience, I was able to channel that energy and used it to overcome the obstacles of tension and nerves.

My advice — and I believe the key to my success — was being prepared. My best tips:

- Review the key points to giving a useful evaluation.
- Use key words that make up speech formats and content.
- Be sensitive to the speaker
- Use humor
- Avoid notes and don't recap the entire speech
- Make sure it is clear that it is your opinion and not fact; and
- Avoid words that imply rules that were not followed in the speech.

It was very rewarding to use what I learned from Toastmasters, other Toastmasters and evaluations given and received to win.

In the area contest, I used great advice from a Toastmaster that helped me, but could also help a new member deliver better speeches. The Toastmaster told me to scout the room, practice volume, and set the stage for props etc. Be prepared so you don't turn your back on the audience, the audience can hear you etc. The target speaker was giving what appeared to be to be an Icebreaker and her performance allowed me to share that advice with her to help her for future speeches.

At the District contest, I felt I came up with something that could really bring the speech to a higher level, namely; if I could deliver the idea that the speaker would benefit and I would be successful in giving a strong evaluation. The goal was not to win, but to add value to the speaker and myself as an evaluator.

My fondest memory was and will always be the energy and confirmation from the audience that what I came up with was something worthwhile to the speaker.

Finally, the experience taught me that when you attempt challenges and apply what you learned from your Toastmaster journey good things happen.



Photo by Robert Bugai, CTM

Upcoming District 83 Humorous Speech and Table Topics Contests

Club Level Contests: August

Area Level Contests: September

Division Level Contests: October

District 83 Humorous Speech and Table Topics Contests: November 22, 2014

<http://toastmasters83.org/-speech-contests/division-area-contests.html>

The website will continue to be updated with more information this season as the Area and Division Governors schedule their contests.

In the Limelight

By Fran Okeson, DTM 17, PDG (46)

Lisa Altamore, a member of the Business Leaders Toastmasters club in Area 13, Staten Island, is a very special woman. A new member who signed her membership application in July 2013, has shown her dedication to the Toastmasters program and diligence to getting things done. She recently earned her CC.

Earlier this year, Lisa presented a speech on “Toastmasters in the Community” where the No Limits Toastmasters club holds its monthly meetings. Toastmasters and non-Toastmasters are invited to make presentations and then watch themselves on Cable TV to see how they can improve and advance their public speaking skills.

Lisa joined Toastmasters for professional development, networking and to meet new people and make friends. She is certainly doing that. She has been working in the insurance industry since 1989.



Photo by Fran Okeson

Q. What was the best advice you ever received?

A. Live well, love much, laugh often, be yourself, don't pretend to be someone you are not. Remember that everyone attends the same school in life: that is, the School of Experience. For some, tuition is very high and for others, not so high. Learn from your mistakes.

Q. What was the turning point in your life, so far?

A. The death of my father eleven years ago. I realized just how much he did for me and my family. I realize now what he said to me just a few days before his passing. I remember like it was yesterday. He said, “Lisa, you will be in trouble.” I chuckled because I thought the medication was talking. He was on a lot of meds. However, he meant that I would need to take care of my mother in the same way he did (fall into his shoes). I needed to pick up where my dad left off.

Q. Do you have a “Bucket List” and if so, what’s on it?

A. Travel to Europe, take another visit to Italy. Next, I would like to find, “Mr. Right.” Finally, just to enjoy life, seeing the world and making new friends along the way.

Q. What are your hobbies or special interests?

A. Shopping and gambling (socially). I love to travel to Vegas or day trips to Atlantic City. Shopping at the outlets catches my interest very quickly!

Q. What do you think is more important: Communication or Leadership?

A. Communication is the key to success in both personal and professional life.

Q. Living or dead, whom do you most admire and why?

A. My late father. He was the rock/backbone of our family. He was always there for us in our time of need.

Q. What advice would you give to a new Toastmaster?

A. It is truly a rewarding experience. Toastmasters teaches you to gain more self-confidence in public speaking. You meet wonderful people and make new friends.

Q. Is there was any question you wished I had asked?

A. Yes, “what is my favorite color?” I’d answer blue, because it reflects peace, harmony and tranquility. That’s how I try to live my life – peacefully, quietly with little or no stress. Also, I look good in blue! I think our readers would like to know about my pets. About two and a half years ago, my brother adopted a rescue dog in Staten Island. Her name is Precious. She is the most lovable, cutest little cockapoo you could ever imagine. She gives us so much unconditional love and she gets spoiled rotten in return. Precious is part of our family for sure. She has been on vacation with us and even has her own luggage! My mom, brother and I can’t even imagine life with out her.

I am delighted that Lisa agreed to let me interview her for this column for the District 83 newsletter. She is a friendly woman who brightens the room just by entering it.

This is the first in a series of interviews of Toastmasters in District 83. The editors plan to introduce interesting members from across all divisions and areas to the rest of the District.