



THE VOICE

DISTRICT 83 NEWSLETTER

October 2015

Interview with Fall Conference Keynote Speaker Lisa Panarello, CC



By Swathi Karamcheti, ACS, ALB



Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, Lisa Panarello is very much the girl next door who rose to the sky by her determination and willpower. An ardent speaker, coach and entrepreneur – Lisa has many jewels in her successful crown. This year, District 83 is privileged to have Lisa Panarello as a keynote speaker. Here is an interview with the inspirer and woman power – Lisa Panarello.

Hello Lisa, Many congrats for being a Keynote Speaker for the 2015 District 83 Fall Conference. Are you as excited as we all are?

Thank you, Swathi. I am honored for the opportunity and certainly excited to be part of such a worthwhile, high-impact event.

You started in Toastmasters with your Ice Breaker speech. Now here you are as a Keynote Speaker. Will you talk about your journey?

My journey through Toastmasters has been one of introspection and learning coupled with the joys of inspiring others and making great friendships. I take the role of speaker very seriously, as I feel my audience is in my hands. I care about what happens in their life after they leave the room. Toastmasters has given me a unique platform to educate people of all ages on how to succeed professionally and motivate them to take charge of their future. From Table Topics to keynotes, every moment has been humbling and meaningful.

How did your Toastmasters' experience change your perspective about public speaking?

Before I joined Toastmasters, I focused on 'delivering' a message. After I joined Toastmasters, my focus shifted to 'crafting' the message.

I always want to give my audience as much knowledge as I can. Yet, I found that overloaded speeches, while energizing and educational, can leave people overwhelmed. So, time limits on Toastmasters speeches forced me to cut, cut and cut content to the most salient points. Preparing for the World Championship of Public Speaking contest proved to be a more intense exercise in writing and editing. This is a mainstay in my practice, as the 'less is more' approach is invaluable to the listener.

Toastmasters is also about leadership. How has it helped you in your professional and personal life?

Of the dozens of leadership qualities defined in books, websites, etc., the one that stands out in my mind is 'listening;' – listening to people's questions, ideas and needs.

As a career coach, my role is to guide clients in setting goals and a driving path to attainment. It's important that I help clients stretch their limits and get out of their comfort zones to break ground in their careers. That's what it takes. However, while I have 12 years in the field and proven strategies for navigating the job market, I have to be open to other people's ways of thinking and doing. Listening allows me to create solutions that help others find their way.

On a personal level, listening has helped me form stronger family/friend relationships. It comes down to hearing and respecting the opinions and feelings of others when they differ from mine. I continue to work on being less reactionary. Instead of tuning someone out, making assumptions or responding in haste, I will use 'active listening' as a way of learning new perspectives. That's leadership.

For many people, public speaking brings fear and apprehension. What is your suggestion for them?

My suggestion is to get over it. Public speaking isn't life threatening. You may sweat and stutter. Your stomach may rumble and nerves rattle. But you won't die. You don't have to get on the circuit, become the next great orator, or speak to thousands. Instead of being frightened by the term 'public speaking,' think of it as merely 'communicating.'

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The Voice will publish online and via email in August, October, December, February, April and June. We welcome your comments, contributions and suggestions. We will assign staggered deadlines prior to publication. **The final deadline for the December 2015 issue is November 21, 2015.**

We have included various flyers in this issue. Please contact subrooks@verizon.net if you would like print-quality flyers.

How to reach the District 83 Newsletter Co-Editors

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Stop worrying about how you look or sound. Focus on what you have to share. Have respect for your thoughts and ideas – they are valid and worthy of being heard.

Two reasons that cause fear of almost anything is lack of knowledge and experience. To conquer fear, then, would be to learn and do. Remember the first time you drove a car, skied down a mountain, or started a new job? You were probably anxious or even scared. You got over it though. How? By learning and doing. So read, watch, listen and practice. With Toastmasters, you have access to an arsenal of articles, training materials and videos, and you can practice several times a month in front of small audiences – who want to listen.

Another suggestion would be to understand and value the benefits of speaking as it relates to your income. Interviews, office meetings, conference calls, etc., they all require effective communication. If you want to advance your career or grow your business, speak. Start by leveraging Toastmasters club time to deliver speeches on topics related to your career or business. Then volunteer to lead a staff meeting at your company or be a panelist for a career day at your local school. Give a toast at a wedding. Read at your church or a Chamber of Commerce event. Speaking increases visibility for your brand. It makes others aware of your talents and potential. Speaking is worth every second on stage, no matter how small.

Were there any moments where you thought public speaking was not for you? How can anyone cope under such circumstances?

From a young age I dreamed about being an actress. I never took that route, but found my way to the stage through public speaking. So, I can't say that I ever thought it wasn't for me. Yet, there were several other dreams that I realized I did not have the talent or capacity to achieve. I wasn't going to be an artist, singer, surgeon, or football player. I had to face reality.

However, I didn't let it break me. There are many other ways to fulfill a dream. I found ways to incorporate what level of skill and passion I had into my other careers/business, as well as into my hobbies and activities.

If public speaking is not for you, it doesn't have to be your full-

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WELCOME NEW CLUBS

Optum, Listen, Speak and Be Heard
Basking Ridge, NJ

Division B, Area 22
Club 4859132

Chartered 09/14/2015

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time job nor take up a good portion of your day. I do strongly believe though that it is important to continue developing public speaking skills. No matter when we communicate, professionally or socially, we should consider eye contact, body language, posture, diction, tone of voice, and so on. These elements make an impression – good or bad.

Is there any relation between leadership and being able to speak in public?

I've seen bold leaders who can negotiate million-dollar deals, but fall flat at the podium. Conversely, I've witnessed dynamic speakers who can motivate a crowd, but aren't fit to manage a business. There are front-runners who serve well as the 'face' of the company and there are behind-the-scenes experts who serve well in overseeing operations. Is the relationship between leadership and public speaking indispensably linked? Perhaps not.

That being said, I do believe that the most successful leaders are powerful, effective speakers. Consider that a leader's role is to direct others, inspire change and drive results. This requires one to be confident, articulate, and charismatic. These are all parts of effective communication – and they can all be learned.

Will you share with us some inspiring moments as part of your journey?

I'd like to share three instances that stick out in my mind.

A few years back, I was delivering presentations to high school assemblies. After a dozen or so, it hit me that I wasn't connecting with the students. I was merely regurgitating a script. That bothered me deeply. So, I worked on translating

the script into my own words and changing my speaking style to be more authentic – more 'me.' The next time I presented, I walked away feeling different. I had done it better. I actually felt my speaking skills rise to the next level. At that moment, I put myself on a path of continuous improvement.

In 2010, when I stood on the International World Champion stage for the first time, I looked out into the vast audience. I took a deep breath and said to myself, "So this is what 2,000 people look like!" What a rush. It felt like being at the center of a stadium.

At the end of my Mission: I'm Possible speech, which didn't win, place or show, I was approached by a teenage girl and a 66-year-old young woman. They both shared with me how they would apply my suggestions to their life plans. That was the trophy right there!

What are you looking forward to in the conference?

I'm most looking forward to the chance to change a life, to spark passion in someone's eyes, to provide information that enables even one person to take a step toward the success they desire. I'm also looking forward to catching up with my Toastmasters friends and meeting new members open to sharing their dreams.

Thank you very much for your time. We really appreciate and are excited to have you with us aboard. See you at the conference.

Swathi Karamcheti, ACS, ALB serves as Public Relations Manager for District 83.

Voting at the District Business Meeting

If you are a Division Director, Area Director, Club President, VP Education or have a proxy, stop by the credentials desk.

You must have credentials to vote at the Business Meeting.

Volunteers at the Fall Conference

Attention experienced Toastmasters attending the Fall Conference:

I need eight volunteers to help at the Fall conference for a two-hour block of time **1)** to assist welcoming/guiding folks to registration, **2)** at the hospitality table (there will no longer be a room and the table will be in or near the main conference room), and **3)** to provide general information help. Please contact Janette Alexander (jalexan@solixinc.com) or Irene Freeman (irenefreemantm@gmail.com). This is an opportunity if you have never volunteered and would like to give back!

For additional volunteer opportunities at the conference, please contact Irene Freeman.

An Interview with Alex and Emilia Volyand, Fall Conference Co-Chairs

By Swathi Karamcheti, ACS, ALB

Alex Volyand, ACS, CL and Emilia Volyand, ACG, ALB are great leaders and speakers. The Toastmasters couple is chairing the upcoming District 83 Fall Conference in November 2015. Here is a fun and informative interview of the couple for our readers.

Hello Alex and Emilia, congrats for serving as co-chairs for the upcoming District 83 Fall Conference. Chairing a conference is a big responsibility. What are the challenges you are facing?

We have great committee chairs. Every one of them is a leader. Our challenge as well as our privilege and opportunity is to listen and make decisions based on the suggestions of these leaders. We have a strong team whose common goal is to have the best conference for our District.

How is this conference different from the other conferences that our district has held?

Every conference brings something new and exciting to the members. To first-timers everything is new. To repeat attendees, the workshops, keynote speakers are new and the ability to meet new people is always a great opportunity.

The Toastmasters experience makes us into better leaders. How did it help you both?

As we mentioned earlier, working with such a great team makes us better because we are learning every day.

The theme for this conference is Toastmasters: Excellence in 5-7 minutes. It's a wonderful theme. How did you come up with it? What's the reason and motivation behind it?

Practice, practice and more deliberate practice is how we achieve excellence. Five to seven minutes is the time for most speeches. If we can learn in five to seven minutes, we as leaders can achieve excellence as well.

You have chosen Lisa Panarello as Keynote speaker. What was the motivation behind choosing her?

Lisa is part of our District and was a finalist in the 2010 Toastmasters International World Championship of Public Speaking contest. We attended the workshop that Lisa gave at a past International Convention in front of hundreds and hundreds of people and knew we had to have her at our conference. Lisa is a great coach and we are looking forward having her with us.



You are a couple in real life. So, on a lighter note, do you disagree on any points regarding conference arrangements?

We trust each other's judgment; we listen to each other and together we come up with the best outcome. Communication makes our marriage stronger. Who would ever guess that Toastmasters could do that?

What do the first-timers have to take back from the conference?

The newcomers will have a workshop presented by Roseann Hood. She is great with people in general and a terrific educator who is able to connect with everybody. Once the first-timers experience all aspects of the conference, they will be coming back for more next time and be able to say, "I did it again!"

Finally, what do you want to say to all those who have yet to register for the conference?

Toastmasters! When you come from the club environment into the conference atmosphere, you will see a bigger picture of what the Toastmasters organization is all about, and it will make you proud to be part of it! The next time you go to your club meeting, everything will look and sound different – bigger, more important and refreshed, with more energy to take on your next challenge. Looking forward to seeing all of you at the conference!!! Thank you Alex and Emilia for your time. We wish you all the best and we are very much excited to be part of the conference.

Swathi Karamcheti, ACS, ALB serves as Public Relations Manager for District 83.

Photo courtesy Alex and Emilia Volyand.

Fall Conference Workshops

Anita Crum, CC, CL

Jaclyn Lee, ACB, ALB

An Experiential Taster: "Opening Space" for High Performance Leadership in the Toastmasters Community.

Club Development

In this workshop we will address one of the most important issues in Toastmasters club development:

Club dynamics and development are two of the strategic challenges that many TM leaders might experience.

Harrison Owen's "Open Space," a simple, inclusive and effective self-organizing meeting format will be introduced to TM leaders as a tool facilitating an establishment of a common ground and envision a new direction for a difficult problem/issue/project. This self-organizing format correlates with the nature of TM groups (volunteer based, self-organizing) and contributes to the goals attainment for TM clubs in enhancing the communication skill and leadership skill via a peer group mechanism (non-hierarchical).

The core values of Open Space are "invitation," and "self-organizing."

This session will be highly experiential, and beyond the scope of a traditional training or educational workshop. Jaclyn and Anita will facilitate the session by introducing the concept, ground rules and open the space for the members to lead and experience.

Takeaway:

- Members will take away concepts, practices and most importantly, an intuitive experience of being part of an Open Space meeting.
- Successful stories and relevant resources will be provided as a support document.

Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALS

Twitter: A Powerful Communication Tool

Club Development

In this workshop we will simplify and demystify Twitter. You will learn to use and benefit from this powerful tool. You will discover that Twitter is part of the three-legged stool of media communication; the others are print media and websites. Toastmasters members and guests will learn how to use the tools Twitter has to offer to increase engagement, using a variety of methods. Increased engagement leads to increased exposure for your club, and or professional endeavors. Get ready to be 'live' Twitter handles and hashtags! #Itsgonnabegood!

Benefits:

- Diffuses fear of the medium.
- Increases brain function, since for some, this will be something new.
- Increase creativity! Twitter is fun!

Swathi Karamcheti, ACS, ALB

Starting problem? No problem!

Personal Development

In this workshop you will learn simple yet useful techniques on presentation techniques. Wouldn't you agree that it is very difficult to come up with a good and attractive introduction? Many speakers face this difficulty to start a speech effectively. This workshop gives an insight into how to start a speech effectively and impressively.

Kevin Moulton, DTM

What's Your Story?

Personal Development

In this workshop you will learn how:

- To find the stories in your life where you learned lessons to share
- To use drama, humor, metaphors, and emotion to make your stories memorable

Benefits:

- You only have 5 to 7 minutes, yet you want to make an impact and be remembered. Tell a story! In this session, you will learn how.

Ruby Scotland, ACS, CL

Change Your Weight, Change Your Life

Personal Development

In this workshop you will receive practical tools and ideas on how to take control of your health and move your life forward in a positive direction. This is not a 'how to drop weight' seminar. This is a 'how do I find the motivation to take the first step and keep going' seminar.

Benefits:

- You cannot change the outside until you change the inside. Get great tips on how to change your mindset and find your motivation to withstand the temptations that get in the way of your weight change success. Be inspired to change your weight and change your life!

Sunil Robert Vuppula, ACB

"Score boarding" your way to success

Personal Development

In this workshop we will underscore the importance of setting goals, measuring progress and reorient our self-development.

You will get immediately implementable tools and ideas in setting and monitoring goals for near term, short term and future. Practical giveaways include tools like building scoring mechanisms, etc.

TOASTMASTERS DISTRICT 83 2015 FALL CONFERENCE

Toastmasters: Excellence in 5 to 7 Minutes

www.toastmasters83.org

SATURDAY, November 14, 2015



Hyatt Regency New Brunswick

2 Albany St, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION

Full Name: _____
 Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____
 Club Name: _____ Div: _____

Status (Check current designation)	<input type="checkbox"/> CTM	<input type="checkbox"/> ATMB	<input type="checkbox"/> ATMS	<input type="checkbox"/> ATMG	<input type="checkbox"/> CL	<input type="checkbox"/> ALB	<input type="checkbox"/> DTM
	<input type="checkbox"/> CC	<input type="checkbox"/> ACB	<input type="checkbox"/> ACS	<input type="checkbox"/> ACG	<input type="checkbox"/> AL	<input type="checkbox"/> ALS	

I would like to work on a committee for this conference () YES () NO

Circle any committee(s) you would like to volunteer for!

Contests	Credentials	Education (workshop proctor)	Repeat Attendees	First-Timers
Fundraising	Hospitality	Parade of Banners	Publications/ Programs	Publicity
Registration	Video/Photography	Volunteers	Facilities	Please contact me

Are you a first time Conference attendee? () YES () NO

Are you bringing your banner for the Parade of Banners? () YES () NO

Registration Fee: \$140.00 until 11/1

Meal Choices Chicken Fish Vegetarian

Mail Registration Form & Payment to:

Lynda Starr, DTM

Fall Conference Registration Chair

48 Emily Place, Parsippany NJ 07054

lbstarr@optonline.net

(973) 386-5949

Should You Have Any Questions Contact:

Alex Volyand ACB/CL / Emilia Volyand ACG/ALB

Fall Conference Co-Chairs

Email: ebheat@aol.com

(732) 251-8682

Make check payable to: District 83 Toastmasters

Date Received _____
 Date Deposited _____
 Check # _____

In the Limelight: Kathryn Timpson, CC, CL, Area 53 Director

By Lynda Starr, DTM

Kathryn Timpson is active in her community, Summit Toastmasters and obviously District 83. Prior to becoming Area 53 director, she often competed and won Table Topics division contests and Tall Tales competitions.

A self-described city girl, Kathryn has adapted to suburbia. She is just about to open her own interpersonal communications coaching company (Speak for Yourself Coaching) for the 12-21 year old set: that age group who have school and job interviews, school presentations and general interpersonal skills which seem to be getting less and less sharp as they defer to technology instead of human contact.

Kathryn joined Toastmasters to understand what makes a GOOD speaker and what can make a good speaker GREAT. Even before joining, she enjoyed speaking publicly despite a bit of stage fright. Although Toastmasters cannot offer secrets about how NOT to get stage fright, she credits Toastmasters with making her "about a zillion times more comfortable speaking off the cuff thanks to three years of Table Topics. And so I either channel the nervousness better OR hide it better. Not sure which. LOL."

Being a Toastmaster has given Kathryn the opportunity to push herself in ways that she would not if she were not involved. Competing in Toastmasters' contests is terrifying but it has made Kathryn much more self-confident and she feels she "has learned more from her losses than her wins."

She has also learned valuable tips such as speaking more slowly, which has helped her to keep out colloquial "likes" and "ahs" in speeches, but she confesses to using them constantly when speaking with friends and family.

But best of all, the confidence and skills honed via Toastmasters have spurred Kathryn to open her communications coaching company.

Kathryn is enjoying her area director role and says, "I adore meeting new people and interviewing them (I was a journalist

by trade) and so visiting area club meetings and asking officers about how things are working is fascinating to me. Because I also love to coach, I get a charge out of giving feedback as well as having dialogues about what we can do together to help clubs grow and succeed. Every club has its own personality, strengths and challenges. Meeting them where they are and talking about how, at that place, we can have them go even further, is really exciting."

Next on her area director to-do list is brainstorming with area officers and members to design and support new and creative ways her area clubs are going to be able to enhance their meetings, increase membership and reach their potential.

Kathryn offers a shout-out to Division E Director, Olga Berejnaia, DTM. "Olga has an unbelievable amount of leadership skills and knowledge about how to make things work at Toastmasters without reinventing the wheel. She is also very good at giving a firm answer without being offensive in any way. So not only do I give what I can of my skills in the Area Director position, but I get much out of it."

Kathryn, a Toastmaster since 2012, currently lives in Summit having been a 16 year resident of Maplewood and South Orange where she renovated three homes out of the five they owned in that area; she also served as her kids' soccer and Little League Coach as well as on school and community boards. Kathryn has two children – both freshmen: her daughter, who just started college and her son who just started high school. Kathryn is 22 years into a wonderful marriage to her husband Andrew.

Photo courtesy of Kathryn Timpson, CC, CL.



How Toastmasters Prepared Me to Present to an International Audience in Berlin

By Susan Chrusciel CC, ALB

You're asked to do a presentation at work. For many new and experienced Toastmasters that alone might cause fear. What if you add in that the presentation is going to take place in front of a large audience including people outside your company in a different country? How about adding that aside from you, no one at this meeting speaks English as a first language?

This is the situation I found myself in recently—as part of a large company—many projects are global so it's natural for me to be on teleconferences with colleagues from Germany, Finland, China, etc. I became accustomed to this pretty quickly. However, the time came when we had to train a group of Russian and Ukrainians on the project – in person, in Germany.

Even as a somewhat seasoned Toastmaster, this was a daunting task for several reasons. I was giving a technical presentation to a very well-educated audience of physicians. It was a much larger group than I was used to, and while everyone in attendance spoke English I discovered before my presentation that my audience's skill in English ranged from very limited to proficient with several on the former side. During this meeting, I witnessed a presentation in what I can only term as "speed Russian" from a very technical and very skilled physician. While her slides were in English, everything she said was in Russian – a language that I speak about three words of. As someone known for the "talking too quickly" habit, I suddenly realized how my



audience would feel if I spoke at my normal rate of speed. It was a lightbulb moment for me that helped clarify how I needed to present to this group.

Many of the skills we learn during the Competent Communicator stage still apply when presenting to non-native speakers; in fact, they become even more vital. Body

language, eye contact, visual aids, tone of voice and rate of speech are all huge here. Another important thing is trying to engage your audience. With the help of a Russian colleague, I practiced saying Good Day in Russian. Honestly, I may have still butchered the pronunciation but opening in the native language gained the attention of my audience. I also took the rate at which I thought I should give the presentation and then slowed it down by half. Pauses are still something I struggle with but I forced myself to pause as often as I could to ensure the audience could catch up with the ideas. As was explained to me by a colleague, many non-native speakers learn British English not American in school so sometimes they need an additional second or two to translate the forms.

The presentation went extremely well and even with the potential language difficulties, my ideas came through and the feedback from the audience was positive. With growing global trade and teams being the norm, it's always a great skill for a Toastmaster to be prepared to present to non-native speaking audiences. We may all have different cultures and customs but communication is what brings us together.

See Tips for Presenting to Non-Native Speakers on page 9.

Photography by Susan Chrusciel, CC, ALB.



Tips for Presenting to Non-Native Speakers

- Open by addressing the audience in their own language. Good day is easy enough to learn any language, check with a native speaker about pronunciation.
- Avoid big words. Use the simplest English term.
- Rate of speech. Think of how slowly you should present and then slow that down by half or more.
- Use simple visual aids – pictures without a lot of text and screenshots help bridge understanding.
- Avoid any American slang words. Many international audiences learn British English not American.
- Ask if there are questions. Ask multiple times if your audience looks confused.
- Have your audience write their questions if they're not comfortable asking in English (in their own language, if possible). If someone can translate, this is a big help!
- Providing copies of slides before presentation gives more time for translation. Yes, your audience may read the slides instead of looking at you but if they have very limited English they may need the extra time.
- Not all cultures ask questions in front of a group. Make sure there's someone they can contact afterwards with questions; either you or someone who speaks their language.
- Thank the audience in their language. Spasibo. Danke. etc. It shows not only that you made the effort but also that you respect their culture!
- In long sessions it can be helpful to provide an interactive quiz with live voting to make sure your audience understands. Major misunderstandings can be cleared up when the live results come up.
- Humor is okay but realize it varies around the world. Avoid any jokes about politics, nationalities, ethnic groups, religion, or anything that could be considered sensitive to your audience. If in doubt, leave it out.
- Gestures and tone of voice should not be over the top – this could be offensive in some cultures or interpreted as angry or rude. Always research the culture of the group to which you're presenting.
- Vocal variety is still important! Helps listeners identify more important points. Make sure to repeat key ideas more than once. Summaries help with this! Agendas are a must.
- Make sure if you use slides or projections that you stand somewhere where your entire audience can see them. Use the lectern or walk among the audience.
- If possible, practice in front of a non-native speaker. They can provide excellent tips and make you aware of issues where your audience might misunderstand.
- Take time to explain acronyms if you have any concern they could confuse your audience. Don't assume that they know because even technical terms can be different in different languages.
- Don't try to present large portions of your speech in a language unless you truly are comfortable with that language. Spelling it out phonetically in English and memorizing that will not make up for an inability to speak the language and you may say something you don't intend to. It also won't impress your audience.
- If asked questions repeat them to make sure you know what you're being asked and allow the whole audience time to understand the question.
- Even if you are being translated simultaneously, rate of speech, word choice and visuals are still very important. Allow extra pauses for translation to catch up.
- Don't be alarmed if your audience does something other than clap when you are finished. Some cultures bang on the table to show appreciation, others bow, and some are completely silent.
- A friendly tone and a smile are universal language.

Save the Date: Winter Officer Training on December 12

Winter officer training begins at the Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI) on Saturday, December 12, 2015 from 1-4pm.

District Officers will meet in the morning for the DEC meeting.

If you cannot attend TLI, there will be several other training opportunities throughout the district. Please visit the district website Club

Officer Training page for additional sessions during December, January and February.

Attending training helps officers to serve their clubs better and to learn more about the District.

During the summer training you learn your job, in the winter you go over what went well, and what challenges you are experiencing as an officer.

Play Ball!

By Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46)

The Women's Club of Tottenville sponsored its fifth annual trip to the Richmond County Bank Ball Park, St. George, to watch the Staten Island Yankees vs. the Brooklyn Cyclones. In attendance were members from several Toastmasters clubs in District 83, which covers Metropolitan New Jersey, Staten Island, NY and Rockland County, NY including members from all six clubs in Area 64.

Before and during the game, a "Speakout" was held and members gave speeches on various subjects. The speakers and their speech titles were:

Irene A. Rosado, DTM: "Vulnerability"

Paul J. Scharf, DTM 5, PDG: "Dressing for Success at Toastmasters Meetings"

Su Brooks, DTM: "My Toastmasters Journey"

Anne Gilson, DTM, IPDG: "Be a Hero"

Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46): "Do Photos Tell the Whole Story?"

Jim Samuel, DTM 6, PDG (46): "Shut Out"

Cecilio Wilson, ACB: "Toastmasters and Me"

Lucy Kahn, DTM 2: "Who Packed your Parachute?"

Speech evaluations provided learning opportunities for all of the speakers. Toastmaster Fran Okeson matched up some of the speakers with evaluators from different clubs since many clubs were represented.

Toastmasters, families and friends enjoyed the exciting game, which went into extra innings before the Cyclones won the game, 2-1.

This article was adapted from a recent article contributed to the online edition of Staten Island Advance, silive.com.

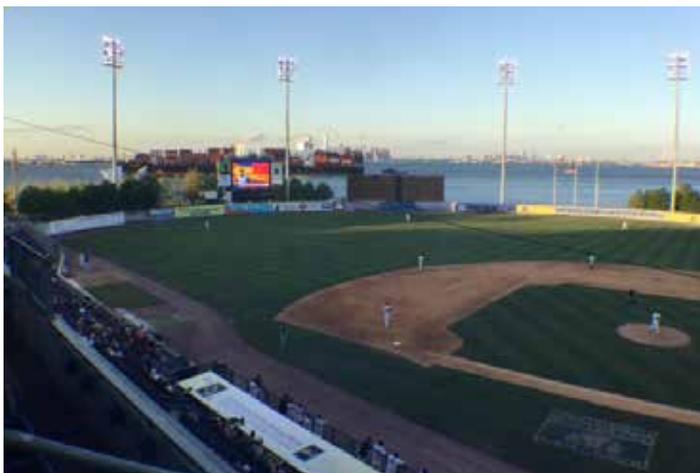
Photography by Richard Kahn and courtesy of Jim Samuel, DTM 6, PDG (46).



Top: Rick Coney from District 38 with Jim Samuel.

Center and Bottom: Staten Island Yankees mascot Scooter visits with Toastmasters Su Brooks, Lucy Kahn, Jim Samuel, Irene Rosado, Anne Gilson and Fran Okeson during the game. Since Scooter doesn't speak, he decided not to join any of our Toastmasters clubs.

Left: The ballpark and the magnificent views of New York.



What's Learned in Vegas Does Not Stay in Vegas

By Allen Chung, CC, CL

I had the absolute privilege to attend the 84th annual Toastmasters International Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. I first learned about the convention when I was browsing through the TI website last September, researching and preparing for my first club officer role as VPE. Initially, I was quite hesitant; travel expenses can be very steep and at the time, I had only been a member for less than a year. However, all different variables were leading me to travel to Nevada and I finally made a firm decision to attend after I joined another Toastmasters club in District 52, which covers the Downtown Los Angeles area and surrounding communities.

Participating in the convention not only as a member, but also as a volunteer was such an amazing, unique opportunity. I was very surprised to learn I was the only undergraduate student attending this global convention. What struck me the most were the vivacious mix of people with passions and interests so diverse and each individual I had met was filled with positivity and kindness in their hearts. As the world is becoming increasingly globalized, Toastmasters International is adapting to its new environment as well.

Toastmasters continues to be a truly global organization. I met so many inspiring Toastmasters from around the world, ranging in diverse nationalities, such as India, Great Britain, Philippines, Mexico, etc. The current Board of Directors also hails from different parts of the world. I really appreciate the diversity among Toastmasters. Not only is there cultural diversity, but there is also diversity among professions. Toastmasters' culture is a climate of inclusivity; each club is a shared community of exceptional leaders and public speakers – it is the peripheral benefits that make Toastmasters special for each of us. Toastmasters is a universal family and wherever I travel, I will visit a Toastmasters club and be welcomed with open sincerity and excitement.

Throughout my involvement in District 83 Toastmasters, I gained the knowledge that a speech is more than just spoken words. A speech, such as a simple Ice Breaker, has the power to entertain, to inspire generations, and to cause disruption in the status quo of complacency. A speech is about understanding your audience, what the audience desires from the speaker, and how to present that information that would effectively serve the audience well into the future. At the World Championship of Public Speaking, Mohammed Qahtani of Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (District 79) effectively displayed this technique. Qahtani was born mute and won the championship with the power of his spoken words alone. Mohammed Qahtani serves as a source of inspiration for countless of individuals who are suffering from speech impediments. While he did not present a single word to initiate his speech, his creative

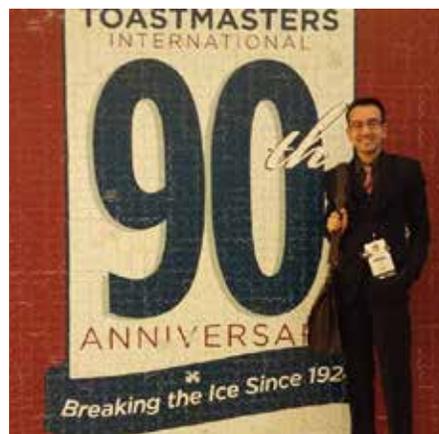
cigarette prop generated an organic, powerful grasp “No!” from the live audience. When he finally connected with the audience with a one-word syllable, it was immediately clear he had the audience at the edges of its seats. Lastly, heavy, unfamiliar accents are becoming increasingly irrelevant. I had an informative discussion with fellow Toastmaster PriyaNandhan Rajendhiran, ACS, ALB, and he said that in his opinion, the top three finalists' accents did not encumber them in communicating their unique stories and messages to worldwide audiences.

Overall, one primary lesson I learned from the convention, but realized much later once I arrived back to New Jersey, was that every Toastmaster is a fellow Toastmaster. We are all going through the same journey. Every single semi-finalist has given a nerve-wracking Ice Breaker speech. More than 30,000 people who competed at any level, had their Ice Breaker evaluated, presented their first impromptu table topics session, and assisted fellow speakers in an evaluation role. This same group of people performed the same functionary roles, such as ah-counter, timer, grammarian, etc. Toastmasters is a transformational journey and I have benefitted from its mission greatly in many respects, such as leadership development, team collaboration, and education. Founder Ralph C. Smedley held the belief that the Toastmasters educational program is a continuous learning laboratory: a self-paced program where personal achievement is just a segment of a variety of the program's learning goals. We all joined Toastmasters for a variety of reasons, but in culmination, we are

all seeking a common purpose: to expand our horizons, to develop our skills, and to improve our quality of life. As an international, non-profit organization, Smedley's vision would not have been conceivable without the assistance of assertive leadership and contagious inspiration from within. The essence of Toastmasters is Ralph Smedley. It is this essence that inspires an expanding, global organization – we are all standing on the shoulders of those who have come before us. Toastmasters International is an incredible organization with so many disparate layers and complexities one can get involved with and that is what had kept me committed to Toastmasters throughout my undergraduate career and beyond in my professional endeavors.

Allen Chung, CC, CL serves as president of Rutgers University Toastmasters in New Brunswick, NJ.

Photos courtesy of Allen Chung.



Toastmasters International Semi-Final Speech Contests

By *Lucy Kahn, DTM 2*

Toastmasters International continues to build on Dr. Smedley's foundation of teaching public speaking and leadership skills. With improved communication and leadership skills, millions of men and women have become better speakers and leaders since 1924 (women, only since 1973).

2015 is an amazing year for all our clubs in District 83 and attending the International Toastmasters Convention in Las Vegas, NV was like icing on the cake.

I was very lucky to be there and witness another successful celebration of our Toastmaster International Convention. Every day was different. We heard the keynote speakers who were very motivated and raised our excitement levels. I attended the 2015-2016 International Annual Business Meeting where we voted for our new International President Elect, First Vice president, Second Vice President and all the Region 1 to 13 International Directors. Our International President for 2015-2016 is Jim Kokocki, DTM.

The most important event was the Semi-Final contests which were held to determine the finalists for the World Championship of Public Speaking. It was a very exciting event when you have the chance to hear all the speakers around the world.

Ninety-six semifinalists were there to compete for the final world championship award and ten finalist were chosen from the semi-finals.

I was in awe when everyone had their own story to tell and how they perfected it with ease and confidence on the stage. The winners were:

Mohammed Qahtani of Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, District 79, the 2015 World Champion of Public Speaking for his speech, "The Power of Words."

Aditya Maheswaran, of Mumbai, India, District 41, finished in second place for his speech, "Scratch."

Manoj Vasudevan of Singapore, District 80 finished in third place for his speech, "We Can Fix It."

The final event of the convention was the Inauguration of the new President of Toastmasters International. It started with a reception followed by the formal inauguration and the celebration, which is often a formal ball. There were lots of networking and dancing. There were members wearing 1920s costumes and dancing with music and songs from that era to commemorate the 90th anniversary of Toastmasters, formed in 1924.

What a fantastic event and I encourage every members to attend at least one Toastmasters International convention. The next convention will be held at Marriott Marquis Washington, D.C. in August 17-20, 2016. Registration opens April 2016.

Come one, come all! See the excitement and the joy to network with all your fellow toastmasters around the world and to be there at the moment to hear the World Championship of Public Speaking.



Lucy Kahn, DTM 2 with Dr. Dilip Abayasekara, DTM, AS, PIP.

Photography by Richard Kahn.

Candidates' Showcase

By *Roseann Hood*

I'm sitting in a huge hall at Caesar's Palace in Vegas waiting for the Candidate's Showcase to begin. The room is filled with excitement and anticipation to see and hear how the TI candidates will respond to five minutes of questions in a sort of Table Topics fashion. All candidates are escorted into the room one at a time by the Sergeant at Arms.

Some of the questions were: what are the critical areas for change, ideas on how to bring Toastmasters to Latin America, what is your 100-year vision for TI, what is the key issue for strategic planning, should there be online training, etc.

Talk about Table Topics, WOW! That was intense! During the interviews, even though cell phones were on silent mode, there was a wave of alerts sounding as we received severe weather notifications. Even with these distractions, the

candidates answered the questions with professionalism and poise. You could truly see their desire to serve the organization.

In my Toastmasters' infancy, I understand how far they all have come to attain their DTM and reach this stage. I was in awe of how deep their passion and knowledge run. I learned how much this education system of ours has changed the lives of people around the world, and how important it is for us to expand our brand to those who are not yet aware of what is within their reach. I am so proud to be a Toastmaster.

Golden Gavel Award Recipient Muhammad Yunus

By William Markert, ACB, CL

The Golden Gavel is the highest honor Toastmasters International offers to non-Toastmasters and it has been presented annually since 1959 to distinguished individuals in the field of communications and leadership. This year, Toastmasters International honored Muhammad Yunus, a social entrepreneur, banker, economist and civic leader who was awarded the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize. He is credited with developing the concepts of microfinance and microcredit: scenarios offering small loans to the rural poor to enable them to invest and lift themselves out of poverty. He also taught economics at Chittagong University.

In his keynote acceptance speech, Yunus explained the concept of microcredit and how he was able to help those in need to create better lives.

After the war to gain independence from Pakistan in 1971 and the famine of 1974, Yunus became involved in programs to relieve poverty. As a professor at Chittagong University in Bangladesh, he realized that the economic principles he taught seemed irrelevant to the conditions in the country. His research into rural poverty found that many poor laborers, especially women, had no access to bank loans. Banks are willing to loan money to rich people, according to Yunus. The poor resorted to loan sharks who charged excessive interest rates. Yunus felt there were gaps in the banking system and if poor entrepreneurs had access to low interest rate loans, it would help investment and wealth creation. He believed that if loans were affordable, people would be able to pay back the loans.

Yunus decided to lend some of his own money to women; all of the loans were repaid. Thus, began the concept of microcredit. Realizing that his resources would soon be depleted, he went

to banks to enlist their support for microcredits. Initially, banks would not support this concept until he offered to personally guarantee these loans. In 1976, the Bangladeshi government agreed to support an expansion of microcredits, giving a loan to create a bank (ultimately named Grameen Bank (Village Bank)) for the poor. The scheme grew and proved successful. Approximately \$8.5 million was loaned to poor entrepreneurs; most of the loans were for \$1,500 or less. Ninety-seven percent of the loans were to women. His banking business was set-up much like a not-for-profit business. Referred to as a social business, the goal was to solve social problems. He loaned money to job creators and problem solvers. Although the bank paid no dividends to stakeholders, it flourished. Dollars were loaned out to start new businesses and when they succeeded, the dollars come back so they could be redistributed to other poor entrepreneurs.

Microfinance did meet considerable local opposition and skepticism in the United States. Muslim leaders noted that the interest rate contradicted their law. Conservatives were critical of loaning funds to women and Communists saw microfinance as a means of controlling people. In the United States, 18 branches of the bank exist. Despite its critics, the concept of microfinance and microcredit is considered to be a success. The concepts have spread to over 100 countries, mainly in the developing world.

While the concepts of microfinance and microcredit appear to be contradictory to capitalism, I think they should be explored as a vehicle to help people improve their lot in life.

President's Dinner Dance

By Bill Hood, DTM

Imagine 2,000+ Toastmasters dressed to the nines standing in the hallway waiting for the doors to open to the banquet hall. Five minutes turns into 30. It's starting to get hot and people are anxious to have some relief provided by a well air-conditioned room. In typical Toastmasters' fashion, it's a minor distraction as we turn to our left or right and strike up a conversation with someone — anyone from all parts of the globe.

The doors finally open and it's a quick walk to claim your table for your friends. District 83 claimed two tables near the dance floor. Maybe that was not the best location for table conversation since we happened to be near the speakers. But it was awesome for feeling the excitement coming from the dance floor. We had a great time. The food was presented eloquently. And, oh so much fun.

The night started off with the introduction of the new executive board and Past International Presidents. When our new president, Jim Kokocki, DTM, took the stage for his address, the first thing he did was to take a photo of the crowd and post it online.

The dancing started off with a 1920s theme to honor our 90th anniversary. There were a few people dressed in character, but most were not. It was cool to see people from around the world dance to an American 1920s beat. After dinner, the place really started to rock as more of a modern mix was played. You couldn't find an empty spot anywhere on the dance floor. And when people started jumping, you almost felt like you were on a trampoline as the dance floor vibrated!

Annual Business Meeting

By Paula Markert, DTM

On Saturday, August 15, 2015, The Annual Business Meeting for Toastmasters International was held at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas. The purpose of the meeting was to elect International Directors and vote on any other business as proposed by the Board of Directors.

International Directors (IDs) are elected for a two-year term, with one-half being elected every other year. This allows consistency without a complete turnover of International Directors. The International Leadership Committee (ILC), consisting of 17 members – past board members, International Directors, etc. – reviewed all the candidates, each spending between 50-70 hours on committee responsibilities. The candidates were assessed based on six attributes, including ethics, leadership, finance, and critical thinking. While current guidelines only allow the ILC to put forth three possible candidates for each ID position, candidates are allowed to run from the floor.

The parliamentarian determined that between the eligible clubs, delegates at large and represented clubs – the total number of ballots available for voting was 21,419, with a simple majority of 10,710. That was the easy part. All voting members (remember those proxies you signed over to Bill) received a handheld device that was used to cast votes. Easy – no? Well, you would think so. “Cast your vote for this person now!! Put in the number of votes you are casting and then hit submit!” For each vote, there were many ineligible votes—at one point, up to 700. We never reached the “Zero ineligible votes.” But, the election went through and we elected seven new International Directors, including Region 9’s new International Director, Steve Chen!

The “any other business” was a vote on Proposal A. Proposal A was a “bundled” group of proposals – something like you might see when our government puts together in a bill items that just don’t seem to go together (often for a special interest group). To quickly summarize Proposal A: part 1 – Expand the number of candidates that can be brought forth by the ILC (currently limited to three); part 2 – Replace the term “policies and procedures” in the bylaws to “policies”; part 3 – accept the

“new” titles for District officers; part 4 – authority given only to the Board of Directors to create Toastmasters’ legal entities.

This proposal caused quite a stir among the attendees at the business meeting. The main concern was that the bundling of the four parts meant a vote “for” meant accepting everything. Many of the comments from the floor indicated that there was support for three of the parts, but not necessarily the fourth (in no order as to approval). If bundling was allowed now, would it not be allowed in the future, possibly with more contentious sections?

A motion was made to resend the proposal back to the board to reconsider “unbundling” but this was defeated by the voting members. Thus, the original proposal was voted in – 15,793 to 4,944.

Thus ended the business meeting – new International Directors and a positive response to Proposal A.

Business meetings, let’s face it, can be boring. However, when an issue occurs, it is very interesting to see the results of debate and the resolution of conflict. We are all instilled with Roberts’ Rules of Order and how they can make sense out of delicate situations. This was more than obvious at the discussion around Proposal A. I guess I am mostly shocked at how easy it is to vote with a hand held device, and many people still could not get it right. Electronics, however, have made life so much simpler – at the last convention I attended at Las Vegas – we voted with paper ballots. Imagine the time to count all those ballots and with the hand held electronic devices, it was just a short period of time. In Kuala Lumpur last year, we also had a lot of invalid votes. Perhaps Toastmasters will come up with a speech module on how to use the device before the 2016 Convention (wishful thinking).

I was honored to vote for clubs at the convention and thank you for your support! Looking forward to another interesting business meeting in 2016!

Tips for Speech Topics

Finding it hard to come up with topic?

1. What’s happening in your life?
2. Read any good books, articles or seen any good movies or plays lately?
3. Open the dictionary or phonebook to a random word and see what it sparks
4. What would you like to do in the future?
5. Think of a happy memory.

Toastmasters Skills in Obtaining “Amateur Radio Operator of the Year” Award

By Rachel Weiss, DTM

Club

At my local Amateur Radio club, the Bergen Amateur Radio Association (BARA), I was asked to “back fill” the role of club trustee. It was at this time when I was first exposed to the “behind-the-scenes” workings of this very successful Amateur Radio Club. Although successful, there were many skills that I have learned in Toastmasters that could be applied to enhance and help the club to become more successful. The first thing that I did was to create a yearly calendar of events with milestones leading up to the actual event. This took the pressure off of the event coordinator and made finding volunteers easier.

When elected as the club’s first female president, I brought additional changes. I helped document the roles and responsibilities of the secretary, treasurer, vice president and president. I used the Toastmaster Roles as a guide and augmented them with interviews with current and past members who held those roles.

The club has an excellent newsletter. I helped the editor tweak the information into a format that we could repurpose as a submission to the local newspapers for extended coverage. This resulted in one of the newspapers’ sending a reporter and photographer to one of our Hamfests and to promote our club’s Fiftieth Anniversary.

This is what Toastmasters has done for me.

Training

My heart is in education and passing on what I know and who I am. I saw the need to train amateur radio operators and to provide classes to help those interested in Amateur Radio pass the exam and obtain their license. There are three levels of Amateur Radio licensing from the FCC (Federal Communications Commission): Technician, General and Amateur Extra.

Having volunteered to assist in times of emergency, I saw volunteers who wanted to help and give of themselves. This led to me to offering to teach basic electronics and radio operations skills to various fire departments, rescue squads and ambulance squads. I also offered to train volunteers with the American Red Cross, Bergen Civil Emergency Response Teams and others to obtain their Amateur Radio License. I have a 90% success rate with my students passing their exam on the first attempt. The skills I learned in public speaking have given me the skills necessary to be the successful instructor/teacher/mentor I am with Amateur Radio.

Developing the training materials is a combination of leveraging the training manuals offered by the ARRL (Amateur Radio Relay League), combining my 40+ years of experience in Amateur Radio and the Toastmasters skill of knowing your

audience, engaging your audience and providing the audience with anchor points that they can internalize and take away with them.

The skills used to give a seven-minute speech or provide a 20-minute presentation are the same skills used for an Advanced Communication Gold workshop or in this case, a 14-hour course in Amateur

Radio. I had to have a clear outline for the material covered, content that would match the time allotted and skills to keep the class session on track and on time. I used visual and audio aids to enhance the subject matter and not distract from the intended result. I even incorporated feedback and evaluation forms at the end of each session to tweak the next class session and to fine tune the course material.

This is how being a Toastmaster prepared me for being a Public Speaker and Educator.

Leadership

The ARRL (Amateur Radio Relay League) Hudson Division Director Joyce Birmingham observed what I was doing to promote Amateur Radio in my local clubs and in the community and asked me to join her team. I was appointed as an assistant director of Education for the Division. I assisted other clubs in the Division to offer Amateur Radio training classes. I worked with local club members, mentoring them through the process and being an assistant instructor; mentoring them to become successful instructors in their area. Many of them asked how I came to be so proficient and they too became Toastmasters.

I developed questionnaires to understand the needs and interests of the members and help develop a group of presenters on the topics of interest. These presenters were then offered as guest speakers to the clubs in the Division. This resulted in enthusiasm and excitement throughout the Division – What Amateur Radio can do for you! The presenters were excited because they had an opportunity to share what excited them about Amateur Radio and many club members heard about aspects and interests in Amateur Radio for the first time.

I also introduced the concept of giving a certificate to the guest speaker, the special event volunteer, the event chairperson and the various club activity coordinators. This took a person who was behind the scenes and made them visible. It



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provided public recognition and thanks for the hours of time invested and it help build self-confidence and awareness of accomplishment to those involved. Since we are a volunteer organization, this raised awareness to the general membership and lead to more volunteers with future activities.

Toastmasters helped me become a leader that make a difference in the lives of our volunteers.

Communication

The personal skills I have learned as a Toastmaster have helped me make a difference in my community. Some of the speaking skills many times go unnoticed yet are extremely vital to success in times of urgency. To have proper diction, grammar and an expanded vocabulary are skills honed from our Toastmasters program. We have and are learning to listen; to hear the “ya” instead of “yes” or “ta” instead of “to.” We learn to hear words and phrases and comprehend through the accents and pronunciation variations from a culturally diverse community. Our grammarian helps sloppy communication become refined and an expanded vocabulary helps us paint a vivid word picture.

Table Topics helps develop a skill for succinct conveyance of information. To engage our minds and train of thought in such a way as to respond quickly, intelligently and with clarity that sets one apart from others.

It is this extemporaneous speaking skill that has led those in charge of the New York City Marathon Communications to select me to be “Net Control” for the last two years. As Net Control it is my responsibility to listen to what is being discussed on several simultaneous radio transmissions and convey the essence on yet another communication channel to accomplish the necessary tasks during an active event. To use language and brevity with Major Medical or Traffic or Parks and Recreation or Police or Fire or Race Command and any of the Amateur Radio Operators stationed on the course of the race is an exciting, awesome and intimidating task. My 40+ years of experience with Amateur Radio has given me the technical know-how and ears to hear. Toastmasters has given me the skills to effectively communicate – to respond – to be heard and get the job done with the first response.

This is what Toastmasters has done for me . . . What can Toastmasters do for you?

Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL) [www.arrl.org] is a National (USA and Canada) non-profit organization over 100 years old. I am a member of the ARRL. There are over 160,000 members in the United States. The ARRL has the United States broken down into fifteen Divisions. The Hudson Division [<http://hudson.arrl.org>] covers NY and NJ; North end From Albany, NY down to South end being Red Bank, NJ and from East end of Long Island to the west end being the Delaware River.

AMATEUR OF THE YEAR. The Radio Amateur in the Hudson Division whose record merits recognition for outstanding contribution to the Amateur Radio Service. He or she is active on the air and in Amateur Radio organizations.

The Amateur of the Year is an all-round Amateur, whose activities, attitudes and achievements may serve as an example to others. Devotion to Amateur Radio is balanced with attention to work responsibilities and family life. The Amateur of the Year exemplifies the “Amateur’s Code”. In selecting the award recipient, emphasis is placed on service to others rather than self, diversity of Amateur Radio interest and activities, evidence of continuing self challenge, and outstanding contributions to Amateur Radio in the year preceding nomination. The Amateur of the Year must be a member in good standing of the American Radio Relay League.

“Leadership is Unlocking People’s Potential to Become Better”

Bill Bradley is an all-around guy. He served as U.S. senator representing New Jersey from 1979 to 1997. Sen. Bradley was an Olympic gold medalist in 1964 and a professional basketball player with the New York Knicks from 1967 to 1977 and is in the Basketball Hall of Fame. He has also been quoted as saying, “In my own business career and as a former public official, I know first-hand the importance of leadership and integrity.”

There are many quotes about what is a leader. In the June 2015 issue of the Toastmaster magazine, Linda Allen quotes Dr. Stephen McKenzie, psychologist and author of Mindfulness at Work. He explains, “Good leadership is knowing where to lead people,” I agree with Bill Bradley, a good leader is the one who can help to bring out the best in others. As Paula Markert explains in her PQD article elsewhere in this issue, leadership is a process, i.e. the use of words unlocking and become to show continuity. A leader helps others to do well and the reward is that the leader shares in the success.



Program Quality Director's Message

By Paula Markert, DTM

What do Alex Malley, Rory Vaden, John Maxwell and Dana LaMon have in common? Yes, well at least two of them are/were Toastmasters! Yes, they have all been speakers at International conferences. And yes, they are all leadership and motivational speakers. But, that is just part of the story.

As Paul Harvey would say, "And now for the rest of the story."

What do all four of these men have in common? They have something to say. They are passionate about what they have to say. And, finally, we want to hear what they have to say.

Alex Malley is the author of the Naked CEO. His message is simple – your life is a journey of being who you are and who you want to be. If you want to be a leader, it is all about being believed. Your journey to leadership is all about the process, all about getting the steps right – because everything you do as a leader impacts others. And two of the most important steps you have to make part of your journey are integrity – one of the core values for Toastmasters – and direction. These are needed now, more than ever before.

Rory Vaden placed second in the International Speech Contest in 2007. Although he is a motivational speaker, he has been called a "self-discipline strategist." His best-selling book "Take the Stairs" focuses on the concept that many people want success and want to be happy, but they constantly look for the easy ways to reach their goals. Self-discipline: sacrifice, commitment, focus, integrity, schedule, faith and action are the principles that Vaden espouses to ensure success in your life.

John Maxwell – a prolific writer – has written a book called the "360 Leader." He presents a well-developed concept that leadership is not just from the top down. Some of us lead across our organizations. Some of us lead from the top down. Some of us lead from the bottom up. However, we are all leaders AND we have to recognize our leadership and build our skills.

Dana LaMon was the 1992 World Champion of Public Speaking. He has written a small book, "The Excellence Book" – a small book that can have a big impact on us all. The subtitle is "104 Principles for Living and Working." He emphasizes that excellence is not an end – it is a continuous journey. I have taken his first principle "to excel is to do better today than you did yesterday" to heart and practice it daily. His principle "everyone can excel" should be a motto that we all live by.

So, Paula, you may say "Speech # 3, get to the point." My point in mentioning these four men is to support Bill's theme "Contagious Inspiration!" There is inspiration everywhere you look. There is inspiration to help you succeed. There is inspiration to help you become a better leader. Are you looking for inspiration? Are you using the many sources that are available to provide inspiration? Further, can you say that you are inspired every day, in many ways, and further are acting to inspire others? If not, take some time to reevaluate. Pick a goal and work toward it. Find a mentor – read a book – be a mentor. "Contagious Inspiration" – embrace the theme.

Best ways to organize a speech

1. Dazzle them with the intro (often best to write last)
2. Provide overview of your speech
3. List three points to cover
4. Call to action
5. Memorable conclusion

Northern Stars Advanced Club and Talk of Monmouth

By Su Brooks, DTM and Susan Chrusciel, CC, ALB

This is the first in a series of articles about advanced Toastmasters clubs in District 83. This month, we highlight Northern Stars Advanced Club and Talk of Monmouth clubs.

Why would a Toastmaster be interested in becoming a member of your advanced club?

NS: At Northern Stars, we give you the opportunity to “Shine at New Heights.” It’s very easy to become the best speaker in your community or corporate club, but if your dream is to become a contest champion, professional speaker or work further toward your DTM, you often need some guidance to take you to that next level. This is our mission in Northern Stars—to help you move to the next level.

Northern Stars is the northernmost advanced club in the district, located in Basking Ridge, NJ. Since our charter in 2009, we have been a home for district leaders and future leaders. Our membership includes three PDGs, the current District Director, Division Director and Area Director. Many of our members have completed their DTM and over 80% have completed at least one advanced communicator award. Last year, we were one of the top clubs for percentage of members who completed educational awards.

We are also a home for speech contests and contest participants. We welcome anyone looking to refine their skills for contests and provide feedback and coaching. Many of the finalists in the last contest cycle practiced at our club – including Division C champion, our own, Narayanan Doraswamy, and District 83 International Speech Champion, Kevin Moulton.

We meet the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Wednesdays of the month from 7-9 pm at Verizon in Basking Ridge. We help Toastmasters move to the next level with more time for advanced speeches and evaluations, as we also offer five different evaluation styles, including evaluation of evaluators, two evaluators per speech and more.

We also have an active mentoring program where members can be paired with some of the most experienced Toastmasters in the district.

ToM: We are the only advanced Toastmasters club in Monmouth County, NJ. At the time of our charter in July 2015, there were several local Toastmasters who were interested in joining an advanced club in the area.

Most of the members of our club live or work in Monmouth County. All of our members have earned at least a CC award. Some of our members have earned their DTM. Several members serve or have served as district officers and many are club officers in this club and/or another club.

We have one meeting a month and add an optional special event later on in the month. We have held a Speakout, a Table Topics meeting, a reverse meeting and our first Tall Tales and Table Topics contests. Our two-hour meeting format provides an opportunity for members to work on longer speeches and for more comprehensive, in-depth evaluations.

Our members have indicated that they would like future meeting ideas to include panel discussions and opportunities for longer speeches from the advanced manuals.

What are some of the challenges you face as an advanced club?

NS: With so many skilled and successful members, the thought of visiting can be intimidating for newer Toastmasters. We are extremely welcoming, informal, encouraging and really love to help newer members! As we are an advanced club, we ask that all members have completed at least 6 speeches, which gives us a smaller base to recruit from than a standard club.

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Northern Stars Advanced Club meets the first, third and occasional fifth Wednesday of the month from 7-9 pm at the Verizon Center, 1 Verizon Way, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920.

Sometimes meetings are held at alternate locations.

Please contact Pam Winter: pamela.l.winter@verizon.com to visit our club.

Our website is: <http://northernstars.toastmastersclubs.org/>

Talk of Monmouth meets the second Thursday of the month from 7:30-9:30 pm at Borough Hall, Courtroom, 556 Tinton Avenue, Tinton Falls, NJ 07724.

Sometimes meetings are held at alternate locations. Optional activities and events may be planned for other days and times to allow more guests to attend one of our meetings. Please contact Su Brooks: subrooks@verizon.net to visit our club.

Our website is: <http://4843227.toastmastersclubs.org/>

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However, we have started working on Public Relations more in the last year and are reaching out to other local clubs to invite them to visit us as well as Toastmasters who have shown interest in our club. We've found that many people who visit us want to come back again and eventually join.

ToM: Making sure we increase our membership. Some of our friends joined our club so we would have enough members to charter a club. At our first officers' meeting, we discussed how important it is to maintain a healthy dialogue with members of local clubs to ensure that we are reaching out to those who are close to a CC and to encourage them to visit our club and join.

We also discussed reaching out to our members to identify which educational and leadership goals they are seeking to achieve this Toastmasters year and which awards will be filed with Talk of Monmouth and which will be filed with other clubs. We provide stage time for members who need to present additional speeches to achieve their goals.

We hope to make our meeting as convenient as possible for as many members and prospective members. We realize other clubs meet on different days and nights as we try to avoid obvious conflicts with clubs in our area. We have one meeting a month on the second Thursday for two hours. Alternate activities take place on other days and times for variety.

Some of the traditional membership recruiting techniques will not work for an advanced club since prospective members have to be a Toastmaster already.

What are some of the exciting opportunities planned for your club?

NS: We always like to garner some attention at the conferences and this upcoming fall conference will be no different. As we have a third meeting some months – we plan on making these meetings themed or introducing different ideas such as a backward meeting. We are planning on reaching out to other advanced clubs in the district. After achieving Select Distinguished status last year we are aiming for President's Distinguished this year and are working on plans for an Open House and more during this Toastmasters year.

ToM: Members of area clubs participate in what has become an annual tradition, the famous multi-club holiday party in December, hosted by Red Bank Toastmasters. This year, Talk of Monmouth will co-host the event with Red Bank. Participating clubs provide speakers, evaluators and other meeting roles. We enjoy networking, a delicious buffet dinner and a fun meeting. Prizes are awarded for best speech, best Table Topics response and best evaluator. It is always a rewarding experience to have your speech evaluated by someone from another club to gain new insight and perspective.

What advice would you offer someone who is considering joining an advanced club?

NS: Don't be intimidated by the membership requirements or think that you're "not good enough yet" to join an advanced



Photo by Brian Lin, DTM.

club. The Toastmasters program is about learning. Everyone in an advanced club really wants you to succeed – no matter what your goal is – if it's achieving your ACB or becoming a District Director. Go to an advanced club with an open mind and remember to always take back what you learn to your home club – this makes every club in the district stronger.

ToM: Visit advanced clubs and talk to members of advanced clubs. Find out what makes each club special. Find out if the club is a good fit for your personality and for your professional, educational and leadership goals. With additional stage time, you may have the opportunity to complete more manual speeches than before. However, make sure joining an additional Toastmasters club works with your personal and professional life.

Sharing that Contagious Inspiration and Enthusiasm

A few members of Northern Stars and Talk of Monmouth are in both advanced clubs and are excited to share best practices, lessons learned and have developed friendships. We participate in both official and unofficial member groups on Facebook.



Ainsley A. Reynolds, DTM, does NOT want to relinquish the gavel!

Photo by Susan Chrusciel, CC, ALB.

District Director Bill Hood, DTM, encourages Toastmasters district-wide to visit other clubs and identify how we have participated in the meeting, what we learned and earn the new Friendly Neighbor recognition ribbon. Three Talk of Monmouth members visited the Northern Stars club contests (photo above) and participated as contest officials (Su Brooks, DTM; Susan Chrusciel, CC, ALB; Eric De Vincenzo, CC). Then, three Talk of Monmouth members visited the baseball game and Speakout at the meeting hosted by the No Limits club in August (see Play Ball! in this issue), and participated as both speakers and evaluators [Su Brooks, DTM; Anne Gilson, DTM, IPDG; Jim Samuel, DTM 6, PDG (46)]. In September members of Northern Stars (Su Brooks, DTM; Susan

Chrusciel, CC, ALB; Eric De Vincenzo, CC and Sherri Rase, ACS, ALB) captured the gavel from Dialogue Party Toastmasters, who held it from the end of June until the beginning of September.

Su Brooks, DTM, serves the district as a Newsletter Co-Editor and the Fall Conference Publication Chair.

Susan Chrusciel, CC, ALB, serves the district as Area 22 Director.

Revolutionary Toastmasters: Advanced Club Forming in Randolph, NJ

Are you:

Ready to take it up a notch?

Ready to get serious about polishing your speaking abilities?

Your wishes are about to come true!

We're bringing a new Advanced Club to **Randolph, NJ!**

Revolutionary Toastmasters club hopes to charter by year's end!

Meetings to be held twice monthly for 1.5 hours of intense and fun Toastmastery!

Meeting location is being actively scouted.

We need YOU!

Please contact Dee Rincon (dee_rincon@yahoo.com) 973 366-5596 and Janette Alexander (jalexan@solixinc.com) 973-581-5302.

CLUB NEWSLETTER CONTEST 2015-2016

Does your club have a newsletter? If so, consider entering our newsletter contest! If not, consider creating one.

While providing club information, the newsletter team may earn credit toward goals in the Competent Leader manual.

Contest Criteria:

- Must use current TI logo
- May use TI templates or create your own layouts.
- Club must be in good standing.
- Issues dated between July 1, 2015 and March 1, 2016 are eligible.
- **Deadline for submissions: April 15, 2016.**
- Submit in pdf format to d83newsletter@gmail.com
- Include correct Toastmasters branding standards (colors, use of logo, fonts, images, design devices)
- Minimum of 2 pages; no maximum number of pages.
- Results will be announced at the District 83 Spring 2016 Conference.
- Prize details will be announced in an upcoming District Newsletter.

The judges will evaluate the newsletters using these guidelines:

Maximum points per category are shown at right.

Does the newsletter contain educational articles, recognition of member and club achievements, and promote participation in Toastmasters' activities?	25
Is the newsletter informative and entertaining?	25
Does content appear to be well-compiled?	20
Does text follow rules of grammar, free from typos?	10
Is layout attractive?	10
Do graphics provide logical connection to story or provide valuable information?.....	10

Stay Above the Fray – How to Keep Your Friends in Election Years

By Sherri Rase, ACS, ALB

Though it's still more than a year away, it's no surprise that the Presidential Election 2016 is well and truly underway. In a world where back-to-school sales begin immediately after graduations and Halloween is shoulder to shoulder with Christmas in the card stores in August, it makes perfect sense. But how do we Toastmasters engage in political conversation, make our point and practice good listening while being active in the political process? The answer resides in our first friend, the Competent Communication manual.

Look at the very first speech – the Ice Breaker! This is perfect practice for when you show up at a candidate's town meeting and need to introduce yourself. You tell people a bit about yourself in a non-threatening and interesting way.

Next, your preparation to meet these candidates is critical. Project 7 – Research Your Topic is what sees you through. Learning each candidate's position on the issues that are important to you helps get facts on the table. There are plenty of emotional appeals that are going to go out, but rather than permitting pandering to sway your decision, knowing the facts drives better voting booth decision making. You may find yourself analyzing the candidates for techniques you learned in Projects 5 and 6, Your Body Speaks and Vocal Variety, respectively.

If you are running for an office or board position, the manual can help you as well. Project 4 – How To Say It is a great way when you're the candidate to make sure your words have the greatest impact on your listeners and the greatest penetration in their thoughts.

A field of candidates may all look like they're not only ready to run the race or to run the school board, the town council, state senate, Congress or the Oval Office. Unless they bear Project 2 in mind, Organize Your Speech, then the final thoughts they leave us thinking may not be quite as they intend.

The candidates who have been most memorable to me are the ones who practice the skills of Projects 3 and 9 together, namely Get to the Point and Persuade with Power. When that person can show me that s/he has a grasp of my issue, the challenges around it and can show me that all angles of the equation have been considered prior to their proposed solution that's when they have reached the pinnacle. When they have inspired me to action – voting for that candidate when I'm all alone with my thoughts, that's when I can admire how they got to where they are and understand why and how I should help them further to where they want to be – running my municipal, state, national or international concerns.

It would be easy to lose friends by strictly coming from our emotions, our historical affiliations, or familial and neighborhood ties during a contentious political season. Coming from fact-based, rational thinking and bearing in mind the foundations of our educational process in Toastmasters keeps us on the road to reasoned argument and keeping our friends beside us.

Now get out there and Rock the Vote!

Upcoming District 83 Tall Tales and Table Topics Contests

Division Level Contests:October
(Final chance to see contestants compete free of charge!)

District 83 Humorous Speech and Table Topics Contests:November 14, 2015

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

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

THEME MEETINGS

Everyone gets into the act when a Theme Meeting takes place. Here are some fun ideas where everyone has an opportunity to present a prepared manual speech with evaluations given after a short intermission.

SHIPWRECK: There is so much potential in using the Discussion Leader Advanced Manual. The Shipwreck lends itself beautifully to the “A Make it Make-Believe” (role playing) project. Plan a scenario about a cruise ship sinking with a small crew and enough passengers on board to give every club member present a role in the event. The crew finds themselves on one island while the passengers drift up onto an uncharted island about fifty miles away. Not knowing how long they’ll be on the island, they decide to plan for a year=s stay. They divide the work and give everyone a job (food gatherer, cook, quartermaster, historian, etc.) Everyone gives a five minute speech about his/her job.

HOUSE TOUR: This is a great project. Whether you own your own home or are looking for one, the Speaking to Inform Advanced Manual can set the stage for all speakers to prepare informative speeches concerning something of general interest. With an agent, take a tour of an empty “house for sale.” When you return to your meeting place, write up your bid on the property and find out who “gets the house.” Incorporate your reasons for your bid in a five minute speech.

BEACHCOMBING: The Entertaining Speaker is a wonderful resource for this project. The term “beachcombing” evokes thoughts of strolling along sandy shores looking for the perfect shell or stone. But what else might you discover during your search? If you meet near a beach, plan to spend forty - five minutes “beachcombing” before the meeting. Everyone brings an object back to the meeting and makes a speech about it.

TOASTMASTERS AROUND THE WORLD: Some Toastmasters belong to only one club and sadly they never seem to venture beyond the boundaries of that club. Do other clubs conduct meetings the way you do, or do they have a different culture or climate? Use “The Speech to Inform” from the “Speaking to Inform” Advanced Manual and with a bit of detective work in the “Toastmasters Magazine” locate clubs around the world and let members choose a club in another part of the world and exchange a few letters with a member of that club. After a few letters are exchanged, the members can put their experiences in the project into a speech.

GRIPES IN THE WORKPLACE: Have you tried the newest Advanced Manual – “Persuasive Speaking” which replaces “The Professional Salesperson?” The “Winning Proposal” is a good project for working out the frustrations of problems in the workplace, clubs or the community. Would you like to create a new company product or have a new law enacted for your town? Try this manual.

A VISIT TO THE LIBRARY: Why pretend? Why explain to the members of your club what age should they be when you work in the Storytelling Advanced Manual? Wouldn’t it be more fun to visit your local library and actually have your members go through the manual projects with children from the community?

NURSING HOME VISIT: There are so many ways to conduct a Toastmasters meeting - why not take it to a nursing home and work from the Interpretive Reading Advanced

Manual? Members can “Read a Story” or “Interpret Poetry.” Most nursing homes look for outside entertainment. Your members can become Toastmasters’ Ambassadors of good will.

THE DEBATE: Don’t forget the old meeting standby. Educational and lots of fun !

MEMORIAL SERVICE TO JACQUES COUSTEAU: Conduct a press conference from the Communicating on Television Advanced Manual and present your views to an imaginary audience. Members are matched up with a fish that represents their occupation. They research that fish and dress like that fish (as far as possible) and make a speech about seeing Jacques Cousteau and the “Calypso” in their waters. **Examples:** Fireman (red snapper), electrician (electric eel), mandolin player (fiddler crab) and a funeral director (monkfish who conducts the service) etc. This would also fit into the Entertaining Speaker Advanced Manual.

MURDER MYSTERY: One member serves as the “Detective-in-charge” of a murder involving the members of a specific group of people. The clues and weapons are at the crime scene. Each speaker chooses a weapon and tries to prove how it relates to the murderer. Can the crime be solved before the speaker becomes the next victim.

SAFARI: The Toastmaster serves as the “Safari Guide.” Each member dresses up as a jungle animal and prepares a five minute speech about that animal (habitat, eating habits, etc.) One member can even act as the “safari photographer” and record the event for posterity.

DINNER THEATRE: Each member brings in a covered dish. (Invite a professional caterer to judge the entries.) The members then perform short theatrical skits using the speech topics in the basic C&L Manual as a guide for their performances. Evaluations are given after dessert.

GALS VS GUYS TRIVIA QUIZ: A member acts as moderator and compiles a number of trivia questions. Points are given for each correct answer. Additional points are earned if a question is answered incorrectly and passes to the other side. Can be used instead of Table Topics.

CHINESE AUCTION: Each member brings in five or ten items for the auction tables. Extra raffles are placed on tables around the perimeter of the room (food basket, wine basket, Avon basket, linen basket, book box, a 50/50 and for extra fun - a bake sale.) Members make speeches about the items they donated to the event while the committee sets up for the auction.

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE NURSERY AFTER THE LIGHTS GO OUT: The moderator of this Discussion Leader panel observes the newborns in the hospital nursery as they comment about the lives they were born into. When the lights go out, the babies talk about their parents and siblings and what they think their lives will be like. Using “baby talk,” this project can be hilarious.

“BEANIE BABY” BIRTHDAY BASH: One member hosts a party for the members’ “Beanies.” Non-Beanie enthusiasts can prepare speeches about the collecting “craze” in general. This is a great idea for the “Entertaining Speaker” or “Speciality Speeches” Advanced Manuals.

CONDUCT JOB INTERVIEWS FOR THE COMMUNITY: As a community service and as a way to garner interest in your club, offer to help prepare people to face job interviews. Teach them the basic skills in the Communication and Leadership Manual.

IN THE MARKETPLACE: Set up tables around the room and “hawk” your profession to fellow club members. Can you convince them to “buy” your wares or “invest” with your company? How does the Toastmasters= program help you in business? This can be opened to the community.

BLACKOUT: the Entertaining Speaker Advanced Manual is a good starting point for telling stories about what happened to you during a “blackout.” Did you panic? Could you find candles or a flashlight? Did you discover your need to re-vamp your thinking about emergency procedures in your home?

Educational flyers courtesy of Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46).

Variety is the Spice of Life (and Meetings)!

By Janette Alexander, ACS, ALS

Do you ever attend your club meetings, look around and think, “Boy, this place could use a shot in the arm! I’m ready to fall asleep already!”? The same routine can become tedious no matter what you are doing. If this is sounding too familiar then do something to shake things up! Get those creative juices flowing; wake up those sleepy grey cells up there in that brain. There are a multitude of suggestions for how to make a meeting more interesting and fun. It can be as simple as changing your meeting venue for just one meeting. Autumn is almost upon us and along with it, more pleasant weather so how about a meeting outdoors? If you are a corporate club, how about asking to use the fancy boardroom for just one meeting? Or change it up altogether by holding an evening meeting instead of the usual lunchtime one, maybe at a restaurant or other location.

Another tried and true meeting variation is the themed meeting. Here are some examples: 1) Do a “backward” meeting where the meeting is run in reverse order. This is a little tricky

and requires creativity to have the evaluations before any of the speeches! (True speech evaluations can be given to the speakers at a later time,) 2) A holiday themed meeting such as “Cinco de Mayo,” “It’s Lincoln’s Birthday,” “April is Liars’ Month!” etc. You can turn almost anything into a holiday! 3) For October, Toastmasters International is wrapping up the celebration of its 90th year so turn this into an event. Your club can tie this into an open house/membership drive. 4) Today’s meeting is “Love Your SAA Day!” Or it can be for another club officer or member who has done a lot for the club and has not been acknowledged for their good deeds. 5) Today’s meeting is “Brownie Prize Day;” everyone who participates gets a brownie (or chips, or a Snapple, etc.). You get the idea – just be creative!

What I’m trying to tell you is: if you are sitting in a boring meeting then you have no one to blame but yourself! Toastmasters is where leaders are made so grab that bull by the horns and make something happen! You’ll be so glad that you did.

Toastmasters Tidbits

By Paul Scharf, DTM 5, PDG

While it is generally known that a Toastmasters meeting consists of Table Topics, speeches and evaluations, there are many other nuances to proper procedure. In this new series, Paul Scharf, DTM 5, PDG and member of Brunswick Toastmasters (and other clubs) shares some information and procedures you may not be aware of.

Toastmaster of the meeting

It is very impolite to walk in front of or behind the presenter. After you shake his/her hand, move to your left or right to an empty chair as you continue to clap.

Prior to the start of the meeting, the SAA should set up two chairs, one to the right and one to the left of the lectern. This will make it easy for the TM to move to the left or right.

Contest Judge / Chief Judge Training

By Sharon Tu, ACS, ALS; Brian Lin, DTM, PDG

Toastmasters contest judging is 50% science, 50% art, and 100% educational. Every year, hundreds of District 83 members competed in one or more of the four types of contests throughout the year. To ensure every contest is properly conducted, District 83 offers judges / chief judge training. Even though the 2015 contest rulebook has only 23 pages, it would take years for an individual to master all the contest rules and judging principles inside out. Judge / chief judge training is the vital first step.

Over the summer, about 50 members attended the two-hour judge / chief judge training and were certified as preferred judges. While it is possible to squeeze the entire two-hour training into a 900-word summary, we decided to share with you some frequently asked questions instead, and hopefully entice you to attend the next judge training.

Q: Has any contestant ever been disqualified for originality?

A: Originality protests and disqualifications are more common than you think. We have seen at least five cases in the last few years. One contestant who adopted a few well-known Internet jokes for a humorous speech contest was disqualified. One contestant told a five-minute story from an ancient fable and was disqualified. One contestant read long quotations from 10 Presidents and was disqualified.

According to the rulebook, "Twenty-five percent or less of the speech may be devoted to quoting, paraphrasing, or referencing another person's content. Any quoted, paraphrased, or referenced content must be so identified during the speech presentation." You can certainly quote Abraham Lincoln and George Washington, but you have to indicate the source and keep the quotations short enough to meet the originality requirements. Don't give contest judges a reason to lock you up in a closed meeting for a half-hour just to discuss your originality case.

Q: May I give a check to my area director this morning and compete at the area contest in the afternoon?

A: The contestant can compete only if the following requirements are met: Dues were received by Toastmasters International and membership status entered / updated prior to the area contest (electronically or by paper). The club is in good standing (eight paid members or more, including the contestant). The contestant's club had no in-house speech contest and the club President or VPE assigned the contestant

We recommend area and division directors recruit a few more than the minimum numbers of judges required, just in case some judges might get stuck in traffic or otherwise not be able to attend.



Photography by Janette Alexander, ACS, ALS.

to represent the club. The contestant has completed six speeches from Competent Communication (CC) manual (International speech contest only). The area directors cannot approve ad-hoc contestants if the contestants did not meet the eligibility requirements.

Q: Can contest results be changed or overturned later?

A: No. Absolutely not. The rulebook says, "Announcement of contest winners is final." Once the result is announced, it cannot be changed, "unless the list of winners is announced incorrectly, in which case the chief judge, ballot counters, or timers are permitted to immediately interrupt to correct the error."

One time, a contestant woke up in the morning with a grudge. This person thought he / she could not possibly lose. This person demanded the division and district governors void the contest results and re-run the contest with a new set of judges. The appeal was denied. The contestant was asked to come up with an even better speech and compete again next year.

To make contest judging more robust, the rulebook has required that, "At area contests, there shall be an equal number of voting judges from each club in the area, or a minimum of five voting judges." At division contests, there shall be an equal

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number of voting judges from each area in the division, or a minimum of seven voting judges... No chief judge, voting judge or tiebreaking judge shall be a member of any club in which a contestant is a member." These rules are in place to select judges from a diverse geographical / territorial background so the fairness of contests can be ensured. We recommend area and division directors recruit a few more than the minimum numbers of judges required, just in case some judges might get stuck in traffic or otherwise not be able to attend.

Q: Can a contestant protest for interruption, noises, or timing signal errors?

A: If there were an interruption such as a member of the waitstaff entering the room with a lot of noise or the lavalier microphone ceased functioning, the contestant can stop. S/he can then ask the contest chair to introduce him/her again and s/he can restart from the beginning.

Some contestants choose to ignore distractions and keep speaking. I have seen a contestant rip out a dead lavalier and continue his speech with a raised voice. It was the contestant's choice.

If the contestant thought the timing signals were not displayed properly, s/he should continue speaking and conclude the speech as planned. The contestant can then ask the chief judge for a time extension. "In the event of technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra over time before being disqualified." I saw an evaluation contestant speak for almost five minutes because s/he did not see the red light which was just burned out. The contestant would not have been disqualified if s/he spoke for four minutes (three minutes 30 seconds plus a 30-second extension).

Q: Should a contestant attend a judge / chief judge training?

A: Definitely YES. A contestant can learn more about contest rules and judging criteria if s/he attends a judge / chief judge training. Do you know International speech contestants are judged with eight criteria: speech development, effectiveness, speech value, physical, voice, manner, appropriateness, and correctness? Do you know who are eligible to judge an area / division contest? Do you know the differences between evaluating and judging? Do you know who, what, and when a participant can protest? Do you know what factors could potentially affect judges at a subconscious level? If you don't know the answers, we will show you at the next training.

Q: I missed the last two judge / chief judge training sessions. When will this training be offered again?

A: At least one more judge / chief judge training session will be available this coming winter training season.

Q: What if I have a pressing question about the contest and I cannot wait?

A: You can reach out to Sharon Tu, District 83 Chief Judge via her email address hctu72@hotmail.com.

*Sharon Tu, ACS, ALS serves as the District 83 Chief Judge.
Brian Lin, DTM, is a Past District 83 Governor.*

Famous folks who were Toastmasters

Tim Allen
James Brady
Debbie Fields
Chris Matthews
Leonard Nimoy

Did You Know? TM stats

As of June 30, 2015:

Toastmasters had 15,406 clubs

332,000 members

135 countries

28,356 CCs earned in 2015

2061 Distinguished