



THE VOICE

DISTRICT 83 NEWSLETTER

December 2015

District 83 Fall 2015 Conference Excellence in 5 to 7 Minutes



Spotlight on Credentials Co-Chair Don Abramson, DTM

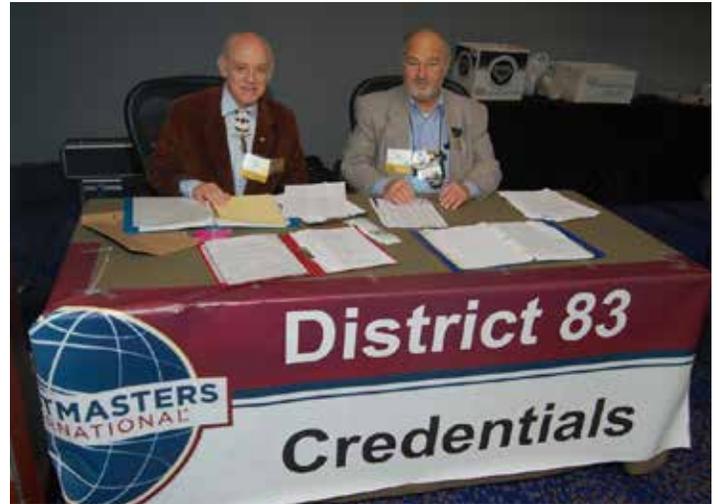
By Lynda Starr, DTM

The first person many people see at a District 83 conference is Don Abramson. He has manned the Credentials desk since 1984 and has enjoyed every minute of it. He has missed only two district conferences (both because of health reasons). Don's Toastmasters journey began that year when he attended a seminar at Drexel University in Philadelphia and the instructor suggested that he join Toastmasters. His brother Lee was a member of Woodbridge Toastmasters so Don joined that club.

Lee was also the Credentials Chair for the district conference in 1984 and drafted Don to assist him. Lee held this post for several years, and Don automatically became one of Lee's perennial volunteers. When Lee gave up the post due to health reasons, Don was asked to continue as the new Credentials Chair. Don explained, "It is a post I enjoy doing. I get to meet club presidents, club VPEs, proxy holders, old friends, and new Toastmasters." As Credentials Chair, Don is a member of the District Conference Planning Committee. "I have many fond memories associated with Toastmasters and yes, it has helped me professionally and personally," Don summarizes.

He is a big fan of conferences because they give him the opportunity to meet new people and share Toastmasters experiences.

Don has also participated in many contests, most recently the 2015 Tall Tales contest and has been a club officer.



Above: Credentials Co-Chairs Don Abramson, DTM (left) and Paul Scharf, DTM 5, PDG (right) at the District 83 Fall Conference assist attendees prior to the District Business Meeting.

Photography by Robert Bugai, CTM.

Presently, Don is a member of ACES Toastmasters, Brunswick Toastmasters and Brunswick Advanced Toastmasters. Even though he lives in East Windsor, NJ, which is actually in District 38, he is— noted by his accomplishments—a dedicated member of District 83.

He is a retired pharmaceutical technology manager focusing on regulatory control, having worked with all the major pharma companies.



Left: District Director Bill Hood, DTM, addresses the audience at the District Business Meeting. Center: Jeff Clarke, CC; and Nikitas Marangos represent Old Bridge Toastmasters at the Parade of Banners. Right: Videographer Bin Zhao, ACG, ALB, at one of the Educational Workshops.

Continued on page 2

In this Issue

District 83 Fall 2015 Conference

Excellence in 5 to 7 Minutes 1

Spotlight on Credentials Co-Chair Don Abramson, DTM 1

The Power of Yes 3

In the Limelight: Linda Isaacs, ACS, ALS 4

Plan Ahead: International Speech Contests and Evaluation Contests Spring 2016 4

NJCU Celebrates 10 Years of Success 5

Club Newsletter Contest 2015-2016 6

Club Growth Director's Message 7

Are You in Shape for Training? 8

Five Lessons from Toastmasters for the Workplace 9

Going Beyond the Club 10

Save the Date: District 83 Spring Conference 10

Quest Diagnostics Madison Holds Charter Ceremony 12

Eagle Toastmasters Celebrates its 10th Anniversary 12

Educationally Speaking 13

Say Yes! Be the Jokemaster! 14

D83 Toastmasters – A Valuable Networking Resource 14

Sometimes, Memories Are All That's Left – the Series 15

SpeakAbility 16

Looking for an Advanced Club in District 83? 17

Brunswick Advanced Club 18

Celebrating the Life of Dennis Fokas, DTM 19

Northern Stars Advanced Open House 21

Hillsborough Toastmasters Attend Small Business Expo 22

Use the Four Whys When Writing Your Introduction 23

Getting Involved with Your Corporate Club 24

Toastmasters – The Right Choice! 24

Continued from page 1



Above: Some of the members from AT&T Middletown Club gather after the first workshop: Donald Chong, CC; Radhi Spear, DTM, PDG (46), Region 9 Advisor; Su Brooks, DTM, and Aida Murphy, ACB, ALB.



Above: Immediate Past District Governor Anne Gilson, DTM, honors Phyllis Goldblatt, DTM, with the Toastmaster of the Year Award.



Above: Lynda Starr, DTM, is congratulated for her achievement by fellow Distinguished Toastmasters as she walks the gauntlet at the banquet.

Photography by Robert Bugai, CTM.

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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 February 2016 issue is January 16, 2016.**

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

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Continued on page 3

Continued from page 2

The Power of Yes

By Sherri Rase, ACS, ALB

Lisa Panarello, CC is a force of nature whose greatest super power is empowering people who hear her voice to realize that they can make their dreams come true. Like Dorothy's ruby slippers, the power has always been in our hands to make things happen, but how many of us believe it's possible? Lisa reached in to light a spark in the conference attendees that will continue to glow for some time to come.

Starting the keynote from the dais and then moving among the tables, Lisa started with a story. All the best speakers do, to bring us into the moment with them. Hearing about how she and her brothers played "church" brought back a lot of memories, judging by the nods around me. She described her first experience of "no" when her older brother told her she couldn't play the priest, because she was a girl. And then we were off.

Lisa shared her expertise with us and her experience, tying it back to Toastmasters as she described some of the lessons she learned about the power of public speaking during her journey to the finals of the International World Championship of Public Speaking in Palm Springs, CA. She recounted how impactful parts of her speech were on individuals who stopped as they passed her on the way to sessions or in the hall to share their stories and what impact their feedback made on her. It's the exchange of energy and power we experience when we step forward.

Turning to the practical, among the tidbits of advice that Lisa provided during her talk included the knowledge that an offer from an employer is just that. Rather than feeling like that offer



Above: Keynote Speaker Lisa Panarello, CC (left) with District Director Bill Hood, DTM, at the Fall Conference.

Photography by Robert Bugai, CTM.

is the best we can get, she advised us, "don't leave money on the table!" Negotiate for more pay, or more vacation or benefits. Further, when you sit down in an interview, be sure you've prepared yourself for it by researching the company. They will ask you questions, so be sure to have some questions of your own that show your work. Consider your career path and what that company offers to align with your goals to make a more informed decision.

There are many ways to pursue your dreams, and often having a mentor or a consultant to help refine your goals is an excellent use of resources. Find that mentor, find that person who will show you how to reach for the stars and hold them in your hand. Have you registered for the Spring Conference? Me too! Touch the future; it's great to be a Toastmaster!

FIVE WAYS TO REDUCE SPEAKER JITTERS

1. Take a deep breath
2. Understand why you are nervous
3. Remember the audience wants you to succeed
4. Practice, practice, practice
5. Structure your speech logically so you remember what you are supposed to say

In the Limelight: Linda Isaacs, ACS, ALS

By Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALS

In this issue, we feature Linda Isaacs, ACS, ALS, who was named Area Governor of the Year at the Fall Conference.

Linda Isaacs joined Mile Square Toastmasters in December 2004; over the following years she had taken on various club officer roles, but Linda was hesitant about becoming an area governor. She spoke with club members who had done it in the past and they all said it had been a rewarding experience. Linda was afraid it would take too much time. But once she agreed to this responsibility, Linda found that it was not as time-consuming as she had feared it would be, and that it was a lot of fun!

Linda really enjoys seeing how the clubs in her area operated. The Toastmasters educational program was the same from club to club, of course, but each club had its own culture and its own set of strengths and weaknesses. Before Linda visited the clubs, she looked at the Toastmasters dashboard to see how they were doing (<http://dashboards.toastmasters.org/Club.aspx?id=83>). Members in several of the clubs in the area were definitely giving speeches and completing educational goals, but the clubs' biggest problem was attracting new members, sometimes manifested by frantic end-of-Toastmasters-year membership drives. After she saw their clubs in action, Linda realized that anyone coming as a guest would be impressed – the challenge was getting people to walk in the door in the first place.

Her goal for her time as area governor, in addition to the basics of club visits and area contests, was to improve the area clubs' ability to recruit new members by helping with PR. To start, Linda looked for a club doing well with new member recruitment, and she did not have to look far. Her home club, Mile Square Toastmasters, has a long history of signing up many new members each year, with very little PR effort. Its first webmaster, Mike Matera, set the club up to win by creating website content and doing search engine optimization that makes the club immediately visible for anyone searching online for "Toastmasters Hoboken." Many of the other clubs in the area were not so easy to find online, and so Linda encouraged them to improve their internet presence. "This can take a bit of upfront work," she explains, "but once it is done, it reaps

continuing rewards, as Mile Square has found." Linda used this endeavor for her High Performance Leadership (HPL) project.

Partway through her year as area governor, Linda received an email from Toastmasters International with a draft press release about Toastmasters' 90th anniversary, to be used for outreach to local media. Linda sent this to the *Hudson Reporter*, the publisher of a number of weekly newspapers about the communities of Hudson County, with a cover letter suggesting an article about the county clubs suitable for inclusion in several of their papers. She notes, "This took less than an hour for me to write and email. A few months later, the *Hudson Reporter* followed through. Members from a number of area clubs were interviewed, and our District PR officer, Margarita Estrada, was invaluable in helping the reporter get what he needed to complete his article. It was printed in several of their newspapers, bringing an influx of guests to area clubs."

Linda's advice to fellow Toastmasters, "If you are considering being an area director, or if you have already accepted this role, my suggestion is: have fun with it! Listen to the people in your area clubs and look for opportunities to be helpful. Remember that it is their choice to decide whether or not to implement your suggestions, that they may come up with alternate ways to deal with problems, and that what motivates you may not motivate them. Look for strengths of one club to share with other clubs, rather than weaknesses to criticize. And listen to the presentations at area director training." In retrospect, Linda feels that if she utilized more of what she heard there, she would have avoided a few missteps. In sum, according to Linda, "Overall, being an area director is a great opportunity to practice leadership skills, to meet more of the wonderful people that are a part of Toastmasters, and to make a little bit of difference in this world."



PLAN AHEAD: INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTESTS AND EVALUATION CONTESTS SPRING 2016

February: Club Level

March: Area Level

April: Division Level

May: District Level

August: International Speech Contest Finals
at the Toastmasters International Convention
Washington, DC, August 17-20

NJCU Celebrates 10 Years of Success

By Franca Kirsch, DTM

New Jersey City University Toastmasters Club marked its tenth anniversary on October 19, 2015. Since 2005, the club has been dedicated to helping people become better speakers and leaders. NJCU Toastmasters Club provides a supportive and positive environment where members have the opportunity to overcome their fear of public speaking and sharpen their presentation skills. Other benefits include the opportunity to increase one's confidence, build critical thinking skills and become an effective listener.

The celebration consisted of a luncheon at the Student Union Building in the Roundtable Room. Eight members attended. Luis Morales, DTM opened up the meeting with his view on his journey in Toastmasters. This journey began in April 2005...many months before NJCU became a chartered club. He has also been a member of Hudson Toastmasters and a member of Toastmasters en Español. He has held the titles of president of NJCU Toastmasters several times, and has been an area governor and assistant division governor. Luis has mentored over 50 members exemplifying the leadership side of Toastmasters. He was presented with a plaque for his dedication, commitment and outstanding services to the NJCU Toastmasters Club. At the celebration, Luis also presented Franca Kirsch with her DTM plaque. Franca then presented awards to Ansley LaMar, Luis Morales and Michelle Scott Crook.

Dr. LaMar first learned about Toastmasters while reading a book on writing and delivering speeches and decided to seek out a Toastmasters group to join. He joined The Port Authority Technical Center Toastmasters (PATCTM) club. When some members of PATCTM started a club near his home, he joined the newly formed Gateway 2 Toastmasters (GW2TM) and he is currently president. While a member of GW2TM, Dr. Aileen Graham, the Vice President of Student Affairs, asked Ansley to reactivate New Jersey City University's Toastmasters club. Dr. Carlos Hernandez, the president of the University at the time was especially supportive. "Many of



Above: Jayson Burg, President; Nitaya Moss, Luis R. Morales, VP Membership; Franca Kirsch, VPPR.

the people who joined at that time have since retired; the two I remember best are Ms. Gayle Ford, assistant to the President, and Mr. Bruce Harman, Director of Security," remembers Ansley. "I'm especially pleased to see that NJCU's club still exists, and I commend Mr. Luis Morales for his hand in keeping the club alive." He received a trophy for his commitment to the longevity of NJCU Toastmasters.

Michelle received an award for outstanding services and devotion as treasurer for the NJCU Toastmasters Club. She has been a member of Toastmasters since 2000, choosing to become involved in the organization to develop her public speaking skills. Michelle noted, "Toastmasters is a great way to grow professionally and meet like-minded people who are willing to work toward the goal of professional development."

Franca Kirsch summed up NJCU, "Our members find their experience in NJCU Toastmasters expands their interpersonal communication skills and leadership opportunities. They also gain an added dimension of professionalism that can directly translate into their careers." Members have achieved much success, becoming area governors, competing in speech contests and the club's achieving multiple Distinguished, Select Distinguished and President's Distinguished status.

Here's to many more anniversaries.

Photography courtesy of NJCU.



Above: Jennifer Gardner, Renato Balasabas, Nitaya Moss, Jayson Burg, President; Franca Kirsch, VPPR; Victor Mosquera, Sgt. at Arms; Luis R. Morales, VP Membership; Stephanie Saquing, Yanjia Xu (Chinese Exchange Scholar), Zach Saquing.

The most notable achievements include:

- March 2006-2007 – Distinguished Club – Tracy Matos
- March 2007 – Won Area Speech Contest – Luis R. Morales
- March 2007 – Won Area Evaluation Contest – Kenneth Sanders
- 2007-2008 – Area Governor – Judith Galang
- 2009-2010 – Achieved Distinguished Status – Rita Oleas, President
- 2010, 2011 and 2012 – Area Governor – Luis R. Morales
- July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011 – Select Distinguished – Luis R. Morales, President
- September 2010 – Won Area Speech Contest – Franca Kirsch
- October 2010 – Won Division Speech Contest – Franca Kirsch
- July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012 – President's Distinguished
- July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013 – President's Distinguished – Franca Kirsch, Luis R. Morales, Bismark DelVillar – Presidents
- July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014 – President's Distinguished
- March 2013 – Won Area Evaluation Contest – Naomi Wright
- April 2013 – Luis R. Morales, Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM)
- July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014 – President's Distinguished – Luis R. Morales, President
- July 1, 2013 – November 22, 2013 – Area 14 Governor – Bismark DelVillar (This was a partial year)
- September 13, 2013 – Won Area Speech Contest – Hassan Kirby
- October 4, 2013 – June 30, 2014 – Area Governor – Franca Kirsch
- January 1, 2014 – June 30, 2014 – Luis R. Morales, President
- January 2014 – Distinguished Status – Luis R. Morales, DTM
- July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016 – Jayson Burg, President
- October 2015 – Franca Kirsch, Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM)

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. Announced at the District 83 Fall 2015 Conference, we have updated information highlighted as **NEW** to provide the opportunity for as many clubs as possible to enter and participate.

Contest Criteria:

- Must use current TI logo
- May use TI templates or create your own layouts.
- Club must be in good standing.
- **NEW:** Issues dated between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016 are eligible.
- **NEW: Deadline for submissions: July 15, 2016.**
- Submit a pdf 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.
- **NEW:** Maximum of one entry per club.
- **NEW:** Results will be announced at the District 83 Fall 2016 Conference.
- **NEW:** Perpetual "Club Newsletter of The Year" award. 27" trophy with the winning club and year engraved on one of the smaller plates. Winning club will take possession of the trophy at the Fall Conference and return it to the District at the Spring Conference.



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

**"The largest room in the house
is the room for improvement."**

– Diane Lane, Actress

**We join Toastmasters to improve our leadership and communication skills.
Regardless of the level of expertise we achieve, an evaluation of our
speeches, within and outside our club, reminds us that there will always be
'room for improvement.'**



CLUB GROWTH DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Janice Buffalow, DTM

I would like to wish each of you a safe, happy holiday season as we come into the last month of the year.

My team has been busy the past six months and I would like to review what has been going on with respect to Membership, Club Growth and Club Retention.

Membership overlaps with growth and retention and is the foundation of our existence. Members are needed to sustain club strength with a standard target of 20 members. However, in terms of being a club in good standing, 8 paid members are required, but don't forget to collect and pay the remaining dues. In terms of performance, the District is measured by the number of paid clubs and the number of paid members and we are behind in both areas. We have 167 active clubs of which 144 (86.2%) have paid their dues; the remaining clubs have been contacted or are being closed. Please make every effort to pay your dues before the end of the year before the next cycle is due in March. The District goals for payments are 8,669 for Distinguished, 8,837 for Select Distinguished and 9,090 for President's Distinguished; one-third of our District goals. The second goal is related to number of clubs becoming distinguished of which renewals and new members are covered in three club DCP goals.

We announced at the Fall Conference the 20/20 Membership Drive incentive. **Any club who pays for 20 members by March 20, 2016 will receive a \$100 TI gift certificate.**

What a great opportunity to grab some TI dollars and to get your membership numbers up! We also announced a March Madness event; more information will be forthcoming on that and it will be exciting for all!

Each year, clubs decide they can no longer stay due to mergers, acquisitions or it is time to close. We have experienced that this year, too. Two clubs have merged with their sister clubs, one is moving to another state, one has split into two companies, the rest have determined it is time

to close. The good news, we have two new clubs: **Talk of Monmouth** and **Optum, Listen, Speak and Be Heard**. Let's welcome them to the District 83 family! We have conducted several demo meetings since July 1 with at least four clubs waiting for the last two or three members to sign and pay. We have received several requests for more information and we have had several leads from within our District. We need to work together on getting those further along and to the point of chartering. Don't forget, Dual is Cool, look to joining a second club. Three of the clubs needing additional members are prospective advanced clubs; try one on for size!

For Club Growth, we have District goals of reaching 171 paid clubs for Distinguished, 175 for Select Distinguished and 180 to be President's Distinguished. If you are interested in starting a club, just look around where you work or where you live, there may be a business that may be interested in learning more about Toastmasters and would welcome a discussion. As a reminder, those who provide a lead and it becomes a club by June 30, will receive \$75 in TI certificates. We are also looking for club mentors for the new clubs.

Club Retention comes into the picture when we start seeing the club strength go below 20 and does not come back. There are 46 clubs with 12 members or less; these clubs qualify for a club coach at the request of the club president. If you are one of these clubs, please reach out to me and we can discuss what options are best for you. Retention becomes important to know why members are not renewing; perhaps it is the club dynamics, location, or time of meeting or time spent. As VPs of Membership and club presidents, you may want to reach out to those members who have not paid and find out why. If you need any assistance, contact anyone on my team (Willie Markert, Sherri Rase) and do not hesitate to contact me if you are interested in being a club coach; the rewards are great!

As we move into the second half of our year, my team and I are here to help each of you grow and retain your members, for the strength of your clubs creates a strong District.

Janice Buffalow, DTM
Club Growth Director
District 83
2015-2016

DISTRICT 83 GEOGRAPHY

Most northern: Nyack Toastmasters

Most southern: Shore Speakers Toastmasters

Most western: Clinton Toastmasters

Most eastern: Nyack Toastmasters

Are You in Shape for Training?

By Lynda Starr, DTM

Every good athlete or musician knows that one does not immediately start with the most difficult training elements. First, one must warm up, stretch and generally prepare one's body and mind for what's to come. **Saturday, December 12 is the winter installment of the District 83 Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI).** It will take place at ToysRUS in Wayne. The purpose of the TLI is to give current and potential club officers the opportunity to network, share best practices, and be inspired. While the summer training focuses on introducing officers to their positions, the winter sessions are a time to reflect on what one has accomplished, what there is yet to do and even to start thinking about next year—June will be here sooner than you think.

Because we are all volunteers and Toastmasters does not employ any trainers, we each must rely on one another for the skills and attitudes needed to fulfill one's specific leadership position. Together, we help clubs, areas, divisions and districts reach the goals of empowering members to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth. Toastmasters International describes the TLI as one in which training programs are conducted concurrently. In addition to the programs provided by World Headquarters, there are additional courses, such as ones on evaluation, contest judging and leadership.

Prepare in advance for your training session whether you choose to attend the TLI or a smaller session in December, January or February. In addition to the Distinguished Club Plan (DCP) point, attending training a second time has several

benefits, according to Training Club Leaders. Clubs often experience mid-term turnover of officers; therefore the second training gives replacement officers an opportunity to learn their roles. Continuing officers have the opportunity to discuss any problems they may be having and share best practices for improving their own clubs.

Before you come to the session, do your homework. Read through the Club Leadership Handbook. If you did not receive one from your club president, you can download one from <http://www.toastmasters.org>. See how your current role

follows or varies from what is written and make notes if you have any questions. Also, jot down any issues you'd like to discuss both questions dealing with meeting protocol, member interaction, members' goals and issues that you think the other members of your training group can learn from such as accomplishments or how you and your club overcame an issue.

The December 12 TLI will consist of specific club officer sessions plus Radhi Spear, DTM, our Regional Advisor will offer insights and there will be a session on Contests – Everything You Need to Know to Run a Quality Contest and one on Contest Judging – Improving your Skills.

Paula Markert, District 83's Program Quality Director (formerly known as the Lieutenant Governor—Education and Training) is involved in planning the day. "The TLI is a great opportunity to develop one's leadership skills and to learn valuable tips to take back to the club," notes Paula. "After all, Toastmasters is where leaders are made."

While the summer training focuses on introducing officers to their positions, the winter sessions are a time to reflect on what one has accomplished, what there is yet to do and even to start thinking about next year—June will be here sooner than you think.

Winter 2015 TLI

December 12th, 2015

TOYSRUS, INC
859 Berdan Avenue
Wayne, NJ

8:30 AM – 1:00 PM

8:30 – 9:00 Coffee, Bagels and Networking

9:00 – 9:10 District Announcements

9:15 – 10:15 Breakout Sessions

- President
- VP of Education
- VP of Membership
- VP Public Relations
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- SAA

10:15 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 1:00 More Training

Contests – Everything you need to know to run a Quality contest

Contest Judging – Improving your Skills

Radhi Spear, DTM, our Regional Advisor

Register online at www.toastmasters83.org

Five Lessons from Toastmasters for the Workplace

By Lynda Starr, DTM

While Toastmasters is often thought of as a public speaking organization, to characterize it only as such, sells it short. As an avid Toastmaster and a current club and district leader, I have seen the benefit to myself and other Toastmasters regarding how we communicate with and treat others and how we approach a task. These items can be leveraged beyond the club meeting or event to social and work environments.

Below are five Toastmasters tips that can be applied to interaction with coworkers, clients, prospects and friends.

Practice and Preparation

Like the Scouts, Toastmasters are always prepared. It is common to arrive at a meeting and find that a speaker or role taker had a last-minute conflict and won't be able to attend. Someone needs to fill in. In any work task, it is important to be prepared, which can range from practicing with the product demo or PowerPoint slides to knowing what you're going to say whether you're hitting the phone, having an in-person interaction or writing an article. An outline or bullet points can guide you in remembering key points.

Have a Sandwich

Back in the day on American Idol, Simon Cowell would insult the performer with such quips as, "who told you that you can sing?" Paula Abdul on the other hand would say, "You looked so happy to be up there, it's a shame your notes were flat." While Simon was more entertaining, he showed little respect for the contestant and left them with little intact self-esteem. A better approach to offering feedback is the Sandwich approach. Because Toastmasters provides a safe learning environment, when one evaluates (not critiques, which connotes criticism), the approach is to start with a good point about the speaker's presentation, offer some areas of improvement and then finish with positive statements. This approach can be used in the workplace. "Great report, here are a few spots where the language can be tightened; loved the way you provided analogies to guide the reader." This flows much better and does not tear down your employee or coworker as would, "Did you write this with one brain tied behind your back? Needs rewriting, but I don't have time to tell you which parts need revising." Everyone from the intern to the CEO deserves respect and well-thought out feedback whether on a project or performance appraisal to avoid demoralizing the person.

If you're not excited, no one will be

Although the Toastmasters program consists of a series of manuals and assigned topics such as "using visual aids," members are free to pick their own topics for each project. They are encouraged to pick something in which they are interested and about which they want to learn more. The idea is to pick a topic you like so that you'll be able to share your interest with others. The same is true for any presentation or article. Although you may be asked to give a status report, you can add your own style when imparting the information to avoid a dry, monotone delivery of data points. Before picking up the phone

for a cold call or other sales call, you want to make sure you are excited about the topic or product or you will not convince your target to be excited.

Know Your Audience

Your speech or presentation is not about you nor should it be designed to meet your needs. Rather, it is targeted to the audience and meeting its needs for information, entertainment, etc. The same is true for a sales presentation, status report or proposal—how are you solving your audience's pain points? For example, engineers prefer technical details on the product while sales and marketing personnel want to hear about how to position benefits with target customers although the topic may be the same.

Get to the Point

With any communication, be it public speaking or one-to-one conversations, it is important to remove the clutter and detours in what one is saying. In Toastmasters, we count ahs, ums and filler words that distract the listener. We point out how speakers can keep speeches and evaluations on target. No one wants to hear an evaluation of his/her speech on car buying that rambles off to talking about an uncle's old jalopy. In the same way, an audience of one or one hundred does not want to hear how the revenue graph reminds you of your hike up Mount McKinley.

As you can tell, I am a strong proponent of Toastmasters. It has helped me to build communication and leadership expertise that have helped me in business by giving me new skills in confidence.

Be Careful of Misused Words in Your Speeches:

"Lie" - to recline or rest on a surface.

"Lay" means to put or place something somewhere.

"Farther" - refers to physical distance.

"Further" - refers to advancement.

"Set" - a transitive verb meaning to put or to place.

"Sit" - an intransitive verb meaning to be seated.

Going Beyond the Club

By Radhi Spear, DTM, PDG (46), RA 9

Toastmasters gives us so many opportunities to hone our communication and leadership skills. A new Toastmaster can see that the club offers speaking opportunities and club leadership roles, but there is so much more! What becomes evident to most Toastmasters is that they need to perform one district role at a minimum to get to DTM, and that is what motivates most to step out of the club environment and that's usually as an area director. As an area director, you perform one of the most crucial roles in Toastmasters—you become the face of Toastmasters International to your area clubs and your interaction with the individual clubs and your feedback regarding the club is what triggers the enormous support system that TI has built to support each member. Members cannot succeed to their utmost potential without a well-run club. Clubs have the support of their area director. The area directors, in turn, have the support of the division directors and the division directors have support from the District leaders and the District leaders have the support from their region advisors and World Headquarters (WHQ). As Dr. Ralph Smedley, founder of Toastmasters said, "Ours is the only organization I know, dedicated to the individual, we work together to bring out the best in each of us and then we apply these skills to help others."

Toastmasters provides training for every position and even though it looks like a lot of time and energy is spent helping others, you are really helping yourself grow and learn. It is truly a win-win proposition and I urge all of you to pursue both the communication and the leadership track. Where else would you learn to run a contest, or organize a training

session? Our district has two conferences every year. The conferences are so much fun, but there is so much planning and organizing that goes on behind the scenes. At our last conference you would have seen that the conference chairs thanked the 27 committees that helped make the conference look effortless. These committees ranged from Hospitality and Education to Marketing and Graphic Design. There are so many opportunities to improve your skills for the real world and it's a very safe environment in which to learn.

As you must have experienced at your home club, Toastmasters is like your family, but when you go beyond the club, you are increasing the size of your family. You get to meet people from all walks of life; this provides you networking opportunities and exposes you to different views and ways of doing things you never thought of. By stepping outside your comfort zone you learn, grow and enrich yourself.

My Toastmasters journey has helped me a lot and I am a true believer and know that it can help you! You may already be a good speaker and leader, but you can always become an even better speaker and leader, the opportunities that Toastmasters offers are vast and varied and they are there for you. It is amazing to me to see all that is offered for such minimal dues that we pay; the return on investment is huge. Of course you reap what you sow and the more you put into Toastmasters, the more you get out of it. Another favorite quote of mine from Dr. Ralph Smedley is, "Your destination determines your journey." I wish you a great journey in Toastmasters!

Save the Date: District 83 Spring Conference

Step Up to Success!

May 21-22, 2016

Hyatt Regency New Brunswick

Saturday, May 21: Full Day

Sunday, May 22: Half Day

Registration form available on the following page.

- Keynote speaker: Johnny Campbell, DTM, AS
- Choose from 9 workshops
- District 83 Officer Elections



TOASTMASTERS DISTRICT 83 2016 SPRING CONFERENCE

Step Up to Success

www.toastmasters83.org

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 21-22, 2016



Hyatt Regency New Brunswick

2 Albany St, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

(732) 873-1234

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION

Full Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Club Name: _____ Div/Area: _____

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	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

Dinner Choices Chicken Fish Vegetarian

Registration Fee: Conference cost - \$160 – discounted to \$140 for early bird until 2/29

**Mail Registration Form & Payment to
Spring Conference Registration Chair:**

Irene Freeman, ACS/ALS
75 Poplar Drive, Morris Plains NJ 07950
973 432 9016
irenefreemantm@gmail.com

**For Questions, Please Contact:
Spring Conference Co-Chairs**

Olga Berejnaia, DTM
908 922 3450 olgabdtm@gmail.com
Lynda Starr, DTM
201 320 1752 lbstarr@optonline.net

Please contact the Hyatt directly for room reservations

Your attendance is agreement to be photographed/videographed, otherwise, please opt out

Make check payable to: District 83 Toastmasters

Quest Diagnostics Madison Holds Charter Ceremony

By Susan Chrusciel, ACB, ALB

On October 8, 2015 Quest Diagnostics Madison held their charter ceremony. Presiding over the ceremony on behalf of District 83 was Pamela Winter, DTM. Several members of neighboring area 22 club, Northern Stars Advanced, visited to provide their support and guidance including Division B Director Catherine Ruiterman, ACS, ALS and Anthony Snowden, CC. After a lively well-attended meeting where several members gave their Ice Breaker speeches, Pam presented the club with both their official charter and club banner.



Above: Club members in attendance (L to R): John Boucard, Stacey Ingram, Vinny Pacione, Yashmini Jagrup, Shamar Armstrong, Laura Bloomstein, Arnold Alberto, Omar Joseph, Peter Harkin, Dom Rello, Jason Reinhardt, Mike Schmidt, Erica Drozd, Ilona Khenkin, and Nathan Adamo.



Above: Pamela Winter, DTM, PDG presents club banner to club officer and mentor Arnold Alberto.

Photography by Anthony Snowden, CC.

Eagle Toastmasters Celebrates its 10th Anniversary

By Fran Okeson DTM 18, PDG (46)

In 2005, the Smedley's Speakers Advanced Toastmasters club received the Founders Award from Toastmasters International for sponsoring another new club. Smedley's already chartered several new clubs since it was itself chartered in 1997.

The difference with this new club, Eagle Toastmasters, is that it was chartered in Lagos, Nigeria. At that time, I had already co-sponsored/mentored more than 27 new clubs in metropolitan New York/New Jersey since joining the organization in 1988. To this date, my name is on 39 new club charters.

I had a chance meeting with Ambassador Vincent S. Okobi who lives in Lagos, but visited the Toastmasters International Convention in August 2005 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

When the Ambassador called the Toastmasters headquarters in California to get information on how to build a club in his country, where there were none at the time, he was told that all the officials were at the annual convention. So he flew to the convention in Toronto.

At the same time, I was getting ready to join the new International President of the Toastmasters organization at his table for the Club Leadership Luncheon. Dr. Dilip R. Abayasekara, DTM, AS, PIP, a member of five Toastmasters clubs around the world including Smedley's, invited all of his club presidents to join him for the luncheon.

As fate would have it, the ambassador and I met in the banquet hall and decided to talk about starting a club in Nigeria instead of eating lunch. After many emails and telephone calls from Staten Island to Nigeria and back, Eagle Toastmasters became club #855814-U on December 9, 2005. Later, the club was assigned to District 94. Ambassador Okobi was the Eagle's first president.

Congratulations to all the Eagles in Nigeria on their tenth anniversary!



Above: (Left to right) Fran, Dilip and Vincent. Photo courtesy of Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46).

EDUCATIONALLY SPEAKING

This month, Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46), shares a flyer with ideas to help promote your Toastmasters club. Please credit Fran if you use the flyer in your promotional material.

Get the word ***OUT!!!***

**Are your Toastmasters club meetings all they're supposed to be?
Do your meetings begin and end on time?**

**Are they interesting and exciting to both members and guests?
Are the speakers prepared to speak?**

Are agendas sent to all participants before the meetings?

**Do your members create an atmosphere of learning?
Do they try to move out of their comfort zones and tackle new subjects?**

**Do their speeches encourage members to expand their knowledge?
The world is ever-changing. Have a panel discuss those changes.**

Then...

Publicize your club to the world!

- *Send meeting notices and reports to your local newspapers.
- *Send club flyers to organizations looking for "guest" speakers.
- *Invite a local celebrity to address your club.
- *Have someone talk about your club on radio /television.
- *Put your club meeting notice in church bulletins.
- * Put club flyers in local libraries.

For more ideas, contact: Fran Okeson DTM 18, PDG (46)
[\(E\) frantotten@verizon.net](mailto:frantotten@verizon.net) or 718-984-1339

SAY YES! BE THE JOKEMASTER!

By Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALS

When your Vice Presidents of Education asks, "Would you like to deliver the joke or inspirational thought of the day?" which one do you choose? Deliver a joke, or an inspirational thought?

Given a choice, most members choose to deliver the inspirational thought of the day. The reason: most members feel they cannot deliver a joke with confidence (I can honestly say that at times, I find myself deferring to the inspirational thought of the day). Some members have told me that they are not funny. Admittedly, there are some people who have a natural talent in this area, however; I believe it is a skill that can be learned.

The Jokemaster sets the tone of the meeting. After a stressful day at the office or at home, the joke you deliver at your club meeting can brighten a person's day. Also, when a visitor comes to visit your club, it will make them feel comfortable and at ease.

Another added benefit is that you contribute to the health and well-being of your fellow Toastmasters. In fact, in an article by Huffington Post contributor Yagana Shah, entitled 'New Study Shows That Laughter is Really the Best Medicine,' Dr. Gurinder

S. Bains, Loma Linda University, said, "Twenty minutes of humor per day can enhance your learning ability and delayed recall."

In view of the benefits previously mentioned, I believe that we can all be successful in this role. The key is to prepare for it prior to the meeting.

Select a joke from either online sources or a joke book (I know people who actually keep a joke file). Since it's only 1-2 minutes, memorizing the joke can help with the delivery and timing. Make sure you use pauses and pacing effectively (You can also choose to read it, observing the suggestions above). Also, ask your mentor to help you. Test the joke on your friends or family members; notice their reaction, then adjust accordingly.

The meeting day has arrived. The Toastmaster of the day says, "I'd like to call Toastmaster Smith to deliver the joke or inspirational thought of the day." Since you have prepared and tested your material, you get up, shake hands the Toastmaster's hand, and deliver your joke. The reward: your audience's applause and laughter!

D83 TOASTMASTERS – A VALUABLE NETWORKING RESOURCE

By Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALS

"If you want to go somewhere, it's best to find someone who has already been there." – Robert Kiyosaki

Robert Kiyosaki, well-known entrepreneur and author of the book "Poor Dad, Rich Dad," built his business on networking. Networking expands our horizons because it exposes us to those specific people who will be valuable in our present and our future.

Most of us are familiar with networking events held by organizations such as Whine and Dine, the local chambers of commerce, and WIB (Women in Business Networking). However, did you know that as a Toastmaster, we also have an excellent resource for networking?

Whether it is in the club environment, a competition, officer training, or the District Conference, we have the opportunity to connect to, or create connections, that can lead us either to gain employment, increase our business, or foster a mentorship relationship.

The training for networking begins in our clubs. We learn to speak off the cuff during Table Topics, listen to others during evaluations, and become more confident by serving in leadership roles during meetings. Our skills are further strengthened when we serve as district leaders, or become speech contest competitors.

As we are developing our skills, we must think about what we want to say about ourselves, our careers, and our business (if applicable). Also, we must be prepared with one important item – the business card. Really think about the design of

your business card. It represents you as a person and a brand. If you do not have your own, download a design from the Toastmasters International website: <http://www.toastmasters.org/Leadership-Central/Logos-Images-and-Templates/Club-and-District-Stationery>. This is very important during the District 83 Fall and Spring Conferences, where all Toastmasters come together to learn and share experiences.

Recently, I attended a networking event hosted by *Entrepreneur* magazine. The keynote speaker was wil.i.am, lead singer of the group The Black Eyed Peas, and owner of many business ventures. Although at times his language was 'colorful,' what he said about networking resonated with many of us who attended the conference. "Networking led me to an association with Apple," said wil.i.am, "that then led to an association with Jimmie Lovine, who taught me about diversification and branding, who encouraged me to lead my current venture – technological products designed totally by my company, i.am+."

The key is, to be open, recognize, and be prepared for when those opportunities come. When a miner starts the venture to dig for gold, he doesn't know if it's there, until he digs deeper to find the gold. For leaders and communicators, District 83 Toastmasters is that gold!

Whether you are at a club or district event, be prepared with what you will communicate about your club, yourself, or your company (if you're an entrepreneur). Bring your business card, share it! You never know where that one simple gesture will take you.

Sometimes, Memories Are All That's Left – the Series

By Phyllis Goldblatt, DTM

After reading Fran Okeson's "Sometimes, Memories Are All That's Left" in the June 2015 issue of The Voice, I suggested that we might make a series out of memories from various members of District 83. For now, I will limit the memories to those related to the time before Fran and I joined in October 1988 and June 1989. In later issues, I hope to continue through our years as District 46 and then as District 83.

If you would like to share some of your memories, please send them to me at pkwg@gmail.com. I hope some more of our "old-timers" will find memories that they are willing to share. As we go along, the later submissions will be included.

At the recent Fall 2015 District Conference, District Director Bill Hood, DTM announced that we are starting a project to create a District 83 History, for use during our 10th anniversary in 2018. We hope that some of the information collected from our memories will help with this project.

I hope you will enjoy reading the memories I have received thus far...

Margaret Flory, DTM, PID, PDG (46)

My first Toastmasters hero was an area governor, John Sloan. When he went on business trips, he sent picture postcards to the club presidents in his area. Most of my fond memories of then District 46, which later split into 46 and 83, are of people, like Joe Bowen, a district governor from the Knickerbocker Club in NYC. At a loss to pick a single person as Toastmaster of the Year, he gave the award to "the women of District 46." As the next in line, I took the trophy home. However, the district had already been led by an excellent, gracious leader, Carol Isselian of the Schering club. Her able fellow Gaveliers, Ann Marion and Cathy Filarski were often with her at district meetings. There was a time when the monthly district meetings were held on the 78th floor of the World Trade Center. I think that one of our corporate clubs, Ebasco, lent us a room. Robbie Roberts on Long Island was as close as a phone call and gave me advice whenever I asked.

I was exasperated, once when I outlined educational goals for the district, to hear Sister Alma Wedge's response, "God willing." I wanted to concentrate on what we could do, but Sister Alma turned out to be right, I guess, because we met those goals. Sometimes it is the personal stories that stick with me, such as computer whiz (and district governor) Deanna Brown's organizing of her Italian grandmother's prayer list. More locally, at the Sandoz club, I was inspired by John Condon, Bob Carlson, Mark Grebenau, and Margarete Peterson. And in northern NJ, I could always depend on Chick Claeys, Morris Meislik, Grafton Dickson and many more.

Jim Samuel, DTM, PDG (46)

Grafton Dickson, I have heard, cast the deciding vote at a board meeting in Houston to allow women to join Toastmasters.

Club 739438 was called Brooklynites, though the club meets in Metuchen. Jim Friend helped start the club. When Jim died, I proposed the club be renamed Jim Friend Toastmasters. It is so named.

Phyllis Goldblatt, DTM

My only memory of Grafton Dickson was of a gentleman who had a really nice smile, but never, ever smiled in photographs.

On the other hand, I remember hearing of Morris Meislik in local politics. To me, he was a man with strong opinions which he was willing to share. I'm sure Toastmasters helped with that. In 1994, I participated in a Dramatic Reading contest above the club level. My son, Edward, who had just had his 7th birthday, accompanied me. Morris, then over 80, was there. I remember thinking that I wished I had been able to know him sooner. In spite of physical limitations, he expressed himself so well.

When I first joined MBL Toastmasters, the source of much of my information was, of course, Ken Schaefer. He was at that time the treasurer of both Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company and District 46. He mentioned names to me – International Director Margaret Flory, immediate past district governor Deanna Brown, and district governor Neil Gerhard. Unfortunately, I have never had the opportunity to get to know Deanna. However, I am happy to say that I've been able to get to know Neil and work with him at one of our Regional Conferences. He's half of the pair of Toastmasters that caused Edward to ask about 20 years ago, "How many Toastmasters does it take to change a lightbulb?" The answer is "Only one, if it's Neil Gerhard or Brad Shilling". Over the last few years, I've had several opportunities to sit with Margaret, and she hasn't changed my first impression of her. She's a wonderful, engaging lady who I would be proud to call a friend. And always, to me, International Director.

I can't imagine Districts 46 and 83 without Lee and Don Abramson. Several years ago, Lee sent me an article he had written for The Toastmaster. I can't find the article now, but I can tell anyone who is interested about his suggestion for panel evaluations. I've used it with great success. Don has been the Credentials Chair as long as I remember, and he has been able to gather all of those statistics for each Business Meeting, giving us the confidence whether we had quorum (or not).

Edward Goldblatt, ACS, ALB

The only District Governor from before 1990 whom I've gotten to know is Neil Gerhard. To me, he has always been tall, funny, and a gentleman.

SpeakAbility

By Phil Munkacsy, ATM-B

This is the second in a series of articles about advanced Toastmasters clubs in District 83. This month, we highlight SpeakAbility and Brunswick Advanced.

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

As an advanced club, we provide the access, flexibility and creativity a Toastmaster may need to fulfill their speaking goals at a faster rate than a traditional club. That is, our agenda is created by the members based on their specific needs and can accommodate projects or speeches of any size or length. Essentially, if you can propose it, you can do it. Also, since we meet only once a month this would not interfere with their membership at other clubs.

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

Due to the size of our club, members must often perform more than one role. However, this is offset by the fact that you are always guaranteed an opportunity to speak at SpeakAbility.

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

We plan on having a club video project whereby members will give 3-5 minute taped speeches and these videos will be evaluated by other members. We are also providing the opportunity for members to give corporate presentations that can benefit them in their workplace. Finally, we are accommodating requests from advanced members from other clubs to give speeches, which our club will evaluate.

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

I would tell them to attend a few meetings before deciding to join to make sure it is a good fit for them and will help with their speaking goals.

Do you have anything else to add?

We are open to anyone who has completed at least their CC6 speech and they do not have to be a member of another club.



Above (left to right): Philip Munkacsy, ATM-B; Guest from another NJ TM club, Teresa Palmer, DTM; Mike Alfano, CC, CL; Anne Goldman Swartz, DTM; John Martoglio, CC; Ed Cruikshank, CTM, CL.

Photo by Michelle L. Williams, CC.

<http://speakabilitytoastmasters.com/>

SpeakAbility meets the Third Wednesday of every month from 7:45-9:30 pm at the Chestnut Community Church, 303 Chestnut Street, Roselle, NJ 07023

For more information, please contact Philip Munkacsy, ATM-B, VP of Public Relations: philzee2@verizon.net

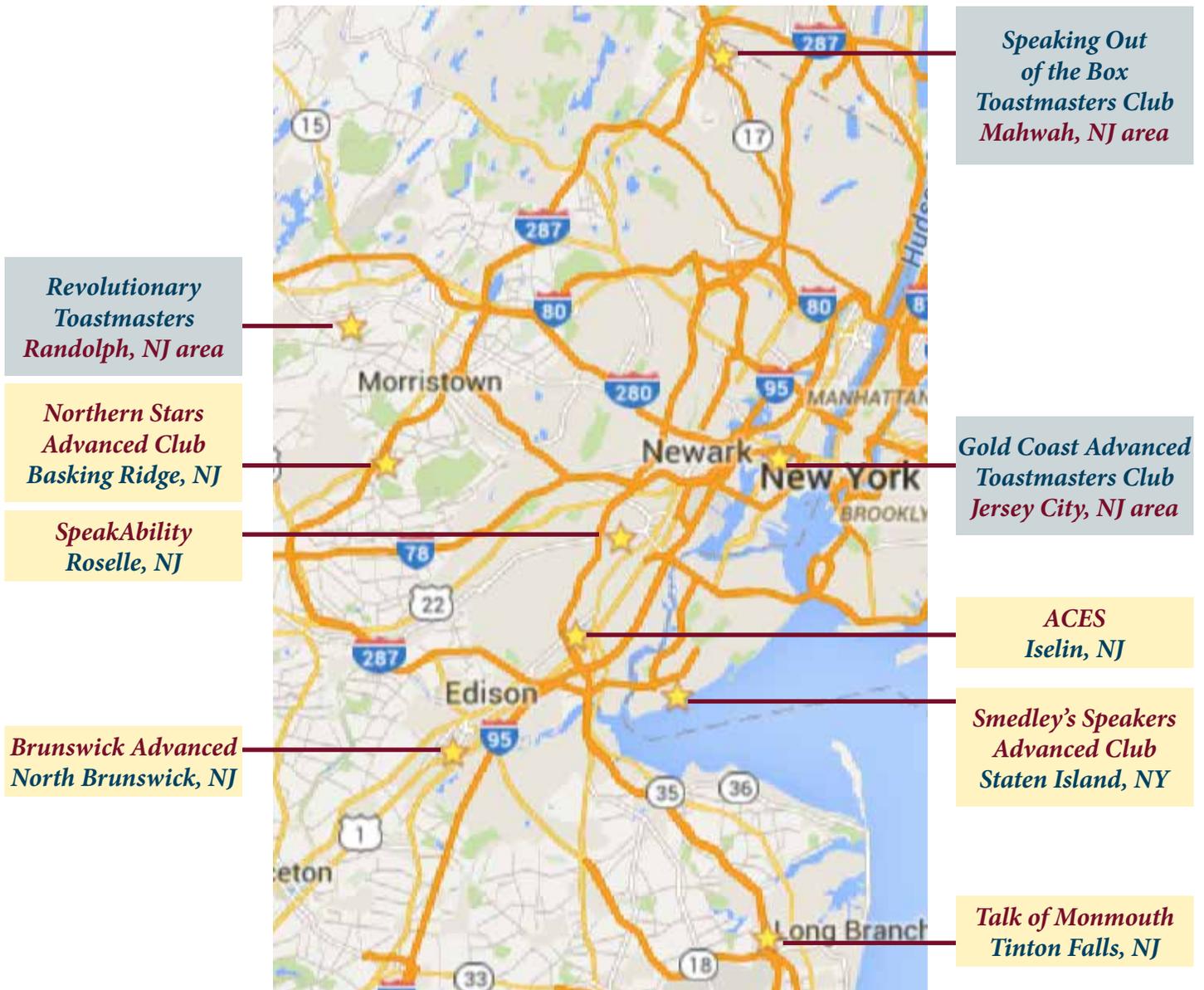
More information about Advanced Clubs continues on the following pages. We highlight locations of advanced Clubs in District 83 and feature an article about Brunswick Advanced Club.

Advanced Clubs

- Provide additional opportunities for strong feedback from other advanced speakers outside of your home club to help take your skills to the next level.
- Demonstrate a variety of speech evaluation methods and techniques that you can share with and implement in your home club (if you are a member of another club.)
- Create an environment where members may choose to work on longer speech projects from advanced manuals.
- Enable members to work with and network with other advanced speakers for a fresh perspective and new ideas.

Looking for an Advanced Club in District 83?

Currently, there are six advanced clubs in District 83 (shown in yellow tinted boxes.)
Three more advanced clubs are forming and are expected to charter soon
(shown in gray tinted boxes.)



For more information about new clubs forming:

Revolutionary Toastmasters:

Janette Alexander, ACS, ALS, jalexan@solixinc.com,
973-581-5302 or
Dee Rincon, ACB, dee_rincon@yahoo.com, 973-366-5596

Gold Coast Advanced Toastmasters Club:

Tony Figueroa, DTM, 551-998-9988 or
Darnelle Richardson, DTM, 201-424-9090

Speaking Out of the Box Toastmasters Club:

Rachel Weiss, DTM: D83RachelW@gmail.com

Brunswick Advanced Club

By Alex Volyand, ACS, CL



L to R: Alex Volyand, ACS, CL; Emilia Volyand, ACG, ALB; George Corrado, DTM; Manny Reyes, ACS, CL; Susanne Arney, DTM, Larry Lazare, CC.

Photo by Begonia Reyes.

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

BA has fabulous opportunities to explore the horizon in the company of both seasoned and intermediate members.

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

Dual membership and commitment are required. It involves more time and money.

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

BA club had an opportunity to meet members of other clubs at the District Conference. Our own Don Abramson competed in the Tall Tales contest representing BA and put BA on the map.

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

Go for it! Visit and participate even if you are not done with your CC – benefit from the next level feedback, mentoring and inspiration!

Do you have anything else to add?

Members of BA work as a team and encourage each other. We learn from each other and support not just Toastmasters, but people in general. This is what leadership is all about!

<http://3325285.toastmastersclubs.org/>

1st and 3rd Wednesdays
North Brunswick Municipal Building
710 Hermann Road, North Brunswick, New Jersey 08902
Welcome at 6:45, meeting begins at 7:00 pm

How Brunswick Advanced Club Came into Being

By George Corrado, DTM

I did not start out to create a new club and certainly not an advanced club. We just had a problem with my home club—a problem most clubs would love to have. Every year, our club had 40-to-60 members during peak months. We could not provide enough opportunities to practice public speaking and leadership to all in four hours of meetings a month.

The consequences; long waits for speaking opportunities and chances at leadership.

What I saw happening was a stratification of opportunities. New members were given favorite status so they would not lose interest or lose heart. CC climbers saw dwindling opportunities as their speech experience increased. CC graduates had fewer opportunities except as cheerleaders. Membership turnover was robust, but was hardly noticed because our membership numbers were always strong. We were disappointing many of the more ambitious and timid members.

I brought the problem to the attention of the club. We looked for solutions: adding more monthly meetings: Rejected; adding monthly meetings on a different day: Rejected; Starting a sister club: Rejected; etc...etc... No agreements.

Coming near the end of my term as club president of Brunswick Toastmasters, I made another try at expanding our club to serve all our members better. It was also the end of the District year and the district was offering benefits to new clubs. Interest in creating an advanced club took hold and we incorporated at the last possible moment creating “Brunswick Advanced.” Our idea was to divide Brunswick Toastmaster along educational lines. Brunswick Toastmasters primarily for newer members and Brunswick Advanced for those who had their CC and wanted to go for their DTMs. We incorporated.

Our membership immediately took a dive. Many joined us to help the District reach its goals and did not participate in our meeting. We carried on meetings with as few as two members. We always had a great time trying productive alternatives in conducting our meetings. After our first year we had the goals to be distinguished except we could not meet our membership quota. Our second year we became Distinguished with help from our friends. We open our doors to guest Toastmasters for our mutual benefit. Our evaluations are more direct, stronger, more positive and more appropriate for advanced Toastmasters.

I was not aiming for leadership awards or more badges, I became a leader by seeing a problem and trying to resolve it. Brunswick Advanced is about leadership through solving problems together.

Join an advanced club and see how your leadership and speaking abilities mature to meet demanding challenges. Advanced clubs are an open challenge, join and become what you can't see now.

Celebrating the Life of Dennis Fokas, DTM

Dennis Fokas unfortunately passed away in October. Several Toastmasters who knew him, share their remembrances.

...

Thank you District 83 very much for the tribute to Dennis Fokas.

Dennis was not just a friend of mine, but we were also related. His cousin is my sister's husband.

I first met him at a District 46 conference in 2002. A few months later he found out by accident that we were related, and he was very excited about it.

Among his Toastmasters accomplishments, Dennis made it twice to the District 46 final in the International Speech contest, and he also served as area governor. He was very active in helping charter new clubs.

He was always in a good mood and willing to help. He always made me feel great when we were together. Even when he was near the end, he was downplaying his health condition, and made me believe he had a long life ahead of him.

When the District conferences were in New Jersey, he would invite me to stay at his home.

I learnt about his death when my mother called me at my job and left a message. I was devastated and started crying.

This is all I can think for now. It was a terrible loss for both Districts 46 and 83.

Charilaos "Harry" Aneziris

...

It's a beautiful fall evening in 2005. I'm taking a noncredit course at Brookdale Community College called "practical philosophy." I was sure this was going to be a great class, but it's not going so well. I'm having a hard time getting engaged. Not because I don't like philosophy because I do. I'm at the point where I'm ready to give up on the course. Luckily I stuck it out for one more night.

During the break a man in his mid-40s with dark black hair strikes up a conversation. He's got a great smile and you can tell he's generally interested in the class and the conversation. As the break is getting ready to wrap up he asked, "Have you ever heard of Toastmasters?" As many of you have probably witnessed, when Toastmasters is mentioned to someone who is unfamiliar with the organization, the reactions often vary widely from a raised eyebrow to a cocked head or blank stare. I'm sure that my face was a combination of all of those looks that fall night when Dennis Fokas started telling me about this mysterious organization.

Dennis was a devoted Toastmaster for countless years. He was always willing to lend a hand and participate at the



Photo courtesy of Radhi Spear, DTM, PDG (46), RA 9.

club, district, division and national levels. Some of you may remember him running from room to room recording the district conferences. God only knows how many hundreds or even thousands of people he invited to Toastmasters. I was one of the many. Thanks to that invitation from Dennis I've been to multiple conferences and held several offices in multiple clubs. I've been a member of 4 different Toastmasters clubs and the confidence I gained as a direct result of Dennis's contagious enthusiasm allowed me to become a professional speaker.

Dennis shared his encouragement and valuable resources that help me become the confidence speaker I am today. As a result of his encouragement I've had the opportunity to speak in front of over 50,000 audience members in over 500 presentations.

Thank you Dennis.

Charles Fleisher, ACB

...

I remember Dennis Fokas and his contribution to the formation of Open Door Toastmasters.

Dennis and Tony Figueroa came to Open Door to present a demo meeting – they were accomplished a bit differently than they are now!

Dennis presented so well; I was really impressed. And, he was so devoted to the program.

For that year and years after – Dennis and I would meet in the Wendy's parking lot – he was the videographer for the conferences – and he always had the CDs for me.

Dennis will be sorely missed.

Paula Markert, DTM

Continued on page 20

Continued from page 19

...

Former member of Smedley's Speakers Advanced Toastmasters club, Dennis Fokas passed away in Greece. During my term as the District 46 governor, Dennis was a great help in chartering new clubs around the New York and New Jersey parts of the district.

It's important to remember what a wonderful team player Dennis was. For those who didn't have the pleasure of knowing Dennis, let me share a story with you.

My Lt. Governor Education and Training, Nick LoBue, a current member of Smedley's and I did a demo meeting in New Jersey during 2001-2002. If my memory is correct, I believe it was at Kevin Thompson's first club and I asked Joan Maurizio to give the demo speech. I asked Dennis to be her evaluator. Joan did speech # 8 from the basic manual, (Getting Comfortable with Visual Aids) and she brought lots of visual aids/props!!!

We forgot that Dennis sometimes had trouble with the pronunciation of certain words, so Dennis gave Joan a glowing evaluation, citing how well she handled her PROMPTS. The PROMPTS were very appropriate. She had just the right number of PROMPTS to make her speech interesting, etc.

We teased him all the way home. He was a man who could laugh at himself and cause others to laugh with him. I'll miss Dennis Fokas and ask you, whether you knew Dennis or not, to look up and wish him Godspeed. He will be missed.

Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46)

...

My dear friend, Toastmaster Dennis Fokas DTM passed away in the Greek town of Patras due to illness.

Dennis and I used to conduct Toastmasters demonstration meetings together. We have traveled to many corners of NJ and NY, marketing Toastmasters to new people and organizations.

Dennis was the district videographer before he moved back to Greece. He purchased his own high-end equipment and spent countless hours of his time to produce and edit professional quality conference videos for both Districts 46 and 83.

Dennis was eloquent, enthusiastic, upbeat, sincere, and friendly. He was a perfect salesperson and marketer. He was like a generous big brother to me. I am very sorry to have lost him.

Rest in peace Dionysius / Dennis.....

Brian Lin, DTM, PDG

...

I was informed by "Harry" Charilaos Aneziris that my dear friend Dennis Fokas passed away yesterday. Dennis was one of the most helpful and reliable Toastmasters. He brought so much energy and enthusiasm to every meeting. I have driven with him to so many demo meetings in New York and New Jersey. He was always ready to help. He also had a great sense of humor. I kept pushing him to get his DTM and he would say I am a DTM – Demo Team Member. I remember when I was DG and it was June 30 and I was urging him to submit his DTM. I

was talking to him on the phone and he replied in a serious voice "Oh I have to give one last speech, so can you hear it on the phone and give an evaluation? Then I am done." I was taken aback, and he started laughing, he had completed everything already and I got to send it in, as he belonged to my home club AT&T Middletown Toastmasters and he got his real DTM.

He was a permanent guest member of my club, and my members and I always enjoyed his visits to our club. He gave us little flags to use for the timing, he would give me DVDs of talks he heard and because of him I got to meet an actual Presidential candidate. We had a demo meeting in the afternoon, so Dennis said we should go listen to Carly Fiorina's talk to the Women Business Owners of NJ in Edison. He was so full of life, it's a huge loss for all of us. He will truly be missed!

Radhi Spear, DTM, PDG (46), Region 9 Advisor

...

I knew Dennis Fokas while I was serving as Lt Gov. of Marketing. Dennis was my go-to person for the demo meetings. Dennis often reminded me that DTM stood for Demo Team Member. It was a nice reminder that we should spread the word about Toastmasters and Dennis loved to do just that. It was hard not to get inspired by Toastmasters when Dennis spoke at the demo meeting. Those demo meetings quickly turned to clubs that changed lives with the inspirational quotes often spoken by Dennis Fokas. Dennis was a great ambassador of Toastmasters that inspired many people and will remain in our lives and thoughts.

Tom Somers, DTM, PDG

...

I met Dennis during the last few years he lived in New Jersey. To me, he was the friendly face behind video cameras at our district conferences. In the spring of 2012, when I was the interviewer for the district contests (and fell into a giggle fit with one of the contestants), Dennis took the time to sort through hours of video to extract a clip of just the interviews and email it over to me, long before the conference DVDs were ready. Thank you, Dennis for this and for your countless hours of service over the years for Districts 46 and 83.

*Anne Gilson, DTM
Immediate Past District Governor, 2015-2016*

...

I remember Dennis when he came to our club meetings at AT&T Middletown when he was back from Greece, from area contests and from district conferences, where he always so generously videotaped our events.

When I got involved helping our area and division governors at contests, Dennis helped me learn how to use the judging ballots effectively. He provided helpful hints such as, "write the contestants' names on the right and fold the paper under so you will not be influenced by the scores of the previous contestants." He also suggested, "start with a score of 100 and deduct points so you can do the math quickly. Be fair and

Continued on page 21

Continued from page 20

apply whatever scoring method you use consistently with each contestant." The other excellent advice he gave was, "sign and print your name on your ballot NOW. Tear off most of the signature panel of the ballot NOW!"

All of his advice is common sense to those who have judged several contests, but when I was starting out, it was extremely helpful to have Dennis guide me along.

Su Brooks, DTM

...

Charilaos Aneziris, "Harry", a friend and a Toastmaster, introduced Dennis Fokas to me as his cousin in 2005. We took trains to our home in many times together after attending District 46 contests. We carpooled to District 46 and District 83 conferences together. His stories made our train rides after long day of work and Toastmasters events so much pleasant and interesting.

I remember him an avid storyteller, a genuine human being with big heart and hearty laughter. One thing always intrigued me about him was his interest in getting to know others and his keen interest mixed with considerate curiosity to know other cultures.

He contributed to our district in many ways especially his contribution to our demo teams was remembered by many of us. I believe over the span of years of his involvement in our district was enormous. I heard someone mentioned in 2011, that over the time he helped us with over 80 demos. He was a natural and he loved being part of the demo team. He was our AV and video recorder in many conferences. He took the time to share video recordings – that was one of his hobbies and passion. He was very generous in sharing and giving his time, energy and laughter to others.

As if it was just yesterday, I remember him enthusiastically sharing stories of his brother getting married; he showed me the venue they had planned for his brother's wedding while he was giving me a ride to my car at the Belford ferry terminal after one of the late Toastmaster events. He was genuinely excited when he became uncle of twins and later I believe he went to Greece to attend their christening. He loved his family.

He was a collaborator. He truly wanted people to connect and help each other. He invited me to a Youth Leadership Program in NJ as keynote speaker. He just wanted to make this world a better place with his presence, generosity and hearty laughter.

What he was to us cannot be expressed merely in words. On one of the carpool rides together, he shared how the accident and untimely death of one of his friends by GSP 120 exit impacted him..... He reflected on fragility of life and how life can be so unpredictable. Who knew then, it will be us who will be reflecting upon it while my friend you are now gone.

Dennis, you will be missed and you have a very special place in my heart my friend. Know that your joyful presence had brightened this world and those around you. A loss to the world and a personal loss of a dear friend.....We will continue to cherish the joy you had shared with us in your very short time on earth.

I'm going to miss his company, our rides to countless contests, and our carpool to the conferences. I'll miss his entertaining stories, his zest for life, and his joyful, ebullient and uplifting presence. It breaks my heart and it still hurts to think that his time was so short with us and he was taken way too soon. He made such an impact on those who he came in contact with and touched them in so many ways over these years – with his candid presence, his big personality, his huge smile, hearty laughter, and his contagious genuine joyful presence.

Neerja Purang, DTM, IPDG (46)

NORTHERN STARS ADVANCED OPEN HOUSE



Want to learn more about advanced clubs and how one can help you?

Come Visit Us for an Open House!

Date: January 20, 2016

Time: 7 – 9 pm

Location: Verizon, 1 Verizon Way, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

This is a secure site.

Contact Pam Winter, DTM at least 24 hrs. in advance

pamela.l.winter@verizon.com

Phone: 908-559-3475

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Hillsborough Toastmasters Attend Small Business Expo

By John Patten, ACB, CL

Hillsborough Toastmasters Club #1689 recently added several new members, thanks to a local business expo in which the club participated. At the same time, members also learned some of the challenges faced to keeping the club growing.

Six of the club's members—Anna Cunningham, ACB; Cindy Mitzen ACB, ALB; Marcos Pagan; Gary Tully, ATM-B; John Patten, ACB, CL; and club president David Lingg, ACB, CL—attended the Oct. 3 Hillsborough Small Business Expo at the Hillsborough Municipal Complex after receiving an invitation to participate from Cathy Briant, a librarian at the Hillsborough Public Library and coordinator of the event.

"Cathy felt that Toastmasters can help small businesses with their presentations especially businesses just starting out," David said. "The officers of the Hillsborough Toastmasters agreed that the expo was a great opportunity to interact with the community, and to tell those at the expo about the benefits of Toastmasters International and the Hillsborough Toastmasters Club."

This year's expo was the third such event aimed at giving small businesses launched in the last three years in the area an opportunity to introduce themselves to the public.

Club members hoped to not only get more people in the community familiar with the local Toastmasters club, but also claim a few more members. The members attended the five-hour event with Toastmasters International handouts, ready to share information and enthusiasm for Toastmasters with attendees and presenters at the expo.

One of the participating club members brought a unique perspective for prospective members: two-month member Marcos had just given his Ice Breaker speech, but was nonetheless ready to share his experiences with others.

"It was difficult talking to strangers about who we are, what we do, and convincing them of the benefits (at least for me)," he said. "It was a bit nerve-wracking and it helped my public speaking experience as it wasn't the normal people from the club I needed to talk to."

Marcos said he noticed many people stopping by the Toastmasters table were not just unfamiliar with the local nine-year-old club, but really didn't know anything about Toastmasters. "I noticed most people I spoke to weren't aware of who we were or that there was a club in Hillsborough—if they knew of Toastmasters," Marcos said.

Gary said he noticed only one person he spoke to knew what Toastmasters is and what it's about. "One vendor I spoke with teaches law to students working on their master's degrees—he commented many of the students have difficulty with speaking," Gary said. "He was unaware of Toastmasters—he now is happy to advise his students to join Toastmasters as preparation for their careers."



Hillsborough Toastmasters Club members use their skills to talk to members of the community.

David experienced similar responses from the people he met at the expo.

"I was surprised by the number of people who did not know that Hillsborough had a Toastmasters Club," he said. "I tried to tell them about Toastmasters, in general, and about our club. I always tried to tell them how Toastmasters has benefited me and how Toastmasters is more than just prepared speeches, which is important to small businesses. I always tried to hand out information so they had something to refer to and provide our club's contact information."

Since the expo, the club has held three meetings—all of which drew more guests than usual—and has added three members with four other prospective members in the wings.

While the lessons on publicity gained will help the club continue to grow, Gary noted the lessons learned in getting the most from such community events. He offers these tips for other clubs looking for new ways to engage their communities:

- "Something to remember: we were invited (after holding club officer training at the municipal complex). We did not search it out. What is the takeaway on this? Become familiar with what takes place with business groups, volunteer organizations, even fairs. Some might be willing to provide 'free' space for a service organization like Toastmasters."

- "Planning for the event is critical—we had a team effort." Gary recommends having one person serve as the contact with the organizer and for participants to attend any event

Continued on page 23

Continued from page 22

planning meetings. "Attending the meeting provided important information on previous events as well as what the expectations are for us," he noted. Keeping the club's participating members or committee in the loop is important. "It is important each person knows their role/responsibility."

• Gary said it's important to have a variety of handouts for visitors and to set up the table display so that it is inviting and draws folks in. "We were quite fortunate to have a great location in the room," he said. "Always provide every visitor with some handouts. Make sure that an invite to your club meetings is in the handout. Show them the invite and remind them they and any friends/associates are welcomed to any meeting."

• "Getting there early to set up helps to make sure your location is correct and everything is set up before the meeting starts," he added. "Look and be calm. Now that the setup is done, spend time meeting other vendors, introduce yourself and what Toastmasters offers."

David noted there were additional benefits to the club's participation, such as the camaraderie the club members enjoyed working on the special project.



Above: A variety of handouts for visitors displayed in an inviting manner.

"I think this was a great experience for our club and a great opportunity for our club to interact with our community," he said. "For the members who participated, I think it was a great opportunity to work together on something outside of club meetings."

Photography by Gary Tully, ATM-B, ALB.

Use the Four Whys When Writing Your Introduction

By Paul Scharf, DTMS, PDG

Do you want your audience to want to listen to your speech? If so, the introduction to you as you approach the podium or lectern has to excite them. Write your introduction in the third person and provide it for the Toastmaster.

If you use these questions as a guideline for building your introduction, you can't go wrong!

Why this speaker?

Why this subject?

Why this audience?

Why at this time?

Bad Sample Introduction

Here's our speaker and he will be giving us a talk today and will tell you what it's about.

Great Sample Introduction

Our next speaker is Paul Scharf. His speech title is, "Writing emails, from the bottom up." Paul is a 24-year veteran of Toastmasters and has also had the opportunity to send many emails to members. (Answers the question, "Why this speaker?")

Today, Paul is going to give you the five steps to complete your emails from the bottom up.

1. First, attach the attachment, if sending one.
2. Write the body of the email
3. Read it from the bottom up. Correct any errors you find.
4. Write a powerful subject line; and
5. Send the email to the right person or people. (Answers the question, "Why this subject?")

You, like me, write many emails and your emails are an important part of good and proper communication. Your introductions should have your audience eager to listen to your presentation. (Answers the question, "Why this audience?")

Since you send emails frequently, even as soon as tonight or tomorrow, make sure you have the four Whys at your desk when you start writing your next speech or presentation. (Answers the question, "Why at this time?")

Paul's speech will be 5-to-7 minutes long and the title of his speech is: "Writing Emails from the Bottom up." Please help me welcome..... Paul Scharf!

Use - Why this speaker? - Why this subject? - Why this audience? - and Why at this time?, when preparing your next speech.

Getting Involved with Your Corporate Club

By Susan Chrusciel, ACB, ALB with Pamela Winter, DTM, PDG

As more and more companies realize the benefits that Toastmasters offers to employee development, the number of corporate clubs continues to rise. However, many ask themselves how to juggle the responsibilities of being actively involved in a corporate club with their day-to-day job responsibilities.

Working for a company that offers a corporate club was my first introduction to Toastmasters. It seemed at first like a lot of extra work to take on during my lunch hour to go to meetings. However, I found that not only lunchtime meetings could be a lot of fun (and flexible enough where you can bring your lunch) but participating in the club with colleagues gave me

the opportunity not only to work on my development skills for my performance review but also meet colleagues from all over the company that I might not have met otherwise.

I was a bit daunted when first asked to be a club officer after only a few months of membership as my workload at the time was very heavy, but I found that each of the seven officer roles helps develop certain skills that I could then take back into my everyday role and perform better and more efficiently. If a boss or colleague is telling you to get involved with your corporate club, go for it, and if there's an opportunity to take on a leadership role, definitely consider it. The skills gained are invaluable to your career.

TOASTMASTERS – THE RIGHT CHOICE!

Corporate Benefits for Joining Toastmasters

Club President

- Communications
- High Performance Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Organizational Change
- Forecasting
- Budgeting
- Listening
- Training & Development
- Peer Recognition
- Reporting, Writing
- Presenting Effective Evaluations
- Coaching/ mentoring
- Goal Setting
- Time Management
- Team Building
- Problem Solving
- Dedication to Excellence
- Accountability Management
- Increased Productivity
- Strategic Partnerships
- Diversity Awareness
- Respect for Others

VP of Education

- Strategic Planning
- Organizing
- Forecasting
- Scheduling
- Listening
- Mentoring
- Training & Development
- Coaching
- Goal Setting
- Team Building
- Peer Recognition

- Increased Productivity
- Time Management
- Dedication to Excellence
- Business Partnership
- Program Design & Implementation
- Communication Inhibitors
- Value-Added Solutions

VP Membership

- Forecasting
- Listening
- Team Building
- Peer Recognition
- Increased Productivity
- Relationship Building
- Sales Techniques
- Recruitment Procedures
- Hospitality
- Retention
- Quality Customer Service
- Right Sizing

VP – PR

- Writing
- Editing
- Advertising
- Web Design
- Public Relations
- Sales
- Creativity
- Marketing
- Negotiating
- Strategic Planning
- Event Planning
- Branding

Secretary

- Organization
- Document Retention
- Listening
- Report Writing
- Recordkeeping
- Purchasing
- Confidentiality
- Attention to Detail

Treasurer

- Budgeting
- Financial Planning & Management
- Recordkeeping
- Budgeting Analysis
- Forecasting
- Analytical Thinking

Sgt. at Arms

- Planning
- Meeting Room Preparation
- Purchasing
- Robert's Rules of Order