



# THE VOICE

DISTRICT 83 NEWSLETTER

February 2016



**STEP UP  
TO SUCCESS**

District 83 Spring 2016 Conference



**MAY 21-22, 2016**

**Hyatt Regency  
New Brunswick**

**SATURDAY, MAY 21: Full Day  
SUNDAY, MAY 22: Half Day**

An interview with conference  
Co-Chairs Lynda Starr, DTM (left)  
and Olga Berejnaia, DTM (right)



**Why should Toastmasters attend the Spring 2016 conference?**

The Spring conference provides an opportunity to learn, catch up with friends and on what's happening in the District. Our keynote speaker is Johnny Campbell, an accredited speaker. Love his motto: "When you're 80 percent ready take action," meaning that conditions do not have to be 100%. This fits well with our conference theme.

**How did you develop the theme "Step up to Success" for the conference?**

We started with the idea "aim high" and then started brainstorming. We settled on "Step up to Success," to connote climbing the ladder of success, reaching for the top and Step by Step. People often think of Success as a destination, but it is really a step-by-step process.

**What should attendees expect at the conference?**

Attendees should expect to come away with the feeling, "This was even better than I expected." "The workshops were fun, informative and interactive; the keynote was engaging and I'm glad I had the chance to participate in the business meeting." And don't get us started on how great it was to see old friends and meet new like-minded Toastmasters."

**Is there anything new or different from this conference compared to previous district conferences?**

The Spring conference is a two-day event. On Sunday morning, we will have the "You and Your Club Step up to Success" session. Led by Steve Chen, our Region 9 International Director, the workshop will have successful clubs share how they continually achieve membership and educational achievement success

## Call for Workshop Presenters

The Spring conference planning is well underway and we are looking for fantastic, educational and inspirational workshop presentations.

We know you're out there. You have great talent, skills and know-how that you've been itching to share. Transform your knowledge into action by sharing and educating others! It's an opportunity to make a difference and give back to our wonderful organization.

**How does someone apply and audition to become a workshop presenter?**

The call for presenters is now open. The details are on the district website [www.toastmasters83.org](http://www.toastmasters83.org); the presenter application is available on pages 4 and 5 of this issue.

To be a successful presenter: have a workshop that fits into one of the tracks, is interactive and informative. Topics should include communication and leadership both in and beyond the Toastmasters experience.

**When will the spring conference workshop auditions take place?**

The auditions, to be held March 12 at the Clark Library are only 5-to-7 minutes so you need to boil down your session.

and offer tips for your individual and club's journey. If you have a question for the panel discussion, please send it to District Director Bill Hood, DTM, [ramapomountainbill@gmail.com](mailto:ramapomountainbill@gmail.com), prior to the conference.

**Continued on page 2**

## In this Issue

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Step up to Success   |       |
| District 83 Spring Conference.....   | 1     |
| Call for Workshop Presenters .....   | 1     |
| Spring Conference Registration Form.....   | 3     |
| Workshop Presenter Application.....  | 4-5   |
| An Interview with Spring Conference Keynote Speaker Johnny Campbell, DTM, AS ..... | 6     |
| Educationally Speaking   |       |
| A Mailbox Full of Speech Ideas.....  | 7     |
| Plan Ahead: International Speech Contests and Evaluation                           |       |
| Contests for 2016.....   | 7     |
| Game Time! .....   | 8-9   |
| Interview with Swathi Karamcheti, ACB, ALB   |       |
| District Public Relations Manager.....   | 9     |
| Club Newsletter Contest .....  | 10    |
| Inspirational Quote.....   | 10    |
| Visions of Sugar Plums .....   | 11-13 |
| 10 Ways to Support Corporate Clubs .....   | 13    |
| Meet Phyllis Goldblatt, DTM,   |       |
| Toastmaster of the Year .....  | 14    |
| Want to be Challenged? Be the Grammarian!.....                                     | 15-16 |
| March is for Members .....   | 16    |
| Welcome New Clubs.....   | 16    |
| Smedley's Speakers Advanced Toastmasters .....                                     | 17    |
| Looking for an Advanced Club in District 83?.....                                  | 18    |
| A Tribute to Joel Remde, CTM.....  | 19-20 |
| Happy Valentine's Day to YOU .....   | 20    |
| Honoring Sharon Tu, DTM,   |       |
| Division Governor of the Year .....  | 21    |
| TLI Kicks off Training Season.....   | 22    |
| Congratulations, Karen A. Muha, DTM.....   | 22    |
| Tower and Bridge 20th Anniversary .....  | 23    |

## District 83 Newsletter Team

|                          |                                      |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| District Director        | <b>Bill Hood, DTM</b>                |
| Public Relations Manager | <b>Swathi Karamcheti, ACG, ALB</b>   |
| Co-Editor                | <b>Su Brooks, DTM</b>                |
| Co-Editor                | <b>Lynda Starr, DTM</b>              |
| Staff Writer             | <b>Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALS</b>   |
| Staff Writer             | <b>Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46)</b> |
| Staff Writer             | <b>Sherri Rase, ACS, ALB</b>         |

*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 April 2016 issue is March 19, 2016.**

We have included various flyers in this issue. Please contact [subrooks@verizon.net](mailto:subrooks@verizon.net) if you would like print-quality flyers.

## How to reach the District 83 Newsletter Co-Editors

Su Brooks: [subrooks@verizon.net](mailto:subrooks@verizon.net) or [subrooksd83@gmail.com](mailto:subrooksd83@gmail.com)

Lynda Starr: [lbstarr@optonline.net](mailto:lbstarr@optonline.net)

## Continued from page 1

### How do you select the keynote speaker(s)?

Generally, most are personal recommendations from people who have seen them present before. Some are tied into a scheduled visit from TI such as a visit from the International Director for Region 9 or an officer such as the International President. When selecting Johnny Campbell for the Spring conference, we had two very strong recommendations from past district governors. They felt that he had a strong message that would be of interest to our group and that he was an excellent speaker. For more information about our keynote speaker, visit [www.riseupandwin.com](http://www.riseupandwin.com).

### Why is it important to attend the Business Meeting?

According to TI, the business meeting is the reason we have the conference. The workshops and contests are icing on the cake. In the Spring, we will elect our district director, program quality director, club growth director and division directors. Club presidents, vice presidents-education or proxy holders will vote. Even if you are not voting, the business meeting provides the state of the district and the chance to hear from the newly elected directors. No other activities can be scheduled during the business meeting.

### How does someone become a volunteer to help before and/or during the conference?

Please contact Susan Chrusciel, [susan.chrusciel@gmail.com](mailto:susan.chrusciel@gmail.com), volunteer chair. The descriptions of the various committees are also found on the back of the hard-copy registration form. There are roles needed in advance and at the conference. A conference is only as successful as its volunteers.

### How do you make sure that the feedback the district receives from one conference is implemented for future conferences?

The overall goal is to have each conference be better than the one before with the sky the limit. To that end, we ask attendees to complete evaluations of each workshop and send out a survey after each conference. We review and discuss the comments received and do our best to implement what we can. Your opinion matters.

### Is there anything else you would like to add?

Have you registered yet? Looking forward to record-attendance May 21-22 at the Hyatt Regency New Brunswick. Call the hotel directly to reserve a room, 732-873-1234. Mention Toastmasters Spring Conference for these rates for Friday and Saturday night. Or, book online using this link:

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/toastmasters2016>.

### King/Handicap Accessible King:

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Single/Double Occupancy | \$139 |
| Triple Occupancy        | \$164 |
| Quadruple Occupancy     | \$189 |

### Doubles:

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Single/Double Occupancy | \$154 |
| Triple Occupancy        | \$179 |
| Quadruple Occupancy     | \$204 |

*The Spring conference registration form is available on page 3.*

**TOASTMASTERS DISTRICT 83 2016 SPRING CONFERENCE**

**Step Up to Success**

[www.toastmasters83.org](http://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<br>(Check <b>current</b> 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<br>(workshop proctor) | Repeat Attendees          | First-Timers |
| Fundraising  | Hospitality       | Parade of Banners               | Publications/<br>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**



**TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL  
DISTRICT 83 SPRING 2016 CONFERENCE**



**WORKSHOP PRESENTER APPLICATION**  
Application Due Date: February 27, 2016  
Mandatory Audition Date: March 12, 2016

*Conference location:*  
Hyatt Regency New Brunswick  
2 Albany St., New Brunswick, NJ 08901  
Saturday and Sunday, May 21-22, 2016

*Conference Theme:*  
"Step up to Success"

**Biographical Information**

|                      |          |                           |
|----------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Name:                |          |                           |
| Street Address:      |          |                           |
| City, State, Zip:    |          |                           |
| E-mail Address:      |          |                           |
| Phone:               | Primary: | Cell:                     |
| Club Name/Location:  |          |                           |
| Your TM Designation: |          | # Years as a Toastmaster: |

Brief Biography: (You may also attach your biography to this form)

**Presentation Information**

1. There are three developmental tracks for the conference workshops. Please check the track your presentation will address:

*Personal Development*  *Professional Development*  *Club Development*

2. Title of your presentation and anticipated length (must be 35 minimum - 40 min maximum)

3. Have you presented this workshop before? If yes, when and where?

4. Have you presented this or any workshop at a Toastmaster conference before? If yes, when and where?

5. Have you attended Toastmaster conferences before? If yes, which district(s)?

6. Briefly describe your presentation (outline and benefits of attending your workshop)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Purpose of workshop:                   |  |
| Further goals of this workshop are to: |  |
| Benefits:                              |  |

7. Explain why you are qualified to present this workshop.

8. Audio/Visual/Equipment Requirements. Please tell us your needs (check all that apply)

Projector/Screen  Flip Chart/Easel/Markers

You will be responsible for providing additional equipment and supplies, such as laptops, handouts or other workshop materials. The Education Co-Chairs must be informed of any changes in your Audio/Visual requirements no later than two weeks prior to the conference. Last minute changes will not be accommodated.

**Regarding Promotions:** No workshops may promote a business, products, or services. Absolutely no merchandise sales of any kind will be allowed during any workshop. Upon request, you may be provided a table for sales after the workshop session.

**Suggestions for a successful workshop presentation:**

- Be well-prepared, well-researched, and cite your sources.
- Have backups ready (handouts, etc., in case there are technical difficulties with audio/visual equipment).
- Give the audience your contact info ~ a business card is a wonderful and easy reference.
- Arrive early to ensure you and your proctor have time to set up the room.
- Have fun and enjoy the delivery!

*Thank you for sharing your knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm!*

Please complete the entire form and submit as a Word doc or PDF no later than the application due date to:

Janette Alexander (jalexan@solixinc.com) and  
 Karen Rittweger (rittwegerk@optonline.net)  
 Co-Chairs Education District 83 Spring Conference

~Detailed information regarding the audition process and time slot will follow shortly~



# An interview with Spring Conference Keynote Speaker Johnny Campbell, DTM, AS

By Swathi Karamcheti, ACG, ALB



Johnny Campbell will be serving as keynote speaker for the District 83 Spring conference. He is an accredited speaker and DTM. He is good at public speaking, motivation, negotiation, conflict management and the list goes on. Here is a glimpse into his life for our Toastmasters.

## Hello Johnny. Congratulations on being the keynote speaker for District 83 Spring Conference. What are you looking for during your interaction with District 83 Toastmasters?

I am looking to build relationships with people who are seeking to use their communication skills as a platform to build a better life for themselves. I also want to connect with people who are interested in learning and being trained on methods that will help them achieve more personal success, prosperity and happiness in their lives.

## How have you transitioned into a transition man?

I worked in the insurance industry for 10 years during which time I was part of five downsizing and merger situations. My job was to provide leadership and trainings that helped guide the staff through these stressful and uncertain times. I became known as "The Transition Man," based on a transitional process I developed that helped the staff remain productive and successful while dealing with the massive organizational changes.

## What kind of superpowers does a Toastmaster need to be a powerful speaker?

1. Clarity, 2. Resiliency and 3. Certainty.

## You have many credits to your profile as a speaker. How did you achieve them?

The achievements, I have earned have been based on: Clarity, Confidence and Resiliency. I believe that my success has been based on knowing what I am good at and investing in the development of my

core strengths and talents, which in turn has help me to achieve my goals.

## You are a speaker, author and a change agent. Which role is closest to your heart?

Change Agent is closest to my heart. I believe I am a messenger and my job is to provide people with the knowledge and blueprints that will help them overcome obstacles and achieve more success, prosperity and happiness in their lives.

## Tell us about the challenges you faced to reach to the position you are at now.

The biggest challenge was gaining access to people who would give me a chance to share my message and showcase my talents. People can be very skeptical and reluctant, that is how I've learn very quickly that building relationships, making and maintaining contacts is critical to your success.

## You are an entrepreneur now. What is the role of Toastmasters in shaping your career?

Toastmasters continues to play a significant role in my life and career. Toastmasters is not only a place where I learn and give back; but it is also a place where I have developed relationships that have made a big difference in my business. It was also through my connection within the world of Toastmasters that I met my wife. We got married on 10/17/2015.

## What is your advice for the budding Toastmaster?

The key to a person's success in Toastmasters is to know why you're joining Toastmasters and what you expect to achieve through Toastmasters.

If you know your "Why" and What," Toastmasters will provide you with the "How." Toastmasters Works...If you work it.

Visit my website: [www.riseupandwin.com](http://www.riseupandwin.com).

*Swathi Karamcheti, ACG, ALB, serves as the District 83 Public Relations Manager.*

## EDUCATIONALLY SPEAKING

# A Mailbox Full of Speech Ideas

By Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46)

I'll let you in on a little secret. One of the best places to find speech ideas is right in your own mailbox! That's right! If you're like many people I know, you check your mail for bills (they've got to be paid first, right?) Then you might look to see if an old friend has sent you a snail-mail letter. What a joy it was to receive several letters in some of my Christmas cards in December. Old (in more ways than one) high school and college buddies who never forget to remind me of things we did back in the day and things we should have done, but didn't!! Probably, you then throw out the "junk mail" and the catalogues. But wait a minute. Now you're throwing away speech ideas!!

One of my favorite catalogues is, "Traditions" and I'll tell you what I found in the issue I received a few days ago. I found six items that have sparked my interest and they'll fit nicely into the final speech in the Toastmasters Storytelling Advanced Manual, "Bringing History to Life" (7 - 9 minutes). Some of the ideas will also fit into some of the other advanced manuals and all of them will be good for the basic Communication and Leadership Manual.

They all are offers for coin sets, for example: "Civil War Commemorative Coins and Stamps"; "A Century of History"; (all about the Lincoln pennies through the years); "First Issue of Uncirculated Coins"; "U.S. Nickels Through the Years"; "WWII Wartime Coin Collection" and "All American Buffalo Nickels." Many years ago, I was chartering a new Toastmasters club in New Jersey and I brought two rolls of nickels as a prop. I gave a speech about President Abraham Lincoln and I passed the nickels around the table and asked everyone to take one and

do a speech one day about President Lincoln and his life and times.

When I was the Immediate Past District 46 Governor (2002) I was asked to give the invocation at the annual Regional Conference and as I returned to my table, our current

Toastmasters International President, Jim Kokocki walked over and handed me a small white envelope containing six newly minted Double Loonies; I was thrilled!! He actually remembered my telling him years earlier that when I went to Canada with the AARP, I got my first Loonie as change in a store and thought it was one of the prettiest coins I had ever seen.

If you're like some of my friends, you'll go to your computer, if you have one, or the library and do a bit of research and give your fellow club members something to really think about. Wouldn't it be fun to have Toastmasters bring foreign coins to your meetings and let people enjoy looking at them and hearing about them? You might even hold a "swap party."

If you have any questions about the manual speeches, just send me an email and I'll be happy to give you some more ideas. If you'd like to present a manual speech on Staten Island CTV, let me know that too. If you call me, please leave your name, phone number TWICE, and a brief message.

*Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46), serves as a Staff Writer for The Voice. She can be reached at [frantotten@verizon.net](mailto:frantotten@verizon.net) or (718) 984-1339.*

*When I was the Immediate Past District 46 Governor (2002) I was asked to give the invocation at the annual Regional Conference and as I returned to my table, our current Toastmasters International President, Jim Kokocki walked over and handed me a small white envelope containing six newly minted Double Loonies; I was thrilled!!*

## PLAN AHEAD: INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTESTS AND EVALUATION CONTESTS FOR 2016

February: Club Level

March: Area Level

April: Division Level

May: District Finals at the Spring Conference

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

# Game Time!

By Bill Hood, DTM

## Start with a solid foundation of the basics

The American football season has just come to an end. The Super Bowl just occurred. It's been said that a good offense will win games, but a good defense wins championships! And no matter how elite the skills, it all comes down to how well the basics are executed. Strength conditioning, knowing what your responsibilities are for every play, the coaches' having a solid game plan, the players' putting 100% into every play from beginning to end, working within the rules of the game, keeping track of the scoreboard and the clock. There is so much more I could list for the basics and each one has a translation into our Toastmasters experience. For me, Moments of Truth is one of our best tools to reflect back on how well our clubs execute the basics.

*Best in Class example: Clubs that routinely present the Moments of Truth educational module.*

## Strength conditioning

The foundations of our educational track are the Competent Communicator and Competent Leader. I keep going back to how World Champion of Public Speaking Lance Miller completed 22 CC manuals on his journey to becoming World Champion! As you finish your CC or even your DTM, keep going back to those competencies to perfect each project. Raise the bar with every speech and every role filled. Reflect back from time to time on the written evaluations you received. You'll be amazed at your progress.

*Best in Class example: Clubs whose members routinely bring their manuals to the meetings.*

## Know what your responsibilities are for every play

Members learn by being active in the program. But even if you're sidelined, you have an important role to listen and give effective feedback. Even if you're not the official evaluator, speakers could use your input on how you received the message. And just as every role should have written feedback in the project, club officers need your feedback too. Let them know how the club is meeting your needs.



*Best in Class example: Clubs that have the agenda filled out in advance of every meeting.*

## The coaches have a solid game plan

At the start of the year, club officers create a Club Success Plan. Each area, division and district also creates a Success Plan. While the details may differ at various levels across the globe, we all are focused on creating the best experience for every member; seasoned, new and future.

*Best in Class example: club executives, area councils and division councils meet regularly.*

## The players put 100% into every play from beginning to end

When coaches put game plans together, they assume the players will do their best at every play. Once they sense a player is not 100%, they have to make a decision. When I was a coach for youth sports teams, my first reaction was always to find a way to motivate the player. Even when the score looked like it was beyond our reach, I tried to keep the players focused on putting in the effort so they could take their skills to the next level no matter what the scoreboard said. By always doing your best on every single play, you will get better and better.

*Best in Class example: Clubs where members attend meetings and are more excited at the end of the meeting than when it started.*

## Work within the rules of the game

IRSE represents our Toastmasters core values. At the top of this is Integrity, followed by Respect, Service and Excellence. Champion-class teams play within the boundaries of the rulebook and keep penalties to a minimum. In Toastmasters, we rely more on self-discipline at every level.

*Best in Class example: Clubs that submit applications for membership and awards in a timely manner.*

## Keep track of the scoreboard and the clock.

While Distinguished Club is not the only measure of success, it is a good yardstick. It's a good combination of education, training and administration goals. Many clubs are on track to achieve some level of distinguished this year.

**Continued on page 9**



## Continued from page 8

Congratulations to the clubs that have already achieved 5 goals as of Jan 18th on the Toastmasters International dashboard.

| Club Name                                      | Mem. Base | Active Members | Goals Met |
|--|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| Brunswick Toastmasters Club                    | 53        | 43             | 9         |
| TM of Westfield Club                           | 66        | 66             | 8         |
| No Limits Toastmasters                         | 22        | 23             | 8         |
| Speech Meisters Club                           | 26        | 33             | 7         |
| Woodbridge Toastmasters                        | 12        | 15             | 7         |
| Mile Square Toastmasters                       | 45        | 40             | 6         |
| Speak and Lead Toastmasters Club               | 29        | 28             | 6         |
| Union City Club                                | 21        | 24             | 6         |
| Sunset Toastmasters Club                       | 19        | 24             | 6         |
| Somerville Toastmasters                        | 23        | 23             | 6         |
| New Heights Toastmasters                       | 20        | 18             | 6         |
| Staten Island - Liberty Toastmasters           | 8         | 10             | 6         |
| DP&C Toastmasters                              | 42        | 36             | 5         |
| Fairleigh Early Birds Toastmasters Club        | 36        | 36             | 5         |
| Clinton Toastmasters                           | 33        | 32             | 5         |
| Old Bridge Toastmasters                        | 36        | 32             | 5         |
| Midtown Toastmasters Club                      | 39        | 28             | 5         |
| Colgate-Palmolive Piscataway ToastMasters Club | 17        | 28             | 5         |
| Shore Speakers Toastmasters Club               | 27        | 28             | 5         |
| Rutgers University Toastmasters                | 9         | 27             | 5         |
| Hillsborough Toastmasters Club                 | 26        | 26             | 5         |
| Clifton Toastmasters Club                      | 14        | 24             | 5         |
| Merck Achievers Toastmasters Club              | 23        | 21             | 5         |
| Tower And Bridge Toastmasters Club             | 12        | 17             | 5         |
| Jim Friend Toastmasters                        | 20        | 14             | 5         |
| New Jersey City University Toastmasters        | 12        | 14             | 5         |
| Business Leaders Club                          | 12        | 12             | 5         |

*Bill Hood, DTM, serves as District Director for District 83. Photos courtesy of Toastmasters International.*



*This month, we interview District 83's Public Relations Manager for 2015-2016, Swathi Karamcheti, ACG, ALB.*

### **What did you expect in the beginning?**

I have enjoyed being a Toastmaster as I love to listen and speak. So, Toastmasters provides the perfect platform that I was looking for. As I started giving speeches

and scaled up my education ladder, I realized, I can equally contribute to the leadership roles too. From VPE to president to area governor to Public Relations Manager of the district, my journey was a smooth ride. Initially it was very overwhelming to see the loads of work I need to do and the burden I have to represent my district as a Public Relations Manager. But thanks to my peers, I learned to take one task at a time. As I progressed, I realized, it is not an easy task, but definitely a ride that we can enjoy until the end.

### **What have you learned?**

Though, this is a pure voluntary work that I do, the whole experience gave me beautiful insights of how and what

it takes to be a Public Relations Manager. Managing the district and the social media handles is not everyone's cup of tea. Everyday, I need to think of something innovative to engage the audience. Whenever I post something, I realize the impact it generates on the readers. This teaches me that the words we say and the thoughts we share are very powerful and we need to weave them with utmost care. I have an excellent team and I totally enjoy working with my peers. But needless to say, it is almost like a full time job and sometimes, we have deadlines! But hey, this is the adrenaline rush I wanted, and I have it all now. I enjoy my role and would like to mentor the future leaders.

### **What are your goals for remainder of term?**

I am profiling the division directors now. After them, I want to profile the area directors and the members who have achieved goals during their Toastmasters' term. Every Toastmaster struggles to achieve the education levels and exhibits excellent leadership skills. I want to bring out such members and tell their stories. I also want to put our district on the global map. So, I have a lot to do and I am confident, I can set an example for the next generation of leaders.

# 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. We have provided 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.
- Issues dated between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016 are eligible.
- **Deadline for submissions: July 15, 2016.**
- Submit a pdf to [d83newsletter@gmail.com](mailto: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.
- Maximum of one entry per club.
- Results will be announced at the District 83 Fall 2016 Conference.
- 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 |

**"Life is not measured by the number of breaths you take, but by the number of moments that take your breath away."**

– From the movie "Hitch"

**Do we simply exist or are we making the most of the precious time we are allotted? Bringing this to a Toastmasters setting, I have seen five-to-seven minute speeches change lives. Some of the greatest speeches in history have segments that are immortal. The point is to get involved. Make the most of every speech you give. You never know when that moment will leave the audience breathless.**

– Bill Hood, DTM

# Visions of Sugar Plums

By Rebecca Marzec, ACB, ALB

Red Bank Toastmasters and Talk of Monmouth Advanced Toastmasters co-sponsored the Area 61 Multi-Club Holiday Party on December 10, 2015. I took on the project for my High Performance Leadership award, and presented the results of the Multi-Club Holiday Party on the eve of Three Kings Day. After that date, the holidays are over; the trees go out to the curb; and the lights disappear into the attic until next year.

The purpose of the High Performance Leadership award wasn't about the holiday party as an event. Rather, the project is about the process leading up to the holiday party. It's the journey, not the destination, and the lessons that the leader learns along the way.

The journey started in September, at a Talk of Monmouth officers' meeting. Su Brooks, DTM, had attended some of the holiday parties and enjoyed them greatly. Much of the agenda at that officers' meeting was dedicated to the question, "What do we do about the holiday party?" She suggested co-sponsoring it with Red Bank Toastmasters. And then I stepped right in and said, "I'll do it."

I had hosted the party previously as club president of Red Bank Toastmasters. It was a lot of work. While I had help from the club treasurer, Cathy Scott, collecting payments, and Vice President Education Dave Cashour, CC, CL, for printing the agendas and reserving the Red Oak Diner, most of the planning was in my hands—from contacting the clubs to setting up the final agenda with speakers and evaluators. Five clubs participated at that time, and 30 people attended. But this time, we decided to do it as my HPL project—and do it bigger.

I wanted to keep my hands out of it as much as possible. The HPL teaches you to motivate your team, without doing a lot of the work on your own. The only thing that I did was to serve as the point of contact for the diner. I booked the date in early October.

The HPL also depends on the leader recruiting an advisory committee and an action committee. I asked three people to serve on the advisory committee—Su Brooks, Anne Gilson, DTM, IPDG, and Dave Cashour. Su Brooks contacted the clubs, and served as the point of contact for the speakers. She also served as Toastmaster for the evening's meeting. Anne Gilson collected the checks and gave me the final headcount. Dave Cashour worked with Su to design and print the agendas. He also made voting ballots for Best Speaker, Best Evaluator, and Best Table Topics. All of them constantly asked me questions about what our next steps were and how we should handle the problems that arose.

The largest problem early on was payment collection. Talk of Monmouth didn't have a bank account yet, so I turned to Martin Donohue, CC, at Red Bank Toastmasters. Mike Carlo



Above: Several members of Red Bank Toastmasters attended the event.

had set up a PayPal button for the party the previous year. However, Martin replied that he would be out of the country during the payment collection period, and moreover didn't have a PayPal account of his own. So Anne Gilson stepped up and volunteered to do it the old-fashioned way—using checks and cash, rather than credit cards. It was wildly successful. Fifty people signed up for the party.



Above: Mike Carlo, CC, and Neerja Purang, DTM, IPDG (46) enjoy the meeting and party.

Another question regarded favors and prizes. I wanted something nice for our party. So, I reached out to Theresa Streidl, CC, and Lis Patterson, CC, CL, for help and creative ideas. We had some creative differences. The original idea used small glass jars filled with a mix of candies dubbed "elf poop," "reindeer poop," and "snowman poop." Lis and I were uncomfortable with the poop concept, and we didn't have a budget for the glass jars. So Lis ended up purchasing tulle circles from Walmart and filling them with Hershey's Kisses. Theresa took over the prizes and put Toastmasters logos inside glass ornaments. From this, I learned about the importance of compromise—perhaps we didn't go with the original vision, but we did well with what we had.

The team and I learned a lot about leadership, and a lot about how to improve our planning process for next year. We realized that there were a number of items that we hadn't considered early on, and that should be addressed for next year. First, we considered limiting the attendance to 50 people, and putting any additional attendees on a waitlist. Along with that, we needed to discuss how to handle it when people drop out at the last minute. We decided that we should emphasize a firm cutoff date, after which payments will not be accepted, rather than simply a "no walk-ins" policy. Another area we could improve would be signage. The lounge room at the Red Oak Diner has two entrances, and we thought it would be beneficial to have a sign indicating "Enter Here" in order to sign attendees in and distribute nametags. Anne Gilson suggested that next time, she could visit the clubs directly and pick up payments as the due date gets closer.

**Continued on page 12**



## Continued from page 11

Su Brooks learned about compromise and diplomacy as well. She designed the original draft of the meeting agenda, and sent it to the advisory committee for feedback. She wanted the agenda to both look good and be functional. We gave her some conflicting opinions, but one point stood out. In previous years, Dave Cashour had replaced the Toastmasters International logo with some holiday-themed clip art. Su Brooks wanted that official logo, but according to the branding guidelines, the additional clip art isn't allowed. As Su wanted the logo on the meeting agenda, she added a border of small circles in the Toastmasters red color. It made the rest of the agenda pop, and Dave printed it out for the party.



Above: We are ready to hear the speeches.

When my committee asked me what I would do differently, I said that I would work on a small budget for favors and prizes. In previous years, we didn't allot money for prizes. Usually, we used our own Best Speaker, Best Table Topics, and Best Evaluator ribbons. Last year, Theresa Streidl and Dave Cashour made fancy Toastmasters-themed wrappers that they wrapped around candy bars. The committee suggested other ways we could raise money for prizes and favors.

We could ask for an extra dollar or two per attendee. We could also request a \$10 donation from each participating club. However, we agree that this should be discussed early in the planning process, as soon as we reserve the restaurant and get a price per person.

### By the Numbers

Paid Attendees: 50

Actual Attendees: 47

### Participating Clubs

AT&T Middletown Toastmasters

Old Bridge Toastmasters

Red Bank Toastmasters

Shore Speakers

Talk of Monmouth

### Past District Governors in Attendance

Neerja Purang (IPDG 46)

Jim Samuel (PDG 46)

Tom Somers (PDG 83)

### Division Directors in Attendance

John Connors (Div. F)

Rebecca Marzec (Div. D)

### Area Directors in Attendance

Victor Martins (Area 62)

Manuel Reyes (Area 42)

Ibis Roman (Area 61)

Frank Schuck from AT&T Middletown Toastmasters won Best Speaker for his speech enumerating the crimes committed in Hansel and Gretel. Theresa Streidl took home one of her own ornaments for Best Table Topics, when she told us that



Above: Jeff Clarke, President of Old Bridge Toastmasters, presents his technical speech.

something new that she tried recently involved giving over Elf on the Shelf duties to her 13-year-old daughter. Jim Samuel, DTM7, PDG, from Talk of Monmouth won Best Evaluator for a bruising critique of John Connors' (DTM) speech. Janice Buffalow, DTM, presented the evening's Table Topics.



Above: District 83 Club Growth Director Janice Buffalow, DTM, had fun with her role as Table Topics Master.

The laughs, fun, and friendship shared are too numerous to count. It was all enhanced by the excellent food and open bar.

I encourage other areas within District 83 to hold a meeting of all of their clubs together, in a more relaxed atmosphere outside of a club contest. In the past four years that Red Bank Toastmasters hosted the event, the participants have greatly enjoyed the party. The club members catch up with old friends and make new ones.

They keep coming back year after year, and look forward to the event—so much so that I can predict that sometime in early September of 2016, I'll hear someone ask once again, "What do we do about the multi-club holiday party?"

Rebecca Marzec, ACB, ALB, serves as Division D Director for District 83. She is a member of Red Bank Toastmasters and Talk of Monmouth.

Photography courtesy of Neerja Purang, DTM, IPDG (46).

Below: Rebecca Marzec (third from left) enjoys the festivities with some of her committee members and Toastmasters friends.



Additional photos continued on page 13





Above: Toastmasters from different clubs sat together to make new friends and share stories over dinner before the meeting began.



Above: Dave Cashour, CC, CL, collects ballots. Dave printed the color-coded ballots so participants could vote for Best Speaker, Best Evaluator and Best Table Topics.



Above: Simply elegant chocolate treats wrapped in festive tulle and colorful ribbons, created by Lis Patterson, CC,CL.

## 10 Ways to Support Corporate Clubs

By District 83's division directors\*

The division directors of District 83 recently initiated a monthly conference call. We discuss a variety of topics, relevant to the issues that we face within our divisions. On our first call, we discussed how we can better support the corporate clubs of District 83. We decided that we should first look at the individual clubs, and ask what their needs are.

We are presenting a list of ways to support your corporate clubs, generated by your division directors. It's been said that two heads are better than one, and perhaps nine heads are fantastic. Enjoy our suggestions, and please incorporate them into your own clubs.

1. A member looking to earn an HPL could choose resurrecting a corporate club as a project.
2. A corporate club doesn't have to stay closed. It can become a community/corporate hybrid and benefit from an increase in membership.
3. Division directors need to talk with the area directors and ask what we can do to help them get these clubs back on their feet.
4. The division director can personally visit the clubs that need additional support.
5. Area directors can ask club officers to contact their human resources department about building membership for their clubs, although this may be difficult if the HR department is not on-site.

6. The club can invite guest speakers for a special meeting, and invite upper management to the event.
7. Munich Re Toastmasters (D-41) presents a Communicator of the Year award annually to someone in upper management with exceptional communication to the company's employees.
8. If a club has the budget to do it, the club may offer to cover the new member fee.
9. The area director can attend "new" club meetings and gather other Toastmasters in the area to attend meetings in order to build enthusiasm, excitement, and support for the new club.
10. Advertise for the club in a weekly site-wide email bulletin. A standard reply to potential members who contact the club can be sent out immediately, with a membership form and information about the benefits of a Toastmasters club.

*A corporate club doesn't have to stay closed. It can become a community/corporate hybrid and benefit from an increase in membership. (Seek approval from company HR.)*

\* Janette Alexander, Catherine Ruiterman, Rasika Venkataraman, Rebecca Marzec, Olga Berejnaia, John Connors, Laura Healy Santo, Thomas Jenkins, Ruby Scotland, Bill Hood, Paula Markert and Janice Buffalow all contributed to this article.

# Meet Phyllis Goldblatt, DTM, Toastmaster of the Year

By Lynda Starr, DTM

At the Fall conference business meeting, Phyllis Goldblatt, DTM, was honored as Toastmaster of the Year in recognition of her dedication and hard work to the district. For 2014-15, Phyllis chaired the realignment committee and started from scratch to put the district back in order. The task includes looking at 171 clubs and considering whether the clubs are in the appropriate areas and divisions.

Phyllis has been a Toastmaster since 1989 when she joined MBL Toastmasters because a coworker, Beth Bogdanowicz, told her, "You need Toastmasters." "And she was right," notes Phyllis. MBL is short for Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company, where Phyllis worked, first in Group Pension Actuarial and then in Corporate Benefits, which later became part of HR. Beth was the president of MBL Toastmasters that year and explained what Toastmasters is. Phyllis joined the club in June and gave her Ice Breaker in November, and the path to DTM began. She finds it hard to decide if the DTM or this award is her greatest Toastmasters achievement.

Phyllis explains her voyage. "The DTM seemed unachievable, with needing to be a district officer, having to do an HPL, and needing to sponsor, mentor, or coach a club. Actually, being the area governor turned out to be very enjoyable. I can't believe that was 20 years ago. I was the area governor for the five clubs in Newark in 1995-1996, when George Sepsie was our District 46 governor. He encouraged us to give a speech at each of our area visits, saying that, if you had five clubs, you could complete a CTM. I had taken five years to complete my first CTM. I took George's suggestion, and finished my second in a year! Being the area governor led to some wonderful friendships from Blue Expressions, Transit Expressions, and PSE&G Toastmasters, which have lasted through those 20 years. Two of those friends asked me to help with a demo for a club in Newark which, unfortunately, failed before I found out that I had gotten credit for being a club mentor. There's a funny story about that. Years later, when I realized that there was actually a possibility that I might be able to complete the DTM, I was talking to someone at TI one day, and she looked to see what I still needed to do. I was working on an HPL at the time. I said I still needed to mentor or coach a club, since I didn't see any likelihood of sponsoring one. Her reply was that I already had done that! All she had was the club number and the date. When



she looked up the club number, she came up with a club in Australia! After the Newark club failed, the number had been reassigned. After some searching, I did find the name of the Newark club. By the way, I achieved the DTM exactly 20 years after I joined, in June 2009. That may not be great, but considering that I thought I would never do it..."

Phyllis is humble with regard to being Toastmaster of the Year. "I know that last year's realignment was a big undertaking, but I volunteered for it, and truly enjoyed it. Sincerely, I didn't do it alone. I asked for suggestions from a lot of people, and got them. I recruited a committee. Over 20 people came to meetings and replied to emails regularly." She cites this as a valuable Toastmasters lesson, "one person can't do

some jobs alone. I will say, though, that others have learned that, too. When I said I needed replies, I got them. Yes, I coordinated. Yes, I prepared maps and lists. But the realignment was created by the group." Being realignment chair also meant having to present the plan at the business meeting, which did give Phyllis some moments of panic. She then reminded herself of the advice she has given to others—"look for your friends in the group, or, if you don't have enough of them there, look for friendly faces to talk to. And then I realized that there would be over 20 there, who I could count as friends—the committee! Then add to that those others who had made suggestions, and other friends who may or may not have been involved in the

realignment. I would be talking to a group of friends! Some old friends, some new friends, and some friends I hadn't met yet. I don't know whether I could make a presentation in front of a group of strangers. But, I have conquered my fear enough to at least speak to friends."

On an individual level, however, she says that recently she has noticed that she now talks to people whom she doesn't know, without even thinking about it, though she didn't in the past. She attributes the change to Toastmasters.

Phyllis is currently a member of Speak and Lead Toastmasters. In

Speak and Lead, she has held all of the offices except VPPR and secretary. Her longest-standing role has been treasurer. Beyond Toastmasters, Phyllis is a lifelong resident of Passaic and has been married to Jason Goldblatt for over 41 years. Her son, Edward, is also a Toastmaster and member of Speak and Lead.

*"I would be talking to a group of friends! Some old friends, some new friends, and some friends I hadn't met yet. I don't know whether I could make a presentation in front of a group of strangers. But, I have conquered my fear enough to at least speak to friends."*

# Want to be challenged? Be the Grammarian!

By Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALS

Most Toastmasters members feel that evaluating a speech is a formidable challenge; however, I believe that the role of Grammarian is not only the most challenging, but the most important.

As Grammarians, we are challenged to be good listeners and good evaluators. The goal: to ensure proper usage of the English language throughout the course of a Toastmasters meeting.

My Impact 21 Toastmasters colleague, Gail Komleski, absolutely loves this role. This is why I decided to interview her for this article.

## What must we listen for when covering the role of Grammarian?

Of course we're listening for the word of the day and its proper usage. We have a great club, our club cheers!

We are listening for something else.

In the November 2013 issue of Toastmasters, Presiyan Vasilev, the 2013 World Champion from Bulgaria, explained why he "spelled out the phonetic translations of practically every word." He went on to say, "What if I lost the audience by mispronouncing just one word?"

As Grammarian, consider a "mispronunciation", if you will, as a word or sound you do not wish or intend to pronounce. Some examples that we recognize as "filler words" are: um, uh, well, but, and, so; and when uttered in combination: um uh so. What if we lost the audience with these "mispronunciations"? A mispronunciation is something that does not add value to the speech.

## Why do you think most members do not like to take on the Grammarian role?

Fear of being critical. In business I've heard people say, "Don't be critical without offering a solution." If you can offer a solution, you may be more comfortable in the role. It may be as simple as suggesting that controlling your breathing, inserting a pause, or the phrase "For example", may be substituted for an "Um".

Fear of not being a good listener. Let everyone else enjoy the picture the speaker is painting with words. This is your opportunity to be the good listener, to be the gatekeeper, to identify the filler words and crutch phrases that sneak into our speech when we are not on guard. Crutch phrases are interesting because sometimes they are truly unique to the

individual. When crutch phrases are used you will begin to recognize them, your ears will perk up, you are becoming a good listener...Right? You know what I mean? So forth and so on.

Lack of confidence in one's grammar skills.

The role of Grammarian serves the speaker as well as the audience, and even the Grammarian, and will boost confidence by increasing awareness. As an example, the word "So" had been used as the first word of a sentence multiple times in a single speech. I am aware that "So," can be synonymous with the word "therefore" but it just didn't always seem to perform that function. It seemed to me a bit like a filler word. I lacked confidence in that moment and broke from the role to ask the opinion of the members. That moment increased EVERYONE'S awareness. In conclusion, we were able to identify and agree when it meant "therefore" and when it acted as a filler word. However, it seemed there was more to the "so" story. Since then I have found more explanations in the link below. As Grammarian, the next time I hear the word "so" I will have the confidence to point it out and explain its usage.

<http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/education/grammar/is-starting-a-sentence-with-so-condescending?page=all>

*"I am aware that 'So,' can be synonymous with the word 'therefore' but it just didn't always seem to perform that function. It seemed to me a bit like a filler word. I lacked confidence in that moment and broke from the role to ask the opinion of the members. That moment increased EVERYONE'S awareness."*

## Why do you feel it is important to take on the challenge?

It's fun, such as the treasure hunt described above, and it's important to have fun! Secondly, by paying your dues, you are invested in the club and what better way to get the best return on your investment than to challenge yourself, and experience personal growth? Think of it as a stretch goal. After all, our club Mission Statement is: We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

## What are the most common misuses of the English language you have heard at our meetings?

- Ending a sentence with a preposition is my favorite because it challenges me, on the spot, to provide an alternative phrase. For example, "Misuses give me something to work with."

Rephrased: Misuses give me something with which to work

Rephrased: Misuses give me an opportunity to assist my club

**Continued on page 16**



## Continued from page 15

(this sentence rephrases to define “work with”.

- The word “so” described above.
- Droppin’ the “g” at the end of words.
- Another favorite of mine (like a treasure hunt) is when “I” and “Me” are misused. Here is one example:

They bought the tickets for my friend and me. They bought the tickets for my friend and I.

You know what’s correct when the word “friend” is left out.

They bought the tickets for me. They bought the tickets for I.

How can we improve them?

Google, Google, Google\* (or search engine of your choice\*)

- <http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/common-grammar-mistakes-list>

Check out Number 9

- Build your knowledge base by taking notes when your club’s Grammarian gives reports.
- Be your own Grammarian when proofreading your speech.

- Utilize the computer’s Spelling and Grammar function

### Do you have any additional words of encouragement?

- I believe in the buddy system. If you have a new member or a reticent member have co-Grammarians. Team up, work together. The new Grammarian will learn by observation or may even pick up on something missed by the experienced Grammarian.

- Have fun with the role, be creative. Consider a doctor using a stethoscope to listen better. Grammarians, put on your stethoscope to listen for mispronunciations in the form of grammatical errors, filler words, and unnecessary sentence openers.

- Remember the Mission Statement.

Feel free ask questions and offer solutions. That’s how we all learn and grow together.

Be an integral part of helping your fellow members on their journey. They are becoming better speakers, because of you!

*Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALS, serves as a Staff Writer for The Voice.*

## March is for Members

Club Growth Director’s Mid-Year Report

*By Janice L. Buffalow, DTM*

It is hard to believe we are at the halfway point in the 2015-2016 Toastmaster Year! Bill, Paula and I just returned from our own Mid-Year Training. We spent two full days with Regions 6 and 9 International Directors, Regional Advisors and the District Trios brainstorming and exchanging ideas that will strengthen our respective districts, ensuring member retention and growth.

We believe that club growth will occur only if our current membership is strong and healthy. As an incentive, District 83 has implemented an exciting incentive: all clubs that pay dues for 20 members by March 20, 2016 will receive \$100 in Toastmasters International (TI) gift certificates. WOW! What an opportunity!

In addition, Toastmasters International’s TALK UP TOASTMASTERS contest runs from February 1st through March 31st. Add new, dual or reinstated members to your roster to win the award – a ribbon to add to your club banner!

For clubs with fewer than 20 members, there are several tactics you can use to increase your chances of qualifying for both prizes: run a club membership building contest; conduct a Speechcraft program; have an open house alone or partner with one of your neighboring clubs; advertise via local papers, libraries, community bulletin boards, or local radio stations.

Club Officers, now is the time to ask all club members to pay their dues. The benefit is two-fold: there will be no lapse in membership, and your club will receive TI \$\$\$\$ (if dues are received before March 31st). Corporate clubs

requiring invoices, start early, start now.

There is strength in numbers. The quality of your club meetings and membership building will provide your club with increased meeting participation, improved learning opportunities and chances to develop new skills.

The foundation of District 83 is a strong membership base that is fully prepared to spread the Toastmaster message of Integrity, Respect, Service, and Excellence. Be responsive to the requests for payment of club dues. As club members, remember that your investment of 5-7 cents a day will garner leadership and communication skills that will last for a lifetime.

Club officers and members, stay tuned for more incentives and opportunities for club growth. Contact me if you have any questions, or ideas, regarding membership growth and retention, at [Janice.buffalow@sanofi.com](mailto:Janice.buffalow@sanofi.com).

TALK UP TOASTMASTERS! Renew your membership, bring friend(s) to your club meeting, and above all, have fun!

### Welcome New Clubs!

#### T and M Toastmasters

Middletown, NJ

Division F, Area 62, Club 4793713 • Chartered 1/04/16

#### The Orators

East Hanover, NJ

Division A, Area 11, Club 5118117 • Chartered 12/1/15



# Smedley's Speakers Advanced Toastmasters

By Fran Okeson DTM 18, PDG (46)

In 1997, Past District 46 Governor Jim Samuel, DTM, was invited to install the new club officers for the Richmond County Toastmasters (RCT) club on Staten Island. After the ceremony, the VP Education set up the agenda for the next meeting and one member, Ken Raftery, DTM, mentioned that he'd been waiting to get a spot on the agenda, but there was never any room. In those days, RCT had nearly 40 members and Ken just happened to miss the cut. On the way back to my house, Jim said that I should start an advanced club so more people could get speaking spots. That weekend, I started phoning everybody I could think of and in 26 hours, I had 22 members. I then called Toastmasters International and asked if I could name the club after our founder, Dr. Ralph C. Smedley and that's how Smedley's came to be.

One of the things we wanted to offer our members was to be different, so Smedley's became, for the most part, a club where our members would come up with ideas for Theme Meetings. (My Theme Meetings flyer was part of the October 2015 District 83 Newsletter.)

Once, we held a Memorial Service for Jacques Cousteau where each speaker dressed up as a fish and spoke about when they saw the "Calypso" pass over their body of water. Our local funeral director, Eric Skau, ATM, dressed as a "monkfish" and wore a long black cape and had his hair slicked back with gel as if he were under water.

The late Tom Bragen, DTM, came as a "Jellyfish" where he'd drawn the body of a jellyfish on the front of a large piece of oaktag and cut a hole in in the center for his face. We found out later that he'd written his speech on the back of the oaktag and read it as he "swam" through the audience on his way to the podium. Tom also mixed a bit of history into his speech when I planned a "Fashion Show" and let a former member wear my wedding gown. I asked Tom to be her groom and he came in a full tuxedo and explained how the tuxedo was first created.

At another meeting, realtor Julie Porowski, DTM, took us to a house she was showing and gave us an idea of how she showed clients around an empty house and explained the pros and cons of the property. When we went back to the meeting, we wrote down our bids and Julie "sold" the house to the same funeral director.

Ken Raftery, DTM, planned a Dinner Theatre Party and we each brought a homemade dish for the food table, which was later judged by a local caterer and his wife. Ken chose our scenes and gave us our parts to play as part of the entertainment. He gave my team a scene from *Arsenic and Old Lace*. The roles were played by Liam Gill, ACG,

CL, the late Dolores Okulewicz, DTM, and yours truly. The hit of the evening was when Dolores reached over to get some more of her Swedish meatballs and the tray slipped and the meatballs rolled all over the floor.

We've done so many theme meetings over the years and the memories are still so vivid. One time, we planned a safari and everyone decided what animal they would research. Eric was an elephant lion and Joan Maurizio, DTM 3, was a zebra. Susan Broughton, ATM-S, CL, and I were a couple of jungle cats. Dolores refused to wear an animal costume but volunteered to be the safari photographer. (See photo.)

One of our former members planned an evening of making collages that I thought was something juvenile – and everything would be provided. We snipped, laughed, pasted and laughed some more. Finally, we made our speeches and then we realized how serious the meeting had turned. We found out some things we didn't know about ourselves or each other. It was truly a bonding meeting!

As a sidebar, I'll tell you that our Area 64 Director John A. Weibel, DTM wouldn't make a collage, but he did give a speech explaining why he wouldn't. That story stays within the club!

Joining an advanced club has special advantages in so far as all members must belong to a "home club" and meet a few other criteria. Ten of our twelve current members are past district officers, including Anne Gilson DTM, IPDG and Dr. Dilip R.

Abayasekara, DTM, AS, PIP. Past district officers tend to keep up with the changes in the Toastmasters programs and we share that information with our fellow members.

Our main challenge with being the only advanced club on Staten Island (Area 64) is that off-islanders have to pay a bridge fare to attend meetings (on the last Tuesday of each month at 7pm.) We do invite members from other clubs to attend our meetings and speak if they've missed one of their other clubs' meetings or want to give a speech before a different audience. We also host area contests and club officer training twice a year. We are always looking for new members so if you'd like to attend a meeting, just contact me and we'll go from there.

*Fran Okeson, DTM 18, PDG (46), serves as a Staff Writer for The Voice. She can be reached at [frantotten@verizon.net](mailto:frantotten@verizon.net) or (718) 984-1339.*



*Above: My finished collage.*



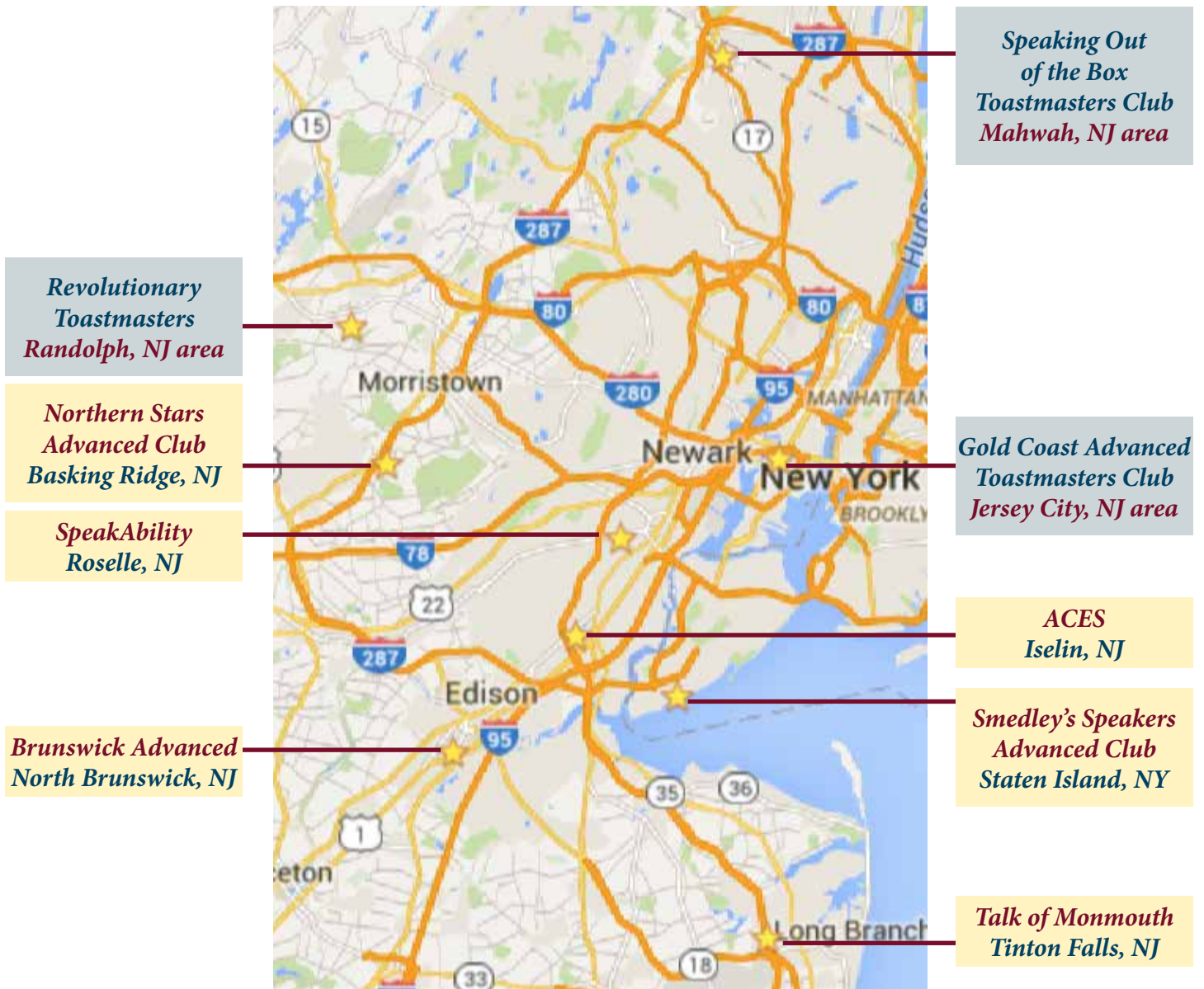
*Above: Dolores Okulewicz in her Safari outfit.*



*Above: The people who made the collages (former member Camelia Botoroaga, Joan Maurizio, DTM 3, former member Ann Lautner, Emily Cohen, ACG, ALB and me sitting in front.*

# 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](mailto:jalexan@solixinc.com),  
973-581-5302 or  
Dee Rincon, ACB, [dee\\_rincon@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:D83RachelW@gmail.com)

## A Tribute to Joel Remde, CTM

Joel was a tireless volunteer for District 83, and could be counted on for just about anything needed. His welcoming face could be seen at most every district function from speech contests to training sessions and conferences. This loss hits our district hard as we move into 2016. If your life was touched by Joel in some small way, please take a moment to remember him. I, for one, will be grateful for his dedication to Toastmasters and to District 83.

Pamela Winter, DTM, PDG (2012-2013)

...

I knew Joel as a “dependable” – he was always willing to lend a hand and you could depend on him to do his best. He always had his club’s interests foremost in his mind. If he had a problem, he worked every which way he could to get to the bottom of the problem and then he jumped in to solve the problem.

More than that, I knew Joel as a super guy. He was quiet most times, but his animation regarding Toastmasters was infectious.

He will be sorely missed.

Paula Markert, DTM  
District 83 Program Quality Director

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Joel always acted from his heart. Most importantly, he was a man of good character, and always encouraged those around him to do and to be better. Personally, he was always willing to give me good advice, and encouraged me to succeed. I will miss him.

Margarita Estrada, ACB, ALS

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I worked with Joel when I was the coach of South Street Toastmasters. He was very dedicated to the club and district and encouraged fellow members. I will miss him.

Lynda Starr, DTM

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I worked with Joel on district conference committees and remember that he helped plan programs even though he knew he wasn’t able to attend one of the conferences.

I remember him for his leadership skills. At another conference, he facilitated a great repeat attendees workshop where our group was tasked with ideas for getting new members.

Su Brooks, DTM

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Joel was a tireless worker for District 83 and I could always count on him to get the job done! He was a sweet person with a very bright smile and a kind word. I will miss him deeply. My sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Cyndi Wilson, DTM, PDG

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I met Joel Remde when I joined South Street Toastmasters in 2006. He immediately made me feel welcome and his



From left to right, the late Joel Remde, CTM, Treasurer; Susan Mennella, ATM-G, CL, VP Public Relations and Secretary; Hanna Minkin, CC, VP Education; Jennifer Percival, VP Membership; and Stuart Kramer, DTM, President.

Photo courtesy of South Street Toastmasters.

*“Joel was one of nicest and kindest people I have ever met. If I had a question that needed answering about Toastmasters or a job that needed to be done I knew all I had to do was email or call Joel to get a prompt answer or to get the job done.”*

dedication to Toastmasters and especially the South Street Toastmasters Club is one of the main reasons I am still an active member of this club.

Joel was one of the founding members of South Street Toastmasters (originally called Bellcore Toastmasters). He was a 30-plus year member of our club. His quiet but very effective leadership kept the club going all these years. I recall Joel telling us that at one point only several members were showing up at meetings and many members thought that the club should disband. Joel would not allow that to happen.

Joel was one of nicest and kindest people I have ever met. If I had a question that needed answering about Toastmasters or a job that needed to be done I knew all I had to do was email or call Joel to get a prompt answer or to get the job done. So many times in the past month I have had to stop myself from trying to contact him. He was always there – to support our club and individual members!

**Continued on page 20**



## Continued from page 18

Joel remained committed to our club as he battled cancer. Last spring he gave an excellent presentation on Networking at a South Street Toastmasters Open House. At that time, none of us knew he was sick. He put together and presented a top-notch talk despite the fact that he was already ill and in pain. He came to club meetings for as long as he could—attending his last meeting in November 2015.

A favorite memory I have of Joel is the time he said he would tell his wife that they would have to delay starting their vacation so that he could attend our club meeting!

Susan Mennella, ATMG, CL

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Joel first made himself known to me when he was part of the Murray Hill club. Like many AT&T Toastmasters, Joel was capable and dependable. Later he helped found a Bellcore

club, which met on South Street. He moved with the club to the Morris County Library, where the club kept its original name, South Street Toastmasters. Joel has been a dedicated and loyal member of the club. He was a quiet person, and we gradually learned of his outside-of-Toastmasters interests in motivation and dance. Joel remained a valuable member of the Toastmasters community, able and willing to contribute. Sometimes one did not know that it was Joel who quietly accomplished routine tasks for the club. To say that Toastmasters will miss Joel is an understatement. We are grateful for his participation, and to have known him.

Margaret Flory, DTM, PID

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Joel was a remarkable person. He really cared about people and South Street Toastmasters club. He was easy to talk to and a very nice person. I am very sorry about his death.

Hanna Minkin, CC

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## Happy Valentine's Day to YOU

By Sherri Rase, ACS, ALB

February 14 is a day some look forward to and others feel is an overblown manufactured holiday strictly for commercial purposes. While the first "official" Valentine's Day cards date back to the Victorian era, the most critical piece of a love affair is the one most people rarely consider – loving yourself first. Until you love yourself, there's not a whole lot you can offer to another person. Toastmasters is a step on the path to getting the love you need.

What?! Is this some kind of Pollyanna bull pucky? Not at all – the skills we learn in Toastmasters make us better relationship partners as well as business and social partners. Frequently, couples who have initially found themselves together through chemistry find their relationship is unsustainable because they have not done the initial ground work that Toastmasters know is the key to stability in social interaction.

Everywhere we go, we're doing public speaking. The December 2015 issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine made this abundantly clear. Listening is a skill; however, that many take for granted, confusing "I hear you" with "I listen." Hearing is a physical act, whereas listening is the interpretation of the meaning of the physical act of hearing the sounds that become words, motivators and action items.

Chemistry and pheromones might bring us together across a crowded room, but it's the conversation that makes relationships that last. We've all been part of an interaction where the person across from us is just waiting for us to take a breath before saying what is on his or her mind, rather than

responding in-kind to what we've just said. Taking the time to practice your active listening skills with a new friend lends weight to your words when you do speak and shows that person that their words and thoughts are valuable to you. How is this loving yourself? It's giving yourself the space to experience thoughts and ideas without feeling the need for immediate response.

We live in a world where there's a 15-second news cycle. Unplug, unwind, relax. The truth of the matter is we're awash in a sea of stimuli. Love yourself by stepping away from a flickering screen more than an hour prior to when you want to go to sleep. Tomorrow's a big day and you want to be awake and prepared for it. That flickering computer screen activates a

portion of your brain that interrupts the wind-down cycle of your thoughts and makes restful slumber as elusive as the unicorn.

Remember to take the time to be good to yourself. When you fly, the safety presentation tells you to put your own oxygen mask on first then help others. Love yourself enough to eat properly, sleep well, listen attentively and respond to loved ones with greater depth and meaning. When you're single, remember to take care of yourself and be flexible and open to others and new experiences. When you're in a relationship, remember to give yourself the recharge and alone-time you need to continue to be the person your beloved loves.

*Sherri Rase, ACS, ALB, serves as a Staff Writer for The Voice.*

*"The greatest thing you'll ever learn  
is just to love and be  
loved in return"  
– eden ahbez*



# Honoring Sharon Tu, DTM, Division Governor of the Year

By Jeanette (Jen) Fredericks, DTM

At the District 83 Fall Conference on November 14, 2015 Sharon Tu was named Division Governor of the Year (2014-15) and was inducted as a Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM). In the following interview, she reflects on her completed goals and directs our attention to the planning of our 2016 spring speech contests.

**JF: How long have you been a Toastmaster and what was your reason for joining?**

ST: I joined in 2009. My husband, Brian Lin, DTM, was then District 83 Governor. At that time we were dating, and I always complained that he spent more time at Toastmasters functions than he did with me. He strongly urged me to join Toastmasters, and I did. Not only do I understand why he spent so much time at those events, but I am doing the same. I especially appreciate the growth in leadership skills that membership has afforded me.

**JF: You have just earned the highest recognition a Toastmaster can achieve – Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM). What is your next goal?**

ST: I would like to compete in speech contests and learn to be a better speaker. I want to apply Toastmasters skills to further advance my career.

**JF: The year 2014-15 has been a remarkable year for you. Besides earning your DTM, you served concurrently as the Power Talkers Club president and as Division B governor. You led your club to a sixth Select Distinguished Club award with eight DCP points, led Division B to Presidents Distinguished Division, and were named District 83's Division Governor of the Year at our 2015 Fall Conference. What was your greatest challenge and most satisfying reward during these outstanding performances?**

ST: As I do with any new task, I challenged myself to lead Division B and Power Talkers officer teams to even higher proficiencies than I had found them. Teamwork is essential to effective leadership. I was fortunate that I had excellent team members at each level, and I capitalized on their skills and commitments.

At the club level, for example, Power Talkers was able to achieve eight DCP credits with only 24 members. I tried to instill in each member the desire to go for the next goal, and many did.

At the division level, Division B the area governors or I visited every club within the division at least twice. If a club in one area had a disappointing performance that could not be satisfactorily corrected within that group, other area governors

and members within Division B lent a hand. It was important that we assessed every club's strength and weakness in order to help each one chart its best course of action for success. At the start of my tenure, there were 28 clubs within the six areas in Division B; we ended with 30 clubs, no losses. Two visits per club, strategy consultation meetings, and the required on-time visit reports to Toastmasters International made for a very demanding team schedule. However, we were successful – Division B ended the year as a President's Distinguished Division, and I strongly believe the team members in both my club and my division experienced leadership growth. A great challenge? Of course, but one that was very satisfying.



Above: Area 54 Director Sharon Brown and five Power Talkers officers at a celebratory meeting honoring Sharon Tu, DTM, Division Governor of the Year (2014-15). Shown (l-r) are: VP Membership Linda DeLap, CC; Secretary Jennie Wright; Immediate Past President and Honoree Sharon Tu, DTM; VP Education Vanessa Day; VP Public Relations Anju Saran; President Raphael Kleinmann, CC; and Sharon Brown, ACS, ALB. Photo by Jen Fredericks, DTM

**JF: Are you giving yourself time off, or are you still deeply involved in Toastmasters at some level?**

ST: I belong to five clubs now: Power Talkers, Novartis East Hanover, South Street, Realtalkers and Morristown. I'm VPE for Novartis East Hanover. In addition, I agreed to serve as the current District 83 chief judge, and

this keeps me busy, especially during contest months.

**JF: As District chief judge, what are your primary duties?**

ST: My primary duties are to (1) educate district members as to the best practices to follow when serving as a judge or chief judge; (2) answer and clarify any question regarding contests or judging; (3) assist divisions/areas in organizing and locating qualified judges for their contests; (4) serve as chief judge at the district-level contests, unless members from any of my five clubs are competing at that level.

**JF: Our International Speech and Evaluation Club Contests are in progress, and the hierarchical competition will soon begin. What advice do you have for contest chairs?**

ST: Read the latest rulebook to become familiar with contest rules, paying particular attention to rule changes from previous years; Ask questions; Serve as a contest official at other contests to gain experience and to learn from others; Have a few trial/test runs before the real contest – practice makes perfect!

**JF: Thank you, Sharon, for your story and advice. You have set a high standard for us, and we look forward to your guidance in the upcoming contest season.**

Jen Fredericks, DTM, is a member of Power Talkers Toastmasters.

**Recognizing someone in your club?  
Please share information with newsletter team.**

# TLI Kicks off Training Season

By Lynda Starr, DTM

While the Toastmasters training season goes from December to February in the winter and June through August in the summer, the first training session known as the Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI) is the showcase event. It is usually the largest training session with fresh trainers and keynote speakers. This go-round is no different with the December 12 session at ToysRUS in Wayne. The TLI offers current and potential club officers the chance to network, share best practices, and be inspired by what one has accomplished and to think about what there is yet to do.

The training kicked off with breakout sessions for each officer role. Unlike the summer sessions, these are more Q&A and sharing than the summer when most officers are new to their positions. Susan Chrusciel, ACB, ALB, president of the soon-to-be-chartered

What Exit? Toastmasters, attended president's training for the first time. She said, "I was struck with how eager the other club presidents were to help every club succeed. We immediately passed around business cards; there were offers of assistance from other clubs and ADs. It was a fabulous way to show the Toastmaster spirit of working together." At the same time there are still many clubs with newly elected officers who appreciate hearing the basics in winter training. Janette Alexander, ACS, ALS, Division A director, is club secretary for Solix. She found the training to be "a great Toastmasters experience! There's so much learning happening and the advantage of meeting/seeing district officers together at once. What you learn is also presented a little differently, with a broader perspective that can only come from more experienced Toastmasters. I attended a training session for secretaries. Not only was it more comprehensive than some other session I've attended it was super upbeat and I walked away determined to take on my officer role with gusto!"

Brian Lin, DTM, along with Paul Scharf, DTM 5, Pamela Winter, DTM and Cyndi Wilson, DTM 2, conducted a session on contest judging. The main takeaways included: the job of the judge is to select a winner, not evaluate. Each candidate should be

judged against the criteria and not one another. While we do offer judge training and it is helpful, it is not necessary to attend a training session to act as a judge.

Phyllis Goldblatt, DTM, shared tips for using the Toastmasters International and District 83 websites. There is much useful information on both sites and many reports can be viewed without a sign-in at the district and club level. Phyllis is also a prospective officer of a club that hasn't yet received its charter. She felt, "it was nice to be part of groups where people who were not yet officers were welcomed. I'm referring not just to the prospective officers of clubs like What Exit?, but also members who aren't officers yet in chartered clubs like Rutgers, whose members seemed to be in many places. I think TLI is an ideal place to

encourage such members to become officers."

Radhi Spear, DTM and our Region 9 advisor shared insights for club success based on her 15-year experience and service as district officer and governor. Radhi first reminded the audience that in Toastmasters, the member is at the top of the hierarchy and it's all about member success and satisfaction. She offered tips such as never cancel a meeting, have high expectations for your club and members will rise to the occasion.

Janette Alexander summarized the session best, "sitting in on some TLI sessions will put you in the front seat and you can observe your district officers at work and in action."

*"There's so much learning happening and the advantage of meeting/seeing district officers together at once. What you learn is also presented a little differently, with a broader perspective that can only come from more experienced Toastmasters. I attended a training session for secretaries. Not only was it more comprehensive than some other session I've attended it was super upbeat and I walked away determined to take on my officer role with gusto!"*

Winter Training continues through the end of February 2016.

Please check the district website [www.toastmasters83.org](http://www.toastmasters83.org) to find a training location if you are a club officer and have not attended training yet.

## Congratulations Karen A. Muha, DTM!

Karen, a member of Speech Meisters, Division B, Area 22, Basking Ridge, earned her DTM on January 10, 2016!

# Tower and Bridge 20th Anniversary Celebration

By Isabel Liu

On October 28, 2015, Tower and Bridge Toastmasters celebrated its 20th anniversary at Sanofi's corporate headquarters in Bridgewater, New Jersey.

Boxed lunches were provided to all attendees upon arrival with an opportunity to network prior to the meeting.

Isabel Liu, club president, opened the event by welcoming attendees and introduced the club's officers. James Boyd, club member and the club's area director, gave a brief history of the club. Tower and Bridge Toastmasters was chartered on August 1, 1995 under the former company of Hoechst which, after many mergers and transitions, is now known as Sanofi. Jim Samuel, DTM, and a group of about 20 employees obtained the company's sponsorship and permission to establish a club and hold meetings on site. Jim Samuel was present to provide more insight on how the club got started back in 1995.

HeiJen Sun, VP of Membership, asked current members to stand and be acknowledged and were provided a commemorative Toastmaster mug. Attendees were given Toastmasters pens along with other informative handouts.

Everyone was served sparkling cider and cupcakes (disguised as a sheet cake). James Boyd led the group in an Anniversary Toast to Tower and Bridge followed by the singing of "Happy Anniversary Tower and Bridge Toastmasters," led by Lessie Williams, the Club's VP of Public Relations. Isabel Liu presented special achievement awards to the following club members: Julie Doerr, CC, ALB; Stuart Persky, CC; James Boyd and Janice Buffalow, DTM.

Stuart Persky introduced the guest speaker, Mary Halliwell, North America Communications Head of Content and Channel Management for Sanofi US. Ms. Halliwell's speech focused on taking advantage of unplanned opportunities and not being afraid to travel into uncharted territory in order to expand your knowledge and experience.

*Below: This certificate was presented to our honored guest Jim Samuel, DTM 7, who founded the Tower and Bridge club 20 years ago.*



*Above, left to right: Isabel Liu, Stuart Persky, CC, HeiJen Sun, Julie Doerr, CC, ALB.*



*Above: Jim Samuel, DTM 7, with Tower and Bridge officers, HeiJen Sun; Julie Doerr, CC, ALB; and Isabel Liu.*

Members from Frontline Speakers club at Merial, a Sanofi affiliate company, were in attendance and were among those who volunteered to participate in a demonstration of Table Topics. Janice Buffalow, DTM, club secretary and sergeant at arms, gave a brief explanation of the various roles members can fill at each meeting and the various tools available to assist members in gaining public speaking and leadership skills as club members. Julie Doerr, VP of Education, conducted a Question & Answer session at the conclusion of festivities. In closing, James Boyd thanked all for coming and encouraged everyone to continue participation in Toastmasters as a means of personal development.

The program was very well attended and enjoyed by all. We are so grateful for the efforts of our membership and for assistance from fellow Toastmasters from Merial, as well as to Mary Halliwell for answering the call to fill in as our guest speaker on incredibly short notice after the planned speaker had an urgent last minute conflict.

Thanks to the overall support from Sanofi Corporate. Congratulations Tower and Bridge Toastmasters, and best wishes going forward to the next 20-year mark!