



The Voice

District 83 Newsletter
February 2014

The Voice is dedicated to inspiring Toastmasters in District 83 to achieve their goals. Let **The Voice** be *your voice* by sending in your success stories—the way that Toastmasters has helped you either personally or professionally. Everyone has a story to share and your experiences can help others find *their voice*. Please send your submissions to Joanne Callahan, your District 83 Newsletter Editor, at greenbriar206@yahoo.com. Photos are welcomed!

Staten Island – Liberty Toastmasters Club Celebrates 20th Anniversary

On November 14, 2013 the Staten Island – Liberty Toastmasters Club held a celebration of its 20th anniversary that was a combination of a meeting and a Brunch. We kept our speeches to a minimum so as to have plenty of time to enjoy refreshments and socialize with one another. To begin the festivities, our Humorous Table Topics Master, Joan Maurizio, explained a gimmick she'd dreamt up for posing the questions.

At previous meetings we had held up a card from the deck of the game "Whoonu" and called on someone to talk about the word or phrase on the card for the required time. Joan's gimmick was to have two cards instead of one. The responder had to weave both words and/or phrases into the response. The results were hilarious. A photo below shows Club President Allen Cohen displaying his two cards and expounding on them. Club Vice President Education Emily Cohen is hidden behind the time cards. She doesn't have to worry whether her best side is showing in this photo.



Having the Table Topics Master listed as the Humorous Table Topics Master on the Agenda wasn't the only twist. The Grammarian/Ah Counter role was to be filled by "Who's Counting?"

Our Distinguished Keynote Speaker was Fran Okeson DTM 16. Who could possibly be more distinguished! She gave speech #1 from the Professional Speaker Advanced Manual (The Keynote Address) and her speech title was "Out Of The Ashes Of An Idea." In her 15 to 20 minute speech, Fran traced the history of our Toastmasters club in a most informative and entertaining way. Among her many Toastmasters positions today, she is our Club Vice President Public Relations and Club Secretary as well as our Area Governor of Area 13.

The next and final speaker was Club Treasurer Julie Porowski whose schmaltzy rendition of her Toastmasters memories brought tears to our eyes. She had saved clippings from the local newspaper about big moments and showed them around. Julie was the winner of a contest some years ago to name a fundraising cookbook for the Toastmasters club. In a photo on page 2, you can see her giving her speech while Club Vice President Marketing AnneMarie McDonough looks over a copy of that cookbook. In the background is posted the official Certificate of Achievement from Toastmasters International commending Staten Island – Liberty Toastmasters on the club's 20th Anniversary.

(continued on page 2)



The refreshment table was a popular feature of our Celebration. Club President Allen Cohen had prepared finger sandwiches with fillings such as cream cheese with smoked salmon and scallion. In a photo below you can see a special finger sandwich he made especially for Fran Okeson. The filling consists of a rubber thumb! When presented with this special finger sandwich, Fran's reaction was one of alarm! Another item on the elegant refreshment table was a lovely fruit bouquet prepared by Club Vice President Emily Cohen.

This was an Anniversary Celebration to be remembered!



Area 13's Traveling Gavel Adventure by Emily Cohen

As a member of Staten Island – Liberty Toastmasters Club as well as one of Smedley's Speakers Advanced Toastmasters Club, both in Area 13 in Staten Island, New York, I completed my High Performance Leadership Project. This involved having one of our Area 13 clubs "capture" District 83's Traveling Gavel from a club in New Jersey. Never before had that Gavel been held by a club on Staten Island. Never before had it been held by every club in an Area of District 83.

The stated purpose of The Traveling Gavel is to encourage joint Toastmasters Club meetings, share talents and knowledge of communication and leadership and extend the fellowship of Toastmasters.

I knew that a club wanting to "capture" The Traveling Gavel needed to look at District 83's website to see what club currently held it. New Heights Toastmasters in Jersey City had the Gavel when I looked. How interesting! I had never been in Jersey City! My husband Allen, who is President of Staten Island – Liberty Toastmasters, had been there once as a youngster. Allen, unafraid of driving at night to unfamiliar places, agreed to drive the three club members required to a meeting of New Heights Toastmasters. I, the club VPE, went along and Joan Maurizio readily volunteered to be the third. Although not an officer in our club this year, Joan outranks Allen and me as she is a DTM.

I contacted Carmin Duarte, President of New Heights Toastmasters, and we set up a date for Allen, Joan and me to participate in one of their meetings. Since I told Oomadai Rampersaud, their VPE, how experienced we all were, Joan was made Toastmaster for the evening, Allen evaluated Darnelle Richardson's excellent speech, and I gave a speech on "Staten Island's Attractions", hoping to promote "the forgotten borough."

The officers and members of New Heights Toastmasters could not have been more hospitable. In fact, this experience inspired Allen and me to seek out a Toastmasters club to visit when we visited family in Arizona. That, however, is a subject for another article in this newsletter.

Now back to our own progress with District 83's The Traveling Gavel. Once we brought it to Staten Island, aided by the members of my Guidance Committee (Fran Okeson, DTM16, Joan Maurizio DTM, and Allen Cohen ACS), plans were worked out to get the Gavel captured by one Area 13 club from another. The grand finale would be having a New Jersey club "capture" the Gavel from No Limits Toastmasters at one of their meetings which is taped for the "Toastmasters In The Community" television program at the studio of Time Warner Cable for airing on community cable channel 34.

It was very helpful to us that a few members of Area 13 clubs are members of multiple clubs. They would usually be in attendance to be part of the three or more club members to "capture" the gavel from the club displaying it at their meeting. However, every attempt was made to include others so that more people would get to have this experience.

Some of our Toastmasters went out of their way to make time in their busy schedules to attend meetings of other clubs so the "quorum" of three or more members would be present and The Traveling Gavel could be "captured" in timely fashion. Mary Bacheller, Irene Rosado, Mike Lenza, Ann Lautner, and Ken Raftery are a few who come to mind.

To give you an idea of how efficiently we passed the Gavel throughout the six Area 13 clubs, it was on September 10, 2013 that Allen, Joan and I made our initial foray into New Jersey and "captured" the Gavel from New Heights Toastmasters. Our Staten Island – Liberty Toastmasters Club met just two days later. At that meeting, Business Leaders Toastmasters Club took the Gavel. It went swiftly from one club to another. On the District 83 website where the entire itinerary of The Traveling Gavel is listed, you can see each date and club name mentioned, as well as names of capturers.

On November 2, 2013, Brunswick Advanced Toastmasters, represented by George Corrado, Paul J. Scharf, and Sandy Scharf, "captured" the Gavel from No Limits Toastmasters and then took it back to New Jersey.

Take a look and see what club has it now. Why doesn't your club make plans to "capture" The Traveling Gavel? It's a wonderful experience!

We have some photos to share. In the photo of the New Heights Toastmasters meeting, which was taken by their member Pradeep Sharma, from left to right are Joan Maurizio DTM, Emily Cohen ACG, CL, and Allen Cohen, ACS (representing Staten Island – Liberty Toastmasters) and Carmin Duarte CC and Darnelle Richardson DTM (representing New Heights Toastmasters).

In the photo which was taken at the North Shore Toastmasters meeting, Irene Rosado, that club's VPE, is on the left handing The Traveling Gavel to, from left to right, Mike Lenza (President), Ann Lautner, and John Weibel (representing Richmond County Toastmasters). Fran Okeson took the photo so she didn't get to be in it.

The grand finale photo, taken by Richard G. Kahn, a cameraman for the "Toastmasters In The Community" television show, shows George Corrado (President of Brunswick Advanced) at left, seated at the desk, and Fran Okeson, (VPE of No Limits Toastmasters). Standing behind them, from left to right, are Paul J. Scharf, Sandy Scharf (representing Brunswick Advanced) and Francesca Romolo, Maria Gambino, Lucy Kahn, Kevin J. Thompson, Gimai Ma, Fern Rashkover, Irene A. Rosado, Ken Cybulska, and Pat Masterson (all representing No Limits Toastmasters). Two No Limits members who were present but didn't appear in this photo are Joan Maurizio and new member Fang Chen.



The 2014 Newsletter Contest is Here!

The 2014 Newsletter Contest is Here!



Hear Ye, Hear Ye! The District 83 Newsletter Contest began on January 15th and runs through March 15th. Below are the official rules:

- Only one submission per club will be accepted
- Submissions must be sent by 11:59 p.m. on March 15th. A submission sent (or received) at 12:00 a.m. on March 16th will not be accepted. Do not be tempted to wait until the very last second to press the 'send' key. It is not worth the stress! Please remember that there are no exceptions to this rule in fairness to those who managed to press their 'send' key on time.
- Submissions may be sent in any format that is compatible with the Windows environment. I know you want to show me your new, fancy computer programs but if I cannot open it, I cannot judge it. It's that simple. Also, format is not one of the judging criteria, although content definitely is.
- Newsletters from past contests will not be accepted. I may be many things, but short on memory is not one of them. I am like the proverbial elephant that never forgets. Whether you won or lost, you must submit an entirely different newsletter. Preferably one that is within the last month or two.
- I cannot stress this enough. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Entries will be judged in the following categories:

1. Best club goal. What does your club hope to accomplish before June 30, 2014?
2. Best interview of a club member
3. Best 'ah ha' moment from a newbie
4. A humorous Table Topics response that you cannot forget

Please send your submissions to greenbriar206@yahoo.com

The winning club will receive a \$50.00 gift certificate for Toastmaster supplies and the honor and privilege of seeing your masterpiece posted to the District 83 website. Good luck everyone!

We Need Your Input!



Do you have a photo of a recent Toastmasters event or meeting? Will your club be celebrating an important milestone? Your District wants to know!

Please send me pictures and articles for inclusion in upcoming newsletters. You don't have to be a literary genius or a professional photographer. Just a Toastmaster willing to share with the rest of us what your club already knows – and that is just how special you are!

Please send your submissions to your editor, Joanne Callahan, at greenbriar206@yahoo.com

