



The Voice

District 83 Newsletter
"Better You, Better World"

September 2009

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 also welcomed!

Brunswick Toastmasters Celebrates It's Milestone

Brunswick Toastmasters' history dates back to almost 15 years ago, the year 1995, when the club was chartered and the person responsible for it was Fran Okeson, DTM, Speech Coach and Trainer. Since then, our club has reached great heights, the highlight of which was the last 6 years wherein it has successfully achieved President's Distinguished Club.

We are based in North Brunswick, NJ and meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month at 710 Hermann Road at the North Brunswick Community Building. We have about 70 members and continue to be a strong club, attracting people from diverse cultural, educational and professional backgrounds.

Over the years, we have done a tremendous amount of work and has exceeded in all 10 categories that we use to rate club activities making us a President's Distinguished Club. It was a great accomplishment that we are proud of. A number of our members have also been successful in completing different levels of their own personal Toastmaster Milestones.

We have been the home club of Immediate Past District Governor, 2008-2009 and Distinguished Toastmaster, Paul Scharf; TI Leadership Institute Director and DTM, George Corrado; District Historian and Area 45 Governor, Sandy Scharf; 2008 Table Topics District Contest Winner, Chinor Lee; 2008 Humorous Speech District Contest 2nd place winner, Celcuis Rebello; 2009 International Speech Division D Contest Runner Up, Irina Dymarsky; and 2009 Speech Evaluation Division D Contest 3rd Place Winner, Adam Breiterman.

Now that we are starting another TM year, the goal of Brunswick Toastmasters is to continue achieving Distinguished Club, to fulfill our mission of enhancing member performance in communication and leadership skills, to continue to attract a diverse group of people, to establish a stronger community presence by participating in and supporting community activities, by achieving more CLs, by having more speak-a-thons; by creating a Social Networking Group Pages (Linkedin, Facebook, and Twitter), and by hosting a holiday club dinner.

A club this large, combined with the commitment, dedication, loyalty and contributions of its members, along with the fellowship and teamwork of everyone involved, should have no problem achieving its goals. It is inspiring to witness member confidence increase and to watch as leadership and communication skills develop. We really are proud of our accomplishment!

Brunswick Toastmasters celebrating their milestone!



And the award goes to.....



Everyone say 'cheese!'



The Road to Toast
By Pamela Winter, ACS/ALB
Division C Governor

About 25 years ago, I heard about an organization where men and women got together to take turns standing up at the front of a room to speak. “Yuck,” I thought. “What sort of sick individual would purposely seek out this unique form of torture if they didn’t have to?” I quickly dispensed with any notion I may have had to join such a stress-inducing group. I had enough going on in my life at the time: being a single parent and raising three children; caring for my recently-widowed and ill mother; and maintaining an aged car so I could continue my 50-mile commute into traffic-infested Los Angeles each day.

Years pass, children grow up, and dealing with the loss of both my parents within a six-month span created some depth of character for me. Once again, I found myself working in a big city – this time it was New York, when I heard about Toastmasters. This time, I thought it was time to finally grow up and take one of those final steps in facing my fears. I joined. And for six months I managed to avoid facing those fears. For six months, every second and fourth Thursday at noon, I tried to blend into the wallpaper in the conference room at work, in an attempt to go unnoticed. Old habits die hard.

Finally, during one meeting, the opinionated me took control of my legs and walked me to the front of the room to give a rousing, albeit short turn at Table Topics. For a full 31 seconds, I owned the room! And then my darned legs, the ones that walked me up to the front of the room, wobbled so much I could barely make it back to my chair.

From then on, I was encouraged by the friendly group to speak, speak, *speak!* And I did; and I did; and I did. The CC manual became so much

easier towards the end as I discovered a confidence in me I barely knew. That confidence just needed some exercise and practice. I joyously anticipated completing each advanced manual and was a little sad when I had done so. It was like ending a friendship I had developed with each speech as I moved through the manuals. I think my favorite advanced manual is *Interpretive Reading* because I can act out each part of the author’s story. I think I would like to be able to volunteer to read to others after I retire. I could have such fun reading to children at the library or to seniors at an assisted living home.

I love reaching each goal and I love accomplishing each hurdle. With the growth of my confidence, I found a kinship in those unable or unwilling to speak for themselves and I try to pay that gift of Toastmasters forward to them. I needed Toastmasters, I just never realized it. Now I want to present that gift to others who, like the me of my past, need to move forward in the world with confidence that comes from good communication skills.



Toastmasters...it’s a gift!

The Techie Toastmaster



In order to help his fellow Toastmasters become technologically savvy rather than watching us become technologically challenged,, Joel Heffner has volunteered to write a monthly column explaining the latest and greatest that technology has to offer.

What do all those letters mean?

One of the most confusing parts of technology is also the easiest. When you save something on your computer, you create a file. All files are not the same. To help clarify the differences, files have different types of names. You see these names at the end of the file's name. For example, you probably have seen files that end with .doc, .pdf, .rtf, and .txt. They are all used to create text. So what makes them different?

Text isn't just text, usually. For geeks, text means plain text, without any formatting. Formatting is when you want to make a word **bold**, *italic*, or a special **color**. If you want to write words without any formatting, you can use a .txt file that is created by a text editor. Text editors create files that are very plain. If you use Windows, you have a program called Notepad that creates text. Mac users have TextEdit to create text files. Both are free text editors and came with your computer.

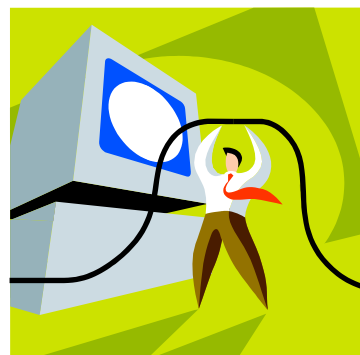
The problem comes because most folks find plain text... plain. They like the formatting. For that you need a word processor. Word processors allow you to format text. Microsoft Word and WordPerfect are examples of word processors. Word is the most widely used word processor. When you save a file, often called a document, using Word, it will be saved as a .doc file. [Newer versions of Word allow you to use the extension .docx.] A problem pops up if you email a .doc file to someone who doesn't have Word on their computer. They probably won't be able to open the file. Yuck.

To solve that problem, there are .rtf files. Rich text files allow you to use some formatting. They aren't as rich as a Word file, but can look very nice too. If you use a .rtf file, just about anyone can open it with a computer. If you use Windows, there is a free program called Wordpad that allows you to write and read .rtf files. TextEdit for Macs also lets you write and read .rtf files. If, for example, you have a

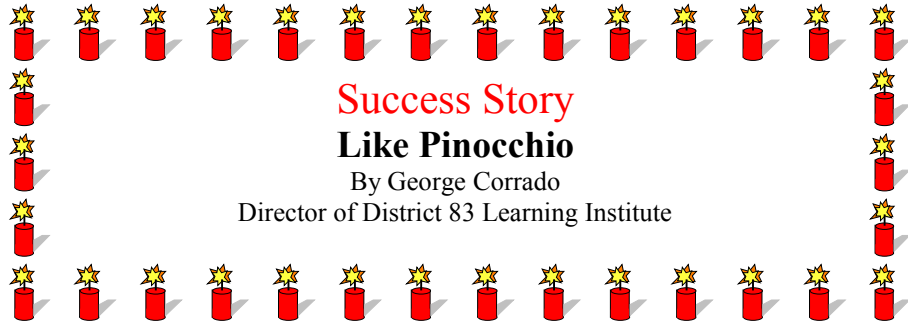
document to send to various members of your Toastmaster's club, you are safe in using a .rtf file.

If you want to send a formatted file to someone who doesn't have your type of word processor there's another possibility. You probably have seen files with the .pdf extension. Portable document files are produced that retain all the formatting of the original. In order to open a .pdf file, you need Adobe's Reader.

The good news is that you probably already have it in your computer. Versions come in formats for all computers. An advantage of .pdf files is that the person who gets your file can not change it. It's locked. To create a .pdf file you need Adobe's Acrobat software, or an equivalent.



Why should a Toastmaster care about all this stuff? If you want to write handouts for a speech, for example, formatted files look best. It's also important if you want to send files from one person to another. Knowing a little of the language of the geeks can be very helpful.



Success Story

Like Pinocchio

By George Corrado

Director of District 83 Learning Institute

In a way I feel my story is similar to Pinocchio's. From wood I have turned into a proactive person.

Let me take you back to my working life before I retired and before Toastmasters. My goal at work was always to be unnoticed. In obscurity I found safety. I did my job well enough to not be noticed. I was neither terrible nor exceptional. In fact if management thought I was a piece of furniture as I hid in the back of the room, I felt secure.

Then I joined Toastmasters very soon after my retirement. I went to a Brunswick Toastmasters club meeting and everyone seemed friendly. I enjoyed the speeches and was surprised at how supportive the criticism was. It was not what I would call "criticism." It was a Toastmasters "Evaluation." Club members did the evaluations. They were complimentary with a few helpful hints. I could deal with that.

I began to slowly participate as a duty holder and then Table Topics speaker to test the waters. I was complimented and applauded. It seemed I had a knack for Table Topics.

No one pressured me but asked me when I would give my first manual speech. I did not shy away from these requests because I did not feel pushed; these club members were genuinely interested in hearing what I had to say. So I tried it and my "evaluation" was very positive and at the same time very helpful with a few very important suggestions.

Thereafter it was a matter of following instructions from my CC manual. I could not believe it was just so enjoyable to learn and practice. I left each meeting on a high having spoken before a very supportive group of friends.

Then I was called back to work. I stopped going to club meetings because of my work schedule.

While at work, management called one of their boring, waste of time meetings and I had to attend. I picked my spot in the back of the room and slouched in my seat to hide better. Wood is good. They started to talk about the operation of a new machine that I learned on my own and was informally teaching my fellow workers how to use.

As usual the managers did not know what they were talking about. I raised my hand and when recognized I went to the front of the room took the chalk and drew diagrams as I described how the piece of equipment integrated into the entire system and what its capabilities were and what its limitations were. When I sat down I realized what I had just done. In my entire 45-year working career I had never stood up before a group to address them. To say the least, I was amazed and intimidated by my actions. When the meeting ended many of the managers came up to me and thanked me for my input. Without me knowing it Toastmasters had changed me.

Since then I won a Table Topics contest at the District level speaking before almost 200 people. I started to accept leadership roles and became one of those dreaded managers. I tentatively started out as a club officer. I moved up and was the Division D Governor for 2008-2009. Last June 13th at District 83 Officer Training I did all the intros to the general sessions, trained officers and most importantly to my growing skills I delivered my first 45-minute seminar to an auditorium of District Officers. I focused on the importance of District leadership and how the Top 3, Division Governors and Area Governors change the lives of the members they serve.

Every DCP point obtained under their guidance represents a person that has been changed. For each point some member in District 83 is better today than they were yesterday. Being a District leader is a valuable job, I suggested they work hard and cherish every bit of the experience.

I have changed so much. I am no longer content to be silent and "wooden" to people I did not know well. I have matured into a real person who can express ideas confidently and work with others as an equal to contribute to our goals.

I have not stopped growing. With every meeting, every task I complete, Toastmaster is still changing me for the better. I have benefited from the work of many Club and District officers.

If I knew then what I know now I believe my career would have been entirely different which is why I enjoy spreading the word about Toastmasters. I want others to benefit from Toastmasters.

At present my retirement has blossomed beyond my imaginings and it is still changing for the better. Thanks to Toastmasters and every member I have met.



Area 34 & 35 Tall Tales & Table Topic Contest was a huge success !

Donna Juzva, ACB, ALB
Area 34 Governor, District 83

Ozzie Akpata
Area 35 Governor, District 83

Participants and officials traveled from all over the District to participate in this wonderful event. Hosted by Area Governors, Donna Juzva & Ozzie Akpata, the contest was wildly entertaining and lots of fun.

Congratulations to all of our participants for winning their club contests. Eric Stetson, Lisa Pantano, Dave Chapman, Karen Muha and Julie Patskin did a fantastic job amusing our audience with their hilarious and exciting Tall Tales. And Dave Milford, Lisa Pantano, Carol Kotopoulos, David Chapman and Meghan Fenton dazzled us with their inspired responses in our Table Topics Contest.

Congratulations to our Area 34 & 35 Contest Winners, Lisa Pantano and Dave Chapman ! Both Lisa & Dave took first place in their respective Areas in both the Tall Tale and Table Topic contests. Great Job ! We wish the Best of Luck to you both in the upcoming Division C Contest and in the subsequent District 83 Contest.

Thanks so much to our wonderful volunteers, without whom the contest could not have taken place. Thanks to all of our officials, Tom Somers, Barbara Krasner, Pamela Winter, Cyndi Wilson, Tushar Despande, Mark Streitman, Mary McGinley and Janice Buffalow, who did a superb job in their roles, ensuring that our contest ran smoothly and professionally. It is an honor to work with these outstanding and generous individuals. Thanks to our audience members for lending their ears, and sharing their laughter and applause.

Special thanks goes to my co-chairperson, Ozzie Akpata, who with a unique combination of enthusiasm, poise and attention to detail, made running this event together a genuine pleasure.

Very Special Thanks goes to our Chief Judge, Division C Governor, Pamela Winter, for her guidance and support in coordinating and facilitating this event.

It is due to the efforts and professionalism of all involved that this event has been such a fabulous success.

Thanks & Congratulations to all for a job well done !

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 Joanne Callahan at greenbriar206@yahoo.com

This Just In...
Area 31 Contest Results

The Area 31 Contest for Tall Tales and Table Topics held on September 16 was a GREAT SUCCESS!!! Congratulations to our contest participants (Tom Davison, Erica Karp, Dan Kleinman, Nelson Rivas, and Mike Rutkowski) for wonderful and memorable performances.

Congratulations to our Table Topics winner, Tom Davison, and Tall Tales winner, Nelson Rivas. They will now compete at the Division Contest, scheduled on Monday, October 19 (7 - 8:45 PM) at Verizon (One Verizon way, Basking Ridge, NJ). I am sure they will appreciate our support at the Division Contest.

Special thanks to our contest officials: Pam Winter, Ruthann Disotell, Ed Kmiec, Amanda Salvarani, Corliss Smith, Robert Snook, and Cyndi Wilson. An additional appreciation goes to Pam Winter, who was wonderful as our Chief Judge.

I ask that you forward this email as a **"THANK YOU"** to anyone you invited who attended, as their presence was heartfelt and appreciated.

Again, thanks for an outstanding job!!!

Andrew Smith
Division C – Area 31 Governor

