



TOASTMASTERS

INTERNATIONAL

# The Voice

*District 83 Newsletter*  
**“Better You, Better World”**  
 November 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](mailto:greenbriar206@yahoo.com). Photos are welcomed!

## My Toastmasters Experience

By Luz Guzman



Toastmasters is a warm receptive arena for those of us who struggle with the coherent assembly of ideas. Since I stumble often over what to say, and how to say it, Toastmasters provides the feedback I need to approach this obstacle. I had recently been hired at a bank as a customer service representative and I wanted to do well. I went on to convince my manager to send me for Life Insurance classes and later Series 6 and 63. I am now a Financial Representative at the bank, still customer service, but with a kick.

Last year I became Area Governor and like learning to ride a

bike I scraped my knee a couple of times but continued to ride the course. This was completely new, because now I was changing gears from presenter to leader. Leader? Who would have thought? Although it is not my main goal to follow the leadership track, the role made me appreciate many things at my work place that many take for granted.

For example Licensed Bank Associates and Financial Representative or LBAs and FRs have a continual training program to remain on top of the Insurance and Financial features. No easy feat when you have to coordinated speakers and trainers, whose schedules have to coincide with many of the employees from different parts of the bank. Then, find an accessible location that is conducive to the training—sound familiar? Toastmasters do this for free and many willingly participate, - it says a lot for the organization.

The Toastmasters Contests are quite a challenge. I went from being a spectator to one of the coordinators. Prior to this I focused on the speech presentations, enjoying new ways of approaching topics. As an Area Governor there was that gear shift to focusing on ways of ensuring that people had the means and opportunity to compete, worry free of anything but the presentation. I think by the second contest, along with my fellow Area Governor Mamadou Fofana, now Division B Governor, we succeeded.

Finally, during this time I achieved ACB, which I enjoyed because I chose manuals that had nothing to do with business, focusing instead on Speeches for Special Occasions and Storytelling. My intent was to develop my creative mind, plus I always wanted to see if my ideas for writing could be transposed verbally. By my last speech I was quite

pleased. I managed to touch at least one or two members who came up to me afterwards with compliments and encouragement. It's like someone enjoying a pie you made and asking for the recipe.

As I said, Toastmasters is that reception area for experimenting and exploring. It has been a wonderful learning experience, an opportunity that no one should let pass by.

*We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started... and know the place for the first time.*

**T.S. Eliot**

## The Technie Toastmaster



*In order to help his fellow Toastmaster become technologically saavy 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*

### E-mail Etiquette for Toastmasters

Although the Web gets most of the attention on the Internet, email gets the most action. Millions of pieces of email are sent each day. Unfortunately, many who send email are not aware of the basic etiquette involved. Here are some basic guidelines when sending email.

1. Do not send mass email to folks who don't want to receive it. That's called spamming and is probably the single-most hated thing on the Internet.

2. DO NOT USE ALL CAPITAL LETTERS! On the Internet, that is considered shouting. It's also harder to read all capital letters.

3. Keep your messages short. Email is considered to be much less formal

than sending a letter. Get to the point.

4. Use the Subject line to let folks know what the message is about. Try to make it interesting and short. If you do not have a subject line, many people will automatically ignore your message.

5. Spell check your email. Since your message is a reflection of your image, it is oftentimes the first (and often only) way that you can make a good impression.

6. When sending messages to more than one person, use blind copies (BCC). That means that the other folks who receive your message do not see the email address of each person you are sending the message to. It also will avoid the possibility of one person returning a message to all the other people who

received the original email. It is very annoying to get an email response with something like, "Good idea."

7. When in doubt, do not send it. Frivolous messages should be avoided. No one wants to waste time looking at messages that did not have to be sent. It may also mean that the next time you send a message - it won't even get opened!

8. Make your email address easy to remember. An address like johndoe@consultant.com is much easier to remember than one like jh123094@myworld.net. You can get email addresses at sites such as Gmail <http://www.gmail.com> for free. Creating dedicated email addresses is also a good idea. You can have several different addresses forwarded to your one main

email account. Check with your email provider to see if forwarding is possible.

9. Nice emails are always appreciated. Saying thank you is always a nice thing to do whether you are using email, telephone, or a written note.

Knowing about email etiquette will help you avoid mistakes on the Internet and will make you look more professional as a speaker.

*Need techie help? Send an email to [thetechie-toastmaster@gmail.com](mailto:thetechie-toastmaster@gmail.com)*



## Success Story

Paul Thompson, DTM

Area 51 Governor



I've been in the public speaking field for over 40 years as a public speaker, a corporate trainer and financial planner. I am now the CEO of my own company Thompson and Thompson, Inc. One of the main reasons I joined Toastmasters was to give back to people because I used to be an avid stutterer and it was other people who helped me overcome that. Reading many books on confidence is what inspired me to go forward, and I was even paid \$20,000 for an hour of public speaking to a group of 1800 at a national convention for Nestle Corporation. This was a great honor for me, and like achieving my DTM, this memory will never leave me.

When I heard about Toastmasters I joined to give back and help other people and to "keep my pencil sharp." The 3 years prior to my joining Toastmasters I had not been in the public speaking circuit because I was division governor for three years ago and then I stepped away. I started to wonder if I could do it again, and even if you have been a professional speaker you can have self doubts about your ability speak in front of a group and you find the lack of confidence you had experienced long ago creeping back into your life. I still have little qualms about speaking in public so I know I still need to be out there.

I am a goal oriented person and that is what helped me achieve my DTM and I did it by visiting over 48

clubs across the country in about 4 years. Because I was a corporate trainer at that point, I was able to stop into meetings wherever I was. It was a great thrill for me because there is nothing like meeting other people across the country and I had a lot of fun doing so.

Having success in business is great but after that your self esteem starts to waiver and I felt very good when I achieved my DTM. This goal was worth the effort and I still have the plaque I received hanging on the wall of my office. It is a good conversation piece and both Toastmasters and non-Toastmasters alike will comment on it

*Paul is very active in the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars), the American Legion and the Marine Corp League. Paul does a lot of work with veterans and is currently an officer in all three of these organizations. Paul is the father of four, he has been married for 41 years (to the same woman!), and has 9 grandchildren with number 10 on the way. Paul is also the author of a book called "For My Grandchild" and has sold 6,000 copies without doing any marketing, merely by word of mouth. Paul is a Vietnam veteran where he was a Sergeant in the Marine Corps. Paul is currently a member of the William Patterson University Club in Wayne and is serving as Area Governor in Division E, Area 51 for the third time.*



## Kevin Thompson

MPA, ACG, ABL, Area 55 Governor



Are you looking for an opportunity to expand your horizons and do things that you thought were just a dream? If you answer yes then you must become a Toastmaster. Being a member of Toastmasters has provided the opportunity for me to pursue my dream of becoming a professional speaker and coach. I joined Toastmasters because I needed to feel comfortable giving presentations to the management staff (a group of 200) at my employer. The process of pursuing the communications manual started me on the journey to discover my dream. Yes I said discover because at the time I did not realize that becoming a professional speaker was a dream of mine.

Toastmaster provided a supportive and safe environment to develop my speaking ability and expand my creativity. If you are like me your day job may not give you much room to think creatively and exhibit your talent. Toastmasters proved to be this venue for me. I entered a number of contest, attended the district conference and I was energized. In six years I went from being afraid of speak in public, to being a top 3 District Humorous speech winner twice, Conference Workshop presenter, Chairing Fun Night at the fall conference twice, becoming District 83's first fall conference chair, a guest on the Toastmasters in the Community Television show twice, and Area Governor. As a contestant and conference attendee I met and learned from members of other clubs and developed a group of friends with common interest and goals. There was a feeling of great accomplishment with every milestone in my Toastmasters journey. I knew that with each step up the Leadership and Communications ladder I had was not only improving my

skills but helping others in the process. This has led me to become an Area Governor where I can help other Toastmasters be successful in pursuing their dreams and achieving their goals.

As a professional speaker I have presented at association conferences in Atlantic City Casinos, Colleges and various organizations throughout New York and New Jersey. I have developed a career coaching practice to help job seekers successfully transition into their next career. In fact it is called Careers In Transition and can be found at

<http://www.careersintransition.net> . My Toastmasters experience has lead me to become a social marketing networker, developing blogs, web sites and content management sites. I just developed a membership site for my home club UMDNJ Toastmasters to help them become better communicators and leaders, take a look at <http://umdnjtoastmasters.com>

Being able to touch other's lives and make an impact in positive ways has led me to take one my Toastmasters leadership role as an Area Governor. Sharing my knowledge, caring about the success of those around me, and communicating the message that we all have something important has kept me involved in Toastmasters. Why not join me and my Toastmaster friends, we would love to learn from you, benefit from your talents and celebrate your success. You too can follow your dream.





**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**

