



TOASTMASTERS

INTERNATIONAL

The Voice

District 83 Newsletter
"Better You, Better World"
January 2010

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!

The Next Right Thing Teresa Palmer, ACB, ALB

I love an opportunity to speak! Anytime, anywhere, I'll talk to anyone about anything. I love an audience! That's the way I am. My Toastmasters story is atypical. It is worth telling because of the reason I became a Toastmaster and what amazing things occurred as a result of becoming a part of Toastmasters International.

My career in Healthcare afforded me the opportunity to speak at Nursing conferences and Professional organizations. I was involved with patient and staff education; in addition, I authored chapters in several nursing texts and was published in Professional Nursing Journals. Within the past ten years I became more interested in creative writing. My mentor, a former Distinguished Toastmaster,

suggested I join Toastmasters to "spark my creativity." "Speaking and writing are two sides of the same coin" he wisely told me. So in 2005 I took his advice and joined Toastmasters of Westfield. I was surrounded by creative individuals—often their speeches gave me ideas for stories. As I completed the basic communication manual and earned my Competent Communicator, I learned how to build a strong story.

I enjoyed giving my speeches—the relaxed environment was far different than the urging forum I was used to and, unexpectedly, I was finding my voice as a performer. I loved it! As I explored the advanced communication manuals, I found a new world opening up to me. Each manual is unique and affords Toastmasters the opportunity to learn different venues—Storytelling, The Entertaining Speaker, Humorous Speaking,

Communicating in the Media, Professional Speaking, and much more. When I achieved my Advanced Communicator Bronze I had a great sense of accomplishment. Then I gave ten more speeches from two very different manuals. I had expanded my confidence outside my comfort zone. I had no boundaries, only possibilities.

That confidence and attitude led me unexpectedly into media / broadcasting. I continually use my Toastmaster skills at a talk radio station in New York City, on and off the air waves. I am currently nominated for a seat on a local radio station board. I am called upon to write and deliver campaign statements as well as to deliver impromptu speeches. Toastmasters serve me well when I am given the opportunity in which to speak.

The Technie Toastmaster



Is There A Blog In Your Club's Future?

In 1997, Jorn Barger coined the term blog. He was combining the word Web and log. Blogs are now one of the most widely types of content seen on the Internet. A blog basically is a way for an individual, organization or company to make comments on a regular basis.

The most common way of creating a blog is to use software specially made to create blogs. The two most popular are [Blogger](#) and [Wordpress](#). You can create a blog with either of these services in minutes...for free. Both allow you to customize the appearance of your blog and even offer different themes to make it very easy to put your own stamp on the blog. Since you can add text, graphics and even video to your blog in a matter of minutes, a blog makes the perfect Web location for a Toastmaster Club or member. The [New Day Toastmasters Club](#) (on Staten Island), for example, uses a blog.



This example shows links to a page that describes the club, provides an email link, and tells about the club's next meeting. In addition, it shows links to Toastmaster sites. A listing of previous posts is also provided. Clubs that want a Web presence but are afraid of undertaking something that is complicated and time consuming should consider such a blog format. Toastmasters who want their own Web site can also use a blog in the same way.

If your club would like to create a blog and needs some help, please send an [email](#) or call me at (917) 327-5720. I'd be happy to help.



Success Story
Gerry Rodriguez, CC
Farleigh Early Birds

I am the Vice President Public Relations of my club and I have just achieved my CC within the past two weeks. It felt great achieving this level, particularly because I am shy and have been told that I do not speak enough. When I first joined Toastmasters 2 1/2 years ago, I would utter about 10 words during a meeting and now I've progressed to giving full speeches. I've also been able to transfer what I've learned into my life.

For instance, part of my job involves dealing with the Helpdesk and answering spur of the moment questions. Being a part of Toastmasters and participating in Table Topics has empowered me because I am now able to respond to people on the job in a more logical and clear manner. Table Topics helps me keep my 'quick thinking' skills sharp.

I am currently working towards my ACB (Advanced Communicator Bronze) and one of the manuals I have chosen to work in is **Television and Media**. I am also interested in producing live web casts of Toastmasters meetings, hoping to open up our meetings to more people.

Farleigh Early Birds has been chartered for 30 years and was established by 22 members who were all MBA students at Farleigh Dickinson University. The club now has over 42 members and they meet every Saturday from 10-12 in Rutherford.

Farleigh Early Birds hosts a mid-year breakfast meeting as part of their officer installation ceremony and also host an end-of-the year breakfast meeting. This is a very diverse Toastmasters group members hailing from Korea, Africa, and India, just to name a few locations. The group has recently joined Facebook, so why not log on and check them out?





Dear Toastie:

Our club has a recurring issue with members not showing for their assigned roles. Even with a published schedule and advance reminders from the Toastmaster, some folks still leave us hanging on meeting day. I understand most clubs accept this as "things happen" but I believe it's a bad habit to allow these members to continue...i.e. it wouldn't be tolerated in the workplace. I guess my question is: how do we address the offenders (in a supportive Toastmaster fashion) and prevent future issues?

Name Withheld
Summit Toastmasters

There are a few routes you can take to prevent this from becoming acceptable behavior:

- 1) Have the club president call the offender after the meeting asking if the person is OK. "We were concerned about you because you did not show up for your assigned role." If the person says they could not make it at the because something urgent came up at the last minute, it is an opportunity to mention that a phone call (almost everyone has cell phones now) would have been appreciated. It may be a good idea for your club to have all the officers cell numbers in case someone needs to be contacted due to a last minute cancellation.
- 2) Let the role go. If a Toastmaster meeting gets off to a shaky start because the Toastmaster did not show up, if there is no Word Master, or if there are no speakers and you need to limp through a meeting to prove how important all roles are, (and if you have the nerve to do this), then this option can serve as an example to others in the audience who may have bailed out of a meeting without letting anyone know, or to someone who is tempted to do so in the future. The news that the role was left empty will eventually reach the offending party who hopefully will show remorse and never let the club down again.
- 3) Make an announcement at the next meeting where the offender is in attendance. State in a non-judgemental way that it is difficult enough to fill roles, but when someone volunteers for a role and then does not show up, does not provide an alternate, and does not let anyone know they will not be making an appearance, it hurts the entire club and sets a bad example for those who managed to attend. You do not need to call the person out, and it would be a good idea not to glare at the offending party. Just make a simple statement at the beginning of the meeting and then move on. Be brief, be kind, be gone.

While Toastmasters is a purely voluntary organization, it is important to remind members that without their participation, your club would not exist. Instilling people with a sense of pride by thanking them for taking on roles either before the meeting starts or as closing remarks can go a long way in building better relationships. Everyone likes an occasional pat on the back for a job well done.

Have a Toastmasters dilemma you are having trouble handling? Perhaps Toastie can help. Send your questions to Ask Toastie at greenbriar206@yahoo.com by the fourth of each month.

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

