

JULY, 1958



The TOASTMASTER

FOR BETTER LISTENING, THINKING, SPEAKING

SAY IT WITH WORDS

By Charles W. Ferguson

10,000 SPEECHES A YEAR

By Roy S. Dunton

THE PUBLIC IS LISTENING

By Charles V. Opdyke

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A Toastmasters club is an organized group providing its members with opportunities to improve their abilities to speak in public, conduct meetings and develop their executive abilities. In congenial fellowship, ambitious men help each other through actual practice, mutual constructive criticism and the assumption of responsibilities within the organization.

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"As a man speaks, so is he."—Publius Syrus, 43 B.C.

the TOASTMASTER

For Better Thinking—Speaking—Listening

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INDEX

SAY IT WITH WORDS—By Charles W. Ferguson.....	2
THE PUBLIC IS LISTENING—By Charles V. Opydke..	10
10,000 SPEECHES A YEAR—By Roy S. Dunton.....	14
TABLE TOPICS PAY OFF—By Ernest P. Strub.....	16
AND CHURCHILL SAID—By Adrian D. Smith.....	28
HAVE YOU ANY NITPICKERS—By Philip B. Phillips..	30
ON WRITING CLEARLY.....	32
BOOK REVIEW—By Lionel Crocker.....	35
EDITORIAL, 18 — PERSONALLY SPEAKING, 22 — CLUB TO CLUB, 23 — LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, 36 — CONVENTION, 38 — JUST IN JEST, 39 — NEW CLUBS, 40.	

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Say It with WORDS

By CHARLES W. FERGUSON

Senior Editor, *The Reader's Digest*

IN SPITE OF THE SPATE of words being poured out upon us today, the English language suffers from massive neglect among those who use it professionally. This neglect will continue until we who use words publicly find daily ways and means to appropriate more of the riches of language and understand its nuances better. To suggest some of these ways and means and to define certain practices that will help us maintain a sensitive respect for the heritage of language is my purpose here.

Evidence of a neglect of language can be found on every hand. Indeed this evidence is so commonplace that only an egregious instance will make us recognize it fully. Recently I discussed with a dean of a distinguished institution of learning the prospect of a course on the use of words. "I think it would make an excellent course," he said. "It would fit into our communications program. So far we have nothing about the use of language in communications!"

THE TOASTMASTER

Several factors, all of them powerful, tend to make us overpass language in our time. Note first the complexity of our vocabulary, what with over 600,000 words in Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, a million possible if technical terms were admitted. The size of the language chills and appalls us and makes us pick and choose.

The first dictionary in English, compiled by Dr. Samuel Johnson and published in 1755, contained but 58,000 words; and the first dictionary of English in America, edited and published by Noah Webster in 1828, offered only 70,000. The size of English vocabulary has thus increased almost tenfold in slightly over 100 years. And now we face the sobering prospect, according to Professor Albert H. Marckwardt of the University of Michigan, that the next two centuries may bring us a total English vocabulary of over two million words.

The Cult of Condescension

Paralleling this grotesque growth of English vocabulary has been an almost equal growth of what we commonly call mass means of communication. Only a person who

stands before the whirling wonder of a modern press, with paper racing through it at the rate of 1200 feet a minute, can appreciate what is meant by one phase of mass communications. Facilities for distributing words have grown almost as fast as words.

Yet the sad part of it is that fewer and fewer words are being distributed to more and more people. The language is deemed too big for mass consumption. The belief prevails in many circles that those who write for a large audience must accommodate themselves to the lowest common denominator. Around this insidious belief that anything aimed at the public must be written in monosyllables and short sentences, in what has come to be known as shirt-sleeves English, a cult of condescension has been built up. The public is dumb, so the theory runs, and language must be watered down accordingly. At certain levels even word lists are supplied to authors, and at all levels the members of the cult would deliberately limit the language to the taste and requirements of those who know least about it.

(Continued on next page)

In addition to his duties as a Senior Editor of The Reader's Digest, Charles W. Ferguson is the author of the current best seller, NAKED TO MINE ENEMIES: The Life of Cardinal Wolsey (Little, Brown, 1958).

Portions of this article will appear in a forthcoming book, also entitled "Say It With Words," to be published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Part of the theology of the cult of condescension lies in what *Fortune* once lampooned as the myth of the 13-year-old mind. This myth rests upon the misinterpretation of a series of Stanford-Binet intelligence tests given American draftees during the days of World War I. Findings indicated that the average person had a mental age of 13; those who took the findings and bandied them about overlooked the fact that full maturity of intelligence under these tests was designated by the age of 16. Hence a 13-year-old mind, far from being a term of opprobrium, ought to be construed as a term of respect.



One Picture is Worth . . .

Still the machine-made tendency to tailor the writer to the mass invites us to reduce words to a paltry minimum. Once this is done, we are asked to eliminate words altogether, or at most to make them captions for pictures. We are told that one picture is worth more than 10,000 words. This is said to be a Chinese proverb, although by what authority

I do not know. It appears in Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations* as a footnote under the sayings of Adolf Hitler. Perhaps one picture is worth 10,000 Chinese words. But in a medium as versatile and varied as the English language, the right word may be worth 10,000 pictures, especially if we remember Mark Twain's dictum that the difference between the right word and almost the right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.

It would be bootless to argue the relative merits of pictures and words. Both have their place and their value. But I suggest that in an age when increasing skill is bestowed upon the mechanics of production and upon the diagram and the chart and the photograph, we must not let our sense of language become obscured. Speech is still to be considered as the best tested way of conveying ideas, and we are foolish if we allow ourselves to be lured away from a cultivated love of language by the siren song of a putative Chinese proverb.

The Cultivation of Awareness

Because of the strength of the tendencies that would shrink the language and shrivel our organs of verbal expression, it seems to me that those of us in the craft of words must make some special effort to keep ourselves alive to the language.

For this reason I want to offer some practical suggestions designed to be of daily use in this direction. These suggestions have one purpose: the cultivation of awareness.

As a first exercise of daily alertness, let me propose a way of keeping ourselves alive to, and grateful for, the heritage of language. I think we can do this only through the history and aura of individual words. This practice involves more than building a vocabulary. It means an appreciation of words as living links with the past, as a part of the continuity of human experience. It means approaching words with some sense of the depth and vividness of their history. Words belong to humanity, not to us.

Thus we may begin to remedy the neglect of language by a rediscovery of the wealth of words in danger of being forgotten. Even the late great H. L. Mencken, who spent 30 years of his life preparing a monumental work in three volumes, *The American Language*, stressed the losses that come from worshiping current inventiveness. Our excessive word-making, Mencken wrote, "is the most riotous seen in the world since the break-up of Latin. It is an extremely wasteful process, for with so many newcomers to choose from it is inevitable that large numbers of pungent and useful words and phrases must be discarded and in the end forgotten by all but linguistic paleontologists."

Our Heritage Through Words

The glare of what is current blinds us to the glory of what is past. And when we lose the meaning of a word we lose more than the word: we lose the story it tells and the rich reminder it brings of

our heritage. "Kindness" came into the language around 1578. It derives from the same root as "kinship," and its origin reveals the early and limited dimensions of man's mercies. Kindness was for the kin. Its expanded meaning as it passes through history shows us the gradual extension of human decency. So it is that even so commonplace a word as kindness, when studied, teaches us something about man's inner history.

Recently I was invited to talk before a management association. It occurred to me to look up the word "manage" in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. This dictionary meticulously records the changes in the history of a word, showing what shades of meaning it has at a particular time. The first recorded use of the word in 1561 had to do with the training of horses. A few years later it was applied to firearms. Gradually the meaning and character of the word moderated, so that by 1796 (after a couple of hundred years of daily use) it has come to mean treating persons with consideration or indulgence. The last recorded meaning listed is for 1899, by which time the word had acquired a gentler meaning still. It meant "to get along," as in the sentence "We'll manage somehow."

You can trace a whole pattern of cultural change in the softening of this one word. And you can surmise that the best meaning is yet to come. Words are our teachers. In a flash they can illumine a whole epoch. You cannot learn the word "steward" without learning that in Anglo-Saxon times it was spelled "sty-ward," nor without

seeing that the warden who kept the sty was high in rank and that animals for slaughter rated high in Anglo-Saxon economy.

When a word is learned in depth and seen as a brilliant fragment of human experience, it is not the same word; and a new appreciation of language grows within us. I do not see how anyone could study the origin of the word "canter," for example, without an increased love of the language that has been handed down to us. This word tells the story of a whole period of human history. It is, to begin with, a contraction—like so many of our words. Originally the term was "Canterbury gallop." To grasp its significance one must learn the story of Thomas à Becket, who as Archbishop of Canterbury defied Henry II. He was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170. Later he was canonized and his tomb at Canterbury turned into a shrine visited by pilgrims from all over England, as everyone knows who has read Chaucer or read about Chaucer. The pilgrims who visited the shrine were devout, but all the same a pilgrimage was a social event, a kind of vacation, and pilgrims who visited the shrine rode to and from at a leisurely pace—a pace so leisurely that the gait of their horses became known as a "Canterbury gallop"—later as a "canter."

Modern business is more indebted to the past for its vocabulary than many of us realize. Even so up-to-date an industry as the oil industry gets the term "derrick" from a 17th century Dutch hangman who devised a special kind of gallows.

And the term "gas" was fashioned by a Dutch chemist out of a Greek root about 1600.

Perhaps I have laid too much stress on old words. I have meant only to stress words that reveal history. Some new ones do. The word "robot" is younger than many of us here, having been accepted into the language in 1925 from a play produced on Broadway in 1924—Karel Capek's *R.U.R.* It derives from Czech and Russian words meaning "work" and describes men and women who act automatically. I know of no word that ever gained quicker acceptance: there was a need for it and the fact that this need existed tells us much about our age.

My first suggestion, then, is that we study the human race through the words it has chosen to represent it. Part of the neglect of language in our time is a simple physical neglect on the part of those who work with words, a failure to delve, to engage in the pursuit of curiosity.

Word Engineering and Tricks of the Trade

My second suggestion for keeping the pores and ears open to language is that we spend some time consulting the accumulated experience of the race in the use of language. This experience is summed up in two words—rhetoric and grammar. Rhetoric derives from the Greek word meaning "orator," and grammar from a Greek word meaning "to write."

Rhetoric has to do with tricks of the trade, various oratorical devices, you might say, that help capture

and hold attention. I cite only one device to show how useful the study of rhetoric—as a means of awareness—can be. I refer to preterition. It comes from a Latin term meaning "to pass over" and it describes the art of saying a thing while pretending not to say it.

Preterition is a remarkably convenient contraption. It is amazing to see how much can be effectively said in passing. An example: "I had thought that I might talk tonight on the extra-ordinary growth of the success of *The Reader's Digest*, what with almost 21 million circulation in 100 countries, with 18 basic editions in 13 languages, with a larger circulation outside the United States than any other magazine inside. And while I would not have gone so far as to quote the rate for a five-color page, I would have said that the magazine has succeeded because it has discovered something important about the reading public: that readers' interests are far more serious than we had supposed. But, of course, there are other things I must say instead. . . ."

We who neglect words not only neglect words but we also often neglect, after a bit of compulsory schooling, the engineering principles by which they can be strongly held together. For most of us grammar is a dirty word. We think of it in terms of custodial care, as rules for usage rather than as an aid to use. What I suggest now is that we go back to grammar as a record of what has been found out about the effective use of language.

Consider the verb. Precisely what any of us would get out of a

renewed study of the verb in conventional grammar, I do not know. But I do know that if we turned to the verb with an adult attitude, we would enhance our awareness. We might learn the wisdom of eschewing wherever possible any form of the verb "to be." We might learn the power of transitive verbs and the picture value of action verbs. A writer pointed out to me not long ago that in a *Digest* article a man does not simply lie down on a couch; he throws himself on the couch.

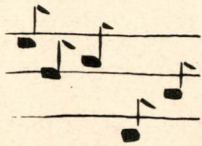
We might note that verbs beat the time and mark the cadence of every effective sentence. ". . . our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, *conceived* in liberty, and *dedicated* to the proposition that all men are *created* equal. . . ."

We would discover the way new verbs are made, the chief means being by the simple process of transferring a noun to verb use. It was by this means that "question" became a word—and at first its use as a verb met with protest. Now there is no question about question. We could study with profit these noun-verbs, not only because they have enhanced the language, but also because they suggest a pastime we can carry on. Use any noun as a verb while talking to yourself. You may not want to tell it to anybody, but you can sharpen your own perception by this practice.

Verb your way through a day just to keep conscious of verbs. The ear will reject most of them as absurd or grotesque. E. B. White, in commenting on the distaste many

feel for "contact" as a verb, points out that we do not mind "grounding" a plane, especially in bad weather, but we do mind "garaging" a car. A car, as White puts it, should either be put in a garage or left out all night.

Certainly toying with verbs does not constitute the whole of grammar. But I submit that if in private practice we pivot all our sentences around verbs, we will keep ourselves alert to the whole problem of sentence structure. Think verbs and you cannot long remain unaware of what Churchill calls the simple beauty of an English sentence.



Language is Music

You have doubtless heard the old statement that what is too silly to be said can be sung. Perhaps it would be just as well if I sang my final suggestion. It might get across better than it will in solemn prose. For I want to point out that music is missing from our speech today and it must be restored and one of the exercises which must engage you and me is that of singing daily what we write. We have lost the Psalms. We have forgotten the enjoyment of language as music.

The hallmark of the true writer is his concern with sound, with the rich diapason of language, the rolling undertone of what he has to say. And by this token and this tocsin, the person who would improve his prose for practical pur-

poses must commence in a most impractical way: he must practise aliteration, cadence, rhyming, and learn to play with words as he would with bells. Only in this way can he hope to get the priceless quality of resonance into what he writes. His style may be clear and his words picturesque, but what he writes will be dead if it does not have sound.

Thus it seems to me that the rediscovery of language as song may be one way of restoring language to its rightful place in our time. You and I can do much if we approach language for its sound effects, if we sing and scan what we write, if we keep our minds up on cadence, up on the rise and fall of sound in our sentences. An instructive pastime is to take any dull piece of prose we encounter and, by the simple rearrangement and recombination of words, see how much better the rhythm can be made.

There are at least a dozen other daily practices that might be suggested to keep us conscious of language, even while the mind is idling in reverie or whirring in worry. These you can easily figure out. What I have proposed is simply an approach to awareness. There is no rule for writing that is not shattered by great exceptions. We may resolve to avoid all forms of the verb "to be" and then encounter Hamlet's soliloquy. Or we may find Marianne Moore's classic line, "But patience *is* action." Here she links two abstractions by means of the weakest verb in the language and gets an unforgettable effect through the use of italics.

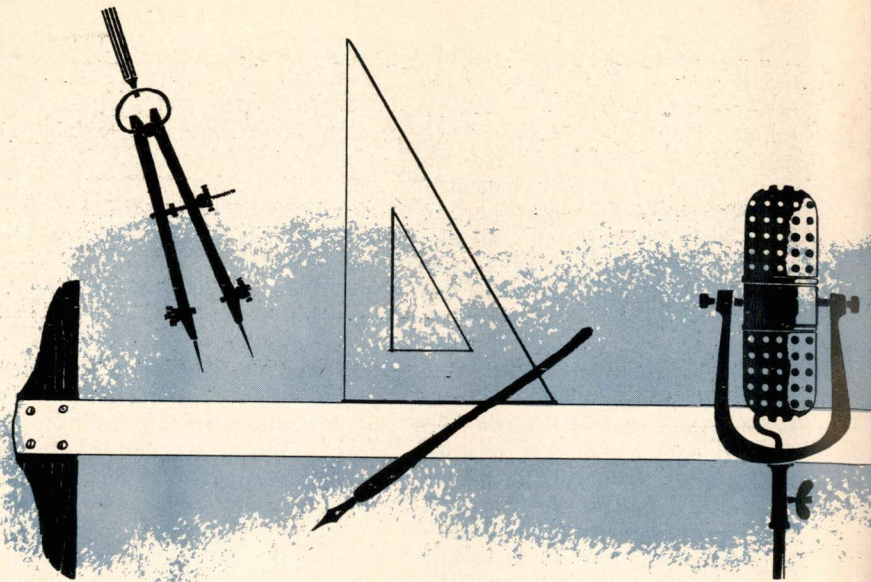
No, there are no rules. I deplore the growth of abstractions in our speech. As a British publisher pointed out the other day, "I got mixed up in something." Now we say, "There's a certain element of involvement." Yet even abstractions can be used with striking effect. Recently I boarded a plane in New York for San Francisco. As we waited on the apron of the runway for the take-off, the captain got on the intercom and said, "There is no significant weather between here and California." On the way back I deplaned for a day in St. Louis. I returned to the airport after I had finished my business and got ready to enplane. I checked in and then stood looking vaguely at the announcement board. An attendant saw my helpless look and, mistaking it for something besides my normal confusion, said, "I see you are ticketed. Where are you destined?" One cannot hear such remarks and say that there is no future for abstractions.

Our Obligation

Not any particular use of language but our obligation to the language—this is my concern. My concern is for a deepening knowledge of language which will lead to an even more responsible use. There will always be the temptation to become a mere phrasemonger, to use words as voodoo. In a free society there can be no thought control and no policing of prose; hence part of the obligation upon us who sell words is that we scrupulously police ourselves and guard against the practice of legerdemain through language. Needless to say,

our obligation must go far beyond pastimes and calisthenics. We must encourage and support bold ventures with language. We should applaud *The Saturday Evening Post* for its new series in which men of intellectual distinction have been invited to say their say in their own way. We find back of this series an attitude of respect for readers' minds, in deference to their supposed tastes. And it is in line with the best mass magazine practice that *Life* has carried its remarkable series on the Epic of Man and has given lavish space to the dignified writings of Sir Winston Churchill. *Look* has been quick to reflect the courageous and farsighted views of such men as Arnold Toynbee. This material and much more that I could cite recognizes the eagerness of men and women to know and to think. It is a sign that we are influencing not so much by subliminal shadows but by ideas intelligently expressed.

Actually, our knowledge of language ought to increase our respect for it as a sacred part of our heritage. The values of language ought not only be studied; they ought also to be cherished. The superficial suggestions I have made here all aim simply at keeping us alive to language. If they have any real appeal, they will make us dig into a study of the literature of language, so that our appreciation will steadily deepen and our use of it become consistently more responsible. A close and sustained study of language, without mere reference to its clever use, ought at all times to be a part of our job and a burden on our conscience. ❖



the public is LISTENING!

By CHARLES V. OPDYKE

THE ARCHITECT is a professional man, whose professional capacities overlap into many fields. He is an artist, a creator, a planner. He is an engineer, a decorator, a designer and a consultant. He is also active in community affairs—the P.T.A., a service club, the city planning commission or the Chamber of Commerce.

The architect is a businessman and a leader in his community. He abides by his profession's code of ethics; he is a family man and a religious man.

Actually he is a composite moulded from many factors: from his professional activities, his community affairs, his family and his spiritual beliefs. All these activities keep him in focus in the eyes

of the public; how he conducts himself and his affairs is reflected also in the response of the public.

All this would indicate that the architect should have another attribute, one which would in a sense correlate and act with all the others. *He should be his own public relations counsel.*

In this field he may or may not be trained throughout his school and college career. It is, indeed, rather more than likely that he is not. It would, however, behoove him to include this among his many talents.

The tools of the architect include the T-square, the triangle and the drawing pencil. He would be wise to add another tool to the list, one rather more intangible but equally as important. This is the ability to speak in public.

This does not mean that he must

try to reach or surpass the standards of the professional public speaker. It means rather that his appearance, conduct and speaking ability should be of a high standard as befits his profession.

I know of many architects who are among the nation's finest speakers and who are in constant demand because of their speaking talents. On the other hand, I have heard architects speak and preside over meetings, whose performance on the platform was a shame to the profession. With proper training, this can be avoided. It is unfortunate that the curriculum of many architectural schools does not include public speaking, a subject of almost equal importance to the practicing architect as the ability to design. Contacting prospective clients and convincing them of your ability to perform your services to

their satisfaction is a pre-requisite to a successful career.

Goethe once said: "Architecture is frozen music." A building reflects the feelings of the architect, his sensitivity, his beliefs, his interpretation of the requirements of his client. But what of the architect himself? He may have all the ability in the world except the ability to express himself audibly. He may reflect his genius on the drawing board, but without public speaking ability it is apt to remain there. It might be said of him, "The architect is frozen music." His personality is frozen; his talents are congealed.

I know of two architects who were competing for the same project, a school building. They were to be interviewed by the local Board of Education on the same

(Continued on next page)

evening. Each man was allotted thirty minutes to present his qualifications.

Architect A had been in practice many years and was generally considered as one of the "old, established firms." He had all the necessary qualifications as a designer and could easily meet the requirements of the project. Architect B was a young man just getting started in his practice. Although he had a great deal of ability, he had experienced some difficulty in obtaining commissions because of his lack of practical experience.

Architect A was to be interviewed from 8:00 to 8:30 p.m. He brought with him a large collection of renderings, blueprints, letters of recommendation, and about a hundred color slides of his building projects. Laboriously he went through all of this material, even showing each of the hundred slides. Inexperienced in public speaking, he tried to make his slides, renderings and blueprints carry the load for him. As a consequence, his presentation ran twenty minutes overtime.

Architect B was to have been interviewed from 8:30 to 9:00 p.m., but Architect A had left him only ten minutes. Obviously, ten min-

Charles V. Opdyke is a practicing architect of Lansing, Michigan, and a member of Club 639, Dist. 28. He has served his club as Secretary, Administrative V-P, Educational V-P and President. He is a member of the Western Michigan Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and a director of the Michigan Society of Architects.

utes was not enough to go into the sort of detail which had characterized the talk of Architect A. Architect B, however, was a member of the local Toastmasters club. From the training which he had received there, he was able to improvise quick changes in the speech which he had planned. He condensed his presentation to the highlights only, and did not elaborate. His talk was short, concise and to the point. He supplied all the basic information which had taken Architect A fifty minutes to cover, and held the close attention of the Board throughout his ten minutes.

The following week he was awarded the contract for the new school. The Board had been so impressed with his straightforward approach and logical presentation that they had found no difficulty in deciding on him. They felt that he was the man to plan and build the school with the same competence he had demonstrated in his speech.

This is a case where one architect found that his Toastmasters training had given him a definite advantage in furthering his professional career. Every architect can benefit by joining a Toastmasters club, and participating in its program of self-improvement. In addition to developing his ability to speak, he may use his club as a sounding board for ideas, receiving in return constructive evaluation and helpful suggestions. As his oral prowess develops, he depends more and more on his club to keep in practice. For it is as necessary that a man practice continually in order to maintain his speaking ability as members of a

football squad must practice passing, punting and tackling. One small ounce of relaxation can cause ability to drop a notch or two.

There is a Toastmasters club near every architect. It would benefit the entire profession and give it a rebirth in oral expression if the architects of the nation would investigate the opportunities available to them through membership in a Toastmasters club.

Throughout the world there are men—successful men, men of action, men who know the power of the spoken word, who stand as living testimonials to the benefits of Toastmasters training. They are men who were willing to take this route to self-improvement because they had found out—as every architect must at some point in his career—that *the public is listening.*

Because of the great number of requests received for copies of the article "Science . . . A Link between Nations" by Dr. Lee A. DuBridg, President of the California Institute of Technology, as published in THE TOASTMASTER for March, 1958, reprints of the article have been prepared and are now available. They may be obtained from the Home Office at Santa Ana, California, at a cost of 5c each, in any quantity desired.

A limited number of reprints are also available of "Profile: Tomorrow's Executive" by Wallace Jamie (THE TOASTMASTER, March, 1957) and "Getting Across with Teenagers" by L.J.Z. White (THE TOASTMASTER, September, 1957). The price of these is 2c each.

If you have not received your copy of SPEECH TOPIC SERVICE with the revised, up-to-the-minute listing of names and addresses of organizations furnishing speakers' kits of information concerning their programs, you may do so by sending a letter or postcard to:

Speech Topic Service
Toastmasters International
Santa Ana, California

Countless Toastmasters have found this list helpful in preparing talks for their clubs or in community work. The service is free.

The Editors of THE TOASTMASTER are happy to make these supplemental services available to readers of the magazine.

Also recommended: *The Public Relations Manual*, a practical, workable handbook for all people interested in obtaining good publicity for their organizations. This may be obtained from the Home Office, price \$1.00 to Toastmasters, \$2.00 to others.

10,000 SPEECHES A YEAR

By ROY S. DUNTON

WOULD YOU LIKE to give more speeches than you do at Toastmasters' meetings? Would you like to have more time to spend on them and experiment with them? You do have that opportunity. In fact, each one of you will deliver approximately 10,000 speeches in the next 12 months.

Webster's Unabridged Dictionary in defining "speech" gives as definition No. 4 the following: *specifically—a formal public discourse, an oration.*

However, definition No. 3 reads—*that which is spoken; a spoken sentence, phrase, remark, etc.; uttered words expressive of thought; also, an interchange of spoken words; talk; conversation.* It is on this last part of the definition that I should like to dwell—*talk, conversation.*

It has been estimated that from the first "good morning" to the last "good night," the average man engages in approximately 30 conversations a day. (The average for women is naturally somewhat higher.) I'm sure your mental arithmetic will show what this totals annually.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Conversation is the laboratory of the student." Why not make full use of this laboratory? Conversation is an important part of daily life. It has lessons to be learned in the following categories: *diction, vocabulary, voice modulation, courtesy, interest in people, thoughtfulness.*

Diction

All of us know the fellow who garbles his words, making us strain to understand him. Let's keep an ear out for this type of talking, and profit by being conscious of the need for proper, clear, concise enunciation. Our conversation can be much more pleasant when the words are neither mumbled nor vague.

Vocabulary

Conversations are held under varied circumstances. The vocal gamut is diversified no end. When you call to a friend a half block away, who then stands and waits for you to catch up with him, you modify your volume and tone as you approach, without giving it thought. Let's see if we can put as much variation into our platform speaking when necessary.

Courtesy

The lesson in courtesy comes from training yourself to give your listener an equal chance to speak—and in showing an interest in what he has to offer. Jonathan Swift summed up this quality of courtesy when he said:

*"Conversation is but carving!
Give no more to every guest
Than he's able to digest.
Give him always of the prime
And but little at a time.
Carve to all but just enough,
Let them neither starve nor stuff,
And, that you may have your due,
Let your neighbor carve for you."*

True courtesy in conversation will pay off, both educationally and in helping to keep our friends. We cannot be other than courteous if we are really interested in people. Which brings us to step No. 5.

Interest in People

If you let a day go by without gaining at least one new idea, you are hardly fit company even for yourself. Henry David Thoreau, the celebrated naturalist, could find more of interest in a few square yards than most of us can see in miles. Some people carry a notebook with them and jot down items of interest they encounter. They always have at hand something to use in their conversations.

I don't mean that every conversation must contain gems of wisdom. When a man says "hello" to an acquaintance, the latter is not expected to reply, "Mt. Whitney is 14,496 ft. high." Frankly, this type of response would soon cause friends to walk in wide arcs to avoid you. But if we are interested and interesting, our conversations will be meaningful.

Finally, there is the most important training one can derive from otherwise trite vocal calisthenics—the quality of *thoughtfulness.*

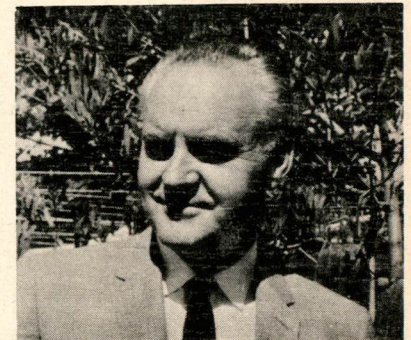
Roy S. Dunton is Pres. of Sequoia Toastmasters 1689 of Palo Alto, California and was last year's winner of the Area Humorous Speech Contest. He is a salesman in the seed business.

Here is an example that may hit home. A new man visits your club. When he enters, many members try to see that he is received cordially and is introduced to others.

Now witness this same man during intermission or after the meeting. Groups gather, each with something to discuss. The man stands apart, looking just a little uncomfortable.

How rarely do we take time to notice the man apart, on the fringe, who would gladly join in, but either for lack of knowledge of what is being discussed or uncertainty of his welcome, hesitates. How simple, yet how thoughtful, to turn and say, "Joe, we're discussing the love life of the amoeba—what's your idea?" This simple little gesture shows Joe that you are interested in him and in his opinions—in short, that *he belongs.*

Here are six facets of speech. There are more—gestures, eye contact, posture. Try one at a time in this testing ground of conversation. Start today—practice and evaluate, and the world will evaluate your efforts. ❖



For getting into the community swim

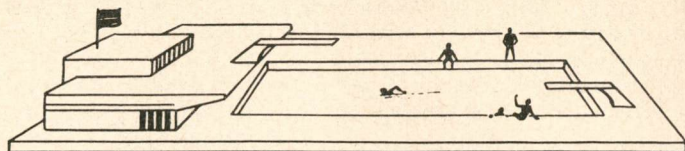


TABLE TOPICS PAY OFF

By ERNEST P. STRUB

EVERY TOASTMASTER knows that table topics pay off to the individual in many ways. It takes considerable mental agility to catch a subject or question thrown out by the Topicmaster, to formulate your ideas and state them clearly, concisely and forcefully—all between one bite of pie and the next. The payoff on such an exercise comes in the development of quick thinking and effective speaking response.

The Oshkosh Toastmasters Club 1483, District 35, can testify that table topics can produce dramatic results affecting the whole community. Here is the story of what happened at a meeting of the Oshkosh Toastmasters, one hot Wednesday evening in summer:

The city of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, had for some years been agitating the matter of a municipal swimming pool. Its 40,000 people lacked an adequate place to swim, and Wisconsin summers are capable of generating considerable caloric content. An Oshkosh Swimming Pool Corporation had been formed, headed by Dr. Paul C. Whyte, a Past President of the Oshkosh

Toastmasters. Yet despite the efforts of the hard-working committee, only \$22,000 of the necessary \$300,000 had been pledged.

It was natural, then, for the table topic that night to be: "Does our city need a municipal swimming pool?"

One by one the members rose and advanced clear, cogent reasons why the project should be supported. Logic and eloquence supported the arguments.

The club had a guest that evening. Toastmaster Bill Bartlett had brought his grandfather, Mr. W. E. Pollock, to the meeting. Mr. Pollock is the former owner of the famous "Oshkosh B'Gosh" Over-all Company, whose trademark is known throughout the world.

Mr. Pollock listened intently throughout the discussion of the advantages of the pool. At the conclusion of the table topics, he arose to offer the most dramatic comment of all. Briefly he offered the sum of \$50,000.00 to the civic project—provided that private citizens contribute an equal amount, and that the city in turn commit itself for the balance.

This offer provided a galvanic

stimulus to the citizens of Oshkosh and a project in which club members could use their Toastmasters training. Additional fund-raising committees were formed to raise the \$50,000 that would match Mr. Pollock's offer. An effort was made to assure that no citizen of Oshkosh would fail to hear the story and have the opportunity of helping in the project.

Many speeches were made by the Oshkosh Toastmasters before many civic groups. Their effectiveness was conclusively proved when the entire sum was officially pledged by September 27, 1957. By 1959, Oshkosh citizens expect to be enjoying their new recreation facility.

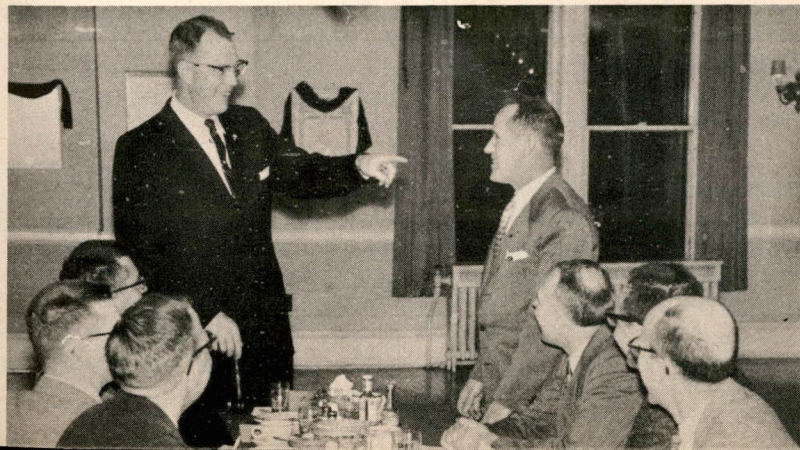
And Toastmasters club members have had another striking example of the fact that well-planned, well-developed table topics, on a subject which is important and of general interest, can pay off—even accidentally.

Giving assistance to community projects is only a part of the civic contribution made by the enterprising Oshkosh Toastmasters Club. Members have cooperated in fur-

nishing speech training to local Boy Scout troops, assisting and providing opportunities for individual scouts to achieve the merit badge in public speaking. Each local service club has had at least one program presented by Toastmasters and demonstrating the results of Toastmasters training to any individual who desires to improve himself. This service has been supplemented by countless individual appearances which members of Club 1483 have made before civic groups, appearances in which the benefits of Toastmasters training have been displayed for all to recognize.

The story of the Oshkosh Toastmasters Club is not unique. All over the world, wherever Toastmasters clubs are found, their communities have been enriched by contributions made by Toastmasters applying their training to aid worthy civic projects. Many cities concur with the conviction expressed by Oshkosh citizens: "Our town is a better place in which to live because of its fine Toastmasters club!" ❖

"What's your opinion?" asks Topicmaster Paul C. Whyte of Club Pres. Dale Schwertfeger. A similar session brought Mr. Pollock's offer of aid to the Swimming Pool Fund



Speaking Editorially

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press . . .

So declared the Congress of the United States, assembling for the first time under the new Federal Constitution in 1789. In fact, their presence there was contingent upon that declaration, among other similar promises. The ratification of the Constitution was not secured until they had promised to incorporate definite statements or restrictions into the document as a *Bill of Rights*. The ten amendments which comprised the Bill defined conclusively the civil liberties with which there could be no governmental interference. At the head of the list, second only to the guarantee of freedom of religion, was the guarantee of free speech.

Those early Americans had reason to fear the abridgment of their right to free expression. They had known what it was to be without it. They had experienced the fears and dangers of secret meetings in secret places; they had read and written smuggled notes delivered by dark-cloaked riders in the night. Through grim determination and firm belief in the rightness of their cause, they had established a system of communication where none had existed before. They were determined that those lines of communication should be kept open. Neither king nor congress should abolish them. Curtailment of free speech should not happen again.

It has happened again, of course, in the world. In our own lifetimes we have seen the pall of dictatorship drop over civilized nations. We have known of men who dared not speak their thoughts, even in the privacy of their own homes, for fear of the ubiquitous listening ear and the ominous knock on the door in the middle of night. All the horrors of the totalitarian state as portrayed by the late George Orwell in his "1984" pale before the one—the surveillance of "Big Brother" over thought and word as well as action.

Even with the bulwark of the First Amendment, America has known times when freedom of speech has reached a low ebb. Fear of censure, ostracism or the loss of economic security may have been contributing reasons for this condition, but the primary cause is frequently an even less worthy one. It is, solely and simply, *inertia*. The easiest way to lose a right is by failing to exercise it.

Every right carries with it a responsibility. In order to exercise the freedom of speech properly and constructively, it is necessary to recognize certain restrictions which govern that exercise in order that it may be effective. There is, first of all, the necessity for clear and honest thinking, free of emotional prejudice or childish traumatic carryovers. It follows, second, that the expression of this thinking must be understandable and incapable of distortion or misinterpretation.

Toastmasters, in appreciating the need for self-improvement in communication, have demonstrated that they are aware of both these factors. They have put their clubs to use as places for the practice, experiment and enjoyment of effective expression. To these they add the third essential to the protection of freedom of speech, namely, careful, critical and evaluative listening.

As a matter of fact, it may well be that this last factor is the most difficult of the three. The great mass of communications received through so many channels makes it difficult to assimilate information, to consider, accept or reject ideas or to formulate a philosophy. On every level our ears and eyes are assailed by facts and figures, opinions and speculations, adjurations and exhortations. From buying a new toothpaste to accepting—or rejecting—a new policy, bill or candidate, we are admonished to follow the advice of the sponsor and hurry, hurry, hurry to the nearest drugstore. Over all is the whiplash of urgency. The sands, they imply, are running out swiftly. The keyword, the impellent force, is "Now!"

It would be strange if our very wealth of communications, of ideas and information which flood the marketplace should act as a deterrent rather than a stimulus to the free thinking and free expression so implicit in the phrase "freedom of speech." It is necessary that selective faculties be sharpened and that expression become even more effective. More than ever the necessity for clear thinking becomes apparent.

We would not exchange this spate of words, ideas, observations and adjurations for the silence of a totalitarian state, a controlled press and a dictator's directive. As freeborn citizens, we accept the responsibilities which freedom of speech entails in the confident expectation of retaining that freedom.

It is easy to say that our times are troubled ones. It is true, yet when, since civilization first began, have they not been so? It is easy to protest that we are only one person, that our own thoughts and ideas cannot change a situation, and should therefore be stifled and remain unexpressed. Toastmasters, respecting the art of communication, know better. Freedom of speech is essential to a free world.—D.G.

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

The Nominating Committee presents the following candidates to be placed in nomination for offices in Toastmasters International at the business meeting to be held during the 27th Annual Convention, August 14, 1958, at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

For President: Aubrey B. Hamilton

For First Vice President: Emil H. Nelson

For Second Vice President: Glenn H. Holsinger

William C. Patten

(signed) Sheldon M. Hayden, Chairman



AUBREY B. HAMILTON, nominated for President of TMI, is the present First Vice President and has been a Director, Secretary and Second Vice President. An attorney of St. Louis, Mo., he is a member of the St. Louis, Missouri and American Bar Associations and has served two terms in the Missouri Legislature. He is Asst. City Counselor in charge of his city's presentations to the State Legislature and city attorney for a number of committees. Other activities include Senior Wardenship of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, member Board of Children's Guardians, Southwest District Chairman and member Executive Board, Boy Scouts of America.

A Toastmaster 18 years, he founded the first TM club in St. Louis, which was also the first club in Missouri. He is an active member of Club 170, the St. Louis Toastmasters.

Nominations of candidates for Directors of TMI to be elected at the annual business meeting will be made at the 16 Zone conferences.

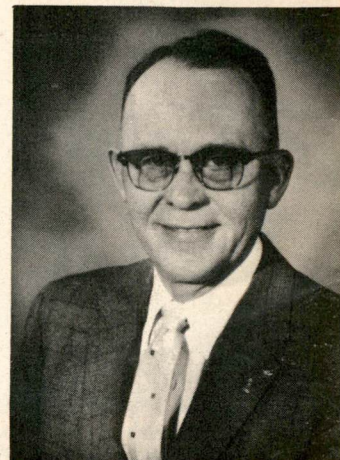
EMIL H. NELSON, nominee for First Vice President, is a member of Victory Toastmasters 221 of St. Paul, Minn. By profession a realtor and appraiser, he is President of Emil H. Nelson, Inc., Realtors. Other activities include: President, St. Paul Chapter of Residential Appraisers, Vice-president St. Paul YMCA, past President St. Paul Board of Realtors and past V-P of Minnesota Association of Realtors.

A 17-year Toastmaster, he has held all offices in club and district, has been successively a Director, Treasurer, Secretary and 2nd Vice-President of Toastmasters International. During his terms of office, he has been Chairman of Int. committees on Public Relations and Organization, Planning and Administration.



GLENN H. HOLSINGER, candidate for 2nd Vice-President, is a Certified Public Accountant of Seattle, Wash., in which capacity he does a considerable amount of management consultation. He is active in church and Masonic affairs.

A 16-year Toastmaster, he has held all offices in his club, No. 259 of Seattle, and in Dist. 2. For International, he has served as member of the Board of Directors and Secretary. He has been Chairman of TMI committees on Zone Conferences and Bylaws, and in these capacities was an important factor in establishing the Zone Conference program and the revision of TMI Bylaws.



WILLIAM C. PATTEN, candidate for 2nd Vice-President, lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he is in the insurance business, affiliated with Occidental Life Insurance Co. of Calif. He is Insurance Consultant in the field of pension trust and group, and has had experience as merchandising executive and educator. Other activities include directorships in the New Mexico Conference Board of Lay Activities for the Methodist Episcopal Church, the N.M. School Study Council, Lions International and the Bernalillo Safety Council.

He has been a Toastmaster 18 years, is a member of Club 122, Dist. 23, has held all club, area and district offices and has been a member of the Board of Directors of Toastmasters International, where he headed the committees on Resolutions, Int. Speech Contest, and Conferences, Conventions and Meetings.



By RALPH C. SMEDLEY

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

IS CORRECT SPELLING becoming a lost art? One is led to believe so, as one reads the letters which come in the regular course of correspondence.

To me, a misspelled word in written material is about the same as a mispronounced word in speech. I may get the meaning, but it is not so well received as if it were right in form.

For example, the word "speech," so important with Toastmasters, is continually written as "speach." I grant that it may be a "peach" of a speech, but the spelling bothers me. You may ask, does it make any real difference, so long as one knows what is meant?

The same is true of "lectern," which is so frequently written "lecturn." What does it matter, except to some purist? We know that it means the reading desk, whether spelled with *e* or *u*. And this brings us to another misuse of words, entirely apart from spelling.

When the speaker or writer confuses "lectern" with "podium," and accuses the speaker of "leaning on the podium," or advises him to "lay his notes on the podium," I always wish that I could have seen the exhibition. Since "podium" refers to the platform on which the speaker stands, it would be quite an athletic feat for him to lean on the podium as he talks, and for him to lay his notes on the podium would be to put them completely out of view.

Then there is confusion about the *e* in the final syllable of such words as "existence" and "persistence." A surprisingly large number of writers make it "existance" and "persistance."

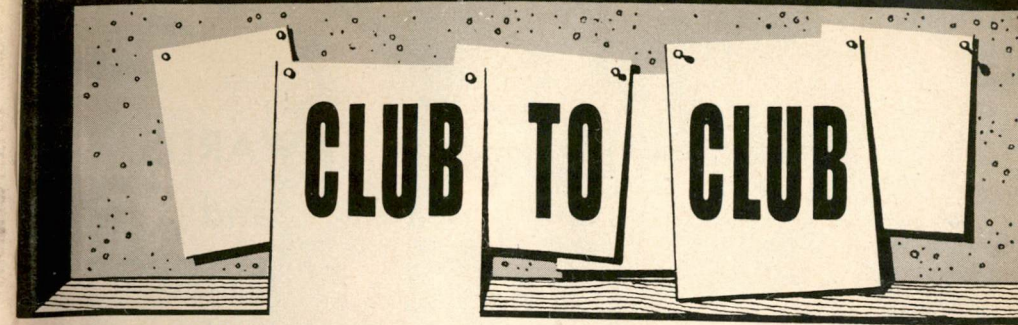
Many lose their way on "loose" and "lose." They forget that the verb is "lose" and that "loose" is an adjective. We who can spell correctly know that a *loose* string may cause us to *lose* a package, but many do not recognize the difference.

When we consider the confusion which exists in our language as to spelling, it is not surprising that many well educated persons make mistakes. One needs a photographic memory to keep in mind all the pitfalls in "*i* before *e*," in the doubling of consonants, and when we "change *y* to *i* and add *es*," as in *fly—flies*, or *penny—pennies*.

But does it really matter? What difference does the spelling make, if the meaning is clear?

Some very successful people go through life without being good spellers. Not all of them pronounce their words according to the accepted standards, but we can understand them.

Each man must decide for himself whether correct spelling is of sufficient importance for him to bother about, but it would be a relief to me if all my correspondents would agree on the uniform spelling of "speech," and if they would quit "leaning on the podium" or misusing the "lectern." ♦



Area 1, District 21, British Columbia, Canada:

The five Toastmasters clubs of Victoria, B. C., followed their usual practice of sponsoring the annual "Golden Gavel Competition," open to any resident of the Victoria area who has had not more than 15 months' training in public speaking.

With 24 entries, including 9 from the Victoria and the Arbutus Toastmistress clubs, competition was keen for winner Charles Ellington of the Capital City Speakers Club.

The winner's trophy is a hand-turned gavel fashioned from the keel of a famous steamship, the *Prince Robert*, and was crafted and given by the late Mr. Harvey Phillips of Union Toastmasters Club 331. The winner receives a replica of the annual trophy in the form of a solid gold lapel pin as a permanent reminder of his prowess.

* * *

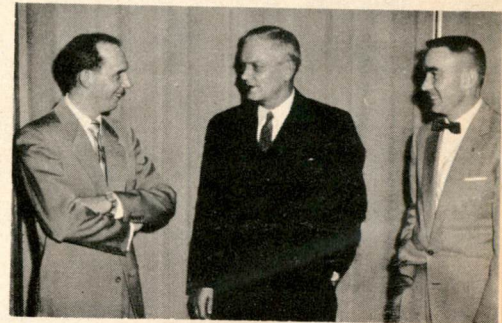
American Legion Toastmasters 637, Canton, Ohio:

Successful long range planning is exemplified by a booklet prepared by and for the members of Club 637. In easy-to-find indexed arrangement it includes the club calendar for the entire year, officers, roster, activities, committees, duties, history of the club and relevant educational material—altogether a workmanlike and impressive job.

District 26, Colorado:

The tri-area Speech Contest of District 26, held recently in Sterling, Colo., had nine clubs participating, and over 70 members in attendance. Jerry Metcalf, incoming President of Sterling TM's 1184, was in charge of the excellent entertainment and Raymond McGavin of Boulder TM's 769 won first place trophy.

* * *



American Consul Lanford (center) chats with incoming and out-going club presidents T/Sgts. John Bradley and Ted Marcuson

Mid-Atlantic Toastmasters 2107, Lajes Field, Azores Islands:

Mr. Homer W. Lanford, American Consul in the Azores Islands, and Captains McClure and Lipham, Naval Commanding Officers with the U. S. Forces in the Azores, were honored guests at a recent officer installation of the club.

The Mid-Atlantic club celebrated its second anniversary on May 7.



DR BONER: Ad. V-P Jim Christianson of Cheyenne TM's 798 bestows awbone of ass on Ed. V-P El Farrar. Dr. E. D. Barrows, donor of bone, and Pres. Chet Davidson approve

AWARDS and ACTIVITIES



FOR SERVICE: Loy Rhoads, retiring Pres. of Marion (Ohio) Club 2020, accepts Past-President's gold pin from incoming Pres. George Lichvarik



"Study Basic Training for Success," says contest winner Bill Adams (Story page 26)

YOU EARNED IT: CMDR William Davern holds Lion of St. Mark for best speech; Capt. Henry Dennon wears "gooney bird" for prize boo-boo—Toastmasters di Napoli 2703, Naples, Italy

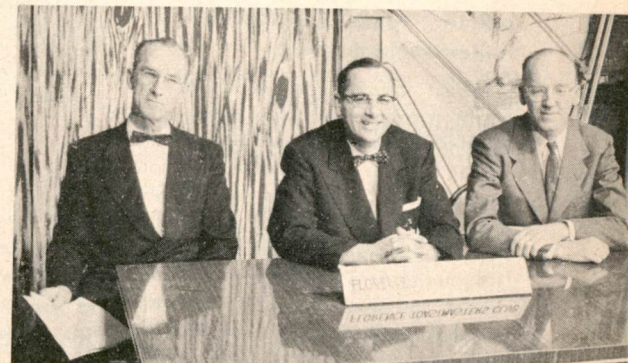


BATTLE JOINED: Palo Alto (Calif.) Toastmistress Pres. Phoebe Seagrave and Sequoia TM's Pres. James Young pledge all-out contest at joint meeting



VISITING FIREMEN: Moses Lake (Wash.) Club 1349 stages program for hosts, Club 1070 of Larson AFB

TM'S IN TV: Wilbur Darby, John Dewey and Matthew Manley of Florence (Ala.) Club 2101 discuss local problems. Weekly program takes 15 min.; all club members participate



HANG ONTO YOUR HATS, BOYS: Newly-installed Presidents Joe Debrace (Novato 1712), John Treleven (Tamalpais 1755), Bert Kork (Marin 890) and Ken Clarke (Hamilton Defenders 2519) don distinguishing headgear for homily by top-hatted D.G. (57) Lothar Salin





Corbin presents, Pres. Carlile receives Del Rey charter, approval expressed by D.G. Ellis and Past D.G. Johnson

**Del Rey Toastmasters 2665,
Anderson, Indiana:**

Official charter ceremonies for the newly-organized Del Rey Club, composed of 35 male employees of the Delco-Remy Division of General Motors at Anderson, Ind., found over 100 members and guests attending. Guests included Joe Ellis, Governor D. 11, Harold Corbin, Governor of Area 9, D. 11, who presented charter, and nine other district and area officials representing seven TM clubs in central Indiana. Guest speaker was Mr. Harris O. Johnson, Eli Lilly Drug Co. executive, Past District 11 Governor and Past Member of TMI Board of Directors.

* * *

**Springfield Toastmasters 722,
Springfield, Ohio:**

The Springfield Toastmasters have some extremely effective club stationery which provides club publicity of a high type. Time and place of meeting and a complete time schedule of the program are included in a pleasing design—a good way to interest prospective members and provide information in a subtle way.

**Moscow Toastmasters 575,
Moscow, Idaho:**

Our club has started a program to stimulate student interest in scientific and technological studies, especially at 7th, 8th and 9th grade level. A brochure has been prepared by Pres. C. D. Sanborn and the club, listing speakers available on such subjects as engineering, plant pathology, forestry, zoology, chemical and nuclear engineering and others. Response from teachers and school administrators has been tremendous.

The club also plans a similar program for industrial and professional members of the community so that they will know what they can do to improve interest in science and mathematics.

* * *

**Area 3, District 60,
Ontario, Canada:**

Intensive use of all communications media played a large part in the success of Area 3's Speech Contest held at the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry Officers' Mess. Each news editor received in advance a folder of information on Toastmasters in general, and the speech contest in particular.

Press coverage was tremendous; two radio stations included the story in on-the-hour news reports; TV CHCH carried a 45-second news item with picture of winner Bill Adams of the Ambitious City Club 1586; a picture of Bill receiving trophy from D.G. Frank Benum, with detailed story, appeared on the city page of the "Hamilton Spectator."

Toastmasters is certainly on the move in our area—three new clubs since last fall—Guelph, Brantford, London.

**Hereford Toastmasters Club 844,
Hereford, Texas:**

Having a sponsor and appearing weekly on a radio station is one of the unique accomplishments of the Hereford, Texas, Toastmasters Club.

Sponsored by the local newspaper, *The Hereford Brand*, and broadcasting over Station KPAN, club members read the comics each Sunday morning. The recordings are taped on equipment owned by the Toastmasters. Musical background, sound effects and voice characterizations all go into a professional recording of the funnies.

Each club member performs in turn, and adults as well as children from over a wide Panhandle area are enthusiastic listeners as "The Toastmasters Read the Comics."



Beaver Dam TM's play host to H.S. fledgling forensickers

**Beaver Dam Toastmasters 310,
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin:**

Beaver Dam Toastmasters recently entertained 20 forensic students and their instructors from the local high school at a "Recognition Dinner," held at the Hotel Rogers. Guests from Horizon and Wapun High Schools were also invited.

Students and Toastmasters participated in the program and were evaluated in regular Toastmaster fashion.

Sunday morning stint: TM's Milton Adams, reader; Robert Tyler, reader; Irving Alexander, reader-moderator, and Curtis Traweck, reader-sound



“How about public speaking?” they asked

AND CHURCHILL SAID . . .

By ADRIAN D. SMITH

WINSTON CHURCHILL is never a man to avoid issues. He has opinions. And with a range of interest more typical of the Renaissance than of the twentieth century, it is not surprising to learn that he has definite views on the art of public speaking.

It would be surprising if he had not. Certainly he is one of the foremost practitioners of the art in recent history. Since he composes his own speeches and since he calculates with great care the effects he wishes to achieve, he must work within a well-defined frame of principle and opinion.

Take, for instance, the matter of notes and their use by a speaker. Here, as in so many other areas, Churchill works from a definite point of view. Notes and how they are used may seem a small item in the study of the great objectives of oratory, but it is to Winston Churchill a matter of practical concern.

In a recent autobiographical work by Lord Halifax*, the author gives full expression to Churchill's views. As a comparative newcomer to Parliament, Lord Halifax was to give an important talk in the

*Lord Halifax, "Fullness of Days," Dodd, Mead and Co., New York, 1957.

House of Commons. Churchill asked him if he used notes. Lord Halifax replied that he did; whereupon, Churchill said:

"That's quite all right. But never try to pretend to your audience that you're not using them. If you do that, you get them into a sort of competitive game of hide-and-seek with you, in which you are bound to lose. But if you are perfectly open about it, you can keep them waiting as long as you like while you find your place in your notes and put on your glasses to read them, and they won't mind at all."

Thus Churchill on the use of notes. We may question whether our audience is as patient as his, but his injunction against pretense or surreptitiousness is basic and sound. The thought is not new, of course. Is not, however, his analogy between the furtive use of notes and the game of hide-and-seek an apt and accurate description of the speaker-audience reaction?

Lord Halifax tells of another occasion when his celebrated compatriot gave him advice. He was

about to set off on a tour of duty through the West Indies for the British foreign office. Churchill asked him if he had ever inspected a guard of honor. When he admitted he never had, Churchill told him:

"There's only one thing that's important to remember. Look every man straight in the face as you pass him. The sergeant-major has had them all standing on parade in a hot sun in time for at least two regimental officers to see them one after another before you come on the scene, and if you go by talking to whoever is with you and looking the other way, it's pretty flat for the men."

Lord Halifax writes that he took the advice to heart and acted upon it. Most advice enjoys no such fate. But Lord Halifax made this injunction a rule of conduct for the rest of his life.

Has not this advice a special validity for all speakers? Might not a determined Toastmaster find in it a rule of conduct?

True, we may never be called upon to face a guard of honor, let alone inspect one. We shall face audiences, however; is it not incumbent upon us to "look every man straight in the face"? Like our speech textbooks and manuals, is not Churchill asking that we establish and maintain eye contact?

Can we not liken our audience to men "at parade in the hot sun"? The best of audiences are restive and we need all the devices at our command to keep them content and attentive.

Eye contact is a form of greeting. When a speaker looks one of his audience in the eye, he is saying "hello" to that man or woman. He is saying, "I see you. I'm glad to see you here. I've got something I'd like to say and I'm saying it to you."

Eye contact is a form of courtesy. It is bad manners for a speaker to ignore his audience or any individual member of the audience. He is not speaking to the walls, or to the men on the right-hand side of the room, or to the lady with the red hat in the first row, or to the men clustered about the door. He is speaking to each individual in the room. He must be courteous to each individual. He must "look every man straight in the face."

Winston Churchill is an orator without equal. There are men who say his voice—and his voice alone—stood between Britain and destruction, that his voice made possible his nation's "greatest hour." Great as he was, he faced many small problems and, in this respect, differed not at all from the least of us aspiring Toastmasters.

Churchill met with the problems of notes and eye contact. Through Lord Halifax we know his solutions to the problems. Like Lord Halifax we can be the beneficiaries of his experience. ♦

Adrian D. Smith, Senior Project Engineer of the Oldsmobile Division, General Motors Corp., is past president of the Capitol City Toastmasters 639 of Lansing, Mich.

have you any "NIT FICKERS"?

By PHILIP B. PHILLIPS

How many times have you heard some speaker make a fervent pitch for his particular plan or project, and then have seen the whole thing sour as he uttered some grating grammatical error? As an intelligent listener giving him your full attention you were mildly indignant at his error, sympathetic that he should be so wrong out loud. Yet you wished privately that he had selected his words more carefully instead of wading cumbrously through his few minutes.

UNDOUBTEDLY your particular chapter of Toastmasters International is an especially good one. Like all good Toastmasters you are convinced of this, and may even hint your views politely to other Toastmasters at the slightest opportunity. But, I ask you, does your club have any "nit-pickers"? If not, you are missing one of the most educational and amusing aspects of this whole self-improvement program.

Realizing that most American men have had the benefit of a public school education, and that most business and professional men use reasonably good grammar, the Wings of Gold Chapter of Toastmasters, Club 1836 of Pensacola, Florida, inaugurated a practice

locally of "nit-picking" or calling to the attention of the group the grammatical errors heard during the meeting. No one, of course, would be so offensive as to point directly to the guilty party, for the practice is not intended to be personally critical but mutually beneficial.

After the "AH King" has humorously reported the "ah count," the "grammarian of the day" is called upon for his observations. Usually he has not observed all the errors, and other members have additional comments to make. Since so many have participated in the program no one really feels embarrassed when the "head nit-picker" says, "I noted two *gits*, a *none have* and a *those people that . . .*" No one rises to defend himself against impersonal criticism. Those who have doubts as to the pronunciation of a word or the grammatical construction of a sentence, present their observation in the form of questions to the Club.

Sometimes visitors have stated publicly that they would hesitate to be a member of a group of professional speakers such as we seem to be. Yet, these same visitors are usually introduced to the club within one or two meetings as enthusiastic new members.

We are a club composed of members of the Armed Forces, and therefore both blessed and cursed with the problem of frequent transfers of old members and the indoctrination of new members. Seldom does a man make his "aloha"

Captain Philip B. Phillips, MC, USN, is head of the Department of Neuropsychiatry at the U. S. Naval Aviation Medical Center, Pensacola, Florida, and Past President of the Wings of Gold Toastmasters Club 1636-29.

address but that he observes, "I was surprised at the frankness of the nit-pickers for a time but I honestly believe this has been one of the highlights of membership in this interesting club. Where else can we be told of our grammatical errors with more subtlety and humor, and laugh with a group of good fellows over our own shortcomings?"

Yes, what other luncheon club meeting could lead to the Supply Officer of a huge military installation calling his psychiatrist friend and saying, "Doc, I'll retract on *ca'co-phony* if you'll quit saying *sy'e'-co-phant*."

We are not rigid purists addicted to one and only one pronunciation, nor would we cramp the style of a "character" whose appeal is in his word pictures and similes. In our particular club we are interested in speaking our native tongue in an acceptable manner and correcting our own careless or unconscious inaccuracies. We have not one "nit-picker" but several. We love them. We all try to get in the game . . . and it's educational as well as a lot of fun.

Do you have a "nit-picker"? If not you're missing a wonderful opportunity. ❖

ON WRITING CLEARLY

WHEN YOU WRITE a letter you are trying to convey a meaning from your mind to the mind of your reader.

Clearness in writing a letter consists in this: that you write what you wish to say in the spirit in which you wish it to be received, and in such a way that your reader gathers both the spirit and the facts without effort.

We are not interested here with the mechanics of letter writing. There are already many comma sleuths, type addicts, and grammatical high priests engrossed only in the techniques. It is the message that is important. We need punctuation, clear type, and grammatical construction as servants, but our purpose in using them is to write so that we shall be understood in the spirit in which we write.

It is one of the good things about communicating ideas that we can be always improving, sharpening up our wits so as to do the job better. It is sad to come upon someone who has thoughts that are worth-while, but who is not learning how to express them. Still more to be pitied are those who think that they have conveyed their ideas when they haven't.

In addition to getting across its point, your letter should make a friend of your reader, or consolidate a friendship already established. There should be an air of grace in it, raising your stature in the eyes of the reader.

How is all this to be attained? By seeing your message through the eyes of your reader. What is the person like to whom you are writing? What will he be interested in learning from you?

The Writer's Responsibility

People who write letters have an obligation to be intelligible. They are not writing to impress their correspondents but to express thoughts.

We are tempted to believe that when our ideas do not get across to someone the fault lies in his incapacity to grasp them. But when we shrug off our duty in that way we put ourselves on a level with Sancho Panza, the simple squire who accompanied Don Quixote on his adventures: "If you do not understand me," he said, "no wonder if my sentences be thought nonsense."

All hope of clearness is lost if you start to write about something

you don't understand, or if you write faster than you think. Let us keep our thinking straight and we shall have well-founded hope of making our writing simple.

Clear thinking is needed for wise action in every field of human action, but in none more so than in writing letters. The more we have predigested our data before starting to write, the more free our minds are to tackle the composition of a letter.

We need adequate information. That is the basic material of all verbal reasoning. The information has to be exact: let us have no woolly ideas in the foundation of our thinking or we cannot avoid woolliness in the structure we erect on it.

One of the great arts in effective correspondence is to get down to the nub of the matter, see the essential points, brush away the superfluous, and express the result of our thinking clearly.

Then, having gathered the facts, decided their priority, and determined the tone of our letter, let us arrange our material.

A writer makes a gross mistake when he tries to cram into his reader's mind a mass of unorganized ideas, facts, and viewpoints. Clarity begins at home. Having thoughts to convey, we need to survey them from end to end and to shuffle them into the order of their importance. We have to classify and conquer the elements in ourselves before we can write with any certainty of appealing to the intelligence of others.

The Right Words

A stock of good words, culled from excellent authors, is a precious thing. There is a feeling in words, as well as sense. They will laugh and sing for us, or mourn and be sad, if we take the care to use the words that convey the spirit as well as the sense of what we wish to say.

Words are sounds, and written sounds are the musical score of meaningful sounds. In nature there are rustling trees, rushing waters, chirping birds, growling beasts. Human beings laugh and hum and whistle and groan and scold. From all these sounds, in some way, after centuries of experiment, art produces a Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* and a Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Those same symbols are given to us with which to influence people. All we need do is choose them wisely and use them imaginatively.

About Simplicity

It is not easy to write simply; in fact it is more difficult to be simple than to be complex. But it is a pleasant experience, like getting into slippers after a day's work or shopping.

This is not a plea for an A B C sort of writing. Far from it. We in business, charged with writing and reading letters, have graduated from the primer class. If you are going to stand out for clearness at any price, then you are going to shut out yourself and your readers

(Continued on next page)

from many good things, because many good things cannot be told in primer language except by being put falsely.

You should not fidget around the edges of what you have to say. Nothing can be more deadly in a business letter than faltering and fumbling, or spreading yourself over a lot of generalities, or wandering off into vague profundities.

Be concise. Use short, direct, simple statements to cover your points, and state them in well-organized order. When you are inclined to use often the words "and, but, however, consequently" in the middle of your sentence, try putting in a period instead. You will find that this adds to the clearness of what you are saying. It dissipates the fog, and saves your reader from having to back-track to find the path.

Give facts exactly and as completely as is necessary. It is more important for you to be sure you have given the needed information than it is to get all the mail into your "out" basket before noon.

Some Pitfalls

Be careful. There are some areas in expression where special care is needed. A map cannot be drawn of all these in this small space, but a few will be mentioned as typical of the sort of thing for which the writer needs to be on the alert.

Loose or unattached pronouns can cause trouble.

Avoid exaggeration. It is essentially a form of ignorance, replacing poverty of language.

Keep adjectives in reserve to make your meaning more precise,

and look with suspicion on those you use to make your language more emphatic.

Beware of words with two or more meanings.

Avoid jargon. Specialists in any branch of human activity acquire methods of communicating ideas that set them apart from other specialists and the general public. Yet even the most learned scientist does not order a dinner or propose marriage in five-syllable words, some of them manufactured specially for his own use.

To Sum Up

Complexity of living has come upon us with our progress in science and technology. The essence of physical evolution is movement away from the more simple towards the more complex. But in our social contacts we need to put forward every effort to move from complexity to simplicity. This is as necessary in business as it is in international affairs.

The man who fails to try to write so clearly as to be understandable to the audience he desires to reach is lazy or affected. If he does not know the subject about which he writes he is a pretender. If he does know his subject and cannot express his thoughts he is merely incompetent.

The superior man writes as if he were interested in what he is trying to say, and as if it were vital to him that his readers should understand what is in his mind.

Condensed from *The Royal Bank of Canada Monthly Letter*, July, 1957.

BOOK REVIEW

BASIC EXPERIENCES IN SPEECH, by Seth A. Fessenden and Wayne N. Thompson. Published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York. (Second Edition) 1958.

Toastmasters International should be proud that one of their staff* is a co-author of this well-conceived and well executed book on communication through the spoken word. It is a pleasure to call attention to the second edition of this widely accepted text.

One of the excellent features of Toastmasters is the critique that follows each speech and program. Yet how can anyone criticize constructively without a grounding in the basic concepts of good speech which a text like this puts forth? How can one suggest ways and means of development as a speaker without knowing what is possible to attain? Such a book saves criticism from being destructive.

The stress of this book is on learning by doing, but the doing is undergirded by sound theory which comes out of the studious background of the authors. The great danger of any "doing" course is that we keep doing the same old things over and over again without mingling thought with our labor. This book points out where the mistakes are likely to occur and

how to avoid them. To neglect the theory of public speaking, that a text like this presents, is as dangerous as it would be for a surgeon to neglect his constant study of anatomy and physiology.

The feature of this book, which has gained it favor, is that it is organized by activities rather than by rhetorical principles. Such an approach might trap the authors in a bog of repetition, but they have skillfully avoided this. The activities are arranged in a planned progression, going from the less difficult to the more difficult experiences in the mastery of the spoken word.

There are not many speech experiences the average person comes in contact with that are not covered in this popular text. The approval that this text has met with indicates that the authors have discovered through long years of experience and study a sane approach to one of man's most precious accomplishments, the ability to speak in public.

This is the second edition. I predict that it will go through many more. Any serious student of public speaking will discover the reason for my prediction by studying its pages. This book has met the severe test of rugged competition.

—LIONEL CROCKER

Chairman, Dept. of Speech
Denison University, Ohio

*Dr. Seth A. Fessenden is Research Director of Toastmasters International.

Letters to the Editor

(Because of obvious space limitations we often print only pertinent portions of letters received. While only signed letters will be considered for publication, names of writers will be withheld on request.—Editor)

Dear Mr. Blanding:

In reading your article "Across the Desk" in the April *Toastmaster* I was interested to see that the Foreign Aid sales program headed by Eric Johnson and the other people mentioned in your article, left no stone unturned in trying to sell the people on Foreign Aid. They must have done a skillful job in convincing you that the Foreign Aid program was a wonderful thing and that Toastmasters would be an excellent avenue for further discussion of the merits of Foreign Aid. We have to look at both sides of every question and fortunately in this country we have that privilege, but should Toastmasters and its magazine become the vehicle for programs of special interest groups. I am confident that your article was more of a report on the meeting rather than an editorial. However, I was definitely left with the impression that Foreign Aid is a wonderful thing for you, for me and for America.

I need not tell you that my position on Foreign Aid is exactly opposite to the ideas expressed in this meeting. Foreign Aid is nothing but compulsory charity in which both the giver and the recipient loses respect for the gift. I respect your right to your position as I am sure you respect mine but I do not think that either of us should use *The Toastmaster* magazine for such an expression.

Geo. P. Macatee, III
Dallas, Texas

It was with the deepest regret that I read the article by Ted Blanding, Executive Director, Toastmasters International, in the April issue of *The Toastmaster*.

It would seem that either Mr. Blanding has little resistance to the blandishments of a Hollywood build-up by Eric Johnson, or else *The Toastmaster* has proselytized its pages for espousal of highly controversial political causes.

Were this article the contribution of a Toastmaster at large setting forth his own views, it might be considered a timely and thought-provoking piece. But for the executive director of an organization such as Toastmasters to apparently speak editorially in this manner through the group's official publication is to me of highly questionable judgment.

Robert M. Parker
Club 578
South Bend, Ind.

ED NOTE: When we asked Mr. Blanding for a response to these letters, he stated: "I am sorry that my effort to report to the membership on the meeting held in Washington was construed as an endorsement of all foreign aid spending. No one recognizes more than I do that it is impossible for me to speak for Toastmasters everywhere, and we do maintain a policy of non-endorsement of any cause. This, of course, does not preclude the requirement of examination of what is transpiring not only in Washington, but around the world, in order to be completely familiar with

activities carried on in Government. Had not this activity received complete bipartisan endorsement I would never have attempted to include a reference to the fact that I was in attendance at the meeting, but when both a Democratic Ex-President and our present President are heartily endorsing the program I would assume that such an endorsement would have removed it from a highly controversial political issue.

"If I gave the impression that I was endorsing something it was not my intention."

I am particularly interested in Mr. Blanding's comments in the April *Toastmaster* regarding the advantages of Toastmasters in furthering a world-wide understanding of the democratic way of life. May I add that at this time, and during our lifetime, it is equally important for Americans to understand the alternatives to the democratic way of life. If we fail to understand these differences our present unsought responsibility for world leadership will be plagued by unnecessary and costly failures.

Toastmasters is an ideal vehicle for furthering the two-way need for understanding with its give and take methods which are equally successful in the fields of business, education, politics and cultural exchanges. The individual clamor for communication and knowledge in the so-called backward countries is a search for something or anything resembling Toastmasters.

The give and take between the 23 Iranians and the 7 Americans in the Iran-America Toastmasters Club has been spectacularly rewarding to both the Iranians and the Americans. The Iranians joined to practice the English language. The Ameri-

cans joined as from a sense of duty to improve cultural relations. Both groups were amazed in the new found respect for each other as well as new understanding.

In closing I would like to congratulate you at Toastmasters International for the remarkable improvement in *The Toastmaster* magazine during the past year. It is now a much more mature and professional publication.

Bill Dean
Iran America Toastmasters Club
Teheran, Iran

At our regular meeting on May 12, 1958, I made the following invocation:

"Bless this hall and bless this food,
Bless the speakers, bad or good,
Thank Thee for the right to talk
And for our critic's helpful squawk.
Grant us wisdom, wit and rhyme
But please God—let us quit on time!"

It was intended to be witty, different and provocative but not irreverent. The general evaluator's comments indicated that it was perhaps in poor taste if not out and out shocking.

Does every invocation have to be a solemn, somber, serious soliloquy? Why can't we, as Toastmasters, spearhead a campaign for lighter, lilted, laugh-provoking invocations? I think the invocation, if properly done, can keynote the spirit of the meeting.

I wonder what my brother Toastmasters may have to say on this subject?

E. E. (Ted) Hannum
Pennypot Club 1202-38
Philadelphia, Pa.

THE CONVENTION PROGRAM IN PERSPECTIVE

By SETH FESSENDEN

"*WHY did you join a Toastmasters club?*" This question has been asked of thousands of our members. The most frequent answer is, "To learn to speak better." To be exact, 86 per cent gave this reply on our latest survey. About half of those asked (54%) identified this as the desire to speak better before audiences; about one-fourth (22%) felt the need for better speech in social situations. The Toastmasters' educational program is designed to accomplish these ends. An examination of 500 questionnaires from men who have dropped out of their clubs shows 90% of them felt their speech had improved; 96% could see improvement in their fellow club members.

How much of this improvement can be attributed to the educational programs presented at the International Conventions? That is the sixty-four thousand dollar question. Less than two per cent of the entire membership attend. The contribution made to the individual Toastmaster whose dues make the Convention possible must therefore come to him through others. *It is what those who attend take back to him that counts.*

The design and conduct of the educational sessions at the Convention, then, are to increase this "take home" aspect. These sessions must do no less than three things: (1) present and give the opportunity to practice methods of speech improvement; (2) suggest ways by which these procedures can be passed on to others; and (3) inspire and motivate those who attend to give others that which they have gained.

The June issue of THE TOASTMASTER magazine covered the areas of Toastmaster training that will be considered at the Pittsburgh Convention. These are vital ones in our work, and those who attend the sessions should profit from the new ideas and methods. It will be their responsibility, however, to translate what they see and do to the other Toastmasters whom they represent.

Viewed in proper perspective, the educational programs of an International Convention have far-reaching goals. The material presented is designed for every Toastmaster, and the purpose is to help the man who attends to learn even more as he shares his gains with many. The contribution is not limited by the physical boundaries of the Convention floor.

27th Annual Convention • August 14-16 • Penn-Sheraton Hotel

PARTICIPATE AT PITTSBURGH



Rare volume—one that comes back to you after you've loaned it.

Work—something that when we have it, we wish we didn't; when we don't, we wish we did; and the object of which is to be able to afford not to do any someday.

Parking meter—a device that enables you to do two hours' shopping in one.

Lots of people are afraid that the next war will be fought in outer space. As for us, we can't think of a better place.

What goes up must come down—unless, of course, it orbits.

—Changing Times.

A bore is a person who keeps you from being lonely, but who makes you wish you were.

Son: "But Dad, George Washington's father didn't spank him for chopping down the cherry tree."

Father: "I know. But his father wasn't in the tree when he chopped it down."

Policeman to driver going the wrong way down a one-way street: "Hey, where do you think you're going?"

Driver: "I don't know, but I must be late—everybody seems to be coming back."

JUST IN JEST

Boss: "You know that new machine that does the work of forty men?"

Foreman: "Yes, why?"

Boss: "I wonder where we can get a man to mend it."

Cheerful people, doctors say, resist disease better than the glum ones. In other words, the surly bird catches the germ.

A Texas lad rushed home from kindergarten and demanded that his mother buy him a set of pistols, holsters and gun belt.

"Why, whatever for, dear?" his mother asked. "You surely don't need them for school?"

"Yes I do. Teacher said that tomorrow she's going to teach us to draw."

A teenager can be said to be grown up when he considers it as important to pass an examination as to pass the car ahead.

In the battle of the sexes, you never meet what you can truly call a conscientious objector.

"I'm not wealthy and I don't have a yacht and a convertible like Jerry Smith," said the lover, "but I love you."

"I love you too," replied the girl. "But tell me more about Jerry."

New Clubs

(As of May 15, 1958)

- 1036 DOUGLAS, Arizona, (D-3), *South-eastern Arizona*, Mon., 6:30 a.m., Gadsden Hotel, 1046 G. Avenue.
- 1472 MOUNT VERNON, Ohio, (D-10), *Cooper-Bessemer*, Wed., 7:00 p.m., Cooper-Bessemer Corporation, North Sandusky Street.
- 1611 NASHVILLE, Tennessee, (D-43), *Tuesday*, 1st, 3rd & 5th Tues., 11:45 a.m., James Robertson Hotel.
- 1622 OTEEN, North Carolina, (D-37), *Oteen VA Hospital*, Wed., 6:00 p.m., Conference Room "A" Bldg., USVA Hospital.
- 1927 NEWPORT BEACH, California, (D-F), *Harbor Lites*, Thurs., 6:59 a.m., Roberts Restaurant, 843 W. 19th Street, Costa Mesa, California.
- 1952 HAVANA, Cuba, (D-U), *Havana*, Mon., 7:00 p.m., The American Club.
- 2103 SHREVEPORT, Louisiana, (D-25), *Southern Bell Telephone*, Mon., 7:00 p.m., The Country Kitchen, 1004 Busby Street.
- 2171 BATON ROUGE, Louisiana, (D-29), *Kaiser*, Tues., 6:30 p.m., Bellemont Motor Hotel.
- 2226 ROY, Utah, (D-U), *Roy*, Mon., 7:00 p.m., Ma's & Pa's Cafe.
- 2659 TORONTO, Ontario, Canada, (D-60p), *Deondo*, every other Tues., 6:00 p.m., Frontenac Arms Hotel, 306 Jarvis Street.
- 2682 PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania, (D-13), *Kaycee*, 2nd & 4th Fri., 8:30 p.m., Mt. Lebanon K. of C. Council Hall, 3245 W. Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh 16.
- 2701 IDAHO FALLS, Idaho, (D-15), *William E. Borah*, Wed., 7:10 p.m., Rogers Hotel, 545 Shoup Avenue.
- 2707 TOWSON, Maryland, (D-36), *Towson*, 2nd & 4th Thurs., 6:30 p.m., The Penn Hotel.
- 2719 WASHINGTON, D. C., (D-36), *District of Columbia Life Underwriters*, 2nd & 4th Tues., 11:45 a.m., Blackie's House of Beef, 22nd & M Sts., N.W.
- 2722 OTTAWA, Ontario, Canada, (D-61p), *Capital*, Mon., 6:15 p.m., YMCA, 127 Metcalfe Street.
- 2725 NEW YORK, N. Y., (D-46), *Firebrand*, alt. Tues., 6:15 p.m., Thermo-Fax Sales, 99 Church Street, New York City 7.
- 2727 ORLANDO, Florida, (D-47), *Telephone*, 2nd & 4th Tues., 7:00 p.m., San Juan Hotel.
- 2739 NORTH PLATTE, Nebraska, (D-24), *North Platte*, Mon., 7:00 a.m., Pawnee Hotel.
- 2747 LINCOLN, Nebraska, (D-24), *Capital City*, Tues., 6:15 p.m., Hotel Capital.
- 2756 OKLAHOMA CITY, Oklahoma, (D-16), *Tulakes*, Sat., 7:00 a.m., Goode's Restaurant.
- 2757 FEDERAL WAY, Washington, (D-2), *Federal Way*, Thurs., 7:00 a.m., Vieux Carre and Rocky's Restaurants.
- 2758 ECORSE, Michigan, (D-28), *Downriver Ambassadors*, Wed., 5:30 p.m., Ciagan's Shrimp House, Ecorse, Detroit 29, Michigan.
- 2760 ANN ARBOR, Michigan, (D-28), *Cook's Inn*, Thurs., 5:45 p.m., Faculty Dining Hall of the Lawyers' Club.
- 2761 FORT SILL, Lawton, Oklahoma, (D-16), *Satanta*, 1st & 3rd Mon., 11:30 a.m., Federal Employees Service Club.
- 2762 UNIONTOWN, Pennsylvania, (D-13), *Uniontown*, alt. Fri., 7:00 p.m., Meloni's Restaurant.
- 2765 ARLINGTON, Virginia, (D-36), *Cavalier*, 1st & 3rd Mon., 6:00 p.m., Britts Cafeteria, Wilson Blvd.
- 2766 WAVERLY, Ohio, (D-40), *Waverly*, 1st & 3rd Tues., 6:00 p.m., Lake White Club.
- 2769 VANCOUVER, B.C., Canada, (D-21), *Clover Leaf*, Wed., 12:20 p.m., B. C. Packers Ltd., Board Room, Ft. of Campbell Avenue.
- 2770 URBANA, Ohio, (D-40), *Urbana*, 2nd & 4th Tues., 6:30 p.m., Millners Cafeteria.
- 2771 CLOQUET, Minnesota, (D-6), *Cloquet*, 1st & 3rd Mon., 6:15 p.m., Cloquet Golf Club.
- 2772 LAS CRUCES, New Mexico, (D-23), *San Andres*, Tues., 7:00 p.m., Town & Country Restaurant, North Main Street.
- 2775 MORRISON, Illinois, (D-54), *Morrison*, 1st & 3rd Tues., 7:30 p.m., Coliseum Bldg., Lindy Way & Genesee Streets.
- 2776 TRAIL, B. C., Canada, (D-21), *Trail and District*, every 2nd Tues., 6:00 p.m., The Warfield Anglican Hall, Warfield, B. C.
- 2779 WESTOVER AFB, Massachusetts, (D-31), *Westover Officers'*, 1st & 3rd Tues., 6:30 p.m., Westover Officers' Club.
- 2784 KAMLOOPS, B.C., Canada, (D-21), *Kamloops*, Fri., 6:15 p.m., Alex's Bar B-Q.

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