

TOASTMASTER

OCTOBER 2004



Toastmasters: 1924-2004

Building A Better World

Let's celebrate TI's 80th anniversary this month.

**Highlights from the
International Convention
in Reno, Nevada**

**Speaking on
Controversial Topics:**

How to keep controversy
from escalating into conflict.

Happy Birthday, Toastmasters!

Can you believe Toastmasters is 80 years old? It's true! Eighty years ago, the first Toastmasters club met and began what is now the world's leading communication and leadership development organization. Much has changed since then, but the fundamental purpose of our organization remains unchanged. And members are still encouraged to be creative and experiment with new approaches as they strive to become better communicators and leaders.

The results continue to be remarkable. Take this inspirational message, for example, written and presented by a student at a Speechcraft graduation banquet:

"Mr. Toastmaster, fellow Toastmasters, family members, and friends! The meal we will soon enjoy was made possible because someone had an idea, then wrote down that idea in the form of a recipe and passed it on to future chefs.

In October 1924, a small group led by Dr. Ralph C. Smedley met in a basement in Santa Ana, California, formed a club, called it Toastmasters and began to perfect their idea. The focus of that first Toastmasters club was to create a special recipe – a recipe for success. The ingredients in that recipe were practice, training, public speaking and presiding over meetings.

Using those ingredients, the club members worked together to create the perfect meal – one that was easily digested, appealed to all cultures, and promoted sociability and good fellowship for anyone who tasted it.

And they were successful! How do I know? Because today over 4 million men and women, including those of us gathered here tonight, have tasted that meal – the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership program.

Tonight marks the conclusion of our Speechcraft workshop. It's now time to demonstrate the success of that recipe... as we share ideas, information and life experiences. Throughout the last five weeks, Toastmasters veterans have provided a supportive atmosphere in the Speechcraft program wherein we, the future chefs, have learned from their experiences. That meal is now ours to consume. All we have to do is mix together the ingredients that appeal to us, add our own spices and flavorings, and enjoy the results.

Let us enjoy each other's company during both meals, the one we are about to eat and the one that has been nearly 80 years in the making."

I hope you agree that the message above is remarkable. To me, it is a clear example of what can be accomplished in Toastmasters in a very short time. Toastmasters still changes lives, one at a time, just as it did 80 years ago. Congratulations, Toastmasters International! May you enjoy many more years of success and many more anniversaries!!

Jon R. Greiner

Jon R. Greiner, DTM
International President



The TOASTMASTER

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Associate Editor KELLYANN MURPHY
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To submit articles, contact:

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL
PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT:
P.O. BOX 9052 • MISSION VIEJO, CA 92690 USA
(949) 858-8255 • FAX: (949) 858-1207
VOICEMAIL: (949) 858-2865
e-mail: kmurphy@toastmasters.org

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THE TOASTMASTER Magazine (ISSN 00408263) is published monthly by Toastmasters International, Inc., 23182 Arroyo Vista, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688, U.S.A. Periodicals postage paid at Mission Viejo, CA and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: Send address change to THE TOASTMASTER Magazine, P.O. Box 9052, Mission Viejo, CA 92690, U.S.A.

Published to promote the ideas and goals of Toastmasters International, a non profit educational organization of clubs throughout the world dedicated to teaching skills in public speaking and leadership. Members' subscriptions are included in the \$18 semi-annual dues.

The official publication of Toastmasters International carries authorized notices and articles regarding the activities and interests of the organization, but responsibility is not assumed for the opinions of the authors of other articles. THE TOASTMASTER Magazine does not endorse or guarantee the products it advertises.

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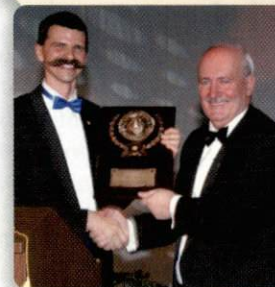
A list of Toastmasters, clubs and districts honored for their accomplishments during the 2003-2004 year.

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Celebrating 80 Years of Excellence!

Highlights from the 73rd Annual International Convention in Reno, Nevada.

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How to keep controversy from escalating into conflict.

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Toastmasters: 1924-2004 Building a Better World

Here's just a taste of how Toastmasters has helped people around the world.

By Glen Murphy, DTM, and Joyce Watson, ATM-B

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The Toastmasters Vision:

Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, and find the courage to change.

The Toastmasters Mission:

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.

Editor's Note: The article "Confusing Communication" by Shula Hirsch in the August issue elicited a heated response from readers. Here is a sample of their comments:

Confusing Communication

When I read "Confusing Communication" in the August issue, I had to giggle because I know just how hard it is to understand English English and American English. I went to England last year and understood most of the language. But when I went to America, oh boy! Was I in for a challenge!

I went to a mall and needed to go to the toilet, so I went up to the nearest counter and asked, "Is there a toilet I can use?" The lady looked at me as if I was from another planet and said, "The rest room is over there." Later in the mall, my friends and I were walking past a shop when someone said, "Why don't ya'll come in?" I found out later that *ya'll* is a shortened version of you all. On the way back from the mall, I saw a "Yield" sign at an intersection. I asked the driver what it meant and he said that it means you must wait for the other cars to pass. In New Zealand we have signs that say "Give Way."

That was my experience with American English. Now if you think English English is hard, Australian English will completely confuse you.

In Australia if you want a can of beer you ask for a *tinny*, not a can. If you want to go to the corner store or dairy in Australia, you go to the *milk bar*. We swim in *bathers* not togs. If you are planning a picnic, instead of packing a cooler, pack an *esky*. If an Australian tells you that someplace is just up the road – pack a lunch! And you'll never feel like a stranger in

Australia because all Australians will call you *mate*. I found that most English-speaking countries have their own language just to make them different from everyone else.

So *ka kite, see ya mate, good bye ya'll, and cheerio.*

Julie Voss • Lunchtime Club 2684 • Rotorua, New Zealand.

A friend of mine was shopping at a grocery store in Columbus, South Carolina, when a clerk became intrigued by her British accent.

"Whar y'all fruhm?" inquired the clerk.

"I'm from Great Britain," Elizabeth replied.

"Oh! Whale, y'all speak real good English," offered the clerk.

"Thank you, my dear. So do you," my friend replied.

At a recent Toastmasters training program in Denver, a speaker illustrated the point, "After all, we're all English-speakers here." "More or less," came a muted but distinctly British rejoinder from the back of the room.

Michele Bartlett, CTM • South Suburban Club 1399
Littleton, Colorado

The article by Shula Hirsch is profoundly depressing. It demonstrates clearly one of the reasons why the U.S. is so unpopular in many countries.

For a teacher of English to be so astonished that the language differs between countries says very little for her level of education and even less for her knowledge of the world. And in using quote marks when writing "English" for the language spoken in its home, she is simply offensive.

The problem is a common one in your country, thinking that all others are either wrong or comical, while being exceedingly touchy about criticism of yourselves.

When I emigrated from England to Australia 30 years ago I did not expect to find the same expressions here. I would have been a great deal poorer for not embracing them.

The U.S.A. is entitled to alter English as it wishes, but you should not expect the country of Shakespeare to follow you.

Robert Arthur Dobbin Crawford, ATM-S • Nambour Club 4164
Nambour, QLD, Australia

Writer Shula Hirsch responds to comments about her article:

My article, "Confusing Communication," elicited conflicting responses, with some readers finding it condescending and others suspecting the British had fun at my expense. Who was dumping on whom? No one was dumping on anyone. The article was a lighthearted effort to capture the amusing differences in usage among English-speaking countries. To the extent I was poking fun at anyone, it was at myself for finding myself befuddled during what was supposed to be a visit without a language barrier.

Surely, any foreign Toastmaster who visits America would find similar humorous "distortions" of our use of the English language as we ourselves do in traveling from one part of our country to another. Those who took my jests seriously clearly misunderstood my intent. But to the extent the article did aim to make a serious point about difficulties of communication, the angry response proves it. In any case, I apologize to anyone I may have offended, however inadvertently.

Shula Hirsch • New York, New York

Have something to say? Do it in 300 words or less, sign it and send it to letters@toastmasters.org.

Use your skills to reason,
communicate and vote!

Ideas for Enlivening an Election Year

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU USED your Toastmasters skills to be a good citizen? And why bother? Here's a hint: When was the last time you had a conversation about this year's election?

For the next six weeks, the U.S. presidential election is going to be a recurring topic of conversation. This can get pretty repetitious and boring unless you have a strategy for using each conversation as an opportunity. This election campaign is shaping up as one of the most divided in memory, so well-reasoned points on either side will be more than welcome.

You're thinking, "What? I already know who I'm voting for," or "I don't

"You don't really know your own mind until you've tried on the other side and tested it in your head."

care." But take this challenge: Use your Toastmasters skills to improve your presence at social gatherings, sound more engaging and display leadership.

Here are the three skills you already know: how to reason, how to communicate and how to act.

First, reason. Election campaigns do not promote reason. They often aim to give you slogans and catch phrases that you can grab without thinking, to show solidarity with people you agree with and to fend off the rest. In one sense maybe they help clarify a position, but you'll have more fun thinking things through yourself. This means choosing which issues are most important to you, and seeing what the candidates' differences are.

Here's the real challenging part: After you master the arguments of the

candidate you agree with, master the position of his opponent. Most people do the first and think that's enough. But you don't really know your own mind until you've tried on the other side and tested it in your head.

Second, communicate. When the next grumbling session about the election comes up, take the conversation in a new direction. Use your storytelling skills, your gestures, your appeal to the emotions. Instead of complaining about the choices, or reciting the latest headline, sound out your ideas on the issues that matter most

to you, the ones you've reasoned through, the ones you have personal examples for. Maybe you've had the same conversation again and again with someone close to you. This time surprise them: "You know, the other side does have two points we have to acknowledge..." Or "True, but on the other hand..."

My favorite radio talk show host is named Kojo Nnamdi. He always keeps conversations on local politics lively, even if you don't care about the issue being discussed. He once said that he liked to test himself to articulate the opposing side of an argument even better than his opponent. By mastering the opposition's argument he finds himself in a stronger position for discussion,



with insights into his own position that he might not otherwise have. And he understands a little better what it's like inside their heads.

After you've sounded out your reasoning, you can try it out in larger settings. Know your audience, and give them something to think about.

Finally, you will get to act. You might think it goes without saying, but you have to go to the polls and vote for your voice to count. It's easy to say, "My vote is only one and doesn't matter in millions of votes. It won't change the outcome." But we know that in the last American presidential election only 500 votes could have changed one state's outcome, and in three states the total difference was within 2,000 votes. In local elections each vote carries even more weight. There are no excuses not to vote.

So be a better Toastmaster and make this election year interesting. Reason, communicate and vote. Democracy is a process that starts with each of us and affects how we live. You may persuade the people around you to see issues in a new light. Whatever happens, you'll be a winner. **T**

David Taylor, CTM, is a member of Greater New Haven Club 5436 in New Haven, Connecticut.

A Voice of His Own

By Cindy Podurgal Chambers, DTM

Imagine a world in which unexpected sounds are amplified to an ear-splitting pitch, and new experiences are a constant source of panic and confusion. Where faces are practically unrecognizable, their expressions unreadable; and even looking at your own face in the mirror makes you uncomfortable.

This is the world of Matt Ward, a Toastmaster afflicted with autism.

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a brain malfunction of unknown origin that affects an estimated one in 500 individuals worldwide. Its symptoms and severity vary widely but include impairment in communication skills, social interactions and patterns of behavior.

For 26-year-old Matt Ward of Madison, Wisconsin, life is a little like being surrounded by dynamite – set to explode at any time. This is how Matt described his noise sensitivity to his mother, Nancy Alar, an ATM who serves as Matt’s facilitator/communicator. Calling him “gloriously autistic,” Nancy describes her role in his world as “exasperating, illuminating, fascinating, heartbreaking and awe-inspiring.”

She credits members of Hill Farms Club 4940, Matt himself, and – strangely enough – the cartoon character Bart Simpson with allowing others a glimpse into his remarkable world.

■ Having been a Toastmaster since 1983, Nancy had the knowledge and confidence to address teachers and students at Matt’s school each year in order to educate them about his disorder. But it was Bart Simpson who gave Matt the voice to tell his own story.

“My goal was to explain autism and its effects on Matt in terms the audience could understand,” Nancy explains. “When Matt was invited to join the ARML (American Regions Mathematics League) All-State Math team in 1995, I interviewed him about what he wanted his teammates to know about him. Then I wrote one of my usual speeches explaining what the team needed to know, and

“Hanging out with a bunch of Toastmasters

what Matt is kind of boring. You talk wanted them to know about autism.”

But before she had a chance to deliver that speech, Bart Simpson intervened.

“I was walking past Matt’s room one day when I heard him talking,” she recalls. “I peeked around the corner, and there was Matt, reading aloud from his Bart Simpson comic book as if it were a play. Matt had good vocal projection and vocal variety. He was actually doing all the different voices of Homer, Marge and Bart.”

Then Nancy had a flash of insight. “I remembered that in one of my first advanced Toastmaster manuals, *Specialty Speeches*, there was a

project called ‘Read Out Loud.’ Although speaking to individuals is very stressful for Matt, reading aloud is not. And it suddenly occurred to me that maybe I didn’t have to present the speech to the math team. Maybe Matt could do it himself.”

Nancy quickly changed the speech pronouns from “he” to “I,” and Matt started practicing. His first speaking engagement was a huge success.

Soon Matt was in demand as a speaker, and in 1996 he gave his first formal presentation to an audience of 300 at the National Autism Society Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Matt’s confidence grew with every speech, and so did the listeners’ understanding of autism.

Shortly after launching his new-found “career,” Nancy encouraged Matt to join her Toastmasters club. There he honed his skills – and earned acclaim as an outstanding Ah-counter.

“He’s so detail-oriented that none of them ever slipped by him,” Nancy says proudly.

“My name is Matt Ward. I am currently a junior at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. My parents

Although Matt found the meetings noisy and disorienting, his mother says the program helped awaken his potential as a public speaker. Last year, Matt served as a keynote speaker at the District 35 Spring Convention Luncheon in Madison. Here, in part, are the words he delivered to his captivated audience:

“My name is Matt Ward. I am currently a junior at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. My parents



◀ **Matt Ward and his mother, Nancy, at the Hill Farms Toastmasters Club in Madison, Wisconsin.**

discovered I was autistic when I was 18 months old. Unlike most of you in Toastmasters, I had a really hard time learning to talk. I knew only 30 words when I was three. I asked my first question when I was five. For a long time, I mixed up my pronouns. I would say things like, 'You want a cookie,' when I meant that I wanted a cookie. I would also try to get things like cookies by taking my mom's hand and trying to throw it at the cookie jar. I knew the hand brought me cookies, but I didn't know there was a mind attached to it that I could communicate with.

"Some autistic people are mentally retarded, but I am not. In fact, when I was 14, my non-verbal IQ score was 144. Still, a lot of my classmates thought I was retarded because I looked and acted kind of weird. But I didn't know they thought that, because I couldn't think about them.

"I was on the math team in high school, and in 1995 I took the American High School Mathematics Exam. I got the seventh-highest score in the state of Wisconsin. It's a little easier for me to communicate with others about math because I understand it so well. The other 'math nerds' on the team seemed to accept my odd parts better than most people. I don't look so different when everyone has a pocket protector and a giant calculator in their back pocket.

"I'm good at math, but I've always had trouble understanding how other people think. That makes it very hard for me to make friends. I just don't know how to be friendly. I'm not really interested in having a girlfriend and don't think I'll ever get married or have children.

"Although I feel close to my mom, stepfather and sister, and sometimes enjoy doing things with them, most

of the time I prefer to be alone to pursue my interests, like video games, origami and mythical beings.

"One of the good things about being autistic is that I'm never embarrassed to speak in front of large crowds. I've spoken at conferences, training sessions and to university classes about autism. The last thing my mom expected was to see me on the 'Speakers Circuit,' but here I am.

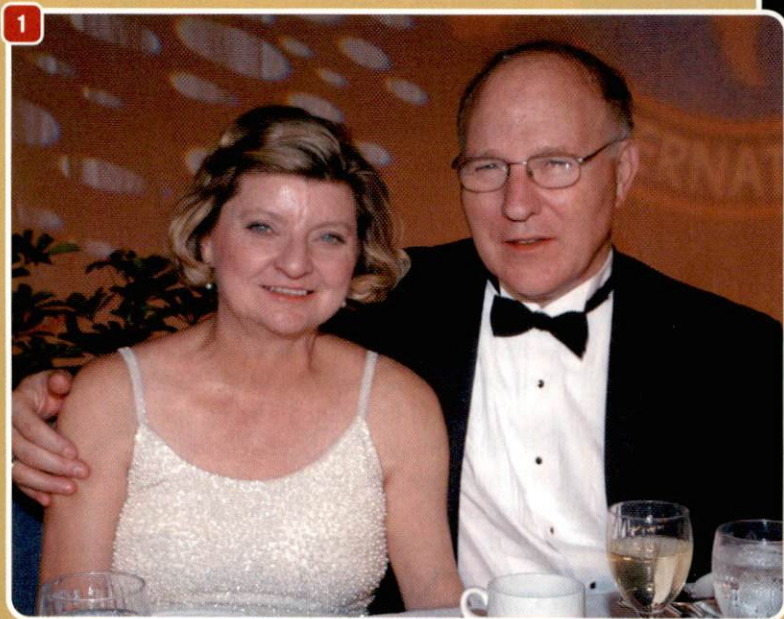
"When I first started reading speeches like this, my mom talked me into joining her Toastmasters club to get practice speaking. But hanging out with a bunch of Toastmasters is kind of boring. You talk too much for me.

"I would like to get a math degree from the University of Wisconsin. My ultimate goal is to find a job where I can use my math skills but don't have to communicate a lot. In the meantime, I have had part-time jobs working in libraries. It's quiet there, and I don't have to talk to people very much.

"I'd like everyone to remember that not all autistic people are the same. Lots of autistic people can carry on conversations easier than I can, and not all autistic people are good at math. Most autistic people certainly never give speeches like I do. All people with special needs are people first, and deserve to be respected as individuals.

"Being autistic is part of who I am. Sometimes I have problems, but I am satisfied with my life. I enjoy my hobbies and am proud of my accomplishments. I know there's a place for my special talents if I can just find it. Being able to read speeches like this makes me feel like I finally have a voice of my own." ■

Cindy Podurgal Chambers, DTM, is a freelance writer from Clarksville, Tennessee, who also hosts a regional cable television show. She is a frequent contributor to this and other publications. Want to share your own success story? Reach her at inkwell1956@aol.com.

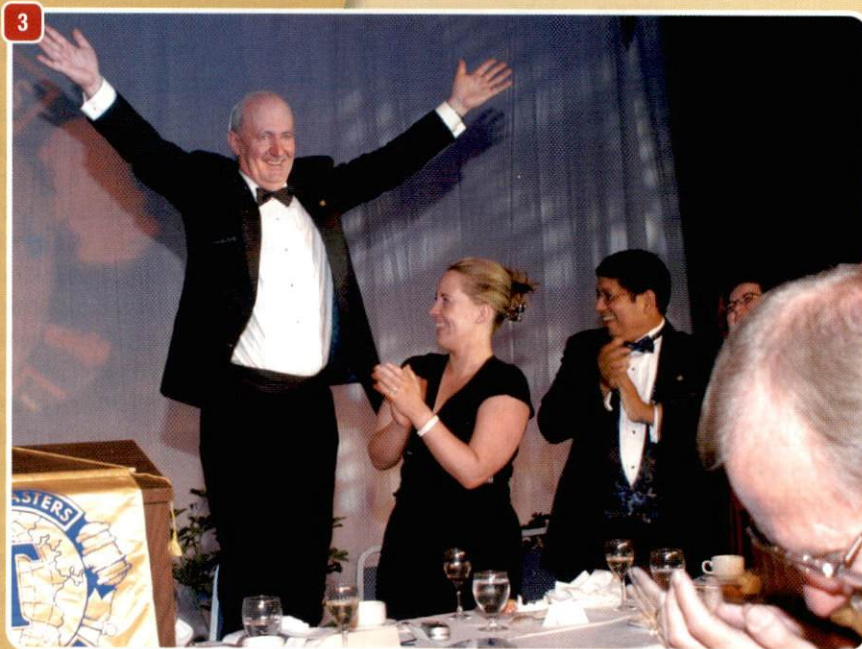


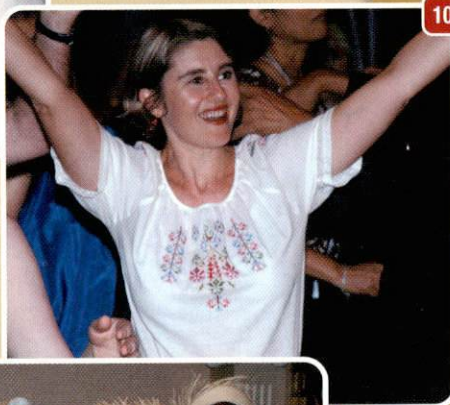
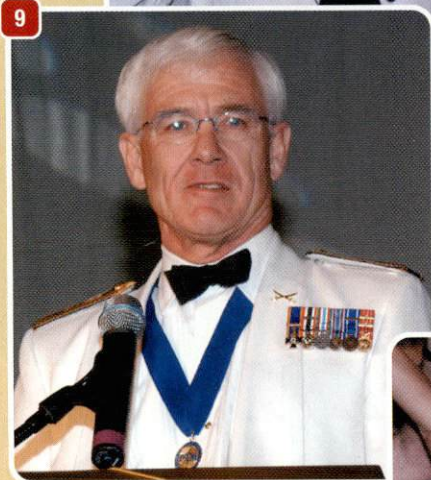
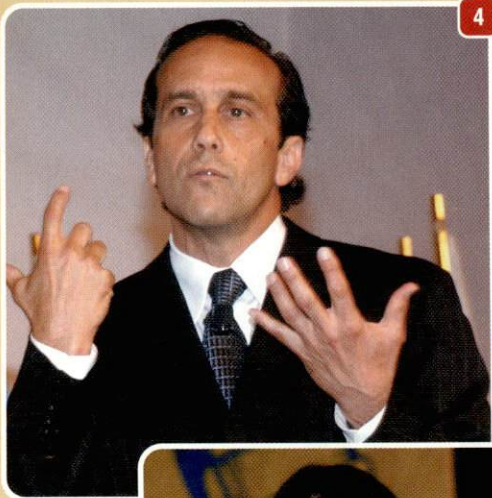
Highlights from
the 73rd Annual
International
Convention, in
Reno, Nevada,
August 18-21, 2004.

Celebrating 80 Years of Excellence in

RENO

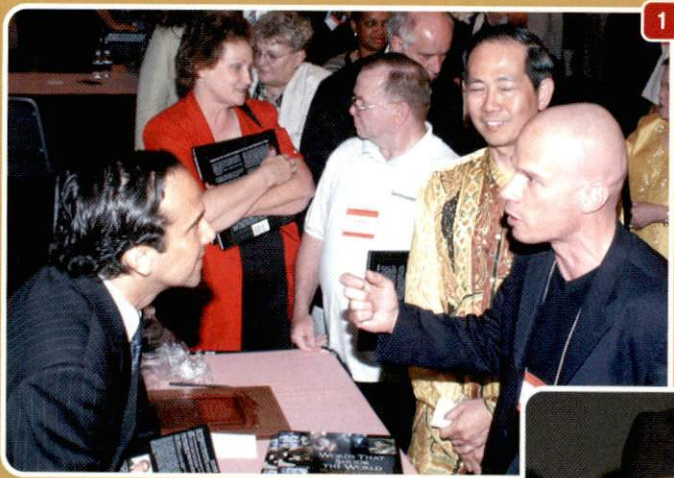
Nearly 1,600 Toastmasters from near and far met for TI's 80th anniversary celebration at the Reno Hilton in Reno, Nevada, in August. Some came as seminar presenters, some came to campaign for a seat on the Toastmasters' board of directors, some came just to see what all the fuss was about. But most people came to the convention knowing what to expect: a reunion with friends and fellow Toastmasters who share a common interest in becoming better speakers and leaders. The photos on these pages show some of the drama, suspense, pageantry and entertainment of the convention. But to truly understand what a Toastmasters International Convention is all about, you had to be there! We hope you will be there, too, at next year's convention in Toronto, Canada, August 24-27, 2005. Once you come, you'll be hooked!





CAPTIONS

1. Newly elected International President Jon Greiner with wife, Belinda, at the President's Dinner Dance.
2. Delegate Elizabeth Nostedt represents Sweden at the Opening Ceremonies' Parade of Flags
3. 2003-2004 President Ted Corcoran is cheered as he ends his term in office.
4. Keynote speaker Richard Greene starts off the convention with a dynamic message.
5. Educational session in progress.
6. 2004 World Champion of Public Speaking Randy Harvey.
7. Luncheon speaker Fran Capo entertains the crowd.
8. Dr. Stephen Covey receives the Golden Gavel award from President Ted Corcoran.
9. Chris Ford of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, celebrates his election as Toastmasters' Third Vice President.
10. Tania Bayne, a native of Bulgaria, has fun at the International Night Theme Party.
11. Delegates from Netherlands Antilles dress with Caribbean flair.



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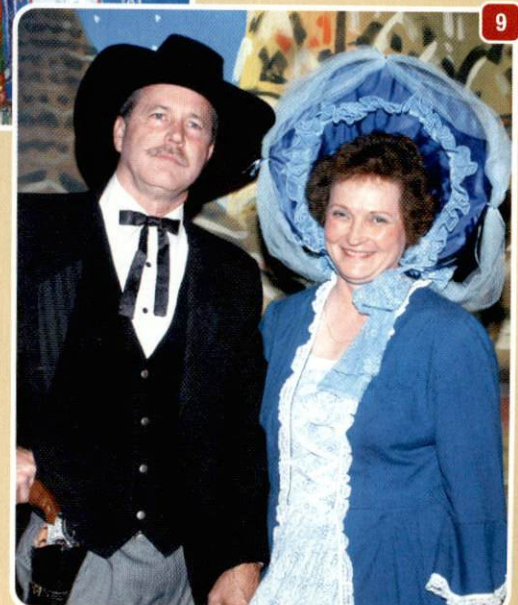
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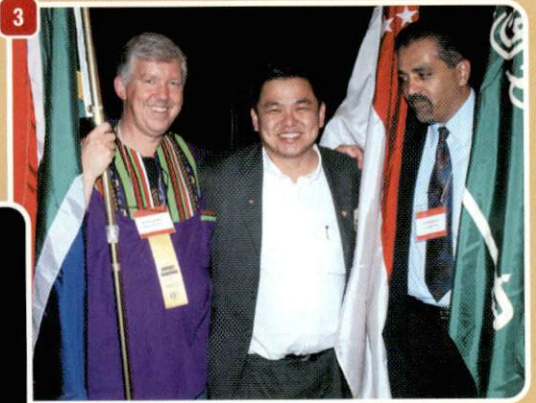
CAPTIONS

1. Keynote speaker Richard Greene autographs his book for speech contestant Erick Rainey from Scotland.
2. Host District 39 Volunteer Anne Pfautz makes sure the Dinner Dance runs smoothly.
- 3 & 4. Toastmasters love to talk.
5. A future Toastmaster?
6. Uncle Sam is a Toastmaster!
7. Delegates from Japan show off their kimonos.
8. Dressed for success at the international theme party.
9. Host District Chairwoman Barbara Brackett and her husband, Cliff, in disguise.



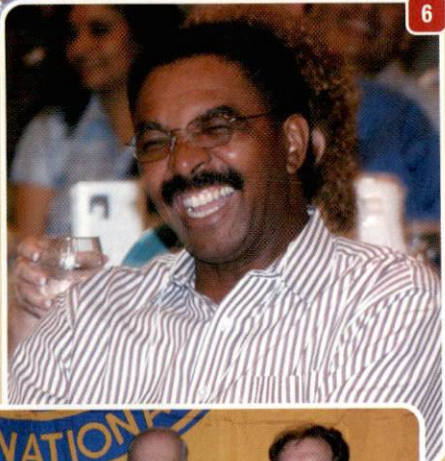
CAPTIONS

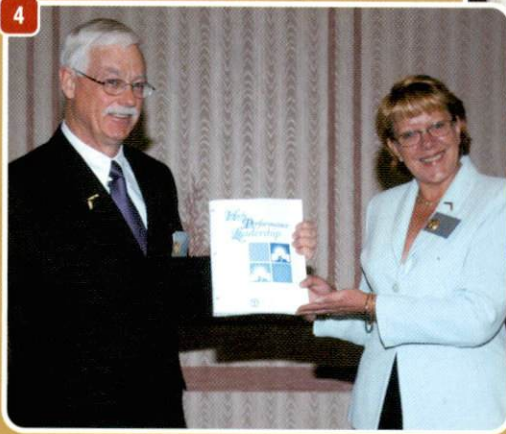
1. The Board of Directors briefs delegates on its recent decisions.
2. Comedian Dick Hardwick in action at the costume party.
3. District 74 Governor David Sutcliffe from South Africa with Poh Kim Siong from Singapore and District 79 Governor Imtiaz Ahmed of United Arab Emirates.



CAPTIONS

4. Chris Widener leads a session on "Successful Leadership."
5. Representatives from President's Distinguished District 59 are honored at the Hall of Fame ceremony.
6. A happy audience member!
7. A full house at the Golden Gavel Luncheon.
8. Delegates from District 61 are congratulated by President Ted Corcoran for achieving President's Distinguished District.
9. Speech contestant Rob Nickel with family.





CAPTIONS

1. Voice coach Arthur Samuel Joseph teaches a session on "vocal power."
2. First-time convention delegates Blessing and Ericson Ugbo dress the part at the International Night Theme Party.
3. Past International President Gavin Blakey thanks Host District 39 Chairwoman Barbara Brackett for her efforts in planning the convention.
4. Rick and Sue Haynes from Australia teach a session on High Performance Leadership.
5. International Speech Contest winners Douglas Kruger (second place), Randy Harvey (first) and James Webb (third).
6. Kay Presto teaches public relations skills.
7. District 39 Governor Jennifer Normington welcomes everyone to Reno.
8. Hilda D'Mello of Bahrain wins second place in the International Taped Speech Contest.
9. Hypnotist Alexander Van Buren puts a group of volunteers in trance.

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73rd Annual Convention

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Rewriting The Gettysburg Address

By Andrew Wilson

**All great artists
break the rules.**

In the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln broke just about every rule in the book about how to write and give a speech. He produced a speech that was both uncommonly short (a mere 272 words) and more than a little convoluted (with one sentence running to more than 80 words). Instead of flattering his audience, he went out of his way to make the teeming throng feel small (“The world will little note nor long remember what we say here”). Worst of all, he paid no heed to the old advice: Tell ‘em what you’re going to tell them; tell ‘em; then tell ‘em what you told them.

All great artists break the rules. To show how Lincoln broke the rules in this most famous and sacred of speeches, I have presumed to rewrite the Gettysburg Address. What follows is neither parody nor humor, but a

workmanlike attempt to convey the real sense of the speech. Sticking to 272 words, I have used plain language and followed the time-honored advice cited above.

(Opening) *At considerable expense, your government is building a great cemetery here at the site of one of the bloodiest battles in the war. Why should we go deeper into debt for what amounts to a symbolic gesture? I will tell you why. It’s about changing the way we think about ourselves as a nation and a people.*

(Body) *I believe that future generations of Americans – taking note of what we say and do here today – will come away with the idea that the Union*

The Gettysburg Address

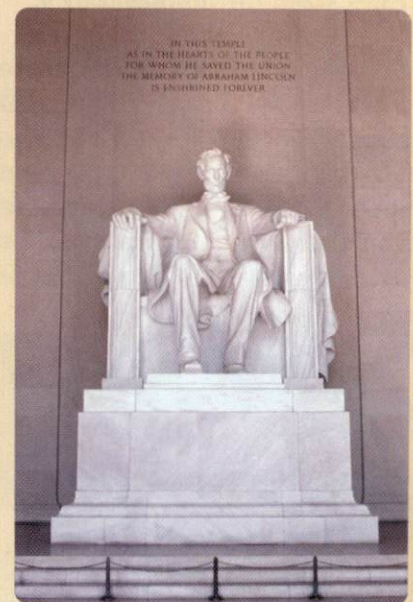
Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced.

It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.”

– ABRAHAM LINCOLN, NOVEMBER 19, 1863



soldiers who died on this battlefield gave their lives in order to extend the same notions of liberty and equality that inspired our founding fathers. Now how can that be? You know – and I know – that most of the founding fathers, including George Washington and Thomas Jefferson from Virginia, a state now in armed rebellion, were slave-owning aristocrats. Slavery is written into our Constitution. But you should never underestimate the power of words or myth. Through our presence here today, we can create a myth that will override some ugly and inconvenient facts in our history and help to forge a new and better reality. If I may paraphrase something I said in an earlier speech, 'Mystic chords of selective memory will swell the chorus of our Union.'

(Conclusion) In summary, regardless of the expense, irrespective of history, it is fit and proper that we should meet here today upon this recent killing field and future tourist attraction. Let us call it "battered ground," and use it to inspire future generations of Americans to think better of freedom and equality. That is

why we have come together to consecrate this cemetery.

My Gettysburg Address (and now I really am risking eternal damnation in speechwriters' hell) does have the advantage, I would like to think, of explicating Lincoln's in honest and simple language. But, of course, it has none of the poetry, none of the magic. What's more, if Lincoln had opted for plain-speaking instead of a dense and deliberately obscure

acter. That said, as Garry Wills, the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and author of *Lincoln At Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America*, has written, Lincoln "re-founded" the nation in his address – correcting things that he found to be imperfect in the founders' own achievements. Again – to quote Wills – "Lincoln had revolutionized the Revolution, giving people a new past to live with that would change their future indefinitely."

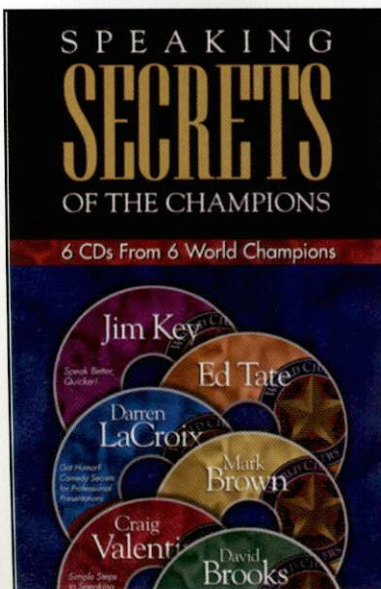
“The (one and only) Gettysburg Address was an amazing combination of audacity and diplomacy.”

poetic diction, his speech would have invited catcalls and derision. Indirection and allusion were key to relating to an audience that wanted an uplifting message but was not fully prepared for a speech that called, in effect, for a second American Revolution.

The (one and only) Gettysburg Address was an amazing combination of audacity and diplomacy. Not only did it not mention any of the forefathers by name; it did not mention slavery, the Constitution, the North or the South or Gettysburg itself, let alone the notion of hypocrisy as a central element in the national char-

There is a lesson here for us lesser mortals. It is to be creative and to be ready and willing to break the rules, including the one that states that you should start out with a simple message that you will tell, retell and tell again. The point is not to coerce, dictate or bludgeon – but to communicate and, gently – and at times audaciously – to persuade and inspire. **T**

Andrew B. Wilson, a freelance speechwriter in St. Louis, Missouri, regularly writes for CEOs of several large and well-known companies. Contact him at www.abwilson.com.



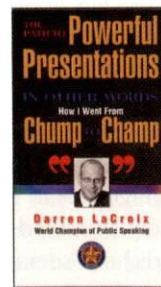
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from escalating into conflict.**

Speaking on Controversial Topics

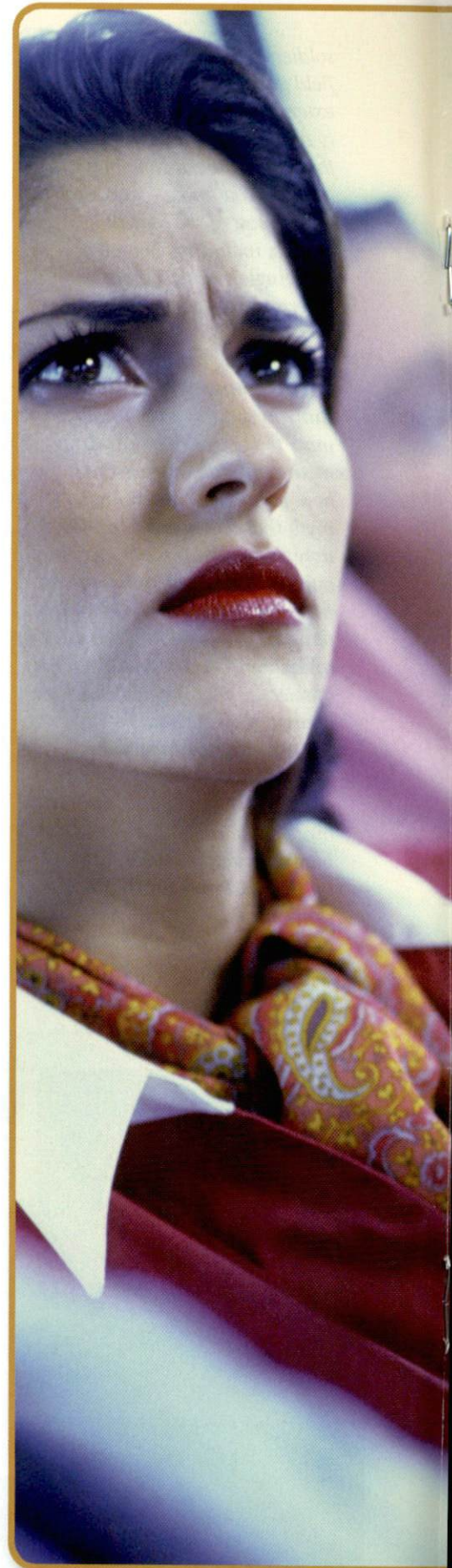
By Aaron Bolin, CTM


S*an Francisco, New York City, Detroit, Boston, Chicago, Honolulu... What do these cities have in common? These are places in the United States where same-sex couples can now get married." These were the words I used to begin my ninth speech project from the Communication and Leadership manual, "Persuade with Power."*

Although the manual does not specifically say to select a controversial topic, I came to the conclusion that there would be no need for a persuasive message if everyone in the audience felt the same way I did. After some deliberation, I decided to speak about gay marriage because it was a hot topic of debate around the country. The debate over gay marriage also fit nicely with the requirements of the speech project: gay marriage seems to get peoples' attention, it arouses emotion, it conjures images in the mind of the listener, and it seems to call people to action. Besides, when I tried to avoid controversy by choosing a "safe" topic, all my persuasive arguments were bland and wishy-washy.

Once I had selected my topic, I considered my audience. I belong to a relatively new club. The club is so new, in fact, that I was the first new Toastmaster to give speech No. 9 on March 9, 2004. Up until that point, my fellow club members had given many enjoyable speeches about safe topics such as gardening, air conditioning, juggling, historical figures and books. Collectively, we had stayed clear of all controversial topics. I knew that attitudes toward gay marriage would be about evenly divided among the members. I knew that some club members felt very strongly on this issue and might take my speech personally. I knew that our club had no experience in handling controversy or conflict. Most of all, I knew that speaking about gay marriage would stretch my abilities as a speaker.

My speech went well. I only stumbled over my words once, but I recovered gracefully and the audience did not seem to notice the mistake. However, I could feel our club president wince when he realized that I had stepped into controversial waters. I could also sense a little tension in my audience, because they had never tasted controversy before. Afterward, my evaluator, who clearly disagreed with my position, did a very professional job of providing constructive feedback. My experience taught me a variety of things that I felt might be useful to fellow Toastmasters in similar circumstances.





“Communication includes learning how to listen with an open mind to a speaker with whom you disagree.”

1 Don't be afraid to tackle a controversial topic. As a Toastmaster, you are expected to step out of your comfort zone farther and farther each time you speak. Controversy automatically adds an exciting edge of energy to your speech. I thought that I had conquered my pre-speech butterflies back at manual speech No. 2, but the butterflies returned before my speech on gay marriage. Why? Because I was taking a risk, doing something that I had never done before, challenging myself to make the leap from speaking to persuading. I now believe that pre-speech butterflies are a sign of growth – if you don't feel at least a little bit nervous before a speech, then you might not be stretching your speaking skills.

2 Pick a side. Nothing is more frustrating and boring than a speaker who cannot seem to make up his or her mind. I personally have mixed feelings about gay marriages; I can appreciate the arguments on both sides of the issue. However, I did not feel that I could persuade my audience to be ambivalent about gay marriage. Instead, I did some background research on the topic, weighed all of the arguments, and decided to argue in favor of the position that I felt was the weakest. I felt it was too easy to pick the stronger side, and I wanted to really test my speaking skills.

3 Distinguish between fact and opinion. One of the interesting things about controversial topics is that opposing sides often cite the same statistics to support radically different conclusions. For example, did you know that the 2000 census showed that there were more than 600,000 same-sex couples living in the United States? The interpretation of this fact depends on your opinion of gay marriage. If you are *for* gay marriage, then this fact shows that laws banning gay marriage are unfair to a large number of Americans. If you are *against* gay marriage, then this fact shows that a very small percentage of the population is trying to force its value system into law. When giving a speech on a controversial topic, it is important to let your audience know when you are discussing a matter of fact and when you are giving your own opinion. Most people can agree on facts, and most people recognize that everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion.

4 Use precise language. A common reason controversy often results in conflict is the use of overly broad terms and sweeping generalizations. For example, John Kerry, the U.S. Democratic presidential nominee, was criticized for saying that the Republicans are a bunch of “liars and crooks.” The problem with this assertion is that it is so broad that it cannot be challenged and so results in an escalating spiral of countercharges. George W. Bush, partly in response to John Kerry's statement, accused Kerry of being unable to make up his mind. If Mr. Kerry had said, “In my opinion, George W. Bush overstated the evidence for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq,” then no one would be upset. If Mr. Bush said, “John Kerry voted for

the No Child Left Behind program and now says it was a bad idea," then Kerry could explain why his opinion changed. A specific statement clearly distinguishes fact from opinion and can be refuted. At the extreme, imprecise language starts to sound less like persuasion and more like name-calling.

5 Be knowledgeable about your topic and try to dispel misinformation. Another reason that controversy sometimes leads to conflict is a lack of understanding between the two sides of an issue. For example, the ongoing debate between creationists and evolutionists is based largely on the belief that only one side can be right. In reality both positions could be right if you accept the assumptions on which they are based. Creationists ask the question, "Assuming that God exists, what is the best explanation of the origin of humankind?" Evolutionists ask the question, "Assuming that no supernatural power exists, what is the best explanation of the origin of humankind?" The heart of the debate is not the origin of humanity, but whether or not to assume that a supernatural being exists.

"Even if we disagree with a speaker, we can still learn something from him or her."

6 Create a respectful environment. One way to avoid escalating from controversy to conflict is for all Toastmasters in your club to value the free exchange of ideas. I think it is important for each of us to realize that we may not agree with everything that is said at a Toastmasters meeting. Our mission in Toastmasters is to make effective oral communication a reality for all club members. Communication includes learning how to listen with an open mind to a speaker with whom you disagree. Communication also includes learning how to speak forcefully about a topic without offending those with differing opinions. I am not suggesting that Toastmasters take all of the bite out of their speeches. Instead, I am suggesting that speaking precisely, distinguishing between facts and opinions, and avoiding derogatory language can go a long way in dispelling conflict before it happens. No one should be insulted at a Toastmasters meeting, but everyone should be willing to listen and judge a speech on the merits of its delivery.

7 Prepare your audience with a proper introduction. Before I spoke about gay marriage, I asked the Toastmaster of the Day to introduce me as someone who came from a long line of ancestors who had life-long marriages. I crafted my introduction so that I could open with a twist as an attention-getting device. It worked, but it would have been courteous to my audience had I inserted a simple sentence into my introduction that said, "Aaron will be giving speech No. 9 from the *Communication and Leadership* manual today with the goal of persuading the

audience to accept his viewpoint." Focusing the audience on my project goals might have taken some of the surprise out of my opening line, but it would also give my audience the option of evaluating my speech on the basis of goal attainment in addition to content.

8 Acknowledge opposing viewpoints. Another way to smother the sparks of conflict is to give voice to opposing views. If you know well in advance that you want to speak about a controversial topic, try to convince another speaker on the program to speak about the opposing viewpoint. As an alternative, you may want to acknowledge the opposing view in your speech. In my speech on gay marriage I said, "I recognize that many of you have already made up your mind on this issue, and many of you will disagree with my views, but I encourage you to listen with an open mind." This brief acknowledgement helped me to keep my audience together; I did not want anybody to realize that I was speaking about gay marriage and then immediately tune me out. Instead, I framed my talk as a discussion and invited everyone to explore the issue with me.

9 Follow up. During the business portion of the meeting that followed my speech on gay marriage, I brought up the question of how we should handle controversial speeches in the future. I acknowledged those who disagreed with my position, reassured club members and guests that my opinions were mine and mine alone, and reminded everyone that I was completing a project from the manual that required a persuasive message. Although none of the club members had been offended by my speech, everyone seemed to agree that it was good to clear the air and set policy for the future. We agreed that everyone would not agree on every issue, but that everyone could disagree without becoming disagreeable. We also agreed to implement some of the suggestions from this list as a policy on future speeches on controversial topics.

10 Keep an open mind. None of us joined Toastmasters to be converted to radical political positions or have our attitudes insulted. However, good communicators know how to listen with an open mind. If you disagree with a speaker, do not stop listening. Instead, try to focus on the way the speech is delivered. Is the speaker persuasive? Is the message logical and well organized? Does the speaker do a good job of communicating his or her emotional engagement? Some of the most persuasive speakers who ever lived advocated positions that seem ridiculous by today's standards. It is important to remember that speech delivery is an art form that transcends the message: Even if we disagree with a speaker, we can still learn something from him or her. **T**

Aaron Bolin, CTM, an assistant psychology professor at Arkansas State University, is a member of Northeast Arkansas Club 6923 in Jonesboro, Arkansas. Contact him at abolin@astate.edu.

There's always another way.

Creative Negotiation

Last year I held a conference in Orlando, Florida, at one of the Disney World resorts. For those of you who have been to any Disney property, you know that they are not known for their low prices. I had a budget set for our conference, one that I was trying not to exceed. However, when setting up for the conference we realized we needed some extra equipment. Fortunately, the hotel had this equipment – for a hefty price. With the conference already over budget, I did not want to have to pay. What to do?

My situation was actually very common; in fact, I'd predict that the hotel's conference staff deals with this kind of situation on a daily basis. It usually plays out in one of the following scenarios:

1 The customer asks for a "deal" or asks for something for nothing. The hotel staff, trying to maintain good faith, offers to give a slight discount or perhaps just explains politely that they must charge the listed fees according to hotel policy. This generally results in a lose-lose situation – the customer ends up paying more than desired and the hotel generally loses good faith from the customer.

2 The customer asks for a "deal," promising repeat business in return. This is often a false promise and not the honest thing to do. And the "deal" the customer wants could make repeat business from that customer more of a liability than an asset.

Negotiation occurs when two or more parties want something from each other. In traditional negotiation, a compromise is made and one or more of the parties give in a little to make the deal. Creative negotiation is about creating solutions that take a different approach. There are many ways to meet the wants of parties

us free use of the extra equipment we needed, they also put together all our information packets at no charge. And for "helping them share their services," sent a "thank you" gift basket filled with goodies to my room. Now that was a win-win situation.

It is well known that right-brain thinkers tend to be more creative whereas left-brain thinkers tend to be more analytical. What if you are primarily a left-brain thinker? Can you learn to be more creative? It depends on which study you read. I believe creative thinking is a learned behavior rather than a result of some gene. However, if you don't believe that, or if you want to profit from creative negotiation right away, get a creative thinker on your team. If you are fortunate enough to have a creative spouse, friend or co-worker, ask them for their ideas. Most would

be more than happy to help, and feel appreciated that you care enough to ask their opinion.

Creative negotiation is not about manipulating or deceiving. It is about approaching a negotiation from a different perspective. It's about suggesting a way to a win-win solution where little or no compromise needs to be made, with the best intentions of all the parties involved. There is always another way; take the time and the mental energy to find it. ■

Bo Bennett, ATM-G, is a member of three clubs in Massachusetts. He is the author of *Year to Success*. Contact him at bo.bennett@yeartosuccess.com.

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involved, but all too often only the most obvious are presented as possible solutions. The creative negotiator, however, searches for alternative options in which both parties get more out of the deal.

I had about 50 people attending the conference, many of whom were either staying at the Disney hotel or were involved in conference planning in some way. I saw this as an asset – one that could be used to get free use of the hotel equipment. I offered to include in the information packet given to each attendee both the hotel room service menu, plus a flier marketing the hotel's conference facility. The hotel management not only agreed to give



A Toastmaster's Mission in Iraq

By Frank Selden, ATM-G

Lessons learned from a military ceremony.

Of all the missions I anticipated encountering in Iraq, I never dreamed being a Toastmaster would be one of them. Our unit was tasked to coordinate a transfer of authority (TOA) ceremony for the Albanian company on our base. A TOA ceremony symbolizes the exchange of authority from an outgoing unit to its incoming replacement. The audience would include our base's high-ranking officers and senior non-commissioned officers (NCO). No one wanted the assignment of narrating the ceremony. As any good Toastmaster would do, I volunteered. A major handed me a fill-in-the-blank program. Too easy, I thought. I discovered, however, that narrating this ceremony would require far more than introducing each program segment. I had less than 48 hours to prepare.

Narrating the TOA brought my Toastmasters experience to a higher level than I ever experienced in a club setting. I had to address differences in cultural approaches, improvise through a few surprises despite repeated rehearsals, and display a high degree of professionalism. The resulting experience broadened my appreciation for my Toastmasters training.

Integrating Different Approaches

The TOA transcript included troop movements and protocol unique to the U.S. Army. When I watched the Albanian troops practice, I realized their movements did not match the script. I approached the captain in charge of maneuvers to discuss the program. We had a problem. He spoke as much English as I did Albanian. I asked the Toastmaster

◀ **From right: Staff Sergeant Selden, outgoing Albanian Commander Major Betri, Sergeant First Class Allen Clark.**

answer-man portion of my brain (I call it Ralph) for a solution.

"Ralph, I need some help here."

"Sorry, I don't speak Albanian."

"I mean, what do I do about the script?"

"Write a new one."

"The constraints of duty and deadlines forced me into action."

I did not like that answer. All I had to do with this script was write names in the blanks and read. The military script for a TOA, with all of its historical formalities, probably came from General George Washington himself. I wanted to cling to the paper in my hand like Linus to his security blanket. But Ralph was right. I could not force the Albanian military to conform to my script; I needed to adapt to theirs.

To be honest, I doubted my ability to write a new script. Someone wise, experienced and infallible had written my script for me. Now I needed to be this person for someone else. Fortunately, I did not have time to be nervous or hesitant. The constraints of duty and deadlines forced me into action.

Some people cling to scripts of the past, afraid to give themselves permission to make any changes when new circumstances arise. Honoring the past brings strength to our clubs, families, communities and even armies. Clinging to scripts of the past, however, could cause us to fail in new situations. Combining the Albanian troop movements with U.S. etiquette, I created a new program for the ceremony. We then started to rehearse.

Perfection with flexibility

When a speaker shakes hands with the Toastmaster and assumes control

of the room, a transfer of authority takes place. The military TOA ceremony, however, involves a few more steps. The outgoing and incoming troops separately march into place. The two commanders and the reviewing officer, called "the official party," move to a specific location in front of the troops. The color guard of the outgoing unit then marches with the flag to

their commander. The flag is passed to the reviewing officer, to the incoming commander, to his color guard, and then marched in position with the incoming troops. All of this takes place with the precision expected of formal military maneuvers. The official party members then each make a speech.

A TOA Toastmaster introduces the program and distinguished guests, narrates the movements, introduces the speakers, and concludes the ceremony. I rehearsed the Albanian movements with them until my narration synchronized harmoniously with how they actually performed their ceremony. We taped marks on the ground for key locations. The reviewing officer, a visiting U.S. general, was not expected to attend the rehearsal. Instead, I acted as the general, noting his various placements so I could brief him before the program. Everything was set for a flawless ceremony, or so I thought.

Although a typical club meeting does not require such intricate rehearsals, the ceremony reinforced two important concepts I need to remember as a Toastmaster. First, proper name pronunciation is important to people around the world. I rehearsed the officers' Albanian names with them until I sounded like a native speaker. They appreciated the effort, as will

everyone we introduce in any other meeting. Second, expect the unexpected no matter how well-rehearsed the program.

The script called for me to announce, at precisely two minutes before commencement, that the program was about to begin. I approached the lectern. The Albanian troops had marched in, the distinguished guests were seated, and the two Albanian commanders waited stage right for their entrance as the official party. Everyone looked at me. No words came out of my mouth: The cast was short one general.

At the club level, a Toastmaster would improvise! Should I tell a joke? Recount an insightful story? Stand in for him as I had done for rehearsal? I have heard it said that one test of a good Toastmaster is what we do with silence. I don't like silence.

"Ralph!" I screamed internally. "What do I do?"

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◀ Staff Sergeant Selden at the lectern.

▼ Albanian commander Major Betri accepts the flag from U.S. Brigadier General Ham.

"Wait."

"Some help you are! I am waiting!"

"Wait patiently, and silently."

Everyone maintained their positions, waiting for direction from the lectern. I felt sorry for the soldiers standing at parade rest in the morning Iraqi sun. The seated guests at least had water. I stood resolute, silent, yet more nervous than waiting at the altar for my bride-to-be.

Finally, the general arrived. He stood offstage with the commanders, ignorant of the changes we had made to the TOA script. The program continued as if the extended silence had been part of our script, a pause for dramatic effect.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please stand for the entrance of the official party."

I felt relieved, yet still anxious. We had 45 minutes of programming remaining, with an unbriefed general in the center spotlight. I read the introductions, as written, with all the professionalism I could muster. The program ended without a glitch.

A Satisfying Ending

Afterward, officers quickly surrounded the general. They kibitzed and schmoozed, earning valuable officer points. I remained near the lectern, alone, dealing with the abrupt end to



my 48-hour emotional roller coaster. I saw the general leave. Not even a hello. I turned to leave.

The incoming Albanian commander approached me. He shook my hand, a smile spread fully across his face.

"Thanks to you," he told me in his best English, "our ceremony was a success."

"You're welcome, sir," I replied, returning his smile.

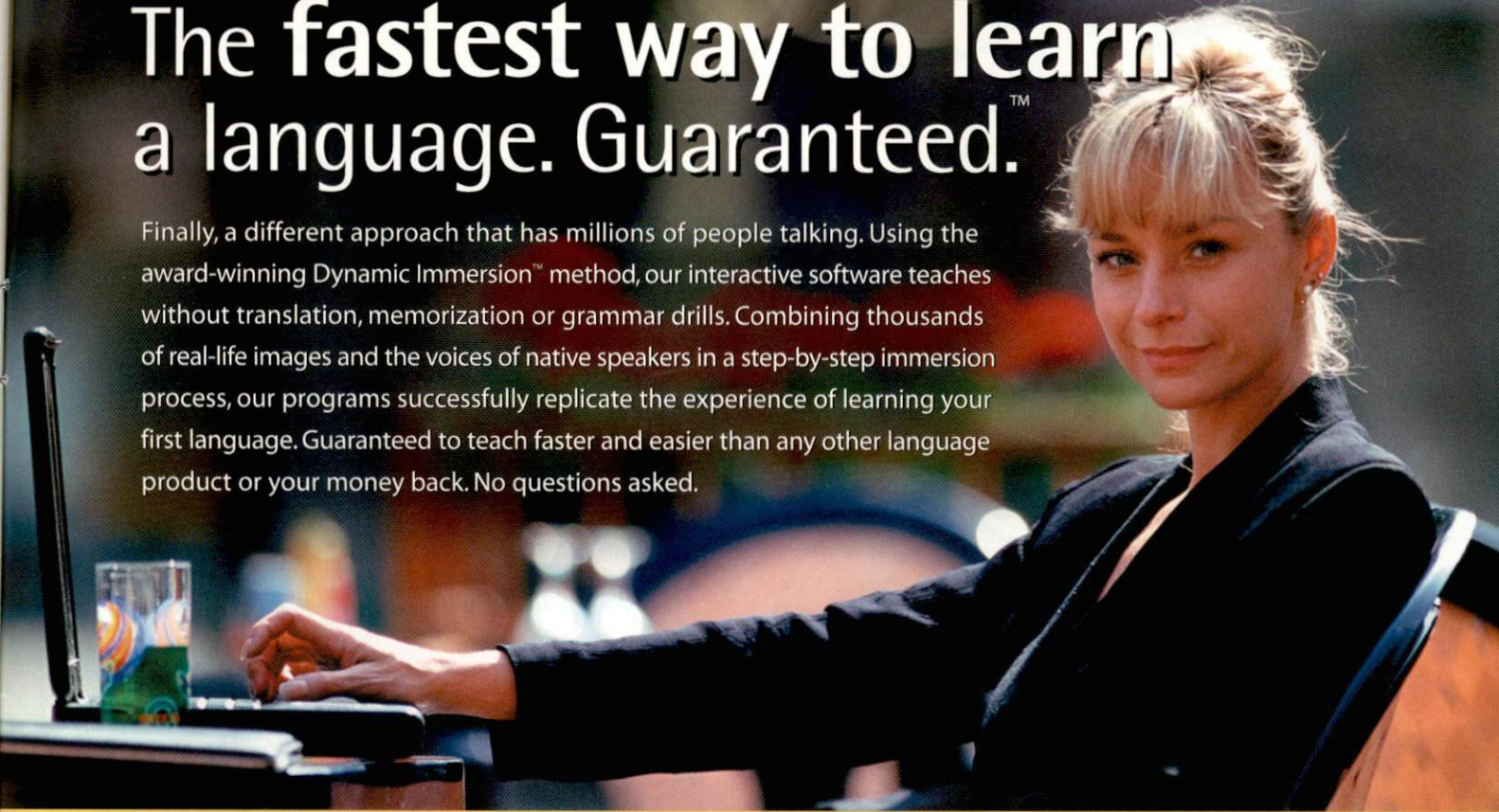
We parted, he to his troops and me back to my office. He had received command of the Albanian

troops in Iraq. In supporting him, I received not only his gratitude, but a new perspective on the role of a Toastmaster. I learned to consider cultural differences when writing a program; I increased my ability to exist in silence; and realized some important lessons in honoring program participants. I think I received the greater gift. **T**

Frank Selden, ATM-G, is a member of WRY Club 4723 in Bellevue, Washington. Contact him at frankselden@comcast.net

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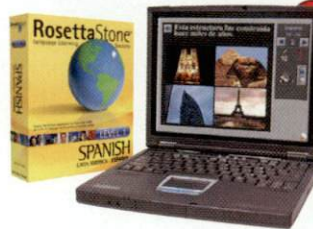
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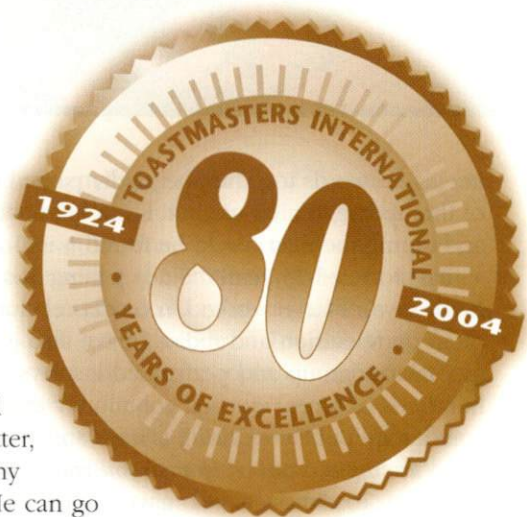
Toastmasters: 1924-2004

Building A Better World

By Glen Murphy, DTM, and Joyce Watson, ATM-B



As Toastmasters celebrates its 80th anniversary this month, let's highlight some men and women whose lives have been changed by TI's programs.



More than four million men and women have benefited from the Toastmasters communication and leadership programs over the past 80 years. When Dr. Ralph Smedley formed the first Toastmasters club in October 1924, he did so in the belief that improved communication skills build self-confident individuals and lead to improvements in almost every phase of people's lives.

Dr. Smedley once wrote that "ours is the only organization I know dedicated to the individual. We work together to bring out the best in each of us and then apply our skills in helping others."

Self-confident individuals are the building blocks for a caring and effective society. As Nobel Prize Winner Madame Marie Curie once said, "You cannot hope to build a better world without [first] improving the individuals."

As Toastmasters, we are exposed to evidence every day that our clubs are helping to build a better world. We see proof in the changes, large and small, in our personal lives. And we see confirmation locally in the growth of our fellow club members.

There are more than 10,000 Toastmasters clubs in 90 countries around the world. It should not be surprising, therefore, that personal success stories span the globe and demonstrate that this organization, by improving the lives of individuals, is helping to build a better world.

This article will share the stories of nine individuals whose lives have changed for the better by

"Personal success stories span the globe and demonstrate that this organization, by improving the lives of individuals, is helping to build a better world."

Toastmasters; individuals who have gained self-confidence, whose careers have improved, who are making greater contributions to their communities, and who are applying their new skills at an international level.

Gained Self-Confidence

Chris and Marie-Laure wanted to improve their self confidence for different reasons. Toastmasters helped them do it.

Chris, a Toastmaster from Wellington, New Zealand, had a serious speech impediment and was very shy and nervous a few years ago. He had tried a number of different methods to overcome his impediment but with little success. Then he joined Toastmasters.

In less than two years his speech and his fluency improved substantially. This increased his confidence and gave him a great personal boost. He says he is no longer

afraid to speak his mind, his social life is much better, and he has many more friends. He can go out to dinner and speak up instead of letting others speak for him.

A historical society in Wellington, as well as his Toastmasters club, have benefited from a more "confident" Chris – one who now holds executive officer positions in both clubs. Toastmasters will continue to play an important part in Chris' life for a long time to come.

Marie-Laure, from Paris, France, also gained confidence after joining Toastmasters. Marie-Laure came to Toastmasters in the middle of a difficult divorce, all self-confidence shattered, and desperately looking for a job. She was, in fact, a very gifted speaker who did not know it. Very soon, thanks to her club's friendly environment, she became one of her club's most loved and appreciated members. She enthusiastically joined the club's executive committee, fully aware of the benefits she would gain from her new leadership responsibilities.

Three years after joining Toastmasters, Marie-Laure is now a successful, self-confident, self-employed communication coach at a famous business school, who leads

seminars with up to 200 students in each class. "I am so thankful to the Toastmasters organization," she says. "My goal for the next year is to build a club for students, unemployed people and those who need to improve their communication skills in order to have a better life."

Improved Careers

Keith, John and Jenny were faced with the need to speak to professional groups of people, either in-house or at external meetings. They knew they needed help if they were to be effective in their careers and they sought out Toastmasters for that help.

In 1991, **Keith, from Oregon,** was called upon unexpectedly in a meeting of 30 people to deliver a five-minute update on a project. The fear of speaking off-the-cuff with no notes seized him. A crisis struck. Unable to put two

intelligent words together, he gladly passed on the delivery of the update to a co-worker. Keith knew he needed help and during the next week, he found it in Toastmasters.

Fast forward 13 years. "Since joining Toastmasters," Keith says, "I have worked in media relations, appearing often on television and radio. I have also joined a community theater group and performed in plays and musicals hundreds of times, emceed community events, taught community public speaking classes and written a book titled *Facing a crowd – How to foil your fear of public speaking*. Toastmasters also gave me the communication skills and self-confidence necessary to start my own real-estate business. I cannot thank Toastmasters enough."

Keith's story is similar to that of **John from Berlin, Germany**. When John was asked by his boss to represent his company at an international aviation forum in Geneva, Switzerland, John said "yes" before the reality set in that he was not an accomplished speaker and needed help, fast! John joined a Toastmasters club. The members of his club and of neighboring clubs worked together to help

"Northern Ireland needs ordinary people like me to do extraordinary things!"

- JENNIFER

John improve his skills and his speech. When John completed his speech in Geneva, he acknowledged that he had a lot of fellow Toastmasters to thank for his success. John's employer recognized his success and approved the newly formed corporate Toastmasters club.

In the late 1980s, **Jenny** was driving a 24-ton articulated truck around the yards of a dairy factory **in southern New Zealand**. When she was given a supervisory position at the factory she wondered how she would fare.

A Toastmasters advertisement in a local paper offered Jenny the possibility of "gaining self-confidence," something she thought might help with her career. When she went along to her first Toastmasters meeting she thought she could sit in the back row and take notes. Of course that won't work in a regular Toastmasters meeting – Toastmasters is a learning-by-doing organization! It took Jenny three meetings before she built up the courage to attempt her first Table Topic. It lasted only 10 seconds and she couldn't remember a word she said. She left that meeting thinking she would never return, but she did.

Jenny gained her confidence and at the same time developed leadership and communication skills. She went on to become the Toastmasters District Governor in New Zealand in 1998.

"Toastmasters helped me to double my salary," Jenny says. "It also helped me to survive two company buy-outs and major restructuring. Very few of the original manage-

ment staff at the dairy factory survived the changes – I was one of the few exceptions."

Of course the benefits were mutual. Her employers recognized the valuable contribution she brought to the largest dairy in New Zealand. Jenny's communication and leadership skills helped build a better business world.

Making greater contributions to their community

When **Bernadette from Paris, France**, accompanied a friend to her first Toastmasters meeting in 1999, she thought, "How on earth could those people gather enough courage to stand up and speak impromptu before an audience?" She had been a housewife for more than 10 years and, although not shy, she was totally frightened when it came to public speaking.

Bernadette often recalls the first time she was called for Table Topics: butterflies in her stomach, sweat running between her shoulder blades, uttering silly banalities for 32 seconds.

Bernadette went on to conquer her fears and became actively involved in her club as a club officer. She is an example to others, earning her ATM-B and CL awards, and serving as a mentor to new members. As Bernadette says, "If Toastmasters has helped me, the least I can do is help others succeed."

But what Bernadette has achieved in Toastmasters is not her only success story. She now uses her skills by being an influential leader in a local women's association where she motivates and inspires others. She recently delivered a speech during a political meeting in front of more than 500 participants. Not bad for somebody who was once totally frightened of public speaking.

Bernadette was able to get up and speak for 32 seconds at her first Toastmasters meeting. Thirty-two seconds would have seemed like eons for **Bob, a farmer from Hamilton, New Zealand**. As Bob said, "I had great difficulty talking to a group of people of any size. Even talking one-on-one was often a struggle and I felt inferior to everybody else." This didn't mean that he did not care about what was going on in his community. To give you an example of how frustrating this barrier was for Bob, at one stage he knew that their local cub-scout group was in deep financial straits and desperately needed some help with fund-raising. He had lots of ideas based on his experiences with activities on his farm. But Bob went along to six committee meetings before gaining the courage to say a single word.

Bob knew he needed help. Eventually he heard about Toastmasters and decided to visit a meeting. This was a challenge for him! But on his first night he could tell what a supportive group of people Toastmasters are.

"The improvement in my life has been dramatic," Bob says. "I now love meeting people. My wife Jackie and I now run a FarmStay bed and breakfast business where we

regularly have visitors from all parts of the world. Toastmasters has definitely changed our lives.”

The communities in France and New Zealand in which Bernadette and Bob live now benefit from their greater involvement.

Contributing at an international level

Some Toastmasters get the opportunity, or make the opportunity, to apply their new-found skills at an international level.

Pritchard, from South Africa, came from a very disadvantaged background. Because of his circumstances he eventually became a “street kid” in search of help. Fortunately there are organizations that assist street children, and through one of these organizations he participated in a Toastmasters Youth Leadership Program. Pritchard was determined to get out of his stressful situation and saw the benefits of Toastmasters. He loved the assignments and opportunities in leadership and served in many club officer positions and as an area governor.

Pritchard proudly tells friends, “I was chosen as one of five young people to represent South Africa at the African Youth Parliament that took place in Nairobi, Kenya, where over 400 delegates from all over the world met to discuss world affairs. And I had the honor of reading the South African president’s speech to the gathering.”

Jennifer from Ireland, after leaving school, worked as an office manager before getting married. Jennifer was very happy being a mother and a wife. If she went to meetings of any kind, the extent of her participation was usually working quietly in the background. Jennifer explains “I didn’t have the confidence to speak. I just stayed in the background and made myself useful by washing dishes.”

In 2000 she joined Toastmasters, at the encouragement of her sister who is also a Toastmaster. Jennifer progressed through the educational manuals and assumed club officer


positions. The confidence and skills Jennifer gained in Toastmasters gave her the courage to help organize an outstandingly successful event where leaders and representatives from Southern and Northern Ireland got together to talk about peace. “I decided I must practice my newly found skills and confidence outside of Toastmasters. Northern Ireland needs ordinary people like me to do extraordinary things!”

Jennifer is further proof that Toastmasters builds confidence and provides skills, which enhance our performance outside of Toastmasters – in our homes, workplace and communities. As Jennifer says, “I truly believe Toastmasters can change our worlds, both personal and global.”

The gifts of Toastmasters

Improved communication skills, improved leadership skills and improved confidence; these are gifts Toastmasters give its members. What Toastmasters has done for these nine individuals – for Chris and Marie-Laure; for Keith, John and Jenny; for Bob and Bernadette; and for Pritchard and Jennifer – it has done for millions of others over the years.

There are many more millions of individuals on every continent who are not yet members, who are possibly just waiting for our invitation to join, and who would benefit from the Toastmasters programs.

We know these programs can change the lives of ourselves and of others for the better, sometimes in small ways, sometimes in big ways. 

Glen Murphy, DTM, served on Toastmasters’ Board of Directors in 1998-2000 and is a member of Oregon State Club 3722 in Corvallis, Oregon.

Joyce Watson, ATM-B, is a member of On First Club 5840 in Portland, Oregon.

You have the opportunity to continue the legacy of our organization’s founder by contributing to the Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund. The fund is used to develop new and innovative educational and promotional materials, such as the videos *Meeting Excellence*, *Everyone’s Talking About Toastmasters*, *Effective Evaluation*, and the High Performance Leadership Program. Our online Supply Catalog at www.toastmasters.org was also made possible by contributions to the fund. Contribute \$10 and receive a special Toastmasters International paper weight. Donors of \$100 or more receive a special plaque and have their names permanently inscribed on a donor recognition plaque at World Headquarters. Every contributor is recognized in *The Toastmaster* magazine.

Contributions are tax deductible. Your support will result in more people learning, growing and

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achieving through Toastmasters. Contributions should be sent to:

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Ralph C. Smedley



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- District 51***
Ho Fong Ming, DTM
- District 60***
Jean McAllister, DTM
- District 59***
Denise Magyar, ATM-G
- District 61***
Richard Inomata, DTM
- District 47***
Margaret Wan, DTM

* District receives "Excellence in Leadership Award" for completing 2003-2004 with three or more consecutive years as a Distinguished District.

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- District 50***
Jack Balko, DTM
- District 67***
Athena Lien, DTM
- District 56***
John R. Moffitt, DTM
- District 7**
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Distinguished Districts

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- District 11**
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- District 57**
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- District 3**
Joe De Rico, DTM
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Elmer Scheidhauer, ATM-S
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- District 76**
Masahiko Inatsugi, ATM-G
- District 73**
Ed Biggs, DTM
- District 22***
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- District 64**
Lyle Appleyard, ATM-S
- District 36**
Debra G. Dusterwald, DTM

- District 28**
Gloria Hamilton, DTM
- District 33**
Debra Ann Ristau, DTM
- District 31**
Charlie V. Keane, DTM

International Speech Contestants

- Region I**
Randy Harvey
Club 4385-7
- Region II**
Jim Tucker
Club 9273-5
- Region III**
David Hill
Club 8952-50
- Region IV**
Rich Breiner
Club 291-78
- Region V**
Karen Smith
Club 7152-43
- Region VI**
Rob Nickel
Club 1908-60
- Region VII**
Jean Shipos
Club 5087-38
- Region VIII**
James Webb
Club 28-47
- Districts Not Assigned to Regions**
Douglas Kruger
Club 920-74

Accredited Speaker Program

- George Nigro, DTM
Club 2166-47

International Taped Speech Contest Winners

- 1st Place**
Babu Ramachandran
Club 603459 • Bahrain
- 2nd Place**
Hilda D'Mello
Club 2888 • Bahrain
- 3rd Place**
Kavya Sriram
Club 9639 • India

Top Five District Newsletters

- The Speak Well – Success News**
District 45
Editor: Gerald W. Higgins, DTM
- The Sunshiner**
District 47
Editors: Cathy Epler, DTM
Don Spencer, CTM

- The Hotline**
District 50
Editor: Van Scott, CTM

- Horizons 51**
District 51
Editor: Mohammed Ariff Azahari, DTM

- Corroboree**
District 69
Editor: Rebecca Fortescue, ATM-B

President's 20+ Awards

- District 71**
Jeremiah Ronayne, ATM-S
Governor

District 79P

Mohammed Murad, ATM-G
Governor

District 59

Denise Magyar, ATM-G
Governor

**President's
Extension Awards**

District 51

Ho Fong Ming, DTM
Governor

District 60

Jean McAllister, DTM
Governor

District 79P

Mohammed Murad, ATM-G
Governor

**2004 Presidential
Citations**

Alfred J. Breaux Jr., DTM
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Dunedin, New Zealand

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County Cork, Ireland

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Canada*

Greg Redekopp, DTM
Bismarck, North Dakota

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California*

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Hereford, Texas

Michael A. Silverman, DTM
*Thames Ditton, Surrey,
United Kingdom*

Darrell J. Zeller, DTM
Corona, California

**Outstanding Toastmasters
of the Year**

Michael Jue, ATM-S • D-1
Jessica du Mas, ATM-G
• D-2

Brenda Bird • D-3
Neil Shapiro, ATM-G • D-4
Linda S. Kadushin, CTM
• D-5

Bob Nowak, CTM • D-6
Marsha Ware, DTM • D-7
Carol Warner, DTM • D-8
Robin Webb, DTM • D-9
John Frederick, ATM-B

• D-11
Mike Frith, ATM-S • D-12
Andrea J. Richko, DTM
• D-13
Cynthia L. Beckles, ATM-B

• D-14
Lamont Snarr, CL • D-15
Sue Brooks, ATM-G • D-16
Emma Frost, ATM-B • D-18
Helen Jacobe, ATM-S • D-19

Grace Dewing, DTM • D-21
Pamela Turner, DTM • D-22
Cynthia Baca, ATM-B • D-23
Donald Schmidt, CL • D-24
Diane Brockington, DTM
• D-27

Karen Holland, DTM • D-28
Carolyn Arthur, DTM • D-30
Bernadette Masur, CTM
• D-31

Dan Proctor, ATM-S • D-32
Bill Jacky, DTM • D-33
Romeo Amauri López
Calderón • D-34

Norm Maier, DTM • D-35
Sushma Singhal, DTM • D-36
Pamela S. Christopher, DTM
• D-37

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• D-38

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Jim Smith, DTM • D-40

Anthony Chim, DTM • D-42
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Candice Buell, ATM-G • D-45

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• D-46

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JoAnna Lands, DTM • D-49
Michael Goforth, DTM
• D-50

Richard Sng, DTM • D-51
Josi Lee Rothwell, CL • D-52
Don Logie, DTM • D-53
Reg Gress, ATM-B • D-54

Joel Hapke, ATM-G • D-54
Samuel Robinson, DTM
• D-55

April Lauper, DTM • D-56
Monica Sullivan, DTM • D-57
Douglas W. Wilson, DTM
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Barry McCready, ATM-B
• D-73
Klaus Von Presentin, ATM-B
• D-74
Isabelita Borres, ATM-S
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The Bill Gove Speech Workshop is offering a limited number of Toastmasters the opportunity to train to become a fee-paid professional speaker. Qualified Toastmasters will learn the platform and business skills necessary to build a six-figure speaking career.

A Sample of What You Will Learn:

- How to select a topic organizations will invest in.
- How to market and sell yourself to major corporations.
- How to set your speaking fees based on your speaking skills and value proposition.
- How to market to speakers bureaus.
- The high-profit mix of speeches, seminars and consulting.
- How to create CD and DVD albums that make money while you sleep.
- What markets to target first . . . and exactly how to reach and sell them.
- How to run a successful speakers office from A to Z.
- How to write and catalog speeches like a professional speaker.
- How to use personal stories that connect.
- The theatrical techniques used by the highest paid speakers in the world.

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