



Toast it Notes

Striving Towards Excellence 2009 - 2010 District 45 Theme

Special Interest Dates:

District 45 Spring Conference
- May 28 - 30, 2010.
Location- Lord Beaverbrook
Hotel in Fredericton, NB.

Sears-Halifax Toastmasters
Year End Party - June 10,
2010. Location: Ralph
Smith's home. Held during
our regular meeting time.

Toastmasters Leadership
Institute - June 12, 2010.
Location - St. Vincent de
Paul Stewardship Centre.
Cole Harbour 9:00 am - 1:00
pm.

Toastmasters Leadership
Institute - June 26, 2010.
Annapolis Valley
Toastmasters Club. Location
and time TBA at a later date.

Our President's Year End Message

Wow, what a year it has been! It is hard to believe that we only have a few more meetings until our famous (or infamous) Summer Basement Blowout Party.

Although my business travels have prevented me from participating as much as I would like this year, I have watched with great interest and pride as I see you all participating in our weekly meetings and reaching further and further on your personal "Journey of Excellence".

Through your efforts, hard work and dedication, we are set to again achieve the top Toastmasters honor of President's Distinguished club status! Please keep reaching, we are almost there.

As we head into the homestretch of this Toastmaster year for our club, let me challenge you a little harder:

- Where are you with respect to your personal Toastmaster goals this year? What do you need to do to reach your goals by June 30th?
- What role on the agenda have you not done yet? Why not? Will you ask Ralph to put you in that slot between now and the end of the year?
- Can you create one more stretch goal for yourself? What are you most afraid of doing? What will it take for you to overcome your fear by June 30th?

Finally, I must acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the people who have really led this club again to excellence, my executive team. These are the folks that quietly and with 110% commitment have made this year happen for all of us. Carol #1 and Carol #2, Binoj, Tony, Ralph, Archie, Cindy and of course, Cameron D. THANK YOU TEAM!

Finally, congratulations on the successful election of our 2010/11 Sears-Halifax Toastmaster Executive: Graeme Van Leer, Cameron Eills, Joanne Fraser, Elaine McManus, Sheryl Kennedy, Tony Easton and Carol Trenholm.

This team is poised to take us to yet another level in our club and individual Toastmaster careers. Please join me in congratulating them and give them your 100% support as they guide us all on our continuing "Journey of Excellence"

Cheers,

David W. Osborne, ATM-S, CL



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A Message from Our VP of Education

Another Toastmaster year is winding down. As your outgoing Vice President of Education, it is gratifying to see so much enthusiasm towards achieving designations. We need just one more Competent Communicator designation to put us in the company of other President's Distinguished clubs for the fifth year in a row. Speaking of fives, our 55th anniversary will be on February 25, 2011. This happens to be on a Friday, so we can celebrate on Thursday, the anniversary eve.

I have been VP of Education before, in the dark ages, when everyone did not have an email address. I remember many times making calls begging people to do speeches or take on roles. This is no longer necessary, thanks to increased enthusiasm and commitment by email. I trust this same level of enthusiasm and commitment will be carried forward to support our new V.P. Education, Cameron Ells.

To all of the new executive officers, please take advantage of the Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI), which is an officer training session, to be held on Saturday, June 12, 2010 from 9am to 1pm. It will be located at St. Vincent de Paul Stewardship Centre, 320 Flying Cloud Drive, just off Forest Hills Parkway. Again, speaking from experience, these sessions are invaluable to both novice and returning executive committee members. I have always come away from these friendly and informative meetings with new ideas and motivation. It is important to have the attendance of least four members of the executive team at both TLI's offered in the Toastmasters International year. This gives our club another point out of 10 possible points available in the Distinguished Club Program.

Thanks to my fellow Toastmasters members and officers for their support and cooperation. Our new, motivated executive, coupled with a robust membership roster, will ensure the continuation of educational and entertaining meetings.

Ralph Smith, ACS

VP of Public Relations

It's funny how it is often the things that scare us the most that offer the greatest opportunities for growth! In April of 2009, our VP of Public Relations for the two prior years, Karen Caldwell, DTM, convinced me that this was a role that I could do well. I now have to thank Karen for being the leader that she is and persuading me to take on a role that forced me to grow and learn in leaps and bounds. Many thanks, Karen!

Of course, this couldn't have happened without the help of all the wonderful members of our club who answered the call to submit articles to fill out the content! It takes a village to create a good club newsletter. I also want to thank Colleen MacLennan, who helped with the October and January newsletters, and Joanne Fraser, who took on the role of Assistant Editor with her usual professionalism. Thank you, Joanne! I want to mention that our four Distinguished Toastmasters (DTM's), Karen Caldwell, Rick Joseph, Jack Kiuru and Jim McMorran, have each contributed at least one article to our newsletters this year. Thank you to our most experienced Toastmasters for leading by example.

I know that everyone on the new Executive Committee and the members-at-large will support their new VP of Public Relations for the upcoming year, Elaine McManus, by contributing articles that will make our newsletter a really interesting publication to read! Thank you for a great year everyone!



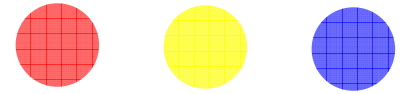
Cindy Slade, ACB, CL

Sears-Halifax
Toastmasters
Club #1555

Thursdays
6:15 - 8:15 pm
Retail Training
Room
Sears Store
Halifax Shopping
Centre

(902) 404-1576
E-mail:
enquiries@
searshalifaxtm.ca

Club News/Member Achievements



April 15, 2010. Our club's International Speech and Table Topics participants. From left to right: Contest Chair - Joanne Fraser, Nadine Wentzell, Carol Trenholm, Mark Doyle, Jim McMorran, Cameron Ells, Elaine McManus, Binoj Daivasahayam.

Cameron Ells won the Table Topics contest and Elaine McManus won the International Speech contest. However, because Elaine had not yet completed six manual speeches, she was not eligible to move forward to the next level of competition. Therefore, the second place contestant, Jim McMorran, along with Cameron, moved on to represent the club at the Area 18 contest.



May 1, 2010. The winners of the Area 18 contests: Cindy Slade won the International Speech Contest (while traitorously representing a rival club, Harbourview Toastmasters). Cameron Ells won the Table Topics Contest. He was representing Sears-Halifax Toastmasters.

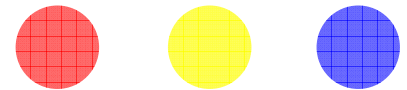
Both Cindy and Cameron continued on to represent Area 18 at the Division D contest.



May 1, 2010. Our dedicated supporters from the Sears-Halifax Toastmasters Club, from left to right: Carol Trenholm, Jim McMorran, Carolyn Ells, Cindy Slade, Cameron Ells, Tony Easton and Ralph Smith.



Club News (cont'd)



May 15, 2010. Division D Speech Contests. Michael Kennedy of Toast of the Coast, was the first place winner of the International Speech Contest. Nadine Wentzell, who was also representing Toast of the Coast, won the Table Topics Contest. Dan Bell, of Schooner Toastmasters, took second place in both contests.

All of these winners now qualify to compete in the District 45 Speech Contests, to be held at the District 45 Spring Conference in Fredericton from May 28 - 30, 2010.

On May 6, 2010 our club held its annual election of executive officers. Congratulations to all those who put their names forward for nomination and to those who were elected! Our new slate of club officers for the 2010-2011 year, starting on July 1, 2010, is shown below. It looks like a good year ahead!

Member/Club Achievements and New Members since April 1:

New Members – Katie Sparks, Craig Rupert

Advanced Communicator Bronze (ACB) - Joanne Fraser, Cameron Deacoff

Competent Leader (CL) - Joanne Fraser, Cameron Deacoff

Triple Crown - Cameron Deacoff (his second - for achieving a CL, ALS and ACB this year!)

The club is currently sitting at 8 out of 10 of the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) goals.

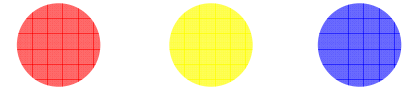
2009-2010 Executive Committee

President:	David Osborne
VP Education:	Ralph Smith
VP Membership:	Archie MacKinnon
VP Public Relations:	Cindy Slade
Secretary:	Binoj Daivasahayam
Treasurer:	Tony Easton
Sergeant-at-Arms:	Carol Trenholm
Past President:	Cameron Deacoff

2010-2011 Executive Committee

President:	Graeme Van Leer
VP Education:	Cameron Ellis
VP Membership:	Joanne Fraser
VP Public Relations:	Elaine McManus
Secretary:	Sheryl Kennedy
Treasurer:	Tony Easton
Sergeant-at-Arms:	Carol Trenholm
Past President:	Dave Osborne

Meet Our Members – Jane Holden, CC, ALB



When Jane joined Sears-Halifax in January 2005, she said, "Little did I know that it was the best club!" Jane had picked this club because the meeting time worked and it was the closest location for her. Like many people, Jane had heard about Toastmasters for years and then one day just decided to look into it by checking the Internet.

When I asked her about her life outside of Toastmasters, Jane quipped, "Is there a life outside of Toastmasters?" Jane has a full and varied life. She is a part-time therapist at Kachina Health Centre, providing acupuncture and massage services. She also nurses part-time in psychiatric rehabilitation at the Nova Scotia Hospital. She started her career life as an artist, by painting, making pottery and jewelry. She still paints. Jane makes wine, plays the guitar and is an avid gardener. Her garlic plants are currently 33 inches high. She is growing eight different kinds of garlic - some are sweet and delicate, while others are hot and fiery.

Toastmasters has given Jane solid insight into the way she speaks and the ways that she can improve. She is a very regular attendee at our meetings. What keeps her coming is the fact that it is fun, there is a lot to learn and she wants to continue to give back to the club. Jane was the club's VP of Public Relations in 2006-2007. A little known fact is that she served as District 45 Treasurer in 2007-2008. That same year she mentored CGI Halifax, a new club. She has participated many times in contests, serving as Chair of our Club Contest and competing in both International Speech and Table Topic contests. Most recently, she was recognized as our club's Most Improved Toastmaster for 2008-2009.

Jane's husband Norris also belonged to Sears-Halifax Toastmasters for a little less than a year. Jane was surprised at how good a speaker he was - she gained a new insight into her husband's talents. He did a few speeches and although he is no longer a member he can often be found at our parties.

Jane loves watching Stars on Ice and this year attended the show for the second time. She even missed a Toastmasters meeting in order to go! The first time she went, she attempted to take pictures of her favourite skaters, but they were too fast for still pictures. So this year, she shot movies with her digital camera. When I asked for her favorites, she said, "Joannie Rochette and Jeffery Buttle."

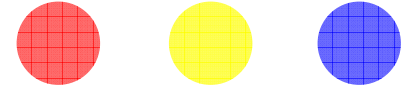


Joanne Fraser, ACB, CL

"Insight, I believe, refers to the depth of understanding that comes by setting experiences, yours and mine, familiar and exotic, new and old, side by side, and learning by letting them speak to one another."

~ Mary Catherine Bateson

Small Talk – A Big Challenge for Newbies



At some point of our lives, we have all been “the newbie” to a club or group. As a new member to Toastmasters myself, I know the trepidation I felt walking into Toastmasters meetings. Even though I had been introduced to the club and had attended a few meetings, I did not feel a sense of belonging until I reached out to people and got to know them on a personal level.

Silence between two people creates a feeling of uneasiness, creates tension, and is usually felt as uncomfortable. These negative emotions might be reason enough for guests or a new member to stop attending meetings.

One way new members can engage others in conversation is by the use of small talk. Small talk can be a big challenge, but a little preparation and confidence is all you need. As a skilled small talker, you will come across as a more open and friendly person, compared to someone who doesn't say much during social situations.

The best conversation starters are open-ended questions. These are questions that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer. Here are some possible small talk conversation starters for newbies to try out:

- Can you explain how to select a good table topic? I'm thinking of taking on that role.
- How do you select topics for your speeches?
- Why did you join Toastmasters?
- Can you explain how motions are made during the business portion of the meeting?
- How do you manage to control your butterflies?

New members need to make the time to engage in small talk. Try to arrive by 6:00 pm, stay at break and mingle around the room. Lastly, make a point to attend extra-curricular Toastmasters events, such as the holiday party, competitions, and post meeting get-togethers.

Experienced members should make every effort to make the newbies feel part of the group. Feeling part of a group is one way to keep people attending meetings on a regular basis and good attendance creates a club that is full of vitality.

Newbies should remember that each of us was a new member at one point or another and feeling uneasy at first is perfectly normal. Using small talk is a great way to start conversations with club members. Why not try one or two of the suggested small talk conversation starters at your next meeting?

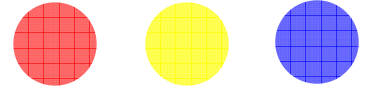


Lynne “Newbie” Fielder, TM

*Are you interested in inviting a friend or colleague to a meeting?
Contact Archie MacKinnon, VP of Membership, 404-1576.*

High Performance Leadership

***As presented by Candice Buell, DTM
at the District 45 2009 Fall Conference***



According to Candice, the High Performance Leadership (HPL) program is the best kept secret of Toastmasters International (TI)! It is a five part project which is designed to help Toastmasters to develop their leadership skills. The participant studies leadership principles and practices leadership skills through a project of his or her own choosing. They receive feedback from a Guidance Committee on their progress along the way.

The HPL project selected must be one that promises to make a positive contribution to a cause. It must have clear, specific, focused, reasonable and realistic goals. The participant must involve several other people with whom they can work in a leadership capacity. This will be their project team and it should be comprised of people who will be accessible and involved throughout the entire project.

Why complete an HPL?

There are several reasons for doing so. It is a well-developed path toward leadership success. It provides valuable learning experience in service leadership and is a fantastic opportunity to gain practical leadership skills. Completion of an HPL project is also required to achieve the Advanced Leader Silver (ALS) designation, which is the final step in the TI leadership path. This, along with an Advanced Communicator Gold (ACG) designation, leads to the achievement of a Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) designation.

The Toastmaster works with the HPL five project program handbook which offers instruction and practice in such vital leadership skills and activities such as developing a mission and vision, goal-setting and planning, identifying values and building a team. Each Guidance Committee member has a handbook corresponding to the HPL project that they will use to complete their part in this project.

The HPL Steps

Step 1 - Learning About Leadership: The Toastmaster will learn that to lead is to serve. Service leaders see their role as enabling or empowering others to accomplish something worthy. They will learn about the six dimensions of service leadership - vision and values, direction, persuasion, support, development and appreciation. A Guidance Committee is recruited, with whom the Toastmaster must meet periodically in order to evaluate their progress. They will receive advice and feedback about the progress of their project from their Guidance Committee members.

Step 2 - Choosing Your Objective: At this point, the Toastmaster must identify the vision, mission and core values of their HPL project. They will then discuss these with their Guidance Committee. A speech will subsequently be presented to their club about the intended project.

Step 3 - Winning Commitment to Your Objective: This is referred to as Action Phase #1. In this step, the Toastmaster will develop an action plan, recruit their team, reach agreement on the team's vision, mission and core values, create an action strategy, set goals and assign responsibility for these goals to the individual team members.

(Cont'd on Page 8)



High Performance Leadership (cont'd)

Step 4 - Working the Plan: This is Action Phase #2. In this step, the Toastmaster will work their plan, review the team's progress and make adjustments where necessary. Any obstacles, problems or setback will be described at this point, along with the methods chosen to resolve these issues.

Step 5 - Analyzing and Presenting Your Results: In Action Phase #3, the Toastmaster will analyze their results by considering what was successful or not and what factors contributed to the success or failure of the project. They will determine what they would do differently in the future and discuss what they learned and what were the benefits achieved by completing this particular project. They will then present their results to the Guidance Committee and to their club.

Candice emphasized that it is important to understand that the HPL project does not have to be done within the TI organization; it can be part of a volunteer project or an office/work related program. It can be any type of a project, as long as it can be done as part of a committee. She indicated that it actually is best to not make the project too large and it can, in fact, be very simple.

Some ideas for sources of HPL projects are as follows: fundraising for a charity event, organizing a food drive for a food bank, being the President of an association, working within volunteer organizations, schools, civic groups and church groups, etc. Of course, there are many opportunities within the TI organization as well, such as organizing a Toastmasters Leadership Institute, leading a committee to develop a particular project for a club, etc.

At the completion of her workshop, Candace asked us all to consider completing an HPL project in order to continue our leadership journey. She emphasized that it is the learning experience that is the most important part of the journey! There is no failure - only learning.

I was extremely glad to have had the opportunity to attend this workshop. Like many of us, I knew very little about the HPL program. However, I now understand how it works and realize that it doesn't have to be a huge, daunting undertaking. Like all TI programs, the participant is very well guided and supported in a step-by-step process that provides learning and many opportunities to put that learning into practice.

This truly is Toastmasters International's best kept secret!

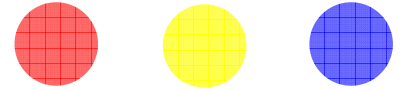
Cindy Slade, ACB, CL



"A good leader inspires people to have confidence in them as a leader; a great leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves."

~Author Unknown

A Toastmasters Education



In the course of attending a Toastmasters meeting, we often lose sight of the fact that Toastmasters is an educational program. A very well defined educational program, designed to assist a Toastmaster in developing her or his speaking skills.

It is important that members of a Toastmasters club take the intent of being a Toastmaster seriously, while having fun in doing so. With membership in Toastmasters comes a responsibility to accept and apply the principles of the Toastmasters program.

Part of the personal development is to stretch ourselves beyond our comfort zone. Giving speeches on the same subject, although each speech conforms to a particular part of a manual, is not really getting out of your comfort zone. A speech on a subject that one is very familiar with is good, but the same subject for each speech is not. The challenge of coming up with a different subject for speeches is one way that we learn to develop our writing abilities. It helps to focus on different presentation skills, body language, vocal variety and so on.

Another important part of the educational process is accepting a club officer position. "What? You want me to be club president?" What better way to learn leadership skills than to take on a club officer's responsibilities?

Volunteering for a meeting role may appear to be challenging, but when the meeting is over, you now have acquired a new skill. The feeling of self satisfaction and achievement are your reward.

Before I joined Toastmasters, I was not comfortable being on my own in a group of people that I did not know. If I received an invitation to attend an event and I could not get someone to come with me, I would not attend. Today, because of Toastmasters' educational program, I am comfortable attending such events. Through the challenge of Table Topics, I excelled as a part-time sales associate. I am not as shy about approaching strangers. It is easier to do now because of the improved sense of self confidence that I've acquired through Toastmasters.

That is the ultimate learning that Toastmasters offers. You improve your skills and self confidence by taking on challenges, presenting speeches, participating in Table Topics, as well as by following the leadership track. A Toastmasters club is a safe and nurturing environment in which you will improve. All successful business leaders have one thing in common - they are good communicators. Through the Toastmasters educational program, you can be a good communicator too. The world opens up before you.

Today Toastmasters! Tomorrow the stars!



Jim McMorran, DTM

Editor – Cindy Slade; Asst. Editor – Joanne Fraser

Sears-Halifax Toastmasters Club# 1555

Website: www.searshalifaxtm.ca