



THE 1555'ER

Club #1555
Sears-Halifax Toastmasters

Spring 2016

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President's Message

It's been an exciting year so far for Sears-Halifax Toastmasters Club #1555. We successfully celebrated our 60th Anniversary this year. Thanks to the dedication of our members, our Club has remained successful for 60 years! Through this past year, we have watched our members grow and expand their knowledge of communication and leadership.

To the Club officers, thank you for your dedication and support throughout the year.

To the members, congratulations on another great year of growth and success.

Best Wishes,

Karen Caldwell, DTM

President

Sears-Halifax Toastmasters Club # 1555

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"Speak in such a way that others love to listen to you. Listen in such a way that others love to speak to you." - Anonymous

Successful Membership Recruitment



New members are the lifeblood of our Toastmasters club. They are the ones who do most of the speeches and provide leadership for the future. Recruitment and retention are the responsibilities of all of the current members in many ways. Here are a few things that members can do to encourage new membership:

- ✓ Bring guests and follow up with them to revisit
- ✓ Make all guests feel welcome
- ✓ Volunteer to be a mentor
- ✓ Make club meetings impressive and enjoyable

Our club has been successful in the past with 11 new members for the 2014-2015 year and this year with a record breaking 14 new members. Our convenient time and location have something to do with this success, but it is really the guests' impressions at the meeting that determine if they will return.

As most of the initial inquiries come through our web page, as your VP Membership I must ensure that the page functions and is inviting. In this area, I must rely on the webmaster (usually the VP Public Relations) who has the necessary technical and design skills. What I can and must do is follow up with guests to make them feel welcome to return and to answer their questions. The mechanics of the Toastmasters induction ceremony is also the responsibility of the VP Membership, and making this event run smoothly is still a work in progress. I wish we didn't have to read the script to the inductees all the time.

A healthy club with robust membership benefits all of us, which means that we must all do our part to ensure that it stays that way.

Ralph Smith, ACS, ALB
VP Membership

Tips for Dealing with Speech Anxiety

Before the speech . . .

Identify the cause of your nervousness. Write down the reasons why you are nervous to give a speech or presentation. If you come up with something like, "I'm afraid I'll look stupid" dig a little deeper. What would make you look stupid? You may find that you are really afraid that you will forget what you wanted to say. This will help you pinpoint specific things to work on. If you are afraid you will forget what you wanted to say then spending extra time practicing your speech should reduce that anxiety.

Prepare your speech early and thoroughly. Having to prepare a speech at the last minute will only increase your anxiety. After you have prepared your speech **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!!** Practice delivering your speech at least 7 to 10 times before your actual presentation. Be sure that you know the organization of your main points to avoid losing your place. Watch yourself in the mirror while you deliver your speech, this will allow you to see your gestures and body language and practice making eye contact. You can also give your speech to friends or family members and ask them for feedback. Audio or videotaping your speech are other ways to evaluate and improve your delivery. If you are given a time limit for your presentation be sure to use a stopwatch as you give your speech. Time each practice run and make changes to ensure that you will be able to stay within your allotted time. Keep in mind that most of us speak more quickly when we are in front of a real audience.

Set realistic expectations. No one is perfect. Public speaking is difficult to master even seasoned speakers make mistakes. Instead of telling yourself that you have to deliver your speech flawlessly, think realistic things like, "If I lose my place I will calmly scan my notes and then continue my speech" or "Small mistakes aren't going to ruin my speech."

Replace negative thoughts with positive ones and visualize success. Thinking negative thoughts increases anxiety. When a negative thought comes to mind try to immediately replace it with positive thoughts. For example, if you think, "I'm going to forget what to say and just stand there," replace that with thoughts like, "I've done a great deal of research and I know this topic well" and "I have practiced my speech many times and I'm going to deliver it just like I practiced."

Continue gaining experience. One of the best ways to combat speech anxiety is to gain speaking experience. Take any opportunity that you have to speak in public. Speak in your classes or volunteer to give presentations for groups you are involved in - anything that gives you a chance to hone your speaking skills.

On the day of the speech . . .

Use relaxation techniques. Simple relaxation techniques lessen anxiety and allow them to focus on the task at hand. Some of the most common relaxation techniques are: taking deep breaths, tightening and then relaxing your muscles, and visualizing a peaceful scene.

Accept fear and use it. Accept the fact that you are nervous (remember it's normal to experience speech anxiety) and use that nervous energy to enhance your delivery. Use the extra adrenaline that

you get from fear to invigorate your gestures and enthusiasm about your topic. Remember, even the best speakers get nervous, but they use it to their benefit.

Wear clothes that you feel confident in. Most of us have a few outfits that we feel particularly comfortable and confident in. These are good things to wear when you present a speech. If you feel good about how you look standing in front of your audience, you can put all of your focus on your message. You do not want to distract your audience or yourself by adjusting your clothes or hair during your speech.

Find friendly faces in the crowd. While you are speaking find one or two people in the audience that are giving you positive feedback (nodding in agreement, smiling when appropriate, etc.). When you feel nervous make eye contact with those people. Their friendly faces will give you encouragement.

Culled from Speaking in the Disciplines – University of Pittsburgh



**"Of course you're allowed to have stage fright.
As soon as your talk is over."**

Highlights of International Speech Competitions



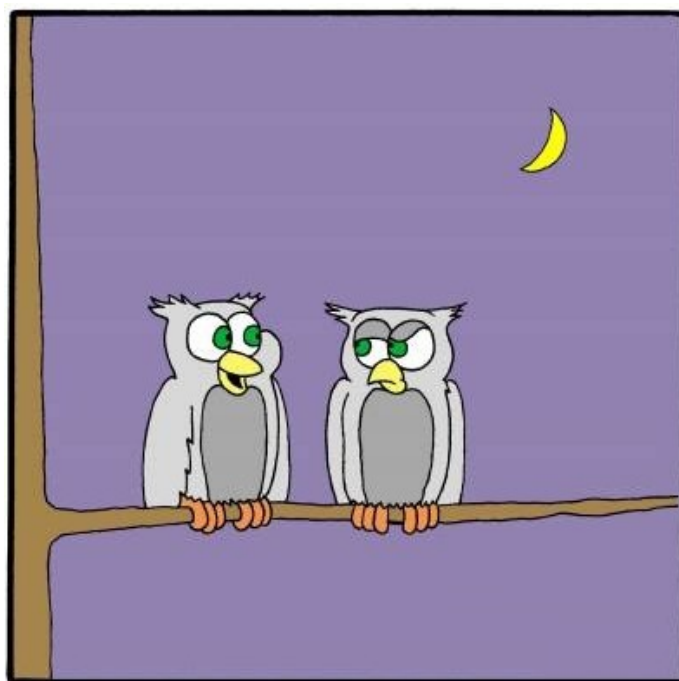
From left to right: **Rick Joseph** (2nd place, Club Table Topics), **Deji Adedeji** (Contest Chair), **Dave Gorsline** (1st place, Club Speech and Table Topics), **Zhou Hui** (2nd place, Club Speech & 3rd place, Table Topics)



From left to right: **Dave Gorsline** (1st place, Area 21 Speech Contest), **Zhou Hui** (2nd place, Area 21 Speech Contest)



From left to right: **Daniel Luton** (2nd place, Area 21 Table Topics Contest), **Tara Smith** (3rd place, Area 21 Table Topics Contest), **Dave Gorsline** (1st place, Area 21 Table Topics Contest)



"I had to give a short speech last night. It was hoot!"

Highlights of End of Toastmaster Year Barbeque

The end of the 2015/2016 Toastmaster year barbeque was kindly hosted by Tony and Marilyn Easton. As always, it was a night to remember.



Rick rounding off the night with an excellent extolment of a chair ~ Yes, you read it right, a chair.



Rajeev, excited as always to be with his favourite club...oops, 2nd favourite



The VIP corner...



And not forgetting the gastronomical highlight of the evening

Meet the Members

Meet Mark Doyle



Tell us about your professional background

My first career was in corporate audio-visual. I used to set up conferences in hotels. I spent a lot of time testing microphones on stage but never had much to say other than "Sibilance" into the microphone. Toastmasters has since changed that. I currently work in the construction world, and public speaking and educating is part of my job.

When and why did you join Toastmasters?

I wish Toastmasters could teach me how to remember dates! I know I've been here longer than 5 years. Working audio-visual and conferences exposed me to a lot of different speakers; I always wanted to have an opportunity to be on the front end of an event rather than behind the scenes. Now I can participate on both sides of the curtain.

What has inspired you to remain with the club?

The people. There are a lot of experienced people in our club. When I lived in Montreal, I joined a club at a local university. There was high turnover and a lot of new members, meaning that many of the speech critiques were given by people with less experience in speaking than me. At the Halifax club, we have many advanced communicators and leaders, as well as DTMs. Speech evaluations are thorough and pack a lot information to reflect on, further enhancing the learning experience.

What are your proudest moments with the club?

Our 60th Anniversary video was certainly a proud moment. Toastmasters has allowed me to explore my creative side, enabling me to speak with comfort to a large group. My best experience as result of the club was my recent participation at a conference for work where I spoke to 100+ people for 5 minutes. The speech was quite difficult as it needed to make a point while teaching a few lessons learned. I've always struggled with making my conclusions during a speech but feel I truly nailed this one.

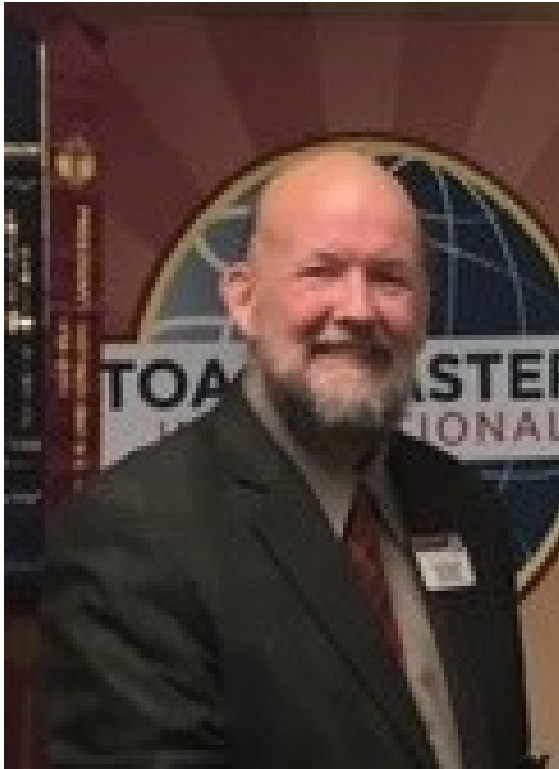
What helped you the most in improving your speaking skills?

Mentors. This past year one of our DTMs, Rick Joseph, pushed me to complete my CL, ALB and ACB. Rick helped me set a goal and I achieved a triple crown as result.

What would you say to a new club member desirous of completing the Toastmaster educational program?

Get on pace and complete your CC. It took about three years for me to achieve my CC and once completed, my skills accelerated rapidly. If you take on an executive role, make time to complete your CC.

Meet Cameron Ells



My engineering and environmental work world is a mix of precision and details, along with uncertainties and assumptions. When I joined the Sears-Halifax Toastmasters Club in the fall of 2007, it was to prepare for a role as a conference chair in 2008.

The friendly confines of the club setting is a sort of mutual self-help group. Several opportunities for self-development also exist outside of the club setting in the Toastmaster world. We can each set our own goals and pace with respect to improving our desired skill sets related to communications, leadership, management, and formal decision making.

The local Toastmaster community and the Sears-Halifax Club are significantly broader than the community that makes up my work world. What might be adequately effective in my work world communications is not always the case in a Toastmasters setting. So with more and more practice, feedback, and adjustments, these ever improving skill

sets become more effective for an ever broader community or audience.

Consider the club meetings and activities as a sort of “rainbow filter” of backgrounds, experiences, assumptions, interpretations, and more. How we communicate and get things done in this broader Toastmaster community might be a little more challenging than with just our friends, family, and regular work world (or equivalent alternative).

We can choose to end up challenging ourselves and improving our skill sets in this broader atmosphere of a “rainbow filter”. In doing so, where there is relatively more diversity and variety in those around us, we become more robust, resilient, flexible, and effective in our efforts. At least that has been my experience with how Toastmasters has benefited me.

“They don’t need a lawyer, they need a Toastmaster.” – Edward Bennett Williams

Meet Dave Gorsline



I have been asked to give a little background as to how and why I first became a Toastmaster. First, I wish to express my gratitude to the membership for the confidence they have shown by electing me President-Elect of Sears-Halifax Toastmasters Club 1555 for 2016-17 and indicate my sincere wish to work towards the betterment of all members.

As to my beginnings in Toastmasters, I first heard of Toastmasters through a close friend's father, Clem Power. Although Clem never invited me to a club meeting, the thought of joining stayed with me for a couple of years. I took it upon myself to find out more and attended my first meeting at Dockyard Toastmasters in Windsor Park.

I attended a couple of meetings and won Table Topics during my second visit. I had nearly convinced myself this was not really what I wanted. Later that evening, one of the speakers, Bill D. from Quebec, spoke about his journey through the Toastmasters program, how it had helped him overcome his stuttering and aided his professional life. In great part due to that speech, I have, on and off, been a Toastmaster for the past 28 years. During my first year, I completed my basic manual, with the aid of George Burton, my mentor.

At the time, I was a teacher at Cornwallis, Jr. High School where I was asked to give a presentation to a group of parents on a new provincial program. I had been a member of the group that developed the curriculum. Close to the end of that school year, I was appointed to my first Vice-Principal role at Fairview Jr High. It was later shared with me that, in part, it was the confidence and manner with which I presented that evening that led to the appointment. In addition to parents, there were school administrators and board members in the audience.

Following my first year, I left Toastmasters due to both increased work and family responsibilities. After two years at Fairview Jr. High, I was chosen as a Commonwealth Exchange Teacher and, as a result, spent a year teaching in Devon, England. There was no internet back then, and I was unable to find a club in England.

Upon returning to Canada, I joined Sears-Halifax Club, but I have also attended the Sackville and George Burton clubs in Halifax. In 2005, I retired from Halifax Regional School Board. I taught in Shenzhen, China and belonged to Shenzhen Toastmasters. During my time in China, I also had the privilege of serving as an Area Governor.

“So I’ve earned my CC; now what?”

Congratulations on having achieved the first major step in your Toastmasters career by earning your Competent Communicator designation! “So, now what?” you ask. You can look forward to completing speech projects in any of the 15 advanced manuals of the Advanced Communication track. You may also decide to increase your leadership skills by working on the Leadership designations, if you have not already started to do so. The choices are up to you.

One option you may wish to consider to supplement your Toastmasters experience is visiting an advanced toastmasters club, such as Toast of the Coast Toastmasters Club. Many members of Toast of the Coast have dual membership in two or more Toastmasters Clubs. All members have completed the Competent Communicator designation, which is a requirement for membership in an advanced club. Any Toastmaster is always welcome to visit Toast of the Coast, as often as they want.

At Toast of the Coast, all members offer support and encouragement to their fellow club members through a unique club feature – the roundtable evaluation. Each speaker has an assigned evaluator, just as they would in any other club. In addition, speakers receive feedback from every club member through the roundtable evaluation. The various points of view and perspectives of other members provide additional feedback and support to speakers.

Speech projects at the advanced level can be anywhere from 4 minutes to 40 minutes, or more. Toast of the Coast provides an opportunity to present these longer projects, which may be difficult to do at a home club meeting.

Toast of the Coast provides an opportunity for speakers to get outside their comfort zone and speak to a new audience. Members of Toast of the Coast offer a wealth of experience, resources and support. We all want to help each other achieve our communication and leadership goals.

Toast of the Coast Club Meeting Information

When: 2nd, 4th, and 5th Saturdays of each month
(Year round – we do not take a summer break)
9:00AM – 11:00AM

Where: 2nd floor Board Room
Steele Chevrolet,
636 Portland Street, Dartmouth
(Please do not park on the dealership parking lot)

Any Toastmaster is welcome to attend our meetings.

If you have any questions about Toast of the Coast or you would like to arrange to present a speech project, please feel free to contact me.

Jim Bendell, ACS, ALS
blackbird@ns.sympatico.ca

Club Achievements



Sears-Halifax Toastmasters Club was awarded the President's Distinguished Club and Excellence in Leadership Awards for the Club year 2015/2016. In the picture above, Karen Caldwell, the Club President, receives the Awards on the behalf of the Club.

The Sears-Halifax Toastmaster Club has won the President's Distinguished Club Award every year since the Award's inception. This year, the Club officers and members put in a great deal of effort to achieve these awards. It is worth noting the contribution of our VP Education, Rick Joseph, who worked tirelessly to inspire club members to achieve educational goals.

As the club enters into the 2016/2017 year with stronger membership, it will almost certainly continue to make great strides.

"No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it." - HE Luccock

Our Executive Committee



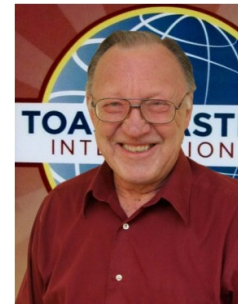
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