



THE 1555'ER

Sears-Halifax Toastmasters

Club #1555

Sobeys Community Room,
287 Lacewood Drive,
Clayton Park, Halifax,
Nova Scotia, Canada

Winter 2018

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President's Message

Winter is in full swing at Sears-Halifax Toastmasters. While it may be chilly outside, our Thursday night meetings are warm and welcoming for all ages, backgrounds and speaking abilities.

Our members have been busy with completing various educational and leadership projects. Some notable speech projects taught us about cardboard boat racing; the importance of giving blood; a key figure from the 1908 Halifax Explosion; and the insider secrets of pizza delivery. New members are trying out different meeting roles, with more experienced members supporting them along the way. Most importantly, our Speechcraft project with Open Door Center is in full swing, with participants learning valuable public speaking and evaluation skills and coordinators learning effective leadership, planning and organization skills.

If your New Year's resolution is to improve your public speaking or leadership skills, you've come to the right place! I encourage you to browse our website and Facebook page, and contact me or our VP Membership if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

- Lindsey Liezert, CC

President, Sears-Halifax Toastmasters Club #1555



Club News

Christmas Party

It seems such a long time ago now, but this is the first newsletter since our very successful Christmas party, held at Rick Joseph's fabulous premises. There was a large turnout of members and significant others, and lots of great food shared.

Once everyone was well fed and watered, we had a long and hilarious Table Topics session conducted by Mike MacDonald. We were then unexpectedly visited by Santa and one of his elves. What a treat! By all accounts, everyone got what they put on their list, and Santa moved on to another Toastmasters club in the area, leaving many happy members in his wake.



Club Contest

Our Sears-Halifax Toastmasters International Speech and Table Topics contest is going to be held April 12th. Please consider competing as it is a great way to expand your skills and abilities. If you don't wish to compete this year, please sign up for a role so that the contest can be executed with our club's usual aplomb. Our area contest will be held April 26.

New Members

We continue to get a steady influx of new members to our club. It must have something to do with the awesome newsletters or something. We have welcomed the following new members since our last newsletter:

- Colette Weare
- Jeremy Steward
- Carol Rolfe-Higney

Welcome aboard everyone! Colette and Jeremy have already delivered their icebreakers, both on the same night, both with no "ah's". Incredible! I can't wait until we hear their next speeches!

Awards

At the party, the season's awards were presented:



- Toastmaster of the Year: **Karen Caldwell**
- Best Speaker: **Maggie Jane Parker**
- Best Evaluator: **Karen Caldwell**
- Best Table Topics Speaker: **Donald Robertson**
- Most Improved: **Jane Holden**
- Most Helpful: **Mike MacDonald**

Congratulations to all our winners!



Member Introductions

Mike Burfitt



I work at the NSCC Ivany Campus in the Facilities Department where I have been since 2007. My first foray into Toastmasters back in 2006 eventually led to me landing my current role so I see no reason why I can't find success again as I look to climb the career ladder. Therefore in 2016 I rejoined Schooner Toastmasters. Having this club's meetings moved to my neighborhood and suddenly finding Thursdays free on my schedule made the decision to try out (and later join) this club easy.

Jeremy Stewart



In a profession that requires a significant amount of public speaking, the people who are good at it stand out. I joined Toastmasters to help myself stand out from the crowd. Although it took awhile to come up with the courage to attend my first Toastmaster's meeting, it's now something I look forward to on a weekly basis. Each week, I am excited to learn something new from the variety of experiences and skill sets that make our club. Toastmasters offers me the safe, comfortable learning environment I need to build confidence and develop the speaking skills I need to stand out.

Savage Chickens

by Doug Savage





Speechcraft – An Opportunity to Succeed!

Over the winter season Lindsey Liezert, Tracy Gatis and I, Karen Caldwell, had the pleasure of presenting the Toastmasters International's Speechcraft Program to The Open Door Centre. The Open Door Centre exists to empower young people to make critical decisions around sex, pregnancy, abortion and parenting. The centre provides its clients with the information, resources, emotional, physical and spiritual support they need to make the best decisions for themselves.

It has been an amazing journey with these 15 brave souls who joined the 8 week Speechcraft Program. The group was broken down into three groups of five participants – lead by three Coordinators – Tracy, Lindsey and Karen. We ran an intensive eight night training session with the group. The participants were taught how to write organized, interesting and powerful speeches. They learned how to create and present Table Topics and Evaluations. They became masters at introducing speakers, and bridging between one-speaker-to-another. They acquired skills on how to use vocal variety and body language to make their speeches effective and interesting.



During the eight evenings we coordinated Timers – Diana Gentile, Robin Murray, Tony Easton and Shawn MacIsaac and Guest Speakers – Diana Gentile and Jennifer Bedell from East Toasters Club. This team was invaluable to the success of the Speechcraft Program. As the three coordinators for the program we want to publicly thank each person who helped in the success of each session. Without these volunteers, the coordinators would have been overwhelmed with all of the tasks of each session.

Speechcraft is not for the faint of heart – as a participant you are required to write a new speech every week, participate in Table Topics and Evaluation. It is tough to keep up the momentum and energy to keep moving forward. However this group was motivated not only by their own ambition but by the spirit of the Lord. It is a strong Christian based group who uplifted and inspired all of us each week with their speeches. Their training through Speechcraft is equivalent to presenting the first five speeches in your Competent Communicator Manual. Just think about doing all of this work in a mere eight weeks – BRAVO!

I must admit it wasn't only the participants who learned things during the eight sessions - the coordinators had plenty of homework. Each week we created and mastered coordinating each session, and then prepared and presented effective presentations for the participants to learn from. Was it easy? No way! But it was so rewarding to see these participants grow and develop into confident, successful speakers and leaders.

- Karen Caldwell, DTM



A Special Speechcraft Moment

The following is the final speech given at Speechcraft for Open Door Center, by Janeen Leigh. This budding writer and public speaker had been honing her skills in the Speechcraft program and greatly improved throughout the eight week program. It is difficult enough to present a normal, run-of-the-mill speech early on in your Toastmasters journey, but to present and original work of art like this takes rare courage. She deservedly received a standing ovation for this very unique and special speech. Enjoy...

The Launch

Shining across the stadium sign

J-A-N-E-E-N

The stage is set.

*As crimson red curtains steadily ascend,
sounds of an anticipating audience soften.*

*The spotlight focuses center stage, igniting a
circular platform.*

It beckons her presence.

Calling her out.

Like an invitation, to risk it all on one hand.

*Then on cue a mediocre inner voice
attempts persuasion....*

"Don't go out there"

"They'll hate everything you say"

"Nothing you tell them matters"

*"Someone else will do a better job. Let the
opportunity pass"*

*These thoughts begin freezing her in her
tracks.*

*Until an unexpected nudge launches her
forward, into a warm weightlessness that
dissolves all doubt.*

What happens next catches her off guard.

*She opens her mouth and speaks -
distinctly
formulated
words*

Her movements -

natural

body is at ease

*There's an absence -
no nervous habits*

*With laser like focus -
eye contact
on point*

*Those mediocre numbing thoughts trying
their best to stop her...
ALL LIES!*

*The opportunity presented itself and she
seized it.*

Went out on stage and brilliantly shone.

Everything she said mattered.

*The roar of applause said everyone loved
what they had heard.*

*The significance of this moment surrounded
her.*

*Taking a glance back towards the curtain,
wanting a glimpse of the culprit that
launched her forward in the nick of time,
she smiles.*

Should have known.

The credit, goes to (drum roll)

*A well-deserved, Toastmasters Speechcraft
Certificate of Completion!!*

Author: Janeen Leigh, Open Door Speechcraft Participant

Who Wants to be Prime Minister?

When I was looking for something to plagiarize for this article I found a description of the Vice President of Education as the Prime Minister of the club. We all know about the Prime Minister's role in politics and everyone in Toastmasters knows about the VP Education. It is really the most important position in the club and it can be the most enlightening and rewarding.

Enlightening because you will enhance human relations skills:

- **Motivation:** Encouraging members to participate in just about everything.
- **Flexibility:** When members must be accommodated if last minute changes are required.
- **Psychology:** Because you must learn human behaviour.
- **Teamwork:** You will coordinate with the other club executives.

Rewarding because you will watch members improve!

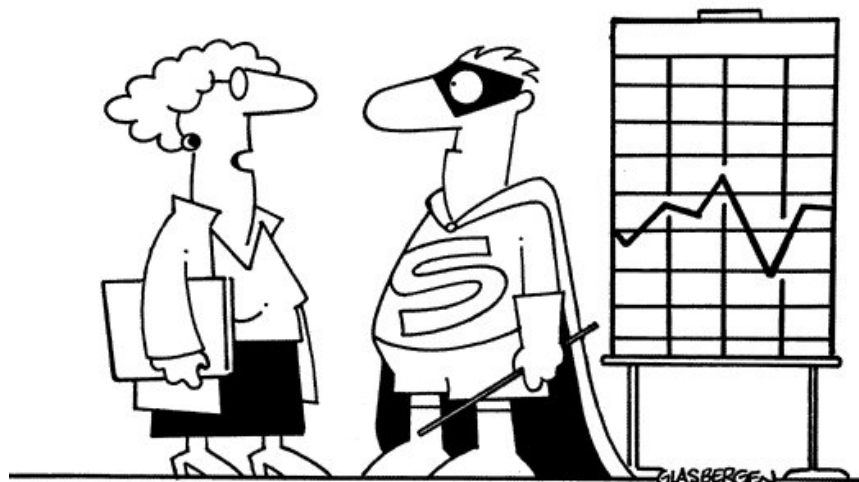
Plus, along with the other executives and members, watch the club become more successful.

With the 2018-2019 election of offices looming the opportunity is there to provide this gift to yourself and to the club.

Now, all we have to do is make the outside world aware of the prime ministerial role of our Vice President of Education!

- **Ralph Smith, VP Education**

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**"Fear of public speaking is quite common.
If dressing up as Speaker Man makes you
feel more confident, then so be it."**

Hiking Nova Scotia

Admiral Lake Loop



Located near Musquodoboit Harbour, Admiral Lake Loop hiking trail is one of my favorite local trails. Easily accessible as a day hike from the Halifax area, it is nevertheless surprisingly challenging. It is only 10 kilometers in length (including the flat and easy rail bed at the start), but consists of many climbs over rough boulders and roots. The downhill slopes can be tricky in a couple of places, hopping from rock to rock like a mountain goat. I miscalculated a landing one time, and ended up cutting a long survey line straight off the path and through the raw woods as I tried to regain my balance. I always feel exhausted when I exit. It's a great workout with many interesting things to see along the way, including a mini cave.

It has been said that this hike is one of the best designed hikes in the province, and I heartily agree. This one was obviously well thought out. The path winds along unpredictably this way and that, taking you to all the best look offs along the way, showcasing Nova Scotia's rough and tumble wilderness. There are four side trails that take you to especially nice vistas, so take the time to visit them. One adds a couple of kilometers to the hike, but it's well worth the extra effort if you have the time. There is little water available except for a small pond about 3/4 of the way along when approached from the south, so on a hot day, bring plenty to drink.

- **Robin Murray, Toastmaster**

Recipe Corner

Smashed Potatoes

This is one of my favorite ways to cook potatoes. When I'm cooking for others, I always try to make too many, but usually they are all gone by the end of the meal, followed by a lot of moaning and groaning from the gluttons (me). This recipe is easy. Just be careful when using turmeric as it stains everything it touches a bright yellow.

Ingredients:

- 6-8 potatoes ¹
- 2-3 tsp salt
- 2 tsp turmeric
- Olive oil
- Butter, melted (optional)
- Pepper to taste



Instructions:

1. Peel potatoes², cut into large, even sized chunks, place in a pot, cover with water. Add salt (to taste) and turmeric. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then turn down to low. Watch for boil-overs or you will have a very yellow mess to clean up!
2. Preheat oven to 425. Take a cookie sheet and spread a thin layer of olive oil over it.
3. When potatoes are just cooked through (avoid overcooking), drain, and immediately spread over the cookie sheet. Take a coffee mug and gently squish each potato until it's about 1/2 it's original height. You want to have bits and pieces fall off and large cracks showing - basically make them look like they have been smashed.
4. Just before putting them in the oven³, drizzle olive oil over each potato or better still, brush each potato with a generous amount of butter. Season with pepper and additional salt if necessary. Roast in the oven until nicely browned. Serve with sour cream.

- **Robin Murray, Toastmaster**

¹ Although any type of potato will do, I prefer waxy potatoes like red skins. These types of potatoes are very creamy when roasted, and contrast well with the crisp browned bits.

² You can leave the potatoes unpeeled, but the turmeric will not penetrate as much. Try it either way and see which one you prefer!

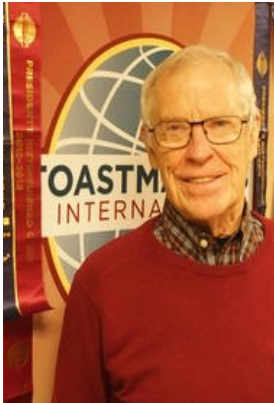
³ For best results, let the potatoes sit and give off as much steam as possible before putting them in the oven. The drier the surfaces are, the better they will brown.



Lindsey Liezert
CC
President



Rick Joseph
DTM, ALB
Secretary



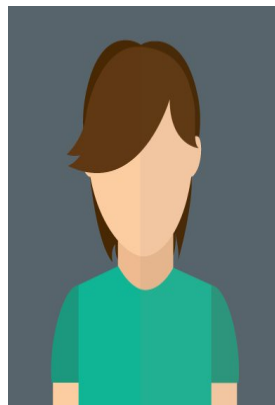
Ralph Smith
ACS, ALB
VP Education



Tony Easton
CC, CL
Treasurer



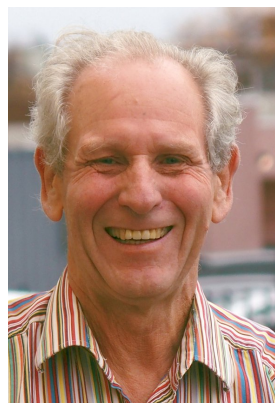
Mike MacDonald
CC
VP Membership



Dianna Gentile
CC
Sergeant-at-Arms



Robin Murray
VP Public Relations



Dave Gorsline
ACG
Past President

Your executive for the 2017-2018 season.