



TOASTMASTERS

INTERNATIONAL

The Voice

District 83 Newsletter

“Better You, Better World”

May 2010

The Voice is dedicated to inspiring Toastmasters in District 83 to achieve their goals. Let **The Voice** be *your voice* by sending in your success stories—the way that Toastmasters has helped you either personally or professionally. Everyone has a story to share and your experiences can help others find *their voice*. Please send your submissions to Joanne Callahan, your District 83 Newsletter Editor, at greenbriar206@yahoo.com. Photos are welcomed!

A Toastmasters Perspective

by Joanne Callahan

My first Toastmasters meeting was very strange.

I remember being in an unusually dark conference room with no banner, no lectern, no speakers, and with only two other people (both officers). I was a new member who had joined the group after attending a Membership Drive a few weeks before. The drive had been held in an auditorium where I work, and was well attended by vibrant speakers and guests who participated in discussions. I was impressed enough to fill out an application and pay my dues within a week.

And then I attended my first meeting. What a contrast. Yes, it was at the end of the year when it is difficult enough getting people to show up for work let alone a Toastmasters meeting. But that one experience almost made me quit on the spot. I left that room thinking “I don’t think this is for me,” and I really had no intention of returning. But there I was at the next meeting (for a reason which to this day eludes me), and I have been an active member ever since.

Toastmasters has something that I want. In every meeting you will find people who are afraid of public speaking and don’t show it, are afraid and want to get over it, and even those who love public speaking and want to get even better at it

So, why did YOU join and why do you stay?

Career Skills Workshop Enriches the Community

by Donna Juvza

On Wednesday, January 20, 2010 at 7:30pm, Somerset Toastmasters presented a free Career Skills Workshop at the Franklin Public Library. The workshop provided valuable information for those seeking new positions as well as those interested in advancing in their current careers.

The evening included presentations by award-winning speakers and an educational video on interviewing techniques. Somerset's VP of Education, Mary McGinley, who coordinated the event, opened the seminar with a discussion on the importance of keeping spirits up while looking for work.

Somerset Toastmasters Club President, Donna Juvza put forth an inspiring presentation outlining guidelines for successfully setting and achieving personal and professional goals. A Success Coach, Ms. Juvza, shared her expertise with attendees advising them on how to set SMART goals and follow through with action plans.

In her talk entitled 'Networking for the Faint of Heart', Ms. McGinley, executive director and head of Human Relations for New Millennium Theatre Works, Inc, drew on her professional experience, advising workshop attendees how to confidently meet new people.

Then, Mark Streitman, Somerset's Club Treasurer, and CEO of Embedded Systems Design, informed attendees, how skills developed as a member of Toastmasters can be invaluable in seeking employment, and can make the difference between being passed over or being offered a position.

The evening concluded with an educational video, outlining valuable interviewing techniques. Workshop attendees left with valuable information, tip sheets and news articles that will help them achieve success.

Somerset Toastmasters Club focuses on helping people develop the communications and leadership skills necessary to succeed in life. When we realized that several of our club members had been giving presentations that would be particularly useful for job seekers, talks on topics such as goal setting, networking and communication in the work place, we decided that it was important to share this with the community.

This event is the latest in Somerset Toastmasters' ongoing campaign to contribute to the community. In October, Somerset Toastmasters held a Halloween costumed Open House, inviting community members to join in the fun. In November, we collected food for the food bank, helping to make Thanksgiving special. And last month, in an effort to spread holiday cheer, we collected toys which were donated to 'Toys for Tots'. Next month, we'll embark on a crusade to share the Toastmasters experience with even more people, helping them to achieve personal growth thereby improving the quality of their lives.





Success Story
Cathy Conant
Cosmopolitan Toastmasters

I'm happy to be a member of the Cosmopolitan Toastmasters in Murray Hill, NJ.

I joined Toastmasters in January of this year and will give my first icebreaker speech on April 13th. I joined Toastmasters for the same reason that many folks are drawn to the club, to improve my public speaking ability. Toastmasters was recommended to me over a year ago. I checked out the website but at the time there was not a meeting time or location that worked with my schedule so I did not pursue it. I work full-time for the Red Cross and one of our performance development goals is public speaking. I remembered Toastmasters and checked the website again for a convenient time and location and found the Cosmopolitan Toasters which meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at noon time.

I'm so grateful to have found such a wonderful club to be a part of. Every member is friendly and encouraging. Club leaders keep the meeting organized and moving on time without participants feeling rushed, which is not an easy task. I've only been a member a short time but feel I've already made improvement in my speaking ability through participating in Table Topics and as Grammarian. I'm also glad to have the opportunity to improve my leadership skills. I did not know this was a part of Toastmasters program, but I am so glad it is. It is certainly an area where I can use improvement. I will also appreciate developing the skills of giving and receiving constructive feedback. I think like many people we don't realize how often this task comes up in both our work and personal lives. And it's something that we're not taught.

I look forward to being a long-time member of Toastmasters.



Dear Toastie:

I work in a club where it is very difficult to get people to volunteer to be club officers. I am finding that the same people remain as officers (or just switch roles back and forth) because of the lack of enthusiasm among members. How can we get our members to become more active in these leadership roles?

Needs a Break

Dear Needs a Break:

This is a common problem at the club, area, and district level. It seems that people are afraid of committing to a role, and this is because they do not fully understand what taking on a leadership role can do for them. A Toastmaster can be a great speaker, but unless they have the opportunity to lead, they will not be honing their leadership skills which can help them become good negotiators, better employees and more compassionate people. Time commitments for officers roles vary, and this should also be communicated to club members. In reality, not one member is 'too busy' to take on an officer role as there are no roles that take up a good chunk of a day. Being a Toastmasters officer also allows people to brush up on their teamwork skills, which are very important in today's competitive work environment. Some people just need a little nudge to get them moving in the right direction while others need more encouragement. Current officers should do their best to see that the roster changes each year so that clubs remain fresh and vibrant. A stagnant club will lose members faster than you can say, 'meeting adjourned!'

We Need Your Input!



Do you have a photo of a recent Toastmasters event or meeting? Will your club be celebrating an important milestone? Your District wants to know!

Please send me pictures and articles for inclusion in upcoming newsletters. You don't have to be a literary genius or a professional photographer. Just a Toastmaster willing to share with the rest of us what your club already knows – and that is just how special you are!

Please send your submissions to your editor, Joanne Callahan, at greenbriar206@yahoo.com

