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## Don't Burn Your Toast! Tips for the Wedding Party

**Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif. (June, 2009)** – Timing may be everything, but wording isn't far behind. Consider one of the most famous toasts of all: Humphrey Bogart's words to Ingrid Bergman – "Here's looking at you, kid" – in the legendary 1942 film *Casablanca*. Now trade "kid" for another endearment. No big deal? Maybe. But Bogie probably would have achieved another kind of immortality if he'd raised his glass to Bergman and said, "Here's looking at you ... babycakes!" Likewise, if you're the Best Man, Maid of Honor or other wedding VIP, you should be aware of the trust that has been placed in you to say exactly the right thing.

A wedding toast should be "brief, personal and customized to the occasion," says Toastmasters International President Jana Barnhill. "Most of all, it should be heartfelt."

Speaking from the heart is the key to an appropriate toast. To help you put your best foot forward – and not in your mouth – (name of club) Toastmasters club in (city, state or province), offers the following tips:

- Pick a topic that is personal but appropriate.
- Keep it short – no more than a couple of minutes. "Essentially, the best advice in public speaking is to always be brief," says President Barnhill.
- Practice. Think about what you want to say, and practice the toast in advance. Use friends as sounding boards beforehand.
- Stay sober. Being coherent helps.
- Be careful with humor – that personal story you consider harmless may not be seen the same way by others.
- Dress your best. If you look good, you'll feel more confident.

In the film *Wedding Crashers*, Owen Wilson offers good advice that echoes President Barnhill: "I think you're better off going with something from the heart. Honestly." Remember, your friend or family member has chosen you to fulfill a special role on that special day. This is your chance to speak with love and make their day complete.

(name of club), which meets at (location) on (days) at (time), is there to help you conquer your public speaking concerns. This group has joined forces with 12,000 other clubs, as part of Toastmasters International – a nonprofit organization serving more than 250,000 members in 106 countries. For more information about Toastmasters International, please visit [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org). Since its founding in 1924, Toastmasters International has helped more than four million men and women develop their public speaking skills and become confident communicators at work, at home, and yes, even at parties.