

# TOASTMASTER®



## Improve with Improv

How exercises in spontaneity hone communication skills.

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Mindful Leadership

The secret to increased productivity and creativity.

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# Khadem and His Dream



I had a project I wanted to execute, and I was looking for someone to handle it. I went on the hunt for the perfect project manager.

After interviewing dozens, analyzing their personality, capability and capacity (refer to the movie *Mrs. Doubtfire*), I met him. He was calm, composed and soft-spoken. He had a soothing effect on me. The fee he charged was the lowest of all the people I had interviewed before him. I gladly shouted out, "Deal!"

His name was Khadem; he was from Pakistan. As we went along with the project, updates were timely and frequent, and the

quality of his work was of a standard I had not experienced before. Just like a talented speaker, Khadem's presentations were supported by evidence, facts and reason. A perfect presenter.

After the first few months we worked together, I was tempted to increase his fees without him even asking for it. Eventually, after years of working together, the day came when Khadem told me it was time for him to leave. I became distracted

## Khadem had been working in Dubai for 30 years, doing what he did best: "Project Management Resulting in Customer Satisfaction."

by the sound in the back of my mind: *Noooooooooo*. After composing myself, I asked him why. Khadem took out a photograph of a huge, two-story, marble-clad house overlooking a valley. "My house in Pakistan is complete," he said with pride.

Khadem was my gardener. He had been so for many years. His long beard had become platinum white, the wrinkles in his face portrayed wisdom and his battered hands evidenced dedication. Khadem had been working in Dubai for 30 years, doing what he did best: "Project Management Resulting in Customer Satisfaction."

He had come to Dubai with a dream of building a house worthy of the sweat of three decades. Khadem was an individual who, day after day, did the same work. He possessed experience, a passion for his job and pride in his work. He truly inspired me.

Khadem means "servant" in Arabic and Urdu. He served many others with passion and dedication, but he still focused on that one goal, that one dream: building his own house.

We all have dreams—winning championships, becoming prominent leaders and succeeding in life. Fulfilling those dreams will take hard work, focus and immense willpower. Achievement Guaranteed.

Khadem, my family and I miss you, but I am sure the breeze of the valley will remind you of us, and the numerous families you have served. ■

**MOHAMMED MURAD, DTM**  
International President

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## Toastmasters International Mission:

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.



**WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE**  
[www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org)

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# Survey Results Are In

Toastmasters International recently conducted a focus group and survey to learn what members like and dislike about the *Toastmaster* magazine in both print and digital formats.\* Overall, the findings were positive, especially in regard to the content.

Members participated in the study anonymously, and the consensus is that members like receiving the magazine.

But there's always room for improvement. Here are some suggestions provided in the survey:

## Top 5 Suggestions for Magazine Content:

Members want more:

- Tips
- Advice
- Stories about the average member
- Real-life success stories
- Images of actual members and clubs

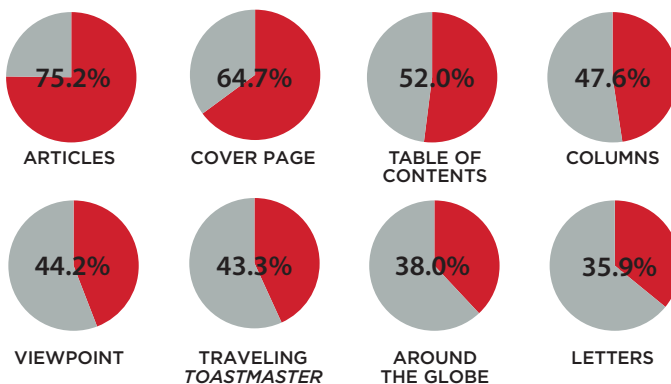
The survey revealed that most members are not aware of the magazine's tablet edition. However, those who download the app enjoy "its interactivity, supplemental videos and links, and its usability."

## Top 3 Suggestions for Digital Formatting:

Most people surveyed prefer to access magazine content from their laptops or desktop computers.

- Some members want to read the magazine on the web.
- The amount of storage required for the app is a concern. *Please note: Past issues downloaded on your tablet can be deleted. Check your device's settings.*
- Some members requested supplemental email links to content weekly or monthly.

## Which of the following sections do you typically read?



- The most commonly read sections of the magazine are articles (75.2%) and cover page (64.7%).
- Approximately 36% of members read the Letters section, making it the least read section of the magazine.
- After conducting a sentiment analysis, Letters, columns and Table of Contents had the most negative sentiment in open-text responses.
- Traveling *Toastmaster* and Around the Globe had the most positive sentiment in open-text responses.

## Print vs. App

**65.4%** prefer to read the print version of the magazine.

*"Love the global concept. No matter where you are, you can take your magazine with you and enjoy a good read."*

**22.9%** prefer to read the tablet app.

The survey shows that most members are not aware of the tablet app exists, and of those who are aware, most prefer not to access the magazine through the app. Those who do enjoy accessing the magazine on their tablets say it is intuitive, quick to download and portable.

*"I downloaded the December issue of TM on my tablet and it is very nice. Linking the magazine to YouTube, TED Talks, TM website activities, club speech contests, etc. gives the tablet version of the magazine immense opportunities."*

Members want to be able to easily share any article through social networks or email; therefore, they avoid the app due to inability to share articles in the current issue. They also avoid it due to space constraints on their device.

*"I visit many places and don't want to load an app for each one. I prefer things that are accessible via link, and only use apps if there is no other way of getting to the article unless it is something I go to very frequently."*

**TELL US WHAT YOU THINK.** What do you like or dislike about the print magazine or the Toastmaster magazine app? Write it in 200 words or less. Include your name, member number and home club and send it to [letters@toastmasters.org](mailto:letters@toastmasters.org). Please note: Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity, and may be published in both the print and electronic editions.

\*+/- 3.9% margin of error with a 95% confidence interval.

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The secret to increased productivity and creativity.

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By Linda Allen, ACS, CL

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How exercises in spontaneity hone communication skills.

Learn to adapt quickly and boost your confidence.

By Caren Schnur Neile, Ph.D., ATMS, CL

 **TABLET SPECIAL:** Watch 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking Darren LaCroix give improv tips.



# Check out our DIGITAL MAGAZINE!

Download the Toastmaster magazine tablet app and enjoy these special features:

- Exclusive tablet-only content
- Dynamic photo galleries
- Interactive features

For more information, go to [www.toastmasters.org/Magazine](http://www.toastmasters.org/Magazine)

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Couple celebrates wedding anniversary by co-chairing the 2015 Convention.

*By Shannon Dewey*

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OF VOTE**

Cast your vote for your 2015-2016 officer and director candidates and Proposal A.



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# AROUND THE GLOBE

## MEMBER MOMENT



## Passionate Artist



Susanne Byström, CC

As a world traveler and eclectic artist, Susanne Byström, CC, has a unique perspective on life.

A resident of Sweden, she began her career in the healthcare field, when she worked as a nursing assistant. Shortly after making a career change, Byström chose to take some time off—a decision that led her to find peace and new strength through her biggest passion: art.

While Byström speaks English, her native tongue is Swedish, and if given the opportunity she likes to use her childhood dialect from Värmland. With a degree from the University of Gothenburg's Valand Academy of Fine Arts in Sweden, Byström has combined her love of art and Toastmasters while taking a journey of personal enlightenment.

### Why did you join Toastmasters?

Throughout my life I have feared making presentations in front of groups. In 2012, in Sweden, I was introduced to Toastmasters by a friend and member of the Borås Toastmasters club, and decided to join. I enjoy its easygoing atmosphere and all the loving people—they greet each other with hugs. I'm grateful for the skills I am developing at the club, and for the new friends I am making.

### How have you benefited from being a member?

I've been able to continually develop the art of speaking and leadership. In addition to easing my fear of speaking in public, I have learned to reach out effectively to deliver my message by using my voice and body language. The skills have helped me as a lecturer on personal development, in pastoral counseling training and as a volunteer for associations for women.

### What drives your passion for art?

Painting, sculpting and creating in clay is stimulating and fun. I create art as a way to heal—it's a valve to let it all out. I call my art "energy art," because I believe that the intent of my paintings or sculpture is felt. My artistry has been an elixir for my development.

### How has Toastmasters affected your travels around the world?

It's always exciting to meet new people through Toastmasters, and be in contact with members I do not normally associate with. I have been a backpacker and traveled for long periods of time in many different parts of our amazing world, including Malaysia, Australia, Brazil, United States, Dubai, Egypt, Mexico, India and a majority of European countries.

It's lovely to find friends through Toastmasters who can give advice and show me around when I do not know anyone in the area. I would highly recommend visiting other clubs while traveling.

## In Brief

### HELPFUL WEBSITE

Prepare your speeches with Evernote, a free website and app that allows you to organize and store your research in virtual notebooks. The program can also store scans, photos, audio and video. Learn more at [evernote.com](http://evernote.com).

### MEMBERSHIP-BUILDING PROGRAM

Encourage members to participate in the "Beat the Clock" membership-building program that ends June 30. For details, visit [www.toastmasters.org/MembershipContests](http://www.toastmasters.org/MembershipContests) (login required).

### QUICK SPEAKING TIP

Be the expert. Make sure you've done enough research prior to delivering your speech. Explore the topic in depth so you're ready for questions and feel comfortable speaking about the subject.

### WORLD'S TOP LEADERS

In April, *Fortune* magazine published a list of 50 of the world's greatest leaders—people who inspired others to share in their vision. See who is on the list at [fortune.com/worlds-greatest-leaders](http://fortune.com/worlds-greatest-leaders).

### VIDEOS OFFER LESSONS

Have you seen the Toastmasters video series of time-tested tips for improving communication? Watch the videos at [www.toastmasters.org/Videos](http://www.toastmasters.org/Videos).

Did you know?  
**Chief Ambassadors**  
share the latest news about the  
**Revitalized Education Program**



[www.toastmasters.org/REP](http://www.toastmasters.org/REP)

## SNAPSHOT



Members of Etihad Airways Toastmasters club of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, celebrate Toastmasters' 90th anniversary with a 1930s theme. Attendees wore 1930s traditional attire for their respective countries, including Arabia, India, Philippines, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Nigeria and Australia.

## FACTS WORTH KNOWING



### Laughter: Give it a Try

You know the familiar phrase “Laughter is the best medicine”? While laughter alone won't cure all maladies, it does have many health benefits, according to MayoClinic.org. It brings new meaning to Humorous Speech contests.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- Laughter yoga is practiced in more than 8,000 “laughter clubs” worldwide. Participants typically begin a session by faking laughter, but are usually guffawing for real by the end.
- Women laugh up to 126 percent more often than men.
- Laughing is like exercise. William Fry, a Stanford University researcher, claimed that just one minute of hearty laughter elevated his heart rate to the same level as that produced after spending 10 minutes on a rowing machine.



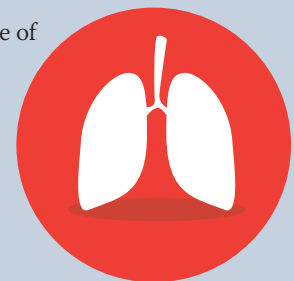
#### LONG-TERM BENEFITS

- Improves your immune system.
- May relieve pain.
- Increases personal satisfaction.



#### SHORT-TERM BENEFITS

- Enhances your intake of oxygen.
- Stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles.
- Increases endorphins released by your brain.
- Activates and then relieves your stress response.
- Soothes tension.



Sources: MayoClinic.org, PsychologyToday.com, HuffingtonPost.com and WebMD.com

## AROUND THE GLOBE

### WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

#### How do your Toastmasters skills help you in the workplace?

"I've slowed my rate of speaking, even when I'm nervous, and I no longer pace, or say 'um' or 'ah.' I've also developed great feedback skills, both giving and receiving. Oh yes, it really works!"

#### Frances Carleton, ACS, ALB

Dundas club  
Dundas Valley, New South Wales, Australia

"The ability to collect your thoughts and verbalize them in an efficient manner goes a long way toward increasing your credibility, expertise and leadership abilities.

"Being able to speak in front of a group at the workplace without stammering and saying 'uh,' 'er' or 'you know' gets you noticed by your customers, vendors, industry associations and those above you in the organization where you work.

"And, at some time in your career, you are going to need to put the skills you learn in Toastmasters to the test during a job interview."

#### Tom Nosal, ACS, ALB

Confident Communicators  
Toastmasters club  
Plainfield, Illinois

"Frustrated with the way team meetings tend to go off topic and over time, I started interjecting to get meetings moving. I learned this at Toastmasters. Now people ask me to chair meetings. I also used to do the occasional group presentation, but only when no one else could. Now I get asked to speak more often. So yes, these skills do translate into the workplace, and beyond."

#### Tom Bielski, ACB, ALB

Victoria Park club  
Victoria Park, Western Australia, Australia  
Join the conversation on the Official Toastmasters International Members Group on LinkedIn.

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"A MENTOR empowers a person to see a POSSIBLE FUTURE, and believe it CAN BE OBTAINED."

— SHAWN HITCHCOCK

### NEWS FROM TI

## REP Offers An Improved Evaluation Process

Evaluations have always been at the heart of the Toastmasters experience. That is how we grow—by speaking in front of others, and then receiving feedback and tips from our fellow club members.

As important as evaluations are, sometimes the quality of the feedback we receive is inconsistent. Perhaps you've had the experience of giving a speech and then hearing your evaluator say something like, "I loved your speech! It was great. I really enjoyed how you delivered it." While such comments make us feel good, they don't help us stretch our skills.

How can the evaluation process be improved? That is one of the priorities in the revitalized education program (REP). Program developers have updated, enhanced and standardized evaluation criteria. In the future, when members give speeches in the REP, they will all be evaluated by the same objective standards.

For example, the criteria for a speaker whose skills needs the most improvement will include concrete feedback such as, "Content lacked organization," "The member did not speak clearly" and "Eye contact with the audience was lacking." The criteria for a speaker at the highest level will include, "The member's level of eye contact, interaction with visual aids and physical gestures demonstrated energy and interest, guiding the listener through the presentation."

In addition, evaluators will complete a form where they mark a number from 1 (low) to 5 (high) to rate how the speaker met various criteria relating to the content and delivery of the speech.

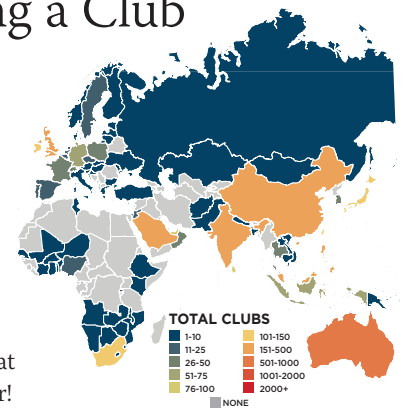
These tools will help evaluators better assess a speaker's presentation and make the evaluation experience more consistent in clubs around the world.

### INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

## Traveling? Plan on Visiting a Club

For many Toastmasters and their families, going on vacation is often the highlight of their year. Whether traveling out of country or to a nearby city, the goal is to vacate work, school and the hustle and bustle of everyday life. It's a chance to meet new people and enjoy new experiences.

Don't forget that you're a Toastmaster—even when on vacation! Why not visit a club while traveling? Toastmasters clubs are in 126 countries. Imagine the people and cultures you could learn from. The great part is you already have a bond as a fellow Toastmaster!



### When planning to visit a club:

- **Before you leave**, go to [www.toastmasters.org/FindAClub](http://www.toastmasters.org/FindAClub). Type in the location of your travel destination. Then choose the club you'd like to visit.
- **Email the club president** to learn when and where the club meets and let them know you're interested in visiting. Contact information for the club is available on the Toastmasters website.
- **Be a courteous guest.** You know how meetings go in your home club, but other clubs may do things differently. Whether you're asked to participate or sit quietly in the back, always be respectful.
- **Have fun!** This is your opportunity to learn from other Toastmasters in a different area of the world. Make new friends, and trade business cards or email addresses for future networking!

**Send us your story!** Have you recently visited a club while vacationing? Email [submissions@toastmasters.org](mailto:submissions@toastmasters.org), and include photos if available.



90TH ANNIVERSARY

## How well do you know Toastmasters history?

### Test your knowledge with this anniversary trivia!

- 1 What is Ralph Smedley's middle name?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2 What date marks the official anniversary of Toastmasters International?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Where was the first non-California club organized?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Up until the 1936 Convention in Santa Barbara, what was the cost of annual member dues in U.S. dollars?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Who was the 1969 Golden Gavel recipient?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Where was the first official Toastmasters convention held?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Who was the first female International President?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 8 When was the first district organized?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Answers:** 1. Chesnut; 2. October 22, 1924; 3. In Seattle, Washington (in 1933); 4. \$1; 5. Legendary newsman Walter Cronkite; 6. Anaheim, California (in 1930); 7. Helen Blanchard; 8. In 1934  
For more trivia and 90th anniversary resources, visit [www.toastmasters.org/90thAnniversary](http://www.toastmasters.org/90thAnniversary).

MEET MY MENTOR



## Ian Perry, ACS, ALB

No one has the potential to influence a member's experience like a mentor. Elizabeth Jordan, ACB, ALB, is a project manager and a member of Hertfordshire Speakers in Hatfield, England. She shares how her mentor, Area Governor Ian Perry, ACS, ALB, has helped her.

### Why did you join Toastmasters?

My job requires me to make frequent presentations, and a manager at work recommended that I visit a club. I visited one close to where I live and received a warm welcome. I joined that same evening in October 2010. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

### Tell us about your mentor.

Ian became my mentor after my first mentor left the club. He has mentored me for more than three years. He is admired by many for his strong leadership skills, dedication to the Toastmasters program, and willingness to help members succeed in their communication and leadership projects. He is at the forefront of technology and develops the club's website and online presence. He also loves to travel.



FROM LEFT: Ian Perry and Elizabeth Jordan

### What makes Ian an exceptional mentor?

Ian has held all club officer roles, and he encourages me to take them on too. He trains me for them, and mentors me as I perform the duties that each one requires. He was especially helpful when I took on the challenging roles of vice president education and club president.

### What do you like best about Ian?

I admire Ian's quiet confidence, competence and calm demeanor. Above all, I admire his generous support for clubs and members.

### What have you accomplished with Ian's help?

Because of Ian's encouragement—and the rich combination of education, training and service I experience at Toastmasters—I have become a more confident speaker and leader. It was Ian who encouraged me to enter the evaluation contests, which, to my surprise and delight, I won at both the club and area levels.

### What is the best feedback you ever received from Ian?

Realizing how much I dread Table Topics, Ian once told me: "You should always have a go at what you are most afraid of. You have nothing to lose, and everything to gain." I remember this phrase every time I stand up to do Table Topics.

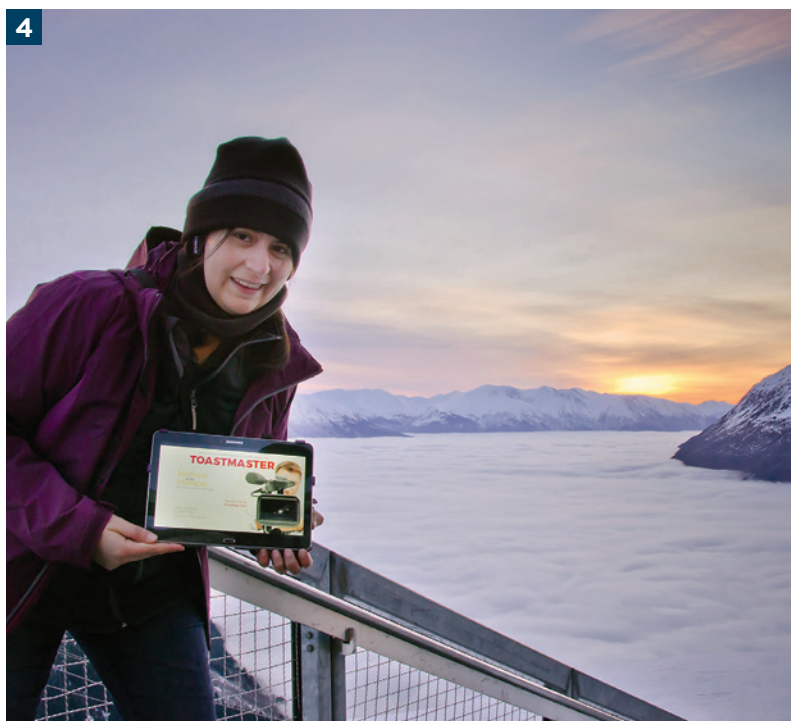


**TABLET SPECIAL:** Download the tablet issue for a new mentor tip each month.

### NOMINATE YOUR MARVELOUS MENTOR!

Do you know an exceptional mentor who has positively influenced you or other Toastmasters? Send a 200-word description and photo (1 MB or larger) of you and your mentor to [MentorMoment@toastmasters.org](mailto:MentorMoment@toastmasters.org).

# TRAVELING TOASTMASTER



**1 | CHRISTIAN EGGENBERGER, ACB, ALB, FROM WINTERTHUR, SWITZERLAND, tests out his new snowshoes on Kronberg Mountain in Eastern Switzerland.**

**2 | DANNY SHAFAR, CC, AND HIS WIFE SUSAN, FROM MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, pose with orangutans at the Singapore Zoo.**

**3 | HAI DOAN, CC, FROM EDMONTON, CANADA, jumps for joy on a beach in Riviera Maya, Mexico.**

**4 | YOLOTL OCHOA, CC, CL, FROM AUSTIN, TEXAS, poses with her magazine tablet issue at the top of Mt. Alyeska in Girdwood, Alaska.**



**View more photos on your tablet** or on our Facebook page: Toastmasters International Official Fan Page.

 **PICTURE YOURSELF HERE!** Pose with the *Toastmaster* magazine or tablet app during your travels and submit your photos for a chance to be featured in an upcoming issue. Visit [www.toastmasters.org/Submissions](http://www.toastmasters.org/Submissions). Bon voyage!

## Naturally Speaking

A photographer's journey from German towns to the American wilderness.

BY DORIS DUMRAUF, ACB, CL

It all began when I fell in love—not just with my husband, but with our common interest in photography.

We lived in Germany then and traveled to picturesque German towns, cameras in hand. Before I knew it, I was enrolled in a remote correspondence course at the New York Institute of Photography. Our goal was to open a home-based portrait studio, but fate had other plans. And much to my surprise, Toastmasters would play a big role.

In 1995, I followed my husband to the United States, still expecting to work as a portrait photographer. Instead, I began writing magazine articles.

When digital photography became popular, we purchased a digital single-lens reflex camera (DSLR) and I began photographing the



*Doris Dumrauf sets up her camera for an outdoor photo shoot near her home in Pennsylvania. She is an award-winning nature photographer, an author and speaker.*

### I educated my fellow club members about native plants, the basics of bird-watching, choosing binoculars and more.

birds in our yard. Several months later, I won first place in a contest held by *WildBird* magazine.

Eventually, I developed a lecture about creating a backyard habitat for birds and insects, and I delivered the lecture to a local garden club that had invited me to speak. My first talk went well. Still, I realized there was room for improvement.

I looked online for a local Toastmasters club. In the back of my mind I assumed I would drop out once I learned to speak with confidence. The moment I walked into a meeting of the Pittsburgh Club in Bridgeville, Pennsylvania, I knew I had found a warm, welcoming environment where I could hone my speaking skills without being judged.

I flourished, taking on a series of club officer roles and earning one education award after another. When I asked our club president's advice on how to get paid for speaking, he told me to speak for free first. I developed a PowerPoint presentation by incorporating

my photography, and I booked speeches at several local libraries.

Over the next few years, I educated my fellow club members about native plants, the basics of bird-watching, choosing binoculars and more. They enjoyed themselves too much to realize that they were my test audience! But they gave me valuable feedback. I learned to make my nature presentations less stiff and more engaging.

Not only did I not drop out of the club after a few months, I've stayed for seven years! I soon realized that public speaking and writing are very similar. Both require a beginning, a middle and an end. And the beginning better be a grand

slam. I've also found that I can mine my cross-cultural background—as a native of Germany and a resident of the U.S.—for speech topics.

In 2011, I presented a speech giving a foreigner's take on baseball, and I earned third place in the District 13 Humorous Speech Contest. Since then I have won several other club contests. Most amazingly, this introvert is now one of the most experienced members of my club, and I readily offer advice to newer members.

I now give many speeches to garden clubs, women's clubs, libraries and retirement communities. The more questions the audience members ask, the more successful I consider my presentation. It seems ironic that an immigrant is teaching native-born Americans the basics of gardening for wildlife in the U.S., but it makes perfect sense to me. After living in Germany for much of my life, I have come to appreciate yards and the American wilderness as important wildlife habitats.

The greatest compliment I receive is when someone walks up to me after my lecture and tells me, "I want to grow native plants!" For that, I thank Toastmasters, where I learned to speak naturally! **T**

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**DORIS DUMRAUF, ACB, CL**, is a member of the Pittsburgh Club in Bridgeville, Pennsylvania. She is a professional nature photographer and speaks about nature-related themes in the greater Pittsburgh area. Visit <http://dorisdumrauf.com> to learn more.

# The Speechwriters' Shepherd

David Murray gathers wandering professionals into a coherent community.

BY MARY NESFIELD



David Murray

**D**uring a compelling speech, the speaker is the star, the sage on the stage, who gets to bask in the audience's adulation. But David Murray, editor of the *Vital Speeches of the Day* magazine, knows that for high-profile speakers the credit must be shared with the person behind the scenes—the professional speechwriter.

In 2013, Murray launched the Professional Speechwriters Association (PSA) to help those in the business connect with other speech scribes around the world. “Speechwriters are a tribe,” he says. “They like to be together. They need a way to learn from one another—be-

**“I’d say public speaking is as much in vogue as it was before they built the Gutenberg press.” — David Murray**

cause they have many problems that only fellow speechwriters can solve.” In May 2014, Murray convened the PSA’s first World Conference—a two-day program that featured speeches, workshops and networking opportunities—to address those needs.

As PSA’s executive director, Murray travels the globe presenting various versions of his “Speechwriting Jam Session”—an inspiring collection of excerpts from notable speeches—to industry conference attendees and groups that have included the United Nations and the European Commission. The jam sessions, notes Murray, include video clips from “Robert F. Kennedy’s beautiful speech ‘Indianapolis,’ given in 1968 after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., and Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson’s 1964 courageous stand against a roomful of military veterans attempting to boo him off the stage” when Pearson proposed a new symbol for the Canadian flag.

In his day-to-day work as editor of *Vital Speeches of the Day*—an 81-year-old monthly magazine—Murray curates a collection of the most noteworthy speeches in the world, printed in full both in print and digital formats. *Vital Speeches* also includes articles, news items and blog and job posts related to speechwriting. Additionally, the Chicago, Illinois, resident is editor of its sister publication, *Vital Speeches International: The Best Thoughts of the Best Minds on Current International Questions*. The magazine features full speeches either delivered by non-U.S. leaders or U.S. leaders who speak on subjects of international relevance.

(For more information, go to [vsotd.com](http://vsotd.com). Speechwriters may submit speeches to *Vital Speeches of the Day* by sending them to [VSeditor@McMurrytmg.com](mailto:VSeditor@McMurrytmg.com).)

## **The PSA and its founding partner, Gotham Ghostwriters, recently conducted a survey on speechwriters and how they work. What did it reveal?**

One thing it indicated is how, typically, speechwriters “stumble” into their profession, by writing a speech simply because someone they knew needed one.

## **How did you begin in your profession?**

Like the speechwriters I serve, I fell into it. As an English major and aspiring poet with an eating habit and rent to pay in Chicago, I answered an ad for a publisher of trade newsletters. I got the job. One of the newsletters we produced was a weekly called *Speechwriter’s Newsletter*. The first reporting I ever did in my life involved calling subscribers and asking them if they’d like to contribute a story to a column called “Speechwriters’ Worst Nightmares.” I never spoke to one speechwriter who didn’t have at least one good, gory professional story.

Eventually I got to know practitioners of many communication disciplines—employee communication, media relations, social media—but I always found the speechwriters to be the most erudite, eccentric, ambitious, frustrated and interesting people in the business.

## **How would you describe your work?**

I bring together the people who help leaders communicate, both online and in person, so that they can share their best ideas, solve one another’s problems and be inspired by the best speeches. They can laugh and cry together at the inherent absurdity involved in a speechwriter’s work.

## **What does the Professional Speechwriters Association offer?**

Convened by *Vital Speeches of the Day*, the PSA is the first and only global membership organization for speechwriters, a nomadic group of people who traditionally have had a hard time finding one another—when a speaker needs to hire a speechwriter, or

when a speechwriter needs work. Speechwriters can attend our second World Conference next fall, as well as our intimate Leadership Communication Days meetings and a number of other online and in-person meeting places we're building.

After a few thousand years, professional speechwriters finally have a professional place to call home.

### What changes have you seen in speechwriting throughout your career?

There are fewer *dedicated speechwriters*—people who serve leaders exclusively—and more *communication generalists* who write speeches as just one part of their jobs. But when you look at the changes that have come to most communication disciplines over the same period, the only constant is speechwriting.

Leaders still must lead, and one imperative element of leadership is looking people in the eye—investors, employees, customers and prospects, and community members—and delivering a message.

### What's one of your favorite speeches?

One that knocked me out because I didn't see it coming was a speech that Stephen T. Banko, III, a retired field office director for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and a Vietnam War veteran, delivered at The Veterans Expo in Utica, New York, in 2009. [Banko received the 2010 Grand Award for Best Speech of 2009 from the Cicero Foundation.] He delivered his intimate and real message to a small group of veterans. It's great when one person speaks and hundreds of people listen as the speaker bares his heart and soul. I've been looking for a speech *that* good ever since.

### What interesting developments have you noticed on the public speaking front?

Here in Chicago, practically every bar has a storytelling night—it's a huge urban trend. Between that and TED Talks—and the continuing growth of Toastmasters—I'd say public speaking is as much in vogue as it was before they built the Gutenberg press.

### What do you think people want to hear from prominent speakers today?

People want a fair chance to size up their leaders—whether political leaders, business leaders, social or moral leaders—to find out, *What kind of human being is this? How competent is he or she to lead? Where is he or she taking us? How committed is he or she to getting us there?* Such questions can only be answered by listening to what a speaker says while simultaneously seeing what he or she looks like and hearing what he or she sounds like during the communicating.

### What are some things to keep in mind when writing for a global audience?

I don't think it's too glib to quote a John F. Kennedy speech, and leave it at that: *"Our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal."* **T**

MARY NESFIELD is associate editor of the *Toastmaster* magazine.



The PSA offers a website and two newsletters that feature information about speechwriting and complete works from speechwriters.

## SAVE THE DATES

**October 6, 2015:** The Professional Speechwriters Association's new Speechwriting Workshop

**October 7-8, 2015:** The next PSA World Conference

Both events will be held at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business, Washington, D.C. For more information, go to [vsotd.com](http://vsotd.com) or download the tablet edition of *Toastmaster* magazine.

# Make the Most of Your Roast

Celebrate the honoree by keeping your quips gentle and brief.

BY CRAIG HARRISON, DTM

**A**s speeches go, delivering an effective roast may be one of the most difficult formats to master. Simply put, most roasts are not done well, and may leave their intended subject feeling fried or singed.

A roast is intended to honor and gently tease the recipient in front of his or her peers, family and friends. It's not done to punish the honoree, but rather to pay tribute. The best roasts celebrate the individual's work, style, personality and idiosyncrasies, and are delivered with love.

## Don't Be Mean

Sadly, I've watched roasters make up stories about the recipient, with no basis in fact. I've also seen roasters disparage the recipient with raw language, taking a mean tone and omitting humor altogether. And I've

**"Try to strike a balance between humor and praise." — Arvind Nair, DTM**

seen roasters get their facts wrong, undermining their own credibility and detracting from the quality of the occasion.

The best recipe for a roast is research. Start by setting aside time in advance to learn more about the honoree. Collect biographical facts such as where the person was born and grew up, where he went to school and what degrees or past positions he's attained. What awards has he received?



*Past District 57 Governor Ashley Harkness (left) takes his turn speaking after being roasted by fellow district members, during a 2008 meeting of the LaughLovers Comedy Toastmasters club in Oakland, California. Sitting to Ashley's immediate left is the author of this article, Past D57 Governor Craig Harrison, and to his left Past D57 Governor Tyree Johnson. Below left, the roasters rib Ashley by holding up a photo of him in front of their faces.*



How about hobbies, favorite teams or songs? What charities or projects is he involved with? Is the person known for any unique figures of speech or favorite phrases?

## Map it Out

You may want to apply some sort of visual organization to the information you gather, such as a diagram. One method is mind-mapping. (Try the site [www.mindmeister.com](http://www.mindmeister.com).) Put the honoree's name or picture in the middle of a blank page and draw lines outward to write what you already know about her. Then **ask others, like friends, co-workers and family, what they can share about the person.** Research her on the Internet. View her Facebook page or LinkedIn profile.

Then look for interesting connections between morsels. What items jump out at you in terms of contrasts or overall themes?

**Is there a common thread?** Are the contrasts stark? Each of these can lead to humor.

When I roasted an outgoing district governor, my research uncovered a lifelong fascination with photography, travels to foreign countries, a tendency to regularly wear bow ties and suspenders and an interest in storytelling. I was able to create humor around each of these topics.

If you're going to roast someone, **be original.** This means avoiding clichéd old jokes. Lazily attaching someone's name to generic humor is actually disrespectful. Customize your humor to the individual.

Unlike revenge—a dish best eaten cold—**roasts should be served warmly.** Use humor that is gentle, positive and has universal appeal. You can tease the recipient and make jokes about him, but be sure you end the roast with love.

**“You should always end well,”** says Denis Dawson, DTM. “Conclude with sincere appreciation.” A member of two clubs in San Ramon, California, Dawson offers another piece of advice: The best levity is found in brevity. “Know when you’re done, and stop,” he says. Remember, as a roaster it’s not about you. It’s about the honoree. You’re there to celebrate him, not draw attention to yourself.

### Success is in the Balance

“Try to strike a balance between humor and praise,” suggests Arvind Nair, DTM, president of Bombay Toastmasters in Mumbai, India. He prefers using gentle humor, especially for those for whom humor doesn’t come naturally.

To deliver a virtuoso roast, practice is essential. That’s when you master the timing, pauses, emphasis on laugh lines and overall tone. Every word should carry weight so the roast can be delivered succinctly. “The more you rehearse before a small practice audience, the more fun you and the audience will have,” says speech coach Patricia Fripp.

If you intend to use props, rehearse using them as well.

Past International Director Bill Woolfolk, DTM, says he has roasted and been roasted over the years. An excellent resource for roasters, he says, is the book *We’re Roasting Harry Tuesday Night* by Ed McManus and Bill Nicholas.

## WHEN YOU’RE THE RECIPIENT OF A ROAST

Sooner or later you may be the roastee. As the recipient of others’ roasts, you may be allowed or even expected to respond before the event ends. Whether you’re allowed rejoinders during each roast or are accorded a “last word” after the others have had their say about you, keep these suggestions in mind:

- **You’re always on stage.** While you’re being roasted, many eyes will be on you. Try to enjoy the experience, whether or not the roasters hit their mark with skill or taste. One roaster played a very long version of “It’s A Small World After All” to me on her accordion as her tribute. Use discipline, concentration and patience to smile and savor every second of the experience. Be gracious!
- **Take the high road.** Show your confidence by laughing at yourself and the barbs others throw your way. And when you get a chance to respond, be classy in your remarks. Dazzle the audience with your good taste and wit.
- **Thank everyone**—the roasters, their collaborators and the audience too. Successful roasts are the result of the collaborations of multiple chefs.

— Craig Harrison, DTM

### And In Conclusion ...

When you give a roast, honor the event by delivering your best material and then sitting back down. Your goal isn’t to speak the longest, but to generate laughter and love in your brief moments in the spotlight. In this case, less is more! 📌

**CRAIG HARRISON, DTM**, has roasted and been roasted over his 22 years in Toastmasters. A member of Lakeview Toastmasters in Oakland, California, he is a professional keynote and emcee. Visit [www.ExpressionsOfExcellence.com](http://www.ExpressionsOfExcellence.com) for his speaker and leader resources.

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## IMPROV



# Improve with *IMPROV*

How exercises in spontaneity hone communication skills.

**BY CAREN SCHNUR NEILE,  
PH.D., ATMS, CL**

For many years, celebrated actors and actresses have hailed the value of doing improvisational theater. But you can benefit from improv even if you're not a budding Colin Firth or Cate Blanchett. And Toastmasters club meetings are a great place to practice!





Members of the ImprovMasters club in Culver City, California, participate in improv games, which encourages spontaneity similar to Table Topics.

Participants in improvisation create scenes without any advanced planning or practice. They do it off the cuff, often drawing on suggestions from audience members or other sources of inspiration to build their on-the-spot stories. Improv exercises—which are referred to as “games”—encourage the use of imagination, playfulness, humor, personal connection and spontaneity.

Ultimately, say improv fans, the games boost your confidence and communication skills.

“You never know from one minute to the next what character, location or situation you’re going to find yourself in, so you learn to adapt quickly,” says Lisa Lockhart, ACB, ALB. “And that’s a big help in any business or social situation. In most of the games, we’re working with partners, so we get better at picking up clues from what’s being said or done, which helps us better harmonize with the other person.”

### Make it Part of Your Meetings

Some clubs make improv a big part of their meetings. One such group is the club Lockhart belongs to—ImprovMasters in Culver City, California. Club members usually play a variety of games. The Improv Master chooses, explains and moderates the activities (sometimes with the help of books and websites).

The games are similar to Table Topics, but the difference is that a member speaks on a Table Topic alone while improv requires spontaneous give-and-take with others. The LaughLovers Comedy club in Oakland, California, includes

improv games and skits in a section of their club meeting they call “Live at the Improv.”

The IMPROV Masters club in Bellevue, Washington, infuses its entire meeting with a spontaneous approach. Members arrive at meetings knowing only the identity of the meeting Toastmaster and the theme. The Toastmaster then tells members who will fulfill meeting roles and who will give speeches. For the speeches, members have five minutes to prepare. There is a great deal of extemporaneous speaking—and the quick thinking that goes with it.

Whether or not you belong to an improv club, you can incorporate these exercises into your club meetings. (See the sidebar for specific games you can try.) Paul Tavenner, club president of ImprovMasters, the Culver City group, says improv has helped his career as a music producer and musician.

“Many forms of music I work within require improvisation,” he says. “I joined ImprovMasters to enhance my musical career and improve how I communicate with people both professionally and personally.”

### Overcoming Fears

Improv activities, says Lockhart, have increased her comfort level as a speaker and communicator. “I came to the very first ImprovMasters meeting just to check things out,” she says. “Even though the concept terrified me, I could see it was exactly what I needed to loosen up my thinking and respond more organically in my speeches and my functionary roles.”



## LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

To get a taste of improvisation, you might try arranging an outing to a local improv theater. But even if you never get to see it performed, improv can easily be added to your club meetings. Here are a few tried-and-true games, adapted from the *Improv Encyclopedia* ([improvencyclopedia.com](http://improvencyclopedia.com)).

### First Line, Last Line

The first line of the scene starts with a line of dialogue contributed by a member of the audience (club members in the case of Toastmasters groups), such as “Run that by me, again?” The last line of the scene is another line from the audience, given at the same time as the first, such as “And that’s why I like elephants.” The scene ends whenever one improviser delivers the final line at an appropriate point in the scene. The trick is for the various improvisers to move the scene in the proper direction in an organic, natural way.

### Alphabet

This game consists of 26 lines of dialogue. The audience gives a letter of the alphabet, such as “t.” The first line must start with “t,” and the reply to that line must start with an “s,” and so on, until the entire alphabet has been covered. Note: After “z” comes “a.”

An improviser who hesitates, or uses the wrong letter, is replaced by another participant. The replacement needs to take over the character of the improviser he or she replaces.

### New Choice

A scene is acted out. Whenever the moderator says “New choice,” the improviser who is doing something or saying something needs to say or do something completely different. For example, someone may be told that her best friend moved away. She might respond by crying, until the moderator says “New choice.” Then she might respond by laughing.

— CAREN S. NEILE

Many improv games are simple and can be played without having to develop special skills, adds Lockhart. “What I see over and over again—and never get tired of—is seeing someone’s eyes light up when they realize, *Hey, I can do this!*”

And the exercises are highly entertaining, featuring a healthy dose of humor, notes Diana Lavery, also a member of ImprovMasters. “I always come away feeling like I laughed really hard!” she says.

John Zimmer, ACB, ALB, does improv outside his Toastmasters club. He is a member of the Renegade Saints Improv group in Geneva, Switzerland, which has put on shows for crowds of up to 150 people.

“I have also done corporate training on improv, and people love it,” says Zimmer, a member of the International Geneva Toastmasters club. “I find the whole process a big rush and incredibly stimulating.”

**“I find the whole process [of improv] a big rush and incredibly stimulating.”**

— John Zimmer, ACB, ALB

### The Basics

What are some of the basics of improvisation? First and foremost, go along with what your scene partner is doing. Your response to their actions and words should imply “Yes, and ...” In this way, you don’t shut down someone else’s suggestion and end up confusing the audience.

This isn’t to say that off the improv stage, you have to agree with everyone you meet. But it does pay to be positive and do your best to see a situation from the other person’s point of view.

### Improv Guidelines

David Razowsky is an improv teacher and longtime actor and director for Second City, a renowned improvisational comedy troupe. These are some of his improv “rules.”

### It’s not the information, it’s the emotions.

At the core of every scene are the character’s emotions. Start the scene by looking into your partner’s eyes and figuring out what he or she might have just said to you—hypothetically—prior to the scene’s start. Make your first line a reaction to that “statement.” You will immediately be connected to your partner.

Connecting to an audience through eye contact is one of the first things we learn as Toastmasters. It’s the best way to find out how and if your listeners are receiving your message.

### The transformation

For an idea to become a scene, a transformation must take place. Someone needs to change, to surrender their point of

## STATE THE OBVIOUS



Thomas Piccin, Ph.D., ACB, ALB, is an improv actor who has performed with the Mop & Bucket Company, an improvisation troupe in New York. He sees many parallels between improv and Table Topics—both activities where the participant or speaker typically has no time to prepare and no advanced knowledge of the topic.

In an article in the June 2014 issue of *Toastmaster* magazine, Piccin wrote about improv techniques that can improve your confidence and skill with Table Topics. These include “stating the obvious”:

*In one of my earliest improv performances, I joined my scene partner onstage as he began the scene without a word by shivering, stomping his feet and hugging himself vigorously. Novice that I was, I watched for several seconds, unable to think of an opening line. Finally, I simply said, “You look really cold.” The audience exploded in laughter.*

*What I said wasn’t funny or clever, but it was true, and it brought an honesty to the scene that the audience loved. In an improv scene, virtually everything exists in the imagination of the performers and the audience. Everyone has his own view of what’s happening, and stating the obvious helps to bring all those disparate views into alignment. Furthermore, what’s “obvious” to one person might be a delightful twist to another.*

*The same is true about a Table Topics speech. Each audience member develops an interpretation of your message. By clearly articulating key points you may think are obvious, you help guide each listener’s interpretation along the path you intend, while simultaneously ensuring the consistency and logical progression of your own thoughts.*

view, to release their grip on what they thought the scene was going to be at its beginning, to relinquish their “ownership” of the scene. Someone needs to be honest, truthful and express how they feel about their partner or the particular circumstance they are in. Someone needs to have a revelation.

In the course of our professional and personal lives, when we are truly present with others, we grow and change through our interactions.

### **No rules, just guidelines.**

Finally, warns Razowsky, “Rules aren’t *rules*; they’re *guidelines*. New improvisers (and speakers) get caught up in concentrating too much on ‘the rules.’” Teachers and directors want you to “own these concepts, to make them second nature,” he adds. “It’s a Zen approach—know what you know, then forget it. Once you ‘own’ a concept, we give you permission to break the rules.”

One of the key principles of improv is to go with the flow—trust your instincts, be open to others and have fun with it. Just remember, there’s a reason they call the thing that actors do a *play!* 🎭

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**CAREN S. NEILE, PH.D., ATMS, CL**, teaches storytelling at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. She is a frequent contributor to this magazine and has presented at two Toastmasters International conventions.

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## Six Rules of Humor

Tips for winning the Humorous Speech Contest.

BY GRAHAM HONAKER, ACS, CL

I have been fortunate to win the Humorous Speech Contest twice (for District 11, covering Indiana and northwestern Kentucky) and along the way I've learned some important lessons about making audiences laugh. My improvement hasn't come easy—the journey to becoming an effective humorous speaker is the result of a lot of practice. It's the direct result of attending weekly club meetings, volunteering for speaking roles to test my use of humor, and signing up each year to compete in my club's Humorous Speech contests. Moreover, it's the result of continually refining my speeches based on club evaluations.

The following six rules of humor can help you draft your next successful humorous speech.

**1 Find Humor in Everyday Life**  
I often hear Toastmasters lament how difficult it is to come up with a humorous speech topic. Some of the best speeches are inspired by life's everyday occurrences. In 2013, my wife and I flew with our two young children to Europe to visit family. The ensuing chaos on the airplane provided me with more than enough material to compose my winning speech that year. Think about your everyday life and things that may have a humorous twist to them.

**2 Know Your Audience**  
In my 2009 speech, I compared the delivery of my first child to a Toastmasters meeting. This would have made little sense to any audience outside of Toastmasters,

but the humorous comparison (using timing cards to help with my wife's contractions) landed perfectly with my audience. Know your audience—it's particularly important when trying to land a punchline.

### **3 It's a Humorous Speech Contest: Be Funny!**

The best Humorous Contest speeches use humor throughout. Some speakers work up to a big laugh at the end, so their speeches are void of humor in the introduction and body. This approach leaves your audience hanging and wondering *When do I get to laugh?* I like to launch into a joke right off the bat to get the audience warmed up and to kick start my own energy level.

## 4 Use Props

In both of my winning speeches, I used props. In the 2013 district contest, I brought a suitcase to show how, ideally, one should travel with kids inside a bag. I closed the speech by donning a pilot's cap. Think about effective props that can enhance your humor.

## 5 Don't Step on Your Laughter

One of the greatest challenges a humorous speaker faces, aside from producing laughter, is to avoid stepping on it. It takes practice, but you have to allow your audience the time to laugh and soak in the humor. You can kill a joke entirely by rushing too fast to tell your next one.

Effective pauses also enhance jokes. When talking about stuffing my kids into a suitcase, I said, "I see a look of concern on the faces of the audience." I then took a long pause and concluded with, "I understand your concern, and I realize that the airlines now charge \$50 a piece for these bags." The pause was the key to the joke that generated the biggest laugh in the contest.

## 6 Consult with Others

Always run your speech by a mentor or trusted advisor. I have seen several contestants essentially eliminate themselves with humor that crossed the line and was deemed offensive. For the 2013 competition, I debated about whether to use one particular joke that I thought toed the line. I sought the advice of five different people and the consensus was to leave it in. It generated big laughs and I am glad I included it, but seeking consultation about risky jokes is imperative. One of the reasons I am a fan of self-deprecating humor is that you only risk offending yourself!

Becoming an effective humorous speaker can provide incredible internal rewards. I can think of three in particular:

- There's nothing as heartwarming as seeing your audience react with smiles and laughter. We live in a world often marred by violence, tragedy and darkness. When you impart humor in a speech and inspire laughter, you as a speaker derive a real reward.

- Public speaking in general requires courage, but delivering humorous speeches in particular demands real fortitude. Stepping onto a stage with the goal of making an audience of strangers laugh can be daunting. But taking on that challenge and producing gut-busting laughter in an audience can be one of the great thrills in the Toastmasters experience.
- While delivery, timing and body language are critical to telling a joke, the joke's success lies in the author's ability to conceive it. Writing an original, clean joke that will deliver a punch takes time and patience, and hones one's creativity. To make humor work, the speaker

must also properly place the joke within the speech, build appropriate context around it and structure the speech effectively. The reward is the development of one's speechwriting skills.

Mark Twain once said, "Humor is mankind's greatest blessing." It's not often easy to pull off, but a well-constructed, funny speech will bring lots of laughs to the audience and many rewards to the speaker. **T**

**GRAHAM HONAKER, ACS, CL**, is a member of the *Indy Free Speakers Toastmasters club in Indianapolis, Indiana.*



## HOW TO ADD HUMOR TO YOUR CLUB MEETINGS

Different styles of humor can be practiced in club meetings. Here are a few ideas to help members expand their comedy repertoire.

**Monologue.** A number of humor clubs open their meetings with a humorous commentary on current events or with a topical monologue (following the examples of popular TV talk-show hosts). As with all humor in the meeting, keep it clean.

**Stand-up comedy.** Delivering a short set of stand-up material can help hone your comedic timing.

**A toast.** What? At a Toastmasters meeting? What better way to practice concise, customized humor? You'll be prepared the next time you need a toast for a wedding.

**A roast.** This type of activity might best be scheduled for a special meeting, because

the structure of a longer roast lends itself best to practicing humorous lines.

**Observational humor.** Incorporating a short session where one or more members share humorous observations about the meeting is a great way to develop a member's skill in creating spontaneous humor.

**Speaker introductions.** Challenge members to make every introduction during the meeting include a touch of humor. When you provide a written introduction for your next speech, build in some humor to make your introducer look good and get your speech off to a lively start.

*This article is a condensed version of a story by John Kinde, DTM, AS, originally published in the August 2011 issue of the Toastmaster magazine.*

# Mindful Leadership

The secret to increased productivity and creativity.

BY LINDA ALLEN, ACS, CL

With a wealth of information, training and materials competing for our attention, how do you know where to start when you want to improve your leadership skills? How do you become better at inspiring, motivating, engaging and energizing others?

Businesses, governments, universities, civic groups and individuals are finding that truly great leadership comes from people who can lead themselves first. The idea is that by learning to lead yourself, you will become a more sensitive and effective leader. You are off to a great start by being active in your club, and if you choose to pursue the leadership track you'll gain additional insight.

Although you may not consider yourself a leader outside of Toastmasters, each of us influences others in our interactions as role models, mentors, colleagues, family members and friends. Even strangers observe how you act and react, and they make decisions based on what they see. The power and impact of your influence is greater than you realize.

"Good leadership is knowing where to lead people," wrote Dr. Stephen McKenzie, psychologist and author of *Mindfulness at Work*. "The essence of knowing where to lead *other* people is knowing where to lead *ourselves*. We have to discover *our* full working potential before we can lead others to discovering *their* full working potential."

## Up-Close and Personal

The first step in leading yourself is to know who you are—your values, character and essence. A list of respected voices from all cultures and times, including Socrates, Lao Tzu, Buddha, Shakespeare, Ralph Waldo Emerson and more, have expressed some version of "Know thyself" to guide future generations in their quest for purpose and meaning in their lives.

To truly know yourself, you have to get up-close and personal by spending quiet time alone to ask and answer the question "Who am I?" We often avoid that puzzling question because we consider who we are not—instead of who we can be. The opinions of others, whether positive or negative, also influence who we believe we are. Each person's answer will be unique—there is no right or wrong answer.

"Most people define themselves through the content of their lives—experiences, thoughts, career, material objects and relationships. Knowing yourself is being yourself and ceasing to





## PERSONAL GROWTH



identify with content,” says Eckhart Tolle, author of the bestselling books, *The Power of Now* and *A New Earth*.

But, finding the time and space to ask and answer deep questions of identity can be challenging when you are overwhelmed by an overscheduled life. Wise voices from the past give us another piece of advice: Be still.

### An Old Practice

In today’s world of multitasking and information overload, our minds often run on autopilot just to keep up with the demands and responsibilities of work and our personal lives. How can you find a place of stillness and inner peace when the noise of the world around you interrupts your day and intrudes on your thoughts and concentration?

Mindfulness is the space of stillness and peace where you can quiet your thoughts and relax your mind in the present moment.

## Stress is an indicator of not being mindful.

It’s an old practice that is attracting new attention as a way to slow down the mind and redirect your wandering attention. Mindfulness is the opposite of multitasking, working and living on autopilot. It teaches you to control your mind and your thoughts through stillness. For centuries, the staying power and value of mindfulness have proven true.

### Emotional Fitness

If you think you’re seeing words like mindfulness, purposeful, intentional, self-awareness and engagement more frequently, you’re right. They’ve crept into mainstream awareness and even into business vocabulary, which has traditionally scoffed at leadership qualities that deal with emotions. Mindfulness workshops at international economic conferences have attracted standing-room-only crowds.

A mindfulness course at Google called “Search Inside Yourself” is the company’s most popular training program. Approximately 2,000 employees have participated in it. Chade-Meng Tan, who has the unconventional title of Jolly Good Fellow, led the creation of the course. He encourages emotional fitness in Google employees by helping them create peace, joy and kindness in their lives. When you lead your life with these three attributes, you can lead others to have the same experience. Without that foundation, it’s hard to do the right thing, says Tan.

Like other companies, Google has discovered the positive effect that mindfulness has on the company’s profit and success. People begin to help others for the greater good. Tan believes



Google’s leadership in communication technology will spur the development of software and apps that will put mindfulness into the hands of digital users.

Janice L. Marturano, founder and executive director of the Institute for Mindful Leadership and author of *Finding the Space to Lead*, practices mindful leadership as a simple and effective way to lead and live better. While a top executive at General Mills, she juggled career, civic and personal responsibilities by reacting to the loudest voice in her overscheduled life.

Marturano discovered mindfulness when family and corporate decisions challenged her usual pattern of problem-solving. She found mindfulness meditation, and within a few weeks noticed how her reactions had changed to responses, and her ability to let go of conditioned behaviors, trivial worries and mental clutter expanded. She became a “closet meditator,” reluctant to share her unconventional problem-solving method with her colleagues.

As she practiced mindfulness meditation, her days became more productive and creative, which spilled over into her personal life. People began to notice the change in her and wanted to learn her “secret.” During her last five years at General Mills, she developed and taught the company’s Mindful Leadership training, which is now part of the work experience for all interested employees. In 2010, she left the company to found the Institute for Mindful Leadership in Oakland, New Jersey, and has taught mindful leadership at organizations around the world, including World Economic Forum gatherings in Davos, Switzerland and Tianjin, China.

### A Complementary Pair

In a phone interview with Marturano, she spoke with thoughtful consideration of her words. She told how she realized that mindfulness and leadership training are compatible—they complement each other and are intertwined.

To tap into mindfulness, Marturano recommends 10 minutes of daily meditation twice a day to redirect your focus in the midst of countless distractions. That’s where being still comes in—being still enough to notice your breath. She says:

*“Mindfulness creates space around your thoughts. From that space come responsive, conscious choices. You are not just focused on the short-term outcomes, you have a chance to ask ‘What is the best choice now?’ You strengthen and cultivate your mind to be present and to bring your full and best capacity to the choices you make.”*

In an online interview with Elliot Hayes, manager of About Time Management Solutions, an Australian consulting company, psychologist McKenzie said mindfulness in the workplace improves decision-making skills, which leads to quality results. Mindfulness brings simplicity and natural abilities to decision-making.

Stress is an indicator of not being mindful. Many mistakes are caused by not paying attention to what you are doing, such







as hitting the send button on an email that you should not send. Instead of focusing on what is happening in the moment, your mind is distracted by living in, and anticipating, the future.

To go from mindless work habits to paying mindful attention and focusing on what you are doing, McKenzie suggests focusing on your breath.

McKenzie describes mindful leaders as those who see opportunities to lead themselves and others. They give clear directions and allow for quiet space so that others can identify their own best way to be an effective working part of the whole. Conversations without distractions of technology (or your ego planning its responses to the conversation) make others feel valued, heard and understood.

## “Serving, learning and growing are the keys to effective leadership personally, professionally and as a Toastmaster.”

— District 16 Governor Jieliang Pan, DTM

From Marturano’s point of view, “It’s ironic that the technology that was created to connect us easier and faster actually disconnects us from quality relationships.” She shared the example of a workshop attendee who returned to work and started the practice of closing his laptop whenever he had a conversation with colleagues. He noticed how different the conversations were when he listened and paid full attention to the other person. His team members commented they felt heard, respected and understood.

Another one of Marturano’s workshop participants, after putting his smartphone away one evening, looked up at the star-filled sky and realized he hadn’t seen the stars in the last 20 years. His true “aha” moment was when he wondered what else he may have missed while staring at his phone.

### It Shows

If you are a mindful leader, your responses come from a center of peace. You choose your words thoughtfully and exude calmness and kindness, which makes you feel comfortable. District 16 Governor Jieliang Pan, DTM, brings these qualities to his leadership responsibilities with Oklahoma Toastmasters clubs and members. He describes his own mindfulness as being fully committed to, and following through on, his leadership responsibilities. When you are with Pan, you feel his values of integrity, respect, service and sincerity. He wants all Toastmasters to experience the joy he does in his leadership role.



## GOT 20 MINUTES TO BE A BETTER LEADER?

Ten minutes twice a day opens up much-needed mental space—the space today’s leaders say they desperately need, says Janice Marturano. Marturano, author of *Finding the Space to Lead*, says mindful leadership helps us face the incredible challenges of being a leader. A simple 10-minute sitting meditation—on a chair or floor, at home or at the office—is the way to start. Here’s how it works:

- Sit comfortably in a way your body can be still and supported. A straight-backed chair is fine.
- Bring your attention to your breath.
- Be open and curious about whatever you notice, such as thoughts, sensations or sounds. Don’t try to change or control or judge what you notice.
- When your attention pulls or drifts away, redirect your attention back to your breath. “This is not about clearing your mind or finding your bliss,” says Marturano. “The process of redirecting is the practice. You are building your ability to pull yourself back to focus in the midst of countless distraction.

Do this twice a day. Details and audio downloads for this basic mindfulness meditation and other leadership practices are free on her website, [FindingTheSpaceToLead.com](http://FindingTheSpaceToLead.com).

*This information is reprinted from the Center for Creative Leadership’s April 2014 newsletter.*

“Mindfulness is a journey to keep growing. You have to keep learning in order to grow,” Pan says. “Serving, learning and growing are the keys to effective leadership personally, professionally and as a Toastmaster. We have to keep learning from each other to continue to grow.”

Getting to know yourself through mindful meditation gives you insight into yourself as well as an honest perspective of the external world, which improves your leadership skills. Long-lasting and far-reaching effects of mindful leadership ripple beyond your job or leadership position to your personal life and out to the world. As your external life mirrors your internal peace and control, others notice. They sense your sincerity, authenticity and compassion. That’s when mindful leadership becomes a win-win-win for everyone. You’ve inspired them to accompany you on the mindfulness journey to get to know who they are and then to become mindful leaders who will inspire positive changes in the world.

Enjoy your journey! ■

**LINDA ALLEN, ACS, CL**, is a member of Enid Speakers of the Plains Toastmasters in Enid, Oklahoma. She is a writer, speaker and trainer who specializes in professional and personal development and leadership programs.

# What a Pair to Chair: Jesse Oakley III and Dana Wall-Oakley

Couple celebrates wedding anniversary by co-chairing host committee for 2015 convention.

BY SHANNON DEWEY

**W**hen Jesse Oakley III, DTM, was asked to chair the host district committee for the 2015 Toastmasters International Convention, he agreed to do it under one condition—his right brain had to be the co-chair.

Meet Dana Wall-Oakley, DTM—also affectionately known as Jesse’s right brain.

Since Jesse and Dana spent part of their honeymoon at the 2012 International Convention in Orlando, Florida, the event holds a special meaning to the couple. They are relishing the opportunity to be involved behind the scenes at this year’s convention, and it’s clear that the honeymoon is not over for this dynamic duo. What’s even more exciting for the pair is that the convention is being held in their backyard—Las Vegas, Nevada.

A member of three clubs in the city—the Starmasters, Innuendo Toastmasters and Smart Mouth Toastmasters—Jesse has served as division and district governor, and is currently an Ambassador for the revitalized education program. Dana’s participation essentially mirrors her husband’s, and she is also an active member of three clubs in Las Vegas: the Windjammers, Innuendo Toastmasters and Wyndham Harradise Toastmasters.

Jesse is an associate materials engineer for the Nevada Department of Transportation and Dana is a transportation dispatcher for Wyndham Vacation Resorts. They’re putting their communication skills to the test as they prepare District 33 for Toastmasters’ 84th International Convention.

## How have you shared the responsibilities of co-chairing?

**Dana:** Jesse calls me his “right brain” because I have the ability to see how something could work in a way that is different from how he sees it. We talk to figure out the best approach to an obstacle



*Jesse Oakley III and Dana Wall-Oakley*

by considering both viewpoints. He thinks of a plan and I fine-tune the details.

**Jesse:** Taking on the role of host district chair is a monumental task, and who better to have by my side than my wife?

## As the goodwill ambassadors of the convention, what does your role entail?

**Jesse:** First of all, the most important role is to be one of the many welcoming faces to greet fellow Toastmasters and guests in attendance. They’ve traveled many miles for this awesome event, and we want to greet them with a warm welcome.

**Dana:** Our second main duty is to oversee the entire volunteer effort. We selected the committee chairs, assisted in creating a volunteer website and posted convention information on our district website. We have been diligently recruiting volunteers as we will need more than 1,000 people

to help make this convention the best one ever. We find volunteers by attending speech contests, district conferences and club officer training sessions, and by connecting with fellow Toastmasters via social networking sites.

## What do you find most rewarding about the process?

**Jesse:** It’s the flexibility that serving as co-chair allows when it comes to planning, and how it builds my self-confidence. What I discovered about myself in the process is that I have the dedication, passion, commitment and belief that I can do it!

**Dana:** Pretty much what Jesse said! What’s especially rewarding is how every day we give each other encouragement and strength; we are committed to both our marriage and to the event. Our passion for Toastmasters is evident in all aspects of our lives, and it strengthens our relationship.

**You're both very involved and seasoned Toastmasters. Why has leadership been an important part of your journey?**

**Jesse:** I took a leadership path because of my willingness to learn and grow inside and outside of Toastmasters. Whether it was in the club, area, division or district, each leadership level brought different challenges. Each one served as a great lesson in how to serve my community or work at my job.

**Dana:** Ever since I joined my first club more than 10 years ago, I have been a club officer. I enjoy being involved behind the scenes, and I've gained self-confidence and self-esteem by being a leader.

**How have your lessons in leadership helped you?**

**Jesse:** The various leadership roles I performed taught me how to make a plan, arrange and organize meetings, evaluate effectively and listen actively. These skills have allowed me to teach classes, give presentations, conduct interviews, write performance evaluations and earn promotions at my job.

**Dana:** I really enjoy being involved with the clubs. The lessons I learned about listening, organizing, thinking on my feet and socializing have enabled me to enjoy

deeper friendships, including the one with my amazing husband.

**How would you describe the International Convention to someone who has never attended one?**

**Dana:** You meet thousands of Toastmasters from around the world and can participate in fantastic education sessions led by professional and inspiring speakers.

The event also offers Toastmasters merchandise like manuals and T-shirts for sale; a Candidates' Corner and Candidates' Showcase for meeting candidates running for a seat on the Board of Directors; a magnificent keynote speech; Hall of Fame awards for districts from the previous year; an incoming International President's Inauguration Reception and dinner and dance; the Golden Gavel event and of course the International Speech Contest Semifinals and the World Championship of Public Speaking!

**Tell us about your favorite Toastmasters convention experiences.**

**Jesse:** The first convention I attended was in 2007 in Phoenix, Arizona. I was there to support a contestant in the World Championship of Public Speaking. I was completely

amazed by seeing and meeting so many Toastmasters from around the world. When I left, I was hooked. Since that experience, I have attended five conventions—including Las Vegas, Kuala Lumpur and the one for our honeymoon in Orlando, Florida.

**Dana:** Attending the 2012 convention together as newlyweds was a great bonding experience for us. Mixing a little fun with a lot of Toastmasters is the absolute best way to spend a honeymoon. Attending subsequent conventions has meant so much more to us as a couple because of that experience.

**What makes Las Vegas, your hometown, a great site for the convention?**

**Jesse:** Las Vegas is an absolutely amazing, world-class destination that offers visitors many exciting options. Although we have visited other places, we love coming home to Vegas.

The Las Vegas Toastmasters community looks forward to meeting everyone in August. Many good times will be shared and great memories will be created as we come together for this highly anticipated event! **T**

**SHANNON DEWEY** is the editorial coordinator for the *Toastmaster* magazine.

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# Official Notice of Vote Your 2015-2016 Officer and Director Candidates

On Saturday, August 15, 2015, you will have the opportunity to vote for the international officer and director candidates of your choice while attending the International Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

The International Leadership Committee nominated officer candidates for the

positions of International President-Elect, First Vice President and Second Vice President. International director candidates were nominated for Regions 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13. The Committee's selection is presented in accordance with the Bylaws of Toastmasters International, Article VIII.

## 2015 Annual Business Meeting

8 a.m. Saturday,  
August 15, 2015

Caesars Palace  
Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

### Officer Candidates



International  
President-Elect  
**Mike Storkey, DTM**



First  
Vice President  
**Balraj  
Arunasalam, DTM**



Second  
Vice President  
**Lark Doley, DTM**



Second  
Vice President  
**Kevin Doyle, DTM**



Second  
Vice President  
**Mike Helm, DTM**

To review details of each officer nominee's qualifications, please visit the Toastmasters website:  
[www.toastmasters.org/officercandidates](http://www.toastmasters.org/officercandidates)

### Director Candidates

#### From Region 1

Margaret Page, DTM

#### From Region 5

Eileen James, DTM  
Magnus Jansson, DTM

#### From Region 9

Steve Chen, DTM  
Jeff Sobel, DTM

#### From Region 13

Nagaraja Rao, DTM  
Jorie Wu, DTM

#### From Region 3

TK O'Geary, DTM  
David Rebeles, DTM

#### From Region 7

Russell Drake, DTM  
Robert Logan, ATMG, CL

#### From Region 11

Teresa Dukes, DTM  
Elizabeth Nostedt, DTM

To view details of each director nominee's qualifications, please visit the Toastmasters website:  
[www.toastmasters.org/directorcandidates](http://www.toastmasters.org/directorcandidates)

It is the right and duty of all clubs to participate in the vote, either through their representatives at the Convention or by proxy. If you are attending the Convention, you will have the opportunity to meet and talk with all the international officer and director candidates before the election. Additional nominations for officers and directors may be made from the floor at the Annual Business Meeting.



# FOR

**The Board of Directors recommends voting in favor of Proposal A.**

To view the full text of amendments to the Bylaws of Toastmasters International, visit [www.toastmasters.org/TIBylaws](http://www.toastmasters.org/TIBylaws).

# CAST YOUR VOTE FOR PROPOSAL A

## Amendments to the Bylaws of Toastmasters International

**In August, at the 2015 Annual Business Meeting, every Toastmasters club will have the opportunity to vote on a series of proposed amendments to the Bylaws of Toastmasters International. Here are the amendments proposed by your Board of Directors:**

- ▶ Expand the number of candidates who may be nominated by the International Leadership Committee (ILC) for Second Vice President and international director. Currently, the Bylaws limit nominations to a maximum of three candidates per position. The proposed change removes that limit.
- ▶ The use of the term “Policy and Procedures” in the Bylaws is not consistent with the current structure of other governing documents. It is proposed that the term “Policy and Procedures” be replaced with “Policies” as a more accurate and simple reference to this body of rules.
- ▶ In February 2014, the Board of Directors established new titles for district leaders that are scheduled to take effect July 1, 2015. The intent of the change is to modernize the titles, reflect a mission-focused approach to district leadership roles and properly represent the status of district leadership in relation to comparable roles in the corporate and voluntary sectors.

Additional changes related to district leader titles are also proposed in order to accommodate operational activities, and to empower the Board of Directors to modify district leader titles in the future with automatic updates to these bylaws.

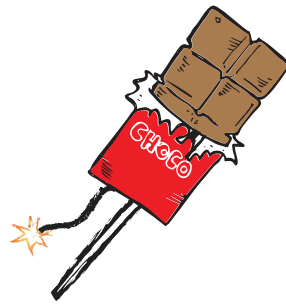
Moreover, the new district leader titles may result in confusion in the Bylaws between directors at the international level and directors at the district level. To ensure clarity between the two, the modifier “international” has been added when referring to the Toastmasters International Board of Directors.

- ▶ Periodically, district leaders form, or request permission to form, legal entities that may or may not enable the proper conduct of district business. Toastmasters International is recognized by the United States Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c) 3 tax-exempt, non-profit organization incorporated in the State of California. Creating separate legal entities in other jurisdictions has the potential to jeopardize the organization’s legal standing and threaten our non-profit status. Language has been inserted to clarify that only the Board of Directors has the authority to create Toastmasters’ legal entities.

**The Board of Directors of Toastmasters International, at its February 2015 meeting, unanimously recommended approval of these amendments to the Bylaws of Toastmasters International.**

*The Board of Directors asks for your support and recommends that your club vote in favor of Proposal A.*

If you have any questions regarding the proposed amendments to the Bylaws of Toastmasters International, please write to [boardcontact@toastmasters.org](mailto:boardcontact@toastmasters.org).



# The Zip Factor

Want to add a little hot sauce to your writing?  
Take a lesson from these guys.

BY JOHN CADLEY

I used to write catalog copy for a living, and my clients were always telling me to put more “zip” into it. I never knew what that meant and, unfortunately, neither did they.

Now I do know. I’ve just received a flier from a new store in town that claims to sell specialty foods you can’t get anywhere else. One thing I do know: You can’t get copy like this anywhere else. You want “zip”? Coming right up.

The very first headline nearly zips me right out of my chair: **Baby You’re a Firework!** Who can resist that? Not me. “Ooh,” the copy says, “there are going to be fireworks. On your tongue. Oh yes indeed. Our Fireworks Chocolate Bar is here to put a little spark in your life (and your mouth).” Who needs the candy bar? I’m ready to eat the copy!

I wouldn’t know a Hefeweizen from a weizenheimer but they make me feel like I do.

Ditto for their Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Caramels. Apparently demand outstripped supply on these delicacies and now the store is making it right: “We heard your pleading. We felt your yearning”—now *that’s* customer service!—“and things are different now.” With this they pledge to stock these “mighty morsels” year-round so they become a “common find in our gastronomic landscape.” And what a find! “Creamy caramels drenched in deep, rich, Belgian dark chocolate, sprinkled with natural salt from the Dead Sea” (not just natural but *old!*)—“the trifecta of sweet-savory indulgence ... the triple crown of candy creativity.” Notice the metaphors, the alliterations, the completely incongruous comparison of caramels to thoroughbred horse racing. *That*, my friends, is copywriting. I’m allergic to chocolate and I’m ordering a pound of the stuff. Who cares if my throat closes up. The person who wrote those words deserves my undying allegiance—even if I die.

And how’s this headline for getting your attention: **Josephs-Brau Dunkelweizen**. They could have said **Our Specially Crafted Bavarian Beer**, but then they wouldn’t have gotten me

to try to pronounce it and sound like I’ve already had a few. Once they’ve got me, they uncork a brilliant copy strategy: “If you’re a Hefeweizen fan and you also like to dabble in the darker beers now and then, Dunkelweizen is a great way to tie them together.” See that? They’re talking to me like I’m a sophisticated beer drinker. I wouldn’t know a Hefeweizen from a weizenheimer but they make me feel like I do. Actually, when it comes to dabbling I prefer **Expensive Beer Someone Else Buys Me**, but after a compliment like that I just may spring for a six-pack.

Even pets get to share in the riches. Who can ignore a headline that proclaims: **Pets Are People Too?** Just as I’m saying to myself “Pets aren’t people” they beat me to the punch: “Well, okay, not exactly people, but if you’re a pet lover you probably didn’t even bat an eye at that headline.” I did bat an eye (I even took off my glasses to do it) but now I feel like I shouldn’t have, not when they remind me: “Your pets *are* members of your family. You shop for the rest of your family at our store. Why *wouldn’t* you shop for your pets with us as well?” Notice that second italic? Why *wouldn’t* I, indeed? What am I, some deadbeat who callously disregards the nutritional needs of poor defenseless creatures just because they have no opposable thumbs to buy their own food? They’re right. My pets are family. They demand attention, cost money, leave a mess and never say thank you—just like my family.

Here’s the clincher: **Reduced Guilt Chicken Salad**. Really? Of all the things I have to feel guilty about? Chicken salad? Who knew? “Throw that guilt out the window!” blares the copy. “Enjoy your chicken salad without worrying so much about fat or calories.” (I never did worry. I will now.) “Traditional chicken salads rely on mayonnaise to hold everything together. Ours uses low-fat Greek yogurt.” There you go! Greek yogurt. Everybody knows people who eat Greek yogurt live to be 4,000 years old. OK, guys, I’m in. Gimme a tub of that stuff—and hold the mayo! Ha-ha!

See that? I just added a little “zip” of my own. ■

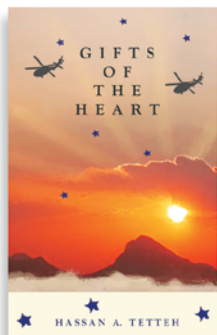
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JOHN CADLEY, a former advertising copywriter, is a freelance writer and musician living in Fayetteville, New York.

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in 1984, living in a public flat, studying in a neighbourhood school, serving in the army to escort the President on the police bike, selling insurance, romances, achieving financial freedom with multiple sources of passive income and meditation to discover his purpose of living. In the end, Happy realised his ultimate dream of a happy family, running a resort and cruise service to connect with whales and dolphins in Australia!

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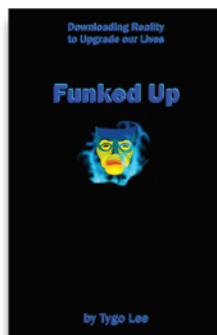
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In addition to all the good stuff in life, we tend to mess things up a lot too, and *ignoring* our difficulties or detrimental behavior doesn't make it all go away. In general, a lot of our problems arise from our *self-centered* and *materialistic* orientations along with our negative or violent *emotional swings*. Hey, isn't it about time we started getting ourselves...

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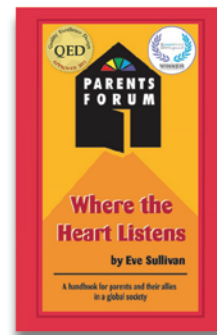
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This is a book written by movers and shakers, for movers and shakers. This is not for the fakers. If you want the substance, the content, the business frameworks, ideas to win, to progress in business, then learn how to create and use business-to-business network. Most people do not have a clue that corporations run the

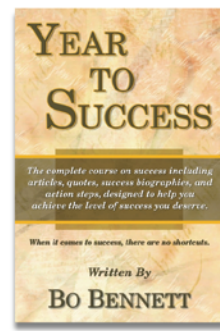
world today, and most corporations work in a business-to-business network that allows them to achieve FIVE goals: simultaneously-innovate, cash-in, profit, sustain, and focus. How? Read the book to find out. This is the area of specialisation of Vivek Sood, the author. Vivek's global clients range from Fortune 500 to some of the most innovative corporations on earth. Having travelled to more than 150 countries for work, Vivek offers a unique perspective. To download 3 free chapters see [www.5starbusinessnetwork.com](http://www.5starbusinessnetwork.com).

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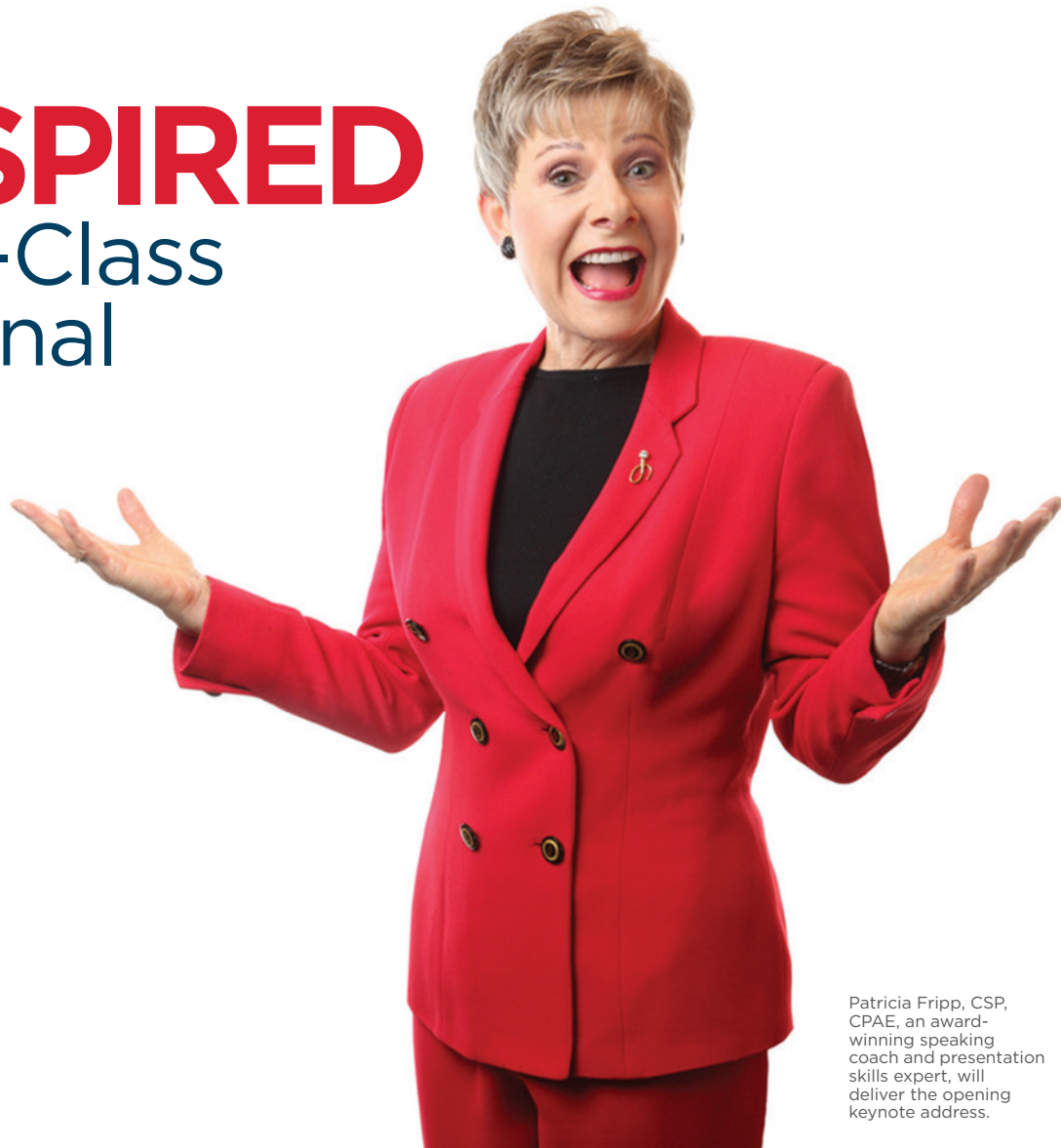
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