



# THE COMMUNICATOR

First Oakville Toastmasters #2245 Newsletter

January 18, 2007

## THE 2006-2007 EXECUTIVE

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## We really know how to Celebrate!

On December 14, 2006, First Oakville Toastmasters celebrated the holidays with our annual Christmas Party. While our singing voices could use some work, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the festivities! Here are some pictures from the fine affair.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 We really know how to Celebrate
- 2 Are you Walking Your Talk?
- 3 Get the Creative Juices Flowing
- 4 Etiquette 101 – Please Rise
- 4 Those Written Comments are Soooo Important
- 4 Robert is our friend



*Our cheery Chair, Maria*



*Jester Gerry lights things up with a funny joke!*



*Marion delivers a heartfelt toast to Santa Claus*



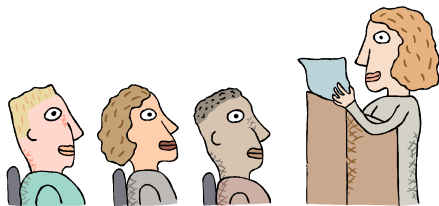
*Our Quizmasters, Katherine and Jason test our Christmas knowledge!*

## Are you Walking Your Talk?

*Excerpt from the November 2006 issue of Toastmaster Magazine by Frederique Herel, DTM, Glen Abbey Club*

Some days are meant to be great. February 16, 2000, was one of them, although its greatness was certainly not obvious at first.

I was about to compete at my club's international speech contest. I had a good speech, which I had rehearsed endlessly for two months. I was ready!



As I stood in front of my fellow Toastmasters, I felt a rush of confidence. I uttered my opening sentence flawlessly. However, my second sentence got stuck in my throat. Then...nothing! I drew a complete blank. Unable to remember the slightest detail of my speech – I didn't have notes – I left the room in tears. Humiliated like a diva who just who just missed her high note, I wanted to crawl into a hole and wait for the end of time.

But this day turned out to be the highlight of my speaking career! Thanks to this humbling experience, I made three invaluable discoveries that changed my life forever.

First, I learned that my Toastmasters club was the best place to fail, because my fellow Toastmasters are a compassionate and caring group of people. Indeed, two days after the contest, I found at my door an envelope full of notes. All my club members had written thoughtful words of encouragement such as "Please come back," "I already miss you," "We want you back." Those words touched my heart deeply and healed the pain of my failure.

My second lesson from this was the discovery of my own resiliency. Even before receiving the notes, I had decided to go back to my club and speak on "What to do when you forget your speech." I had already scheduled this speech for our next meeting. Incidentally, I gave this presentation without any memory blank!

But the third lesson was the most important one: I uncovered my inability to speak in a situation where I don't "walk my talk."

Walking our talk is directly related to the topic we present. The topic of my contest speech was "Relationships," and more specifically "Commitment." I was speaking to Ken, the boyfriend of the Barbie doll, teasing him about his 40 years of dating Barbie and asking him when he was finally going to propose to her. It was an entertaining and motivational speech about the glory of love and commitment.

However, at the time of this presentation, I had been dating a man for the last two years. Even though I was trying to convince myself – and everyone else – that I was very committed to my boyfriend, deep down I knew I wasn't ready to spend my life with him. So there I was, trying to convince my audience that commitment was a wonderful thing, while in my personal life I was running away from it like a scared chicken.

Unfortunately when our body goes in one direction, and our head in another, the result can be disastrous. In my case, I believe my personal integrity kept me from lying to my audience and...I froze! As public speakers, I am convinced it is essential that our words be in line with our actions, or that we walk our talk.

I now live with a marvelous man I met six years ago. Our relationship is filled with fun, love and commitment. Since that fateful contest in 2000, I have been walking my talk. In 2001, I again presented that same speech on commitment at my club's international speech contest, simply hoping to complete it. Not only did I deliver the whole speech without a glitch, but I also won first place. I later placed first at the area level, and I could have won at the division level had the judges not decided to give more points to my fellow contestants!

Life is full of twists and turns. Surprisingly, I learned a lot more by failing in 2000 - than by succeeding in 2001. February 16, 2000, turned out to be a great day after all: The day I learned to walk my talk!

## Get the Creative Juices Flowing

By Laura

Do you ever have trouble coming up with a great idea for your next speech? I do! I stumbled across this great piece, “12 Steps to Creative Thinking” by James Lund in the book, Lists to Live By. Next time you are stumped, try one of these tips to get your creative juices flowing!



### 1 Write Away, Write it Down

*Record ideas as soon as you think of them. Keep paper and pen handy at all times -- in your car, by your television, on your nightstand.*

### 2 Listen to Music

*Listen to whatever sparks your imagination, whether it's Bach, the Beatles, or something you've never heard before.*

### 3 Exercise

*Go for a run, shoot some hoops, do jumping jacks – anything that starts your blood pumping and keeps your mind sharp.*

### 4 Brainstorm with a Friend, Co-Worker, or Six-Year Old

*Talk with someone who looks at the world a little differently than you do. Chances are he or she will inspire a new approach.*

### 5 Do it Poorly

*If you're a perfectionist, don't be. Create something that isn't necessarily your best work, but that gets the job done. Then go back later to fix it or redo it.*

### 6 Watch People

*Go downtown or to the mall, sit on a bench, and observe the passersby. Imagine what kind of life they lead.*

### 7 Keep a Journal

*Write about your life and what's important to you, then revisit your old thoughts when you need new ideas.*

### 8 Pray or Read the Bible

*Putting life into spiritual perspective can take the pressure off and jump-start the creative juices.*

### 9 Free-Write

*Sit down at the computer or with pen and paper and write whatever comes into your mind. You might be surprised at what comes out.*

### 10 Change Your Locale

*Find a new quiet place -- a park, the beach, a library, or just a different room -- and let your mind wander.*

### 11 Wash the Dishes or Mow the Lawn

*It's easy and it gives you a feeling of accomplishment while you're trying to think.*

### 12 Sleep on it

*If nothing is working, your best bet may be to give up for now. Let your subconscious create overnight and you'll have fresh ideas tomorrow.*

## Etiquette 101 – Please Rise

If you have something to say, we all want to hear it. It's important that you wait to be recognized by the Chair (unless you don't need to be recognized as with some parliamentary procedures during the Business Session) and then **stand up** to make your point, ask your question, or perform your role for the evening. With the fast pace of our meetings, it's important that you stand up and project – you often only get one chance to make your point and be heard by your fellow Toastmasters!

## Those Written Comments are Sooooo Important

By John S



John's "After Speech" Ritual:  
Cocktails and Comments

I have a ritual I follow when I get home after delivering a speech. I settle down with an alcoholic nightcap and read through the written comments I have received from those who have been gracious enough to share their thoughts with me. As much as I take note and value the verbal and written comments I receive from my evaluator on the night, I also look for the added value I can derive from those brief written sheets. It is always valuable to read and digest the diverse views of the impact of my speech and the suggestions offered for improvement. I am not masochistic; I do also like to read the praise that sometimes comes my way! Please keep the reviews coming, they are very useful immediately and later, as I keep them with my manual and refer to them often.

## Robert is our friend

Putting a motion on the table is what kicks off any exciting Business Session, but there is a right way to put your motion out there! When acknowledged by the Chair, rise and state, "Mr./Madam Chair, I move that we..."<sup>1</sup> Make your motion as succinct as possible. At this time, just state the motion and be seated. In order for your motion to be recognized, the Chair will call for someone to second the motion. Once the motion has been seconded, the Chair will call for the mover of the motion to once again stand and speak to their motion. This is when you will go into the details of your motion and appeal to the membership to support your motion. Also, don't forget to supply the Secretary with your motion in writing in advance of the Business Session. This will help ensure your motion is properly documented in our Meeting Minutes and that the motion can be re-read easily when debate and voting occurs.

<sup>1</sup>Jones, O. Garfield. *Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance*, Penguin Books, 1971.

### Feedback/Comments/Story Ideas?

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