



MANSION TOASTMASTERS

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2004

Our club theme this year is: Taking Growth to New Heights

What's New....

Nine new members for starters. Welcome to Chris Demerino, Kathrine Brown, Kathryn Nestor, Dale Skverekas, Norma Urquhart, Allison Mang, Kelly Cuthbert, Michael Paul and Maurice Labelle. These newcomers have been so actively participating in our weekly meetings that they don't seem new anymore. That brings our total membership up to 46.

Two New Website pages are under construction: a page with pictures and brief bio's of our new members and a page with the pictures of our current contest trophy holders with captions listing the past winners. The Mansion trophies are spectacular – probably the best of any Toastmaster club and should be prominently displayed. Also, the executive approved the purchase of a *new trophy* for our annual Debate winner.

An *online schedule* has been created and Eugene has been updating it as assignment changes occur. It can be accessed from the menu on the member's page of our website.

Shelley Thornton is scheduled to complete her CTM speech on December 15th. With this achievement the Mansion Club will have earned another banner ribbon for tracking as *a President's Distinguished Club* in the Fall term.

The mystery around former member Karin Jelecanin's departure has been revealed. She is *expecting twins* – a more than adequate explanation for taking a break from Toastmasters.

Advanced Manuals

There is a full set of advanced manuals in our supply box in the Cumis room available for all club members to borrow. Just sign them out with Michael Hourigan but remember that - like the basic manual you receive upon joining - you are responsible for replacing or returning the manual.

Friends of the Mansion

New members may be wondering who they are and why we call them "Friends of the Mansion". They are Peter Crabtree and Anita Roth from the Trafalgar Club, Joan Graham and Val Clements from the Mighty Oaks Club and Hal Shaw from the First Oakville Club. These five senior Toastmasters are the individuals who provided educational and organizational support for our founders when our club was chartered in April of 2000. Their ongoing support is very much appreciated and they will be given a VIP invitation to our Gala Event this June.

2005 Program

Education Sessions

- *January* - Mentorship
- *February* - Planning a speech for a contest
- *March* – The art of effective evaluation
- *April* – Supporting the message with voice – inflection, projection, pausing and breathing
- *May* – Emoting – using heart strings and touch points to resonate and persuade your audience

Meeting Types

- Video Night
- Mike Night
- Mastermind Session Part Deux
- Late Night Show
- Charter Night Party
- Debate
- Contests

Winter Survey Attached

Please complete the attached survey and submit by return email to Eugene Peters. Your views, suggestions and personal requirements are essential for Eugene and your executive in creating an exciting program and for scheduling assignments. On several occasions membership attendance has been weak. This is your opportunity to speak up so that we can create *our* program – one that keeps you coming out regularly.

Year End Gala Event

Our committee volunteers held their first meeting to begin preparation for our Year End event. Gisele Doucet and Wendy Alexopoulos were selected co-chairs for this year's gala and we have a fine group of volunteers eager to plan a great event. Once again the Springer House is reserved for Friday, June 3rd. A theme was selected and if you were able to attend last year's event, you know the exciting time that will await you. And for those that couldn't attend, we know that you've heard all about the fun so make sure you reserve Friday June 3rd on you calendar now. More details to follow so staved tuned...

The Mastermind Experience

by Sara Rams

On November 17th, Mansion Toastmasters participated in a first ever *MasterMind Forum*, facilitated by Val Clements and Mike Isber, of Mighty Oaks. The objective was to provide an open forum of feedback to our designated Speakers and Evaluators. Participants and audience came together to share honest and insightful comments on the evaluations, the speeches, and how they felt about the process in general.

As a speech participant, I was amazed at the impact of the *MasterMind* process. I walked out of the session with a firmer grasp on what I do well and what areas, specifically, I need to work on. The audience offered enthusiastic ideas and moral support that could not have been replicated on slips of paper.

Funny, everyone dreads evaluation, and yet, it's likely the most supportive and empowering part of the Toastmaster process. Those slips of paper (which I'm still a big fan of) often feel like little gifts at the end of a long night of nerves and speech presentation. You put your heart and soul out there, and while you want honest feedback in return, you also want the inspiration to do it again next week.

And that's exactly what you get. People are good to each other. We are all in the same boat. We are all here to learn. And no one is perfect. Comments are always gently constructive and immensely supportive. We share our vulnerabilities and celebrate our successes together every week. There is no doubt this is why there is a sense of closeness; a strong feeling of camaraderie within the group.

And there is no doubt; *this is why the MasterMind Forum* ran so smoothly. Everyone was open to the process and very comfortable in sharing their honest opinions with the group.

I must admit I was intimidated by the agenda. Private feedback is great but was I ready for verbal feedback from thirty people all at once? Well, I lived to tell the tale and I'm happy to say I'd do it again in a heartbeat!

However, there is a distinct difference between *The MasterMind Forum* and the written feedback we typically receive.

When I review written feedback, I may gloss over a comment that I don't entirely understand; or someone may write a simple critique like "more pauses" without expanding on the thought. The written word does not always translate full intent. And the participant doesn't always take the time to absorb everything written (we all prefer the good stuff, admit it!)

This is where *The MasterMind Forum* goes further. In our open forum, audience members had the opportunity to fully express their constructive criticism or rave about the good points. The Speakers and Evaluators had specified time to respond to comments and to expand on how the whole process made them feel.

While it might sound like the speakers were the focus of the session, I'd say every person in the room was in the hot seat – to offer sensitive, clear and insightful feedback. It was a challenging process for all involved.

Looking back at the experience, I would say the Evaluators have the most difficult shoes to fill at a *MasterMind* session. There is little preparation time. You have to trust your gut and go with what feels right. And then you are evaluated on your evaluation, which is not something we do in a typical club meeting. Perhaps it is something we need to do more of - so we can all refine our skills on how to sandwich the good with the bad and ensure the speaker comes out feeling on top.

Thanks to the *MasterMind Forum*, we learned the power of discussion. While written feedback is effective, open discussion dramatically accelerated the learning curve. It gave us all an opportunity to stretch our skills further – and faster.

The MasterMind Forum is brilliant. I trust it is being considered as a recurring event at Mansion Toastmasters. If you missed out on the event, don't miss the next opportunity for a *MasterMind Forum*. It will be an experience you won't forget!

Thanks again to Val Clements and Mike Isber for sharing the Mighty Oaks *MasterMind Forum* with your friends at The Mansion!

IMPORTANT DATES:

<i>Saturday, December 11th</i>	<i>Mansion Christmas Party</i>
<i>Wednesday, December 15</i>	<i>Last Fall Meeting</i>
<i>Wednesday, January 5th</i>	<i>First Meeting in the New Year</i>
<i>Saturday, January TBA</i>	<i>Club Officer Training</i>
<i>Tuesday, January 18th</i>	<i>Club Executive Meeting</i>
<i>Wednesday, February TBA</i>	<i>Club International Speech & Evaluation Contests</i>
<i>March TBA</i>	<i>Area Contests</i>
<i>Saturday, March TBA</i>	<i>Division Contests</i>
<i>Weekend, April 15-17^h</i>	<i>District 60 Conference</i>
<i>Friday, June 3rd</i>	<i>Mansion Annual Gala Event</i>
<i>Week, August 23rd-27th</i>	<i>Toastmasters International Conference Westin Harbor Castle – Toronto</i>

Club Executive Succession

by Dalia Petrulis

One of the best parts of being Past President is watching Mansion Toastmasters consistently develop and evolve into a stronger and more dynamic club that meets the needs of our members.

Each year your Executive surveys and collects information pertaining to your interests in the club. Based on that information, we plan and implement regular meetings, Educational Presentations, special meetings such as last year's Dinner Night and Microphone Night, Club and Area Speech Contests, and social events such as the Christmas Party and the Year End Gala Event.

The Executive works as a team meeting 6-7 times a year, however individually, the Treasurer maintains the club's bank account, collects membership dues and remits the appropriate club dues to TM International. The VP Education is responsible for scheduling assignments based on goal information that you have provided him/her with. The job of the VP Membership is to provide our guests and new members with the details they need to join our club or to begin preparing for their Icebreaker Speech. Sometimes this responsibility is shared with the

VP Public Relations who ensures that information about joining our club is available both within and outside Mansion Toastmasters. The Sergeant-At-Arms is responsible for the operational logistics of our weekly meetings and the Secretary records the minutes of the weekly and Executive meetings.

The Club President acts, as a team leader to both the Executive and the entire club membership, is aware of all aspects of running the club, and liaisons with the Area Council.

Pronouncing the Toastmaster of the Year and club Executive succession rests within the domain of the Past President. Elections for all positions are held in the spring; however, I am starting the head hunting process as I write this article! I will be talking to club members, both old and new, to see if you are interested in filling any of these positions for the 2005-2006 Toastmaster year. In addition, I invite you to contact me for further information on each of the job requirements, time involvement, or any other details you may need to know about in making your decision to be involved on next year's Mansion Toastmasters Executive.

2004 – 2005 CLUB EXECUTIVE

<i>President</i>	<i>Ken Barkman</i>
<i>past President</i>	<i>Dalia Petrulis</i>
<i>VP. Education</i>	<i>Eugene Peters</i>
<i>VP. Membership</i>	<i>Michael Hourigan</i>
<i>VP. Public Relations</i>	<i>Darwin Allen</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Mark Coleman</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Russ Berthiaume</i>
<i>Sergeant at Arms</i>	<i>Michael Wain</i>

Please provide comments on your Newsletter by return email to xxx@xxx.xx . What type of information, stories and articles would you like to see in it? How long should the newsletter be? How often would you like to see the newsletter published? What comments do you have on the style and format of the newsletter?