



Mansion Toastmasters

Newsletter

December 2008

In This Issue:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Best Wishes! | p1 |
| Conferences | p2 |
| A Message from Our New Member | p3 |
| Education Session | p3 |
| Education Session | p4 |

Mansion 2008/09 Executives

President
Janice P.

Past President
Adam M.

VP Education
Paul T.

VP Membership
Peter V.

VP PR
Lee Z.

Secretary
Dale S.

Treasurer
Jeanne A.

Sergeant-at-Arms
Doug S.

Co-Sergeant-at-Arms
Vacancy

Club-Elect Secretary
Shelley O.

Best Wishes!

– A message from Janice P., President

It's hard to believe that December is already here! In Toastmaster terms, our year is half over, as it officially begins on July 1. Since we started back in September, the Mansion club has had 14 meetings, of which two were devoted to contests! We have had nine new members joining our ranks! Our meetings have been packed with speeches, evaluations, education sessions, lively new business sessions, creative table topics, thoughtful, inspiring toasts and personal thoughts and opinions. We've had a lot of fun!

What have you gained from your participation in our Mansion meetings? I ask this of each of you because we all joined for varying reasons. Toastmasters is a communication and leadership organization, so many of us joined to learn how to express ourselves more effectively, some of us joined to gain experience in leadership, and some of us joined to have a social, entertaining and fun evening out each week. Our meetings should be an opportunity for each of us to "soar with our strengths" – to discover our strengths, to work with our strengths and to achieve our goals.

The best way to discover and learn is through participation! And with the introduction of the Competent Leader manual we now have a way of monitoring, measuring and being recognized for our participation. The majority of the projects within the CL manual are focused on the learning that comes from participating in filling meeting roles. I encourage everyone who has not yet achieved their Competent Leader award to begin working with the manual. Read through each project and plan how and when you would like to fill that role at a meeting. Our V.P. Education, Paul T., is ready and willing to add you to future meetings on our roster.

We start back on January 7, 2009 with 23 meetings remaining to us. Since it is a traditional time for reflecting on the coming new year, it is appropriate to reflect on what it is that you want to achieve and accomplish? Have you written it down? Have you enlisted the help of your mentor? I encourage everyone to take some time during the Christmas and New Year's break to take a look at where you are now and where you want to be on June 10, 2009.

I wish every member and your families a happy and safe holiday season. Enjoy the three week break from Toastmasters. Come back refreshed and ready to "soar with your strengths"!



| Event | Location | Date & Time |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Last Meeting in 2008 & the Mansion Toastmasters' Food Drive | Paletta Mansion | Dec. 10, 2008 at 7:30 pm |
| Christmas Party | The Cork House 2441 Neyagawa Blvd., Oakville <i>Dress – Christmas Glitter & Festive Attire please!</i> \$25 per person | Dec. 12, 2008 at 7:30 pm |
| First Meeting in 2009 | Paletta Mansion | Jan. 07, 2009 at 7:30 pm |
| Last Meeting in 2009 | Paletta Mansion | Jun. 10, 2009 at 7:30 pm |

Attending Conferences – A Great Learning Opportunity

– by Diane C.

This year I had an opportunity to go to both the District 86 and District 60 Conferences. Let me reflect with you on my experience and encourage you to participate next time – in the Spring Conference, 2008 – at the International Speech and Evaluation Contest.

I learned so much from listening to two World Champion Speakers – Darren LaCroix, 2001 Champion and Craig Valentine, 1999 Champion. I participated in a live coaching workshop offered by Darren LaCroix and a workshop on “How to keep your audience on the edge of their seats” workshop by Craig Valentine. Their ‘Own the Stage’ techniques gave me much needed pointers that included:

1. Tell a story–make a point; tell another story–make another point.
2. Tap into an audience with a question; transport them with a story.
3. Give a memorable presentation people will still remember three days after your speech.
4. Include your audience with more connection – changing the ‘I’ to ‘You’. Emphasis is on speaking to one – and connecting to all.
5. Move with purpose in your presentation (not just from one side of the stage to the other).

The workshops, the Keynote presenters and the 14 (best) Humorous Speeches from the presenting contestants gave me more information on improving my own speaking and communicating skills. I listened and learned how to use props effectively, how to enhance my storytelling and when & why to pause, plus much, much more. Also, I had so much fun making new friends and wonderful connections within this great organization.

There are many opportunities to get involved and practice your communication skills as you learn to achieve your best. Consider being a judge, introducing a workshop presenter, giving a workshop or another role at the next Conference; or just go and participate like I did – The Spring 2009 Conference will be held in Burlington from April 24 to 26, 2008. I encourage you to start thinking and planning for April – and what you want to achieve as per your goals. For more details on this coming Conference go to – www.toastmasters86.org.

Maybe I’ll see you there. Cheers!

District 86 Spring 2009 Conference

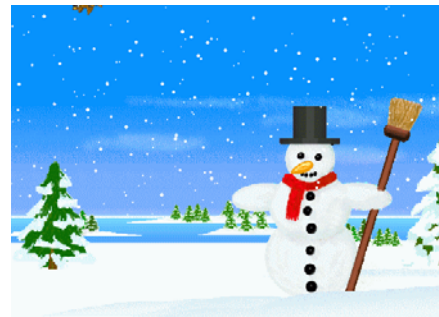
– by Lee Z.

The first District 86 Spring Conference will take place at the Burlington Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Centre (3066 South Service Road, Burlington) from Friday, April 24 to Sunday, April 26, 2009.

The theme is Shaping Your Destiny - take the opportunities to learn by observing the many wonderful workshop presenters, the excellent speech contestants, the inspiring keynote speakers, and the remarkable District Leaders. By reflecting on your observations and applying the lessons gleaned, you can shape your destiny.

Over 300 enthusiastic Toastmasters are expected to attend the first District 86 Spring Conference. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Deadline for registration is April 20, 2009. The cost for full conference is \$185.

For more information, please visit <http://www.toastmasters86.org/page/view/id/144>



A Message from Our New Member...

– by Mario C.

I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

As 2008 draws to a close, it is time to reflect back and take note to the most meaningful events of the year. And for me, it was taking the first steps to join Mansion Toastmasters Club and getting to know each one of you.

For years, I've known about the club but always debated in my mind whether I should join, fearing that would mean public speaking. I've always known that having this skill would not only improve me personally but perhaps financially as well.

Even though I've only been a member since October and have participated in limited roles in the club, I feel more confident already in everything I do. And I feel this has largely been due to the positive and nurturing influence that each one of you has given me. I look forward to our Wednesday night meetings.

Thank you for helping to build my confidence and I sincerely hope everyone has a safe and prosperous New Year!



Education Session: Competent Leadership – Track 1

– by Dale S.

Every member that joined after January 1, 2006 should have received a Competent Leadership (CL) Manual. If you did not receive one, please speak with VP Education (Paul T.) or VP Membership (Peter V.).

You can work towards the CL award at the same time you are working the Competent Communicator Manual.

There are 10 projects in CL Manual. Some roles are repeated in several projects because there is a specific focus on a particular Leadership Skills.

For example, the Project 4, the Toastmaster role. To qualify and complete that project, both the Toastmaster and Chair roles must be completed.

Don't think you can check off all the boxes in each project after completing one Role. For example – the General Evaluator appears in Projects 2, 3, 5, 7, 8A and 10A. Depending on the choices made, it is possible you will perform the General Evaluator role six times. With respect to the requirements of Project 8A; the Executive is looking at ways on how to best support everyone.

Seek guidance from your Mentor. Find a member to conduct an evaluation on the role you are filling.

Bill B., a DTM, summarized the 10 projects from the CL manual onto one page. It is an excellent reference tool when working through the CL manual. Ask any member of the Executive team for a copy of his summary.

In summary, the CL projects will provide you with the tools to develop your Leadership skills, achieve the CL AWARD and set the foundation to move on to achieve your CL Bronze award.



Education Session: Selecting Your Topic Speakers blocks or building blocks?

– by Mike W.

Below is a synopsis (or, if you are of a certain age, the Coles Notes version) of an education session I presented at our meeting Nov.26. I hope you find this helpful and I welcome any questions or comments you may have.

You have to do a speech next week and you don't have a clue what you will talk about. How do you turn speakers block into building blocks?

Take a Walk!

Sometimes just walking away from it for a while will do the trick.

Trust me – it works – you take the pressure off your brain and let your subconscious do its job and in an amazing number of cases –your topic (and maybe even an entire speech) will just pop into your conscious mind.

Personal Experiences

Yes –yours! Your topic doesn't need to be an earth shattering revelation or a mind boggling treatise on nuclear reactors.

Simple works—the good old **kiss** formula—keep it simple stupid!

Don't overwhelm yourself or your audience and don't ever underestimate the impact you can have talking about your own life and experiences. Simple works—personal works—largely because of the knowledge, interest and, most importantly, the enthusiasm you bring to your topic. It will show in your delivery and rub off on your audience.

For more ideas along this line, check out www.jagamache.com. J.A. Gamache is an award winning toastmaster and professional speaker who shares a wealth of information—for free.

Research and Reference Material

If you are still faced with stumbling blocks, you might try some quick research. The operative word is “quick” as opposed to hours of study.

Look at your daily newspaper or weekly news magazine, particularly the editorial sections. Browse the magazine rack in book stores and your interests will lead you to topics that turn your crank and get the creative juices flowing. A visit to the library for some general or subject specific browsing may do the trick.

Big Point Here

And I know you would write this down if you had a pen with you. And that's the big point. Always have a pen with you to make impulse notes.

Conclusion

Two years ago, a 34-year-old engineering student at MIT became Toastmasters 2007 World Champion of public speaking.

Vikas Jhingran spoke about himself—about the challenges of learning a second language, having an arranged marriage, and convincing his superiors that he was able to research and present his own projects.

When we give our first speech in toastmasters—our icebreaker—it's about ourselves. There's a lesson here, isn't there?

Don't complicate things—keep it simple and personal. You can pick just about any topic you want so long as you meet the speech objectives. In your daily life, things you love- things you hate – things that make you laugh out loud or cry, what you read or watch, provide enough speech topics to give you a far different challenge.

Too many ideas!