

One Community Many Voices

District 7 Toastmasters
DECEMBER 2022



LOOKING FOR LEADERS



DISTRICT 7 2021-2022

JANUARY 28, 2023 10AM - 1PM

Save the date!

Are We Missing the Mark?

Phyllis Harmon, DTM, PDG - Publisher/Editor

Happy Holidays! Christmas is past and a new year is just around the corner. We are at the half-way point in our Toastmasters year. It's time to review the Club goals we set last July and adjust our expectations accordingly. Looking at my own Clubs, there is much work to be done if we intend to reach our Distinguished Club goals.

Membership growth is challenging as potential members appear less enthusiastic about making long-term commitments. It seems to me that this is a paradigm shift for the years ahead. We' all know about companies who are struggling to fill open positions. And, the same people who are unwilling to return to work are the same people we are trying to recruit as members. Does that make sense? Perhaps its time to readjust our thinking about what motivates someone. . . anyone. . . to join our ranks.

Beyond the skill building inherent in the program, what do we offer to potential members? Support through evaluations and on-the-job leadership training? Of course—but are they enough?

Are our marketing messages out of touch... missing the mark... in today's world? Shouldn't we be doing some extracurricular research and finding out what today's workers are looking for? Surely it would be imperative that our messages speak to the needs and wants... the WHY... of potential members!

Our future lies with those born after 1990. They hold the future of this 98-year-old organization in their grip. What can we do to attract this age group to Toastmasters?

Our messaging focused on career advancement and upward mobility appears to be out of step with the cultural norms of today. Let's rethink what we are doing. Let's create new talking points that address the needs

of today's potential members. For if we do not, our Clubs will continue to dwindle, and none of us will be reaching our membership goals any time in the foreseeable future.







Volume 9 Issue 5 November 2022

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Voices! is published monthly by District 7 Toastmasters. First issue published August 2014. Submit articles or contact us at voices@d7toastmasters.org

VOICES!





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Dr. Gwendolyn Avington, SR4 TOASTMASTERS: REACHING FULL POTENTIAL

Phyllis Harmon, DTM, PDG

In this month's cover article, Division F Director, Dr. Gwendolyn Avington, SR4, shares her goals and vision for personal growth and the success of Division F.

WHY DID YOU JOIN TOASTMASTERS?

I joined New Horizons Toastmasters Club in May 2019. I joined Toastmasters to sharpen my leadership and communication skills. I had heard about Toastmasters in passing for many years but was never told how to join a group. Fast forward twenty-five years, I was at a meeting where a group of Toastmasters were presenting the Toastmasters program. I asked a lot of questions that day and everyone presenting seemed to be eager to answer each of them.

I was invited to visit the Club where most of the presenters that day were members. I was excited to visit the Club and went on Saturday morning with a friend. I did not have the same warm exchange that was presented at the prior event. My first impression was not the best. However, I decided to attend the very next Saturday morning. I felt like I had not seen the real essence of the Club. Saturday morning came and with great anticipation I arrived at the meeting. I was met with a warm welcome

and smile. Cleon Cox introduced himself and began to ask me about myself. Romeo, the Toastmaster of the Day was engaging and fun. He had created an environment and theme 'We are all Stars.' He gave out handmade stars. He gave away items such as store-bought stars that lit up. I was hooked and the New Horizons Club members became my Toastmasters family.

I was reminded that day of the old adage 'you don't judge a book by it's cover, open it up and see what is inside.'

Along my Toastmasters journey, this has become a part of my secret weapon for Toastmasters success. You don't necessarily look at your first exchange with other people, especially if unpleasant or less than anticipated, and throw out the whole relationship. I look at another old adage, 'if at first you don't succeed, try, try again.' Relationships are a major part of my 'why Toastmasters.'

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR GREATEST AHA! MOMENT IN YOUR TOASTMASTERS JOURNEY SO FAR? WHY?

My greatest Aha moment so far on my Toastmasters journey has been the realization that done appropriately, the Toastmasters program can help me reach my full potential. I started understanding this through working with my first mentor. I learned from that experience that a mentor can give a mentee a lot of tools to succeed. A mentor can truly boost the mentee's confidence, help them elevate their existing skill sets, and empower the mentee to strive toward excellence. I am incredibly passionate about mentorship. I believe that we gain from others to give to others, thereby we all grow and become the best Toastmasters we can be on our individual and collective journeys.

WHAT DO YOU DO OUTSIDE OF TOASTMASTERS—HOBBIES, INTERESTS, ETC.

My hobbies outside of Toastmasters are hiking, fishing, and writing for research in the areas of Epilepsy and Effective Communication. I am an Apostolic Pentecostal Minister. I enjoy helping other people, especially through my ministry work.

HOW DOES TOASTMASTERS ENHANCE YOUR WORK CAREER?

Toastmasters has greatly enhanced my career trajectory. I am the Owner/CEO of CLATAK Consulting, LLC. CLATAK Consulting provides effective communication strategies to individuals and organizations in the areas of executive coaching, team building, conflict resolution, diversity, equity, and inclusion facilitation and training. Before I started my business, I enjoyed working as a

healthcare professional for thirty-two years. I believe Toastmasters has helped me define goals, set goals, and step up to reach those goals. The knowledge and growth gained in Toastmasters has helped me to find my voice and share my talents with others.



Gwen and her 93-year old mother, Fay Avington

YOU'VE BEEN IN TOASTMASTERS SINCE 2019. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR CAREER SO FAR?

In reflection, the highlights of my Toastmaster career have been many. After gaining a firm foundation as a Club member, I worked in Club leadership as the Vice President of Education. It was a real education for me to understand the intimate details of the Toastmasters Educational Program. In the same period, I was asked by District leadership if I would become the first Pathways Chair. I felt the enormous responsibility of this role because District 7 members began the transition from Legacy Manuals to a new digital program called Pathways. I considered it an honor to learn from and work with those representing their Divisions across the District. Teamwork and collaboration were two transferable skills that each of the Pathways Proponents gained from this year-long experience. These were critical skills to have in uncertain times.

I have enjoyed the privilege of working in several other District leadership roles. I have served as an Area Director and Toastmasters Leadership Institute (TLI) Elective Curriculum Coordinator, 2021. I served as the Annual Conference Trio-pardy Game Show Coordinator, 2021. I was elated to be named the D7 Toastmaster Rookie of the Year, 2021. Currently, I am serving as the D7 Division F Director and in Dl, I serve as President of Platform Speakers. I have a wonderful team of five Area Directors (Arne Bostrom, AD 71, Lakeitha Ruffin AD 72, Emily Cargill AD 73, Lisa Busenbark, AD 74, and Jenna Owen AD 75). The team of District leaders amazes me with their willingness to share their time and talents to help with the success of members and Clubs in Division F.

AS DIVISION F DIRECTOR, WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE DIVISION THIS YEAR?

The Division F Team and I worked to create the mission and vision that we recite at monthly meetings and follow as we carry out our work in the Division. Our theme is to 'Rise Toward Excellence' using the Toastmasters' core values (Integrity, Respect, Service, and Excellence) as a guide throughout the year. Our Mission Statement is 'To develop processes that allow us to work together to achieve Distinguished status and support personal growth.'

Our Vision Statement is 'As a Division, we will establish goals, create strategies, and empower each other in Education, Leadership,

and Communication. Together, we will plan fun and educational activities that bring us together as one Division. It will be our combined effort that pushes us to 'Dream Big and Achieve Together!'

There are guest presentations at our monthly meetings to provide information in the areas of education, leadership, and communication. These presentations are aimed at living up to the created vision for service to the Division F Membership.



Division F Leadership Picnic 8/6/2022

WHAT ARE YOUR PERSONAL PLANS AND GOALS FOR NEXT YEAR?

My personal plans and goals are to grow my business. I am passionate about teaching, coaching, and training individuals and organizations in the art of effective communication. My Toastmasters plans and goals are to leverage the skills learned over my Toastmasters journey to continue in a leadership role this next year. I believe we have an opportunity to reimagine how to grow our membership and reignite our current membership to reach their full potential.

WHAT WOULD YOU SHARE WITH THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN TAKING ON A LEADERSHIP ROLE NEXT YEAR?

I would tell everyone considering taking on a leadership role next year to just do it. Every time I consider my next leadership step and I feel nervous, I go for it. I have been told throughout my life, if something scares you, then it is likely the step you should take next on the journey. If a member at large, consider Club leadership as a Club officer. If you are already working in leadership at the Club level, consider District leadership as an Area or Division Director. If Club or District offices don't interest you, consider the many committees at the Club, Division, and District levels. I believe continuing to serve at whatever level will help you grow as a leader and communicator.

In addition to holding the role of Division F Director, Gwendolyn Avington is a peer-reviewed published author, holds a Doctor of Health Administration (DHA), Master of Business Administration with a concentration in Healthcare Management (MBA/HCM), Bachelor of Science in Business Communications (BS/BC), and Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science (BS/MLS). Dr. Avington is a Board Member of the Black American Chamber of Commerce and serves as the Membership Chair, a Board Member of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce. She serves on the Public Policy Committee, Black Advisory Business Council, and Small Business Entrepreneur Council. She is a recent graduate of the Leadership Hillsboro Program which facilitates the development and growth of the leaders of tomorrow.



Gwen's doctoral graduation in 2017 - Left to right: daughter Angelika Gulley-Rogers, Gwen Avington, PhD, grandson Cam'Ron B. Gulley, and son Lee D. Gulley Jr



Join Us at Feedbackers Where Evaluations Are the Stars

It's January, that time of year when many of us make resolutions to eat better, lose weight, exercise, read more books, learn something new, and be a better evaluator. We can't do much about the first ones, but we can offer you the opportunity to become a better evaluator. If you have visited Feedbackers in the past, then you can appreciate our intense focus on evaluations. This is a skill that will serve you well. If you haven't visited us before, then this is your chance to tune in and see what we are all about.

We welcome all Toastmasters to our meetings, as guests or members. If you are a Toastmaster curious to take your evaluations to the next level, this one's for you.

Join Us!

Click Here to Register

Coach Leaders Change the World

Lorri Andersen, DTM - District 7 Director

We are on the verge of 2023! Father Time is growing a bit greyer, and the New Year is dawning in the distance!

Friends, this has been an amazing year full of events and changes. Who has not been affected by the developments of the last two years? Our Toastmasters community is stepping out with many clubs meeting on hybrid formats. This is great as it helps us stay connected to one another, in person and virtually. This change poses the challenge to modify your leadership styles as we forge forward into 2023.

We need to become more of a Coach Leader as we work with our different teams. Coach Leaders are connected and work with others while being on different platforms. Can we keep our members connected online while part of us meet in person? Can the Club stay close as a team while many meet on the wide screen inside a conference room filled with people? Can we thrive as an online Club? Can we go back to in-person only meetings? I say yes, it's possible to do all those things. Coach Leaders can do much to help members as they work towards their goals.

A Coach Leader helps others with change

and brings unity to situations.

The world came out with a vaccine for Covid but what is the vaccine for disruptive and changing times? We need to stay connected even when much of our team is virtual. How do we not just survive but prosper in these unprecedented times? We have been stretched and challenged, and we will never be the same. We see that traditional models of leadership do not work. As a leader, we need to be the bridge between past and future and pave the way for our Clubs to grow. Coach Leaders are flexible and embrace change, solve problems, create the future, and lead with servant leadership. Let's not be shocked when faced with struggles. Let's use the good times to prepare for difficulties and use the hard times to fortify our skills. There are many qualities that never go out of style and always seem to work during times of disruption. At a minimum, a Coach Leader brings kindness, selflessness, respect, self-control, and looks for the best in people.[1]

This is how I see each of us in our District, a steadfast positive Leader that does not give up. Is not Toastmasters the place where leaders are made?

DOYOU INSPIRE PEOPLE AROUND YOU

With the challenges we've had to work through this past year, we have two options. We can stay the same or we can use the changes we have encountered to build new character and skills within ourselves to help others. Surely, these past two years we have had many opportunities to become a leader and influencer in our community. Let's use this opportunity to help others grow, learn, and to become a leader as we grow ourselves.

Thank you for your work this past year. I look forward to 2023 with anticipation and confidence knowing we are on this journey together. Please feel free to reach out and let me know if there is anything you need or anything I can do for you and your Clubs.

[1] (Thomas Nelson, 2021 Tom Ziglar)

TEAMWORK

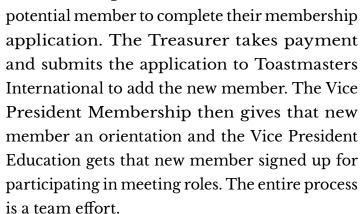
def: The combined action of a group of people, especially when effective and efficient.

Jim Robison, DTM - Program Quality Director

On January 20 & 21, District 7 will host two important training programs. Friday January 20 is intensive contest training. Take advantage of this opportunity to learn every aspect of being part of the team that puts on a successful speech contest. A successful contest takes the combined action of a large group of people. The Contest Chair, event Toastmaster, Chief Judge, voting Judges, timers, ballot counters, sergeants at arms, facilities support if in person and Zoom masters if online. This takes significant planning and organization as well as the work of the contestants to prepare and participate. You can learn how to complete any of those roles, and how to be a part of the team that puts on great Area, Division, and District contests as well as your Club's contests.

Saturday morning January 21 join us for Toastmasters Teamwork Training (TTT) which focuses on how the Toastmasters Club officers work together as a team. As a Club officer you may wonder why Toastmasters provides a single combined Club Leadership Handbook instead of separate handbooks for each officer? It is precisely because the officers work together as a team, not as individuals completing siloed tasks.

The concept of teamwork is that every team member has tasks that they take responsibility for, but they are not alone. For example, the Vice President Public Relations might make sure that a potential member is able to find the Club information and become a guest. The Sergeant at Arms welcomes that guest to the meeting and gives them some introductions. The Vice President Membership works with the









In the TTT, we have divided the program into two major functional areas: Recruitment/onboarding of new members, and retention of existing members. Join us for a morning to build our best approach for teamwork success in all our Clubs.

January also sees the launch of two initiatives to help bring new members to all our Clubs. A District wide Club website contest, and our District participation in a Toastmasters global advertising campaign on LinkedIn. In surveys completed by guests and new members last year, over half used toastmasters.org to find a Club. The second most frequently used source was the Club's own website. Starting January 3, 2023, District 7 will participate with Toastmasters International in a LinkedIn advertising campaign that targets bringing new prospective members to Clubs in our District. For this to succeed, we must all work together as a team. The LinkedIn campaign will drive prospective members to Clubs, and for many of them, their first impression of the Club

will be the Club website. The Club website contest is to support and encourage Clubs to build great Club websites so those potential members will translate into new members for your Clubs. For this to succeed, Clubs must be fully committed to responding to all prospect inquiries within 48 hours. The faster you respond to a request, the more likely that prospect will visit and join your Club.

Let's work together and bring the value of Toastmasters to these new members.

Ongratulations to Rose City Toasters
for being the first club in District
7 this year to complete ALL TEN
Distinguished Club Program Goals!
Ongratulations to Nuchanath
Aumpradithpun and Angela Stringer
for winning the first round in our District
7 Discover Treasures through Toastmasters
Activities Challenge

Club Coach Program - The Gift that Keeps C

Dave Bones, DTM - Club Growth Director

During this holiday season, you might be thinking about sharing gifts. Perhaps you have been in Toastmasters for some time, and want to deepen your connection with other members, as well as contribute further in our community. You might be wondering what you could offer as a gift to this organization that means so much to you?

There is one top answer—become a Club Coach. It is truly a gift that will keep on giving for years to come. This year's Club Coach Coordinator is Patrick Tuohy, DTM. He shares some of his story and you can get started as a Club Coach.

Patrick's story

I decided to become a Club coach when I was looking for ways to satisfy the requirements for my Distinguished Toastmaster Award. I figured I had been a Toastmaster for a while and could help a Club that might be struggling. I was paired with a Club close to my work. I had visited about a year before when they had a large membership.

At our first meeting I realized the Club had recently lost its meeting location, and along with that, quite a few of its members. Remaining was a strong core of about 5 members. Oh, and a bit of internal unrest. As a matter of fact, within a week after I started attending their meetings,

the leadership blew up leaving the Club without a president or rudder. What did I get myself into?

Well, let me tell you. I got myself into maybe the most rewarding experience of my almost 20-year Toastmasters journey. After collaborating further with the core members remaining, I discovered that all they needed was a consultant to help them understand where they might improve.

They were all great members, but I noticed some key issues. They were not bringing in guests, having contests, or holding open houses. Also, they were flying a bit by the seat of their pants with meeting organization. The great part was they listened and things began to change.

We updated their Club homepage, and guests started coming. We had a few contests and an open house. We also reviewed their Distinguished Club Program (DCP) goals. By the end of my appointment, they had made it to Distinguished Club status, and had more than doubled the size of the Club!

The real payoff for me was seeing the excitement and pride the members had when they converted a guest into a new member. They saw their efforts had a positive effect on their Club's performance.

Do you like the satisfaction of helping others learn, grow, and succeed? Maybe you are looking for a way to learn, and grow yourself? Or

n Giving

perhaps you are looking for a way to fulfill the leadership requirements to become a DTM?

Become a Club coach, and all of these can come to life! To be eligible for an appointment, you must:

- Be a paid member in good standing with Toastmasters International
- Not be an existing paid member of the Club during the time of appointment, nor for at least six months prior to appointment
- Have been a member of Toastmasters
 International for at least one year
- Have served as a Club officer for one annual term or two semiannual terms
- Have completed a minimum of Level 2 in a Path, or an Advanced Communicator Bronze (ACB), or an Advanced Leader Bronze (ALB)
- Have completed the Club Coach Program
 Training module in Base Camp

The main responsibility of the Club Coach is to help the Club reach Distinguished status by June 30th of either the current or the next Toastmaster year. This means that the Club needs to have at least a net growth of three new members, it needs to pay its membership dues on time, and it needs to accomplish five or more DCP goals.



Currently we have 19 Clubs in District 7 who could use a Club Coach. If you'd like to know if there's a Club that could benefit from your help in your vicinity or one that you could attend virtually, please email me, Patrick Tuohy, DTM by clicking here, and ask. If you'd like to get more information about what else might be expected of the role, let us know that too. Feel free to check out the Toastmasters International website Club Coach homepage by clicking here.

Being a Club coach could be exactly what you are looking for to help learn and grow your leadership skills, as well as to make your Toastmasters experience even more rewarding!

In closing, whether you want credit towards your DTM, or want to gift your time and knowledge, becoming a Club Coach could be a perfect fit for you.

LOOKING FOR LEADERS

Eldred Brown, DTM, IPDD

Do you have what it takes? Do you have the right stuff to be a successful District 7 leader? If so, then please let me know. We are now looking for leaders to step forward and run for election to one of our elected D7 leadership positions for the 2022-2023 program year. We need qualified candidates to run for District Director, Program Quality Director, Club Growth Director, and Division Director of each of our eight Divisions. If you know a good candidate or want to nominate yourself, please click this link to make your nomination via our nomination form: 2023-2024 Nomination Form for D7 Executive Roles - Google Forms

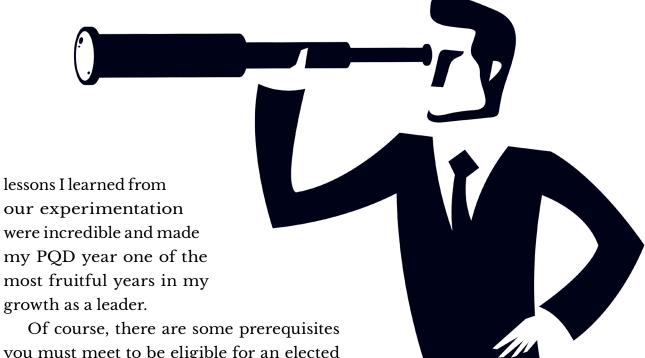
What can you gain from serving as a District leader? You will learn how to

- lead a team of leaders
- create a vision of success
- set goals
- create a plan to reach your goals
- identify the best people to help you reach your goals.

You won't do this work alone. You will have a team of leaders to whom you can delegate many of your responsibilities. Yet you will learn how to communicate your vision, goals, and expectations to the leaders you appoint to help you succeed.

You will learn how to motivate others and sell your vision to others so they will gladly do whatever you need them to do to achieve it. If you communicate effectively enough, your vision won't be your vision alone. Your team will make your vision their vision, and they will want to achieve it just as much as you do.

During my year as your Program Quality Director, (PQD) for example, I had the privilege and honor of leading a program quality team that included Leanna Lindquist as your Education and Training Coordinator, Lyle Schellenberg as your Conference Chair, and Dr. Gwendolyn Avington as your Pathways Proponents Committee Chair. I communicated to each my vision for what I wanted our District to achieve and how each could help us accomplish our goals. It was so much fun to delegate the work to them and watch them implement our plans and hear their ideas for how we could provide even better service to our clubs and members. We expanded our service to fill the online space given us by the Zoomisphere, with Leanna's Wednesday's Wonderful Webinars and Gwendolyn's Pathways webinars. Lyle offered us the first totally online conference experience in our District's history. The



Of course, there are some prerequisites you must meet to be eligible for an elected District leadership office. To serve in any elected District 7 office, you must have been a Toastmaster for at least the last 12 months in a District 7 club and served as a club President for at least six consecutive months. Additionally, to be elected to any of the Trio positions, you must have served at least 12 consecutive months as an Area Director, Division Director, or a lower Trio role than the one for which you want to be elected. You must also be a member in good standing of any District 7 club in good standing.

The prerequisites I mention here are not comprehensive, so if you want a more exhaustive list of required qualifications, please click here and review the *Toastmasters International – Governing Documents – District Administrative Bylaws Article VII: District*

Back to my opening question: Do you have what it takes to be a successful District 7 leader? I've talked about what you can learn

as a leader. I shared with you some of my experience as a District 7 leader. I covered briefly the qualifications required for election as a D7 leader. The next step is yours. If you qualify and think you have what it takes, please click here to complete the Google form, 2023-2024 Nomination Form for D7 Executive Roles. The deadline for nominations is January 31, 2023, so time is running out.

PEABODY MANSION MYSTERIES

8

FPISODF 4

The Investigation Begins

Leanna Lindquist, DTM

In episode #3 Laura and Rich came to the rescue. Penny shared a secret and a guest visited the meeting. . .

"You were there," Laura blurted out, "and you didn't tell me?"

"You never asked." Penny took another sip of tea. Laura hated it when she got that smug look on her face.

"How did you wrangle an invitation to the party? You were certainly MUCH older than William," Laura said with delight in her voice.

"We were special guests of William's father, who was my husband's client. My costume was beautiful, I went as Cleopatra and my husband was Marc Antony," boasted Penny. The party took place on the second floor. Do you know there is a ballroom upstairs? It was decorated with ghosts and witches and spider webs. The tables were piled with food and as I recall, the alcohol was abundant."

"Did you see or hear anything that made you think it was murder?" blurted out Mark.

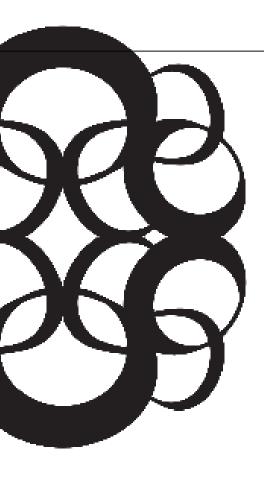
Penny picked up her teacup, held it near her lips, and looked one by one at Rich, Carl, Terry, John, Laura, and finally Mark. "I have no idea," she admitted as she took another sip of tea. Mark looked displeased with her answer.

"Rich, you must know some juicy tidbit that wasn't in the papers," Penny hinted.

Rich cleared his throat. "I was first on the scene but was relegated to taking staff statements when the detectives arrived and took over. I was just a rookie, so I didn't have anything to do with the investigation, and the detectives didn't confide in me. So, I'm afraid I don't have any juicy tidbits to add." He reached for another cookie.

"This is so exciting," chirped Laura. "Since we'll be meeting here for a while, we can search for clues and solve this mystery." Laura sat a little taller, putting her shoulders back. "That should bring new members to our club."

"I don't know that a group of public speakers can solve a case that's befuddled the police for 30 years," pointed out Carl.



Before Laura could respond, John jumped in, "Good point, Carl. I'm sure the police don't want a bunch of Toastmasters poking their noses in where they don't belong. Let's keep our focus on having good meetings and bringing in new members."

Laura jumped up out of her chair, "I disagree," she exclaimed. "Who better than us to figure out if it was an accident or murder, and if it was murder, to identify the guilty party. I suggest we begin by visiting the scene of the crime. Rich, you were there, lead the way. Then Carl can tell us what he remembers."

Rich, caught off guard, looked like he wanted to be anywhere else. Scooting his chair away from the table, Rich moved slowly as if to avoid the task at hand. One by one the members stood and filed behind Laura and Rich.

After opening the basement door and flipping on the light switch, Laura gestured to Rich to begin. When he failed to respond after a moment, Penny probed, "Rich, what are you

waiting for. Tell us what you see."

"Penny, what do you think I see? All I see are stairs and the dark basement below," sighed Rich.

Shaking her head, Laura knew that she would have to direct the investigation. "Well, if we can't see anything, what are we waiting for. Let's go downstairs. Come on Rich, you're leading this phase of our investigation. Lead the way."

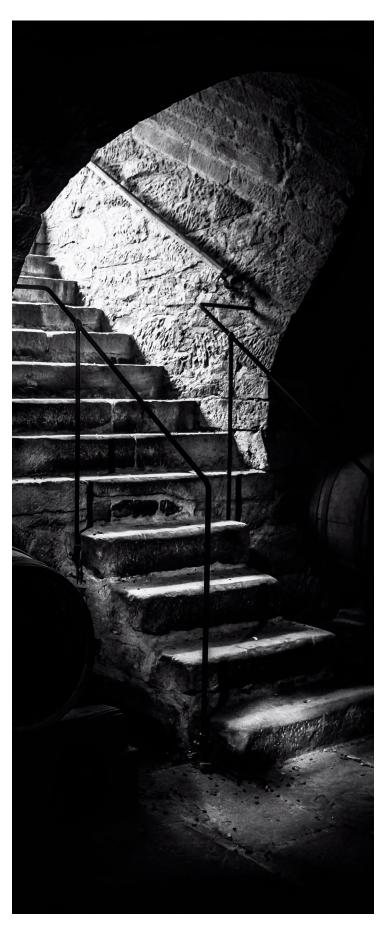
Penny looked at her friend and rolled her eyes as Laura continued. "The stairs are quite steep. Be sure to hold on tight to the railing. Rich and I will go ahead and turn on more lights. Chop chop!"

In a stage whisper, Laura asked Rich, "Are you afraid of the dark? Do you want me to go first?"

Rich glared at her and started down the stairs gripping the handrail as he went. Laura followed close behind. When he reached the basement level, Rich rubbed his hand along the wall for the light switch and flipped it on. An overhead light cast an eerie glow. Rich and Laura took a few steps into the laundry room, making space for the others to gather. One by one, like lambs to the slaughter, each descended the stairs into the basement where William had met his demise. They all looked at Rich with the intensity of a congregation waiting for a sermon to start. Rich looked back at the group.

"Where's Terry?"

"I thought she was right behind me," John said.



"I'll get her," offered Laura.

Laura found Terry at the top of the stairs visibly shaking. "My dear, what's the matter? Afraid of the dark or basements?"

Terry gave Laura a weak smile. "Basements."

"Put one hand on the railing and I'll walk beside you and hold the other one. It will be fine. There's nothing down there to be afraid of. Let's join the others at the scene of the crime."

The women reached the bottom of the stairs in time to hear Rich say, "We found him right there where Terry and Laura are standing." Terry began to sway. Laura, who was always observant and eager to put her nursing skills to work, grabbed the fainting woman before she collapsed onto the floor.

An audible gasp came from the others. John rushed forward and helped Laura lower Terry onto the steps. John held onto her left arm while Laura rubbed her back and spoke softly into her ear. The others huddled together silently as they looked back and forth between Terry and the floor where William's lifeless body had been found. Everyone that is but Rich, who paced back and forth with his hands behind his back.

Laura wished she had smelling salts to bring Terry around. But the younger woman's pulse was strong, and after a few minutes Terry lifted her head, opened her eyes, and looked around. Her calm demeanor suggested she knew where she was and why she was there.

Laura leaned forward and looked at Terry. "Terry, are you alright?"

Terry took a long slow breath, "I think William was my father."

To be continued . . .

THE GIFT OF THE LIFT

Lee Coyne, ATMS

Christmas time is ringing in.

Melodies proclaim that it's the

"most wonderful time of the year" but that isn't true for all.

We are a nation divided by Covid and high prices and often by low outcomes. Racism and sexism are running rampant. We are all craving for relief.

Now in retirement, i have had ample time to give thoughts to better coping.

This requires creating an empathy for others starting with asserting Toastmasters skills of attentive listening.

That in itself validates our counterpart that they are adequately valued.

We must bear in mind that life experiences vary from person to person. Paths shape attitudes.

Hence we carry along carry-over effects from our past. When we meet a new person quite often something from olden days lurks in out mind. We freely associate.

Our reaction is steeped in ancient flashbacks tethered to our many yesterdays. Novelty is rare.

Be generous in love and caring for others. You have not lived their lives. You have not confronted their triumphs nor their setbacks. You might well falter if you did.

We each owe our brothers and sisters the benefit of that doubt along that mystical winding trail.

Supply that welcome gift of a lift. Begin in Christmas.

Supply that welcome gift of a lift. Begin in Christmas

And keep it going all year long!

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MEMORIES OF CHRISTMAS PAST

Paul C. Fanning, DTM

The trees are set up in the living room, St. Nicholas and friend guarding one and the other by Theodore E. Bear and his buddy Frosty. The ornaments glisten, the candy canes beckon one to come and sample them, and the greens (fake) look real in the semi-darkness. On the medium sized table covered in white with flecks of silver, and the cotton pretending to be snow, a small forest of trees with an old wooden stable is filled with animals and people of Provence awaiting the coming foretold to them by a dog and an idiot! (Remember Ravi from an article about Christmas past?) I can sit in my chair, and lean back, thinking. . .remembering. . .and gosh, the aria "Memories" from "Cats" by Andrew Lloyd Webber is running through my head. The most wonderful time of the year, right? Except the "Memories" version I am hearing is from "School of Rock" being sung by the girl who cannot sing or carry a tune, but screeches it out much to the horror and amazement of the rest of the school. Yes, you see, not all memories are so precious, but they are at least amusing!

Take for example one from Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, circa 1960. It is Christmas Eve. I am at my grandparents' house, supposed to be snug and asleep in bed, but I managed to sneak out to the living room and peek under the Christmas Tree. Ah, yes—presents! Gifts well wrapped and taped with ribbons, etc. I see one

with my name on it. I carefully reach under the branches and pull the box towards me. What was wrong with giving it a little shake. . .or two? No noise, silent like the night, and then it hit me. I could most carefully begin to un-wrap it and see if I could determine what it was. It seemed like hours of cautiously pulling the tape off enough to begin to see a corner of the gift emerge. It was a wild west fort, hopefully one like Corporal Rusty and Rin-Tin-Tin resided in. Back went the tape, package swiftly pushed back under the tree and the ever-silent retreat to the bedroom for me to

dream about what I would be doing with that toy tomorrow on Christmas Day!

I am up early—after allitis Christmas. Out I go from the bedroom back to the living room, but faster and more noisily than the night before. There before me were my Grandparents and my Parents, drinking tea or coffee. I greet them with a "Merry Christmas" and loudly proclaim a



"thank you very much, everybody!" for the gifts I was about to receive.

The first round of gifts given out did not involve my fort. Nor the second, or the third. I was beginning to panic! And then, it was all over! I crawl over to the tree and look under it to see if someone missed my "secret" gift I had already "found" on Christmas Eve. Yet, alas, there was no other gift there, let alone a wild west fort that I was now realizing would never be mine. I did not dare ask, "what happened to my fort?" Because then they would know I had been



sneaking and peeking. To this day, that gift is still a mystery. I do know I asked my grandmother many, many years later about it, and then my mother. Neither one knew what I was talking about. Did I dream this up? No, I just think one of the four adults saw that the gift package had been tampered with and decided not to give it to me to teach me a lesson.

Flat in the Sierra Nevada mountains was a great time in my life. Yes, at 3500 feet, we had snow. The town looked like one of the picturesque Christmas cards with the church steeple's roof covered in snow, and the whole area with the greens of the pine trees and icy streams adding to the ambiance of the holidays. It was a great time for me to be a thirteen-year-old kid. One of my chores was to go and get the Christmas tree and bring it back to the house so my father could set it up in the bay window of the dining room. This was not going to a Christmas tree lot and buying a tree. This was a hike into the forest areas surrounding Dutch Flat, cutting down, and then dragging home the seven or eight-foot tree. After all, that year I had earned my "Paul Bunyan Woodsman Award" from Boy Scouts which meant I had the skills, I knew which end of an axe to use, and had demonstrated how to fell a tree and the safety required to do so. Off I went, three trees were to be my lot that day for neighbor, grandmother, and us. Me the intrepid explorer. Axe, bow saw, and rip saw with my sled. In those days, you could wander off and just cut down a tree in the area. It never seemed to cause any concern whether it was from Pacific Gas & Electric, Southern Pacific, or (gulp) federal land. Permit? "We don't need no stinkin permit." Three hours later I emerged, face

Living in the old gold mining town of Dutch

flush with victory and chilled to the bone but and the biggest tree we ever had was ready to triumphantly bearing the requisite three trees. Little one for g'ma. Medium sized for neighbor and our magnificent specimen that would look oh so splendid in the bay window, fully decorated and a symbol of my hunter/gatherer prowess.

Father came home. We dragged the tree through the front door, past the living room, and finally into the dining room. Out comes the tree stand (extra heavy duty) and the crowning moment is about to unfold. To me, it was like the Marines raising the American flag on Mt. Suribachi. Except that the ten-foot tree did not fit in the eight-foot ceiling space! Axe man I was, but my measuring skills needed a little refinement His solution was simple. Find a boy, give him a and polishing. I think I managed to slink away before father used his Navy chief voice on me was always hoping he would select my brother, and my so-called intelligence. However, a little trimming here and there, it was soon finished alone shoveling what I was being told was "a

decorate.

Perhaps a memory of Christmas past I wish I could forget is about snow on the roof. The house in Dutch Flat was begun in the early 1850's, and the kitchen portion of the house had been built in the 1880's. Obviously the builder must have gone to the same engineering and measuring school I did because the roof was at the wrong pitch, and the snow would slide nicely until it just sat on the roof, not sliding off. My father was always worried that this 120-year-old house would crumble to the ground—that the weight of the snow would eventually crush the kitchen. shovel, and send him to clear away the snow! I but he was way too young for any of that, let

> ton of snow" off the edge of the kitchen roof. It also did not help matters that I could open my second-floor bedroom window and stand on the roof and merrily shovel away. In snow boots, heavy jacket, winter coat, and gloves, I would emerge and begin my toil of removing the snow from the metal roof so that we could no longer fear that the roof would cave in while mother was cooking dinner. This took me at least an hour or two to get down to the bare metal and have it all shiny and clean.

> > One particular day things



were a little tougher. We had a huge amount of snow dumped on us, and I could hear the wonderful sliding noise and resulting thump of snow vacating ours and the neighbor's pitched roof. I inched my way carefully down the incline, getting closer and closer to the edge and the twelve-foot drop into the garden below. I misjudged that edge, and found myself falling, the shovel going one way, me another and alas, I knew no more. My mother tells me she heard me go off the edge and ran out the back door of the porch to see me upside down in a huge pile of snow, my legs kicking back and forth while trying to extract myself out of the deep snow. She called for my father who

wondered aloud what tom foolery I had gotten myself into and why I was wasting time when he came around the corner and saw the same sight. Both were concerned about me, right? Yes, in the perfect world, their older son was now deep in a snow pile, maybe unable to breathe, and most definitely unable to dig himself out, and required immediate assistance. But the reality was laughter instead, and to me what felt like hours transpired in brief seconds and I was lifted out alive but gasping. No questions about my well-being, or was I hurt, etc. Nope, not a one, just laughter. Mad, still getting snow off my face, eyelashes, and hair, I took off for the house. I was done. Bah, humbug to fond Christmas memories!

Yes, the off-key, pitchy, screechy, and just plain horrible warble of "Memories" continues to go through my mind. Yet soon they are



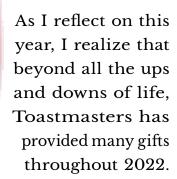
replaced by kinder, gentler, and "ah" thoughts of Christmases past. Favorite foods. Splendid and meaningful gifts both given and received. Those who have passed on. Christmas is indeed the most wonderful time of the year if you and I let it be so.

Oh, I do have one final vision. Not mine, unfortunately, but from my younger brother. You see once I left for college, there was no one for several years to shovel the roof. My father had to do it. And one fateful day, a loud bang, ker-thump, and salty language was heard in the house from the outside. My brother told me that dad had fallen off the roof, and that he was stuck in a snow pile, his legs flailing away. . .karma!

Enjoy the holidays. May you make a few positive memories this year with you and yours.

THE GIFT OF TOASTMASTERS

Jennifer Schmidt, EH2



Especially during those times when I got really stuck, those speaking and leadership gifts would magically appear and give me the chance to shine even when I didn't believe it was possible. Some of these experiences included:

Surprises of Competition – Earlier in the year I gave a speech that needed more animation and volume that was way out of my comfort zone, requiring that I stretch my vocal variety and physical presence. Sometimes just having the ability to try different gestures, tone, volume, helped to discover what was the most effective technique to use. Yelling out a gleeful "Yippee," was fun and not something I thought I would ever try, but experimenting is what competitions are for, to expand your skills and enjoy those moments.

Interesting Topics – One speech I gave during a New Horizons meeting was about the topic of swearing (which is something I don't do) and the reasons why. At one point I used the word

As I reflect on this fabulous to demonstrate that if any word was year, I realize that used too much (such as a curse word), it would be beyond all the ups repetitive and boring. What was funny was how and downs of life, fabulous became its own swear word by default. Toastmasters has While it was risky to bring up a controversial topic provided many gifts that isn't often talked about, it was fun to discuss throughout 2022. it without swearing and seeing the response of the club members.

> **Impromptu Q & A** – I gave a speech at a PR Masters meeting about content writing and thought when I was finished, my part would be done. Then I was asked several impromptu questions, which surprised me since a Q & A portion wasn't part of the program. Participating in Table Topics over the years helped me go into answer mode as the expert. The fact that my expertise was sought out was a compliment, and great practice for other life situations when people ask for your opinion.

> In addition to stretching my comfort zone, trying new topics, and answering questions, other gifts of boosting confidence, practicing on a regular basis, and receiving support are all gifts that I experience throughout the year as well. As we all go into 2023, each gift we receive from Toastmasters will help us become better communicators, leaders, and people who help each other as we grow.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Club Name	Last Name	First Name
Newberg Toastmasters Club	Bradshaw	Julie
Spirit Trackers	Christian	Dustin
Creative Communicators	Cutler	Koli
Yammertime	Hubbard	Katherine
Lake Oswego Toastmasters Club	Kittle	Diane
Waffle Toasters	Lee	Yilin
M A C Toastmasters Club	Leonard	Jacob
Rose City Toasters Club	Lopez	Jose
Rose City Toasters Club	Maurer	Mason
Salmon Speakers	Molano	Olivia
Rose City Toasters Club	Morales	Anselmo
Newberg Toastmasters Club	Petersen	Amy
Downtown Public Speakers Club	Reynoso	Monica
Newberg Toastmasters Club	Rosacker	William
NoonTime Club	Saputra	Yogi
Corvallis Evening Group	Sebring	Linda
Waffle Toasters	Shellenberger	Dan
Rose City Toasters Club	Sillers	Chance
Downtown Public Speakers Club	Sisneroz	James
Rogue Communicators Club	Smith	DeeDee
Corvallis Evening Group	St. Onge	David
Battle Ground Toastmasters	Tagabuel	Carlos
Top DOTs	Temple	Christy
Silicon Forest Club	Teoh	Cynthia
Battle Ground Toastmasters	VanRoyce	Jeremy
Unified Toastmasters Club	Williams	Leslie
CareOregon	True	Ali

HONORING EDUCATIONAL AWARDS

AWARD	DATE	MEMBER	Club NAME
PI2	11/24/2022	Ahren Kretlow, PI2	Rose City Toasters Club
PI3	11/27/2022	Ahren Kretlow, PI3	Rose City Toasters Club
EH1	11/18/2022	Andrew Powers, EH1	Portlandia Club
MS3	11/30/2022	Anna Osmukhina, DTM	Noon Talkers
PM3	11/3/2022	Barb Schimmel, PM3	Vancouver Toastmasters Club
EH1	11/1/2022	Craig Johnson, EH5	Will-Sher Club
EH2	11/1/2022	Craig Johnson, EH5	Will-Sher Club
EH3	11/1/2022	Craig Johnson, EH5	Will-Sher Club
EH4	11/1/2022	Craig Johnson, EH5	Will-Sher Club
EH5	11/1/2022	Craig Johnson, EH5	Will-Sher Club
EH3	11/25/2022	Dave Hardenbrook, EH3	Babble-On Toastmasters Club
PM3	11/16/2022	Deanne Englund, PM3	Tell Me A Story
PM4	11/14/2022	Elizabeth Hall, PM4	Professionally Speaking
VC1	11/21/2022	Elizabeth Heinlein, VC1	Washington Street Club
EC2	11/21/2022	Elizabeth M. Harris, EC2	Portland Progressives
PM2	11/1/2022	Hua-Ching Liao, PM2	MIME Speaks
MS4	11/23/2022	James Kennedy, MS4	Rose City Toasters Club
MS1	11/22/2022	Josh LaFevre, MS1	Mentors Of Focus Club
EH5	11/9/2022	Judy Chan, EH5	New Beginnings Toastmasters
IP3	11/6/2022	Kathy Phillips, DTM	Sunrise Toastmasters Club #1492
PM4	11/6/2022	Kristine Obritschkewitsch, PM4	Sunrise Toastmasters Club #1492
DL4	11/18/2022	Lisa Busenbark, DL4	Portlandia Club
PM2	11/18/2022	Lisa Hutton, DTM	Marylhurst Toastmasters
DL4	11/23/2022	Lori Faren, DL4	Coachmasters Toastmasters
MS3	11/15/2022	Louis R. Burns, DTM	NoonTime Club
DL4	11/1/2022	Mahmoud Moustafa, DL4	Capital Toastmasters Club
PM4	11/29/2022	Mao Kenney, PM4	Nano-Mated Speakers
PM3	11/8/2022	Mao Kenney, PM4	Nano-Mated Speakers

HONORING EDUCATIONAL AWARDS

AWARD	DATE	MEMBER	Club NAME
TC1	11/6/2022	Marcy L. Field, DTM	PR Masters
LD2	11/2/2022	Mark Henry, LD2	Waffle Toasters
PM1	11/21/2022	Mary Cooke, PM1	Lebanon Toastmasters
EH3	11/8/2022	Nathan Beste, EH3	Nano-Mated Speakers
SR5	11/30/2022	Neal Wilkinson, SR5	MIME Speaks
DL1	11/3/2022	Orlando Bolet Correa, DL1	NuScale Toasters
PM1	11/25/2022	Paige Z. Pace, PM1	Clark County Toastmasters Club
IP1	11/4/2022	Pat Pitz, IP1	Silicon Forest Club
PM4	11/4/2022	Pat Pitz, IP1	Silicon Forest Club
DL1	11/15/2022	Patti Midland, DL1	Stevenson Breakfast Club
LD1	11/20/2022	Phyllis A. Harmon, DTM	Wallmasters International Club
PM1	11/12/2022	Robert B. Hall, DTM	Professionally Speaking

TRIPLE CROWN AWARD PINS

Name	Number Earned	Awards
Ahren Kretlow, PI3	3	PI1 , PI2 , PI3
Allan B. Edinger, DTM	5	EC1, EC2, EC3, EC4, EC5
Angela Stringer, PI3	3	PI2 , PI3 , VC2
Beth Pinchot, DTM	4	PM1 , PM2 , PM3 , PM4
Bettina K. Schempf, DTM	3	IP4 , IP5 , SR1
Brandon Marsh, IP5	5	IP3 , IP4 , IP5 , PM4 , PM5
Brent E. Smith, DL5	3	DL4 , DL5 , MS1
Carina Corbet-Owen, DTM	3	PM1 , PM2 , PM3
Cate A. Arnold, DTM	5	EH3 , EH1 , EH2 , PM4 , PM5
Craig Johnson, EH5	5	EH1 , EH2 , EH3 , EH4 , EH5
Crystal Clark, DTM	3	DL4 , EH3 , EH4
Dallas Jannett, IP3	3	IP1 , IP2 , IP3
David R. Sessum, PM4	3	PM2 , PM3 , PM4

TRIPLE CROWN AWARD PINS

Name	Number Earned	Awards
David Shehorn, SR4	7	TC4 , TC5 , PM5 , SR1 , SR2 , SR3 , SR4
Donna L. Stark, DTM	9	EC5 , EH3 , EH4 , EH5 , PM2 , PM3 , PM4 , PM5 , PWMENTORPGM
Giovanni Beccaria, LD4	4	LD1 , LD2 , LD3 , LD4
Gwendolyn Avington, SR4	4	SR1, SR2, SR3, SR4
Helen M. Grothe, DTM	3	EH4 , EH5 , PM5
Jacki L. Elsom, PM3	3	PM1, PM2, PM3
James Kennedy, MS4	4	MS1 , MS2 , MS3 , MS4
Joan Miller, PM4	4	LD5 , PM3 , PM4 , PWMENTORPGM
John E. Anderson, DTM	6	EC2, EC3, PM1, PM2, PM3, PWMENTORPGM
Judy Chan, EH5	3	EH3, EH4, EH5
Lyle W. Schellenberg, DTM	3	EH3, EH1, EH2
Mao Kenney, PM4	3	PM2 , PM3 , PM4
Michael K. Rosenberg, SR3	3	PM5 , SR2 , SR3
Neal Wilkinson, SR5	3	PM1 , PM2 , SR5
Patrick Little, PM3	3	PM3, PM1, PM2
Phyllis A. Harmon, DTM	3	LD1 , PM5 , EH4
Robert B. Hall, DTM	3	EC4 , EC5 , PM1
Rudy Erbrich, EC3	4	EC2, EC3, LD1, LD2
Ryan Villemyer, SR3	3	SR1, SR2, SR3
Sarah Rosenberg Brown, LD3	3	EC1 , LD2 , LD3
Sean D. Tobin, LD5	5	LD1 , LD2 , LD3 , LD4 , LD5
Stephana M. Johnson, PM5	8	EH1, EH2, EH3, EH4, EH5, PM4, PM5, PWMENTORPGM
Steve Mathis, PI4	3	PI3 , PI4 , PM5

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO DECEMBER CLUBS

CHARTER DATE	YEARS	Club	CITY
12/1/1987	35	Rogue Communicators	Grants Pass
12/1/1979	43	Arlington	Portland
12/19/2019	3	Coachmasters	Lake Oswego
12/15/2015	<u> </u>	Codeminasters	Lake 03Weg0



Dave Bones, TM



Eldred Brown, DTM



Jennifer Schmidt, EH2



Jim Robison, DTM



Leanna Lindquist, DTM



Lee Coyne, ATMS



Lorri Andersen, DTM



Paul Fanning, DTM



Phyllis Harmon, DTM



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