



# Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters Newsletter



Club 7123 – Area 34 – District 70

May 2011

## Toastmasters Skills in Real Life



### Story by Julie Macken

On Saturday 9 April my aunt celebrated her 80th birthday at a dinner with over 20 family members. Most people travelled from interstate so it was a great get together for all concerned.

Just before the cake came out my Dad called me over and asked if I would propose a Toast. When the cake came out I led the singing (not so surprising for a Karaoke Queen). We cheered and ‘hip hoorayed’ and applauded.

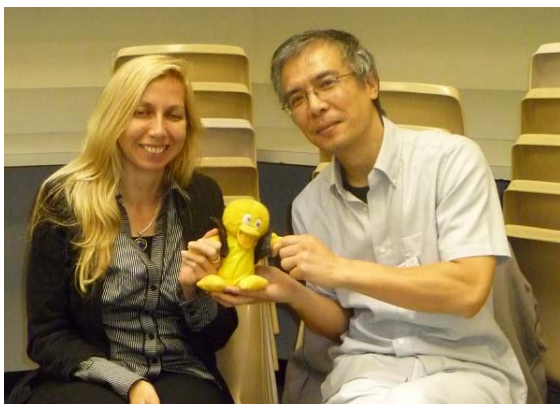
Then I rose to my feet and, with no preparation, I gave a brief but heartfelt speech ... ending with a call for everyone to charge their glasses and stand as we toasted my aunt. She is not normally one to show emotion but she got quite teary. She thanked me profusely afterward and many of those present came to thank me and said they loved my speech.

What we learn as Toastmasters is wonderful and it is great to have those skills to call on at short notice.

One of my favourite lines I heard years ago from a Toastmaster was “Be upstanding, be brief, be seated”.

You can say a lot with a few words.

## Dancing with Laura



Laura Masson and Anthony Low – joint winners of the Yak Yak Award (best Table Topic) at a recent meeting.

*Dance like no-one is watching you*

*Love like you have never been hurt*

*Sing like no-one can hear you*

*Live like heaven is on earth*

William W. Purkey

Laura recently spoke to us about her passion for dance in an inspirational speech based on the quotation above. She described how these words form an equation: Dance + Love + Sing = Living.

Laura then spoke about embracing dance as the soul’s expression of itself in movement. Dancing is all about connection. As a Toastmaster we seek connection with the audience whereas a dance connects with another person, with their eyes to the windows of their soul building rapport with movement.

Dance is a creative collaborative outlet. Dancing transports your mood within minutes. Partner dancing involves leading and following and is the classic embodiment of feminine and masculine energy.

There are so many reasons to learn to dance. Imagine a safe environment, just like Toastmasters is safe for learning communication, where you can learn to dance?

Laura has arranged free lessons for any Toastmaster to experience the joy of dancing. The lessons are run by Ceroc and classes are held in various locations including Willoughby.



[www.ceroc.com.au](http://www.ceroc.com.au)

Contact Laura for more details on how to take up this offer.

## David Fisher on Leadership



David Fisher DTM, visited our meeting on the 5th April and spoke about leadership. David has been in Toastmasters for seven years, is a member of five clubs and is currently serving as Central Division Governor. David spoke to the objectives of project 9 from the Competent Communicator manual - Persuade with Power, and titled his speech "We can be leaders". Here is a summary of his talk.

Who is a leader here? Nearly half of the audience raised their hand. Why isn't everyone else a leader? We can all be leaders. In Toastmasters there are two education tracks - Communication and Leadership. The leadership track is more encompassing as it contains the communication track. To be an Advanced Leader Bronze you need to have the Competent Communicator (CC) award.

In February, David attended a conference of Strata Managers and was asked to lead a breakout group for 45 minutes. If asked to do that a few years ago he would have said "I can't do that!". Can you relate to that? We all get asked to do leadership roles from time to time and our first response is "I can't do that". But we can do that with the help of Toastmasters.

David's first leadership role in Toastmasters was being asked to be Sgt-at-Arms. At first he thought "I can't do that" but after a little while he got into the role and thought it was good. He got the opportunity to speak at every meeting. Next year he was asked to be VP Publicity, then VP Education and then President. David said "Someone tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I could a role".

Every Toastmasters role is a phenomenal opportunity for growth in leadership. If one of my peers thinks I am capable of doing a role and asks me to do, then I take on the challenge and grow into that role.

What is Leadership? A leader is someone who motivates other people - an inspiration and a director of where the action is. A leader is someone who people will follow and learn from. When the time is right the leader steps back and allows someone else to take over the role.

Benefits of being a leader. Personal growth - you will learn, gain self-actualisation, creating the kind of person you want to be. You will discover things about yourself including the knowledge you can be a leader. You will benefit, your club and the organisations you belong to. You take the skills developed in Toastmasters to the outside world and gain benefits including financial rewards.

Where do you start? Become an executive officer in your club. Work through the Competent Leadership manual. Answer the questionnaire at the beginning of the manual and when you have finished each task review your answers to assess your growth.

Leadership will help you become the person that you want and need to be in Toastmasters and more importantly outside Toastmasters.

### Committee Learning Experiences



Soon we will be having the club elections for the committee for 2011-2012. As David Fisher said, getting involved in the committee gives you the opportunity to grow as a leader and reward you in the future.

I asked the present committee members for their perspective on the role and what they learnt.

**President** (Clare Gallagher) - "I think you'd make a good president". What a set up those words were when first I heard them in May last year. I try in my life to say "Yes" when opportunity presents itself, at least more often than I say "No" or "I couldn't do that" or I think "I'd feel uncomfortable doing that".

Taking on the role of President at Chatswood Early Risers definitely fits into that last category. There is something uncomfortable about trying something new and unfamiliar. But there is also something deliciously rewarding and affirming about taking the challenge and doing it anyway.

I was lucky. I was able to draw from the remarkable depth of experience that exists in our club, and I was able to work with a really committed Executive group this year. It was their enthusiasm and willingness to make our club a success that made my job by far the easiest.

In the last 12 months I have learnt a considerable amount about the organisation of Toastmasters outside the club level, I've had an opportunity to meet and interact with some talented people in the interest of furthering our club, and I've developed confidence and trust in my abilities to be a leader through my role as President of Chatswood Early Risers.

Thank you for the opportunity.

**VP Education** (Darin) - If you are looking for one of the most rewarding roles within the club then VP Education is definitely for you. Each week you have the opportunity to get to know members and guests as they pursue their speaking goals. In doing this not only are you always learning but you will find that their enthusiasm is also very motivating in the pursuit of your own goals. Furthermore you gain an understanding of the workings of the club as well as Toastmasters as a whole, giving you invaluable experience on so many levels.

No experience is necessary to start as you have time and great support within the club to grow into the role. Having said that some time and commitment each week on your part is a must. I found this role to be challenging but rewarding. I thoroughly enjoyed taking on this role.

**VP Membership** (Melanie) - Our Central division governor said: we can be leaders! His message "I can't do that" sounds familiar.

The VPM could be seen as the pink-and-fluffy HR in organisations (half of it anyway - the other half is VPE). It is the executive who greets guests (we all do that, but they have accountability), follows up and helps guests to become members. The role can check on member satisfaction e.g. following up absentees. They also have voting rights at the monthly area council.

My role as VPM has been surprisingly interesting. I thought I needed the role for my CL manual, but I only need it for AL. What I gained was an understanding of the magic behind the scenes to get meetings and special events running so smoothly

I learnt how our club fits into Area 34 and meeting other club executives in the area. I focused on interacting with potential and new

members and many existing members, as well as interacting with the Area Governor and other club executives.

I exercised and grew my leadership capabilities. These skills need to grow along with speaking ability if you intend to move up the corporate ladder or other speaking opportunities.

Using a volunteer leadership role as a backdrop, one can improve other communication skills within the context of the Toastmasters program, where there is mentoring and support from experienced members.

All volunteer roles take time, but one can find a way of balancing effort with results, using leadership planning and time management skills.

Putting your hand up for the role, you realise yes, I can do that!

**VP Publicity** (Charles) - The role of VP Publicity is to promote our club and the benefits of Toastmasters to the wider community. People usually find us a result of searching on Google then finding our web site or a listing on the district 70 web site or international web site. I then respond to enquiry emails or telephone calls and encourage people to visit our next meeting. I am freshening up the web site but this hasn't been a high priority as people just keep on visiting our club.

The second part of publicity has been to tell members about activities in the club. I have produced several newsletters which are emailed to members and placed on the web site. I have also posted photos and short articles to our blog as well as our Facebook page. It is a challenge to find out the most effective way to spread the message of Toastmasters, and it is interesting to experiment with new social media and see what works.

**Treasurer** (Paul Dower) - In my role as Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters Club Treasurer, what do I do? I look after the club's finances. This involves bringing money in to the club and sending money out.

I bring money in by collecting joining fees, membership dues and room hire dues from members. This money is deposited into the club bank account.

I send money out by paying our membership and joining fees to Toastmasters International. I also pay for room hire and for services such as the club's post box. I refund members expenses, contribute funds to Toastmasters competitions, buy books, badges, and other supplies. These

payments are made by cash, cheque and online transfers. Payments made to Toastmasters International are in US dollars.

All of these transactions must be tracked and recorded to satisfy audit requirements. Every so often I deliver a report on our finances to the club executive.

That's about it. I became an executive because I believe that I should give something back to the club that has helped me a lot. What I do is not exactly high finance, but it's a vital part of keeping our club going.

**Secretary** (Davida Liang) - Having served on the executive committee as Secretary this past year, I can honestly say that this role at Chatswood Early Risers is unlike any other advertised in the job market. Not only do you not need any qualifications to apply, but experience is also not required.

Instead of collecting and sorting the mail five times a week, you do it once at Early Risers. And instead of taking down meeting minutes every single week, our meetings only occur once a month.

There is also no dress code, so feel free to turn up to 'work' in whatever you want. And if that is not enticing enough, how about the fact that there will be no probation period, nor will there be any possibility of being made redundant during your one year tenure?

What is everyone waiting for?

Apply now for this once in a lifetime opportunity to be the next Secretary of Chatswood Early Risers!

**Sergeant at Arms** (David Nixon) - The role of Sergeant At Arms is one of the most visible and rewarding of the Toastmaster roles, without being too much of a burden outside meeting time. Your main responsibilities are to ensure the room is available and in a good state for the meeting and then to start it on time with your welcome address. You hold the key and arrive at 7 am to unlock the room (or arrange for someone else to have it if you are unavailable), then unpack the equipment from the cupboard and arrange chairs and tables as necessary. The welcome address is the best part of the role, where you have the opportunity to practice your speaking skills for 2 minutes every meeting, either introducing the meeting topic or on a subject of your own choice. It is great fun, great experience and minimal effort!

## Club Calendar

### Meeting Themes

3<sup>rd</sup> May – Club Debate

5<sup>th</sup> May (Thursday) – interclub debate with Chandos Challengers – St Leonards 7.00 am

10<sup>th</sup> May – Star Signs

17<sup>th</sup> May – Australian Dollar

24<sup>th</sup> May – Julius Caesar (born on this day 15BC)

## Early Risers are Champions



This is a photo of the trophy for the winner of the International Speech Contest in Area 34. Reaching this level is a high achievement. Engraved on this trophy are several members of Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters.

**2011** – David Cruwys

**2009** – Pauline Gulleford

**1996** – Janet Whitten

Who will be the next Early Riser to reach this level?

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