

# Yankee Activator



INFORMING, INSPIRING, AND EDUCATING THE TOASTMASTERS COMMUNITY OF CONNECTICUT, EASTERN NEW YORK, AND WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS FOR OVER 50 YEARS

## Message from the Editor

Dear Yankee Activator Readers:

I hope everyone is enjoying this lovely fall weather. It's my favorite time of the year! Speaking of "year," it's now a new Toastmasters year and I would like to officially welcome our new District senior leaders: Marsha Kiley, ACS, CL, District Governor; Dave Wheeler, DTM, Lt. Governor of Education and Training; and new to the pack is Richard Peck, ACB, ALS, Lt. Governor of Marketing.

Each incoming governor brings a new theme and this year it's no different. Marsha's motivational theme for the District is "Move Forward," inspired by her passion for cycling.

I think this attitude is reflected succinctly on page 2 in the message to Dave Wheeler, DTM, from Ray Bell, DTM, a long-time Toastmaster, in response to Dave's article in the Summer '09 Yankee Activator, "How Full is Your Motivation Tank?" You'll appreciate Ray's candor, thoughtfulness, and honesty. Hopefully, you'll take away a little something and share it with others.

It's also time for me to move forward and finish up my CL (one more credit!) and start on speech number four towards my CC. No more excuses!

So, enjoy this edition of Yankee Activator. Read all about the International Convention hosted by our District (a smashing success, from all reports); Toastmasters sharing their knowledge within their communities; register for the Fall '09 District Conference and much more.

Mary Rarogiewicz, Editor-in-Chief



By Val Albert, DTM, PID  
North Country Toastmasters & North  
Atlantic Toastmasters, Division F

Kudos to District 53 for hosting the 2009 International Convention at Foxwoods, August 12-15. What a thrill it was to see our District take the center stage as we welcomed Toastmasters from around the world.

Congratulations to Joe Zafian, DTM, PDG, as he guided and supported his team as Host District Chair. District 53 Toastmasters

came together to work for a successful convention. In addition, Toastmasters from Region VII and from around the world volunteered. (Their stories are peppered throughout this issue.) Many, many thanks go to the Committee Chairs, and the volunteers who assisted throughout the week. Each day added more and more excitement for the 1,400 Toastmasters at the *Go Grand* 2009 International Convention.

- ★ On Tuesday evening the Inter-district speech contest took place, when our overseas friends competed for the honor of participating in the World Championship of Public Speaking, won by Mark Hunter of Australia. (Remember that name!)
- ★ Wednesday evening was the official opening of the convention with the thrilling display of the participating countries' flags. The colorful display was an incredible sight, and our District was oh so proud to see our Lt. Governor of Marketing, Richard Peck, ACS, ALB, carry the flag of our country—a proud moment for our District.
- ★ Thursday's highlights included meeting with the candidates for International Director and 3rd Vice President. Thursday evening featured a showcase of candidates answering questions by a moderator and the audience. Wow! Talk about Table Topics—a daunting process for anyone seeking higher office.
- ★ Friday featured the Annual Business Meeting where your voice was heard through your ballots. John Lau was elected 3rd Vice President; Gary Schmidt was elected International President.

(Continued on page 7)

From the Colchester *News Bulletin* - July 17, 2009

## Resident Receives Award

**Resident Bruce "Bruno" Hayn of Home Designs by Bruno—and also a volunteer with ABC's Extreme Makeover: Home Edition**

**Voluntown project—was recently selected as one of approximately 70 outstanding leaders throughout the world to receive the Toastmasters International Communication and Leadership award this year.**

The award was presented to Hayn at the District 53 Toastmasters Spring Conference on April 25 at the Chelsea Rose Ballroom in Norwich, CT. He received a standing ovation following a presentation in which Toastmasters District 53 Governor Karin Von Kaenel cited him in recognition of his achievements as both a communicator and leader, as well as a volunteer.

The *Extreme Makeover* project was for the Girard family of Voluntown. The family had suffered multiple tragedies: their house was ravaged by fire and then in June 2008, the family lost the father, Thomas, and the oldest son, Marc, 17, in a drowning accident. The family was chosen as recipients of a new house from the *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* television design team. **Hayn led the army of more than 1,000 volunteers who built the Girard's new home in 106 hours.**

While that in itself was an enormous accomplishment that required communication and leadership skills, Toastmasters honored Hayn for what he did "above and beyond" the building of the home. According to nominator Eva Menon, President of Niantic Toastmasters, "Bruno set up an accountant to teach them about budgeting and financial planning. He then got a lawyer to help the family with legal issues, and also arranged for a financial planner to be involved. He arranged for fundraisers that will enable the entire family to go to college. CVS donated cash towards college and Goodwin College has already given five full scholarships. **Bruno has made a positive difference in this family's life and he has gone above and beyond to continue helping them even after the 'glory' is gone.**" Menon continued, "Even today Bruno is available for the stuck door and leaky tub."

Following the evening in Norwich, Hayn was presented with the award again—this time on a more local level. Air Line Trail Toastmasters hosting District 53 Governor Marsha Kiley presented Hayn with the award on Thursday, July 9, at Cragin Library. 🐿



## A Reader's Wisdom

*Motivated by Dave Wheeler's Summer '09 article, "How Full Is Your Motivation Tank?", Ray Bell shares his thoughts*

**D**ave, Your story is the reason I am writing. I really enjoyed your story about motivation, rocks, sand, gravel, and water.

Why do I stay in Toastmasters? For the opportunity to learn to speak, listen, or lead? No, my future is behind me; I am 74 and hopefully 75 this fall.

The reason I stay is because of people like you and Karin von Kaenel, Marsha Kiley, Rich Couture, John Lynch, Paul Young, and so many others who get up in the morning and say, "What a great day. What can I do today to enjoy life? What can I do for others to make their lives better?"

Yes, it is the positive attitude I find in Toastmasters that keeps me going.

Set a goal, work towards it and enjoy the fruits of your labors. Toastmasters, in my humble opinion, is not the goal. Living a fulfilling, rewarding life is and Toastmasters is the tool we can use to reach our goal. We only go around once. Finding fault, complaining, seeing half-full glasses, and realizing how bad other people are leads nowhere.

In 1991 I set out to hike the Appalachian Trail, as many speech-weary members of Patroon and Bethlehem Toastmasters will tell you. Each year I hiked one- or two-hundred miles. I hiked in the snow, rain, heat, and sub-zero temperatures with black flies, mosquitoes, rattlesnakes, bears, and other companions—and one day I

finished. I finished on August 6, 2003, the date I had chosen back in 1992.

I set that goal, kept my eye upon the doughnut and not upon the hole, and I completed the trail. I was helped with the goal-setting management skills I learned in Toastmasters.

You are right; there is always room for more. We get discouraged, we get stalled, but we keep plugging. "Never, never, never, never...give up," Winston Churchill said. I look forward to your next two years as District Governor of Education and Training and District Governor. You will be a great success. 🐿

Ray Bell, DTM  
Bethlehem Club, Delmar, NY

*Ray is married to Beth Bell, CC.  
He can be reached at  
at55rbell53@verizon.net.*

A Message from our 2009-10 District Governor,  
Marsha Kiley, ACS, CL

## THE TOUR Everyone's Talking..



Everyone's talking about the Tour de Toastmasters in District 53!

Like the Tour de France, the annual cycling race comprised of 21 stages and covering 3,500 kilometers, District 53, with its theme of *Move Forward*, began its own tour on July 1st.

Inspired by the image of the racing bicycle, all members are encouraged to *Move Forward*, go the distance, and achieve new goals in 2009-10.

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**THE STAGES ARE CHALLENGING...**and vary like the terrain in District 53, from the flat coastal profile here in Connecticut, to the rolling hills in western Massachusetts and the mountains of eastern New York.

For example, **Stage 1, Club Officer training**, began July 1<sup>st</sup>. The "winners" will be clubs with four to seven officers trained. **Stage 2, the Smedley Award and Membership Drive**, began August 1<sup>st</sup>. The "winners" will be clubs that gain five or more new members by September 30<sup>th</sup>. **Stage 3 is the fall contest season**, the Evaluation and Humorous contests, and **Stage 4 is the October dues renewal period**.

As in the Tour de France, each "winner" of a stage wears the yellow jersey, but the one at the end of the final stage on June 30<sup>th</sup>, the Distinguished Club Program, counts the most.

A "white" jersey recognizes a new member with a Half CC, the first five speeches in the Competent Communicator Manual; a "green" jersey recognizes a

member with the most points, such as a Triple Crown winner; and a "polka dot" jersey recognizes the best climber, the "King of the Mountain," such as a club that rises from being coached to Distinguished!

Your Area Governor (AG) is there to serve you and to help you *Move Forward* and attain each of those special "jerseys."

**CLUB PRESIDENTS...**you will be receiving a phone call at least once a month from your AG asking about the overall health of your club, its meetings and membership status. AGs have been trained to help in the areas that may seem insurmountable to your club. Please tell your AG what challenges you would like help with during the year.

As your District 53 Governor, I have set our sights on the minimum number of members each club must have in order to be successful in the Toastmasters Distinguished Club Program:

**All clubs need to achieve Charter Strength (20) or a minimum net gain of 5 new members by June 30, 2010.** This is our goal for Members, Clubs, Areas, Divisions, and our District as we *Move Forward* toward success this year. Yogi Berra said, "If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up someplace else." When you do know, you're ready for the next challenge as I was when I gave the Welcome Speech at the Opening Ceremonies to 1,400 delegates from around the world at the Toastmasters International Convention at Foxwoods in August.

**WHAT AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY...**it was to represent our District, which did an awesome job as host for the convention! I heard so many positive comments about District 53! Let's keep this momentum going!

**On behalf of the District 53 Officer Team, we hope you have an outstanding year!** Come join us on the Tour de Toastmasters, go the distance toward your goals, and always, ALWAYS move forward!

Marsha Kiley, ACS, CL  
[dg53@district53toastmasters.org](mailto:dg53@district53toastmasters.org)

## A Message from Our 2009-10 Lt. Governor of Education & Training, Dave Wheeler, DTM

# What is a Distinguished Club and Why Should We Care?



The Distinguished Club Program (DCP) is a series of goals designed to track how well a club is doing in terms of Education, Membership and Leadership.

(See the sidebar for its ten goals.)

However, people get hung up unnecessarily on the number of awards they received, or whether they made eight or nine goals. It's not about how many goals you achieve; it's something far more important: **the long-term health of your club.**

The DCP is simply a *measurement tool*, an indication of where your club is heading. You would not get stressed about a sign on the side of the road unless it indicated you missed your exit. Similarly, the DCP tells you whether your club is on the path to success, or otherwise.

### The Other Path

District 53's statistician Rich Couture analyzed the past nine years of DCP data of all D53 clubs. Rich's study showed that when clubs in our district *failed* or *disbanded*, 97.6% were *not Distinguished* the year prior. Of those failed clubs, only 9.5% of them had *ever* been Distinguished within the nine years.

### Eat Your Vegetables

Most of us recognize that a club (and the members within the club) must *want* to be Distinguished. We cannot force them to do it. It is like eating your vegetables. Your Mom may have forced you to eat them as a child, but unless you want to be healthy as an adult, it won't become a habit.

### Motivate and Inspire

Here is a simple three-point approach that you can use to create your own motivational speech about

the Distinguished Club Program for your club.

#### 1) Understand the program:

- The DCP is simply a measure of a club's long-term health
- It measures membership, education and leadership
- Goals of the members support the goals of the club

#### 2) Challenge members & officers to:

- Do something that has not been done before
- Join the effort to have your club do better than ever
- Set and meet their own personal goals, which will automatically support the overall club goal

#### 3) Emphasize the importance and simplicity of:

- How easy the DCP is—support and answers are always available
- Opportunities for creativity and personal expression in each role
- The long-term health of your club

### One Last Thought

The DCP is a **Team Effort**. Be sure to include **all officers and members** in the discussion of your club's goals as well as the tracking process.

Your Area Governor can be a great resource as you plan your goals for the coming Toastmasters year since he or she is tied into all of the information available from District 53.

*How is your club doing toward the Distinguished Club Program this year?*

Can we get 100% of our clubs to be Distinguished this year? Realistically speaking, factoring in the District's new clubs, maybe not. On the other hand, we can certainly get **over 75%** Distinguished, if we **start now!**

Send me an email if you have any questions about the Distinguished Club Program or how you can help your club achieve more than last year.

Your District leadership team (including your Area Governor and Division Governor) are here to help all clubs *Move Forward* and be part of a *Distinguished Club!* 📣

Dave Wheeler, DTM  
lget53@district53toastmasters.org

## How Does the DCP Work?

For all clubs who have at least 20 members or a net gain of 5 members by 6/30/10 (end of the Toastmasters year):

- ★ Meet 5 goals: Distinguished
- ★ Meet 7 goals: Select Distinguished
- ★ Meet 9 goals: President's Distinguished

## The 10 Goals of the DCP

### Education

- Two Competent Communicator (CC) Awards
- Two more CCs
- One ACB, ACS or ACG
- One more ACB, ACS or ACG

### Membership

- Four new members
- Four more new members

### Leadership

- One CL, ALB, ALS or DTM
- One more CL, ALB, ALS or DTM
- Minimum of 4 club officers trained during each of two training periods
- One membership dues renewal and one club officer list submitted on time

Check your club's DCP status online and learn more by searching for *DCP* at [www.Toastmasters.org](http://www.Toastmasters.org).



**Ay, caramba!** Over the past nine years, 36 clubs (of 140+ in the District) have never been Distinguished, not including

clubs less than three-years-old! Does your club fall into this category? Email [lget53@district53toastmasters.org](mailto:lget53@district53toastmasters.org) with **DCP Check** in the Subject line, or talk to your Area Governor.

A Message from our 2009-10  
Lt. Governor of Marketing, Richard Peck, ACS, ALB

## TOUR DE MARKETING: Growing Clubs and Membership



**D**uring the 2008-09 year, we faced many challenges brought about by a recession and corporate layoffs. All of us felt the results: the loss of members and clubs. But that was then and this is now; it's time to *Move Forward*. With that being said, I'd like to wel-

come all of you to the 2009-10 District 53 Toastmasters year and the "Tour de Marketing and Membership."

Toastmasters International sets the club and member payment growth goals for the District; it is up to us as a whole to achieve these goals. As Lieutenant Governor of Marketing, I have two major areas of responsibility: club growth and membership payment growth. In order to *Move Forward*, we need to understand where we ended in the 2008-09 year and where we need to go. After all, if we are all aware of the goals, we can pull in the same direction to get there.

### D53 Club Goal

The District began the year with a base of 141 clubs and a goal of 145 clubs for June 30, 2010. You may think that growing by four clubs doesn't sound too difficult, but it can be. Remember, there is always the possibility—even though we do our best to avoid it—to lose a club during the year. For every club lost, two new clubs need to charter for a net gain of one. Wouldn't it be great if we could charter three to four clubs a month, or even better, one weekly?

### D53 Membership Payment Growth Goal

The District began the year with a base of 6,186 member payments with a goal of 6,309 for June 30, 2010. Dues (member payments) are collected twice a year; if we take the required number, 123 (the difference between 6,309 and 6,186), and divide by two, membership in the District must grow by 62. Every club member lost results in two fewer payments. Compounding the issue is the loss of one or more clubs.

### Keys to Club Growth

REMEMBER: EVERYONE IS A POTENTIAL NEW MEMBER

- ★ Consistently promote Toastmasters, i.e., step up club PR
- ★ Participate in TI membership drives:
  - Smedley Award: 8/1/09-9/30/09
  - Talk Up Toastmasters: 2/1/10-3/31/10
  - Beat The Clock: 5/1/10-6/30/10

### GUESTS

- ★ Encourage every member to bring in two to three guests
- ★ Treat guests as if they are already members
- ★ Provide guests membership packages and follow-up

### QUALITY MEETINGS

- ★ Who wants to join a club if its meetings are unorganized and boring?
- ★ To retain existing members, are you meeting the goals of your club members so they *want* to renew?

### CLUB & MEMBERSHIP SUCCESS DEPENDS ON ALL OF US

There are many opportunities for every member of District 53 to help the District grow:

- ★ Identify companies throughout the District that might be interested in hosting a demonstration meeting
- ★ Identify potential locations for community clubs
- ★ Become a member of the demonstration meeting team and help present a demo meeting to a potential new club
- ★ Become a new club sponsor or mentor and help new clubs have a successful start
- ★ Become a club mentor for a struggling club
- ★ And so much more. Just ask me or anyone on the LGM Team!

### The LGM Team

Do you have a club lead, or want to know what's involved? Are you interested in becoming part of a demo team? How about becoming a sponsor or mentor? If so, my team is here to help and support you. The LGM Team is:

- ★ Club Extension Chair – **Joe Zafian, DTM**, at [joe.zafian@espn.com](mailto:joe.zafian@espn.com)
- ★ Demo Team Coordinator – **Brian Cavanaugh, ATMG, CL**, at [bcavanaugh@sikorsky.com](mailto:bcavanaugh@sikorsky.com)
- ★ Club Rescue Chair – **Mike LaFountain, ACB, ALB**, at [mikelaf1@yahoo.com](mailto:mikelaf1@yahoo.com)
- ★ Public Relations Officer - **Tatiana Pechenik** at [tpechenik@gmail.com](mailto:tpechenik@gmail.com)
- ★ Dues Coordinator – **Steve Gondek, ACB, CL**, at [gondek@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gondek@sbcglobal.net)
- ★ District Webmaster – **Michael Aron, DTM**, at [michaela53@sbcglobal.net](mailto:michaela53@sbcglobal.net)

Working together, we can grow new and successful clubs and maintain and increase membership. Let's *Move Forward* together and help District 53 achieve its goals and set it as a shining example of Toastmasters International.

**Richard Peck, ACS, ALB**  
[Igm53@district53toastmasters.org](mailto:Igm53@district53toastmasters.org)



# She's Got a Ticket to Ride

By Lani Brown, CTM, Area D1 Governor  
Brass City Toastmasters, Waterbury, CT

*It's not "All work and no play" for TI Convention volunteers*

**T**he 78th annual Toastmasters International Convention was held August 12–15 in our backyard at MGM Grand at Foxwoods in Mashantucket, Connecticut. Of course, our district, District 53, was host. Being at this convention was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and similar to the Olympics in a couple of ways: **members from all over the world participated as Australia, Singapore, New Zealand, Thailand, Hong Kong, and Japan**; and there was the excitement and anticipation of competition. On Saturday, August 15, ten finalists competed to be the World Champion of Public Speaking.

## Almost-Free Admission

The difficult economy meant that some people could not afford the expenses of the event. Did that mean missing out altogether? Not for those who truly wanted to be there. Volunteering for the event meant that one could experience portions of the convention at no cost. **If a volunteer was needed at a workshop, luncheon or dinner, he or she was able to attend that event for free.**

Some volunteers just attended for a couple of days, or stayed in other hotels or with a friend or relative in the area. And other volunteers contributed offsite during the many months of planning prior to the event, while those onsite assisted with registration, the information desk, crowd control, and the parade of flags at the opening ceremonies, to name a few duties.

## White-Glove Treatment

Volunteers were treated well. There was a special area where coffee, tea, soda, ice water, and food were always available to keep the volunteers going. On the last day we were pleasantly surprised to be treated by our District leaders to a wonderful lunch of sandwiches, chips, cookies, brownies, and beverages outside in the warm sunshine. **Our 2008–09 International President, Jana Barnhill, DTM, met with us to personally express her appreciation.**

## Free Entertainment

That wasn't all there was to absorb without having a ticket. After the candidates for International Office addressed

convention delegates, our district leaders held a caucus where any district member was welcome to attend.

**Another benefit was the advance screening of *SpeakEasy*, a feature-length film about Toastmasters.** While watching the documentary, we munched on candy, and popcorn from old-fashioned red- and white-striped cardboard boxes used in movie theaters years ago.

**An enjoyable free event was the sing-along each evening following the last session.** Ted Corcoran from Ireland has led this annual tradition since the early 1990s. Apparently quite a few Toastmasters members can sing. Regardless of the talent (or lack of), it was great entertainment and included a few comedians.

**The finale of the International Convention was the President's Dinner Dance.** At about 10:00 p.m., the doors opened to all Toastmasters to listen to the music or join the dozens of people who were still dancing. The fun continued 'til past midnight.



Just being there, surrounded by Distinguished Toastmasters and District Governors, was quite **an inspiring and outstanding opportunity to meet and listen to those who have accomplished much in Toastmasters.** Their words of wisdom, based on their experience, are of great value to us as we in District 53 *Move Forward*.

Now is the time to begin budgeting for the next international convention, scheduled for August 11–14, 2010, in Palm Desert, California. Make it the vacation you deserve—plus so much more. 🍷



Email Lani Brown at [lanibrown@snet.net](mailto:lanibrown@snet.net).

# I Never Danced Like That

Diverse cultures learn on and off the dance floor



By Glenn Harrison, AC-Silver, CL, Uncle Sam Toastmasters Club, Troy, NY

At the Toastmasters International Convention, I had no plans to sit in on any sessions—I was there to serve. I committed to spend Saturday volunteering. I have volunteered many times at different company and organization conventions, so the experience was not new to me.

Most of the day I was on my feet running errands here and there, putting up signs, taking down signs, delivering items to another part of the convention center, moving bottled water, clearing trash.... I was so busy during the International Contest that I didn't know who won until much later!

It was amazing how many new people I met—Sharon, Debbie, Elaine, Earl, Hannah, Dave, Jane, Ed, and Elaine—just to name a few. I was humbled by their joy in serving others. One volunteer wasn't even a member of Toastmasters. She lived in the area and was asked if she wanted to volunteer; it was her way to find out more about Toastmasters.

I met Sanjay Bhagat, a District 31 Toastmaster from Brockton, Massachusetts. He is a software consultant originally from India who has been living in the U.S. for ten years.



Fellow volunteers Sanjay Bhagat (l) and Glenn Harrison at the Toastmaster Intl. Convention

Sanjay and I had a number of assignments together and got acquainted over the day. When all the Convention attendees headed to the ballroom for the President's Dinner, we went to the food court. During our meal, I learned more about him as he related the story of his journey to the U.S.

When we finished, we returned to the ballroom for the induction of the new Toastmasters International officers. Soon the music started and the deejay started playing tunes that made your feet want to move. But I still had a three-hour-plus drive home and couldn't muster the energy to dance.

Then Sanjay asked me, "How do you dance here in the U.S.?" I replied, "Just go out on the dance floor and start dancing." Well, he attempted to dance to one song but soon returned commenting, "I think you really need a woman to dance with." Seeing the glum look on his face, I said, "Come on!" We soon joined a fun group of six ladies and danced for over a half hour.

It began getting late and I told Sanjay it was time for me to start my drive home. With sincere gratitude in his voice, he said, "Thank you. I have never danced like that in the U.S.!" At that moment, I realized my most significant contribution of the event wasn't so much volunteering my time as it was enabling someone to do something completely unfamiliar.

Isn't that's what we do in our clubs? Our clubs are more than places to give speeches. They are places to help lead each other to go where we might never go on our own. The speeches are simply one of the vehicles Toastmasters provides that enable members to continually place ourselves in unfamiliar situations allowing us to grow professionally and personally.

I received this warm email (along with the picture to the left) from Sanjay a few days later. His email reminded me once again that as much as we give of our time and skills when volunteering, we get so much more in return:

*I hope this email will take you (down) memory lane to the TI Convention. I really had a good time with you...your nature of interacting with people—the way you talked with the same zeal and compassion with the waitress at President's dinner party as with others really impressed me. I learned from you during our brief interaction.... (So), who are you helping to dance? 🍀 Email Glenn at usbobsled1@yahoo.com.*

## CONGRATULATIONS!

(Continued from p. 1)

- ★ **Saturday**, bright and early, the World Championship of Public Speaking was held. Remember that name I asked you to remember? Well, **Mark Hunter** ended up being the 2009 World Champion of Public Speaking with his thrilling speech. What a great opportunity it was to see the competitors give the speeches of their lives.
- ★ **Saturday evening** was a time to relax and enjoy the successes of our Convention at the President's Dinner Dance. It was then that all of us realized what a great job we had done! We were so proud that we completed our work successfully to make our Toastmasters friends from around the world feel welcome and enjoy the Convention. We did it!

As we all said our good-byes to new and old friends, knowing in our hearts we will see each other next year, it was apparent to all that the real gift we receive from Toastmasters is the wonderful people we encounter. It was a truly grand convention and our District welcomed the world to our little corner with class, style and pride. Congratulations, District 53! 🍀

Email Val at [valbert53@earthlink.net](mailto:valbert53@earthlink.net).

The Winner of the  
\$25 Gift Certificate to the  
Toastmasters Online Store is  
Mr. NANA DANSO, CC, OF  
BI TOASTMASTERS.

Nana's name was drawn from  
the list of Toastmasters who  
submitted an article.

You can win, too! Email me  
your anecdote or story to  
[editor53@district53toastmasters.org](mailto:editor53@district53toastmasters.org). Visit  
[district53toastmasters.org/yankee](http://district53toastmasters.org/yankee) to find out more.

# Front-Row Seats to a Remarkable Show

*An International Convention first-timer is wowed by the performances*

*By Mr. Nana Danso, CC  
President, BI Toastmasters  
Ridgefield, CT*

**O**n Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, ten of the best speakers in Toastmasters competed in the 2009 World Championship of Public Speaking (WCPS) at the Toastmasters International Convention held at Foxwoods MGM Grand Hotel. In addition to being able to attend, I secured a seat

*The winner was Mark Hunter of Queensland, Australia, with his speech entitled “A Sink Full of Green Tomatoes.”*

*Mary Cheyne of Somerville, Massachusetts, came in second with her speech “Nelly,” and in third place*

which dog we decide to feed. Erick’s story of auditioning for a stunt role against younger and fitter athletes was hilarious and reminded me to go for my dreams, regardless of the obstacles.

I learned something from all the speakers who stepped on the stage. *As a speech contest junkie, watching each contestant inspired me to keep writing and delivering speeches.*

The International Speech Contest will begin again next February. Why not sign up for your club’s contest and take your speaking skills to the next level? You can grow tremendously in a short period of time.

Darren LaCroix, the 2001 World Champion of Public Speaking, says, *“The fastest way to improve (your public speaking skills) is by maximizing your stage time.”* The 2009 World Championship of Public Speaking was a testament to Darren’s advice! ✉ *Email Nana at [nana@nanasmagic.com](mailto:nana@nanasmagic.com).*

**“All of the speakers shared beautiful stories—stories about their lives that made the audience laugh, gasp, cheer and cry.”**

in the third row, which gave me a magnificent view of the stage. This was my first International Convention, the highlight of which was the WCPS. If you have never attended the International Convention before, you have no idea what you are missing!

Every year, more than 200,000 Toastmasters from around the globe receive the opportunity to compete in the International Speech Contest where contestants deliver five- to seven-minute speeches judged on content, delivery and language. To be eligible to compete in the WCPS, contestants must win five International Speech Contests in a period of approximately six months leading up to the big event.

All of the speakers shared beautiful stories about their lives—stories that made the audience laugh, gasp, cheer and cry. I have watched many recordings of past contests, but there is nothing like being there in person. At the end of the contest, we all waited in anticipation to see who would be crowned the 2009 World Champion of Public Speaking.

*was Erick Rainey of Portland, Oregon, with “Feed the Right Dog.”*

I saw Mark Hunter deliver his speech on DVD at a previous Inter-District Contest. This time, he delivered it with even more style and grace as he shared his challenges of dealing with a disability and his desire to fit in with the rest of the world. It was a remarkable performance and a pleasure to watch him speak.

*Mary Cheyne related an account about her childhood friend Nelly.* Nelly discouraged Mary to fulfill her dream of emigrating to the U.S. to seek prosperity and success. It turned out that Nelly was actually Mary’s inner critic, whose words she counteracted with the phrase, “Stop, reset, and continue!”. Mary’s speaking style is terrific. She always catches audience members off guard with her Australian accent. She says she’s “...an Australian trapped in the body of a Chinese person.”

*Erick Rainey told us that he has two dogs and that, in fact, we are all dog owners.* One dog is always encouraging us while the other is telling us that we can’t make it. Our success depends on



Former WCPS winners congregated at the International Convention. Back Row, L-R: Darren LaCroix (2001), Lance Miller (2005), Mark Brown (1995). Front Row, L-R: Ed Tate (2000), Mark Hunter (2009), Jim Key (2003). Photo Credit Nana Danso.

**We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit.**  
-Aristotle-

# ASSIGNMENT: NEXT GENERATION



## SHINE Speech and Debate Tournament

*Toastmasters lend a hand judging a youth speech contest*

Spring started off with a wonderful experience for me. I participated in an event judging young people presenting speeches and debates.

The National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA) runs SHINE (Share Him In New England), a speech and debate tournament. The event organizers reached out to Toastmasters clubs to find judges. Jay Dis-

count (Division C Governor), Carter Sutherland (Area C3 Governor), and I volunteered to judge at this March event held in Manchester, Connecticut.

*More than 150 home-schooled students between the ages of 13 and 18 competed in debates and speeches.* The debate categories were Lincoln-Douglas and Team Policy; speech categories included

Persuasive, Original Oratory, Expository, Dramatic, Humorous, Open, DUO (two-person team), Impromptu, Extemporaneous, and Apologetic.

We were highly impressed by the preparedness of the students. They were very versatile on the stage, highly organized, and polished in their delivery. When it came to the prepared speeches and debates, their research was outstanding—they made several “killer” arguments. Similarly, for the limited-preparation events, their style, maturity, creativity, and organization of thoughts were amazing.

At this young age, *students not only showed great stage confidence, but impressive use of body language, purposeful facial expressions, a calculated use of the stage, versatile vocal variety, and a clear flow of*

*thoughts.* Of course, every speech was time-bound. And yes, students were judged on all of these criteria.

I must say—NCFCA is making priceless contributions in shaping the future of America. Congratulations to David Weekley and his crew who successfully coordinated this entire event.

*Without a doubt, our future generation is smart, fast and creative—they have lots of great ideas and no fear.* Let's prepare them to make their ideas fly. For me, it was a great learning experience and an amazing source of ideas. I would highly encourage all Toastmasters to participate in such events and share your experience with the Toastmasters community. 🍀

Email Abhijit at [Abhijit.Mhetre@cigna.com](mailto:Abhijit.Mhetre@cigna.com).



L to R: Abhijit Mhetre, ACB, CL; event organizer David Weekley; Jay Discount, ATMB; Carter Sutherland, CC; Bill (last name unavailable) of SHINE

## A Match Made in Heaven



*Optimism abounds at this youth speech event*

**Peanut butter and jelly. Bees and honey. What do these things have in common?** They go along with each other, just like Toastmasters and Optimists.

Several District 53 Toastmasters had the wonderful opportunity to serve as judges for the Optimist Club Youth Public Speaking Competition last May in Albany, New York. Young people aged 13 to 16 advanced through club and zone competitions to participate in this final district level for \$1,500 in scholarship money.

The Optimists, a civic organization devoted to service and youth development, reached out to Toastmasters in the Albany area for this event. Jeff Sobel, ACB, ABL, Division F Governor, Richard Romano, ACS, CL, and I, Pamela Mertz, ACS, CL, agreed to serve as contest judges for this exciting event.

Each of the thirteen participants was

required to speak on the same topic, “For Me, Optimism Is...” for four to five minutes. Similar to Toastmasters, contestants were penalized for preceding or exceeding their time limit. Judging criteria also included appearance, poise and confidence, speech delivery, and content.

Stories ranged from reflections on world disasters, family illness, personal sacrifice, and dedication to goals. In addition, each learned about the value of hard work and persistence through this process and about his or her own potential. It was so difficult to choose a winner—their performances were superb. We were privileged to see these young people compete and deliver sparkling presentations, displaying just how alive and special the gift of communication really is.

After judging, I delivered a brief speech to the group offering inspiration and

sharing how Toastmasters profoundly influenced my life, both personally and professionally. Of course, I encouraged all to consider joining Toastmasters.

It was truly a special day. Young people in the competition had reason to be proud of their efforts, and the beaming faces of their parents in the audience were priceless.

After the awards ceremony and photo opportunities, the participants thanked us for our support and asked for tips to improve their speaking style. It was fulfilling to contribute to the growth of the next generation of Toastmasters and the leaders of tomorrow.

What a great way to spend a Saturday! We have already been asked to consider helping out again next May.

Toastmasters and Optimists—yes, we fit well together! 🍀

Email Pam at [pmertz2@yahoo.com](mailto:pmertz2@yahoo.com).



Get on Track to  
Success

Sat., November 7, 2009  
Holiday Inn  
232 Broadway  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12886

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**DISTRICT 53 FALL CONFERENCE EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS**

The morning and afternoon sessions are comprised of four tracks: 1) Communication, 2) Leadership, 3) Personal Growth, and 4) Career Enhancement. A special Toastmasters Club-Building Track is scheduled in the afternoon. Sessions are open to all Toastmasters.

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**MORNING SESSIONS: 10:00 - 10:50 a.m.**

**Communication Track • Joe Peck, ATMB, CL  
SPICE UP YOUR SPEECHES WITH STORIES**

This hands-on session will teach you how to incorporate historical, inspirational and personal stories into your speeches. Discover how a well-crafted story can spice up an otherwise ordinary speech, understand why stories stay with the listener long after other aspects of your speech are forgotten, and learn how to find the right story to inspire your audience.

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**Leadership Track • Nathan Jaycox, ACS, CL  
SIX FOUNDATIONAL TRAITS  
OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE LEADERS**

Leadership is best learned as you experience it. Not too many of us are natural-born leaders, but there are a number of common traits that enable "average" leaders to become highly effective. Discover these traits, how many you already possess, and how you can develop them further to become a better leader in any organization.

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**Personal Growth Track • Glenn Dulko, CC  
AWAKEN THE POWER OF YOUR VOICE**

Come out of hiding and use your voice fearlessly; discover the talents and power you never knew you had; gain the confidence to use your voice to convey passion and communicate clearly to lead and inspire. In this fully interactive workshop, learn from experience and—above all—have fun! You will be astounded by the results as we triumph over our fears, discover our passion, and freely share our natural gifts.

---

**Career Enhancement Track • Angela Lussier, CC  
READY, AIM, FIRE: CREATING A TARGETED  
AND FULFILLING JOB SEARCH**

Sending out 200 resumes a day may be an accomplishment in some people's eyes, but if you're looking for your next dream job, you won't attain it by playing the numbers

game. In this session, you'll learn how to craft a targeted job search that builds on a solid foundation of your past accomplishments, interests, strengths and vision for the future. You will discover this eye-opening self-exploration process is far more effective than random resume mailing.

---

**AFTERNOON SESSIONS: 2:00 - 2:50 p.m.**

**Communication Track • Glenn Harrison, ACS, ALB  
CAN'T THINK OF A SPEECH TOPIC?**

Have you ever canceled a speech at the last minute? Why do club members canceling a speech at the last minute?

It's likely due to the challenge of finding a speech topic. And if you've asked yourself: "Where can I find speech topics?", "How do I make my speech relevant to my audience?", or "How do I give a perfect speech?", this interactive workshop is for you where these questions and more will be explored.

---

**Leadership Track • Ruby Parker, ACG, ALB, and  
Sonja Chan, DTM**

**EVALUATE WITH AUTHORITY: THE HOLISTIC EVALUATION**

Beginning and experienced evaluators alike will benefit from this fast-paced presentation packed with: a) the basics of speechmaking—from both an educational and a practical point of view—that form the basis of any evaluation, b) the more-popular Toastmasters evaluation frameworks, and c) a mini-evaluation workshop. Attendees will have the opportunity to develop and hone their evaluation skills by discussing and critiquing a pre-recorded speech presentation.

---

**Personal Growth Track • Jamie Macica, CC  
IT'S ABOUT TIME**

This session looks at the concept of time from different perspectives and engages the audience in thought-provoking exercises to illustrate how a few minor changes in your time management can yield great rewards. Through a combination of inspiration and practical application, this session will show you how to take the *time in your life* and turn it into *life in your time*. Attendees will have the *time of their life!*

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**Career Enhancement Track • Bill Shor, CC  
HARNESS THE TRUE POWER OF THE INTERNET  
TO BRAND YOURSELF FOR SUCCESS**

Can you or your business be found on the Internet? Organizations looking for speakers for their events do their research online. Learn how to be found online and be seen as the top choice for anyone looking for a speaker in your field. Harness the power of personal websites, blogs, newsletters, Facebook, Twitter, social networks, video, and more to promote yourself and your business.

*(Continued on page 11)*

(Continued from page 10)

## SPECIAL TOASTMASTERS CLUB-BUILDING TRACK

3:00 - 3:50 p.m.

*Simply Denise, CC*

### SUCCESSFUL GOAL SETTING

Are you only a scant few speeches away from obtaining your Competent Communicator or Competent Leader awards? Will this season be the season that you achieve your club goals? Do you need help developing or setting your own club goals? In this inspirational and motivational session, you will learn some of the goal-setting techniques that Simply uses in Black Butterfly Inspirational Seminars & Consulting, a motivational speaking and training service. This session will explore proven and actionable techniques for setting and working toward fulfilling your personal *and* professional goals. You will also learn to avoid the traps that prevent goals from being unrealized.

*Robert Ekblaw*

### ALL A-TWITTER: USING SOCIAL-NETWORKING SITES TO PROMOTE TOASTMASTERS

What is social networking anyway? How do you begin? What are others doing? What are some success stories? And what are the pitfalls to avoid? At the request of the Immediate Past District Governor Karin von Kaenel, Mr. Ekblaw conducted a study of the effective use of social-networking and micro-blogging sites such as Facebook and Twitter to promote Toastmasters. Assisted by a team of university graduate students, he determined the best sites

and the most effective means of using them. In this session, he will share his results for the benefit of all Toastmasters.

*Norm Miller, DTM*

### MARKETING TO BUILD MEMBERSHIP

All non-profit organizations struggle to maintain its membership. As members come and go, the number of members gained needs to offset the number lost. How do clubs keep a net gain in the face of this "churn?" One problem is that the Competent Communicator award is seen as the ultimate goal, after completion of which members drift away from Toastmasters, thinking that they're "done." This presentation will offer strategies for using a variety of Toastmasters programs—and other educational materials—to keep developing and setting post-CC goals to continue to challenge members, old and new. At the same time, the session will also present simple steps Toastmasters club officers and members can take to market their club to attract new members.

*Jonathan Toner, ACB*

### HELP THE D53 WEBSITE HELP YOU

The District 53 website is getting a makeover with Web 2.0. We're seeking input on how it can better serve members, clubs, areas, divisions, and the district as a whole. In this interactive "round table" session, we'll explore the new website and its features, discuss its advantages, and solicit suggestions for ways we can make it more functional, user-friendly, and informative—from providing more news and member/club recognitions, to online networking, to....? 🗨️



Don't forget to send in your Fall Conference Registration Form with payment by October 17<sup>th</sup> for the Early-Bird Discount! (See next page.)

## Club Traditions Add Value

*And can be enjoyable at the same time!*



The new Last Word officer team includes (L-R) Margaret Katz; Ellen Hynes; Millie Calesky, CTM, CL; Mickey Haryanto, CC; Suzanne Eisermann; Dee Sweeney; and Rick Carlson. Swearing them in is 2008-09 Area E1 Governor Ann Bloch, DTM (R).

*By Marilyn Jess, DTM, Last Word Club, Pittsfield, MA*

This photo shows our new officer team from the Last Word Club being sworn in this June. After a superb buffet dinner at a local Italian restaurant, I hosted a program which included a photo scramble ice breaker. Members and their guests brought baby pictures of themselves; we mixed these up and redistributed them to each table. We had loads of laughs, guessing who was in each photo.

Events like our year-end officer installation dinner have helped our members appreciate one another, and they are a lot of fun, too. Guests and family members also learn firsthand why Toastmasters means so much to us. Is your club planning any events to add to your history this Toastmasters year? 🗨️

*Email Marilyn at Rdms87@aol.com.*

**You can't deny laughter. When it comes, it plops down in your favorite chair and stays as long as it wants. —Stephen King**



**DIVISION F HOSTS  
THE DISTRICT 53 FALL CONFERENCE**

**Saturday, November 7, 2009  
Holiday Inn  
232 Broadway  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12886-4253**

**Join us Friday evening, November 6, for a Welcoming Event!**

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM**

**1 ATTENDEE INFORMATION - Please print clearly. One form per person.**

First Name:	Last Name:		
Address:	City:	State:	Zip:
Phone: (     )	Email:	@	
Toastmasters Designation(s):		Club Name(s) & Number(s):	
Current Office Held:	Is this your first conference?* <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

<b>2 CONFERENCE PACKAGES - Please check one:</b>		<b>Recession Buster!</b>	<b>Postmarked on or before 10/17/2009</b>	<b>Postmarked after 10/17/2009</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>TRIFECTA** (Full Pass)</b> 8:30am – 9:30pm	Includes Continental Breakfast, all Educational sessions, Evaluation Speech Contest, Luncheon Buffet, Dinner Banquet, & Humorous Speech Contest		\$80	\$95
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>WIN** (Day Pass)</b> 8:30am – 3:50pm	Includes all Educational Sessions, Evaluation Speech Contest, & Luncheon Buffet		\$50	\$65
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>PLACE (Evening Pass)</b> 5:00pm – 9:30pm	Includes Dinner Banquet & Humorous Speech Contest only		\$45	\$55
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>SHOW** (Basic Pass)</b> 8:30am – 9:30pm	Includes Educational Sessions only ( <i>no meals included; for alternate meal plans, lunch is 12:00pm–2:00pm, dinner 6:00pm–7:30pm</i> )		\$30	\$40

**3 DINNER - Applies to TRIFECTA and PLACE passes only. Please check one:**

Sliced Roast Top Sirloin    Chicken Cordon Bleu    Vegetarian Chef's Choice    Special Dietary Needs:

**Will you be joining us for the Welcoming Event on Friday, November 6, 2009, at the Holiday Inn?**  Yes    No    Not sure

**4 PAYMENT - Make check payable to: DISTRICT 53 TOASTMASTERS and mail completed Registration Form with check to:**

**Amount Enclosed:** \$

Tisha Speraw, Fall Conference Registration Chair  
806 Main Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12303

**Questions?** Please call (518) 377-3939 (home)  
Email fall53registration@district53toastmasters.org

**5 HOTEL - Staying Overnight? For the recession-busting rate of \$105/night, contact:**

Call The Holiday Inn at 1-888-HOLIDAY or (518) 584-4550, or reserve your room online at [www.spa-hi.com](http://www.spa-hi.com). Make sure to mention *District 53 Toastmasters* for the discounted rate.

<p><b>Refund Policy:</b> 90% of the registration fee is refundable only if written notice is received by November 1, 2009. <u>No refunds</u> after November 1, 2009. Registration is transferable to another member for this conference only.</p>	<p><b>Co-chairs: Howard Litwak &amp; Richard Romano:</b> fall53registration@district53toastmasters.org</p> <p><b>For the latest conference updates &amp; driving directions:</b> <a href="http://www.district53toastmasters.org/conferences">www.district53toastmasters.org/conferences</a></p>
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\*Orientation session (8:00-8:15am) for first-time attendees   \*\*Registration opens at 7:30am

# Yankee Activator



Toastmasters International  
District 53  
431 Dogwood Road  
Orange, CT 06477-2652



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for the next edition is **November 30**.  
Email [editor53@district53toastmasters.org](mailto:editor53@district53toastmasters.org)  
with your story (150-word minimum). You could  
win a \$25 gift certificate to the Toastmasters  
Online Store!

#### DISTRICT 53 ONLINE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Toastmasters International Website: [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org)  
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Webmaster e-mail: [webber53@district53toastmasters.org](mailto:webber53@district53toastmasters.org)  
YA Editor e-mail: [editor53@district53toastmasters.org](mailto:editor53@district53toastmasters.org)



Yahoo! Group: [groups.yahoo.com/group/d53toastmasters](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/d53toastmasters)  
Post Message: [d53toastmasters@yahoogroups.com](mailto:d53toastmasters@yahoogroups.com)

*Email the entire Leadership Team: District 53 Governor, Lt. Gov. of Education and Training, and Lt. Gov. of Marketing at [team53@district53toastmasters.org](mailto:team53@district53toastmasters.org)*

## 2009-10 District 53 Leadership Team:



**District Governor**  
*Marsha Kiley, ACS, CL*

**Lt. Governor of  
Education & Training**  
*Dave Wheeler, DTM*

**Lt. Governor  
of Marketing**  
*Richard Peck, ACS, ALB*

*YANKEE ACTIVATOR is Toastmasters International's District 53  
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**Editor-in-Chief & Designer:** Mary Rarogiewicz, MassMutual  
Speakers Club

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Toastmasters • Dave LeBlond, ACB, ALB, MassMutual Speakers •  
Nate Filip, CL, MassMutual Speakers • David Malloy, CC, Pioneer  
Valley Club

**Mailing List Coordinator**—Arden Billings, YCC Express



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