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DECEMBER 2012

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INTROVERTS
LEAD

12 SPEAKING
UP FOR
CHILDREN

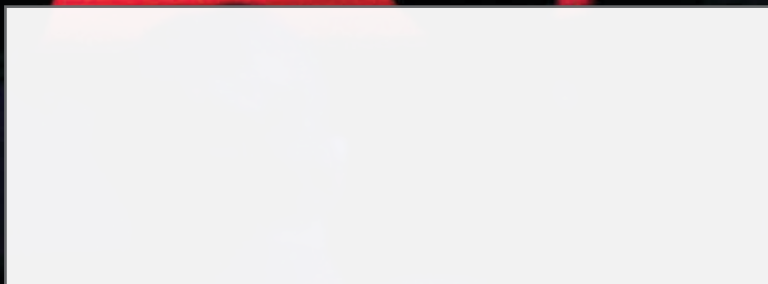
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LEARN
TOGETHER
IN CLUBS



Meet *Quiet*
author and
speaker

SUSAN CAIN

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TOASTMASTERS BUILDS CONFIDENCE



“You can have brilliant ideas, but if you can’t get them across, your ideas won’t get you anywhere.” — Lee Iacocca

Mr. Iacocca put it nicely when he sparked an emphasis on effective communication in organizations.

I met a young bank clerk named Thanimalai (Thanni) Letchumanan 12 years ago. His employer stressed the importance of effective communication in customer service. Thanni was shy and humble, and asked if I knew of any organization that could help him polish his communication skills and build his confidence. I introduced

him to Toastmasters and asked him to join a club demo meeting for bankers. He participated, and by the end of the meeting was elected sergeant at arms. Thanni was surprised by the appointment but willing to learn.

“I have learned to communicate well with people of different cultures.”

— Thanimalai (Thanni) Letchumanan

He was a loyal club officer, the first to come to meetings and the last to leave. Thanni diligently completed his manual speeches. When I met him four years later, he had developed the confidence to converse fluently in English, Bahasa Malaysia and Tamil, in front of large audiences. He took a position at the bankers’ union and enrolled for a banking qualification. Thanni went on to serve as area governor, lieutenant governor and district governor—all by the age of 36. His communication and leadership skills were polished and he obtained a banking qualification. He is now a vice president at the company. His bank, too, has a Toastmasters corporate club, in which staff members enhance their communication and leadership skills.

Thanni is a fine example of someone who has benefited from Toastmasters. His club has members from diverse cultures. “I have learned to communicate well with people of different cultures,” he says. When asked which leadership skills he applies to his work, Thanni mentions encouragement, support and inspiration.

Countless corporations around the world encourage their employees to master communication and leadership skills. The Toastmasters communication and leadership tracks suit every culture and all organizations. In its 88-year history, Toastmasters International has groomed more than 4 million men and women worldwide for success. Let us continue to reignite our passion in Toastmasters, where leaders are made. **T**

JOHN LAU, DTM
International President

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WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE
www.toastmasters.org

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Since 1924, Toastmasters International has been recognized as the leading organization dedicated to communication and leadership skill development. Through its worldwide network of clubs, each week Toastmasters helps more than a quarter million men and women of every ethnicity, education level and profession build their competence in communication so they can gain the confidence to lead others.

By regularly giving speeches, gaining feedback, leading teams and guiding others to achieve their goals, leaders emerge. They learn to tell their stories. They listen and answer. They plan and lead. They give feedback — and accept it. They find their path to leadership.

Toastmasters International. Where Leaders Are Made.



"I will always remember the 2012 District 30 Spring Conference, when International President Michael Notaro, DTM, participated in three conference segments. He was witty, entertaining and very informative."

— Barbara J. Baker, DTM
Next Step Toastmasters club
Chicago, Illinois

Writing vs. **Speaking**

Judith Tingley's article "The Power of the Pen and the Voice" (August) resonated with me. I have been a Toastmaster for 40 years, and I've been a writer for longer than that. There is considerable difference between the written and spoken word. Generally, our writing vocabulary is much larger than our spoken one. Also, the sentences used in speaking are, on average, shorter.

"In ... speaking, brevity is key," writes Tingley. This is also true when writing a good short story. That said, the two disciplines certainly do complement one another.

Tom Ware, ATMG, ALB
Dundas Toastmasters club
Dundas, New South Wales, Australia

Timely **Word Advice**

Dan Brewer's July article on how to creatively use the Word of the Day spiced up our recent club meeting. Our grammarian selected seven words and handed them out in an envelope. Everyone attempted to use them throughout the meeting. It created an entertaining twist and everyone enjoyed trying to guess everyone's word at the end of the meeting. Thank you for the idea!

Aycha Sirvanci
Southshore Toastmasters
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Leadership Preparation

I recently attended a club-officer training session and found it very beneficial. As a new club president, I can say that coming into a leadership role can be daunting. Our mentor, Henri, who led the training, was well-organized and prepared. He was

so prepared, in fact, that there was very little we needed to ask, as it had all been addressed. Information was given to us in the form of handouts, and electronic copies were offered for the more technologically minded member. The session was very informative and worth attending.

Pauline Csuba, CC, CL
Ringwood Toastmasters
Ringwood, Australia

Triple **Praise**

I am really impressed with three articles in the June issue of the *Toastmaster* magazine: "Noteworthy Points on Evaluating" by Colleen Plimpton, "Evaluations Make an Impact" by Jean Bailey Robor and "The Scrupulous Sandwich Approach" by Jenny Baranick. The articles outline the methodology and guidelines for providing effective evaluations.

The authors offer valuable insight, emphasizing the importance of evaluation, which is the core of personal development in Toastmasters. I congratulate them for providing this valuable information.

M.Y. Zainudeen, DTM
Wayamba Toastmasters club
Kurunegala, Sri Lanka

Presidential Visits

As an active member for 25 years, I have been involved when we had visits four times from International Presidents.

I will always remember the 2012 District 30 Spring Conference, when International President Michael Notaro, DTM, participated in three conference segments. He was witty, entertaining and very informative, and he thor-

oughly explained our new branding. He gave the reasons for the brand update and explained how it would help us with marketing the organization. I also remember his comment about how people prefer to lead rather than speak, and that we will receive more new members by inviting others to join Toastmasters, "where leaders are made."

Barbara J. Baker, DTM
Next Step Toastmasters club
Chicago, Illinois

Common **Courtesy**

I am compelled to respond to the "Dealing with a Distracted Audience" article (July) by Tim Cigelske about welcoming distractions while one is speaking. I find this approach contrary to good communication.

In today's technological world, it is even more important to teach and encourage good communication skills. Paramount to this is the practice of listening. It is only courteous to give a speaker one's attention. Distractions provide nothing to aid memory retention and understanding, or to encourage a relationship between the speaker and listener.

As a college instructor of public speaking, I find this encouragement of poor listening a detriment to anyone who is attempting to increase public speaking and communication skills.

Mary Williams, CC, CL
Sarasota Evening Toastmasters club
Sarasota, Florida

Do you have something to say?

Write it in 200 words or less.
Include your name, address and club affiliation, and send it to letters@toastmasters.org.

DIVING IN

My fear of public speaking drove me to start my own club.

By Nicole Sweeney Etter, CL

When I was 16, I worked at a drugstore. One night, while straightening the vitamins, I heard someone yell, “Hey!” I turned around to find a gun pointed at my head. It was the first time I had seen a real gun, and I froze. All I could do was stare at the barrel a few inches from my face. The man holding the gun became increasingly angry as

class, when some boys laughed and imitated me during my presentation about the Salem witch trials. Naturally, I dropped the class and switched into one where presentations were not required. This didn’t help me conquer my fear. I considered becoming a teacher but was deterred because I didn’t think I could stand in front of a class and present every day.

a club that met during the lunch hour at my workplace.

Within 48 hours, a box of supplies arrived, and I felt as if I was 16 again, staring down the barrel of a gun. I organized the demonstration meeting and more than two dozen people showed up. There was no going back. The Toastmasters club of Marquette University, Marq Our Words, was born, and I had to quell the knocking in my knees long enough to launch and lead this new club.

As club president, I had no time to focus on my own anxiety; instead, I cheered on my new Toastmasters friends. Wanting to lead by example, I progressed through the *Competent Communication* and *Competent Leadership* manuals. While my nervousness didn’t completely disappear, my confidence grew with every minute at the lectern.

I’ve always liked Eleanor Roosevelt’s saying: “Do one thing every day that scares you.” As a daily goal, it’s difficult to achieve. But if I can do something that scares me twice a month—well, it’s a start. And eventually I may even have to find a *new* goal that will scare me, once again. **T**

I’ve always liked Eleanor Roosevelt’s saying: “Do one thing every day that scares you.”

I unintentionally ignored his order to get down on the floor. Finally, a co-worker called my name and broke my trance.

As my co-worker and I trembled in the cleaning supply aisle, I wondered if we were going to die. Finally, the thief finished robbing the Walgreens store and left.

But being held at gunpoint was not one of the most frightening events in my life. You see, until recently I was part of that large percent of the population that fears public speaking more than death. A few years ago, I was asked to give a presentation at work, and the simple request sent me into such panic attacks that I seriously considered quitting my job.

Many people are surprised to hear about my presentation anxiety because I’m outspoken in so many other situations. So how did I end up terrified of public speaking? It started with my eighth-grade social studies

class. Instead, I went into newspaper journalism. When I had my reporter’s hat on, I *could* muster up the courage to walk up to strangers and ask nosy questions. I could have a voice, but I hid behind what felt like the safe anonymity of a byline.

However, I wasn’t able to avoid presentations forever. I was forced to present on various topics in school and during my professional life, and each time I felt sure I was going to die. My heart pounded, I felt light-headed, my hands shook and my voice quavered, while a hot, blotchy blush raced up my neck.

I visited a few local Toastmasters clubs but always found a reason not to commit: The time wasn’t convenient; I didn’t like the location; I couldn’t see myself fitting in. But one night, on a whim, I filled out the “Start a club” form as I surfed the Toastmasters website. I would have no valid excuse not to join if I started

Nicole Sweeney Etter, CL, was the founding president of Marq Our Words Toastmasters club in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Now a freelance writer and editor, she is still active with Marq Our Words. Reach her at nicole@nicoleetter.com.

AROUND THE GLOBE

▶ INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATIONS

CELEBRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD



December is an important month because Christmas and Hanukkah are commemorated during this time and is a celebratory month for people all over the world.

For example, Europeans celebrate Saint Nicholas Day to honor Saint Nick, a gift-giver much like the fictional Santa Claus in America. In the Netherlands, children even leave their shoes out at night and find them filled with treats in the morning.

Many countries, including England and Canada, observe Boxing Day, with people giving boxes of gifts to show gratitude to loved ones. In Ireland, Boxing Day is a public bank holiday.

Kwanzaa began as an African-American holiday honoring history, culture and community. It's still celebrated in the United States, but its popularity has spread to the Caribbean, France and Canada.

▶ WHAT DO YOU SAY WHEN...

YOU GIVE A TOAST AT A HOLIDAY EVENT?

Members from the Phoenix-Tara Toastmasters club in County Meath, Ireland, respond:

“May you live as long as you want, and never want for as long as you live!”

— DONAL KEATING, ACB, CL

“May your joys be as many as the sheep in the glen, and may your sorrows be few as teeth in a hen.”

— CHRISTINA HESSION, ACS, ALB

“May you always have wine and may your goose always be cooked.”

— MAIREAD MURPHY, ACB, ALB

“May peace and plenty be the first to lift the latch on your door, and happiness be guided to your home.”

— MICHAEL MAY, CC

▶ SNAPSHOT



Officers and members from five cities in Romania met over a period of three days to participate in educational sessions. They learned about leadership, how to create a successful club and more about Toastmasters International.

BOTTOM LINE

Videos Offer Tips

New videos have been added to the Toastmasters video series of time-tested tips for improving communication. Watch them at www.toastmasters.org/Videos.

Speech Contest Resources

The *Speech Contest Rulebook 2013* and contest materials are available. For a free download, go to the Toastmasters Online Store at www.toastmasters.org/DigitalContent.

Holiday Gift Ideas

Show your appreciation to fellow members and leaders with gifts from the Toastmasters Online Store. Visit www.toastmasters.org/ApparelGifts to see what is available.

► TOASTING TIPS

Delivering a toast at a holiday event or festive dinner is a special way to salute family and friends. You can reflect on good memories, offer a wish for happiness, look at the year ahead or—always a favorite—talk about love. But there's an art to giving a graceful toast. Here are some tips:

- **Be prepared.** Give some thought ahead of time to what you want to say. This is your chance to add a special touch to the festivities—so seize the moment.
- **Say it sincerely.** Being authentic is the most important part of a toast. Don't try to be someone you're not. Instead, deliver a message you are comfortable with, care about and genuinely mean.
- **Be succinct.** Keep your remarks brief. Holiday guests don't want to hear a long-winded speech. You can deliver a meaningful or entertaining toast in two to three minutes.

MEMBER MOMENT COACH OF THE YEAR

Sean Tarrant, ACG, ALB, is head football coach of the Westside Christian Academy Warriors in Detroit, Michigan. He was recognized as the 2011-12 Varsity Football National Coach of the Year by the National Christian School Athletic Association. A member of Oak Park Toastmasters club in Oak Park, Michigan, Tarrant coaches his student athletes on more than just football. The majority of his students are considered “at-risk”—they are unsure if they can graduate. But “Coach T” motivates the young men, and uses football to demonstrate their capabilities.



Sean Tarrant

What is the most important characteristic of a good leader?

When dealing with at-risk youth, I spend a lot of time just listening because then, when I start talking, I want them to be able to take in what I have to say. You develop respect by listening.

How do you motivate your students?

I apply what we do on the field to life. During practice I ask, “What happens when your mother loses her job? Do you give up, or do you stick together as a family?” If you stick together, there'll be more good times than bad. I let them know this stuff is temporary, and it's important to continue to work hard.

How do you apply coaching to more than just football?

I use football as a tool to make sure these young men will have an opportunity to excel in life. In the last three years, 35 out of 37 seniors on my team signed national letters of intent to play college football.

Seeking Speakers

Toastmasters International is seeking great speakers for the 2013 International Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. If you possess professional-level speaking skills, apply at www.toastmasters.org/CallForPresenters.

Meet the Board Do you ever wonder who serves on the Board of Directors? Learn more about them at www.toastmasters.org/MeetTheBoard.



Around the Globe Expands

The *Toastmaster's* January issue debuts an expanded section of Around the Globe, featuring a Mentor Moment, tips from experts and interesting facts.



introvert (noun)
a person who turns his thoughts inward; a person who recharges with introspection

THE QUIET LEADER

Five reasons you should never underestimate an introvert.

By Michelle Tyler

Growing up in California with my parents and older sister, I was a quiet girl with gumption. I liked to keep myself in the dirt and out of trouble, and I always felt a bit envious of my sister, who made friends easily and brought energy to everything she did. I longed for the day when I would be more like her, because, even at a young age,

wishing to be more like a bubbly sibling. Many societies reward people with extroverted personalities, and those who are more introverted may feel excluded or envious. For that reason, it is essential to acknowledge the advantages of introversion. Of particular importance are the benefits introverts offer when they are in leadership positions.

physicist Albert Einstein, spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi and civil rights leader Rosa Parks, were introverts. Modern leaders such as business expert and philanthropist Bill Gates and motion picture entrepreneur Steven Spielberg are also introverts.

Despite the impressive list of well-known introverted leaders, workers who avoid the spotlight still need to develop their innate skills to become comfortable in leadership positions. Gary Guwe, ACB, says he was constantly overlooked at work because he did not feel comfortable sharing his opinions, even when they were well-researched and innovative.

With a desire to succeed, Guwe regularly pushed his boundaries and created leadership opportunities for himself. He stretched himself by volunteering to lead teams, speaking at community events, creating a blog dedicated to public speaking (garyguwe.wordpress.com), completing freelance projects and joining Toastmasters to demonstrate he was a capable leader. Guwe explained that Toastmasters gave him a “place to practice and experiment ... fail and survive.”

At age 26, Guwe is now an experienced leader in Singapore. He has held leadership positions in two Toastmasters clubs: NUS Toastmasters and Nee Soon South Toastmasters,

Introverts are capable of being independent heroes, role models and confident leaders.

I could sense that the world responded positively to her.

Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist Carl Jung popularized the personality types *introversion* and *extroversion* in the mid-20th century. Most basically, extroverts get energy from being around other people and sharing their thoughts with the outside world. Introverts, in contrast, are inwardly focused and enjoy solitude to energize themselves and think. People typically have both introverted and extroverted tendencies but favor one personality type over the other.

As I have grown older, I have figured out a few things beyond mud pies and jealousy. I have learned that I am more introverted than my sister. I have also realized that I was not alone

Introverts who want to advance their careers or make a mark in today's society can lead the way to success.

Overcoming Stereotypes

Introverts may be viewed as a minority because they are often overlooked due to a quieter disposition. In actuality, as Susan Cain notes in her bestselling book *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, introverts make up close to half the world's population.

With valuable qualities such as highly developed listening and thinking skills, it is no surprise that many introverts can make extraordinary leaders. Some of the most widely known historical leaders, such as

both in Singapore. He also runs his own businesses in training and education, managing more than 20 trainers and coaches as well as a sales and events team.

Likewise, Stacey Shipman, ACB, CL, is proud that she has developed her natural talents through consistent practice and hard work. She is an entrepreneur who leads workshops and retreats, hosts networking and educational events, and speaks professionally. She has held leadership positions in her club, Hanover Toastmasters in Hanover, Massachusetts, and in other organizations. “In the sixth grade I won the quietest girl award, and today I make a living as a

“You’ll never feel comfortable if you deny who you are to fit in.” — Stacey Shipman, ACB, CL

professional communicator. It’s not by accident that purpose, desire, drive, dedication and support helped me speak and lead with confidence,” even if it is done quietly, she says.

Investigating Introverts

Good leaders are not defined by their audibility or outwardly displayed energy level. Despite stereotypes that good leaders must be extroverted, recent research by management professor Adam Grant and colleagues at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania suggests that extroversion is not a simple indicator of success in a leadership role. According to Grant, introverts can be more effective leaders than extroverts. The determining factor is who leaders are managing.

While extroverted leaders work well with people who need to be motivated and encouraged, introverted leaders work well with proactive people who want to be listened to and given the freedom to run with ideas. Each type of leader has an

important role in the workplace and offers a balance to other personalities within a team.

It is important to understand the value of having a leader who is “more reserved, quieter, in some cases silent, in order to create space for employees to enter the dialogue,” notes Grant.

Use Introversion to Your Advantage

Introverts have innate tendencies they can develop or accentuate to become phenomenal leaders without changing their core personality. According to a number of experts, the following five characteristics or habits come naturally to

introverts and should be further developed to maximize potential for leadership success.

► Willing to Listen

Many extroverts prefer speaking over listening and can miss team members’ comments. Introverts, on the other hand, have excellent listening skills and take time to understand the needs and ideas of team members. When employees share opinions or ideas with a leader, they feel acknowledged and respected, and they are more likely to maintain a feeling of job satisfaction.

But introverted leaders don’t stop at listening. They take time to thoughtfully consider and analyze the facts before deciding how to proceed. “Introverted leaders are more likely to listen carefully to suggestions and support employees’ efforts to be proactive,” Grant explains. A willingness to listen without feeling threatened is also indicative of confidence, which colleagues can sense and feel comforted by.

► Calm Under Pressure

If a leader is constantly nervous about deadlines or stressed that something will not be good enough, team members will rarely feel composed and entire teams can crack under pressure. Introverts display a calm exterior while ideas continue churning in their minds. By seeming relaxed and maintaining composure in demanding situations, an introvert offers reassurance to his or her team and puts the group at ease, better enabling it to be focused and productive.

► Share Ideas and Successes

Extroverted leaders enjoy vocalizing ideas, and they can become very excited while doing so. This excitement can limit the flow of ideas from other members of a team. Alternatively, introverted leaders prefer to share talk time with teammates and enjoy listening to differences in opinion.

More idea generation leads to finding the best solution, even if the solution is not proposed by the leader. Introverts tend not to feel threatened if their ideas are not used, nor do they feel threatened by high performers. Introverted leaders prefer to have strong teams to drive their passion for achievement. Less of the focus is on the introverted leader’s ego and more is on delivering an outstanding product.

Emphasizing the outcome as the most central aspect of work—not the process taken to get there—creates an environment where success can be obtained in a variety of ways and shared by the group. Sharing ideas, success and praise leads to increased employee satisfaction and greater team innovation.

► Take Time to Think

In the workplace today a great deal of emphasis is placed on group discussions, brainstorm meetings and camaraderie. Yet introverts enjoy spending time alone to develop ideas,

create solutions and recharge. To have a successful work environment, it is good to have a balance between interaction and solitude.

In the quiet, it is easier to contemplate complex decisions, weigh benefits and drawbacks, and take all ideas into consideration, not just those expressed by the most vocal people in discussions. Shipman is a newly self-discovered introvert who likes to think before making decisions. As a health and wellness entrepreneur and community leader, Shipman's decision-making process sometimes posed a problem because people on her teams tended to want immediate answers. But she was not discouraged.

Shipman chose to share her decision-making process with the people she worked with and they were very accepting. "Clear communication and expectations can make a huge difference," she explains. It can also boost morale, as it did in Shipman's situation. A more thoughtful and meaningful action plan can be reached when an introverted leader takes time to make decisions and encourages others to do so, as well.

► **Driven by Efficiency**

Because introverts like to reduce time spent in groups, efficiency can be increased. Introverted leaders try to avoid scheduling unnecessary meetings, and to minimize time spent in meetings. There is definitely a need for meetings in which employees share ideas, but with an introvert's focus on information-gathering, rather than verbalizing ideas out loud, time can be spared and team members can be more productive.

In addition to spending less time in meetings, introverts like to start and finish projects before becoming distracted by another great idea. Their hard work toward a specific goal is contagious and sets a great example. By completing one project at a time, employees typically maintain steady growth or success rates.

HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU

A look at the differences between extroversion, introversion and shyness.

By Michelle Tyler

A common misconception is that all introverts are shy. In reality, extroverts are just as likely to be shy as introverts. Shyness is a characteristic of one's personality, while introversion is a more inherent trait. Shyness can be overcome, but introversion is an essential part of one's being.

Are you an extrovert or an introvert? Are you shy? Check out the categories below and choose which describe you better.

| Extrovert | Introvert | Shy |
|--|--|--|
| You are energized by people. | Being around people can be draining. | You are anxious or nervous around people. |
| You dislike and become bored being alone. | After being around people, you enjoy solitude to contemplate. | You avoid social situations. |
| You like to talk about yourself or be the center of attention. | You like to listen to others and consider what they've said before responding. | You speak only when necessary. |
| You enjoy talking about anything and everything with anyone. | You dislike small talk and speaking with strangers with no purpose in mind. | You have a difficult time talking to acquaintances or strangers. |
| You speak to fill silence, even if you have nothing particularly important to say. | You will speak when you think it is necessary to make a point. | You avoid speaking unless you are with one of your very close friends. |
| You like to have verbal brainstorming to help you formulate your thoughts. | It is much easier to formulate your thoughts while writing or when alone. | You hope you are not required to verbalize your thoughts. |

Stay True

If you are an introvert, do not try to change into someone you are not. "You'll never feel comfortable if you deny who you are to fit in," Shipman says. Allow yourself time for self-discovery, then emphasize your innate abilities to become the person and leader you want to be. Guwe used to hate his introversion as a child, but has since embraced his personality. "It wasn't easy [to become a leader]," he says. "It took patience to consistently reflect on my strengths and weaknesses, research new ideas and refine my current strategies ... but I haven't looked back since."

Introverts are capable of being independent heroes, role models and confident leaders. Through practice and support, anyone can develop their innate abilities and use their personality, introverted or otherwise, to succeed at anything they set their mind to. 🗣️

Michelle Tyler is a member of Coastmasters in Dana Point, California, and is Social Media Strategist at Toastmasters International. Reach her at mt Tyler@toastmasters.org.

Judith Allee: PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST

The journey of a child advocate.

By Julie Bawden-Davis

In the early 1970s, Judith Allee, CTM, volunteered at a children's home. She planned to simply share fun experiences but soon found herself making a profound and lasting difference in the lives of underprivileged children. Allee volunteered at the children's home with her sister, and the two were assigned a brother and a sister in a sibling group of seven.

"Judith and her sister were there for me and my siblings during the hardest time in our lives."

— Cory Pariseau

"My epiphany regarding the real need of the children came one day when I was returning the little boy to his foster home, which was not a good place to be, and he begged me to not make him go back," says Allee. "I realized right then that someone had to do something, and I knew that someone was me. Although it took several years, I did eventually find a family that adopted four of the boys."

Seeing how much positive impact one child advocate could have, Allee started Friends of Foster Children—dedicated to adoption recruitment—and then volunteered for a larger national organization, Adopt a Child Today Foundation. A member of the Moundbuilders Toastmasters club in

Granville, Ohio, Allee is responsible for placing 20 children with families. She personally became a foster parent to two children and adopted one.

"For children in the [foster care] system, permanency and grounding is the real goal," says Allee. "Shuttling the kids from foster home to foster home can be as damaging as their staying in abusive family homes."

Working on Public Speaking

Allee joined Toastmasters in 2006, when her book *Homeschooling on a Shoestring* was released and she realized she needed to promote it with public speaking.

"I knew I was going to be interviewed on radio and television, and though I wasn't shy, I said 'um' with every other syllable," she recalls. "The first Toastmasters meeting I went to at the Moundbuilders, they counted over 40 'ums,' and to my knowledge that's an all-time high."

Consistent practice in club meetings helped her overcome this problem. In her most recent club speech, notes Allee, the Ah-Counter "counted only one or two 'ums' and 'ahs.'"

She joined the club with her husband, John Allee, who was painfully shy but soon came out of his shell. "Prior to Toastmasters, even without an audience at home, John would break into a cold sweat at the mention of speaking in public," she says of her husband of 32 years, who passed away in July. "Within the first six months, John transformed into everyone's favorite speaker and he even won Humorous Speech contests."

The couple's weekly outing to club meetings became their date night. "The meetings gave us a way to go out and have a great time and get away from the pressures of raising foster children and our adopted daughter," says Allee. "We would spend the evening laughing and improving our speaking skills. Every person there was interested in self-improvement, which provided us with a positive, encouraging environment."

Helping Children and Parents

Allee's volunteer work in finding homes for children in need led to her landing a part-time job with a local government agency. She facilitated a parent support program designed to prevent abuse by helping parents learn new strategies to build better relationships with their children. In 2000, she received training through the Ohio Supreme Court to be a mediator—someone who helps



Judith Allee has done years of volunteer work finding homes for children in need and has also managed parent support and anti-poverty programs.



others to peacefully resolve conflicts. Allee volunteered for five years as a mediator in the juvenile court system, working with youth and parents with the goal of preventing kids from entering the system.

Because listening is so central to both mediation and Toastmasters, the two are complementary to each other, says Allee. “As a mediator, you learn

“The [club] meetings gave us a way to go out and have a great time and get away from the pressures of raising foster children and our adopted daughter.”

— Judith Allee

to listen not only to the words, but to the emotional content. Your role is to help people find the common ground that they share. As an evaluator, you can help a speaker by looking at the underlying message and identifying the common ground between the speaker and the audience.”

“I think mediation skills made me a better speaker,” she adds, “and especially a better speech evaluator.”

After volunteering as a mediator, Allee went on to become a certified trainer for the Bridges Out of Poverty program—an international program that works to break the cycle of generational poverty. Allee eventually presented more than 50

workshops a year in managing both the parent support and Bridges Out of Poverty programs for the local government agency.

She says her Toastmasters training definitely increased her comfort level with delivering presentations. Allee says it has also enabled her to feel more confident in situations where she has to speak off the top of her

head—what she calls “real-life Table Topics.” In addition, Toastmasters came through for Allee during a particularly tough personal time.

“It was a real ‘thank you Toastmasters!’ moment when I was able to pull together a powerful eulogy for my father in the middle of all the chaos of dealing with his death and planning the funeral in three days,” she says. “My family had never heard me speak before, and they were stunned. As the saying goes, ‘We laughed, we cried.’”


Connecting With People

Greg Greene, ACS, ALB, is a fellow member of the Moundbuilders club

and has known Allee for many years. “Judith is very engaged in her community and in helping others,” he says. “She is one of those rare individuals who really knows how to connect with people and has chosen to leave an imprint on humanity.”

An example is the impact she had on the life of Cory Pariseau, one of those four boys in the children’s home for whom Allee found a family. Pariseau, now a pastor with Crossroads World Christian Center Church in Columbus, Ohio, says Allee’s intervention and support enabled him to have a stable home life.

“Judith and her sister were there for me and my siblings during the hardest time in our lives,” he recalls. “She and her sister walked into our lives as guardian angels, shining light in some really dark places.... They comforted us and gave us unconditional love ...

“I will always be grateful about having her in my life.” 

Julie Bawden-Davis is a freelance writer based in Southern California and a longtime contributor to the *Toastmaster*. You can reach her at Julie@JulieBawdenDavis.com.



THE POWER IN BEING **WHO YOU ARE**

How self-proclaimed introvert
Susan Cain rose to the top.

By Mary Nesfield

Social interaction is the core of society—it's the way in which we all relate to one another. But consider the innate traits of people categorized as “introverts.” It is said that introverts strive to avoid social interaction because they find it to be draining. According to popular belief, introverts tend to be “quiet.”

From this, one might surmise it takes an extrovert to deliver a great speech. But that would be a false assumption. Take, for example, the most-viewed speech from the TED2012 conference held in February and March this year in Long Beach, California, which has generated more than 3 million views and

counting. It was delivered by a self-proclaimed introvert: Susan Cain. Her talk was titled “The Power of Introverts.” Cain has explored the world of the introvert in her lectures and her *New York Times* best-selling book *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*. And, in spite of her natural tendencies, she



Susan Cain's speech delivered at the TED2012 conference has generated more than 3 million views.

has reached her potential as a public speaker. In that area, Toastmasters has played a key role.

Cain sees Toastmasters as a place where introverts can flourish. "Once I started talking with my fellow club members, I found that more than 50 percent of them were introverts. It makes sense that these people would want to practice public speaking in a supportive environment like Toastmasters."

Cain's book gained instant recognition when it was published in January. She appeared on *CBS This Morning* to talk about it, and blogged about the irony of being an introvert on a book tour: "Yesterday I gave 21 interviews, starting at 6:45 a.m. and concluding at 10 p.m. Today wasn't much different. This is not an ideal scenario for someone who dislikes the spotlight. But for now, I'm in a state of awe and delight."

When Cain was selected to speak at TED, the renowned annual confer-

ence series of talks about "Ideas Worth Spreading," she found the idea terrifying.

"Although it wasn't my first major speech, I was nervous because I would be speaking in front of 1,500 people on a red-carpet stage—with no notes and no podium," she says in an interview with the *Toastmaster*. "There was no place to hide! But because of all the practice I got by delivering speeches in front of the supportive members of my

"I wanted to be able to speak about my book, and so I joined my local Toastmasters club."

—Susan Cain

Toastmasters club, I had the confidence to do it. Presenting at TED was a thrilling experience."

Personality Types

People are born with certain tendencies. Carl Jung, a 20th century Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist, proposed and developed the concepts of the

extroverted and introverted personality. Cain thought about her own introvert tendencies when she came across the book *Do What You Are: Discover the Perfect Career for You Through the Secrets of Personality Type* by Paul D. Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger. The authors discuss the unique strengths, as well as the pitfalls, of each personality type. They go on to explain how to become more successful and satisfied by taking your innate abilities into consideration when selecting a career.

After reading the book, Cain says, "It was a revelation to me." Previously a Wall Street lawyer, Cain says she was never meant to be a lawyer, even though she had the ability to develop a powerful voice. "I had always known I was a sensitive introvert—and that it's not the cultural ideal. It

[being a lawyer] was stimulating and interesting, but just like someone who is visiting another country, I knew it wasn't my home. And so I took a leave of absence. I was trained in negotiation skills, and since I'd always been interested in mentoring I started consulting. But my true self led me to take a creative writing class."

Cain spent the next six years researching personality traits and writing her book. She says the experience has given her peace and a sense of balance. “Any lingering doubts I had about being an introvert have been put to rest.”

She discovered through research that introverts make up close to half the world’s population. “I felt that half of the population was undervalued,” she says. “So I went on a mission because I thought of this as a waste of happiness.”

Determined to share her findings, Cain began what she deems her

being nervous while *speaking*; after all, she had to speak in her role as a lawyer. It was about speaking outside of her *comfort zone*.

“Participation in the club gave me the ability to get used to public speaking in a way that was safe. I was able to practice as much as I wanted in front of a supportive audience. It served as a process of desensitization.”

A Close Call at Summer Camp

Cain based her TED speech on an experience she had as a young girl at summer camp. She had taken a suit-

other club members, I later decided to make it part of the speech I would give at TED. It developed into a speech about how introverts should open their suitcases, and themselves, to the world—even on stage.”

Cain says that some introverts are perfectly comfortable with public speaking, but she is not one of them. And so she practiced. She practiced breathing. She practiced smiling when feeling nervous, and she rewrote the parts of her speech she found difficult to deliver.

The Thrill of Overcoming Fears to Achieve Goals

As a result of the support and encouragement members get from fellow Toastmasters, mentors and coaches, many increase their confidence. However, some introverts get a real workout, since being in the spotlight is much more of a challenge than it is for an extrovert. Introverts, including Cain, as well as extroverts, who are willing to risk extending themselves beyond their comfort zone, are often surprised to discover they are actually quite good at public speaking.

Cain says this doesn’t mean introverts should become more extroverted. She stresses that introverts will do best to remain true to their inner selves. She says they should be free to come about the process of developing ideas in their own way. Introverts require quiet solitude for contemplation, but then they are tasked with presenting their thoughts and ideas to others. For the introvert, it’s a delicate balance between getting enough solitude to recharge and getting out into the spotlight to deliver a message.

Being nervous about public speaking is a natural reaction for anyone, but it is especially challenging for introverts, since their personality type prefers solitude. It always takes

“Participation in the [Toastmasters] club gave me the ability to get used to public speaking in a way that was safe.”

— Susan Cain

“Year of Speaking Dangerously” to prepare for her role as public speaker a year before her book was published. She’d spoken publicly before, but she wanted to be sure she could communicate her findings in an effective way, especially on a large stage.

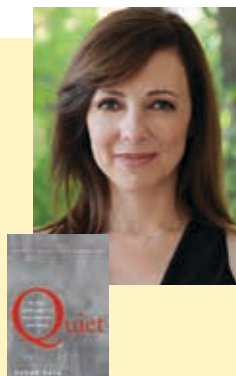
“I wanted to be able to speak about my book, and so I joined my local Toastmasters club,” she says. She also sought out two professional coaches. For Cain, it wasn’t about

case full of books to camp. She put the suitcase under her bed, and never took the books out the whole time she was there. She had come to realize reading was seen by others as uncool.

“I planned to practice the speech at Toastmasters,” says Cain. “But as usual, when it came time to leave for the meeting, I almost stayed home. In the end, I pushed myself to go—and I’m glad I did.”

“When the speech received a positive response from the evaluator and

Susan Cain, a featured speaker at TED2012 in Long Beach, California, and a former Toastmaster, is author of the non-fiction *New York Times* best-selling book *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking*, which is being translated into 30 languages. Reach her at ThePowerOfIntroverts.com, or connect with her on Twitter @[SusanCain](https://twitter.com/SusanCain) or on Facebook at facebook.com/AuthorSusanCain.



courage to step outside of one's comfort zone. But through practice, it is possible for anyone to become more relaxed while presenting to an audience. With increased confidence levels, introverts can come to enjoy public speaking, or at least they can train their butterflies to fly in formation, even while on stage.

Cain has demonstrated the courage and strength to be true to one's self—to be authentic. Her presentation style reflects who she is: calm and soft-spoken. It's a speaking style that, in its own way, is very effective.

In Cain's book, she writes, *Figure out what you are meant to contribute to the world and make sure you contribute it. If this requires public speaking or networking or other activities that make you feel*

uncomfortable, do them anyway. But accept that they're difficult, get the training you need to make them easier, and reward yourself when you're done.

Her willingness to speak and write with authenticity—in her own style—has earned her a fan base of millions. What specifically is Cain's message? She is passing out “a permission slip to be who you are.”

Introverts Are Not Alone

After delivering her TED speech last year, Cain spent much of the week talking with those attending with conference. “Famous people and CEOs approached me to tell me about their personal struggles with being introverted. Hearing their stories was a privilege.

“Now, whenever someone asks me how they can improve their public speaking, I always tell them to join their local Toastmasters club.”

Every person has a message—something that is worth hearing. If Cain had lacked the fortitude to communicate her thoughts and ideas, introverts would have been denied the advice, and the example, of one introvert who dared to stand up on stage and deliver her message of encouragement. She is a shining example of the achievements that can be reached by remaining true to your innate self while speaking your mind. **T**

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PITCHING TRUST

How to convey authenticity when making your case.

By Jack Vincent, CTM, CL

You're preparing to pitch your idea to your manager, your spouse, a prospective client or a stakeholder. You've prepared all your talking points using a catchy opening, a clearly defined situation and a solid business case or personal example. You'll end with a compelling statement of the benefits offered by the plan.

You're all set. Right? Not really. Studies show that the best salespeople and the most persuasive leaders in business today are not only effective at presenting their cases; they are also good at building trust.

If you pitch, but don't build trust in the process, you're in dangerous territory. You may be seen as a pitch artist, and "the gift of the gab" may actually

work against you. The stakeholder may think you're simply a smooth talker and wonder if you can deliver on your promises.

"Trust is the absolute conviction that the other person has your best interests in mind," says Paul Rulkens, CC, of the Lighttown Speakers club in Eindhoven, Netherlands. He works as an organizational development consultant with DSM, a Netherlands-based global materials and life sciences company. "Without trust, there is only risk."

Become More Trustworthy

Some people have an aura of trustworthiness about them. They just seem trustworthy—sometimes in intangible ways we can't readily identify. But you

can do tangible things to build trust when presenting your case to people you'd like to influence. Here are a few:

- ▶ Don't talk *at* people; engage *with* them.
- ▶ Ask the right questions at the right time.
- ▶ Listen proactively and let the other party provide input.

"Great leaders and team players alike know that communication is a two-way street," Rulkens says.

This kind of dialogue lets people know you are genuinely interested in what they have to say and what they want. Taking such steps helps turn a standard pitch into a "trust pitch." Fortunately, Toastmasters are well-practiced in the art of two-way communication. We learn to listen and provide constructive evaluation to

help club members grow and improve. As mentors, we agree to a plan of action with a new club member. When we mentor effectively, we become trusted advisers.

Use communication strategies when you present your case, but make sure you are true to yourself and your own style. A key to building trust is being sincere. Whether you are trying to persuade audience members with your speech, convince a spouse of your message, or pitch a product to an investor, you have to be authentic. This is how I describe it in my book, *Sales Pitches That Snap, Crackle n' Pop*:

“One sure-fire way to lose trust is to be disingenuous. If *you aren't you*, in the buyer's eyes your product

The paradox of a great pitch is that it should not *feel* pitchy. “People today have a built-in skepticism meter. It's easy to be labeled as a fake,” says Gelkin, president of Helsinki Toastmasters in Espoo, Finland. “If you're doing all the talking, even if it's brilliant, the other party's mind may drift negatively.”

Start Strong

“Trust pitches” begin with something that grabs the stakeholder's full attention, much like a good speech has a compelling opening. The opening can include a success story, the surprising results of a test market, or even the outcome of not taking action on the topic you're pitching. But whatever it is, it needs to be relevant

“It takes time, sometimes years, to establish trust, and it takes but a moment to break.”

— David Gelkin, CC, CL,
data recovery specialist

probably won't be what you say it is, either. ... In substance and style, authenticity sells.”

Persuade, Don't Push

Selling today is not about pushing your product. Likewise, persuading today is not about pushing your point of view. “Pitching trust” is about sparking interest by making a catchy yet relevant opening statement and then leading stakeholders—or anyone you are pitching an idea to—through an interactive process of identifying challenges, projecting the benefit of taking action and motivating the person to move forward.

“Nowadays, in a world that grows more complicated every day, people are almost begging to be led by a trusted adviser,” says Rulkens.

David Gelkin, CC, CL, a self-employed specialist in data recovery, adds, “Trust is not acquired or inherited. It is built. It takes time, sometimes years, to establish trust, and it takes but a moment to break.”

to the overall pitch. Don't simply push forward with your standard statement about the benefits of the plan without knowing the audience's level of familiarity and buy-in.

It's much more effective to turn your pitch into an inclusive, conversational dialogue, in which you take the lead by having good questions prepared in advance. When you ask questions, you can navigate the conversation.

Navigating is leading. Presenting while being unaware of quiet resistance is naïve. If you're going down a path alone, you're not leading.

Have a Plan

As you prepare your pitch, keep these questions in mind:

- ▶ What is your objective?
- ▶ How will you stimulate your stakeholder's interest?
- ▶ Being mindful of your objectives, how will you engage that person in an interactive discussion in which

TIPS FOR PITCHING TRUST

When you are trying to pitch an idea, present a plan or make a case to someone, it's vital that you are perceived as trustworthy. Keep these tips in mind:

- ▶ Know what the objective of your pitch is.
- ▶ Don't make the presentation too long or overload your audience with information.
- ▶ Check for visual and verbal affirmation of your message. Affirming reinforces trust.
- ▶ Listen proactively. Listening is one of the strongest ways to build trust.
- ▶ Once your pitch is complete, follow up as soon as possible. And always deliver what you promise on time.

you actively seek to understand his or her point of view?

- ▶ How will you jointly build a solution, even if the actual building will occur once you gain approval or win the business?
- ▶ What actions do you want the stakeholder to take following the pitch?

By clearly defining the answers to these questions, you will increase your confidence. That will help you to engage, to lead and to build trust. 📌

Jack Vincent, CTM, CL, is a member of Toastmasters Zug in Zug, Switzerland. He is a sales consultant and the author of *Sales Pitches That Snap, Crackle n' Pop*. Read his blog at BraveNewSales.com.



RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR THE HOLIDAY OFFICE PARTY

Enjoy yourself by making others feel welcome.

By John Spaith, ACG

If you've been a Toastmaster long enough, you've probably heard the speech about how some activity in life—like washing the dog or giving birth to triplets—is like a

Parties, one of the many activities in life, are however *not* like Toastmasters meetings—period. As holiday party time approaches, office parties will force many of us to extend

more than just delivering speeches. Leo Novsky, ACS, ALB, a member of Redmond 2828 Toastmasters club in Redmond, Washington, is an emcee, speaker and speech coach. He says, “A Toastmasters club is like a martial arts dojo—[it’s] a safe environment where members are encouraged by each other to develop, sharpen and practice key communication and leadership skills that are critical in social and business situations.”

Don't approach a stranger and lead with standard Table Topics talk.

Toastmasters meeting. That speech tells you how to give your golden retriever a positive evaluation despite its bad behavior in the tub, or how to count the “ums” and “ahs” of the delivering mother. If you stay in Toastmasters long enough, you will give that speech yourself.

ourselves beyond our comfort zones. First, the holiday party is unscripted. Second, you don't get to practice for it. And third, you'll have to interact with non-Toastmasters. This can be stressful for a lot of us.

The good news is your Toastmasters experience has prepared you for

Club Guests and Party Strangers

There is a good chance that during an office party you will come across a stranger or two. You may be unsure about how to carry on a conversation. Most people, even Toastmasters, are

sometimes reluctant to break out of their circle of friends to strike up a conversation with a stranger.

Let's say you're in a Toastmasters meeting and you see a nervous guest standing alone. You would know

as you do, and may appreciate talking about something that makes her happy.

Is this considered pointless small talk? Not if it's sincere. Dale Carnegie, author of the classic book

as I'd like. The holiday party gives me a chance to catch up with them.

Finally, remember to follow through, just as you would after a Toastmasters meeting. F. John Reh, a senior business executive and contributing author to *Business: The Ultimate Resource*, suggests you follow up on any verbal commitments you might make to anyone at a holiday party. "Try to write them down as soon as you get home so you don't forget," Reh writes in an **About.com** article called "Surviving the Office Party."

Use your communication, evaluation and leadership skills to help others enjoy themselves, while having fun yourself.

to approach him and engage him in conversation. Doing this at a party is not much different. It can be a fun experience, and you will have had the experience of using your communication skills in "the real world."

Table Topicsmaster and the Conversationalist

Don't approach a stranger and lead with standard Table Topics talk like, "Stranger, you've just spilled wine on the prime minister's wife. What do you do?" This can only be made worse by introducing timing lights and flashing a red light after two minutes.

Pretend you're the Table Topicsmaster on the day a nervous guest visits your club. You want to set him up for success, and so you don't ask close-ended questions he wouldn't be able to talk about for more than five seconds. You don't ask controversial questions about religion or politics, because it will make him uncomfortable. Instead, you try to get a sense of his interests, so you throw him a softball question.

Try using the same technique at a party to discover a stranger's interests. Ask questions like, "What keeps you busy when you're not attending parties?" or "What kinds of things do you enjoy?" or "How does that work?" The person you're talking to may feel as awkward

How to Win Friends & Influence People, advised, "Everybody has something interesting about them. Find out what it is." If you do this, both of you will have a better time. And remember, it is not your job to be the party's Table Topicsmaster. You get to talk about yourself, too.

Don't Fly Blind

Trying to run an entire Toastmasters meeting without any forethought is a bad idea. By the same token, you should put at least *some* forethought into being a guest at a holiday office party. However, leave the printed agenda, along with your timing lights, at home. Just take a few minutes to think things through.

For example, make the right decision about alcohol, assuming it is being served. Know your limits and stick to a plan. Your limits are not only what you can handle, but what is appropriate to the group you're with. This will require some evaluation. You can never go wrong by playing it safe.

At the office party itself, actively seek out co-workers you haven't seen in a while—don't just wait for a chance encounter. In my case, what once was a small group of co-workers has turned into a fairly large group throughout the years. As a result, I don't get to see my old friends as often

Silence Your Phone

If your cellphone has ever gone off during a Toastmasters meeting, you may have received some glaring looks. You may not get that same type of glare if you follow a soccer game on your phone during the party, but you will have wasted an opportunity. Don't hide behind your electronics.

The best way to prepare for an office party is to think about how you will conduct yourself during the event. Yes, a holiday party can sometimes be awkward. But think back to when you thought your first Toastmasters meeting was going to be awkward, and it turned out to be fun.

What makes Toastmasters enjoyable for so many of us isn't in the scripting, it's in the way we treat one another. The office party is not the time to present a razzle-dazzle speech, and it's certainly not the time for gossip. It's time to use your communication, evaluation and leadership skills to help others enjoy themselves, while having fun yourself. After all, isn't that the spirit of the holiday season? **T**

John Spait, ACG, is a member of Redmond 2828 Toastmasters club in Redmond, Washington. Reach him at johnm@spait.com.

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PJJ Antony and wife Jessie are happily surrounded by their daughter, Maria Vineetha, and sons Vasanth, Emil and Anand.



Ellary Mori, left, stands proudly with her mother, Lindy Smith, who won first place in an area-level Evaluation Contest.



Carol and Brian Harrison enjoy the day with their son, Jeremy, and daughters Ameer and Lorilee.

IT'S ALL RELATIVE

Club meetings give families something to talk about.

By Ruth Nasrullah, CC, CL

Across generations, family ties are cemented through Toastmasters. While helping each other set goals, supporting each other's achievements and celebrating their accomplishments, families grow closer. Here are the stories of three families whose members have learned to be better communicators and leaders, both in their clubs and in their homes.

"That's one more generation getting excited about the possibilities Toastmasters offers."

— Carol Harrison, on her granddaughters



A Little Competition Goes a Long Way

Carol Harrison, DTM, a speaker and writer from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, is the matriarch of one family that has benefited from Toastmasters. She was the first in her family to join the Excel club, in Saskatoon, in 2003. Two years later, health issues prevented Carol from driving, but her husband stepped in to chauffeur her to club

meetings. On one trip he was convinced to become a member himself.

The next family member to join the Excel club was daughter Ameer, ACG, ALB, followed by son Jeremy, CC, CL. Most recently, daughter Lorilee Guenter sought the same benefits and joined her family in the Innovative Toastmasters club (also in Saskatoon), for which Carol and Ameer served as

coaches. Everyone in the family finds a unique benefit from Toastmasters, and as a group they reinforce each other's skills. Interestingly, they often better themselves by besting each other.

"Our family is a little competitive," Jeremy says. "We all strive to do better than one another."

Carol says her family's competitiveness benefits fellow club members. "Others in the club kind of feed off our competitiveness and it helps [our club] set goals," she says.

The Harrisons hold their cards close to their chest even when it comes to prepared speeches. "Some people think we've heard each other's speeches," says Carol. "But we haven't. We practice them separately.

If it's not a competition, we sometimes share ideas."

Husband Brian, ACS, ALB, gets professional development credit at work through Toastmasters, but he, too, enjoys friendly competition with his wife. "I've had a goal to beat Carol in a club contest and represent [our club] at the area level instead of her being the one all the time," he says. "If one of us does something, we all have to try it."

Opening New Avenues

For Ameer, who has communication disabilities as a result of a stroke suffered at birth, Toastmasters has been life-changing. She joined the Excel club and has used both family support and the Toastmasters educational program to open avenues she might otherwise never have pursued.

"When I started in Toastmasters, having my family there made going to a meeting less scary," Ameer writes in an email. "They help people understand my limitations if I can't. It is also really good to bounce ideas off of each other, helping with suggestions when we are working on our speeches.

"Mom is a big help with my speeches. I write my ideas down and then some things I want to say under each point. I don't type very fast, so Mom often types them out for me

and helps teach me a good order to put them in.”

Despite Amee’s challenges, she serves as area governor and is on track to become a DTM by June 2013.

The Harrisons recommend “family-style” Toastmasters. Whenever Brian has the opportunity, he talks to people about the benefit of bringing their family members into the club.

Carol notes that the Excel club has been jokingly called “the Harrison family club.” They appear to have set a trend. “One lady brought in her brother, then another



That’s How We Roll

Lindy Smith, ACB, CL, and daughter Ellary Mori, ACS, ALB, have strengthened their mother-daughter bond through Toastmasters. In 2004, Lindy, a marketing specialist, joined Toastmasters after being

“I think it’s nice to have this common bond, something we can talk about and work on together, and it’s not going to grow old.”

— Lindy Smith, on her daughter

gentleman brought his two sons with him and now he’s trying to talk his wife into joining,” Carol says.

Amee’s sister, Lorilee Guenter, was moved to join after attending a meeting where Amee gave a prepared speech. “I was surprised and impressed by the speech Amee gave that evening,” she says. Lorilee’s middle school-age daughters are also enthusiastic about Toastmasters. “They have noticed the excitement and challenge that goes along with Toastmasters by watching and listening to the [family] discussions of what we are learning.”

Although Toastmasters’ age restrictions prohibit her granddaughters from becoming formal members, Carol has shared information with their teacher about the Youth Leadership Program and hopes to coordinate such a program at their school. “That’s one more generation getting excited about the possibilities Toastmasters offers,” she says.

encouraged by her supervisor at work. A couple of years later, at Lindy’s suggestion, Ellary joined too, becoming a member of the Getz Speaking Club in Getzville, New York, which met at her workplace. Eventually, Ellary transferred her membership to her mom’s club, Downtown Toastmasters in Buffalo, New York.

At that time, Lindy and Ellary lived across the street from each other, but three years ago Lindy moved to Florida, where she joined the Electric Toasters club in North Fort Myers. Nevertheless, mother and daughter continue to support and encourage each other in their speaking endeavors.

“The night before a Toastmasters speech, I’ll call her and I’ll say, ‘Oh my gosh, I need to redirect because this just isn’t working,’” says Lindy, “and she’ll tell me that’s how we roll—just do it, go with your feelings.”

“We reassure each other that we’re doing okay,” says Ellary. “Bouncing ideas off each other works really well.”

Like the Harrisons, Lindy and Ellary are motivated by observing each other’s progress. As Lindy made her way through the communication manuals, she watched Ellary move ahead on the leadership track and was inspired.

“Even though I gave very dynamic speeches, I got to a point where I just didn’t move any further in the manuals,” says Lindy. “So here I was, stagnant, and then I watched Ellary as she ticked off the speeches and was taking role after role after role as an officer and doing the whole leadership track. “I believe that’s where her strength is. She sets a goal, just like in school, just like in anything she does at work, and she attains it.”

Their personalities reflect their inclinations, says Ellary. “Mom is a little more outgoing, and I’m more serious and studious, so we complement each other.”

She adds that when they are performing their club-meeting roles, their Toastmasters relationship transcends family ties. “It’s really interesting to have that dynamic, because [my Mom] had to be my evaluator and she had to be professional about it,” says Ellary. “We had to put aside that parent-child relationship.”

Their mutual involvement in Toastmasters is a gift to that relationship, says Lindy. “I think it’s nice to have this common bond,” she says, “something we can talk about and work on together, and it’s not going to grow old.”

Full Family Participation

PJJ Antony, DTM, a human resources administrator from Jubail, Saudi



Arabia, has endeavored to include his whole family in Toastmasters. He, his three children, his wife, his sisters and his nephews are all in the same club—Periyar Toastmasters in Jubail.

His children initially participated through a Youth Leadership Program. After his daughter turned 18, she became a full-fledged member and encouraged her younger brothers to join as soon as they were old enough.

For the Antonys, Toastmasters is truly a family affair. “On holidays when we get together, we usually have at least one Table Topics contest,” PJJ says with a laugh.

Over his many years as a Toastmaster, he has gained skill in evaluating and managing staff at the office, and in a way, there is a parallel with his family life. He jokes that speech evaluations have taught him to constructively comment on his wife’s cooking without fear of a backlash. He has served as a club mentor to both his wife and his children, strengthening his bond with the former as much as the latter.

“That is the biggest thing that has benefited me personally: to have a better understanding with my wife,” he says.


Family participation is especially popular with the Periyar Toastmasters. The club currently includes seven families, prompting a change in meeting location and format. “We changed it to a dinner meeting,” explains Antony. “It has become really a social gathering place with a lot of good friendships.”

Antony encourages families to improve their relationships through Toastmasters.

“I conduct workshops on parenting,” he says. “I always recommend that joining a Gavel club or a Toastmasters club is one way to strengthen interfamily communication and to groom children the right way.”

Generations of Toastmasters

It may be a little awkward to call your mom “Toastmaster Smith,” but learning to evaluate family members in the comfortable environment of a Toastmasters meeting strengthens family relationships. Family members

can provide stronger encouragement than strangers can. They know you best—your strengths and weaknesses, your style and personality—and take the most pride in your accomplishments. So think about inviting your dad or sister or grandson to your next club meeting. It may make you a better leader and a better relative. 

Ruth Nasrullah, CC, CL, is president of two clubs in Houston, Texas: Boeing Toastmasters and Speakers R Us. She is a freelance writer and blogger. Contact Ruth at ruthmiriam@earthlink.net.



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WORDS WE DON'T LIKE

OMG! The list is *ginormous*.

By Jenny Baranick

While watching this year's Olympic Games in London, my friend sent me this text message: "The Olympic commentators cannot stop using the word *ginormous*." She sent me the message because she knows how much I hate that word. I not only hate the way *ginormous* sounds, I hate the way it combines two words that mean the same thing, *gigantic* and *enormous*, to create a new word that means the same thing as those two words. What a waste of a word! But, somehow, in 2007 *ginormous* was officially accepted as a new word in the Merriam-Webster dictionary. (Merriam-Webster traces the word back to 1948, when it appeared in a British dictionary of military slang.)


Words I dislike are added to the dictionary every year. Last year, for example, *cougar* gained a new definition in Merriam-Webster that I find rather demeaning: an older woman who seeks sexual relationships with much younger men. Last year also saw two initialisms that I despise, *LOL* and *OMG*, added as words to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Yet, this year—although I didn't have the opportunity to officially eradicate my least favorite words from the English lexicon—I was at least given a venue to voice my displeasure: *The New Yorker* conducted a survey to find out which words its readers would eliminate if they could, asking readers to send in their nominations via Twitter. Thousands responded, which was comforting because it means I'm not the only word nerd. And this got me thinking: Word nerds can use the fact that so many of us

care to our advantage. If we can discover what makes words displeasing and pleasing to others, we can fashion our speeches so that we not only woo our audiences with the content but also, on a more subconscious level, with the words we choose.

The nominations from *New Yorker* readers indicate that people dislike words for varying reasons. Some readers, for example, sought to eliminate words like *hate* and *war* based on the words' meanings. (Using that criterion, I vote we also jettison *traffic* and *anchovies*.) Other readers nominated words they felt were just space fillers, such as *literally* and *actually*. Slang, such as *bling* and *swag*, also took a beating. But the word that *The New Yorker's* staff settled on as most deserving of elimination from the English language was chosen for another reason: It was considered old-fashioned. It had "overstayed [its] welcome," determined the magazine staff. The word was *slacks*.

Ben Greenman, an editor and writer for *The New Yorker*, suggests that another quality might also be responsible for the dislike of *slacks*: bad texture. "People said that it felt like rubbing the palm of their hand over polyester, to say that word out loud," Greenman said in an April interview with National Public Radio in the United States. In other words, the word *slacks* is cacophonous, which, according to phonaesthetics (the study of the inherent pleasantness or unpleasantness of the sounds of words), means its sound is inherently unpleasant. Euphonious, on the other hand, means a word's sound is pleasant.

British linguist David Crystal proposes several criteria for making a word pleasing to the ear. Some are easy to understand: The word has three syllables, there's a stress on the first syllable, and the word contains at least one *m* or *l*—and preferably both. Crystal provides examples of existing words that fit this criteria, *emulate* and *alumnus*, and nonexistent ones that do too: *ramelon* and *dermatol*. (Although, I'm calling dibs on naming my firstborn Ramelon.) However, the word combination heralded by linguists as creating the most pleasing sound in the English language is *cellar door*.

Because people react so strongly to the actual sounds of words, I propose that on the final draft of our speeches, we not only proofread for punctuation but for the phonaesthetic quality of our work. Consider replacing prosaic words with more euphonic ones that share the same meaning. (Linguist Robert Beard's list of the "100 most beautiful words in English" can be found online.) We might, for example, replace the word *inclination* with the word *propinquity*. Instead of *a lot*, we could use *plethora*. We might even be so bold as to replace *complicated situation* with *imbroglio*. And if we really want to seduce our readers, we should try to work in *cellar door*. Any ideas? 

Jenny Baranick is an English instructor based in Southern California. Reach her at jennybaranick@gmail.com.

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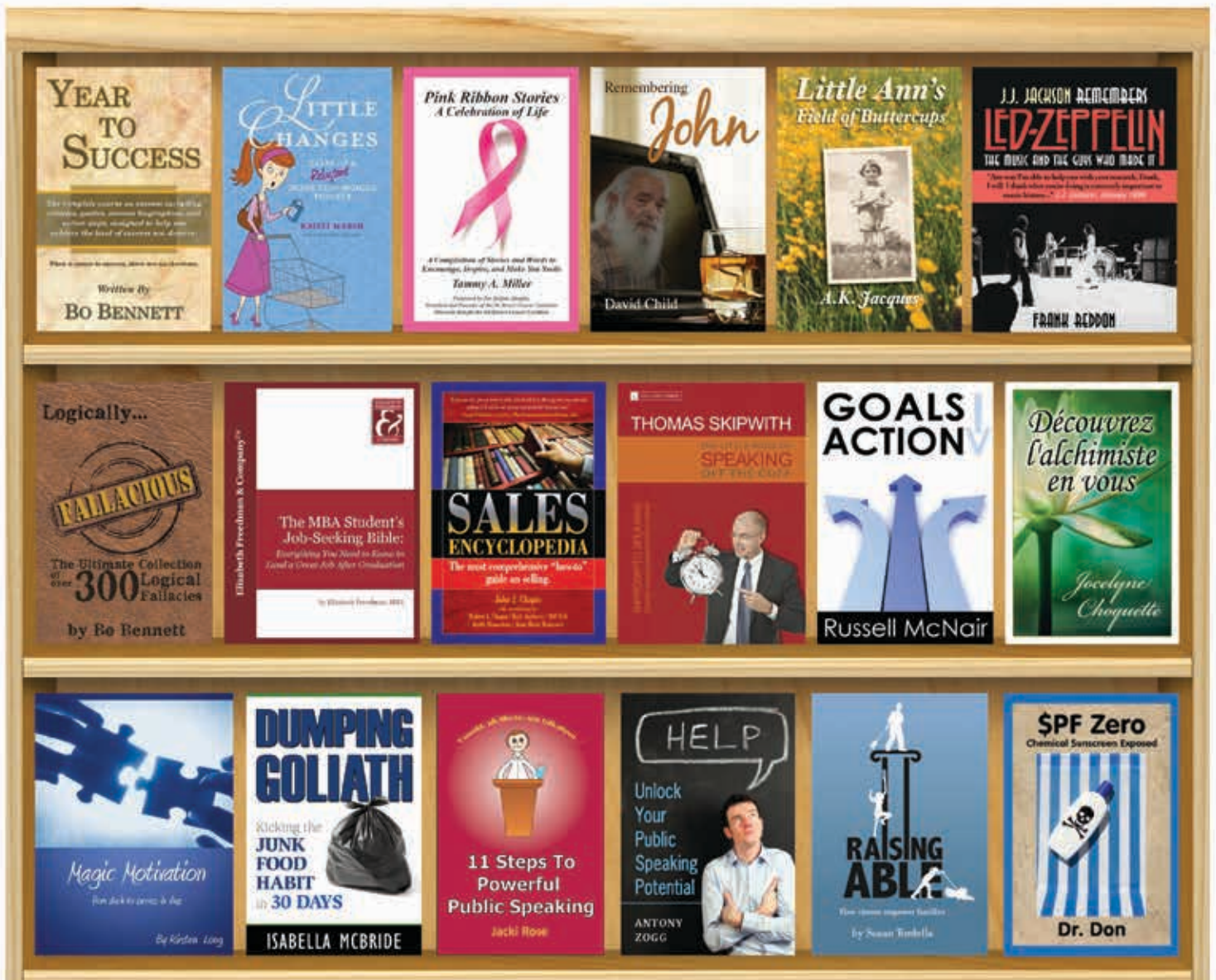
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TRADING A CORPORATE SUIT FOR A RED COAT

The life of a professional master of ceremonies.

By Paul Sterman

Janet Blann is a Toastmaster and a toastmaster. What is the distinction? The Englishwoman is a proud member of Toastmasters International; she is also a professional toastmaster, which is someone who serves primarily as a master of ceremonies for various social and political functions.

In England, the toastmaster profession dates back to the 18th century. The toastmaster's form of dress is also rich in tradition: Such individuals typically wear a long, red-tailed coat, giving them a unique formal look for the events they work. Blann, a member of a professional association called the Executive Guild of Toastmasters and Town Criers, is one of the few female professional toastmasters in London.

Her day job is chief executive officer of a small, locally based charity. Blann, who joined Toastmasters in 2007, is president of her club—Wessex Speakers in Winchester, England. Buoyed by the confidence she gained in Toastmasters, she became qualified as a civil celebrant in 2009. In that role, she provides personal, non-religious services at weddings, funerals and baby namings. Blann, who lives in Southampton, on England's south coast, became a professional toastmaster in 2010. She typically works weddings.

Earlier this year, in celebration of the Diamond Jubilee—the 60-year anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's

ascension to the throne—Blann and several other professional toastmasters went to Buckingham Palace. Dressed in their red coats, they were there to present a giant bottle of champagne to Her Majesty. Blann says it was a day she will never forget.

Q: Do you use your public speaking skills as a professional toastmaster?

A: It's a different way of using your public speaking skills. When being a master of ceremonies and introducing speakers at weddings, you're moving people from one room to the next, announcing people into the room, using a gavel and bringing great organization to an event. Whether it's a wedding or a political event, you bring order to what would be chaos if you weren't there.

For a wedding, I organize the actual day for the couple so they can just enjoy their day, because they know I'm taking care of everything. The job is quite subtle; you're in the background all the time, just doing what's needed.

Does the red toastmaster coat give you an air of authority?

When people see you dressed like that, they kind of know you're going to be bossing them about or asking them to do something. [Laughs.] People listen to me, even though I'm a smallish woman, because I'm dressed that way.

You don't have to be a large man with a booming voice.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

In my job [as CEO of a charity] I always had to do quite a lot of public speaking to groups of people, and I also needed the skills to chair large groups of meetings with quite high-level people around the table. I was at a seminar one day that a man was facilitating and I was very impressed with how he did it; he told me about Toastmasters, so I looked into it and found a local club.

I was fairly competent but I knew I had lots of room for improvement and I needed to be more confident.

How did you become a civil celebrant?

When my skills were improving, about two years into being a Toastmaster, I had a couple of occasions where I spoke at funerals. Then I went on the Internet one day and found a [civil celebrant] training course and thought perhaps this was something I could do. I became trained in delivering funerals, and then I moved on to wedding blessings and baby namings.

What types of skills does a celebrant need?

You have to be a fairly good public speaker. You also have to be very confident [thinking] on your feet, because whatever type of ceremony it is, you have to be in control of the situation. When standing up in front of people, you have to give out a huge amount of confidence. You have to stay calm but



Janet Blann holds a giant bottle of champagne that she and other professional toastmasters presented to Buckingham Palace staff as a gift to Queen Elizabeth II.



you have to bring some of your personality into it as well, and if humor is part of it, that's fine.

What do you find gratifying about this type of work?

I recently received a testimonial for a funeral I did. It was a sad situation; a lady had died of cancer. To be told I had made that day better for that family, and that I had played a significant role in making the sendoff of that person a good memory for them, was very rewarding.

With weddings, you know you've been part of one of the happiest days of a couple's life.

I plan to retire from my day job at the end of the year to focus on my celebrancy work. It is not just a job—it's a joy. It has taken me a while to believe I'm good enough, but I have that confidence now. I could never have imagined doing it if I hadn't had the confidence Toastmasters International has given me.

What was it like to bring a giant bottle of bubbly to Buckingham Palace?

That was quite amazing. One of our members [in the Executive Guild of Toastmasters] was well-connected with the royal family, and he wrote to the queen and asked if they would accept this gift from the guild. During the Diamond Jubilee, many groups had asked the queen to accept their gifts. Our gift was accepted, so we thought that was pretty special.

Some of us went to Buckingham Palace with a Nebuchadnezzar of champagne. [A Nebuchadnezzar is a bottle containing the equivalent of 20 normal bottles.] I have a photo of myself holding this thing, which is very, very heavy. Tourists assumed we were famous people and they all flocked around us!

We didn't get to meet the queen, but we were invited into Buckingham Palace and we got to present our gift [to Sir Edward Griffiths, who holds the title of Master of the Household]. He took us down to the wine cellar and we were able to see where they store all of the palace wines. It was just the most extraordinary day!

To learn more, visit www.ceremoniesforyou.co.uk.

Paul Sterman is senior editor of the *Toastmaster* magazine.

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NOT MY SIZE

The ontology of small, medium and large—in a fish joint.

By John Cadley

There's a place I always go to buy a great fish sandwich. The service is fast, the staff is friendly, the haddock is trucked in fresh from the piers of Boston and the buns are homemade. What's not to like? Nothing, unless you're a language curmudgeon like me, in which case you'll be ever so slightly bothered when you order your beverage. The waitress will ask, "Small or medium?" "Actually, I'd like a large." "There is no large." "If there's no large, then wouldn't the medium be the large?"

"Well, I've served about 30 medium sizes today so far, so I guess it is possible."

"Because you *call* it medium. That doesn't mean it *is* the medium, existentially speaking."

"Like I said, sir, we speak English and Spanish."

"Could you give me the two sizes you have?"

"You want two drinks?"

"No, two empty cups. I want to demonstrate for you. See these two cups side by side? This one is smaller than *that* one, so that's the small size,

large because it is the larger of the only two sizes you have. If you refuse to call it the large size, then you could ask your customers, 'Small or larger?' Then at least you're being accurate, technically speaking. And I *know*—you only speak English and Spanish."

"The delivery guy speaks Italian."

"Look, I love this place. I come here all the time. I tell my friends to come here. But I am a linguistic purist. Do you understand?"

"Freedom of religion is your right, sir."

"It's *not* a religion. It's a deep caring for the proper use of language. And it actually physically pains me to the heart when I hear it misused."

"Are you having a heart attack, sir? We have one of those portable defibrillators over there on the wall."

"A what?"

"The thing with the paddles that whacks your ticker."

"It's a *defibrillator*. You mispronounced it. Don't do this to me. I'm still dealing with medium versus large."

"Want me to call 911?"

"No, I want you to call your beverage sizes by their proper names. But seeing as that is impossible, I'll let the matter drop. I'll have a fish sandwich, please."

"You want an order of fries with that?"

"Yes, please."

"What size—small or medium?" **T**

"We only have two sizes, sir—small and medium."
"Then the medium isn't the medium."

"No, the medium is the medium."
"But if there is no large and you only have two sizes, then the one that's bigger than the small would be the large, comparatively speaking."

"We speak English and Spanish here, sir."

"You'll have to forgive me. I'm a professional wordsmith. Linguistic precision is important to me. A medium size gets its meaning from its relation to two other sizes, one being smaller and the other larger. You, however, don't have two other sizes; you only have one size ..."

"No sir, we have two sizes: small and medium."

"Yes, but for it to be a medium you would need to have a total of three sizes."

"We only have two sizes, sir—small and medium."

"Then the medium isn't the medium. It's mathematically impossible."

and this one is larger than the small size, so it's the large size."

"No, that's the medium size."

"But you don't have the large size, so the medium size becomes the large size by default."

"It's not my fault, sir. The owner orders the cups. I just work here."

"Why doesn't he order the large size? Doesn't he know he could make more money?"

"He owns a Jet Ski and an RV. He does pretty good."

"I know a little something about the restaurant business. Soft drinks are highly profitable because they're mostly ice and seltzer, which cost nothing, with about 3 cents worth of syrup added for flavor. So for 3 cents you get to charge \$1.49 for a large drink. That's a huge profit margin."

"We don't have the large size."

"Yes, you do! Your medium is your

John Cadley, a former advertising copywriter, is a freelance writer and musician living in Fayetteville, New York. Reach him at [jcadley@twcny.rr.com](mailto:john@jcadley.com).

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Marion Chevalier from Barcelona, Spain, travels to Las Vegas, Nevada, before the 2011 International Convention.



Mike Robinson from Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, visits family in Newcastle upon Tyne, England.



Brian VanKeuren from Lakewood, Colorado, stands at the base of Arenal Volcano in Costa Rica.



The Arnall family, including Peter and wife Judy (center), from Calgary, Alberta, Canada, stands near Samuel Beckett Bridge in Dublin, Ireland.



Sankara M. Pillai from Manama, Bahrain, poses in front of the tallest tower in the world, Burj Khalifa in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.



Husam Al Sini from Jubail, Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia, treks to the top of a mountain in the Alps in Zell am See, Austria.



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