

CAN-AM LINK



Toastmasters—A Community of Practice

Patricia MacNevin, DTM, Lieutenant Governor—Education & Training

My journey through Toastmasters has been exciting and rewarding. There has been a blend of my professional work with non-profit organizations and government, as well as my personal volunteer work. Many people do not recognize that Toastmasters is an international non-profit organization that provides an evidenced-based educational training program. If I combine knowledge and experience with Toastmasters, I and others, know that we all belong to a Community of Practice or CoP. Our organization is divided into Regions, Districts, Divisions, Areas and Clubs—each providing a Community of Practice.



When we speak about a Toastmasters CoP, we focus on several key areas that are consistent – no matter where you practice and learn your communication and leadership skills.

A Toastmasters Community of Practice:

1. Allows members to connect and interact.
2. Provides a shared context for members to tell their stories and share experiences.
3. Enables dialogue between members to explore opportunities and to solve challenges together
4. Stimulates learning through mentoring, coaching, guiding, and supporting.
5. Captures and diffuses knowledge so members can improve their skills and identify best practices for meeting roles, speeches and evaluations.
6. Provides and/or introduces collaborative processes to encourage freedom to express ideas.
7. Helps organize members around purposeful actions that deliver results in a positive manner.
8. Generates new knowledge so members may transform / enhance their communication and leadership skills.

Communities of Practice are valuable in many situations, inside and outside of club meetings, both personally and professionally. Members trust one another in their club meetings and at Toastmasters activities within their “communities”.

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Since the beginning of January, members have come together at Toastmasters Leadership Institutes to learn, to connect, to share, to collaborate, to solve problems and find opportunities. TLIs are a Community of Practice.

Communities of Practice allow members to share their stories, their successes and their concerns so that together a solution can be found and opportunities are identified. CoPs are valuable to each of us. Learn from one another; ask the right questions; offer solutions. Sharing, discussing and knowledge transfer are crucial to improving ourselves and our program.

What did you learn at your officer training? How did you share your knowledge? What did you take home to implement or try? What will you share from your Community of Practice?

PRO Corner

Shane Walsh, DTM, Public Relations Officer

We are in the throes of one of the coldest winters in years and to my surprise toastmasters keep showing up to meetings when they could be home warming themselves by the fire. They even attend TLIs?! A true testament to the dedication and determination of my fellow District 45 Toastmasters!

This issue has some changes. First, two of our regular contributors have taken a break. Michael Thompson, our District Parliamentarian, and Collette Saunders, our Division D Governor. Collette will be back in our next issue. Right now she is focused on her teaching duties. Michael would like readers to provide questions for future articles on parliamentary procedure.

We have contributions from John Savoy ACB/CL on his trip to his TLI; information on the bus to Portland, and articles from Patricia MacNevin, DTM, our LGET, and Tom Dowd, and a book review from Karen Murray.

Stay warm my friends!



How About Trying a Club Raid?

- Richard Huntley, Division A Governor & Karner Blue Toastmasters

Has your Toastmaster club been “raided”? Have you stepped outside your club and your comfort zone to raid other clubs? The Karner Blue Club broke with tradition in October by skipping one of its weekly meetings to raid other area clubs. Several members attended the Capital City Club and the Kearsarge Club meetings. They filled roles, gave speeches, and thoroughly enjoyed the hospitality of their fellow Toastmasters. A memorable note—the Kearsarge Club has a Snack Master and the warm cookies were fantastic! Speaking in a different venue is definitely challenging and rewarding.

When the Capital City Club returned the raid in early November, Karner Blue’s meeting overflowed with talented Toastmasters!

What are the rules for Club Raids? There are no rules! Just email the club telling them you are coming and be prepared to speak up!

Club Anniversaries

<u>Club #</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Anniversary</u>
1479	Saint John Club	1954	59
1741	Lewiston-Auburn TM Club	1957	57
5785	Souhegan Speakers and Leadership Club	1990	24
4921	Winning Spirit Club	1995	19
8518	Ecotasters Club	1999	15
4450	Sunrise Toastmasters Club	2003	11
2926638	Chaleur Toastmasters Chaleur—Club	2013	1

Road to Success— The Anxiety

Tom Dowd, ACG/ALB

My first memory of public speaking was in the fourth grade. I was asked to present some topic that I can't even recall in front of a class of about twenty students. What I remember is the heat running up to my face and head, and the heart palpitations that caused greater tension and fear as I walked to the front of the room. After what I remember to be a dreadful display of public speaking, I became disoriented. I walked down the wrong aisle and sat down in someone else's seat.

Public-speaking fear emerges early on, as childhood inhibitions slowly turn to hesitation and angst. We each have our individual reasons for why stepping in front of a group of people becomes so daunting. I know firsthand the physical and mental anguish of stepping into a public forum when my words became gibberish and my thoughts left my mind. I have had to work hard to gain control of my faculties to be able to successfully share thoughts, feelings, and stories in such a way that people want to listen to me. Shockingly, I can't wait to do it now.

Many of us tend to stay in our comfort zones. When we wander out of these comfort zones, we start to feel anxious. New situations always increase the stress meter. As previously noted, driving in an unfamiliar place without a map or GPS creates that same feeling that washes over us when we step up to a podium or have that big meeting with the boss.

The feeling is natural. There are plenty of actors and athletes who get this same feeling before a big event. It is natural. Given an opportunity to present to senior executives at my company, I instantly fear failing in front of them. They trust and have faith that this presentation will be successful, and I never want to let them down. The mental head games we play with ourselves tell us that the risk of failure is there. However, we need to override this feeling by looking at the other side of the coin: that success is likely if we have controlled everything we could and have come prepared. The presentation won't be perfect, so get over it—you can still make it a great performance if you invest the time and effort.

The punishing effects of the mental game can overtake you. *What if I embarrass myself? What if the red blotches creep up my neck to my face and I am burning with heat? What if the fear of the fear is overtaking me? What if...what if...what if?* A funny thing happened as I learned how to practice and prepare. The more stage time I got, the more confident I became. I had worried about the "blush" factor for too many years, and now the only time I ever think about it is when I am teaching people about how I forgot about it. It truly is no longer a distracting "what if" thought. You too can control the mental game by increasing your time on stage.

You also don't want to bore the audience. You won't, as long as you put the necessary time and effort into the material, message, and delivery to ensure you keep the audience interested. Don't just throw the presentation together and hope it works. You have to remember that most people in an audience want you to succeed, and when you succeed, they walk away thinking about you and your message. If your goal is to entertain, inspire, motivate, or persuade, and they are entertained, inspired, motivated, or persuaded, you have both won. Audiences want to think and be transformed into your world. Take the bold and confident approach. When you believe that you have the message to make a difference in someone's life, that belief should turn into confidence that will resonate with any audience. Turn your words to action, and your action into positive energy. If you say, "I'm really glad to be here," you should mean it. *You* set the tone.

Finally, a lack of public-speaking experience often drives anxiety. Nothing increases experience more than just doing more of it. Set up a plan to increase your face time, presentation time, and public time to gain this experience. When you start to write and prepare for the audience and stop worrying about yourself, many of these anxious feelings will dissipate.

Tom Dowd is a member of Kennebec Valley Toastmasters. He was selected as the 2010-2011 District 45 Toastmaster of the Year, and is the two-time award winning Table Topics (Impromptu) District Champion (2012-2013). He is also a member of the National Speakers Association. Tom has written two award-winning books that were published in September 2012 called *The Transformation of a Doubting Thomas: Growing from a Cynic to a Professional in the Corporate World* and *From Fear to Success: A Practical Public-speaking Guide*. The most recent book *Displacement Day: When My Job was Looking for a Job* will be released in early 2014. Reach him at www.transformationtom.com.

Book Review:

How to Get Your Point Across in 30 Seconds or Less

- Karen Murray, ACB/ALB

Author Milo O. Frank tells the reader that when the time comes to make your point, make it in 30 seconds. The right 30 second message will enable you to get your point across and keep it where it belongs—in the mind of your listener.

Why 30 seconds? The human mind can accept only so much information in one steady flow. If you want your listener to give up thoughts of the many things racing through their mind and pay attention to your message, you've got just 30 seconds.

Ever wonder why TV commercials are 30 seconds? Advertisers have paid millions to analyze how we think. A lot of info can be said and retained in 30 seconds and we can learn how TV and radio capture our attention. The author offers tips that can be used in public speaking.

Frank says anybody can master the art of the 30 second message by mastering a few basic principles; what's your objective, who's listening, asking for what you want and how to paint a picture.

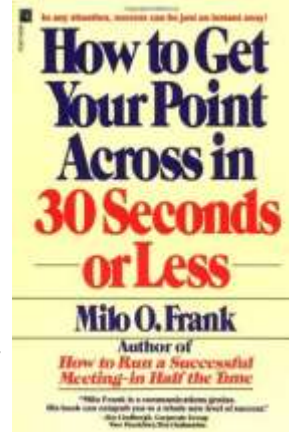
I found the chapter on creating a hook to get your listener's attention very interesting, with information that will help us craft an opening to our speeches. The hook is the first part of what Mr. Frank calls the three K's: Katch 'em, Keep 'em, Konvince 'em. He offers tips on what can be done right with the first sentence out of our mouth that would capture and begin to hold on to your listeners' short attention span.

The "keeping them interested" part is the subject of your message where you describe the what, who, where, when, why, and how of your speech.

I think Frank does a good job of offering ideas that can help us keep our audiences' attention focused on our speech topic.

The "convince the listener" section is like the "call to action" that Toastmaster members are supposed to have in a speech that is meant to inspire the listener to change a way of thinking or to do something. A convincing close demands a specific action by the listener. The author states that the call to action should not be merely implied. Ask for what you want.

I am happy to have found this book at the District 45 Fall conference silent auction. Money well spent, I'd say.



TLI or Bust!

- John Savoy, ACB/CL, *Xerographically Speaking*



John Savoy, from Xerographically Speaking Club #2927242 made a choice that he did not regret. John attended the Division C TLI not only to receive his credit as Sergeant-At-Arms, but to support his fellow club officers.

"I was told to meet at Studio 10 in Saint John for 7am so that we could travel. At least this is what I thought was in the email." says John. I waited until 7:30am, then went home. I checked my email and found out that we were supposed to meet at the Xerox building. The next few moments I made an important decision I picked up the phone and called a cab—From Saint John to Fredericton it cost me \$130.00! I made a commitment to my fellow executives and I was determined to keep it.



When John arrived, his colleagues were surprised and disappointed that he had to travel by himself at great expense.

For John Savoy, his commitment to his club was greater than the cost of the cab, however, he would strongly recommend carefully reading emails, and it doesn't hurt to actually use your smart phone to call your friends and colleagues once in a while.

Education Achievements, December 2013– January 2014

Award	Name	Club Name	City
CC	Arcand, Richard Paul	Karner Blue Toastmasters	Concord
CC	Brown, Kathleen	Dal Toastmasters	Halifax
CC	Chessman, Holly F	Dartmouth Toastmasters Club	Dartmouth
CC	Jordan, Eric G.	George Burton Club	Halifax
CC	Soler, Brian	Riverview Canusa Toastmasters Club	Riverview
CC	LeBlanc, Nora M	True Blue Toastmasters	Moncton
CC	Wilson, Craig A.	Harbourside Club	Saint John
CC	Irving, Natalia	Greater Portland Toastmasters Club	South Portland
CC	Booth, Sean	Premiere Toastmasters Club	Charlottetown
CC	Crick, Doreen B.	George Burton Club	Halifax
CC	Eastwood, Amanda D	Fredericton Toastmasters Club	Fredericton
CC	Belbraouet, Mehdi	Club AcadiUM	Moncton
CC	Gould, Kristen A	Concord Toastmasters Club	Concord
CC	McDonnell, Anne M.	MDI Toastmasters	Bar Harbor
CC	Nadeau, Crystal R.	Maine Fab Toastmasters	South Portland
CC	Mossey, Richard G	Souhegan Speakers and Leadership Club	Amherst
CC	Boggs, Sallie S.	MDI Toastmasters	Bar Harbor
CC	Ulemek, Svetlana	BURNDY Toastmasters	Manchester
CC	Elwood, Tamara L	Spirit-Ed Toastmasters Club	Halifax
CC	Moore, Daniel Joseph	Yarmouth Toastmasters Club	Yarmouth
CC	Lajoie, Terry A	Souhegan Speakers and Leadership Club	Amherst
CC	Green, Shauna M.	Souhegan Speakers and Leadership Club	Amherst
CL	Keydel, Christian	TIC Talkers Toastmasters Club	Dartmouth
CL	Duivenvoorden, Carl J.	Civil Speakers Club	Fredericton
CL	Lane, Dorothy	Winning Speakers Club	Windham
CL	Nowak, Debra E.	Brunswick Toastmasters	Topsham
CL	Savoie, Nicole	Hub City Toastmasters Club	Moncton
CL	Nadeau, Crystal R.	Maine Fab Toastmasters	South Portland
CL	Keldsen, Kyle	Merrimasters Toastmasters Club	Nashua
CL	Ford, Betty A.	Bangor Toastmasters Club	Bangor
CL	Baker, Virginia B	Spirit-Ed Toastmasters Club	Halifax
CL	McFarlane, Colin D.	Xerographically Speaking	Saint John
CL	Harding, Wendy P.	Rise and Shine Advanced Toastmasters	Fredericton
ACB	Savoy, John W.	Xerographically Speaking	Saint John
ACB	Nagle, Kelley M	True Blue Toastmasters	Moncton
ACB	MacNevin, Patricia A.	Civil Speakers Club	Fredericton
ACS	Crick, Reginald	George Burton Club	Halifax
ACS	Bechtold, Robert Theodore	MDI Toastmasters	Bar Harbor
ACS	Soucy, Doris	Granite Place Club	Concord
ACG	Tompkins, Randy	Bangor Toastmasters Club	Bangor
ACG	Ripley, Jill	Portsmouth Toastmasters	Portsmouth

Congratulations!

Education Awards *Continued*

Award	Name	Club	City
ACG	Stern, Mitchell	Toastmasters of Greater Burlington	South Burlington
ACG	Crowley, Cali	Greater Portland Toastmasters Club	South Portland
ACG	Bissonnette, Anne	Hub City Toastmasters Club	Moncton
ALB	David, Jesse	Dal Toastmasters	Halifax
ALB	Miller, Bruce	Faithfully Speaking Toastmasters Club	Dartmouth
ALB	Brenton, Lorraine E.	East Coast Raconteurs Toastmasters Club	Halifax
ALB	Jackson, Neil	Dal Toastmasters	Halifax



Celebrate!

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