



DISTRICT 84 TOASTMASTERS

SERVING CENTRAL AND NORTHERN FLORIDA

Volume 2, Issue 11 (May 2022)

Synergy



PURSUIT OF PASSION **TRANSFERRING SKILLS FROM THE TOASTMASTERS' LECTERN TO LIFE**

Story by Sowjanya Athmakuri Ramini

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On the cover: Distinguished Toastmaster Gloria Darling recording an episode of her weekly Cup of Glo podcast. Episode 111 (Enjoy Your Life at Every Age) was published on May 8, 2022.

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District Mission

We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

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**TOASTMASTERS
DISTRICT 84**
Serving Central & North Florida

**Empowering
individuals
through personal
and professional
development**



Synergy is a publication of Toastmasters District 84. Published once a month, the newsletter aims to inform our audience through relevant information and tools to help members and clubs to think and work creatively to achieve goals, inspire through ideas and stories that can be applied to our personal and professional lives and finally, entertain through content that is interesting and presented in a way that is fun to read.

Take Action Now To Finish 2021-2022 Strong

by District Director Debi Jo Londono, DTM; PQD Paula Summa, DTM; CGD Vickie Goodman, DTM

Are you feeling a little isolated? Are you tired of being on Zoom? Do you prefer personal contact and in-person meetings? What can we do to break out of these pandemic doldrums?

The TIME for action is NOW!

It is action that will propel us out of our slump and into new journeys and experiences. There has never been a better time to be a part of something bigger than yourself.

Now is the time to experience the excitement and vitality that can only come from discovering new friends; sharing new ideas with people like you who want to be better and do more. Add diversity to your routine! Visit other clubs within your Division – some are even meeting in person. Discover new ideas to re-energize your home club. Invite those clubs you visit to come to your meeting. Now is the time to build stronger connections within our clubs and with members around the world.

Take action rather than falling victim to lethargy. Keep working on your personal development. Keep mentoring. Keep coaching. Keep planting seeds of hope, excitement, and anticipation, recognizing that this pandemic journey is making us stronger. We will take all of the lessons we have learned and build stronger clubs with stronger members.

Area Directors keep pushing forward! You have nearly two months to complete the job you started; to build a relationship with the members of your clubs. Congratulate them on their progress and accomplishments and help them set up their next Toastmaster year for success by sharing District news and events, reminding them to elect new club officers, hold membership drives, and reach out to members who have not renewed.

Complete your club visits this month! But also stop by your clubs just to say hello and let them know that you are still there to help, support, encourage, and help them finish the year strong.



From left to right: Paula Summa, Debi Jo Londono, and Vickie Goodman

Check your Club progress on the TI dashboard. Some clubs have only one or two things to complete to be recognized as a Distinguished Club or higher. Are there members who have completed Pathways assignments but haven't submitted them to TI? Get ready to put these accomplishments into Club Central as soon as the new TI website platform is ready on May 22nd. Gather this information from club members now so you will be prepared to get it submitted on time!

Introduce yourself to the incoming Area Director as names are announced. Invite them to meet club officers and help make their transition an easy one.

Refuel, re-energize and revive our momentum, rather than stress out about the work to be done in these last few weeks! Some of us may even have double (or triple) duty as we try to complete this year's responsibilities and prepare for new responsibilities and positions next year. Take a breath and step back for a moment.

Give yourself a break. Take some time for yourself. What do you enjoy doing to unwind and revive yourself? Take a walk and enjoy the beauty of nature or simply enjoy some quiet time reading, meditating, or listening to music. Busy schedules often overlook our need to "refuel." Just 5 - 15 minutes a day of "you time" will add the motivation needed to get the job(s) done.

Take action now, and let's finish strong together. ■

Public Relations Skills = Transferable Skills

by Maria Martinez, DTM, Public Relations Manager



Maria Martinez

Many of us cite improved communication, leadership, and even networking or confidence as the main reasons or benefits of joining Toastmasters. While all of those are evident, there are other benefits not as apparent — at least not at first glance. For instance, not everyone realizes we have immediate access to collaborate with

great teams and, even more so, to develop transferable skills.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role as Public Relations Manager this year has been to see the development and growth of our Vice Presidents of Public Relations. These dedicated professionals often come with a great deal of passion and interest yet not always with the experience necessary to effectively promote their club and activities. This is why I love that our Toastmasters journey is so experiential.

Personally, I have pushed my own boundaries by playing and learning new trends with video, graphic design, social media, branding, writing, and collaboration using tools such as Trello and Google shared drives.

Similarly, many of our members have successfully learned and practiced public relations skills beyond their clubs. This is what some of our most amazing and creative members said:

"I use my VPPR skills and communication to promote not only Toastmasters but the mission of others for social change and cause through my business. I utilize public relations skills to preserve my own brand and assist others in gaining clarity in theirs."

— DeeJae Durante

"Designing fliers and handouts about my business, promo pieces. I love Canva!"

— Nancy Wilkins

"I've learned a LOT about the importance of branding and use those skills when I'm posting on our university's alumni networking platform to engage our alumni."

— Stephanie St. John

"I use my VPPR skills to enhance my visibility as a brand and build trust in the community. It has made me more comfortable in putting myself out there and writing my own story."

— Nicole Hamm

"Photography, podcasting, and most recently, video projects as I'm going to school for videography and will be studying soon for my drone license."

— Fred Bergeron

"Creating social media posts for all my temple's festivities. Doing live feed during food offerings."

— Pim Parpart

Want to learn new skills? Want to practice some of what you already have in your toolkit? Consider joining the Public Relations Team as we start to form a new team for the upcoming year. The skills you employ in this

dynamic and engaging field will serve you well in and beyond Toastmasters! ■

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I have pushed my own boundaries by playing and learning new trends with video, graphic design, social media, branding, writing, and collaboration using tools such as Trello and Google shared drives.

MARIA MARTINEZ, DTM

**PUBLIC RELATIONS SKILLS
= EVERY DAY SKILLS**





3 STEPS TO MAXIMIZE YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE

And a nugget of wisdom from the
2020 World Champion of Public Speaking
MIKE CARR

TAKE RISKS

Speeches that advance, are those that are memorable. The key is to push the envelope between the novel but not off the deep end.



MAKE IT RELATIONAL

Practice your speech until it becomes natural. The key is to talk "through" the camera as you are speaking to a dear one. Build the connection and trust.



USE YOUR FACE

Get comfortable using all your expressions as well as fully utilizing the depth of the camera. And, remember, only use all the extra bells and whistles if it helps tell the story.



"JUST GO AND DO GREAT WORK"

Perhaps the most salient point: harness your energy focusing on what matters: **your message and the one person who desperately needs to hear it.** Let go of the idea of "winning" and create a beautiful piece of art as is a speech.



Captured by PRM Maria Martinez, DTM - Inspired by Mike Carr's presentation on April 14th to District 84. To watch the entire presentation, please visit our [YouTube Channel](#).



Toastmasters District 84 Proudly Presents

EVALUATION CONTEST WINNERS



1st Place
RACHAEL ASSIGNON



2nd Place
Robert Warren



3rd Place
Colette Smith

"Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better."

#tmd84
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Toastmasters District 84 Proudly Presents

TABLE TOPICS CONTEST WINNERS



1st Place
NANCY WILKINS



2nd Place
Rosamund Fife



3rd Place
Earl Kitchings

"Winners don't wait for chances, they make them."

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TOASTMASTERS DISTRICT 84

Serving Central and North Florida

Pursuit of Passion: Transferring Skills From The Toastmasters' Lectern to Life

by Sowjanya Athmakuri Ramini, LD5, DL5, Area 93 Director



Sowjanya Ramini

Bobby Blackmon, DTM

Toastmasters has helped DTM Bobby Blackman in everything he does—writing, speaking, singing—by teaching him the importance of engaging his audience at a personal level.

Giving speeches to his Toastmasters community, Bobby quickly realized that engaging his audience in his messages helped them apply his words to their own lives. He transfers this mindset to his readers and concertgoers as well. Bobby has written two inspirational books, one children's book and is currently working on two more. He gathers inspiration from people he meets, with Toastmasters being a great organization to make new connections and hone networking skills.

“

"Toastmasters increased my audience awareness and enhanced my stage presence."

W.C. BOBBY BLACKMON

Prior to Toastmasters, Bobby didn't feel that he was ready to perform on a stage. Since joining Toastmasters, however, he is ever ready to perform. "Toastmasters helps you get yourself into that mode," Bobby said. "Toastmasters increased my audience awareness and enhanced my stage presence." Constructive feedback received from evaluations boosted Bobby's non-verbal communication such as gestures, hand movements, and pacing.

Since joining Toastmasters in 2016, Bobby has also learned to think quickly on his feet, thanks to Table Topics. This skill particularly helps while addressing his readers during book reviews.

"With numerous benefits to reap, Toastmasters is the place to be!" Bobby said.

Gloria Darling, DTM

"I may not have had the courage or realized that I can commit to the time it requires to run a podcast, had I not been in Toastmasters," Gloria Darling, DTM, said, host of *The Cup of Glo* podcast. "I simply would not have realized my potential."

Gloria's experience leading structured Toastmasters meetings allowed her to transfer a similar discipline and consistency to her podcast. An episode could last anywhere between 5 to 10 minutes if she presents it by herself or it can last 15 to 20 minutes with a guest. This organization of thoughts in a set timeframe comes from Toastmasters' timed speech structure and is key in holding audiences' attention.

Gloria also oversees *Milestone Divas* community event to help women celebrate milestone birthdays. Toast-

“

Gloria's experience leading structured Toastmasters meetings allowed her to transfer a similar discipline and consistency to her podcast.



Bobby Blackmon



Gloria Darling

masters' Legacy and Pathways projects that are specifically tailored to honing project management skills taught Gloria how to launch a project and to see it through from formulating an idea, discussing it with her team, and then implementing the plan. Project management skills Gloria learned from Toastmasters helped her take ideas from paper to real life.

Toastmasters' speech evaluation techniques have helped Gloria immensely as well, by mastering the ability to deliver succinct year-end evaluations for her staff so they could receive and accept feedback. She keeps her evaluations gentle yet firm. Improved management, coaching, and mentoring skills have helped Gloria understand that if you develop your staff, you yourself move forward.

Gloria attributes her many successes, both at work and outside, to Toastmasters.

Angela Ardrey—Reynolds,

"I knew I could write, but I feared how well it would be accepted," Angela Ardrey Reynolds said. "If I want to write a book, I have to understand my voice in this world."

Prior to joining Toastmasters, Angela didn't know how well her writing would be accepted. She didn't trust her voice. When she heard about Toastmasters, she immediately joined, where she gained a listening ear. Saying what was in her heart and seeing how well it was accepted gave Angela instant relief while boosting her confidence.

With carefully tailored evaluations delivered by her fel-

low Toastmasters, Angela received much-needed constructive feedback regarding her material. "I want to write about almost giving up and then not giving up," Angela said about her long-term goal of writing and publishing a book. Surrounded by a supportive Toastmasters community, Angela is now building her confidence to finish that book.

Angela also lends a helping hand to her fellow writers in The Writers Loft, a writers' guild. Here she applies Toastmasters mentoring techniques to empower and encourage writers. Much like what she has received in a Toastmasters setting, Angela provides a listening ear to fellow writers.

Toastmasters Pathways program emphasizes developing project management skills by taking a project from ideation to delivery. Angela put her project management and organization skills to use while forming The Writers Loft. With the help of local coffee shop owners, she drafted a program that fills the void for local writers and provides a supportive environment to bounce ideas off each other. The program was an instant hit and attracted many writers in the area.

“

Angela applies Toastmasters mentoring techniques to empower and encourage her fellow writers in The Writers Loft, a writers' guild.



Angela Ardrey-Reynolds

Finally, in addition to enhancing speaking skills, Toastmasters also improves one's listening skills. Being part of several clubs and attending diverse meetings, Angela developed good listening skills that she currently uses when interviewing people for *Synergy stories*.

The lessons that Toastmasters take from lectern to life are innumerable. Bobby, Gloria, and Angela show us precisely what can be achieved in Toastmasters. Be it mastering public speaking, enhancing listening skills, networking, implementing project management and organization skills, or simply having fun, there are too many reasons why more than 350,000 Toastmasters worldwide join and stay in the program. Among the myriad of benefits Toastmasters offers, there is one for everyone. ■

Get Tech—Savvy with “Tech Talks by George”

by Sandy DePrimo, DTM



Sandy DePrimo

The Covid-19 pandemic wreaked havoc with many businesses. Changes in social behavior meant finding new ways to conduct business without interacting in person. For Toastmasters, this meant relying on Zoom or other virtual platforms to keep learning and progressing.

George Hazzard, DTM, took that time to master several communication technologies. He learned Zoom, forged through Open Broadcast Software (OBS), and dabbled in editing software, making him a great candidate for the District Public Relations Team. He created “**Tech Talks by George,**” a set of videos designed to raise virtual presence within the Toastmasters community.

In 2022, as Covid-19 restrictions began to slacken, George took a deep dive into these technologies. He figured out how to have a meeting online and in-person. He created a tool kit for hybrid meetings. He wrote a detailed list of equipment and instructions to set hybrid meetings up quickly and easily (see below).

Basics Setup of a Hybrid Meeting

Things to have:

- ❶ **USB Microphone.** You need a good microphone for a hybrid meeting. Typically, the microphone on a laptop does not perform well. Encourage members to come to the microphone to speak rather than from their seats. The audio quality is far better when the speaker is up at the lectern near the microphone.
- ❷ **HDMI Cabling** for TV or Projector. Make sure you have the remote. I use two 10-foot cables that I connect. It has worked well for our different venues.
- ❸ **Set up for an audience view camera.** A cell phone will work well for this function. I attach a battery pack to the phone so I do not worry if the phone could go dead. It is usually fully charged by the time the meeting is over. Use the back camera on the phone because it has better video quality.

❹ **Web camera.** Try to avoid using the laptop camera because speakers look down into the camera. When you use a separate webcam, you can place it on a tripod so that the speaker can have eye level contact with the online audience. I use a selfie stick to hold both of our cameras. I fashioned a base for the stick. It is like a plate at the bottom to stabilize the cameras. The selfie sticks are less cumbersome than a tripod.

❺ **External speaker.** We use a wired external speaker. It gives good volume so that everyone can hear. You could use a wireless speaker, but you have one more variable that could malfunction. You may not need an external speaker if the TV or projector in your location picks up the sound.

❻ **Laptop computer.** Nothing fancy is needed. You will need USB ports for the webcam and microphone and possibly your external speaker.

His kit is extremely organized. It consists of bagged cables labeled with the appropriate equipment to plug into, making it an easy set-up for a first-time hybrid user. He has the meeting ready to go in the blink of an eye.

Once he was organized, he released a “**Tech Talk by George**” showing Toastmasters just how easily a hybrid meeting can be arranged. George is a great source of information for setting up hybrid meetings and is very happy to help guide anyone through their technology blunders.

You can find, “**Tech Talks by George,**” on [YouTube](#).

Thank you, George, for graciously taking the time to research communication technologies and share your knowledge and growth with the District. ■



YOUTUBE.COM

Hybrid Meeting Setup Part2

The Anatomy of Action — A Philosophical Perspective on the Power of Action

by Angela Ardrey-Reynolds, IP5



Angela Ardrey-Reynolds

Believing Me: *"Just Do It! Angela, why are you making this so hard? JUST DO IT!"*

Doubting Me: *"I'm not ready. I don't know all the steps. I don't have all the answers yet. I need more direction."*

Believing Me: *"Angela, you are stalling again. It's time to trust yourself. You ARE ready. You have everything you need."*

Doubting Me: *"I'm just scared."*

Yes, this has happened to me many times. Struggling to move forward. Paralyzed in fear. Procrastinating repeatedly. Refusing to believe that I am ready.

As disheartening as it sounds, it made me aware of one truth . . . I'm the only one standing in my way. I can't blame anyone or anything. Nope. My inability to take action was all on me. "Why do I keep doing this to myself?" became my question.

That was then.

This is now.

As a current writer and health coach, I find myself (per se) deep in the minds of great scientists and their books, for example, Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*, Carol Dweck's *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, and even Angela Duckworth's *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*.

The common theme . . . what makes us do the things we do?

Frankl declares, "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way." This shows that man has the ability to

create his own success . . . meaning man is self-determining and has control over his life.

Dweck affirms, "The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it's not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset." This shows that man again can create his own success . . . meaning man's view of himself can determine everything.

Duckworth explains, "Without effort, your talent is nothing more than unmet potential. Without effort, your skill is nothing more than what you could have done but didn't. With effort, talent becomes skill and, at the very same time, effort makes skill productive." This shows that man once more can create his own success . . . meaning man will reach success by applying himself and not giving up.

I am not an expert in motivation and will never push my ideas on another, but I have extensively studied the theories of goal setting, focusing on one thing and finding your why. I even returned to school to study the human body and mind, becoming certified in behavior change and mental toughness. And I keep returning to this one truth . . . action and success lie within me. Just as they lie within you. We have everything we need inside us right now.

“

Action and success lie within me. Just as they lie within you. We have everything we need inside us right now.”

ANGELA-ARDREY-REYNOLDS

Through those past years as I fought against myself to LET GO and TO TRUST, I awakened to my own ability to create success. I started challenging my belief systems and my perceptions of who I was. I also learned the power of not giving up, no matter how many times I missed the mark. Ultimately, I discovered that the answers I looked for outwardly were short lived, whereas the answers I uncovered inwardly changed my life forever.

Hmm, the anatomy of action . . . it's not complicated. You already hold the key. ■

Are You Ready to Become A Club Coach?

by Bobby Blackmon, DTM



Bobby Blackmon

It feels amazing to help a team of outstanding individuals challenge themselves and each other by collaborating and creating a more complete and fulfilling Toastmasters club program. This is exactly what a Toastmasters Club Coach (CC) does. Do you want more on *how* this is done, you say?

The **First Step** is choosing a club that can benefit from a coach. This means compatible meeting time, location, and personality. While these first two seem obvious and super important, having a compatible “personality” is equally essential. For more on this aspect, see [Club Coach and Mentor forums](#).

Once a match has been established, the **Next Step** is connecting, assessing, and providing relevant necessary support:

Connecting: This means getting to know the club as well as its members, and allowing them to know you through your words and *coinciding* actions. For example, communicate what you’d like to do to assist the club achieve its goals, then follow through.

Assessing: This boils down to observing the club for a few meetings, compiling the strengths and weaknesses that have been observed, then diplomatically sharing your results with the club leaders.

Providing support: This is arguably the most key element to being a successful CC. In providing support, the variable to remember is to do just that: “Support, support, support.” Much like a coach of a sports team, the CC is there to provide information, tools, and resources for the team to grow. As for leading the club though, respectfully leave that job to the elected executive committee. The Club Coach may need to provide some extended guidance to those leaders in certain circumstances, but the focus must always be on “*not to assume control*.” The reasons for the Club Coach not taking over are ample, but here are the top three:

- ❶ members lose confidence in the duly elected leaders,
- ❷ leaders lose a wonderful opportunity to grow, and
- ❸ after the Club Coach is gone, the likelihood is much higher that the club falls back into their prior “less than stellar” status.

These are to be avoided at all costs, especially as it is important to end the club’s year on a high note. But how can a high note be achieved even when ultimate club goals are not met? **Another Crucial Step** for a CC to collaborate and create a more complete and fulfilling Toastmasters club program is to assist at ending the year on a high note by supporting structure and leadership for the upcoming year. There is little that lowers morale more than uncertainty and few actions that boost morale faster than established structure, buy-in, and confidence in elected leadership. This creed holds even when little else has gone as planned, whether for an individual, nonprofit organization, or business. Also, by helping establish new and innovative ways of growing the club’s membership and raising the level of enthusiasm in members, a club’s year can still end on an invigorating note. These strategies do not have to be newly invented, just *new* to that particular club. Remember that old saying, “Can’t keep implementing the same actions and expect to receive different results.”

Being a successful D-84 Club Coach is all about: choosing a club with good synergy, continually connecting, constantly assessing, and always supporting, and then doing what’s needed to end the year on a high note. With that established, here’s the question:

“Are you ready to be a successful Club Coach?”

To attain additional insight into being a successful Club Coach, look for and tune-in to the Club Coach and Mentor forums. [You may email me.](#) ■



Do Tell Me! A Tribute to Jerry Smith

by Gail Hill Smith, DTM

Our community lost an extraordinary Toastmaster, DTM Jerry Smith, on Friday, April 8, 2022. There are many approaches to pay homage to Jerry Smith but I felt the most sincere and respectful approach was beginning with "DTM" or Distinguished Toastmaster, the highest educational award bestowed on a member from Toastmasters International.

For those many folks who came to know Jerry through his tenure in Toastmasters, they were never disappointed by the experience. From his early involvements with the Winter Haven Toastmasters in Florida, to the New Albany Toastmasters in Ohio, then back again to Florida with the Weekenders, ACE Advanced Toastmasters, and the online Find Your Funny Advanced Toastmasters clubs, Jerry became known as the Southern Storyteller and the DTM would better translate to "Do Tell Me".

Toastmasters paid homage:



Brenda and Jerry Smith

It is only natural to start with Jerry's wife, Brenda, also a Toastmaster and DTM. Her words flowed starting with "attraction". Brenda met Jerry just over 27 years ago at their church. "He was such a godly man, a kind man, a joyful man." They wed within a year and, bound by her attraction to his trustworthiness, commitment, and support,

Brenda would soon recognize his generosity. "He would give the shirt off his back to help anyone and everyone he encountered. There were so many benefits to being a married Toastmasters couple", she told me. "He coached from his heart. You could share anything with Jerry and he quickly related and displayed his caring and support through his storytelling, propelling and uplifting them to success."

A plethora of descriptive words about Jerry were offered by fellow Toastmasters in his clubs:

Storied. "Jerry's warm, charming personality positively affected everyone who knew him".
— *Jeremy Udell, DTM*

Entertaining. "Jerry could find the funny in almost anything and shared it with genuine love and compassion".
— *Nancy Ford, DTM*

Genuine. "Jerry was a true friend to all - he met people where they were and walked beside them in friendship, never expecting anything in return. He loved to tell tall tales, yet his personality was true and authentic and inherently trustworthy. Jerry brought joy and laughter into every room and left hope and inspiration as he departed". — *Gina Tyckoson, DTM*

Go-to. "Ok, not one word, but how else can you describe someone who was always there; always willing to speak at a demo meeting, address a new club, share a story or a Tall Tale? His stories and speeches were always inspiring, humorous, and directly from his heart. I will always remember him with a smile on my face and love in my heart". — *Paula Summa, DTM*

Extraordinary. "To me, Jerry was an exceptionally rare friend first and Toastmaster second. His ability to listen, coach, and offer insightful perspective, all within the same interaction, were valued gifts that will truly be missed." — *Fred Bergeron, DTM*

Forever. "From my initial meeting of Jerry and Brenda at an Area contest some 10 years ago, I knew we would be forever friends. I could sense the happiness they both exuded and I was never, and I mean never, disappointed by the inordinate display of kindness, wisdom, and love this couple shared with me. Jerry Smith, DTM, will always be considered a gift; forever in my heart, and never forgotten. Rest in peace, dear friend."

— *Gail Hill Smith, DTM* ■



Jerry Smith

How Are You Progressing? A Self-Assessment

by Julie Salgo, Retired Learning and Development Consultant



Julie Salgo

When you pick up a book, do you wish to read it for pleasure, or do you need to study the content? How will you proceed? You may look at the title and the author first, then read a few critical quotes on the cover, or the synopsis on the flaps, then check the

table of contents. I even heard about someone who liked to read the ending first! If you never turn the pages, you will never know what the chapters have in store for you.

Did you wish to socialize, network, or develop some skills when you joined Toastmasters? You may know the history and the mission of the organization. You probably have read some testimonials, participated in club meetings, and observed others grow. Hopefully, you've worked with a mentor and verbalized your goals by now. So what's next? How quickly do you turn the proverbial pages of the several Toastmasters volumes available to you? Which Toastmasters chapter are you in right now?

As a Toastmaster, we are responsible for our own growth, contributing to our club's growth. Pathways projects always include easy "before" and "after" self-assessments. Try this self-assessment, answering as honestly as possible (5 being the highest), to help assess your progress.

Think about why you scored yourself as you did and what you can do to improve your score. Perhaps you are a good listener and can focus on the speaker without being distracted or "phasing out" when assigned as an evaluator. However, you take too many notes, recording words and quotes from the speaker, which you try to include in your evaluation.

Continued on Page 13, Self-Assessment

Example Assessment: Composing Evaluations and Giving Feedback

Skills	When I joined TMs	Currently	My Goal
Answering Questions	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Asking Questions	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Building Confidence	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Coaching	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Communicating	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Composing Evaluations	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Giving Feedback	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Impromptu Speaking	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Influencing Others	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Leading Projects	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Learning from Examples	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Listening	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Mentoring	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Motivating	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Practicing & Preparation	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Reading Non-Verbal Cues	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Receiving Feedback	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Role-Playing	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Self-Awareness	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Speaking with a Message	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Stay Within Time Limits	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Competing in Contests	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Writing Speeches	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Self-Assessment, Continued from Page 12

Everyone has already heard the speech, so no need to repeat what was said. Try focusing on the speech delivery rather than the content. Review the 3rd page of the evaluation form and listen to the evaluation tutorial in Basecamp to improve your skills. Other excellent resources can be found on the TI or D84 websites.

Think about why you scored yourself as you did and what you can do to improve your score. Perhaps you are a good listener and can focus on the speaker without being distracted or "phasing out" when assigned as an evaluator. However, you take too many notes, recording words and quotes from the speaker, which you try to include in your evaluation. Everyone has already heard the speech, so no need to repeat what was said. Try focusing on the speech delivery rather than the content. Review the 3rd page of the evaluation form and listen to the evaluation tutorial in Basecamp to improve your skills. Other excellent resources can be found on the TI or D84 websites.

An effective evaluation can be given by identifying at least three strengths, offering a couple of specific improvement opportunities, and finishing with a brief and positive summary in 2-3 minutes. Fully utilize the evaluation form by adding comments, not simply circling the scores. Email the completed form to the speaker right after the meeting. To maximize improvement in your skills, volunteer as often as possible, aiming to increase your score within 3 months.

Help your club grow by sharing the value and benefits Toastmasters has brought to your own personal and professional life to help spread the word. Sharing Toastmasters opportunities with others is just as easy as recommending a good book to friends, family members, or colleagues. Evaluate yourself as a club ambassador:

How satisfied are you with the number of guests you invited in the past? 1 2 3 4 5

How well did you do with those who became members by now?
1 2 3 4 5

How are you doing with creating a list of potential new members? 1 2 3 4 5

How well do you help your clubs to retain current members?
1 2 3 4 5

Take Action! Help plan or participate in organizing a special club event that will attract guests. Many clubs do this monthly and they are adding members each time. Toastmasters is a team activity. Working together by providing our best in every role always improves our own performance and attracts others to join us.

Make time to take action. ■

Toastmasters Rotary Alliance

District 84 participated in Rotary District 6970 Training Assembly on April 29, 2022. Honoring our alliance, some of our members shared the power of communication through a prepared speech by WC Blackmon, an evaluation by Nic Patterson, and even a Table Topics by Rotary District 6970 Governor Rich Cooper. Many thanks to Nicole Hamm, Cathy and Richard Hoar, and our Club Growth Director, Vickie Goodman. May this alliance continue to prosper!



Immediate Past District Director, Pim Parpart, and Past Division C Director Marie Loeffler promoted Toastmasters at BizFest Expo at Space Coast Convention Center in Cocoa, FL on May 3, 2022.



Are You Feeding the Secret Sauce to Your Members?

by Tom Hobbs, The Man in the Hat, DTM



Tom Hobbs

They were in a local coffee shop. Sharon had tears of frustration when John heard her story before revealing who he was. His own family had experienced a near-devastating loss, too.

Sharon wanted to improve the lives of health-care deprived families. Her years in wellness and foodservice organizations should

have been enough to effect change in these deprived lives. Yet each time she stepped out to speak to the people who had the immediate authority to make the changes, her results showed failure.

Sharon's credibility was discounted. Her education, job experiences, and years in healthy food service were facts that should have refuted any claims. Sharon was about to surrender to failure when a "gatekeeper," the man who controlled access to one of the biggest authorities to funding, spoke with her.

John heard her story before revealing who he was and how his own family had a near devastating loss. Working for a company that often funded BIG needs, John described to Sharon the common skill set that enabled people to successfully access his company decision-makers - skills that Sharon could learn to build to pursue her goal.

That common skill set was the ability to present clear, confident presentations that were memorable.

After her long coffee break with John, Sharon realized she normally rambled and often left others confused about her message. John suggested Toastmasters.

Sharon visited several clubs and one connected with her. She felt the vibrancy and became an active member. Her presentations quickly changed, yet she still failed to help those families in need. That is, until Sharon learned the recipe for success, including the Secret Sauce.

Here is the recipe that fed Sharon:

Indulge in finding a successful club:

- Engaged Members - Arrive early and treat each meeting as an "event."
- Clear Structure – Sign up for roles in advance and come prepared.
- Fun Learning Environment – People are drawn to energy and enthusiasm.

Serve yourself up as a Successful Professional Presenter

- Engage with the audience; be your authentic self. Show consideration for your audience by keeping them engaged.
- Deliver content clearly – Your message must be clear to resonate and connect.

Top it off with the Secret Sauce - vibrancy:

- Create an environment of common connections where all can laugh at the silliness of a serious problem.
- Humor is the primary ingredient in the Secret Sauce, increasing vibrancy for speakers, trainers and leaders.

How do you make that vibrant "meal"?

Follow the recipe I receive from my past mentors. I accepted their guidance and am now a sought-after trainer of trainers at two of my volunteer organizations - Red Cross and Spellbinders Storytellers. (I credit my successful Toastmasters clubs for my improved presentation skills, a quality that has also increased my professional (paid) opportunities.)

Adding the secret sauce of vibrancy will increase your success and help make you

- A more sought-after presenter
- A leader that is eagerly followed
- A presenter who earns more professional fees

Continued on Page 15, Secret Sauce

Secret Sauce, Continued from Page 14

When you can Find the Funny of a serious situation, others will want to be there with you.

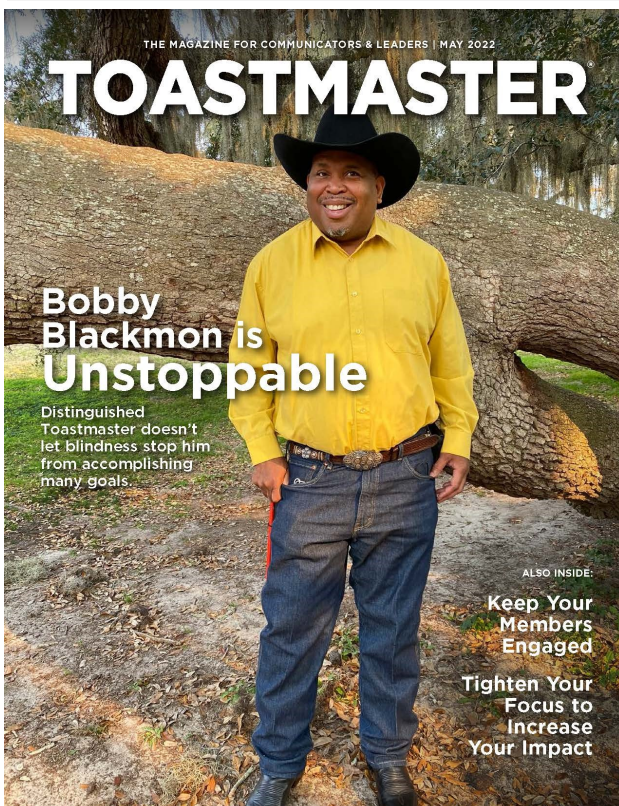
So where do you find this secret sauce?

A banquet of food has been sautéed, cooked, and devoured these past 12 months. A year ago, Find Your Funny Toast began nourishing the souls of attendees twice a month. Like any elegant buffet, the program offers unique "rolls." A great chef, The Master of Ceremonies, coordinates the meal, which includes a featured "Special" as the Educational Headliner. A Humor Detector is employed to look for ways to lighten your meal.

Vegetables, like peppers and avocados, aren't funny by themselves, but add some humor and you have... "Holy Guacamole."

Make your own Secret Sauce or come to an online tasting at Find Your Funny Toast the 2nd and 4th Sundays each month at 6:30 p.m. EDT. [Click here to join our Zoom meeting.](#) ■

District 84's Bobby Blackmon, DTM, was the cover story of the Toastmaster magazine May edition. [Click here to read District 84 Andrew Miller's story on how Bobby overcame steep obstacles to accomplish one goal after another.](#)



Pitch Your Idea at Toast Tank

Are you a Toastmaster who has a business idea or hopes to open your own business? When speaking to investors or bankers, it is imperative to have a succinct presentation that clearly defines and describes your business and what sets your business apart from the competition. How can you prepare?

"TOAST TANK" is a district event coming our way on June 17th!

This event will allow TM entrepreneurs to showcase the public speaking and leadership development they acquired in Toastmasters. Inspired by the hit TV show "Shark Tank," entrepreneurs will present their business idea to the audience and a handful of panelists with extensive small business experience and expertise. There will also be door prizes, and one winner will be selected from the presentations to receive 3 free months of business coaching with a dynamic personal coach and successful business owner.

To craft an 85-page business plan takes dedication and articulation. To present a comprehensive business pitch in 5-7 minutes is another work of art. When future business owners are excited about their venture but never get to the point, people lose interest. Avoid hearing a potential investor ask, "So, what are you planning to do?" Take advantage of this opportunity and submit your business idea or register to attend and learn from others.

Even if you don't submit your business idea for Toast Tank, there's still an opportunity for you! The expert panel will remain for 30 minutes after the event ends to respond to questions from everyone present.

TOAST TANK is also an opportunity for you to invite club members to enjoy and participate in a District event that is both useful and fun to watch.

What are you waiting for? In these times of mass resignations, it's time to consider working for yourself! You deserve it. ■



TOAST TANK

New Date! → June 17th at 8:00 PM ET

Thinking of starting a business?
Got your plan all laid out?
Want to get feedback?

zoom

My Cat Loves Zoom

by Andrew Miller



Andrew Miller

I've owned both dogs and cats and don't prefer one over the other. Dogs are more suitable for country living and are great if you want a companion for walks in the woods or when working in the yard. Cats are more trouble-free; no need for poop bags or leashes, and they happily stay by themselves if you're gone for the day.

But when my wife and I adopted a Maine coon cat, I was surprised that long-haired Smokey didn't act much like a feline. When he sees me outside, he'll chase after and jump up to my waist like a dog. Other times he acts like a four-year-old boy. He'll unexpectedly ambush me; wrap his paws around one leg as though we're playing football. He's also extremely playful and loves to chase catnip mice, ping pong balls, and his favorite, a furry lobster. Sometimes he'll dig a toy out of his basket and beg for someone to play with him.

After I retired, my wife and I spent our summers in Maine. We lived in a house Kathryn built in the 1970s on seven acres of spruce forest. We ran an electric fence around the yard to protect our trees and garden from deer. Once a day I would walk around the fence to inspect for breaks. Occasionally, Smokey trotted along behind. When I walked from the house to the road to check for mail or retrieve the paper, he was at my heels.

A couple of years ago we sold our place in Maine and now live in Tallahassee full time. We don't have a spruce forest for Smokey to explore but live on an acre east of town that has plenty of excitement. He loves to watch the squirrels and rabbits but doesn't chase them. Once I asked Smokey why he wasn't interested in them.

Smokey: *"They're too quick, and all those bones and fur—yuck. I'd rather have turkey primavera with special sauce, trout Tuscany with delicate greens, or beef and chicken pâté. You know what I like. It comes in those little cans."*

Smokey is very sociable and loves Zoom. Early Monday afternoon he'll start asking about the upcoming Toastmasters meeting.

Smokey: *"Planning to join the Toasters tonight?"*

Me: *"That would be Toastmasters. Anyway, what's it to you?"*

Smokey: *"Sometimes I see cats on Zoom. Like that cute little short hair we saw last week."*

Me: *"Smokey, that cat lived in California. Besides, you've been neutered. Remember Toastmaster Sue Leitholf's speech from a couple of weeks ago?"*

Smokey: *"Oh, that."*

I reminded him that on Zoom we sometimes hear dogs barking and see children running about.

Smokey: *"Children and dogs?"* He arched his back and spat. *"Disgusting."*

Me: *"Come on Smokey, you like children."*

Smokey: *"Will Rocky be on Zoom tonight?"*

Me: *"Who's Rocky?"*

Smokey: *"Lisa Desjardins' cat. Most nights he sleeps on the couch while Lisa gives her speech."*

Me: *"Rocky's not in our Toastmasters Club, and neither is Lisa. She's a reporter for Public Television."*

Smokey: *"Do you think Rocky is a girl cat?"*

Me: *"How would I know?"*

Smokey: *"Call up Lisa. She'll tell you."*

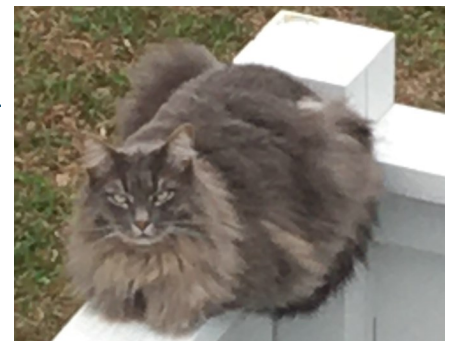
I explained to Smokey that Toastmasters Meetings weren't always on Zoom. Before COVID-19, everyone got together in a room to give their speeches.

Smokey: *"How terrible! You couldn't see inside their homes, meet their pets, find out what the rest of the family is eating..."*

Me: *"Right you are, Smokey."*

Smokey: *"How did the Toasters learn about Zoom?"*

Next issue, I'll answer Smokey's question about Toastmasters and Zoom. But not about Rocky.



TOASTMASTERS DISTRICT 84

Leadership Team 2022-2023



Paula Summa, DTM
District Director-Elect



Vickie Goodman, DTM
Program Quality Director-Elect



Felicia Shorter, DTM
Club Growth Director-Elect



NICHOLAS
PATTERSON, DL5
Division A
Director-Elect



DWIGHT
DILLON, DTM
Division D
Director-Elect



WILLIAM
MCCOMBIE, DTM
Division G
Director-Elect



MARY
ARNOLD, DTM
Division B
Director-Elect



DONALD
TOLDSON, SR., PM3
Division E
Director-Elect



GLORIA
DARLING, DTM
Division H
Director-Elect



JOHN
MORROW, DTM
Division C
Director-Elect



RANDALL
CROSBY, MS2
Division F
Director-Elect



ORN
TEMPLEMAN, TC3
Division I
Director-Elect

Word Search Puzzle

by Julie Salgo, Enigmatologist

District 84's Time and Time Again Annual Conference was held on May 13 and 14, 2022, in Kissimmee, FL. The words in this puzzle appeared in a welcome article written by Barbara Amato, DTM, District 84 Conference Chair and published in the Conference Supplement in the April edition of Synergy. How many can you identify?

L	N	V	T	Q	D	U	K	X	H	S	Z	P	E	P
A	E	L	S	A	F	I	A	E	E	D	E	L	Z	K
N	L	S	E	T	H	L	N	M	Y	D	T	A	A	U
O	F	H	T	V	E	L	U	N	U	N	H	B	T	G
I	F	O	N	R	A	T	W	C	E	R	O	M	U	H
T	A	W	O	X	S	R	A	K	D	R	U	T	N	F
A	R	C	C	O	Y	T	T	V	T	Y	G	C	E	R
R	L	A	C	N	I	A	G	A	M	F	H	M	D	S
I	M	S	S	O	V	M	J	I	S	N	T	F	Z	C
P	P	E	N	D	G	N	I	K	O	V	O	R	P	E
S	R	A	T	E	R	O	M	A	N	C	E	I	J	T
N	L	I	N	S	T	A	L	L	A	T	I	O	N	S
I	M	A	D	O	C	C	W	T	A	L	E	N	T	S
E	U	D	D	S	R	E	K	A	E	P	S	C	W	T
D	I	G	N	I	T	A	R	I	E	S	F	K	H	I

AGAIN
AWARDS
CONTEST
COSTUMES
DIGNITARIES
DINNER

DTMS
EDUCATIONAL
HUMOR
INSPIRATIONAL
INSTALLATIONS
KEYNOTES

LAB
PROVOKING
RAFFLE
RELAX
ROMANCE
SHOWCASE

SPEAKERS
TALENTS
TECH
THOUGHT
TIME
TRAVEL

What's Happening in District 84?

So You've Joined Toastmasters.
Now What?

New Member Orientation with
the Trio and Pathways Chair

1st Sunday of Each Month
7:00pm ET on Zoom
Meeting ID: 962 7944 2148
Password: NewMembers



**DISTRICT 84
YOUTUBE**

CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE

District 84 Presents

TOAST TANK
June 17th at 8:00 PM ET

Thinking of starting a business?
Got your plan all laid out?
Want to get feedback?

Monthly Sessions

Learn how PATHWAYS is
the companion on your
Toastmasters journey!

Zoom ID: 853 1202 4512
Passcode: 448672

17th of every month at 7 pm ET

May focus

Open Mic Night:
Bring your questions

June focus

Open Mic Night:
Bring your questions

**TOASTMASTERS
PATHWAYS**
— learning experience —



new
**Synergy
Podcast**

Episode 26

The Power of 3

In this episode, our talented Podcast
team comprised of Leslie, DeeJae and
John sit around the table to share
experiences, successes and the lessons
learned along the way.

Hosted by: John Morrow

<https://toastmastersd84.org/the-d84-synergy-podcast/>



Toastmasters
District 84
Presents

**June 9th
7 pm ET**

**FIND THE
GREATNESS
WITHIN**

Roger Caesar, DTM
3rd place 2021 World
Champion of Public Speaking

toastmastersd84.org



<https://www.toastmastersd84.org/>

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