

Inaugural stitch-up goes haywire

Last Thursday night, Parramatta Toastmasters held their first meeting of the new Toastmaster year—it was a night of high energy, high attendance and dubious lighting. This was the first meeting in which the new executive stood entirely and officially on their own sixteen feet, and we think most would agree it went off without a hitch, well almost.

There was one thing that didn't go quite to plan.

Many of us were met at the door, in hushed tones, by John Bright. He was holding a script, which detailed plans for an elaborate stitch-up. John (and presumably his cronies) had put together a plan for the Business Session that involved a motion, an amendment, a reference motion, a further amendment, a few rights of reply, and an adjournment of five minutes... "so everyone could go buy a drink from the bar". The aim of this theatre of course, was to trip up the Immediate Past President, who as tradition would have it, found himself in the role of Chairman II for the first meeting of the new Toastmaster year. This was of course Demian, one of our most experienced parliamentarians and chairmen.

This is what didn't go to plan—a combination of Demians fluid expertise and a little enthusiastic incompetence by some of the conspirators, led not only to Demian keeping tight control of the business session, but his managing to roll the five minute adjournment into the ten minute break we would have had anyway shortly after the Business Session.

Kirsten, as Parliamentarian was left with little to recommend to Demian beyond the fact that he should fidget less.



Gary and Demian reflect on what almost was



Newly minted CC Lyndal Eager, with proud President Dave Griffiths

Eager takes home the 'Fancy Badge'

Lyndal has made her mark by becoming the first Competent Communicator of this Toastmaster year. Lyndal delivered her 10th speech last Thursday night, and thus reached this very important milestone.

Much like a black-belt in Karate, the Competent Communicator badge marks not so much the end of something, as it does the beginning of something. Lyndal has worked to acquire a broad set of basic skills (finished her apprenticeship, so to speak) and is now ready to embark on a new journey that will see her refine her skills and possibly even specialise.

Lyndal made reference to some of these concepts in her speech, which we have chosen to reproduce in this issue, for the following reason.

It is rare that something written to *read* well, will maintain the same appeal when delivered as a speech. Likewise many great speeches use a simpler and more impacting language than would be interesting to read. Lyndal delivered a speech full of language interesting and complex enough to be read, but was *also* spoken beautifully.

We congratulate Lyndal on reaching this milestone.

See Page 3 for a transcript of Lyndal's 10th Speech.

Denis lets the sun shine in

Alicia gave us all the pleasure of not only a little poetry last Thursday night, but also shone a light for us on a piece of her childhood. Alicia speaks both Spanish and English, and read a poem called El Sol (The Sun) in both these languages.

See Page 2 for the transcripts of Alicia's poem

Returning Toastmaster shows his mettle

We welcomed Socheat back to the stage after a seven-year absence from Toastmasters. Socheat is embarking on the Competent Communicator programme, and as a first step, delivered his Ice Breaker on Thursday night.

After such a long absence Socheat did struggle a little to get his speech out, it was plain to see that nerves were doing their best to get the better of him. Socheat had prepared a speech that intended to deliver a message that was deep and poetic, drawing on a visit to the beach when he was a young boy, and relaying the impressions that day left on him, and the deeper significance and effect it had on his life.

What Socheat gave us was not only a speech that was bold in its intent, but a display of perseverance that we can all take example from. Despite long pauses and some struggles to find his words, Socheat stood his ground, repeatedly steadied himself, and pushed himself to the conclusion of his presentation.

Our intention in being part of the Toastmaster organization is to learn, and to improve communication and leadership skills. This is done most effectively when we set ourselves challenges, and then meet those challenges, despite nerves, despite fears, and despite uncertainty. Socheat gave us a fantastic display of just this last Thursday night.

It's not all fun and games at TM—good advice

A Toastmasters meeting is rarely *just* fun and games, there's usually a serious note or two in the evening. Joan led us all through a moments reflection when she asked us to show hands, if we had known or been connected to, someone that has suffered some form of cancer. Nearly every hand in the room went up. Joan wasn't trying to depress us all, but rather to bring a little awareness—it's a moment like that in which we are reminded how omnipresent this disease is. Joan left us with some pertinent advice—pay a visit to the cancer council, and *be aware* of your bodies.

...continued from Page 1—Denis let's the sun shine in El Sol

Apenas el sol despierta lo saludo con amor
 tiendo hacia el mi derecha y asi tomo orientacion
 Mi izquierda marca al oeste por donde se oculta el sol
 Todo el norte esta a mi frente
 y al sur mi espalda doy.
 Si yo recorriera el mundo, guiandome por el sol
 jamas lograre perderme
 pues el nunca se perdio

The Sun

As soon as the sun rises I greet it with my love
 I stretch towards it my right and thats how I orient myself
 my left points west where the sun sets
 All of north is to my front
 and to the south I give my back.
 If I were to travel the world with the sun as my guide
 I would never be able to get lost
 for that he has never done



Long-standing disagreement, Sam says stripes, Dave says spots

Spots or stripes; vital questions remain unanswered

They have always agreed on the colour, but when it comes to patterns, President Dave Griffiths and Vice President of Education Sam Ekinici do not see eye-to-eye.

It is a little known fact in our club that there has been long-standing contention, between these two prominent Toastmasters, over whether a tie should be spotted or striped. The fist executive meeting on Thursday 8 July is promising to be explosive, as Dave and Sam continue what has been a fiery debate over tie fashion.



Kirsten planning for Thursday nights executive meeting

GIVE A VOICE TO THE HEART—Lyndal Eager

Mr Toastmaster, Ladies and Gentlemen.

“Hear the tolling of the Bells, Iron Bells, What a world of solemn thought their monody compels, In the silence of the night, hear them ring out with delight, in the melancholy menace of their tones, for every sound that floats, from the rust within their throats, is a groan.”*

Not long ago, I thought those bells were ringing for me – I was going to die. A Doctor stood beside my bed and said “Lyndal there are worse things in life than death.” I responded “Look Doc, that’s easy for you to say, I’m the one lying in bed with pink fluffy slippers on, you’re the one standing up beside the bed.” What was really frustrating was that I only had 2 speeches to go to become a competent communicator and I wasn’t going to get there! Well here we are together tonight – you may be interested in where I took my inspiration from, to see me through and complete my C.C. manual.

Serendipity, a strange word, it means “Fortunate discoveries by accident.”

I had an accident and fortunately discovered that you were all there supporting, nurturing and encouraging me to get here. I am grateful and thank you.

The Ancient Greeks did not conduct a eulogy when a man died. They did not examine who he was nor what were his life’s achievements. Instead they looked at how he lived his life. They did this by asking just one question... “Did he live his life with passion?!”

On the 14th of January last year I celebrated my 50th birthday, it was a personally happy time. Demian Coorey gave me this book as a present. It’s a photographic history of the 20th Century. And over the past few months I’ve read it, cover to cover. Winston Churchill is there – an inspiration to all toastmasters for his lifetime achievement crafting words, composing speeches, great oratory. But I looked at him as a man. He was so flawed, so imperfect, he suffered from depression, the “black dog” he called it, and, well, he was an alcoholic.

He was 65 years old when, in 1940, he was appointed British wartime Prime Minister. I’m only 51! That gives me 14 years to polish my public speaking skills, dye my hair red, and then run the country!

January 15th, 2009, an aeroplane crashed landed into the icy waters of the Hudson River. Right beside the skyline of NYC. All 155 passengers and crew survived. The pilot, 57 year old Captain Chesley Burnett Sullenberger, affectionately known as Captain Sully was recently interviewed on TV. I’ve been watching way too much “Oprah”. He said “I chose my words carefully” – sounds like a great toastmaster to me. I think the quote of the day belongs to the co-pilot, Geoff Skiles, who said, “Gee it’s quiet up here when you have no engines!” Lucky for everyone, Sully, born and raised in Texas, had learned to fly gliders as a teenager. Do you know how an A320-Airbus glides with no thrust? Like a brick!

Oprah asked him “What were you thinking at the time?” He replied “I didn’t have time to think. I did my job, it was as if my whole life, all the training, had brought me, prepared for this moment in time, ready for this incident. One of the passengers in the audience stood up and said “Captain Sully, my wife was 4½ months pregnant with our daughter at the time of the accident last year. Because of your skill I have been present at her birth and now we are about to celebrate her first birthday – Thank you.” And he sat down. Another man stood up and laughingly said “yeah, but what he’s not telling you is he named his daughter Sully, after you!”

And there was my connection. (Serendipity.)

In 1986 I was working as a midwife. In the labour ward that day there was a crisis. Everything went wrong, the baby was in distress. I didn’t have time to think, I just did my job. The obstetrician wavered “Oh, perhaps we should keep going,” I stood on his toes and pressed down, my nose touching his nose I said “Perhaps you should go scrub, and I’ll bring the patient into the operating theatre in a few minutes for the emergency C – section.” Twenty minutes later the baby girl was born. What they found was that the umbilical cord was TIGHTLY wrapped around her neck three times. If we had continued the labour, the baby would have been stillborn or severely brain damaged.

I have the distinct honour of knowing that out around St. Clair somewhere is a young lady, 24 now, whose name is Lyndall. Except they got it wrong and spelt it with two L’s on the end.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there are two things I need you to do for me. I need you to know how grateful I am for your support and encouragement to get me here tonight – I thank you.

And the most important thing is this – Don’t change – you are very good at bringing out the best in people, and in putting them on a solid footing with their public speaking training.

You have given me the place, the space and the ability to give a voice to my heart.

* (Excerpt from “The Bells” by Edgar Allen Poe)

Parramatta Toastmasters - Club 2274

Meeting Details

Parramatta Toastmasters meet fortnightly on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month, in the Linden Room of the Parramatta RSL.

6pm for a 6:30pm start

Dinner is available during the meeting
Guests and visitors are always welcome

Enquiries / Correspondence

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Email: info@parramattatm.org.au

Speechcraft Spot

Do you suffer from human-kind's most common fear?

Public speaking is a fear held by many people. For some it is a mild discomfort, while others break out in a cold sweat at the mere thought of standing in front of an audience!

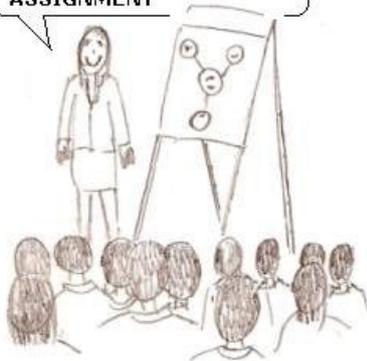
If you have decided it's high time to break free of the powerful fear of public speaking, Toastmasters may be an excellent place to get the knowledge and practice that will allow you to speak both confidently and competently in public.

Contact one of our club officers or enquire about a Speechcraft course to find out how!

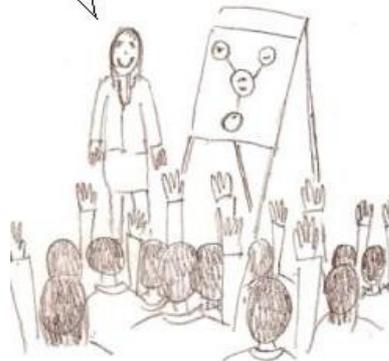
Start the ball rolling - come to a meeting or enroll in a Speechcraft course!
Enquiries at speechcraft@parramattatm.org.au

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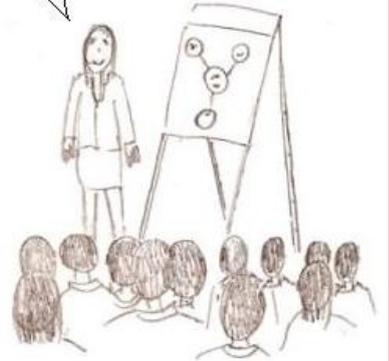
GOOD EVENING FELLOW TOASTMASTERS....I'M GOING TO NEED A VOLUNTEER FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT



WOW



AND I'M GOING TO NEED SOMEONE TO TAKE SOME NOTES



ANYONE UP FOR CLEANING MY BATHROOM?

