



PARRA NATTA

Newsletter of Parramatta Toastmasters Club No 2274, Area 13, Western Division, Dist.70

Meeting no 1249

21 Nov 2013

THEME

Count Your Blessings

AWARDS

Best Speech

Alicia Dennis

Best Table Topic

Robyn Peck

Best Evaluation

Elizabeth Wilson

WELCOME VISITORS

Joe

Aida

Anita

Dave

The Mission

of a Toastmasters club is to provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

Contact

To share any exciting news or to submit an article for Parra Natta, contact:

Malkit Banwait

Vice President for
Public Relations at:

Count Your Blessings!



The dictionary definition of 'Count Your Blessings' is 'to think about the good things in your life, to stop yourself becoming too unhappy about the bad things'. A TM club is one place where we do exactly that. For a few hours every fortnight, members and guests from all age groups and all walks of life get together in comradeship & help one another to improve their Communication & Leadership skills, in a caring and supportive environment. Of course having fun and feeling good on the way, is an added bonus. Thanks to the vision and wisdom of Dr. Ralph C. Smedley, we can truly 'Count Our Blessings' when it comes to Toastmasters.



On Sat 23 Nov we were treated to an action packed finals of the annual 'Dural Lifeboat Debate' where each contestant had to deliver, in character, a prepared and an impromptus speech. Isn't this what Toastmasters is all about? After much laughter & entertainment, **Don Bradman** (Matt Tonkiss of City Tattersalls TM) was declared the winner, 2nd place was **Shakespeare** (Dave of North Sydney Achievers TM) and 3rd **Marie Antoinette** (Dale Rees-Bevan of Mosman TM).



Other famous characters fighting for the last seat were **John Lennon** (Craig Morris of Dundas), **Queen Boadicea** (Lynne Harris of Western Lectern), **Margaret Thatcher** (Jess Geale of Dural), **Steve Prefontaine** (Matt Dawson of Wimbledon), **Robin of Locksley** (Rowan Kunz of West Pennant Hills). Our own **Ned Kelly** (alias **Michael**), although did not place, nevertheless gave his best shot, thoroughly entertaining the passengers with his six shooter and quick wit. Well done **Michael**, we're all proud of you for representing us.

You can watch Rounds 1&2 and Final Round at:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBuYnA4mGzY
www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-kGzQK6r8



Our president **Alicia** got the meeting off to a positive start by reminding everyone that 'count your blessings' is all about taking opportunities, keeping perspective and staying balanced. She continued with this theme into the second half with her prepared Inspirational speech titled '**The Benefits are Enormous**'. Chairman **Kim** opened by talking about his favourite book 'The Lucky Country' by Donald Horne. As we all know the lucky country is Australia.



Sam's Point of View/Opinion was that 'most people don't have a point of view!' and he gave many examples to prove his point.

For her book review, **Robyn** chose Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury published in 1953. It's a powerful concept about a futuristic world which she can't stop thinking about since reading the book 6 weeks ago.

The Toast by **Gary** was to Toastmasters, more specifically to 'The Heart of a Toastmaster' an inspirational collection of true short stories, successes and tributes by, for and about members of Toastmasters International. There's also a chapter by our Immediate Past Dist. 70 Governor Jan Vecchio. A must read.

Kirisha started the Table Topics with

an observation 'It's interesting how you all look terrified!'. Looking around, clearly she was right, everyone was petrified. So she started off gently with an easy first topic for **John** 'What are you grateful for?'. He played it safe by replying 'everything' from his family to his friends to his work. **Natasha** was asked about 'her blessings when things don't go according to plan'. **Richard** was challenged to talk about 'a time when he was less than gracious'. And **Ron**, with his wedding only days away, was asked 'Is your family a blessing or a curse?' As expected Ron delivered an action packed one minute humorous speech which clearly relaxed and warmed the audience. Seeing this, Kirisha toughened the topics! **Monique's** answer topped Ron's with 'Is Australia's TV show Bachelor, a Blessing or Curse?'. **Christine** tackled 'Global Warming, a Blessing or Curse?'. Elizabeth had no difficulty with 'Public Speaking is Blessing or Curse', **Desiree** got 'Biggest Blessing in Life', **Robyn** with 'Whose more blessed, Beauty or Brains?'. Finally **Tom C** having just been pronounced the new Pope was asked 'Who do you bless first?'. Tom played it safe by blessing his mum, after all 'she is great'.



Second half of meeting began with an **Induction for our new member Andrew Iverson** (pictured above with President Alicia and Mentor Malkit). Welcome Andrew; we wish you an enjoyable and rewarding TM journey.

The formal speaking segment was kicked off by **Sam** with a management speech 'The Cycle of Service & Business Risk' where he used TM as a case study. He was followed by an Eulogy by **Rob** for his mother-in-law who passed away recently. Afterwards, Rob thanked TM and members for the skills he learnt at the club which enabled him to write and deliver an appropriate Eulogy.



Our newly engaged couple **Wendy & Ian** delivered a double act performance. Wendy started by recapping her colorful TM journey which resulted in a new job and a new love.



Ian was just as excited & colourful in telling us a story about their recent holiday in France. In 'Practice Makes Perfect', he described how driving a rental car in Paris is no laughing matter, especially when manipulating a clutch and being on the wrong side of the road (to us that is). However with Wendy's reassuring guidance as his passenger, he survived the maneuvers and returned the car in one piece. The moral of his story was 'if you intend to drive in France then take Wendy with you!'

Opportunities

By Michael Said

Just about all of us join Toastmasters to gain confidence in public speaking. We soon realise that there are other gems on offer. We learn how to give feedback in a positive manner. We collect a great set of friends. Some of us even find another treasure, a life partner. And for many, they stay in their club, enjoy the camaraderie, partake in club activities, help out at special meetings, and so on. They even take on things that they never would have before and run/be involved in Speechcraft, if that club runs that program.

But they see themselves as not leaders, but put their toe in the water and join the Executive. Moreover, they stay just within their club. And to quote Seinfeld, there is nothing wrong with that, it fosters a great club environment. In my Toastmaster travels, I have visited over 60 clubs, and have seen many great ones. It is clear to me, the clubs that don't venture beyond the frontier of the walls of their own club. They become insular, never taking on new ideas, never

evolving, and finding change difficult to accept.

These are the clubs where there is a core of strong members that keep that club on track maintaining their same standard. And when one or several of these members leave the club for whatever reason, things invariably turn sour. The club is under pressure and can go under. There was a club, older than Parramatta, Karingal, that three years back, went this way. The one person holding things together went overseas, and the club eventually folded.

This weekend, the Semi Annual Conference is taking place at Ettalong. 11 Parramatta members will be there, a low number for Parramatta standards, but a large number compared to other clubs. Those who have never been to a conference will not miss anything. What I really mean is that those who have never been to a Conference, they will not know what they have missed, and it will appear as missing nothing.

When I joined Toastmasters, I heard talk of these Conference things, but thought that they were not for me and that I was not included. When I finally went to my first, I regretted not going immediately. The Annual Conference is in May 2014. Our club should do what it can to have a

high representation of our newest members there. This is not an exclusive club. And who knows, we may need your support for our International Speech or Evaluation champion. Other external events members should consider are:

- Attending Area and Division Contests.
- Other clubs in Area 13, and beyond.
- Be a test speaker for other clubs/ Areas, Divisions when they are running their Evaluation Contests.
- Attend District sponsored training.
- Attend District Conferences.
- Be involved in District Sunday Seminars
- Volunteer to help at District events
- Be an Area and then Division Governor
- Attend the International Convention, which is in Malaysia next year. 15 club members have attended conventions in the past.
- Be a club Coach
- Join a second club.

There are 25 other clubs represented by Parramatta members already. This list is almost limitless as to what a club Toastmaster can do to venture out. The benefits to you are you get a new level of growth and a broader set of friends. And your Club benefits by the influx of ideas and the reinvigoration of the organisation by having people broaden their wings. *(Thank You Michael - Ed)*

For Your Diary

Every Tuesday 6:30 - 9:30

Speech Craft Course

All members are encouraged to help out. Please contact Coordinator Monique & Liaison Officer Tom W.



Thursday 5 Dec

Club International Speech Contest Meeting

Sunday 15 Dec

Club Social at Tom & Elaine's Home in Rydalmere

12 noon onwards



Thursday 19 Dec

Club Christmas Party Meeting

Club Executive Officers for 2013/2014

President: Alicia Denis

VPE: Ian Lipski

VPM: Monique Tonna

VPPR: Malkit Banwait

Treasurer: Tom Cummins

Secretary: Mrinal Sarkar

Sergeant-At-Arms: Richard Aitkins

Immediate Past President: Linda Snalam

Webmaster: Gary Wilson

Speechcraft Liaison Officer: Tom Woods

Executive Support Officers: Melanie Wilson, Natasha Chan,

Join us for our Next Club Meeting 'International Speech Contest' on 05 Dec 2013



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PARRAMATTA TOASTMASTERS CLUB

WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE