



PARRA NATTA

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

Meeting no 1250

5 Dec 2013

THEME

Understated Sophistication

AWARDS

Best Speech

David Griffiths

Best Table Topic

Robyn Peck

WELCOME VISITORS

Monica Wu

Kumi Matsunobu

Victoria Kilby

Gary Cullinane

Ralf Genuttis

Delani Madonsela

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

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'International Speech Contest'



Winner David with Christine & Ian

If you wanted to hear a top motivational speech, you could spend \$ thousands to attend one of many motivational seminars in Sydney OR you could come along to Parramatta TM Club's International Speech Contest night. At our last meeting, members and visitors were inspired by five outstanding International Speeches by Alicia, Monique, David, Michael and Tom as they battled it out for a position at the Area contest next March.

Historically, International Speech Contest winners inspire, motivate, educate and/or entertain the audience with anecdotal stories having a moral or a call to action. All five speakers presented speeches with this winning formula and lived up to the standard of Parramatta TM Club. However, there could only be one winner.

With our Area Governor Christine Pizzuti as the Chief Judge and Western Division Governor Ian Chick as Contest Chairman, Alicia kicked off the contest. After almost an hour of entertainment, **David** was declared the winner with his speech '**Just a Few Steps**', about the leaning Tower of Pisa which stands at 56m high.

On his holiday with a tour group last year, he discovered that tourists are more interested in taking photos leaning on the tilting tower than actually climbing the last few steps to marvel at the breathtaking views from the top.

When he asked his fellow travelers why they had not gone to the top, the answers ranged from 'at 15 Euros it's a bit steep mate' to 'it's quite high up there 'ol boy, with the steep stairs'. David could not understand how people spends \$\$thousand to travel to Italy but not wanting to pay the last 15 Euros.

Even worse, he observed how they travelled 1,000s of miles across the globe but not take the final few steps of the journey. He inspired us not to be like them, letting opportunities pass by.

He asked 'How many of us come across a leaning tower of Pisa in our daily lives? Do we climb the final few steps? He concluded his winning speech with a call to action '**Don't look back, you're not going that way!**'

Well Done David and Good Luck in the next round! Also congratulations to the other four contestants.



Runner Up Tom Cummins

Tom Cummins was 2nd with his speech **'The Wise Words of a Has Been!'** He opened by challenging the audience with an interesting proposition 'Are high achievers drawn to competition or are does competition create high achievers?'

By reciting stories of his children, he inspired us to 'embrace competition' because that is what allows us to achieve our goals. That is the only way we can have the chance to be the best we can be. Like his young son on a 6 week losing streak, he is happy to just score a goal.

Tom himself is a skilled loser! That is how he got to represent his country at Kayaking at the age of just 16. His call to action was **'have a go'**. Competition and competition alone, is what drove his son to learn a life saving skill; swimming. Well Done Tom, an outstanding first attempt at International Speech contest.

Monique was 3rd with **'Faith in Failure'**. She quizzed members if they failed at anything in life. The answer of course is yes; most of us have failed at something. She then shared her own life's experiences at failing, despite being highly confident.

The first time she failed at something, she was just 3. Later on at 15 she failed an important dancing exam. At the time, she thought it was

everyone else's fault but hers; from her parents to the teachers.

Only when she asked herself the question 'why she kept going back to dancing when it had caused her so many tears', that things finally turned around.

She left us with a moving message 'Next time you find yourselves staring at letter 'F' in red ink, have confident and faith in the opportunity and process that failure will bring you. **But more importantly, always have faith in yourself'**.



Alicia delivered a moving speech titled **'We Are Good People'**. Despite so much bad news in the media, such as natural disasters, rising crime rate or personal adversaries, she inspired us on the positives in life, using many colorful examples.



We learnt that as a society, Australians lead the world in donations to charity, averaging \$300 per person. It's a staggering \$120Billion industry. With so much giving going on, she reassured us that **'the world is in safe hands'**. Just like the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan telling the nation in 1957 **'you've never had it so good!'**.



Final speaker was **Michael** with **'Simple Act of Kindness'**. He started on Alicia's charity theme of Australians being a nation of givers. But his act of giving was quite different; giving when the need is not obvious. Giving when no one asks you to donate. He used beautiful life experiences to hone in on his message. He told us stories which left long lasting memories on him (and us).

Like stopping to help an old lady, whose car broke down in the rush hour traffic. It would not start. Mechanic Michael discovered that it was in D so a simple act of putting it in P and turning the key took the old lady out of distress. No doubt she will be thinking of Michael forever. And a touching story of Josh who won a Humanitarian Award for encouraging & helping Tim, a child with down syndrome complete and win a 1500m race. Once again it cost nothing but gave something that was long lasting.

Michael motivated us to just look around us. There are many times we can chose to ignore or do something'. He left us with Louis Armstrong's famous words. Simple acts of kindness tell the giver and the receiver **'what a wonderful world we live in'**.

And on a Lighter Note:



'The Toastmaster's Promise'

By **Alicia Denis**



Parramatta Toastmasters Club is such a diverse and fun club that on a night when we are hosting the Speech Contest, it was not a complete surprise to me that the question sparked in my mind, why do people join and continue to attend our club? I guess in reality most of us when we first visited, liked what we saw and continued to come back we probably had just one or two driving reasons.

But coming to meetings regularly for me has meant that I soon found out that I was getting far more out of Toastmasters than I had ever hoped for. To me, the key to my success in Toastmasters and the clue as to why the program works, lies in the Toastmaster's Promise that we pledge the day we are officially inducted into the club.

When I joined Parramatta Toastmasters in February 2008, Kirsten Linklater was our club President, Wikrom Tang our VPE and Kris Venugopalan our VPM and I remember it like it was yesterday. Do you remember the people that were there for you when you gave your pledge?

More importantly, do you remember

what you said? Here is a refresher... As a member of Toastmasters International and my club, I promise:

- To attend club meetings regularly
- To prepare all of my speech and leadership projects to the best of my ability, basing them on projects in the Competent Communication, Advanced Communication or Competent Leadership manuals.
- To prepare for and fulfill meeting assignments.
- To provide fellow members with helpful, constructive evaluations.



- To help the club maintain the positive, friendly environment necessary for all members to learn and grow.
- To serve my club as an officer when called upon to do so.
- To treat my fellow club members and our guests with respect and courtesy.
- To bring guests to club meetings so they can see the benefits Toastmasters membership offers.

- To adhere to the guidelines and rules for all Toastmasters educational and recognition programs.
- To maintain honest and highly ethical standards during the conduct of all Toastmasters activities.

You can see how we are a club of excellence and how we keep the promise alive and well in all the big and the little actions taken as part of our day to day operation.

Respecting and honoring our Toastmaster's Promise means that our members grow, our guests are impressed and we are admired by fellow Toastmasters from other clubs, Areas, Divisions, Districts and in the world stage for our commitment to quality and for producing results.

Aside from the Toastmaster program and being an active member of a Toastmaster's Club being good for your career, good for your confidence, good for your ability to think on your feet, to speak more effectively, to develop your leadership skills and become a better listener, Parramatta Toastmasters is FUN.

Ask any of our Toastmasters what keeps them coming back and they'll tell you it's the fun; good old fashioned fun from real live human interaction; fun that surpasses the kind of experience you can have in front of a TV, or computer or at a pub.

If you are reading this but have not yet visited us, I suggest you put a note on your calendar right now. Just come along and check us out. Toastmasters is a brilliant way to spend a Thursday evening once a fortnight, we promise! Checking us out will cost you nothing but time, so come!

Alicia Denis

President

Our Next 'Christmas Theme' Club Meeting is on 19 Dec 2013

