

Northwest Words

The Official Publication of Northwestern Toastmasters Club 2946/37
Meeting each first, third, and fifth Tuesday, 6:30 PM - Mayberry's, 50 Miller Street, Winston-Salem, NC
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On the web at www.nwtm.org

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For more information --
call Marcia Barney at
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See YOU
at our next Meeting



The Mission of a Toastmasters Club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which each member has the opportunity to develop and practice communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.

Area 21 Contest

Northwestern Toastmasters did it once again! We had an outstanding Area 21 contests - and not just because Don Barnett won the Humorous Speech Contest and Brian Davidson won the Area Evaluation Contest! In fact, if anyone could complain about the hosting it was simply the possible bad manners they showed by taking home both big trophies! Congratulations to each!

It was a very good contest with 4 outstanding humorous speeches and 3 challenging evaluations. However, for this author's money the brightest star was the contribution by the host team of Northwestern Toastmasters assisted by our friends from VIPS Toastmasters. Craig Thrift did a beautiful job printing the programs and a superbly timed job as Sgt-at-Arms. John Clark did an equally outstanding job at the Registration Desk before he took up his post as Assistant Timer. Jeff Walker did a great job as Chief Timer. Joel and Barbara Schanker, assisted by VIPS, did a wonderful job of setting up the room and making the coffee. Barbara even pitched in with putting out the food and other beverages. Barbie Morgan and Barbara were counters. Butch Barney was our judge and Joel Schanker judged for VIPS. Pam Christopher served as Chief Judge and did a commendable job of keeping everyone straight. As to the Contest Host Chair she just sat back and pompously told everyone she was a Northwestern Toastmaster!

Thanks to all who did a great job hosting the contests and to all Northwestern Toastmasters for making our club one of which we can be very proud!

Marcia Barney, DTM
Contest Host Chair

My grandpa started walking five miles a day when he was 60. Now he's 97 years old and we have no idea where he is.

Craig Thrift Appointed as Assistant Area 21 Governor

At the Area 21 Humorous Speech and Evaluation Contests in September Area 21 Governor Kim Netter announced that Craig Thrift is now her Assistant Area 21 Governor. There are 6 clubs in our Area. Craig's new position will be to assist with the bi-annual visits to each club and with the Area contests. As a club President Craig was already a member of the Area Council.

Craig's can-do attitude, enthusiasm for Toastmasters, and obvious leadership abilities led to his appointment. With a dynamic duo of Area Governor and Assistant Area Governor, Area 21 should exceed last year's accomplishment of Distinguished Area! Congratulations, Craig!

Wedding Bells



We all joined Toastmasters to improve our skills - in communication, leadership, or just to get over the fear of speaking. Once in awhile, we get more than we planned. That happened last weekend (September 27) when two members of Northwestern were married. Congratulations to Evander and Susan Woo!

If you would like to see pictures, Both Susan and Evander will be more than happy to show and tell you all about the wedding. (Somehow, I think that there are a few speech topics in there.)

The Secretary's Report for September 30, 2008

by Evander Woo, Secretary



Since this was an extra meeting for the month, being the fifth Tuesday of the month, the meeting was an educational session about "Effective Evaluations".

Presiding officer Don Barnett filled in for President Craig Thrift this evening to run the meeting. The meeting started a few minutes late at 6:33PM. Tonight's session was a continuation of the improved communications seminar.

Don had won the area humorous speech contest on September 27th. Immediate Past President Brian Davidson won the area evaluation contest on the same day. Both would be representing Northwestern Toastmasters in the district fall conference in Raleigh on November 7th and 8th. After a five minute recess, the meeting resumed at 6:45PM.

Our toastmaster for the evening was Marcia Barney. With her distinguished manner, she presented the ground rules for effective evaluation and its importance for both the speaker and the evaluator. "Learn to evaluate to become a better leader." The purpose of the evaluation was to help each speaker become a better speaker. To encourage participation, she asked person why they had joined Toastmasters. The reasons included overcoming nervousness in front of an audience, to become an organized and effective speaker, put money in your pocket, and to become a better listener.

Since this was an educational session and part of the improved communications seminar, no table topics were presented.

The three speakers tonight were Pam Christopher, Brian Davidson, and Butch Barney. Pam presented "The Roles of an Evaluator". Brian presented "How to Evaluate". Butch presented "The Speaker's Responsibilities" from the Advanced Specialty manual, speech number 2.

Jeff Walker evaluated Pam's speech. Don Barnett evaluated Brian's speech. John Clark evaluated Butch's speech. Their evaluations became part of a group discussion to evaluate the evaluators to determine what was right and what needed to be improved.

The best speaker tonight was Pam Christopher. The best evaluator tonight was John Clark. The timer was Evander Woo and the vote counter was Jordan Smith.

John Clark ended the meeting as Joke Master.

~~~~~ **Improved Communications Seminar Continues**

Our Improved Communications Seminar is held each Tuesday. This is valuable training for all members as well as those we know who simply need to improve their abilities. Don't forget, the October 14 seminar will be at Butch's office - 3501 Lakefield Court in Clemmons. Call Marcia at 712-8183 or Butch at 766-9707 for details.

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We all get heavier when we get older. That's because there's lots more information in our heads.

Every time I start thinking too much about how I look, I just find a Happy Hour somewhere and by the time I leave, I look just fine.

## The Tyranny of Perfection

By Joel Schanker



A man is at the first tee when he notices that his partner is about to use an orange golf ball. Commenting on its color his partners tells him that this is the perfect golf ball. It can't be lost. The color makes it easy to spot, it glows in the dark, it floats on water and if

it can't be seen clap twice and it will beep until you find it. Fantastic the man says where can I buy some. His partner replies. I have no idea, I found this one.

Perfection isn't what it used to be but then again perfection never was. Lets consider the Tyranny of Perfection. When I came to Northwestern I found an environment where perfection was not required but effort was rewarded. From the beginning something positive was always brought to my attention only then followed by suggestions for improvement that were offered not dictated. As a result I find it difficult to keep my mouth shut but some great talks have grown out of the pieces of less than perfect presentations.

Consider your presentation. You know your objectives and you have only two or three stories to tell. How difficult is it to remember three basic idea or personal stories? But how many of us feel comfortable memorizing 1000 specific words. It is this drive for the perfect recitation that raises stress forcing us to cling desperately to our notes unwilling to raise our head for fear of losing the perfect word.

When that one word is lost the mental search on stage drowns out the simple sequence of stories or alternate words you could use.

Perfection is a judgment word that seeks to characterize the whole instead of valuing the parts. Can anything be perfect if just one part of it isn't? As result we are forced into "all or none mindsets"

If perfection is considered the absence of flaws, it becomes a negative force. Focusing us on eliminating flaws instead of celebrating benefits. Good, very good, even great accomplishments are not perfect. Yet how much we gain when they occur.

I was raised to not accept anything less than perfection in what I did. I applied that to my communication looking for the perfect story told with the perfect words the perfect way. I never got close to that elusive goal but I did raise my stress to the point that I hated to speak. There was always something wrong about that story or this phrase. Too many times, good ideas and eloquent words were not presented because they were not perfect.

THEN YOU FREEZE.

All your ideas and skills held hostage to the need for perfection. I heard Darren LeCroix talk about how he won the world championship of public speaking in 2001. He wasn't perfect but he knew what he had to say and its value overshadowed individual flaws. Look to value not perfection for a better presentation, a better experience and a better life.

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I used to have a handle on life, but it broke.

