



A PUBLICATION OF  
DISTRICT ONE  
TOASTMASTERS

SPECIAL  
FOCUS:

Let the  
Contest  
Begin!

District ONE Leaders:

*District Governor*  
Rodger Cota, DTM

*Lieutenant Governor of  
Education and Training*  
Michael Jue, DTM

*Lieutenant Governor of  
Marketing*  
Sandy Dunning, DTM

# Toast of the Coast

SEPTEMBER, 2007  
FALL EDITION

## Toastmasters: Opportunities For Growth

District ONE Governor



Rodger Cota, DTM

One of the best learning experiences I have had as a Toastmaster has been competing in speech contests. The contests provided me the opportunity to learn how to write, develop, and present a speech at an advanced level.

I have competed in the Humorous Speech & Tall Tales Speech contests.

It was fun developing an idea, practicing, adjusting with each presentation, and then presenting a finished speech I felt proud of. I learned how the audience reacts differently at different times. I learned how to adjust to each presentation setting; room size, microphone use, and seating arrangements.

For me, it wasn't about winning or losing. It was about being able to say I had really worked on a speech and delivered it to the best of my ability. I wanted to be able to sit down after my presentation feeling

that I had "Aced It". Knowing I presented my best was the most important thing I learned from speech competition.

As it turned out, I proudly placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Tall Tales competition at the Division level and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Humorous Speech contest at the District level.

I encourage you to get involved as a contestant this Fall with our Humorous Speech Contest and or the Evaluation Contest. You will discover hidden talents, develop new skills, and feel the pride of doing your best. It is another opportunity that Toastmasters has to offer.

Heidi Swan, CC

District One Spring 2007 International Speech Contest Winner



To my great surprise and delight, I won the District One International Speech Contest! Hurray! Time to celebrate! Wait—there wasn't *time* for celebration! I had

to have a brand new speech in less than three weeks—and I didn't HAVE another speech! Three weeks was simply not enough time—I needed help and I needed it fast!

I managed to quickly choose a topic: my unlucky love life prior to meeting my husband. My story is tragic and funny all at the same time; its inspirational message is that we should never give up on

love. Now...HOW TO SAY IT??!!

I spent 4 days writing my first draft, I called it, "My Empty Hope Chest". I've written enough to know that writing is rewriting, so I brought my hot-off-the-printer pages with me to my club and simply read what I had thus far. Suffice it to say, they were less than thrilled. Due to the immediacy of the contest, many people stayed

Continued on page 4



“Speak  
from  
Your  
Heart;

The World  
Will  
Listen.”

Randy is planning  
a workshop  
in the L.A. Area

“Killer Keynotes”

Details to follow  
on the District  
web site.

## Three Questions Randy J. Harvey, Ph.D., JD

I often am asked how I go about coming up with ideas and developing a speech. As a professional speech coach, I start with three questions. I believe that the key to your becoming a great speaker and a truly successful person, comes from your answer to three questions. I hope after you finish reading this article you will take the time to answer them for yourself.

### Who are you?

It is significant that every great leader in history knew who they were. For the rest of us, who we are, has evolved through a lifetime of experiences. Who are you, is really a question about purpose. Ask most anyone who they are and they will tell you about what they do, but who are we really? Do you know people who are aimless, without focus and purpose? Are you one of them?

Heroes are people who lay their lives down for a purpose that surpasses them. Whether it is knocking a child out of the way of an on coming car only to be killed yourself, or falling on a grenade in combat to save the lives of comrades—heroes lay down their lives. While every human being has a life, not every human being lives. Knowing who you are is a matter of knowing what you are investing your life in. Have you thought about it?

### What are you about?

The second question is “What are you about?” Martin Luther King Jr. described it clearly when he said, “If a man hasn’t found something that he will die for, he isn’t fit to live.” Are there principles in your life that

you would die for? This is a pretty difficult question to answer. People struggle with it when I put it to them. Intellectually they say yes, but it tends to be a hollow answer without substance. To get a handle on it think about it differently. A few years ago we had a flood. A hundred year flood where a normally peaceful river raged beyond its banks destroying everything it could touch. If you were offered one-million dollars, would you plunge into that raging river and swim to the other side? Ok. So there is usually someone in every crowd, but the sane people reading this wouldn’t give it a moments thought. Now, picture your child clinging to a log exhausted and losing strength. Would you plunge into the river? You would without a hesitation. Your strongly held belief in the worth of your child over your own personal safety holds sway. These life principles are the genesis of your daily actions even though you don’t think about them.

Success comes from having principles to guide you. Your own clarity on these issues will help clarify the message you deliver to others. Take some time and write down your guiding principles. Try to be succinct. Start with a paragraph and edit it down to a bumper sticker. You will begin to get a grasp on why you behave the way you do. Actions result from principles (whether it is a good or bad principle doesn’t matter).

### Where did you learn that?

The third question is the essential question for every

speaker, “Where did you learn that?” Have you ever thought about where you learned the things you believe? For example, when you misbehaved perhaps your Mama told you, “You are just like your Dad!” Of course your Dad denied it and you had no clue what she was talking about, but the message was received none-the-less. Much of what you think in and about life is shaped by other people and experiences. In fact, I challenge you to try to think of one principle you hold as truth for your life that can’t be traced back to a person or event.

Answering the question: “Where did you learn that?” makes your message personal and allows you to deliver it sincerely and honestly. Every speaker has a message to deliver. You can’t deliver another’s message because it won’t have any impact. Your audience will know it is counterfeit. Tell your stories from the heart and the world will listen because they have meaning to you. The stories will resonate with an audience. In re-living the event your gestures become more natural. You communicate to the audience the original emotions in unspoken body language.

***When you speak from your heart the world listens, when you lead from your heart the world will follow and when you live from your heart you will know happiness.***

(Used with permission; paraphrased.) For the full version go to <http://randyjharvey.com/>

## The Four H's

**W**e've all heard of our five senses. Well as speakers, did you know we have something similar? Each and every one of our speeches needs to have what we call the Four H's. They are Head, Humor, Heart, and Heavy Duty.

**Head.** In giving your speech you want your audience to contemplate the things you say before (an intriguing title), during (rhetorical questions), and after (rumination) the speech..

**Humor.** A wonderful element of a great speech is to have some funny moments. It could be an anecdote, a simple joke to illustrate a point, perhaps a characterization. You will lose credibility if there is too much humor. Use it to make your points.

**Heart.** The audience wants to feel good. They want to be inspired. Nothing can do that better than touching on emotional

feelings. Stories of family, recovery, and personal challenges can be very powerful. However, they must be genuine and have relevance to your point. An audience will quickly know if they are being manipulated.

**Heavy Duty.** Impact! That's what you want. Don't be afraid to be deep in your thoughts. The combination of the various elements will give real resonance to your words, thus creating strong feelings in your audience. With emotional, thoughtful, perhaps even edgy substance, your speech will stay with your audience. However, be sure to end on a higher note, so that the audience is uplifted and not depressed.

If you use these Four H's as part of the structure in your speech, you will find your message to be more expressive, have more impact, and be more consistently appreciated.



Joshua Schulman is the 2006 District One International Speech Contest Winner, and came in Third Place in the Regional Contest in Hawaii. He is Past President of Dreambuilders Toastmaster Club in Torrance, CA, and is the Corporate Sales Director for Berlitz Languages, Inc.



## Lem Bradley, CTM Tall Tales 1st Place Winner Spring 2007

**W**hen writing my tall tale speech, I became very involved with the structure of it and wanted it to be good. I wanted humor and I wanted a theme that was clever.

Even though a tall tale is a made up story, there should be some truth to it, some elements of reality. It should have excitement in it and a plot that builds to a climax.

My tall tale story came from a Table Topic speech I gave and so it was too short. While working on it, I added to the original story, and in doing so I came up with many other ideas that added to the plot and made a stronger

structure. By the time I finished it had become a completely different story. The name of the speech was, Get Back Jack.

After hours of writing and rewriting the speech, I looked at the story and wondered what I could do to set it apart from other speeches. I thought, "why not put the whole speech in poetic form"?

I again spent hours of writing and then untold hours of rehearsing the speech. Once the writing and rehearsing is finished, the fun really begins. Now you must test your speech in front of an audience. Ideally that audience is your club whose members can give you friendly advice and constructive criticism. This is a very delicate process because it's normal for a person to be sensitive about their work, particularly creative work. One should not take suggestions or harsh criticism personally, but rather be willing to make the necessary changes to im-

prove the speech. Remember, a winning speech is worked and re-worked.

For me it was a labor of love. When I won the finals at the District One Spring Conference I knew that every minute I had spent on the speech was well worth it. That was one of the most exciting times in my life, especially when I took the trophy home to my club, San Pedro Professionals 111, to celebrate my victory with my fellow members.

When your speech is ready and you feel confident to enter in District competition, GO FOR IT! It's fun and exciting, win or lose. There is of course some anxiety and self-doubt because only one speaker will win and move on to the next level of competition. But, remember this; ***"The more you lose the more you learn and the more you learn the more you win."***

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Our journey as a Toastmaster is a personal one and yet we won't succeed without one another's support. Club Members are often unaware of the benefits they receive from the work of those involved beyond their clubs, our District officers and their teams. To reach out and connect, we are trying something new this year. Each Division will have their own Public Relations Officer whose mission will be to connect with and support the club VP of Public Relations. As always when we work together, everyone has the opportunity for growth.

*Michele Wilkosz*

## Heidi Swan, continued from page 1

beyond our allotted time to have an open, frank discussion and a brainstorming session with me about my speech. After we were finished, people asked if I was confused by all of the ideas and comments. In fact, I wasn't. I was inspired.

I decided that I would take suggestions up until a week prior to the contest. After that, *no more input!* I wanted time to block the speech, to discover the nuances, and to let the speech become a part of me. Without starving or neglecting my family, the seven days were dedicated solely to writing my speech. Phone calls went unreturned, I wrote notes while working out, and I discovered a new way to do the dishes: shove them in the oven.

During that week, I was graciously invited to a few clubs to practice my speech. I would work on my

latest version up until the minute before I read it to the club; they would listen, and then give me their comments and ideas. I have a Toastmasters buddy at my gym who, thankfully, listened to the incarnations of this speech repeatedly in the Spinning Room. I have a specific approach to taking notes: I throw my ego out the window, while holding tight to my own instincts.

The day after I visited the last club, I sat down at my computer. I had integrated all of the terrific ideas that people had shared with me, but there was still something missing. I had an "Aha!" moment. I discovered that it wasn't just my story, it was a tale as old as time: it was a story of Unrequited Love. I rewrote in a flurry, broadening my speech by adding literary references.

I brought in "The Unrequited Hope Chest" to my club and read it for them. I really wanted their approval before I committed it to memory. They liked its new form and I knew

that they were being honest with me because they had been so candid a week before.

I spent the next week memorizing it and deciding when and where and how to move to enhance my story. I counseled only with Don Johnson (former International Contest Winner, fellow club member, and now my good friend) and his lovely wife, Karin. My life was nothing but my speech and my family--and my oven was so full of dirty dishes that it wouldn't shut anymore.

When I went to the Region II Conference in San Diego, after all the work, I really wanted to just enjoy myself during my performance...and I did. I would never have had the confidence that my speech was ready, or that I was ready, without the honest feedback that I received from my fellow Toastmasters; their ideas were like diamonds and jewels that adorned my hope chest and I will be forever grateful.

