

THE TARHEEL TALKER

NEWSLETTER OF THE DISTRICT 37 TOASTMASTERS

WWW.TOASTMASTERS-NC.ORG — NOVEMBER 2009



Whew! What an exciting Fall Conference.

We crowned new District Evaluation and Humorous Speech Contest Champions. We roasted Immediate Past District Governor, Charles Harvey. Our Keynote speaker Katherine Morrison was witty and inspiring.

The District celebrated achieving Select Distinguished District for the 2008-2009 Toastmasters year. Area and Division Governors who achieved Distinguished, Select Distinguished and President's Distinguished were honored at the Hall of Fame Luncheon on Saturday. Our luncheon speaker Larry Blunt was genuine and very funny.

The highest honors were awarded Saturday evening: Area Governor of the Year – Anette Power, Division Governor of the Year – Bryan Walsh, Toastmaster of the

Year – Patrick Curley and the Helen Yandle Award (Club President of the Year) – Glenda Teams.

Our conference co-chairs Jeannie Blethen and Susan Stewart did an awesome job. If you attended, aren't you glad you did.

If you didn't attend, see what you missed. Hope to see you at the next District Conference in May 2010.

Deb Lee, DTM
District 37 Governor

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Golf outing kicks off conference

By BARNEY BARNUM

On an ideal day in the Carolina mountains with a cloudless sky, mild breeze, and temperature in the 60s, the Grand Gentlemen of Golf teed off for the Second Annual Jay Nodine Invitational at the Black Mountain golf course.

With an explosive start by honoree and distinguished chairman of the event, Jay Nodine, MD (Master Duffer), the drive for the much anticipated sportsmanship prize was underway!

District-wide participation from six teams brought camaraderie and laughter to this special pre-Conference event.

Each player received an embroidered JNI ball bag, courtesy of Patty Schmid, VP Ed for Crossroads Toastmasters in Statesville, and a commemorative JNI golf ball, provided by Area 33 Gover-



Players in the Jay Nodine Invitational each received an embroidered JNI bag and golf ball.

nor Ken Levra.

Thanks to golf committee member, Michael Beach, Division A Governor, for arranging his home course in Black Mountain.

Other golf committee members included: Barney Barnum, DTM, PDG; Bryan Walsh, DTM, Lt. Gov, Marketing; Patrick Curley; and Ken Levra.

Players sought the customary Captain's Choice awards, and winning members were:

- Longest drive: Jim Thompson

- Longest putt: Bryan Walsh
- Closest to the pin: Bruce Rockett

The lowest-scoring team (8 under) consisted of: Jim Thompson, Jim Hinton, Patrick Curley, and Ken Miller.

Master Hospitality provider Marie Betts, DTM, and Guy Ross drove the courtesy cart patiently and served drinks to teams vying for the coveted Sportsmanship Award.

A panel decision of the post-tournament Table Topics determined Division E Governor Curley provided the best spokesperson soliloquy for his fellow team member, Jim Hinton, VP Ed of Lake Norman Toastmasters in Cornelius. Jim was awarded the trophy for his laudable display of sportsmanship during the tournament.

Barney, DTM, is founder of the Lake Norman Club, and a mentee of Jay Nodine's, living in Mooresville.

Fall district conference a great success

By SUSAN U. STEWART
& JEANNIE BLETHEN

The beautiful mountains of Asheville, near the end of their fall color-show, provided the perfect venue for a conference dedicated to "raising your skills to new heights," with perfect Indian Summer weather and a hospitable hotel staff who tended to our every need by preparing extra food and altering venues at the last minute to accommodate the overflow. Attendees totaled over 200-- nearly double expectations--and 77 of those were First Timers, the most ever!

Friday night began with a kickoff reception, followed by the evaluation contest, the Division Basket raffle,

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First Timer's experience: Community beats the fear

By PHYLLIS KOMBOL

I had no idea what I was getting into when I joined my local Toastmasters club almost a year ago and then decided to attend the conference in Asheville!

It's almost like a cult: special language, abbreviations, hierarchy, rituals of applause and introduction, procedure for announcing contestants, why contestants do not wear club identification while competing, why WE have a minute of silence...timing, lights with redundant systems, protest protocol, contestants' and judges' eligibility and qualifications, wine tasting and toasting etiquette you would have never guessed.

The First Timers Bill of Rights and the signature activity made those of us attending conference for the first time feel welcome and valued, and

effectively encouraged us to meet and mingle.

When the competitive urge to get signatures was overcome by the fascination of pausing to spend time talking with people from across the state, the goal was accomplished at an even deeper level. The varieties of people, viewpoints, and areas of expertise added richness to the experience.

I learned valuable things about avoiding fear, finding courage, ignoring naysayers, sustaining change, using speech preparation for blogs, articles, e-zines, e-books, webinars, or podcasts. I observed mastery of evaluation and speech craft.

We laughed a lot; I hear it's good for your health! I will soon receive a certificate saying I am qualified as a judge. Now that's a little intimidating in itself! Uh-oh, now I'm

TOASTMASTERS ON PARADE



[Photo by Ron Crews] Toastmasters at the Fall Conference display their club pride by processing into the conference room with their banners.

right back to fear!

It was pleasant to join with others who value people, communication, leadership, the challenge and fun of competition, and the nuances of language. This was an incredible experience, and I thank you all for embracing each of us into this organization.

Phyllis is a clinical nurse specialist and a member of Goldmine Toastmasters in Concord.

Announcements:

Edited by: Cat Williams, VP for PR of the Blue Ridge Toastmasters Club

The Talker needs writers!

If you would be interested in writing an article for the next issue, please contact Cat at the address below.

Deadline for the Jan. issue is Jan. 1. Send articles to williams.cat@gmail.com.

Holiday festivities great for perfecting your toast

By CHUCK BLETHEN

Whenever we think of the upcoming holidays we usually think of laughter with friends and family, wonderful smells wafting from the kitchen, and enjoying great food and drink.

Those of us who are Toastmasters will frequently be

asked to make a toast and/or make a brief speech about an event or a person.

Building a small speech around a toast is the perfect way to set the tone for any event.

You can always be seen as the "hero" of the moment if you take a few minutes and prepare a note to yourself

about where you are going (a wedding, Thanksgiving dinner, birthday party, etc.), the people you may expect to see or meet there (a son, daughter, uncle, family friend, etc.), and a funny or touching memory surrounding that person or group.

For example, you might remember Uncle Ed and the time he was working on his jeep and the engine backfired loudly as he was reaching under the hood. He was so startled that he bumped his head on the hood trying to retreat from the noise.

Tell the story. Then raise your glass and toast him – "Here's to Uncle Ed. May his future be filled with quiet



Photo by flicker user quinn.anya.

running engines... And soft hood liners if they're not!"

Be prepared and help everyone enjoy a great holiday season. Cheers!

Chuck, DTM, is the D37 Public Relations Officer and a member of the Blue Ridge Toastmasters.

The Mission of the District: to enhance the performance and extend the network of Clubs, thereby offering greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from the Toastmasters educational program by:

1. Focusing on the critical success factors as specified by the district Educational and Membership Goals.
2. Ensuring that each Club effectively fulfills its responsibilities to its members.
3. Providing effective training and leadership for Club and District officers.



D37 CLUB SPOTLIGHT

New corporate clubs bring strange names, great values

By BRYAN WALSH

Let the spotlight shine as we welcome our newest clubs...

AIDS Toastmasters (Club # 1318227) chartered on Oct. 26, and is a corporate club at Family Health International in RTP. AIDS is an acronym standing for Association for the Improvement of Destructive Speeches.

The background story is the Family Health International started in Chapel Hill in 1971 with a grant from the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

They continue to receive funding from USAID and other sources. They have grown to become managers of some of the largest inter-

national HIV/AIDS prevention programs in the world.

So even though some of us may find the name a little strange, the name fits in with who they are and what they do!

Smart Talk Toastmasters (Club # 1403830) chartered on Nov. 9, and is a corporate club at IBM RIP, NC. IBM has always believed they are more than just a business.

When you look at the history, you see they have had a real and lasting impact on the world because of their unique character. IBM's core values, behavior and performance will lead this club to great success.

Bryan Walsh is the District 37 Lt. Gov. for Marketing.

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and keynote speaker, Katherine Morrison, and ended on a "hot" note with the roasting of "AWESOME" Immediate Past District Governor Charles Harvey, who was led over the coals by Cindy Martin. Afterwards, the diehards crammed into the Hospitality Suite for some hot food, drinks, and camaraderie.

It was hard choosing among the nine Saturday morning educational sessions; many had standing room only. Then came lunch with news anchor Larry Blunt who was wonderfully blunt and funny. Following was the afternoon leadership event with non-Toastmaster area speakers, open to the public.

Saturday evening began on a "high" note with wine

connoisseur Chuck Blethen schooling a room full of neophytes on the finer points of wine etiquette and tasting, followed by the humorous speech contest, a fabulous banquet, and awards.

The Club Pride Basket trophy was won by The Ridgefield Club, then the baskets were auctioned off by professional-sounding auctioneer Bill Mintz...which turned into a battle royal! The Silent Auction closed the official show, and a few hangers-on visited the Hospitality Suite, which became so overly hospitable, the party ended up downstairs!

If you missed this conference, you missed a LOT!

Susan and Jeannie are the co-chairs of this fall's District 37 Conference.

Have you checked out the brand new

District 37 Website?

Visit <http://www.toastmasters-nc.org> to find pictures and news from recent conferences and district events, to contact district officers, and to learn more about D37!



District awards recognize the best of the best in D37

By CHARLES HARVEY

The "Best of the Best" describes these Toastmasters who have exceeded their goals and demonstrated exceptional performance and fulfillment of the Toastmasters promise during their year as Area Governor, Division Governor, Club President (Helen Yandle Award) and exceptional District 37 Toastmaster (Toastmaster of the Year).

As Immediate Past District Governor, I was truly honored to announce this year's 2008-2009 District Leader awards to these Top Toastmasters:

- Area Governor of the Year: Annette Powell
- Division Governor of the Year: DTM Bryan Walsh
- Helen Yandle Award Winner: Glenda Teams
- Toastmaster of the Year: Patrick Curley

To achieve this honor, these Toastmasters not only achieved President's Distinguished Status as Area Governor, Division Governor, Club President (Helen Yandle), and Toastmaster member, but achieved their individual educational and leader goals as Toastmasters, chartered clubs, visited clubs, sponsored and mentored new clubs and other

Toastmasters, served on district or conference committees, or chaired district committees.

They often faced obstacles that seemed insurmountable at times and were likened to the fictional character "Rocky" during the awards ceremony—a prize fighter who made his climb to world champion.

These Toastmasters who were honored at our Banquet Awards ceremony reached this status—each being a Rocky in their own right achieving against the odds, never saying no, or I can't, or it is impossible, but always climbing to the top.

We congratulate these District 37 Toastmasters and all Toastmasters who achieved Distinguished Club, Area, Division and DTM (Distinguished Toastmaster) status.

Additionally, "thank you" to those Toastmasters who served in District Leader roles (LGET, LGM, PRO, Treasurer, SAA) and as our District Chairs during my administration and all 3,300+ Toastmasters who helped our District reach a ranking of:

#8 District in the World!

I only have one word to say—Awesome!

Charles, DTM, works in human relations at BlueCross Blue Shield in Durham.



Contest winners hit at the funny bone

COMPILED BY BRENT OWENS

Humorous Speech Contest

David Tanner

Winston Salem, NC

Clubs: Friendly Toastmasters (home club), FUN Toastmasters, Blue Moon Advance Club, Advance Communicators of Charlotte

Joined Toastmasters: 1997 (Got serious in 2001)



District 37 humorous speech and evaluation contest winners David Tanner (left) and Angel Guerrero. Both competed during the Fall Conference. (Photos by Ron Crews.)

What does it take to make it to District competition?

Practice. And a lot more practice. I also speak to different clubs to get as much feedback as possible. Prior to this contest, I tested the speech at a club in New Orleans. I implemented some of the changes they suggested.

How do you create humor that appeals to the audience?

I look at things that I find funny and talk about them. The key though is to know your audience. It has to be something they relate to, and you have to have an interesting take on it. Some things are funny when read but do not translate well to the spoken word.



Evaluation Contest

Angel Guerrero III

Greensboro, NC

Club: Triad Toastmasters

Joined Toastmasters: 5 months ago

What does it take to make it to District competition?

First of all you have to have a conviction (no doubt) that

you are bound for that level and nothing less. Next you have to compete not just for yourself but for your TEAM. My team consisted of my fellow club members, family and new members in the audience so that they can see the benefits, thrill and excitement of hard work, dedication and a great supporting system can achieve for them.

What is the most important thing in an evaluation?

Evaluate like a member of the audience. This is the goal of the speaker—connecting with the audience. So as an audience member the evaluation will be more than from a Toastmaster's perspective.

Brent was Contest Co-Chair at this fall's District Conference.

Club Pride Contest stuffed with D37 fun, club spirit

BY AL BEAM

AWESOME !!!—is how Past District Governor Charles Harvey would describe the inaugural District 37 Club Pride Basket Competition at the Fall Conference in Asheville.

District 37 accomplished many goals with this competition: all eight Divisions were represented by at least one club pride basket. Fourteen of 35 Areas were represented. And 22 competed for the Club Pride Cup!

Creativity and originality, beautiful décor and wrappings, and truly inspiring content and value were reflected by the array of baskets in the competition.

As chair of the Club Pride

Basket Committee, I personally thank every club and member who worked on getting their basket in the competition.

At the end of the evening, auctioneer Bill Mintz generated some spirited bidding for a handful of baskets.

Special appreciation and recognition goes out to Gastonia Toastmasters' Bucket List theme basket ... several ladies in the audience just didn't want to let it go, but in the end Annette Powell took home the "Bucket List" basket—filled with adventurous and exciting activities, attractions, lodging, and sightseeing in and around Gastonia and valued at over \$1000—for a mere \$180.

All total, the pride basket



The winning Club Pride Basket from the Ridgefield Club in Asheville. (Photo by Ron Crews)

auctions raised almost \$900 to apply toward the cost of the conference.

All conference attendees had an opportunity to cast a ballot for their favorite basket to determine the winner—and the inaugural recipient of the District 37 Club Pride Cup trophy.

And the winner is ... from Div-A, Area-13 ... RIDGEFIELD Toastmasters, from

nearby Asheville. Ridgefield will keep the Club Pride Cup, along with full district bragging rights, until next Fall Conference, sharing it with their membership, families, friends, and using it as a marketing and membership building tool.

Al Beam is Area 64 governor and the coordinator of the Club Pride Basket Contest.