



# Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters Newsletter



Club 7123 – Area 34 – District 70

March 2011

## Speech Competitions

Recently we held the Evaluation and International Speech Contests for 2011 in our Club meetings. The Area 34 contest was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March hosted by Yes Optus Toastmasters. I am delighted to report that our club winner, **David Cruwys** won the 2011 Area 34 International Speech Contest. Congratulations David!



Laurel Holterman (Hawkesbury Division Governor, David Cruwys, Theresa Han (Area 34 Governor).

**Clare Gallagher** was our club representative in the Evaluation Contest and is shown receiving her certificate of appreciation.



Darin Bodilly reports on the Area contest:

The Area 34 Evaluation and International Speech contest was certainly one to remember for Chatswood Early Risers. While the venue was a challenge to reach for some members, the facilities at Optus in Ryde were excellent and perfect as our event venue. From the very professional looking programmes to the well

appointed and ample auditorium it is custom made for big events.

After a slightly disorganised start, the evening quickly gained momentum. The Evaluation Contest was first and we were treated to a very entertaining speech with the speaker talking about their experience serving in Iraq. The evaluations quickly followed with some strong competition. Representing our club, Clare was first speaker and presented an excellent evaluation. I felt she was unlucky not to get a place. After the short break the International Speech contest followed with all contestants speaking on personal experiences and told a compelling story.

As the last speaker, David did our club proud, winning the contest with his outstanding speech. As much as I enjoyed his speech at our club contest I have to say I enjoyed it even more the second time round. It was great to see lots of support for our club there too with Jan, Laura, Melanie, Young Eun and myself in attendance. Furthermore David's win topped off what was a very entertaining evening at the Area 34 contest!

## What is it like to be in a contest?

There is a first time for everything, including participating in a speech contest. Darin Bodilly writes about his first time in a club contest.



Club International Speech Contest 2011: Laura Masson, David Cruwys, Julie Macken, Charles Cave and Darin Bodilly

Contest meetings are always memorable and entertaining and our recent International Speech contest was no exception. I was a contestant for the first time this year and I am learning how this

is a rewarding learning experience. I want to encourage you to have a go in the next contest.

The first challenge is to **prepare your speech** which is not as easy as it first may sound. While I always hope to deliver an entertaining speech I found myself trying to think of content a little different or special for the contest. As the day arrives that extra effort in preparation creates an added excitement and nerves before your speech. It all starts with the drawing of the cards to determine the speaking order. Having drawn the first speaking spot I had was just enough time to sit for a minute before it was time to speak.

After all the preparation, the speech itself seemed to pass in a moment but perhaps that is just my lack of context experience? In any case I was happy to have finished and was very much looking forward to listening to the remaining speeches. Given the strength of our club I expected tough competition and I wasn't disappointed. I thought this year's contest was one of the strongest club competitions I had ever seen and David's outstanding win at the area contest certainly supports this. In any case I have to say as a contestant the day was even more rewarding for being involved.

While there is no doubt I still have a lot to learn the contest environment is another step in this process. Personally I think it is a great way to learn and I look forward to future competitions. Also as a fellow Toastmaster, regardless of your experience, I would certainly encourage you to take this step as early and often as you can!

Editor's Note: The next club contests will be the Humorous Speech Contest and Table Topic (Impromptu) Contest later this year. Any financial member of the club can participate.

### **New member – Dong Jun (“DJ”) Ha**

At last week's meeting our VP Membership presented inducted new member “DJ” Ha to the club. DJ will be presenting his icebreaker speech on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March.



### **Video evaluation**

Watching yourself on video is one of the best ways to evaluate your speeches. You not only get to hear your voice, but you can see all of your gestures, eye contact and hear the audiences reactions.

Estelle Renard was recently recorded on HD-video and wrote the following response.

#### **My Experience as a TV star**



When I presented my speech on **The Big Bang Theory** Charles recorded it on video. We wanted to establish if there would be real value in self assessment by watching one's own performance.

First my husband and I looked at it and we had a good laugh! I've never seen myself perform. Afterwards I seriously assessed the speech by comparing the words I spoke to the words I wrote. This was a surprise. I adhered to the structure but I hardly ever used the sentences I wrote. So why did I feel so visibly dependent on the notes on the lectern? I wrote 573 words, I used about 850. I have always been aware that I write in a different style to my speaking style which is probably true for most of us. When writing I search for the right word, when talking I grab the first convenient one for example I wrote “small concern” I said “tiny worry”, I wrote “remote celestial objects” I said “things” and at the end I quoted Patrick Moore who said “our brains are unequal to the challenge” but I said “our minds are unable to grasp it”.

I had fun doing this review. I noticed I rock somewhat from side to side, when I go to the lectern for the notes it was for moral support not for reading them and when I felt like uttering an “um” I used “well” as the filler.

Should we buy a video camera for Chatswood Early Risers? I think it would be excellent for those who will not be discouraged when they see themselves through the eye of the camera. Am I really that old?

## Video Evaluation of Lucy



Lucy recently presented her number eight speech on the cons of being a Law student with ample demonstration using heavy text books. I asked her about her self-evaluation watching a video recording of her speech.

“A wise Toastmaster had advised me to use a recorder to practising my speeches, and I agreed. However a video recording is even better, as I can hear my voice, and see the presentation. Davida (my sister) usually gives me honest feedback on my speeches and watching the video confirmed many of the things she said.

I noticed how I enlarged my eyes when I emphasised a point but I was pleasantly surprised at how comfortable I was using the books as props. My practice had paid off! I think I was more relaxed because I didn’t have to memorise a lot of facts and statistics.”

## Evaluation Contest

Our Club Evaluation Contest was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> February. It was pleasing to see several members who had not participated in a contest previously.



Estelle Renard (Contest Toastmaster), Jill Lamond, Clare Gallagher (1<sup>st</sup> place) , Laura Masson, Lucy Liang, Darin Bodilly, Melanie Cheong, David Nixon (2<sup>nd</sup> Place).

## Meeting Report Tuesday, March 15, 2031 by Paul Dower



After a light blue breakfast, I walked to my media room, plonked down into the VR couch and lowered the stim-helmet onto my head. A slight vibration tingled the back of my scalp while the meso-harmonic wave transceiver logged in.

“Toastmasters. Chatswood Early Risers” I said.

A translucent sign sprang up in front of me.

“Avatar?” the sign asked.

To the last three meetings, I had gone dressed as myself, or at least an idealised version of myself. Today the meeting theme was “Politics”. It was time to go as someone else.

“Bob Hawke, 20th Century Australian Prime Minister.” I said.

The computer asked me a series of questions and fined-tuned my new skin. I ended up looking like the casually dressed Hawke seen in television archives from 1983, just after Australia had won the America's Cup yacht race. During his interview Hawke had slurred: “Any boss who sacks a worker for not turning up today is a bum.” As well as being a popular Prime Minister, Hawke was famous for setting a world beer drinking record, and for speaking in an informal manner; umming, ahing and swearing a lot.

After I finished my avatar, I voiced the “Attend Meeting” command. My surroundings disappeared and I was outside an auditorium, facing the entry doors. In the early days, we used to materialise directly inside the meeting room, but this proved disconcerting. Attendees would sometimes blink into existence overlaid on top of each other, and if the room was already crowded, first timers would go unnoticed, spending the entire meeting perplexed.

I walked in. The interior was a 16th Century theatre with tiered balconies surrounding a Shakespearean stage; much cosier than last week's Colosseum. Most of the audience were already seated.

The Sergeant at Arms, Napoleon Bonaparte, called the meeting to order by striking a giant Chau gong that disappeared soon after sounding. During his opening address, his appearance morphed through a series of famous statesmen. In conclusion, he called upon the club president to speak.

The President's Address, a rousing call to action, was delivered by a face I didn't recognise. I waited until the applause break and turned to the person next to me.

"Who was that?" I asked.

Thutmose the Third turned his mummified face toward me.

"20th century U.S. politician. Al Gore." His voice was like dried leaves and sandpaper.

"No, no, Harry, it's not Gore." said Queen Cleopatra, seated next to Thutmose. "It's definitely Dan Quayle."

The pharaoh's eyebrows creaked. "I believe you are mistaken dear. I'm certain it's not Quayle."

I turned back to the stage. The President had handed control of the meeting to Margaret Thatcher who sat, bemused, at the chairman's bench. Thatcher reviewed the agenda, then called the Laugh Master to the stage.

Marie Antoinette wafted down from the ceiling, and I wondered whether she was collaborating with Napoleon, establishing a French connection. After a convoluted build-up, she ended her joke by laughing her head off, picking it up and throwing it into the audience. In a front row seat, Winston Churchill ducked and morphed into a large green mound of soap as Marie's head sailed past.

A two metre high Oxford Shorter English Dictionary flapped up to the lectern and delivered the Word of the Day, which was "Neo-Luddite."

The chairman called the Toastmaster, Nelson Mandela to the stage, to host the prepared speech section of the meeting. The first two speeches were full of the pyrotechnics and special effects that are a feature of modern e-speaking. The third was more traditional, relying on voice and gesture to achieve effect. The speech evaluator gave this speaker extra praise for appearing as herself, but hinted that to appear as someone else could be a point for improvement.

Next came the Table Topics impromptu speaking session. Some of the participants showed off their chameleon avatars by morphing, to suit the topic, into an appropriate character or form. The

audience gasped, probably suffering a mild case of cyber-vertigo, when one speaker, half way through his minute of speaking time, changed into a tenth scale model of the Russian Houses of Parliament.

Gandhi, the Table Topics Master stood to ask his final question for the session.

"You have one minute to sum up your position. Please come to the stage and tell us why we should vote for you..." he paused, "...Bob Hawke, in the third row."

As I moved down to the stage, I was thinking furiously, trying to formulate my answer. I opened my dry virtual mouth to speak.

"Ahhhhm. Ummmm. Errrr. Bloody heck. Ummm. Ahhh..." I stammered.

Too late, I realised that I had forgotten to disable the artificial speech assistant in my avatar. This meant that not only did I sound like Hawke, but much of what I was saying was precisely what the software thought Hawke would have wanted to say.

At the end of the meeting the General Evaluator, King Sejong the Great, was commenting on the efforts of the Table Topics participants. I flinched when he turned his crowned head my way.

"Too many ums and ahs." he pronounced, with a regal frown.

## Club Calendar

### Meeting Themes

1st March – Favourite Holiday Destinations

8<sup>th</sup> March – Languages

15<sup>th</sup> March – Cars

22<sup>nd</sup> March – Reality TV Shows

29<sup>th</sup> March – Earth Hour

Published by:

Chatswood Early Risers Toastmasters

PO Box 1405, Chatswood NSW 2057

Editor: Charles Cave, Phone: 041 488 7959

Email: [editor@earlyrisers.org.au](mailto:editor@earlyrisers.org.au)

[www.earlyrisers.org.au](http://www.earlyrisers.org.au)