



# PARRA NATTA

Newsletter of Parramatta Toastmasters Club 2274 Area 13, Dist.70

## Meeting no 1239

18 July 2013

### Theme

*Foot in Mouth!*

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### 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

To share any exciting news or to submit an article for Parra Natta, contact Vice President for Public Relations at:  
vppr@parramattatm.org.au

## And the Winner is ....



**MONIQUE TONNA** with Area Governor **Christine Pizzuti**

Yes Monique is our 2013 Table Topics Contest Champion. With Christine Pizzuti as Chief Judge and Wendy Nielsen as Contest Chairman, 12 contestants took to the stage grappling with this year's topic '*You'll never guess what happened on the way to work!*'

It was interesting to see the different ways this question was interpreted by the contestants. There were a range of excellent responses, ranging from hilariously funny to profound and moving. The judges had their work cut out to award one winner from what was a very close contest.

Monique received first place for her clever and witty Table Topic in which she spoke about her commute to work on public transport. She joked about the transition from driving to catching the train: '*I believe there should be three carriages on the train – the first for those who speak too loudly, the second for sick people (who make you want to shower when you get to work) and the third for 'normal people' like me!*'

## WELCOME VISITORS

Julie Tibbertsma  
(Rob T's wife)

Queenie Min Zhou

Sumit Chum

Helena Wang

Sandra Bond  
(current Speech-crafter)

Tam Dirckze  
(ex speech-crafter)

Martin Cominotto

## AWARDS

- ◆ **Best Speech**  
Peter Steinhour
- ◆ **Best Evaluation**  
Alicia Denis

## ICE BREAKER

Rob Tibbertsma

## MEMORABLE QUOTES

'Ah so you're Peter Steinhour, I've been told that you're the real thing.' **Peter S**

'I was using my shaving gel to brush my teeth. Funny taste that is.' **Richard A**

'At least my favourite speed camera won't get me today.'  
**Michael S**

'I did what all irrational, angry people do. I got on my phone... and missed my turn.'  
**Tom C**

'My favourite station is 101.7. A little less autotune, a little more instrument.'  
**Kirisha T**

'You don't have problems. There are people out there who have bigger problems and bigger issues'.  
**Sam E**

# Table Topics Contest ... (cont)

**Michael Said** was awarded **second place** for his response, in which he told a true story about helping a woman whose car had broken down on his way to work. He asked us to think about *'the kind of world we would live in if we each completed a random act of kindness for someone else!'*



**Third place** was awarded to **Ron Marriott** for his amusing interpretation of the question, in which he stated that *'nothing happens on his way to work as he drives down the most boring road on earth - Victoria Road!'*

It was an outstanding contest with many participants, ranging from the brand new to very experienced Toastmasters. Each contestant should be proud of their achievement in the contest and will no doubt be using the experience as a learning curve for their growth as speakers.

The first half of the meeting was just as exciting and action packed. We were in for a treat with three speakers, one delivering an ice breaker and two advanced manual speeches. With **Cheryl P** at the helm as TM, first up was **Rob T's** ice breaker **'Family Man'**. We learnt that his surname **Tibbertsma** comes from Holland and that at 25 he travelled to Holland and was

met at the airport by 25 relatives; wow beat that!. He says he's also *sadly a Parramatta Eels supporter*. Not to worry, Rob winning luck is surely around the corner.

Next up was **John N** telling a story titled **'Twister'**, a tale of high drama. Opening with 'Once upon a time....' it took me back to my kindergarten days! It was a classic tale of prince charming Tom taking on the evil magician Grax . In the end good prevailed over evil and everyone lived happily ever after. That's what I like, a story with a happy ending.

Final speaker for the evening was **Peter S** accepting a 5 Year Service Award at Savills Real Estate. He talked about his legacy and how he helped win K-Mart Group business, despite in most people's eyes *'Real Estate being in the top 5 most dodgy occupations'*. At a formal dinner function, Peter told us how a female director asked *'Ah so you're Peter S, I've been told that you're the real thing'*. To find out more, tune in to his next speech!

Once again, an entertaining evening



was had by all present. We now look forward to our next meeting, themed **"Money is..."**

# POINT OF VIEW

## Food for the Mind!



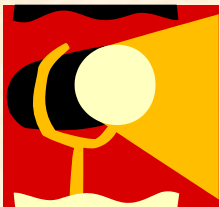
**Music** is said to be 'food for the mind' so what is your favorite music or song? In other words what music really gets you going? You may think what has this got to do with public speaking? Actually quite a lot. A little story explains how. A doctor was asked to speak at a large medical convention in Chicago, USA with an audience of 10,000. Obviously he was quite nervous. A few weeks before the convention he delivered his speech in front of a small audience of just 30 (typical TM club) and afterwards the organizers asked him for

his favorite song, which he told them but wondered why they wanted to know. At the convention a few weeks later, as he was waiting for his turn to be called to speak, to his surprise he heard the sound of his favorite music streaming out of the speakers in the waiting room. He said listening to that music '**gave me such a high and got me going**' that he gave one of his best presentations ever in front of that huge audience. Using music as a motivational technique is nothing new. It is used all the time by professional sportsmen before, during and after their big events. Snow skateboarder Olympians have their favorite music playing in their headphones whilst skiing down the slopes. They know their skating skills and slopes so

well that they can actually relax to the music and go the extra mile, literally!



So what is **your** favorite tune? The next time you are waiting for your turn at a speech contest try playing this music or song through your smart phone and you'll be pleasantly surprised at the results! (*Malkit Banwait VPPR*).



## MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### Melanie Wilson

**Resident of:** Glenwood

**Family Details:** I have really cool grandparents.

**Where You Were Born?** Sydney

**Current Or Past Occupation?** Student Services Officer at a school. Also studying advertising, PR, and journalism.

**Proudest Achievement at Work Or Home?** Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Marketing) and ACB.

**Favourite Food?** Italian pizza and pasta.

**Favourite Place?** QLD where family live.

**Why You Joined Toastmasters?** Professional communication skills, to be more outgoing & social.



**What You Have Gained From Your Membership?** Coming out of my shell. Having fun through informative speeches.

**Hobbies & Special Interests?** Piano, flute, blogging, cooking.

**Pets:** None now. Previously had 2 Caveir King Charles Spaniels.

**Goals for Next Year?** Do something unexpected.

**Favourite Movie?** Harriet the Spy with Michelle Trachtenberg.

**Favourite Song/Music?** Judith Durham and The Seekers.

**What book are you currently reading?** Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships by Temple Grandin and Sean Barron.

**Anything else Interesting about you?** I have a few slightly webbed toes.

**Finally, how would you spend your last \$5?** Coffee.

**ED:** Thank You Melanie

# Developing Original Humour for Your Talk



**Most humor** in the real-world setting is unplanned. It just happens.

Most humor in the business setting is unplanned. It just happens. Spontaneous events with clients and co-workers create the surprises and uncomfortable situations which call for humor as a coping tool.

We all have differing abilities to recognize, appreciate and create humor. How's your HQ (humor quotient)? Do you work with people who are full of wit?

Regardless of where you are now, you can increase your humor skills. When you study humor, it's obvious there's more to it than just sponta-



neous laughs. There are times when you may want to deliberately use humor, maybe even plan it in advance. Perhaps you want to spice up a training session or a planning meeting. Maybe you want to lighten up a sales presentation. You can learn ways to administer a dose of laughter to help you connect and communicate.

There are three elements which

can help you understand and structure your humor: surprise, tension and relationships.

First, humor is based on the element of **surprise**. Humor often comes from something as simple as someone saying the unexpected. The surprise twist creates the humor.

Because of the element of surprise, when we are deliberately structuring a piece of humor (perhaps for a speech) we don't want to telegraph the joke. A line like, "a funny thing happened to me on the way over here," signals your listeners that a joke is coming. This will lessen the element of surprise.

To enhance the surprise, it's best to place the punch line at the end of the joke. And within the punch line, the punch word is usually given last. The punch word is the word that makes the humor work. It's the trigger that releases the surprise. If your humor falls flat, do what professional humorists do. Pretend you are serious. Since the listeners didn't realize you were making a joke, you never need to apologize or explain it. Turn your surprise into a secret.

It's no surprise to people who work in pressure-packed work environments that humor is also based on this second principle: release of **tension**. Laughter is a pressure valve which releases muscle tension. Uncomfortable situations, fear and pain are all tension builders that cry out for humor. We find ourselves laughing at risqué humor and embarrassing situations because they make us uncomfortable. We release the tension they create with humor.

People who intentionally and frequently use humor know tension can be used deliberately to heighten the impact of the humor. A pause placed just before the punch line or the punch word builds a sense of anticipation, a form of tension, which makes the joke stronger.

In most jobs, daily challenges give you the opportunity to purposely use tension in setting up your humor. Simply by sharing a real life humorous situation, you can recreate the spontaneous circumstances



which generated the laughter in the first place. Although there's nothing like "being there," you can improve on the actual event by embellishing to create a little more tension in the set up. You can structure the punch line for maximum effect by putting the punch word last. And you can pause to add impact.

As we plan our humor, we also notice that the third principle of humor is **relationships**. Most humor is based on how things are related and not related. We can create humorous twists when we play with relationships.

Natural, spontaneous humor is one of your greatest tools for coping with stress as you work. By understanding what makes the humor tick, you can become better at planning and deliberately using this powerful adjunct to your success arsenal.

*For full article see [www.humorpower.com/](http://www.humorpower.com/) (Copyright 2006 by John Kinde).*

# UP UP Toastmasters! by Christine Pizzuti



**As Area 13 Governor** it is my responsibility to be involved in overseeing the smooth running of 6 clubs within the Parramatta area. One of the clubs that I look after is a specialized club and what I believe to be a most inspirational club called **UP UP Toastmasters**.

UP UP Toastmasters is a club specifically catering to people aged 18 years and over who either have Down Syndrome or are intellectually challenged. The group meets on the last Saturday of the month with an aim to learn to speak more confidently, to make new friends and have fun along the way.

A different take topic session is held each month and it generally reflects the time of the year that the meeting is held (i.e. Easter, Halloween, Christmas etc.). Additionally, similar to all

Toastmaster meetings there are inspirational, educational, toasts, book and film reviews and of course speeches and evaluations at each session.

For those of you that are not familiar with Down Syndrome, sufferers have an extra chromosome in the cells of their body. Subsequently people with Down Syndrome are slightly shorter than the rest of their family, have smaller hands, legs, feet and mouths than others and have eyes that slant slightly upwards. Additionally it may take longer for a Down Syndrome person to learn and it is best for them to be shown things rather than being told things and simple, clear language is best used. Down Syndrome is not an illness, it is not contagious and cannot be cured.



At this point in time it would be great if we could involve the experience of the greater Toastmaster community and have some able bodied Toastmasters come and help out on a regular and ongoing

basis. Any assistance would be appreciated and acting as side-line coach, helping others take minutes, providing educationals and/or simply filling out as and when needed would be most appreciated. Additionally, if you could act as an ongoing mentor for one of the members it would be most appreciated.

In my short time as a Toastmaster it has been my personal experience that you help yourself more by helping others and UP UP Toastmasters is truly one fantastic and inspirational group of members that currently need the help of able bodied Toastmasters.

The club meets at the Harris Park Community Centre, 11 Albion Street, Harris Park 2150 on the last Saturday of the month from 10:30am to 12:30pm. If you are interested in volunteering and in helping to get the best out of others (and possibly also have some of your CL assignments signed off in the process) please contact me at [toastmasterchristinepizzuti@gmail.com](mailto:toastmasterchristinepizzuti@gmail.com) or on 0424 123 315.

**Christine Pizzuti**  
**Area 13 Governor 2013-2014**

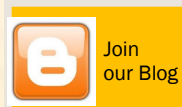
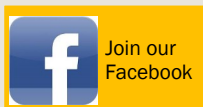
## Club Executive Officers for 2012/2013

**President:** Alicia Denis    **VPE:** Ian Lipski    **VPM:** Monique Tonna    **PPR:** Malkit Banwait    **Treasurer:** Tom Cummins

**Secretary:** Mrinal Sarkar    **Sergeant-At-Arms:** Richard Aitkins    **Immediate Past President:** Linda Snalam    **Webmaster:** Gary Wilson

**Speechcraft Liaison Officer:** Tom Woods    **Executive Support Officers:** Melanie Wilson, Natasha Chan, Clare Walker

Join us for our Next Meeting on 1 Aug 2013 with theme 'Money is ...'



PARRAMATTA TOASTMASTERS  
CLUB

WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE