



# PARRA NATTA

Newsletter of Parramatta Toastmasters Club No 2274, Area 13, Western Division, Dist.70

Meeting no 1260

17 Apr 2014

THEME

*'Opportunity Knocks'*

## AWARDS

- ◆ **Best Speech**  
Demian Coorey
- ◆ **Best Table Topic**  
Tom Woods
- ◆ **Best Evaluator**  
Wendy Nielsen

## WELCOME VISITORS

Larissaa  
Yash  
Rebecca  
Lynne

## 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:

### Malkit Banwait

Vice President for  
Public Relations at:

[vprr@parramattatm.org.au](mailto:vprr@parramattatm.org.au)

## 'Opportunity Knocks'



**'Opportunity Knocks'**, is a topic that **everyone can relate to**. In tonight's meeting, we heard how people grabbed their opportunities - in Toastmasters and in their everyday life. There were some great stories.

Our meeting began on time as **Rudolph Wirawan** immediately put the night's theme into practice. With our regular SAA away, he took the opportunity at short notice to stand in as our SAA. Being his first time in the position, he did an excellent job.

**Alicia Denis**, our President, opened our meeting, taking the opportunity to mention the winners of the Area 13 Contests and Western Division Contests - **Tom Cummins** (International) representing Parramatta Toastmasters and **Wendy Nielsen** (Evaluation) representing Parramatta Pioneers. Plus club member **David Griffiths** who, in a different division, won both the speech and evaluation contests. Congratulations to all.

Chairman 1, **John New**, told the story of how he took up a job opportunity. At one time he worked for a large stable IT

company but was head-hunted to work for a small software startup. It was a one-time-only job offer with high risks but potential for high rewards. It worked out for 9 years until the high-tech bubble burst, whereupon he needed to seek other opportunities.

**Kumi Matsunobu** welcomed our visitors, including a group of Speechcraft graduates and a visitor from another Toastmasters club.

This evening we also had a new member induction. **Alicia Denis** invited new member, **David Gane**, and mentor, **John New**, to the front as we welcomed David into the club.



In his point of view, **John Taylor** explained how a tap on the shoulder from **Gary Wilson** kick-started his Toastmasters leadership track. He began as SAA at club level and then took on other club roles such as VPE and President. But it didn't stop there. He continued as Area Governor, Division Governor, and Annual Conference Chairman, to name just a few. His point? Don't wait to take up those roles!

# What Happened at Our Last Meeting?



## We got to know Steven Cox a little better

as Linda Said asked him a series of penetrating “get to know you” questions. Such as: What was your first impression of Toastmasters? It was good, not as scary as he thought it would be. Has Toastmasters helped you? Yes, it helped him to become more articulate. It’s always nice to learn a bit more about our club members.

**Andrew** Iverson’s inspirational revolved around music. He mentioned some classic songs such as “Cats in the Cradle” by Harry Chapin and “Imagine” by John Lennon. He explained how music, with its rhythm, melody, and harmony can evoke power, passion, tears, and humour – finishing with his own humorous rendition by singing as Elmer Fudd!

Our Blog Evaluator tonight was **Michael** Said. Trying something different, he didn’t ask who had read the latest blog. Instead he had printed the blog and handed it out. The blog, by **Melanie** Wilson, was titled “Have Your Say” and it explained how the blog was now to be opened up to all club members who had something to say. As she said in her well-written piece: feel free to get creative.

Tonight’s toast by **Tom** Woods was to Mary Donaldson. If that name

doesn’t ring a bell, she is now better known as Mary, Crown Princess of Denmark, married to Frederik, Crown Prince of Denmark. As Tom explained it, Mary took her opportunity to meet Fred in a Sydney pub, not knowing she would soon be the star in a fairytale romance between prince and commoner.

**Rudolph** Wirawan continued the theme of opportunity knocks in Table Topics.

He began by asking **Tom** Woods what advice he would give his 12 year old self, if he had the opportunity to do so. Tom explained it would not be to brush his hair because, as Tom found, it doesn’t always get thicker.



**David** Griffith explained what he would do if opportunity doesn’t knock. With his military background, he said he wouldn’t wait and gave us the memorable phrase: go straight down the middle with bags of smoke. Which means: go for it.

When asked what language she would learn, given the opportunity, **Wendy** Nielsen said she would learn Thai. Why? Because she has such fond memories of Thailand as a friendly holiday destination.

If he had the opportunity to reduce poverty in one country, **Michael** Said told us he would choose India, because it would have such a big impact with its large population.



**Kumi** when asked how she would change the world, said she would stop war so that people could live in peace. If only that would happen.

Larfmaster is a challenging role with such a fickle and demanding Toastmaster crowd, and this time was no exception. **Peter** Steinhour normally has us rolling around with laughter but couldn’t raise more than a chuckle this time. Perhaps he needs to rethink some of those questionable punch lines.

With the end of the Toastmaster year fast approaching, **Sam** Ekinci said a few words about the club’s executive changeover and nominations. He asked all those who had nominated for executive positions to stand and be recognised well before the elections.



Our Toastmaster for the evening, **Linda** Said, was well-prepared and did her usual professional job when introducing our five speakers. Once again, all speeches were interesting and entertaining.

# And the First Speaker is. . .



First speaker was **Rob Tibbertsma** with “Stand up for what you believe in”. He not only provoked our civic conscience to consider taking up issues that we felt strongly about, he also entertained us by telling us about his sister who is not afraid to get arrested for her beliefs. However, the two often clash he explained – the result being, after he received one email from her, that he deleted her as a Facebook friend. He finished by telling us how much he admires his sister’s willingness to stand up for her convictions, he just doesn’t go as far as she does.



Our next speaker was **Alicia Denis** with “When opportunity knocks, be ready”. She began with a notable quote attributed to Winston Churchill: The pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity, the optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty. She told us the true story of Yash Gupta, who at the age

of 14, started Sight Learning, an organisation that collects used eyeglasses from optometrists and donates them to organisations that can deliver them to children in need. Alicia made the astute observation that it’s often not that hard to grab an opportunity, we just have to realise it’s there and seize it.



Next speaker was the experienced **Gary Wilson** who was finishing off the Competent Communicator manual for the umpteenth time. His speech, entitled “What should leaders focus us”, was a cautionary tale. He told us about the time that Toastmasters organised an Australia-wide public speaking content, with the finals held on Australia Day. While the idea was good, he asked “Was it good for Toastmasters?” and answered “No”. The reason being it took the focus away from Toastmasters and put in on the logistical nightmare of organising a large competition. It’s better, he said, to focus on what Toastmasters does well and make sure it continues to be done well.

In **Steven Cox’s** speech, he took on the role of an Effective Salesperson, which is Project 1 in the advanced

Persuasive Speaking manual. He invited Peter Steinhour and Melanie Wilson to the front of the room with the intent of persuading Peter to take up a fantastic deal with Melanie as another representative. It took the form of a question and answer session. This is certainly a speech we don’t see very often, it was good to see something different.

Our final speaker was **Demian Coorey** with the entertaining, persuasive, and informative speech “Wood heating is good heating”. In his usual authoritative style, Demian left us in no doubt where he stood on the issue of using wood for heating – and why. He finished by inviting us to anonymously fill in a form, indicating where each of us now stood on the issue. Perhaps he’ll share the results next meeting!



(Summary by John New)

## Coming Up Next Meeting

- ◆ Meeting Theme ‘Democracy’
- ◆ Elections of 2014-15 Club Executive conducted by Elizabeth Wilson.
- ◆ Ice Breaker by our newest member David Gane.
- ◆ Another member induction
- ◆ Plus 4 manual speeches

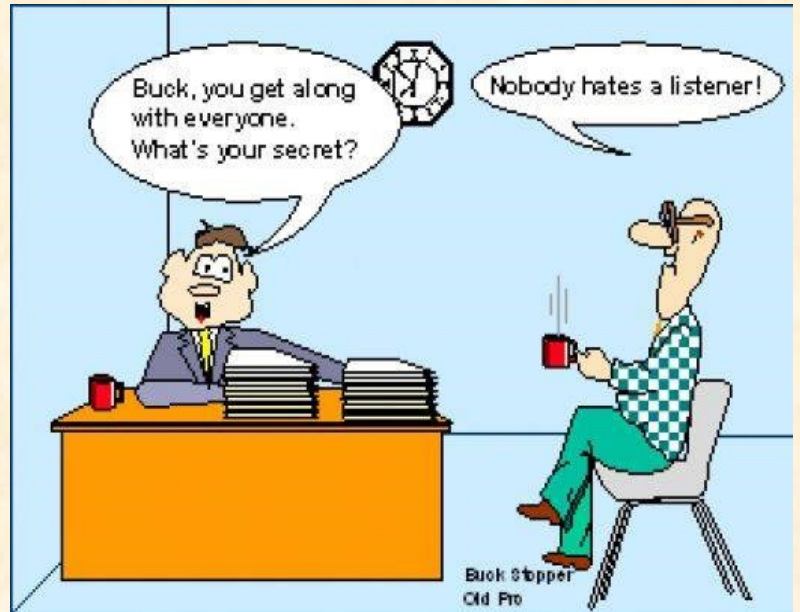
**DON'T MISS IT**

# On a lighter note!

© 2000 Ted Goff www.tedgoff.com



"You're not allowed to use the sprinkler system to keep your audience awake."



## For Your Diary

There is so much happening at the moment in the TM calendar; at club, area, division or district level. Something for everyone! Pick and choose from below.

- ◆ **Thu 22 May & Sat 24 May:** We are having a **Brazilian** special theme meeting followed by a **Brazilian** Social Mixer at Tom & Elaine's House. Come dressed in **Brazilian World Cup** football colours or show off your Samba dancing steps.
- ◆ **Sun 22 June 1-4pm: Next Sunday Seminar & Speakers Forum** at Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Parade, Bankstown. Another great event to learn more and to deliver a speech to a brand new audience to be evaluated by from outside our Club.
- ◆ **16 - 18 May 2014: District 70 Annual Conference.** Same but different: The value of communication at Bankstown Sports Club, Greenfield Parade, Bankstown. For more details see <http://annual2014.d70toastmasters.org.au/>

- ◆ **Speechcraft Update:** Pre-speechcraft meeting - Tue 29th April at 7:30pm at Tom Woods house. 61 Antoine St, Rydalmere. This will be an energetic meeting discussing the team assignment and educational with the course coordinator Wendy Nielson. You will be asked to show varying levels of commitment to the 6 week program, some members will be available for the full 6 weeks, others will only make one evening, all efforts are welcome to ensure the success of the program. Tea and coffee will be supplied along with some biscuits. Feel free to bring your own alcoholic beverage.
- ◆ (The last course was from Wed 5th Feb to 12 Mar. **Next course starts on 6 May** and future courses on 22 July and 14 Oct. We conduct four Speechcraft programs each year, coinciding with four school terms.

### Club Executive Officers for 2013/2014

**President:** Alicia Denis    **VPE:** Ian Lipski    **VPM:** Monique Tonna    **VPPR:** Malkit Banwait    **Treasurer:** Tom Cummins  
**Secretary:** Mrinal Sarkar    **Sergeant-At-Arms:** Wendy Nielsen    **Webmaster:** Gary Wilson  
**Speechcraft Liaison Officer:** Tom Woods    **Executive Support Officers:** Melanie Wilson,

Join us for our Next Club Meeting with theme 'Democracy' on Thursday 1 May 2014



PARRAMATTA TOASTMASTERS CLUB

WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE