

Northwest Words

The Official Publication of *Northwestern Toastmasters* Club 2946/37

We meet each first, third, and fifth Tuesday, 6:30 PM - Mayberry's, 50 Miller Street, Winston-Salem, NC

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The Mission of a Toastmasters Club is to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which each member has the opportunity to develop and practice communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.

That's the Way it Was - March 16, 2010

by **Christa Neuhauser** Secretary

Vice President of Education



Craig Thrift opened and led the business session. Two guests were present for the meeting.

This was the third meeting of the *Improved Communication Seminar*. Toastmaster-of-the-meeting Joel Schanker talked about "*Effective Listening*". He brought up some important points, and discussed how speakers can win the battle for the attention of their audience by focusing on the message, not the details, and by ignoring distractions. Developing good listening skills is just as valuable as developing good speaking skills. Listening and hearing is not the same thing – *Listening* means gathering information. The audience has to *want* to listen. Don't jump to conclusions, hear your audience out, avoid hasty judgments, and wait to hear what he/she is going to say. Following these rules will make you a better communicator.

Wordmaster of the evening, Nancy Wilson, introduced the word: "*palatable*," which is an adjective and means delicious, pleasant to taste. The word was used multiple times. Jeff Walker was the Grammarian, Bob Lauwers the Timer, and Pam Windley the Vote Counter.

Brian Davidson, the Table Topics Master of the evening, asked questions around topic finding.

- Bob Lauwers told how he chooses a topic for a speech. He reads and collects ideas, prepares the speech in writing, and practices.
- Butch Barney compares finding the right topic to a shiver looking for a spine to run up.
- Pam Windley turns to family and friends, or finds resources in the nature of her own backyard or personal environment when searching for her topics.

- Elizabeth McKinney finds family topics by talking with her relatives, finding out what concerns them and what's on their mind.

- When Pam Christopher prepares a speech, she tries to find a topic that would be of interest to others.

Three prepared speeches were held this evening:

Ü Ernst Bonaparte gave his third speech out of the Basic Manual, titled: "*Prolonging the Inevitable*". He mentioned his concern about the development and danger of outsourcing jobs, which ultimately will outsource our wealth as well.

Ü Greg Jones also gave his third speech from the Basic Manual, called: "*Low and Slow*". He is very passionate about barbecue, and shared his secrets on how to prepare the meat the right way. He explained the differences between grilling the meat over direct fire or heat, or smoking indirectly over heat.

Ü Barbie Morgan gave her 1st speech off the cuff, out of the Specialty Speeches Manual. She had several topics prepared and the Toastmaster picked between her four choices. She then spoke about "Soul Dancing". She explained that soul dancing isn't an escape from life, but something that thrills you, what feeds your soul, and is a total elation of happiness.

General Evaluator, Craig Thrift, analyzed the meeting, which he considered smooth and according to the agenda. He mentioned to be aware that we now have members with the same first names so to avoid confusion. Jeff Walker presented the grammarian report. The present guests thanked everyone for the informative evening, which they very much enjoyed.

The award winners of the evening were:

Best Table Topic – Elizabeth McKinney

Best Evaluator – Lance Kull

Best Speaker – Barbie Morgan

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**What to Speak About**



by **Marcia Barney, DTM**

Perhaps the most difficult part of preparing a speech is selecting the subject of that speech. Who said "All glory comes from daring to begin." The beginning of any speech or presentation is obviously deciding the topic. Here are some ideas gleaned from many Improved

Communications Seminar group discussions, Table Topics Sessions, and just listening to others' speeches.

The first criteria of a good topic is one in which you, the speaker, are interested. It is also important that your potential (for they may not listen if your topic is not interesting) listeners will or should be interested in the topic. Some of the things that could fit this bill are:

- § -news events - past or present
- § -hobbies - travels, animals, woodworking, dancing, painting, cooking, photography...
- § -your profession - broadly or a specific part
- § -the latest technology to which you have been exposed (be sure not to overstep your expertise)
- § -books or the concepts to which you have been exposed through books or magazines
- § -health, diet, and exercise
- § -people you know or have known
- § -historical events
- § -nature
- § -philosophies, morals, outlooks, beliefs
- § -issues - roads, schools, legislation, safety....
- § -other cultures or even the history of yours
- § -fashions, past or present
- § -money - making or spending it
- § -entertainment - circus, music, arts, theatre, fine dining....
- § -how things work
- § -making our world better - volunteering, conservation....

A good way to insure that you always have a good supply of potential topics at hand is start a speech folder. When you find a topic of potential value put a note, article or reference material in that folder. When you hear a speech about a topic of interest, put a note about the speech in the folder. When you get "hot under the collar" about an issue, put a note in the folder. Remember, you can obtain a plethora of information about just about any topic via a simple visit with Google.

Good speech topics are all around us. Use the opportunity to speak as an opportunity to learn more about some subject of interest - to you and your potential audience.

Thanks for all who attended the March 23 ICS session for adding to this list!

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 I would love to change the world, but they won't give me the source code

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**That's the Way it Was - continued**

Christa Neuhauser ended the evening with a joke. The Vice President of Education thanked the fellow Toastmasters for another productive session and adjourned.

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ICS, Session four (by P. Fantum)

This successful session, held off-site found four speeches from the **Competent Communicator manual** - -

- ü Elizabeth McKinney - #3 "Reality Isn't Real"
- ü Florian Neuhauser - #5 - "The Joys of Rescue"
- ü Bob Lauwers - #3 - "What's Lurking In Your Home?"
- ü Christa Neuhauser - #7 - "Freedom of Choice"

Don Barnett also spoke from the **Advanced Humorous Manual**, about "Introducing Others." Brian Davidson did a superb evaluation.

Remember that this coming Tuesday, as part of the ICS, is exceptionally important -- it is the **Evaluation Meeting**.

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**Meeting Roles Supplement**

With each issue, we are including a definition of the various roles in a Toastmasters meeting. Feel free to print this role and keep it with your Toastmasters Notes. Because all roles are important, these roles are presented in alphabetical order. This issue contains the role of the Joke Master. Other roles described are:

- ü Evaluator
- ü General Evaluator
- ü Grammarian
- ü Joke Master
- ü Speaker
- ⇒ Table Topics Master
- ✓ Timer
- ✓ Toastmaster of the Meeting
- ✓ Vote Counter
- ✓ Word Master

These are also available on our award winning web site - [www.NWTM.org](http://www.NWTM.org) or, if you like, talk to our Vice President of Public Relations, and ask for an embossed and personally autographed copy.

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Newsletter Policy Change

At the suggestion of NAG (Newsletter Advisory Group) publication dates of our newsletter (Northwest Words - the official publications of Northwestern Toastmasters) have changed. In the past, the newsletter has been published on the weekend before the first and third Tuesday meeting nights. When there has been a fifth Tuesday meeting night, no newsletter has been created. Starting with this issue, the newsletter will be published on each weekend before a meeting.

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 When the best actors are chosen by actors it is called the Oscars, but when the best actors are chosen by regular people it is called an election



## When you are the Table Topics Master - - -

The Table Topics Master provides the impromptu speech topics for the meeting. The Toastmaster-of-the-Meeting will relinquish control of the lectern to the Table Topics Master who should remain at the lectern during the Table Topics Session. The Table Topics theme should usually coincide with the theme of the meeting. The Table Topics Master may wish to make a few brief, appropriate comments explaining his/her topics in general and even briefer ones for the specific topics.

The topics should be given, then the Topics speaker's name called. This helps everybody's listening ability since no one knows who will be called. Be careful about editorializing after the speaker has finished with the subject. If you'd like an opposing view, ask another Toastmaster to take the opposite view. Mini-debates can make interesting Table Topics.

Four Table Topics should be enough for the meeting. Depending on the number of prepared speakers, the Toastmaster-of-the-Meeting may ask for more or fewer. Toastmasters who do not have a speaking part on the program, or who have only a minor part should be given Table Topics. The Toastmaster-of-the-Meeting, the General Evaluator the Prepared Speakers and the Evaluators should be avoided since they already have major roles. Non-Toastmaster guests should not be given a topic except by prior consent, then please do not call on them first.

Table Topics should be chosen to challenge, but not embarrass the topic speakers. They should be specific enough to be clear, but broad enough so that any Toastmaster will understand, and should have some thoughts on the subject (Everybody is not familiar with your favorite sports hero, and could not intelligently address the question of why they made a major error their last game.)

Remember, the purpose of Table Topics is to give other members the opportunity to speak impromptu so keep your remarks **very** brief.