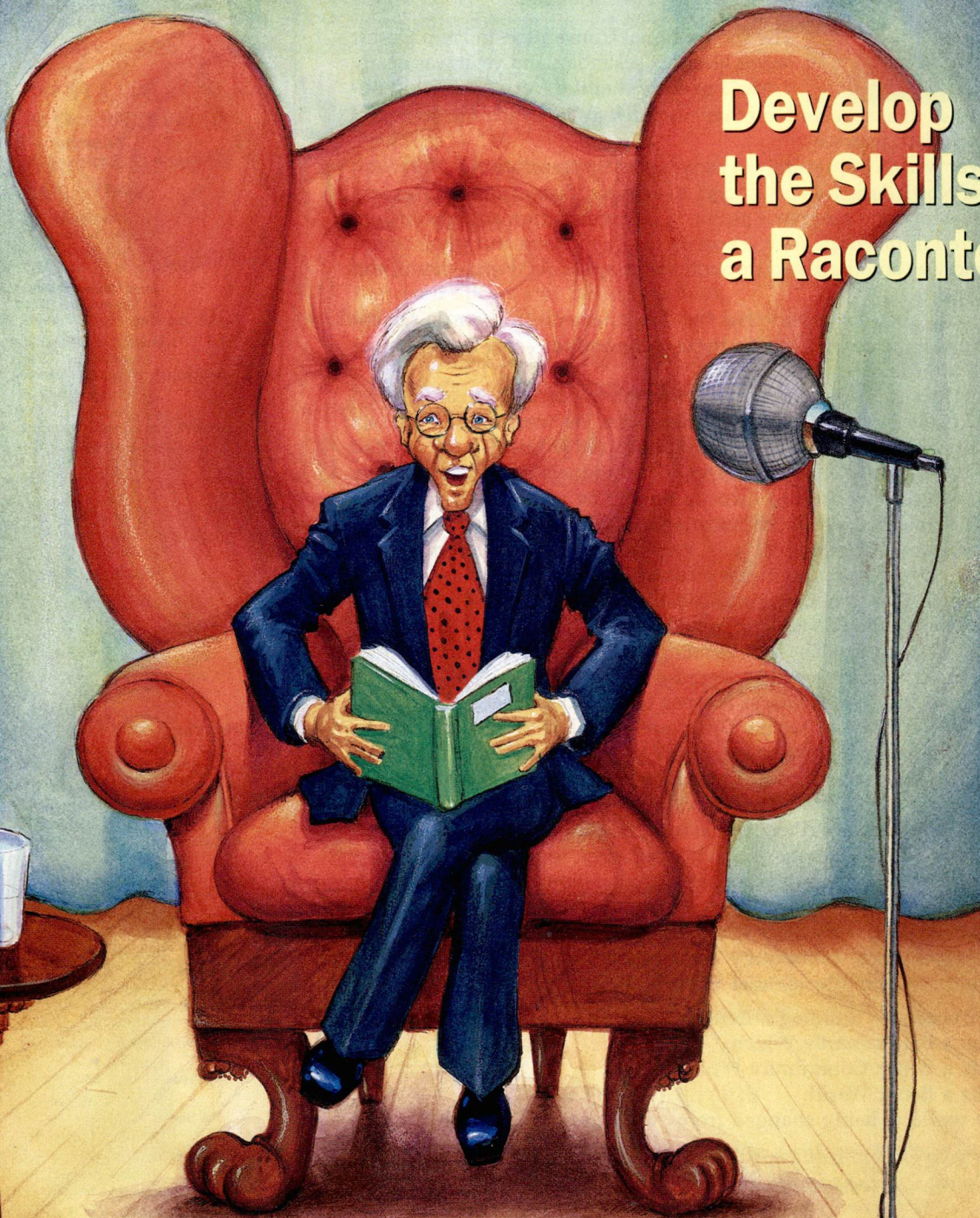


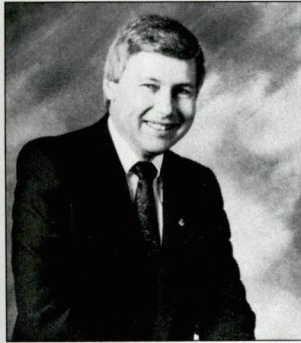
# THE TOASTMASTER

AUGUST 1990

**Develop  
the Skills of  
a Raconteur**



*Jennifer McChristian*



## Reflections on a Presidential Year

The International Convention in Palm Desert seems like only yesterday, and yet it was nearly a year ago. Now that the work of one administration draws to a close and another prepares to begin, I'd like to reflect on some special memories.

The year was an opportunity to represent our organization within communities of North America and abroad, to help our district and club leaders raise the Toastmasters program's profile in communication and leadership. This occurred in meetings with associations, businesses and government leaders, and was accomplished through visits, speaking engagements and media interviews.

I can now proudly report that the Toastmasters program is widely known and highly accepted within these communities — we are no longer one of the world's best kept secrets.

One of the year's many high points was the opportunity to attend and participate in district and regional conferences. We were able to interact with Toastmasters and discover firsthand how our program is used at the club level to build and enrich the lives of individuals and their families.

This past year has been an exciting time to be your president and to work with a talented group of international officers, directors, district leaders and World Headquarters staff. We reached an important milestone in the history of our organization: We sold our previous World Headquarters building which served our organization since 1962. We moved to a new, larger facility in Rancho Santa Margarita designed to take care of our needs well into the 21st century. The new building was constructed on time, under budget, and without the need to increase membership dues — a tribute to our past leaders and the financial acumen of our World Headquarters staff.

This was the first year for the Distinguished Club, Area and Division Programs, important management tools developed to enable our club and district leaders to focus on those critical aspects of operations that will add both strength and quality to all parts of our organization. This year our organization's focus turned to emphasizing quality rather than quantity.

Thanks to all the Toastmasters who took time to speak to us during our conference visits, to share ideas, and to let us know that in using our program as Smedley intended, that the philosophy of Toastmasters — Building a Better You — is effective and develops skills that are transferable into the market place, community and home.

I leave to you my Presidential Theme:

Toastmasters — Building a Better You  
Builds a Better Family Which;  
Builds a Better Community Which;  
Builds a Better World:

"The world is being changed from your Toastmasters club."

*"Whatever your grade or position, if you know how and when to speak, and when to remain silent, your chances of real success are proportionately increased."*

**JOHN F. NOONAN, DTM**  
International President

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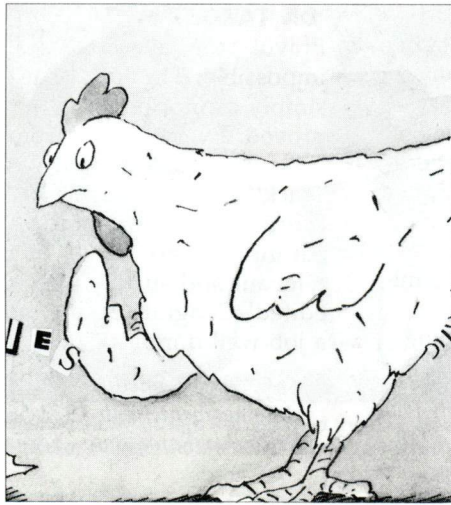
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## **JOBLESS NEED ENCOURAGEMENT**

The article "The Fine Art of Encouragement" in the May issue was particularly enjoyable. Victor Parachin wrote about a friend who shares job openings with people who have lost their jobs, and provides words of encouragement. Parachin's friend deserves a medal of honor!

I have been unemployed for 3½ months due to a corporate acquisition. It was my second similar job loss in one and a half years. People in our shoes need all the encouragement we can get.

Stephen J. Cook  
Realtors Club 2512-6  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

## **'CHAIRMEN' INACCURATE**

As a brand new member, I really enjoyed getting my first copy of *The Toastmaster*. I found it quite interesting.

However, the article "Avoiding Sexist Language" was followed later in the magazine by the listing of "Territorial Council Chairmen." This is surprising since two of these officers are women. Perhaps Toastmasters International will take the advice of the article and change the title of this position to "chairperson."

Bonnie Telfer  
Rancho Bernardo 112-5  
San Diego, California

## **LEARN, THEN SKIP GRAMMAR**

Well, excuse me, Dennis. Your article "Can the Grammarian" (June 1990) reeks of literary hogwash.

Your rhetoric made it obvious that you were

simply writing for the sake of writing. Any or all of our Toastmasters functions would have served your purpose just as well. The venom and vigor with which you so joyously lambasted the grammarian could just as easily have been aimed at negating all other positions.

Toastmasters is a laboratory for learning all the arts of speaking. A polished speaker capable of choosing a language style that fits the occasion needs to know the grammatically correct way to use the language, then he or she can choose whether to use it.

Jan King  
Business-Professional Club  
2207-56  
San Antonio, Texas

## **COMMUNICATION INCLUDES GRAMMAR**

Let's can Dennis Kessinger ("Can the Grammarian," June 1990) and keep the grammarian.

Throughout his two pages of complaints against grammarians, he consistently uses good grammar himself. It is clear that grammar is important to Kessinger despite his harangue. And for good reason: The medium is the message. Speakers who haven't mastered the fundamentals of good grammar risk losing their credibility. Call me a snob, but recognize that I am not alone.

Kessinger cites e.e. cummings and Will Rogers as successes who defied the grammarian. But they are exceptions, and not everyone can expect to get away with it. Also, they consciously and purposefully broke the rules.

Careful manipulation of language for a planned effect has no resemblance to slipshod or ignorant usage.

I agree with Dennis on one point only: communication is what is important. But let's be true to the purpose of our organization; improving communication involves many different skills, including grammar.

Sumati Pollin  
Sun Masters Club 4248-23  
El Paso, Texas

## **SHOCKED BY RIDE ADVICE**

Having just read the article "Are You Sabotaging Your Chances for Success?," in the July issue, I am flabbergasted that the author, Charles Dickson, Ph.D., claims to have been a family counselor for 28 years. In the article, he uses an example of a little girl being offered a ride by a stranger, accepting the offer and teaching the adult a profound truism.

As a professional therapist who has worked with abused and molested children, I want to re-emphasize an old axiom: never, never accept a ride with a stranger. Unfortunately, in today's world this is sound advice for child and adult alike.

I am shocked and saddened that Dickson uses this story as a "cutesy" account of emotional empathy, and equally shocked and saddened that *The Toastmaster* magazine staff did not edit it out.

P. Christine Stockham, ATM  
Voyagers Club 5315-4  
San Diego, California

## **ARTICLES 'ON TARGET'**

Bravo! You have done the impossible. The July issue simply cannot be improved. Every article, from "Are You on the Right Track" to "Fending Off Murphy," was on target. All inputs were timely, relevant and superbly edited. Congratulations on a job well done.

Earl Shellner, CTM  
Management Club 1973-56  
Kelly Air Force Base, Texas

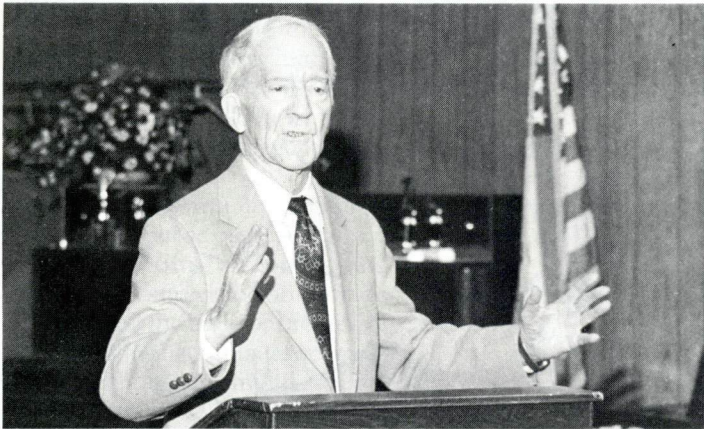
## **CRITIQUE IN THIRD PERSON 'RUDE'**

I enjoyed reading "Digging for Gold" by William Aspden in the May issue. I agree with all of Aspden's crucial points on the art of evaluation except for one: We should not use the third person voice in evaluations, but rather the second person.

The evaluation is directed to the speaker. Naturally, the rest of the Toastmasters benefit from listening. It is rude to use the third person voice when that person is present. I am surprised Aspden is not aware of this.

However, I did enjoy and agree wholeheartedly with all of his other constructive suggestions on evaluation. I have been a Toastmaster for almost 10 years and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for publishing a most interesting, inspiring and enlightening magazine. It has been most helpful these many years in my achievements as a Toastmaster.

Lyn April Statten  
High Spirit of  
Toastmasters Club 4368-4  
San Mateo, California



Charles McBrian, age 91, captured the Best Speaker Award at the Smedley Hometown Memorial Club 4115-8 in April last year.

### Judge Charles McBrian: A 53-Year Member

On Jan. 13, 1990, Toastmaster Charles McBrian celebrated his 91st birthday.

A charter member, McBrian has been an active leader in Lincoln-Douglas Club 51-8 for the past 53 years and is the only active charter member of that club. When McBrian discovered that Toastmasters' founder, Dr. Ralph Smedley,

was born and raised a few miles south of Springfield in Waverly, Illinois, McBrian joined Smedley Hometown Memorial Toastmasters Club 4115-8 (This club has erected a white marble memorial lectern in honor of Dr. Smedley in Waverly's Salter Park).

At 91 years young, Judge McBrian is a highly active member, rarely missing a weekly meeting of the Lincoln-Douglas Club, and never missing the four annual Smedley Hometown club meetings. He is always ready with a good speech and will handle any club assignment. At a recent Smedley Hometown Memorial Club meeting, he won Best Table Topic with an 18-second response.

Judge McBrian's advice to the next generation is that "every person should always try to improve themselves." He also recommends that Toastmasters "stay involved in Toastmasters long after you have learned the basics."

In February 1989, to honor McBrian's faithful membership, members of the Lincoln-Douglas Club changed the name of their club to the McBrian Lincoln-Douglas Toastmasters Club. Also, at the District 8 Spring Conference, the Smedley Hometown Memorial Club gave McBrian an honorary lifetime free membership.

**David Smith, DTM**, of Quincy, Illinois, was 1989-90 District 8 Governor.



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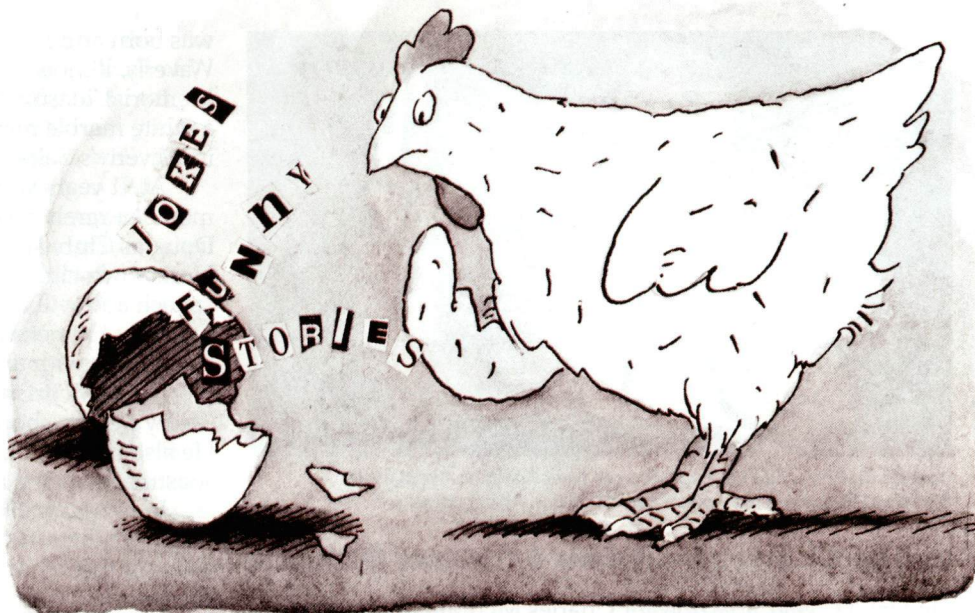


**TOASTMASTERS  
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# Where Do Stories Come From?

*Real incidents often provide the best story material.*

*By Robert Orben*



**D**uring my 40 years as a comedy writer, I have often been asked during interviews, "Where do stories come from? Who writes the stories and anecdotes that are suddenly on the lips of every comedian from New York City to Melbourne, Australia?"

I have long felt that, overwhelmingly, one-liners are written. Somebody sits down, thinks about the subject to be humored, and then grinds them out. On the other hand, I believe that stories evolve. Quite often they are based on a funny true event that is sharpened and refined by telling it again and again.

I have heard millions of jokes in my lifetime so people are sometimes inhibited when telling me a joke. They feel I've heard them all—and, to some extent, I have. But I will never cut someone off in mid-joke because of its familiarity. Somewhere in the telling, there may be a twist, a nuance, or an improvement that makes a much more effective joke out of the original version. Most stories are almost human in their development—they are born, then grow, mature and die.

I've found that real life can be our best joke writer if we just raise our comedic antenna. There are two principal criteria by which to judge a true story: Is it funny? Can it be communicated to an audience?

The fact that it is true tends to make it relevant to your business, community or social scene. But true, semi-true or pure fiction — most stories should be told as truth. They should sound as if they just happened, within a framework of people and places your listeners can relate to.

Never preface a story by saying it's true. This raises an element of doubt. The way you set up a story should imply its authenticity.

Let's examine the two criteria you're going to apply to real life humor. Is it funny? This is an easy one. If it made you laugh, chances are others find it funny as well. Is it retellable? There's the rub.

Good stories, true or otherwise, require an attention-grabbing premise, interesting development, and a punch line or finish that snaps. It's the lack of this explosive definitive ending that puts much of real life humor into the "you had to be there" category.

By way of example, a few years ago I was in a plane on my way to give a speech. I was reviewing some new material while sipping from an ice cube-filled drink that sat on the armrest. The pilot announced a scenic attraction that could be seen from the other side of the plane and I half-stood up to see it. Without my realizing it, the glass tipped over and the ice cubes tumbled out and onto my seat.

Having satisfied my curiosity, I dropped back into my seat and resumed my reading—for about 10 seconds. Then I slowly began to feel the strangest sensation—an increasingly cold dampness in the seat of my pants. I jumped up with only a moderately restrained yelp and discovered that I had been sitting on an ice cube cushion.

Now if this little incident had been observed or filmed by someone across the aisle, it would have had all the essentials of a Three Stooges bit. The unexpected tipping over of the glass; the an-

ticipation of what's going to happen next as I confidently resumed my seat; the slow take of confusion as the ice cubes began to make their presence known; and the less than dignified jumping to my feet—all would have seemed very funny to another person watching it. But it's a story that can't be told. Why? No finish. There is no definite punch line to trigger an audience's laughter.

Most funny true-life incidents can be ruled out as platform humor because of one weakness—no finish. But a surprising amount do qualify. Or, if the build or premise of an incident is that unusual or amusing, it might be worthwhile to concoct a punch line. I would guess that most of the "true" anecdotes and stories told about famous personalities, past and present, have been liberally fixed, fudged and fictionalized. If it makes the story work, by all means incorporate some flight of fancy.

Where do you find these true-life gems? Obviously, your own eyes, ears and comedic instincts are your best resources. We all witness funny incidents in our jobs, community, and private lives that are all too often quickly forgotten. My suggestion is to write them down. Preserve and cherish them as you would anything else that's precious.

You can also seek out and draw on the funny experiences of others. In my humor and speech writing workshops, I always urge writers to interview their clients, as well as the associates, employees and families of their clients, with a view toward discovering real life funny anecdotes. It takes a lot of digging but the nugget found may be pure gold.

***There are two principle criteria by which to judge a true story: Is it funny? Can it be communicated to an audience?***

The relevant story or anecdote that has the ring of "real" to it, will often outscore the most expertly-crafted joke.

In addition to personal interviews, I also suggest that writers scan company bulletin boards, trade publications and, if possible, the contents of suggestion boxes—with a view to finding the laughter that is sometimes buried within.

Finally, don't overlook the mail room. A rich vein of humor can be mined from the thousands of letters every company or organization receives in the course of a

year. When I was at the White House, the mail room would occasionally send me some of the funny and touching letters received. Letters from children are always winners—entire books have been made from them. One of my favorite letters, however, came from an adult. He was commenting on one of President Ford's bicentennial speeches and took particular exception to the fact that the president had not made any reference to "our founding fathers." For obvious reasons, this letter was never used in a speech.

But another one was—and it sums up all that a good story should contain.

It began as a regular letter to the president, but it was the envelope that got our attention. It said, "To President Nelson Rockefeller, or Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, or just plain anybody who will listen."

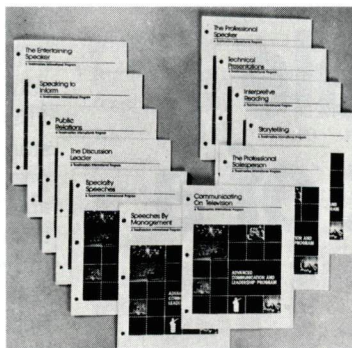
It was real. It was funny. It could be told. And we did.

**Robert Orben**, who lives in Arlington, Virginia, speaks and conducts workshops on the uses of humor in business communication. He is the author of 46 books about humor for show business and speakers. In 1974, he served as speech consultant to Vice-President Gerald Ford.

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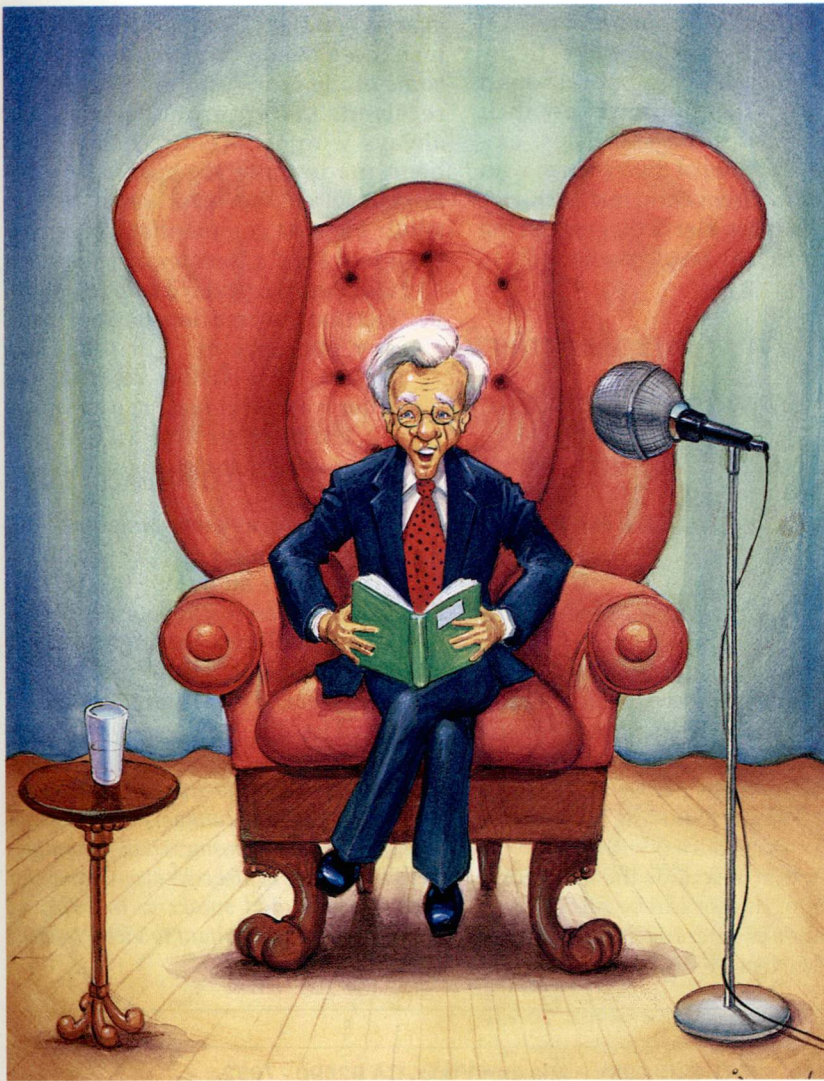
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# Tell Your Tale With the Wit of a RACONTEUR

*A refresher course in the basics  
of storytelling.*

*By Nick Peterson, ATM*

**D**o your kids beg you not to read them bedtime stories? Do friends suddenly remember important appointments when you start to tell a joke? Did you wind up on the sofa last night because your wife didn't buy your explanation of why you were out until 4 a.m.?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you don't know how to tell a story.

When was the last time somebody told you a real story that had you listening wide-eyed and open-mouthed like you were a kid again? Our addiction to electronic media that spoon-feeds us information has threatened to relegate storytelling to a dusty shelf in a back room in the Museum of Antiquated Activities. We've become lazy and the skills of verbal expression dull quickly unless practiced regularly. But storytelling is too deeply ingrained in the human psyche to be relegated to that shelf. Something inside us won't let it die.

So, while the demise of this quintessential form of interpersonal communication may be greatly exaggerated, that which is not used tends to atrophy. A refresher course in storytelling basics may help get us back on track. Is this going to be a tough course? Not really. But it will require commitment and lots of practice. Are you up to it?

## THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

**Material.** The most vital ingredient of successful storytelling is affection or love for the material. You can't do justice to a story that bores you. You won't be able to hide that feeling from your audience, either. They'll be wondering why you're wasting everybody's time. But the love you feel for a favorite tale will infuse your presentation and sweep the audience away.

**Preparation.** Storytelling is one of the most grueling of the speaking arts. Doing it well requires mastery of all the disciplines of good speechmaking coupled with the presentation skills of an actor. This all requires work, lots of it. When you hear a story told smoothly and effortlessly, you're hearing preparation. I find a cassette recorder an indispensable tool. It allows me to hear the story from the audience's perspective and facilitates fine-tuning of inflection, emphasis and pacing. After all, the success or failure of a spoken story depends most heavily on how it sounds.

**Vocal Variety.** The last of the top three critical elements of successful storytelling is also the most complex. The storyteller's voice is the vehicle delivering the story. If that vehicle runs sluggishly or has only one gear, the story probably won't get to its destination. Adding vocal variety involves the orchestration of several components:

- **Volume.** A good storyteller manages the flow of the story with volume. Important elements in the story can be emphasized by either lowering or raising one's voice. The contrast between loud and soft announces the arrival of something important and automatically snaps an audience's attention back to the storyteller.
- **Inflection and Articulation.** Remember, the



voice is the instrument that a storyteller lives and dies by. If it is monotone, boring or unintelligible, people won't listen. Aim for precision in your diction. Exaggerate the t's and p's. It may seem forced or unnatural at first, but soon becomes second nature. Think about how you'd like to hear someone tell a story and use that version as a model.

- **Pacing.** Slow down, slow down, slow down. A rushed delivery is a story's worst enemy. Exaggeration helps here, too. Slow down until it's almost painful and stay there. Try to build excitement with how you use your voice, not how fast you make it go.

- **Pausing.** Pauses are the punctuation of the story. They can be funny, provide emphasis, increase tension and provide relief. As with any other tool, they must be used purposefully and appropriately or they lose their effectiveness. Don't be afraid of silence. There are many times when purposeful silence has a riveting effect and can have people on the edge of their seats, breathlessly awaiting what comes next.

(pause for effect)

See? It works every time.

Next is a discussion of how the principles we've just talked about operate in five of the more important species of stories.

## TYPES OF STORIES

The choice of these five story formats is completely arbitrary, but the examples should get you thinking analytically about others. The analytical approach will add another dimension to your storytelling skills.

1. **The Historical Story.** Pay homage to the glue that holds civilization together. These stories were the primary means of passing cultural knowledge before writing. This form of storytelling was considered so important that it was entrusted primarily to priestesses, shamans and other such go-betweens to higher powers. The tales often became cultural heirlooms, passed on through generations of elite storytellers, who were revered as guardians of the past and the future.

By their nature, historical stories tend to be long and detailed and often are presented in serial form. This requires adequate transitions between sessions. A good lead-in must recap what was presented earlier smoothly into the new material. Since these tales served as cultural archives in the past, and to some extent even today, it was vital that they be remembered accurately. This explains why the stories (folk tales) were and are often sung or chanted, using rhythm and repetition to etch the words into memory.

2. **The Yarn.** The name says it all. This story spins along almost endlessly. You know the scene: a porch in the front of a small-town general store. Old men are whittling or playing checkers and all the while, yarns are being spun by the yard. A yarn can go on indefinitely, taking twists, turns and convolutions as it stumbles toward a vague ending. This is one type of story where the point is not to get to the point, but to savor the process that eventually leads us there. The works of Mark Twain and

Garrison Keillor deserve careful study as models of how to spin yarns.

3. **The Outright Lie.** Alias, the tall tale. These stories are close relatives to the yarn, but more focused. The differences between the two correlate to those between a novel and a short story. Whereas the novel gives the author time to discover his characters, the short story allows no time for such luxuries. The same is true of the tall tale. Like a joke, the tall tale must catch the listener's attention immediately, build quickly toward an ending, then slap the listener with a punch line. The compact nature of a good tall tale makes it one of the more difficult forms of storytelling. If you've heard a good fish story lately, you've been treated to a tall tale.

4. **The Ghost Story.** Ah, campfires and dark woods. This is the time to pull out all the stops in setting mood and in painting mental pictures. A good ghost story sets that mood and paints those pictures only to the point where those sitting around that campfire begin to conjure up their very own spooky images in their minds. After that it's easy—the audience is hard at work, creating visualizations that will be far more frightening than you could describe.

Intonation and volume can be employed very effectively to play on the audience's thoughts, already haunted by self-induced images. This is the perfect opportunity to set up vocal shocks. Take them around a few dark corners and then pounce on them with a "Boo!"

Learn the art of ghost storytelling and you'll never want for speaking engagements. People love to be scared.

Our last story type also revolves around love.

5. **The Bedtime Story.** A verbal glass of warm milk, a syntactic sleeping pill. The bedtime story leaves no question of its intent: to put its audience to sleep. This mission calls for guidelines slightly more rigid than many other story forms. The subject should be comforting, warm and familiar. This is not the time for too much excitement or worse, for monsters.

The bedtime storyteller's voice must be quiet but expressive, conveying a feeling of trust and reassurance. Rhythm and repetition soothe and quiet frazzled little psyches like a good long cuddle with Mom in the rocking chair.

I hope by this point you're feeling like you might try some storytelling. The rewards involved don't come easily, but those rewards are very, well...rewarding. Just one experience with those little mouths hanging open in wonder and the sparkling little eyes riveted to you and you'll be hooked. But remember, your kids deserve the best, and so do adult audiences. Everybody loves a good story and cherishes a good storyteller. And that's no tall tale. ♣

**Nick Peterson, ATM,** is a member of Vanguard Club 2226-26 and Creme de le Toast Club 6294-26 in Aurora, Colorado.

*The most vital ingredient of successful storytelling is affection or love for the material.*

# Imagination: Our Secret Ally

*Practice child's play to unleash your creative powers.*

*By Nick Peterson, ATM*

**T**ry to remember way, way back to the olden days when you were just a pup. What was your strategy on those dreary, rainy days when Mom wouldn't have let you go outside unless the house was burning down? (Even then she'd make sure you had a coat and hat on). Since all your friends were locked in by their moms too, what were you going to do for a playmate?

You and the kids down the street did the most natural thing for kids to do: you made one up. The make-believe didn't make any of us feel silly or embarrassed - it never even occurred to us that we should be. As adults, many of us have lost, or at least misplaced, our imaginative skills and, as a result, our capacity to be truly creative. Fortunately, those imaginations aren't gone, they're just dormant, waiting to be reactivated and exercised.

How do we get back in touch with our childlike imagination? I'm going to offer four simple steps that, if practiced diligently and regularly, lead to that reunion. First, we can allow ourselves to think silly thoughts. By the time we've reached adulthood, most of us have had reality pounded into us enough times that we're extremely wary of letting our minds play. Take credit for being sensible enough to know what's real and what isn't. Occasional silliness does not permanently disable the rational mind. The practice of childlike thinking actually enhances imagination and fosters creativity.

**Step #1:** Give yourself permission to be silly. Remember back again for just a moment. What activity were you normally engaged in those times that you were being silly? You were playing.

**Step #2:** Make a concerted effort to play at least once a day. Some of you are

probably asking "But what should I play?" Who cares? Make something up. Kids do it with no effort at all. My four-year-old buddy, Marshall, and I have a little ritual we perform before we start a play session. We turn on our "magninations." It's easy. Anyone can learn our technique, even adults.

It's foolproof. The next time the burden of the workplace is smothering you,

cheering crowd. After the meeting, the man, still radiating pleasure, admitted that it had been the first time in many years that he'd allowed himself to have so much fun playing and pretending in public.

**Step #3:** Surround yourself with imaginative and creative people. We all need our regular playmates. Humans are social beings. We thrive on contact and interaction with others. The mental stimulation

generated by a pack of playful minds can crackle through the nervous system like a Sousa march, heightening the senses, sharpening the wits, and producing residual effects on the brain similar to those that regular exercise have on the body. We're left feeling more relaxed and aware, and thinking more clearly than before.

**Step #4:** The final and most important step in recapturing our imaginations is to

observe and learn from the experts. Kids are imagination machines. Their world is a kaleidoscope in which reality and make-believe run together into a riot of fantastic patterns and colors. Their energy seems boundless and they live at full throttle. We grown-ups still have that child in us, a child who wants and needs to play, pretend and imagine. That child is the wellspring of the creative powers that we all possess.

The four steps outlined above are not difficult. They're child's play. All that's required to make them work for us is desire and a little practice. We can gain that extra edge in our lives, both personally and professionally, by reacquainting ourselves with the most valuable asset we had as children: imagination. It's our secret ally.

**Nick Peterson, ATM,** is a member of Vanguard Club 2226-26 and Creme de le Toast Club 6294-26 in Aurora, Colorado.

## HOW TO TURN ON YOUR IMAGINATION

*Instructions by Marshall & Uncle Nick*

- 1) Assume sitting position: Mental torque can be quite powerful, so it's best to be as stable as possible.
- 2) Press the index finger and middle finger of each hand to your temples. Pressure should be firm but not painful.
- 3) Squeeze both eyes closed as tightly as you can. This, for reasons that are not yet known, concentrates the imaginative juices into the parts of the brain where the imagination receptor sites are located.
- 4) Mentally start your imagination's engine and let it idle for approximately 5 seconds.
- 5) Open your eyes, remove your fingers from your temples and pause briefly to reorient yourself.
- 6) Play.

lock yourself in the office, have your calls held for 15 minutes, fire up your imagination's engine and pretend that your pencil's a rocket.

"Pretend" is a key word. In our club, and I imagine in many others, Table Topics has become a beloved rite of creativity. There seems to be an unspoken challenge for the Topicmaster to top last week's session. The result, more often than not, is a rousing 20 minutes of fun.

One of the most moving and enjoyable experiences I've had as a Toastmaster involved a club member who was quite reserved and proper in his manner. He was Topicmaster that day, and when the Toastmaster called him up to conduct Table Topics, he ducked behind a partition and emerged wearing a homemade black stovepipe hat and a paper mustache. In seconds, we were all under the "Big Top" as the Ringmaster introduced the various performers to the

# Fe, Fi, Fo, Fum Isn't Just for Kids

*How children's literature can help you become a better speaker.*

*By S. Bradley Stearns*

**U**se your imagination for a moment and take a trip with me back through time. Imagine yourself before you entered high school, before you went to elementary school. Imagine yourself as you were when you were three or four years old and remember your mother's voice saying, "Fe, fi, fo, fum. I smell the blood of an Englishman. And be he live or be he dead, I'll grind his bones to make my bread."

You probably haven't heard the story of Jack and the Beanstalk since you were four years old, or since you last told it to your own child. And that's a shame, because fairy tales, nursery rhymes, tongue twisters—all of the elements of children's literature—can be of great value to you in your efforts to become a better speaker. In fact, there are at least four ways in which children's literature can help you improve your public speaking skills:

## **VOCAL CHARACTER**

Vocal character is the ability to alter your voice to portray different types of emotions, characters and viewpoints to make your arguments more persuasive and clear. Fairy tales are perfect for developing vocal character because they usually unravel a number of emotional ups and downs and different characters within a short story line.

I'm sure you remember the story of The Three Little Pigs in which three pig brothers all leave their mother's home to go out on their own and make their fortunes. One goes off and builds a house of straw, another builds a house of sticks and the third builds a sturdy brick house. By and by, a wolf comes along and tries to capture and eat the pigs.

For developing vocal character, tell this story aloud and try to convey the various emotions the characters feel. You should speak in a loud, confident voice when you, the wolf, say, "Little pig, little pig, let me in." And respond in the small, meek, quavering voice of a terrified pig when you



answer, "Not by the hair of my chinny chin chin."

The idea is to speak aloud, not feel foolish, and experiment with different voices and the portrayal of different emotions. Don't limit yourself to the traditional telling of the tale — be creative and change it around. Alter the characters. For example, you might try to portray the wolf as a laid-back hippie and the pigs as haughty butler-types. Experiment with the emotional overtones of the story.

Try different stories. Don't feel silly. Remember, you're not trying to win an Oscar with your acting abilities; you're trying to improve and enhance the range of emotional overtones and characteristics your voice can produce, so that the next time you speak you have a greater repertoire of vocal variety to draw from.

## **DICTION**

Tongue twisters, another element of

children's literature, also can help you improve your diction.

I'm sure you've heard, "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers," but have you ever tried, "Two tree toads tied together tried to trot to town twice" or "Pour a proper cup of coffee from a copper coffee pot?" How about pronouncing "toy boat" or "unique New York" five times in quick succession, or repeating "red leather, yellow leather" three times as rapidly as you can. They're all tough. The important thing is to practice them aloud, often and quickly to develop ear/tongue coordination.

## **PACING**

Children's literature also can help you develop a sense of pacing. Good speakers use verbal speeds that are appropriate to the information they are presenting and its context. For instance, if you're telling an exciting story with a lot of action, you'll

want to increase your speech tempo to convey that excitement. Conversely, if you're discussing technical information or attempting to convey a serious demeanor, you'll want to speak much slower.

Children's stories work quite well in

developing a sense of pacing because of the constant ebb and flow of excitement they contain. For example, when telling the story Goldilocks and the Three Bears, you'll want to begin in a slow, melodious voice, capturing the tranquility of the

scene: "Once upon a time, in the middle of a deep and brooding forest there lived a family of three bears...," etc." As you near the end, however, your pace should increase as you try to capture the rapidity with which actions take place, and to convey excitement: "Goldilocks looked about her, sprang from the bed, raced down the stairs, out the door, down the trail, and was never seen in the forest again."

Again, it's important to try several stories and experiment with pacing in a number of different ways. You'll find that your verbal speed can greatly affect the emotional impact of your message.

## GESTURES

The final way children's literature can better your skills as a communicator is by helping you develop a larger and more natural set of gestures, enabling you to shed the "talking head" syndrome.

Simply by acting out the activities described in a children's story or fairy tale as you tell it, you become more comfortable using your body, hands, and face to punctuate your message. Because they're filled with action, children's stories are perfect for developing whole-body acting ability.

For instance, in telling the story of Jack and the Beanstalk you can mimic a determined Jack, axe in hand, chopping down the towering stalk and then you can quickly shift to a wild-eyed expression with arms flailing backward as you describe the giant falling from the sky. Or when telling the tale of King Arthur, you can act out the part of the strong and confident Sir Kay pulling, in vain, with all his might to free the sword from the stone. As you tell the story, you can actually mimic Arthur as you wrap your small hand about the hilt of the blade and then pull it smoothly from the stone, as villagers all about you shout, "Hail to King Arthur, long live the King!"

Just like using children's literature to develop vocal character, the more you experiment with telling different stories in different ways, the more comfortable you'll become using your whole body to make your point in other speaking forums.

Whether it's increased vocal character, improved diction and pacing, or enhanced use of gestures, the more you play with children's literature, experiment and have fun, the better prepared you'll be to use your speaking techniques in other forums, and the better speaker you'll be. ♣

**S. Bradley Stearns**, a member of *Speakeasy Club 5923-18*, is an analyst in the U.S. Defense Department. This article is an adaptation of a speech he used to win the 1988 District 18 International Speech Contest.

## READ ALOUD WITH CONFIDENCE *By Patrick Williams*

If you have to *read aloud* before a group, appear on *radio* or *TV*, present a *report*, quote an *article*, or even read *stories* to *children*, there are simple ways to make your presentation better.

For instance, go back and read the first sentence of this article over again, aloud. Good. Now, read it aloud once more, only this time slightly emphasize the italicized words, and pause a bit for the commas.

Notice the difference the second time. You were *conveying meaning*, not just reading words.

The technique for this is easy, and it makes your presentations much more effective and fun. Here are some simple tips to pep up your delivery right away. Practice these examples out loud:

### 1. Emphasize words that tell who, what, when, where, why and how:

"One day with *life* and *heart* is more than *time* enough to find a world." (Lowell)

### 2. Emphasize important nouns:

The *president* . . . the latest *news* . . . his *determination*.

### 3. Emphasize important verbs:

They *assumed* . . . she *lied* . . . we *flew* . . . he *understood*.

### 4. Emphasize adjectives that modify nouns:

The *private* phone . . . *sophomore* students . . . *gusty* winds.

### — especially when emphasizing opposites and special distinctions:

The *old* vase . . . *higher* values . . . *capital* letters . . . *fresh* food.

5. Use short or long pauses for emphasis and effect: Short pause for a comma, longer pause for a semi-colon; dash or dots; a longer pause for a period. And, pause a little to let a point sink in, allow a laugh, change pace, or begin a new topic.

6. Vary your tone: Instead of always starting up and ending down in voice tone, sometimes start down and end up, or go up in the middle. Try different ways—letting your enthusiasm for cer-

tain ideas and points be reflected in your voice.

7. Be sure your voice is loud enough to be heard clearly—but not too loud.

8. Speak softly now and then for drama.

9. Be conversational—simple, warm, and interesting. A smile helps. How would you express yourself in a pleasant chat with an old friend? Do it like that.

10. Understand and have an interest in the material and ideas you are presenting. If not, the audience will sense it and tune out.

Practice is the key to perfection. Read aloud to your family at the breakfast or dinner table. Read aloud to friends and associates, and to yourself in private. Ask others for comments and suggestions. Most importantly, don't let anyone (including yourself) discourage you.

Criticism has its place, but go easy when it comes to learning good speaking habits. Most of us tend to be too hard on ourselves when it comes to this skill. You just can't perform as well when feeling tense, nervous or fearful of making a mistake or being laughed at.

Try to read effortlessly—for self-development, information or for the sheer fun of it.

**Special help:** Now, reread this whole article aloud, applying the suggestions and notice how much you have improved.

**Special benefit:** As you master these techniques, they will naturally transfer themselves to your formal and impromptu talks, as well as to your ordinary conversations. Your speaking will become much more interesting and meaningful to others, and less awkward and embarrassing to yourself.

**Patrick Williams** is a management communication consultant and a student at the nonprofit New Life Foundation in Boulder City, Nevada.

# How Well Do You Read?

*Test your speed and comprehension.*

*By Charles Dickson, Ph.D.*

**O**ur ability to read, or lack of it, affects every area of our lives — from performing at work to reading the evening newspaper; from grocery shopping to determining insurance policy benefits. Yet millions of people have difficulties because their reading skills do not match the demands of everyday living.

Have you ever wondered how fast you read? Try this simple test to determine both your speed and comprehension. Get a pencil and a watch. When you come to the end of this paragraph, write down the exact time. Then continue reading at your regular speed. Questions at the end of this article will test your understanding of what you have read. Here we go.

Norman Lewis, author of the book *How to Read Better and Faster*, says, "Slow readers are poor readers. A person reads fast because he thinks fast, has good eyesight, a good vocabulary, and a wide range of information."

Those who teach remedial reading point out that few jobs do not require reading, and while five percent of American adults cannot read at all, at least 60 percent do not read well. A child who does not read well is doomed to do poorly in school, and have problems as an adult.

Practice is an important part of improved reading. Spend some time every day making an effort to read a little faster and comprehend more at a glance. The

wider your eyes span, the more words you see at once and the faster you read. An excellent reader will see an entire line at once, so that a narrow column can be read without moving the eyes from left to right.

## *The wider your eyes span, the more words you see at once and the faster you read.*

According to reading expert Dr. Stella Center, the chief reading faults are reading one word at a time and turning back to reread. Many of those who read slowly pronounce each word, either aloud or mentally, and thus significantly reduce their speed. Instead, try to keep your mind focused on the author's thought. We read efficiently when our minds and imaginations are captured by what we read.

Reading experts also agree a poor vocabulary is a drawback to rapid reading. Don't stop to look up every word in the dictionary. Keep going until at least to the end of the paragraph. Often the meaning of the word is made clear by its context. Lewis points out, "A large vocabulary does not come from looking up long lists of words in a dictionary. It comes from wide reading."

How fast should you read? If you read 225 words a minute, you are at the national average and doing as well as a sixth grader. But this is not fast enough to make newspaper or magazine reading enjoyable. High school students who do not read 300 or more words a minute have difficulties. College students should read at least 400 words per minute. If you're willing to work at it, you can increase your reading rate at least 35 percent with practice.

Now look at your watch. How much time did it take you to read the 391 words you have read so far? Divide the number of minutes into 391, and you will know your rate per minute.

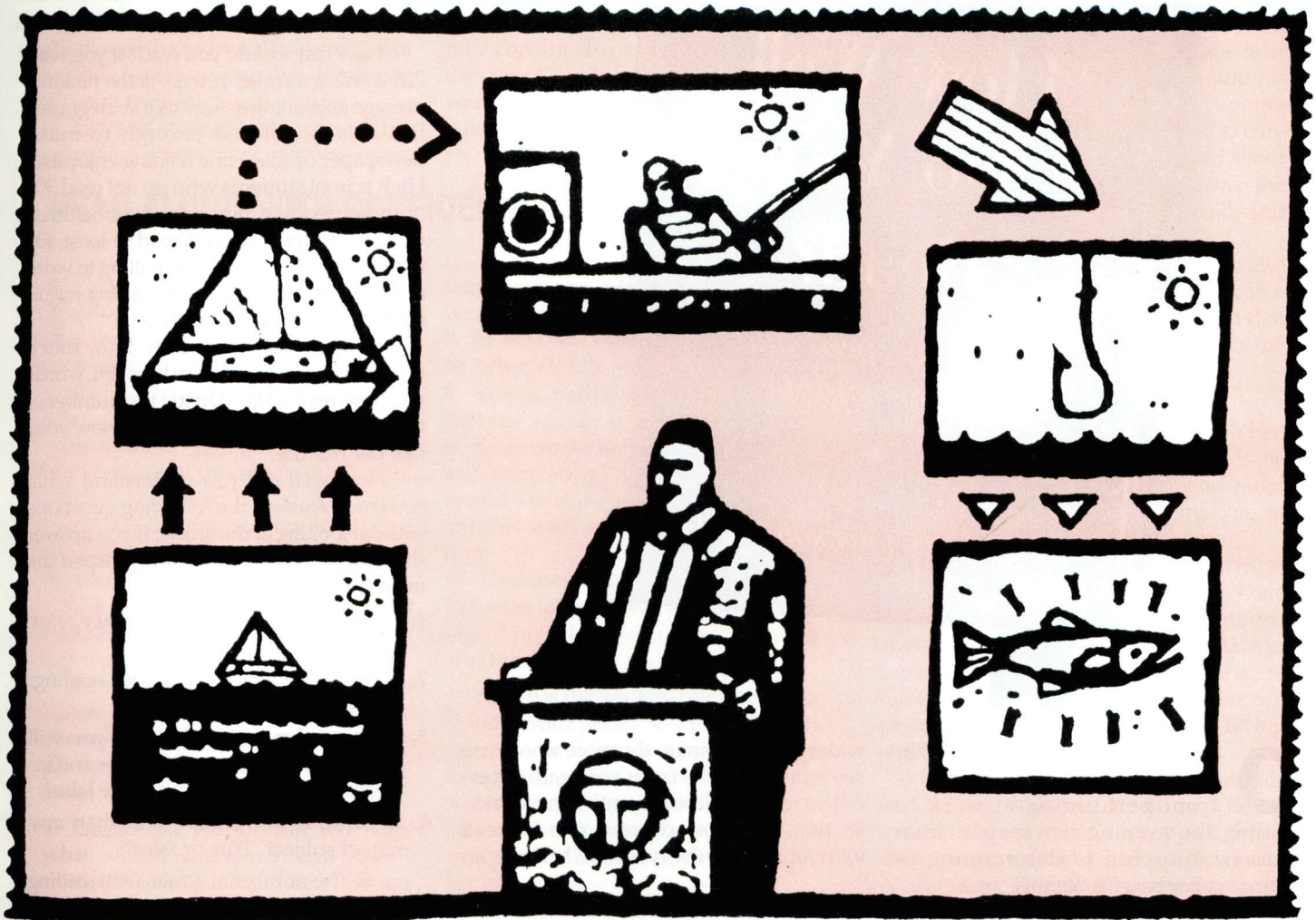
How well did you understand what you read? Answer the following questions without looking at the article. If you answer six or more correctly, you have grasped the main points of the article.

1. Fast readers miss a lot when they read. True or false?
2. A poor vocabulary slows your reading. True or false?
3. If you pronounce each word, you will understand what you read better and increase your vocabulary. True or false?
4. Reading is more important than any school subject. True or false?
5. The number of adults with reading problems is about: a) five percent, b) 25 percent, c) 60 percent.
6. Most adults can increase their reading speed by at least: a) 10 percent, b) 35 percent, c) 100 percent
7. Anyone who reads fast can learn to read faster. True or false?
8. Using a dictionary to immediately look up each new word will improve your reading rate. True or false?

**Answers:** 1) False, 2) True, 3) False, 4) True, 5) 60 percent, 6) 35 percent, 7) True, 8) False

If you didn't do as well as you liked, there are several avenues you can pursue. You can work on your own at self improvement using some ideas mentioned above, or you can seek professional assistance through local schools in your area. Whatever route you choose, remember that improving your reading skills can create new opportunities and add fulfillment to your life. ♣

**Charles Dickson** holds a doctorate in education from the University of Florida and he works with those having reading difficulties in a special school in Hickory, North Carolina.



# Storytelling: The Original Art of Communication

*Enchanting and entertaining,  
stories attract attention.*

*By John R. Ward*

**W**hen you don't know what to say, tell a story. Storytelling, like humor and music, is universally understood and enjoyed by everyone. Sharing your own stories and those of others can be a meaningful experience to the teller as well as the listener.

When someone asks you, "How did your business get started?" or "How did you and your wife meet?" a story can leap out like an untamed lion. When you say, "Our company started in a small garage off Lincoln Street on the west side of Chicago..." or "My wife was a blind date..." it is as magical as saying "Once upon a time..." You have set a scene for listening. People listen to stories at a much higher level of attention than the standard 25 percent reported from most studies about listening in general.

Our personal anecdotes may be the most ignored resource at our disposal. You might even consider story-swapping ses-

sions just for fun. When you take time to discover and share stories, your story repertoire will expand. You may gain new insights about people you have lived with or worked with for a long time. Story-swapping is appropriate in many types of group gatherings: business, social, religious, family, etc.

The spoken word was once the only form of communication. Much of the personal touch in communication has been lost in the fast pace of technology. Storytelling revives the original art of communication.

#### ADVANTAGES OF STORIES

Not only are stories enchanting and entertaining, they can enhance the communication process. Here are some examples:

- **Stories are easily remembered.** They can be effective in supporting or illustrating a point, since people relate well to personal experiences.
- **Statistics show that we learn more from material presented in story form.** Stories generate interest, which is essential for willingness to learn.
- **Stories provide structure for organized thinking.** The story is a convenient container to keep elements in proper sequence. A series of little stories can aid organization as well as retention.
- **Stories are a safe place to deal with complex issues.** Used as a fable or allegory, a story can get a point across in a subtle, rhetorical way. It can camouflage hard-hitting controversy by taking the focus off of what could be offensive if delivered too directly.
- **Group sharing of stories creates a sense of unity and togetherness.** Stories elicit personal identity to universal situations.
- **A story engages the imagination.** In the right side of the brain, which controls creativity, thinking is active in early childhood. Perhaps this is why children are so intrigued with stories. Nevertheless, the appeal of a story doesn't disappear as we get older. We still have a need to stimulate right brain activity.
- **Stories foster and encourage listening.** They possess a unique charm that captivates and holds attention.

#### COMMUNICATE A STORY

If we are interested in communicating artistically, effectively and responsibly, we must be concerned about how our message can be best delivered. The use of the story is one of many valuable tools. The events and people that give rise to stories are assets for growth in many

aspects of our lives.

Facts are important, technology is vital, but they are not all that is necessary for communication. Every business has its vignettes that may reveal how a million-dollar product resulted from an accident in the laboratory, or how a forgotten experiment solved a problem for society. For example, consider the classic story of how Madame Curie attacked the waste pile of "useless pitchblend," in her search for the hidden treasure radium.

### *Statistics show that we learn more from material presented in story form.*

Our personal stories are no less significant. Recently while moderating a discussion panel, I listened to three elderly people tell stories in response to questions from high school students. One 99-year-old man had everyone spellbound with stories of his youth in New Mexico. He even sang the 10-verse "Ballad of Statehood" as tears trickled down his cheeks. He knew how to communicate a story magnificently.

A story should have a beginning, a middle and an end. A story is like a journey—it begins in one place and ends somewhere else.

Like any other resource, a story does not have value for every occasion or all

people. There is an ancient tale that describes how a nightingale sang for the animals in a forest. The song was so beautiful that every creature listened in absolute rapture. All, that is, except one small worm resting on a maple leaf. Noticing this, a squirrel nearby viciously berated the worm for not enjoying the song with everyone else. Couldn't the worm see and appreciate how the songs made everyone else joyous? After a few moments the worm replied, "That's alright for you. The nightingale will not be eating you when he finishes his song." Perspective shared, point made.

Developing your communication skills is the best gift you can give yourself. Any improvement, however, requires time and effort. Practice is the key. If you've already chosen to communicate through music, you know the amount of practice required.

If you choose storytelling as a communication tool for your own success, find the time to do it now. Let everyone around you—fellow workers, family, friends—benefit from the rich heritage you possess. Let your stories bear ideas, concepts and new ways of thinking. The art of communication is a process. The activity of sharing part of yourself is a gift that enriches those around you. ♦

*John R. Ward is a writer and creative consultant based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He has written and produced many slide presentations and training films for industry and government and is an experienced workshop leader in health care organizations.*

## 10 WAYS TO BE A MORE POWERFUL SPEAKER

*By Marian K. Woodall*

1. Prepare — don't wing it. Preparation is the best way to quiet nerves.
2. Decide what the audience needs and use that to talk to them; speak to their perspective, not from yours.
3. Target a narrowly focused, precise message; resist trying to tell the audience all you know on the subject.
4. Provide oral guidelines so the audience can follow your message:  
"There are three major aspects..."  
"Four factors guide your decision today..."
5. Use stories, examples or "interesting stuff" to develop your message, rather than more aspects. Don't make it all information.
6. Use visual aids. Find posters or props around your office to demonstrate your points. Make slides or overheads.
7. Care deeply and sincerely about your topic; let that show in your intensity and enthusiasm. Audiences are never more enthused than you are.
8. Practice. Professionals in every walk of life practice.
9. Involve your audience; ask questions to think about, share opinions, have brief group discussions or brainstorming sessions. You'll change them from listeners into participants.
10. Close on a strong statement: a challenge, a reminder, a ringing cry will echo in the listeners' minds.

*Condensed from Speaking to a Group, Mastering the Skill of Public Speaking by speech coach Marian K. Woodall. This book is available from Toastmasters' Supply Catalog.*



Secrets from  
**The Great  
Communicator**

*Two Toastmasters' account of their meeting with Ronald Reagan.*

*By Jim Green, DTM,  
and Mark LaVergne, CTM*



**Editor's Note:** Last August after Toastmasters' International Convention in Palm Desert, Speech Contest finalist Mark LaVergne, his friend Jim Green and Green's wife Frieda arranged a visit with former U.S. President Ronald Reagan at his Los Angeles office. Reagan offered the three Toastmasters hints on public speaking. The following story describes what they learned and their reflections on Reagan as a communicator.

**W**hen we visited Ronald Reagan in August, we expected to come away with nothing more than a nice story to tell our grandchildren. We were wrong. The former president is such an impressive communicator that the 15 minutes we spent with him was worth at least 15 manual speeches in our education as Toastmasters.

Whether he's talking on television or to a trio of Toastmasters, Ronald Reagan knows how to win people over to his ideas. We learned during our visit that the secret to Reagan's power as a communicator is to consistently practice the principles of communication and leadership that we all study as Toastmasters.

When we were ushered into Reagan's penthouse suite, we felt a bit lost at first in the maze of rooms and corridors. Suddenly, Jim's wife, Frieda, noticed a man standing in a doorway, looking relaxed and smiling, and inviting us into his office. It was Ronald Reagan. Dressed in a checkered shirt and sweater, Reagan apologized for his casual wear. "I have a golf game after lunch," he said. The then 78-year-old former U.S. leader didn't hide behind a desk or put on airs. For the entire 15-minute meeting, Reagan stood face-to-face with us and shared stories from his years on the "mashed potato circuit."

Reagan told us he gave his first speech as a freshman at Eureka College in 1928. The college president had proposed cutting deeply into the curriculum to save money. The students responded by going on strike, and Reagan was one of the strike leaders. On the night the trustees met, Reagan was chosen to rally the students with a speech.

"I discovered that night," he wrote later, "that an audience has a feel to it, and that the audience and I were together. They came to their feet with a roar. It was heady wine." Any Toastmaster who's just completed the fourth or fifth speech in the basic manual will know that feeling.

Reagan admitted that he was nervous during his first attempt at public speaking that night 60 years ago. "Especially in front of the older students," he told us. "But it was the conviction, the feeling that we were right, that helped me to forget about myself and to overcome the nervousness." Focusing on the message, and forgetting yourself, is good advice for any Toastmaster who gets nervous at the lectern.

Ever since that night, Reagan has worked tirelessly to develop his speaking abilities. During college, his was a familiar face on the campus stage. After graduation, he worked as a radio sportscaster at stations throughout the Midwest and soon became known as the "voice of Midwestern baseball." This led to a Hollywood screen test in 1937, and the rest, as we know, has been a life of acting, speaking and politics.

Public speaking became the focus of Reagan's career in the late 1940s. For one thing, he was getting fewer movie roles than before. "One thing about being an out-of-work actor," he told us, "is that if you can't sing or dance, then you have to be an after-dinner speaker." Reagan's interests also shifted from acting to politics when he served several terms as president of the Screen Actors Guild. Reagan soon found himself in demand for speaking assignments around the country. Sometimes he would describe the Guild's attempts to weed out communists in Hollywood. In other speeches he would attempt to dispel popular images about loose morals and high divorce rates in Tinseltown.

Reagan said that while speaking to audiences

*"What impressed us most about our visit with Reagan is that he seemed so down-to-earth."*



Former President Ronald Reagan shares public speaking tips with the authors in his Los Angeles penthouse office.

***“Don’t use a two-syllable word where one syllable will do . . . Keep it simple, speakers.”***

***—Ronald Reagan***

about Hollywood, he stumbled upon the anti-government theme that has become his stock-in-trade ever since. “When I told groups after the war that movie actors were then being taxed at 80 percent of their income,” Reagan said, “people would come up to me afterward and tell me their own stories about government interference in their lives.” Reagan studied this audience feedback carefully and changed the focus of his speeches to the problems that ordinary Americans have with Washington. “Eventually I tossed out all my earlier material about Hollywood,” he said.

During the 1950s Reagan matured as a public speaker as a result of constant practice. General Electric hired him for eight years to host its television series and to be its public spokesman. “This involved touring the 135 General Electric plants that were spread across 39 states,” Reagan said. “At each stop I would speak to the plant workers, and that night give another speech before the local chamber of commerce.” His themes were anti-communism, traditional American values and the free-enterprise system. His delivery was lively, friendly and always filled with entertaining stories.

Reagan has spoken so often for so long that he is comfortable in any situation. Who can forget Reagan’s aplomb in March 1981 after an assassination attempt? As he was carried into surgery to remove the bullet, he borrowed a line from a Marx Brother film and quipped to his wife, “Honey, I forgot to duck!” He then jokingly asked the surgeons if they were Republicans.

Reagan advises Toastmasters to value brevity in their speeches. “Don’t use a two-syllable word where one syllable will do,” he told us. “Keep it simple, speakers!”

Reagan loves to tell a funny story to make a point; it’s been his trademark as a communicator. Early in his first presidential term he was trying to illustrate how difficult it was to impress the news media with his accomplishments.

“In the days of vaudeville,” he told a group of tough White House reporters, “ambitious performers would try out in front of a blase booking agent who was hard to please. One day a fellow walked out to center stage. The agent asked him what he did, and the kid just took off and flew around the whole theater—made a couple of circles clear up to the ceiling, came back down, and landed right in front of the agent. The agent looked up and said, ‘What else do you do besides bird imitations?’ The White House reporters laughed at the story, but also got the message. For Toastmasters the message is different but just as clear: use humor to illustrate a point, rather than try to be a comedian.

What impressed us most about our visit with Reagan is that he seemed so down-to-earth. When presenting Reagan with a medallion from Toastmasters’ International President, Jim noted that U.S. membership in Toastmasters has nearly doubled in the nine years since Reagan won the

presidency. He then thanked the former president for promoting the value of good speaking by his own example.

Reagan graciously demurred that he had nothing to do with the growth of our organization, and confessed that he couldn’t accept the medallion because he failed to join Toastmasters when he had the chance to do so years ago. Reagan communicated warmth in many ways throughout our meeting. He kept looking us in the eye, made us feel right at home in his presence and cracked self-deprecating jokes.

People often point to his Hollywood background and wonder if Reagan is for real. In truth, the many years he spent both in front of the camera and behind the lectern have enabled Reagan to always show his best side.

Likewise, we benefit by our Toastmasters training in that we get the chance to iron out the wrinkles in our style. With practice, our speeches come to reflect our true feelings and best thinking, unfettered by insecurity about ourselves or inexperience at the lectern.

When Reagan first emerged as a national leader in the 1960s, many pundits credited his political skills to his years as a Hollywood actor. The same critics then proceeded to denigrate his film career. But other people have wondered how this so-called “B-film” actor could play the role of leader and orator so well?

The secret lies in the years he spent on the “mashed potato circuit.” Acting didn’t change Reagan; he always played himself. Rather, it was his long and often overlooked career as a speaker and union leader that turned Reagan into an eloquent leader. What did it were all those years of giving impromptu talks on countless General Electric plant tours; years of conducting scores of meetings for the Screen Actors Guild; years of delivering speeches before hundreds of service clubs and chambers of commerce. In short, The Great Communicator became great by paying his dues.

For Toastmasters, the one easy lesson to be drawn from Reagan’s 60-year career is to grab every opportunity to speak and to lead. That means eagerly accepting speaking assignments both in and out of Toastmasters, and learning to get comfortable before any audience. It also means getting involved as a club and district officer to develop leadership and team-building skills.

We may not turn out to be presidents through Toastmasters, but at least we’ll have the chance to fully realize our potentials as speakers and leaders both in the business world and in our communities.

**Jim Green, DTM**, was 1987-1988 District Governor for District 52. He is a member and past officer of three Toastmasters clubs.

**Mark LaVergne, CTM**, was a 1989 finalist in the World Championship of Public Speaking and has served as Area Governor in District 46. He is an officer in two Toastmasters clubs.

# Meet Your 1990-91 District Governors



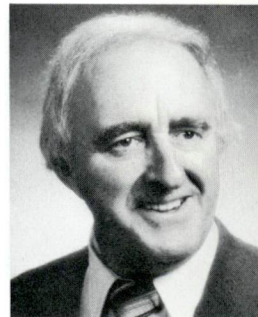
**F. Thomas H. McKerlie, DTM**  
Orange, CA



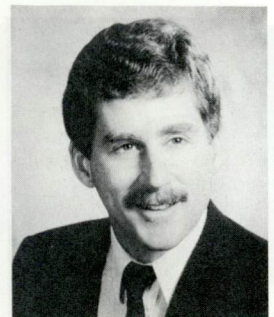
**1. Cheryl A. Myers-Kunze, DTM**  
Los Angeles, CA



**2. Arlietha Reed, DTM**  
Bothell, WA



**3. Geoffrey Wilson, DTM**  
Phoenix, AZ



**4. John W. Fenwick, DTM**  
Los Altos, CA



**5. Jose Garza, ATM**  
San Diego, CA



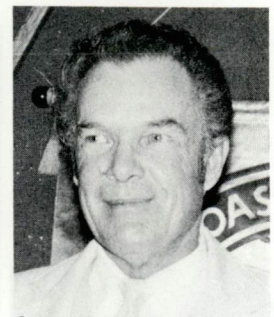
**6. Joanne Dahlin, DTM**  
Maple Grove, MN



**7. Ronald A. Edson, ATM-S**  
Vancouver, WA



**8. Lorraine Newgent, DTM**  
Fairview Heights, IL



**9. Les Sisco, Sr., DTM**  
Yakima, WA



**10. Frank C. Hirt, ATM**  
Akron, OH



**11. Jenny K. Pagano, DTM**  
Greenfield, IN



**12. Carol L. Averill, DTM**  
Chino, CA



**13. Beverly G. Belcher, ATM**  
Pittsburgh, PA



**14. Beth B. Thwaites, DTM**  
Rome, GA



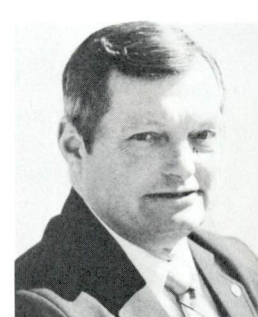
**15. Michelle Wood, ATM**  
Salt Lake City, Utah



**16. Roger D. Osburn, DTM**  
Edmond, OK



**17. Gene E. Burnett, DTM**  
Butte, MT



**18. R. Brooks Loomis, DTM**  
Crownsville, MD



**19. Carol A. Smith, DTM**  
Dubuque, IA



20. Deborah Arnold, ATM  
Bismarck, ND



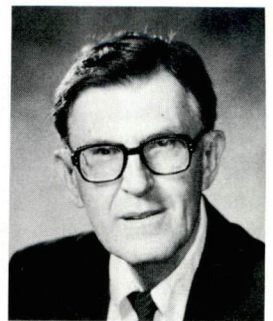
21. Dawn H. Miller, DTM  
Prince George, B.C., Canada



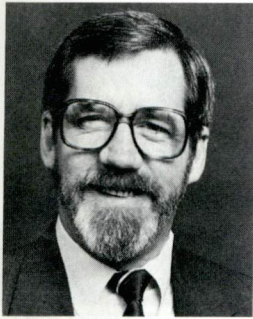
22. Louise Anderson, ATM-B  
Wichita, KS



23. Jamy D. Peevy, ATM  
Albuquerque, NM



24. A. Richard Brazis, DTM  
Bellevue, NE



25. John Fooks, DTM  
Texarkana, AR



26. Joseph M. Barrows, DTM  
Thornton, CO



27. Beverly H. Hitchens, DTM  
Alexandria, VA



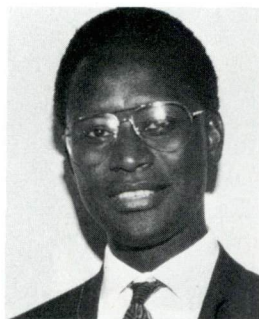
28. Bert W. Farnilo, CTM  
Royal Oak, MI



29. Harlan Brewer, ATM-B  
Eglin AFB, FL



30. Marc Nagele, DTM  
Woodridge, IL



31. Bashiru Turay, DTM  
Hyde Park, MA



32. Joyce A. Dixon, DTM  
Tacoma, WA



33. Charlene Williams, DTM  
Las Vegas, NV



35. Darlene Lightfuss, DTM  
Milwaukee, WI



36. M. Louise Butler, DTM  
Clinton, MD



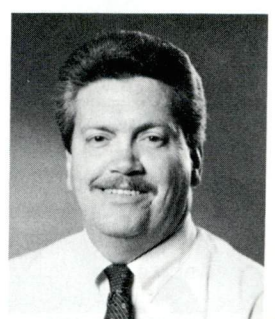
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Charlotte, NC



38. James P. Murphy, ATM  
Camp Hill, PA



39. Carol E. Williams, DTM  
Sacramento, CA



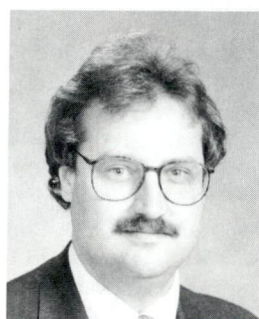
40. William Morrow, DTM  
Grove City, OH



41. Julie A. Giedd, ATM  
Sioux Falls, SD



42. Elizabeth Pasieka, DTM  
Edmonton, Alberta, CANADA



43. Peter W. Wofford, DTM  
Memphis, TN



44. Robert F. Smith, DTM  
Canyon, TX



45. Heather Perkins, ATM  
Windsor Junction, N.S., Canada



46. Gregory A. Batson, DTM  
New York, NY



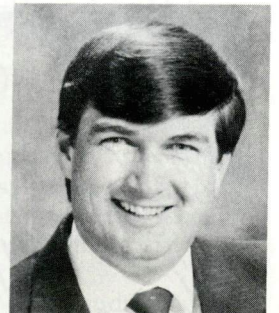
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Valrico, FL



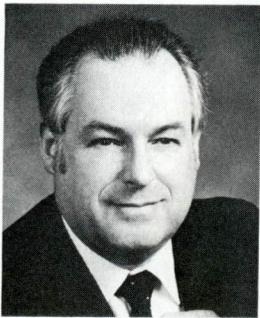
48. Angie A. Akin, DTM  
Enterprise, AL



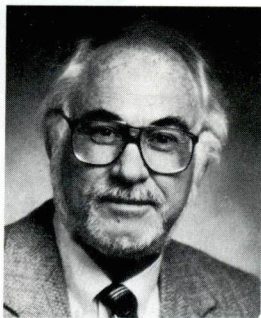
49. Doug Kelly, DTM  
Honolulu, HI



52. Alfred Roy Herzing, DTM  
Los Angeles, CA



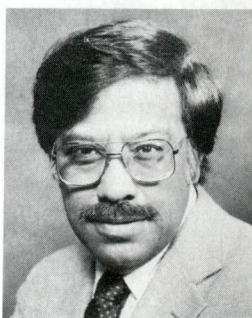
53. Robert D. Bradshaw, ATM  
Sherman, CT



54. Richard Keethers, ATM  
Kankakee, IL



56. Alberta Roberts, DTM  
Houston, TX



57. Al Mangarin, DTM  
Hayward, CA



58. Betty Janzen, ATM  
Clemson, SC



60. Harold L. Usher, DTM  
London, Ontario, CANADA



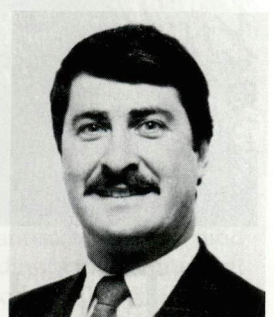
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Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA



62. Florence L. Rumsey, ATM  
Grand Rapids, MI



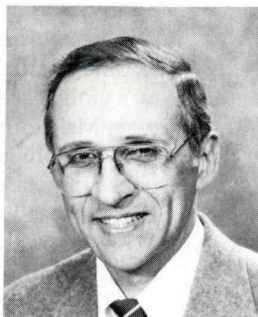
63. Mary M. Bucy, DTM  
Signal Mountain, TN



64. Laurie Fischer, DTM  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA



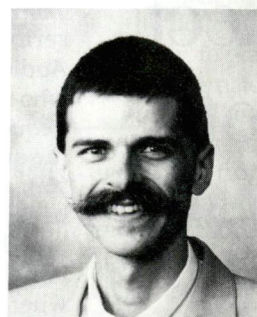
65. Virginia Moszkowicz, DTM  
Fairport, NY



66. Robert Miserentino, DTM  
Hampton, VA



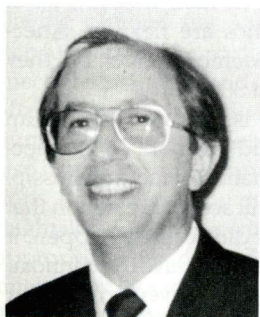
68. Pauline Harvey, DTM  
Port Neches, TX



69. Gavin Blakey, DTM  
Ashgrove, Qld, AUSTRALIA



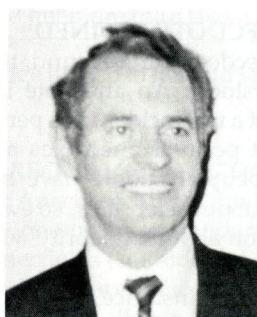
70. Richard Stacey, DTM  
Ashfield, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA



71. Ian Jones, CTM  
Thane, Oxon, ENGLAND



72. Russ Woods, DTM  
Wanganui, NEW ZEALAND



73. Charlie Holden, ATM  
Nunawading, Vic., AUSTRALIA



74. Pieter du Plessis, DTM  
Pretoria, R.S.A.



75. Virginia Europa, DTM  
Davao City, PHILIPPINES



# Finding the Perfect Anecdote

*It should be brief, funny and realistic.*

*By Lawrence J. Epstein*

All speakers routinely receive the valuable advice to include more anecdotes in their speeches. Anecdotes relax audiences and can make a serious argument in a pleasant way. Audiences easily identify with speakers who use anecdotes because the stories are frequently both human and funny. When the anecdote is about a well-known person, audience members feel like they are being let in on a secret.

The problem for speakers, therefore, is not whether to use anecdotes, but where to find them. More precisely, the problem is not where to find just any anecdote, but where to find the right one.

## THE ANECDOTE DEFINED

Before anecdotes can be found, they must be understood: An anecdote is a brief account of a real incident in a person's life. The most popular anecdotes are about famous people. People have a natural curiosity about celebrities, so even trivial information about a celebrity will garner interest.

Here, for instance, is an anecdote about comedian Jack Benny:

Jack Benny was famous for his poor abilities on the violin. One day he was invited to the White House by President Lyndon Johnson to give a performance. Benny marched up to the White House gate where he was stopped by a young Marine guard. The Marine examined Benny's violin case and asked, "What's in the case, Mr. Benny?"

The comedian gave one of his famous pauses and said, "It's a machine gun." The Marine was just as fast. He responded, "Then you can go right in. For a minute I thought you had your violin in there."

This story has all the familiar characteristics of an anecdote: it's relatively brief, supposed to be based on a true incident, and funny. In fact, though, all of these characteristics are flexible. Anecdotes can be considerably longer, but they should not exceed 300 words.

Sometimes it is unclear whether an anecdote really did happen. Most anecdotes are a combination of fact and gossip. Most audiences will accept the notion that even if an incident didn't really happen, it should have. Anecdotes have the connotation of being funny, or even trivial, but they can also be serious in their intent to

show insight into a person's life.

An anecdote is neither a joke nor a simple quotation. While jokes and anecdotes have a similar structure in their build-up and sudden punch line, the anecdote's build-up is usually longer, and its overall content more believable than that of a joke.

When I was collecting stories for a collection of Jewish anecdotes, I quickly decided that an anecdote had to be more than a joke to be good; it had to have a message as well. Here, for instance, is one anecdote I found about Israel Zangwill, a popular British author from the turn of the century:

Zangwill was once riding on a London subway. Two well-dressed women sat opposite him. As the train stopped, a poor Jewish peddler carrying a pack on his back boarded the train and sat next to one of the ladies. The woman turned to her companion in disgust and said, "Do you know of a place where there are no Jews?"

Zangwill answered for the lady: "You might try going to hell, Madam."

This is a good anecdote because while it contains a joke, it doesn't stop there. It's a statement about prejudice.

The word "anecdote" is often mistakenly used to describe a quotation. An anecdote may contain a memorable quotation, but if it does, the quotation is only part of a longer story. The quotation in an anecdote does not stand alone. While speakers can use quotations on their own or packaged in anecdotal form. For instance, here is a quotation disguised as an anecdote:

Woody Allen was once praised for his films by an admirer who claimed that Allen had achieved immortality through his wonderful movies. Allen replied, "I don't want to gain immortality through my films. I want to gain immortality through not dying."

### PLANTING ANECDOTES

Having defined the anecdote, the next step for a speaker is to determine how the anecdote is to be used. While speakers often rely on anecdotes solely for a humorous introduction, anecdotes are also useful for transitions and for illustrations throughout the speech. Speakers might illustrate points from speeches with appropriate anecdotes. For example, a list might look like this:

1. Humorous anecdote as an introduction.

2. Anecdote to illustrate point A:

3. Anecdote to illustrate point B:

4. Anecdote to illustrate Point C:

Using an anecdote in the introduction makes more sense than using a joke. If a joke has been heard before or doesn't work, the speaker has started off badly. But if an anecdote doesn't work as humor, it might still work as information, insight, or even gossip. Additionally, the anecdote can be intended as half-insight and half-joke, so that the speaker can gauge an audience's sense of humor. For instance, here is an anecdote about President Calvin

speech is about marriage, you could simply look up "marriage" and possible related subject headings such as "love," "men" and "women." The next step is to read through the anecdotes and see if any are pertinent to points made in the speech. Of course, some clever speech writers first find anecdotes that illustrate a specific point, writing a speech around that very point.

If the subject you wish to address is narrow or unusual, you may have to extract an anecdote from an original source, usually a biography or autobiography.

For anecdotes about your particular subject, look at the beginning of the book as well as the beginning of each chapter — this is where anecdotes are most likely to be included in the text. It's important to develop an eye for anecdotes, and to be able to extract them from the larger text. Remembering the key characteristics of the anecdote, look for a brief, interesting episode in the person's life, an episode that has a build-up and a surprising, funny or insightful ending.

A speaker often must reconstruct an anecdote from a book to make it appropriate for a listener, rather than for a reader.

When you reduce the long story into a brief anecdote, keep in mind that the ending is most important in an anecdote. Look for the sentence or two that sets up the ending. With the end in sight, go back and write out the full anecdote. Then read it aloud, frequently, to practice the timing and see if alternate wording makes the anecdote sound better.

The great value of extracting anecdotes from their original source, rather than from a collection, is that the audience probably hasn't heard the anecdote before and you'll sound both intelligent and original.

It makes sense, of course, to establish a library of anecdotes. Try to obtain at least one thorough anecdote collection and search out and write your own. Many speakers have wonderful joke collections and too few take the time to find the perfect anecdote that makes their speech memorable.

**Lawrence J. Epstein** is the author of *A Treasury of Jewish Anecdotes*, recently published by Jason Aronson Inc. and chosen as a main selection of the Jewish Book Club.

## ANECDOTE COLLECTIONS

**Boller, Paul F. Jr. and Donald L. Davis.**

*Hollywood Anecdotes.*

New York: Ballantine Books, 1970.

**Boller, Paul F. Jr.**

*Presidential Anecdotes.*

New York: Penguin, 1982

**Epstein, Lawrence J.**

*A Treasury of Jewish Anecdotes.*

Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc., 1989.

**Fadiman, Clifton, ed.**

*The Little, Brown Book of Anecdotes.*

Boston: Little, Brown, 1985.

**Fuller, Edmund, ed.**

*2500 Anecdotes For All Occasions.*

New York: Avenel, 1980.

**Handley, Cathy**

*Encyclopedia of Women's Wit, Anecdotes and Stories.*

Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1982.

**Hay, Peter**

*Broadway Anecdotes.*

New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

**Humes, James C.**

*Podium Humor.*

New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

**Okrent, Daniel and Steve Wulf**

*Baseball Anecdotes.*

New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

**Speaker's Treasury of Anecdotes About the Famous**

New York: Harper & Row, 1978.

**Sutherland, James, ed.**

*The Oxford Book of Literary Anecdotes.*

New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Coolidge which, while intended to be funny, is not as funny as a joke, but does contain insight into Coolidge's character:

Calvin Coolidge sat next to a woman at a dinner party. Throughout the dinner, the woman tried to get the notoriously quiet Coolidge to speak. Finally, she said to him, "I have made a bet, Mr. Coolidge, that I could get more than two words out of you."

Coolidge turned to her and said, "You lose."

### YOUR PERSONAL COLLECTION

The Great Anecdote Search can begin by looking at one of those standard collections of anecdotes (see sidebar). Most of these collections have subject indexes with numerous listings. If, for instance, your



# Tech-Talk

*Clubs across the U.S. hold joint meetings via video.*

*By Bob Ingram*

**H**ow can two Toastmasters clubs that are separated by half a continent hold a joint meeting? Answer: by video conferencing. And that is exactly what the HP Toastbusters club of Palo Alto, California, and the Speakeasies club of Boise, Idaho, did last November in a unique joint meeting spanning 700 miles.

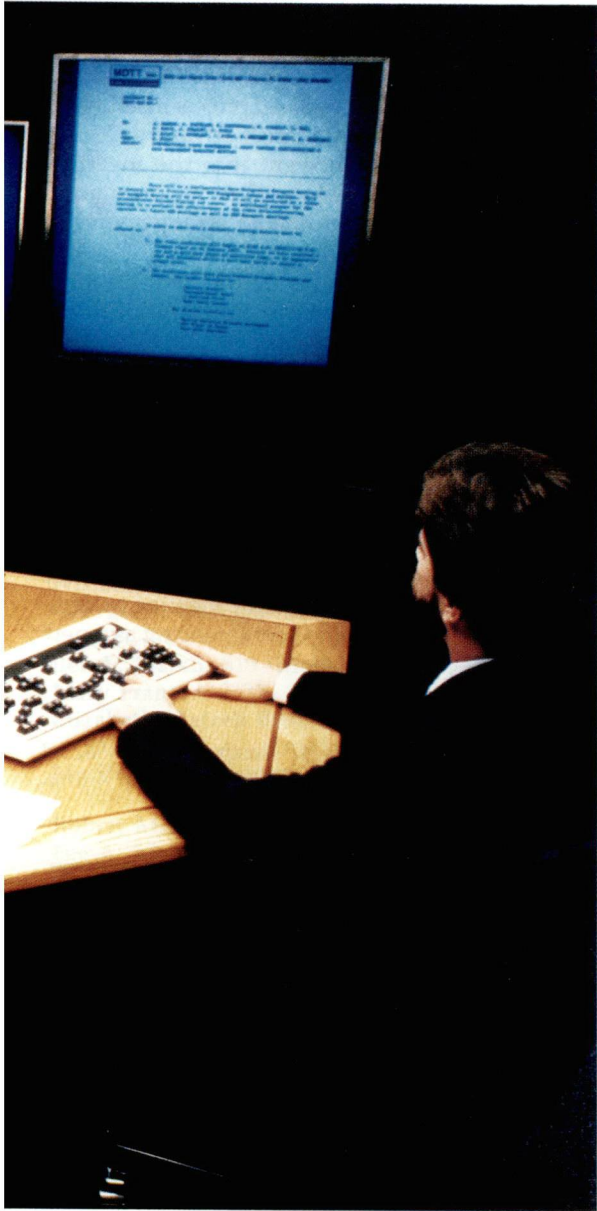
Both clubs were provided studios and transmission services for the 90-minute event by their sponsor, Hewlett-Packard Company, a leading electronics manufacturer.

Video conferencing allows small groups in two different locations to communicate with one another by televised images transmitted over phone lines.

HP Toastbusters President David Brehm, who works in Hewlett-Packard's Corporate Telecommunications and Office Systems Department, arranged the special meeting and served as both Toastmaster and technical director.

The meeting ran very much like a regular Toast-





**Members of Twilite Toastmasters 1169-47 and employees of Martin Marietta Corp. in Orlando, Florida, save time and travel by communicating via video to plant and customer sites throughout the U.S.**

masters Meeting: After introducing the theme, "Toastmasters of the Future," Brehm acknowledged Speakeasies President John Perryman, who returned the welcome. A Palo Alto Topicmaster directed questions to Toastmasters in Boise, and another Topicmaster in Boise reciprocated by directing questions to HP Toastbusters. Timers kept speakers on track at each location.

Other functional duties were divided between the two clubs: the Thoughtmaster and Wordmaster were in Boise, while the Grammarian and Ah Counter reigned from Palo Alto.

Another unique aspect of the meeting was that the four speakers completed assignments out of Toastmasters' advanced manual, "Communicating on Television." In the manner of a talk show format,

*Continued on page 26*

## More Toastmasters on the Silver Screen

By Paul J. LaCarrubba

**D**uring the past year, the 25-year-old Picatinny Toastmasters Club 3547-46 in Dover, New Jersey, has been exploring a communications system made available to it through a training program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense. Fifteen conference rooms located within various Army bases throughout the country have been linked by video satellite, creating a nationwide television network.

Thanks to a geographical listing from World Headquarters, about a dozen Toastmasters clubs were found to coincide with points in the network. Seven of these clubs are affiliated with the Army and have access to conference rooms. These clubs have pioneered what promises to change Toastmasters club meetings: video teleconferencing.

A three-point, four-club meeting hosted by the Picatinny Club with AMCATS (3151-36) and NAVFAC (3396-36) clubs in Alexandria, Virginia, and the Rock Island Arsenal Club 2667-19 in Illinois was held on May 30. The clubs in the link all provided Table Topics participants, speakers and evaluators. A tight schedule was kept to fit the rigid one-hour time slot.

This meeting was unique in that the role of the co-host was explored. Two Toastmasters were seated side by side at the conference table, exchanging dialogue and introducing the participants. Picatinny's video teleconferencing coordinator switched cameras and edited the videotape during the meeting.

Adapting a Toastmasters meeting to the silver screen has required some experimentation, but after six meetings hosted by the Picatinny Club, the basic procedures for setting up and executing a video meeting have been established. These include



**Toastmaster Rick Schwartz introduces the PENTAF club to the Picatinny Club.**

locating interested clubs; booking a time slot; FAXing the agenda; positioning the lectern, microphones and cameras; and distributing the videotapes after the meeting.

The PENTAF Club 2014-36 in Washington, D.C., stumbled through the very first video teleconference meeting with Picatinny last June.

Veteran Toastmasters found it awkward talking to a television set, but expecting it to answer back was petrifying. By the second meeting, speakers were more at ease and the implications of this powerful new medium became apparent.

The Ft. Monmouth Club 6263-46 in Eatontown, New Jersey, has conducted two video conferenced meetings. Other clubs that have participated in video meetings are the HDL Club 3323-36 in Adelphi, Maryland, and the White Sands Club 3422-23 at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.

Comedian Ernie Kovacs said that television is a medium; it's neither rare nor well done. Will Toastmasters prove him wrong? Here is a real opportunity for creativity in leadership. Admittedly, talking to a television set and expecting it to answer back may be a little strange at first.

But once the advantages of this powerful new communication mode are realized, speakers will embrace it and become as casual with the camera as they are with the telephone.

**Paul J. LaCarrubba** is president of Picatinny Club 3547-46 in Dover, New York.

***“Television is  
a medium. It’s  
neither rare  
nor well done.”***

***—Comedian  
Ernie Kovacs***

### **Tech Talk**

*Continued from previous page*

one member of each club interviewed a member of the other club.

Evaluations were done in a similar manner: Members of each club evaluated speakers from the other.

Ballots were counted at each site, and tallies were phoned in from Boise to Palo Alto, where they were added to HP Toastbusters' votes, and winners were announced as certificates were transmitted on screen. Comments for speakers were collected and sent to them by fax after the meeting.

Participants in both cities considered the joint meeting “challenging,” “inspiring,” “educational,” “outstanding” and “fun.”

“It was also a very good method for learning and practicing how to speak in front of a camera,” said Speakeasies member Brian Olson. “I encourage other clubs to follow suit and try a similar meeting.”

HP Toastbusters President Brehm saw the meeting as an opportunity for club members to develop job-related skills.

“Because we are a corporate club,” he explained, “most of our members joined to advance their careers. As the cost of air travel continues to rise and the cost of video conferencing declines, more busi-

ness meetings will be conducted in this manner. Those employees who can lead project meetings by video will have a distinct career advantage.”

Much preparation went into the meeting. President Brehm chaired the planning committee, while Lyle Larson coordinated arrangements in Boise.

About two months before the joint meeting, Brehm explained the basic concepts of video teleconferencing to members of his club in a speech from Toastmasters' advanced manual, “Technical Presentations.”

In addition, the club newsletter carried articles explaining the technology of video teleconferencing as well as a four-page special supplement covering techniques for communicating effectively on television.

Members of HP Toastbusters are currently editing videotapes of the unique meeting to demonstrate the value of video conferencing as a new medium of communication. ♣

**Bob Ingram** is president of HP Toastbusters Club 5825-4 in Palo Alto, California. He is a Hewlett-Packard Affirmative Action representative.

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## **Twilite Toastmasters Zoom in on the Future**

*By John Gillespie*

**S**ometimes you have to break something apart to get something extraordinary out of it. Pinatas, geodes, oysters — even the Twilite Toastmasters Club 1669-47 in Orlando, Florida.

In 1980, the Martin Marietta Electronics and Missiles Group, which founded the Twilite Toastmasters Club, needed more space for engineering and manufacturing. So the company established a new site some 25 miles away, on the east side of Orlando.

With employees moving to the new site, it wasn't practical for them to travel across town to attend weekly Toastmasters meetings, particularly in view of increasingly heavy rush hour traffic. In anticipation of communication problems between the plants, Martin Marietta management pioneered an interplant teleconferencing network, which has since grown to include fiber optic and satellite videoconferencing to plant and customer sites throughout the United States.

In early 1986, a Twilite club member familiar with the company's teleconferencing efforts asked permission to use the videoconference equipment during off

hours to allow club members at the new site to participate in the Toastmasters meeting without having to travel across town. Permission was granted and Twilite Toastmasters conducted its first teleconferenced meeting.

In late 1989, another Florida plant based in Ocala, about 70 miles north of Orlando, joined the weekly Twilite Toastmasters network. Every Tuesday morning, scores of Martin Marietta Toastmasters from Ocala and both sides of Orlando hold these joint meetings, which operate as if everyone were in a single room. The system works so well that Orlando Twiliters are now trying to videoconference with Martin Marietta Toastmasters in Denver, Colorado, if time differences can be accommodated for.

A videoconferencing format is almost identical to a regular Toastmasters meeting agenda. Twiliters have created a “Control Master” position to facilitate the meetings. This person is stationed at the graphics display console in the meeting room of each of the three Florida Martin Marietta plants. The Control switches and inserts visuals to supplement speakers' presentations. The Control

Master can select among video displays of speakers at the lectern, and he or she also operates the writing board and graphics table. The Control Master can manipulate these three cameras while performing any normal club activity, including speaking and evaluating.

Videoconferencing fine-tunes Toastmasters training for Martin Marietta employees and enhances their professional participation in business conferences. And Martin Marietta has learned from the experiences of Toastmasters how to optimize camera position and function, and improve microphone type and placement.

Twilite Toastmasters' experience in videoconferencing has made the system far more user friendly for the entire company. And Twilite Toastmasters has proved that with today's technology, no Toastmasters club need be isolated from other clubs, no matter how distant they are.

**John Gillespie** has been a member of Twilite Toastmasters Club 1669-47 since 1985.

## DTM

*Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Distinguished Toastmaster certificate, Toastmasters International's highest recognition.*

Dodi Palmer, 6057-1  
 Kenneth M. Cage, 117 - 2  
 Mary Lee Madison, 1918 - 3  
 Rita Fredlund, 1771 - 4  
 Vera E. Mizell, 203 - 5  
 Stephen C. Satko, 2560 - 10  
 William C. Keller, 1096 - 11  
 George H. Graham, 1211 - 11  
 Ben F. Marsh, 810 - 14  
 Mary Frances, 3133 - 14  
 Elizabeth Matzek Boaz, 2438 - 26  
 M. Stephen O'Connor, 1499 - 35  
 Robert Misener, 450 - 42  
 Lee A. Mackay, 1860 - 42  
 Rose M. Bradley, 2161 - 42  
 Louise Y. Boyd, 3018 - 47  
 Carol H. Dayton, 6860 - 47  
 Jacqueline S. Lawley, 3963 - 48  
 Marvis Ellen Hansen, 125 - 52  
 Alfred Roy Herzing, 4676 - 52  
 William Jeffrey Riggs, 6701 - 56  
 Nancy S. Johnson, 6001 - 58  
 Ivan Richard Watts, 3090 - 60  
 Fredrick H. Knack, 2780 - 66  
 Margaret Favell, 2498 - 72  
 Noreen Patton, 6018 - 72  
 David O. Roberts, 2249 - 74  
 Joseph Adonis Milan Baduel, 35 - 75

## ATM Silver

*Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Able Toastmaster Silver certificate of achievement.*

Jeanene Johnson O'Brien, 5707 - 4  
 Ezekiel Smith, 5315 - 5  
 Noel M. Field, 167 - 6  
 Mark Andrew Schumacher, 431 - 9  
 George H. Graham, 715 - 11  
 Wayne Alexander Cooper, 3922 - 21

*"I do the best I know how, the very best I can; and I mean to keep on doing it to the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me will not amount to anything. If the end brings me out all wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference."*

*Abraham Lincoln*

Carol V. Havey, 1743 - 30  
 H. W. Slach, 1174 - 32  
 Barry Fox, 5515 - 52  
 John R. Hayes, 3301 - 60  
 Paul M. Porritt, 3301 - 60

## ATM Bronze

*Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Able Toastmaster Bronze certificate of achievement.*

Joseph Nicassio, 608 - F  
 Kenny Kan, 4544 - 4  
 Ezekiel Smith, 5315 - 5  
 Hans H. Schallig, 395 - 7  
 Stephen W. Henley, 4661 - 7  
 Ben Franklin Marsh, 810 - 14  
 Bessie McCloud, 5901 - 14  
 Milton A. Cerny, 1340 - 19  
 Sam Bloom, 2710 - 20

Gene Grice, 5801 - 25  
 Carol V. Havey, 1743 - 30  
 M. J. Williams, 2242 - 39  
 William George Pasztor, 6895 - 39  
 Scott A. Zingler, 4532 - 40  
 Norbert Leidl, 4499 - 42  
 Richard F. Maemone, 2413 - 46  
 Connie Moartense, 5833 - 61  
 Genevieve Becker, 5462 - 71  
 Keith F. Dignan, 4594 - 72  
 Zoila P. Genato, 4426 - 75

## ATM

*Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Able Toastmaster certificate of achievement.*

Rosemarie Carmichael Duke, 6498 - 5

Jack Hankel, 160-9  
 Donna E. Ayers, 4808 - 9  
 Lee Aubin, 1475 - 12  
 Marion Vassilakos, 2593 - 12  
 Scarlett Santay, 3592 - 14  
 Asher F. Tunik, 6892 - 18  
 Catherine Hockett, 1857 - 19  
 Ian W. Scargill, 1929 - 21  
 Jane Elizabeth Powell, 1938 - 21  
 Scott K. Paris, 7460 - 21  
 C. Watson Waulor, 3214 - 22  
 Manuel Ontiveros, 2127 - 23  
 Timothy Dippold, 5731 - 23  
 Patricia Kay Hiller, 2114 - 24  
 George Rogers Gideon, 4005 - 25  
 Eveline Yang, 871 - 26  
 William C. Thompson, 1445 - 26  
 Shirley Escott Davis, 2554 - 26  
 Kenneth U. Mowll, 3179 - 27  
 Arlene S. Cooper, 4390 - 27  
 Steven E. Sapienza, 2745 - 30  
 Robert Moffatt, 2277 - 31  
 Lefern Humphery, 3991 - 31  
 Sheila M. Oranch, 3993 - 31  
 David McIlhenny, 5525 - 31  
 Patricia Babcock, 4333 - 33  
 Cheryl Schultz, 2700 - 35  
 Alice B. Alexander, 693 - 36  
 Rita M. Chatham, 3594 - 36  
 Charles M. Medlin, 1048 - 37  
 Ronals R. Genova, 714 - 38  
 Connie M. Regnell, 3475 - 39  
 Alan J. Nuytten, 7475 - 39  
 Robert P. Addis, 3341 - 40  
 Connie L. Fricke, 3456 - 40  
 Steve P. F. Fedyna, 489 - 42  
 Gary W. McKenzie, 2105 - 42  
 Marjorie Powell, 1702 - 47  
 Mary Coleman St. John, 2449 - 47  
 Ann M. Shields, 6251 - 47  
 Kevin Macleod, 4946 - 56  
 Shinya Ochiai, 4973 - 56  
 Madan Singh, 4973 - 56  
 Anne R. Lowy, 890 - 57  
 Catherine Stoots, 2091 - 58  
 Bruce N. Runnalls, 5712 - 60  
 John Gupta, 2827 - 61  
 Jerry W. Conrad, 3009 - 62  
 Frank Broome, 4559 - 63  
 Sharon C. Freeman, 1419 - 64  
 Fern Butler, 5659 - 65  
 Barbara A. Periman, 2870 - 66

Steven F. Yaros, 3184 - 66  
 Abu Bakar Mudin, 4237 - 70  
 Pauline Marie Newman  
 Hawke, 5073 - 70  
 Joseph Christopher Bergin,  
 5795 - 70  
 Graham Terrell, 6175 - 70  
 David Heggart, 6345 - 70  
 Peter Graves, 6406 - 70  
 Virginia Ridgway, 1996 - 72  
 Noreen Patton, 6018 - 72  
 Charles H. Holden, 1179 - 73  
 Janine Gordenne, 844 - 74  
 Ma Fides A. Balili, 4933 - 75  
 Baleriano Pasquil, 4933 - 75

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 Toastmasters Mesa, 7657-3  
 Mesa, Arizona  
 MCT Speakeasy, 7658-3  
 Mesa, Arizona  
 IE-Toastmasters Club, 7670-3

Tempe, Arizona  
 Success Masters, 1301-8  
 Carbondale, Illinois  
 Hollister-Stier, 7680-9  
 Spokane, Washington  
 IRS, 6439-10  
 Cleveland, Ohio  
 Notre Dame MBA, 7678-11  
 Notre Dame, Indiana  
 Indianapolis Fellowship,  
 7704-11  
 Indianapolis, Indiana  
 Talk of the Town, 7652-15  
 Vernal, Utah  
 Talking Circle, 7664-21  
 Kamloops, B.C., Canada  
 Daseke Corporate, 7663-25  
 Dallas, Texas  
 Morning VIP, 7708-25  
 Garland, Texas  
 Silver-Tongued Devils, 7705-26  
 Colorado Springs, Colorado  
 ESO Toasters, 7675-27  
 Alexandria, Virginia  
 Brass Craft, 5777-28  
 Southfield, Michigan  
 New Center, 7667-28  
 Detroit, Michigan  
 The Postal Employees, 7672-29  
 Mobile, Alabama  
 Clinton, 7677-31  
 Clinton, Massachusetts  
 Point of Toastmasters, 7707-31  
 West Yarmouth,

Massachusetts  
 Speakers Corner, 5131-36  
 Silver Spring, Maryland  
 G.E.I.S. Breakers, 5609-36  
 Rockville, Maryland  
 Vaca Morning Toast, 7674-36  
 Vacaville, California  
 BTC, 6367-37  
 Winston-Salem, North  
 Carolina  
 Sandoz Monroe Road,  
 7679-37  
 Charlotte, North Carolina  
 Clark County, 7661-40  
 Winchester, Kentucky  
 Metropolitan, 7665-40  
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 Hampshire  
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 7681-46  
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 TMRMC Healthy Talkers,  
 6185-47  
 Tallahassee, Florida  
 Disney ToastMouseters,  
 7671-52  
 Burbank, California  
 Fluor Daniel, 7666-56  
 Sugar Land, Texas  
 La Quinta & Friends,  
 7676-56  
 San Antonio, Texas  
 Safeway, Inc., 7659-57  
 Oakland, California  
 240 Sparks, 7706-61  
 Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
 Maleny, 7709-69  
 Maleny, Qld., Australia  
 "Talking Heads," 3300-71  
 Garrycoe, Co. Cork, Ireland  
 Northrise, 1988-72  
 Auckland, New Zealand  
 The Gourmet Club, 7662-72  
 Wellington, New Zealand  
 Victoria Court, 4773-75  
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 Philippines  
 American Micro Systems,  
 5669-75  
 Paranaque, Metro Manila,  
 Philippines

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Superstition, 73-3

### 35 years

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 Burlington, 1835-37  
 Marvin G Rook, 1848-40

### 30 years

Hi-Noon, 3172-25  
 Naval Ordnance Station,  
 3173-27  
 Puget Prattlers, 1594-32

### 25 years

Los Cerritos, 192-F  
 Excalibur, 2914-4  
 Woodman, 681-11  
 San Joaquin, 201-33  
 TM Club of Barrie Ont,  
 1603-60  
 Wellington, 1046-72

### 20 years

Transportation, 1153-37  
 Las Juntas, 2473-57

### 15 years

Broadview 3303, 3303-30  
 Greater Homestead, 1867-47  
 Kalmia, 1239-58  
 North Shore, 2256-72

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Calmecac, 4329-U  
 Fuller Spirits, 2206-6  
 Mills Early Risers, 2312-6  
 Wrip City, 1597-7  
 The Volunteers, 3501-11  
 The 25/25, 3838-11  
 Lk Arrowhead Mile-High,  
 4-12  
 Lord Peninsula, 491-13  
 Connaught, 4328-21  
 Energetics, 536-26  
 Laramie, 2546-26  
 Bolling Air Force Base,  
 3308-27  
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 Micro TMC, 4331-31  
 Sunrise Toastmasters, 4333-33  
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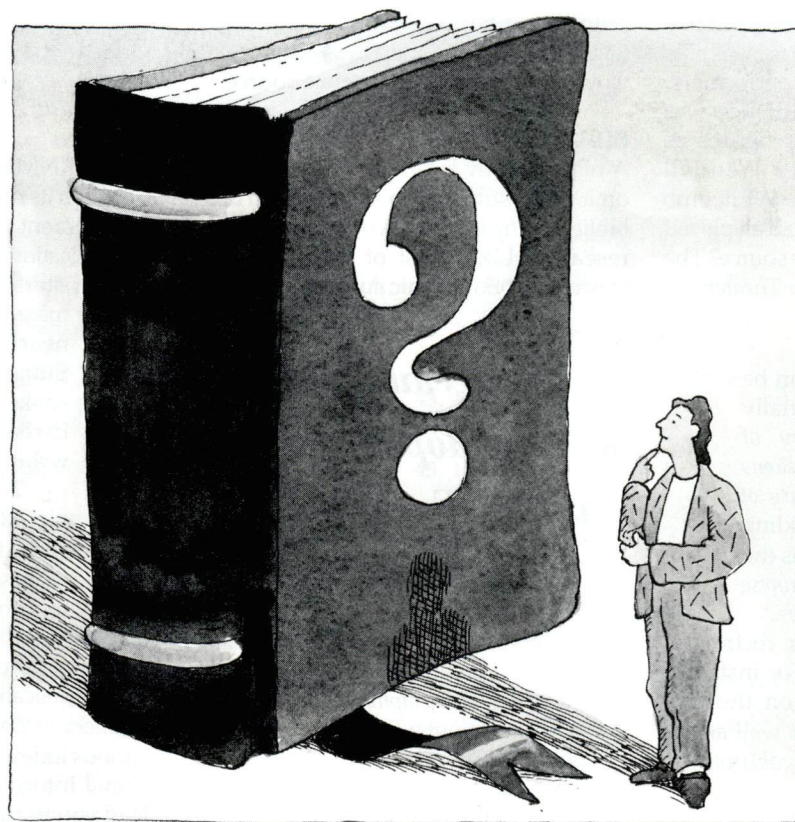
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# You Can't Judge a Book By Its Cover

*A library's reference department can be a Toastmaster's treasure-trove.*

*By Don B. Center*

**S**everal years ago, I was evaluating yet another in a series of successful speeches by a particularly skilled Toastmaster. As always, he was poised, articulate, personable and organized; yet, so were many others in our club. I asked myself; what made him stand apart?

I then took the opportunity to analyze just why his speeches were more effective. And the simple truth was that his content was very interesting. He used examples, anecdotes and other relevant facts to highlight his specific thesis and purpose.

Later, as I began to prepare my next manual speech, I resolved to include a myriad of interesting information. This resolution led me to our local library, and in turn, to a Toastmaster's treasure-trove of materials.

While most of us know how to locate particular books through the card catalog

in our local library, we may feel a bit intimidated by the microfiche file. However, it's a good idea for any serious orator to become familiar with the cornucopia of data available at the library's reference section. Literally thousands of reference books are available to research any topic, answer any question. Your local community or college librarian will prove to be your best guide, and the following reference sources should also prove extremely valuable:

## **ENCYCLOPEDIAS**

If you haven't used an encyclopedia since your high school days, you're sure to be surprised. While the familiar *Encyclopedia Americana* and *World Book* are still available and useful, note that there are more than 1,000 various specialized encyclopedias. There's an *Encyclopedia Canadiana* for information on our neighbors to the north. There are also encyclopedias on American

antiques, Black American folklore, insects, football, fishing lures, military history, Chinese food, cooking, sailing, and ... well, you get the idea.

These books are invaluable. Recently, I had to present an informative speech on soccer, and needed biographical information on soccer's legend, Pele. I found what I was looking for in the *Encyclopedia of World Soccer*, of course, along with a definition of a penalty kick and information on who won the 1972 "Super Cup."

## **DIRECTORIES**

Directories generally provide a thorough, annotated list on a specific category. For example, you can find the *Directory of American Book Publishers* or the *Directory of Organizations Interested in the Handicapped*. Other directories are available on a wide range of subjects such as: Canadian map collections, New Jersey newspapers, and ancestral heads of New England families.

A recent speech on the history of live theater in our area came to life as I was able to describe the theaters, the performers, and their programs. My audience was fascinated that such notable figures as John Phillip Sousa, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Buffalo Bill, James Whitcomb Riley and the Marx Brothers had all played at our community theatre. My source? The *Dictionary of Historic American Theaters*.

## DICTIONARIES

No serious communicator can be successful without occasionally consulting the *Dictionary of Synonyms*, the *Dictionary of Idioms and Maxims*, or the *Dictionary of American Proverbs*. Or try tackling more esoteric volumes such as the *Dictionary of Golfing Terms*, *Chinese Mythology*, or *British Surnames*.

Sometimes, a particular dictionary becomes the speech topic. For instance, I've given speeches based on the *Dictionary of U.S. Place Names* as well as the *Dictionary of Fairies, Hobgoblins and Brownies*.

## INDEXES

These handy research tools are especially valuable when looking for periodical articles. For example, the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* is an index of current magazine articles. Similarly, there's the *New York Times Index*, the *Wall Street Journal Index*, and the *Christian Science Monitor Index*.

Other periodical indexes are classified by subject. *The Catholic Index* will provide you with listings of journal and newspaper articles on numerous topics related to Catholicism. Likewise, indexes exist for various areas, including psychology, education, the arts, the humanities and so on.

Literature indexes can be especially valuable. There are indexes to poetry, plays, music, speeches, short stories and book reviews. Again, specific subject indexes often exist for the above subject areas. For instance, there is an *Index to Periodical Literature on Christ* and an *Index to Scientific Articles on American Jewish History*.

## ALMANACS

No longer the sole domain of farmers and fishermen, today's almanacs provide much more than weather forecasts. Almanacs are concise, ready-reference sources for charts, statistics and data on subjects ranging from politics and geography to history and sports.

They are especially helpful when comparing data. For example, if you were

preparing a talk on various state birds or flags of European countries, an almanac would be your ideal reference source.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIES

A bibliography is simply a list of sources on a given subject. So a well constructed bibliography can save you many hours of research. Like most of their reference sources, bibliographic subjects are varied

## *Of special interest to Table Topics speakers is the "Facts on File" publication.*

and numerous. However, no matter what your topic, a bibliography is sure to exist. How about a *Bibliography of American Hymnals*? Or how about a *Bibliography of Fossils*? Or Jazz, Parapsychology, New Mexico Paleontology or 18th Century English Literature? The list is endless.

Bibliographies occasionally cover specific time periods as well. The most notable example is probably *Early American Imprints 1639-1819*. This is an exhaustive 14-volume set listing all books and pamphlets published in America during the covered dates. Similar works include *Early English Books, 1475-1640*, and *Western Americana, 1550-1900*.

## ATLASES AND GAZETTEERS

Don't overlook the value of these sources. An atlas is a collection of maps while a gazetteer is an annotated dictionary of places. Both, however, offer a wide variety of content and subject matter. Maps cannot only show places and distances, but other features such as elevations, populations, physical configurations, weather patterns, and so on. While most maps are geographical, they can also provide information on political, social, economic, and historical matters. For example, there is the *Atlas of American Agriculture*, of *World Religions*, of *Anglo-Saxon England*, and of *Australian Natural Resources*.

Historical atlases can show former geographic particulars, including inaccuracies by early cartographers. They also can provide other data as illustrated by the *Atlas of Classical Archaeology* and the *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*.

Likewise, gazetteers often provide interesting facts, including place names and descriptions for unincorporated areas and for places that no longer exist. They also

can contain additional data such as provided in the *Gazetteer of Florida Indians*, the *Gazetteer of American Politics* and the *Gazetteer of Early Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites*.

## GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

Through its numerous agencies, the federal government produces literally thousands of publications daily. Ranging from pictures and posters to books and audiovisual materials, these "documents" cover nearly every conceivable topic. Subjects as varied as poisonous snakes, canning cabbage, Amelia Earhart, flag designs, and handwriting analysis, are discussed.

Though no single source will provide you with the key to researching these documents, a number of resources will help you. A monthly catalog is issued by the Superintendent of Documents, which indexes approximately half of all government publications. A *Cumulative Title Index*, an *Index to Government Periodicals*, and the various indexes and guides of the Congressional Information Service will generally lead you to the remaining materials.

## FACTS ON FILE

Of special interest to Table Topic speakers is the *Facts on File* publication. Started in 1941, this is a weekly current events digest with an annual index. It covers a variety of world news events and is an excellent source to find out what happened, to whom, when and where.

## BOOKS IN PRINT

This annual, multi-volume publication provides an index to books currently in print. The indexes are arranged by author, subject and title. The Library of Congress has produced sets of the *National Union Catalog* series, each covering a different time period. Each set is arranged by author and covers all books and pamphlets ever cataloged by the Library of Congress. These sets now contain more than 1,000 volumes.

Obviously, thorough research of your speech topic demands considerable time, energy, and patience; yet, the results are significant. Your speeches will be more enlightening, substantive and interesting. But one word of caution — research causes an alarming side-effect — insatiable curiosity! ♦

**Don Center** is a member of Chief Munsey Sunrisers Club 4552-11 in Muncie, Indiana.

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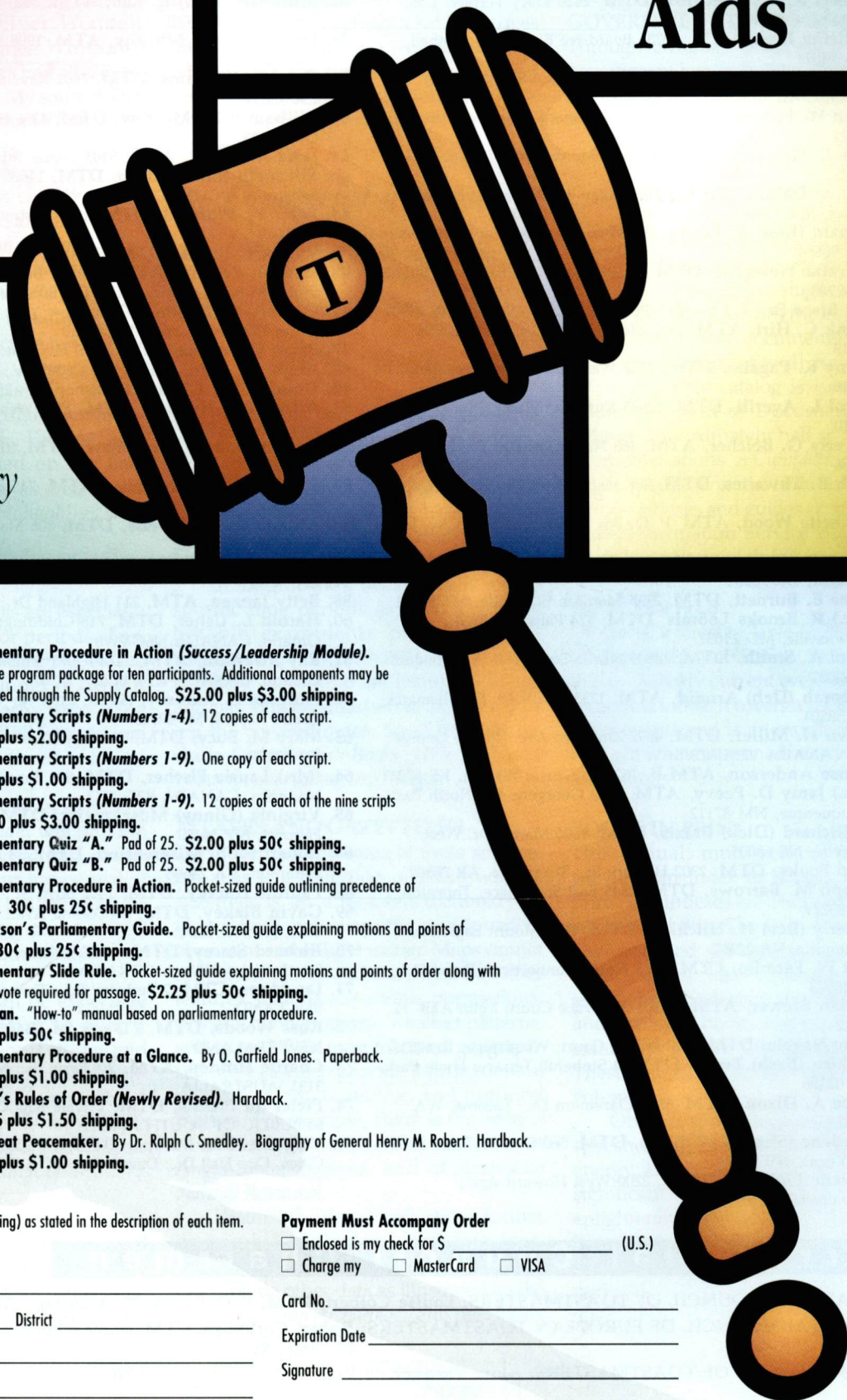
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