



# The Pride Moments

A Newsletter of the Toastmaster Indiranagar Pride | Chartered Club of Toastmasters International USA  
Club No. 3078424 | Area C5 | Division C | District 92

## The Club Officers January – May 2015

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

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Welcome to the seventh edition of the Toastmasters Indiranagar Pride newsletter!

The newsletter brings together all the events that have occurred over the past few months – Club Contest, Area Contest, Division Contest, 100<sup>th</sup> Meeting Celebrations and the milestones reached by the club and members.

Happy reading!

**TOASTMASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL®

Toastmasters Indiranagar Pride meets every Sunday at Rotary Club, Indiranagar from 4:45PM to 6:30PM.

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*From The Editor's Desk*

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In the last few months, the club and its members have achieved many milestones and this newsletter is aimed at celebrating those milestones. This term the club celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> meeting, had many members completing their competent communication track, competent leadership track, advanced communication and leadership track. All this has been possible by the hard work of the committee and club members together!

The club's forward thinking approach required the club to increase the seating capacity due to influx of new members and guests. Indiranagar Pride has also achieved the President's Distinguished Club status.

In this edition of the newsletter, members can benefit from the educational articles by experienced Toastmasters and make use of these points in their future speeches. So jump right in and enjoy the seventh edition of the 'Pride Moments'.

Thank you to all the members for their contributions! A special mention to TM Shilpi/TM Ranjani for their help and contributions as co-editors while creating this newsletter.



**TM Ashutosh Srivastava**  
**Editor – The Pride Moments**  
**Vice President Public Relations**  
**Toastmasters Indiranagar Pride**

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*From The Co-Editor's Desk*

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**“It's when ordinary people rise above the expectations and seize the opportunity that milestones truly are reached.”**

For many of us, we get so caught up in the day-to-day building of a business or career that we don't stop and celebrate our milestones and achievements.

I'm sure you all know and share this feeling: when we are working really hard and so focused on the task at hand, we often forget what we are achieving is incredible, however small it may be. We all do this, whether it's training to climb a mountain, renovating an apartment or achieving a career (or, a Toastmasters) goal.

So, now, I have written out as many milestones as I can remember and added them to my diary. Now, even if I don't have a party to celebrate, I will stop and acknowledge what I have achieved. It's time to acknowledge your achievements even if you don't think they are huge or life changing. They all have a level of significance to your life.

It's so important to celebrate your milestones and achievements and even more important to share them with the people who love and support you. And through this edition, we, at Pride, are celebrating milestones that we have achieved in the last one year.



**TM Ranjani Ranganathan**  
Co-Editor | The Pride Moments

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*From The Co-Editor's Desk*

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Yay! We at Indiranagar Pride are indeed a happy bunch this summer because we are 100+ meetings old now. No longer are we merely toddling but walking confidently with recent wins at the Division C conference. We are also celebrating several of members finishing the CC and CL track.

This past quarter is full of so many milestones that we have themed this newsletter "Celebrating Milestones". Here's welcoming you to accompany us to the celebration and the journey ahead.



**TM Shilpi**  
Co-Editor | The Pride Moments

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### *From The President's Desk*

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Here we are in the final quarter of 2014-15 already! The year has just zoomed past! It is time to prepare for the grand finale of the International Speech contest of District 92 at Kochi on May 30th and 31st. A time to look back and reflect on the year that has been. To take stock of the possibilities that bore fruit – what could be has now turned into what is. What a wonder that is – to make into reality the opportunities of yesterday. I am reminded of this quote from Paulo Coelho's Alchemist. "When you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it"

We PRIDE ourselves on being a club which encourages its members to spread out their wings. We also proactively arrange educational sessions to benefit members. Special sessions started as early as August 2014. This one was on Speech Evaluation for a Contest and was handled by Area Governor, TM Chandramouli. As many members were taking part for the first time in the Table Topics contest and the International Speech contest during March 2015, sessions on how to tackle them were taken by TM Chimmu Kutty and TM Kausthubh respectively. After the contest fever, the club was benefitted by a fresh 'batch' of Speech Evaluators. To decode and simplify speech evaluation, President, TM Chimmu Kutty conducted a session on this topic in the first week of May, 2015. We also have several interesting meetings lined up for members during the coming months.

It is a pleasure to work with my team of Committee Members. Each meeting is filled with new ideas and suggestions. We firmly believe that "Innovation is not the result of chance; it's the result of action. It's NOT a thing to wait for. It's a thing to do" - Phil McKinney.

This term has seen a lot of new practices - for example the TM points system every month for the TM of the Month Award and the spreadsheet to reserve slots for speeches and roles are the brainchild of TM Abilash, VP Education. The interesting and picturesque MoMs we look forward to every week, thanks to TM Ranjani, Secretary. The diligent follow-up with guests after every meeting by TM Jitesh, Immediate Past President and TM Nishanth, VP Membership. The hand holding of a guest till conversion to a member by TM Nishanth, VP (M), TM

Srinivas, Treasurer and TM Kausthubh, Charter President. The hard working editor of this newsletter, TM Ashutosh who always has several ideas up his sleeve and ably assisted in this edition by TM Shilpi and TM Ranjani. Sergeant-At-Arms, TM Ravi Rathore for doing such a wonderful job week after week. And now, TM Sakthi working diligently to keep our meetings smooth. Great job! The warm welcome email and inclusion into the PRIDE WhatsApp group by President, TM Chimmu Kutty. Finally, Area Governor, TM Chandramouli whose extensive experience as a Toastmaster has always been at our disposal.

Yes, we are a TEAM

T - Together

E - Everyone

A - Achieves

M – More

And that is the essence of the PRIDE – we are a family. Each meeting is a wonderful experience of friendship and bonding. Coming to awards – we have won an impressive number this year. Starting from the awards at Division level such as, Best Website, Highest DCP Points to Fast Five, Spirit of 92, and Golden Gavel Plus at the District Level.

My term as the President has made me lifelong friends with my team. Incidentally, it has also made me a better speaker and a communicator. We had the distinction of celebrating our 100th meeting in style this term! Hosting this event outside the usual club premises was an eye-opener and a learning experience. Let me place on record my appreciation for all the hard work and attention to minutiae done by the team which has resulted in the smooth running of meetings, events and competitions. The PRIDE has a bright and brilliant future to look forward to. Buckle your seatbelts for the ride ahead! Wishing each member a journey of discovery and fun.



**TM Chimmu Kutty | President**

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*Koffee with Kausthubh (Charter President)*


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**Q:** How long had you been a Toastmaster for before Indiranagar Pride?

**A:** 2 years

**Q:** When and where did you hold the demonstration meeting? Who were the club mentors?

**A:** The day and time of meeting was always the same - Sundays @ 5 PM. We used to meet in East Cultural Association (ECA) on Indiranagar 100 Ft Rd. The mentor of the club was Leju Varghese.

**Q:** How long did it take to gather the first 20 members, in order to be chartered?

**A:** 5 months. It wouldn't have taken that long but a few members who had enrolled, backed out before the charter.

**Q:** What kind of challenges did you face during this time?

**A:** The district was always keen on getting any 20 members and chartering the club. I was decided I will charter only with 20 members who wanted to remain with the club. So when some members wanted to cancel their enrolment before charter, I complied. The challenge was to keep the district at bay while I waited for the magic 20.

**Q:** How did your role change once the club was chartered?

**A:** It didn't change at all. All along from the first meeting, my role and its responsibilities have been the same before and after charter.

**Q:** What kind of challenges did you face during this time?

**A:** This was the time the foundation of the club was being laid. The biggest challenge during this period was not to

be overcome by our growth and to stay focused on the 4 core values of Toastmasters - Respect, Integrity, Service & Excellence.

**Q:** What vision did you have for the club's first 100 meetings, which we have achieved recently?

**A:** My vision is not for just the first 100 meetings but for every season to come. It is that the people who join us should transform positively - every single one of them.

**Q:** What's vision do you have for the club's future?

**A:** The vision remains the same. It is easy to get lost in the laurels and accolades that come our way as a club and forget about individual members. The club has to remain focused and dedicated to the development of every single member even if it is at the expense of these laurels and accolades.

**Q:** What has being a part of a new-born club added to your Toastmasters' experience?

**A:** I know the secret to starting from scratch and making the club a success! :-)

**Q:** What's your advice to someone who wishes to start a club of their own?

**A:** Never do it for yourself.



**TM Kausthubh | Charter President**

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## *Why??*

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A very simple question evaded my mind in the first few of years of my Toastmasters journey. I did not bother to look for answers to this simple, basis yet a mandatory question that one needs to ask whenever one sets out to do something significant. The question is.. WHY?? Why did I join Toastmasters?

I was not very proud of my conversation skills and wanted to make a significant difference in my ability to convey my thoughts/ideas in a conversation. That was why I joined Toastmasters. Initially, I was a bit lost in understanding the proceedings and terminologies. Later, got caught in the normal cycle of CC1, CC2, play roles, and so on. Somehow, got carried away by what others thought needs to be done. Then I met Pathikrit Bandopathyay, a person who became my first mentor. He asked me the right questions and gave me directions to follow the goal that I set out to achieve. Unlike most toastmasters, I was not the most fluent speakers. I started out to give miserable speeches, wondering from where one should pick topics? Most often, it used to be an idea from the latest book that I read, or an article that I read somewhere. I had to repeat my Projects multiple times to understand what each project meant.

It is extremely funny how till then I was focusing more on completing CC or CL. Then my focus shifted to understanding how to script, how to use words to create vivid imagery, how to voice the thoughts, etc. which are the fundamentals of any form of communication. Slowly, yet surely, I started to feel a huge difference in my thought process when it came to presenting an idea/thought. There was a point when how I achieve what I set out to achieve in Toastmasters started to become clear. When I realized that most people I was in association with were set out to become CC, ACB, ACS, ACG, DTM, etc. which meant nothing to them before joining Toastmasters. The focus shifted to finishing projects and graduating and not using the projects to learn skills what they set out to learn. The day I realized that, my learning journey in Toastmasters started.

Do yourself a huge favor; ask yourself why you are a Toastmaster. Check if you are on your path to learn the skills that you set out to learn.



**TM Chandramouli | Area Governor (Area C5)**

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## *7 Rules of Writing an Effective Speech*

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Dear Toastmasters,

I would like to condense my experience of writing speeches in the following important points. Some of these might look commonsensical to you and others might be insightful, but I must tell you that I have learned these points by falling into pitfalls, making mistakes and getting politely reprimanded by my mentor. So I hope I can make your speech writing experience a bit smoother with this article

To support my points with an example, I have chosen the red hot topic of “Drunken Driving”. Any guesses, why?

**1 - Stick to project guidelines.** This is the most important aspect of any speech.

For example – If you are delivering a CC04 on “Drunken Driving” then you should be using vivid imagery, triads and the concept of transportation. A part of your speech can be what your experience was when you saw a person bleeding profusely after being hit by a speeding car. Whereas, if you are delivering a CC07 on “Drunken Driving” then make sure that you have several data points, like the number of people caught of drunk driving, how many people were booked in different countries, etc.?

Please don't pick any idea and force-fit in any project. For example, “Drunken Driving” might be a misfit for CC08 as you might not be use props to support your speech

**2 - First draft of Speech:** Usually the idea of speech comes from your experience and from something you are passionate about, so make sure that you make a draft of the speech as soon as you get some idea. Don't worry about the language, word limit, flow and grammar at the first go. These can be done iteratively when you have got sufficient content for the speech. Use mind-mapping technique to add more content. Mind-mapping means any interesting point that you come across in the context of your speech should become a part of it.

For example – You saw an incident recently in which, a guy in a group in a pub, was repeatedly challenged to drive after drinking and although he was reluctant to do so initially but finally succumbed to their request.

**3 - Speech Structure** - Any speech should follow the OBC structure that is Opening, Body, and Conclusion. The opening should be intriguing, that is, it should talk about an unsolved problem or any experience that led you to think about the topic. The conclusion should suggest some possible solution to the problem and preferably a quotation.

For example –You can conclude your speech with –"We can spend our youth in uplifting the society to great heights. If you find it difficult to do in individually then you can join several groups that work for this cause. Can you afford to take even an iota of risk to get caught for drunken driving and put yourself and your family to shame."

You can get quotations from internet about the subject of your speech.

For example –Automobiles are not ferocious; it is the man who is to be feared. ~Robbins B. Stoeckel

**4 - Use first person narrative instead of the third person to increase the effectiveness of the speech.**

For example – Instead of writing- "I told my friend's mother that 2 speeding cars came from behind and we had to take a sharp turn to avoid them and in the process we fell down and injured ourselves".

You can write, Sachin and I came back injured, and Aunty asked us – "What happened? What happened Sachin? What happened, Vijay?"

Sachin – "Aah, nothing Mom. You know these spoilt brats. They drive extremely carelessly."

Aunty – "But, both of you are injured, please tell me what happened?"

Vijay – "Actually Aunty, 2 speeding cars came from behind, and we had to take a sharp turn to avoid them and in the process we fell and injured ourselves".

**5 - Use emotions and humor** in your speech wherever possible, these two elements takes your speech to the next level. But ensure that it's not force-fit, else its looks out of place.

**6 - Word Limit** – Heuristic rule is 100 words per minute. So any speech from CC02 to CC10 should be of around 700 words. But this rule has exceptions, if you are using pauses or props in your speech then you may have to dedicate some time for that and, therefore, the numbers of words in the speech should be lesser than 700. On the other hand, there might be sections in which your speech that you are planning to complete at a faster pace, in that case you can exceed the word limit of 700. The best way of finding whether your speech is within time limit is to practice it and finalize. I would suggest 5th rehearsal of your speech should tell you whether you need to reduce some parts of your speech, or you have the luxury to add something more

**7 - Title of the speech** – The title should be short and should cover the gist of the speech without revealing much detail about the speech. The title shouldn't be more than 10 words long.

For example – The title of my speech cannot be "Drunken Driving" because with that I would be telling audience in the beginning itself that I am going to speak on this topic. It should be little intriguing like – "It's the time to reinvent the people at wheel"

Besides the above points, there are things that you can keep in mind and the following framework developed by Florian Mueck can be of real help.

**Note – Please refer to Florian Mueck framework in the last page of the newsletter.**



**TM Shubhodeep Sarkar**

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### *Reaching Milestones*

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I haven't really achieved any great milestone recently but I guess anything small where we've noticed progress or advancement in our lives would qualify as a milestone. I've had personal goals set aside recently and although I find it difficult to manage my time especially when I have multiple goals set aside, this time I thought I would create a time table and stick to it systematically just like school days. To achieve any task you have to take little baby steps initially just to gain confidence and then take big strides with the confidence that you've gained to get to where you want and all of this in good faith. One of my goals recently was to learn a new language called objective C which most of you might know, is the language used for iPhone development, I usually find myself extremely motivated in the office but when I get home I get into a relaxed mode, even if I had planned to do something I find myself totally helpless and irresponsible. I couldn't explain this behavior so I started to introspect and realized that at home I stay with my parents and they take away all the responsibilities from me and this mentality had become generalized to all things in my personal space except work. So I started to take on more responsibilities like fixing things at home that were broke, cleaning my room, paying utility bills, buying grocery items, observing the needs of my family and eventually I started to notice and discover that I was transforming into a more responsible individual. I tried to take the positives from this and tried applying it to my objective of learning objective C and it sort of did make a difference. I started to feel more responsible about,

saving up money to buy a mac which is required for iPhone developers, finding the right tutorial and going through it on a daily basis. The trick is to feed the elements to your mind that it is deprived of which is keeping you from achieving the goals, in my case it was a little bit of motivation and responsibility and I started looking in places where I could strengthen these elements.

I am more of an implementation person rather than learning from theory so I decided to play to my strengths and started looking for tutorials that is more hands on than theory. I eventually stumbled upon a Stanford lecture course that they had made available for free. I quickly downloaded the entire course and decided to go through each lecture on a daily basis. It took some time getting used to the ios environment but I was able to follow the tutorials from the first lecture, it was very intuitive since I already have good knowledge on android. Every lecture demonstrates creation of a sample app through which the concepts are solidified. So you actually implement to understand and can feel the progress as you go along. After 10 lectures I feel comfortable with the syntax and have explored enough of the framework to get started with my own ideas.

This has been one of the goals that I had set aside and the milestone that I have achieved so far. There are few more lectures to go before I can complete the course, but that's definitely not going to stop me from exploring things myself now, since I now have the confidence to do so.

To summarize my other goals like building muscles through weight training, improving speech with confidence through toastmasters and an idea that I am currently implementing with one of my ex colleague, I have made some progress, I may have to get the ignition started on one of those but I am constantly introspecting and criticizing myself to be on my toes to achieve these goals. It's not easy to find the right energy to stay focused a 100% at all times but it's important to not lose the fire that has sparked the interest.

As for my toastmasters experience, I have realized that I have an anxiety problem, and the way I go about it is to be more objective about it. I constantly rate myself on a scale of 1 to 10 in different situations and try to understand when, why and how my anxiety levels go up and I try to analyze when it goes down and why it goes

down. So far I have been able to control my anxiety better than when I had first joined the toastmasters club. By the way I use this tactic in all walks of my life. This has helped me not to stress over small things and has helped me gain more confidence. I believe that every toastmaster is unique and that its more of a fight against your past self that helps in progressing.

I hope my humble experience serves as food for your thoughts.



**TM Akshath Shetty**

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*Be funny, they will come*

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### Why?

Speakers come in different varieties! Some speakers want to inspire with a story, some speakers want to prove a theory with an example. Some speakers just want to get over their nerves! But almost all the speakers want their audience to have fun listening to them. Put it simple, everyone wants to be funny and make their audiences laugh. Laughter is clearest and most quantifiable response from your audience. You may not always be able to gauge how they are reacting to your inspirational message but you can *\*always\** gauge if they find you funny! It's almost scary how vulnerable you can be! There's no place to hide if a joke falls flat and THAT is where all the fear comes from. Epiphany I had the same fear, in all walks of my life. Cracking a joke in a work setting, making a wise remark at the pub or supplying a one liner to the stranger at the movie theatre queue! Fear of people not finding the joke funny! And that is when I stumbled upon this American Late Night Talk Show host called Craig Ferguson. He taught me how to be funny through a TV screen. (Recipe 1 comes from him)

### Recipe 1 – Self Deprecation

A typical late-night talk show monologue is simply a series of stories, each with a punchline. They have great writing staff who writes world class material. BUT if you do a show every night for 10 years, you are bound to experience 1000's of failed jokes and embarrassing silence! So Craig discovered the "Self Deprecation" style for late night. Self-Deprecation humor is something we all know about since the dawn of time, but Craig takes it to the next level. Example: When a joke failed he would look at the audience and say..."Huff... Well... there goes my last joke...That's it for me... I think I'm done... No, not just today's show. I mean, I'm retiring... and go on a funny self-deprecating rant. He would almost act proud that his joke failed. That whole act of "why the joke failed or how he is an idiot" is the funny part of his speech/monologue. (Sometimes I would think, is he deliberately failing a joke JUST so that he would be so awesomely funny!)

Recipe 2 – Forget Self Deprecation... Self-praise is the way to go

Another way to add humor is to go the OPPOSITE way of Self Deprecation. "Self-praise". I never get bigger laughs than when I speak "highly" of myself in my speeches. For instance when I was asked about "What makes me come to the club every week?"... I said..."To get the adulation I deserve of course. Um... guests may not know but I am the Club Vice President of Education... Thank you very much (\*last line should be said very quickly\*)..." The audience laughed! Why is that? Well, Humor is mostly always derived when something unexpected happens!!

These days Self Deprecation sometimes becomes too "predictable". So just go the opposite way. Honest fact about myself. This is my "GO TO" method to make people laugh when put on the spot.

Recipe 3 – Be cheeky/naughty/cute/weird!

Being funny and telling jokes are as different as Being the President of a TM club and doing the work for the club. We all know only Vice President of Education does all the work! Anyway as I was saying, don't focus on jokes. Focus on the way you speak a sentence or frame

an idea. For instance when I was telling a story about how I was dumped by a girl, all my punchlines were around the actual dumping. The initial set up to the story was supposed to be only informational and not funny. Imagine my surprise when the audience laughed so much when I just said..."Like everyone here I too did not have a girlfriend in my first year of college... hmmm (pause)... I was very very sad... So in my second year I went and got a girlfriend..." (Laughter Laughter Laughter).

They found it funny because I said it as if someone was actually selling girlfriends in a shop and I went to buy them there! THAT is funny. This was NOT supposed to be a joke. It became funny only because of the way I said!



**TM Abilash Gunta**

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### *The Value of Evaluation*

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Whether you are Sachin Tendulkar or Brian Lara, you have to listen to the decision of the Umpire. You may be the brightest student in the class but ultimately, it is the teacher who decides your grades. Even a superstar like Salman Khan must bow down before the Judge. Every person from every walk of life is being assessed at all times no matter how small or big they are. An Executive Vice- President is subject to a performance appraisal. The local vegetable vendor is 'evaluated' by the people and only if his commodities pass the test do people buy from him. Whether we realize it or not everyone is evaluated at all times by someone or the other and it is not necessarily formal. A lover is evaluated by his potential girlfriend and only if he makes her grade does she say 'Yes' to him.

Evaluations (forgive my repetition for lack of a better word) are the best reality check a person can possibly get. Very often we tend to have a misconception about ourselves which leads to overconfidence or the lack of it.

It could make us live in a bubble, but an applause or an approval or to the contrary a kick in the place where the sun doesn't shine could reset us. A marketing manager might think his new strategy is the next Holy Grail, but will be likely to rethink when he realizes he isn't able to sell a Bible to a Pastor with that strategy. In other words he takes feedback and works on it, till he improvises his strategy so well that he can sell oil to an Arab or ice to an Inuit.

Toastmaster's Indiranagar Pride is a firm believer in this and any member will be able to tell you that the Evaluation session is the cornerstone of the meeting. No matter how much we research on the internet or other sources, there is nothing like receiving constructive feedback from a person who is an expert in the field, a person who has 'been there, done that', a person who has been through the grind and come out as a shining diamond.

Evaluators are people who pay close attention to your speech, dissect everything to do with it right from introduction to content to body language and tell you how you can improve in each of these areas and more. When I attended my first session at Toastmaster's as a guest, I was fairly confident that I wouldn't learn much because I had studied in an English Medium school and attended a law college. Believe me, I was blown away during the evaluation. It brought a whole new dimension, a totally new perspective to me. Things that I couldn't even conceive were advised. The evaluator was pointing out nitty-gritties that I would never have noticed. Using the entire stage, modulating your pitch and tone, changing your volume when you need to stress a point, utilizing your hands more expressively were just some of the things I learnt that very first day. When a speaker goes on stage, in the initial stages, he is nervous and what he prepares does not fully flower in his speech. Hence, he needs somebody to tell him what he did right and wrong. Just like any other art, the art of speaking is an endless ocean and there are infinite things to be learnt and the best way to learn them is through evaluations. Evaluations are what tell you where you stand, what made a connect

The beauty of these evaluations is that it is always given in a very positive manner. By that I don't mean it is sugar-coated but what I mean is that it is done in such a way that the speaker is inspired and motivated to do

better and his efforts are never demeaned. There's constant scope for improvement for everyone and when it comes to communication skills, the sky is the limit. Evaluations are what will help take your speaking to stratospheric levels, step by step . Nobody is above evaluations and unless you are influencing millions of people like Martin Luther King, for example, with your oratory skills, you can always take home something from an evaluation.

To put it simply, evaluations are the life force which drives the Juggernaut known as Toastmaster's.

I look forward to a lot more evaluations as well as evaluating.



**TM Atul Atre**

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### *Division C Contest*

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The Division C Contest held on May 2<sup>nd</sup> was held at the Pride Hotel. TM Nishanth represented the club for the International Prepared Speech Contest. TM Kausthubh also took part in the Table Topic Contest and represented Speakers Den (from Area C3).

TM Kausthubh came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Table Topic Contest at the Division level!



TM Nishanth did us proud by winning the 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the International Prepared Speech Contest.




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### *Contest Makes Us Better*

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Contest days are always fun. Everyone is dressed up and entirely focused. The audience gets to hear the best speakers of the club. The participants themselves are, all polished and practiced for surpassing their old performances; with the ever eternal hope of winning and coming one step closer the 'World Champion of Public Speaking' title.

At the club level this year, the contestants were so evenly matched that the audience was kept guessing till the announcement of the 1st place winner, which was me! :) Unlike last year when I placed 3rd, this year the hope was rekindled, with me moving one step closer to big title.

For the area level contest, I decided to change my speech, as I felt my original wasn't good enough to take

me to the next level, Crescendo. The contest was a blur. I gave the speech and the results were announced. I placed 3rd, my hopes were dashed. It was an end to my dreams of going further, at the least competing at the district level and higher. Ranjani and I commiserated over the fact that this would be the first year when the Pride would not be represented at the Division level.

With my hopes dashed, I still looked forward. I craved for feedback, the general consensus being that while my speech was good, it lacked what a winning speech should do - fulfilling the judging criteria. That was an eye-opener. I looked up the criteria but it was already too late to implement.

Life had other plans, however. I was at the movies to get out of my funk when Chandramouli, our Area Governor called me to announce that the second place winner had pulled out due to prior commitments and I could now participate at the Division level. I was absolutely thrilled, the hope reawakened. Our Division C is one of the best in Karnataka and now I had a chance to perform with the Division's best.

I took a look again at the judge's criteria, wrote out a brand new speech and recalibrated it to the criteria. I got help from Kausthubh and Abilash, I practiced as many times as I could and was finally ready for the big day.

On the D-day, I was nervous though not for the lack of preparation but for the lack of a past win at the Division level. My turn came and I went on stage. I gave the best performance of my life and the audience applauded. The results placed me 2nd. Yay for me! Not too bad for someone who did not make it past the club level, an year earlier.

Unfortunately only the first place holder goes forward to the District level. So ends my dream to become world champion....for this year alone. Come next year, I will be better prepared because I participated in these contests.



**TM Nishanth P K**

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## *A, An or The?*

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It was evening around 4 PM on March 26th 2015. Heads bent, pens scribbling, each candidate, fully focused on cracking the exam conducted by the Airport Authority of

India. I was attempting a question in the English Section – Convert the following sentence into passive voice. All the 4 options were looking similar and I got confused. So I closed my eyes and then read the question again and there came into my mind my father's words about the difference between active and passive voice and I got the answer!

My father taught me English Grammar and laid the foundation for building a good vocabulary, but I never used to understand why he gave so much importance to it. When do you use A, An or The? Why is it The United States while it is not The India? Tenses, Nouns....the list went on and on. The tree of Language will blossom and bear fruits only if it gets the sunshine of Grammar and the fountain of Vocabulary. They form the fundamental building blocks of language which in turn form the basis for communication. Following are few of the advantages of having a sound base in Grammar and Vocabulary

- Helps understand and communicate ideas in the best possible way
- To express even the most simple thoughts and acts in the most beautiful way
- To understand and enjoy the true beauty and intricacies of a language

We use spoken and written words every single day to communicate ideas, thoughts, and emotions to those around us. You can even win the hands of your love with the words you choose to propose her! The best way to improve your Grammar and Vocabulary is to read more, write more and speak more. Try to learn new words and usages and use it in your communication. My Mother used to keep a diary in which she used to write down new words she comes across, along with its meaning and an example.

As Toastmasters, we have the best opportunity to improve our vocabulary, grammar and communication

skills. This can transform a plain sentence to the most beautiful one, an ordinary speech into the most extraordinary speech. By choosing the right words, one can paint a picture in the minds of readers bringing to life, the words you write. Yes, it is indeed an Art- Word Art! The art of writing is such a powerful and subtle art by which when you write about the soft touch of Zephyr, you can actually feel its soft brush against your face; when you write about the first rain, you can actually drink deep the joy it brings. Why, you can intoxicate the reader with the permutations and combinations of words. So let me ask you a simple question. When do you use A, An or The?



**TM Lakshmi**

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### *Why Must You Attend Coronations?*

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A weekend getaway is something that all of us enjoy and most of us do at the spur of the moment, with hardly any planning. But sometimes, even a lot of planning can make things a lot of fun. One such getaway is a Toastmaster convention that happens every year, across the globe. And I happened to attend one such convention last November at Mysore. It was my first ever conference and I had absolutely no idea what to expect. All I knew was I'm attending a conference where I'll run into a lot of unfamiliar faces, listen to the greatest of speeches and may be, at the end of it, find some familiarity in the unfamiliar.

Jamboree as it was called – the Communication Carnival of District 92. It was truly a carnival of sorts. Starting with the location, Mysore – the Royal City of Karnataka. And the venue, Radisson Blu – What a classy place! From the start to the finish, we had a complete five star experience. Over 300-400 people attended, toastmasters and guests alike. Jim Key was the highlight of this conference– World Champion of Public Speaking (2003). His humility, his simplicity, the way he connected with the

audience, I was totally mesmerized by this Champion Speaker. He not only entertained us but also gave us a lot to ponder upon. My key takeaways from this conference were – getting a glimpse of the Toastmasters world outside of the club, listening to some of the greatest speeches ever, forming new bonds and most importantly, making the existing ones stronger. This conference gave me an opportunity to really connect with our Pride members and I'm sure the ones who attended this would most certainly agree with me. Yes, we had a lot of fun @ the Fun night. This happened to be the first conference of District 92, there was indeed a lot at stake. But the conference team really pulled it together and gave us, a magical weekend extravaganza.

My words won't do justice. You really have to be there to experience it, first-hand. May be you still can..... Kochi is still a couple of days away and this one is going to be bigger and better than the previous one. After all, this is the first Annual Conference of District 92. There's so much awesomeness waiting for us. Firstly and most importantly, God's own Country. Enough said. The beautiful and serene state of Kerala. You will not regret it. Especially since the monsoons are planning to hit the coast of Kerala by May 30th. You are bound to have a refreshing time, no doubt. And where's all this awesomeness going to take place? The Crowne Plaza, Kochi. Far away from the hustle and bustle of the city, this majestic five star hotel is all set to welcome each and every one of us for a weekend we won't forget for a long, long time (at least, until the next conference). And lo, behold! Who's in town to enthrall us through the power of his spoken words? World Champion of Public Speaking (2005), Lance Miller. You surely wouldn't want to miss it now. And of course, to match his awesomeness, we also have 2 contests, a LOT of other speeches, a number of awards to be won and to top it all, a fun night that promises to be the biggest party of District 92. Do you need more reasons? It's a full package deal of learning and fun. Leave behind your worries and routines of your daily life and come join us at Kochi to celebrate the joy of communication...



**TM Ranjani**



**Toastmasters Indiranagar Pride at Jamboree 2014, Mysore**

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### *Importance of Mentoring at Toastmasters*

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Not everyone will understand your journey. That's fine. It's not their journey to make sense of. It's yours.

Deciding to join toastmasters is the beginning of our journey in the quest to master public speaking and leadership skills needed for dealing with people - which could be as simple as talking with a group of friends or making a big presentation at the workplace with our toastmaster skills. For sure, all agree when I say skills developed at toastmasters gives us that extra confidence needed that comes from being a competent speaker.

To be successful in any field, aspiring leaders or communicators need role models and guidance. Who else, apart from our fellow toastmasters, can help us achieve this? Of course the MENTORS!

Mentoring can be a challenge that is well worth one's time and effort. One of the pleasures of mentoring is the sense of connection that develops between two people. Traditionally, mentoring relationship consists of an experienced executive providing guidance and advice to an associate with less experience. But at toastmasters, I should say, the mentor – mentee relationship is more at a fellow toastmaster level than at the executive - associate level.

The very first thing that a toastmaster experiences after joining a club is getting associated with a mentor who becomes a role model and guide for our journey. He becomes a directional tool for one's successful journey. Toastmasters is one place where we notice that mentor – mentee relation is not based on age groups or qualification. They are more our supporters than our coaches. We can definitely let down our guard, share our insecurities, and ask the stupid questions we all have sometimes. They show a strong emphasis by being very supportive, taking their precious time off to give their constructive feedback that is specific, descriptive, and nonjudgmental on the raw speech sent by their mentees and ensuring it is delivered to the perfection needed at the end of the day.

The mentor's evaluation is the first step in helping the toastmaster achieve his speech objective. Their evaluation makes the mentee become less self-conscious, more confident and helps us to become more confident about the content and delivery even before it is actually delivered at the club. The positive statements, encouraging comments and opinions will

surely make the delivery of the speech more effective, both in terms of content and delivery. In the long run, mentors definitely help their mentee overcome his speech weaknesses and guide him throughout his journey of becoming a competent speaker with ease and confidence.

So, at toastmasters you definitely find a mentor who can be your best buddy and also a supportive, friendly and a patient person who is all out to help you have a successful journey. With such great mentors at toastmasters, we can surely say there is someone who understands our journey, our dream journey that makes it enjoyable at the end of the day.

Hats Off to the Mentors for being a companion in our journey!!!



**TM Akhila**

### DCP Status

SI No	Goal To Achieve	Status
1	Two CC awards	Goal Met
2	Two more CC awards	Goal Met
3	One ACB, ACS, or ACG award	Goal Met
4	One more ACB, ACS, or ACG award	Goal Met
5	One CL, ALB, ALS, or DTM award	Goal Met
6	One more CL, ALB, ALS, or DTM award	Goal Met
7	Four new members	Goal Met
8	Four more new members	Goal Met
9	A minimum of four club officers trained during each of the two training periods	Goal Met
10	On time payment of membership dues	Goal Met

#### Toastmasters Indiranagar Pride:

Visit the Toastmaster Indiranagar Pride website - <http://indiranagarpride.in>

Club Facebook Page – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ToastmastersIndiranagarPride/>

Invite a friend to the club - <http://www.meetup.com/Toastmasters-Indiranagar-Pride/>

#### Coronations 2015

Coronations 2015, the District 92 Conference will take place on May 30<sup>th</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> at Kochi.

Do not miss this chance to meet new Toastmasters and learn from TM Lance Miller (2005 World Champion of Public Speaking)! If you still have not registered then do so at the earliest. Visit the website [www.coronationkochi.com](http://www.coronationkochi.com) for more information.

#### Toastmasters Worldwide:

Visit Toastmaster International website – <http://toastmasters.org>  
Register your self - <http://members.toastmasters.org>