



WHERE LEADERS
ARE MADE

Newsletter of Miranda Toastmasters - Club 3554

SPEAK UP

www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au

SUMMER 2023/24

MIRANDA TOASTMASTERS

Established 1962

From the President

2024 promises to be a cracker of a year for Miranda Toastmasters and its members.

In this issue

- **How Toastmasters Transformed Cathy Goodwin**
- **Coffee with Shane Geha**
- **Meet Miranda TM's Sergeant-at Arms**
- **Important messages from our Treasurer and Speechcraft Coordinator**



Dear Toastmasters

Here we are, facing the prospect of brand-new year.

As we approach each new year with excitement and anticipation, we tend to take the opportunity to reflect on the previous 12 months and often set ourselves sometimes lofty goals for the coming year that we do have every expectation of attaining.

But if you're like me, the new year's resolutions will likely end up tossed into the bin by the end of January. What can we do to ensure our goals don't become crumpled up pieces of paper?

2024 promises to be a cracker of a year for Miranda Toastmasters and its members, especially if, as a club, we continue to learn from each other, support each other and build on our public speaking journey.

If we look at the past year, it was packed with notable achievements by our members, lots of learning, plenty of great speeches, and fun and entertaining meetings.

Miranda Toastmasters is fortunate to have a diverse range of talented members who each bring varied perspectives and experiences. We are so very lucky to have long-term, seasoned speakers who freely share their talents and knowledge. And we love to welcome new members as they start out on their speaking journeys. It's this mix that makes our club interesting, educational, entertaining, and fun.

My experience with our club, and something that I'm regularly reminded of, is the support and encouragement from members that is ever-flowing. The generosity of our members to build each other up and empower one another is something that I cherish. I always leave every meeting happy and wanting more. I hope others feel the same way.

(Continues)



From the President (*continued*)

As a club we've achieved 10 out of 10 goals on the Distinguished Club Program (DCP) for 12 years in a row and this year we're aiming to make it 13. It takes the contribution of all members to achieve this milestone each year and I appreciate the efforts of everyone who delivers speeches, completes a Pathways level, pays dues on time, and gets involved at meetings and at Speechcraft. We only have two more goals to meet this year's target.

I want to give a big shout out to our Executive Committee: Abbey, Alex, Daniel, Kathy, Pat and Teresa, who go above and beyond to help ensure our club runs seamlessly. It's through their efforts that meetings are arranged, members achieve education goals, members are kept informed, and the important business elements, such as minute taking and financial management, are completed.

Thank you too, to our immediate past president, Mike, who provides valuable guidance. It really is a team effort and we're fortunate to have an amazing team.

Back to goal setting. If you are still determined to set new year's resolutions, here are a few pointers to help keep you on track:

- Break goals into bite-sized, actionable steps - How does one eat an elephant? One bite at a time. The same principle applies to goals. Big scary goals are just that, big and scary. However, breaking these down so we achieve regular smaller goals can help us stay motivated and retain the momentum of achievement.
- Find an accountability partner – Find a friend or fellow Toastmaster to share your goals and who will help support you, keep you motivated and accountable.
- Reward yourself – Treat yourself when you reach milestones, remember bite sized steps equals more treats!
- Stay flexible – Goals aren't set in stone, and they should be adjustable if necessary. Sometimes circumstances change or our goals change. Adapt and achieve.
- Record your progress – Regular journalling about your progress, challenges and successes can provide valuable insights and help keep you motivated.
- Be kind to yourself – Embrace change, accept setbacks and don't be too hard on yourself if you don't meet all your targets on time. And don't give up. Keep going, call a friend, or take a break while you get back on track.

I wish each of you a fulfilling and successful 2024, and I look forward to learning with you and sharing many fun-filled meetings.

Warm regards,

Jill Brookfield

President, Miranda Toastmasters



SPEAK UP

www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au

How Toastmasters Transformed My Fear of Public Speaking into a Passion for Change

by Cathy Goodwin



Stepping into the realm of public speaking can be daunting, especially for someone like me, whose heart used to race at the mere thought of addressing a crowd.

However, necessity propelled me to confront this fear head-on when I founded BFF 4 Change, an initiative aimed at fostering positive community impact. To drive this change effectively, I needed to speak confidently to large groups, a task that seemed insurmountable at the time.

In the quest to conquer this fear and amplify the mission of BFF 4 Change, I found myself at the doorstep of Toastmasters. Joining this esteemed organization marked a pivotal moment in my journey towards mastering the art of public speaking.

Toastmasters provided a nurturing environment where I could learn, stumble, and grow without judgment. Each meeting became a safe space to practice articulation, hone persuasive techniques, and cultivate a commanding presence on stage. The structured approach, constructive feedback, and supportive community became the pillars that supported my transformation.

The journey wasn't without its challenges. There were moments of doubt and nervousness, but with each speech delivered, I felt a little more empowered. The incremental progress bolstered my confidence, allowing me to navigate the stage with newfound ease. The skills I honed at Toastmasters became indispensable tools for driving BFF 4 Change forward. From delivering compelling pitches to engaging stakeholders in our cause, I could now speak with conviction, capturing the attention and hearts of those I addressed.

More than just conquering a personal fear, Toastmasters gifted me opportunities to make new friends, learn as a mentee and share knowledge as a mentor. The ability to communicate effectively has become a catalyst for driving change, amplifying the impact of BFF 4 Change, Community Giving Made Easy, where 100% of donations directly benefit families in crisis.

Through Toastmasters, I discovered the transformative power of facing fears, embracing discomfort, and emerging stronger on the other side. What began as a quest to overcome my fear of public speaking blossomed into a journey of personal growth and a vehicle for effecting positive change.

Today, when I speak publicly, addressing the audience with purpose and conviction, I reflect on how far I've come. Toastmasters wasn't just a platform for refining speaking skills; it became a springboard for personal and social growth. It's a reminder that sometimes, the most profound transformations stem from daring to face our fears head-on and stepping into the unknown with courage and determination.

with Shane Geha



On Sunday 21 January a small group of Miranda Toastmasters met for a coffee catch-up at 7th Heaven in Kirrawee and was delighted to be joined there by Dr Shane Geha (DTM). Shane is the Managing Director and co-founder of EG Advisory, a premier rezoning company with expertise in land transformation operating across Australia. One of the leading rezoning experts in NSW, Shane completed his PhD at the University of NSW in 2013 and now lectures part-time at the University of Sydney in several Engineering Courses.

As well as being a highly successful businessman and academic, Shane is also a fully paid-up member of Miranda Toastmasters and has been for nearly 30 years. If you haven't seen him around lately, that's because he hasn't attended a meeting since he moved out of the area several years ago. But, he says, his Miranda membership still means a lot to him. "I could never, ever disengage my membership at Miranda because I feel that it is still a part of me, a part of who I am, part of the Shane Geha DNA."

Shane first joined a TM club in Canberra. When he came to Sydney and started working in Sutherland, he became a member of Miranda on the 1 March, 1995. The club was then meeting at Sutherland United Services Club (now Club on East), and Shane remembers that Doug Morton was then the president. 'A stalwart', he recalls. He remembers current members John Patterson and Richard Mason, among others, some of whom have sadly passed such as Vasan Knilnani and Garo Hartoonian (after whom a contest and trophy is named.)

Shane says that Toastmasters became a very important part of his life.

"When you think about it, Toastmasters pre-dates my marriage. My wife, when she dated me and then when we married, knew that on Tuesday nights, 'Shane goes to Toastmasters'. That's what I do on Tuesday nights. So, it wasn't a night we could go out."

Shane found that Toastmasters was a great way to challenge his boundaries.

"I was a natural public speaker, I did debating at school, debating at Uni. I was a confident public speaker, but it's not until you learn the science of public speaking, and practice it regularly session after session that you become truly proficient."

Shane says that Toastmasters helped him immensely in both his professional life as a businessman and a university lecturer, and in his private life.

(Continues)

"It's helped me on so many occasions do so many things," he says, then, as an example, tells the story of his friend's wedding. Apparently, Shane's friend, the groom, had forgotten to tell Shane that he was to make a speech at the reception. When, at the reception, his friend said how much he was looking forward to hearing Shane's speech, Shane didn't want to add to the groom's stress by telling him he'd forgotten to actually tell Shane he was expected to speak. Instead, Shane excused himself for a few moments and went off to find a quiet place to think. A little later, using the techniques he'd learned and practiced over the years at Toastmasters, Shane made a wedding speech that many of the guests said was the best they'd ever heard.

"I can give you a hundred examples like that," he says.

It's no wonder Shane says that he can't forego his membership.

"I no longer live close and I no longer work close, but it doesn't matter: Miranda Toastmasters is still a part of me.

"Miranda Toastmasters played a foundational role during my younger years towards my success... I've given over 6000 speeches in my time, and wouldn't have done it as well without Toastmasters.

"You can take me out of Miranda Toastmasters, but you can never take Miranda Toastmasters out of me.

"Even if I don't turn up and see you, I still love you; I still care about you from far away. And if you ask me for anything, I'll do it for you.

"I'm always going to belong because it's a part of me, it's an important part of me."

Shane's affection for our club is a reminder of the important role Toastmasters can play in members' lives.

We were excited to hear that Shane hopes to come to a meeting at Miranda soon and give a speech.

We look forward to that, and, in the meantime, we wish him all the very best for the future.



Shane shares his enthusiasm for Miranda Toastmasters with Kathy, Jill Alex, and Teresa. Photo by Pat

Meet Miranda TM's Sergeant at Arms, Kathy Tasker

Up until I joined Toastmasters in March 2013, I was a very shy person who couldn't talk to people other than in a one-on-one situation.

Back in 2010 I lost my dearly beloved husband to a work place accident. I met a lady called Wendy Lark who was the public officer for a group called Workplace Tragedy Family Support Group. She would go around to work sites and talk to bosses and workers about work place safety.

She wanted me to go with her to do talks on these matters, giving a personal perspective as someone who experienced a personal tragedy.

She suggested we join Toastmasters. We tried a few clubs before attending Miranda Toastmasters. I attended as a guest three or four times. The late Rick Haynes was at the club at that time. And he made me feel so welcome the first night. I became a member in April 2013.

Wendy didn't end up staying, but I continued and I'm still here in 2024.

Last year, I received an award for 10-year membership.

I wanted to get more confidence so I could

"Toastmasters has helped me a great deal by bringing me out of my shell and comfort zone."

speaking in front of a group of people and I feel by being a member of Miranda Toastmasters I have achieved this goal. Toastmasters has helped me a great deal by bringing me out of my shell and comfort zone.

I thoroughly enjoy Toastmasters.

I give speeches, take on meeting roles and enter competitions. I enjoy going to the fortnightly meetings. It gets me out of the house and I look forward to hearing other members' speeches. The meetings are great and I like that I have met new and friendly people.

I intend to keep going to Toastmasters for many years to come.



An important message from Club Treasurer, Daniel Bazzano



Hi all, please be aware that starting from the first meeting for 2024 we now have an eftpos facility for the club.

At each meeting or event, you will now be able to swipe away for things like the raffle, fees & other expenses that may come along in your TM endeavours.

The 'cube' is directly connected to the Miranda TM bank account & there will be assigned people within the club who will be able to assist you with any payments.

More information on who will be able to help you will come shortly but for now it is Daniel.

For any other questions on this please ask Daniel or club president Jill.

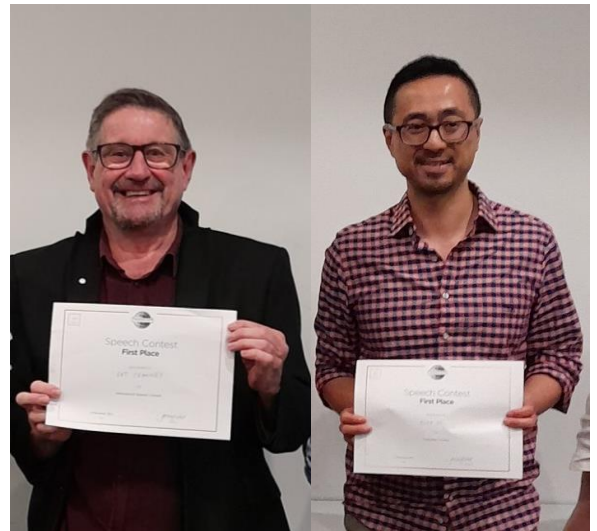


Disclaimer: The image above is for illustration purposes only and may not be an exact representation of the product.

Conrgratualtions

to club contest winners

Pat Cranney (*left with glasses and goatee*), winner of the International Speech Contest, and Alex Li (*right with glasses and goatee*), winner of the Evaluation Contest. Both contests were held on Tues 14 november last year.



Pat and Alex go on to represent Miranda at the Area 2 contests at Cronulla RSL, 7pm Thursday 22 February.

Come along and support them on the night if you can.



JOIN US

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

DISTRICT 70
**AREA 2
SUMMER
Speech Contest**

22 FEB | CRONULLA RSL | 7PM

EVALUATIONS & INTERNATIONAL SPEECHES

DESSERT BAR | PRIZES | TROPICAL DRESS CODE

COME & HEAR THE SHIRE'S BEST COMPETE!

A groovy message from Speechcraft Co-ordinator, Mike B Smith

Any member who has been involved in a Speechcraft course will know it is a truly rewarding experience for BOTH students and assistants.

The first time I was invited to coordinate a Speechcraft course, I felt that I was not qualified or ready for the job. But once I understood that it's mostly about "coordination", I saw it as a real opportunity to increase my confidence in front of a group. I still remember a moment a couple of weeks into coordinating that

I'd like more of our members to experience that – especially our newer ones. The whole process is well defined and easy to follow, and I'll mentor you through it. Of course, the support you also get from our other members is fantastic. Talk with me if you'd like to know more – I'd love to see another member make a similar leap in their communication and confidence.

The latest Speechcraft course kicked off on 5th Feb and runs to 24th March 2024.

Members who would like to come along and help, please contact Mike on
M: 0411 173 290



Groovy, Baby!
Mike 'Myers' Smith at the 2022 Christmas party and the Club's 60th Anniversary celebrations.



Miranda Toastmaster will hold its **Tall Tales & Master of the Toast Contests** on **Tues 26 March**.

The following has been adapted from an article originally published on 4 August, 2013 by Aurora Colorado George Sutton Toastmasters Club

Winning A Tall Tales Toastmasters Contest

Storytelling is one of the most important aspects of public speaking. Not only do stories keep your audience glued to your message, but the process of creating stories takes time, patience and diligence. You should **approach participation in the Tall Tales competition as an opportunity to practice your detailed story development and presentation skills**. This opportunity will increase your speaking skills in other types of speeches, not just the next time you tell a humorous, exaggerated, make-believe story.

"A Tall Tales speech must be of a highly **exaggerated, improbable nature** and have a theme or **plot**."



Humor and props may be used.

From the 2017 Speech Contest Rulebook

Basic Rules of the Tall Tales Speech Contest

- Time is 3-5 minutes, plus or minus 30 seconds. So you really have to whittle down your story to the most important points
- Must be an original story with original content. Best to use something that happened to you so you're not suspected of copying an existing story
- ANY members (who are not district officers) in good standing can participate. So, every member is eligible to participate. No excuses!
- There is no topic limitation. You can choose any topic you want your tale to be about. It just has to be original. (So, no adapting from a children's story book.)
- Humour and props may be used and are even suggested to illustrate the story.
- Do NOT prepare a written introduction as only your name and speech title will be announced when you are introduced

Tips to WIN a Tall Tales Contest:

1. Have a short 10-20 second intro to your story so people know where you're going with it.
2. Plan a story plot that stays on track that people can follow
3. Create a build-up in your story to a climactic point
4. Use a lot of exaggeration that will naturally bring humor
5. Have pauses to give people time to laugh and breathe
6. Describe details to the point where the audience can picture it in their minds
7. Include surprise twists in your story so that things happen that are unexpected.
8. Tie-up your story with a final point as you would any speech
9. Leave 'em laughing

Check out the many fine samples of Tall Tales on the TM International site, or You Tube.

Master of the Toast Contest

Tues 26 March.

The purpose of this contest is for the speaker to present a 2-3 minute toast in honour of a person, cause or special occasion. The toast is to be original, and the audience is to serve as "guests" at the toast. The toast must clearly state the occasion or person being honored and personalized through stories, anecdotes or quotes relating to the subject.

In honour of the upcoming Master of the Toast contest, the editor offers the following parodic verse.

Master of the Toast

(With apologies to Les Misérables' Master of the House)

Master of the Toast, raises up their arm!

Speaking with such confidence, and oh, so calm!

In honour of a person, occasion, or a cause.

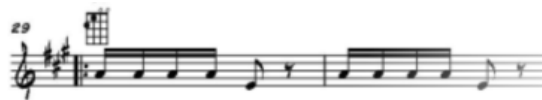
Speaks for up to three minutes and never bores!

Guests have all filled up their glasses,

Only water but that's fine!

They've all spent the last week

Practising with beer and wine!



Everybody cheer the speaker!

For they've done their uttermost.

Everybody raise your glass—

Raise it up, for that's your task!

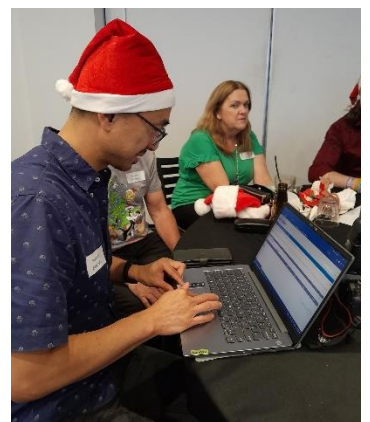
Everybody raise a glass for the Master of the Toast!

At Miranda Toastmasters' last gathering for the year on Tuesday 12th December 2023, Members celebrated the end of another very successful year with much merriment, jollity, delicious food, games, quizzes, and carol singing! The following photo-montage hopes to convey the spirit of the night!





SPEAK UP hopes that all our members, their family and friends had a wonderful Christmas and New Year break. We wish you all the best for a safe, happy and productive 2024.





What's On

Tues 13 February – Regular Meeting including Educational by Mike Smith, Speeches & Table Topics

Thurs 22 Feb – Area 2 International Speech & Evaluation Contests, 7 pm, Cronulla RSL

Tues 27 Feb & 12 March – Regular Meetings, incl. Speeches + Table Topics

26 March - Tall Tales & Master of the Toast Contests

Upcoming:

23 April – Hartoonian Autumn Contest

CLUB MISSION

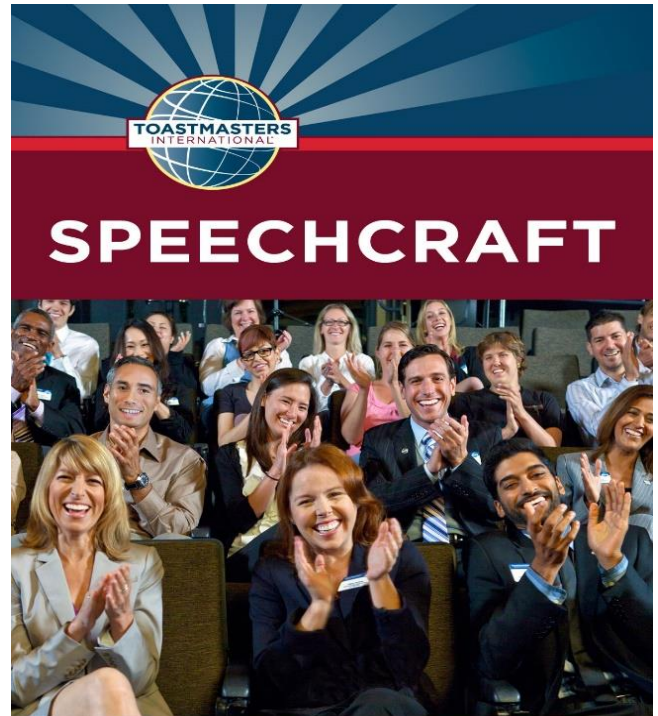
We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

Find us

Web: www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au/

Facebook: Search for Miranda Toastmasters Club
www.facebook.com/Miranda-Toastmasters-Club-113871933658

Calendar: www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au/whats-on



- Build confidence
- Grow as a leader
- Improve communication & public speaking skills
- Overcome fears
- Improve career potential
- Think on your feet

In 8 weeks become a confident public speaker in a friendly, supportive atmosphere

To register for the next Speechcraft course, contact: Mike Smith

M: 0411 173 290

E: speechcraft@miranda-toastmasters.org.au

SPEAK UP

MIRANDA TOASTMASTERS

Club 3554 - Area 2 - District 70 - Region 12

Our meetings are held the 1st and 2nd Tuesdays of each month

6.45pm for 7.00pm - 9.30pm

at Miranda Diggers RSL, 615 Kingsway, Miranda

Newsletter of Miranda Toastmasters

Published by: Jill Brookfield, President

Edited by: Pat Cranney, VPPR

Club website: www.miranda-toastmasters.org.au

Email: hello@miranda-toastmasters.org.au