

The Dynamo

November 2006
Club #457, Area 16, District 5

Capturing the spirit of Dynamic Speakers Toastmasters

Speechcraft with the Charger Girls

The Dynamo had the chance to sit down with District Governor, Mark Kramer, to discuss an exciting Toastmasters outreach event held earlier this year with the San Diego Chargers Girls.



1. What was the name of the program you held with the Charger girls? Let me give you some background, first, before answering the question directly. Joyce Persichilli, former District 5 Governor, first contacted the Charger Girls six years ago about forming a Toastmasters club. While the club failed to charter, the Charger Girls recognized the benefit of improving their communication skills through the Toastmasters program. The Charger Girls serve as ambassadors for the city of San Diego -- not just the Chargers -- and frequently make public appearances where they need solid communication skills. So Toastmasters led a Speechcraft program for the Charger Girls to teach them a variety of skills in the 8 weeks available to them between when the squad is selected and pre-season football begins. Every year since, the Charger Girls invite us back to teach the new squad through Speechcraft.

This year, Lisa Simmons, the new Charger Girls Director who had attended the Speechcraft program during her three years as a Charger Girl, invited Toastmasters back but asked that we focus on specific communication areas such as interview skills. The program we presented might be called a modified Speechcraft.

2. When and how did you get involved? Martin Olmeda, former District Governor and, at the time, the District 5 New Club Chair, had worked with the Charger Girls previously and led this year's effort. He selected Toastmasters throughout the District whom he felt would make the best team for working with the Charger Girls. He was very clear in his initial email: "This is a professional opportunity, not a dating opportunity" just in case anyone had other ideas about this project! This worked both ways. The Charger Girls as well as Toastmasters were requested to wear professional dress to all meetings.

Additionally, Mark was serving as fellow Dynamic Speaker Alina Kokovska's mentor at the time and told her of his involvement with the Charger Girls. She wanted to know if she could assist. After checking with Martin, he invited her to join the team.



Dyanmic Speakers Alina and Mark with Lisa Simmons, Team Director

3. What were the goals of the program? Improved communication skills was the overall goal of the program. Mark noted, "Most of the ladies already possessed strong communication skills. I'd like to thank that this was as a result of our previous Speechcraft sessions, but most of them are probably naturals."

Lisa asked the team to focus on one area in particular: interview skills. Each member of the squad, whether a rookie or experienced team member, needs to compete to make the team every year. During tryouts Lisa felt that the ladies needed to hone their interview skills and she asked for Toastmasters' help.

4. What activities, projects, sessions did you do? Nearly every meeting followed the same format: A 30 minute educational session on a particular technique led by Martin or guest Toastmasters. This was followed by a 30

minute mini-meeting: We divided the 28 Charger Girls into groups of seven. Each was assigned to be a Toastmaster, a Speaker (one of two), a General Evaluator, an Ah Counter, a Grammarian, or a Timer. Two Toastmasters served as Speech Evaluators. Following the mini-meeting everyone regrouped for either a Table Topics session or to ask/answer questions about the day.

To work on interviews, Martin asked each Charger Girl to submit a resume for a fictional job. From the 28 resumes he selected five to interview. The following week, Martin led a 30 minute educational presentation on the dos and don'ts of resumes and interviews. Mark joined a panel of four other Toastmasters and Lisa to interview the five selected candidates. Each panel member asked one question. After the five questions were asked of each candidate the group was asked to evaluate the interview and suggest ways to improve. The panel then added their comments.

During the final "real" meeting we held a Speech Contest. Six of the ladies volunteered to prepare and present speeches to showcase what they had learned. Overall they were well organized and well presented. Several incorporated props. Some of the stories really tugged at your heart. Some were so funny that nearly everyone was doubled over in laughter.

5. What did you find most challenging about the project? Fitting in so much in so little time each week! But more to the point of what you are asking, it was the questions that the ladies asked that made it challenging. They never seemed to be short of questions to ask and comments to make. These were more often than not insightful and thought-provoking. Mark reflected, "Often times I was amazed at the little subtleties that they had picked up that I had missed entirely."

Mark also found judging the speech contest to be quite a challenge!

6. What did you find most rewarding about the project? "Knowing that we were making a positive impact." While working with the Charger Girls, NFL Films taped two of the sessions. They were making a documentary called "Making The Squad"; a three episode series to be shown on the NFL Network showing what it took to be a Charger Girl. They invited the Toastmasters team to watch all the episodes with them. During the formal Toastmaster sessions, there were no opportunities to speak with the ladies. They flowed straight from a squad meeting into the Toastmaster session and then straight to dance practice. Things were different at the premier.

"I was amazed by the number of ladies who came up to us and told us how much they appreciated what we were doing for them. Some had brought their parents to the premier and even their parents came up to us and told us how much they appreciated what we were doing. The mother of the squad's captain, Shantel, went on and on about us (it was easy to see where the captain got her energy!). One Charger Girl told us how she had applied the interview techniques we taught her to land a new job. Oh, and yes, in case you are wondering, they did show a Toastmasters' session in action in the third episode. For about 2 seconds."

"I also came away very impressed with the Charger Girls themselves. I didn't really know much about cheerleaders and the tremendous dedication and drive they have. Nearly all had college degrees or were pursuing degrees. They planned to be doctors and lawyers and veterinarians. Many owned their own businesses. They were an impressive group."

"Of course, I must mention that one of the most rewarding sessions for me was when the Charger Girls sang happy birthday to me and then posed for a birthday picture with me. I was sure glad that I didn't play hooky that night!"

The Dynamo has obtained a copy of said picture and will gladly share it with our readers below.



Happy Birthday Mark!!

Thanks to Mark Kramer for helping make this feature possible. -ed.

Election Information

Wednesday, November 8th will be our bi-annual Election meeting. We will be selecting officers to lead our club for the first half of 2007.

The slate of candidates will be announced on November 8th.

At the meeting, nominees will be given the chance to tell the club whether they accept or decline their nomination. If a position has no candidates, we will entertain nominations at the meeting.

After everyone has spoken and the slate is set, we will take the vote.

If you are unable to attend, but would like to vote, you may do so via proxy. To vote by proxy, send an email to the Election Chair & Past President, **John Varenyi** who will cast your vote for you.

Elections are important as they establish our club's leadership for the next six months. Consider attending to hear the candidate's speak and if you can't make it, please exercise your right to vote through the proxy process!

October Meeting Recaps

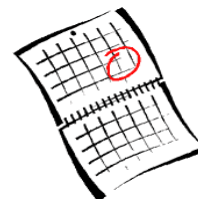
If you missed any meetings in October, here is a quick recap of the theme and speakers:

Date	Theme	Toastmaster	Speakers
10/04	Youngest International Gymnastics Participant	Tim Eddo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terry Carlson - "History of the Marine Corps" • Louis Rader - "WWII: The Rest of the Story"
10/11	1st Spacewalk	Holly Armstrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ben Le - "New Competent Leadership Manual"
10/18	Nobel Prize for DNA	Ellen Czaika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christopher DiLeo - "Mapping the Mind" • John Varenyi - "Baseball 101 - Keeping Score"
10/25	First Electronic Wristwatch	Louis Rader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doug Ernst - "Island Safety" • Betsy Loghry - "Everyone Can Travel" • Gerard Fernandez - "Ice Breaker"

Upcoming Events

Currently planned events:

- 11/01 - **Ben Le** plays Toastmaster. Speeches by **Monali Bhide** and **Lisa Liguori's** Ice Breaker. This will mark Monali's tenth speech achieving her Competent Communicator! And Table Topics too.
- 11/06 - Slate of candidates for officer positions announced.
- 11/08 - Election Meeting hosted by Past President **John Varenyi**. Speeches by all nominees.
- 11/15 - **Doug Ernst** takes the Toastmaster role. **Terry Carlson** and **Louis Rader** present speeches while **Rich Preston** presents Table Topics.
- 11/22 - No meeting. Happy Thanksgiving!
- 11/29 - **Tim Eddo's** back at the helm as Toastmaster. Speakers include **Betsy Loghry** and **Holly Armstrong**. Table Topics hosted by **Doug Ernst**.
- 12/06 - Toastmaster **Rich Preston** hosts speakers **Betsy Loghry** and **Holly Armstrong**. **Tim Eddo** leads the club in Table Topics.
- 12/13 - Past President **John Varenyi** serves as Toastmaster. **Betsy Loghry** gives her tenth speech, becoming our second Competent Communicator of the term! **Louis Rader** also presents. **Ellen Czaika** will lead Table Topics.
- 12/20 - End of Term Extravaganza. Details forthcoming.



- 12/27 - No meeting. Happy Holidays!
- 01/03 - First meeting of the new year. **Gladys Jimenez** gives her Ice Breaker!

November Membership Anniversaries:

- **Aurora Recepcion** - 10 years
- **Victor Garcia** - 2 years

Welcome Guests!

Dynamic Speakers proudly welcomes guests to visit our friendly and fun club! Every club in Toastmasters boasts its own personality. We suggest you visit our club as well as other clubs throughout San Diego until you find one that fits your personality and schedule.

Still not sure about us after your first visit? Come and visit us again!

We meet Wednesdays from 11:30am-12:30pm and are hosted by:

BAE SYSTEMS
10920 Technology Place
San Diego, CA 92127



For club information, directions, and conference room location, please contact our President, **Ben Le**, at [benjamin\(dot\)le\(at\)baesystems.com](mailto:benjamin(dot)le(at)baesystems.com) or 858.592.5523.

About Our Club

Dynamic Speakers was founded as "Dynamic Toastmasters" on January 13, 1953 as a company club for General Dynamics, now BAE Systems.

Our goals are aligned with those of Toastmasters International: To teach leadership, speaking, and listening skills and instill confidence in our members. We provide a fun yet professional atmosphere in our meetings and activities. We work with you to achieve whatever goals you set for yourself.

Visit us on the web at: <http://www.geocities.com/dynamicspeaker!>

About The Dynamo

The Dynamo is Dynamic Speakers Toastmasters club's monthly newsletter. It is published under the auspice of the Vice President of Public Relations, **Christopher DiLeo**.

Members are invited to submit original material for publication or ideas for articles they would like to see grace these hallowed pages.

Errors, omissions, comments, recipes and whatnot can be sent to [chris\(dot\)dileo\(at\)baesystems.com](mailto:chris(dot)dileo(at)baesystems.com).