

WUSTL Speaks Club Newsletter

Issue no. 6/ Jan. 2016



A WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY TOASTMASTERS CLUB

WELCOME!

NEW MEMBER MATT CARLSON

1. What do you do for the university? How long have you worked here? *I've worked here for about two years. I'm helping the university's central web team transition to a more contemporary way of working using elements of both Lean and Agile, which focus on delivering more value for the university by increasing collaboration and reducing waste in the team's process. That last line may have sounded like manager-speak, so I will also add that Lean and Agile can involve playing games to learn how to work more effectively as a team.*

2. What's your favorite book? *I mostly read non-fiction, and am a personal development junkie. My most recent favorite is *Loving What Is* by Byron Katie. I've found it really helpful in letting go of my thoughts about how I or someone else should be, and accepting things as they are.*

3. What is your favorite movie or TV show? *My favorite show to watch at the moment is *Game of Thrones*. I love the sheer scale of the story and how the depth of the characters evolves as the show goes on.*

4. What made you decide to join Toastmasters? What do you hope to gain from the club? *I've done a poor job in some of the meetings I've led in Public Affairs, and I want to change that. I work with Martin, John and Rosalind, who all seemed to be having fun at Toastmasters, so I thought I'd give it a shot. In addition to the work-related benefits, I'd like to become more comfortable with making mistakes in front of an audience.*

5. What do you like to do for fun? *I love to make chocolate. It's an incredibly versatile food that can be mixed together with a variety of ingredients and still taste amazing.*

6. Tell me something not many people know about you. *I recently won fifth place in a costume contest dressed up as Captain Picard from *Star Trek*.*



District 8 Conference

The District 8 Fall Conference took place November 13-14, and several WUSTL Speaks members came out to attend and to participate. Rosalind Early took third place at the 2015 District 8 Humorous Speech Contest with her speech "The Life of the Desperate Single." Additionally, John Richards and Troy DeArmitt gave a workshop together on "Talk Talk Better," where they used engaging and humorous advice to encourage attendees to make tech talks more entertaining.

WUSTL Speaks donated a gift basket for the conference's silent auction. In honor of Rosalind's participation in the Humorous Speech Contest, the basket contained several humorous books and an assortment of fun and funny goodies. It sold for \$40, which helped the conference organizers surpass their set goal of raising \$1,000 to support prison Toastmasters clubs.



WUSTL Speaks members (from left): John Richards, Rebecca O'Laughlin, Rosalind Early, Mary Clemens, Troy DeArmitt, and Martin Yoakum (who served as timer for the Humorous Speech Contest) at the District 8 Fall Conference.

Member Spotlight: Rosalind Early, CC, CL

Rosalind Early works as the associate editor of alumni periodicals at Washington University, where she is an active member and current VP of membership of WUSTL Speaks. Rosalind has a lot to be proud of: not only did she win third place in the Humorous Speech Contest at Toastmasters' District 8 Fall Conference (see article on page 1), but she recently gave her "Inspire Your Audience" speech (#10 in the *Competent Communication* manual), earning Rosalind her Competent Communicator designation and making her the first WUSTL Speaks member to achieve both the Competent Leader and Competent Communicator titles. So what's next for Rosalind?

"I had so much fun competing in the district contest. I decided I would one day come in first at Toastmasters' International Speech Competition. This would make me the best public speaker on the planet (for that one year)! I know I have a lot of work to do, but it never feels like work, which is why I think I'll succeed. But in the shorter term, I really want to recruit more new members to WUSTL Speaks. I feel so much more confident: I speak up more in meetings, I advocate for myself, and I can make up pretty decent presentations on short notice. I know I learned all of that in Toastmasters, and I just really want to pass it on and make sure everyone knows about this awesome opportunity."



Rosalind Early, after winning third place in the district's Humorous Speech Contest, with District Director Farzana Chohan.

BUILD YOUR VOCABULARY WITH RECENT WORDS OF THE DAY

Flumadiddle (October 21): noun. Utter nonsense/worthless frills

After a few more months of political speeches and false promises, the public will tire of all the flumadiddle surrounding the 2016 presidential race.

Smarmy (October 28): adjective. Wheedling, smug, insincere

The smarmy used-car salesman couldn't convince his customers to purchase a vehicle.

Competitive (November 18): adjective. As good as or better than others of a comparable nature

The university's generous stipend package for graduate students was competitive with that of many Ivy League schools.

Bamboozle (December 16): verb. To fool/deceive

The smarmy used-car salesman tried to bamboozle me, but I was not fooled!

Corporate Recognition for Toast of WU and WUSTL Speaks

On Thursday, November 12, Balraj Arunasalam, First Vice President of Toastmasters International, presented the Corporate Recognition Award to the university. Arunasalam traveled from Sri Lanka for a ceremony on campus in Olin Library. Mark Bagby, director of emergency management and President of Toast of WU, opened the ceremony. Henry Webber, executive vice chancellor for administration, accepted the award from Arunasalam on behalf of the university. The university has two Toastmasters clubs – Toast of WU and WUSTL Speaks. Both have achieved milestones that led them to this award, including hosting two recent Toastmasters Leadership Institutes and the Early-Bird Officer Training, earning “Select Distinguished” and “Distinguished Club” status and having members complete their Competent Leader and Competent Communicator Awards.



A Celebration of Story: What's Your Story?

On December 19, Rebecca Linz O’Laughlin, WUSTL Speaks secretary and administrative assistant for Comparative Literature at Washington University, participated in the District 8 “Celebration of Story: What’s Your Story?” event. Ten speakers from different Toastmasters clubs in the district shared stories on diverse topics such as being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis; illiteracy in the United States; a woman’s search for the biological mother of her children in Cameroon; and the legend of Dashrath Manjhi, an Indian man who spent several decades carving a road through an entire mountain in order to give his village access to essential services such as schools and hospitals.

Rebecca’s speech, “Sitting Shiva with the Synagogue Ladies,” was about her experience of attending her Jewish mother’s funeral as an outsider to the faith. (Rebecca was not raised Jewish, and her parents converted to Judaism only a few years ago). “I originally wrote a version of this speech as an audition piece for the St. Louis production of ‘Listen to Your Mother’ which is a show that takes place in different cities on Mother’s Day. Each cast is comprised of a dozen or so speakers who each have a story to share that is somehow related to mothers or motherhood. My audition went horribly wrong — I cried through the second half of it because I was so nervous! That experience inspired me to join Toastmasters. Now that I feel more confident in public speaking, I plan to resubmit this piece for next year’s ‘Listen to Your Mother.’ If I get invited to audition again, I know I’ll do so much better! And even if I don’t get selected for the show, a better — or at least, less humiliating — audition experience will be cathartic.”



Rebecca O’Laughlin at the Celebration of Story event.

Committed to FUN!

One of the benefits of being a member of WUSTL Speaks is the opportunity for socializing and fun with WashU colleagues. Current president Josh Lawrence is committed to hosting monthly happy hour events which have taken place at a variety of restaurants and bars including the Danforth Campus's Knight Center Pub, Cicero's, the rooftop bar at the Moonrise hotel and, most recently, Three Kings. Josh explains the importance of the social aspect of WUSTL Speaks: "The happy hour events are a great opportunity to get to know fellow Toastmasters in a more social atmosphere than the club meetings provide. Attendance is always strong because the members enjoy them so much. While the club meetings facilitate professional development, the happy hours give the members a chance to let their guard down and get to know each other on a more personal level."

Club members have also enjoyed social lunches at local restaurants during weeks when there are not regular meetings. Current VP of Education Cecily Stewart Hawksworth planned this year's holiday party, a delicious potluck on December 9. Members brought dishes to share and partook in a "warm fuzzies" activity, where they were encouraged to write complimentary notes about other members. Members got to take home their envelopes full of kind notes as well as "warm fuzzy" creatures, handmade by Cecily.



Match the Speech to the Speaker!

Each speech was given at a WUSTL Speaks meeting during the Fall 2015 semester. The first WUSTL Speaks member to e-mail Rebecca (rolaughlin@wustl.edu) with the correct answers will win a prize!

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| 1. "My Three Sons" | a. Henry Biggs |
| 2. "Tribes: A Game to Help People Work Together Better" | b. Rebecca O'Laughlin |
| 3. "Denali's Big Five" | c. Cecily Stewart Hawksworth |
| 4. "The Mystery of the Quoi" | d. Josh Lawrence |
| 5. "The Prism" | e. Rosalind Early |
| 6. "Nigeria!" | f. Anna Eggemeyer |
| 7. "How Are Desktop Support Services Measured?" | g. Chris Sherman |
| 8. "Swimming to Ferguson" | h. Matt Carlson |

DID YOU KNOW? Toastmasters International was founded in 1924 and is now made up of more than 15,400 clubs in 135 countries?

