

# The Orator

Volume 1

[www.stamfordtoastmasters.com](http://www.stamfordtoastmasters.com)

Winter 2004

## Welcome to the Premiere Issue!

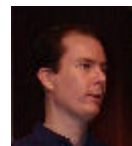
*Prepping to be the Best Club on the Planet*  
Simone Morris, CL7

Fellow Toastmasters, welcome to the premiere issue of The Orator, the newsletter for the Greater Stamford Toastmasters. The objective of this newsletter is to keep you informed, motivated, and abreast of opportunities to learn from your fellow Toastmasters. We encourage you to take the time to review the articles and discover how you can help Greater Stamford become the "Best Damn Club on the Planet". At least that's the goal of our new President, James Jorasch. **Did you know that the Greater Stamford Toastmasters Club is now one of the 50 largest TM clubs in the world? In November alone, 8 new members joined our club. This number surpasses June 2003 (7 new members) as our best month for new membership. We have also filled our Distinguished Club Program goals for new membership for the year.** These are indeed exciting times! In this edition, you'll get to hear our new President talk about his vision for the Club. James was elected back in June. To meet the rest of the officers for 2003-2004 term, visit

<http://www.stamfordtoastmasters.com>

A Chat with new Club President  
James Jorasch, ATM-S

Simone Morris



James Jorasch, President  
July 2003 - June 2004 Term

**SM: James, what inspired you to run for office in the Greater Stamford Toastmasters Club?**

JJ: My primary inspiration was that I wanted to give back something to the club that has given me so much over the two years that I have been a member. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to learn from some true masters of speaking (Ian, Geoff, Jesse, Melanie, Joe, Al, and others) and I wanted to make sure that the club continued to flourish to enable future members to experience the same wonderful opportunities.

**SM: What exciting plans do you have in store for your term? I know you've consistently said that GST will be the Best Damn Club on the Planet. Can you elaborate on how you intend to achieve this goal?**

JJ: As an entrepreneur, my vision for the Greater Stamford Toastmasters Club is that it should run like a business. What makes a business successful? An obsessive desire to constantly improve the quality of the product, and a complete devotion to the needs of the customer attributes to business success. For Toastmasters, the "product" is the education and training we provide to each member and the

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"customers" are the members. If we can achieve a high quality product and satisfied customers we'll be well on our way to the Best Damn Club on the Planet. To do that, we've assembled the most talented and motivated group of officers ever to run a Toastmasters Club, and have embarked on a series of projects aimed squarely at our products and customers. To improve product quality, we have scheduled many special events that offer extra training such as Beginner's Night, Interview Workshops, and Memory Training. But these are just the beginning! Keep a close eye on the schedule page of the website for new events to be scheduled soon. Have an idea for a seminar that you want to lead? Talk to one of the officers and we can get the ball rolling!

And of course new technologies will play a part in improving product quality. We've already seen a dramatic improvement to the website (thanks Ed Carroll!), and recently rolled-out software that allows members to sign up for speeches from any Internet browser (thanks Andrij Koshelevski!). As far as we can tell, GSTC is one of a handful of clubs at the forefront in online scheduling technology!

Interested in a videotape of your speech? We are the only club in our District to offer regular videotape services! Will the technology upgrades stop there? Of course not! We'll be adding sound files of actual speeches to the website, and will eventually provide the capability for video playback of a speech during the meeting in which it was delivered. Do you need to do a PowerPoint presentation for work? We're working on setting up a digital projection system. Do you have technical skills that could help the club? Grab one of the officers and talk about how you can help us achieve our vision.

We will be intensifying our efforts to understand exactly what the members want. We're willing to look at Toastmasters from the ground up to make sure that it is meeting the needs of the members. To that end we have a number of projects in the works. Al Bhatt (the club consultant) is tapping into his years of consulting

experience to help recast the club in a more effective form. A few officers (Andrij Koshelevsky, Judi Borderud, and Joe Coldebella) conducted a special session back in October to discuss the goals of members in an effort to better understand what members are trying to get out of the Toastmasters experience. Paul Dunay will also be developing questionnaires to better understand members.

Lastly, I should also mention that the club is trying to reach out to potential members in the Stamford Community. Andrew Mouradian will be working with companies, setting up public speaking seminars on-site. All of the officers will also be involved in efforts to give back to the community such as by reading to children at libraries. If we manage to accomplish even half of these projects, I think we will be well on our way to becoming the Best Damn Club on the Planet!

**SM: How do you plan to re-involve experienced club members who have lost interest in the club?**

JJ: First, by creating a vibrant and exciting club that those members will want to come back to. Former club president Sal Scalisi recently stopped by our special CL-1 night, and enjoyed the opportunity to once again interact with the club. Second, by creating unique opportunities for those members that let them learn new skills and stretch themselves a bit. The Stamford Club is helping guide the newly formed GE Capital Club - work that will hopefully draw some of the older, more experienced members.

**SM: Thanks for giving us an insight into the vision for the future of the Greater Stamford Toastmasters, James. We look forward to hearing from you on a regular basis.**



## The Value of Mastermind Groups

Judi Borderud

Napoleon Hill coined the concept of the Mastermind Group (MMG) in his classic book, *Think and Grow Rich*. His belief was that a group of like-minded, achievement-oriented individuals could have a dramatic effect each other's success.

A MMG is a small team of 5 to 8 entrepreneurs who are dedicated to developing their businesses. The group's purpose is to provide structure, accountability, suggestions, and moral support to each member to further his or her success in business. MMGs meet regularly to share ideas and critique plans in a supportive, confidential environment.

Although each group establishes and agrees to its own parameters and procedures, successful MMGs are generally based on the following principles: Motivation; Brainstorming, Success, Openness, Positive outlook; Commitment, Trust; Challenges and Fun. Great minds may not always think alike, but that's good news for those in MMGs. More people are finding them to be instrumental to their success in business as well as personal development growth.

Imagine the opportunity to communicate with other committed, like-minded, intelligent, ambitious individuals who take a personal interest in you and who have the goal of helping you achieve your dreams. Now imagine playing a key role in supporting others in the same way. That's the power of a MMG. In a business framework, a MMG acts as an informal board of Advisors.

Participation by all is encouraged and expected, as well as a commitment to attend meetings, and a commitment to setting and making progress toward business and personal goals. Everything said at the meetings is kept in complete confidentiality. It is a great tool, especially for those of us who work alone. Anyone interested in more information on Mastermind Groups, please e-mail Judi at [judib@optonline.net](mailto:judib@optonline.net). ❖

## Membership News:

- CONGRATULATIONS TO PAUL BAILO for taking second place at the District Level (all of CT, Western MA, and Eastern NY) of the Table Topics Contest. We knew Paul had it in him and obviously the judges thought so too. You can learn more about Paul's win by reading an article published in the CT Post. Visit <http://www.stamfordtoastmasters.com> for more information.
- SEEING IS BELIEVING! Improve your speaking habits by taking advantage of the club's camcorder. Your first VHS videotape is free of charge. All others must be dropped off to the club's Video Master, Mr. Ed Carroll.
- WEDNESDAY NIGHTS. We now have meetings on the first Wednesday of each month. Because these meetings are smaller, they offer a great opportunity for individualized attention. See Jamie Gerelli for more information.
- MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES ARE NOW AVAILABLE! Mentors offer guidance through their thorough understanding of the Toastmasters Program. Mentees - take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to improve your public speaking skills. If you have been procrastinating about giving your speech, engage a Mentor to help you along that path. Anyone interested in being a mentor or mentee should see Judi Borderud.
- EXCITING OPPORTUNITY to share your talents with students. Ed and Raj will begin a Youth Leadership program in Stamford in January, while the Hall School in Bridgeport is asking for volunteers for a 6<sup>th</sup> grade class. Please speak to James Jorasch to hear more about scholastic opportunities.
- VOLUNTEERS are needed for articles in The Orator Newsletter. Please email Simone Morris at [simoniemo@yahoo.com](mailto:simoniemo@yahoo.com) to indicate your interest.

- CALENDAR OF EVENTS - For updated event information, visit our website <http://www.stamfordtoastmasters.com>
- SPECIAL THANKS to Richard Flight for coming up with the name of our newsletter.
- CLUB BUSINESS CARDS are available to any member who requests them and would like to share information about our club with their co-workers, friends and associates.

## Holiday Party Recap

THIS YEAR'S HOLIDAY PARTY was held on Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. A short meeting was held at the usual location and then we transferred over to Jazzmine's for good food and interesting conversation. We had a great turnout. It's obvious that next year, we'll need more space.

The fun began with some networking among the Toastmasters, followed by Melanie leading the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Story-telling experience. It's quite a spin on the Table Topics and we were amused by the visits to various exotic locales. It was quite different from last year's interesting tale. No one can accuse the members in the Greater Stamford Toastmasters Club of not being creative. After all, our own Geoff Gelman won the Tall Tales competition back in Spring 2002. Our president, James Jorasch told us his plans for the New Year. True to meeting form, we had a timer role so James had to cut it short. Please take some time to review the article on James in the first 2 pages of The Orator.

If you missed the experience, be sure to attend next year to join in the fun!

