

The Whispering Woods



Note from the Editor

Last month we launched our newsletter and asked for nominations for the title.



The winner is.... Steve Gilbert for nominating Whispering Woods. In recognition he receives a double movie pass.

This month we're featuring our first member profile so read on to learn a bit more about our most recent Competent Toastmaster, Marcel Raffoul.

Next month we'll feature an update on our Distinguished Club program – our set of 10 goals to make our Club even better while furthering our skills as communicators!

What's On?

The Semi-Annual Conference is fast approaching – Nov 6 & 7. For those of you who haven't been before, conferences are a great experience. You can attend as much or as little as you wish. There are educational sessions, the NSW/ACT Humorous & Table Topics contests and much more. This year it's at Sydney Olympic Park and it will be a fantastic weekend.



A word from our President – Darren Gilchrist

Wow, edition #2 of our newly named newsletter "The Whispering Woods." What an name, particularly if like me, you go for walks in the forest. The things I've heard! Well, it's principally me talking to myself.... hehehe. Congratulations to Steve Gilbert for winning the newsletter naming contest.



An even bigger WOW is needed for our 200th meeting! It was great to see so

many current and past members attending, and a large number of guests that I hope will all become members! THANK YOU to all those that made it happen.

While we're thanking people - thanks to all those folks that paid their annual dues on time and made life a little easier for our Treasurer Noel Christensen. For those who didn't, please make sure you do next time. To make our Distinguished Club Program (DCP) goals we do need to have you all signed up before October 1st.

The next half of the year is going to be a more exciting one. We've put together a great club calendar that shows all our meetings until August 2005, which we will distribute soon. This is going to give you an idea of the incredible program we have ahead. We'd love to hear any suggestions to make meetings or the club better, so send an email to cftm@au1.ibm.com with any ideas!

Toastmasters is all about "Making Effective Communication a Worldwide Reality." If you have a meeting assignment you would just love to take up, or would like to do a formal speech as part of your Toastmasters education plan, please let Michael Ross our Vice President Education (VPE) know. Assignments and speeches are of course, very important to your development as a Toastmaster. Every time you do one, you'll both improve your skills and increase your confidence as an effective communicator.

Finally, make sure you keep an eye out on our ever improving website for 200th meeting pictures, our DCP progress charts and the 2004/2005 club calendar. These are just a few things being progressively placed on the website by our very enthusiastic and creative webmaster, Dimantha Goonasekera.

Darren Gilchrist
(2004 - 2005 President)

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Club news

Since our last newsletter we've had some exciting times in the Club. On 27 September we celebrated our 200th meeting with a great night. We definitely exceeded our expectations in terms of attendees and had a fantastic night. There were lots of visitors and I hope that we'll see them again soon as members! Our visitors were full of praise for the Club's accomplishments with one saying, "I was impressed by how much you've improved since the last time I attended a meeting". Great feedback to hear and with Darren's leadership and plans I know we can do even better!



We also recognised two achievements on the night. Firstly, congratulations to Marcel Raffoul who achieved Competent Toastmaster by completing his 10th speech – well done Marcel! Les Kent is to be congratulated for achieving Advanced Toastmaster Bronze. This is only the second ATM-Bronze for the Club so a big hand to Les!

While on Les, he acquitted himself well at the Area 37 Contest on 24 September. Our Area always sets a high standard and this recent contest was no exception. Well done Les and hopefully we'll see you as a winner next time!

Member profile: Marcel Raffoul

At our 200th meeting Marcel mentioned that he was moving into a new job and attributed Toastmasters with helping him so who better to feature in our first member profile! In our member profiles we'll learn a bit more about our members, how Toastmasters has helped them and each person will share a little known fact.

Marcel is Lebanese although his maternal grandfather came with the Allies from France during the war, marrying and settling in the area. He originally migrated to Australia in 1996 but stayed for less than 6 months that first time. He got a job with IBM in Saudi Arabia and spent 3 years working in the desert. Marcel returned to Sydney just before the Sydney Olympics in August 2000.

Marcel says that Toastmasters has helped him in the last 18 months to grow in confidence and to be a bit more extroverted. He's now enjoying talking to a group whereas a little while back he dreaded it. He says, "certainly becoming a CTM went a long way in helping me get my new job as it was a bonus to be able to present to the team and TM is a kind of skill certification". Congratulations!

Now for something you might not know about Marcel: he speaks, reads and writes three languages! English, Arabic and French.

Got something to say?

This is the Club's newsletter so please let Janelle, or any of the Exec. Team know, what you would like to see in future newsletters so that they add value to you. Contact Janelle directly or email cftm@au1.ibm.com.

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Trivia Time - ?????

If you were stumped last month, here are the answers to our Trivia question.



Q: What is the collective word for a group of frogs? A: An army or a colony or knot.

Q: What is an arctophile? A: Someone who collects or is fond of teddy bears.

Q: What two countries are bordered by the greatest number of nations? A: China & Russia each share borders with 14 other countries.

Word Puzzles

See if you can guess what these abbreviations stand for:



Here's an example to get you started.

12 I in F = 12 inches in a foot

Now for your turn, answers next edition

- 1) 99 B of B on the W
- 2) 2's C, 3's a C
- 3) 18 H on a GC
- 4) 52 C in a D
- 5) 6 0s in a M

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