



ROSTRUM

INFORMER

January/February 2013

Newsletter of Rostrum Western Australia

www.rostrum.com.au/wa

Happy New Year & Welcome to 2013



I trust you all had a great Christmas & New Year and didn't suffer too much in the extended hot spell. It didn't bother me at all; we were in Melbourne. There were occasional hot days but not too bad; now I'm enjoying the lovely warm days and cool nights.

By the time you receive this newsletter all clubs will have restarted their meetings. I'm looking forward to this year and

hope you are too. I'm hoping we can extend awareness of Rostrum. We ended 2012 with a shade under 300 members but not all returns were in, so fingers crossed we can stay close to that number and then grow it during the year.

Plenty of things are planned for the year, starting with the **Club Executive Training Workshop** at the Dais meeting on **Friday 22 February** at the Joan Watters Building, Wembley Community Centre, Alexander St, Wembley, at approx 8.00 pm following the Dais meeting. Dais meeting commences at 6.30 pm for 7:00 pm start. Drinks and nibbles are provided both before the meeting and in the fellowship break before the workshop. Anyone can attend the Dais workshop, although only club representatives can vote.

This is an ideal opportunity to develop or refresh your understanding of the role and duties of the club executive positions. It's particularly important if you're taking up a position for the first time but it can also provide a good reminder to previous office bearers. All speakers are experienced in their roles and will give you fresh insights into different ways of doing things.

While all positions will be covered, a strong focus will be the Program Director's role, which is the key to keeping meetings innovative, stimulating and enjoyable. I look forward to seeing many of you at the workshop.

As I said in the December *Informer*, members of the Board are basically unchanged. The exception is Fmn Sue Hart, who has stepped down as coordinator of the **Speaker of the Year Competition**. Fmn Karen Reid has taken over Sue's role and has already booked the venue for late October. Planning for the heats is well underway. Full details will follow in a future *Informer*. Keep your eyes peeled!

That's the beginning and end of the year but there are plenty of other things happening or planned to happen including:

- Program sharing between Club Program Directors has been initiated by Graham Minchin, Director of Marketing & Membership. This should have started but get in touch with Graham if he hasn't contacted you yet.
- The traditional **Anzac Day Breakfast & Great Debate** will again be held by Club 15. They had nearly 100 members and guests last year. Let's see if we can beat that number this year.
- A **Critics Training Course** has provisionally been scheduled for **April**. Director of Training, Wayne Passmore, is organising this. If you're interested or you're aware of club members you think would make good critics/tutors, let Wayne know. I'll also be running a course down in Albany in mid-April.
- There is a \$500 marketing grant for clubs, which was initiated at the November Dais meeting. Clubs wishing to take advantage of this must submit a Marketing Plan to the Dais Board setting out how they will use the money. We are developing guidelines which will be sent out to clubs soon. Put your thinking caps on!

I look forward to seeing many of you around Rostrum during the year. I'm always happy to visit clubs for special occasions.

Freeman Tony Lightman, President, Rostrum WA

Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year

The Arthur Garvey Speaker of the Year final will be held on **Saturday 26 October** at the **Lake Karrinyup Country Club**, a popular venue for the last two competitions.

All Rostrum members should get revved up to either enter, or to encourage and support those who will take up the challenge. There is no one in Rostrum who cannot succeed in this competition. It's enormously rewarding and will take your skills on a quantum leap. You'll also make friends with people from other clubs and get a window into different speaking styles. It's a multi-experience. Watch this space for more info..."

Freeman Karen Reid, Co-ordinator AGSOY

What's on in ...

FEBRUARY

- 21 **Dais Board meeting**
6.15pm
Shenton Park Community Centre
240 Onslow Rd, Shenton Park
- 22 **Dais Reps meeting
& Club Executive workshop**
6.30 for 7.00pm start
Joan Watters Centre
Alexander Rd, Wembley

MARCH

- 12 **Speak up Speak out course**
6.00 to 9.00pm
Tom Dadour Centre
363 Bagot Rd, Subiaco
- 15 **Deadline for April *Informer***
- 21 **Dais Board meeting**
details as for February

APRIL

- 18 **Dais Board meeting**
details as for March
- 25 **ANZAC Day Breakfast
& Great Debate**
7.30 for 8.00am start
Ascot Quays Hotel
150 Canning Hwy, Belmont
- 26 **Dais Reps AGM**
details as for March
- ☺ **Critics Training Course**
dates and venue tba

Information and course registration:

Rostrum Information Centre
PO Box 5547
Canning Vale South
WA 6155
Phone 08 9463 6433
Fax 08 9455 1215
Email ric@rostrumwa.com.au

This year the *Informer* will be printed and posted to members in **February, April, June, August, October** and **December**, with the deadline for copy the 15th of the month preceding publication.

I look forward to receiving your contributions of advance notice of club events, reports and photos of club functions or interesting meetings, as well as news of individual member or club achievements. Please send copy to: informer@rostrumwa.com.au.

Rose Fogliani (Editor)

What is SUSO?

Speak up Speak out (SUSO) is a short course designed to give new Rostrum members a head start as they tackle their Personal Development Programme exercises. It's also a great introduction to public speaking for visitors to Rostrum who are yet to take the plunge.

Through instruction and by example, the course shows how to develop ideas on different topics and how to structure a presentation. The focus is on effective communication, so time is also spent on the importance of gestures and voice in getting a message across. Participants have the opportunity to develop and present a short speech and receive personalised feedback from qualified tutors.

SUSO is held at the Tom Dadour Centre in Subiaco on the second Tuesday of alternate months, beginning in March, from 6.00-9.00pm. The course is free for members and \$60 for non-members, although this includes \$50 credit towards membership. Registration is essential (see box opposite).

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|------------|----------|--------------|
| SUSO dates | 12 March | 10 September |
| | 14 May | 12 November |
| | 9 July | |

ANZAC Day Breakfast

The Rostrum ANZAC Day Breakfast & Great Debate is on again on Thursday 25 April at the Ascot Quays Hotel, 150 Canning Hwy Belmont. We've booked a larger room this year, but get your name in early to avoid missing out.

The function starts at 7.30 for 8.00am start – so arrive early to start your buffet breakfast. The cost is the same as last year (\$35 each). More details will be available soon.

Sarah Bellow, President, Club 15

New venue for Foothills Club 11

Foothills Rostrum Club 11 has bid 'au revoir' to the Mud Hut in Kenwick and will now meet in the Function Room of the Gosnells Hotel, Albany Highway, Gosnells. What hasn't changed is that we welcome visitors wherever we have our meetings, so feel free to come and visit us!

Fmn Osmund Perera, Secretary, Club 11

[The December *Informer* reported on Fmn Osmund Perera's 30 years in Rostrum. The fourth member of the Foothills '30+ club' is, of course, Fmn Graham Longworth. – *Ed.*]

Language at play

Why do 'slow down' and 'slow up' mean the same thing?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language when a house can burn up as it burns down and in which you fill in a form by filling it out. English was invented by people, not computers. That is why when the stars are out they are visible but when the lights are out they are invisible and why it is that when I wind up my watch it starts, but when I wind up this poem it ends.

Richard Lederer, *Crazy English* 1990

8 things your audience needs and expects from you

A Attitude

A positive attitude is the most important quality any communicator can possess. Your audience will be more attentive and energetic, and will respect you for your great outlook on life. Speakers with charisma are always positive.

Tip – Smile and you will start to feel more positive.

U Unity

Your job is to bring your audience together so you can establish two-way communication. It's about making people feel part of a group. Create a warm and inviting atmosphere so your audience feels as though they belong.

Tip – Humour unifies an audience because laughter breaks down barriers. Try sending yourself up to make a point.

D Direction

You have a responsibility to take your audience on a voyage. People want to know where they are being led in a speech; you need to direct them on a carefully mapped-out route so they are not confused about your message. They want to know there is a purpose to what they are listening to.

Tip – Have a beginning, middle and end to your speech.

I Involvement

People learn best in an experiential environment. The simplest way of involving an audience is by asking questions and getting them thinking and talking so that the communication is two-way.

Tip – Introduce an energiser; get everyone up on their feet. It must be relevant to the theme.

E Empathy

Empathy is the power of understanding and imaginatively entering into another person's feelings. This is one of the most important tools in communication. We learn to be empathetic by listening to and observing others.

Tip – Take time to stop and listen to people.

N Nurturing

It's the presenter's responsibility to nurture their audience, so take care of them no matter what the subject matter. Enable them to learn.

Tip – Speak with a caring tone in your voice. Kindness doesn't cost, so be generous with it.

C Credibility

Your audience needs to believe in you from the moment you open your mouth. You are the expert in your field and that's why you are speaking to this audience. Without credibility your messages will have no impact.

Tip – Provide the person introducing you with relevant, up-to-date material and credentials well in advance.

E Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is essential to wake up any audience and keep their interest. You cannot have too much passion. Depriving your audience of your enthusiasm robs them of any relationship with you.

Tip – Confident posture, a smile, energy and a lively voice tell your audience you are enthusiastic.

In case you were wondering where old phone cords go...

In this age of 'cordless this' and 'wireless that', when we communicate mostly via smart phones, twitter and facebook, it might be comforting to know that the (now) dumb phones are being quietly put out to pasture at Auckland's Museum of Communications (someone in New Zealand has *way* too much free time).

Thanks to *Alf Frater, Southern Star Club 63*, for the heads-up.



Why you should study public speaking if you are never going to speak in public

"Nothing in life is to be feared, only understood." Marie Curie

There is, of course, no such thing as going from the cradle to the grave without ever speaking in public. Your audience may not number in the thousands, but you have an audience. The average person speaks over 5 000 words a day, and that's a great deal of talking to have done in private! Every day, as soon as you speak to someone, your voice makes an impression. Your audience of one, or three or seven, decides right at that point if you are cheerful, tired, upset, impatient or optimistic. They decide if they would enjoy more of your company, or would just as soon you were on your way. You may never want to use your voice to recruit your fellow citizens to cast their vote in your behalf, but if you'd like the sales clerk to check something in the stockroom for you, you stand a better chance if your voice is pleasing to her.

It is not just for you that we say a speech course is important. It is for those speeches to which we listen. Daily you form the core of your convictions by listening to what other people are telling you. On the radio, on the TV, from the pulpit and in the public forum – you are told what others would like you to think, what they want you to join, how they expect your support and how they demand you cast your ballot. Usually, they are polished, effective speakers. They know exactly what they are doing – and so should you.

Supposing someone wants you to accept a proposition she is not entirely sure you're going to buy. In the back of your mind, you have an idea what she is going to say, and you're sceptical about it. You're sitting there with a "well, let's hear what you've got to say" attitude. Then the speaker walks up to the mike, smiles and tells you a funny story – usually a ridiculous or embarrassing thing where she is the butt of the joke. Pretty soon you are laughing with her. Did you ever try to argue with someone who has you laughing? It's a pretty difficult thing to

do. Twenty minutes later you're saying, "She really is a down-to-earth person. I thought she was great and what she said made a lot of sense, too." Did it? Let's hope so.

How about the speaker who wants to convince you of his point of view? He may start on common ground. Something in the line of a question that will get a sure 'yes'. "I'm sure we all love our country?" He enlarges upon it – "We are proud to be Americans," etc. Heads all over the hall nod 'yes'. A second statement, "We work hard for what we have. Our fathers fought for freedom, our brothers and sisters fought for it, and our sons and daughters fought. Many of you sitting here tonight fought." Watch all the heads nodding and affirming. The third statement, "We don't want to see anyone hungry in our country," etc., etc. More 'yes, true, yes' nods by a large majority of the audience. No one knows exactly why three 'yes' answers equal four 'yes' answers, but any teacher of Platform Art will confirm that it works. Even the boy at your door selling anything has his sale almost assured if he can first get you to agree that 1) it's a nice day, 2) you live on a well-kept street, and 3) your dog is the greatest.

How about the way questions are answered? Do you always hear the answer?

If the politician says: "I'm glad you asked that – it gives me a chance to tell you . . ." I'll bet if you were really listening you didn't hear the question that you asked, answered.

If you mention that you understand from TV reports that the Starvation Awareness program the speaker has just praised has not given one cent of its money to relieve starvation, and you'd like to know if this is true, and the speaker says –

"That is an interesting comment – I didn't happen to see that program, but even more pertinent etc., etc." or "First let me tell you . . ."

Where's your answer?

How about people who use endorsements to persuade? "The Veterans of Foreign Wars are behind me 100% – to a man. How about you?" He may be exaggerating a bit.

Or association – "The party of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and me!"

Do you know what you are listening to, and why you are forming opinions? You should.

Is this manner of presentation wrong? No, absolutely not! If you have a good product, or a worthwhile cause, why shouldn't you offer it in the most attractive way possible? You should. If you believe in something and want support it would be foolish not to seek it out as effectively as possible, wouldn't it? Because something is well-packaged doesn't mean it is defective. What the speaker is saying may be exactly right and deserving of complete co-operation. It is simply prudent of you to know exactly why you enrolled in a cause. It is the duty of every person today to immunise himself or herself against manipulation and to do this you must be able to distinguish the gift from the wrapping. Fancy boxes are fun, but they don't always indicate the value of the article inside. Know what you are buying and why. If you sit in a good Public Speaking class and never say a word, but you learn how to listen, you have become a far wiser person.

When Adolf Hitler spoke, he was one of the most dynamic, enthused and forceful speakers of his time. A man who listened to him in person once said he could not disagree with Hitler while he was speaking. Only after he went home and reviewed the talk in his mind, step by step, could he see the diabolical fallacies in Hitler's plans. Nothing, absolutely nothing, is more powerful for good or evil than the human voice. Understand it – it is your privilege and your duty.

Maureen Hanigan, *Secrets of Successful Speaking* 1980