

Vital News

Special birthday edition



The newsletter of "Vital Communicators Toastmasters Club, Club #7056, Division A, District 74

July 2006

Editor's note ...

The "baby" that was born 18 years ago, has grown into a sturdy, healthy boy! After being in the Toastmasters business for 18 years, it surely is time to stand still for a few minutes and reflect on what our club has achieved over the past 18 years. This is a special birthday edition and in it we are going to look back on past achievements, to introduce everybody who is currently on the team, and to look towards the future and what it may hold for us. Let us draw inspiration from the past, and build a great future for our club!

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*Small talk drives out meaningful talk —
Doug "Leo" Hanbury*

Leadership, goals and members

Frances Boshoff DTM
District Governor 2006-07

"Leadership does not simply happen it can be taught, learned, developed," says Rudi Giuliani, former mayor of New York.

He further says that: "Much of your ability to get people to do what they have to do is going to depend on what they perceive when they look at you and listen to you."

Paying attention to minor issues like the goals of members and interesting programs will result in a successful club. Guests would want to join a club where the members' goals are important, resulting in the club obtaining its membership goal.

However, a club should also be run as a business with the President being the CEO. In order for a business to be successful, the management team should work well together and should strive to achieve its goals without compromising the well-being of its employees (members).

Every club should strive to achieve the 10 Distinguished Club Points (DCP), but it should not be the driving force behind the success of the club. The club leadership and especially the President should look after the well-being of its members and not overlook their individual goals. Do the goals of the member and the goals of the club align?

Believe that you as a club leader can be the best leader that you can be. As a member get involved with the club activities and become the best communicator that you can be.

The two most powerful tools for personal growth:



TMI Logo and District 74 motto for 2006 - 2007

Always think of something new, that will make you forget your last rotten idea — Frankel

Meet our new executive:

President: Bertus Theron joined Vital Communicators about 14 years ago. He is married with two sons, Jacques, who is 10 years old, and Riaan who is almost 4. Bertus is a scientist and works at the CSIR .

He has completed his ATM bronze but has not yet started on his ATM silver. Not being VPE this year, he should have more time on his hands, and we challenge him to give that ATM silver a go! He has been president of Vital Communicators before, so watch out: he is experienced and will keep his thumb on everyone.

Anchen, his wife, is a preschool teacher. They are very fond of hiking and when they do, Bertus carries the little one on his back when he gets tired. Bertus has a great interest in plants (or rather, anything to do with nature) and is for ever gathering specimens to take home.

Lynnette Vermaak joined Vital Communicators in 2004 and is our **VPE** for this year. She is married to Neil and they have 3 children: a son named Alex, who is 19 and studying Computer science, and twin daughters named Kim and Gail, who are 13. Neil has his own business and Lynnette works for Kimberley Clarke (the Kleenex people). Lynnette has completed her CTM and if she received her advanced manuals on time like she should have, she would have been halfway through it by this time. She has also completed her CL. She enjoys helping out at Youth Leadership courses and has presented the PRO training at COT (i) this year

As a family, they enjoy camping, the outdoors in general and bird watching in particular.

Jonas Maloka, our **VPM** this year, graduated from Tshwane University of Technology at the end of last year. He joined Vital Communicators Toastmasters during 2001, when he was still a student. He got to know about Toastmasters at school when he attended a Youth Leadership Course. Jonas was on the debating team at TUT, and still helps out there when needed. He also assisted the club in winning the debate against Pretoria 2000 last year. He has just completed his Advanced bronze.

His hobbies are movies, reading and watching sport – he rooted for Germany in the Soccer World cup Final. Does he have a steady girlfriend ? – who knows??

Susan le Roux is trying out her writing abilities by being the **PRO** this year. So watch this space, you will get quite a few

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Elsi Meyer

Book Review

Supernatural Meetings with the Ancient Teachers of Mankind

By Graham Hancock author of "Fingerprints of the Gods"

Are you one of the many modern people who are curious to step out of our scientifically proven western society? Curious about the Power of the Universe that were so tightly kept under the blanket in modern society?

In this well researched book, the author takes us back nearly 50,000 years in time. Here he introduces us to the first rock paintings found in the Upper Paleolithic Europe. In this journey it is discovered that these paintings have obvious and uncharacteristic similarities with the rock art found in the Native American countries, as well as those of the Bushman that was discovered in Namibia and South Africa – the latter was done ten thousands of years after the Paleolithic art.

These similarities include:

1. The therianthropes – blending of human and animals
2. Hybrid animals blending the characteristics of two or more species
3. Monsters
4. Abstract and geometrical patterns, with recurrent combination with fully iconic figures
5. Multiple superimpositions of images on top of earlier images
6. The absence of ground and horizontal lines and the disregard of relative scale
7. Strange figures of the 'wounded men' penetrated by many arrows or spears

Neuropsychological studies found a strong resemblance between the rock art and the entopic phenomena seen in altered states of consciousness (hypnosis, meditative states and drug induced states). He also points out that, although there is a strong indication that the altered state of consciousness of the Upper European art where, as in the case of the Native American art, induced by taking herbs or drugs. The Bushman reached these states of consciousness only through doing trance dances.

With this explanation, he guides us into the world of the San Bushman and their shamans. He asks crucial questions: (p 212)

.... whether we are wise today to censor and ferociously repress the very kinds of shamanistic explorations of consciousness that brought art and religion into being at the dawn of the modern human story? Above all else, we who say we are 'free' in the economically advanced and democratic nations of the world, and who arrogantly set up our societies as models for others to follow, need to pause and reflect. What do we have to preach about where freedom is concerned, when we as individuals are not even free to exercise that basic sovereignty over our own consciousness that our ancestors claimed as their birthright?

If this question catches your attention, this book is a must read!

The people who have something to say, don't talk; the other insist on talking —
AJ Liebling

Education...has produced a vast population able to read but unable to distinguish what is worth reading — Oscar Wilde

You can be a leader!

Willem le Roux

We all joined toastmasters because we wanted to develop our communication skills. Toastmasters however promises to develop both our communication and our leadership skills. By this time all of you properly have experienced for yourself how Toastmasters have developed your communication skills, but do you know how toastmasters can develop your leadership skills? To my mind there are four basic ways in which Toastmasters can develop our leadership skills:

- 1) In developing our communication skills Toastmasters automatically also develop our leadership skills. If you want to become a good leader you must be able to communicate with conviction. A leader is a person who brings about positive change in society by convincing other people to help him/her in bringing about the change. For this you need a vision and mission and to persuade other people to follow your vision and mission. It is no coincidence that the 10th speech of the Competent Communications manual's objective is to speak with persuasion: once you have completed your first ten speeches in becoming a Competent Communicator you have thus also learned the most basic skill in becoming a leader, the skill to persuade people to follow your vision and mission.
- 2) In Toastmasters we improve our speaking skills by helping and supporting each other. We all take part in creating a supporting environment in our clubs. We don't only give speeches but also give evaluations on the speeches given by our fellow members, we are getting the chance to be the toastmaster of the evening, the grammarian, the general evaluator etc. Once again we develop skills that are important in becoming a good leader. A good leader needs to support and develop the members of his/her team. In developing our listening skills and the skill to give positive feedback to our fellow members, we thus develop important leadership skills. In the new Competent Leadership manual these skills are consciously developed by giving us constructive feedback on the way in

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Soul Food

People make their most important decisions with their heart but they justify them with their head to preserve their sanity (although they will never admit it).

After studying how and why people make decisions over the past seven years, I have discovered that all the most important decisions we ever make are based on emotion, although we justify them with logic. Think about yourself: Why did you buy your house? Why did you buy your car? Why did you choose to do what you do for a living? Why did you marry the person you married? Why did you buy this book?

So here is the main message of this MindSpark:

Human beings are 90% emotional and 10% rational, although there are many among us who would like to think it's the other way round.

So don't expect people to make sense. Don't look for rational answers to highly emotional issues. And don't be surprised when people surprise you. Even Shakespeare said, "The heart knows reason that reason knows nothing of."

But from today, use this powerful MindSpark to your advantage. Make sure that you connect emotionally with people.

I believe that the best communicators bypass reason and go direct to the heart. You see, if people like you, they'll listen to you. If they don't you are doomed to failure no matter how much sense you make.

(Taken with kind permission from www.mikelipkin.com)

There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in—The Power and the Glory

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newsletters this year, especially if you provide the news!

Susan has joined Vitals in 2001, after being invited to meetings by her (now) husband. Her only regret is not having joined 20 years ago!

Susan has just completed her Advanced silver. She has also completed her CL. She is involved in Youth Leaderships, and at present she and Willem is presenting a Speech Craft course at the World Bank.

Susan has been a lecturer in Education at the University of Pretoria for 22 years, and at present still give courses to teachers on a regular basis, while she also has a small practice at home as an Educational Psychologist. She has 3 grown-up boys.

Frances Boshoff still saw her way open to be **Secretary** for Vital Communicators although she will have her hands full this year with being **District Governor** for the whole of Southern Africa, which includes Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Lesotho, Zambia, Botswana, Malawi and Namibia, and now also Mozambique, where a club has been chartered recently.

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- 3) In Toastmasters we learn public speaking by practicing it in a supportive and protective environment. In the same way we are given the chance to develop our leadership abilities by taking part in the leadership roles in Toastmasters itself, in our clubs, in our Areas, Division and District. If we really want to develop our leadership abilities we have to take up leadership roles. Being a part of the club executive for at least six months is a pre-requisite for the Advanced Leadership Bronze qualification. Being an Area or Division Governor is again a pre-requisite in qualifying for the Advanced Leadership Silver. Although these positions can be seen as managerial positions with clear managerial tasks, they also provide you with opportunities to develop your leadership skills. Taking part in a Membership Building Project is for example another pre-requisite for the Advanced Leadership Bronze qualification.
- 4) Lastly there is the Advanced Leadership Project with its own manual which have to be completed for the Advanced Leadership Silver qualification. In this manual you learn both the theoretical background of leadership development and you have to complete a project to develop your leadership skills. The purpose of this project is not so much to complete the project successfully but to develop your leadership skills. For this purpose you have the support of a Guidance Committee which you appoint yourself and which continuously give you support and feedback on your progress with your chosen project. Once you have completed this project you will realize that if you want to bring positive changes in society or in any organization you have to assume leadership yourself.

If you believe in your own self-development, grab the opportunity offered by Toastmasters with both hands and you would become the best you, you can be. You will have become not only an excellent communicator but an excellent

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Kenia is also on the verge of chartering one or two clubs, and they will also form part of Southern Africa, District 74.

She has already began to put her own stamp on Toastmasters Leadership in District 74 by starting the Toastmasters Leadership Institute which will ensure that the leaders in TM in the whole of District 74 gets proper training which will be standardised for all Divisions. The second "Speaker to trainer" workshop was held on 22 July and attended by 55 Toastmasters from all over the country. Well done Frances!

In between Toasmastering, Frances also lectures in Computer Studies at Wits University. She is very fond of children and tutors a few children. Her sister's boy of eight is the apple of her eye, and she still finds time to take him to the zoo or on other outings.

Recently she has taken up "beading" and she makes the most beautiful bracelets, watches, and other items. This satisfies her creative side!

Marius Potgieter is our **Treasurer** this year. He has completed his CTM and is roaring to go for the Advanced manuals.

Marius is a lecturer at the Tshwane University of Technology in "Tourism Marketing in International Destinations." Does not sound like work to me at all!! Surprise, surprise, his main hobby is travelling!. He belongs to a coffee club which is called "Die kannie worry koffieklub" and friends, mainly from this club, goes on a yacht cruise each year. Last year they went to the Greek Islands. Apart from travelling, he also likes reading (anything interesting except the "You" magazine). He has spread his wings, giving a talk to a church group the other day, and the birds told me that especially the older ladies were enchanted by his talk.

Willem le Roux is happy to be the **Immediate Past President** of the club. He joined Vitals in 2001, and has been VPM, VPE and twice President of the club. Last year he also acted as Division Governor for Division A, which includes all the Toastmaster Clubs in Pretoria, Rustenburg and 4 clubs in Zimbabwe.

Willem has studied in Sociology and has been a lecturer at the University of Pretoria, as well as a researcher at the HSRC. He loves reading, hiking and being outdoors in general. He used to participate in road running, and has done the "City-to-City" (Johannesburg to Pretoria), as well as the "Hyper-to-Hyper (from Menlyn to Pretoria North).

Currently he is the Minister of Holidays, trying to find time to go on holiday in between the Toastmaster commitments. He has 2 boys, so between them he and Susan has 5

If the opposite of 'pro' is 'con' then what is the opposite of progress? - David Gerrold

Looking back on 18 years—Susan le Roux

On the 25 of July, Vital Communicators will be 18 years old. It is suitable to take some time off to stand still and reflect on what we have accomplished during the past 18 years. It is difficult to keep track with all the accomplishments, especially as so few of us who are members at present, were around in the early years. However, that is why the ribbons handed out by Toastmasters International, is such a good idea. However, few of us has the time to go and browse through the ribbons to "read up" on our club's history. I therefore thought it fitting to analyse our accomplishments as a club and to give it to you to read about.

Vital Communicators Club was started by members of Pretoria 2000 Toastmasters club. It was chartered on 25 July 1988. It reached distinguished status in 1988-1989, 1989 -1990, 1990-1991, 1993-1994 and 1994-1995. he nineties were actually good



years for Vital Communicators, as in between the above, the club also became Select Distinguished 4 times, namely in 1991-1992, 1992—1993, 1997—1998 and 1998—1999. Membership during the late nineties grew to 29 members in 1997-1998



and 38 members during 1998-1999. We received the distinguished "TOP CLUB" ribbon during these years.



In 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 we also received the coveted "TOP 10 CLUB award, as one of the top ten clubs in Southern Africa.



Our best achievement regarding the Distinguished Club Program, was however during the last few years: came Presidents Distinguished in 2002-2003, 2003-2004, 2004-2005 and again in 2005-2006 (this last ribbon is in the post)!!!! This means that for 4 years in a row, the club have achieved 9/10 or 10/10 on the Distinguished Club Program, which is no mean feat!!!



Our Club also prides itself on the fact that so many of its members service Toastmasters beyond the club, by becoming Area, Division and even District Governors. :



In 1995 Costa Nicolaou, one of the founder members, became the first Area Governor. He was followed the next year by Jürgen Oschadleus another founder member, in 1996-1997. Frances Boshoff took up the challenge in 1998-1999, followed by Cooks Dauth in 2001-2002. Jürgen Rüppel did likewise in 2003-2004, then came Willem le Roux in 2004-2005 and Susan le Roux in 2005-2006. This is a position for which you can volunteer: so don't be backward in putting yourself forward: not only is it a great learning curve, but also lots of fun!!.

As far as Division Governors are concerned, we are also well represented in that department, with Frances Boshoff taking the lead during 200-2001, with Brandon Topham following in her footsteps during 2003-2004. Willem le Roux did it in 2005-2006 and now Susan le Roux is following his example by being the Division Governor for 2006-2007, Frances went and outdone us all again, by becoming the most important person in Toastmasters Southern Africa, namely the new District Governor for District 74. Well done again Frances!!! Our club is very



Our Club has also won an award for starting a new Club, called TAG, which has now changed to Tshwane Advanced Growth Toastmasters Club, which is for toastmasters who already have obtained their CTM's (or CC's as it is now known).



You will agree with me: this kid can look back on the past 18 years, and be proud of what he/she has achieved. We can all be proud of our club. May this proud tradition not only be upheld by our present members, but even surpassed in the future!!! Long live Vital Communicators!!!

A wise word

Elize Janse van Rensburg (Immediate Past District Governor):

Congratulations on the birthday anniversary! Vital Communicators Club has for 18 years now provided their members with the opportunities to grow and develop. The club has succeeded over the years in creating the friendly supportive atmosphere vital to fostering participation and commitment. In meeting the needs of the members, Vital truly subscribes to the Mission of this wonderful organization we all belong to.

Vital Communicators do not function in isolation and only within the boundaries of the club. Your club has for a number of years also contributed excellently towards the goals and Critical Success Factors of its Area, Division and District. To be awarded the highest accolade of **President's Distinguished Club** for a number of years is no mean feat! The club has been the training ground for several District Officers as well.

Vital Communicators is truly alive and well and living in Pretoria! Enjoy the birthday bash

The President's Pen: Eighteen years of communication & leadership opportunities

Bertus Theron
President, Vital Communicators

Vital Communicators Toastmasters club had been chartered in July 1988, which means that, as club, we are celebrating our 18th birthday this month! This birthday is an opportunity, on the one hand for contemplating the past, but on the other hand it serves as springboard for the future.

The past: I wish I had some statistics handy on the achievements of members over the past 18 years in terms of the Toastmasters communication/speaking track, and in terms of the Toastmasters leadership track; but I don't. However, I do know that the club has achieved distinguished club status over most of the recent twelve years (and likely further back), which proves that the club has been getting most of the key Toastmasters stuff right. This implies that club members had actually benefited by developing their own communication and leadership skills.

The future: Even though we can have pride in the past successes of the club, there is no room for complacency. The club is by no means perfect and added to that, the world is changing at a fast pace, the demands on people are changing, people's circumstances are changing, people themselves are changing. This translates into changes in that which existing and prospective members demand from Vital Communicators. The club will need to identify and meet that to remain successful.

Ultimately the club thrives on the positive commitment and involvement of each member, so the future requires from you and me to participate in order to keep Vital Communicators a great club; a great club to the benefit of each member.



Robin Lunt is our new Area Governor (Area A 3) She hails from Scientia Club and she joined Toastmasters in February 2002 after having completed a Speechcraft Course presented by Scientia, in November 2001.

She serves her club well: first as Sergeant in 2002—2003, then Treasurer in 2003-2004, VPE 2004-2005 and this year as Club Secretary.

She obtained the CTM in October 2003 and the CL in May 2004. Robin also received Division A Achiever Awards in 2004 and 2005.

Family life: she is married to Brian, and have three children. Their elder son Steven is married and lives in Johannesburg, daughter Karen is also married and lives in Pretoria and younger son Malcolm is a student and still living at home

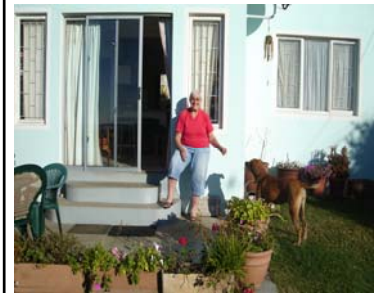
Robin has also decided to do her Advanced Leadership this year. Her project will be to rebuild Tukkies Toastmasters Club into a strong and healthy club

I can; I can; I can; I Can; **I Can**
I Can; I can; I Can; I CAN

Common sense and common knowledge are the two most uncommon things in the world —
Gruber's law

Last word.....

Cooks Dauth



Vital has reached official voting and driving status. Remember to vote wisely and drive carefully for long-lasting service

Oxford Dictionary explains "Nurture" as follows:

- 1 Encourage growth or development (of a child, plant etc.)
- 2 Have (a hope, belief or ambition) for a long time .

When this club was started 18 years ago, we believed in "Vital"; we also encouraged the growth and development of our members. Please carry on the good work. Vital has produced excellent speakers and mentors over the years. With constant nurturing you can only go from strength to strength. To quote the Oxford Dictionary again: "Progress with increasing success".

Every Vital Communicator I had dealings with over the last 18 years, left a mark I learnt a lot from them—even if it was just the importance of punctuality. But there is ONE person I would like to single out and that is FRANCES BOSHOFF— I salute you ! (Oxford says: salute: Express admiration and respect.

I wish you well with continued success for the future. God Bless!!!

Any critic can establish a wonderful batting average by just rejecting every new idea —
William