



“I am delighted to see that the REP is truly a program for the future, and I’m awaiting its quick implementation.”

— George Mathai, ACG, ALB
Kochi club
Kochi, India

Learning German

Thank you for the interesting interview with John Stumpf in the January issue. What struck me most was how he began learning German at the age of 60. Being a German native speaker, I know this is a bold endeavor.

But, Toastmasters can help! A group of committed Toastmasters in Hamburg, Germany, started a bilingual German-English club in October 2015—the Hamburg International Speakers. The core idea is that anyone can apply lessons learned in a language class. We don’t force members to speak in a language they are not (yet) comfortable with. In the meantime, they can train their listening comprehension before eventually giving speeches in the language they are learning. The response is positive and we are confident to be able to charter soon.

Should John Stumpf be in Hamburg anytime soon, he is more than welcome to pay us a visit and apply his German skills.

Markus Krause, CC, ALB
HanseRedner Club
Hamburg, Germany

Opportunities for Children

I was pleased to see that opportunities for kids were featured recently (March). I’ve been looking for ways to bring the benefits of Toastmasters to my children. My wife and I, as homeschooling parents,

are always looking for ways to instill interpersonal and leadership skills in them; skills that Toastmasters has developed in me.

Toastmasters is well-positioned to do great things with the next generation of leaders, but my experience has been that its programs for kids appear to be an afterthought. I hope you can expand these offerings, and better facilitate connecting kids with those opportunities in the future.

Rex VanHorn, CC
West-Ward Professionals
Columbus, Ohio

Leading by Example

Kudos to International President Jim Kokocki for completing his *Competent Communication* manual—again. As a Toastmaster for almost eight years, I recently started on my fifth trip through the manual. Like Jim, I find the spark to continually improve my speaking skills by returning to the basics. And just last month, at age 72, I started a new career as a lecturer and workshop leader. Thank you, Toastmasters! And thank you, Jim, for providing leadership by example.

John Steinbach, DTM
V.O.I.C.E.S. of Williamsburg club
Williamsburg, Virginia

Understanding Understatements

In the “Looking at Language” article in the March issue, it is recommended to avoid the expression “that’s not a bad idea” for it means exactly the opposite. Of course it does! It is the very much used, typically British understatement I had to study when I was learning English as a second language.

I think understatements are some of the things that make the English language great, and unique. They are a sign of the subtle sense of British humor, and it would be a pity if they were suppressed from the English language.

Maria Teresa Vago, ACB
Morris Gellman Toastmasters club
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Implementing the REP

Thank you Paul Sterman for that highly enlightening information on the REP (March). Being a Toastmaster since 1990, I used to feel that our education programs were not exactly in line with the needs of the 21st century. I am delighted to see that the REP is truly a program for the future, and I’m awaiting its quick implementation.

George Mathai, ACG, ALB
Kochi club
Kochi, India

Amazing Member

Nick Hoesl is an amazing man and member (Member Profile, April). I should know, having evaluated him probably a hundred times over the years as a fellow club member. For me, it is the sound of his voice that really is fabulous. His inflection, and change in rate and volume, is a skill that Nick has truly mastered. I have learned so much from him. Thank you for this article!

Carole Erb, DTM
West Hills Toastmasters club
Cincinnati, Ohio

Jimmy Thai

Jimmy Thai, your written words came alive in my mind and heart as I read your “Compassionate Leadership” article (April) and followed you from the promise, to the escape, to returning to your promise with a plan, and allowing people to come along with you. I love how you credit Toastmasters for helping you communicate your story. I believe God moves in the hearts of people, and I love what He is doing with you.

Thanks for sharing your story through this global platform.

Greg Wright, ACB, CL
Rock Toastmasters
San Diego, California

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

Write it in 200 words or less. State your name, member number and home club, and send it to letters@toastmasters.org. Please note: Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity, and may be published in both the print and electronic editions.