

DECEMBER 2025

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE MAGAZINE

LEADERSHIP
Feedback the
Breakfast of
Leaders

COMMUNICATION
Be clear about
your ATO:
Audience
Topic
Objective

**BILL
RUSSELL,DTM**
A Lifetime of
Leadership,
Laughter &
Learning

District 74

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Toastmasters District 74 Mission

We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.

toastmasters74.org



EDITOR'S NOTE



With the end of the year upon us and with various festive season celebrations already in motion, may we all take this time to rejuvenate ourselves. Whether you will be travelling, working or relaxing at home, take some time to care for yourself and prepare yourself for the year to come.

So often we forget to rest as Toastmasters and with most clubs taking a break from mid-December, take the time to rest your mind or slowdown a little in preparation for going full steam ahead come January. Taking a break does not mean stopping, it is an opportunity to refuel, re-examine your goals, possibly reset your goals and prepare yourself for an even more powerful restart.

The period between January and May will be filled with contests, various Club Fitness Reward campaigns and a push to finish the Toastmasters' year strong as Distinguished Clubs and all this will require energy, so fuel yourself up now during this festive season.

May you all have a blessed, safe and joyous festive season and can't wait to see more of your stories and successes in our future issues next year.

Khethiwe Malema

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S NOTE

As we arrive at December, I want to pause and extend my heartfelt gratitude to every member, leader, and volunteer who has committed themselves to being Catalysts of Success this year. Your dedication, your service, and your belief in the power of communication and leadership have carried our District forward in remarkable ways.

As we enter the final stretch of 2025, I encourage you to finish strong so you can start the new year with intention. The habits you close the year with shape the momentum you carry into 2026. Finishing strong isn't always about doing more – sometimes it's about resting, recovering, and reflecting. Give yourself permission to pause and breathe so you can step into 2026 refreshed and ready.

As you gather with loved ones this festive season, I invite you to share the gift of Toastmasters – the confidence it builds, the community it creates, and the growth it inspires. Consider offering someone the unexpected gift of transformation: a Toastmasters membership.

This issue marks our half-year milestone, and I honour our production and editorial team for their dedication and creativity.



As always, I encourage you to share this magazine widely. Let it inspire, uplift, and ignite the spark of possibility in others.

Enjoy the season. Celebrate your progress. And step into the new year with purpose.

Together, we continue Achieving Excellence.

Bhekisisa Ngomane,DTM

FROM THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DESK

November was a month defined by momentum, community spirit, and powerful storytelling across District 74. From club celebrations to impactful campaigns, our digital platforms became vibrant spaces where members' achievements, leadership journeys, and diverse voices shone brightly.

We elevated key district initiatives, including Pathways Enhancements awareness, membership growth activities, and recognitions that celebrated excellence across clubs and members. Every like, share, comment, and story contributed to a district-wide narrative of growth, visibility, and progress. November reminded us that when we communicate with purpose, we lead with impact.

As we bring the year to a joyful close, the PR Desk extends warm festive wishes to all members of District 74.



May this Christmas season fill your homes with peace, your hearts with gratitude, and your journeys with renewed inspiration. And as always don't forget to follow us on our social media pages so you never miss an update on what's happening in our district. [\[Link here\]](#)

Leya Musunga

Feedback, The Breakfast of Leaders

By Tumelo Maphalala

Leadership is often romanticized as standing at the helm; guiding, empowering, deciding, and inspiring. But one of the most overlooked truths of leadership is this: leaders cannot grow on their own. Leadership is strengthened, refined, and sharpened through feedback. In many ways, feedback is the breakfast of leaders, a fuel for continuous improvement and nourishment for long-term success.

In Toastmasters, giving feedback is second nature. We evaluate, encourage, and suggest improvements every week. But receiving feedback? That is where true leadership maturity is tested. It takes humility to listen to perspectives that challenge our assumptions.

It takes self-awareness to recognize blind spots.

And it takes emotional intelligence to accept that even with good intentions, our impact may not always match our expectations.

Great leaders do not fear feedback, instead they seek it. They understand that leadership is not about perfection but about growth. Whether serving as a Club Officer, Area Director, or beyond, leaders who embrace feedback position themselves for greater influence. They demonstrate openness, evolve faster, and create environments where others feel safe to improve as well.

“Receiving feedback is where true leadership maturity is tested.”



Feedback also builds trust. When leaders model receptiveness, their teams become more willing to share ideas, identify risks early, and collaborate honestly. Instead of defensiveness, they cultivate dialogue. Instead of ego, they display curiosity. The result is stronger decisions, better teamwork, and healthier club cultures.

As we prepare to enter a new year of goals, dreams, and leadership decisions, let us challenge ourselves to embrace feedback wholeheartedly. Ask for it. Listen to it. Reflect on it. Apply it. Make it a regular part of your leadership diet.

Because the leaders who grow the fastest are not those who avoid feedback, rather they are the ones who value it. And that is the true mark of a leader committed to excellence.



Leadership Beyond Your Home Club: A Resolution Worth Making

By Tumelo Maphalala

As the year draws to a close and we begin thinking about new goals, new commitments, and new opportunities, one powerful resolution stands out for every Toastmaster: experience leadership beyond your home club. While the club environment is where we first learn, grow, and sharpen our communication and leadership skills, it is only the beginning of what the Toastmasters journey can offer.

Stepping outside your home club whether through area, division, district, or even international opportunities, opens a world of deeper learning and broader impact. In these spaces, you are challenged in new ways. You meet members with different perspectives, diverse professional backgrounds, and unique approaches to problem-solving. You discover leadership on a wider scale, where your decisions affect more people, your teamwork expands across borders, and your capacity to influence becomes stronger.

Experiencing leadership beyond your club also builds confidence. It teaches adaptability, exposes you to new systems, and stretches your ability to manage larger teams or more complex projects. Most importantly, it reveals strengths you may never have realized you had. Many leaders who took that first step, whether as contest chairs, program quality team members, area directors, or district committee volunteers often describe it as the turning point in their Toastmasters careers.

As you craft your New Year's resolutions, consider adding a bold, transformative one: serve beyond your home club. Volunteer for a district role, join a committee, support a conference, or mentor members from another club.



These opportunities are not just roles, they are investments in your personal and professional growth.

Leadership is not a destination but a journey, and the path becomes richer when you expand your horizons. The coming year offers a fresh start. Choose to grow outward, lead bigger, and experience Toastmasters at a level that will shape you long after the term ends.

**“You meet members
with different
perspectives, diverse
professional
backgrounds, and
unique approaches to
problem-solving.”**

The Year-End Fatigue Is Real

By Tumelo Maphalala

No matter how passionate, committed, or disciplined we are, this time of the year has a way of slowing even the most energetic among us. The deadlines pile up, our calendars tighten, and the emotional and mental load of the past eleven months begins to settle on our shoulders. For Toastmasters leaders, who juggle professional commitments, personal responsibilities, and the added demands of running a thriving club or district portfolio, this fatigue can feel even heavier.

Keeping the momentum going becomes a challenge. Meetings begin to feel longer, inboxes seem noisier, and the goals we set with such enthusiasm in July may now appear just a bit out of reach. But here's the truth many leaders need to hear:

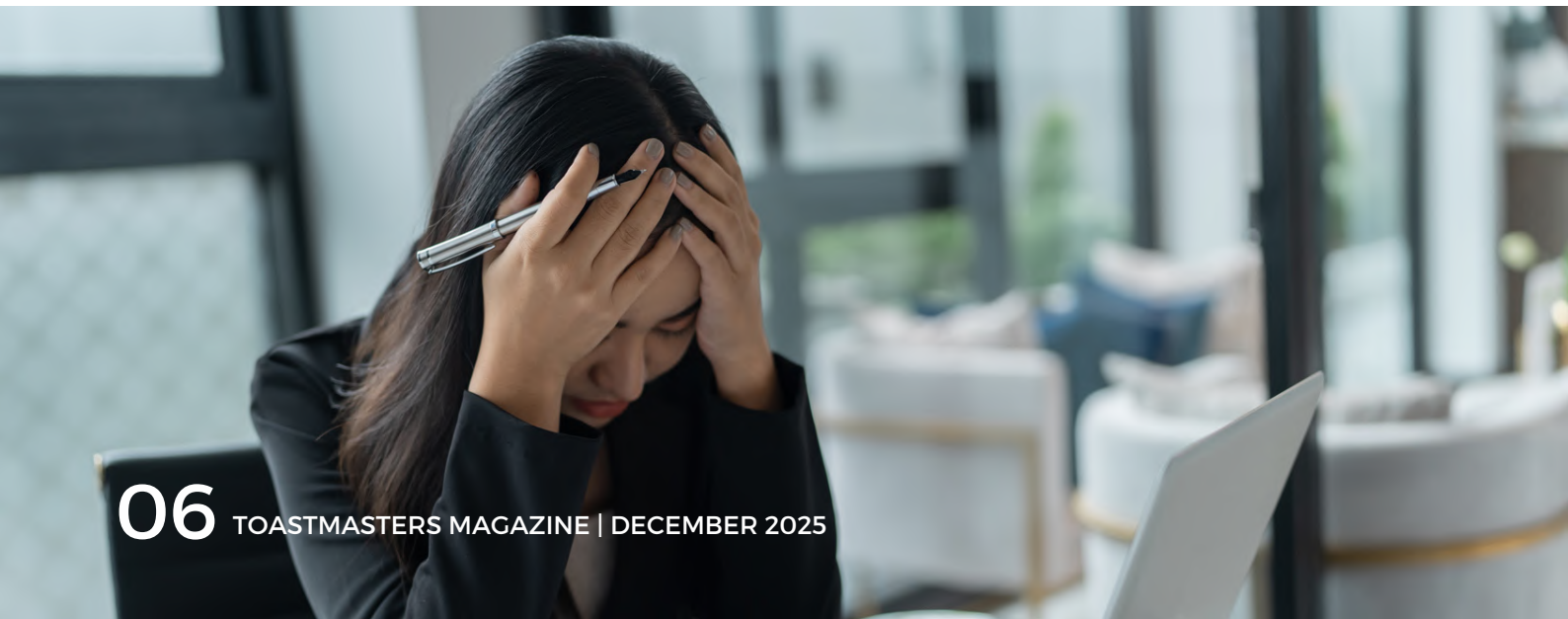
it is normal to feel tired, and more importantly, you are allowed to pause.

This season is not a sign of failure, it's a natural moment in the cycle of leadership. The Toastmasters year still has many months left, but that does not mean you must sprint without stopping.

In fact, the most effective leaders recognize that endurance is not built from constant motion, but from intentional rest.

A short break, a reset, or simply giving yourself permission to breathe can be the difference between burnout and brilliance. With the festive period upon us, give yourself grace. Take stock of how far your team has come, acknowledge the progress already made, and look forward to the second half of the Toastmasters year with renewed clarity. January offers a fresh window, a perfect moment to regroup, refill your motivation, and re-align with your goals.

Year-end fatigue may be real, but so is your capacity to bounce back. Rest now, recoup your energy, and return ready to finish your term strong, purposeful, and inspired.





District 74

SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT- NOV 2025



Followers

Interactions

Viewed

	Facebook Page	Facebook Group	Instagram	LinkedIn	YouTube	X
Followers	14,605	9,270	3,200	368	1,628	4,201
Interactions	297	439	317	177		
Viewed	10,011	8,649	14,717	5,794	959	



Website

Active users - 3800

New users - 3700

Page Views- 4600

From the PRM Desk

Follow our Pages at : [Link Here](#)

5 DCP Sprint AWARD

Achieve 5 DCP Goals by 31 December.

Reward: A Trophy OR R300 CFR Voucher

usable towards stock purchases or May

Conference.

When Nerves Mute our Personality

By Kagelelo G. Mogotsi

Are you witty, expressive and warm in everyday conversation? But put you in front of an audience and suddenly your personality fades. Your voices dulls, gestures stiffen and all the favorable traits that make up your personality, fade.

You are not alone. Hi! My name is Kagelelo and just like you, I'm trying to reclaim my personality on stage. I desire to deliver speeches that reflect the kind of person I am. Animated and cheerful. While one cannot entirely avoid feeling nervous, I find myself pondering on how not to let the nerves strip my personality, leaving my speech flat. I cringe and find myself afraid to watch my videos simply because I appear serious and rigid, which I am far from off stage.

To understand the cause of this problem, I reached out to Tumelo Maphalala, a seasoned speaker at Gaborone Toastmasters. She said that

the environment can bury your personality.

She explained how she became unusually reserved at her workplace because not everyone was receptive to her persona.

This followed her into Toastmasters, dulling her presences on stage. Ironically, what pulled her personality back was responsibility. When she became the club president, she could not afford to stay hidden. People cannot follow someone who is half-present. Leadership forced her to bring her full self forward, that is, her charisma and her liveliness. And the moment she did, her speeches transformed.

To be real, not everyone will stumble into a situation that forces them to reclaim themselves. To move past this phenomenon, let's take the time to understand it together.



Why does speaking to a room full of humans suddenly feel like stepping into an emotional chokehold? Why do our instincts tell us to shrink when what we actually want is to expand?

This is exactly what I'll be exploring in the next part of this series- the science behind why nerves make our personalities evaporate and why our brain sabotages us in moments that matter.

For now hold this truth close; there is nothing wrong with you. Your personality didn't disappear. It's hiding behind a survival reflex that almost everyone experiences. And together, we're going to learn how to pull it back into the spotlight, on purpose not accidentally.

**People cannot follow
someone who is half-
present.**

Building Confidence, One Speech at a Time

By Zizipho Mabusela



I'm Zizipho Mabusela, a member of Nedbank Allstars Toastmasters. I recently decided to join Toastmasters this year because I often struggle to articulate my thoughts clearly and experience stage fright when speaking in front of an audience.

I wanted to challenge myself to overcome these barriers and develop stronger communication skills. Additionally, I am looking forward to attending ThriveCon 2026 in Lesotho, as it will be a great opportunity to network with other Toastmasters and enjoy a fun, engaging experience with like-minded individuals.

My journey with Toastmasters has been truly rewarding. Through the various sessions and activities, I have learned valuable techniques that have significantly improved my ability to communicate effectively.

The supportive environment and constructive feedback have helped me grow, and I now feel more comfortable expressing my ideas in both personal and professional settings.

Most importantly, Toastmasters has boosted my confidence. What once felt intimidating speaking in front of a group has become an exciting challenge that I am eager to embrace. I am proud of the progress I have made and look forward to continuing this journey, building stronger connections, and applying these skills in future opportunities.

Finding My Voice: A New Toastmaster's First Step

By Thulisile Thwala



Joining Toastmasters marked the beginning of an exciting journey of self-discovery and growth. From the moment I joined the club, I was welcomed with genuine warmth and encouragement, which immediately made it easier to belong.

By the time I delivered my Ice Breaker speech, what could have been an intimidating experience felt instead like a supportive opportunity to grow.

I shared my story, and the attentiveness and positive engagement in the meeting helped calm my nerves and build my confidence.

The evaluation was a defining moment: thoughtful, balanced, and deeply encouraging. It highlighted strengths I had not fully recognized in myself while offering practical guidance for improvement.

This first prepared speech became more than an introduction; it laid a strong foundation, reaffirming that Toastmasters is a safe space to learn, be vulnerable, and grow with grace and confidence.

Be Clear About Your ATO: Audience, Topic, and Objective

By Leya Musunga

Every great speech begins long before the speaker reaches the stage. It starts with clarity specifically, clarity about your A.T.O: Audience, Topic, and Objective. Whether you're preparing a Toastmasters project, addressing colleagues at work, or delivering a community presentation, understanding these three elements can transform your message from ordinary to unforgettable.

1. Know Your Audience

Your audience determines how you speak, what examples you use, and which emotions you aim to evoke. Before crafting your content, ask:

- * **Who am I speaking to?**
- * **What do they value, believe, or struggle with?**
- * **What level of knowledge do they already have on this subject?**

A speech tailored to the audience feels relevant, respectful, and engaging. When people feel seen and understood, they listen.

2. Define Your Topic Clearly

A common mistake in speech preparation is trying to cover too much. A powerful presentation is focused. Your topic should be:

- * **Specific, not broad**
- * **Clear, not ambiguous**
- * **Relevant, not random**

When you define your topic with precision, your ideas flow more logically and your message becomes easier for the audience to follow.

3. Set a Clear Objective

Every speech must have a purpose. Are you trying to inspire, educate, persuade, entertain, or challenge a belief?



Your objective is the “why” behind your words. Ask yourself:

- * **What do I want my audience to think?**
- * **What do I want them to feel?**
- * **What do I want them to do after listening?**

A clear objective ensures your speech stays intentional and impactful. Without it, you risk wandering, confusing, or overwhelming your listeners.

ATO: Your Foundation for Success

When your Audience, Topic, and Objective are aligned, your speech gains structure, confidence, and power. You communicate with direction. You speak with purpose. You connect with meaning.

Whether you're preparing a contest speech or contributing in a work meeting, always begin with your ATO.

It's not just a framework it's the roadmap to a message that matters.

District 74

SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

NOVEMBER INDIVIDUAL SPONSOR AWARD Congratulations



Sponsor
Count **11**



Leya Musunga

Sponsor
Count **10**



Lorna B. Holtman

Sponsor
Count **05**



Leigh Lewis

INDIVIDUAL SPONSOR AWARD Members in the Zone

Name

Sponsor Count

Karen A. Levy-Strauss, DTM
Tafara E. Chingwe, DTM
Mellissa Adams
Tracy-Ann Adams

4

Carmelita A. Kruger
Elaine O'Gorman, DTM
Kagelelo G. Mogotsi
Lufefe T. Plaatji
Malehakoe Mothala
Masims J. Tsikoane
Nomonde Booi, DTM
Vinkie M. Talane

3



Bill Russell: A Lifetime of Leadership, Laughter & Learning

— By Leya Musunga

For three decades, Bill Russell, DTM, has lived and breathed the spirit of Toastmasters. His journey began in May 1995 at London Corinthians Toastmasters one of only five clubs in London at the time. “Much has changed over these 30 years,” Bill reflects, and his story is woven into that evolution.

A Global Toastmaster With a Global Journey

Outside of Toastmasters, Bill’s passion for performance and expression has taken him across continents. A retired professional, he continues to channel his love for comedy through standup, improv, musical improv, and sketch comedy.

Today, you'll find him performing with Third Wheel, a short-form improv troupe in Cape Town.

Two DTMs, Two Eras, One Purpose

Bill is now the proud holder of two Distinguished Toastmaster titles one earned under the legacy program and his latest under Pathways.

"I didn't rush either of them," he says. His first DTM spanned more than a decade across several London clubs, including London Corinthians, Citi Criers, and Excalibur. His Pathways DTM reflects an equally international journey, with segments completed in Chicago (Lightly Toasted, PESO, French Toast) and in Cape Town (Two Oceans and Cape Town Speakers).

He is especially grateful that both of his Cape Town clubs are recognized:

- **Level 5 Completion:** Two Oceans Toastmasters
- **DTM Award:** Cape Town Speakers

"I've been much more heavily involved with Two Oceans, but wanted both clubs to celebrate the achievement."

Leadership Across Clubs and Continents

Bill's Toastmasters leadership résumé is extensive. He has served as Club President at London Corinthians, Citi Criers, and Lightly Toasted, and held nearly every other club officer role at various points. At district level, he has served as District 30 Club Extension Chair, Division Director, and twice as Area Director in District 74.

The People Who Shaped the Journey

A major source of strength along the way has been mentorship. Bill credits his longtime mentor, Mike Silverman—now in New Zealand but still a Toastmaster—as a pivotal influence. He also acknowledges countless friends from clubs across the world who encouraged him, challenged him, and helped him grow over 30 years of membership.

Challenges That Shaped Character

Earning a DTM is no small feat. Bill notes that the biggest challenges come from the long-term commitments needed to complete officer roles and district leadership positions.



Another obstacle? Time.

"Getting through two Pathways is not easy if you only speak at one club," he explains. His advice is clear: attend multiple clubs. "There are enormous benefits—you learn better habits, see different approaches, and meet wonderful people."

The Heart of Toastmasters: Lifting Others

Perhaps the greatest lesson Bill has learned is the essence of what keeps members coming back.

"We join for personal reasons we want to become better speakers and leaders. But we stay because we want to help the next person through that door."

Highlights From a Rich and Rewarding 30-Year Journey

Bill's 30-year Toastmasters journey spans six countries, countless clubs, and transformative moments—from watching nervous speakers turn professional to witnessing hesitant members rise as leaders. He's attended international conventions across the US, with a standout memory: celebrating Aletta Rochat's inauguration.

After 30 years, two DTMs, and a Toastmasters legacy that spans continents, Bill is far from finished. "It's been a rich and rewarding journey, and I'm looking forward to whatever awaits around the next bend."

The Power of Intention: How I Achieved Multiple Toastmasters Awards

By Leya Musunga

For nine years in Toastmasters, I was never intentional about earning awards. I attended meetings, I participated, but I never had a clear plan for recognition. That changed this year.

When the new Toastmasters year began in July, something shifted. After attending a session where the district team beautifully explained the various awards, I walked away inspired. In that moment, I made a commitment: This year, I want to win some of these awards. I wanted to challenge myself, push beyond my comfort zone and work with purpose.

Preparation: My Secret Weapon

The biggest game-changer was preparation. I decided to do a project at every meeting. Even when I wasn't sure I would get a slot, I came ready. I always had a polished "pocket speech" prepared, waiting for an opportunity. Whenever a speaker didn't show up or a gap appeared on the agenda, I stepped in. That kept me active, consistent and steadily progressing.

I also benefited from having already completed parts of some projects in previous months. During this season, I only needed to finish one or two projects to close a level. I wasn't starting from zero—I was completing what I had already begun.

Consistency and Commitment

I didn't miss a single meeting. I showed up prepared and kept my goal in sight. I was driven by the desire to achieve my Triple Crown—something I had admired in others but never pursued. Some awards still came as a surprise, but this time, I worked with intention, commitment and excellence.

Advice for Members Aiming to Achieve Multiple Awards

1. Prepare a speech for every meeting.

Never arrive without something ready. Treat every meeting as an opportunity.

2. Keep a "pocket speech" ready.

When someone cancels, you step in. Be ready for action.

3. Use online clubs and extra meetings.

There are many places to book speeches outside your home club.

If you want to accelerate your progress, take advantage of online meetings.

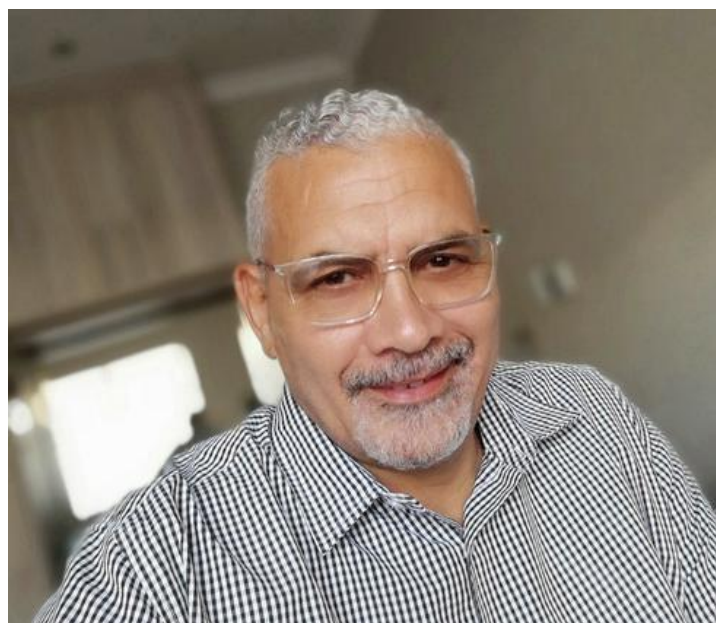
4. Book your speeches strategically.

Plan ahead across clubs, commit to your schedule, and deliver every time.

5. Stay intentional.

Awards don't just happen, they come from purposeful effort.

This year taught me a powerful lesson: when you are intentional, prepared, and consistent, Toastmasters rewards you generously not just with awards, but with growth, confidence, and accomplishment.



Cornelius Jansen, DTM
Walvis Bay Toastmasters Club

How One Yes Changed Everything for Me: Derick Mujera

By Lame Mthethwa

There are moments in life when growth presents itself quietly—disguised as an unfamiliar opportunity that no one wants to grab first. For Derick Mujera, that moment came during a club meeting when an invitation was extended for someone to serve as Contest Chair for the Division C Speech Contest. It was unfamiliar territory for me. I had never chaired a contest before. I didn't have the confidence, the experience, or even the slightest idea how to execute it. But something inside me whispered, Step up. Without fully thinking it through, I raised my hand.

What pushed me to say yes despite my uncertainty?

Over time, I've watched people I admire say yes to big, intimidating responsibilities they weren't fully ready for. They stepped forward, figured it out, and came out victorious. That taught me something powerful: You don't need to know how everything will unfold right from the beginning. This has become my new mantra:

Say yes, even when you don't have a clue.

The Mindset Shift That Set Me Free

I heard someone say, "If you're not failing at anything, you're not trying anything new." That line became a mirror for me. It became a truth I now hold tightly. Growth demands stretching—and stretching often feels like failing before it feels like progress.

There is the one truth that helped me overcome fear: "If it doesn't kill you, why not try?"



From Regret to rising

If I'm being honest, after volunteering, regret hit me hard. I thought: Why did I do this? What was I thinking? Doubt crept in and fear tried to reclaim the driver's seat. As the contest date got closer, something inside me started shifting. On the day of the event to my surprise, I felt confident—energized even. What I expected to be stressful actually became enjoyable.

What I Learned About Myself

That experience taught me that I can achieve anything I commit to, even when fear tries to stop me. I learned that I'm a go-getter who grows through challenge, and that courage is built through action.

To anyone afraid to step up: you'll never know what's possible until you try.

Fear isn't a warning—it's an invitation.

Congratulations

Triple Crown Awards - NOVEMBER 2025

Members

- Angelina M. Mazibia - KPMG Toastmasters Club
- Annah Moses - Eloquent Speakers Club
- Elaine O'Gorman, DTM - Golden Gavel Advanced Club
- Lorna B. Holtman, DTM - Northern Star Toastmasters Club
- Tintswalo P. Ngobeni - Harties Toastmasters Club
- Vivien Boddy, DTM - Pinnacle Toastmasters Club



NOVEMBER 2025 TOP 6 CLUBS WITH THE MOST COMPLETED PATHWAY LEVELS

Total Levels	Club Name
1- 14	Bloemfontein Toastmasters Club
2- 12	Rainbow Toastmasters Club
12	Eloquent Speakers Club
12	Green Speakers Toastmasters Club
12	West Rand Toastmasters Club
3- 11	Gaborone Toastmasters
4- 10	Moving Forward Toastmasters
5- 9	Algoa Club 2457
9	Good Hope Club
6- 8	Carpe Diem Aspire
8	Nedbank Allstars
8	Nedbank Cape
8	Rosebank Toastmasters Club

A Life Rooted in Love and Resilience: Shana Valentine Viljoen

By Khethiwe Malema

Born and raised in Kempton Park, Gauteng, Shana's story is one of strength and devotion. She grew up as the eldest of three with two younger brothers, Jared and Etienne. Life threw her an early challenge when her father passed away from colon cancer in 1981, but that loss only deepened her appreciation for family bonds. Her mom remains a cornerstone of her life, still in their family home.

Shana's own family is her pride and joy. After 19 years of marriage, she embraced a new chapter as a devoted mom to three incredible daughters—Courts (25), Megan (22), and Ashleigh (21)—and a loving mother-in-law to Tristen. Each child is chasing their dreams: Courts recently married and teaches in Auckland, Megan is stepping into her career as a high school teacher, and Ashleigh is studying Bachelor of Exercise, Sports & Leisure (Sports Massage). For Shana, their laughter and achievements are the greatest gifts of all.

Christmas—Shana Style

When it comes to Christmas, Shana doesn't just celebrate—she creates magic. Her countdown starts in October, and by early November her home is already festive. Once, she even kept her tree up all year, switching themes for every season—from Valentine's pinks to Easter crosses and Heritage Day beads.

For Shana, Christmas is really about togetherness and gratitude, and as her family has grown, so have their traditions. The menu is a delicious expression of love: gammon, roast chicken, all the trimmings, and her famous chocolate trifle layered with brownies, mousse, Chuckles, and fresh strawberries. Outside the festivities,



Shana enjoys cross-stitch and knitting, and hopes to return to archery, where she once represented Team KZN at the South African National Championships. With qualifications in Marketing and Project Management, she thrives in a dynamic insurance career as an agile Project manager.

Finding Her Voice

Shana's journey with Toastmasters began after a nerve-racking public speaking moment where she was scheduled to motivate KZN Olympic Athletes. Determined never to feel the same fear and mistakes, she joined the Nedbank Allstars Toastmasters Club and hasn't looked back. Today, she's a charter member, a leader, and a passionate advocate for personal growth—proof that resilience and determination can turn any setback into a stepping stone.

Thriving Through Change: The Journey of Tebogo Gladys Matolo

By Khethiwe Malema

Life has a way of nudging us toward growth, and for Tebogo Gladys Matolo, that journey has been nothing short of inspiring. Born and raised in Itsoseng, North West, Tebogo's early path led her into geology in the mining industry after earning her qualification at Pretoria Technicon. While working as a geologist, she realised her true calling for connecting with people and driving development.

Her story truly blossomed when she pivoted into Enterprise and Supplier Development, working with SMMEs to unlock opportunities in funding and markets. This shift took her to Shanduka Black Umbrellas, where she served as Regional Manager before transitioning to Anglo American Platinum (now Valterra Platinum), where she continues to make an impact as a Livelihood Specialist, ensuring communities thrive alongside mining operations. It was during the transition from geologist to Enterprise and Supplier Development that she discovered the power of communication—and Toastmasters became her bridge to mastering it.

From joining Rhino Toastmasters in 2016 to serving as club president, Tebogo found herself immersed in a community that radiates warmth, encouragement, and a genuine desire to see people succeed. She describes Toastmasters as a safe space where mistakes are embraced as stepping stones, and growth is celebrated at every level. Today, she continues to lead as President of the newly launched Thriving Toastmasters Club in Rustenburg, a testament to her commitment to empowering others.



Beyond her professional and leadership roles, Tebogo's life is filled with joy and creativity. Whether dancing with her daughter, watching animated films, or hiking, she embraces moments that keep her spirit light. Even during December, when work keeps her busy supporting communities, she reminds herself—and others—that rest and reflection are essential.

Her message for the festive season is simple yet profound: pause, appreciate how far you've come, and don't be too hard on yourself. In a year that has tested many, Tebogo encourages us to celebrate resilience, spread positivity, and step into 2026 with courage and confidence. And if you find yourself at a family gathering, why not raise a toast? After all, growth begins with a single step—and sometimes, a single speech.



District 74

SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

December 2025

Division

A

Alberton Toastmasters Club - 40 Years

Stellenbosch Club - 38 Years

Division

B

Northern Star Toastmasters Club

- 36 Years

Division

C

Westlake Toastmasters - 10 Years

Division

D

Multichoice Toasties - 7 Years

The MultiVoice Academy - 7 Years

Division

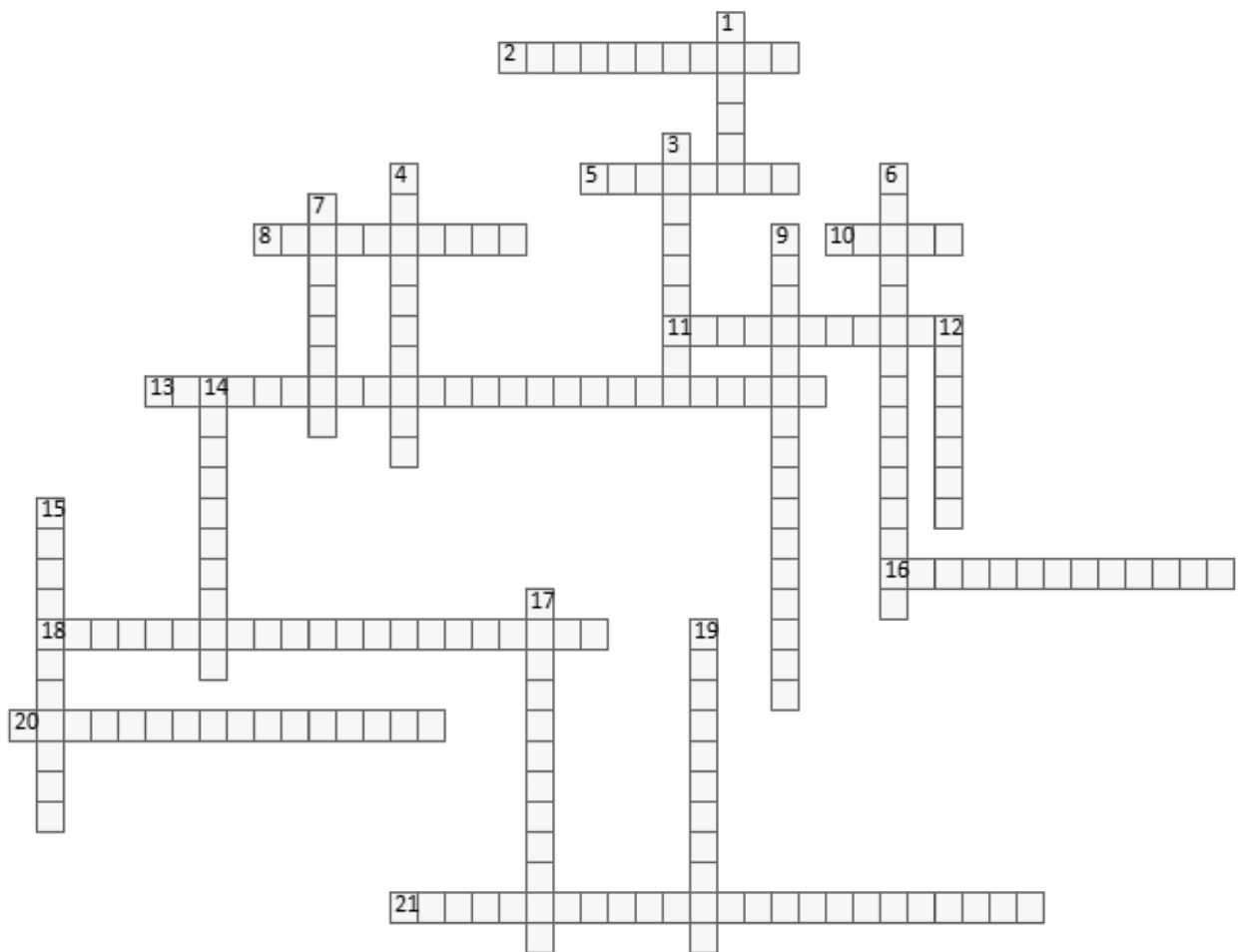
E

4th Dimension Club - 23 Years

Eloquent Speakers Club - 19 Years

Bryanston Breakfast Toastmasters - 10 Years

December Crossword



Across

- 2.** Tool used by the timer to signal time
- 5.** Name of the Toastmasters education program introduced in 2018
- 8.** Term for feedback given after a speech
- 10.** Symbol of authority used to maintain meeting decorum
- 11.** Term for impromptu speaking session
- 13.** A Measure of a club's performance
- 16.** Custodian of a club's assets
- 18.** The first manual in the traditional education program
- 20.** Guide for completing projects in Pathways
- 21.** Highest educational award in Toastmasters

Down

- 1.** Document listing meeting roles and agenda
- 3.** Role responsible for tracking filler words during a meeting
- 4.** Role that improves listening skills
- 6.** Competition level above Area
- 7.** City where Toastmasters International was officially founded
- 9.** Role that evaluates speech structure and delivery
- 12.** Toastmasters founder's last name
- 14.** First step in Pathways program
- 15.** Event for practicing public speaking outside regular meetings.
- 17.** Advanced manual focusing on storytelling
- 19.** Official Toastmasters magazine published monthly

Create your own puzzles for free at www.teachize.com





Merry Christmas from Toastmasters District 74

Wishing you a joyful and peaceful festive season filled with warmth, gratitude, and meaningful moments.

Thank you for a year of courage, growth, and shared inspiration. May 2026 bring new opportunities to learn, lead, and shine even brighter.

Season's Greetings &
Happy New Year!

Missed our previous issues you can find them on

[Toastmasters74.org](https://toastmasters74.org)

