

FEBRUARY 2026

ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

MAGAZINE

How
Toastmasters
Helped Me
Speak Up:
**Boitumelo
Magano**

Why
Toastmasters
Need a
**Professional
Headshot**

The Language
of Love Is
Communication

The Hunt for
Successors
Should Have
Began

A portrait of Reena Vallabai, a woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a dark blue blazer over a white collared shirt. She is looking slightly to the right with a gentle smile.

Reena Vallabai
A Journey of Self-Love

District 74 Southern Africa Toastmasters

District 74

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Toastmasters District 74 Mission

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



EDITOR'S NOTE



W

e all know that February is considered “the month of love,” but what does that really mean? I believe this month is about more than romantic love or affection from those close to you it is also a month that includes self-love.

What better gift can you give those you love and care about than a happy and thriving you? So often, we focus on showing others affection, supporting their growth, or playing a part in their happiness that we forget about ourselves.

This month, take the opportunities available to you to grow through delivering speeches, leading with heart, and performing meeting roles while remembering that you are a work in progress.

Offering yourself kindness is one of the greatest gifts of love you can give yourself

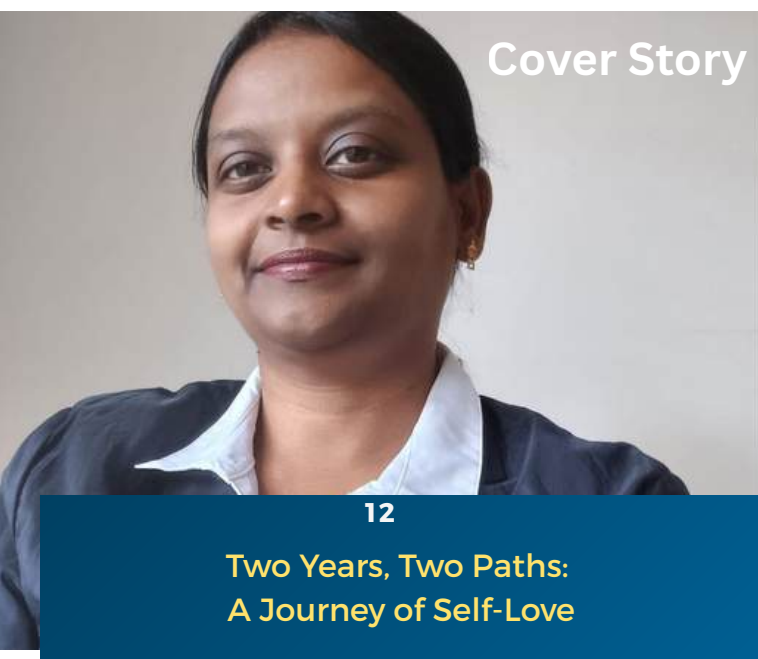
Khethiwe Malema

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DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S NOTE

By the time February arrives, the year has found its rhythm. The excitement of January settles into purposeful movement, and across our District, clubs and members are quietly – and confidently – building momentum. This is often where real progress begins.

What inspires me most is how our clubs continue to show up for one another. When leaders support leaders, and clubs support clubs, excellence becomes achievable not as a distant goal, but as a shared journey. Every act of collaboration brings us closer to becoming Distinguished, together.

For our members, this season is a gentle reminder that growth thrives on consistency. Renewing your membership is more than an administrative step – it is a commitment to your personal development, your voice, your confidence, and your leadership.

As contest season unfolds, I want to acknowledge everyone involved from those bravely stepping onto the stage to those working behind the scenes to make it all possible. These moments challenge us, and in being challenged, we grow.

February also carries the promise of Talk Up Toastmasters – an opportunity to share what has enriched our lives. Sometimes, one invitation is all it takes.



My sincere appreciation goes to the editorial and production team who continue to bring Achieving Excellence to life. As you read these pages, I invite you to be inspired and to share the magazine, so the spirit of Toastmasters may reach even further.

Let us continue this journey as Catalysts of Success, nurturing momentum and Achieving Excellence one meaningful step at a time.

Bhekisisa Ngomane,DTM



Together, we grow.
Together, we lead.

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

FROM THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DESK

As we step into February, I would like to pause and celebrate the strong start our district made in January. The energy across our clubs has been inspiring from educational achievements and club officer training momentum. Thank you to every club officer, member, and district leader who contributed to amplifying our message. Your efforts matter, and they are being noticed.

Looking ahead, February presents even greater opportunity. This is a month to deepen our visibility, strengthen brand consistency, and showcase the life-changing journeys happening inside our clubs. Expect more coordinated campaigns, member spotlights, and tools to help clubs promote meetings and attract guests.

Let's continue to tell compelling stories, celebrate excellence, and open doors for future members.

District 74

Southern Africa Toastmasters

TALK UP TOASTMASTERS IS LIVE!

ADD

5

NEW,
DUAL, OR
REINSTATED MEMBERS

01 February - 31 March 2026

Reward: R300 Voucher + ribbon from TI + up to R200
in boosted Facebook Ads.



Leadership and Age Dynamics

By Tumelo Maphalala

Leadership rarely operates within a single age group. In many teams, clubs, and organizations, leaders find themselves guiding people who are older, younger, or at vastly different life stages than themselves. While this diversity brings richness of perspective, it can also introduce challenges that require patience, humility, and resilience.

Age dynamics often surface in expectations, communication styles, and attitudes toward change. Younger members may seek faster progression, flexibility, and innovation, while more experienced members may value structure, tradition, and proven approaches. Tension can arise when these differences are misunderstood or dismissed. Effective leaders recognize that age does not equate to ability, relevance, or authority, it simply reflects experience viewed through a different lens.

Resilient leadership begins with respect. Leaders must resist the temptation to lead from assumptions and instead cultivate curiosity. Asking questions, listening actively, and acknowledging the strengths each age group brings, fosters trust. When people feel respected, they are more open to collaboration, regardless of age.

Leaders must also be secure enough to learn from those younger than them and confident enough to lead those older than them. Authority in leadership is not derived from age, but from consistency, fairness, and integrity. When challenges arise such as resistance, skepticism, or generational misunderstandings, resilient leaders respond with composure rather than defensiveness.



In spaces like Toastmasters, age diversity is a powerful advantage. Members bring varied professional backgrounds, life experiences, and leadership styles that enrich the learning environment. Leaders who navigate these dynamics well create inclusive spaces where everyone feels valued and heard.

Ultimately, leadership across age dynamics demands adaptability. It requires leaders to balance empathy with decisiveness, openness with clarity. When leaders embrace age diversity as a strength rather than a barrier, they build resilient teams capable of learning from one another. In doing so, they model a leadership style that is inclusive, grounded, and prepared for the complexities of real-world leadership.

“Leaders who navigate age dynamics well create spaces where everyone feels valued and heard.”



Why Toastmasters Need a Professional Headshot

By Leya Musunga

In Toastmasters, communication goes beyond what we say on stage. Long before we speak, we are often seen on club websites, district social media pages, LinkedIn profiles, contest flyers, and conference programmes. A professional headshot is not just a nice extra; it is a powerful personal branding tool.

1. First impressions matter

A professional headshot communicates confidence, credibility, and approachability in seconds. Whether you are a new member or a seasoned leader, your photo signals that you take yourself and Toastmasters seriously.

3. It strengthens your personal brand

Toastmasters helps develop leadership and communication skills, but your image should reflect that growth. A polished headshot aligns with the professional speaker, presenter, or leader you are becoming, especially when you represent your club or district publicly.

5. It reflects pride in the organisation

As Toastmasters, we represent a global organisation known for excellence. Showing up professionally, including through our photos, reflects respect for the brand and inspires confidence in those who engage with us.

In short

A professional headshot helps you look the part of a confident communicator, credible leader, and proud Toastmaster before you even say a word.

2. It supports opportunities beyond Toastmasters

Many members use Toastmasters experience to advance their careers. A professional headshot seamlessly serves multiple purposes LinkedIn, speaking engagements, media features, and business profiles making it a smart investment.

4. It enhances visibility and recognition

From speech contests to leadership roles, professional photos help people recognise you across platforms. When your image is consistent, you become more memorable, which is especially valuable in a large district or online environment.



The Hunt for Successors Should Have Began

By Tumelo Maphalala

The title sounds urgent, and intentionally so. But let's be clear from the start: it is not too late. Rather, it is a timely reminder that effective leadership is not only about serving well today, but also about preparing the ground for tomorrow.

As the Toastmasters leadership year draws closer to its end in June 2026, club leaders should already be thinking beyond their own term. Succession planning is not a last-minute activity reserved for May elections; it is a continuous process of observation, encouragement, and development. Strong clubs do not scramble for leaders, they grow them.

Looking for successors early allows leaders to identify potential, not perfection. The next Vice President Education, President, or Secretary may not yet feel "ready," but readiness is often built through exposure and trust. By involving members in small leadership tasks now, chairing sessions, assisting officers, leading projects, leaders create confidence and competence long before titles change hands.

Early succession planning also ensures continuity. When incoming leaders have had time to observe, ask questions, and learn informally, the transition becomes smoother and less disruptive. Knowledge is transferred organically, institutional memory is preserved, and momentum is sustained. The club does not merely survive the transition; it thrives through it.

Importantly, encouraging future leaders is also an act of inclusion. It signals to members that leadership is accessible, that growth is expected, and that the club believes in their potential. Many members are willing to serve, they simply need to be invited.



To reiterate: it is not too late. The title may sound like a warning, but it is truly a call to action. There is still ample time to mentor, guide, and inspire the next generation of club leaders before June 2026.

Leadership is temporary; legacy is not. The hunt for successors is not about replacing leaders, it is about strengthening the future.

"Effective leadership is not only about serving well today, but preparing the ground for tomorrow."



Congratulations

District 74
Southern Africa Toastmasters

TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

NEW CLUB ANNOUNCEMENT

WELCOME

**GREEN BERET SPEAKERS
TOASTMASTERS CLUB**

Division A | Area A02

Club Mentors	Club Sponsors
Carmelita A. Kruger Nandipha Jeke	Moeketsi I.Nthombeni Carmelita A. Kruger

Club #7
2025/26

Club meetings In Person
1st & 3rd Friday 08:30 am

FROM THE DESK OF THE CLUB GROWTH DIRECTOR

District 74
SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

DISTINGUISHED READY
By 31 March 2026

Congratulations
SAP Toastmasters Club

- Verified Complete
- Achieving 5 or more DCP goals
- Renewed for 20 members or base +3

Reward: Trophy OR R300 CFR Voucher (stock or May Conference)

HOME DISTRICT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

District 74
Southern Africa Toastmasters

**Moving Forward
Toastmasters**
has achieved

**10 D C P
GOALS**
2025-2026

Congratulations to All Club Members

Home District of the International President

District 74
Southern Africa Toastmasters

**Gaborone
Toastmasters**
has achieved

**10 D C P
GOALS**
2025-2026

Congratulations to All Club Members

Home District of the International President

Beat Presentation Panic with the U.S. Navy's "Box Breathing" Technique

By Leya Musunga

Every Toastmaster regardless of experience has felt it. Moments before speaking, your heart races, your breath shortens, and your mind feels less steady than it did during practice. This reaction isn't a lack of confidence. It's biology.

When we step into high-pressure speaking situations—whether a contest, evaluation, or important presentation our bodies often enter fight-or-flight mode. While this response once protected us from danger, it can work against us on stage.

Fortunately, there is a simple technique used by the U.S. Navy to stay calm under pressure: box breathing.

What Is Box Breathing?

Box breathing, also known as tactical breathing, is taught to U.S. Navy SEALs to help regulate stress and maintain focus in extreme situations. The technique follows four equal steps:

- Inhale for four seconds
- Hold for four seconds
- Exhale for four seconds
- Hold for four seconds

Repeat the cycle four to six times.

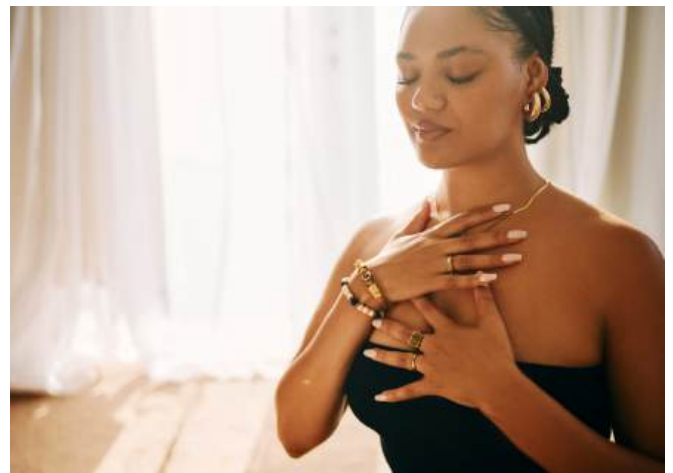
No tools or special conditions are required just your breath.

Why It Works

Stress causes shallow, rapid breathing, which signals danger to the brain and intensifies anxiety. Box breathing slows the breath and activates the body's calming response. It lowers heart rate, reduces stress hormones, and improves mental clarity and vocal control. In essence, it tells your nervous system: You're safe.

A Tool for Every Toastmaster

If box breathing helps military professionals make clear decisions under fire, its value in public speaking is undeniable.



Toastmasters can use it discreetly while waiting to be introduced, standing behind the lectern, or pausing during a speech.

The audience sees confidence. The speaker experiences calm.

Final Thought

Confidence doesn't come from eliminating nerves it comes from managing them. Box breathing doesn't remove anxiety; it helps you stay present despite it.

In Toastmasters, we train our voices and our messages. Perhaps it's time we also trained our breath because sometimes the most powerful speaking tool isn't what you say, but how you breathe before you say it.

The “Tell Me About Yourself” Trap: Acing It with the PAR Method

By Leya Musunga

The four most dreaded words in any job interview? “So, tell me about yourself.” It feels like a trap. Do you share your life story? Your hobbies? Too often, candidates ramble when what interviewers really want is clarity, confidence, and relevance. The secret to answering this question effectively is the PAR Method.

What Is the PAR Method?

PAR stands for **Problem, Action, Result**.

It’s a simple yet powerful storytelling structure that transforms your experience into a concise, compelling narrative. Instead of listing skills, you demonstrate them in action keeping your response focused and professional.

How to Build a PAR-Powered Answer

P – Problem (Present)

Start with where you are now. Briefly describe your current role and a key challenge or opportunity you’re working on. This sets the context.

Example:

“I’m currently a Marketing Coordinator, and our team was struggling to increase engagement on our social media channels.”

A – Action (Past)

Explain the specific action you took to address the problem. This is where you showcase your skills and initiative.

Example:

“I researched our audience and launched a new video content series that was interactive and tailored to their interests.”

R – Result (Future-Focused)

Highlight the outcome ideally with measurable results and link it to the role you’re applying for.

Example:

“As a result, engagement increased by 40% in three months. I’m excited about this role because I’d love to bring that same data-driven creativity to your team.”

Why PAR Works

In under two minutes, you:

- Define your professional identity
- Prove your value with real results
- Clearly connect your experience to the job

So next time you hear, “Tell me about yourself,” don’t panic. Remember your PAR story and deliver it with confidence.



The Compounding Effect of Continued Public-Speaking Practice

By Tumelo Maphalala

Recently, I came across an advertisement for a one-day public-speaking masterclass promising rapid transformation. It made me pause. Can confidence, clarity, and mastery truly be built in a single day? While short courses may offer useful tips, real growth in public speaking does not happen instantly. It is the result of continued practice, reflection, and refinement over time.

Public speaking is a skill that compounds. Each speech builds on the last. Every attempt, successful or not, adds to a growing foundation of experience. The first time someone stands to speak, nerves often dominate. Over time, posture improves, pauses become intentional, and confidence emerges naturally. This progression cannot be rushed; it must be lived.

Toastmasters understands this principle deeply. Rather than offering a quick fix, it provides a consistent environment where members can practice repeatedly and safely. Through regular meetings, structured evaluations, and gradual challenges, speakers grow in layers. A single speech may feel small, but when repeated over months and years, the impact multiplies.

The compounding effect extends beyond speaking itself. Continued practice strengthens listening skills, emotional intelligence, leadership presence, and self-awareness. Members learn how to adapt to different audiences, handle unexpected moments, and communicate with authenticity. These are skills that no one-day workshop can fully instill.

Consistency also builds confidence in a way shortcuts cannot. When speakers return to the stage again and again, fear loses its power. What once felt intimidating becomes familiar. Growth becomes measurable, not imagined.

In a world eager for instant results, continued practice may seem slow, but it is far more effective. Mastery is not achieved in a day; it is earned through commitment. Toastmasters offers something far more valuable than a crash course: a journey where improvement compounds with every speech, every meeting, and every moment of courage.





Two Years, Two Paths: A Journey of Self-Love

By Reena Vallabai
Editor: Khethiwe Malema

Two years and two completed Toastmasters Paths were never part of a master plan. They were not goals I consciously set. Instead, they became the natural outcome of a journey that unfolded gradually, one that taught me something far more meaningful than accolades: how to practice self-love through intention, growth, and community.

Growing up, I was a quiet and timid child, more comfortable observing from the sidelines than standing in the spotlight. While center stage never appealed to me, I enjoyed working on projects, navigating change, and collaborating with teams. I simply hadn't found the voice or the courage to express it. Years ago, a friend invited me to attend a Toastmasters meeting in India. I declined without hesitation.

Almost a decade later, life offered me the opportunity again, this time in South Africa, where I had relocated with my husband and our nine-month-old baby. Like many people adjusting to a new country and a new phase of life, I found myself searching for connection, growth, and belonging.

On 12 June 2023, I walked into my first meeting at Transformers Toastmasters feeling nervous, excited, and uncertain all at once. That single step marked the beginning of a journey that would reshape not just my communication skills, but my relationship with myself.

Looking back, my transformation was shaped by four key pillars—the 4 Ps.

Purpose

My first speech, “New Kindergarten,” helped me uncover my “why.” As I spoke, listened, and received guidance from mentors, my goals became clearer. Toastmasters became an anchor. Even while balancing family responsibilities, professional aspirations, and club commitments, my sense of purpose kept me grounded. Challenges stopped feeling like obstacles and became meaningful steps in a larger journey. Through purpose, I learned that self-love begins with knowing why you show up.

Planning

Planning became my way of honoring my time and energy. I mapped out my Pathways projects, speech topics, and themes in advance, aligning them with my personal and professional life. Every meaningful experience, joyful or difficult, became material for my speeches, making the journey authentic and sustainable. My first Path was driven by enjoyment and momentum, and I completed it in under a year. For my second Path, I intentionally chose different projects and electives. With focused planning, I completed it in six months, partly to contribute to my club’s DCP goals. Planning taught me that self-love also means aligning ambition with reality.



Persistence

Planning set the direction, but persistence carried me forward. I consistently showed up, sometimes delivering speeches across time zones at 2:30 a.m. or 4:00 a.m., attending meetings across the globe. Contest roles such as Contest Chair and Chief Judge stretched me further, strengthening my leadership skills.

I treated feedback as a gift, intentionally applying it speech after speech. Growth became deliberate, not accidental. Awards like two Triple Crowns and a Magic Five boosted my motivation. Persistence made one thing clear: progress matters more than perfection.

People

Above all, I learned that growth accelerates when you surround yourself with people who believe in your potential. Whether working on team projects or serving as Area Director, I experienced the power of collective effort. Toastmasters is a community where encouragement is genuine and support is abundant. Self-love, I realised, doesn’t mean walking alone, it means choosing the right people to walk with you.

Joining Toastmasters may be life-changing. With purpose, planning, persistence, and people, confidence grows, perspectives widen, leadership appears, and you ultimately discover a stronger, more self-aware version of yourself.

Congratulations

Triple Crown Awards - JANUARY 2026

Members

- Angeline Kivido - Act Toastmasters Club



JANUARY 2026 TOP 5 RANKED CLUBS WITH THE MOST COMPLETED PATHWAY LEVELS

Rank	Total Levels	Club Name
1	16	Gaborone Toastmasters
2	15	Green Speakers Toastmasters Club
2	15	Bloemfontein Toastmasters Club
3	13	Eloquent Speakers Club
4	12	West Rand Toastmasters Club
4	12	Rainbow Toastmasters Club
4	12	Moving Forward Toastmasters
4	12	Good Hope Club
5	11	Algoa Club 2457
5	11	Carpe Diem Aspire

Re-Training The Nervous System: Claiming Your Personality

By Kagelelo Mogotsi

During my Christmas holiday, I stumbled upon a video that stopped me in my tracks. Its message was simple but powerful: the stage is not the enemy our nervous system just thinks it is. And the moment we teach it otherwise, we move closer to reclaiming our authentic selves. That insight felt like a lightbulb moment. I knew exactly what I wanted to write about.

By now, you know the feeling well the seconds before stepping forward, heart racing, palms slick, thoughts spiraling. We've unpacked this response before, but it bears repeating: your body isn't malfunctioning. It's trying to protect you.

One simple way to interrupt that panic is through breathing. The 4-2-6 technique works like a quiet reset. Inhale for four counts, hold for two, then exhale slowly for six. That longer release signals safety to the brain, easing the fight-or-flight response. Repeat the cycle a few times and the noise in your head begins to soften.

Practice plays an equally powerful role. Through repetition, you uncover awkward phrases, untangle complex ideas, and refine your vocabulary. You stop memorizing and start understanding. I often rehearse in front of a mirror, and by the tenth attempt, I can retell the same story in several ways. That flexibility removes the fear of "ruining" a speech there is no single fragile version to protect.

As novelty gives way to familiarity, anxiety loses its grip. Your body learns that this situation is survivable, even manageable.



Warming up the voice helps too. Gentle humming loosens tension and grounds you in the present moment. I discovered this when I served as MC at a church event, humming quietly during the drive there. By the time I arrived, my shoulders had dropped and my voice felt ready.

Finally, be kind to yourself. Nerves are not a weakness they're proof that you care. The goal isn't to eliminate them, but to carry them without letting them silence you.

As we step into 2026, let us color the stage with who we are and use our voices with purpose.

"The goal isn't to eliminate nerves, but to carry them without letting them silence you."

Love at First Speech: Why Toastmasters Is a Relationship That Lasts

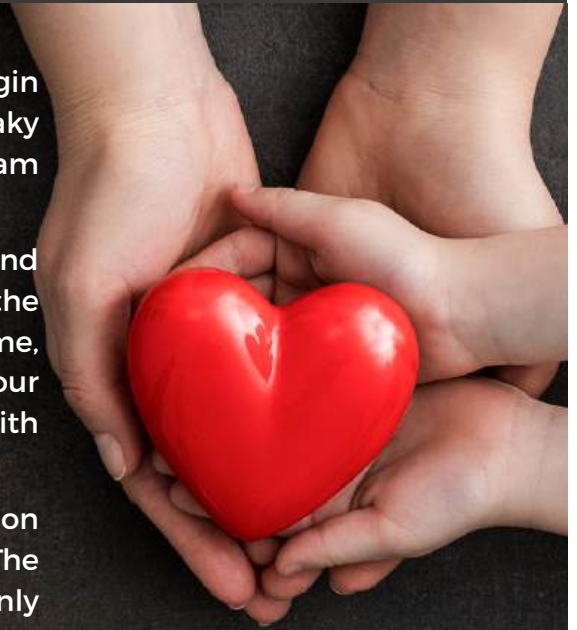
By Leya Musunga

February celebrates love but not all love stories begin with roses and chocolates. Some begin with shaky hands, a nervous smile, and the words, “Madam Toastmaster...”

Toastmasters is a relationship built on trust, growth, and mutual support. You arrive unsure of yourself, and the club welcomes you exactly as you are. Over time, something remarkable happens, you fall in love with your voice, your confidence, and your ability to connect with others.

Like any strong relationship, Toastmasters thrives on commitment, encouragement, and honest feedback. The more you invest, the more you grow and the love only deepens.

Toastmasters isn’t just a club. It’s a love story with your potential.



The Language of Love Is Communication

By Leya Musunga

At the heart of every strong relationship lies clear, honest, and respectful communication and that is exactly what Toastmasters teaches. Love is not sustained by grand gestures alone; it is nurtured through the words we choose, the way we listen, and the intention behind our messages. Communication is the bridge that connects people, builds trust, and deepens understanding.

February, the month of love, reminds us that words truly matter. They have the power to heal wounded hearts, inspire confidence, motivate action, and create meaningful connections. In Toastmasters, members learn far more than public speaking. They develop the ability to listen actively, speak thoughtfully, and express ideas with empathy and clarity. These are life skills that extend well beyond the lectern.

Strong communication strengthens marriages by encouraging openness and understanding. It deepens friendships by fostering honesty and respect. In the workplace, it builds collaboration, reduces conflict, and inspires leadership. Toastmasters provides a safe and supportive environment to practice these skills, allowing members to grow not only as speakers, but as communicators in every area of life.

When we learn to communicate with clarity, kindness, and compassion, we don’t just become better speakers we become better humans. This February, fall in love with the power of meaningful communication and the connections it creates.

Finding Your Voice: How Toastmasters Helped Me Speak Up - Boitumelo Magano

— By Modieng Ramekosi

As an ambitious early-career professional, I was constantly pushed beyond my comfort zone to speak up, lead conversations, and connect with diverse audiences. Fueled by a passion to make my voice heard and create meaningful impact, I embraced every challenge that came my way.

I wanted to become an eloquent speaker, someone who could confidently engage with people from all spheres of life without feeling limited by fear or uncertainty.

As an avid reader and a podcast enthusiast, I've always valued the power of words and communication. Toastmasters was the best-suited platform to turn my passion into a skill.

A Journey of Growth: Personal and professional transformation

On a personal level, this platform has taught me the value of honest and clear communication. I now approach conversations head-on, expressing myself with confidence and clarity.

Professionally, it has been a game-changer. As a communications professional, I can now advocate for myself and articulate key messages effectively in both internal and external contexts. Toastmasters has opened doors to incredible opportunities, such as being featured in a newsletter and on the Inspired Leaders podcast.

As a young woman with aspirations of speaking on global stages, this platform has equipped me with the tools, resources, and confidence to seize those opportunities when they present themselves. Toastmasters didn't just improve my communication; it amplified my confidence and opened doors I never imagined.



Turning fear into strength

My biggest fears were making mistakes and being visible, as I worried about stumbling over words or not meeting expectations. Fortunately, Toastmasters helped me turn those fears into strengths. Today, I embrace visibility as an opportunity to grow and connect, and I see mistakes as steppingstones toward self-mastery.

Your voice matters -Start your journey today

If you've ever felt held back by fear or uncertainty, Toastmasters is the key to unlocking your potential. It's more than a club - it's a community that empowers you to speak with confidence, lead with impact, and embrace opportunities you never thought possible.

Saying You Will Do the Thing Is Not Doing the Thing

— By Tumelo Maphalala

There is a comforting illusion in planning. Writing goals, talking about intentions, preparing outlines, and surrounding the “thing” with everything else can feel productive. But as a post I recently came across reminded me: tiptoeing around the thing is not doing the thing. Doing the thing is doing the thing.

In Toastmasters, this truth shows up often. We say we want to become better speakers, yet delay delivering that speech. We say we want to grow as leaders, yet hesitate to take up a role. We talk about confidence, growth, and transformation, but stop just short of the action that actually creates them. Planning has its place, but it must eventually give way to courage.

Progress demands deliberateness. It requires us to move from intention to execution, from discussion to delivery. The uncomfortable truth is that growth rarely happens while we are preparing to grow. It happens when we speak, lead, evaluate, and show up, sometimes imperfectly, often nervously, but always intentionally.

Toastmasters offers a rare gift: a safe space to do the thing. To stand up and speak even when your voice shakes. To lead a meeting even when you feel unready. To give and receive feedback even when it stretches you. Every meeting is an invitation to step beyond planning and into practice.

“Planning has its place,
but it must eventually
give way to courage.”



As we move forward this year, let us be honest with ourselves. What is the thing we keep circling? The speech we’ve postponed? The leadership role we’ve avoided? The skill we keep saying we’ll work on “soon”? Growth is not found in someday. It is found in the now.

Let this be the year we stop rehearsing change and start embodying it. Say less about what you will do, and do more of what you say. Because in the end, transformation is not imagined, announced, or outlined. It is acted upon.



Member Spotlight: Maipelo Stroh

By Leya Musunga

Maipelo Stroh is excited to have recently joined Toastmasters, stepping into a journey of growth in both communication and leadership.

She joined with a clear goal: to strengthen her professional skills while embracing an environment that would challenge her, provide constructive feedback, and push her beyond her comfort zone. From her very first meetings, she has already seen that promise come to life within her club. Through regular evaluations, encouragement from fellow members, and opportunities to participate, Maipelo is building the confidence to communicate more clearly, think on her feet, and lead with greater purpose.

For her, Toastmasters is more than a program it is a space where potential is stretched, skills are sharpened, and growth becomes visible.

And so far, it has delivered far beyond expectations.



Maipelo Stroh
Gaborone Toastmasters Club

District 74 - February 2026 Social Media Report



	Facebook Page	Facebook Group	Instagram	LinkedIn	YouTube	X
Followers	14,591	9,350	3,224	422	1,358	4,216
Interactions	495	334	199	199		
Viewed	11,410	7,266	10,033	177	714	



Website

Active users - 3914
Page Views- 5368

From the PRM Desk

HOME DISTRICT OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

The End of Beginning-of-the-Year Anxiety

By Tumelo Maphalala

The start of a new year often arrives with mixed emotions. Alongside excitement and optimism, there is also a quiet anxiety that settles in; returning to routines, re-entering workspaces, reopening school schedules, and resuming commitments that were briefly paused. January is often filled with adjustment, hesitation, and the pressure to “get it right” from the very beginning.

By the time February arrives, however, something shifts. The unfamiliar begins to feel familiar again. Alarm clocks no longer shock the system, calendars start to make sense, and routines slowly regain their rhythm. This is the moment when beginning-of-the-year anxiety should begin to loosen its grip.

February invites us to exhale. It reminds us that momentum does not have to be frantic to be effective. Whether at work, in school, or in spaces like Toastmasters, we have now had time to settle back in. The meetings are no longer first meetings. The goals are no longer just ideas. We have started, and that in itself is progress.

In Toastmasters, early-year anxiety can show up as hesitation to take roles, deliver speeches, or commit to goals. By now, members have attended enough meetings to remember why they joined in the first place. The nerves that come with new beginnings can be replaced with confidence rooted in familiarity and support.

This period is not about rushing forward, but about grounding ourselves. It is an opportunity to refine intentions, adjust expectations, and recommit with greater clarity. Anxiety fades when action becomes routine and uncertainty gives way to experience.

As February unfolds, let us allow ourselves to move forward without the pressure of perfection. The year is no longer brand new, it is underway. And with that comes the comfort of knowing we are capable of navigating what lies ahead. The beginning has passed; now, the work and the growth can truly begin.



District 74

SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

February 2026

Division

B

Vodacom Cape Town Toastmasters
- 16 Years

Division

C

NAMFISA Toastmasters Club - 5 Years

Division

F

Proconics Toastmasters - 5 Years

District 74

SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

MEMBERS ANNIVERSARIES

February 2026

Years

28

Ursula Von St.Ange - Chuckle 'n Chirp Club

17

Placxedes Ndhlovu - Algoa Club 2457

13

Mayumbula Chikwililwa - Seagulls Club

10

Glennita Ford - Vodacom Cape Town Toastmasters

9

Leigh Lewis -Durban Umgeni Toastmasters Club

7

Yolandi Bulger - Egoli Golden City Club

Judith Lee - Johannesburg Toastmasters Club

6

Leya Musunga - Gaborone Toastmasters

5

Shikesho Lazarus - NAMFISA Toastmasters Club

Janet Muthuki - Crest Connect Club

Maboi Mashabela - Honeydew Club

Bongumusa Mnguni - Honeydew Club

Karen van Heerden - Carpe Diem Aspire

Navesh Naidoo - Carpe Diem Aspire

4

Nicola Mathieson - Absa Toastmasters Breakfast

Thobeka Tshabalala - Absa Toastmasters Breakfast

Nonkululeko Zungu - Cape Town Speakers

District 74

SOUTHERN AFRICA TOASTMASTERS

MEMBERS ANNIVERSARIES

February 2026

Years

3

John Welch; Timothy Chabualasanza
Paula Wilson; Georgie Pearce;
Samora Menze
Clive Hendricks; Mark Wilkinson
Ian Pillay; Colleen Larsen; Thabo Nhlapo
Thandwefika Tshabalala; Gcobisa Sigwili

2

Majele Mokanyane ; Rosemary Kalwani
Nadine Butler ; Rowena Lakay
RICHARD BOUGARD ; Michaela Geldhof
Steven Theron ; Nokuthula Mchunu
Yolisa Ndimma ; Alanna Fincham
Tshiu Koele ; ELIJAH SIVAKO
Matshediso Tamaki ; Loveness Damba
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