



Bridge Builders Newsletter

February-March 2024

Bridge Builders
Toastmasters Club
(#1944)

**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

Toastmasters is used by many top companies as a key component of their professional development programs. [Learn more here.](#)

WELCOME!

Our Bridge Builders Toastmasters Club (BBTM) is generously sponsored by **McDermott/CB&I Storage Solutions** (Plainfield). Our membership is open to **both** CB&I employees and the general community. **Guests are always welcome.**

We meet on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesdays of each month from **12:00 NOON to 12:59 PM** central time (online **only**).

For more information, visit [our club website](#).

Toastmasters International
<https://www.toastmasters.org>

From Cheese Doodles to What?

At our March 5 meeting, we had fun with National Cheese Doodle Day as our theme – sharing some of our personal stories related to cheese. Now for our March 19 meeting, it's quite a different day that will serve as our theme.

Here's a hint: Ha-Ha-Ha! Yes, our next meeting will be using National Let's Laugh Day as our theme. Did you know that Bridge Builders start our meetings with a bit of humor – led by the member serving as that day's Joke Master? What is your favorite joke? How well do you tell that joke? A Bridge Builders meeting is a practice field – whether for practicing that great joke or for delivering a business presentation.



Thank you, Barry & Prince!



We hosted a Table Topics (TT) Contest “practice session” on February 6 for competitor **Mark B.** He volunteered to represent Bridge Builders at the Area 41 level on Sunday, February 18. Seasoned Toastmasters **Prince M.** (from “across the pond”) and **Barry M.** (from a neighboring district) went head-to-head in match-ups with Mark.

TT competitors are required to speak for 1-2 minutes in response to a “prompt”. For Practice Round #1: **Prince** and **Mark** received this prompt: “*You have accepted an offer to be the keynote speaker at the graduation ceremony of a major university. What key point will you share as the core of your message?*” Practice Round #2: **Barry** and **Mark** responded to “*What makes you special?*” as the prompt. How would **YOU** respond to these prompts?

Mark is on a Roll: Speech Contest



Those practice sessions with **Prince** and **Barry** paid off. **Mark** smoothly handled a prompt about changing history. With a response targeting a field goal kick that went wide left, **Mark** finished in first place for Area 41 – qualifying to compete at the Division D level on Sunday, March 10. The Division competition prompt was: “What would you do if the world is going to end in 24 hours?” With his “fantastic” life and family as the heart of his response, **Mark** extended his winning streak. He is now eligible for District 54's Speech Contest in April.

CONGRATULATIONS, MARK!



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Rich L.



WELCOME BACK!

In January, Bridge Builders welcomed back Rich L. as a member. As a self-described very shy accountant, Rich joined his first Toastmasters club 30 years ago. He came to Bridge Builders for his first time in 1997 – staying as a member for more than a decade. His experience and enthusiasm are valuable assets that he happily shares with our members and guests.

Rich was a member of several clubs in the past. Currently, in addition to Bridge Builders, Rich belongs to Joliet Jesters Toastmasters (IL) and Apple Valley Toastmasters (MN).

Rich earned the status of Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) in 2017. DTM is the highest educational award within Toastmasters International's program.

It's great to have Rich back!

Induction of 3 New Bridge Builders

At our March 5 meeting, we inducted 3 new members into Bridge Builders: **Prince M.** (who transferred his membership from an East coast club), **Bill H.** (who is now an active member of 6 Toastmasters clubs), and **Zach J.A.** (who is totally new to Toastmasters). Each took a very different route in finding his way to our club. In future newsletters, we'll have a chance to share more about their stories.

WELCOME PRINCE, ZACH, and BILL!

Bridge Builders' Tidbits

Bridge Builders were provided with a Quick Survey back in **January**. We learned some interesting things about the respondents. For example, 4 times as many ALWAYS make a New Year's resolution as compared to those who NEVER make one. Which of the following reflect some of our other responses?

1. All of the respondents were born in the U.S. Which is true?
 - a. More than half were born in Illinois
 - b. Less than half were born in Illinois
 - c. Same number in Illinois as outside of Illinois
2. In which quarter of the year were the most born?
 - a. January-March
 - b. April-June
 - c. July-September
3. When listed sequentially by preference – starting with most wanted – which best represents their favorite high school subjects?
 - a. Math – English – Science
 - b. Science – Math – English
 - c. Science – English – Math

Answers: 1. c; 2. c; 3. a. If our 3 most recent inductees had participated, how would results have changed?

Tip from a Toastmaster

Make it **personal**. When giving a presentation or just speaking in front of others, adding personal anecdotes can make your speech more engaging and interesting. It is a great way to connect with your audience and help illustrate an idea, drive home a point, or make your presentation more convincing. Plus, a personal story is material you already know; so, it is less content you must create and memorize for your speech.



To report errors or request info, please email us at BridgeBuildersTM@gmail.com.