



Passion Led Us Here

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Southern Lights Toastmasters Club

Web: SouthernLights.ca

June 2022, Club 3684, Area 09, Division B, District 99



Toastmaster of the Year

Rhonda Lagace

Rhonda Lagace is exemplary in fulfilling the club mission. She energetically advanced her toastmaster educational goals, while contributing and enriching the club spirit.

Rhonda was the first member in our club to finish a path in the new pathway program. There are five levels in the Motivational Strategies path, with numerous speeches and projects to accomplish. Rhonda took on each one with ample preparation and finished them with flying colors. Her dedication and skills inspired many members to progress in their own path. In the era of toastmaster pathway program, being the first is not only a great achievement for herself, but it also becomes a milestone for the club.

While Rhonda actively made progress in her educational goal, she made great efforts in club building and bonding members together. She organized the club open house, which brought many guests to experience our club and the toastmaster world. She led through the team building events for the executives,

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Toastmaster of the Year, Rhonda Lagace

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which helped them understand the importance of communication. She brought everyone onboard the Poseidon adventure and practiced their skills of persuasion to become the only survivor. These constructive, engaging, and fun club activities were what we would remember this year for in our club.

Southern Lights is lucky to have such an energetic and talented member such as Rhonda Lagace. We honour her with naming her The Toastmaster of the Year for he Southern Lights Toastmasters Club. Congratulations and thank you for all you do for us, Rhonda.

Herb Ashley Spirit of Success Award

Barb Turner

Barb Turner is known for her dedication and passion to elevate club excellence in times of change.



Barb joined the club in 2020 and after being recognized as Rookie of The Year, she immediately jumped onboard the executive team and contributed to the club both in and beyond her capacity as the VP PR. Barb was very enthusiastic in promoting the club. Barb made very concrete reports and deliberate proposals in our executive meetings and many of these came to fruition in her hands and benefited the club. She led the development of the new club website, which impressed both members and potential guests. She worked with a team, recognizing the importance of having strong support in all her endeavors.

Barb had a vision for the future of our club in the new age. She promoted hybrid meetings in our club and served as link between our out-of-town and local members. She made many connections by phone calls, emails, and meetings with members and listened to and addressed their concerns, suggestions, and impression of the new hybrid meetings. She bravely stepped in as our next president to bring her vision to a reality.

The club is in good hands as Barb's dedication and passion will maintain and elevate the quality and excellence of the Southern Lights club. She truly embodies the Spirit of Success.



New 2022-23 President's Address —*Barb Turner*

I want to thank all those that have supported me with my decision to run for President of the Southern Lights Toastmaster Club. It would not have been possible if it wasn't for the members who are always ready to have a conversation on any platform. In my short tenure as a Toastmaster I have come to realize the value of the relationships you build in the club atmosphere.

This year's theme is "***Where Toastmasters tradition meets Southern Lights Innovation.***" In the past Southern Lights has welcomed unconditionally all people regardless of race or disability. We follow this tradition into the upcoming year with Hybrid meetings, board members in different geographical areas and choosing connection in the vast array of ways that are available to us.

Duke universities Coach K. who says Being a leader: "I get a group of people who are talented to commit to excellence and to work together as one. That's where it starts. Different talents, same commitment." This is exactly what Southern Lights has brought to life. Always showing that anything is possible when the challenges are presented.

In my eyes the SLT experience is one of safety for failing forward, fun, professional and EVOLVING. Let's commit to learning the different talents needed for leadership today.



Pathways and Toastmasters

by *Marlene Petruch*

Toastmasters Educational program is called Pathways. When you join you are able to choose a path that will assist you in achieving your own personal goals. With eleven different paths to choose from the possibilities are endless. In each path you have five different levels to complete. As you follow through Base Camp on each Level you have ability to access various tutorials, learning materials and speech evaluations. You also can give feedback to other members, present performance badges, and save all your documents and evaluations. If you are on Zoom and members gave you an evaluation in chat you could save this and attach it in your documents. A great resource when you are preparing for your next speech is to review some of the suggestions for improvement. In hybrid meetings you will receive some evaluations through



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The Extra Mile Award

Nigel Bowles



Nigel Bowles is a veteran member of our club. He was a charter member from the beginning. In past years he served as the president, and led many committees and projects. This year was no exception. Nigel delivered noteworthy contributions and many of his innovative decisions helped raise the standard for the club. For his creativity, diligence, and attention to detail, Nigel is worthy of the Extra Mile award.

Nigel served as the club treasurer this year and in past years, and he did more than that. He was really the “Chef Operating Officer” (COO) on the Executive team, ensuring excellence and excellence whatever the direction required. Nigel was pivotal in club planning in the beginning of the year as the executive deliberated on the transition to hybrid meetings. He started in August 2021 to plan how Hybrid might work, and served as the logistician as he planned, procured, and donated the hybrid meeting equipment necessary to make this new venture a possibility. Nigel’s organization skills made our plans achievable, and brought our on-line members into the in-room experience. Anyone who helped setting up our meeting room appreciates the notes, labels and diagrams that Nigel had created to ensure consistency and ease of set-up. Nigel always came early to the hybrid meetings and fine tuned each camera angle, the audio equipment and lightening options. He was the main reason that our club had the earliest and most successful hybrid meetings among the area.

Nigel went an extra mile this year and helped our club made a great leap into high quality hybrid meetings. For that our club is very grateful.

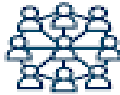
Why Toastmasters



Increase self-confidence and self-belief



Enjoy personal growth



Impact your community



Engage and captivate your audience



Think fast on your feet

Find out how! Visit a club near you: [ToastmastersD34.org](https://www.ToastmastersD34.org)



Nigel is soaring high with his photography. Airplanes and now Hawks. You can find him doing sky and celestial photography and exploring new ways to hone his professional skills.



President’s Choice—*Diane Gunn*

The President’s choice award goes to Diane Gunn, for her admirable dedication to our club’s growth and cohesion.

Diane was as instrumental in our club’s development in the past year. Before we started in September,

Diane already visited many clubs and attended educational sessions from the TI world. She passed

valuable experience and knowledge to the executive team so that our club had a head start. As the VP of education, she planned and managed this toastmaster year from vision to action. Diane brought prestige to our club as she was awarded the president of the year for the entire toastmaster district 99. Diane was a rock in maintaining our club’s strong cohesion during a changing time. She developed close bonds with our out-of-town members and bridged any geographical distance with support and friendship. As an experienced leader, she coached many executives in their leadership path. Diane was behind many events, innovations, and decisions that led our club to a high level of excellence.

Congratulations to Diane Gunn for the President’s Choice award.



The year in review by Bob Wang

Another toastmaster year will soon be behind us. It was a transitional year for our club as we set the course and sail for the future. When I was elected president one year ago, we had been holding Zoom meetings for quite a while. With the commencement of the “best-ever” summer of 21’, we were ambitious to become a hybrid club in the new year. Despite some delays, I want to declare that the mission has been accomplished. This was a milestone for our club’s history. Our club broke the geographic boundary and welcomed members from all corners of the world. As of now, we have members physically or virtually coming to the Providence Renewal Center from Tokyo, Denver, Calgary, and Vancouver Island. Along with our members came a culture of diversity, innovation and adaptivity. With the club decision to embrace hybrid in the next year, this fresh influx of ideas, perspectives and passion will be engraved in our club’s mission.



While our club-building went an extra mile, our members also excelled in their personal success. Juergen Abildt achieved the highest honor in toastmaster and added another golden plaque in our club’s DTM hall of fame. Rhonda Lagace became the first member to finish a path in the new pathway program. 7 new members gave their icebreaker and embarked on their own toastmaster journey. (Maybe add more here, our list of level 1-5s) Their growth not only awarded in their own confidence and skills, but also agglomerate to the unstoppable momentum of our club.

Our club activities left us fond memories of this past year. Despite resurging pandemic restrictions, our club met and mingled in Pat’s beautiful backyard, gathered around a bonfire in Sir Wilfrid Laurier Park and will party in the upcoming traditional year end BBQ. We also had a amusing yet tense night arguing who would be the last survivor to be rescued from the Poseidon. And don’t forget the meetings that everyone pronounced who was the best James Bond, or what they would if you could travel back to the future.

At last I want to acknowledge the executive team, with whom I enjoyed my leadership experience as the president. Our VP Ed Diane worked tirelessly organizing weekly meetings and getting in touch with individual members. Our VP membership Rhonda communicated with numerous guests in style and helped organized our open house. Our VP PR Barb innovated our club website and made posters for each meeting. Our Treasurer Nigel finely turned each line in our budget and volunteered his own equipment for our hybrid meetings so that we had a balanced budget. Our Secretary Michelle timely taken and circulated our business meetings minutes and at the same time contributed from her role as the area director. Our sergeant-at-arms Olga opened each meeting with passion and found her own style with a strong personal touch. At last, our past president Diane helped us elect a formidable new team of executive. Executives, thank you for your passion and dedication. It has been a great privilege for me to be the be the president for this wonderful club. Thank you to every member for your contribution. I look forward to pass the gavel to the new president and work together with her to bring our club to new height.

Recognition of Educational Awards and Speech

Contests Achievements

Club International Speech Contest—Barb Turner

Club Table Topics Speech Contest—Pat Cunningham

Area Table Topics 1st Place—Nadia Daniel

Area International Speech Contest 2nd Place—Barb Turner

Triple Crown Award Winners:

Juergen Abildt DTM DL1, LD2, EH2

Diane Gunn PM2, PM3, MS1

Michelle St. Louis IP3, IP4, PM1

Barb Turner VC2, VC3, PM1

Nadia Daniel M1, DL2, DL3

Educational Achievements:

Rhonda Lagace MS5

Marlene Petruch EC4

Noel Blades PM3

Erika Tsunakawa PM1, PM2

Pat Cunningham EF2

Wayne Sager PM2

Nadia Daniel PM1

Varun Pathak DL1



Thank you to our perennial party hosts, Pat and Randy Cunningham and Darryl and Rita Hauge. Your generosity, consideration and hospitality are greatly appreciated. THANK YOU!

Pathways and Toastmasters by Marlene Petruch (Continued from page 4)

chat and others through a scan or alternative distribution format, and you can use those evaluations to build skills and confidence for your next speech. The Navigator is another tool that you can use to learn about how a club works, the club office roles and the importance of evaluations. You find this manual in Toastmasters International – Pathways—Tutorials and Resources.

Each path has some duplication at the start – Ice Breakers speech, Leadership, Mentorship and

Communication styles. Use your imagination, be creative, and spread your wings so if you are in two or three paths and have to do an Ice Breaker in each one think of different times in your life that you can talk about – share a hobby, a dream something about you that your fellow members would never know. If you are stuck for a topic ask an existing member for idea's for speeches. We will all know what the basics are so think about different and creative ways to share your experience with leadership and/or communication.

Members are a great source of knowledge and inspiration. The most important part of the Toastmaster experience is to have fun and enjoy the journey.



Rookie of the Year—*Varun Pathak*

Varun joined our club just eighteen months ago, but he has already made an impact in every aspect of our club. We will celebrate his achievement with the Rookie of the Year award.

Varun was inspired by his friend's Toastmasters achievements and joined our club without hesitation after one meeting as a guest. Since then, we all have witnessed Varun's personal and professional growth within the club. He bravely took on each meeting role in quick succession and he speedily developed competent and accomplished speaking skills. Gone was the nervousness as a rookie. Varun speaks confidently in any club capacity. With his newly founded skills and confidence, Varun flourished in his professional world as he landed his dream job and moved to Calgary. We are all inspired his achievement.

Varun also demonstrated his skills as a leader. He used his professional skills and helped revitalized our club's website working on the PR Team.

He developed the club's digital file management system and held a workshop with the executive team. Varun served as the Zoom guru in our club meetings as well as area events. He brought ideas and suggestions to our hybrid meetings and in his latest leadership endeavor, was elected VP PR for the next year.

Varun is a rising star in our club. Congratulations on winning the Rookie of the Year award.



What is it like to be an Area Director? by Michelle St. Louis

The famous title of Dr. Suess' children's story, Oh, The Places You'll Go should be a Toastmasters theme. When I joined Southern Lights in 2016, I never would have imagined the adventure ahead.

Firstly, I thank the Southern Lights members for guiding me to a place of curiosity and confidence to step into the Area Director role. Each encouragement and constructive feedback brought me to the place where I was ready for leadership. It is an opportunity of self-exploration to fulfill leadership tasks with one's unique personality and vision. It requires the courage to take risks, the humility to ask for help, and the moment to recognize when others are better at something. It demands the wisdom to sometimes listen and keep a closed mouth, and sometimes the audacity to speak boldly and make a hard decision.

The most enjoyable aspect of being an Area Director is meeting new people. Leadership is about relationships. I visited clubs frequently and I got to know people. I know who to ask to teach me how to make a perfect pie crust, who to ask about the best wine, who started new jobs this year – a whole group of new friends that I can look forward to meeting in person. Furthermore, I met admirable role models and expanded my Toastmaster network by attending District executive meetings. I know that our incoming Club Growth Director, DTM Rebecca

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Winter Marshmallow Roast

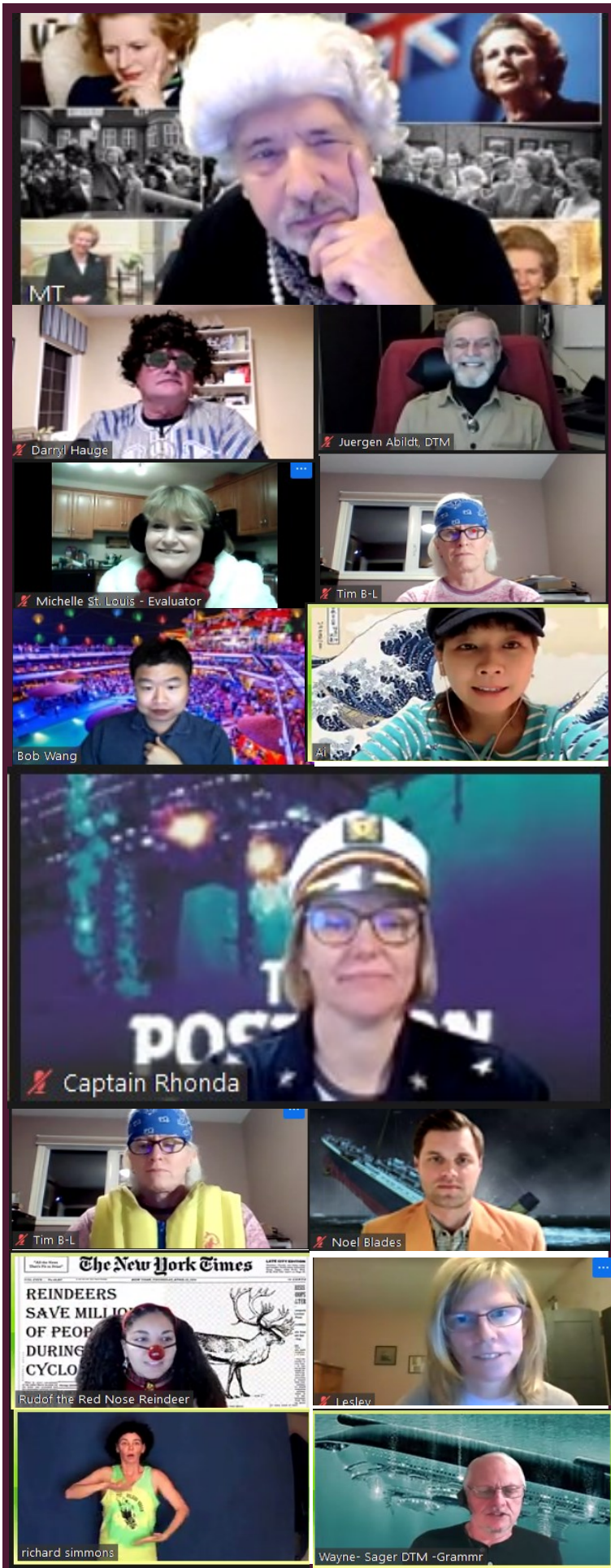
Gratitude—by *Diane Gunn, Past President, D99 President of the Year 2021*



I have only gratitude for the lessons learned and the opportunities that have been provided by Southern Lights, Brownlee’s Best (my other club) the district and Toastmasters International. Being President for a club as brilliant as Southern Lights was an honour and privilege in itself. You can’t imagine my surprise when I received an award in the mail! Thank you to the incredible wordsmiths in Southern Lights who nominated me and supported me on my unexpected voyage to District 99 President of the Year aka The Neil Wilkinson Award. That fabulous surprise opened opportunities to speak at the District 99 convention, and to be a panel member with esteemed TI icons like club member and Past International President Neil Wilkinson DTM. I have two lovely Division and District crystal trophies that remind me say thank you to all of you who made my tenure as President of Southern Lights in 2021 so rewarding and such a remarkable test of leadership and listening skills. SLT DOES ROCK!



Frequent visitor and “Honorary’ Southern Lights Member, Richard Mattis, has joined us for many different events and celebrations as Area Director, Program Quality Director and most importantly a friend of SLT, and now he has been elected as District 99 District Director. Congratulations Richard and good luck on your upcoming term. He is joined by Dan McCosh and Rebecca Cuthbertson Hulst on the District Trio.



On Zoom we had fun dressing up and acting the part of who should be the last one on the lifeboat in our Poseidan Adventure, or entertaining each other with crazy Halloween costumes. Southern Lights Toastmasters like learning with a hint of nuttiness. We are looking forward to extending this sense of adventure to specially themed meetings in a hybrid setting for the 2022-23 season.

Juergen Abildt DTM

When I rejoined Southern Lights in the fall of 2019, I was only an ATM. It certainly was on my mind to get my DTM, but once I found out that all requirements and the entire process had changed, it became quite clear to me that I would not be able to achieve that.

Enter the pandemic. That changed everything once again and seemed to inhibit progress of any kind for anybody. It wasn't until after we started to meet online again, that I saw the potential to meet the final requirements to achieve my DTM. I had the pleasure to meet Toastmasters from many different clubs across British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, and continue toward my goal.

I knew that once I have reached the level of a DTM, it would not be the end of a journey. It rather became a starting point for something more engaging. The problem for me was to decide which direction I wanted to go. District Leadership, competitions, Accredited Speaker program, local community involvement, or something on a much broader influential sphere such as the kidney foundations or diabetes foundation. Heck, even politics had entered my mind!

However, the progression of my illness put everything on hold for now. But I still see the positive in all of that, for it does give me more time to actually make a much more definitive decision, instead of just getting involved in anything without greater forethought. My first year as a DTM didn't really turn out to be anything spectacular, but rather has been a year of contemplation as to where I want to take what I have achieved and give back. Whatever I may decide in the time ahead, I want it to be a good fit for me and great benefit and impact of where or how I get myself involved.



NEW MEMBERS ARE AWESOME

We have seven new members this year and we were happy to welcome back two reinstated members and five newcomers. Each of Debanjan, Melanie, Nadia, Ashley, Vishwadha, Yeshu, and Kelly make our meetings more interesting and fun. We are so lucky to have you join us and share your talents with Southern Lights Toastmasters Club.

Being an Area Director (Continued from page 8)

Cuthbertson-Hulst is a sage planner and a crazy-fun person to dance with over Zoom at the District on-line social! Being a leader is about appreciating the unique personality, talents, and contributions of many people on a team.

Being Area Director is that it is humbling. Previously, I often worked with people on projects, but I am independent many times. As Area Director, I learned to treasure the input of a team. Repeatedly, people would offer compliments, and I'd feel unequal to the compliment. Every job well done is because of the Toastmasters working with me. The newsletter, Frosty Frolics, engaging Area Council meeting discussions, -- all of it is about the people working together. Did I accomplish all of my goals? No, most leaders dream bigger than reality, but having a dream is important. A key phrase in my vision for the year was "Toastmasters Together," and as an Area Director, we did that -- we shared ideas, worked together, and are better for it.

New Executive for 2022-23

President:	Barb Turner
VP Education:	Marlene Petruich
VP Membership:	Lesley Revell
VP Public Relations:	Varun Pathak
Secretary:	Radhika Kalra
Treasurer:	Darryl Hauge
Sergeant at Arms:	Rhonda Lagace
Past President:	Bob Wang



Congratulations to the first hybrid SLT Executive. Thank you for your vision, compromises, and caring for taking on the hybrid executive challenge.



Thank you to the out-going executive for their hard work. Great job, Bob, Nigel, Diane, Michelle, Rhonda, Barb and Olga, and thank you to those who stayed on for another year in a different position. The continuity you provide is important for success.



How to get your DTM in Pathways

1. Complete two complete paths in Pathways
2. Complete Distinguished Toastmaster Project
3. Serve one full 12 month terms (July 1-June 30) as a club officer
4. Serve a complete term as a district officer
5. Served successfully as mentor, as appointed by District Director of a new club or serve successfully as a club coach.
6. Coordinate and conduct Club Sponsor, Speechcraft or Youth Leadership Program.

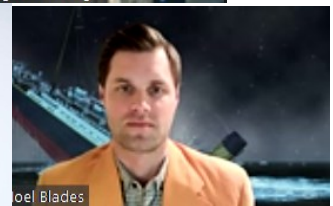
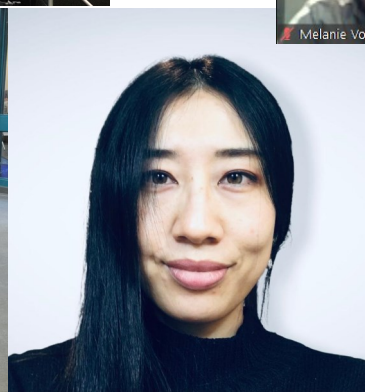


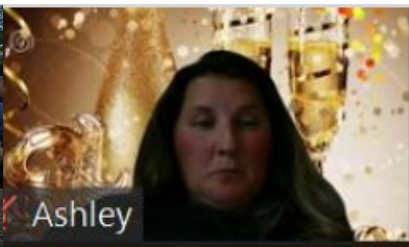
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Enjoy the process, the learning and the friends you make, and don't get caught up in finishing your DTM quickly, as only one percent of Toastmasters achieve their DTM, but we all learn. Congratulations to the four Super Toastmasters in SLT who have achieved their DTM.

Why Toastmasters? By Noel Blade

In early 2017 I was invited to a leadership conference in Houston where I was required to complete a couple of technical speeches in front executives at my company. At the time I was intimidated by the task but at the recommendation of a family member I went to Toastmasters in hopes that I would at least have some practice and confidence before I went. After coming to a few meetings at Southern Lights I was quickly drawn towards the structure and fun that we had at our meetings and immediately signed up to be a member. Having never been to a Toastmasters club I never heard of different parts of the meetings like table topics and assistants. The speeches were fun, we laughed at some of the hilarious table topics answers, and I learned through the variety of speech topics that were presented at the meetings. Although I was not a natural at speaking or table topics, I enjoyed the challenge and being part of a room where everyone was encouraging and willing to give feedback. After my first couple of speeches, it was clear to me that I would need to continue with Toastmasters after my trip as public speaking takes continual practice and never comes easy. Even with a well-run club, another factor that has me coming every week was finding a group of fascinating members with who I enjoy meeting with and discussing topics during meeting breaks, yearly events and of course over drinks and food at JR's after the meetings. I hope as we move forward, I can continue to build those relationships and meet more members in person as we look to continue to grow the club.





AFTER THREE YEARS! The Annual Barbeque at Darryl and Rita's

