



**SUNRISE CENTER TOASTMASTERS
"25 YEARS OF GOOD SPEAK"
Denny's Restaurant
April 26, 2001**

Fellow Toastmasters,

Celebration-Reflection-Appreciation spilled over during today's special event: Sunrise Center Toastmasters' 25th Anniversary.

Members and guests gathered to chat among the brightly colored balloons and tables festooned with spring flowers parked on gold doilies. Voices rang out to say "Good to see you again!" "**How** are you?" To be sure, there were plenty of hugs and handshakes. Walking among the smiles and exclamations of delight, someone wandering into Denny's Diner this April 26, 2001 might have thought this was a family reunion. And as it turns out, this is not far from the truth.

And as with any big celebration, there were unanticipated surprises. Our lectern, flag, banner, and guest book we found out were locked up in the storeroom, unavailable till Denny's manager could be roused to deliver the key. A collective sigh of relief went up when he appeared to unlock our valuables. In the meantime, members and guests rose and dutifully held their pledges until Bill Schlack, club guest, unfurled the flag. This is no easy task when you have 33 eyes watching you... and waiting.

Joyce Klusnick's invocation was clearly a labor of love. Holding a burgundy colored binder, she commenced with a touching quote: "*Every man is like a lamp, giving us light with which to see ourselves as a bridge to the knowledge of who we are*". Toastmasters, Joyce recalled, not only taught her about public speaking, but also helped her acquire many "tools for personal living".

Toastmaster for our Celebration is none other than Melissa Andrews, 9-year member and recipient of the club's coveted "Princess of Grace Award". Melissa's dedication, sense of humor, and impeccable delivery has earned her a host of monikers. But it's no use. Club members realize there's simply no single word that'll capture the bold spirit called Melissa.

Margi Herzog, an accomplished storyteller, got our group off to a good start with a bit of well-seasoned humor. After that there was no stopping this group.

Sunrise Center's celebration hosted a number of distinguished guests including Marcia Sydor-Area 62 Governor and Past International Director, Ruth Maloney-District 39 Governor, as well as 14 of our past presidents. Together we shared, remembered, and rejoiced.

Marcia Sydor reminisced how we were spawned from Reveilliers (downtown) and how we met at noon instead of 6:30 a.m. when we first started. It was not until 1979 that the club apparently changed to the early morning hour. She recalled times when our club membership was low, so low that its future was in doubt. Dave Mason and member Ed Schroeder, however, wouldn't give up; and together they rebuilt Sunrise Center to become one of the District's top clubs. It has been said, "One can make a difference and two can change the world". We're grateful for the audacious expectation of these two determined people.

Ruth Maloney told us "everything I need to know, I learned at Sunrise Center". This is high praise from an accomplished woman who rose from member to Club President and then to District 39 Governor. What we learn at Toastmasters, Ruth tells us, we take with us forever. She held up a little book titled Winners and Losers that she bought after a speech by Ed Schroeder. The paperback is well worn and, from all appearances, well appreciated. "You never know when you'll make a difference in another person's life", Ruth says. We heard late member Ray Holste's name mentioned several times during the presentations. Those of us not fortunate enough to have known him heard about Ray from members who celebrated his life by recalling how he made a difference in this world.

Dick Henderson, Sunrise Center's resident poet, has dubbed himself the "longest lasting member of Sunrise Center". He recalled how he rose from member to VP-Education in 4 months. Low membership that plagued the club during the early years lasted some 2-3 years. It was then that the late Ray Holste joined the club and became instrumental in rebuilding membership. He had a gift for making every guest feel special. Ray's style, Dick tells us, is to "dig a little ore". And in the end, we reflected, he left us a legacy. In 1981 our club membership grew from 8 to 28; and from 1982-1986, it exploded from 28 to 88 members. Our club became so large that members were having trouble finding a seat at meetings. As a result, Dick ventured to say, members set out to start another club: American River. Sunrise Center has been rated as high as #3 on an international level; and we have been in the "top10" clubs for eight years in a row. Dick tells us to "spend a little time and effort and you will gain a great deal."

District 39 Governor, Ruth Maloney, honored us by pinning our 25th Anniversary Ribbon (black with gold lettering) on our ribbon banner-providing photographer Bekah Buckles with a golden photo opportunity.

Marty Maskall led the birthday celebration. She thanked key members for her growth and progress as a person and professional. Since 1983, the year she joined Sunrise Center, she has served as executive recruiter, written two books, started a nutrition business, become a community activist, and is currently looking to start a web design business. It is clear Marty is actively "digging a lot of ore". We got so involved with Marty's story that we almost forgot to cut the cake. But as always, there's a member around who'll help to save the day.

Steve Beede, Toastmaster par excellence, was our undisputed emperor of table topics. He recalled a topic assigned to him by Al Swanson quite some time ago: "how do you milk a cow"? To this day he tells us he can remember how embarrassed he was. For just a moment we thought Steve would return the favor and that Al Swanson was in the proverbial "hot seat". But we knew Steve's a good sport. Instead we heard about their bus trip to the District Conference in Reno. Shucks!

Evelyn was called up to comment on the "appendage" she grew at Sunrise Center. She recalled how she called on Jim Hulin to demonstrate a dance step during cha-cha class. Impressed with how quickly she caught on, he asked her if there was "a step you can show me". Quite a line, don't you think? Well, they ended up falling in love with each other's feet. Before any wedding bells, however, Jim had to pass the muster with our club members. Apparently Jim showed Sunrise Center that he could both dance AND think on his feet.

Jean and Doug Thompson were asked to recall some of the "characters" they've met at Sunrise Center. Jean recalled how as a struggling, single mother, Dick Henderson paid her club dues and then asked her "now what's your excuse" not to join? And Doug recalled how he came up to Al Swanson and announced excitedly "this is my first time"—to which Al replied coolly "So...?"

Jason Harnum was introduced to our group as "the kid who grew up in Toastmasters". Jason commented on the quality of the relationships one builds at Toastmasters. He spoke with both feeling and power and promptly received the "Ah award" from Steve Beede. Is there no mercy?

Susan Dakuzaku, VP-Membership and winner of the Division Speech Contest, took tremendous delight in bestowing special awards to longtime Sunrise Center members:

MELISSA ANDREWS "Princess of Grace" Award

Style is a "grace of mind"

MaryAnn Ellis	Called Presidents & invitation mailing
Dick Henderson	Presentation & Club History
Margi Herzog	Joke Master & Birthday Cake
Joyce Klusnick	Invocation and Pledge
Marty Maskall	Birthday Ceremony
Patrick O'Kane	Decorations and balloons
Beth Rees	Program and Education Awards

President Marty Euretig proudly announced that our club has met all the requirements toward becoming a Toastmasters Distinguished Club. What makes this announcement extra special is the fact that Sunrise Center has managed to meet every single requirement (all 10) in order to achieve this distinct honor. Sunrise Center members: front and center please--and take a bow!

At the very end of our celebration, which came all too soon, she thanked our speakers and guests for taking time out of their day to come and celebrate this important milestone with us.

By Beth Rees, CTM