

## Toastmasters Treasures...Profiles in Performance

by Peggy Lynn, CTM/CL, PR Reporter

If you think you have been petrified of public speaking earlier in your life, then think about Jodie Dickman. She was so upset during a presentation her senior year of college - even blanking out mid-stream - that she escaped to the safety of the restroom where she truly LOST her lunch! Jodie credits the fiasco as her "most embarrassing moment!"



That tidbit in time also kept Jodie from EVER wanting to get up before people to speak. Of course, that is until she met the opportunity to overcome her fright by joining a Toastmasters club two and a half years ago. Jodie works at Sprint in Overland Park, KS. When a director wanted employees to benefit from bringing various reporting groups together, someone suggested a Toastmasters club. Creative and innovative Jodie agreed to help organize the club.

Haunted by her own personal experience, Jodie thought she would merely remain a sideliners. Of course, fellow charter members Pam Turner and Barbara Kuklenski, among others, would eventually enjoy prodding their colleague into verbal action - most especially in the boss-pleasing Toastmasters project! This does not suggest they find a bit of enjoyment with another's squirming, but it does mean that Area K2's NetworkMasters relished the idea of Jodie overcoming adversities before their eyes. In a safe and nurturing environment, Jodie "found that it <public speaking> wasn't so difficult this time around. I was learning with others in a very positive and supportive manner."

Of course, the not-much-of-a-sideliners Jodie went on to achieve her Competent Toastmaster award and then added the Competent Leader. She has been Vice President of Membership and

President for the club. Jodie's growth through Toastmasters delights her. "Last month I was asked to give a short presentation in front of 100 people in my work group. I won't say that I wasn't a bit nervous, but I got my message across, answered questions, and best of all didn't need to leave the room and find a bathroom." She KNOWS she is "making progress!!!"

Also making progress for our community, Jodie is an avid volunteer. Whether it is with the Discovery Shop for the American Cancer Society, KCPT or Youth Friends, she is passionate about service to others. Her talents and energy combine winningly in projects like using Jodie's love of reading and making "homemade" greeting cards with her very "big heart for children." She even convinced NetworkMasters to stop their pattern of relentless Sprint work momentarily and turn talents to a new venture. Jodie organized them into making handmade valentines for children confined at Children's Mercy hospital on Valentine's Day.

As if a career and ample volunteer duties doesn't keep Jodie busy enough, a part-time job as a bartender stirs up the mix! Her "love" for "meeting new people" allows Jodie to connect with them "one on one" in this venue. She is duly armed with a great sense of humor and just may find fuel for a future Toastmasters speech there too! A club member remembers Jodie giving "one of the funniest speeches ever" entitled "Kiss My Grits!" wherein Jodie relayed some of her more unusual bartending experiences. This funny lady has what some may call "quirky" luck too. For instance, on a trip to New York with a friend, Jodie bumped into two stars from the "Law and Order" television series. Then she called into a radio station and won a trip for two to Iceland! Plus she has been married the past five years to a man she met on a blind date!

Funny, lucky, committed to family, career and public service, Jodie says Toastmasters helped her "find confidence in expressing ideas to peers, management and Sprint executives. What I've

learned in TI has helped me organize what I'm going to say and express my message more concisely." Jodie believes "watching people grow, succeed and smile keeps me going. Thus my involvement in community efforts!" She has "seen this through TI" in herself and others. "People who have been petrified to speak in front of others and/or are quite shy have grown into confident speakers in front of my eyes. It is amazing." The transformation emerging after involvement with Toastmasters IS amazing, as many have witnessed down through the years. Also amazing is the numbers of outstanding individuals drawn to TI like Jodie who particularly shines with qualities of humor and grace as another true GEM! Join me in applauding the efforts of so many within District 22, most especially our own Jodie Dickman, CTM/CL, as she forges on as a super ex-ample! This goodwill ambassador of sorts LEAPs beyond Toastmasters, family and career to reach out and touch her much wider community of people PLUS keeps her lunch down now! We are the LUCKY ones - to be adding this TREASURE to our growing chest! Please feel free to learn more by contacting Jodie at [jodie.r.dickman@mail.sprint.com](mailto:jodie.r.dickman@mail.sprint.com) !