

# Local Toastmaster's chapter receives organizational charter

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STAFF REPORTER

"Through better listening, through better thinking, through better speaking; we learn by doing." Such is the motto of Toastmaster's International.

Just over a year since its initial organization, the first local chapter of Toastmaster's International has received its official charter. At a ceremony which took place during meeting held at the Dunn Building on the Mount Allison University campus, the Bagtown Babblers officially became part of a worldwide organization.

Toastmaster's is an international, non-profit organization that provides self-motivated individuals with the opportunity to improve their communication and presentation skills, leadership and organization abilities and time management skills. Always in a positive and supportive learning environment, members progress at a pace that suits their abilities, interests and personal schedules.

Founded in 1924, the organization currently has boasts some 270,000 members in 13,000 clubs located in 113 countries around the world. Affectionately named Bagtown Babblers by its 22 charter members, the new local group looks forward to welcoming many more in the months and years to come.

"The theme for this evening is 'New Beginnings' and we are certainly proud to announce the new beginnings of this, one of many clubs across the country. I want to thank everyone for their efforts...and that means every member of this club," said club mentor and member of the Riverview Canusa Toastmaster's club Maureen McIntosh.

The Riverview club along with True Blue Toastmaster's in Moncton are sponsors of the new Bagtown Babblers. McIntosh noted the support of the Mount Allison University for providing a regular meeting place for the new

club, as well as local business Moneris Solutions who provided funds for the purchase of the new Toastmaster's International club banner.

Guest speaker for the charter ceremony was Wayne Mercer of Halifax, N.S., District Governor of District 45 of Toastmaster's International.

"Most people believe that Toastmaster's is all about public speaking; and it is, but more importantly, it's about skill development and leadership... As Toastmaster's we are all volunteers; everyone is here because they love the program and want make it part of their personal development growth," he said.

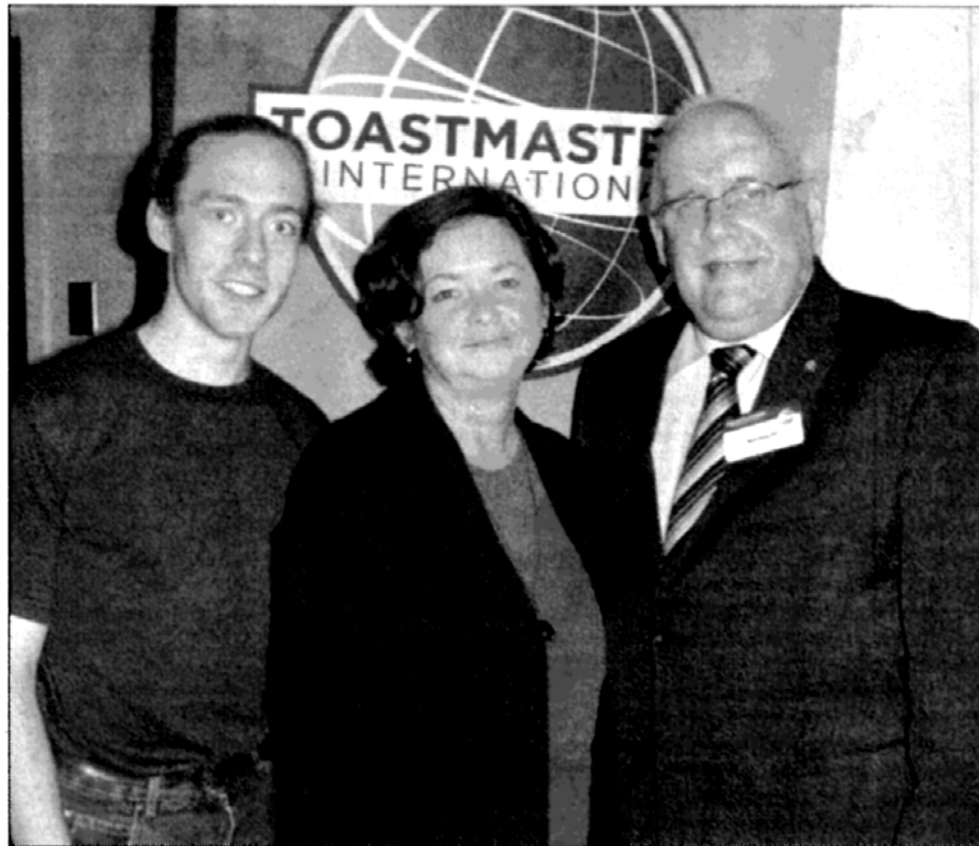
"The moment you get up and do your ice-breaker speech, is a celebration moment...you get support from other members...you decide how fast you want to move ahead, what level you want to reach and where you want to go in the program..."

A typical Toastmaster's meeting lasts from 60-90 minutes and during that time members have the opportunity to present talks and speeches and listen to those of others. There is no instructor or leader during meetings, instead members will evaluate each other's presentations.

The evening begins with the introduction of the 'word of the day', then is followed by an appropriate joke to help members relax. Some members will take the opportunity to present a speech, which will be evaluated by others, always in a positive and helpful manner.

The final portion of the meeting includes reports of the evening's timer, quizmaster and grammarian, all of whom have volunteered to fill these roles for the evening. It is through the learn-by-doing approach that helps members to build confidence, leadership and public speaking abilities.

Members also are encouraged to give impromptu talks as part of the Table Topic portion of the evening.



The Bagtown Babblers club of Toastmaster's International received its official charter during a ceremony held recently in the Wu Centre at the Dunn Building, Mount Allison University. Shown are left - right: Club president Paul Shaver, vice-president of public relations Sharon Allen and Wayne Mercer of Cole Harbour, N.S., District Governor of Toastmaster's District 45. The club meets every second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Wu Centre. New members are welcome. LEBLANC

Members receive a Competent Communication's manual and as they move forward in the organization, will present 10 self-paced speaking assignments which help to a build a foundation in public speaking.

Interested individuals are encouraged to attend a meeting of the Bagtown Babblers

chapter of Toastmaster's International, which is held each second and fourth Wednesday from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Wu Centre of the Dunn Building on the Mount Allison University campus. For more information check out the Toastmaster's International website at [www.toastmasters.org](http://www.toastmasters.org).