

# Pro Edge TOASTCRUMBS

Commendations, Recognition, Unofficial Monthly Buzz n' Stuff - December 10, 2014

*2014-2015 Executive Officers*

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*Secretary Beverley Steeves  
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**WHAM!**

## **What A Wonderful Meeting...**

Professional Edgers never fail to deliver inspiration, laughter and learning. In case you were away, *here's what you missed...*

**Timer Bill Cannell** was poised and ready to go at 7:30 on the dot, determined to keep another outstanding meeting on track. And also as usual, **Sgt-at-Arms Ken Cowie** prepared well in advance. Before introducing **Beverley Steeves**, our Chairman for the day, he set the tone for the meeting with a beautiful Christmas story titled, 'The Gold Wrapping Paper', with the message that each of us has been given an invisible golden box filled with unconditional love. There is no more precious possession anyone could hold.

**Beverley** then launched into her role with a Dr. Seuss quote, asking something we're all wondering about, "How did it get so late so soon?" and proceeded to run a very professional meeting, complete with brilliant transitioning between all the speakers. She first called on **Ken Cowie**, the first introducer, remembering that he had evaluated her icebreaker years ago. **Ken** then effectively introduced **Khanh Vo** with humour...this is a new Dad who is excited but a bit sad about Christmas, since now his son will be getting all the gifts not him!



**Khan's** warm and uplifting speech about the meaning of Christmas, titled 'The Gift of Life' was a gift of inspiration to all of us. His story started on April 30, 1985, when his Mother brought him into the world, shifted to the people who helped him on his journey...and then moved forward to the present, when his wife gave **Khan** a special gift, a new bundle of joy that will change his life. Just like his Mother did years before, **Khan** feels this is a chance to look at life anew. **Khan's** message was all about gifts...a gift can be a toy, love or just a smile, but time is the most valuable of all...giving is the best gift.

**Evaluator Cheryl Crotty** employed an effective sandwich approach, commenting first on several ways that **Khan** created an effective speech (e.g., his calm delivery, repetition of the word 'hope', no notes, well-prepared and well-paced), and then encouraging **Khan** to work on eye contact and then wrapping up the evaluation on a positive tone. Cheryl appreciated how **Khan** always shares something about his life that is inspiring, and how grateful he is.

### *Tips & Snippets from the audience...*

**Duncan...**authentic, connected well, maybe dial down some of those stories to focus on a few things that are really helping today.

**Alan...**excellent full circle; pacing very good, relaxed, calm... consider adding inflection for extra effect.

**Bill...**enjoyable, calm speaker, would like to see a bit more with facial expression and a smile.

**Angelika...**very much enjoyed the speech. Suggestion: add dialogue to help us share in the experiences, e.g., take a pause after the pinch on son's cheek to give us time to delight in it. Consider getting into the humour manual to take his speech to next level.

Our second introducer, **Sandra Bell**, showed us a great example of how to set the stage, and warm up the audience to the speaker and topic with some interesting tidbits about **Karen Van Delft**: she was born in Nova Scotia, grew up in Winnipeg, and right after graduation she applied to Vancouver as an interior designer. **Karen** is authorized to take down walls, and work with electricians and the foreman. Her speech titled, "*Why Hire a Designer?*" reveals her passion about flow design, and doing it the right the first time.



**Karen** took the stage confidently, and proceeded to enlighten the audience on how to furnish a family room with professional flair. She offered us something very concrete, explaining in detail the various stages of her 3-pronged approach: decipher, design, and redecorate. **Karen** explained how she works in depth with a client to find out what's important to them, and provided plenty of insider tips, from placement (measuring each corner, width, depth, and height) to sourcing fabulous fibres and decorations at designer discounts. **Karen** offers great service to clients, and convinced us that hiring a designer of her calibre is a huge advantage.

Evaluator **Michael Sumal** used a solid sandwich technique as he described how **Karen** expertly set the stage (putting herself in the role of teacher, and the audience as BCIT students), and listed many signs that **Karen** is a veteran speaker: she came prepared, looked the part (professional, fashionable person), stood right in the middle, drew people in, threw out some questions, built anticipation and carried the speech from there. He mentioned a few minor details that were a bit distracting: (the measuring tape, and her clasped hands, at times), and was looking for a call to action. But overall, despite hiccups, **Karen's** passion carried the speech. **Michael** then skillfully refocused on the positives, saying he admired the pacing...it was like taking us on a journey, speeding up, and slowing down appropriately. It was a topic of passion, and easy to speak about, something we can learn from.

### *Tips & Snippets from the audience...*

**Ken...**connected with the story of vulnerability, in recounting the error **Karen** made earlier...the unspoken message is we're all human, learning from mistakes.

**Angelika...**likee how she drew the audience in with humour...'Have you ever designed a room without measuring?

**Alan...**liked the consistent theme '*decipher, design, decorate*'...this kind of foundational phrase / organization is important in any speech; felt Karen must have a host of stories, which would have brought it out even more.

**Beverley...**calm, kind voice; a very endearing, enjoyable professional to listen to.

**Jamie...**10,000 Bonus Points for **not** sharing that the PPT was not working.

**Chairman Beverley** introduced **Alan Warburton** with humour, reminding us that he's on the job even when he's not...his eyes are on us, wherever in the world he happens to be.

World class speaker **Alan** shows us how an introduction is done: he professionally set the stage as he introduced our third speaker, **Duncan Robinson**, with information about the speaker and the topic. **Duncan** has been a member since 2010 who participates with another advanced group, "The Transforming Speakers" and travels extensively. In his speech titled "*That Memorable Moment in Time*" **Duncan** asks, "Was there a pivotal event from your past that shaped your life?"



**Duncan** took the stage revealing how he has honed his speaking skills. He recalled how a pivotal event in his life engraved his need to put his hand up, and stretches him even now. Years ago, a Social Studies Teacher described 'Miles for Millions', an opportunity that he took, one that would eventually pave the way to the future, where he is currently raising money for the other side of the world. **Duncan** passionately reeled the audience in, describing in vivid detail his journey, the trials along the way, and his gratitude for the events that shaped his life. He proceeded to inspire young people of all ages, about creating 'just about anything' we want in our lifetime...and cautioned us that what we can't get back is time. His call of action involves the present moment, but is also the past and the future. He asks, "If our actions are not

stretching us, why are we here?" and, "As you stretch yourself into 2015 what is that moment of time you can grab by the throat and hold onto...something you can make a tremendous impact with?"

When world class speaker **Jamie MacDonald** weighs in as evaluator, we know what to expect... 'maximum impact' wisdom with professionally phrased kudos and suggestions packed in. He started by reminding us of the beauty of the organizing principle 'learn by doing', and highlighted how **Duncan** always takes every opportunity to get better and better. He pointed out that the first thing **Duncan** did was establish the timeline, just by moving up and down the stage. He reminded us to think of the perspective of the 'past and future' from the audience point of view, which is opposite to how the speaker would instinctively move (left for the past and right for the future). **Jamie** pointed out how **Duncan** created an effective speech: referring to people by name in the audience, talking about all his blessings, the signature gesture (arms crossed into heart), and how he won the lottery. One area of opportunity, he suggested, was to make sure to tie it back to the work we all do, to amp that point up a bit, and to help us connect more. **Jamie** took a moment to appreciate **Duncan's** work, and suggested that since we know the background story, he, doesn't need to tell us 'you heard it before'; he can just weave the story in....this all purpose speech about **Duncan's** greatest tragedy, his greatest blessing, keeps getting better and better.

### **Tips & Snippets from the audience...**

**Alan...**over the years **Duncan** has become very accomplished; he owns the stage. For the second time, **Alan** challenged **Duncan** to go into a different type of speech, take his skills and apply them into a different project, with a different topic.

**Cheryl...** every movement matched what he was saying; open posture, didn't seem rehearsed, very natural. the hand over heart was very tender.

**John...** looking more vulnerable, credible, great accomplishment. Moving from side to side smoothed out, really suits him.

**Ken...**personalized, very clear message, challenged us; something nit-picky to help him move along to the next level—be aware that when he pauses, he rolls his tongue around, which is a bit distracting.

**Chairman Beverley** introduced **Haddy Abra**, Division W Governor, who is providing us with pearls of wisdom from his interesting blog. **Haddy** graciously introduced our fourth speaker, **John Beck** who was working on Project One in the Entertaining Manual with his speech “*In the Spirit of Christmas*”. Evidently **John’s** Dad had said he enjoyed entertaining with stories...maybe they were not always true, but they were enjoyable.



**John** brought his passion for Christmas, this magical time of the year, full of love, laughter and joy, and asked the audience if we still have a passion for Christmas. **John** proceeded to take us on an enchanted journey, describing vivid memories and pictures of growing up in a paradise, a land blanketed in snow, sun glistening over the snowbanks, out in the snow with a red nose, ears that felt like they would fall off, listening to boots crunching in the snow, anticipation of sleighing down the hills, and thawing out in front of the fire, sipping egg nog and hot chocolate. He spoke of family stories, fairy tales, a guitar, singing carols (Jingle bells, Santa smells...), and his Dad’s Danish heritage with food galore: chestnut stuffings, candy canes and gingerbread. He talked of Christmas Eve through the eyes of the child, of a time when he convinced himself that Santa was real, when he really had to

be good to know that Santa would come, putting St. Nick at the top of the tree, waking up at early hours, wondering if Santa was really coming, his first dash to the stocking, and checking for crumbs to see if Santa is really real. Sure enough, there were special gifts with Santa’s fingerprints on them, the helmet with a light, and hockey pads, sitting next to the tree. **John** finished his memory tour by encouraging us to that passion and our memories to create a magical Christmas for a child with angels in the snow, snowballs, and sleigh rides, finishing with a cheery call, “Merry Christmas, Everyone”.

**Beverley** then introduced **Angelika Bendrich** who demonstrated great animation as an excellent evaluator. She started with what she loved, saying that with **John** so full of enthusiasm and passion, who could not get in the spirit of Christmas? She enjoyed his magical journey with memory after memory, forming pictures in her mind that she could see hear, and feel. She thought the call to action (to bring the spirit of Christmas to someone else, and make it special) was something she could connect with. What she would have loved to see is **John** taking more time to let us ponder and savour the memories with large gestures that match the bigness of his expression to enhance the picturesque pictures. She felt the best features were **John’s** passion, language and the vivid journey that he took us on.

### ***Tips & Snippets from the audience...***

**Cheryl**...words created wonderful pictures in our mind...loved the phrase ‘Santa’s fingerprints on the gift’. Always appreciate the humour, and thank you for the Christmas greeting.

**Duncan**...an inspirational powerful speech that became more powerful and profound... **John** brought the whole package...he killed it.

**Beverley**...created such vivid imagery, when he went into the descriptions, took me back, presence so strong, yet not overbearing...saw more personal side of **John**.

**Alan**...fantastic word images...maybe could bring in a bit of dialogue with his Mom or Dad, or little brother over hockey.

**Chairman Beverley** closed the meeting, reminding us that a Christmas Breakfast celebration would take place immediately after the meeting adjournment, across from the theatre, and invited all members and their guests to attend.

## First Annual Professional Edge Christmas Breakfast

We were treated royally to a breakfast of cheese omelettes, frittatas, appetizers, dessert bars fruit and fresh baked cinnamon buns, complete with coffee, thanks to **Ron Newell**. Thank you **Ron** for such delicious morsels!

### Award Ceremony, courtesy of Alan Warburton

**“Stayin’ Alive”**... to recognize our charter members who continue to be active, important members of our club. They are being recognized for persistence, determination and ... old age!! They are, in order of age...**Bill, Haddy, Alan, Ros** and **Jamie**.

**“Keeping us Satisfied”**... to recognize two members who have looked after our gastronomic needs by feeding us SO well. They are...**Ron**, for the amazing meal today. And, **Bev Steeves**, for the delicious goodies that she takes time and care to make for all of our meetings.

**“New Blood”**... to recognize our newer members who are keeping us sharp with their new ideas and provide us with brand new material in their speeches. They are...**Delores, Khanh, Sandra** and **Bev Wallin**.

**“Strutting Their Stuff”**... to recognize our members who represented our club so well in contests at the Area, Division or District level in 2014. They are...**Angelika, John B, Duncan, Michael, Ken** and **Karen**. Congratulations to all!

**“The One and Only”**... to the one person who doesn’t fit any of the previous categories but has, in her own unique way, become a most valued member of our club. She came as a non-Toastmaster and is now a very important member of our club Executive. She is...**Cheryl**.

### News flash

-**Rory Smith** officially became a member...welcome **Rory**!

-**Ros** reminded people to update their bios and photos for the website.

-You’ll notice we’re sharing the Meeting Review (**CRUMBS**) duties...looking forward to seeing everyone’s unique style!



***Have a wonderful Christmas!***

Our next meeting will take place on  
**Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>.**