



# TALKMAGIC TOASTMASTERS CLUB

#2870184 | DISTRICT 92 | AREA H3

*"TO ALL WONDER WOMEN IN OUR LIVES WHO AESTHETICALLY  
TURN EVERYTHING ORDINARY INTO EXTRAORDINARY WITH ALL  
THEIR WARMTH AND GRACE"*

## *Strength with Grace*

NEWSLETTER VOL. 09, ISSUE 11, JAN-JUNE 2021



WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE

Power of Sorority



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# Toastmasters International

## Who are we

Toastmasters International is a non-profit educational organization that teaches public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. Headquartered in Englewood, Colorado., the organization's membership exceeds 357,000 in more than 16,600 clubs in 143 countries. Since 1924, Toastmasters International has helped people from diverse backgrounds become more confident speakers, communicators, and leaders.

The world needs leaders. Leaders head families, coach teams, run businesses and mentor others. These leaders must not only accomplish, they must communicate. By regularly giving speeches, gaining feedback, leading teams and guiding others to achieve their goals in a supportive atmosphere, leaders emerge from the Toastmasters program. The multitude of skills that one can develop in Toastmasters are as follows:-

-  Improve your public speaking skills
-  Build leadership skills
-  Maximize your potential
-  Enjoy unlimited personal growth
-  Work on networking in a small and supportive environment
-  Practice writing speeches and presenting in a group setting
-  Gain a competitive advantage in the workplace
-  Build self-confidence and self-awareness

## Toastmasters International Mission.

We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.

## District Mission

We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.





## About Talkmagic Toastmasters

### Who are we

We provide a supportive and positive learning experience in which members are empowered to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

Since it's founding in 2012, Talkmagic Toastmasters has gone from strength to strength and we're soon closing in on our 420th Meeting. Our club strength is ideal so that every member who joins the club has a chance to participate and gets individual attention while ensuring competition and frenzy at the same time.



### Club Contact Information

President,  
Talkmagic Toastmasters Club,  
TM Saleem Haneef Mohammad,  
saleemcrg@gmail.com,  
+91 9886625174

Vice President Membership,  
Talkmagic Toastmasters Club  
TM Anjali Rawat  
anj4u2003@gmail.com  
+91 9632097722

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## Club Details

**Club Number:-** 02870184, District 92, Division B, Area B2

**Charter Date:** November 11, 2012

### Social Media Information:-

**Facebook:-** <https://www.facebook.com/talkmagictoastmasters/>

**Meetup:-** <https://www.facebook.com/talkmagictoastmasters/>

**Instagram:-** <https://www.instagram.com/talkmagictoastmasters/>

### Meeting information

#### Venue:

St. Vincent Pallotti College, Chellikere,  
Meganahalli, Kalyana Nagar, Bangalore -  
560043

**Time:** Every Saturday 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m



**Saleem Haneef Mohammad,**  
President, Talkmagic Toastmasters Club

### Directions:-

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/St+Vincent+Pallotti+College/@13.0290204,77.6413233,15z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0xc6b37b9f85025a09!8m2!3d13.0290204!4d77.6413233>



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# DCP Report

## 02870184 Talkmagic Toastmasters Club

Club Alignment	Membership		Goals
Region 13	Base 46	To Date 51	Goals Met 10
District 92	Required 20		Distinguished 5
Division H	20 members or a net growth of 5 new members		Select Distinguished 7
Area 03	Chartered 11/21/2012		President's Distinguished 9

Goals to Achieve		Goal	To Date	Status
<b>Education</b>				
1	Level 1 awards	4	10	✓
2	Level 2 awards	2	2	✓
3	More Level 2 awards	2	4	✓
4	Level 3 awards	2	2	✓
5	Level 4, Level 5, or DTM award	1	1	✓
6	One more Level 4, Level 5, or DTM award	1	1	✓
<b>Membership</b>				
7	New members	4	4	✓
8	More new members	4	9	✓
<b>Training</b>				
9	Club officers trained June-August	4	7	✓
	Club officers trained November-February	4	6	
<b>Administration</b>				
10	Membership-renewal dues on time	Y	2	✓
	Club officer list on time	Y	2	





## President's Address

Dear Talkmagicians,

I am highly obliged for being elected as the President of the TalkMagic Toastmasters club, which is a President's Distinguished Club. I would like to thank the nomination committee for having faith in me to lead this club. I would also like to thank all the previous term's presidents and respective club officers for setting high standards and retaining the club's status as President's distinguished club.

In the first three months of the term, we are successfully able to conduct club meetings, club contests and arrange a few educational sessions. I would like to thank all the members and ExCom for their support in conducting club activities successfully.

For the past few weeks, we are witnessing low attendance in the club's meetings and roles are not being filled in time which is impacting the quality of the meetings. It's understandable that due to the pandemic, most of the members are working from home and they are finding it difficult to balance their personal and professional commitments.

Based on the Moments of Truth, officers have identified few action items to improve the club's meeting quality to ensure Min 75% Members attendance in every meeting, to have members' goals documented, participate proactively in every club activities, meetings & educational sessions. The actions include Proactively engaging members through regular Mentor - mentee connects, Making meetings more engaging through educational sessions, Fun-filled & interesting meeting Themes, Celebrating important events like birthdays & Wedding Anniversaries, and Introducing monthly awards for various categories.



**Saleem Haneef Mohammad,**  
President





## President's Address

To take the club to the next level, ExCom seeks the support of the members by regularly attending meetings, providing feedback regularly to ensure that club goals are met, Introducing Toastmasters to friends & family members, and help the community to leverage the toastmasters platform to grow and lead better lives.

Growth is a continuous process. We can grow by unlearning, learning & relearning. Toastmasters platform is the only platform that gives us this opportunity with minimal investment. I urge all the members to leverage this platform to make better versions of themselves and their loved ones.

**--Mohammed Saleem**





## Editors Note

The goals and ambitions that we strive for is a journey full of hurdles complemented with a fair share of opportunities. Infact, it's only during the process of overcoming these obstacles that we create new avenues for growth. In this day and age, we have numerous platforms we can connect to and acquire any skill we aspire for. Most of these platforms focus on imparting very defined set of skills to groom the aspirants in specific areas. However, there are only a few platforms that cover every aspect of a desired skill and toastmasters is undoubtedly one among them. A year and a half ago, the moment I showed up for my first ever toastmasters meeting, I realized that there cannot be a better learning platform than this to hone my public speaking and leadership skills, the skill that I've wanted to master all my life. From our ability to communicate to the manner we interpret an idea, it nurtures us in all ways. While, it goes without saying that toastmasters is beneficial, one thing that I firmly believe is, here the entire trajectory of our improvement depends solely on us. Every role we take for the meetings we attend has a significance and is an opportunity for us to evolve. It encourages us to think beyond and expand our scopes.



**Amlan Kumar Bhowmick,**  
**Vice President, Public Relations**

As the VPPR of the club I feel privileged to be presented with the opportunity to develop yet another skill of newsletter designing for the very first time in my life. The activity has been an engrossing one. As a part of Talkmagic and to be able to edit the newsletter; it has been an immense please to design and collate everyone's thoughts reminiscent of varied experiences. So much of learning has been involved in it and it's been a pleasure to know one another better.





This installment of the newsletter is dedicated to all the wonderful women in our lives who play such significant roles in myriad of ways. We owe them our deepest gratitude for everything they tirelessly do to make our lives worthwhile. The theme of the editorial "**Strength with Grace**" intends to portray the fortitude shown by them to accomplish everything under the sun with perfection and grace. They deserve all our admiration.

I would like to extend my thankfulness and appreciation for all the support I have received so far as a toastmaster of this amazing club. Especially the freedom it offers to express and do things in my own way that facilitate the creativity within. As you scroll down the pages of the newsletter, you will delve into the minds of our wonderful members and get to learn a lot and know about their perspectives and experiences. I am sure all of you will enjoy reading them. Wish everyone all the joy and success.



--**Amlan Kumar Bhowmick**





## The Excom Team



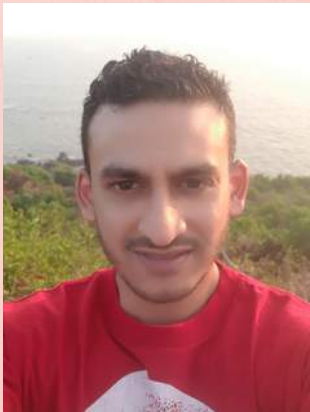
**TM Harry Ramsay**  
VP Education



**TM Anjali Rawat**  
VP Membership



**TM Amlan Kumar Bhowmick**  
VP Public Relations



**TM Gary Veeramundar**  
Club secretary



**TM Irfan Pathan**  
Treasurer



**TM Parthiban Dhalayan**  
Associate VP Education



**TM Vadivel Arumugam**  
SAA



**TM Chetna Setia**  
Associate, VP Membership



**TM Nixon Almeida**  
Associate, SAA

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# **STRAIGHT FROM OUR MEMBERS**

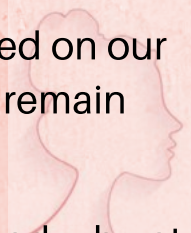


## A Dynamic Process

Success in life is a journey, not a destination.

Success is the progressive, day to day, realization of pre-determined, pre-planned and personal worthwhile goals. As a journey, we are always moving towards our end objective in mind, in tune with the dynamics of our constantly changing, rapidly evolving and technology driven world.

That's to say, we always stay focused on our strategic goals and objectives, but remain flexible in our tactical execution.



This simple fact helps us understand why at every stage in life it is important to have goals and plans for the future. We can consider ourselves successful only as long as we continue to grow and reach for new horizons.

We have heard about several successful people. They learn how to cope with failure. They realize that they will have to face setbacks and they are willing to accept and learn from them. We also know that most people are remembered not for their failures, but for their successes. We never think of Thomas Alva Edison as a failure, but many of his experiments were unsuccessful. Edison is one of the prime example of successful people who weren't afraid to fail.

From the above statements, we might characterize successful people as those who have an invincible spirit that carries them along their journey. Let us learn from their ambitious and continually work which will help to improve ourselves. It is always better to possess an "I will" attitude and we will be determined to succeed. Also we need to pursue long-range goals that keep us from being frustrated by short-range.



**DTM Theresa Sophia Madtha,**  
Immediate Past President





Most importantly, let us recognize that success is a journey, a dynamic process that never stops — until we do.

**-- DTM Theresa Sophia Madtha**



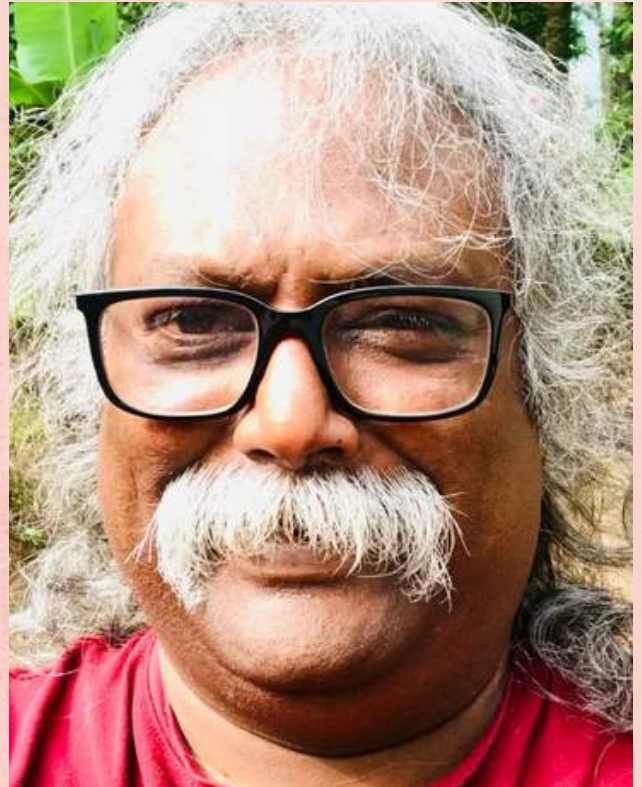




## Namma Bangalooru

I miss my beloved Bangalore. I yearn for the spirit of Bangalore.

If I were asked to coin a phrase for its spirit, I'd say something like yochane maada bedi, swalpa adjust maadi and enjoy maadi. Loosely translated, it'd mean be carefree, adjust and enjoy. Agreed, it might not quite hang together and may occasion more ridges and furrows on a grammarian's brow than it might on a ragi field in Mandya district. But at least it has the virtue of accurately reflecting a bygone era.



**TM Suresh Madhavan,**  
Member

I grew up here in Bangalore. This is probably the reason why I adapt to every Bangalorean quirk as easily as a duck takes to water. I taught my friends and country cousins visiting Bangalore from neighboring states, lessons on how to live happy lives in Bangalore's famed pubs. I introduced them to all sorts of clubs and groups. They learnt about jam sessions, busking, cycling all the way to Nandi Hills for a barbecue and other quintessentially Bangalorean leisure activities.

I am quite certain that in no other city in the country would one encounter a greeting such as, "Aarama?". "Aaram" simply means "to rest" and when you pose it as a question, it becomes "Aarama?" which in turn means - "are you relaxed sufficiently?" That is the key word. Aarama. For we Bangaloreans take our relaxation very seriously. And woe betide anyone new to Bangalore who dares to trample on these hallowed traditions and go so far as to suggest an official meeting on a weekend. Weekends are for beer, biryani and a siesta. Not for official meetings, for \*\*#'s sake. "Loafer" is a swear word in all of Karnataka, which is ironic when you think of how good we





Bangaloreans are at loafing.

Bangalore had a wonderful intimacy to it back then. You knew everyone and even if you didn't it was only a matter of time before you did. I confess I'm a little sick of hearing the phrase "Silicon City". It makes me want to projectile vomit. Silicon and techies, though not necessarily in that order, are for the most part boring. And when they act as if the rest of us ought to be grateful to them for putting Bangalore on the map, I work myself into a lather and start to froth at the corners of my mouth. Personally, I'd have had no problems if they'd discovered Chhattisgarh or Balrampur: those places suffer from scam-fatigue and would have been grateful for the development.

Alas, those cool, balmy times of Bangalore have passed. Those were the days when a long ride with your girl on a borrowed motorcycle on a moonlit night was considered the done thing. You rounded off the evening with a paper twist of peanuts stir fried in hot sand. Then you dropped off your girlfriend at a discreet distance from her house, returned the motorbike and walked home with a spring in your step.

Today, the sparrows have abandoned us. Horrid chrome and reflective glass monstrosities have sprung up all over the place like Parthenium weed or congress grass as it was then known. Thanks to power shortages, the central air-conditioning in these structures have generator back-up and the heat generated by this lethal combination of inappropriate architecture and diesel CPU's is only matched by political rhetoric.

Milan Kundera once said, 'The Greek word for "return" is nostos. Algos means "suffering." So nostalgia is the suffering caused by an unappeased yearning to return.' All I say to Milan Kundera is that we old Bangaloreans feel your pain.

-- **TM Suresh Madhavan**



## Getting Unstuck

Imagine you are in your car. You can't wait to get home. Then suddenly, out of nowhere, the traffic slows down and finally comes to a complete standstill. You are now stuck. Minutes turn into hours. Imagine the ordeal.

You are tempted to abandon the car and walk back home, even if it means covering miles on foot.

Now what if you got caught in a shipping traffic jam caused by a mega cargo ship running aground and getting stuck in a crucial waterway in the middle of the ocean.



**DTM Mathew Verghese,**  
Past President

What would you do?

Recently, a massive 20,000 container capacity vessel with a height of 1300 feet (an equivalent of Bangalore's 4 UB towers stacked one over the other) got stuck in the Suez canal causing utter chaos.

It took the salvage team a whole week of round-the-clock effort, to get the stuck vessel unstuck.

Compare the cargo ship to LIFE.....

Have you ever felt stuck?

Well, I have had that feeling umpteen times - stuck at work, stuck in pursuit of my goals, stuck in delivering speeches.

The list can go on....





What can be done to get unstuck?

Well, we may not be as lucky to have an entire salvage team at our disposal to assist us in getting unstuck. However, there are a few things that have helped me get unstuck and continue onward in the voyage of life.

1.Begin: Start where you are with what you have and don't beat yourself with the "What could have been" syndrome. It's better late than never to set sail once again to the land of our dreams. Once we begin and gather momentum, speed shall follow.

2 .Release: Some cargo / baggage may not be worth carrying. Dispose them in the high seas of life. Find out what holds you back. Maybe an old conditioning is the villain. Work on getting rid of that. Now that may be easier said than done, yet it's worth the effort. Anything that bogs us down must be released. That'll help in getting unstuck and sail onward.

3. Plan tomorrow today: The practice of planning tomorrow today is something that many successful people do. The best time to do that is just before we retire for the day. By planning tomorrow today, we can prioritize our activities and in that way not just get through the day but getting the best out of the day.





Friends, just like the ship that was stuck in the Suez canal, there are times we too get stuck. Well, the good news is that it is never too late to break free.

By beginning right where we are with whatever we have, releasing the things that keeps us stuck and by planning tomorrow today, you and I can move steadily towards the destination of our dreams.

Bon Voyage.

--DTM Mathew Varghese







## My Role Model-My Mentor

Afflicted by ignorance, amid darkness,  
Desperation tore us apart on an isle devoid of  
gleam.

Longed for an acquaintance, craved for some  
guidance,

Fortune maneuvered us to the mentor of our  
dreams.

Powered by her intellect, driven by her wisdom;  
She ignited our minds by her divine vision.

Groomed by her erudition, touched by her  
affection;

She empowered our souls for our future  
academic missions.

Ephemeral moments with eternal memories,  
She mothered us all and left her priceless legacy  
A persevering mind with a benevolent soul  
Blended together to help us get through  
faltering chores.

Ushered and aligned, through corridors of time,  
With grace and composure she helped us strive  
and unwind;

A multitude of gratefulness for altering our  
lifeless instincts

As we lay our lives under the canopy of her  
blessings.

--**TM Amlan Kumar Bhowmick**



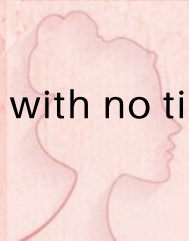
**TM Amlan Kumar Bhowmick,**  
VP Public Relations



## Know me More

I step out of my home ,  
to understand myself.  
Walking gives me strength,  
And says about me.  
Whenever I take a step  
To walk towards my goal  
My thinking gets more and more strong  
Tells me, that there is nothing we can't achieve  
Tells me, Everything can be made possible  
And can take you to the peak  
My thoughts fly like a free bird  
Who wants to explore everything with no time limit.

--**TM Anjali Rawat**



**TM Anjali Rawat,**  
VP Membership





## The March Madness

It's been exactly a year since we first had our official physical meeting.

It was on Women's Day last year where we had a themed meeting, and today, one year later, we are doing it online.

So much changed in due time.

Over the course of 1 year, we had many interesting things that happened.

Our Toastmasters Members adapted to meetings online. But they didn't stop there. They went a level further by launching weekday Table Topics Meetings at 7 PM every evening.

While my attendance at those meetings were only for 1 or 2 sessions, I've been told by other members that the practice helped them hone their speaking skills a lot better.

Special mention must be made to Toastmasters Suresh, Theresa, Theju, Prakash (and other senior members) who ensured that these meetings happened consistently.

As the new year ushered in, within weeks, we organized the Contests and as always, it was a stellar participation from Talkmagic.

We had many members take up NEW roles.



**TM Harry Ramsay,**  
VP Education





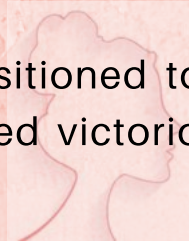
Toastmaster Bharath, who is pursuing his engineering who recently joined Talkmagic took up his maiden role in HIGH Spirits right away.

Like Bharath, there were many other maiden role takers, taking their next step in the Toastmasters Journey.

Our club contest had excellent participation with many takers for both the Prepared Speeches and Table Topics.

Our inspiring DTM Mathew Verghese became the reigning champion in both, with DTM Thejovathi as the emerging runners-up.

From the club contest, we transitioned to Division, where again both DTM Mathew and DTM Thejo emerged victorious... making Talkmagic incredibly proud of their achievements.



As an ExCom member, I sincerely laud their efforts and wish them the best for the journey.

At the beginning of March, the ExCom was contemplating organizing Physical Meetings, but now, for the time being, with the rapid rise in cases, we have pushed that aside and are planning other things that we can do to have a more fun and lively Toastmasters Meeting each week.

Look forward to connecting, growing with all the Talkmagic Members.

**--TM Harry Ramsay**





## Your battlefield

Everyone has their battlefield.

For some it is the stage. For some it is making a sale. For some it setting up processes. And for some it is just engaging in meaningful conversations.

Whatever the battlefield is, it is where the one truly finds oneself. It is that space which brings out the best within. The space where one is always ready to be challenged.

I call it a battlefield because that's where I would choose to fight from, given a choice. It is where I can be myself without fear or inhibition. The question is "am I choosing to fight this battle in my battlefield?"

What is your area of expertise? Do more of it. Keep doing it till no one would dare challenge you. Be so good that if they choose to challenge you there, they would regret even having thought about it. This is your battlefield. You rule.

--DTM Geetha Prasanna



**DTM Geetha Prasanna,**  
EDUCOM Coordinator, District 92



## Be wild and Free

What is our purpose here? Are we just another group of humans following the herd and living a mechanical life?

Since our early age, we are buried with expectations on our shoulders. Finish school, go to college, get a degree, find a job, get married, have kids, follow the norm. Then what? You wither away slowly.



**TM Gary Veeramundar, Club Secretary**

What about your true nature? Your real purpose? What about things that matter only to you?

We have been conditioned by society to follow a designated path. Our biggest challenge is to unlearn the things we have been taught not to question. Unlearning comes at a high price - that we might be wrong. But what if we were wrong?

Never be afraid to unlearn, relearn and question the narrative. In the end, it doesn't matter how popular you are or how much possessions you have. It's about knowing who you really are. Take a break and disconnect from everyone- Be with yourself. It can be an hour, a whole day or even a week.

Pay attention to yourself and listen to your heart-you will know what truly sets your soul on fire. And once you find that, do it as often as you can, for you will become what you are meant to be: Wild & Free.

--TM Gary



## The He-Man of the house

"She is the He-Man of the house", I read the topic over and over again, scratching my forehead. It was a standard seven English language examination. The students were asked to compose a thousand-word essay on the topic.

I wrestled with the theme for good ten to fifteen minutes. My mind went completely blank, and I composed my essay taking only a portion of the theme - "The He-Man of the house".

I poured every bit of my energy in writing about the renowned fictional superhero who used to appear in an animated television series. He entertained me and kids like me, every Sunday morning, and my essay was a lofty tribute to him.

My class teacher went speechless after reading my thoughtfully crafted article. He scribbled on my answer paper - "Dear He-Man of the house, your son is not able to decipher words in context. Wish you can guide him." He asked me to get the paper signed by my mother.

And then it struck me. I was supposed to write about my mother, the unsung superhero of my house. A medical doctor by profession, she was tasked to raise her two sons alone for a large part of our childhood, as my father had to relocate to another city for his job. She was no ordinary mother. She learnt swimming after crossing forty, and mastered driving four wheelers when she was just few months shy of turning fifty. She held high positions in her job and retired as Head of the Pathology Department from one of most reputed medical colleges in Kolkata. She also devoted good amount of time to singing, her passion since childhood.



**TM Ranajay Dasgupta, Member**





My brother and I never troubled her with our studies and homework but tried to make her life miserable in every other way. I refused to take swimming lessons from the swimming club trainer, whom I found to be quite intimidating. Therefore, my mom had to wear the hat of my swimming coach. She made me a competent swimmer in three months. Much later, when I attained the age to drive a car, I planned to evade the road test mandatory for earning the driver's license, by paying off an individual in motor vehicles office. When my mother got the whiff of my nefarious plot, she personally accompanied me to all my driving lessons to ensure I sit behind the wheels and not fritter away my time in road-side tea stalls.

Science has proven that our brains are not built for multi-tasking, but my mother defied this well-established theory. She effortlessly handed her professional and personal commitments, invested time in building and nurturing relationships with her friends, colleagues and relatives. The typical smart alec that my brother and I were, we hypothesized that our mom had a big team whom she delegated all her work in office to keep her days light.

We never acknowledged her superpower back then, but we do now - better late than never!! I still wonder how her smile never faded, even when she was inundated with our incessant annoying demands. And it's an enigma how she maintained the same level of childlike enthusiasm, zestful attitude towards life day in and day out, carefully putting all her difficulties out of our sight. Wish I have a fraction of her superpowers now. I cannot turn back time. But if I could, I would have gone back to the exact day of my class examination and written a befitting tribute about her.

**--TM Ranajay Dasgupta**



## Deliver the small Packets

With the pandemic, not sure what has increased but looking eagerly for delivery of online ordered items has increased. I get excited every time I get a message that the item is out for delivery, overlooking how much it pinched my pocket. As they get delivered I feel as if I'm receiving packets of happiness.

It was one of those days I was waiting near my apartment main gate to pick the parcel. Meanwhile, something caught my attention. An elderly lady, in a nicely pressed half-white cotton sari, flowers in her grey plait got down the auto-rickshaw.



**DTM K.S.Thejovathi, Member**

She took a minute to move forward. She had difficulty walking without support but yet she appeared confident and covered all her pain under a pleasant smile. Since nobody was around, I approached her and enquired where she wants to go. She said that she has come to visit her friend in the apartment and looking for a lift lobby. Held her hand and showed her way to the lift lobby. I could feel the shivering hands becoming stable. As the lift door opened, I have loosened my hand to let her go in. That's when she did something unexpected, that touched me deeply. She took my hand closer with both her hands and kissed me on the palm and said "Thank you for taking care and giving hope for the elderly people". I was awestruck by her gesture of appreciation. It was something I never experienced before. It was something I was missing big time ever since the pandemic started .... the human touch. It made my dopamine levels overflow. I was joyful. Her words uplifted me. All of sudden, I found myself cheerful, energetic. Later I carried the same energy and dispelled at home contributing to a productive day. We often look for some significant things to make us happy.





But the best things come in small packets. That day, that elderly lady gifted me small packets of happiness appreciating my deeds.

Toastmasters, words of appreciation can create wonders. They can bring in smiles, take away self-doubts. Giving a pat on the back when some do a good job, can motivate that person and the people around to do more. Appreciation can make a day, even change a life. Our willingness to put it all into words is all that is necessary. Giving timely appreciation is a leadership skill. Coincidentally, at toastmasters, we learn to appreciate each other as we take up meeting roles and leadership roles. Toastmasters is not only a place to upskill self but also provides a platform to develop uplifting skills. Appreciating is like delivering small packets of joy and happiness to the people around us. There are so many undelivered packets, let those get delivered by us!

---K.S.Thejovathi





## Tryst with Destiny

Lots of books have been written on Nostradamus's predictions. Claims are made that he had predicted the major events unfolding in the world today, centuries ago. Closer home, a couple of my close acquaintances vouch for the authenticity of palm leaves predictions. They have excitedly described how their past, present and future were read out from palm leaves. They claim that the pronouncements on their past and present were accurate. When I tried to check it to

quench my curiosity, I found it a piece of bullshit. My encounters with astrology have always come a cropper. Nevertheless, the three instances that I am going to narrate have perplexed me, circling back to the question of whether our lives are scripted.

I had run into problems with my business with huge inventory and debt staring at me due to the abrupt cancellation of a contract with a large company. I was wondering on how to negotiate the turn of events. Every Wednesday, Times of India comes out with a supplement called Ascent which carries advertisement on employment opportunities. I had never opened the supplement nor had I felt the need to do so except on one Wednesday. I was waiting for my wife to join me to get to our office, she was delayed by a few minutes and I opened Ascent while I was waiting. I found an advertisement from a software major seeking application from domain experts with 15+ years of experience for their Engineering Services team. I discussed this with my wife casually and she encouraged me to apply. She assured me that she will take care of our business should I get selected. I applied and was one of the three selected from over 100 applicants. My stint for around 4



TM Balki Narayanan, Member





years in the Software Company helped us in a big way to overcome the mess our business had gotten into. Advertisements for lateral entry of senior professionals are rare. I also later learnt that the ad was published only once on that Wednesday. Was there any divine intervention in me seeing that ad? Was it destined to happen that way?

The second surreal instance happened when I was looking for a name for my daughter 10 days after she was born. My son Tejas was in Montessori and was unhappy that his name came last in the attendance list. I was determined to give a head start to my daughter in the rat race by giving her a name that starts with not just A but AA. Tossed in my bed on a Saturday night, I was completely engrossed in the thought of finding an uncommon name that started with AA. The name Aarabi suddenly flashed in my mind which is the name of a Carnatic Raag. I was satisfied with the name and decided to finalize after discussing it with my wife the next morning. Early next morning, I get a call from my mother who tells me to name my daughter Aarabi. I have some knowledge of Carnatic music but my mother is a trained singer. I had not discussed anything about naming my daughter with my mother. Was it Telepathy? How come the same uncommon name occurred to both of us? When I admitted Aarabi to school she had Aarthi (Should be the big Kashi Aarthi) and Advik ahead of her and 15 other students with names starting with an A. That is a story for another day.

I met with an accident on the 6th of May 2018. I was to join a group of bike riders at 6.30 in the morning near Lalbagh. A speeding car hit my bike near Shoolay circle. Three days before I had confirmed in the Whatsapp group that I would join the ride. I had messaged "Will join Insha Allah". To this date, I don't know why I suffixed Insha Allah. It is not a phrase I normally use. Was it a premonition?

I can brush aside all these as coincidences but I keep wondering whether there is an invisible hand guiding our lives. Are our lives written in those palm leaves? I hope, I find answers to these, Insha Allah.

--TM Balki Narayanan





# OUR GAVALERS SPEAK



## Captured Moments

*Awesome Blossom*



*Trip To Goa*



*Golden Temple Galore*



--Gavalier Kavini Rawat

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## Our Evergrowing Family

# Warm welcome to all our new Members



- **TM Shibin Velutheril Samuel**
- **TM Gunturi Bharath Varma**
- **TM Niraj Lambat**
- **TM Mohan**
- **TM Prashant**

*We wish them luck for their endeavors in toastmasters and beyond.*





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