



*The Electronic Newsletter of the  
Minnesota Chapter of the  
National Speakers Association*

**June 2009**

*Edited by: Dennis Stauffer*

*Please send comments and feedback to*

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## President's Message



### Reflections and Thanks

Recently incoming NSA-MN President Amy Tolbert, PhD, CSP conducted a daylong retreat for the incoming board of directors of our chapter. For me it was a time of personal reflection, including the exceptional service of those who choose to serve their fellow speakers. Specifically, I thought about those outgoing directors whose contributions are

lengthy and invaluable.

Audrey Thomas is what she says she is: organized! But Audrey goes beyond efficiency; she is impactfully effective. Her management and guidance of our association places her on my list of great leaders.

Stuart Gray possesses a great combination of two essential qualities of success - vision and the ability to execute. Stuart's mark is visible in every person who traveled through the Institute for Professional Speaker Development programs.

Sue Rusch, CSP is one of those people of whom I am in awe. Her wisdom and knowledge are surpassed only by her incredible grace, compassion for others, and humility. Sue Rusch is a class act.

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### NSA-MN Upcoming Events



Dan Janal agreed to serve another term as Director of Finance, so he is not going anywhere anytime soon, but let me note he is this year's Mark LeBlanc Award winner, and was just named as one of the top 50 branding coaches in the world. Dan's willingness to address tough issues provides an invaluable service to your Association.

The new directors will all make their mark, as have these other volunteer-servants. I can't wait to see their accomplishments as they work with the existing members of the board under Amy's leadership. These will truly be the best of times!

Have a wonderful summer, and celebrate your success!

Michael Roby  
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## Annual Awards Gala An Award Winning Night

By Dennis Stauffer  
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Photos courtesy of:  
 Wendy Blomseth, InBeaute Photography  
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The annual Awards Gala has become the chapter highlight of the year and this year's event again set a new standard, as did the many award-winners.



Sue Rusch is named Volunteer of the Year.

### *Mark Your Calendars!*

**Institute for  
 Professional Speaker  
 Development  
 Ice Cream Social &  
 Information Nights  
 Schedule  
 6:00 - 7:30 pm**

*July 14, 2009  
 August 18, 2009  
 September 15, 2009*

### Off Kilter

By: Molly Cox  
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### Twitter This!



Driving down the street the other day, I noticed a church sign that made me feel like I should check the labels on my prescriptions. It said: God is Twittering You. Pick up. I drove around the block so I could read it again--to be sure that's what it said.

Twitter makes it possible to blurt out the first thing that pops in your head and broadcast it instantly to all your friends and followers. This may be a good thing for God. He may want to remind McDonald's groupies that gluttony is a sin or send out a quick reprimand to Dan Brown.

But I can't even imagine



Amy Tolbert and Mike Roby are co-recipients of this year's Member of the Year Award.



Randall Munson received this year's Next Level Award.



Dan Janal was this year's winner of the Mark LeBlanc Award.



David Knox and Hondo are admitted to the NSA-MN Speakers Hall of Fame by Manny Steil

the business I would lose if I were allowed to blurt out whatever came into my head.

As of this post, I am not on Twitter. I simply don't tweet. (Well, not in public) I don't have time and I know if I started it I would end up in TA (Twitter's Anonymous) 12-step program. I don't have time for that either. My "extra" time lately has been spent flying around in Second Life. As an avatar.

I tried to explain this to a few men at my father's assisted living the other day. I used every communication technique I could muster, but they looked as baffled as Nancy Pelosi's memory scan. After thirty minutes I got up, walked into the dining area and drove a fork through my eye-which offered much relief.

Speakers are all at different stages with their technology use. We incorporate tools that will help us grow our businesses and stay in touch with friends. Or for some, and I won't name names-just annoy others.

In the dim recesses of my mind, I recall making fun of a few things that are so common now the Pope uses them. Luckily, in accordance with Federal NSA law, I have to stay on top of certain speaker technology. For instance, I have a Crackberry which I believe has the capability to network to the Hubble Space Telescope, and I have Bose noise-canceling



**2008-09 Outgoing NSA-MN Board Members:**

From Left; Sue Rusch, Platinum Representation; Amy Tolbert, President-Elect; Dennis Stauffer, Director of Communications; Lori La Bey, Director of Membership; Kevin Stirtz, Director of Programming; Audrey Thomas, Past-President; Stuart Gray, Director of IPSD Director; Sharon Tyra, Volunteer Coordinator  
Not shown: Dan Janal, Director of Finances; Mike Roby, President



**2009-10 Incoming NSA-MN Board Members:**

From left: Joe Mayne, Director of IPSD; Dennis Stauffer, President-Elect; Lori La Bey, Director of Membership; Amy Tolbert, President; Ross Bernstein, Director of Internal Communications  
Not shown: Robin Getman, Platinum Representative; Danita Bye, Director of External Communications; Troy Stende, Director of Programming; Mike Roby, Past-President; Sharol Tyra, Volunteer Coordinator; Dan Janal, Director of Finances



Gala Hosts Amy Tolbert and Christine Rozman

headphones (but, I only wear them when I'm with family), I Skype, YouTube and Facebook. And still try to fit in a yoga class each week.

So is it a sin that I don't Twitter?

On the day that I saw the church sign, I pulled into my driveway and there was a huge rock leaning against my front door with a message carved into it: XI: Pick up Twitter messages.

--Moses. \*Sent via stone tablet from Mount Sinai.

It takes a village.

### Editor's Note

This is the last newsletter I will edit before moving on to other responsibilities on the board. I'm delighted to be leaving the newsletter in the very capable hands of Ross Bernstein, who will take over beginning with the August issue. I'd like to thank all of the many contributors who have so generously provided content-and made my job so much easier. That includes all of the board members over the past couple of years, as well as "outside" contributors. In particular, I'd like to thank Mary McGrath for profiling board members, Lori La Bey and Brenda Elsagher for regularly introducing our new members...and Molly Cox for sharing her wit and *Off Kilter* perspective. It's been a pleasure working with so many talented and generous colleagues.

Thanks!  
Dennis Stauffer

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Apprentice Program Participants



Graduate Program Participants



Mentorship Program Participants



No Sweat Speaking Participants

### **Bragging Rights**

Roxanne Emmerich, CSP, CPAE has a best seller. Her new book Thank God It's Monday: How to Create a Workplace You and Your Customers Love made it to #1 on Amazon in business and made the Wall Street Journal bestseller list.

Dennis Stauffer was selected from among hundreds of international innovation experts, to author an article for the soon to be unveiled web site and book The Future of Innovation, in conjunction with the 2009 International Society for Professional

Innovation Management (ISPIM) Conference in Vienna Austria.

## Graduate Level Speaking: Ideas From the World's Best Speakers - Leith Anderson

By Michael Roby  
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Leith Anderson pastors one of the largest churches in Minnesota, Wooddale Church, located in Eden Prairie, Minnesota. Anderson came to Wooddale in 1977, when the church was located in Edina, MN. Wooddale attracts thousands of worshipers to five regular weekend services, in part due to Anderson. Not only is the church one of the largest congregations in Minnesota, it is considered one of the most successful in America, and many attribute a great deal of that success to Anderson, a world-class speaker who is a humble man, a master storyteller and champion of his faith.



Anderson preaches every sermon on the vast majority of weekends, in addition to speaking at conferences around the world. He is president of the National Association of Evangelicals, on the board of Bethel University in St. Paul, MN and former President of Denver Seminary in Denver, CO. Anderson is widely quoted by the national media, including the New York Times and the Washington Post.

### **Expertise and Content**

Over the course of the year, Anderson preaches about forty weekends, presenting the same sermon to an average of five separate worship services. While he has been preaching since graduating from seminary in 1969, he quickly points out he has never used the same sermon twice. He also speaks on a syndicated radio program called "Faith Matters" that airs on "well over a hundred stations," including non-religious stations, sport-talk radio, and sports broadcasts. The program's reach is broad, and Anderson pointed out "we're on every [Minnesota] Twins game this year, fifth inning. There are one hundred sixty-two games. The Twins' Network [includes] eighty stations." So how does he create so much new content?

"I take off July each year and do overall planning for the preaching for the following year," says Anderson. "And that's published and it's an internal publication, but it has many pages and it gives bible text, gives a title, gives a summary of the sermon. It gives other elements, art that we may use, our music or benediction and liturgical factors." He adds, "if I'm going to do a sermon on marriage, I may be looking for articles all year long on marriage

and if I pick up a magazine or newspaper and there's an article, I tear it out (and I often don't even read it) if it might relate to what I'm interested in. And if I do the job well, six months or nine months later I've actually got a file folder full of at least preliminary information or research."

Anderson spends three or four days on preparation for each sermon. Obviously he received a tremendous amount of training and education in seminary, but that only takes one so far. For research, he uses a variety of resources, including the Internet. "I can tell you what I used years ago was a wall of books and I have a lot of books. Almost all this information is accessible on the internet now... so I have a number of research tools that are in the laptop."

Does he do all of his research personally? "I do most of my own research and I certainly do my own scholarly research," he says, "but [an assistant] would do statistical or some story or historical research for me."

### **Eloquence**

One of Anderson's greatest speaking skills is as a storyteller. "My father was a pastor, and he was a marvelous story teller," said Anderson. While stories are an integral part of his presentations, he does caution that, "There's always the temptation for professional speakers and pastors... to tell a great story because it's a great story and that is a temptation to which I try never to succumb. The stories must make the point that I'm seeking to make and it is an ethical dilemma to have a great story that doesn't make the right point or another ethical dilemma is to have a story that makes the point, but the story is so good that the point is not actually heard. So, what people do is they leave remembering the story, but they didn't learn the lesson and it's about the lesson. It's really not about the story."

Anderson made several points about connecting with an audience. "You have to talk to the audience. When I talk on the radio, I envision somebody driving a car alone, but when it's an audience of thousands of people, I can't envision somebody driving a car alone. They're in an audience with a large number of people."

Anderson's style and delivery are effective. People have commented that when listening to Anderson, it is like he is speaking to them individually. "I had a funny thing happen a couple of weeks ago," said Anderson, "which shows I made good eye contact with the camera. During the sermon, I'm sorry to say, a guy looked at his watch and then he looked up and I was looking right at him and caught him and he told me he felt guilty over it, but I wasn't there. I was on video."

While he often speaks to thousands, Anderson stresses the importance of connecting with an audience. "I can get energy from the audience or lose energy or I can see people who are sympathetic or in disagreement or hostile or bored... Actually, I see that as a challenge... you can tell when I think I've lost someone. I'll take off my glasses, I will look in a certain direction to try and grab someone's attention back. I may walk around. Whatever it takes,

but I see that as a challenge if I've lost a member of the audience. I don't want to lose anyone," he says.

Another topic he mentioned was analogies and examples. "At a traditional service... I might refer to the flip side of an issue. The flip side could refer to a coin, but to many people it's a record, but the people that are here at [The Young Adult Services] on Sunday night have actually never flipped a vinyl record. So, I won't say that. At [The Young Adult Services] I said why don't you give up something significant for Lent, like My Space. If I said that to an older audience -- They don't have My Space accounts. The basic sermon or speech is pretty much the same."

Anderson also tailors his choice of words to reflect the education and background of his audience. "When I'll speak to like a college faculty, I find myself using words that I'd forgotten that I even knew. I'm using these multiple syllable words, but if I do that in a church service... I realize there are younger...many people, that just don't know what the word means...I will immediately follow it with a synonym. Whereas if I were just speaking to a university faculty, I would not do it with a synonym," he says. "I don't use acronyms... Churches do that. Churches have summer vacation bible schools. They talk about VBS. It sounds like a virus that you get in your computer, a VBS; you can't do that. That's not fair to people."

What is basic to good communication? Anderson believes it is study of classical communication. "I think it's helpful to have a basic understanding of traditional rhetoric. So, understanding Aristotle's *Lothos*, *Pathos*, *Ethos*, just understanding that really informs you well on the communication process, and experience is clearly very helpful, and critique," he stated.

In addition to speaking, Anderson has authored or co-authored seven books. Anderson spoke of the differences. "Books are different than speaking though. If you've got something to say in a book you can hire somebody to fix the grammar. The problem with books is if people don't have anything [meaningful] to say. So, saying it well in a book and saying nothing is not a good thing. Saying something and saying it really incorrectly, that can be fixed if you've actually got a message in the book, [but you can't do] the same when you're saying it in front of an audience."

Personal belief in a topic and integrity are essential says Anderson. "I communicate through my personality. And I think what good public speakers do is they speak the truth. They have a personality. If you're an interesting person and you're speaking the truth, that's the core. It's not necessarily the [nuance] of the phrase. I'm ready to listen to anybody that's going to talk about any topic, if they're going to be an interesting person and tell me the truth that I want to know or wouldn't otherwise know."

Leith Anderson speaks with conviction, passion, and extreme knowledge of his subject matter. These ingredients are essential for success for any speaker.

*Your Source for NSA-MN Information*

**PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW CONTACT INFORMATION.**

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