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Cumberland Woman Honored by Toastmasters of Rhode Island, Eastern Massachusetts

Esther Paris, of Cumberland, has been named Toastmaster of the Year for the district that covers Rhode Island and eastern Massachusetts.

In presenting the award, outgoing District Governor Bash Turay said it “symbolizes performance excellence, dedicated service to the district, and exemplary portrayal of the ideals of Toastmasters. ...

“Rarely do we find a member who so completely embodies the Toastmasters’ ideals as this year’s recipient. An excellent coach, mentor and team leader, this member consistently motivates other members to achieve their best, guides others away from conflict to cooperation and ensures that the relevant metrics are being achieved.”

Upon accepting the award, Paris said, “I am absolutely thrilled to receive this highest honor. ... I am very grateful to the people who served Division G (Rhode Island) as area governors, for they are a huge part of the success of the division. I am very proud to have been chosen and expect to continue to serve the division and the district to the best of my ability.”

Paris has been a member of Toastmasters since the early 1990s. In 1999, she received Toastmasters’ highest credential, Distinguished Toastmaster.

She founded the Saturday Brunch Bunch, a community Toastmasters club based in Lincoln. She is currently a member of three clubs: the Saturday Brunch Bunch; Advanced Orators, in Foxboro, Mass.; and Brown Noise, at Brown University, in Providence.

Paris holds a bachelor’s degree in physics from the College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, Mass. She worked at the Raytheon company, where she was a senior software engineer, from 1985 until 2002, when she became a stay-at-home-mom. She has four children, ranging in age from 6 to 14.

She loves needlework of all kinds, especially knitting and crocheting. She has had a knitting pattern published in The Prayer Shawl Companion and is the facilitator for the Library Yarns program at the Cumberland Library.

Toastmasters is a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to the development of public speaking and leadership skills. It has nearly 250,000 members in 12,000 clubs around the world.

In Rhode Island, there are five community clubs open to the general public and 13 clubs based in corporations or at universities.