



District 90

Jazzer Smith Award

Each year the District 90 Management Committee considers nominations for the Jazzer Smith Award at its meeting prior to the Annual Conference.

The criteria for selection shall be:

A member of District 90, excluding the Management Committee, who exemplifies in some way, the attributes and characteristics of Jazzer Smith. These attributes to include courage, overcoming adversity, persistence and perseverance, loyalty to Toastmasters, pride in Toastmasters, friendliness, cheerfulness and support for other members.

In addition, a citation will be prepared to accompany the presentation.

To learn more about the man behind this award refer to The Jazzer Smith Story on the next page.

Nominations for District 90 Jazzer Smith Award are to be submitted by email, using the attached form, to the District 90 Administration Manager.

Nellie Beggs
E: am@d90tm.au

Nominations Close:

**Tues. 5 pm 30th
April 2024**

THE JAZZER SMITH STORY

Jazzer Smith died in May 1987, at the age of 47. During his short lifetime, he touched the lives of countless people - and this is the story of a small part of that remarkable life.

James Russell (Kenneth) Smith was born on September 4, 1939, in Hobart. The son of James Henry Robert Smith and Annie Jean Smith, he grew up on the slopes of Mount Wellington in the small community of Fern Tree. His father was called away to war and died when James was only two years old. His mother was left with five children and very little money, but a wealth of courage.

By the time James had left school to begin an apprenticeship with a printer, there were two major loves in his life - music and people. While playing drums in a rock band he earned the nickname Jazzer (Jas. R.) and that name stuck for the rest of his life.

At the age of 30, Jazzer had a satisfying career in music, also a career in the media as a journalist, TV show compere and radio copy manager. His life was looking promising when he was given a death sentence.

The doctors at Peter McCallum Cancer Institute in Hobart told Jazzer that he had Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma (a cancer of the lymph glands) and that it was terminal. Somehow this seemed to strengthen Jazzer's concern to live life to the fullest and not waste one single minute. He went on with his search for success for life and left Hobart to establish himself in Melbourne.

Jazzer became copy manager of Radio 3DB in Melbourne, then left to join the Musicians' Union as their Public Relations Officer. He later started 'Across Country', a country music newspaper, and became editor of the Journal of Australian Music and Musicians (JAMM).

On the advice of his doctors, Jazzer came to a warmer climate - Tamworth, where he was editor of Capital News, which became Australia's only monthly country music newspaper. Because of his constant contact with people, conducting interviews, etc., Jazzer found that he wanted to improve his communication skills, so on the advice of a workmate, Bob Kirchner, Jazzer joined Tamworth Toastmasters.

During his life he was a self-confessed "non-club member". He had always strived to retain his individuality, so clubs were not on his list of priorities. But Toastmasters became the exception to the rule. As well as benefitting from the Club, he was still able to retain his uniqueness.

He was talked into becoming President of the Club after being a member for only a few months. Jazzer believed the greatest thing about Toastmasters was the challenge it presented. He always said that the only person you competed with in Toastmasters was yourself - you challenge yourself constantly to achieve your next goal. That is what kept him so involved with the organisation.

After his term as President, Jazzer took on several other executive roles within the Club and became Area Governor in 1985. The following year, Jazzer became the first Northern Division Lieutenant Governor to come from the Tamworth area.

His many friends in Toastmasters will remember Jazzer with a smile as they recall listening to his humorous speeches. His more serious speeches about cancer and various aspects of life would cause others to reflect deeply on life and their attitude to it.

Despite the most difficult circumstances, Jazzer always gave 100 percent effort and was a tremendous fighter. To strive to emulate Jazzer is impossible. There will never be another James Russell (Jazzer) Smith.

District 90

Jazzer Smith Award

Nomination Form

Name:	
Highest Education Award:	Years Membership:
Submitted by:	

General Comments

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