

## **Rough Writers**

A few years ago, several members of Toastmasters International who were aspiring writers had an epiphany: while Toastmasters clubs focus on public speaking, the speeches and feedback that are integral to the Toastmasters curriculum can also be tools for writers. Why not create a hybrid club where experienced public speakers can hone their craft as writers? And where writers can develop their public speaking skills?

With that in mind, the group began meeting on Monday evenings. Word got out, more people joined, and the Rough Writers club was officially founded on March 31, 2015.

The club's name is an homage to the U.S. volunteer cavalry first regiment of the Spanish-American War, a colorful group of characters known as the Rough Riders. Cowboys, prospectors, hunters, gamblers, and Native Americans served on equal footing with Ivy League graduates, polo players, tennis champions, and yachtsmen. The Rough Riders, led by Theodore Roosevelt, were the only cavalry regiment to see battle in that conflict.

The Rough Writers is a similarly colorful group, with diverse characters of all ages and from all walks of life. The group includes distinguished Toastmasters and beginning orators, published authors and novice writers, retired professionals, college students, businesspeople, and educators. However rough their skills may be, members are able to refine and polish their writing and speaking in a supportive and collegial environment.

The Rough Writers meets on Mondays at 7 p.m. in the community room of Fire Station #8, 5373 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Long Beach, California.