



I-R PHOTO BY MIKE DONAHEY

Former Marshalltown resident Clyde Eisenbeis is shown speaking before the Crosswinds Toastmaster Club of Marshalltown at Marshalltown Community College last week. Eisenbeis may have given his final speech to the club he founded in 2003.

The last speech?

Bittersweet for local Toastmaster Club

By MIKE DONAHEY

TIMES-REPUBLICAN

After giving dozens upon dozens of speeches over 12-plus years, Clyde Eisenbeis, now of Bismarck, N.D., might have given his last before the Crosswinds Toastmaster Club of Marshalltown last week.

The speech, "The Beat Goes On," an analysis the tumultuous 60s reflected in the original Sonny and Cher song, was trademark Eisenbeis.

It combined humor and thought-prov-ing commentary.

The speech was complete with ex-citable hand gestures, facial expressions, voice inflections and pauses.

He used but a few notes.

And his glasses made their way up to the top of his head.

The speech was short and to the point too.

"Presenters who speak too long is one

of the biggest errors in public speaking," Eisenbeis said many times to attentive members in hundreds of speech evalua-tions over the years.

He had taught brevity, and other speech-making skills to many, many Crosswinds members since he founded the club in 2003.

Bill Backoff and Keith Bloomquist, both of Marshalltown, and Melissa Niesen of Ames, charter members too, were there, fittingly, and heard "The Beat Goes On."

So were current members Cynthia Barber, Leah Cox, Adin Mann and George Trent.

They and others shared fond memories and good-naturedly roasted Eisenbeis af-terwards, including a Niesen comment about Eisenbeis' habit of resting his glasses on top of his head.

But bittersweet overshadowed funny on this day.

Club members were happy Eisenbeis and his wife, Sheryl, would be moving back to their home state.

They were also pleased Eisenbeis will enjoy retirement, after multi-year, produc-tive stops with Texas Instruments, 3M, and Emerson/Fisher.

But they were sad to be losing the club founder, devoted attendee, and a regular guy possessing a great sense of humor, who made everyone he encountered feel good.

Two days after the speech, the Eisenbeis' moved to Bismarck to be close to their elderly mothers who reside in area nursing homes.

It is unclear if the couple will return to Marshalltown, since they have no family in the area and it is a 12-hour drive from Bismarck to Marshalltown.

But Clyde and Sheryl made many, many friends in Marshalltown.

Perhaps when the north-wind blows cold across the North Dakota prairie, the Eisenbeis' will head southeast to Mar-shalltown, drop in on Toastmasters, and Clyde will find time for another speech.

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