



Ed Gibbons

Ed Gibbons was the first President of Topeka South Rotary, and also our Club's first recipient of a Paul Harris Fellow.

Ed's career was primarily in the area of rehabilitation services; for over 30 years, Ed held leadership positions with the Capper Foundation.

Ed was a member of Topeka's downtown Rotary club when in the mid-1980s, he and others were approached about forming a new, second Rotary club in Topeka. In 1986, Ed presided over the first meeting of Topeka South Rotary at the club's meeting location located at Howard Johnson's on South Topeka Boulevard (hence the "south" moniker).

Ed was a man of deep faith, and dedicated his life to serving others, which he did so unselfishly. The loves of his life were his parish, his lovely wife, Elida, and Topeka South Rotary.

Ed died four years ago. We lost not only our friend and founder, but Topeka lost a great statesman.

Perhaps Ed's greatest gift was mentoring every Club President who succeeded him. Ed instinctively knew when to call to offer advice, moral support, or gentle guidance.

Every club project and every club social function continues to reflect Ed's influence. There are times I still think I catch a glimpse of Ed, or think I hear his laughter.

Ed always had a quick smile and, with his sparkling blue eyes, he could be as ornery as they come. Particularly in the presence of ladies, Ed could be charming, gracious and at times, flirtatious. In the presence of a trusted male colleague, Ed could swear a blue streak with the best of 'em.

During the day, I never saw him without a styrofoam cup of coffee and, in the evening, I never saw him without a scotch and water.

For those who had the pleasure of knowing Ed, we all have our own stories about him, most of which are most appropriately shared over (in Ed's words) a libation.