



## **Customs and Traditions\* of the Rotary Club of East Cobb (Rotary District 6900)**

### Social Events:

- ❖ Charter Night is traditionally celebrated close to the anniversary of our Club's founding charter date of February 23, 1985. The Immediate Past President assists the Club President in organizing Charter Night. Charter Night is a formal affair, typically black tie or black tie optional. A keynote speaker of general interest to the Rotarians and guests is invited. All members are billed for the event to encourage attendance.
- ❖ The Club traditionally hosts a holiday party in December at a Rotarian's home. In years past this was a formal affair with a catered dinner. More recently it has become a less formal event, sometimes coupled with a service project (caroling at a retirement home) or a fundraiser (silent auction, Chinese auction, Marine Corps Toys for Tots collection – Rotarians donate a toy as the price of admission) for The Rotary Foundation's Polio Plus fund.
- ❖ Third Thirsty Thursdays, an informal happy hour get-together after work on the third Thursday of the month, are coordinated by the Membership Chair (or by any other thirsty Rotarian). There is typically no program, just socializing, and prospective members are invited to get to know our Club.
- ❖ Rotarians also volunteer to host social events at their homes for the Super Bowl, Kentucky Derby, Halloween and other events, often coupled with a fundraiser activity for charity (for example a pool to raise money for Relay for Life).
- ❖ In years past, the Club held a "Hangar Dance" in an aircraft hangar at Dobbins Air Force Base, an auction at the Lutheran Church on Lower Roswell Road, and an All-Star basketball game with the Harlem Magic at Walton High School
- ❖ Rotarians periodically organize outings for Rotarians and guests to Braves games, hockey games and other events.
- ❖ Our Club was instrumental in organizing the Cobb Rotary Challenge. This was an annual competition among all of the Rotary Clubs in Cobb County including various sporting events (golf, bowling, tennis, bocce, free throws, putting contest, etc.). Our club was traditionally strong in bowling and bocce. An awards dinner was held afterwards. We won the last Challenge held, and still hold the trophy.

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\* Compiled 2011 - 2012 at the suggestion of DG Margie Kersey, and intended to be updated over time as the club changes. To the extent these notes are inconsistent with the Club Bylaws, the Bylaws control.

Programs:

- ❖ Members are encouraged to arrive about 15 minutes before the 7:00 am start time of Wednesday meetings to enjoy fellowship, network, meet guests and membership prospects, and take care of informal Club business.
- ❖ “Sunshine” is a time during our regular Wednesday meetings where people contribute \$1 or more to make a short announcement about something in their personal lives, or \$5 or more for a commercial announcement. The person donating the 100<sup>th</sup> dollar gets to designate a charity to receive the money collected. In the absence of a preference, donations to the East Cobb Rotary Foundation are encouraged.
- ❖ The program at a Wednesday meeting in December is sometimes designated for holiday music played by students from the Wheeler or Walton high school band, with the meeting room decorated for the holidays.
- ❖ Our monthly board meetings are held at a volunteer member’s home or office on a rotating basis. Dinner is usually served before the board’s business is conducted.
- ❖ When a new member is inducted, the spouse of the new inductee is invited to their induction and puts their Rotary pin on.
- ❖ The Membership Chair safeguards the Club’s pledge paddle, and is responsible for the paddling part of the new member induction ceremony. (Just kidding – this was a test to see if anyone really reads this).

Leadership Development and Changeover:

- ❖ The Club pays for the President-Elect (PE) and President-Elect Nominee (PEN) to attend the annual district President Elect Training Seminar (PETS). Registration fees and hotel are reimbursed. The PE must attend PETS at least once before taking office as Club President, and is encouraged to attend PETS in both their PEN and PE years if possible.
- ❖ The Club reimburses the registration fee for members attending District Assembly and Rotary Leadership Institute (RLI) seminars, in order to develop future Club leadership.
- ❖ The Club traditionally invites a past District Governor to induct the incoming officers and directors at the last meeting in June or first meeting in July.
- ❖ The incoming President receives the Club’s Charter and the ancient President’s pin (rumored to have been forged in the volcanic fires of Kennesaw Mountain from shards of the sword Paul Harris used to enforce the 4-Way Test) from the outgoing President at the last meeting in June or the first meeting in July when new officers and directors are inducted, and safeguards them during his reign as Club President.
- ❖ The incoming President takes the lead in getting the outgoing President a Past-President’s pin and a gift from the club recognizing their service.

District 6900 and Rotary International (RI):

- ❖ All members are encouraged to attend the annual District 6900 Conference. \$100 of a new member's induction fee will be paid toward their District Conference registration if they attend the District Conference their first year of membership.
- ❖ The President Elect leads the effort to encourage District Conference attendance, and runs the Club's hospitality suite at the District Conference.
- ❖ The Club pays for the Club President's registration and hotel at the annual District 6900 Conference. The President's room serves as the hospitality suite.
- ❖ The Club sponsors the William E. Carver (our Founding Club President) Rotarian of the Year Award annually at the District Conference, awarding a Paul Harris Fellowship in the name of the recipient or their designee. Foundation points and club funding are used to secure the PHF.
- ❖ Members are encouraged to attend the annual Rotary International Convention. The President Elect may receive a stipend toward registration and travel for attendance at the RI Convention prior to their induction as Club President.

Foundation Giving:

- ❖ The Club has its own foundation, known as the East Cobb Rotary Foundation (technically, the "Rotary Club of East Cobb Fund of the Cobb Community Foundation"), to which members contribute. Proceeds fund charitable projects designated by the Club at the local level.
- ❖ Donors to the East Cobb Rotary Foundation reaching \$1000 in cumulative giving (including Sunshine 100<sup>th</sup> dollar designations) are recognized as David Stahl Fellows (previously East Cobb Fellows). \$2500 donors are recognized as Connelly Sanders Fellows, \$5000 donors as Randy Thompson Fellows, and \$10,000 donors as James Rhoden Fellows (all named in honor of East Cobb Rotarians instrumental in the creation and development of our East Cobb Rotary Foundation). Donation levels for the East Cobb Rotary Foundation are tracked by the individual Rotarians and reported on a "Four Way Test" basis.
- ❖ The Club President chairs the East Cobb Rotary Foundation Steering Committee, which includes the Club President and the three immediate past presidents, plus one member at large selected by the Club President. The President Elect records minutes of the Committee meetings, but is not a voting member. It is advisable to invite the Treasurer for information as well. This Committee receives charitable donation requests from the membership and decides how much will be distributed to local charities. Traditionally, about two-thirds of the annual gain of the East Cobb Rotary Foundation is distributed to charities nominated by Club members. Preference is given to local charities with a presence in East Cobb when distributing funds from the East Cobb Rotary Foundation.

- ❖ \$100 of each new Rotarian's induction fee is contributed to The Rotary Foundation (TRF) to establish the new Rotarian's TRF account. New Rotarians are encouraged to contribute to TRF to reach the Paul Harris Fellow level (\$1000) and to the Georgia Rotary Student Program (GRSP) at the Will Watt Fellow level (\$1000) before becoming Fellows of the East Cobb Rotary Foundation.
- ❖ The Club encourages all Rotarians to contribute to TRF at least at the Sustaining Member level (\$100 per year) to reach the Paul Harris Fellow level (and beyond) if they are able. When Foundation points are available, the Club's Foundation Chair may allocate them to allow the Club to reach 100% Paul Harris Fellow status.

#### Georgia Rotary Student Foundation (GRSP):

- ❖ The Club traditionally hosts a GRSP student, in recent years sharing the financial commitment by co-hosting with one or more other local clubs. One Rotarian from our Club volunteers at the host family, but all Rotarians share in the responsibility to make the student's year a good one.
- ❖ The GRSP Student traditionally visits the Club and gives a program at the beginning of the year to introduce themselves and tell about their home and plans for the year. The Student also gives a program toward the end of the year to share what they have done. The Student frequently attends Club events, and is invited to attend the Holiday Party and Charter Night without charge. The Club traditionally gives the GRSP student a gift at the Holiday Party.
- ❖ Members are encouraged to donate to the Georgia Rotary Student Foundation. Members donating at the \$1000 (Will Watt Fellow) level and beyond are recognized at Charter Night and other Club meetings. At the Club President's discretion, GRSP points may be used to match member donations to encourage giving.

#### Service Projects and Fundraisers:

- ❖ The Club's primary fundraiser in recent years has been the Dog Days 5K Road Race. The PE traditionally serves as the Dog Days Chair. A display table with photos of Club events and information about Rotary International and our Club is set up near the finish line and staffed with a Rotarian (usually a Past President) to answer questions.
- ❖ Previous fundraisers have included a summer concert series, golf tournaments, nights at the theater, and the Hanger Dance at Dobbins, silent auctions, yard sales, casino nights, and All-Star basketball games.
- ❖ Brumby Schoolmates Program: Our club has adopted Brumby Elementary School as an ongoing service project. Rotarians tutor students, District Grants are used to fund improvements, and we meet at Brumby once a year to see their progress.
- ❖ Service-Above-Self awards are presented at a regular meeting, typically to a local educator, a fireman and/or policeman, and a military person.

**Customs and Traditions of the East Cobb Rotary Club (2011-12)**

- ❖ Key Employee / Associate luncheon: Each Rotarian is invited to bring a key employee or associate with them to lunch, where they will be recognized for their contributions to our business or other endeavors.
- ❖ The Club is responsible for clean-up of an Adopt-A-Mile section of Johnson Ferry Road, just north of Lower Roswell Road.
- ❖ The Club maintains a section of a walking trail at the East Cobb Park.
- ❖ Rotarians from our Club helped staff the 1996 Olympics House of Friendship to welcome visiting international Rotarians.
- ❖ In recent years the Club has been a lead sponsor of the Friends for East Cobb Park Holiday Tree Lighting, welcoming Santa Claus to the Park, and helping man the concession stand.
- ❖ The Club sponsors AIDS Awareness programs at Walton and Wheeler High Schools.
- ❖ The Club helps with judging Senior Projects at Wheeler High School.
- ❖ Coins for Alzheimer's Research Trust (CART) change collection buckets are placed on the tables at our weekly Club meetings.
- ❖ Rotarians and their families march in the annual East Cobber Parade with the Club banner to raise awareness of our Club in the Community. We usually hand out candy to the children and Rotary information to the adults along the parade route.
- ❖ Our Club participates in the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, collecting funds, walking at the event, and setting up a tent with refreshments for participants.