



JULY 2008

**CURRENT CLUB
OFFICERS**

JULY 1 – DECEMBER 31,
2008

President

Edwinna

VP Education

Laura

VP Membership

Ron

VP Public Relations

Dr. Gee

Secretary

Ellery

Treasurer

Sharyn

Sergeant at Arms

Li, with Jessica and Cathy

Social Chairs

Galina and Kevin D

Contest Chairs

Josephine and Elaine

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DOGWOOD BARKER

ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO WOOF

WE MEET EVERY SATURDAY AT 8 A.M. AT FIRST ALLIANCE CHURCH,
2512 N. DRUID HILLS ROAD, ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30329.
VISIT US AT OUR REGULAR MEETINGS OR ON THE WEB AT [HTTP://WWW.DOGWOODTOASTMASTERS.ORG](http://www.dogwoodtoastmasters.org)
TO FIND OUT WHAT IS NEW, WATCH MEETING VIDEOS, AND LEAVE COMMENTS ON OUR BLOG.

ON BEING PRESIDENT: LOOKING BACK AND AHEAD

BY EDWINNA

I have completed one six-month term as President of Dogwood Toastmasters and am now at the beginning of a second six-month term.

I feel so much more comfortable in the office than I did at the beginning! When I started, I told Rajnish, Cathy and Yolande that they had to come to the Executive Committee meetings because I was terrified of making a mistake! After making lots of mistakes and realizing that I'm going to make a lot more, I have relaxed and accepted the fact that I'm not perfect, and I shouldn't expect to be. Rajnish, Cathy and Yolande have stopped attending Executive Committee Meetings, and I haven't even noticed!

One of the astonishing things I have learned about being President is that you really don't have to do much. You just go with the flow, and Dogwood rolls on. I have discovered that there is a fine line between being a do-nothing president and being an over-controlling president who is making the decisions instead of letting the club make them. In order not to be a do-nothing president, I decided I would be known as the tax-cutting President. I was going to lower the club dues. This turned out to be a disaster because the club didn't want to lower the dues!

When Yolande asked me to serve a second term as president, I warned her that I would be missing five meetings in August and September. She said, "That's OK. The club members are going to do what they want to do whether you're here or not."

Since Toastmasters International prohibits Club Presidents from serving more than two consecutive six-month terms, I will definitely be stepping down as President on December 31, 2008. I hope that some of you are considering taking my place. If so, my advice to you is to relax, have fun, delegate responsibility and have confidence that Dogwood will by the strength of its wonderful, creative members continue to be the best club in District 14!

FEATURING THE HISTORY OF DOGWOOD TOASTMASTERS : FROM THE EDITOR

What keeps Dogwood rolling? As I was researching the club's 50+ years of history for this issue, I found the answer in Dogwood's deep roots, namely the supportive environment our members create. It has been a privilege serving as Editor of the Dogwood Barker. Thank you all for contributing, kindly responding to my questions and offering constructive feedback. I am humbled and proud to be a part of Dogwood history. — Gloria

WHERE DOGWOOD TOASTMASTERS MET: RELOCATION, RELOCATION, RELOCATION

FROM HAL'S SPEECHES, EDWINNA'S DECEMBER 1997 BARKER ARTICLE, YOLANDE'S OLD BARKER COLLECTION, AND GLORIA'S UPDATES

Dogwood has had many meeting "homes" since its start in 1955. In the early years, meetings were held at the Dogwood Motel on Buford Highway which provided the inspiration for the name. After the motel was torn down, Dogwood met at a variety of places.

When Cathy joined in October 1977, Dogwood was meeting at the Squire Inn on Piedmont. The motel served sausage biscuits and orange juice during the break. The club began each meeting with an invocation. During a renovation of the motel, Dogwood sometimes met in the bar. At that time, the meeting began at 7:30 a.m.

Hal still wonders to this day about what was said in the room in 1982 after the Sergeant-at-Arms escorted him out while the club voted on his admission. (Was Cathy sworn to secrecy?) He would later take on that role when meetings were held at the Knights of Columbus on Buford Highway. His job description was expanded to include lighting matches to mask the terrible mildew and cigarette smell.

Following a move to a crowded and noisy restaurant called Hickory House, the club relocated to the Ramada Inn Central on Peachtree. Equipped with luxurious mahogany tables, the meeting place resembled a boardroom. Eventually, the management started to raise the rent, which went up to \$90 a meeting. The huge overhead prompted Dogwood to devise various schemes to generate revenue. In addition to semi-annual dues, members had to pay \$2 to attend each meeting. A weekly raffle was held, with the winner keeping half the proceeds and the rest going to the club to subsidize the rent. The club resorted to selling speech tapes and doughnuts. For each "ah," members had to pay \$0.05.

When the Ramada Inn closed down, the club took up residence in Morrison's Cafeteria (now Piccadilly Cafeteria) on N. Druid Hills in 1989. The rent was a bargain at \$10 a month. They even provided free coffee. The only downside of the place was the blinding sunlight through the windows, which members attempted to shield with newspapers. In 1993, the club started to forget to pay the rent and remained there rent-free for two more years. The discrepancy was discovered by a new manager who started charging \$50 a meeting. After 7 years at the cafeteria, it was time to move again.

From 1996 to 1999, Dogwood called St. Mathew's Lutheran Church on Briarcliff home. The rent started out at \$15 a month until it climbed to \$50 a month. Eventually, the club realized a raise in rent was a polite way of asking the club to search for a new place. Hal harbors no hard feelings, as the church was torn down years later.

In 2000, Dogwood returned to N. Druid Hills, this time to Cokesbury United Methodist Church. A new administration took over the church in late 2006, prompting the club to assemble a search committee for a new meeting place. At the last meeting at Cokesbury, members sang "Auld Lang Syne" to Hal's piano accompaniment.

The club has been meeting at the current location at First Alliance Church since January 6, 2007.

Watch Hal Speak on this Topic on YouTube:

- Table Topics on 11/7/07 — <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckupKrawpR8>
- Speech on 3/1/08 — <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZ3m78RmS8>

WHAT I LOVE ABOUT DOGWOOD TOASTMASTERS: THIRTY YEARS OF MEMORIES

BY CATHY

I joined Dogwood Toastmasters in October 1977 as a result of a disastrous work-related public speaking engagement. I had been making presentations for work --- some of which went very well, some well enough, and then one that fell flat. I couldn't figure out what I was doing right one time and wrong the next. I correctly guessed that Toastmasters could provide those answers.

Lots of things have changed in thirty years, some already described by longtime members Hal and J.G.:

- Attire has gone from business suits to sweat suits.
- The meeting location has changed at least 7 times that I can remember.
- Some of the meeting procedures and starting times have changed.
- The membership has gone from all men (until 1975) to a positive mixture of men and women.
- Communicating with members went from USPS snail mail to answering machines to e-mail and websites. Video-recording speeches on VCR was a new thing in the 1990's, now replaced by digital videos and You-Tube.
- Speeches and table topics cover subjects today that would have been science fiction thirty years ago.

But some things HAVEN'T changed over the last thirty years.

- Positive Evaluations. One of the things I've always appreciated about Dogwood Toastmasters is its strong evaluations and positive feedback. I can go other places to hear empty accolades. At Dogwood, no speech is so good that we can't find suggestions for improvement— just as no speech is so unpolished that we can't find something nice to say.
- Diverse Ethnic and Cultural Membership. When I joined Dogwood Toastmasters in 1977 the current president was of Indian descent and the immediate past president was Dogwood's first woman president. I remember a particular member during my first few weeks at Dogwood who was from South America and gave a demonstration speech about soccer, complete with bouncing soccer ball. I have delighted in learning more about other cultures and viewpoints from Dogwood's international membership.
- Diverse Occupational Membership. As a newcomer to Toastmasters, I especially appreciated the exposure to a wide variety of occupations and careers. My career decisions were still in front of me, and Dogwood members who presented work-related speeches gave me insider views of some of my options. Even now, as a semi-retiree, I am fascinated to learn what other people do and how they think.
- Enduring Friendships. So many of my long-term friendships have come from Toastmasters! Where else can I find bright, caring, positive people who share my passion for self-improvement and life-long learning? I look forward to Saturday mornings to see these wonderful people blossom and grow in confidence. I stay in touch with former Toastmasters, I run into former and current members in my travels around the city, and I am overjoyed when a former member returns to Dogwood.

I can't imagine my life without Toastmasters. I look forward to my next thirty years at Dogwood.

WHY I CONTINUE TO BE A MEMBER OF DOGWOOD TOASTMASTERS: NOURISHING MYSELF AND OTHERS

BY J.G.

Before joining Toastmasters, I had tried something called Toastmistresses but quickly got "scared" away. I don't know just when women were permitted to join Toastmasters or when I tried Toastmistresses, but I remember I was living in Atlanta – I came here in 1970 – when I tried it. I believe the organization was patterned after Toastmasters and existed because women couldn't join Toastmasters. My husband Bill was a member of Toastmasters in about 1963, and there were no women in the organization then. I was "scared" away probably because I went alone and no one befriended or mentored me.

Nearly twenty-five years ago, I joined Dogwood Toastmasters when women were able to join. I needed to respond to speaking invitations, yet I knew I did not know how to prepare or present well. Not only did Dogwood Toastmasters welcome me, they sort of gave me a new identity, J.G. Kiely. For so many years I had been Judy, daughter of, wife of, mother of, etc.

Twenty five years ago Toastmasters was much more formal; men wore suits, and women probably did too. Criticism was a fear of mine, and it was very difficult to accept evaluations at first. However, the positive comments were enough to keep me coming back with a speech a month until I completed the fifteen speeches required at that time to become a Competent Toastmaster. My mentor encouraged me to go to Area or District events. I served as Area Governor. Back then, one made 15 speeches to become a Competent Toastmaster (CTM); then 15 more to become an Advanced Toastmaster (ATM); then there were requirements for Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM); I never completed the DTM after Bill died.

I really enjoy being a mentor. I was mentor for Edwinna, Ann M, and Charlie. In Charlie's case, I felt I really helped a very shy guy succeed. He really worked hard and won contests. At their request, I accompanied both Edwinna and Ann M to Area or District events, and I'll bet that was helpful to them.

Among my most interesting mentees are Dr. Luke from Taiwan and Tom from China. Dr. Luke would e-mail his speeches to me, and then he would come to my home to rehearse them. He was very computer savvy, so we swapped my mentoring for his helping me with my computer. He even updated me from a 98 model and suggested I use g-mail. He had been to Boston and knew about the famous doctor who had given my mother two of the first artificial plastic hips.

When it was time for Dr. Luke to return to Taiwan, he introduced me to Tom as my new mentor/computer companion. Tom would come to rehearse speeches, and he would help me with my computer problems. One day he came with a new monitor to replace the tiny one I had. We have become good friends, and the first birthday message I received last year was an e-mail from Tom who was at home in China visiting his mother.

Dr. Luke and Tom call me their American mother.

Besides the practice, new friendships, and watching so many people grow, two things I experienced at Dogwood stand out: organization and evaluation. Not only in speaking, but also in writing I am now much more concise.

I hope continuing my membership helps others to grow in one of life's most difficult challenges: public speaking.

UPCOMING EVENTS

8/2
Midtown Walking
Tour Guided by
Bob

8/9
Picnic at W.D.
Thompson Park

8/29 - 8/31
Decatur Book
Festival

8/30
Decatur Library
Book Sale

9/12 - 9/14
Atlanta Arts
Festival

10/3
Capitol Steps at the
Ferst Center

10/17 - 10/18
District 14
Conference

**DOGWOOD
BARKER**
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Please let the Toastmaster or Sergeant at Arms know if you plan on using the projector so the room can be arranged accordingly.
- The website (www.dogwoodtoastmasters.org) has been updated. New blog entries now automatically show up on the homepage as latest news and events. The club's YouTube site is embedded for easier access to all of the videos — 180+ and counting .

CONTEST RESULTS

Humorous Speech (HS) and Evaluation (E) Contests were held on July 26. Members, judges and guests marveled at the quality of the presentations. Ron (HS) and Jerry (E) will represent our club at the Area level in September.

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

SINCE LAST ISSUE

- Ron, CC
- Malini, CC
- Jerry, ACB

WELCOME

- Rita, Jay John, Grace Chong, Jessica, and Hamid: Returning members.
- Elaine, Lily and Georgia: New members.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Ann M: Her own Farewell Party, April 6.
- Fran, Dr. Gee and John: Projector Screen Installation, April 12.
- Edwinna, Galina, Cathy and Josephine: Wedding Party for Rajnish & Nilima, April 26.
- Rajnish: Hindu Temple Visit, May 3.
- Gloria: Kaffee Klatsch (Coffee & Conversation), May 18 & Korean BBQ, June 1.
- Dr. Gee: Potluck and Movie Night, May 24.
- Galina: Fernbank Museum Visit, June 28.

SNEAK PEEK AT NEXT ISSUE...

DR. GEE STEPS IN AS THE NEW EDITOR.