

# THE ROTARY CLUB OF MARIETTA **ROTALIGHT**

*Putting "Service Above Self" in Marietta Since 1919*  
*February 13, 2019 • Volume 82, Number 27*

*The Rotary Club of Marietta  
Welcomes  
Today's Speaker:  
**TOM WILSON**  
Nature Photographer*



**Rotary**  
Club of Marietta



BE THE INSPIRATION



## Today's Speaker: **TOM WILSON**

Tom Wilson began making photographs at age 40. His work stems from a life-long love of nature and the outdoors. He has worked extensively on the Chattahoochee River providing images for the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, Chattahoochee Parks Conservancy, Georgia River Network, The Atlanta Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy and other conservation oriented organizations. His work has appeared in Blue Ridge Country Magazine, The Atlantan Magazine, National Geographic Maps, Environmental Monitor, Southern Exposure Magazine (cover), The Nature Conservancy Magazine and North Fulton Living. His work appears in numerous calendars, books (including "The Official Boy Scout Handbook 13th edition) and web sites. His work was selected by the National Park Service to be the centerpiece of the Chattahoochee River "Healthy Parks" campaign in 2005 and 2006 appearing on MARTA Buses and Billboards throughout the Atlanta Area. Recently he supplied 42 images for the Headquarters display at the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area on Island Ford Parkway. His work has been displayed in numerous public spaces including Shepherd Spinal Center, Barnes and Thornburg Law Firm, Coxe, Curry and Associates, Hartsfield-Jackson international Airport and the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Headquarters.

Tom has won numerous awards including Roswell Photo Society Photographer of the Year twice, Grand Prize Winner in the Nikon "Publish Your Passion Photo Essay Contest" twice; Travel Photographer's Network "Image of the Year" 2003, First Place in the Atlanta Audubon Society 2008 Photo Contest and the very prestigious "All Time Winner" from Better Photo.com's 20th anniversary contest held in 2016.

Tom believes strongly that nature photographers should be nature advocates and use their cameras to protect and preserve our vanishing natural world, documenting the threats to our precious resources and sharing the beauty that makes it worth protecting. He works extensively to document natural areas of Georgia and provide images to organizations such as the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, The National Park Service, The Nature Conservancy, Georgia River Network, Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway, The Atlanta Audubon Society, Chattahoochee Parks Conservancy and others.

Tom retired from a 33 year career as an Executive with the Boy Scouts of America in December of 2016 to pursue Nature Photography full time. He is currently working on a project with Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park to update their library of photographs and with the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area to update their signage throughout the park. Tom enjoys hiking, camping, birding, amateur astronomy, astrophotography and just about anything else that gets him outside.



**(L - R)** George Kreeger, President Jesse, Ann Harris, Mary Staley Clark, Reuben Green, and Tain Kell

# WHEN WE LAST MET

## Minutes from the February 6 Meeting

President **Jesse Evans** opened our meeting and reminded us of the need for efficiency, given the fact that the head table contained several individuals possessing the power to hold us in contempt of court. With that, the Rev. Dr. **Mark Barbour** delivered a meaningful, albeit relatively brief invocation. **Glenn Owens** introduced visiting Rotarians and guests, including one who had already served as president of three other Rotary Clubs.



With relatively few announcements, Judge **Reuben Green** introduced our program entitled "Accountability Courts in Cobb County." He is currently serving as Chief Judge of the Superior Court of Cobb County, and he assembled a panel of our other Superior Court judges to explain how their respective accountability courts work. Before he introduced

the panel, Judge Green explained that accountability courts are designed to solve problems and are not necessarily adversarial. In most of these courts, the minimum time for an individual to complete the program is one to two years. Most of the courts involve criminal matters, and the participants must choose the program-no one is forced to enter an accountability court; they always have the option of traditional court. Most of the participants have underlying issues with substance abuse, housing, or mental illness. The recidivism rate (the rate at which defendant's re-offend) is much lower than traditional court.

First up was Judge George Kreeger, Senior Judge. Judge Kreeger presides over Drug Court. He was told he would start and preside over that court years ago by then Chief Judge Michael Stoddard. This court's genesis was in South Florida when former attorney general Janet Reno was the prosecutor in Dade County. She realized that the traditional model was nothing more than a revolving door for most defendants, and she advocated for changes to the system. So, Judge Kreeger examined other accountability courts around Georgia, and after receiving funding from the Board of Commissioners, started Cobb County's first accountability court, the Drug Court. This court has had about 550 participants, and its recidivism rate is only 30%, which is quite good.<sup>1</sup> There are five phases of Drug Court, and court appearances are less frequent as the participant moves through the process. Participants are subject to random screening for alcohol and drugs and pay fees which help fund the court.

Next, Judge Mary Staley-Clark spoke about her experiences presiding over Mental Health Court. She began by noting that no one in her court chose to be there. Mental

illness is a disease, not a choice. This court started about six years ago. She is only able to handle about thirty-five cases at a time because they require intense supervision. Participants in her court often are diagnosed with PTSD, schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, and major depression. Unlike the other accountability courts, Drug Court participants are eligible even though they may have been violent. However, if the victim is not willing to agree to the defendant's participation in Mental Health Court, the defendant is processed in regular court.

Judge Tain Kell, spoke of his role in supervising Intermediate Drug Court. This court is designed for defendants who are not at the point of being ready for Drug Court. It is hoped they can be helped early, to avoid larger substance abuse problems in the future. He told the story of one defendant who came to him addicted to meth, with no job, no education, and no car. He was completely unemployable. Through the assistance of the Intermediate Drug Court, this person ended up getting his G.E.D., becoming a tree surgeon supervising an entire crew, getting his driver's license, and paying his child support. He was so dedicated to getting his G.E.D., he drove all the way to Macon to take the two portions of his course materials he had not passed, to complete the course. Needless to say, he graduated and is a productive member of society today.

Finally, Judge Ann Harris, presides over Parental Accountability Court. This court works with parents who cannot pay their child support. In Georgia, as in most other states, a parent who fails to pay child support is usually held in contempt and sentenced to jail. The problem is, how is this parent going to work to pay child support if in jail? This court works with these individuals to try to help them get their lives back on track and pay child support. This saves Cobb County money because it keeps many individuals out of jail, so they can work and pay child support, taxes, etc.

President Jesse presented a book on behalf of our speakers. Glenn Owens and **Jim Peeler** handled the opportunity drawing, but there was no winner (other than Marietta Rotary charities). Glenn concluded the meeting by leading the pledge of allegiance and the four-way test, and President Jesse gavelled the meeting to a close.

*~ Joe Atkins, Scribe  
~ Jim Kellogg, Photos*

<sup>1</sup>DURING HIS EARLY YEARS OF PRACTICING LAW, THE AUTHOR WAS APPOINTED, AT VARIOUS TIMES, TO REPRESENT APPROXIMATELY FIFTY INDIVIDUALS CHARGED WITH VIOLATIONS OF GEORGIA'S CRIMINAL STATUTES. OF THAT FIFTY, APPROXIMATELY NINETY PERCENT HAD RE-OFFENDED. BASED UPON THIS WRITER'S ANECDOTAL EXPERIENCE, RECIDIVISM IN NORMAL COURTS IS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN THE THIRTY PERCENT FOUND IN ACCOUNTABILITY COURTS.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, February 14, 2019	10:30 AM	MUST Ministries Cook and Serve
Wednesday, February 20, 2019		No Meeting
Saturday, February 23, 2019	6:30 P.M.	Rotary Social Event - Marietta Theatre Valentine Play: "I Love you because.." Contact Blaine Clotfelter at <a href="mailto:blaine.clotfelter@mariettatheatre.com">blaine.clotfelter@mariettatheatre.com</a>
Wednesday, February 27, 2019	12:15 PM	Luncheon Meeting – Dr. McGaha; President of Atlanta Metropolitan College
Wednesday, March 6, 2019	12:15 PM	Luncheon Meeting – The Extension, <b>OFFSITE MEETING</b> , 1507 Church Street Ext NE, Marietta, GA 30060
Wednesday, March 13, 2019	12:15 PM	Luncheon Meeting – Dr. Hank Klibanoff; Georgia Civil Rights Cold Cases Project at Emory University

## MARIETTA ROTARY CLUB

### CLUB OFFICERS 2018-19 Jesse Evans, *President*

Chris Bethel, *President Elect*  
Marla Blackstone, *Co-Secretary*  
[marla@skeltonblackstone.com](mailto:marla@skeltonblackstone.com)

Jeff Cooper, *Co-Secretary*  
Brad Leskoven, *Treasurer*  
Fred Beloin, *Presidential Advisor*

### DIRECTORS

Brooke Cohen, *Administration*  
Lee Alison Rable, *Service*  
Kelly Maxwell, *Membership*  
Thomas Sherrer, *Public Relations*  
Chuck Boring, *Foundation*

Meeting makeups may be emailed to:  
[jeff.cooper@wellstar.org](mailto:jeff.cooper@wellstar.org)

[www.mariettarotary.org](http://www.mariettarotary.org)



## THE ROTALIGHT FOUNDED AUGUST 25, 1937

*Published Weekly by*  
The Rotary Club of Marietta  
Post Office Box 711, Marietta, Georgia 30061

### ROTALIGHT STAFF Deborah Marshall, *Editor*

Joseph Atkins	Warren Gordon
Mark Barbour	Abbott Hall
Marla Blackstone	Jim Peeler
Chuck Boring	Marlys Williams
Dale Covington	

*We welcome and encourage all contributions.*  
*Send articles, photographs and editorials to:*  
[Deborah.Marshall@uss.salvationarmy.org](mailto:Deborah.Marshall@uss.salvationarmy.org)

## DISTRICT 6900

Court Dowis, *District Governor*  
Mark Barbour, *Assistant District Governor*  
[mmlbarbour@bellsouth.net](mailto:mmlbarbour@bellsouth.net)  
[www.rotary6900.org](http://www.rotary6900.org)

## ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

Barry Rassin  
*President*  
[www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)