



FARMERS BRANCH  
Historical Park

## Witness to History Award Application Form

Applications will be considered by the Historical Preservation and Restoration Board in October of each year for award recognition but may be submitted at any time. Applications must meet the following qualifications to be considered:

- Documented outstanding service/contribution to Farmers Branch
- 75 years as a resident of Farmers Branch for citizens
- 50 years as a resident of Farmers Branch for businesses and organizations

Name: Carol Dingman Business/Organization Name: CFB Rotary Club

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in Farmers Branch: 58 years - founded 1960 - see attached

Outstanding service/contribution to Farmers Branch (both written documentation and/or photos are encouraged): One of the Club's charter members was Karl "Catfish" Montgomery - see attached

*I hereby declare the information in this application form is true to the best of my knowledge. Additionally, if I receive the Witness to History Award, I grant permission for the City of Farmers Branch to publish and release my name and photograph (taken at awards ceremony) to the media, on the City's website and/or in any promotional materials.*

Applicant's Signature: Carol Dingman Date: 10-19-18

*Please note: applicants will be notified in January if qualified for award.*

Mail or email completed applications (including supporting documentation) to:

Farmers Branch Historical Park

PO Box 819010

Farmers Branch, TX 75381

972.406.0184

historicalpark@farmersbranchtx.gov

www.fbhistoricalpark.com

## Club History

The original club was chartered on Wednesday, November 30, 1960. Recommended by District Governor Calvin Clyde, Jr., and sponsored by the Rotary Club of Dallas, its chartered name was "The Rotary Club of Carrollton, Texas, U.S.A." Meetings were held weekly at noon, beginning the next day at the Tower Hotel Restaurant, 10108 Harry Hines Boulevard, just north of the Harry Hines circle, in Dallas.

The founding President was Edgar A. Pledger, Jr., Vice President was Jack Blanton, and Jack Ramsay, Jr. and D. E. Spradling were Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. The directors were Bill Proctor, Ray Erickson, Kenneth Moore and the ever-present Carl "Catfish" Montgomery. Included among the programs the first year were Dr. Willis Tate, President of SMU, Jim Barton talking about the Dallas Texans Professional Football Club (Lamar Hunt's AFL Team), and George Coker, Manager of Love Field. In 1966, under President D. E. Spradling, the club made its first scholarship award. Totalling \$250, it was presented to R. L. Turner H.S. The club met at the Tower for 3 years, until moving in 1963-64, under President Carl Fleming, to Otis Engineering on Beltline in Carrollton. With Robert H. Davis at the helm in 1969-70, the club moved to the new Holiday Inn restaurant on the east side of IH-35E, just north of the Carrollton-Farmers Branch boundary. The name was not officially changed to "The Rotary Club of Carrollton-Farmers Branch, Texas, U.S.A." until 1975, under President John Prickett.

President Percy Pentecost, in 1977-78, started the tradition of member Rotarians presenting a three-minute autobiography/vocational talk, and that year, membership in the club went over 100 for the first time.

In 1985-86 and 86-87, under the direction of Presidents Phillip Foote and Gary Carley respectively, the club sponsored two new Rotary Clubs. The first was Farmers Branch, with first president Paul Watten, which met Mondays at noon at the Ramada Inn Restaurant (it became the Best Western Oak Tree Inn in 1989) in Farmers Branch. The second was Carrollton Sunrise, with President Andrew Jurisich, which met at Trinity Medical Center in Carrollton. Bill Innes was the District Governor's Special Representative for establishing the new clubs.

On February 13, 1986, the Rotary Club of Carrollton-Farmers Branch celebrated its 25th Anniversary at Brookhaven Country Club, under the direction of President Phillip Foote. In January of 1988, while Phillip Hettich was president, the club admitted its first woman member, Patsy Fulton, President of Brookhaven College.

In 1989-90, during Dick Calvert's presidential term, the Carrollton Health Department shuttered the kitchen of the old meeting place. After eating cold catered chicken fried steaks and beans for a couple of months, the meeting place was moved to its present location, the Brookhaven Country Club.

In June 1990, club members Gary Embrey and Bill Innes, at the behest of District 581 (now District 5810) Governor Milton Kessel, went to Taos, New Mexico, to observe first-hand a RYLA Camp (Rotary Youth Leadership Award) in operation. The next June, they, along with Committee Chairman Chris C. Christopher, and a number of members of the Rotary Club of Carrollton-Farmers Branch, including Dana Mackison, founded the District 5810 Camp RYLA program at Lake Bridgeport. Embrey was the first Camp Director, and Innes was the assistant Camp Director and a cabin councilor. Mackison has served all 18 years of the camp's existence as Program Director and Activities Chairman.

In April, 1994, U. S. President George W. Bush spoke to the club, while he was still the managing partner of the Texas Rangers Baseball Club. That was the meeting that President Tom McWhirter discussed with the Secret Service the advisability of displaying a big butcher knife.

Two months later, at the District 5810 Awards Banquet on June 3, the club received the Presidential Citation for Balanced Club Achievement for the 1993-94 Rotary year. This was the second year of the Presidential Citation program, and the first of eight consecutive citations for the club. After that, winning Presidential Citations did not resume until President Regina Edwards in 2005-2006. They have continued since under Bobby Burns in 2006-2007 and Phillip Hettich, in 2007-2008.

The club has had two District 5810 Rotarians of the Year, Dana Mackison in 1995-96 and Doug Rudman in 1996-97, and four District 5810 Ethics Award winners, David James, PDG Walt Leonard, Keith Vanderburg and Shawn Bhagat. It was awarded the District Community Service Award for 2005-2006, President Regina Edwards' year.

Doug Rudman became the first president to serve longer than one year, when he replaced Kennedy Quick in January of 1996. He served until June 30, 1997. During his term, the club's Foundation was created, shepherded by 1997-98 president Craig Greenway. During Greenway's year, the club recognized 21 people as Paul Harris Fellows, the record for any year. Theodora A. Barker, for 1998-99, was the first woman president of the club. Phillip Hettich, in 2007-2008, became the second two-term Club President.

On November 30, 2000, the Rotary Club of Carrollton-Farmers Branch celebrated its 40th Anniversary at Brookhaven Country Club at its regular luncheon meeting, under the direction of President Fred Ferguson. Also, in the spring of that Rotary year, the club held a "Gala" to honor the retiring Director of the Metrocrest Social Service Center, Robert McMahan. With about 30 days remaining before the event, the club decided to turn it into a fund raising event, primarily to benefit the Metrocrest Social Service Center. As a social event, over 250 community leaders were present. As a fund raiser, it was a modest success, raising about \$8,000, but Ferguson felt that there was potential in the "Gala" concept as a fund raising event.

So, thirty months later, in October of 2003, President Cecil Albrecht and the club held its second "Gala," a tribute to Citizen of the Year Ebby Halliday Akers. Attended by over 350, it raised \$28,000, almost four times as much as the first, and the club presented substantial checks to the Cities of Carrollton and Farmers Branch to help in the purchase and installation of park equipment for Special Needs and Mobility-Challenged children.

The "GALA" had become an annual event. The following year, the club toasted Carl "Catfish" Montgomery, and raised \$35,000. 2005 saw Sam Pack as Citizen of the Year and \$85,000 for club projects. Mayor Milburn and Mrs Sylvia Gravley were feted in 2006 to the tune of \$38,000, Dr. Annette Griffin was honored in 2007, raising \$40,000; and in 2008, Charles Heath was the recipient and the amount raised came close to equaling the previous year.

For most of the 1990s, the club and its presidents worked diligently to find qualified candidates to become Ambassadorial Scholars. Four times the club went to sponsor an applicant, only to find that another club had pre-empted them, and the applicant went on to receive the scholarship through the other club. In 2006-07, Wilson Jackson, a student at UNT, approached President Bobby Burns. Numerous emails were sent requesting consideration in sponsoring him for a District 5810 Ambassador Scholarship. His persistence paid off. After meeting with Burns, the club sponsored Wilson, and he received the scholarship, to study in Jordan. It was the first one in the club's history.

Presently, 15 of the 47 different presidents the club has had since its inception are still active members, and 1982-83 president George Grimmer is an active member of the Rotary Club of Farmers Branch, which he helped found. Still active in today's club are 47 Paul Harris Fellows.

Doug Rudman, President 1995-1997

Revised August 26, 2009

## **Charter Members and Officers & Directors**

The following is a listing of the Charter Members and Officers & Directors of the Rotary Club of Carrollton-Farmers Branch, complete with their Rotary-Anns in parentheses, and their classifications:

### **Charter Members**

Jack Blanton (Marion) Grain Elevator Storage  
Homer Clayton (Irma) Real Estate Agency  
Ray Erickson (Evelyn) Scientific Instrument/Apparatus  
Carl Fleming (Pat) Industrial Engineering  
John Lowrey (Mary) Motion Picture Theaters  
Norman B. Godfrey (Christina) Senior Active  
Oliver Godfrey (Elna) Men's Clothing Retailing  
A. Patrick McEvoy (Joan) Aluminum Fabrication  
Jim McGehee (Dixie Nell) Auto Parts, Retailing  
Charles McKamy (Anne) General Farming  
Don Miller (Billie) Groceries, Retailing  
Carl Montgomery (Kay) Distributing  
Kenneth Moore (Ruth) Building Materials, Retail  
Charles Parrott (Gayle) Loans Installment  
Edgar A. Pledger, Jr. Banking  
William Proctor (Wanda) Insurance-Life  
Edward M. Quintana (Alice-Doll) Metal Furniture Mfg.  
Jack C. Ramsay, Jr. (Karin) Christianity, Protestant  
Holman Rhoton (Elizabeth) Funeral Directing  
D. E. Spradling (Polly) Metal Furniture Mfg.  
Leon Shaw (Ida Mae) Flowers and Retail  
Dr. Sam L. Scothorn (Jessie) Honorary Charter Member  
William Sumner (Betty) Postal Service  
Robert D. Woodward (Frances) Dentistry

*22 Active Members, 1 Senior Active Member and 1 Honorary Member*

### **Charter Officers and Directors**

Edgar A. Pledger Jr. -- President  
Jack Blanton -- Vice President  
Jack Ramsay, Jr. -- Secretary  
D. E. Spradling -- Treasurer  
William Proctor -- Club Service  
Carl Montgomery -- Vocational Service  
Ray Erickson -- Community Service  
Kenneth Moore -- International Service

## **Witness to History Award - the Rotary Club of Carrollton-Farmers Branch**

One of the club's charter members was Karl "Catfish" Montgomery, an infamous Farmers Branch resident. Catfish was a character or as he said "a legend in his own mind". He was a great supporter of our community, an avid CFBISD football fan and always charming to the ladies. Catfish was a Rotary member til his death a few years ago. Like Catfish, the original members were businessmen who were active in the community and believed in the Rotary International's motto "Service Above Self"

CFB Rotary has included many community leaders and done many projects that benefit our community. In 1987, after a Supreme Court decision, Rotary had to admit women members. The Club's first woman member was Dr. Patsy Fulton, the President of Brookhaven College. The second woman member was Carol Dingman, a former Councilwoman from Farmers Branch.

Over the years Rotary has contributed thousands of dollars to local non-profits. The Club's current major projects are helping to build a playground in Farmers Branch and one in Carrollton that serves all children including those with disabilities. The Club also participates in the CFBISD mentoring program and was an early supporter of it. Last year members donated and planted a total of 60 trees in Farmers Branch & Carrollton as a project of Rotary International. The Club volunteers every year for Metrocrest Services back pack program and annually sends money and supplies to a home for individuals with special needs in Jamaica. See <https://www.cfbrotary5810.org> for news and photos of some current and recent projects.

Currently Mayor Robert Dye, former mayor Bob Phelps, former Mayor John Dodd, former Councilwoman Carol Dingman, FB city Manager Charles Cox,, Police Chef David Hale and several Farmers Branch staff members are Rotary members. The CFBISD superintendent has been a consistent member over the years as well as several Carrollton city officials. They are joined by Farmers Branch business people like Dr. Paul Lonquist who received our Rotary District's "President of the Year" award for his tenure this past term.

The beauty of Rotary is that whatever your political affiliation or personal views, everyone there puts community first. Each member strives to live by Rotary's Four Way Test:

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?"

CFB Rotary has been an unsung but indispensable part of our community for 58 years moving our community from sleepy suburbs to the dynamic area we have today. The Club provides an informal meeting place for a variety of community leaders which is helpful at many levels as well as making our community a better place by practicing "Service Above Self."