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Rotary Club of Dalton named Club of the Year

Submitted by the Rotary Club of Dalton

Dalton Daily Citizen

DALTON — Nancy Kennedy, president of the Rotary Club of Dalton and executive director of the Northwest Georgia Healthcare Partnership, got plenty of exercise at the Rotary 6910 District Conference this past weekend at Jekyll Island, as she walked to the stage a dozen times to retrieve awards the club received.

On her final hike Sunday morning, she was followed by many of the 21 Daltonians in attendance at the conference who cheered her on as she accepted the district's "Club of the Year" award for extra-large clubs.

In the extra-large club category, the club also won the awards signifying the top achievements for membership, community service, vocational service, international service, youth service, Rotary Foundation and public relations. Competing in this category were Georgia clubs in places such as Athens, Gainesville and Rome.

Additionally, the Dalton club, which meets on Tuesdays at noon, was recognized for its outstanding work on behalf of the Rotary Foundation, which among many projects, works internationally to provide clean drinking water to people around the world. The Dalton club is a \$100 per capita club for this foundation which literally saves lives around the world every day. Dalton's "Carpet City" Club also contributes \$100 per capita and received recognition for this achievement. This club meets on Monday mornings at 7.

A major Rotary emphasis for several decades has been the "Polio-Plus" campaign designed to eradicate polio and other devastating illnesses in the world. Since its launch in 1985, reported cases have dropped from 350,000 to less than 2,000 cases a year, a 99 percent decrease. Today only four countries in the world are still fighting polio, but Rotary International has recently accepted a matching-grants challenge from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to raise enough money to finally conquer this disease worldwide. In just three years, the Dalton club has fulfilled the six-year goal of committing \$6,000 towards Rotary's \$200 million goal to match the Gates Foundation challenge grant. Further fundraising activities at the district conference raised enough money to immunize some 4000 children against polio and will be used by the Rotary Foundation for that purpose.

Other awards garnered by the Dalton group include the "Gold Club Award," "Governors Service and Leadership Award" and "Presidential Citation."

Dalton Rotarians and representatives recognized

Kennedy was not the only Daltonian taking the walk to the stage. Last year's Rotary District Governor Gary

Moore presented Tangela Johnson with a “Paul Harris Fellowship” at the Rotary Foundation breakfast in appreciation for her leadership in and service to the District 6910 Rotary Leadership Institute.

Two Daltonians also brought home two of the three grand prizes offered by conference corporate sponsor The Reynolds Plantation. Jean Lowrey of the Rotary Club of Dalton and David Snyder, president of Dalton’s Carpet City Rotary Club, each won a two-night stay package for two with free golf at The Reynolds Plantation.

Alissa “Ali” Donahue of Dalton is one of four young adults chosen from across District 6910 to represent Georgia in Rotary’s “Group Study Exchange.” This group departs May 17 to tour the United Kingdom’s Manchester area and London. They will focus on getting to know the people and the culture by staying with Rotary families and on building goodwill among our two countries. Rotarian Doug Bolton of Conyers will serve as team leader.

Carlos Anliker of El Salvador, whom the Dalton Rotary Club sponsors as a participant in the Georgia Rotary Student Program (GRSP), attended the conference along with the whole GRSP team. GRSP is unique to Georgia Rotary Clubs and is designed, like the Group Study Exchange, to improve international relations by bringing people of different countries together.

Kennedy, who followed 2008-2009 President John Neal, told club members in an e-mail Monday, “I listened and learned from John Neal last year and carried his philosophy forward — just do the work of Rotary and don’t be concerned about the points or awards.”

The work earned the points, however, and the Rotary Club of Dalton has the plaques and certificates to prove it.

Attending the annual conference from the Rotary Club of Dalton were Nancy and Dave Kennedy, John and Agnes Richmond, John and Terri Neal, Bill and Linda Blackman, Bill and Ann Bowen, Lowell and Lou Kirkman, Tangela and John Johnson, Dixie and Bob Kinard, Jean Lowrey, Mark and Laura Marlowe, and Bitsy and Stuart McFarland. Representing the Carpet City Rotary Club were David Snyder and Mary Thelma Norris.