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## Northwest Georgia News and Notes

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## Northwest Georgia news and notes

Recently, the Rotary Club of Dalton presented Mrs. Joann Williams with the Jean Harris Volunteer of the Year Award. The award, named for the wife of the founder of Rotary International, Paul Harris, recognizes outstanding volunteerism which advances the Rotary standard of



*Pictured are: (kneeling) Nick Fogarty, NGRL Deputy Director; (standing from left) William Williams, NGRL Director Joe Forsee, Joann Williams, GA Representative Roger Williams, Alison Williams Faulk, NGRL System Board President Elizabeth Chadwick.*

“Service above Self,” The distinguished award honors the efforts of non-Rotarians who have made a significant contribution to the development and progress of others in their communities.

The Rotary Club of Dalton annually recognizes a non-Rotarian woman whose volunteer efforts in the areas of Health, Education, Economic, and

Personal Development have made an impact on the lives of members of the community, particularly women and children. The Jean Harris Award is made to an individual who meets certain Rotary standards, which include voluntary Service above Self, current and on-going activities which further the principles of Rotary, and produce measurable results and/or benefits to the community-at large.

Northwest Georgia Regional Library Board President Elizabeth Chadwick, Director Joe Forsee, and Office Manager Janet Eberhart attended the presentation, along with Mrs. Williams’s husband, State Representative Roger Williams, and adult children William Williams and Allison Faulk. Deputy Library Director and Rotarian Nick Fogarty introduced Mrs. Williams, and current president Dr. John Richmond presented her with the award. During his comments, Fogarty cited Mrs. Williams’s lifelong volunteer activities in the Georgia communities where she and Representative Williams, have lived.

“She has been a true grassroots advocate, and many, many community organizations, including the Northwest Georgia Regional Library, have been the beneficiaries of her work. She is an esteemed, dedicated public library advocacy, and in the world of public libraries, advocacy takes on the highest importance. Giving of one’s time and talent to persuade, convince, or cajole funding

bodies for sufficient budgets to allow for growth and expansion of library programs is of paramount importance, and Mrs. Williams is a model of such action,” Fogarty said.

“Joann and the members of the 4 Seasons Garden Club have helped to fund beautification projects at the public library. It is difficult to raise funds for improvements at a public facility, unless a private group takes on the advocacy role,” said Library Director Joe Forsee. “With Joann’s leadership, garden club members and other citizens she knows have called city council members and county commissioners, and appeared before the mayor and commission chair to support the library and its funding needs. Largely because of Joann’s leadership, the library received a local funding increase of over 10 percent in fiscal year 2009. That 10 percent allowed the purchase of many books and saved the job of at least one staff member.”

Forsee noted that Mrs. Williams’ proactive approach helped to raise the public library in Dalton from being one of the poorest funded libraries in the state. “She actually achieves what many others simply give ‘lip service’ to,” he said. ►►

## Friends of Georgia Libraries news

Friends of Georgia Libraries will hold its annual meeting and spring workshop, “The Care and ‘Feeding’ of Friends Groups,” from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on April 29 at the Macon State College Learning Support Center in Macon. “There’s never been a more important time for Friends groups and libraries to be vocal advocates for libraries,” said FOGL President Bede Mitchell, “and there’s no better teacher and guide on the subject than our speaker, Alan Harkness, Assistant State Librarian for Library Development. He’ll share smart, effective — and not-so-complicated — ways to put Friends to work to promote and protect your library.”

The event’s luncheon speaker will be Laretta Hannon, author of *The Cracker Queen: A Memoir of a Jagged, Joyful Life*. Afternoon highlights will include book signings by Hannon and the presentation of FOGL’s Fabulous Friends Award and its Best Friend Award.

Registration fees are \$20 for FOGL members and \$30 for non-members, which includes membership. Breakfast and lunch are included. Attendees are eligible to earn one hour of continuing education credit. Registration deadline is April 22. Additional information and registration forms are available at [www.georgia-friends.org](http://www.georgia-friends.org). ►►