



## Rotary Club fills in gap

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The Polish Hall was packed with a throng of Kirkland Lakers last weekend, all sporting fancy duds.

There was a black and white theme for the K.L. Rotary Club's second annual Evening of Excellence.

Balloons hanging from the ceiling surely brought back memories of prom night for many of the patrons.

All that was needed was some Billy Joel. And Jeff "The Piano Man" Brewer came through in the clutch to entertain the audience.

But the night belonged to the five Rotary award winners who have made great contributions to the community.

Mike Guimond received the Paul Harris Fellow Award, Rotary's highest honour. The mother-daughter duo of Kathy and Janet Barnes accepted the Small Business Award for The Jewel Box.



Dr. Ken Middlemiss received the Dedication to Vocation Award and retired teacher Carolyn MacKinnon took home CJKL's Lifetime Achievement Award.

The winners were all gracious and humble in their acceptance speeches, acknowledging that the many other people could've been honoured in the same way.

"K.L. has so many people of such generosity," said MacKinnon. "They unconsciously live by Rotary's motto 'Service Above Self.'"

Although there are only 28 members in the local club you'd think that there's a whole lot more after taking into account the many projects that Rotary supports.

Hockey Heritage North, the Salvation Army, Kirkland and District Hospital, VCARS, JSANO, the Terry Fox Run, not to mention minor hockey, soccer, ringette, curling and aquatics, all enjoy the support of Rotarians.

And there are many more causes that are too numerous to mention here.

Guimond believes that the club has never shied away from big projects and that this is necessary in the wake of government cutbacks to charities and services.

"Rotary fills in the gap," he said.

With monstrous commitments to health and education, sports are usually the first things on the chopping block when the government is looking for ways to reduce expenditures.

However, a person with an active lifestyle is less likely to be a burden on the health care system, so it's great to see clubs such as Rotary stepping up to support athletics.

Rotary President Jams King is also looking at the possibility of bringing a dragonboat race to K.L. in the future.

"This event promises to be full of fun and adventure for participants," he said.

We're certainly looking forward to it.

And who knows, maybe we could attach wheels and motors to the things and challenge the Northern Thunder drag racers at the airport next year?

Don't laugh, it's worked for snowmobiles...