



NEWS RELEASE

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EXEMPLARY VOLUNTEERS HONOURED BY TOWNSHIP

A special night was hosted by the Township of Langley to recognize and thank the many people who contribute so much to their community. The annual Volunteer Appreciation Event was held on Thursday, April 7 at the Langley Events Centre and hundreds of honoured guests were treated to dinner, presentations, and entertainment.

“The Township of Langley is an amazing place to live in and so much of that can be attributed to our dedicated volunteers, the people who are always willing to give their time, talent, and energy to help others and give back,” said Township Mayor Jack Froese. He co-hosted the event with Chelsea Ross, a Grade 12 student at Langley Fine Arts School, who is majoring in drama and serves on the Township’s Youth Advisory Committee.

During the evening, three awards were presented to celebrate an exceptional volunteer, an outstanding student, and a couple who together go above and beyond.

The **Eric Flowerdew Volunteer Award** is presented annually to a volunteer who promotes an active living lifestyle that enhances residents’ quality of life through creative, cultural, physical, or social pursuits, and enhances Langley’s community spirit.

Eric Flowerdew was a school trustee, municipal councillor, and member of the Langley Hospital Board. As Parks and Recreation Commissioner, he was instrumental in establishing the initial Parks and Recreation budget and in hiring Pete Swensson as the Township’s first Recreation Director. His commitment to volunteerism was unflinching, and in 1974 the Flowerdew family honoured his name with the award.

Nominees for the 2015 Eric Flowerdew Volunteer Award were:

- Kirsten Charlesworth
- Mary Renvall
- Maureen LePage
- Pat Anderson

The recipient was: Kirsten Charlesworth

From helping children, seniors, sports and schools, to fundraising to fight cancer and ensuring Christmas is special for everyone, Kirsten is always willing to lend a hand wherever there is a need in the community.

A working mother of two, Kirsten is dedicated to children's education and active lifestyles. A volunteer coordinator for Langley United Soccer Association, she is also president of RC Garnett Demonstration Elementary School's Parents Advisory Council and was instrumental in organizing and overseeing the installation of the new RC Garnett playground addition. She was also a member of the School District's PAC executive for three years.

Kirsten, who helps keep streets, waterways, and parks free from litter during Clean Up Langley Day, was a member of Langley Township's Recreation, Culture, and Parks Advisory Committee for six years and an organizer of the annual Langley Walk, including the event's 50th anniversary celebration.

Kirsten's volunteer efforts have also helped ensure the success of high-profile community sporting events, including the 2010 BC Summer Games and the 2014 Seniors Games. For several years, she has been raising money for the Langley Christmas Bureau by co-organizing the very popular Thank You for Caring – A Christmas Tea Fundraiser, and raising funds for the Canadian Cancer Society as an enthusiastic member of the Gallery Girlz Relay for Life Team.

The **Pete Swensson Outstanding Community Youth Award** is given to a Langley student in Grade 11 or 12 from one of the area's secondary schools, in recognition of his or her athletic, scholastic, and community efforts. Personal qualities such as leadership, work ethic, and initiative play a major role in the evaluation process.

Pete Swensson was an internationally recognized athlete and photographer, and an outstanding member of the Langley community. The Township of Langley's first Recreation Director, he was the originator of the Langley Walk. Swensson was committed to the overall development of youth, and this award is named in his honour.

Nominees for the 2016 Pete Swensson Outstanding Community Youth Award were:

- Rebecca Chadney of Langley Christian High School
- Lauren Ens of R.E. Mountain Secondary School
- Sierra Gustafson of Aldergrove Community Secondary School
- James Hardy of Langley Secondary School
- William Karpan of Brookwood Senior Secondary School
- Jenna Richmond of D.W. Poppy Secondary School
- Jaylene Stam of Credo Christian High School
- Daniel Stead of Walnut Grove Secondary School
- Alix Way of Langley Fundamental Middle and Secondary School

The recipient was: William Karpan

Having maintained a 97 – 99% average throughout his senior grades, William is a very accomplished student. Currently in Grade 12 at Brookwood Secondary School, he has been in French Immersion since Grade 6 and is taking Advanced Placement courses in Chemistry, Calculus, and English. William consistently finishes in the top 25% nationally in math contests, and has been his school's top academic student since Grade 9 and top French Immersion student since Grade 8.

Also named Athlete of the Month at his school – twice – William is a past member of the Langley Mustangs and has also played hockey, baseball, and lacrosse. He has been swimming for the past eight years and has won medals at the AAA Provincial Swimming Championships and the BCSSA Provincial Championships. He is now a coach for the Langley Flippers Swim Club, where he has set a number of club records.

Equally committed to the community, William has volunteered with the Gateway of Hope, the Langley Senior Resources Society, the Catz Crew Program that helps Grade 8 students starting at his school, and Brookwood's Breakfast Club.

The **John and Muriel Arnason Award** honours two people who are advocates of literacy, culture, and learning, and volunteer together as a team to make the Township of Langley a better place.

The award was created in memory of Muriel Arnason, the first woman to be elected to Township Council, and her husband, John. Muriel, who was made Freewoman of the Township in 2006, served on Council for 26 years, and was fully supported by her husband in her political pursuits, as well as in her initiatives to foster the arts, education, and literacy.

Recipients of the 2015 John and Muriel Arnason Award were: Candace and Dave Johnson

Helping those who have served our country and reaching out to seniors through friendship and food is a passion for Dave and Candace Johnson of Aldergrove, a husband and wife team who are members of the Aldergrove Vets and Seniors Society and the Ladies Auxiliary of the Royal Canadian Legion's Aldergrove Branch.

While the Auxiliary may have the word "Ladies" in its title, the group depends on the assistance of both male and female members. The Auxiliary regularly serves meals to veterans, and the Johnsons set up tables, prepare and serve food, sell tickets, clean up, and socialize with the guests of honour. They also help with special events, from swap meets to barbecues, with Dave acting as bartender. The Legion events provide socialization for seniors and veterans, but also raise funds for student scholarships, the food bank, families in need, and seniors' care homes.

Candace is the secretary at the Aldergrove Vets and Seniors Society, and while rules prohibit two family members from serving together on the executive, Dave is equally active as a volunteer and the group's maintenance man. The Society puts on lunches for seniors and veterans four days a week, and the Johnsons help set up and serve, and buy all the groceries.

The recipients of the Flowerdew and Arnason Awards received a \$750 monetary award to contribute to a recognized charity or society of their choice, and the Swensson Award winner received a \$750 scholarship.