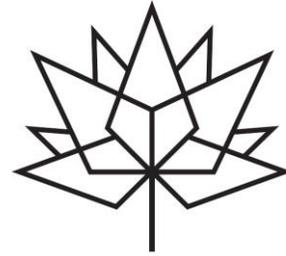


Township of
Langley



Est. 1873



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NEWS RELEASE

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VOLUNTEER EFFORTS APPRECIATED BY TOWNSHIP

They can be found in community halls and sports facilities, helping children or supporting seniors, lending a hand to those in need and giving their time and energy to make their community a better place.

The Township of Langley is full of tremendous volunteers who go above and beyond to enhance life for others. On Tuesday, April 4, they were recognized and thanked during the Township's annual Volunteer Appreciation event. Hundreds of special guests were welcomed to the Langley Events Centre, where they were treated to presentations, dinner, and entertainment, and awards were given to an exemplary individual, student, and couple.

The 2016 Eric Flowerdew Volunteer Award was presented to Alice Johnson.

A lifelong Willoughby resident, Johnson is committed to celebrating, preserving, and sharing Langley Township's heritage and history. A member of the Willoughby Community Hall and the Willoughby School Committees since the 1990s, she was instrumental in preserving both heritage buildings. A member of the Township's Heritage Advisory Committee, Langley Heritage Society, and Langley Centennial Museum History Group, Johnson has played a key role on the Douglas Day Committee for a decade and has been Queen Mother on May Day. Twenty-five years ago, she started the Willoughby Women's Community Institute, which is committed to bettering homes and families in the community and around the world.

Named after former Parks and Recreation commissioner, school trustee, and municipal councillor Eric Flowerdew, the Flowerdew Award is presented to an individual who promotes an active living lifestyle that enhances Langley's quality of life and community spirit through creative, cultural, physical, or social pursuits.

This year's Flowerdew nominees included Allan Richmond, Darlene Sherwin, Sandi Whyte, Sandy Dunkley, and Thornton Smith.

The **2016 – 2017 Pete Swensson Outstanding Community Youth Award** was presented to **Virginia Nikkel**.

A Grade 12 student at D.W. Poppy Secondary School, Nikkel has played on almost every team at Poppy, been named captain and Player of the Year for the Langley Football Club, and Rookie of the Year in rugby. An active student leader, Nikkel serves on Grad Council, is president of Global Voices, and volunteers as a scorekeeper and tutor. An ambassador for Lighthouse Voyage, she has raised money to fight human trafficking in India through the sale of her artwork. Nikkel maintains a 96% average and has received top student awards every year for subjects including Physics, Pre-Calculus, and Advanced English. She also shines in Band, Choir, and Musical Theatre, and has played the lead in several school productions.

An internationally recognized athlete and photographer, Pete Swensson was the Township's first Recreation Director and the originator of the Langley Walk. The award named in his honour is given to a Langley student in Grade 11 or 12 to recognize his or her athletic achievements, scholastic effort, community involvement, and personal qualities.

Also nominated were: Caleb Onderwater - Credo Christian High School; Elizabeth Lacey - Langley Fundamental Middle and Secondary School; Justin Curran - Walnut Grove Secondary School; Karen Shakirae - Aldergrove Community Secondary School; Katrina Schulz - R.E. Mountain Secondary School; Meaghan Laycock - Brookwood Secondary School; and Taylor Swift - Langley Secondary School.

The **2016 John and Muriel Arnason Award** was presented to **Wayne and Brenda Singbeil**.

Since 2009, the Aldergrove couple has been volunteering with the Valley Therapeutic Equestrian Association, which provides therapeutic horseback riding to children and adults with special needs. Brenda is secretary with the VTEA Board of Directors, organizes fundraisers, and has been re-writing the Association's policy and procedures manual. A member of the VTEA Board, Wayne works with the horses and riders and can often be found building paddocks, fences, and stalls. He has installed a sprinkler system and was kept busy this winter clearing snow. Both Singbeils are also active with the Langley Hospice Society, providing support to those at the end of their lives, their families, and those who are bereaved.

The John and Muriel Arnason Award was created in memory of Muriel Arnason, the first woman to be elected to Township Council, and her husband, John, to recognize people who volunteer together to make Langley a better place. It honours a couple who advocate for culture, learning, and literacy, foster partnerships and cooperative efforts, and create the potential for long-term benefits to the community.

Also nominated for the John and Muriel Arnason Award were Grant and Vera Ward.

“Volunteers really are exceptional people; they constantly give back and think of others, and they are one of the reasons the Township of Langley is such a wonderful place,” said Mayor Jack Froese. “It is always a pleasure to host this evening and thank our volunteers for everything they do and contribute, and let them know they truly make a difference.”

Froese co-hosted the appreciation event with Jamie Kusack, a Langley Fundamental Middle and Secondary School honour student who serves as a youth representative on the Township’s Recreation, Culture, and Parks Advisory Committee.

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.