

Township of
Langley



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NEWS RELEASE

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HELP GIVE VOLUNTEERS THE RECOGNITION THEY DESERVE

For some people, volunteering is something they just do. They enjoy socializing, giving back to the community, and utilizing their skills and talents. They say it keeps them active and makes them feel good.

Many volunteers do not expect to be recognized for all the things they do and contribute – but they should be.

“Volunteers have a profound impact on others,” said Township of Langley Mayor Jack Froese. “They make life better for the individuals they encounter and they enhance the quality of our community as a whole. That’s why each year it is our pleasure to thank the volunteers who make the Township such a great place.”

On Thursday, April 5, the Township of Langley will host its annual Volunteer Appreciation Event, and encourages members of the public to ensure dedicated volunteers in the community get the accolades they deserve by nominating them for an award.

During the evening, a student with exemplary athletic and academic achievements, community involvement, and personal qualities will be presented with the Pete Swensson Outstanding Community Youth Award. A couple who volunteer together to make Langley a better place will receive the John and Muriel Arnason Award, and the Eric Flowerdew Volunteer Award will be given to an individual who promotes active living and enhances Langley’s quality of life and community spirit through creative, cultural, physical, or social pursuits.

Last year, the Flowerdew Award was presented to Alice Johnson, a life-long Langley resident who is committed to celebrating, preserving, and sharing Langley Township’s heritage and history, and enjoys interacting with seniors.

“It was very special,” Johnson said of being named the Township’s Volunteer of the Year. “I saw all the nominees listed and thought they all deserved awards.”

A member of the Willoughby Community Hall Committee and the Willoughby School Committee since the 1990s, Johnson was instrumental in preserving both heritage buildings, which are still used and enjoyed by the community today. Twenty-five years ago, she started the Willoughby Women's Community Institute, which works towards bettering homes and families in the community and around the world.

A member of the Township's Heritage Advisory Committee, Langley Heritage Society, and Langley Centennial Museum History Group, Johnson also plays a key role with the Douglas Day Committee, which annually recognizes Langley's pioneers. Having lived in Willoughby all her life, she recently moved to Fort Langley and is enjoying socializing with other seniors in the community.

Johnson "absolutely" encourages people to get involved and volunteer, not just for the sake of the community, but for their own benefit. "The number of friendships I've made, the companionship: it's well worth it. You miss something if you don't volunteer."

Recipients of the Flowerdew and Arnason Awards receive \$750 to give to a recognized charity or society of their choice, and the Swensson Award winner is presented with a \$750 scholarship to help further their studies.

Johnson gave her cash award – which she personally topped up to make a \$1,000 donation – to Encompass Services Society to help homeless youth. She was happy to know the money had gone to buy school books for a student and to help another young person train for a career.

Johnson will be paying it forward by nominating a couple for this year's John and Muriel Arnason Award, and encourages other residents to put forward the names of hard-working volunteers they know, to give them a chance to be honoured.

Awards criteria, information, and nomination forms for the 2017 Eric Flowerdew Volunteer Award and John and Muriel Arnason Award can be found online at **tol.ca/awards**. Deadline for nominations is Friday, February 9.

To nominate a Grade 11 or 12 student for the 2017 - 2018 Pete Swensson Outstanding Community Youth Award, contact their school principal.

For more information, contact Sarah Morris, Special Events Coordinator, at 604.533.6148 or smorris@tol.ca.