

Township of  
Langley



Est. 1873

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR RELEASE: April 4, 2019**

### **EVENING AND AWARDS HONOUR TOWNSHIP VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers give without expecting anything in return, think of others first, and make the world a better place for all of us. They are the heart of our community, and on April 4, volunteers were celebrated by the Township of Langley for all they do and everything they contribute.

The Township's annual Volunteer Appreciation and Awards Evening was held at the Langley Events Centre and hundreds of people who assist those in need, care for the environment, encourage active lifestyles, support children and seniors, and enhance quality of life within the community were treated to dinner, entertainment, and special presentations.

"Our volunteers are a vital part of this community. Their hard work and dedication makes a huge difference in people's lives and their efforts can be felt throughout the Township of Langley," said Mayor Jack Froese. "Hosting this annual event is a small token of our appreciation and thanks for everything volunteers do throughout the year. It is always an honour to present this evening."

During the event, three awards were presented to recognize community members who have gone above and beyond to make the Township a better place.

**Shirley McGonigal**, a former nurse at Langley Memorial Hospital, was named the **2018 Eric Flowerdew Volunteer of the Year**. Now 83 years old, McGonigal retired 20 years ago but continues to care for people, visiting those who are ill or housebound, shopping and preparing meals, performing wound care, taking seniors to appointments, and visiting patients who are in hospital or care facilities. McGonigal often sees five to ten people per week.

A member of the LMH Heritage Committee since its inception in 1993, McGonigal is also active in the United Churches of Langley congregation. She serves with the Pastoral Care and Prayer Shawl Knitting Ministries, organizes memorial receptions, teas, and craft fairs, and delivers cards and cookies at Easter and Christmas.

The Flowerdew Award is named after former Parks and Recreation commissioner, school trustee, and municipal councillor Eric Flowerdew. It 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.

The **2018 John and Muriel Arnason Award** was presented to married couple **Jeff Morfitt and Kellie Reynolds** for their extraordinary efforts to present the inaugural Ribfest last summer at McLeod Athletic Park. Hosted by the community's four Rotary Clubs, the massive fundraiser brought in 25,000 visitors and raised \$60,000 for Rotary projects in Langley and around the world. Morfitt was chair and Reynolds treasurer and secretary of a 25-person committee that organized the inaugural three-day event, which featured award-winning barbecue fare, entertainment, and activities.

Members of the Rotary Club of Langley Sunrise, the couple are supporters of the Langley Youth Hub, Starfish Backpack Program, SASSY Awards, and Langley Has Talent. Morfitt and Reynold also both serve with Rotary's Charitable Foundation, which expands the organization's fundraising capabilities.

Friends **Donna Linke and Pauline Markle**, the longest-serving dog walkers at the Langley Animal Protection Society, were also nominated for the Arnason Award.

The Arnason Award was created in memory of Muriel Arnason, the first woman to be elected to Township Council, and her husband, John, to recognize two people who volunteer together to make Langley a better place.

The **2018 – 2019 Pete Swensson Outstanding Student of the Year Award** went to **Carson Sidhu**, a Grade 12 student at D.W. Poppy Secondary. Carson maintains a 93.5% average while taking eight courses and has been named Top Student in Philosophy and Computer Technology. He competed at the Physics Olympics, performs with the school's Wind Ensemble and Senior Jazz Band, and has received Duke of Edinburgh Bronze and Silver medals.

Poppy's Athlete of the Year, Carson is Captain and MVP of the Senior Boys Basketball Team, was named an All-Star at three tournaments this past season, plays volleyball and baseball, and swims. Carson is involved in youth leadership, volunteers with the Weekend Fuelbag Program, and is a certified CPR Heartsaver.

Other students nominated for the award included **Asher Mayan** of Langley Christian School, **Brooke Lindberg** of Langley Fundamental, **Fabrice Louise** of R.E. Mountain, **Jordan Jacobs** of Walnut Grove Secondary, **Kori Johnson** of Langley Secondary School, and **Madison McKellar** of Brookwood Secondary.

The Swensson Award is named after internationally recognized athlete and photographer Pete Swensson, the Township's first Recreation Director and originator of the Langley Walk. It is given to a Langley student in Grade 11 or 12 in recognition of their athletic achievement, academic accomplishment, leadership, and commitment to the community.

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

The evening, which included entertainment by the Langley Ukulele Ensemble, was co-hosted by Acting Township of Langley Mayor Blair Whitmarsh and Christina Jamieson. An advocate for those living with epilepsy and mental health issues, Jamieson was named Miss BC last year and recently crowned Miss Canada.