

King Township honours local volunteers at Volunteer Appreciation Awards

In what's called the finest night of the year in King, local volunteers were in the spotlight, being recognized for their selfless dedication. King's Volunteer Appreciation event awards local volunteers, who have made their community a better place. On behalf of King Township Council and its residents, I want to extend sincere appreciation to all our volunteers. Their altruism and commitment to enhancing our community are truly admirable. Whether they're lending a hand at schools, hospitals, non-profits, shelters or other community endeavors, their contributions have profoundly touched countless lives. King Township owes much of its character to their invaluable efforts, said Mayor Steve Pellegrini. Volunteers are the lifeblood of our Township, selflessly dedicating their time, skills and passion to make King a better place for all. Their efforts, often behind the scenes, touch countless lives and help build a stronger, more vibrant community. Each of these individuals embodies the values of compassion, generosity and selflessness that define our community. They are a testament to the power of volunteerism and the difference that one person can make in the lives of others. Councillor David Boyd praised the volunteers for their selfless efforts, and dedication. Tonight's recipients are inspirational examples of giving your admirable stories and accomplishments, demonstrate admirable that every day provides us the opportunity to affect somebody's life.

Citizen of the Year

Ivan Rapa was named Citizen of the Year. Nominated by Anthony Bisogno on behalf of the King United Soccer Club (KUSC), Rapa's contributions to the community and the club have left a lasting impact. Rapa's journey with KUSC began nearly 13 years ago when he joined as the equipment manager. His dedication to making soccer accessible to all soon propelled him into the role of vice-president of operations and, later, president. Known affectionately as Coach Ivan, he became a familiar face on the field, ensuring that every child's experience with the sport was meaningful and aligned with the club's ethos of Soccer for Life. As president, Rapa worked tirelessly to enhance KUSC's facilities, collaborating with the Township and private stakeholders. He also represented the club at regional and provincial soccer levels, advocating for the sustainability of community clubs like KUSC against for-profit academies. Rapa's leadership has inspired many to return to coach and volunteer, creating a ripple effect of positive change in King Township. He thanked his family for their support and also thanked the families of all the other volunteers for their support as volunteering can take time away from families. He said he gets satisfaction from seeing the smiles on the faces of the kids he's coached over the years. He also congratulated all the other volunteers.

Special Recognition Award

This award is given to one or more citizens or an organization for a special contribution made to the community. This year's recipients are: Nancy Boyd: Boyd was recognized for her support of the King Township Food Bank and community, her creation of the Love Bags program and her dedication to serving the less fortunate in a profound way. Karen Marshall: Marshall was recognized for her dedication and service with the King Township Food Bank as well as Christmas in King and significantly enhancing the organization's fundraising efforts with her remarkable organizational skills. Patti Strypek: Strypek was recognized for her dedication and service to Arts Society King, the King Township Public Library's King City branch and for the various charity events she has helped to run, such as Comedy in King and the King Holiday Lights Tour.

Non-Resident Award

This award is given to one or more individuals for a special contribution made to the community who reside outside of King. This year's recipients are: Karlene MacDonald: MacDonald was recognized for her dedication and service with the Nobleton Skating Club. She was recognized for her compassion and professionalism alongside her countless volunteer hours, ensuring families and skaters enjoy the sport. Ken Orr: Orr was recognized for his contributions to the community by way of coaching and donating to

youth sports teams, along with his giving more than 40 years of service to work with and help fundraise for the Lions Club.

Senior Citizen Award of Merit

This award is given to a senior citizen of King to recognize and honour special contributions to the senior population of King. This year's recipient is: Earl Groombridge: Groombridge was recognized for his coordination of initiatives to uplift the underprivileged, his involvement with the King Township Food Bank and support of those facing transportation challenges, offering his time and vehicle to those most in need.

Lifetime Achievement Award

This award recognizes outstanding citizenship within the community, with many years of dedicated service and devotion to the residents of King. This year's recipient is: Carol Ann Trabert: Trabert was recognized for her creation and development of the King Township Food Bank, her ?proclivity for saying yes? when it comes to serving her community and her exemplary dedication to her community's well-being. She has also been a strong leader in the Kettleby Fair, Carrying Place Property Owners' Association, and Schomberg Country Run.

Youth Award of Merit

This award is given to a younger citizen of King to recognize special contributions to the Township. This year's recipients are: Isabella Iacolino: Iacolino was recognized for her volunteer work over the last two years with King's Community Services department. She first started volunteering to obtain her high school volunteer service hours. However, she has far surpassed her 40 hours and continues to volunteer with King. She tackles every volunteering opportunity with enthusiasm and a sense of fun. Layla Giambattista: Giambattista was recognized for her willingness to support her community through the act of volunteering with the King Township Public Library, providing valuable support as a Reading Buddy to younger children as they develop and improve their literacy skills. Parents of the children she volunteers with speak highly of her. This year's theme was ?Thanks for helping us grow.? Special thank you to Pots and Plants for providing the décor and photo wall, LA Cantina Catering for the refreshments and Gatto Flowers for the beautiful blooming flowers. For more information on how each of the award recipients volunteers their time to make King a better place, visit king.ca/awardrecipients.