

?Priceless? volunteers honoured in King

By Angela Gismondi

King's priceless volunteers were honoured for their valuable efforts Thursday night.

The Township's annual Volunteer Appreciation Night was held in the packed Performing Arts Centre at The Country Day School in King City. The mayor and councillors handed out 13 awards to committed and dedicated volunteers who contribute to improving the quality of life in the community.

?Volunteers don't get paid not because they're worthless but because they're priceless,? said Mayor Steve Pellegrini.

Citizen of the Year

The prestigious Citizen of the Year award presented to a very deserving Blair Day.

In addition to his outstanding contributions as a secondary school teacher volunteering with extra-curricular activities, coaching sports and directing school theatre productions, he has also been actively involved with a number of community organizations including Sacred Heart Parish, local Scouts of Canada, Bereaved Families of Ontario, Canadian Blood Services, Maple Health Centre, Hospice King- Aurora and Meagan's Walk. He is also a member of the King City Library Board, Horticultural Society board and was recently appointed as the president of Arts Society King.

?This is for all the people I volunteer with,? said Day as he accepted his award following a standing ovation. Blair and his wife Elizabeth have lived in King City for over 40 years.

?Together we build this community and it is a great place to be. I love King.?

Awards

A special recognition award was presented to Helen Bible in recognition of her dedication and involvement for the past 50 years in the community of Nobleton, campaigning and raising money for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Margaret Hastings received a special recognition award for her contributions as member of the board of directors for the King Township Food Bank as its first director of fundraising, taking on the challenge of marketing and website redesign, as well as her success in creating the Sip and Savour Event, which raised \$35,000 in 2015.

Although Linda Olsen was not on hand to accept her award, she was recognized for her involvement with Nobleton United Church, dedicating time performing outreach and for the countless hours spent organizing various community meals, quilting and raising funds.

Ann Raney also received a special recognition award for her work spearheading the King For Refugees initiative, welcoming many into the community and demonstrating leadership by working with others towards sponsorship.

Bill Salter was honoured with an award for his efforts within the community as an early member and treasurer for several years with Concerned Citizens of King Township, treasurer and organizer of the Charles Sauriol Environmental Dinner with the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust. He has also been a member of the Cold Creek Stewardship since its inception in 2002 and an active board member of the King Township Historical Society since 2007.

Alex Simonato was recognized for establishing a Women's Softball League in King Township known as ?The Queens of King? and for her involvement with the Nobleton Public School Council, as well as contributing to the Eco School Program.

The Senior Citizen Award of Merit was given to Rosemary Bellefontaine in appreciation of her dedication as a long-time volunteer with the Anglican Church and her involvement in helping to start the Farmers' Market in King City. She is also a valued member of the King City Seniors' Centre and volunteers her time with Hospice King-Aurora, counselling both children and adults.

Two Youth Awards of Merit were presented to local young people who have donated their time and efforts to volunteer projects.

Ned Tighe accepted an award for his work with the Mayor's Youth Action Team, and for his involvement with various initiatives at King City Secondary School.

King City Secondary School student Sharan Dhillon was not able to attend the event but an award was given to her for her participation as Vice-Chair of the Mayor's Youth Action Team, as well as her involvement in various initiatives at King City Secondary School.

Lifetime Achievement Awards went to husband and wife volunteer team Fred and Betty Beaton for generously giving their time and contributing to the King City Lion's Club, King City United Church, countless fundraising initiatives, delivering gifts to seniors on

Christmas Eve, providing clothes to the homeless and coaching children's baseball and hockey.

Ed Millar also received a lifetime achievement award for his numerous contributions including his involvement as a member of the Oak Ridge's Trail Association since 1994 and Chair of The King Chapter since 2005, dedicated to keeping the trails safe, as well as a member of All Saints Anglican Church.

Pellegrini thanked everyone for coming to one of the most important events in the Township.

"This truly is the most special day in King when we acknowledge our volunteers," said an emotional Pellegrini to the crowd gathered in the auditorium. "As a mayor, I can't tell you how proud I am."