

CITY OF BURNABY

ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS

**RE: CITY OF BURNABY 2001 ENVIRONMENT AWARDS AND
ENVIRONMENTAL STARS**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** two awards be presented for the 2001 Environment Award in Communications: to Joan Parsonson for innovative environmental education, and to Dr. Mark Winston for environmental and science policy communications.
2. **THAT** three awards be presented for the 2001 Environment Award in Community Stewardship: to Jim Atwater for the significant enhancement of Beecher Creek; to the Byrne Creek Streamkeepers for their stewardship of Byrne Creek and the Stream of Dreams project; and to the Sapperton Fish and Game Club for their long term stewardship of the Brunette River.
3. **THAT** the 2001 Environment Award in Youth be presented to Buckingham Elementary for their comprehensive environmental activities over the last fifteen years.
4. **THAT** two Environmental Stars in Communications be presented to Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST) and the Douglas College Institute of Urban Ecology Green Links Program.
5. **THAT** an Environmental Star in Planning and Development be presented to the Wembley Estate Townhouse Complex.
6. **THAT** three Environmental Stars in Community Stewardship be presented to Maurice Coulter-Boisvert, Harry Karmitsa, and Fred Porth.
7. **THAT** four Environmental Stars in Youth be presented to Alysha McAuley and Marsha Koniuhova, Matthew Clive and Kevin Kellin.

REPORT

The Environment and Waste Management Committee, at its meeting held on 2001 May 08, received and adopted the *attached* report providing nominations for the 2001 Environment Awards and Environmental Stars. The Committee advised that these individuals and groups have demonstrated exemplary works which enhance the City's natural environment while encouraging stewardship.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston
Chair

Councillor C. Redman
Vice Chair

Councillor B. Der
Member

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

2001 JUNE 01

FROM: ENVIRONMENT & WASTE
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

OUR FILE: 11.800.1

SUBJECT: CITY OF BURNABY 2001 ENVIRONMENT AWARDS & ENVIRONMENTAL STARS

PURPOSE: To recommend award recipients for the 2001 City of Burnaby Environment Awards and Environmental Stars.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the following 2001 Environment Awards be conferred:
 - a) That two awards be presented for the 2001 Environment Award in Communications: to Joan Parsonson for innovative environmental education, and to Dr. Mark Winston for environmental and science policy communications.
 - b) That three awards be presented for the 2001 Environment Award in Community Stewardship: to Jim Atwater for the significant enhancement of Beecher Creek; to the Byrne Creek Streamkeepers for their stewardship of Byrne Creek and the Stream of Dreams project; and to the Sapperton Fish and Game Club for their long term stewardship of the Brunette River.
 - c) That the 2001 Environment Award in Youth be presented to Buckingham Elementary for their comprehensive environmental activities over the last fifteen years.

2. **THAT** the following 2001 Environmental Stars be conferred:
 - a) Two Environmental Stars in Communications be presented to Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST) and the Douglas College Institute of Urban Ecology Green Links Program.
 - b) An Environmental Star in Planning and Development be presented to the Wembley Estate Townhouse Complex.
 - c) Three Environmental Stars in Community Stewardship be presented to Maurice Coulter-Boisvert, Harry Karmitsa, and Fred Porth.

- d) Four Environmental Stars in Youth be presented to Alysha McAuley, Marsha Koniuhova, Matthew Clive and Kevin Kellin.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

Within the State of the Environment Report (SOER), adopted in 1993, there is a provision for Shared Stewardship, an idea that seeks opportunities for community stewardship, environmental awareness and public information. One of the specific ideas discussed in the report is the need “to establish an environmental awards program to recognize environmental achievements.” Council subsequently adopted terms of reference for an environmental awards program to recognize important environmental achievements in a variety of areas. The first City Environment Awards were presented during Environment Week 1996, and have occurred annually during Environment Week since that date.

At its meeting of 2000 March 27, Council adopted the terms of reference for the Environmental Stars program to recognize important environmental works by members of the community which fall outside the scope of the Environment Awards. The first Environmental Stars were awarded during Environment Week 2000.

The recommendations for the 2001 Environment Awards and 2001 Environmental Stars are outlined in this report, as advanced by the Environment and Waste Management Committee. The terms of reference for the City of Burnaby Environment Award and Environmental Stars Programs are outlined in *Appendix A, attached*.

3.0 AWARD PROCESS

A call for nominations is made annually through the local newspapers and on the City’s web page. The Environment Awards are given annually by Council, through recommendations of the Environment and Waste Management Committee. The Committee is not compelled to recommend Award winners to Council in any or all categories if they feel there are no appropriate candidates in a given year. The Environmental Stars can be awarded throughout the year, and recommendations may come from the Committee or members of Council.

At its meeting of 2001 May 14, Council approved a special evening reception for the presentation of the Awards and Stars. The reception will be held at Ceperly House, hosted by Council, on 2001 June 06.

4.0 2001 ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

4.1 Communications Awards

It is recommended that two individuals be awarded the Communications Award, given their long term work in environmental communications. The first recommended recipient of the City of Burnaby 2001 Environment Award in Communications is **Joan Parsonson**, for her innovative environmental education programs. Ms. Parsonson is a Social Studies teacher at Burnaby Mountain Secondary School who has brought the Social Studies 10 curriculum alive for her students by tying it into current issues of stewardship and sustainability. Her creative approach to social studies has her students involved in public stewardship events, providing input into management plans, mentoring projects with elementary students and other activities which introduce students to current environmental issues and issues around resource management. In September 2001 a new course called Urban Ecology 11/12 will be offered for the first time, developed by Ms. Parsonson.

The second recommended recipient of the City of Burnaby 2001 Environment Award in Communications is **Dr. Mark Winston**, for his environmental and science policy communications. A full professor in Simon Fraser University's Department of Biological Sciences, he is internationally acknowledged as the world's leading expert on bees and pollination, and his publishing credits include 126 scientific research papers and four books. Some of his many honours include a B.C. Science Council Gold Medal, a Manning Award for Innovation, a U.S. Fulbright Award and a Canada Council Killam Fellowship, and he was recently named the top educator in the province by the Confederation of University Faculty Association of B.C.

Dr. Winston's 1997 book - *Nature Wars: People vs. Pests* - reminds us that pests - from cockroaches to rats - share our world in a delicate balance. *Nature Wars* was short-listed in Britain for the BP Natural World Book Prize and also earned Dr. Winston SFU's Sterling Prize in Controversy. In addition to the successful *Nature Wars*, Burnaby residents may know Mark Winston best for his twice-a-month columns in *The Vancouver Sun* where he explores everything from genetically modified plants to our addiction to pesticides. But they may have also read his work in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* or in *Orion* magazine or have heard him interviewed on local radio and television stations. Dr. Winston is an academic with a rare ability to communicate effectively and powerfully with scientists and non-scientists alike.

4.2 Community Stewardship Awards

There are three recommended recipients of the Community Stewardship Award. The first recommended recipient of the City of Burnaby 2001 Environment Award in Community Stewardship is **Jim Atwater**, for the significant enhancement of Beecher Creek.

Jim Atwater initiated the rehabilitation of Beecher Creek in 1995. Working closely with the 8th Northview Scouts and Mr. Ken March, Mr. Atwater coordinated and implemented extensive enhancement works, including stream monitoring and reporting, riparian plantings, bird nest box installation, the installation of a pedestrian bridge, stream complexing through the creation of a number of small weirs and bank stabilization works completed as part of City Engineering works to upgrade sanitary sewer crossings across Beecher Creek. In 1997, Mr. Atwater and the 8th Northview Scouts implemented a major riparian planting project with the City of Burnaby, BCIT and members of the public at a private industrial site on lower Beecher Creek near the BNR. In facilitating the various projects, he ensured that the Scouts played a meaningful role to gain a solid understanding of creek ecology and the processes and partnerships necessary to be effective stewards. In 1997, the 8th Northview Scouts, under his leadership and that of Mr. March, received the City's Environment Award for Youth for their participation as Beecher Creek Streamkeepers.

Since that time, Mr. Atwater has continued to initiate and design improvements to Beecher Creek, working with elementary students as well as with the City and BCIT. He recently partnered with BCIT in the juvenile sampling and monitoring program with the goal to learn more about the distribution and abundance of salmonids in Burnaby to better manage salmonid stocks and focus enhancement efforts. A stroll along Beecher Creek provides ample evidence of the tremendous effort Mr. Atwater has extended in the area.

The second recommended recipient of the City of Burnaby 2001 Environment Award in Community Stewardship is the **Byrne Creek Streamkeepers**, for their stewardship of Byrne Creek and the Stream of Dreams project. The Byrne Creek Streamkeepers were formed in April 1999, with a unique partnership with local residents and the Vancouver Angling and Game Association (VAGA), who had been active on the creek for many years. This merging created the unique opportunity for VAGA members to pass along their skills and the benefits of their experience to a new group of Streamkeepers. The Byrne Creek Streamkeepers are one of the most active groups in Burnaby, and work tirelessly in raising the City and community's awareness of environmental conditions in the creek. In cooperation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, they regularly release salmon and monitor returns, regularly reporting coho returns annually. The group has cleaned up the creek and ravine substantially, and sponsor clean-ups for Environment Week and BC Rivers Day. Regular storm drain marking has also helped to raise awareness in the area.

In addition to these activities, the Byrne Creek Streamkeepers embarked on the Stream of Dreams project in 2000 to commemorate a spill in 1998 which resulted in the death of some 5,000 fish. The Stream of Dreams is a mural on the City-owned property fence at the corner of Kingsway and Edmonds of some 2,200 painted wooden fish (there will ultimately be 5,000 fish on the fence), created entirely by members of the community. The mural is intended to raise awareness about the connection of the creek to the storm sewer system, and remind residents that what goes into the storm drain ultimately ends up in the creek. The fish

were painted in a series of workshops done in conjunction with a talk and/or walk of the creek and discussion of these issues. The full impact of the mural on the community has yet to be gauged, but there is no doubt that it has already had a significant impact. Literally thousands of people have participated in its creation. This may be the most visible of the Byrne Creek Streamkeepers projects, but it is only one of many that have significantly enhanced this Burnaby waterway.

The third recommended recipient of the City of Burnaby 2001 Environment Award in Community Stewardship is the **Sapperton Fish and Game Club**, for their long term stewardship of the Brunette River. The Sapperton Fish and Game Club has been addressing issues on the Brunette River since the 1960s, and at that time, the river was substantially degraded and facing the impacts of increasing urbanization. Sapperton members commenced the long and arduous task of restoring this urban waterway, and in the 1980s began introducing cutthroat trout and coho salmon stocks to the river. Throughout the next several years, working with the City of Burnaby, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Sapperton members helped to investigate and eliminate many potential sources of pollution. One of the major problems discovered was the issue of cross-connections, whereby improperly connected sewer lines were discharging into the storm system. Sapperton members dedicated many hours to the identification and elimination of these cross-connections.

In an effort to supply fish stocks themselves, Sapperton spearheaded and coordinated the construction of a new hatchery on Craig Avenue in 1997. Members tend every facet of the process, as well as conduct regular tours for schools and members of the public. Sapperton members typically spawn 20,000 coho eggs per year, which are subsequently released into the Brunette River or its tributaries. An afternoon stroll on the Brunette demonstrates the long term success of Sapperton's efforts: the restoration of this fish-bearing river, something the experts of the time said couldn't be done.

4.3 Youth Award

The recommended recipient of the City of Burnaby 2001 Environment Award in Youth is **Buckingham Elementary**, for their comprehensive environmental activities over the last fifteen years. Buckingham students have a long-established record of achievement in environmental responsibility. Last year they reached the 500 project mark in the SEEDS program (an educational program to promote environmental awareness in the schools), and were recognized by the Minister's Award for Youth.

The students have been involved in diverse environmental activities over the past 15 years and continue to be committed to the environment on a daily basis. Their activities regularly spill over into the community as a whole and involve neighbours as well as local businesses. For example, the Burnaby branch of Speedy Autoglass used to throw away their telephone

books each year, and now supports the school's annual telephone book drive instead. The students have taken part in salmonid activities each year and regularly clean up Buckingham Creek, which is near the school. Classes have taken part in environmental education programs offered by the City, such as the *Cut The Garbage* program. Buckingham Elementary also has a strong commitment to recycling, reusing and reducing. The school has instituted tetra pak and container recycling, blue box use, mixed paper recycling and the reuse of paper in many ways. Children are involved directly in planning for all of these activities through the Student Council and classroom discussion.

Buckingham Elementary has lost many of its original trees through storm and decay, and each year classes participate in the school's greening process. By participating in the telephone book recycling program, the students have raised enough money to plant numerous trees and flowers on the school grounds. The students have also helped with ideas resulting in the Buckingham School garden. The garden idea was taken on by several members of the school PAC and was supported by the community, staff and students of the school. It is intended that the garden will not be a temporary entity, but a lasting legacy to the whole community from this year's student, staff and parent group.

5.0 2001 ENVIRONMENTAL STARS

5.1 Communications Stars

There are two recommended recipients of the Environmental Star in Communications. The first recommended recipient is **Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST)**, for initiating the Willingdon Transportation Action Group (WTAG) to facilitate transportation improvements in and around the Willingdon Avenue area. BEST is a non-profit agency established in 1991 as a grassroots cycling education and advocacy group, and has evolved into an integrated voice for environmentally sound transportation generally. WTAG includes representatives from the businesses and institutions in and around the Willingdon corridor. This group has participated in the transformation of the Willingdon HOV initiative from project concept to preliminary design and, finally, to alternative transportation reality. This has included working in association with the City to install additional transit shelters in the Discovery Park area, as well as the production and dissemination of *Go Green! Commuting Options for the Willingdon Corridor*. This pamphlet details the various alternative transportation options individuals have in the area, and was disseminated by member employers, institutions and the City. As a result of WTAG and the transportation options pamphlet, awareness of alternatives to the single occupant vehicle and the implications that our transportation habits have on the environment and the surrounding community has been significantly increased.

The second recommended recipient of the Environmental Star in Communications is the **Douglas College Institute of Urban Ecology Green Links Program**. In 1995 Green Links

initiated its Burnaby Green Links project under the direction of Dr. Val Schaefer. The purpose of the project is to establish and enhance ecological corridors or green links between larger environmentally sensitive areas or ecological reservoir areas to enhance biodiversity by allowing for the movement of wildlife. The Burnaby Green Link is intended to link Byrne Creek Ravine Park with Robert Burnaby Park and eventually connect with Burnaby Lake and Burnaby Mountain. The project has involved a number of native plantings at Graham Park, erection of a significant number of bird and bat boxes, coordination of a Backyard Naturalization Challenge and naturalizing of a number of private residences, school yard enhancements at Cariboo Secondary, community naturalization workshops and a successful plant salvage program.

In the last two years, Green Links work in Burnaby has focussed around two schools: Second Street Community School and Burnaby North Secondary School. Green Links played a prominent role in the greening of the Second Street School grounds (for which the school received the City's 2000 Environment Award for Youth), including the development of the community garden and the mural. Green Links has also recently completed a bat box workshop with Burnaby North students, and has been working with their "Options" special needs program to do native plant propagation from seed.

5.2 Planning and Development Star

The recommended recipient of the Environmental Star in Planning and Development is **Wembley Estate**, a townhouse development in the Forest Grove area which is implementing a long-term re-landscaping plan. The intent of the re-landscaping plan is to move away from the typical strata landscaping of grass and manicured shrubs, toward naturesscaping. This involves a commitment of funds, time and a recognition of the environmental benefits which will be achieved by such an investment. These benefits include the elimination of potentially hazardous chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, and improved habitat for wildlife, including birds and insects. Phase 1 of the re-landscaping plan was implemented in 2000. It is anticipated that, subject to funds being available, subsequent phases will be implemented over the next three to four years. By the end of that period the full environmental benefits of this project will be substantially realized.

5.3 Community Stewardship Stars

There are three recommended recipients of the Environmental Star in Community Stewardship. The first is **Maurice Coulter-Boisvert**, Community Stewardship Advisor with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. While he began working with Fisheries and Oceans Canada in 1978, since 1989 Mr. Coulter-Boisvert, as Community Advisor, has worked exclusively with volunteers: all the programs related to salmon enhancement and volunteers, salmonids in the classroom and public awareness. He has some 30 - 40 stewardship groups that rely on him for fisheries-related services. The Burnaby Streamkeepers speak very highly of Mr.

Coulter-Boisvert and the work that he does in this community. “He’s always been there for us,” said one. This refers not only to the provision of fish for a release, or a letter of support for a grant application, but for advice, strategy and support. His work program is defined strictly in terms of the enhancement of fisheries stock, but Mr. Coulter-Boisvert sees the necessity of addressing the bigger picture. As such, he attends stewardship meetings and works with the stewards to address advocacy issues in their community. He takes the extra step to get involved, and has cultivated a reputation of always being there and for always going the extra mile. The stewards of Burnaby rely on this man, who has never let them down. As he puts it, “I help people realize the difference they can make and are making.”

The second recommended recipient of the Environmental Star in Community Stewardship is **Harry Karmitsa**, who has been the driving force behind the Lubbock’s Stream Habitat Committee’s efforts for approximately three years. He initiated interest in Lubbock’s Creek, and is largely responsible for rehabilitating the stream to such an extent that it has been suitable for the release of salmon fry for the last two years. With the addition of a fish ladder/weir by BC Hydro later this year, which Mr. Karmitsa helped to facilitate, it is anticipated that these fish stocks will now be able to reach the river system and return. Some of Mr. Karmitsa’s other activities include working with the City and various agencies to effect numerous enhancements in the creek and associated riparian area, organizing several successful Rivers Day events at Lubbock’s Creek, where local residents participated in cleaning up the park and stream area, storm drain marking and regular monitoring.

The third recommended recipient of the Environmental Star in Community Stewardship is **Mr. Fred Porth**, who has been a resident of Burnaby since 1935. While not affiliated with any organizations, Mr. Porth maintains that he has always lived his life in an environmentally-friendly manner, stressing the reduction of materials and their reuse. He has been an avid gardener and landscaper throughout his life. At 83, he regularly picks up garbage along Hastings Street and Clare Avenue, and volunteers at his residence doing landscaping.

5.4 Youth Stars

There are four recommended recipients of the Environmental Star in Youth. The first two are **Alysha McAuley** and **Marsha Koniuhova**, grade 7 students at Forest Grove Elementary School who recently initiated a battery recycling and awareness campaign at their school. Alysha uses hearing enhancement equipment, and became concerned with the number of batteries the equipment utilized and their disposal. Alysha took the initiative to research information about batteries and their recycling options, and with Marcia established a collection facility at the school. The two have subsequently spoken to all of the students in the school and prepared articles for the school newsletter, encouraging students to bring their batteries in from home to be recycled. Alysha also recently did a presentation for the Optimist Club (which focuses on hearing impaired youth) at the Michael J. Fox Theatre on

the importance of battery recycling, and completed a science project about batteries, weighing a new battery and a used one to document the loss of weight.

The third and fourth recommended recipients of the Environmental Star in Youth are **Matthew Clive** and **Kevin Kellin**, Grade 11 students at Alpha Secondary School who recently discovered MTBE in surface water near the Chevron refinery in North Burnaby. While preparing their project for a science fair, the two students took numerous samples of surface runoff near the refinery site, and a local lab donated testing services. An analysis of the samples detected MTBE. The City was subsequently notified and met with Matthew, who led staff to the site. Additional sampling by the City confirmed the students' findings, and the City undertook investigation with Chevron on the matter. As a result of their discovery, the City is actively dealing with Chevron to retain the product on their site and to undertake remedial measures.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The Environment and Waste Management Committee recommends that the recipients identified in this report receive the 2001 City Environment Awards and 2001 Environment Stars as outlined. The Committee believes these individuals and groups have demonstrated exemplary works which enhance the City's natural environment while encouraging stewardship. As recommended in the City's State of the Environment Report (SOER), the City's Environment Awards are seen as a means of recognizing significant environmental achievements, while encouraging stewardship. This will be the sixth year for the City Environment Awards program, and the second presentation of the City's Environmental Stars.

A special reception will be held for the presentation of the Awards and Stars, as previously approved by Council at its meeting of 2001 May 14. The reception will be held at Ceperly House, hosted by Council, on 2001 June 06. The reception also provides an opportunity for the community stewards to meet other individuals and groups active in environmental issues in the City.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston, Chair

Councillor C. Redman, Member

Councillor B. Der, Member

Citizen Members
Mr. R. Anderson
Mr. R. Gunn
Mr. C. Lipp
Mr. S. Wong

Appendix A

City of Burnaby Environment Award & Environmental Stars Categories

The City of Burnaby Environment Awards recognize outstanding contributions made by individuals, organizations or companies to improve Burnaby's environment and our understanding of it. The Environmental Stars program is intended to recognize important environmental works by members of the community which fall outside the scope of the Environment Awards. Both programs increase awareness of opportunities available to the public and the City to become more environmentally responsible. While the specific categories of awards are described below, the Committee does reserve the right to recommend awards to candidates that do not fall into any of the categories as outlined. It should be noted that the same categories apply to both the Awards and the Stars, although the criteria for the Stars is less rigorous.

Communication

This category includes newspaper articles, publications, video, audio, multi-media or visual/ graphic presentations that help to increase the awareness and understanding of environmental issues in Burnaby. The nominated work should demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of an environmental issue and its relationship to the citizens of Burnaby. Newspaper articles may be in the form of regular constructive reporting on environmental issues or may be serial in format, thoroughly researched and referenced, and prominently featured within the newspaper. Other publications such as magazine articles or books should offer in depth profiles or insight into specific environmental characteristics and issues found in Burnaby and be readily available in Burnaby bookstores. Awards in the video, audio and multimedia category should be granted to those works that exploit their media format to provide insightful, and possible interactive, educational opportunities that may be useful within Burnaby schools and libraries to increase awareness of environmental issues in the City.

Planning and Development

This category highlights exemplary developments that demonstrate innovative environmental features that may include environmentally sensitive site planning, solar energy, water conservation, storm water or wastewater management, conservation of resources through the reuse of materials, the protection and enhancement of urban streams or the enhancement of wildlife habitat in the City. Developments may range in scale from large commercial, industrial, institutional or residential projects to individual new or renovated buildings or sites.

Community Stewardship

This category identifies citizens or groups in Burnaby who have been actively involved in promoting environmental stewardship for several years and who, through their efforts, have increased public awareness of an environmental issue or notably enhanced or rehabilitated the City's environment.



Youth

This category recognizes the contributions that children or teenagers have made, either through their own initiatives or through school or other programs that have resulted in enhanced public awareness of environmental issues or notably enhanced or rehabilitated the City's environment.

