

SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

SUBJECT: 2009 LOCAL HERO NOMINEES

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council receive this report for information.

REPORT

Council, at the 'Closed' Council meeting held on 2009 October 05, received and adopted the *attached* report containing this year's Local Hero nominees.

A copy of the Local Hero report is provided for public information.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor P. Calendino
Chair

Councillor P. McDonell
Vice Chair

Councillor A. Kang
Member

<p>COPY: City Manger Director Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director Planning and Building</p>
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TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

DATE: September 10, 2009

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

FILE: 1450 01
Reference: Local Heroes

SUBJECT: 2009 LOCAL HERO NOMINEES

PURPOSE: To recommend individuals for receipt of 2009 Local Hero Awards and to seek funding approval for the 2010 Local Hero Award program.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council be requested to:
 - a. Approve the nominations of the following individuals for receipt of Burnaby Local Hero Awards in 2009:
 1. Stella Castillo
 2. Merrilyn Cook
 3. Sidney Cumbers
 4. Keanna Driedger
 5. Sharon Freeman
 6. Fatehali Jetha
 7. Jack Kuyer
 8. Tammy Ozero
 9. Wanley Poh
 10. Deepak Prasad
 11. Wendell Ratcliffe
 12. Mohammad I. Shamsi
 13. Millie Wylie
 - b. Invite approved nominees to the 2009 November 2 Council meeting to be presented with their Local Hero Award certificates of recognition.
 - c. Approve expenditures of up to \$3,500 from the 2010 Council Committees and Boards Budget for printing and advertising costs for the 2010 Local Hero Award program.

REPORT**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Each year since 1997, Burnaby has identified and recognized Local Heroes: people who have made outstanding contributions to community well-being in Burnaby. To date, the City has recognized 187 Local Heroes, individuals who represent diverse interests and backgrounds and have contributed to the community in a variety of ways (see list of past recipients in Appendix 1, *attached*).

This report provides background information and recommendations on the nominees for the 2009 Local Hero Award program.

2.0 LOCAL HERO NOMINEES

As in previous years, the following means were used to seek nominations for the 2009 Local Hero awards: advertisements in Burnaby's community newspapers; display of a large format poster at the Metrotown information kiosk; a call for nominations through the City's website; and requests to participants at various inter-agency meetings to "get the word out" about the initiative. Posters and brochures on the program were circulated through Burnaby City Hall, schools, recreation centres, libraries, community resource centres, and other venues. Volunteer Burnaby also distributed information about the program to their members and networks.

The deadline for submitting Local Hero nominations was 2009 June 30. As stated in the eligibility guidelines, a maximum of 20 Local Heroes may be selected in a given year. Local Hero Awards are intended to recognize individuals who have made contributions to community well-being in Burnaby over an extended period of time. Consideration is given, however, to youth or recent immigrants who have made noteworthy contributions over a shorter period. The primary intent of the program is to recognize volunteers. In exceptional circumstances, however, people who go "above and beyond the call of duty" in a paid capacity may also be eligible for recognition. Local Hero Awards are given on a one-time basis only.

A total of 23 nominations were received this year. After reviewing the submissions in accordance with the established criteria, the following 13 nominees are proposed for 2009 Local Hero Awards:

Stella Castillo

Stella is originally from Colombia and arrived in Canada in 2000 after a traumatic experience in her home country. Stella was kidnapped and held hostage for five months by a guerilla group in Colombia – an experience that she says taught her how to make decisions based on love and create spaces for freedom amidst captivity. In Canada, Stella uses her positive energy to give back, facilitating a Latin American women's group through the REACH Community Health Centre's Multicultural Family Centre. Stella also volunteers at Burnaby Family Life as a group facilitator, photographer and program planner. Stella's nominators observe, "Not only has Stella touched my life and turned it around, but the lives of others as well. She is truly a local hero who has had an enormous impact on the lives of many women and their families."

Merrilyn Cook

To summarize Merrilyn's list of accomplishments is a difficult task. Merrilyn has been involved with the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI) for the past 30 years – as a community advocate, educator, board member, leader, and an invaluable resource to BACI's community development and organizational vision. She is recognized for her admirable personal characteristics and values which inform all that she does. Merrilyn's nominators note that "Inspiring others through her words and works, Merrilyn helps people and organizations to achieve their goals and create a better world for us all to live in."

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Sidney Cumbers

Sidney has approximately 30 years of volunteer commitment to community projects in Burnaby. Since his retirement, Sidney has furthered his dedication to continued education through his volunteer work at the Community Centred College for the Retired in Burnaby. Sidney also volunteers at the Burnaby Historical Society and is actively involved in their activities. Lastly, Sidney volunteers with the Friends of Interurban, working to restore and preserve this historic tram. He is noted for his dedication to the community and his energy and enthusiasm.

Keanna Driedger

Keanna Driedger has not let her youth stop her from becoming an active volunteer in the community. At only 16 years old, Keanna volunteers with the South Burnaby Neighbourhood House with the youth leadership program, the newcomer children's program, and fundraising for hampers during the Christmas season. She also works with the cultural dinner events, and an environmental education project at Edmonds school. She currently serves on the South Burnaby Neighbourhood Small Grants committee. Keanna is also the co-leader of the Student Union at Moscrop and has raised money for the Free the Children Society. Her nominator remarks, "What I appreciate most about Keanna is her willingness to step into whatever situation before her to see that a job gets done."

Sharon Freeman

Sharon served on the Board of the Burnaby Public Library from January 2001 through December 2006 and was reappointed to the Library Board in January 2009. She was Board Vice-Chair in 2005 and Board Chairperson in 2006. Sharon is a tireless advocate for children, literacy and libraries. As a teacher-librarian she has promoted public library use among her colleagues. Sharon brings her passion for children, literacy and libraries to her role as Trustee. Her nominators observe that "Her participation at the Board level has always been exceptional!"

Fatehali Jetha

Fatehali has been an active volunteer since he was young. He has been particularly supportive of the seniors in our community and he works with them to guide them in applying for the various benefits they are entitled to. He also assists people in crisis to secure emergency housing. Lastly he offers a lunch, once a month, to the residents of the Carleton Lodge (a nursing home in Burnaby). Fatehali has also contributed to the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion for many years, in particular assisting with seniors' issues. His nominators note, "Mr. Jetha's many volunteer contributions have made a significant and positive difference, especially to the more vulnerable segments of the community."

Jack Kuyer

Jack is the owner of Valley Bakery and has been an integral part of the Burnaby business community for many years. He has been actively involved with the Burnaby Board of Trade (BBOT) for six years. For two of those years Jack was Chair of the BBOT, where among other things, he initiated the promotion of corporate social responsibility. For several decades, Jack has also donated Valley Bakery's unsold products to the Union Gospel Mission every night. He also regularly donates to Hats Off Days and Empty Bowls. Nominators praise Jack for being "a sincere and honest communicator; he does not engage in negativity."

Tammy Ozero

Tammy is a parent volunteer and community member dedicated to creating a warm and welcoming community. She volunteers her time to help organize and run school fundraisers and community events through 2nd Street Community School. Tammy is involved with numerous

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activities including: Walking Wednesdays, Fruit & Vegetable Snack Program, Bike Fair, Eastside Opportunities, Second Street Signal, Book Swap, and Roots of Empathy, in addition to countless other tasks. Her nominators observe that, “Tammy’s energy is both infectious and endless, and her cheery personality and smile makes her a pleasure to be around.”

Wanley Poh

Wanley is a parent at Taylor Park Elementary School who has worked tirelessly to provide for the students. She almost single-handedly raised money for two playground structures. In 2004, Wanley was elected as the chair of the Parent Advisory Committee and a member of the School Planning Council. Over the last five years, Wanley and her team have organized countless events such as Fun Fairs, Community Potluck Dinners, Pancake Breakfasts, Haunted Houses, Scholastic Book Fairs, Concession Stands and other activities. Her nominators note that while it is common for parents to volunteer at schools, “what makes Wanley stand out is her commitment to all the stakeholders at the school. She ensures that the students are having fun, the staff is appreciated and the parents are involved in their children’s education. When she takes on a task, she completes it with energy, grace and class.”

Deepak Prasad

Deepak has been an outstanding member of the community by providing a number of services on a volunteer basis. In 2002, he founded the First Responders Charitable Society and has assisted in raising over \$160,000 for cancer research. The society also provides critical incident stress management services, emergency management training and first aid training free of charge. Deepak has also been a run organizer with the Terry Fox Foundation in Burnaby. His nominators applaud Deepak for his “kindness” and note that he is a “role model” in the community.

Wendell Ratcliffe

Wendell is over 80 years old and volunteers almost daily with one organization or another. Wendell has been a member of the Burnaby Fall Prevention Society (formerly Coalition) since 1990 and has been President for the last three years. Wendell is also a member of the Burnaby Seniors’ Interagency Society, an active member of the Voices of Burnaby Seniors, and a member of the Burnaby Access Advisory Committee. Most recently, he was instrumental in having a chair lift installed at the City’s Edmonds Neighbourhood Resource Centre. Wendell is an energetic and active volunteer who continues to give back. His nominators propose that Wendell’s commitment to the community is exemplary and difficult to match.

Mohammad I. Shamsi

Mohammed is a local business owner who strives to give back to the community. Since 2004, he has been volunteering with the St. John’s Ambulance Brigade (Burnaby Division), approximately 10-20 hours per week. In the organization, he holds the role of Emergency Response Coordinator, whose tasks include developing a Divisional Emergency Response Plan and determining and maintaining proper equipment. Mohammed also volunteers with the Air Cadets, a youth organization that promotes physical fitness, citizenship, and leadership, and provides social activities. Mohammed’s nominators write that he has the “..leadership, resourcefulness, and determination necessary to succeed, and is making great strides in these tasks.”

Millie Wylie

Millie has been teaching piano to seniors on a volunteer basis at the Community Centred College for the Retired since 1980. She also plays piano once a week for the patients of St. Michael’s Hospice in Burnaby, as well as various ‘gigs’ at nursing homes, dances, and holiday events. Millie plays piano regularly at her church and is a long time member of the Eastern Star

Organization where she plays as well. Millie is now in her 93rd year and has more energy than most people who are half her age. She is always willing to give her time to helping people when she can possibly fit it into her schedule. Her nominators write that “.. she is very deserving of recognition for her long years of volunteering in the Burnaby area.”

3.0 ASSESSMENT

Based on the established selection criteria, the foregoing 13 nominees satisfy the guidelines for Burnaby Local Hero recognition and demonstrate the exemplary characteristics required of a local hero. In their unique ways, they have all made noteworthy contributions to community well-being and merit recognition as Local Heroes.

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2009 marks the thirteenth year that Burnaby has recognized Local Heroes. As in previous years, the quality of submissions and calibre of nominees for 2009 is high. It is believed that the Local Hero Award program continues to be an effective vehicle for recognizing citizens who have made noteworthy contributions to community well-being in Burnaby over the years. A key strength of the program is that the nominees are received from the community.

It is recommended that Council be asked to approve the nominations of the following individuals for receipt of Burnaby Local Hero Awards in 2009:

1. Stella Castillo
2. Marilyn Cook
3. Sidney Cumbers
4. Keanna Driedger
5. Sharon Freeman
6. Fatehali Jetha
7. Jack Kuyer
8. Tammy Ozero
9. Wanley Poh
10. Deepak Prasad
11. Wendell Ratcliffe
12. Mohammad I. Shamsi
13. Millie Wylie

It is further recommended that these individuals be invited to the 2009 November 2 Council meeting to be presented with certificates of recognition for their contributions. As in previous years, a reception for the Local Hero award recipients will be held prior to the meeting. Volunteer Burnaby will be invited to have a display at the reception in recognition of its ongoing support in promoting the program.

To facilitate the printing of brochures, posters, certificates, invitations and placement of newspaper advertisements for next year’s Local Hero program, it is also recommended that Council approve an expenditure of up to \$3,500 from the 2010 Council Committee and Boards Budget.

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Given Committee and Council concurrence with the foregoing recommendations, following the presentation of the Awards on November 2nd, staff will publish an article on this year's Local Hero Award recipients in a forthcoming issue of InfoBurnaby.

B. Luksun, Director
PLANNING & BUILDING

DP/jc
Attachments

Copied to: City Manager
Fire Chief
Director of Engineering
Director of Finance
City Clerk

Deputy City Manager
OIC - RCMP
Chief Librarian
Director of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services