

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS
SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

DATE: 2011 May 19

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING

FILE: 1450 01
Reference: Local Heroes

SUBJECT: 2011 LOCAL HERO NOMINEES

PURPOSE: To recommend individuals for receipt of 2011 Local Hero Awards and to seek funding approval for the 2012 Local Hero Award program.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the Committee request Council to:
 - a. Approve the nominations of the following individuals for receipt of Burnaby Local Hero Awards in 2011:
 1. Darlene Gering
 2. Stephen Hughes
 3. Vicky Ma
 4. Raymond McKay
 5. Jim McQueen
 6. Sonia Purewal
 7. Nellie Wong
 - b. Invite approved nominees to the 2011 October 3 Council meeting to be presented with their Local Hero Award certificates of recognition.
 - c. Approve expenditures of up to \$3,000 from the 2012 Council Committees and Boards budget for printing and advertising costs for the 2012 Local Hero Award program.

REPORT**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Since 1997, Burnaby has identified and recognized Local Heroes, individuals who make outstanding contributions to community well-being in Burnaby. To date, the City has recognized 210 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 I, attached*).

This report provides background information and recommendations on the nominees for the 2011 Local Hero Award program.

2.0 LOCAL HERO NOMINEES

As in previous years, nominations were sought for the 2011 Local Hero awards through advertisements in local newspapers, the City website, and community networks (e.g., Burnaby Interagency Council¹). Associated posters and brochures were also circulated through all City venues (e.g. City Hall, recreation centres, libraries, community police offices), and through partners such as the Burnaby School Board. Volunteer Burnaby also distributed information about the program to their members and networks. The deadline for submitting Local Hero nominations was 2011 April 29. This deadline was subsequently extended by one week, to 2011 May 6, in response to a number of community requests for additional time to complete the nomination packages.

As stated in the eligibility guidelines, a maximum of 12 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 in multiple capacities. Priority is given to nominees who have contributed to the community for a minimum of five years through a minimum of two activities. Local Hero Awards are given on a one-time basis only.

A total of 12 nominations were received this year. After reviewing the submissions in accordance with the established criteria, the following 7 nominees are proposed for 2011 Local Hero Awards.

Darlene Gering

Darlene is an energetic and vital force in the Burnaby community. In addition to going above and beyond her mandate as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Burnaby Board of Trade to advocate for and participate in a wide range of community development initiatives, Darlene also contributes to her community through volunteer work. Among other roles, Darlene has been involved as a volunteer with Faith Lutheran Church for over 10 years, where she assisted in negotiating the expansion and joint ownership of the church building with the Vancouver Chinese Lutheran Church. In addition, Darlene volunteers with the Burnaby Art Gallery as a member of their Leadership Advisory Committee, where she has been key in advising on acquisitions and fundraising initiatives. Darlene also volunteers her time with Burnaby Family Life, the Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table, and the Burnaby Taskforce on Homelessness. As Darlene's nominators describe: *Darlene's extraordinary efforts deserve recognition and honor. Her leadership and tireless efforts have contributed to a stronger, healthier and more compassionate community for us all.*

Stephen Hughes

Stephen has been an active volunteer with Citizen Support Services for over 15 years. In this capacity, Stephen has been involved with the 'Volunteer Visitor' and 'Phone Buddy' programs, which reach out to isolated seniors in the Burnaby community. Through his role in these programs, Stephen has worked to ensure the participant seniors' well-being and to provide support for their becoming involved in additional programs and activities. Stephen has also been very involved with his church and the Burnaby Host Lions Club for many years in a number of supportive roles. As Stephen's nominators state: *Stephen has not let his visual disability deter him from participating in community service. Stephen has remained committed and he is a very good example of what volunteering is all about.*

¹ Burnaby Interagency Council is an informal affiliation of approximately 100 representatives from organizations and agencies offering community and social services in Burnaby.

Vicky Ma

Vicky has been volunteering her time and skills at both Edmonds Community School and Suncrest Elementary in Burnaby for over five years. In this time she has made many contributions including volunteering in two classrooms (a 1/2 split grade and a 6/7 split grade), coordinating the 'Fruit and Veggie' program, heading the Grade seven video club, assisting with Kindergarten orientation, and helping to organize the Grade seven graduation. Vicky has also served on her local District Advisory Council as a representative, treasurer, and childcare coordinator for parental events. Outside of her activities with the School District, Vicky is also a committed volunteer with the Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISS BC), and with the Northern Shaolin Lung Chi Cheng Martial Arts Association. Vicky's nominators write: *Vicky is an amazing person. She gives tirelessly of herself to help some of the most vulnerable children in the city.*

Raymond McKay

Raymond has been an active volunteer in the Burnaby community for many years. Since 2001, Ray has served on the Board of Directors at the Burnaby-based Community Centered College for the Retired, while also instructing two classes in Bridge. As well, Ray is the volunteer manager of the 'Moody Blues', a division of the Lower Mainland Seniors Slo-Pitch League, and is committed to encouraging seniors to stay active and be healthy. In addition to these roles, Ray volunteers with the Company of Master Marines in Canada (Ray served with the Merchant Marine during World War II), with his church, and with the Knights of Columbus in Burnaby. As his nominators highlight: *Ray is a kind, warm, generous, 'real-people' person. Ray has spent most of his life, and much of his retirement, as a volunteer with many different organizations.*

Jim McQueen

Jim gives many hours of volunteer time to participate in a wide range of initiatives in his community. Among other activities, Jim is a member of the Southeast Burnaby Community Policing Advisory Committee, working to bring a citizen's perspective to policing issues. As well, Jim has been a regular volunteer at the Progressive Housing Society-operated Homeless Outreach Resource Centre for the past five years. There he acts as the kitchen operator and resident handy-man, arranging food distribution, washing floors, making coffee, transporting supplies, and generally doing what is needed. Jim also volunteers with the K.R.I.B. Youth Centre, providing support with donations of food for young people in need. As Jim's nominators describe: *Jim epitomizes the value of volunteerism for Burnaby. He is a person truly deserving of recognition.*

Sonia Purewal

Sonia has been an active volunteer with St. Michael's Centre long-term care and with the South Burnaby Eagle's Basketball program for over eight years. At St. Michael's Centre Sonia volunteers by giving manicures and visiting room-bound residents. Well beloved by the participants in the basketball program, Sonia contributes her time and talents to all aspects of the Eagle's operations, including serving, over the years, as coach, assistant coach, and scorekeeper. As members of the Eagle's basketball program write: *We might not all become NBA superstars, but because of Coach Sonia, we've learned the importance of becoming caring people and helping the community. A hero inspires the best in others and Coach Sonia is our hero.*

Nellie Wong

Nellie has been a stalwart volunteer in the Burnaby community for over 20 years. Among her numerous roles, Nellie has volunteered with the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion for 23 years as a community advocate for persons with disabilities, as an educator, as a member of the Advocacy Committee, and as a supporter of the organization's family-based initiatives. Since 1992 Nellie has also been a member of the Burnaby Access Advisory Committee, which

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advises the City's Planning and Building Department on access and inclusion issues related to persons with disabilities. As well, Nellie is currently a Board member of the ConnecTra Society, and is a long-time volunteer with the Family Support Institute, both Lower Mainland organizations supporting persons with disabilities. As Nellie's nominators describe: *The challenge for anyone writing a letter of support for Nellie Wong is in distilling the endless list of contributions to her community, and adequately conveying the admirable personal characteristics and values which inform all that she does.*

3.0 ASSESSMENT

Based on the established selection criteria, the foregoing 7 nominees satisfy the guidelines for Burnaby's Local Hero Award program 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

2011 marks the fifteenth year that Burnaby has recognized Local Heroes. As in previous years, again the quality of submissions and calibre of nominees 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 nominations are received from the community.

It is recommended that the Committee request Council to approve the nominations of the following individuals for receipt of Burnaby Local Hero Awards in 2011:

1. Darlene Gering
2. Stephen Hughes
3. Vicky Ma
4. Raymond McKay
5. Jim McQueen
6. Sonia Purewal
7. Nellie Wong

It is further recommended that these individuals be invited to the 2011 October 3 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. After the awards presentation, staff will also once again publish an article celebrating the Local Hero Award recipients in a forthcoming issue of InfoBurnaby.

To facilitate the printing of brochures and posters and the placement of newspaper advertisements for next year's Local Hero program, it is also recommended that the Committee request Council to approve an expenditure of up to \$3,000 from the 2012 Council Committee and Boards budget. This amount is slightly less than the amount requested for the 2011 Local Hero program, as it has been adjusted to reflect actual expenditures for the program in 2011.

With Committee adoption of the recommendations of this report, the report would advance to Council for initial consideration at a closed meeting in 2011 June, with subsequent consideration

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at an open meeting in late 2011 August. With Council approval, successful nominees would be notified, and the awards presented at the 2011 October 3 Council meeting.

B. Luksun, Director
PLANNING & BUILDING

RM:jc
Attachment

Copied to: City Manager
Deputy City Managers
Director of Engineering
Director of Finance
Director of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Fire Chief
OIC - RCMP
Chief Librarian
City Clerk

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