
Exceptional volunteers recognized by county

This year's Lanark County Awards of Excellence were presented to two outstanding citizens at a special ceremony at council Wednesday evening. Ken and Freda Fournier, of Drummond/North Elmsley Township, were recognized for their exceptional efforts in the volunteerism category.

"Ken and Freda Fournier are pillars of our community," said County Warden Aubrey Churchill. "They have donated tens of thousands of hours, and this generosity and their skills have, without a doubt, made our county a better place to live."

This is the second year for the Awards of Excellence program, which recognizes recipients for contributions to the county at large or in at least two municipalities. It was developed to say thank you to citizens of Lanark County, to provide community recognition and visibility, to support citizens for their contributions and to inspire others to participate in community service.

The Fourniers were nominated by Perth Civitan Club president Bonnie King. Numerous letters and newspaper clippings supported the nomination. Entries were evaluated in September.

The Fourniers have been involved with the Civitan since the early 1960s. Mr. Fournier coached the Perth Stingrays Swim Team from 1977 to 1987 and was assisted by Mrs. Fournier. They have welcomed exchange students and visiting athletes into their home, participated in school breakfast programs, volunteered for the Canadian Cancer Society, are involved with the Great War Memorial Hospital Foundation and have organized many community events and fundraisers to help organizations in need.

Ms. King said Mr. Fournier, as a swim team coach, went beyond basic training for team members. "Ken taught the swimmers about dedication and determination. He was one of the most admired and caring coaches in the region."

Supporter Bob Burch said the Fourniers have helped to organize and promote Civitan clubs within and outside of Lanark County, and have held positions in the Perth club, the district and internationally. They have been recognized by the Civitan with Honour Keys, which are "awarded to members who exhibit outstanding dedication and service within the organization."

He noted the Perth club has received the Founders Award three times, which recognizes the top club in the world each year. "Ken and Freda have been an integral part of the Perth club's success as well as the success of Civitan in Lanark County.... They are a shining example of family and community values in Lanark County."

Louis Stephens, of Civitan International, said the Fourniers' passion for helping people has spread to hundreds of people across the county and that the Civitan has been blessed by their involvement. "Civitan members throughout the world know of Ken and Freda Fournier because of their great work through the Civitan. However, the real beneficiaries of the tens of thousands hours of volunteer work done by this giving couple through the Civitan are the citizens of Perth and Lanark County."

The Fourniers received an individually designed award commissioned by Mississippi Mills-area artist Stephen Braithwaite, who also created the stained glass windows in the council chambers. They will be recognized on a plaque in the county administration building, as well as on the county website at www.county.lanark.on.ca and in notices in local newspapers.

Last year's recipients included Keith and Stanley Brunton for agriculture and community services, Bryce Bell for community service and volunteerism, and Keith Thompson for heritage and volunteerism.

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For more information, please contact:

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Digital photos are available upon request at clerk@county.lanark.on.ca .