

Oakvillians honoured with Diamond Jubilee medal

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The spring recipients of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal with Oakville MP Terence Young. - ERIC RIEHL / OAKVILLE BEAVER / @halton_photog

Inspired by the Queen's service to the Commonwealth nations, 15 Oakville residents were recognized Friday for their own contributions to their community with a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Created to mark the 60th anniversary celebration of Queen Elizabeth's coronation, a total of 30 Oakville residents will be among 60,000 Canadians to receive the commemorative medal this year.

More than 100 nominations were considered in Oakville for the spring presentation of the medal.

Another 15 residents will be awarded the medal this fall and nominations for the autumn recipients are still open.

Oakville MP Terence Young hosted the Friday presentation at the Harbourfront Banquet Hall and Conference Centre in Bronte, while the T.A. Blakelock High School senior jazz orchestra was on hand to play *O Canada* and *God Save the Queen*.

“The Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal is a tangible way for Canada to honour Her Majesty for her service to this country,” Young said. “At the same time, it serves to honour significant contributions in the community by individuals who have dedicated themselves to service for the fellow citizens, their community and their country.”

To be eligible, nominees must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, have made significant contribution to a particular province, territory, region or community in Canada or an achievement abroad that brought credit to the country — and have been alive Feb. 6, 2012, the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth’s accession to the throne.

The medal can be awarded posthumously, as long as the recipient was alive on that date.

Young, along with Oakville Community Foundation CEO Rusty Baillie and former United Way of Oakville CEO Barbara Burton, reviewed the more than 100 nominations.

“Our nomination committee in Oakville chose to emphasize unsung heroes, to a large degree, who have otherwise never received any recognition for their contributions and who have otherwise not received any high profile recognition in their community,” Young said. “Today is a commitment to all those who have gone above and beyond in their contributions to serve our community.”

Spanning eight categories of various areas and endeavours, the spring recipients follow:

Multicultural

- ***Nancy Siew*** — a teacher, Siew immigrated to Canada from Hong Kong and has advocated multiculturalism for more than 30 years, helping new Canadians

with needs in mental health, aiding veterans assimilate, offering services to seniors and working toward prosecution in cases of domestic violence. Siew also founded Asian Heritage so new Canadians can celebrate their heritage with the community.

- **Veronica Tyrrell** — born and raised in Guyana, Tyrrell was trained as a registered nurse and midwife in England and moved to Canada in 1968. She is president of the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton (CAAH) and has worked toward the preservation, understanding and enjoyment of the Caribbean culture and performing arts, while assisting new citizens from the Caribbean settle in Canada. Tyrrell also serves on the Halton Multicultural Council (HMC) and has partnered with Community Development Halton (CDH). She is also a leader in celebrating Black History Month in Oakville.

Community Service

- **Stephen Cull** — Cull has been in a wheelchair since a 1991 tobogganing accident. He volunteers with the Rick Hansen Foundation, Industry Canada's Community Access Program to provide all Canadians with access to computers and the Internet, Ontario March of Dimes and the Oakville Easter Seals. Cull also founded CharterAbility eight years ago; an organization committed to improving the lives of people with disabilities and the disadvantaged, by enabling them to safely spend time on the water.

- **Julia Hanna** — a chef and restaurateur in Oakville for more than 25 years, Hanna is a generous donor to several charities in town. Hanna established Kids Culinary Community, a not-for-profit organization directed toward children in need, that teaches children a positive attitude in preparing and serving healthy food in a team setting and educates them on the benefits of healthy eating.

- **Sera Mansueto** — inspired by her own personal time of need as a single parent, Mansueto founded Walls of Hope in 2004, a grassroots organization that improves homes for families and organizations in need. Mansueto supported her family by painting homes and furnishings for friends. Walls of Hope has now completed 18 projects for those facing financial, medical and circumstantial needs and has expanded to include other community organizations, such as Dream Rooms, which creates special rooms for children with life-changing illnesses.

Religious Service

- **Father Peter Watters** — an Oakville resident since age 11, Watters left school in Grade 8 to help support his family, but became an alcoholic. A life-changing experience at age 32 saw him join Alcoholics Anonymous and begin a life of sobriety. In 1978, after being a Ward 3 municipal councillor, Watters turned to the priesthood at age 50. He has since counselled thousands of people struggling with addiction.

Arts and Culture

- **Jean Grieve** —the unofficial “matron of music” in Oakville for more than 60 years, Grieve has helped found and direct the Halton Youth Symphony Orchestra, and is founder of the Oakville Suzuki Association and Summer Camp. She has taught generations of people music and continues to have 55 students today. Grieve also volunteers with musical arts programs in local schools.

- **John Laing** — born in England and trained at Corpus Christi College in the University of Cambridge, Laing is a distinguished conductor, composer and organist who has directed choirs in Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton and Oakville, where the John Laing Singers have an enviable. Laing has had a long career as a church musician, including at Oakville’s St. Jude’s Anglican Church, where he directed the church choir. He is also founder and director of the Celebration of Arts concert series.

Healthcare

- **Dr. Aliya Khan** — with a practice in Oakville, Khan is a leader in the areas of endocrinology, calcium disorders and metabolic bone disease/densitometry. She is the founding chair of the Canadian Board of the International Society of Clinical Densitometry and chair of the ISCD Certification Council. Khan led the development of the first national and international standards and guidelines paper on bone densitometry and has published more than 80 papers on osteoporosis/parathyroid (calcium regulating hormone) disease.

Education

- **Guy McLean** — for more than 25 years McLean was headmaster of Appleby College. Under his leadership, students and faculty were consistently involved in service activities in Oakville and around the world, and many vision-impaired, handicapped students, and students from impoverished countries have been able to graduate from Appleby College.

Humanitarian Aid

- ***Shae Invidiata*** — while at university in Waikiki, Hawaii, Invidiata became aware of young prostitutes, forced into modern-day slavery, in her neighbourhood. Upon returning home, Invidiata discovered human trafficking was occurring in many places, including southern Ontario. In 2010, she founded free-them, an organization dedicated to raising awareness and funds to abolish human trafficking in Canada and abroad.

Voluntary Service

- ***Joan Gibb*** — as a cancer survivor and volunteer, Gibb has worked for 43 years on behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society in Québec and Ontario. In 2002, she established Oakville's Relay for Life, which has raised \$9.7 million for the Canadian Cancer Society. She has befriended hundreds of cancer victims and survivors in Oakville and is ready to recruit, train and manage large groups of volunteers to help out with the latest cancer drives.

- ***Godwin Kruitwagen*** — a volunteer and camp chief with Scouts Canada for more than 20 years, Kruitwagen founded Cub Level Education and Camp at Fort George in 2007. He has mentored numerous youths toward their Queen's Venturer and gold Duke of Edinburgh awards, become leaders themselves.

- ***Lt.-Col. Guy Smith*** — having served in the Canadian Armed Forces for more than 32 years, Smith founded and organizes an annual gala dinner and the Host a Veteran Fishing Derby to help raise funds for Canadian soldiers who have returned from war and their families in need of assistance. Besides volunteering with the Military Family Resource Centres, Smith has developed clean water ideas on silt removal at local harbours, worked on the Oakville Cenotaph Committee for Veterans and assisted with the Col. Geoff Parker Memorial.

- ***Colin Woodcock*** — from Northern Ireland, Woodcock retired 19 years ago after serving with the Toronto Police Service for more than 35 years. He began volunteering upon setting foot on Canadian soil in 1958. Since then he has and continues to drive cancer patients to hospital for treatments, delivers meal to shut-ins, collects food for the needy, assists in cleaning up Oakville's creeks, helps youths in trouble, raises funds to support addiction programs and volunteers internationally to help promote peace in Northern Ireland. Smith also founded Paddling for Peace, an annual fundraiser for peacekeepers in Northern Ireland's Corrymeela community, which has raised \$100,000 to date.

For more information on the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, visit www.gg.ca/document.aspx?id=14019.

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