

Volunteerism in HRM

In the spirit of National Volunteer Week, which is April 21st – 27th, I would like to dedicate my first article in the Community Herald to the amazing volunteers in our community, and throughout HRM. Volunteering is described as many things. To me, it is helping others without expecting anything in return and it is the best form of citizen service.

Volunteers do not look for recognition; however, recognition being expressed by others is important. It's not just about the volunteer; it's about who they serve. It is an honour to recognize the people who make a difference in the community.

Volunteers are the key to community success. They make a difference by giving selflessly of their time and energy. These individuals work tirelessly through their involvement in many charities, organizations and initiatives. They help make a difference in the lives of the people around them.

Each year Halifax Regional Municipality, the Mayor and Regional Council recognize the extraordinary contributions of individuals and groups who volunteer their time and skills to provide services and programs in HRM communities. The 2013 HRM Volunteer of the Year Awards Ceremony was held on April 17th. I would like to congratulate and sincerely thank the volunteer award recipients from Lower Sackville, Dr. Susan Paynter and Elisabeth Sanders. Susan is an outstanding volunteer with a firm commitment to improving the quality of life for those in any way challenged or without capacity or resources. She volunteers with Family Service Association and the Sackville Rotary Club. Elisabeth is the coordinator and founder of the Tourette Syndrome Lower Sackville Resource Unit, bringing awareness of Tourette's Syndrome to NS.

The Lake District Recreation Association will also be holding their Volunteer Dinner and Appreciation Award Ceremony on May 1st. Since 1979, LDRA has formally recognized the value of volunteers' contributions in Lucasville -Sackville – Beaver Bank by hosting LDRA's Volunteer Recognition Dinner the week after National Volunteer Recognition Week. All community organizations are asked to send one volunteer to represent their group and be recognized at the dinner along with other community volunteers.

This year's volunteer dinner will be held at the Sackville Royal Canadian Legion located at 45 Sackville Cross Road in Lower Sackville. Barbara Legge will receive the Sackville Volunteer of the Year Award this year. Barbara has volunteered thousands of hours toward creating public awareness of cancer, and fundraising to assist in valuable research. Barbara is an innovative entrepreneur for raising money. For the last few years she has been in the top five individual fund raisers for the Canadian Breast Cancer Society for all of HRM.

Halifax Regional Municipality Volunteer Services supports many volunteering initiatives. We connect you to other volunteers, non-profits and partners, as well as various resources and funding opportunities. We also offer a variety of workshops for non-profit organizations, such as free courses

for citizens that cover a wide range of topics and are intended to help people develop leadership skills and build strong communities.

Another way that HRM recognizes and supports its local volunteers is through the Annual HRM Volunteer Conference, which provides valuable networking and learning opportunities for local volunteers. The next conference will be held in November. For more information on HRM Volunteer Services, please visit www.halifax.ca/volunteerservices.

Again, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all volunteers on behalf of your fellow citizens.

“Volunteering can be an exciting, growing, enjoyable experience. It is truly gratifying to serve a cause, practice one's ideals, work with people, solve problems, see benefits, and know one had a hand in them.” **Harriet Naylor**

“Remember the good deeds others have done for you. Forget the good deeds you have done for others.” **Donald P. Craig – ‘My Dad’**

I also communicate with residents through various social media, newsletters, and internet. For updates on community events, and various municipal information, please visit my HRM web page at: www.halifax.ca/councillors/district15 . Or my Facebook page at: Steve Craig for HRM Council. You can also reach me by phone at (902) 240-0441, or my office at 490-1577.

If you are interested in receiving my monthly Electronic Newsletter, please email Nadine.Yuriev@halifax.ca with “District 15 E-Newsletter” in the subject line and you will be added to the distribution list. E-mail addresses will not be shared.

I will also be hosting an Open House for the residents of District 15 – Lower Sackville, on Wednesday, May 22nd from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. in Fenerty Room 1 at the Sackville Public Library. I encourage anyone with municipal issues/questions to attend to speak with me directly. Any feedback or suggestions will be welcome.

Best Regards Always,

Steve