

Local Volunteers, What Makes Them Tick

THE FOLLOWING IS THE BIO'S OF SEVEN COLCHESTER, CUMBERLAND AND EAST HANTS VOLUNTEERS WHO WERE AMONG A GROUP OF 62 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS FROM ACROSS THE PROVINCE WHO WERE RECOGNIZED IN A VIRTUAL PRESENTATION CEREMONY BROADCAST FROM HALIFAX ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH.

CRYSTAL BLAIR – COLCHESTER

Crystal Blair, Glenholme, is 2021 provincial volunteer for Municipality of Colchester County. Instead of taking a well-deserved rest after serving customers for 31 years, Crystal, owner of the Glenhome Petro Pass, did the complete opposite. During the pandemic she realized how difficult it had become for essential workers and made the decision to remain open and provide a resting place, along with a home cooked meal free of charge to truck drivers. As time went by more and more drivers heard of the welcoming service and as a gesture nicknamed her Angel. Crystal is a compassionate and extraordinary individual whose kindness allowed her community to thrive. She feels we are really all in this together and when all is said and done our community connections will stand the test of time.



Crystal Blair

JACKI CHANDLER – EAST HANTS

Jacki Chandler, Municipality of East Hants Jacki has been a valued volunteer giving her time and leadership to multiple community organizations for more than 19 years. She currently holds the chair position at the East Hants Museum Society and the Hants Craft Show. She had played a large part in building a new playground for her community and served on the Nine Mile River Trail and the Upper Nine Mile River Hall Committees as a member. She is also involved in East Hants Grounds Search & Rescue as Treasurer and participates in searches. Jacki has a love of volunteering and takes every opportunity to assist her community.



Jacki Chandler

MIKE GILLIS, MILLBROOK FIRST NATION

Mike has been an active member of Millbrook First Nation's community garden and the Millbrook Greenhouse for several years. His commitment and dedication to the gardens has given community members the opportunity to learn about sustainable agricultural practices. He has been especially important during the pandemic, as his efforts have provided nutritious food for our low income and the Elder populations within the community.

LISA GOWER, TOWN OF AMHERST

Lisa is a dedicated teacher at the Nova Scotia Community College who puts her heart and soul into helping her students. She is a dedicated Rotarian, as both a member and President, who drives their international volunteer work, ensuring grants for various projects. From orphanages in Kenya to local Syrian refugee settlements, Lisa's volunteer work shows she is not only passionate about her own community, but also about issues around the world.



Lisa Gower

GLENN MACKINNON, TOWN OF TRURO

Since the mid 80's, Glenn has been a well-known name in many households. He has always made time to be an active volunteer in his community. Glenn has been very involved in the local sporting community, coaching basketball, hockey, soccer, archery, volleyball, badminton, floor hockey, and golf. Since his retirement, he has been volunteering his evenings organizing open gym nights, family archery and snowshoeing events to facilitate families to spend time together while being active. A great example of how he goes above and beyond can be seen through his family snowshoe hikes. Glenn takes the time to light the trails with tea lights and hides "wild animals" in the trees to the delight of his students. It is not only what Glenn does that is deserving of recognition, but also the energy and enthusiasm that he brings to every occasion.



Glenn MacKinnon

GREGORY NIX, COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND

Greg has been a champion of all things outdoor. He has continually encouraged and guided many groups in outdoor activities and the knowledge he has shared has made a positive impact on our county and throughout Nova Scotia. Greg has taken on the challenge of overseeing trail maintenance to ensure a safe experience, especially during Hurricane Dorian. He also teaches orienteering to youth and demonstrates how to safely adventure outdoors. His endless determination has resulted in amazing trails and the beginning of an outdoor legacy.



Gregory Nix

JOE ROSS, TOWN OF STEWIACKE

Since 2018, Joe has taken the lead on all the Town of Stewiacke's children's sport programming. He volunteers his time working with children to support them in basketball, t-ball, flag football, floor hockey, soccer and introductory sport programming. Joe also assists the recreation department with program planning and implementation. His dedication to youth is commendable - the community is very thankful to have such a devoted and caring volunteer in their community.



Joe Ross

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VOLUNTEERS

Provincial Ceremony Honours Local Volunteers

By Maurice Rees

Volunteers who give their time, promote community initiatives and offer support all year long were honoured on September 20 during a virtual ceremony for the 47th annual Provincial Volunteer Awards.

"I am delighted and honoured to participate in this important event where we recognize and thank the outstanding volunteers in Nova Scotia," said Lt.-Gov. Arthur J. LeBlanc. "Despite the pandemic challenges our citizens have faced over the last 18 months, I was greatly impressed that people found different and innovative ways to continue to help the less fortunate. I salute not just those who have been recognized with awards at the ceremony, but all volunteers who give of their time."

This year, 62 representative awards were given in addition to three specialty awards: the Youth Volunteer Award, the Family Volunteer Award and the Nova Scotia Strong Award.

Local volunteers recognized included: Crystal Blair, Glenholme for Municipality of Colchester County; Jacki Chandler, Municipality of East Hants; Mike Gillis, Millbrook First Nation; Glenn MacKinnon, Town of Truro; Joe Ross, Town of Stewiacke; Lisa Gower, Town of Amherst and Gregory

Nix, County of Cumberland. Bio's of local volunteers are printed individually adjacent to this story.

In addition to the individual awards, three specialty awards were handed out. The Dupuis Family - Jennifer, Marcel, Sophie, Lily, Henry and Beau were presented with the family award. Karema Alarabim Halifax was presented with the youth award while the Nova Scotia Strong award - a legacy award born from the very thoughtful actions of a group of people who organized "Nova Scotia Remembers", an online tribute to the 22 Nova Scotian souls lost in the tragic events in Portapique on April 18 and 19th, 2020.

Mitra Naseh, Atousa Costandi and Soheila Hashemi recipients of the Nova Scotia Strong Award, have been active in the Iranian community of Nova Scotia for the past several years and have made a significant contribution to the progress and well-being of Iranian Canadians of NS, Iranian residents of NS and newcomers to the Province.

Rhonda Barrett, an artist from Newfoundland, currently living in Nova Scotia, whose study of paper and Japanese arts finds her working in a chigiri-e style with newsprint was recognized as the 2021 Nova Scotia Strong artist award.

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