

Lighthouse LEISURE CARE AWARDS PROGRAM

"The Leisure Care Lighthouse Awards are an opportunity to recognize the exceptional contribution made by today's active and community-minded seniors. All of this year's nominees have demonstrated significant leadership and stand out in their efforts to continue to play a vital role in our society. They are an inspiration to us all."

DAVID PODMORE
AWARDS CHAIRMAN AND CONCERT PROPERTIES PRESIDENT AND CEO

HONOURING EXCEPTIONAL SENIORS'

A tribute to accomplishments of B.C. seniors



Maria Perretta of The O'Keefe and Sister Elizabeth Kelliher

Shining Light Sister Elizabeth Kelliher

Sitting at a kitchen table in the Downtown Eastside convent of the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, this diminutive nun explains why at age 84 she puts in double shifts feeding the homeless - 300 to 500 each week -- and organizing for social justice.

"I do it because I can," she says. "This is a wonderful place to be, a place where I can contribute. It is such a blessing."

After a lifetime of service to the poor, with extensive involvement in early childhood education and daycare, she now serves as the chairperson for the board of directors of DERA, is a member of the Urban Care Workers Association and actively organizes for world peace.

People speak of her courage, her eloquence and passion for justice.

They are an inspiration to us all - active, dedicated senior citizens who have contributed much to our province, through their charitable works, their wisdom and their commitment to health and fitness. For three years, the Leisure Care Lighthouse Awards have honoured the best of B.C.'s senior citizens, paying tribute to their accomplishments.

On September 28 at The O'Keefe Retirement Community the 2007 awards were handed out to a Canadian of Japanese descent, a fitness instructor, a Franciscan nun and a prominent member of the Lower Mainland's East Indian community.

Awards chairman and Concert Properties president and CEO David Podmore told his audience "I am pleased to have had the opportunity to honour them."

He thanked the awards' sponsors and said "the combination of the business sector and the B.C. government pulling together to offer support ensures events such as this are a success," noting that this is the third consecutive year of sponsorship for Concert Properties. Other sponsors and partners include: BC Housing, The Vancouver Sun, Ministries of Health and Community Services, Vancouver Coastal Health and Leisure Care.

The awards recognize adults 62 and over who have made a difference in their communities through volunteer service or by serving as an inspiration and role model for others. Since their inception, a total of 149 finalists have been selected and more than 45 community partners have participated. This year more than 50 nominations were received in four categories.

The Wisdom of Age Mentorship Award is given to an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to making a difference in the lives of children. Recipient Aya Higashi has made a breakthrough in many communities by promoting equality to races and sponsoring children in Third World countries.

The Picture of Health Award, which recognizes exemplary commitment to good health and fitness, was presented to Edna Lee, an energetic volunteer who has developed and led an exercise program for seniors at The O'Keefe for several years.

The Shining Light Award, for outstanding volunteer service to the community and for advocacy on behalf of seniors was won by Sister Elizabeth Kelliher, who works tirelessly in the Downtown Eastside, feeding and helping to clothe the homeless.

Volunteers "the hidden jewels in our communities...we are honouring a few special hidden heroes for the impact they make, for the many ways they change our world. Nominees, you show us that age is all about how young you feel, and a positive attitude."

**Ida Chong
Minister of Community Services
and Minister Responsible for
Seniors' and Women's Issues**



David Podmore, President & CEO of Concert Properties Ltd., Hon. Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services, Dan Madsen, president & CEO of Leisure Care Retirement Communities and three winners, Dr. Raghbir Singh Bains, Edna Lee and Sister Elizabeth Kelliher.

Lighthouse Awards Finalists

More than 100 nominations were received for the 2007 Leisure Care Lighthouse Awards which recognize seniors who have made a difference in their communities. The quality of the nominations was outstanding this year and the judges had a difficult task narrowing down their decisions to one winner in each of the four categories. Indeed, the achievements of all the finalists are worthy of celebrating and each finalist received a certificate honouring their work at the September 28 luncheon.

Wisdom of Age Award

Given to an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to making a difference in the lives of children.
Michael Breeze - Vancouver
Aya Higashi - Kaslo
Elsie Doreen McIntee - Vancouver
Arni May - Vancouver

Shining Light Award

Outstanding volunteer service to the community and/or advocacy on behalf of seniors.
Ward Allen - Vancouver
Dolly Cartwright - West Vancouver
John Hayes - Vancouver
Sister Elizabeth Kelliher - Vancouver

Picture of Health Award

Recognizes exemplary commitment to good health and fitness.
Michael Breeze - Vancouver
Shirley Buchan - Vancouver
Ruth Doole - Gibsons
Edna Lee - Vancouver

Philanthropy Award

Acknowledges an individual or group that has demonstrated a concern for humanity by providing significant financial resources and personal time.
Dr. Raghbir Singh Bains - Surrey
Rose McGinnis - Gibsons



Wisdom of Age Aya Higashi

In 1942, Aya's family had their home on Quadra Island, their boats and family heirlooms confiscated and the family eventually sent to an internment camp in Kaslo. At 20 she was recruited to teach secondary school in the camp and continued in that profession for more than 35 years.

Part of a coalition that advocated for human-rights issues in regard to Japanese-Canadian repatriation, she received the Queen Elizabeth Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977. She was a 30-year volunteer for the local hospital auxiliary and has dedicated herself to promoting racial equality and sponsoring children in Third World countries.

A strong woman with strong beliefs and devoted to living life to its fullest, at 85 she still golfs, curls and square dances and takes computer classes at Selkirk College.



Aya Higashi



Bob McKay of Concert Properties and Dr. Raghbir Singh Bains.

Philanthropy Dr. Raghbir Singh Bains

There are few people who haven't been touched by this activist, educator and community volunteer who spends thousands of hours every year to serve the sick, the needy and the disabled and has been called "an apostle of peace".

Dr. Bains' mission is to create awareness in the fields of drugs, rape, prostitution and HIV-AIDS as he works diligently, donating to and helping raise funds for non-profit organizations, including the B.C. Children's Hospital, the B.C. Cancer Society, The United Way, the Surrey-Delta Seniors Society and North Delta's Community Police Station.

He is an active volunteer and role model in the Indo-Canadian community, acting as an interpreter and assisting new immigrants to adjust to our society. Winner of more than 60 local, national and international awards, Dr. Bains is a tireless volunteer worker.

Picture of Health Edna Lee

A resident of the O'Keefe since its inception in 2003, Edna rarely stands still. Formerly a Chi Kung instructor in a local community centre in White Rock, she successfully implemented a similar exercise program at O'Keefe, which develops energy particularly for health, vitality, mind expansion and spiritual cultivation through movement.

Three times a week, between 10 and 18 residents attend the program, which has also been adapted to serve the needs of older adults with a variety of physical challenges, including macular degeneration, osteoporosis and arthritis.

Her energy level is extremely high and she thoroughly enjoys making a difference in people's lives. Edna also is an eager volunteer, helping with the planning and coordination of special projects.



Edna Lee, Minister Ida Chong and John Sproule of Vancouver Coastal Health.



BC Housing



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