



2026 Volunteer Nominations

MUNICIPALITY *of the*
COUNTY *of* KINGS

Page #	Category	Nominee
2	Youth Volunteer of the Year Award	Grace Walsh
3	Youth Volunteer of the Year Award	Brayden Williams
4	Youth Volunteer of the Year Award	Leah Newcombe
5	Volunteer of the Year Award	Cecil Brown
6	Volunteer of the Year Award	Brian Hirtle
8	Volunteer of the Year Award	Debbie Surette
9	Volunteer of the Year Award	Teressa VanOostrum
10	Volunteer of the Year Award	Jeremy LeBlanc
11	Volunteer of the Year Award	Deon MacKenzie
12	Volunteer of the Year Award	Muriel West
14	Volunteer of the Year Award	Peter Rigby
15	Volunteer of the Year Award	Mick Tanner
16	Volunteer of the Year Award	Marc Albano
17	Volunteer of the Year Award	Johannes Wheeldon
18	Volunteer of the Year Award	Darrell Steel
19	Volunteer of the Year Award	Team of Sandy Wing, Amanda Cress and Laura White
20	Volunteer of the Year Award	Beverly Palmetter
21	Volunteer of the Year Award	Tara Hirtle
22	Volunteer of the Year Award	Melina Param

Youth Volunteer of the Year Nomination 2026

Nominee Name: Grace Walsh

Nominee contributes to:

4-H is a youth organisation designed to help young people between 7 and 21 years of age use their heads, hearts, hands and health to develop leadership skills, care for the environment and become contributing community citizens. Adult leaders provide guidance as members choose from a variety of life skills and livestock projects, participate in public speaking, meetings, conferences and team activities...learning valuable skills while having fun.



Years of service: 5.5 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Grace is a keen 4-H member who has contributed to her club almost since the day she joined. She is the Western Kings 4-H Club secretary, a position that she has held for nearly two years. She is eager to help her fellow members by sharing skills such as judging and public speaking. During her involvement in 4-H, Grace has been an active participant in the club community service projects including the Food Bank, Valentines for Seniors and visiting community members to thank them for their assistance. She has been a club volunteer for the 4-H Kings County Breakfast fundraiser. Grace is currently a Kings County 4-H Junior Ambassador, helping with various 4-H events and promoting the organisation. She is also a member of the County Spirit Committee where she is involved in planning fun and learning activities for her fellow members. Grace is a confident youth who has a special talent for sales. She has used her engaging personality to increase the sales at the Provincial 4-H Show Trail Shop for the past two years. She is also a faithful supporter of fundraising at the local level. Outside of 4-H, Grace can be found serving at Lions' Club Breakfasts, at the rink helping younger children tie skates and volunteering at the Berwick School Craft Fairs. Grace uses her Head, Heart, Hands and Health, the four H's, to learn new skills and share her enthusiasm and energy with both her club and the wider community.

Nominee Name: Brayden Williams

Nominee contributes to:

Brayden has been involved with The Stockings Were Hung Project again this year. He stepped up to dedicate extra time to our committee working with other youth, volunteering with our group, our school and committing hours the last few days before Christmas and after the holidays with cleaning up as well. He volunteers with many programs, is involved in sports and leadership activities. We are always pleased to see youth take such a solid interest in their community.



Years of service: 4 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Brayden is deserving of the award as he sincerely wholeheartedly gives of his time to volunteer in the community. He reached out to us this year to become more involved in the Stockings Were Hung Project. He very sincerely gave of his time and encouraged others as well to take part. This is a show of strong leadership. We were impressed that he reached out on his own accord to take part. He is very involved at school and in the community, taking on leadership roles and helping out wherever needed. He's been elected by his peers to support student government, organize sports and events, and help plan graduation. He also helps run the Unified Basketball program, supports school groups like yearbook and spirit committee, and volunteers at community events like seniors dinners and holiday drives.

Nominee Name: Leah Newcombe

Nominee contributes to:

4-H is a community based youth organization dedicated to providing rural youth with opportunities for leadership and life skills development while promoting agriculture awareness. The Kings County 4-H Council co-ordinates the county level of 4-H programming.



Years of service: 6 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Leah has volunteered many hours to the 4-H program, as President of Kings County 4-H Council, President of the Western Kings 4-H Club, chair of the Joint Achievement Days, organizing school visits to promote 4-H, committee work, helped organize recreation events, and contributed to the community through community service projects. Outside of 4-H, Leah volunteered in her school community and with Holstein Canada on the Young Leader Advisory Committee for Atlantic Canada and is a part of DAL ACs judging team.

Nominee Name: Cecil Brown

Nominee contributes to: Scouts Canada

Years of service: 35 years



Nominee is deserving because:

Cecil has served in various positions in our organisations from cub leader to sunken lake camp, committee chair. He spends many hours assisting and mentoring groups across the valley, planning youth events, camping trips, fundraising and even offered service at the National Jamboree. He gives freely of his time and is an amazing mentor for youth and adults alike. The energy and time this gentleman spend on the youth in our community is commendable.

Nominee Name: Brian Hirtle



Nominee contributes to:

The Berwick Curling Club is a volunteer-run community organization which provides opportunities for residents of Berwick and surrounding areas to engage in a sport which enhances physical activity, mental agility and offers exceptionally important socialization with a variety of individuals during long Canadian winters. Our curling club boasts 200 members, plus a healthy Junior program, leagues where community members can either sign-up or drop-in to play with over 300 people accessing the facility weekly. We also welcome curlers from across the province to play in various bonspiels. Our club bustles with activity between October and April of each year but operates year-round with fundraisers and other activities.

Years of service: 25 +

Brian Hirtle is deeply committed community volunteer whose impact spans decades and touches countless organizations throughout the region. His service is characterized by long term leadership, quiet reliability, and a willingness to step in wherever help is needed. He currently serves as Chair of the Grand View Manor Board and also sits on the Grand View Manor Foundation Board, contributing to both governance and fundraising efforts in support of seniors' care. Most recently, he has been an active member of a steering committee tasked with determining a future purpose for the former Grand View Manor, helping guide thoughtful discussions around its continued value to the community. His dedication to public service is perhaps best demonstrated through his 35 years as Chair of the Berwick and District Fire Commission, a role requiring steady

leadership, accountability, and a strong commitment to public safety. He has also been a supporter of local sports and recreation for many years. For the past five years, he has volunteered with the Jr. A Wildcats, assisting with season tickets and sponsorships to help ensure the team's continued success. In addition, he is an active volunteer with the Berwick Curling Club, where he serves on multiple committees, including the Board of Directors, Finance Committee, co-heads stick curling leagues, bartends, helps with club events, and fills in at KMCC board meetings when needed. Fundraising is another area where his contributions are widely felt. He regularly takes on responsibility for barbecues at major community events, including the Grand View Manor Golf Tournament, Campaign for Kids Golf Tournament, Jr. A Wildcats events, and the Berwick Curling Club Golf Tournament. These efforts play a key role in supporting local programs and services. In Burlington, he has chaired the local cemetery committee for 20 years, providing long standing leadership and oversight. He also volunteers annually at the Burlington Canada Day Celebration, the community's largest fundraiser, contributing to an event that brings people together while supporting local initiatives. While he may not seek recognition, his collective contributions are substantial. Through decades of leadership, behind the scenes support, and hands on involvement, he has made a lasting and meaningful difference across multiple organizations. His commitment exemplifies the true spirit of volunteerism and community service.

Nominee Name: Debbie Surette

Nominee contributes to:

The Royal Canadian Legion in 2026 is celebrating 100 years of Service to Veterans, RCMP, their families and the community at large.



Years of service: 6

Nominee is deserving because:

Debbie plays a pivotal role in the functioning of RCL Branch 006, Kentville. She sits on the Executive, is instrumental to the poppy fund, does all the public relations, manages Chase the Ace and organizes Paint Night Fundraisers and volunteers at events.

In the past she has been a Brownie Leader, coached T ball, canvased yearly for the Canadian Cancer Society and was involved in work place initiatives to assist not for profits. She is a great asset to the Legion. Always willing to lend a hand or sit on an action committee.

Western Kings 4-H Club



CANADA
4-H Nova Scotia

Nominee Name: Teresa VanOostrum

Nominee contributes to: 4-H is a youth organisation designed to help young people between 7 and 21 years of age use their heads, hearts, hands and health to develop leadership skills, care for the environment and become contributing community citizens. Adult leaders provide guidance as members choose from a variety of life skills and livestock projects, participate in public speaking, meetings, conferences and team activities...learning valuable skills while having fun.

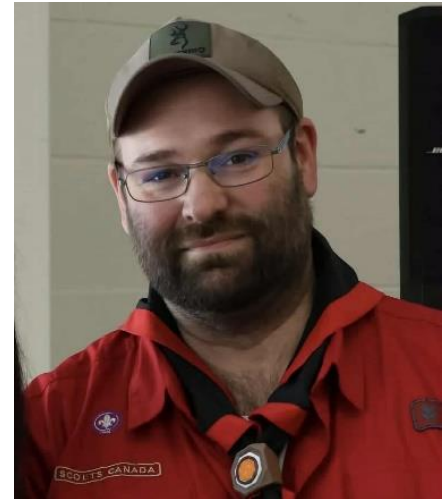
Years of service: 11

Nominee is deserving because:

Teresa VanOostrum is a valued leader in the 4-H program, providing thoughtful comments to help guide leadership and inspire young people. She has volunteered as a leader in the Western Kings 4-H Club for eleven years. During that time she has led the building blocks project and has organised building blocks and woodworking competitions both locally and provincially. She has attended 4-H Council meetings, supported community service projects and has helped with Joint Achievement Days. Teresa believes that it is important to make learning fun. Consequently, she happily assists with recreation activities after the business meetings. Teresa is an active volunteer in the club, county and province. She is a strong supporter of fundraising activities at all levels. Currently she is Treasurer of the Kings County 4-H Council and is a member of the 4-H Nova Scotia Fund Development, Life skills and Provincial Show Committees. Besides 4-H, Teresa is also a volunteer lead with pickleball groups in the Kentville area and has volunteered with the Community Income Tax Program for the past nine years. The 4-H program is definitely richer because Teresa shares her time to help members 'learn to do by doing'.

Nominee Name: Jeremy LeBlanc

Nominee contributes to: Scouts Canada is a leading co-ed youth organization (ages 5–26) providing adventurous outdoor experiences, leadership development, and community service to over 40,000 youth. Supported by over 13,000 volunteers, the organization focuses on building resilience, social skills, and active citizenship through the Canadian Path program.



Years of service: 4 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Jeremy LeBlanc has been a dedicated volunteer with 2nd Berwick Scouts for the past four years, consistently going above and beyond in his role. While it's often said that volunteering in Scouting takes only an hour a week, Jeremy proves time and time again that true commitment means giving so much more. He is deeply invested in ensuring the youth have an active, engaging, and meaningful Scouting experience. Jeremy regularly attends camps and events, always showing up with enthusiasm and a willingness to help wherever needed. He even uses his own vehicle to transport equipment, making sure the youth have everything they need to fully participate. Jeremy has taken the youth camping throughout Nova Scotia, giving them the opportunity to explore places they may never have otherwise seen. Through these experiences, he helps them discover the true beauty of our province while building confidence, skills, and lasting memories. With his big heart and genuine care for every child, Jeremy ensures that each youth is included, encouraged, and able to get the most out of their Scouting journey. His dedication, kindness, and energy make him truly one of a kind within 2nd Berwick Scouts. To many, he is more than just a leader — he is a role model, a mentor, and, affectionately, “Jeremy Twinkle Toes.”

Volunteer of the Year Nomination 2026

Nominee Name: Deon MacKenzie



Nominee contributes to: Scouts Canada is a leading co-ed youth organization (ages 5–26) providing adventurous outdoor experiences, leadership development, and community service to over 40,000 youth. Supported by over 13,000 volunteers, the organization focuses on building resilience, social skills, and active citizenship through the Canadian Path program.

Years of service: 8 years

Nominee is deserving because: Deon MacKenzie has been a dedicated member of 2nd Berwick Scouts for over eight years, serving as a committed volunteer and leader. His connection to Scouting began at a young age, when he started with the former 1st Berwick Scouting group. This lifelong involvement reflects both his passion for Scouting and his deep-rooted commitment to its values. Scouting is truly a family tradition for Deon. His daughter has also been involved since the age of five, continuing the legacy of participation and service. Deon is a highly hands-on and active member who consistently goes above and beyond to support and mentor youth. He ensures participants develop essential skills such as knot-tying and safe whittling, while guiding them in earning their permits with a strong emphasis on safety, responsibility, and confidence. In a remarkable demonstration of his dedication, Deon has transformed a portion of his property into “Camp MacKenzie,” providing a unique and accessible space for youth to camp, build shelters, and practice outdoor skills. This initiative has significantly expanded opportunities for hands-on learning and adventure, allowing youth to experience Scouting in a meaningful and memorable way. The impact of Camp MacKenzie has been so profound that some youth have even designed a badge inspired by their experiences there. Deon’s ongoing commitment, leadership, and passion continue to make a lasting difference in the lives of the youth he serves and within the Scouting community as a whole. He has proudly carried, and will continue to carry, the Scouting name “Rikki-Tikki-Tavi” with dedication and pride.

Nominee Name: Muriel West

Nominee contributes to: The Village of Kingston acknowledges the several organizations in our area that Muriel has contributed to, including Kingston & Area Scouting, Kingston & District Elementary School, Heart & Stroke Campaign, North Kingston Cemetery, Canadian Blood Services, Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, Kingston United Baptist Church, Kingston Village Commission, Association of Nova Scotia Villages, Steer BBQ, and Mid Valley Region Physician Recruitment & Retention Committee.



Years of service: 50 years

Nominee is deserving because:

We want to nominate Muriel West for the County of Kings Volunteer of the Year. She has contributed an immeasurable number of volunteer hours to better Kingston, Greenwood and the surrounding area. Listed below are some of the highlights of Muriel's volunteer contributions. She was most often with an organization for several years - five to ten years or more. • Kingston & Area Scouting • Served on the Kingston Scouts Group Committee • Made neckerchiefs for the scouts for 10 years • Convened large yard sales for many years • Kingston & District School Fundraising Committee member for many years. • Organized the Historic Kingston House tour for Kingston's 50th Anniversary. • Chaired the Heart & Stroke Campaign for Kingston area for over 10 years. • Involved in the North Kingston Cemetery clean-up for 10 years. • Has been a blood donor all her life (about 50 years). • For the last 8 to 10 years, she has helped with income tax preparation for those needing assistance. She started doing 30 taxes per year and is now up to 50 per year. • a staunch

supporter of the Kingston United Church and Kingston United Baptist Church for almost 50 years. Served as Sunday School Superintendent and teacher, choir member, gardener, teller, decorator, greeter and more. • Served 9 years on the Kingston Village Commission. Besides the day-to-day responsibilities of a commissioner, she was also involved in some of the following during her term: Treasurer for the Association of Nova Scotia Villages for 6 years • Helped create parade floats • Decorated the five Village entry signs seasonally • Steer BBQ committee member, including organizer of the markets and the Udderly Delicious Dessert Contest. • Initiated the Village spring and fall yard clean-up bins. • Member of the Mid Valley Region Physician Recruitment & Retention Committee for several years. Amongst other duties, she organized a pizza lunch for the doctors and arranged for personal handwritten thank-you letters for all the doctors from Aylesford to Bridgetown. • Initiated and personally wrote and delivered 75 handwritten notes of appreciation and encouragement at Christmas to all the area businesses on behalf of the Commission for several years. • Co-chair of the committee responsible for collecting donations for the new Kingston library. Also heavily involved in researching, planning, and designing for the building. Even though we've no doubt missed some, we feel she is deserving of this award. As someone who has worked with her on many occasions, I know she does a very good job, leaving no stone unturned and digging for the best outcomes. For most of her activities, Muriel has been in a leadership position and in many instances, she initiated new approaches and events. Having recently taken some time for herself, she has become a published author, writing a children's book, "Muffin: A Dog's Life".

Nominee Name: Peter Rigby

Nominee contributes to: Scouts Canada is a leading co-ed youth organization (ages 5–26) providing adventurous outdoor experiences, leadership development, and community service to over 40,000 youth. Supported by over 13,000 volunteers, the organization focuses on building resilience, social skills, and active citizenship through the Canadian Path program



Years of service: 30 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Peter “Chatter” Rigby has given more than 30 years of his life to the 2nd Berwick Scout Group, and in that time, he has become so much more than a volunteer—he has become a constant, a mentor, and a friend to generations of youth. His heart has always been with the Beaver Colony, where his patience, kindness, and steady presence have helped shape the very first Scouting experiences for so many young people. For countless children, Chatter was one of the first leaders to welcome them, encourage them, and help them find their place. The impact of those early moments stays with them for years to come. Over the decades, he has given his time selflessly — attending camps, planning activities, and creating opportunities for youth to explore, learn, and grow. From local camps to adventures across Nova Scotia, and even unforgettable experiences like tours of the HMCS Athabaskan, Chatter has always gone the extra mile to make sure youth had meaningful and lasting memories. His dedication has been recognized through many honours, including the Medal for Good Service, the Bar to the Medal of Good Service, the Long Service Medal, numerous Certificates of Commendation, and his 25-Year Service Pin in 2022. While these awards reflect his commitment, they only begin to tell the story of the difference he has made. Outside of Scouting, Chatter continues to give back through his work with Berwick Legion Branch 069 (Ortona 69). Over the past 12 years, he has stepped into many roles—President, First and Second Vice-President, Poppy Chair, and Secretary—always willing to serve wherever he is needed. He also supports the cadet squadron and contributes to countless Legion events and committees. Chatter’s decades of service, leadership, and community involvement reflect his deep commitment to supporting youth and strengthening his community. His contributions have made a lasting and meaningful impact on generations of young people and fellow volunteers alike.

Volunteer of the Year Nomination 2026

Nominee Name: Mick Tanner

Years of service: 5



Nominee contributes to: Mick has devoted countless hours to coaching and supporting youth basketball in New Minas and all over Kings County, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to both boys and girls in our community. This past year alone, Mick coached with Evangeline Middle School Basketball boys and girls teams and the Axe Basketball Club, taking on multiple teams including U12 Girls, U10 Boys, and U14 Boys. In addition to his head coaching duties, he generously volunteered his time as an assistant coach for the U8 “Lil Hatchets,” helping introduce the youngest players to the fundamentals of the game in a positive and encouraging environment. Mick has done this all for a number of years now.

Nominee Name: Mark Albano



Nominee contributes to:

Filipino-Canadians in the Valley Association is a non-profit organization that has been registered for a year now.

While our formal journey as a registered organization is still young, our mission and commitment to serving the community have been alive much longer organizing events, supporting families, and responding to the needs of our community. What started as a shared passion among a few individuals has grown into a collective movement driven by compassion, unity, and a deep desire to make a difference.

Years of service: 1 year since the organization was registered

Nominee is deserving because: He expresses deep gratitude and love for the Filipino-Canadians in the Valley Association, a community that has become like a family to him. Volunteering has never felt like an obligation, but rather a calling. Through every event he helps organize, every activity he supports, and every smile he sees—especially from younger members—he is reminded why he continues to serve. From cultural celebrations to community gatherings, he has dedicated his time and energy to creating experiences that bring people together and foster a sense of belonging. Being far from home, this organization has given him a strong sense of identity, connection, and purpose. In return, he is committed to uplifting others, promoting Filipino culture, and strengthening the bond between Filipino and Canadian communities in the Valley. Despite the challenges behind the scenes, including long hours, careful planning, and personal sacrifices, seeing the joy, unity, and pride in the community makes it all worthwhile. He believes that even small acts of service can make a meaningful difference, and this nomination reflects both his passion for the community and his ongoing commitment to serve with compassion, dedication, and heart.

Nominee Name: Johannes Wheeldon



Nominee contributes to: Johannes contributes to the Canning & District Recreation Commission through his leadership and development of the Ice Breakers hockey program at the Glooscap District Arena. As the originator of the program, he identified a need for a low-cost, low-pressure, and fun introduction to hockey for children and families in the community.

He has played a key role in designing and delivering the program, ensuring it aligns with the organization's goal of reducing barriers to participation and increasing access to recreation. Through his efforts, Johannes has helped expand local programming, engage new participants, and create a welcoming environment where children can build confidence and foundational skills. His contributions have strengthened both the organization's offerings and its impact within the broader rural community.

Years of service: 2 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Johannes is deserving of this award for his vision, leadership, and dedication to creating accessible recreation opportunities in our community. In 2024, he brought forward the idea for what is now the Ice Breakers hockey program, recognizing a gap in low-cost, low-pressure opportunities for children and families to participate in hockey. He has been the driving force behind the program from its inception, leading its development and ensuring it remains focused on fun, inclusion, and skill-building.

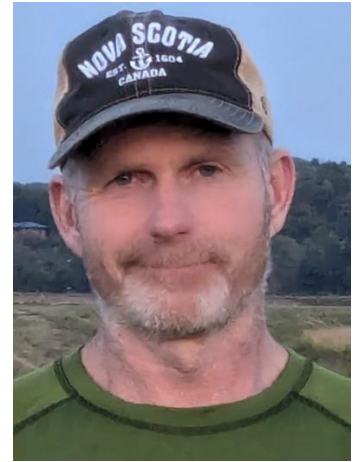
Through his commitment, Johannes has helped remove barriers related to cost, travel, and confidence, making hockey more accessible to a wider range of participants. His efforts have not only strengthened programming within the Canning & District Recreation Commission, but have also had a lasting impact on the community by creating a welcoming space where children can try something new, build confidence, and develop a love for sport.

Johannes' leadership and passion have been instrumental in the success of Ice Breakers, and his work continues to create meaningful opportunities for youth and families in our rural community.

Volunteer of the Year Nomination 2026

Nominee Name: Darrell Steel

Nominee contributes to: Darrell contributes to the Canning & District Recreation Commission through his active leadership within the Ice Breakers hockey program at the Glooscap District Arena. As the program has grown, Darrell has stepped into a leadership role by running his own team, helping to increase capacity and ensure more children can participate.



His involvement supports the organization's mission to provide inclusive, accessible recreation opportunities. By leading a team within a low-pressure, learn-to-play environment, Darrell helps create positive experiences for youth, fostering skill development, confidence, and enjoyment of sport. His commitment and reliability play an important role in sustaining and growing the program for the benefit of the community

Years of service: 2 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Darrell is deserving of this award for his dedication, leadership, and commitment to supporting and growing accessible recreation opportunities in our community. As a key volunteer within the Ice Breakers hockey program, Darrell has taken on an important leadership role by stepping forward to run his own team, helping to expand the program and ensure more children can participate.

His involvement has been critical to the program's sustainability and growth. By creating a positive, supportive, and fun environment for participants, Darrell helps children build confidence, develop foundational hockey skills, and feel a sense of belonging. His willingness to lead, mentor, and invest his time ensures that the program continues to meet the needs of families who may otherwise face barriers to participation.

Darrell's commitment to community recreation and his hands-on approach to supporting youth make him an invaluable part of the Ice Breakers program and a deserving candidate for this recognition.

Nominee Names:

Team of Sandy Wing, Amanda Cress and Laura White

Nominees contribute to: The Include Me Society is a registered non-profit that provides recreational and social opportunities for neurodivergent children, teens and adults and their families living in the Annapolis Valley.

Years of service: 2.5 years

Nominees are deserving because:

I would like to nominate the team of Sandy Wing, Amanda Cress and Laura White of the Include Me Society for a 2026 Kings County volunteer of the year award. Since the fall of 2023, Sandy, Amanda and Laura have worked tirelessly as a team to provide recreational and social opportunities for neurodivergent children, teens and adults and their families living in the Annapolis Valley. What began as a meeting around a kitchen table to discuss the growing gap in services for individuals with autism, ADHD, global developmental delay and rare genetic disorders in our region, has grown into the Include Me Society, a vital service in our Valley region. Over the last two and a half years, Sandy, Laura and Amanda have each devoted hundreds and hundreds of volunteer hours planning and hosting over 150 adapted events and programs for neurodivergent families. In addition, they have built partnerships with local organizations and recreation departments to promote inclusion and expand the number of opportunities available to neurodivergent children and youth in our community. Thanks to their hard work and advocacy, neurodivergent children and youth and their families have participated in sensory swim lessons, adapted art sessions, special-occasion parties, family support groups, caregiver events, visits to the Acadia multi-sensory room, low-stimulus family swims, sensory movie showings, try-it sports and wall-climbing, sleigh ride, bowling and playground outings. In 2025 alone, Include Me hosted over 100 events and programs, 74 of them in Kings County. These events were attended by over 2,000 people, 1,371 of them residents of Kings County. None of this would have been possible without the passion, energy and dedication of Sandy, Amanda and Laura. While juggling their own family and job responsibilities, they have continued to advocate for the needs of this very vulnerable population. Their volunteer work in Kings County has changed lives and I feel they truly deserve recognition.



Nominee Name: Beverly Palmeter



Nominee contributes to:

4-H is a community-based youth organization dedicated to providing rural youth with opportunities for leadership and life skills development while promoting agriculture awareness. The Kings County 4-H Council co-ordinates the county level of 4-H programming.

Years of service: 25 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Beverly has contributed to the 4-H program as a County Leader Adviser, General Leader of the Horton 4-H Club, has assisted with fundraising, grant applications, mentored 4-H members, served on numerous committees, been instrumental in the county awards committee, and is on 4-H Nova Scotia Provincial Show and Sheep Committees.

Outside of 4-H, Beverly also volunteers as a director and vice-chair with the Landscape of Grand Pre Inc., a director and secretary on the Sheep Producers Association of Nova Scotia, a director and secretary on the Canadian Sheep Federation, and secretary/treasurer of the Grand Pre Marsh Body.

Nominee Name: Tara Hirtle



Nominee contributes to:

4-H is a community-based youth organization dedicated to providing rural youth with opportunities for leadership and life skills development while promoting agriculture awareness. The Kings County 4-H Council co-ordinates the county level of 4-H programming.

Years of service: 15 years

Nominee is deserving because:

Tara has contributed to the 4-H program as a Horse leader, organizing the light horse project at the county level including shows, clinics, and judging, assists in organizing regional Light Horse Boot Camps, is part of the committees organizing the Tug-o-War team and Lumbersports competitions, was part of the 4-H Nova Scotia 100th Anniversary committee, and attended the 4-H Canada Leadership Summit. Outside of 4-H, Tara also volunteers at the horse show at the Tremont Fair.

Nominee Name: Melina Param

Nominee contributes to:

The Village of Canning represents Canning and the surrounding region. Melina lives in Canning and her volunteer efforts are experienced in our village. Ross Creek Centre for the Arts, Melina is instrumental in the Community suppers initiative Hope for Wildlife, Melina works weekly with the support of this important organization Volunteer Nova Scotia, Melina is an active member of the board Rotary Club of Kentville



Years of service: 2.5

Nominee is deserving because:

Melina is the kind of person who quietly strengthens the fabric of our community in ways most people never fully see. From her work with Rotary Club of Kentville, she contributes to initiatives that directly support and uplift local families. At Hope for Wildlife, she gives her time to the care and rehabilitation of injured animals. Her involvement with Ross Creek Centre for the Arts reflects her belief in the importance of creativity and access to the arts, feeding the within the community through the monthly community suppers. Through Volunteer Nova Scotia, she is an active member of the board and extends her impact even further, supporting and promoting volunteerism across the province. What sets Melina apart is not just the number of organizations she supports, but the way she shows up, reliably, generously, and without seeking recognition. She gives her time and energy because she genuinely cares, and the ripple effect of her efforts is felt across multiple corners of our community. Melina embodies what it means to be a volunteer, not just in action, but in spirit and we feel is deeply deserving of recognition as Volunteer of the Year.