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Township Honours Volunteers For Community Commitment

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It is people who truly make a place, and on April 5, the Township of Langley paid tribute to the many people who generously volunteer their time, knowledge, and efforts to make this an exceptional community.

Hundreds of caring community members were thanked and celebrated during the Township's annual Volunteer Appreciation event. Held at the Langley Events Centre, the evening included dinner, entertainment, and the presentation of awards to an outstanding individual, couple, and student.

The 2017 Eric Flowerdew Volunteer Award was presented to Sylvia Anderson.

For decades, Anderson has been dedicated to numerous organizations in Langley, from the Christmas Bureau to the Field Naturalists. She volunteered for the BC

Summer Games and the BC Senior Games, supports Langley Special Olympics, and helps with the Relay for Life. She has been involved with the Langley Heritage Society and Canadian Blood Services, and is a recipient of the Order of the Red Cross Canada.

A charter member and the volunteer coordinator for the Langley Volunteer Bureau, Anderson pairs local residents with organizations and events in need of a helping hand. She also volunteers with the Langley Emergency Program, helps at the Campbell Valley Community Visitors Centre, and co-chairs the Langley Seniors Committee Action Table.

The Flowerdew Award is named after former Parks and Recreation commissioner, school trustee, and municipal councillor Eric Flowerdew. Each year it is presented by the Township to an individual who promotes an active living lifestyle that enhances Langley's quality of life and community spirit through creative, cultural, physical, or social pursuits.

2017 Flowerdew Award nominees included Carol LaJeunesse, Peter Massey, Rob Jones-Cook, Tony DeJong, and Zosia Ettenberg.

The 2017 – 2018 Pete Swensson Outstanding Community Youth Award was presented to Laura Stead.

In Grade 12 at Langley Fundamental School, Stead is a straight-A student who has earned the Top Student Award in 12 classes over the past three years. Earlier this year, she and four other students initiated an Amnesty International Write for Rights event. A volunteer at Langley Evangelical Free Church, she serves in the Children's Ministry program, on the Hospitality Team, and as a summer intern.

Stead plays volleyball and is captain of the senior girls' basketball team. She has been named Top PE student and Most Inspirational Player, and has received the Tracy Basham Memorial Scholarship. An exceptional musician and vocalist, she starred in the lead role in her school's production of Beauty and the Beast. Stead has also won Langley Fundamental's Citizen and Principal's Awards.

The Outstanding Community Youth Award is named after Pete Swensson, an internationally recognized athlete and photographer who was the Township's first Recreation Director and the originator of the Langley Walk. The Swensson Award is given to a Langley student in Grade 11 or 12 in recognition of their athletic achievements, scholastic effort, community involvement, and personal qualities.

Also nominated were Alana Collmann, D.W. Poppy; Annika Szarka, Langley Fine Arts; Brodie Hofer, Langley Christian; Colin Ulle, Brookwood; Dannon Sturn, Walnut Grove; Jennifer Chu, R.E. Mountain; and Kalyn Hartmann, Langley Secondary.