

Ron Wallace named Aurora's Citizen of the Year



By Brock Weir

Ron Wallace, founding editor of The Auroran was named Aurora's Citizen of the Year by Mayor Geoffrey Dawe on Tuesday.

Mayor Dawe hailed Mr. Wallace during Tuesday's Council meeting for his service to the community.

"I am honoured to present the 2013 Citizen of the Year Award to Ron Wallace," said Mayor Dawe in a statement. "Ron has been a tremendous supporter and promoter for our Town for decades, and his selfless efforts have helped to shape Aurora as a caring and inclusive municipality."

Mr. Wallace, known in many quarters as "Mr. Aurora" for his dedication to the community, was hailed for his service on Aurora Council, serving as York Region District School Board Trustee, a volunteer fire fighter, director of the Aurora Historical Society, Aurora Chamber of Commerce, and Aurora Cemetery Board.

His work as a Rotarian, support for the Aurora Optimist Club, Lions' Club, Royal Canadian Legion, Society of York Region Artists (SOYRA), the Aurora Farmers' Market, and driving force behind the Aurora Street Festival were just a handful of his many accomplishments highlighted by the Mayor.

"He is a stranger to very few," said Mayor Dawe in his presentation. "He has been an exceptionally visible and active member of our community. He came to Aurora in 1969 to work in the newspaper industry. His community involvement speaks volumes for his character and his commitment to our Town. He was a Rotarian for many years and recipient of the Paul Harris Award for Rotary International, which is a very prestigious award.

"In addition to the honour from Rotarians, our Citizen of the Year was recognized by the Aurora Heritage Advisory Committee in 2007 for the promotion of Aurora's Heritage. He was honoured by SOYRA in 2008, by the Ontario Heritage Trust in 2011 and was a recent recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal. With a wealth of accolades and a lifetime commitment to his community, our Citizen of the Year's altruism can be summed up best by his own words: "I love Aurora and that's all there is to it. I would do

anything I could for this Town.

Choosing one person as a glowing example of civic pride and a commitment to helping our community can be a difficult task, but when faced with an individual for whom giving back is a lifelong pursuit, the burden of decision-making is much easier. For his selfless efforts to help so many groups and to help shape Aurora as a caring, inclusive community, it is my distinct pleasure and honour to introduce Mr. Ron Wallace as 2013 Citizen of the Year.

Receiving an extended ovation from Councillors and the audience in the Council chamber, an emotional Mr. Wallace spoke briefly of the honour.

This is a total surprise to me, he said. Thank you for your support.

For more on Mr. Wallace being named Aurora's Citizen of the Year, check our July 3 edition of The Auroran, or MPP Frank Klees' tribute on Page 5 of this week's paper.