

Sports journalist celebrates sport volunteerism in Aurora



By Ron Weese

In front of a packed house at East Side Mario's in Aurora on Sunday, sports journalist Mark Hebscher told the 14 nominees of Sport Aurora's Volunteer Recognition Luncheon and their friends, families and colleagues that they should be honoured for their awards.

Mr. Hebscher is a double Gemini winner for his sportscasting, famous for 'the Hebsy Awards.' 'Volunteers are the heart of every successful community,' he said. 'To be recognized as one who contributes to the welfare of others is a distinct honour.'

Mr. Hebscher recounted his own volunteer experiences and how rewarding they were, as well as entertaining the audience with his stories of famous interviews.

When asked the best person he ever interviewed, he didn't hesitate to identify Wayne Gretzky.

'Wayne is such a gentleman and a truly nice person,' he said. 'High-performance athletes are difficult to interview between periods,' he said, because of the cramped quarters and hot lights, 'but Wayne was always pleasant, always looked you right in the eye and never seemed in a hurry to finish,' he noted.

Now living in Dundas, ON, Mark works at CHCH TV and co-hosts Sportsline and Square-Off.

Mark does his own charity work, speaks at various functions and writes his blog at www.markhebscher.com

THE WINNERS

Sunday's ceremony recognized the contributions of Sport Volunteers nominated to receive special Awards for their commitment to athletes.

Almost 100 family, friends and colleagues joined them in the celebration and heard from each nominating Organization how each of these volunteers have brought value to their Organization.

This is the fourth year that Sport Aurora has recognized special volunteer efforts.

Mayor Geoffrey Dawe was on hand to welcome the group, along with Councillors John Abel and Michael Thompson.

'Sport Aurora has once again brought the spirit and contribution of sport volunteerism public. This is a very important event to all sport in this Town, and I am proud to be a part of it,' said Mayor Dawe.

- ? John Morning (York Oldtimers Hockey League)
- ? Nicola McGovern (Special Olympics Ontario-Aurora)
- ? Guy Wallace (Ducks Swimming)
- ? Dan Coldwell (Central York Girls Hockey Association)
- ? Stephen Ward (Storm Volleyball)
- ? Mark Cheeseman (Storm Volleyball)
- ? Javed Khan (Sport Aurora)
- ? Marsha Morassutti (York Simcoe Minor Football Association)
- ? Ken Kodnar (Aurora Community Tennis Club)
- ? Matt Giesen (Aurora Minor Baseball Association)
- ? Gaye Mass (Aurora Lawn Bowling Club)
- ? Renee Papaevangelou (Redbirds Lacrosse Club)
- ? John Spicer (Aurora Barbarians Rugby Football Club)
- ? Joyce Sparrow (Aurora Skating Club)