

Opinion

Recognizing outstanding kids

You don't have to look far to find the leaders of tomorrow. They are at local schools, church groups and youth clubs, already making a difference by contributing to community life. They are on sports teams and volunteering for organizations. They are collecting donations and supporting area charities. And they are excelling in school, maintaining top-level grade point averages.

They are extraordinary, and it's time to recognize them. Each year, the Ontario Community Newspapers Association (OCNA) — of which the *Milton Champion* is a member — co-ordinates the Ontario Junior Citizen awards program as a way to honour and encourage youth who are involved in community life. The program is sponsored by TD Bank Group.

Previous recipients of the Ontario Junior Citizen Award include Justin Hines, for applying his musical talents to support charities and help others while dealing with his own physical challenges, Annaleise Carr, who was the youngest person to swim across Lake Ontario in 2012 — and two years later swam across Lake Erie — to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for Camp Trillium, and Maya Burhanpurkar, who by age 11 had already conducted research on plant-based antibiotics, donated her hair to make wigs for children with cancer and volunteered for a summer to work at a rural hospital in India. Any Ontario resident between the ages of six and 17 is eligible to be chosen as one of the final recipients of the award.

How can you get involved?

By nominating youth in one of five categories:

- A person involved in worthwhile community service
- A special young person contributing to his or her community while living with a physical or psychological limitation
- An individual who has performed an act of heroism in the past year
- Excellence in achievement, such as the arts or athletics
- Good kids who show a commitment to making life better for others and do more than is normally expected of someone their age

Up to 12 nominees will be chosen as the final recipients of the provincial award and will be invited to a special ceremony held in the spring of 2017 in Toronto. Each young person who is nominated will be presented with a certificate of recognition, and their contributions will be highlighted with an article in this community newspaper.

Help us pay tribute to our leaders of today and tomorrow. The nomination deadline for the 2016 Ontario Junior Citizen Awards is November 30. Nomination forms are available at www.ocna.org/juniorcitizen or by calling OCNA at 416-923-7724 ext. 4439.

SNAPSHOT



SUN SETS OVER MILTON: *Champion* reader Gordon Gibson snapped this photo of the sun setting over Milton, which created a warm, orange glow over Pettigrew Trail. Do you have a unique, interesting, fun or cute photo taken in Milton that you would like to submit to be considered for Snapshot? Send submissions (minimum 600 KB resolution) to editor@miltoncanadianchampion.com or use the hashtag #MiltonChampion on Instagram. Please include the name of the photographer and a description of the photo including the location where it was taken.

My View

Make a difference — locally

It is said that volunteers are the roots of strong communities.

This rings true in Milton, where so many people offer their time and skills to assist others in making this great town the place to live, work and play.

Volunteers are kind, caring and compassionate — selfless individuals with a will.

And when there's a will, there's a way.

Paving the path to volunteer opportunities locally are the folks at Volunteer Halton, who have been working diligently to put on the Milton Volunteer Fair.

Slated for Saturday, the 12th annual fair offers residents the chance to connect with local organizations that rely on the benevolence of others to carry out their mission in the community. The fair also serves to promote the work of local agen-



Catherine O'Hara
Managing Editor

cies, which will be well represented at the November 19 event.

Milton Transitional Housing, The Darling Home for Kids, The Optimist Club of Milton and The Distress Centre are among the more than two dozen not-for-profits that have signed up to participate in the fair in the hopes of adding a few names to their roster of volunteers — people who are willing to lend a helping hand and keen on having an impact in their community.

The Milton Volunteer Fair organizing committee, of which I am a member, has spent a considerable amount of time working to ensure Saturday's event goes off without a hitch. We're hopeful residents will seize this opportunity to get engaged and make a difference.

Like Casey McKay, a volunteer at Halton Women's Place said, "It's a wonderful experience and you definitely see the impact your time can have on the community and the people you work with. "Go for it."

The Fair runs from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the banquet room of the Milton Sports Centre, 605 Santa Maria Blvd.

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