

Milligan, Sheryl

By government

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Lawn bowler recognized for contribution

By JACK EVANS
Staff Reporter



Milligan

Seldom is lawn bowling recognized as a major sport. But Belleville's Sheryl Ann Milligan has brought distinction both to herself and her home town with a provincial award for her contribution to amateur sport.

Milligan is one of 27 Ontarians who will receive Special Achievement Awards from the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation of which Quinte MPP Hugh O'Neil is minister.

The awards will be presented April 7 at the ministry's annual awards banquet at the Sheraton Centre, Toronto.

For Milligan, her interest in lawn bowling is a family affair. She learned from her father as a child and has been active ever since. Also, her brother, now a school teacher at Cobourg, is a member of the Canadian national men's team, and in that capacity has travelled all over the world.

As one who has worked her way up in provincial lawn bowling activities from local club involvement, she has been active in the Ladies' Provincial Lawn Bowling Association since 1975. She remains zone convener for the association, looking after the activities of more than a dozen clubs in an area stretching from Barrie through to Ottawa and all points south, plus serving as secretary of the 7,000-member association.

It was in the latter capacity that, in recent months, she realized a long-term goal of amalgamating the men's and women's associations into one. That is now called the Ontario Lawn Bowlers, and Milligan is its charter secretary.

She has also been active for some years as a national lawn bowling umpire.

Lawn bowling is an ancient sport, says Milligan, and its membership and activity level tends to be increasing.

It is also closely related to carpet

bowling, which which seems to be staging a comeback for indoor recreation.

Despite her busy role provincially and nationally, Milligan continues to bowl regularly at the Belleville Lawn Bowling Club, where the season normally runs late May through September.

Some places, she notes, already have covered lawn bowling facilities.

She also hopes to encourage more young people to get involved in lawn bowling, she said. "It's not just a sport for senior citizens," she said. "It takes endurance and stamina to take part in a major, day-long tournament."

Milligan said she knew she had been nominated for the award by local club officials, but the news still came as a surprise because lawn bowling, as a sport, often tends to be played down.

Nearest lawn bowling clubs to Belleville would include Trenton, Brighton and Kingston, she said.