

Chamber award winners modest people

By Frances Niblock

Modesty is a characteristic shared by all of the winners of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce 2006 business awards – while flattered, many recipients said others are more deserving of the annual awards.

Superior Glove in Acton was selected Business of the Year, an honour recognizing significant social and economic contributions to the community, excellent customer service and good business ethics.

“Who wouldn’t like to be described that way – it’s great,” Superior president Tony Geng said on Tuesday when informed of the criteria that volunteer judges used to assess nominations.

“We were kind of surprised because we didn’t know we were in the running, or that anybody was thinking about us, but we are very honoured and really, really pleased,” Geng said.

“We’re proud of our town, and it’s nice that the town is proud of us too,” he said, adding Superior’s Newfoundland plant gets lots of publicity and recognition, including visits from the Premier, but said “maybe we’re just taken for granted, a little bit,” in Acton.

Superior is owned by the Geng family of Acton, including father Frank, who purchased Acton Glove in 1961, and sons Tony, and Joe who is vice-president.

Geng said the family

business, which sells millions of pairs of gloves annually, competes on world markets by focusing on “niche things that we can do better than anyone else in the world,” like cut resistant gloves.

Superior regularly donates gloves to local groups for cleanups and supports local sports teams and community events

No joke

At Acton Optical, owner Nancy Wilkes hasn’t been able to stop smiling since being informed on her day off that she had been chosen Entrepreneur of the Year.

“I was in absolute shock when I got the phone call. I kept thinking I was going to wake up and someone would say it was a joke,” Wilkes said last Thursday, adding initially she thought the phone call was to make arrangements to return the Chamber’s Business of the Month sign which had hung in her window in December.

“It is really unbelievable, and it was so unexpected. I’m so honoured to be part of Acton,” Wilkes said, adding she has had steady growth since she opened in the Giant Tiger plaza in the summer of 2005.

The Entrepreneur award recognizes superior customer service and excellent business ethics of companies operating from one to three years, with fewer than 10 employees.

Top employee

When found at his desk in the Town’s public works

department, senior supervisor Dick Spear said he found all the attention of being chosen Employee of the Year a little “awkward.”

“I don’t usually get people congratulating me – it’s nice, but I’m usually one of those guys who works behind the scenes to get things done,” Spear said on Monday, adding he was raised to be respectful and helpful.

The award is designed to recognize an employee who makes a significant contribution to the excellence of Halton Hills through exceptional customer service, something Spear cheerfully and efficiently provides.

Spear joined the Town, working on “the back of a recycling van,” in 1981 after several summers of

work as a student, and worked his way up to oversee a public works staff of 26.

Surprised, honoured

The Civic Pride Award was earned by Margaret and Bob MacKinnon who came to Acton in 1999 to open the MacKinnon Family Funeral Home, Shoemaker Chapel, on Mill Street.

Margaret MacKinnon said they are “quite honoured and surprised” by the award. She said she loves gardening, so enjoys taking particular care with the grounds, and was happy to see 40 years of old paint scraped off the building’s gingerbread trim over the summer.

Both MacKinnons volunteer their time and talents with local Acton service organizations and com-

munity groups.

Top volunteer

The JA Volunteer of the Year is Virginia Hornby, an employee of CPI in Georgetown who has helped with Junior Achievement programs for five years.

All of the recipients will receive their awards at the Chamber’s 37th annual Business Awards banquet on March 22 at Glen Cairn

Golf Course.

Call the Chamber at 905-877-7119 for more information.

CORRECTION: Margaret MacKinnon is the Canadian Cancer Society co-ordinator of transportation, not canvassing, as reported in last week’s issue. The New Tanner regrets the error.

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