

Award recipients honoured

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secure provincial approval and funding for an expanded Milton District Hospital.

The postcards were delivered — along with a strong message — to Queen's Park last summer.

"We asked the citizens of Milton to respond to the need of the hospital and did they ever," Pomeroy said in his acceptance speech.

The Lifetime Achievement Award went to the three men responsible for founding the Milton Lions Club, George Clements, who wasn't able to make the ceremony, Gus Mowbray and Sam Nadalin.

The local group was formed in 1963. Almost 50 years later, the club continues to raise large amounts of money for causes around town including the CT Scanner Campaign and local schools.

Clements' sister, Donna Coulter, spoke on behalf of the recipients, who continue to be involved to this day. Her words were followed by an invitation from emcee Mark Curtis: "It's fitting to show our respect, love and gratitude by a standing ovation."

The crowd rose to its feet.

The Civic Improvement Award went to Emil Georgiev and Kamen Kostabinov for their renovation to the Thai House Cuisine building on Main Street downtown, which in the early 1900s was a shoe factory.

In accepting the award, Georgiev said at the start of the project they wondered if Milton was the right town for the project.

"Now we know for sure it was the right town."



ERIC RIEHL / SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION Chamber president Andrew Wall (left) presents the 2009 Lifetime Achievement Award to Donna Coulter (on behalf of George Clements), Sam Nadalin (centre) and Gus Mowbray.

Business of the Year (100 employees or more) went to Dufferin Aggregates, which beat out Mohawk Racetrack.

Dufferin's Milton quarry employs more than 300 people, making it one of the largest in Canada.

Rehabilitating lands is very important to Dufferin, said site manager Mark Graves in a video presentation before he took to the stage. Large tree-planting events are a regular occurrence, and this year more than 21,000 trees are expected to be planted.

"This award is very special to us because it highlights the long-term relationship we have with the Milton community," Graves said.

The award for Business of the Year (99 employees or less) went to The Dance Shoppe, which started out 16 years ago with 1,200 square feet of space. It has since grown to 7,500 square feet, with hundreds of students in its recreational and competitive streams.



ERIC RIEHL / SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION Ann Loker of Manheim Toronto accepts the 2009 Business Person of the Year Award from Chamber president Andrew Wall.



ERIC RIEHL / SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION Emil Georgiev (centre) and Kamen Kostabinov accept the 2009 Civic Improvement Award.

Its dancers perform at fundraisers across town.

"To say this is an honour is an understatement," said owner Ruth-Ann Gray, explaining the studio started as a little girl's dream. "We'll cherish this always."

Also nominated in the category were Milton Auto Wreckers Ltd. and Pasqualino Café and Bistro.

Business Person of the Year went to Ann Loker of Manheim Toronto, a wholesale vehicle marketplace and auto auction.

In a video recording, Loker said Manheim, with its 540 employees, is more than a work-



ERIC RIEHL / SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION Dufferin Aggregates site manager Mark Graves (left) shows the 2009 Business of the Year Award (100 employees or more).



ERIC RIEHL / SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION The Dance Shoppe owner Ruth-Ann Gray accepts the 2009 Business of the Year Award (99 employees or less).

place, it's her family.

Giving back to her community is a priority for Loker, who has served as a chairperson and been on the board of the United Way of Milton. She's also part of the Fine Arts Society of Milton (FASM), and has donated paintings for fundraisers.

Loker said the award goes far beyond herself.

"This isn't just about me. It's the people I work with who make me shine," she said.

The other nominees were Scott Howard of Scott's Car Care and Rust Check Centre and Ruth-Ann Gray of The Dance Shoppe.

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