

Shelburne Rotary Club member honoured with Paul Harris Fellow Award

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The Rotary Club of Shelburne has recognized the dedication and contributions of one of their own members with a prestigious award.

The local Rotary Club presented member Michelle Chidwick with the Paul Harris Fellow Award on July 3 at their annual Changeover BBQ.

“While Michelle is still fairly new to the club, her impact was felt immediately as she conceived and continues to lead our Thanksgiving weekend PumpkinFest event,” wrote the Rotary Club of Shelburne in a press release. “Michelle's energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to making our community and the world a better place is greatly appreciated.”

The Paul Harris Fellow Award is the highest award given by Rotary International. It is presented to a person who has made outstanding contributions to their community and exemplifies the Rotary ideal of “service above self.” Named after Rotary founder, Paul Harris, the award was established in 1957 to encourage and show appreciation for substantial contributions to a program known then as, the Rotary Foundation Fellowships for Advanced Study.

“I was definitely surprised to receive the award. It's a very big award in the Rotary world so to be able to receive it was a really big honour,” said Chidwick. “The Shelburne Rotary Club is such a great community and they've welcomed me with open arms. I've really got to see the amazing things they're able to help the community with.”

Chidwick joined the Rotary Club of Shelburne between 2022 and 2023. She recently became a part of the executive board for the Shelburne Rotary Club in the role of secretary, and will serve as the local Rotary's Youth Exchange counsellor.

“Seeing how much they do for the community from an event and fundraising standpoint, it's really something I wanted to be able to give back to the community I live in and work in,” said Chidwick.

Past community recipients of the Paul Harris Fellow Award include Greg and Heather Holmes, who hosted the annual musical event, Pickin' in the Park, and helped raise donations for Fiddle Park improvements and the Shelburne Food Bank.

Ardith Dunlop, volunteer coordinator for the Shelburne Food Bank, received the award in 2023 for her 30 years of volunteer service with the local food bank.

Last year, the award was given to Tim Hortons owner John Lewandowski for his support of the local Rotary Club through the annual Smile Cookie Campaign.