The nominees for the 2015 Valued Elder Recognition Award (VERA) were honoured on Friday, October 2, 2015 at the Salvation Army Citadel in Victoria during the annual International Day of Older Persons Lecture.

The Centre on Aging honours the United Nations' International Day of Older Persons and the Government of Canada’s National Seniors Day on October 1st with the presentation of the Valued Elder Recognition Award (VERA). The award, first presented in October 2000, recognizes and honours individuals who over their lifetime have given exemplary service to helping others in the Capital Regional District. Award recipients are further acknowledged with a plaque at the Centre on Aging offices.

Thank you to our 2015 VERA nominees, for all you give to the community.
Our honoured VERA nominees and recipients:

(L to R) Wynne Arden, with nominator Kate Humble and fellow nominee, Joan Smith

**Wynne Arden – nominee**

- 2004 – present  Belfry Theatre
- 1991 – present  Craigdarroch Castle

**Nominated and supported by:**

Kate Humble, Craigdarroch Castle
Montanna Mills, Craigdarroch Castle
Courtney Malek, Craigdarroch Castle
Adriana Ayers, Craigdarroch Castle

“For the last 23 years she has tirelessly dedicated herself to represent the Castle as a skilled and knowledgeable docent.”

“I have always been struck by her openness to learn new information and to adapt with the organization.”

“I know she has volunteered at other institutions over the years since her retirement, but her commitment to us has been consistent and we are very lucky to have her.”
Dick Cavaye (L) with his nominator, Patricia Jelinski

Richard (Dick) Cavaye – nominee

2011 – present  Pacific Opera Victoria Foundation
2004 – 2009  District of Oak Bay
1999 – 2000  BC Summer Games
1999 – 2000  Victoria Golf Club
1986 – present  United Way Greater Victoria

Nominated and supported by:

Patricia Jelinski, United Way Greater Victoria
Patrick Corrigan, Pacific Opera Victoria Foundation
Heather Skydt, Oak Bay News
Hazel Braithwaite, District of Oak Bay

“Dick’s commitment to spreading the word about opera and to engaging others in opera is inspiring.”

“Dick has been a true mentor and role model.”

“Dick has been a constant, bringing he unique perspective to the table and motivating his colleagues to embrace new approaches.”
Robert (Bob) Ferguson – nominee

2009 – 2010 Saanich Peninsula Hospital
1998 – present Belfry Theatre
1998 – present Craigdarroch Castle
1986 – 1994 Saanich Police

Nominated and supported by:

Kate Humble, Craigdarroch Castle
Montanna Mills, Craigdarroch Castle
Courtney Malek, Craigdarroch Castle
Adriana Ayers, Craigdarroch Castle

“He has a knack for communication with people from young to old, from every educational background, and every cultural milieu.”

“He is clearly dedicated to giving back to his community and he does it with a youthful sense of joy.”

“Bob is the kind of person who energizes the room when he walks into it.”
Ida Marie Foster – nominee

2002 – present  Kiwanis Pavilion

Nominated and supported by:

Lynne Thompson, Kiwanis Pavilion  
Kerike McLeod, personal reference  
Alana Shenkenfelder, personal reference  
Dave Cockle, Kiwanis Health Care Society

“Ida Marie is a valued volunteer who over the years has given of herself to bring joy, laughter, music, and a sense of belonging to those who are in our care.”

“She is not one to need recognition for the work she does. For her, seeing the smiles on the residents’ faces is enough.”

“She know each resident by name, and greets each and everyone with her warm and genuine manner.”
Arthur Kratzmann - recipient

2000 – present  Dawson Heights, CRD
2000 – 2009  BC Council of Educational Leadership
1969 – present  CRD, as a travelogue enthusiast
1970s – 1980s  BC Knowledge Network
1960s – 1969  Alberta Early Childhood Education Council

Nominated and supported by:

Anita Angelozzi, Dawson Heights Housing Ltd.
Kathleen Warwaruk, personal reference
Anne Nelson, Saanich Silver Threads
Karen Hope, Dawson Heights Housing Ltd.

“I have borne witness to many, many acts of kindness as he gently and respectfully supports and encourages others around him.”

“Arthur embodies all the very best aspects of a volunteer: he is generous with his time, giving of himself, kind, supportive, helpful, selfless, and mindful of everyone, a true community builder.”

“If one looks at the definition of volunteering, it is generally considered an altruistic activity and is intended to promote goodness or improve human quality of life. Arthur exemplifies this essence of volunteering in his every action.”
Beth Potter – nominee

2004 – present   Kiwanis Pavilion
2002 – present   Cathedral Church of Saint John the Evangelist

Nominated and supported by:

Lynne Thompson, Kiwanis Pavilion
Jackie Hiebert, Jimmy Thistle Britches Gardening and Design
Margaret Bates, For the Love of Africa Society
Reverend Shane Janzen, Cathedral Church of Saint John the Evangelist
Dave Cockle, Kiwanis Health Care Society

“While I know that Mrs. Potter also volunteers her time and talents to other organizations in our city, her dedication and enthusiasm, as well as her obvious talents and gifts, continue to enrich our worship and fellowship.”

“Beth is a charming talented lady giving back unstintingly and cheerfully to her community.”

“Beth brings joy, respect, and great compassion to her work with our residents.”
(L to R) VERA nominees Wynne Arden and Joan Smith

Joan Smith – nominee

1999 – present  Craigdarroch Castle

Nominated and supported by:

Kate Humble, Craigdarroch Castle
Montanna Mills, Craigdarroch Castle
Courtney Malek, Craigdarroch Castle
Adriana Ayers, Craigdarroch Castle

“In addition to being reliable and proficient, Joan is quite possibly one of the kindest, sweetest, most thoughtful people I have ever met.”

“She is one of the friendliest, most personable people I have ever met.”

“I can honestly say, and without a doubt, that Joan is one of the kindest, friendliest, and most open people that I have ever met.”
Maureen Walkden – recipient

1990 – present Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

Nominated and supported by:

Margaret MacIntyre, Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Pat Mochrie, Society of Saint Vincent de Paul
Carmen Gillevet, Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

“She is always kind, patient and happy to be part of the team.”

“Maureen has a real twinkle in her eye, which adds warmth to her commitment and caring.”

“Maureen always has a smile for everybody, and radiates true affection.”
VERA nominee Pat Williamson standing between her nominator Lynne Thompson (L) and Debbie (R)

**Pat Williamson – nominee**

- 2005 – present Dawson Heights
- 1980s – present British Columbia Registered Music Teachers’ Association
- 1967 – present Kiwanis Pavilion and Villa
- 1967 – present Maplewood Gospel Hall

**Nominated and supported by:**

- Lynne Thompson, Kiwanis Pavilion
- Jan Arend Bergink, personal reference
- Karen Hope, Dawson Heights Housing Ltd.
- Stella Barbon, BCRMTA – Victoria Branch
- Dave Cockle, Kiwanis Health Care Society

“*Pat devotes precious time and energy to all her volunteer work and spends countless hours serving.*”

“*Pat has a compassionate, warm and gentle spirit.*”

“*We are truly blessed that someone so gifted is also so generous in her willingness to share that gift to enhance the lives of so many.*”

*Thank you to all our nominees for all you give to our community!*