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A community is nothing without its residents, and, on Saturday night, the town of Woodstock honoured many of those who have helped make a difference over the last 150 years. Before a nearly packed NBCC gymnasium, the names of 150 people – from community volunteers to community leaders – were called in recognition of their positive contributions to the town's 150 year history. Honourees included important names from the past – like L.P. Fisher, Woodstock founder and first mayor and Francis Peabody Sharp, world-renowned horticulturist – to many current contributors to the community's fabric – such as current councillors and volunteers Catherine Sutherland and Art Slipp.

All of the recipients were well-deserving of the honours, said Woodstock Mayor Jeff Wright. "This has just certainly been a fantastic event," he said. "There is not a person up there who hasn't made a difference to this community one way or another. This community is about volunteers, and the list could go on and on." He added that the town is what it is because of all the efforts of its numerous volunteers. He said Woodstock is fortunate that these volunteers step up to the plate every time there is an event like this or when they are needed. "They are there to do the job, (and) they get it done effectively," Wright said. "And that is what makes Carleton County such a great place to live."



Wright said the list of 150 people is not near long enough to include the many people who have touched the lives of Woodstock residents in one way or another. Whether teaching school, coaching hockey or volunteering for boards and committee, he said, Woodstock relies on the efforts to these dedicated people. "They know who they are, and we know who they are," he added. "Tonight was about 150 people, but, 50 years from now, I'm sure the list will be 200. And that won't be sufficient."

Chairman Randy Leonard said the selection process for the 150 recipients was done in democratic way. "We placed eight ballot boxes throughout the community in various locations and left ballots at the ballot boxes," he explained. "The nominations came from the street. We, as a committee, looked over the nominations and picked from those nominations. It was done very appropriately." He added that all were deserving. Leonard said he was pleased, though it did

come as a surprise, that even he had been selected. He was recognized as being a former mayor and for being involved in public service 19 years. He had been the chair of the Carleton Regional Development Commission, sat on the school board, sat on the food bank board and the Civic Centre board. "My portfolio is a little more extensive than just being a past mayor of the town of Woodstock," he added. "Everybody had some specific role in doing something for the town of Woodstock, and I'm only happy to have been part of it. I'm quite pleased and I'm happy for everybody."

Richard Blaquiere, teacher and humanitarian, was also quite surprised to see his name on the list. Noting the many people who dedicated time and effort to improve the community over a century and a half, the Woodstock High teacher said he was pleased to be a part of it. "I feel great, it's my home now," he said. "My kids were born here so I can show them this, was given this and made a contribution to the town. They can tell my grandkids about this someday." Blaquiere said he looks forward to getting another one in 50 years. "I'll only be 105," he said with a laugh. "The first centenarian to get one. (But) I've had a ball. It was very well done and very well organized."



Deputy Mayor Art Slipp also presented Mayor Wright with an award, a framed portrait of L. P. Fisher, the town's first mayor and Wright, the current mayor. "I am very honoured to be the mayor of this community," he said. "It is a very proud title for myself. I was born and raised in Woodstock. I love the community, and I'm the mayor because I love the community. I guess once my political career is done, I'll continue to do the

volunteer work with the Rotary Club, the golf club and the minor sports. I just love Woodstock, and I hope people will be proud of our community.”

The evening also saw a variety show with performances from mother-daughter duo Kelly and Brittany Shaw, Flat Top, the Smith Academy dancers and a karate demonstration from RCMP Cpl. David Vautour – a third degree black belt who broke a baseball bat with his shin