



Corporate Report

NO: R085

COUNCIL DATE: April 18, 2005

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: April 7, 2005
FROM: General Manager, Parks, FILE: 0290-09
 Recreation and Culture
SUBJECT: National Volunteer Week

REGULAR

RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayor and Council receive this report for information and proclaim the week of April 17 - 23, 2005, "National Volunteer Week" in Surrey.

INTENT

National Volunteer Week is recognized annually to honour those who donate their time and energy to their communities through volunteerism. It also serves to raise awareness of the important role volunteers play in local communities across Canada.

BACKGROUND

Canada's National Volunteer Week was first proclaimed in 1943, when Women's Voluntary Services in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver organized special events to draw the public's attention to the vital contribution women made to the war effort on the home front. In the late 1960's, the idea of creating a designated week to honour volunteers was revived and the focus was broadened to include all volunteers. With local community organizations taking the lead, National Volunteer Week promotions and celebrations continue to grow.

DISCUSSION

Volunteers touch every aspect of our community: health care, education, social services, youth, arts, heritage, sports, recreation, and the environment. In 2004, approximately 6,800 volunteers were involved in supporting Surrey's Parks, Recreation and Culture initiatives. Some highlights include:

- Providing one on one support for persons with disabilities through Outreach and Support Services;

- Presenting arts and heritage programs through the Surrey Art Gallery and Museum docent programs;
- Working to beautify our parks through the Partners in Parks Program;
- Assisting with day camp programs through Community and Leisure Services;
- Developing and supporting special events and community festivals; and
- Delivering English language programs for our diverse community through a partnership between the Department's Volunteer Resources and the Surrey Public Library.

New opportunities for 2005 include the Surrey Children's Festival, the "Reading Buddy" children's literacy program, and a Youth Leadership program.

CONCLUSION

Volunteers continue to be an integral part of Surrey's community fibre. Their role is central to creating and sustaining a vibrant and healthy City. We will continue to foster an environment which encourages and supports volunteerism at all levels. Given the wide range of current opportunities, new initiatives for 2005, in addition to the potential for Surrey citizens to become involved with the 2010 Olympics and Paralympics, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department will continue to work closely with other City departments and the community to identify new ways to involve volunteers in our services and programs.

By proclaiming the week of April 17 - 23, 2005 "National Volunteer Week" in Surrey, we will honour the contribution of our current volunteers and encourage new community members to become involved.

Laurie Cavan

General Manager

Parks, Recreation and Culture

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