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PENINSULA NEWS REVIEW

Dancing kick starts volunteerism

By Christine van Reeuyk - Peninsula News Review

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At age five the first inkling of volunteerism was implanted in Shevaun McGoldrick's mind.

"It's something we do with dancing," she explained. "As I got older and learned about other volunteer opportunities, it became a passion for me."

The Grade 12 student at Stelly's secondary is also involved with her school Green Team and Amnesty International group. "We just finished organizing the Haiti benefit, it was Amnesty with two other student organizations at the school," McGoldrick said. "We raised more than \$10,000."

Now she organizes dance groups, taking that love of performance to the community. She's soft-shoed her way into hospitals, seniors homes and fundraisers across the Peninsula for more than 10 years.

"It's really fun, they're so appreciative when we come in, it's really exciting," McGoldrick said. "A lot of them came from England or Ireland and they're really excited to see the culture in the youth. It's really neat to hear their stories. It's rewarding to get to know them and see how much they enjoy the performances."

It's just a sliver of the volunteer activities that earned McGoldrick the 2010 Hearts of the Community outstanding youth award. The awards were handed out Feb. 17 at the Mary Winspear Centre. McGoldrick coordinated the performances for Olympic flame celebrations in Sidney last October, and most recently worked as part of a committee to bring together a benefit concert for Haiti at Stelly's secondary. She volunteers at the Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre and tutors at the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society. Her volunteerism goes all the way back to middle school and student council, and she did a tour of BC schools as part of an educational performance about the province's history with celtic-folk band Tiller's Folley in 2005.

"I think I volunteer because it provides me with a good opportunity to give back to my school and community," she said.

She'd recommend volunteering to anyone in the community, young or old.

"It's such a great way (to) learn about yourself and other people in the community," the teen said. "In



Youth volunteer Shevaun McGoldrick receives her Hearts of the Community Volunteer Award from Peninsula News Review editor Laura Lavin.

Christine van Reeuyk/News Staff

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society today we don't put enough value on volunteering, people think 'it's not paid so why bother'. I've had richer experiences in volunteering than I have in paid positions."


As part of her recognition, McGoldrick was also given the \$1,000 Ardena Simpson scholarship.


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