



SDCF Chair Shauna Curtin with Citizen of the Year Tim Edwards.

Meet the 38th Citizen of the Year, Tim Edwards

Surprising Tim Edwards at Grand Marais' Tuesday night bingo with the news he had been named the 38th Citizen of the Year was easy, but getting him to take a break to take in the moment, now that was another story.

"I'm busy," was the response from Edwards when a crew from the Selkirk & District Community Foundation showed up with cake and sparklers to mark the occasion.

And he wasn't kidding. Edwards returned to the canteen to serve the bingo crowd burgers and fries at intermission.

The good-natured Edwards encouraged everyone else to enjoy the cake, and when the mid-bingo break was done, he said he was taken by surprise, and figured he'd be having words with his nominator and friend, Terry Neplyk, a little later.

“My buddy Terry Neplyk, he’s very sneaky when it comes to things like this,” Edwards laughed.

“I had heard rumblings about a nomination in the wind, so to speak, but I didn’t realize any paperwork had been put through. To be honest I wasn’t really interested in getting an award, but I am flattered by it and what more can you say? Terry and I will be talking a little later on. But I am very appreciative.”

Tim’s wife Kathia wasn’t surprised that her husband kept his focus on the task at hand.

“He got an award and went right back to work in the canteen. That’s just what he does. He’ll probably be a little embarrassed because as much as he likes to do for people, he gets embarrassed about being recognized,” Kathia said.

“He deserves this for everything he does. If he hears of anybody, any organization that needs help he jumps right in with both feet and he doesn’t care what anybody thinks, if it needs doing, he does it.”

Terry Neplyk, the guilty party behind the nomination, says it was a no brainer to put Tim’s name in for consideration.

“It was easy to nominate Tim Edwards,” Neplyk said.

“I’ve known Tim for about seven years and he takes on a lot of responsibility for our community. He goes way beyond the call of duty to make sure everything in the community and in our community club is done to the best of his ability and in favour of all the community members, young and old, including all the activities we have in our hall all year round.

“He’s a huge part of our community, he volunteers for everything, anytime, anywhere, anyplace, and he spends all of his free time here as a volunteer, as president of the Grand Marais Rec Association. He’s a wonderful man and a really dear friend and we’re really glad to have him in our community.”

When bingo play resumed, and perhaps the news of the night had sunk in a bit, Edwards thanked his community and spoke about why he does what he does.

“Wow. I’m honoured, flattered, never saw this coming and actually I’m really honoured to get this award and I want to thank all you for putting in a good word for me and I’ll try not to let you down,” he said.

“I’m retired, I’ve got a pretty easy schedule, five grandkids to keep me occupied when I’m not doing this, but we do it for our community, we do it because we want to leave a legacy behind, we don’t want to see the place close up and it was close to that a few years ago.

“Now it’s (good), we’ve got a lot of help, a lot of grants and a lot of prayers answered I guess you could say. We’re gonna keep moving forward.”

According to Kathia, her husband does it all for his community and the community centre, where he does maintenance and looks after the ice rink in the winter.

“He does anything that needs to be done, he’s there. He sets up for events, I run the bingo but he’s here every week before me with all my equipment set up and ready to go when I get here. I don’t have to do anything but come in and run the bingo,” she said.

Edwards’ involvement in Grand Marais includes: president of the Grand Marais Rec Association (5 years), head organizer of the annual Santa Parade & Breakfast and the SAFE Halloween event (5 years), spearheading renovations at the old Grand Marais curling rink and turning it into a multi-purpose room, and past president/director of the Grand Beach Area Development Corporation (3 years).

He received the 2019 Interlake Municipal Recreation Association Award in 2019 and he’s a former talent/onsite producer at 92 Citi FM and Kiss 102.3 Winnipeg (5 years) and the CEO and founder/owner of Orange Door Entertainment.

Congratulations Tim!