

Celebrating Meger at The Garry Theatre.

Meger pulled into the spotlight as 41st Citizen of the Year

As if starting your new job at The Garry Theatre wasn't exciting enough, Wendy Meger's day at the newly restored theatre was made even more special when she was surprised by family and friends with news she'd been named the 41st Citizen of the Year.

"I have absolutely no words," a choked up Meger said.

"I'm going to go home and let it sink in…it blows me away, I'm very surprised and humbled for sure."

Meger was hired to work at The Garry and offered to come in to clean before the theatre opened its doors. She arrived for her shift but like a movie classic there was a plot twist – Selkirk & District Community Foundation Executive Director Meredith Boerchers had invited SDCF staff and board members, Meger's friends and family and her nominators to surprise her with the news she is the newest Citizen of the Year.

After a day or two to reflect, Meger offered these words:

"To say I am honoured is an understatement. I am truly humbled, overwhelmed, and still a little lost for words. The fact that you were able to arrange to have my partner and family there to celebrate that moment truly meant the world to me," she said.

"I've never done the things I do for recognition or praise. I do them simply because I believe it's the right thing to do. I do better behind the scenes rather than in the spotlight.

"Many years ago, as a young working mother, I was the one who needed a helping hand. There were people who showed me kindness and supported me when I needed it most. I have never forgotten those people, how they made me feel, or the difference they made in my life. I know firsthand what it feels like to need a hand up, and I've spent my life trying to be that hand for someone else."

Boerchers said Meger is more than deserving.

"I knew Wendy was very involved in the community, but when I read the nomination letter I was blown away," Boerchers said.

"Wendy is everywhere in the community, except in the spotlight. It's time to recognize her for all the amazing work she does behind the scenes. She joins a long list of outstanding citizens of the year who give so much to the communities of Selkirk, St. Andrews and St. Clements, and she belongs on that list."

Wendy's friend Linda Rosser nominated Meger, and said Meger was an obvious choice.

"I have known Wendy for approximately 20 years, and throughout that time I have witnessed her genuine and lasting commitment to Selkirk and the surrounding communities. Wendy is someone who does not simply recognize a need—she steps forward, brings people together and finds a way to help," Rosser wrote in her nomination letter.

"Her contributions have touched many areas of our community, including families needing assistance at Christmas, seniors living in personal care homes, local food programs, cancer fundraising, environmental projects, schools, recreation facilities, local businesses and community organizations. What stands out is not simply the number of causes she has

supported, but the consistency of her service. Much of what she does happens quietly and behind the scenes because she genuinely cares about people and about making her community a better place."

Meger's husband, as well as a few of her siblings and children, were on hand for the celebration and her sister, Karen Still, brought congratulations from a long list of family and friends and spoke about the important role her sister plays in the community and their family.

"This honour is so well deserved. You constantly put others first and work tirelessly behind the scenes," Still said.

"What an achievement. Your passion for helping others and making a difference is exactly why you've earned this title. Within our family Wendy is also known as the one who works to try to keep our large family connected. She is the one to organize and host family functions…Family and connection are a key part of her life. That's just who she is and we are truly grateful to her for this."

Foundation Chair Deborah Vitt said Meger is involved in countless ways in the community.

"She simply steps forward, brings people together and finds a way to help," Vitt said.

"She has a spirit, compassion and a genuine big heart that responds to needs in our communities."

Meger's volunteer efforts include Big Hearts Tri-S Community Foundation Hamper Drive, Gifts from Angels, Turning Loss into a Legacy, 15 years of tree plantings and is a member of the Selkirk Biz and Selkirk Rotary.

Meger also worked with Paws for a Cause cancer walk, supported Mother's Day giveaways, and organized Earth Day initiatives.

While thankful for the recognition, Meger said she'll continue to work for the community, in her way.

"I'm just going to continue doing what I do, not in the spotlight," she laughed.

"Under the radar, behind the scenes, and make things happen."

Congratulations Wendy!