

Sherman Olson Lifetime Achievement Award - Shirley Burr

Shirley Burr, born in Essex, England in 1935, turned a childhood illness into a lifelong passion for horses, earning Pony Club “A” certification and the BHS Preliminary Instructors Certificate before gaining extensive experience at stables across the UK. In 1960, she moved to Canada, eventually joining Queen Margaret’s School in Duncan, where she rebuilt and led the equestrian program for 37 years, teaching thousands of students, developing facilities, and establishing riding camps, clinics, and shows. Shirley’s leadership extended beyond QMS: she contributed to Canada’s first national coaching certification program, mentored future coaches, competed successfully in dressage, jumping, and eventing, served as a Senior EC judge and steward for 25+ years, and supported national and Olympic teams. Known for her knowledge, professionalism, and quick sense of humor, Shirley left a lasting legacy as a teacher, mentor, and respected member of BC’s equestrian community, making her a fitting recipient of HCBC’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

Bob James Community Volunteer Award - Jennifer Barnes van Elk

Jennifer Barnes van Elk is a tireless and inspiring volunteer whose dedication has had a transformative impact on the dressage and equestrian community across Vancouver Island. From founding and leading the Cowichan Dressage Club to revitalizing the Sointula community riding ring and actively supporting the Courtenay CADORA Dressage Club, Jennifer has consistently brought energy, knowledge, and heart to every initiative she undertakes. She organizes clinics, competitions, educational sessions, and virtual dressage test days, mentors riders of all ages, and creates inclusive, welcoming opportunities for people to learn, grow, and enjoy the sport. Even while navigating personal challenges, Jennifer has remained selfless, approachable, and committed, inspiring countless riders, volunteers, and horse enthusiasts. Her leadership, compassion, and passion for horses make her an outstanding ambassador for dressage and a truly deserving recipient of the HCBC Community Volunteer of the Year Award.

Recreation Volunteer – Scott Walker

Scott Walker exemplifies the spirit of a “Valuable Volunteer,” dedicating his time, energy, and resources to enhancing recreational trail riding and camping opportunities for equestrians across British Columbia. A member of the Back Country Horsemen Society of BC since 2003, Scott has served as president of BCHBC (2018–2021) and chaired the Okanagan Chapter for six years, always stepping forward whenever volunteer help is needed. He has planned and coordinated major projects, including the Lundbom Lake equestrian camp upgrade, the Kane Valley Equestrian campsite build, and bridge

construction along the Dewdney Trail in Manning Park, skillfully partnering with government agencies, local businesses, and other user groups while organizing volunteers to complete the work. Beyond these projects, Scott continues to maintain trails and camps, support BCHBC operations, manage the chapter website and membership platforms, and provide education and mentorship in his local chapter. His unwavering commitment has left a lasting impact on BC's equestrian community and trail riders everywhere.

Sport Volunteer Award – Alison Martin

Alison Martin is a dedicated and passionate volunteer whose leadership and expertise have had a lasting impact on dressage in British Columbia. A Level 3 High-Performance coach and accomplished competitor, Alison has guided riders from grassroots to FEI and Grand Prix levels, while actively contributing to the Southlands Riding Club as coach, Chair of the Dressage Committee, board member, and co-creator of the SRC Rescue Horse Program. Beyond SRC, she has served on national committees, including the EC Dressage Committee and the EC National Awards Committee, and acted as Chef d'Equipe for Canada's dressage team at international competitions, helping secure a team silver medal. As Vice President of Dressage BC, Alison has expanded the organization's outreach through social media, launched the High Performance Program Fund to support BC athlete/horse combinations, and managed grants to further member education. Her tireless energy, creativity, and dedication to riders, horses, and the BC equestrian community make her an outstanding recipient of the 2025 HCBC Sport Volunteer of the Year Award.