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NEWSMAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2015



25

COMMUNITY BUILDERS

in Durham to watch!



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When searching for a community to call home, most people look at the proximity of schools, parks and other amenities that will make their lives comfortable, safe and enjoyable. Knowing an area has a low crime rate is also a plus when choosing a place to live.

Those are the things that can be checked relatively easily but it's not until someone moves into a new neighbourhood that they get a sense of the most important aspect of the community -- its people.

Good neighbours are one of the most important aspects of a community. They are there for you when you need a cup of sugar, they'll watch your house while you're on vacation or they'll invite you over just to say hello.

To live in a community with good people is a pleasure but then there are individuals who go over and above what would be considered neighbourly. Those are the people who go out of their way to help make a difference in our communities. These people volunteer or work, making positive impacts economically, socially or environmentally. They help through business, education, health, volunteerism, not-for-profit, in the fields of arts, sports or entertainment. Best of all they aren't looking for recognition, they're doing it for their communities.

We put out a call last spring asking for people to nominate neighbours who are making a difference in our communities, but who do not get recognized for their efforts. The response was overwhelming,

which is a testament to the people and the good deeds that take place in every community across Durham Region. Some of these individuals chose to remain anonymous; others agreed to being featured in our short profiles.

All these people have made differences in their communities. They're our unsung heroes who aren't looking for recognition but deserve praise. Many of these people you may recognize but had no idea of the good deeds and work they've been contributing to our communities. They are the greatest of neighbours and help make Durham Region the great place it is in which to live.

By **Shane MacDonald, Emma Nicholls, Derek Dolstra, Ian McMillian**

Lisa Weiss helping bring arts and culture to Oshawa



Photograph by
Ron Pietroniro

Lisa Weiss moved to Oshawa in 1960 after growing up in Berlin and has lived in places such as Montreal, Toronto, and New York City. When she moved here she decided to volunteer her time to help bring more arts and culture to Oshawa.

Over her 55 years of volunteering she helped develop the board of directors for the Ontario Philharmonic, and is still a board member for both the Parkwood Estate and the R.S McLaughlin Gallery.

Q. What do you enjoy most about your community?

A. Oshawa started as a factory General Motors town. With the development of the gallery, symphony, college and universities we are now a university town.

Q. How did you get involved in your volunteering?

A. I was always attracted to the arts. When I found I had a talent for raising money I discovered that if you made

it fun for the volunteers everyone was happy to help.

Q. What is the most rewarding aspect about your volunteering?

A. Through the camaraderie of working together you build lasting friendships.

Q. What words of advice would you give someone looking to get involved in their community?

A. Everyone has talents in one area or another. Offer your services in an area that interests you.

Q. When you're not working or volunteering how do you spend your free time?

A. Watching old black and white movies.