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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Winners Announced- 20th Anniversary Surrey Police Officer of the Year Awards

- Police Officer of the Year Winner, Nominated by Community:
Sergeant Lyndsay O'Ruaric

The Surrey Board of Trade's 20th Anniversary Surrey Police Officer of the Year Awards was held on Thursday, October 6 at the Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel. The presenting sponsors were the BC Lottery Corporation and Commissionaires BC, with media sponsors News1130 and the Now Newspaper.

"The relationship between business and the RCMP is important because we are both working towards a healthy and safe community for our residents and businesses," says Surrey Board of Trade CEO Anita Huberman. "The Surrey Board of Trade celebrates the work of the Surrey RCMP because they do excellent work in ensuring the safety of our city and our businesses. Their jobs are not easy. Their innovation, work ethic, cross-collaboration, makes the Surrey RCMP leaders in Canada. In this 20th anniversary, the Surrey Board of Trade is proud to celebrate the Surrey RCMP in this unique event in Canada."

Dressed in red serge uniforms, many members along with Surrey's Auxiliary officers, civilian employees and volunteers joined members of Surrey's business community to celebrate those chosen by their peers and the public as those most worthy to receive the two Police Officer of the Year awards, as well as awards for top Auxiliary Officer, most deserving municipal employee working with the police service, top volunteer and business partner. Master of Ceremonies Peter Legge of Canada Wide Media Ltd., kept the evening going with many laughs.

The 400-person gathering was addressed by Assistant Commissioner Bill Fordy, District Commander of the Lower Mainland District; Surrey Mayor Linda Hepner; and Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General Mike Morris. At the event, the community was also introduced to the newly announced Officer in Charge of the Surrey RCMP, Dwayne McDonald.

The winners were judged in the areas of: innovation, commitment, contribution and perseverance. Partial proceeds from the event go towards the RCMP Youth Academy. The Surrey RCMP Detachment, the largest in Canada and second largest municipal force in BC, has over 650 officers and hundreds of support staff.

2016 Surrey Police Officer of the Year Award Winners: (full descriptions are noted below):

Arnold Silzer Community Policing Initiative Award: Priority Target Offender Unit

Police & Business Partnership Award: Sophie's Place



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Municipal Employee of the Year Award: Jody Nelson

Volunteer of the Year Award: D'Arcy Nelson

Auxiliary Constable of the Year Award: Auxiliary Constable Mark Elson

Police Team Award: Domestic Violence Unit

Police Officer of the Year Award - Nominated by Peers: Constable Chris Jones

Police Officer of the Year Award - Nominated by Community: Sergeant Lyndsay O'Ruaric

(FULL WINNER DESCRIPTIONS BELOW)

Arnold Silzer Community Policing Initiative Award

Priority Target Offender Unit

The Priority Target Offender Unit (PTOU) was established in 2015 with the advent of the Surrey RCMP Community Services Business Line. The PTOU innovatively and strategically deploys police resources to accomplish Surrey's goals of safe homes and neighborhoods. Priority Target Offenders are identified based on the prolific nature of their offence and/or the significance of their role in criminal activities. The PTOU works vigorously with investigative teams across the Detachment and District as well as external partners including Crown Counsel, Correctional Service of Canada and the Canada Border Services Agency to identify PTOs for strategic enforcement and post-enforcement monitoring. To date, PTOU has identified and prioritized 174 offenders for enforcement, resulting in 161 arrests.

Police and Business Partnership Award

Sophie's Place

Sophie's Place provides services to children and youth, 0 to 18 years of age who are victims of sexual, mental, and physical abuse, in a child-friendly designed environment. Sophie's Place provides the RCMP with the ability to investigate incidents of child abuse in the least intrusive and most supportive way possible. Together, the partners in the facility are committed to strengthening the bond between the community and the RCMP, while ensuring that everyone involved obtains the most accurate information in a safe and protective environment for young victims. Sophie's Place also assists with long-term care and recovery of vulnerable children. Since its inception in 2012, Sophie's Place has supported a total of 561 children.

Municipal Employee of the Year Award

Jody Nelson

Jody works at the Surrey RCMP's District 4 Office as a Crime Prevention Programs Coordinator. She is responsible for developing and implementing crime prevention programs in the community. Jody develops and delivers presentations to Surrey residents on RCMP community programs such as Block Watch, Observe and Report It, and Coffee with a Cop. In 2015, Jody's presentations reached over 800 residents. She manages 141 Block Watch groups in Cloverdale,



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and the program has grown over 20% under her guidance. She has been an amazing ambassador in promoting and educating local neighbourhoods on crime prevention. She shows genuine care and love for the community through her work.

Volunteer of the Year Award

D’Arcy Nelson

D’Arcy started as a volunteer with the Cloverdale/Port Kells District 4 office in 2013, contributing nearly 600 volunteer hours to date. When learning about a neighbouring residential complex suffering a number of thefts and break-ins, he immediately offered to accompany the Crime Prevention Coordinator to have a Block Watch group in place. He attended meetings with residents to ensure that they were aware of security precautions and RCMP support. The residential complex today is very active in Block Watch. Upon learning that his own complex was becoming inactive in Block Watch, he spearheaded a campaign to ensure it was reactivated and became the Block Watch Captain. He contributes on a daily basis to community safety by becoming active in not only his neighbourhood, but also by assisting and encouraging other citizens to take ownership and responsibility to ensure a viable, safe community.

Auxiliary Constable of the Year Award

Auxiliary Constable Mark Elson

In his role as an Auxiliary Constable, Mark Elson has assisted in delivering Block Watch training on a monthly/bi-monthly basis for the last 15 years. His dedication to community engagement, and public safety is a cornerstone of the drive and commitment that Mark brings to this volunteer role. In the past 18 months, Mark has worked with the Crime Prevention Team to revamp and update the training syllabus that is delivered to Captains and Co-Captains. The program, through his leadership, established almost 200 new Block Watch groups in Surrey.

Police Team of the Year Award

Domestic Violence Unit

The Domestic Violence Unit (DVU) is an integrated unit composed of RCMP officers, community partners and victim service workers. This innovative shift resulted in a higher degree of coordination and proficiency when responding to high-risk domestic violence cases. The DVU investigates all individuals at the highest risk to violently re-offend against their current or future intimate partner. The DVU brings together community stakeholders and regularly participates in committee meetings, local events and media platforms to raise awareness to tackle domestic violence. The DVU also hosts training opportunities through Interagency Case Assessment Teams, offering risk assessment, and trauma sensitive training, increasing the community’s capacity to respond to domestic violence cases.

Police Officer of the Year Award – Nominated by Peers

Constable Chris Jones

Constable Jones has been a member of Surrey Detachment for almost seven years and a part of the Special Victims Unit since 2014. During his time with SVU he has established himself as a “go to” member within the team. He continuously carries one of the heaviest file loads. His quiet demeanor is quickly replaced with a witty banter that is sure to motivate his team or instigate heated debate. He keeps the team motivated during challenging, emotionally charged



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investigations. Noteworthy files this year included overseeing three investigations simultaneously where the same 14-year-old victim had been exploited by a number of adult males. The victim lacked support from her family and was unable to see the support she had in the community. Constable Jones lead the team that worked diligently with this victim to ensure that those responsible were prosecuted. Constable Jones' actions during his investigations are stemmed from a passion for justice and genuine care for the vulnerable and the exploited of our community. He is continuously giving back by sharing his skills related to preparation of Judicial Authorizations, Sex Crimes Investigations and Investigative Interviewing.

Police Officer of the Year Award – Nominated by Community

Sergeant Lyndsay O'Ruaric

Sergeant O'Ruaric leads the Sophie's Place Child Advocacy Centre RCMP Special Victims Unit (SVU) team and also works with the entire SVU team at Surrey Detachment. She has been an RCMP Officer for 13 years and has worked with the SVU for seven years. She provides exemplary service to reduce the trauma experienced by child-abuse victims. Her ultimate focus is long-term care and support to vulnerable children. She ensures police engagement in collaboration with community service providers to offer on-going assistance and recovery for victims. Her leadership and encouragement motivates community agencies. The integrated approaches between law enforcement and community brings focus to the wellness of children, child abuse investigations, family support, and abuse preventions in Surrey.