

## **Fredericton Chamber of Commerce Announces 2014 Distinguished Citizen Award Recipients**

29 January 2014 - For immediate release

(Fredericton, N.B.) – The recipients of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce’s 2014 Distinguished Citizens Awards have been announced. Receiving awards this year are Mardi Cockburn, George Piers, and David Peterson. The honorees will be recognized at a reception and dinner to be held at the Crowne Plaza Lord Beaverbrook Hotel on Tuesday, 18 March 2014.

“The Distinguished Citizen Awards really shine a light on the community-minded nature of the Fredericton chamber,” said Chris Johnston, chamber president. “That focus, including these awards, is something that everyone involved with the chamber is very proud of and this year’s recipients represent the best of what Fredericton has to offer.”

“Year after year we are flooded with highly deserving nominees for the Distinguished Citizens Awards,” said Janice Corey, Past President of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce and Chair of the Distinguished Citizens Award Nominating Committee. “It is always interesting to see that those community members who are most deserving of collective praise are those who want it the least. For decades, Mardi, George, and David have demonstrated a sustained dedication to their city and its people that will have an impact on generations to come.”

*A brief biography of each of this year’s Distinguished Citizen Award Recipients:*

### **Mardi Cockburn**



Throughout her adult life, Mardi Cockburn has demonstrated a commitment to assisting individuals and organizations from a variety of fields that affect everyone in the city and province in some way. From education to healthcare to the arts, Mardi’s breadth and depth of volunteerism is undeniable.

Over the past decades Mardi has been involved with the following organizations: the York Regional Library, New Brunswick Library Association and the Canadian Library Trustees Association as president; the Board of Governors of Theatre New Brunswick as a member and chairperson; the University of New Brunswick as a member of its board of governors and senate; the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital board of directors as chairperson; and is currently serving on the board of directors of the Atlantic Salmon Association. She has also been a top fundraiser for numerous organizations over the past four decades, receiving the Canadian Society of Fundraising Executives NB Award. Mardi has also been previously recognized for her dedication to the community during the International Year of Volunteers in 2001 as well as with the following awards: the Richard Hatfield Award for “Making a Difference” in New Brunswick; the Canadian Library Trustee Association Merit Award; the Lescaibot Award from the Government of Canada; the Paul Harris Fellowship from Rotary International; the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal; the Canada 125 medal; the UNB Alumni Recipient Award; and is a member of the Order of New Brunswick. Mardi’s diversified volunteer activities have made her part of the social and cultural foundation of Fredericton.

### George Piers



Since he began his teaching career at age 17, George Piers has provided leadership and mentorship to those around him who have needed it. Beyond his students, he has been a tireless advocate people who are homeless, mentally ill, working poor or battling addiction. George was the driving force behind the opening of the Fredericton Community Kitchen in December 1982, now serving 100,000 meals each year. He sat on its board of directors from its inception until 1996, at which point he took on the role of executive director until his retirement in 2013.

After the Community Kitchen opened in 1982 it became apparent that many of its clients were homeless, so George began working on the establishment of Fredericton Homeless Shelters Inc., which subsequently opened the following year. To best serve the vulnerable population of Fredericton, George was able to successfully partner with other local organizations, including the Department of Social Development, the John Howard Society, Partners for Youth, Bridges of Canada, as well as various literacy advocates and the province's community colleges. Presented with the Order of New Brunswick in 2007, he has also extended his impact by being a past president of the New Brunswick Association of Food Banks and served two terms on the board of the Canadian Association of Food Banks.

### David Peterson



David Peterson's contributions to the health and wellness of the Fredericton community through the enhancement of physical activity opportunities cannot be overstated. A former city councillor and clerk of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly, David has been a part of public life in the province for decades. As a founding member and director of the Fredericton Trails Coalition, his efforts to convert out-of-use railways lines into non-motorized trails have led to a system in Fredericton that is the envy of communities from across the country, with more than 85 kilometres of trails in the city. He then took his mission a step further as co-founder and previous president of the New Brunswick Trails Council, which has led to more than 850 kilometres of trails across the province, as well as a driving force behind the Trans Canada Trail.

David has also been very active in establishing, managing and organizing youth hockey teams and programs at nearly every age level, particularly for girls in the province. Most notably, he is the founder and general manager of the UNB V-Reds Prospects Girls' Youth Hockey program, which has become world-renowned in hockey circles. Amongst other activities, David has been the president of the Fredericton Pony Club, a member of the 1993 Federal Electoral Boundaries Commission, a member of the Upper Kingsclear Local Service District's Subcommittee on Rural Planning and a driving force behind the Upper Kingsclear Playground Project.

-----  
Tickets for the awards reception and dinner can be purchased online at [www.frederictonchamber.ca](http://www.frederictonchamber.ca) or by contacting the Stacey Murray, Events Manager at (506) 451-9741.

*With more than 900 members, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is one of Atlantic Canada's largest chambers of commerce. A dynamic and relevant business organization, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is actively engaged in policy development that affects the competitiveness of our members and of the Canadian business environment.*