

TOWN POLICY NUMBER: 011/2008

REFERENCE:

ADOPTED BY:
Town Council

SUPERSEDES:
None

PREPARED BY:

Todd Becker – Director of Special Projects

EFFECTIVE DATE:

November 4, 2008

TITLE:

Martha Kostuch Memorial Award

Policy Statement

Vision

The Town of Rocky Mountain House, as a key stakeholder, will demonstrate leadership in promoting and recognizing environmental stewardship in the community.

Mission

To enhance environmental awareness and celebrate environmental excellence in Rocky Mountain House by recognizing individual, community, and corporate successes in support of a sustainable future.

Goals

1. To stimulate public and corporate environmental awareness in Rocky Mountain House
2. To create and expand environmental initiatives
3. To promote and encourage youth participation in environmental initiatives

Town Council will identify and/or receive nominations and decide if an individual(s), community group or organization, or corporate business meets the outlined criteria to receive the Martha Kostuch Memorial Award. Town Council will receive and review nominations or identify individuals, organizations, or businesses based on the following criteria:

- Commitment to the education, preservation, protection, enhancement of the environment impacting the quality of air, water, or land.

The intent is to provide flexibility for Council to identify and acknowledge community environmental initiatives and award recipients based on community nominations or identified directly through Council. The Martha Kostuch Memorial Award will become part of the Mayors Award program. Council may consider the following categories:

1. **Business-** This category recognizes any local business, small or large, that demonstrates an ongoing commitment to environment sustainability.
2. **Community Group-** This category recognizes community groups, agencies, and not for profit organizations that demonstrate specific environmental initiatives that has produced positive change.
3. **Youth/School-** This category recognizes young people for initiatives and actions that demonstrate community leadership pertaining to environmental sustainability. This category includes programs administered in the communities' schools.
4. **Individual-** This category recognizes individuals committed in protecting the environment through personal initiative that may include public education and inspiring others in the community to commit to environmental sustainability.

NOTE: In order to preserve the name of Martha Kostuch and the purpose of the Martha Kostuch Memorial Award the Alberta Emerald Foundation Backgrounder: Martha Kostuch has been attached outlining her dedication to environment preservation.



MARTHA KOSTUCH MEMORIAL AWARD

“Recognizing Environmental Stewardship Achievement”

Select the correct category for your nominee, and on a plain sheet of paper in 100 words or less provide detailed information as to why the nominee should be recognized for this award. In order for the nomination to be considered, all sections of this form must be completed. Posthumous nominations cannot be accepted. For further information, please telephone 403-845-2866, fax 403-845-3230 or e-mail town@rockymtnhouse.com by February 20, 2012.

Nominee: _____

Project: _____

Nominee Type : ___ Individual ___ Organization ___ Business

Nominee Contact Information:

Name (Individual, Organization, Business): _____

Primary Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Nominator Contact Information:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Contribution: Please explain the environmental initiative contribution made to include:

- Nature of the project or initiative
- Impact to the community

Conditions:

By signing below you are indicating all the information presented above is true and accurate and give the Town of Rocky Mountain House permission to use the information provided to promote the initiative and the Award program through the Town website, email, media, and other means.

Signature of Nominator:

Date:

Signature of Nominee:

Date:

Martha Kostuch Memorial Award
c/o Mayors Office, Town Hall
Box 1509 Rocky Mountain House, Alberta T4T 1B2

Backgrounder: Martha Kostuch

Martha Kostuch was a retired veterinarian who had lived and worked in the Rocky Mountain House area since the 1970s. In addition to raising four boys, she became very involved in her community and soon found herself immersed in environmental issues.

She worked tirelessly as a volunteer participating in diverse hearings through the 1970s and 80s and more recently in a number of multi-stakeholder processes on environmental issues affecting our air, water, land and wildlife. She had been a member of a number of Alberta environmental organizations and had also participated actively in many federal government environmental advisory committees over the years. In 2006-2007, Martha was part of Alberta's Oil Sands Review, first as a member of the Process Design Committee, then as an Environmental Non-Government Organization member of the Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and ENGO member of the Hearings Panel.

Martha's personal integrity and commitment were beyond reproach. Her focus had always been on the content and the issue rather than the person, which has given her credibility and respect, even from those who didn't always agree with her. This is part of the reason why she was often consulted by senior industry and government officials as well as her NGO colleagues for her advice and opinions.

One of Martha's key contributions had been her ability to empower others and to help them learn how to participate effectively in public processes. Recently, prior to her death, and despite being diagnosed with a serious neurological disorder, she accepted an invitation to speak to a conference in Korea to share her experiences with the oil sands multi-stakeholder process.

Martha also "walked the talk" in that she had worked hard to reduce her own environmental footprint. On land she shares with her son and his family, she realized a longstanding goal of building an environmentally friendly, off-grid house. Its construction had also been a multi-stakeholder activity, epitomizing the esteem in which she is held, as friends and colleagues from industry, government and NGO communities alike have helped with the house raising.

Martha was known to be an active grandmother and was a strong role model for her family and friends.

Below are some highlights of Martha's accomplishments on key issues.

Improving Air Quality

Martha had been a major player in securing reduction of SO₂ emissions in Alberta, especially from sour gas plants. As a newly-arrived veterinarian in Rocky Mountain House, she had alerted farmers and ranchers in central Alberta to the link between sour gas emissions and animal health in the 1970s.

She actively intervened in local hearings for approvals, worked directly and behind the scenes with companies to improve their performance, and worked with other landowners to make them aware of things to watch for in terms of potential effects and how to respond. She had also been actively involved in strengthening the sulphur recovery requirements for sour gas processors.

She was a major NGO participant in the project of the Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) to achieve reductions in flaring and venting. This has led to voluntary reductions of some 70%. The model used in Alberta has been adapted and used internationally. It also won for CASA a Pollution Prevention Award from the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, as well as an Emerald award for the Flaring and Venting Project Team.

Martha had served on the CASA executive as NGO Vice President and was part of many CASA teams that have developed innovative approaches to managing air quality in Alberta. Martha was a co-chair of CASA's Electricity Project Team which created a new framework to manage air emissions from Alberta's electricity sector (2003). The team was formed in response to a request from Alberta's Minister of Environment. Overtime, this framework will lead to significant reductions in four major pollutants, including mercury, and represents a new approach to addressing these issues. It was implemented in its entirety by Alberta Environment, and this hard work was recognized by an Emerald Award.

In 2005 CASA, with the involvement of Martha, won the Arthur Kroeger College Award for Policy Leadership. This award, sponsored by Carleton University, is given to an individual or organization that serves as a model to others on how to define an issue and successfully advance the policy process through the use of innovative leadership.

She was a founding member of the Parkland Airshed Management Zone (PAMZ), and like the other airshed zones in Alberta, PAMZ is a multi-stakeholder process.

Protecting Fisheries

Martha won a Supreme Court decision in 1992 with a landmark ruling that upheld Ottawa's constitutional responsibility to conduct environmental assessments on provincially-sponsored projects. This decision was incorporated into the provisions of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

She acted as agent for private prosecutions related to damage by the county in building roads over streams. This was settled out of court, but the outcome is that all crossings are now built to protect streams and fisheries habitat, and require the approval of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Gravel mining of rivers in Alberta is no longer done due to another prosecution involving Martha which targeted gravel mining in the North Saskatchewan River.

Martha had been a leader on Article 14 and 15 submissions under the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, a side agreement of the North American Free Trade Agreement. One submission ultimately led to the deployment of a significant number of additional federal fisheries officers in the Prairie Provinces to protect fish habitat and enforce Canada's Fisheries Act.

She had been chair of the Canadian Environmental Network's Water Caucus for many years where she has been instrumental in setting the national agenda on water issues. Martha was instrumental serving on a working group that has brought NGOs and Department of Fisheries and Oceans together to develop a path forward on fisheries habitat management in Canada.

Previous Awards

In 2004, she was awarded a Wilderness Defender Award, the “Ernie”-- Alberta Wilderness Association’s lifetime achievement award--for her dedication to wilderness protection.

In 2003, she was awarded the Douglas H. Pimlott Award--Nature Canada’s most prestigious Award--for her outstanding contributions to Canadian conservation.

In 1992, Martha was presented with an award at the inaugural Emerald Awards for her leadership on environmental issues.