



In photo, from left, are Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB paramedics Adam McDonald, Chris Gillis, Linda Lebeau, Lieutenant governor Richard Rohmer, Chief Michael MacIsaac, Andre Therrien Jr., Deputy Chief Robert Smith, and Commander David Wolff.

District Services Board paramedics recognized Exemplary Service Medals

Tom Sasvari
The Recorder

ESPANOLA-MANITOULIN—Five Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board (DSB) paramedics were recently awarded the Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal. This group includes Adam McDonald, of Mindemoya.

Mr. McDonald and fellow paramedics Andre Therrien Jr., Chris Gillis, and Linda Lebeau were presented with the service awards by Lt.-Gen Richard Rohmer during the September 29 Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs annual general meeting. Paramedic Maureen Sagadore is also receiving her medal but was unable to attend.

The service medal is awarded to eligible members of the pre-hospital emergency medical service, with more than 20 years of exemplary service characterized by good conduct, industry and efficiency.

At the October 27 DSB board meeting, board chair Les Gamble offered the board's sincerest thanks for all the outstanding work of the areas paramedics. Chief of Paramedic Services Michael MacIsaac noted that, "paramedics come to work every day with the idea that they are going to help someone and the fact that our

five paramedics have been helping our community members for over 20 years each is outstanding."

"I never started into this profession thinking I would get awards for it," stated Mr. McDonald when contacted by the Recorder. "When I started as a paramedic I had the thought I was just going to be helping a neighbour, but I can still remember my first call. I had to learn pretty fast that this is not like television... this was real. You have someone's life at your fingertips."

Mr. McDonald has actually been a paramedic for closer to 30 years in total. "I started off as a volunteer with the ambulance system. No, I never dreamt in my early days I would be doing this as a career."

"With the whole recognition-award experience, I had to do some soul searching before I agreed to be part of this," said Mr. McDonald. "Part of the reason people do this emergency service work is, as is the case with any profession, we like someone to appreciate what we have done."

"In the first incident I took part in, the person had been in an accident and he lived, but he was debilitated. What an eye

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opener. Talk about PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder)," continued Mr. McDonald.

Mr. McDonald said the recent award ceremony, "was very nice. There was a total of 107 of us on hand, and it was nice to have the opportunity to meet and hear about paramedics in other areas. It is very humbling to receive recognition of any kind, but I received my recognition with high regard and pride."

DSB paramedic superintendent Mario Danis was awarded his second bar indicating a total of 40 years of meritorious duty. This

brings the number of current or former Manitoulin-Sudbury paramedics receiving this award to 24. Noting that 40 years of service from Superintendent Danis is extremely rare, Mr. MacIsaac said, "I am extremely proud of the work our paramedics perform and for this group to receive this honour is an indication that all their hard work and dedication does not go unnoticed."

The awards are part of the Canadian Honours System made available through the Governor General and presented each year.