

## Fredericton Chamber to Honour Distinguished Citizens on Tuesday, 26 March 2013

22 March 2013

[For immediate release]

(Fredericton, N.B.) – The Fredericton Chamber of Commerce’s 2013 Distinguished Citizens Awards will be handed out at the Crowne Plaza Lord Beaverbrook Hotel on Tuesday, 26 March 2013. Receiving awards this year are Bill Matthews, John Waite, and brothers Albert and Ronald Neill.

“Previous recipients of these awards have demonstrated both a breadth and depth of community involvement over a long period of time and the 2013 honourees are no different,” said Andrew Steeves, past president of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce and Chair of the Distinguished Citizens Award Nominating Committee. “Community service has been a decades-long passion for each of the four people we are recognizing this year.”

“All four recipients are well known in the city, which is not surprising given the number of causes and groups that they have been involved with over the years,” added Janice Corey, chamber president. “I know the sold-out audience is eager to give something back to these men.”

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

### **William J. Matthews**



Bill has been a committed and energetic volunteer working in many different roles to enrich and advance his community - whether in the broader legal and business domains, or in many of Fredericton’s community-based organizations.

Over the years, Bill has been involved in the following capacities: a founding member of the Fredericton North Rotary Club, a founding member and president of the Main Street Business Development Association (now known as Business Fredericton North Inc.); president of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce; a director of the Capital Regional Development Corporation; a member of the board of governors for The Fredericton Playhouse; a director of the YMCA; president of the Fredericton Red Cross and honorary solicitor for the New Brunswick division; and a director of Hospice Fredericton. Most recently, Bill was a founder and past president of the United Way Endowment Fund; chair of the BFN Past Presidents Fundraising Committee for the Nashwaaksis Rec. Project / Mitch Clarke Nasis’ Park; and is currently a director of the Fredericton International Airport Authority. Bill has done much of his work behind the scenes and has always encouraged others to become involved in their community in whatever ways they can.

### **Albert and Ronald Neill**



The Neill brothers learned from birth the art of being successful farmers from their parents. As partners, they took over the operation of the family farm when their father passed away in 1976. Ronald was responsible for the outside operations, while Albert was the herdsman. The Neill farm is a Fredericton landmark, providing much needed open land in an urban area. The Neills have generously opened up their property as a recreational area for many people in the community. Albert and Ronald are both lifelong supporters of local churches and are very involved in the community. Ronald has served as the treasurer at the Devon Park Baptist Church for thirty-six years, as well as a deacon for much of that time. Albert has been very involved in the following capacities: director and past president of the

Fredericton Exhibition & Livestock Show; director and past president of the New Brunswick Holstein Association; Fredericton's representative to the New Brunswick Milk Marketing Board; and New Brunswick's representative to the Dairy Bureau of Canada. They can always be counted on to lend a helping hand when and where it is most needed.

### **John Waite**



John has consistently conveyed the proud sense of community purpose held by the Waite family through their ownership of the Fredericton Inn and the role they play both directly and indirectly in the business and social life of the city of Fredericton. John has been serving the Fredericton sporting community since 1990. Through his involvement with local athletics (UNB Varsity Reds, STU Tommies, Fredericton District Soccer Association), he has been focused on providing the youth of our community with an opportunity to participate and excel in their chosen sport. In addition to his tremendous support of the sporting community, John is also very involved with these organizations: the Fredericton Food Bank, the Chalmers Regional Hospital Foundation, the New Brunswick division of the Canadian Cancer Society, the

Central NB Chapter of Muscular Dystrophy Canada, Fredericton North Rotary Club, Ducks Unlimited, and Making Miracles Happen. John is community minded in the largest sense and makes generous donations to many charitable groups. John is noted for his strong family values, good business sense, and devotion to doing the right thing.

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*With more than 900 members, the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce is one of Atlantic Canada's largest chambers of commerce. A dynamic 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.*