

On behalf of Cheema Aquatic Club's Masters paddlers I am very pleased to nominate Tim Milligan for the Russ Dunn Achievement Award.

Tim is best known for his unrelenting positivity and passion for the sport of canoe/kayak. His involvement with Cheema Masters goes back more than several decades and his contributions as paddler, volunteer, coach, cheerleader, instructor, and all round ambassador for the sport has had an enormous positive impact on not just the Master's program but the whole Cheema community as well.

It would be impossible to list all of the ways that Tim has selflessly contributed to Cheema Masters and the sport in general. I have no doubt that most of us aren't aware of all of the things he does voluntarily to enhance the experience for others. But if you were to drop by early one Friday morning before he leads a morning masters fitness group, you would likely find him with a mop cleaning the gym floor.

Tim is respected as well for his wealth of knowledge on all topics regarding canoeing and he willingly shares this knowledge to the benefit of all paddlers, regardless of skill level. His own fitness level and his 'can do' attitude makes him an amazing role model for young and old alike.

Last year Tim was instrumental in successfully applying for a government grant for seniors that lead to the purchase of dry land equipment and K2s to ensure the longevity and fun of the sport for older participants.

Cheema's recent purchase of a new dock system for the club was another project that Tim stepped up for, having done the research and leg work to ensure the docks would not only provide success for the youth and Master's programs but that they were accessible for PaddleALL and para athletes as well.

Many of the participants in our program will credit Tim with inspiring them to give paddling a try and to persist when they may have felt a bit discouraged at first. He is quick to take anyone under his wing if he sees you need some encouragement.

He was also the first Cheema master to introduce surf skis to the program and his passion for it has inspired many others to give it a try. He regularly volunteers to teach others some of the skills and techniques unique to surf skis. There have been several new paddlers to our program who have told us that they might not have persisted if they hadn't had the opportunity to paddle in a more stable surf ski.

Tim has also been a great influence for young PaddleALL masters and has been their unofficial coach of sorts. He is the first one to re-energize them with encouraging words or challenge them to a race which of course he wins by a nose. At the age of 73, can't let those youngsters beat him yet!!

In summary, Tim is an individual whose positivity, inclusivity, passion, integrity, knowledge, skill and kindness make him an ideal candidate for the honour of receiving the Russ Dunn Achievement Award!

**Dr. Cindy Forbes, master's paddler**

What others say about Tim...

*“Since I started paddling with Cheema Masters in 2010, Tim has been an amazing member at our club. Whether he is loading and unloading boats, helping new paddlers or teaching fitness classes in the winter his is always giving with his time. He has a contagious spirit of positivity and is an absolute joy to be around.”*

**Nancy McIver, masters paddler**

*“Tim, A team mate that inspires the best of a masters program. FUN, SOCIAL, FITNESS and TEAM”*

**Brad Murray, masters paddler**

*“When our daughter Emma was paddling (6 years ago now) and preparing for spring training camp in Florida, there was a shortage of parents available as chaperones. To ensure the trip was not put in jeopardy, Tim volunteered to go to FL. He had no kids paddling and no particular connection to any of the paddlers travelling. But he took 2 weeks of his own personal time and travelled to FL and chaperoned and cooked for the (very hungry!) boy’s house. This personifies Tim and the way he conducts himself. There’s often nothing in it for him.”*

**Alana Patterson, masters paddler**

*“What I would say is Tim is always smiling and positive and that’s why I gave him the nickname smiley.”*

**Ashely Thomas, PaddleAll paddler**

*“Tim’s ‘can-do’ attitude is infectious. He is willing to help anywhere, anyhow he can. Tim was instrumental in convincing me to try Cheema. That was 22 years ago - thank you Tim!”*

**Sharon Cake, masters paddler**

*“Tim has a genuine interest in helping every Master’s paddler at Cheema. He has a tremendously positive attitude that inspires and motivates everyone around him. Not only has helped me in our flat water racing, he has also introduced me to surf skiing and ocean paddling. Thanks Tim.”*

**Jeff Kerr, masters paddler**

*“During the recent Atlantic Trials the PaddleALL Masters competed for a chance to head to the Canada Cup. The weather was driving rain and cold. There was Tim dressed for the weather cheering them on (picture attached). Time is his signature Green baseball cap. There could not be a more deserving recipient of the Russ Dunn Award as Tim has been an a of the sport forever.”*

**Bill Casey, masters paddler and parent of Matt Casey, PaddleALL masters paddler**

