

## OPHA LIFE MEMBERSHIP AWARD

Ralph Stanley, a veteran Public Health Inspector and a Supervisor with Peel Regional Health Unit was honoured with a Life Membership Award at the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) Awards Luncheon and Ceremony in Toronto on November 2, 2009. This award recognized Ralph's substantial and lasting contributions of long time and esteemed member of OPHA for the past 30 years.

In the late 1980's, Ralph served on the Board of Directors on two consecutive boards during the presidencies of Dr Peter Cole and Dr Trevor Hancock. Also, in the late 1990's Ralph's appointment by the Minister of Health to the Ministry of the Environment Advisory Committee on Environmental Standards was proudly endorsed by OPHA.

The hallmark of Ralph's 30-plus-year membership with the OPHA has been his sustained commitment to the advancement of environmental public health through many OPHA's resolutions and position documents on environmental public health issues based on the latest scientific evidence. Among those which he participated and influenced were:-

- The impact of reduced public health consultants at the MOHLTC in the mid1980's;
- Name change of the Environmental Workgroup from Environmental and Accident Prevention Division to the Environmental and Occupational Health Division;
- Proposed regulations for water slides, splash pads and public whirlpools/spas ;
- Networking on the Walkerton Water Inquiry with CIPHI, ASPHIO and ALPHA, and
- Appointed to represent OPHA and the public health community in the 1990's on the Advisory Council of Environmental Standards (ACES-5yrs).

Known for being a wise counsellor, neutral demeanour and credible opinions, Ralph has distinguished himself as an innovator and an ambassador of public health. In his award acceptance speech, he said, "OPHA is an invaluable organization with many strengths but we must not under-estimate the power of a multidisciplinary public health team as an organization where we can all work together to make a difference and fulfil goals and drawn on membership from the front lines."

His devotion, passion, and wisdom have been the driving force that has left an indelible imprint on the advancement of environmental public health issues at various constituent societies, professional organizations and advisory committees. For his vision and achievement in giving public health a higher profile, Ralph was the most deserving selection for the 2009 OPHA Life Membership Award. Accolades were received from his peers at Peel Health, CIPHI, OPHA and the public health community who respected and admired Ralph for being the recipient of this distinguished award.

Ralph will remain a key figure in the annals of OPHA and CIPHI work in the areas of health and the environment. He is also a member in good standing with CIPHI for the past 30 years. He said, “for me it has been a rewarding journey thus far in public health and I would like to thank my employer, Peel Public Health for its belief in public health networking, the foresight, support and time investment for me to participate in many OPHA initiatives over the years.”

Congratulations Ralph! You have made your peers and the entire public health community proud not merely for being the recipient of this award but for your avid desire to move the environmental public health profession forward to greater heights.

By Dennis Persaud