

Two firefighters recipients of first Owen Sheardown Memorial Award



By Mike Baker

Two Orangeville firefighters have been honoured for their dedication, loyalty, productivity and professionalism while on the job.

Revealed during the Orangeville Fire department's 2018 Firefighter Appreciation Night on Saturday (March 2), local chief Ron Morden announced Sean Pryce and Mike Parr had been selected as co-recipients of the very first Owen Sheardown Memorial Award.

Launched this year, the award is a memorial to volunteer firefighter Owen Sheardown, who passed away last February following a short battle with cancer. His death sent shockwaves through the department.

“We knew we wanted to do something to remember Owen, and really honour his memory,” Chief Morden told the Citizen. “He was an important member of our team.”

In Chief Morden's own words, the Owen Sheardown Memorial Award represents an individual who best exemplifies the positive characteristics that Owen exhibited as a member of the fire service. Although not an award for heroism, the award is presented to those who have given selflessly in support of the department, the fire service in general and the community.

“In total, seven individuals were nominated by their peers within the department. Those nominees were evaluated based on their dedication, loyalty, productivity and professionalism,” Chief Morden said. “Other areas considered were attendance at meetings, emergencies and training, fundraising projects and work details, including appearance, dependability, willingness to accept responsibility, attitude towards your position and work involved, the impression made on others and overall general

conduct.?

Mike Parr has been a firefighter with the local department since June 1, 2016, while Sean Pryce has worked his way up the ladder since joining, initially as a volunteer, in 1999. He was hired full-time in June 2004 and was promoted to Captain in 2017.

Members of the Sheardown family were in attendance on Saturday to present the award to Mr. Pryce. Unfortunately, Mr. Parr had a prior engagement and could not attend.

Chief Morden noted that, while he hopes to make the Owen Sheardown Memorial Award an annual offering at the department, it would only be presented to those deserving of it.

?We won't hand this out just for the sake of doing it,? Chief Morden said. ?This is such a special thing to us, that it will only go to a deserving individual who displays all the required qualities.?