

^{Red Biry, Bk.} ^{Laughton, Don} ^{May 4 - 90 MN} *Volunteerism a way of life for new Citizen of the Year*

By STEVE PECAR
Staff Reporter

Don Laughton gets up each morning at 4:30.

He's too modest to tell us what time he goes to bed.

That's because Laughton spends most every night doing what he loves best — volunteering — and if that means meeting late into the night and sacrificing a little sleep, well, so be it.

But Laughton's efforts have never gone unnoticed. For years, his friends and colleagues have known about his good work. Now all of Mississauga will know.

Laughton has been named the Citizen of the Year for 1990 and he will be honored at a luncheon on May 27 where he will be presented with the Gordon S. Shipp Memorial Award.

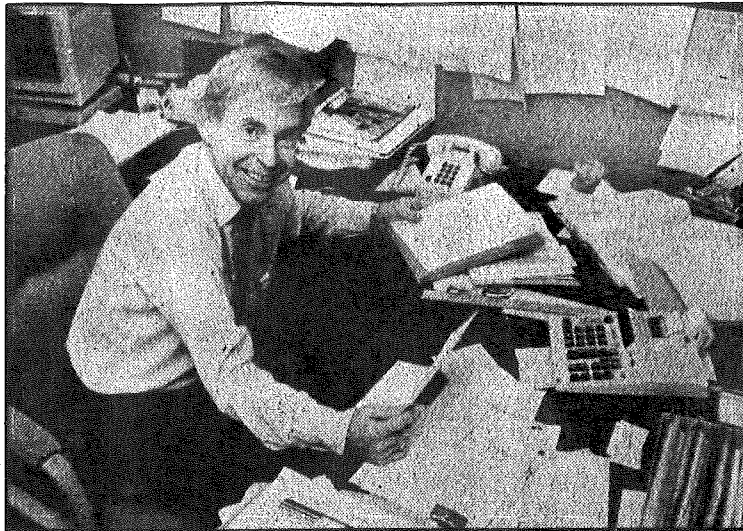
He was selected from among a dozen nominees and was chosen by a four-member committee earlier this week.

"This is great," Laughton said yesterday from his office at North American Life in Toronto. "I never expected such an honor."

Laughton's work in the community has spanned a good portion of the "more than 50 years" of his life and started when he was a youngster growing up on his family's farm in Mississauga.

"Yes, there were farms in Mississauga back then," Laughton says laughing. "I'm one of the few that can boast that they were actually born here. But back then I learned you have to put your money where your mouth is and that if you thought something had to be done you had to go out and do it."

That is the practice he has followed ever since by donating his energy to Community Living Mississauga, Bethesda Concert



Staff photo by Fred Loek

Mississauga's new Citizen of the year, Don Laughton, is a busy man in more ways than one — at his profession and after business hours, doing volunteer work.

Series, Canadian Autistic Society, Parkinson Foundation, Cancer Society, Heart and Stroke Foundation, the United Way, Dixie-Bloor Neighborhood Centre, Bethesda United Church, and the St. Luke's-Bethesda Refugee Committee, as well as assisting with other charities and projects.

If Laughton is known in the community it is for his work with Community Living.

He says he first became aware of the association when one of the children he adopted from Vietnam was found to be developmentally handicapped.

"I never realized the good work that was being done there, how everyone had such a positive outlook," he says. "I had to become a part of it."

And become a part of it he did, as a volunteer for the association for 14 years, a board member for 11, and as president for three.

More recently he has helped to

set up the Dixie-Bloor Neighborhood Centre where he is the current president of the association and an English as a second language tutor.

Probably closest to his heart, however, is his work with refugees.

Laughton and his wife, Mary, claim there are at least 10 people out there who can call them parents, some of them refugees who live in camps in Southeast Asia, and many of those who have come to live under his roof.

He says he will do all he can to assist refugees and has had his share of battles with bureaucrats to make sure some could arrive here safely.

Frances Gottschlich, who has known Laughton for 15 years and nominated him for the award, says if the Citizen of the Year lived in a mansion, he would have 50 of "his children" living with him.