

## Unsung Heroes AOA Community Builder Volunteer Recognition

### Purpose

The Alberta Orienteering Association (AOA) proposes the creation of a new volunteer recognition category—the — **Unsung Heroes— AOA Community Builder Volunteer Recognition** to be presented annually as part of AOA’s regular Volunteer Recognitions Categories as a **stand-alone award** with it’s own nomination process.

This award would honour individuals whose consistent dedication, behind-the-scenes effort, and positive community impact have significantly strengthened orienteering in Alberta, even if their contributions often go “officially unnoticed” as do not fit into the AOA historically defined Volunteer recognition criteria ( see appendix A).

### Rationale

While AOA currently recognizes annual contribution through the AOA volunteer recognition criteria and also the major achievements and long-term service through lifetime memberships and the Orienteering Canada Hall of Fame, there remains a need to acknowledge the ongoing contributions of volunteers who embody community spirit and sustained involvement at the grassroots level. This new award will:

- Encourage ongoing volunteer engagement.
- Highlight the inclusive, community-driven nature of the sport.
- Meaningful recognition with minimal financial commitment.

### Award Details

- Frequency: Annual (presented at the same time as the established AOA Volunteer recognition in conjunction with the Celebration event)
- Eligibility: Open to any AOA members/ volunteer who is not already recognized with one of the existing volunteer recognition categories ( AOA or OC Hall of Fame)
- Ineligibility: Because this award aims to recognize volunteers who have not yet been acknowledged, volunteers who have received formal recognition within the past (10 years )?are not eligible.

### Nominations process:

- Anyone may submit nominations using a standardized form (Appendix B- will be developed to web based fillable form).
- Clubs also may submit nominations.
- Nominees who didn’t receive the award may be re-nominated in future years.

### Selection:

- The AOA Volunteer Recognition Committee selected annually, up to 3 people ( may be AOA board members or other volunteer selected by the AOA board of directors) will select recipients based on assessing longevity of service, community impact, and supporting narrative.

## Recognition:

- Up to two individuals (or one couple) may be recognized each year.
- A tangible, wearable token of appreciation (e.g., travel mug or string backpack) will be presented.
- Awardees will be featured on a new Volunteer Recognition page on the AOA website, which will also include AOA volunteer recognition list, Alberta members of OC Hall of Fame and Lifetime Members listings.

## Financial and Administrative Considerations

- Minimal annual cost for tangible awards.
- Web and form development to be led by ED within existing infrastructure.
- Ongoing coordination integrated into AOA's annual recognition process and communication through AOA and Clubs's newsletter and social media channels.

## Appendix A – Regular AOA Annual Volunteer Recognition Criteria:

1. AOA Board or Committee Members
2. Auditor of AOA Books
3. Club Presidents
4. Canada cup (A Meet) Organizers (Event Director, Course Setters, Controller, Results Chief, Safety Chief /First Aid and Registrar - includes Barebones & Rogaine)
5. Forest event (B-Meet) Organizers (2 organizers - includes Goat)
6. Someone who has done something significant specifically for the AOA (e.g OC board /committee members from Alberta).

## Appendix B

### Unsung Heroes - AOA Community Builder Volunteer Recognition Award Nomination form

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#### **Award Description**

The AOA Community Builder – Unsung Heroes Award recognizes volunteers (individuals or couples) who quietly but consistently help build and support orienteering in Alberta and has not been recognized with any other awards previously by AOA and Orienteering Canada (Hall of Fame).

This award is for people who:

- Have volunteered in orienteering for at least 5 years.
  - Make a positive difference in their club or the wider AOA community.
  - Have not received a major AOA or Orienteering Canada volunteer/service award in the last 5 years.
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#### **Nomination Form:**

##### **A. Nominee Information**

- Name(s) of nominee:
- Club (e.g., FWOC, EOOC, other):
- Main community/area where they volunteer:
- Nominee contact information (email and/or phone, if known):
- Approximate number of years they have volunteered in orienteering:

##### **B. Nominator Information**

- Your name:
- Your contact information (email and phone):

##### **C. Eligibility**

- To your knowledge, has the nominee received a major AOA or Orienteering Canada volunteer/service award in the last 10 years? (Yes / No / Unsure)

##### **D. Volunteer Contribution and Impact**

Provide a description about your nomination including below answers:

- What roles has the nominee taken on as a volunteer in orienteering?
- How long have they been doing this, and how regularly do they help?
- Describe how they help build and support the orienteering community (e.g., welcoming new people, helping at events, supporting programs).
- What makes this person an “unsung hero”?

