



July 13, 2024

### Pair of outstanding citizens recognized as Cypress County celebrates

WALSH, Alta. – Cypress County’s best was on display Saturday, with a pair of citizens taking the spotlight during a showcase event in Walsh.

Connie Evely-Curtis and Dannica Beck were named Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year, respectively, during a ceremony at the Cypress County Welcome Centre.

“It’s very overwhelming,” said Evely-Curtis, a Suffield resident who’s a regular volunteer with the local community association. “It’s very nice to see people nominate me in that category and appreciate what I’m doing.”

“I’m really happy for myself, really surprised,” added Beck, who just graduated Grade 12 at Eagle Butte High School and is active in 4H, fine arts, and agriculture. “It’s nice knowing that everybody in the community does their best to help out and gets involved with everything.”

The ceremony kicked off with a flyover by Halo Air Ambulance. Afterwards, the winners posed with awards while friends, family, and others looked on at the Welcome Centre, which was hosting its annual Celebrate Cypress County event. Fire trucks, bouncy castles, food trucks, face painting and games kept a couple hundred guests busy. Inside, scavenger hunts, a book signing by local author Summer Straub, and giveaways were popular as visitors checked out local artisans’ wares at the Badlands Boutique gift shop.

“I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for joining us in this joyous celebration,” said county Ward 9 councillor Keith Ritz. “Your presence has made today truly special as we come together to honour our community and for those who make it shine.”

Evely-Curtis becomes the 33<sup>rd</sup> Citizen of the Year winner, an award which dates back to 1989. Given to an adult who displays a deep commitment to enriching the lives of those in Cypress County, Evely-Curtis was described as dedicated, organized, and always making people happy as she regularly cooks for and helps plan community events.

She didn’t expect her name to be called on Saturday.

“I thought it was my boyfriend (Corre Duckmanton) getting the award,” she said. “Thank you so much. I appreciate it.”

Beck, whose family was named the county’s Farm Family of the Year in 2023, is in the midst of another busy summer. She’s managing cattle, working at Blue Sky Veterinary Clinic, and getting ready to attend Lakeland College in Vermillion this fall. “No doubt this girl works hard for what she wants, has a very high work ethic and is very successful like the rest of her family,” wrote her nominator.

“We work hard as a family to get where we are,” said Beck, who volunteers at food bank, school, and 4H events among other things. “So getting these awards and recognition really helps us build more.”

Beck is just the second Young Citizen of the Year winner, as the award was first handed out in 2023.

Cypress County has lots to celebrate, and is thankful for both Evely-Curtis and Beck’s contributions.