



WINNING ENTRY: The above photo shows a delegation of Alexandria and area residents who travelled to Charlottetown last week for the WinterLights Celebrations Awards. Alexandria picked up the CN Tower Visual Presentation Award for its Festival of Lights. From left: Edward McDonald, Tish Nicholson, Bonnie McDonald, Karen Gerlich, Tom Gerlich, Ginette and Ron Aubin, Gary Thompson, Alain Belanger, North Glengarry Mayor Grant Crack, and CN Tower Representative Lisa Tompkins.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VIVIAN SHUM

Festival of Lights picks up Visual Award

The proof is in: Alexandria's annual Festival of Lights is one of the best winter light shows in the country.

Representatives of the local festival received the good news last weekend in Charlottetown at the WinterLights Celebrations Awards, which saw Alexandria beat out 32 other communities across the country when it picked up the CN Tower Visual Presentation Award.

Alexandria won the award after impressing judges with the concept, design, and theme of the Festival of Lights, which turned the town's Island Park into a multicolour display last

December.

North Glengarry Township's Recreation Coordinator Tish Nicholson was not surprised to win the CN Tower Award, but was hoping to do even better in terms of overall placement.

"The fact that we walked away with the visual award is great," she said. "We were expecting to win that award but we were hoping to win the top prize."

That top prize would be for Alexandria to be named best winter lights display in its population category of less than 7,500 people.

Judges gave Alexandria a score of 427 out of 500, enough for a second-place finish behind

the British Columbia community of Chetwynd.

She noted that Chetwynd had been competing in the contest for eight years while Alexandria just competed for the first time.

Tom Gerlich, who got the local celebration started four years ago, was pleased with the win and looks forward to improving it next year.

"I wish to thank everyone in Alexandria for their support the last few years and for making my dream come true," he said. "Now I ask for you to help, volunteer and be part of the Alexandria Festival of Lights."

- Steven Warburton