

2014 Winners of the Haines Award

The Haines Award is presented annually by Christians Together in Minehead to the Minehead Middle School Student who has been judged to have contributed most significantly to the local or wider community in terms of charity work and/or volunteering. It is awarded in memory of Ruth and Frank Haines who themselves worked tirelessly for local and overseas charities and the local community and its churches.

This year's winners will be awarded their commemorative pens and engraved shields at the annual Minehead Middle School Prize giving on July 17th. They will be presented by Andrew and Ralph Butcher, members of the Haines family who make this annual pilgrimage to honour the community spirited young people of Minehead Middle School, in memory of Ruth and Frank.

This year's joint winners are Emily Hayes aged 13, Alfie Martin aged 13 and Holly Donaghy aged 10. The judging panel said, "It was impossible to make a distinction between the amazing achievements of these three wonderful young people. Each of them had shown initiative and maturity in responding to the needs of others. Each of them had been moved to make a difference as a result of their personal experience of the impact of trauma upon members of their family or local community. They exemplify what it means to be a good citizen; the desire to improve the lives of others, to respond to the needs of those in trouble or some kind of suffering and the willingness to make personal sacrifices in order to change things for the better.

Emily is a keen supporter and fundraiser for St. Margaret's Hospice. She has run the recent Beacon to Beach Run, organised a tombola in the Year 8 charity day at school and taken part in the Rotary Club's Swimathon. All in aid of a charity which is close to her heart because of what she recognises, through first-hand experience, it does to help terminally ill people and their families. Emily has been willing to use her own pocket money to buy prizes and has given up a lot of her spare time for her chosen cause. She is also a member of the Girls' Brigade and a keen and active member of swimming, dancing and trampolining clubs.

Alfie joined the St John's Ambulance after he was shocked to realise that he did not know what to do when he witnessed an incident where a local resident required First Aid. Unlike many of us, Alfie decided he had to do something to hone his life saving skills. Three years later he has gained enough qualifications to now attend community functions on a regular basis ensuring that we can enjoy ourselves in safety. He has clocked up over 100 hours of service and now has ambitions to become a paramedic and become a valued member of our Public Services. Alfie also keenly supported the Yr 8 charity day and is an essential volunteer at events like the Beacon to Beach Run.

Holly may only be ten but she is already a confident and committed member of many community groups. Sadly, Holly's family has lost several members over the last few years as a result of cancer and this has led Holly to support fundraising events for Cancer Research UK, the Beacon Centre in Taunton, Relay for Life and the Air Ambulance. She has raised money and awareness through taking part in the Swimathon, the Beacon to Beach Run, helping with Rugby Club Raffles, making and selling loom bands, face painting and many other creative ideas. In the spare time she has left, Holly finds time to play for both the girls and boys teams at Minehead Rugby Club and perform with Lorraine Ahern's Dance Centre.

"These three young people are an inspiration not just to their peers but also to older members of our community," says one of the judges, Lynne Wooldridge. "They remind us all that to participate and make a positive contribution to community life is to enrich the lives of everyone around us whilst having a great deal of fun."