



## District of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Maple Ridge to Host International Naturally Autistic® People Awards, Festival and Convention**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** On April 2, 2012, World Autism Day, Maple Ridge Mayor Ernie Daykin took part in an online announcement that Maple Ridge would be the location for the Third Annual International Naturally Autistic® People Awards, Festival and Convention, October 19 – 21, 2012.

“Last year Council had the chance to meet a local resident, Jacynthe Geschke, who was the recipient of the Community Achievement Award at the 2011 International Naturally Autistic® People Awards, Festival and Convention. We were inspired by her story and her courage and determination to help educate the public and bring awareness to the issues around Autism. To be named as the host community for 2012 is a great honour and on behalf of Council and our community we welcome the people from around the world that will take part in this event. The International Naturally Autistic® People Awards, Festival and Convention will give our residents the opportunity to enjoy the talents and celebrate the accomplishments of Autistic People” said Mayor Daykin.

The three day event will begin with the opening ceremonies and awards event at the Arts Centre Theatre (ACT) in Maple Ridge on October 19, 2012. October 20, 2012 will see a variety of presentations and networking at the ACT and Sandman Signature Hotel. On October 21, 2012 the gala Dinner and Dance will be held at Swan-e-set Bay Resort and Country Club to announce the 2013 Host City.

Leonora Gregory-Collura, one of the founders and organizers of the event noted that there will be a number of events leading up to the International Naturally Autistic® People Awards, Festival and Convention. “On April 21, 2012 we will be holding a reception recognizing the contribution of local sponsors for their support over the last two years and for the 2012 event. On May 12, 2012 we will be holding a ‘kick-off’ event in conjunction with the Haney Farmer’s Market to raise awareness about the event. We are very pleased with the enthusiastic support from the community and know that our guests will be impressed with both the natural setting of Maple Ridge and the strong volunteer spirit and inclusiveness that makes the community so special,” said Leonora.

For more information about the 2012 International Naturally Autistic® People Awards, Festival and Convention, and awards nomination information, go to [www.naturallyautistic.com](http://www.naturallyautistic.com) or phone either

Laurie Geschke at 604-463-1611 or Leonora/Charlie at 604-886-5720. You can email Laurie at [anca@naturallyautistic.com](mailto:anca@naturallyautistic.com). Nominations for the awards close on April 20, 2012.