



LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY
CHAMPIONS AND THE PROGRAM
ITSELF AT: [MAPLERIDGE.CA/2016](https://mapleridge.ca/2016)

ORGANIZATIONS THAT ARE NEAR
& DEAR TO THEIR HEARTS

ARMS/ADOPT-A-BLOCK

CANADIAN CANCER AGENCY

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE

ETHOS LAB

Tell us about you two!

Danielle was born in Regina, Saskatchewan and moved to Port Moody just before starting school. Ty was born in Surrey, lived in Nova Scotia for kindergarten and grade one, then moved to Port Coquitlam where he spent the rest of his childhood. We both attended Riverside Secondary for High School, though we didn't know each other at the time. We met through mutual friends after Ty graduated and that's where our story began.

After living in various cities, adopting two dogs, buying a home in Maple Ridge, selling that home and then moving to Port Coquitlam...we bought our second home in Maple Ridge in 2015 and have been here ever since! Older and wiser, we want to be closer to friends and family and love the quieter streets and proximity to nature.

What is your favourite thing about Maple Ridge?

Our favorite thing about Maple Ridge is the feeling of living in a city while still being in nature. We have a greenbelt behind our house and can hear the frogs and coyotes throughout the summer with the windows open, but we're a short drive from shopping, dining and entertainment. We love to travel, camp and hike together, and living in Maple Ridge is the perfect launching pad for getting outside!



Tell us about your work with Adopt-a-Block.

We hike and trail camp a lot, so the environment is important to us (we follow the "Leave No Trace" principles and eliminate excess waste where we can). When COVID first hit, we would go for walks with our geriatric dog and noticed there was a lot of trash left out in our neighborhood.

One day, when walking in Kanaka Creek Regional Park, we saw a sign for Adopt-a-Block and Googled it once we got home. We learned that the program involves cleaning up a chosen block, park, stream or river once a month. Since we were passionate about the outdoors and keeping it clean, the obvious choice was to apply to adopt our block!

The application process is run through the Alouette River Management Society (ARMS) and, after we were approved, ARMS dropped off the garbage pickers to help us safely clean up. There have been a few times where we've collected such a large amount of trash (I'm talking piles!) that we've had to call ARMS to dispatch the City Workers to do a pick up for us.

What about ARMS resonates with you the most?

Their work to proactively protect and improve Maple Ridge by creating a healthy environment resonates with us the most. A healthy planet helps make healthy people. If there are clean and safe parks, sidewalks and trails for people to enjoy, a huge part of health is made that much easier. We also think it's empowering to encourage members of a community to care for where they live and hopefully discourages littering and waste.

Do you have a story from a time you were volunteering together?

TY: Years ago, Danielle was part of a team that participated in Concrete Hero, an obstacle course run which raised funds for the BC Cancer Agency. Danielle's friends and family quickly jumped in to support her and, after raising significant funds, she was featured in a segment on Breakfast Television hosted by Fiona Forbes.

Unfortunately, while training for a different run, Danielle broke her pelvis, an injury that would go undiagnosed but made the obstacle course that much more difficult.

DANIELLE: My team literally helped carry me across various obstacles and waited for me to catch up, but we got through it together and it was all for a terrific cause!

We also frequently compete to find the most unusual trash. We've found a moving dolly, palettes and a mint condition, Yeti brand koozie that I took home and still use.

How has COVID-19 impacted you?

COVID has given us more time to volunteer, but less opportunity. Being healthy, low risk individuals, we have been able to take advantage of our resources to help our direct community of friends and family, be it running errands for people stuck at home, or equipping friends with workout equipment to have them stay health (and less bored) during the pandemic.

We've both transitioned to working from home, and we've taken to breaking up the day by going for a walk at lunch time. This not only allows us to get outside for some fresh air, but we can also use our break to clean up our street! We've had more time to explore our community which in turn fuels our desire to help protect it.

Our overall outlook on life is pretty positive, and this hasn't been negatively affected by COVID-19. We're very fortunate that we are fully employed, young(ish) and healthy, so we always try to look for the good going on in the world instead of being bombarded by the bad. COVID-19 has amplified how we look at our privileges and our success, and we have made it more of a mission to donate to charitable causes and volunteer our time whenever we can because it's an easy way for us to impact the world in a positive way.

What can we do as a community through the pandemic?

For us, the biggest thing is that people need to remember that we are all human and we are in this together. This last year has brought a lot of anger and confusion, but we think it has also strengthened communities.

Before the pandemic, when shopping was easier, we never thought to check in and see what friends or family might need. Once shopping became very difficult and people were stuck

at home, it was easy for us to pick up cheese for Grandma or tomatoes and soap for friends when we were already out. It was the same thing with lending out gym equipment that we had. If we had enough to make do ourselves, why not share with people who had their gyms shut down? These were simple little things that we could do that would hopefully positively impact someone's day.

We also became more aware of where we were shopping and the businesses we were supporting. We hope everyone continues to support the small businesses in our communities. The local farmers, crafters, restaurants and shops rely on our support to pay their bills.

Give us an elevator pitch for volunteering.

It's free, and you can generally find any type of volunteering to suit your values. All you need is time! It can be extremely rewarding and, if everybody contributes in small ways, it all adds up!

Everyone can make a difference, no matter how small a role you think you play.

"Dani is the most
determined,
thoughtful, and
giving person
you could ever
meet."



"Ty wears his
heart on his
sleeve, and
ultimately just
wants to see his
favourite people
happy."



"For us, the
biggest thing is
that people need
to remember we
are all human
and **we are in**
this together."

