

AFTER HOURS

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR: ATLANTIC CANADA

Fuel retailer got jump at pumps

Wilson Group top winner at award night

Dave Wilson, chairman of one of Atlantic Canada's largest independent gas retailers, the Wilson Group of Cos., was named Atlantic Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year at a gala in Halifax last week.

Mr. Wilson and his late brother G. Peter took over the family coal business established in 1909, and discontinued coal to focus on supplying fuel oil. This shift helped them avoid financial hardships as customers soon turned to oil to heat homes. In 1989, the company ventured into the retail gasoline business. It currently distributes to 253 dealers in the Atlantic and runs 10 Wilsons Gas Stops. He also received the business-to-consumer products and services award.

"Given today's markets, companies that don't think ahead risk being eliminated by their competitors," says **Joyce Hoeven**, partner and Atlantic director for the award program. "Dave Wilson surpasses the competition because he anticipates future trends and responds quickly to changing

consumer needs. This progressive attitude helped him expand on the success of a centuries-old family business."

Other Atlantic recipients this year are: For business-to-business products and services, **Normand Caissie**, Imperial Manufacturing Group; emerging entrepreneur, **George Donovan**, Gogii Games; manufacturing, **Steven Kelley**, Charlottetown Metal Products Ltd.; professional/financial services, **Rodney Colbourne**, **Steve Green** and **Steve MacDougall**, OTS Offshore Technologies Services Ltd.; social entrepreneur, **Geoff Eaton**, Young Adult Cancer Canada.

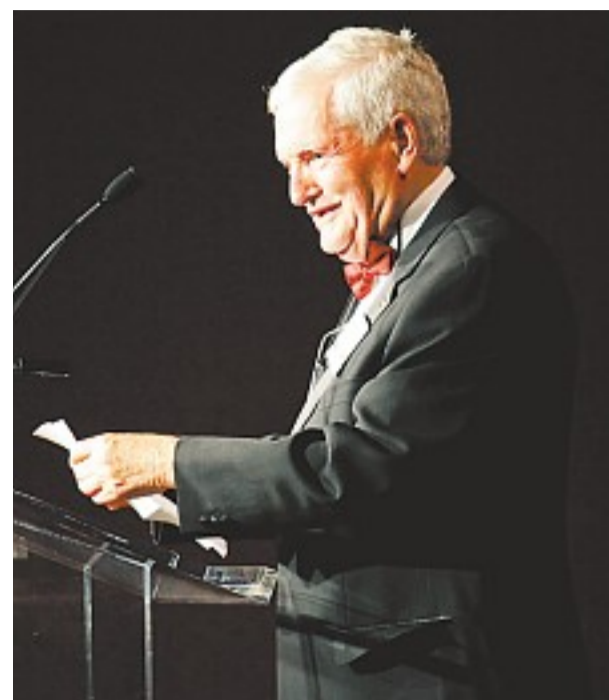
The Entrepreneur of the Year Awards program was founded by Ernst & Young to celebrate the contribution of entrepreneurs here and around the world. This year, the Canadian program is celebrating 16 years of honouring Canada's outstanding entrepreneurs from all areas of business. Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year is sponsored nationally by Global Television Network, the *National Post*, *La Presse* and RDI.

Next week: Quebec Entrepreneur of the Year

Photos by Sándor Fizli



Normand Caissie of Imperial Manufacturing Group.



Ches Penney, Penney Group of Companies.



David Wilson, Atlantic Entrepreneur of the Year Award winner, and Matthew Harris, managing partner, Ernst & Young.



Geoff Eaton, Young Adult Cancer Canada, winner of the Social Entrepreneur award.



Lindsay Moore and Jay Aird, Volt Media.



Top, Mel Woodward, Woodward Group of Companies, speaks at the Atlantic EOY awards after receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award; above, William Gale of the Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative shakes hands with Ernst & Young managing partner Matthew Harris.



Amy Hitchman and Keith Newhook, AMC Brokerage.



Djoura Abbas, Ernst & Young, and Steven Kelley, Charlottetown Metal Products.



George Donovan, Gogii Games.



Will entrepreneurs power the recovery?

Absolutely. At Ernst & Young, we help entrepreneurs succeed. Our professionals understand the challenges and needs of fast-growth companies. Across Canada and around the world, we've helped thousands of ambitious entrepreneurs achieve their dreams, from start-up to market leadership. And we celebrate their accomplishments through the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur Of The Year® program. Discover how our experience, industry knowledge and global resources can help turn your vision into reality.

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