

Paul Koomans/Norlund Oil

By Stephen Challis



On the left, Norlund Oil owner Paul Koomans receives a plaque from RRFDC Chairman Russ Fortier for the 2007 Customer Service Challenge.

For more than half a century, Norlund Oil in Emo, Ontario has been a source of bulk and retail fuel for customers across the district. Ownership has changed since the Elmer Norlund family sold the business in the early 1990's, but Mr. Paul Koomans, the current owner, understands well the tradition of good service associated with the enterprise. Moreover, now as an authorized distributor for Petro-Canada, "Canada's Gas Station", he has to adhere to additional standards of product quality and customer service.

Mr. Koomans said: "We aim to give top shelf service with a smile." Also: "The phrases, "prompt and friendly" and "we will go the extra mile to help you" are not just slogans for us."

The nature of Paul's business is to provide a range of products while always paying attention to the small, yet crucial, factors of customer service. He employs four full-time staff and, during busy periods, a handful of summer students. All receive the same level of orientation and training.

At his prominently location on Hwy. 11/71 on the western edge of Emo, Paul is able to operate as a "full-service" source of fuel and oil, and as a car and light truck tire shop. "People stop to buy gas, snacks, or just to ask directions," he said. "We always try to point them in the right direction."

He also has the bulk fuel delivery service – serving mostly the agricultural, logging and home heating sectors – and 24 hour Key-lock fuel pumps. The latter are mostly used by logging truck operators. Paul will deliver fuel to any road accessible point in the district south of Sioux Narrows.

Paul grew up in Ottawa and met his wife while going to university. She hales from Emo. In 1998 they decided to settle permanently in her home town. "This is the best place in Canada to raise a family," he said.