

Five locals in MISTIC finals

The Comox Valley has five of 33 finalists for the sixth annual Mid-Island Science Technology and Innovation Council (MISTIC) Innovation Awards.

They are: Natural Pastures Cheese Co. (Agri Foods), Island Labs (ICET Excellence in Technology), 1st View (Information Technology), Swinkey Golf Inc. (Innovation Startup of the Year) and Woodland flooring (Value-Added Product).

The first four are in Courtenay and Woodland is in Comox.

The diverse range of finalists represent the best and the brightest from across Vancouver Island (Malahat North to the tip of the Island), the Sunshine Coast and Gulf Islands, MISTIC says in a news release.

The awards recognize the achievements of businesses and individuals that are pushing boundaries, engaging in technology and developing creative concepts within the region.

The awards were created in 2006 to highlight and recognize the many knowledge-based businesses. To help bring these businesses into the limelight, MISTIC created the awards for knowledge-based entrepreneurs and others in the sectors of advanced manufacturing, aquaculture, engineering, environmental technology, food and beverage, health science, information technology, new media

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and value added products.

In 2011, the awards were expanded to recognize young people pursuing innovation with the VICC Young Innovator Award.

The winners will be announced on the evening of Nov. 2 in Nanaimo in an Oscar-style ceremony with innovative techie twists at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre in Nanaimo.

Tickets are available for \$95 for the award ceremony and guests will have the opportunity to rub shoulders with dignitaries from across the region and be treated to a gourmet dinner featuring regional culinary delights. Tickets can be purchased online at www.mistic.ca.

MISTIC's Innovation Island Tradeshow is the leadup to the Innovation Awards. The tradeshow is an all-day event on Nov. 2 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre and is open to the public at no charge.

A series of keynote speakers will be scheduled who are leaders in technology and innovation.

Exhibitors at the tradeshow will have

the opportunity to be nominated for the coveted People's Choice Award, which will be announced at the evening award ceremony. Exhibitors can register for a booth at www.mistic.ca.

MISTIC is the only council north of Victoria that encourages growth of the knowledge-based industries through programs,

business coaching and support for their ideas.

MISTIC is a non-profit organization committed to promoting technology on Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast and Gulf Islands and is supported through the BC Innovation Council.

— *Mid-Island Science Technology and Innovation Council*