Dear NCRA,

I wish to lend my voice to CiTR's bid to have Ben Lai, volunteer extraordinaire, recognized for his many efforts over the past 20 years.

As former Music Director at CiTR, 1998-2001, I had the chance to work closely with Ben. He was always around to provide a helping hand with technical issues or odd jobs within the music department. In my capacity as MD, it was my job to organize an annual battle of the bands, Shindig!, which ran every year in the fall. At the end of my time, the new MD was not able to take on the full extent of organizational duties, and Ben stepped up and volunteered to run the event, as well as to take on the MC role!

Ben helped out with Shindig! for more than 10 years, which is an amazing feat, as it requires great patience in dealing with submissions, rounding up judges, hyping up audiences, and generally making everything come together for 13 weeks at a time of year when most people would rather be hibernating.

Ben is super well-known in the local community, as he is an avid supporter of our independent music scene. I suspect that Ben never sleeps - he's always out late, and he's always ready to dish out words of encouragement to new bands and old favourites.

Ben is a great asset to CiTR and the Vancouver music scene. Maybe an award will help to ensure he keeps coming out and supporting the scene for another 20 years!

Thank you,

Julie Colero