

Royal Canadian Legion

Ontario Command Newsletter

Winter



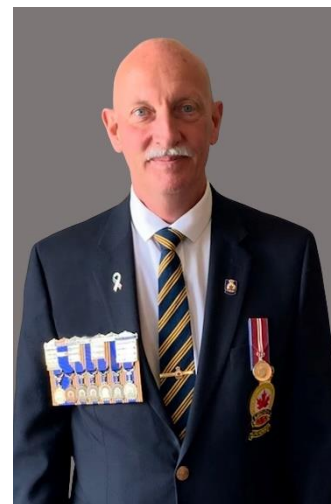
2023

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Derek Moore, Provincial President

Comrades All. I can finally give a very small sigh of relief I have finally reached the half-way point of this term. I knew that it was going to be tough right from the start, especially since I missed my own installation and convention in North Bay because of the emergency open heart surgery I had to undergo the week before but I'm glad to say the new parts are functioning very well even under the enormous stress they have had to endure from time to time. Then you find out you are subject to another 3 year term in office, if the one prior to this one as 1STVP wasn't enough, 2 extra years, no wonder I'm bald! Seriously though Comrades I wouldn't have missed this experience for all the tea in China. I, or should I say, my wife Trish and I, have had the unique opportunity to meet and enjoy the company of so many wonderful people. Sadly though, some of whom are no longer with us, We still have thousands of terrific



memories that we can draw from, and of course let's not forget the real reason I joined the Legion in the first place, our veterans. I personally have been a member of Br. #134 Mount Forest for 45 years, hopefully I will make the 50 and beyond, fingers crossed.



2024 is shaping up to be a very busy year indeed with lots of travel planned already. Start off with a trip to my new second home, St. John's, Newfoundland, where I have left my mark in 2023, quite literally, in front of the Court House yet. My friends at the Court House, picked me up and brushed me off, and still

had time for a group photo. In 2024, there will be a special event planned in St. John's. They will be bringing home a now identified Unknown Soldier from the Beaumont Hamel Battlefield of 1916 where the Newfoundland Regiment was decimated almost to extinction. Out of the 800 soldiers in the regiment that went into battle that day on July 1st, only 68 were able to answer roll call the next day. The plan is to be able to lay a wreath on behalf of Ontario Command at the ceremony.

Trish and I were actually able to visit the site in France a few years ago. Hoping my good friend and Comrade, Garry Pond will be able to join me. Come back July 4th. And then to York University for the Provincial T & F Meet. July 12-13th. Followed on Aug. 7-14th in Calgary, Alberta for the Dominion T & F Meet. We will finish off August with a trip to New Brunswick to attend the Dominion Convention in St. John. Of course there will be lots of other events to go to attend in between those ones. All in the day in the life of a Provincial President, and I don't regret one little bit of it. Looking forward to attending the Provincial Public Speaking in May, also the Ladies Auxiliary Convention at the end of the month, an election year so it should be quite interesting.

Now down to the ugly business, we are still seeing way too many Article IIIs. Since the beginning of the year, well over 90 Article III submissions have had to be dealt with but most would you believe were Not Properly Lodged and were Not Valid in Accordance with Article III. Many should have been dealt with at branch level but were sent directly to Ontario Command, no \$100 cheque enclosed, not signed, not within the time frame. Comrades if you really do feel the need to file an Article III please do it correctly. Instructions are in the Officers Manual. In all honesty I would sooner see those involved just sit down solve their differences with some good old fashioned talking to each other, over a beer maybe? At the end of the day those same members still belong to the same branch and will still see each other from time to time so why not learn to get along, or failing that, stay away from each other.

Branch Inspections are winding down in fact they should all be done and sent in by now. I would certainly like to see them all completed by the end of January 2024. Branch Regulations are coming along reasonably well, hopefully we will see something resembling close to 100% complete very soon into the New Year. Thank you to those comrades that have taken on the job to help branches complete this task, not an easy one for sure but your commitment and dedication is certainly appreciated.

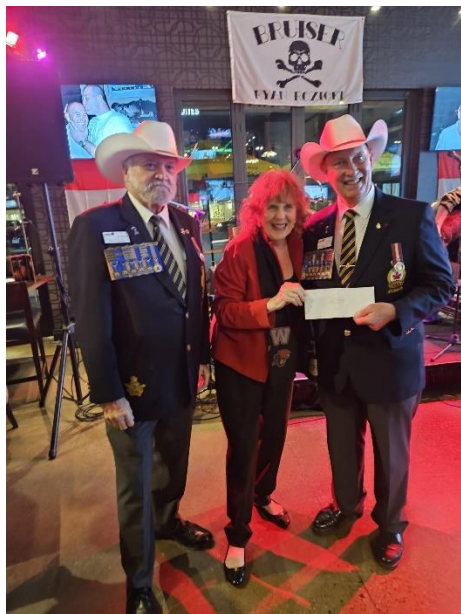
The world is somewhat turned upside down these days we need to continue and focus on all of the good things in life and not spend so much time trying to tear down what some else has built. Step back and take the time to admire the effort and in a very pleasant manner offer a suggestion or two to improve what has been accomplished but let's continue to, "Work Together", to make this a better organization and build a brighter future for ourselves. Also, wherever our armed forces personnel may be, let's hope they come home safe.

Comrades, Trish and I, and all of the Moore family, would like to wish your families a wonderful, safe and enjoyable time together, I know we will. Merry Christmas everyone.

In Comradeship

Derek Moore

Editor's Note. President Moore now has one more hat to wear. At the Grey Cup, Jack Gemmel and Derek Moore, Ontario Command President were both white-hatted by City of Calgary, by Councillor, Dan McLean. The White Hat Ceremony is considered the equivalent of bestowing the keys to the City of Calgary.



"We present you with the symbol of our western hospitality and friendliness – the white cowboy hat. This hat represents the spirit of the Calgary Stampede and the warmth of our community. As we place this hat upon your head, we extend to you the honorary title of Calgarian".

Pictured: L-R Jack Gemmel District B Commander, Hon. Lois E Mitchell, Lieutenant Governor Alberta (2015 to 2020) and part owner of the Calgary Stampeders presenting Ontario Command President Derek Moore with a cheque for \$2,500.00 to the Joe Sweeney Fund.

Garry Pond, Immediate Past Provincial President, Homeless Veterans Chair, Property Chair

Hello Comrades. Another Christmas season to enjoy! Please take the time to do so with family and friends.

I would like to thank the many volunteers at Branches, Zones, Districts, our Ladies Auxiliaries - and of course many, many thanks to our fantastic staff at Provincial HQ led by Executive Director Pam and Assistant Executive Director Juanita, for helping and guiding us with this important work! Without all of you, our work just could not continue. Thank you again!

Following is an update on some of the programs I have been working on.

Leave The Streets Behind

Through the generosity of our Legion Branches and Ladies Auxiliaries, throughout our Command, money has been raised through various events to support the Homeless Veterans Program. To date over 3 million dollars has been dispersed from the Ontario Command Homeless Veterans Fund and over 100,000 dollars from our Ladies Auxiliary. We note here that there has been no financial support from any level of government. More than 1158 Homeless Veterans have been identified in 199 communities. Of these Veterans, 129 have identified as females since the beginning of the program. We have noticed that there are many Veterans we assist that have families with children and in the past year we have assisted 53 families. (Note all figures shown above are as



of 01 Dec 2023 and it is to be noted that August was the busiest month on record assisting 15 new veterans).

I want to thank Districts, Zones, and our Branches for stepping up to the plate and providing contacts who are willing and able to assist at the local levels with our Homeless Program. As our Districts are very different in many ways, we have determined that this role can be done at either the Zone or District level and sometimes even at the Branch level. Many of our Provincial VSS Committee Chairs have taken on the role and this is an incredible help to our Provincial team. There have been some fantastic success stories at local levels that would never have been accomplished without this local help!

Leave the Streets Behind has also partnered with Toronto City Police, Military Veterans Wellness Program (MVWP) and this has proved to be an invaluable partnership. The MVWP is growing exponentially to other Police forces, and we now have contacts with Waterloo Regional Police, Durham Regional Police, Peel Regional Police, and many OPP contacts throughout the Command. This really helps us identify Veterans needing assistance.

Another important partner of our Program is Built for Zero Canada (BFZ-C). This relationship is growing and proving to be valuable to both our organizations - as both of us have the same objective.



I also would like to mention and to thank a very much closer partner in our Ladies Auxiliary who always step forward when needed.



Ruck to Remember has been incredible and many thanks go out to Comrade Lino and his team who again have had an incredible year! I also announced that this year's "Golden Boot" award goes to District E with a total donation of \$107,500.00. Congratulations! Accepting the award from President Derek and I was District E Commander Rick Preston.

In summary it has been very busy with the program, however it is very satisfying knowing the help the program gives to so many Veterans. I would like to thank Comrades Pam, Juanita, Jen, and Lisa S. and all our PSO staff - but also thanks to all our HQ staff as everything they do in their day-to-day work affects our Homeless Veterans very much!

In closing, I would also like to thank everyone for the get well wishes and the wonderful words of encouragement to me during my recent health issues. You cannot know how much this means to me during this difficult time.

I do wish to announce that I will be letting my name stand as Vice President of Dominion Command at the upcoming convention in Saint John NB and I humbly ask for your support!

On behalf of Linda and myself, I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season. We are hoping 2024 will be a great year for The Royal Canadian Legion, all its members and our many wonderful friends!

In Comradeship

Garry



Lynn McClellan, Provincial First Vice President, Provincial Leadership Development Chair

Our term of office is now into its eighteenth month and I am just as excited now as your 1st Vice President as I was when the term began. It has been a pleasure working with all of the members of PEC, my fellow Senior Elected Officers, the Finance Committee, The Property Committee, the Leadership Development committee, the Cadet Leagues, the Charitable Foundation, and especially our Command staff. I would be remiss if I didn't mention that if it weren't for the guidance and support provided by everyone at headquarters and look forward to being even busier over the next eighteen months when this term will come to an end.

Over the past year and a half, Comrade Derek and I have travelled to various meetings, presentations, and social events together. Living only forty five minutes away from each other has been a true benefit not only financially to the Command, but for me as a Vice President, as we are able to discuss many topics while we are in the car. I also use the telephone a lot to keep updated with Comrade Derek and we are able to discuss whatever topics are relevant that day. When Comrade Derek emphasized "**Working Together**", I don't think he realized what he was getting in to with me.



Since we last met I have attended many events. Provincial Darts, Provincial Shuffleboard, Provincial Public Speaking, PAC meetings, Finance Meetings, Charitable Foundation meetings, a Flag Raising Ceremony for King Charles III at Queen's Park, various Zoom meetings, Warriors Day, and many, many more meetings and conventions just to name a few. The most exciting event though was being able to participate in the National Foundations Pilgrimage of Remembrance in July. Our journey to France and Belgium touring Canadian battlefields from WWI and II, Commonwealth cemeteries and monuments was a trip I will never

forget. It was a grueling sixteen days of learning Canadian and Commonwealth military history and I can't thank the organizers enough for the opportunity to tag along. I have included a couple of photos from my trip. One taken in front of the Vimy Memorial and the second, a selfie in an underground World War I tunnel.

On behalf of Darlene and I, we wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year.

Lynn McClellan
1st Vice President



Crystal Cook, Provincial Vice President Provincial Youth Education Chair

Comrades it is hard to believe that 2023 is coming to an end and that we are halfway through the term. The first half of this term has been a great learning experience and one that I have thoroughly enjoyed. I want to thank the branches and Ladies Auxiliaries for all that you do for the Royal Canadian Legion your dedication and commitment to our veterans and your community are outstanding. Without all of you there is no Royal Canadian Legion.

As we continue to recover from the COVID closures, hard work and determination are certainly evident and are going to be the difference between success and failure. Since the last newsletter I have had the pleasure of attending District C & D Conventions and I thank both Districts for their hospitality.



It was a special pleasure to attend the service at Pinehill's Cemetery in Zone D5. It is breathtaking to see hundreds of crosses adorning the hills of the cemetery, words cannot describe the feeling



Thank you to everyone at Ontario Command for all their hard work throughout the year, you make our jobs much easier. It has been a pleasure to serve as one of your Vice Presidents and I look forward to the remainder of the term.

In closing I wish everyone the very best of this holiday season, I hope that everyone gets to spend some time with family and friends.

Yours in Comradeship

Crystal Cook

Diane Condon Provincial Vice President, Bursary Chair, Honours and Awards Chair,

.OUT AND ABOUT THIS YEAR

All of us are asked to visit different locations and spread the word about the great work that we do. So, one of my first events was to attend Sunnybrook with 1st Vice President Lynn McLellan to present the first Poppy to the Lt. Governor. That was October of 2022. Great to see the veterans, who are very active for their ages. I ended up in conversation with three of them, One was 96, one was 98, and the other 100. Charming, entertaining, and a reminder that they come from a special generation who gave so much for this country.



My next trip took me north to the wilds of Northern Ontario, to attend the District K convention in Kirkland Lake. Well, I packed everything except snow shoes and could have worn shorts. For April the weather was fantastic. The one highlight of the trip was installing Comrade Marianne Sowinski to the office of District Commander, her deputy Comrade John Hill to the office of Deputy District Commander. The warmth of the welcome in the north exceeds the common thought that it is a cold place. I enjoyed the trip even though it is a long way. No moose, no bears, and not even a dead gopher on the highways. I must have lucked out.

The summer was somewhat quiet, but of course there is always Warriors Day at the CNE along with our usual meetings that weekend. It's always good to be with everyone and exchange ideas.

For my fall trip, I didn't have to go far – only to Newmarket for the Fall District E Convention. Again, I was warmly welcomed by District E Commander Rick Preston and his wife Sue. I was kept well informed on the activities in the district and took the opportunity to visit with old friends from there. Always nice to meet new people too. They left a very nice gift basket in my room and they even remembered my Tim Hortons addiction! Nicely done!

My final trip was to the Ontario Legislature to lay a wreath on behalf of Ontario Command and the Veterans in our Province on Remembrance Day. It was an honor to do so, even though the trip itself was less than nice. Traffic, road closures, accidents and construction make it very slow going and it took 2 ½ hours to get there! But it all worked out in the end.

Other than my work as an SEO I still work for District B, where I chair Finance and Homeless Veterans. Both are challenging positions, but it forces my mind to stay sharp.

Comrades, stay safe, keep healthy, enjoy your family and friends over the holidays. Merry Christmas and a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

In Comradeship

Diane Condon

Mark Rogers, Provincial Vice President, Provincial Membership Chair

Greetings Comrades of Ontario Command. Now just past the halfway point of the term, I am continuing to learn every day on the inner workings of Ontario Command and how we are working towards being the best Provincial Command in Canada.

As Vice President, I am not only the Provincial Membership Chair but also a member of the Property Committee and Constitution and Laws Committee. I cannot stress to the branches and members enough how difficult these committee decisions can be at times. Whether a property issue or branch regulations, so much goes into making sure that the branch is protected and following the rules and bylaws. I thank all of you who work on these issues at your branch, zone, and district.



I have been proud to represent Ontario Command at several District Conventions this term and look forward to the remaining Districts I have been approved to attend to. Unfortunately, I will not be able to visit every district but by the end of the term I will have been able to get to 7 districts either as a guest or as Provincial Membership Chair to give a seminar.

I am hopeful that in 2024 I can visit more branches and areas of the province and meet with members of our great organization. I also look forward to the Dominion Convention next year to help move The Royal Canadian Legion forward.

Yours In Comradeship,

Mark Rogers

Ed Pigeau, Provincial Treasurer

I am pleased to report that the changes to the Command Budget process for the year 2023-2024 went very well. My thanks to everyone involved, especially our Command Staff who played a key role.

The current focus of the Command Finance and Investment Committees is to review our various investment portfolios to ensure that we maximize our rate of return on our investments. Several portfolios were modified recently. We continue to work toward a zero per capita increase this term.

My best wishes to all for a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

In Comradeship

Ed Pigeau



Ron Goebel Provincial Chair

Hello Comrades.

Wow how time flies when you're having fun! It's hard to believe that it was in June when our last Provincial Newsletter was distributed this year. I guess keeping busy makes the time just fly by. Since our last Provincial Newsletter in June, Legion business continued as usual for me both at my Branch and at the Command level. Both my wife and I assisted with our Branch Colour Party for Opening Ceremonies at the Canada Day celebrations in Carleton Place. Soon after we were able to take a bit of a vacation to one of our favorite spots, Pelee Island. And on our travels back home, we managed to stop in to at least say hello to those who attended the District F picnic at the home of our Executive Director Pam Sweeny and District F Commander, Greg Kobold.

Getting away certainly did not preclude me from continuing to deal with situations that arose with those unwanted Complaints and Appeals that we deal with being on the Provincial Constitution and Laws Committee. With our Committee Chair Garry Pond being away on vacation, it placed a little extra responsibility onto my shoulders as Vice-Chair, but Garry was always there when needed.

On Friday, August 18th, we were off to our Provincial Headquarters in Aurora for our annual August Finance Committee meeting, Saturday Warriors Day Parade and Sunday P.A.C. meeting. Our meetings were as always, most productive and the Warriors Day Parade was again most heartwarming in seeing the number of spectators in attendance who applauded our Ontario Command contingent from the time we entered through the Princess Street gates right through the CNE grounds. The only thing that was missing was my wife Barb who stayed at home for the second year in a row to attend a celebration of life for a very close and dear friend of ours and a WW11 Veteran.



Following the Saturday parade, we went to Highland Creek Branch 258 in Toronto who were most gracious hosts and served us a very delicious lunch. No-one certainly did not go away hungry. It was great to see their President Dave Adamson who I have not seen for quite some time. He was always a most valued member of District D Council.

The following weekend, I relinquished my duties to represent Ontario Command at the Provincial Washer Toss Tournament being held in Almonte to our Immediate Past President Garry Pond. I still went to Almonte as it was there where my wife Barb and I participated in the Zone G-6 Colour Party parade and Opening Ceremonies for the North Lanark Highland Games.



On September 23rd, my wife and I attended a most impressive Perth Veterans Motorcycle parade where close to 400 thundering motorcycles paraded through parking lots of Senior residences to honour Veterans along their way to the Perth Legion Branch 244. The parade follows a route known as the Pathway of Heroes where the local Legion Branch this year had 341 Veteran banners hanging on street light poles. This is an annual parade where the motorcycles parade in pairs along this Pathway of Heroes and then join in to socialize at the Perth Legion following the parade.

I attended Provincial Zoom meetings in September and October and of course like many, attended various local Branch meetings in preparation for our annual Poppy Campaign and Remembrance Day activities.

The weekend of October 21st, my wife Barb and I had the privilege of driving to Massey to Branch 432 where I had been invited as the Provincial guest to attend their annual Fall District H Council Meeting. They held a most successful Council Meeting during the day on Saturday and I was very privileged to have placed a wreath at the Branch Cenotaph during a brief Wreath Laying Ceremony held prior to lunch. They held a banquet Saturday evening and Deputy District Commander John Lewis present my wife with a lovely flower centre piece.



Of course November is always a busy month for all of us and it was no different for Barb or I as we took part in our annual local Poppy Campaign. On November 5th, we attended a Veterans dinner at our own Branch in Carleton Place, and we were privileged to have invited the Dominion President Bruce Julian to attend our dinner. Barb and I had the distinct pleasure of sitting with Bruce along with our Immediate Past Provincial President Garry Pond and his wife Linda. In the photo below, Comrade Bruce presents his Dominion President's coin to 102 year old WW11 Veteran Gord Standing.



I was again very honoured to be the Master of Ceremonies for our annual Remembrance Day Ceremony in Carleton Place. We couldn't have asked for better weather and we had a very large crowd attend our Ceremony and parade. Canadian Forces Base Petawawa supplied a Chinook Helicopter that made a most impressive flypast during our Ceremony.

Our annual P.E.C. meeting was held at the Aurora Branch on November 19th and although it was a bit of a long meeting due to 7 various presentations being made, it was also a very productive meeting. All of the more than 20 changes to our Provincial By-Laws received approval and have now been submitted to Dominion Command for their review.



We enjoyed a most delicious dinner at our P.E.C. banquet that was supplied by the Aurora Branch and it was nice to see the parents of their local cadets assist with the serving of the meal. Both Barb and I thoroughly enjoyed the comradeship of the District H people at our table for the banquet. We had a lot of laughs. On behalf of my wife Barb and myself, we wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and safe travels and good health in 2024.

Ron Crown, Provincial Vice-Chair. Provincial Resolutions Chair

It has been busy times in the Crown household, between Sharon and I, since the last Provincial Newsletter. A new hip for Ron, six weeks of doing nothing but wonderful results. A new Great Granddaughter, Brinley Mae, arrived safe and sound and her 2-year-old sister is being even more spoiled by us. A successful PEC meeting with 5 resolutions concurred and on the way to Dominion Command for consideration at the convention in August.



I continue to receive and review the Zone Commanders Annual Inspection Report forms.

Ladies Auxiliary Provincial Convention is upcoming in May 2024 in New Market and Sharon will be seeking the office of Ladies Auxiliary Provincial President.

We are pleased our dear friend Roy Eaton has accepted the position of Ontario Correspondent. We are confident he will do a great job.



We wish all our Comrades near and far a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Successful 2024.
Kind Regards,

Ron and Sharon.

Pamela Sweeny, Provincial Executive Director

It's difficult to comprehend that Christmas is around the corner and soon we'll be ringing in 2024!

All administrative aspects at Provincial Headquarters, are continuously reviewed by Provincial Standing Committees, Senior Elected Officers, and Staff to streamline processes and make important information available to you on the Ontario Command website www.on.legion.ca Ontario Command's Provincial Service Officers and their assistants continue to deal with the tremendous increase in First Applications for Veteran pensions. Thank you for the great teamwork!

Homeless Veterans assistance is incredibly busy, given program coordination with Built For Zero, The Military Veterans Wellness program being adopted by more Police Services, OPP and RCMP increasing referrals for service verification and assistance. Many thanks to the volunteers that are working at Branch, Zones and Districts with their community service partners identifying Veterans requiring assistance through the Homeless Veterans program.

Staff at Provincial Headquarters have been extremely busy this year. We have seen increased volumes in emails, phone calls, Article III's, Property and Renovations, Veterans Plates, Branch Certifications, Remembrance Ceremony details, Poppy distribution, SUF's, Boards of Trustees, Branch Advisories, Homeless, Sports Issues, Youth Education updates, Charitable Foundation application changes as well as evening Zoom meetings, etc. We're certain you're experiencing the same at all levels and thank you for your patience.

Which is why, Staff sincerely wishes you all enjoy time with family and friends this holiday break.

Be safe over the holidays and thank you to the Senior Elected Officers, Staff at Provincial Headquarters and Satellite Offices that are always willing to lend a hand and to all those volunteers who are called upon to assist us. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Cheers,

Pamela





Back Row – Adina, Gord, Juanita, Marg, Lisa D., Lisa S., Lynn, Pam, Derek
 Front Row- Hailey, Jen, Melissa Bottom Row – Kelly Missing - Sue
 Thank you Adina for the great Staff Luncheon photo. Merry Christmas to each of you. Roy

Diane Condon Provincial Bursary Chair

Comrades all; Bursary has proven to be a very challenging position and certainly made me work towards bettering its position as a charity worthy of support. I must thank all the District Chairs, our CF President, Comrade Marg Emery and our Co Ordinator, Jen Leclair for their support and hard work. When you have a good team things go much easier.

Started by the LA over 30 years ago, it was taken over by Command and made part of the Charitable Foundation, which is a registered charity. This requires reporting to Revenue Canada and the distribution of T4A slips. All funds for bursary are accounted for separately and the donations received constitute our budget on an annual basis. Pre covid, we had 500 applications to the program. During covid that dropped to 292. Despite the pandemic we were able to support these students, who, for the most part, were studying from home. They still had to pay for books, tuition, etc., all of which have a high cost. However, the number dropped again the following year to 262, and we appeared to be losing ground with the program. Up until the December of that school year we only had 9 applications in house. That necessitated action on our behalf.



After a complete review of our procedures including the application process, and, after input from outside sources, it was determined that we should look at the application with a view to making it simpler and easier to follow. We have done that, and at our last Bursary meeting the chairs from the districts

voted in favor of the changes made. We now have an application which is easier for the students to follow. In addition, we needed to get noticed. There are many bursaries available to qualified students, most of which are in the \$1,000 range. In an effort to outdo them and get our share of the bursary market, we increased the award to \$1,500. However, our budget would not support that amount, and the Charitable Foundation, after review, put the award at \$1,250.

Comrades, to date we have 51 applications in house for this current academic year, which is a vast improvement of prior years. The new application is receiving favorable reviews, and most certainly the award amount is going to be a boost to the bursary program.

Currently, the bursary program is open to all veterans, their spouses, children and grandchildren. Great grandchildren can apply through the branches. During our June Bursary meeting, we did discuss opening up the program to include affiliate members and all LA members. This, unfortunately, is not possible due to funding. We are reliant on the branches for funding through donations. As it stands, we are an older charitable venture and not as popular as Homeless Vets or Service Dogs. Most of the branch donations go to them, and we haven't seen an increase in donations for quite some time. We know that there are significant funds being held by the branches in their Poppy accounts, and we ask that you request them to donate those funds to all our charitable ventures, including Bursary. Only with their funding will we be allowed to grow. Don't forget, this is all part of

supporting our Veterans and their families, something we are mandated to do, and something we do with pleasure.

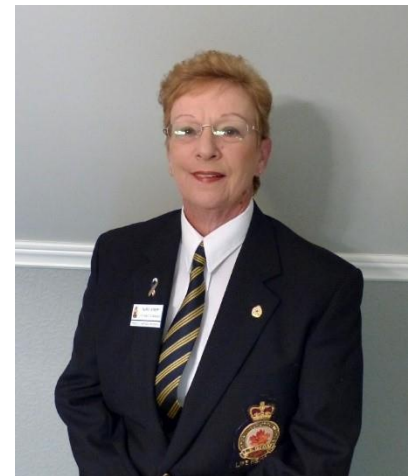
In Comradeship
Diane Condon

Marg Emery, President, of The Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command Branches and Ladies' Auxiliaries Charitable Foundation

First, I just want to say that it is an honour to be a part of the Charitable Foundation and serve with our dedicated committee members both Legionnaires and Ladies Auxiliary along with Senior Officers and senior staff.

For any who don't know, the following accounts are within the umbrella of the Charitable Foundation and are reported as part of CF Veterans Comfort Fund (VCF). For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the Veterans Comfort Fund received total donations of \$170,900.00, interest income of \$41,533.34 and \$39,146.20 on program expenditures, leaving a balance of \$173,287.14. Donations for VCF were up 56.62% from last year.

For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the Joe Sweeney Fund (a.k.a. Leave the Streets Behind / Homeless Veterans' Program) received total donations of \$84,152.40, interest income of \$18,010.74 and



\$33,330.78 on program expenditures leaving a balance of \$68,832.36. Donations for the JSF Fund were up 31.30% from last year.

For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the Service Dogs Program received total donations of \$10,295.30 from the public. Donations from Legion levels for the SDP go to the Provincial Poppy Fund to be kept there until needed which is why this figure seems low. There was \$385.10 on program expenditures leaving a balance of \$9,910.30. Donations for this program were up 235% from last year.

I am happy to report that donations for this year were up about 12% for the Charitable Foundation over last year. Our branches and our Ladies Auxiliaries always put others first especially as the cost of everything has skyrocketed.

Our Committee of the Whole for Charitable Foundation met on Friday, November 17, 2023 where we approved 73 applications for a total of **\$671,332.00**. I believe this is one of the highest amounts we have had for distribution all because of every one of you who donate to the Charitable Foundation. Thank You!

Comrades, as a committee we made significant changes for 2024 as we are going digital. The Command website has been updated with all the new forms and directions and there is even a sample grant for applicants to use as a template. We are very excited about this move. We will also be using electronic funds transfers for successful grants and will work with the recipients to ensure a presentation is made which includes branch and Ladies Auxiliaries representation.

Special thanks to the Ladies Auxiliaries as always for their support and another big thank you to the branches, zones and districts for their donations, without all of you there would be no Charitable Foundation. A huge thank you to our committee members who are enthusiastic about the work they do for the Charitable Foundation and come to the table each year prepared to go to bat not only for their own Districts but other Districts who would benefit from a larger grant if the funds are available. We have a great team!

I would like to thank Hailey Gobin to our Committee Coordinator who worked so hard ensuring all the necessary paperwork was uploaded to the website for this coming application season and just does a great job overall. Thank you to all staff at Ontario Command who have any part in providing a service for CF especially Pam, Juanita and Sue. They all do a great job.

Wishing you all very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year with sincere best wishes for an enjoyable and healthy holiday season filled with family, fun and faith and a better year ahead. Take care, God bless, stay safe and please be kind to one another.

In Comradeship

Marg Emery

Diane Condon Honours and Awards Chair

Since being named to the Honors and Awards Chair, I have developed a deeper understanding of what it takes to be recognized by your peers. It never ceases to amaze me that we have people within our organization who can, and have devoted so much of their time and effort to making the Legion a better place for all members.

In this calendar year to date, we have received 139 applications for Honors and Awards. Of that number, 117 were for Life Membership, 19 were for MSM's and there were 3 applications for the Palm Leaf to the MSM. After careful review by the committee, we declined 33 Life memberships, 5 MSM's and 1 Palm Leaf to the MSM. Having done that, the final submissions were 84 Life Memberships, 14 MSM's, and 2 Palm Leaf to the MSM.



There seems to be as lot of confusion over what makes a good citation and what constitutes the requirement of “over and above”. Many of our members contribute their time volunteering to do a variety of things around the branch. When they have continued to do so over a period of years, an executive committee might feel that they should be given a life membership in recognition. This does not necessarily meet the criteria for “over and above” and the application is usually denied. We can only refer them to the Ritual, Awards and Protocol manual which is available on the Dominion website. In that manual, starting on page 14, they will find the criteria for all awards. Following the guidelines, including dates of service in chronological order, and a good citation increases the chance of the award being approved.

It has been said, that when the branch feels a Life membership is in order for an individual, it should be given, even if the criteria for “over and above” is not met. Comrades, as you all know, the only way to make things change is by resolution. If you have a strong opinion on how Honors and Awards should be given, then it is up to you to try and change things.

In Comradeship

Diane Condon

Mark Roger, Provincial Membership Chair

Greetings Comrades, I am happy to report that Ontario Command is continuing our upswing in membership. To date Ontario Command is at 104.48% of our end of 2022 membership. This is an increase of just over 4000 members. Many thanks go to the branch membership chairs as well as the zone and district chairs that have helped their branches with issues and questions.

One concern I still have is the nonrenewal rate. Only approximately 80% of 2022 members have renewed their 2023 dues. Hopefully branches can reach out to those unpaid members and bring them back into our Legion



branches. A second concern I have been approached on is that a lot of branches are still having trouble recruiting volunteers. With so many new members, hopefully branches reach out to these new members and let them know of ways they can help support their branch.

2 resolutions were approved by the Provincial Executive Council regarding Membership and hopefully they will be on the floor at Dominion Convention in Saint John next year. More details will follow next year through your District and Zone Membership Chairs. I thank the 2 branches that had the idea and worked with me to make their submissions clear and concise to everyone who will read it.

I look forward to a great 2024 membership year. Branches have done a great job this year and I encourage them to continue that hard work and bringing more people into our Legion family.

I would like to thank our District Membership Chairs: District A Paula McEwen, District B Roy Mackey, District C Dennis Schmidt, District D Donna Sampson, District E Amanda Grant, District F Ted Whan, District G Blaine Kiley, District H Andre Paquette District K Marianne Sowinski

My best wishes to everyone this holiday season and a successful 2024

Yours In Comradeship,

Mark Rogers

Ron Goebel, Military Service Recognition Book Program Chair

Volume #10 of the Military Service Recognition Book has been distributed and we are now well into year #11 of our program. It appeared that we encountered minimal problems this time around with our deliveries.

Hopefully now that our annual Poppy Campaign and Remembrance Day activities are completed, branches will place more attention in doing what they can to recruit more Veteran submissions for our important Remembrance program. Branch Veteran Service Officers and PRO's can also be a big help with us accomplishing this.

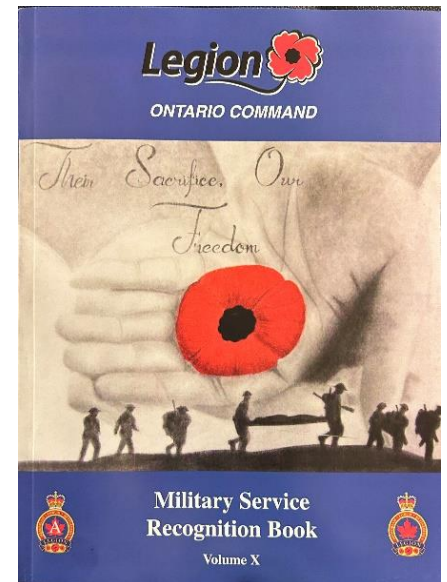


Our program should be talked about and promoted at branch general meetings and all branch functions. As mentioned, we just recently distributed our Volume #10 book to all branches. This is a great tool to use in promoting our program with the membership and especially with Veterans and family members of Veterans. Many communities also had Veteran Banners lining their streets during our Remembrance period. Another great source for having these Veterans included in our books.



Comrades, we should be doing what we can to have our Volume X1 book full of Veteran submissions rather than having to use fillers as we have had to do for the past couple of years. We ask for everyone's assistance and cooperation in doing what they can to make this happen. All Veterans deserve to be recognized and with the number that we have in the Province of Ontario, we have a long way to go before we have included them all in our special books of Remembrance. And remember that both our traditional Veterans and our modern day Veterans, including current service Military members who live or have lived in the Province of Ontario all qualify.

Also keep in mind Comrades that through our publisher, we have raised a lot of money for our Command through this program. And these funds are being utilized to give back to our Veterans through various Veteran transition programs that we at Ontario Command support. In this regard, our program has been most successful over the past ten years thanks to the efforts of our publisher, Fenety Marketing. As of the end of October, we had received a total net income in the amount of \$1,933,063.25 since we first introduced this program in 2013. And also remember that these funds assist us in not having to impose any increase to the Provincial per capita tax.



The success of our program is dependent on each branch having a Branch MSRB Coordinator who is continually promoting our program and actively involved in recruiting Veteran submissions through their branch and community. Because what has been somewhat disappointing is to see that there are still several of our branches who have not as much as submitted one Veteran submission over this ten-year period.



I do not for one minute believe that there are no Veterans who have lived or are living within these communities and the surrounding areas of where these branches are located. So, I put out the challenge to any branch who has yet to submit any Veteran submission to recruit submissions and have them submitted for publication in our Volume #11 book. Of course, we also ask that all branches do the same. And please do not hold onto submissions until the last minute. Please submit them to your Provincial Coordinator as soon as you have received them.

I do want to thank all of you who have been involved in our program to date to make it the success that it has been. Your support and dedication is truly appreciated. I ask that you continue to promote the program through a concentrated effort during year #11 of our program.

Comrades, on behalf of Barb and myself, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and all the very best in 2024. May you continue to stay safe and healthy and work in the best interests of our Veterans, their families.

In Comradeship

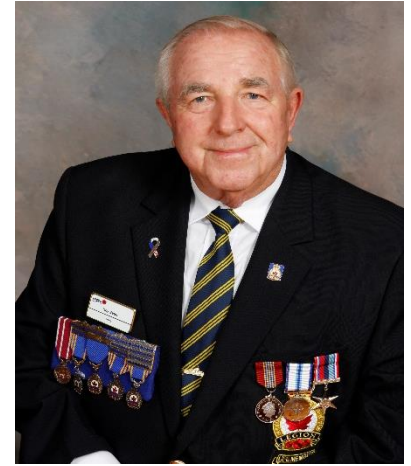
Ron Goebel

Roy Eaton Ontario Correspondent

Mary Ann Goheen was first appointed to the position of Ontario Correspondent in May 2009 by President Ed Pigeau and she served in that capacity until November this year.

In 2013, then President Bruce Julian, wanted the Ontario Command website redesigned and Mary Ann was asked to be the Website coordinator. During that period, the MSRB program was introduced. The SEO's decided that the provincial Public Relations Officer, Carolyn McCaul and Mary Ann would do the processing of the submissions – a massive job for both.

I congratulate and applaud Mary Ann for her dedication and inspiring work as Ontario Correspondent for 14 years and for over 10 years as Website Coordinator and working on the MSRB program.



Since it has only been a few weeks since my appointment as Ontario Correspondent, I will attach Mary Ann Goheen's report which she gave at PEC on November 18. For submissions to the Legion Magazine please contact me at this email address: reaton@on.legion.ca

Wishing all a joyous and blessed Christmas

Roy

Mary Ann Goheen, Ontario Correspondent 2009-2023

Legion Magazine continues to provide excellent publicity for branches in our Command. In the 5 published issues for 2023 (Jan., March, May, July, Sept.) we had 220 photos in the Community section alone---and additional 73 head shots for special awards (Palm Leaf, MSM, long service 50 years or longer), 21 names for Life membership awarded. The most photographed members appear to be branches in District C, G and B as indicated in the chart. A-29 B-33 C-41 D-6 E-20 F-23 G-37 H-17 K-0 LA-8 OC-6

At the time of writing this report, I knew we would have a significant number of pictures for the November issue but did not include the figures in this report. As the magazine has a bit of a backlog due to space allotment per issue, with respect to Ontario photo submissions, I never really know anymore exactly how many to expect being published---this is all due to changes in editorial staff and their methods of communication (or not) with the provincial correspondent. Canvet Publishing have their 'own' agenda and communication with the correspondent is not one of them when it comes down to advising of each photo approval---that system retired when Tom MacGregor retired.



Mary Ann Goheen

Brian Harris, Provincial Poppy Chair

Greeting Comrades from cold and getting colder London. As we approach the Holiday season and the end of the year, we have much to be thankful for and special acknowledgements to give.

To our District and Zone Poppy Chairs, a very big thank you for all the excellent work that has been done over hundreds of hours. Much more responsibilities have been added since your terms began as our Poppy and Remembrance programs continue to grow and expand.

To our Branch Poppy Chairs, their Committees and thousands of Poppy Volunteers around our Province who keep their oath to actively participate in the Poppy Campaign, the biggest and most heartfelt Thank You! Your many hours of dedication, your presence in our communities as representatives of the Royal Canadian Legion is one of the most important activities that we all perform every year.

It is too early to report the returns on the Poppy Campaign, but early tallies are very favourable. With Remembrance Day occurring on Saturday this year and for the most part it was great weather throughout our Province, attendance was up and services were well attended.

This season, however you celebrate it, let us remember our Veterans who have served us, and who now we pledge to serve, take every opportunity to say Thank you, every day of the year. To our current serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces, we also need to thank and remember, especially the 3000 plus who are deployed around the world and away from their loved ones.

On behalf of Brenda and myself, we wish you the very best of the season. May you enjoy Family, Friends and Comrades over the coming weeks with celebration and hope. Wishing 2024 to be a better and successful year for all!

Brian Harris

“Thank those who came home, Honour those who did not”

Garry Pond Provincial Property Committee Chair

Ontario Command Property Committee continues to be extremely busy. The Property Section in the Legion Officers' Manual has now been amended and hopefully this will help with questions from Branches through the Chain of Command and with our training. There is a useful new section we added to the re-write “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ).

Again, and I repeat, Property Committee issues are governed by the Legion Act and the Act to Incorporate. The Legion Officer's Manual Section A, page 43 to 53 has the policies and procedures. There is also a “Terms of

Reference” for the Provincial Property Committee in Section D pages 34 and 35.



There is a branch I would like to mention that we have been working with over the past few months. I'd like to announce that the construction of a new Branch for Hepworth Shallow Lake Branch 586 is well underway. Their branch burned to the ground a couple of years ago and after much hard work they have rebounded incredibly well. Congratulations!

I would like to thank the members of the Committee - Comrades Derek, Lynn, Crystal, Diane, and Mark as well as to our Committee Coordinator Pam and Assistant Coordinator Jen for ALL the hard work. I also would like to thank our property guru Dave MacDonald who continually amazes me with his brilliance in this field!

In Comradeship

Garry Pond

Carolyn McCaul, Provincial Public Relations Chair, Military Service Recognition Book Coordinator (Districts A,D,G,H,K)

Hello Comrades. An important item on our plate at this time is the Branch Survey. Why is it important? The information we gather from this survey is used for our Fact Sheet which is used to promote the awesome work our Branches and members do within Ontario Command. Information such as...volunteer hours, the number of times the Branches offered their facilities free of charge to community groups, funds spent in support of community groups are just a few that we need from the Branches as these are not recorded through any other reports sent to Ontario Command.



The current Fact Sheet of 2019 needs major updating, so we need the Branches help in completing this Branch Survey.

Facts from the last Branch Survey resulted with...

- Continued to support Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Army/Air/Sea/Navy Cadets, and other Youth Programs in excess of \$1.3 million
- Other donations to local charities amount to over \$1.5 million, not from Poppy Trust Funds
- Donations to local Community Projects totaled over \$1.3 million
- Ontario Command Members annually put in over 444,500 volunteer hours
- In 2018 Ontario Command Branches had over 6552 volunteer staff and employed over 1300 full time and part-time staff
- Ontario Command Branches offered their facilities free of charge to community groups for over 27,600 occasions in 2018

These are awesome facts and the only way we can state these is through information gathered through the Branch Survey.

The last Branch Survey of 2018 had Branch participation of 92% and as of December 15th, we only had 63% participation. So, Comrades, I ask for your continued help by completing the Branch Survey and sending it into Ontario Command so that we can update our Fact Sheet. The more information we have the better it will be as we will have more accurate information for the Fact Sheet. If your Branch has misplaced the Survey form, please contact me at carolyn.mccaul@sympatico.ca and I will be happy to send a form to you. To those Branches that have already completed the task, thank you for your help!

My final note is that Public Relations is about communicating, and this does not mean with just the Media. First, we must communicate with each other amongst our committees in order to get the information out to the Public. So Comrades, please "Keep the Communication Lines Open!"

During this Special Season please take time to remember what Christmas is about. It's a time of caring and sharing and spending special moments with your families and friends. John and I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Comrades, please have safe travels on wherever your paths may lead, stay safe and stay healthy!

Yours in Comradeship,

Carolyn McCaul

Sharon McKeown, Provincial Seniors/LTC Chair

Seniors over 55 are the largest segment of our Membership, those able to retire, generally have experience, spare funds, and time. It's a fact Volunteering is good for one's health, so encourage your seniors to stay active, get involved, though I suggest keeping them off ladders. Cudos and thanks to the three Districts now offering a Seniors Literary Program. District F started the ball, District E has carried it, and now District A, has entered the game. In addition, I hear District E has added a category specifically for Veterans' stories and poems. Seniors love discounts, included with this report is a listing of companies, places, etc., offering discounts to Seniors, some for the asking. Please share.



Sunnybrook, Parkwood, and Perley-Rideau experienced minimal casualties during Covid. There were no double digit Covid related deaths from either. Staff continue with their due diligence, units are locked down as quickly and as often as necessary to contain illness, keeping everyone, patients, staff, and visitors safe. Sunnybrook reports of their 286 Veteran beds, occupancy is at 76%. There is currently no waitlist for Contract or Preferred admission Veterans. The Palliative Care Unit has 52 of 56 beds occupied. Occupancy is usually at 95%. Veterans get priority if a waitlist. Parkwood Institute reports of the 119 beds available, Veterans occupy 88. At Perley, in Ottawa Veterans formerly housed in other wings of the facility have now been moved, subject to their approval, to the 'Rideau Veterans Residence'. Perley reports no 'waiting list' for qualified veterans (WWII & Korea), though 19 are waiting for 'preferred beds'. In September, there were 72 Other Qualified

Veterans (OQFs) occupying beds. These numbers change by the day. The Seniors Village, a LTC centre associated with and attached to Perley Health, still maintains a 28%-30% unofficial occupancy of veterans. The residents of the Seniors Village are welcome to use the amenities, games and workshops of Perley Health.

The Seniors Report presented at the 2023 Provincial Executive Council Meeting, in November, included a list of organizations, companies, etc. that provide a Seniors' Discount of one form or another. Your District and Zone Commanders would each have received the listing distributed by email. Hopefully, you, your family and friends make use of it. Some companies have Seniors' Discounts not advertised nor promoted. So, if over 55, take a risk, ask if a discount is available. Keep in mind, the young kid at the checkout, may not ask you, for fear of insulting that nice lady who appears as old as Grama.

As the New Year approaches, ugly winter weather is not far beyond, with cold temperatures and snowstorm warnings in the forecast. As you're wishing you didn't have to go out, think of our seniors. Give a call, make sure all's good, groceries, internet, cable, driveway shovelled, etc. Lend a hand when physically possible, and show you care.

The Santa at the shopping mall was quite surprised when he saw Martha, a woman in her mid-twenties, asking to sit on his lap. We all know Santa doesn't usually take requests from adults, but she smiled at him very nicely and he ended up asking her what she wanted for Christmas. "Something for my mother, please," she replied.

"Something for your mother? That's very thoughtful of you," smiled Santa. "What would you like me to bring her?"

Emily answered quickly, "A son-in-law."

In closing...from my Family to Yours, **MERRY CHRISTMAS**, stay well, travel safe, and have a **Happy Healthy Prosperous 2024**.

In Comradeship

Sharon McKeown

Walter Stevens, Sports Chair

We got through the 2023 Sports season without any major health concerns and Members came back to play again. It was not a great return as numbers were down across the board. Some sports were at a point that Zones and Districts did not have a full slate of participation to send players on to the next round and if they did, qualifying players opted not to move on and the pool of replacements bottomed out. One of the main issues for this was the higher



expenses for travel and accommodation to attend. Another reason given was some were still uneasy about playing in a tight indoor environment.

We still had issues of no shows and in most cases it turned out to be a lack of communication between players and various Sports Chairs to Convenors. Still need to work on this. I still hear from members that they didn't see anything posted at their branch about sports or dates so missed out on playing. There are Branches and Zones across the Province that have no Sports Chair on record so information is not always passed on.

Transfers, are another area of concern that still creates confusion and problems. I think we are going to have a look at this as to how it relates from a sports perspective to try and simplify it. We had and still have problems with trophies and plaques missing or damaged. Players need to be reminded that

they are to be taken to their Branch once they are won, not taken home etc. If they go missing the Branch would be responsible for tracking it down or replace it. We are still hunting for two of them. I hope our 2024 Sports term (which has already started play now in some areas) returns to normal or better. Legion Sports will always be a boast to Branches Province wide. Good luck to all.

In Comradeship,
Walter Stevens



John Crook, Provincial Track and Field Chair

Comrades all.

It's great to be back on track after three years of no Track & Field. We made a comeback with a bang, with both the Provincial championship Legion Nationals. However, we also experienced some sadness as we lost two of our past Track and Field Chairs recently - Comrades Crystal Taylor, who served for 37 years and Loraine Duncan, who served for 4 years. They will be sorely missed.

It's a great experience working with these elite athletes, and any legion member can be a chaperone. Please let me know if you're interested.

As many of you may know, a few weeks prior to the Provincial Track meet, I fell off my truck and ended up fracturing my back in two places. As a result, I wasn't able to stay for the entire Provincial meet, and I also couldn't attend the National meet in Sherbrooke.



I would like to thank Comrades Al Plume and Manny Raspberry and their better halves for their help at the Provincial Track meet. Thank you, comrades.



After taking a break, we resumed our participation in the provincial track meet and had to relearn the process. The Districts also had to get back to organizing district meets. However, during this time, we faced some unexpected challenges that tested the Track and Field Committee. We faced several challenges, such as one of the districts not arranging a District meet initially, and another district having their meet venue cancelled just a week before the scheduled date. However, the team worked together and found solutions to ensure that athletes from each district could still participate in a meet.

As we went through this process, we discovered some shortcomings, mainly in terms of our communication with each other within our organization (Legion), as well as with external parties such as clubs and parents. To prevent encountering the same issues in the future, we have decided to standardize some of our communications.

Summer Meet Brampton July 2023

District B hosted the Provincial meet on July 6th and 7th in Brampton, which was hosted by the Brampton Track & Field Club. The event saw a participation of approximately 350 athletes who competed in 738 events over a beautiful and sunny weekend. From this large group, 40 athletes were selected to represent Team Ontario at Nationals. I would like to extend my gratitude to Comrade Kiryn Crook for hosting this successful event.



After the track meet, the Committee held a meeting chaired by Comrade Derek in my absence. During the meeting, the committee selected the team led by Comrades Laura Sivers and Kiryn Crook to represent Team O in Sherbrooke. Additionally, a motion was proposed to invite Athletics Ontario to be a part of the Provincial Track & Field committee. We felt it was necessary to do this to keep our program active and promote it not only to the Track and Field community but also to other sports in the province. This relationship will guide our future collaboration and changes in Track and Field, and could open a new avenue for Legion membership.

National Championships Sherbrooke QC Aug 9th -15th 2023



The National Meet was held in Sherbrooke, Quebec this year, marking the second year at this venue. Comrade Dianne Hodges (District B) led the chaperones and Team O, with a team of three new chaperones to assist her: Comrade Chris Peters (District H), Comrade Mike DiCesare, and Comrade Suzanne Doan (both from District B). They provided support and encouragement to the athletes.

From L-R Chris Peters, Mike DiCesare, Chris Timm, Diane Hodges (Head Chaperone) Jamal Miller (Head Coach), Suzanne Doan, Angela Whyte

We achieved great results in Brandon, winning 35 medals and placing first among all provinces, narrowly beating Team BC by just one medal.

Head Coach Jamal Miller (Sprints & Relays), Angela Whyte (Middle Distance), and Chris Timm (Multi & Field events) did an excellent job guiding Team O's athletes this year.

As I was unable to attend the national event this year, I cannot provide a firsthand account of the happenings. However, I have been kept informed by other Provincial Chairs and remain close to the event.

Conference Call Sept 27th

During the call, we covered the remaining items from the meeting held after the Provincial Meet in Brampton. One of the topics discussed was the possibility of District D hosting the provincial meet next year. This is great news because District B had identified that hosting the provincial meet for the past 5 years has been tiring, and they needed a break.

As a reminder, any district can host a provincial meet and I urge all district commanders to explore this opportunity in the future. All the necessary information can be found in the Legion Officers Manual Section D Page 50, and Comrade Juanita and I are here to answer any questions for you.

Future Track Meets

Provincial Track meet July 12th & 13th Hosted by York University

Nationals

Calgary, AB 7th – 13th Aug. 2024

Calgary, AB 6th – 12th Aug. 2025

My committee members this last year were.

District A – Brian Harris District B – Kiryn Crook District C – Chrystal Taylor/Brenda Funston
District D – Dan Burri District E – Chris Scolozab/Betty Smith District F – Steve Bell
District G – Laura Sivers District H – Chris Peters District K – Debbie Morin TBC

In closing, the athletes of the province and I would like to thank Comrades Juanita and Pam for guidance and direction, Comrade Greg Kobold & Charlene Plume for manning the Resale booth at the Provincial meet and especially the Ladies Auxiliary for their kind continuous donations for our Team O Uniforms, PIB/Home Hardware and you the Legion members for the support given to them throughout the Provincial and National Track & Field meets.

During the PEC event, we had the privilege of presenting the President of the Ladies Auxiliary, Kathy Moggy, with a team track suit jacket. This jacket, which exemplifies the quality of the track and field program, was made possible through the consistent and generous donations from the Ladies Auxiliary. Also, thanks to Comrade Derek for the presentation of my Team O shirt.

Comrades from my family to you and yours we wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

John Crook

Crystal Cook, Provincial Youth Education Chair

Comrades, the National Remembrance Contest is currently in full swing with entries making their way through the various stages. I am excited to see the work that has been created this year, if it is anything like last year there are going to be some hard decisions to make.

As everyone is aware the contest has undergone some changes this year mainly due to the contest now being run by the National Foundation. The Poster portion has been renamed to The National Remembrance Contest and the Literary portion has been renamed the Rabbi Bulka Literary Contest. The renaming of the contest has been controversial, and it is hoped by the Committee that The National Foundation will revert to the original name. The contest has been called the Royal Canadian Legion Poster Poem and Essay competition since its inception and the old adage "if it's not broke don't fix it" comes to mind.



The second change is the addition of the Video Competition at the National Level, many will remember that Ontario Command did have a video competition, but it was put on hold as the caliber of entries was not what we considered to be adequate. Ontario Command has agreed to try the competition again and all entries will now be submitted through National, and each Province will review and judge the entries for their province. The competition will only be open to Intermediate and

Senior for this year. After the completion of this year's competition the Youth Education Committee will evaluate at our meeting in June if we wish to continue to participate.

Public Speaking will be starting soon, and I am pleased to announce that the Provincial Competition will be held at Br. 101 Long Branch in District D on May 4, 2024 start time is 11am. I hope you will be able to join us for a day of great speeches, the students' talents never cease to amaze me.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Branches, Zones and Districts who participate in this contest ,without your hard work at the various levels we would have no competition.

Thank you also the District Youth Education Chairs and our Command Assistant Hailey for all your work, it is much appreciated.

In closing, I wish everyone Season's Greetings and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Yours in Comradeship

Crystal Cook

John Dalley, Provincial Veteran Services Chair

The Homeless stats for Dec., 23

1158 clients helped of whom 129 were females and 53 families. 192 towns were involved. Total spent \$1,865,844.62.

The Military Veterans Wellness Program (MVWP) initiated by the Toronto Police Service is now Canada wide.

There was an **amendment** put forward at PEC to have the Provincial Veterans Services Committee "Seniors" position be separated from the Provincial Veterans Services Committee to focus on Seniors.

Amendments to GBLO/GBLB have been forwarded to DEC for their action.

Please ensure that you refer to the applicable web site(s) for the current version of the Manuals.

The National Suicide Crisis Line 988 is now open but with a few glitches. For example, if you are in an area not serviced by 911, 988 may not work. It is not available currently in Nunavut.

The current **Minister of Veterans Affairs** is the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor and the **Shadow Minister** is Blake Richards MP.

All the best for 2024.

John



Kathy Moggy, President Ontario Command Ladies Auxiliary

Comrades:

I will begin by bringing greetings from the Officers of the Ladies Auxiliary Ontario Command. It is a pleasure to be able to bring you an update on what is happening with our Ladies.

Of the 399 Legion branches in Ontario, 204 are blessed to be supported by Ladies' Auxiliaries. Provincially the L.A.s donated \$1,175,732 to branches. In addition, \$435,563 was donated to Veterans Welfare projects, Bursaries, the Charitable Foundation and other worthy causes.

Unfortunately the news is not all good. We have seen a number of our Auxiliaries surrender their charter, and for many reasons. Aging, declining numbers, and ongoing disputes with their Branch that couldn't be fixed. It's really too bad because by working together, both organizations could have been stronger.

We are currently, working on setting up our next Provincial Convention, it will be held from Saturday May 25 – Tuesday May 28, 2024. It will be held in Newmarket at the Roy Tweenie Complex. We are looking forward to having a good turnout of delegates and observers this year.

All Officers will be busy during the months of April and May, attending Zone Conventions and unfortunately that means we will not be able to attend any of the District Conventions. We are finding it to be extremely expensive to attend the District Conventions, so it has been suggested that instead of being there in person, we will supply a report which can be read at the convention on our behalf.

Our Provincial Sports is getting ready to begin in March of 2024. We hope all 4 tournaments will go smoothly. Comrade Kelly Scott has done an excellent job making sure the tournaments are run smoothly and well attended.

Our up-dated By-laws can be viewed on the Legion Command website, these are not printable, if your branch wishes a copy, they can be ordered through our Provincial Secretary – Kim Adams. We hope each Branch that has an Auxiliary will obtain a copy. A couple of major changes that need to be recognized are: Auxiliaries **NO LONGER NEED** Branch approval prior to planning a fund raising event. Also when an Auxiliary chooses to surrender their charter, after all bills are paid, and obligations met, the monies remaining shall be divided equally between the Branch and the Ladies Auxiliary Command.

WHEN AN AUXILIARY CLOSES, THERE IS A PROCEDURE THEY MUST FOLLOW. We are finding that this is not being done. They must notify our Command, they must notify the Branch, they must hold a special General meeting, notify each member of this meeting, there must be 2/3 majority vote of members in attendance, once this is done, a final year to date financial report and audit must be done. **THE CHARTER, MINUTES AND FINANCIALS ARE TO BE GIVEN TO THE BRANCH TO BE SENT TO ONTARIO COMMAND, WITH A COPY OF MINUTES AND FINANCIALS SENT TO THE LADIES AUXILIARY PROVINCIAL COMMAND.** We find out an Auxiliary has closed when we receive notification that Ontario Command has received a Charter with absolutely no paper work. A letter must also accompany the Charter should the Branch like the Charter returned.





I am pleased to announce that with the help of the Ladies Auxiliary Zone E-4 Commander, we have revived Port McNicholl Branch 545 Ladies Auxiliary. We have also heard and are awaiting word that West Ferris Branch 559 has also been successful in forming a Ladies Auxiliary. If you are considering adding or reopening an Auxiliary, contact our Provincial Secretary – Kim Adams, she will gladly pass on the requirements necessary to open an Auxiliary, and all Provincial Officers are available to help.

1st Vice President Sharon Crown and I were pleased to represent L.A. Command at the November PEC meeting in Aurora.

In closing, we wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Good luck and success in all your endeavours in 2024.

Yours in Comradeship,

Kathy Moggy

Roy Eaton, Editor, Provincial Newsletter

My wife Margaret and I wish all of you reading this Winter 2023 edition of the RCL Ontario Command Newsletter a very Merry Christmas. May the year to come be complete with good health and many memorable and enriching moments.

Roy

