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The Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command Information Update

Please hang me on your bulletin board for all members to read

Volume 7 – Issue 7

Spring 2011

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Comrade Ed Pigeau

I begin by offering my congratulations to all who have been elected and appointed to the various offices and committees at Branch, Zone and District level. As well my sincere appreciation to all who will soon complete their term office. Be proud that you have been able to contribute to the growth of The Royal Canadian Legion and supported those who have and are still serving in the Canadian Armed Forces.

I look back now over the past two years and wonder were the time has gone. I am not sure if I have been just that busy or the old tale is true that time passes by fast when you are having fun. It has been an extraordinary adventure and I thank you for the privilege to serve you.

I close by offering a sincere Thank You on behalf of Judy and myself, to all Legionnaires, Branches, Zones and Districts, for the wonderful hospitality we have received over the past two years. See you in Sault Ste Marie.

VICE PRESIDENTS' REPORTS

Comrade André Paquette

The end of another two year term is almost upon us. Much has happened over the last two years and I must say that it has been an enjoyable learning experience. The challenges that I faced this term were indeed a very rewarding experience.

The first assignment was the rewriting of the Command Expense Account policy. Comrades Erl Kish and Debbie Crown assisted me in this venture which eventually was passed and approved. I EXTEND my sincere thanks to both Comrades Erl and Debbie for their input and especially their time. To all the other members of the ADMIN, PAC and PEC thank you for your patience and support.

Sitting on the various committees kept the mind in check and continually multi tasking to say the least. The Property Committee was a whole new learning experience. As for VSS, POPPY, MEMBERSHIP, BURSARIES and CF you bring with you what one has learnt at Branch level hoping only to enhance your knowledge of the committee material. The day to day challenges are what keep you on your toes, especially with VSS and POPPY. One would not believe how many creators we have amongst our midst when it comes to POPPY expenditures. I would love to be able to procure the guidelines that they use for reference.

The biggest challenge to date has been the Homeless Veteran Project. Considering that it has only been in actual effect since the 24th of September 2010 this program has been and is still in the building mode

and will be for some time to come. There have been a number of challenges let alone crossroads which had to be overcome. VAC and the Good Shepherd Ministries have felt the same type of crunch as we have. We have had several meetings amongst ourselves and the VAC team. I would like to extend my appreciation to Jean Pierre Blackburn minister of VAC and Agriculture, Comrade Keith Hillier Asst. Deputy Minister, Charlotte Sebastian RDG, Stephen Little District Director, Sarah Schnobel Client Service Team Manager, Brother David Lynch and Aklily Wendafrew from the Good Shepherd Ministries, Comrade Joe Sweeney our guide and conscience, and last but surely not least our Angel of Mercy Dion Mac Arthur who is the Client Services Manager at the good Shepherd Ministries. Dion is the one who deals with our homeless Veterans on the day to day affairs and comrades she has her hands full. Dion is their contact right from the get go. Dion is doing an excellent job. The program is moving along well.

Getting reacquainted with my teaching skills was just great. I truly enjoyed being a part of the TOD team that delivered Phase 1 and Phase 2. Unless something drastic happens with our scheduling it is my intention to be a part of the Phase 3 deliberation as well.

I have received many invitations over the last term and would like to take this opportunity to thank those Branches and the District for their hospitality shown to both Jane and I. Although Jane cannot always be with me I can assure you that she is with us in spirit when not able to attend. A year May and all this will change.

Comrades I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the Provincial Convention in Sault Ste Marie and best of luck with all of your branch endeavours.

Safe travels and May God Bless!

Comrade Brian Smith – Membership

Comrades, it is very hard to believe that spring is already here and as I write this report the sky is clear but it is -5 C. My term as Vice President is almost at an end and I would like to thank all comrades who showed their hospitality to Marg and me during our stays at your special events. We enjoyed every moment with you!

We have attended many Branch Anniversary celebrations and District Conventions along with Honours and Awards presentations. This past year I was honoured to attend the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Kapuskasing where, believe it or not, we witnessed a member of the public place a wreath at the cenotaph in his short sleeved shirt because the weather was that nice.

My travels throughout the Province have shown me that each and every Branch is unique but they all share a common sincere concern and affection towards all Veterans.

The membership numbers in Ontario have continued to decline but the rate of decline has become less. The final numbers for 2010 are as follows:

- Paid Membership – 130,459 (down 3,128)
- Deceased Members – 2,360 – “To the family and friends of our departed comrades we offer our sincere condolences”
- New and Reinstated Members – 2,714

At the upcoming Provincial Convention in Sault Ste. Marie we will all be asked to contribute towards the Charity of Choice – the “Homeless Veterans Program”. I am quite sure that all of our Branches will throw their continuing support behind this very important initiative.

To all the comrades who have been elected to a position at your Branch or Zone and District levels, I wish you much success over your term of office and to all of the members who let their names stand for office in our great organization, please stay active and support the duly elected members.

At the Provincial Convention I will be letting my name stand for the position of 1st Vice President and I am humbly asking for your support.



At the District “A” Fall Convention Vice Presidents Brian Weaver and Brian Smith salute wreath laying at the cenotaph.

Comrade Brian Weaver – Poppy

Where has the time gone? It just seems like yesterday that we were in Burlington at a Provincial Convention and now another one is just a few months away!

Your District Poppy Chairmen and I have met in Aurora both in June of 2009 and 2010 with both meetings being very productive and constructive with lively discussions from all nine Districts. All of your District Chairmen presented excellent and detailed reports bringing us up to speed on all happenings within their areas. The sharing of ideas and information was of great assistance to all in attendance.

We discussed at length the resolution returned from Dominion Command concerning the “Term of the Poppy Chairman” to which your Provincial Poppy Committee voted non-concurrence. It remains June 1st. to May 31st. of the following year.

Other items discussed were the Request for Special Use of Poppy Funds, Poppy Levies, Use of Poppy Funds for Service Dogs, Campaign Starting Date, Insurance for Cadets, our Terms of Reference, and our newest project; Operation – Leave the Streets Behind, the Homeless Veterans Program.

A new Poppy Manual has been reprinted and sent out to all Branches and Poppy Chairmen. All of the “grey” areas that have cropped up over the past two years have been fine tuned and put into layman’s

terms for a better understanding and explanation concerning eligible expenditures. Also, there is a new form for “Special Use of Poppy Funds”. Please ensure that your branch will be using these now and remember that a new form has to be filled out every year for the same expenditure.

Again, we have dealt with boundary disputes, theft of Poppy Funds and the misappropriation of Poppy funds. We still had a few Branch Poppy Chairmen and some Branch Presidents, handling Poppy Funds by their rules and not those as written in the Poppy Manual. They treat these funds like it is there own little nest egg and spend money with reckless abandon. Those Branches that have ignored these rules and regulations of our Poppy Manual are the ones that usually don’t attend seminars and turn a blind eye to the Do’s and Don’ts of the Poppy expenditures. Remember, Ontario Command has a zero tolerance on theft and/or misappropriation of Poppy Funds. Branches and/or individuals will and have been dealt with to the fullest extent of the law.

Below are the totals for all of the Districts during this past two-year term:

Balance 1 st October 2008	\$4,317,827.46	Results of the money collected from the various outlets across Ontario in 2010: Home Hardware Stores - \$ 34,893.16 Brewers Retail - \$ 92,192.83 LCBO Outlets - \$152,478.95
Campaign Revenue	\$7,695,263.75	
Wreaths & Poppies	\$1,442,601.52	
Promotional Material	\$ 132,842.23	
Other Local Expenses	\$ 911,670.77	
Grants to Ex. Service	\$ 990,957.97	
Personnel and Dependents		
Bursaries	\$ 665,830.32	
Donations	\$3,093,609.36	
Balance 30 th September 2009	\$4,775,561.04	

A lot of countless hours and numerous volunteers, plus Poppy Chairmen at all levels have made for another successful campaign. Well-deserved thanks to all those members of the Ladies’ Auxiliary that make themselves readily available to assist whenever called upon during your campaigns.

Special thanks to all of your District Poppy Chairmen for all of their hard work and dedication they put into this most valuable Legion program. They are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| District ‘A’ – Doreen Chester | District ‘F’ – Ian Colman |
| District ‘B’ – Sharon Anderson | District ‘G’ – Wayne Wood |
| District ‘C’ – Robert Grey / Norma Dudgeon | District ‘H’ – Karen Luttrell |
| District ‘D’ – Dominic Capalbo | District ‘K’ – Linda Cote |
| District ‘E’ – John Stiff | |

This is a very fine group of caring Legionnaires who work so hard for the betterment of your Legion Branches, your Veterans, all ex-service personnel and their dependants Ontario wide. Thanks again.

Special thanks to our Committee Secretary Comrade Dave Gordon, Comrades Ed and Andre plus all of the Command staff for their support and guidance over the past two years. Your efforts have not gone un-noticed as you have made my job that much easier.

I look forward to seeing many Comrades at our Provincial Convention in Sault Ste. Marie in May. It has certainly been an honour and privilege to serve you in my capacity as your Vice President. Debbie and I have travelled all over this province and met a lot of wonderful Comrades over the past two years. Your

comradeship and hospitality has been second to none. If nominated at Convention, I will let my name stand for the position of 1st. Vice President of Ontario Command.



London Poppy Trust Fund Chairman Keith Roden presented Jonathon Bancroft (right), owner of Snell Interiors Gallery, London, Ontario, with the Legion Friendship Award. Mr. Bancroft auctioned a painting and donated the proceeds of \$2,000 to the London Poppy Trust Fund



During the 2010 Poppy Campaign Walmart Fairview Park store in Kitchener, Assistant Manager Kamal Arif (2nd left) presented a cheque to “match the donation” collected from counter boxes and volunteer taggers for almost \$1,500 to Fred Gies Branch 50 Poppy Chairman Vince McQuabbie and Co-Chairman Joan McKinnon (far left) while Personnel Manager Zina Falls looks on.

Comrade Bruce Julian – Youth Education

Comrades, as we near the end of this term, let me say first what an honour and privilege it has been to serve as your Provincial Vice President and Chair of the Provincial Youth Education Committee for these past two years. Wherever Darlene and I have travelled, from Pembroke to Penetanguishine, from Listowel to Pickering, from South Porcupine to Downtown Toronto and all places in between we have been warmly received, your comradeship and hospitality has been outstanding. It is something we will remember and cherish long after “this part” of our lives is past.

In Youth Education this Command is indeed fortunate with the quality and dedication of its Youth Education Chairmen and their volunteers, at every level. Their hard work makes possible the various programmes that have been developed so that our younger generations receives the knowledge of the many sacrifices made on their behalf by our Veterans.

This year's Poster and Literary contest is almost complete. The Provincial results are included in this "newsletter", Dominion results may also reach us by the newsletter's "print deadline". Congratulations to all who competed helped organize and eventually judged "the work". You are all integral parts of this programme and necessary for its success.

Provincial Public Speaking will be held at Branch #34 Orillia on Saturday April 30th. I would urge all that are able to attend this event, the contestant's performances are just incredible. Also, as with Poster and Literary, this programme would not be possible without the many volunteers at each level.

Our work with the Ministry of Education developing a new core curriculum which includes the educational resources of the Royal Canadian Legion continues. Comrades Marg Emery and Ruth Ann Dodman have done excellent work, while assisted by others; they have taken the lead in developing our submissions and responses to Ministry surveys. This "process" is about halfway to completion, work on the junior grades has been completed with the senior grades to come.

As I have previously said "there are no guarantees" that the Ministry will accept all or any of our recommendations but I do believe we are doing all within our prevue to put forward the case that the Royal Canadian Legions Educational Programmes need to be included within their curriculum. Here's hoping they agree with us.

After PEC endorsed the Provincial Youth-Ed Committee's recommendation that a "class" for "computer generated" art be developed, a committee was formed to set the parameters, rules and regulations for this class. This committee will take all the time necessary to develop these "rules" so that we get it "right the first time". We are still confident that this class will be introduced this fall.

Congratulations are due to Comrade George DeRabbie Br. #197 Acton who has been chosen to be Ontario's representative on the Pilgrimage of Remembrance. He is an excellent candidate and will do this Command proud,

Finally, I wish "good luck" to all those standing for election this spring, at whatever level. Your knowledge, dedication and enthusiasm is needed now more than ever, and as I have previously announced I will be a candidate to be your 1st Vice President.

See you at the "SOO"

PAST PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Comrade George O'Dair

I certainly appreciated your support in Winnipeg that allowed me the opportunity to continue to serve, this time - as Dominion Vice-President. Most of you will know by now that the Dominion President appointed me to chair Membership and I look forward to the challenge and what a challenge it is. In fact, it's a challenge for each of us to face as we lose, to time, many older Veterans and we seem to have trouble attracting newer Veterans. Nonetheless, I'm quite pleased with our national membership results for 2010.

Following too many years of reduced annual membership at an average of some 13,500, in 2010 our membership reduced by **5,083** and that is a tremendously positive trend. I attribute this change to each of you realizing that we all have to be involved in membership as our future depends upon us remaining strong and large and ready to tackle issues involving the care of our Veterans. It was also impacted by a terrific positive response to the mail outs by Dominion Membership to members that hadn't renewed by end January 2010. We will repeat that effort in 2011.

In addition, I was pleased to note that 617 Branches across Canada, or about 41%, will receive the new Membership Achievement Award for maintaining 100% or more of their membership over the previous year. This is a great achievement, indeed.

By now, you will know that Bill C-55 significantly impacting the New Veterans Charter has received Royal Assent and is now law. This is largely the product of pressure applied by the Legion and its members. But, it's only just begun and the Legion will continue to press for more necessary changes to the Charter.

So, Comrades, our numbers talk and politicians listen. If we continue to rebuild our membership, we will become even more influential with respect to our requirements of the Federal Government. With a bit more attention to new membership and retention, I'm convinced that we can get our numbers back onto the positive side in 2011.

I've been travelling to many events, including the RCL US Eastern Zone Convention in Michigan; the ANAVETS Convention in Stratford; DEC meetings; Legion Magazine (CANVET) meetings and numerous other opportunities to officially represent the Dominion President. It's been quite busy.

With respect to Ontario Command, I have a bit of time left as Chairman of your Property Committee which continues to monitor various proposals from Branches and is working to establish a successful process for developing Legion Housing. More on this at Convention, however, I remain convinced that it's more appropriate for us to be helping financially troubled Branches to renew their efforts than to gleefully accept the proceeds from their closures.

So, my active involvement as an Ontario Elected Officer is rapidly coming to a close. I have enjoyed the experience in all of my positions and Frances and I wish to thank all of you for your kindness, your generosity and your comradeship.

I appreciate the efforts of all of the Officers and Chairmen of the Command and of the Ladies' Auxiliaries that I've served with and the Branch and Auxiliary Presidents who constantly tackle their difficult responsibilities, for continuing to care and for jobs very well done. And, comrades, only those of us who have served at the highest levels of Ontario Command have a true appreciation for the incredible work accomplished, again and again, by the members of our professional staff both in Aurora and in the field. Well done, folks and thanks again.

Finally, I wish much success to all of those who will seek higher Legion office. Regardless of the results, I'm sure that all of us will continue to zealously serve the Legion and the Veteran.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Bill Chafe

I am beginning to wonder if this winter will ever end and if the snow will ever melt. I hope you have been able to get through this winter in fairly good shape and let's hope the heat and sun will soon be with us.

Again this year, our Legion activities have kept most of us quite busy, I know that I have been busy. Since our last "Information Update" I have attended many Provincial Command meetings. Last November we had the PEC Meeting in Aurora and it was a very busy and informative session as many issues were brought forward and many decisions were made. In December we had our annual combined meeting with your Command Officers and the Command Officers of our Ladies' Auxiliary. Again it was a great opportunity to have an open and respectful dialogue that brought forward a number of issues and concerns. With some listening, some understanding and some careful consideration many of these issues or concerns were resolved with the full support of both parties. It is truly amazing how a little bit of openness, respect, and consideration can lead to agreement and support of the issues by all parties involved. I wish that all Branches could operate in a similar fashion at the joint meetings with their Branch Ladies' Auxiliary to ensure the best for the future of all of our Branches. Later that day we had a Finance Meeting and again many issues were identified and dealt with.

On the first Saturday in March, we held the Admin. Meeting at the Aurora office and this was also a very productive meeting as the District Commanders shared some of their issues and concerns and it was very evident that there are many common concerns and also many common successes across our Command. Later that afternoon we held a Finance Meeting that addressed a number of financial issues and where the decisions were made to take the necessary actions for the best of our Command. On a side note, as I had to attend these two meetings with the assistance of crutches, I would like to thank all of my fellow officers and their spouses for the assistance they provided to me in my moment of need.

You have read this portion of my update before but as long as the need remains I will continue to print it. As I write my update Canada is still counting her dead. We have now lost 155 Canadian heroes as our nation continues to fight the war against terrorism in Afghanistan. When we are at our Cenotaphs or participating in a Memorial Service, let each of us be sure to remember and thank every Canadian Veteran for their past and present sacrifices and let us also show our gratitude and understanding to the family members who have lost their loved ones while in the service of our grateful nation, Canada.

Comrades, as I stated in our last issue of the "Update", at our upcoming Provincial Convention being held in May at Sault Ste. Marie, I will be a candidate for the office of Chairman of Ontario Command. Again, I humbly and respectfully ask for your continued support to allow me to continue to serve our Veterans, our members and our Legion as the Chairman of Ontario Command.

VICE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Ron Goebel

When I received the request to prepare a report for this issue of *Information Update*, I found it hard to believe that this will be the last report during the current term of office. I think we all feel the same way as to just how fast time flies.

So here we are with another two years behind us. Over the next couple of months, elections will be taking place at the Branch, Zone, District and Provincial levels and I would like to pass on my personal best wishes to everyone who is seeking office at any of these levels. I also congratulate all those willing to step up to the plate and let their names stand for office.

My wife Barb and I trust that all of you enjoyed the times together over the festive holiday season with family and friends. And we wish you nothing but happiness, safe travels and good health in 2011. We both look forward to seeing many of you at our Provincial Convention in Sault Ste. Marie in May.

Our annual Remembrance Day ceremonies and Poppy Campaign for 2010 are now behind us. I trust that the campaign and events were most successful for all Branches. By all reports they were, and I congratulate all Branches for their success and the support that was given to honour those who have gone before us while serving this great country of ours.

The various Provincial meetings that I have attended since our last Information Update included our annual PEC meeting in November and PAC meeting at the beginning of March. Many Legion issues were discussed and debated and decided upon at these meetings. I will not dwell on them here since your District Commander will no doubt expound upon them at your upcoming District Conventions.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking President Ed for the dinner at our PAC meeting in March. It was held as a last get-together for all of the current PAC members and their spouses. Because with elections taking place at the District level and of course at our Provincial Convention, there will be some who will not be members of our Provincial Administrative Committee following our Provincial Convention in May. Your current committee has been a terrific group that has worked well together over the past two years. An awful lot has been accomplished during these two years and there has also been some great camaraderie.

Our annual joint Senior Elected Officers meeting with the Ladies' Auxiliary in December is always a special weekend in Aurora. It was enjoyable to get together with the newly elected Officers of the L.A. to discuss various issues and of course for some great camaraderie. And of course our annual visit from Santa was a big hit as it always is.

Comrades, at our Provincial Convention being held in Sault Ste. Marie in May, if nominated, it is my intention to stand for the office of Vice-Chairman of Ontario Command. I humbly and respectfully seek your continued support to allow me to serve you, our Veterans, our Seniors, our Youth and our Legion as Vice-Chairman of Ontario Command.

We will remember them!

FINANCIAL ADVISORY CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Chuck Johnston

Your Financial Committee has been busy these past few months since we last reported to you. The final copy of the Branch Financial Advisory Committee at District Level was completed and also the Financial Review Committee Guidelines.

BRANCH FINANCIAL ADVISORY GUIDELINE

The Branch Financial Advisor Guidelines at District Level has been printed and distributed to the committee members and District Commanders for distribution to their committee members.

INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROL GUIDELINES

The Financial Review Committee Guidelines has been printed and distributed to the committee members and a copy distributed to all Branches and Provincial Executive Council members

These articles are living documents which can be revised as needed and members are encouraged to send additional information they see relevant to the articles to the attention of the Provincial Advisory Chairman Chuck Johnston at sumitup@cogeco.ca and also to the committee secretary Assistant Executive Director Ontario Command Robyn Zettler at rzettler@on.legion.ca

Your comments and suggestions will be brought to the committee for discussion and possible insertion into the documents. In time it is possible that the articles will be posted to the web site.

The committee is continuing to work on some projects which include:

- Development of a Financial Seminar and the target audience will be Branch Financial Advisors, Branch Treasurers, Branch Managers, anyone intending to run for an elected office such as Zone Commanders, Deputy Zone Commanders, District Commanders, Deputy District Commanders, Branch Presidents and Vice Presidents and Financial Review Committee members. Basically anyone that has or will have access to the branches finances should attend this seminar. The completion date we are shooting for is the fall of 2011. When completed the committee will strike teams to go to the Districts to give the seminar and will consist of the Provincial Advisory Committee members.
- Development of a Lottery Seminar.
- The feasibility of a General set of Chart of Accounts, Financial Reports etc. and possible development of a software package for Legions.

The hope is to establish unity and a user friendly format throughout the branches so everyone is on the same page, no matter who is reading the reports from any branch whether it be Ontario Command, District or Zone Commanders or an advisory committee, they will be able to read and get the pertinent information needed to decide if any branch should be red flagged with relation to financial matters.

I would like to thank the members of the committee for their hard work and many volunteer hours they have put in to complete these documents. They are dedicated to insuring that they will do their best to develop tools for branches to use to become or to remain solvent and prosperous.

Your committee consist of the following persons.

1st Vice President Ontario Command Andre Paquette, District A Ron Crown, District B Frank Funk, District C Shirley Chalmers, District D Charles Fenech, District E John Briscoe, District F David Harlow, District G Terry Jacobs, District H Peter Miller, District K Allan Shier, Secretary Assistant Executive Director Robyn Zettler

"Nothing is easier than the expenditure of public money. It doesn't appear to belong to anyone. The temptation is overwhelming to bestow it on somebody." –(John) Calvin Coolidge.

"The trick is to stop thinking of it as 'your' money."

BURSARY CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Alex Lammle

As the last Friday in March approaches it is again time for the final mass of applications to arrive at Command Headquarters. At the present time it appears that the overall number of applications is down compared to past years; however, it is too early to be certain at this time.

The lack of early applications is still a problem either by procrastination on the student's part or perhaps by the proof of second semester attendance required prior to issuing the bursary cheque. I am sure that some resubmitting students wait until they are in the second semester to submit their applications saving themselves a second trip to the Registrar and the fee for providing the necessary proof.

All branches were forwarded the 2010 edition of the application form and were requested to use only this form when issuing to a requesting student. Old forms are still showing up and perhaps they are coming from High Schools that have yet to be visited by the Branch Bursary Chairman. Forms are available from Command upon request.

Our Command staff reviews the submitted application forms for completion accuracy and in doing so, also authenticate the Legion membership that the student is applying under. It seems that some Branch Membership Chairmen still view the deceased as 'members in good standing' and have signed the student's application form attesting to the fact!! It is distressing to see a presumable "helpful" Legion member possibly causing the student to be denied a bursary.

Application forms are still being completed on the student's behalf by parents who often call Command for assistance in completing the forms. The student is supposed to complete and submit the form and while we may not deny a bursary when this does happen, the procedure is strongly discouraged.

We still encounter problems with the "attendance in a theatre of war" requirement in the eligibility criteria. One student who claimed grandparental service during the Korean Conflict was denied as the Veteran had not actually served in Korea. This generated a protest letter to our Command President from a parent who was quite upset that her father's honourable and willing service was not worthy to meet our requirement. A letter explaining our position was forwarded to the parents. Consideration to possibly alleviating this contentious item is underway.

Have a great summer comrades – good health and long service is wished to all. My thanks to the Command staff, the District Chairmen, and the LA for their dedication and service! Special thanks to W. Ed.

CHARITABLE FOUNDATION CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Don Young

For the 2009 to 2011 term the Foundation presented \$1,155,220 in grants to Hospitals, Nursing Homes and other groups that met the criteria for the Foundation. In addition to that the Foundation also directed \$950,000 to the Bursary Program in 2009-2011.

During that term our applications were up approximately 30% (I guess all of you paid heed to Gord Moore's comments from the previous term) and we had some very hard decisions to make regarding the applications we received. From 2010 applications we handed out \$571,000 compared to \$584,000 the previous year, but the only reason we were able to accomplish that feat was that we had a large number of 2009 applications that were not paid as the Purchase Orders were not received according to our requirements. Your committee was very diligent in trying to satisfy all of the applicants but reductions were made where necessary.

Comrades, I know there a large number of other Legion segments looking for your donations especially with the new Homeless Veterans Program being funded by you as well. I do urge you to try and accommodate the Foundation's requests for money to help us with this very important Legion program.

Here are a couple of important things to keep in mind:

- Your donations to the Foundation can be made from your Poppy Fund Account.
- Take advantage of the In Memoriam Cards available to the Funeral Homes for donations.

VETERANS AND SENIORS CHAIRMEN REPORTS

Comrade Greg Oakes - Seniors

I wish to thank all comrades for their support and assistance during my term as Vice Chairman of the Seniors Sub-Committee of the Veterans Service Committee. There have been a lot of results achieved recently for the Veterans through modifications to the Veterans Charter. This was achieved by advocacy, changing public opinion and demanding accountability from our government. The same can be done for seniors! So far our message is being heard with both the federal and provincial government having made changes to legislation to improve pensions for our seniors. However, thus far nothing substantial has changed. I call on our members to keep the message out there so real change occurs. Our seniors deserve it!

The Veterans have an Independence Program and so should all of our seniors. Why not? It is less of a burden to the tax payer to keep people in their homes rather than in institutions. The governments should be jumping on this one! So far they have not but they need to consider it.

Since there are both federal and provincial elections happening this year, it is an excellent time to get our message out to the candidates and the media. I ask all of you in all of the towns across Ontario that when the candidates knock on your door and ask for your vote to ask – “what are you doing on issues concerning seniors”? We can all be advocates for seniors. Most of us (not me but the day is fast approaching) are seniors.

Thank you all for the volunteer work you do to getting our message across. I hope to see you in Sault Ste. Marie and hopefully the snow has melted by then.



Merriton Branch 138 in St. Catharines donated funds from the Poppy Fund which were used to purchase a bed for the Linhaven Home for the Aged. At the presentation are (left to right) All Folick 2009-10 Poppy Chairman, Branch President Larry Krupa, Mike Gander and Marylou Folick.

Comrade Bob Sivyer - Veterans

GOOD NEWS! Bill C-55 has received Royal Assent! The Bill makes several changes to the New Veterans Charter, most of which were advocated for by the Legion.

- Earning loss benefit will increase to \$40,000 to replace lost income for Veterans who are undergoing rehabilitation or who cannot return to work to full capacity.
- Increase access to permanent impairment allowance under CFMVRC and exceptional incapacity allowance under the Pension Act.
- Provide a supplement of \$1,000 per month for veterans in receipt of PIA who cannot work to full capacity.
- Provide flexibility to have disability awards paid over a period of time.

These changes demonstrate the governments commitment to make the new Veterans Charter a living document.

HONOURS AND AWARDS CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Mike Atkinson

I hope everyone has survived this long and cold winter! As spring arrives so do branch elections and the end of terms. If you are the **H & A Chairman** and are stepping down, please ensure that you have left complete and up-to-date Honours and Awards file for your successor. As well, it is very important that you keep copies of Life and MSM applications that have been approved since you will need them when you want to honour the comrade for a higher award. Remember, Dominion and Provincial Commands do not keep copies.

I have had the pleasure of being invited to many branches during this term to assist in awards presentations – a duty I really enjoyed. Thank you for having me.

On a personal note, I cannot thank all of you enough for your outpouring of support and sympathy for myself and my family during Zine's sickness and in her passing. The number of comrades that travelled from near and far for her Legion Tribute and Funeral was overwhelming and it will not be forgotten. It is true that the Legion is one big caring family and someday I hope there is a cure for this terrible disease – cancer!

It has been an honour and a privilege to be your Honours and Awards Chairman for this past term and all the best to everyone in the future.

MIDDLE AGE IS:

- When it takes longer to rest than to get tired.
- When work is a lot less fun – and fun a lot more work.
- When your doctor, not the police, caution you to slow down.



Telephone City Branch, Brantford, Ontario President Chrystal Petit-Pas (centre) presents the Friendship Award to Scotiabank Manager Elaine Bessie (left) and Financial Aid Advisor Joanne Lewis. Scotiabank donated \$5000 to the branch to meet funds raised at the branch's fall fundraiser.

TRAINING & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Brian Abrams

Comrades, greetings and a happy and prosperous 2011! The Training and Organizational Development Committee (TOD) continue to develop timely and required training for Legion in Ontario.

At the publication of this report the Branch Officers Leadership training program, Phases I and II will have been presented in all Districts save two. The feedback from the Phase II presentations was even more positive than that of Phase I. Phase II dealt with Problem Solving. Participants were urged to "think outside the box" to "leave all their baggage outside the seminar" to "explore all options" and most of all to participate. Once again the buzz group format proved to be the vehicle for success in the Phase II presentations.

At the writing of this report the Phase III presentation, dealing with the Branch Executive Committee is in the process of being written. Phase III will not be a "how to do your job" type of seminar. Rather, Phase III will deal with the various positions within the Branch such as standing committee member, standing committee chairman, Sgt. At Arms, Secretary, Vice Presidents, , President and of course the Immediate Past President. Comrades it is critical to understand that Phase III will not deal with job specific responsibilities. Phase III will however deal with the afore mentioned positions in relation to Roles, Responsibilities, Roadblocks, Motivation, Required Resources and other dimensions required to

operate as part of the Branch team. Conspicuous by its absence is the office of Branch Treasurer. I leave this most important office in the capable hands of the Branch Financial Advisory Committee.

Comrades I wish to offer a special thank you to comrade Phil Richmond and District "D" for giving up the Family Day weekend and taking part in Phase I and Phase II seminars on February 19 and 20, 2011. This was an extraordinary weekend with amazing participation from the participants.

As well I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to the presentation team; Comrade Andre Paquette, Comrade Debbie Crown and Comrade Doreen Chester. The success of Phase II is a direct result of the dedication and presentation skills of these Comrades.

Comrades these seminars are designed to create an understanding of what is required to become a leader in Legion. Certainly the target audience is those Comrades who are currently in leadership roles within their respective Branches. Ultimately any one who thinks they may want to assume a leadership role will benefit from this seminar. From an attendee point of view all that is required to attend this seminar is an open mind and an enthusiasm to learn.

CONSTITUTION & LAWS CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Bruce McKittrick

The submission of Branch Regulations from throughout the Command has increased significantly with almost one hundred submissions received at the start of the New Year. This has placed a considerable burden on me and the Committee with a number of submissions being forwarded for the second time after either being returned with or without a Committee Review, dependent upon the submission content. There are still a considerable number of branches that have not submitted Branch Regulations and these branches are urged to do so as they can no longer rely on Branch By-Laws.

It continues to be evident that some branches are not referencing the Command Website for the most up to date Forms and Guidelines and thus their submissions are being returned for correction and resubmission. The nature of the process relies on fine tuning these documents on a continual basis as amendments and new glitches come to light in an effort to make the process as user friendly as possible. Branches are urged to reference the Website prior to submitting their submission. It is also noted that branches must use the Submission Form when forwarding their submission.

Numerous branches have failed to submit their Clubhouse Rules or indicate that they do not maintain same. The General By-Laws required their submission at the end of the year to ensure that Command had copies on file for all branches in the event that there was a need to reference the Clubhouse Rules of a branch.

Finally, Complaints and Appeals continue to consume a considerable amount of my time and the time of Command Staff. In the greater percentage of cases the substance of the complaints are nothing more than personality conflicts that could just as easily be rectified at the branch if the involved members would recognize the error in their ways and accept responsibility for their actions. Formal complaints in these situations do nothing but increase the level of animosity between the parties and their respective friends and Comrades.

PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Carolyn McCaul

Public Relations at Ontario Command have a couple items going at this time.

First off we have the **Branch Survey**; our PR Committee has asked all branches in Ontario Command to complete this. As of the writing of this report for the newsletter (March 9, 2011) we had 244 (59%) branches complete this survey. So far we doubled the total amount that completed the last survey that Dominion Command conducted a couple years ago – that was 122 branches. The beginning of April all the information our branches submitted will be used to produce a 'Fact Sheet' that all branches can use with the media and public to promote the Legion. Our aim was to have this Fact Sheet ready in time for the Provincial Convention, comrades it will happen even if we don't have 100% participation – but the 100% would have been awesome!

Comrades, we are still looking for individuals who have participated in our Youth Programs that have gone onto bigger and better things. Our Athletes, Public Speakers and Poster and Literary participants,

- where are they now;
- Did participating in our programs help them achieve their goals;
- Did they carry these achievements on into their careers?

If you know of any individual that fits this description, let us know, contact your District PRO or myself (carolyn.mccaul@sympatico.ca). Our committee feels that this would be another great promotion tool for the Legion.

The **scrapbook/bulletin contest** for this year; all the forms have been sent too all the branches, please remember to give a copy to your Ladies' Auxiliaries as they too are able to enter the contest. Just a note, all forms have been updated, basically a little house cleaning and a few minor points rearranging. All these rules, entry forms and score sheets are available on the Provincial website (www.on.legion.ca) for printing. Please remember to have all your entries into your **own District Public Relations Chairman** by June 15th. Good Luck to all editors!

Legion week this year for 2011 is September 18-24.

Finally – our **fundraising project** for our upcoming Provincial Convention which will be in Sault Ste. Marie, May 8-11, it is the Homeless Veterans Program, "Operation: Leave the Streets Behind" – an awesome and emotional project. Ontario Command has recently released the story behind this program. If you access the Provincial Website (www.on.legion.ca), front and centre on our home page you can view our new Banner representing this program, extremely well done. Comrades, Ontario Command is asking that our branches support this great program! Please remember that funds can come out of the Poppy account for this project.

Also at our Provincial Convention, our PR committee will be covering the event from beginning to end with photos and video. We will be producing a DVD that would be 2 ½ hours in length. Content will cover the Parade, Wreath Laying, Opening and Closing Ceremonies, Installation of Officers and hopefully if space permits a photo gallery. We will be taking orders for the DVD at the convention and the price will be \$20/DVD (prepaid).

Please remember to use any material that is available to you to promote the Legion and Keep those communication lines open!



Richmond Hill Branch 375 President Sheelagh MacDonald surrounded by students was guest speaker at an advanced level “English as a Second Language” class speaking about Legion programs. Teacher Miriella Mosca is in the centre of the first row.

SPORTS CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Comrade Vic Newey

The 2012 Sports Program is just underway. Snooker was played in Br. 286 Coronation; this was their third year in a row for this event. The honors will go to Br. 616 Pickering in 2012 as they emerged the winners this time. I have to thank the hosts for a great job they did for this event and the previous two.

Next was Provincial Cribbage hosted by 422 Ailsa Craig. Because their hall was not big enough they made arrangements with their neighbours at Br. 116 Strathroy to use the hall there. The co-operation between the two branches terrific and the tournament went off without any problems. The winners were Br. 414 Woodbridge who will represent our Province at Dominion to be played at Br. 251 in Laval, Quebec. I'm sure they will represent us well.

Winning Team: Br. 414 Woodbridge – B. Delahunt/S. Ellis/ D. McNutt/L. Zerafa

We played the Provincial Darts this past Saturday March 19, 2011. Again the host Br. 15 Brampton did a great job playing hosts to all the players. They wanted to put a Roast Beef Supper for the players, but too many just wanted to go home after the darts were done, as it was a long day. They all left with the impression of an excellent host branch. Winners to represent Ontario at Dominion Tournament are as follows:

Singles: Br.583 Newbury - Jim Long

Doubles: Br.208 Wiarion – D. Richardson/N. McCoy

Teams: Br. 46 Swansea – P. Carlson/R. Jacobs/G. Robinson/A. Rust

It's been a great start to the new sports season 2011.



Shelburne Branch in District “E” sent this team on to the District Euchre tournament. Representing the branch are, in front left to right looking at the photo, Helen Johnston, Lesa Netzke and Carmelita Feenay. In rear are Phillip Norris, Wayne Orvis and Steve Johnston. Not available for the photo were team members Russ Mino and Bruce Galbraith.

ONTARIO CORRESPONDENT'S REPORT

Comrade Mary Ann Goheen

Ontario branches continue to have excellent coverage in the Legion Magazine. Many branches have supported promotion of their branch/ladies' auxiliary events and recognition of members with photo submissions and news items. Occasionally, we experience a rejection due to subject content not qualifying under guidelines but we are using the rejected photos on branch web pages, and in the Ontario Command newsletter whenever possible. I am happy to say that on average less than 10% of photos submitted to the magazine are rejected by the editor.

Remember to take your time to setup your shot, consider the background— for example: a President presenting a cheque to an organization in front of the coat rack would be a better photo if the background was less cluttered and simpler such as a plain wall. Another reason photos are rejected is due to the fact the photographer does not have the digital camera at a picture quality setting that will produce a photo that meets the technical requirements of the magazine. A lower picture quality setting produces a photo that we are fooled into thinking is good enough because it looks good on our camera display window or computer when in fact it is far below resolution requirements.

In the past 11 issues we have made great strides in our visibility in our national magazine--more than doubling past submission figures. I do believe it would be possible for Ontario to realistically reach a published rate of 300 photos in the Snapshot section for the calendar year of 2011 but in order to do so more branches and ladies' auxiliaries will need to become active in the promotion of their donations and activities in the community. Our recognition to members of long service awards has had a strong showing on the H&A pages of the magazine.

Guidelines can be found on the Legion Magazine website — www.legionmagazine.com - then click on 'contributions'; scroll to 'submissions' and click on 'guidelines' for more information.

Comrades, keep up the good work.