

Editorial



The mission of The Royal Canadian Legion is “to serve veterans and their dependants, to promote Remembrance, and to act in the service of Canada and its communities.” I think the first and third objectives are pretty clear but what about “promote Remembrance”.

I would wager that most of you associate this with our Remembrance ceremonies and the National Remembrance-Poppy Campaign where Legion members distribute poppy emblems for donations to raise money for needy veterans, ex-service members, and their families. But what about our Youth Education Program?

The Legion believes educating our youth on the high cost of their freedom is one of our most important roles today. We must impress upon young people who have never known war that freedom was won at the cost of many lives; young lives like their own. Our annual poster, literary and essay contests with a Remembrance theme, helps focus the attention of the participants on those who gave all for the freedom we enjoy. Also let’s not forget that these are our future members.

I’d like to recognize Comrade Mary Bradley, our Youth Education chair, for the fine job she is doing for our branch in this respect. She took on the chair enthusiastically in mid term and has done a great job. Having an awards ceremony was an excellent idea and the event was truly appreciated by the parents and winners. I had quite a few parents come up to me to express their thanks and tell me what a great idea the event was.

Keep up the good work.

Yours in Comradeship
Doug Smith
Public Relations Officer

1st Vice President



Well first of all I would like to thank everyone for your patience while our elevator was being upgraded. We now have a state of the art unit that will be safe and reliable for many years to come. This new equipment gives us superior security features as well.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for all of their financial support. We will be having our inaugural acceptance and approval of the elevator at our monthly Senior's luncheon on Tuesday March 13th. Representatives from the Ontario Trillium Foundation will be in attendance, so everyone is invited to come out and give them a warm welcome.

The building committee is now in the process of requesting tenders to replace our wooden doors on the east entrance of the building. We are looking at replacing them with steel doors with glass inserts and one automatic door opener for better handicap access. This type of door gives us visibility from both sides and eliminates the possibility of an accident when members are standing outside near the doors having a smoke break.

Ontario Command has given us the approval to purchase a defibrillator and this will be paid for through the Poppy fund. It will be located in the Clubroom. Special thanks to Poppy Chairman Reg Sherren for a great effort in acquiring the unit and I would like to thank Tim Verdoch, Bob Lamont and Terry Bugg, our fire fighters in the branch, for their involvement and commitment regarding the training program involved.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize all of our dedicated staff for doing a superb job.

In closing don't forget to purchase your tickets for our annual "Anne Thompson Memorial Raffle" There are some great prizes that include a Bud Lite mini bar fridge, Toronto Maple Leaf hockey tickets, jackets, shirts and many more exciting items.

These great prizes will be drawn at our St. Paddy's Party in the Clubroom on Saturday March 17th. There will be no admission fee, so come on out and kill two birds with one stone...Have a fun time and possibly win a prize.

Yours in Comradeship
Bruce Sharpe
1st. Vice-President

Past President's Report



Normally our General Meetings are pretty quiet and proceed with a certain amount of respect for the organization we represent and for the people that we elected to hold office in our branch. That usually is the case and most times with a little discussion we accept the majority vote on the issues that come before us.

That being said, there are certain things that the General By- Laws of the Royal Canadian Legion give the Executive Committee power to decide without having to seek permission from the General Body.

As an example, bar prices do not require approval, wages of individual staff and of course emergency repairs. There are several others including the power to dissolve any committee that is not a standing committee.

These are not decisions that are taken lightly and have to be justified and in many cases they are sent to Ontario Command for their comments.

This was the case with the Colour Party.

As was stated at the February General Meeting the executive had held an emergency meeting to discuss the events that had brought us to this point and the motion presented to us by the Sgt.-at-Arms. The decision was unanimous to disband the Colour Party and while I do not intend to delve into all the reasons I believe most members are aware of the problems over these past two years. The Deputy District Commander was consulted and the reasons for the action were also forwarded to Ontario Command.

The response from Command was read at the General Meeting stating their approval.

Everything was handled in the proper manner as proscribed by Command.

Unfortunately what happened at the meeting was not. It was more of an attempt at mob rule than a Legion meeting and what is disturbing is the fact that it was led by couple of Past Presidents who have no excuse for not knowing how to properly conduct themselves during

meetings. You can make excuses for some of the others as they might not be as well versed in Legion procedures. But when you see Two Past Presidents and the current L.A. President storm out of a meeting followed by their supporters you have to wonder if their actions are for the betterment of the Branch or a personal agenda.

You can draw your own conclusions.

Ironically following the exodus came the vote on the notice of motion regarding the Colour Party. Which I might say was conducted properly and with discussion was amended and duly received the two-thirds majority needed to pass.

Those members who left the meeting lost their chance to state their views and influence the decision. They should be ashamed of their behavior and I believe that they owe the Branch an apology for the way they conducted themselves.

It is also a disgrace to have a small number of L.A. members show such disrespect, especially considering the fact that the Branch had just voted to donate several thousands of dollars to help them survive. Makes you wonder what they were thinking.

For two years now I have witnessed many personal attacks on the President and also on the 1st Vice. Most of them coming from members of the former Colour Party.

This is something that during my five years as President of this branch I seldom had to endure and I am sure that goes for my predecessors as well. It is uncalled for and has got to stop before it destroys this branch. I can tell you that today many branches are struggling and some will not survive but due in no small part to Mike O'Hara and Bruce Sharpe and your executive this branch will be here for many years to come.

It is time for the silent majority to speak up and make their voices heard and your chance will come in early May.

As for the Colour Party it will be brought back to life and will be in Legion Dress, the same as the other 54 legions in our District. This will allow many other members to carry our Colours and represent the Ajax Branch.

Yours in Comradeship
Cyril Best
Past President