



THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION
ONTARIO COMMAND

TO: All Branches
PEC, Ladies Auxiliary

FROM: Ed Pigeau, Provincial President

DATE: May 6, 2010

SUBJECT: Homeless Veterans Program

Comrades;

At the recent District Conventions there was mention of the Homeless Veterans program, by the command representatives.

This project came about as a result of Comrade Dave Gordon, attending the first ever Homeless Veterans Remembrance Service at the Scott Mission in Toronto last November 11. The event was organized by VAC and the Federal Ombudsman with the assistance of Ontario Command.

In 2008-09 the Federal Ombudsman issued a report indicating that there were concerns of Homeless Veterans throughout Canada and launched a program entitled "Leave Nobody Behind".

I requested our staff to complete some research and they found that indeed there is cause for concern. Last February, Comrades Andre Paquette, Robyn Zettler and Dave Gordon attended a one day visit to Buffalo, New York with VAC to be briefed on the VA Homeless program in that area. Since that time I have received reports from this trip and further discussed the concern with the Admin. Committee.

With their approval, I am very pleased to announce that Ontario Command and Veterans Affairs Canada have partnered to create a Homeless Veterans program that will be developed in the Toronto area and we anticipate that it will grow and eventually spread across Canada. It is our intention to share the information and program with other commands for development in their respective provinces. I have appointed Comrade Andre Paquette to chair this project with the assistance of Comrades Robyn Zettler and Dave Gordon.

We have named this project "Leave The Street Behind" and I can tell you the program is moving faster than we ever anticipated. Through meetings with two prospective partners they have indentified to date, 78 homeless or near homeless Veterans and that is 78 to many. We are prepared for the numbers to increase and we expect this to be a regular occurrence for some time to come. We are seeing more and more of our returning CF members being diagnosed with PTSD and brain trauma and as time goes by we expect the numbers of homeless veterans to increase.

From the Legion side we need to ensure that our Veterans are not homeless. Our program will include providing food, clothing, transportation and any other needs we can cover from our Poppy Funds. Enclosed you will find correspondence from Dominion Command approving the use of Poppy Funds for this program. We also expect in the very near future that there will be a joint media conference, with the Legion and VAC.

Comrades, I have asked that this project be treated similar to the Troop Morale fund as we did for the Burlington Convention in 2009. Should you wish to donate to this project from your Poppy Funds prior approval is not required by command and we ask that you please identify on the face of the cheque that it is for the Homeless Veterans program. We will keep track of all donations received between now and the Provincial Convention in May 2011. At that time all donations received will be recognized. Branches are also encouraged to host special functions to collect funds for this project.

We also invite all Ladies Auxiliaries to join us, but we ask that you forward your donations to Comrade Gloria Adie, Provincial Secretary / Treasurer, Ladies Auxiliary. Please note on the cheque face that the funds are for the Homeless Veterans Program.

Thank you in advance for your support and should you have any questions, I ask you to please contact the command office and direct your call to Comrade Dave Gordon or Robyn Zettler.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Pigeau". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "P".

Ed Pigeau, Provincial President
Ontario Command



26 March 2010

File:35-1

Mr. W. Ed Pigeau
President, Ontario Command
89 Industrial Parkway North
Aurora, ON L4G 4C4

Re: Ontario Provincial Command Homeless Veterans Program

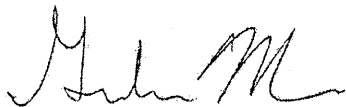
Dear Comrade Ed:

Further to my correspondence of March 9, 2010 concerning the implementation of the Homeless Veterans Program in Ontario Command, we appreciate the fact that Branches in your Command are very much in support of this project and will want to use Poppy Funds for various initiatives within the program.

Please be advised that this matter was referred to the Poppy & Remembrance Committee for its consideration and I am pleased to advise that the Committee has approved the Homeless Veterans Program of Ontario Command as an appropriate use of Branch Poppy Funds .

As stated previously, it would be appreciated if you would provide the Committee with your assessment of this Program in due course.

Yours truly,



Gord Moore
Chair, Poppy & Remembrance Committee