

2020-2021

Year in Review

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS



SUPPORT OUR TROOPS



Opening Letter by Commodore (Ret'd) Sean N. Cantelon

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Throughout the past year, we have seen those we support through your generous donations surmount unprecedented challenges. The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) provided support to Canadians this past year by operations that included: providing pandemic relief in long-term residential homes and Northern communities, supporting the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in Canada and deploying worldwide in the defence of Canada.

These missions speak to the unique challenges of military service: frequent deployments, frequent separation from family and a dangerous work environment. Military service combined with family life affects those who serve in the CAF and their families differently. This carries with them throughout life whether still serving or a Veteran. The burden of navigating the COVID-19 pandemic added additional stress on our military community.

You would be pleased with how quickly the Support Our Troops team pivoted to deploy emergency financial support to military families impacted by COVID-19 and to increase virtual programming, with an emphasis on mental health and wellness.

While COVID-19 restrictions created challenges for fundraising, supporters like yourself chose to find ways to provide our serving members, Veterans and their families with the support they need when they need it most. The generosity of you- our donors, is outstanding. Your generosity helps women, men and families face these unique challenges with hope, strength and dignity. We appreciate your unwavering support.

In the coming pages you will learn about the impact our community has had on support to members, families, as well as to the ill and injured over the last year.

Thank you for standing with us.

Sincerely,



Commodore (Ret'd) Sean N. Cantelon
CEO, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services



Impact in 2020-2021

April 1, 2020-March 31, 2021

The generosity of Canadians has made a considerable impact on the lives of Canadian Armed Forces members and their families. This Year in Review highlights a few key examples of how this support has been provided to families, as well as to the ill and injured.



7,800

**MEMBERS AND FAMILIES
SUPPORTED OVERALL**



\$3.2M

**RAISED BY GENEROUS
CANADIANS**

SUPPORT OUR FAMILIES



133

**FAMILIES WITH A CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
RECEIVED FUNDING**



192

MILITARY CHILDREN WENT TO SUMMER CAMP



75

**SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO MILITARY
SPOUSES AND DEPENDENTS**



372

**MILITARY FAMILIES RECEIVED EMERGENCY
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**



400

**FAMILIES ACCESSED PROGRAMS AND
SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF ENHANCED
MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**



549

**MEMBERS RECEIVED SUPPORT THROUGH THE
LICENSE PLATE PROGRAM**



458

**MILITARY SPOUSES ATTENDED
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT
TRAINING**

SUPPORT FOR THE ILL AND INJURED



2,105

**OPERATIONAL STRESS INJURY SOCIAL
SUPPORT PROGRAM**



129

OFFERED SUPPORT WHILE IN HOSPITAL

SOLDIER ON



1049

**SOLDIER ON MEMBERS SUPPORTED
THROUGH EQUIPMENT GRANTS**



156

**SOLDIER ON MEMBERS SUPPORTED
THROUGH CAMP GRANTS**

BOOMER'S LEGACY



9

PROJECTS FUNDED BY BOOMER'S LEGACY



Support for Families

Emergency Financial Assistance

Support Our Troops works to ease financial burdens and stress for military families facing extraordinary life challenges through emergency financial assistance. In 2020-2021, there was a 41 percent increase in the number of military members supported compared to the previous year. The COVID-19 Emergency Grant was created to provide immediate and modest financial assistance to members and their families during the pandemic.

372

MEMBERS AND FAMILIES
received emergency financial support through Emergency Grants, Distress Grants and COVID-19 Emergency Grants.

\$180,969.32

DISTRIBUTED
through emergency grants.



"Support Our Troops was there for our family when we needed it the most. The COVID-19 Emergency Grant allowed my husband to self-isolate away from our primary residence. We are now reunited as a family and life has returned to a new normal. through emergency grants." – Elizabeth Morris

Holiday Food Hamper Program

The Holiday Food Hamper Program offers CAF members and military families in need additional support during the holiday season. Having grown substantially over the past five years, the program now reaches 96.5 percent of Bases/Wings/Units nationally.

\$154,800

DISTRIBUTED
through the Holiday Food Hamper Program

871

MILITARY FAMILIES
supported during the holidays.



Support for Families

National Summer Camps Program

The National Summer Camps Program allows military children to escape the pressures of military life and enjoy the experience of summer camp. Due to COVID-19, the National Summer Camps Program looked a little different last year. With the safety of our campers and camp staff at the forefront of discussions, and after a momentary pause, we were able to send a small number of children to day camps.

\$32,000

DISTRIBUTED
through the National
Summer Camps Program.

90

CHILDREN
enjoyed summer camp.



"Programs like this are important for military families, as they encourage them to get their children (and themselves) involved in community activities. This is especially important if those families have recently moved to a new community as a result of a military posting." – Malia's father

PSP Summer Camps

Personnel Support Program (PSP) Summer Camps are offered on Bases and Wings as part of the military family care plan. Last year, pandemic restrictions and requirements increased the overall cost of programming and reduced participation. Some locations that normally offer camp were not approved to do so by the military Chain of Command.

\$135,800

DISTRIBUTED
through PSP Summer
Camps.

35

**STAFF WITH SPECIAL
NEEDS TRAINING**
were hired.

102

**CHILDREN WITH
SPECIAL NEEDS**
enjoyed summer camp.



Support for the Ill and Injured

Operational Stress Injury Social Support Program

The Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS) program provides a national peer support network for Canadian Armed Forces members, Veterans and their respective families. While the OSISS program normally organizes in-person gatherings, due to the pandemic the program was offered virtually. As a result, more individuals were able to participate and benefit from digital workshop resources.

\$24,600

DISTRIBUTED
through the OSISS Program.

2,105

FAMILY AND FRIENDS
viewed/participated in a
virtual workshop.

"My husband always said to everyone that I was his rock. This weekend I found out that his rock was starting to form cracks. When I saw the green chart for healthy, yellow for reacting, orange for injured, and red for ill, it was then that I realized I was in the yellow zone. It really scared me when I totally realized that my husband was in the red zone. How was I going to help him when I myself was forming more cracks? It really hit home when I had to write that letter to myself. Then I realized the only way I can repair those cracks is through coping and self-care. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."
– **Military spouse**

Hospital Comforts

Hospital Comforts ensures that members of the Canadian Armed Forces who are hospitalized due to illness, injury, accident or surgery for longer than 48 hours are made comfortable for the duration of their stay.

\$18,760.54

DISTRIBUTED
through Hospital Comforts.

129

INJURED MEMBERS
supported through this program.



Support for the Ill and Injured



Soldier On is a program of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and is administered by Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services. Soldier On contributes to the recovery of ill and injured CAF members and Veterans by providing opportunities and resources through sport, recreational, and creative activities. Last year, Soldier On temporarily halted the acceptance of applications from mid-March to the beginning of June in order to adhere to the COVID-19 safety protocols but was quick to engage participants through virtual programming to continue to encourage the comradery and activity that characterizes the Soldier On program.

\$1M

DISTRIBUTED
overall through Soldier On equipment grants and camp grants.

1049

SUPPORTED
through Soldier On equipment grants.

156

SUPPORTED
through Soldier On camp grants.

1,670

SOLDIER ON MEMBERS
supported overall.



"Soldier On is an amazing organization that brings together soldiers with similar injuries, both visible and non visible, to share their stories and more importantly lets them know that they are not alone! It shows them what they can accomplish when they focus on the positive rather than the negative. It also builds a community of friends they will have for life. In all the events I had the privilege to attend I was extremely impressed by the dedication of all involved to better themselves and to help others in time of need."

—WO Lorne Ford



Boomer's Legacy



Boomer's Legacy, a fund managed by Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, is named after Corporal Andrew "Boomer" Eykelenboom, a dedicated soldier and a Canadian Armed Forces medic killed by a suicide bomber on August 11, 2006. Boomer's Legacy was inspired by Andrew's desire to give back to the communities that he served in. Boomer's Legacy empowers members of the Canadian Armed Forces to make a positive difference in their communities both at home and abroad.

9

PROJECTS
supported internationally
and at home.

\$92,631.17

DISTRIBUTED
through Boomer's Legacy grants.



Operation Freedom Paws Canada, which received a grant from Boomer's Legacy, helps serving members and Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces through illness and injury by training their own dog and becoming certified as a service dog team.



Get Involved

CAF Appreciation Games

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) partners with NHL, CHL, CFL, MLB, MLS, NBA teams and others to host CAF Appreciation Nights to demonstrate support to the women and men who serve our country. COVID-19 restrictions meant the cancellation of all major events throughout Canada last year. Despite these unprecedented challenges, support from our partners in the sports world was unwavering.

\$51,810.94

RAISED LAST YEAR

from participating CAF Appreciation teams.



Royal Canadian Air Force Run

For 12 years, the Royal Canadian Air Force Run has been a rare opportunity to experience both the camaraderie and aircraft that make the Royal Canadian Air Force unique.

The RCAF places a high priority on the health and well-being of its members and the communities where they live. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and because the run is held on Wing, the Commander RCAF made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 and 2021 Air Force Run.



\$435,666.88

RAISED TO DATE

thanks to generous donors, fundraisers and sponsors.



Get Involved

Canada Army Run

Through Canada Army Run, our troops extend the military esprit de corps to Canadians, and in turn Canadians can thank the troops, who serve them in so many ways at home and abroad. Due to COVID-19, last year's race was attended virtually by thousands of participants throughout Canada. Since 2009, fundraisers, donors and sponsors have raised over \$4 million to support the military community.

7,000

PARTICIPANTS
registered for Canada Army Run.

\$400,000

RAISED LAST YEAR
thanks to fundraisers, donors and sponsors.



When Ann Bourke turned 70 years old, she registered for Canada Army Run in support of ill and injured members and Veterans. Six years later she is a top fundraiser.

Navy Bike Ride

The 2020 virtual Navy Bike Ride celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic. Together, Canadians cycled over 25,000 rides to commemorate the 25,000 kilometres travelled across the Atlantic during World War II. The event was offered virtually due to the pandemic and was a great success. Over \$59,000 was raised for Support Our Troops and the Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund.



I am a recently medically released Veteran of the Royal Canadian Navy. I really struggled to come to grips with my injury, and that had a significant impact on my mental health. Thanks in large part to the Soldier On program, and the amazing people I connected with and got inspired from there, my life has changed immensely for the better. I now live for a bright future with a loving wife, and amazing friends and family by my side.

CPO 2 (Ret'd) Joe Kiraly



Get Involved

Support Our Troops Art Easel Program

Thanks to a valuable partnership with Funding Innovation, the Art Easel Program allows Canadians to create positive change within their communities ... simply by purchasing artwork! Since its inception in 2016, the program has grown exponentially. We are proud to work with over 300 partners in nine provinces. Contributions through this program support programs for military members, Veterans, ill and injured, and their families.

\$222,740.06

RAISED IN 2020
for Support Our Troops.

\$910,167.76

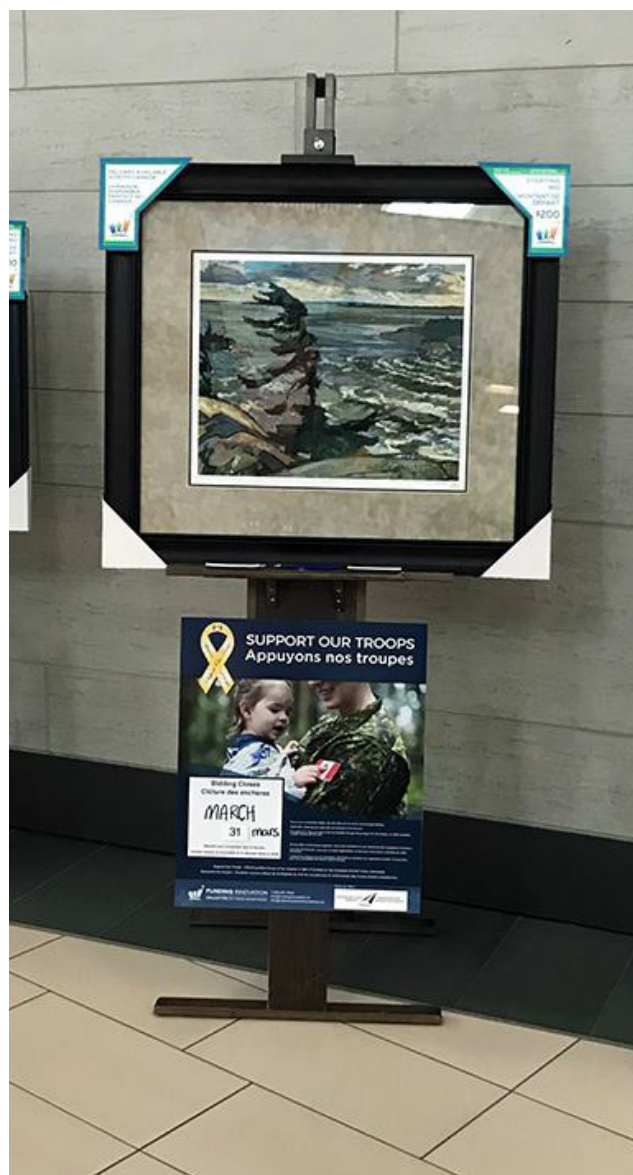
RAISED SINCE 2017

License Plate Program

The License Plate Program, adopted by Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan, encourages Canadians to rally support for our military in an impactful way. These customized license plates feature our signature Yellow Ribbon, which exemplifies the story of Canadians coming together to show their gratitude to our women and men in uniform. Funds raised from these specialty plates support programs and initiatives at the local level for military communities in the four participating provinces.

\$255,716.25

RAISED LAST YEAR
in four provinces.



Give Support

There is no higher priority than to stand up and defend our nation. More than 100,000 women and men voluntarily prepare for and face harm – anywhere, anytime and under all conditions. They are a talented and dedicated team protecting Canada and its citizens.

Our valued donors are dedicated and committed to supporting these honourable women and men. Their gifts provides financial support and assistance to Canadian Armed Forces members, veterans and their respective families.



Gord Tallman became involved with Support Our Troops in 2014 after hearing the news of Corporal Nathan Cirillo's death at the National War Memorial in Ottawa. What began as his family's annual donation has evolved into their participation in the Canada Army Run every year and committing to a legacy gift – in their wills – that will impact the lives of our troops for years to come.



Every May, Bob Rowe, owner of Freedom Syrup, a sugar bush in Walton, Ontario, hosts a dedication ceremony for the 158 fallen soldiers who served in Afghanistan to honour their sacrifice and keep their memory alive. This decade-long tradition has raised \$98,000 for Support Our Troops and Soldier On in support of military members and their families. Last year, Bob and his team supported 24 Soldier On members.

"I'm proud to be a Canadian, and I support our troops both past and present who have fought for the freedom of Canadians and others around the world. It is heartwarming to support those who have lost loved ones or suffered from the affects of combat"

– **Bob Rowe**



Give Support



During challenging times like these, The Personal Insurance continues to demonstrate a true commitment to standing with those who serve with their support of the OSISS Program. Thanks to The Personal Insurance 383 individuals attended a virtual OSISS workshop and CAF members and their families were able to access support through the COVID-19 Emergency Grant Program.



As children of Veterans, Kyle and John focus their philanthropic efforts on showing their appreciation for the Canadians Armed Forces community for over a decade. They first committed to helping ill and injured troops with recovery, recognizing that serving our country is not just a job, it is a sacrifice, and then expanded their generosity to the entire community last year. 330 military members and families were supported last year by Kyle and John's gift.



Closing letter by Jackie Girvan

Dear Friends of Support Our Troops,

I am Captain Jackie Girvan, a Personnel Selection officer in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), cancer survivor and mother of a child with special needs. When I joined the Army at the age of 18, I knew that I was signing up for education and a cool career, but it quickly became so much more than that. Enrolling in the CAF gave me lifelong friendships, a personal and professional support system, and taught me what it meant to build good character. Sixteen years later, I can say that I serve because I wholeheartedly believe in what the organization stands for.

Military members as a whole are very proud. We persevere and always put the job first. But we are human, and therefore vulnerable to life's challenges. Our children need a lot from us, our parents age, our marriages come under stress, and sometimes we get injured. Life happens.

When my husband and I first learned of the Special Needs Grant, we were hesitant to accept support. As well paid members of the CAF it felt uncomfortable to accept financial help and we were still getting used to what it meant to raise a special needs child.

But we realized that getting support is not based solely on financial hardship. The grant made us feel like Canadians were on our side and wanted to help relieve some of the pressure. We cannot thank you enough. Your continued support helps members like me deal with the challenges associated with military life.

Thank you for taking the time to read the Support Our Troops Year in Review and for continuing to stand with us.

Sincerely,



Jackie Girvan





4210 Labelle Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K2