

These are trying times for area families and for businesses and organizations, including the Gananoque Legion which was created in 1927 by veterans who had returned home after the end of the First World. Since then the Legion has undergone many challenges including the Great Depression of the 1930's and numerous significant down-turns in the economy, but nothing to compare with the challenges it has faced since 17 March 2020 when it shut down because of the COVID virus epidemic.

Since then, and only for a few months, it could operate its bar a few days each week, but all other functions ceased. Over the past eleven months the bar, which in a normal year generates a profit of \$150,000 to \$160,000, has produced only a few hundred dollars. The cancellation of dozens of celebrations of life, that would have been organized by the Ladies Auxiliary to mark the passing of area residents, and the dinners, has not allowed for donations to support Legion operations. In most years it gives out donations amounting from seven to ten thousand dollars. The Legion also had to cancel its monthly brunches, meat draws, and dinner/dances.

Unfortunately, despite lost revenue, major Legion expenditures have continued. Annual insurance costs are almost \$12,000 and utilities about \$21,000. Recently the Federal Government provided the Gananoque Legion a grant of \$10,845 while the Ontario Government is considering a grant to the Legion under the Ontario Government Small Business support programme.

The Legion has benefitted from generous donations from area citizens and its members. Two Ladies Auxiliary members sewed and sold protective masks which raised donations over \$3,000. Donations over the past few months ranged from \$4,087 from Gananoque's Metro Grocery to over 60 individual donations made at area funerals. As the Legion slowly re-opens, it hopes to be able to host functions and be able to resume donations to the community. Over each of the past five years the Legion lottery fund, consisting of funds raised through the sale of lottery tickets at the bar, donations from the Poppy Fund to area organizations such as hospitals and Gananoque's cadet Corps, and donations made by the Ladies Auxiliary have averaged over \$16,000. One event that we trust will benefit the community and raise revenue for the Legion will be a rain barrel sale that will occur in May just in time for the spring flower planting season.

Listed on the Legion Home Page are many donations given to the Legion during COVID-19 Pandemic. Branch 92 is most grateful for those donations.