

Today's Program

The Honourable Erin O'Toole,
Minister of Veterans Affairs Canada

Topic

Care, Compassion and Respect for
Our Veterans

Location

Upper Canada Room, The Fairmont
Royal York Hotel



Minister Erin O'Toole was first elected to the House of Commons in November 2012.

In January 2015, Mr. O'Toole was appointed Minister of Veterans Affairs. Previously, he served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade.

Minister O'Toole graduated from the Royal Military College in 1995 with a Bachelor of Arts degree (Honours) and was commissioned as an officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force. He served at the Rescue Coordination Centre in Trenton, Ontario, and as a Tactical Navigator on the Sea King helicopter in Shearwater, Nova Scotia. Following the

completion of his service in the regular forces, Mr. O'Toole transferred to the reserves and attended law school at Dalhousie University. He graduated in 2003 and returned to Ontario, where he practiced corporate law and litigation with two national law firms and served as in-house counsel to Procter and Gamble, a large consumer goods company.

Minister O'Toole already has an extensive record supporting our troops, past and present. He was a founder of the True Patriot Love Foundation, which has raised awareness and significant funds for programs supporting members of the military, veterans and their families, as well as a former director of the Vimy Foundation. He is also a long time member of Legion Branch 178. As a member of Treble Victor, Mr. O'Toole helped transitioning military members find meaningful employment in private sector. He also served on the Board of Governors of the Royal Military College of Canada. In an effort to raise awareness of Veterans' mental health issues, he co-founded the Annual Lieutenant Colonel Sam Sharpe Veterans Mental Health breakfast. Mr. O'Toole lives in Courtice, Ontario, with his wife Rebecca and their children, Mollie and Jack.



Young Tapiwa Suk receiving first-class hospitality—ice cream and fruit—from Royal York Staffer Natasha Nowak at our January 9 meeting. Beside him is William Suk, Tap's dad and husband to that day's speaker Gillian Kupakuwana. Now that's how you hook them into Rotary young!

Check out Next Week's Programme

Our Women's Initiative Committee is spearheading next week's programme featuring the Canadian Director of Human Rights Watch, Jasmine Herlt. Jasmine has been the Canada Director for Human Rights Watch since the office opened in 2004. Human Rights Watch in Canada is focused on outreach, fundraising and advocacy.

Under Jasmine's leadership, the Canada Committee has grown to 50 members in Toronto and Ottawa. Human Rights Watch is one of the world's leading independent organizations dedicated to defending and protecting human rights. The group has worked tenaciously to lay the legal and moral groundwork for deep-rooted change and has fought to bring greater justice and security to people around the world.

Next week's program will tie in with our Women's Initiative plans with Covenant House (see following article). Don't miss this meeting to hear a great speaker on an important topic related to our Club's latest philanthropic plans.

International Cuisine Restaurant Night

Wednesday, February 4th at 6:30 p.m.
Lisa Marie at 638 Queen Street West.
Cost is \$40 pp, which includes all taxes and gratuity.

Payment is direct with restaurant, or cash at the door.

Alcoholic drinks extra. Guests and prospective members are welcome!

To sign up contact Neil at
nphillips@dgn-marketing.com
by Friday, January 30.



Woman's Initiative and Covenant House join forces

– by Marg Stanowski



A new partnership between the Rotary Club of Toronto's Women's Initiative Committee and Covenant House Toronto, will establish and operate the first Safe House in Toronto for young female victims of sexual exploitation. Our Club has previously been involved in the development of a variety of houses and hostels, having partnered with various social service agencies such as Nelli's, the YMCA of Greater Toronto, and The Pine River Institute.

Through the leadership of the Women's Initiative Committee, numerous Community Groups were consulted and provided advice and support for the need for such a facility and Covenant House was part of this initial work.

For more than 30 years, Covenant House, the country's largest agency for homeless youth, has offered its services and support to these young women to help them move forward with their lives. As part of its new transitional housing strategy, Covenant House Toronto will establish and operate a residential program for sexually exploited young women. Participants in the program will have access to the agency's wrap-around services at its main Gerrard Street East location as well as specialized services from other community partners.

Covenant House's services include health care, educational and vocational support, life skills training and support for mental health issues. Beyond providing a critical resource for program participants, the plan also includes an on-going research component to establish it as a centre of excellence in this field.

Going forward, we will be developing the plan, service model and funding model for this critically needed project.

What You Missed Jan 9th, 2015

– by Luba Rascheff



This Friday's meeting took place at the National Club. Arriving early, I couldn't help but notice our distinguished speaker, the Rev. Canon Rob Fead, Padre for the Canadian Military. He was seated in the lounge, in his dark blue uniform, head and shoulders above everyone else, like the true military man that he is. As a fellow student of Divinity, I didn't wait too long before introducing myself. I felt honored to be speaking to the man who had performed the burial of fallen hero Nathan Cirillo, Canada's son.

People eventually trickled out of the lounge and into the dining room. The place was packed. Vice President David Hetherington stood in for a travelling President Steve. We were served a delicatessen-quality repast of fish accompanied by boiled vegetables followed by a marvelous, smooth, round, decorated strawberry and raspberry mix dessert. The meal earned a 5-star review from me.

After being introduced, Major Rob Fead took to the podium and, after a few jokes to make us feel at ease, spoke about how he became Chaplain for the Canadian Military and what this entails. Rob said that he wasn't at all prepared for the fact that he would have to undergo basic training before being given the assignment. "The hardest part" he said,

"was sleep deprivation." Although Rob's job is emotionally taxing, he said that one of the biggest compliments he ever received was that he brings a calming presence to a situation.

Rob explained how, accompanied by a fellow serviceman, he must sometimes knock at the doors of parents who have lost a child in war. He told us a story of how he had accompanied the mother and pregnant wife of a 24-year-old soldier who had been severely wounded in Afghanistan and transported to Germany. Rob flew from Canada to Germany with the young man's mother and wife because it was thought that, paralyzed from the neck down and unconscious, he would not live. The brave young man did live and regained movement where doctors predicted he would not. Today, able to propel his wheelchair, he can even, with the help of special equipment, drive a van.

You could hear a pin drop in the room as Rob talked to us about the Highway of Heroes, the road on which funeral convoys travel and where thousands gather to sing the national anthem and proudly wave Canadian flags. After Rob's speech, David, following President Steve's example, made a joke about divine intervention, or lack thereof, and everyone chuckled. Lucky John Fortney picked the 50-50 ticket and walked away with a bottle of wine!

Upcoming Speakers & Events

January 2015

30 Jasmine Herlt, Canada Director, Human Rights Watch

February 2015

6 Mark Lukowski, Christian Children's Fund of Canada

13 No Meeting due to the Family Day Holiday
20 New Member's Program – At The National Club
27 Dr. Danielle Martin, Women's College Hospital, State of the Canadian Health Care System

March 2015

6 Chief Bill Blair, Metropolitan Toronto Police Chief

Editor of the Week

Don Bell

Editor Jan 30

Maureen Bird

What You Missed Reporter, Jan 23rd

David Sharpe

Today's Host

Robert O'Brian

Propose a Speaker – Contact

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