

Military Police join W Ross MacDonald Students for Lunch, Songs, and Laughter

Corporal Calvin Smith, MPFBC London Area Representative

I was first introduced to the Military Police Fund for Blind Children(MPFBC) while on a military police course at the Canadian Forces Military Police Academy in Borden, ON. We were tasked to be creative and use our initiative to compete against rival classes for the largest monthly donations to the fund. This was a fun way to not only raise money, but to also help achieve our goal of not participating in Physical Training the last Friday of each month! This donation was coupled with our class marks and Commandants Challenge scores to see who could ultimately earn that extra shower time, or the breakfast minutes we so cherished! In addition to our fundraising efforts, we learned about the history of the MPFBC, and how it came to be.

Provost Marshal, Colonel James Riley Stone was the founder of the MPFBC, which was created in 1957. This venture stemmed from his daughter, Moira "Plumsy" Stone, who contracted retinoblastoma, a form of eye cancer, which was responsible for her sudden loss of sight and subsequent death. During his daughter's illness, he came into contact with various organizers who were struggling to help blind children. He also became familiar with the Provincial school, W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind and Deaf-Blind in Brantford, ON. Moira attended the school during her Grade One year, and Colonel Stone came to realize he could assist so many more children by utilizing his contacts in the military. Since the inception of the MPFBC, a great deal of fundraising has been generated to support the needs of blind and visually impaired children across the country.

Since those early days of my career I have become more involved in the MPFBC. I am now the London representative for the fund and assist in the organization of the W Ross MacDonald Christmas party. The Military Police from 2 Military Police Regiment purchase the toys and have the good fortune of joining the W Ross MacDonald staff and students for their annual Christmas Luncheon. Listening to the angelic voices of the choir you could literally feel the energy and enthusiasm of everyone in the auditorium. It was overwhelming to say the least, and at one point my emotions got the better of me. Afterwards, we were escorted to the elementary student activity area, where each of the children where handed their gifts and had an opportunity to visit with Santa. I left the school knowing that I had just experienced one of the most memorable days I will ever have in my life.

I cannot express the joy this event brings to me. I became a police officer with hopes of helping others. Knowing I can help make a difference in just one person's life means I have done my job to its fullest. But, I can tell you for certain that after watching the students faces light up and speaking with the children, I've participated in something far greater than I could ever have imagined. It's a very

rare opportunity that a person can see exactly what their charitable donations can do for others, and I've been lucky enough to witness that very thing.

The MPFBC is unique to Canada in that we are the only military charity in the country. If you wish to donate to the Fund or aid blind or visually impaired children nearby, please contact the local MPFBC representative at the Military Police detachment in your area or go to our website at: www.mpfbc.com