



REGIMENTAL LINES SUPPLEMENT

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S HORSE GUARDS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Fall 2020

OP LASER UPDATE

By Cpl William Right

I volunteered on OP LASER from the start of April to the end of July this year. We were brought to CTC (Cadet Training Centre) Blackdown at CFB Borden, where we received OP LENTUS and OP LASER training. My section was deployed to support the Altamont Long Term Care Facility, operating out of the Toronto Delta East hotel. We were responsible for getting meals, laundry and general clean-up duties for the Medics and General Duties (GDs).

After making a post about a bag of Frito Lay potato chips, one of the managers from my work (Loblaw Companies Limited head office) asked me if it were possible to arrange a shipment of President's Choice (PC) chips to me and the soldiers I worked with. My Chain of Command approved this, and I was given the go ahead.

Our goal was to put 1 bag in the hands of every soldier serving with 1 TBG, which was 610 Soldiers. I worked closely to coordinate approvals, transportation, and delivery

to the Canteen. We got the Chips into the hands of our soldiers and I felt good that I did my part to improve the morale, health, and wellness of the troops.

Shortly after that, I received a message from a beef jerky company I work with who wanted to make a donation to our canteen as well. By then our numbers had increased so the vendor delivered 850 units of beef jerky. Our Soldiers were happy, and so was the vendor.

In the end, I felt good about what I was able to accomplish for the soldiers I worked with. In getting these 2 food donations to our troops, I was not only able to care for the Morale, Health and Wellness of our soldiers, but I was also able to work with my Chain of Command in a management capacity, and work with soldiers across 32 Brigade. I strongly believe that it does not matter what rank you currently have, but that you can make a difference.

By Pte James St. Fleur

Imagine for a second if you will. A global pandemic has taken over the world that you so peacefully were living in. You suddenly receive a call and are told to wrap up your entire life in less than 48 hours. That is exactly what happened to me.

Upon arrival at Denison Armory, I was quickly relieved to know that I was not the only confused soldier on the ground. I learned very quickly that social distancing was something to do with no questions asked. It was personally hard for me to do, being the social butterfly that I am. It was even harder when I saw friends I hadn't seen since BMQ and BMQL.

Arriving at Borden was no different than arriving at Denison. More confusion, more paperwork, more "hurry up and wait". As one of the youngest, least experienced, and lowest ranked soldiers in my section, my first duties were to

work in the kitchen. I was not a big fan of the job but people have to be fed and tables have to be sanitized. I always had a smile on my face and tried to convince myself that I loved this job as an attempt to get through it optimistically. After working in the kitchen, training started for working in the long-term care facilities.

The day had finally come when we would be deployed to the long-term care facilities, where my training would come into real practice, and where I would be faced with a disease that had killed millions of people. I'd be lying to you if I told you I was not scared.

First day arriving at the homes we were put straight to work, as expected. Our job was to support the facility staff so that they would be able to land on their feet again. Every day that I worked in the facility I did something different. This included: helping with the laundry, throwing out the



Preparations for Operation Laser at CFB Borden, entailed quickly assembling emergency accommodations with the capability of temporarily housing 250 people in a pandemic setting.

trash, doing daily deep cleanings in the residents' rooms, moving furniture, cleaning bathrooms, and most important of all, decontaminating surfaces. These jobs were hard and sweaty with all the PPE, but I did it all with pride and joy. What pushed me everyday was the work we were doing was not in vain. The COVID numbers were going down, making it all worth it.

The part that I enjoyed the most of all was the interaction I had with residents. The CAF being there was like a breath of fresh air for them. It was a privilege for me to be able to assist medics in taking the residents outside for a little change of scenery. I also enjoyed sitting down to have hour-long conversations with some of them, listening to their stories of when they were younger, the jobs that they had,

the schools they went to, and the things that they liked to do.

I feel that the CAF being there brought a sense of comfort that they were missing in these hard times and also helped the facility staff regain a sense of control.

If you had told me five years ago that I would be a part of the Canadian Armed Forces, and less than 2 years after joining I would be deployed on a domestic operation, I would not have believed you. I'm happy to be home again with my family, but if you were to ask me if I would do it again, I would say Yes, in a heartbeat. Op Laser has changed me. I believe that I have grown as a young man and as a Canadian Soldier.



MEETING ENGAGEMENT WITH A PANDEMIC - *From Sabre Sqn to LRF 2* **'A' Company Local Reaction Force**

By Capt Jeremy Golding
Officer Commanding A Coy LRF2

We can all look back on March of 2020 as a time of significant uncertainty. Sabre Sqn was stood down from normal parading and it looked like the CAF's response to the global pandemic (OP LASER) would need to be activated in order to meet the growing number of public requests for assistance (RFAs) pouring in from Provincial and local authorities. Further, mounting COVID -19 case numbers and an unclear timeline on when life would return to normal exacerbated an already emotionally trying time.

When the request was made to generate the Battalion-sized Local Response Unit (LRU) to respond to RFAs within the boundaries of Toronto, 2/3rds of Sabre Sqn volunteered to meet the virus head on in whatever capacity the people of Ontario needed us to. Almost the entirety of combat power held within the GGHG was put towards fighting the effects of the pandemic and mitigating its impact on the city's most vulnerable. I had the privilege of serving as commander of Local Reaction Force 2 (LRF2), one of the company-sized sub-units of the LRU.

LRF2, despite having the smallest Area of Operations (AO) geographically, was the most robust of all sub units within the LRU, being composed of dismounted platoons of Infantry (The Royal Regiment of Canada), Armoured (The Governor General's Horse Guards), Engineers (32 Combat Engineer Regiment) and Operational command over a platoon of Naval personnel as well (Her Majesty's Canadian Ship York). LRF2 performed admirably from day 1 of the RSOM (Reception, Staging, onward Movement) through the execution of Multiple RFAs.

Initially preparing to enter the badly affected Long Term Care Homes (LTCs) within Toronto, LRF2's task shifted abruptly to include transportation and warehouse assistance to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) as it received medical goods from China to be distributed across the country. Planning was quickly shelved for the LTCs and all effort was put towards the transportation and force protection requirements of troops working with goods arriving from the then-epicenter of the pandemic.

Sabre Sqn Guards, as a part of LRF2, worked primarily

out of Brampton and Mississauga at key warehouses, being briefed by Logistics and PHAC staff beforehand. They helped to prepare PPE that came to Canada and organized it so that it could be properly inventoried and catalogued, enabling the PHAC to know what had been received, when and from where. The PPE that the soldiers and sailors of LRF2 prepared for allocation were sent to the provincial and territorial warehouses.

Due to the uncertain nature of the arrival of trucks, and sometimes even the planes, The need for work parties would often be communicated only hours before the shipments were slated to arrive, and sometimes in the middle of the night. This required management of strict notice to move regimens and work shifts. However, LRF2 personnel were ready at all times, never missing a shift and almost always early.

Effectively, the aid that Horse Guards provided during the worst days of the pandemic to date touched all corners of the country. I could not have been prouder to lead this organization, who performed ably in the face of uncertainty and an unprecedented situation. As the Pandemic rages on, it is important to note that the GGHG stand ready to continue to defend Canadians should the need arise again. Lessons learned from our time in LRF2 will be invaluable in the future, and I know that every member of LRF2 is prepared to meet the challenge again.

LRF2 Leadership:

OC – Capt Jeremy Golding (GGHG)

SSM – MWO Dimitri Iassinovski (GGHG)

2IC – Capt Greg Tufman (GGHG)

1. PL – Lt Zachary Jomphe (R Regt C) Sgt Kash Dar (R Regt C)
2. PL – Lt Matt Stephan (GGHG) Sgt. Eric Xia (GGHG)
3. PL – 2Lt Laura Trafford (32 CER) MCpl Grisales (32 CER)
4. PL - Lt (N) Alex Low (HMCS York) PO2 Humza Ansari (HMCS York)