

The Governor General's Caring Canadian Award



Larry John Pearson

Weyburn, Saskatchewan

Larry John Pearson has long been dedicated to supporting our Canadian Forces. He helped soldiers serving in Afghanistan in many thoughtful ways, sending them care packages, ensuring recognition for their work and sacrifices, even helping to look out for their families at home. He also led members of his community of Weyburn, Saskatchewan to show their support, organizing events at the Weyburn War Memorial to honour the Royal Canadian Navy's 100th birthday and working with others to have the memorial itself updated.

The culmination of Mr. Pearson's work was the Homecoming Parade and Evening, held on October 25, 2008, which he organized and carried out almost single-handedly. Officially recognized in the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, this was the first military homecoming parade in the area since the end of the Second World War. The parade included local members of the RCMP and of the Weyburn fire, police and ambulance services. It also included members of the Canadian Forces and army cadets; Royal Canadian Legion members; representatives of the Regina City Council; and members of Parliament. The parade also featured a Legion colour guard and three military vehicles from the Saskatchewan Dragoons.

Hundreds of residents from around the region gathered along the streets to welcome home four soldiers who had returned from a tour of duty in Afghanistan. The crowd was treated to a flypast of a B-52 Bomber out of the U.S. Air Force Base in Minot, North Dakota. Festivities continued inside the Legion long into the night, with speeches from the soldiers as well as from many of those who had attended the parade.

Local soldiers and their families described the event as amazing, something they would always remember. "Support is important in everything we do," said Bombardier Roy Matheson.



"When you go on a tour of duty, you do not realize how much support you have until you come home or receive the care packages that show people really care for us."

"To have been home for a few weeks and to be included in an event of this magnitude was just overwhelming," said Sergeant James Richards.

"It is my sincere hope and desire that all communities across our country take the time to show their appreciation to our soldiers."

Larry John Pearson, recipient

As for event organizer Mr. Pearson, it was simply the right thing to do. "Men and women of the Canadian Forces have all answered the call to duty and placed themselves in harm's way and under difficult conditions," he said. "They have served their country well. It is my sincere hope and desire that all communities across our country take the time to show their appreciation to our soldiers."

Spoken like a true volunteer and a fitting recipient of the Caring Canadian Award.



The Caring Canadian Award was presented to Larry John Pearson on April 17, 2012, at Rideau Hall. Sgt Ronald Duchesne 2012 © Rideau Hall