



DECEMBER 2004 - JANUARY 2005

PROFESSIONAL PARAMEDIC ASSOCIATION OF OTTAWA OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

PAC LOBBY DAYS

Normand Robillard

From October 26 to 28, PPAO members Andrew Dixon, Matthew Hogan, Stan Morrow, Deanna Schofield and Norm Robillard joined another PPAO member Paul Morneau (*past president of PAC and current Chair of Government & Media Relations*) on Parliament Hill. This group of local delegates teamed up with some twenty other paramedics from across the Country as the Paramedic Association of Canada (PAC) went through with its 3rd annual Federal lobby days. Together, we managed to visit with over 100 Members of Parliament.

Gathering with paramedics like Ernie Mothus from British Columbia, Eric Glass from Manitoba and Mike Kellock from Nova Scotia was wonderful. We shared tons of ideas and talk mostly about national issues that affect paramedics from across Canada. I cannot stress enough how impressed I was with the level of knowledge and professionalism demonstrated by our paramedic colleagues.

Local paramedics, Stan Morrow and Norm Robillard met with MP's, Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa - Vanier) and Marc Godbout (Ottawa - Orléans). These two gentlemen invited us in to their Parliament Hill offices and listened attentively to the topics affecting paramedics and the public we serve. Morrow and Robillard appreciated the time these two local MP's gave. Letters of thanks to MP Godbout and MP Bélanger

were mailed.

Robillard was accompanied by experienced paramedic lobbyists Bryon Longeway and Ernie Mothus who had a wonderful opportunity to meet with Federal Health Minister, Hon. Ujjal Dosanjh.

The two major topics that we addressed with Members of Parliament were:

1. *Public Safety Occupation (PSO):*

We asked that MP's make changes to the taxation legislation pertaining to which professions are included under the designation of "Public Safety Occupation". Currently Police, Fire, Pilots, Correctional Officers and Air Traffic Controllers are the only ones with this designation.

Having this designation gives these other professions the opportunity to negotiate early retirement (age 55) benefits without any penalties. Clearly Canadian paramedics fall within this designation. The PSO project lead is paramedic Ernie Mothus.

2. *Include Paramedics In Health Care Initiatives*

Historically the definition of Primary Health Care always referred to institutionalize Health Care workers (Doctors, Nurses, Dentists etc). We told MP's that paramedics have clearly become part of the Primary Health Care group. Our increased clinical abilities, and the opportunities for

expanding our scope of practice, are part of the solutions to Canadian Health Care issues. We asked that PAC be included as a stakeholder in such things as the *Health Council*, the *Canadian Institute of Health Research* and the *Canada Health Act*.

Hogan and Robillard teamed up with Chris Munn, a paramedic from Saskatchewan. Together they were lobbying MP David Anderson (Cypress Hills-Grasslands) when he was summoned for question period. MP Anderson thanked us for coming to visit him and shook our hands and then surprised us by asking if we have ever been to question period. Noticing that we were interested, he quickly gathered three "Members Gallery" passes and voilà, off we were to the House of Commons to view Question Period. MP Anderson escorted us onto the shuttle bus, through security, to the coat check area, and right to the Members Gallery where we took our seats. MP Anderson then

went down and took his seat on the Opposition side of the House. Heck, he even looked up and waved at us.

On the evening of Oct 27th, about 10 paramedics including Chief A. Dimonte, joined the PAC delegates for dinner at Tucker's Marketplace. It was a wonderful opportunity for more local medics to meet these dedicated paramedic colleagues from all over the country. Longtime paramedic, Ed Ouston, made it to the dinner too. Ouston took the opportunity to chat with some old friends from his days working in B.C.

As PAC returns to the Nation's Capital again next fall, hopefully the PPAO can galvanize more local medics to support the project. For your colleagues who did have the opportunity to be involved in this 2004 PAC lobby, it was an invaluable experience which hopefully, will see paramedics nationally gain ground and recognition.

See you on the Hill next year.



PARAMEDICINE 2004

Darryl Wilton, President

This October, the PPAO sent a small delegation of executive board members to the Ontario Paramedic Association's annual EMS conference in the Peel Region. In addition to the executive members from the PPAO, Ottawa had a strong delegation with a total of 16 paramedics present at the conference.

- Darryl Wilton
- Mike Cross
- Elizabeth Anderson
- Stan Morrow
- Ashley Murfin
- Keith Buchanan
- Bob Davidson
- Marc Ouimet
- Brian Morris
- Greg Furlong
- Paul Levesque
- Dan Kennedy
- Gary Chamberlin
- Mike Henry
- Rhonda Kavanagh
- Lynne Desjardins

We spent three days learning, networking, sharing ideas and developing new partnerships with chapters from across Ontario.

There were excellent educational presentations from high profile guest speakers including George Smitherman (Minister of Health), Dr Martin McNamara (enormous paramedic advocate) and Darrell Bardua (supervisor to the late John Rossiter from Halifax Nova Scotia). The presentations were educational, entertaining and even very emotionally moving.

Between presentations, the majority of our time was spent working closely with the OPA executive so that we

could learn how to run Paramedicine 2005. Elizabeth Anderson is in charge of the P2005 committee so she spent much of her time shadowing the OPA at the conference. Elizabeth is already running all over the map in an effort to track down a location for next years conference.

For those of you who don't already know, P2005 will be in Ottawa next September. The PPAO has already put together a conference committee and we expect our efforts to attract a very large crowd. We are inviting paramedics from across Ontario, ambulance technicians from Gatineau and Montreal, military medics, medical students, paramedic students and many impressive guest speakers. Next years conference will be endorsed by Base Hospitals across Ontario and we will offer up to 9 hours of self directed CME credits for PCP's and ACP's.

If you would like to get involved with the P2005 conference committee, please contact Elizabeth Anderson at secretary@ottawaparamedics.ca because I'm sure she will need a ton of help.

SCHOOL VISITS

Steve Dodge, Director of Communications

Everyone has heard of "Bring Your Kid to Work" day. Why not let your kid bring you to school? The PPAO and the Ottawa Paramedic Service are encouraging paramedics to visit their child's school this year and show the kids just who paramedics are and what they do. The OPS will provide you with a rig and a package complete with an activity book and age-specific guidelines that will help you with what to say. They will vary from short sets (20 minutes, tops) for the smaller kids to career-choice presentations for the high school teens. Code the dog is available if a pair of you would like to team up.

This is an important step in promoting awareness of our profession in the community. If we make an on-going, long-term commitment to visiting the schools, some of the students will grow up wanting to be paramedics, not just a policeman. Most medics in this service have kids of their own, or nieces or nephews that attend school here. If every medic presents at their kid's school just once or twice a year, we'll begin to have an awesome impact on how we are perceived by the community. To pick up a school package and a rig, simply contact Joe Micucci, OPS' Community Awareness Coordinator at extension

ATTENTION PPAO MEMBERS:

You can order 100 of your own high quality full colour PPAO business cards (identical to our membership card) for only \$25.

Cards fit in your ID badge holder and can be customized to include our own personal contact information.

Contact us at mail@ottawaparamedics.ca for more information.

PPAO MEMBERSHIP AND PAYROLL DEDUCTION

Darryl Wilton

The PPAO automatic payroll deductions started on November 11th! Each registered member of the PPAO has been placed on this system.

You only need to submit a new membership card if your personal contact information has changed. It is important to have your contact information up to date because you will receive important material from the Ontario Paramedic Association via Canada Post. If you need to update your membership card, you can find one next to our box in the Tremblay lunch room or download one from our website.

Be advised that the City of Ottawa is still fine tuning the PPAO deductions. In an effort to ensure accuracy, the PPAO is diligently tracking each and every deduction that has been made. If you want to be able to verify that your PPAO deductions are accurate, you should have a collective total of \$15 deducted from your Nov 11th, Nov 25th and Dec 9th paychecks.

If you have any questions about payroll deductions or your membership information, please contact us at www.OttawaParamedics.ca.

PPAO at EPS Committee November 28, 2004

Darryl Wilton, President

Here is your brief update on the EPS committee meeting (2004-10-28).

Anthony DiMonte gave a strong presentation that successfully eliminated holes that fire was shooting for in an effort to get more medical calls. The presentation effectively placed paramedics first and foremost as the primary care giver for medical emergencies.

Base Hospital Physician Justin Maloney was also present and addressed council. Dr Maloney painted a clear picture of the health care system and how important it is to have each and every link operating at a capacity that is essential in order to get the job done. Dr Maloney made many references to the high level of training that was delivered by paramedics and gave council confidence in the level of medicine that we are delivering under his license. Dr Maloney delivered credible testimony and a clear indication about the advanced skills that paramedics deliver to the public. Committee was elated to have him present as an expert and invited him back for further council meetings. At the end, it was clear that council was holding paramedics in high regard thanks to the clear and concise information provided by Dr Justin Maloney.

Heather Gillespie was present from CUPE 503 to take notes for union lawyer John McLuckie. She has a political sciences degree and is currently working on her law degree. Heather seemed to be very impressed with the PPAO and she possesses a wealth of political knowledge that we plan to tap into.

On arrival at Committee, we spoke with the Ottawa Professional Fire Fighters Association, Government Relations Director, John Sobey. We agreed to carry a cooperative message with the OPFFA that clearly identified the specialties of professional firefighters and the specialties of professional paramedics.

Our address to council included information about how the current staffing is affecting our patients, our profession and our paramedics. I also encouraged council to widen their view on the response times and see that there is more at stake here than meeting a target. Council was told, "The problem is based on simple mathematics. We currently have 264 paramedics and that gives us the ability to respond to 65000 calls per year. The problem is that we are responding to over 90000 calls per year and council needs to understand the consequences of this. You can send any allied agency, you can even send the national guard, but in the end, you still have to get paramedics to treat and transport over 90000 patients to hospital and that can't be done with only 264 staff."

After Scott Stephens and myself delivered our speeches, there was a clear shift in opinion towards the paramedics. Although this gave us a positive feeling, the icing was not yet on the cake.....

That icing came from Elizabeth Anderson's mother, Joanne Rodgers. Joanne had recently written letters to various news editors, OPS, and the PPAO about the excellent care recently provided to her father by paramedics Norm Robillard and Benoit Jolicoeur.

She spoke highly of our paramedics and gave a very compelling speech to committee. The last few words moved many people in the room to tears. "I first became aware of serious problems in the Emergency Services System in 1978 when my husband died at his place of work. No one there knew CPR. I am a firm believer, even all these years later, that had someone at his place of work known CPR, if the Emergency Medical Service in Ottawa been able to respond and an ambulance sent, that he might well be with us today. When he died, he left behind a 7 month old baby girl who now, 26 years later, is one of your Ottawa Paramedics. Part of why she became a paramedic was to be there for someone else's father when he needed her help. She's in this room today. And I am extremely proud of her." I couldn't believe how well Elizabeth's mom kept her composure and how her words had everyone in the room fighting back tears.

The end result is that our patients gained 14 additional paramedics and we are still leading the charge for 38 more. We have meeting lined up with several councillors, CUPE and the OPFFA.

An association can only be as powerful as its membership. Please get involved because the PPAO has a voice and to carry this voice, we need your help. Thank-you.



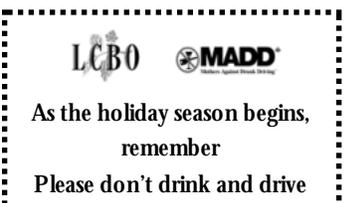
2nd Annual Invitational Hockey Tournament

Denis Gagnon
Chair of the PPAO Invitational Hockey Tournament

The Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa is hosting its 2nd annual invitational hockey tournament on February 23rd & 24th, 2005 at the University of Ottawa arena. All proceeds from this tournament will be donated to Roger's House. We are expecting 12 teams to join us from Ontario and Quebec at this year's event. Last year, we donated \$1500 to Roger's House. This year we hope to surpass it but we will need your support. Come out, watch a game, buy some raffle tickets and participate in the 50-50 draw. On Wednesday February 23rd, 2005, we will be having a party at a downtown hot spot (location TBA). If you would like to donate prizes for raffling or know of a business that is willing to donate prizes please contact one of the organizers:

Denis Gagnon
Cory Van Delst
John Shail
Ian Courville
Marc Legault

Thank you.



COLLEGE OF PARAMEDICS INFORMATION SESSIONS

Stanley Morrow, Director of Professional Development

First, I would like to extend a warm heartfelt thanks to Mr. Rob Burgess from the Ontario College of Paramedics Steering Committee for his time in coming to Ottawa and speaking to the Paramedics of eastern Ontario. If you missed one of these great information sessions, I would hope that you spend some time read the info on the College web site at www.ontariocollegeofparamedics.ca. If you did attend then I hope you will talk it up with medics that did not.

Your Voice is Needed.

When it comes to the Steering Committee, the decision about whether or not to forward an application to the Minister is far too large for just a dozen or so participants to make. This decision will affect the direction of Paramedicine for years to come. The profession must make this choice. It is for this reason that every Paramedic in the province should voice their opinion and complete the survey when it arrives at work or becomes available on-line. Please encourage your fellow professionals to overcome the apathy and make themselves heard. Don't let this decision that will affect so many be made by a few.

Quoted from the College of Paramedics website.

SANTA CLAUSE PARADES

Darryl Wilton, President

This year the PPAO participated in all 3 Santa Clause Parades. We would like to thank Mary-Ellen Harrison for doing an incredible job of coordinating the paramedic component of the Ottawa Help Santa Toy Parade, Paul Morneau for coordinating the paramedic component of the Nepean Santa Clause Parade and Wendy Royer for coordinating the Santa Clause Parade of Lights in Orleans. Next year, the PPAO plans to go bigger and better with a super sized float. If you know of someone who has a garage or barn where we can build and store props, please let us know.



TOY MOUNTAIN CAMPAIGN 2004

Normand Robillard and Pino Federico

Norm Robillard and Giuseppe (Pino) Federico are this year's Toy Mountain Co-chairs. They have been hard at work over the past two weeks making the necessary contacts with the Toy Mountain people and keeping the PPAO up to date of what this year's plans entails.

The big moving day is December 15th when all the toys we've collected at Tremblay, Orléans, CACC, Base Hospital, as well as the contributions we will have received from La Cité Collégiale and Algonquin College get moved in OPS ambulances and other vehicles to the Corel Centre.

All OPS employees and allied agencies will soon be receiving more information about how this year's 2004 Toy Mountain will unfold. This year we hope to participate further by offering Toy Mountain our assistance in picking up toys from various businesses throughout the city and delivering them.

In the meantime, if you wish to volunteer time on the day of the big move (Dec 15) or help out in another capacity, including toy pick up, please contact either Norm or Pino.

Norm 824-2781 (h) Normand.Robillard@ottawa.ca OR Pino 364-1284 (pgr) Giuseppe.Federico@ottawa.ca



HELP THE PPAO

Steve Dodge, Director of Communications.

The PPAO is proud of the paramedics who have taken ownership of our profession, demonstrated pride and come forward to help us achieve new goals. These paramedics, with their "I want to do this" attitude, have been models for the rest of us. Some fine examples for the rest of us are Paul Morneau, Mary-Ellen Harrison and Wendy Royer who helped coordinate our involvement at all three Santa Clause Parades; Norm Robillard and Pino Federico, who are organizing Toy Mountain and the Canned Food Drive; Matt Hogan, Andrew Dixon and Michel Verdun, who are coordinating Grand Rounds medical discussions and case studies; Deanna Schfield who is coordinating an enormous fund raising project for the Benevolent Society and Honour Guard and Kathleen Ramsay who redesigned the PPAO bulletin board. If you have an idea that would promote awareness of our profession within the community, or would help raise the standard of the profession amongst ourselves, we want to hear it! Email your ideas to any board member and the PPAO will offer you the support, guidance and resources you need to help get your idea off the ground. The association, and the profession it represents, will only grow if its members want it to.