Ancient order calls CF personnel, Defence employees to its ranks

From CFPN

Every year, the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem invites DND to submit recommendations for Honours of the Order for CF personnel and civilian Defence employees.

Admission to or promotion in the Order of St. John is an honour bestowed by the sovereign in recognition of exceptional services performed in the spirit of the Order.

Commanding officers must forward recommendations to Directorate of History and Heritage (DHH) 4 by June 1, 2007. Recommendations must be submitted in both hard-copy and disk formats, and should include:

- a brief cover letter making the recommendation;
- a page detailing the merit and service of the member of the Forces or the civilian Defence worker being recommended; and
- a page of information for publication, with the heading "Citation" and the text containing appropriate personal information about the nominee and detailing the reasons for the promotion/appointment using no military jargon or acronyms.

The Order was brought into the Canadian Honours System in 1995. The Grades in the Order are Knight or Dame, Commander, Officer and Serving Member.

The insignia for all grades of the Order comprises a Maltese cross, embellished alternately in each of its principal angles with a lion and a unicorn. The four arms of the cross symbolize the virtues of prudence, temperance, justice and fortitude.

- Consult Canadian Forces General Message (CANFORGEN) 021/07 at http://vcds.dwan.dnd.ca/vcds-exec/pubs/canforgen/intro_e.asp for more information.
- Send queries to Captain Carl Gauthier at Gauthier.C2@forces.gc.ca or at 613-990-4635.
- Read about the Order on the Governor General's website at www.gg.ca/honours/nat-ord/osj/index_e.asp.

Warrior-healers launch millennium of service

Nine hundred years ago, when the first crusaders entered Jerusalem, they found a small hospital attached to an even smaller church dedicated to St. John.

The hospital, overseen by the Abbey of St. Mary, cared for travelers who fell sick during their pilgrimage to the holy city, and became both a haven and a cause for devout crusaders. In less than 100 years, it was endowed with property in Europe and the Middle East and recognized by Pope Paschal II as an independent Order of the Church.

The Brothers of St. John, as the hospital's crusader-patrons came to be known, made a solemn vow to perform two duties – they were warriors and they were healers.

The Order of St. John of Jerusalem spread to Europe as crusaders returned home, and flourished. Its knights established their headquarters in Clerkenwell, London. During Protestant King Henry VIII's reign, however, the Order's English assets were confiscated and the Order was outlawed in the British Empire.

The Order of St. John continued in Catholic Europe. When some if its members decided to reintroduce the Order to England, the head of the Order, by then established in Italy, would not accept their proposal. Eventually, the British organization was re-established in the hospitaller tradition of caring for the sick. In 1877 in England, members of the Order established the St. John Ambulance Association.

St. John Ambulance Association members gave classes in first aid, published books and other material, and established examinations for first aid certificates. The need for equipment was met by establishing a stores depot at St. John's Gate in London.

Thousands of people received first aid certificates, and many of them wanted to use their training to help the public. The resulting Ambulance Corps became the St. John Ambulance Brigade in 1887. Members provided first aid services and ambulance transport at public events ranging from national occasions to local football matches. Eventually, the Brigade and the Association merged to become St. John Ambulance.

In 1882, the British Order acquired land in Jerusalem to set up an Eye Hospital, which has been operating ever since. In 1888, in recognition of its work, Queen Victoria made the British Order of St. John a Royal Order of Chivalry, "The Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem". King George V, an enthusiastic supporter, added "Most" to the formal title.

The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem spread throughout the British Empire. By the end of the Second World War, the status of separate Priory had been conferred on the Order of St. John in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, South Africa and Wales. The U.S. joined the Order's ranks in 1996 and, in 1999, the Priory of England was established.

Today, St John Ambulance members work in more than 40 countries around the world, providing a variety of first aid and other services wherever people gather together in public venues.

- Learn more about the history of the Order of St. John at www.sja.org. uk/history/.

QUESTION CORNER

Medical care in Canada for CF families

QUESTION:

I am married to a CF soldier. We were transferred from one province to another just over a year ago, and are quite happy.

I was on a waiting list for more than two years in our former province to have surgery, and they have finally called to tell me that it's my turn. My problem is this: My doctor here has said that because my new province will be funding my surgery, I have to have all the examinations and tests over again, which may take another two years to complete!

Can you help me?

ANSWER:

Medical care in Canada is administered by the provinces and not by the federal government, so standards and practices can vary depending on where you live. Things can be further complicated for military families because under the terms of the *National Defence Act*, DND/CF cannot give medical care to, or arrange medical care for, CF families on Canadian soil.

In other words, DND/CF cannot intervene on your behalf in this issue. There are some things you can do to help yourself, however.

If you have already had all the tests done in your former province of residence, strongly encourage your doctor in your new place of residence to revisit and accept the results of those tests. To have those tests redone seems a waste of medical resources, and would certainly cause you to lose your place in the line for surgery.

As well, contact your local Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC) and talk with the crisis counsellor there. He or she may have some contacts in your community who could help you, or may be able to direct you to a local association that advocates for access to health care.

And contact the Military Family National Advisory Board (MFNAB). The board exists to champion and monitor issues affecting the well-being of military families, and to advise Chief Military Personnel accordingly.

MFNAB is responsible for:

- advising on policy and future trends that affect CF families;
- advocating on behalf of CF families to ensure an acceptable quality of family life for the family and the military member;
- monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the programs affecting CF families; and
- promoting CF families as a valuable asset to the effectiveness and operational readiness of the CF.

- Visit www.cfpsa.com/en/psp/dmfs/mfrccontact/index.asp to find your nearest MFRC.
- Go to www.mfnab.forces.gc.ca/engraph/home_e.asp for more information.