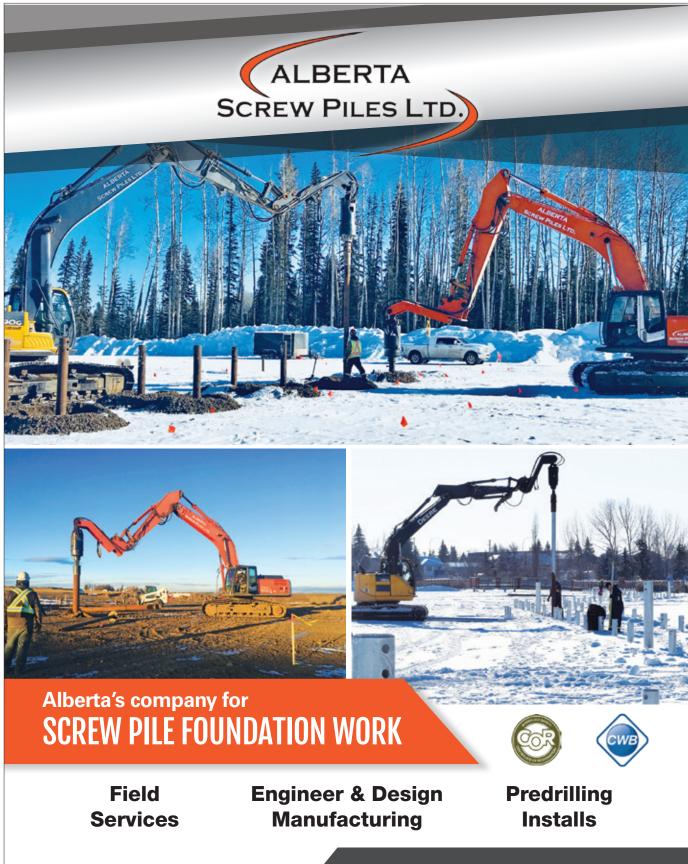


# ALBERTA POLICE BEAT

The Official Voice of the Municipal Police Associations in Alberta





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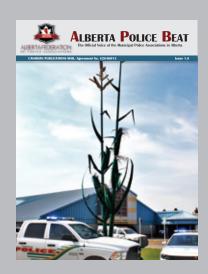
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# From the President Johnny Orr

est edition of the Alberta Police Beat, the official publication of the Alberta Federation of Police Associations (AFPA). I am very excited to be a part of this very informative publication. I would also like to thank the sponsors of this publication, without whom this would not be possible!

It has been a very busy time at AFPA, but I feel a very productive time. I wanted to give you all a quick update on some of the more important issues we are facing.

I would like to start by giving you an update on our Annual General Meeting, which took place in May of 2018 in the very picturesque Waterton, Alberta. This meeting was organized and hosted by the Blood Tribe Police Association and was an overwhelming success. Many thanks to Grant Buckskin, President of AFPA and his entire board for putting on an excellent program and taking such good care of all of the delegates. During the AGM, we had several excellent speakers, including Sue Hughson, the Director of ASIRT, who is always willing to engage in very lively but meaningful discussions. Our member organizations were also able to discuss issues of mutual interest, including discipline, pensions and more.

As at every AGM, we also held our yearly elections. We had some changes this year as Lethbridge member, Shane Kisinger decided to step down after many years of service as our Secretary/Treasurer. Shane was an extremely dedicated and talented member and will be sorely missed. I remember when I first got into the Calgary Police Association, many years ago, one of the first conferences I attended was in Vancouver and I didn't

know a soul. One of the first people I came across was Shane. He took the time to introduce me to everyone from the various Associations and made me feel very welcomed. On the other hand, he also kept me up until we were very directly told it was time to leave the hospitality suite! Shane will be greatly missed!

I would also like to welcome AF-PA's newest board member, Marc Gaumont, from the Lethbridge Police Association, who will fill the role of Secretary/Treasurer. Marc is a very qualified individual who will bring a ton to the table moving forward. We are thankful to have his great sense of humour and very diverse skillsets as a part of the team!

We have also been very busy engaging the government of matters that will greatly impact our members. VP Mike Elliott, Executive Director Howard Burns and I met with Solicitor General and Minister of Justice Kathleen Ganley, along with members of her staff in relation to concerns relating to the Alberta Police Act. It was a timely meeting as AFPA had recently completed our discussion paper outlining our recommendations for changes to this antiquated piece of legislation. We have also engaged the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police and local police commissions on this matter. Although we are at the very beginning of what will likely be a long process, I left the meeting with Minister Ganley feeling confident that the Government is truly interested in the inclusion of the Association perspective in any future changes or rewrites of the Act. As this piece of legislation governs almost everything we do at a Provincial level, it is critical that it be done right!

We also engaged the government on another important issue; pension governance changes. The GOA has made it clear that they are interested in overhauling the governance structure for most pension plans, including the Special Forces Pension Plan (SFPP). Months ago, they proposed a new structure which involved multiple plans being administered together by a single, government appointed board.

AFPA, and our member organizations met several times to discuss this proposal. After much discussion, and consultations with experts in this area, we were all in agreement that this proposal was far too costly to benefit our members. We also felt that our members and pension plan would not be well represented in such a large structure. I am very much simplifying the issues here, but suffice it to say, it is our belief that the government proposal does not meet the needs of our pension plan or our members.

Because of these concerns, we met with members of the Finance Minister and Premier's staff at the legislature in Edmonton. We presented our concerns and they seem very well received.

I want to be clear; AFPA is not opposed to changing our governance structure. In fact, I believe that a well thought out change could greatly benefit the plan and give more authority to those of us with "skin in the game". I am cautiously optimistic that the GOA has heard us and that we will end up with a governance plan that works best for us, instead of a "one size fits all approach". We will keep our members updated on this critically important issue.

AFPA will continue to work towards

positive results on these issues, as well as several others. I thank you all for all of the work you do across the province to make it a better place for all!  $\blacksquare$ 

Stay Safe, Johnny Orr





Guest speaker Pat Nugent (Nugent Law)

Alberta Association members with Dalton Timmis representatives



AFPA board of directors

# From the Vice President

# Michael Elliott

he Alberta Government has recently indicated they will re-evaluate the Police Act and Police Regulations. On June 29, 2018, the government invited the Police Associations to meet and discuss the aforementioned. Representatives from the Edmonton Police Association, Michael Elliott and Tony Simioni, and the Alberta Federation of Police Associations, John Orr and Howard Burns, held a meeting in Calgary with the Minister of Justice Minister, Kathleen Ganley, and the Assistant Deputy Minster and Solicitor General, Bill Sweeney.

All Associations across Alberta have been calling for changes to the current Act and Regulations. They are outdated, confusing, non-transparent in nature and do not serve the best interests of the Police Officers and the public. Changes to the act have not occurred since 2006 and even then, they were very minor tweaks. The Act and Regulations need to resonate with society to be fair, transparent and written in such as manner they are not open to various interpretation; as they currently are today. As the Act currently stands, Chiefs and Police Services across the province interpret the sections within the Act differently which causes major confusion to all those who rely and utilize it every day. Those interpretations cause immense issues amongst everyone.

AFPA has been in discussion with the other Police Associations for a number of years. AFPA has created a document outlining our proposals and recommendations. All of our recommendations have been provided to the current government. AFPA has also been in discussions with other agencies, such as the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) who has also indicated changes to the Act are necessary.

The Government informed the Police Associations they will begin discussions with all parties in the fall of 2018. We are happy to see these discussion occur but realize this process will occur over a long period of time (two to four years) thus true change will not occur for the foreseeable future. We hope the Government hold true to their word and implement change which is long overdue and has been requested by all Police Associations for a number of years.

Michael Elliott Vice President - AFPA



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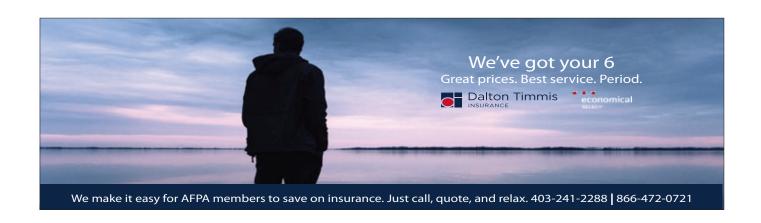
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# From the Secretary/ Treasurer

## Marc Gaumont-

reetings from the Windy South!
Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, so I believe I will keep Shane's opening from his previous articles as my homage to him and many years of dedicated service with both the Lethbridge Police Association and the Alberta Federation of Police Associations. Thank you Shane!!

Perhaps I'll start with a bit of an introduction. I am a 22 year member of the Lethbridge Police Service and started my career in November 1996. I have spent time in the Patrol Division, Downtown Policing, Forensic Identification and most recently Computer Forensics where I currently am posted. I have also spent 16 years as a Crisis Negotiator and 3 years as a UAV operator. On the Association side, I have been serving on the Lethbridge Police Association board as the Treasurer for 10 years having been elected in the fall of 2008. I was recently selected as the Secretary/Treasurer of AFPA at the May General Meeting held in Waterton. A giant shout out and thank you to our Association Members of the Blood Tribe who hosted a very memorable AGM and set the standard for all to follow.

I would like to touch on the Opioid Crisis that is gripping our Province and across all of North America. Doing some research I noticed that there were 6 Fentanyl related deaths in 2011; which coincided with the year I returned to the Street from my time in the Forensic Identification Section. In 2016 the death toll rose to 349 deaths in Alberta and locally Lethbridge is the third highest among Alberta Cities. I find this shocking. Since 2011 our local

Association has had to work with our administration to develop policies and procedures to deal with our Members carrying Naloxone and we are currently in the process of rolling out puncture resistant gloves to deal with the needle crisis that we currently find in our city today. These conversations are very new to our City and remain one of the hot topics locally.

Needles it would appear are being handed out like candy on Halloween and discarded in various places throughout the city that has resulted in two occasions where children have handled the needles, one being the victim of needle poke. This has resulted in conversations that I would have never imagined being had in schools and households alike, "What to do when you find a needle".

In our local paper in late June, there was an article titled, "Providing drugs for drug users" and referenced the supplying of medical-grade heroin to users three times a day. The paper referenced the program as "controversial" but it appears to have success locally in Vancouver and has been successful in Europe as well.

The article focuses on the user, but I believe that a program like this will be a better solution to the opioid crisis that we currently face. Users still need to go to their "supplier" and obtain the drugs illegally and then get to the facility to use the drugs and hope that they don't have a "hot" load of the illegal and generally homemade drug leading to an overdose. The effects that the rest of the community sees is that the vehicles are still being broken into or some other crime is being committed to

obtain the fast cash to provide to their dealer to obtain the drugs. If the user is provided the drug of choice, then it's likely that those crimes will lessen in our community. Less problems for the community, less calls to police, less man hours wasted on petty thefts and crimes that affect the greatest number of citizens. Seems like a win to me.

More recently the focus of our Mayor and Counsel seems to be surrounding the distribution and discarding of needles in the community. I believe that this has been the major issue facing our community as the Needles represent the Crisis and have brought it out of the shadows and onto the front page of our Local Paper. I can tell you that in 2013 when I left the street, I never heard of a needle being discarded on the road and rarely dealt with anyone having a needle during an arrest. Now I see signage in the River Bottom while out for a walk explaining what to do when you find a needle. I will find myself back to the beat in January and will most definitely see a change when I do. ■

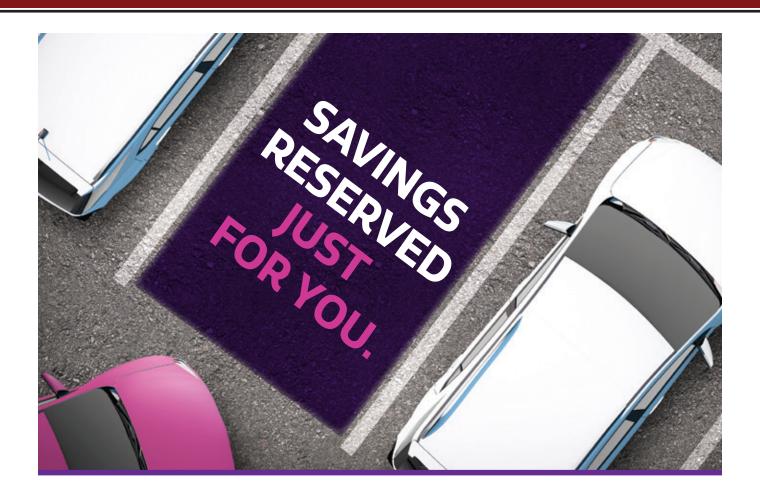
Take Care and Be Safe ~

Marc









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# From the Director/Editor Darryl Hubich-

hanks for reading the latest edition of the Alberta Police Beat. I hope that everyone has had an enjoyable and safe summer!

This edition of the magazine is set to be printed and released to our members during the last week of September to coincide with the fall meeting of the AFPA Board of Directors. Your Board schedules the meeting in Edmonton on the last weekend of September every year. This weekend is significant as the Sunday always marks The Provincial Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Day.

Over my 8 years of Association experience in Alberta, one of the most baffling issues I have dealt with is trying to come up with new and innovative ways to promote the Memorial Day. Associations throughout the province and the country seem to be facing similar issues that we have faced here in Medicine Hat. Locally, we have seen a steep decline in attendees over the last decade. It is 500km each way for our members to travel to Edmonton so it makes for a very long day. That being said, our Association has tried an assortment of different things from renting vehicles and hotel rooms to paying per diems to members in an effort to bolster numbers. Our Service has costshared with the MHPA and assisted financially on various efforts made to encourage better attendance as we both recognize the importance of this day. So, even though you will likely be reading this after the 2018 Memorial is over, I thought I would share a little history about the Memorial in hopes of inspiring more members to appreciate the significance of this event.

This day, dedicated to our members, was proclaimed by the Government of

Alberta in 1999. It takes place on the last Sunday of every September to coincide with the Canadian Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Day ceremony in Ottawa.

The National Memorial, in Ottawa, was created following the murder of Ottawa police rookie Cst. David Kirkwood, on July 11, 1977. That event launched a response that, today, has become the nationally recognized ceremony honouring police and peace officers killed in the line of duty. Following the shooting death of Kirkwood, Ottawa police officers vowed to keep his memory alive and to ensure that the magnitude of his sacrifice, and that of others like him, would never be forgotten by Canadians.

Accordingly, on Sunday, September 24, 1978, a special service and tribute was held. The site selected for the Memorial was Parliament Hill. This was chosen as it is the place where laws are made that directly impact on police officer safety and, ultimately, the quality of life for all Canadians.

The ceremony was expanded to honour other police officers murdered in the line of duty and this criterion of inclusion was itself modified years later to include all officers killed in the line of duty. This current criterion has been applied retroactively, and names of officers killed in the line of duty, from years gone by, are now being added to the Memorial stone. The original ceremonies were limited to police and correctional officers killed but that criterion was expanded, in 1995, to include all peace officers so that all areas of law enforcement are now included in one single ceremony.

The first Alberta Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Day ceremony took place on Sunday, September 26, 1999.

On July 18, 2006, a permanent monument, "The Pillar of Strength", was unveiled on the South Grounds of the Alberta Legislature where the ceremony annually takes place. This permanent monument serves as a poignant symbol of Alberta's commitment to the police and peace officer community and also provides the families of the fallen officers with the formal and enduring recognition they seek for the ultimate sacrifices made by these officers. The Pillar of Strength is a place to commemorate these law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty since



Mark Flynn and myself of the MHPA board

I encourage every member of the public, and most importantly, the law enforcement community, to make the trip to Edmonton for this ceremony at least once. I get it, we all have things in our lives that can seem like a priority (and likely preferable) over a long drive and squeezing ourselves into our dress uniforms/boots for a public



Edmonton Police Association board of Directors

march and ceremony. Please try and remember that this day was dedicated for us and there is no reason that we shouldn't be proud of the noble occupation we chose and, most importantly, proud and appreciative of the ultimate sacrifice made by too many of our colleagues.

I hope to see you in Edmonton on the last Sunday of September in 2019.

Stay safe!! Darryl Hubich

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# From the Director

# —Chris Young

### **Improving Association Communication**

ello again from Cowtown! For this edition of Alberta Police Beat magazine I will touch on an issue that many Association Boards have been experiencing for some time now, that being "Communication".

Communication between the general membership and it's respective Association Board can be a challenge. When communication starts to falter, membership engagement begins to fade and the Association itself weakens. Many of our members in Calgary have stated that they have experienced limited interaction with their Association Board members. Several have commented that more Association face time and Board member personal appearances are needed throughout the different work areas of the Service. This is easier said than done I'm afraid and it's not for a lack of trying. Currently in Calgary there are only 7 Association Board members. 2 full time (President and VP of Admin) and 5 part time (VP of Finance and 4 Directors). There are over 2200 members of the Calgary Police Association. That's quite the Director to member ratio. Since my election to the Calgary Association Board in the fall of 2015 I have attempted to visit Districts and work areas at least once a month to interact with members, provide some face time, be available to answer questions and look into issues that get raised. This has all been outside of election campaigning. I have visited many different teams so far during my term on the Calgary Board of Directors. Other Board members have gone out to Districts and work areas and have visited with members also. Even with the current Board going out

and making appearances it has proven impossible to see everyone. Also, the Board has a great amount of responsibilities and Association work that is taking up the majority of time. Grievances, negotiations, meetings etc take a lot of the Board's time. It's just not realistic to expect the Board, in the way it is currently is assembled and in the way it functions, to be able to physically see everyone.

Hence the idea of a Stewardship program in Calgary! Having a Stewardship program in place could augment communication and bridge the gap between the Calgary Police Association Board and the membership. Back in April of this year I provided a short presentation on this initiative at the Calgary Police Association Annual General Meeting. Here is a short explanation of what a Stewardship program can do for the Calgary Police Association and it's membership.

Having Stewards in the workplace could add a lot more Association face time for our members. Having a Steward in your work area that you can speak face to face with would augment the Association's ability to have personal communication with members. However. Stewards are limited in this communication with the membership and it's important that members understand that. Work Area Stewards are not permitted to provide advice or direction to members other than referring members to a Director/Board member regarding any issues no matter what the circumstances are. Nor are Work Area Stewards permitted to attempt to negotiate or mediate with management on behalf of other

members in relation to any employment matters such as: suspensions, internal investigations etc no matter what the circumstances are. They are also not permitted to enter into any agreement with the Service or with any person representing the Service such as Senior Officers, Civilian representatives or with any other members (including Sergeants and Staff Sergeants) no matter what the circumstances are. The reasons for this are legal in nature. Stewards are not Association Board Directors or Representatives. They do not fall under the Association's Director insurance. Should a Steward provide information that is incorrect or advice to a member that could jeopardize that member the consequences could be disastrous for everyone. Stewards are a means of stream lining communication. They would be able to improve our current communication by the following:

Refer members to Directors/Board members when necessary (for all labour/workplace issues/inquiries etc) and encourage communication with Board members/Association.

Assist and support members in their workplace/work area with information such as informing them about upcoming events, providing information such as hours of operation of the CPA office and Cuff n Billy club, informing members on which Director to speak with regarding portfolios and issues etc.

Encourage participation in regards to Association matters (AGMs, Events Etc) - Also attend Association AGMs and Association events and assist where needed. Encourage members to participate during Association elections (encourage members to vote).

Report labour/workplace issues/ matters to a Director/Board member.

Survey/touch base with members in their work area on such things as: Morale, Workplace issues or other Labour/Contract issues/matters and report to the Association Board via a Director/Board member.

Several other Police Associations have Stewardship programs such as the Toronto Police Association and the Peel Regional Police Association over in Ontario. Both Associations state that their Stewardship programs have been a vital piece of their communication abilities with their respective memberships. I have communicated with Directors from both Toronto and Peel extensively on their Stewardship programs. The initiative could have many positive outcomes and advantages for the membership in general - if run correctly.

Back in January of this year I wrote up a proposal to conduct a 1 year trial of a Stewardship program. I presented this proposal to the Calgary Police Association Board and the Board unanimously approved the proposal. Next, using our online voting software, we had a vote with our membership in Calgary to see if our members supported the idea of a 1 year trial. Overwhelmingly, the membership voted in favour of running a 1 year trial of this initiative. Members interested in par-

ticipating in this initiative as a District/ Work area Steward wrote a cover letter to the Calgary Police Association Board. Presently, cover letters are being reviewed by the Calgary Police Association Board of Directors and soon Districts/Work areas will be assigned a Steward.

A senior member in Calgary who was at the AGM had a very good question during my presentation of this initiative. The member asked, "I have been on this job for 20 years. We have had Stewards in the past and it ultimately failed and no longer exists. What will make this program different from the past ones?"

Several factors have been considered in the implementation of this trial.

- **2** Board members will be in charge of the Stewardship portfolio. The trial is a large portfolio for 1 Director. Having 2 running it will increase overall supervision of the trial.
- Stewards will receive a monetary incentive. Programs in the past had issues with Stewards staying engaged. We feel paying them an incentive for their time and efforts will enforce a solid program for our membership.
- Rules and guidelines have been established and put in place for the program. With proper rules in place Stewards will be able to know what is expected of them and what their limitations are.
- **Stewards will be trained.** We will ensure that Stewards get training on what their responsibilities are and what they are not permitted to do.

- Modern technology. The last time a Stewardship program existed in Calgary members had limited communication technology. With everyone having a cell phone and email now - communication for the Association Board, Stewards and the members will be quicker and easier than programs in the past.

The truth of the matter is that we won't know if a program like this will actually benefit us in Calgary or not until we try it. It is the Calgary Police Association Board's intent to implement this program in order to benefit all of our members. I for one am excited at the potential positive possibilities a program like this can bring to us as a membership in Calgary. After the 1 year trial we will see if this initiative is beneficial enough to keep as a communication resource and option for our membership in Calgary. This may not be the best option for other Associations in AFPA, but it is worth taking a look at in my professional opinion. If any members of any other Associations within AFPA are interested in the outcome of the Calgary Stewardship trial - I have no problem sharing our findings with you. Feel free to contact me via email at: cyoung@backtheblue.ca for any information regarding this initiative we are implementing in Calgary.

The Association is at it's strongest when members are involved in their Association. ■

Be safe.



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# From the Director

# -Rayan Najjar

### **Appreciation for your Association**

Ok. After 10 years on the Blood Tribe Police Association, I resigned as Vice-President to take an extended sabbatical. I felt it was time to allow others to lead our Association and for me to concentrate on my family, which I have neglected over the years. I have not known policing without being part of the Association board, so this is new territory for me. It's both exciting and frightening, mostly for my spouse because she will be seeing a lot of me.

Here I thought that when my two year term with AFPA came to an end, I would be riding into the sunset and my days on an Association board were over. Somehow I was convinced that I should stay on for another two year term. I mean... I am really appreciative of the other members of the board that have confidence in my ability and saw the hard work I have put in to recommend I serve a second term.

As I start my second term, AFPA says goodbye to Shane Kisinger. Shane has been a mentor and friend to me not only on the Association side, but in general. Shane had worked tirelessly over the years to improve working conditions for police officers, not only in Lethbridge as a member of their board, but provincially as a member of the AFPA board. Thank you Shane for everything you have done. Replacing Shane on AFPA, is Marc Gaumont who I know will be an asset for AFPA going forward. Welcome Marc.

Any member that has been elected to represent their membership on their local board, knows that there are challenges that come along with it. With the exception of Calgary and Edmonton's President and Vice-President positions, every other position on every board is part-time. This means that those mem-

bers have to conduct their Association business 'off the corner of their desk' as the saying goes.

I know locally, none of the positions on our board are compensated through monetary gains. So those who are elected to the board, are there on a voluntary basis. Their expenses are covered if they have to attend meetings, conferences, etc., but they are not given an honorarium for their work. This includes all the phone calls, texts, emails, preparation, consultation, research and the list goes on and on. Their time, which is taken away from their families are given freely to their Association.

Over the last 10 years, I have taken pride in my role on the Association. We started as a group of officers that pooled their money together to pay for entry fees for a softball team or hockey tournament. The idea of camaraderie, that feeling of belonging to something bigger then yourself was important to us. It was only 9 years ago that the idea of togetherness shifted to being incorporated as an Association. A couple years after that, we negotiated our first Collective Agreement and today we are one of the leaders in First Nation Policing when it comes to compensation for our members.

With everything that we had accomplished over the years, there was great disappointment and frustration. I am a true believer that if you are elected by your peers to represent them, you must conduct yourself with integrity and always place the needs of the membership over individuals. As President for 6 years, I have made my decisions to benefit the membership as a whole, which upset individuals. Sometimes, those individuals have the loudest voices within the organization.

When you know you have made the best available decision for your Association and your hear rumblings in the bull pen or at a members gathering that you are incompetent and should not be in your position, it's discouraging. So, how do you fix this or silence the critics? One thing that all Associations do, is schedule an Annual General Meeting. This gives the membership a venue to air their grievances and if there are elections this time around, a chance to step up and effect change within their Association.

However, you ask a lot of current and past sitting members of any Association board they will have the same comments, which is a great majority of the membership do no attend to these meetings. This is where it gets really frustrating. You work diligently throughout the year to improve the working conditions for your members, at the same time you hear all the complaints and issues these same members have with the decisions you've made and when it comes time for them to provide feedback or step up, they are nowhere to be found.

I ask the members of all Alberta Associations to understand and recognizance the hard work these people put in year after year. Although it is your responsibility to hold these elected positions accountable for their decisions, it is also your responsibility to provide solutions to the issues you identify and not to simply criticize. I encourage more of you to take an active role in your Association and leave the membership in a better position than when you first joined it.

As always, take care of yourselves and stay safe.  $\blacksquare$ 





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# From the Executive Director

# -Howard Burns -

#### IT PAYS TO PAY ATTENTION

re you one of those people who rarely pays attention to their pay invoices? Or worse yet, leaves them unopened in a desk drawer? If you are, hopefully this article will convince you that putting blind trust into any establishment is a bad idea and it will likely cost you in the long run.

I do my best to pay attention to detail and to verify information that I receive, no matter what it is or who it's coming from. I can't really explain why I do it, its just the way I'm wired; however, I can tell you that paying attention does pay dividends. Below are three examples where being attentive has put thousands of dollars back into my jeans.

Example 1: In January 2015, I was reviewing my final pay invoice for 2014. I cross checked my 2014 annual pension contributions against my annual base salary. The contributed amount should be 13.45% of the base salary, but mine wasn't. I discovered that I had **over contributed \$478.64** to my pension. I brought the error to the attention of the Calgary Police Service / City of Calgary and was refunded the money.

**Example 2:** I retired from the Calgary Police Service on Dec 30th, 2016. I received my final pay invoice in January 2017 and immediately identified a multitude of errors. First, I was missing \$1,320.16 in banked overtime pay. Second, I had only worked 40 hours or 1 week out of a 2 week pay period, but all of my deductions reflected 2 weeks of work. This resulted in a pension over contribution of \$388.81 and the payment of benefit premiums and union dues for a week after I had retired. I was able to recoup the missing pay and pen-

sion over contribution immediately, but the city refused to budge on the benefit premiums and dues, necessitating the filing of a grievance. That worked out okay, as during the grievance preparation, I discovered that I was eligible for an additional \$400.00 in "Wellness Account" reimbursement (due to language in collective agreement). In addition to the above amounts, I eventually recouped \$69.31 in benefit premiums and \$34.33 in union dues and insurance. By paying attention, I received an additional \$2,212.61.

Example 3: I mentioned earlier that I retired from the Calgary Police Service in December 2016. Part of the retirement process is the calculation of pension payments. In general terms, the Special Forces Pension is based on a contributor's average salary for their best 5 years of service (usually their last 5 years), multiplied by a percentage based on total number of years of service (2% per year). For example, a contributor with 30 years service would receive 60% of their 5-year average salary (2% x 30 years = 60% x 5-year average salary). The exact calculations are performed by Alberta Pension Services (APS) and the contributor / future retiree is provided an estimate of what their pension will be (usually quite close to the final amount). After a period of time, APS finalizes the pension and notifies the pensioner of the final pension

When I received my final pension amount notice from APS in June 2017, I realized that I hadn't been provided detailed information on how the final amount had been arrived at (the math)

and therefore couldn't review it for accuracy. I requested additional information from APS and they provided it. In my circumstance, my best 5 years were 2012 - 2016. I was quickly able to determine that the calculations for years 2013 - 2016 were correct, but the contribution amount (as reported by the City of Calgary) for 2012 didn't jibe with my own contribution and tax records. My reported pensionable salary for 2012 was \$1,113.30 less than what I actually made in 2012. After considerable digging, I was able to determine that the lower pensionable salary was a result of the reporting method used by the City of Calgary to report retroactive pay in 2012, for a period between Jan 3rd, 2011 and July 29th, 2012. Rather than assigning the retroactive pay and pension contributions to the actual periods worked, it was averaged over the entire 19-month retroactive period, resulting in the higher salary paid in 2012 being spread over 2011 & 2012. For most employees, this reporting method had no impact, but it shortchanged those retiring in 2016 with 2012 as part of their best 5-year average.

I brought my concern to the City of Calgary in December 2017. I established that I had actually earned and paid pension contributions on an additional \$1,113.30 over what had been reported by the city to APS. Surprisingly, the city refused to correct the situation, citing that it would be too much work to manually calculate individual pension amounts for retroactive periods.

I brought the matter to the attention of the Special Forces Pension Plan Board Manager, Liz Doughty. She rec-

ognized that contributors to the pension plan should get what they have paid for and she asked APS to investigate and mediate the problem. The end result was a recalculation of my pension to reflect the missing earnings. My pension increased by \$182.40. annually, which doesn't seem like a lot, but over 35 years its an additional **\$6,384**.

In Closing:

Hopefully my examples have provided you with some food for thought on the

importance of paying attention. The total dollar value recouped was \$9,075.25 (providing I collect pension for 35 years – I retired at 49). It is unlikely I would have seen any of these funds if I hadn't been attentive. *It pays to pay attention!* ■



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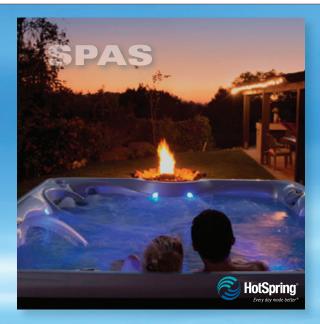
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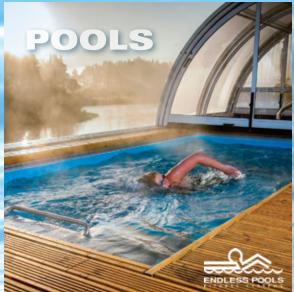














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