to sign Community Covenant

Tomorrow (Friday, June 6) the Town will mark the 70th anniversary of D-Day with the official signing and launch of the Community Covenant for Veterans and their families. This is the first Community Covenant for Veterans in Ontario, and second in Canada. The event will be held at the Gellert Community Centre, in Georgetown.

In the fall of 2011, the Town of Conception Bay South (Newfoundland) became the first community in Canada to endorse a Community Covenant. Veteran Affairs Canada describes a Community Covenant as follows:

A Community Covenant is ... an agreement within a community, defined by the community, to support Canada's Veterans and their families, in a manner specified within the Covenant document.

A Community is ... selfdefined by those who come forward to enter a Community Covenant. It may be identified by physical location (e.g. town, city, region, province, nation), organizational ties, (e.g. service organizations, school groups, business communities, non-governmental organizations), demographics, (e.g. youth, seniors, mothers, fathers, families), or any combination. Community can be at any level - local, regional, provincial, or national.

Regional/Acton Councillor Clark Somerville brought forward information related to the creation of a Community Covenant two years ago, and Town Council directed staff to review and report back.

The Community Coven-

ant fosters the continued development of the Town of Halton Hills as a community that embraces the veterans. It is intended that all residents and partners will take advantage of the opportunities to become part of this Covenant that respects and honours the veterans of Halton Hills.

The objectives of the Covenant are to:

- 1. Leverage support for Veterans and their families by affirming or reaffirming a community's willingness and commitment to maintaining and/or building an actively supportive environment where Veterans and their Families will be recognized, engaged and have their specific needs met;
- Develop and showcase partnerships, organizations, programs, and services within communities supporting Veterans and their families;
- Provide an opportunity to encourage or announce new or existing initiatives or programs of support and;
- 4. Create a network of community based resources within the Town

The Community Covenant Committee wanted to ensure that there was significant, sufficient and sustainable support to reach the goals of a Community Covenant and that all activities are respectful, inclusive, family-friendly, and community directed. The group completed an exercise to identify community needs and gaps. The guiding principles were developed and became the primary focus of the covenant.

The guiding principles are

· Work together to provide a healthy, vibrant and safe community for our veterans

- · Build on community programs that benefit veterans and their families
- · Strengthen and connect community partnerships and
- Celebrate and recognize veteran contributions to the community
- · Lead and promote community initiatives and events that support veterans and leave lasting memories in the community
- · Establish and measure support to determine community gaps
- Preserve and invest in our heritage and community his-
- · Educate and inform the community about veteran contributions

The action plan will be an evolving guideline for the working group to continuously work together and achieve the guiding principles of the Community Covenant.







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