

SALUTE TO VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer-based Boots Campaign Canada making big steps to aid first-responders, soldiers

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Georgetown-based Boot Campaign Canada has been making many strides in its support of the 350,000 people who serve in active duty in this country and plans to host a fundraising event here in the coming months.

Founded in 2013 after getting its inspiration from the original Boot Girls located in Texas, Boot Campaign Canada development co-ordinator Jason Lowrie explained that the Canuck version of the CRA-registered charity doesn't just support those in the military, as its U.S. counterparts do, but also tens of thousands of first responders.

Recently released statistics indicate that 30-35 per cent of first responders suffer from some sort of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or operational stress injury.

"PTSD is a hot-button topic right now and we just feel that there's more to it than the men and women in the forces,"

said Lowrie, a teacher at Gary Allan High School in Georgetown.

"RCMP officers, our police, fire and paramedics need to be looked after as well in the line of duty. Maybe they're not over in Afghanistan, but they're showing up at the scenes of car crashes and accidents and they're going through a lot of stress as well."

Several celebrities, including Toronto Blue Jays' slugger Jose Bautista and restaurant magnate Jim Treliving of The Dragons' Den, have helped generate awareness about the charity by having their pictures taken with the tan boots on.

Boot Campaign Canada also supports the Georgetown company on Armstrong Ave. called Original SWAT by having the public purchase boots through that firm.

In recent months, BCC donated 15 pairs of boots to homeless veterans, or veterans in transition, while funding an equestrian retreat for six RCMP officers and their spouses. There are also plans to arrange for home renovations or adaptations for disabled persons and Lowrie

added that the volunteer-run organization has been getting great response from its Facebook page and Twitter feed, with a steady stream of boot orders coming in since January. As well, BCC has received donations from groups who have organized benefit concerts and comedy nights. Details of an event in Halton Hills are in the works.

"We're not going to get into the business of event planning because there are only four of us who are working on this right now," said Lowrie, whose wife Amaranth is the campaign's public relations co-ordinator.

"This isn't only an awareness thing. We'd like it to have a community-building aspect where civilians are organizing backyard barbecue fundraisers, things like that."

The boots come in a dozen different styles, are either tan or black in colour and range in price from \$120 to \$170 per pair.

For more info, visit the website www.bootcampaign.ca



Boot Campaign Canada development co-ordinator Jason Lowrie (right) connected with Jose Bautista of the Toronto Blue Jays at Gregg Zaun's golf tournament last summer and the former MLB home-run king was more than happy to pose wearing his new tan boots to help raise awareness about the Canadian boot campaign.

Submitted photo



Volunteers... A Work of Heart!



National Volunteer Appreciation Week April 12-18, 2015

Georgetown Hospital is very fortunate to have an amazing team of dedicated and talented volunteers who enhance our patient and visitor experience every day.

We would like to extend a **BIG THANK YOU** to all our volunteers for their invaluable service and fundraising contributions. Our volunteers make a difference to our patients, visitors, staff & physicians as well as each other every day.

Volunteer with us! Visit www.haltonhealthcare.com



An act of volunteerism is like a stone thrown in a lake. Not only does it have a direct impact, but like ripples, a volunteer's efforts reach far and wide to improve communities. Undeniably, volunteers rock!

This **National Volunteer Week – April 12 to 18**, Town of Halton Hills Council and staff would like to extend their sincere thank you to the volunteers within our community. Thank you for your time, energy and compassion.

Thank you for making our community healthier, strengthening our organizations, mentoring our children and creating a more resilient and inclusive society.

Let's celebrate the volunteers among us who give so much of themselves to our community. Our volunteers are a big part of what makes life so special in Halton Hills and show why this is "Small Town Living at Its Best".

Mayor Rick Bonnette

