

Captain Shane Crawford stepping down as Lorne Scots Commander

By Nathan Howes
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

The 1188 Lorne Scots Royal Army Cadet Corps will give a final salute to its Commanding Officer on Aug. 30 after a near-decade of leadership.

Captain Shane Crawford, CD, will be stepping down as commander, and Lieutenant (Navy) Mark Phillips will take over the lead role in a change of command ceremony Tuesday at the Oakville Armoury.

"I found it very fulfilling and I think that youth can join without the belief they have to join the army. The key thing here it is an adventure training in a military atmosphere," said Crawford. "We're not here to put the army in cadets. We're here to teach you self-reliance."

The 51-year-old constable with Halton Region Police (HRP) spent nine years as commanding officer, and first got involved with the army in 1977. He left the "regular army" as a sergeant to join the HRP 27 years ago.



Lorne Scots Commander
Shane Crawford

"I don't want to go back to a reserve unit because I enjoyed the fulfillment of what (cadets) gives you. You really do make a difference," said Crawford. "My time with them has been such an eye opener, but the rewards there are to be able to make a difference in so many kids lives."

"You're helping these kids, who

normally wouldn't have an opportunity to be able to do things that are there, (which) has really been pertinent with my job as a police officer," he added.

He joined the cadets with his twin brother when they came to Oakville in 1970, he said. Crawford comes from a military family where his father spent 36 years serving in the Second World War, Korean and Congo wars.

Crawford said 65 per cent of all members of the Canadian Armed Forces were cadets at one time, which is why it is "a recruitment tool."

"There are 57,000 cadets in all of Canada. It is the largest youth organization, yet it is the least known about," said Crawford.

One of the most enjoyable activities for Crawford as commanding officer was outdoor adventure training with the kids taking them camping to teach them survival skills to become self-reliant, he said.

"You teach them the basics of camping and then move on to survival training where over a week-

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1188 Lorne Scots
Royal Army Cadet Corps

end, monitored and watched, they show up and they have to live off the land or they bring limited resources with them to be able to do that," said Crawford.

He has also been able to take some of the cadets to Greece on two separate occasions, coming up with airfare costs through fundraising, while food and hotel were paid for through a donor.

"That was very enjoyable because you see kids, who have never left Oakville, to get to go to the birthplace of democracy, and to be able to see a part of the world maybe they never will be able to see again in their lives," said Crawford.

When Crawford was a cadet, the program was a lot different than it

is now, since its focus isn't to teach kids to use weapons or how to kill because it has become socially unacceptable, Crawford said.

The success of the program, for some individuals, might not be seen for years if they choose a different career path, but they take with them the lessons they learned in cadets, he added.

"I'm hoping at somewhere down the road, maybe he's working for IBM or a lawyers firm that when people go 'oh man that was a great presentation' he can actually smile and say to himself at least 'I learned that through cadets,'" said Crawford. "Even rich kids come to us, but for whatever reason maybe things aren't great at home, (and) they learn the concept of family, the group and the unit. We work together as a group."

Tuesday's event will start at 6:30 p.m., with the ceremony at 7. Cadets are to dress in full dress uniform and other guests in business casual (no shorts). Oakville Armouries is located at 90 Thomas St. For more information, call 905-901-4616.

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