

CF dependants and citizenship documentation

QUESTIONS:

My son was born in the military hospital in Lahr, West Germany. We can't find his citizenship card. Can you help?

My daughter can't get an Ontario Health Card because no one can find a record of her birth. We were stationed overseas. How do I get this fixed?

ANSWER:

We've received many queries such as these in recent months – all those CF babies born overseas in the 1960s and '70s need health cards and passports. As well, other citizenship issues—that of foreign-born children of Second World War personnel, for example—have arisen.

The resulting requests for citizenship documentation has had Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the official source

of documentation covering foreign births of children of Canadian citizens, hopping.

Please note: If that Registration of Birth Abroad certificate your parents received when you were born overseas is in reasonable condition, it is still accepted as proof of citizenship. However, whether or not it's in good condition, you should replace it with a Citizenship Certificate (Proof of Canadian Citizenship) card. It's more durable and more widely accepted because of its enhanced security features and photo identification.

- Go to www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizen/index.html and scroll down to find the appropriate option.
- Visit www.cic.gc.ca/english/contacts/call.html or telephone 1-888-242-2100 for general info and other online services. ♦

Where do I get medical paperwork for my claim?

QUESTION:

I'm applying for benefits from Veterans Affairs Canada [VAC]. How do I get documentation on my condition?

ANSWER:

The CF is committed to the well-being of all personnel. If you've been disabled while on duty, or in other circumstances, the Forces endeavours to meet your needs as effectively as possible and in a timely manner.

Accordingly, the CF and VAC have established procedures that allow disability applications from CF personnel to be processed by VAC without further medical examinations or diagnostic tests by a CF physician.

When you apply for a disability award, the CF provides a complete copy of your medical file to VAC. This file provides comprehensive documentation of your medical history throughout your career in the CF. In most cases, your CF medical file will contain the necessary clinical data required by the VAC adjudicator assessing the application.

Should the VAC adjudicator require further clinical information, a CF

physician will examine you and provide updated documentation on your medical file. The decision to approve or deny the application rests solely with VAC.

If your initial application is denied, you has the right to appeal the decision with the assistance of the Bureau of Pension Advocates (BPA).

The lawyers working for BPA provide you advice and assistance with regard to how your application may be strengthened. This may necessitate that you undergo additional diagnostic testing and/or examinations by civilian specialists to supplement the clinical information provided by CF physicians in your CF medical file.

BPA has established a network of civilian physicians that you can access to provide this additional clinical review.

CF physicians are not involved in your appeal process because these additional tests and supporting data do not relate to the provision of healthcare and clinical outcomes.

- Go to www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=contact for contact information for VAC. ♦

Ontario business honours soldiers

By Ms Ruthanne Urquhart



Decorating Fotos & Flowers By Joanne for Canada

Day was a given. This year, Ms Joanne Ferguson and her staff decided to devote one window to a photo gallery of the CF soldiers who have died in Afghanistan.

"We did it because we could," she says simply. "We deal with the military here pretty much on a daily basis. We thought this would be a great way for everyone to see the faces that go with the names, and make it a little more real."

"Here" is Meaford, Ont., about 240 km northwest of Toronto, and the closest town to Land Force Central Area Training Centre (Meaford). The town decided that Canada Day 2007 would be a "Support Our Troops" day as well.

"We were in no way prepared for the reaction we got!" Ms Ferguson says. "Within five minutes of the photos going in, people were gathered around. Many came in to thank us for doing it."

Meaford and the military go back to 1942, when the federal government bought 17 500 acres about 8 km from town for training soldiers in tank warfare and artillery gunnery. The site became an annex to what was then Camp Borden.

In 1970, Borden lost the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps School to Gagetown, and the camp became a ghost

town till local Reserve units began to make unofficial use of the facilities. Beginning in 1989, the camp was redeveloped and modernized to accommodate a new training facility that today is used by CF Regular and Reserve Force units, by allied forces, and by police units from throughout Canada and around the world.

Through it all, Meaford has been supporting the troops, and today's camp residents, whoever they may be, return the favour with business and a whiff of distant places. And continuing reactions to Fotos & Flowers' window display.

"It wasn't until some of the base folks came in," Ms Ferguson says, "that I started to realize there were going to be two very different reactions. One said it was difficult to see them all 'front row, centre'. Then two soldiers stood there for a while, pointing and remembering the ones they had been posted with or trained with."

"We are very proud of our military," she adds, "and the job they do for us. This was one small way we could help everyone remember the ones we have lost."

Contact Fotos & Flowers by Joanne at fotoflowerjoanne@on.aibn.com, at 519-538-5701, or at 43 Sykes St. N., Meaford ON, N4L 1S7. ♦



Operational Stress Injury Social Support

QUESTION:

My friend retired from the armed forces due to personal illness, but can't adjust to civilian life. He watches the news about Afghanistan and gets very depressed. He wants to help and feels guilty he's not there. Is there anything the military can do to help him?

ANSWER:

Yes. Please have your friend go to www.osiss.ca/engraph/peer_sn_e.asp for information on Operational Stress Injury Social Support available to CF personnel and veterans, and their families. This is probably the best course of action for him to follow for understanding and support –

OSISS offers counseling and support from veterans, and their families, who have been there themselves.

For authentic testimonials about OSISS, go to www.forces.gc.ca/hr/cfpn/engraph/home_e.asp, and click on "Sections" and then "Casualty Support...".

As well, if he has not already been communicating with Veterans Affairs Canada, he should. Go to www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=contact for the location of his nearest VAC office. Alternatively, he can telephone toll-free 1-866-522-2122 (English) or 1-866-522-2022 (French). ♦