

Community Services

Capital News: Volunteer Centre Column 2013 November 7

Volunteers who help us remember

I went to get my hair cut on Saturday. The hair stylist and I were chatting about Halloween being over and Christmas on its way.

Tanya startled me by saying, "We should wait until after Remembrance Day to decorate for Christmas."

Wow. The importance of respect, of honour, of remembrance . . .

On my way home, I stopped at the grocery store and what did I see? People selling poppies.

Here is another example of committed volunteers reminding us about the important things in life. Their role is in fact part of our Canadian culture.

The Veterans Affairs Canada website tells us that the first Remembrance Day was held in 1919 to commemorate the end of World War 1 on Monday, November 11, 1918 at 11:00 am.

That is where the phrase 'the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month' originated.

At first it was called Armistice Day and it was celebrated on the same day as Thanksgiving between 1923 and 1931. Poppies and turkey dinners shared the Monday of the week in which November 11th fell. – I didn't know that.

All that changed in 1931 when Parliament passed a bill declaring Remembrance Day to be observed on November 11th and Thanksgiving Day was given its own day of October 12th.

The poppy has become the symbol of Remembrance Day, a symbol of unity for people around the world to reflect on the sacrifices of those who died in battle for freedom.

When you see volunteers selling poppies, they are part of a national campaign raising over \$14 million that is held in trust and goes towards Veterans and their dependents according to clearly defined criteria.

You can find out more about our local Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 26 at www.kcr.ca, Community Information Search Central Okanagan.

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