



On the fence:
U.S.-Mexico
border
debate

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Franco Varone
October 7 • Woodbridge, ON

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Honours for older vets

For those who can't attend a Remembrance Day ceremony, this regiment brings it to them

TOM GODFREY
Toronto Sun

An annual Remembrance Day ceremony at the Runnymede Healthcare Centre is a much-anticipated highlight for three generations of the Galea family of Toronto.

Jim Galea, 94, was adorned with his British army medals on Saturday, as the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, a regiment formed in 1860, marched to a stage accompanied by a bugle band to perform *God Save the Queen*.

Galea, his wife, Mary, 88, and other veterans were among 100 seniors and others attending the event at the Runnymede Rd. centre for complex, continuing care.

Mary served in Victory Kitchens in Malta during the Second World War. She was among hundreds of volunteers who cooked food for civilians and soldiers.

There was a two-minute silence after a band played *The Last Post*. Former Liberal MP Sarmite Bulte read *In Flanders Fields*.

"I love Canada and this country has been good to me and my family," said Galea, who moved here from Malta in 1951. "It was worth the struggle and fighting to be free."

Galea fought from 1939 to 1945 in the Royal Malta Artillery, which was part of the British Army, said his son, George, 55.

George, who is a retired

sergeant of the Queen's Own Rifles, said his dad, like others at the centre, cannot physically attend Nov. 11 ceremonies at area cenotaphs.

"We bring the ceremony here to them," George said. "This is a highlight of the year for many of the veterans at the centre."

Galea's granddaughter, Lisa Dess, a vice-president at the centre, said the regiment has been performing at the ceremony for 15 years.

"We are thankful for those who fought for our country," Dess said. "We are also here to honour those who died in the line of battle."

Women played a major role in supporting their husbands during the war, she said.

"Many of them lost their loved ones or members of their families," Dess said. "They suffered just as much as the men."

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Ex-soldiers rally across the country to protest cuts at Veterans Affairs

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CRAIG ROBERTSON/TORONTO SUN

Jim Galea, 94, poses with members of the Queen's Own Rifles during Remembrance ceremonies at Runnymede Healthcare Centre in Toronto's west end yesterday.

Centre spokesman Abigail Bueno said the facility has a long history in caring for people with specialized complex

continuing care needs. The hospital has doubled its capacity from 95 to 200 beds while expanding much-

needed programs and services, Bueno said.

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