

Legion plans expansions and upgrades

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In an effort to modernize the Royal Canadian Legion in Golden, planners are working to institute a four-phased expansion that will see the organization remain strong and healthy moving into the future.

Legion Branch 122 in Golden received a grant from the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) Community Initiatives program to begin work on the first phase of its expansion, involving extensive renovations to its facilities.

The Year 2011 marks 80 years that the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 122 has been in existence. “It was decided that we need to do something to both commemorate the anniversary and revitalize our legion branch to ensure we continue to serve both our veterans and our community for another 80 years,” states a bulletin on the Legion website.

In phase one of the 80th Anniversary Revitalization Project, the Legion will be replacing the existing 30 year plus roof over the lounge and dance floor as well as updating and freshening up the interior with a lighting upgrade, skylights and windows, and a new splash of paint. A new entrance way with wheelchair access doors is also in the works for this summer.

In the remaining phases of the project, the Legion plans to reinvigorate its facilities, staff and membership as well as its role in the community over the next 5 years. This will include more events, more outreach and a modernized look to its building.

Terry Hickey, Executive Committee Chairperson for Public Relations says the Legion wants to build its relations with the town and community to bring the branch into the 21st century and make it more appealing for younger generations.

“We’re trying to make it into something that people want to join and be a part of and erase the perception that it’s just a bunch of old fogies sitting around and telling war stories.”

Hickey explains that the primary function of the Legion is to support veterans and their families, as well as the community at large. The Legion raises funds through its operations and gives back to the community through support work, clubs and sports. It supports the Ladies Auxiliary and sponsors the Cadets. It also provides entertainment, music and events and a place for socialization and having good conversation.

“To make the Legion last another 80 years we need to ensure that we continue to help our vets and community and make it a centre that people want to come to. There was a time when you had to arrive at the Legion before five o’clock because it was so busy you couldn’t even get in there.”

For project details visit: www.rcl122.ca.

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