

To All OIRCA Members:

Camp Manitou Planning to Emerge from the Pandemic with a New Roof Courtesy of Rooftop Rescue



From left to right: Doug Entwistle, Camp Manitou; Nigel Price, Herman's Supply Company; Christopher AlRehany, GAF Canada ULC, and Joe DiBratto, Applewood Roofing & Sheet Metal Ltd.

Last summer OIRCA Members came together in what was thought to be the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic to reroof the Sandwich Teen Action Group's building in Windsor. Once again, this summer, the youth of this province needed help from OIRCA's Rooftop Rescue Foundation. This time it was Scouts Canada reaching out. COVID of course was still with us.

Scouts Canada is a non-profit organization that has existed in Canada for more than 100 years. Scouting gives kids something fun to look forward to. By getting outside, connecting with their friends, and sharing new experiences, youth build resiliency and are motivated to blaze their own trail.

Leading fun adventures with their friends, Scouts discover what they are capable of and how it connects with the communities in which they live. Whether in the community, nationally or globally, youth can work towards any goal while building confidence and skill.

Camp Manitou is a Scout Camp owned and operated by Scouts Canada. It is located just north of Burlington near Milton and serves youth in the regions of Halton, Peel, and the Greater Toronto Area. It sits on 91 acres of mixed fields and woods adjacent to the Bruce Trail and just south of Campbellville.

Although owned by Scouts Canada, Camp Manitou operates as a profit centre and must survive on camper fees and donations. Maintained and managed by volunteers only, financing capital project such as new roofs are a challenge. Over five thousand youth visit the facility each year to experience camping at either their tent sites or one of their indoor lodges. MacLaughlin Lodge, the building in need, was constructed in the late 1950's and has a shingle roof that is over 20 years old and is suffering from old age and a forest environment.

Once Don Marks, Executive Director of Rooftop Rescue had received the go ahead from the Foundation's Board of Directors he knew who he was going to call. Joe Dibratto, owner of OIRCA Active Member Applewood Roofing & Sheet Metal Inc. of Toronto had on several occasions expressed an interest in rescuing a roof. "While we are primarily an ICI roofing contractor, we have been getting more involved with installing shingles, so yes we will donate the labour on this project," said Dibratto.

"Joe is such a generous person", Marks commented. "He came back from his first site meeting one hundred percent committed to not only reroof the lodge but also deciding that he would reroof the Ranger's residence, fix its soffit and make necessary repairs to a third building."

OIRCA Associate Member GAF has been in business for over 130 years and is North America's largest manufacturer of roofing products. Adam Prestwich is GAF Canada ULC's Director Canada Sales and did not hesitate when asked if he would provide the shingles. "Yes, we will supply the shingles and we would like to bring in one of our supplier partners Herman's Supply Company, to deliver the shingles and other materials required," he replied. "The team at GAF values community. Our commitment to protect what matters most includes making a positive difference as neighbors and partners in the communities where we live and work. Thank you to OIRCA, Applewood Roofing and Herman's Supply for sharing these values and their partnership on this great project!"

"Here at Herman's, we are excited and can't wait to participate in this worthwhile venture," stated Nigel Price, Director of Sales for OIRCA Associate Member Herman's Supply Company. "We at Herman's Supply are honored to be part of such a worthy cause. Showing strong community support is a core value that Herman's aims for. It gives us great pleasure that Scouts Canada's Camp Manitou will have a new roof over their head."

Doug Entwistle, Manager of Camp Manitou was delighted that the project moved ahead so swiftly, especially with COVID in the way. "The Rooftop Rescue Foundation came to our rescue! The volunteers and thousands of children that use Camp Manitou are grateful

to the Foundation for replacing the roof on our lodge,” Entwistle stated. “With the camp closed due to the pandemic and no income for more than a year replacing the roof may not have been possible until after serious damage had been done. Don and his team reacted quickly to our request and were soon on site to evaluate the situation. OIRCA members were arranged to provide the required materials and labour. Thanks to their intervention the lodge will be able to welcome more children to exciting overnight adventures as soon as the pandemic restrictions ease.”

While the reroofing was taking place in late June, Ontario was still in Stage One of the province’s reopening plan. “We are governed by Scouts Canada COVID regulations which tend to take the lowest common denominator for all the provincial jurisdictions across Canada,” said Entwistle. “Currently we are hoping to open for outside day use only around the third week of July. We would only have two groups at a time. Perhaps by mid-August we would have outside overnight camping. This would only be for the older sections – Scouts and Venturers.”

He went on to say, “Indoor use of the lodges is up in the air at the moment. I am hoping maybe by the start of September. This would require provincial restrictions to ease and allow indoor groups of at least 50 people.”

One thing is for sure. When all this pandemic business is behind us, Camp Manitou will be in much better shape for future Scouting.



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