

MICHIGAN HOSTS EASTERN ZONE CONVENTION

The Royal Canadian Legion's Eastern United States Zone is still going strong and held its biennial convention this past September in Royal Oaks, Mich.

The Eastern U.S. Zone is quite an active place these days, with posts stretching all the way from Michigan to Florida and more than 500 members on the roster last year. They hold a convention every two years, as is normal for the Legion, and this last meeting drew more than 50 attendees—transplanted Canadians—from all across the eastern U.S.

In elections, Ray Mullen was re-elected as zone commander, a post he has held since 2000. Judy Miller was chosen as first vice-president and Dann Oliver second vice. Gord Bennett is the zone chaplain, service officer and Legion Magazine correspondent.

The big news was that Dominion

Command President Pat Varga made the trip to Michigan for the convention. "I have to give a lot of thanks to Pat Varga for coming," said Mullen, a veteran of the Canadian Forces who's lived off and on in the U.S. for years. "Since I became Eastern Zone commander, I've been waiting and waiting for a chance to get a president at our convention and finally it happened."

The big issue for the zone is keeping the membership numbers up and that was discussed at the convention. "Membership is an ongoing thing," said Mullen. "You might say number one on our list."

In addition to the standard camaraderie and good cheer, there was also a performance by the Canadian Legion Drill Team from Lorraine, Ohio. The group of eight women dressed up in their finest



Attending the convention are (from left) Zone Commander Ray Mullen, Dominion President Pat Varga and service officer Gord Bennett.

red tartans and put on what was, by all accounts, quite a show.

"The branches in the U.S. are carrying on," said Varga. "They're endeavouring to get new members and they had representation from most of their branches at the convention. And that's important."

Mullen concluded: "We take pride in our convention and we just discuss everything that's on the table, because we don't see each other all that often."

The next Eastern Zone convention is scheduled for early fall in 2013. **LM**