



A group of students, anxious to check out “the bug,” gather around the VW Beetle.

Photo by Veronica Russell, Prairie Girl Photography

Other daring souls tried the emergency lights and loudspeaker chiding friends with the public address system. Webb and Bodden stood back smiling. They knew that they were creating bonds with youth that will follow through to adulthood.

The trip to the school was successful. Webb says kids remember the events, even years later when they are adults and he has met people he spoke to as youth years ago.

All community events and programs the RCMP set up are done free. The upkeep of the car is something that has to be considered and the Detachment receives funding from the nation-wide Mounted Police Foundation.

The foundation was set up to assist the RCMP Commissioner to protect the image of the Mountie, one that Webb says is known worldwide.

“It’s well-known,” he said. “I’ve talked to people from Japan and Spain and they know it.”

As part of the souvenir trade to attract tourists, inferior products were being produced and the RCMP didn’t want to be associated with poor quality merchandise. They decided to clamp down on the use of images or goods depicting the Mounties and formed a product-licensing program in 1995.

“It was decided that there was a lot of value in the image,” said Webb.

Royalties collected from the sale of licensed products go into the fund and are then distributed to detachments across Canada.

“We had a source of income that we hadn’t tapped before,” he said.

Since the Force didn’t have much experience with product licensing, a five-year contract was signed with the Walt Disney Company (Canada) Ltd.

The company was very effective.

“They got rid of a lot of the junk stuff,” said Webb.

But now that the contract is up, the RCMP must continue to license on its own. Despite the change in the regulatory body, Webb knows the program will continue. The lease on the Volkswagen is up November next year and he isn’t sure what they will get next.

“Hopefully we will replace it with another one,” he said.

He knows there is a need for the programs he administers. Some things have changed during his time on the Force — like a reduction in impaired driving — but the work that still needs to be done reminds him of something an instructor told him when he graduated 19 years ago.

“You will never win,” his instructor said. “You will have a job until you retire.”

***Out in the community!
Cpl. Webb lets one of the students sit in the driver’s seat.***

*Photo by
Veronica Russell,
Prairie Girl
Photography*

