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NEWS 2
Yanow winner declared



COMMUNITY 3
Civilian doctors receive medal



FEATURE 6-7
Happy Holidays from Senior leaders



Final days before Christmas

Gary Webster, Contributor
Above: Navy League Cadet Corps Admiral Rayner Victoria held their annual Christmas dinner at the Esquimalt Archie Browning Centre. From left to right taking a dip in the chocolate fountain, CPO Heather Logan, A/SLt Camille O'Connor, Cadet OC Brandon Muttitt and Lt(NL) Gayle Grice.



Dunc Malcolm/Black Press
Left: Children aboard HMCS Regina clamour to reach the switch that turned on the ship's Christmas lights during the Navy Lighting kick off, December 11.

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HMCS Ottawa smarter than a QL3

Mary Ellen Green
Staff writer

Members of the Pacific Fleet found out if they were "Smarter than a QL3" during the 23rd annual RAdm Yanow (R'td) Naval Combat Information Operator (NCIOP) trade competition.

It wrapped up Friday, Dec. 12 with *HMCS Ottawa* declaring victory over three other ships in the fleet.

The competition had over 20 events testing sailors' skills in everything from seamanship and naval history to nuclear plotting and voice procedure.

"This was an opportunity for all NCIOPs to gather together for a friendly competition of their skills and enhance esprit de corps within the trade," said PO1 Howard Manderson, Fleet

School Combat Information section supervisor and competition organizer.

The contest featured teams from *HMC Ships Ottawa, Calgary, Regina* and *Protecteur* and ran over five days. Teams were made up of four members, one each from QL3, QL5A, QL5B and QL6. Players competed individually in events such as Relative Velocity, Nuclear Plotting, Equipment Troubleshooting, Combat Information "Jeopardy" and Global Command and Control System.

They also competed as a team in the Amazing Race, a multi-event competition at Naden that included physical training at the Naden Athletic Centre, a history lesson at the CFB Esquimalt Naval and Military Museum, seamanship testing at the boat-

shed and a tricky plotting quiz at the Naden Drill Shed. The fastest team was *HMCS Calgary* who came in just over 30 minutes.

Another new event this year was "Are you smarter than a QL3", and while a lot of fun, didn't count for points towards the teams' total.

Awards and trophies were handed out at the Pacific Fleet Club on Dec. 12 by RAdm Yanow, Cmdre Nigel Greenwood, and CPO1 Lewis Walsh, the most senior NCIOP in the Canadian Forces.

RAdm Yanow was presented with a NCIOP trade coin at the ceremony, which was introduced last year during the trade's 60th anniversary celebrations.

A graduating class of 10 QL3 students were also presented with the coins.



Left: OS Kevin Colson of *HMCS Regina* throws a heaving line during the Amazing Race competition at Naden's Boat Shed.

Right: OS Chris Holmes, MS James Simon, PO2 Ron Neufeld and LS Nicholas Mulligan formed team *HMCS Ottawa* for the Admiral Yanow Naval Combat Information Operator trade competition.

See Page 9 for full results.



Mary Ellen Green, Lookout

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Shelley Lipke, Lookout Base Commander Capt(N) Marcel Hallé presents Dr Steven Kraus and Dr Rachel Barton with Task Force Afghanistan medals for their service in Afghanistan as part of a surgical team at Kandahar airfield.

Civilian doctors receive special medal

Shelley Lipke
Staff writer

In their wildest dreams a husband and wife doctor team from Duncan never imagined they would be part of a Canadian surgical team in Afghanistan, let alone receive a Canadian Forces medals for their work.

Following five weeks of work in March, which they characterized as the most devastating trauma work imaginable, both doctors were given Task Force Afghanistan medals.

Base Commander Capt (N) Marcel Hallé made the presentation to the couple Dec. 8 at Canadian Forces Health Services Centre (Pacific).

"It was a great honour to receive these medals," said anesthetist Dr Steven Kraus.

"It seems like such a small effort we've contributed compared to what the medics in Afghanistan face on a daily basis," said general surgeon Dr Rachel Barton.

After learning about the need for medical staff in the war torn country from a colleague who had worked in Afghanistan, they both felt duty-bound to help.

It took a year of planning before the couple went on the mandatory five-day military training course in Kingston, which prepared them for Afghan life and taught them how to react in dangerous situations.

Once in Afghanistan, the doctors worked alongside other Canadian specialists who formed the Canadian surgical team at the Kandahar Airfield Base hospital. At times when their individual skills were needed by other nation's surgical teams, such as the Dutch or Danish, they would break away from the Canadian team to help.

"When we worked with people who did their training in different countries, we were surprised at how similar the work was and how well everyone worked together," said Dr. Barton. "Everyone performed their job com-

pletely devoid of ego, because looking after these patients was the number one priority."

The work itself was more than the doctors had anticipated. "It was devastating," said Dr. Kraus. "Even the most dedicated trauma team in North America wouldn't have seen so many blast injuries."

One of the worst scenarios imaginable occurred when a bomb went off during a battle outside Kandahar city, sending 17 casualties into the hospital simultaneously for treatment.

"It was organized chaos," said Dr Kraus.

The hospital headquarters was transformed into a trauma bay with 17 separate trauma teams assessing and sending patients to the operating room in order of priority.

"Metal folding chairs were set up and used as an operating table to put chest tubes in," said Dr Barton, who played the dual role of assessing patients and operating on them.

The doctors admit they weren't well equipped to deal with young children, and they found this very difficult. Dr Kraus remembers one emotional moment when trying to save a child who had aspirated on a bead. "If we had the equipment we had in Canada the child would have had a good outcome, but this didn't happen and it was a very discouraging moment."

The majority of their patients were civilian, but they also treated military and Taliban patients. Dr Barton remembers the ironic situation when

a young Taliban man was brought into the hospital after being shot.

"We shot him, and he didn't die, so we had to fix him up," she said.

Their working schedule varied greatly, and they generally had one day on and the next day off. But emergencies could arise at any time creating long working days and odd hours.

Both doctors brought their bicycles from Canada so they could get to the hospital within 10 minutes of being called by pager.

The couple lived separately in dorm-style hard shack accommodation with same-sex roommates. Since their accommodation was close to each other they would meet up for movie nights and visit each other often. "I've known Steven since I was 19, so it felt like we were dating again," said Dr Barton.

Aside from their daily work in the operating room, they also taught some of their skills to local doctors at the Afghan National Army Hospital near Kandahar airfield.

In March their service with the military ended and they flew back to Canada. While they were happy to return to the safety and security of home, they found themselves reflecting on the experience.

"Being a part of this big machine and seeing how much effort is being put into helping Afghanistan was humbling," said Dr Barton. "It's also filled me with anguish to see what people are up against and how they have been dealing with this for centuries."

She plans on framing her medal to hang in her office as a reminder of the unbelievable experience that will remain in her mind for both good and bad reasons.

While Dr Kraus doesn't work out of an office, he plans to hang his at home.

When asked if they would go back, "In a heartbeat," they both replied.

"Being a part of this big machine and seeing how much effort is being put into helping Afghanistan was humbling."

-Dr Rachel Barton

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WHAT SAY YOU

New Year's Eve long ago on warship

Story by Edward Gray

Edited by his daughter,
Gloria Gray Lorenzen

When I joined the Royal Canadian Navy at HMCS Nonsuch, in Edmonton, AB, in December 1948, at 19 years old, I didn't expect to be fighting for democracy in Korea just 20 months later.

I thought joining the navy was the sensible thing to do.

During the dimming days of 1950 and the dawning of 1951, New Year's Eve would not be celebrated with fancy dress balls, gatherings at neighbours' homes, or stopping off at a cherished public house for a dram.

For Canada's sailors who sailed the waters of the Far East in HMCS Sioux during the Korean War, the impending New Year was just another day in a long stretch of days at sea.

Petty Officers Toflin and White, and myself, Able Seaman Stoker Gray, were on first watch in Sioux's forward boiler room as the final sunset of 1950 passed. We had been 44 days at sea on patrol in the Yellow Sea, notorious for its storms that boiled up without warning. Since the winters around the Korean Peninsula could be rather severe, the water was covered with ice. Sioux was steaming along at a comfortable 16 knots pushing aside the ice that tried to interfere with her appointed rounds while the midnight hour approached.

After such a long duration without the benefit of being able to kick up a bit of dust ashore, we were bored. And we were cold, despite being in a boiler room that generated high pressure steam to drive the destroyer's twin turbines. A boiler room requires copious amounts of fresh air in order to keep the fires burning.



Able Seaman Ed Gray with fellow sailors Petty Officers Toflin and White as they pose for a photo more than 50 years ago.

The forced air fans were gulping vast amounts of the frigid air from above, cascading the wintry blast down into the boiler room. We were bundled in duffle coats, our hands encased in service issue mittens.

As per boiler room routine, stokers put potatoes on top of the boiler to be baked and usually eaten just before going off watch. Ours were cooking nicely but in the meantime, White suggested we play a game from our younger days called hopscotch to warm up. But in a destroyer's belly here is no terra firma, so we had to make do with hopping along the steel grating walkways. Being ingenious Canadian sailors we decided to use our mittens as markers.

First up was White; he threw his mitten forward then hopscotched across the grates, stooping and picking up his mitten. Next it was Toflin's turn, then my turn.

I tossed my mitten down onto the open steel deck, hopped and stooped and so it went. However, topside, the weather had taken a turn for the worse. The wind had come up and the waves had increased in size. The Yellow Sea was about to teach Sioux's forward boiler room crew a thing or two about playing hopscotch on watch.

Suddenly, as I was hopscotching my way across the boiler room grates, the ship lurched and I was thrown off balance and landed unceremoniously in the bilge. It was hard to tell which was louder - the turbine engines or the laughter from Toflin and White. With as much decorum as I could muster, I extricated myself from the bilge. With nothing broken, only my ego slightly bruised, I climbed up to join my boiler-room mates for the baked potato feast. However, Toflin had devoured them while

I had struggled to get out of the bilge. Not one was left. Fed up and cold, I was grateful our watch was over and the middle watch about to take up their duties.

The midnight hour approached and Commander P.D. Taylor gave permission to sound the ship's sirens to bring in 1951 in grand style. They echoed across the dark, icy Yellow Sea, mingling with Canadian sailors' thoughts of those back home.

Decades later I realize that in spite of being hurtled into the bilge, and missing out on a baked potato feast, my first New Year's Eve at sea was a great start to a New Year.

Ed Gray (1929-1997) retired from the navy in July 1972. When he took his release at Esquimalt, B.C. he was a Petty Officer Naval Storesman. He is buried with many of his mates in God's Acre Veterans Cemetery in Esquimalt.

Christmas and New Years' Mass Schedule:

Christ the Redeemer Chapel/ Naden

- Christmas Eve Mass: 24 December @ 1700 hrs

Our Lady Star of the Sea Chapel, Chapel (RC) Belmont Park

- Christmas Eve Mass: 24 December @ 2000 hrs

Christmas Day Mass/ Our Lady Star of the Sea Chapel
25 December, @ 10:30 hrs

New Year's Day Mass/ Christ the Redeemer Chapel
01 January 2009, @ 1030 hrs

New Year's Day Mass / Our Lady Star of the Sea Chapel
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Oh those were the days, when a screen door could buy a car

Ron Fawcett of Whitby, ON, died recently at 79 after restoring hundreds of antique and classic automobiles. He also supplied many vintage cars for movies and television.

When Ron was five, he was living with his mother and dad in a rented house in Hamilton, ON. It was 1934 in the depths of the Great Depression and his dad was out of work with no money to pay the rent. The landlord told them they would be evicted Monday morning.

On Sunday evening, a man drove an old Model T Ford running on three cylinders into their yard and knocked on the back door. He told Ron's dad he had no money for gas to get home and was wondering if he could sell the car to him for five dollars.

Fawcett said he was "financially embarrassed" and had no money. Then the man said: "Could I have the screen door off the back of your house in exchange for the car?"

Without saying a word, Ron's dad picked up a screwdriver, unscrewed the door, and handed the man the door, the screws, and the screwdriver. The man walked off down the street with the screen door under

his arm.

Then Ron's dad gave his son a gallon can and a rubber hose with instructions to siphon "a small amount of gas" from each car parked along the street. While Ron did this, his dad fixed the dead cylinder in the Model T and his mother packed up all their belongings.

They left town at midnight and drove all night till they arrived at a farm near Drumbo, where some kind-hearted relatives let them stay awhile. Then they moved on. Ron attended 14 schools while growing up, and to earn extra money, his dad turned that 1922 Model T into a clown car and drove it in parades for the next 40 years.

When he died in 1974, Ron placed the steering wheel in his dad's hands and then closed the coffin. He installed a replacement wheel and drove the car



"Buck 'n' Snort" at a flea market in Oshawa.

himself (nicknamed "Buck 'n' Snort") in parades for the next 33 years. The off-centre wheels made the car bounce up and down and hidden canisters squirted water on the spectators. Ron's son, Peter Fawcett, of Fawcett Motors in Whitby, now has the car and it's still running.

If you happen to see the car at a movie shoot, be sure to read the wording on the back: "Borrowed from Fawcett Motor Carriage

Co. located six corn fields north of Whitby just opposite white cow standing in field."

As a thank you, if your story is published in this column you will receive a copy of Bill Sherkh's book "60 Years Behind the Wheel: The Cars We Drove in Canada 1900-1960". To share your stories or photos e-mail biltsherkh@sympatico.ca or write Bill Sherkh, 25 John St., P.O. Box 255, Leamington, ON N8H 3W2.

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AS Christmas and the year 2009 approach, I am struck by the speed with which another year has passed, and amazed at the tremendous accomplishments by members of our Formation defence team in the face of mounting challenges.

Our ships and maritime aircraft have covered over half the globe, demonstrating our resolve to maintain freedom of the seas, combat terrorism, help those in need and re-affirm our commitment to allies, coalition partners and friends. Our efforts are recognized as significant contributions towards stronger relations with the United States and countries of the Americas and Asia-Pacific.

MARPAC and JTFP soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen have deployed in support of operations in many places, including our ongoing major commitment in Afghanistan.

As you are all too aware, the sacrifices are many, but none so dear as the lives that have been lost by our comrades in arms. We gain strength from their courage and commitment to duty and are inspired by the immense strength and pride shown by their families.

Care of the family is and

shall continue to be the foundation that enables us to fully commit to these missions at home and abroad. For all members of the Canadian Forces and DND that will be away from loved ones during the holiday period, I know you join me in extending our Formation's best wishes for a fulfilling and rewarding tour of duty and safe return home to their families.

Looking ahead to 2009, our ship, aircraft and personnel deployments in support of maritime security, Search and Rescue, domestic operations and training will continue. Early in the New Year, we will join all British Columbians in celebrating the one-year countdown to the opening of Vancouver's 2010 Winter and Paralympic Games. Our Joint Task Force Games Headquarters and our 2010 Component and Supporting Commands have been ramping up for over a year in preparation for this milestone event. This is a huge undertaking. Canadian Forces' support to the 2010 Olympics and Paralympics will be the largest joint domestic security operation undertaken by the Canadian Forces since the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics.

As we prepare for the Olympic Games throughout 2009, we will also witness the commencement of official activities for our

Canadian Navy Centennial celebrations, also in 2010.

Combined, these activities make for another busy year ahead, which I realize is nothing new for this Formation. In this regard, I know that I ask a lot of you and your families.

As your Commander, I am as proud as I am grateful for your dedication, realizing that none of what we accomplish is possible without your commitment and the support of our families. I look to the New Year with optimism in addressing some of our very real personnel pressures, while continuing to contribute first-class, professional service to the defence and security of our country as well as prepare for truly historic events in 2010. We have a lot to look forward to.

My wife Debra and I and our family extend a heartfelt season's greetings and wish you a safe, prosperous and Happy New Year.

Rear Admiral Tyrone Pile
Commander Maritime Forces Pacific/Joint Task Force Pacific/Joint Task Force Games

À l'approche de Noël et du Nouvel An, je suis étonné de la vitesse à laquelle l'année s'est écoulée et ébahi par les réa-

lisations remarquables des membres de l'équipe de défense de la Formation, qui sont confrontés à des défis grandissants. Nos bâtiments et nos aéronefs maritimes ont patrouillé plus de la moitié de la planète afin de démontrer clairement notre détermination à maintenir la sécurité des voies maritimes, à combattre le terrorisme, à aider ceux qui sont dans le besoin et à réaffirmer notre engagement envers nos alliés, nos partenaires de la coalition et nos amis. Nos efforts sont reconnus et contribuent grandement au renforcement de nos relations avec les États-Unis et avec les pays des Amériques et de l'Asie - Pacifique.

Les soldats, les marins et les aviateurs des Forces maritimes du Pacifique et de la Force opérationnelle interarmées (Pacifique) ont été déployés dans des opérations de soutien en de nombreux endroits, notamment en Afghanistan, notre principal engagement militaire actuel. Comme vous le savez tous nous devons faire de nombreux sacrifices et aucun n'est plus coûteux que la disparition de nos compagnons d'armes. Nous puissions notre force dans leur courage et leur dévouement au service, et notre inspiration dans la détermination et la fierté sans bornes dont font preuve leurs familles. Le soutien à la famille est et restera la pierre angulaire nous permettant d'entreprendre ces missions, au pays et à l'étranger. Quant aux membres des Forces canadiennes et du MDN en déploiement qui seront séparés de leurs proches durant la période des Fêtes, je sais que vous vous joignez à moi et à la Formation pour leur souhaiter de vivre une période de service satisfaisante et enrichissante et de rentrer sains et saufs auprès de leur famille.

En 2009, nos déploiements (navires, aéronefs, personnel) se poursuivront en soutien à la sécurité des voies maritimes, pour des opérations de recherche et sauvetage ainsi qu'aux fins d'opérations nationales et d'opérations d'entraînement. Dès le début du Nouvel An, nous nous joindrons à tous les Britannico-Colombiens qui souligneront le fait qu'il ne restera plus qu'un an avant le début des Jeux Olympiques

Off at Maritime Forces Pacific

paralympiques d'hiver 2010 à Vancouver. Le quartier général de la Force opérationnelle interarmées des Jeux olympiques et les commandements de soutien et les composantes annexes sont en préparation depuis plus d'un an en vue de cet événement important.

Il s'agit d'une entreprise colossale. L'opération de soutien dont seront responsables les Forces canadiennes lors des Jeux de 2010 constitue l'opération interarmées de sécurité intérieure la plus importante reprise par les Forces canadiennes depuis les Jeux olympiques d'été de Montréal en 1976.

Lors que nos préparatifs en vue des Jeux s'échelonneront sur toute l'année 2009, nous assisterons au début des activités officielles prévues dans le cadre du Centenaire de la Marine canadienne, en 2010. Ensemble, ces activités feront de 2009 une année fort occupée, qui n'est rien d'anormal pour la Formation. En ce moment, je sais que je vous en demande beaucoup, à vous et à vos familles. En tant que votre commandant, je suis fier et reconnaissant de votre dévouement et je suis conscient du fait que notre succès dépend entièrement de votre engagement et du soutien de nos familles. C'est avec optimisme que j'aborde la nouvelle année; j'espère que nous pourrions régler nos problèmes réels en matière de ressources humaines tout en contribuant des services professionnels de qualité à la défense et à la sécurité de notre pays, et en nous permettant de participer à un événement historique de grande envergure en 2010. Nous avons beaucoup à apprendre de l'année qui vient.

Mon épouse Debra et ma fille se joignent à moi pour vous souhaiter chaleureusement de joyeuses fêtes et une bonne et heureuse année!

**Contre-amiral
Tyron Pile**
Commandant des Forces
opérations du Pacifique/
Force opérationnelle inter-
armées du Pacifique/
Force opérationnelle inter-
armées des Jeux
olympiques



We have so much to be thankful for as we enter into this holiday season.

Another hectic, but operationally successful year is quickly coming to a close - a year in which each of you as members of the Defence Team can take tremendous pride in your outstanding contributions to the many missions, operations and exercises that have unfolded. All Canadians reinforce this pride and are truly appreciative and respectful of what you've done and what you continue to do in support of peace and security.

Much of who we are in the military and public service has been built on long standing and rich traditions that define what we do and who we are as an integrated defence community. This rich tapestry includes the personal and family values that define who you are as individuals and what you collectively contribute to make the Navy, the Canadian Forces and DND the iconic organization that it is.

As we reflect on the past year, our thoughts, prayers and support go out to those individuals that are deployed and those who must work during the Christmas period - for you epitomize the words in our proud anthem, "We stand on guard for thee."

Our deepest gratitude and our prayers are extended to those members that have given their life in the service of our country over this past year, and also to their families, for the sacrifice they have made is great.

As many of you prepare to be with friends and family in celebration of your respective

traditions, enjoy and cherish this special time. It is our loved ones who provide the cornerstone of support that enables us to do what it is that we do so well in bringing stability in a chaotic world.

As your Base Commander, along with my wife Elaine, our son Matthieu and daughters Danielle and Renée, we extend a heartfelt thank you to each of you and your families. We wish you all a safe and wonderful Christmas, and look forward to the challenges that 2009 will bring.

**Marcel Hallé
Captain(N)
Base Commander
CFB Esquimalt**

En ce début du temps des Fêtes, nous avons tant de raisons d'être reconnaissants. Une autre année mouvementée mais opérationnellement fructueuse touche à sa fin - une année au cours de laquelle vous avez tous, en tant que membres de notre équipe de défense, apporté aux nombreuses missions, opérations et exercices qui se sont succédé, une contribution extraordinaire dont vous pouvez être fiers. Tous les Canadiens vous admirent et vous remercient pour vos accomplissements passés et futurs au service de la paix et de la sécurité. Une bonne partie de ce que nous sommes et de ce que nous faisons, militaires et civils, découle des riches et anciennes traditions qui informent l'action de notre communauté intégrée de défense. Au cœur de ce patrimoine sont les valeurs personnelles et familiales qui nous définissent en tant qu'individus


et qui définissent l'action que nous menons collectivement pour faire de la Marine, des Forces canadiennes et du MDN l'organisation emblématique qu'elles sont aujourd'hui.

Alors que nous songeons à l'année qui vient de s'écouler, nos pensées, nos prières et notre soutien vont à ceux et celles qui sont en mission ou qui doivent travailler pendant la période de Noël - pour « protéger nos foyers et nos droits », selon les belles paroles de notre hymne national. Notre reconnaissance la plus sincère et nos prières vont à ceux de nos membres qui ont donné leur vie pour notre pays au cours de l'année qui s'achève, ainsi qu'à leurs familles. Il n'est pas de mot pour exprimer l'immensité de leur sacrifice.

Que ceux d'entre vous qui se préparent à célébrer cette période spéciale avec leur famille et leurs amis, selon leur tradition respective, en retirent toute la joie possible. C'est dans les êtres chers que nous puisons une bonne partie de la force que nous avons de faire notre devoir pour assurer un peu de stabilité dans un monde de chaos. Ma femme Elaine, notre fils Matthieu et nos filles Danielle et Renée, se joignent à moi, votre commandant de base, pour vous remercier tous, vous et vos familles, du fond du cœur. Nous vous souhaitons le plus joyeux des Noëls, et attendons avec sérénité les défis que l'année 2009 nous réserve.

**Capitaine de vaisseau
Marcel Hallé**
Commandant de la base
BFC Esquimalt

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HMCS Ottawa's LS Michael Smith assembles furniture for the Lampson Street Military Family Resource Centre day care. Sailors from the ship helped prepare the new facility, which is slated to open in the new year.

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Shelley Lipke, Lookout

Above: As part of the Base Logistics hockey challenge on Dec. 17, players flew through the breakaway skills portion of the competition by speed skating around cones, showing their puck handling skills before taking shots on goal. Twenty-four players took part in the fun challenge at the Wurtele arena.

Below: Cpl Krista McKeough takes a shot on goal during the base logistics hockey challenge held at Naden arena on Dec. 17.



Admiral Yanow results		
Awards	QL5A - LS Milligan	QL5B - MS Simon
2008 Team Champions - HMCS Ottawa	HMCS Ottawa	HMCS Ottawa
2008 Overall QL3	QL5B - MS Whitman	GCCS
Champion - OS Holmes	HMCS Calgary	QL3 - OS Colson HMCS Regina
HMCS Ottawa	Voice Procedure	QL5A - LS Milligan
Amazing Race - HMCS	QL3 - OS Colson HMCS Regina / OS Brauer	HMCS Ottawa
Calgary	HMCS Ottawa	QL5B - LS Nicol HMCS Regina
Rel Vel	QL5A - LS Sparks	CIO Jeopardy
QL3 - OS Holmes	HMCS Regina	QL3 - OS Brauer HMCS Ottawa
HMCS Ottawa	QL5B - MS Simon	Ottawa
QL5A - LS Milligan	HMCS Ottawa	QL5A - LS Sparks
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

FEDERAL SUPERANNUATES GENERAL meeting. Tuesday, January 13 at 10am. 411 Gorge Road East. # 292 Legion. There will be a speaker from VIHA. Call 477-6102 for more info.

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29 Dec 08 Normal Routine 6am - 10pm Pool 6am - 9pm	30 Dec 08 Normal Routine 6am - 10pm Pool 6am - 9pm	31 Dec 08 Open 6am - 1pm Pool 6am - 1pm	1 Jan 09 New Years Day CLOSED	2 Jan 09 Normal Routine 6am - 10pm Pool 9am - 5pm	3 Jan 09 Normal Routine 9am - 8pm Pool 9am - 8pm	4 Jan 09 Normal Routine 9am - 8pm Pool 9am - 8pm
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Ship divers unite to hone their skills

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HMCS Ottawa

An all time high was set when a total of 25 ship's team divers and three support craft participated in a fleet dive off Royal Roads University on Thursday, Dec. 11.

With decreased numbers of divers in the fleet, maintaining diver currency and promoting recruiting have become two of the major challenges facing ship's dive teams. In an attempt to address these issues, the dive objective was to conduct assessment dives on lapsed divers.

Fleet dives occur once per month, with the responsibility for planning and coordinating the dives rotating between ships. As the whole fleet was in harbour for the holiday season, there were plenty of divers available to participate. With this many personnel involved, extra support from Queen's Harbour Master (QHM), Fleet Dive Unit (Pacific) and Maritime Operations Group Four was required.

With such a cooperative

effort, it was possible to conduct assessment dives for six lapsed divers and get a total of 18 divers into the water for a solid 30-minute swim.

Special recognition goes to HMCS Ottawa's Dive Officer, SLt Stanley, for organizing this month's dive, and to the dive supervisors, SLt Brown and A/SLt Morrow for their hard work to ensure the dive was conducted safely.

Credit also goes to all the dive officers for their help with organizing the event and acting as office of primary interest.

As well, thanks go to the team from QHM for their support with the Sea Truck. Many of the assessment dives were the result of the last minute efforts made by LCdr Hillier to gain waivers for which the divers are very appreciative.

Lastly, thanks to FDU(P) for the loan of their benches, it would have been a tough go without them.

If you have any questions about becoming a Ship's Team Diver, please feel free to contact your Ship's Dive Officer.



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Leigh Gagnon BEd, BA, LLB

Mel Hunt practises military law, criminal law, and personal injury law, and is a former member of the Judge Advocate General's Branch in The Canadian Forces.

Leigh Gagnon practises family law, real estate law, and in the area of wills and estates.

They look forward to being of continuing service to you at 813 Goldstream or 895 Fort Street. You may contact them at 478-1731.

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Sgt Eileen Redding, 19 Wing PAO

Corporal Jessie Blanchette is hugged tightly by his daughter Emily upon returning from deployment.

Home sweet home

Lt Alexandre Cadieux
19 Wing PA

The Comox Valley airport terminal was unusually busy in the early hours of Saturday, Dec. 13. Family members of the 19 Mission Support Squadron (19 MSS) waited with anticipation for the arrival of their loved ones returning from a tour of duty in the Middle East.

At approximately 3:30 a.m. the lights of the CC-150 Polaris were visible from the runway as the aircraft slowly made its way toward the anxious crowd, reaching its destination after travelling for 36 hours. The 65-member contingent was greeted by the Wing Commander, Colonel Fred Bigelow; the Wing Chief Warrant Officer; CWO Lloyd Hodgins, and senior supervisors of the Wing.

The MSS was mandated to deliver both close and integral support to deployed Air Force operations in the areas of engineering, logistics, human resources, finances and communications.

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The Staff and Management of The Langford Home Depot Would like to wish all Military Personnel & Their Families A Very Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year!