

# LOOKOUT



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Senior citizen Barbara Bolli sneaks a few extra drops of rum into the pudding with help from CFB Esquimalt Base Commander Capt(N) Marcel Hallé during the annual Veterans Yuletide Luncheon on Dec. 9. See more on page 4.

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COMMUNITY NEWS: SAILOR NEEDS SUPPORT

# Reservist needs chemo for Christmas

**Shelley Lipke**  
 Staff writer

At any moment life can take a turn for the worse. MS Lindsay Rempel knows this firsthand.

Twenty months ago the reservist from *HMCS Unicorn* was diagnosed with a rare disease, Idiopathic Autoimmune Hemolytic Anemia, on the day her second daughter was born.

Then she learned her health care would not cover the expensive chemotherapy treatment she needs to battle the disease.

The chemo treatment recommended by her doctor could give her an 80 per cent chance of remission.

MS Rempel was scheduled to start chemotherapy treatment in the new year, but her falling hemoglobin levels have forced her doctor to move that date forward.

But the drug is not made specifically for her disease and the insurance companies refuse to cover the costs.

"The drug companies and insurance companies should be looking at the person themselves, and not whether or not a drug is made to treat a specific disease," she said. "Living in Canada, if a person is suf-



MS Lindsay Rempel and her family are trying to raise \$18,000 to secure a chemotherapy treatment not covered by insurance.

fering from a serious condition, treatment should be covered through the health care that we pay into."

MS Rempel has worked as a reservist since 1997 and doesn't know if or when she'll be able to return.

"The disease has changed my life in many ways," she says. "It has been a challenge caring for my two children due to the symptoms and side effects of the medications I have to be on. And the disease has made me unemployable,

which is financially stressful."

Husband LS Joseph Rempel with the help of friends and family set up a website to raise money for the treatment, which is needed by Christmas. But with less than half of \$18,000 raised to date, MS Rempel is asking for help.

Family and friends are helping care for her children.

"I'm overwhelmed with trips to the doctor's office, weekly lab tests, an operation, biopsies and now the stress of lack of coverage."

But with only a few days before December ends, she is now turning to the Canadian Forces community for further assistance with raising the remaining money.

One way members can help is to donate online or attend a benefit concert

scheduled for the Dec. 22 at 'Cabin 12' (607 Pandora Ave).

MS Rempel hopes more research will be conducted on this rare disease to benefit others who are suffering from it.

To make a donation towards MS Rempel's chemotherapy go to [www.chemoforchristmas.ca](http://www.chemoforchristmas.ca). The website will be online until Dec. 26.


**Idiopathic autoimmune hemolytic anemia is an acquired disease that occurs when antibodies form against a person's own red blood cells. In the idiopathic form of this disease, the cause is unknown.**

*The disease has changed my life in many ways. It has been a challenge caring for my two children due to the symptoms and side effects of the medications I have to be on.*


-MS Lindsay Rempel

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# Venture surpasses United Way goal

**Shelley Lipke**  
Staff writer

Venture, The Naval Officer Training Centre (NOTC) wrapped up an extremely successful Government of Canada Charitable Workplace Campaign (GCCWC) on Dec. 11 by presenting a cheque for \$10,293.04 to United Way representatives.

"In a tough economy where we have seen an overall reduction in funds raised, Venture has managed to turn the numbers in the opposite direction and increase them by 50 per cent from last year," said Venture Commanding Officer, Cdr Kelly Larkin.

This year's campaign saw numbers rise significantly in the final weeks as leadership donations of \$500 or more came in and were added to the total.

"We had 20 leadership donations this year compared to six last year," said Cdr Larkin. "Well Done Venture."

Using their Christmas party to celebrate their campaign end, Venture took care of some unfinished fundraising business.

"Throughout the campaign an initiative was set to progressively shave the legs of Venture's chief, coxswain and the executive officer at the \$3,000, \$5,000 and \$7,000 fundraising mark," said Lt(N) Bob Mackay, unit coordinator for the campaign. "If we met our fundraising goal of \$10,000 all three would have their legs shaved, and that is what happened."

CPO1 Harry Learning, LCdr Simon Brown and LCdr Keith Guinchard sat in a row with pant legs rolled up past their knees awaiting the inevitable. Armed with pink daisy razors, shaving cream and buckets of water, several members smiled as they gladly took their place to lather and shave.

"They were ecstatic that we collected so much and met our goal, but were a little nervous about what



Shelley Lipke, Lookout

**CPO1 Harry Learning, LCdr Simon Brown and LCdr Keith Guinchard make good on the promise to shave their legs after their unit, Venture, The Naval Officer Training Centre, surpassed its goal of raising \$10,000 for this year's United Way campaign.**

conditions their legs would be in the end of the shave," said Lt(N) Mackay.

After a few nicks and cuts and a lot of laughs, they emerged from their chairs silky smooth and ready to enjoy the cake and Christmas cheer with members from their unit.

Lt(N) Mackay and fellow campaign coordinator OS Ahmad Al-Pouri agreed the fundraising was a team effort felt throughout the unit.

"A lot of staff and students put their time and efforts in during many events to help with the fundraising and everyone is very proud of the successful campaign we had this year," said Lt(N) Mackay. "During this time of year the United Way is needed more than ever to help those in need within our community. These funds will go to organizations, programs or services that are needed."



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# matters of OPINION

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## WHAT SAY YOU

# Seniors relish time at Nelles Galley

Thank you so much for the generous supply of the Yuletide luncheon tickets for Dec.8 you very kindly sent to me.

How very privileged we are to have the opportunity to be with and waited on by the young men and women of our Canadian Forces, you are always so very cheerful and so precious to us all.

Then you give us, the ex-service women, such a great welcome, making us feel so young again, is it any wonder we get desperate for tickets to the Yuletide luncheon.

I truly hope I did not embarrass the young Commander in our Cathedral, asking him for the tickets, but it was an act of desperation. I am so sorry for behaving badly, you can put me on a charge - it would not be the first time.

May God Bless you all, and keep you safe.

*Sincerely,*

*Brenda Beech ex W.A.A.F.*

### Good morning Capt MJM Hallé,

I speak for the five members of Branch #50 Victoria of the WAAFA Women's Auxiliary Air Force association headquarters in England. We served our five or six years in Britain and Europe and I'm here to tell you that we have never seen such happy and efficient people serving Christmas dinner as we did yesterday. It was the miracle of the year and we thank and applaud each naval member who appeared to pour heart and soul into cooking the fine turkey dinner. Every time we turned around there was a good looking male or female, smiling at us, while offering more of the delicious food and wine. What a banquet and to be repeating the performance all over again today.

So from five Air Force "gals" the noise and sighs you hear are our thanks to you all from the smiling old WAAFEES now in their eighties.

Hope your Christmas brings a smile because you brought many to our faces, especially when we glanced in the mirror and noticed that we had gained a few pounds. But we still love you all.

*Tony Montgomery*

*Edith Hills*

*Edna Wood*

*Brenda Beech*

*Pauline Inglis*

Thank you for the dinner we were served today. What a wonderful gesture.

*James Bay New Horizons*

*Rev Ronald D Johnstone*

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.*



• Bill Howarth along with Capt(N) Marcel Hallé, carves the turkey during the annual Christmas party.

• Capt(N) Marcel Hallé and Santa speak with the veterans/senior citizens during their annual luncheon.

• MS Kevin Gilbert, of Fleet Maintenance Facility, serves turkey dinner.

Cpl Roderick Hopp,  
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GOOD PEOPLE TO KNOW IN TIMES OF TROUBLE



# Holiday spirit touches residents of Mount St. Mary's

**Shelley Lipke**  
Staff writer

It was a flurry of Christmas activity at the base health centre last Tuesday as Santa's "helpers" loaded up more than 400 gift-wrapped presents into three vehicles then delivered them to seniors living at Mount St. Mary Hospital.

Cpl Claudine Lamy, Sgt Melanie Levesque and LS Trish Benson all wore Santa hats as they dropped off the gifts bought by Canadian Forces Health Services Centre (Pacific) staff. All three coordinated the gift drive along with Cpl Jessie Erickson.

This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary that health centre staff has purchased gifts for the senior residents.

In November, more than 200 residents made a Christmas wish list that was hung on the lunch room wall at CF H Svcs C (P). The seniors wished for items like socks, books, cookies, blankets, diabetic chocolates, pyjamas and sweaters.

One by one each name on the list was adopted, and by Dec. 15 hundreds of presents were ready for delivery.

"Some people even decided to buy gifts for two or three people, so we ended up with between three and four hundred gifts," said Sgt Levesque. "Every year the residents are impressed with what we bring, and each person at the clinic really puts their hearts into what they buy. I am really happy about being involved in this."

The union between hospitals began with a military member who volunteered at Mount St. Mary.

"Don Bernardin worked at the base clinic and he used to bring his dog to Mount St. Mary for the seniors to see," said Cpl Levesque. "He thought the unit would be able to help the residents at Christmas and make their holiday better by buying gifts."

On Christmas Eve, Sgt Levesque and LS Benson will visit Mount St. Mary and go door to door to hand deliver the presents.

"I think it will be nice to see people and take the time to visit with them. This initiative was a great success," said Sgt Levesque.



Shelley Lipke, Lookout

Cpl Claudine Lamy and Sgt Melanie Levesque packed up gifts purchased by the staff at Canadian Forces Health Services (Pacific) for seniors at Mount St. Mary's health care facility. In mid-November Cpl Lamy and Cpl Jessie Erickson volunteered to coordinate the campaign that would fill a wish list submitted by 200 residents at the senior's facility. By Dec. 15 between 300 and 400 gifts were purchased, wrapped and delivered to the Fairfield Road care facility to be opened by the seniors on Christmas Day.

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Shelley Lipke, Lookout

Cpl Rebecca Strauss (left), Cpl Christy Clipperton (second from left) and Capt Yvette Menard (right) of 1 Dental Unit Detachment present a stack of gifts to Sarah Jenkinson of the Military Family Resource Centre. Dental unit staff opted to brighten Christmas for a military family in need instead of doing their annual gift exchange.

## Hamper ready for local family

**Shelley Lipke**  
Staff writer

In the spirit of giving, 40 staff from 1 Dental Unit Detachment decided to forgo their annual Christmas gift exchange and use money to brighten the holidays for a military family in need.

The unit collected over \$500 in cash and gifts for the family.

"We already have so much, and this year we wanted to give to people who don't have enough," said dental line officer Capt Yvette Menard. "We decided to contact the Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC) to see if they had any families that need help this Christmas and we learned they had several that had come forth asking for help."

Each person in the unit contributed, whether it was a toy, or cash donation allowing the purchase of a

Thrifty's gift card, a Bay/Zellers gift card, and a coffee card from Tim Hortons. The pile of presents was substantial by the time MFRC staff came to pick them up.

"I asked the MFRC how many other departments helped a family this year and found out that we were the only unit on the base to adopt a military family this Christmas," she said. "I think it must be especially difficult for a family to identify themselves to the MFRC and ask for help, and I also think there is more stress on a military family because they could be new in town or may have been moved around many times."

For their own unit Christmas celebration, Capt Menard brought in 15-year-old Magical Micheal, a Vancouver Island magician. "Micheal is an international gold medal winner for close up magic, and is the youngest illusionist in North

America. He generously donated his time to support the troops," said Capt Menard.

Everyone gathered in the foyer outside the dental clinic to watch him perform tricks and jokes. "Micheal did several illusions and magic tricks and the oohs and aahs from the crowd gave testimony to his professionalism and ability," said Capt Menard.

The Christmas social wrapped up when the gifts were presented to MFRC intake and assessment coordinator, Sarah Jenkinson, who will give them to the military family in time for Christmas.

"The family is very grateful for being considered at this time of year and expresses extreme gratitude to the unit for their support," said Jenkinson.

To learn more about Magical Micheal go to [www.oceanmistretreat.com/magic](http://www.oceanmistretreat.com/magic).



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# Teens win education bursary

**Shelley Lipke**  
Staff writer

In honour and recognition of the naval centennial, the Royal Canadian Naval Benevolent Fund (RCNBF) has stepped up its bursary program to award five deserving applicants each with a \$5,000 education bursary.

Eighteen-year-old Claire Parkhouse of Duncan was delighted to be invited to the Chief and Petty Officers' mess on Dec. 11 to receive this jumpstart to her tuition, which was presented by Naval Centennial and RCNBF representatives.

"I'm about to enter a four-year nursing program at Vancouver Island University, and I think I'll be able to fully enjoy the experience of school because of this," she said. "I feel like I don't have to worry about financial stress as much."

On a whim she decided to follow her grandmother's advice and apply for the bursary, and when she received a call from CPO1 (Ret'd) Dick Todd, chairman for Western Canada

RCNBF, she was shocked to hear the good news. "I'm used to applying for something and then never hearing back, but in this case I was surprised and excited to learn my application was approved," she said.

Out of 47 applicants from across Canada, Parkhouse was chosen by the RCNBF Ottawa Committee based on her academic achievement, financial needs community service and volunteerism.

"All five recipients had grandparents in the navy," said CPO1 (Ret'd) Todd. "Claire's grandfather LCdr Roy Burnon worked at CFB Esquimalt, and passed away at age 41 in 1977 after being diagnosed with Leukemia," he said.

Sarah McLaughlin of West Vancouver was the other B.C. recipient to receive this bursary and she will study at the University of B.C. in a Bachelor of Science program.

Each year since 2006 the RCNBF helps financially needy students pursue post-secondary studies by awarding 15 applicants across Canada with a bur-

sary of \$2,000. Of the 15, the top five applicants are awarded a further \$1,000 in recognition of a bequest from the late CPO Douglas R. Hooser.

The RCNBF is a Canadian corporation that relieves distress and promotes well being of individuals through grants, loans, and education support to qualified naval personnel and their dependants.

"The Benevolent Fund looks after widows, and retired or serving members in distress by giving them grants and interest free loans," said CPO1 (Ret'd) Todd.

Other Canadian bursary programs include the Andrew McQueen Jack bursary program, which is set up specifically for Sea Cadets who are dependants of retired or serving members of the Naval Service of Canada. Bursaries are \$1,000 with numbers awarded reflecting capacity of the trust fund annually.

For details on all bursary and scholarship programs administered by the RCNBF go to [www.RCNBF.ca](http://www.RCNBF.ca)

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# Be pet smart – keep them safe this holiday season

**Carol Scheidl**  
Contributor

Now that the holidays are upon us it's time to bring out all the trimmings, dress up the house and enjoy the company of friends and family.

With all of this holiday merry-making it's easy to forget about our four-legged family members. Every year pets are rushed to their vets with injuries that could have been prevented with just a few simple changes to our holiday preparations. In magazines they have pictures of houses that have been decorated for people that obviously don't have pets. My cats would have the livingroom looking like a war zone in no time flat. They would think tinsel and shiny baubles were new plays toys set out just for them.

So how do you decorate, keeping your pets safe and still having that "Martha

out of your pets reach as this is toxic to both dogs and cats.

Of course if you want that real Christmastime look, bring in poinsettias. For years this traditional Christmas flower has been listed on the poison plant list. But in fact poinsettias have a low toxicity and will only cause an upset stomach if eaten. However, it isn't a good idea to let your pet make a meal out of one. The milky latex inside can cause contact burns. Of course, a way to prevent the worry if your pet is wishing to make a salad out of your trimmings is to use silk plants - they are inexpensive and can be used year after year.

One very important note - don't bring real mistletoe into the house; the berries are fatal if eaten. Another holiday decorating favourite are candles. Nothing looks nicer than to have candles as part of a centerpiece or on

whiskers and burned noses. In the case of some cats, they will walk past a candle setting their fur on fire. Of course, you can always use battery powered candles. One of the biggest holiday decorating hazards for pets is the Christmas tree. Whether it's real or artificial, the Christmas tree can be fraught with dangers for your pet. One way to make having a tree safer is to have no decorations for a day or two, this will give your pet a chance to get used to it. I have been using this trick for a long time and my cats check it out but then lose interest in it. Plus if they choose to climb the tree there is less of a chance of having all the decorations destroyed if they knock the tree over.

Stick to plain water for keeping your real tree from drying out. Many pets have been poisoned by drinking the water that has had preservatives added to it to keep the tree fresh. Another way this problem can be avoided is to buy a tree stand that has an enclosed water reservoir. Another advantage of these new stands is they are more solid, and work better at keeping your tree upright when or if your cats want to play Tarzan in the tree. When decorating the tree its best to stick with plastic balls. Glass ones have a tendency to shatter into small shards that can cause cuts on the pads of the feet



offices. Varitone is used to keep animals from licking at wounds and it works great

Of course we must not forget the goodies and foods that we are all so fond of this time of year. Most people know the rules about turkey bones and pets, there are other foodstuffs that are actually toxic to both dogs and cats. The first one on the list is chocolate. If you put out chocolates or cookies that have chocolates in them make sure your pets can't get into them. Be advised it can take several hours for signs to show.

Other foods that people aren't aware that are poisonous to pets are mushrooms, onions, garlic, grapes, raisins, macadamia nuts, almonds, and chestnuts. These foods can cause symptoms from nausea and vomiting to seizures and even coma.

Another food that is always missed is artificial sweetener. They are now finding that artificial sweetener can cause serious problems for dogs by raising their blood sugar levels.

The most important thing you should never give your pet is alcohol. Every year people serve their pets alcohol thinking its funny, but it's cruel and you're poisoning your pet.

Let's all do our part to ensure that our four-legged family members have just as wonderful a Christmas season as we all do.

**One way to make having a tree safer is to have no decorations for a day or two, this will give your pet a chance to get used to it.**

Stewart" look? The first trick is to keep it up high.

Put boughs of holly and pine up around the ceiling. It's very important that if you choose to have holly in your house to keep it

a shelf, giving a soft glow to the room. Unless constantly watched, candles can and do cause burns to pets who are curious. They stick their noses too close while smelling, which brings on singed

and tongues if they try to lick their feet. Plus, if a plastic ball drops on the floor it's not a problem if your cat wants to play with it. Avoid using metal hooks, though, these can be ingested by a curious pup who has yet to learn that the tree balls aren't chew toys.

Garland and tinsel are always a huge problem with cats, so its best to avoid using them. Even one strand of tinsel can cause a linear obstruction in a cat and could also cause cuts to

the intestines. If you must use tinsel, try and use it sparingly and keep it up high on the tree out of reach of curious pets.

Lights can be a concern. If you do have a pet that loves to investigate the light strings, rub some "Bitter Orange" on the cords. You can purchase this at most pet stores and it does work to keep pets from taste-testing objects, but I found that some animals don't mind the taste. The best deterrent is Varitone. You can buy this at veterinarian

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# Bravo ZULU



Top to bottom:

- Capt Mark Keirstead (right) is promoted to Major by Base Construction Engineering Officer, LCol Jon Burbee (left), with help from Maj Kierstead's wife Laura.

- LCdr Roger Miller of J31 receives his new rank from Capt(N) Les Falloon.

- Cdr Steve Irwin (left), of J4 Logistics, and Cdr Guy Bolduc (right), Commanding Officer of Maritime Forces Pacific Headquarters, present new shoulder slip-ons to SLt Hiscock.

- Tim Hoffman (left) of Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton Shop 114 holds his new guitar, which was raffled off to raise money for GCWCC/UnitedWay. The guitar fetched \$1,800. Al Gendron (second from left) handcrafted the guitar. Helping to make the presentation are Dan Deringer and Capt(N) Martin Adamson.



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## Logistics staff earn certification

The Base Logistics Officer (BLogO), Cdr Kathleen Ballantyne, represented by the BLog Executive Officer, LCdr Kellie McNab, and the Systems Control Officer, Michael Morrison, have announced that nine more members of Technical Services Section (TSS) have undergone certification training as quality inspectors and quality technicians from the internationally recognized American Society for Quality (ASQ).

Since 1946, ASQ has been at the forefront of the quality movement in the U.S. and Canada, and has become a guiding force in the development of quality management practice and its application in industry and government.

TSS personnel provide incoming product acceptance control and inspection services for materiel processed through the Base Logistics main warehouse, as well as providing conditioning and sentencing services to the return materiel stream at D210 Return Stores. Other section activities include providing on-shelf maintenance capability, logistics technical assistance to end-user units, cataloguing of locally managed materiel, and training to end-user units in logistics technical areas.

Taking this training and incorporating it into daily work activities is an import-

ant milestone in the ongoing Base Logistics continual improvement program and significantly enhances the ability of Base Logistics, through its new systems control division, to generate and sustain logistics support.

"This training has proven beneficial to all that have undertaken it. I am grateful for the dedication and professionalism that these members of the TSS team show in their commitment to continuous improvement," said the Systems Control Officer, Michael Morrison.

Certified as quality inspectors are Jeff Eagle and Bill Turner. Certified as quality technicians are Rob Senkpiel, Bill Anderson, Louise Cassidy, Jordan Walsh, and Ken Stotz.

Preparing for the certification examinations are Ken Turpin and Gene McLeod.

Many hours of after-work study were required and the training was a significant challenge for all involved.

"I'm in awe of the personnel that we've been able to attract and retain in TSS to support Base Logistics, they are all incredibly motivated and are pursuing this challenge aggressively. We've been continuing our staged approach to this certification and we look forward to more certifications after the March 2010 exam dates," says TSO Rob Senkpiel.

## Winnipeg hosted recruiters on board

**Cdr R. A. Ferguson**  
Commanding Officer

HMCS Winnipeg hosted Colonel Norman Saulnier and CWO Guy Janssens from the Canadian Forces Recruiting Group (CFRG) on Dec. 14. They were in Victoria to conduct a visit with the Recruiting Detachment and seized upon the opportunity to come aboard a frigate. The cooks in Winnipeg enjoyed showcasing their culinary skills and CPO2 Whiteoak, Winnipeg's Combat Systems Engineering Chief, explained some of the challenges and rewards experienced by combat systems technical occupations. The CFRG, under the command of Cmdre Dan MacKeigan, has been very successful in meeting the navy's personnel intake needs. This was excellent news for Winnipeg, particularly given that technical personnel resources are in high demand. Winnipeg looks forward to actively employing the new technicians when they reach the Fleet.



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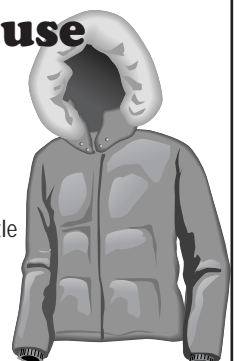
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SHIP NEWS: TIME OF REFLECTION



U.S. Navy photo

## Winnipeg set for 2010 challenges

**SLt Dave Hendry**  
HMCS Winnipeg

It has now been four months since *HMCS Winnipeg* returned from its deployment to the Gulf of Aden at the end of August, and what a busy time it has been.

Once *Winnipeg's* crew returned to work after a well deserved few weeks of post-deployment leave, the ship's company kicked itself back into high gear. The Marine Systems Engineering Department and the Combat Systems Engineering Department launched the ship into a short work period to get the ship back into fighting shape.

The engineers spent six weeks conducting repairs and routine maintenance on many ship systems. By the middle of October *Winnipeg* was back in action and ready to take on its new role as the West Coast ready duty

ship, much to the credit of all those who worked hard during that time.

This work carried on in spite of the tragic news of the passing of OS Heidi Clow, a well-respected member of the crew, at the end of October. The ship and her crew had the honour of conducting the committal of her ashes at sea as *Winnipeg* sailed for the first time out of the work period. *Winnipeg* was scheduled to sail in support of the Royal Visit, but the thoughts of the crew that day were with OS Clow's mother and family.

In the middle of November, *Winnipeg* assumed ready duty ship status. Since then, ship and crew have been on standby to react to any emergency or occasion that requires a response from the navy, such as its predecessor, *HMCS Regina*, who sailed in support of Canadian Border

Services Agency and the RCMP in the boarding of MV Ocean Lady in October.

*Winnipeg* also spent a week at sea showing the flag in Canadian waters off the west coast of Vancouver Island during a weeklong maritime security patrol.

As the crew approaches the Christmas leave period and subsequent preparations for the navy's support of Operation Podium during the Vancouver Winter Olympics, *Winnipeg* gets a short but decidedly well-deserved rest before beginning its program again in the New Year.

In all, 2009 was a long but very successful year for *Winnipeg*, both in its stellar performance of duties in anti-piracy operations; international, multi-ship operations during Exercise Talisman Sabre and Operation Sharem 09; and support to national operations.

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AIR FORCE NEWS: NEW HONORARY COLONEL

# Senator Pamela Wallin takes on uniform job

**Holly Bridges**  
The Maple Leaf

Senator Pamela Wallin, now Honorary Colonel Wallin, entered Ottawa's Royal Canadian Air Force officer's mess Nov. 16 for her investiture with a pride that was palpable. Wearing an Air Force blue honorary colonel's tunic, HColWallin looked every bit the part – part officer, part mentor, part public figure, part supporter.

"I feel a very strong connection to [Air Force] blue today, and a particular pride," HColWallin said, referring to the seven members of her immediate family who have served in the Air Force over the years.

Those family members include her father, Sergeant (Ret'd) Bill Wallin, who served as a Second World War tail gunner and who attended his daughter's investiture. Fresh from her recent visit to Afghanistan for Remembrance Day with Defence Minister Peter MacKay, HCol Wallin praised members of the Air Force for the work they are doing in the war-torn country and the hope they are bringing to the people of Afghanistan.

"We travelled to Kandahar and four forward operating bases, up to the Dahla Dam," she said, "and we did it all in Canadian Chinooks piloted by Canadian



Sgt Ron Flynn, DND

Chief of the Air Staff LGen André Deschamps and HCol Pamela Wallin sign the assumption of appointment certificate, making her appointment official.

crews with air cover by Canadians in the Griffons. And walking out onto the airfield on our last morning at KAF [Kandahar Airfield], it did my heart good. It was a moment of great pride that we are now seeing our troops properly equipped and able to do their work. You are saving lives."

In his remarks after her investiture, Chief of the Air Staff Lieutenant-General André Deschamps thanked HCol Wallin for accepting the invitation to become the

first Air Force honorary colonel and explained why she was perfectly suited to the position.

"Your military family background," he said, "your intimate understanding of the military and of Canadian culture and public issues, your business acumen, your diplomatic work, your contribution to the Manley Report, your service in the Senate and on various committees, and, of course, your tireless work in educating Canadians about their

military, all make you a most welcome addition to the honorary colonel extended family."

Defence Minister MacKay appointed Senator Wallin to the position of honorary colonel, which became effective Aug. 1. The investiture ceremony was the formalization of her three-year term as honorary colonel for the Air Staff, located at NDHQ. By extension, she is also honorary colonel of the entire Air Force. Hers is the first appointment to this new post.

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# Canadian Navy recognized for counter-piracy operations

**Darlene Blakeley**  
CMA PA

The Secretary-General of the UN's International Maritime Organization (IMO), Efthimios E. Mitropoulos, has publicly recognized the efforts of Canada and 21 other nations that have contributed warships to naval counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden by presenting special certificates for exceptional services rendered to shipping and mankind.

The certificates were presented during the Bravery at Sea Awards ceremony held Nov. 23 at IMO Headquarters in London, as part of the 26th Regular Session of the Assembly of the IMO.

Capt (N) Harry Harsch, the Naval Adviser at the Canadian Defence Liaison Staff in London, accepted the award on behalf of the Canadian Navy, with the Canadian High Commissioner, His Excellency James R. Wright, in attendance.

The Canadian warships recognized were: *HMCS Iroquois* (then under the command of Capt(N) Brendan Ryan), *HMCS Calgary* (then under the command of Cdr Kelly Larkin), *HMCS Protecteur* (then under the command of Cdr Sean Cantalon), *HMCS Ville de Québec* (then under the command of Cdr Chris Dickinson) and *HMCS Winnipeg* (then



The Canadian High Commissioner in London, His Excellency James R. Wright (left), thanks the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, Efthimios E. Mitropoulos (right), for the IMO's initiative to recognize those nations whose warships contributed to counter-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia. Capt(N) Harry Harsch (centre), Naval Adviser at the Canadian Defence Liaison Staff in London, received the award on behalf of the Canadian Navy.

under the command of Cdr Craig Baines).

*Iroquois*, *Calgary* and *Protecteur* were part of Combined Task Force 150 (then under the command of Canadian Commodore Robert Davidson) in mid-2008, and were part of the initial international response to the menace of piracy. *Ville de Québec* provided direct support to the World Food Programme in late 2008, helping to ensure that food aid was provided to those in need in war-torn Somalia. *Winnipeg* was in the region in the spring of 2009 as part of Standing NATO Maritime Group One.

While not specifically recognized by the IMO at this year's awards ceremony, *HMCS Fredericton*, under the command of Cdr Steve Waddell, recently joined the NATO group and is presently patrolling the waters off Somalia.

Certificates of commendation were also awarded to crews of naval ships from Australia, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece,

India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom and the U.S. – nations that have put their political differences aside in an unparalleled display of solidarity by joining forces to rid the region of the criminal element who are taking advantage of the instability in their country.

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# Counselling for vets goes high tech with video chat

## The Maple Leaf

If you are a veteran who finds it difficult or impossible to attend counselling sessions with your mental health clinician, telemental health is an option worth considering.

### What is telemental health?

Telemental health uses technology such as video conferencing and telephones to bring together veterans and mental health service providers from different locations for secure and confidential meetings. It usually involves video conferencing at a health care facility or another suitable site close to you. Depending on your circumstance, it can also be

a telephone conference call. Most of the services offered at Veterans Affairs Canada's (VAC) Operational Stress Injury (OSI) clinics—intake interviews, debriefing of assessments, therapy and counselling sessions, and medication evaluation and follow-up—can be conducted using telemental health. Increasingly, VAC-approved private mental health professionals are using telemental health to help veterans with OSIs.

### How does telemental health work?

If you are a VAC client and live beyond a reasonable commuting distance from a VAC OSI clinic or an approved mental health service provider, or if you

face other barriers to travel such as health or weather, telemental health offers a convenient way for you to see and talk to your mental health clinician using a television and video camera in a private setting. In some cases, you may just talk by telephone. You can ask questions and share information about yourself and your situation. No one outside the room can join or listen in on the session without your permission. If appropriate, telemental health can connect several sites so health care providers, family members or others can participate in sessions, even if they live in another province. Accepting the telemental health option does not limit

or alter the range of services available and you can revert to in-person sessions at any time.

### How do I access telemental health counselling?

Telemental health is available to VAC clients who are eligible to receive mental health services at either a VAC OSI clinic or from a VAC-approved mental health service provider. Suitability for telemental health is determined in consultation with your clinician on a case-by-case and session-by-session basis.

Further information VAC is always exploring ways to support and expand the telemental health services available to clients with OSIs. If you feel you

may benefit from this type of service delivery, talk to your mental health clinician about telemedicine as an alternative to travelling for in-person sessions, or contact the nearest VAC office. If you are a mental health professional inter-

ested in providing mental health services to VAC clients via telemental health, please contact Medavie Blue Cross.

Further information on telemental health counselling can be found on the VAC web site.



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Chris Benesch

# Deployed for the holidays, but thankful

## Corporal Tom Bulger Reconnaissance Squadron, 1 PPCLI Battle Group

The idea of spending the holidays, particularly Christmas and the New Year in Afghanistan, is different for each specific soldier.

Those with young children usually prefer to be home to watch their kids open gifts from Santa, or to see them play in the snow. Others may not mind spending the holidays in the desert — maybe because they are single, maybe because of the insane amount of snow Petawawa receives every winter, or even because they do not want to be hassled with the hectic Christmas shopping season.

Either way, it is a time of year to reflect on what you have and how fortunate we are to live in Canada. Spending the holiday season on deployment for some is a wake-up call to what others in the world have, specifi-

cally Afghanistan, one of the poorest countries in the world. The majority of homes here are made by hand, constructed completely of bricks, mud and straw. Those who did not make the bricks for their homes themselves got them from brick-makers who break their backs digging in mud holes and wadis, gathering enough material for hundreds and hundreds of bricks. One of the primary sources of income includes fields of marijuana, poppies or other plants. Besides this, a strong source of income is often hard to come by and poverty is common. The country and its people are so different from North American culture and technology that the simple sight of most of our military equipment mystifies or scares them. Soldiers initially deploying usually experience what most call "culture shock" and are in awe as to how different our two countries are. With how little they have can make someone appreciate

what they have back home in Canada. Soldiers deployed over Christmas and the New Year would obviously prefer to be at home with loved ones and friends for the holidays, but at the same time, most can appreciate what they have in Canada to the point where missing one holiday season is not such a loss. Experiencing what others in the world have, or do not have, helps those deployed to develop a sense of understanding of how well off Canadians really are.

For example, looking forward to a shower everyday here is far from soldiers' minds. Once or twice a week is more than enough and it does not really matter if it is hot or cold — in most cases, it is usually cold. In Canada, if you did not shower everyday you would be considered unhygienic. Grasping the difference between cultures can help soldiers through the holidays on deployment by appreciating how fortunate Canadians really are.



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## Navy charity and the Grey Cup

**CPO1 Dennis Oliphant**  
HMCS Queen

As soon as the Saskatchewan Roughriders won the CFL's western final, the wheel started turning as far as potential wagers went for the Grey Cup winner.

When the Alouettes won the eastern final the Riders instantly came into the possession of the most desirable of positions in professional sports: "The Underdog."

The self-professed "Canada's Team" relished the pressure that was squarely on their opponent, and took the time to thoroughly scrutinize every inch of Alouette tactics and strategy, all the while maintaining a cool sense of calm.

On the other hand, things in the

wardrooms of navy ships across the country were starting to heat up. The gauntlet was thrown down a couple of weeks before the big game by the Executive Officer of *HMCS Queen*, the naval reserve division in Regina, to their opposite unit in Montréal, *HMCS Donnacona*.

"The winner will donate the sum total of the individual donations to the charity of their choice, and the losing Commanding Officer has to wear the opposing team's jersey for a photograph," was the challenge.

Not to be outdone, the Commanding Officer of *HMCS Regina*, Cdr Derek Moss, upped the ante by adding to the wager: "The losing namesake city frigate will hoist the winning CFL's team flag on their yardarm for a week."

*HMCS Montreal*, based in Halifax,

gladly accepted the additional bet, and then the "smack-talk" began in earnest.

Of course, everyone now knows by now the Riders handed the game and the cup to the Alouettes in the final minute of the 97<sup>th</sup> Grey Cup game, losing by a single point due to a counting error by a coach.

It was then that the piper came a-callin', albeit with a reduced amount of volume than the pre-game talk. The day of reckoning came soon enough, and the sense of humiliation worn on the face of LCdr Corey Thiemann was evident as soon as his hands touched the red, white and blue jersey.

"Let's get this over with," he said. "Hoist flag zero. I mean flag Alouette."

In the end, it was all in good fun and in keeping with the best principles of the navy.

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