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Base Commander (for the day) Capt(N) Karlie Gill (aka Private Karlie Gill) performs the ceremonial carving of the turkey to start the annual Junior Ranks Christmas Dinner at Nelles Pacific Galley on Dec 1.

Photo by Ed Dixon, MARPAC Imaging Services

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Order of Military Merit members can now administer Citizenship oath

Gerry Pash
Contributor

Members of the Order of Military Merit of the rank of Colonel or Navy Captain and above have been added to the list of distinguished Canadians eligible to act as voluntary presiding officers at citizenship ceremonies and administer the Canadian Citizenship Oath.

Immigration Minister Jason Kenney made the announcement last month during citizenship week.

"I am very pleased to empower the extraordinary recipients of this honour to preside at citizenship ceremonies, and I'm particularly happy to make this announcement during Canada's Citizenship Week," said Minister Kenney on Oct. 18. "This is a fitting reminder that we must take our responsibilities as citizens very seriously, and that we honour the Canadians who have served and are serving in the Canadian Armed Forces."

Although citizenship judges preside at most citizenship ceremonies, occasions arise where they are not available. In

1994, to fill the role, the Minister invited recipients of the Order of Canada to volunteer for the ceremonial element of citizenship ceremonies. The invitation was extended to individuals holding the position of Governor General, Lieutenant Governor and Territory Commissioners in 2004.

These individuals, and now recipients of the Order of Military Merit and the Royal Victorian Order, are the preferred substitutes for a citizenship judge. In very exceptional circumstances senior management officials at Citizenship Immigration Canada may act on a case-by-case basis.

Inviting recipients of the Order of Military Merit to preside at citizenship ceremonies follows on the practice of having members of the Canadian Forces and veterans as honoured guests at citizenship ceremonies.

The volunteer presiding officer is an honorary role on behalf of the Government of Canada. Usually they officiate at ceremonies in their own communities. The presiding official speaks to new citizens about the responsibilities and privileges of Canadian citizenship, administers the Oath of Citizenship, and present a citizenship certificate to each new Canadian.



Photo by Citizenship Immigration Canada
Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenney at a special citizenship ceremony held at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum, in Ottawa. In attendance, Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada; Commodore Hans W. Jung, Surgeon General, Canadian Forces, and Member of the Order of Military Merit; and Deborah Corry, Clerk of the Ceremony.

Skate with Santa!

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Left to right: RAdm (retired) Roger Girouard, Dr. Linda Duxbury, and events organizers Lori Wallis and Terri O'Keeffe pose after Dr. Duxbury's lecture two weeks ago.

Managers gain expert knowledge

Mike Hillian
Contributor

Work Point hosted some of the region's best and brightest middle managers on Nov. 24 during the 2011 Vancouver Island Federal Managers Leadership Forum.

"Change: We're in it Together" was the theme of this year's forum, which brought together nearly 150 civilian and military managers from around the Island to discuss managing change in the workplace.

"The Learning [and Career] Centre (LCC) started this about eight years ago and it's sort of been an annual thing," said LCC Manager Terri O'Keeffe. "It started out as a DND-only event, but in the last few years we've decided to bring in other federal departments to round it out. It really helps provide for much richer conversation when you get people from other

departments."

Participation consisted of more than 100 military and civilian employees from Maritime Forces Pacific, approximately 30 individuals from other Federal departments, and a handful of managers from provincial ministries.

"I think the forum is great," said Dan Leblanc, Chief of Staff for Canadian Fleet Pacific. "It gives an opportunity for us managers to take a break from our usually stressful work and to reflect on some of the tools that are available for us to deal with the coming changes, even though we don't know what those changes are."

The day began with welcomes from O'Keeffe and Capt (N) Donald Smith, Commanding Officer of Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton. After a brief address from Gerry Salembier of the Pacific Federal Council, keynote speaker Dr. Linda Duxbury

took the stage.

Dr. Duxbury, a business professor from Carleton University and international expert on managing the workforce, spoke about viewing change from the "middle." With lots of humour and many keen insights into the challenges of managing change, Dr. Duxbury commanded the audience with the authority of an Admiral until the forum broke for lunch.

During the afternoon, participants separated into four groups for café discussions, where managers shared common practices and concerns. Cafés focused on building resiliency, common mistakes in leading change, business process improvement and communicating difficult messages.

To close the event, Rear-Admiral (Retired) Roger Girouard, former Commander Maritime Forces Pacific, punctuated the day with his "Leading in

Times of Change" speech. RAdm Girouard encouraged the audience to make the most of opportunities and stay resolute during change.

"Remember, everybody's got a boss," said RAdm Girouard. "And it might be on a higher scale, but even the Admiral is a middle manager with Esquimalt on one side and Ottawa on the other."

As managers left to return to their respective offices, many were enthusiastic about employing the new tools they learned.

"I've taken away quite a bit," said LeBlanc. "I've discovered new methods of how to manage change both for myself and people that work for me, and also about communicating the message properly. In other words, how to define what change is and how to make sure my team understand what that change means to them."

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matters of OPINION

MPCORNER

Protect your home over the festive period

Sgt Benoit Rheume
Military Police Community Relations

Christmas is a busy time of year for everyone; however, ensuring your home is properly protected against festive crime should be made a priority.

Many of us spend time away from home visiting family or travelling abroad to escape the winter chill. It is also a time when the house is full of valuable items such as gifts (think brand new 60" plasma screen TV) food and wine. Because of this, Christmas traditionally sees a sharp increase in domestic burglary, with criminals targeting homes when they are at their most vulnerable.

Home insurance may be the last thing on your mind during the busy festive period, but it is essential that you protect your home with sufficient contents insurance for high value items.

According to research, burglaries increase by up to 60 per cent during the winter months (U.S. and Canada), a figure that has perhaps increased in recent years as a result

of the recession.

To avoid being a victim of festive theft, take a look at these tips in order to protect your home this Christmas.

Insurance

It is worth getting in touch with your insurer to find out whether your contents insurance policy covers your newly acquired TV, DVD or ATV. So that if the worst occurs, your financial losses can be kept to a minimum.

Safe storage

With more luxury items in the home than any other month of the year, burglars and opportunistic thieves take to residential areas to prey on unsuspecting households, and one of the first things they will look for is items under the Christmas tree. Try to avoid displaying gifts; keep all items hidden in a bedroom or attic until Christmas Eve as this can make your home an obvious target.

Box disposal

Once all the gifts have been opened, steer clear of leaving empty boxes and packaging in plain sight. This acts as a glaring adver-

tisement to thieves and shows them all the valuable items you now have in your home. Post-Christmas can be just as bad for burglaries, so make sure you dispose of packaging responsibly by ripping it up and taking it to your local recycling outlet.

Signs of life

Burglars will be on the prowl for homes that look empty during the Christmas period, so make sure there are signs of life about your household. If you are out for a night or perhaps going away for a few days, make it look like you are in by keeping lights on, or installing automatic timer-switches to come on at different intervals. One fifth of all burglaries require no force as windows and doors are frequently left open; so always make sure everything is locked and your home is fully secure before you leave.

Call CFB Esquimalt Military Police: (250) 363-4032 or 9-1-1 to report information relating to any crime, or www.victoriacrimestoppers.com or call 1-800-222-8477.

MFRCNEWS

Military spouse credits MFRC with transition

Jon Chabun
MFRC

In 2005, Roxanne Mill found herself a 20-year-old stranger in Victoria. Moving from Long Island, New York, to British Columbia was a culture shock for her. To trade a stressful, fast-paced life in the big city for an easy-going, relaxed west coast life here in B.C.'s capital city can be rough. Especially leaving a lifetime of friends and family behind to start from scratch in somewhere new.

"It was me and my empty apartment with no furniture and my new husband just posted to a ship," recalls Mill.

Later that year, Roxanne and her husband Justin expanded by one as they welcomed son Trent to their family. One day, a neighbour mentioned to her that the Military Family Resource Centre would take care of her son for a few hours of respite child care. She was all over that.

"I loved it," said Mill of the help. "Trent loved it."

When she arrived in Victoria,

Roxanne didn't really know what the MFRC was. Even after using the respite child care, she didn't really explore it much further. Until one day, she checked out, albeit reluctantly, a Wednesday Coffee Night. She thought she would try it once before deciding if it was for her. Turns out it was her thing and she has been going ever since.

Roxanne's growth as a person the past six years makes it hard to imagine that young, isolated newcomer. When she started making the effort, everything came together.

Now, she is a Family Network representative for the HMCS Algonquin, working with a team of volunteers to organize events and provide information and support for other families experiencing a deployment. The impact of that job became apparent during the 2010 Thanksgiving potluck that drew close to 60 people that got her email updates.

Her son has been able to attend children's deployment workshops that she credits as "a crucial part of getting Trent through

a deployment" and says that her husband loves receiving mail packages of Trent's work through the class.

"It makes him happy," said Mill on what her husband thinks of her involvement with the MFRC. "It makes deployments go easier." Justin is even now officially a MFRC volunteer as of this summer.

When she first got married to someone in the Navy, Roxanne didn't really know what to expect.

"I didn't know anything about it," said Mill of the military or being married to someone in the military. "Didn't understand what that really meant."

"Now that I have so much going on to keep me more connected to what my husband is doing, it's easier on me, it's easier for him."

"I'm happy where I am now," she continued. "I don't let anything hold me back."

The MFRC is the only local non-profit organization specifically dedicated to providing services to military families. Help keep

key services by contributing to the MFRC through the Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign (GCWCC). On Section 4 of the pledge form, write Esquimalt Military Family Resource Centre and include the charitable number 13807 0578 RR0001.



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Published each Monday, under the authority of Capt(N) Craig Baines, Base Commander.

Le LOOKOUT est publié tous les lundis, sous l'égide du Capt(N) Craig Baines, Commandant de la Base.

The editor reserves the right to edit, abridge or reject copy or advertising to adhere to policy as outlined in CFAO 57.5. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of National Defence.

Le Rédacteur se réserve le droit de modifier, de condenser ou de rejeter les articles, photographies, ou annonces publicitaires pour adhérer à l'OAF57.5. Les opinions et annonces exprimées dans le journal ne reflètent pas nécessairement le point de vue du MDN.

LOOKOUT
NEWSPAPER

Circulation - 4,500

One year subscription - \$37.36

Six month subscription - \$18.84

Three month subscription - \$12.56

A Division of Personnel Support Programs
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Victoria, BC V9A 7N2

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Gnome's holiday thoughts

Gnaval Gnome Interview II: Return of the Gnaval Gnome

LOOKOUT(LO):

Welcome back, Gnaval Gnome, I'm glad you could join us for another interview session.

GNAVAL GNOME (GG):

I was told there'd be cookies.

LO: Perhaps later.

GG: I have a particular fondness for fig newtons. I like to dip them in egg nog.

LO: That sounds...different.

GG: Well, I've always felt that gnoggs are hugely neglected. Gneglected, if you will. For instance, when's the last time you had a nice cold mug of carrot gnog, or chugged down a pint o' yam gnog? Gno, I would say the gnog industry is due for an up-swing anytime now.

LO: I suppose that's possible...

GG: And this may interest your readers as the holiday season is approaching. The word gnog has a gnaval origin. It's derived from the phrase "egg and grog" used to describe a rum and egg-based beverage, but was eventually shortened to "egg gnog." Most of the best things in life do have a gnaval origin.

LO: Hmmm, yes. Can you tell us what you've been up to recently?

GG: I've been very busy working with the Communications

folks. I've developed a one-way communications system for talking to oneself. It's quite gnifty.

LO: Wouldn't talking to yourself by definition constitute one-way communications?

GG: I was just arguing with myself about that very thing the other day. No I wasn't. Yes I was. There it is.

LO: When last we spoke you had some musical projects on the go.

GG: Indeed I did. In fact I've been quite busy artistically. I've written an opera based on Ships Standing Orders. I call it "Ships Standing Orders: The Opera". It's about a handsome young gnaval gnome who does a bunch of gnaval stuff and then operatic a-doings ensue.

LO: Do you think that will have popular appeal?

GG: I'm hoping so. I've stuffed it full of poetic and literary devices, like denouement and pathos and irony.

LO: What do you mean by "irony"?

GG: That's like when you take something out of the dryer and you press it, which changes it from wrinkly to iron.

LO: Did you write all the music for your opera?

GG: Oh yes. I wrote it all in the key of Gn. And it's intended for an all-alpenhorn orchestra.

LO: Where will you get sufficient alpenhorns?

GG: My plan is to get a bunch of French horns and just straighten them out. It'll be what the young gnomes today call gnarly. Mind you, I did get into a spot of trouble with the GOP, that's the Gnomatic Operatic Police, over one of my solo pieces. They cordoned

off the entire aria.

LO: Oh, I hope you won't get into serious legal trouble?

GG: Don't worry, my cousin Anne is an excellent lawyer. They call her "The Island".

LO: Why is that, because she stands alone in her legal prowess?

GG: No, it's because of what that poem says: "Gnome Anne is an island". Also, they say "time and tide wait for Gnome Anne".

LO: You seem to love a good pun, Gnaval Gnome. Did you know that Dickens called the pun a tool of the weak?

GG: "Tool of the Week"? Is that like Soup of the Day? Speaking of which, any sign of those cookies you promised? Gnothing with gnuts in it, though, or I'll swell up like a pneumatic fender.

LO: Have an allergy?

GG: No thanks, I've already got one.

LO: Well Gnaval Gnome, as always it's been very interesting chatting with you.

GG: Thanks for letting me drop by. I have to shove off now, though, because I'm hosting a party this evening for the guy who invented window blinds. You know, if it wasn't for him, it'd be curtains for all of us.

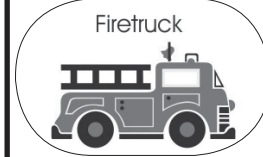


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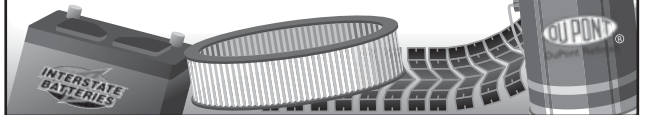
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Awards in athletic achievement

Jen Seipp

CFPFSS Communications Advisor

Whether they registered three kicks in a single second against an opponent, dead lifted an astounding 685 lbs, or ran over 200 km at a stretch, the athletes honoured at the 23rd Annual Canadian Forces Sports Awards Ceremony demonstrated exceptional speed, strength, and stamina.

Held on Nov. 5, the Sports Awards gathered nearly 300 senior Canadian Forces members, sponsors, nominees, honourees, and CFPFSS staff at the National Gallery of Canada for an evening of awards and retrospectives. The night not only celebrated achievement in sports, but also stressed the valuable roles that athletes, coaches and officials play as role models and leaders in their communities, and as ambassadors of the Canadian Forces around the globe.

"I am impressed by the diversity and calibre of our military athletes," says BGen F.G. Bigelow, Director General PFSS. "All of our nominees actively demonstrate the value of sport within their communities, and have dedicated countless hours to promoting sports and fitness among athletes of all ages."

The ceremony's theme this year was the Canadian Forces and International Sports, putting special focus on our athletes' success in representing Canada in military and civilian sports competitions around the world.

Among the athletes applauded for their success on the international sports scene were: Pte Kyle Croxall, an ice cross racer who placed second overall in the Red Bull Crashed Ice World Championships, and has consistently been ranked top three in the world in the downhill skating events; Capt Mike Evans, a sailor who won the 2010 Korea Cup Sailing Championship with a team of Canadian and Korean sailors; and OS Yvette Yong, a taekwondo athlete who won Canada's only gold medal at the 2011 Military World Games.

In addition to the spotlight on international sports and the achievement awards distributed, the Sports Awards also honoured several athletes, coaches and officials for their lifetime of exceptional sports success. Five new inductees were added to the Canadian Forces Sports Honour Roll, and two extraordinary athletes were

inducted into the Canadian Forces Sports Hall of Fame, the highest honour of the night. World-ranked powerlifter MCpl Brian George, easily the strongest man in the Canadian Forces, and MWO Richard Ward, international and Paralympic shooting coach, received this high honour in recognition of their remarkable sports careers.

For more information about the winners and nominees, visit www.cfsportsawardsceremony.ca.

The award winners were:

Male Athlete of the Year: Cpl Eric Feunekes, Canadian Army, Greco-Roman Wrestling

Female Athlete of the Year: 2Lt Serena Palmer, Military Personnel Command, Swimming and Lifesaving

Male Coach of the Year: Sgt Alain Chalifoux, Royal Canadian Air Force, Multi-sports

Female Coach of the Year: Sgt Wendy Nelson, Canadian Army, Swimming

Official of the Year: Cpl Giancarlo Pavone, Royal Canadian Air Force, Soccer

Team of the Year in Individual Sports: CFB Esquimalt Running Team, Royal Canadian Navy

Team of the Year in Collective Sports: CFSU Ottawa Men's Basketball Team, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff

CF Health and Physical Fitness Award: CFSU Europe, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff

Honour Roll

Capt (Ret'd) Kevin Dulude Basketball player

Sgt (Ret'd) L. "Moose" Gibson

Multi-sports official and builder

Capt Michel Ouellet Multi-sports

athlete and builder

Sgt (Ret'd) Donald Phillips Soccer

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Hall of Fame

MCpl Brian George, Powerlifting athlete

MWO Richard Ward, Shooting coach

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PSP News

Lunch time courses gaining speed at Naden Athletic Centre

Ben Green
Staff Writer

With 2012 right around the corner, it seems many base personnel are not waiting to hit the scales for a weigh in on Jan. 1.

Instead, they have taken the initiative now for a healthier tomorrow.

Personnel Support Programs (PSP) lunch-time fitness classes have seen an influx of people looking to either prepare their holiday beach bods, or get a month's head-start on a better New Year.

"It's like the pre-New Year's resolutions," says Megan Larsen, Fitness Coordinator with PSP.

All lunchtime classes held at the Naden Athletic Centre run from 12:05-12:50 p.m. and offer something unique on a daily basis.

On Mondays and Wednesdays, personnel can choose from Bootcamp, flexibility, or cardio development classes; Tuesdays and Thursdays are push-ups/sit-ups, a spin class, or Aquafit; and Fridays are combat training

or cardio development classes. The classes are taught by a rotation of about a dozen fitness trainers, both from the Naden and dockyard gyms.

Larsen says the courses offer something for everybody without any hit to the pocket.

"They're free, which is very nice," she says. "It's drop-in style, there's no registration. There's such a variety; on every given day there's a variety of classes."

Despite many of the classes doubling in occupancy, and even at capacity in some (spin class), Larsen says they would love to see even more people come down and participate.

"We'd definitely like to see more," she adds. "We always like to see every class full."

In the New Year, starting on Jan. 3, morning unit PT courses will be held from 7:30-8:30 a.m. These courses will be open to all base units and will see members run through a variety of the fitness courses, such as the ones currently being offered right now.



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Runaway barge rescued by harbour authorities

Ben Green
Staff Writer

Three weeks ago, gusting winds and powerful swells inside Esquimalt harbour pried loose a barge, stranding it deep on the harbour's north side rocks.

The barge, called Capco 200, was an old 176-foot, 1,000 gross tonne ship that had been converted into a sewage barge. Moored on one of three commercial buoys inside the harbour, Capco 200's poorly maintained lines were easily parted by the rough winter weather. The barge drifted into the View Royal side of the harbour across from dockyard's A jetty where it ran aground.

"[It was stranded] in a heavy residential area with docks and vessels," says Doug Kimmett, Auxiliary Fleet Manager at Port Operations and Emergency Services Branch. "It just happened to go into the right place."

While the barge didn't cause any immediate damage, a local resident, Troy Saladana, alerted CFB Esquimalt's Queen Harbour Master (QHM) of the situation.

Since 2005, the Department of National Defence has basically been the landlord of Esquimalt harbour. Previously under the control of Transport Canada, the harbour was divested by the agency in an attempt to downsize some of its port/harbour holdings.

This has meant, for the past six years, QHM has dealt with all forms of maritime traffic emergencies.

"We have responsibility over the entire harbour now, this involves some industry," says Kimmett.

In response to Saladana's call, QHM dispatched Dawne Vanstone and her firebrand crew in a small, aluminum vessel to investigate. At approximately 8:30 p.m. they arrived at the scene to find Saladana in a small craft of his own attaching a line to the barge.

As Firebrand's crew attached the line to their vessel, CFAV Tillicum, a tug from the base, arrived to help. With all assets working together, they managed to drag the barge off the rocks and secure it properly back to its buoy. By 10 p.m. all ships were back at their berths.

The three commercial buoys, owned by Jones Marine, were leased for commercial, temporary moorage. Normally, they're used by the logging industry to tie up long-haul log tows during extreme tides or severe weather. Similar buoys are in place up and down the coast as it's more effective for log tows to stop rather than battle through unforgiving conditions.

Jones Marine hasn't been able to contact the owner of Capco 200 since the Nov. 13 incident. Kimmett says the barge could be potentially orphaned in the harbour.

"The bottom line is Jones is taking responsibility for their leased buoys and QHM is assisting with the process to have the barge removed from the harbour," he says.

Acting as harbour authority, it is QHM and CFAV's duty to coordinate responsible retrieval and cleanup of any incident involving pleasure, commercial, or military crafts. Kimmett says they assist with one or two cases per year. This may include tracking down drifting vessels or providing services for ones that have sunk. Since taking over harbour responsibility from Transport Canada in 2005, QHM has salvaged over 20 vessels from the harbour's bottom.

"We've had to learn salvage and disposal skills," says Kimmett with a laugh. "I'm not sure if that's a good thing."

Kimmett says incidences like the runaway barge are just part of the job now that the harbour falls under DND jurisdiction. He says the quick response from QHM and CFAV shows how important it is to have the firebrand manned 24 hours a day, complete with a crew competent on a range of vessels.

"It gives DND greater awareness in the harbour," he adds. "Before we were more focused on our own facilities; in the past, we had no control over leased buoys, no input into what was going on. This was an accident, but at least we're involved and can help mitigate after the fact."

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Nelles Yuletide d

Above: Connie Lapointe from Prince Edward Legion Branch 91, Tom Green of Br... Commander's representative Cdr Tim Allan, Base Administration Officer, carve the Yuletide dinner held in Nelles Pacific Galley on Nov. 29.

Right: It's all smiles as a handful of sailors prepare plates for hungry seniors attend

Below right: Hundreds of Junior Rank members filled the galley for their special Christmas fixings on Dec. 1.

Below Left: CPO2 Jamie Lone, from Canadian Forces Fleet School Pacific Standard... the annual Veterans Yuletide dinner.

Randall Garrison, MP ESQUIMALT-JUAN DE FUCA



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Old dockyard building torn down

Ben Green
Staff Writer

Last month, building 50 in Dockyard (DY50) was finally reduced to rubble following the deconstruction of the old wooden structure.

Long-term occupants had long since vacated to newer locations, but the building continued to be a home for unforeseen, short-term tenants, giving it several “stays” of execution.

The building’s last temporary tenants were staff from Joint Task Force Games Headquarters during Operation Podium for the Vancouver Olympics from 2007-2010.

Treasury Board and DND have policies that state whenever newer infrastructure is installed, the older, more obsolete facility it replaces should be removed from base inventory.

D50 was included in a thorough Facility Condition Assessment done on all Dockyard buildings by a team of architects and engineers who specialize in building assessments for Base Construction Engineering (BCE).

“Although DY50 was per-

ceived as suitable by some, this rigorous and quantitative process confirmed BCE’s opinion that the building’s systems – envelope, electrical distribution, mechanical and heating systems, communications – were indeed in very poor condition, despite all the work to make it fit for occupation by Op Podium headquarters,” says Marcel Gingras, Base Development Engineer.

Quite simply put, DY50 was beyond economical repair.

In addition, the building’s position along dockyard’s Hospital Road is in direct conflict with the new road alignments planned. Hospital and Rainbow roads

will be improved and re-aligned for better access to the operational jetties that will be replaced over the next several years as well. The road realignment will also be in conjunction with the new utility corridor being developed underneath dockyard’s roadway this summer.

After several weeks of preparatory work, it only took about two hours for the structure to actually come down, and additional work to complete the deconstruction will continue on site for several weeks. This work is the first of many significant changes taking place in the near future in the Dockyard to support Naval operations.



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Human remains found at Aldergrove

Last Tuesday, at approximately 1:30 p.m., Langley RCMP were called to the 26200 block of Robertson Crescent after two BC Hydro workers found what they believed to be a human skull.

Police confirmed the skull does appear to be human. At this time, it is not known how long the remains have been at that location. A perimeter around the discovery area has been established and the scene secured overnight.

On Wednesday, Forensic Identification Officers were on scene to scour the area and collect any and all relevant evidence.

It has been determined the remains are on

Department of National Defence property. Langley Serious Crimes Investigators are working closely with the Military Police to determine what transpired.

Anyone with information that might assist with this investigation are asked to call Langley RCMP at 604-532-3200. Should you need to remain anonymous, please call Crimestoppers: There are four ways to leave an "anonymous tip" with Crime Stoppers. Talk:

- 1-800-222-TIPS (8477)
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NEWS Nuggets

Career manager coming to base

Base Visit

From Dec. 5-16, the Regular Force Naval Career Manager will visit CFB Esquimalt to conduct briefs at the Formation, unit, and MOSID levels. Individual interviews will be available as required. An overall Flex can be found at <http://esquimalt.mil.ca/marpac/n11/index.htm>.

Questions or concerns are to be directed to LCdr S.D. Brown at 250-363-2702.

Spread the Cheer, Spread the Smiles

The Employee Assistance Program is spreading some holiday cheer this season and you can too.

In support of the GCWCC and locally funded United Way partners, there will be a box in the EAP resource room (Building D29, Room 105) until Dec. 14. They are looking for two things:

- Items to be donated to the homeless. Our most desired items are newly purchased socks and gloves for men and women.
- Gently used clothing and jackets that will be taken to Victoria's Single Parent Resource Centre.

Any donations are greatly appreciated.

For further information contact Pam Patterson, 3-4614 or pamela.patterson@forces.gc.ca

Great Gingerbread Showcase at Laurel Point

Things will be a bit spicier at Victoria's Inn at Laurel Point from now through Jan. 2, 2012, with entries for the 2011 Great Gingerbread Showcase now on public display.


The annual festive fund raising event sees local bakers (both amateur and professional) going head-to-head in creating (using 100 per cent edible ingredients) the city's most elaborate gingerbread houses – all in the name of raising funds for Habitat for Humanity Victoria and, of course, earning bragging rights.

This year's event has a record 25 entries on display throughout the hotel, ranging from *T 'was the Night Before Christmas* by Ryan Townsend to *Monastery Brewery* by Crystal Duck of Spinnakers Gastro Brew Pub and *Poseidon's Playground* by Melanie Lonsdale.

Members of the public can drop by Inn at Laurel Point to check out this year's entries daily from now until Jan. 2, 2012, between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Holiday Trees

Purchase your Island grown, fresh-cut Christmas tree at Royal Oak Canadian Tire Garden Centre, starting Dec. 1, weekdays- 4 to 8 p.m., weekends 9 a.m to 6 p.m., all in support of Scouts Canada's Camp Barnard.



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Photo courtesy of Lt(N) Mike St-Pierre

Above: Lt(N) Mike St-Pierre, a Clearance Diver with Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific), poses for a quick photo with crew from the German Mine Hunter FGS Bad Bevensen.

Mine hunting in the Mediterranean

Ben Green
Staff Writer

In mid-September, five Clearance Divers from Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) (FDU(P)) left the frigid B.C. waters behind and submersed themselves in the tepid Mediterranean as part of NATO-backed Mine Counter-Measure (MCM) exercises in the region.

For five-and-a-half weeks, Lt(N) Mike St-Pierre, LS Tyler Newman, PO1 Sean Ratz, LS Kyle Hobbs, and LS Ken Jones ferried around Italy's coastal waters as part of Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 2.

"We circumnavigated most of Italy and went through the Straits of Messina," says Lt(N) St-Pierre. "From Messina we went up to Croatia then back down to Sicily."

After flying into Florence on Sept. 12, the team took a few days to acclimatize and arrange logistics before making their way on board the German Mine Hunter FGS Bad Bevensen. With NATO frequently conducting multinational exercises in the region, the team from FDU(P) was brought in to shore up the shortage of qualified Clearance Divers in the German Navy. Commanded by a Turkish Commodore, MCM Group 2 was a coalition of German, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Greek, and Croatian naval vessels.

"They were heading all the way [east] to the end of the Mediterranean," says PO1 Ratz. "This is a four month deployment, but we were there for only a quarter of it."

Bad Bevensen was a true Mine Hunter. About the size of a Canadian Maritime Coastal Defence Vessel, it carried a crew of about 45 in a stainless steel, silent, non-magnetic hull. On board, the team

from FDU(P) soon realized their German was about as good as most of the sailor's English.

"[Language] was a huge barrier," says LS Jones with a smile.

Most of the ship's senior staff spoke English well, but all pipes and procedures were broadcast in German. This meant for certain drills, such as emergency stations and firefighting response, the group couldn't compliment the crew or properly use the foreign equipment.

Despite the barrier, the team adjusted quickly with the generous hospitality of their hosts. Most of the first week on board was spent properly preparing their dive kits, liaising with crew, and reviewing the ship's re-compression chamber procedures (the chamber is used in diving medical emergencies to re-compress the diver to depth).

In total, the team completed 23 dives in water and 13 dives in the chamber. Unfortunately, prior to each dive they had to receive permission from the Group 2 command team. Their time underwater meant the accompanying vessels above had to stop and wait.

"Our dive windows were allocated," says Lt(N) St-Pierre. "It was tough to organize them, but when we got them we used them."

The majority of the dives centred on the location and disposal of inert influence mines laid by ships in Group 2. Using hand-held sonar, the team conducted multiple dives in an effort to locate the mines. Upon finding them, proper explosive ordnance disposal procedures were exercised. On occasion, their dives included partnering with an enthusiastic Croatian dive team who were seeking some structured

training from their Canadian counterparts.

When not in the water, the team volunteered with basic seamanship (handling of lines), bridge watches, and small arms exercises.

Lt(N) St-Pierre says a significant difference with foreign dive teams compared to Canadian Clearance Divers were the caveats and restrictions they had on diving operations.

"In the diving community here [in Canada], we're pretty flexible and can easily adapt," says Lt(N) St-Pierre. "[Their mindset was] diving is dangerous so don't do it, instead of diving is dangerous so do it more so you're better at it. It took some getting used to."

The German's approach to MCM was also something the team had to adapt to. While Canadian Clearance Divers are sufficiently trained to deal with explosives by hand, Bad Bevensen had a Remote Operated Vehicle called Penguin that they became reliant on after years without an MCM dive team. Penguin, a small, orange sub, was controlled from the ship's operations room and carried explosives to deal with potential mines. Putting bodies in the water was a last resort, but like all electronics in water, Penguin had its problems.

Although the team found adjusting to the environment trying at times, they didn't seem to mind the clear, turquoise, 22 degrees Celsius water of the Mediterranean. Compared to the seven degrees Celsius water of the Pacific Northwest, they might as well have been diving in bath water.

"Visibility was great," says PO1 Ratz. "I remember being on the bottom, about 30 metres deep, looking up and seeing the boat."

Their time overseas wasn't all spent under

water. After each week of sailing they were allowed port visits to cities throughout Italy and its neighbouring areas. The team took advantage, visiting museums, cathedrals, and various tourist destinations in Livorno, Gaeta, Taranto, Catania, Sicily, and Split, Croatia. They even participated in a pleasure dive of reef beds in Croatia that their German hosts had organized.

"Canada doesn't have that same history," says LS Hobbs. "It was really neat to see that."

By mid-October it was time for the team to return home. Before departing Bad Bevensen, they were presented with various gifts by the crew, including the Canadian flag that had been flying on the ship's mast since their arrival almost six weeks earlier. As they stepped off the mine hunter for the final time, the ship's crew was already lined up at attention, stretching shoulder to shoulder down the jetty. Each sailor shook the divers' hands; it was a hero's exit.

"I've never seen anything like that, ever," says LS Hobbs.

Now back in Victoria, the team collectively agrees the experience only had positive outcomes on their development as naval divers.

"It gave us a better idea of the big picture," says LS Newman. "We don't have mine hunters or mine countermeasure task forces in Canada. It gave us a better understanding and a better appreciation of how everything works."

If tasked to do it again, all five divers emphatically said they would jump at the opportunity – perhaps after a few lessons this time.

"I think I'd brush up on some German first," adds LS Jones.

First World War shell safely destroyed

Lt Trevor Reid
19 Wing PA

A shell, almost 100 years old, was safely destroyed by members of 19 Explosives Disposal Flight (19 EDF) Nov. 23, after it was discovered and reported by a local resident clearing out a house in Lazo, British Columbia.

The resident immediately called CFB Comox Military Police when she spotted what she believed to be military ordnance. Upon arrival at the residence, members of 19 EDF identified a 37mm high explosive round from circa First World War. The shell was still live at the time of discovery.

"Military ordnance can be extremely dangerous, particularly if it is old," said Lt Jorge Parra-Martinez, 19 EDF Commander. "It's very important that if people see something that looks like ammunition, be it sitting on a shelf, or in a basement that is being cleared out, they contact local police or the military to ensure its safe disposal."

To encourage reporting, an amnesty program protects those who find and report ammunition. No names or addresses are reported publicly. Ammunition safety is paramount and even if residents are unsure about items resembling ammunition or explosives, they are encouraged to

call in order to let experts confirm the identity of the object and determine if it poses a danger.

Members of 19 EDF are specially trained to identify and dispose of a wide range of ammunition and explosives. Regionally, members of 19 EDF are the first responders to deal with any military explosives and are regularly called upon to dispose of hazards such as unearthed or souvenir munitions and Marine Locator Markers washing up on the beach. To report findings, please contact local law enforcement or the 19 Wing Operations centre at 1-866-488-0889.



Photo by DND
A 37mm high explosive shell, used in First World War quick firing guns, was discovered in a Lazo, British Columbia home on Nov. 23. The shell was safely destroyed later that day by Explosive Ordnance Disposal experts of 19 Explosives Disposal Flight (19 EDF), based at 19 Wing Comox.

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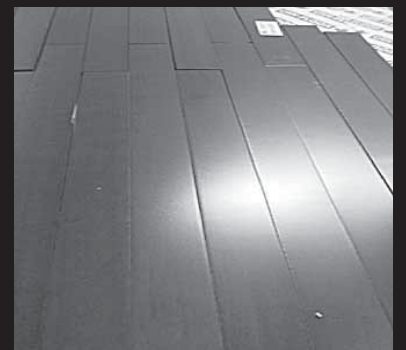
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Bravo ZULU

On Nov. 4 at the Chief and Petty Officers Mess RAdm Nigel Greenwood presented various commendations to MARPAC personnel.



RAdm Greenwood presents Mr Thomas Percy with the Vice Chief of Defence Staff Commendation for "outstanding performance in a time of immediate crisis."



RAdm Greenwood presents LCdr Hopkins with the Joint Task Force West Command Team Commendation. "During Operation Lustre, LCdr J.W. Hopkins displayed outstanding professionalism, skill, and commitment, expertly and effectively performing his duties as the J3 of the Maritime Component Commander's Regional Maritime Coordination Element."



RAdm Nigel Greenwood presents WO Polson his sacrifice medal for his tour during Operation Athena in Afghanistan from June 1 to Dec. 21, 2008.



Rear Admiral Greenwood presents CEFCOM Commanders Commendation to PO2 P.W. Smith for "Outstanding initiative, ingenuity and technical expertise in inventing a Counter Improvised explosive devise rake."



RAdm Greenwood presents LCdr Ensing with the Joint Task Force West Command Team Commendation. "During Operation Lustre, LCdr C.M Ensing displayed outstanding professionalism expertly overseeing all logistical support requirements of the Maritime Component Commander's Regional Maritime Coordination Element."



RAdm Greenwood presents MS Bruce with a Commander-in-Chief Unit Commendation for "Courageous and professional execution of duty in Afghanistan that prevented the capture of Kandahar City by insurgents August to September 2006."



RAdm Greenwood presents Commander Derosenroll (Retired) the Commander Royal Canadian Navy Commendation in recognition for his outstanding leadership as Maritime Forces Pacific Canadian Naval Centennial Coordinator.



RAdm Greenwood presents Chuck Grenkow with the Joint Task Force Pacific Bravo Zulu for, "Exceptional determination and perseverance over a prolonged period of time to complete the JRCC Telecommunication Upgrade Project."



RAdm Greenwood presents Cdr McBurney with the Vice Chief of Defence Staff Commendation for "outstanding performance in a time of immediate crisis while on duty."



RAdm Greenwood presents CPO1 (ret'd) Moger the Commander Royal Canadian Navy Commendation. "CPO1 Moger is recognized for his outstanding leadership and unselfish dedication as the Maritime Forces Pacific Canadian Naval Centennial Chief Petty Officer."



RAdm Greenwood presents MS Blackburn the MARPAC Bravo Zulu for "Outstanding initiative and dedication demonstrated while assisting with recruiting efforts, specifically for the Electrical Technician trade."

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RAdm Greenwood presents Fred Abraham the MARPAC Bravo Zulu for "Outstanding leadership, dedication and perseverance to overcome significant time critical challenges by ensuring all HCM/FELEX objectives for HMCS CALGARY were met."



On July 28, Jackson Filtness received his 25 Year Public Service Long Service Award from Maj Rob Mason.



RAdm Greenwood presents Lt(N) Forsyth his commissioning scroll.

Photos by Corporal Alex. W. Croskery



Roxanne Mill accepts the MFRC's 2011 Phenomenal Woman Award at Pacific Women's Day on Nov. 19. The honour goes to a woman in the military community who contributes to the life of others, is a role model, demonstrates initiative and a pioneering spirit, and has commitment to her community.



On Nov. 22, sailors graduated from CISN ADMIN at the Communication Training Centre. Back row (left to right): LS Cullum, MS Sorensen, LS Arensen, MS Rancak, LS Acland, LS Lafontaine, and LS Ensom. Front row (left to right): PO1 Hales, CPO2 Lesperance, and PO2 Laughland.



On Nov. 1 Karen Field was presented with a BCE Branch Commanding Officer's Award from LCol Darlene Quinn in recognition of outstanding work and dedication as co-chair and member of the BCE Joint Occupational Safety, Health Committee.



On Nov. 1, LCol Darlene Quinn presented a BCE Branch Commanding Officer's Award as a Team Award to the Risk Management Section in recognition of exceptional performance and team work during the Formation Management Review and Performance Verification.



PO1 Dale Narum, a Sea Cadet with RCSCC Esquimalt, is awarded the Duke of Edinburgh's Award B.C. & Yukon Division from the Honourable Steven L. Point, Lieutenant Governor of B.C., and Stuart McDonald at the Government House in Victoria on Nov. 12.



Photo by Cpl Michael Bastien, MARPAC Imaging Services
Ruth E.B. Larder was awarded with a certificate, in honour of her 25 Years of Service to the Government of Canada. The certificate was presented by Commander Plaschka at the Admiral's Briefing Room in the D-100.

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