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A real score

Military nets Royal appreciation

Photo by Jonathon Howe, One Lion Photography

Base Public Affairs

A week ago, the largest arena in Victoria was brimming with hockey fans, including a large contingent from CFB Esquimalt.

Military members were the special guests of the Victoria Royals, the city's Western Hockey League team, during their March 3 game against the Vancouver Giants at the Save-on-Foods Memorial Centre.

Front and centre in the military appreciation night were sailors from *HMCS Vancouver*, freshly back from seven months in the Mediterranean enforcing United Nation's imposed arms embargo against Libya.

The Royals also donated more than 150 free tickets, which were given to deserving personnel from the Formation, and discounted general tickets for CF members and their families.

As hockey fans arrived at the Memorial Centre, they

were able to check out the Fleet Dive Unit bomb disposal truck and see the bomb disposal robot in action. They also received a CF promotional item as a souvenir of the evening.

The pre-game show was all about the Canadian Forces. *Vancouver* crew members formed the Flag Party on the ice while the Naden Band performed the national anthem. At the conclusion of 'Oh Canada', a locally produced DND video highlighting all three elements of the CF played on the megatron screens as announcer Cliff Lequesne talked about the work done by the CF. To the delight and surprise of the crowd, three search and rescue technicians from 442 Squadron Comox, hiding in the rafters, repelled down to the ice to hand deliver the ceremonial puck to Marty the Marmot.

"It is very special to rappel from the roof and land on the ice in a big event. It is a lot of fun," said Sgt Robin Richardson, SAR Tech.

RAdm Nigel Greenwood, Commander Maritime Forces Pacific, and Cdr David Mazur, Commanding Officer of *Vancouver*, were joined by Royals' Senior Vice President Sales and Marketing, Darren Parker at centre ice for the puck drop.

Throughout the game, 20 volunteers from the Military Family Resource Centre sold the 50/50 tickets, which raised \$4,052 for the charity.

During the first intermission, Navy, Army and Air Force members took centre ice for a fun relay involving puck handling, dressing quickly and tricycle riding on ice. The navy scooped bragging rights. In the second intermission, pucks sold by the 89 Pacific Squadron from the Royal Canadian Air Cadets were tossed on the ice in chuck-a-puck contest.

And when the buzzer sounded, announcing the end of the game, the Victoria Royals were victorious over the Vancouver Giants by a score of 5-2.

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Blue Boat shuttle service to cease

Staffing shortage prompts refocus on core mandate

The Blue Boats have satisfied many requirements to transport military members and DND civilian employees across Esquimalt Harbour over the past 50 years. Come the end of April, the venerable vessels will start a new chapter when their most recent role as scheduled shuttles will end.

The Auxiliary Fleet responsible for the boats' operations is currently facing staffing challenges. The section is comprised of qualified ship's officers, ship's engineers and Deckhands that operate a range of vessels using a manning pool concept. As personal resources have become more constrained, it has become increasingly challenging for the Auxiliary Fleet to meet all of its operational commitments in addition to providing the cross-harbour service. By the end of April, given scheduling, leave, medical and all the other demands placed on personnel, it simply was not going to be acceptable to continue with the cross-harbour service while not having critically important Tugs and Barges available for operational support.

The primary task for the Blue Boats has been to connect Defence properties and organizations along the harbour in order to facilitate the performance of official duties. In recent years, an increasing number of people liv-

ing in Colwood and the West Shore have availed themselves of the service to shorten or improve their travel to and from work. This was not a mandate of the Blue Boats but was perceived as such given the number of people who took advantage of this extra-capacity during commuting hours. Capt(N) Craig Baines, Base Commander of CFB Esquimalt, says while he is certainly sympathetic that the change will impact the 300 to 400 daily commuters that catch the Blue Boat each day, the Auxiliary Fleet have nevertheless exhausted their ability to both manage higher priority operational support requirements and continue the cross-harbour service.

"I understand very well that people took advantage of the excess capacity that existed within the shuttle service to help them with their commute," said Capt(N) Baines. "Because the boats had the ability to accommodate that, it wasn't an issue for us even though it was not part of our mandate. While not necessarily convenient, we can find other ways of getting around the harbour for work purposes. We can't find other affordable ways to replace the incredible operational support the crews provide through use of tugs, barges and other essential pieces of equipment."

"No question that we're

sensitive to the fact that this will change some folks daily commute, but as responsible resource managers, we have to ensure we're putting our resources to our highest priorities," he says. "Our number one priority is operational support to the Fleet and we're now in a place where we need to realign our Auxiliary Fleet personnel resources to ensure that this support continues with a minimum of disruption."

Scheduling, various types of leave, retirement, medical and other forms of attrition are amongst the personnel management challenges faced by the Auxiliary Fleet that underscore the now critical need to prioritize support to the Navy's ships and submarines.

The core capabilities of the Auxiliary Fleet include crewing various tugs to manage ships' movements and position specialty barges for jobs around the harbour and up in Nanoose. As well, a range of vessels are operated to conduct fuelling operations, mooring operations, bilge services and environmental responses.

With the Blue Boats ceasing their cross-harbour runs, there is an obvious potential for more vehicles to be added to the already congested commute from the western communities. This is clearly an unfortunate byproduct of having to take this decision. However, while Capt(N) Baines recognizes that this will not make the Base popular in the local community necessarily, it does further

highlight the regional traffic issues to which everyone contributes and one for which a collective and collaborative solution is required.

"We understand the traffic situation is at times difficult and there is no question ceasing the shuttle service will, indirectly, add to the complexity of that," he says. "But we also recognize that transportation is a regional issue that needs to be addressed through all the area stakeholders and we're actively engaging those groups."

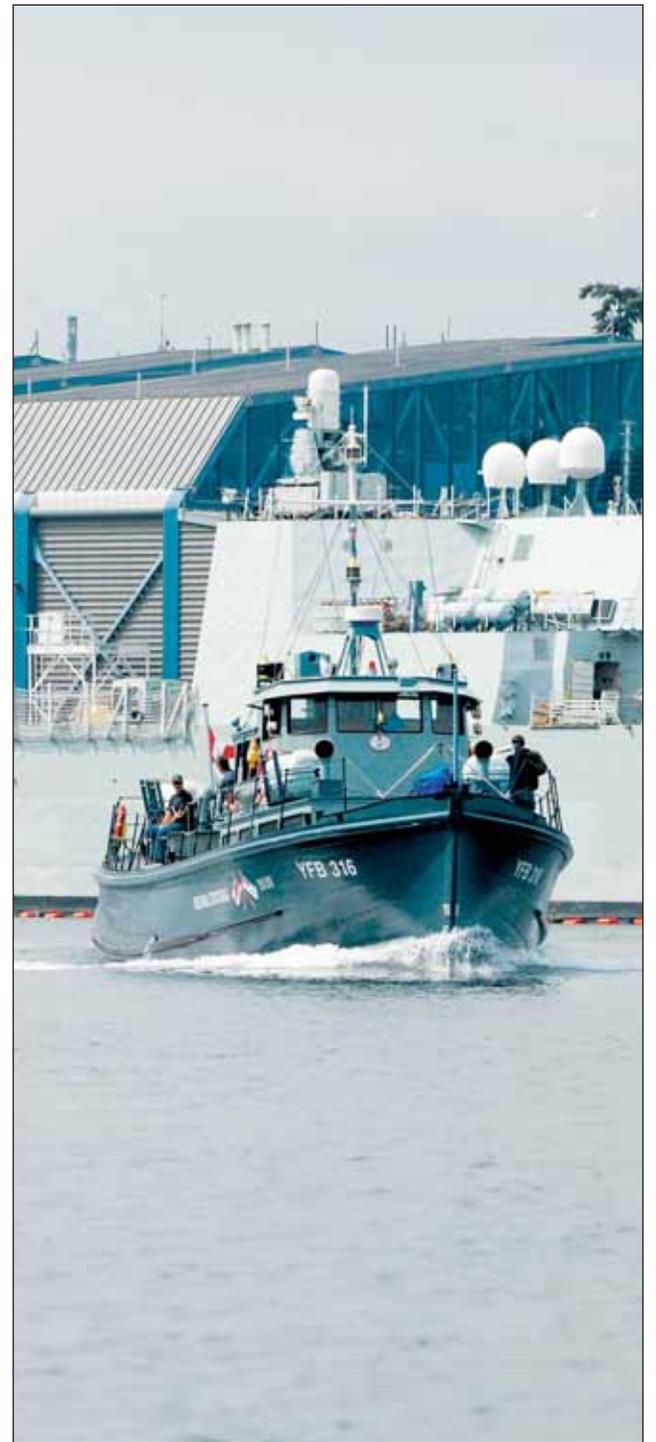
In particular, Capt(N) Baines says the Base is in discussion with B.C.

Transit with a goal of exploring ways to mediate the impact on commuters affected by both this cessation and the existing traffic situation.

"While we can't put resources towards helping people with the commute to work, we are very interested in working with these stakeholders in trying to develop solutions to make the regional transportation issue better. For instance, perhaps there is a private enterprise solution to this service that no one has thought of yet."

The Blue Boats were built in 1955 by Star Shipyards in New Westminster, BC.

The Blue Boat cross-harbour shuttle service will cease no later than Apr. 30. The boats themselves will be maintained and used on an "as required" basis for operational purposes.



The Blue Boat cross-harbour ferry service will cease operations as of April 30, 2012.

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Last month, HMCS Algonquin participated in a series of exercises off Southern California with U.S. and Mexican naval assets.

Law enforcement practiced on the sea

Lt(N) Mike Ronaldson
HMCS Algonquin

In mid-February, HMCS Algonquin took part in the North American Maritime Security Initiative (NAMSI) exercise off the coast of Southern California and Northern Mexico. NAMSI is an interagency tri-lateral security initiative between the U.S., Canadian, and Mexican maritime commands. The primary goal of the exercise was to test the interoperability and mutual understanding amongst the participating commands.

The Feb. 22-23 exercise was conducted to validate the tri-lateral agreement's standard operating procedures (SOP) used to coordinate the hand over of custody of a suspect vessel from one nation to another.

The procedures are designed to facilitate maritime law enforcement as it relates to interdicting vessels suspected of trafficking illicit drugs or other illegal activities prohibited by international law. The exercise was also an opportunity to observe and learn from how the U.S. and Mexico conduct boarding operations.

The first day had Algonquin's boarding team board the U.S. tanker, USNS Henry J. Kaiser, who was playing the role of the merchant vessel Black Pearl, a container ship known to be harboring a person of interest with links to terrorist activity.

After obtaining permission from Canadian maritime authorities, Algonquin's Naval Boarding Party secured the vessel and conducted a search for the potential terrorist. Once the person was located, secured and his identity confirmed, U.S. national authorities were contacted in order to turn over the custody of the vessel to the United States.

Shortly after national maritime authorities had completed the requisite paperwork, USCGC Boutwell was seen charging over the horizon in order to take custody of the Black Pearl and the person of interest.

Algonquin's Naval Boarding Party officer and his team conducted a thorough turnover of custody to the U.S. Coast Guard.

The following day a similar exercise was conducted to test the ability of the Canadian and Mexican maritime

authorities to hand over custody of a vessel in accordance with the NAMSI Letter of Intent. This time it was the Mexican Navy's turn to conduct the initial boarding on a Canadian flagged vessel, once again played by USNS Kaiser.

ARM Monasterio conducted the boarding, secured the vessel and in doing so found an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) for which a Mexican Explosive Ordinance Team was dispatched. Once the IED was neutralized, Mexican maritime authorities contacted Canadian maritime authorities to commence the transfer of custody of the vessel to Canadian control.

Algonquin's Boarding Party proceeded to board the Canadian flagged vessel and the Mexican Navy transferred custody of the secured vessel to Canada, thus ending the exercise.

This exercise stressed the importance of interoperability between North American partners, and the fostering of these relationships will be key in facilitating future efforts against common threats to our collective security.

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Sgt Benoit Rheume
Military Police Community Relations

Drivers in B.C. can no longer use hand-held cell phones and other hand-held portable electronic devices.

In addition to that, new drivers in Graduated Licensing Program (GLP) can't use hands-free portable electronic devices while driving.

The goal is to make our roads safer for all road users. When you're behind the wheel, anything that competes with your attention will impair your driving ability and increase your risk of being involved in a collision.

Included in the ban are hand-held cell phones, PDAs, MP3 players, and GPS Navigation Systems. Also, a driver can't

send or receive text messages or electronic email on any type of electronic device. A driver must not hold, operate, communicate or watch the screen of a hand-held electronic communication device.

The fine amount is \$167, and drivers caught texting or emailing will receive three penalty points in addition to a fine.

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A person may use a Global Positioning System (GPS) for navigation purposes while driving if:

- It is programmed before the person begins to drive or operate the vehicle; or
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Remember that you are four times more likely to get involved in an accident while on your cell phone and this increase to 27 times while texting.

Exceptions to prohibition — emergency personnel

Section 214.3 Section 214.2 does not apply to the following persons who use an electronic device while carrying out their powers, duties or functions: a peace officer (Police Officer); a person driving or operating an ambulance as defined in the Emergency and Health Services Act and fire services personnel as defined in the Fire Services Act.

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In Memoriam

A funeral service will be held next Saturday for a retired commander who spent his early officer years at CFB Esquimalt, and went on to serve with Canada's Strategic Advisory Team in Afghanistan, and later as spokesman for NATO's senior civilian representative in that country.

Cdr John Coppard (ret'd), 45, died Monday after a two-and-a-half-year battle with cancer.

He had returned to Victoria in 2009 for treatment after being diagnosed in Afghanistan.

Cdr Coppard joined the forces in 1984 and attended Royal Military College, graduating in 1988 with a BA in English.

He completed his training as a naval officer at HMCS Venture in Esquimalt, then served aboard several ships in Canada's Pacific Fleet, including HMCS Provider, HMCS Huron and HMCS Vancouver, as well as shore duty at the Naval Officer Training Centre and at Maritime Forces Pacific Headquarters. He was on one of the first Canadian ships to enter the Russian port of Vladivostok.

Cdr Coppard transferred to the Public Affairs Branch of the Canadian Forces in 1998.

He served as a public affairs officer at 19 Wing Comox; the Canadian Forces Recruiting, Education and Training System in Borden, Ont.; the Canadian Defence Academy in Kingston, Ont.; and as Deputy Director Naval Communications in Ottawa. He was promoted to lieutenant-commander in 2001, and served as public information officer with the NATO Stabilisation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2002.

Four years later, he was posted as a Strategic Communications Advisor to the government of Afghanistan in Kabul as part of Canada's Strategic Advisory Team.

As part of that role, he accompanied Afghanistan's Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Ehsan Zia, on a 10-day speaking tour from Ottawa to Victoria - and even took him sailing while in Victoria.

Later, he was promoted to the rank of commander and posted to the NATO Allied Command Transformation Headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia.

In 2008, John retired from the Canadian Forces and accepted a civilian position as



Cdr (Retired) John Coppard

spokesman for the senior civilian representative for NATO in Afghanistan.

The funeral service is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday, March 17 at St. Andrews Cathedral at Blanshard and View streets.

A reception will follow at the Union Club. Everyone welcome.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Victoria Hospice Foundation (victoria-hospice.org).

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Bomb disposers train in Comox

Lt Trevor Reid
19 Wing Public Affairs Officer

Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) explosive disposal experts from across Canada were in the Comox Valley two weeks ago to hone their skills at finding, identifying and defeating Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

RCAF personnel took part in Exercise Tazz Runner, a two-week long training opportunity, designed to challenge even the most skilled IED disposal person-

nel. While in Comox, they had a chance to not only improve their own abilities, but share experiences and knowledge with members from other bases.

"Although the combat mission in Afghanistan has ended, it is important we maintain and improve the skills we learned in defeating IEDs," said Capt Jorge Parra-Martinez, Commanding Officer of 19 Explosives Ordnance Disposal Flight. "We have teams from across the country here for this exer-

cise, training to ensure we stay ready for this very real threat."

IED disposal teams took part in a wide range of scenarios during the exercise, all of them based on real life situations experienced by Canada and its allies in theatres of operations such as Afghanistan.

"We're using very advanced equipment in realistic scenarios that reflect the complex environment in which we work while deployed," said WO Robert Selman, an Exercise

Controller from 1 Canadian Air Division. "Readiness is vital; as IED experts you need to constantly train and keep up-to-date with your skills in order to match weapons that are themselves being constantly refined."

While most of the exercise participants are members of the RCAF who specialize in air weapons, as experts in dealing with explosive devices, they are often deployed around the world to support army, navy or joint operations as well.



Above: A suspicious package is remotely blown up by 19 Wing's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit.

Left: A member of 19 Wing's EOD unit approaches the bomb disposal robot.

Photos by Sgt Eileen Redding, 19 Wing Public Affairs

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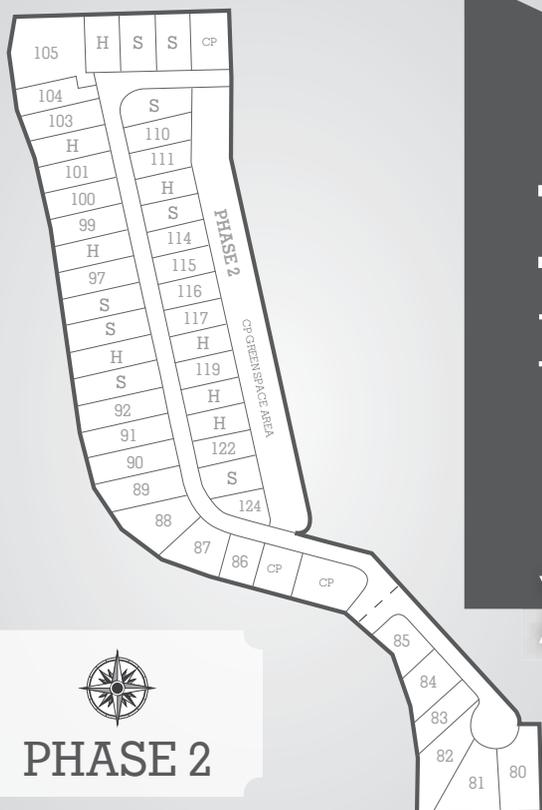
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Military Ombudsman accepting nominees

The Ombudsman's office is currently accepting nominations for the 2012 Liz Hoffman Memorial Commendation for Complaint Resolution. This award serves to recognize Canadian Forces members, civilian employees and family members who go the extra mile and exceed expectations in helping their colleagues resolve a difficult problem or in bringing about positive and lasting change to the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces.

The Ombudsman's Committee, along with Liz Hoffman's daughter, will review all submissions received on or before May 31, 2012. With this input, the Ombudsman will select a maximum of three recipients for the Liz Hoffman Memorial Commendation for Complaint Resolution. All nominators and nominees – whether successful or unsuccessful – will be advised of the outcome of the process in the summer of 2012.

How to submit a nomination file online

Anyone can nominate members (individuals or groups) within the Defence community who have demonstrated one or more of the following attributes:

- A willingness to resolve problems informally and quickly, as well as to support alternative means of resolving disputes;
- The courage not to turn a blind eye to difficult situations, but to find ways to resolve them in a manner consistent with fairness, loyalty and integrity;
- The identification of issues of unfairness and a means of resolving them;
- A systemic approach to problem solving; and/or
- The resourcefulness to propose or consider innovative solutions.

Award recipients will receive a framed citation, an engraved glass sculpture created by a well-known Aboriginal artist, and a trip to Ottawa to be recognized at a special ceremony in October 2012.

Members of the Ombudsman's Advisory

Committee, along with Liz Hoffman's daughter, will review all submissions received on or before May 31, 2012. With this input, the Ombudsman will select a maximum of three recipients for the Liz Hoffman Memorial Commendation for Complaint Resolution. All nominators and nominees – whether successful or unsuccessful – will be advised of the outcome of the process in the summer of 2012.

- Your nominee's name and contact information,
- A short biography on the nominee,
- Concrete examples of the nomination criteria, and
- Your name and contact information.

Mail
Print the nomination form available on the office's website and mail it to: Liz Hoffman Memorial Commendation, for Complaint Resolution Attn: Angelina Nikkel Office of the DND/CF Ombudsman 100 Metcalfe Street, 12th Floor Ottawa, ON K1P 5M1.

For more information, please contact Angelina Nikkel by phone, 613-996-4285, or by E-mail at Angelina.Nikkel@forces.gc.ca

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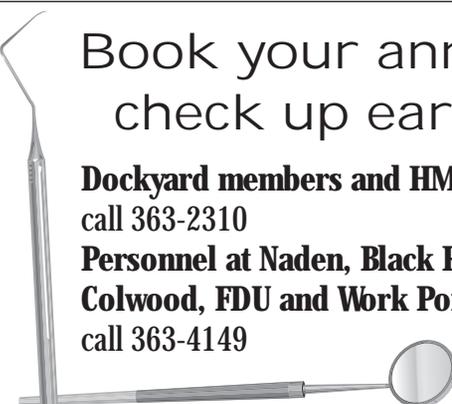
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Four pairs of shoes, 2,000 kilometres, one deployment

Ben Green
Staff Writer

When *HMCS Vancouver* returned home from NATO operations last month, the only thing more worn out than the frigate's crew were the sneakers of Combat Department Chief CPO2 Howard Manderson.

The 42-year-old marathoner spent the seven-month deployment clocking more than 2,000 kilometres on *Vancouver's* 60 by 30 foot flight deck, and in the streets of a dozen countries from Europe to Central America.

"I like to monitor my weekly mileage, so I set a spreadsheet up," says CPO2 Manderson, an 18-year naval veteran and the current Masters Marathon Champion within the Canadian Forces. "Just before the halfway point of the trip, I looked at it and thought, wow, I might be able to pull off 2,000K on this trip."

Maintaining a workout schedule of five days on, one day off, he logged 70 to 80 kilometres per week, averaging around 10 kilometres per day. When not in port or on a leave pass, this meant circling the frigate's pitching and rolling flight deck as many as 320 times for a 10 kilometre run and up to 960 times for a longer 30 kilometre run.

"I changed direction every 15 to 20 minutes, but there were people out there too, lots of people running and working out in the middle," he says. "It certainly beat staring at the same wall on the

treadmill, in my opinion."

When not interrupted by an incoming helicopter, violent sea spray, or temperatures creeping up to the 50 degree Celsius plateau, CPO2 Manderson says it was the constant inclining and declining deck caused by beam seas that often added a new element to his workouts.

"You're adjusting your running, you're never on flat ground," he says. "It's like running on a sidewalk at 30 degrees. It's uphill one way, downhill the other and you just spend so much time stabilizing yourself."

While *Vancouver* was in the box, CPO2 Manderson says his hours on the flight deck provided a sanctuary from the reality of being in the middle of a conflict zone. That is until it gave him a front-row seat to Gadhafi's last stand in Sirte.

"You could see the smoke, hear the rocket fire and the concussions from shore," he says. "The battle was raging and it was a little bit surreal to be exercising and doing what I do and then I go back in the ship, get in the job, and that's what I was focused on 100 per cent."

Of the 2,045 kilometres he ran on deployment, about 1,800 of them came on the ship. For the remaining distance, he had the luxury of setting foot on solid ground, exploring ports and cities in countries such as France, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Israel, Malta, Martinique, Trinidad and Tobago, and Panama.

In Greece, CPO2 Manderson and about 90 other crew members participated in the Terry Fox Run, raising almost \$4,000 for the charity. Running in the nation that is the birthplace of the marathon was a huge thrill for him, but some destinations simply took his breath away.

"Going into Paris was pretty amazing," he says. "That was my leave period so I went off to Paris and I got up early in the morning and I'm running down the Seine. It's like here I am, I'm running in a great city in the world; it was fantastic."

With only days left to go in their journey, CPO2 Manderson finally broke the 2,000 kilometre mark while alongside in San Diego. There was no fanfare, no confetti falling from the sky, just a personal pat on the back for a milestone achieved.

"At that point, I sort of knew it was going to happen," he says. "There weren't balloons going off, it was just I did it."

Now back in Victoria on post-deployment leave, he's picking up where he left off on *Vancouver* and is already competing in a few local five and 10Ks in preparation for the CF National Running Championships in Ottawa this May. A solid showing at his first race two weeks ago confirmed that his almost 30,000 laps of the flight deck weren't in vain.

"I just did my first run last Sunday at the Bazan Bay 5K up in Sidney," he says. "It was a real test because running on the ship

you sort of have a feel for distance, but you don't know how to gauge it. It worked out great; I got a personal best for five kilometres so it validates all the training on board."

Along with defending his title at the CF Nationals this summer, CPO2 Manderson is also eyeing the New York City Marathon in November. Already qualified for the race, he's hoping for a three hour finish in the Big Apple and

the battle of a lifetime.

"The marathon distance, one of the reasons I love it is because it doesn't matter if you run it fast or slow, it's going to hurt," he adds. "You learn sort of what you're made of. Call it my mid-life crisis. It's better than a convertible."

The 2,045 kilometres CPO2 Manderson ran during his seven month deployment is roughly the equivalent of running from Vancouver to Los Angeles.



CPO2 Howard Manderson stands on the flight deck of *HMCS Vancouver* while sailing in the Mediterranean. The deck provided a platform for him to complete much of the 2,045 kilometres he ran during the seven-month deployment.

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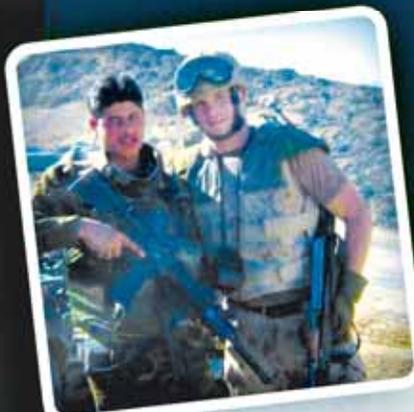
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Air Force Band gleeful to be on national TV

David Elias
Public Affairs Officer

The wild popularity of musical and reality television has recently swept over 17 Wing in Winnipeg.

Members of the RCAF Band were chosen to take part in the reality television show *Canada Sings* and spent a week in filmed rehearsals in February.

Canada Sings is a series that challenges ordinary Canadians to form singing groups or glee clubs with their co-workers. TV show producers approached NDHQ in Ottawa and from there the opportunity to participate was offered to the RCAF Band in Winnipeg.

"This was a unique chance to showcase the talented members of our band in a way we'd never done before," said Capt John Fullerton, RCAF Band Commanding Officer. "We certainly have musical background, but many of us hadn't done much singing or dancing before."

Following a video-recorded audition process and interviews with producers, a team consisting of 14 members from the RCAF Band were accepted to participate in the show.

Each episode features a showcase between two teams with a cash prize awarded to each team's chosen charity or cause. Should the RCAF team win the showcase, \$10,000 would be awarded to the Support Our

Troops envelope of funds, or \$2,000 awarded if they lose.

"The RCAF band members are on track to deliver a strong production for our live performance," said Capt Fullerton. "We've put a lot of work into this and we believe in the cause that we're trying to support through our participation on the show."

To prepare for their musical performance, the RCAF Band began a rehearsal process with an internationally acclaimed choreographer and vocal coach. They have been left to practice on their own in the weeks leading up to their live performance.

The live show will be filmed in front of an audience of about 1,200 people in Toronto on March 17. A total of 600 tickets are being distributed by the CF Personnel and Family Support Services to CF members. The theme of the performance is a "Tribute to the Canadian Forces Throughout The Ages".

The show is broadcast on Global Television across Canada with a national reach of up to one million viewers. The episode will air in May 2012.

For more information on *Canada Sings*, visit: www.globaltv.com/canadasings/index.html and www.insighttv.com/show/Canada+Sings,

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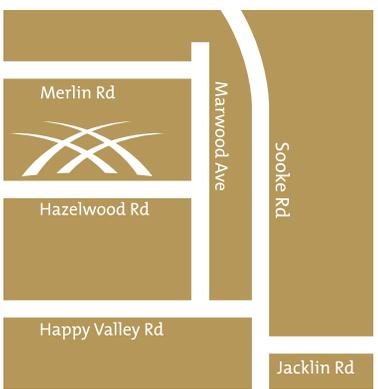
Members of the Royal Canadian Air Force Band rehearse a song and dance number for the Global TV show *Canada Sings*. The RCAF Band will be competing in the upcoming season of the show for a chance to win money for military charities.

Photo by Sgt Bill McLeod




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NEWS Nuggets

Afghan documentary takes top prize

On Feb. 26, the Canadian Afghan war documentary "If I Should Fall" won best documentary at the 4th Annual Amelia Island Film Festival in Florida. The film is based on the life and death of Lebanese-born Trooper Marc Diab, a Royal Canadian Dragoon who was killed by an IED in March 2009. To date, the film has also won best documentary at two

Canadian film festivals. All proceeds from the DVD go towards the Military Families Fund and the Marc Diab Children's Foundation.

Blood Donation Clinics
The next Canadian Blood Services clinics will be held Mar. 13 and 14 at the Chief and Petty Officers' Mess from 8:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. All are welcome, appointments and walk-in spots are available with donations usually taking one hour. Personnel are asked to bring their ID and can book online at www.blood.ca or call 1-888-2-DONATE (1-888-236-6283).

Base Ball Hockey
The Tritons Ball Hockey team is preparing for the 2012 season. The team will

represent the Esquimalt Formation at the Pacific Regional Championship and if successful, the Nationals. Practices are to be announced, but for more information contact CPO2 Darren Fogarty at 250-363-2169.

Cadet Band Performing in Victoria

On March 21, the B.C. Regional Cadet Honour Band will perform at Victoria's McPherson Theatre. Comprised of the top 55 teenage musicians within the Royal Canadian Sea, Army, and Air Cadets, the band will be led by Lt(N) Camil Bouchard, former Music Director of the Naden Band. The concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. and there is no charge to attend.

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Newcomers flourish in DND

Ben Green
Staff Writer

For the past four months, Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton (FMF CB) has been providing two employees from the Federal Internship for Newcomers (FIN) program a foot in the door to the Canadian job market.

Immigrants Etsuko Shibata and Isaac Rosas Bermudez are in their second 90-day casual term with FMF CB's administrative services department where they're gaining valuable work experience with the federal government.

"The first part of the program is a 90-day casual, possibly followed by a second 90-day casual," says Peggy Maher, Administrative Services Officer at FMF CB. "Whether we'll be able to do anything beyond that I don't know, but it does open them up to other government departments as well."

The FIN program, delivered through the Foreign Credentials Referral Office of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, seeks to improve integration into the Canadian labour market for newcomers who have been in the country less than 10 years.

Situated in building D250's newly renovated third floor, Etsuko and Isaac have been busy contributing to their new work environment. While Isaac is heavily involved with FMF CB's documentation management systems, often tracking corporate records to eventual archival or destruction, Etsuko's responsibilities lie with the department's travel claims.

"Basically, when they [FMF CB personnel] come back from travel, they drop off a package," says Etsuko, originally from Nagoya, Japan, but a resident of Canada the past eight years. "I track their receipts,

itineraries, email messages and I do an entry. When it's finalized I contact them and ask them to come and sign off."

Both Etsuko and Isaac were referred to the program by their case managers at the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS). Local agencies such as VIRCS screen newcomers for FIN by testing their language proficiency and seeing if they need additional job-coaching courses. With a referral by one of these partnering agencies, candidates can apply online, where they are screened by CIC and possibly put into a pool of qualified candidates whose resumes are forwarded to hiring managers.

For the pair, their hiring at FMF CB has been exactly what they were hoping for when they started the application process almost a year ago.

"I feel very welcomed; it's been a very nice working environment," says Isaac, who's spent the past six years here after coming from Veracruz, Mexico. "I know [good] working environments are sometimes hard to find."

"I like the environment because our office is right by the ocean and I like to go for walks on my lunch break," adds Etsuko.

Despite what may seem like a seamless transition into CFB Esquimalt, both say they have had to overcome a few cultural differences since their hiring in October.

"Here people are more open with what they say [compared to Japan]," says Etsuko. "That's why when I saw someone who was angry I was so surprised. But it's very natural, people get upset or people are sad and things like that. I like this way because I know what they're thinking about."

Isaac and Etsuko agree

the program has given them an excellent platform for future employment in Canada and both highly recommend FIN to qualified newcomers looking for work experience. Etsuko says in order for applicants to be successful, it's important they set small goals for themselves and are prepared to work their way up. Isaac believes it's more an exercise in faith, complimented by hard work.

"With the FIN program, it's great to come in fresh, to come in with a great attitude and try and give the best you can," he says. "Good things happen. Both [Etsuko and I], we had it hard before getting here, but in my case I see like a miracle, I think I finally got the job. Don't give up, and when you come here give your best."

While both have expressed their desire to stay on at FMF CB after their term ends in May, they understand at the very least, the job has given them an invaluable tool going forward - experience.

"If it's possible to move in the same direction it would be great, but if not I can still use it as Canadian work experience," adds Isaac.

Whatever the outcome this spring, Maher believes FIN has been mutually beneficial for all parties involved.

"From FMF CB's perspective, this has been a win-win situation," she adds. "We have been able to provide meaningful training and experience to two participants of the FIN program and we have had the opportunity to work with two highly skilled individuals who slipped seamlessly into the workplace, learned quickly, and continue to give their best efforts to the job."



Photo by Ben Green, Lookout

Etsuko Shibata, originally from Japan, takes care of travel claims for Fleet Maintenance Facility (Cape Breton) personnel. Since October, FMF CB has employed two participants of the Federal Internship for Newcomers program.

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Photos by MCpl Dany Veillette, Rideau Hall



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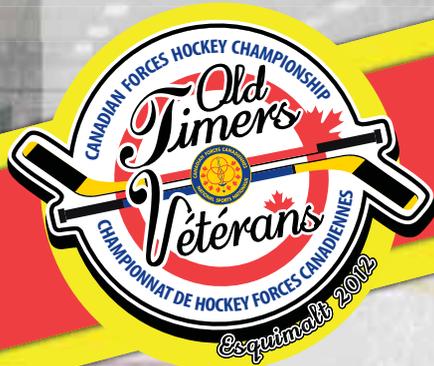
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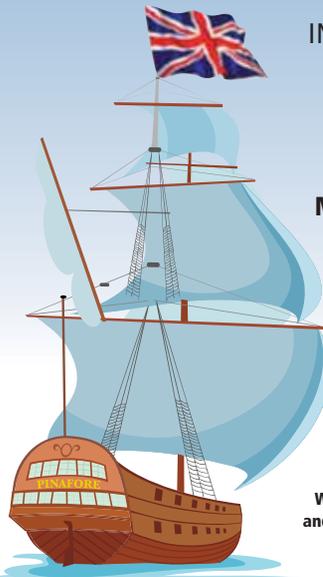


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