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LOOKOUT

MARPAC NEWS CFB Esquimalt, Victoria, B.C.

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Warriors on the water

His Honour Steven Point, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, and CFB Esquimalt Base Commander, Capt(N) Craig Baines, paddle across Esquimalt harbour to A Jetty in a First Nations dugout canoe with eight First Nations paddlers.

Read the full story on page 2.



Photo by Cpl Charles A. Stephen, MARPAC Imaging Services

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A day of celebration

Shawn O'Hara
Staff Writer

Through the misty spray churned up by Firebrand's hoses, a wooden craft slowly approached A jetty last Friday.

Propelling it through the harbour were 10 men of varying ages and strength, each pulling a brightly painted paddle through the water. As the black vessel, with a hand carved eagle mounted at the stern, pulled alongside A jetty, onlookers were able to see more clearly just who had arrived. The paddlers were Lieutenant Governor Steven Point, Base Commander Capt(N) Craig Baines, Inspector Steven Ing, George Taylor and the Le-la-la Dancers.

The guests were here to co-celebrate National Aboriginal Day and National Public Service Week with hundreds of DND employees.

The Le-la-la Dancers performed a series of ceremonial dances, including the Chief's Peace dance. This dance symbolizes the trust between the local First Nations and the Canadian Forces, a dance few outside the First Nations community witness.

After the dances, LGov Point took the podium to address the crowd.

"We have every right to celebrate. We have every right to be proud of who we are; never forgetting our culture, but ever so willing to share that which we remember, and that which we know," said LGov Point. "I believe these celebrations must continue not only because we have survived as a people, but because we're going to march into the next century as a growing and thriving part of this country. We're going to make a contribution to this country that will mark us as Canadians above and beyond."

LGov Point reflected on a tumultuous past and described his vision for a better future for First Nations people.

"We can bemoan the past if we wish, and wish that it never happened, or we can stand on it and make a better future for our children," he said. "That is my dream. That Aboriginal people can walk away from the past, away from the poverty, and into a better future, for themselves and for our country."

Capt(N) Baines spoke of the relationship between the Esquimalt and Salish First Nations, and the personnel of CFB Esquimalt and the Canadian Forces as a whole.

"It's important that we recognized that we have a shared history. That we recognize the value of each other's contributions and dignify each other by appearing here today," said Capt(N) Baines. "It's very much the same as travelling by canoe, as I learned today. By getting aboard, we commit to a future where we all pull together, and support each other in whatever comes in our future."



Top right: Base Commander, Capt(N) Craig Baines addresses the crowd gathered for National Aboriginal Day and National Public Service Week celebrations.

Above: George Me'las Taylor, artistic director for the Le La La Dancers, leads dignitaries with his traditional drum to the celebration area.

Middle left: Lieutenant Governor Steven Point speaks of his vision for First Nations people.

Left: Le-la-la Dancers re-enact the story of a shape shifter, with the mask changing from that of a man, to a raven, to a black bear and finally to an eagle.

Photos by Corporal Charles A. Stephen,
MARPA Imaging Services

Fleet divers join international mine disposal effort

Lt(N) Rick Kappel
Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific)

Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) made history when they deployed a clearance diving team on board the German mine hunting ship Rottweil for Operation Open Spirit, held May 10-25.

The operation involved locating and disposing of Second World War legacy sea mines in the Baltic Sea, where thousands of mines still pose a hazard to shipping.

Nearly 80,000 mines were laid mainly by German and Russian forces during the First and Second World Wars to deny freedom of movement on the seas. Tens of thousands are still unaccounted for.

The annual operation was led by the Estonian Navy this year, with several navies participating, mainly from the Baltic region, but was the first time for Canada.

This was also the first time a Canadian Clearance Diving Team (CAN CDT) worked side by side with German Minentauchers (Mine Divers) to conduct Naval Mine Countermeasure (NMCM) clearance operations. The experience not only provided valuable operational exposure for the team, but under the spirit of "partnership for peace", also a significant stride forward in building a professional working relationship

between the two countries' navies.

The German mine hunting ships are state of the art. They are designed to minimize magnetic and acoustic signatures that can trigger "influence" mines to detonate. Rottweil also employed hull-mounted sonar and an autonomous underwater vehicle that uses side scan sonar to map the sea bottom.

Upon recovery of the vehicle, German and Canadian underwater divers analyzed the information and classified contacts. Mine-like contacts were investigated by diving on their position and confirming their origin.

More than 200 dives were collectively conducted by the two teams during the two-week operation; 15 mines were identified and disposed of by countercharging the main explosive charge.

Countercharging involves placing an explosive charge in contact with the main charge of the mine and conducting a controlled initiation from the surface - a difficult task in this environment as limited underwater visibility hampered charge placement, and sea states made connecting the explosive charge a challenge.

So many things have to go right to be successful in clearance operations. The sonar imagery has to be interpreted correctly, positional information has to be accurate and

synchronized, sea conditions have to be favorable for diving, and of course the divers need to employ correct tactics and procedures in order to locate and identify the mine without causing it to detonate.

Knowing that some of these mines are triggered by movement, magnetic influence, acoustic signatures, and even pressure waves can be un-nerving for the diver. Though they dive using equipment designed to minimize these influences, correctly employing tactics to mitigate the risk is a matter of life and death.

Because of these dangers, they employ a single diver to conduct these tasks, equipped with a hand held sonar imaging system to assist in locating the mine. In limited underwater visibility, this system makes it possible to identify a possible mine without accidentally swimming into it, which could be fatal.

The crew of Rottweil, which consisted mainly of divers, was very welcoming and as excited about the opportunity to work with the Canadian team as they were to work with their own. The German divers are experienced in NMCM and conduct operations in a very professional manner. Both teams benefited from each other's expertise and both hope to continue to work together in the next Op Open Spirit, as well as other NMCM and EOD opportunities.



Above: Lt(N) Rick Kappel relaxes in the zodiac, with FGS Rottweil in the background after diving for mines in the Baltic Sea.

Right: An explosive charge detonates a sea mine as members of FDU(P) watch from their zodiac.

Canadian Clearance Diving Team:
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PO1 Sean Ratz
LS Sebastian Guay
LS Steve Musgrave
LS Chris Cooper
LS Sarah Biberger



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WHAT SAY YOU

MPCORNER: On board camera shows the truth

LS Nicolas Muir

Military Police Community Relations

Video is omnipresent in our society, with closed-circuit security cameras often used by the police to help solve crimes.

However, video recording equipment is sometimes turned on the police, often by citizens using phone cameras to record potential police misbehaviour.

Among the police vehicle's latest technology - radar gun, GPS,

and on board computer (giving us access to CPIC, Interpol) - are cameras/voice recorder/transmitter. This equipment is made for one purpose: to protect you and the law enforcement officer from abuse, and demonstrate facts rather than fiction.

Military Police are certainly not immune from events of abuse or fiction. Military Police Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) dictates the expected law enforcement response to any given situation; however, from time to time,

complaints are lodged against MPs that allege they were not acting appropriately.

The MPU(E) investigates any alleged wrong doing by its members. Investigations are done by an independent unit specially trained for complaints against police officers.

If you believe that an MP was acting inappropriately during a traffic stop, or any other event, the MP Unit invites you to come forward and make a complaint through the "On-Duty"

Watch Commander.

That being said, remember that credibility and accountability goes both ways. Making false allegations or starting a police investigation as an act of revenge because of a traffic ticket can result in a greater concern other than a bruised ego.

CFB Esquimalt Military Police: (250) 363-4032 or 9-1-1.

To report information relating to any crime, visit: www.victoriacrimestoppers.com or call 1-800-222-8477.

Photo Correction



In last week's *Lookout*, we incorrectly identified RAdm Bill Truelove, Commander MARPAC, as the person accompanying the Base Commander. Below is the proper caption. The *Lookout* team apologizes to the officers for the error.

Accompanied by Guard Commander Lt(N) John Slack of CFFS(E) and Capt(N) Craig Baines, Mayor Desjardins inspects the Guard of Honour and the Naden Band during the Freedom of the City ceremony.

Photo by Cpl Alex. W. Croskery,
MARPA Imaging Services

Celebration of Life

for Phil Petersen

Phil passed away in October 2011. He had a long and dedicated service working for BCEO, more than 30 years. He was also a well known and well respected member of the Base DAAG committee.

His Celebration of Life will be held:
Location: CPO's Mess - Rainbow Room
Date: June 25, 2012
Time: 1400-1630
Come celebrate our friend Phil.

NEWS Nuggets

Geese time

Spring time sees the return of CFB Esquimalt's most fair weather residents. Dozens of Canadian geese and their offspring have taken roost in Naden, and CF personnel are reminded to take care near the Naden playing field and Lang Cove, where the fowl are frequently found.

Driving Competition

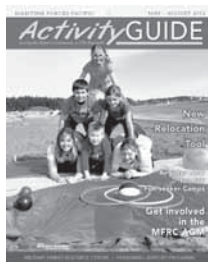
The Canadian Forces Safe Driving Competition is coming up June 27-29 at CFB Esquimalt. Also known as the Trucker's Rodeo, the friendly competition sees teams competing in a number of contests related to safe vehicle operation. Teams are being accepted from all over the community. All team members must have a valid 404 driver's license and be collision free for one year. More information is available from MCpl Campbell at 250-363-0938

Two dead

Two are dead after a four person vessel capsized near the Sechart Inlet on June 3. The Victoria Joint Rescue Coordination Centre was alerted of the incident and deployed the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Canadian Coast Guard, and the Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue. Two people were recovered from under the hull of the boat and pronounced dead by Emergency Health Services, while two others were rescued by a nearby vessel.

Motorcycle Relay

The 4th Annual Military Police Nation Motorcycle Relay is coming up July 21. The ride features participants from all over and benefits the Military Police Fund for Blind Children and the Children's Wish Foundation. Those who wish to participate are asked to register at www.mpmnr.ca.



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Protecteur



RAdm Bill Truelove presents Cpl McLean with her Operational Service Medal. The ship's company of HMCS *Protecteur* gathered in the Naden Drill shed June 11 for presentations of the medals with the Expedition Ribbon for their role in Operation Carribe from October 2010 to June 2011.

Photo by Cpl Alex. W. Croskery, MARPAC Imaging Services

Shawn O'Hara
Staff Writer

Dressed in their Number Ones, the crew of HMCS *Protecteur* stood erect and proud in the Naden Drill Hall June 11, set to receive their individual medals for a mission well done.

The honour was for their work supplying Operation Carribe's ships, who were working to halt the flow of illegal drugs into North America through the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, and the shores of Central and South America.

Under the direction of Canada Command, *Protecteur* provided support in missions taking place from August to October 2010. During that time, they travelled to and from the "hot zone" of operations off the coast of Columbia, providing more than eight million gallons of fuel to participating patrol ships. *Protecteur* also sailed support missions from May to June 2011 in the Caribbean Basin and the East Pacific. Op Carribe was responsible for 33 arrests, as well as the confiscation of 12 metric tons of cocaine, totaling a street value of more than

\$235 million.

Cdr Todd Bonnar, Commanding Officer of *Protecteur*, and crew received the Operational Support Medal (OSM). The OSM was awarded in 2010 to recognize certain military operations for which there were no medals available. It is awarded to those who are deserving of recognition due to the service granted and risks taken on overseas missions in potentially dangerous environments.

"The crew did exceptionally well," said Cdr Bonnar. "They had to endure a sweltering work environment. The average temperature in the Gulf had to be in low 30s."

RAdm Bill Truelove, Commander Maritime Forces Pacific/Joint Task Force Pacific, came to speak to the crew and present them with medals.

"*Protecteur* supported a mission that has accounted for over 14 tons of illegal contraband over the course of your service, and over 400 metric tons since its inception. That is contraband that will no longer find its way into the hands of those people walking the streets of our community, thanks in part to your service. You should be proud," said the Admiral.



RAdm Truelove presents MS Vezerian with the MARPAC Commander's Coin for outstanding effort during *Protecteur's* destoring.

Photo by Cpl Alex. W. Croskery, MARPAC Imaging Services

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Front row from Left to right: Lt Rebecca Sparkes, A/SLt Krista Seguin, and Capt Maria Codina.

Back row from Left to right: Switch Rousseau, LCdr Lorinda Semeniuk, Lt(N) Liz Mohammed, Capt Thesa Wheaton, Lt(N) Milena Johnson and Cpl Nicole Munro.

Triton women fought hard for gold

Lt Rebecca Sparkes
Contributor

The base women's volleyball team the Tritons, represented the Pacific region well at the 2012 CF National Volleyball Championships held April 20-25.

The competition, which historically takes place in CF Borden each year, was hosted this year by 14 Wing Greenwood.

The women started off against Kingston and won two straight sets. They were able to continue this streak against Montreal, and Winnipeg. The match against the predicted strongest team, Halifax, was a tight three sets, but ended with Halifax taking

first place overall after the round robin.

With a second place in round robin, the semi finals were a given. While the women had met their goal of doing well, they quickly decided it was their gold to win.

Tritons met Montreal again in the semis and easily won in three straight sets.

There was only one match left to play; West Coast verses East Coast.

During the first set of the finals the women from the West dominated, but in the second, the women from the East came back swinging and took the set. The third and fourth sets finished the same way, tying the teams at two sets a piece.

The fifth and final set was a battle for points, but unfortunately the Pacific team lagged behind and couldn't take the win, finishing in second place.

Although disappointed, the Esquimalt team celebrated as if they had won. Lt(N) Melina Johnson was especially excited, and for good reason.

"This is my ninth year playing on this team and eight times we finished last, and once we were fourth. I am so happy we made it this far."

This was Lt(N) Johnson's last year on the team. After changing trades, she is posted to CF Petawawa this summer.

The Esquimalt team took home a silver medal from the competition.

Game MVPs were won by Capt Thesa Wheaton, A/SLt Krista Seguin, Lt(N) Liz Mohammed and two by Lt Rebecca Sparkes. At the tournament closing banquet, Lt(N) Liz Mohammed and Lt Sparkes were both selected for the All Star Team.

Practices will start again in September and the team is always looking for "new blood." All CF members including class B or C reservists interested in joining the team are encouraged to submit their full name, rank, unit and work phone number to the PSP Sports office at 250-363-4069/4068 or via email at: www.richard.schertzer@forces.gc.ca.

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HMCS Regina gears up for Operation Artemis

Shelley Lipke
Staff Writer

In early July *HMCS Regina* will set sail as the primary Canadian warship relieving *HMCS Charlottetown* in the Arabian Sea in support of maritime security and counter-terrorism operations.

About 260 crew, including an air detachment with embarked Sea King helicopter, will take part in this mission, entitled Operation Artemis, the Canadian contribution under U.S. Command (CTF 150).

"The typical day will involve building the picture in that area and observing traffic for anything that may look out of place. This may lead to anything from simple

queries to boarding of vessels," said Commanding Officer, Cdr Jason Boyd.

"These operations seek to prevent violent extremists from launching attacks at sea, and from transporting personnel and war material, especially weapons, by sea," he said.

The purpose of these maritime security operations is to help set the conditions for security and stability at sea, while complementing the counter-terrorism and security efforts of regional nations.

"This is a Captain's dream to command a ship on a deployment like this. As I have just recently taken command, I am looking forward to working more closely with the team and getting to know my sailors very well. It is a privilege to lead such a fine group of pro-

fessionals, where, in my opinion, you will not find any better in the world," he said.

Regina's crew has just completed operations team training in Halifax to ensure their combat team is prepared for the mission. This week they will begin air workups to integrate the helicopter into the ship and then embark Sea Trainers during the transit west to conduct mission-tailored workups.

"Thanks to the outstanding support from Fleet Maintenance Facility, Sea Training and our headquarters ashore, *Regina* will be in great standing for this mission," said Cdr Boyd.

The ship will head west across the Pacific and arrive in the area of operations mid August.

Regina's mission will last more

than six months, and possibly stretch to eight, said Cdr Boyd.

"We are all eager to have the preparations and training for the mission behind us so we can execute the mission. Although a deployment like this can be hard on the members and our families, an operational mission like this is what we signed up for, and is extremely rewarding," he said.

"The crew is looking forward to doing the mission and tasks that we have been training our careers to do. The feeling of purpose experienced during a mission like this, is unlike any other time at sea. We will be contributing at the international level, to security and stability at sea. The crew feels great about being able to contribute toward such an important task," he said.



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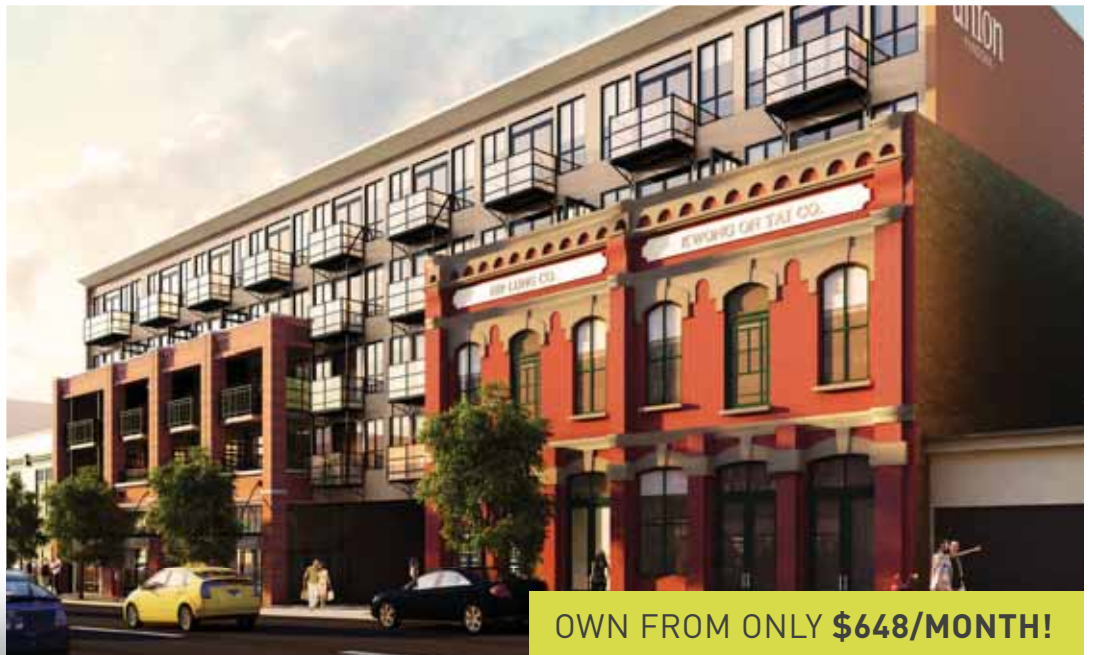
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Photo by Corporal Malcolm Byers, MARPAC Imaging Services

Invited guest posed for a group photo prior to a dinner hosted by the Lieutenant Governor of BC, Steven Point, at Government House May 31.

Front row from left: Mrs. Deborah Greenwood; RAdm Nigel Greenwood, His Honour Steven Point, Lieutenant Governor of BC; RAdm Bill Truelove, and Mrs. Brenda Truelove.

Second row from left: Mrs. Dorene Steele; HCapt (N) Cedric Steele; Mrs. Manon Knippel; Capt(N) Mike Knippel; Col Carl Wohlgemuth; and Mrs. Gina Wohlgemuth.

Third row from left: Mrs. Peggy-Sue Mulholland; Capt (N) Dermot Mulholland; Mrs. Lisa Baines; Capt (N) Craig Baines; Mrs. Lynn Smith; Mrs. A. Maureen Costello; Capt(N) Don Smith; and Capt(N) Brian Costello.

Rear row from left: CPO1 Paul Helston; Lt(N) Allan Wilson; Mrs. Suzanne Helston; Jamie Webb; and LCdr Chantal Desormeaux.

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Golf tourney with an historic twist

On June 21, in recognition of Esquimalt's centennial year and the fact that Esquimalt has one of the country's oldest golfing traditions stretching back to the mid 1890s, the Esquimalt Centennial Golf Tournament will take on a distinctly historic theme at Gorge Vale Golf Club.

Participants will be taken back to 1912 and will have the opportunity to try traditional hickory clubs and mesh golf balls, as well as compete for a host of prizes.

The tournament is a Best Ball Texas Scramble format and will feature sev-

eral prize holes, including a \$10,000 hole-in-one prize sponsored by RBC, and longest drive for men and women using both modern and historic hickory clubs.

Representatives from the B.C. Golf Museum and Hall of Fame will be on site in recognition of Esquimalt's golfing past.

The tournament will be followed by a banquet inspired by dishes served at similar events a hundred years ago.

Entry is limited to 108 golfers. Cost is \$125 per person for both tournament and dinner. Register at the Esquimalt Recreation Centre, located at 527

Fraser Street in Esquimalt, or give the centre a call at 250-412-8500.

It Takes a Village

A special centennial photo display "It Takes a Village: Esquimalt Faces, Places and the Navy" opens Friday, June 22 at 1p.m. in Naden Building 37 at CFB Esquimalt Naval and Military Museum.

This photo display celebrates Esquimalt Centennial 2012, in conjunction with the Esquimalt Photo Club. Display continues to Aug. 31. For more information, contact: Clare Sharpe, Clare.Sharpe@forces.gc.ca 250-363-4312

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Buccaneer Days

The Naden Band of Maritime Forces Pacific salutes the Base Commander's representative, Commander Fitzpatrick, Queens Harbour Master, during the Buccaneer Days Parade. Residents of the township lined Esquimalt Road on Saturday June 9, (many in period dress), to watch the parade, which was held in conjunction with the township's centennial celebrations.

Photo by Corporal Alex. W. Croskery, MARPAC Imaging Services



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Photo by Cpl Ronnie Kinnie, Formation Imaging Services, Halifax
LS Korey Tynes, a boarding party team member, scales the rope ladder on board HMCS Charlottetown during training in the Gulf of Aden while on Operation Artemis.

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On May 29, the Base Construction Engineering (BCE) Finance Section was presented a BCE Commanding Officer's Team Award by the BCEO, LCol Darlene Quinn, in recognition of their tremendous efforts and dedication toward the oversight and management of the BCE budget and ensuring optimal use of Branch funds. From left to right: Brenda Kipot, Shelley Lima, Sharon Park, Tracy Olson Leisa Craddock, and LCol Quinn (BCEO).



On May 29, Pat Cracknell of the Base Construction Engineering (BCE), Engineering Section was presented a BCE Commanding Officers Award by the BCEO, LCol Darlene Quinn, in recognition of her unwavering dedication and support to the Base Construction Engineering Branch Mission.



Photo by MCpl Angela Abbey, MARPAC Imaging Services
Capt(N) Steve Virgin, Deputy Commander of Canadian Special Operations Forces Command, presents Cdr William Bates, Commanding Officer of Regional Cadets Support Unit Pacific, with a Commander's Commendation for his outstanding leadership and remarkable work ethic as Acting Deputy ACOS International within CEFCOM Headquarters in support of Operation Mobile.



PO1 Rempel receives his promotion to PO1 from CPO2 Barker and Cdr Drews at CFFSE June 11.



PO1 Ian Crawford is presented his Canadian Forces Decoration Second Clasp by LCdr Blanchfield (QAWC QAM).

Military Merit Investiture Ceremony

His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada presided over an Order of Military Merit investiture ceremony at Rideau Hall. The Governor General, who is chancellor of the Order, presented the honour to four Commanders, nine Officers and 31 Members. The Order of Military Merit was created in 1972 to recognize meritorious service and devotion to duty by members of the Canadian Forces. Below are our local recipients:



Photo by Sgt Ronald Duchesne, Rideau Hall, OSGG
His Excellency presented the Order of Military Merit Member to CPO2 Christopher Koblun.



Photo by Sgt Ronald Duchesne, Rideau Hall, OSGG
His Excellency presented the Order of Military Merit Officer to LCol Darlene Quinn.



Photo by Sgt Ronald Duchesne, Rideau Hall, OSGG
His Excellency presented the Order of Military Merit Member to CPO2 Janet Graham-Smith.

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Civilians honoured with awards

Shelley Lipke
Staff Writer

Eight DND civilian employees were recognized for their achievements June 11 at the annual Pacific Federal Council award ceremony in Vancouver, which kicks off National Public Service Week, June 10-16.

Six of the eight recipients attended the awards ceremony administered by Cdr Tim Allan.

Base Construction Engineering's (BCE) financial business manager Sharon Park was recognized for Outstanding Career.

"She embodies the finest attributes of an outstanding public servant," said BCE Commanding Officer, LCol Darlene Quinn. "In her delivery of comptrollership for my branch, which is entrusted with over \$50 million annually, she consistently exhibits the drive and technical abilities that allow her to perform at the highest level and is a key contributor to BCE's success."

The Joint DND/Defence Construction Canada Project Implementation Team, also from BCE, won Collaborative Working Relationships. This team included Maj Mark Kierstead, Gordon Ayer, Douglas Kroeker, Sean McNeil and Curtis Evans.

"The Project Implementation Team is a joint team that together plans, schedules, contracts for and manages the execution of the majority of the Base's infrastructure program," said LCol Quinn. "Increased efficiencies and reduced administration realized through the team has tripled the BCE output from the previous year, ultimately raising the condition of Formation infrastructure."

mately raising the condition of Formation infrastructure."

Maritime Forces Pacific Staff Officer Marjolaine Bailey received the award for Innovation for creating and implementing an efficient, streamlined tool to track and manage hundreds of evaluation reports. Bailey's tool has been requested by Maritime Forces Atlantic.

"She has been an outstanding employee whose non-stop efforts to improve and streamline processes have influenced the unit, Formation and indeed the Navy as a whole," said LCdr Carolyn Ensign, Deputy Chief of Staff Administration. "Her conscientious approach to managing her duties in a fiscally responsible manner, as well as her consistent efforts to find new and better ways for conducting business, have made positive and noticeable changes that will have long lasting effects."

Base Accommodations clerk Lauren Smith received the New Public Servant award.

"She is not afraid to take on new responsibilities," said Cdr Allan. "She quickly masters new tasks and has an extremely pleasant and friendly disposition."

Solicitations for the awards were received from across the base and then whittled down to a group of finalists. After all submissions were in, both the Base Commander's Office and MARPAC analyzed them to see who would best represent the base and Formation. Once those names were put forth, the Pacific Federal Council made the final selection of award recipients.

"All recipients were very grateful their bosses and organizations took the time to



Douglas Kroeker, Sean McNeil, Sharon Park, Lauren Smith, Marjolaine Bailey, and Gordon Ayer receive public service awards presented by Cdr Tim Allan, center, on behalf of the Pacific Federal Council.

put pen to paper and advocate for their recognition," said Cdr Allan. "This represented a strong group of contenders."

This was the 14th year the Public Service Awards were held to recognize B.C. workers.

"It is particularly important to recog-

nize public service employees who make outstanding contributions to the workplace or community," said Pacific Federal Council Executive Director Laura-Dawn Petrie. "This year, DND stood out as the only department to win in all four award categories."

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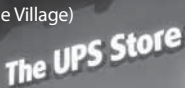
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INTERNATIONAL News: From Afghanistan

Women continue the fight

Gary Hengstler
DynCorp Public Affairs
Mentor

Peering intently over a pair of boxing gloves, the Afghan soldier suddenly lashes out with a fierce left jab into the pad held by a Canadian advisor teaching the basics of self-defense. Ordinarily, such army training would be viewed with a shrug, not meriting a news reporter's time and effort.

The story takes on significance, however, when one considers that barely more than a decade ago the soldier in question would not have been wearing a uniform—much less boxing gloves—but, instead, would have hidden from view beneath a blue burqa.

She is part of a small but growing band of women who have joined the military as a means of helping change the roles of women in Afghanistan. They are called Malalai, or the Female Training Battalion (FTB) and, upon graduation from the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC), they will become officers in the Afghan National Army (ANA).

"Hand-to-hand combat teaches the women to react in the moment without a weapon and not to back down," said Captain Christa Farrell, the Canadian Advisor



Photo by Capt McIntyre

Officer candidates of the Female Training Battalion learn self-defence techniques at the Kabul Military Training Center located near Kabul, Afghanistan.

to the unit. "It can simulate fighting in a small space and helps develop skills they may need to subdue foes rather than kill them. The women of the ANA are especially placed in a vulnerable situation so the ability to defend themselves is a must."

Physical training has always been included in the 20-week course, but the introduction of defensive skills is relatively new. A crucial element in the training is simply building confidence among the women who, throughout most of their young lives, have carried on submissively within

Afghan society.

Farrell is part of a female advisory contingent that includes Jordanians, a British captain and two U.S. Marine NCOs. "With the Marines, teaching the self-defense techniques runs the full gamut," she stressed. "They not only learn the proper stance, but also what it is like to hit and to be hit. And guess what? They like it. Some days it feels like they can't get enough of the training."

Lieutenant Kubra, one of the candidates in the FTB exemplifies the change in attitude and the growing confidence, according to Farrell. "You can see it when she and Holloway, one of the Marines, spar. Of course, she hasn't developed the proficiency, but her determination and enjoyment can't be denied."

Farrell also noted that building confidence is not only critical to developing leadership skills among the female soldiers they will eventually command, but it also helps build respect

from their male ANA counterparts – something that also needs to be cultivated as time goes on.

That the women have equipment for self-defense training is due primarily to Farrell's own efforts. As with many aspects in Afghanistan, men are a higher priority, even in the ANA. There was no funding for boxing gloves, pads or other items needed in the course so Farrell had to exercise her own abundant resourcefulness.

She succeeded in acquiring the necessary equipment but is quick to add "we could always use more, especially with the new class that will succeed this one after the June graduation. The confidence building that this kind of training imparts to them is something not only fundamentally necessary for armed forces members, but could be vital to the survival of these female ANA members and the survival of women's acceptance within the ANA."

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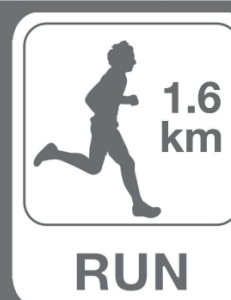


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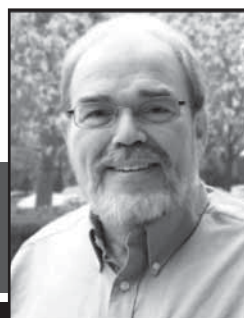
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