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Volume 66 Number 7 | February 22, 2021

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## TGEX 21



Lieutenant (Navy) Austin Ferguson, a Naval Warfare Officer in HMCS Brandon, conducts navigation during Task Group Exercise 21-01 on Feb. 10. At the conclusion of the exercise, Brandon and HMCS Saskatoon departed last Thursday for Operation Caribbe.

Photo by Captain Sarah Harasymchuk, Canadian Armed Forces



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Sailor's Second Class Colton Tom (centre) and Liam Fisher (front) are promoted to their current rank by Commander Landon Creasy (left) and Lieutenant (Navy) Rebecca Macdonald on board HMCS Regina Feb. 8.

Photos by Lieutenant Jeff Klassen, Canadian Armed Forces Photo

## HMCS REGINA STEWARDS BECOME

# "MILITARY-ISSUED" *Best Friends*

**Lt Jeff Klassen**  
HMCS Regina PAO

Two base brats from different coasts meet up in basic training, become best friends, get posted to the same Canadian warship, get promoted at the same time - and somewhere in there they buy puppies together.

That's the story of Sailor Second Class (S2) Liam Fisher, 21, from Greenwood, Nova Scotia, and his "best friend" S2 Colton Tom, 24, from Victoria, British Columbia. The two have a sort of special camaraderie they've developed through their military career as stewards.

"I say he's my military issued best friend," said S2 Tom.

Both S2 Tom and S2 Fisher decided to join the military because they have parents who've served. S2 Fisher's father is Master Warrant Brian Fisher, a Meteorological Technician at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown and S2 Tom's dad, Ron Tom, retired as a Chief Petty Officer Second Class Boatwain on the west coast.

S2s Fisher and Tom met for the first time during their 2018 basic training, in the laundry room of 'The Mega' (the giant build-

ing in St. Jean-Sur-Richelieu, Quebec, where most basic training goes on).

"We weren't in the same platoon," said S2 Tom. "During the first few weeks we were hanging out in the laundry room and neither of us had met another steward before, we were so excited. We didn't even really know what the job was about yet."

Throughout basic training they spent their down time messaging each other or hanging out in the cafeteria in front of the Subway restaurant on base. S2 Tom graduated Basic Training first (he was two weeks ahead) and moved to Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Halifax for the basic steward trade qualification course. Two weeks later, S2 Fisher followed to go on the same course, and the two were together again.

From there they had short stints working together at the Maritime Operation



Group 5 galley at CFB Halifax, then at CFB Esquimalt in the Formation Auxiliary Personnel unit, and then at HMCS Vancouver's shore office. They couldn't believe it. With every job change, the military kept moving them around together and they became better and better friends. While in Esquimalt they even bought puppies together - S2 Tom's is called Benny and S2 Fisher's are called Dolly and Badger.

"We wanted to have dogs that could play with each other all the time and since we were good friends we thought it was perfect," said S2 Fisher.

When the two were working in Halifax, S2 Fisher showed S2 Tom around, when they were in Esquimalt, it was reversed.

In September 2019, the two finally got what they consider to be their first real postings as stewards aboard HMCS Regina.

On Regina, S2 Tom works as a "baby wardroom buffer," and S2 Fisher is the steward for the ship's Commanding Officer. On ship they sleep in the same mess and they are always spending their spare time together. They've been nicknamed "Fish and Tom" or "Tom and Jerry" - people just switch it up, though "Tom and Jerry" seems to be winning.

"We play on each other's strengths and weaknesses," said S2 Fisher.

"Yeah, Fish is good at the fancy stuff and I'm better at the hands on, carrying things, type stuff. We complement each other," said S2 Tom.

On Feb. 8, the two got their first promotion since basic training. Usually people are called up one by one on the parade square but Regina's Commanding Officer, Commander Landon Creasy, in tribute of their unique friendship, called them both up at the same time. The two were happy to have their friendship celebrated this way.

"There is no way I could have gotten this far without Fish - and I'm not being cheesy," said S2 Tom.

"Yeah, Tom's my support. We've been with each other all the way," said S2 Fisher.

**Inset: Sailors Second Class Colton Tom (left) and Liam Fisher are both stewards in HMCS Regina. The two first met in basic training in 2018 and have moved to each new job together ever since. Even their puppies are friends. Image taken on Feb. 12.**





# NDWCC Wrap-up

On Feb. 17, Capt(N) Sam Sader, Base Commander (right), presented a cheque to Dave Ramsay from the United Way of Greater Victoria (left), accompanied by Mark Miller, base civilian NDWCC co-chair, CPO1 Steve Wist, Acting Base Chief, and Margot Cutcher, NDWCC Co-ordinator.



Base Chief, CPO1 Alden Darragh participates in the NDWCC Halloween Parade.

Photo by Sailor First Class (S1) Victoria Loganov, MARPAC Imaging Services

Every year, CFB Esquimalt's Defence Team comes together to support those in need through the National Defence Workplace Charitable Campaign (NDWCC). This year, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, CFB Esquimalt raised just over \$170,000 for local communities, money that will help make a big difference during what has been a very hard year for many.

"This was a historically difficult campaign, but I couldn't be more proud of how everyone across the base and the formation came together to rise to the challenge," says Capt (N) Sam Sader, Base Commander. "Our communities have always been great supporters of the base, and I am grateful for the efforts of our Defence Team to give back to their neighbours, especially in this time of need. The money raised will make a real impact in the community."

Through the NDWCC, Defence Team members could choose to support HealthPartners, United Way, or any other registered Canadian charity.

In light of the hardships caused by the pandemic, the United Way Centraide Canada prioritized increasing funding to programs for seniors, families in need, mental health and addictions, and diversity and inclusion. In neighbouring communities this includes: offering meals and companionship to seniors, increasing literacy skills and providing books to children, providing counselling and addictions services, and contributing funds to Little Phoenix Daycare, a centre with a focus on providing care for children suffering from trauma.

Donations made to HealthPartners will help support life-changing research and provide local programs and services to individuals living with chronic disease or major illness, a high-risk demographic during a global pandemic.

With the health and safety of base members in mind, Margot Cutcher, CFB Esquimalt NDWCC coordinator, had to think outside the box.

"This year's campaign was like no other. Pledges went online for the

first time and we had to get creative to find new ways to raise funds. We even had a Defence Team member rap for the NDWCC," explains Cutcher. "We adapted, and I couldn't be more thankful for the support we received from the Defence Team."

Most events were moved to a virtual platform, but planning allowed for the continuation of the NDWCC Tug-of-war, an outdoor concert by the Naden Band, and a Halloween parade, in addition to individual unit events.

"Margot and her team put their heart and soul into adapting and spearheading this campaign through our new-normal, she really stepped up and made the NDWCC a success, despite the challenges," says Capt (N) Sader. "I'd also like to thank Mark Miller – the base's civilian NDWCC co-chair, who helped make this another great partnership between management and our unions."

Over the past two decades, CFB Esquimalt has raised over \$11 million for the NDWCC.



APART BUT *together at heart*  
LOIN DES YEUX, près du cœur

## THANKS TO THOSE THAT HELPED MAKE THIS CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS:

- Margot Cutcher and her NDWCC team: A/SLt Alison Demers, S1 Bradon Hamilton, S1 Kent Huynh, and S3 Huthaifah Alfallah
- External partners: Dave Ramsay and Mark Breslauer from UWGV • Julie Mills from HealthPartners of Canada
- Union Leadership • Mark Miller – Vice-president of UNDE • All NDWCC 2020 Unit Ambassadors



Representatives from NPTG pulled their weight in the NDWCC Tug-of-War on Nov. 18, 2020. NPTG would go on to win the competition.

Photo by S1 Mike Goluboff, MARPAC Imaging Services



CPO1 Darragh hands out a pancake breakfast during the NDWCC kick-off event at Nelles Galley.

Photo by Corporal Jay Naples, MARPAC Imaging Services



Members of the Naden Band held an outdoor concert at Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton on Oct. 9, 2020.

Photo by S1 Victoria Loganov, MARPAC Imaging Services

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## WHAT SAY YOU



The Health  
Promotion  
Team

## PINK SHIRT DAY WEDNESDAY, FEB. 24

*We asked members of the Mental and Social Wellness Working Group to share some of the ways they have lifted others up, or ways that others have lifted them up.*

### Shannon Black, NPTG

"On a Tuesday recently I had a very busy and very frustrating morning – nothing was going quite as planned and everyone I talked to was cranky. I decided I needed a lunchtime walk to help get into a different frame of mind. I walked to one of my favourite restaurants for lunch and was struck with how frustrating their day was going – orders were getting lost, a new trainee was stumbling as he learned, and customers were frustrated. I suddenly realized that it wasn't just me – the whole universe seemed to be frustrated and I was picking up that energy or vibe from all around me. Once I became aware of this it was much easier to not pick up that vibe and remain positive. My afternoon was much better. Take a deep breath and notice what is going on around you and know that you are not alone."

### Andrea Lam, Health Promotion

"In May 2020, I was supposed to get married and, unfortunately, had to cancel my wedding due to the pandemic. It was incredibly disappointing and I was feeling a lot of stress due to the uncertainty of when we would be able to re-book, and what the future would look like with COVID-19 affecting large gatherings and travel. On the day we were supposed to get married, my amazing Health Promotion co-workers made me feel extra special by dropping off gifts, flowers, and other goodies. Their kindness and generosity meant so much to me, and definitely lifted me up when I needed it!"

### Tracey Conrad, NPTG

"I'm a single person who lives on my own. When the world first shut down last March, a couple of my friends who live in my area contacted me and asked if I'd like to join them for a walk each week around the neighbourhood. With everyone working from home, and everything being done online, that contact and those walks were often times the only in-person connection I had, and the only time (once a week) that I would be using my voice – and sometimes even getting outside. They mentioned that it was something they were doing with any friends they knew who were single, and it was very helpful for my mental and social well-being.

They also have a bus stop at the end of their driveway and would dress up in silly outfits and wave - and sometimes sing - to the bus drivers with big 'Thank you!' signs. It's a blessing to know such people who bring such light and laughter to the world!"



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This year, let's  
#LiftEachOtherUp!

The Mental and Social Wellness Working Group of the MARPAC Health and Wellness Strategy is encouraging Defence Team members to dress with a difference, and proudly wear pink.

Pink Shirt Day began in 2007 when two students from Nova Scotia took a stand against bullying. Since then, Pink Shirt Day has evolved into an annual campaign that brings awareness and raises funds to support anti-bullying, while promoting kindness, respect, and civility. It has expanded beyond schools to include workplaces and professional environments, and is supported all over the world.

Official Pink Shirt Day t-shirts can be purchased at London Drugs, or you can wear a pink shirt you already have, or one from last year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us all, and has shown the importance of helping one another and advocating for those who need it. It's been a tough year and everyone is dealing with a lot, so being kind and doing something nice for one another can mean even more these days.

This year, let's #LiftEachOtherUp!



Cdr Mariano





# A 'Wray' of hope with Soldier On

**Peter Mallett**  
Staff Writer

Nicole Wray brings a bounty of experience to her new position as Soldier On Regional Coordinator B.C.

She holds a Master's degree in sport and organizational psychology, is a researcher, a strength and conditioning coach, an avid outdoor athlete, and grew up surrounded by a military family and the military community.

Combined, they give her unique insight into the challenges of ill and injured currently serving and retired military members – her clients – and how to help them.

"I get to combine my areas of passion and expertise to contribute to the service and support of both currently serving members and veterans," said Wray. "I look forward to getting to know the B.C. members, strengthening their relationship with Soldier On, and growing our presence on the West Coast."

Her job is to support members with physical and mental illnesses and/or injuries to a path of recovery through sport and exercise.

"My goal has always been to pursue a career where I am making a positive difference and giving back to people that have supported me personally [her family] and our country collectively."

Her grandfather served in the Army during the Cold War; her late father served in the air force; her brother currently works in the Signals Branch of the army, and many of her mentors continue to serve across the army, navy, and air force.

This deep connection, Wray says, helps her understand the challenges and stresses of a military member's life, including deployments, illnesses

or injuries, and the death of loved ones.

"I love that Soldier On empowers members to overcome challenges and find wellbeing through sport and physical activity. I value the commitment that Soldier On has to inspiring people. In doing so, people can share their experiences to uplift others, and that contributes to a more powerful military community. No matter what their story holds, there is always hope."

Despite the limitations of COVID 19, she is planning events and activities to help her clientele, while following provincial health and safety guidelines. She points to a recent virtual Yoga workshop as an example of connecting members to a moderate fitness activity, and is excited about an upcoming virtual creative arts workshop. She highlights the regional Facebook group for Soldier On members in B.C. as a virtual means for members to stay connected.

A special Soldier On grant program further aids her clientele by providing funding for sporting equipment so they can stay active and get involved in healthy activities.

"Many of our members have benefited from this support and this is something we are hoping to continue to build on, as well as general awareness of the events Soldier On hosts. Ultimately, we want to create a positive community and for our members to know that we are here for them."

For more information, you can visit [www.soldieron.ca](http://www.soldieron.ca), connect with Soldier On through Facebook, or email [SoldierOnBC-CBSansLimites@forces.gc.ca](mailto:SoldierOnBC-CBSansLimites@forces.gc.ca)




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Nicole Wray, Soldier On Regional Coordinator for B.C., stands in front of a promotional poster at her office in Nelles Block. Wray says she is eager to begin her new job of assisting mentally and physically injured currently serving and retired military members find paths to recovery through sport and activity.

Photo credit: Soldier On



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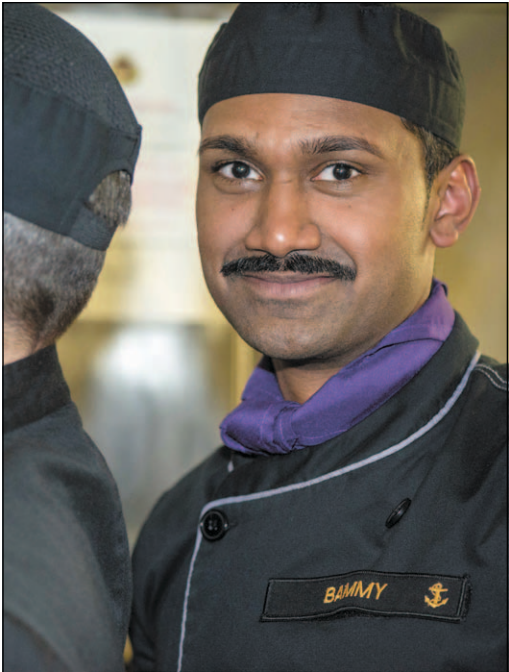




# TASTE OF SUCCESS FOR CHEF BAMMY

Photos by S1 Lisa K. Wallace, Canadian Armed Forces

**O**n Valentine’s Day, S3 Tanveer Bammy, a navy cook by trade, successfully accomplished his confirmation dinner to complete one of his training packages. This dinner included four courses and was evaluated on things such as preparation, procurement, time management, service, hygiene, and sanitation. The menu consisted of fresh dinner rolls, tuna sashimi poke bites, spinach salad, grilled rib steak with blue cheese gratin, baked fresh vegetable bouquet, creamy whipped sweet potatoes, and pina colada cheesecake with white chocolate truffle shavings. Cooks on ships hold an important responsibility to ensure crew morale, health, and well-being by serving fresh, healthy, and succulent meals. By reaching this milestone, S3 Bammy is now able to move on to more advanced cook training.





COMBINED TASK FORCE (CTF) 150:

# The Anatomy of a Drug Bust



**Lt(N) Melissa Kia**  
Op Artemis / CTF 150  
PAO

The breaking sun languishes off a bleary horizon in the Northern Arabian Sea on a strip of ocean known as the “Hash Highway” as a suspicious vessel plods its way south off the coast of Oman.

The dhow is being shadowed by the HMS Montrose, a Royal Navy Type 23-class Frigate, who is working under the command of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 to halt would-be smugglers.

The potential for a big bust hangs in the air amongst the crew who interdicted more than 275 kilograms of heroin only 36 hours previous in the same area. The hunt is on.

To the north, in Bahrain, sits the Command Centre for

CTF 150 where the team of Operation Artemis operate. The night crew of the Battle Watch are hard at work coordinating with the Royal Navy frigate. They sport their COVID-19 protective masks, and adhere to new editions to their work routines including physical distancing and enhanced hygiene measure to ensure they are safe as well as highly operational.

The objective of the joint Canadian-Australian staff is clear: disrupt terrorist organizations from using the high seas for smuggling weapons, unlawful cargo, and drugs, all of which fund and support their illegal activities.

CTF 150 is a naval task force whose command was recently assumed by Commodore (Cmdre) Daniel Charlebois of the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN). Its mission is to conduct

Maritime Security Operations in a large area that includes the Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea. This task force operates under Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), a voluntary, non-political organization and multinational coalition of 33 nations whose focus is on the security, stability, and prosperity of this region.

HMS Montrose, as well as other coalition assets, have agreed to work under CTF 150's command to detect, deter, and possibly interdict smuggling activities. After only a week under Canadian leadership, CTF 150 has already interdicted over 500 kilograms of narcotics, motivating them to strive for more.

In the CTF 150 Watch Centre, Lieutenant-Commander (LCdr) Trevor Robinson, the Canadian

Task Force Current Operations Officer, gets an important call pertaining to the shadowed vessel en route to East Africa. This trips a series of events that puts two boarding parties into motion on board Montrose. They prepare to get the order to move.

Such orders are not issued lightly by Cmdre Charlebois and because of this, Major Angela Orme, a Canadian Army Legal Officer, meticulously pours over a check list to confirm that any boarding decision is in conformity with the law.

Meanwhile, LCdr Robinson orchestrates the busy watch floor, ensuring timely and accurate information travels back and forth between the ship and his team. Once armed with all the required information, and legal checks, Cmdre Charlebois makes his decision for Montrose to conduct the boarding.

After receiving an obligatory briefing on their Rules of Engagement, the parties begin gearing up and making their tactical preparations. They also don masks and additional protective equipment to allow them to operate safely in a COVID-19 environment at sea. Once their commander is satisfied his team are properly briefed and prepared, the boarding parties are lowered in their Rigid-Hulled Inflatable Boats to the sea. They slip from the side of their warship, slicing through the Northern Arabian waters towards the dhow.

Under the watchful eye of the ship's helicopter, the boarding teams cautiously approach the dhow. Having reached their objective, they quickly ascend the wooden gunnels under the strain of their weapons and protective equipment. Before proceeding

with any search and seizure, and to ensure they operate strictly in accordance with United Nations Conventions, they radio back to the Commanding Officer of Montrose and wait for further permissions.

Back in Bahrain, Montrose's request for search concurrence flickers over the screens of the CTF 150 Battle Watch. Having assessed the information, the operators pass on their recommendation through their chain, seeking legal consensus from the Commander of CMF. Having met all of the necessary checks according to United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), his response comes back to the Watch Floor: “Proceed.”

Hours pass on the old dhow as the boarding parties seize bag after bag of suspected illicit cargo. Their find is so excessive

they cannot fit all of it onto the upper decks at once. In an operation lasting just over 10 hours, more than 2.7 tonnes of heroin, crystal methamphetamine, and hashish are stopped on their way to the streets; the proceeds of both this and the previous Montrose interdictions total an estimated U.S. wholesale value of \$15 million. These profits would most likely have filled the coffers of a regional terrorist or criminal organization.

Following the successful interdiction and the destruction of the narcotics at sea, the team on the CTF 150 Watch Floor and the crew on board Montrose go back to monitoring their area of operations for additional suspect activity. Theirs is an ongoing mission of denying terrorists the ability to fund their activities from the profits of smuggling.

The hunt starts once again.



3.



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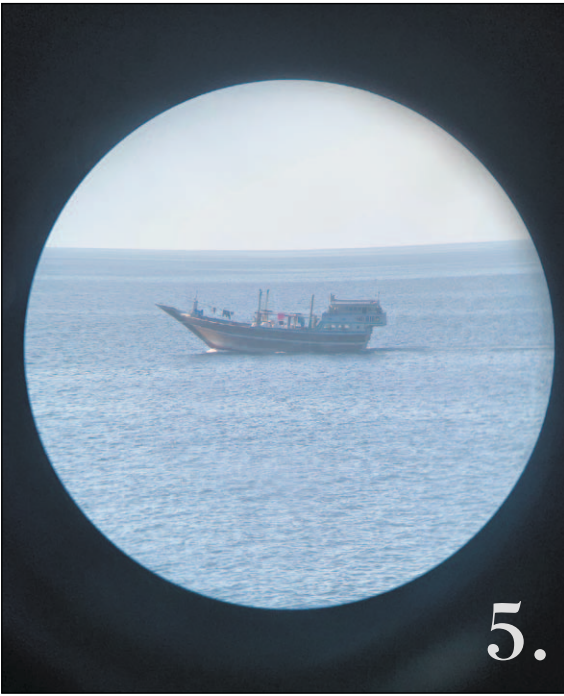
- On Feb. 6, 2021:
1. Boarding teams from HMS Montrose approach the suspect Dhow.
  2. The Crew of HMS Montrose on the flight deck with their 2.7 tonne capture.
  3. On the Dhow, bags of illicit drugs are carefully prepared for offloading by the boarding parties of HMS Montrose.
  4. HMS Montrose's helicopter provides over-watch to her ship's boarding parties.
  5. A suspicious Dhow as seen through bridge binoculars of HMS Montrose.



2.



4.



5.



## » PROFILE

## LT(N) KHAN - LOGISTICS OFFICER: BASIC TRAINING LIST OFFICER



**2Lt Jamie Boparai**  
Base Administration

The Canadian Armed Forces have been diligently working towards building a diversified fighting force that is a reflection of Canadian society, and they are finding success stories about members with incredible resolve.

Lieutenant (Navy) Asifer Khan, logistics officer at Base Administration, was born in Bangladesh and immigrated to Montreal with his family at the age of two. Growing up as a first-generation immigrant was tough financially, he explains.

"In all honesty, I joined the CAF to receive a higher education. My original plan was to serve while attending university and see what the future would provide me with regards to potential opportunities."

As it turned out, the CAF and the Royal Canadian Navy provided all the opportunity Lt(N) Khan had hoped for; while achieving his goals in receiving a higher-education, he also found himself in the midst of a rewarding career with an abundance of opportunities.

"I fell in love with the organization," he explains. "And the members that I have the privilege to work with are dedicated

and inspiring. I can no longer see myself doing anything else."

Lt(N) Khan joined the CAF as a Resource Management Support (RMS) Clerk in 2006. After working exceptionally hard at his primary duties, while attending school in the evenings, Lt(N) Khan graduated from York University with a bachelor's degree in Public Policy and Management. Now holding the education required to serve as an officer, he applied for the Special Commissioning Plan (SCP) in the hopes of becoming a naval officer.

Described on the Base Personnel Selection Office website, the SCP Program "is to provide a means whereby a Regular Force NCM who possesses an undergraduate degree may apply for commissioning." It is heavily stressed that the SCP program is intended for NCMs that have displayed job performance and personal qualities indicative of officer potential. Lt(N) Khan succeeded in 2017 and became a Logistics Officer.

"I chose to become a Logistics Officer as it bridged nicely with my former RMS Trade. Coming from an RMS background I know the expectations of the roles being performed by NCMs under my care and I can better support our

team members here at Base Administration."

The training required of a naval logistics officer includes a common core component as well as specializations in finance and supply, much of which is now conducted online due to COVID-19.

"You have to be detail-oriented to be successful as a logistics officer," explains Lt(N) Khan. "I enjoy reading news on policies and finance. This fits well with my trade as it requires you to be familiar with a plethora of military references that one must administer day-to-day."

During the last two years, Lt(N) Khan has had the opportunity to be employed as the Basic Training List Officer, an experience he has enjoyed immensely. Members are posted to BTL for a variety of reasons, such as when they change trades or attend university programs, and Lt(N) Khan oversees them all. He aids personnel progress through the training system and helps them with attach-postings into desirable positions while



Lieutenant (Navy) Asifer Khan and his family.

they wait for training.

"It is a challenging but rewarding job," says Lt(N) Khan. "To do this job well you need to be incredibly personable as you are required to work with multiple external organizations to administer students and trainees through the recruiting process. Fortunately, I have had amazing senior NCMs I can rely on to be my eyes and ears so I can best

support the members in my care."

Ready for his next adventure, Lt(N) Khan will be taking all his expertise and experience gained as the Basic Training List Officer in the hopes of becoming the next Base Foods Officer. As he learns the role, he would ultimately be charged with supervising over 50 personnel employed at Galleys in Colwood, Nelles Block, Albert Head and Work Point.

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Steady as she goes through the Gulf Islands - members of HMCS Malahat take part in NABS simulation training at CFB Esquimalt on Feb. 6-7.

## HMCS MALAHAT TAKES ON VIRTUAL SIMULATION TRAINING

**SLt Donald Den**

HMCS Malahat Public Affairs Officer

While current COVID-19 protocols make the holding of regular training challenging, many units are getting creative in maintaining a state of readiness.

During the weekend of Feb. 6 to 7, members of Victoria's Naval Reserve Division (NRD) HMCS Malahat were able to take part in virtual ship training at CFB Esquimalt.

The Naval Officer Training Centre's Navigation and Bridge Simulator, or 'NABS' for short, is a series of virtual training platforms on-location at the base meant to simulate the bridge of various Royal Canadian Navy ships.

Along with all the proper equipment that would be found on the bridge and appropriate scaled space and seating, the NABS offer a 360-degree realistic field of view, using multiple monitors to simulate an 'at-sea' environment. By using customized computer programming, everything from pitching and rolling seas during a thunderstorm to simulating numerous classes of vessels and locations can be generated to support sailors' training.

Due to its proximity to Esquimalt, Malahat is the only NRD in Canada right now that can access the NABS training facility as COVID-19 restrictions currently prevent other units from travelling.

In addition to being able to make use of the NABS facilities, Malahat was also able to fully run the program with its own personnel, thanks to a split of Officers and Non-Commissioned-Members, sea-based trades, and an extensive amount of on-ship experience.

NABS provides an excellent practice environment to prepare those members that are still waiting for their sea training.

"Being in NABS is intimidating at first, but it's great fun," says A/SLt Alistair Hirst, a junior Naval Warfare Officer. "It very much feels like the real thing - you are put in situations that are very realistic, so you start to get a sense of what it's going to be like at sea."



During the training weekend, Malahat's senior staff and mentors were able to walk junior members through some of the core rules of the road when it comes to being at sea in a war-ship. Members were able to practice bringing the ship alongside - meaning to safely park it at a jetty (or dock), as well as learn about basics such as steering and turning a ship while factoring in considerations such as wind direction, land, and other non-military vessels in the water.

Also, NABS can simulate a night-time environment, providing an additional challenge of navigating the sea in the dark.

"Learning to sail at night is always a challenge, and, amazingly, it felt like it was the middle of the night when it was 3 p.m.," adds A/SLt Hirst.

Malahat's Deputy Operations Officer, Sub-Lieutenant Bryn Stephenson, fresh off training aboard HMCS Brandon, took on one of the command roles in the simulation.

"The NABS experience is ideal for training as it allows you to practice bridge skills in a relatively consequence free environment. I especially appreciated the opportunity to be part of some command development exercises, as it revealed some of the processes that go into making command decisions."

NABS also presents the opportunity to stage unique simulations that would not traditionally occur outside of the virtual environment to keep even the most experienced Bridge Officers ready to expect the unexpected.

"Sailing through the Gulf Islands and then suddenly being part of a convoy alongside 10 Halifax-class frigates was definitely something," says A/SLt Hirst.

Malahat's Commanding Officer, Commander Cameron Miller, was present during the NABS training, often acting as the captain of the RCN vessel that personnel were training in.

"COVID-19 certainly presents challenges to how we train and stay ready, but by being able to take advantage of opportunities like this for some of our junior members to gain experience, we can continue to train as a unit," he says.

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Lois Delaney Harnett-Shaw, Grade 7 student at St. Margaret's School, brought 225 hand-written and many hand-made Valentine's cards for each resident living at Veterans Memorial Lodge.

*Hearts for Happiness*, as she calls it, is her own project.

For many nights and weekends, Lois worked on the cards. She organized students in Grade 2 through Grade 7 to write about half of the

cards, and she personally enhanced each one to make sure that each resident received an equally decorated heart or kind sentiment. The project turned into many more days, hours and emails than Lois had imagined – all to bring a Valentine's smile to those living in long term care.

Carol Cluff, resident at Veterans Memorial Lodge met Lois through a window visit, and was delighted to receive the 225 hand-made cards on behalf of the residents.

"I heard my mom talk a lot about the pandemic and the restriction

placed on seniors living in long term care," shared Lois. "My heart aches for them, and I hope this gesture will make a difference and bring many smiles."

Broadmead Care, a non-profit organization, offers long-term care and programs for people who require assistance every day. With five locations in the Victoria area and compassionate, dedicated staff, we live our purpose by building communities where every person can experience wellbeing and happiness.



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Joe O'Rourke, Vice President and General Manager of Seaspan Victoria Shipyards, presents Jackie Carlé, Military Family Resource Centre Executive Director, with a donation of \$8,000 on Wednesday Feb. 17. The donation is going to support services for military families provided by the MFRC. Seaspan Victoria Shipyards also made a sizeable donation to the MFRC in 2019 and 2020.

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# Bravo Zulu

Photo credit Sailor First Class (S1) Sisi Xu,  
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## Naval Fleet School (Pacific) Rank Qualification Sailor First Class (RQS1) Boatswain Graduation

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CFB ESQUIMALT

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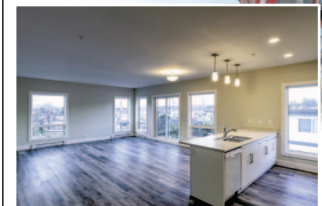
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