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# LOOKOUT

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Learning to fight

## FIRE

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## MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE MARKS BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2023

### DND/CAF

The Honourable Minister of National Defence, Anita Anand, issued the following statement to recognize and observe the beginning of Black History Month.

"Today, I ask Canadians to join me in celebrating the beginning of Black History Month.

"Black History Month allows us to recognize and celebrate the many contributions that Black Canadians have made over the years to help make Canada the prosperous, peaceful, democratic and compassionate nation it is.

"As Minister of National Defence, I especially appreciate and honour the Black Canadians who have proudly served and continue to do this country, whether in uniform in the Canadian Armed Forces or as public service employees with the Department of National Defence, even in the face of discrimination, racism and hostility.

"We saw this commitment with the No. 2 Construction Battalion, which was formed during the First World War and was composed of Black soldiers who were not allowed to join their White compatriots in battle. This Canadian Expeditionary Force unit served our country from 1916 to 1920, yet the Government of Canada only recognized their contributions and achievements in 1992. The Prime Minister and I officially apologized to their descendants last year. Their legacy, like their determination to serve, persevered, and we thank them for their service.

"In November 2022, we established a new tradition of laying a wreath at the National Remembrance Day ceremony to commemorate the sacrifice and contributions of Black members of the Canadian Armed Forces. This wreath laying signals the importance of acknowledging

Black contributions and addressing anti-Black racism, and it demonstrates our commitment to building a more inclusive institution.

"Black soldiers, sailors, aviators, special forces, and civilian National Defence employees have demonstrated remarkable resilience during our country's most formative moments—from the beaches of Normandy to the mountains of Afghanistan, as well as here at home.

"While we have progressed in addressing harmful behaviours like systemic anti-Black racism within our organization, we acknowledge that there is much work to do. We will continue to make fundamental changes to eliminate systemic barriers and create safer spaces for Black employees to share their experiences — whether through the Defence Visible Minority Advisory Group, the Director of Anti-Racism

Implementation, or the Defence Team Black Employee Network.

"I encourage all members of the Department of National Defence, the Canadian Armed Forces, and the Communications Security Establishment community to learn more about Black History in Canada, and the experiences of the Black Canadian Armed Forces community. By opening and sustaining a dialogue, we can have the open, honest and constructive conversations that will lead to meaningful culture change. As we begin Black History Month, may we recognize the contributions of Black Canadians and the Black Canadian Armed Forces community who helped build Canada, and those who continue to protect our country. May we honor their stories. And may we never forget their extraordinary courage."



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Commodore David Mazur, Commander Canadian Fleet Pacific and Reviewing Officer, Commander (Cdr) Meghan Coates, incoming Commanding officer His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Vancouver, and Cdr Kevin Whiteside, outgoing Commanding Officer, participate in the ceremonial signing at the Change of Command Ceremony Feb. 3.

Photo: Sailor First Class Kendric C.W. Grasby

#### Commander (Cdr) Megan Coates:

Cdr Coates became a Naval Warfare Officer (NWO) in 1999 after graduating high school in her hometown of St. Stephen, N.B.

Her postings included Bridge Watchkeeper aboard HMCS *Fredericton* in 2005, Above Water Warfare Officer for HMCS *Calgary* in 2008, and Executive Officer (XO) of HMCS *Calgary* from July 2020–August 2021.

She is married to Captain (Navy) Matthew Coates, Commanding Officer (CO) of Naval Personnel Training Group (NPTG). The couple has two boys, Nathaniel (11) and Jackson (8).

#### Commander Kevin Whiteside:

Cdr Whiteside was born and raised in Scarborough, Ont. He joined the forces in 1998 and the RCN in 2003.

He has served as XO of HMCS *Winnipeg* from October 2014–May 2016. Following this, he served as XO of Sea Training Pacific, ensuring readiness of deploying units from the Pacific and Atlantic fleets. His last job before serving as *Vancouver's* CO was Executive Assistant for Commander RCN from Jan 2019–Jan 2021.

Cdr Whiteside says his main non-sea-going passion is his role as husband and father to 'three awesome children'.

#### Commander Tyson Bergmann:

Born and raised in Port Alberni, Cdr Bergmann joined the RCN in 1997.

He is now being piped aboard *Regina* after serving as Director of Current Operations (F3) for Canadian Fleet Pacific. He previously served as XO of HMCS *Ottawa*, CO of the Patrol Craft Training Unit, as well as Operations Room Officer for HMCS *Algonquin* and as Bridge Watchkeeper in HMCS *Toronto*.

He currently resides in Victoria with his spouse Jennifer and stepson, Gavin.



## Change of Command

HMCS *Vancouver* looks ahead to a summer deployment with a new leader.

**Peter Mallett**  
Staff Writer

Commander (Cdr) Meghan Coates assumed command of her second Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) warship in less than a year.

"My most important lesson so far is that I can learn so much from the ship's team every day, and if I show up for them when they need me, they show up for me when I need them," Cdr Coates said.

Cdr Coates bid a fond farewell to HMCS *Regina* on Feb. 2, relinquishing her command to Cdr Tyson Bergmann. The following day, she hoisted her pennant on HMCS *Vancouver* as Cdr Kevin Whiteside turned over command of the ship. He is now preparing for his next posting in Esquimalt.

Cdr Coates said her first experience as the CO of an RCN frigate was an exciting learning experience.

"It takes a lot of work and sacrifice to become a CO or any appointed position; everyone looks to you and is counting on you," she said.

In his farewell message, Cdr Whiteside thanked the ship's company and the entire

Defence community for their support.

"*Vancouver* is getting a fantastic Commanding Officer in my good friend Cdr Meghan Coates who comes with a wealth of experience," Cdr Whiteside said. "I could not think of a better person and leader to take the ship through the next phases of its operational journey."

Cdr Whiteside has no doubt *Vancouver* will succeed in their 2023 program.

The Change of Command for HMCS *Regina* is a new beginning for Cdr Bergmann: he now gets his first chance to command a major Canadian warship. He agreed with Cdr Coates on the importance of teamwork and having each other's backs. When she handed the *Regina* over, he said her work spoke for itself.

"The hard work and dedication Cdr Coates has shown towards re-activating *Regina* was clear through the motivation throughout *Regina's* entire crew," Cdr Bergmann said.

Meanwhile, *Vancouver* is preparing for another overseas deployment this summer. Following Intermediate Multi-Ship Readiness Training, the ship's operational plans include an Indo-Pacific deployment in August 2023.



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# “ALL HANDS”

“Visiting civilians and newcomers often wonder why this ‘Hans’ person is the one who does all the work.”

~ Mark Nelson, Chief Petty Officer Second Class (Retired)

In a maritime environment, *hand* is short for *shiphand* and describes one of the ship’s sailors. *Hands* is the collective version of the term, meaning the entire ship’s company, as used in pipes and announcements, e.g., “Hands to dinner!” Although primarily used in this way, it sometimes refers to the junior ranks only, e.g., “Hands to muster on the jetty. Store ship!”

*All hands* refers to the entire ship’s company, both officers and non-commissioned members. E.g., the pipe “All hands muster on the quarterdeck” means the whole ship’s company is ordered to gather on the quarterdeck.

*Hands clean into night clothing* is a pipe commonly made in the evening, allowing off-watch personnel to switch to a slightly relaxed order of dress. The wording of the pipe implies the crew will remove dungarees soiled from a hard day’s work and don clean clothing. *Call the hands* describes waking the ship’s company, i.e., “Wakey wakey!”

*Hand over hand* describes passing a rope through hands alternately one before or above the other. It is often used as a line-handling instruction indicating the rope should be handled at an average pace, i.e., “Check away, hand over hand!” *Handsomely* describes handling a line with a slow, even motion, i.e., “Heave in handsomely!” *Roundly* means to handle the line fast or rapidly, i.e., “Heave in, roundly!”

*Hand over fist* is a term used when good progress is being made, i.e., “Boggins was splicing the lines hand over fist”. This term was drawn from the steady motion of an experienced sailor climbing the rigging on a sailing ship, the same

action being one free hand reaching over a gripping hand that had made a tight fist on the rigging. Although derived in a naval environment, the term is commonly used in business, i.e., “making (or losing) money hand over fist”.

The term *handraulic* refers to manual labour, i.e., “No winches required. We’ll use handraulic power”. Sometimes, cleverly, performing a task manually may be referred to as *armstrong* or as *using an armstrong lever*. E.g., “How are we going to move that pallet of stores to the quarter-deck? Answer: Armstrong lever!”

A *dab hand* describes an expert in a particular field. For example, a ship’s cook might be regarded as a ‘dab hand’ with a chef’s knife, or a boatswain might be a ‘dab hand’ with tiddly ropework. More common in the British Commonwealth, the term’s origin may be associated with sailors who were charged with the continuous touch-up of a sailing ship’s paintwork.

*Old hand* describes a more senior sailor with extensive experience or is used to describe a sailor who has mastered a particular piece of kit, i.e., “Boggins is an old hand at handling a zodey boat”.

Since many shipboard pipes begin with ‘Hands...’, such as “Hands carry on with departmental work”, visiting civilians and newcomers often wonder why this ‘Hans’ person is the one who does all the work.

You will find over 4,000 examples of Jackspeak in my book *Jackspeak of the Royal Canadian Navy* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).



The author of ‘Jackspeak of the Royal Canadian Navy’ and ‘Whiskey 601’, Mark Nelson developed a love of the Navy’s language and lifestyle over his 26-year career in the service. After retiring as a Chief Petty Officer Second Class, he now works as a Library Systems Specialist at Red River College Polytechnic in Winnipeg, Man.

Follow Mark on Twitter @4marknelson



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# UNBEATABLE:

## TRITONS CELEBRATE TRIPLE PLAY OF REGIONAL TITLES



Esquimalt Tritons Women's hockey team at the Canada West tournament in Winnipeg. They went undefeated in the tournament. Photo: PSP/Winnipeg



Esquimalt Tritons men's basketball team, who won six straight games to capture the 2023 CAF Sports Canada West regional championship.



Esquimalt Tritons Senior Men's hockey team The Tritons were crowned tournament champions. Photo: PSP/Cold Lake

### Peter Mallett Staff Writer

Three Esquimalt Tritons teams crushed all competition on the ice and hardwood on the way to Canada West regional titles.

The women's and senior men's hockey and men's basketball teams went undefeated in Canada West regional competitions while earning berths in upcoming Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) National Championship tournaments.

### WOMEN'S HOCKEY

Esquimalt's women's hockey team soundly dispatched all three opponents at the Canada West Regional Championships at CFB Winnipeg, Jan. 29–Feb. 3.

"We have put together an extremely talented team this year and we can't wait to see how we stack up against the opposition at Nationals next month," said Private (Pte) Breanna Leef, Tritons Manager and Player-Coach.

Esquimalt outscored Edmonton, Winnipeg and Cold Lake by scoring 42-4 over four games, culminating with an 11-1 win over

Edmonton in the tournament final.

Acting Sub-Lieutenant (A/SLt) Frederique Gauthier, Tritons Assistant Captain and Centre, was voted Most Valuable Player of the championship game and tournament. She led the Tritons top forward line, including winger A/SLt Kayla Letouzel and Captain (Capt) Amanda Lauder, who is also an Assistant Captain.

The Tritons will travel to Trenton, Ont., March 20-25 to compete in the CAF Women's Hockey Nationals.

### MEN'S BASKETBALL

Esquimalt's men's basketball team registered lop-sided wins over Comox, Edmonton, Moose Jaw and then Cold Lake for a second time on Feb. 3 to collect the tournament title.

"We were at a two point lead at halftime [in Edmonton] and, led by Owen's hard work on both sides of the floor, we regrouped and turned the tides," said Josh Buck, Tritons coach.

Lieutenant (Navy) Owen Murphy, a Deputy Division Commander at Naval Fleet School (Pacific), helped push things a notch higher

for the Tritons and captured the tournament and championship game Most Valuable Player honours.

In the tournament championship game versus Cold Lake, the Tritons trailed at halftime before Lt(N) Murphy helped rally Esquimalt to a 76-39 win. CFB Halifax is hosting the CAF championship tournament later this spring, but a precise date has yet to be announced.

### SENIOR MEN'S HOCKEY

The Senior Men's hockey team earned their gold medals by defeating the Comox Silver Totems 6-0 in the final of the Canada West Old Timers Hockey Championship on Feb. 2 at CFB Cold Lake. The Tritons outscored their opponents 38-5 over six games.

"This is an amazing group of players with a mix of leadership, speed and great goaltending," said Chief Petty Officer Second Class (CPO2) Tibbetts, Team Captain and forward, and Coxswain of Royal Canadian Navy submarine, HMCS *Corner Brook*.

The team's two goaltenders, Petty Officer Second Class (PO2) Randy Collens and Major (Maj) Dustin Matheson, showed strong per-

formances and allowed just four goals over four games against Edmonton, Winnipeg and Comox.

CPO2 Tibbetts said an improved CAF Sports Strategy announced in January has helped gain support and more players on his team.

"More Personnel Support Programs [PSP] support allowed us to recruit from all units within the Base and grow and strengthen our program," said CPO2 Tibbetts.

The Senior Tritons will host the CAF Old Timers Hockey Championship tournament in Esquimalt at Wurtele Arena on March 13–17.

All three Tritons hockey teams at the Base have captured Canada West regional hockey titles this year. The Tritons men's hockey team defeated hosts CFB Edmonton 5-4 in their Canada West Regional tournament championship game on Jan. 20.

The Tritons men's and women's volleyball players are next to put their gold-medal dreams to the test. Both teams tipped off play in their Canada West tournaments over the weekend in Cold Lake.

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# The origin and meaning of *Sweetheart Jewellery*

**Clare Sharpe**  
CFB Esquimalt Naval & Military Museum

There are few more potent symbols of wartime love, separation and affection than so-called 'sweetheart jewellery'.

These keepsakes reminded the wearer of a relative or sweetheart who served in the military. Such tokens of love and like, in the form of personal jewellery and adornments, were made to be given as gifts to family members and romantic partners. The givers were often men serving in the military who wanted to offer a small but significant present to a woman they loved or admired. The hope was that the gift would remind the recipient of them and their role in the armed forces.

Women such as those serving in the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS) also purchased and gifted sweetheart jewellery to those they cherished and

admired. The giving and wearing of sweetheart jewellery symbolized respect for service and personal affection.

Sweetheart jewellery took the form of pins, brooches, necklaces and pendants, rings, bracelets, watches and sometimes earrings. Designs incorporated the badges and symbols of many military branches and reflected the donor's allegiances. Patriotic symbols such as the iconic Canadian maple leaf were also depicted.

Jewellery of this kind was widely advertised during the Second World War; it represented a form of morale building. Another purpose was to bridge the emotional gap between loved ones separated by war.

Because these items were small, easy to buy and cheap to mail, they became trendy. The jewellery was often mass-produced and could be ordered from catalogues or bought in stores. Other items were hand-made by specialty jewellers and artisans, or created by the person giving them. Even metal military badges were sometimes

incorporated into sweetheart jewellery.

Because it was wartime, the materials were typically cheap. Plastic was a reasonably new material to the market at the time and was often used. Other metals like tin were reserved for the war effort, and precious metals were under strict limits at certain stages of the war and not available for manufacture. The government placed a tax on luxury items like jewellery as part of the war effort. Despite this, such trinkets and keepsakes were a significant part of the wartime culture and stood for essential values and human bonds.

To learn more about customs and traditions like the exchange of sweetheart jewellery, visit the CFB Esquimalt Naval and Military Museum, open Mon-Sun from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.



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HMCS Discovery Kisbee ring adorns the entrance of the recent Royal Canadian Navy Hiring Fair in Vancouver.



**Ashley Evans**  
Strategic Communications Officer,  
FMF CB/CS

A small Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton (FMF CB) team climbed aboard the Swartz Bay Ferry on Feb. 5 to share the story and purpose of FMF at HMCS *Discovery*. Ryan Solomon, Group Manager 5 at FMF CB, said the event was a great success. “Some of our displays are a direct representation of the quality workmanship present within our facility,” he said. As a mixed civilian and military workforce

# FMF TEAM VISITS VANCOUVER

supporting the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), FMF CB showcased a few unique talents within the facility. The FMF booth at the RCN Job Fair displayed a 3D printer and a virtual welding machine. The team was all smiles as they welcomed attendees throughout the day, passionate about sharing the FMF story while watching a few brave individuals attempt the FORCE test. “There was such positive feedback about our display, which we’ve worked hard on,” Solomon said. Sharing the diverse work of the FMF were

Elaine Yan, Electrical Engineer; Sailor First Class Sero Deo, MarTech; Master Sailor Jose Villano, WEng; Ryan Solomon, Group Manager 5; and Jaden Prigione, Electronics Apprentice. All were thrilled to share their career journeys thus far. Also in attendance was the Naval Pacific Training Group, showcasing developments and advances in the training available to recruits. Thank you to everyone who made the day a success and shared their own FMF story with pride! BZ!



Members of the RCN share their passion for their service to Canada at the recent career fair at HMCS *Discovery*.



Team members from Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton talk to visitors at their booth during the RCN hiring fair at HMCS *Discovery*.



Team member from CanSubFor talk to visitors at their booth during the RCN hiring fair at HMCS *Discovery*.



Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton team members (L to R) Electronics Apprentice Jaden Prigione, MarTech Sailor First Class Sero Deo, Group Manager 5 Ryan Solomon, WEng Master Sailor Jose Villano, and Mechanical Engineer Elaine Yan at HMCS *Discovery*.



RCN CH-148 Cyclone on display for visitors of the RCN career fair at HMCS *Discovery* on Feb. 5



# IS A REGISTERED RETIREMENT SAVINGS PLAN FOR ME?

## SISIP Financial Esquimalt

Check with your advisor whether you have changed jobs in the past year, been redeployed, or are just starting to think about retirement planning. Your SISIP advisor can help keep your investments on track for future goals and ensure you are investing in a tax-advantaged way.

### Here are five things to consider.

#### 1) Is an RRSP the best way to save for retirement?

A Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) can be a great way to save for your retirement to ensure you have an income when you are no longer working. Putting money aside into an RRSP reduces the tax you pay now, which means you'll often qualify for an immediate income tax return.

The money you save in your RRSP grows and earns interest, but you only pay income tax once you withdraw it as income, ideally in retirement.

If you're starting your career, an RRSP gets you into saving each month. When it comes to any investment, time is your friend. The earlier you start, the less you need to put aside to meet your retirement goals.

#### 2) Do I have an RRSP contribution room if I pay into a pension?

Even if you already pay into a workplace pension, you can still benefit from investing in an RRSP to top up your income when you retire. Your pension adjustment will affect your allowable contribution room, which is shown on your T4 slip.

If you're in a high tax bracket, an RRSP will help you reduce the income tax you pay.

#### 3) Should I invest in an RRSP if my income is lower than usual this year?

The general rule with RRSPs is the higher your income, the more money you'll get back on your income tax return when you make an RRSP contribution.

Don't worry if you've already contributed to your RRSP this year, but your income was reduced. You don't have to claim the deduction on your 2022 tax return.

If you'll make more money in the coming years, claim your RRSP tax deduction then.

#### 4) Is a spousal RRSP good if my spouse makes less money than me?

If there's a significant difference in income between you and your spouse, the higher earner should make RRSP contributions to get the most significant income tax deduction.

You could contribute to your RRSP, as normal, but a spousal RRSP may be a good option in this scenario.

When you retire, you want your household income split evenly between you and your partner to keep your income taxes as low as possible. A spousal RRSP gives the higher earner the tax break benefit now. But it helps you to balance future retirement income with your spouse. That means you'll save on taxes when you eventually draw from the fund.

#### 5) Is an RRSP the only way to save for retirement? Can a TFSA be used for retirement savings?

RRSPs are a great way to save because you get a deduction on your income taxes, and the funds grow inside the account on a tax-deferred basis. However, depending on your financial situation and investor profile, you could also use a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA) to save for retirement.

You don't get a tax deduction on TFSA contributions, but you also don't have to pay income tax when you withdraw from the account, allowing flexibility around how and when to use the funds.

Contact your local SISIP office for more details.

**Note: The RRSP contribution deadline for the 2022 tax year is March 1st.**



Elin Kelsey, PhD

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Please join the MARPAC Health & Wellness Strategy (MHWS) as we host Elin Kelsey, PhD, for a special 90-min MS Teams presentation on Tuesday, 21 February 2023 from 10:00–11:30 am PST. Elin Kelsey will speak about "Climate Emotions and Evidence-Based Hope".

Elin Kelsey, PhD, is an international thought-leader for the evidence-based hope and climate solutions movement. Her best-selling book for adults, *Hope Matters: Why Changing the Way We Think Is Critical for Solving the Environmental Crisis*, was published by Greystone Books (2020). She co-created #OceanOptimism, a twitter campaign to crowd-source marine conservation solutions which has reached more than a hundred million shares since it launched in 2014.

Elin has history of effecting positive change. She wrote the scientific brief for Pew Global Oceans that led to the dedication, in 2009, of what was then the world's largest marine protected area, the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument. As an Adjunct Faculty member of the University of Victoria, School of Environmental Studies, and Western Washington University's partnership in the Redfish School of Change, she is helping to forward a solutions-oriented paradigm for educators, environmental scientists and social scientists.

Elin is a popular keynote speaker and media commentator. She regularly serves as an author/artist in residence, leading workshops with kindergarten to university students across North America and around the world. Her newest film, *Breathe*, which was commissioned by award-winning filmmaker Marc Silver, is being distributed globally through Amnesty International. Elin is an award-winning children's book author. Her newest book for children, *A Last Goodbye*, was published in 2020.



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# DENTAL OFFICER INSPIRED BY WOUNDED WARRIORS RUN



## WOUNDED WARRIORS RUN BC TEAM:

- ★ Captain (Capt) Natalie Butler, runner;
- ★ Capt Jacqueline Zweng, Race director;
- ★ Master Sailor (MS) Amver Cinco of the Naval Personnel Training Group (NPTG), runner;
- ★ Matt Carlson, a civilian employee with the Base Commander's Office and Support Team Runner;
- ★ Chief Petty Officer Second Class John Penner, a Divisional Commander of Naval Fleet School (Pacific) and the team's photographer.

**Peter Mallett**  
Staff Writer

The gruelling physical challenge of traversing the length of Vancouver Island over eight consecutive days seems daunting. Captain (Capt) Nathalie Butler is up to the task.

A Dental Officer from the Naden Dental Clinic, Capt Butler is one of two new fleet-footed volunteers on this year's eight-member Wounded Warriors Run B.C. (WWRBC).

"I knew I would be a good fit for the team, given my love of running and passion for giving back to the military community," she said.

The team of five will embark on a relay-style run along the Trans-Canada Highway from Feb. 26-March 5 and will cover more than 600 km between Port Hardy and Victoria. WWRBC is now in its tenth year.

Capt Butler said the team's mission is to raise public awareness of mental health and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), along with providing financial support for programs that benefit affected military members and first responders.

"PTSD and mental health issues affect everyone, so increasing awareness about their profound effects on military members and their loved ones will increase support and encourage others to seek help when they need it," she said, adding that her work at the Base Dental Clinic gave her a fair degree of insight into the profound effects PTSD and operational stress injuries have on her patients.

Capt Butler took up distance running seven years ago, has competed in the local race circuit, and routinely runs 50-60 km per week. She is fully aware her next challenge is much more significant because it involves covering distances of up to 20 km per

day for a string of eight consecutive days with little recovery time.

"I have been told by other participants this relay is truly an inspirational and challenging experience and there is no other running event like this anywhere," she said.

Capt Butler is still determining what to expect regarding the physical demands of her task but is excited about the challenge.

Equally enthusiastic about this year's relay is Matt Carlson, Support Team Runner and a civilian employee with the Base Commander's Office, who joined the team in 2018.

"Just seeing the direct positive impact Wounded Warriors has had in my community keeps me coming back to the team each year," Carlson said.

Carlson and Capt Butler continue raising funds and awareness about the run. Runners not directly participating can help fundraise and promote WWRBC by registering for their National Virtual Run. Using the running app Strava, runners can run, walk, ski or paddle to help raise money and awareness. Fundraising is ongoing, and donations to fundraising campaigns of individual runners can be made at the these websites: [www.woundedwarriors.ca/events/wounded-warrior-bc-run](http://www.woundedwarriors.ca/events/wounded-warrior-bc-run) and [akaraisin.com](http://akaraisin.com)



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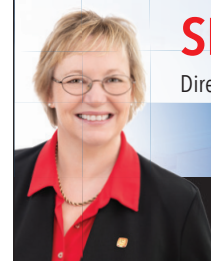


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# Putting the 'why' to the 'how': COPS II

**Kate Bandura**  
Lookout Editor

What measures should a Maritime Coastal Defence Vessel (MCDV) crew put up to deter a potential attack from pirates?

This is the type of simulated operations seven Naval Reservists from Quebec trained in during a specialized course using the Naval Bridge Simulator at HMCS *Venture* last December.

"This course is teaching potential Operations Officers (OpsO) to react fast to an evolving situation," said Lieutenant (Navy) Titus Villegas, course director and lead instructor. "It refreshes the core skills of an OpsO, which will set the students up for success when they assume the position on ship."

Titled 'Coastal Operations Planning – Part II' (COPS II), the course is designed

for prospective Operations Officers on the Kingston-class vessels and explores equipment such as sensors and radars used during coastal operations. It caters towards Naval Warfare Officers (NWO) in the Primary Reserves who already have significant time at sea.

MCDVs go to the Caribbean Basin for drug interdiction operations. They support the navies in the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa and train them in anti-piracy, and conduct training in countering illegal activities in West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. The platform was originally designed for Naval Reserve Sailors. Lt(N) Villegas said about a decade ago the MCDVs were amalgamated into the Regular Force fleet; combined with the pandemic, the COPS courses lost visibility.

Reserve trainees come to Esquimalt because many resources are not organic locally.

"We needed simulators such as the one in HMCS *Venture*, the subject matter experts are closer to the fleet, and the ships are here for field trips and tours," he said.

COPS II is the second part of a three-part program. COPS I teaches operational planning process. COPS III is scenario-based, presenting students with skill-based modules of the Coastal Operations program. When the students are ready, they can successfully assume the OpsO position in MCDVs.

The students said COPS II helped them understand the 'why' to the 'how' they learned while on ships.

"I knew there was this one sensor on top of the MCDVs and I heard the name before, but I didn't know what it was. I learned about its functionality in detail," said Lt(N) Jessica Pelletier.

Lt(N) Pelletier, Training Officer at HMCS *d'Iberville* in Rimouski, Que., sailed with

HMCS *Yellowknife*, HMCS *Edmonton* and then HMCS *Nanaimo* almost two years ago. She said she now understands the OpsO job much better.

"Ultimately, you mitigate risks for the CO and make recommendations," she said. "I will use what I learned to plan and execute tasks as a Force Protection Officer."

Lt(N) Villegas hopes the course will be a useful refresher to NWOs who haven't been on ships for a while.

"It's a busy job on ship, there's a lot coming at you, and there's a lot to absorb. I'm hoping this course would teach them the core skills of becoming the Operations Officer," he said.

COPS II and III will be taught in Esquimalt in November 2023. As a scenario-based course, COPS III will explore three major scenarios OpsOs encounter: Search and Rescue, maritime interdiction operations, and force protection.




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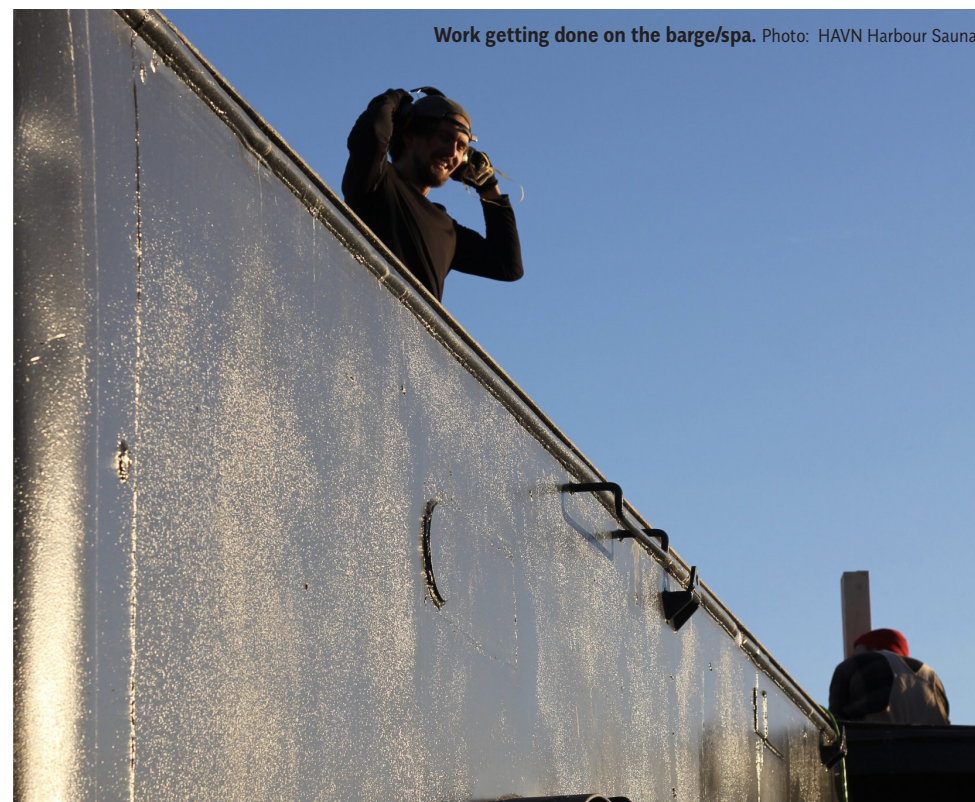
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Work getting done on the barge/spa. Photo: HAVN Harbour Sauna

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## A spa with naval history will soon come to Victoria

**Peter Mallett**  
Staff Writer

Extended naval history permeates a 44-metre-long barge that will soon be converted into a tourist attraction in Victoria's Inner Harbour.

Among artifacts found aboard – a note from the U.S. Navy (USN) crew dating to 1984 which says 'Thanks for getting me the coffee'.

Nicholas Van Buren, HAVN Harbour Sauna CEO, said he sometimes gets goosebumps thinking of all the people who lived and worked on this vessel over the years.

"I spent a lot of time tracking down the history of the vessel," Van Buren said. "I have photos of it operating at [navy] bases in San Diego and Pearl Harbor."

Van Buren purchased the vessel in November 2022 from a shipyard in the Broughton Archipelago near Port McNeill. He plans to convert the barge into a floating park with saunas, cold pools and green space.

The barge's history dates back to the final years of the Second World War.

It was one of four barges created as a float-

ing workshop for welders and other tradesmen. It was built by Puget Sound Bridge & Dredging of Tacoma, Wash. for the USN in 1944. The USN identified these vessels with acronyms. This barge's official identification would either be a Workshop Floating Drydock (Hull), YRD (H), Workshop Floating Drydock (Machinery), or YRD (M), Van Buren said.

Van Buren's research indicates the vessel was held by the U.S. military until 2002.

"Some barges would be towed by much larger U.S. Navy vessels to make at-sea repairs to damaged ships," he said.

The vessel previously included a large crane on its deck and a 1943 General Electric distributor, which have been removed during re-construction.

Van Buren wants to make visitors to the HAVN spa aware of the ship's rich history with on-board displays.

The spa is currently moored at Ogden Point and could open for business as early as May 2023. When completed, it will be located off Government Street in Victoria's downtown core.



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