

VOLUME 70 NUMBER 26 | DECEMBER 15, 2025

MORALE & WELFARE NEWS | CFB ESQUIMALT, VICTORIA, B.C.

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Members of the local Defence community hold out their hands for a festive high-five from Santa Claus during the Dec 6 Skate and Swim with Santa event hosted at Wurtele Arene by Personnel Support Programs (PSP) and Chief and Petty Officers' (C&POs) Mess. Photo: Lindsay Groves

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# MARPAC Holiday Greetings

## Members of the MARPAC/JTFP Defence Team,



During this holiday season, we look forward to gathering with friends, family and celebrating the departing year with gratitude. My wife Christian and I, and all at MARPAC headquarters, want to thank you for your service and we wish all of you a happy holidays filled with hope, peace, joy and love. We collectively have a tremendous responsibility to train and employ the navy that Canada needs, and expects, to defend our country. This is a significant task and requires tremendous effort from everyone within MARPAC and JTFP; due to your hard work throughout the year, we are making incredible progress towards developing a military that is ready, resilient and relevant. While 2026 will bring new challenges, it will also bring incredible opportunity to regenerate, to grow and to achieve excellence.

I greatly appreciate the efforts of every sailor, aviator, soldier and public servant who has worked steadfastly in 2025 and is committed to 2026 being a year of further success and transformation. I have had the opportunity to visit many of our units including our fleet schools in Victoria, Halifax and Quebec City who are training and motivating the next generation; I have been impressed with the innovation, commitment, energy and dedication demonstrated by our sailors.

Moreover, I am thankful for the friends and families who support everything that we do, who make service to our country possible, and who add incredible meaning to our lives. I do hope that everyone in the Formation has time over the holidays to connect with those who are most meaningful.

Supported by everyone at CFB Esquimalt, FMF Cape Breton, Canadian Submarine Force, Canadian Fleet Pacific and at the Naval Training Group, we achieved a number of key milestones at sea. His Majesty's Canadian Ships *Regina*, *Max Bernays* and MV *Asterix* sailed on Operation Latitude with *Max Bernays* setting a record for transiting further north than any RCN ship in history. HMCS *Corner Brook* not only successfully returned to sea but was an incredible strategic deterrent, demonstrating to Canadians why we need to grow our submarine fleet. Additionally, our Search and Rescue team responded to over 2500 distress calls, ensuring the safety of Canadians.

It was a year of change, with HMC Ships *Edmonton*, *Nanaimo* and *Yellowknife* circumnavigating the continent to their new home on the East coast as we said farewell to HMC Ships *Brandon*, *Saskatoon*, and *Whitehorse* at their decommissioning ceremony. But with this farewell, comes the hope of a new, regenerated navy, a navy that will see significant investment and growth over the next decade.

Looking ahead to 2026, transformation will continue with our resolve to defend Canada and strengthen our navy through investment in the next generation of our incredible sailors. We thank you for a successful year, upon which, we will continue to build together as we deliver the navy Canada needs. From our family to yours, we wish you hope, peace, joy, and love this holiday season and a Happy New Year.

*Rear-Admiral (RAdm) David Patchell*

Photo: Master Sailor (MS) Bryan Underwood, MARPAC Imaging Services





# New DND Shuttle Trials as Transport for CFB Esquimalt Staff

**Archana Cini**

Lookout Newspaper

Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Esquimalt has completed a new transportation trial designed to make commuting across Vancouver Island simpler and more affordable for local Defence team members.

From Nov 24 to Dec 12, Transportation, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (TEME) piloted The Base Connector and Base Rounder Initiative, a complimentary mobility service. Intended to improve connectivity across CFB Esquimalt properties, the Base Connector linked Canadian Forces Ammunition Depot (CFAD) Rocky Point, CFB Albert Head, and Colwood with Esquimalt stops including the Base Hospital, Naden, Dockyard, and Work Point. The Base Rounder was also tested to reduce the need for personal vehicles by encouraging Defence team members to leverage a base-operated shuttle to travel to and from CFB Esquimalt properties.

During the test period, participants hopped aboard both the Base Connector, a 56-passenger coach, and

the Base Rounder, a 12-passenger van. TEME also collected daily ridership data and stop-specific pickup information throughout the trial period to assess the necessity of each stop, ridership fluctuations, and overall trial usage.

To Petty Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Class (PO1) Troy Dierk, Weapon Engineering Manager, the trial experience was positive overall. "There was far less stress during the high traffic periods of the trip, less fuel consumption, and thus less expense for me," he said. "I would reassess some of the stops to confirm if they are necessary to make for a more seamless flow for drivers, as several stops proved to be a little more problematic for maneuvering the buses."

When asked if he would utilize the service for the next trial period in 2026, PO1 Dierk said, "There will still remain days where the use of my own vehicle will be required due to personal commitments, but I will definitely be utilizing the service should it be put in place."



The Base Connector on its way to one of many Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Esquimalt properties during the shuttle trials from Nov 24 to Dec 12. Photo: Rodney Venis

If you took a ride on either the Base Connector or Rounder from Nov 24 to Dec 11, please share feedback on your experience at [forms.office.com/r/xyE9Dp5BSE](https://forms.office.com/r/xyE9Dp5BSE).



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2025

CFB Esquimalt



Holiday Greetings

Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt Defence Team Members,

As 2025 draws to a close, Sue and I, and our families, extend our sincere gratitude to you and your loved ones. Your professionalism, resilience, and commitment have been the foundation of our success throughout the year.

This year, the Base continued to deliver exceptional support to operations at home and abroad. From enabling deployments in the Indo-Pacific region to sustaining local operations and participating in major exercises, your efforts have ensured mission success, strengthened Canada's presence internationally, and improved understanding and support for Canadians towards our core mandates.

2025 also saw a major milestone in infrastructure modernization with the completion and inauguration of the new B Jetty. This state-of-the-art jetty will accommodate the next generation of Royal Canadian Navy vessels, including Joint Support Ships and Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships, and represents one of the most significant investments in naval infrastructure since the Second World War — this is the start of much infrastructure change to come. In 2024, we also took delivery of our new Naval Large Tugs, Haro and Barkerville, and at the end of March this year, the Naval Large Tugs achieved full operational capability.

Beyond operations, we have continued to strengthen our bonds within the Defence Team and with our community. Our relationships with First Nations, local leaders and community supporters continues to grow, building foundational relationships that will help guide and inform our decisions, ensuring we remain the most responsible and respectful neighbours possible while supporting operations, our families and all Canadians. Through events such as Defence on the Dock, the Navy Run and Navy Bike Ride, Go by Bike Week, Healthy Workplace Month, Veterans' Week ceremonies, several Canadian Armed Forces appreciation events with local sports organizations, and numerous recognition activities, we came together to spread the word of the great work we do, promote well-being, and honour those who serve and have served before us. Your generosity during the 2025 National Defence Workplace Charitable Campaign has been extraordinary, yet again for exceeding our fundraising goals in support of those most in need. This accomplishment reflects the compassion and dedication that define our team.

Every day, you embody our motto, *Portare per omnia* —

Support for all. From the most senior leaders to our newest members, each of you and your loved ones supporting play a vital role in our collective success. It is an honour to serve alongside such a dedicated and diverse team.

2026 will be an exciting year as we break ground on myriad projects that will ensure we are ready to support operational requirements and the needs of our current and future workforces for generations to come. As we enter the holiday season, we encourage you to take time to rest, recharge, and connect with those who matter most. Please continue to look out for one another and extend kindness wherever possible. Whatever traditions you celebrate, may this season bring peace, joy, and renewal.

From our families to yours, we wish you Happy Holidays and a bright, prosperous New Year.

Yours Aye,  
  
Captain(Navy) Kevin Whiteside  
CFB Esquimalt Base Commander  
  
Chief Petty Officer First Class (CPO1) Sue Frisby  
Base Chief Petty Officer



Photo supplied



**MORALE & WELFARE NEWS**  
**CFB ESQUIMALT, VICTORIA, B.C.**  
A Division of Personnel Support Programs

The Lookout Newspaper and Publishing provides morale and welfare news to CFB Esquimalt, Maritime Forces Pacific, and is nationally distributed bi-weekly in print and online at lookoutnewspaper.com with social media updates on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

Reach out to us, we'd love to hear your feedback and story ideas!

Published every other Monday, under the authority of Capt(Navy) K. Whiteside, Base Commander, CFB Esquimalt.

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Circulation bi-weekly print: 2,100  
Social media reach: 10,000+ Defence community members

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# Meet Cameron

*Note from the Lookout: In this series, we're excited to introduce you to our team. It's a chance for us to say hello, step out from behind our desks, and share our connections to the Defence Team along with the personal passions that drives our work at the Lookout.*

## Archana Cini Lookout Newspaper

For over half a decade, I've been one of the engines keeping the Lookout Newspaper moving — quite literally! My name is Cameron (Cam) Carnell, and I am one of the team's Administrative Assistants.

I've been with the Lookout since 2019 when I first started delivering papers. Since 2020, I've also been tackling our biweekly mail-out process. My favourite part of the job has always been the Sunday morning drive. The stops have become familiar, and over the years I've met a lot of friendly, genuine people on my route. Knowing that someone is receiving yet another copy of the Lookout because I delivered or mailed it brings about a lot of happiness. It means something.

I was raised on a hog ranch in the East Kootenays, surrounded by a menagerie of animals. That taught me a lot

about life, and what matters most. The motto 'A job's not done until it's done well,' comes to mind, and often guides me.

As is in life, there are challenges. I had an automotive incident a few years ago, and since then, sitting or standing for long stretches of time hasn't been easy. But I keep going — there's a sense of purpose here, and the connection we have to the local Defence community helps.

Service has always run deep in my family. One of my grandfathers served in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), and the other in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). My oldest brother was in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN), and now both his oldest children serve in the RCN and CAF. My twin brother also serves in the RCN. With this around me, I've always seen the concept of service as straightforward: doing something real for others.

Outside of work, there are many

activities that keep me grounded in life. I play basketball and have loved to shoot hoops since I was six years old. My love for it will likely never fade, and it keeps me active. I also collect Magic: The Gathering (MTG) cards, something I started back when I was a teenager. There's a special camaraderie among players I really enjoy.

It's special to think about how I've become a familiar face myself when it comes to readers across the region receiving their copy of the Lookout. My father used to do this route, and then eventually we'd do it together. I took it over from him. He has since passed on — now, the continuity of it all means something. Every drive, every copy, and every reader keeps this legacy alive.

*"Service has always run deep in my family."*

## FUN FACTS

**Q: What's a fun fact about you that no one knows?**

I've won mathematics awards from Waterloo. Also, card tricks!

**Q: What's your favourite book?**

A: I'm actually more of a comic book enjoyer ... Spiderman.



Cameron photo supplied  
Magic: The Gathering card. Photo: Wikimedia Commons  
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# Canadian Naval Capability in 2026 and Beyond:

## The Future of the RCN with RAdm Armstrong



**Archana Cini**  
Lookout Newspaper

The Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) currently stands at the precipice of a transformative decade — and according to Rear-Admiral (RAdm) Jason Armstrong, Chief of Naval Capability, the coming years promise some of the most substantial capability upgrades in decades.

“We just received delivery of the Harry DeWolf class,” said RAdm Armstrong, referring to the new fleet of six Arctic and Offshore Patrol Vessels (AOPVs) helping the RCN operate in regions once out of reach. Armstrong called the class “a phenomenal capability,” noting its successful deployments to the Arctic, Indo-Pacific, and the Caribbean, where the fleet continues to demonstrate its international versatility. Notably, the AOPVs have also successfully deployed further north than any other RCN ship in Canadian history.

With the longest coastline in the world, Canada’s underwater surveillance capability is on the mind of RCN leadership. “There’s a lot of new builds coming for our sailors that I’m excited to speak to,” shared RAdm Armstrong. “The Canadian Patrol Submarine Project (CPSP) is very near and dear to my heart.”

The CPSP will see up to 12 new submarines join the RCN over the next decade, with each submarine poised with the capabilities to efficiently detect, track, deter, and if necessary, defeat adversaries in all three of Canada’s oceans. “I’m very optimistic with where we’re collectively heading,” said the RAdm. “There are also infrastructure projects on the move to improve

quality of life for our sailors, and innovative work being done with regards to drones and uncrewed systems. It’s an exciting time.”

In terms of addressing and closing naval capability gaps in the next five years, RAdm Armstrong shared insights regarding both artificial intelligence and outer space. “We’re looking at artificial intelligence and how it’s going to enable war fighting in a more efficient navy. It’s much more than drafting reports — now it’s about enabling sailors to do things faster and better.” RAdm Armstrong also noted that Defence teams in Ottawa and on both coasts are looking to leverage technologies in tandem with outer space to better protect Canadian assets. “Some of our young sailors genuinely know better than I do,” said RAdm Armstrong with a smile. “We’re looking to many of them to be innovative and we’re really going places.”

When asked what leadership meant to him, RAdm Armstrong took a pause before sharing his thoughts. “To me, leadership is setting an example of how to do things right. You enable people to be successful, you support them, and when mistakes happen, you own that. It’s part of my job as Chief of Naval Capability to help enable that success. We have phenomenal sailors and officers in our navy. They really are our future, so we must mentor and guide them effectively towards it.”

With a new decade of growth unfolding with every new hull laid and technology tested, Canada continues to build more than a fleet — it also builds a sailor-first naval future worth fighting for.



# Wings of Wonder:

## Eaglets Learn to Fly at CFB Esquimalt

**Marc Bibeau**  
FDU(Pacific)

Members of Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific) (FDU[P]) were treated to the remarkable glimpse of nature unfolding just outside their workplace this past season. A pair of bald eagles, calmly nesting near the unit, became the subject of a months-long photography project that captured the growth of two eaglets — all the way from hatchling to first flight.

First discovered in late May, the eagles were observed shortly after hatching. Over the course of several weeks, they began to transform from fragile, down-covered chicks into confident, young birds ready to fly.

"Watching them develop was extraordinary," said Chief Petty Officer Second Class (CPO2) Marc Bibeau, Training Coordinator. "Each visit showed how quickly they adapted and grew stronger." CPO2 Bibeau also photographed the eagles throughout the season.

By June, the eaglets' personalities had begun to emerge — one adventurous and restless, the other comparatively patient and observant. Photographing them required early mornings, long hours of waiting, and careful observation.

"It was a reminder that nature moves at its own pace," said CPO2 Bibeau. "It taught me patience and

respect for the process." Life in the wild also came with challenges. The nest, perched high in a pine tree, occasionally became the scene of aerial skirmishes with a nearby osprey defending its hunting territory. These brief encounters offered a glimpse into the balance of coexistence and competition that has long defined much of the natural world.

By late summer, the eaglets' transformation was well underway with their soft grey down replaced with sleek brown feathers. Now, the birds were testing their wings against the breeze.

"Seeing them learn to fly was inspiring. Those first uncertain flaps showed both determination and courage." By mid-August, both young eagles had finally taken flight, leaving the nest that had sheltered them for so many months. After following their movements and growth all season, CPO2 Bibeau admitted that their final flight was bittersweet. "It was a powerful moment, and it reminded me that growth means learning to let go," he said.

For CPO2 Bibeau, the experience became more than a personal photography project. It was also a poignant reflection on resilience, freedom, and the simple wonder found in nature. "These eaglets reminded me that even in our daily routines, there's beauty all around us," he said. "You just have to take the time to look."

The two eaglets captured during their season of growth.  
Photo: Chief Petty Officer Second Class (CPO2) Marc Bibeau



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## STATEMENT BY Rear-Admiral David Patchell, COMMANDER MARITIME FORCES PACIFIC / JOINT TASK FORCE PACIFIC

On December 8, 2025, at 2:43 p.m. local time, the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) Victoria was alerted to a person overboard. One of our Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) members had fallen from a Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) approximately 0.5 nautical miles east of Bentinck Island, near Albert Head, British Columbia. At the time, the RHIB was returning from conducting sentry duties off the Bentinck Island range.

In response, JRCC tasked multiple search and rescue assets, including a CH-148 Cyclone helicopter, a CH-149 Cormorant helicopter, a CC-295 Kingfisher aircraft, a United States Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin helicopter, multiple Canadian Coast Guard vessels, RCN Orca-class patrol vessels, and His Majesty's Canadian Ship *Regina*. Despite challenging conditions —high winds, large swells, and darkness— the member was located at 5:00 p.m. local time, signaling for help as rescuers approached. He was subsequently recovered by the Pacific Pilotage Authority vessel Pacific Guardian and transferred to local Emergency Health Services.

Thanks to the swift coordination and unwavering professionalism of all agencies involved, a life was saved today. This incident serves as a powerful reminder of the dedication and readiness of our search and rescue partners, and of the strength we demonstrate when we respond together. We are profoundly grateful for the tireless efforts of everyone who took part in this operation. On behalf of Maritime Forces Pacific and Joint Task Force Pacific, we extend our sincere appreciation to all who helped bring our member home safely.

Rear-Admiral David Patchell  
Commander, Maritime Forces Pacific and Joint Task Force Pacific



*“We extend our sincere appreciation to all who helped bring our member home safely.”*

Rear-Admiral David Patchell

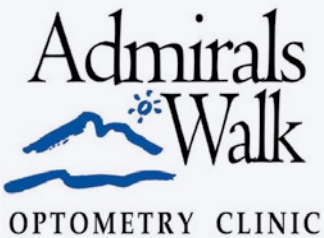
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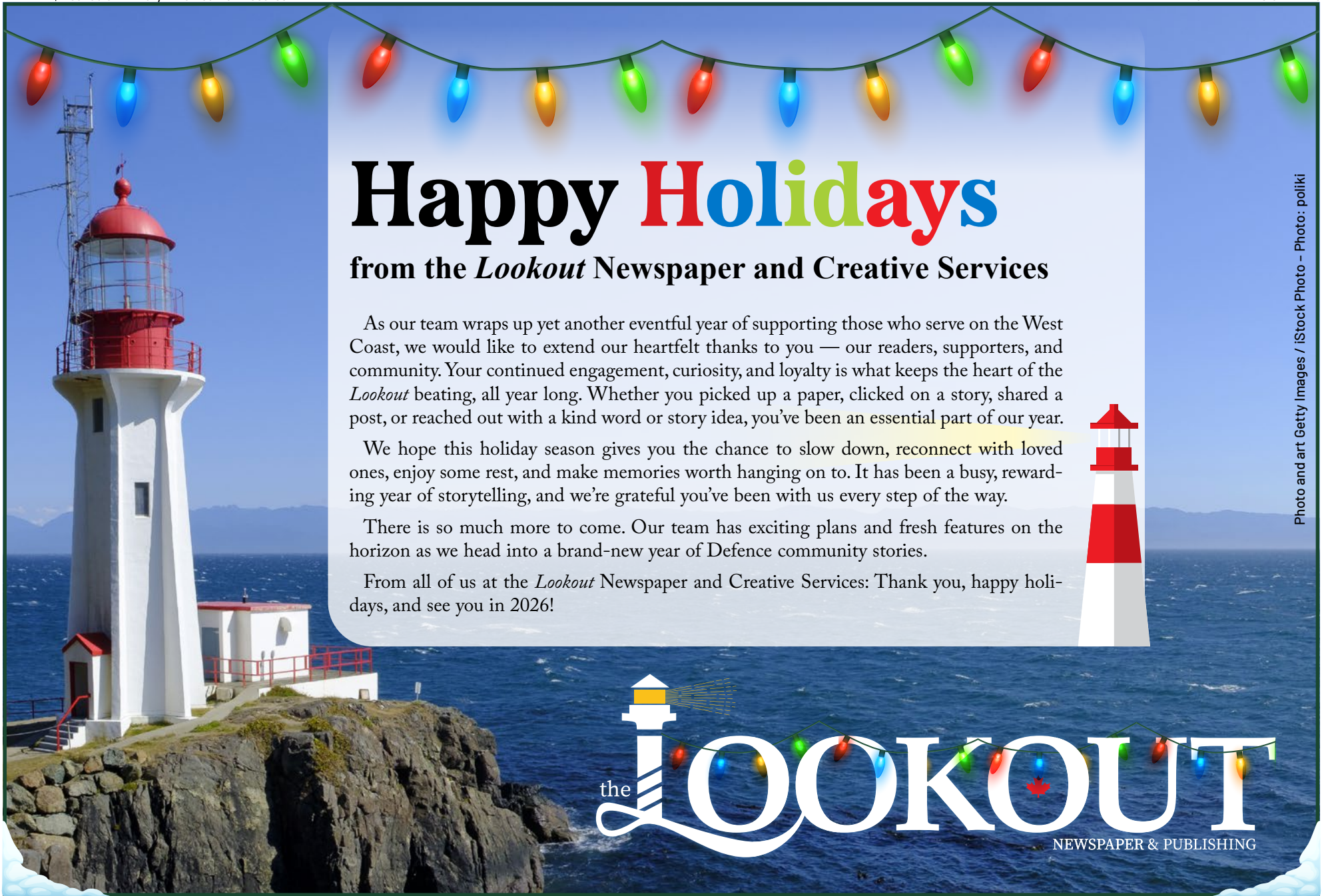
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# Happy Holidays

from the *Lookout* Newspaper and Creative Services

As our team wraps up yet another eventful year of supporting those who serve on the West Coast, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to you — our readers, supporters, and community. Your continued engagement, curiosity, and loyalty is what keeps the heart of the *Lookout* beating, all year long. Whether you picked up a paper, clicked on a story, shared a post, or reached out with a kind word or story idea, you've been an essential part of our year.

We hope this holiday season gives you the chance to slow down, reconnect with loved ones, enjoy some rest, and make memories worth hanging on to. It has been a busy, rewarding year of storytelling, and we're grateful you've been with us every step of the way.

There is so much more to come. Our team has exciting plans and fresh features on the horizon as we head into a brand-new year of Defence community stories.

From all of us at the *Lookout* Newspaper and Creative Services: Thank you, happy holidays, and see you in 2026!

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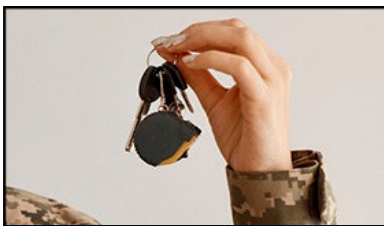
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## Junior Canadian Rangers Build Skills and Confidence at NLETS 2025

Junior Canadian Rangers (JCRs) exploring a cave during the 2025 iteration of the National Leader Enhanced Training Session (NLETS). Photo: Master Corporal (MCpl) Jason Shafto

**MCpl Jason Shafto**  
4CRPG

From July 28 to Aug 8, Junior Canadian Rangers (JCRs) from all five Canadian Ranger Patrol Groups participated in the 2025 National Leader Enhanced Training Session (NLETS), an annual training event hosted by 4th Canadian Ranger Patrol Group (4CRPG).

NLETS is a 12-day program designed to build confidence, leadership skills, and practical abilities in JCRs. To kick off NLETS 2025, approximately 40 JCRs (accompanied by Canadian Rangers, Junior Canadian Ranger Instructors (JCRI), and Canadian Ranger leadership) travelled to HMCS Quadra Cadet Training Centre in Comox, British Columbia (B.C.). Here, 4CRPG's Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel (HLCol) Adele Donaldson delivered remarks at the opening ceremony. JCRs were then assigned to their respective sections, and training commenced.

The training began with foundational team-building exercises and leadership workshops that emphasized mentorship and safety. JCRs also collaborated with leaders from the Sea Cadet program to share ideas and explore leadership concepts and theory.

After two days of team building and Sea Cadet collaboration, the JCRs travelled to the Strathcona Park Lodge, west of Campbell River, B.C., to apply their skills in advanced expeditions including hiking, canoeing, and rock climbing. Once arrived, lodge staff trained JCRs for their chosen outdoor activities. Following a day of instruction, the JCRs, guided by SPL staff and supported by Canadian Rangers and JCRI, embarked on four-day adventures. Upon returning, a ceremony was held to recognize significant team contributors for their efforts.

The group then travelled from Duke Point, near Nanaimo, B.C. to Vancouver, where they took charge, planned, and led activities using a daily budget for food and activities. Each

section made group decisions, with JCRI and Canadian Rangers serving as chaperones. Activities included visits to the Vancouver Aquarium, Stanley Park, and Playland. After time in Vancouver, the JCRs reflected on their leadership experiences and prepared for the program's conclusion.

NLETS 2025 wrapped up with a closing ceremony held at the Colonel (Col) Sherman Armoury in Richmond, B.C. The event was attended by Brigadier-General Paul Ursich, Deputy Commander of the 3rd Canadian Division, and Lieutenant-Colonel (LCol) Vincent Couturier, Commanding Officer (CO) of 4CRPG. Five JCRs, each representing one Canadian Ranger Patrol Group, received the Army, Navy, and Air Force Veterans in Canada Medal of Merit in recognition of their exceptional performance during the program.

Congratulations to all JCRs who participated in NLETS 2025!



A hiking sectional group of Junior Canadian Rangers (JCRs) pose for a group photo at the Strathcona Park Lodge. Photo: Master Corporal (MCpl) Jason Shafto



Behind the Defence Team:

Sailor 1st Class (S1) at work.  
Photos supplied.

# Meet S1 Yaretz, Serving Both In and Out of Uniform



Meet the Defence Team like never before. Our new series spotlights the trades and talents that power CFB Esquimalt with a more personal look at the many sailors, technicians, and specialists who shape Canada's Pacific naval presence.

## Brittany Wiseman MARPAQ

Sailor 1<sup>st</sup> Class (S1) Daniel Yaretz grew up in Cranbrook, British Columbia (B.C.) surrounded by the beauty of the Rocky Mountains. His childhood was filled with outdoor adventures — hiking, skiing, and time spent on the lakes — an environment he describes as an incredible place to grow up.

Following his high school education, S1 Yaretz moved to Lethbridge, Alberta (Alta.), where he pursued and obtained two bachelor's undergraduate degrees in Music and Education, alongside majors in Music and Outdoor Education. Following his graduation, S1 Yaretz dedicated five years to teaching, sharing his passion for learning with students.

While still teaching in Alta., S1 Yaretz joined the Naval Reserve (NAVRES) at His Majesty's

Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Tecumseh*. He enlisted as a Boatswain, a trade he proudly called "the coolest in the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN)." The role, he explained, is dynamic and hands-on, involving everything from operating small boats and handling lines to managing cargo, overseeing rescue gear, running ceremonial events, and working with small arms. S1 Yaretz also experienced parts of this trade firsthand when deployed aboard HMCS *Vancouver* during Operation (Op) HORIZON and NEON in 2023. For S1 Yaretz, the variety of tasks and responsibility of his role make every day both unique and rewarding.

In addition to his naval service, S1 Yaretz works as a 911 dispatcher at the Vancouver Island Emergency Communications Centre (E-Comm 911), a career that complements his military role. S1 Yaretz has an ability to remain calm under pressure, communicate clearly, and make quick, informed decisions — all skills that serve him well both on the phone and aboard ship. He believes

his civilian work has strengthened his situational awareness, teamwork, emotional resilience, and attention to detail, as they are all vital qualities for watch-keeping, rescue operations, and shipboard effectiveness with NAVRES.

Conversely, his time in the NAVRES continued to enhance his civilian career. S1 Yaretz noted that military training has sharpened his discipline, focus, and leadership abilities, helping him make clear decisions during high-stress calls. This confidence and resilience built in uniform continues to directly support his work with callers and first responders. S1 Yaretz believes strongly in the value of NAVRES, noting how it has allowed professional civilians to serve in two worlds: supporting their communities through their careers, while also serving their country in uniform.

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# Menopause Symposium Brings Awareness and Support to Defence Team



Shirley Weir, founder of Menopause Chicks, speaks at the Menopause Symposium on Nov 21. Photo: Sailor 1<sup>st</sup> Class (S1) Brendan McLoughlin

**Kelley Stark**  
MARPAAC Public Affairs

Maritime Forces Pacific's (MARPAAC) first Menopause Symposium took place on Nov 21 in a step towards fostering awareness and support for women's health in the workplace.

Menopause impacts not only individual well-being in life, but also team dynamics, productivity, and retention — yet it remains one of the least discussed phases of life. By creating space for education and dialogue at the workplace, MARPAAC is leading the way in breaking stigma and promoting inclusivity. The event was filled with attendees from diverse age groups and backgrounds, highlighting that menopause continues to be a topic that resonates beyond the demographic of middle-aged women.

Captain(Navy) Mike Stefanson, Champion for the Defence Women's Advisory Organization (DWAQ), opened the event, reminding audiences that mental, physical, and spiritual health are all key to operational success. "If it's important to you, it's important to me and the Admiral," he said, encouraging people to lean on the DWAQ team when needed.

The first speaker, Susannah Stewart, a pelvic health physiotherapist in Victoria, gave a talk titled *Menopause 101*. She explained that menopause can happen for many reasons, including surgery or medical treatment, and that

it also affects gender-diverse people. There are over 130 symptoms associated with menopause, including hot flashes, brain fog, and anxiety. She also shared that hot flashes could signal risks for heart disease or dementia. Stewart stressed the value of pelvic physiotherapy and addressed hormone therapy.

Next, Shirley Weir, women's health advocate and founder of Menopause Chicks, spoke about changing attitudes. She noted that many women still feel dismissed when they engage with doctors. Her advice: advocate for yourself, ask questions, test your thyroid yearly, and believe women's experiences.

Serena Peck, a registered kinesiologist and founder of *Serene Motion*, focused on exercise. She explained the difference between physical activity and exercise, and why both matter for heart, muscle, and bone health, saying somewhat jokingly, "sitting is the new smoking." Her tip for lifting weights: start small, then increase weight and intensity over time.

The symposium's final speaker, Dr. Shana Johnston, a family physician and holistic health advocate, explored emotional health. She urged everyone to embrace their emotions and that feelings are energy in motion. She encouraged people to rethink the 'shoulds' in their lives and begin to also think about the benefits of saying "no."

Finally, the day ended with closing remarks from Rear-Admiral (RAdm) David Patchell, who said, "Menopause is an important health topic that impacts many in our Defence community. By prioritizing health, we

strengthen not only individual well-being but also the operational effectiveness of the Canadian Armed Forces."

Following positive feedback post-event, DWAQ's co-chairs, Vanessa Nicholson and Master Warrant Officer Samantha Crowe plan to offer a symposium similar in nature in the future.

How to join the DWAQ: At the policy and program level, the DWAQ assists with identifying systemic employment barriers, provides unique perspectives to affect change, and directly advises both local and national leadership on issues that adversely affect their communities. The importance of the DWAQ is that they raise concerns through the organization for senior leadership to consider and act upon. These concerns can range from unique issues affecting our base to national level issues, including policies or programs that are not advantageous to its represented community.

All CAF members and DND public service employees, regardless of their ethnicity, gender, orientation, disability, age or background, are welcome to join the DWAQ. If you are interested in joining, please contact:  
Defence Women's Advisory Group (DWAQ)  
+DWAQ-MARPAC@MARPAAC HQ@Esquimalt



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# Skate and Swim with Santa Returns for Local Defence Community Fun

Holiday cheer filled the Wurtele Arena and the Naden Athletic Centre on Dec 6 as Defence community families gathered for this year's Jolly Days Skate and Swim with Santa, a free community celebration hosted by PSP and sponsored by Seaspan Victoria Shipyards. The event invited families to glide, splash, and meet Santa on a joy-filled December afternoon.

Crowds arrived with holiday spirit for a double feature lineup: a skate from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., followed by a swim session from 3 to 5 p.m.

For many young attendees, skating with Santa was the highlight of the season. Three-year old Kristiauna Shale, who learned to skate in October, was thrilled to join Santa. Her mother, Morgan Shale, shared that the first thing Kristiauna said when she learned was, "Now I can skate with Santa!"

Thank you to the event sponsors, Seaspan and Domino's Pizza. Thank you to SISIP and Canex for supporting the event. And thank you to all the volunteers, staff, and Santa for making this beloved event possible.



Andrew, Morgan, Kristiauna, and Olivia Shale take a photo with Santa at the Skate and Swim with Santa on Dec 6. Photo supplied.

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**NAVY OFFICER MESS KIT SIZE 40 WITH GOLD BRAID** Men's Jacket, pants with waist coat. Gold braid in good condition per Mia the base tailor. For the mess kit jacket it's about 17" for shoulder width. Shoulder to cuff is 25". 18.5" from armpit to end of sleeve. 22.5" from back of neck to bottom of the waist coat. Waist on the pants looks to be 34" 41" long outer seam 29.5 for the inseam of the pants. Asking \$500. Contact: 250-415-5812

**WOMAN'S MESS KIT - \$100** Dark Blue woman mess kit. Measurements - Skirt - waist 27 inches, hip 38 inches, length 39 inches. Jacket - length 21 inches, shoulder width 15 inches. Blouse size 12. Asking \$100. Text 250 888 2361 if interested.

## LOCAL CLUBS

**VICTORIA YOUTH PADDLING CLUB (VYPC)** We have programs as well as summer camps for youth

to learn paddling techniques, try different types of water craft and generally have some fun with a good sweat. Contact Marianne at commodore@vyppc.ca or (250) 744-8543

## VOLUNTEER

**BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF VICTORIA** Free clothing collections services. Protecting the environment and supporting local kids for over 20 years! Reduce, repurpose, do good. Drive thru donation station open 7 days a week, 10am-6pm at 230 Bay St. Visit bbsvictoria.com

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE** Become a Network Friend. You would be matched according to shared interests to build a long term friendship with an individual who experiences a disability or mental health issue. Contact: volunteer@lnv.ca Learn more at www.lifetimenetworks.org

**FOSTER HOMES ARE NEEDED** - People choose to become foster caregivers for many reasons, but all share a love for children and the desire to help those in need without an expectation of receiving something in return. Visit www.fosterhope.ca

## FRIENDS OF ASHTON ARMOURY MUSEUM

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**THE WITS PROGRAMS FOUNDATION** Is looking for a volunteer who is fluent in French with a background in elementary education to edit and review French translations of materials. Please contact us at info@witsprogram.ca for more information!

**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY AND THE RESTORE** Are seeking volunteers to help out with customer service, warehouse and driver assistants. We are also looking for ambassadors for special events. Please contact Nancy at volunteer@habitatvictoria.com or 250-480-7688 ext. 105



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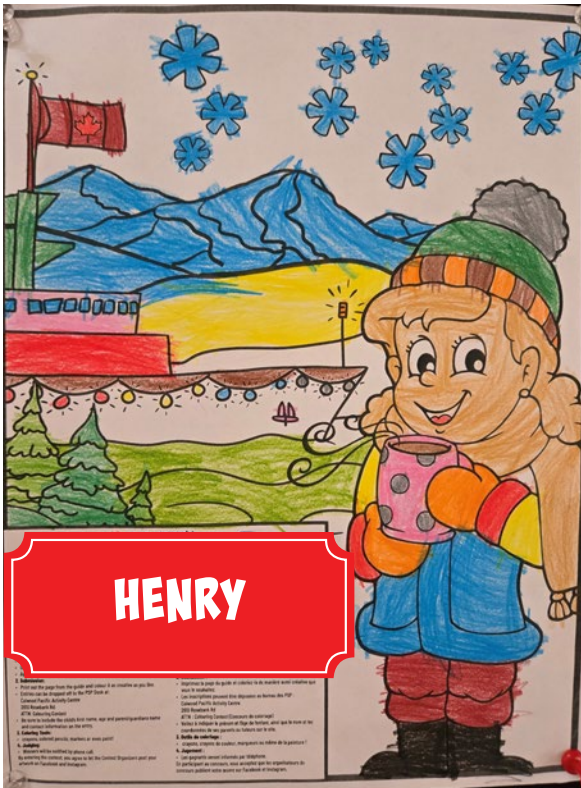
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Congratulations to Personnel Support Programs (PSP) Colouring Contest winners Henry (4), Noah (6), Sarah (8), Chloe (10), and wildcard winner Scarlett!

Thank you to all those who participated in the colouring contest.



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