

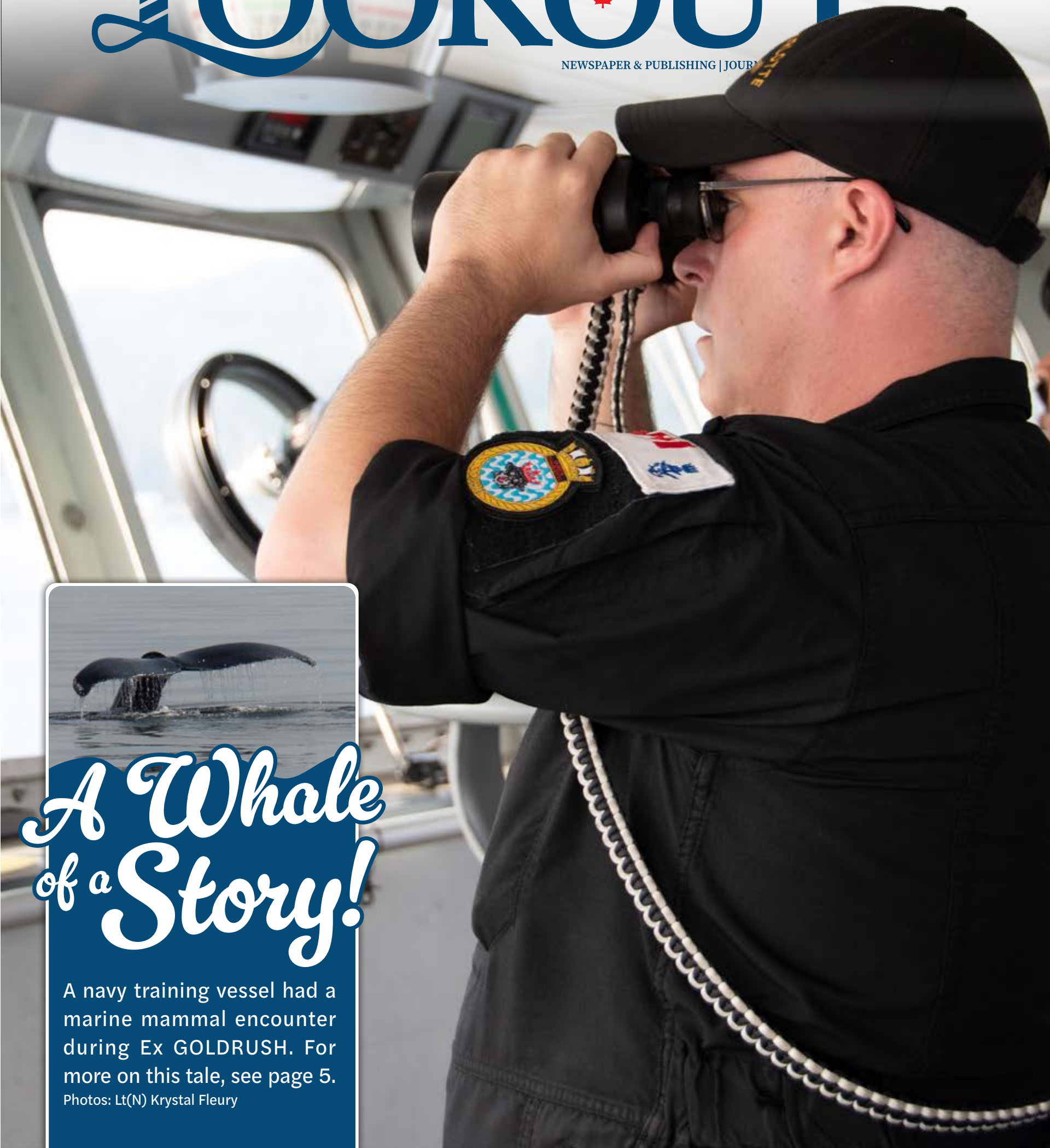


VOLUME 71 NUMBER 16 | AUGUST 10, 2026

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

LOOKOUT

NEWSPAPER & PUBLISHING | JOURNAL



A Whale of a Story!

A navy training vessel had a marine mammal encounter during Ex GOLDRUSH. For more on this tale, see page 5.

Photos: Lt(N) Krystal Fleury

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The Lookout Newspaper and Publishing provides morale and welfare news to CFB Esquimalt, Maritime Forces Pacific, and is nationally distributed bi-weekly 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!

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CDR SLEEN PRESENTED WITH GOLD SSI AT SEA



(Left to right) Captain(N) Landon Creasy shakes the hand of Commander Darren Sleen as he receives the Gold Sea Service Insignia. A close-up (below) of the Gold Sea Service Insignia presented to Cdr Sleen.

Photos: Avr Rebecca Mainardi, MARPAK Imaging

Lt(N) SeeEun Kim

HMCS Regina

To the untrained eye, the Gold Sea Service Insignia (SSI) is simply a small pin on a naval uniform. To those who have watched the shoreline fade into the horizon from aboard a naval vessel, the Gold SSI represents something far greater. The pin, which marks 1,460-plus cumulative days spent at sea, is an extraordinary milestone of dedication, resilience, and unwavering commitment to the mission.

During Exercise (Ex) Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2026, Commander (Cdr) Darren L. Sleen, Commanding Officer (CO) of His Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) *Regina*, was presented with the Gold SSI. It represents four full years spent upon the high seas, leading

sailors through both challenges and successes while answering the call of duty around the globe. To earn the Gold SSI is to wear a badge of honor; it is a level of expertise and drive cultivated through high-tempo operations and the unyielding rhythm of service at sea. Earning such recognition demanded a presentation to match, and the crew of HMCS *Regina* delivered, in operational style.

To present Cdr Sleen with the Gold SSI, the crew of HMCS *Regina* conducted a covert shipboard operation: Op SILENT SLEENER. Under the guise of SILENT SLEENER, the crew orchestrated a surprise passenger transfer by bringing Captain(N) (Capt(N)) Landon Creasy, Task Force Commander of RIMPAC, aboard the *Regina* to present the SSI where it was earned: in the middle of the ocean,

directly on the deck plates.

The presentation carried a deeply personal and inspiring connection. Years earlier, when Cdr Sleen served as the Executive Officer (XO) of HMCS *Regina*, Capt(N) Creasy was his CO. Standing together on the same ship, their reunion highlighted the powerful bonds of mentorship, camaraderie, and the shared history that often defines naval leadership. Presenting the Gold SSI at sea was a deliberate mark of honor; a testament to a mentorship forged in common purpose and built on the steel decks of HMCS *Regina*.

As HMCS *Regina* continues its voyage, the gold pin on Cdr Sleen's chest stands as a powerful symbol of excellence and inspiration. Bravo Zulu, Cdr Sleen!



The Life of Canadian Armed Forces Veteran Ross Fetterly

Archana Cini
Lookout Newspaper

Ross Fetterly, at 66-years-old, has a story for almost everything – a smelter tunnel in Kitimat; a night in a Kabul-bound convoy; a Ukrainian colleague who once traded a Jesuit seminary for a career in Defence. Through 34 years of service in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), Ross has built a distinguished career in logistics and finance, alongside a repertoire of stories that have only gotten better with time. Today, Ross attends the Veterans Health Centre day program at the Veterans Memorial Lodge, a Broadmead Care Home.

Ross was born in northern Quebec, where his father worked as a chemical engineer. Here, Ross attended the town's only English school.

“When I went outside, it was all French, and I learned French very quickly because of this,” said Ross. The family later moved to Kitimat, B.C., where his father then began work at an aluminum smelter fed by water piped 17 kilometres through a mountain. To him, this time of his life was “heaven for a young boy.”

As a young adult, Ross attended McGill University to complete a Bachelor of Commerce undergraduate degree, after which he landed a banking job. However, interest rates soon climbed to 17 per cent and Ross was left without a job after a mass layoff.

“I remember asking myself, ‘Do I really want to work in a bank? I’m a young guy. I want to be,’” said Ross. The next day, he sat down with a military recruiter and began his career with the CAF.

Ross was halfway through basic officer training in Chilliwack, B.C., when instructors pulled him aside to tell him that he’d already passed. His new job, they said, was to ensure that everyone else passed. Ross traces the start of his leadership qualities back to this point, when he found himself boosting the morale of those around him and even carrying another recruit’s rifle. When the course concluded, every single recruit had passed.

While Ross had initially wanted to serve as an infantry officer, the CAF had other hopes.

“The infantry, they told me, were a dime a dozen,” Ross said. “What they really needed at the time was logisticsians: finance, procurement, and contracting.” As such, Ross moved on to train in all three and was then posted to Ottawa. It was here, at a church service, that a minister introduced him to a woman named Sherry, who he drove home from service. Today, the two have been married for more than three decades.

Ross then spent four years running logistics for the Canadian Forces Snowbirds out of Moose Jaw before postings carried him through Edmonton and back to Ottawa. In 2000, he was then

deployed to the Golan Heights as acting commanding officer of the United Nations Logistics Battalion. Tasked to monitor the tension of the region, Ross recalls making a phone call to his superior in Canada and sharing that he felt there was no immediate danger around him.

“We have a really good team here. We’re not in any significant danger,” Ross said on the line. Just hours later, Ross found himself at the centre of history when the second Palestinian uprising, a five-year period of violence also known as the Second Intifada, began. Still, he remembers codes, the voices of his superiors keeping him steady across the ocean, and even the details of a report he wrote for the Chief of Defence Staff.

Another difficult tour came later, at Kandahar Air Force Base in Afghanistan. “When President Obama announced a surge of 30,000 troops without consulting NATO allies, it fell to me to plan the budget for the sudden growth,” said Ross. He recalls Shura meetings (the Arabic word for collective roundtable decision-making gatherings) held in round buildings and a roommate, a military police officer, describing drone surveillance.

After retiring in 2017, Ross completed a PhD at the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC), after which the college’s president asked him to stay on as an adjunct professor. Ross



A photo of veteran Ross Fetterly. Photo: Compliments of Broadmead Care

accepted, teaching finance, defence decision making, and government procurement for nearly a decade.

When asked what he’s most proud of, Ross doesn’t reach for medals or milestones; instead, he talks about the teams. He speaks of the people of the logistics battalion that stayed calm when the Second Intifada began; his colleagues in Kandahar; those at RMC he spent years teaching.

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A photo of the 2000/2001 cohort of the Logistics Battalion of the Canadian Contingent, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force. Ross Fetterly, third from far right. Photo cropped for clarity. Photo supplied.

“We have a really good team here. We’re not in any significant danger.”

Ross Fetterly on a phone call he made to his superior hours before the Second Intifada began



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Sharing the Sea:

Wolf 59 Encounters Whales During Ex GOLDRUSH

Lt(N) Krystal Fleury
MARPAF Public Affairs

The B.C. coast is one of Canada's most remarkable environments, defined by dramatic shorelines, rich forests, and diverse marine life. For Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) sailors, operating in these waters means upholding a deep responsibility to the communities and wildlife that depend on them.

On July 21, residents near Comox may

have noticed Patrol Craft Training Vessel (PCT) Wolf 59 paused during Exercise (Ex) GOLDRUSH. The ship's lookout spotted a whale fin in the distance and announced the sighting to the crew. Even though the whales were initially outside the mandatory mitigation range, Wolf 59 was heading in its direction. Lieutenant(N) (Lt(N)) Jason Wychopen, commanding officer of Wolf 59, immediately ordered the vessel to a stop to ensure the whales could pass safely.

Under marine mammal mitigation protocols, any sighting within 1,000 yards requires a vessel to slow and stop for at least 15 minutes. In this scenario, Wolf 59's crew monitored the whales for approximately 30 minutes as the whales approached, investigated the ship, and then continued along their feeding route.

Once the whales moved on, the crew resumed their course and reported the encounter through the Canadian Coast Guard Marine Mammal Response

Program (CCG MMRP), contributing valuable data to conservation research. For many of the sailors still early in their careers, the experience was a memorable reminder of the extraordinary wildlife that shares our coastal waters.



Photo sequence L-R: The tail of a whale above water as spotted by a sailor aboard PCT Vessel Wolf 59. A sailor tracks the movement of a whale while aboard PCV Wolf 59. Photos: Lt(N) Krystal Fleury





A team photograph of the PCC Flag Football champions. Photo supplied

Big wins, big plays, and even bigger team spirit. Here's a look at some of the teams and athletes from Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Esquimalt who made waves in July.

- **Bravo Zulu** to the CFB Esquimalt Women's Slo-Pitch Team's undefeated run during the 2026 CANWEST Regional Championship. The team won the championship with a 15-0 final win against Cold Lake
- **Bravo Zulu** to PCC for defeating Calgary/FDU 28-0 in the Flag Football Intramural championship final, held over three days at Colville Field
- **Coming up:** CFB Esquimalt athletes head to Edmonton from Aug 16 to 21 for the CAF Canada West Regional Soccer Championship (Men's & Women's Teams) and Wainwright for the CAF Canada West Men's Slo-Pitch Championship

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RCN Sailor Stops to Help After Local Truck Fire



Lt(N) Alistair Hirst (circled) douses flames from a truck fire with a garden hose on July 21. Photo: Verna Chan via Facebook

Archana Cini
Lookout Newspaper

For Lieutenant(N) (Lt(N)) Alistair Hirst, a Bridge Watchkeeper with Patrol Craft Training Unit (Pacific) (PCTU[P]), his daily bike ride from Vic West to His Majesty's Canadian (HMC) Dockyard is a familiar one. He commutes by bike most days, usually dropping his two children at daycare along the way before continuing to work. On July 21, Lt(N) Hirst was riding alone.

As he approached a nearby street, he noticed a truck that had crashed into a telephone pole.

"My first thought was that maybe it's an accident that happened an hour ago and the emergency services have already taken care of it," he recalled. But then he saw the smoke and the fire under the engine, and realized help hadn't arrived yet.

Lt(N) Hirst immediately pulled over and assessed the scene, checking the damaged power lines and confirming that the truck was turned

"I can't pass by someone in trouble and not stop."

~ Lieutenant(N) (Lt(N)) Alistair Hirst

off before checking for casualties. He noted that the vehicle was empty and that the driver had been supported by bystanders and was sitting nearby, shaken but talking and upright without visible injuries.

With the fire still burning under the hood and no extinguisher in sight, a man on a nearby apartment balcony pointed him to a garden hose. Immediately, Lt(N) Hirst unspooled it and doused the flames.

"It only took a few seconds to put out the flames," said Lt(N) Hirst, though he later reflected that his priority could have shifted sooner to keeping bystanders clear of the damaged power lines.

For Lt(N) Hirst, stopping to help wasn't really even a question he asked himself in the moment. "I can't pass by someone in trouble and not stop," he said, noting this wasn't his first time arriving first at the scene of a car accident.

Lt(N) Hirst credits his Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) training for how he handled the moment, which was particularly timely as he had completed a Fire Refresher course just the week before.

"My training in the RCN absolutely kicked in, especially with the instinct to fight the fire as quickly as possible, but also more generally with the ability to stop and think my way through an intense situation."

It's a fitting reminder that training doesn't stay at the base; it comes with you, ready to make a difference. Bravo Zulu, Lt(N) Hirst!



From the Chaplain's Desk

Gratitude, A Path to Happiness

August
Padre Capt Alexandre Dutil

Welcome to the August installment of *From the Chaplain's Desk*, a series that showcases reflections from chaplains serving at Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Esquimalt. Each piece offers personal perspectives from those who work closely with members of the Defence Team in times of challenge, transition, and everyday life.

Gratitude is the feeling of being thankful and showing appreciation for the good things in life. It involves recognizing and valuing what we have, rather than focusing on what we lack.

Today, many studies demonstrate that practising gratitude has a significant impact on happiness, relationships, and even physical health. We might naturally assume that happiness leads to gratitude, that happy people are the ones that are grateful, but research suggests the opposite: being grateful is what leads to happiness.

Gratitude shifts our mindset. By focusing on positive emotions rather than negative ones, how we see the world and experience life can transform.

At every moment, one has the choice to be bitter or grateful. While there may be times when bitterness feels justified, there is always a reason to be grateful. We have this precise moment of existence for ourselves.

Here are a few practical ways to cultivate gratitude and move towards happiness:

- 1. Write a thank-you note:** take time to write a note to someone you have not properly thanked. If possible, share it with them.
- 2. Give thanks silently:** if you cannot thank someone in person, pause and express gratitude silently, in your thoughts.
- 3. Keep a gratitude journal:** write down the things you are grateful for and revisit your journal when discouraged or upset.
- 4. Connect with family and friends:** spend time with those you love and let them know how much you appreciate them.
- 5. Honour your environment:** take time to observe the world around you -- nature, the weather, your surroundings. This combination of the elements is unique since it will never come again in its exact form at this exact moment.
- 6. See each moment as a gift:** you may not feel grateful for everything in life, but you can choose to show gratitude for every moment.
- 7. Count your blessings:** at the end of each day, spend some time to reflect and identify what you are thankful for.

- 8. Meditate:** practise mindfulness or meditation to remain present and grounded in the moment.
- 9. Pray:** if you are a person of faith, offer prayers of thanksgiving and gratitude.
- 10. Practice the "Stop, Look, Go" method:** Brother David Steindl-Rast suggests pausing during your day as such: stop what you are doing, look around with awareness, and then move forward with intention. This simple practice can help you reset and centre yourself throughout the day.

By intentionally practising gratitude, we can begin to reshape not only our thoughts, but also our hearts. Over time, we notice a quiet transformation: what once felt heavy becomes lighter; what once seemed lacking begins to feel sufficient, perhaps even abundant. Gratitude does not remove life challenges, but it can give us the strength and clarity to face them differently.

Happiness, then, is no longer something distant or dependent on circumstances. It becomes something we gently grow within ourselves. So today, take a moment. Pause. Notice. Give thanks. In doing so, allow yourself to perhaps grow in happiness.



(Left to right) Two sailors aboard the flight deck of HMCS William Hall on June 15. Photo: Cpl Mitchell Paquette, CAF Imagery

Chaplains can be reached through a call to the Naden Chapel at 250-363-4106 during regular office hours.
For after-hours support, call Military Police dispatch at (250) 363-4032 to connect to a duty padre.



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Local Sailor Supports High-Profile Ceremonial Duty

SLt Christopher Hofing
MARPAc Public Affairs

Sailor 3rd Class (S3) Neil Pontejos, a Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) sailor raised in Surrey, B.C., participated in a Flag Party at the Vancouver Convention Centre on July 2 in support of the official visit of Philippine President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos, and Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney.

For S3 Pontejos, the opportunity to represent the RCN during a high-profile international engagement just months after graduating from basic military training was an experience he will not soon forget.

“It felt a little bit surreal,” said S3 Pontejos. “I’ve been to the convention centre before as a civilian, but being there in uniform was completely different.”

Born in the Philippines and raised in B.C. after moving to Canada in 2008, S3 Pontejos enrolled into the RCN on Feb 23 and is currently posted to Naval Fleet School(Pacific) (NFS(P)), where he is awaiting training to become a Naval Communicator. Selected for the Flag Party based on his drill performance, he spent several days rehearsing alongside fellow sailors before the event.

During the ceremony, S3 Pontejos carried the Philippine flag, adding a personal connection to an already memorable experience. He described seeing the visiting dignitaries in person as a unique moment.

“I found out the day before that the Prime Minister would actually be there,” he said. “Then suddenly he appeared right in front of us. It was definitely something I wasn’t expecting.”

For S3 Pontejos, the event reinforced

the importance of preparation, teamwork, and attention to detail. Sailors spent days rehearsing movements and ensuring that uniforms met the highest standards before stepping into an environment surrounded by media and public attention.

“The camaraderie was really noticeable,” said S3 Pontejos. “Everyone was helping each other improve and making sure we were all synchronized.”

While the event itself was memorable, S3 Pontejos said the greatest source of pride came from representing the RCN.

“I think what made me most proud was being part of the Navy,” he said. “We were given the responsibility to represent, and I think we did a good job.”

S3 Neil Pontejos participates during a Flag Party at the Vancouver Convention Centre on July 2.
Photo: Sailor 3rd Class Jacob Saunders



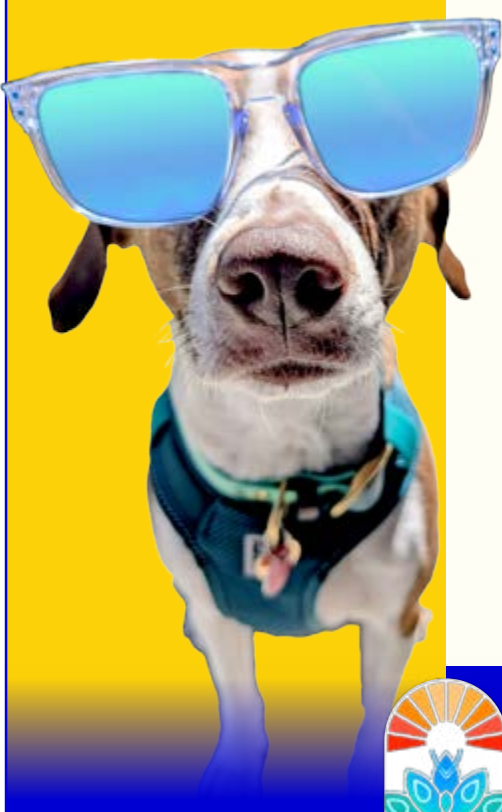
A formal portrait of veteran William (Bill) McIntyre. Photo: John W. Penner

Correction from the Lookout

It has come to our attention that a supporting image directly provided to the *Lookout Newspaper* for use, modification, and distribution was originally photographed by John W. Penner in 2016 and is protected under copyright against modification. Without this knowledge, the image was utilized and modified by the *Lookout* within Vol 71 Issue 13 and on our website.

As a result, the *Lookout* has now removed any modified versions of the original image that exist across our platform and archives, and given full credit to the original photographer. Thank you for your continued support and engagement.

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103 1351 ESQUIMALT RD, ESQUIMALT

Esquimalt Condo for Sale, minutes to CFB, Price reduction \$344,900. Unit 208 – 109 Lampson Road | 1 Bedroom, 1 Bath Condo Recent Price Reduction: \$344,900 Step into comfort and contemporary living in this thoughtfully

designed condo, where every detail has been curated for ease and enjoyment. The modern kitchen is both stylish and functional, showcasing Whirlpool appliances, a tiled backsplash, and a smart bar seating area that invites casual meals and conversations. The bathroom features a tiled shower complemented by in-floor heating—perfect for slow mornings and relaxed evenings. Full-size stackable laundry, air conditioning, and window screens add everyday convenience, while blackout blinds in the bedroom create a peaceful retreat for restful nights. Step outside and take advantage of the excellent gym and inviting courtyard—ideal spaces to recharge, socialize, or simply enjoy a quiet moment outdoors. Located in the heart of Esquimalt. The ocean, downtown area, Naval base and shopping are nearby. This home effortlessly blends comfort, function, and lifestyle, offering a welcoming space you'll be proud to call your own. Reach out for more information! 250-220-9557 Michael Smith.

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

FURNISHED 2 BEDS 1 BATH SUITE \$2800 + 25% UTILITIES - AVAILABLE SEPT. 1ST

Welcome to our newly built FURNISHED 1200 sq. ft suite. Safe and sound insulation and resilient channel bars with double the drywall to add superior SOUNDPROOFING. This is an above ground walkout basement suite with lots of natural bright light and big windows. The bedrooms are on opposite sides of the suite for privacy. Each bedroom comes with a queen sized bed and both have 2 closets. The suite has laminate flooring throughout and tile in the bathroom.

It comes with a 50" smart tv, furniture, beds, bedding and towels, kitchen accessories (pots, pans, glassware, utensils, magic bullet, coffee maker, etc.) It also comes with a dishwasher and a full size washer and dryer. Wi-Fi included. 1 dedicated off street parking and street parking for 2nd vehicle. We are in the Upper Quadra area of Saanich. Super quiet neighbourhood. Walking distance to Beckwith Park, 12 min. to UVIC, 20 mins to DND, Military Base, 15 minutes to airport, 20 minutes to ferry, 15 – 20 to downtown, 15 minutes to Victoria General Hospital and 20 minutes to Jubilee hospital. Very centrally located. Tell me a little about yourself. Contact: march072008@gmail.com

1 BEDROOM SUITE IN HOUSE CLOSE

TO CFB ESQUIMALT \$1,750 / MONTH - SEPT 1ST

High quality 1 bedroom ground floor suite in a family home (landlord lives upstairs). Freshly painted, with 710" ceilings, over 900 sq ft, with private entrance and small garden/patio area. Utilities included, except wifi and cable. Heated floors, maple kitchen & bathroom cabinetry, custom counters with granite eating bar. Appliances with high-efficiency features, including dishwasher, in-suite washer & dryer.

On Lyall Street, very close to CFB Esquimalt and Work Point, easy access to downtown by bike, bus or car. One block to the ocean, stroll to Saxe Point Park. On street parking available. Strictly no smoking, no vaping on property. 1 year lease, references, proof of income and tenant insurance required.

Looking for a quiet, respectful, employed person or couple as long term tenants. If interested please email with a little information about yourself, your lifestyle and your employment. Email: SaxePointSuite@outlook.com.

SUITE FOR RENT, ESQUIMALT

Suite for Rent: 1 bed, 1 bath furnished suite in Esquimalt, B.C. \$1900 + utilities. Available Sept 1, 2025. Private laundry, Close to CFB Esquimalt. No pets, no smoking. Contact Peter at 250-580-6252, Petevanb@gmail.com for more information and photos.

VIEW ROYAL TOWNHOUSE FOR RENT

For rent end unit, 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom townhouse with garage and driveway parking. Located close to the Galloping Goose Trail, Thetis Lake, shopping, recreation centres, bus stops. Beautiful ocean views, including all appliances, washer/dryer and 2 decks. Non smoking, damage deposit, last months rent and references required. Monthly Price \$3200. Contact: Gordonhodson84@gmail.com or 778-535-5631.

1.5 BEDROOM SUITE

Newly renoed Bright and specious basement suite. This 850 sq ft unit, sits at the end of a quiet cul de sac. In suite laundry, parking, A/C, fire place, shared back yard. Military preferred. 1700/mo, plus shared utilities. 250-885-6352 or Hectorladron@yahoo.ca

SERVICES OFFERED

VANCOUVER ISLAND CHOICE CLINIC

offers a range of professional specialized services to meet the healthcare needs and experiences of our patients. We are an inclusive clinic available to patients of all orienta-

tions and gender identities. Our physicians offer early pregnancy ultrasounds, Rh testing, IUD insertions, contraception, vasectomies covered by MSP, PAP smears, STI screening, endometrial biopsy, pregnancy prevention and bleeding control. For your comfort, you are welcome to bring a support person with you, or a member of our staff to join you in the exam room. www.vichoice.ca

HAVEN

If you are in an unexpected pregnancy our qualified healthcare personnel can equip you with the free services you need to make an decision. We provide pregnancy tests and support to allow you to make decisions around your sexual health and pregnancy, and support after abortion. Contact us today. www.havenpsc.ca

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@vypc.ca or (250) 744-8543

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

ASHTON ARMOURY

"The friends" of the Ashton Armoury Museum is a non-profit society made up of volunteers with a passion for military history. We assist the Museum by promoting the collection and display of Logistics, Medical Service, Military Police, and Communications Branch history. At present we are seeking volunteers interested in becoming Executive Board members, particularly serving in the capacity of Treasurer and/or Secretary. If you have the passion and are interested in helping out please contact Chris Preston, at (250) 479-7634, or prestoncm@shaw.ca for details.

BECOME A NETWORK FRIEND

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

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF VICTORIA AND AREA

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 bbbsvictoria.com

Where the right people meet at the right moment

SHIP TO SHORE TRADESHOW

A FREE EVENT

FOR DEFENCE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

October 6, 2026

Naden Athletic Centre

10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Presented by the Lookout Newspaper, the annual Ship to Shore Tradeshow showcases new technologies, products, connections, and services from industry suppliers and partners.

Highlights from previous years include over 50 vendors featuring underwater drill demos, ready-to-use rust and corrosion samples, customized tools kits display, the latest in safety mask technology, and more!



This year, the upper gym will feature an Industry Connect Hub as a space designed to connect industry and military skills.

Join us and discover what happens when the right people meet at the right moment to open new possibilities for professional growth.

lookoutnewspaper.com/ship-to-shore-tradeshow