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• December 19, 2003 • Serving 8 Wing/CFB Trenton • 8^e escadre/BFC Trenton • Volume 38 Issue Number 49 •

HO, HO, HOPE YOUR HOLIDAYS ARE HAPPY!



Photo: Andrea LeBlanc

Youngsters from the Trenton Military Family Resource Centre Daycare performed adorably for parents, staff, friends and relatives at the 8 Wing Chapel for the annual Christmas Concert on December 16.

"...the very best for the holiday season"

As the holidays approach, I am pleased to extend my best wishes to the members of the Canadian Forces, to the employees of the Department of National Defence, to our many supporting agencies, and to your families.

I would especially like to recognize the men and women currently deployed on operations and will be away from their loved ones during the holiday season.

Once again this year, the men and women of the Canadian Forces have been involved in a broad range of difficult, and sometimes dangerous, missions both in Canada and throughout the world.

You have demonstrated a solid commitment to international peace. On operations around the world, you have helped restore stability and improve the lives of countless people. As part of the international coalition against terrorism, you have worked hard to preserve our freedom and security.

Here at home, our uniformed members supported our troops abroad, helped defend Canada and North America, and conducted thousands of search and rescue operations. You went wherever you were needed -- working tirelessly to put out forest fires in the West and helping rebuild communities after hurricane Juan in the East.



You can be assured that, wherever you are serving, Canadians are grateful for your dedication, sacrifices, and hard work. You are truly making a difference and I am proud to lead such a fine group of men and women.

And as always, our civilian colleagues have provided outstanding assistance to all our missions. We would not be successful without their unwavering support.

Military life demands dedication and selflessness. I know from experience that spending the holidays away from family and friends is never easy.

So once again, I would like to make special mention of the many men and women who will not be home for the holidays. I appreciate the sacrifices that you and your loved ones are making.

Let me wish all of you and your families the very best for the holiday season.

General Ray Henault
Chief of the Defence Staff

A message from Colonel Higgins

As we enter the holiday season and 2003 draws to a close, I find myself once again looking back on a year underscored by the many accomplishments of 8 Wing CFB Trenton personnel.

In addition to sustaining an exceedingly high operational tempo, we have also had to face many other challenges, both expected and unexpected. As such, there is no question that this highly deserved respite will be well-received and that time spent with family and friends will have all the more meaning as we reflect and prepare for the year that lies ahead.

For me personally, time passes ever more quickly in what I consider to be the great privilege of serving as your wing and base com-

mander. In this capacity, I have been able to observe from several perspectives your remarkable efforts to ensure mission success, as well as your professionalism in accepting and adapting to ever increasing demands and challenges. At every level and on an individual and collective basis, you continue to prove that 8 Wing lives up to its motto, "In Omnia Paratus" (prepared for all things) and that CFB Trenton remains worthy of its great legacy.

Strategic and tactical airlift, Search and Rescue (SAR) and support to globally deployed operations remain our principal focus and without question, this is where we have realized some of our greatest accomplishments. Despite severe

limitations in aircraft availability, our maintainers have maximized mission ready aircraft, training and readiness personnel have dedicated themselves to ensuring mission and deployment viability and our operational cadre has undertaken its missions without reservation. In addition to several other ongoing commitments, Operation APOLLO has transitioned to Operation ATHENA, within which our Tactical Airlift Unit (TAU) continues to acquit itself admirably in providing critical CC130 airlift support to deployed forces in the Gulf region. As well, our CC150 Airbus aircraft continue to render critical strategic airlift capability ranging from the Queen's Jubilee Flight and



several Prime Ministerial and Governor General missions, to airlifting Land Force personnel into and out of various theatres of operations. Our CC144 Challengers continue to fulfill their diverse Administrative Flight Service and Utility Airlift missions from Ottawa and See Col Higgins, Page 7



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PM makes first official visit, praises Canadian Forces

by Gloria Kelly

The generosity and spirit of the men and women of DND and the CF are a source of pride to all Canadians, Prime Minister Paul Martin said during his first official visit to

National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa.

The Prime Minister decided to make DND/CF his first official department visit to offer his congratulations for the record \$1 032 736, DND/CF in the

National Capital Region raised during the annual Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign. Nationwide DND/CF raised over \$2.5 million in support of charities and others in need of specialized services.

"This shows the tremendous dedication to those who live around you and to those who are in need," said Mr. Martin. "I must say that you make all of us feel very, very proud of our association with you, given what you have done."

The Prime Minister

said he wanted to congratulate the department on the Write to the Troops program that allows citizens across the country to send messages to deployed troops during the holiday season. He told of how he and his wife had sent off a message, and of a conversation he had with three CF members, in his home riding of Lasalle-Emard, Que., who spoke about how uplifting it was to get these messages from people they know and total strangers who just want to let them know they are appreciated.

Speaking on domestic deployments undertaken by the CF the Prime Minister said, "If we look at the last couple of years I can tell you there are many situations that had it not been for the military the amount of suffering that would have gone on would have been incredible." He specifically mentioned the ice storm, which impacted greatly on his own Montréal area riding, and the devastation in Nova Scotia this fall caused by Hurricane Juan.

Speaking of Canada

on the world stage Mr. Martin said, "Our capacity as a nation to respond on behalf of the world community is very heavily dependant on the men and women of our armed services. So, as one Canadian to you, there is no other word that I can bring forth except to say how proud I am of you. No better way of putting it than to express that pride on behalf of all Canadians—that one word is thanks."

Gloria Kelly is the assistant managing editor and assignment editor for The Maple Leaf.

WING LOGISTICS & ENGINEERING PICTURE OF THE WEEK



Cpl McGowan (left) and Cpl Giles (right) from EME Sqn, AMSE section, were caught in the act of switching engines in the attempt to maintain the operational levels of our aging aircraft ground power fleet. Good luck gentlemen!

"...mes vœux les plus sincères, à l'occasion des fêtes"

À l'approche du temps des fêtes, je suis heureux d'exprimer mes meilleurs vœux aux membres des Forces canadiennes, aux employés du ministère de la Défense nationale ainsi qu'aux maintes agences qui nous supportent et à leurs familles.

Ces vœux s'adressent particulièrement à tous ceux et celles qui sont actuellement

déployés en opérations et qui seront loin des leurs lors de la période des fêtes.

Cette année encore, les membres des Forces canadiennes, hommes et femmes, ont participé à toutes sortes de missions difficiles et parfois dangereuses au Canada et un peu partout dans le monde.

Vous avez pris un engagement ferme en faveur de la paix internationale. Au cours d'opérations à l'étranger, vous avez contribué à restaurer la stabilité et à améliorer la qualité de

vie de milliers et de milliers de personnes. Vous avez pris part à la coalition internationale contre le terrorisme et vous n'avez pas ménagé vos efforts en vue de garantir notre liberté et notre sécurité.

Au pays, nos membres en uniforme ont appuyé leurs collègues à l'étranger, ont aidé à défendre le Canada et l'Amérique du Nord, et ont mené des milliers d'opérations de recherche et de sauvetage. Chaque fois qu'on a eu besoin de vous, vous avez répondu à l'appel.

Ainsi, vous avez travaillé sans relâche pour éteindre les feux de forêt dans l'Ouest canadien et pour rebâtir les collectivités de l'Est du Canada qui avaient souffert du passage de l'ouragan Juan.

Je peux vous assurer que, peu importe où vous servez, les Canadiens vous sont reconnaissants de votre dévouement, de vos sacrifices et de votre travail acharné. Vous avez véritablement changé le cours des choses, et je suis fier de diriger l'équipe exceptionnelle que vous formez.

Et comme toujours, nos collègues civils nous ont apporté une assistance inestimable dans toutes nos missions. Nous ne pourrions réussir sans leur apport continu.

La vie militaire exige dévouement et altruisme. Pour l'avoir vécu moi-même, je sais à quel point il est difficile de passer le temps des fêtes loin de sa famille et de ses amis.

C'est pourquoi j'aimerais une fois de plus saluer tout spécialement les nombreux militaires qui ne pourront passer le temps des fêtes avec leurs familles. Je suis très conscient des sacrifices qui vous sont imposés, à vous et à vos proches.

Enfin, permettez-moi de vous réitérer, à vous et à vos familles, mes vœux les plus sincères, à l'occasion des fêtes.

Général Raymond Henault
Chef d'état-major de la Défense

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NORAD set to track Santa Xmas Eve

by Captain Dave Mural

WINNIPEG – Intelligence reports and satellite imagery indicating activity around the North Polar region has aerospace controllers from Canadian NORAD Region on high alert as the Christmas season draws near. Monitoring coastal radars, they are preparing to scramble CF-18s to intercept and escort a special visitor in a reindeer-driven sleigh full of toys destined for girls and boys around the world — Santa Claus!

Capt Nathalie Leblanc says the atmosphere in the Canadian Air Defence Sector's Air Operations Centre at 22 Wing North Bay is electric on the eve of the jolly old elf's arrival. "It's a career highlight for those lucky enough to be on duty when Santa enters Canadian airspace." CF-18 pilots LCol Paul Kissman and Capt Dave Pletz of 3 Wing Bagotville will be the first to intercept Santa and will escort him across eastern Canada before handing him off to American fighters at the

border.

"I'll be flying tail number 790 with 22 mission markings on it from combat operations in Kosovo," said LCol Kissman, Commanding Officer of 433 Squadron. "It'll be a treat when the techs paint on Santa's sleigh silhouette after this intercept." "When I was little, my whole family would gather around the radio to follow Santa's progress," adds Capt Pletz of 425 Squadron, who admitted he was excited about having a Santa-intercept mission in his logbook. When Santa re-enters Canadian airspace, Capt Desmond Brophy and Bill Hodson of 4 Wing Cold Lake will escort him throughout western Canada, before handing him off to the Alaska NORAD Region.

Intercepting Santa Claus is old hat to Capt Brophy of 441 Squadron, a 2002 Santa escort who will be the "Voice of NORAD" on the ABC Radio Network this year along with Honorary Santa Tracker and former

Beatle, Ringo Starr. "Rudolph's bright red nose is easy to pick up," he said. "Santa's a superb pilot with a light touch on the controls that make him a real pleasure to form up on."

"How often do you see reindeer dragging a sleigh full of presents through the sky?" adds Capt Hodson of 416 Squadron. "Santa's going to stand out from the traffic we normally see."

As they have since 1958, the Air Force personnel of the Canadian NORAD Region will continue their mission to deter, detect and defend against aerial threats to Canada. However,

Christmas Eve will see that one special "track of interest" that signs off with a hearty "Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!"

Everyone can track Santa's progress on Christmas Eve at the NORAD Tracks Santa website at www.noradsanta.org or by calling the NORAD Santa Hotline at 1-877-Hi-NORAD (1-877-446-6723).

Message du temps des fêtes du CEMFA

En ce temps de réjouissances, j'aimerais souhaiter de joyeuses fêtes à tous les membres de la grande famille de la Force aérienne – au personnel de la régulière, de la réserve, civil et allié servant au sein d'unités canadiennes.

L'année qui s'achève a été remplie de défis, et valorisante pour nos militaires tant ici qu'à l'étranger. Le rythme des opérations a semblé effréné par moments, exigeant le maximum de nos militaires et de notre matériel. Grâce à vos efforts, nous avons continué à fournir un soutien exceptionnel à la campagne contre le terrorisme, et nous continuons de soutenir les opérations de maintien de la paix en Bosnie. Et même au pays nous avons fait une différence, encore tout récemment en déployant des hélicoptères et du personnel pour combattre les feux de forêts en Colombie-Britannique.

Nous relevons bien les défis matériels et personnels. Notre plus grand atout est notre conviction de pouvoir faire les choses, et notre plus grande difficulté est d'effectuer les missions qui nous sont assignées aussi bien malgré des manques sérieux. Nos efforts sont néanmoins fructueux alors que notre organisation continue d'accueillir de nouvelles recrues et que les anciens se ré-enrôlent. La modernisation et la mise à niveau de notre matériel sont en cours. En même temps que l'environnement de sécurité change, nous aussi nous nous transformons.

Nous resterons une Force aérienne de niveau international tant que nous serons concentrés sur l'essentiel qui est de produire une Force expéditionnaire en forme et disciplinée, dont la raison d'être est une chaîne de commandement renforcée qui est le moteur de résultats

réalisables à tous les niveaux de l'organisation.

Aujourd'hui comme demain, notre objectif collectif est et sera d'aligner une Force aérienne professionnelle et capable de bien servir le pays et dont j'espère que tous les Canadiens et les Canadiennes sont fiers. Sans doute serons nous encore confrontés à bien des défis dans la prochaine année, mais grâce à nos efforts constants et au soutien de nos familles qui donnent et sacrifient tant, je crois que nous allons continuer à exceller.

Je tiens à vous féliciter pour ce que vous avez accompli au cours de cette année qui prend fin, tant au pays qu'à l'étranger. Pour ceux qui ont la chance d'être à la maison en cette période des fêtes, j'espère que vous trouverez le

temps de vous reposer et vous détendre avec votre famille et vos amis. Pour les autres qui sont éloignés de leurs proches, je souhaite que vous trouviez le réconfort en sachant que vos efforts et vos sacrifices font vraiment toute une différence. Votre dévouement illustre notre engagement envers la liberté et la sécurité du Canada et de notre société, comme envers la paix et la stabilité mondiales en général. Vous représentez votre pays avec professionnalisme, dévouement et excellence, et je sais que votre famille est aussi fière de vous que je le suis. Alors, merci de vos services.

En ce temps des fêtes et pour la nouvelle année, je vous souhaite à vous et votre famille la paix, le bonheur et le succès dans vos entreprises.

Search & Rescue UPDATE



424 Tiger Squadron responded to one Search and Rescue case this past week.

The SAR Hercules, while airborne, responded to a mayday call east of St. Hubert Airport. The search object was a Cessna 152 with one person on board. ATC had observed the aircraft descending to ground level. The aircraft was located in a field where it had completed a forced landing. The pilot was safe and had walked to a nearby house and telephoned for help. The Hercules returned to base without further incident.

Missions for 2003: 158 Missions for Dec.: 5 Persons rescued: 21

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The Contact Newspaper

The CONTACT is an unofficial publication of 8 Wing/CFB Trenton. The CONTACT is a weekly military newspaper that provides accurate and timely coverage of issues and events at and affecting Canada's largest and busiest air base — 8 Wing / CFB Trenton. We are the primary internal and external communications tool for 8 Wing / CFB Trenton and began publishing in November, 1940. We strive to build awareness, morale and 'esprit de corps' among both the military and civilian communities. It is our privilege to showcase the efforts of the men and women of the Canadian Forces at work. The Editor reserves the right to edit copy and reject advertising to suit the needs of the publication. Views expressed are those of the contributor unless expressly attributed to DND, CF or other agencies. In case of typographical error, no goods may be sold and difference charged to this newspaper whose liability is limited to a refund of the space charged for the erroneous item. Published every Friday with the kind permission of Colonel David Higgins CD, Wing Commander, 8 Wing / CFB Trenton.

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Guidelines for submissions: ARTICLES AND PHOTOS

The CONTACT delivers news and information about 8 Wing / CFB Trenton; at home and around the world. We depend on you and our military community for articles, personal stories and photos. We work hard, with a limited staff, to bring you a quality weekly newspaper. You can help considerably by following these guidelines on preparing your submissions for the paper:

- Articles should be typed in upper and lower case and in plain black text. Don't worry about formatting with underlines, bolds, italics, colours, etc. Acronyms should be spelled out on first reference, and then abbreviated when referred to thereafter.
- Do not include clip-art or graphics within your typed pages. Additional graphics/logos may be sent as separate files.
- Articles may be mailed, e-mailed or delivered in person. Non e-mail submissions should be saved in rich text format (.rtf) and as "text only" on a 3.5" disk and accompanied by a hard copy of your article.
- Articles must include author's full name, unit and phone #.
- Wherever possible, photos should be included with your article. Include your name and caption on the back of each photo, and number multiple photos. Electronic photos should be saved in either a jpeg or tiff format at a high resolution, to ensure quality reproduction.

Jpeg-Maximum (8X10), 300 dpi

- Please label all disks and hard copies with article name, contact person and phone numbers, date.
- Articles must be received by Tuesday at noon prior to print date at The CONTACT office.

Letters to the Editor:

Internet: LEBLANC.AL@forces.gc.ca

Intranet: LeBlancAL@CFBTrenton@Trenton

All letters and editorials must be signed and the name of the author will be published, unless otherwise requested. Include a phone number for verification. We reserve the right to edit while preserving the main objective of the writer. We cannot guarantee that any particular letter will be printed. Mail, e-mail, fax or drop in person to the Contact office. Please refer to the information at the bottom of the page for how to reach us.



A Military Community Newspaper



The Contact newspaper is a Personnel Support Programs (PSP) entity and is not funded by public funds. Our newspaper relies almost solely on revenues generated through advertising and sponsorships.



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LETTER

Dear Editor,

If the magic of Christmas is kept alive in the hearts and minds of children then I hope three certain young boys – or better yet, their parents – read this as a reminder because I don't want someone else ruining Christmas for my 3½-year-old son.

He'll be waking up in the morning to see his two snowmen in the front yard smashed. The youths in question did it between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Tuesday, December 16. And it's not the first time homes on this street, particularly ours, have been targeted.

Hey moms and dads do you have boys (aged 7 to 12 or so) running around the streets in the north end of Middleton Park at night? Do you know what your children are doing or where they are at all times? If not, then keep reading. Chances are they are on Borden Drive ringing doorbells and running away. No big deal you say? It is when my young child is asleep in bed only to be woken by your child's thoughtless pranks, which I might add, have been going on for months now.

The military police have been called time and again and actually spoke with the youths in question the first time. (Did your children happen to mention that particular conversation to you, mom and dad?) That was thanks to my husband who got so fed up that he tracked the kids down and called in the police.

Id certainly rather have the police knocking on your door to speak with you about your kids rather than knocking on ours (we disconnected our doorbell) to have a report filed. We have better things we could be doing.

You may well be thinking to yourself that kids will be kids. Well, what about my kid? When he cries in the morning, disappointed by the sight that will greet him in the front yard, does that justify that your kid is prowling about people's homes? Kids also grow into young adults and that kind of behavior is not tolerated by the law. Teach them some respect early on for other people's property as well as for other people's feelings – otherwise one day the police might have to do it.

Erin McCracken

Canadiana Crossword

And a Partridge in a Pear Tree

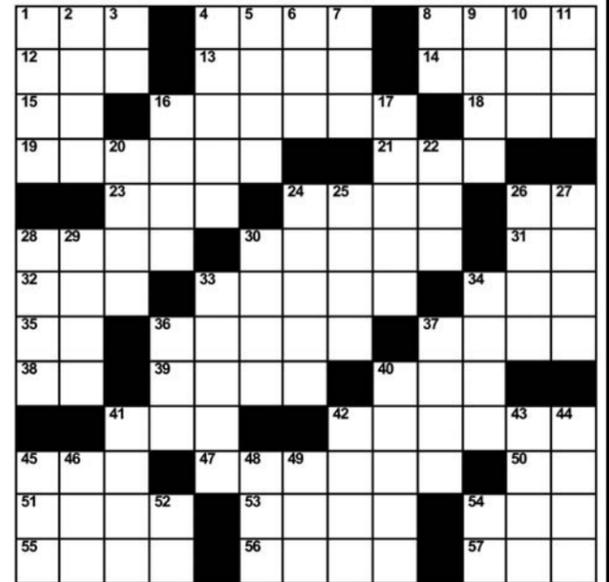
By Bernice Rosella and James Kilner

ACROSS

- 1 _____ Lords a'leaping
- 4 North _____
- 8 Appends
- 12 Route, abbr.
- 13 Wading bird
- 14 _____ calling birds
- 15 Article
- 16 _____ pipers piping
- 18 Fifth sign of the Zodiac
- 19 Double up
- 21 Mature
- 23 Pixie
- 24 Dry
- 26 Tuberculosis, for short
- 28 _____ golden rings
- 30 _____ french hens
- 31 Elevated railway
- 32 _____ Alamos
- 33 Deserves
- 34 China's Chairman, once
- 35 Overtime, abbr.
- 36 No _____
- 37 Drug buster
- 38 Dad
- 39 Oh, God
- 40 _____ geese a'laying
- 41 Utmost
- 42 Doddering
- 45 _____ turtle doves
- 47 _____ drummers drumming
- 50 In the event that
- 51 Dregs
- 53 Healing herb
- 54 Despised tax, for short
- 55 Briton
- 56 Highland valley
- 57 The _____, Manitoba

DOWN

- 1 Horse-drawn conveyance
- 2 Bunsen burner



- 3 Compass pt.
- 4 Rice dish
- 5 Do as you're told
- 6 Roman 54
- 7 Expert or legal follower
- 8 Air Force, abbr.
- 9 Distribute sparingly
- 10 Owing
- 11 Marque letters
- 16 She, in Chicoutimi
- 17 Nostrils
- 20 Revolutions, slangily
- 22 Command right
- 24 Whit
- 25 Sea eagle
- 26 Rip
- 27 _____ Quebecois
- 28 Failure

- 29 Bit
- 30 Scarlett's domain
- 33 _____ maids a'milking
- 34 A kind of skirt
- 36 Sun _____
- 37 _____ ladies dancing
- 40 _____ swans a'swimming
- 41 Christmas
- 42 Gin type
- 43 Mona _____
- 44 Newts
- 45 Tender loving care, for short
- 46 Tiny
- 48 Jokester
- 49 Annex
- 52 Saint, abbr.
- 54 A kind of Dr.

Pet Particulars

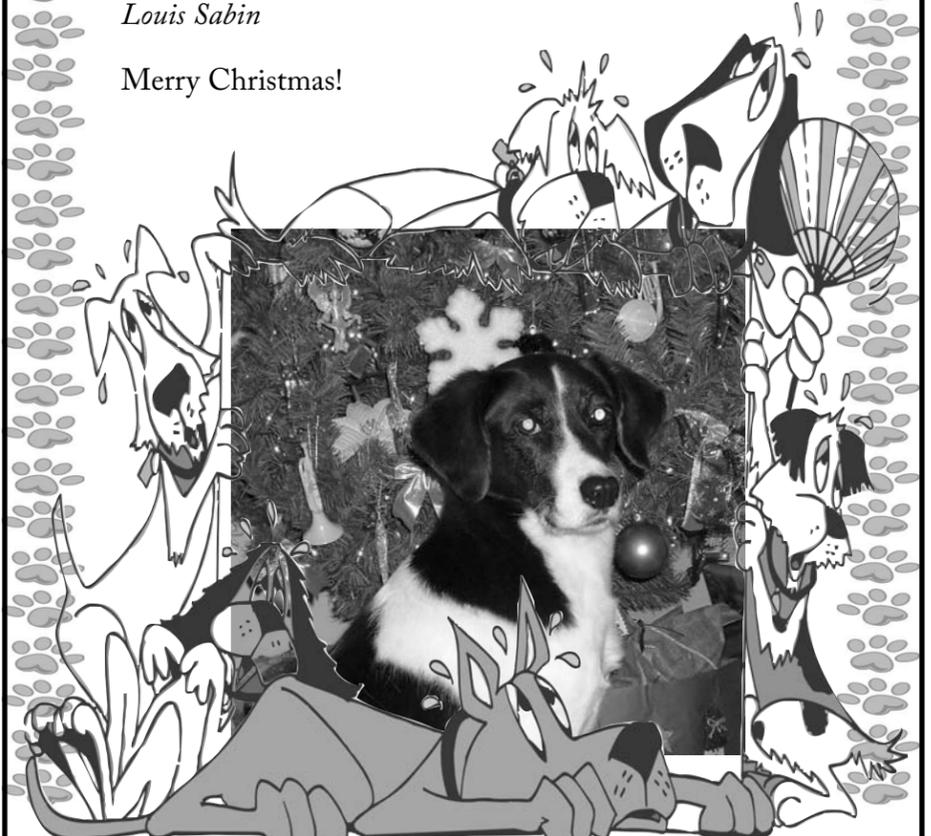
The Perfect Christmas Gift

Looking for a gift for that animal lover in your life?? The Quinte Humane Society is selling dog and cat gift basket in a variety of sizes. The shelter is located on the corner of West Moira and Avonlough Rd in Belleville. All proceeds go to the shelter. (For more information, please send an e-mail to: www.pets@quintehumane-society.com)

"No matter how little money and how few possessions you own, having a pet makes you rich."

Louis Sabin

Merry Christmas!





PM announces new Minister of National Defence

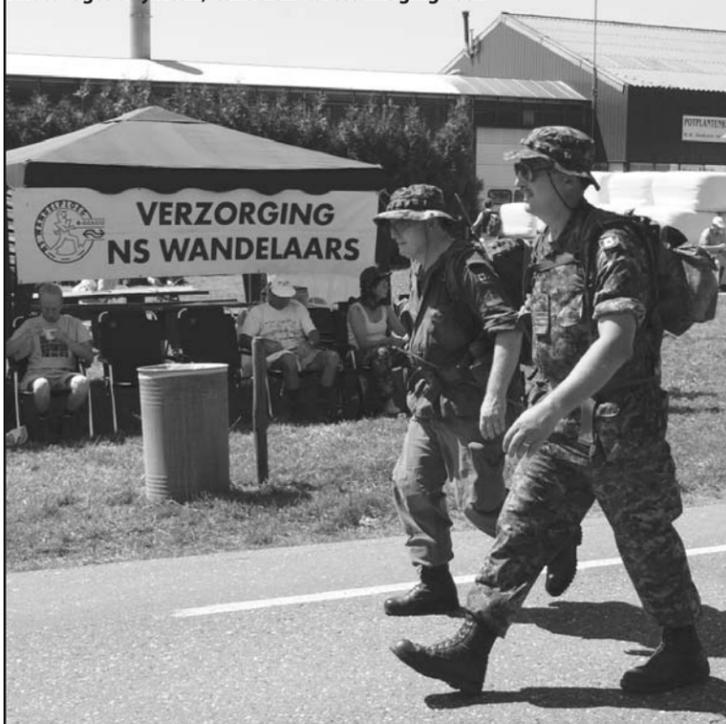
OTTAWA - The new Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Paul Martin, has made sweeping changes to cabinet. He released 23 ministers, retaining only 15 veterans, as he shuffled members into 38 cabinet positions.

Taking over the position of Minister of National Defence will be David Pratt. Pratt was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Nepean-Carleton in June 1997 and re-elected in November of 2000.

Following his re-election in 2000, Pratt was elected the Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence and Veterans Affairs and has been re-elected as Chair of the committee by Members of Parliament from all political parties in 2001, 2002 and 2003. Pratt also serves as a member of the House of Commons Sub-Committee on National Security.

In July 2003, Pratt successful-

Photo: Sgt Jerry Kean, Canadian Forces Imaging Tech



Member of Parliament David Pratt (left) marches along with Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Rogozinsky, Deputy Commander of the Canadian Nijmegen Contingent, after taking a break in the shade at the 30 km point on the first day of the four day marches in Nijmegen, Holland.

ly completed the prestigious 160 kilometre Nijmegen March in Holland along with a contingent of 220 members of the Canadian Forces. This annual four day march commemorates Canada's participation in the liberation of the Netherlands.

During his first term, Pratt actually served on two standing committees: Environment and Sustainable Development and National Defence and Veterans Affairs.

Active in Liberal Party caucus committees, Pratt has served as the Chair of the National Capital Region Caucus and Chaired the first caucus committee on Foreign Affairs, National Defence and International Cooperation at the Prime Minister's request.

In 1999, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy asked Pratt to serve as Canada's Special Envoy to Sierra Leone and he was reappointed on April 25, 2001 by John Manley, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Prior to his election to Parliament, Pratt served three terms in municipal politics. He was elected to Nepean City Council in 1988 and was re-elected in 1991 sitting on both the Nepean City and Ottawa-Carleton Regional Councils. On Nepean Council, Pratt served as Deputy Mayor and chaired the Parks and Recreation and Public Works committees. On Regional Council, he worked on transportation and environment issues and was a member of the Ottawa-Carleton Police Services Board and the public transit commission. He has also served on the National Board of Directors for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

A sixth generation resident of Nepean-Carleton, Pratt's ancestors settled in Nepean-Carleton approximately 170 years ago. He received his B.A. in Political Science from Carleton University in 1976. He and his wife Joan reside in South Nepean.

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Remember...

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Best wishes to all!

Congratulations!

The Ontario Regional Bowling Championships were held in Kingston during the first week of December and 8 Wing Trenton finished second this year behind a strong Kingston Team.

Congratulations to Carol Hill, Rick Sensabaugh, Adrian Randall, Darryl Dubuc, Dave Elverson and Mike Stoddart. We would also like to congratulate Rick Sensabaugh and Mike Stoddart for being selected for the Ontario region All Star team and Mike Stoddart for winning high average for the tournament.

Congratulations!

JR RANKS MESS

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
14 Children's Christmas Party 1300hrs	15	16	17 Astra Lounge All Ranks Christmas Cheer 1200hrs	18	19 TGIF Cancelled	20
21 ★	22	23	24	25 Merry Christmas!	26 TGIF Cancelled Boxing Day!	27 ★
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve Dance			

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Happy New Year

DEAR SOLDIER...

Photo: 2Lt Jennifer Jones, 8 Wing Public Affairs



On Monday, December 15 students from Miss Pearce's Grade 4-5 class at Prince of Wales Public School in Belleville presented 2Lt Jennifer Jones, 8 Wing Public Affairs, with letters they wrote to Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan as part of a Remembrance Day project. During a question and answer period afterwards, the students asked about the Canadian military's role in Afghanistan and the educational requirements involved in joining the military.

The 50th Anniversary Committee for 7 CF Supply Depot in Edmonton invites all current and former 7 CFSD employees, military and civilian, to attend a ceremony on June 4, 2004 to share memories and help us celebrate. Whether or not you're planning to attend, please consider submitting your reminiscences about your working days at 7 CFSD to Ms Gladys Marie Magega, Publicity Chair for the 7 CFSD 50th Anniversary Committee.
 E-mail: Magega.GM@forces.gc.ca
 Mail: Department of National Defence, 7 Canadian Forces Supply Depot, CFB Edmonton, PO Box 10500, Edmonton AB, T5J 4J5.

Year ends on busy note for 437 Sqn

The Squadron has been pretty busy this past summer with continuous flights in support of Op Athena with all Sqn personnel involved in various missions. September and October was also extremely busy with the Op Palladium rotation, being involved in transporting Her Excellency, Governor General Adrienne Clarkson on her visit to Russia/Scandinavian and also transporting the Prime Minister to South West Asia. November found us all in some much needed down time to catch up on various courses, appointments and much appreciative leave. Now once again, we're up and running. The month of December promises to be a busy one with the Prime Minister's trip to Nigeria, our own Sqn Christmas Party and our up and coming Christmas flights across Canada. The Sqn would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



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SANTA STOPS AT MFRC



Photo: Laurie McVicar, Contact

Despite a hectic schedule this time of year, Saint Nick made a surprise visit to the MFRC playroom on December 17. Among the children eager to address their last minute wish lists was three-year-old Vincent Gallant.



Colonel Higgins looks back on year of accomplishments, challenges

Cont. from Page 1

our enduring SAR mission was highlighted by not only a very successful year safeguarding Canada's largest SAR region, but also by the arrival of the new CH149 Cormorant, which will gradually replace our legacy CH113 Labrador in 2004. All of this, of course, was enabled by the superb efforts of our administration, logistics and engineering personnel, who continue to support our increasingly diverse mission mandate and composition with great distinction.

This past year witnessed the celebration of the Centennial of Flight and the 2003 Quinte International Air Show (QIAS '03) was a fitting salute to both that anniversary and to all of those who serve in aviation. QIAS '03 went on, despite our heavy operational burden, with its success a direct result of the collaborative expertise, effort and tenacity of our base and wing team. Several tens of thousands watched in awe and took the opportunity to reflect on how far flight has come in just 100 years and what an impact it has had on civilization.

Joint and combined effort has definitely proven a key phrase for us this year, even when we least expected it. Who can forget the August 14 electrical grid failure that left millions of North Americans in the dark? It was only through your understanding and cooperation that we succeeded in significantly reducing our energy consumption, which in turn enabled Ontario Government Emergency Services to meet regional reduction targets during some very difficult demand periods.

The year 2003 will also be a momentous one for the 8 Wing Pipe Band, which in addition to winning the North American Championships, returned from the World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland with several awards, including first place in drumming. Our Concert Band performed at myriad

appearances throughout the year, representing the Air Force with pride and musical excellence. We are all extremely proud of our musical ambassadors, their many accomplishments and the great work they continue to do.

This next year will undoubtedly be one of continued change for us all. In addition to the construction of a new medical clinic, we will continue to advance commercial use of surplus capacity at the wing through our partnership with AVBNK Corporation. We have also commenced a major expansion of the RCAF Memorial Museum, which will result in new facility that will be truly worthy of its standing as the national museum of the Air Forces of Canada. We can look forward to numerous other base improvements, including hangar line upgrades and a major CANEX facility expansion.

A significant number of 8 Wing CFB Trenton personnel will once again be far away from home this holiday season, either on deployment or in direct support of ongoing operations. Not only will we as a military community keep them and their families in our thoughts throughout the holidays, but our sentiments will be shared by our extended military family (Army Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada, Royal Canadian Legion, and the Air Force Association of Canada), as well as the people of Quinte West and the surrounding municipalities of the Quinte region, who continue to show unwavering support and appreciation for what you do each and every day.

On a more personal note, Sharon and the rest of our family join me in thanking you for all you have done this year and wish you a safe and happy holiday season. We look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

*D.S. Higgins
Colonel
Commander
8 Wing CFB Trenton*



Photo: Capt. E. Baraniecki

"QIAS '03 went on, despite our heavy operational burden, with its success a direct result of the collaborative expertise, effort and tenacity of our base and wing team."



Photo: Capt. E. Baraniecki

"...the arrival of the new CH149 Cormorant, which will gradually replace our legacy CH113 Labrador in 2004."



Photo: Submitted

"The 8 Wing Pipe Band, which in addition to winning the North American Championships, returned from the World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland with several awards, including first place in drumming."



Fitness, Sports & Recreation

Step outside the norm



Laurie McVicar

Wednesday, December 17

Confessions from the Gym

Since starting this column over a year ago, I have passed on oodles of advice given to me by trainers here at 8 Wing/CFB Trenton, by the Health Promotion Department and from various literature that comes across my path.

This week I'd like to revisit some advice I passed on many months ago - the importance of stepping out of your comfort zone when it comes to physical fitness.

It's terrifying, it's exhilarating, it can sometimes be a little stressful, depending on your athletic ability, but almost always it is

rewarding.

What other way can you test your mettle and discover your limits? By simply never trying something because of lack of courage or self-esteem, you are robbing yourself of what could be an exciting opportunity. Believe me, there are days I shake my head in disbelief at the 20 plus years I have done this very thing.

Last week, I took part in my very first sporting event since joining this organization. It was a Blind Volleyball tournament organized by the fantastic folks at The Gymnasium to raise

money and non-perishable goods for the Trenton Food Bank. Although I haven't played volleyball since high school, and have definitely never played in a situation where I can't see my opponents, I had a great time.

It was extremely nice, for once, to put aside the fear of being judged and just have fun. That's what it should be about! Not whether or not you have the perfect body type to play a certain sport.

So, once again I urge you all to try something new. Something you never imagined you could do. Test yourself. I'm betting you'll be surprised at the results.

On a personal note, I was a far better player than I remembered myself to be. Unfortunately, not good enough to help prevent my team from losing every game. At least we were the most spirited of the bunch!

NEW FLIPPERS FOR KIDS



Christmas came early for members of the CFB Trenton Dolphins Swim Team after they received two large boxes full of flippers. The new equipment was purchased jointly by PSP and the Dolphins and will be made available to younger team members and participants of the Red Cross Swim Course. Pictured above are: Manny Raspberry, Acting Recreation Director; Dana Kelly, President of the Dolphins Swim Club; Amy Morton; Roxanne Lamonte and Gabriel Braun. A donation of \$100 was made by Carm's Pools.

Give the gift of fitness

(CA.ARA) - In many parts of the country, when the temperature drops, so does our activity level. When the snow falls it is often hard to participate in favorite activities like hiking, biking and swimming -- so a lot of people cocoon.

Inactivity often leads to weight gain and the winter "blahs," but there is something you can do to brighten the outlook for yourself, your friends and family. "Give a gift that promotes health and fitness this holiday season," says Karen Righthand, director of marketing at Atlas Snow-Shoe Company. "Pick up a pair of snowshoes for someone you love for a season filled with healthy fun."

Since anyone who lives in a cold climate can participate in the sport daily, snowshoeing has steadily been gaining in popularity. "It's like hiking, only you can go places you never dreamed possible in your hiking boots," says Righthand.

And while hiking will only burn about 340 calories per hour for the average person, snowshoeing will burn twice that: 680 calories.

Not only do you burn calories, you improve your core body strength and balance, and get an aerobic workout. Snowshoeing raises your heart rate and compares favorably with activities such as running, swimming, cross-country skiing and bicycling. In fact, many cyclists, mountain bikers, trail runners and adventure racers snowshoe as a way to cross-train and improve their cardio fitness during the winter months.

Snowshoeing can be done anywhere there are a few inches of snow on the ground. Backyards, local golf courses, hiking trail systems, national parks and forests are all accessible to people with snowshoes.

"One of the great things about this sport is its affordability," says Righthand. "You don't have to pay a lift-fee each time you want to go down a hill, just strap on your snowshoes, grab your poles and get out there."

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Vœux de Noël du commandant

À l'approche de la saison des fêtes et que l'an 2003 tire à sa fin, je me retrouve de nouveau en train de mettre en perspective une année marquée par les nombreux accomplissements du personnel de la 8e Escadre / BFC Trenton. En plus de soutenir une cadence opérationnelle excessivement élevée, nous avons également eu à relever plusieurs autres défis, prévus et inattendus. Dorénavant, ce sur-sis fortement mérité, sera sans doute bien reçu et le temps passé avec nos proches nous sera très cher alors qu'il portera à réflexion et nous préparera pour l'an 2004.

En ce qui me concerne, de mon poste privilégié de commandant de l'escadre et de la base, le temps passe de plus en plus rapidement. Ainsi, j'ai pu observer de plusieurs perspectives vos efforts remarquables afin d'assurer le succès de la mission ainsi que le niveau de professionnalisme que vous avez démontré de façon à vous adapter aux demandes et aux défis toujours croissants. À tous les niveaux et sur une base individuelle et collective, vous démontrez que la 8e Escadre / BFC Trenton mérite amplement sa devise, 'In Omnia Paratus' (prêts à tout) et que la BFC Trenton demeure digne de son grand héritage.

Le transport aérien tactique et stratégique, la recherche et le sauvetage et le soutien aux opérations déployées demeurent notre centre d'intérêt principal et sont sans aucun doute là où nous avons réalisé nos plus grands accomplissements. En dépit des limitations dans la disponibilité des avions, nos spécialistes de la maintenance ont maximisé les aéronefs prêts à l'action, notre personnel d'entraînement et de préparation opérationnelle s'est dévoué afin d'assurer la viabilité des missions et des déploiements et notre cadre opérationnel a entrepris ses missions sans réserve. En plus de nombreux autres engagements continus, l'opération APOLLO est devenue l'opération ATHENA, parmi laquelle notre Unité de transport aérien tactique (TAU) continue de s'acquitter admirablement bien de sa tâche en fournissant l'appui aérien de CC-130 critique aux forces déployées dans la région du Golfe. De plus, notre Airbus CC-150 continue de fournir une diver-

sité de transport aérien stratégique s'étendant du transport de la souveraine lors du Golden Jubilee aux missions de transport du Premier Ministre et de la Gouverneure générale ainsi que de pourvoir un support critique aux Forces terrestres qui arrivent et quittent les divers théâtres opérationnels. Nos CC-144 Challengers continuent d'accomplir leur Service de vols d'affaires ainsi que leur transport aérien polyvalent à partir d'Ottawa et notre mission SAR a été soulignée non seulement par une année remplie de succès sauvegardant la plus grande région SAR du Canada, mais également par l'arrivée du CH-149 Cormorant, qui en 2004, remplacera graduellement notre legs, le CH-113 Labrador. Naturellement, ceci est le résultat de superbes efforts de notre personnel d'administration, de logistique et d'ingénierie qui continue de soutenir avec grande distinction le mandat et la composition de notre mission de plus en plus diversifiée.

Cette année, nous avons été témoin de la célébration du centenaire du vol. Le Spectacle aérien de Quinte (QIAS '03) a honoré convenablement cet anniversaire et tous ceux qui servent dans l'aviation. QIAS '03 a continué en dépit d'un lourd fardeau opérationnel, son succès, un résultat direct de l'expertise, de l'effort et de la ténacité collective de l'équipe de l'Escadre et de la base. Plusieurs dizaines de milliers ont saisi cette occasion pour réfléchir sur l'incroyable évolution et l'impact qu'a eu l'aviation sur la civilisation au cours du dernier siècle.

L'effort conjoint et combiné a certainement été l'expression principale pour nous cette année, même lorsque nous nous y attendions le moins. Qui pourrait oublier la panne d'électricité du 14 août qui a laissé des millions de nord-américains dans l'obscurité? C'est à travers votre compréhension et collaboration que nous avons réussi à réduire de manière significative notre consommation d'énergie, permettant aux services de secours du gouvernement de l'Ontario d'atteindre les cibles régionales de réduction.

L'an 2003 sera aussi important pour le corps de comemus de la 8e Escadre qui en plus d'avoir remporté le championnat nord-américain, est revenu du

championnat du monde à Glasgow, Écosse avec plusieurs prix incluant une première place pour le corps de tambours. Notre orchestre a, à son tour, participé à une myriade d'événements tout au long de l'année, représentant la Force aérienne avec la fierté et l'excellence musicale. Nous sommes extrêmement fiers de nos ambassadeurs musicaux, de leurs accomplissements et de l'excellent travail qu'ils continuent à effectuer.

L'année prochaine sera assurément une année de changement constant pour nous tous. En plus de construire une nouvelle clinique médicale, nous avancerons avec l'utilisation commerciale de la capacité en surplus de l'Escadre en association avec AVBNK Corporation. Nous avons également débuté une expansion importante au Musée commémoratif de la Force aérienne qui deviendra certainement digne de sa position en tant que musée national des Forces aériennes du Canada. Nous pouvons ainsi anticiper avec intérêt plusieurs autres améliorations sur la base y compris des rénovations du secteur des hangars et une expansion importante de l'installation du CANEX.

Un nombre important de personnel de la 8e Escadre/BFC Trenton se retrouvera de nouveau à l'étranger pendant la période des vacances, soit en déploiement ou en opération de longue durée. Les pensées que nous éprouverons pour eux et leurs familles en tant que communauté militaire seront partagées par notre famille militaire prolongée (les anciens combattants de l'armée, de la marine et de l'aviation canadienne, la légion royale canadienne et l'association de l'armée de l'air du Canada) ainsi que par la municipalité de Quinte West qui continue de soutenir et démontrer ses sentiments constants d'appréciation envers ce que vous faites chaque jour.

Sur une note plus personnelle, Sharon et le reste de notre famille se joignent à moi pour vous remercier pour tout ce que vous avez fait cette année et pour vous offrir nos meilleurs vœux pour la saison des fêtes.

*Le commandant,
D.S. Higgins
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Hope grows on Hayden Street

by Lt. Tim Brodie

Hope grows on Hayden Street in Hamilton, Ontario. That's where I lived when I was a kid with my mother, my brother and my grandmother. My uncle was in the Marines and it was the early sixties. I remember the sixties well. Not as a radical teen rejecting society and fighting against American imposed aggression in a small Asian country, but as a small boy whose uncle was trying to survive as a serviceman on active duty. I remember that we used to watch the news nightly with my grandmother and mother telling us that the scenes we were watching on television were a part of my uncle's daily life.

In those days my Uncle Ted was about the closest thing to a hero that I knew. He was a strong, brave, quiet spoken man who was easy with his affection towards my brother and I. We would eagerly await his visits with the knowledge that we would be spoiled, cuddled and loved by this man who seemed to take great joy in playing and wrestling with two small boys.

He didn't write from Vietnam. Instead, he would record his thoughts on reel-to-reel tape and send them home. Sometime around Christmas of 1965 we received one of his tapes. We had anxiously been awaiting his return for Christmas holidays. The tape did not bring good news. Although the supply and transport ship was visible in the harbour, the shelling was too bad to transport personnel. Mailbags were delivered by helicopter, the route that his tape had taken out. In the background of the tape we could hear the crump of explosions. He would be home, he explained, but the delay would probably not afford him the opportunity to be with us for Christmas.

In our living room we had a pine tree decorated with our "boy made" ornaments. It was in a metal bucket filled with gravel. Daily my brother and I would studiously ensure that it was watered and cared for. As a family we decided that our Christmas would come late this year. We would wait until my uncle's arrival to celebrate the season. My brother and I would continue our leave for a while yet, but he assured us that he would be first on the list to leave as soon as it was safe. Unaware that we awaited his arrival to celebrate Christmas, he said that he hoped our season had been bright and that Santa had been good to us. We, on the other hand, continued about our duties in great solemnity, watering and caring for the Christmas tree which had to last until our uncle's arrival. Santa would not come to our home until Uncle Ted did.

The months went by. January slipped into February, and on and on. We would receive updates from my uncle explaining his great sorrow that he had not yet been able to join us, but promising that he kept us in his thoughts and that he would be with us as soon as he could. Christmas, in his mind, was over. He went about his business slogging through jungles and facing tragedy, fear and horrors daily. We went about our business, watching the television in hopes of seeing him, taking care of our regular life, and watering our Christmas tree.

That following June my uncle finally returned to us. The weather was warm and humid. To his surprise, the fully decorated Christmas tree, complete with gifts, sat in the living room. We laughed, cried and sang carols that "Christmas". My family was close together, and Vietnam was far, far away. And the tree? After over six months of constant watering and care the tree itself had formed a root ball. We ceremoniously took it outside and planted it. It grows there still.

We all learned that year that hope is the feeling you have when a part of your heart is missing, when a loved one is beyond your reach and an intimate thought is your only contact. We learned that hope can carry a person through difficult times. We learned that hope is a pine tree that grows on Hayden Street in Hamilton, Ontario.



Joy, Hope & Peace




Sandy, Lisa, Shelly, & Gabby (front)
Lisa, Megan, Laura, Jenna & Corrine

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CAS Christmas / New Years Message

This holiday season, I would like to extend my sincerest greetings to all members of the Air Force family – regulars, reserves, civilians and allied personnel serving with Canadian units.

The past year has been another challenging, yet rewarding time for our members both here at home and abroad. The pace of operations has seemed relentless at times, tasking our people and our equipment to perform at their maximum. Thanks to your efforts, we have continued to provide outstanding support to the campaign against terrorism, and we continue to support peacekeeping operations in Bosnia. Even domestically we have made a difference, most recently answering the call to deploy helicopters and personnel to help fight the British Columbia forest fires.

We are dealing well with our equipment and personnel challenges. Our biggest asset is our can do ability to do the job; our biggest liability is

that we can do our assigned missions so well in spite of severe shortages. Our efforts are paying off though, as the organization continues to absorb new recruits and re-enrollees who are coming back to the organization. The modernization and upgrading of our equipment is proceeding. As the security environment changes, so will we.

As long as we as an Air Force get back to the basics of producing a fit, disciplined and expeditionary force, one that reinforces the chain of command as our raison d'être and the driver of achievable results at every level within the organization, we can remain world class.

Our common goal has always been and will continue to be to field a professional and capable Air Force, one that serves our nation well and of which, I hope, Canadians are proud. We will undoubtedly face many challenges in the coming year, but with your contin-

ued support and that of your families who give and sacrifice so much, I believe we shall continue to excel.

I want to commend you on your accomplishments over the past year, both at home and abroad. For those fortunate enough to be home this holiday season, I hope you find the time to rest and relax with family and friends. For those away from loved ones, I hope you can take comfort knowing that your efforts and sacrifices are truly making a difference. Your deployment demonstrates our commitment to the freedom and safety of Canada, our society, and to world peace and stability in general. You represent your country with professionalism, dedication and excellence, and I know your families are as proud of you as I am. Thank you for your service.

For this holiday season and the coming year, I wish you and your families peace, happiness and success in all that you do.

MFRC CHRISTMAS CONCERT



Photos: Andrea LeBlanc



Youngers of varying ages participated in the Trenton MFRC's annual Christmas Concert, held this year at the Wing Chapel on Dec. 16.

holiday greetings

&

Christmas Blessings



Canadian Parachute Centre celebrates Xmas

by Capt Simon Cox

Members of the Canadian Parachute Centre and their spouses celebrated Christmas at the unit's annual Christmas Dinner held December 5, at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Trenton.

Sans-Souci Catering of Belleville provided the buffet dinner and the DJs of Amazing Music brought sound and colour to the event.

As in past years, local merchants donated door prizes and gift certificates for the dinner. The first door prize was a gift basket provided by Thompson's Independent Grocer's of Trenton and was won by the unit's Officer Commanding of Training Company, Capt Cayle

Oberwarth. Other corporate and merchant donors included: Britannia Restaurant, Trenton; Bruinix Jewellers, Trenton; Canadian Tire, Trenton; Esthetique Avenue, Trenton; Fifth Avenue Jewellery - D Tapin, Trenton; Golden Valley Restaurant, Trenton; Holiday Inn, Trenton; Jim Pizzeria & Dining, Trenton; Kaye's Flowers, Trenton; Kelsey's Restaurant, Trenton; Mark's Work Wearhouse, Trenton; Radio Shack, Trenton; Reilly's Sports Excellence, Trenton; Rogers Video, Trenton; Rumours Restaurant, Trenton; Shopper's Drug Mart, Trenton; Harold Stoddart, Trenton; Subway, Trenton; Team McCurdy, Trenton; Tim Horton's, Trenton; Trade Winds Restaurant, Trenton; Trenton's Dry

Cleaners, Trenton; China Gate Restaurant, Belleville; Irvin Aerospace Canada, Belleville; Kelsey's Restaurant, Belleville; Mark's Work Wearhouse, Belleville; Music World, Belleville; Quinte Outdoor Sports, Belleville; Quinte Restaurant, Belleville; Ramada Inn, Belleville; Reid's Dairy, Belleville; Rob McIntosh China, Belleville; Sears, Belleville; Stanley's Fashions, Belleville; Star Buck Coffee, Belleville; Studio DK, Belleville; Sunsational Sun Tanning Salon, Belleville; Taste of Country, Belleville; The Body Shop, Belleville; Cole's Building Supplies, Brighton; Kokimo Candles, Castleton; Blue Mountain Dist, Carrying Place; and Via Rail Canada, Montreal.

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Community Events

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MOVIE LINE-UP

• Lord of the Rings: Return of the King (14A)	1:00	7:15	
• Brother Bear (G)	1:10	3:00	7:10 9:00
• Something's Gotta Give (PG)	1:05	7:00	9:20

Starts Dec 26th Peter Pan S.T.C.
Christmas Gift Certificates on Sale \$5.00 or \$10.00
 Admission: \$7.00 (adults 18+) \$5.00 (youth) Wed. & Matinees \$5.00 (ALL)

Matinees Everyday Except Christmas

MOVIES MOVIES MOVIES

Welcome to the Contact Newspaper's Community Events page! Thanks to the generosity of Trenton's Centre Theatre, we can now feature (space permitting) public service announcements, community events and help promote non-profit and charitable organizations in the Quinte area. Fax us at 965-7490 or email to leblanc.al@forces.gc.ca, at least 10 days prior to your event. Call 392-2811 Ext. 7005 for more information.



The MS Society is having its annual Christmas Goodies Sale at the Quinte Mall Dec 19, 20, 21 during mall hours. Come out and support your local MS Chapter.

WISHING YOU ALL A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY!

THE MANUEL FAMILY

MARATHON, ONTARIO



TRENTON
Military Family Resource Centre

Youth Centre Kid's Only New Year's Party
 Do you have plans for New Year's but don't know what to do with the kids? Why not bring them to the Youth Centre for a Kids Only Party! We will have games, Kids' Champagne, party favours and more! You may drop the kids off any time after 6:00 pm on December 31 and pick them up by 1:00 am. We would be more than happy to arrange a taxi to safely send your children (or you!) home if you wish. Please call the Youth Centre to pre-register your children aged 6-14. Cost is only \$2 for members and \$3 for non-members. We also ask that you bring a small snack and a drink for yourself. Cheers!

Wednesday Night Out! Everyone Welcome!
 Coordinator, Eve Lawrence, 965-3595
 Activities...Workshops every Wednesday night. Childcare is available, if your partner is deployed childcare is FREE, you need to call ahead to reserve your spot for both childcare and the workshop. We need to have some idea of the number of participants.

January 7- Fitness - Aerobics Class - Getting backing shape after the holidays.

January 14 - Bistro night - "The Flaming Moes", Chuck and Greg will come with acoustic guitars, bring your requests. Be prepared to sing along!

"Pamper yourself and your loved ones"
 10th Anniversary Women's Conference
 28 February 2004
 Register by February 13th and get a chance at the Early Bird draw Day at the Spa "Elemental Embrace" in Brighton



CHAPLAIN SERVICES
SERVICES OFFERT PAR L'AUMÔNERIE

Wing Chaplain/ Aumônier de l'escadre - Major Lloyd Clifton (Presbyterian)
Administrative Assistant/Adjointe administrative - Manon Pilon Ext 2490
 UNIT CHAPLAINS / AUMÔNIERS DES UNITÉS
 Padre Rick Gould
 Padre Catherine Morrison (deployed until Jan 04)

WORSHIP SERVICES

<p>OUR LADY OF PEACE (RC) NOTRE-DAME-DE-LA-PAIX (CR)</p> <p>Chapel Life Co-ordinator/Responsable de la communauté chrétienne Padre Bastien Leclerc (RC)</p> <p>MASS Sunday Mass (English) 0900 hrs Messe Dominicale: 1015 hrs</p> <p>CONFESSION At all times</p> <p>PARISH ORGANIZATIONS Parish Council 3rd Thurs 1900 hrs Knights of Columbus 1st Thurs 1900 hrs CWL 2nd Tues 1900 hrs Chorale Merc 1900 hrs Choir Tues 1900 hrs Silhouettes of Mary 2nd & 4th Thurs 1830 hrs</p>	<p>ST CLEMENT ASTRA (PROTESTANT)</p> <p>Chapel Life Co-ordinator Matthew Lucas (Bapt.)</p> <p>WORSHIP SERVICE Divine Worship (Sun) 1130 hrs Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month Mid-Week Communion Wed 1230 hrs</p> <p>PARISH ORGANIZATIONS Chapel Guild Last Tues 1930 hrs</p>
--	--

CHURCH SERVICE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON
CÉLÉBRATIONS DURANT LA PÉRIODE DES FÊTES

24 December, 2003
 1730 hrs (RC) Bilingual Family Mass
 1930 hrs (P) Christmas Service
 2130 hrs Messe francophone (cr)
 2400 hrs Anglophone Christmas Mass (RC)

28 December, 2003
 1015 hrs (RC) Liturgy of the Word (Bilingual)
 1130 hrs (P) Sunday Worship Service

1 January, 2003
 1015 hrs (RC) Liturgy of the Word (Bilingual)



DUTY CHAPLAIN/ AUMÔNIERS EN DEVOIR
 After working hours, for emergency only, please call the base operator at 392-2811 and ask for the duty chaplain. / Après les heures de travail, pour les urgences seulement, svp appeler la téléphoniste de la base au 392-2811 et demandez l'aumônier en devoir.

DIDN'T FINISH HIGH SCHOOL? WANT TO EARN A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY? THE GED PROGRAM MAY BE FOR YOU!!

The Learning & Career will be offering a seven-week GED session commencing on Tuesday 13 January, 2004. This session is open to Military members and Civilian employees at 8 Wing Trenton. Dependents of these groups who are at least 19 years of age may also participate.

On successful completion of all five tests, students will receive an Ontario High School Equivalency Certificate.

Cost to each student is \$275. For more information or to register, contact the Learning and Career Centre at local 2557.

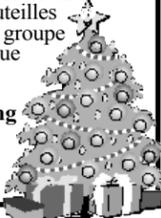


1st Airforce Trenton

Drive/Christmas Tree Pick-up
 1st Airforce Trenton Scout Group
 1st Airforce Trenton Scout Group will be holding a bottle drive/Christmas Tree pick-up on Saturday 3rd of Jan 2004 in PMQS starting at 1000hrs. Christmas trees will be picked up for a donation to the Group. Items that will pick up for the bottle drive is beer bottles, beer cans. If PMQ residents wish they can put bottles in plastic bags and label them for Group and leave them outside on the doorstep to be picked up.

Ramassage de bouteille et d'arbre de Noël
 Le Groupe Scout 1st Airforce Trenton fera un ramassage de bouteilles et d'arbres de Noël le samedi, 3 Janvier 2004, dans les PMQS, à partir de 10 heures. Les arbres de Noël seront ramassés pour une donation au groupe scout. Nous ramassons les bouteilles de bière, les cannettes de bière. Les résidents des PMQS peuvent, s'il le désire, placer les bouteilles dans des sacs de plastique, les identifier pour le groupe et les laisser à l'extérieur sur le perron pour que nous les ramassions.

If you would like to be a part of our scouting team, come and attend a meeting. If you have any questions please contact Galen at 392-8245.



Out of a hole in Iraq--Another reason to invest

it's your Money



Garth Turner

Walk up to most any Canadian and say, "Hey, what about those markets, eh?" and the usual response is something like, "Tell me about it - they suck!"

Without a doubt, the majority of folks have no idea that financial markets troughed in October

of 2002, and have been climbing steadily higher since that time. The Dow is now sitting above at the 10,000 mark, and has jumped more than 20 per cent this year. The TSX has had a similar gain, and is regaining the 8,000 level. The tech-heavy and volatile

Nasdaq, once everybody's favourite little index, has climbed 40 per cent.

Now, there are solid reasons why this advance will continue, and why you might want to melt down some GICs and get back into equity funds. One reason is profits, since the American economy is growing at a breakneck pace (about 8 per cent a year, if you can believe it), and corporations are starting to see sales, revenues and retained earnings increase.

Another reason is the bespectacled oracle of New York and Washington, Alan Greenspan. The head banker of the United States has made it very clear he's going to sit on interest rates for months to come, keeping the cost of money at its current 45-year low level. Cheap rates are a tonic for economic growth, since they encourage business borrowing, consumer spending, and make everybody's paycheque go further. Real estate has been a great example of this, since with mortgage rates so low, most renters can become owners without spending any extra each month.

Another reason the markets will do well crawled out of a spider

hole in rural Iraq last weekend. Looking like a pathetic old man instead of a feared dictator, Saddam Hussein finally came into the grip of Coalition forces. It means that George W. Bush has accomplished what his father could not during the Gulf War, and that

the relentless advance of technology, which is dramatically increasing productivity in both Canada and the United States, giving us solid economic growth without a whiff of real inflation. Then there is the reality of demographics, as the largest group in our population,

That return of, say, 8-11 per cent is actually quite juicy, when you consider the prime lending rate is down in the 4 per cent range and inflation is hanging in there at no more than 2 per cent. It also runs the wheels off fixed income assets like savings bonds, corporate or government bonds, and guaranteed investment certificates. As I keep pointing out, after inflation and taxes, many of those things are actually giving investors a negative return.

Meanwhile, last month, close to 90 per cent of all Canadian mutual funds were making money. Some of them, spectacularly.

So, if you have been a market refugee for the last couple of years; if you have gorged on real estate and filled the Posturepedic with cash; if you took a fling with precious metals or got convinced by the guy with the cute Dutch accent to "save your money" in a "high rate" savings account; then maybe this is the time to change your path.

Caution had its day. Now, growth is good.

Garth Turner's Investment Television airs Sundays on the Global network. www.garth.ca.

Another reason the markets will do well crawled out of a spider hole in rural Iraq last weekend. Looking like a pathetic old man instead of a feared dictator, Saddam Hussein finally came into the grip of Coalition forces.

the odds of the whole Iraq adventure turning out well are shooting higher.

This is good for the American people, the US economy, the United Nations and global growth. The world's only superpower, it now seems, will not be held hostage by a bunch of third-rate thugs with used rocket launchers and explosive-laden donkeys. So, look for a Saddam Rally on the markets that could last some time - despite the inevitable profit-taking sessions that will continue to pepper the bull market's current run.

Added into this mix of positive influences is

the Baby Boomers, are now into the life stage which sees the greatest amount of income and spending - between the ages of 46 and 55.

In short, the markets are doing what they are doing for legitimate reasons, and if you believe any or all of the above, then you should expect it to continue. No, we will not likely see a repeat of the late 1990s, when 20 per cent annual increases were the norm - hopefully the dot-com era taught us all a major lesson. But it is reasonable, the Bay Street gurus tell me, that equity investors could see their assets grow each year by high single digits, or low double ones.

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Don Lockey
 Investment Advisor

Please note:
 Our next issue of **The Contact** will be delivered on the morning of **Wednesday, December 31, 2003.**

The staff at the Contact Newspaper wishes you and yours a Merry Christmas & a very Happy New Year.

WANTED!
 Volunteers of all ages, with and without construction experience, from all across Canada to work with families in need to help build their first safe, decent, affordable home.

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HOROSCOPES

ASTRO ADVICE WEEKLY By Eugenia Last
December 21 - December 27

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You won't have much time for rest on the 21st and 22nd, but with your energy and high-spirited approach to life, you will make a difference to everyone you encounter. Kind words do make a difference. Someone is likely to put unreasonable demands on you on the 23rd and 24th. Work-related matters will cause some worry, but time is on your side. Everyone around you may be in the festive mood on the 25th, 26th and 27th, but you will be more concerned with reflecting on the past. So much has taken place and by remembering it all, you can ensure that the year ahead will be better.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Money matters are likely to leave you feeling a little uncertain about your future on the 21st and 22nd. A decision to do something about it in the New Year should put your mind at ease. Expect to encounter people from your past on the 23rd and 24th. Love and romance are evident. Join in the festivities and you will meet someone with whom to share an interesting time. Your way of viewing the family dynamics on the 25th, 26th and 27th will help make things much clearer for those lacking your vision. Positive thought and thankful blessings will be the theme.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will be flirtatious and quite capable of attracting romantic attention on the 21st and 22nd. Getting involved with someone you work with could lead to trouble in the New Year. Don't take a foolish risk. You can make a difference to an older relative on the 23rd and 24th that is having difficulty with paperwork. Money matters can be cleared up quickly. If you stick to your budget, you can enjoy yourself. Communication, transportation and a few late but very special gifts are likely on the 25th, 26th and 27th. Love and romance are in your corner.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't let anyone coerce you into doing things you don't want to do on the 21st and 22nd. Work-related events will prove to be beneficial. Remember: Doing well professionally will help your family in the future. Be creative about your gifts for others on the 23rd and 24th, even though time is short. Remember: Your time is worth more than any gift you can purchase. You can't buy love or friendship. If you have taken on too much on the 25th, 26th and 27th, don't hesitate to accept the help being offered. You don't have to be a super person who does everything for everyone. Let your family do for you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your generosity on the 21st and 22nd will take others by surprise and will enhance your reputation. Your ability to organize will make a good impression on those who could make a difference to your career. Romance will lead to a little adventure. Socialize with some of your colleagues on the 23rd and 24th, but don't do anything that might make you feel uncomfortable later. Someone you have worked with in the past is likely to contact you. Focus on the most important relationship in your life on the 25th, 26th and 27th. Make amends and new promises for future togetherness.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't take on more than you can handle on the 21st and 22nd. You may be blamed for something you didn't do. Things may be tense around home, so avoid nasty conversations. You are likely to run into someone on the 23rd and 24th you haven't seen in a long time. Make plans to get together in the New Year. This renewed connection could lead to a worthwhile partnership. Sit back and enjoy the ones you love on the 25th, 26th and 27th. Take part in any activities that include the whole family. Your concern for the elders in your family will be appreciated.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Make the phone calls on the 21st and 22nd to all the people you want to connect with before the end of the year. This is a perfect time to gather ideas for what you want to concentrate on next year. A close family member may not be easy to get along with on the 23rd and 24th. Get out and do your own thing to avoid issues that are upsetting you. Surround yourself with friends. Keep your true thoughts to yourself on the 25th, 26th and 27th. You may not be happy with all your relatives, but put your differences aside and rejoice in all you have. Extend an invitation to the people you don't get to see often.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Do something special for older members of your family on the 21st and 22nd. The information they share will help you understand the dynamics of your family and lead to a greater understanding of yourself. Small gatherings on the 23rd and 24th to celebrate the time of year will lead to new acquaintances that will influence your future. Listening to what some family members have experienced and what they are trying to get into will open up all sorts of new ideas for you on the 25th, 26th and 27th. You will be thankful for what you have. Plan how you can put your plans in motion.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You will be excitable, anxious and willing to go the extra mile on the 21st and 22nd. Channel your energy into a worthwhile cause. Romantic possibilities are present. Your good will can make a difference on the 23rd and 24th. It will take your mind off issues that are worrying you and help you to put things back in perspective. Clear up the jobs you left undone before taking a break. You can meet new friends and potential mates through close friends and relatives you visit on the 25th, 26th and 27th. Your colorful approach to festivities will enhance your popularity.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Being well organized on the 21st and 22nd will be key to pulling off any event you are involved in. Abide by the rules of the road. Romantic connections can be made. You'll be feeling a little nostalgic on the 23rd and 24th. You will want to tidy up unfinished business before the end of the year. Dump the baggage you've been carrying once and for all. Family and friends will take your mind off your work on the 25th, 26th and 27th and help you to realize what is important. This is the perfect time to discuss future plans with someone you love.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Give a little back to society on the 21st and 22nd. Your time and kindness will be appreciated more than you realize. Ponder what you can do to help in the future. The 23rd and 24th is a good time to make a quick year-end investment. Luck is with you so don't hesitate. Give a helping hand to those who can't do for themselves. Do not divulge family secrets on the 25th, 26th and 27th. Make a special effort to please the ones you love. Make future choices based on what's best for you. Change is necessary even if it isn't always welcome.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Everyone will be on edge and ready to start a fight on the 21st and 22nd. Back off and don't get involved. Direct your energy into physical activities. If you have even a couple of hours to spare on the 23rd and 24th, help serve the needy. Be gracious and donate your time and anything else you can afford to a cause you believe in. Don't dwell on what has already taken place on the 24th, 25th and 26th. Get out and party with friends. The time for change is now, so prepare to follow through with your creative ideas and make the upcoming year the best year of your life.

Scotiabank plays Santa to deployed personnel

by Laurie McVicar
Assistant Editor

Deployed personnel will get a special surprise along with their care packages this holiday season.

Thanks to the generosity of Scotiabank, 150 t-shirts were shipped overseas this week by the Trenton Military Family Resource Centre. The shirts, which were started as a fundraising project, display the words Proud to Support and an image of a Hercules aircraft. On the sleeves the Scotiabank logo was added.

"We were approached by the Trenton MFRC to contribute money to send the t-shirts overseas," said Scott Frechette, Branch Manager at the Trenton Town Centre Scotiabank. "Because of our affiliation with the military, we were happy to."

The Scotiabank is also a strong supporter of the RCAF Memorial

Museum by donating computers and funds to the organization.

"Because the military is such a

strong entity in the community, anything we can do to support them, we will," stated Frechette.



Photo: Laurie McVicar, Contact

Pictured above (left to right) are Scott Frechette, Scotiabank Branch Manager (Trenton Town Centre); Terry Waite, Scotiabank Personal Banking Manager; Jo-Anne Conley, District Banking Manager; Susan Stoddard, MFRC Children & Youth Coordinator; WO Serge Peloquin; Eve Lawrence, MFRC Quality of Life Coordinator; and Donna Gray, Treasurer for the MFRC Board of Directors.

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6 Days til Christmas.
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Congratulations to winners from National Safe Driving Week

During the recent Safe Driving Week, 1 to 7 Dec 2003, MSE Safety conducted numerous safety patrols of 8 Wing properties, the connecting roads and the PMQ area. Our MSE Safety Supervisors were on the lookout for DND/POMV vehicle operators.

Many vehicles were stopped during the course of the Safe Driving Week, some for exemplary driving behaviors and some who simply needed to be reminded of forgotten, good driving habits. Those deserving drivers operating lawfully and in a defensive manner were instantly awarded an appreciation gift donated by CANEX and their names were

retained for a final draw. This year, the Safe Driving Week grand prizewinner was MCpl Etienne Rioux from 437 Sqn; the prize was an emergency safety kit.

In addition, MSE Safety initiated a colouring contest as a means to include children into the safe driving awareness week. A picture reflecting this year's theme "DRIVER'S DISTRACTION," was selected. The response was wonderful and displayed great creativity on the part of our contestants, who ranged from 3 to 14 years of age. The colouring contest winner was a lovely 8-year-old young lady by the name of Brittany Brennan. Brittany's prize was

some safety equipment consisting of protective knee/elbow pads and wrist braces. Congratulations to all our coloring contestants and safe drivers.

During this awareness campaign, we congratulated drivers for good performances but we also reminded many more about basic safe driving procedures such as:

- Failure to wear seatbelts;
- Failure to use proper signaling procedures;
- Improper lane change maneuvers;
- Failure to comply with traffic regulations and stop at a stop sign, etc...

Driving is a privilege, not a right and it is a highly demanding task in the best of cir-

cumstances. Most drivers do not realize how demanding driving is and often treat it as a secondary activity. Driving must be treated as a top priority and taken seriously at all times. When you drive defensively, you greatly reduce the risk of collision and potential loss of precious lives. Everyone benefits from driving defensively.

MSE Safety would like to extend our appreciation and thanks, to May's ESSO for providing two wrecked vehicle displays to remind everyone about the perils of drinking and driving. MSE Safety will continue patrolling regularly to maintain awareness of safe driving.



MCpl E. Rioux receives the Safe Driving Week Grand Prize for obeying all traffic regulations.



Brittany Brennan is seen receiving her prize for the colouring contest held by MSE Safety for Safe Driving Week.

This season, ski and skate like the pros ... safely



Submitted by
Doug Bird, Deputy
Wing General Safety
Officer

This winter promises to be good for skiing and skating in many parts of the country, with lots of snow and cold weather expected. You won't have much fun if you get injured, though. Take extra safety precautions for both of these popular sports.

Ski Safely:

Get in shape before you hit the slopes. Do exercises to build strength, endurance and flexibility to avoid muscle strains, sprains and other injuries.

A few loosening-up exercises prior to skiing or skating would be helpful.

Learn to ski correctly. Take professional ski instruction if you are a newcomer. Experienced skiers can benefit from a refresher course, too.

Check weather and snow reports before you set out. Be prepared for a sudden change of weather.

Learn the layout of the ski hill to keep you from getting lost.

Ski with companions. Tell someone where you are going.

Plan to ski well within your abilities. Choose the slopes you can handle safely.

Don't ski out of designated areas.

Quit for the day before you get exhausted.

Sharp Skating:

Wear well-fitting skates, which provide adequate ankle support.

Keep the blades professionally sharpened.

Skate only where you are sure the ice is strong enough to support your weight. Check for any cracks or holes in the ice or debris, which might cause a fall.

Don't skate alone.

Skiing and skating are fun ways to spend a winter day. Put safety first so you can enjoy the entire season.



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Mrs L. Griffiths

received a Long Service Award for Longest Serving Member at 8 Wing presented by LCol R.C. Baker, WLEO



Mr N. Pickle (retired)

received a Long Service Award for 35 yrs presented by LCol R.C. Baker, WLEO



Cpl T.A. Giles

received his SSM presented by LCol R.C. Baker, WLEO



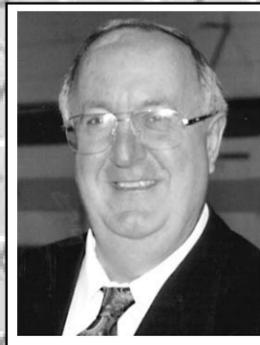
MCpl J.L.C. Hebert

received his CD1 presented by L Col R.C. Baker, WLEO



Sgt R.G. Jones

received his CD2 & the Queen's presented by LCol R.C. Baker, WLEO



Mr W. Huffman (retired)

received his Retirement Certificate presented by LCol R.C. Baker, WLEO



Ms L. Gagnon

received a WLEO Commendation presented by LCol R.C. Baker, WLEO



Pte L. Messier

received a WLEO Commendation presented by L Col R.C. Baker, WLEO



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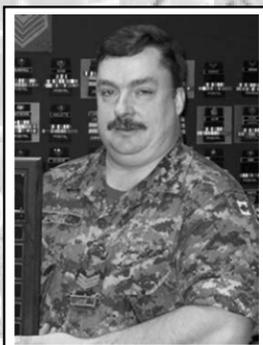
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Postal Supervisor Course Pt. 1 • 17 Nov. - 03 Dec. 2003



Pte M.L.J. Allen

received Top Student in the Journeyman Course presented by Maj J.C.J. Lavoie



Sgt M. Moreau

received Top Student in the Supervisor Course presented by Maj J.C.J. Lavoie



MCpl D. Hood

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News we can use? Call us! Locals 7005, 3978

Holiday Greeting

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May this coming year be one of health & happiness. Happy Holidays
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Announcement

1st Airforce Trenton Scout Group will be holding a bottle drive/Christmas Tree pick-up on Saturday 3rd of Jan 2004 in PMQS starting at 1000hrs. Christmas trees will be picked up for a donation to the Group. Items that will pick up for the bottle drive is beer bottles, beer cans. If PMQ residents wish they can put bottles in plastic bags and label them for Group and leave them outside on the doorstep to be picked up.

Ramassage de bouteilles et d'arbres de Noël
Le Groupe de Scout 1st Airforce Trenton fera un ramassage de bouteilles et d'arbres de Noël le samedi, 3 Janvier 2004, dans les PMQS, à partir de 10 heures. Les arbres de Noël seront ramassés pour une donation au groupe de scout. Nous ramasserons les bouteilles de bière, les cannettes de bière. Les résidents des PMQS peuvent, s'ils le désirent, placer les bouteilles dans des sacs de plastique, les identifier pour le groupe et les laisser à l'extérieur sur le perron pour que nous les ramassions.

Crossword Answers

T	E	N		P	O	L	E		A	D	D	S	
R	T	E		I	B	I	S		F	O	U	R	
A	N		E	L	E	V	E	N		L	E	O	
P	A	R	L	A	Y			A	G	E			
		E	L	F		S	E	R	E		T	B	
F	I	V	E		T	H	R	E	E		E	L	
L	O	S		E	A	R	N	S		M	A	O	
O	T		S	I	R	E	E		N	A	R	C	
P	A		E	G	A	D		S	I	X			
		N	T	H				S	E	N	I	L	E
T	W	O		T	W	E	L	V	E		I	F	
L	E	E	S		A	L	O	E		G	S	T	
C	E	L	T		G	L	E	N		P	A	S	



Tradition continues as youngest privates enjoy "promotions"



8 Wing personnel recently enjoyed the annual Appreciation Day/ Junior Rank's Christmas Dinner. This is an occasion each year when Officers and Unit SWOs make an extra effort to show their appreciation by serving dinner to the Junior Ranks. The day starts with the temporary "promotions" of the two youngest Privates on base to the positions of Wing Commander and Wing Chief Warrant Officer. This year's recipients were Pte M. Metivea, A/WCOMD, and Pte J.P Trudeau, A/WCWO.



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The Christmas Truce - Fritz and Tommy celebrate together

by Michael Duffy
www.firstworldwar.com

There's no doubt that it actually happened - the unofficial Christmas Truce of 1914 - but even today many people are not entirely sure of the detail and extent of the remarkable hiatus in the war that took place for a few hours during the fifth month of that first year of conflict.

For the most part the truce was observed by British and German soldiers in the southern part of the Ypres Salient in Belgium. However it was observed elsewhere on the Western Front and by other combatants, notably by the French and Belgians, although the very fact that the Germans were sited on the territory belonging to France and Belgium inhibited any great displays of seasonal goodwill towards their German opponents.

Continuing the History of Wartime Truces

Not that the very fact of the truce was in itself so very unusual during wartime. Examples of temporary lulls in conflicts date back centuries, and include the Peninsular and Crimean Wars (between the British and French in the former, and British and Russians in the latter). Similar stories are told of meals shared and stories exchanged between the opposing sides of the U.S. Civil War and, as late as 1900, in the South African Boer War. Indeed, in various arenas of the First World War the tradition continued outside of Christmas.

The extraordinary German guerrilla warfare leader in East Africa, Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, was renowned for the chivalrous - some called it civilised - manner in which he conducted war. For example, after humiliating British-led Indian forces at the Battle of Tanga in early November 1914, leaders of both sides met under a white flag to share opinions of the action and to share a bottle of brandy. However this style of courtesy was deemed to have been extinguished with the onset of the relatively new form of mechanised warfare that characterised the First World War, certainly as fought along the Western Front.

That said, it wasn't unknown for brief ceasefires to be tacitly understood and observed for perhaps an

hour or so as breakfast was served in quiet sectors where a mere few yards separated Allied from German troops; a case of "live and let live".

Started with Trees and Carols

Although there are numerous individual stories telling how the unofficial Christmas was started in various sectors, for the most part it was initiated by German troops situated opposite British forces where a relatively short distance separated the trenches across No Man's Land. Many German soldiers had, as was their custom on Christmas Eve, begun to erect Christmas trees adorned with lit candles - except they were placed along the trenches of the Western Front.

Initially surprised, and then suspicious, British observers reported the existence of these to higher officers. The word came down that they were not to fire, but were instead to observe closely the actions of the Germans.

Next was heard the singing of carols, in German. The British responded in places with carols of their own. Those German soldiers who understood and could speak English called across greetings to 'Tommy' (the popular name for the British private); similar greetings were shouted over to 'Fritz'.

In areas German soldiers invited 'Tommy' to step across No Man's Land and to pay a visit to the same German opponents they had been so wrapped up in killing but a few hours earlier.

Edward Hulse, a 25-year old lieutenant in the Scots Guards, wrote in his battalion's war history:

"We got into conversation with the Germans who were anxious to arrange an Armistice during Xmas. A scout named F. Murker went out and met a German Patrol and was given a glass of whisky and some cigars, and a message was sent back saying that if we didn't fire at them they would not fire at us."

Consequently the guns in that sector were silent that night.

The News Spread

Stories began to spread of visits exchanged between Allied (including some French and Belgian) forces

and German foe alike. Such visits were by no means restricted to private soldiers only: on occasions the initial contact was made between officers, who jointly agreed the terms of the truce, including just how far their men could walk in the direction of enemy lines.

These terms often allowed for the burial of each other's troops lying scattered around No Man's Land, some a few days old, others who had waited months for the dignity of a burial - but all of whom had to be left where they had fallen, machine guns covering where they lay in the wasteland between opposing trenches.

Commander-in-Chief, Sir John French, had possibly anticipated a suspension of hostilities for Christmas when issuing an order beforehand alerting his forces to the likelihood of increased German activity during Christmas: he therefore instructed his men to adopt an increased start of alert during this time. In the aftermath of the truce he wrote sternly:

"I issued immediate orders to prevent any recurrence of such conduct, and called the local commanders to strict account, which resulted in a good deal of trouble."

The Roman Catholic church, under Pope

all subordinate commanders the absolute necessity of encouraging the offensive spirit of the troops, while on the defensive, by every means in their power. Friendly intercourse with the enemy, unofficial armistices (e.g. 'we won't fire if you don't' etc.) and the exchange of tobacco and other comforts, however tempting and occasionally amusing they may be, are absolutely prohibited."

The Front-line Soldier's View

In letters home the front-line soldiers were practically unanimous in expressing their astonish-

they were making themselves understood by signs, and everyone seemed to be getting on nicely. Here we were laughing and chatting to men whom only a few hours before we were trying to kill!"

Bruce Bairnsfather, the author of the celebrated 'Old Bill' cartoons, summed up however the feelings of many of the British troops when he wrote:

"It all felt most curious: here were these sausage-eating wretches, who had elected to start this infernal European fracas, and in so doing had brought us all into the same muddy pickle as themselves... There was not an atom of hate on either side that day; and yet, on our side, not for a moment was the will to war and the will to beat them relaxed."

Once and Once Only

Nevertheless, reaction from on high was such that special precautions were taken during the Christmases of 1915, 1916 and 1917, even to the extent of actually stepping up artillery bombardments. The events of late December 1914 were never again to be repeated.

Investigation were undertaken to determine whether the unofficial truce was in any way organised beforehand; the result came back negative. It was a genuinely spontaneous event, which occurred in some sectors but not others. And so although the history of warfare includes numerous examples of generous gestures between enemies, the Christmas Truce on the Western Front was perhaps the most spectacular, and certainly the most renowned, of its kind. Goodwill to all men - for a space.

Even on that apparently peaceable Christmas Day the war was by no means entirely forgotten; many of the same soldiers who shook hands with Tommy or Fritz on 25 December 1914 took care to observe the structure of the enemy's defences: so that full advantage could be taken of any loopholes on the following day.

References: Christmas Truce, Malcolm Brown & Shirley Seaton, London 1984 First World War, Martin Gilbert, London 1994 Gunfire, A Journal of First World War History, A J Peacock, London 1994.

Photo: www.iwm.org.uk



British soldiers spent Christmas with the same men they were earlier trying to kill.

Naturally, men from burial parties came into contact with their opposite numbers, and conversation was struck up, and cigarettes or cigars exchanged. Letters were handed across for delivery to family or friends living in belligerent towns and villages. Most remarkable of all, perhaps, is the story of the football match conducted between the English Bedfordshire regiment and German troops (allegedly won 3-2 by the latter). The game was brought to an end when the football was punctured after it struck a tangle of barbed wire. In many sectors the truce lasted until midnight on Christmas night; yet on others lasted until New Year's Day.

Official and Public Reaction

Reaction to the Christmas Truce from various sources came in numerous forms. The Allied governments and military high command reacted with indignation (notably among the French).

The British

Benedict XV, had called in advance for a temporary lull in hostilities for the celebration of Christmas: whereas the German government had indicated its agreement the Allies quickly demurred: the war had to go on, even at Christmas.

Almost immediately that the truce happened word filtered back to friends and family of those serving at the front via the usual method: letters home. These were quickly picked up by local and national newspapers (including some in Germany) and were regularly printed.

The author of the Sherlock Holmes stories, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, commended in his history of the war the "one human episode amid all the atrocities which have stained the memory of the war".

Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, the then-British commander of II Corps (Douglas Haig commanded I Corps), reacted with a simple instruction:

"The Corps Commander, therefore, directs Divisional Commanders to impress on

ment at the events of Christmas 1914. One German wrote, "it was a day of peace in war; it is only a pity that it was not decisive peace". Corporal John Ferguson recounted how the truce was conducted in his sector:

"We shook hands, wished each other a Merry Xmas, and were soon conversing as if we had known each other for years. We were in front of their wire entanglements and surrounded by Germans - Fritz and I in the centre talking, and Fritz occasionally translating to his friends what I was saying. We stood inside the circle like street-corner orators. Soon most of our company ('A' Company), hearing that I and some others had gone out, followed us... What a sight - little groups of Germans and British extending almost the length of our front! Out of the darkness we could hear laughter and see lighted matches, a German lighting a Scotchman's cigarette and vice versa, exchanging cigarettes and souvenirs. Where they couldn't talk the language