



EXCELSIOR

Newsletter of the RCAF Reserve

FALL 2021

Excelsior:

"Ever Upward"

"Loftier"

"Still Higher"

Inside this issue:

Comox Reservist
Contributes to
Squadron's Largest
Evacuation in
Decades [2](#)

The RCAF Publication
Library: Where to Go
When You Want to
Know [2](#)

Recognizing Our
People: The RCAF
Reserve Junior NCM
Award [3](#)

22 Wing Reserve
Member Receives
CAF Chief's Coin [4](#)

The Right Role, the
Right Way [5](#)

Fit to Serve, Fit for
Life! [6](#)

Meet Our New Director: Colonel Maryse Simard

It is a privilege and honour to assume the role of Director Air Reserve. First, as a Personnel Administration Officer, now as a Logistician in Human Resources, I have spent my career in this permanent quest to improve our administrative policy suites and assist our members with their individual issues and concerns so they can better focus on their work.

The pandemic has brought some challenges, but some positive things as well. As we all did our part to respect the public health restrictions, a number of us started working from home. No more commuting to and from work and the ability to work in our slippers, yet still collaborating with the rest of our team as we moved to virtual meetings. We

also had to improvise a gym in our own homes to stay mentally and physically fit. It has shown us that remote employment is a possibility, from anywhere in the world.

Our recruiting and training systems were hugely affected. As a remedy, we have stood up Decentralized Basic Military Training in different locations to increase our intake and we are looking at, or have already implemented, ways to dispense occupational training virtually.

We need to do more. For those of us who are looking at following our spouse on an OUTCAN posting, we are currently looking at ways we can remove administrative and diplomatic barriers for a reservist to telework from anywhere in the world, if the nature of the work lends itself to it. We also need to look at the recruiting process and see how we can make it easier and faster. We are also looking at creating a virtual Marketplace where we can match the RCAF's needs with one's expertise and employment preferences. Look at this proposal, which we call FARM (Force Augmentation Reserve Marketplace), in the [rcafé](#) and give us your feedback.

I am an eternal optimist. I am totally committed to improving and modernizing the management of our people, increasing the size of the RCAF Reserve, improving our recruiting process, assisting 2 Canadian Air Division in delivering training, and working on reconstitution efforts of the Total Force. Most of all, I look forward to working with you.



Colonel Maryse Simard
Director RCAF Reserve

On Monday, 15 November 2021, when [442 \(Transport and Rescue\) Squadron](#) from Comox, British Columbia, deployed a CH-149 Cormorant helicopter on a domestic operations mission it had an unusual crew member on board. The [Operation LENTUS](#) mission was launched to airlift more than 300 stranded motorists on a washed out portion of Highway 7 in the small community of Agassiz, BC.

Aviator Elsa Gilroy, an Air Operations Support Technician (AOS Tech) with 442 Sqn, was brought along to assist on the ground by directing the motorists towards the helicopter and helping them to board it safely for their evacuation.

This occupation is still fairly new to the RCAF. AOS Techs can be found at Wings across the country, but those who work at units carrying out Search and Rescue (SAR) operations are especially instrumental in lessening the load on undermanned specialist SAR Techs. They support them by handling the serviceability of a variety of SAR and medical equipment, setting up and tearing down drop zones, transporting equipment and personnel by vehicle or boat, and assisting with diving exercises, among other duties. Members like Avr Gilroy free up the less technical tasks from



"On November 15th I came into work, usual work day, I was asked to board the 906 the third rescue Cormorant and go out to Agassiz to help with the evacuation," said Avr Gilroy. "A SAR Tech and I got dropped on the ground in Agassiz. Our task was to get an accurate count of how many people needed evacuation. After triaging and organizing people we briefed them on a safe approach to the aircraft, escorted them to the aircraft and assisted them in getting aboard, and making sure people got buckled up."

"[On] a usual day, I'm a support staff here, so I don't go operational, but because of my background ... I've been a firefighter in Comox for 10 years, so I was asked for that reason to provide a bit of extra hands on the ground."

highly trained SAR Techs to allow them to get on with their core business of saving lives and training for their multiple proficiencies - the same proficiencies that enabled an evac mission like the one performed on November 15 to be successful.

Lieutenant-Colonel Jean Leroux, Commanding Officer of 442 Squadron has said that his unit's response to the situation was the "largest mass evacuation the squadron has executed in decades."

Left: In the community of Agassiz, B.C., crew members from 442 (Transport & Rescue) Squadron lead some of the more than 300 motorists, who were stranded by mudslides, towards a CH-149 Cormorant helicopter for their evacuation on Nov. 15.

Photos: 19 Wing Imagery Section.



The RCAF Publication Library: Where to Go When You Want to Know

In our digital age, information comes at us from many sources and numerous directions. It can be overwhelming for sure, but did you know that many of the RCAF publications can be found in one convenient online location?

The RCAF Publications page allows you to read about the day-to-day activities of the men and women who serve in Canada's air force, as well as learn about our proud history, heritage, research and innovation. You can access RCAF newsletters and journals, Wing newspapers and other publications at:

<http://www.rcf-arc.forces.gc.ca/en/publications.page>



Be sure to bookmark the page in your internet favourites for easy access to RCAF news! Image: iStock under license.

Recognizing Our People: The RCAF Reserve Junior NCM Award

What's better than the satisfaction that comes with a job that's really well done? How about recognition for that job well done? Every year, the RCAF Reserve takes the opportunity to recognize one deserving junior NCM amid our organization for their hard work, dedication, leadership by example, dress, deportment and their achievements –both on and off duty– over the past year. Air Reserve Flight Commanders have the responsibility to ensure that this selected recipient is honoured and formally recognized in a most fitting way. In recognizing a deserving junior NCM, the aim is to inspire their peers and demonstrate that our aviators are greatly appreciated and their efforts aren't overlooked.



Above: The 2020 award was presented on 23 August, 2021 to Master Corporal Jim Thain (above), an Information Technology technician at the [Joint Rescue Coordination Centre \(JRCC\)](#) in Halifax. With the JRCC's officer in charge, Major Kristin MacDonald, at his side the award was presented virtually to MCpl Thain by the Director General Air Reserve, Brigadier-General Mike Rafter, and RCAF Reserve Chief Warrant Officer, CWO Jim McKenzie. CWO McKenzie stated that MCpl Thain was selected from "an impressive list of candidates from organizations across the country for [his] remarkable effort and impressive commitment to [his] work throughout the year."

Photo: Sailor 3rd Class Taylor Congdon, Formation Imaging Services TRINITY, Royal Canadian Navy, Halifax.

What is presented?

A plaque and accompanying certificate is presented during a special occasion the Flight Commander deems appropriate for this honour. For instance, the presentation could be made at a unit event, such as the annual Junior Rank's Christmas Dinner, or during a professional development session. Maximum attendance is desired, so any event that involves a large unit presence is ideal.

How do I nominate someone?

Each year the RCAF Reserve CWO sends out a call letter to the Reserve Flight Commanders asking them to canvass the units and sections at their respective wing and squadrons to identify any deserving members. If there are more than one file the Reserve Flight Commander will select one candidate for nomination. The RCAF Reserve saw several outstanding

nominations last year, so Flight Commanders are fully encouraged to resubmit any candidate(s) that were not selected the previous year.

To make a nomination, the following items are required:

- * a completed nomination form;
- * the nominee's biography and latest Member Personnel Record Résumé (MPRR);
- * a narrative explaining why the member is deserving;
- * a Commanding Officer's letter of recommendation; and
- * any other documents supporting the nomination, such as a commendation or letter(s) of appreciation.

The above requirements may appear to take some effort to coordinate, but really, is it too much to ask when compared to those extra efforts made all year long by your nominee? It is extremely important to formally recognize the contributions and achievements of our deserving Air Reserve junior non-commissioned members (NCMs) and encourage them in continuing to perform at a high level in their respective workplaces. So the next time you notice exemplary performance and attitude, take note! You just might be the catalyst to make a deserving someone's year!

22 Wing Reserve Member Receives CAF Chief's Coin

On 24 June, 2021, during a visit to [22 Wing](#)/Canadian Forces Base North Bay (Ontario), which included the Canadian Air Defence Sector, Chief Petty Officer First Class Gilles Grégoire, [CAF Chief Warrant Officer](#), presented the CAF Chief's coin to Warrant Officer Stephan Jaworski.

As the 22 Wing Readiness Training Standards Warrant Officer, WO Jaworski manages the Air Force's Expeditionary Readiness Standardization and Evaluation Team's policies and directives for all units at 22 Wing, the Recruiting Detachment in Sudbury and posted out-of-country members. WO Jaworski was an integral part of a newly created Local Reaction Force (LRF) capability at 22 Wing; as LRF Warrant Officer, his efforts generated 35 members to a Deployment Ready status for OP LASER, the CAF's response to a worldwide pandemic situation. Those efforts included:

- * Was personally selected for, and accepted responsibilities as, Chief of the Phelps Volunteer Fire Brigade in Redbridge, Ontario;
- * Led the team of 16 fire fighters in multiple motor vehicle collisions and structural fires; and
- * As a licensed paramedic and as Phelps's primary First Responder, WO Jaworski medically assisted in 27 emergencies this past year alone, to include leading a team in an austere wooded area cadaver retrieval, for which his efforts were lauded by family members.

WO Jaworski's selfless acts are truly impressive and worthy of receiving the CAF CWO's Coin.

WO Jaworski (A.K.A. Jaws) completed his first tour in North Bay from 1991 to 2000 in the Underground Complex. He enrolled again in 2003, retiring in 2006 when he returned to military service as a reservist that same year. 22 Wing North Bay takes pride in the calibre of the personnel that make up its Air Reserve Flight. Jaws is an example of the breadth and depth of knowledge and skill that is such a valued commodity in the CAF.



Left: Chief Petty Officer First Class Gilles Grégoire (right), CAF Chief Warrant Officer, presented the CAF Chief's coin to Warrant Officer Stephan Jaworski (centre). Then-Lieutenant-General Wayne Eyre, then-Acting Chief of the Defence Staff, attended to witness the award and be among the first to congratulate CPO1 Grégoire.

Photo: Corporal Robert Ouellette, 22 Wing Imagery Section.



Above: Warrant Officer Stephan Jaworski, proudly displays the CAF Chief's coin he was presented on 24 June, 2021.

Photo: Corporal Robert Ouellette, 22 Wing Imagery Section.



We want to hear from you!

This is *your* newsletter and your input is essential to making *Excelsior* relevant and useful. You can submit your comments, questions and suggestions to:

Excelsior-Excelsior@forces.gc.ca

Photo: iStock (under license)



Above: Master Warrant Officer Kip Cormier, deployed with the Operation PALLADIUM Task Force Helicopter Detachment, in Bosnia Herzegovina, 2003/04. (Photographer unknown)



Above: Conducting rescue operations with 444 Combat Support Squadron, Goose Bay Labrador in 2010. (Photographer unknown)



Above: (Left to Right) Warrant Officer Kip Cormier, Reserve Flight Engineer, Chief Warrant Officer Steve Rutt, Reserve Search and Rescue Technician, and Sergeant Chris Finnigan, Reserve Flight Engineer, all of whom at the time were serving reservists on contract overseas conducting medevac and rescue operations for Total Response Solutions. (Photographer unknown)

The Right Role, the Right Way

By Warrant Officer (Retired) Kip Cormier, Former Unit Flight Safety NCM, 403 Helicopter Operational Training Squadron

The RCAF Reserve is great way to continue serving for those with a desire to transition from the Regular Force, which comes with the benefit of employing experienced personnel in key positions if needed immediately. For the member, this also allows the benefit of experiencing employment outside the military, while still utilizing previously gained skills and knowledge within the Reserve, mentoring and giving back to the establishment that we served for so long.

In my case, I was a Master Warrant Officer (MWO) and 31-year veteran employed as the Operations MWO and Senior Flight Engineer at the [Tactical Flight School](#) in Gaagetown. Due to family considerations, my family and I made the choice to release from service rather than take another posting. The Reserve Force gave me the option of remaining in service as the Unit Flight Safety Non-Commissioned Member, drawing on my experience without having to uproot my family and move. My previous experience both as a Flight Safety Representative and experienced Flight Engineer made for a quick and seamless transition into the Air Reserve.

At the same time, I was approached by a civilian company, Total Response Solutions (TRS) that carries out contract work doing Rescue and Medevac projects, about accepting a position with them. The advantage and flexibility of a part-time (Class A) Reserve contract offered the ability to accept the civilian position and still be able to work at and contribute to the unit. The key to making it work for both was determining the unit's requirements, what I could provide on a part-time basis, and if both factors could suit the Air Reserve Flight. In this case, with the unit being a busy flight school, it is difficult for Regular Force members to commit full-time to the office, as most are also employed as flight instructors which also comes with student logistics, course requirements, and other complications.

If we go back to the unit's requirement, it was the ability to fill a dedicated position, which is what I gave them. My duty was Flight Safety (FS) first. The fact that I am also certified as a flight instructor allowed me to also take on some of the student load when practicable. As for what I could provide (although having me exclusively would allow for more flight time), working part-time was enough to dedicate time to the FS occurrences and reports that had to be completed while the Regular Force personnel were carrying out other duties. Did it fit the needs of the Air Reserve Flight? Absolutely!

From a company perspective, TRS is a veteran-owned, veteran-operated company with projects around the world. With the right employer that values and supports the experience military service brings to the civilian workforce, it allows for the integration of reservists, while still allowing the member to serve. Currently within TRS there are more than 30 personnel, most of whom are retired RCAF or equivalent, with approximately half of the retired Regular Force holding Reserve positions at [Greenwood](#), Nova Scotia and right across the country as far as [Comox](#), British Columbia. With the Air Reserve providing that flexibility and the combination of our experience in a civilian capacity, the benefit that comes back to the Air Reserve on the whole is immeasurable.

The use of reservists in part-time positions has ensured efficient and effective flying operations within the RCAF. In my case, it showed how it allowed for aircrew personnel

[cont.d on the next page](#)

(who may not be available for flying duties) to be utilized in their flying positions, while employed to complete those key duties that could otherwise fall behind. On top of this, reservists are a valuable resource with experience remained in service, training and mentoring the next generation of military aviators. That, in my opinion, is the greatest benefit for both the RCAF and the Class A reservist when employed in the right role and in the right way.

Fit to Serve, Fit for Life!

Since the COVID-19 pandemic struck, many reservists have seen their work routines drastically changed, and many still continue to work from home. While we focus on accomplishing the day-to-day tasks related our jobs, we may have neglected other aspects of our habitual work routines. Military fitness facilities (as well as civilian ones) and Personnel Support Program (PSP) fitness services were stood down leaving members to their own resources to find ways to stay in shape. On top of that [FORCE](#) testing stopped, so there went a key motivating factor for some folks.

Were you able to maintain your personal physical fitness, or did you let yourself go a bit? If it's the latter, it happens and it's especially understandable given the lack of available options for working out during the pandemic's lock-down periods. The good news is it's never too late to start fresh!

Jordan Springer, a Fitness and Sports Instructor with PSP at Canadian Forces Support Group (Ottawa-Gatineau) says the best advice he can give if you are returning to training is to lower your expectations.

"I have seen and experienced mental frustration and physical injury after returning to the gym from a period of not training, because I went in with the expectation to be able push as hard as I did when I was training consistently," he said. "This can set you up for failure because it is not only unsafe, but can put a damper on your self-esteem. So please, if you are returning to physical activity after being away for some time, start off with lighter intensity, less volume, and slowly increase it over time. You will be back to where you were in no time."

"We limit what we set out to do by what we convince ourselves is realistic. But I believe in possibilities, and sometimes we have to redefine what is realistic."

- Heather Moyse, Canadian athlete and two-time Olympic gold medalist.

Beyond personal well-being, meeting the CAF fitness standard can open reservists to increased employment opportunities, such as a deployment, applying for a new Reserve position, Component Transfer into the Regular Force or, for those who so wish, the potential to serve beyond compulsory retirement age of 60.

"Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live." - Jim Rohn, Motivational Speaker

"Personal fitness is just as important for reservists as it is for Regular Force members," says Chief Warrant Officer Jim McKenzie, RCAF Reserve CWO. "The benefits are employability for service but, more importantly, it will help you maintain a long and healthy lifestyle once you leave the military."

Need help getting restarted? Want to find out more?
Check out the resources available at:

<https://www.cfmws.com/en/AboutUs/PSP/Pages/default.aspx>

Right: These shoes were made for walking...or running! Both activities are great ways to get into –or stay in– shape and don't have to involve a large investment in equipment.

Photo: iStock (under license)

