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Volume 52 Issue 17

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August 29, 2013

INSIDE This Issue



CIB judges tour Base as part of their judging. Page 2



Stag's Jillian Driessen flies in B17 bomber. Page 4



Be in focus with CAF annual photo contest. Page 12



B17 Flying Fortress ride for Shilo soldier

MCpl Cody Cameron had a bird's eye view when he took flight in a Second World War bomber at the Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum. The B17 Flying Fortress was here for three days as part of an air show at the Brandon airport. MCpl Cameron was selected as a deserving soldier from CFB Shilo to have a seat — he was in bombardier's front perch — on the bomber that was built in November 1944. For more on the flight, see pages 6 & 7.


Photo by Jules Xavier

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CIB judge Berta Briggs listens intently as Maj Reg Sharpe explains some of the changes made on the Base since last year's CIB visit.

Photo by Jillian Driessen

CIB judges introduced to life living on army base during tour

Jules Xavier
Shilo Stag

Maj Reg Sharpe had reason to be scurrying about 24 hours prior to the arrival of two Alberta-based Communities in Bloom (CIB) judges to ensure everything was just right.

For the past year, since CFB Shilo garnered four blooms in its inaugural participation in the Canadian Forces Sustainable Communities category of CIB, Maj Sharpe — also mayor on the Shilo community council — had a goal to improve on the 2012 placing and bring home top honours among the other military participants.

"When your community buys in ... then this program flourishes," Maj Sharpe told the Stag a few days after judging in the 2013 national edition of CIB in the Canadian Forces Sustainable Communities category concluded following a busy 12 months.

CFB Shilo is up against 4 Wing Cold Lake in Alberta, and two Ontario bases: CFB Borden and Garrison Petawawa.

The CIB judges: Berta Briggs from Wetaskiwin and Rose Marie Carmichael of Edmonton were here Aug. 20 to evaluate this Base.

"For our second year, we had a better idea of what to expect, and we understood what the judges were looking for from the different categories they judge," offered Maj Sharpe. "To be successful in what we do on this Base, the community has to buy into Communities in Bloom, which I believe they did."

CIB is a Canadian non-profit organization committed to fostering civic pride, environmental responsibility, beautification and to improving quality of life through community participation and a national challenge.

Unlike last year, Maj Sharpe brought together key people on the Base to plan out strategies on how to improve on what the CIB judges suggested from 2012. There were no smoke and mirrors, just hard work from countless individuals who rose to the challenges set by the Base's mayor.

He also introduced the community council to the judges prior to showing them around the Base.

"People on the community council were able to meet the judges and tell them why they are involved ... the judges said they were impressed to see people who worked and lived on the Base being involved in their community," he said. "These

people were asked questions by the judges, and offered unscripted answers.

"The judges were able to see a diversity in our community council that offered a great mixture, of military and non-military, plus old and young, all working together for a common goal."

One of the first stops on the Base tour saw the judges being taught some of CFB Shilo's history, with RCA museum director Marc George acting as the tour guide.

"Marc was just excellent in telling the history of this Base," said Maj Sharpe. "He has such vast knowledge that even I learn something new every time I hear him talk."

History and conservation is a component of the judging, and having the refurbished outdoor gun park open compared to last summer, should score points with the judges, according to Maj Sharpe.

"Marc was able to promote and give insight into the Base with his vast knowledge. The judges learned, as I did, about our history, from their tour of the museum."

Then it was off to the GSH.

"The GSH, like any facility on this Base, is not just a building," he said.

"The judges were able to see what programs are offered and they came away from their visit knowing the GSH is more than a gym, and a pool."

He added, "In talking with the judges they said they were interested in not just the facility, but what the facility is used for, and by whom in the community. Sure it's great we have three gyms, and a pool. But they learned that there are movies shown at the pool, and there's a bowling alley downstairs. Schools have their Christmas concert in the theatre. And they commented on the natural lighting."

The outdoor sports facilities adjacent to the GSH also earned kudos from the judges, who liked that a covered gazebo is provided in case of inclement weather, and the grounds were well-groomed.

"They could see why this Base was able to host the recent regional slo-pitch tournament because we offer excellent facilities to hold such an event," said Maj Sharpe.

The new recycling container behind CANEX did not go unnoticed by the judges, as did the new recycling blue cans placed around the Base.

"They were able to see it was being used, and used properly, when they looked [inside]," he said.

While here, the judges were able to observe a hive of activity when it came to the Shilo MFRC venue, and the nearby waterpark on a hot summer day.

"They got to see lots of kids using those facilities," he said. "The judges were especially impressed with the MFRC's natural playscape, with kids out using it."

Flowers, whether in hanging baskets or in the new boxes provided to PMQ residents, also earned praise from the judges. As did the thriving newly-designed community garden where the green thumbs of Base gardeners were shown off based on the crops bearing fruit. After all, the judges are looking at communities in bloom and Maj Sharpe acknowledged despite recent wind storms causing vast damage, there was plenty of bloom in the ambience on this Base.

"We had such good weather for the judges when they were here that it made their experience that much more thorough when I took them around, or when they were out the night before by themselves touring after arriving on the Base," said Maj Sharpe, who was assisted on the tour by the Stag's Jillian Driessen.

A tour of CANEX also showed the judges the Base provides one-stop shopping for its residents who would otherwise have to commute to nearby Brandon for dental care, acquire car insurance or buy groceries or home electronics.

See **JUDGES** page 3



Maj Reg Sharpe

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CIB judges Berta Briggs and Rose Marie Carmichael toured the GSH, including the pool, as part of their judging of Base facilities. Inset: Judge Berta Briggs listens as tour guide Marc George of the RCA Museum tells some of the history of CFB Shilo. *Photos by Jillian Driessen*

Judges impressed with booklet

Continued from page 2

"They were able to see our retail hub and what it provides to those living, and working, on the Base," said Maj Sharpe. "We even had lunch at the Garrison Grill, with the Parker sandwich earning rave reviews from those who ate them."

During the lunch break, the judges were able to sit down with new BComd LCol Stephen Joudrey and hear from him about what makes CFB Shilo a vibrant military community.

"Even with our wind storms, there was no part of the Base I would have been embarrassed to show the judges because of the efforts put in by so many people the past few months as we prepared for the judges to arrive," said Maj Sharpe.

"Just look at the improvements we made to our dump based on the recommendations of the judges last year. I was able to explain our changes to the judges, and they were able to see it first hand when we went out there. With our dump now, we can recycle a lot more materials. It's more of a landfill now, rather than a dump."

Even the units on the Base like 2PPCLI and 1RCHA got into the act by planting flowers outside of their buildings. Maj Sharpe conceded this was reflective of the pride the units have in their own facilities, and how they mesh with the rest of the Base.

Photos were taken of these areas by the judges, including the WOs' and Sgts' mess, with floral arrangements not only out front, but also in the back outdoor patio area.

The judges did not shy away from the tough questions, according to Maj Sharpe, while on their tour.

"They asked the difficult questions. Our responses were good, and nobody waffled ... they told the truth based on the question. This was well-received by the judges as we had nothing to hide."

Capt Dane Nicholson also earned praise from CFB Shilo's mayor for his presentation on community policing at CFB Shilo.

"This wasn't just Dane spouting off police statistics. He talked about the

programs being offered like car seat clinics or bike safety for the kids," he said. "This was not just symbolic, as he explained to the judges MPs provide community policing programs that on this Base benefit the community ... such as the success of the first Operation Red Nose program that will be expanded this year."

The judges also had an opportunity to tour the Shilo Country Club, taking golf carts and being shown the 18-hole course, including how the golf club has rebounded from the recent damage incurred following the July wind storm.

The results will be announced at the national awards ceremonies, in Ottawa-Gatineau, from Oct. 23 to 26.

The concurrent 16th edition of the national symposium on parks and grounds offers conference sessions, workshops, and technical visits on the green spaces throughout the seasons' theme.

"If we don't win, or get five blooms, I would be at a loss what we could have done better," said Maj Sharpe. "If we do win, that will be nice, but for me I think the Base is a more welcoming place to live [for its residents] because of what we have done to improve it."

"Winning can be attributed to our involvement in Communities in Bloom because what we have done, from putting in flower boxes, to improving the dump. All of this has benefitted the community."

Maj Sharpe believes in a long-term commitment to being part of CIB, and constantly evolving as a Base, improving amenities which benefit those who call the Base home.

"Any improvements we make to this Base only benefit everyone who lives and works here," he said. "I am going to be interested in seeing what the judges had to say this time in their write-ups."

Note: Driessen's work on the CFB Shilo profile book, provided to the judges in advance of their visit, also garnered kudos.

"Your profile book is excellent," said Briggs. "I was just reviewing the package you sent again and I am anxious to see the Base in person."

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Submitting articles and photos for print:

- Please submit articles as a MS Word Document.
- Include the author's full name, rank, unit and contact information.
- Include photos with your articles whenever possible, however, do not embed photos in word documents.
- Please submit photos as high resolution jpegs (if scanned 300 dpi), digital images or in hard copy format.
- With photos, include a caption that names the individuals in the photo; what is taking place; and the name, rank, and unit of the photographer.

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Flying in B17 bomber a thrill for reporter

Every now and then, working for a military newspaper offers you once-in-a-lifetime experiences.

Most people will never set foot on a military training area or see military life and operations from the perspective and freedom we are granted at the Stag.

My business as usual weekdays often seem incredible to those working outside the military.

To date, my favourite experience has been a flight over Brandon in a B17 Flying Fortress called the Sentimental Journey.

Outside of being inherently entertaining in its nature, the flight was also extremely sobering.

As the one journalist lucky enough to land a seat in the nose of the Sentimental Journey, I started the flight planted in the navigator's seat. I found myself sitting in an area of the aircraft where 2Lt Francis Mercer Hackley was killed in action in July 1943.

Being told the spot you've jovially parked your behind in is the place of someone's death in another bomber makes you realize the history and the reality of the aircraft.

Today, the Sentimental Journey is an airborne tourist attraction, but it has a rich and deep history.

The history is evident in every section, nook, and cranny of the flying artifact. Carefully tucked in a storage unit above the navigator's desk is a laminated photo of 2Lt Hackley, left there by his daughter who visited the Sentimental Journey in Arizona.

The photo serves as a stark reminder of the impact of an airmen's death and the history of the B17 as a war machine.

I am sure many navigators and many more bombardiers seated in the noses of B17 Fighting Fortresses paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Flying in the nose of the plane in 2013, surrounded by fully restored weapons and ammunition, is an amazing experience. To see the weapons the aircraft is loaded with is to understand, at the tiniest level, the danger airmen flying found themselves in.

Thirteen .50 calibre guns and the capability of carrying thousands of pounds of bombs are loaded onto a plane less than 100-feet-long.

The unpressurized cabin meant the crew of about 10 men would fly at 35,000 feet cloaked in heated suits plugged into outlets while breathing through an oxygen hose.

Their flight was not the pleasant sight-seeing journey I experienced. It was a hellish, death-defying, risky affair — the kind of flight for which I am grateful to have not made myself.

The history of the B17's construction is also incredible. I was lucky enough to cross paths with Shelby Bolke, an American Warrant Officer's wife. Every now and then, being an army spouse will also pay off.

My "army wife connection" earned me a special behind-the-scenes tour of the tail gunner and a run-down of the building of the B17. Given my lack of mechanical ability, it impressed me to learn that as many as 12 B17 Fighting Fortresses were produced each day. These planes were constructed without many of the modern amenities used in construction today.

The B17 seems larger when its hands-on construction method is considered. To know nearly each rivet, screw, nut, and bolt was placed by hand makes the project seem almost daunting, yet 12 aircraft a day were produced at the height of its demand.

On top of constructing these fighting machines, the same women were responsible for ferrying the B17 to



front lines overseas. These women served whole-heartedly with little recognition. Many overcame extreme challenges to pilot the lumbering aircraft.

One pilot was shorter than the height requirement and was only approved as she wore her shoes. She flew her aircraft with couch cushions to permit her feet access to pedals and her eyesight over the flight deck.

These women, as Bolke explained, were expected to return to "baking cookies" after the war. For many years, the contributions to the war and the B17 went without recognition.

The Sentimental Journey, in its restored glory, serves as a window to another time. It's a beacon of historical significance for military members and civilians alike, as both offered their service to and on the B17.

As a military spouse, I am always intrigued by military history. To have a flight in an aircraft with a crew so passionate and knowledgeable makes for an educational and inspired flight. It makes you feel as if you've experienced a little piece of history.

For the crew of the Sentimental Journey, Aug. 21 was likely business as usual. It was another city, another flight, and another group of passengers. I suppose it would be the equivalent of a trip to the training range for me — exciting, but not out of the ordinary.

For myself, the military members, and the other journalists on board, our trip in the Sentimental Journey was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, a flight like no other.



Stag staffer Jillian Driessen sat in the front of the B17 Flying Fortress during its landing at the Brandon airport. When the US bomber built in November 1944 took off, the bombardier's seat was occupied by CFB Shilo soldier MCpl Cody Cameron. Driessen was all smiles after her 45-minute flight.

Photo by Jules Xavier

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Downward trend according to statistics Crime is not running rampant

"The lowest crime rate since 1972!" the headlines proclaimed in the media this summer.

Canada has seen a steady decline in the amount of police substantiated criminality during the last 40 years, with considerable drops in violent offences in the last decade.

So what is a police substantiated crime?

When a police agency in Canada concludes a file a determination is made on whether a crime did or did not occur. Where it is concluded a crime did occur, it is "substantiated."

A nationally-based system known as Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) is then used to capture this information.

Court convictions are not used as the mechanism of measure as there are many variables which may lead to no conviction in a court, but an actual offence did occur.

While using police information does not give a completely accurate picture, it does provide a common baseline from which to measure statistics.

Here in Shilo, we are not immune to this positive trend in reduced criminality.

From 2001 to now, the period that accurate electronic records are kept, there is a downwards trend in most types of crime.

This includes violent offences, alcohol related offences, National Defence Act offences where the Military Police are involved, and minor theft/mischief. Family violence-related offences have demonstrated a steady rate during the past decade, but occur at a reported rate less than the national average.

In an age where information can be quickly spread, and is not always vetted for accuracy, it is important to have an understanding of the actual picture of crime in our country.

While it is easy to read the papers or Facebook and believe that crime runs rampant in communities everywhere, this in fact is not the case.

Also impressive in this downwards trend in crime is a generally more diligent posture by police across the country, and an increased width of behaviour we consider criminal.

For example, some forms of bullying were generally socially acceptable in the 1980s, but could lead to charges in 2013. Tolerance for many other offences, such as family violence has also decreased.

How can you assist in keeping our crime rates low?

Under-reporting of illegal activity is considered the biggest hindrance to police effectively responding to all forms of crime.

When you observe behaviours that are illegal, call the police at 911 or the non-emergency line at 294-765-3337. Anonymous information can also be called into Crime Stoppers, 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or text "TIPMAN."

Capt Dane Nicholson is Platoon Commander 1 Military Police Regiment at CFB Shilo

CANADIAN
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NOTEBOOK

Shilo Emergency Services Promotions



Shilo Emergency Services had three promotions recently: Aaron Bull to FR-02 (Deputy Platoon Chief), Dave Danners to FR-03 (Platoon Chief) and Rick Bantchuk FR-02 (Deputy Platoon Chief).

Photos submitted

Knock at the door

Brandon-based Cumming & Dobbie started the demolition of seven duplexes on the Base, with PMQs 38 and 40 falling Aug. 27. It took less than 90 minutes to bring the duplex on Kingston Avenue down. Here, the front door of PMQ 38 is crushed. Built in the early '50s, the PMQs being taken down this year are part of phase three of the removal of defunct military homes. Before they could come down, however, the asbestos had to be removed.
Photo by Jules Xavier





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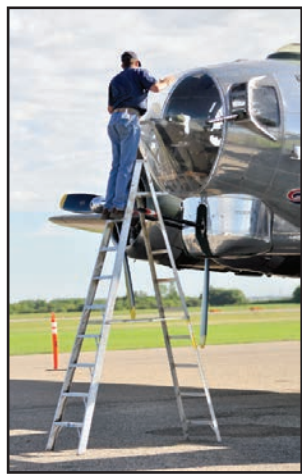
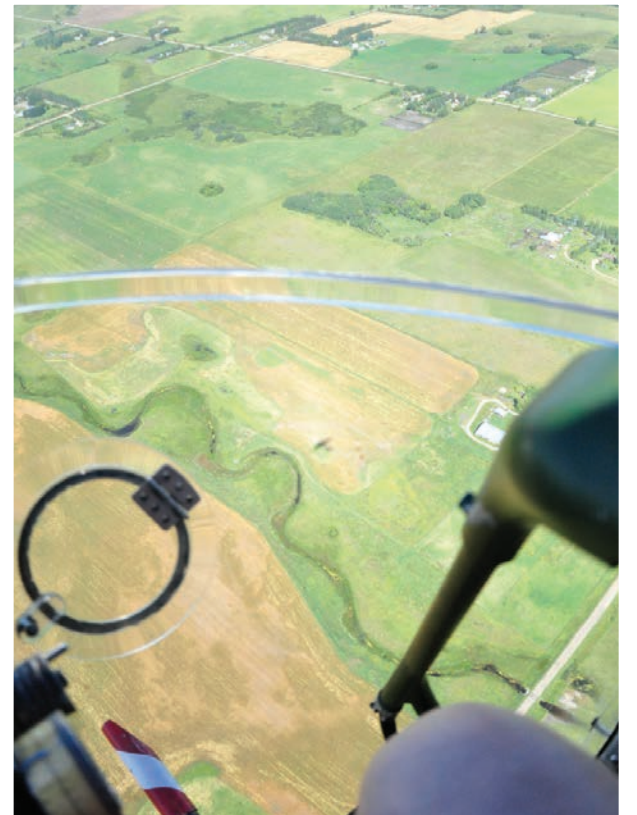
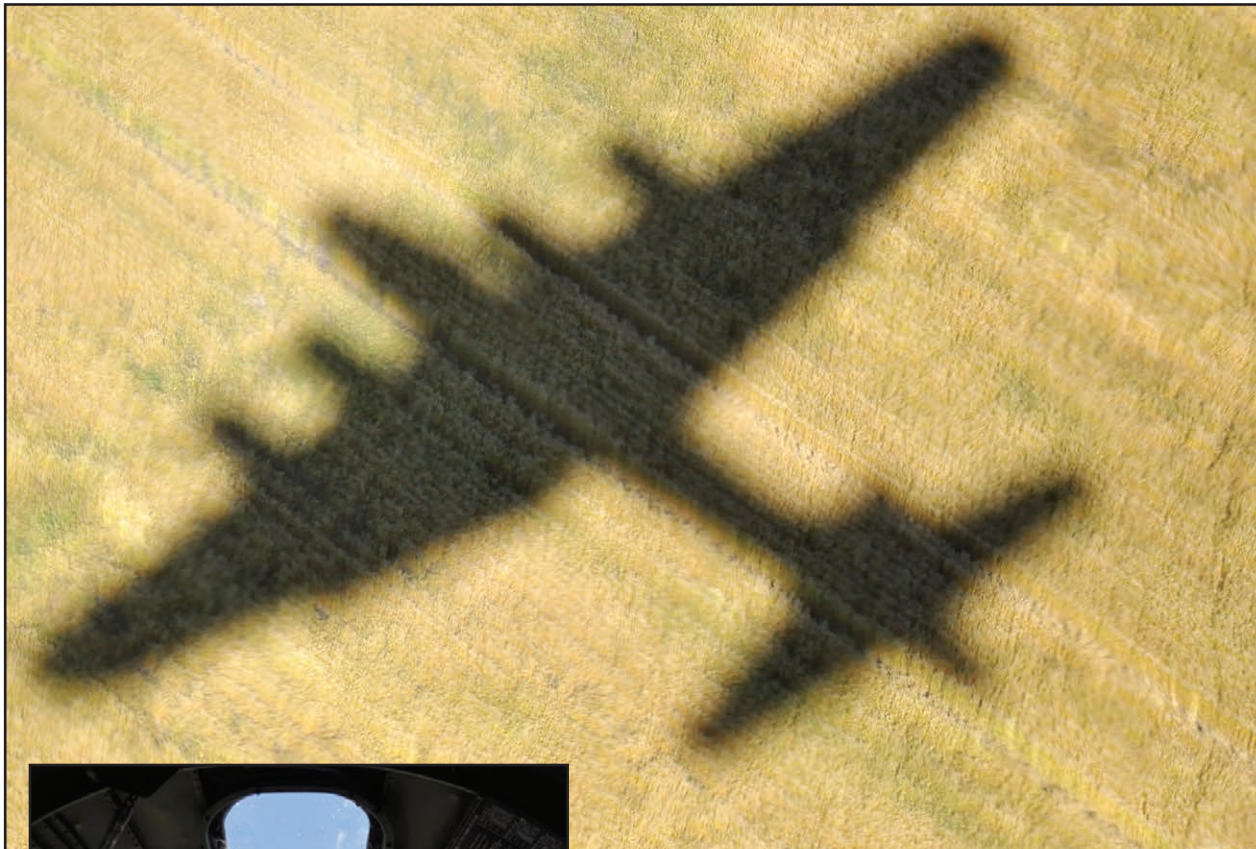
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Taking flight in a B17 Flying Fortress



Stag staffer Jillian Driessen and Shilo soldier MCpl Cody Cameron were invited to enjoy a ride over Brandon in this Second World War US bomber



Photos by Jules Xavier & Jillian Driessen



The B17 Flying Fortress known as Sentimental Journey waits on the runway while another aircraft lands at the Brandon Airport.

Photos by Jules Xavier

Jillian Driessen Shilo Stag

Sentimental Journey, a B17 Flying Fortress, is still cruising the skies nearly 70 years after rolling off the assembly line.

Built in November 1944, Sentimental Journey has flown in many capacities. After serving in the Pacific, she was used briefly as an air-sea rescue vessel in Florida before being sold and used as a forest fire bomber that dropped retardant on the flames below.

In 1978, upon its formation, the Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force received Sentimental Journey as a donation.

Given to them in what Shelly Bolke calls "scrap metal" condition, the fighting fortress was completely restored to its Second World War configuration.

Since her restoration, Sentimental Journey tours about 60 cities each summer and is on static display throughout the winter in Arizona.

One city added to this year's North American tour was Brandon where it was part of the air show held at the Commonwealth Air Training Plan Museum.

One soldier lucky enough to land a spot in the nose of the defunct bomber was MCpl Cody Cameron.

Along with two airmen from Portage La Prairie — part of 15 Wing Cold Lake — MCpl Cameron was joined by the *Stag* and several other media outlets for a 45-minute flight over Brandon.

"I was extremely excited to even be nominated to attend this," said MCpl Cameron. "Just to go where those gentlemen back in the day who fought the good

war were and to fly where they flew and see what they saw is exhilarating. I just can't quite put it into words."

MCpl Cameron was chosen for the flight as one of many deserving soldiers.

Sgt (ret'd) Linda Tollas, who was once posted to CFB Shilo, contacted the Base looking for one soldier deserving of the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

MCpl Cameron, who works as a heavy equipment operator at Base Transport, is described as a well-rounded soldier and a strong leader. He is responsible for the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) section and has found himself responsible for several large tasks on Base in the last year.

He was responsible for several tasks on the ranges as well as the repair of the shoulders on Shilo's roads.

Cameron found himself seated in the nose of the plane surrounded by .50 calibre machine guns mounted to the 65,000-pound beast.

The quarters were cramped for the tall Shilo soldier. His head grazed the metal frame of the plane as he took his seat in the nose of the aircraft. While seated, elbow and leg room was just as limited.

The advantage to Cameron's perch: An incredible view. With a wide open view from the bombardier seat, MCpl Cameron took Westman in from a truly unique seat.

The experience was a fair compensation for the cramped seating.

Despite the incredible flight, the highlight for him was touring the entire plane.

"My favourite part was walking from the nose to the bomb-bay and to the rear. To see where they were and

where they walked and to have the whole overview of what these gentlemen did is great," he explained. "It was a lot of fun."

MCpl Cameron took in the entire plane, front to back, guided by Laz Tollas, who gave him and others lucky enough to be on the flight, the condensed history of the war-time bomber which saw plenty of action over Nazi Germany.

Having been restored to its original condition, the four-prop bomber is an incredible historical artifact. With only a few chairs added to accommodate paying customers, the plane is all original.

The specifications were provided by Bombardier for the wing's use and were strictly adhered to. Seats, weapons, ammunition, and all accessories reflect the original build.

The reality of the 10-man crew who once manned this 74-foot-long, 1,200-horsepower flying fortress is cramped quarters, a bouncy flight, and perilous journeys when it came to surveying attacks from the German Luftwaffe in the air, or the German anti-aircraft guns from below.

Today, the Sentimental Journey is one of about 50 B17 Flying Fortresses still in existence — a stark difference from the 12,731 that were originally built.

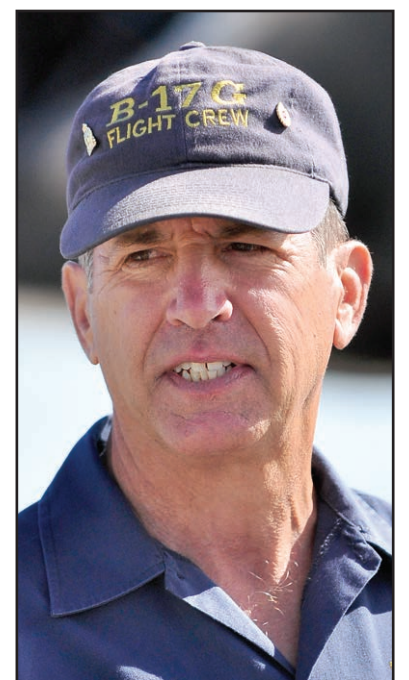
With so few in existence and a high cost of operation, a flight in the Sentimental Journey is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, especially for those passengers who had parents or relatives who once flew in the B17 Flying Fortress.

For further information regarding the Sentimental Journey and the Commemorative Air Force, visit www.azcaf.org



"Just to go where those gentlemen back in the day who fought the good war were and to fly where they flew and see what they saw is exhilarating. I just can't quite put it into words."

— MCpl Cody Cameron



Before each flight, pilot Jim Kimmel would do chin-ups (far left) on the forward machine guns.

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GOVERNMENT OF CANADA MP SERVICE

After 9 years as the Member of Parliament for Brandon-Souris, Merv Tweed announced that he is resigning his seat effective August 31, 2013.

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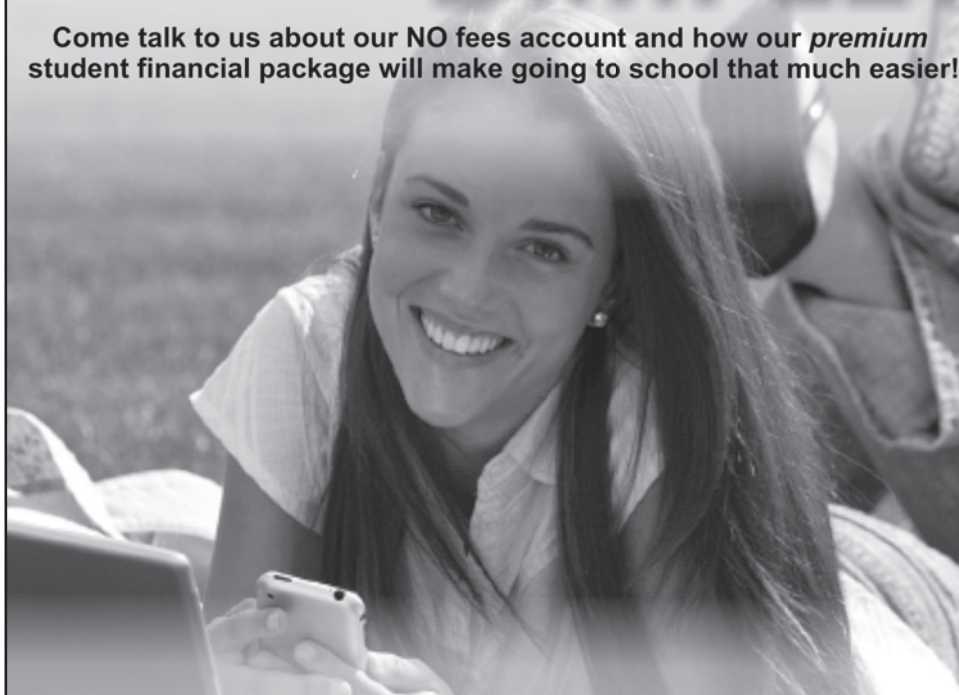
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GSH venue for free film festival Sept. 9

Shilo Stag

Are you a film buff interested in Canada's involvement in the Afghanistan war?

If so, you will not want to miss Afghanistan: A Soldier's Story when it arrives Sept. 9 at the GSH. And it's free, with shows running from 1 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m.

More titles from the film festival are still to be confirmed, but here's what will be running that day here on the Base.

• *Desert Lions: Canadian Forces Mentors in Kandahar (one hour, English)*

Filmed in the heart of Taliban country by army reservist and former CBC reporter Mike Vernon, Desert Lions is an on-the-ground look at Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan.

Stationed in Nakhonay, one of the deadliest regions in Kandahar Province, Vernon documents the daily lives of the Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT), which provides training and support to the Afghan National Army (ANA).

OMLT is more than just a team of mentors.

Living in a converted school in the center of the city, the team shares jobs, meals and even living quarters with its ANA counterparts.

That camaraderie isn't always easy, and Vernon captures the tension that comes from culture clashes, 40-degree heat and the constant threat of attack.

An honest, unvarnished view of military life, Desert Lions is as close as most of us will come to understanding the efforts of our dedicated soldiers abroad.

• *The Van Doos in Afghanistan (44 minutes, English/French)*

In this Claude Guilmain documentary, we hear directly from franco-phone soldiers serving in the Royal 22e Régiment (known in English as Van Doos) who were filmed in the field in March 2011, during their deployment to Afghanistan.

They speak simply and directly about their work, whether on patrol or performing their duties at the base.

The film's images and interviews bring home the complexity of the issues on the ground and shed light on the little-understood experiences of the men and women who served in Afghanistan.

• *Waging Peace: Canada in Afghanistan (53 minutes, English)*

This film follows Canadian Richard Fitoussi on a personal quest into the fiercest parts of Afghanistan's war-torn southern frontier to learn why Canadian soldiers are dying in a mission that has sparked more controversy than any other military intervention in Canadian history.

Embedded with the Canadian military alongside established war correspondents, Fitoussi sees for himself what is at stake for the Afghan people and the Canadians who serve in our name.

As his journey unfolds, Fitoussi is faced with the realities of modern day peacekeeping, and tries to distinguish between the reality on the ground and the rhetoric of the US-led "war on terror."

In the end he witnesses the ultimate sacrifice of young Canadians in a journey that nearly costs him his life.

Why hold this film festival? It came about because of another project.

The best way to get someone to tell you their story is to first share a story with them. This past month, volunteers with the Afghan book project launched a cross-Canada, mini-film festival showcasing the human stories of the Canadian mission in Afghanistan.

The intent was to get those who served to share their stories with our legacy album. The films are travelling with a portable theatre and there is no charge to show them to the public.

Any funding donated to the project is being set aside for publication of the legacy album Afghanistan: A Soldier's Story, which is a volunteer, not-for-profit, non-DND initiative launched in August 2010, to collect the stories and images of the men and women who have served Canada in Afghanistan since 2001.

The collection will be published Nov. 11, 2014, in a legacy album that will be distributed through Chapters Indigo.

Net proceeds from sales of the book will go to the Edmonton MFRC, financial administrator of the project, for distribution to the Boomers Legacy Foundation, the Military Family Fund and the Soldier On Fund.

More information on this project can be found at www.afghanistancanadianstory.ca



Civilians garner awards

Two CFB Shilo civilian employees earned quarterly awards in 2012, while a third was named civilian of the year. (L-r) Al Dunham was named civilian of the quarter covering January to March, while Richard Kelland copped the same plaudit covering October to December. Max Bratzke received the civilian of the year award for his commitment and effort to improving the Base and surrounding community. He was a catalyst in CFB Shilo's inaugural year of Communities in Bloom, and his efforts could be seen in the high-quality grounds maintenance throughout the Base and RTA. With the new implementation of new equipment, Dunham reduced disposal costs as the Base's hazmat co-ordinator. His efforts will continue to save CFB Shilo more than \$24,000 annually. Like Dunham, Kelland also works for Base Supply. He was recognized for preparing Shilo's supply system for the DRMIS rollout.

Photos by Jules Xavier

Play with savvy to save money in fall

Tricia French
Stag Special

It takes savvy money management to survive the onslaught of fall expenses. The good thing about the soaring expenses between September and December is that they're predictable: Kids always go back to school in September, Thanksgiving is always in October, and Christmas is always on the 25th of December. Fortunately, it's much easier to plan for events you know will happen.

How can you plan to not just survive but thrive? Use these three steps to put together your plan: Review, Reflect, & Rework.

First, REVIEW your spending over the same time period last year by looking at receipts, cash withdrawal slips, and bank and credit card statements. We

usually underestimate what we spend, so checking your previous year's spending helps you be accurate and realistic.

Second, REFLECT on whether you'll spend the same amount this year. If you were comfortable with the amount you spent, great! If spending got out of hand, strained your budget, or added to your debt load, then now's the chance to commit to a new spending limit. A spending limit ensures you don't carry costs of those events well into the New Year, often costing hundreds of dollars in interest.

Once you've decided what you're going to spend, the final step is to REWORK your budget to set aside money for those expenses. It's much easier to save a little at a time over the year and it's never too late to get into the habit.

Try these reliable strategies for saving for planned expenses. Earmark a bank account specifically for

savings for annual expenses like back-to-school costs, sports registrations, or holiday spending. Start an automatic deposit of a set amount into a savings account each pay using online banking or a pay allotment.

Don't feel you're a good saver? Try these tricks that are hard to sabotage. Buy a gift a month to prepare for birthdays or Christmas. Buy gift certificates or gift cards from retailers throughout the year to help with the increased spending demands during the holidays. You can even set up an automatic withdrawal with your employer for Canada Savings Bonds and cash them annually to pay for your holiday expenses.

Setting up a system takes a bit of time and practice. Security comes from knowing you can afford what you and your family value without getting into debt.

This article is for general information purposes only and is the opinion of the writer, Tricia French, who is a financial counsellor with Edmonton-based SISIP Financial Services



Taking aim 'playing soldier'

The airsoft club meets on weekends on the Base, with participants honing their tactical shooting skills while well protected. But it's not like paintball games, with participants using an array of weapons, from rifle to handguns. To learn more about the club and what you need to join, contact Ian Moore (ext 3420) or Jason Prefontaine (ext 3551) on the Base.

Photo by Hugo Girouard

Independent tribunal offers avenue of appeal

Shilo Stag
Special

Have you heard about the Veterans Review and Appeal Board?

This organization is the independent tribunal that offers an avenue of appeal for disability benefits decisions made by Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC). It exists to support you in receiving the disability benefits you are entitled to.

Remember, this organization is not Veterans Affairs Canada. To offer you a fair appeal process, it is an entirely separate and independent organization.

It holds hearings and writes decisions for two levels of redress: review and appeal.

The review hearing is your first and only chance to appear before decision-makers to speak about your case. The hearing is non-adversarial, which means no one argues against you.

If you are dissatisfied with your review decision, you can request an appeal hearing. This is another chance for you, through your representative, to submit new information and arguments in support of your case.

If you are dissatisfied with a VAC decision on disability benefits, this organization can take a completely new

look at your case. Its impartial decision-makers will make a full and fair examination of your file.

They will: listen to your testimony; ask questions to better understand your case; and weigh all the evidence — including any new information you provide.

They will then write a decision with reasons for their ruling.

How often does the board rule favourably? It rules favourably in about half of its review decisions and 33 per cent of its appeal decisions. Last year alone, more than 2,100 individuals were awarded new or increased disability benefits by the board.

The Government of Canada provides you with a lawyer — free of charge — to help you prepare your case and make arguments on your behalf. If you think you may want to bring your case to the board, contact the Bureau of Pensions Advocates for advice at 1-877-228-2250.

You can also seek representation from the Royal Canadian Legion's service bureau at 1-877-534-4666.

Or, for more general support or information on disability benefits and services, you can visit your local Integrated Personnel Support Centre (IPSC).

For more information visit www.vrab-tacra.gc.ca or call 1-800-450-8006.



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Morning march for soldiers

Training on the Base this summer has been busy for young soldiers honing their soldiering skills. Here, a group march along a road in the early morning. Infantry training has seen soldiers learn various skills, including spending time on the range firing the C7, or testing their mettle firing heavier artillery.

Photo by Jules Xavier

Two decades ago: Remember Medak Pocket? 2PPCLI commemorate intense battle during major Croatian offensive

Shilo Stag

In March 1993, the Second Battalion Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (2PPCLI), comprising a significant number of Reserve Force personnel, departed for its first six-month peacekeeping tour in the former Yugoslavia.

In Sector South of the UN Protection Force's operations area, the heavily Serbian population had come under increasing Croatian military pressure.

The Erdut Agreement, which created a ceasefire in Sector South, was very tenuous at best.

In September, the UN Protection Force commander ordered the Second Battalion to deploy in order to bring stability to the area.

Within hours of arriving in Sector South, the 2PPCLI Commanding Officer (CO) LCol James Calvin and his force met a major Croatian offensive in the area known as the "Medak Pocket."

As the Canadian and French peacekeepers moved into position, they were attacked by Croatian forces and returned fire to defend themselves.

With an intense standoff ensuing, LCol Calvin even-

Medak Pocket background

The battle of the Medak Pocket was part of a military operation undertaken by the Croatian Army from Sept. 9 to 17, in 1993 to create a salient into the south suburbs of Gospija, in the south-central Lika region, and the village of Medak.

The Croatian offensive temporarily succeeded in expelling rebel Serb forces from the pocket after several days of fighting. The operation ended in controversy after a skirmish with UN peacekeepers and allegations of serious Croatian war crimes against local Serb civilians.

UNPROFOR personnel, largely composed of the 2PPCLI Battle Group (BG), and Croatian troops exchanged heavy fire, and at the time, the battle was considered to be one of the most intense actions since the Korean War.

Composition of the 2PPCLI BG of 875 soldiers was composed of more than 55 per cent Reservists.

Consequently, the contribution of the Reserve Force was a key enabler to the success of the 2PPCLI BG at Medak.

tually called forward a group of international reporters that had arrived at the scene and pointed out to them that the Croatian army commander was not abiding by the terms of the ceasefire agreement.

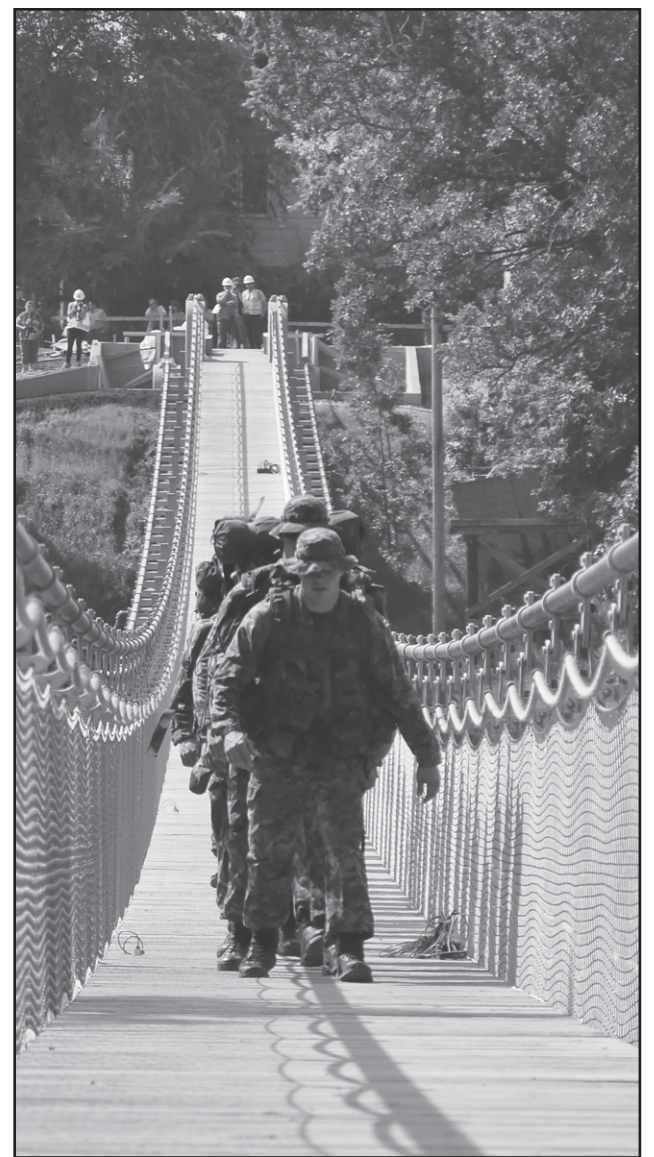
The appearance of the reporters had the desired effect and Croatian forces allowed the battalion to enter the zone. What the members of 2PPCLI saw during those days was horrific.

The Croatian forces had, during the course of the past week, completely laid to waste the Serb villages. Canadian soldiers were able to gather ample evidence of the atrocities that had taken place.

As part of the Government of Canada's Road to 2017: 150th anniversary of Confederation, the Department of National Defence (DND) has been tasked to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the battle of the Medak Pocket.

Commemorations will consist of ceremonial events at CFB Shilo Sept. 13, as well as an exhibit in Alberta of the Bosnia Memorial Stones at the Military Museum of Calgary.

The ceremony on the Base will be held at 10 a.m. on the Korea parade square.



Bridge testing

Members of 2PPCLI were invited to march on the new Souris swing bridge as part of the load testing. The bridge will officially open in 2014 once all work is completed.

Photo by Jillian Driessen

Shilo Theatre
(Located in the General Strange Hall)

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Children aged 10 and younger require adult supervision at all times

Doors open 15 minutes prior to movie start time
For more info, contact the community recreation office at 204-765-3000 ext 3317/3588

Cliff Cullen, MLA
Spruce Woods Constituency

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Promoted

Lt McInnis has reason to smile after being promoted to lieutenant.



Summer training

Soldiers hone their rescue skills on the "battlefield" during training east of Base headquarters.
Photo by Jules Xavier

Plenty to do if you are posted to CFB Shilo

Carolyn Senchuk-Lavergne
 Stag Special

It is the season of postings and adjustment. Living in beautiful CFB Shilo can offer both challenges and rewards, and how you and your family approach living on the Base is a determining factor in your quality of life.

There are many ways to make living here the best possible experience. A good place to start is building friendships and community. Get to know your neighbours.

Other military families seek the same things you do, including a sense of community and wholesome family activities.

Reach out to these families for friendship, education about life here, and a general sense of belonging. Take advantage of programs available at the Shilo MFRC.

Visit www.familyforce.ca to view our ever-changing calendar of events, or better yet, drop by and speak with our staff about your family's interests.

Get to know your new home. Visit www.cfha-alfc.forces.gc.ca to learn about your housing policies or use the link on the MFRC website.

Keep a list of maintenance and emergency phone numbers handy. Make sure the list is posted where they can see it easily. Make your PMQ your home.

Although regulations can make it more challenging to personalize your home, there are many acceptable, creative ways to make your resident reflect you and your family.

Brandon is home to Brandon University and Assiniboine Community College. Why not engage with college-level courses or continuing education classes.

The MFRC's employment and education co-ordinator can help get you on the right track.

There are also community groups and MFRC classes always being offered here.

You may want to get a job to bring in extra money and make the most of your free time. Again, visit www.familyforce.ca to learn more about education and employment services and support staff. You don't have to figure this out all alone.

Opportunities to volunteer are everywhere. Local service clubs, schools, MFRC — the list of organizations in need of additional help is endless, and the feeling of giving back to your community is priceless.

It is also a great opportunity to meet others and it looks great on a resume.

Exercise and keep fit. The PSP staff offer a number of classes and would be more than willing to speak with you about your fitness needs. Exercise helps keeps you fit — both physically and emotionally.

It's also a good way to meet other people. Remember that everyone needs a little help and support at times. MFRC counsellors are here to listen.

We have three counsellors on staff to address a variety of issues related to military life.

Elaine assists children and youth, while Renee is our adult and family counsellor. Carolyn works with family of ill and injured military members.

Feel free to call any one of our counsellors to discuss your unique needs.

Carolyn Senchuk-Lavergne is the family liaison officer at the Shilo MFRC

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Volunteer Opportunities

First Shilo Scouts is seeking First Aid Trainers and Computer savvy individuals interested in volunteering time to instruct Cubs and Scouts (Ages 8-13) on these Badges. Contact Linda at 204-765-3000 ext 3396

1ST Shilo Scouts is looking for individuals who like children, outdoors, hiking, camping, and crafting to become leaders. Contact Linda at 204-765-3000 ext 3396

Homes For Sale

Wawanesa - Great 3+1, 2 bath, bungalow with insulated double attached garage. Many updates including windows, bath, flooring, \$ newer siding. Two decks on very private large lot. A pleasure to show. MLS# 1315809 Call Bob Daymond Sutton Harrison Realty for more info. 204-571-5918

Homes for Sale

Wawanesa - Well-maintained 3+1 bungalow, large eat-in kitchen with double insulated & heated detached garage (22 x24). Many updates in the last two years, ideally located on large treed lot close to Waterpark. MLS # 1311181. Call Bob Daymond Sutton Harrison Realty for more info. 204-571-5918

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Focus on photo contest with submission by Oct. 1

Shilo Stag

Whether it's for work or fun, we all love to take photographs, but what makes a truly great photo?

Is it excellent technique, an engaging subject matter, great timing or an emotional draw? For 45 years it has been the job of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) photography contest judges to answer that question.

Each year, highly qualified individuals from multi-disciplinary backgrounds are invited to judge thousands of contest submissions and use their expertise to select the best images of the year.

This year, MWO (ret) Christian Coulombe will join the judging panel, bringing years of experience and his unique passion and perspective to contest.

"I look forward to the challenge of being a judge this year. Photography is important for the CAF as it forever captures moments in time of what the soldiers, sailors, airmen and airwomen are doing," he says.

As a judge, what will he be looking for?

"The quality of the image itself, sharpness, and structure of composition," Coulombe offers. "Does the image display an angle or aspect never seen before?"

The context of the image and its emotional impact are also very important to Coulombe.

"I will look for images that reflect an event that is so close to our heart that even without reading the caption, I am moved, disturbed, informed, or so close that I can feel the joy or pain that the people in the image actually feel."

The judging of the entries takes place Oct. 9 and 10 at the National Research Council campus in Ottawa, and visitors are welcome.

Do you have a great image to share?

There is still time to enter the contest and see if your photos will catch a judge's eye.

The CAF photography contest is accepting submissions until Oct. 1, so don't delay.

Photographers will be eligible to win a selection of great prizes, and each contest participant also be entered into a grand prize draw for a round trip anywhere in Canada, courtesy of Via Rail.

For full contest rules, eligibility criteria, and to enter, visit www.cafphotocontest.ca



Reflecting on a Good Day (above) earned Capt Zacharie Charbonneau a first-place in the military life advanced category. Cpl Isabelle Provost finished third in same category in 2012 with her image titled *Vaincre*. Photos submitted





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