

SPIRIT

783 (Calgary) Wing Newsletter

***ROYAL CANADIAN
AIR FORCE
ASSOCIATION***

www.783afacwingcalgary.ca



***Wing Meets every
4th Tuesday at 7pm
285 Legion Horton Road
and virtually***



MEET THE TEAM

<http://783afacwingcalgary.ca/>

Chairperson	Rob Caswell
Honorary Chairperson	Col (Retd) Don Matthews
Immediate Past Chairperson	Randy Fisher
First Vice Chairperson	Michelle Gerwing
Second Vice Chairperson	Scott Deederly
Treasurer	Kenn Nixon
Secretary	Cecilia Brugma
Past Chairs Advisory Council	Pat Sulek
Casino Chairperson	Darlene Laroche
Friends of Col Belcher	Pat Sulek
Membership	Anna Lewis
Newsletter	Bev Spielman/Michelle Gerwing
Health and Wellness	Michele Henderson
Sergeant at Arms	Art Hill
Entertainment Chair	Muriel Mymko
Public Relations	Bob Wade
Military Museum Liaison	Bob Wade
Cadet Liaison	Kevin Knight
Advocacy	Scott Deederly
Historian	Grant Whitson
Webmaster/Social Media	Kent Anderson





Message from the Chairperson



Spring is here (we hope) and we move into a final push of activity for the Wing and our constituents as we dream of the summer months ahead. It's hard to believe that there are just a couple of meetings between us and our own AGM as we have found our stride returning to in-person meetings (with a web option!) and events.

I have immense gratitude for all of those making the work of 783 Wing shine. Our Past President's Committee along with our steadfast Treasurer gave us spectacular recommendations on how to support other agencies and groups that align with, or further, the RCAF Association mission. This includes support to new installations at the Air Force Museum of Alberta; the upcoming work at the Colonel Belcher with the library project Bob Wade is spearheading; and our perennial support to the RCAF Mess Dinner which was held on 24 March (with a flight jacket beer call the night before).

Our next big showing will be the Alberta Group AGM, which will coincide with a dinner as part of our Charter event for 2023. We have a great guest speaker lined-up from STARS Air Ambulance, and hopefully a few other surprises we can share soon, including the Alberta Group Awards! The dinner will be \$25 at the Hotel Blackfoot who always puts on a good show for us, and is certainly a nice way to really embrace spring.

Please remember to RSVP to Kenn Nixon (kbnixon@shaw.ca) by April 15. I hope to see as many 783 Wing members there as possible.

Per Ardua Ad Astra

Rob Caswell CD, AdeC
Chairman
783 (Calgary) Wing



Happy Birthday to you (Mar/Apr)

Bryndis Whitson	6 Mar
Keith Mann	8 Mar
Scott Deederly	10 Mar
Muriel Mymko	10 Mar
Mary Lou Nikolaisen	11 Mar
Kent Anderson	13 Mar
Carol Ann Neale	13 Mar
Darlene Laroche	16 Mar
James Third	22 Mar
Allan Collins	27 Mar
Maurice Balych	1 Apr
Norm Harvey	1 Apr
James Bristowe	5 Apr
Robert Ross	6 Apr
Brian Lewis	7 Apr
Gerry Morrison	11 Apr
Helen Hill	12 Apr
Randy Fisher	17 Apr
David Downs	23 Apr
Tom Lemon	25 Apr



Donation Cheque Presentations



Representing the 187 Foothills Squadron
Lt Dave Morieta
Mrs. Sonja Perkins
WO2 Perkins



The Military Museum Foundation
Jackie Jansen van Doorn



Friends of Col Belcher
Marcia Quinn



St Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Sobor
Yulia Garbach



Homes for Heroes
Mr. Kyle Claperton



Royal Canadian Legion Br 285
Mr Rob Danberger



The Air Force Museum Society of Alberta
Alison Mercer
John Argue
Don Matthews



The group minus the Air Force Museum Society of Alberta. The cheques were presented at the meeting in February.

Member Profile—Michelle Gerwing

Someone suggested I tell you a bit about myself this month, so here it goes...

I grew up in a small farming community in Saskatchewan called Lake Lenore. My great grandfather founded the town, so there are lots of Gerwings there! On completion of high school, I moved to Saskatoon and entered nursing school. My first job was at what is now the Royal University Hospital. I worked in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) which provided great experience I used throughout my career. In 1982, I decided to join the Canadian Forces as a nurse. Basic training is not a fond memory as I was injured, but I obviously made it through. My first posting was the ICU at NDMC in Ottawa. I was young, there were lots of other young people in quarters and we made the best of it. There was a lot of partying, crud playing, sing a longs, and trips in the Challenger (it was great having a friend who was a pilot as he took a group of us to a lot of interesting places in the Maritimes while they trekked off to move Ministers from one place to another. In between, we got dropped off to see tall ships, to spend afternoons on beaches in Newfoundland.... Those were the days when that was acceptable.

My next posting was to Summerside, PEI where our main jobs were to care for the staff on the base and to provide air ambulance service to the Maritimes. I did nearly 120 medical evacuations while there. It was a fun place to live and explore the Maritimes. (Summerside closed shortly thereafter)

From PEI, I went to the medical school in Borden, Ont where I taught the Medical Assistants. Classes were nonstop and there was a firehose method of teaching. We filled 8 hours a day with so much information, I am surprised they remembered anything!

I then moved to Portage la Prairie, Man where I was the Senior Nursing Officer on the base. It was a short posting of a year as they required someone with teaching experience to go to Lahr, Germany to teach the clinical portion of the training for the nurses and Medical Assistants. It was a tremendous hardship, but I agreed to leave Manitoba and move to Germany. (Portage closed shortly thereafter as a base)

Life in Germany was amazing! I traveled to many countries in Europe, and went to Africa and the Middle East. There are so many fantastic memories of my time there. One of my fondest is when my parents wanted to come to visit. They planned their trip and I told them everything would cost about \$10,000. They started cutting down on things when my Dad won \$10,000 on a scratch ticket! Wow, did we have fun. We travelled to Prague and Paris, they travelled to Rome, the Netherlands, day trips in Germany, to Austria, and spent a week at a

week at a chalet in Switzerland. It was a dream come true for them. I left Germany as Baden closed and Lahr was closing (do you see a pattern there??)

It was then time to go back to school and obtain my degree in nursing (which was not an issue when I completed school, but had become one). Shortly after completing the degree, I was posted to Cold Lake as the Senior Nurse on the Wing. It was a great experience despite the fighter pilots (for all of you in the Wing).

I was then promoted to Major and could no longer work as a nurse on a base. My options were to become a Health Services Officer or remain a Major for life. As it turned out, it did not matter too much. I spent two years planning training for the Regular and Reserve forces at the Medical Group Headquarters (back in the building that was NDMC and in an office that was a patient room when I worked on that unit. I just had to tell my friends the name of the patient who had occupied the room for quite some time and they knew immediately which room was my office). I then went on to be the Career Manager for the Nursing Officers, Personal Selection Officers and Dental Officers. I learned a lot about dentistry over the next two years!

At this point, I retired to follow my spouse to the US and we spent a year living in Montgomery, Alabama. I had a glorious year helping at my children's school, learning to golf and quilting. I loved retirement!

Eventually all good things come to an end and I ended up going back to work as the Chief of Staff to the Wing Commander in Cold Lake. It was the best job I have had and I spent four years doing it as a Reservist. I then moved to Okotoks and spent the next five years in an equally great role as Aide-de-Camp to the Lt Gen of Alberta, who at the time was Col (retd) Don Ethell. I learned a lot from the Ethells.

When I am not volunteering, I work for Alberta Health Services (AHS) at both Rockyview General Hospital and South Health Campus. During my time in AHS, I was fortunate enough to complete my Masters in Nursing. I now spend my Air Force time divided between the Wing and the Air Force Museum.



From many years ago, but I still love the picture. These are my sons Eric, Marc, and Daniel (now 27, 26 and 24)

Your laugh for the day...

Don't be worried about your Smartphone or TV spying on you. Your vacuum cleaner has been collecting dirt on you for years.

If you can't think of a word just say, "I forgot the English word for it." That way people will think you're bilingual instead of an idiot.

I'm at a place in my life where errands are starting to count as going out.

I'm getting tired of being part of a major historical event.

I don't always go the extra mile, but when I do it's because I missed my exit.

At what point can we just start using 2020 as profanity (think COVID)? As in: "That's a load of 2020." or "What in the 2020." or "abso-2020-lutely."

My goal for 2023 was to lose 10 kilos. Only have 14 to go.

Ate salad for dinner. Mostly croutons and tomatoes. Really just one big round crouton covered with tomato sauce, and cheese. FINE, it was a pizza.... OK, I ate a pizza!

Senility has been a smooth transition for me.

Remember back when we were kids and every time it was below 30 outside they closed school?

Yeah, Me neither.

I may not be that funny or athletic or good looking or smart or talented.... I forgot where I was going with this.

I love approaching 80, I learn something new every day and forget 5 other things.

A thief broke into my house last night. He started searching for money so I got up and searched with him.

I think I'll just put an "Out of Order" sticker on my forehead and call it a day.

Just remember, once you're over the hill you begin to pick up speed. -

Having plans sounds like a good idea until you have to put on clothes and leave the house.

It's weird being the same age as old people.

When I was a kid I wanted to be older... this is not what I expected.

Life is like a helicopter. I don't know how to operate a helicopter.

It's probably my age that tricks people into thinking I'm an adult.

Marriage Counsellor: Your wife says you never buy her flowers. Is that true? Me: To be honest, I never knew she sold flowers.

Never sing in the shower! Singing leads to dancing, dancing leads to slipping, and slipping leads to paramedics seeing you naked. So remember... Don't sing!

Coronacoaster: noun; the ups and downs of a pandemic.

One day you're loving your bubble, doing work outs, baking banana bread and going for long walks and the next you're crying, drinking gin for breakfast and missing people you don't even like.

I'm at that age where my mind still thinks I'm 29, my humour suggests I'm 12, while my body mostly keeps asking if I'm sure I'm not dead yet.

You don't realize how old you are until you sit on the floor and then try to get back up.

We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more information in our heads.

Carrot Nut Cake

2 cups all-purpose flour 1 ½ cup brown sugar

2 tsp baking powder 4 eggs

1 tsp baking soda 1/2cup sugar

1 tsp salt 3 cups grated carrots

2 tsp cinnamon 1 cup raisins

1 tsp all spice ½ cup finely chopped walnuts

1 cup oil

Preheat oven to 325 degrees, oil the pan. Sift flour, baking powder, soda, salt, spices. Add sugar

gradually to oil in another bowl. Add eggs one at a time and beat well. Continue beating until smooth.

Gradually stir in dry ingredients. Add carrots, nuts. Bake at 325 about 55-60 minutes. Allow to cool

about 20 minutes, before removing from pan.

Cream Cheese Icing

Cream Cheese 4oz. 125g

Butter or Margarine ¼ cup 60 ml

Vanilla 1 tsp 5 ml

Icing Sugar 2 cups 500 ml

Beat cream cheese, butter and vanilla well. Add sugar gradually, beating until fluffy. Spread over cake. May be doubled to ice a 2 layer cake or simply because of more good icing.



reminder

From your Membership Director:

Please contact Anna Lewis, our Director of Membership, if you change any contact info at bandalewis@shaw.ca

From your Health and Wellness Director

All Wing members already receive birthday cards. Do you know of anyone in our membership who would appreciate receiving a card of congratulations, or perhaps a card to raise their spirits? Greetings could be sent for many reasons, such as:

- a “milestone” birthday*
- best wishes for someone in hospital or convalescing at home*
- bereavement on the passing of a Wing member*
- retirement*
- graduation*
- marriage*
- a special wedding anniversary*
- receiving recognition and/or winning an award*

All members are encouraged to contact Michèle Henderson at michlorr@shaw.ca at any time during the year with the person’s name, the event, and the date on which it is to be recognized.

A quick reminder that our casino will be held the 13th and 14th Apr at the Elbow River Casino.

Our Alberta Group AGM will be held the 21st and 22nd of April at the Blackfoot Inn. The banquet and Charter Tea will be held on the 22nd. Please contact Kenn Nixon by 15 Apr to book tickets at kbnixon@shaw.ca.