

Spotlighting success and achievement at Canadian/Military Family Resource Centres across the country and around the world

Strength through Partnership

**Submitted by Tara Bayne,
Halifax MFRC**

Providing services for military family members is a crucial part of preparing the deploying member for duty. Through partnerships and excellence in programming, Military Family Resource Centres (MFRCs) work in partnership with the military and civilian organizations to provide family services.

The Halifax MFRC and Maritime Forces Atlantic (MARLANT) was recently recognized by the Director of Military Family Services Program (DMFS) for their partnership by being selected to present Deployment Support for Families: Strength through Partnership at the NATO Symposium: Human Dimensions in Military Operations, hosted in Brussels, Belgium.

Representing the Halifax and Shearwater MFRCs were Executive Director Colleen Calvert and Assistant Deployment Coordinator Bernie Mullin-Splude. They were joined by Celine Thompson, DMFS and Capt (N) G. Switzer of MARLANT

"All MFRCs should be incredibly proud that Canada is years ahead of the nations present," said Celine Thompson. "Most of these nations are where we were in 1985 when



it comes to family support during deployment." Since 1991, DMFS has developed guidelines and policies and worked with bases and MFRCs to provide standardization of programs and services for military families throughout Canada.

"I was honoured to represent MFRCs, and all of the work and passion that has gone into building the programs," said Colleen Calvert. "Presenting to and hearing from an audience which included representatives from 34 NATO and Partner for Peace countries, military and civilian leaders throughout the world was exciting. The content of presentations affirmed the hard work that has been done by the MFRCs over the past 20 years."

At the core of the Halifax MFRC's deployment services program is research by Bernie Mullin-Splude. In 2004, Mullin-Splude completed her thesis, Experiences in Community in Canadian Military Families - a Female Partner's Perspective. This research and the development of the deployment services program at the Halifax MFRC is centered upon community based

programming that recognizes and builds upon the strengths of participants and families. The successful program has been running at the Halifax MFRC for several years, and has included support to such large scale deployments as the Op Apollo deployments in 2001-2004.

The open relationship between the command structure and the Halifax MFRC has enabled the MFRC to respond effectively and professionally to communicate with members during a critical incident and has allowed members and their families to stay connected throughout deployment. This has led to measurable successes, including reports of lower numbers of repatriations due to family stress and letters and emails from both members and families expressing appreciation to the MFRC.

Held on April 24-26, the symposium was called Human Dimensions in Military Operations hosted in Brussels, Belgium - Military Leaders' Strategies for Addressing Stress and Psychological Support and included participation from NATO countries, Partnership for Peace Nations and Mediterranean Dialogue Nations.

In Focus Gets a Makeover

The fresh scents of spring are behind us now as the summer solstice sets in. The time couldn't be riper to freshen things up a little.

So when the window of opportunity presented itself, DMFS jumped at the occasion to work with CFPSA's senior design, Helene Gareau, to revamp In Focus with you, the reader, in mind. In Focus is a unique communications vehicle intended to be upbeat and positive with an emphasis on achievement and success.

The new In Focus logo on the front page integrates the "Swirl" from the MFSP logo to carry through on our commitment for a common look and feel for the Program. The grey swirl represents a curved path leading in and out, depicting a concept of openness and approachability.

The "O" with the centre circle in red represents a target, depicting the pursuit of common goals and working together in a focused manner.

We hope you like our new layout, more vibrant in colour and presented for readers to quickly identify the articles that are of interest to them. Happy reading.



A Year in the Life of the MFSP: The Saga Continues

Submitted by Celeste Gotell,
DMFS Senior Manager, Field Operations



Hello friends of the network. I know you have been waiting with great anticipation, wondering if the pilot of this exciting mini series "A Year in the Life of the MFSP" will survive the editorial chopping block. Well, great news after all. Upon seeing its overwhelming ratings and popularity, the network has decided the axe will not fall on this mini series and has extended it for yet another season.

In the last episode, you were introduced to several DMFS characters. Just as you were getting familiar with them all, however, Andrew Webb left the show to pursue other career opportunities. The network has since cast Luc Girard to fill Andrew's role, along with Maria DiVirgillio in a field operations supporting role.

Enough about the characters and on with the show.

This episode is all about Family Separation and Reunion. It begins with C/MFRCs providing a wide range of services and activities to support families. Calls into warm lines, the publishing of special newsletters, sharing coffee and conversations, activities for the children and youth, respite and emergency childcare are all contributing to the well being of families during separation and reunion. Amongst all of these activities we see C/MFRC staff and volunteers working along side the Chain of Command and other dedicated professionals to make certain that the needs of families affected by deployment are taken care of.

Canadian Forces families in locations throughout Canada, United States and Europe have frequently experienced separations related to deployment. While these separations are traditionally quite stressful on families, the CF participation in Afghanistan and the fight against terrorism, amidst several casualties, has placed upon CF families and C/MFRCs a unique challenge unlike anything they have faced for many years.

If you have not yet reached out to a family dealing with deployment, reach out and make a difference. You never know how this could be the one time that they need to hear your friendly voice. Your role in this mini series can be critical and go a long way to improving the lives of military partners and families and the peace of mind of our CF members serving overseas.

By doing so, you promote and facilitate community-based military family services and strengthen Canadian Forces families and communities.

Note:

The deadline for submissions for the next issue of C/MFRCs In Focus is 7 SEPT 2006.



Family Separation and Reunion Services... A Year of Review

Submitted by Borden MFRC

In the fall, a focus group was conducted with military representatives from units on Base to discuss how Centre services could assist in supporting them better. It was a great success. There was a good response to the invitation to participate and valuable feedback was provided, specifically regarding the care package services, Adopt-a-Holiday and the many other services that are valued and appreciated by the Military members and their families during deployment. One outcome of the meeting included changing the name of the Centre's current *Deployment Services to Family Separation and Reunion Services* that more accurately reflects the scope of services offered. A second positive outcome was the opportunity to renew the partnership with the Base Orderly Room and improve the clearance process for military members.

While continuing to focus on improving Family Separation and Reunion Services, a second focus group was conducted with the families of deployed military members. While the children participated in pizza and movie night, the spouses and parents of deployed personnel were invited to discuss existing services and provided the opportunity to offer feedback and suggestions. Participants appreciated the opportunity to share their experiences and realized that they are not alone affected by a deployment, even in Borden.

The Borden MFRC invited renowned author Dianne Collier to address the realities of deployment and how to prepare for it. It was a wonderful opportunity for many spouses to learn and share with Dianne, a very interesting and experienced lady.

Keeping Families Connected

Submitted by Gagetown MFRC

The Gagetown MFRC was very fortunate to receive a video-tele conference system during the month of October 2005. Thanks to the dedication and commitment of Sgt. Glenn Park from 2RCR (2nd Royal Canadian Regiment) the VTC system was quickly up and running for our CF families.

Families share their experiences through words:

- Even though this was a difficult tour for both of us, the video-conference has given us a chance to feel and remain so deeply connected. It's so good to be able to say "see you Sunday." It makes it bearable.
- The tele-conference made an extraordinary difference on this tour! Nelson, though thousand of miles away, was able to share in many of Blake's firsts, including his first steps, eating a muffin, saying "Dada", and so many other things.
- To see them is to know they are healthy and relatively happy.
- He could see how the kids are, how much they've grown and see our faces too.
- I think it is a great asset to the deployment program.
- It was the most wonderful gift imaginable to be able to talk to our son and see that he is safe and to hear his voice.
- The system is totally valuable to both the soldier and the family.
- It helped me miss him not so much. I could see he was doing great.
- When we came in on Christmas our kids were more excited to see their daddy then to open presents from Santa.
- Although I love the phone calls and communicating via e-mail, there is nothing like seeing my husband. It really helps to get through this long tour.
- This system is totally valuable to both the soldier and the family.
- A picture is truly worth a thousand words.

An amazing, awesome, awe-inspiring resource for our Canadian Forces Families.

Support Our Troops Car Magnets and Bracelets

The sales for the "Support Our Troops" car magnets and the silicone bracelets have been outstanding. During 2005-2006 approximately 3000 car magnets and hundreds of bracelets were sold. Dollars raised from the sales of these items provided programs and services to families experiencing separation. The main program that has utilized these funds is the Free Deployment Childcare, which provided over 188.5 hours of care to more than 327 children.

Getting Ready – Task Force (TF) 01-07

Although Task Force 01-07 is seven months away, the Gagetown MFRC is already in the planning stages for the upcoming rotation to Afghanistan in 01-07.

Earlier in the year, the MFRC was invited to be a part of a focus group to begin fact finding for the possibility of standing up a Deployment Support Centre (DSC) in Gagetown for TF 01-07. The results have been unbelievable. Not only will a DSC be set up for 01-07 it will be a permanent DSC. It will not only serve those personnel deployed overseas but also those away from their home unit for a period of 30 days or longer.

We are very excited to announce that the DSC will be co-located at the Gagetown Military Family Resource Centre. We look forward to working in partnership with the DSC to provide the best services and supports to our Canadian Forces families.



Peacekeepers – The Next Generation

Submitted by Brenda Forbes,
Kingston MFRC

The grade eight students from École Lundy's Lane School, CFB Kingston won't soon forget their day learning about the role of peacekeeping in the world, past and present. The Jr. Peacekeeper program is a partnership between the Kingston Military Family Resource Centre (KMFRC) and the Canadian Forces Peace Support Training Centre (PSTC) at CFB Kingston. This program helps the students understand the risks and rewards of serving our country.

During this daylong program, the 60 students attended nine interactive workshops after getting a good overview of the role of peacekeepers by Lieutenant-Colonel Haindl, Commandant of the PSTC.

The Geography Jeopardy workshop got these young minds working hard to identify the flags and political leaders of the different countries where our soldiers have recently served in order to score points. Alex Trebec, played by Captain O'Donnell, provided clues to help the students unravel some the many acronyms that are part of military life.

Cultural Awareness proved to students once again how fortunate they are to live in Canada. Major (Retired) John Russell, dressed in typical Arab clothing, explained why no one would wear jeans and drink cold beverages in hot climates.

The Negotiations workshop provided lots of laughs when the students shared their stories of not getting what they wanted from their parents. Major Luc Racine gave the students some ideas on how to listen, watch body language and try to understand others points of view in order to reach a good compromise.

The Jr. Peacekeepers then moved outside to explore a bunker, climb the observation tower and see inside an operations trailer outfitted with everything from a communication centre to a kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. The students wore flak jackets and blue helmets for a quick group photo before going on to learn about the UN vehicles and all the safety gear the soldiers travel with. The demonstration of mock land mines literally got the students hopping. They saw the many sizes and types of mines before they each got to probe for mines in an oversized sand box.

In the Weapons workshop students learned how to safely handle a weapon, check it for ammunition and do a test fire. Everything from hand pistols to rifles to rocket launchers were available to see and touch.

In order that peacekeepers can keep informed they carry two-way radios, GPS instrument and a compass. Captain O'Donnell unraveled the mystery behind the language used when talking on a radio from Alpha to Zulu.

The goal of the Jr. Peacekeeper program is to raise awareness and appreciation of the work our soldiers do. For those students with parents in the Canadian Forces this knowledge helps make them more resilient before, during and after deployments.



Look who's in the Kitchen

Submitted by Gillian Spurrell,
St. John's MFRC

On April 27th 2006 the St. John's MFRC, in partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion, held an old-fashioned Newfoundland kitchen party. The party, held at the Legion in Placentia, was open to all ages for the families of those of CF Military members from CFS St. John's serving in Afghanistan and other peacekeeping missions around the world.

Our Families Connecting Group helped plan, participate and contributed to the success of this kitchen party. The idea was to create and send a little piece of home to those overseas. More than 120 people took part in this opportunity to meet, socialize

and have a good time while creating something special for their loved ones. The Families Connecting Group provides an opportunity for the families of Canadian Forces personnel to meet one another, share experiences and work on various outreach projects.

Local radio personalities, Paul Raynes and Claudette Barnes hosted this event. Two well known local bands, The Walsh Brothers and Chicaunna provided the musical entertainment and the families enjoyed a dance while munching on Purity syrup (a local tradition), cookies and candies. The party was videotaped and each family was given the opportunity to record a message for their serving family members. The resulting video is a mix of



the night's festivities and the personal family messages. The video will be sent to Afghanistan the various locations where members are serving giving each of the CFS St. John's Military members Newfoundlanders the opportunity to see their families and hear the special messages recorded by their loved ones. The kitchen party was an outreach project of the Family Separation and Reunion program area and was designed to close the distance between those serving overseas and their families, if only for a short time. It was well received by all who attended and deemed to be yet another successful and worthwhile event.

Unit Support Adds New Dimension To Service

Submitted by Alex Greenwood,
Deployed Coordinator, Comox MFRC

At Comox we don't normally have units deploying en masse, but in December we sent 25 Wing Telecommunication and Information Technicians (TIS) overseas for six months.

With new Wing Standing Orders outlining criteria for support to families, the leadership from TIS approached me to ensure that we worked as a team to provide outstanding support to the families of their deployed personnel. How exciting it was to have such cooperation and enthusiasm!

On January 18, we held a Family Fun Night and Information Session for this group. With pizza, veggies & dip and a tray of desserts, there was an opportunity for families, sponsors and volunteers to mingle over dinner and connect with each other. Several crafts were set out for children young and old to make, to send to their loved one in the sandbox. The highlight of the evening for the families was watching a briefing about the deployment location and a slide show of their loved ones in theatre.

As I watched the faces of the family members viewing the slide show, I noticed one spouse had tears welling up in her eyes. What a poignant moment it was when I saw another spouse put her arm over the shoulder of



this one, and give her a knowing smile. To bring together families so that they can share their time and support one another is part of my job and at that moment I saw success.

Winnipeg MFRC Hosts Deployment Coordinators Conference

Submitted by Nicole Johnson, Family Separation and Reunion Coordinator, Winnipeg MFRC

On April 5th – 7th, the Winnipeg MFRC played host to 18 MFRC Deployment Coordinators from all geographical regions and military elements. From learning how to juggle to a virtual visit to Camp Mirage, coordinators

took the opportunity to “Spring Into Action” and explore positive ways to ease the tension in providing Family Separation and Reunion services. Coordinators were provided with the opportunity to participate in discussions on best practices, learn new skills, gain valuable information and develop tools to assist with delivering deployment services.

Special thanks to MWO Lou Landry 1 Cdn Air Div, CWO Ray McInnis DQOL, and MCpl Diane Miazga 17 Wing, for contributing very important pieces of the agenda. Additional thanks to DMFS for supporting the conference by sending two Field Operations Managers, including Jackie Specken, Field Operations Manager.

Jackie offered a great deal of knowledge and expertise to the conference by providing guidance during the planning stages; giving insight into key issues and concerns of Deployment Coordinators with regards to the MFSP; and facilitating two very important sessions of the conference. Jackie’s attendance at the conference proved that there is great value and benefit in having a DMFS representative present when discussing MFSP related activities.

New Website Content For CF Families Out-of-Canada

Submitted by Karen Dooks, CentrepoinTE Managing Editor

It’s human nature, really. When embarking on a new venture, we often seek out others who’ve “*been there, done that*” in hopes of getting the inside scoop or to pick up a few tips that we never even considered. We do it for major purchases, selecting courses or schools, and – particularly in the case of Canadian Forces families – when we



move. (Note that we didn’t say *if we move!* If there’s one common bond amongst CF families, it’s the perpetual moving van parked outside our homes.) Yes even though we are, when it comes to moving, veritable experts, we know that there’s usually something to learn from others who have gone before

us. And when that moving van becomes a sea container destined for some location halfway around the world, we’re all the more interested in what others have to say.

Yet the problem is that since we go from Alaska to Washington and from Anglesey to Warsaw (and everywhere in between), it can become difficult in tracking the information down.

Knowing this, the Connecting CF Youth and CentrepoinTE websites have teamed up to amass a series of testimonies from CF spouses and youth who’ve experienced, first-hand, various components of international relocations. Working with the Canadian company Pensivo, people around the world have recorded their personal insights and perspectives for the benefit of all. These powerful audio accounts capture real-life experiences of CF family members before, during and after their out-of-Canada moves. Their stories, along with tips, resources and additional information, are now available in CentrepoinTE’s SHARE section and will soon be posted to the Connecting CF Youth website.

As part of this project, we also developed a “Learn To Use Blog” tutorial to help address the issues of keeping in touch with family and friends while living out-of-Canada. It can be tough and we know it, so we’re thrilled to provide this training



in our Work and Learn section. Log on to CentrepoinTE learn more about blogging – an inexpensive and fun way to keep current with everyone while you’re away – and to preview the new relocation testimonies.

To log in to CentrepoinTE, select your language of preference (English or French) and enter your username and password into the appropriate fields. Click OK.

If you do not have a username and password, log in with our visitor account. Username = visitor, password = visitor.

Wherever you are, wherever you go, we are your CentrepoinTE.



Colorado Springs Hosts First Ever MFSP Conference in the US

**Submitted by Sue McCormack,
DMFS Field Operations Manager**

In March, DMFS sponsored the first-ever conference for delegates from across the United States to discuss the unique concerns of CF families living and working out of country.

Twenty-six participants (95% of them spouses of CF members) met in Colorado Springs for two and a half days devoted to professional development, networking and developing outreach strategies for CF families posted to locations in the US where there is no actual CMFRC. Delegates included: CMFRC staff members, volunteers and community representatives from Elmendorf Alaska, Rome New York, Tyndall Florida, Tinker Oklahoma, McChord Washington and Cavalier North Dakota. Staff and volunteers from the Colorado Springs CMFRC did an excellent job of organizing the conference and were wonderful hosts.

DMFS staff members Sue McCormack and Brian Gallant used this opportunity to launch the new DMFS resource "Guidelines for CMFRC Advisory Committee Members", to discuss the MFSP Marketing Strategy and the current expansion of the Centrepointe web site to include locations across the US.

Networking opportunities and workshops on succession planning, outcome measurement and 'Perfecting Connecting' rounded out the conference agenda. The "value added" of the conference was to be able to have face-to-face discussions with representatives from so many communities and to hear from each other the realities of life for CF families posted to the US.

As a result of the conference, connections between staff and volunteers in the US were enhanced, and representatives from other US locations were able to learn more about the MFSP and services available to them even in remote locations.

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive and all hope that this conference will be the first of many.

Standing Proud at the Family Support America Conference

**Submitted by Regan S. Gorski,
Executive Director, Moose Jaw MFRC**

Nothing About Us...Without Us
The most powerful force in family support today is parents, community and professionals working together. Every family deserves support. Family support is not an intervention. We must weave family support principles into the fabric of society.

We all wanted to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the opportunity to attend the Family Support America Conference in Chicago. The mix of delegates included DMFS representatives, Executive Directors of MFRCs within Canada and the USA, staff and one board chair.

We were all very proud to represent our individual MFRCs, MFSP, and indeed, Canada. It confirmed that we are all very fortunate to be part of one of the best family support programs in the world.

We all took different pieces from the conference. For some the conference reaffirmed the belief in family support principles and the importance of "Nothing About Us...Without Us".

Other key messages focused on the foundations of family support. (How is it that we all look similar, and we all approach family support in a similar way, but we have never met each other?) The foundation of an effective family support program includes numerous building blocks, which are quite evident in our program.

Parent Leadership:
Leadership & involvement - our boards and volunteers

Relationships:
Relationships with community members, base partners, DMFS, funders, community organizations

Champions:
Lucie Pepin, MPs, Base Commander, Dianne Collier, etc.

Data/Evaluations:
MFSP Survey, Focus Groups, Feedback Forms, Questionnaires, Suggestion Boxes, etc.

Program Standards:
MOU, Parameters for Practice, Service Delivery Agreement

Work Force:
Incredible staff teams, volunteers

Infrastructure:
Physical locations that best meet the needs of the community

Principles:
Vision, mission, guiding principles and values of the MFSP and similar local principles as outlined by individual MFRCs

Finance:
Supported by our funder and base commander, and other funding bodies

Communication: Internal, external and Canada-wide, international. Personally, the message that resounded most was the importance of community. With our successes, we run the risk of becoming purely service providers. Whether we are meeting the real or perceived community needs are debatable because we are part of the equation. (Those who dabble in Quantum Theory know this as the 'Observer Effect'; the notion that there is no phenomenon until it is observed.) By holding fast to the importance of CF spouses and families as the foundation and active partners in everything we do is the only way to ensure adherence to the grassroots movement that resulted in the creation of the MFRCs, and subsequently, the national MFSP.

Parents matter; as leaders, as volunteers, as Board members, as the foundation of our program. I would go further and state that CF spouses matter. They are the visionaries, the ones who saw a need and pushed to have their voices heard. From those humble beginnings, we are living the legacy they have created.

CF spouses and CF families matter.



Amalgamation of the Halifax and Shearwater MFRCs

Submitted by Michelle West,
Chair, Board of Directors, Halifax and Shearwater Military Family Resource Centres

Over the past year, the Halifax and Shearwater MFRCs have been working to amalgamate our two MFRCs. The final approval for this amalgamation will come through a Special Resolution, to be approved by the community effective April 1, 2007. Amalgamating the two MFRCs will allow us to reduce Administration, Governance and Management in our budgets, while still maintaining the quality programs and services that the community deserves. The amalgamation will not affect our commitment to maintain key programs and services from all three locations, Halifax, Shearwater and Sydney.

In preparation for the final amalgamation, effective April 1, 2006, Colleen Calvert was hired by the Halifax and Shearwater Boards of Directors to fill the position of Executive Director and is responsible for the overall management of our three sites. Following that, the community elected the Board of Directors during Special General Meetings on April 11th and 12th, 2006. This transitional Board is unique in that it is representative of both the Halifax and the Shearwater geographic areas and its members will sit concurrently on both the Halifax and Shearwater Boards of Directors until the final amalgamation date of April 1, 2007.

Finally, to recognize the joining of the communities and resources, the Board has proposed that the legal name of the amalgamated organization be the "Halifax & Region MFRC" (H&RMFRC). Steps will be undertaken over the coming months to formalize the legal name change.

If you have any questions on the planned amalgamation of the Halifax and Shearwater MFRCs, please feel free to contact Executive Director, Colleen Calvert or Board Chair, Michelle West (board@halifaxmfrfc.ca).

Real power for change lies within families and communities!

Family Service Canada's 2006 National Conference

Conférence nationale 2006 de Services à la famille-Canada

September 28 – 29, 2006 /
Du 28 au 29 septembre 2006

Fort Garry Hotel, Winnipeg, MB



This exciting conference will draw attention to the strengths, assets and power for positive change in all families.

La conférence attirera l'attention sur les points forts, les atouts et le pouvoir d'opérer un changement constructif que possèdent toutes les familles.



1-800-668-7808

info@familyservicecanada.org
www.familyservicecanada.org

Ce sont les familles et les communautés qui détiennent véritablement le pouvoir de changer les choses!

At your Service ...



Centrepointe

An online community for CF families living outside of Canada
www.centrepointe.info



Mission Information Line

A bilingual telephone service for immediate and extended families, as well as friends of Canadian military personnel serving in operations outside of Canada.
1-800-866-4546

Bagotville MFRC finalist at Chamber of Commerce Gala

Submitted by **Mélanie Cardinal,**
Bagotville MFRC

We're very proud of our nomination as finalist in the category " Social Economy Business " at the Economic Merit Gala organized by the Saguenay Chambers of Commerce. It's a wonderful acknowledgment of all the MFRC's efforts and initiative taken in the past year.

It was with great pride and pleasure that the MFRC's Executive Director, Joan Simard, accepted the commemorative plaque given to the 2006 finalists. The social event hosted by the Saguenay Chambers of Commerce took place this past April 6th. The other finalists in the category " Social Economy Business "

were " la Coopérative de solidarité de services à domicile du Royaume " and the " Centre de formation en entreprise et récupération (CFER) de Chicoutimi ". The award went to the CFER at the grand Gala this past April 29th.

"We were going up against a good group of finalists", says Joan Simard. "Still, we're extremely happy that our work in the community was acknowledged. It allowed the people from La Baie to see what the MFRC team and the Board of Directors accomplished in the past year".

Our nomination was based on such major achievements as the English translation of the French DVD " Agir avant, agir à temps ", the setting up of the Health Clinic and the improvement of the Child/Youth services.

Simard feels that these accomplishments couldn't have been possible without the MFRC's employees' enthusiasm and energy. "I wish to thank the entire

staff who accepted these changes and modified their routine to give way to innovative means of offering services to the community", says Joan Simard.

The Saguenay Economic Merit Gala, which brought the three districts' Chambers of Commerce together, has been doing so for two years. There were twelve categories presented during this event, which was held in Jonquière.



Children's Thrift Sale

Submitted by **Brenda Forbes,**
Kingston MFRC

Cheryl Bradley and her team of volunteers did an amazing job coordinating the Children's Thrift Sale held on Saturday, April 1st at CFB Kingston. People came from as far as an hour away to shop for bargain priced children's clothes, furniture, toys and games. Close to 800 people attended this event, up from 500 last fall and purchased over \$14,000 worth of merchandise, up from \$8000. The fees the 76 vendors paid to participate in the sale were donated to the Kingston Military Family Resource Centre, and after expenses, came to \$608.

This is an entirely volunteer driven event. Congratulations go out to the team of volunteers who helped promote the sale, set up tables, sort merchandise, collect boxes, work on cash and stayed to clean up. Two vans loads of merchandise were picked up by Padre King and donated to Youth for Christ.

Thanks to our corporate contributors:

- Bennett's Valu-Mart for the loan of shopping carts and providing plastic bags
- CANEX for providing clothes racks
- Tim Horton's for providing coffee & Tim Bit's for the volunteers
- Base Supply for the use & delivery of tables

All the volunteers that have worked with Cheryl over that past few years are sad that she is leaving for CFB Shilo soon. They have agreed to form a working committee to continue offering this very successfully children's thrift sale. The expected date will be October 2006.

All the best Cheryl, Jeff and Grace, and thanks for all your long hours and hard work!



Goose Bay MFRC and PSP Salute Volunteers with a Family Brunch

Submitted by Holly Moores Snook, Welcome and Community Integration/ Volunteer Coordinator, Goose Bay

The Goose Bay Military Family Resource Centre and Personnel Support Program Volunteer Brunch sponsored by SISIP was held on Sunday, April 23, 2006. The brunch was a great success with 81 people in attendance.

A Bouncy Castle was set up outdoors for the children who attended. The volunteer brunch honoured individuals who have donated their time and energy to the MFRC & PSP. Throughout the year, volunteers dedicated numerous hours of their time organizing and implementing many of the programs and services offered at the MFRC & PSP. From the feedback we received, the volunteers were very pleased with the event. A heartfelt thank you is extended to all the volunteers for sharing their time, energy and talents with their community.

Red T-Shirt Anyone?

Submitted by Gagetown MFRC

On Wednesday, May 10, Gagetown MFRC decided to jump on the bandwagon and wear Red on Fridays to show support and respect to our Canadian Forces Men and Women serving overseas. We then ordered 300 red-shirts with the yellow ribbon support our troops logo and made them available to the community at a cost of \$10. The shirts arrived at our centre two days later on Friday and within two hours we had sold 50. By Monday, May 15 another 150 shirts had to be ordered and by the Friday (one week later) another 1000 were ordered. The awareness that the Red Friday Campaign has generated in the Oromocto area is unbelievable Gagetown MFRC is very proud and humbled by the overwhelming response the community has shown to our Canadian Forces Personnel through The Red T-Shirt campaign!!!

Gagetown Opens New Youth Centre

Submitted by Christina Long, Youth Development Coordinator, Gagetown

The last year has been a year of changes for Gagetown MFRC Youth Development Services. If you had asked me a year ago when I came on as the Youth Development Coordinator if I would be planning the grand opening of our new youth centre, I would have told you no way.

Well, a year has passed and I am thrilled to be telling you that I am planning for the opening of our new Youth Centre for June 1, 2006 and I could not be happier. The new Youth Centre was not a project that was dreamed up overnight, in fact a lot of hard work and planning went into making this dream a reality.

It started in October of 2004 when the MFRC Board Chair expressed "programming space challenges" to the 3 ASG Base Commander, especially for the Youth programs. It was evident that we needed to give the youth their own space. The MFRC Board formed an Infrastructure Committee and began working on a solution. We were thrilled with the news that CFB Gagetown was going to give us two units in a six unit PMQ for the new Youth Centre. Now that we had a location, we needed to start looking for funding. When we thought the Base had done enough, they came through again with a \$50K donation and the MFRC Board contributed another \$20K towards the project.

With everything falling into place, it was time to begin renovations. The renovations began in January 2006 with the CFB Gagetown Construction Engineers doing the work. These guys worked hard for three months to complete this project and there was not one thing that they did not think of. They built a custom-made entertainment centre to house the 50" TV and wired in a state of the art Theatre surround sound system. They did a phenomenal job and there are not enough words to thank them for all of their hard work.

The name for the new youth centre, chosen by a youth, will be "The Centre", "Youth at the Centre of our community!" I am so excited about the possibilities that the opening of "The Centre" will bring. It is going to make it possible for MFRC Youth Development Services to expand the programs that we offer. We are expanding our drop-ins to three times a week for preteens and teens. There will also be dedicated time for youth to use the computers. In the fall, I hope to have noon hour, after school & homework drop-in times as requested by youth. We will also run art and cooking programs out the new centre. The new centre will be place just for the youth and is equipped with a HUGE TV, video games, computers with internet access, a canteen and much more. I am confident that the youth in our community will love their new space and that great things are going to come from the opening of "The Centre".



International Women's Day a Great Success

Submitted by Anne Keating-Morrison,
Borden MFRC

Driven by the energy of amazing volunteers, the Borden Family Resource Centre joined the community to celebrate on March 8, International Women's Day. The day began with some history of the celebration and an inspirational speech from Ann Keating-Morrison, Keynote Speaker and volunteer with the planning committee. Ann spoke about her volunteer experiences and how it positively impacted her life. The speech was followed by a workshop on Women's Self-Esteem and Self-Image offered by a local community organization, Women Resources of Simcoe County.



Following a tasty lunch, participants were then invited to try and learn about different things such as belly dancing, scrap booking, rubber stamping, cosmetic products

and nail care. Throughout the day information kiosks about women's health and resources were available. Local business sponsored the event donating much-appreciated door prizes. Participants greatly enjoyed the relaxed and fun environment, and the opportunity to meet and exchange with one other. A wonderful demonstration of the power of community involvement!



Sandbagging Saturday – An unforgettable experience

Submitted by Donna Earl,
Executive Director, Meaford MFRC

It was a cold, foggy, wet and windy April morning when a few dedicated MFRC volunteers gathered to begin the daunting task to fill 2500 sandbags within a 4-hour period as a fundraiser for its Childcare Centre play area.

"Sandbagging Saturday" was scheduled to begin at 8:30 am. When I drove over to the site, there were three very large piles of sand and only a handful of very determined people. The MFRC had made a commitment to provide these sandbags to the base by April 30th. As I looked at the sand and the number of volunteers, I began to think that all my "spare time" over the next week would be dedicated to completing the task. Suddenly, our spirits were lifted when out of the fog, appeared forty-five students from SQ 0248. For the next hour, they filled the bags, after

which, they disappeared into the grey morning as quickly as they appeared.

Over the next three hours, thirty volunteers relentlessly continued through the rain and wind—filling, tying and stacking bag after bag. As the 12:30 pm deadline approached, I could hear the excitement in the voice of one of my staff members, "Only 120 bags to go!" By the time we finished, we had surpassed our goal. Quickly, we retreated to the warmth of the MFRC and a homemade lunch.

It was a very ambitious project and I'll probably be stiff and sore for the next week, but by filling the 2500 sandbags, we were able to net over \$4500 for our playground—not bad for a morning's work!

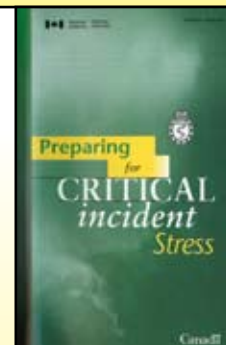
Waiting in the Wings

The booklet Preparing for Critical Incident Stress Booklet Deployment Support published by Director Medical Policy (D Med Pol) in January 2000 has become obsolete and has been rescinded.

The CF is currently rethinking its response to cases of critical incident stress due in part to some recent research from the field on this issue and are looking at preparing a new booklet. They have indicated that it will be similar to the one in use by the US.

See hyperlink below.

<http://airforcemedicine.afms.mil/idc/groups/public/documents/webcontent/knowledgejunction/hcst?functionalarea=LeadersGuideDistress&doctype=subpage&docname=CTB030812&incbanner=0>



Have You Used Your

MFRC HUMAN RESOURCE & BUSINESS PRACTICES LINE

Lately?

*HR Management Expertise: A confidential sounding board for advice and support.
Think of it as your own HR Department available when you need it.*

Advice to Military Family Resource Centres on:

- Hiring Practices
- Employment Contracts
- Performance Management
- Progressive Discipline
- Termination
- Wrongful Dismissal
- Compensation Plans
- Employee Relations
- HR Policies
- Strategic Planning
- Governance
- Board Development

*The **MFRC Human Resource & Business Practices Line** provides all members immediate access to a **Certified Human Resource Professional** at times when you need help to deal with **human resource, employee relations and Board management issues.***

- Available to all MFRC Executive Directors, and Board Chairs, or their designates
- Confidential: deals with sensitive information discreetly
- No cost: a service provided to you by the Director Military Family Services
- Timely advice with written follow up if appropriate
- Explore your options, get common sense, practical solutions

HR Group Management Consultants are human resource and organizational development specialists with years of hands-on, practical experience at a senior level in both the public and private sectors. They provide access to the information you need and help in applying it to your specific needs.

Sharon Patriquin, Dimitri Pojidaeff and Ralph Williams take turns answering the line – you will always have access to a Certified Human Resource Professional.

1-888-474-5463

Monday to Friday – 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MST/MDT

Halifax MFRC working in partnership with the community

Submitted by Aileen Whitehead, Prevention & Intervention Coordinator, Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre

For the second year in a row, the Halifax & Region MFRC was able to work in partnership with the Metro Interagency Committee on Family Violence by sponsoring and hosting the annual panel discussion and keynote speaker for Nova Scotia's Family Violence Prevention Week.

The session was held at the MFRC on Thursday, February 16th, and was called: "Family Violence Through a Child's Eyes: Prevention; Diverse Needs & New Visions". I am so pleased to say that support for this event continues to grow annually. For example, new to the event this year was support from the local chain of command with a visit from the Base Chief and Cdr Tweedie N11 who gave opening remarks. Information booths from the DND Employee Assistance Program, the Defense Women's Advisory Organization, and the MARLANT Family Crisis Team were also part of this informative event.

The panelists spoke to almost 200 participants from the military and civilian community and professionals about prevention-based programs. The keynote speaker, Dr Deborah Norris, who has devoted much of her career researching issues important to military families, discussed how witnessing family violence affects children.

With the success of this project, we plan to continue this partnership and are already looking at plans for next year.

Roots of Empathy

Submitted by Linda Scott and Sarah Daviau, Esquimalt MFRC

Roots of Empathy is a classroom program designed to reduce aggression and raise social competence, emotional literacy, and empathy. The mission of the program is to "build caring, peaceful, and civil societies through the development of empathy in children and adults" (Roots of Empathy, 2005).

Roots of Empathy was created by Mary Gordon in two Toronto schools in 1996. It has grown to more than 1500 schools across Canada. More than 107,000 children have benefited from Roots of Empathy since it began.

This year, the Esquimalt MFRC is pleased to sponsor the program at Ecole John Stubbs Memorial School in Victoria. Linda Scott, MFRC Emergency Services Coordinator, teaches the Roots of Empathy curriculum to a class once a week from November to June. The heart of the program is the monthly visit of a baby with her mother. This year's baby is Holly - a vibrant, beautiful baby girl. Each month the children witness how Holly has progressed from being a tiny infant to a smiling young child who can roll over, reach for toys, sit up and laugh.



Holly's Mother, Shawna, a teacher by profession, wanted to get involved with Roots of Empathy because she has witnessed the effects of bullying in the classroom. "This (program) sounded like a very unique approach to combatting bullying. When I was told that my baby and I could be involved, I didn't hesitate to sign up," said Shawna.

The Roots of Empathy experience, from Shawna's perspective, offered one very unique benefit. "Every time Holly and I went to the classroom, students pointed out the differences in Holly that I didn't usually notice because I am with her all the time. I watched her grow through the eyes of someone else," she said.

Roots of Empathy has nine themes, including topics such as caring for baby, emotions, and safety. The curriculum provides opportunities for children to ask questions, practice problem-solving, share ideas, and allows for learning through observing the baby, listening to stories and participating in activities. As the children learn words for the baby's feelings, this helps them reflect on their own feelings and how to recognize feelings in others. "When children know how others feel, they are less likely to hurt each other through bullying." (Roots of Empathy, 2005).

Taking a Stroll Along the Board Walk

Submitted by **Cynthia Plant-Hansen**

Now that I've had time to reflect on my term as Chair of the Board of Directors for the Toronto MFRC, I took some time to write an article to share with you a piece of my learning.

Whenever the Toronto MFRC Board was requesting information or entering into a decision-making process, it was important to get objective third party information. For several reasons, the Board did not have an established network of subject matter experts, nor did it have the time and money to spend on developing these resources. Thanks to the services of the DMFS Field Operations Managers and the HR Group – two resources that have

the background knowledge and understanding of family resource centres, military families, military lifestyle and the Department of National Defence – we didn't have to look much further for extraordinary services that are not found in the local communities or in most of the Not for Profit sector.

Sue McCormack, Field Operations Manager, was always the supportive and professional voice at the end of the telephone. She is a profound source of information and is particularly knowledgeable in Board orientation, development and processes. She understood Board challenges, giving advice respectfully when asked. The Centre benefited greatly from this relationship.

The HR Group was also invaluable. We were most fortunate to have access

to such expertise in Human Resources issues, concerns and processes. We received advice on the best and current practices for hiring and termination of staff and establishing responsible documents such as contracts and terms of reference. The company was involved in the hiring of the Executive Director using a very diligent process. The HR Group offers years of experience, expertise and a large national network of professionals from labour lawyers to Transitional Counselors.

With the assistance of the Field Operations Manager and the HR Group, the Board could make well-informed decisions. The board was upholding one of its most important duties, the duty of diligence. Due diligence was done and Board members can be very proud of their work.

Meet the MFSP Europe and UK Team

Submitted by **Caterina Perry, MFSP European Regional Manager**

It really is a long way from Cold Lake, but what an exciting ride this is. Six months in and I'm beyond getting my feet wet, I'm soaked. The best part so far is the remarkable team that I have the pleasure of working with. It is truly a privilege to introduce you to them:

[Geilenkirchen, Germany](#)

Elizabeth MacDonald,
Acting Director
(Maureen Cheeseman, Director)

Isabelle Gagnon,
Finance and Administration Coordinator

Melissa Koene,
Personal Development and Education Coordinator

Melissa Fougere,
Community Outreach Coordinator

Ann Ramsay,
Child and Youth Coordinator

Adele Morely,
Advisory Committee Chair

[Daws Hill, United Kingdom](#)

Martine Guerette,
Administrative/Finance Assistant

Petra MacDonald,
Employment, Information and Referral Coordinator

Donna Brothers-Palfrey,
Regional Program Coordinator

Susan Gallinger,
Regional Program Coordinator

Cheryl Pennel,
Regional Program Coordinator

Brenda Reeve,
Regional Program Coordinator

Judy Grant,
Advisory Committee Chair

[Brussels, Belgium](#)

Chantal Godin,
Director

Vacant,
Finance and Administration Coordinator

Erin Rose,
Child and Youth Coordinator

Tara Whiteside,
Adult Program Coordinator

Jennifer Cameron,
Advisory Committee Chair

[SHAPE, Belgium](#)

Anna Ballard, Acting Director
(Cathy Priestman, Director)

Heather Kugler,
Resource and Volunteer Coordinator

Vacant,
Adult Program Coordinator

Judy Toth-Elvish,
Information and Referral Coordinator

Pascale Couturier,
Child and Youth Coordinator

Sharon Geleyn,
Advisory Committee Chair

[Naples, Italy](#)

Maydon-Dods Green,
Director

Cheryl Rubia,
Program Coordinator

Nancy Caron,
Advisory Committee Chair

[Remote, throughout Europe](#)

Kimberly Bertrand,
Remote Personnel Coordinator

At Ease and Feeling Appreciated

Submitted by Colin MacPhail,
Edmonton MFRC

The Edmonton Garrison is no stranger to special guests. In the past two years there have been visits from the Minister of National Defence, Gordon O'Connor; Chief of Defence Staff, General Hillier; Member of Parliament, Laurie Hawn and Senator Tommy Banks, to name just a few. May brought a special kind of excitement when Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean paid a visit, asking specifically to speak to military spouses.

On May 4, 2006, the Edmonton Garrison MFRC welcomed Her Excellency with a tour of the facilities, which included a chat with our Daycare Cook, and a meeting with a few Day Care children to discuss various art projects they had in the works.

Her Excellency then sat down for a heart-to-heart with 20 military spouses. Ten of the women in the meeting had husbands currently serving in Afghanistan, and few had just been reunited with their partners. It was a frank conversation about the challenges of the military lifestyle, specifically on the day-to-day reality that military partners face while the member is away. Her Excellency's grace put all at ease and the conversation was easy.

As is true form for a military spouse, always concerned for others, the first question asked of Her Excellency was how she managed family and an extremely busy schedule. The conversation flowed easily from there with many laughs, a few tears and everyone leaving feeling a little more appreciated.

Later in the day military members and families received a nod in Her Excellency's Speech on the Occasion of the Official Dinner Hosted by the Government of Alberta.



Photos of Her Excellency's visit to the Edmonton Garrison MFRC are available for viewing at <http://www.mfrcedmonton.com/>

An Irish Twist to Evaluation

Submitted by Michelle Greene,
St. John's MFRC

For those of you who were at the Evaluation and Accountability Training in Moncton, it was a repeat performance of our role-play. During our two week evaluation blitz, the St. John's MFRC held an Irish Stew supper. We celebrated St. Patrick's Day with Irish music and food. We served stew, rolls cake and of course the Evaluation Survey. There were lots of door prizes and activities for the children.

Just as rehearsed, the families were given the outline of the purpose and the procedure of the evaluation and given a private space to complete their surveys. With bellies full and spirits high they went off to the 'Survey Booth'.

It was a fun way to get families together while at the same time gathering feedback. There were families registered for the evening and a great time was had by all.



Survey booths were staffed by trained volunteers.

People on the move

Goodbye and thanks to **Bernice McIntosh** Board Chair for St. John's MFRC, posted to Ottawa

Goodbye and thanks to **Cindy Howlett**, Board Chair for Gagetown MFRC, posted to St. John's

Welcome to **Pauline Meaney**, new Board Chair for Gagetown MFRC

Goodbye and thanks to **Brenda Dunne**, Board Chair for Greenwood MFRC, posted to Ottawa

Welcome to **Kristan Gallant**, new Board Chair for Greenwood MFRC

Goodbye and thank you to **Michelle Loose**, Board Chair for Goosebay MFRC, posted to Portage La Prairie

Goodbye and thank you to **Charlene Plume**, Board Chair for Moncton MFRC, posted to Trenton

Welcome to **Kara Lang**, new Board Chair for Moncton MFRC

Goodbye and thank you to **Lydia Mombourquette**, past Board Chair for the Shearwater MFRC

Congratulations to **Michelle West**, new Board Chair of the Halifax and Region MFRC

Congratulations to **Colleen Calvert**, the new Executive Director of the Halifax and Region MFRC

Goodbye and thank you to **Helen MacDonald**, Comox MFRC Chair

Welcome to **Nancy Callaghan**, new Board Chair for Comox MFRC

Goodbye and thanks to **Sheila Avery**, Shilo Executive Director

Goodbye and thanks to **Sue Greer**, past Board Chair for Moose Jaw MFRC, posted to Edmonton.

Welcome to **Heather Best**, new Board Chair for Moose Jaw MFRC

Goodbye and thank you to **Patricia Rousseau**, Board Chair for Yellowknife MFRC.

Goodbye and thank you to **Val Hudson**, Executive Director, Yellowknife MFRC

Goodbye to **Angela Dozois**, Canadian Community Program Coordinator, Elmendorf CMFRC

Welcome to **Shauna Langley**, Canadian Community Program Coordinator, Elmendorf CMFRC

Goodbye to **Joyce Charlton**, Canadian Community Program Coordinator, Colorado Springs CMFRC, on a six month leave of absence

Welcome to **Mary Lou Climenhaga** as Interim Canadian Community Program Coordinator, Colorado Springs CMFRC

Goodbye to **Jan Kennedy**, Advisory Committee Chairperson, Colorado Springs CMFRC

Goodbye to **Kendra Hartery**, Advisory Committee Chairperson, Rome NY CMFRC, posted to Cornwall

Goodbye to **Tracy Gorman**, Board Chair of the Trenton MFRC, posted to Petawawa.

Welcome to **John Smylie**, incoming Board Chair of the Trenton MFRC

Goodbye to **Darlene Fenhoulet**, Board Chair of the London MFRC



Important Dates to Remember

1st Quarter

31 July 2006

Expenditure Report

In Focus Article Submission

7 September 2006

Professional Development Fund Proposals due

15 September 2006

2nd Quarter

31 October 2006

Expenditure Report

MFSP Funding Application Due

1 November 2006

In Focus Article Submission

23 November 2006

Professional Development Fund Proposals due

1 December 2006



MFSP
MILITARY FAMILY
SERVICES PROGRAM

Director Military Family Services is moving.

Our new address as of August 1 is:

4210 Labelle Street,
Ottawa ON K1A 0K2
FAX: (613) 995-2178

HEADQUARTERS

Celine Thompson, Director
(613) 992-0255
Thompson.CA@forces.gc.ca

Brian Gallant
(613) 992-2328
Gallant.BM@forces.gc.ca

Beverly Weber
(613) 992-7516
Weber.BJ@forces.gc.ca

MISSION INFORMATION LINE

Michel Morency
(613) 995-8480
Morency.M@forces.gc.ca

Brigitte Cadieux
(613) 995-5234
Cadieux.B@forces.gc.ca

POLICY & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Alla Ivask
(613) 992-9656
Ivask.AG@forces.gc.ca

Dean McCuaig
(613) 996-5328
McCuaig.D3@forces.gc.ca

Jonathan Pratt
(613) 996-8862
Pratt.JE@forces.gc.ca

Linda Tyrrell
(613) 992-1877
Tyrrell.LM@forces.gc.ca

CENTREPOINTE

Karen Dooks
(902) 765-4553
pkdooks@eastlink.ca

Michelle Squires
(613) 353-7103
msquires@lincsat.com

FIELD OPERATIONS

Celeste Gotell
(613) 995-5608
Gotell.CM@forces.gc.ca

Maria DiVirgilio
(613) 995-2479
Divirgilio.M@forces.gc.ca

Eva Marks-MacIsaac
(902) 893-7735
evamac@ns.sympatico.ca

Luc Girard
(418) 907-9012
Girard.Luc@cfpsa.com

Sue McCormack
(613) 353-9932
sue.mccormack@sympatico.ca

Jackie Specken
(780) 989-3479
Jackie.Specken@shaw.ca

Mariruth Morton
(250) 370-2791
mariruthmorton@shaw.ca

Our Mission:

To promote and facilitate community-based military family services that strengthen Canadian Forcers families and communities.