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Canadian Forces Decoration [CD] and Special Service Medal [SSM] (NATO)

After graduation, Roger Hitesman and I drove west to Esquimalt where I was scheduled to start MARS training. I was enticed by all the stories of great adventures that the navy summer training produced: Seattle Rose Festival, Hawaii, etc. After spending three summers on the hill in CELE training, the prospects of an adventure was impossible to turn down. LCdr Davies (LaSalle) was also a positive influence on my decision to re-classify.

I completed my training in September 1988 and married Diane Olson on the way out to Halifax to joining HMCS Fraser, which is now an artificial reef off the coast of Nova Scotia (the ship, not Diane). Fraser was truly a great ship and crew. Major sea-going assignments included: Communication Officer, Weapons Officer, Bridge Officer, Training Officer, & Aircraft Controller. I was away from home the five years of the first seven of marriage and the marriage did not survive.

On a more positive note, I spent a number of years ashore studying French at Shearwater and St. Jean, working on an MBA, and spending three terrific years in naval HQ as an executive assistant to Chief of Staff Personnel. I retired in 1987 (nine year plan) and headed west intending to settle in Vancouver. I made it as far as Picton Ontario, the centre of Prince Edward County (The County). That summer my family and I opened a family bookstore named, Chapter One, (not to be confused with the truly amazing creation of "Chapters" by Larry Stevenson). I threw myself into the political, business, and artistic life of this amazing corner of Ontario. The recession of the 1990s forced me to be flexible and after closing the store, I landed a two week position, that I left nine years later. A local company gave me the opportunity to develop skills as a job and career counsellor to adults.

The next professional change came after teaching a number of Introduction to Computer courses, to adults in the evening, at a local high school in Belleville. That experience of teaching high school courses plus the growing awareness that my day job was no longer satisfying, caused me to re-assess. On reflection it became apparent to me that the most consistent thread in my professional life was 'education'. Looking for a new professional adventure I returned to school and graduated from Queen's with a B. Ed. and qualifications to teach secondary school math and physics. This was a personally satisfying experience and I discovered that as an experienced adult I am a much better student than I was able to muster at RMC. Getting a Math teaching position in the best secondary school in the Belleville area, Nicholson Catholic College, has made me a happy and contented professional. I have developed a teaching expertise in teaching mathematics to college bound students, a group who as a whole does not experience great success in their mathematics studies.

Shortly after my arrival in my new career, the fourth by the way, my nine years

experience as an adult 'career counsellor' led to a part-time opening in the school Guidance department. Nine months later I was named the new Head of Student Services (which includes being a fulltime Guidance Counsellor), where I can use all of my accumulated experiences that began on my arrival at RMC in 1973. After half of my first year in the position I still cannot wait to get into the school each day.

I learned to play badminton at RMC which is fortunate as I have also been the school badminton coach since arriving in Nicholson. It is great fun. During my navy years I was introduced to golf and I am an enthusiast, which is a polite way of saying I golf as much as possible but have severe challenges in this arena.

I am unable really to get my head around the passage of time. Lately I have been attempting to stay more in tune with how the college (RMC) is doing plus I look forward to seeing my classmates in the news. I am planning on being in full attendance at the upcoming 30th events and look forward to reconnecting.
Ready Aye Ready, John