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MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, NORTH VANCOUVER

SUMMER 2024

North Vancouver Constituent Update

We've got toothbrushes for the Canadian Dental Care Plan!



## Keeping quiet for killer whales

Summer is the best time to see iconic black and white orcas (often referred to as killer whales) in the Salish Sea. A ferry ride across the Strait frequently allows travelers here to catch a passing glimpse of these magnificent creatures as they feed, play, breach and carry out their normal family lives in our coastal waters.

These remarkable mammals depend upon food resources and space in a marine habitat well suited to their social network and family groupings known as pods, that they now share with a great deal of human activity.

Swiftsure Bank, at the western mouth of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, is a critical foraging area for at-risk Southern Resident killer whales. It's also the main international shipping route in and out of the Port of Vancouver. Underwater noise from ships is one of the key threats to killer whales, due to its interference with their ability to hunt, navigate and communicate via echolocation.

In 2014, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority launched a program to reduce the impact that noise from commercial shipping has on at-risk whales.

It's called the Enhancing Cetacean Habitat and Observation Program – ECHO – and it is working.

In June, it was gratifying to announce a \$3.2 million continuation of federal funding for ECHO's vitally important work, and hear some encouraging statistics.

### SLOWDOWNS REDUCING NOISE

Swiftsure Bank is one of three whale-sensitive areas where ECHO coordinates a voluntary slowdown for large commercial ships – in collaboration with government agencies, Indigenous communities, the marine transportation industry, and environmental groups. Preliminary analysis of hydrophone data indicates that a high level of participation in the 2023 Swiftsure Bank slowdown **reduced underwater sound intensity by up to 62 percent, or 4.2 decibels, compared to 2019, before slowdowns were introduced.**



CON'T

ECHO has also implemented route alterations for tugs in the Strait of Juan de Fuca to move them away from key areas of activity for the Southern Resident killer whales, reducing underwater noise by up to 75%.

The program's positive impact goes beyond mitigating underwater noise. Two larger species of baleen whales that feed on small crustaceans in our waters as they migrate to and from their calving and summering areas, are also at risk in shipping lanes. According to a study completed last year, the slowdowns have reduced ship strike risk to humpbacks and grey whales by an estimated 30% and reduced localized air emissions by up to 25%.



Across the border in Washington State, the ECHO Program has inspired a sister program, called Quiet Sound. And at the global level, ECHO's work is helping to shape the International Maritime Organization's guidelines for reducing underwater noise from ships, creating an improved environment for many marine species.

## COMPLEX EFFORT

The ECHO Program is one component of a complex, multi-stakeholder, inter-connected effort spearheaded by the federal government.

Canada's Oceans Protection Plan and our Whales Initiative, supported recently by an additional \$151.9 million in Budget 2023, have been advancing the survival and recovery of endangered whales by implementing protection measures, increasing research and monitoring activities, and addressing the key threats to their survival and recovery.

**Like many who live on the Pacific coast, this work is personally significant.**

I've worked very hard on this file – first as the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, then as Minister of Environment and Climate Change – and continue to care deeply about the health of our oceans and marine life in my current role as Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and as the Member of Parliament for North Vancouver.

**This work is vitally important. It's getting results. And we know there is more to do.**

Read more about the Oceans Protection Plan and the Whales Initiative here:

[Canada's Oceans Protection Plan](#)

[Whales Initiative: Protecting the Southern Resident Killer Whale](#)

## Commemorating and commissioning ships



**Significant commemorative events are part of an MP's responsibilities.** Two such events occurred this spring in relation to Royal Canadian Navy vessels – one in France and one here in North Vancouver.

Constituent Keith Johnston is a member of the Friends of the Athabaskan, a Canadian Tribal Class destroyer torpedoed and sunk off Brittany in April 1944 while securing the English Channel in advance of the D-Day invasion. The loss of the Athabaskan crew remains the largest single loss of life in the history of the Royal Canadian Navy. Keith's mother's first husband, Lieutenant Ralph Lawrence, was an officer on the Athabaskan who died that night – they had been married just twelve days.

Keith reached out to me as he was preparing for the 80th anniversary of the sinking of the Athabaskan in Kerlouan, France and asked that Canada's Ambassador to France attend. I contacted Stephane Dion – someone who I have known for many years – and asked if indeed he could possibly fit this commemoration into his official schedule.

### Keith wrote to us afterwards:

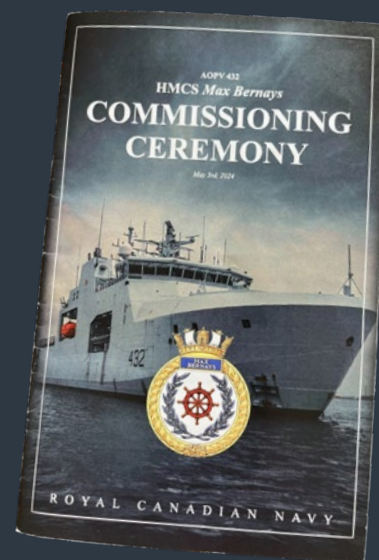
*"HMCS Athabaskan is a very significant symbol for Bretons of the sacrifice that Canadians made in liberating France. ...Seeing the large numbers of people, young and old, who mark the anniversary was emotionally overwhelming. The people were friendly, open and generous. It gave me great pride to be able to attend and sing O, Canada..."*

*"Our small Canadian delegation was celebrated, wined and dined in various small towns on the Finisterre coast of Brittany. And we were all absolutely delighted that Ambassador Dion and his Aide de Camp made the effort to attend on the 29th! It was greatly appreciated!"*

## FIRST COMMISSIONING IN YEARS

### Commemoration of our past is important.

We must honour the commitment and the sacrifices made by Canadians who fought for our freedoms.



We must also look forward, ensuring the defence of Canada with our allies internationally at a time of great international turmoil. The Canadian Navy is in the process of welcoming several new vessels to its fleet. On May 3rd, Burrard Pier played host to the first official commissioning ceremony in a quarter century.

A commissioning ceremony is the placing of a ship into active service by an order of the Minister responsible. This ship was launched from Halifax where it was built by a Canadian shipyard to specifically meet Canada's needs. Once its first sea trials were completed, it traveled through the Panama Canal to arrive in North Vancouver for this ceremony.

The newest ship, the Artic and offshore patrol vessel (AOPV) Max Bernays, is named for a naval hero who distinguished himself in the Battle of the Atlantic in 1942. The commissioning was attended by many distinguished guests and dignitaries, including CPO Max Bernays' family members, many of the commanding officers of the RCN, and Chris Perry, the Royal Canadian Navy historian – a veritable font of knowledge regarding all things naval.

**Most notably, Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne, was in attendance as the Honourary Commodore-in-Chief of the Canadian Pacific Fleet,** to commission the latest addition and escort the ship to its Esquimalt home port.

On deck to welcome us were crew members of the new ship – more than 80 in number – talkative, affable and engaging, they shared stories of how this new generation of vessel is such an improvement over our aging fleet, with more headroom, air conditioning on the bridge, egalitarian seating in the galley and other aspects that bring the navy squarely into the 21st century – strengthening Canada's defences and continuing our country's proud naval tradition.



# Providing home at Harold House

**Founded in 1918, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is the oldest and most extensive community mental health charity in Canada.** With a presence in over 330 communities, spanning every province and one territory, CMHA has been steadfastly offering programs and resources to respond to mental health challenges, support recovery and enable Canadians to flourish. This registered Canadian charity is supported by funding from all levels of government and by private donations.

Here on the North Shore, CMHA provides our local community with essential resources through innovative services and supports for people struggling with their mental health, meeting needs with compassion and kindness.

During Mental Health Week, I met with Leanne Mack, the local executive director, to tour Harold House, a building that has stood for 100 years and provides home for older women living with mental health issues. The house has character, but that also makes it a challenge for residents to age in place, and to keep it up to current standards of safety and accessibility. Our tour proved that the efforts to create a sense of belonging, security and health bear fruit with staff who consider they are all part of a big family, and that the residence is truly home.



The comprehensive programs and services offered by CMHA/NWV encompass vital areas such as housing, counselling, peer-assisted interventions, social support groups, youth programs, outreach, peer support, community wellness, and mental health education & training. These initiatives are designed to address the diverse needs of the community and foster mental health and well-being.

I was so impressed with the attention to people's needs and the comprehensive care offered at Harold House, and to the commitment of the team of staff members and residents to assure everyone has what they need, when they need it. Leanne indicated that what they really hope to achieve is a purpose-built facility to accommodate residents as they move into old age, and have greater requirements for long-term, specialized geriatric care.

**This government has supported increased awareness of and services to mental health and wellness, particularly since the pandemic, with continuing support to a variety of CMHA programs, including investing heavily in budget 2024 in youth mental health programs:**

- Investing \$500 million to create a first-of-its-kind Youth Mental Health Fund.
- Providing \$4 million to continue initiatives through the Mental Health of Black Canadians Fund.
- Providing \$7.5 million to Kids Help Phone to support their work providing mental health, counselling, and crisis support to young people.
- Helping community mental health organizations provide care to youth – broadening mental health support systems.
- Supporting diverse Canadians, at-risk populations, and students at public colleges and universities.

**One notable initiative is the North Shore PACT (Peer Assisted Care Team), a mobile community-led crisis response team serving the North Shore community and established in 2021.** This ground-breaking alternative to frontline emergency services pairs a mental health professional with a peer worker to provide trauma-informed support to individuals aged 13 and above facing crisis situations related to mental health and/or substance use. This program is not only designed to help de-escalate crisis situations but also bridges the gap between police as first responders to mental health crises and community-oriented mental health teams. PACT goes one step further by offering support to family members, caregivers and bystanders affected by mental health and substance use crises.

I met recently with a number of local service providers specializing in youth mental health to gather ideas and feedback on the work they do, and on what support is needed going forward.

**I would like to personally thank everyone who makes CMHA's work possible. As the world recovers from the social shock of COVID, we need organizations like this now more than ever. They remind us that mental health matters. That you matter.**

**To reach North Shore PACT, individuals can call 1-888-261-7228, text 778-839-1831, or email [pact@cmhanorthshore.ca](mailto:pact@cmhanorthshore.ca). This service is available in both English and FARSI. In cases of immediate danger or safety risk, you are advised to call 911.**

## 2 Billion Trees – planting our country's future

We are making real progress on our government's ongoing commitment to mitigate climate change and enhance our natural environment through the 2 Billion Trees (2BT) initiative. Late in the spring, I stood alongside Scott Pearce, the President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), to announce a significant new initiative that will support the planting of at least 1.2 million new urban trees by 2031 and create more jobs annually in municipalities across Canada.

The program, Growing Canada's Community Canopies (GCCC), is funded directly through the 2BT initiative. This partnership between the federal government and FCM underscores the crucial role local governments play in providing nature-based climate solutions. By working together, we can ensure that every municipality, from the largest city to the smallest town, has the resources and support needed to contribute to our national reforestation goals.

Since the launch of 2BT, the federal government has supported the planting of hundreds of millions of trees throughout Canada. This is a remarkable achievement that demonstrates our collective dedication to protecting and enhancing our natural environment. The City of North Vancouver has already planted 3072 trees as part of this initiative. Each tree planted represents a step forward in our work to counter the effects of climate change, a boost to our local biodiversity, and a commitment to a greener, healthier future for all.



Zanzibar Holdings Ltd. planters / Cariboo Carbon Solutions Ltd 2BT projects

As we work through what is now a typical fire season, the importance of projects like 2BT becomes even more evident. The devastating wildfires we have witnessed across our country over the past several summers remind us of the fragility of our forests due to human-induced changes and the urgent need to protect and restore them. By prioritizing reforestation and selective, species-specific tree planting, we are not only working to mitigate the impacts of climate change but also building resilience into our forests.

**I am encouraged by the progress we have made so far, but there is still much work to be done.** The 2BT initiative is a long-term commitment, and its success depends on the active participation and support of communities across the country. I encourage all of you to get involved, whether by participating in local tree planting events, supporting reforestation projects, thoughtfully greening your own spaces, or simply spreading the word about the importance of this initiative.

**Together, we can build a greener, more sustainable future for Canada. Let's continue to get spades in the ground to regenerate our forests, counter climate change, and protect biodiversity for generations to come.**

# Bonded by adversity, friends forever

**Our community is very fortunate to be peaceful, calm, safe, even sleepy.** The atmosphere in my constituency office is sometimes a bit surreal as our casework staff deal with issues that can seem unfair and shocking when global conflicts land in our laps and pitch our world sideways.

That played out this spring when Natalia poured her vibrant energy into the waiting area in the company of a heavily pregnant friend. It was to prove one of the most moving cases for all of us, as Yuliia and Natalia described their situation.

Yuliia had just arrived from Ukraine – leaving her husband and older child safe in Türkiye while their visa applications were processing. She had moved quickly to exit the war as her due date grew closer and she was afraid to have her baby as bombs dropped.



Serendipitously, Natalia, while exiting a local hair salon, nearly bumped into a distressed Yuliia looking lost and worried. Natalia's natural kindness took over – she offered assistance to the stranger and discovered their common nationality and Yuliia's dilemma. It turned out the salon was run by Yuliia's close friend, and she was on her way there to get help. Her baby would be born in a few short weeks, and she was not yet covered by healthcare. Natalia knew that the MP office could assist in all sorts of emergencies, so they came to us for help.

Over the course of several weeks, we worked together with our provincial counterparts to advocate for Yuliia – our staff reached out to a family physician in North Vancouver, who agreed to see Yuliia pro bono, and provide the necessary documents.

These helped to confirm her need, and to move her Work Permit forward. All the while, Natalia was advocating for her new friend, assuring she was connected, cared for and healthy. Suddenly, we got word that Yuliia was in labour – Neva was born mid-May. The same kind physician undertook post-natal care for mom and baby without hesitation.

A few days later, Yuliia's husband and six-year-old daughter arrived to meet their new addition.

From the horror of an un-provoked war in her homeland, Yuliia brought us all together as she sought safe haven for her family here. Natalia, who had been lonely in her own journey to find a new home as a Canadian, held her friend's hand and talked her through Neva's birth. "The most amazing thing that happened to me was witnessing the delivery of Yuliia's baby girl, Neva," she explained - an experience that she says forever changed her.

The two women now consider each other best friends, united by need, compassion, and a shared experience of fearing for the fate of their homeland at war, but also of "bright moments reminiscent of home," says Natalia.

As for us? We feel that baby Neva is our baby, and we, too, share a special bond with these women and their families. They reminded us how important compassion, patience and caring are as we serve our community.

**"It's hard for immigrants to feel at home in foreign countries," Natalia told us later, "but this experience showed me that we are all equal, we share this humanity."**

Canada has from the onset of the Russian invasion into Ukraine provided stalwart support for the Ukrainian people and for their besieged armed forces. In addition to providing a safe place for Ukrainian citizens to seek shelter from this conflagration, we continue to actively deliver aid and military supplies and equipment based on Ukraine's urgent operational requirements. Since early 2022, Canada has committed \$4.5 billion in military assistance to Ukraine.

**But we in the office realize that the effects of what is going on such a long way from our country can still have a very personal impact.**

# Wile away the summer locally

Languorous, late-summer days are the time to rediscover the beauty and vibrancy of the North Shore. **Stunning natural landscapes, diverse cultural offerings, and a commitment to sustainability – there’s lots on offer right here for you, me and all our late summer visitors.**

## EXPLORE NATURE

For families, Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre highlights our region’s natural history and biodiversity. For more of a challenge, there’s no shortage of trails to hike - one of my favourite ways to spend time on the North Shore.



The Baden-Powell Trail connects the North Shore for seasoned and casual hikers with lots of variety. The gentle paths of the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve are ideal for biking, birdwatching and picnicking. Brothers Creek Trail in West Vancouver is noted for its waterfalls and towering trees. And for a real challenge, I recommend Hines Valley.



## SAVOUR LOCAL CULTURE AND CUISINE

Lonsdale Quay Market, Polygon Gallery and the adjoining Shipyards District draw thousands of visitors on a summer day. But every village centre has its charm – Edgemont, Lynn Valley Centre, Park & Tilford, Pemberton, Lonsdale Avenue – and each has markets, events, galleries and attractions to suit most tastes.

Museums like MONOVA, local artisan and farmers’ markets like Loutet Farm, activities like swimming, kayaking and paddleboarding in Deep Cove, outdoor yoga, open-air cinema, festivals and special events abound.

**Local businesses continue to be the heart of our community –** from boutiques in Edgemont Village to eclectic shops on Marine Drive and great food choices along Lonsdale. Range beyond your own neighbourhood and discover local, thriving businesses all across the North Shore.

## ENGAGE IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The North Shore Tourism Association’s new Path for Sustainability emphasizes the importance of preserving our natural environment, supporting local businesses, while minimizing our footprint. By following principles of sustainability, we’ll ensure that North Vancouver remains a vibrant place for future generations.



**Being tourists in our own town fosters a stronger sense of community and a greater commitment to sustainability as we contribute to the prosperity and overall health of the North Shore.**

**Just a caution:** hikers should know what they are getting into in a mountain environment. Apps like AllTrails and sites like VancouverTrails.com can be helpful in preparing for a hike.



**Enjoy the rest of the summer!**  
Our office is always there to serve you.



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