

39 COMBAT ENGINEER REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi all, another good newsletter. As we move into 2025, I would like to thank all those individuals who assist with getting articles in our Regimental Newsletter. I have heard a lot of positive comments about the newsletter, so please keep up the good work. Finally, a big thank you Achim for putting this together. So, read on, as this one is a good one.

Chimo,

Bill Wenman
President

INVICTUS GAMES

56 Canadian veterans participated in the Invictus Games of 2025. 39 CER is proud to have had two of the team members as serving members of the Regiment.

Assunta Aquino

Gold medal for Alpine Skiing



Trade: Combat Engineer

Service Branch: Army

Current Residence: North Vancouver, BC

Hometown: North Vancouver, BC

Motto/Tagline: "Pain shared is pain divided."

Assunta served in the army as a combat engineer and was posted at 39 CER, Canadian Forces School of Military Engineering, CFB Chilliwack, and Gaagetown, NB. She deployed overseas, participating in Op BRONZE and Op BOREAS in the former Yugoslavia. A career highlight for her was mine monitoring for de-mining teams in Bosnia.

Assunta's injury has had a profound impact on her day-to-day life, which naturally bleeds into those around her. Learning to work with an invisible injury and its byproducts has brought its challenges. Assunta was inspired to compete in the Invictus Games after she attended the Ravensview Trauma Recovery Centre in 2019; "The stories of the veterans I met, while different, echoed so many familiar symptoms and struggles. When I graduated, I made a commitment to help other veterans, that there is hope and that pain shared is pain divided. Whistler is my mountain top and Invictus has generously given me the space to do so. The athletes, teammates I am journeying with to the Invictus Games will be another gift, a family for life."

Assunta is grateful for her husband, her children, and her service in the military. The military has blessed her with best friends across the globe, her moral compass, and a wild ride. She is ready and now able to write her own story each day from a different start line. Her lifelong

lesson is to go with your gut. The most memorable and worthwhile advice she was given was to “go dance with him!” 30 years later and he is now her husband and father of 3.

She competed in alpine skiing, sitting volleyball and swimming.



Congratulations to Assunta Aquino for winning the gold medal for Alpine Skiing in the Invictus Games. Way to go and represent Canada doing what you love to do!!

Jeffrey-Becker

Bronze medal for men snowboarding – Congratulations.



Trade: Combat Engineer

Service Branch: Army

Current Residence: Port Moody, BC

Hometown: Chiliwack, BC

Motto/Tagline: "Better than yesterday."

Jeffrey Michael Becker is a retired Combat Engineer who was posted to Primary Reserve, 39 Combat Engineer Regiment and deployed to former Yugoslavia in 2002, Kandahar in 2006 and Kabul in 2011. “I found the most satisfaction in my career when resolving unexploded ordnance and landmines; it benefits all humanity and nature.”

Jeffrey was medically released in 2014 and struggled with transition, “The isolation from being medically released was initially the biggest impact, then working through rehabilitating physical injuries, which limited my ability to be useful or even pickup my child. It also took time and support to deal with survivor guilt, operational stress injuries, and the loss of my military career in healthy ways. It took quite a while for me to find new purpose and opportunities to serve, which is a continual process.”

His motivation to apply for the Invictus Games was due to one of his personal rehab goals of snowboarding, which he began again in 2016. Once he heard the Invictus Games were in Whistler, he became excited and wanted to be involved in any capacity. Being on the team gives him the chance to work towards camaraderie through sport, try new experiences, and meet other veterans and the Invictus community.

Jeffrey continues to persevere and is grateful to still be here. His mantra is, “To stay present in the moment, express gratitude, and get outside.”

He competed in snowboarding, sitting volleyball, and skeleton.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

On 6 February 2025, 6 ES conducted an Honours and Awards Ceremony.



Lt Matthew Benson was promoted to Capt



Capt Beneteau (ret) received his CD.



Capt Beneteau (ret) received his Certificate of Service

On 20 February 2025, 39 CBG Comd Team (Col Paul Lindsay and CWO Tony Harris) made some presentations to some deserving 6 ES members.



Cpl Valeriia Osypenko received her King's Coronation Medals from the 39 CBG Comd Team (Col Paul Lindsay and CWO Tony Harris)



Cpl Alex Crestani received his King's Coronation Medals from the 39 CBG Comd Team (Col Paul Lindsay and CWO Tony Harris)



Sgt Michael Kenacan received a Division Commander's Commendation



Sgt Orman Savage received a Brigade Commander's Commendation

On 13 February 2025 at the Invictus Games for which she was providing CF support to, Maj Leah Wilson (former OC 44 ES) was presented the King Charles III Coronation Medal by the CDS, Gen Jennie Carignan and CFCWO CWO Bob McCann.



Maj Leah Wilson's surprise presentation of the King Charles III Coronation Medal

6 SSM Change

With MWO Izawa's component transfer to the Canadian Rangers (Ucluelet Canadian Ranger Patrol A Coy 4 CRPG), 6 ES conducted a change of appointment ceremony with WO Hans Park assuming the responsibilities of SSM.



CO, LCol Stephen Piers, outgoing SSM MWO Izawa, incoming SSM WO Hans Park, OC Maj Patrick Kwok

Mug Out

On 6 February 2025, 6 ES Mess said farewell to Sqn Sgt-Maj MWO Gary Izawa.



SSM MWO Gary Izawa receiving his Drill Cane from the DCO Maj Gower.

D-DAY DINNER



VETERAN AFFAIRS

Our Board member David Blake-Knox Maj (Ret'd) (blake_knoxd@hotmail.com) has offered his services to assist individuals in submitting claims to Veterans Affairs. David has had success in navigating the bureaucracy in submitting his own claims and those of others.

MEMBERSHIP

For those wishing to become members of 39 CER Association, a membership form can be acquired from: membership@39cer.ca

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The 39 CER Museum website can be accessed at: <http://www.39cer-museum.net/>

Recent editions of the 39 CER Newsletter can be accessed at: [39 CER Association \(39cer-museum.net\)](http://www.39cer-museum.net/). Earlier editions can be obtained from the Secretary or Editor.

For more Engineer news please visit the Canadian Military Engineer Association website at: <https://cmea-agmc.ca>