

Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Nanaimo Air Cadets



Nanaimo, B.C. – The Air Cadet squadron in Nanaimo is celebrating its 75th anniversary with unique experiences for its young members. Volunteer instructor and Sutton Group - West Coast Realty (Nanaimo) sales associate Ken Welte has donated countless hours over the past 21 years to help youth experience the thrill of flight and develop valuable life skills and confidence. In addition to classroom instruction, Ken takes students up in his Cessna 172 and leads memorable excursions and wilderness adventures for the cadets.

The long winter in western Canada created the perfect conditions for Ken and the squadron to take their annual snowshoeing trip (pictured above). Enjoying lots of snow and sunshine, the group trekked 7 km into Strathcona Provincial Park.

“The senior cadets, the 16- and 17-year-olds, were tasked with navigation,” says Ken. “We teach basic survival skills, like how to avoid dehydration, find tinder and wood for a fire and construct a shelter. Some of this is theoretical because of provincial park rules.”

Another highlight of the winter for Ken and the Nanaimo Air Cadets, was a tour of a large, Chinese naval vessel during their annual citizenship trip to Victoria.

“The Nanaimo Air Cadets formed up and marched down the causeway to the gangplank, where they were greeted by the ship’s personnel and given a personal VIP tour,” says Ken. “The cadets also got to see the ship’s helicopter up close, which they thought was impressive. Then the cadets had an opportunity talk to the Chinese sailors and exchange pins and some swapped uniform hats. The kids said it was an amazing, once-in-a-lifetime experience.”



The 75th anniversary celebrations will culminate in a special event at the Nanaimo airport on May 28, 2017, with support from the Department of National Defense, Nanaimo Flying Club, Nanaimo Airport Commission and others.

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