

IFR

IN•FLIGHT REVIEW

Helijet

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En Route with Helijet

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WINTER 2020/21

IFR
IN-FLIGHT REVIEW

Helijet

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BY **WILLIAM B. MOLLARD**,
PRESIDENT, UNION
GOSPEL MISSION

Union Gospel Mission:

Building compassionate community in the Downtown Eastside

A S A BIT OF A FUTURIST, I always look forward to what each new year has in store. As we move into 2021, I'm particularly excited about opening the doors to our new Women's & Families Centre, due to open this coming September.

Specifically designed for women and their children in the Downtown Eastside, this brand-new seven-story building will provide 135 beds in one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments as well as full support services including addiction and trauma counselling, childcare and youth development programs.

This new development has been five years in the planning and during that time we have researched where service gaps exist in the city and where there is greatest demand. Tragically, our research has shown that 80 per cent of women who complete the hard work of a one- or two-week detox program almost immediately find themselves back in their addiction if they are unable to find a drug recovery program as their next step. Our hope is that the Women's & Families Centre will help fill that gap and many others by surrounding women with a supportive, compassionate community within their home community.

In addition to counselling and addiction supports, we know that overcoming trauma and addiction

must also include the practical things that will give women and children a strong anchor from which they can pivot their lives. With this in mind, the new centre will include two on-site preschools for ages zero to five as well as afterschool care for older children, which will allow women the opportunity to get educated, to receive training and to move into a living-wage job.


Our Repair to Wear social enterprise is just one example of how women can add to their income while learning new skills. Using one of a dozen sewing machines on site, women are taught how to repair any damaged donated apparel, whether it be missing a button or a small tear. These garments are then sold in our thrift store and the profits are shared back with those who completed the work. It's a full circle enterprise that helps women build skills as they re-build their lives.

Those who move into the new centre are welcome to stay as long as they need, but our program is based on a five-year change. Looking again at the research, studies from Harvard have shown that people need to be in recovery for five years before they are at the same risk level of becoming addicted as the general population.

“OUR HOPE is that every single woman and their child in the Downtown Eastside who is struggling with poverty, addiction or homelessness will know that there is a way out, that there are people who will walk alongside them and will help them in their challenging journey.”

Embarking on a capital project such as the Women’s & Families Centre is a major investment and we are grateful that to date we have raised more than \$45 million in donations, which not only covers construction costs, but will also help with the operating expenses. That’s exciting and we are humbled by the trust people put in UGM to provide essential services to our most vulnerable.

Without a doubt, there are significant challenges facing thousands of our neighbours who are experiencing poverty and homelessness – many for the first time from job loss and financial struggle due to the COVID-19 pandemic. People are also increasingly turning to drug use as a coping mechanism to deal with stress, but by providing long-term recovery and supportive housing for vulnerable families we’ve seen people break what can otherwise become intergenerational cycles of poverty.

Our hope is that every single woman and their child in the Downtown Eastside who is struggling with poverty, addiction or homelessness will know that there is a way out, that there are people who will walk alongside them and will help them in their challenging journey, and that there is success on the other side of struggle. 



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BY SUE DUNHAM



Photo: Jay Minter

DAVID MCNAMAR
Director of Maintenance, Helijet

Everything in Order

SUPERIOR CUSTOMER CARE is a hallmark of Helijet: from check-in to drop-off, passengers can expect personal and professional service from front-line staff, be they passenger service agents, pilots or shuttle bus drivers. The same can be said behind the scenes in the company's Maintenance Department. Day and night, Helijet's Aircraft Maintenance Engineers (AMEs) and apprentices work

tirelessly to keep the company's fleet of helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft operational.

David McNamar, Helijet's Director of Maintenance, is the person responsible for overseeing all aspects of aircraft maintenance and ensuring the company is in compliance with safety regulations. He joined Helijet in December 2019, bringing with him 30 years of aircraft maintenance experience that serves him well keeping everything in order, every day.

"The Director of Maintenance is the person ultimately responsible for everything that goes on in the company's maintenance department," says McNamar. "That means safety first — making certain everything is done to ensure all Helijet aircraft are airworthy and in compliance with Transport Canada regulations."

To that end, McNamar's days are filled with a range of tasks from directing company policy and managing personnel, to coordinating aircraft maintenance and parts, among other things. "Overseeing a Maintenance Department is the ultimate chess game," says McNamar. "Your brain is constantly working, planning and strategizing aircraft, people and parts."

McNamar's fascination with machinery started at an early age. Growing up in Creston, B.C., he tinkered on dirt bikes, which gave him and his buddies access to the surrounding mountains. After high school, he got a job with Okanagan Helicopters in nearby Cranbrook working as a "hangar rat" doing odd jobs such as painting, cargo loading and aircraft fuelling.

"To be honest, I just wanted to get into snowboarding and skiing," confesses McNamar. "Okanagan Helicopters operated heli-skiing tours and I hoped to score open seats."

Still, anyone who spends enough time around helicopters eventually falls under their spell, and so in 1989 McNamar enrolled in the Aircraft Maintenance Technician program at Northern Lights College. Upon graduation he was hired by Vancouver Island Helicopters (VIH) in Victoria where he apprenticed in the company's avionics shop doing medevac conversions on Bell 222 helicopters used in air ambulance operations. In the years that followed he worked at a variety of the company's bases, including stints in Prince Rupert, Sandspit and Bella Coola. He rose within the organization and by 1999 he was working as a Crew Chief in VIH's head office in Victoria.


After VIH, McNamar went to work for Skyline Helicopters in Kelowna as an engineer on Bell 212s

“Your brain is constantly working, planning and strategizing aircraft, people and parts.”

doing seismic work and heliskiing operations. He then stepped out of the aviation industry for a few years to work for a local hydraulic overhaul company, doing AME consulting on the side. He returned to aviation full-time in 2012, working for Kelowna-based Valhalla Helicopters, which involved summers working in the B.C. Interior and winters in Australia during that country's annual fire season. In 2014, he returned to Skyline Helicopters, becoming Director of Maintenance the following year.

McNamar and his wife, Alison, raised their two children, Emma and Joshua, in Kelowna for most of his career. Once their kids graduated from high school the family began considering new opportunities for Alison, Emma and Joshua to all pursue academic studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Over breakfast one morning Alison asked, “Dave, have you ever thought of applying for a Director of Maintenance job in Vancouver?” She did a quick Google search and discovered Helijet was accepting applications for a new Director of Maintenance. McNamar thought it was a long shot, but submitted his resume for consideration and was hired for the position six months later on December 2, 2019.

McNamar had experience as a Director of Maintenance at small helicopter companies, but taking the helm at a large air carrier with varied aircraft, operations and personnel presented a whole new set of challenges.

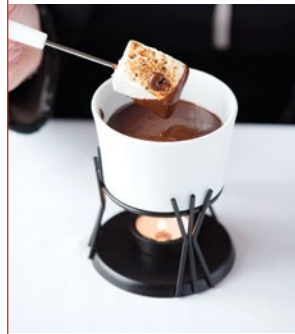
“It was extremely eye-opening,” says McNamar. “You don’t know what being Director of Maintenance at a large air carrier entails until you actually do it. There is no course or qualification you can take to prepare.” He adds, “I am fortunate to have a team of very experienced colleagues supporting me, including Morris Forchuk [Manager, Procurement and Fleet Planning], Kevin Robinson [Chief Engineer] and Jim Forbes [Manager, Quality Assurance]. I also have to thank all the people who work in the maintenance department, particularly the night shift — they are the unsung heroes who get the job done after everyone else has gone home at the end of the day.” 



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A behind-the-scenes chat with Stephen White, Executive Producer at Dance Victoria, on pivoting to a virtual home season

The last year has been particularly difficult for the arts and culture sector. How did the onset of the pandemic affect Dance Victoria?

In the beginning it was very much a rollercoaster and it was a challenge to navigate a way forward. But we found that by the time it was clear to us we wouldn't be able to proceed with a season of live performances in the Royal Theatre in 2020/21, we quickly pivoted to planning what we could do. We did some brainstorming, started a big list on a whiteboard and it has evolved into what we're calling our Virtual Home Season.

What will the new virtual season look like?

The Virtual Home Season tries to capture many of things we did when we were live at the Royal Theatre. At our core, Dance Victoria has always been very interested in building a community of people who are engaged and excited by dance. With that in mind, the virtual season is designed around four filmed feature presentations by companies that we have selected, but it also includes extensive program notes, filmed conversations with artists and after chats.

We've also added some whimsical things. We partnered with a local liquor store, which developed four cocktails that are themed to match each presentation. On the secure, password-protected web pages that subscribers will access, they'll find demo videos and recipe cards to make the cocktails at home. And for our presentation of the Nutcracker, there are downloadable colouring pages and paper cut-out dolls. We also engaged a local storyteller to tell an animated story of the Nutcracker that kids can watch before the ballet. There's even a subscriber swag bag from our sponsors.

So we really looked at what we could bring to the virtual performances that were value-added and would enhance the online experience. Just even logistically, this format allows us to bring performances by international companies to our audiences that we wouldn't otherwise be able to, so in that sense I'm thrilled that Dance Victoria can now present them.

How has your audience responded?

At the very beginning, we were actually in the theatre setting up for Ballet BC's production of Romeo + Juliet when word came from the Public Health Officer that there was a ban on large gatherings and we had to immediately cancel the show within 24 hours. We contacted our ticket buyers and subscribers and told them that they were of course entitled to a full refund, but we also asked if they would consider donating the value of the tickets back to Dance Victoria. We were really overwhelmed with the generous response: in



Photo: Jose Luiz Pederneras



Photo: Nathalie Sternalski


total we saw \$115,000 in donations, which helped more than cover the losses from cancelling the last two shows in the season. We're very fortunate to have such a loyal audience.

How has the pandemic affected local dancers and performers?

In addition to live presentations, Dance Victoria manages a facility that has three dance studios. And in parallel to our virtual home season, we were able to put together a plan to make a big investment in the development of artists and new projects at our studios. Individual dance artists were very much affected by the pandemic: they lost contracts and performance opportunities and were locked out of studios immediately. Fortunately, we have been able to reach out to local and Vancouver-based dance artists and have offered residencies with financial support so they can continue to develop new work.

What does the future hold for Dance Victoria?

I think what we're learning now really has some application for the future, even after we go back to the theatre live. While it's shut down, the Royal Theatre has installed three camera positions, making it possible for livestreaming. I imagine when we are given the all-clear to return, there will still be a segment of our audience that will be somewhat uncomfortable returning to the theatre, so this will allow those people to still participate and that's a great advantage to us.

Prior to the pandemic, I don't think any of us that are involved in live performing arts really thought about shifting programming to online, but that's the reality now. It's a new kind of creative process. 



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Winter Wonderland

10 WAYS TO EXPLORE B.C.'S BIG BACKYARD

By Stephanie Cunningham

IF EVER THERE WAS A YEAR to explore new local adventures in the great outdoors, this is it. After all, there's no shortage of beautiful B.C. landscapes and activities to keep your family outside, active and happily occupied all the while staying safe and sound within your social bubble. Try a new-to-you winter activity this year, and who knows? It might just become an annual tradition for many years to come.

1 Downhill Skiing and Snowboarding

Of course, downhill skiing and snowboarding are top of the list for many families heading outdoors this winter – and for good reason. B.C.'s 13 major ski resorts have built a well-deserved world-wide reputation for both premier conditions and first-class accommodations. And this year, with the usual flocks of international tourists staying home, the powder promises to be that much more pristine



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Travel safely this winter by calling ahead to make sure your destination is welcoming visitors and be sure to follow all Public Health travel orders and recommendations. Many venues will be operating with limited capacity and additional safety protocols in place, so book early and remember to check cancellation and refund policies should circumstances change.

and the lift lines just a little bit shorter for locals looking to hit the neighbourhood hills.

Whistler Blackcomb's expansive 8,171 acres of skiable terrain makes it the largest downhill resort in North America. With 37 lifts and gondolas whisking skiers and riders up the mountains, there are plenty of slope options to suit every skill level and ski-style.

Those in the Interior can check out some of B.C.'s

smaller picturesque mountain towns such as Nelson's Whitewater Ski Resort, Kimberley's Alpine Resort, or Canada's newest ski resort at Revelstoke Mountain with 75 runs that cater primarily to intermediate and advanced skiers. And for easy-to-access day-trips from Vancouver, check out Grouse Mountain, Cypress Mountain or Mount Seymour; all three are within an hour's drive of the downtown core.

Photo: Tourism Vancouver, Grouse Mountain

2 Hop on a helicopter, sneak up on a snowcat

Avoid lift lines altogether by hopping in a helicopter or snowcat to seek out that once-in-a-lifetime run of perfectly smooth, untracked powder.

Heli-skiing and cat skiing are suitable for skiers and riders who can confidently tackle black diamond runs and who are up for a measure of added adventure: the runs skied on any given day will depend on the abilities of the group, weather forecast and snow conditions. Panorama Mountain Resort boasts the highest heli-skiing operation in Canada, while over at Rossland's Red Mountain Resort, guided snowcat trips allow intermediate to "uber expert" skiers and riders the opportunity to take tackle remote runs that streak down the area's eight main peaks.



3 Take a spin under the stars

Those who prefer skates to skis can channel their inner Tessa Virtue or Scott Moir under starry skies at outdoor rinks.

Brewer's Pond at Silver Star Mountain Resort features 2.5 acres of natural skating surface, while Sun Peaks Resort sports an NHL-sized rink, perfect for wannabe hockey stars. Closer to Vancouver, take a spin on Grouse Mountain's 8,000-square foot ice skating pond high above the city lights below.

At Apex Mountain just outside of Penticton, a one-kilometre long Zamboni-groomed Adventure Skating Loop winds its way through a forested landscape. Kick the experience up a notch and skate by the glow of twinkling lights at night, capped off with snacks and a bonfire to end your evening.

4 Cruise on a snowmobile

Tour as a single rider or buddy up with a friend. Cruise an easy-going, well-groomed trail or tackle a powder run. Options abound for snowmobilers from novice to pro at most of the major ski resorts around the province. There's even something for the kids: pint-sized mini snowmobiles provided by some tour operators allow kids to take a solo spin on a machine sized just for them.

5 Mush a dog sled

Alaskan Huskies are the only engines you'll need when dog sledding through the snowy forest trails at Sun Peaks Mountain Resort. Tours offered by Mountain Man Adventures include the opportunity to meet and "mush" the team alongside an experienced guide all the while learning about what it takes to be a good sled dog.



6 Float on a fat bike

If bicycles were the hot ticket item this past summer, you can expect fat-tire bikes to be right on trend this winter. Fat bikes have over-sized tires, typically 3.75" or wider, with a modified frame and wide rims. Originally designed to ride in the snow of Alaska and the desert sands of New Mexico, fat bikes with low-pressure tires can float on unstable terrains where normal tires would otherwise sink.

A growing number of ski resorts are opening trails specifically groomed for these chubby tires including single and double tracks at Silver Star, and parts of the Nordic trail system at Mount Washington.

7 Explore Nordic trails

Perched on the edge of Strathcona Provincial Park, Vancouver Island's Mount Washington offers 55 kilometres of top-rated cross-country skiing, 25 kilometres of snowshoeing trails and a dedicated Nordic Lodge, making it one of North America's top destinations for mountain lovers looking to go the distance deep into a winter wonderland.



Photo: Tourism Whistler/Justa Jeskova

8 Zip-line through the forest

Take flight through snow-laden old-growth trees on a high-wire adventure spanning Whistler and Blackcomb Mountains. Choose from zipline tours operated by Ziptrek Ecotours or Superfly Ziplines to experience panoramic views and thrilling descents down the mountainsides and across valleys. No experience necessary, but make sure you don't blink as you sit back, relax and enjoy the views – these ziplines can reach speeds of up to 80 to 100 km/hour.

9 Dark nights, bright lights

During the shortest of days, it's no wonder we look to winter light displays to brighten the season. Grouse Mountain lights up the night starting at dusk each evening with a glowing light tunnel leading to its charming Light Walk around Blue Grouse Lake, while Cypress Mountain's Lights at the Lodge snowshoe trek leads to historic Hollyburn Lodge where you can enjoy a rewarding hot chocolate before making your way back along the one-kilometre long trail. And if you find yourself in Whistler this season, be sure to check out Vallea Lumina, an enchanting multimedia display that lights up the trees.



Photo: Tourism Whistler/Justa Jeskova

10 Slip and slide

While the wooden toboggans of long ago have mostly been replaced by fibreglass sleds and specially designed innertubes, the thrill of hurtling down a slope on a snowy day remains as exhilarating as ever.

When the flakes fall, go old-school and find a local park, or venture farther up-mountain to one of the many ski hills that offer magic carpets or tube tows saving sliders the drudgery of dragging their sleds back to the top.

Those looking for an even greater thrill can visit the Whistler Sliding Centre to book a seat on the Passenger Bobsleigh Experience – the only place in Canada where the public can ride in a real bobsleigh steered by a trained pilot. 🚗

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All Is Not Lost

PLATELET-RICH PLASMA (PRP) TREATMENT CAN PROMOTE HAIR GROWTH IN MEN AND WOMEN

~
BY SUE DUNHAM

HAIR PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE in society, and always has. Throughout history human hair has been associated with femininity and masculinity as it conveys youthfulness, vitality and sexuality. No wonder men and women fret when it starts thinning and hairlines recede. After all, hair loss affects up to 80 per cent of men and 40 per cent of women.

Until recently little could be done to address thinning and balding without resorting to hair transplants. But developments in platelet-rich plasma (PRP) research reveals it can be an effective and natural way to treat hair loss in both men and women.

PRP therapy is a minimally invasive technique that is remarkably simple, yet brilliant. Blood is drawn from a person and placed in a small centrifuge that separates platelets from red blood cells. The patient's concentrated platelets are then injected into the scalp at multiple focussed sites to stimulate hair growth.


"PRP is like hair fertilizer," says Dr. Jeff Stein, a

physician and surgeon who provides hair loss treatment to patients at Stein Medical clinic in Vancouver. "Blood plasma contains platelets and many types of growth factors. The PRP process turns your own blood into a naturally derived serum to promote and accelerate hair growth. Other than minor discomfort at the injection sites, PRP treatment has no side effects or allergic reactions, and there's no downtime." He adds, "Most people don't know about PRP. It's a relatively new treatment better known in sports medicine for treating injuries, but the same principles apply to the scalp — you're using your body's own platelets to stimulate vitality and rejuvenation, which thickens existing hair and generates new hair growth."

Dr. Stein says an increasing number of men and women of all ages are inquiring about PRP treatment as more becomes known about it. He says individuals with severe balding are better served by hair transplant, but those wanting to address generalized hair loss and thinning, male/female pattern baldness, or conditions like alopecia areata or traction alopecia, can benefit from PRP.

"We see an equal number of men and women ranging in age from 20 to 80, but most are middle age people with mild-to-moderate thinning or baldness," says Dr. Stein. "Some people respond faster than others, but most begin to notice a slight thickening and new hair growth after the first few treatments."

Each person's needs are unique, but generally patients undergo one treatment each month for three to six months, with ongoing maintenance every few months as required.

"PRP treatment is not about vanity," says Dr. Stein. "The results are subtle and natural, making hair look fuller and healthier over time." He adds, "Ultimately, we all just want to look our best." 

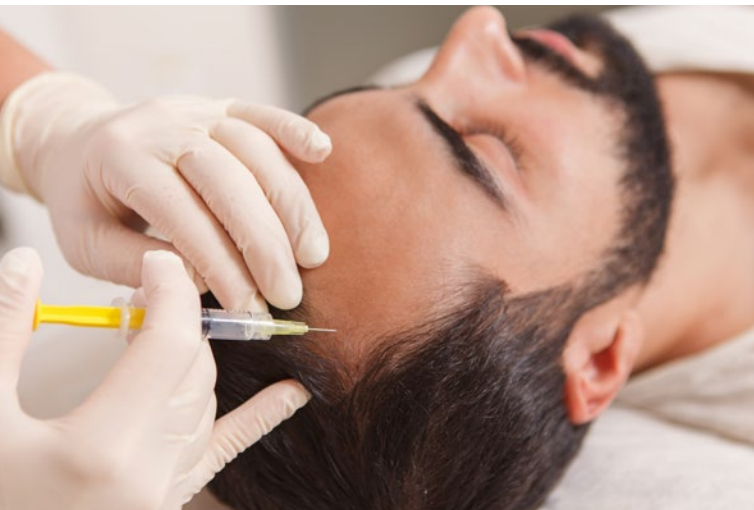




Photo: Erich Saide




Air Ambulance Award

On October 22, 2020, the BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) announced that Mr. Geoffrey Burkholder, Lead Captain for Helijet's Air Ambulance operations had been awarded the Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal (EMSESM). This occasion marks the first time an air ambulance pilot has received the medal.

"I'm honoured and humbled to receive this award," says Burkholder. "I have so much respect for the BCEHS air ambulance paramedics we work with. We function as a team and the relationship is almost seamless."

Created on July 7, 1994, the EMSESM is administered by the Governor General's Chancellery of Honours. It is the highest honour bestowed by the Crown on EMS professionals in Canada. Specifically, the award recognizes professionals in the provision of pre-hospital emergency medical care who have performed their duties in an exemplary manner, characterized by good conduct, industry and efficiency for at least 20 years.


"It is awe inspiring to think of the number of lives Geoff has touched, the austere conditions and technical demands he has worked through, and the thousands of calls he has kept our medics safe on," says Kalani Polson, a YVR-based Critical Care Flight Paramedic. "He's the utmost professional and our team is extremely proud of him." 



Helijet recognized on National Philanthropy Day 2020

First held in 1986, National Philanthropy Day is coordinated by the Association of Fundraising Professionals to recognize the significant philanthropic contributions of individuals and organizations. This year, during National Philanthropy Day 2020, Helijet was named to the Vancouver Island Giving Hearts Honour Roll for generously responding to the needs of the Vancouver Island community.

Realizing that doctors, nurses and others in the health care sector needed to travel quickly between the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island to provide direct patient care and attend urgent medical strategy briefings on the COVID-19 outbreak, Helijet offered no-charge flights for B.C. health care responders travelling on business. In total, more than 425 flights were donated during the months of April and May, easing some of the strain on the health care system and its workers during the early months of the pandemic.

Helijet salutes the thousands of health care and frontline workers across the province who continue to respond during this ongoing pandemic. 

25

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