



# INFORMATION RELEASE

**[parksvillefirerescue.ca](http://parksvillefirerescue.ca)**

**January 5, 2026**

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## Parksville Firefighter Running for Wounded Warriors

From February 22 to March 1, a team of eight Canadian runners made up of first responders and military personnel will complete an 800-kilometre run from the northernmost tip of Vancouver Island to Victoria. The team will spend eight days running through many communities, raising funds and awareness for [Wounded Warriors Canada](#) mental health programs

Karen Petraschuck, a volunteer paid on-call firefighter with Parksville Fire Rescue, is one of eight chosen to run in this year's Wounded Warrior Run; eight days, eight runners and a journey of 800 kilometres on Vancouver Island. Karen is an advocate for staying active and how it can impact a person's mental health. Karen understands firsthand the struggles of post-traumatic stress disorder and is dedicated to helping break the stigma surrounding trauma, encouraging those struggling to seek support. Karen is passionate about running, a runner since her teens, participating in half marathons and triathlons and who sees fitness as both a physical and mental anchor.

Wounded Warriors Canada, a registered charity, is a national mental health service dedicated to supporting trauma-exposed organizations, professionals and their families. They offer services that combine education, counselling and training to help individuals build resilience and recover from post-trauma injuries, focusing on serving Canadian Armed Forces members, veterans, first responders and their families.

### QUOTE – Fire Chief Marc Norris

“Our congratulations to Parksville Firefighter Petraschuck for taking on the challenging Wounded Warriors run on Vancouver Island. We are proud to support her fundraising efforts for the Wounded Warriors mental health programs. Our firefighters step up every day to keep our community safe and Wounded Warriors programs benefit the wellbeing of Parksville firefighters and their families as well as all first responders in Canada, a most worthy cause.”

### QUOTE – Parksville firefighter and Wounded Warrior runner, Karen Petraschuck

“It is a true privilege to have been chosen to participate in the 2026 Wounded Warrior Run. In 2023, seeing the crew come through Parksville and being moved by the stories, I was inspired to be a part of this worthy movement. Personally, joining the team has been important to help bring awareness to the mental stress experienced by first responders.”

### FUNDRAISING FOR WOUNDED WARRIOR CANADA

- The Vancouver Island team has set a fundraising goal of \$250,000 - every dollar raised during this run remains on Vancouver Island, supporting mental health programs for first responders, veterans and their families. If you'd like to contribute to the team and Wounded Warriors Canada, you can do so at [Wounded Warriors Canada](#). <https://woundedwarriors.ca>

- To support fundraising, a charity hockey game is set for January 30 with Parksville Fire Rescue members and other first responders playing the Oceanside Generals with all proceeds to Wounded Warriors and ALS Canada; Friday, January 30 at Oceanside Place at 7 pm.
- On Friday, January 9, The Beach and The Lounge radio stations will be on location at the Parksville firehall (160 Jensen Avenue West) from 6 am to 9.30 am to bring awareness to Parksville Fire's 2026 firefighter recruitment campaign and chat with Karen about the Wounded Warriors run.

### **Wounded Warriors Canada 2026 Run**

Traditionally, the run starts in Port Hardy and ends at Market Square in Victoria. The tentative schedule has the runners starting in Port Hardy on February 22 running through Port McNeill and Woss. On February 24, the runners will end the day in Campbell River, departing the next morning to Comox, where they will pass through Oyster River. They will depart Cumberland on February 26 and head through Bowser as they head to Qualicum Beach and Port Alberni on February 26 and Parksville, Lantzville and Nanaimo on February 27. Further south the runners will be in Chemainus, Duncan and Shawnigan Lake on February 28, and Mill Bay, Langford, View Royal, Esquimalt, and finally Victoria on March 1.

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#### **For more information:**

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*Photo credit: Dave Graham Photography*

*The City of Parksville is located on the traditional territory of the Coast Salish Nations, home to the Snaw-Naw-As First Nation and the Qualicum First Nation.*

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