

Thiffault, Pierre

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Belleville family to honor newest captain, their son

By Nancy Gummow

The Intelligencer

As her son officially takes command of Canada's newest navy frigate Thursday, Catherine Thiffault will wipe a few happy tears from her eyes.

Thiffault and husband John will witness their son Pierre take control of the high-tech vessel, Canada's new addition to its naval fleet.

The Ville de Quebec's ceremonies take place — appropriately — in its namesake Quebec City on Thursday afternoon.

And the Belleville boy's parents, along with his seven other siblings, wouldn't miss the occasion. Some are travelling from other parts of Ontario for their brother's big day.

"We're so proud of him," said

his mom, on Tuesday, shortly before they left for Quebec. "He loves his work. He just enjoys it very much."

Thiffault, who graduated from Moira Secondary School, comes from a line of sailors. His two older brothers have had successful naval careers.

The 41-year-old man, educated in Ottawa and B.C., before docking permanently in Halifax, N.S., will be given the commanding officer's honor in front of Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Gov. Gen. Ray Hnatyshyn, plus other dignitaries.

The Ville de Quebec is one of 12 ships in the Canadian patrol frigate program. The new anti-submarine warfare frigates are being built in New Brunswick and Quebec. They'll provide long-range submarine detection capability.