

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

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Executive Digest

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BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

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RCMP suicide levels a 'mental health crisis'



May 27 2014

A Mountie with 25 years of service says the traumatizing effect of witnessing violent deaths and working for bullying supervisors drove him to attempt suicide.

"I put my gun in my mouth and tried to pull the trigger," said the officer, who fears he could lose his job by speaking out and asked that his identity be concealed.

Believing his career would suffer if anyone knew he was depressed, he sought treatment in secret.

"I have worked with half a dozen guys who have taken their own life," he told CBC News.

He says he knows first-hand why officers hit rock bottom.

"It's an accumulation of pride, things aren't going away," he says.

"If you're isolated, you're bullied, you've already ignored your family — if they're still around. You only have cops as friends, you measure everything by success at the workplace; if that goes south, failure is not an option."

After the deaths of six of his friends, he says, RCMP bosses tried to blame their suicides on anything but work.

"It's very easy for a supervisor to say there were problems at home or the marriage was breaking up."

He's tired, he says, of being a pallbearer.

"I've lost too many. I've carried too many. We can't afford to have any more," he



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says. "There's a mental health crisis."

And some experts agree.

Dr. Greg Passey, a psychiatrist who works with both the military and police officers who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, says the RCMP is trailing behind on the issue.

"To be quite frank, the RCMP at this moment in time does not have a program in place that is even close to approximating what the military has," says Passey.

But RCMP Assistant Commissioner Gilles Moreau says the force is working to get rid of the stigma associated with mental health issues.

To aid in this, the force is about to launch a five-year mental health plan and hopes to encourage officers to seek help when they are suffering from depression.

According to Moreau, there have been 16 documented suicides of serving members — and 13 retirees — in the last eight years but, he admits, those cases have not been reviewed.

Last year the RCMP told CBC they do not track employee suicides, but Moreau says that is changing.

"We will make it mandatory that every suicide that we have in the organization, a postmortem is done ... and that we review the cases to see if there is anything we can learn from that, and put in place anything we can do differently to assist our members."

One suicide is one too many, he says.

"Any reason that somebody may decide to end their life through that means is certainly tragic and we, as an organization, have to do better."

Moreau says the RCMP is determined to convince officers it's OK to talk about mental illness.

"We're almost like Superman and Superwoman — and we have to be everything to everybody — but let's not forget we're all human beings and we don't wear a cape, and some of the stuff we see in our work will have

an impact on us."

Dr. Passey says, however, that the RCMP's mental health plan only allows officers six therapy sessions without approval, and puts too much bureaucratic red tape in the way of treatment.

"The problem with the RCMP is that on paper it appears they are doing a lot of things," he says. "But in reality they are not."

He says mental health support is the key to reducing suicide.

"The level of support a police department provides to an officer in regards to stressful situations is as important — if not more important — than the actual exposure to traumatic events in preventing things like PTSD and suicide."

And, according to Passey, the RCMP now have a higher rate of PTSD than that seen in the military.

He says research shows that among patients with PTSD, about 19 per cent will actually attempt suicide.

"It doesn't surprise me at all that there is going to be higher rate of suicide in the RCMP," he says.

"But you truly don't know until they track, not just serving members but more importantly, those members who have already retired."

There has been no study of police suicide across Canada as a whole, but in 2012, an Ontario report found 23 Ontario Provincial Police officers had committed suicide in the previous 13 years — more than the number killed during the same period in the line of duty.

Passey says U.S. studies show almost nine times as many police officers [there] die from suicide and their own handgun than from felons.

A special investigator with the BC Coroners service is now looking into the death of Sgt. Pierre Lemaitre, who took his life last July.

He was the senior RCMP spokesman who bore the brunt of criticism after the RCMP misled the public over the Taser death of Robert Dziekanski.

Friends say he was never allowed to clear his name.

Several officers who have been interviewed by the coroner say that investigation will also examine the suicide of another RCMP member earlier this month.

The RCMP says it will listen to any recommendations from the B.C. coroner and make changes if necessary.

(CBC News)

phetamine were imported directly from Mexico then transferred to traffickers in several Ontario communities, including Oxford County, Norfolk County, Middlesex County, Waterloo Region and the Greater Toronto Area.

Police say Project Greymouth was then linked to an investigation carried out by Waterloo regional police, dubbed Grimm.

Thirteen search warrants were executed at a number of southern Ontario locations and police say 12 kilograms of cocaine and 3.5 kilograms of methamphetamine were seized, along with one stun gun, four vehicles, almost C\$90,000 and US\$38,000.

Twelve people have been charged with 49 offences, including charges relating to the Controlled Drug and Substances Act.

"This joint investigation means thousands of dollars have been taken out of a criminal enterprise and prevented illegal drugs from getting into the hands of our young people," said OPP Deputy Commissioner Scott Tod.

May 22 2014

CALGARY - A man accused of killing five young people in Calgary's worst mass murder has been found fit to stand trial.

Matthew de Grood is charged with first-degree murder after four men and a woman were stabbed to death at a house party that was being held last month to mark the end of the university school year.

De Grood, 22 and the son of a senior Calgary police officer, had been ordered to undergo a 30-day assessment to determine whether he was mentally fit to stand trial.

He appeared in court briefly by video link Thursday and a judge was told de Grood understands what is happening.

Court heard de Grood will remain in psychiatric care under a mental health certificate.

The case is due back in court July 22.

Police have not said what they think motivated the attack.

They have said de Grood was invited to the party April 15 and mingled with guests before violence broke out.

Jordan Segura, Kaiti Perras, Josh Hunter, Zackariah Rathwell and Lawrence Hong were killed.

(CHQR)

May 22 2014

EDMONTON - Just because a police officer has someone pulled over doesn't guarantee the perp won't take off.

According to the Edmonton Police's 2013 criminal flight report it's happening more and more each year. Report findings show a 34% increase, representing 58 more incidents from 2012 to 2013, in criminal flights — commonly described as police chases or police pursuits.

However, Kevin Galvin, superintendent of operational support division, says the spike in fleeing criminals can be explained through Edmonton's rise in population and internal

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**THURSDAY
MAY 22, 2014**

May 22 2014

LONDON, Ont. - A dozen people are facing charges after provincial police say they busted three illegal drug trafficking rings in southwestern Ontario - two of which they allege were importing drugs from Mexico.

The probe dubbed Project Greymouth began in August 2013 to gather evidence of illegal drug trafficking.

It's alleged that cocaine and metham-

changes of operation that have simplified pursuit procedures.

“Our policy, when it was first developed, was quite complex. So we undertook a plain language review ... and as a result it was easier to train our sergeants and staff sergeants on how to apply the policy,” said Galvin, adding that one-third of police pursuits ended within one kilometre of where the chase started.

Numbers have risen when police do decide to follow fleeing criminals, up 13% when compared to 2012. But terminations, incidents when police decide to call off on ground police pursuits, have also increased by 15%, from 75 incidents in 2012 to 86 incidents in 2013.

“One of the reasons why terminations is up is because in some instances officers are choosing not to follow because it’s too high risk,” said Galvin,

The number of Air 1 involved incidents remains constant, with 64 incidents requiring helicopter assistance in both 2012 and 2013.

In late 2013, Air 1 moved to Villeneuve Airport, 40 km northwest of Edmonton. First quarter statistics have yet to be released but longer flight deployment times are expected to impact service numbers, says Galvin.

(Edmonton Sun)

FRIDAY
MAY 23, 2014

ay 23 2014

MONCTON, N.B. - An investigation of an RCMP shooting involving a 30-year-old man has concluded his death was not the result of the shots fired by the officers and that they used reasonable force.

The investigation by the Fredericton police says Daniel Levesque died of stab wounds he suffered prior to the shooting in Moncton, N.B., on July 13, 2013.

Fredericton police say the Mounties were called to an area near the Moncton Coliseum around 6 a.m. after reports of a man with a knife.

They say the suspect was shot nearby a short time later and died in hospital.

Fredericton police have concluded the gunshot wounds were not fatal and the two RCMP officers who fired the shots are not responsible for Levesque’s death.

As a result, Fredericton police say they have launched an investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death, which they consider suspicious.

May 23 2014

OTTAWA - Canada’s privacy watchdog is considering a formal review into the RCMP’s use of Canadians’ personal data gleaned from telecom and Internet companies without a warrant.

The potential review comes after the Mounties admitted to Parliament in April that they do not track how often requests are made for “basic subscriber information” from tel-

ecom and Internet service providers.

“I can tell you that we are scoping out a possible review of the RCMP’s collection of subscriber data without a warrant,” wrote Valerie Lawton, a spokeswoman for interim privacy commissioner Chantal Bernier, in an email Wednesday.

“We are not in a position to provide more information on the review at this time.”

Lawton said “given the RCMP’s role” as the national police force, privacy office analysts determined it made sense to start looking at government agencies’ collection of subscriber data with the Mounties.

The review could be a preliminary step toward a full-fledged audit.

The commissioner has the power to compel records from an agency such as the RCMP if it undertakes such an audit.

Despite recent revelations around widespread telecom disclosure to police, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada said it is not looking into warrant-less disclosure at this time.

“We currently have no plans to audit the issue,” said spokesman Ghislain Desjardins.

The RCMP declined to be interviewed for this story.

According to parliamentary documents tabled last month, the RCMP obtains warrants for most usage information with the notable exception of basic subscriber information. That data — including names, addresses, telephone numbers, Internet protocol addresses and email addresses — can be used to put together a profile and can lead authorities to more detailed personal information.

(Toronto Star)

May 23 2014

EDMONTON - An investigation has concluded that a suspect who exchanged gunfire with RCMP officers in the small Alberta town of St. Paul earlier this month killed himself.

The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team says police did nothing wrong in the death of John Quadros, 55, and no criminal charges will be laid.

“I can tell you that the investigation did not disclose any criminal conduct on the part of those police officers involved,” Clifton Purvis, head of the civilian investigative agency, said Friday.

“It was further determined that the male driver of that vehicle, Mr. John Quadros, took his own life during the incident.”

Three Mounties were injured in downtown St. Paul on May 9 during a pursuit of a man in a truck who was believed to have fired shots at the RCMP detachment.

One police vehicle was rammed by the truck, seriously injuring an officer, and an exchange of gunfire ensued. A second officer was grazed by a bullet in the hand and a third was hit by a shard of flying glass.

The RCMP have since said that they believe Quadros, who owned a health food store in St. Paul, also shot and killed a Catholic priest in the church rectory earlier that night.

Purvis said Quadros was armed with a

number of weapons.

“The investigation recovered several firearms from inside the cab of the black truck. Recovered was a high-powered rifle, two shotguns, a small-calibre pistol and numerous rounds of ammunition to fit all of those weapons.”

Numerous shots were fired at police using the weapons and one officer shot back eight times, Purvis said. None of the shots hit Quadros, he said.

Police ordered the suspect to get out of the truck, but he didn’t move, Purvis said. Officers approached and found Quadros dead.

The three injured Mounties are expected to recover from their injuries.

May 23 2014

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. - A Peel regional police officer is facing an assault charge following an investigation by Ontario’s police watchdog.

Special Investigations Unit director Tony Loparco says there are reasonable grounds to believe the officer committed a criminal offence when a 22-year-old man was injured in February.

The SIU says the charge relates to an exchange that occurred between the man and the officer at an intersection in Mississauga.

The SIU said at the time of the incident that the man suffered a fractured jaw.

Const. Tomasz Laskowski is facing one charge of assault causing bodily harm and is to appear in court in Brampton on July 7 to face the allegation.

May 23 2014

HALIFAX - An independent unit is looking into three separate incidents after people were injured during police investigations in Nova Scotia on Thursday and Friday.

The Serious Incident Response Team says police were called to a home in Enfield late Thursday and tried to arrest a man who allegedly uttered threats.

The team, which investigates cases involving police, says the man’s arm was broken as police tried to arrest him.

In the second incident, police say they were pursuing a car Friday at about 2 a.m. when the vehicle went off the road and crashed.

One of the teenage passengers suffered a broken pelvis, while the 14-year-old driver was not hurt.

The team says it is also looking into the case of a 31-year-old man whose leg was broken when police tried to subdue him Friday around 7 a.m. in Kentville after they determined he should be taken into custody and used a conducted energy weapon on him.

May 23 2014

MONTREAL - Anarchists, rioting hockey fans and students beware: Montreal police have two new weapons in the war on public disorder.

Montreal police have purchased two LRAD sound cannons, similar to ones used

by Toronto Police during the G20 summit. The cannons, the LRAD 100X and the LRAD 300X, cost \$6,000 and \$12,000 respectively.

They can generate up to 140 ear-splitting decibels to disperse pesky crowds, but the cops promise not to pump up the volume unless people get really unruly.

A city report made several recommendations on how best to use the cannons safely. Among the suggestions are to not sound alarms continuously and to never use the cannon if people are within 10 metres of the device.

(QMI Agency)

May 23 2014

TORONTO - Toronto police may stop sending officers to alarm calls, arguing the overwhelming number are false alerts and it's a bad use of resources.

In 2012, just 300 of the 20,000 private alarm calls Toronto police responded to turned out to be legitimate.

It's one of 12 areas identified by an internal police steering committee reviewing the cost-saving potential of scaling back on a variety of services, including alarm response.

"It's not looking at saying 'under no circumstances,' but they (the committee) haven't started their work on it," police spokesman Mark Pugash said Friday.

"We're looking at how we can reduce the drain on resources so we can put more in frontline services."

The committee, part of Chief Bill Blair's Internal Organization Review process, has already recommended scrapping police reports for lost Canadian I.D. and licence plates.

"These reports were found to be largely redundant" since the issuing government agencies can handle them, according to a police newsletter.

The committee estimates the police force will save \$613,222 or 10,960 officer hours annually on this alone.

Lost property reports for debit and credit cards and cellphones are also redundant, the committee found.

"The issuing financial institution and service provider have the technological capabilities to disable the cards or phones remotely and immediately," Sgt. Shari MacKay, a committee member, told the newsletter.

The committee has also recommended police stop taking reports on lost or stolen property when "certain parameters are met and property falls below a certain value."

Pugash identified the limit as \$500.

Toronto police will also no longer report on fires when there are no fatalities or when the cause of the fire is determined or if no criminal offence was involved. Nor will officers attend industrial accidents and file reports if an injury is "not deemed critical and the nature of the event is not criminal."

Areas still under study include animal complaints, which "are generally outside the core responsibilities of police," and when other city agencies manage demand for this service. The committee found that eliminating 90 per cent of this type of calls would result in an average annual savings of 3,668

officer hours, or \$205,225.

Overall, the committee identified potential savings of \$2.1 million and almost 41,903 person-hours.

(Toronto Star)

May 23 2014

REGINA - It is a new, improved way to get to see what goes on inside the RCMP Training Academy in Regina.

You can now take a tram ride starting at the RCMP Heritage Centre that takes you through Depot. There are two trams now operating, thanks to the \$96,000 donation from the Regina Hotels Association.

The tour will allow visitors to see the 450 acre site without disrupting the work going on to train every RCMP recruit entering the force.

(CJME)

SATURDAY MAY 24, 2014

May 24 2014

SURREY, B.C. - Police in British Columbia have laid a second degree murder charge against a man in connection with the slaying of hockey mom Julie Paskall.

Yosef Jomo Gopaul was arrested Friday and will appear in court on Monday to face the allegations against him.

Paskall, 53, died in hospital Dec. 31, following a vicious attack in the parking lot of a community ice arena days earlier.

Her death rattled the community's sense of security and prompted some Surrey residents to demand the city and the police do more to keep them safe.

Surrey set a grim record of 25 homicides in 2013 compared with only 11 the previous year.

May 24 2014

EDMONTON - The Edmonton Police Service has released the results of the 2014 Citizen Survey and it seems Edmontonians are more confident than in the last survey.

When the survey was completed last in 2011, 51 per cent strongly agreed that the EPS was doing a good job. Chair of the Edmonton Police Commission, Shami Sandu tells 630 CHED's Tencer and Grose the numbers this year are up.

"93 per cent indicated they were very confident in the EPS and the service they got which was a two per cent increase from 2011."

EPS hired an outside company to conduct the survey and were able to contact 1400 people. This year there was a little change to how the survey was conducted.

"This is the first time we've also included cell phone users," Sandu says. "By contacting cell phone users we found that we captured a lot more males between the ages of 18 and 34 that responded to this survey."

Topping the list of citizen concerns this year was traffic, drugs, gangs and general crime. The number of murders in Edmonton is no longer listed as a top concern, whereas

in 2011 that was the top of the list. That year the city saw 48 homicides.

(630 CHED)

SUNDAY MAY 25, 2014

May 25 2014

TORONTO - A stolen bike could take weeks or months to retrieve, if it comes back at all. But Christian Garnette had his back in just a day.



Rather than reporting the theft to police last Tuesday after the 23-year-old Toronto man realized his bike was stolen, he turned to complete strangers on the Internet to help find it.

He posted a picture of his bicycle on the Facebook group of a local fixed gear shop around 3:30 a.m., asking if anyone had seen it since it went missing. All that remained was the front wheel and lock of the bright white bike.

"I had a feeling I would actually get it back because my bike stands out a lot and it's kind of hard to disguise," Mr. Garnette said.

Just 10 hours later, someone commented on his post with a photo of the bike six blocks away, locked and with a new front wheel.

The stranger and his friend guarded the bike until two men arrived, claiming to have purchased the bike themselves. After a brief dispute, they were told Mr. Garnette, the rightful owner, was on his way, and conceded the bike as well as the replacement tire, for good measure.

"It was a different experience," Mr. Garnette said. "I already lost two bikes. I even have a video of a guy stealing one of my bikes because my sister used to live in a condo and I ended up getting the footage from the concierge, but yet that was still not enough for the police to get my bike back. It feels like a Facebook group is easier."

More than 3,400 bicycles in Toronto were reported stolen in 2012, according to Toronto Police Services. This was roughly 300 more than the previous year.

In a survey conducted by Cycle Toronto, 168 of 303 respondents said their bikes had been stolen, but just 22% had registered them with Toronto police. Less than half reported the theft to police, and of these, 88% didn't think it was worth it to report it.

(National Post)

MONDAY
MAY 26, 2014

May 26 2014

VICTORIA - No charges will be laid against a Mountie in Langley, B.C., who told a civilian to stop trying to resuscitate a dying man.

The civilian complained to the RCMP and the Independent Investigations Office determined that the officer might have committed an offence.

The B.C. Crown prosecutor's office says it happened last September when a man crashed his vehicle because of a medical event and a person on the scene started CPR.

The office says when the RCMP officer arrived, he checked the driver's pulse and, because he thought the man was breathing, he ordered the person to stop CPR.

Firefighters arrived and could not find a pulse and so started CPR again; despite numerous medical interventions, the man died in hospital.

The prosecutor's office says charges will not be laid because there's no substantial likelihood that the officer involved would be convicted.

May 26 2014

VANCOUVER - In its 350-year history, the changing of the guard ceremony in England has never included a non-military pipe band - until now, says the Vancouver Police Department.

This June, the force's 34-member pipe band will accompany members of the Household Division, British soldiers who guard the Queen, during ceremonies at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle.

Pipe Sgt. Bob Murphie said Monday the trip has been about two years in the making and is meant to celebrate the band's centennial year.

"It's very significant," said Murphie. "We're going to London in the first instance to perform in the changing of the Queen's guard."

"That's been done by the military for 350 years, the military and the Commonwealth, so Commonwealth regiments from around the world have gone to participate in it. But it's always been done by the military, so we're the first, the very first, non-military band to do this."

The band is scheduled to participate in four daily ceremonies at Buckingham Palace and two at Windsor Castle, starting June 16.

It will also play at the Royal Chelsea Hospital, a residence for retired army pensioners, and take part in a ceremony known as the beating retreat at a parade ground near Buckingham Palace. The beating retreat is a historic military tradition, which saw drums beaten, camp gates closed and flags lowered at the end of the day.

Murphie said all the band's current members are sworn members of the police department and have done a lot of work getting ready for the trip. He said the British military regiments that guard the Queen are the best

in the world at what they do, are phenomenal in drill, are wonderful musicians and are the epitome of perfection.

"So we've had to raise the standard of our band in terms of drill and deportment and music as well."

The pipe band was formed in 1914 under the authorization of then Chief Const. Malcolm MacLennan.

Current Deputy Chief Const. Warren Lemcke said most of the 10 constables who gathered in 1914 to form the band had no experience with the pipes and drums. The band has since played around the globe - including in Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, the United States and Switzerland - and for royalty, heads of state and dignitaries.

The department says it's the oldest non-military pipe band in British Columbia and the longest continually serving police pipe band in the world.

May 26 2014

Stirling Rawdon has a new chief of police - Dario Cecchin, a former RCMP officer with 28 years of policing experience at various locations in Canada.

He has spent 11 years as a commander in smaller communities.

Dario Cecchin says he's looking forward to working in a small community like Stirling Rawdon, but he hasn't made any decisions on changes to the operation of the police service.

The new chief begins work on June 9.

The Stirling Rawdon Police Services Board didn't renew former Chief Brian Foley's contract at the end of 2013 after a couple of years of controversy surrounding the police service.

Foley is no longer on the municipal payroll. An agreement has been reached with him, but details are confidential.

(Quinte News)

TUESDAY
MAY 27, 2014

May 27 2014

WINNIPEG - The quick thinking of an 82-year-old woman who used a spy camera to catch a thief red-handed has led to a former Winnipeg home-care worker being sentenced to two years of probation for theft.

Myrna Jacqueline McDougall, who is 54, blamed her misdeeds on work and personal stress when she pleaded guilty to the charge Monday.

Court heard McDougall was nabbed taking \$25 last June from the purse of Viola Dufresne, who suspected someone had stolen nearly \$1,100 over a six-month period from her apartment but had no proof.

McDougall only admitted to the one incident caught on surveillance.

Dufresne has previously said she purchased the camera, which was disguised as a clock radio, after a police officer mentioned how a friend had set up surveillance to catch thieves breaking into his cottage.

The senior says she began finding excuses to leave McDougall, formerly with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, alone in her room for extended periods of time to set a trap.

Justice officials say they've never seen a case quite like this, where someone of the victim's age essentially launched their own successful investigation.

(Winnipeg Free Press)

May 27 2014

MONTREAL - The mother of a 16-hour-old infant snatched from a Quebec hospital says she's grateful to everyone who helped bring home her baby - especially the group of people who used social media to track down the alleged kidnapper.

Police issued an Amber Alert on Monday night after the newborn was allegedly abducted from the mother's hospital room in Trois-Rivieres by a woman wearing scrubs and posing as a nurse.

The alert, which included a security-camera photo of the suspect and a description of her car, spread rapidly on mainstream and social media.

With the guidance of four young locals who took up the cause on social media, police apprehended the woman and recovered the baby safe and sound three hours later.

"Every click, every share made the difference," Melissa McMahon, the infant's mother, wrote Tuesday in a post on her Facebook page.

"Four marvellous people, whom we had the chance to meet, identified this woman thanks to Facebook ... We felt a huge amount of support from the public. This victory is for you, too!!!"

The four online detectives who helped find baby Victoria were identified as Charlene Plante, Marc-Andre Cote, Charel Bergeron and Melizanne Bergeron.

"We had the chance to meet the family and it was one of the best moments of my life," Melizanne Bergeron told the Montreal radio station 98.5 FM in an interview Tuesday.

"The parents were euphoric, we had a visit with employees and we received rounds of applause. It was really great to see - it was the greatest gift to see the baby with her parents."

She said she spotted the information about the kidnapping on Facebook and showed the photo of the suspect to a friend, who recognized her.

"My friend knew where the woman lived," she said. "The patio door was open, the light was on. We called the police."

Melizanne Bergeron also posted a video Tuesday on her Facebook page of young women crying as they greeted a police officer carrying a tiny, blanket-wrapped baby.

"An evening rich in emotions," read the video caption.

McMahon, who also thanked hospital staff, police, the media and the public for helping find Victoria, called those hours without her infant the worst of her life.

"The powerlessness we felt in this situation

was difficult to accept,” wrote McMahon, who said she sprinted after the woman toward the hospital exit after sensing something was wrong.

“The worst-possible scenarios were looping in our heads.”

May 27 2014

WINNIPEG - A man who was in the custody of Winnipeg police after a disturbance last week has died in hospital.

The Winnipeg Police Service says the 40-year-old was arrested last Thursday and taken to the District 3 station.

The police say he was put in an interview room where he suffered a medical emergency.

He was transported to hospital in critical condition and died on Monday.

Police say his family has been notified and his name is not being released.

The officers involved have been placed on administrative leave during the investigation.

May 27 2014

EDMONTON - The Alberta Court of Appeal has dissolved a court injunction that prevented the province from releasing the names and salaries of its Crown prosecutors.

The provincial government appealed an earlier judge's order that limited the disclosure list.

A lawyer for a prosecutor who didn't want to be on the list had argued that releasing the information could put people in the profession at risk.

Government spokeswoman Kathleen Range says prosecutors will be given time to apply for an exemption before their information is published.

May 27 2014

The Vancouver Police Department credits 26 new tips to its recently launched cold-case website.

The site, launched less than a month ago, has been visited by more than 22,000 and offered new leads for homicide investigators to follow up.

“We've been very pleased with the response to the website,” said VPD Sgt. Dale Weidman in a release Tuesday.

“All it takes is one good tip and we can potentially solve a case.”

The site currently features eight unsolved murders dating from 1981 to 2008.

“Despite lengthy, complex investigations, their killers have not been caught,” said police.

Investigators have added Global News video and more photos to the site about cases such as Evan Garber, Richard Chacon and Danielle LaRue that have yet to be solved, and more cold cases are expected in the coming weeks.

(The Province)

May 27 2014

ORILLIA - The OPP Museum's new exhibit, 'Behind the Badge: The Story of the Ontario Provincial Police,' features a restored 1931 Henderson Four vintage motorcycle.

About \$30,000, raised by the Friends of the OPP Museum through the past two years

of Pedal for the Past, has been put toward the restoration of the Henderson, the earliest known surviving OPP patrol vehicle.

“Every single bolt and nut was removed from the bike and everything was cleaned and inspected and (given) all new paint and decals. Everything was meticulously restored,” said museum curator Chris Johnstone.

Behind the Badge is the museum's first new exhibit since 2009.

“Everything is new, wall to wall. We did a complete tear-out and put in all new displays,” Johnstone said. “It allowed us to put out so many objects.”

Each object has a story and that's what gave the museum the idea for the exhibit title.

Behind the Badge features an Orillia OPP display for the first time. It's also celebrating the 40th anniversary of the underwater search and recovery unit and the 30th anniversary of women police officers.

The underwater search and recovery unit started in 1964. To commemorate the anniversary, the exhibit features a full-sized diver in a display using a metal detector to search for a knife.

Women became full OPP constables for the first time in 1974.

“This was groundbreaking. They beat out the RCMP by almost a year in recruiting women as full police officers,” Johnstone said.

The display includes a mannequin wearing the first women's police uniform, which looked more like an airline hostess's outfit.

“It was very quickly realized that the purse, the skirt and heeled shoes were ridiculous. By the second class, they were replaced by pants and a regular duty belt,” Johnstone explained.

(Sun Media)

May 27 2014

NEW YORK - New York City police will begin carrying large amounts of anti-opiate drugs in an effort to combat a recent spike in heroin deaths, law enforcement officials said on Tuesday.

Opiate overdoses killed more than 2,000 New York residents in 2011, more than double the number in 2004, state records show. Across the United States, the number of fatal opiate overdoses increased 45 per cent from 2006-2010.

“This program will literally save lives,” New York Attorney General Schneiderman said in a statement.

Some 19,500 officers with the New York Police Department - the nation's largest police force - will receive kits with the opiate antidote drug naloxone, which can instantly restore breathing in people who have overdosed, Schneiderman's office said.

The \$1.7 million needed to purchase the naloxone kits for NYPD officers will come from the attorney general's Community Overdose Prevention Program, which is funded by money seized from drug dealers and other convicts, the attorney general's office said.

The kits, costing about \$60 each, contain two pre-filled syringes of naloxone, two atomizers for nasal use and sterile gloves. They

have a shelf life of two years.

It was not immediately clear when the program will begin. It expands on a smaller pilot program used by NYPD on Staten Island, which resulted in a handful of overdose reversals, the attorney general's office said.

(Reuters)

May 27 2014

Rural communities around Saint John supported a motion on Monday to explore the possibility of creating a regional police force.

The rural communities voted in favour of the motion at the Fundy Regional Service Commission meeting, which is a significant departure from when the idea was raised a year ago.

Last year, Saint John Mayor Mel Norton could not find a person on the commission to second his motion to study the concept of regional policing.

Norton said he was “incredibly grateful” to the communities for agreeing to study the regional police concept.

The Saint John mayor said it is too early to know what form this regional police service could follow.

“It could be all of the region policed by the Saint John Police Force, it could be only the local service districts and Saint John being policed by our police force. It could be any combination of that,” Norton said.

Joan Seeley, the commissioner for the Simonds local service district, initiated the motion to study a regional police force.

Seeley said her local service district is very close to Saint John so a regional police service could be a way to trim their policing costs.

Seeley said Saint John police could respond to an emergency in Simonds faster than the RCMP.

The Fundy Regional Service Commission includes the local service districts of Simonds, Musquash, St. Martins, Kingston, Westfield, Greenwich and Petersville. Saint John, Rothesay, Quispamsis and Grand Bay-Westfield are the towns and cities on the commission.

Saint John has its own police force, while the Kennebecasis Regional Police Force covers Rothesay and Quispamsis. The KV Regional Police costs \$5.5 million per year and that is roughly split in half between the two towns.

Grand Bay-Westfield has contracted its policing service from the RCMP since 1998.

(CBC News)



May 28 2014

TORONTO - Toronto police say 50 people were arrested Wednesday after a series of pre-dawn raids across the city targeting gangs, drugs and weapons.

Acting Chief Mark Saunders says the investigation - dubbed Projects RX and Battery - involved multiple police agencies from across southern Ontario as well

as RCMP, OPP and the Canada Border Services Agency.

Saunders says the operation focused on two “incredibly ruthless” rival gangs known as the Sick Thugz and Asian Assassins, who police allege have been involved in a series of shootings in the city.

He says the almost year-long investigation led to 53 search warrants being executed Wednesday by a “multitude” of police service agencies, although most of the raids were executed in the Toronto area.

The other forces involved were Peel, York, Halton, Niagara and Durham regional police, as well as Waterloo, Barrie, Guelph, Windsor, London, Hamilton, Belleville, South Simcoe and Brantford police.

Those arrested are expected to face charges related to criminal organization, as well as firearms possession and trafficking, drug trafficking, human trafficking, armed robbery and conspiracy to commit robbery.

Among the items seized were about 10 firearms, drugs including cocaine, heroin and marijuana, and a large amount of Canadian currency, Saunders said.

While 50 people were arrested Wednesday, 30 other people have already been arrested in prior incidents, he said.

May 28 2014

VANCOUVER - An investigation into the deadly crash of an RCMP helicopter has prompted a warning about possible engine flame-out for a specific type of chopper when it is flown in bad weather.



The caution from the Transportation Safety Board has prompted Transport Canada to review the engine design of the Eurocopter AS 350 and EC 130, with more than 500 of those machines operating in Canada.

Civilian pilot Dave Brolin died during a training exercise near Cultus Lake, B.C. in January 2012 after his chopper's engine cut out and the aircraft slammed into the ground nose first.

The report says covers had not been placed over the engine before a heavy snowfall and the air intake system hadn't been cleared before take off, but the report also shows it may be impossible to keep the intake system clear in snowy or rainy conditions.

The TSB concludes the chopper came down after snow built up on the air intake, clogged the engine compressor and caused a sudden loss of power.

Since the accident, pilots have been reminded of the need to clean the air intake systems before takeoff, but the TSB says some of those preventative steps aren't easily taken in the field, and there's still a safety risk.

May 28 2014

WINNIPEG - A member of the Winnipeg Police Service has been charged with assault and obstruction of justice.

Police say the professional standards unit began a criminal investigation last September into the alleged conduct of an officer while off duty.

Criminal charges were laid following consultation with Manitoba Justice.

Sgt. Kenneth Molloy, a 24-year veteran, has been released on a promised to appear.

The 47-year old has been assigned to administrative duties that do not require contact with the public.

May 28 2014

MONTREAL - A Montreal police officer is being disciplined after being photographed with a woman on his lap while he sat in his patrol car.

Cmdr. Ian Lafreniere, a Montreal police spokesman, says the sanctions could include a suspension from duty.

Lafreniere says the force first heard about the incident on Tuesday night when it appeared on Twitter.

He said the initial reaction was that the grainy photo was faked because there was no indication where it happened or when.

No identifying number on the car was obvious. Police later got a tip that the person who took the picture had those details.

Lafreniere says it then took about an hour on Wednesday to track down the officer, who was called in to meet with his commander.

“For us, this is completely unacceptable,” Lafreniere said in an interview Wednesday evening.

He said police are now investigating what led to the incident and where the officer's partner was.

Lafreniere also said the woman was not naked and there was no sexual act as has been reported.

“We take this seriously,” Lafreniere said. “A lot of police officers are not happy now because it's extremely bad for their job, their professionalism. This is not all the force. This is not the way officers are working in Montreal. This is one case.”



May 29 2014

WINNIPEG - A Manitoba judge is recommending the province give courts the power to quash mandatory inquests to save time and resources.

Judge Brian Colli made the recommendation after presiding over an inquest into the death of an intoxicated man who died in RCMP custody after a fall.

Colli says the RCMP was the only party that requested standing, but the inquest still took two years from start to finish.

He says inquests tend to be costly and drawn out, which takes away precious resources from

other areas of the judicial system.

Colli recommends the province amend the Fatality Inquiries Act to allow judges to cancel a mandatory inquest if no member of the public expresses interest and it's unlikely to yield any recommendations.

Inquests are mandatory in Manitoba if someone dies while in police custody or in a psychiatric institution.

May 29 2014

HALIFAX - A Nova Scotia judge has ruled that a man wrongfully convicted of statutory rape in 1970 has failed to prove that the miscarriage of justice was the result of negligence.

But Judge James Chipman of the province's Supreme Court is awarding Gerald Barton \$75,000 in general damages, saying the plaintiff's life was profoundly and negatively affected by the wrongful conviction.

Barton launched a lawsuit against the RCMP in Digby, N.S., for negligent investigation.

He testified that at the time he was charged he never gave a statement to the Mounties and did not plead guilty at a trial, even though that's what the record shows.

Barton, who now lives in Edmonton, was wrongfully convicted of raping a 14-year-old Nova Scotia girl in 1969.

In January 2011, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal admitted fresh DNA evidence that proved Barton was not the father of the child born to the girl, who has since died.

May 29 2014

TORONTO - Toronto police say Wednesday's series of city-wide, pre-dawn raids targeted two groups of ruthless gangs and may provide key evidence into some recent gang-related shootings.

Police held a news conference Thursday to provide more detail about the raids that took place a day earlier and were aimed at curbing the activities of two gangs: the Sic Thugs and the Asian Assassins. The raids were part of two police stings titled Project RX and Project Battery.

The raids resulted in more than 50 arrests on Wednesday plus 40 more arrests in the weeks leading up to Wednesday's raids.

Toronto police Insp. Gordon Sneddon of the force's guns and gangs task force said the two rival groups will face multiple charges. Without getting into specifics, Sneddon said police are investigating a connection between the Asian Assassin gang and some recent high-profile shootings.

Police displayed a selection of the guns and drugs seized in Wednesday's operation. Drugs seized include cocaine, marijuana and ecstasy. Police also seized a cocaine press and more than \$350,000 in Canadian cash. The guns seized include assault rifles and semi-automatic handguns.

(CBC News)