

BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

A CHRONICLE OF NEWS FOR THE CANADIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

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Executive Digest

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BLUE LINE NEWSWEEK

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Extremely potent painkiller hits Montreal black market

May 13 2013

MONTREAL - An extremely powerful drug has made its first appearance on Montreal's black market, and it's being produced in sordid conditions by amateur chemists.

In late April, Montreal police raided seven locations in Montreal, seizing more than 300,000 tablets of illegally-produced synthetic prescription drugs, including Viagra and Cialis.

"The fight against synthetic drugs is a priority for all of the province's police forces," said Cmdr. Francois Bleau at a Monday news conference.

The busts also yielded crystal meth, bath salts, methamphetamines, ecstasy, speed, steroids, oxycodone and 1,500 kilograms in untransformed ingredients — enough to produce three million pills.

But police consider the presence of bromadol and desmethyl fentanyl to be particularly worrisome.

Mario Guérin, an assistant director for the Montreal police, said investigators found three kilograms of desmethyl fentanyl after they sent the seized pills to the lab for analysis.

Fentanyl on its own is a powerful painkiller in the form of a patch that is usually prescribed to cancer patients and people suffering from chronic pain disorders.

The desmethyl fentanyl is a derivative of it that has been chemically modified to be even more potent and is reported to be 40 times stronger than heroin and 80 times stronger than morphine.

Montreal police said this is the first time



they've come across desmethyl fentanyl on Montreal's black market.

Public health officials have warned emergency room physicians about the drug, saying it's extremely potent.

The seized desmethyl fentanyl was toxic enough to affect four police officers who were handling the drugs for analysis.

"Even though they were wearing masks and gloves, still by being in contact with the product, they suffered from mild injuries. One of them had to be hospitalized because of a heart condition," said police Insp. Marc Riopel.

Many of the pills are stamped with copy-cat logos of companies like Facebook, Tim Hortons and the Montreal Canadiens.

Bleau said the tactic is used to target young users.

In addition to the pills, police seized 1,500



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kilos of chemicals capable of producing 3 million pills. Investigators said the pills were sold online and on the street. Some pills made it across the US border by being stashed inside microwaves.

Locations on in the city's Ville-Marie, Pointe St-Charles, Little Burgundy and Plateau-Mont-Royal districts were among those searched.

Police said they found sophisticated equipment used to produce industrial quantities of drugs — one machine was capable of producing at least one pill per second.

THURSDAY MAY 09, 2013

May 09 2013

TROIS-RIVIERES, Que. - Four police officers face criminal charges following the violent arrest of an armed-robbery suspect that was caught on video.

The four Trois-Rivieres municipal officers were arrested and released under a promise to appear in court on May 31.

A surveillance video showed four people beating a suspect in a parking lot on Feb. 2. The incident attracted international attention once the video hit the Internet.

Police officers Andre St-Amant, Barbara Provencher, Dominic Pronovost and Kaven Deslauriers have already been suspended with pay since the video was made public and went viral.

The four officers face seven charges, including assault with a weapon, assault causing bodily harm, negligent use of a firearm, fabricating police reports and obstruction of justice.

There are also charges against the original suspect, Alexis Vadeboncoeur, who is accused of armed robbery at a pharmacy.

The video shows a young man dropping a

weapon and laying on the ground, face down. Police officers arrive running, and level a flurry of punches and kicks.

Vadeboncoeur alleges he was struck in the head and the genitals.

Trois-Rivieres municipal council is expected to receive the results of an internal investigation between now and June 3 to determine whether the officers' legal fees will be covered by the city.

The video went viral and was picked up internationally, notably on CNN.

(Cococo)

May 09 2013

WINNIPEG - Just as the warmer weather might tempt some people to hitch a ride in the back of a pick-up truck, the Manitoba government has introduced legislation that would make those windy rides illegal.

An amendment to the Highway Traffic Act will restrict the number of passengers to the number of seatbelts in a vehicle.

It will also prohibit rides in a cargo area.

Currently, there is nothing in the act that prevents this so long as all seat belts are otherwise occupied.

In addition, Transportation Minister Steve Ashton says passengers in wheelchairs will need to be secured with a seatbelt.

(CJOB)

May 09 2013

SASKATOON - A Saskatchewan man, lost and alone, has been found by an RCMP remote controlled helicopter that spotted him from the sky.

The 25-year-old had wandered away from where his car rolled on Highway 5 near St. Denis, about 40 kilometres east of Saskatoon, early Thursday morning.

RCMP arrived at the accident scene after midnight, but couldn't find the driver.

Cpl. Doug Green said he had suffered a head injury and became disorientated and wandered off.

Two hours after the rollover, the man phoned 911 and said he was lost and cold wearing only a t-shirt, pants and had no shoes.

The GPS on his phone was used to narrow down the search area.

A STARS helicopter used night vision and a search light, but couldn't find him.

That's when Green came in with the Dragan Flyer X4-ES, a type of unmanned aerial vehicle that weighs just over four pounds, with an infrared camera.

"When I put the Dragan Flyer up, I put it up in a hover mode ... and just did a slow rotation," Green said.

The infrared camera identified three heat signatures within five minutes - one was the missing man, the other two were likely animals, Green explained.

"Something hot will be white, whereas cold is dark. So, it's very easy to spot animals and human beings."

Volunteer firefighters from the Vonda and Prud'homme fire departments then went to that

spot where they found the man curled up in a ball at the base of a tree next to a snow bank.

He was unresponsive and taken to hospital with hypothermia. Green said he's now in stable condition, but this could have turned out much worse without the Dragan Flyer.

"We wouldn't have found him until later on today and he wouldn't have made it," Green said.

Green has been operating the Dragan Flyer for about a year-and-a-half and said it is typically used to take pictures from the air of accident scenes. He said this is the first time it has ever been used to find a missing person.

(CKOM)

FRIDAY MAY 10, 2013

May 10 2013

SASKATOON - He was one of the most recognizable residents in Saskatoon and some people consider the Prairie city a little different now that he's gone.

Alvin Cote wasn't a well-known politician, businessman or hockey player, but a ragged, homeless alcoholic whose tough talk would easily melt into a hearty chuckle and a big smile short on teeth.

He spent that past couple of decades living in Saskatoon. He could be seen curled up on floor of a bank foyer, sleeping on park benches or reading worn copies of National Geographic in the drunk tank.

He died April 19, a few days shy of his 60th birthday.

Saskatoon police officers are still talking about his death, even though they considered it an inevitable fate. It's believed Cote had been arrested more times for public drunkenness than anyone else in the city's history. Some officers put the tally at close to 1,000.

Although his obituary does not list an official cause of death, police say Cote was in hospital with pneumonia when he died.

Downtown beat officer Const. Derek Chesney was surprised and saddened when he heard the news. He saw the man almost every day over the past five years.

"It's not often that you can arrest somebody on multiple occasions and end up being friends with them. But such was the case with Alvin," Chesney recently wrote on his official police blog, Cops and Bloggers.

The officer confesses that he had a good cry after writing the online tribute. He fights back tears again as he talks on the phone about the important life lesson Cote taught him.

"You realize that people can fall through the cracks," says Chesney. "And just as much as a good person can have a bad day, things can happen to people in their lives where they end up going on a path that perhaps they didn't choose."

Cote was from the Cote First Nation in the Kamsack area, east of Saskatoon near the Manitoba boundary. He was carted off as a child to a residential school on a neighbouring reserve and suffered years of abuse, says Chesney.

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He says Cote never talked about it, but the abuse likely set him on his destructive path. Cote has a sister in Saskatoon and she tried to look after Cote for a while, says Chesney. But he wouldn't stop drinking.

Chesney remembers meeting Cote for the first time in the winter of 2009 outside the old train station downtown. Chesney had just earned his badge and saw the man with a scraggly beard tapping and flexing his arms, yelling his catch-phrase: "I'm a fighter."

Chesney calmed him down by asking, "I heard you were a lover, not a fighter."

"Well, I'm that too," Cote laughed.

Chesney and his partner then put Cote in their cruiser and, as they were heading back to the police station, Cote knocked on the dividing window with \$5 in his hand. He said he was hungry. Chesney ran into a McDonald's and got him two double cheeseburgers. Cote happily devoured his meal during the rest of the ride.

Chesney says he and many other officers looked out for Cote. They checked on him at night and made sure he had enough to eat.

Sometimes, when Cote was hanging out on his usual bench in the public lobby of the police station, officers changing shifts would hand him their lunches as they walked by.

One time, when Cote was in detention on his birthday, staff rummaged up a cupcake and stuck a candle on top. "They actually had everybody on key and everybody else in cells sang Happy Birthday. He blew the candle out through the bars."

Chesney says he last saw Cote a few weeks before he died, sitting outside a Tim Hortons. Chesney patted him on the back and they ended their chat the way they always did.

"OK, Bud. See you later," Chesney said. "You will," Cote replied.

Chesney says he and other officers have made their way in recent weeks to the home of Cote's sister to drop off sympathy cards and kind words about the man they miss. Some even say they thought of him as family.

But the police aren't the only ones mourning Cote. Chesney's blog has received hundreds of clicks and comments from people who had seen Cote on the streets, even though they never knew his name.

A McDonald's manager wrote about how she will miss waking Cote up outside the restaurant in the mornings and asking him to move along.

Another woman said she'll miss buying him lunch. One man talked about how he once saw Cote sleeping inside a bank foyer. He slipped some money under the pile of clothes the man was using as a pillow.

"Sounds like this guy may have been an angel in disguise?" wrote a woman named Amy. "He seems to have brought out the best in humanity."

Even Saskatoon's police chief knew Cote. Clive Weighill recalls seeing him at a Tim Hortons just a few weeks before he died. Weighill slipped him some cash.

"I think most people thought I was telling him to leave but I was just giving him a five dollar bill so he could go get himself something to eat."

Weighill says a study completed last year

tracked Cote and 22 other homeless people with substance abuse problems. It showed that they cost the city \$2.8 million over one year in policing, ambulance and hospital costs.

That's why police, health officials and other agencies hope to build a wellness centre in the city to house the group. Weighill says it's a more dignified solution than sticking them in police cells.

The centre could also provide faster access to treatment services, but Weighill concedes some people just don't want help.

Chesney says he did everything he could for Cote. "I couldn't make him sober up. I couldn't bring him home and put him in my basement and give him a bath. He lived the way he wanted to and you almost have to respect somebody for that."

Some officers say they would have gone to Cote's funeral but he was buried on his home reserve some 350 kilometres away. There's talk of a local memorial, but nothing has been organized.

Chesney hopes the bench in the police lobby that Cote sat on for countless hours will be decorated with a plaque in his name and moved into the new police station that's under construction. That way Cote will always be there.

"He was a fighter. He was a survivor. And he'll be remembered."

May 10 2013

EDMONTON - Police in Edmonton are trying a two-wheeled tool to fight crime.

Some foot patrol officers in the downtown area will soon be riding around on Segways.

Six of the electric-powered devices will be available to monitor streets and walking trails, special events and the city's light-rail transit pedways.

Police Supt. Tony Harder says the Segways won't have sirens, but will be equipped with red-and-blue LED lights to make them stand out at night.

(CHED)

May 10 2013

EDMONTON - A court erupted with angry screams and shouts from spectators on Friday as the Crown dropped murder charges against a youth who confessed during a police sting to killing two people.

Jeers and taunts were thrown at the 17-year-old, who was accused of second-degree

murder. But the prosecution conceded it didn't have a case after the judge ruled the undercover evidence inadmissible.

Several sheriffs needed to be brought in to calm the crowd.

The youth made the confession in a "Mr. Big" sting, believing they were part of a criminal gang. But the boy recanted during his trial, saying he was just trying to fit in and gain respect.

Court of Queen's Bench Justice Brian Burrows had said earlier Friday that police took a troubled teen, who was a ward of the state, and offered him privileges such as hockey tickets, rock concerts and access to a condo.

Burrows said he was satisfied that the boy "was coerced by expectations and hopes of future significant benefits and advantages."

The judge, who was hearing the case without a jury, also said the statements the teenager made to police varied and contradicted the evidence.

Burrows expressed concern about using such a sting at all on a teenager.

"In my view, permitting the use of statements ... made to Mr. Big would give rise to a real and serious possibility of abuse of conduct by the state."

The day before Boenke and Trudel were killed, the accused and another boy - both 14 at the time - had run away from the Strathcona County Ranch, a youth treatment facility run by Bosco Homes. The boys had been sent to the home for allegedly vandalizing a school.

The two were arrested after they were found driving Boenke's stolen truck. The accused confessed to police, but during pretrial hearings a judge ruled the statement inadmissible. Without that key piece of evidence, the Crown stayed murder charges.

There was no forensic evidence linking the boys to the killings.

Their DNA was not found at the scene and there was no blood or gunshot residue on their clothes. The gun that killed Boenke and Trudel has not been recovered.

RCMP later targeted both boys separately in undercover stings.

Last May, the Crown reactivated the case against the teen now before the judge and charged him with two counts of second-degree murder.

The suspect was being tried as a youth and cannot be identified.

His lawyer had argued that Mounties



wasted time and money targeting a vulnerable youth in a poorly planned sting when they should have been looking for the real killer.

Mona Duckett said RCMP made a quick arrest and, when the case fell apart against the teen and a co-accused, officers forged ahead with an undercover charade that took advantage of the youth's vulnerabilities.

The Crown responded by saying police didn't coerce or intimidate the boy into a confession.

Prosecutor William Wister told court that social services miserably failed the accused teen as he was growing up, but Wister added that the child-welfare system was not on trial.

He said the teen might have low intelligence, but was able to do math in his head, carried on conversations with undercover police and always had a choice to leave, Wister said.

May 10 2013

MONTREAL - Police investigators are trying to locate \$15 million of hidden money in offshore bank accounts tied to the former mayor of Laval, Que., who was arrested Thursday and charged with gangsterism.

QMI Agency has learned that the alleged dirty money could be in bank accounts in Switzerland and Panama.

Quebec's anti-corruption unit arrested 37 people Thursday including former mayor Gilles Vaillancourt.

Also arrested was Laval's former director general, Claude Asselin and the former head of the city's engineering department, Claude Deguise.

Police consider all three former officials to be the heads of an "organized and structured" criminal network that operated between 1996 and 2010. If convicted, Vaillancourt's regime would have been the largest criminal organization ever run out of a Canadian city hall.

"The proof is solid as concrete," a source told QMI Agency. "When the trial begins you will be stupefied."

Police claim Vaillancourt and other city officials took kickbacks from construction companies that received municipal contracts.

Police also arrested Tony Accurso, former Quebec construction magnate, on Thursday, and charged him with fraud. Accurso has been arrested three times in the past year on fraud charges.

More people could be arrested for complicity in the alleged crimes.

A source close to the investigation told QMI that one of the people arrested Thursday hid boxes of documents at the home of a family member.

Vaillancourt ran Laval, Quebec's third-largest city, for 23 years, usually with no opposition, before he resigned last November.

(QMI Agency)

May 10 2013

OTTAWA - The federal government is dismissing the notion that a terror suspect recently arrested in the United States entered from Canada.

Immigration Minister Jason Kenney

suggested Friday that the Tunisian-born man, who had been studying in Canada, could not actually have entered from here.

"When we became aware of security concerns, he was back in Tunisia, and his study permit was not renewed," Kenney told a news conference.

Ahmed Abassi was arrested last month in the U.S. and accused of planning an "act of international terrorism." He is accused of having ties to one of the two men suspected of plotting an attack on a passenger train in Ontario. He has pleaded not guilty.

The ties to Canada were being downplayed in Ottawa.

Initial reports, citing U.S. officials, said Abassi had travelled from Canada to the U.S. in mid-March, where he was arrested at JFK airport on April 22 - the same day Canadian authorities arrested Chibeb Esseghaier and Raed Jaser, 35 of Toronto.

May 10 2013

TORONTO - Ontario's police watchdog is investigating an incident that left a 22-year-old man with a broken collarbone after an officer ordered him to climb down from a tree in a downtown Toronto park.

Sandra Deziel says her son Dylan climbed into the tree during lunchtime a week ago because all of the benches in the small Bellevue Square Park were packed with people enjoying a sunny day.

But she says after he'd sat about 4 1/2

metres up in the tree for a half-hour, a police officer on a bicycle told her son to get down immediately, stating "it is illegal to be in a tree."

Speaking for Dylan, Deziel alleges the officer shoved her son to the ground, breaking his clavicle and leaving him with scratches and a bump on his head before writing him a \$365-dollar ticket for climbing a tree without a permit.

She says Dylan did not act aggressively towards the officer, who she alleges rode off on his bike after handing out the ticket.

SATURDAY

MAY 11, 2013

May 11 2013

MONTREAL - The day after a once-mighty mayor was arrested in his own city and accused of being a gangster, aggressive questioning shifted toward local police.

The long-time police chief of Laval, the third-largest city in Quebec, found himself on the defensive Friday over why he never smelled anything fishy about his old boss, Gilles Vaillancourt.

The former mayor, whose 23-year reign in the city earned him the moniker the "Monarch of Laval," is facing a dozen charges, two of which are gangsterism-related.

One of those charges carries, in theory, a possible life sentence and is the most severe of the charges against him.

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But the top police officer, who reported to Mr. Vaillancourt for a decade and a half, told a radio station Friday that he never noticed anything suspicious.

Jean-Pierre Gariepy insisted he never received any information that Mr. Vaillancourt, or any city officials, were involved in illegal activity.

"No, never – never, never, never," Mr. Gariepy responded in an interview on the popular Montreal station.

"I worked with [Mr. Vaillancourt's] good side. A dark side, in which he [allegedly] worked in collusion with individuals to put money in their pockets – [city officials] didn't highlight that for me."

Mr. Vaillancourt is among 37 people facing a long list of charges. Laval's city manager and its head of engineering appeared in handcuffs before a judge Thursday, alongside the former mayor.

Quebec's anti-corruption unit alleges the suspects were part of a network that illegally diverted money from public construction projects.

Mr. Gariepy confirmed in the radio interview a previous media report that the mayor was planning to move into the same condo building as him.

In addition, he addressed the fact that police headquarters were housed in the same building as the offices of Dessau Inc. – an engineering firm implicated in the controversy. One of Dessau's senior executives was arrested this week.

The police chief admitted that living in the same building as the mayor – and working in the same building as Dessau – had been cause for concern.

"I found it inappropriate that a police headquarters was in a building that belonged to engineers that have dealings with the city," Mr. Gariepy said. "That doesn't make sense."

He said he expressed those concerns to Mr. Vaillancourt, but the decision about the police headquarters ultimately fell to elected officials.

As for living in the same condo tower as Mr. Vaillancourt, Mr. Gariepy insisted he probably would have left the building if the mayor had ultimately decided to move in.

"It's not comfortable for a police chief to be close, to live close, to elected officials," he said. "It's not good, it's not desirable."

Mr. Gariepy, who has announced that he would retire at the end of this year, said he never investigated Mr. Vaillancourt or any other city officials.

He told the interviewer he had heard "hearsay" that corruption and collusion were present in Laval.

There had actually been media reports dating back several years – which Mr. Vaillancourt aggressively denied – accusing him of improper cash dealings.

The veteran police officer said he would have turned over any credible information about Mr. Vaillancourt or elected officials to provincial police.

But he insisted he never saw any

credible evidence.

Mr. Gariepy said the fact that Mr. Vaillancourt has been arrested, as were others he knows from working in the city, does not mean he collaborated with them or closed his eyes to any wrongdoing.

"It's unfortunate that you have this opinion of me," he said, as he defended himself from pointed questions by the radio interviewer.

"I always did my work honestly. You can ask everybody in my organization."

SUNDAY MAY 12, 2013

May 12 2013

About 30 people were released from police custody Sunday after being questioned about a shooting that injured a Gatineau police officer on Saturday night.



cbc.ca

The female officer was shot in the leg while breaking up a disturbance involving nearly 20 people at a bush party.

Witnesses of the disturbance called police at about 10 p.m. ET, saying that at least one person was carrying a firearm.

Police arrived at the scene about 12 minutes later and shortly afterward a female officer was shot in the right leg.

The injuries weren't life-threatening and the officer, who has three years on the force, underwent minor surgery later Sunday morning.

"She's in pretty good condition ... her family is surrounding her, police officers and people from the hospital, so she's in pretty good condition," said police spokesman Const. Pierre Lanthier.

"We're still looking for the firearm and also for the person of interest in the case," he said.

Police have not ruled out any possibilities, including that it may have been an accident. (CBC News)

May 12 2013

HALIFAX - A Nova Scotia agency says a woman who is the focus of an investigation into how two police officers handled her arrest has died.

The province's Serious Incident Response Team says officers responded to a Halifax-area apartment on Friday after receiving a call that the woman was behaving erratically in a common area of the building.

Police say the officers who responded believed the woman was suffering from a mental illness that might cause harm to herself or others.

They say the officers noted after arresting the woman that she had a stab wound to her torso and decided to take her to hospital, where

she later died.

Police have said it's not clear how the woman received the injury.

MONDAY MAY 13, 2013

May 13 2013

OTTAWA - The Mounties are taking a sober second look at the expense claims of three senators.

However they stress that it's too early to tell whether they'll conduct a full investigation.

At issue is whether Conservative Mike Duffy, former Conservative Patrick Brazeau and Liberal Mac Harb were eligible for an allowance they received to compensate them for keeping a secondary residence in Ottawa.

An independent auditor recently concluded all three live primarily in the Ottawa area, but said the rules governing housing claims were unclear.

Duffy has voluntarily repaid 90,000 in expenses.

A Senate committee has ordered Brazeau and Harb to give back their housing allowances, but Harb, for one, says he'll go to court to fight the order.

Brazeau got the boot from the Conservative caucus this year after being charged with assault and sexual assault.

May 13 2013

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. - Ontario's police watchdog has cleared a provincial police officer in the death of a man whose speeding car rolled while it was being pursued near Windsor.

The Special Investigations Unit says a car accelerated when an officer tried to stop the vehicle near County Road 46 and Manning Road, east of Windsor, in the early hours of April 18.

Investigators say the officer activated his emergency equipment and pursued the vehicle after reporting that it reached speeds of 155 kilometres an hour.

The SIU says after a pursuit of less than a minute, the driver lost control on Manning Road north of the Highway 401 overpass and the car rolled several times, coming to rest on its roof.

The 39-year-old man was pronounced dead at hospital.

SIU director Ian Scott says the man sped away in an apparent attempt to elude apprehension, the officer pursued the vehicle for only a short time before the man lost control, and there's no suggestion of contact between the two vehicles.

TUESDAY MAY 14, 2013

May 14 2013

WYNYARD, Sask. - A former constable with the Rosthern RCMP has been given a one-year conditional sentence after admitting to using an RCMP fuel card to

purchase gas for his personal vehicles.

Harley Gillman, 42, was also ordered to pay \$7,200 in restitution after pleading guilty in Wynyard court to fraud over \$5,000.

He was charged alongside his wife, Marie Cheryl Diane Gillman, who was fined \$800 after pleading guilty to the fraud charge.

RCMP received a complaint last May, which led to a four-month investigation and charges being laid in August.

In addition to fraud, the couple was also charged with theft over \$5,000. Those charges were stayed.

Gillman resigned from the force shortly after he was charged.

(CJME)

May 14 2013

HAMILTON, Ont. - Hamilton police say a 27-year-old man will be charged with first-degree murder in the death of a man who vanished after a test drive more than a week ago.

Police allege that Tim Bosma, 32, was killed last week the night he went missing after going on a test drive with two men in his black pickup truck, which he had been posted for sale online.

Det. Sgt. Matt Kavanagh says Bosma's body was found in the Waterloo region of southwestern Ontario, "burned beyond recognition."

Police say the charge will be laid Wednesday against Dellen Millard, who was arrested Friday and is already charged with forcible confinement and theft over \$5,000.

Kavanagh says police are looking for at least two other suspects, as he alleges a second vehicle was following the black pickup truck when it left Bosma's home, though they don't know how many people were in that second vehicle.

He says police believe Bosma was targeted.

May 14 2013

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. - A police officer has been charged after a man and woman were injured when a marked cruiser struck their SUV from behind in Niagara Falls, Ont.

The province's police watchdog says Robert and Christine Long were travelling in their Nissan Rogue in the city's west end when the collision occurred early in the evening on Jan. 19.

The Special Investigations Unit says 56-year-old Robert Long suffered fractured ribs while 55-year-old Christine Long sustained a head injury in the incident.

Niagara regional police Const. Leslie Bittman is facing one count of dangerous driving.

May 14 2013

CALGARY - Police in Calgary shot and wounded a man after receiving a call about a suspicious vehicle Tuesday.

The person who was shot was in serious condition while two other people in the vehicle were taken into custody.

"We had a uniformed officer approach the vehicle," explained police spokesman Kevin Brookwell. "The vehicle sped off and in doing

so, mounted a sidewalk and struck two elderly pedestrians."

The female senior was in stable, non-life-threatening condition while the male senior was not seriously hurt.

"Shortly after that, uniformed officers challenged the driver in the vehicle," said Brookwell. "At that point, a police service firearm was discharged."

As is standard practice in all officer-related shootings, the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team has been called in.

The shooting happened in a parking lot outside a Bank of Montreal, but police have said the incident was not a bank robbery.

(CHQR)

May 14 2013

MONTREAL - About 100 RCMP officers took to the street and the metro in Montreal to air their grievances over what they call strained working conditions and labour relations.

The demonstration began at around noon in front of RCMP headquarters in Westmount and travelled to the Atwater metro where officers took the subway to the Hyatt Regency Hotel where management is holding a forum.

The officers are protesting the latest budget cut to their personal wardrobe expenses used for undercover work; they say that's on top of previous cuts and changes to benefits such as pension and healthcare benefits.

Retired RCMP officer Gaetan Delisle of the Quebec Mounted Police Members' Association said with no permission to unionize and no independent grievance system, it's all part of the lack of protection for officers.

"And particularly in cases of harassment, harassment usually comes from above the person who's being harassed. So the system that we have is that you have to grieve the decision of the boss so you have to grieve against your boss," Delisle told CJAD 800 News.

The protest was dubbed a "silent" demonstration, to highlight the lack of an independent tribunal to listen to officers' complaints, which Delisle said means they have nowhere to speak out, especially in light of allegations of sexual harassment and reports of bullying that have plagued the force in recent years.

(CJAD)



May 15 2013

MONTREAL - A 32-year-old woman driver and two police officers involved in a spectacular crash Tuesday evening that flipped a police minivan onto its back were released from hospital before daybreak Wednesday.

"We had initially feared major injuries" to the two officers, Constable Simon Delorme of Montreal police said.

Their patrol minivan had been responding to an emergency call in Montreal North at 9:25 p.m.

It was headed eastbound on Henri Bourassa Blvd., with lights flashing and siren blaring, when it crossed the intersection at Lacordaire Blvd.

The woman driver in a car heading north on Lacordaire didn't see or hear the police vehicle and smashed into its passenger side in the intersection, Constable Raphaël Bergeron said Tuesday night.

The impact was so violent that the police van spun into the air and landed on its roof.

Delorme was not immediately available early Wednesday to say which driver had been running a red traffic light.

The officers were been diagnosed with back and neck injuries "and will be followed up in the weeks and months to come," Delorme said in a taped early-morning update.

The woman injured an arm and suffered from nervous shock, he added.

(Montreal Gazette)

May 15 2013

Critics fear that police could lose timely access to a key technology used to investigate shootings as the RCMP shutter several regional forensic laboratories.

The technology known as the Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS) helps police analyze bullets and shell casings picked up at crime scenes, helping to determine if they have come from a firearm known to law enforcement.

It's a Canadian-designed technology that is used in dozens of countries around the world, including in the United States, Mexico, as well as in Europe and South Africa.

The federal government has even helped connect countries outside of Canada with IBIS, donating equipment to Belize and Costa Rica in recent years.

But the RCMP is in the midst of closing down IBIS-equipped laboratories in Halifax and Regina. A third forensics laboratory in Winnipeg is also being closed, but it does not have IBIS equipment.

A spokesperson for Public Safety Canada sent an email to CBC News saying that the closure of the IBIS labs in Halifax and Regina was "in line with the government's efforts to achieve efficiencies within the federal government without affecting service to the public or provincial/territorial partners."

RCMP Sgt. Greg Cox said any IBIS requests that would have gone to Regina are now being directed to other labs in Canada.

In an email to CBC News, Cox said that the winding down of lab operations in Regina will have "no impact on gun cases or future ballistic investigations."

The Halifax forensic site is due to wind down its operations over the next two years, Cox said.

Shutting down the laboratories will save an estimated \$3.5 million, but critics say that process could create backlogs and problems for police.

(CBC News)

May 16 2013

FREDERICTON - Eight people will be added to the RCMP's Internet child exploitation unit in New Brunswick under funding announced today.

Public Safety Minister Robert Trevors says the unit will lead all Internet child exploitation investigations in the province and provide support for all police forces.

The money will boost the unit's ranks to 18.

Education Minister Jody Carr says a program to teach youths how to keep themselves safe while on the Internet will be launched this fall.

May 16 2013

WINNIPEG - Manitoba Justice is moving to have the Hells Angels motorcycle club permanently listed as a criminal organization.

The move would make it easier for the province to seize property from gang members and evict them from houses under various provincial laws.

Currently, Crown prosecutors must prove the gang is a criminal organization during each court case.

The application to have the Hells Angels permanently listed will be reviewed by a three-member panel made up of people who are neither police officers nor government employees.

They will decide whether the Hells Angels meets the criteria of a criminal organization as defined in the Criminal Code.

It's the first such proceeding under recent changes to the Manitoba Evidence Act.

May 16 2013

HALIFAX - Nova Scotia's justice minister says he remains concerned the RCMP is planning to close a forensics laboratory in Halifax.

Ross Landry says he's unhappy about the loss of jobs and he's disappointed the cut announced last year came after the provincial government completed contract negotiations with the Mounties.

A spokeswoman for his department says the RCMP has informed the province it will close the lab in 2014 as part of a national consolidation of six labs into three locations.

The RCMP announced in May 2012 that labs in Regina, Winnipeg and Halifax will close and their work will be handled in Edmonton, Vancouver and Ottawa.

They said the move will save \$3.5 million a year.

Landry says his department plans to monitor whether the remaining labs maintain the existing turnaround times on DNA and forensics analysis.

May 16 2013

From falsifying information to the abuse

of police resources — including an airplane — CBC News has been digging through the discipline files of Manitoba RCMP members who faced hearings between 2010 and fall of 2012.

In one instance, a civilian pilot with the RCMP's D Division used the police force's airplane to seek out a caribou herd for hunting in the Lac du Bonnet area.

According to the documents, the pilot hunted on shift and used a police snowmobile and vehicle in the process. He also stored the game in a freezer at the RCMP hangar.

His punishment was a reprimand and the loss of five days' pay.

In another case, a Dauphin RCMP officer was reprimanded after botching three separate investigations.

He admitted to documenting false information in police reports, failing to attend the scene of a crime, and claiming that evidence was examined by forensics officers when in fact it was not.

The Dauphin officer received a reprimand and the loss of 10 days' pay.

The CBC News' I-Team shared the discipline files with Manitobans, and some said they felt the punishments RCMP officers receive are too lenient.

"There should definitely be possible dismissal in these cases, as opposed to just getting their pay docked," said Luke Campbell.

The maximum penalty a member can face without a full dismissal is the docking of 10 days' pay.

It is something the RCMP's brass would like to change.

"I think there has been concern that the range of sanctions currently available is not broad enough," said Supt. Stephen Thatcher, who heads up the branch of the RCMP responsible for discipline.

Thatcher goes on to say that new rules are in the works that would allow the police force to have a wider range of sanctions than it currently has.

But the Mounted Police Professional Association of Canada, which represents RCMP

members, says the new rules would give the RCMP commissioner too much power.

"The commissioner is going to become the judge, jury and executioner without any of the oversight of his actions," said Rob Creasser, the association's media liaison.

Creasser said he worries that the focus on discipline cases would overshadow the good work being done by 99 per cent of RCMP officers.

(CBC News)

May 16 2013

OTTAWA - The RCMP public complaints watchdog has launched an investigation into the conduct of Mounties in northern British Columbia.

Ian McPhail, the interim chairman of the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP, has taken the rare step of initiating the complaint himself, rather than waiting for one from the public.

The probe comes after the New York-based group Human Rights Watch issued a report in February outlining allegations of rape and other abuses of aboriginal women at the hands of police.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper asked the commission to look into the allegations shortly after the report was released, but urged potential victims to come forward on their own.

McPhail says there are reasonable grounds to initiate the complaint, given the concerns raised by the group.

Two Human Rights Watch researchers visited 10 communities in northern B.C. last summer, where they documented accounts from aboriginal women of how they were allegedly mistreated by police.

The communities are connected to B.C.'s so-called "Highway of Tears," a notorious stretch of road where a number of women have disappeared.

The commission said it will examine how Mounties in those communities use force, and how they police public intoxication, conduct searches and handle reports of missing persons and domestic violence.



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