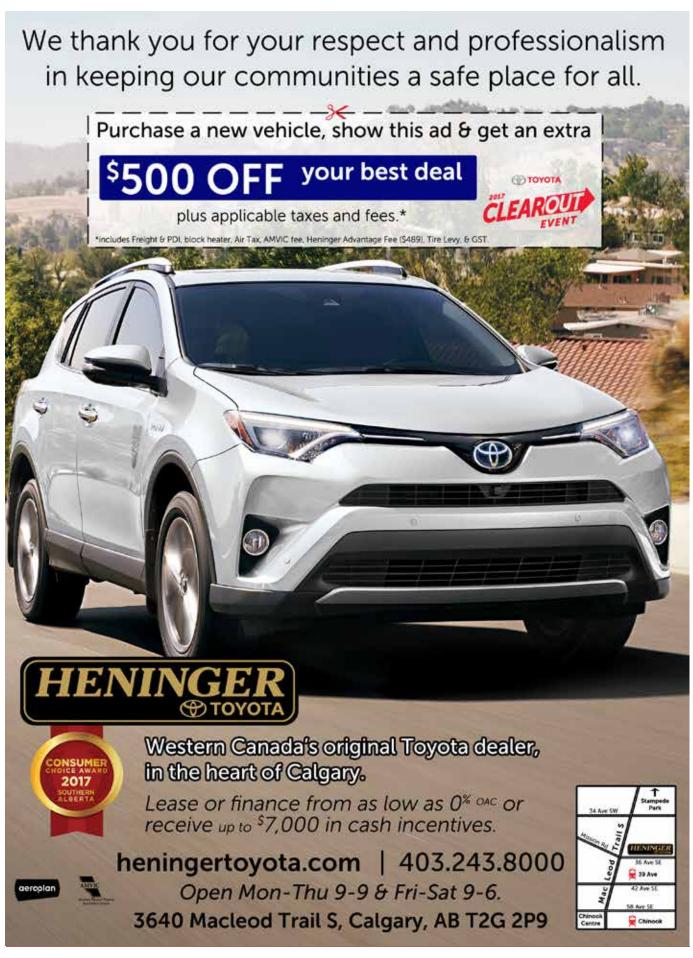


ALBERTA POLICE BEAT

The Official Voice of the Municipal Police Associations in Alberta







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ALBERTA POLICE BEAT is published bi-annually by iMarketing Solutions on behalf of ALBERTA FEDERATION OF POLICE ASSOCIATIONS #10150 - 97 Avenue, Edmonton, ABT5K 2T5 www.albertapolice.ca publication agreement number: 42846013

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From the President

—Johnny Orr

¶very police officer in Alberta, as well as the rest of Canada, Itrains extensively for the moment that they may have to use lethal force in order to protect themselves or another human being. That being said, these officers dread that moment and hope that it never comes. Fortunately, for the vast majority of us, it will never happen. Given the training that our members receive regarding de-escalation techniques and mental illness training, as well as the deployment of less lethal technologies and the professionalism of our members, the vast majority of situations that could escalate to a lethal force encounter are stopped before getting that far.

Unfortunately, these situations will never be eliminated completely. Some of our members will face situations in which they are forced to act in order to protect the lives of innocent people. This will sometimes result in the death of, or serious injury to a person. When this happens, it is important that the incident be thoroughly and completely investigated to ensure that the use of force was justified and that policing maintains public confidence.

In Alberta, the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) is responsible for investigating incidents involving Alberta's police that have resulted in serious injury or death to any person, as well as serious or sensitive allegations of police misconduct (ASIRT Website).

Through my experience in both the Calgary Police Association and the Alberta Federation of Police Associations, I have had several dealings with the investigators and management from ASIRT. In my experience with these investigators, I have found them to be a very talented and dedicated

group, whose primary goal is to seek the truth in any situation. This is the goal of any investigator, in any unit, of any service. In fact, in a statement on the ASIRT website, written by Sue Hughson, ASIRT's Executive Director, she quotes Malcolm X as saying "I'm for truth, no matter who tells it. I'm for justice, no matter who its for or against".

One issue that has reared it's head lately is the used of proffered statements during investigations. In the context of an investigation into the actions of a police officer, a proffered statement would come from an officer's lawyer, explaining the officer's actions. These statements are not admissible against the officer in any proceedings. They are a way for an investigator or a Crown Prosecutor to assess information, while protecting the right to remain silent, which is afforded to every Canadian under investigation. While they are not admissible, they can offer valuable information to the Crown and to investigators, who can follow up information in the statement and attempt to corroborate or disprove it. ASIRT, under the direction of Ms. Hughson, has taken a hard stance against accepting proffered statements in any situation. Refusing to accept or even look at this information flies in the face of the concept of seeking the truth.

First of all, I would like to thank Ms. Hughson for attending the AFPA Annual General Meeting, this past year in Lacombe. It's a bit like coming into the Lion's Den, but Ms. Hughson was very gracious and professional in her arguments regarding this issue. While I completely disagree with her on this issue, I greatly respect her willingness to attend and engage in discussion about

it. Ms. Hughson's primary argument against the use of these statements seems to be that because members of the public are not afforded the opportunity to use these statements, police officers should not be allowed to either. While nothing prohibits Crowns from accepting these statements from non-police officers, I will agree that it is not a common practice (other than for cooperating witnesses and agents). That being said, members of the general public have not taken an oath to protect life and property. They are not duty-bound to place themselves in harm's way to protect others, as police officers are. There are several, fundamental differences between a citizen charged with murder and a police officer who is forced to shoot someone in the execution of their duty. In order to effectively investigate officers, it is not unreasonable to assume the process to differ as well.

In my opinion, I believe that by refusing to even accept, read, or consider the information provided in a proffered statement, ASIRT is turning away a piece of information that could assist in meeting their goal: learning the truth.

Stay Safe,

Johnny Orr

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From the Vice President

-Michael Elliott

s police officers we realize and understand the high standards we have to adhere and follow given the nature of our profession. There are checks and balances within the Police Act, Police Regulations and the policy and procedures set out in each of our police services across our province. We are held to a higher standard than the average citizen due to the power and authority we possess protecting and helping our communities.

When a serious police event occurs, our citizens demand and should receive a fair, unbiased investigation into the conduct of our police officers. Too often in the past a small percentage of the population would cry out assuming there were biased investigations when "police officers investigate police officers" within their own organization. (Example: Internal affirms or Professional Standards Branch). Due to the perception of these biases, the Alberta government created a team known as the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team to be an "arm's length" away from police officers during serious investigations. The ASIRT website provides the following:

"The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) investigates incidents involving Alberta's police that have resulted in serious injury or death to any person, as well as serious or sensitive allegations of police misconduct.

All ASIRT investigations are assigned by the Director of Law Enforcement (DLE). ASIRT can be assigned one of the following roles:

• The DLE can direct the head of ASIRT to conduct an investigation into the incident or complaint.

- The DLE may request or direct a police service other than the one involved in the incident or complaint to conduct an investigation. The DLE may at any time direct the head of ASIRT to take over the ongoing investigation.
- The DLE may request or direct that ASIRT provide an ASIRT investigator to assist and advise the police service investigating the incident or complaint."

I have faith in the system and feel all police investigations should be handled by an outside agency or ASIRT for an unbiased investigation. An issue which has been occurring more and more is the following: There is a serious incident within a police service. The Director of Law Enforcement requests ASIRT to investigate. ASIRT, being overloaded with files, directs the home service to investigate their own members. When the investigation is complete, the home agency forwards the file to ASIRT to review. This happens more and more each year. I know our home agencies are more than capable of investigating each other but the fact remains, we have moved away from the sole purpose and reason ASIRT was created in the first place! Why create an independent body to investigate a service when the service conducts their own investigations?

This practice has to stop. Our home agencies are overburdened with their own files and investigating their own members removes those members from their primary role. (Example: A Robbery detective will be tasked with a file from ASIRT, thus the robbery detective cannot investigate their robbery files)

An issue has been ASIRT's workload.

It has increased every year but the number of investigators has not kept pace. The unit has been overtasked and overburdened. Another issue: Files have been investigated and are ready for review but the head of AISRT's has not been able to keep pace to review/clear members or recommend charges. Police officers end up waiting months or even years to see the conclusion of a file. This is stressful on the member, their families and everyone's mental health.

To resolve these issues I look to the government to step up to the plate. The increased workload isn't a surprise to anyone. The files grow every year. The numbers speak for themselves but yet nothing has been done. When will the Solicitor General and/or Minster of Justice increase the size of ASIRT? It is an easy fix but an issue which is being ignored or not considered of significance. By increasing the investigators in ASIRT, it will help maintain and even increase public confidence, allow local police investigators to return to their duties and help relieve stress off of those affected officers. This would be a win win for all involved. ■

Michael Elliott Vice President – AFPA Michael.elliott@edmontonpolice.ca



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From the Treasurer/ Secretary

Shane Kisinger

reetings from the windy south. ■I hope everyone had a great summer holiday. It has been a busy summer for AFPA (in what is usually a quiet season for the majority of your AFPA board members). However this summer we saw the arrival of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) agenda and the issue of carding make its way from the east. BLM released a news article in Edmonton that had a Lethbridge twist, where it quoted a Lethbridge resident, who felt he had been targeted for selective enforcement by the Lethbridge Police Service based solely on his status of being an identifiable member of a minority race. In Lethbridge we also had a local lawyer release an article with attached statistics inferring that the Lethbridge Police Service stops and harasses nonwhite members of their community. I was surprised that Lethbridge was mentioned. I was relatively aware of the concept of carding but thought it was more a big city issue. I had read of the different issues in the states and more specifically New York and their "Stop and Frisk" policies.

What I guess I naively did not understand was how was "carding" racist? I thought to myself that perhaps I was not understanding the issue as I have "carded" people many times and failed to see how I was being a racist.

My interactions had always been conducted with the outmost professionalism and I always explained to people what I was doing in the area, and why I had stopped to speak with them. If I asked information of them (their name, address, date of birth), I would explain that they did not have to provide me with any information if they did not want to as this was their right.

I was having this discussion at home the other day with my wife and she asked me what my understanding of carding was.

The best I could explain to her, in my biased opinion, was this. In Lethbridge, if we are experiencing a high level of crime in a particular area (i.e. residential break-ins, business breakins, car prowling, etc.), then we try to direct our focus on trying to stop and prevent these crimes.

We patrol these affected areas more and look for suspects.

If I stop to speak with someone at a certain time (especially around when these crimes were reported to have occurred), or I stop someone carrying an item (that has been identified as being used to help facilitate these crimes) then according to the carding dogma I would be discriminating against a certain minority.

To further sum this up I stated to my wife if I am on duty and assigned to an area that has had a recent rash of car break-ins by subjects wearing hoodies, back packs and riding a bike. If I stop a person or persons who match the description of suspects committing these crimes during the times these past break-ins have happened, then I am infringing on someone's rights.

Now my wife is a smart lady but she was confused. She said "so let me get this straight. If you stop say a person at 3:00 AM in the morning, in a high crime area, who matches the description of people who have been breaking into

cars, then somehow this is wrong? Is this not what we pay the police to do? Keep our communities and property safe?"

Now I know the carding issue is not this simplistic to all and especially the individuals who have been stopped by police for not doing anything wrong. But it really is this simple to an old police officer like myself. Police officers are by nature, to use an old phrase "Sheep dogs". We feel a deep compulsion to chase bad guys, stop crime and protect our citizens.

To a police officer, if they stop a person at 3:00 in the morning, it's because they are investigating something. Police are not stopping people because of their race. We are stopping people because we are acting on information. That information may be a certain clothing description or knowledge of certain crimes being committed in that neighbourhood.

Police see it as doing our job, what we are paid to do, patrol the neighborhoods (when we are not going call to call, which is entirely another article I could write on) and prevent crime.

Recently, after an early morning walk, I returned to my vehicle to find that my driver's side window had been smashed and my wife's purse was taken from the backseat. A witness on scene had told me it was a person dressed all in grey with a back pack, and they were riding a bike.

What I expected to happen (as the area I was in had experienced an unusual epidemic of car break-ins) is this. I report the crime and provide police with the time and description

of the suspect (which in this case occurred at 7:00 AM and it was done by a person dressed all in grey with a backpack, riding a bike). Then the officers assigned to this area begin stopping to talk to anyone (they felt based on their experience and information they received) who meet the requirements of being a potential suspect.

If police stopped me I would not care and I don't think that many citizens, who are not committing a crime, would care. As long as that interaction was explained, conducted in a professional manner, and done following the principles of the "golden rule" of treating others how you want to be treated.

If the public truly does not want police to do this on the off chance it may be offending some members of the public then I suggest this.

Please make us like the firemen, we will sit in a station awaiting deployment, on a solely call us if you need us basis. We will stop being proactive and be entirely reactive.

I feel that the BLM movement and other USA imported issues have more

to do with the issues of that nation and the distrust of police than in Canada. The Canadian public for the most part, or at least in my small Albertan city, still support and trust the police. They trust the police to carry out their duties and responsibilities and not misuse the power given to them by the public.

Stay well, stay safe. Shane Kisinger Treasurer/Secretary AFPA





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From the Executive Director

Howard Burns

reetings from Calgary! I'm Howard Burns, the newly minted Executive Director of the Alberta Federation of Police Associations (AFPA). I recently retired from the Calgary Police Service after more than 28 years of serving the citizens of Calgary. I spent the last 49 months of my policing career as the elected President of the Calgary Police Association. I had planned to stay retired for at least a year before jumping back into the workforce, but the AFPA Board disrupted that plan when they posted for a parttime Executive Director. description fit me like a glove and I couldn't resist applying. I officially started in my new post on July 1st -Canada Day.

I'm excited about the possibilities and opportunities my new position presents. My primary role will be to support the AFPA Board in developing and implementing AFPA's continuous strategic plan for the future. Like most strategic plans, it needs to be relevant and adaptable to ever-changing conditions. In addition to this, I will also assist the AFPA Board with the

research and development of position papers on emerging issues impacting policing. For example, in early July, our members in Edmonton were publicly called out by special interest groups in relation to the over-representation of some minorities in the Edmonton Police Service's street check data, which was accessed by these groups through the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). The data was trotted out as proof of racial profiling and systemic racism by the police. The special interest groups were calling on the Alberta government to ban all street checks.

AFPA recognized the need for a prompt response to these very public assertions. Director Cory Huculak wrote an open letter disputing the claims. It was picked up by most media outlets in Edmonton. Vice President Mike Elliott also addressed the media and he appeared on a local talk radio show to discuss the matter in a public forum. I developed an AFPA resolution calling on the Alberta government to carefully consider all relevant information before making any decisions on street checks. I pointed

out that the over-representation of some minority groups in the criminal justice system isn't new. It also widely occurs in Canada's prison population. I suggested that the over-representation is a product of broader societal issues and not the result of specific actions taken by the police. The resolution was passed by the AFPA Board and has since been sent to the Alberta Justice Minister for consideration. It is available for viewing on the AFPA website at https://www.albertapolice.ca/

I mentioned earlier that I'm excited about future possibilities and opportunities. I firmly believe that AFPA has a vital role to play when it comes to member advocacy on provincial policing issues. Going forward, I plan to work with the AFPA Board to identify priorities and move matters forward as directed. Association members are encouraged to bring any matters of concern forward through their elected AFPA representatives. I can be reached via my e-mail at hburns@backtheblue.ca

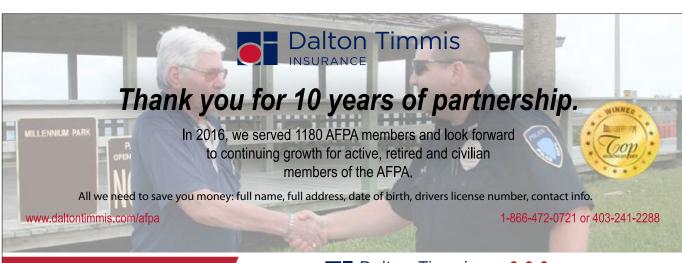


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From the Director/Editor Darryl Hubich

Telcome to the fall 2017 edition of the Alberta Police Beat! I hope that everyone has had an enjoyable summer. Since our last issue and since our Annual General Meeting in May, much has changed in our province and country.

At our AGM, we talked about the need for a captain to steer the AFPA ship in the form of an Executive Director. It was decided that we would do a one year trial with a part-time E.D. and then determine the continued need moving forward in 2018. Additionally, we held our elections. We said farewell to Ray Wong and Bob Walsh (finally) as Bob assumed the presidency duties with the Edmonton Police Association. Joining the board were Cory Huculak (EPA) and Chris Young (CPA). Also, as set out in our bylaws, our president is now from Calgary, as John Orr takes over for Mike Elliott, who becomes our Vice-President.

Also at the meeting Bill S-217 (Wynn's Law) was discussed and how it appeared as though it may become law. Attendees also talked about the reluctance of the current provincial government to address much needed changes to the Police Act in Alberta. ASIRT attended and agreed with AFPA that changes are necessary to the Act.

Gerry Annetts also presented on the "Effects of Marijuana on Policing in Alberta". Annetts has been tasked with assessing community/policing issues with the upcoming legalization of marijuana next year. The two biggest issues that arose out of the presentation were, a: the possibility that the duty of "inspectors" of grow-ops could fall on police and, b: how Police Services and Associations will handle the use of marijuana by their members once it is legalized. Thanks to the

Camrose Police Association for hosting a great event!

Unfortunately, the week after the AGM we learned that all of our efforts to push Wynn's law through failed as the bill was defeated by the federal government in Ottawa. This was extremely disappointing to the policing community, but was devastating to Mike Elliott who had really championed this bill. He invested countless hours with the Wynn family, dealing with media requests, and in meetings with MLAs and MPs, most notably, MP Michael Cooper. Mike represented AFPA admirably in his efforts, even having the opportunity to speak on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Mike has the complete support of AFPA and the Canadian Police Association as he continues his fight, starting with a request to re-work the Crown manual, hoping to effect change provincially to prevent another tragedy.

In July we saw the first publicized initiative in Alberta by highly organized special interest groups such as Black Lives Matter. As we have seen down East and in the U.S., these groups have attacked the investigative tools that our officers routinely rely on to solve crimes, such as "street checks", which they continuously refer to as "carding". This issue does not appear to be going away anytime soon and AFPA will continue to work with community members and the media to educate the public on the importance of these investigative techniques in maintaining public safety and confidence.

Also in July, after an exhaustive search, Howard Burns officially started his tenure as AFPA's Executive Director. Howard brings an incomparable knowledge of the Police Service Regulations, the Police Act and provincial

issues to the board. Howard recently retired as the President of the Calgary Police Association and is known throughout Canada as an articulate and well-prepared spokesperson for associations coast to coast. Welcome aboard Howard, we are lucky to have you!

As some of you may be aware, in 2015 AFPA drafted a resolution and began pushing strongly for pre-payment of fuel at service stations to avoid an incident like the one that killed Maryam Rashidi. On July 10, we received correspondence from Husky Oil that all of their etc. 350 corporate locations were going to be converted to pre-payment site, beginning in September of this year. Hopefully this will encourage the other fuel retailers to follow suit.

Lastly, as the editor I have the luxury to review all of the editorial content in this magazine and I wanted to finish by echoing Rayan Najjar's comments about supporting each other. As we continue to bear witness to, we are all under tremendous public scrutiny that can have its own inherent stresses. We do not need the added stress of members spreading gossip about one another or formally complaining about each other. This is cancerous to all of our associations. I was once told by a veteran member when I started that "you are not always gonna get along with everyone at work, but, at the end of the day, as long as your work is respected by your colleagues and you respect the work they've done you will be fine". ■

Stay safe and take care of each other! Go Riders! Darryl Hubich





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From the Director

—Chris Young

NOW IS THE TIME TO BE UNITED IN THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

ello from Calgary! For those of you who don't know me I'm Chris Young, recently elected to the Alberta Federation of Police Association's board of directors. I'm in my fourteenth year with the Calgary Police Service and will be entering my third year as a Director on the Calgary Police Association board. I'm happy to be part of the AFPA board and I am looking forward to assisting the board in representing our respective members who are working hard in police services across Alberta.

For those of us in law enforcement it has been interesting times as of late. Now more than ever before, police officers are facing more scrutiny, bias and negative opinions, along with negative media attention/stories. Also, special interest groups pushing an anti-police agenda and a growing feeling of lack of support from the public at times. It has been challenging times indeed and I hate to say it, but I feel it has only just begun. It is times like these that I feel we are truly put to the test. The only way we can endure such challenges is to be strong and united. That is why now more than ever before we must be united in our respective associations. Each association must work together and rely on one another. There are those that wish us to be caught up in bureaucratic red tape and ultimately fail. In order to stand tall in the face of such adversity, we must be united in the law enforcement community and support each other.

Members need to become involved in their respective associations. They

need to attend their annual general meetings, find out who their work area representative is and chat with him or her, let their representative know about the issues they along with their teammates are experiencing, be in the know when it comes to their association and what their association board is dealing with/working on presently. Likewise - association board members need to visit work areas and chat with the members they are representing. Board members need to know what the issues are in order to properly represent their membership. When both members and board members invest time in their association it strengthens the association's resolve in such challenging times. Now is not the time to be apathetic. It's time to be in the know and to support your local association board. Get involved!

I know that we all lead very busy lives. However for members, how much time is really taken up by attending an annual general meeting? One hour? An hour-and-a-half? Members' opinions are very important and need to be expressed and heard by their respective association board. Members need to speak up. By doing so, members educate their association board on what direction the membership wishes them to take on various issues or concerns. For board members, how much time is really taken up by attending a work area and speaking with the people who elected them? An hour? An hour-and-a-half? In order to really be an effective representative, a board member should know their members and the issues they are facing day in and day out when they go to a call, investigate a file or what they are hearing from management at parade.

It is my belief that the majority of citizens respect their local police service and are supportive of the work that the police officers are doing in their neighborhoods and city. However these citizens are a silent majority at times. Presently I don't see a lot of the everyday citizens speaking out against the anti-police movement that is resonating in the negative media attention and being pushed by special interest groups that are out there. So, we have to support each other in the law enforcement community and keep "fighting the good fight" as it were. Better times will be here again. It is the challenging times that truly define us and have the potential to strengthen our resolve. Our unity and strength as a membership often is the beginning of better times, believe it or not. ■

Be safe out there.

Chris Young



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From the Director

Blue Brotherhood

s long as I can remember, police officers spoke about the brotherhood that encompasses the policing family. You see it in the movies, TV show spinoffs and the stories told by those wily vets. It is one aspect of policing that is very attractive. That sense of belonging to something much greater then yourself. You can literally go anywhere around the world and would be immediately accepted by the local police agency as one of their own. But... is it truly like that?

In my 10 years of policing experience (which is not a great deal of time), I've seen a change in the culture. When I first started, I remember spending a couple hours after my shift had ended just trading stories and laughing with my fellow officers. I remember attending BBQs, Christmas parties and Regimental dinners with my coworkers and having a great time. There was very little drama and for the most part everyone got along.

Somewhere along the way, there was a shift in the culture. Now it seems almost acceptable to throw your fellow officers under the bus or step on their necks to get ahead. The idea of working hard and putting in the time to get ahead is too taxing. It's easier

to get promoted by pointing out the flaws of others instead of showcasing your strengths. The idea of promotion through attrition is the new trend.

When I first started my career, I was taught that if you had an issue with a fellow officer you went up to them and had a conversation, face-to-face. You made an attempt to resolve the matter. You took initiative to ensure that the relationship was not strained. If you went to your supervisor to solve the issue, they would tell you to deal with it yourself.

It seems the standard now is to go directly to the supervisor (and in some cases above) and make your complaints directly to them. This is being done without first attempting to deal with the matter on your own. What's worse, the supervisors are allowing this to happen. Before you know it, Professional Standards are getting involved and officers are being served with paperwork.

This causes more issues. The original matter is never dealt with between the two officers. The relationship is now strained even more than before. Further, now that paperwork appears on the officer's personnel file, it limits their ability to further their career. Where they were looking at a promotion or

unit placement, they are now ineligible to participate. What's even more damaging, this breeds mistrust amongst the ranks. The idea of brotherhood, the thin blue line, is now fractured.

-Rayan Najjar

We as police officers already face plenty of criticism from outside sources. We should not compound the issue by turning on each other. In no way am I suggesting that serious contraventions be ignored and not reported. I'm speaking about the minor issues that can and should be dealt with due to personality conflicts. Address the matter with the person directly. Give that officer an opportunity to explain themselves. If the problem is not resolved and needs to be brought up the chain of command, then do so.

It seems we have lost the ability to communicate our issues and frustrations with one other. It seems that the confrontation is too uncomfortable and we would rather have someone else deal with the matter. Although it may be unpleasant, dealing with the matter head-on has a higher likelihood of it being resolved and it may heal the relationship or potentially strengthen it.

Be kind to one another, support each other, encourage each other and talk to one another. At the end of the day we

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Carding

(This is a reprint from Oct 2015 – originally printed in Calgary Police Association's 10-4 Magazine.)

It just goes to show how often times we can anticipate issues that are heading our way, such as "carding" and when we do this we can, hopefully, be better prepared when they directly affect our area).

Thanks to Howard for allowing us to reprint this! You are always ahead of the curve!!

ack in the mid-1990s, I worked as an Acting Detective in the District 4 General Investigation Unit. One of the files I caught was a road rage incident involving two groups of young men in separate vehicles. One of the vehicles contained four Caucasian men and the other, three men of Middle Eastern descent (Lebanese). The two groups pulled into a north east convenience store parking lot and entered into a consensual fight. They did not know each other. Things escalated when two of the Lebanese males removed their belts and began swinging the buckles. This resulted in one of the Caucasian males obtaining a broom from the convenience store. He broke it and used the handle as a club, striking one of the Lebanese males in the head, causing a nasty laceration. Not to be outdone, one of the Lebanese males produced a sawed-off .22 rifle. This caused the Caucasian males to scatter and run away. The man with the rifle located one of his opponents hiding behind a dumpster at the rear of the store. He threatened to shoot the man in the head and brought the rifle up and pointed it. Believing he was going to be shot, the man brought his arms up in an effort to protect his head. The man with the rifle pulled the trigger, purposely firing the bullet past the other man's head. The Lebanese man laughed and returned to the front of the store, where he and his group

departed the area.

Police were called and attended the scene. Statements were obtained from the Caucasian group. The Lebanese group could not be located. I received the file the following day and had the statements and a bullet casing to work with. The casing was submitted for fingerprinting and testing. A review of the witness / victim statements indicated that the Lebanese males were riding in a blue Toyota Celica, with rust on the driver's side rear wheel well. Witnesses were able to supply a partial licence plate number, but follow up on that vielded no useful results. There was no video surveillance outside of the store.

Having very little to work with, I began conducting computer searches on the partial plate and vehicle description. The partial plate was a nonstarter, but I struck gold when I located a checkup slip submitted a month earlier by another district officer. The check involved a Toyota Celica occupied by several Lebanese men. The vehicle was registered to a Caucasian female associated with the men. Following up on the checkup information, I was able to locate the Celica parked in front of one of the addresses of interest. The vehicle had noticeable rust on the driver's side rear wheel well. The licence plate, although different, was similar to the description provided by witnesses. Three suspects were identified and photo lineups were conducted. Identification was made and the suspects were charged and eventually convicted.

This investigation sold me on the importance of talking to people and submitting checkup slips. Had a slip not been submitted by another diligent police officer, I doubt my file would have ever been solved.

I've told you this story because I'm concerned with some of the political shenanigans taking place in eastern Canada, particularly Toronto. In that city the police describe their checkup slips as "cards" and they refer to the process as "carding". This simple investigative tool has somehow become a lightning rod for allegations of racial discrimination. I'm writing this article in October, 2015 and some of the Toronto media headlines are: "Ontario Launches Public Consultation into Police Carding" - Toronto Star, Aug 4th, 2015; "Toronto Mayor John Tory to introduce motion to end carding in the city"- The Globe & Mail, June 2015; "Carding' is illegal and bad policing, province's ombudsman says"- Ottawa Citizen, July 2015. There are dozens of similar stories, but I think these ones highlight the political interference occurring and the direction the carding practice is headed. The problem is, most politicians are not investigators. They have no idea why the police conduct street level interviews and record the contact on a checkup slip or card. Ontario's Ombudsman, Andre Marin, believes he has a handle on the issue. He is quoted in the August 4th, 2015 edition of the Globe & Mail stating: "I've always thought that carding is an illegal measure. I think it's wrong. "Whatever benefit the police get out of it is outweighed by the breach of individual liberty involved in carding". He appears to be saying that it is illegal for the police to talk to people! In my view, that is absurd. The public expects the police to not only solve crime, but to prevent it as well. Talking to citizens and recording the interaction serves both purposes. Carding is an integral part of policing and enhances police effectiveness.

How did carding become such a controversial issue? The start of the carding controversy in Toronto can be linked to an investigative report titled "Known to Police", published in the Toronto Star in March 2012. An analysis of information obtained by the Star through the Freedom of Information Act provided some interesting findings:

- The Star found that between 2008-2011, police completed 1.25 million cards and skin colour was recorded on 92% of these.
- Blacks make up 8.3% of Toronto's population, but accounted for 25% of the cards.
- Blacks are 3.2 times more likely to be documented than whites.

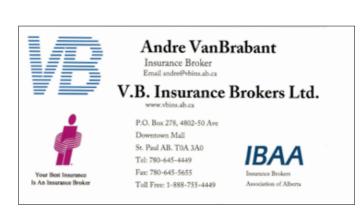
As can be imagined and anticipated, the Star's findings raised some eyebrows and prompted questions. The statistics were seized by some anti-police groups and touted as proof of racial profiling by the Toronto Police Service. Other media outlets jumped on the bandwagon and the carding story began to grow legs. Once it became a controversial issue, politicians at all levels began weighing in, with most denouncing the practice due to their lack of understanding on how police work is done. Soon after the Star report was published, the Chair of the Toronto Police Services Board, Alok Mukherjee, was quoted in the Star stating; "No explanation can provide a credible alternative reason for the significant discrepancy in the contact between the police and young people from different ethno-racial backgrounds".

The problem with the Star's findings is they are only statistics and don't tell the whole story. Statistics in isolation can be manipulated to suit a purpose. Unfortunately that appears to be happening to some degree in Toronto. To the Star's credit, they also pointed out that the most carded areas in the city are the high crime areas where a spate of homicides and violent crime tend to occur. This finding alone creates a bit of a chicken and the egg scenario. On the one hand, you could accept that the entire Toronto Police Service has a problem with racial profiling and their officers are targeting young blacks during the carding process. There are some who are inferring that is the case. On the other

hand, there may be more blacks in the geographic areas requiring police attention (high crime areas). Part of the Star's findings indicate that could be the case. If it is, there are bigger social issues at play and a few limited statistics don't provide an accurate picture.

I find it hard to believe the entire Toronto Police Service is systematically targeting blacks for carding. Frankly, I think the idea is ridiculous. The differences in the Star's data analysis can likely be explained by studying the social and economic conditions existing in Toronto. There are certainly questions to be answered, but a ban on the carding practice is simply wrong headed. I think a fair and impartial look at why the data overrepresents blacks is warranted and I predict the overrepresentation will eventually be linked to social and economic conditions.

The carding controversy hasn't yet taken hold in western Canada and it isn't a big issue in Calgary today, but it is still worth keeping tabs on. Generally issues in the east eventually migrate west and become topics of concern here – **something to look forward to!**





From the Director

-Cory Huculak

reetings from Edmonton. I am excited for the opportunity to be a member of the AFPA Board. This is my first term as a Director with the AFPA. As a twenty-year member of the EPS and having served seventeen of those years on the Edmonton Police Association Board I hope to lend my experience and another perspective as we move forward. At home, in Edmonton I have been involved a member of our Bargaining and Legal Committee and am happy to offer assistance to members across the Province.

Over the past few weeks we have much to proud of across the Province. If you read the local papers we are getting some good exposure. Members in Edmonton and Calgary have conducted top notch drug investigations that have lead to significant seizures that will surely be a positive impact on community safety. The big brothers aren't doing it alone. Members in Medicine Hat recently concluded an internet child exploitation investigation that lead to the identification and arrest of a predator that puts all our children at risk. It would be easy to fill the pages of this magazine with the good things that Members across Alberta do every day. So why do the newspapers and online media continue to focus on mistakes members make? Simply, it sells. As Members everywhere, we have long had an uphill battle to maintain and promote our true reputation of integrity and service. I encourage Members at the local level to take any opportunity you have and speak up and hold high our accomplishments, be it at work or in our off-duty time. So many of our Members are dedicated to making their part of the world a better place. Whether you coach youth sport, champion a

charity or volunteer in your neighbourhood, it is important that those examples of get out to the public.

Your AFPA Board is also committed to representing local issues at the Provincial and National levels through many of our ongoing initiatives. Examples of our progress on Parole reform, Wynn's Law and Carding are presented in this issue of the magazine.

How are we doing? Your AFPA Board wants to know. If you have ideas on how to improve our Provincial Association Please feel free to drop me a line at chuculak@epaboard.ca or share any feedback you might have.

The following is a letter I sent this summer, on behalf of the EPA...

...Your Right to Public Safety, An open Letter to the citizens of Edmonton from the Edmonton Police Association on "Carding" and Street Check Reports

The Edmonton Police Association represents over 1850 uniformed members of the Edmonton Police Service and we are concerned that the recent false and inaccurate comments by special interest groups in the media are threatening the relationship between the public and police.

I'm a proud member of the Edmonton Police Service. Before and above that, I am a member of this community. In the face of comments made the other day by a member of the media that questioned how great a place Edmonton, Alberta and Canada are to live, I felt compelled to let you know that this is a safe place to live, work, and raise a family.

Canada is what it is - A country that guarantees freedoms of thought, expression and association. As for the special interest groups who have raised the issue of carding, I'm thankful they have the freedom to do so. They also have the responsibility as citizens in this country to seek to understand and open their minds to consider all facts, opinions and perspectives of others as they demand of their own. This is fundamental to Canada's attitude of inclusivity and acceptance. All of those freedoms are protected by the laws of our Country.

"Carding" or arbitrary stopping of people based on race *does not* exist in Edmonton.

We do not target people based on race. Carding does not exist in Edmonton and nor should it. As an Edmonton Police Officer, we must act in accordance with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The Criminal Code of Canada, The Provincial Laws of Alberta, The Bylaws of the City of Edmonton, the Policies and Procedures of the Edmonton Police Service and our character and morals. Under each of those layers of oversight we are accountable.

You, the public, expect us to keep you safe. We use "Street Check Reports" as a tool to gather information. The information is the "who, what, when, where, why, and how" of our personal observations. We make notes of a person's name, age, sex, height, weight, appearance, who they associate with, what time of day and where they are. All of this information is useful in increasing public safety through the prevention and detection of crime. Whether the person is obligated to provide their personal information is based on the authorities granted under the law. If a police officer asks for a person's information, it will be explained whether they have the lawful right to refuse. It is never random. When you see police officers in your neighbourhood it is not random. We are there because you called, there is a crime in progress, a recent crime has occurred that we are investigating or we have reason to believe that your neighbourhood is at risk of crime.

In Edmonton, the police officers that serve our community are a diverse group that include minorities and every identifiable cultural background. They are people of high character, great integrity and daily demonstrate compassion for the citizens they serve. During my twenty years of service, I have never witnessed a police officer act in a racist manner. The policies of Edmonton Police Service are some of the most progressive and inclusive in the world.

The members of the Edmonton Police Service do a great deal to build bridges and foster relationships with newcomers to Canada, vulnerable persons and all ethnic groups. In fact, the Edmonton Police Service is so dedicated to protecting those victimized by hate, that there is a unit dedicated to in-

vestigating Hate Crimes. The allegation that Edmonton police officers are racist is offensive and entirely false.

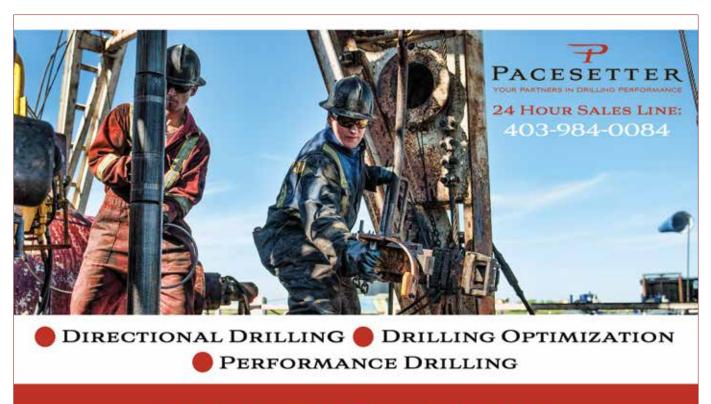
Day to day, as a Beat Sergeant in North Edmonton, I can attest that members of the Edmonton Police Service strive to develop and foster relationships with the community. You, the public have witnessed it first hand. Yes, you've seen us at community meetings and events, we partner with and support charities, coach our children, volunteer in the schools, we are the good neighbour and on top of all of that, we work to keep our community safe.

The Edmonton Police Association is very proud of our police officers and the work they do in our community. We will continue to support our members and work to ensure police officers have the necessary tools to prevent and detect crime and keep our community safe.

The Edmonton Police Association invites Justice Minister Ganley and her working group to sit at the table and continue toward getting the full story. The practice of throwing out statistics without placing them in context is irresponsible and not proper investigative journalism. We challenge the media to get the full story. Whether it is an anecdote of how someone feels harassed by police or a person claims to feel they were targeted as a shoplifting suspect, have those people come forward so that the circumstances can be determined. and the truth brought out. If a police officer has done something wrong, they will be held to account. Where it is found that there has been a misunderstanding let us educate and inform. Where it is found that the claims are false, let us also hold those people to account. Then publish the results. ■

Sincerely,

Cory Huculak



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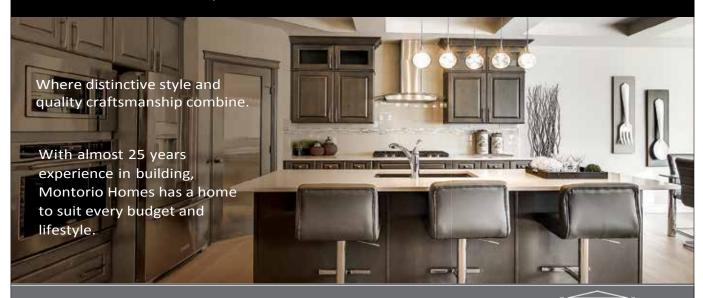


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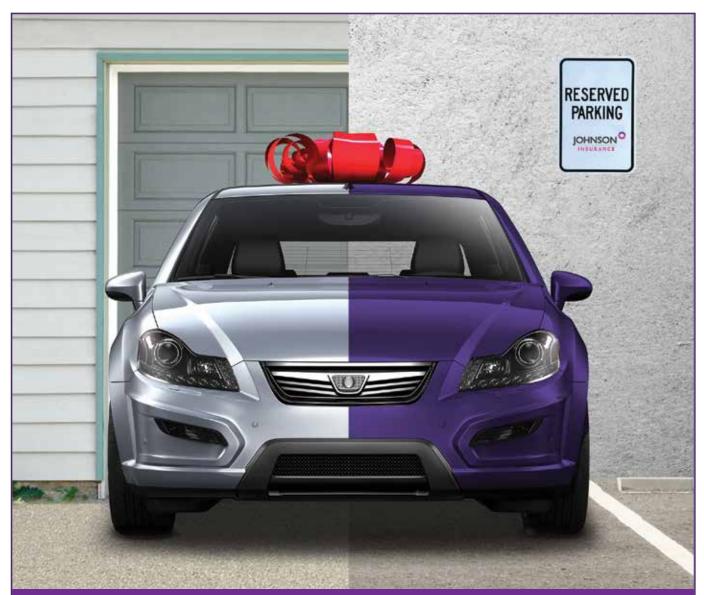
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