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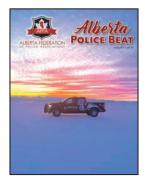


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Index

- 5 FROM THE PRESIDENT Chris Young
- 7 FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT Cory Kerr
- 9 FROM THE SECRETARY/TREASURER Marc Gaumont
- 13 FROM THE DIRECTOR/EDITOR Mark Flynn
- **15 FROM THE DIRECTOR** Alex Shaw
- **17 FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Howard Burns
- 20 FROM THE DIRECTOR Graham Ernst
- **23 FROM THE DIRECTOR** Jason Vowles
- 25 ALBERTA POLICE GOLF ASSOCIATION 89TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT ENTRY FORM
- 27 CANADIAN POLICE ASSOCIATION 2023 LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

On The Cover: Photo submitted by Constable Samantha Pederson of Blood Tribe Police Service





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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Inris Joung Vice President of Calgary Police Association

Message from the Outgoing AFPA President

Hello, my fellow members! Spring is in full bloom, and it's time for another edition of the Alberta Police Beat magazine. This edition should be out in time, or shortly after the AFPA Annual General Meeting, which is being held in Medicine Hat this May. This is a special edition for me personally, as it marks the end of my two-year term as your AFPA President. The Presidency will shift to Edmonton, and a new President will be elected at this year's AGM.

I have been an AFPA Board Member since 2017 and the President since 2021. Upon the conclusion of my term, I will be leaving the AFPA Board to make way for new Board Members. It is the right time to move on and allow others to bring new ideas to the Federation. This transition will allow me to focus more on my full-time position as the Vice President of Administration of the Calgary Police Association. I cherish my time with AFPA, and I have truly fond memories of the years I spent working on the Board.

A big win during my time on AFPA has been the Calgary Police Service creating a fit-for-duty policy regarding cannabis. Former VP of Admin in Calgary, Mike Baker, filed a grievance concerning cannabis being prohibited for Members in Calgary. Calgary President John Orr advocated for a fit-for-duty policy in Calgary, and I did the same as the AFPA President. I had a meeting with Calgary Police Chief, Mark Neufeld, about this issue, and that set things in motion. Shortly after that, the fit-for-duty policy was created and is in place now in Calgary. It was a collaborative effort that had a positive conclusion. Cannabis products can be helpful for health issues such as sleep, pain, and mental health, and I am immensely proud that we were successful in getting this in place in Calgary.

Recently, I attended the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police meeting in Camrose. Once again, I advocated for other AACP Services to establish similar fit-for-duty policies. Edmonton Police Chief, Dale McFee, informed me that such a policy is coming for Edmonton, and I was incredibly pleased to hear that. Let us hope the other Police Agencies adopt similar fitfor-duty policies. During my time as AFPA President, I did a lot of advocating. AFPA Executive Director, Howard Burns, and I even had a meeting with Calgary City Councillor, Courtney Walcott, in February of this year. Councillor Walcott had a very positive discussion with us concerning societal issues and the role of the Police regarding those issues. The Councillor informed us that he does see the Police as necessary in terms of public safety. He even mentioned that he does not use the word "defund" anymore, as it is often misinterpreted. Councillor Walcott spoke about a holistic approach to such issues as homelessness, addiction, mental health, etc. He talked about the Police working with health professionals, social programs, and addiction treatment programs in addressing the need to assist our vulnerable population. He spoke about how he hopes that eventually, over time, the Police would not have to attend calls and complaints concerning these societal issues. We agreed that an approach such as this will take a considerable amount of time to be able to get a positive footing within our society and be able to make real positive changes concerning these issues. Changes such as this do not magically work overnight; however, by working together, I believe we can achieve great success.

That was how I concluded my Fall edition of the Alberta Police Beat article, which was published in Fall 2022. I stated the following: "If our political leaders are honestly attempting to assist the minority and vulnerable of our city, then they will come to the table with all stakeholders and work collaboratively on real solutions. I look forward to logical and reasonable discussions in an effort to make Calgary an even better city for all." I applaud Councillor Walcott for approaching me and setting up a meeting where we were able to discuss these issues. I do support a holistic approach to these societal issues if the Police are supported and equipped to deal with public safety at the same time. As I have stated before, it has taken decades of neglect from our very own Government for these societal issues to become the major problems they are today. It will take a considerable amount of time working together (with the Police) to get to a place where we can consider other alternatives regarding these issues.

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

AFPA has attempted to assist the Blood Tribe Police Association with the issue of not being recognized under the Police Officer's Collective Bargaining Act. I have advocated for the BTPA to several UCP Ministers. Sam Pedersen is the new BTPA President, and she too has addressed this issue with our Provincial Government. This issue is complex and will take considerable time and effort. AFPA will continue to assist the BTPA and will remain a resource for them.

Policing has gone through a difficult period over the last 3 to 4 years. During this period, certain special interest groups, activists, and online bloggers have attacked our profession and attempted to spread hate toward the Police. In the last 6 months, at the time of the writing of this article, 9 Police Officers have been killed and murdered while on duty in Canada. Two of these Fallen Members served in the city of Edmonton. Policing is a difficult and dangerous occupation. It becomes even more so when entities and individuals work so deliberately at spreading hate toward the uniform and those who wear it. We, as the Police, need to fight the temptation to become jaded and to develop a negative mindset. That is exactly what the people spreading hate toward us want. Policing is a calling, and we got into this profession to make a positive difference in our beloved communities. The thing about hate is that it is a poison. It often consumes the person spreading it, and the venom eventually has a deep destructive effect upon the individual wielding it. The people who spread and deal in hate never know a day of peace. It often is the source of their very own destruction. I personally do not feel anger toward these people who hate us. I pity them, as they truly live a very unhappy existence. Remember our Fallen Members and their sacrifice. The way to truly honor their memory is to attempt to do your absolute best while you serve.

I would like to acknowledge the diligent, hardworking Members of the AFPA Board. I would like to thank former AFPA President and Vice President, Curtis Hoople. Curtis was an enormous help to me personally, and he always was able to be that calming influence for us. I very much appreciated what Curtis had to say on issues. I also would like to thank former AFPA Director, Troy Forester, for his work on the AFPA website. Troy is a former soldier that served in the PPCLI. I too served in the PPCLI, and it was good having a fellow Patricia on the Board. I also would like to thank Director Mark Flynn. Mark has done an outstanding job on the Alberta Police Beat publication. Mark is responsible for bringing Shield Publishing on board, and the magazine has never been better. I owe a thank you to Directors Graham Ernst, Jason Vowles, and Alex Shaw for their work on the AFPA Board. These Members put a lot of time into AFPA, and it is very much appreciated. Next, I would like to thank my current Vice President, Cory Kerr. Cory is also the Vice President of Edmonton. He is smart, determined, and a motivated representative of our Members. If I were a betting man, I would predict that Cory will be elected as the next AFPA President. AFPA will be in excellent hands, I have no doubt. I truly need to thank the AFPA Treasurer, Marc Gaumont. Marc has been a pivotal Member of the AFPA Board. He was always there for me when I needed him, and he would drop everything he was doing to assist me. I will never forget your loyalty, Gomer. Last, I want to thank our Executive Director, Howard Burns. Howard is one of the most intelligent people I know. His experience in Police Labour Relations has assisted the AFPA Board greatly. Howard never misses a detail, and he sees every angle in every situation. He has been a lifeline to me, and I truly have appreciated his assistance and advice over the years. I know he will continue to guide and support the new President going forward. It has been an honour to work with all of these Members. Their dedication to the job and their assistance to me was vital to AFPA's success.

I will conclude my last AFPA article by thanking our Membership. Thank you all for the support over the years. I really appreciate it. And thank you all for your service. I am truly proud and honoured to have been your President. All the best to all of you. Be safe, my friends.

Your outgoing President, Chris Young

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT



Cory Kerr Vice President of Edmonton Police Association

Out of the pot and into the fire...

y first foray into Police Association work came in 2022 as a Director with the Edmonton Police Association. At that point, I was in my 19th year of service and was looking for something new and exciting to focus on that would provide me the opportunity to gain experience with new things, implement positive change, and ensure that something I was engaging with would be left better than when I first engaged with it. I had previously considered running in 2015 but decided against it at the time as I wasn't completely sure what it would entail. As my interest in this work grew deeper in 2022 after starting as a Director, I opted to run for the full-time Vice-President's role with the Edmonton Police Association, and I was successful in that attempt, starting in the position this past January of 2023.

Shortly after the beginning of my term with the EPA, I learned that I would also be taking over the Vice President's role with the Alberta Federation of Police Associations (which I hold now), and in June will be progressing into the President's position with AFPA after Chris Young's completion of his term. We met earlier in the year in Red Deer, where I was introduced to the other members of AFPA's Board and will be meeting again at the upcoming AFPA AGM at the end of May, something I am looking forward to as it provides a great opportunity to glean information from other Associations throughout the Province in relation to the way they operate, what issues they are facing, and what ideas others may have relating to bringing said issues to a successful conclusion. To look back and see that the workload has gone from relatively small to quite high in only 16 months is amazing.

Since starting in both these roles, I have found the pace to be very high, and the learning curve to be very steep as we deal with a variety of issues that range from collective bargaining, legal representation, dealing with issues relating to benefits, WCB, LTD, STD, Duty to Accommodate Framework, HR issues, grievances, bylaw amendments, policy changes, SFPP, internal PSB representation, 46.1 incidents, building and property management, staffing, finances, building of a foundation, hiring processes, board meetings, committees, and more. It has been thoroughly enjoyable to learn new skills, engage with members, and fight for a better outcome on various issues for all members involved. As I progress with AFPA, I'm sure I will be engaging more in the political arena as I have already been exposed to issues relating to Body-Worn Cameras, Transit, Safe Consumption Sites, the Defund the Police movement, and more. Engaging with our politicians on issues is a necessity to ensure that pressing issues are highlighted and propelled forward to ensure a better work environment for us all.

Association work definitely takes passion, and I encourage those with the appetite for it to get involved with your respective Association. Succession planning is important no matter where you are, and there are great opportunities if you seek them out. We will all need future Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Treasurers, Secretaries, and Directors in our respective Associations to carry this important work forward as time marches on, and if you go in with a desire to make a change for the better, keep an open mind, and present a great work ethic, you will be able to make positive change that will have a prolonged beneficial impact on your fellow police members, both current and yet to come.

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FROM THE SECRETARY/TREASURER



Marc Jaumont Treasurer of Lethbridge Police Association

Body Worn Cameras, what's the big deal?

T is Master's Thursday as I start my article. Tiger Woods is 3 over through 7 holes and does not appear to be making the charge that everyone hoped would make. I was reminded of his substandard first rounds in his previous wins at the Masters, so there is still hope for some Tiger Magic as the weekend progresses. Before Tiger started his round, the cameras were watching as he was on the driving range, hitting every single ball of his warm up. The announcers projected his warm up shots that he was hitting on the range overlapping the 1st hole as if to predict every shot of his upcoming round. Tiger puts his clubs away and moves to the putting green and again, we watch as Tiger hits every single putt. How was the pace of the last putt, is his pushing the putt, how will he do?

On March 14, 2023 the Public Safety Minister, made an announcement that body worn cameras will become mandatory for all Police and Sheriffs in Alberta. When I was thinking about this topic, I never had it my head to compare who is arguably the greatest golfer in all time (Sorry Dad, he's better than Jack) to police work, but when it comes to being in the public eye, I did happen to notice some similarities.

I started policing in 1996, strangely the same year that Tiger turned pro. This was 4 years after the LA Police beat Rodney King all while being captured on a shaky home video camera from a nearby apartment balcony. To say that having a camera on us while we work is something that has only happened since 2007 when the first gen iPhone was released is ridiculous. The truth of the matter is that every active-duty member in Alberta has been under the watchful eye of the public for their entire career. As my career progressed and the camera on the smart phone became the best feature it has, I became more aware that I have and will always be in the public eye. I have personally policed knowing that the reaction of the public will be to film our interactions in hopes of getting that next viral video. I have learned that videos of police behaving professionally and respectfully towards the people they encounter are unlikely to go viral.

Tiger birdied the 8th and is 2 over after nine, the crowds are enormous, but thankfully it's the Masters, so there are no iPhones in the crowd.

In reading the CBC release dated March 14, 2023 written by Madeleine Cummings, she wrote regarding a quote from Minister Ellis: "By documenting the behaviour of the police in public, collecting better evidence, and improving our approach to resolving complex complaints during investigations, [body-worn cameras] represent an objective measure to show what occurs in the moment," Ellis told a news conference.

I found this interesting in that Mr. Ellis stated that body worn cameras are documenting the behaviour of the police in public when clearly we have been documented all along. I see the body worn camera from a different perspective and see the body worn cameras as another tool at our disposal that will be of greater value to the police officer than to the public we deal with. I believe this to be true as for the first time since the iPhone was purchased, Police have a camera that no longer is pointed at them, but rather faces out to the public, towards the person that we are dealing with. Another great feature of the body worn camera is that I don't have the ability to download, edit and share my content to make the next viral video. I don't have the ability to edit what would only be described as click bait and lead to the statements that I have heard too often, "that's not what happened". Professional policing doesn't get "likes".

Tiger just birdied the 15th and the 16th, is this another late Tiger Charge? While searching up the countless studies on the effects of body worn cameras, I have noticed that one of the changes that occurred was the number of complaints that were filed against police by citizens during their contact with police. On the surface, this appears to help our members greatly as the effects of a complaint against our members whether substantiated or frivolous weighs heavily on that member and those members that are around them. This would also suggest that perhaps having a camera facing out will be a greater deterrent to the public, as for the first time, they have the camera looking at their behaviour. They have the camera showing the comments they make and the behaviour they exhibit while intoxicated, fuelled by drugs, or just plain angry. Put a camera on the troll and perhaps they too will have something nice to say. I, like many of my fellow officers look forward to having the body worn cameras, I only wish that there was this technology when I started my career.

A bogey on 18th, plus two for the first round and well back of the lead, I'll watch as the cameras follow Tiger as he limps to his car and drives away.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR/EDITOR

Mark Hynn Vice President of Medicine Hat Police Association

Police officers in Alberta face numerous and unique mental health challenges in our line of work, which can range from exposure to dangerous and unpredictable situations, to experiencing high levels of mental and emotional stress. The nature of our duties often require us to confront potentially lifethreatening scenarios, make split-second decisions, and bear witness to tragic or violent incidents that can have a lasting impact on our mental health. These challenges can take a toll on our mental well-being, affecting our ability to perform our duties effectively and increasing the likelihood of burnout, PTSD, depression, and suicide.

Recent events, such as the deaths of fellow members in the line of duty, have brought this issue to the forefront of discussions among police associations across the province. Throughout the years, we have lost too many colleagues to tragic circumstances, which not only affect the families and loved ones of those who were killed but also impact their colleagues who are left to grieve and process the trauma of losing a brother or a sister. Despite the danger inherent in our job, we continue to carry out our duties to keep our communities safe.

In recent years, police officers in Alberta have faced intense scrutiny from the media, politicians, and the public. Negative stereotypes and generalizations about law enforcement have become more prevalent in the media, making it difficult for us to maintain positive relationships with the communities we serve. Anti-police movements have gained traction in certain circles, leading to an increase in protests and public demonstrations against law enforcement.

This heightened scrutiny and negativity can cause additional mental health-related issues for police officers. The constant barrage of negative news and social media attention can lead to feelings of isolation, frustration, and even anger. Moreover, the repeated exposure to traumatic events and negative portrayals of police work can lead to PTSD and other mental health challenges.

Anxiety, depression, and PTSD are common among police officers who have experienced traumatic events or who are exposed to high levels of stress on a regular basis. In addition to the mental health challenges inherent to the job, the negative media attention and public perception of law enforcement can exacerbate these issues, making it even more crucial to address the mental health concerns of officers.

To tackle these unique mental health challenges, police associations in Alberta have been working diligently to provide resources and support for our members. Initiatives such as the Peer and Family Support Program offered by the Calgary Police Association exemplify this commitment, as they provide police officers and their families with access to confidential support from peers who have been trained in critical incident stress management and other mental health-related issues.

Other resources available to police officers include Employee and Family Assistance Programs (EFAPs), which provide confidential counseling and support services to employees and their families. Many police associations also provide members with access to specialized mental health professionals who understand the unique challenges faced by law enforcement personnel.

Moreover, we are actively working to raise awareness about the importance of mental health for police officers. Through training programs and public awareness campaigns, we are striving to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health and encourage our members to seek help when needed.

The mental health challenges faced by police officers in Alberta are complex and multifaceted, but by recognizing these unique challenges and working to provide resources and support, we can help ensure the well-being of those who put themselves in harm's way to keep us all safe. Prioritizing the mental health and well-being of our members is crucial and can be achieved through providing access to confidential and specialized mental health resources, promoting healthy coping mechanisms, and implementing preventative measures to minimize the risk of mental health-related issues.

As we continue to address the mental health challenges faced by police officers, it is essential that we foster a culture of support and understanding within our own agencies and associations.

Continued from page 13

Encouraging open dialogue about mental health and the unique struggles faced by police can create an environment where our members feel comfortable discussing their experiences and seeking help when needed. This can lead to increased resilience and overall well-being within our memberships.

One approach to promote this supportive culture is through the implementation of regular mental health check-ins and evaluations for members. By normalizing these assessments, we can create an environment where discussing mental health is not stigmatized and is instead seen as a crucial aspect of maintaining overall wellness. This can help identify members who may be struggling and direct them towards appropriate resources and support.

Furthermore, investing in training programs that focus on stress management, resilience-building, and self-care techniques can be highly beneficial. By supplying tools to manage stress and maintain good mental health, we can mitigate the negative impact of the challenging situations that we may face daily. This proactive approach to mental health care can lead to more positive outcomes and a healthier workforce.

Another essential aspect of addressing mental health concerns

is ensuring that members have access to a support network that extends beyond their colleagues and immediate family. This could involve connecting members to community-based resources and support groups, where they can share their experiences with others who understand the unique challenges of our profession, or other similar emergency services professions.

Collaboration between law enforcement agencies, mental health professionals, and community organizations is also crucial to develop comprehensive solutions to the mental health challenges faced by police. By working together, we can create a strong support network that addresses the various dimensions of mental health and provides our members with the resources they need to maintain their well-being.

Finally, it is essential to recognize that the mental health challenges faced by police officers does not only affect the individuals involved but also our families and the communities we serve. Ensuring that the families of our members have access to appropriate support and resources can help to maintain the overall well-being of the law enforcement community.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Shaw rector of Edmonton Police Association

Stronger Together...

hile navigating through my first foray into police association work it's evident that strong committed leadership is required to meet and persevere through this fluid and evolving vocation.

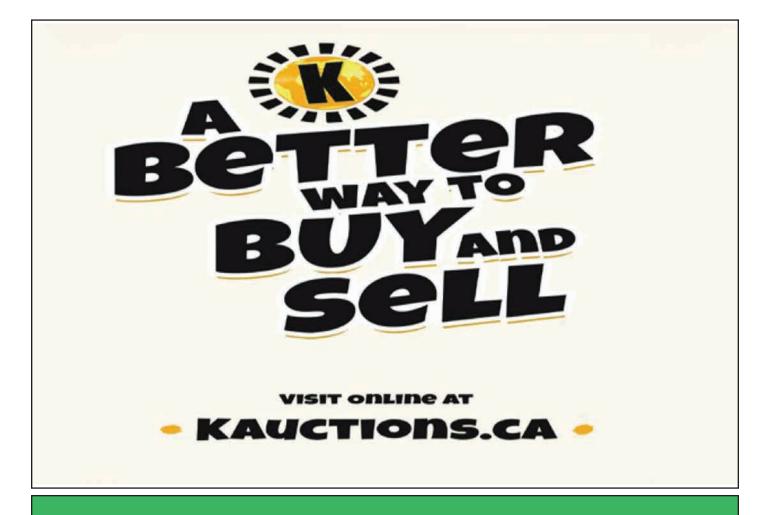
I am a Constable, in my 14th year, with the Edmonton Police Service and began my baptism into the police association world at the start of 2022 as a Director with the Edmonton Police Association. The learning curve of association work was steep and trying to understand a totally different function compared to that of operational police work was a challenge I wanted to embrace. I was keen to listen, support and assist members through work related issues and after being in my Director's role for a year, I was re-elected again as an EPA Director in early 2023, and ultimately gaining the confidence of the EPA Board to become a first time AFPA Director.

After joining the AFPA Board along with my EPA colleague, EPA VP – Cory KERR (now AFPA VP) we met with the other AFPA Board members in Red Deer in February 2023. Shortly after meeting and speaking with the other AFPA members, it was obvious that although we work in different parts of the province, and in a variety of roles, there is a strong sense of commitment and wanting a solid foundation of representation for members. This foundation will set the table for open and fulsome discussion at our AGM in Medicine Hat at the end of May. The sharing of information between associations throughout the province allows us to understand common problems, while considering local intricacies. This type of collaboration allows each AFPA Board member to provide their own experience and insight toward an integrated outcome. This united collaboration and strength of leadership was on full display during the tragic and unimaginable events that occurred on March 16th in Edmonton, where West Division Patrol Constables - Travis JORDAN and Brett RYAN were murdered in the line of duty. The deaths of Cst. JORDAN and Cst. RYAN sent a shockwave through the EPA membership as these sworn members were dedicated, determined and entirely invested in their profession and to serving the citizens of Edmonton. I knew both members personally as I had worked alongside them in a variety of roles and from my experience, both Cst. JORDAN and Cst. RYAN exemplified the strength of the fabric we all wear on a daily basis. This strength of the fabric was on full display during the initial aftermath of their deaths, as AFPA members reached out, without the slightest bit of hesitation, offering assistance in anyway possible and it has not stopped. This woven partnership we call AFPA, continues while we thrive together, but it also solidifies us during times of crisis. Members of the AFPA Board wholeheartedly understand the last few years have taken a huge toll on all sworn members around the province and throughout the country, but we share our strength together and foresee the clouds lifting.

Strength of leadership and unity can't be something that comes and goes, but rather it's the fabric that we wear, it holds us together, individually and collectively.

I am passionate about serving as an AFPA Director and have a desire to create positive outcomes for our sworn members throughout the province and being part of the AFPA Board is something I very much welcome.

Stay safe and see you in Medicine Hat!





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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Howard Burns

The Calgary Police Commission Erases the Thin Blue Line

Here a ving served as a police officer in Calgary for over 28 years, I was quite intrigued and a bit astonished last spring when the Calgary Police Commission (CPC) chose to pick a fight with the rank-and-file members of the Calgary Police Association (CPA) over the well known thin blue line symbol. In their ultimate wisdom, the CPC decided that the symbol was controversial and "has a contentious history with roots in division, colonialism and racism, most recently being prominently displayed at counter protests against the Black Lives Matter movement." (CPC News Release – March 30, 2022). They ordered that it be removed from the uniforms of all active-duty police officers.

As a long serving police officer, I was very much aware of the thin blue line symbol throughout my policing career. During my time with the Calgary Police Service (CPS), the thin blue line represented a number of very positive things. It was a symbol of professional pride and solidarity for those tasked with the difficult and sometimes dangerous job of protecting the public from the unsavoury criminal elements present in society's midst. It was also a symbol of respect in mourning for those police officers who paid the ultimate price protecting their community. I can tell you that during my entire career, I had never heard the thin blue line described as a racist symbol. The idea was foreign to me, so being a retired cop, I decided to have a look for myself. Here is what I found:

The first thing that I did was research news stories on-line to see if I could find any situations in Canada where the thin blue line symbol had been used to promote colonialism, division or racism. I couldn't find anything; however, I did notice something quite unusual. Nearly every news story I came across (in both Canada and the USA) negatively depicting the thin blue line was quite recent (2020 forward). Based on the timing, it certainly appears that the attention being focused on the thin blue line corresponds quite well with the **defund the police movement**, which gained world wide attention after the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota in May 2020.

It seems that I'm not the only one who can't find any evidence linking the thin blue line patch to racism, colonialism and division in Canada. In an <u>April 2022 interview</u> with CTV News in relation to the CPC's direction, Dr. Kelly Sundberg of Mount Royal University in Calgary is quoted as saying; " **the commission's decision to strip the 'thin blue line' patches from the uniforms of on-duty officers is petty politics."** "I think that there's just a lot of people that are making decisions that are not based on facts,".

"Sundberg says claims made by the commission that the patch represents racism, colonialism and division have no merit."

""What is the basis of this direction? Is it evidence based? Is it informed on fact, or is it driven by rumour or guessing?" said Sundberg."

""That's problematic. If we have the police oversight body making decisions that are not evidence based, that are not fact based, that is a problem."

Based on Dr. Sundberg's comments, it would seem that there are problems with the somewhat "woke" reasoning and wisdom behind the CPC decision. In fact, it appears that CPS Chief Mark Neufeld did his best to prevent the CPC from heading down their dodgy path nearly a year earlier when he presented them with actual facts and publicly supported the thin blue line symbol. In a <u>March 23, 2021 CBC news story</u>, Neufeld is reported to have told the CPC that; **"The thin blue line symbolizes the ideals** of justice, bravery and service to the community. It also honours our fallen brothers and sister officers." And; **"The** symbol, I would argue, is positive from the Canadian policing perspective and certainly a Calgary policing perspective"..... Despite the chief's persuasive submissions, the CPC over-ruled

Continued on page 18 🕨

Continued from page 17

him and forged ahead, banning the thin blue line symbol from all Calgary Police Service uniforms (as they have the authority to do), and simultaneously ignoring the significance of the symbol and disrespecting those who value its true meaning (in my view). Unsurprisingly, members of the CPA reacted quite passionately. The association responded by encouraging open defiance to the CPC ban and by supplying thin blue line symbols to their members.

The CPC deciding that they know more about policing than the chief of police and the CPA openly encouraging defiance to a lawful directive are both exceedingly rare and unusual events. They certainly appear to be a product of the divisive times we find ourselves in.

I was personally offended by the CPC's misguided thin blue line decision. Never one to sit on my hands, I wrote the following letter to commission chair, Shawn Cornett;

Good morning Ms. Cornett,

I am writing to you this morning to express my profound disappointment with the Calgary Police Commission's decision to ban the display of the **Thin Blue Line** symbol by Calgary police officers. I understand the reasoning behind the commission's decision, but I deferentially reject what has been put forward. I think one would be hard pressed to find even a single instance in Canada where the symbol has been used by police to divide or to support racist or nationalist views. In fact, the idea that the symbol could even reflect those things wasn't considered by our community until special interest groups began propagating the idea. It should be noted that some of these same groups also promote hate and use the ACAB symbol to offend and denounce the police.

In my view, the Calgary Police Commission has disappointed and offended all Canadian police officers, both active and retired. I respectfully request that the commission reconsider its decision.

Attempting to eliminate an important symbol that really represents camaraderie and serves as a sign of mourning is an affront to Canadian police officers who already sacrifice so much for their communities.

I note that the commission overruled Chief Neufeld on this matter. That is extremely unusual. It is not often the commission, made up primarily of volunteers, decides it knows more about policing than the chief of police. I have to wonder about the politics involved with this decision and I wish to remind you and the commission that your obligations are to all Calgarians, not just those who yell the loudest.

In closing, I again ask the commission to reconsider their position on this matter. I have the utmost respect for the institution, but I think

the commission has lost its way on this issue.

Thank you for your time.

I didn't receive any response from Ms. Cornett or the commission, but writing the letter proved to be good for my soul.

So how did the thin blue line suddenly become a symbol of controversy?

In my view, it really comes down to technology and society's ability to communicate almost instantaneously. People can express their personal views like never before and some have figured out that this can be a very powerful tool for shaping public opinion. Some special interest groups and certain politicians have become quite adept in harnessing the power of social media and using it to create their own versions of truth and history.

Case in point, during the spat between the CPC and the CPA, a sitting city councillor and member of the CPC reportedly described the thin blue line as "*a known hate symbol whose origins are buried in hateful thoughts and hateful deeds*", during a <u>CTV News interview</u>. Thousands of Calgarians saw this assertion made by an elected representative, the problem is, it doesn't appear to be true. The thin blue isn't a known hate symbol and its Canadian origins are very much debateable. The Anti-Defamation League keeps a list of known hate symbols and the thin blue line isn't on it. Nor is there any indication that the thin blue line has ever been actively used to promote hate in this country.

So why make such a dubious statement? We may never know as the councillor reportedly declined to provide "context and evidence for his comments". In my personal view, it's all about the petty politics mentioned in the earlier quotes attributed to Dr. Sundberg. It's possible the councillor took a page out of former Environment and Climate Change Minister Catherine Mckenna's handbook. <u>Mckenna is reported</u> (Toronto Sun) to have once said that; **"if you actually say it louder, we've learned in the House of Commons, if you repeat it, if you say it louder, if that is your talking point, people will totally believe it."** Mckenna isn't wrong, people do tend to believe what they hear and see from arguably trusted and reputable sources, even when the information has been manipulated or is just plain false.

Furthermore, I want to draw attention to another line in the CPC's news release. <u>CPC News Release – March 30, 2022</u> "The thin blue line has been featured prominently in many high-profile protests that espoused white nationalist or racist views, most recently being prominently displayed at counter protests against the Black Lives Matter movement." Now, I note that the CPC used the term "many", which I take to mean a lot, but interestingly enough, I couldn't find a single instance of this occurring in Canada and I could only find one reported example of it occurring in the USA. It seems that protesters at the 2017 Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia displayed blue line flags in support of the police, who had the unenviable task of trying to manage the protestors and counter-protestors in attendance. It appears to me that the CPC may have overstated fact and I question the veracity of their statement.

The same line mentions the thin blue line "being prominently displayed at counter protests against the Black Lives Matter movement." The wording certainly seems to suggest an overarching support for the Black Lives Matter movement and that's where things get a bit curious. I mentioned earlier that the Anti-Defamation League keeps a list of <u>known hate</u> <u>symbols</u> and that the thin blue line is <u>not included</u> on their list; however, the **ACAB** (All Cops are Bastards) symbol is. Traditionally used by the Skin Head movement, this symbol has been adopted by some in the Black Lives Matter movement. It has appeared with some regularity at Black Lives Matter protests, including <u>protests in Canada</u>.

When one connects all the facts, a very unusual situation becomes evident. The CPC has taken away an important symbol of solidarity and mourning from Calgary police officers. Their reasons for doing so seem to be based on dubious information, primarily from another country, and their decision appears to inadvertently favour a group whose supporters sometimes promote hate through the use of the ACAB symbol.

Is there any wonder why members of the CPA chose to push back and defy the CPC's somewhat woke direction?

In all fairness, the CPC isn't the only oversight body to ban the thin blue line patch. The RCMP and the Saskatoon Police Service have also directed the symbol not be worn on their uniforms. Their reasons for doing so appear to be quite similar to those offered up by the CPC. The National Police Federation (RCMP Union) has encouraged its members to defy the direction. I think I've made the case that the CPC's decision to ban the thin blue line is based on questionable facts and reasoning. Their rush to appear *woke* has insulted and angered the many active and retired CPS officers who actually know the true meaning of the thin blue line, including me. As the CPC is now learning, there are consequences for making questionable decisions that impact sworn members. In their own <u>Employee Engagement</u> <u>Report (Nov 2022)</u>, **96%** of sworn members indicated a low level of trust in the CPC's governance and oversight of the police service (pg. 58).

Despite efforts to demonize it, the thin blue line hasn't been entirely erased just yet. Most Canadian (and American) police officers understand that the symbol has been hijacked and misrepresented by those who have a dislike for the police. As a result, they are willing to push back and continue displaying the symbol, despite the consequences for doing so. For most, the truth matters and taking a bit of heat is a worthy endeavour. Case in point; On Dec 19, 2022 CBC News reported that retired police officer and current Vancouver city councillor, Brian Montague, was seen proudly displaying the thin blue line patch on his jacket. He was called out on social media for wearing a "white supremacist symbol" and reportedly responded with the following comment in relation to the thin blue line; "it symbolizes a line of dedicated people who protect." "It is a memorial to many of the friends and colleagues I have lost. It symbolizes courage and sacrifice. I earned the right to wear it. How dare you, or anyone, attempt to redefine, hijack, or appropriate my symbol."

When CBC News asked Vancouver Mayor Ken Sim for comment on the patch, he reportedly offered the following in a written statement; "As a veteran of the Vancouver Police Department, Coun. Montague wears the patch as a memorial for the many friends and colleagues that he and countless other officers have lost over the years — We stand by Councillor Montague's choice to wear the patch," (said Sim).

"We condemn those who attempt to redefine or co-opt the thin blue line symbol for hatred or political purposes."

I think Mayor Sim's comments hit the mark and give us all plenty to consider moving forward.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Graham Ernst Director of Calgary Police Association

Is Your Bathtub Getting Full?

I m a little embarrassed to say it, but I cried. Not just once but a lot that week. I started okay, with a plan to hold it together, but I just couldn't keep it all in.

It's been a long, challenging year with the loss of so many of our Brothers and Sisters in targeted attacks. I have been lucky in that since Sgt Andrew Harnett was killed on December 31st, 2020, I haven't had any direct connections with the members taken too soon. This allowed me, and I suspect many of us, to remain at arm's length. To feel sad and angry but just a little grateful that it happened somewhere else this time.

I learned of the murders of Constables Travis Jordan and Brett Ryan the same week I learned of the funeral arrangements for a family friend. Our friend had died the same week as the two officers after a two-year battle with brain cancer. Only in his mid-forties, he left behind a wife and two teenage boys.

I knew it would be a rough week of funerals and that it would take a toll emotionally. I prepared myself as well as possible and tried to steel myself against the anticipated emotional onslaught. I pride myself on being pretty emotionally stable, and I hoped to be sad and grieve with our people in a dignified way before stoically moving on.

I was wrong! The funeral of our friend Karl Schuller was the funniest, most heart-wrenching funeral I have ever been to, and I wasn't able to hold back the tears. We weren't even close, but with shared family members and what felt like uncanny similarities between us, the loss to his friends, wife, and children was overwhelming.

As all funerals are, in the end, it was cathartic to grieve together, say goodbye, and spend time together catching up with old family and friends. That day passed, but I was left with a surprising sadness I couldn't shake. I was self-aware enough to realize that I still had another funeral to attend four days later, which I knew would be hard. However, I was able to leave there with a plan and an expectation that I was allowed to be sad but that I would hold it together a little better next time.

On Monday, March 27th, approximately 8000 police officers gathered to honor Cst Travis Jordan and Cst Brett Ryan. Despite the knowledge that Edmonton in March is expected to be cold, most were unprepared for the biting wind, even with the blue sky and relatively warm day.

It was a powerful experience to march with all those Brothers and Sisters and heartwarming to see the blue ribbons and thousands of people standing in the cold with us to show their support. It felt good to see the discipline of our members and the tradition of such an occasion. I clung to that feeling of support and used the knowledge that things could be so much worse to try and stay warm as we waited in those frigid temperatures to enter Rogers Place.

Once inside, I quickly found myself overcome with sadness for the second time that week. The families and friends that spoke were funny and engaging and incredibly brave to stand in front of so many and lay their hearts bare to everyone in attendance. My heart broke for the wives, family, friends, and teammates left behind to move on alone. I cried some more despite my best efforts.

I once again left the funeral grateful to have shared my grief with so many but unable to shake the feeling of shock and despair. That feeling just hung on me like a weighted blanket I couldn't put down.

Even still, I recognized that I was feeling weighed down. I knew that the pressure was building, and it was a strange experience to watch it happen, regardless of my plans to prevent it. It felt like watching it happen to a favorite character on a TV show. I knew my emotional capacity was reaching its limits, but I couldn't seem to release the pressure valve.

The following day, immediately after waking up and checking my phone, I learned of the murder of Cst. Maureen Breau. It all

seemed so unfair, and it was too much!

There are a lot of analogies that people use in times like this. One of my favorites is the emotional bathtub. As bad things happen, stress builds, and your bathtub fills up. If you are lucky and prepared, you can do something to pull the plug in the drain to lower the water level. Exercise, talking with family and friends, or a little vacation time can help stop your tub from overflowing. If the water gets too high, it spills over the top and causes a mess. The kicker is that most people are never quite sure what will fill your tub, so sometimes it surprises you.

I am grateful to have spent years on our Service's Peer Support team. The training provided and the knowledge and support of my incredible wife, Tara, who has been a leader for the last decade in supporting police families with Beyond the Blue, has given me an awareness of what was happening to me.

After a morning of walking around in a sullen daze, I realized I was fighting a losing battle. Even in the safe place of my own home, I was still a little embarrassed to ask my wife for some help. For me, that meant just lying with her in our room and quietly chatting about how hard the week had been. It all seemed so unfair and combined with the sadness of everyone impacted. That weighted blanket was making it hard to take a deep breath.

Thankfully, as we spoke and shared a few more tears, the weight that had been steadily building for the last few days lifted just a little. I could breathe a little easier. After a while, I knew I had managed to reach down and pull the plug on the drain and let the water slowly back out. It took me a couple more days to thoroughly shake off the feeling of malaise that I had been dealing with. A few more quiet chats, some time in the gym, and the distraction of my kids ultimately did the trick. I have seen a psychologist before, so I'm not afraid to reach out when needed, but in this case, I didn't quite get there.

I am grateful for the many supports I have available here in Calgary. As I mentioned, we have an excellent Peer Support Unit, an unrivaled Psychological Services Section, Beyond the Blue (a support group for families of police officers), and the fantastic support of my wife, family, and brothers and sisters in blue. I am lucky to have all this and realize that it still almost all caught up to me anyway. If it can happen to me, it reminds me that we all need to be self-reflective and watch out for each other to ensure our water doesn't spill over and cause a mess.

If you have any questions about the programs I mentioned above, please don't hesitate to reach out (GErnst@backtheblue. ca). Maybe your Service doesn't have the same supports but needs someone to take the bull by the horns and get it started. You don't have to create something from scratch; you don't need to do it alone.

We are policing in uncertain and challenging times. If the recent funerals I've attended have shown me anything, we don't have to do it alone, and we're stronger when we stick together.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Fason Vowles President of Taber Police Association

A few years ago, the Taber Police Association rebranded our logo. One topic of that discussion was changing the word "brotherhood" as we wanted to be all-inclusive of our members. "Camaraderie," "Brotherhood," "Thin Blue Line" - at the end of the day, it all means the same: it encompasses the police family.

With the recent tragic events among our policing community, not only in Alberta but across Canada, that word "brotherhood" has come to the fore. What is "brotherhood"? Contrary to many critics and people not familiar with the culture of policing, the police brotherhood is not an extremist group of bullies, gangs, and organizations that believe they are above the law. The brotherhood is, in fact, the feeling of being brothers (and sisters) within law enforcement that is obviously heightened when tragic events occur.

Brotherhood is not something that comes from a book or comes from a lesson plan. Brotherhood is a feeling that comes from the experiences gained and relationships forged throughout a policing career, whether it be gained through members of the same crew, service, or through multi-agency interactions. We all belong to the same family.

The brotherhood cannot be measured, but can be defined in the actions between us, whether it be picking up the bill for a cup of coffee or lunch, covering a shift, or helping colleagues move home. A show of brotherhood can, however, be seen by the public at tragic events, such as line-of-duty funerals, where support is shown by members travelling from across the country, in fact internationally, all of whom subscribe to the policing cause. These members, more likely than not, did not know or work with the fallen hero that they have travelled, sometimes great distances, to honor and pay their respects.

During that brief march from the Legislature Building to Rogers Arena, in temperatures that must have been minus 10, with a wind chill, knowing that every person involved, including members of the public that were there to support, was feeling the chill, but nevertheless, despite feeling the cold, even with the most welcomed hand warmers, everyone there was there for a purpose, brought together by the brotherhood. During that time, the unseen warmth emanating from the gathering of the brotherhood provided muchneeded comfort and resistance from the cold.

These actions can give great reassurance, comfort, and strength amongst our peers. And not only is this seen at times of sadness but also at formal and celebratory occasions such as Regimental dinners and Police Balls. Why do we do this? The answer cannot be found in a dictionary, an Encyclopedia, and even Alexa probably would be stumped to explain it.

The true meaning of the brotherhood cannot be comprehended by those who have not experienced it or been affected by it. The thin blue line is what we all signed up for; it is our calling, our duty, and we do it selflessly to serve and protect those who are unable to do so.

As within any family, there is always going to be fighting between brothers and sisters, but in the end, we are all there for each other, respect one another, support one another, and love one another.

I had other topics and ideas to address; however, after seeing the effects and emotions of the recent tragedy in Edmonton, not only among the members I work and interact with in Taber, but throughout the province, I decided this was something to share.

Support each other. Stay strong. Keep safe.





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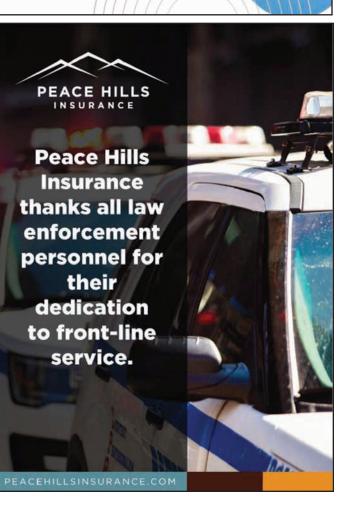
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Canadian Police Association 2023 Legislative Conference Seeking a New Mandate for BAIL REFORM and PUBLIC SAFET

LEGISLATIVE FACT SHEET: BAIL REFORM AND PUBLIC SAFETY

OVERVIEW

The Canadian Police Association (CPA) is an umbrella organization that represents almost 60,000 civilian and sworn front-line law enforcement professionals from across Canada. Our members serve every municipal and provincial police service, and include personnel from First Nations police agencies and the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railway police.

On behalf of our members, we work in a non-partisan fashion with Members of Parliament from all political parties to advocate for policies that promote public safety while improving the health and safety of those who serve their communities. We regularly appear before Parliamentary Committees to offer expert testimony during the consideration of legislation, and are always available to facilitate meetings with Parliamentarians in their home ridings to provide a local policing perspective on important issues.

As you are no doubt aware, since we met with you last year, events around the world continue to put a significant focus on the roles and responsibilities of police personnel. It is important to emphasize that policing in Canada remains one of the most trusted public institutions in our country, and while there will always be room for evidence-based reforms that ultimately benefit both our members and the communities they serve, we should not hesitate to recognize our sector's successes, while being willing to constructively address areas where we can and must improve.

With violent crime and random attacks on the increase across Canada, and facing activist calls to "defund the police" that have largely lacked realistic alternative solutions, to confronting the unique but now well documented mental health challenges facing first responders, to ensuring that our members are equipped and trained to respond to modern threats to community safety and security such as our recent and ongoing experience with the Covid pandemic, the CPA has a strong interest in working with our elected officials at all levels to ensure that Canadian policing continues to be a global example of progressive and accountable law enforcement.

It is because of these factors that it should be emphasized that policing in Canada is, appropriately, the profession subject to the most regulation and oversight possible. Our members know, and expect, that the split-second decisions they make will be scrutinized by both the public, and by the independent agencies established to ensure Canadians continue to trust those who police their communities. Law enforcement personnel accept the risks that come along with the profession, while understanding and embracing the need for accountability, but it's important to remember that police officers are people too, and in speaking with front-line officers, it's becoming clear we also need to work on changing the tone of discourse around policing issues in our country. Coverage that is balanced and objective, and a willingness to allow robust oversight procedures to take place before placing blame on individual officers, will certainly help maintain and enhance the confidence Canadians continue to show in our system.

There's no doubt that the cost of policing will continue to be debated, but there should also be no question that our members provide tremendous value to their communities, and that value



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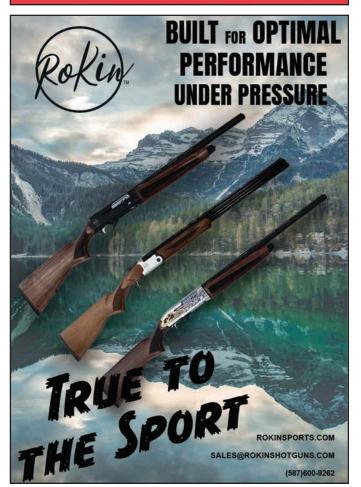
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Continued from page 27

goes beyond just dollars and cents. Police personnel are often the agency of only resort when confronting societal challenges. Our officers are on-duty 24/7, and receive training that allows them to address the myriad of challenges they face on a regular basis. Our Associations will be the first to work with community stakeholders to identify areas where alternate responses may make more sense to reduce the current workload our officers face, but we need to work collaboratively to build that capacity without sacrificing community well-being.

As Members of Parliament, we look forward to continuing our work with you in this 44th Parliament. The need to protect our communities with evidence-based strategies supported by professional public policing is the ultimate non-partisan goal. Thank you for taking the time to meet with us, but also don't hesitate to reach out to us in Ottawa through our National Office, or just as importantly, back home in your ridings any time you might need to discuss public safety issues, or have specific concerns or questions you might like us to address.

THE ISSUE

Front-line police personnel play a crucial role in protecting the public and maintaining law and order. While we generally agree that our justice system often works as intended, there are exceptions within our existing system that result in tragic circumstances. Recent cases, such as the murders of Sergeant Maureen Breau of the Surete du Quebec, Constable Brett Ryan and Constable Travis Jordan of the Edmonton Police Service, Constable Grzegorz Pierzchala of the Ontario Provincial Police. Constable Shaelyn Yang of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Constable Devon Northrup and Constable Morgan Russell of the South Simcoe Police Service, and Constable Andrew Hong of the Toronto Police Service, highlight the need for all partners in the justice system to come together to address the very specific problem that repeat violent offenders pose, not just for police personnel, but for all Canadians. These 8 murders, all committed in just the past 7 months underscore the urgency of addressing this problem.

We want to be absolutely clear that we are not asking for a "tough on crime" solution. As law enforcement officers, we are not asking for an approach that focuses solely on punitive measures. Instead, we ask for a more balanced approach that prioritizes prevention and rehabilitation as well. We believe that bail reform could contribute to this approach, by ensuring that those who pose a significant risk to the public are kept in custody until their trial, while those who do not pose such a risk are granted bail with appropriate conditions.

We also recognize that bail is a fundamental right, and the presumption of innocence is a cornerstone of our justice

system. However, we are hopeful that this Parliament can work collaboratively to identify potential evidence-based legislative and administrative changes to address the concerns that many Canadians have expressed, when highlighting their concerns of deteriorating public safety in their communities. We believe that by implementing these recommendations, we can better protect the public and ensure a fair and effective justice system.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a specific definition of prolific or repeat violent offender, to give Crown prosecutors, Justices of the Peace, and Judges a framework or set of guidelines to work within when considering bail applications, particularly in situations where reverse onus provisions already exist. For example, this definition could include the prior commission of a serious offence while on bail, the prior commission of an offence while using a weapon, in particular a firearm; and the extent of the number and frequency of previous convictions of the accused for serious offences, including persistent offending by the accused.
- Establish a dedicated program of Crown Prosecutors and Justices of the Peace to consider bail applications by repeat violent offenders to ensure that these specific cases are considered promptly, and that those arguing and deciding these cases recognize the significant consequences that can arise from their decisions.
- Consider stronger emphasis on obligations for sureties, and ensuring that there are consequences for those who act as sureties, particularly when there is established evidence that they are aware of breaches of conditions taking place.
- Provide increased resources, both within the justice system (to provide for dedicated Crown prosecutors who are specifically trained to argue these particular cases, and to facilitate quicker access to trials for accused who are held without bail), and for police services across Canada to target those offenders who are in breach of their conditions.
- Increase the use of technology within the criminal justice system, particularly electronic monitoring of offenders on bail, to help maintain public safety in our communities.
- Advocate for better data collection, to ensure that any new policies that are developed are evidence-based and can be evaluated for effectiveness and to better understand how frequently bail is breached. This is particularly important given that amendments made by the previous Bill C-75 mean that no record of bail breaches are kept, and cannot be considered by judges or justices of the peace in subsequent hearings.



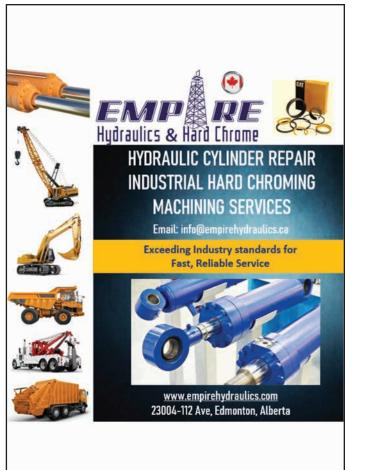
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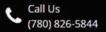
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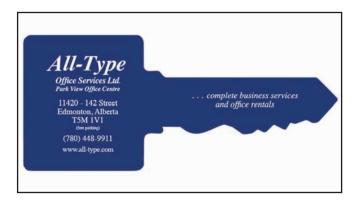
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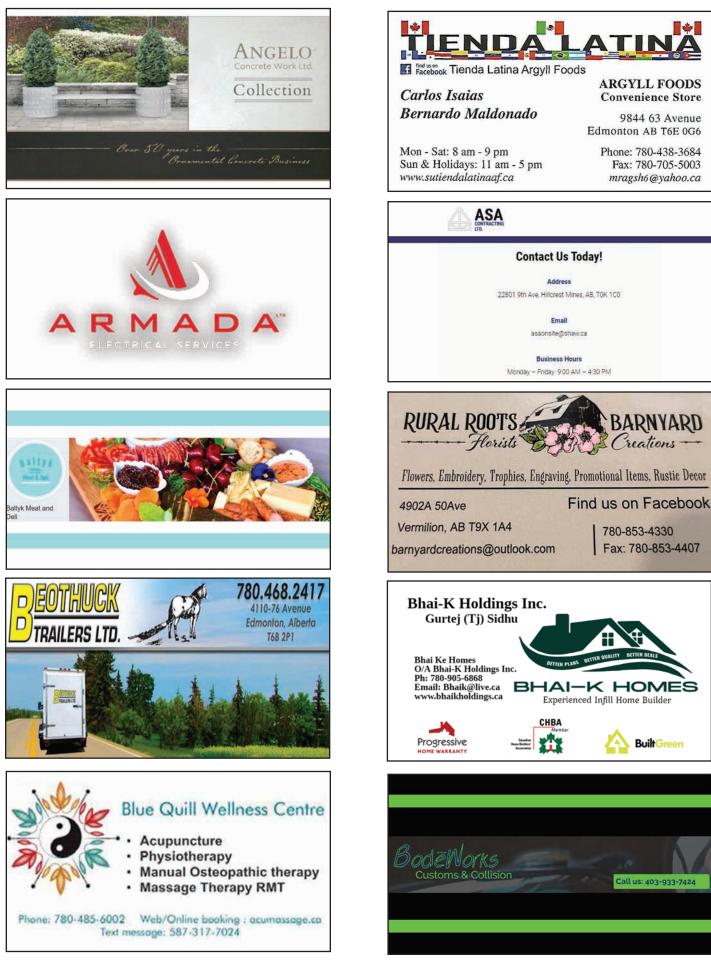


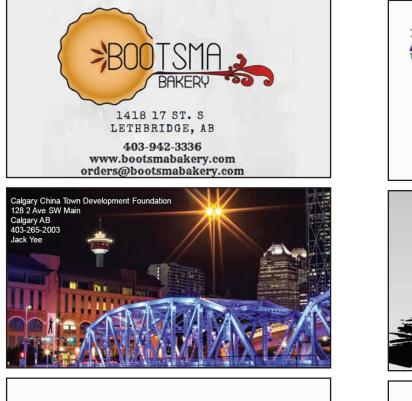




















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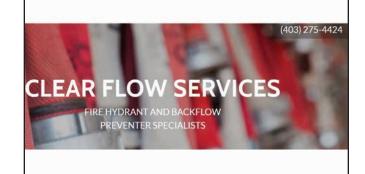
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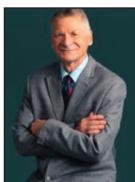


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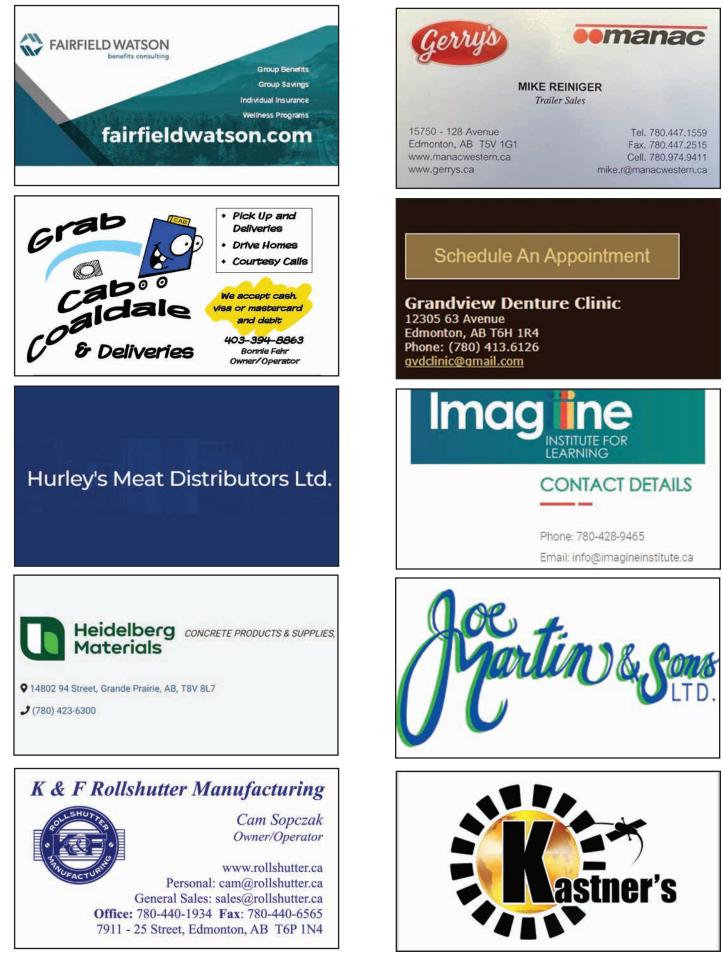


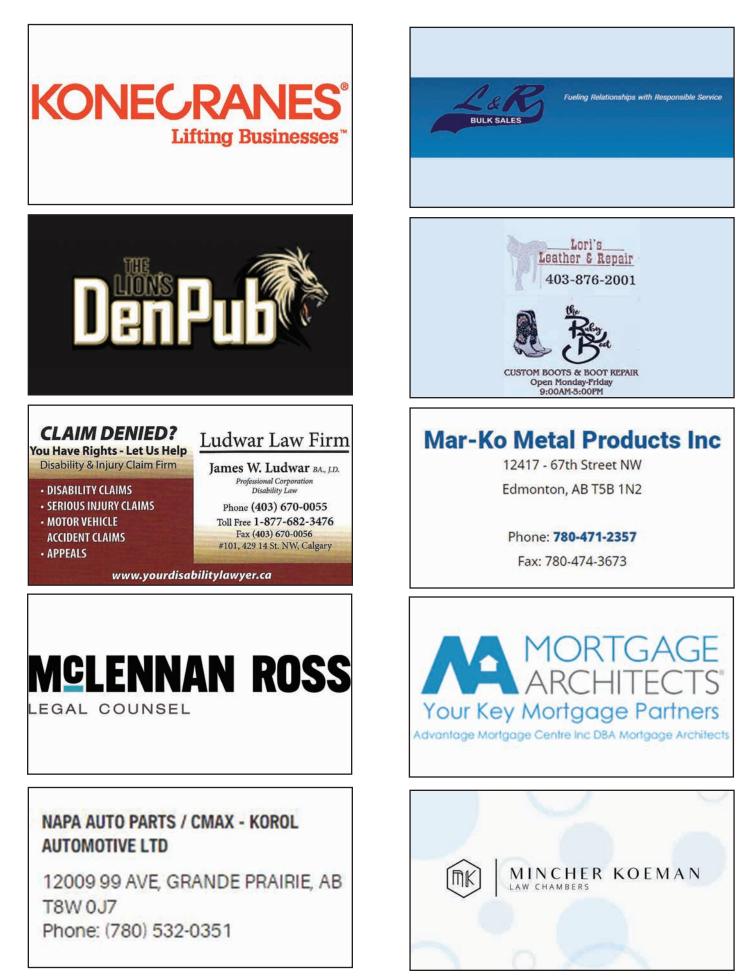


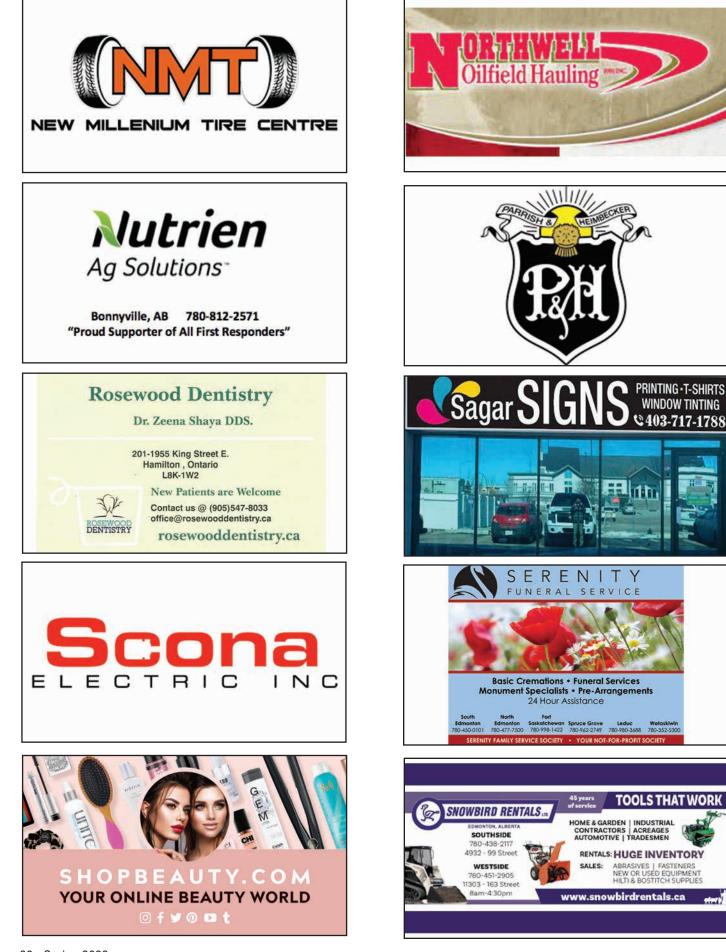
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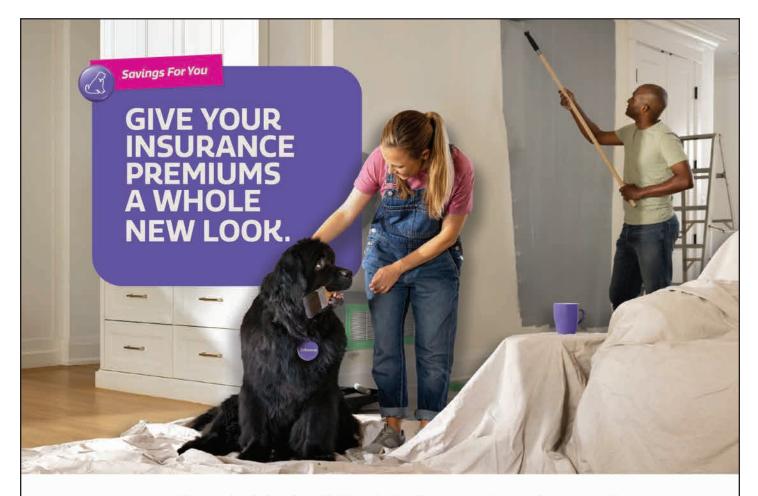
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A-Plus Registry Svc		Kastner Auctions	
Argyll Foods Tienda Latina		Kichton Contracting Ltd	24
Armada Electrical Svc Ltd		Konecranes Canada Inc	
Asa Contracting Ltd		L & R Bulk Sales Ltd	
Baltyk Meat Products Deli Ltd		Labrie Bookkeeping Ltee/Ltd	
Barynard Creations		Legacy Dodge Claresholm	
BeachComber Hot Tubs	41	Lions Den Pub	
Belair Direct	8	Lori's Leather & Repair	
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Beothuck Trailers Ltd		Managewise	
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Hi-Tec Intervention		Yangarra Resources Ltd	12
Horton Auto Body & Paint	26	York Realty Inc	

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