



# BEYOND THE CALL

VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT | ANNUAL REPORT 2007



Chief Constable Jim Chu with his 2007 executive team, (from left to right) Deputy Chiefs Steve Sweeney, Bob Rolls, Doug LePard and Bob Rich (retired).

**EACH YEAR AT THIS TIME**, we report to the citizens of Vancouver on the efforts we are making to keep you safe. We are dedicated to those efforts and committed to providing you with a level of service that routinely goes Beyond the Call.

Our vision is to make Vancouver the safest major city in Canada. I am pleased to tell you that we are making real progress in realizing that vision. In 2007's annual report, you will read of a reduction in crime. And for the first time, we are publishing long-term crime trends which illustrate a falling crime rate from the peak years of the mid 1990s. Despite these successes, we still have serious concerns such as property crime, gang violence, and the public disorder associated with drug addiction, mental illness, and homelessness.

We have always maintained that more police equals less crime. We are very pleased that with the additional funding support provided by City Council, the VPD has been able to hire more officers. You have often told us that you would like to see more visible police on foot and in your neighbourhoods. We share your concerns and have increased front line patrol resources. This has decreased call response times and improved our ability to provide proactive policing services, such as walking beats and officers on bicycles.

During 2008 and 2009, we will be deploying 96 additional officers whose recruitment was approved by City Council. These officers will further enhance our front line presence in service areas, such as uniformed patrol and criminal investigations, and will be a valuable security resource for the 2010 Winter Olympics.

Our focus continues to be providing our citizens with a Beyond the Call level of service. We are always looking at new methods to provide more effective levels of service and enacting innovative strategies to enhance the public's safety. One of those strategies, approved by the Police Board, involves complementing our direct service by advocating for legislative and social changes where we see an opportunity to achieve a greater impact on reducing the problems.

Many of you will be familiar with our recent efforts to publicly "shine the light" on pressing issues such as:

- **OFFENDERS FLEEING PROSECUTION** — For decades, criminals have fled prosecution for serious crimes by simply fleeing from the jurisdiction where they were charged. We have returned 19 of these offenders to jurisdictions from Alberta to Nova Scotia, saving our City and Province significant money in areas such as policing, courts, jails and social assistance. Our Community Policing Centre volunteers have completed a public petition program to increase awareness. We will continue to spread

the message so that criminals know that they cannot avoid prosecution for a serious charge by fleeing to Vancouver.

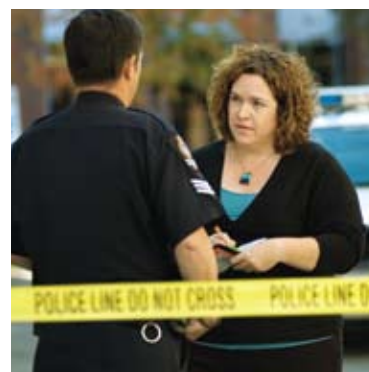
- **MENTAL ILLNESS** — The deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill has created an appalling situation in our City and has turned police officers into de facto mental health care workers. Many mentally ill people are drawn to the Downtown Eastside because of cheap accommodation and access to services. These people are often the victims of predatory drug dealers, abusive pimps and unsavoury landlords who take advantage of their vulnerabilities. The report we released on this situation is titled: *Lost in Transition: How a lack of Capacity in the Mental Health System is Failing Vancouver's Mentally Ill and Draining Police Resources*. The VPD was presented with the Richard Dolman Excellence in Police Service award by the B.C. Schizophrenia Society for producing this report.
- **CHRONIC OFFENDERS** — Our report on sentencing trends showed that Vancouver has a prolific offender population that has accumulated criminal convictions to a ludicrous level surpassing anywhere else in the world. We studied a cohort of 379 offenders. We found that 100 of them had more than 54 criminal convictions. Forty had more than 77 convictions, and six had in excess of 100 criminal convictions. Most disturbingly, the report revealed that after they had been convicted about 30 times, they actually started to receive shorter jail sentences. As a start, we have proposed a "30 strikes and you're out" policy in our report: *Assessing Sentencing across Criminal Careers: An Examination of VPD's Chronic Offenders*.

The changes we recommend are based on the front line observations of more than 2,000 Vancouver Police sworn and civilian members, and volunteers. Their experiences and insights provide the VPD with a unique perspective that we believe deserves to be heard so that good legislation, funding allocations, and policy decisions are made.

To learn more and read our reports in their entirety, I invite you to go to our website at [vpd.ca](http://vpd.ca). You may wish to visit our crime prevention pages, view our crime statistics in detail or find out if "you have what it takes" to be one of Vancouver's finest by taking our instant quiz on our recruiting pages.

Meanwhile, I also invite you to read further in this year's annual report for stories about our officers going Beyond the Call and our civilian volunteers who are helping us achieve our vision of making Vancouver the safest major city in Canada.

Jim Chu  
Chief Constable



# BEYOND THE CALL

## Lost and Found

*Missing Persons Unit has perfect record*

**FEW THINGS STRIKE** more terror in the heart of a parent than to learn their child is missing. While the majority of missing children are runaways, the sad reality is that thousands of children and adults in Vancouver go missing every year.

The good news is that no police department in Canada has a better record of finding missing persons than the Missing Persons Unit of the Vancouver Police.

It wasn't always that way. In the past two and half years, the unit has been transformed into one of the most highly efficient and responsive missing persons units in the country. Following an audit conducted in 2004, major changes were implemented.

By 2005, missing persons reports had been reduced by 30 per cent. In 2006, 4,004 people were reported missing. The unit found every one of them. In 2007, another 2,893 people went missing and once again the unit had a 100 per cent success rate.

For this outstanding accomplishment, the men and women of the Missing Persons Unit, including Sergeant Ron Fairweather, Acting Sergeant Mark Forshaw, Detective Constables Henry Wolf, Bryce Schindel, Greg Ralla, Cal Traversy, Raymond Payette and Ms Emer Fitzgerald, were awarded the Chief Constable Unit Citation. ■

## Citizens' Crime Watch Goes High Tech

*New GPS system the latest aid in recovering stolen cars*



*Citizen Crime Watch volunteer Dr. Greg Franklin uses the GPS program he helped design while on patrol with Constable Kevin Berardin.*

**WHEN DAVID CAMERON WAS A YOUNG BOY** he was fascinated by police work. But unlike many youths who get caught up in the excitement of police shows, it was police communications that intrigued David.

"When I was 16, I would drive around with a scanner," he says.

He had no way of knowing that one day he would realize his dream and make an extraordinary contribution to police communications and public safety.

David Cameron is one of hundreds of volunteers in the Vancouver Police Citizens' Crime Watch program. Most of his fellow volunteers spend an evening a week patrolling the city looking for stolen cars and reporting suspicious activity.

They work with Constable Kevin Bernardin, who runs the program. He takes their reports and compares them against the list of cars that have been reported stolen. On any Friday or Saturday night, up to nine teams of two or three volunteers drive their own cars and carry computers and radios while they search city streets. They have been impressively successful.

Since 1993, 4,231 stolen vehicles have been recovered. In 2007, more than 900 volunteers put in a total of just under 5,400 hours.

"I went on my first patrol about a year ago," Cameron said. "It was exciting and we recovered a stolen car. It really opened my eyes."

Cameron, an engineer and amateur radio enthusiast, saw a way he could make the program more effective and safer for the volunteers.

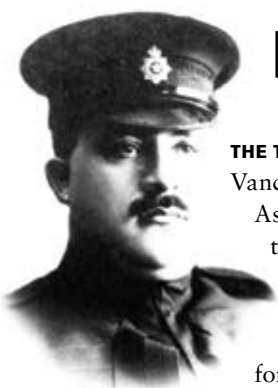
While the VPD advises volunteers to stay in their cars and call for assistance immediately in any emergency, in one case volunteers calling for back-up didn't know their own location. David Cameron wanted to make sure that would never happen again.

Seeking funding from the Police Foundation and working with another volunteer, Dr. Greg Franklin, he devised a global positioning system that the volunteers could place in their cars. Now when they go out on patrol they are monitored from a base station and Constable Bernardin can even monitor them from a laptop in his police car. Each volunteer car is visible on a computer map and its location is pinpointed as it moves about the city.

"We couldn't have done it without David," said Constable Bernardin. "He contributed hundreds of hours and gave us access to equipment and resources we never could have afforded."

For David Cameron, it's all part of the excitement of police work. ■

## TIMEPIECE 1917



### He Only Saw Blue

**THE TRADITION OF GOING BEYOND THE CALL** has very early roots in the Vancouver Police Department.

As far back as 1917, no one believed in the principle more strongly than Chief Constable Malcolm MacLennan. Tragically, he gave his life in the line of duty as he went far beyond the call.

Chief MacLennan was a reformer who fought for his members and for what he believed was right. In 1917, he led a force of 250 officers protecting a population of 100,000 people. His men worked seven days a week with no time off. He insisted and was granted two days off a month for each officer. He was also the first Vancouver Chief to hire a minority officer. Constable Raiichi Shirokawa, a Japanese Canadian, only lasted a few months in the job before pressure from the Japanese community who thought he was a spy forced him to resign. Chief MacLennan even lobbied politicians for medical treatment for drug addicts instead of treating them as criminals. His pleas fell on deaf ears.

Chief MacLennan was an innovative and highly principled leader who had every intention of making the VPD the best Department in the country. All that came to a tragic end on March 20, 1917. It was on that day he led his men as they stormed an apartment where a barricaded man had already shot a number of policemen and civilians, including an eight year old boy who died from his wounds.

To prevent further loss of life, the Chief decided to send a squad into the apartment.



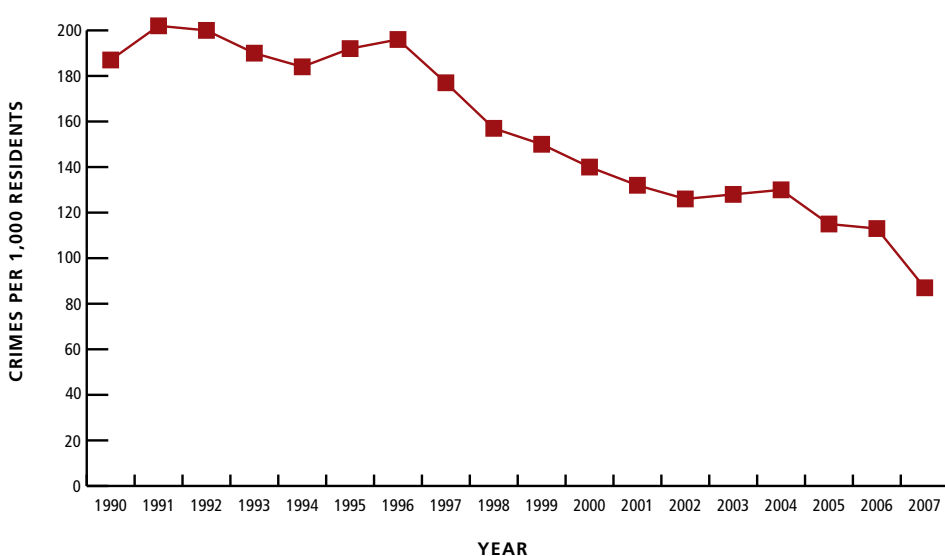
*In one of the largest public funerals Vancouver had ever seen, police line the street creating an honour guard for those mourning the tragic death of Chief Constable Malcolm MacLennan.*

He didn't believe in sending a man in where he would not go himself, so he led the assault armed only with an axe to break down the door. In the hail of bullets that followed, the Chief fell.

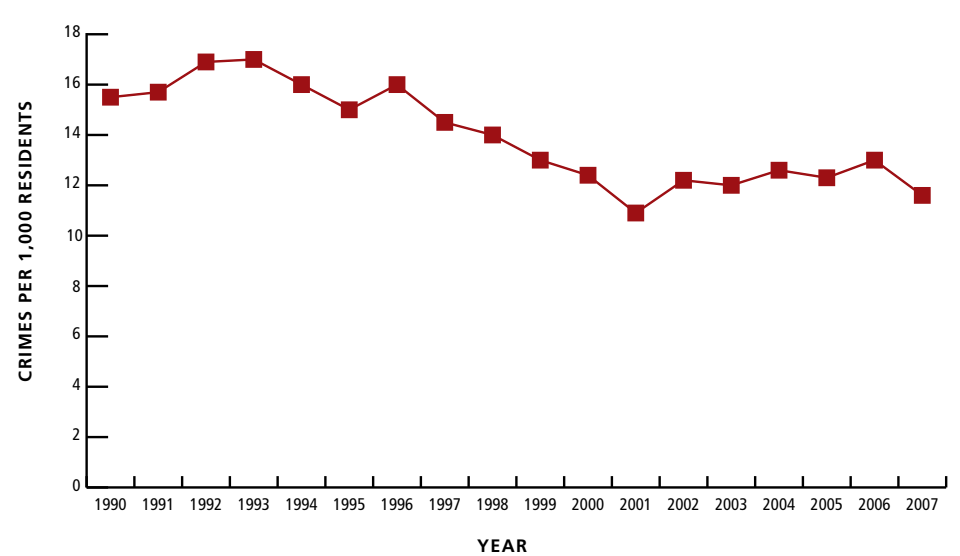
His funeral was attended by his men and thousands of grateful citizens who mourned his passing.

To learn more about this remarkable officer, visit the VPD website at [vpd.ca](http://vpd.ca) or the website of the Vancouver Police Museum. You can also visit the Police Museum in person to see the new multicultural display, "I Only See Blue" which opens in October. ■

### TOTAL CRIME RATE IN VANCOUVER



### VIOLENT CRIME RATE



# STORIES FROM OFFICIAL FILES

## Police Arrest Armed Men in Crowded Restaurant



*Guns seized, no shots are fired*

**GANGS, GUNS AND RESTAURANTS.** They shouldn't go together, but all too often they do.

Just after midnight on a summer night in 2006, Constables Michael Wheeler, Keith Biln and Samantha Jacob were standing outside an east end restaurant when a patron ran up to them and said that he had been confronted by a man in the washroom who pointed a gun at his head.

The officers knew they were facing a dangerous and possibly deadly situation. Their first thoughts were for the safety of the patrons in the crowded restaurant. They knew the gunman was high and that he wasn't alone. He was sitting at a table with five other rowdy males.

While Constable Jacob stood guard at the door, Constables Biln and Wheeler moved in. The man had no intention of going quietly. As he resisted, his coat fell open revealing a gun in his waistband. He tried to grab it, but failed. The three officers held him and his friends until other units arrived.

They recovered a loaded 9mm handgun from the suspect, found a second gun in the booth and a third in a car outside.

For their quick thinking and calm actions in preventing armed drunks from posing further risks to patrons in a crowded restaurant, Constables Michael Wheeler, Keith Biln and Samantha Jacob were awarded the Chief Constable's Unit Citation. ■

*Constables Keith Biln, Samantha Jacob and Michael Wheeler gave armed diners their just desserts.*

## Back in Harness One Last Time *Retired police dog saves a life*

**POLICE OFFICERS KNOW** that there is really no such thing as off-duty. Sometimes there is no such thing as retirement, not for police officers and not even for police dogs. Duty can call at any time.

For the past couple of years, life had been pretty sweet for retired police dog Axel. He lived with his former handler, Sergeant Gord McGuinness, and his family, in their spacious suburban home that backed onto a greenbelt with a river. Days spent chasing the ball in the woods were about as exciting as retired life ever got.

But one afternoon in April all that changed with a frantic knock at the front door.

"Our next door neighbour was standing there in hysterics," said Sergeant McGuinness.

Her husband, who was partially paralyzed from a stroke, had taken too much medication and wandered away. He had been gone for about half an hour and was nowhere to be seen in the neighborhood, which contains a maze of trails that lead to the river. By the time it would take to search all the trails, it might be too late.

"I thought I would take a long shot with Axel. He was a police service dog for the Vancouver Police from 2003 to 2006," said Sergeant McGuinness. "Since retiring he hadn't done any tracking or explosive work, but I knew if he was given the proper triggers he would not have any problem remembering how to do it."

"I ran back to my house and pulled out an old tracking harness and longline. I could immediately tell by Axel's demeanor that he knew something was up."

Once Axel was ready, Sergeant McGuinness gave him the command to track. He shot off toward the river. It was

immediately clear that he had detected the presence of human scent and ground disturbance, and was working odour as he proceeded to track down the footpath that lead to the lower river trail.

"It had been three years since I had run behind a dog that was strong on a track, but the memories flooded back and it felt like I had never stopped working a dog."

Axel tracked through the bush and down towards the river's edge. As Sergeant McGuinness came out from the bushes he could see Axel's tail behind a large log at the edge of the river.

"Axel's tail was wagging rapidly and then suddenly he looked up at me from behind the log with what I can only describe as a smile on his face. I knew that look as, 'Okay, Dad, I found him, now where is my ball?'"

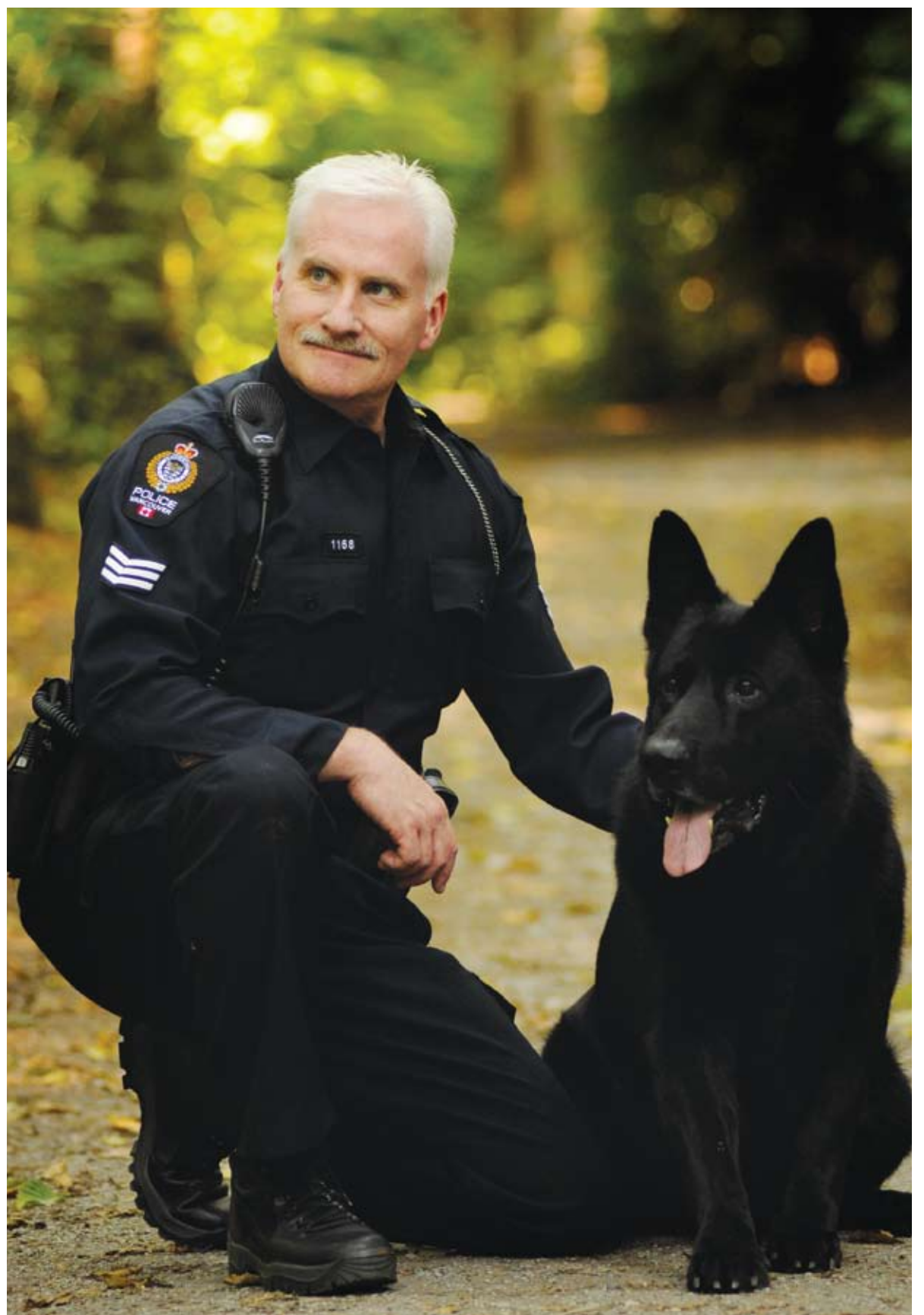
Sergeant McGuinness quickly ran over toward Axel, and as he rounded the back end of the log, he found his neighbour lying unconscious approximately 10 feet from the river.

"I ran over to him and although unconscious he was breathing. I began shaking him and after a few moments he woke up but was very groggy. Once I had him sitting up, I used my cell phone and called his wife to tell her I had found him and that he was okay."

The RCMP had arrived at the house by this time and were directed to the man's location, so they could help carry him to a waiting ambulance.

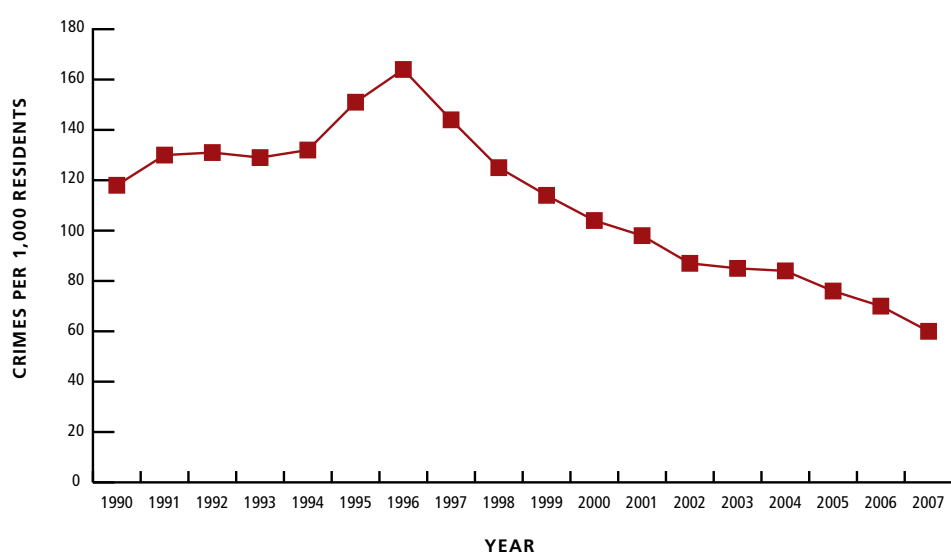
"Axel did well that day, I could not have been prouder of him. In my 17 years as a dog handler, this was the proudest I have ever been of one of my canine partners," said Sergeant McGuinness.

All Axel wanted was to play fetch. ■

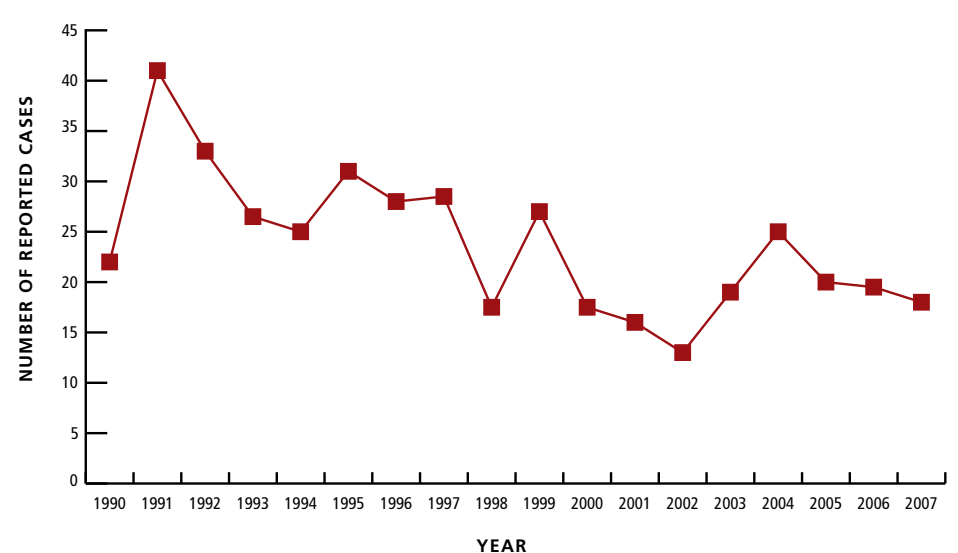


*Sergeant Gord McGuinness with his old partner, retired police dog Axel, sprang into action to come to the rescue one more time.*

### PROPERTY CRIME RATE



### REPORTED HOMICIDES



## FINANCIAL RESULTS

(FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31)

	"2006 (\$1,000)"	"2007 (\$1,000)"	% CHANGE
<b>STAFFING</b>			
Salaries & Benefits	\$131,307	\$140,871	7%
Uniforms & Related Equipment	\$2,376	\$2,900	22%
Travel & Training	\$1,032	\$1,199	16%
<b>TOTAL STAFFING</b>	<b>\$134,715</b>	<b>\$144,970</b>	<b>8%</b>

<b>OPERATING COSTS</b>			
Building & Facilities	\$4,182	\$4,143	-1%
Fleet	\$6,817	\$6,529	-4%
Criminal Investigations	\$3,283	\$1,869	-43%
Legal & Consulting	\$582	\$833	43%
Equipment	\$3,616	\$4,382	21%
Administrative & Overhead Costs	\$8,074	\$7,518	-7%
<b>TOTAL OPERATING COSTS</b>	<b>\$26,554</b>	<b>\$25,274</b>	<b>-5%</b>

<b>REVENUES</b>	<b>(\$1,992)</b>	<b>(\$1,722)</b>	<b>-14%</b>
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$159,277</b>	<b>\$168,522</b>	<b>6%</b>

## CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES

CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES	2006	2007 <sup>1</sup>	2006 CRIME RATE /1,000 POP	2007 CRIME RATE /1,000 POP	% CHANGE
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<b>VIOLENT CRIME</b>	<b>7,971</b>	<b>7,498</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-5.9%</b>
Culpable Homicide	15	19	0.0	0.0	26.7%
Attempted Murder	13	17	0.0	0.0	30.8%
Sexual Offences	528	490	0.9	0.8	-7.2%
Assaults	5,775	5,423	9.5	8.9	-6.1%
Abduction	8	10	0.0	0.0	25.0%
Robbery	1,632	1,539	2.7	2.5	-5.7%

<b>PROPERTY CRIME</b>	<b>49,736</b>	<b>44,310</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>-10.9%</b>
Break & Enter	8,655	7,654	14.3	12.5	-11.6%
Theft of Vehicle	4,339	3,936	7.1	6.4	-9.3%
Theft (Over/Under \$5K)	27,310	23,768	45.0	38.8	-13.0%
Have Stolen Goods	1,507	1,312	2.5	2.1	-12.9%
Fraud	2,160	2,362	3.6	3.9	9.4%
Arson	302	237	0.5	0.4	-21.5%
Mischief (Over/Under \$5K)	5,463	5,041	9.0	8.2	-7.7%

<b>OTHER CRIME</b>	<b>12,230</b>	<b>11,397</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>-6.8%</b>
Prostitution	285	200	0.5	0.3	-29.8%
Gaming and Betting <sup>2</sup>	1	3	0.0	0.0	-
Offensive Weapons	1,611	1,435	2.7	2.3	-10.9%
Other Criminal Code	10,333	9,759	17.0	15.9	-5.6%

<b>DRUGS</b>	<b>5,183</b>	<b>5,034</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>
Heroin	566	589	0.9	1.0	4.1%
Cocaine	2,376	2,231	3.9	3.6	-6.1%
Cannabis	1,638	1,638	2.7	2.7	0.0%
Other Drugs	603	576	1.0	0.9	-4.5%

<b>TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>2,171</b>	<b>2,341</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>7.8%</b>
Dangerous Operation of MV	39	31	0.1	0.1	-20.5%
Impaired Operation of MV	1,778	1,951	2.9	3.2	9.7%
Fail/Refuse Breath/ Blood Sample	167	116	0.3	0.2	-30.5%
Fail to Stop/Remain at Scene	121	139	0.2	0.2	14.9%
Driving while Prohibited	66	104	0.1	0.2	57.6%

<b>TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS</b>	<b>2,637</b>	<b>2,808</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>6.5%</b>
MV - Fatal	20	23	0.0	0.0	15.0%
MV - Non Fatal	1,374	1,212	2.3	2.0	-11.8%
Property Damage	1,243	1,573	2.0	2.6	26.5%

<b>TOTAL INCIDENTS</b>	<b>79,928</b>	<b>73,388</b>	<b>131.7</b>	<b>119.9</b>	<b>-8.2%</b>
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<b>CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
Total	275,154	259,209	453.4	423.6	-5.8%
Dispatched	189,936	195,831	313.0	320.1	3.1%
% Dispatched	69.0%	75.5%			9.4%
Population <sup>3</sup>	606,901	611,869			0.8%

<sup>1</sup> 2007 data run on 2008/05/27

<sup>2</sup> Rate Change not presented for counts less than or equal to 5

<sup>3</sup> Source: BC Stats

These statistics are produced using the "all offence scoring method"  
Note: Small offence numbers may result in large percentage changes

Statistics quoted may differ from last year's report due to ongoing investigations and the timing of when police reports were submitted.



## Message From Mayor SAM SULLIVAN

CHAIR OF THE VANCOUVER POLICE BOARD

2007 will be remembered as a landmark year for the Vancouver Police Board. In addition to publishing a comprehensive five-year Strategic Plan, we chose a new Chief Constable. Chief Jim Chu has done a wonderful job leading the force in his first year on the job. With his leadership, we are very excited about our ability to enhance public safety in the coming years.

Our five-year Strategic Plan provides an overview of how the Department intends to focus its energy and resources to make Vancouver Canada's safest major city. It has already become an essential tool for the Board and it has been instrumental in our successes. Among other things, we are:

- securing historic commitments from City Council for new police officers, equipment and infrastructure
- using innovative strategies to restore public order in the Entertainment District
- on the way to double-digit decreases in property and violent crime compared to 2006
- increasing awareness regarding challenges associated with mental health
- implementing the "Con Air" program to return offenders to their home jurisdictions across Canada
- updating the mandate of community police centres
- working with federal and provincial agencies on issues related to security for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games

While many challenges remain, we look forward to working through them together with our community partners and reporting more progress in the year ahead. It is my hope that this report will give you further insight into the work of the Vancouver Police Department. For more information on the Board's work over the past year, visit the Board's website at [www.vancouverpoliceboard.ca](http://www.vancouverpoliceboard.ca).

### 2007 VANCOUVER POLICE BOARD MEMBERS

Jerry Adams, Dale Parker, Glenn Wong, Mary McNeil, Sam Sullivan, Terry La Liberté and Patti Marfleet.



## Keeping the Neighbourhood Safe

### Block Watch members make it happen

#### AMONG THE WORLD'S CRIME-FIGHTING

duos, they might not have the same status as Batman and Robin or Starsky and Hutch, but to the neighbours of Riley Park, Vicki Morell and her little dog Cooper are just as well known.

Vicki and Cooper are a common sight in their community as they go for regular walks keeping a watchful eye on the neighbourhood and checking anything that might look suspicious.

"One night I saw a car parked in the alley with two people who appeared unconscious," she says. "I walked up to the car checking for blood and saw that the pair was asleep. It didn't look right to me, so I called 911."

Vicki's instincts were right; the pair had just come from a violent home invasion. Police arrived in minutes and safely took the suspects into custody.

For the past seven years, Vicki Morell has been the Block Watch Captain in the 300 block of East 36th Avenue.

"It was easy to start it up," she says. "We have 15 homes and they all signed on."

The residents of Riley Park learned what hundreds of other neighbourhoods in Vancouver have learned, that there are few crime prevention programs more effective than Block Watch. Success stories are legion.

In one community, the odds of a burglary fell from one-in-86 homes to one-in-300. In a mobile home park, property crime calls fell from 46-a-year to none.

Constable Dave Krenz runs the Block Watch program for the VPD, which has about 600 block captains across the city.

"Dave sends me emails regularly that contain news and safety tips that I in turn pass along to our



Block Watch Captain Vicki Morell with her sidekick Cooper know that if it looks suspicious, it probably is.

members," says Vicki. "He told us once about burglars who were knocking on doors in the afternoon, then breaking in when no one answered. His advice to go to the door was invaluable."

Over the years, Vicki's reports of stolen cars that have been abandoned on the street and other

suspicious activities have helped to make her neighbourhood one of the safest in the city, and when it comes to being a crime-fighting duo, that's more than enough for Vicki and Cooper.

To learn more about Block Watch or how you can start a program in your neighbourhood, visit [vpd.ca](http://vpd.ca). ■