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SECOND FRONT



Drugs, kid porn found

Prince George RCMP say they conducted a drug search of a residence at 500 Winnipeg Street on Friday and came across not only drugs, but a large quantity of child pornography. A male resident of Prince George is being held in police custody facing charges of possession of drugs after RCMP found drug paraphernalia, cash, marijuana and illegal mushrooms in the home. Police say the investigation surrounding the discovery of child pornography continues. The man is being held in custody and expected to appear in court this morning.

Officer impersonated

A clerk working at a Quebec Street store phoned police Friday evening to complain that a woman was impersonating a police officer outside the store. The complainant said the woman was introducing herself as an officer and was asking to see people's identification. The woman was described as 5 feet - 3 inches tall, heavy set, wearing a black leather jacket and blond hair. Police say impersonating an officer is not only illegal, but can be extremely dangerous.

Pedestrian hurt

Police say a 40-year-old male was taken to Prince George Regional Hospital Saturday after being struck by a vehicle on Central Street west. The man was crossing the road when he was struck by a vehicle driven by a 52-year-old Prince George man. The 40-year-old received non-life threatening head injuries. Police could not confirm if charges were laid against either men involved.

Assault reported

About 1 p.m. Sunday, an assault was reported to the Quesnel RCMP. Police say the victim, a male resident of Williams Lake, was found outside the rear doors of the Quesnel Hotel. He was taken to Quesnel hospital by ambulance with severe facial injuries. If you have any information regarding this event contact Const. Fuhrman at (250) 992-9211.

Pickup stolen

Police received a complaint that someone had stolen a 1989 red, Chevrolet pickup from the 100 block of Tabor Boulevard Saturday just after 8:30 p.m. Anyone with information regarding this is asked to call CrimeStoppers at 564-8477.

Gun ranges to get new regulations

by PAUL STRICKLAND
Citizen staff

New federal regulations governing shooting ranges are on their way to gun clubs in Prince George and throughout the province, says an official in the attorney general's ministry.

Officers of shooting clubs and firearms ranges may toss out as cancelled provincial guidelines the ministry devised in May, said communications officer Barry Salmon. They were advisory and were issued only as a stop-gap because of continuing delays from the federal government in setting up its rules, he said last week.

Critics from shooting clubs and the Opposition had, in error, taken the advisory provincial guidelines as official. They interpreted

them as being even more stringent than what was called for in the already strict federal firearms act, Salmon said.

"We've taken a lot of heat over this," he said. "It turns out, however, that our guidelines are almost identical to the ones the federal government just sent out."

The provincial guidelines were onerous and likely to drive smaller, volunteer-run shooting ranges out of existence, said Sheldon Clare of Prince George, president of the B.C. Branch of the National Firearms Association.

The B.C. guidelines said berms in back of shooting ranges had to be 30 metres high, and included other requirements more appropriate for Department of National Defence military ranges than volunteer-run shooting

ranges for small sporting arms, he said. The provincial approach to regulating shooting ranges amounts to overkill, especially in view of the ranges' virtually perfect safety records. "Target practice at a shooting range is safer than golfing," Clare said.

The attorney general's ministry developed overly strict guidelines in implementing the federal legislation, said MLA Paul Nettleton (Liberal, Prince George-Omineca). Then Attorney General Ujjal Dosanjh recently called on Ottawa to delay the Dec. 1 implementation deadline for the same regulations his own ministry devised.

"It's a case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing," Nettleton said last week.

Forest minister supports access for value-added firms

by GORDON HOEKSTRA
Citizen Staff

Forest Minister David Zirnheld said he supports the value-added industry's position that it should have free market access to the U.S.

The value-added industry publicly stated its position recently, saying it shouldn't be part of any future quota-based trade agreement because it buys its raw materials without subsidy.

"I think they have a legitimate point, and we won't retreat off that," Zirnheld said in an interview, following an address to the Central Interior Wood Processors Association AGM at the Ramada Hotel.

But Zirnheld said he holds out little hope the Americans will listen, since they've been try-

ing to add more and more value-added products to the current quota agreement.

The softwood lumber agreement ends in April 2001, and Zirnheld said he doesn't support renewing it because it's too restrictive.

He told the association that Canadian lumber producers will be helped by U.S. lumber consumer groups and large buyers like Home Depot. "But the battle might get worse before it gets better," he said.

There's a growing U.S. protectionist sentiment and the Americans have been tightening up their trade laws, so if Canada has to fight another countervail duty, it will be harder to win, he said. The American lumber lobby continues to cry "subsidy, subsidy, subsidy," he said.

Zirnheld reinforced his belief the value-added industry is important in creating jobs, saying the handful of jobs created here and there, adds up.

He advised the local producers to keep moving up the value chain, as the bottom end is not the area they can be the most competitive in, as the major forest companies can do that. Zirnheld also told the association to develop more markets, improve business planning and keep training employees.

B.C. Rail unions vote to strike

B.C. Rail's seven unions voted 84% in favour of strike action in a vote completed Friday, the Council of Trade Unions said in a news release.

In Prince George, the company has a unionized workforce of 380 to 390, according to company spokesman Alan Dever.

Contract talks broke off two weeks ago. B.C. Rail's contract with its unions expired in December 1997.

Union council chair Bob Sharpe said the unions do not want to disrupt B.C. Rail customers or the communities they serve and will

only launch a full strike as a last resort.

Sharpe said the unions have agreed to a three-year wage package of zero, zero and 2%, but the company wants to cut 20% of the union payroll and make changes to their collective agreements.

McDonald's owners earn high honour

Dean and Val O'Connor, who operate six McDonald's franchises in Prince George, earned a major award from McDonald's Restaurants of Canada for outstanding people practices.

The award winners are among 87 franchisees who operate nearly 200

restaurants in Western Canada. "The award for people practices recognizes franchisees who clearly demonstrate an exceptional sense of pride and commitment by both management and crew," said a spokesperson.

Regional-district vote 'not surprising'

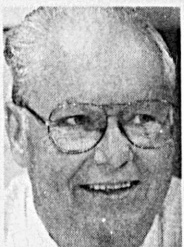
by ARLENE WATSON
Citizen staff

The election of Fraser Fort George Regional District board members Saturday is not packed full of surprises, but is full of promise, said board chair Bob Headrick.

He said the only surprise and disappointment was a low voter turnout. In Headrick's Tabor Lake-Stone Creek area, only 352 votes were cast among about 3,000 eligible voters.

Headrick, who was first elected to the board in 1981, defeated Perry Slump for the Tabor Lake-Stone Creek Area D seat.

Many incumbents will return to the



HEADRICK

Salmon River and Lakes (Area A).

New member Mike Monroe fills the Robson Valley-Canoe (Area H) seat, where incumbent Peter Amyoony didn't run.

board table as a result of the elections, including Erwin Stoll for Willow River-Upper Fraser (Area F), Art Kaehn of Woodpecker-Hixon (Area E), Harvey Clark of Chilako River-Nechako (Area C), Maureen Thompson of

The closest race was in Crooked River-Parsnip (Area G), where challenger Don Callaghan defeated incumbent Terry Burgess by only two votes.

Headrick said being re-elected is gratifying and a message that people are pleased with what the board is doing. He said he's looking forward to working with all the members elected to the board.

"Mike (Monroe) will be a great guy on the board. We have a good bunch of people on the board and no matter who comes we'll work well together."

He said the focus of the new board will be construction projects and funding issues. Members will oversee the

construction of the new FFGRD office and the expansion at Prince George Regional Hospital, scheduled to begin in the spring.

The Bear Lake Community Commission sees a mixture of new and returning members. The commission consists of incumbents John Elmquist and Barry Nilsen and new members Betty Muzzell and Monique Voyer.

Residents approved construction of a community hall, while Miworth residents turned down a vote on fire protection for the community northwest of Prince George.

Hixon Fire Protection Extension was also given approval in a nine to two vote.



Gord Leighton, second from right, celebrates his election to Prince George city council with members of his family, far left, daughter Dianna Vassallo, wife Peggy and son Robert.

Electronic voting meant swift results

by BOB MILLER
Citizen staff

Thanks to the speed and accuracy of electronic voting, anyone with an Internet link on their home computer had election results as fast as they were relayed to city hall after the polls closed at 8 p.m. Saturday.

Two computers and monitors displayed the city's Web page, replacing the election tote board that used to be filled in by poll clerks dozens of times over the course of the night, as ballot boxes were counted and results phoned in. In those days, it wasn't possible to determine election trends or an outcome for hours, as vote counts see-sawed with each poll reporting new totals several times during the night.

Not so this time. A handful of people in the second floor conference room at city hall got their first result at 8:15 p.m. when two of 10 polls reported (there were two advance polls prior to the main vote and eight polls open Saturday).

There was no surprise when Mayor Colin Kinsley pulled ahead of his two mayoral rivals Eugene Fetterly and Michael Cavanagh. With each poll, Kinsley widened the gap, leaving little doubt as to the outcome.

It was different story in the race for eight councillor seats. After numbers for the two polls were entered, the councillor's list, that had up to that point been alphabetical, sud-

denly shifted to put challengers Bruce Strachan, Don Zurowski and Gordon Leighton at the top of the list, followed by incumbent councillor Dan Rogers. Former councillor Don Bassermann, hoping to return to council after losing to Kinsley in the '96 mayoral race, held down fifth spot followed by incumbent councillors Cliff Dezell, Don Grantham and Shirley Gratton.

Except for Rogers and Zurowski climbing to first and second place, it was a pattern that held when the remaining eight polls were factored in.

City clerk Allan Chabot, chief election officer for the city, said the electronic voting machines worked well and for the most part voters accepted the procedure.

Chabot said a number of voters over-voted different sections on the three-section ballot and the Accu-Vote machine spit the ballots back out. Such voters had two options — fill in a new ballot, which Chabot said most voters did, or ask the polling clerk to nullify that section of the ballot.

"Most were pleased with the opportunity to make the correction (on a new ballot) and have their vote counted," he said.

The city expects the four Accu-Vote machines it purchased, bringing electronic voting to Prince George for the first time, to pay for themselves in cost savings this year and in the next two elections. The four machines cost taxpayers \$37,000.

Citizen photo by Brent Braaten

Disaster workshop on agenda

The Red Cross is holding a personal preparedness for disaster workshop Dec. 1 from 7 to 9 p.m. at 1399 Sixth Ave.

"You can either be a victim, believing that disasters occur in other communities, or a survivor, expecting the unexpected and preparing for it. Only then can you concentrate on helping others in your community," the Red Cross said in a release.

If disaster happened mid-week, members of your family could be in different locations: at work, at school or at day care.

How would you meet up if you were evacuated to different locations, the Red Cross asks. Do you know several escape routes from your community, workplace or child's school? What would you need for a 24-hour period or longer if you were not able to go back into your home tonight?

The workshop will review disaster management, emergency planning, reunification, minimizing injury and damage, evacuation, emergency vehicle and survival kits and Y2K specific information.

Call 564-6566 to register. Seminar fee is \$20 including GST.

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