

# PROVINCE

## Police seize tapes

VANCOUVER (CP) — Police officers armed with a search warrant seized videotapes from a city newsroom Wednesday as evidence in an investigation into allegations of police misconduct in the murder trial of Shannon Murrin.

The search of the Vancouver Television newsroom comes two days after RCMP announced Victoria City Police would investigate allegations that Kelowna RCMP failed to disclose statements from a potential defence witness and coached a witness to fabricate evidence.

Alberta police have also been asked to review how Mounties handled the investigation.

## Couple fights charges

VANCOUVER (CP) — Two British Columbians released Wednesday after 19 days in a Mexican jail vowed to stay and fight fraud charges against them.

Vivian Munroe, 72, of Mission, and Bill Fellows, 72, of Campbell River, were allowed to go free after posting about \$14,000 bail each.

One of their lawyers, Eduardo Nolasco, said from La Penita, Mexico, that he is confident all the charges will be dropped when a court hears the case within the next two months.

"We are going to celebrate today, but we are going to continue the struggle," Nolasco said. "Vivian and Bill are not criminals. We are going to show the proof that they did nothing wrong."

## Porn suspect charged

VICTORIA (CP) — A man charged with trying to lure young girls into Internet pornography is a special student assistant in the Greater Victoria school district.

Paul Edward Russell was suspended with pay from his work at Victor Elementary-Secondary School "as soon as the arrest came through," said John Gaipman, district principal in charge of administrative services.

"He remains with pay until there is a board hearing," Gaipman said Wednesday.

Russell was hired by the school district in February 1999 to work with youth with profound developmental disabilities.

## Officer investigated

KAMLOOPS (CP) — A Nelson municipal police officer has been suspended with pay following an assault complaint by a 19-year-old Kamloops woman.

The officer, whose name has not been released, is a longtime member of the Nelson police force.

Kamloops RCMP are investigating the complaint. The 53-year-old man works with the photo radar unit in the west Kootenay region, although he was not on duty when the incident allegedly occurred in Kamloops.

"To say the least, I was extremely concerned when I heard of the allegations," said Chief Const. Ron Brock, with the Nelson municipal police.

## Blasting caps found

SOUTHAM NEWSPAPERS  
DAWSON CREEK — Although no expert on explosives, Kerry Smith has had enough experience with them while in the armed forces to be alarmed by what he found on Tuesday.

Not far from the optometrist office, he found lying on the road about a foot away from the curb, a blasting cap with a primer cord attached.

He gingerly picked it up with two fingers laid on the branch of a nearby tree, and called the police.

All that would be needed, he said, would be a small spark, and there would be an explosion large enough to blow out a tire on a car passing over it.



CP photo

Sulphur coats the ground near the Albion ferry after at least 15 cars of a CP Rail freight train left the railway's main line early Wednesday in Maple Ridge.

## Derailment strands thousands of Lower Mainland commuters

### Southam Newspapers

MAPLE RIDGE — The West Coast Express is confident the commuter train can be back operating today after a broken wheel on a CP Rail car caused a derailment that left thousands of commuters stranded yesterday.

Crews were working last night to clear the debris from an 18-car derailment near Maple Ridge. "We don't know whether we'll be able to get through the spot that was messed up today," said West Coast Express spokesperson Trish Webb. "But we are planning on providing people with a way to get into work tomorrow."

The commuter train uses CP rail lines to move passengers from Mission to Vancouver.

If the line is still blocked near Maple Ridge, buses will be available to take people from the Mission station to the Maple Ridge station where they can catch the commuter train into Vancouver, said Webb.

Much of yesterday's West Coast Express service

was cancelled after the cars full of sulphur run off the tracks at about 3 a.m.

While crews worked to clear the wreckage, the commuter trains were moved down to Vancouver on the CN Rail line south of the Fraser River.

Officials were hoping to run several of yesterday's afternoon commuter trains from Vancouver back to Maple Ridge but had to cancel that service due to delays.

Webb said a number of transit buses were provided to help commuters stuck at their stations in the morning. But many people were forced to make other arrangements such as car pooling.

CP Rail spokesman Steve Morris said he was hopeful at least one of the two main lines could be re-opened by today.

A two-person crew was aboard the CP train at the time of the derailment but no one was injured, said Morris.

He said the cause of the broken steel wheel is under investigation.

## New guides assess students

VANCOUVER (CP) — There is a new yardstick to see how B.C. students are measuring up in reading, writing and math.

The guidelines, which Education Minister Penny Priddy said are the first of their kind in Canada, provide specific examples of student work that meet, fall below or exceed expectations at several grade levels.

By comparing a student's work to the examples, teachers and parents can better determine how a child is doing and where more effort is needed, Priddy told educators Wednesday.

"It is one more tool — because teachers use many tools — for evaluating how students are doing in their class," she said. "(They) show clearly and concretely what the range of student performance is at age and grade levels."

Performance standards are now available for Grades 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 for reading and writing, and for Grades 2, 4, 6 and 8 for math.

Standards for remaining grades are being developed this year.

Debbie Look, the president of the B.C. Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils, said the response among parents is overwhelmingly positive.

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## Cat problem hits Kelowna

### Southam Newspapers

KELOWNA — Fuss Forand is worried that Kelowna is going to the cats. Forand, the manager of the local SP-CA, estimates Kelowna is overrun with 25,000 stray and feral felines.

"There are just too many cats, that's the problem," he said. "We have several colonies in the Kelowna area that we are aware of and that we're working on, but you just don't catch several hundred cats overnight."

Forand said the spring weather has brought a crescendo of kittle complaints — residents are even trapping them and bringing them to his office.

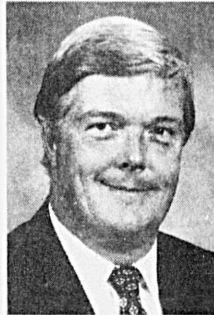
"We get people who routinely bring us cats. They might bring us a dozen or fifteen over a period of a month," he said.

The office handles up to 3,000 cats a year. Many are euthanized.

"We feel that's better than leaving them out to fend for themselves," said Forand.

He cited the spread of disease, fighting and breeding with pets, and the nuisance value of the strays as the chief worries.

## Appointment Spruce Credit Union



Fred Wagner, General Manager

Len Thony, President, Board of Directors, Spruce Credit Union, is pleased to announce the appointment of Fred Wagner as General Manager. He replaces Colin McIntosh, who has retired after 25 years of exemplary service.

Fred brings to Spruce Credit Union his extensive experience in the financial services industry, encompassing banking and the credit union system. A resident of Prince George since 1997, he has come to appreciate the benefits of this community on a personal and professional level.

Spruce Credit Union is community based financial institution with over 8000 members. For almost 50 years, Spruce Credit Union has been committed to providing the highest quality service while meeting the financial needs of its members in the Prince George region.

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## Teen killer's parents defend daughter

VICTORIA (CP) — There is good in the teenaged girl being sentenced today for murdering 14-year-old Reena Virk, says the girl's mother.

In a brief interview with the Victoria Times Colonist, Kelly Ellard's mother suggested her daughter is innocent of the crime she was convicted of last month.

"There is (good)," said Sue Pakos, adding she had no further comment.

Ellard, 17, faces a life sentence with no chance of parole for between five and seven years.

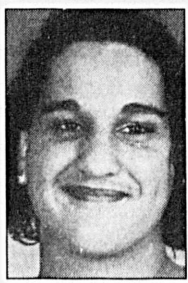
Her parents, who are divorced and remarried, have supported their daughter since she was arrested.

As the jury rendered its verdict last month, Pakos began to sob in court, and said, "this can't be happening."

Virk was beaten twice then drowned in a suburban Victoria waterway on Nov. 14, 1997.

During her trial, witnesses testimony painted a particularly callous picture of Ellard, who some said bragged that she had one foot on Virk's head and smoked a cigarette while Virk lay in the water.

But some friends and neighbours who crossed paths with



REENA VIRK

the petite teen remember her differently.

"She was a nice little girl but there was unrest," said Trudy Madson, who taught Ellard English riding when she was a younger.

Madson said Ellard didn't stand out much and got along with the other kids.

Ellard's lawyer, Adrian Brooks, said his client is intelligent and a talented artist who paints watercolours.

"There's no question she's a kid who can be good and who has many positive things going for her," Brooks said. "Her prospects are bright."

Ellard was arrested a week after Virk's murder but was released under house arrest after a short stint in youth detention.

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### ADVERTISEMENT

## My Conscience Dictates My Political Creed

by Louis J. Matte

**I refuse to trade my principles and freedom for political promises and government handouts.**

**I choose to struggle against evil and refuse to sell my soul for monetary gain or degrading pleasures.** I will not be politically bribed with taxpayers dollars for a guaranteed livelihood and ignore the social and economic consequences of the government's total agenda.

**I prefer the thrill of fulfillment to the stale realm of a Socialist or Liberal Utopia.** I will not cover before the power of political opportunists nor yield to their ultimatums and threats. It is my heritage to be proud of my principles, to stand erect and unafraid to defend them and to profess my belief in God and His Ten Commandments as the basis for just laws, social harmony and the joys of living.

**I believe that truth and social justice is more important than short-term political or economic gain.** I oppose the Liberal and NDP social engineering that has plagued our society and degraded family life ever since Pierre Trudeau's Liberals (with Ed Broadbent's NDP support) decriminalized killing the pre-born (abortion) and legalized homosexual behavior (ie. sodomy). They have brought in permissive laws which ridicule the time-honored value of our forefathers based on the Ten Commandments.

**I oppose the Liberal and NDP so-called**

**"politically correct" agenda and will never endorse sexual perversions and dignify it with the Liberal label "alternative lifestyle" or "sexual orientation".** Instead, I will call it by its proper label, "sodomy."

**I believe marriage was instituted for the loving relationship between opposite sexes for the procreation and raising of children in a committed family relationship** for the benefit of the children and society in general. I oppose Liberal and NDP policies which reflect the gay and lesbian agenda. They have legislated homosexuals rights to adopting children, and same-sex perverted behavior is rewarded with spousal benefits at the taxpayers' expense. **I also object to having my tax dollars being used by the Liberals and NDP to fund birth control, abortions, radical feminists, homosexual lobby groups, Planned Parenthood and sex change operations.**

I believe that freedom must be accompanied by responsibility. **Freedom of Expression must be restricted** so that profanity, blasphemy, sodomy, pornography, etc., do not pollute our airwaves, classrooms, libraries and newsstands. **Those who scandalize and corrupt our youth would be better off to have a "mill stone" tied around their necks and dropped to the bottom of the sea,** just as Jesus Christ has said.

**I believe that Chrétien's Canadian Charter of Rights is badly flawed. His appointed liberal judges have made it a**

**Charter of Criminal Rights by imposing their Liberal social agenda** which destroys good laws and implements unlegislated new ones for the benefit of warped special interest groups. **I believe that we need to reform the judicial system** so that judges are appointed and held accountable as proposed by Reform BC. **Families and communities must be protected** from the often abusive interpretation made by proactive, politically-appointed judges, bureaucrats and human rights commissions.

**I will never compromise my principles and become a Liberal Party supporter in order to defeat their NDP brothers.**

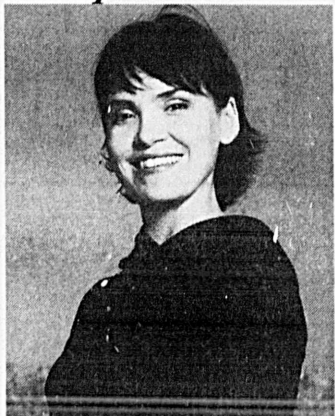
**I challenge all conscientious citizens who endorse my creed to join with me and to not be afraid to make your voices publicly heard.** We all know that evil grows when good people won't get involved for fear of being criticized if they go against the flow of media-driven public opinion. **Why compromise your principles and vote Liberal to defeat the NDP!** Do the right thing and support a party or candidate with the courage to stand up for truth, justice and time-honored values. Fax me at 563-0929. I suggest that you fax or send a copy of this to all our acquaintances and perhaps poster it on your bulletin board. If you have time, take a poll of your employees - ie agree, or disagree and fax me the results. Thanks.

(signed) Louis J. Matte

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