

Chief's verbal for October 29, 2018

Good afternoon,

Shootings

We are investigating two shootings that happened this morning in the City's core. The first occurred on Carruthers Ave. at about 3:45 am and resulted in the homicide of a man in his twenties. The second occurred at about 7:30 a.m. on Gilmour Ave. near Percy. This activity is concerning to us all. Over the last few months we have refocused our efforts across the service on gun violence suppression and we have seen an impact on the number of shootings as compared to the first few months of the year. But there are still too many. Our Frontline and our covert units will continue to focus on known offenders.

We know there is often a link between gun violence and drug trafficking. Just last week, our Drug Unit, Tactical Unit, Guns and Gangs Unit, and PIVOT Team executed several search warrants. Their efforts resulted in the seizure of 4.5 kilos of cocaine, \$125,000 in cash and a semi-automatic handgun. Four people were charged with trafficking offences, the illegal possession of a firearm, and possession of proceeds of crime. This year we have already seized almost 50 guns and many more investigations are underway.

Pittsburgh

I want to recognize the tragedy that occurred in Pittsburgh this past weekend. Eleven people were shot and killed and many more were injured including four police officers who came to stop the gunman. It's important we all denounce this act of hate. These types of acts are despicable, but they can occur anywhere. What happened in Pittsburgh is a sad reminder of our need as a community and as police to be vigilant and ready to respond. It also highlights the importance of reporting all acts of hate and intolerance. I have sent messages of support to Pittsburgh's Police Chief on behalf of our service.

We recognize the local impact of this tragedy and we have reached out to our local Jewish community. I attended the Soloway Jewish Community Centre to ensure they know they have our support. As well we have increased our presence at important religious institutions locally.

Cannabis

The past few months have been a busy time for our Service as we moved to ensure the safety of our roads after the implementation of the new cannabis legislation. Our Traffic Services team has been instrumental in getting the word out about the dangers of driving while high, both online through social media accounts, and by interacting with drivers on our city's streets. On the first day of the legalization of marijuana, they were out conducting spot checks. More than 2,900 vehicles were stopped during an October 18 MEGARIDE check. Another 1,640 drivers were stopped during road checks on October 17, 19 and 20. The RIDE programs did not result in any impaired charges. We hope that this trend means that people are hearing the message.

It's important that as we adjust to the new legislation, that we remain focused about keeping our roads safe for all users. Other major jurisdictions that legalized cannabis have seen an increase in collisions on their roads and we are working hard to buck that trend here through education and enforcement.

Human Trafficking Unit

Our Human Trafficking Unit rescued two Ottawa-area women from their traffickers earlier last week. As a result of a month-long investigation, the unit helped to get these women out of a trade they had been trapped in for years. PIVOT members also assisted with the investigation in locating and arresting one of the traffickers. The unit continues to work with other police services to share information and targets. Investigators were recently part of a national initiative called Northern Spotlight, where seven women were identified provincially, and the OPS assisted with the rescue of three. This annual program combines the efforts of multiple police services and seeks out those victims of the human trafficking trade by offering them exit strategies and support services.

Gala

I also want to thank all the members who helped organized the 9th Annual OPS Gala that was held this past weekend. I especially want to thank our main speaker Paul Dewar on his inspirational message. It was a great night that helped raise a great deal of money for three charities.

Care, compassion, professionalism

I would like to wrap up with two examples of the work our officers do that often go unnoticed. In August, Constables Michelle Berkvens and James Killeen responded to a situation where a refugee family that had travelled from Montreal to Ottawa but had no where to stay and very limited funds. The family, a woman and her three young

children, were stranded and it was late at night. Constables Berkvens and Killeen tried to find the family a shelter to stay in but were unable to locate any place. Then, out of their own pockets, they rented the family a room at a local motel to ensure they had a place to stay and could be connected with social services in the morning. The next day the family was able to get the help they needed. We only learned of the matter after the YMCA contacted us to thank the officers.

Another example of the impact our officers have from a letter we recently received. "I just wanted to send a note of gratitude to Constables Shane Gregan and Kellan Moore who attended my call. Their presence helped my sisters and I get out of an abusive situation peacefully. I know they were just doing their job but I wanted to send a note to say thank you to the constables, and the Ottawa Police for their training, assistance, professionalism and also sensitivity. It was the first time I felt safe enough to be assertive and establish boundaries with (this person) who has been abusive to me for my entire life. That was transformative for me. I finally feel like I have regained some power. Thank you for being there and helping me do that."

That is my verbal update.