



2010 CHIEF CONSTABLE COMMENDATIONS CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

AWARDS



VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
Beyond the Call



When they heard the screams coming from a woman on the street who was being robbed by a thug with a knife, they rushed in. The thief ran off as they approached. For many people, that would have been the end of the story, but this brave duo decided to give chase - Ms. Whitcomb in her car and Mr. Wickson by foot. They both called 911 and gave a detailed description of the man and his movements.

At one point, the man ran up to Ms. Whitcomb's car and put his head through the open window. She sped away as he ran after her. Despite her close call, she returned to the victim and comforted her until police arrived.

Meanwhile, Mr. Wickson continued the chase on foot until he saw the man get in a car and drive away. He immediately called in the plate number. Police were able to arrest a suspect who was wanted in connection with a number of other robberies.

Because of their outstanding courage and civil character, Ellen Whitcomb and Mark Wickson are awarded the Vancouver Police Board's highest recognition of civilian bravery, the Certificate of Merit.

4. – MR. ARIA VAZIRY

Imagine you are walking along a downtown street when you see police running after a man who refuses to obey their shouts for him to stop. You don't know what the man may have done or whether he is high on drugs or armed to the teeth. Then imagine what you would do as he approaches.

If you are Aria Vaziry, you yell to the police, "I'll get him," and you join the chase.

Without regard for his personal safety, Mr. Vaziry sprinted after the man and grabbed him so police could make the arrest. Even though there were many other bystanders and witnesses at the time, Mr.

Vaziry was the only citizen to join the fray. He had no way of knowing at the time that he had intercepted a man who was fleeing from a hysterical victim of a sexual assault. Without Mr. Vaziry's intervention, the suspect may have escaped.

For his courage and outstanding sense of civic duty, Mr. Aria Vaziry receives the highest award for civilian bravery from the Vancouver Police Board, the Certificate of Merit.

5. – MR. BRUCE POOLE

When a police officer is in trouble, there is always hope that in any crowd of civilian witnesses, someone will emerge to provide a helping hand.

On July 7, 2009, Sergeant Matt Harty needed help. He had confronted a man in an alley who was causing a disturbance. Sergeant Harty had no way of knowing at the time that the man was high on rock cocaine and had a record of engaging police in violent struggles.

During his arrest the man fought, displaying extraordinary strength and attempting to reach his waistband as though he had a concealed weapon. As the pair struggled, passerby Bruce Poole rushed forward to help. With his assistance, Sergeant Harty was able to call other officers to the scene.

The suspect later told police, "I was going to keep fighting until more police came and killed me."

For unselfishly putting himself in harm's way by rushing to assist a police officer, Mr. Bruce Poole is awarded the Vancouver Police Board's highest award for civilian bravery, the Certificate of Merit.

again called 911 and was handed to negotiators. He told them he had a shotgun levelled at the door and would have killed anyone who came through it. After two tense hours he surrendered without further incident or injury.

For their outstanding skill and judgement, the officers who responded to this call, including Inspector Tony Zanatta, Sergeant Kris Wrathall, Constables Aaron Kazuta, Kal Penner, Brent Derksen, Andrew Ramage, Dan Ames, Trish Peck, Sam Primerano, Christian Galbraith, Wade Rodrigue, Michael Wagar, Ryan Visser and police dog Blade, are awarded the Chief Constable's Unit Citation.

5. – PROJECT REBELLION

There was a time in our city, not so long ago, that gang shootings and killings were a weekly occurrence. The public and the VPD wanted that to end and to end quickly. Project Rebellion was the answer.

For months a team of tireless investigators combined high-tech tactics with old-fashioned police work to suppress the violence and get the gangsters off the street and behind bars. Their efforts were truly impressive.

They accumulated enough evidence to charge 28 gangsters with 228 criminal offences. As a result, the deadly Sanghera gang has been functionally dismantled.

Shooting incidents among the gangs went from 60 during the two years prior to the Project to zero within two weeks of Rebellion's inception. All gun-related suspects were taken off the streets and kept in jail.

The success of Project Rebellion is directly due to the dedication, imagination and tenacity of the men and women of the Investigative Team and support staff: Inspector Mike Porteous, Staff Sergeant Mike Serr, Sergeants Dale Weidman, Ike Isaksson, Greg Meyerhoff, Fiona Wilson-Bates, Mark Bragagnolo,

Corporal Stan Cratchley, Detective Constables Lisa Byrne, Peter Alfred, Craig Bentley, Jason Chan, Don Coghill, Besnik Dobreci, Mike Heard, Tanya Leboutillier, Christian Lowe, Eugene Lum, Ryan Masales, Graham Orlick, Dawn Richards, Matt Smart, Jean-Pierre St Amant, Brandon Steele, Paulina Vegt, Christine Wohlleben, Dennis Wong, Carla Young, Paul McNamara, Constable Courtney Cordrey, Abbotsford Constables Vic Gamboa, Tony Herbert, CFSEU Detective Terry Murphy, and Civilians Kyle Hearfield, Mark Langham, Sara Lee, and Oonagh Tournier.

They are jointly awarded the Chief Constable's Unit Citation.

CHIEF CONSTABLE'S COMMENDATIONS

1. – CONSTABLE LISA BYRNE

Much has been written about the success of Project Rebellion, which took many of the most violent gangsters in the city off our streets. It led to the dismantling of the Sanghera gang, with 28 members charged with 228 offenses.

Coordinating the files on a project of this scope is a staggering task, and if not done correctly could destroy any chances of convictions. Detective Constable Lisa Byrne was determined that would never happen.

She personally handled and disclosed 121,000 intercepted communications and more than 700,000 pages of information for Crown Counsel. She worked six days a week, up to 20 hours a day for months. Crown Counsel commended her for her organization, knowledge, diplomacy and tireless work ethic. Her accomplishments led to her being named Police Officer of the Year.

For her outstanding efforts that have made Vancouver a safer place for everyone, Detective Constable Lisa Byrne is awarded the Chief Constable's Commendation.

2. – CONSTABLE ROGER RAI

The Vancouver Police Department is a strong advocate of community policing built on contact and communication with the residents of those communities.

Recent surges in gang violence in the Indo-Canadian community, along with ongoing property crime and domestic violence on the South Slope area, made police outreach to this community even more urgent.

Constable Roger Rai proposed a VPD drop-in centre at the Ross Street Temple, which evolved into the Khalsa Diwan Community Policing Office in partnership with the VPD, the Khalsa Diwan Society and the South Vancouver Community Policing Centre. His efforts and his personal involvement led to increasing awareness and a reduction in violent crime and property crime.

For the long-lasting relationships that Constable Rai has established with this community and the leadership he has shown in bringing his idea to fruition, Constable Roger Rai is awarded the Chief Constable's Commendation.

3. – DETECTIVE CONSTABLE TORSTEN SCHRODER

Not all police work involves rescues from muddy waters or burning buildings. Good old-fashioned police work involves diligence and sustained effort that results in arrests and writing reports. Constables Eric Davis and Jennifer Antonel do that better than most.

On average, in a year, a patrol officer averages about 20 new charges and writes about 109 general

occurrence reports. In 2006, these partners were involved in 106 new charges and wrote 350 reports. It is likely when the 2007 results are tallied they will be even higher.

With this award, the department hopes to send a clear message to all members that relentless follow-up and arresting those who commit crimes in our city will always be worthy of recognition and celebration. Constables Eric Davis and Jennifer Antonel are awarded the Chief Constable's Commendation

2. - DETECTIVE CONSTABLE CHRIS GRAHAM

Those who work in the field of drug abuse prevention for youth know that nothing works better than youth mentoring youth. But someone has to identify potential mentors and provide them with the skills and knowledge to inspire others.

For the past 12 years, at the VPD, that person has been Detective Constable Chris Graham.

In 1998, he was asked to assist the Red Deer RCMP, who were working with the Western Hockey League Red Deer Rebels on a drug education program for community youth. The success of that program led to requests from other departments for the same assistance when their teams came to Vancouver.

He made it possible for visiting players to meet and speak with substance abusers in the Downtown Eastside, then tour venues such as the Marine Squad, Children's Hospital and the Vancouver Police Museum. When the players returned home, they were able to give presentations at schools to inspire a healthy and drug-free lifestyle.

Over the years, his selfless efforts on his own time have led to the Vancouver Giants Drug Education Program which he dubbed Project Stay on Side.

For his dedication and unwavering commitment to

