CCOPA NEWS Summer 2026

For Citizens On Patrol and Crime Watch Volunteers



We also want to recognize an important honour received this year. CRCOPA was recognized by the **Minister of Public Safety of New Brunswick**, following nomination by RCMP leadership. That recognition reflects the work and dedication of this entire organization.

On behalf of the Board, thank you to all of our members, volunteers, and RCMP partners for your continued support, commitment, and service to our communities in Moncton, Riverview, and Dieppe.

Chuck Rouse
President, CRCOPA

Human Trafficking Training by Truckers Against Trafficking

This was forwarded by Ken Casey and the Nova Scotia group. It is, as it says, providing 5 modules of online learning on the everlasting problem of human trafficking.

A lot of what we seem to be talking about these days are human related, whether human trafficking as this article or extortion of the younger population who further can be involved in "sextortion" . Interesting that Crime Stoppers Canada has several campaigns out in the public on the latter at this time.

The TAT site, at le@tatnonprofit.org , is complete with 5 modules that individuals can work through to learn more on this topic. The modules are a great way to learn a little more about the topic and will teach the basics on how to identify the interaction and the importance of the trucking industry in combating the problem. Ken reports that "RCMP H Division has arranged for COP Volunteers in Nova Scotia to have access to the online TAT Human Trafficking Training Program. Each module concludes with a test and a certificate with credits for completion. The objective of the program is to help our volunteers understand and recognize the signs of human trafficking along with how and where to report it and some may not be applicable."

South Peace District Crime Prevention Association – spelled SUCCESS!

A major accomplishment was the successful delivery of the South Peace Community Crime Prevention (SPDCPA) Symposium April 2026, attended by more than 70 participants from across Northeast British Columbia including Fort St John COPS, Saulteau First Nations and volunteers from our own COPS group, Rural Crime Watch and Speed Watch. The symposium featured presentations from Sergeant Shawn Peddle (Dawson Creek RCMP), Sergeant Wahnese Antonioni-Stevens (Chetwynd RCMP), Kelly Young (BC Hydro), Gill Millam (Executive Director, BC Crime Stoppers), Corporal Dan Cloutier and Brodie Nesjan (RCMP Police Dog Services and Drone Operations), Conservation Officers Rob Groeger and Kevin Mayowski, Tracey Hoffman (ICBC Road Safety Coordinator), and industry security representatives Jesse Evanshen (Shell Canada) and Darren Traichevich (Ovintiv). The event strengthened regional collaboration and provided valuable education on emerging crime trends, infrastructure security, policing technology, fraud prevention, road safety, and rural crime reduction.

The group also hosted their annual golf tournament in May where part of the funds raised went to Northern BC Crime Stoppers. The Crime Stoppers has recently found new life and the donation to Crime Stoppers is a huge benefit in getting the word out in the larger community.

They also hosted a Seniors Fraud & Scam Prevention Presentation with Dawson Creek Better at Home. Speakers from the Dawson Creek RCMP and Lakeview Credit Union joined us. The Better at Home is a program that provides non-medical services to seniors to assist them to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. Seniors 65 and older, living independently in Dawson Creek can contact Better at Home to find out more and to apply for services. A great job of reaching out in the community.



Left to right is Sgt. Peddle, RCMP Dawson Creek, Kyle MacDonald, VP SPDCPA,

Sgt. Antonioni-Stevens, Detachment Commander Chetwynd detachment.



Left to right is Kyle MacDonald, Cst Anna LeGrand, Dawson Creek RCMP, Layne Lajeunesse, Lakeview Credit Union, John Vetter, President SPDCPA, and Greg Apolonio, City Councillor Dawson Creek



Interior view of the conference area and some of the delegates.



Seated on stage are Kyle MacDonald, Sgt. Antonioni-Stevens, and Sgt. Peddle



Left to right is Kyle MacDonald from SPDCPA and Ron Polillo, vice president Northern BC Crime Stoppers accepting donation.



John Vetter, Chairperson South Peace District Crime Prevention Association and CCOPA President Bev Salomons
as Bev travelled from BC to her home in Alberta. 2026.

Spotlight – Smithers, BC Citizens on Patrol

In response to community concerns and an escalation in property crime, Lorne Benson said he reorganized Smithers Citizens on Patrol in 2022.

Benson, a former three-term councillor born and raised in Smithers, was involved when the volunteer-run group launched in the late 1990s following problems with vandalism.

Now he said, issues related to COVID and social distancing have caused displacement, while drugs and mental health are taking a devastating toll.

"It's a really sad thing to see," Benson said in an interview. "There's been more and more people pushed to the margins and the manifestation of that in this community is like what you see in most communities."

"It's kind of sad, disheartening to see the town sort of sliding away," said John McEwen, who feels it's time to give back.

McEwen, 73, is a lifelong Smithers resident and one of a handful of volunteers who cruise the streets after dark, looking for suspicious activity and reporting any crimes to police.

"I wish I could do more, but you only can do so much," McEwen told Global News.

"It's pretty tough to see your day-to-day neighbours start to suffer," volunteer Sharon Eastabrook said.

Eastabrook said the hardest part of trying to make a difference in her community is seeing the people she knows or has known.

"You see the drug addiction," she told Global News. "Recently, there was a young lady who passed away who used to be in my living room hanging out with my kids."

"It's heartbreaking," said an emotional McEwen. "I love this town and I have very fond memories of years ago – some of them are starting to slide away and it hurts to see that happen."

By Kristen Robinson Global News
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Ed. Note: **Smithers** is a town in northwestern British Columbia, approximately halfway between Prince George and Prince Rupert. With a population of 5,378 in 2021, Smithers provides service coverage for most of the Bulkley Valley.

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