

Bodies of fugitive Canadian murder suspects discovered

By **ROB GILLIES**
Associated Press

TORONTO — Canadian police said Wednesday they believe two fugitives suspected of killing a North Carolina woman and her Australian boyfriend as well as another man have been found dead in dense brush in northern Manitoba.

Authorities located two male bodies and are confident they are 19-year-old Kam McLeod and 18-year-old Bryer Schmegelsky, said Royal Canadian Mounted Police Assistant Commissioner Jane MacLatchy. An autopsy will confirm their identities and causes of death.

Critical evidence found last week when police discovered items directly linked to the suspects on the shoreline of the Nelson River helped locate the bodies, MacLatchy said.

The two bodies were located less than a mile from where the items were found and about 5.6 miles from where they left a burnt-out vehicle on July 22.

“We are confident that these are the bodies of the two suspects wanted in connection with the homicides in British Columbia,” MacLatchy said.

McLeod and Schmegelsky were charged with second-degree murder in the death of Leonard Dyck, a University of British Columbia lecturer whose body was found July 19 along a highway in British Columbia.

They were also suspects in the fatal shootings of Australian Lucas Fowler



Darryl Dyck/Canadian Press

Security camera images of fugitives Kam McLeod and Bryer Schmegelsky.

and Chynna Deese of Charlotte, North Carolina, whose bodies were found July 15 along the Alaska Highway about 300 miles from where Dyck was killed.

A manhunt for the pair had spread across three provinces. The suspects had not been seen since the burnt-out car was found on July 22.

The bodies were found near Gillam, Manitoba — more than 2,000 miles from northern British Columbia.

Police had said Tuesday they were investigating all possibilities, including that they might have drowned.

A police helicopter initially spotted a damaged boat along the Nelson River last week and a follow-up search in the area uncovered the items directly linked to the two in what MacLatchy described as “very tough terrain.”

MacLatchy said there is a sense of relief for families of the victims involved and the communities in the area.

“It’s huge to be able to

hopefully give some people the opportunity to exhale and to hopefully go back to being normal and not be afraid of who is out in the woods,” she said.

Deese’s brother, British Deese, said the family needed time to process the news that the suspects’ bodies were apparently found.

“We are speechless,” British Deese said in a text message, declining further comment.

The separate discoveries of three bodies and burning cars shook rural northern British Columbia and Manitoba.

Schmegelsky’s father, Alan Schmegelsky, said last month that he expected the nationwide manhunt to end in the death of his son, who he said was on “a suicide mission.”

McLeod and Schmegelsky grew up together on Vancouver Island and worked together at a local Walmart before they set off together on what their parents thought was a trip to

Yukon for work.

McLeod and Schmegelsky themselves were originally considered missing persons and only became suspects later.

Police were investigating a photograph of Nazi paraphernalia allegedly sent online by one of the suspects. Schmegelsky allegedly sent photographs of a swastika armband and a Hitler Youth knife to an online friend on the video-game network Steam.

Alan Schmegelsky had said his son took him to an army surplus store about eight months ago in his small Vancouver Island hometown of Port Alberni, where his son was excited about the Nazi artifacts.

Alan Schmegelsky said he didn’t believe that his son identified as a neo-Nazi, but that he did think the memorabilia was “cool.”

Fowler and Deese were found shot dead along the Alaska Highway near Liard Hot Springs, British Columbia.

Fowler, the son of a chief inspector with the New South Wales Police Department, was living in British Columbia and Deese was visiting him.

The couple had met at a hostel in Croatia and their romance blossomed as they adventured across the U.S., Mexico, Peru and elsewhere, the woman’s older brother said.

British Deese said the couple was on a trip to visit Canadian national parks when they were killed. He said the family believes they must have had engine trouble in their van.

Hotel: Knowledge of the tank was lost during change in ownership

Continued from Page A1

reimbursing the federal government for all of its response costs.”

Part of a crumbling dock next to the hotel collapsed early last year, puncturing a fuel storage tank underneath.

The Coast Guard oversaw a cleanup costing nearly \$1 million, including the placement of containment booms around the spill, skimmers, vacuum trucks and the removal of the tank. The Department of State Lands has also filed a claim of at least \$1 million against the hotel and estate for the cleanup of the dock.

The hotel’s management has denied any prior knowledge of the tank,

installed in the 1920s for storing boiler-heating oil.

Jacob, who died last year, bought the property from the Port of Astoria in 1999 to develop the boutique hotel on the site of the former Union Fishermen’s Cooperative Packing Co. and a Bumble Bee tuna cannery. Don West, general manager of the Cannery Pier, has said knowledge of the tank was lost during the change in ownership.

The Cannery Pier is under contract to be sold to Vesta Hospitality of Vancouver, Washington. The sale depends on the hotel and estate resolving state and federal claims. Thane Tienson, an attorney for the hotel, has said it is also close to a settlement on the state claim.

Gearhart: Bowman said he hopes his letter sends a message

Continued from Page A1

said this is the second time the dog has bit someone.

In his letter to Brown, Bowman wrote that “law enforcement investigations conducted by my department will not be influenced by political members of our City Council. We base our cases on facts and what can be proven in a court of law.”

Bowman wrote that he was not alleging official misconduct, but described Smith as “just grossly wrong in his approach.”

Bowman said he hopes his letter sends a message to city councilors.

“When the investigation is done, if they want to bring it up at council meetings or whatever they want to do, then that’s fine,” he said. “I thought it was inappropriate and I wanted the mayor to know and I wanted everybody else to know ... this isn’t the city of Portland where the mayor is in charge of the police department and he gets to interfere.”

Bowman believes there needs to be a clear separation of duties.

“Police departments should not be politically run, as we can see on the news how bad that turns out,” he said.

Pot rule: Would allow for certain exceptions

Continued from Page A1

“Obviously if somebody is flashing their vape pen or whatever around and they’re clearly ingesting (marijuana) obviously then, I think, you could cite them,” she said.

City Councilor Tom Brownson called the rule “one of those funny kind of slippery slope-y kinds of things.” If Spalding could point to specific instances where the possession of marijuana was a growing problem in city parks, Brownson said he could be convinced the city needs a new rule.

But right now, he said, “I don’t buy it.”

Other councilors and residents worried the rule would

unfairly target specific populations, such as the homeless, who carry all their possessions with them. Spalding assured them that this was not the intent.

“I think what we’re all struggling with, chief, is trying to understand what problem we’re trying to solve with this,” City Councilor Roger Rocka said.

The City Council asked Spalding to return with specific examples of marijuana-related problems in city parks. The council will revisit the rule modification at a future meeting.

With less debate, city councilors unanimously agreed to hold a first reading to modify an ordinance

regarding public consumption of alcohol.

Spalding pointed to a marked increase in public intoxication and people drinking in public. The modified rule, which would apply citywide, would make it illegal to possess an open container of alcohol in public locations — a rule some of the city councilors thought was already in place.

The rule would allow for certain exceptions, for example, at “movie in the park” events where beer is sold as a concession.

As city rules stand now, police officers can only cite someone if they witness the person drinking from an open alcohol container.

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