

## Local News

# Cross of Valour decision borne by PM:

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Governor General Michaëlle Jean says it's the prime minister's responsibility to change the rules to allow a slain Cobourg police officer to be honoured with the Cross of Valour.

Guarded optimism was the feeling among proponents of the award for Constable Chris Garrett after two meetings in Ottawa Monday. President of the Canadian Police Association, Tony Cannavino, said Monday's was a "very productive meeting."

The meeting included the governor general and members of her staff as well as Mr. Cannavino, Acting Cobourg Police Chief Paul Sweet, York Regional Police Chief Armand LaBarge, chair of the decoration committee for the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police Joel Cheburt, and President of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, Stephen Chabot.

Since an online petition was started a few weeks ago, nearly 30,000 people have supported awarding the Cross of Valour to Constable Garrett, who was murdered in the line of duty in May 2004. But due to a time limitation, the Governor General's office turned down the nomination, made by Port Hope Police Sergeant Darren Strongman who was also in Ottawa Monday.

Mr. Cannavino said, "The problem right now is she (the Governor General) had discussions with the Prime Minister and she doesn't have the



PHOTO BY PETE FISHER

Talking to the media in Ottawa Monday about getting the Cross of Valour awarded posthumously to Cobourg Police Const. Chris Garrett are, from left, Acting Cobourg Police Chief Paul Sweet, Stephen Chabot of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, Tony Cannavino of the Canadian Police Association and Armand LaBarge of York Regional Police.

authority to change the regulations (which state the nomination must be made within two years of the act of valour). It is under the Prime Minister's authority."

Police officers from across the country are pushing to have the two-year deadline changed, not only for Constable Garrett's case, but for others cases in the future

that may be delayed because of trial proceedings.

"We have to push and we're going to make sure it doesn't happen in the future. Valour has not time limit, we all know that."

To protect the rights of his accused killer, Troy Davey, Constable Garrett's nomination had to wait until after his trial concluded, in February of this

year — two years and nine months after Constable Garrett's death.

"For future cases, let's not put a simple regulation that stops that," Mr. Cannavino recommends.

During the meeting with the Governor General, Mr. Cannavino said she agreed, "sometimes regulations after a certain

## Enter hospital via Chris Garrett Way

It's Chris Garrett Way now. The main entranceway to Northumberland Hills Hospital will honour the memory of Cobourg Police Constable Chris Garrett. The signs will be up next spring.

Local businessman and community benefactor Ken Goodwin donated \$250,000 to the Northumberland Hills Hospital Foundation for hospital equipment needs. To recognize the gift, and to honour Mr. Goodwin's wishes, the hospital is naming the roadway from

DePalma Drive to the main entrance Chris Garrett Way.

Constable Garrett was a 13-year veteran of the Cobourg Police Service when he was murdered in the line of duty May 15, 2004.

"Chris was just a great guy," Mr. Goodwin, owner of Fisher's Foodland, Division Street in Cobourg, said Monday. "I got to know Chris quite well during his time on the Cobourg police force."

"We would often talk when he came into my store and I always looked forward to these visits. I liked and respected him."

"I also know that he loved his work and he loved this town. This is one way that I can recognize Chris within the community."

Expanding on his decision to recognize Constable Garrett through a donation to the hospital foundation, Mr. Goodwin added: "I've always been a strong supporter of our



PHOTO BY MANDY MARTIN

**\$250,000 donor:** Ken Goodwin, left, and Bob MacCoubrey, past chair of the Northumberland Hills Hospital Foundation, stand Monday on the newly named Chris Garrett Way.

local police. I also feel the hospital plays a pivotal role in the community.

"It just made sense to me to honour Chris's memory with this

gift to the Northumberland Hills Hospital."

"This is a lovely gesture in memory of Chris. We're all for it," Evelyn Garrett, Chris

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