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Acton/Georgetown, Friday, September 16, 2005 17

Replica guns are a cause for concern for police

There is something about guns that fascinate people, particularly the male of our species. The interest starts young, probably due to movies, electronic games and other forms of entertainment. You only have to open the newspaper to see the devastation that they cause.

Something that concerns the police is replica guns. They are cheap, easy to obtain, and look very real. There is no age limit for purchasing them.

We get numerous calls from the public about guns. There are times that we respond and the gun is a replica, but the witness hasn't been able to tell the difference.

911/
411



Laurel Barnett

Some replica guns have been used in the commission of crimes. They are so real looking that a bank teller or other victim has believed that it is real. The victim feels that they have been looking down the barrel of a real gun.

When a replica gun is used in that way, the law treats it as a real firearm, and the appropriate charges are laid. Police officers also have no choice but to treat these items as a real threat. We have to make a split second decision, which could have tragic results.

Parents should be cautious about allowing their children to purchase or play with these replica firearms. There is difference between a toy gun and a replica. Most toy guns now have brightly-coloured barrels to avoid them from being mistaken for real.

If you have any questions about this or any other police issue, contact me at laurel.barnett@hrps.on.ca or 905-878-



5511, ext. 2120.

Constable Laurel Barnett is the community support officer for District 1.

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It is with great pleasure that Bev and Norma Siegner of Georgetown announce the engagement of their daughter, Amy to Mike van der Valk, son of Conrad and Jeanette van der Valk of Parry Sound. The wedding will take place in August 2006.

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