

Police raids get 8 outdoor grows

Wellington OPP, assisted by fellow officers from the OPP's drug enforcement section and aviation services located eight outdoor marijuana grow operations in cornfields and bush areas of Guelph-Eramosa, Puslinch and Pilkington township last Wednesday, August 16.

Officers said they located 1280 marijuana plants, some up to nine feet in height and mostly in the budding stage. All the plants were collected and sent off for destruction.

Police estimated the street value of the seized marijuana at \$1,280,000.

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Domestic violence against men – growing, often ignored problem

By Rebecca Ring

This newspaper's office has been receiving an increasing amount of police reports where the victim of spousal abuse is the male partner. Earlier this week, Wellington OPP reported an incident in Erin where a 46 year old male was allegedly assaulted by his 44 year old female partner. Charges were laid.

This paper recently printed an article on resources available to female survivors of spousal abuse. Where do adult males go who are in the same boat? The short answer is they seem to be on their own. This reporter could find no services anywhere near Wellington County dedicated to male survivors of spousal abuse.

In an emergency, a man fleeing domestic violence could go to a men's shelter such as the Stepping Stone in Guelph or House of Friendship in Kitchener. These are "all purpose" shelters for men. They do

provide caseworkers to aid individuals in their unique situations. There are several counselling centres where a man could get one-to-one counseling, on a sliding fee scale based on income, such as Family Counseling and Support Services in Guelph.

Ron Flemming of House of Friendship said that they offer assistance in finding housing for low-income individuals and families. Fleeing domestic violence is a high priority situation, regardless of gender. He

programs and no safety net for these men.

Elizabeth Bresnahan of Victim Services said they are seeing more and more cases where the victim is male. Police are specially trained to handle domestic violence without judgment, and are taught to treat all cases seriously, regardless of the gender of perpetrator or victim. However, Bresnahan said that many men do not come forward for help because of cultural stereotypes of men as strong and in control and women

he or she may be hurt or killed, DVERS will install an alarm system that he/she can set off. This alerts the OPP who will arrive ASAP, ready to deal with the situation. This service has so far never been used by a man.

To reiterate the past article on spousal abuse, there are four main types: physical, emotional (including verbal and psychological), sexual and financial. Physical abuse includes hitting, slapping, restraining, pinching, tripping and confinement.

Emotional abuse includes name calling, extreme irrational jealousy, controlling everything from how to dress to association with friends or family, threatening family or pets, ignoring him/her, destroying favourite items, threatening deportation for an immigrant, threatening to "out" a person in a same-sex relationship, using vulnerabilities as put-downs or threats, not allowing or forcing religious practises, and threatening suicide if the person leaves.

Sexual abuse includes forced intercourse or other sexual acts, harassment, leering or any sexual behavior that the abuser knows makes the person uncomfortable.

Financial abuse includes controlling access to money, including the person's own paycheque, not allowing any financial decisions or discussion, and denying funds for normal purchases. This severely limits the person's access to transportation, including owning a car or hiring taxis.

All support workers who commented agreed that this gap needs to be addressed. Abused men need to be reached out to and validated, supported and helped. They should have the same services available to them as women do. Most attribute the lack of services to cultural stereotyping, lack of funds and the fact that the need continues to be greater in numbers for women, as they still represent the majority of abuse survivors.

Many men don't come forward for help due to masculine stereotypes

said that most men do not talk about why they are in the shelter and cannot guess at how many are fleeing abuse. He guesses that there are a lot that feel ashamed and never tell.

Problem under reported Of all the community services contacted, there is a consensus among the workers interviewed that this problem is under reported and under serviced. Many had anecdotes of men being abused but not wanting to come forward. There is no government funding to create awareness, provide counselling or emergency

as weak and vulnerable. Many men do not speak up for the same reasons as many women. They are embarrassed and afraid that nobody will believe their story.

Bresnahan said that men are certainly able to use a program called DVERS (Domestic Violence Emergency Response System). It is provided by the Rural Women's Support Program and Guelph Wellington Women in Crisis, the OPP, ADT Security, Bell Canada, Guelph Police, and Victim Services. If a person is in a high-risk situation, where

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