

Murder suspect confessed to police: trial

By LISA CARTWRIGHT
The Champion

David Fiorino confessed to an undercover police officer that he shot and killed Stephen Andreopoulos, a jury heard Wednesday during an on-going first degree murder trial in Superior Court in Milton.

OPP Det. Staff Sgt. Mark Banzant testified that the former Milton resident told Constable Kenneth Watson he was the one responsible for the 36-year-old Barrie man's death.

Defence lawyer Robert Nuttall told the officer that Mr. Fiorino confessed to shooting the deceased, but no gunshot wounds were found on the body.

Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant agreed there weren't.

Mr. Fiorino, 27, has been charged with first-degree murder in the death of Mr. Andreopoulos, whose body was found on a Derry Road property February 13, 1998. He was last seen July 2, 1996.

Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant testified that in February, 1997, Mr. Fiorino was put under surveillance. There were also probes and wire taps in the homes and on the phones of Mr. Fiorino and his wife Kimberly and his parents Carmine and Lilian Fiorino. They also wire tapped the phones at Kimberly's work.

To stimulate conversation, police sent Det. Sgt. Randall Krieger to Kimberly's workplace, Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant told the jury.

Det. Sgt. Krieger — who posed as a biker — claimed he was to collect a \$50,000 debt Mr. Fiorino owed him.

The jury heard Mr. Fiorino suspected it was a police officer.

On the August long weekend, undercover officer Constable Kenneth Watson established a friendship with Mr. Fiorino while they were camping at Grundy Provincial Park, Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant testified.

Constable Watson's job was to establish a friendship with the accused, then get him involved in a criminal activity, the jury heard.

Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant told the jury police set up a meeting in which Constable Watson and Mr. Fiorino collected \$10,000 from two other undercover officers.

Another meeting was set up between Constable Watson and his "boss" Constable Bill Campbell. During that meeting, Mr. Fiorino saw \$75,000 in cash change hands, Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant said.

Soon after, Constable Watson asked if the accused would be interested in doing a

paid "hit" for his boss, the jury heard.

When Mr. Fiorino told him he was, the constable said his boss needed physical proof that he killed Mr. Andreopoulos. He had 24 hours to get the proof.

The jury heard that Mr. Fiorino told Constable Watson he was unable to get the proof because he suspected he was under surveillance. He later told Constable Watson he killed the deceased, Det. Staff Sgt. Mark Banzant told assistant Crown Charon Kerr.

But the confession wasn't caught on tape?, Mr. Nuttall asked the officer.

Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant said the police ran out of time and, legally, were unable to record conversations anymore.

So, why didn't the police delay the meeting between the accused and Constable Watson until they had permission to set up a wire tap?, Mr. Nuttall asked the officer. Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant said they didn't want to strain the friendship.

Mr. Nuttall told Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant that Mr. Fiorino knew police were involved and he was feeding them incor-

"Quite frankly, David Fiorino was putting you on."

ROBERT NUTTALL

rect information. Mr. Fiorino was also trying to find out how much information the police knew, Mr. Nuttall said.

"Quite frankly, David Fiorino was putting you on," he told Det. Staff Sgt. Banzant.

On Tuesday, the jury heard there was no evidence of bloodstains on either the UHaul vehicle that was rented by Mr. Andreopoulos or the backhoe bucket thought to have been used to bury him.

Sgt. Michael Isles, an expert in forensic identification, told the jury he conducted a bloodstain test on both the items. The test detects the presence of blood even after it has been washed away.

The UHaul truck was discovered in Bracebridge on July 19, just over two weeks after it had been rented by Mr. Andreopoulos. It had been used by several other people.

Sgt. Isles said test was conducted on the interior of the cab as well as the walls and ceilings of the back of the UHaul.

The test proved negative.

On February 23, 1998, Sgt. Isles conducted the bloodstain test on a backhoe bucket. He said there was no blood found on the bucket because it had been used by property owners and exposed to the elements over the last 18 months.

The trial continued yesterday.

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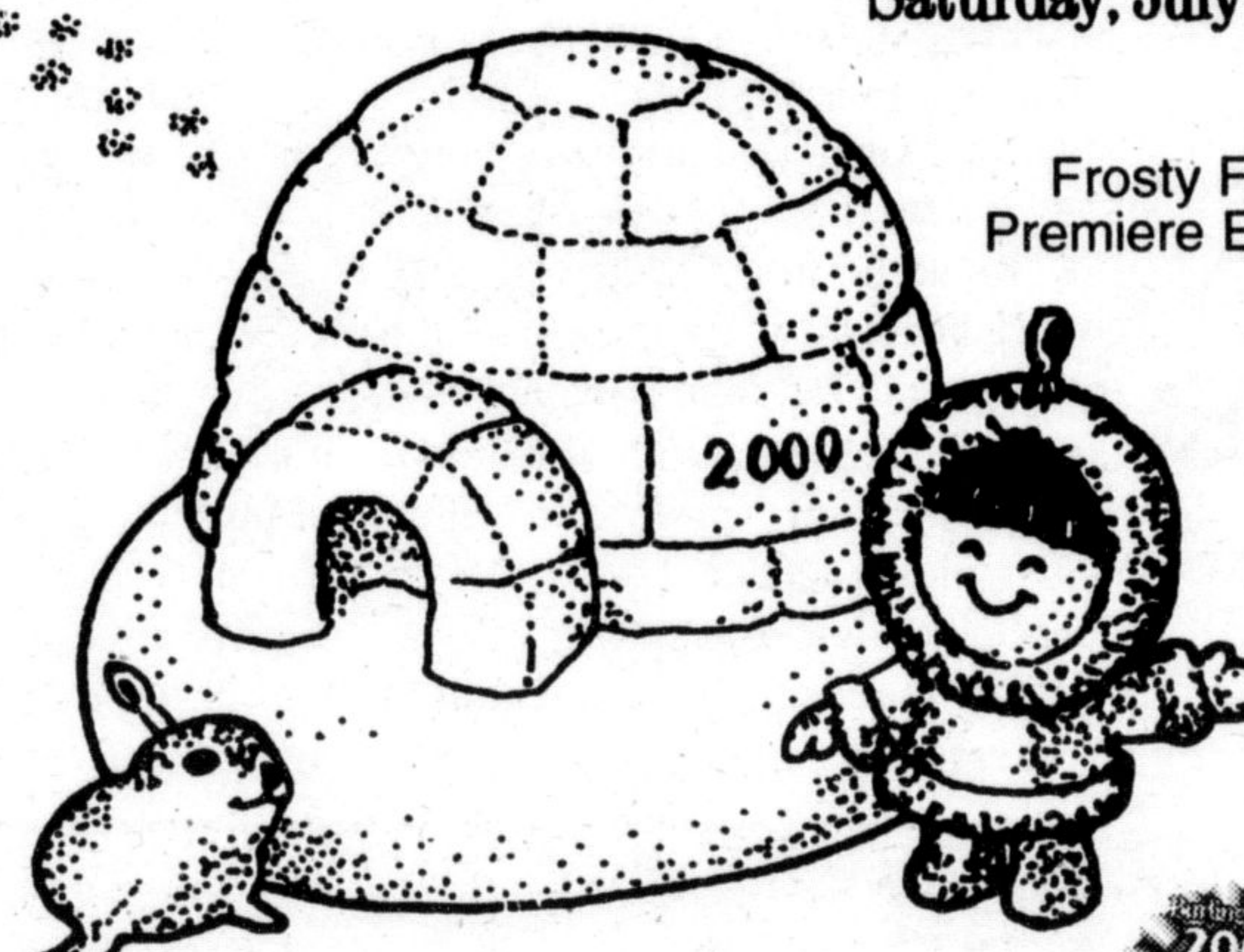
In our July 12-18, 2000 flyer, the following errors occurred:

- The Clearnet Sanyo 4000 Dual Mode PCS Phone on page 6 was advertised incorrectly. The advertised price of \$129.99 AFTER \$30 Mail-In Rebate is an error. The price of the phone is \$129.99.

We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused our valued customers.

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