

Police take cover from sun's damaging rays

Ontario Provincial Police officers throughout the province are switching general service head gear to a new, wide brim hat that offers effective protection from overexposure to ultraviolet radiation and its related health risks. Commissioner Thomas O'Grady made the announcement last week in conjunction with the Canadian Dermatology Association and National Sun Awareness Week, May 26 to June 1.

"The health and the safety of our officers are paramount and we have no hesitation in taking decisive action to protect our members," O'Grady said. "The wide brim hat will provide better protection for our officers and will be a recognizable symbol of authority and public safety."

The dark blue, all-around wide brim hat is made of a tightly-woven, breathable nylon material. It replaces the cloth peak hat in order to provide better protection from the sun for the vulnerable neck and face areas. According to the Canadian Dermatology Association, two out of every three skin cancers occur in the neck and face areas.

The change in head gear recognizes medical and scientific evi-

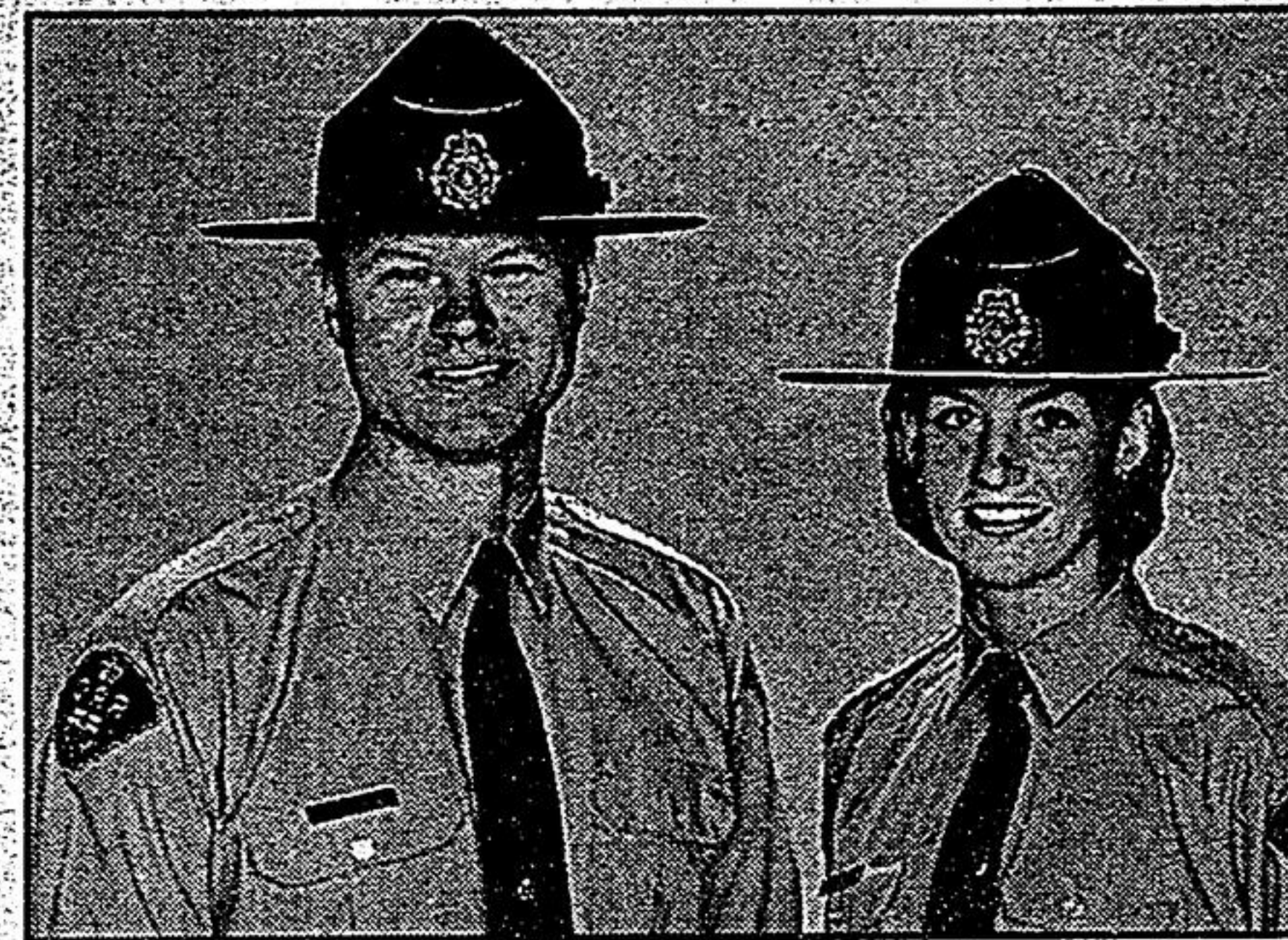
dence that preventative measures, such as wearing a sun safe hat, can reduce the risk of developing skin cancer. The change also meets officer requests for better protective head gear to safeguard against overexposure to ultraviolet radiation on the job.

According to Dr. Lynn From of Women's College Hospital in Toronto, the OPP is showing leadership in making the change to a wide brim hat. "The OPP is not only protecting its own members, it is also sending an important message to the community at large about sun protection and skin cancer prevention," she said.

The new wide brim hat was selected after several years of prototype testing and monitoring, including work undertaken at the Canadian Police Research Centre. By the end of July, approximately 5,000 OPP officers across the province will be wearing the wide brim hat.

In addition to the change of uniform hats, the OPP is developing an educational program for all members to increase awareness about sun safety and the preventative measures that can be taken to reduce overexposure to ultraviolet radiation. Alternate

sun protection measures are in place for officers in the OPP bicycle and marine units.



HATS OFF: Two OPP officers model the new wide-brimmed style of hat that will help protect police from overexposure to ultraviolet radiation.

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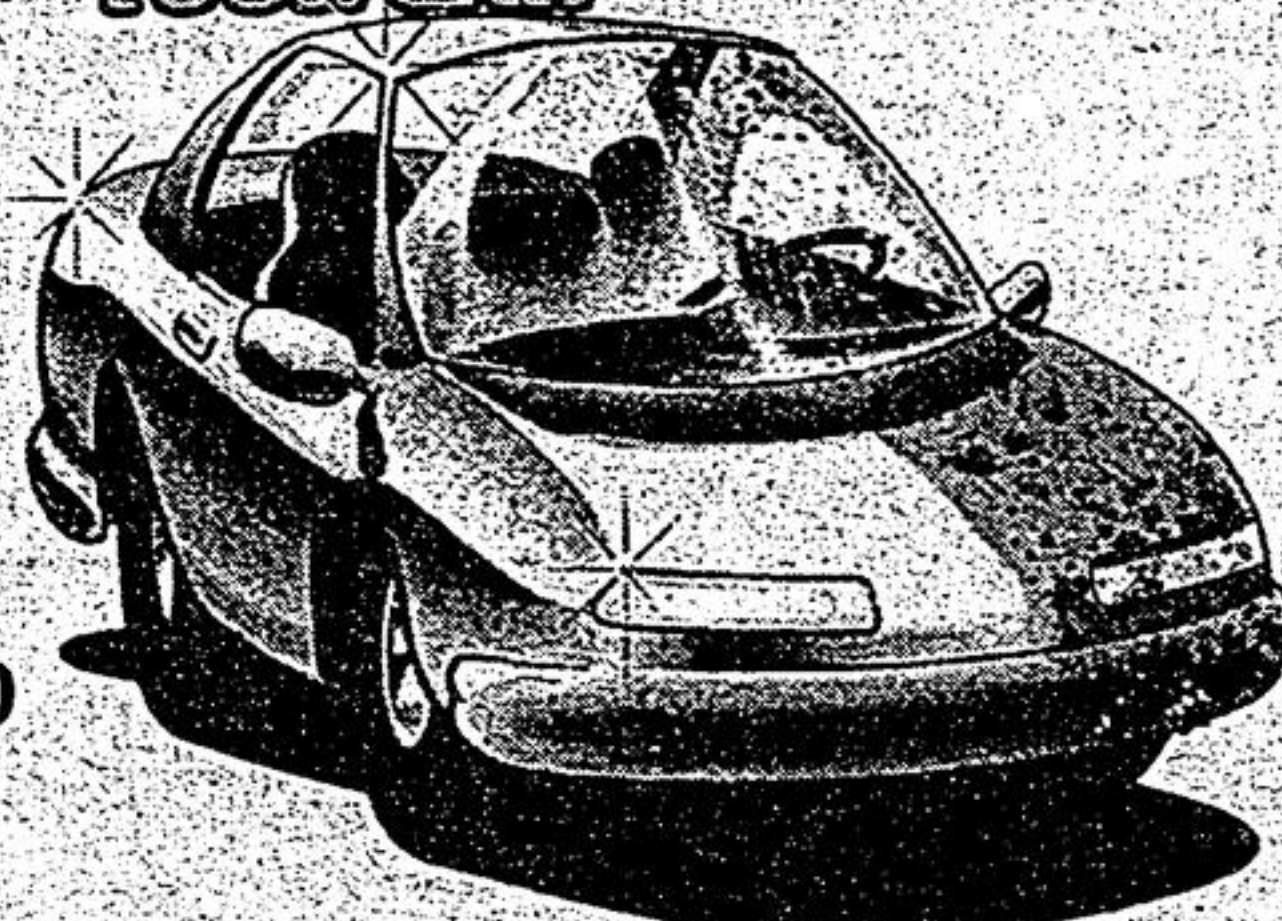


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