



## SAD RECAP

Vol 1 // JAN- FEB 2024

ALBERTA RCMP

### Message from Chief Superintendent Nichols



**C/Supt. Wayne Nichols**  
District Officer

Happy 2024 to everyone in the Southern Alberta District!

As we step into 2024 and embrace the warmth of spring, I wanted to take a moment to share a heartfelt thank you and to share the excitement of what lies ahead. Springtime in our community not only is the blossoming of fresh greenery, but it is also the season of heightened community engagement and connection. With the weather warming up and more outdoor events are occurring, we anticipate a flurry of community events and initiatives taking place in our district.

This is where I tie in Employee Appreciation Day which occurred this past March 1 and I wanted to express my gratitude to each and every one of you. It is your dedication, hard work and commitment that is the driving force being our shared mission to serve and protect our community. Your contributions are unnoticed, and your communities and all of K-Division thanks you.

Together let's make 2024 a year filled with growth, prosperity and meaningful connections.

### What's up in the district

#### Bell Let's Talk Day

#### Jan. - Royal Canadian Mounted Police encourages mental health awareness across the country

The RCMP is committed to prioritizing mental health, and to creating real change for the organization and the communities that we serve.

As a proud partner of Bell Let's Talk, detachments across K Division organized flag raising ceremonies and engaged employees across the division to help raise awareness for mental health.



#### Pink Shirt Day

On Feb. 28th, Canadians will be taking part in Pink Shirt Day to support awareness of the need for kindness and anti-bullying initiatives, and it's also an opportunity to support the RCMP's renewed core values and show support in the communities we serve across the country and abroad.

As the RCMP is evolving, one of the RCMP's top priorities is to ensure a healthy and inclusive workplace culture. The RCMP is committed to making change through conflict resolution, education and prevention.

Every action we take today helps lead to a more inclusive, equitable future where each and every Canadian can thrive.

Happy Pink Shirt Day!





## March 8 is International Women's Day

Good morning,

It is [International Women's Day](#) and this year's theme – Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress – speaks to gender equity and supporting a stronger, diversified and more successful team. Women, and their roles in the RCMP, are a part of our storied history and critical to our success in the future.

This year will mark 50 years of women in uniform in the RCMP. It is an important milestone for our organization. Troop 17, made up of 32 women from across Canada, started their training at Depot in September 1974. While that is a significant event in history for the Force, women had been vital to the success of our organization for decades. As spouses of serving members, going back as far as the 1890s, women were often the "Second Man" at isolated posts, serving as matrons and assisting during female prisoners.

Women also served within the RCMP in a number of ways throughout our history. From providing professional services in detachments and divisions, to working in the fields of forensics and pathology, women have long been a part of the Force and continue to advance our work.

We've come a long way since the days of Troop 17 and a "Second Man," but we must continue to support diversity and foster an environment where no matter your gender identification, everyone has the opportunity to succeed and prosper.

Thank you all for your service, and keep up the good work,

Trevor Daroux, O.O.M.  
Assistant Commissioner  
Acting Commanding Officer





## Sirens for Life 2024 - Alberta's emergency crews compete to boost blood donations across province

**Feb.** - Results are in! Congratulations to Calgary again for the bragging rights with the most units collected and most new donors in January 2024 versus target! Pat yourselves on the back Calgary partners and champions!

This year we collected 12092 units for Alberta and welcomed 1306 new donors. Thank you for all your hard work in making Sirens for Life 2024 a success. Even with the extreme weather conditions as we had to cancel a few donor events in the various communities, we still managed to meet the collections target for the month in Alberta.

We really appreciate everyone who helped by encouraging more people to donate blood these past weeks. You can make all the difference by continuing to rally your team to donate all year round.



### January 2024 Results

City	Actual	Target	%
<b>Calgary</b>			
<i>Collections</i>	5677	5422	<b>104.7%</b>
<i>New Donors</i>	636	450	<b>141.3%</b>
<b>Edmonton</b>			
<i>Collections</i>	5349	5362	99.7%
<i>New Donors</i>	593	469	126.4%
<b>Red Deer</b>			
<i>Collections</i>	1066	1089	97.9%
<i>New Donors</i>	77	88	87.5%

### Total units collected for Alberta:

Collections: 12092/11873 = 101.8%

New Donors: 1306/1007 = 129.7%



## Congratulations - New Members of the Order of Merit of the Police Forces

### Staff Sergeant Mark Wielgosz, M.O.M.

During his career, S/Sgt. Wielgosz has demonstrated leadership in crime prevention, community engagement, and public safety. His achievements are actively improving the safety of southern Alberta, and his ongoing volunteer efforts are helping to make communities more welcoming and inclusive. S/Sgt. Wielgosz is seen as a role model among his peers and community.

Congratulation S/Sgt. Wielgosz and thank you for your service!





## Brooks RCMP hit the dance floor

**FEB** - Cpl. McCready, Cst. McCready from the Brooks RCMP, and Kelly Sanford, Safe Communities Facilitator, hit the jackpot with an invite to Night to Shine! The event was a wonderful evening filled with dancing alongside the kings and queens! Hats off to the organizers for such a special night!



## The Olds RCMP Sport Squad

**FEB**- The Olds RCMP detachment experienced a heartwarming day as members of the Olds detachment alongside with the Olds Firefighting department teamed up with students from Olds Elementary for a spirited game of ball hockey. Members and students united on the rink creating lasting memories for years to come.

But the fun doesn't stop there!

After a quick break, Olds members then headed over to Holy Trinity Catholic school for a action-packed game of dodgeball where these seasoned members and enthusiastic students ducked, dodged and dipped diving for loose balls challenging each other to an intense game of dodgeball as laughter was shared together forging unforgettable memories of friendship in the Olds Community.







### Android Team Awareness Kit (ATAK)

The divisional ATAK working group wants to ensure detachments are compliant with new policy surrounding utilization of the ATAK program.

ATAK has made a significant difference in management of events, improving efficiencies, and increasing the overall safety of members and support teams.

Familiarize with some of the NATO symbology commonly used in the program:

	Target residence, vehicle, or location.
	Position currently being occupied by a police unit (for example, containment point or checkpoint).
	Residence, vehicle, or location with an unknown status.
	Cleared residence, vehicle, or location.

### Good things to remember about ATAK:

- 1.) Review the business rules located [here](#)
- 2.) Turn ATAK on at the beginning of your shift
- 3.) Take a screenshot of your inputs after an event and;
- 4.) Remove symbols/waypoints at the end of an event.
- 5.) The pink dots are reserved for F Division general duty members

RTOC uses ATAK to assist in keeping you safe and connected. For up-to-date onboarding and usage information, including NATO symbology, visit the [ATAK SharePoint](#).

-Insp. Breitkreuz, OIC, K Division Real Time Operations Centre



## Hummingbird's Farewell: Celebrating Rita's Remarkable 46-Year Journey with the Crowsnest Pass RCMP

**FEB-** With great admiration and appreciation, we recognize the retirement of Rita Filipuzzi, a distinguished public service employee of the Crowsnest Pass RCMP Detachment.

On February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 the Crowsnest Pass RCMP Detachment bids farewell to one of its most cherished detachment members, Rita, after a remarkable 46 years of serving the Crowsnest RCMP community.

Although her official retirement may not have been a surprise, Rita's imprint on the RCMP detachment and the hearts of those she served will be felt for generations to come.

From her very first day on July 3, 1977, to her last drive on July 7, 2023, Rita travelled the same streets, driving the same routes to work and serving her community with unwavering dedication. She became the heart and soul of the detachment, touching the lives of over 100 colleagues and learning from eight non-commissioned officers who served the detachment.

Throughout her five-decade career, Rita became an integral part of the fabric of the Crowsnest Pass RCMP community assisting members new and old settle in their postings. She has made a profound impact on the lives of countless individuals, both within the detachment and throughout the Crowsnest Pass region and in K Division.

Beyond her professional duties, Rita's essence was that she is a caring soul, always placing others before herself. With her love for sugary snacks and contagious laughter, she brought light into every room she entered, earning her the endearing nickname of "hummingbird" among her colleagues.

But Rita's impact extended far beyond the confines of the Crowsnest Pass Detachment. As a lifelong resident of Crowsnest Pass, she intimately knew the community and its people. Her insights proved invaluable, aiding countless investigations and strengthening the bonds between law enforcement and the public.

In a fitting tribute to her unwavering service, Rita was honored with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee award in Cochrane in May 2023. It was a testament to her dedication and a crowning achievement in a career of excellence.

As Rita embarks on this new chapter of her life, her presence will be sorely missed within the detachment and in K Division.

But on behalf of the Alberta RCMP Southern Alberta District, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Rita for her decades of service and wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement.





## Special Olympics 2024 takes over Alberta

**FEB-** Did you know the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games occurred in the Calgary area this past February and early March?

The Special Olympics Canada Winter Games Calgary 2024 (SOCWG Calgary) ran from February 27th to March 2nd, marking its return to competition on the national stage for the first time since the Special Olympics Canada Winter Games was previously held in Thunder Bay 2020.

Calgary brought together over 1,250 participating Special Olympics athletes, coaches and support staff from across Canada and more than 2,500 spectators.

Special Olympics Canada National Games provides Canadian athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) a competitive opportunity and venue to pursue excellence. For many athletes, this national competition serves as a pivotal stepping stone towards the Special Olympics World Winter Games Torino 2025.

Vice President of the Southern Alberta Special Olympics Chair, S/Sgt. Ryan Singleton and several members of the Southern Alberta District Office geared up for this momentous event participating in the SOCWG Opening Ceremonies as Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) runners.

In relation to the success of the Special Olympic Canada Winter Calgary Games 2024, RCMP detachments across SAD participated in the annual Polar Plunge in support of Special Olympics Alberta bravely jumping into the cold waters of bitter winter Alberta.

This year the Canmore Detachment participated in their local annual Canmore Polar plunge where the event raised \$9,326 of their \$10,000 goal.

Inspector. Bannerholt of SAD and members of the Airdrie Detachment showed the Calgary Polar plunge who was boss jumping into the freezing water participating alongside the Calgary region raising \$46,829 of \$75,000.

Thank you to everyone who participated and supported in this great event!

Please reach out to S/Sgt. Ryan Singleton if you would like to be part of future Special Olympics and Polar Plunge events.





## Cochrane Foundation wins Fire-RCMP charity game

Story written by CochraneNow

**FEB-** There was plenty to cheer about at the first Cochrane Fire-RCMP charity Hockey Game in six years.

"The crowd was spectacular," says Cst. Darwin Lewko, who co-organized the event with Chris Chyka, Cochrane Firefighters Association president. "We got a way better turnout than we anticipated, especially on a short notice."

The first responders drew a crowd when they laced up for a little fun on Family Day. The scoreboard read 8-6 for Fire with the final goal an empty-netter.

But the real winner was the Cochrane Foundation, the charity selected for the game.

"We don't have a total yet, but by the looks of the turnout, we think it's going to be fantastic," says Chris. "We had a lot of people step up to support the game."

It was free to attend, but people had a chance to enter raffles for some skookum prizes which were donated by several local businesses.

To add a little buzz to the event, Cochrane Toyota sponsored a shoot-out, with the top prize being a big screen TV. The other two participants also received prizes.

"We were able to take part in this and bring these prizes and have some sort of game to make the activity more dynamic and engaging for the audience,

especially to celebrate Family Day," says Mili Palacios, from Toyota's marketing

team. "I think it was a great initiative, and we're very proud to be part of it."

Retired RCMP officer Lyle Marianchuk won top prize in the shootout.

"My only strategy was to watch the hockey game, and I was lucky enough to get drawn," says Lyle. "I just started playing hockey again this year after a 15-year hiatus, so maybe that helped me a little bit today."

Despite being a retired RCMP officer, he was cheering for Fire, for good reason. His son is a firefighter.

Also adding a thrill for young ones in attendance were the RCMP and fire services mascots roaming through the stands. They gave out plenty of high fives along the way.

Both teams recruited ringers from Cochrane. Former NHLer Mason Raymond laced up for the RCMP and scored their first goal (a few others followed). Tanner House played for Fire and was part of the Edmonton Oilers organization, playing a few seasons with their AHL affiliate, the Oklahoma City Barons.

Up until Monday, the game's trophy was in the hands of the RCMP, who won it the last time the game was played in 2018. We all know what that means.

"Rubber match next year," Chris and Darwin said almost in unison.

"The rebuilding starts today," says Darwin. "We're going to iron out all the kinks and we'll be back next time to battle, and maybe we can pull it off."





## Piikani Nation RCMP focuses on reconciliation and community engagement

Piikani Coun, Wesley Crow Show, Sgt. Vince Bacon, Coun. Cindy Provost, Southern Alberta District Officer Chief Superintendent Wayne Nichols and Coun. Jordan No Chief during a National Truth and Reconciliation Day event.



**JAN-** The Alberta RCMP is actively involved in the ongoing reconciliation process, with a dedicated effort from detachment members Alberta-wide to strengthen trust and build collaborative relationships with all Indigenous community members.

Officers throughout the province are actively listening and taking affirmative steps to formalize working relationships with Indigenous partners while consulting with them on community policing initiatives.

Sgt. Vince Bacon, the newly appointed detachment commander of Piikani Nation RCMP, and his team are wholly committed to enhancing relationships between the Piikani First Nations community and the police officers serving them.

“Our history has left generational scars on the lives of many,” Bacon said. “I know that we are just at the beginning of a long journey, and to rekindle that trust and to strengthen relationships will take time.”

“At first glance, policing a rural community versus an urban center would seem as different as the landscapes themselves, but no matter the size of the community, we have a responsibility to those we serve. Part of that is actively participating in the healing process.”

Over the past eight months, Bacon and his team have concentrated on addressing policing gaps and priorities while fostering transparency and trust within the community.

They aim to break the cycle of discrimination, violence and neglect within the criminal justice system.

With a renewed outlook and plan, the goal is to establish relationships based on mutual respect and trust, encouraging community members to feel comfortable seeking police assistance without fear.

“Ultimately, everyone here has the same common goal — keeping your communities safe and secure for all residents,” Bacon said. “But we cannot do this alone. When establishing our policing priorities, consultation is key. There are no one-size-fits-all solutions. We cannot make decisions that affect you, without you.”

Understanding the significance of community involvement, detachment officers are encouraged to participate in traditional Indigenous events and ceremonies to enhance their cultural understanding.

“One of the best ways to build relationships, is to meet face-to-face with Indigenous leaders, elders and



community members as much as possible,” Bacon said. “This allows us the opportunity to listen, to learn and to set priorities based on feedback from the community, as they teach us traditional Indigenous values that are unique to them.”

Bacon also said he wants officers to hear stories from elders and the community. Even if those stories are sometimes difficult to hear.



“To benefit a community is to be part of the community. Finding the time to acknowledge people in the communities that we police is important.”

Bacon added that all detachment vehicles have a Blackfoot Piikani decal as a sign of integration within the community.

With multiple collaborative projects under way, the detachment most recently finished a mural wall with symbolic Blackfoot Winter Count imagery.

It serves as a pictorial calendar representing significant community events chosen by community leadership and elders.



After an impactful year of engagement, detachment employees have gained a deeper understanding of the backgrounds, cultures and experiences within the Piikani First Nation community.

The community has recognized and honoured the detachment’s commitment by awarding them a golden community medallion, gifted by the elders as a token of appreciation for their dedication to learning about the community’s culture and history.

“We must be open to listening,” Bacon said. “It is the little things that can make a significant impact.”





## Piikani First Nation RCMP works to uphold safety and well-being of community

**FEB-** The Piikani First Nation community is currently facing significant challenges on multiple fronts, including an increase in drug poisonings and drug-related crimes.

Recognizing the community's current challenges, Piikani RCMP has leveraged the Alberta RCMP's Community Safety and Well-being Branch (CSWB). In 2022, CSWB was launched to reduce crime and proactively address the root causes of crime and victimization by integrating police with community partners and enhancing engagement with all Albertans. It operates under four pillars:

- Crime reduction;
- Community outreach;
- Analytics and intelligence; and
- Social engagement.

Through CSWB, the detachment has access to the assistance of an RCMP Crime Reduction Partnership Liaisons (CRPL) who consult community groups and leadership to determine community-driven initiatives that tackle local concerns around crime and promote public education.

CRPL Adeel Zaman, a registered social worker and therapist with a master's in social work, has been actively involved in community engagement efforts, working closely with detachment commanders and communities in southern Alberta. Zaman travels the region, connecting with detachment commanders and their communities, always looking for opportunities to meet with people and work with others.



"If you don't have a good relationship with people, there is no trust," says Zaman. "How can you build a community from that?"

With the southern Alberta CSWB unit currently focused on the Piikani Nation and Pincher Creek region, Piikani Nation RCMP Detachment Commander, Sgt. Vince Bacon, is also actively working to address policing concerns in the community. His detachment officers, alongside CSWB employees, are encouraged to participate in traditional Indigenous events and ceremonies to enhance their cultural understanding and learn traditional Indigenous values that are unique to the community.

This is a means of enhancing the trust and relationship between the RCMP and the community.



Adeel presenting a drug presentation at a local Piikani school

"One of the best ways to build relationships is to meet face-to-face with Indigenous leaders, Elders, and community members as much as possible," says Sgt. Bacon. "This allows us to listen, learn, and set policing priorities based on feedback from the community. The community currently faces crime prevention challenges. Historically, the approach to solving these issues was mainly policing-centric, but what we're doing instead with CSWB is focusing on addressing our policing gaps with more of a traditional healing approach."

Over the past eight months, Sgt. Bacon, the detachment, and the CSWB unit have been concentrated on working with stakeholders in the community such as Piikani Child and Family Services and Piikani Employment Services to ensure these partners have input in creating more proactive, holistic solutions to the issues in the community; these solutions include addiction information sessions, supportive housing, food security and more.

"The idea is that we prevent police from needing to initiate action in the first place, and it's really all about the police listening to the community," says Sgt. Bacon. "It's about shifting resources out of the criminal justice system



and into early intervention and crime prevention.”

Using the data collected from community input and the Crime Severity Index, CSWB employees like Zaman identify where crime interventions are most needed. Together, the detachment and council members then work to develop strategies addressing issues in those specific areas.

CSWB also uses the data and analytics to identify priority offenders and selects them for potential participation in the Alberta RCMP Integrated Offenders Management Program (IOM). IOM aims to address the root causes of criminal behaviour by leveraging expertise and support from all areas including social services, health agencies and the criminal justice system. The program focusses on identifying complex-need individuals who contribute the most to community harm and works to break them out of the cycle of criminality. The Alberta RCMP teams up with community partners to provide individuals with supports and resources to address addictions, mental health, poverty or housing challenges that may be contributing to patterns of reoffending.

Zaman explains that by addressing an offender’s basic needs and harm-causing behaviour through the IOM program, recidivism can be reduced by up to 36 percent.

A huge positive about this program, is that we try to facilitate a relationship between offenders and our community partners, who can provide them with wrap-around services to address their criminogenic needs. The people we usually meet are at a low point, but by having a support system, the offender isn’t necessarily relying on police to navigate issues for them in the future. However, if the offender continues to offend and commit crimes, they will be held accountable. We don’t apologize for the accountability piece. That is something that the RCMP as police are here to do — keep our community safe.”

As the policing needs of Albertans change, the RCMP is responding and evolving, going beyond front-line policing. The work of CSWB and IOM are showing successful results in communities across the province. With programs such as these, RCMP detachments across Alberta are taking a more enhanced and coordinated approach to community safety and well-being.

“You have the opportunity to meet someone on their worst day, and you really can make their worst day better,” says Zaman. “The easy thing to do is to send them to jail. The tough thing to do is actually help them and be a positive influence in their life, a meaningful influence.”

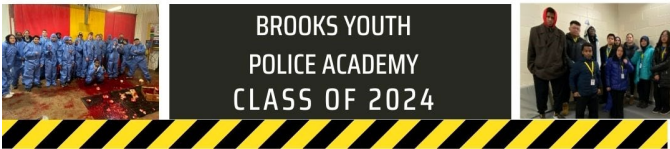


Piikani RCMP participating in the Piikani Open House event with CSWB and Recruitment members





## SAD RECAP Newsletter



BROOKS YOUTH  
POLICE ACADEMY  
CLASS OF 2024



### 3rd Annual Brooks Youth Police Academy

**FEB-** The Brooks Youth Police Academy has been a remarkable initiative that has been making a positive impact since its inception. The recent 3rd Academy, held from Feb. 5th to 9th, 2024, was another successful event that provided high school students with valuable insights into the world of policing.

Designed in 2022 by the Brooks RCMP Community Policing Unit, the Academy offers students a glimpse into the various aspects of policing and the diverse career paths available within the field. Over the course of the 5-day program, 20 students got the opportunity to participate delving into topics such as the History of the RCMP, the Criminal Code of Canada, and the importance of mental health in policing.

Moreover, students had the privilege of attending engaging presentations on forensics, impaired driving, special units, and even had the opportunity to interact with a Crown Prosecutor and a Judge during a question-and-answer session. These interactions not only provided valuable knowledge but also fostered a deeper understanding of the justice system.

The Community Policing Unit's dedication and proactive approach in collaborating with the school board have been instrumental in the success of the Academy. By securing credits for the students who participated, Cpl. McCready and the team were able to further incentivized and recognized the student's commitment to learning and exploring potential career paths in law enforcement.

The Brooks Youth Police Academy continues to serve as a

beacon of education, inspiration, and empowerment for young individuals interested in the field of policing, and potentially shaping the future of law enforcement with each Academy session.

Piece submitted by: Cst. Sharon McCready



### THOUGHTS? FEEDBACK? IDEAS?

Do you have a news story, event, photo or anything to share with the unit in an upcoming newsletter? [Send us an email here!](#)

