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# Hail to the chief

Claude Shaver, the Cornwall native who set aside a distinguished 21-year Royal Canadian Mounted Police career to become chief of his hometown police department, says he is taking some of his own advice on coping with stress.

Thus, Shaver, 51, will step down as police chief Jan. 2.

Chief Shaver, an authority on stress, says the onerous demands of commanding a 110-member municipal police department played a role in his decision to retire.

A boardroom battle contributed to the stress.

The chief was caught up in the squabble over control of the five-member Cornwall Police Services Board; on one side the three New Democratic Party appointees, on the other city council representatives Mayor Ron Martelle and Ald. Tom Green.

The police chief, who answers to the commission and not council, had both feet in the provincial appointees' camp.

The political football became claims of serious morale problems in the department, especially among the rank and file.

To unmask the source of the morale problems, the board asked the Police Services Division of the Solicitor General's office to conduct an inspection of the force.

The study recommendations are expected to be released by the end of the year. Shaver anticipates changes in how the force operates will be highlighted in the study recommendations. With that in mind, he believes new blood is needed.

Of course, the chief will not be retiring empty handed. He will leave with a golden handshake. Just how golden the handshake will be is apparently up in the air. The chief and Leo Courville, chair of the police services board, say a settlement has not been ironed out.

We suggest that while the names may not be on the retirement documents, the figure has been set. It would be ludicrous to think that a man of Chief Shaver's intellectual level would negotiate the final figure only after turning in his resignation.

Despite the claims of morale problems, Chief Shaver will leave his demand for professionalism firmly stamped on the force he commanded for nine years.

Like any tough administrator, Chief Shaver has his good and bad points. However, the good far outweighs the bad on the scales of assessment.

We suspect his tremendous contribution to the force will be magnified with the passage of time.

Chief Shaver plans to remain in his hometown. That is good news. He has been actively involved in community work and social agencies will welcome his continued support.

On behalf of the community he served so well, we wish Chief Shaver a happy retirement.

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# Reports of sex-abuse complaint involving church, police surface

## It's unlikely any investigation will be reopened

By LEN HOOPER  
Staff Writer

The male victim of a sexual abuse about 20 years ago may have been paid more than \$30,000 in 1993 to drop his criminal complaint against a local priest.

Allegations that both Alexandria-Cornwall Diocese Bishop Eugene LaRocque and city police had some involvement in a settlement have been circulating for weeks.

The reports surfaced Wednesday in an Ottawa television news program.

The victim, now more than 30 years old, initially complained to police that he was sexually assaulted by a priest when he was between 10 and 14 years of age.

Acting City Police Chief Carl Johnston and former Police Chief Claude Shaver, who retired this week, both told the *Standard-Freeholder* in separate interviews Wednesday that a police investigation was opened early last year after



"That is absolutely, totally untrue. It's complete bunk, ridiculous."

— Former chief Shaver

the victim came forward with the allegations in December 1992.

Johnston, who began work in Cornwall this week, said he was told the investigation was dropped only after the victim withdrew his complaint.

The priest, who is no longer in this diocese, was assigned to a city parish at the time of the alleged assault.

Shaver said he doesn't feel it is appropriate for him to comment on details of the case without talking to Johnston first. "I'm no longer with the department," he explained.

However, Shaver absolutely denied rumors the department — and he

specifically — was involved in any settlement of a complaint.

"That is absolutely, totally untrue. It's complete bunk, ridiculous. There's not even a shred of truth to that," Shaver said.

"Remember, I came out in favor of naming child molesters who are released back into the community."

Bishop LaRocque refused to comment on the case when contacted by telephone at his residence Wednesday evening.

Johnston said it's unlikely the case against the priest would be reopened unless the victim co-operates.

He said it's all but impossible to convict anyone of sexual assault without the testimony of the victim.

A source told the *Standard-Freeholder* that during the police investigation of the priest, the victim stated he had also been assaulted by another Cornwall man.

But he did not want to pursue criminal charges against the man. So the priest was the only person to be the subject of an official police investigation.

Martelle said he would insist on an investigation of how the case was handled "only if the allegations ... warranted an investigation."

The source said that during the investigation, the victim told police he was negotiating with the church for compensation and that he might want to drop the case. The source said police were not happy with those developments, but that without a complaint, they had no choice but to drop the case.

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# Justice and buyouts are not compatible

The credibility of the justice system is on trial in Cornwall in the wake of an out-of-court settlement — reported to be \$32,000 — to a man who told city police he was sexually assaulted by a priest while serving as an altar boy at a local parish 20 years ago.

Police closed down the investigation several months later when the man told police he had reached a cash settlement. He refused to identify with whom he negotiated the settlement. The payout obviously influenced the man's decision to ask police to halt the investigation.

The cashier in the payout has not been identified but the trail leads past the Alexandria-Cornwall diocese office on Montreal Road. In Wednesday's *Standard-Freeholder* city lawyer and former Crown attorney Malcolm Macdonald said he served as emissary in the settlement between the former altar boy and Alexandria-Cornwall diocese.

It is not mindless speculation to say that Bishop Eugene LaRocque knew about the payout.

Bishop LaRocque refused to discuss the case. He told the *Standard-Freeholder* any comment must come from the diocesan lawyer, but refused to identify the lawyer.

In a news release, Bishop LaRocque said he would cooperate with investigators in any allegation of sexual abuse by a member of the Alexandria-Cornwall diocese clergy.

That is hardly a major revelation. One would assume that the diocese would do nothing less than co-operate with police.

The issue here is a payment in the midst of a police investigation to a person who claimed to have been sexually abused by a diocese employee, a priest who suddenly was re-assigned outside the diocese.

It's a scenario that has been replayed many times; one that has badly damaged the Roman Catholic Church's image. The Church would be better served if such priests were given the opportunity to pursue another career.

An out-of-court settlement while a police investigation is under way is an outrage.

Such settlements can easily be viewed as hush money, an effort to stickhandle around the justice system and sweep the problem under the carpet. The justice system should not be subject to private negotiations and private deals, a privilege for those who can afford such undertakings.

# Shaver's 'roast' is Friday

More than 100 tickets have already been sold for Friday's 'roast' of former Cornwall Police Chief Claude Shaver.

Tickets for the dinner and roast at the Parkway Best Western are \$30 per person. The Cornwall Police Services is organizing the event.



Shaver

Madeline Villeneuve, secretary for the police chief's office, said a total of 150 tickets were available.

She said the identity of the people who will be roasting the former chief is being kept secret to preserve the element of surprise for her former boss.

Villeneuve said she's "not disappointed at all" that the event is not yet sold out. "At this time of year a lot of people are down south and I expect a lot of last-minute sales," she said.

Any profits from the evening will be divided between the Children's Aid Society and the Summerheights Golf Program. Shaver did a lot of volunteer work with the two charities during his term as chief.

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