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CAUSE OF PETROLIA LINE FIRE UNKNOWN



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Petrolia/North Enniskillen firefighters lead the effort to control a barn fire on Petrolia Line Canada Day. Four fire departments were on the scene in the heat. One firefighter was taken to hospital with heat exaustion. They were released hours later. **See more on page six.**

Over $220K in drugs seized in Petrolia

Heather Wright
The Independent

Sarnia's Deputy Police Chief says a man arrested in a drug bust in Petrolia had likely been living in town for nearly a month, using it as a home base for his drug trade in the city.

Deputy Chief Ron Hansen spoke to T*he Independent* after news of an early morning traffic stop Thursday where Sarnia Police seized over $200,000 in drugs.

Hansens says police had been watching a suspect for some time including on the night of June 26 in Sarnia.

"Our officers were getting surveillance on the vehicle as it was leaving and because of the nature of the drugs – the type of dealing this person was doing – we wanted to have our tactical units do the traffic stop. So, our drug team basically guided them up to where the vehicle was and then they did the containment traffic stop," he says.

Once the vehicle was stopped, Hansen said the suspect was "agitated from the get go." When the ERT members tried to take him into custody, the deputy chief said, he was combative and officers used a taser to subdue him and arrest him.

"He did not sustain any significant injuries," says Hansen.

Officers searched the man and seized 10.5 ounces of cocaine, 13 ounces of methamphetamine, and eight ounces of fentanyl. Police say half of it was uncut fentanyl which they say could easily make close to a kilogram of fentanyl when mixed with a precursor which was also seized.

Police say the estimated street value of the drugs was $222,069. Police also seized $7,900 in cash in the traffic stop.

The deputy chief says after the man was in custody, investigators found an Airbnb rental where the takedown occurred.

Officers went to court that morning and just over nine hours later were searching the one-bedroom, modern unit overlooking Petrolia Line.

Police seized another $12,140 in cash, food colouring, Ziploc bags for packaging and 7.34 grams of MDMA (ecstasy) as well as a digital scale.

Police say the items seized during the arrest and at the Petrolia Airbnb show evidence of "high-level trafficking" in Sarnia and suggests he was producing his own fentanyl based on the items seized and found in Petrolia.

Hansen believes the suspect had been staying in the unit for three or four weeks. "A lot of the (dealers) GTA and from the London area will come into Sarnia, and they all set up in in trap houses," the deputy chief says.

SEE DRUGS PG 2

Petrolia splash pad almost ready

Heather Wright
The Independent

Petrolia's long-awaited splash pad should be up and running by the end of July.

That from Town of Petrolia officials who acknowledged they'd hoped it would be open July 1.

In 2019, a community survey called for a splash pad. The 2020 Parks and Recreation Master Plan also picked up on the desire for the water feature. In 2021, Petrolia Kiwanis offered to build a splash pad for the town and started raising money. In 2023, the town agreed to allow the club to pay the $100,000 over 10 years.

SEE SPLASH PAD PG 2



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