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STANDARD FREE HOLDER

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Rumor mill is working in overdrive

The rumor mill is working overtime.

Overtime and in overdrive.

Add up the names, and half the town is about to be swept up by the Ontario Provincial Police Project Truth dragnet.

Prominent names are being thrown around without any caution. Seems everyone has a new name, which they've learned through a friend who has a friend who has a...

Some of the names could not be remotely connected to the investigation. Some innocent people in our community are being slandered by the rampant rumor mongering.

Caught in the crossfire is the Roman Catholic clergy. It seems that the name of every priest in the diocese is on someone's list of suspects.

So far, the drawn-out investigation has charged two people, a Roman Catholic priest, and an unnamed man, a professional, whose identity is being protected by a court ban.

That ban has raised, and rightfully so, some eyebrows. It also has helped fuel the rumor mill.

A rumor was making the rounds on Tuesday that this person had committed suicide. Not true.

The rumor mill reached a ridiculous level on Friday when the word on the street was

Claude McIntosh



Associate Editor

that former police chief Claude Shaver had shot himself.

Shaver, who now lives in Constance Bay, was surprised to hear that when contacted Friday afternoon.

He's alive and well, enjoying his well-earned retirement.

Shaver is NOT being investigated. His only involvement in the case is that he was police chief when the first complaint was filed.

Meanwhile, a source close to the investigation says as many as five other people could be charged.

At least two people who have been questioned by police but not charged have hired lawyers. One, a clergyman, is expected to be charged next week.

Meanwhile, two recent adult male suicides are being linked to the investigation. Police are not commenting. If true, this would bring the number of suicides connected to the lengthy investigation to three. There are well-placed reports of an attempted suicide.

One thing is certain now. The investigation, when it is finally wrapped up, whenever that is going to be, is going to jolt the community.

We are told that it is going to have a tremendous impact on Roman Catholics. It is going to test their faith.

The bottom line in all of this is, that in this country people are innocent until proven guilty.

In the days ahead, let's not lose sight of that fact.

Usually, anonymous letters are sent directly to the waste basket.

But one received this week got our atten-

tion.

It suggested, among other things, that in wake of recent Operation Truth events, this scribbler should be eating crow.

The letter was shown to an old friend, a former high ranking U.S. Army intelligence officer who knows a thing or two about analyzing hand-written letters, an art he refined in the espionage game during the Cold War.

His brief examination of the letter produced some interesting conclusions.

The anonymous author is/has:

- A female, probably older than 30 but not older than 60
- Has a post-secondary school education
- Is determined
- Has a deep interest in this case and has followed it closely, and might even somehow be involved
- Is interested enough to have built up a clipping file on the case

• And, was probably educated at a Roman Catholic school where nuns taught. This was concluded because of the splendid penmanship, something nuns gave a lot of attention to.

Hummm.

Methinks I know who...

Jack Mills, who died a couple of weeks back, was a former Courtaulds personnel manager who was a tireless volunteer in the community. He had moved to Florida several years ago. He was involved, among other things, in hospital fund-raising campaigns and the United Way.

He did a lot for the community," said retired Paperworkers Union representative Wilf Oliver, who worked with Mills on some of the campaigns.

Letters to the Editor