



Opium plants near harvest

## Doda bust in Delta

**MATT KIELTYKA** - Doda is the new drug du jour.

Delta police raided a local flower shop in the 9400 block of 120th Street on Aug. 13, seizing 3,600 opium poppy pods, six kilos of doda powder (a drug made from ground opium poppy pods) and 15 kilos of opium poppy seeds.

News of the bust comes hot on the heels of last week's RCMP announcement that a Chilliwack farm was raided for growing 60,000 opium poppy plants for doda production - the largest bust of its kind in Canadian history.

At the time, RCMP spokesperson Const Michael McLaughlin said mixing Doda - which has similar effects to heroin - was becoming an increasingly popular trend.

Delta police spokesperson Sgt. Sharlene Brooks said the drug has been gradually popping up on their radar for some time.

"Doda has come to light [publicly] as of late, but it's been on our radar," she said, adding the Aug. 13 bust had no connection to the Aug. 23 Chilliwack raid. "Given the size of the seizure, there is definitely demand for it on the market."

A 47-year-old Surrey man was arrested in the Delta bust and is facing several drug-related charges.

## AUTUMN

# Turn over a new leaf

**KRISTEN MCKENZIE** - It's now September, and that means a time of transformation is in the air. The trees will develop hues of red and gold, and the weather will invariably chill. More importantly, people have the chance to turn over a new leaf in life.

According to experts, autumn is the ideal season to re-examine and update one's priorities.

Registered clinical counselor Kim Boivin believes there is something to be said about making changes in September. "Generally, in the cultural context that we live in, this is constructed as a time of changes," she said, referring to the annual back-to-school frenzy marking the end of the summer holidays.

"[The change of the trees] is also just a very good reminder that change happens and it's basically the only thing we can count on in life. There's incredible value to the fact that things are always changing. The fact that things are always changing means there's huge advantage for positive growth."

Heather Knittel, co-owner of personal organizing solution company Good Ridance, promotes the fall season to her clients as a good time to address disorder and amend bad habits.

"We like to do [reorgani-



FILE PHOTO

No need to stress about the changes in the seasons. Autumn is a great time to assess your priorities and make changes where needed, according to two Vancouver life coaches.

zation] twice a year. It's usually spring and fall. Those are the more natural times to look at stuff," she said.

"[Autumn's] a good opportunity to look at some of the stuff that you've got in your closet and say, 'OK, when did I wear this last?' On average, I would say before school starts and in the new year. That's when people start thinking, 'OK, I got to get all this clutter under control.'"

Both women advised quiet, thoughtful reflection

as a powerful tool of transformation, but warned against the consumer madness that is so aggressively promoted at this time of year.

"[Back-to-school] is one of the bigger retail times ... you don't have to look too far to see ads everywhere," Knittel said. "People have to get into the habit of really trying to understand the inventory of clothing that they have or school supplies that they have."

"We're all about use and all about fashion and being

up-to-date. I think we all get caught up with that. You have to put a little bit of discipline into your behaviour, complement what you have."

But above all, don't forget to relax.

"People think, 'Oh, September's coming. It's time to get back to work,'" Boivin added. "I would suggest to people not to overload themselves or their children if there's a desire to start some new learning or a project. Start with a small goal and build on the success of that."

## Forecast for spycams ballooned

**BOB MACKIN** - The forecast for surveillance cameras at Olympic venues ballooned by almost \$15 million just before the Games, but the Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit now claims it will end up costing \$3.5 million more than budgeted.

A Jan. 31 RCMP report obtained by *24 hours* shows a \$13.5 million "pressure" for perimeter intrusion detection systems (PIDS) that pushed the estimate up to \$44.9 million.

"We were anticipating it could've been substantially higher, up to \$45 million. We still brought it back to \$34 million, which includes system removal and site remediation," Supt. Kevin deBruyckere said.

Honeywell's Burnaby office got the \$30.5 million contract in May 2009 to supply and install 900 camera and sensor units at venue fences. The company subcontracted work to Richmond-based MDA for \$4.8 million and hired Science Applications International Corporation of McLean, Va., as an advisor.

The Greek government accused U.S. military contractor SAIC of failing to deliver a similar security system in time for the 2004 Athens Games.

## Downtown living only for select few

**KRISTEN MCKENZIE** - There's no denying downtown Vancouver is a swell place. It's got great eateries, shops, parks and the buzz of the business district - too bad only a select few have the means to actually live there.

"For your average couple ... looking for something that's affordable, you're probably not going to get away with much," said Michelle Farina, Advent Real Estate Services

director. "Affordable housing in [the downtown] market is difficult because there are so many condos and so few rental buildings."

She noted a trend emerging among the clientele she now gets for downtown rentals or condos.

"We get a lot of people from the east or from animation companies ... all sorts of high-tech companies. [Those clients] are making a lot of

money," Farina said. "We see a lot more professional jobs, young lawyers, young doctors"

In other words, those professionals in lower-paid positions, such as teachers or social workers, are out of luck.

"Vancouver's not affordable to people who earn below a certain income," said Martha Lewis, executive director of B.C.'s Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre. "We're the most expensive in

Canada. It's the most expensive for ownership and for rental. That makes it fine for those few who are willing to pay those rents, which are wealthier people."

The solution for those with lower incomes and dreams of living downtown - find a roommate or two.

"We're starting to see more and more people wanting to do three people in one bedroom," Farina said.



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