

# rabid bats raise concerns

LISA YEUNG  
The Gazette

Rabid bats have been discovered in suburban areas in August, raising questions about whether the disease is spreading among bats in the city area. A 10-year-old Claire child is undergoing vaccination against rabies after handling an infected

bat in his back yard Sunday. And the Laval health and social-services department is urging anyone who touched a brown bat between July 25 and Aug. 4 to contact Info-Santé or their local CLSC as soon as possible.

In Laval, the bat was first spotted near the Ste. Rose Church on Ste. Rose Blvd. on Aug. 1 by two workers who took the sick and weakened animal to a local community centre,

where it was kept in an aquarium and later transferred to a cage at the Éco-Centre at the Rivière des Milles-Îles park, also on Ste. Rose Blvd.

After the bat died on Aug. 4, it was sent to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, where it tested positive for rabies.

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### QUEBEC

#### Hydro-Québec line approved by court

Quebec Superior Court removes the final legal obstacle preventing Hydro-Québec from completing the construction of a controversial power line through prime farmland. *Page A7*

### NATION

#### Alliance picks March

The Canadian Alliance schedules its leadership vote for mid-March, increasing pressure on potential candidates to declare their intentions. *Page A12*

### WORLD

#### Warning of war

Bloodshed between Israelis and Palestinians might drag on for five years and could lead to a regional war, says an Israeli military intelligence forecast. *Page B1*

### BUSINESS

#### Wanted: skilled hands

Canadian homebuilders say a shortage of skilled construction labour is causing delays in projects and higher costs – and it's consumers who are going to foot the bill. *Page C7*

### TRANSIT RAGE

## Bus-driver, passenger in brawl

BASEM BOSHRA  
The Gazette

A broken nose, a fractured jaw and a lot of blood.

That's what being seven minutes late and driving maddeningly slowly cost city bus-driver Yvon Huard on Wednesday night.

Huard and Albert Stephan, a 36-year-old passenger, brawled in the aisle and footwell of the bus in LaSalle – as the bus was rolling – after an angry exchange about the service.

The passenger, who was released on bail yesterday after pleading not guilty to assault causing bodily harm, is claiming he was the victim of a rude driver with a short fuse who deliberately tried to make him late, then tried to injure him because of his complaints.

However, Montreal Urban Community police say the driver's version is that he was only defending himself and Stephan was the attacker.

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## Police rocks

### Drug-squad-c

SHANNON KARI  
Southam News

TORONTO – A widening web of allegations of corruption involving a number of Toronto police officers might involve misconduct as far back as 1995.

The federal Department of Justice has already been forced to drop or put on hold at least 115 drug prosecutions. Many other cases are in limbo as a result of the lingering allegations, and Justice Department officials have conceded they do not know how many prosecutions will be ultimately affected.

Police Chief Julian Fantino, who has called in the RCMP to head a probe, called the investigation a "sad passage in the history of the Toronto Police Service."

In a statement released by the Toronto Police Association, it represents rank and file officers.



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QUOTE

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# Minister hops on to apply brakes

## BUS

Continued from Page A1

"When he was in the (police) car, he kept saying he was the victim," Constable Brigitte Barabé said of the arrested passenger.

"But his shirt was covered with blood – and it wasn't his own."

The driver was taken to LaSalle General Hospital to be treated for his injuries, none of which are considered life-threatening.

And if it wasn't for the intervention of a mild-mannered, quick-thinking minister – who just happened to be waiting for another bus at another stop – the situation could have turned tragic, as the bus rolled along driverless during the brawl.

Around 7 p.m. Wednesday, Stephan and his girlfriend, Mimi Robertson, were waiting for the 123 bus at Elmhurst and St. Jacques Sts. in Notre Dame de Grâce on their way to catch a movie in LaSalle.

Yesterday, Robertson recalled that they were miffed that the bus was seven minutes behind schedule. When the bus did finally come into view, they were even more miffed that it was moving very slowly.

Fearing they'd be late for the movie, Robertson said she asked Stephan to ask Huard if he could pick up the pace a little bit. Stephan talked to Huard and reported that the driver responded very rudely to his request.

Robertson claimed that Huard then began baiting the couple.

"The very spot where my boyfriend asked him to pick up the pace, he stopped," Robertson said. "There wasn't even a bus stop there. He stopped for a couple of minutes, until he was pleased, and then he started driving again."

When the bus approached their stop, Stephan and Robertson rose to get off. When Huard saw this, Robertson said, he began driving even slower.

Robertson said that's when Stephan asked Huard sarcastically, "Could you drive any slower?"

When the bus finally came to their stop, Huard initially refused to open

the door, Robertson said.

Stephan asked Huard – who was "sitting there with a big smirk on his face," according to Robertson – to open the door. When he refused, Stephan said he would report him to the Montreal Urban Community Transit Corp.

"He was like, 'I don't give a f-- what you're going to do,'" Robertson said.

Huard finally opened the door, Robertson said, only to close it on Stephan as he tried to disembark. Stephan fell and Robertson claimed Huard kicked him in the head.

"The next thing I know, the two of them were going at it," Robertson said. "The driver got up from his seat and started fighting with my boyfriend – and the bus was still moving."

"So I screamed, 'Is there anybody on this bus who knows how to drive?' I was panicking but I was trying to keep my cool. The bus was swerving in the middle of the road."

Robertson said the driver kept trying to kick Stephan off the bus.

"If he had fallen, he would have hit his head and God knows, on a moving bus like that, what could have

happened," Robertson said.

That's when Neville Barrington, a minister who happened to be waiting for a bus at another stop, leaped onto the slow-moving bus, jumped into the driver's seat and put on the brakes.

Yesterday, Barrington said the driver stopped fighting with Stephan long enough to take a swing at him.

The bus emptied after it came to a stop and when police arrived, Barrington added, Huard put his hand on the minister's mouth and told him to shut up while he tried to tell his side of the story.

Stephan, who has no prior criminal record, was arrested. Robertson said when she and Barrington told police they witnessed the altercation, the officers on the scene refused to even take down their version of events.

Stephan's lawyer, Eric Sutton, said he hasn't ruled out the possibility that his client – who he advised not to comment – will file a criminal complaint against Huard.

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**"The driver got up from his seat and started fighting with my boyfriend – and the bus was still moving."**

# A commo



Dr. Morrie Gelfand describes Alzheimer's as "a big j

# Ali in Barry's corner

## Montreal man gets show of support at trial

Associated Press

HOUSTON – Three-time heavy-weight boxing champion Muhammad Ali

the courtroom and sat near the defendant.

Ali, who has Parkinson's disease, did not testify and gave no statements. But

