

# Oakville man charged in bike gang roundup

By David Lea

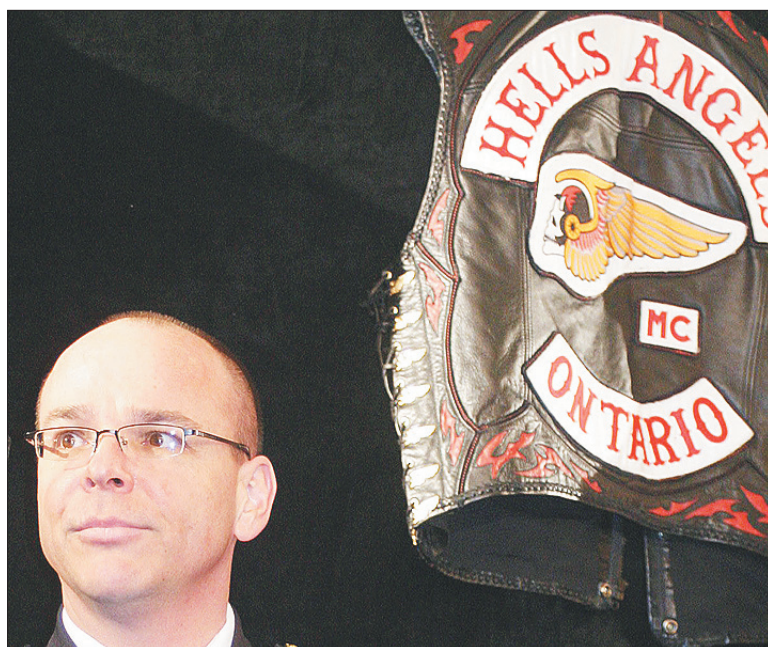
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

An Oakville man is among 31 people arrested, last Wednesday, in a nationwide police action that targeted the alleged criminal activities of the Hell's Angels and Bacchus Motorcycle club.

Joseph Peter Halak, 49, is facing a wide array of charges including, conspiracy to traffic in cocaine, two charges of possession of property obtained by crime, possession of cocaine, two charges of trafficking in cocaine and the committing of an offence in association with a criminal organization.

"At 6 a.m. members of the Biker Enforcement Unit and the Halton Regional Police Tactical Rescue Unit executed a search warrant at an address in Glen Abbey. An individual was arrested and is facing a number of serious criminal charges," said Halton Police Inspector Chris Perkins during a Thursday press conference in Toronto on the police raids.

"In addition to the charges he was facing prior to the warrant the officers that executed the warrant also found a set of brass knuckles and an expandable baton. So he's been charged with an additional



DAVID LEA / OAKVILLE BEAVER

**ON GUARD:** Halton Police Inspector Chris Perkins at the Toronto press conference for Project Develop.

offence of possession of a prohibited weapon."

Perkins refused to comment on Halak's alleged gang affiliation only saying that Halak is believed to be connected to an organized criminal element.

Residents of Warbler Road were shaken out of their sleep, Wednesday morning, by the police

raid in which cruisers blocked off the street as officers forced their way into the Halak's residence.

Neighbours also reported hearing multiple explosions like thunder, which Perkins explains comes with the territory in this kind of raid.

"You have to understand that when the tactical unit, based on

information they have, execute a dynamic entry there may be elements of noise and light and they will have a specific tactical purpose."

Halak's raid was one of a series of raids that were carried out simultaneously across Canada with warrants also being executed in British Columbia and New Brunswick.

Dubbed Project Develop the operation involved 400 law enforcement officers including local police forces, RCMP, OPP and the Canadian Border Services Agency.

So far police have laid 169 charges and seized a wide variety of drugs, weapons, currency and property.

This includes \$996,000 worth of GHB (date rape drug), \$982,800 worth of cocaine and \$48,000 worth of hashish.

"From the arrests and charges resulting from Project Develop the rhetoric of the Hell's Angels, as motorcycle enthusiasts, has been proven to be misleading propaganda," said OPP Biker Enforcement Unit Commander Dan Redmond, against a backdrop of three Hell's Angels jackets at Thursday's press conference.

"Our enforcement initiatives make it clear the Hell's Angels are involved in drugs, weapons and violence related offences. The Hell's Angels are criminals and as such are not welcome in Ontario."

Police are crediting intelligence gathering but also the information of a Hell's Angels informant with the richness of Project Develop's dividends.

"Project Develop was an 18-month investigation that utilized a full-patch Hell's Angels member as a police agent to infiltrate the Toronto downtown chapter of the Hell's Angels," said Redmond.

"This is the second time in Ontario the Hell's Angels criminal activity has been exposed by one of their own."

The Hell's Angels have not remained silent during this action accusing police of using Project Develop to steer public attention away from police corruption.

With 16 chapters and over 200 full-patch members in Ontario the effects Project Develop will have on the Hell's Angels have yet to be seen although police are optimistic.

"We're always hopeful that any arrest makes a dent in these situations," said Perkins.

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(See Mar 3/07 Q&A article on motorcycle insurance to keep your cost down)

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**Q:** What's Blepharitis?

**A:** Blepharitis is a common and persistent inflammation of the eyelids. There are several types of blepharitis most of which are caused by bacterial infection. However, allergies, toxins and viral infection can also lead to its development.

**Symptoms** - Commonly, your eyelid margins are red with scales and flakes apparent at the base of the lashes. There may be irritation or the sensation of a foreign body in your eye with redness, burning and itching of the eyelid margin. On awakening in the morning, your eyelids may feel sticky with crusted scales and debris caused by an oily discharge from the eyelid glands. Untreated, these glands may become plugged and infected, potentially leading to recurrent styes, dry eye syndrome and a loss of lashes.

**Cures** - Unfortunately, blepharitis is usually a chronic condition for which there is no known cure. However, early diagnosis and proper treatment is the key to controlling the symptoms and to prevent worsening of the condition.

**Treatment** - Treatment requires a program of daily eyelid hygiene which usually includes:

- 1) Warm compresses
- 2) Thorough eyelid cleansing with various medicated towelettes
- 3) Application of outer lubricant may also be used
- 4) Application of an antibiotic ointment to control the bacterial component
- 5) It's important to know that in some cases it may take up to eight weeks to notice an improvement. Ongoing lid hygiene is often necessary to keep the condition under control

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