

## Bad numbers

### EDITORIAL

Because Toronto is not in our back yard, and is a millennium away when it comes to our rural and closely-knit lifestyle, we feel somehow safer thanks to distance.

No question opioid addiction is becoming increasingly prevalent in our neighborhoods but we don't have the gun violence of drug gangs which is so rampant and brazen in great swaths of Toronto.

There was a record high of 96 murders in Toronto during 2018, and 51 of those killing was done by guns, one shy of another record high.

Morale on the Toronto Police Service has plunged, as the crime rates have pushed overtime and psychological stress to the red line. Alarms bells were ringing everywhere.

In February Toronto's police association, representing the force's front line, held a non-confidence vote on Police Chief Mark Saunders and, while less than 50% of the membership voted, a full 86% who did vote expressed zero confidence in their chief.

By the fall of 2018, many cops were becoming increasingly critical of the service's modernization plan, dubbed The Way Forward, with some calling it a step backward.

Not only are gang members freely carrying guns knowing they are unlikely to be stopped by police, but other criminals have also been emboldened by the service's decision not to respond to various non-violent crimes and other incidents.

Police now only respond to collisions if someone is seriously injured, they no longer respond to vehicle break-ins, LCBO and other retail thefts, or security alarms at homes or businesses unless it's verified the thief or burglar is on site.

Citizens feel more and more that they are ?on their own.? And they are not wrong for thinking this way.

We can thank our lucky stars that our communities are not infected with the same kind of malaise, but the bigger question is how long can we escape?

Members of the OPP across the province are clamoring to get transferred to our communities for many of the same reasons we choose to life here.

Like relative peace and safety. Like community spirit and commitment to cause.

These are all valuable things.