

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Moose Jaw & District EMS donated nearly \$6,000 to Sask. Party

University of Regina professor says donation “one of those lovely, interesting grey areas.”

JANE GERSTER

MOOSE JAW TIMES-HERALD

Moose Jaw & District EMS has donated nearly \$6,000 to Premier Brad Wall's Saskatchewan Party since 2007, according to a Progress Alberta database.

The left-wing advocacy group tracked donations valued at \$250 or more, including from Moose Jaw Husky, Moose Jaw Refinery Partnership, Moose Jaw Toyota, Moose Jaw Value Express and Moose Jaw & District Chamber of Commerce. The local donations ranged up to \$2,500 at a single time.

Coverage of the database has zeroed in on out-of-province donations as well as donations from universities and health regions, but University of Regina political science professor Jim Farney said cases like Moose Jaw EMS are “one of those lovely, interesting grey areas.”

“Under the law it's legal,” Farney said, “but donating money is really messy.”

The bulk of Moose Jaw & District EMS's donations were made by its previous owners: \$2,500 in 2007, \$400 in 2009, \$812 in 2010. A total of \$376 was donated in 2011, the year ownership was transferred to Kyle and Angela Sereda. The Seredas later donated \$540 in 2013.

Kyle Sereda said they made the donation because the Saskatchewan Party's health mandates aligned with Moose Jaw & District EMS's.

“As a contracted provider,” Sereda said, “we support governments that ... offer support for delivery of those services in that manner.”

Moose Jaw & District EMS is a private organization contracted by the Five Hills Health Region to provide ambulance services locally. It receives a provincial subsidy for the work it does.

That is what makes the donations potentially messy, said Farney, even though they are legal. It's an ethical question likely to face increased scrutiny, he said, “as we start to do more



JANE GERSTER/TIMES-HERALD

Moose Jaw and District Emergency Medical Services donated \$540 to Premier Brad Wall's party in 2013.

things through public-private partnerships.”

“I imagine it wouldn't be just EMS groups,” Farney said. “It would be, say, heavy construction firms that do highways.”

Executive director of Progress Alberta Duncan Kinney said having public or publicly funded services donating to a ruling political party “is extremely troublesome.”

“It has a harmful effect on democracy,” Kinney said. “These are organizations that receive some or most of their funding from the taxpayer of Saskatchewan and then they're turning around and donating to the Saskatchewan Party. There's just an inherent conflict of interest there that's obvious.”

Moose Jaw & District EMS considers its donations very carefully, Sereda said, always mindful of what is legal and what is considered appropriate.

“If it was deemed that a contracted provider of health services would fall in that grey area then certainly we would consider it. Certainly we at this time

don't believe it does,” he said.

“We do provide a public service as it were, but I would stress the fact that it is a contracted provider.”

Moose Jaw donations of more than \$250 to Premier Brad Wall's Party:

Moose Jaw & District Chamber of Commerce:

- \$259.88 in 2007
- \$300 in 2009
- \$344 in 2011

Moose Jaw & District EMS:

- \$2,500 in 2007
- \$400 in 2009
- \$812 in 2010
- \$376 in 2011
- \$540 in 2013

Moose Jaw Husky:

- \$2,500 in 2007

Moose Jaw Value Express:

- \$580 in 2010

Moose Jaw Refinery Partnership:

- \$812 in 2010
- \$688 in 2011
- \$864 in 2013
- \$880.95 in 2014

Moose Jaw Toyota:

- \$1,275 in 2007
- \$500 in 2009
- \$812 in 2010
- \$1,420 in 2011
- \$432 in 2013

*a full list can be viewed on Progress Alberta's website

CRIME

Police charge man with arson

WILLIAM STODALKA

MOOSE JAW TIMES-HERALD

A man faces charges of arson after a house fire Sunday evening.

Police said that around 11:30 p.m.

Sunday, they attended to a house fire on the 1000 block of Athabasca Street East.

Damage was estimated at \$80,000, but there were no injuries.

One man, Daniel Bloomfield, was ar-

rested and charged with arson.

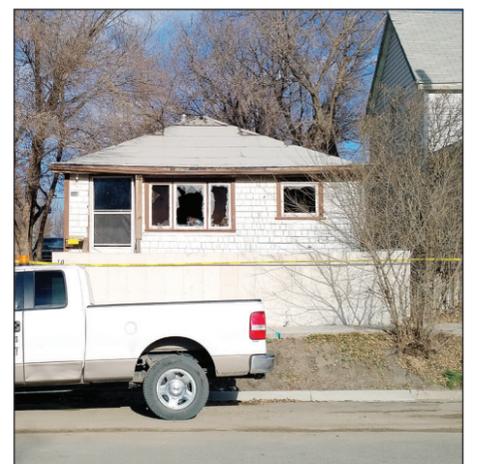
According to Moose Jaw Police Sgt. Rick Johns, Bloomfield was an occupant of the house at the time of the blaze, and he is believed to be alone at the time.

“We're still trying to determine who the actual owner is, if he's the renter, or the owner.”

Bloomfield appeared in court Monday. Crown counsel was opposed to release and his defence asked for the preparation of a bail report.

He is expected to appear in court again Nov. 17.

Until then, Bloomfield remains in custody.



WILLIAM STODALKA/TIMES-HERALD

Police attended to this house fire Sunday evening on the 1000 block of Athabasca Street East.

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