

Vancouver police officer recovering after being shot

by BWNS & Cheryl McDermott

A ten-year veteran of the Vancouver Police Department underwent surgery Thursday morning and is recovering from a gun shot wound he suffered during a SWAT operation on July 18 when a wanted man barricaded himself inside a southeast Vancouver residence with a hostage. Both the officer and the hostage were shot before the suspect was captured, police reported.

Cpl. Chris LeBlanc - 2002 photo submitted by VPD According to Kim Kapp, the department's Public Information Coordinator, Corporal Chris LeBlanc was injured in a Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) operation at a residence in the 15600 block of SE 12th Street in Vancouver at about 7:20 a.m. Wednesday.

Law enforcement personnel were negotiating with a man wanted for outstanding warrants for drugs and firearms charges, who allegedly held a hostage at the southeast Vancouver home for several hours and threatened him harm. A shot was fired toward officers from inside the home, and the SWAT team was called in.

Corporal LeBlanc was shot when SWAT team members entered the residence when the life of the hostage was threatened. The officer was transported to SW Washington Medical Center and admitted in serious condition.

The Portland Police Bureau Special Emergency Reaction Team (SERT) was eventually brought in to relieve the SWAT team, then the Washington County Tactical Negotiations Team (TNT) was called in to relieve SERT and take over on scene tactical operations. They remained on scene until approximately 1:30 a.m. on July 19 when members of the Gresham-Multnomah County SWAT Team transitioned into the tactical role.

Eleven nearby homes were evacuated, and at 7 p.m. the hostage was released and was transported to SW Washington Medical Center for treatment for a single gunshot wound to the abdomen, the news release stated.

At 3:30 a.m., Gresham-Multnomah County SWAT Team members set off one pre-set, controlled explosive charge in a window that allowed them to introduce tear gas into the residence and make entry. The suspect, identified as 28-year old Matthew R. Hastings, was taken into custody without incident and was transported to the Clark County Jail.

Corporal LeBlanc began his career with the Vancouver Police Department in April 1997 and was promoted to Corporal in November 2006. He was most recently assigned to the special operations division after working in patrol, Kapp said. LeBlanc is a long-time member of the SW Washington Regional SWAT Team.

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