

# local



R&B superstar Beyoncé Knowles, left, is making a stop on her B'day concert tour in Vancouver tonight. The 10-time Grammy-Award winning songstress performs at GM Place. **METRO VANCOUVER**

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# 'It's almost unbearable'

Balloon crash victims mourned

By **RAFE ARNOTT**  
 Metro Vancouver

Emotions ran high as friends and family streamed from the Langley church yesterday where Shannon and Jemma Knackstedt were remembered.

The mother and daughter died in a fiery balloon crash on Aug. 24. Eleven others were injured.

### expressing sorrow

» "My heart is particularly with the Knackstedt family," Stephen Pennock, the balloon's pilot, wrote. "Words cannot express the depth of my sorrow."

More than 1,400 mourners turned out to pay their respects to the two women described as shining lights.

After the memorial service, long-time family friend Gerald Leger's eyes were red from

crying.

"It's kind of hard to explain — two people are taken — it's heartbreaking. It's almost unbearable."

Kait Farmer worked with Jemma, who was 21, at a local deli. She said Jemma "took every day as it came."

Vicki Matts, the deli's owner, said she knew the family for 17 years. She remembers Jemma as feisty and spunky. "Our little Jemma Poo-Poo we used to call her," she said holding back tears.



Reverend Anna Christie outside the church where Jemma and Shannon Knackstedt were remembered yesterday.

## Oak Bay victims stabbed

Five people killed in a murder-suicide in an affluent Victoria suburb Tuesday died from multiple stab wounds inflicted by a four-inch, double-bladed knife, a coroner said yesterday.

Rose Stanton, regional coroner for Vancouver Island, said Peter Lee killed his spouse's parents before he killed his estranged wife, their six-year-old son and finally himself.

The bodies of Lee, 38, his wife Sunny Yong Sun Park, 32, and their son Christian Lee, 6, as well as her parents, Kum Lea Chun, 59 and Moon Kyu Park, 66, were removed from the \$1-million Oak Bay house Wednesday evening.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

## Addiction centre lauded

By **KRISTEN THOMPSON**  
 Metro Vancouver

Last year, Lauren Gill was a drug-addicted teenager living on the streets of Vancouver.

She had been in 20 short-term addictions services before finding Portage, a peer-driven, long-term addictions treatment program in Montreal.

"The program saved my life," said Gill, 18, now sober.

She spoke yesterday at the Downtown Eastside Youth Activities Centre, where Health Minister George Abbott announced the planned opening of B.C.'s first long-term residential facility.

Vancouver Coastal Health and Fraser Health, in collaboration with several non-profit

organizations, pooled their resources to create The Crossing, set to open next August.

### youth allocation

» Of the 1,038 addiction withdrawal treatment beds currently in B.C., 160 are allocated for youth.

The facility will provide Portage's six- to 12-month program for addicted youth in Keremeos, just south of Penticton, an option unavailable to B.C.'s addicts.

"If (my friends) could be given the opportunity I was given they might not have to live in the shadows," said Gill.

Rob Ruttan, a member of Grief to Action, an association of family and friends of people with addictions, says his son needed to be sent to a Portage program in the Maritimes. He said the new facility will save lives.

## Chopper \$2M wings



B.C. solicitor general John Les discusses the finer points of the province's first dedicated traffic safety helicopter — Air 1 — as press get their first glimpse of the \$2 million bird at the Vancouver Airport's South Terminal yesterday.

## » news In Brief

**DRAGGED** A pickup truck was dragged for almost 100 metres yesterday morning after it was struck by a Whistler Mountaineer passenger train in West Vancouver. The driver was rushed to hospital and is reported to be in stable condition with non-life threatening injuries.

**FUNERAL** A funeral will be held tomorrow for Joshua Bates, who was killed accidentally in Langley last week after being hit by a car that jumped a curb, news1130.com reports. The six-year-old will be remembered at Saint George's Anglican Church in Fort Langley. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

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