

BRANDON SUN



WEDNESDAY

MARCH 4, 2009

Li 'commanded to kill'



RCMP officers keep an eye on the Greyhound bus on July 31, 2008, about 18 km west of Portage la Prairie. (File)

Psychiatrist: 'Decent person' heard voices

WARNING: CONTENTS OF THIS TRIAL COVERAGE COULD OFFEND READERS.

BY MIKE MCINTYRE

WINNIPEG — He claims voices in his head from God caused him to single out a perfect stranger, stab him multiple times and then decapitate, defile and cannibalize the body in front of dozens of horrified witnesses.

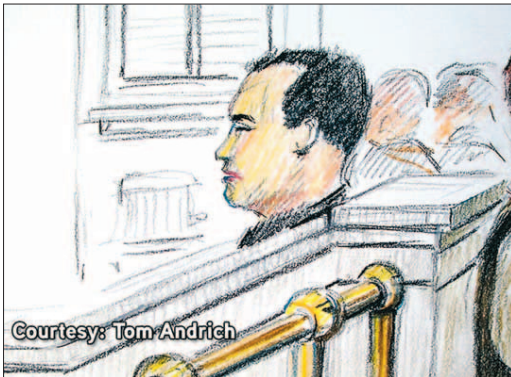
But despite committing one of the most gruesome crimes in Canadian history, Vincent Li could be rehabilitated enough to return to the streets one day, according to his doctor.

Psychiatrist Stanley Yaren told Li's second-degree murder trial Tuesday that the admitted killer has a very strong chance to recover from the major mental illness and extreme psychosis that triggered last summer's slaying of 22-year-old Tim McLean on board a Greyhound bus.

He described Li as an otherwise "decent person" who was suffering from untreated schizophrenia and clearly out of his mind when he believed he was acting on God's commands to eliminate "the force of evil" by attacking the sleeping McLean.

"He was being tormented by auditory hallucinations," said Yaren, who has worked closely with Li at the Health Sciences Centre psychiatric ward since he arrived last August. "He believed Mr. McLean was a force of evil and was about to execute him. He had to act fast, urgently, to save himself. This wasn't an innocent bystander and stranger he chose to kill, but rather an evil force he was commanded to kill."

Yaren, a witness on behalf of the Crown who is the director of forensic psychiatry for both the province and the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, has concluded Li should be found not criminally responsible for his actions based on his mental



Court sketch of Vince Li on the first day of his trial in Winnipeg on Tuesday. Li, 40, is charged with second-degree murder in the grisly slaying of carnival worker Tim McLean, 22, near Portage la Prairie on July 30, 2008. (Tom Andrich/CWNS)

state at the time.

Such a ruling would send him to a hospital, instead of a prison, for an indefinite period. Li admits he killed McLean, but rather his case Tuesday by pleading not guilty by reason of a mental disorder.

"He didn't understand, in my opinion, that he was just killing an innocent bystander. He understood this was the only action he could take," Yaren told Queen's Bench Justice John Scurfield.

Once McLean was obviously dead from dozens of stab wounds to the back and chest, Li continued to hear voices demanding he attack the body, he said.

"He was terrified, frightened, tormented. Mr. Li's fear, because of what he was being told through these hallucinated voices, is that what he perceived to be the evil being would come back to life, through some supernatural powers and finish him off. He

was in a frenzy to prevent this from happening," Yaren said.

He said Li has been co-operative and made significant strides since being hospitalized and medicated and could function again in the community — something Yaren admits doesn't sit well with most people, including the victim's family.

"I completely understand the need for a sense of justice, of retribution," Yaren said. "It would be in some sense easier if Mr. Li was an anti-social psychopath with a history of malicious behaviour, but he isn't that. He is, as I've come to know him, a decent person. He is as much a victim of this horrendous illness ... as Mr. McLean was a victim. Don't hate the person. Hate the illness."

Yaren conceded Li's actions could not have been predicted, given that he had no prior criminal record or history of any violence.

Man did odd things in last days of July '08

WARNING: CONTENTS OF THIS TRIAL COVERAGE COULD OFFEND READERS.

BY MIKE MCINTYRE

WINNIPEG — He boarded the Greyhound bus in Edmonton just after midnight last July 29, leaving a note in the apartment he shared with his ex-wife.

"I'm gone. Don't look for me. I wish you were happy," Vincent Li wrote, according to testimony heard Tuesday at his second-degree murder trial.

Li — travelling under the bogus name of Wong Pent — had a one-way ticket to Thunder Bay.

But he got off the bus in the early evening hours of July 29 in the community of Erickson.

He would spend the next 24 hours in Erickson, spending most of the time sleeping and sitting on a park bench.

Li also sold and burned many of his possessions, later telling a psychiatrist that he was acting on God's orders.

Li called his ex-wife around 6 a.m. on July 30 but made little sense.

"He was talking to her about the Yellow River in China," Crown attorney Joyce Dalmyan told court.

Some of the conversation was in English, the rest in Mandarin.

Li told his ex-wife he would return home once he "set up."

He boarded the daily Thunder Bay-bound Greyhound that passed through Erickson later that afternoon, taking a seat near the front.



Carol deDelley (left), mother of Tim McLean, and family members leave the Law Courts in Winnipeg on Tuesday after the first day of the trial of Vince Li, charged with second-degree murder in the beheading of McLean on a Greyhound bus last summer.

(The Canadian Press)

• See 'Defendant' — Page A4

• See 'Li' — Page A4

Career symposium remains a popular draw

BY ALLISON DOWD

Though the instability of the Canadian economy has left the future of some jobs across the country in doubt, a sense of optimism was still palpable in the Keystone Centre yesterday during the 24th edition of the Brandon Career Symposium.

By the time the annual symposium wraps up this afternoon, co-ordinator Matt Duboff says an estimated 3,800 high school students will have attended the three-day event, many of whom have come to see the symposium as a one-stop shop to set them on the right path to their professional futures.

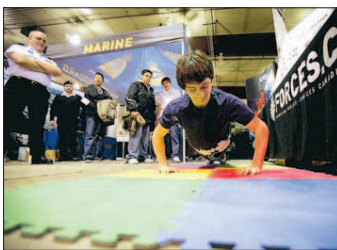
"It's just a centralized place for people to connect with employers, so they can realize what qualifications they need

to do a certain job. It helps them focus on what they want to do if they don't have a sure idea ... there are just so many options to look into," Duboff said.

The number of exhibitors this year, at 119, is slightly higher than last year. They range from colleges and universities to certified general accountants and police services, though Duboff noted, for reasons unknown, the average size of the exhibitor booths has decreased.

However, with Monday night's free open house attracting almost 500 people from the general public, it's clear that, for some, the search for the perfect career never stops.

"It just shows the people are still looking for dynamic jobs,"



Vincent Massey student Travis Singbeil puts in the effort to finish the minimum 50 push-ups to win himself a T-shirt at the Canadian Forces booth at the Brandon Career Symposium on Tuesday afternoon. (Bruce Burnstead/Brandon Sun)

Duboff said "They're looking to improve their education with any opportunity they can get."

Recruiters with the University of Regina made their annual trek to Brandon

the symposium, hoping to catch the interest of people, both young and old, looking to head west for a unique educational experience.

"We really stress that, during this time, it's really important to get your university degree because a lot of the jobs out there are asking for at least a university degree," says Thy-Thy Quach, a student recruitment officer with the U of R. "Also, all of our programs have some sort of work experience component to it. When you graduate, they have something to show potential employers along with their degree."

The Manitoba Association of Health Care Professionals is making its first appearance at the Brandon event in an attempt to stimulate interest in

the health-care field.

"It's really just about educating people, so they know about who we are and get to know about health care," says Kathy, one of the association's exhibitors, who requested that her last name not be used.

"A lot of times, people don't really know that there's such a wide range of professions in health care. And there's a lot of opportunities in health care right now ... we're just saying, 'Give health care a thought.'"

That's right up Jenna English's alley, as the Grade 9 student from Vincent Massey high school told the Sun she has already got her sights firmly set on a career in either physiotherapy or occupational therapy.

• See 'Student' — Page A2

Advertisement for Lotto 649 with a \$17 million jackpot on Wednesday. Includes a photo of a person holding a lottery ticket and a barcode with the number 7 76639 00006 2.



Bridal history

TOP: Curator Eileen Trott works on displays in the Daly House Museum's latest exhibit, entitled "And the Bride Wore White: A Century of Wedding Fashion." The museum is opening the show with a reception this Thursday evening.

RIGHT: A series of stereo wedding pictures is seen at the Daly House Museum.



LEFT: A gown is shown on display at the Daly House Museum.

RIGHT: The Victorian-era family bible of Alexander Shewan is seen next to a bridal gown on display at the Daly House Museum.

(All photos by Colin Corneau /Brandon Sun)

Student wants to do something she likes

Continued from Page A1

"Ever since I was little, I just thought it was kind of cool because a lot of people in my family are nurses and they really like it, so I just think it would be interesting," she said.

"I'm going to be taking biology and physics and stuff in Grade 11, and right now, I'm trying to get my math marks right up there so I can have the skills I need to get into college."

After putting her push-up skills to the test at the Canadian Forces booth, Roblin high school student Jennifer Friesen says she has definitely ruled out a career in the physical realm.

"I'm just looking around, just having fun, really," Friesen said.

"I've actually already picked out what I want to do. I want to go into writing — journalism or something."

And though it's certainly fun to jump into a military tank and pretend for even a few minutes that a career in the army is in the cards, for Friesen, it's all about keeping focused on what she loves — not seeking out the biggest paycheck.

"Anybody can make money. Doing something — and doing something that you like at the same time — that's the tough part," she said.

The symposium is open to students from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. today.

adow@bransonsun.com

Winnipeg plane lands on its belly; no injuries

BY KEVIN ROLLASON

WINNIPEG — The same twin-engine Perimeter Aviation plane that landed on its belly on Tuesday when one of its landing gear failed to open encountered a similar landing gear problem 24 hours earlier.

And a third Perimeter plane was forced to turn back and land in Winnipeg shortly after takeoff on Monday after a light indicated overheating in the wing.

According to a Transport Canada report, the twin-engine Metro, with two crew and eight passengers, was en route from St. Theresa Point and on its approach to Winnipeg's James Richardson International Airport on Tuesday shortly before 11 a.m., when the crew was forced to perform a missed approach when the plane's right main landing gear would not open to the locked position.

The crew tried to land with the right main gear up, hoping it would extend. But when it didn't, they came back again to land the plane on its belly on the runway.

All 10 people walked off the plane, but were taken to hospital as a precaution. The incident forced Runway 18 to close for more than an hour and delayed the landing of an Air Canada plane. But according to an incident report, the same plane, at about

the same time on Monday, was approaching Winnipeg from Island Lake, when the crew flew a circle around the airport while checking out an unsafe gear indication light.

The plane landed safely without incident six minutes later at about noon.

Peter Hildebrand of the Transportation Safety Board of Canada said investigators are going over the plane, which is now inside a hangar.

Hildebrand said investigators are looking into both incidents. He said the focus of the investigation is the landing gear doors, but he said part of the problem is the wear and tear the planes go through when landing on predominately gravel runways at reserves and rural communities.

"It puts additional pressure on the mechanisms," he said. Hildebrand said the flight crew on Tuesday did everything they could to land safely, from flying more than an hour to use up fuel to turning off the engines before they could be damaged on the ground.

"It was a smooth and well-executed landing," he said.

"They performed by the book and did everything possible to bring it to a safe conclusion. "And it did arrive safely — they all walked away without any injuries."

FPWS

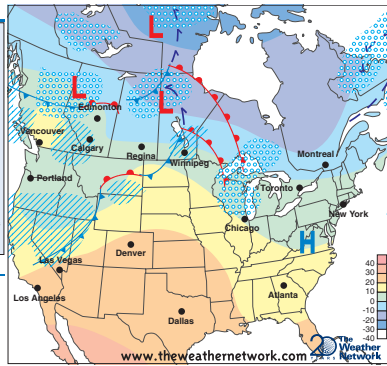
THURSDAY ... GARBAGE DAY 4 ... SCHOOL DAY 6

Western Manitoba Forecast

TODAY	TONIGHT	TOMORROW
Cloudy with a few flurries ending in the morning, mainly sunny with cloudy periods in the afternoon. High 3.	Variably cloudy. Low -5.	Cloudy with sunny breaks. High 6. Low -12.
FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mainly sunny with cloudy periods. High -8. Low -15.	Sunny. High -4. Low -8.	Mainly cloudy with a chance of flurries (pop 80%). High -1. Low -16.

Canada Today

Calgary	m.sunny	6/-12	Prince Rupert	rain/snow	4/0
Charlottetown	flurries	-10/-14	Quebec City	sunny	-11/-18
Edmonton	p.cloudy	-9/-18	Regina	p.cloudy	1/-7
Estevan	p.cloudy	4/-13	Saint John	sunny	-8/-12
Dauphin	p.cloudy	2/-5	Saskatoon	p.cloudy	-3/-10
Dryden	flurries	-1/4	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Fredrickton	sunny	-8/-15	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Halifax	p.cloudy	-6/-11	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Kipisskasing	sunny	-5/-11	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Lethbridge	m.sunny	8/-9	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Moncton	p.cloudy	-9/-14	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Montreal	p.cloudy	-7/-17	St. John's	rain	5/-7
North Bay	sunny	-7/-14	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Ottawa	sunny	-6/-16	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Prince Albert	p.sunny	-11/-11	St. John's	rain	5/-7
Prince George	flurries	2/-10	St. John's	rain	5/-7



Regional Temperatures

Dauphin	3/-4
Russell	
Shoal Lake	1/-5
Carberry	3/-6
Winnipeg	2/-2
Brandon	3/-5
Portage la Prairie	3/-6
Melita	2/-3
Killarney	

The Daily Skies

Sunrise: 7:16 a.m. Moonrise: 10:34 a.m.
 Sunset: 6:27 p.m. Moonset: 3:08 a.m.

Mar 4 Mar 11 Mar 18 Mar 25

Almanac

Temperature	High	Low
Normal	-6.4°	-18.4°
Yesterday	-4°	-13.3°
Precipitation	Today's Normals	0.3mm
Yesterday		0 mm

Wind Chill

This morning: -9
 This afternoon: -1
 This evening: -8

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PASSINGS: JONES, Richard Alexander