

# Slain journalist remembered for her kindness, tenacity

By JOAN DELANEY  
Epoch Times Staff

One of the last articles by journalist Michelle Lang was a memorial she wrote on Boxing Day for Lt. Andrew Nuttall who was killed Dec. 23 by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan.

Just four days later, Lang and four Canadian soldiers met the same fate, but in an area thought to be one of the more peaceful in war-torn Kandahar and one where no Canadians had been attacked before.

The remains of the four soldiers—Sgt. George Miok, Sgt. Kirk Taylor, Cpl. Zachery McCormack, and Pte. Garrett William Chidley—along with that of Lang were returned to Canada on Sunday.

The soldiers, who were part of the

**‘It feels as though all our pages should be black.’**

— Calgary Herald Editorial

Provincial Construction Team, were on a routine patrol when the incident occurred. Four other soldiers and an official member of Canada's civilian personnel were injured in the powerful explosion on Dec. 30.

Lang, 34, a Calgary Herald reporter working for Canwest News Service, is the first Canadian reporter to die while covering the eight-year military mission in Afghanistan.

Tributes from both high-level officials and ordinary Canadians have been pouring in for the award-winning journalist who had been in Afghanistan for only two weeks.

Lang's colleagues at the Herald, who remember her as a tenacious, fair-minded, and hard-working reporter as well as an all round nice person, are still feeling her loss.

“We are still speaking of her as if she is alive, for it is so difficult to accept that our beloved colleague is gone,” said a Jan. 2 editorial in the paper.

“It was impossible, almost, to put out today's paper, to run stories and letters and commentary that do not speak about our Michelle. It feels as though all our pages should be

black.”

Lang was engaged and planned to marry in July. Her fiancé Michael Louie said in a statement that he is struggling to come to terms with her death.

“This is clearly the darkest and most painful moment of my life,” Louie wrote. “Michelle could light up any room she walked into. Those who had the privilege of knowing her professionally and personally will always remember her warmth, her kindness, and the positive impacts that she made wherever she went.”

Those positive impacts were also evident in the Afghan war zone, where Lang, who had previously covered the Herald's health beat, was quick to earn the respect of those she met.

Canadian Brig-Gen. Daniel Ménard said from Afghanistan on behalf of the military that Lang's “sensitivity and ability to connect with people touched many of us.”

In a letter published in the Calgary Herald, Sandy Keeler, a civilian volunteer with the Afghanistan mission whom Lang interviewed days before her death, wrote: “Michelle lived her

truth and should be remembered as someone who gave her life for what she believed in—getting her story told.”

The loss of the four soldiers raises the death toll of the Canadian military in Afghanistan to 138.

The remains of the five were flown to Canadian Forces Base Trenton in Ontario where they were met by family members and an official party that included Governor General Michaëlle Jean, Defence Minister Peter MacKay, and Gen. Walt Natynczyk, Canada's chief of defence.

A tearful Louie placed a red rose on Lang's casket before rejoining a group of mourners that included the reporter's family and colleagues from the Herald and Canwest News Service.

As hearses carrying the flag-draped coffins made their way along the Highway of Heroes on Sunday evening, throngs of Canadians braved the bitter cold to pay their last respects.

After routine autopsies conducted by the provincial coroner's office in Toronto, the victims' remains will be released to their families.



Journalist Michelle Lang and four Canadian soldiers were killed in the Kandahar City area of Afghanistan when the military vehicle they were travelling in struck a roadside bomb. CHRIS BOLIN

## Ancient tradition brings Olympic spirit to Canada's Far North

By HELENA ZHU  
Epoch Times Staff

VANCOUVER—As Vancouver prepares to host the world for the 2010 Winter Games, an Olympics initiative will see 17 boxes of sporting goods donated to children in Canada's Far North.

Throughout this week, children in 17 of Canada's most remote northern communities will receive the Olympic Spirit Boxes which are filled with equipment for hockey, soccer, lacrosse, baseball, and basketball.

The boxes hold enough to fully equip two teams for each of the five sports in 20 Aboriginal communities located in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.

The initiative, which is intended to enhance existing sport programs in the communities, is part of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Truce Program.

The 2010 Games marks the first time Canada has been responsible for Olympic Truce efforts—an ancient tradition dating back to 776 BC in Greece that was revitalized in 1992. The philoso-

phy behind it is that sport can inspire peace.

“The Inuit have long understood the ability of traditional games or sport to bring people together from different places to develop friendships and strengthen cultural traditions,” said Mary Simon, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, in a statement.

“That's why we're so pleased with this project—not only will it bring much needed sports equipment to some of our most remote communities, it's also focused on developing the athletic skills

and leadership abilities of our children, who are our legacy and our future.”

The Vancouver 2010 Olympic Truce Northern Outreach Project was created by Olympics organizers in partnership with the Canadian Forces and the United Nations Association in Canada (UNAC) as a way to help children lead active and positive lifestyles through sport.

In addition to the donated goods, UNAC will send a UN facilitator to hold workshops in each of the 20 communities to teach youth to inspire and educate others about physical activity and the val-

ues of sport.

“Participation in sport and a sense of teamwork can truly motivate youth to become engaged in their communities,” said Kate White, UNAC's executive director. “With the power and the spirit of the Olympic Games behind it, the initiative has even more potential to inspire the children involved.”

Upon arrival, the equipment will be presented by Sharon Firth, a four-time Olympian and member of the Gwich'in First Nation in the Northwest Territories; Blythe Hartley, an Olympic bronze med-

alist and world champion in diving; and Olympic mascots Quatchi and Miga.

The Olympic Spirit Boxes will be delivered to the Northwest Territories' communities of Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, and Hay River separately in early February, making a total of 20 communities.

Most of the goods were donated by Nike, the official high performance sporting goods manufacturer for the Games. The hockey sticks were provided by the National Hockey League's Vancouver Canucks, Edmonton Oilers, and Calgary Flames.



Google chief executive Eric Schmidt speaks to the press at the newly restored National Museum in Baghdad on Nov. 24, 2009. SABAH ARAR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

## Google Loses Groovle.com Dispute

By JOAN DELANEY  
Epoch Times Staff

Canadians Jacob Fuller and Ryan Fitzgibbon get to keep the domain name Groovle.com after an arbitration panel ruled that the name is sufficiently different from Google.com.

Google filed a complaint in November arguing that Groovle.com was “nearly identical or confusingly similar” to its own Google trademark.

The panel, which is accredited by web overseer Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, decided that Media 207, a Canadian Web development and marketing company, can continue to use the domain name Groovle.com.

The panel ruled that adding an R

and replacing the second G with a V “creates an entirely new word and conveys an entirely singular meaning” from Google's name.

“Google never had anything to fear from our web site. The arbitrators' decision that the two domain names are sufficiently different should put Google at ease and we look forward to a renewed positive relationship with Google,” Fuller said in a statement.

“Google clearly miscalculated here, however, my clients are prepared to put this behind them,” said Internet law expert Zak Muscovitch who defended Groovle.

The decision marks only the second time Google has lost in the 65 domain name disputes it has commenced to date. In 2004, the Inter-

net search giant lost its challenge of the domain name froogles.com when a panel found that “the dissimilar letters in the domain name are sufficiently different to make it distinguishable.”

Google received another setback recently when a French court ruled that it cannot digitize French books without publishers' approval. Google was ordered to pay 300,000 euros (US\$430,000) in damages to publishers owned by La Martinière.

In its plan to scan as many as 40 million books and make them searchable online, Google has been criticized by publishers and libraries in both the U.S. and Europe for scanning books without copyright permission.

## Prorogued Parliament a political liability, says expert

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Harper's decision to postpone parliament will also hit a reset button on all legislation before the house.

“Two prorogations in just over 14 months is at best unusual. So is the fact that both of them have been for the political convenience of the party in power rather than for the normally legitimate reason that Parliament had substantially finished with one set of bills and was ready for a new beginning,” said Van Loon, who also worked as the associate deputy minister

## Canada open to organized crime, says expert

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Vancouver erupted in gang violence in late 2008 and 2009 when the flow of cocaine from Mexico slowed due to the drug war being fought there between rival cartels and the Mexican government. As the cost of cocaine soared 60 percent, criminal groups previously focused on the marijuana trade moved in and battled with established rival crime groups.

But Montreal is unique in how well entrenched its criminal groups have become in the corporate and political fabric. Macleans published an October cover story about the shameful state of the city titled, “Montreal is a disaster: The once-glamorous city is now a corrupt, crumbling, mob-riddled disgrace. What went wrong?” Among other things, the article detailed corruption scandals in the municipal government.

Montreal has also been a kind of international innovator for criminal groups where potential rivals would instead divide up portions of the drug trade and find ways to work together.

That kind of cooperation is why very little is heard about organized crime in Toronto, says Nicaso.

Toronto has several criminal organizations but there is a balance of power at the moment with each group sharing some portion of the drug trade and other illicit activities.

“At the moment there is no conflict, so practically we don't see anything,” he says. “But when you fight over turf, criminals become more visible. In Calgary there is an ongoing feud between two Asian gangs that used to be one.”

While street gangs are likely to fight for simple reasons and catch the media and government's attention, the Quebec Mafia attempted to keep a low profile and was more business orientated.

“They spend more time in the attempt to legitimize their activities—to move into the corporate sector of crime—and they lose track of the street. That is what happened in Quebec,” says Nicaso.

The Mafia has focused much of its efforts on the construction industry where a recent Radio Canada (CBC's French network) investigation found wide-ranging price-fixing involving some 14 construction firms that dominate the bids for public works projects. In some cases, Hells Angels' muscle was reportedly used to intimidate rival firms.

The report said the price-fixing scheme has driven up the cost of infrastructure contracts by 35 percent. Radio Canada cited one former bureaucrat who claimed the Mafia controls 80 percent of road contracts in Montreal.

In 2008, a Transport Canada study found one kilometre of road

cost 37 percent more to build in Quebec than the average cost in the rest of the country. Urban roads cost 46 percent more, while rural roads cost 26 percent more.

Quebec was also home to a bloody turf war that erupted in the 1990s when the newly formed Rock Machine motorcycle gang took on the Hells Angels who dominated the street-level drug trade. Over the years, the battle claimed 150 lives but public outrage and political will to combat the problem did not emerge until 11-year-old Daniel Desrochers was killed when a car bomb exploded outside a biker hangout.

In 2000, Le Journal de Montréal's crime reporter Michel Auger was shot in the newspaper's parking lot after it published an in-depth article by Auger on the fight for power between Quebec's biker gangs and Mafia organizations.

But in some ways, the lack of obvious signs is a greater problem. Without turf wars and public outrage, Canadian politicians seem relatively indifferent to the dangers posed by organized crime.

Quebec's ruling Liberal party has so far refused to hold a public inquiry. And when the RCMP concluded that the country's largest airports had been infiltrated by hundreds of criminal groups involved in drug smuggling and human trafficking, the announcement did not produce



Nick Rizzuto Sr. leaves the church with family after his grandson Nick Rizzuto's funeral in Montreal on January 2. REUTERS/CHRISTINNE MUSCHI

a noticeable political response.

Nicaso says Canada has become a haven for criminals because of a lower risk of prosecution and detention than other countries and a propensity for prosecutors to plea bargain light sentences for guilty pleas in order to avoid costly trials.

“We are country of crime but not of punishment because the Department of Justice unfortunately likes to make deals with criminals.”

All crime groups have branches

in Canada and that will continue as long as politicians lack the will to fight crime in a way that matters, Nicaso says.

“We have to hit the criminals in the pocket, where it hurts the most.” He advocates an aggressive national strategy to go after the proceeds of crime.

“If we don't change this attitude ... we will have more crime, more violence, but most of all, more criminals from all over the world.”

**‘Two prorogations in just over 14 months is at best unusual.’**

— Richard Van Loon

for Health Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs.

Van Loon said he supported the Conservatives first prorogation because he considered the coalition of opposition parties looking to take control of Parliament to be illegitimate. But this time around, he disagrees with the move.

“Whatever one thinks of the noise level in Parliament, one at least has to consider that it is the major way in which a government is held accountable, and yet as soon as it started to bite, Mr Harper runs for cover.”

In announcing on December 30 that Parliament will resume with a new throne speech focused on economic recovery, the Prime Minister said the government will use the time to figure out how to restore a balanced budget and further Canada's economic recovery.

“Our priority in the new session of Parliament will continue to be rapid and effective implementation of Canada's Economic Action Plan to benefit communities, workers and businesses,” Harper said.