# [***First night a wild one for police***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:47KF-3PN0-01D6-Y558-00000-00&context=1516831)

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

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**Body**

New Year's Eve was a zoo in Greater Victoria.

A ***cell phone*** was mistaken for a handgun. Drunks filled up the Victoria and Saanich police cells and spilled over into the sheriff's cells at the Victoria courthouse. There were assaults, knife calls, fights between loved ones and not-so-loved ones. And the madness didn't end at midnight.

Times Colonist, with files from Emily Bowers

A Central Saanich woman was arrested for impaired driving after a breathalyser test showed she had a blood alcohol level of more than three times the legal limit of 0.08. She was on her way to work and was pulled over on the Patricia Bay Highway at 6:45 a.m.

"She'd been drinking the night before and thought she was fine," said Saanich police Sgt. Ed Illi.

Saanich police had a wild night, said Illi. They handled 500 calls. Of those, 199 were emergency calls.

"Our cells were at double capacity. We had 12 people in custody, some for intoxication, some for assault and one for a stolen car," Illi said.

Just before midnight, an intoxicated teenager threatened a bus driver with a piece of glass before getting off the bus in the 500-block of Gorge Road West.

In Victoria, a man walking along Yates Street was taken down by police at gunpoint and searched after someone called 911 to report a man walking along the street with a gun. "We later determined it was a ***cellphone*** tucked into his waistband that someone had mistaken for a gun," said Sgt. Del Manak.

Police also defused five situations where people were threatening to hurt either themselves or others with a knife.

Victoria police arrested 53 people for being intoxicated in a public place.

"All the cells were doubled up. Each cell had two people in it," said Manak.

Revellers started drinking early, but most did not end up in cells. Police told the friends of intoxicated people to take them home and look after them.

"We had to pick and choose who to bring into custody," said Manak.

Oak Bay police arrested a few teenagers who were stumbling down Oak Bay Avenue after leaving a house party.

West Shore RCMP ended the evening with seven people in custody, said Cpl. Jack Gallup. They were occupied with mostly alcohol-related calls, but at 4 a.m. on Strathmore Road in Langford, a car stolen from Nanaimo was set on fire. Police have no suspects.

It was much of the same farther up the Island. Mounties in Nanaimo took 51 people into custody. The city's downtown celebration went smoothly, said Staff Sgt. Bruce Wylie. But officers, including an extra 15 on duty, were kept busy with calls to bars and house parties for complaints of noise and public drunkenness.

In Campbell River, 18 people were arrested.

**Graphic**

Color Photo: Darren Stone, Times Colonist; A couple kisses at the stroke of midnight during a New Year's party at Moxie's Classic Grill in Victoria.

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