



## PROVINCIAL PRIDE

ESO pays tribute to Alberta **A8**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2026

ESTABLISHED 1903

POSTMEDIA

## NEWS

### CITY HALL

Council to vote on new 78 Ave. entertainment district **A2**

### EDUCATION

Return of school resource officer program draws praise **A3**

## NP



### UKRAINE

Drone attack kills father, 3 children **NP3**

## FP



### ECONOMY

Supporting entrepreneurs seen as way to boost GDP **NP7**

# Tumbler Ridge grieves in silence

## Small B.C. mountain community closes ranks as media crews roll in

STEVEN SANDOR

Tumbler Ridge sits nestled in the mountains, surrounded by trees. On Wednesday, it felt like a soundstage.

Park downtown and it's an easy walk from the supermarket to the community centre to the high school. But, media outnumber the residents on the streets by a healthy margin. Five camera crews were set up behind Tum-

bler Ridge Secondary School, a day after 18-year-old Jesse Van Rootselaar killed one teacher and five students before taking her own life. Van Rootselaar also killed her mother and stepbrother.

In a municipal district of 2,400, where everyone is, at most, a handshake away from a victim.

The town's visitors centre has become the de facto media gathering place and parking lot. More cameras are seen through the

downtown, more reporters looking to speak to locals. But the locals aren't talking. The downtown core feels like a ghost town, as if the camera crews were on a set, waiting for the actors to arrive.

In front of the community health centre, where mental-health resources were on offer for residents, a security guard stood in front, shooing away media. She told us that no one had showed up to take advantage of anything other than everyday medical services.

"People are staying home," she said. "They're not ready."

Simply put, the people in this tight-knit community aren't pre-

pared to share their grief with outsiders, especially if they come armed with notepads, microphones and cameras. This is the aftershock when tragedy comes to a small community — it appears on the radar of places like Toronto, New York and London. So, the locals have chosen, for the most part, to stay hidden.

Three people walked out of the community centre, wiping away tears. They did not want to be approached. They huddled close until media walked away.

SEE SHOOTING ON **A4**

■ ADDITIONAL COVERAGE, A2-4  
■ GEOFF RUSS, A6



A small memorial sprang up near Tumbler Ridge Secondary School Wednesday following Tuesday's mass shooting incident. GREG SOUTHAM

# Eight killed, 27 others injured in worst mass shooting in Canadian history

LORI CULBERT

VANCOUVER The world's attention has turned toward the quiet, tight-knit community of Tumbler Ridge after a mass shooting killed eight and injured 27 others.

It's the worst mass shooting in Canadian history.

On Wednesday morning, police confirmed that the six victims found dead inside the school were a female teacher, three female students and two male students. One was found in a stairwell, while the rest were located in the school's library.

The shooter, who died of a self-inflicted injury inside the school, has also been identified as Jesse Van Rootselaar, an 18-year-old transgender woman.

Two individuals found dead in a home nearby have also been identified as Van Rootselaar's mother and stepbrother.

Deputy Commissioner Dwayne McDonald of the B.C. RCMP also said that a long gun and a modified handgun were recovered by police at the scene.

As the sun rose Wednesday over the still snowy northeastern B.C. town, police continued to hold a

perimeter around Tumbler Ridge Secondary, where the shooting unfolded a day earlier.

"These kids should be playing hockey or just being kids, but life has just been completely turned upside down," said Rev. Gerald Krauss, who was up until 4 a.m. comforting parents still waiting for news of their children.

Just a five-minute drive from the school, a police car remained parked outside a residential home on Fellers Avenue, where police were going door-to-door to speak with residents nearby early in the morning.

"This is too close to home to talk about right now," said one resident, who lives across the street from the house that appeared to be the focus of the police investigation.

On Tuesday just after 1 p.m., the RCMP were alerted to an active shooting situation at the high school. Upon entering the building, police found six individuals who had been killed.

Two others were airlifted for critical care, while a third was initially believed to have died en route to hospital. Police confirmed Wednesday that the individual has survived.

Another 25 individuals at the school were assessed and treated on-site for injuries.

The suspect was also found inside the school, dead from a self-inflicted injury. An emergency alert that was sent out had described the suspect as a "female in a dress with brown hair."

Shortly after the scene at the high school, police were called to a home on Fellers Avenue. There, police found two others dead inside a home, later confirmed to be the shooter's mother and stepbrother.

According to police, the two victims airlifted to hospital remain in critical but stable condition. At least one has been identified by family.

Maya Edmonds, 12, remained at B.C. Children's Hospital in Vancouver on Wednesday morning after suffering two gunshot wounds, according to her mother. In a Facebook post, her mom Cia wrote Tuesday evening that her daughter was "fighting for her life" while doctors treated her for gunshot wounds.

"She was a lucky one, I suppose," the mother wrote.

SEE SUSPECT ON **A4**

## EDMONTON ARTS



### CONCERTS

The Black Keys bring Peaches 'n Kream tour to town in June **A9**

Dosanjh returns to Rogers Place May 2 on latest world tour **A9**

Activate your ePaper — it's included with your subscription. Scan the QR code or visit [epaper.edmontonjournal.com](http://epaper.edmontonjournal.com)



0 55829 00050 2