

WHERE THE STREETS HAVE OUR NAME

By Greg Nesteroff
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When the San Bernardino Sheriff's Dept. received a tip last month that a murder suspect was staying at a home in Victorville, Calif., they promptly went to the address – on Kootenay St.

Who knew they were naming streets after us in the Golden state?

Patti Ingrao of Victorville city hall explained in an e-mail that Kootenay St. is part of a housing development built in the early 1990s. The developer would have chosen the street name from a pre-approved list provided by the city.

"However I have no idea when that list was approved or how the name Kootenay came to be on it," she said.

But a few minutes using Google Maps makes it clear many larger cities are growing so fast they can't be bothered to consider each new street name. Instead they simply pick them out of an atlas. (Indeed, Victorville's Kootenay St. connects to Ottawa St.)

Not only is there a Kootenay St. in Victorville, there's a Kootenay Court in Bakersfield, Calif. (which intersects with Kamloops Drive and Okanagan Court); a Kootenay Circle in Denton, Tex., and a Kootenay Path in Logan, Ohio. All by happenstance and residents along these routes are likely oblivious to where the name came from.

Closer to home, there's a Kootenay St. in Kitimat, and Kootenay Ave. in Prince Rupert, Banff, and Devon, Alta. – although in some of these cases an early surveyor may have been paying tribute to another part of the province or country, which was once common practice.

There's more: you'll find a Kootenay Drive in Abbotsford, Saskatoon, Santa Ana, Calif. (which intersects with Cranbrook Drive), and Lake Havasu City, Ariz. There's also a Kootenay Way in Kamloops, and Kootenay Places in Saanich, Powell River, Prince Rupert, and Brampton, Ont.

Not surprisingly, Kootenay is also a popular street name in the area where it originated. Nelson, Lardeau, New Denver, Revelstoke, and Windermere all have a Kootenay St., while Rossland, Trail, Castlegar, and Fruitvale each have a Kootenay Ave. For good measure, there's a Kootenay Road in Brilliant.

Vancouver has a Kootenay St. too, plus a Kaslo St., Slocan St., and many others reflecting B.C. place names.

Oh, and the guy wanted for murder? Don't worry, they got him. Only the straight and narrow can walk down Kootenay St.

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