

# Killer driver's parole

# DENIED

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EMOTIONS  
RUN HIGH  
AT BOWDEN

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**BOWDEN** — Capping an emotional hearing, a panel on Wednesday refused to grant day parole to a man doing time for killing five people by slamming a cement truck into a car.

Daniel Tschetter offered a poignant apology to the victims' sobbing relatives — who were seated mere feet behind him — during a hearing where a two-member Parole Board of Canada panel approved unescorted temporary absences, but denied day parole.

Saying Tschetter needs “a very gradual” reintegration into society and “to reinvent” himself, the ruling detailed outings to visit his family over the next six months while bound by conditions including abstaining from alcohol, not contacting victims’ relatives or having care or control of a vehicle.

“This is a story without a happy ending,” a panel member said at Wednesday’s hearing at Bowden Institution.

“Whether today or ... 50 years down the road, the memories will never be erased.”

Tschetter slammed his truck into Chris Gautreau’s car stopped at a red light on Macleod Tr., killing the man, his daughters — Alexia, 9, and six-year-old Kiarra — along with his girlfriend Melaina Hovdebo, 33, and her 16-month-old son, Zachary Morrison.

The collective pain created by the crime was palpable at the hearing where Zachary’s family read statements.

“Daniel is not the victim,” said Lee Morrison, who lost his only child, Zachary, and described visits to his grave-site to apologize for being unable to protect him.

“I don’t get to see Zachary grow up ... I have to drive by (the crash scene) often and I blow him a kiss and say, ‘daddy loves you, daddy misses you.’”

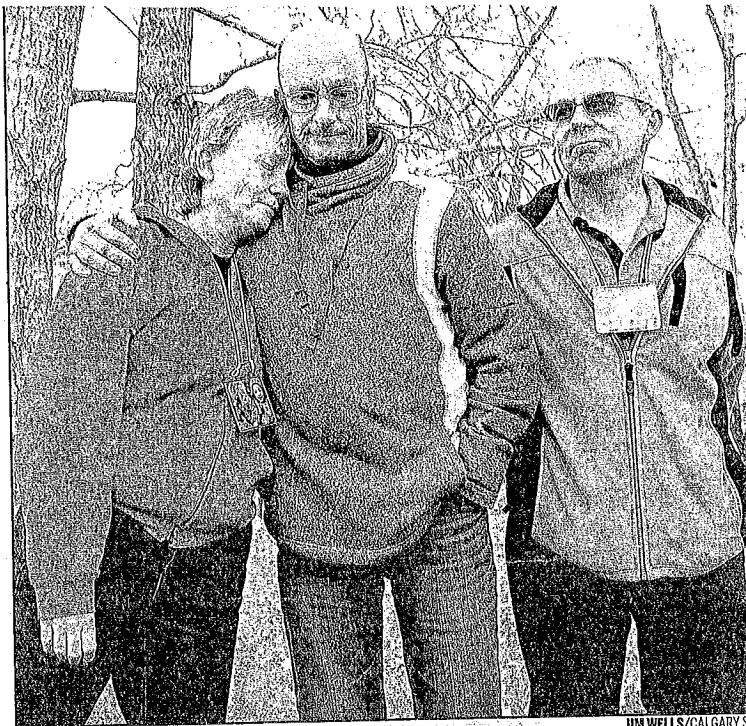
With family by Tschetter’s side, the 54-year-old, sentenced a little more than two years ago to nearly six years on manslaughter charges stemming from the December 2007 crash, offered an apology as he had during his trial.

“I sincerely apologize for the grief, the hell, the agony and all the pain I’ve inflicted,” he said.

“My desire is, in their lives they can move on.”

He said he has “been soul-searching until mentally exhausted,” and cannot find words to explain actions he takes full responsibility for which have left him “disgusted” and “full of despair.”

Parole board members, citing a lengthy record of driving infractions, including nine speeding tickets and a



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Above, family members Tracey Grieder (Zachary Morrison’s aunt), Lee Morrison (Zachary’s father) and Herb Grieder (Zachary Morrison’s uncle) speak to media at Bowden Institution Wednesday after the parole hearing for Daniel Tschetter. Tschetter was driving a cement truck in 2007 and crashed into a car killing, (clockwise from left) Alexia Kiarra, Melaina Hovdebo, Zachary and Chris Gautreau.

1978 impaired driving conviction, said Tschetter appeared “almost a ticking time bomb,” the deadly crash an anticipated outcome of his “sense of entitlement” on the road.

The victims’ relatives don’t know if they can ever accept Tschetter’s apology.

“I’d like to be able to forgive him, but I don’t know if I ever will,” Tracey said.

“Was it sincere? I don’t know ... I hope for him that he finds a way to heal.”

Tschetter is banned for life from driving a commercial truck.

“This has never been about us,” his wife, Marie, told the panel.

“I know that enough will never be enough, you can’t change the outcome, you can’t better your life.”

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