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## Police board renews Chief De Caire's contract

By Laura Lennie  
News Staff

Hamilton police Chief Glenn De Caire is keeping his job until the end of 2018.

The police services board voted 7-0 on Nov. 19 to extend his contract by two years only — not three as expected.

The decision came after board members debated for almost two-and-a-half hours behind closed doors.

De Caire's existing contract expires at the end of 2016 and the board had to let him know by the end of this year if it intended to hunt for a new chief.

See page 10

## Cards' comeback stuns Knights

It may have been the greatest high school football game ever played in Hamilton.

With four touchdowns and a field goal on the board and their opponents held to just one point, it was shaping up to be a huge upset when the St. Thomas More Knights went into the locker room at halftime.

But in the third quarter, the Cardinal Newman Cardinals came to life.

Story, page 27



### Celebrating success

Organizers Jacob Koenig and Javaria Bhatti, 2016 Children's Miracle Network Champion Sarah Stephens, the Westmount Wildcat and organizer Deanna Allain ham it up with jazz hands during a dance marathon at Westmount Secondary School to raise money for McMaster Children's Hospital Foundation. About 90 students took part; more than \$3,600 was raised. | Photo by Gord Bowes

# Refugee plan

Public school board offers empty schools for emergency shelters

By Richard Leitner  
News Staff

Hamilton's public school board may allow closed schools to serve as temporary shelters for Syrian refugees who come to this city — as long as it doesn't have to pay anything.

While some urged caution, trustees voted unanimously on Monday to authorize chair Todd White to

offer "to engage in a conversation" on leasing the space with Wesley Urban Ministries, the designated lead organization for local settlement efforts.

Potential shelters include Hill Park and Parkside high schools, and Linden Park, Eastmount, Roxborough Park, Woodward Avenue and Bell-Stone elementary schools.

Trustee Greg Van Geffen, who pushed for the initiative, said the

offer "is the right thing to do" during a humanitarian crisis and will potentially bring in money to boost classroom spending.

Leasing the space on a full-cost-recovery basis will ensure no money is diverted from students while giving the board a foothold with refugees as they settle here, the representative for Dundas and west Flamborough said.

See page 10

### NEWS

## MP, MPP open easy-access office

Duvall, Taylor set up new shop on Concession Street. **pg. 3**

### COMMUNITY



## Winter clothing drive underway

Warmth Project collects new winter outerwear donations to help those in need. **pg. 13**

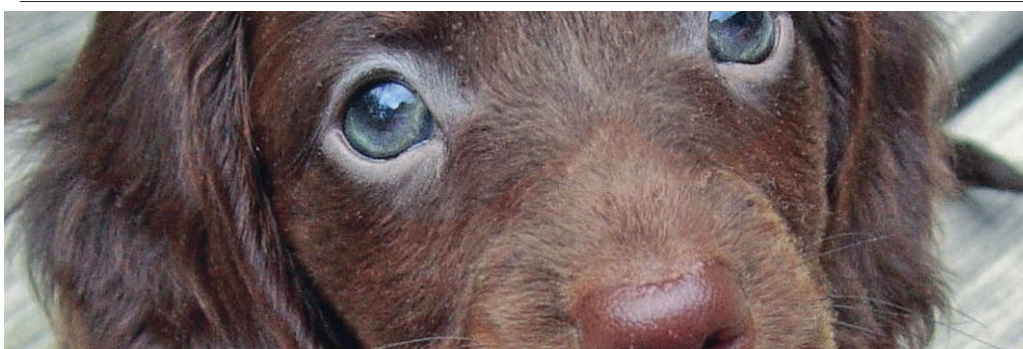
### NEWS

## Cops on hunt for drug store robbers

Two different bandits in separate pharmacy holdups. **pg. 4**

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# Help spread the Warmth

Annual Mountain News winter clothing drive is underway



A brightly decorated collection bin at 120 Fusilier Dr. is ready to accept donations for The Warmth Project.

The Warmth Project is underway for the 2015 holiday season. This is the second year the *Mountain News* has organized a drive to collect new winter outerwear for individuals and families in need to help them face the bitter cold during a long Canadian winter.

Last year, more than 1,000 items, ranging from mittens and scarves to coat and snow pants, were donated in bins located across the Mountain at businesses and homes taking part in the Mountain News Christmas Lights Tour and Contest.

The items were distributed by Mountain Kidz Klub, People's Church and the *Mountain News*.

The recipients included students at several elementary schools, families using Mountain Kidz Klub's outreach programs at Eastmount Community Centre, residents of CityHousing Hamilton and the King's Way Centre, which helps the poor and homeless in downtown Hamilton.

"We are very excited to be running The Warmth Project for a second year," said Gordon Cameron, managing editor of Hamilton Com-

munity News. "The generosity of Mountain residents made sure that hundreds of Hamiltonians stayed warm last winter, which is something that should make us all very proud."

To make a donation, look for a brightly decorated box (green bins on loan from the City of Hamilton) with a Warmth Project sign, open the lid and drop in a new piece of winter outerwear.

You can find a bin at Fascination Flowers (1104 Fennell Ave. East), Peoples Church (510 Mohawk Rd. West) and in front of 120 Fusilier Dr. and 440 Upper Kenilworth (part of the Christmas Lights Tour). More businesses and homes are being added each week.

You can follow The Warmth Project on Twitter (@WarmthProject15) to see donation locations as they are added.

This year, elementary schools in the St. Jean de Brebeuf catchment area also collecting for The Warmth Project.

Any group that would like to assist in distributing items is asked to call editor Gord Bowes at 905-664-8800 ext. 335. Businesses interested in hosting a collection bin are also asked to call.



## Annual Christmas lights contest underway

The lights are coming on across Hamilton Mountain.

Flashing lights, twinkling lights, lights set to music — all kinds of fun displays to be seen in the annual Mountain News Christmas Lights Tour.

Last year's champions — 25 Redbury Street, Unit 46 in Ward 6, 120 Fusilier Dr. on the central Mountain and 64 Magnolia Dr. in Ward 8 — are ready to defend their crowns.

If you have a display you think the rest of the city should check out, enter our contest. Email your name, contact phone number and street address, along with a description and photo of your creative genius to [editor@hamiltonmountainnews.com](mailto:editor@hamiltonmountainnews.com).

Be sure to also include the hours your display is lit up.

For more details, see [HamiltonNews.com](http://HamiltonNews.com) and follow @MtnXmasLights on Twitter.



The display at 120 Fusilier has won the Mountain News Christmas lights contest four years in a row.

## COMMUNITY

### Canadian Pacific Holiday Train arrives Monday

Canadian country-music artists Kira Isabella and Wes Mack will perform when the Canadian Pacific (CP) Holiday Train makes its annual Hamilton stop Monday.

The train is expected to arrive at 7:45 p.m. across from Gage Park on Lawrence Road.

While the concert is free, those attending are asked to make a donation or bring healthy, non-perishable food items for Hamilton Food Share.

Lawrence Road from Rothsay to Cumberland will be closed from 5:30 p.m. to approximately 9 p.m. During this road closure, there will be no public access to the Gage Park parking lot.

CP's Holiday Train program features two brightly decorated trains travelling across Canada and the United States.

Since 1999, the Holiday Train has raised close to \$9.5 million and 3.3 million pounds of food for North American food shelves.

## COMMUNITY

### Christmas lights fundraiser Sunday

A Christmas toy drive is being held Sunday at 6 p.m. outside an east Mountain home.

The toy drive is being held at 932 Upper Ottawa in connection with a Christmas lights event.

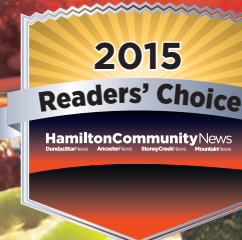
Parking is available at a nearby plaza. Hot dogs, hot chocolate and Timbits will be served.

Donations of a new unwrapped toy or gift card will go to City Kidz.

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### Making a difference

Mary Odisho (left) and Danvi Kim, the president and vice-president of St. Marguerite d'Youville Catholic Elementary school student council, show some of the winter outerwear that has been donated to The Warmth Project at the school. The two students have made daily announcements and gone room to room to collect donations, which will be distributed to people in need throughout the community and other schools in the system. The Warmth Project is an initiative of the Mountain News to collect new winter outerwear to distribute to people in need. Donations can be made at Fascination Flowers (1104 Fennell Ave. East), Peoples Church (510 Mohawk Rd. West) and homes on the Mountain News Christmas Lights Tour located at 120 Fusilier Dr., 101 Hardale Cres., 64 Magnolia Dr., 25 Redbury Unit 46 and 440 Upper Kenilworth Ave. | Photo by Gord Bowes

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# New program offers free math help

Volunteers will help students at two Mountain schools

By Mark Newman  
News Staff

It's something Deban Brunette has been trying to set up for more than a decade.

Starting Feb. 9, volunteer math tutors will begin helping Grade 7 and 8 students at Westview and Annunciation of Our Lord elementary schools as part of the Neighbour to Neighbour Math Success Program, a 16-week pilot project that is free to the participants.

"Our major issue with trying to put a math program together over all these years has been the fact that a lot of people have a math phobia," said Brunette, director of educational programs at the west Mountain centre.

The program will run three days a week at Annunciation of Our Lord on Limeridge Road West. On one of those days, Brunette said, the program will feature a guest speaker who will talk to the students about why math is important as part of their career choice.

The program is moving forward thanks to a \$50,000 ABACUS grant from the Hamilton Community Foundation.

ABACUS supports initiatives aimed at improving high school graduation rates including helping middle school students transition to high school. The grant covers training and supply costs and each student will get a workbook, pencils and other materials.

While the program is aimed at students who are struggling with math, Brunette said, it is not a



Hailey Capretta, co-coordinator of the Neighbour to Neighbour Math Success Program, with some of the materials the after school program will be using starting Feb. 9. | Photo by Mark Newman

homework help program.

"This is a separate program that is lesson and workbook-based," she said.

"We are using JUMP Math essentials, which is a math tutoring program."

Brunette said educational con-

sultants at Neighbour to Neighbour will oversee the program, which she hopes will become as popular as their literacy program that began in a single Mountain elementary school 13 years ago and is now offered in 14 schools.

She noted they are looking to

"We are using JUMP Math essentials, which is a math tutoring program."

build confidence as well as improve math skills and they are hoping to get 15 students from each school.

They are also looking to recruit 30 adult and high school student volunteer tutors.

"I need people who love math," said Brunette. "One of the things we really want to push forward is that if you're not good at math and you go through, say Grade 9 and 10 and then you decide you can't deal with this anymore, by the time you get to Grade 12 you've cut 75 percent of careers out of your future."

High school students and adults interested in becoming a math tutor should contact Brunette at tutor@n2ncentre.com or 905-574-1334 ext. 204.

Westview principal Joanna Crapsi said they should have no problem finding 15 students to take part in the program.

"It's a great thing for Westview," said Crapsi, who noted teachers at the school will identify potential candidates the next week or two and she will be calling the parents of those students to invite them to take part.

"We are just thrilled about it," said Annunciation of Our Lord principal Josie Pini, who added the new initiative will complement existing math support programs at the school.

She also plans to speak to parents about the new program in the coming days.

"It's going to help with that gap just before high school," Pini said.



COMMUNITY

## Winter outerwear available next Wednesday

Anyone in need of winter outerwear can drop by Eastmount Community Centre next Wednesday to pick up items to keep them warm.

A selection of gloves, mittens and hats, along with a limited number of coats, snow suits and boots, will be given away from 3-6 p.m. on Jan. 27.

The items were donated to The Warmth Project, an initiative of the Mountain News to collect new winter outerwear to distribute to children, families and individuals in need.

This year's clothing drive collected more than 3,000 pieces of winter outerwear, from gloves and toques to jackets and boots. The items were given to a number of Hamilton agencies to distribute, including Mountain Kidz Klub, The King's Way, Wesley Urban Ministries and the Good Shepherd Centres.

Eastmount Community Centre is located at 115 East 26th St.

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### Santa shy

Zachary Franklin, 4, whispers his Christmas request to his brother Will to pass on to Santa during a recent visit from old St. Nick to Linden Park Community Church. | Photo by Gord Bowes

### Hamilton police step up drunk driving crackdown

The last installment of Hamilton police department's holiday traffic safety program will focus on impaired driving. Police have increased their presence on the road with RIDE lanes throughout the city, at all hours of the day and night.

Hamilton Police have pulled over 215,000 vehicles in RIDE lanes this year.

RIDE lanes are conducted throughout the year, but special attention will be paid to the roads until Dec. 27.

Operation Lookout is still in effect. Residents can call 9-1-1 to anonymously report suspected impaired driving. As a result of this program, 143 arrests have already been made by Hamilton police in 2015.



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# Students help refugees through Warmth Project

By Gord Bowes  
News staff

Two St. Margaret Mary students have been encouraging their peers to think about helping new Canadians and the homeless this Christmas. And the hard work of Abbey Rogers and Jessie Ferns-Nocente is paying off in a big way.

Working under the umbrella of The Warmth Project, the two Grade 8 students numerous items to be distributed to Syrian refugees and people living on the streets of Hamilton.

"We've collected about 15 bags of clothes," said Abbey Rogers. "I'm really surprised how much people have given."

Abbey originally thought about copying an idea she had read about a group that sold painted rocks for paper weights and gave the money to a homeless shelter. Then her mom talked to her about the arrival of Syrian refugees and their needs.

"We've collected about 15 bags of clothes."

When The Warmth Project, a *Mountain News* initiative designed to collect new winter outerwear to distribute to people in need, arrived with a collection bin at their school, they started making announcements and encouraging people to donate. Along with outerwear, they took donations of blankets and clothing.

John Coons, principal at St. Margaret Mary, said, "The students said this is what we want to do. That's



St. Margaret Mary students Abbey Rogers (left) and Jessie Ferns-Nocente have been collecting clothing for a downtown homeless shelter and for Wesley Urban Ministry to distribute to Syrian refugees in Hamilton. | Photo by Gord Bowes

what makes it even more special."

Abbey enlisted friend Jessie Ferns-Nocente to help with the clothing drive and sort the donations.

"I'm grateful for everything I have, so I want to help people," said Jessie.

After the donations are sorted, Abbey's mom has been dropping off clothing at Wesley Urban Ministry and blankets at a shelter.

"We are pleased to have such an outpouring of community of support to welcome Syrian refugees, such as from St. Margaret Mary

students," said Andrea Buttar of Wesley.

Anyone looking for information on ways to help or make a donation can visit [wesley.ca](http://wesley.ca) and click Syrian Refugee Information Portal.

Donations to The Warmth Project can be made at Fascination Flowers (1104 Fennell Ave. East), Peoples Church (510 Mohawk Rd. West) and homes on the Mountain News Christmas Lights Tour located at 120 Fusilier Dr., 101 Hardale Cres., 64 Magnolia Dr., 25 Redbury Unit 46 and 440 Upper Kenilworth Ave.

## 'Twas the night before for Pierre and Margaret

Muriel Lee (pictured at right) wrote this poem in 1975. It was published in the *Mountain News* that Christmas:

*'Twas the night before Christmas, with Marg and Pierre.*

*The tree in the corner was chosen with care.*

*As Margaret looked on, in her hand was a wreath;*

*While Pierre danced around with a rose in his teeth.*



*Baby Michel and Sasha asleep in their bed,  
Dreaming of someone with reindeer and sled;  
Justin sat still at the foot of the stair,  
Awaiting a call from his grandpa Sinclair.*

*Guards stood at attention outside at the gate,  
Hoping that Santa Claus wouldn't be late.  
Santa arrived in his broken down heap,  
He had no raise last year; he worked very cheap.*

*He went first to the nursery to check on the boys,  
Then off to the tree, where he left all the toys;  
Tiptoed in the bedroom to gaze at Pierre,  
What a surprise when he saw Margaret there!*

*With no postal service he just hadn't heard,  
That Margaret was already home with her third.  
A note on the table, with letters a-swirl —  
"Dear Santa - Next Christmas please bring us a girl."*

*Old Santa just mumbled, "I think that I can't,  
Unless I apply for a Government grant."*

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