

Quebec Provincial Police (QPP) spread Christmas cheer in Potton



THE SCOOP
MABLE HASTINGS

As a fresh, bright and promising New Year fast approaches, we look back on the year and its highlights. We also reflect on the Christmas just past with a reminder of the human spirit and its continuous giving and inspiring of hope, joy and love.

Just before Christmas Quebec Provincial Police (QPP) officers, David Blanchette ("QPP Godfather for the Potton region") and Officer, Jean-Guy Caron made a surprise visit to a family in need in Potton in hopes of helping the family to enjoy a special Christmas.

"The objective," explained Blanchette, "is to take the load off of the shoulders of the parents and family and to share an amazing holiday experience full of the magic of the season."

This is not the first time that the Quebec Provincial Police have made a gesture like this. Blanchette shared his experiences in giving to an immigrant family in Outaouais, the previous region he served in. This was a gesture that Blanchette initiated personally and it was supported whole heartedly by his colleagues. While Blanchette cannot say if the gesture will be repeated in the coming years, he intends to try and keep the initiative going in the territory that he serves if at all possible.

For the family who benefitted from this tremendous show of kindness, the entire experience was overwhelming and brought them to tears. The police car arrived and was packed with gifts for each child including snow jackets, toys and special items selected with each of the children in mind. There was food and all that might be needed to make the holiday a merry one. The two officers sat on the floor and presented the children with their gifts and the room filled with excitement and gratitude. Surely this was a celebration that will never be forgotten nor matched.

It was hard to determine who was more moved by the experience, the parents or the officers for as the children shrieked in excitement, the smiles and tears on the adult's faces really spoke volumes. This was indeed what Blanchette



QPP Police Officer, David Blanchette and his partner, Jean Guy Caron spread Christmas cheer to one Potton family in a big way. A gesture that will not soon be forgotten.

and Caron had hoped for and extended beyond what they expected. Children truly remind all of the excitement and magic of Christmas.

While the family will remain anonymous, the efforts of Blanchette, Caron and the entire Police department and the memories and joy spread this Christmas will long remain in their hearts.

Debra Harding, a member of the Misisquoi North Volunteer Centre (CABMN) staff team, helped the Police to coordi-

nate the surprise and was able to accompany the officers when the delivery was made.

"It was amazing," shared Harding. "The faces of the children were something I will not soon forget." The CABMN is proud to work alongside the QPP and Officers Blanchette and Caron. In this particular case, a joyous experience was shared by all and the spirit of the season was at the forefront.

Commissioner's report assesses health services wait-times

Record Staff
SHERBROOKE

The Commissioner of Health and Welfare (CSBE) sees positive effects in emergency response times in her latest report, but these are partly offset by the effects of an aging population.

Two days before the final closure of the agency's offices, Acting Commissioner Anne Robitaille wrote Tuesday that Health Minister Gaétan Barrette's reforms appeared to have produced "certain effects" between 2014-2015 and 2016-2017. She adds, however that the increase in the number of elderly people has led to an increase in the clientele in emergency rooms resulting in longer wait times.

The 86-page report warns that effort needs to be "redoubled" to ensure that the public can actually benefit from an improved emergency situation in the province.

The report points out that from 2014 to 2016, the average length of stay in an emergency department decreased from 9.24 hours to 8.93 hours. It rose again, however, in 2016-2017, reaching 9 hours.

The increase in wait time is attributable specifically to older patients with greater needs. If this variable is excluded, the average stay in the emergency room would be 8.75 hours, down 5.5% per cent over two years.

Robitaille also examines the use of mental health emergency services, highlighting very long stays and significant disparities across regions.

Another report from the CSBE published Tuesday reveals that people over 75 years wait on average nearly 10 months for a place in a CHSLD in Quebec. Currently, they are roughly 2,407 on waiting lists.

Robitaille also points out that Quebec is facing an accelerated aging of its population. In 2016, almost 8

per cent of the population was 75 years of age and older. In 2016-2017, 4.4 per cent of people over age 75 were living in a CHSLD, representing 28,427 people out of a total of 641,501 in this age group. Between 2010-2011 and 2016-2017, the number of beds in public CHSLDs decreased by 2.5 per cent (926), while population estimates suggest the population over 75 years has increased by 15 per cent, she says. "However, we note that since 2014-2015, the number of beds in private and public CHSLDs has increased somewhat."

To counteract some of the decline in the number of beds in CHSLDs, there has been some improvement in other services that support autonomy, such as home assistance, intermediate resources, and family-type resources, Robitaille adds.

"Home support and intermediate resource or family-type resource services may delay the need for accommodation in CHSLDs," she says. "However, for clients already experiencing severe loss of autonomy, these services are no longer adequate, since they can't offer the level of care required by a CHSLD resident. Unfortunately, waiting lists to access a CHSLD are long and many seniors wait several months, despite the fact that they are already known to the network and their need for CHSLD accommodation has been confirmed."

The position of the Commissioner, whose mission was to shed relevant light on public debate and government decision-making, was abolished in the March 2016 budget. Outraged by the announcement last year of the abolition of the position, health groups have criticized Health Minister Barrette has denied himself of a valuable tool - one that advises and evaluates

reforms and question whether These he is trying to avoid any critical and independent evaluation of his actions.



COUNTRY DANCE CLASSES

www.clubdansecountry.com


New classes for beginners:
THE HUT (A.N.A.F.) Tues. Jan. 9/18, 8 p.m.

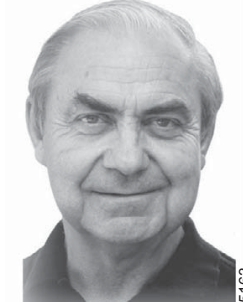
For intermediate:
SHERBROOKE (West) Fri. Jan. 5, 7 p.m.
Fleurimont Wed. Jan. 10, 7 p.m.
Magog Thurs. Jan. 11, 7 p.m.


Manon Levesque, Instructor
\$8.00 per class

Also! Dance night every Friday starting Jan. 5. Dance on Sunday p.m. in Sherbrooke or Magog starting Jan. 7 - see schedule (free mini classes included).

For more information, call 819-636-0505





See you soon !
Michel Comeau

Specialist of Chrysler and Dodge trucks for over 40 years. Michel Comeau thanks you for the support that you have shown him for the past year at Magog Concept Chrysler.

Always a pleasure to serve you !

MAGOGCONCEPT
CHRYSLER

3025, Sherbrooke Street, Magog • 819 843-3380