



OUR OHL PREVIEW

TEAM BY TEAM RUNDOWN, MEET THE SPITS, D1, D3 & D4.



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FORD TO TEAR DOWN WINDSOR
CASTING PLANT. PAGE A3

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THE WINDSOR STAR

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Refugee overload

Mayor appeals to Ottawa for help as city faces social services crunch

BY DOUG SCHMIDT
AND DAVE BATTAGELLO
STAR STAFF REPORTERS

With city shelters full and a surge of further refugee claimants expected to flood into Windsor, Mayor Eddie Francis is pleading for financial help from Ottawa.

"When there is a possibility of adding thousands to the local social assistance system as a result of refugee claimants crossing the border into Windsor, we will become overwhelmed and our current resources will not suffice," Francis said in a letter sent Wednesday to Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

ONLINE windsorstar.com

Check out our photo gallery
of Mexican refugees.

Over the past three weeks, 45 families and 31 individuals — approximately 200 people — entered Canada at the Detroit River crossings and applied in Windsor for shelter and social assistance after filing refugee claims with the Canada Border Services Agency. Municipal agencies dealing with the sudden influx of mainly Mexican refugee applicants are renting hotel rooms and bracing for predicted thousands more to come.

"We don't have the means, ability or capacity to deal with this additional cost. We are not able to deal with this potential crisis locally," Francis wrote Harper.

SEE REFUGEE CRISIS, A4



JUST ARRIVED: Concepcion Montiel and her daughter Perla, 2, arrived in Windsor this week looking for refugee status. They spent the past few years in Naples, Fla.

Star photo: Scott Webster



THE FUN SIDE OF FUNDRAISING

Schools are choosing healthier ways to raise cash. See why it's out with the cookie dough. See B3.

NDP vows money for tunnelling

BY TREVOR WILHELM
STAR STAFF REPORTER
LONDON

If NDP leader Howard Hampton was running the province, he'd immediately begin spending \$1.8 billion to build a tunnelled route to a new international crossing between Windsor and Michigan, he said Wednesday.

The tunnel funding, pegged at \$250 million a year, was mentioned briefly in Hampton's four-year, \$9.1-billion fiscal plan, which he unveiled in London. The estimated cost of a tunnel project, with a completion target of 2013, is \$3.6 billion, said a Hampton representative.

The province and Ottawa would share the cost, which would mean \$1.8 billion paid by the province. If elected, Hampton would funnel \$250 million a year to the project for the next four years. After that, the amount of the annual funding would increase, but the actual number is unclear.

On Wednesday night, MP Brian Masse (NDP-Windsor West) told The Star he couldn't comment on the plan because, though he discussed Windsor's needs with Hampton, he wasn't aware of what was announced.



Howard Hampton

More election coverage, C11

He won't let bedbugs bite

Public housing apartment infested

BY DOUG WILLIAMSON
STAR HEALTH/SCIENCES REPORTER

For three weeks John Fontaine has been sleeping on his balcony, but not because it's warm inside.

Fontaine's apartment at 920 Ouellette Ave. is infested with bedbugs, as are many other apartment units in the build-

ing owned by the Windsor-Essex County Housing Corporation.

"They've spread through the building," the 62-year-old cab driver said Wednesday.

"I've been sleeping on my balcony — I've been bitten enough."

SEE SLEEPING, A4



CAMPING OUT: John Fontaine is sleeping on his balcony because of a bedbug problem.

Star photo: Nick Brancaccio

Price disparity miffs Canadians

Costs higher here despite loonie

BY CARLY WEEKS
CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

Canadian consumers have yet to see major benefits from the soaring loonie and anyone hoping things will soon change shouldn't hold their breath, according to experts.

While the Canadian dollar has been climbing steadily and is nearly at parity with the U.S.

greenback this week, prices on everything from books and stationery to cars and electronics are still substantially higher in Canada than in the U.S.

"It's the case now where unfortunately you don't see those savings reflected in the goods," said Scotiabank Group economist Meny Grauman.

SEE PRICES, A4

City buses 'like a rude neighbour'

BY SARAH SACHELI
STAR STAFF REPORTER

Downtown home and business owners are learning that, when it comes to Transit Windsor buses, you can't live with 'em and you can't live without 'em.

Restaurants on Chatham Street West, those with sidewalk patios in particular, are cursing the buses that drive past every three minutes,

sending dust and fumes into their patrons' faces. They share the same concerns as Pitt Street residents who say that since the new terminal opened and rerouted buses began roaring past their homes, they can't open their windows, hear their televisions or carry on a conversation uninterrupted.

Meanwhile, stores on Ouellette Avenue say the number of customers has plummeted now that buses have

been rerouted to the west, onto Douglass Avenue.

"I don't deny we have had an effect," said Rob Larret, Transit Windsor's planning manager.

"Some of the new folks don't want us and some of the old folks miss us."

The bus company's board of directors promised Wednesday to study how to address the barrage of complaints. Headed by Coun. Caroline

Postma, the board directed the bus company to conduct time and manoeuvrability trials on several routes.

"It's not easy to please everybody but we'd like to try," Postma told the delegations that addressed the board's meeting.

The route changes came into effect in May when the new depot opened.

SEE FUMES, A4



CONCERNED: Brian Gordanier, owner of the Chatham Street Grill, is upset that buses are annoying patrons.

Star photo: Scott Webster

U.S. Dollar Dealings: For normal transactions quoted Wednesday by Windsor banks: Buying U.S. cash for 1.0455 and selling for 1.0987. Buying U.S. cheques for 1.0429 and selling at 1.0990.

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