



Catherine O'Hara • Review

**CHRISTMAS SPIRIT:** Dave Patterson and his son, Tucker, thank Hamilton Fire Service volunteers Brent Vasey, Doug Leach and Ted Galea for assisting with their holiday lights. Dave, who is also a volunteer firefighter in Waterdown, and his wife Kari are hoping to make Christmas especially bright for Tucker, who was diagnosed with Leigh's syndrome last August...

## Time to shine

By Catherine O'Hara

Community

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The Patterson home on Strathroy Crescent will shine bright this holiday season, thanks to the help of Waterdown's volunteer firefighters who generously donated their time and resources to help the local family install Christmas lights on the peak of their roof this week.

Kari and Dave Patterson are parents to young Tucker, who suffers from Leigh's syndrome, a fatal disease that affects one out of every 500,000 children.

Intent on making the Christmas holidays as festive as possible, the Pattersons were keen on decorating their home. In October, Dave started fastening colourful outdoor lights along the roof outside, but his ladder wouldn't reach the peak. So he appealed to his coworkers for help.

A volunteer firefighter, Dave contacted volunteer Doug Leach at Waterdown's Station 24 asking to borrow the station's extension ladder. "I didn't expect them to bring the ladder truck," laughed Dave on Tuesday afternoon.

On site to help decorate the Patterson home were Leach and two other volunteer firefighters, Ted Galea and Brent Vasey.

"We asked to do this for the Patterson family," said Leach, adding that the crew was given the green light from their superiors to donate their time and the station's resources to help the Pattersons.

"It's really for my son," said Dave, who alongside his wife and daughters, Tori and Avery, wanted to make this Christmas a special holiday with Tucker.

The family, explained Kari, hopes to get away sometime over the holiday season, possibly making a short trip to Niagara to enjoy the region's Festival of Lights. Although Tucker has lost much of his motor skills and spends a lot of time in his chair, traveling to Niagara and staying overnight in a hotel with a pool would allow the family to spend quality time together – and Tucker could take advantage of playing with his sisters in the water.

"It will be nice to do something as a family," said Kari.