

The Gaspé Spec

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Snow day – slow day

Wendy Dawson

NEW RICHMOND: - Ah the weather! We love to talk about it and complain about it. It has now even become the focus of our news feeds, as headlines regularly predict the coming of the next 100 year storm.

While we can probably all agree that winters have changed significantly over the last couple of decades, one thing remains certain, the Gaspé Peninsula is no stranger to winter storms and record snowfall.

According to Environment Canada, the average snowfall for the region is 371.8 cms per season. Provincially, this is only outdone by Sept-Îles and Schefferville who see annual averages of 384.6 and 398.4 respectively. In February of this year, Gaspé received almost a third of average it's annual snowfall in one day with a record breaking 120 cms falling between February 16th and 17th! Gaspé will receive on average more snow than the rest of the region, and the record for the Gaspésie was set in the winter of 1955/1956 when just shy of 700 cms of snow fell in and around the area of Gaspé! Hard to imagine how that was managed without the modern-day snow removal equipment that we have access to today.

While some lament the arrival of the winter months, the Gaspésie offers a healthy and thriving winter lifestyle that boasts over 3000km of snowmobile trails, an exciting culture of both downhill and cross-country skiing, not to mention limitless access to winter hiking and snowshoeing trails. Even if you're not a huge fan of winter, you must admit that there is nothing that is nearly as magical as a winter evening full of giant, fluffy snowflakes.

Despite the beauty of winter, it does come with its hardships. In my humble and personal opinion, this winter has offered us early days of

biting cold that feel much more like January than they do December. In addition, harsh weather can create less than favourable road conditions make driving a risky endeavor. There is one upside to these severe circumstances, and that is the coveted and elusive "snow day". While it does seem that there are more "snow days" now than I remember from my youth, I would much rather my kids and myself be home safe and sound than navigating through icy and dangerous back roads during inclement weather.

There is a certain joy in being able to announce to your sleepy headed late rising student that school is cancelled. Those snow days seem to be a kind of gift from Mother Nature – a permission of sorts to stay home and do something unplanned, decadent and out of character.

This past December 13 marked the first official snow day of the year. In a quick and informal survey of my Facebook community, to see how folks liked to spend their snow day, many took advantage of the proximity to Christmas to catch up on some baking. Patsy MacDonald from New Carlisle said, "The storm day was the signal to get out the yeast and make bread! Fun!" Kelly Caldwell from New Richmond let her recent snow day be inspired by the upcoming

holiday, "I love to bake when snow is falling, and at this time of the year Christmas music is playing."

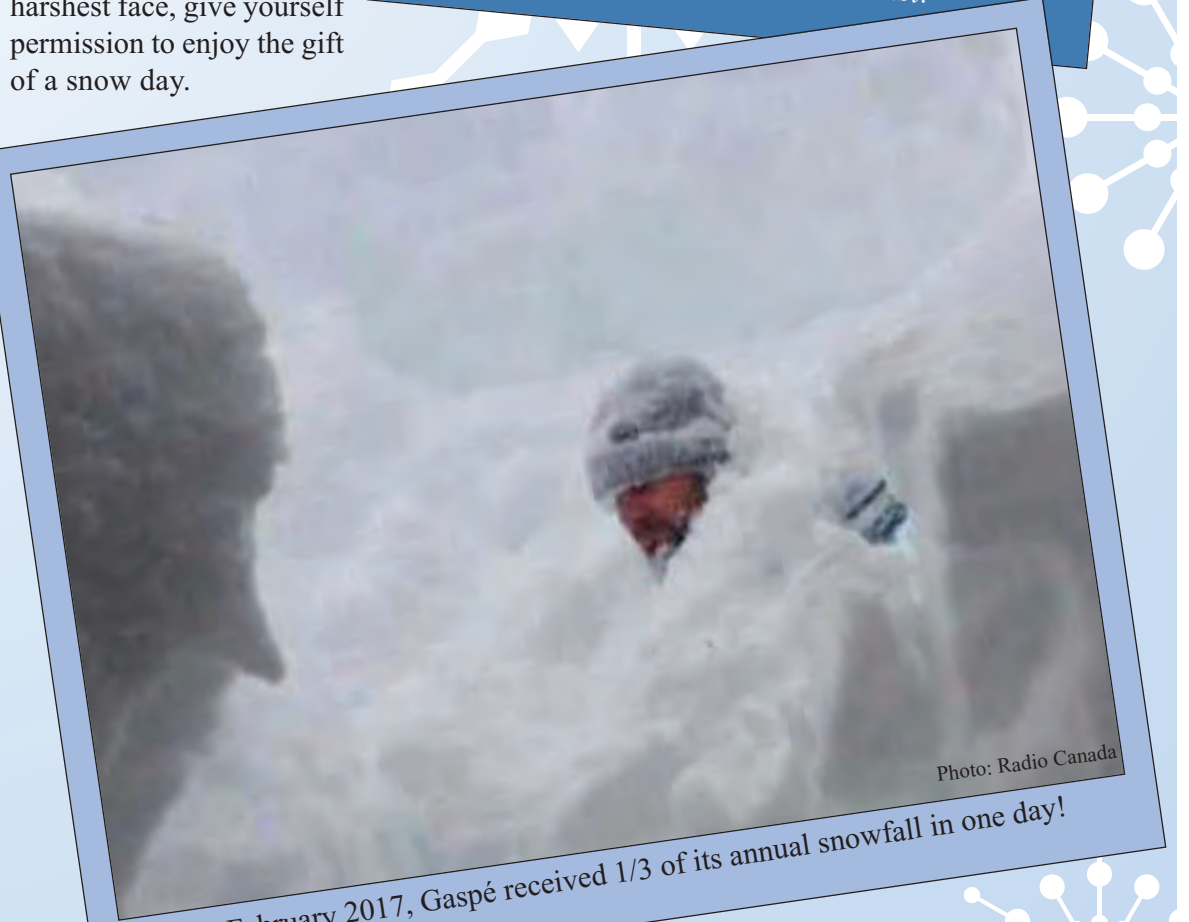
A lazy day of reading was in the works for others. "Fire in the wood stove, jazz, a good book to get lost in.", was on Sandi Beebe's agenda for the day.

One thing for certain, winter comes every year and the best way to deal with the season is to zip up your jacket and open up your arms. Winter can provide a magical playground if you let it. And when winter puts on its harshest face, give yourself permission to enjoy the gift of a snow day.



Jennifer Flowers started her family's snow day with Nutella and strawberry stuffed french toast!

Photo: Jennifer Flowers



In February 2017, Gaspé received 1/3 of its annual snowfall in one day!

Photo: Radio Canada

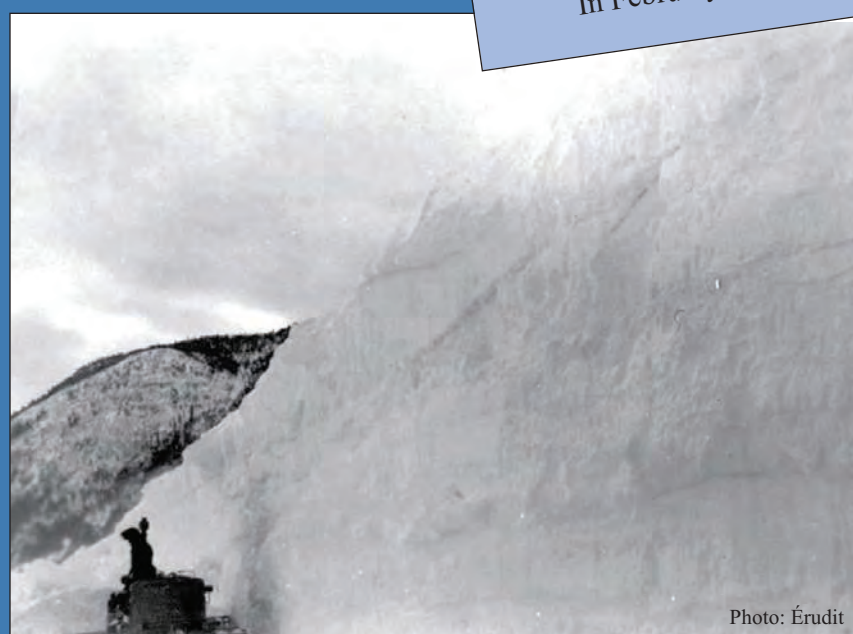


Photo: Érudit

Winter snow removal 1956 l'Anse Pleureuse on the 132



The CISSS hiring

Thierry Haroun

GASPÉ PENINSULA: - Are you a psychologist, a social worker or a secretary? If so, a job is probably waiting for you at the Gaspésie Health and Social Services Center. That's the message its Human Resources Executive Director, Michel Bond told Spec over the phone. We reached him at his office in Gaspé for further details.

The CISSS published a document, that Spec was able to obtain. The document states, "The CISSS de la Gaspésie is facing a shortage of manpower in certain job categories. The aging population, those are retiring, more complicated tasks, competition from other businesses (private sector), work and family conciliation and private lives are all factors that explain this shortage. Therefore, our organization has to assure an efficient and modern management in terms of human resources and long term planning."

In detail, Michel Bond, confirms that many jobs are available and important ones.

For example, in the Haute-Gaspésie region, the CISSS has been looking for years now to fill the job of a child psychologist but to no avail, so far. "We've been looking for a psychologist specializing in youth and it's not easy. It's been years that this job has been available." There's also a job available in Gaspé. The problem is such that the CISSS offers a bursary to those who are currently studying in this domain and in exchange, the student once graduated, makes a commitment to work in our region for a period of three years. "I must say that while there are no psychologists available, other health professionals help out, but there comes a time when a diagnosis must be done on a youth by a psychologist."

Other jobs available

The CISSS is also looking for social workers, nurses and secretaries to fill the jobs of those who are retiring, vacationing or simply absent for health reasons. Moreover,

pharmacists are also needed. No less than three are needed for the health establishments of the Percé Rock MRC and another one for the Gaspé area. "These jobs are very specialized. A masters degree is needed. For example, a pharmacist that works for a hospital must work closely with the Oncology Department. This is very specialized, as you may know," pointed out Mr. Bond.

News briefs

More money for promotion

Thierry Haroun

GASPÉ: - For a third consecutive year, the Gaspésie Regional Tourism Association, now called Tourisme Gaspésie, is investing no less than \$100,000 in a province-wide promotional campaign. It includes more presence on the web, in specialized magazines, television adds, videos about snowmobiling on the Gaspé and press conferences. "There's so much to do in our beautiful region in the winter. We have 3000 km of snowmobile trails, more than 500 km of cross country skiing, dog-sledding, outdoor events (such as the TDLG), the Chics-Chocs mountains, the sea and all sorts of family activities," pointed out the spokesperson of Tourisme Gaspésie, Stephanie Thibault.

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Photo: G. Gélinas

The new owners constructed a new building for boat building, next to the original shop.

Shipbuilding in Rivière-au-Renard

Geneviève Gélinas

RIVIÈRE-AU-RENARD: – The new owners of a Rivière-au-Renard-based company, Les Entreprises maritimes Bouchard, are undertaking fishing boat construction and will quadruple the initial number of employees.

The transaction took place at the beginning of the 2017 summer. The Desbois brothers, Richard, Nicol and Bertrand, and shrimp fisherman Mario Côté acquired this fishing boat repair and maintenance shop. The fifth shareholder is Ahmed Kabbadj, the new shipyard manager.

“What motivated us is that we own several boats. We

have about 15 boats (a total for the Desbois brothers and Mr. Côté), half of them crab fishing boats, the other half shrimp fishing boats. We bring 50% of the work to our shop. We used to pay for that anyway. We created a service for ourselves and we saw the opportunity of doing construction,” explains Nicol Desbois.

The new owners are putting the final touches to a building where boats will be built, beside the original building. It’s a \$2-million investment.

“There’s a high demand for building boats. Lobster and crab fishing are doing well. People are investing,” Mr. Desbois says. Les Entreprises

maritimes Bouchard recently started to build two crab fishing boats for Gaspesian fishermen. One will be delivered to its owner in the spring of 2018 and the other one in the ensuing fall.

From nine employees at the time of the transaction, les Entreprises maritimes Bouchard have increased the staff to 35 workers and want to reach at least 40. “It’s getting difficult to find skilled labour,” Mr. Desbois points out. However, manager Ahmed Kabbadj, who is of Moroccan origin, has succeeded in recruiting workers among his network of migrants already settled in Quebec and “is looking elsewhere,” Mr. Desbois adds.

Police report

On December 13 at the New Carlisle courthouse, Quebec Court Judge James Rondeau sentenced Carolanne Poirier, 24, from Caplan, to a conditional sentence of eight months to be followed by a probation of one year, during which she is forbidden to contact Steven Gagné. During the conditional sentence, she will be under house arrest and must respect the usual conditions of house arrest.

On October 19, 2017 Carolanne Poirier pled guilty to obstructing justice. She had incited Steven Gagné, the driver eventually accused of the July 23, 2012 hit and run accident causing the death of Donald Powell, 50, from New Richmond, not to turn himself in to the SQ. At the time of the incident, Carolanne Poirier was 19 and she is now the mother of two children. In court, she apologized to the family members of the victim.

On August 14, 2017, Steven Gagné, 29, from New Richmond was found guilty of hit and run causing the death of Donald Powell by Judge James Rondeau and will return to court on January 22, 2018 for sentencing.

On December 11 at the New Carlisle courthouse, the case of Jérémie-Viktor Lagacé, 23, from Saint-André-de-Restigouche charged with the premeditated murder of a French tourist on August 22, was put over to January 8, 2018 at which time defence attorney Richard Lavigne will inform the court of his intentions of the case.

On the morning of December 13, in Sainte-Georges-de-Malbay, near Percé, an Orleans Bus Express on its way to Montreal left the road and rolled on its side. Route 132 was very icy and slippery. Only the driver and one passenger were onboard. They were not injured and were able to get out of the bus unassisted. Because of the high winds, snow and rain, roads in various sectors of the Gaspé Peninsula were hazardous on December 13, 14 and 15.

News briefs

MRC increases budget

Thierry Haroun

GASPÉ: - The MRC de la Côte-de-Gaspé has recently adopted its 2018 budget and its up compared to last year. The elected representatives of the MRC adopted a \$3.4 million budget which is \$642 701 (23%) more than 2017. This hike is directly linked to the \$612,526 in royalties stemming from the region’s windmill parks. The money is collected by the Régie de l’Énergie Gaspésie-les-îles and distributed to all five MRCs of the region. “Our budget has been boosted because of those royalties, but we redistribute that money to the municipalities of our MRC,” points out the Executive Director of the MRC, Bruno Bernatchez. We asked him how the cuts made by the Liberal government since 2014 in terms of transfers and the abolishment of the CRÉ have affected his budget. He responded that they were short 10% of his budget.

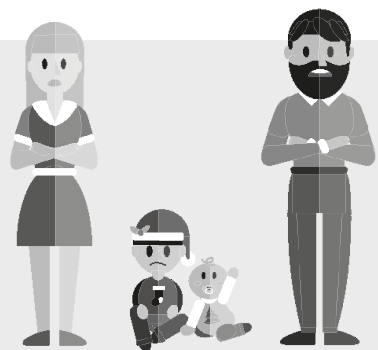


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Commentary

Gilles Gagné

Some wishes for 2018 for the Gaspé Peninsula

Year 2017 is already coming to an end, which inevitably brings thoughts about what 2018 might hold for us, individually and collectively. Here are some wishes for the residents of the four Gaspé Peninsula MRCs covered by the SPEC, with a special attention for each of them.

Avignon MRC: Development is unbalanced in that part of the Gaspé Peninsula, and the distribution of the population is just as disproportionate there as well. The west part is composed of a series of eight small villages, Pointe-à-la-Croix being the largest. The east part is formed by bigger municipalities, Nouvelle, Carleton-sur-Mer and Maria.

Salmon fishing plays a large role in Avignon West due to the presence of the Restigouche and Matapédia rivers. Wind energy has also emerged over the last decade with the construction of four windfarms, three in the Ascension-de-Patapédia area and one north of Escuminac, opened in December 2016.

The whole region owes a big thank you to the existing windfarms of Avignon. Two of the three Ascension windfarms belong in part to the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Inter-municipal Energy Board, a creation of the region's towns and villages that will bring in millions of dollars in royalties annually. It therefore contributes to alleviate the tax burden. As for the Escuminac windfarm, half of the \$330 million facility belongs to Listuguj, Gesgapegiag and Gespeg, a form of economic emancipation that will lead to more promising ventures.

Wish: Considering the large section of Avignon covered by public forest, a couple of additional wind farms could be added, likely in l'Ascension-de-Patapédia and Escuminac's backcountry. With Hydro-Québec's surplus, the electricity could be exported to the green energy hungry New England states, where decisions will be made soon.

Bonaventure MRC: Running from Cascapédia-St-Jules to Shigawake, the Bonaventure MRC is characterized by having the most substantial agricultural presence on the Gaspé Peninsula. It is an area of economics that faces many challenges, with finding relief farmers whilst leaving some room for new housing being at the top of the list. Making urban-based ministries understand these realities represents an enormous task.

The Bonaventure MRC also has arguably the second most versatile economy on the Gaspé Peninsula (the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC comes first), with some manufacturing activities in New Richmond, some forestry in Saint-Elzéar and Saint-Alphonse, a sound tourist sector with Bonaventure as a leader, solid commercial fisheries with Paspebiac in the lead, the highest number of farmers in the region and a fine pool of construction workers.

Wish: Bonaventure will greatly benefit from any strong labour recruitment campaign, like many economic fields. Due to the position of agriculture in the area, changes to some green zone rules would be welcome, without affecting production.

Percé Rock MRC: The fantastic commercial fishing season, especially in snow crab and lobster, generated the highest benefits in that part of the region. Most plant

workers stayed on the job for periods exceeding, sometimes by far, what is necessary to qualify for unemployment benefits. In that field as well, a shortage of labour is looming, mainly because of an aging workforce. If the problem is not solved locally, an influx of foreign workers is being considered.

The start of production of the McInnis Cement plant also played a role in the relatively good performance of the Percé Rock MRC. The new industry for Port-Daniel-Gascons seems to benefit equally Chandler, Paspebiac and Bonaventure.

Prefect Nadia Minassian is anxious to bring new firms in to complement McInnis Cement and has an eye on ventures that could reduce the environmental impact of the Port Daniel plant, which would be a great thing.

Wish: Lobster fishing will likely remain on a favourable wave in 2018, as most species are in great shape. An advantageous exchange rate would keep the area's numerous lobster fishermen quite happy. Crab quotas will unavoidably go down in the southern part of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence but the international situation of decreasing catches, mainly in Alaska, will keep the price up. There again, a low Canadian dollar compared to the American currency will keep people happy. Let's also hope for innovative ventures in order to reduce the impact of the Port Daniel cement plant.

Côte-de-Gaspé MRC: Two realities characterize this area, the contrast between the booming economy of the town of Gaspé, and a certain amount of hardship hitting the other four municipalities of Côte-de-Gaspé, namely Murdochville, Petite-Vallée, Grande-Vallée and Cloridorme.

Gaspé stands on a high, especially since the ex-

pansion of the LM Wind Power plant, where the workforce now reaches close to 500 employees, 300 more than in August 2016. A gigantic export contract signed with General Electric sparked that expansion.

Murdochville is still struggling, 15 years after the closure of the copper smelter. However, wind energy has not reached its full potential in the area, one of the highest in Canada due to its altitude and strong winds. The town is also becoming big in outdoors activities and that growth, especially in off-trail skiing, will become increasingly attractive in the situation of climate change, which has often meant more snow for Murdochville.

Wish: Côte-de-Gaspé needs to be successful in labor recruiting in order to keep LM Windpower and its shipyards expanding. A return of ground fish species like cod and redfish would represent good news for the north side communities. Shrimp fishing is affected by the ground fish increase and a balance between the two is needed.

Overall for the region: We wish for an acceleration of the railway refurbishment, considering the handicap represented by the dormant state of the Caplan to Gaspé portion of the line. The slowness showed by the Quebec government in that file since 2014 is slowing down the economy and social wellbeing of the Gaspé Peninsula. Premier Philippe Couillard announced \$100 million for our railway eight-and-a-half months ago, and no repair contracts have stemmed from that. We have lost almost a year. Meanwhile, we wish for another banner year in commercial fisheries and tourism, and some due support to bring in the manpower needed to keep the region's economic diversification process going.

THANK YOU!

We take this opportunity to say thank you to all our loyal supporters, subscribers, advertisers and contributors and volunteers. We wish each and everyone of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We thank you for your support and look forward to a new year of publishing news on the Coast.

**This is the last issue for 2017.
The office will close on Wednesday, December 20, 2017**

**The Gaspé Spec will reopen at its new location
208-B Gérard D. Levesque (Family Ties building)
on Friday, January 5, 2018.**

**Please note that the first issue
in the new year will be January 10, 2018.**

The Gaspé Spec

ESTABLISHED • MAY 1975

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Correction
Please note that Paspebiac CLSC is missing from the last sentence of the front page article in the December 13 issue of Spec.

Opponents seek the right to challenge oil exploration

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON: - Environmental groups and an alliance of Indigenous people appeared in court on December 13-14 to argue that they should be allowed to proceed with a lawsuit challenging an oil and gas exploration license.

The lawsuit challenges a January 2017 decision to reissue an oil and gas exploration license in the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Corridor Resources, a company with a head office in Calgary and an office in Halifax. The Gulf is home to more than 4,000 species including the endangered right whale and blue whale, point out the groups.

“Our clients and Indigenous allies have engaged on this very issue for years,” says Ian Miron, Ecojustice lawyer. “These groups have a long history of defending the Gulf and are well-placed to bring this issue before the court.”

Ecojustice lawyers, on behalf of members of the Sierra Club Canada Foundation, At-

tention Fragiles, Nature Québec, David Suzuki Foundation and SNAP-Québec first initiated a legal challenge in May 2017.

The lawsuit aims to reverse a decision by the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board to reissue an exploration license for the Old Harry prospect in the Gulf to Corridor Resources Inc.

That license issued in 2008 should have expired in January 2017, as mandated by a clear legal rule that puts a nine-year limit on exploration licenses. Despite this legal constraint and the importance the Old Harry region plays for surrounding communities and species, the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board issued a new, identical license to Corridor.

The environmental groups and the alliance of Indigenous people believe that the extension breaks the legally-mandated nine year term limit.

The Innu-Maliseet-Mi’g-

maq Alliance for the Protection of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, are also seeking to intervene.

The Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board has filed a preliminary application challenging environmental groups’ right to bring the case and opposing the Alliance’s participation in the proceeding, despite citing the duty to consult Indigenous peoples as one reason for extending the license.

“We support the Alliance’s participation in this case. Indigenous groups have long demanded that federal leaders protect the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and we look forward to standing in solidarity with them before the courts,” says Gretchen Fitzgerald of Sierra Club Canada Foundation, in a press release.

The Gulf of St. Lawrence supports a wealth of marine life, including species at risk like right, blue and beluga whales and the leatherback sea turtle. Innu, Maliseet and Mi’gmaq peoples have claimed title to or rights in the

waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and called for a 12-year moratorium on oil and gas there.

“The Gulf provides food for Indigenous groups and acts as a renewable economic engine for numerous Gulf communities, powering a flourishing tourism industry and abundant fisheries, together worth more than \$2-billion,” says Sylvain Archambault of SNAP Québec and St. Lawrence Coalition.

Mr. Archambault points out that judge Sandra Chaytor is supposed to render her decision “very soon. If she recognizes our right to intervene in that file, the procedure will keep going and we will have the occasion to explain why the license shouldn’t have been issued to Corridor Resources. If she doesn’t recognize the interest of our groups in that stake, the procedure will stop there for us.”

The Old Harry prospect, located 80 kilometres from the Magdalen Islands, is in the migratory path for whales, salmon and cod.

“Numerous groups from the Magdalen Islands, including Attention Fragiles have been concerned by the Old Harry drilling project since the very beginning of the project. The island community has mobilized against this threat to protect the fishing and tourism industries as well as the insular way of life,” explains Danielle Giroux of Attention Fragiles and St. Lawrence Coalition.

Indigenous groups and environmental groups have long called for a moratorium on drilling in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, particularly in the absence of a comprehensive gulf-wide scientific study on its risks.

The Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board has renewed Corridor’s license in the Old Harry region despite the fact that the company has been waived the \$1-million drilling deposit three times, has not completed an environmental assessment and has not received regulatory approvals necessary to start oil drilling.

FERRY BETWEEN THE GASPÉ AND ANTICOSTI: Grande-Vallée wants to be considered

Geneviève Gélinas

GASPÉ: – Grande-Vallée, like Rivière-au-Renard, wants to become the home port of the ferry that could link the Gaspé Peninsula, Anticosti and the North Shore. To convince the *Société du Plan Nord*, the Municipality argues that Grande-Vallée is closer to Anticosti Island and that its wharf is adequate.

Premier Philippe Couillard asked the *Société du Plan Nord* to study the possible options, budget forecasts and timeline to implement a ferry like this. The president and chief executive officer of the Société, Robert Sauvé, was in Rivière-au-Renard on December 11 to consult local leaders.

“We told him that we want the study to consider Grande-Vallée. From Madeleine to Saint-Yvon, it’s pretty devitalized. Starting from Grande-Vallée is the shortest route to get to Anticosti from the Gaspé. The marine currents are also easier to manage in Grande-Vallée, when a ship has to dock,” explains Grande-Vallée mayor Noël Richard.

“The government wants Anticosti Island inhabitants to overcome isolation. Grande-Vallée is closer to Quebec City



The Grande-Vallée wharf is still used regularly because barges deliver logs from Anticosti island to the local Groupe GDS sawmill. The municipality has owned the wharf since 2001.

and Montreal than Rivière-au-Renard. The new ferry would transport supplies to Anticosti. If it comes from Quebec City or Rimouski, it means 70 kilometers (65 km, in fact) less in distance; it could help,” the mayor argues.

Grande-Vallée is also midway between Forillon Park and Parc de la Gaspésie, and a road to Murdochville (the G-103) starts in the municipality, Mr. Richard adds.

Grande-Vallée has to update its studies and check if there are modifications to do to the wharf and its surroundings in order to receive a ferry. The

Municipality acquired its wharf from the Canadian Government in 2001. From May to September, barges carrying logs from Anticosti Island are unloaded two to three times a week, to supply the Grande-Vallée Groupe GDS sawmill.

The competition with Rivière-au-Renard “isn’t a war. The question is: what’s the best home port for the ferry to make sure that is profitable?,” says Noël Richard.

“It’s normal that Grande-Vallée raised its hand,” says Gaspé mayor and Côte-de-Gaspé prefect Daniel Côté. “Both Grande-Vallée and Riv-

ière-au-Renard are going to explain what advantages are to settle in one port or in the other,” he adds.

“The main asset of Rivière-au-Renard is the condition of the infrastructure, the wharf and the L’Entrepôt street, which are almost perfect to receive a ferry.” About twelve years ago, the long wharf extremity was rebuilt so that a ferry could dock, Mr. Côté explains.

Another advantage is the Rivière-au-Renard proximity to Forillon Park. “The idea is to link three national parks: Mingan, Anticosti and Forillon.

We’re also working on a project to revitalize Rivière-au-Renard. The beauty of the place will be an additional asset.”

The Société du Plan Nord is supposed to file a preliminary study within six or seven months to define the selected ports, the service frequency and the size of the ship. Final recommendations have to be made to the Quebec Government at the end of 2018. The ferry could begin its crossings in 2020 or 2021.

During the consultation, the Société du Plan Nord talked about a less-than-80-meter ferry, in operation 10 and a half months per year. The ship would carry passengers and freight.

The Nordik Passeur, a ship owned by Groupe Desgagnés, linked Rivière-au-Renard, Anticosti and Havre-Saint-Pierre from 1994 to 1996 inclusively. The ship took two days for the return trip.

At the beginning of the 2000 years, Grande-Vallée worked with Havre-Saint-Pierre and Anticosti to revive a maritime link. Over the last few years, the Town of Gaspé resumed discussions with the two other regions, with Rivière-au-Renard in mind as a home port.

PUBLIC NOTICE

To the qualified voters entitled to have their name entered on the referendum list of the entire municipality:

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned, Clerk of Ville de Gaspé, that at an ordinary sitting held on December 18, 2017, the Town Council has adopted the following By-Law:

1346-17 : « CRÉANT UNE RÉSERVE FINANCIÈRE AU PROFIT DE L'ENSEMBLE DU TERRITOIRE DE LA MUNICIPALITÉ POUR UNE SOMME DE 90 000 \$ EN 2018 »

THAT the persons qualified to vote on the By-Law on the date of December 18, 2017, and who have therefore the right to demand that this By-Law be submitted to a referendum poll will have access to a register open for that purpose from nine (9) hours to nineteen (19) hours on January 8 and 9, 2017, at the office of the undersigned, at the Town Hall in order to enter their name, address and occupation together with their signature.

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- is of full age and a Canadian citizen, and not under curatorship.

The non resident sole owner of an immovable or non resident sole occupant of a business place situated in the municipality who is not disqualified from voting and meets the following requirements:

- is the owner of an immovable or sole occupant of a business place situated in the municipality since at least 12 months;
- in the case of a natural person, be of full age and Canadian citizen and not under curatorship.

The non resident undivided co-owners and non resident co-occupants of a business place situated in the municipality not disqualified from voting and meet the following requirements:

- is the undivided co-owner of an immovable or co-occupant of a business place situated in the municipality since at least 12 months;
- is designated by means of a power of attorney signed by a majority of the persons who are co-owners or co-occupants since at least 12 months, as the one who has the right to sign in their name and to be entered on the referendum list of the municipality. This power of attorney must be produced before or at the signature time.

Legal person:

- have designated by resolution among its members, directors or employees, a person who, on December 18, 2017, and at voting time, is of full age and Canadian citizen, is not under curatorship and is not disqualified to vote.

THAT the persons qualified to vote on the By-Law in question must establish their identity to the responsible person for the register, by presenting, among others: a health-insurance card issued by the Québec Health Insurance Board, a driver's permit issued by the Québec Automobile Insurance Society, a Canadian passport, an identity card of the Canadian armed forces, a certificate of Indian status.

THAT the number of applications needed in order that a referendum poll be held is 1 211 and failing this number, the concerned By-Law will be deemed approved by the qualified voters.

THAT the qualified voters may examine this By-Law at the office of the undersigned from 8 h 15 am till 12 h and from 1 h till 4 h 30 pm from Monday till Thursday, and from 8 h 15 am till 12 h on Friday, and during registration hours.

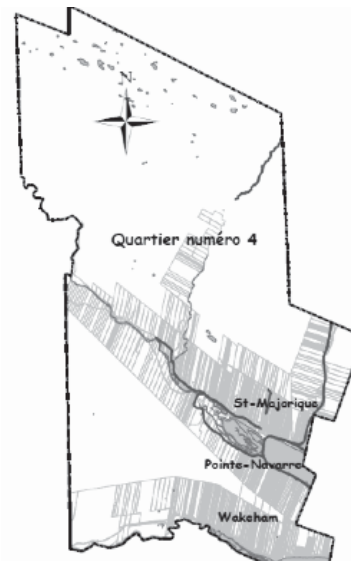
THAT the result of this registration procedure will be announced on January 9, 2018, at 7 pm, at the office of the undersigned, 25, rue de l'Hôtel-de-Ville in Gaspé.

GIVEN at Gaspé, December 20, 2017.

Isabelle Vézina,
Director of legal services and town clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE

To the qualified voters entitled to have their name entered on the referendum list of the following sector of the municipality: complete ward number 4 (ex-municipalities of St-Majorique and Baie de Gaspé Sud) and according to the following sketch:



PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned, Clerk of Ville de Gaspé, that at an ordinary sitting held December 18, 2017, the Town Council has adopted the following By-Law:

1350-17: CRÉANT UNE RÉSERVE FINANCIÈRE AU PROFIT DU QUARTIER NUMÉRO 4 POUR UNE SOMME DE 8 000 \$ EN 2018

THAT the persons qualified to vote on the By-Law on the date of December 18, 2017, and who have therefore the right to demand that this By-Law be submitted to a referendum poll will have access to a register open for that purpose from nine (9) hours to nineteen (19) hours on January 8, 2018, at the office of the undersigned, at the Town Hall in order to enter their name, address and occupation together with their signature.

IS A QUALIFIED VOTER OF THE MUNICIPALITY

A person who, on December 18, 2017, is not disqualified from voting according to article 524 of the Act respecting elections and referendums in municipalities and meets the following requirements:

- a natural person domiciled in the municipality and, since at least six months, in Québec and
- is of full age and a Canadian citizen, and not under curatorship.

The non resident sole owner of an immovable or non resident sole occupant of a business place situated in the municipality who is not disqualified from voting and meets the following requirements:

- is the owner of an immovable or sole occupant of a business place situated in the municipality since at least 12 months;
- in the case of a natural person, be of full age and Canadian citizen and not under curatorship.

The non resident undivided co-owners and non resident co-occupants of a business place situated in the municipality not disqualified from voting and meet the following requirements:

- is the undivided co-owner of an immovable or co-occupant of a business place situated in the municipality since at least 12 months;
- is designated by means of a power of attorney signed by a majority of the persons who are co-owners or co-occupants since at least 12 months, as the one who has the right to sign in their name and to be entered on the referendum list of the municipality. This power of attorney must be produced before or at the signature time.

Legal person:

- have designated by resolution among its members, directors or employees, a person who, on December 18, 2017, and at voting time, is of full age and Canadian citizen, is not under curatorship and is not disqualified to vote.

THAT the persons qualified to vote on the By-Law in question must establish their identity to the responsible person for the register, by presenting, among others: a health-insurance card issued by the Québec Health Insurance Board, a driver's permit issued by the Québec Automobile Insurance Society, a Canadian passport, an identity card of the Canadian armed forces, a certificate of Indian status.

THAT the number of applications needed in order that a referendum poll be held is 212 and failing this number, the concerned By-Law will be deemed approved by the qualified voters.

THAT the qualified voters may examine this By-Law at the office of the undersigned from 8 h 15 am till 12 h and from 1 h till 4 h 30 pm from Monday till Thursday, and from 8 h 15 am till 12 h on Friday, and during registration hours.

THAT the result of this registration procedure will be announced on January 8, 2018, at 7 pm, at the office of the undersigned, 25, rue de l'Hôtel-de-Ville in Gaspé.

GIVEN at Gaspé, December 20, 2017.

Isabelle Vézina,
Director of legal services and town clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE

SCHEDULE OF CITY COUNCIL'S REGULAR MEETINGS FOR 2018

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned Clerk of the Ville de Percé, to the effect that at the meeting held on November 21, 2017, City Council adopted the schedule of the regular meetings for 2018 as follows:

DATE	HOUR
Tuesday, January 9, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 6, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 6, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, April 3, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, May 1, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, June 5, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, July 3, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, August 7, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, September 4, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, October 2, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday November 6, 2018	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 4, 2018	7:00 p.m.

Meetings will be held at the City Hall of Percé, 137, route 132 West.

Given at Percé, December 13, 2017.

Gemma Vibert,
Clerk



PUBLIC NOTICE

**MINOR EXEMPTION
FROM URBANISM BY-LAWS**

NOTICE is hereby given that the Town Council, at a regular meeting that will be held on January 15, 2018, at 8 p.m., will consider the request for minor exemption from the zoning By-Law 1156-11, presented by Mrs Annie Cloutier for a property situated at 1009, montée de Pointe-Navarre.

The nature and consequences of this exemption are the following:

- the nature of the minor exemption is to reduce by 14,25 m the minimal front setback of 25 m for a unimodular house required at the article 7.2.2 by the zoning By-Law 1156-11;
- the minor exemption will have for consequence to regularize the principal building with a front setback of 10,75 m.

During this meeting, the Town Council will hear the interested wishing to be heard on that request.

Given at Gaspé, December 20, 2017.

Isabelle Vézina,
Director of legal services and town clerk



PUBLIC NOTICE

CONDITIONAL USE

NOTICE is hereby given that the Town Council, at a regular meeting that will be held on Monday, 15, 2018, at 8 pm, will consider the request for conditional use in accordance with the Conditional uses by-law, for the property situated on the 814-B, rue Fournier, presented by Mr Éric Fournier.

The nature of this conditional use is to:

- Modify the conditional use of car reparation service at 814-B, rue Fournier, to allow the enlargement of the principal building on the front wall.

During this meeting, the Town Council will hear the interested wishing to be heard on that request.

Given at Gaspé, December 20, 2017.

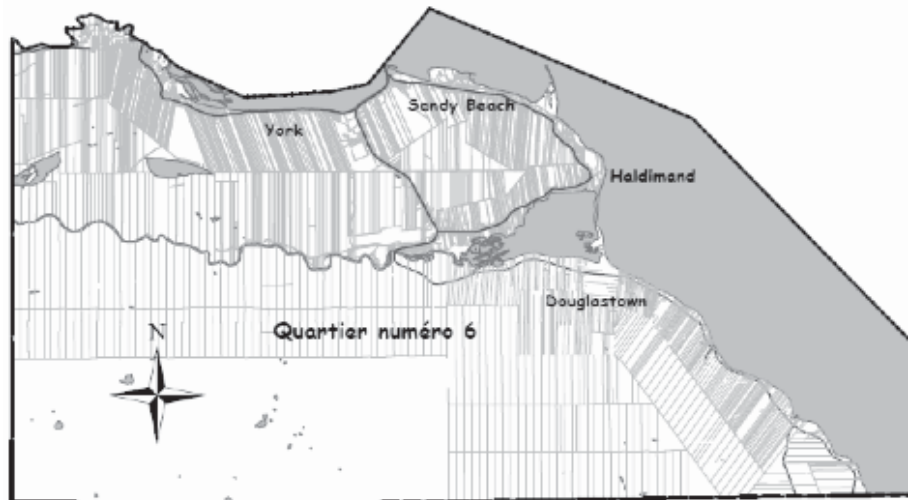
Isabelle Vézina,
Director of legal services and town clerk



PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

To the qualified voters entitled to have their name entered on the referendum list of the following sector of the municipality: ward number 6, (York, Haldimand and Douglastown) and according to the following sketch :



PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned, Clerk of Ville de Gaspé, that at an ordinary sitting held on December 18, 2017, the Town Council has adopted the following By-Law:

1352-17 CRÉANT UNE RÉSERVE FINANCIÈRE AU PROFIT DU QUARTIER NUMÉRO 6 POUR UNE SOMME DE 21 000 \$ EN 2018

THAT the persons qualified to vote on the By-Law on the date of December 18, 2017, and who have therefore the right to demand that this By-Law be submitted to a referendum poll will have access to a register open for that purpose from nine (9) hours to nineteen (19) hours on January 8, 2018, at the office of the undersigned, at the Town Hall in order to enter their name, address and occupation together with their signature.

IS A QUALIFIED VOTER OF THE MUNICIPALITY

A person who, on December 18, 2017, is not disqualified from voting according to article 524 of the Act respecting elections and referendums in municipalities and meets the following requirements:

- a natural person domiciled in the municipality and, since at least six months, in Québec and is of full age and a Canadian citizen, and not under curatorship.

The non resident sole owner of an immovable or non resident sole occupant of a business place situated in the municipality who is not disqualified from voting and meets the following requirements:

- is the owner of an immovable or sole occupant of a business place situated in the municipality since at least 12 months;
- in the case of a natural person, be of full age and Canadian citizen and not under curatorship.

The non resident undivided co-owners and non resident co-occupants of a business place situated in the municipality not disqualified from voting and meet the following requirements:

- is the undivided co-owner of an immovable or co-occupant of a business place situated in the municipality since at least 12 months;
- is designated by means of a power of attorney signed by a majority of the persons who are co-owners or co-occupants since at least 12 months, as the one who has the right to sign in their name and to be entered on the referendum list of the municipality. This power of attorney must be produced before or at the signature time.

Legal person:

- have designated by resolution among its members, directors or employees, a person who, on December 18, 2017, and at voting time, is of full age and Canadian citizen, is not under curatorship and is not disqualified to vote.

THAT the persons qualified to vote on the By-Law in question must establish their identity to the responsible person for the register, by presenting, among others: a health-insurance card issued by the Québec Health Insurance Board, a driver's permit issued by the Québec Automobile Insurance Society, a Canadian passport, an identity card of the Canadian armed forces, a certificate of Indian status.

THAT the number of applications needed in order that a referendum poll be held is 334 and failing this number, the concerned By-Law will be deemed approved by the qualified voters.

THAT the qualified voters may examine this By-Law at the office of the undersigned from 8 h 15 am till 12 h and from 1 h till 4 h 30 pm from Monday till Thursday, and from 8 h 15 am till 12 h on Friday, and during registration hours.

THAT the result of this registration procedure will be announced on January 8, 2018, at 7 pm, at the office of the undersigned, 25, rue de l'Hôtel-de-Ville in Gaspé.

GIVEN at Gaspé, December 20, 2017.

Isabelle Vézina,
Director of legal services and town clerk

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers

A Plump Little Partridge...

'Twas the night before Christmas, all along the Gaspé,
Not a creature was stirring even out on the Bay.
The stockings were hung up with binder twine.
We were eating grandma's cookies, that suited us just fine.

A plump little partridge stood out in the snow,
A proud father buck and a cute little doe.
A light dusting of snow covered the bales
And grandmas were telling the wee ones some tales.

"On the Coast, little dears, some 200 years past,
Came settlers so hearty and also steadfast.
They were tough and brave: struggling to survive
After harsh, stormy seas they were grateful to be alive.

They came to the Gaspé from far, far away;
England, Scotland, France and Ireland. I'd like to say
That some lived here before us in this gorgeous land –
Mi'gmaq: They're natives, something you should understand.

Some were Acadians who settled here too
From what is now Nova Scotia, New Brunswick,
maybe you knew?
From Islands called Guernsey and Jersey my child
They came here to these shores where the forests grew wild.

And then there's the Loyalists, loyal to the Crown
Loyal to Britain, they came here, not even a town.
They were given 200 acres and some grain and an axe
They worked very hard. No time to relax.

They farmed and they fished and they made their own way
And the descendants of them live here to this day.
And you must stand tall and be very proud.
They fished in the lakes. The land they plowed.

So if you are Gaspesian don't ever forget,
That the blood of these ancestors flows through you yet.
You know who you are. You're from the Gaspé,
Whether you're living here or maybe away.

Now hush go to sleep for Santa is near.
And when you awake in the morning my dear
The sun will be shining on the new fallen snow
But remember the Gaspé wherever you go!"

*Merry Christmas to all
Gaspesians living here or away.*

How to cope with the winter blues

(NC) During colder months, many of us can suffer from what's known as the winter blues. Symptoms can include crankiness, fatigue, low energy and anxiety, and are usually caused by the shorter days we experience in our winters. Feel healthier and happier so you can take advantage of what the winter wonderland has to offer with these three tips from the Canadian Health Food Association.

Eat smart. The cold weather might make us want to reach for snacks and junk food, but these treats do little more than fill our stomachs with unnecessary calories and simple carbs. Instead, reach for smarter options, such as whole wheat breads or healthy fats like fatty fish or avocados. Rather than making you full and ready for a nap, these foods will give you a boost of energy for your snowy outdoor ad-



ventures.

Enhance your ambiance. When we're huddled inside away from the cold, it's especially important to make sure our home is cozy and happy. There are many ways to achieve this, whether it's re-decorating, adding plants or using aromatherapy, which has been shown to help with bad moods. In fact, diffusing a calming essential oil, such as lavender, may help improve mood and increase feelings of relaxation.

Sleep well, not just more.

According to a survey conducted by CHFA, 73 per cent of us say that lack of sleep has negative effects on our happiness. Improving sleep quality is just as important as getting enough hours each night. One way to do this is supplementing with melatonin, which can decrease the amount of time it takes to fall asleep while increasing the amount and quality of our rest.

When shopping for natural health products, remember to look for the eight-digit Natural Product Number (NPN) on the label. This is your assurance that the product has been licensed by Health Canada and approved to be safe, effective and high-quality.

For healthy tips and to find a CHFA Member health food store in your neighbourhood where you can find all these and more, visit chfa.ca.

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SADC

\$294M in Visa transactions goes to businesses out of the region

Gilles Gagné

MARIA: – Numbers released by the Bay of Chaleur Chamber of Commerce show that Gaspésians using their Visa credit cards spent 42% of their money with businesses located outside of the Gaspé Peninsula, over a period of 12 consecutive months. It represents transactions of \$294 million, out of a total of \$700 million.

The Bay of Chaleur Chamber of Commerce received those numbers from Visa through a request based on the postal codes of the customers and the businesses. Chamber of Commerce president Ken Henry thinks that the numbers are reliable.

“It includes the standard transactions made through Visa and the pre-paid transactions as well. According to Visa, they get about 75% of the market share,” points out Ken Henry.

If Visa is right about its market share, it would mean that Gaspésians buy about \$935 million worth of goods and services through credit cards, and about \$390 million goes to businesses out of the region, if the holders of other credit cards shop according to the same trend.

“The numbers are an eye opener. We have to sensitize our population to the positive aspects of local shopping, especially regarding the impact on jobs. We also have to tell our business owners that they must increase their inventory of products and services,” says Mr. Henry.

An in-depth study about regional credit card shopping habits would cost \$70,000, he says. For now, the Bay of Chaleur Chamber of Commerce will work with the Visa numbers. Ken Henry says the study could put job creation figures into the equation but other types of evaluation exist in that regard. The exercise has not been conducted yet though.

Online shopping is another area in which Gaspésian businesses can make a breakthrough, he adds.

“The Visa statistics show that \$56 million were spent online by Gaspésians, and 85% of that total was spent with businesses based outside the region. I don’t know what the numbers are elsewhere but they must be higher.

There are usually very few products and services offered online by regional businesses. We must make that change. One positive aspect of the number is that Gaspésians still don’t shop much online. So it gives us a chance to do some catching up before they adopt the trend we see elsewhere,” states Ken Henry.

The Bay of Chaleur Chamber of Commerce has held a number of workshops for its members in an attempt to increase the area’s businesses capacity to deal with online shopping. Rhéal Pitre Sports is a good example of a store deploying the means to adapt to that reality, he says.

“There is government money available to make that digital change. We also have the information and communication technologies Techno-centre (based in Chandler) which is ready to support this kind of initiative,” says Ken Henry.

Informing the population is one important aspect of the work ahead, he mentions.

“Some of our members see clients coming in, looking at things, taking notes and going out without seeing them again. Those clients either go outside the area or go home, to use their tablet and order online,” he says.

However, business owners and their staff have to make their effort too. “The quality of the service counts a lot. Unfortunately, some businesses have no idea about their shortcomings in customer service. We see store employees avoiding clients as they come in. We are thinking (at the Chamber of Commerce) of making visits with “mystery clients” and taking notes about what could be improved. It is odd to say but the businesses deploying the best efforts are usually very good right from the start. They are the ones that wouldn’t need those efforts,” explains Ken Henry.

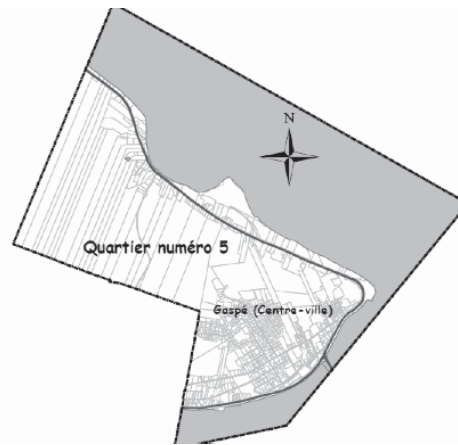
“Customer service is often the factor that will make it or break it. Many times, the price is comparable between two business places. Customer service will make the difference,” he concludes.

The Bay of Chaleur Chamber of Commerce covers the area between Matapédia and Shigawake. Close to 400 businesses are members.



PUBLIC NOTICE

To the qualified voters entitled to have their name entered on the referendum list of the following sector of the municipality : ward number 5, Gaspé town centre and bounded as follows : to the North-West by the Darmouth Range, township of Baie de Gaspé Sud, to the North-East by the Gaspé bay (North-West arm), to the South East by the Gaspé bay (South-West arm) and to the North-West and to the South-West by the Range 1, township of Baie de Gaspé Sud; and according to the following sketch :



PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned, Clerk of Ville de Gaspé, that at an ordinary sitting held December 18, 2017, the Town Council has adopted the following By-Law:

1351-17: CRÉANT UNE RÉSERVE FINANCIÈRE AU PROFIT DU QUARTIER NUMÉRO 5 POUR UNE SOMME DE 23 000 \$ EN 2018

THAT the persons qualified to vote on the By-Law on the date of December 18, 2017, and who have therefore the right to demand that this By-Law be submitted to a referendum poll will have access to a register open for that purpose from nine (9) hours to nineteen (19) hours on January 8, 2018, at the office of the undersigned, at the Town Hall in order to enter their name, address and occupation together with their signature.

IS A QUALIFIED VOTER OF THE MUNICIPALITY

A person who, on December 18, 2017 is not disqualified from voting according to article 524 of the Act respecting elections and referendums in municipalities and meets the following requirements:

- a natural person domiciled in the municipality and, since at least six months, in Québec and
- is of full age and a Canadian citizen, and not under curatorship.

The non resident sole owner of an immovable or non resident sole occupant of a business place situated in the municipality who is not disqualified from voting and meets the following requirements:

- is the owner of an immovable or sole occupant of a business place situated in the municipality since at least 12 months;
- in the case of a natural person, be of full age and Canadian citizen and not under curatorship.

The non resident undivided co-owners and non resident co-occupants of a business place situated in the municipality not disqualified from voting and meet the following requirements:

- is the undivided co-owner of an immovable or co-occupant of a business place situated in the municipality since at least 12 months;
- is designated by means of a power of attorney signed by a majority of the persons who are co-owners or co-occupants since at least 12 months, as the one who has the right to sign in their name and to be entered on the referendum list of the municipality. This power of attorney must be produced before or at the signature time.

Legal person:

- have designated by resolution among its members, directors or employees, a person who, on December 18, 2017, and at voting time, is of full age and Canadian citizen, is not under curatorship and is not disqualified to vote.

THAT the persons qualified to vote on the By-Law in question must establish their identity to the responsible person for the register, by presenting, among others: a health-insurance card issued by the Québec Health Insurance Board, a driver’s permit issued by the Québec Automobile Insurance Society, a Canadian passport, an identity card of the Canadian armed forces, a certificate of Indian status.

THAT the number of applications needed in order that a referendum poll be held is 224 and failing this number, the concerned By-Law will be deemed approved by the qualified voters.

THAT the qualified voters may examine this By-Law at the office of the undersigned from 8 h 15 am till 12 h and from 1 h till 4 h 30 pm from Monday till Thursday, and from 8 h 15 am till 12 h on Friday, and during registration hours.

THAT the result of this registration procedure will be announced on January 8, 2018, at 7 pm, at the office of the undersigned, 25, rue de l’Hôtel-de-Ville in Gaspé.

GIVEN at Gaspé, December 20, 2017.

Isabelle Vézina,
Director of legal services and town clerk

Gaspésie Wood Producers Syndicate files complaint about Temrex

Gilles Gagné

NEW RICHMOND: – The Gaspésie Wood Producers Syndicate has filed a complaint against the negotiation strategy deployed by Temrex, owner of the Nouvelle sawmill, because that subsidiary of Investissement-Québec refuses to respect the terms of a wood-buying contract signed in 2016.

The 2016 agreement came to an end over the spring of 2017. According to the Gaspésie Wood Producers Syndicate, the termination of the contract included a clause stipulating that the price valid during the previous period was automatically applicable to the ensuing negotiation interval.

“It is written in the contract. The price remains the same while negotiating another agreement. They (Temrex officials) say that when there is no agreement, there is no price. However, they signed that clause pertaining to the extension of the price,” explains Berthold Gagné,



Photo: G. Gagné

Berthold Gagné affirms that Temrex is not respecting the law.

president of the Gaspésie Wood Producers Syndicate.

There is more than just the price. “It is a matter of principle. We are talking here about the “residuality principle. It is the law. Sawmills must get their supply first from the private forest and rely on the public forest after. We know that it rarely works

that way, if ever,” adds Berthold Gagné.

The *Régie des marches agricoles du Québec* will hear the cause over the following months, probably in April 2018. That body regulates transactions in certain aspects of agriculture, and includes the wood produced by private lot owners.

“Temrex has refused to buy wood from the Wood Producers Syndicate since the spring. In that, they don’t respect the law. They want a 10% price cut. We argue that the price paid by the other sawmill is reasonable. It came after negotiations that went fine. Groupe GDS bought 100,000 cubic metres of wood from us last year. Temrex operates a sawmill that has a capacity of 500,000 cubic metres, the biggest in the Gaspé Peninsula and we can hardly sell them 20,000 cubic metres annually. There is something wrong. At the same time, Temrex applies to get more wood from public land, going against the residuality principle,” explains Mr. Gagné.

“It is the only firm that is giving us that kind of trouble. It is odd to think that Temrex belongs to a government-related body, Investissement-Québec, which is not respecting the law,” he adds.

The lumber market remains relatively good and the Gaspésie Wood Producers

Syndicate has few problems selling the logs of its 600 to 700 active members on an annual basis.

“Even Irving, despite all the land that the company owns, buys wood from us for its sawmills. We gather that the wood that comes from public land is cheaper than ours, but the law must be respected,” concludes Berthold Gagné.

The Gaspésie Wood Producers Syndicate sold about 300,000 metres of wood for lumber or pulp plants in 2017. The final results will be released over the winter.

The *Régie des marches agricoles* was first supposed to hear the case of Temrex in September but the company was not ready to defend its cause. Other hearings scheduled for December 14 and 15 were postponed because of weather conditions.



Tremendous Thanks!

With appreciation from our entire team, we wish you all a fun-filled and Merry Christmas!

Thanks so much for stopping in this year. We look forward to serving you again soon.

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Dixie Lee

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Merry Christmas!

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We wish you all a truly memorable holiday season. Thanks for all the wonderful memories you've given us this past year.

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We would like to use this special occasion as an opportunity to thank you for your trust and send you our sincere best wishes during this holiday season.



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