

Obstetrics shifts at Maria hospital left uncovered due to staff shortage

Gilles Gagné

MARIA – On May 11 and 12 obstetrics shifts were left uncovered at the Bay of Chaleur Hospital Centre in Maria because of a nursing shortage.

The situation could possibly occur again on May 24 but the administration at the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre is trying to avoid a repeat of that labour shortage.

According to Johanne Méthot, director of nursing services at the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre, the Maria hospital situation is not unique. She says the four hospitals in the region are experiencing a “fragile” context because of a labour shortage.

Since the beginning of 2019, the Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts hospitals experienced similar brief closures to the obstetrics unit. In the first case, it was due to the absence of the anesthesiologist and in Gaspé, the situation was created by a lack of nurses.

“The Chandler hospital was the only one without a service interruption in obstetrics (since the beginning of 2019). It is fragile there as well, but less fragile,” notes Ms. Méthot.

The Chandler hospital has become the pinch-hitter for both Maria and Gaspé since the beginning of the year.

In Maria, each service interruption lasted only eight hours, over two night shifts. The first night, an obstetrics nurse was available but two are required to open the department. On the second night, no one was available.

“We still wanted pregnant women to show up if needed at the Maria emergency so that a doctor could assess their state and see if a transfer to Chandler was neces-



The obstetrics unit at Maria hospital was closed on May 11 and 12 as a result of a staffing shortage. It is possible that another closure to the unit may take place on May 24.

Photo: G. Gagné

sary,” explains Johanne Méthot.

No transfer to Chandler was necessary over those two nights. The 22 women under a follow-up process by the obstetrics department were not expected to give birth over that weekend. The distance between Maria and Chandler is 140 kilometres.

Regarding the long-term reasons for the obstetrics department shortage of staff, Johanne Méthot doesn't attempt to hide the facts.

“There is a human resource shortage. We didn't learn that last week. We tried to fill the (May 11 and 12) gap. We had to conclude that it was impossible. We then adopted a contingency plan,” she says, referring to the decision to potentially assess pregnant women at the emergency department.

“The shortage of nurses stems from the massive number of retirees. Moreover,

among the young nurses, we have to deal with a lot of maternity leaves, which is just fine but it makes certain situations precarious,” points out Johanne Méthot.

Replacing nurses working in specialties such as obstet-

rics, surgery or the emergency poses particular problems because not all the other nurses want to or can fill in, she adds.

“Our hospitals have small volumes in obstetrics and expertise comes with 15 or 20

births,” she says.

Approximately 180 babies are born yearly in Maria, compared to 130 in Gaspé, 130 in Chandler and 40 in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. There is an agreement between the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts hospital and the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal in order to have Gaspesian nurses watch video births taking place in the urban hospital in order to gain experience.

The Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Service Centre attempted to see if the Campbellton hospital was capable of assisting on May 11 and 12. “They were overwhelmed there,” states Johanne Méthot.

The distance between the two hospitals is only 75 kilometres. Campbellton is already the reference hospital for those living in the western part of the Avignon MRC.

The next obstetrics service interruption in Maria could occur on May 24. “We are taking steps to avoid that interruption, through talks with the union representing nurses,” explains Johanne Méthot.

19 nursing positions to fill

Gilles Gagné

MARIA: – The fragile balance at the Maria hospital obstetrics department depends heavily on the number of nurses available for work.

Michel Bond, director of human resources for the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre points out that in the region, his organization is currently looking for 19 nurses. “We have ten positions posted and have not

found any takers. We must also try to replace nine nurses who are currently absent for various reasons. We have trouble getting teams to make up for that,” explains Mr. Bond, who admits that in some cases, those pinch-hit teams cannot fill all the vacancies.

Counting all the professions found at the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre, the organization has “approximately 100 positions,” to fill at the present time. These are

permanent jobs.

“We have had a lot of success with our hiring drive this spring though as 200 students were recruited to work for us during the summer months. It will take some pressure off,” adds Mr. Bond.

The summer is not a down period for Gaspé Peninsula hospitals due to the strong presence of tourists. Hospitals are often very busy along the Coast in July and August.

News briefs



Photo: T. Haroun

Gaétan Cousineau.

Good news for the unemployed

Thierry Haroun

GASPÉ PENINSULA: - There's good news for the unemployed. The federal government has decided to return to the Tripartite Appeal Commission of three people which existed before the current Social Security Tribunal. The former Conservative government of Stephen Harper created that Social Security Tribunal which is formed by only one person. The independent administrative tribunals make quasi-judicial decisions on appeals related to the Employment Insurance Act, the Canada Pension Plan, and the Old Age Security Act.

"The decision of going back to the Tripartite Appeal Commission is good news because there are three experts that assess a situation instead of one judge. Now, the only thing that we're not sure of is if the Appeal Commission will operate in a region like ours," says Gaétan Cousineau, MAC Gaspésie coordinator (an organization based in Chandler that defends the rights of the unemployed).

Since the inception of the current Social Security Tribunal, an appeal from an unemployed person can take three to seven months before being resolved. Mr. Cousineau hopes that the Tripartite Appeal Commission will substantially reduce the delays. "I remember a time when a decision could be made in ten days once the dossier was heard."



Photo: T. Haroun

The Cégep de la Gaspésie-les-Îles is adopting a sexual harassment policy.

No to sexual harassment

Thierry Haroun

GASPÉ: - The Cégep de la Gaspésie-les-Îles has recently adopted a policy against sexual harassment. This policy provides many services such as support, prevention and awareness activities at all its campuses. Françoise Leblanc-Perreault, the spokesperson for the Cégep, confirms the importance of having such a policy in her establishment. "We know in general that only one person out of 20 that was faced with sexual violence will reveal it and, obviously, we all have to work together in order to prevent such situations. We, therefore, want to make sure that such a policy within our establishment will make that person feel more at ease to reveal the incident and to talk it over with one of our experts on the campus. We also wanted to make sure that the procedure is simple. In that I mean that the person has only one place to go and talk to one person that will make the follow-up instead of having to tell his or her story again and again to two or three experts before getting the help needed."

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Photo: courtesy of An Acoustic Sin

Stephen LeBlanc and Ronnie LeBlanc are the founding members of An Acoustic Sin. They hire a bass player and a drummer for their shows.

An Acoustic Sin to play in New Richmond on May 31

Gilles Gagné

NEW RICHMOND: - One of the most popular bands of the 1995-2000 stretch in the Bay of Chaleur area, An Acoustic Sin, will be having a concert on May 31 at the Salle de Spectacles in New Richmond. It will be the New Brunswick band's re-entry into Quebec.

"After a long sleep, An Acoustic Sin reunites for another stretch of tours and three brand new albums," says singer/songwriter Ronnie Leblanc. The music that was never recorded was the last thing on An Acoustic Sin's bucket list. The band just needed to get this music to the fans.

What started off as a reunion thing became more. The band saw that they still had a big fan base! Their fans had children who are now in the front row of every show! Even though all that time has passed, the band still gives 200% at a show and they still feel that the fans deserve a powerful and energetic performance worthy of their hard-earned cash."

Ronnie Leblanc, who adopted the Gaspé Peninsula side of the Bay of Chaleur as his home many years ago, adds that the band will deliver a powerful performance "like we always have done since we started. We promised three new albums, one per year."

In 1998, the band released an album entitled *Here Comes The Sin* along with seven official music videos of songs from that album. The band also filmed a documentary on the life of An Acoustic Sin entitled *Behind The Sins*. This year, the members will have a second album entitled *Human Delight!* and is in recording phase now for the third album.

An Acoustic Sin per-

formed on the New Richmond Salle de Spectacles stage in 1996 for the ROSEQ, the Eastern Quebec network of show producers.

"The fans will get a chance to sing their favourites as An Acoustic Sin takes them back to that time with the songs they love and many new songs for them to discover. Fans will have a choice to stand and dance or sit in a trance! There will be a bar beside the stage in case they need to unwind! For those who have never seen An Acoustic Sin, the band welcomes you and promises to give you everything we have and more! It may be the first time we meet but it won't be the last time," concludes Ronnie Leblanc.

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Photo: N. Sergerie

Percé wants to revise its snow removal contract with the Quebec Transport Ministry.

A surplus in Percé

Nelson **Sergerie**

PERCÉ: - Percé ends its 2018 fiscal year with a surplus of \$369,000. A \$144,000 grant from the Quebec government for the local roads has helped with the surplus.

With the Ryan reform in 1993, certain road network responsibilities were transferred from the provincial level to the municipalities. Since 2003 Percé has received \$155,000 to maintain 110 kilometres of roads. Those grants were increased considerably in 2018.

A reduction in administrative expenses due to the Director General position being vacant for part of the year also

contributed to the surplus.

The 2018 budget was \$6.4 million. The accumulated surplus reached \$980,000 and the debt decreased to \$4.4 million or 1.8% of the property value. "It gives us a comfortable cushion that can be used in case of problems or allow us to invest in certain infrastructures," says the mayor, Cathy Poirier.

Reviewing the snow removal contract

Four years ago, the municipality took charge of the maintenance of certain sections of road on behalf of the Ministère des Transports, including

Highway 132 in the Cap-d'Espoir sector and the Lemieux Road. The contract could have been renewed automatically, but Percé ended the agreement to renegotiate a new partnership since the contract did not allow for indexation. The difficult winter of 2019 brings a shortfall to the municipality. "It is certain that last year was not profitable in this contract. I do not have the exact numbers. They need to be validated. We will ensure that the next agreement is not made to the detriment of the citizens of Percé," says Ms. Poirier. A meeting is planned with the Department of Transport to begin discussions.

A merging of strategies in Rocher-Percé

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The Tourism Office and the Rocher-Percé Chamber of Commerce are merging. At their respective annual general meetings the two boards of directors took this position in order to have a better striking force for the business people in the Rocher-Percé MRC.

The goal is clear: to have a new organization that is strong, solid and united, and comprised of entrepreneurs that will have a powerful voice to positively influence socio-economic development issues.

The three-year project is receiving \$100,000 from the MRC. The regrouping was one of the objectives of the MRC's 2019-2023 strategic planning. "It will be interesting for us to have an association of strong, united and



Gaspé wants to prioritize housing construction.

solid business people who will be able to sit down with us and have discussions to tell us if we are in the field or on the right road and come to help us in our orientations and actions putting in the groundwork," said the prefect, Nadia Minassian.

Regrouped but different

Each of the organization's missions will be maintained within the new organization. A founding general meeting will be held shortly to form the new board of directors. "I am very happy that we can move forward with such a project. It has been part of our board of directors' discussions for some time. The MRC's business community will be the winner of this group, I am sure," said the president of the Chamber of Commerce, Émilie Bourque-Bélanger. If the experience is inconclusive in three years, the two entities will regain their operating autonomy.



Police report

Dimitri Hughes, 22, from Gaspé, was arrested by Sûreté du Québec officers from the Côte-de-Gaspé detachment and investigators from the major crime squad in Chandler at 5:45 p.m. on May 14 in a house located in the Haldimand sector of Gaspé on De la Plage Street. The drug bust led to the seizure of an undetermined quantity of methamphetamine pills and cocaine as well as tools used to sell drugs.

Dimitri Hughes was questioned and kept in custody. He appeared on May 15 at the Percé Courthouse to face charges of possession of methamphetamine for the purpose of trafficking, possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking and two breaches of probation. "He had already been judged for similar matters and he didn't respect the probation periods of those previous judgements," emphasizes Crown Prosecutor Émilie Landry-Thériault.

The police investigation demonstrates that the man was very active in selling drugs in certain bars in Gaspé, says Sgt. Claude Doiron, spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec.

Recently appointed Quebec Court Judge Sonia Cyr ordered Dimitri Hughes to be remanded in prison until his bail hearing, scheduled for May 29, also at the Percé Courthouse.



Photo: N. Sergerie

The Luc-Germain Arena needs to be replaced

Plan B for Gaspé Arena

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - Gaspé is contemplating the future of the Luc-Germain Arena. The original plan called for the construction of a new amphitheatre and indoor soccer field where the Ministry of Transport's garage is located, but since that file isn't making any headway, the municipal government may need to consider another site.

It is a matter of moving heavy infrastructure to the city centre near the Augustine Industrial Park that needs to be discussed with the Quebec government. Talks will happen between now and June at the Treasury Board but Gaspé has no guarantee on the future schedule.

"Honestly, we will not wait for the Ministry of Transport. We have a deadline of 2022 because the refrigeration system of the arena will no longer comply with the law," says Mayor Daniel Côté.

Renovating the current arena would cost as much as a new one. The mayor wants to keep it downtown, but isn't revealing the location which could serve as Plan B. "We have different scenarios, but out of respect for the users, we will consult them." Users will be consulted shortly and a public consultation will be held in the fall.



Commentary

Gilles Gagné

A shot at justice for the Sunny Bank residents

The Sunny Bank flood victims finally have a chance to get justice. The class action lawsuit pitting the Sunny Bank residents against the Quebec Department of Transport started on May 13 at the Percé Courthouse.

Ten years have passed since several residents started thinking about suing Transport Quebec for the way the bridge passes over York River and, above all, its side accesses, were rebuilt in 1977. Those structures literally form a dam retaining water upstream and therefore causing recurrent flooding in that Town of Gaspé community.

In 2009, the Sunny Bank residents had just dealt with their seventh flood since 1980 when the idea of a class action suit took a serious form. Little did they know that the worst flood had not occurred yet.

Despite the fact that it was December, close to 250 millimetres of rain fell in the Gaspé town area on December 13, 14 and 15, causing a major flood in Sunny Bank. People might remember that New Richmond was also hit hard by those rainfalls. This was following a huge sea storm on December 6 that had also caused extensive damage along the coast.

The mid-December 2010 flood forced the closure of the community convenience store and caused extensive damage to a number of houses, in some cases irreversible damage. It also heavily affected the morale of many residents, understandably. No wonder they are seeking changes in the design of the bridge and its accesses, as well as monetary compensation.

The most shocking aspect of the file over the years prior to 2010 has been Transport Quebec's refusal to modify substantially the access roads leading to the York River bridge. High-ranked civil servants probably thought that such change would have been perceived like an admission of ill-conception.

They preferred dealing with the risk of recurrent floods, especially considering that those civil servants do not live in Sunny Bank. They only have to deal with the matter on paper, while residents have to deal with real problems.

Another disgusting aspect of the way Transport Quebec has handled the file rests on that ministry's repeated attempts to delay the trial, after the case was authorized to proceed by the Superior Court in 2015.

In too many trials involving various levels of government, their lawyers try to exhaust ordinary citizens through old but not enough known tricks. We could call them dirty tricks. Government attorneys will use all the rule provisions to multiply delays. In the Sunny Bank case, the attorneys were changed at one point in the procedure. So new government lawyers had to be brought in and asked the court for some time to become familiar with the case.

A number of valuable witnesses of Sunny Bank floods have passed away over the years. Fortunately, the Superior Court has authorized the deposition of certain documents, letters, personal journals and written accounts as evidence of what occurred over the last decades.

Another positive development took place on April 2 when Superior Court Judge Alain Michaud ruled that the trial would start this spring, preferably on May 13 as scheduled. Quebec's Department of Transport had previously tried to get another delay. It was refused.

Despite that decision rendered by Judge Michaud, it won't be a quick trial. For now, the procedure will be continued until May 24. It will stop for a week and resume on June 3 for a week. Then, it

will be postponed until... May 2020! The reason rests on the fact that some expert witnesses have not been heard in out of court hearings. Those experts, not surprisingly, are delegated by Transport Quebec and the Department of Civil Security.

It is impossible to predict a victory for the Sunny Bank residents. Trials can be quite unpredictable and the problem of floods is a complex one, with historical numbers, hydrological reports, surveyors' documents, legal manoeuvres, emotions and other human factors tied to competence and lack thereof, among other things.

Moreover, despite the fact that the Sunny Bank case is unique in a sense, a number of cases are relatively similar, in this age of recurrent floods. A number of observers will watch that case closely because it might lead to some jurisprudence. So there is pressure tied to this lawsuit.

Patience will be required once more though, since a verdict is unlikely before the end of 2020.

Letters to the Editor

What has confused me, about the whole SNC-Lavalin news coverage - is why so few of those reporting seem to recognize that Jody Wilson-Raybaud was the Minister of Justice, reading the drafts, and responsible for the eventual amendment to the criminal code under the Budget Implementation Act? She was in at ground level. It's not like Canada created DPAs (Deferred Prosecution Agreements). Remediation settlements exist in other countries. The government is attempting to remain competitive in a global economy where white collar crime is a reality.

Would it not seem logical that the next step was to test the amendment with a large private corporation whose offenses date back ten years or so? It doesn't take a lawyer to realize the amendment was passed through the finance department for a reason. We are after all a society dependent upon taxpayers for taxes, and not all employment can be tied to government posts. We need private enterprise. Mind you, many Canadian corporations have been sold off, so possibly there's a « ...another one hits the dust,.. » mentality about all this.

Ms. Wilson-Raybaud's loyalties seem conflicting. She is doing her best to take the Liberal Party of Canada down, all the while claiming to want to run as a Liberal in the October election. To my way of thinking, she has ulterior motives, and I'm not convinced it's principles and truth. If so, she would have tested the new legislation adopted in March 2018 which provides incentive for corporations to self monitor crimes rather than cover up.

As well, Ms. Wilson-Raybaud would have resigned from the Liberal party rather than be kicking « beehives ». She, however, prefers to wear a smug look and assume she's the only one immune to bee stings.

As for Ms. Wilson-Raybaud being a truth speaker, she's not the only personality claiming this status. Jussie Smollett, another person in the news of late, swears that he only speaks the truth and mentions matriarchal loyalties. Every truth has several sides dependent upon interpretation.

Prime Minister Trudeau is proving to be immune to the stings of Ms. Wilson-Raybaud and her side kick, Ms. Philpott. He's probably using raw onion and garlic to keep his immune system up and help him deflect their noxious, inflammatory comments. Hang tight young Mr. Trudeau, the election is a long way off. Summer is a season when Canadians relax, and many of winter/spring storms are forgotten.

Vivian Anne(tt) Beebe
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The Gaspé Spec

ESTABLISHED • MAY 1975

208-B Gérard D. Levesque
New Carlisle, Que.
G0C 1Z0

Tel: 418-752-5400
specs@globetrotter.net
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1-year (paper or digital): \$46
6-months (paper or digital): \$25
Outside Canada:
1-year paper \$165 digital: \$46



Gaspé's Home Page:
www.gogaspé.com



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News Editor:
Gilles Gagné



Office Manager:
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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada.
We acknowledge special funding from the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications.

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CONTRIBUTORS:
Cynthia Dow,
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Published every Wednesday by:
Les Publications de la Côte Inc.
(Sea-Coast Publications Inc.)

A new image for Gaspé

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ: - Gaspé Pure Pleasure is the new tourism image that will also serve as a tool to attract people to Gaspé's workforce. The image presented is dynamic and refreshed for tourists, workers and their families. The Gaspé-Forillon name that has been in place for five years will no longer be part of the strategy.

"Simply because we had limitations. Forillon is a major player at the level of the appeal product but, in winter, we had positioning constraints considering that the service offer of the park is more or less existing. We will reposition the actions in the target markets rather than the image," says Destination Gaspé chief executive officer Stéphane Ste-Croix. These target markets are still Quebec in the summer, the region of Montreal and its suburbs. Internationally, the destination will be repositioned and



Gaspé Pur Plaisir; the new image developed to attract both workers and tourists, was presented by Mayor Daniel Côté and Destination Gaspé Director General Stéphane Ste-Croix.

Photo: N. Sergerie

at this time Forillon will come to the front line.

Image redesigned

The image had to be redesigned especially to attract

the workforce. "What we want is to attract people to our home. Whether they come as a temporary tourist or permanently as a worker, we must be attractive and that makes people want to come to us: the happi-

ness of living here, the happiness of staying here. That's what we wanted to put forward," says Mayor Daniel Côté. The same branding will be used to attract as many people as possible.

Lack of housing

To accommodate new families, Gaspé will have to add housing. The vacancy rate, calculated by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, is 1.2%.

The Town of Gaspé has been trying to charm developers in recent years, without success, because of the difficulty of making investments profitable, given construction costs and low rent.

That is why they are looking to Quebec to put in place financial incentives. "It hurts recruitment efforts. The heart of the job is downtown and we have been in short supply for several months," says the mayor. Discussions are ongoing with the government. "It has passed the political stage. We have gone to the legal and technical analysis of the provisions we want to put in place."



Gaspé wants to prioritize housing construction.

Photo: N. Sergerie

LODGING CRISIS:

Gaspé wants a private bill

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ: - In order to address the housing shortage and revitalize the rural fabric of the municipality, Gaspé wishes to obtain adapted measures from the Quebec government in order to promote the construction of housing.

To do so, the municipality is submitting a private bill to the Quebec Government sponsored by the Member of the National Assembly for Gaspé, Méganne Perry-Mélançon.

A program for buying homes located in more devitalized areas is one of these measures. "We know that if we offer incentives to build housing, the largest buildings will end up in urban perimeters. For the sake of fairness throughout the territory, we wanted an incentive for people

to acquire residential properties such as those in Cap-des-Rosiers or Douglastown. We want to stimulate the real estate market and the socio-economic fabric in these sectors," explains Mayor Daniel Côté.

Incentives

The bill is designed broadly in order to be creative. "The project would give us quite broad powers," says the mayor. The City could offer property tax credits on new housing buildings or expansions of existing buildings. For the home ownership component in devitalized areas, a credit equivalent to the welcome tax could be adopted. "It could be something else. The council will have to rule once the bill is passed. We do not have the assurance that it will be in its en-

tirety, but if it is adopted as it is, we would have free rein to offer good incentives," says the mayor.

Gaspé also wants to stimulate the construction of housing in a context where the vacancy rate of 1.2% in a balanced market reaches about 3%. The town can count on the support of all parties and hopes for its adoption before the end of the parliamentary session. "We did a lot of canvassing behind the scenes. The willingness to support us is very large. Nobody sees any pitfalls," said the mayor.

Daniel Côté has repeatedly said in recent months that the lack of housing was a hindrance to the economic development of the municipality. Obtaining tax benefits would partly offset the higher construction costs in the region.

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ESTABLISHED • MAY 1975

Bay of Chaleur area businesses receive federal funding for expansion and certification

Gilles Gagné

BONAVENTURE: – Three Bay of Chaleur companies administered by women, two from Bonaventure and one from New Richmond, are receiving a total of \$177,000 from the federal government in order to develop specific aspects of their businesses.

The money comes from the Women Entrepreneurship Fund, managed by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. Up to 3,000 applications were sent to that department by Canadian women and 200 requests received a positive answer, including three from the Gaspé Peninsula.

Bonaventure's Bergerie du Margot, a sheep farm managed by Manon Lelièvre, receives \$64,610 in order to develop new markets in Japan. Ms. Lelièvre points out that the farm's lambs, fed with sea algae, are a niche product well-appreciated in Japan. She believes that her products can be singled out on that Asian market.

"There is already an American sheep farm exporting to Japan, like farms in Australia and New Zealand but it is not the same quality. Their lambs



Manon Lelièvre, of Bergerie du Margot, Minister Diane Leboutillier, Raymer's Sabrina Mercier and Camille Brideau of Cime Aventure are glad to see that the Women Entrepreneurship Fund has chosen to support three Gaspé Peninsula enterprises.

Photo: G. Gagné

are fed differently, in the field. My lambs are fattened with feeds, grains and algae," explains Manon Lelièvre.

Bergerie du Margot has been exporting its products to the United States for four years now. The farm sells 2,300 lambs yearly, 700 from its own production and 1,600 bought from other farms located in the Gaspé Peninsula mainly, but also in the Lower Saint Lawrence region.

"We would take all our lambs in the Gaspé Peninsula

but we don't have enough volume. It is a good business opportunity for young farmers," adds Manon Lelièvre.

In New Richmond, Sabrina Mercier, who manages Raymer with Rachel Leblanc, is receiving \$76,224 to develop new markets in Quebec, Ontario and in the eastern part of the United States. The company operates a fish farm in New Richmond where char and arctic char are produced. The company also runs a fish market.

"We are talking about Boston and New York. That funding will allow us to go and meet those new customers, send samples, create promotional tools and cover the cost of developing those markets. (...) Char is not well known yet. It has a delicate taste," explains Ms. Mercier.

Raymer will reach an annual production of 50 tonnes by 2020, with 90% of it consisting of char. The company sells almost all its current production in Quebec and a little

in Ontario.

In Bonaventure, Cime Aventure receives \$37,000 in order to get an environmental certification, ISO 14001, the first firm in Quebec to get that status.

"We are talking about environmental management, how to administer that certification and adopt the best ways to respect the environment. We have to train our staff of 65 employees. We want to be exemplary, in fact," points out Camille Brideau, spokesperson for Cime Aventure and the sister of director general Élodie Brideau.

The company is starting its 31st year of operation in 2019. Last year, it greeted 78,000 visitors.

The Women Entrepreneurship Fund is endowed with a \$2 billion envelope. "Prime Minister Justin Trudeau wants to double the number of businesses controlled by women between now and 2025. There are 1.2 million enterprises in Canada and 16% of them are owned by women," points out Gaspésie-Magdalen Islands Member of Parliament and Canada's Revenue Minister Diane Leboutillier.

Helping the farming sector

Thierry Haroun

GASPÉ PENINSULA: - The agricultural sector in the Gaspé and across the province is going through difficult times mainly due to the difficulty in finding young farmers and the increasing cost of land.

What to do? What are the solutions? Are there solutions? In fact, a new service called Arterre may be the solution. Spec spoke with Arterre coordinator, Andréanne Cyr-Wright, who was able to provide more information regarding the issue.

"It's difficult sometimes for a farmer to find someone that will pursue the activities of his farm when he doesn't have children to assure the relief of his farming business. It's in this perspective, in part, that this new tool called Arterre will be helpful," says Andréanne Cyr-Wright. "Arterre," she adds, "is a tool that enables people interested in the farming sector to meet



Arterre, a new online tool, will help farmers network with potential buyers.

Photo: T. Haroun

through a web platform, therefore, under one roof, and with a data base, all these people could be producers, buyers, sellers and so forth. They will be able to reach out and talk to

the right person and get in touch with potential buyers in all confidentiality. My work will be to coordinate all this and make sure that it works to its best potential."

The reality

There is a reality in the agricultural sector and it's not an easy one, she says. "In fact, the number of enterprises is

dropping. There are many abandoned properties that once were used for farming activities. These properties are not used to their full potential.

The other issue is the difficulty for young farmers to have access to land because the prices are going up. You add to all this farmers that have no one to continue their farming activities once they retire and you get as a result de-vitalized rural communities. Now with Arterre, there is hope to stimulate this sector and revitalize rural communities," states Andréanne Cyr-Wright.

Partners

Arterre has many partners, such as the *Fonds d'aide au rayonnement des régions*, all five MRCs (Avignon, Bonaventure, Côte-de-Gaspé, Rocher-Percé and Haute-Gaspésie), the Fédération UPA Gaspésie-les-îles and the Quebec Fisheries and Agriculture Ministry.

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



Foraging for fiddleheads

*Fiddleheads are greenery.
Wash them till they're cleanery.
We await their season eagerly.
Available only fleetingly.*

Hurry! Act now, for the season is short. They first start to poke out their little heads from mid-May to the first week of June. Fiddleheads are the furled fronds of a young ostrich fern. They are foraged, that is, picked by people who will dine on them, or harvested them to be sold. They grow wild in wet, damp areas, such as marshes, forests and beside streams and rivers and can be picked for about two or three weeks in the early spring.

The plant is called fiddlehead because it looks like the top of a violin or fiddle. If you pick fiddleheads, only pick half of the tops on each plant or cluster. This is to prevent over-picking, which will mean that fewer fiddleheads will grow next season. If you over pick every year, the plant will stop producing and eventually die. Be a responsible picker.

Fiddleheads have been eaten in this area for centuries. Native communities introduced fiddleheads to Europeans who settled here over 200 years ago. Most commercial harvesting of fiddleheads happens in Maine, New Brunswick and Quebec. The village of Tide Head, New Brunswick, is considered the Fiddlehead Capital of the World. Tide Head, with a population of 900, forages for most of their greens along the Restigouche River. Last year, 2018, the harvest was possibly contaminated by floodwaters and so could not be consumed or sold but they are hoping for a good season in 2019.

Fiddleheads are eaten as a vegetable. Fiddleheads contain vitamins and minerals, including omega-3 and vitamins C and A. They have antioxidants and provide fibre. They are a powerhouse of nutritional goodness.

Fiddleheads can cause food poisoning, so to avoid this possibility, follow a few simple routines. They should be washed a few times in cold water before cooking to get rid of dirt. It's also recommended that you pick off any little brown bits. Fiddleheads should never be eaten raw. Scientists suggest cooking them for 15 minutes, if you boil them. If you steam or sauté them, 10 to 12 minutes is optimal. Serve them with butter, salt, pepper and lemon. Fiddleheads can be frozen, or for the culinary adventurous types, they can even be pickled.

The flavour of fiddleheads is distinctive and some people describe it as being similar to asparagus and spinach. Others report tasting a mushroomy flavour or even that of artichoke. What is definite is that many people greatly enjoy this spring delicacy. Thank you, Mother Nature, for providing us with this unique and delicate spring veggie!

Fiddleheads for 4

1 pound of fiddleheads

3 garlic cloves

Olive oil

Fresh herbs, finely chopped, such as parsley, thyme or basil

Salt and pepper

Lemon

Wash the fiddleheads in a couple of cold-water rinses.

Remove any brown bits.

Pat dry with a clean tea towel.

Heat the olive oil in a large wok or pan and add the fiddleheads and garlic cloves when oil is hot.

Stir lightly with a wooden spoon until the fiddleheads are slightly soft, but not mushy.

Just before serving, add herbs and salt/pepper to taste.

Squeeze on a wee bit of lemon juice.

Enjoy a taste of spring!

Fiddlehead Shrimp Salad

Ingredients

250g cooked shrimp
250g cooked fiddleheads
1 red onion, chopped
1 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp lime juice
1 tbsp soya sauce
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1 tsp sesame oil
salt and pepper to taste
1 head of red leaf lettuce

1. Combine the fiddleheads, shrimp and onion in a bowl.

2. In a small bowl, beat together the mustard, lime juice and soya sauce. Slowly whisk in the vegetable and sesame oils. Season with salt and pepper. Pour over the fiddlehead mixture.

3. Arrange the leaf lettuce on a platter and top with the fiddlehead mixture. Serves 4 to 6.



Photo: courtesy of Vincent Blais-Fortin

The Sunny Bank area was hit hard by the flood of 2010

Sunny Bank lawsuit finally underway in Percé

Gilles Gagné

PERCÉ: - Eight-and-a-half years after the last major flood, close to 200 Sunny Bank residents are finally having their case heard in court. The class action suit initiated by Sunny Bank residents in 2013, following the December 2010 disaster, kicked off on May 13 at the Percé courthouse.

The Sunny Bank group is suing the Quebec Department of Transport, arguing that the ministry caused many floods after 1977 as result of the way the York South Boulevard was rebuilt that year in the vicinity of York River. The then new road and the new bridge were built too high above the surrounding area, thus forming a dam prone to cause flooding.

The citizens affirm that the bridge and the higher road were not constructed to let enough water pass towards the mouth of the York River following heavy rainfalls, as in December 2010, or during a spring thaw.

The 2010 flood alone caused damage to houses, businesses and properties valued close to \$3 million.

The attorneys for the Sunny

Bank residents, Marie-Anaïs Sauvé and Vincent Blais-Fortin will notably try to prove that Transport Quebec were aware since 1980 that the bridge, primarily, and the road were not constructed to evacuate enough water during strong flow periods.

Before 1977, the road leading to both sides of the bridge was significantly lower and the water would pass over it instead of flooding the upstream area.

Witnesses of past floods will testify during the trial, as well as experts. The procedure will last many months and a time frame is hard to predict.

Attorney Blais-Fortin recently told the SPEC that "we are talking about a file that goes back a long time. There is

an important historical perspective in this file."

Additional floods occurred in 1980, 1981, 1983, 1997, 1999, 2004 and 2009 before the idea of a lawsuit came to the mind of the Sunny Bank residents.

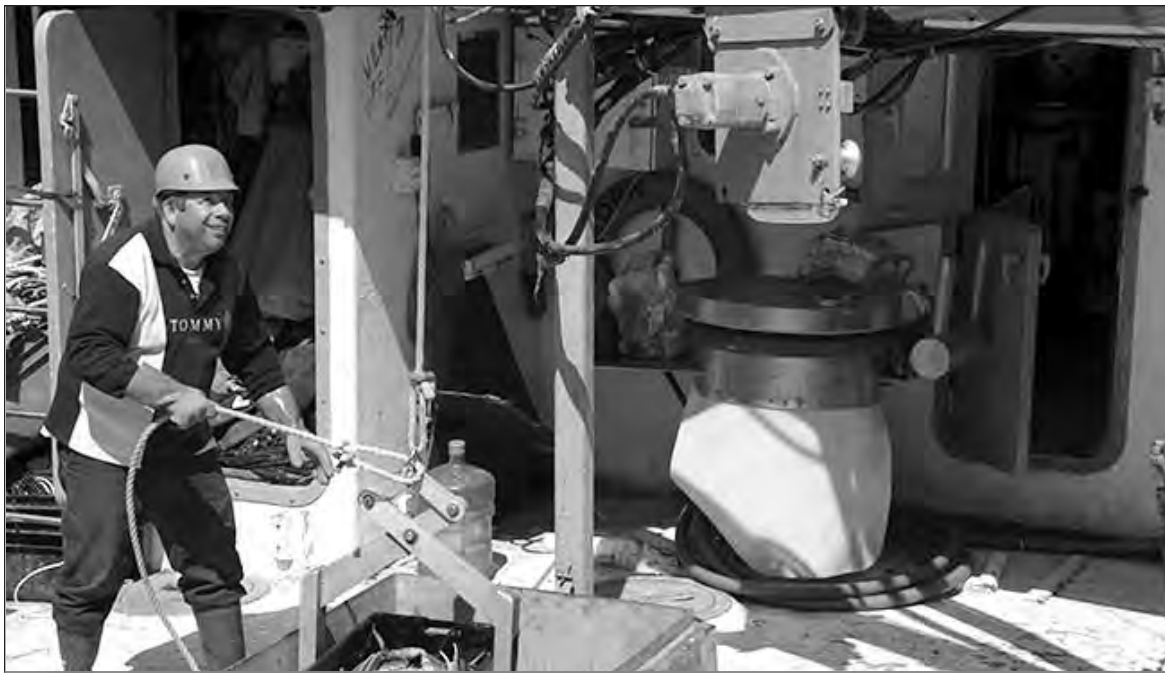
Superior Court Judge Pierre Bellavance presides over the case. A verdict is unlikely to be rendered before the second half of 2020.

Transport Quebec officials have refused to comment regarding the case because it is being heard in court. Until recently, that ministry was requesting another postponement of the trial but an April 2 decision rendered by Judge Alain Michaud, of the Superior Court, ordered the start of the procedure for May 13.

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Crab landings are happening at an accelerated pace at the Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé wharf, and in other wharves as well. Photo: Robert Nicolas

SNOW CRAB:

Landings are strong, despite late start of the fishery

Gilles Gagné

PASPEBIAC: – Snow crab landings in the Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence started strongly once the go-ahead was given on May 2 by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). It was again a late start, due to the presence of ice in the Acadian Peninsula harbours and the Canadian Coast Guard's inability to clear those ports.

This year the fishermen of the Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence, often referred to as zone 12, are benefitting from a large quota increase, a 32.9% jump to 32,480 metric tonnes, compared to the 24,439 tonnes in 2018, which was an average quantity.

Bill Sheehan, vice-president of the E. Gagnon et Fils processing plant in Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé, indicates that the catches are delivered to the plant at an accelerated pace.

"The landings are there for sure. The biologists were right. We receive 300,000 pounds per day at the plant. It is close to our capacity. (...) Some New Brunswick plants are calling to ask us if we want to process their crab, in an attempt to avoid wasting it. Landings from zone 12 are overflowing the processing plants. It is not a species that we can keep alive for a long time, except in the boats that have a water-filled hold but those boats have to go back to sea. Ice machines can hardly supply what is needed. The boats are coming back too fast and the trucks also need ice to deliver our products,"

says Mr. Sheehan.

The Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé plant is currently hiring 325 people in the processing section. "Altogether, with the office staff, the unloading crews at the wharf and our truck drivers, we have 500 employees. We hired 39 Mexicans this year. We had 29 last year. We provide housing for them. The number of Gaspesian employees is stable but we do lose a few to retirement every year," adds Bill Sheehan.

The plant started slowly with 50 employees at the end of March for the snow crab catches made in the Saint Lawrence estuary. "We take delivery of some landings in Rimouski," he says.

The Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé facility will process about 9 million pounds of snow crab this spring and in the first days of the summer. The deadline for fishing is June 30. The plant gradually switches to lobster processing when snow crab landings slow down.

Market conditions are quite favourable this year and the price could reach a record once the final adjustment is paid.

"The season starts while the market is practically empty. The Americans are buying massively. The Japanese are really cautious though. Some (Japanese)

companies are only buying one year out of two. The Canadian dollar is a little better than last year for exports. Its value was between \$1.20 and \$1.30 (Canadian dollar for an American dollar last year) and it is \$1.34 at the present time. We are winners in that regard. On the American market, the demand is really strong but there is so much crab delivered to the Boston market that a downward spiral is possible. The price must not be too high. The consumer will decide," explains Bill Sheehan.

E. Gagnon et Fils offered \$5 per pound as a base price at the start of the season.

"It will be higher. The final price is not set yet. It will be near \$5.50 like last year. There is something coming, as quotas should increase two or three-fold in Alaska, compared to last winter. The Japanese are not here this year and they are starting to buy Russian crab. Will it hold (this year's price) if the Americans see that they are the only buyers? We are sending five to six containers to the Boston market every day. What will happen in Alaska is hard to predict," explains Bill Sheehan.

E. Gagnon et Fils buys most of the catches made by the boats belonging to Listuguj, Gesgapegiag and Gespeg.

Daniel Côté second in line at the UMQ

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ: – Gaspé mayor Daniel Côté is positioning himself for presidency of the Union of Quebec Municipalities (UMQ). Daniel Côté who previously filled the position of 2nd vice-president and chairman of the UMQ Air Transport Committee was elected by his peers as 1st vice-president on May 8,

The next logical step is the presidency of the organization in 2020. For him, this job is important. "It represents a channel of communication that is interesting with the highest levels of government. It's the network of contacts that comes with it. It's the visibility that comes with it," says Mr. Côté.

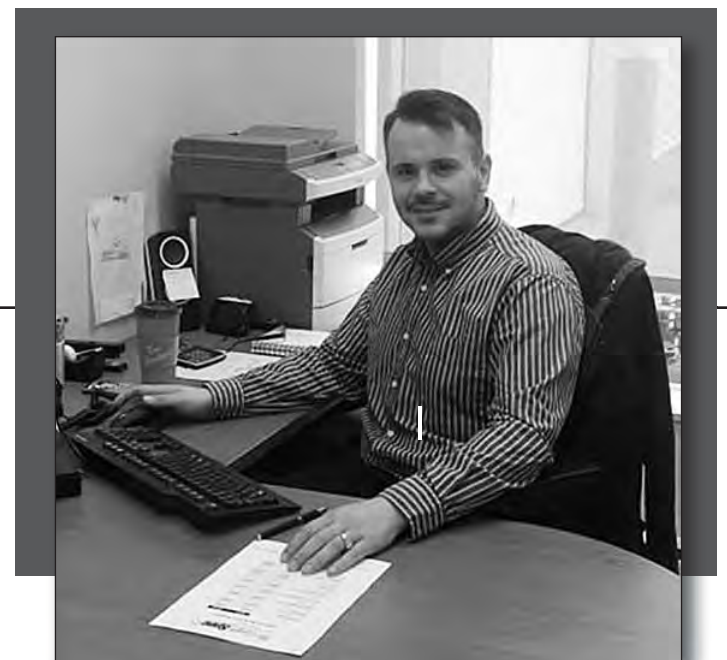
Faced with possible criticism regarding his absence in the municipality following this appointment, Mr. Côté believes that it will be an advantage for the development of Gaspé. "I chair the National Committee on Air Transport and as a result we have almost a 90% grant for our airport. We have succeeded with the government in building programs adapted to our reality," says the mayor. His colleague from Bonaventure, Roch Audet, also remains on the UMQ board.

Engagement & Wedding Announcements

Announce your Engagement or Wedding in The Gaspé Spec

Engagement Announcement:
\$30 (\$35 with picture) up to 20 lines

Wedding Announcement:
\$40 (\$45 with picture)
max. of 300 words



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Announcements...



OBITUARIES



D'AMOURS: Gabriel

November 8, 1925 - May 14, 2019

Mr. Gabriel D'Amours from New Carlisle passed away at the Residence St. Joseph in Maria on May 14, 2019.

He leaves to mourn: his wife Cécile Martin; his children Serge (Thérèse), Sylvie, Denis (Jody), Andrée (Pierre), Eric (Luce), Marc (Irene), Nicole (Jacques) and Mathieu (Sylvie); his sisters; brother-in-law; and sister-in-law as well as many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The family will welcome you at the Roman Catholic Church in New Carlisle on Friday, May 24, 2019. The visitation hours will be from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. followed by the funeral. The burial will be in August 2019. (Date to be determined.)

Donations in his memory can be sent to the Foundation of St. Joseph's Residence, Maria.



WILLETT: Linda Ann

June 1, 1949 - May 8, 2019

Linda Ann Willett, originally of Cascapedia, Quebec, passed away suddenly in Verdun, Quebec.

She leaves to mourn: her husband Fredrick Preston; her daughters: Nathalie (Gary) and Cindy (Dany); her grandchildren: Shawn, Jamie, Kisha, Hunter, Caylee, Michael, Nicholas and Sam; sister: Pauline (Johnny); brother: Lloyd (Elaine); as well as other family and friends. She was buried at Saints-Anges in Lachine, Quebec, on May 15, 2019.

The New Carlisle
Funeral Association
extends sympathy to the family of
Dr. Gabriel D'Amours



IN MEMORY



SIMON: Lillian Ida

May 27, 1937 - June 4, 2018

In loving memory of our dear sister Lillian.

*One year has passed since that sad day,
When the one we loved was called away.*

*Sadly missed along life's way,
Quietly remembered every day.*

*No longer in our lives to share,
But in our hearts she's always there.*

Forever loved, Betty, Sally, George, Michael and Mona.

Card of Thanks



The family of the late Vera Simon (née Langlois) wishes to express its sincere thanks and appreciation to relatives and friends for their many acts of kindness, floral tributes, donations and expressions of sympathy received during the loss of a dearly beloved mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Please accept this as our personal thank-you.



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Steven Imhoff - New Carlisle 418-752-6041

Alexis Normandeau - St. Jules 418-759-3270

Funeral and Celebration of Life



The funeral and celebration of the life of Eva Patterson Miller will take place at St. James Church, Wakeham, at 2 p.m. on August 10, 2019.

Interment will follow at Wakeham cemetery. Please join us in remembering a very special lady.

Committal Service



A committal service will be held at the Black Cape Cemetery on May 30, 2019, at 11 a.m. for Lenette Powell-Flowers.

Son Justin and family ask those who wish to attend to join them at this time. A light lunch and a chance to mingle and remember Lenette will follow the interment.

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COAST ROUND-UP

POINTE-NAVARRÉ:

Sanctuary of Pointe Navarre

May 26: The Annual General Meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. at the church. You are invited to this meeting to receive information on the administration of the sanctuary. Everyone welcome.

GASPE:

Legion Branch 59 Community Yard Sale

June 1: A Community Yard Sale will be held at the Gaspé Legion, 197 Rue Jacques Cartier, from 8 a.m. to noon. Tables available to rent \$10. We accept donations of items that can be dropped off or we can pick them up. Contact 418-355-8608 to pick up your items or to rent a table.

WAKEHAM:

Advance Notice

Wakeham ACW will be holding its annual summer sale on **Saturday, July 6**, at the York River Community Hall. There will be a bake sale, handicraft table, white elephant table and mystery parcels. Afternoon tea will be served. \$5. Doors open at 2 p.m.

YORK:

York ACW

July 29: The York ACW will be holding its annual Summer Sale and Afternoon Tea beginning at 2 p.m. at the York River Community Hall. There will be baked goods, handicrafts, and a white elephant table. Hope to see you there.

DOUGLASTOWN:

Community Centre

Tuesdays: Zumba from 7-8 p.m. \$10/class.
Wednesday: Yoga for women. There are two groups: 5:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. and 7:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. \$17/class (drop in). Requires minimal experience in yoga. Bring your mat.

MALBAY:

Malbay ACW

July 27: All Saints by the Sea

Tea, Crafts and Bake Sale at the Malbay Hall from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

MALBAY:

Malbay Festival Buffet

June 8: Chinese and Canadian buffet at the Barachois Royal Canadian Legion starting at 5 p.m. Takeouts at 4:30 p.m. Adults \$14, Children 6-12 \$10, under 6 free.

BARACHOIS:

Legion Branch 261

Every Monday: The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 261, will be having a money bingo at 7 p.m. at the Legion. 18+ only.
Every Thursday: Cards and Games from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Free. For more information, contact Lloyd Roussel at 418-645-3700 or 418-645-2786.

BARACHOIS:

Recreation Centre

May 24: The Barachois Recreation Centre will be holding an 18+ money bingo at 7 p.m. Bilingual. Over \$600 in cash prizes.

BARACHOIS:

Mountain View Golden Age

May 31: Gift Bingo Fundraiser beginning at 7 p.m. 857 Rte 132 East. Everyone over 18 is welcome.

PORT DANIEL:

St. James

Anglican Church

July 27: Annual Bazaar at the Three Star Golden Age Club.

PORT DANIEL:

QWI Marcil Branch Advance Notice

July 20: Strawberry Social from noon to 2 p.m. at the Three Star Golden Age Club building in Port Daniel West. For more information, please call 418-752-8152.

PORT DANIEL:

Three Star Golden Age Club

Every Wednesday: Pétanque from 7 to 9 p.m. Cost \$3. Come and join the fun and learn a new game!
May 25: Military Whist.

June 1: 500 card game.

June 8: Father's Day BBQ.

HOPE TOWN:

Hope Baptist Church

Hope Baptist Church welcomes you. Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m. and Corporate Worship at 11 a.m. on Sundays. Prayer Meeting and Bible Study at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays. Young Peoples for grades 7-11 at 7 p.m. on Fridays. 305 Route 132 West, Hope Town, 418-752-5838.

June 1: Annual Bake Sale from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the New Carlisle Town Hall. All proceeds go to youth ministries and to send kids to Fair Haven Bible Camp. Come and enjoy our freshly baked goods.

HOPE TOWN:

Community Centre

June 8: Military Whist beginning at 8 p.m.

NEW CARLISLE:

Heritage New Carlisle

May 25: Wood carving at Kempffer House from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with Marcel Beaulieu. \$15.

NEW CARLISLE:

Royal Canadian Legion

Saturdays: Legion opens at 1 p.m.

July 1: Mini prince and princess. If you would like to register your child/children, call Laura at 418-752-6799. Age groups: 0-4, 5-9 and 10-13. More info to follow.

NEW CARLISLE:

Bible Chapel Services

Sunday: Breaking of Bread for Believers - 9:30 a.m.; night service - 7 p.m.; **Wednesday:** Bible Study and Prayer - 7 p.m. "You Must Be Born Again."

NEW RICHMOND:

La Boutique

June 1 & 8: Garage and Bake Sale from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Any donated objects and baked items are gratefully accepted. Garage sale items can be dropped off May 30 and 31 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Please drop off bake sale items on June 1 only.

For more information or if you need pick up service, please call 418-392-4508.

June 14 & 15: Artisans are invited to bring in their hand crafted items to be inventoried in preparation for season opening. Doors are open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

June 17 to September 6: La Boutique is open from Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 210 Boul Perron Ouest, New Richmond

NEW RICHMOND:

Flea Market

New clothing has arrived, \$1 each. Hot meal at noon. Free. Donations accepted. To donate or obtain furniture, please call 418-392-5161. Open on **Fridays** and **Saturdays** from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 248 Perron Blvd, New Richmond.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

Bookroom

The book room is now closed, but if you call Kathleen at 392-4896 she can set up a time to go in.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

Royal Canadian Legion Br. 172

The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 172, meets monthly every third **Saturday** at the Legion located at 55 Gallagher St.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

Fifty Plus Club Events

May 25: Annual Spring Bingo beginning at 1 p.m. Doors open at 12 p.m. The entrance fee is \$10 for 3 cards; additional cards are \$1 each. Canteen will be serving hot dogs, sandwiches, drinks, potato chips and chocolate bars.

May 31: There will be jam sessions open to all musicians and spectators at the club. Doors open at 7 p.m. and entertainment begins at 7:30.

June 16: Father's Day Brunch from 9 a.m. to noon. \$12 per adult, children 12 and under \$10. Welcome to all.

Every Tuesday: Bingo at 7 p.m.

Every Thursday: Dame de Piques at 1 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Thank you for your support.

GESGAPEGIAG:

Important Meeting

This is to inform the community members of Gesgapegiag and the surrounding area that Gesgapegiag healing lodge (NNADAP) hosts AA meetings and is open to everyone. If you are interested in a lifestyle free of alcohol and substance abuse and have the desire to change, you are invited to attend meetings every **Monday** at 7 p.m.

GESGAPEGIAG:

N.A. Meetings

N.A. Meetings held every **Tuesday** at 7 p.m. at the Mawimi Treatment Centre located at 85 School Street in Gesgapegiag. Everyone welcome! For more information, call 418-759-3522.

ROTARY CLUB WINNERS

The winners for the week of May 12 are: Henriette Audet, Gilles Arseneault, Yannick Barriault, Kevin Gallan, Philippe Maltais, Émilien Rioux and Daniel Arseneault.

UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, May 26

Worship with Anglicans in Shigawake at 10 a.m.

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Sunday, May 26

New Carlisle

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Hope Town

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Shigawake

10 a.m. Morning Prayer

PARISH OF GASPÉ

Sunday, May 26

St. Matthew's - Peninsula

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

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On the lighter side...



SUDOKU

			8	4				1
		3		1				
						2	6	
	6		8	2			4	5
			4	9				
		4	6	3				9
					6	5		
4	5	6	7				1	3
1		7		5	8	6	9	4

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

1	2	7	3	5	8	6	9	4
4	5	6	7	9	2	8	1	3
9	3	8	4	1	6	5	7	2
2	1	4	3	5	7	8	9	6
7	8	5	1	4	9	3	2	6
3	6	9	8	2	7	1	4	5
5	4	1	9	7	3	2	6	8
8	9	7	2	3	6	1	4	5
6	7	2	5	8	4	9	3	1

ANSWER:

Roasted Banana Coffee Cake

- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled, plus 1 tablespoon at room temperature for the pan
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 bananas
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans
- 3 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract



Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter a 9-inch round cake pan with the 1 tablespoon room temperature butter and dust with the granulated sugar and tip out any excess. Place the bananas on a small rimmed baking sheet and roast for 15 minutes. Remove and set aside to cool.

In a small bowl, combine the pecans, brown sugar and cinnamon. Set aside. Sift the flour, baking soda, baking powder, and nutmeg through a fine-mesh strainer into a medium bowl.

In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat together the butter and sugar on low speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Scrape down the sides of the bowl with a spatula, then add the roasted bananas, sour cream and vanilla. Beat until incorporated.

With the mixer running on low speed, spoon in the flour mixture and mix until just combined. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the top with a spatula. Sprinkle evenly with the pecan topping. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out clean with a few crumbs attached. Let cool for 10 minutes before slicing and serving.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, you are a terrific planner, but something is getting in the way of plans to socialize in the days ahead. Commit to seeing friends regardless of the obstacles in your way.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

You can handle difficult situations with ease, Taurus. Others may think that you are uncaring, but you focus on the facts and not the emotions of the situation.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

Others look to you for guidance this

week, Gemini. Try to lead them in the right direction. If you do not have all of the answers, try to find them.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

Take some time to sort through personal issues that may be holding your career back, Cancer. Once you clear your mind, you can focus fully on your career.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

If you find yourself spending more time with your social circle rather than family, you may have to re-assess your priorities, Leo. Don't let responsibilities slide.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Direct your energy toward work in the days ahead, Virgo. There is a possible promotion in the works, so

now is a great time to put your nose to the grindstone.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Sometimes the key to success is to know when to step back and take a break, Libra. Periodic respites from the daily grind can help you recharge and refocus.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, you may be looking for something new to keep yourself occupied. Try learning a new sport or a language. This is a fun way to meet new people and stay busy.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, if you have been procrastinating of late, keep in mind that you will ultimately need to get things done. Better to get back on track sooner

rather than later.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, support a reputable cause or charity. Doing so sets a positive example, and you will feel better for having done so. Even small efforts can make a profound impact.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

It isn't enough to simply get the job done, Aquarius. You need to do everything to the best of your ability. If you do, you will have a sense of accomplishment and pride.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, ask others for help if you are having any difficulties in your personal life. They can bring a new perspective to the situation.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

MAY 19

Sam Smith, Singer (27)

MAY 20

Rachel Platten, Singer (38)

MAY 21

Mark Crilley, Author (53)

MAY 22

Ginnifer Goodwin, Actress

(41)

MAY 23

Melissa McBride, Actress (54)

MAY 24

Patti LaBelle, Singer (75)

MAY 25

Ian McKellen, Actor (80)



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Jules Grenier, b.a.ll.i.

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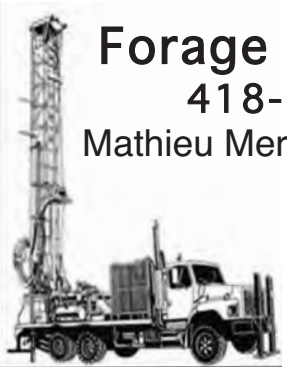


Tremblay & Barriault, notaires inc
Notaries & legal counsel

Gilles Tremblay, notary
Serge Barriault, notary
Gaël Tremblay, notary

119B Perron Blvd West, New Richmond, Que.
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Class of 2019



If you are from a household that has an active subscription to **The Gaspé Spec**, you are invited to apply for the **SPEC BURSARY**

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Escuminac Intermediate, New Richmond High School, New Carlisle High School, Chandler Evergreen or Gaspé Polyvalent

APPLICATION PROCESS

The applicant must include in their application the following items:

GRADE 9, GRADE 10 **AND** GRADE 11 transcripts.
The transcripts must show improvement.

Proof of involvement in community volunteer activities.
This would include letters from community leaders attesting to community volunteer work over the last three years.

Acceptance letter from the post-secondary institution you will be attending.

Applicants failing to provide **ALL** of the above mentioned items will be disqualified.

Student's address must match the address of an active Spec Subscription.

**Applications must be submitted by
May 24, 2019 at 4 p.m.**

Send your application and all required documents to:
**The Gaspé Spec / Spec Bursary
208-B Gerard D. Levesque
New Carlisle, QC
G0C 1Z0**

Over 60? Keep an eye out for common vision problems

(NC) As we age, we come to appreciate the simpler things in life whether it's playing with grandkids, taking up a hobby or finding more time for a good book. Whatever activity brings you joy, don't let the loss of vision affect your independence.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the most common cause of poor vision in Canadians over the age of 60 and one of the leading causes of vision loss. While peripheral vision is usually unaffected, people with AMD lose the sharp, straight-ahead vision used for driving, reading, recognizing faces, and looking at detail. Though AMD doesn't always lead to complete blindness, it can sometimes significantly impair simple daily activities. Over time, the areas of vision loss may grow larger or denser or you may develop blank spots in your central vision.

If detected at an early stage, there are treatments that can decrease AMD's rate of progression. You can take steps to prevent or reduce vision loss with these tips from the Canadian Ophthalmological Society:

- Get regular comprehensive medical eye exams. People over age 65 should get an exam at least once every two years.

- Quit smoking. Smokers are twice as likely to develop AMD compared with a non-smoker.



- Know your family's eye health history. Before you go in for your next eye exam, speak with your family about their eye health history, as it may prompt your ophthalmologist to recommend more frequent eye exams.

- Eat well. Studies show that people who have a reduced risk of AMD have diets rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon and walnuts, and omega-3 enriched foods like yogurt and eggs.

- Stay active. It's important to maintain regular exercise to not only keep a healthy weight, but also reduce the risk of developing AMD.

Leading an active, healthy lifestyle and getting regular eye exams are important to saving your long-term vision, especially after age 60. Speak to your eye doctor about your eye health and the steps you should take to ensure healthy eyesight for years to come. Learn more at cos-sco.ca.

CENTRE COMMUNAUTAIRE

AUBERGE DOUGLASTOWN

HOSTEL

Tel.: 418-368-0288
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Email: centre.douglas@douglastown.net
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ASSOCIATES

ALPHONSE BERNARD, FCPA, FCA
CLAUDE BERNARD, CPA, CA
HÉLÈNE LAGACÉ, BAA

alphonsebernard.ca
CARLETON-SUR-MER
418-364-7471
CPA

STUDIO DENTAIRE
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D^{re} Éline Audet

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