

Two Gaspesian firefighters had the experience of a lifetime in Australia

Gilles Gagné

NEW RICHMOND: – Two Gaspesian firefighters, Benoit Audet and Stéphane Leblanc, recently returned from a month in Australia, where they combatted forest fires with 21 other Quebecers who are, like them, employees of the SOPFEU, the *Société de protection des forêts contre le feu*.

The two men describe their stay “down under” as the experience of a lifetime but it was also very difficult, because of the time spent away from home and of the rising heat that prevailed as time passed, independently from the fires.

New Richmond’s Stéphane Leblanc and Caplan’s Benoit Audet were initially called to leave around Christmas but that departure was postponed, which was a good thing for the two fathers. They finally left on January 18.

“We had to stop in Quebec City for physical tests. It is a Canadian test that we have to do every year. It is called WX-Fit. It is very demanding, really tough. Usually, we know in advance. This time around, the notice was short,” explains Benoit Audet.

“It was not easy. You leave everything behind. It is wintertime and the family stays here, with the storms and everything,” he says. “Face-time is fine but you are far if something happens,” says Stéphane Leblanc.

This was not the first time the two men travelled for a firefighting mission.

“Every year, we go away to fight fires outside Quebec,” adds Stéphane Leblanc who has gone on missions in Western Canada and in the United States.

“It is our job. Going outside Quebec is a way to do our



Stéphane Leblanc and Benoit Audet appear in the front row, second and third from the left. The photo shows the first of two groups of Quebecers that intervened in Australia’s forest fires.

Photo: Courtesy of SOPFEU (Isabelle Gariépy)

job over a longer period. We prefer doing it year around,” adds Mr. Audet.

After their arrival in Australia, the Quebecers were stationed in Bright, a village of 2,400 people located in the northeast part of the state of Victoria which is situated in the southeast portion of Australia.

“It is a tourist place. It was important to open the park trails. It is their livelihood,” points out Mr. Leblanc.

The heat was a major factor when they arrived. “It was 30 degrees when we arrived and it went as far up as 44,” he adds. “It went from 30 to 32, then 38, 40, 42 and 44. It took us three days to get used to it but after that, it was all right,” says Stéphane Leblanc.

He and Benoit Audet are supervisors in firefighting. It means that they have between five and seven team leaders, and each team leader manages four firefighters. They are consequently used to supervising between 20 and 25 fire-

fighters.

During their first few days in Bright, the Australian firefighting service asked the Quebecers to carry out some basic duties.

“We cut some trees. After a week-and-a-half, they sent us to some fires, new fires. It was for initial attacks,” explains Benoit Audet.

“It is the wild part of a forest firefighter’s job. We were happy. That is what we are looking for. We proved (with the tree-cutting chores) that we were capable and after that, they let us work. They (the local firefighters) had been there since November 2. They were tired. The Aussies were able to spend more time with their families,” adds Mr. Leblanc.

Their firefighting in Australia was intense. They had a hard time judging if it was comparable to some of their previous interventions.

“The British Columbia fires were big, two or three years ago,” says Benoit Audet.

Stéphane Leblanc fought the tough fires of Fort MacMurray in 2016. He also worked in the states of Idaho and Washington.

“The topography (in that part of Australia) is similar (to the Gaspé Peninsula’s). There are mountains with steep slopes and not much water. A lot of work is done with manual tools,” says Benoit Audet.

“There is a danger of heat-stroke even for the Aussies. At one point, we can’t work anymore,” states Stéphane Leblanc.

They were housed in motel rooms, something they really appreciated, considering the length of their stay. “Here, we sleep in tents. Our stays usually last two weeks when we are called for an important fire. A month is a long mission,” they both explain.

A lot of the fires they fought were triggered by lightning. “They are usually small fires, detected by a column of smoke. They cover a

small surface. We are used to those things. It is important to go as fast as we can, to prevent the fires from spreading,” they explain.

On occasions, they were supported by a helicopter releasing water from a bucket it carries underneath, a technique also used in Quebec.

“In fact, the helicopter was owned by a Quebecer, Fred Carrier. It was a Sikorsky,” points out Benoit Audet.

They travelled back to Quebec on February 18. In retrospect, they were quite impressed by the way the Aussies considered what they had done.

“We came back tired and proud. It was mission accomplished. We were greeted incredibly well. They (the local firefighters) wrote us small letters,” he adds.

“It is something I will remember all my life. They appreciated the fact that we spent 12-14 hours a day at work,” emphasizes Mr. Leblanc.

“We were treated like family members by the firefighters after two or three days. Their fire station is a small one, with 10 firefighters, like ours in Bonaventure,” notes his colleague.

“They really had something special. They often told us ‘thank you for coming and helping us’ (...) We saw that they were grateful,” points out Stéphane Leblanc.

Both men were sad to see the level of destruction sustained by the Australian forest but they came back with a consolation.

“When we arrived (in Australia), everything was uncontrolled. When we left, everything was contained,” says Benoit Audet, happy that the group of Quebecers were able to contribute a little to that improvement.

Caisse Desjardins contributes \$300,000 to Bonaventure's new recreational centre which will bear its name

Gilles Gagné

BONAVENTURE – The Caisse Desjardins de la Baie-des-Chaleurs will contribute \$300,000 to the new recreational centre of Bonaventure, which will be officially called Centre récréatif Desjardins.

The contribution of Caisse Desjardins will allow the Town of Bonaventure to acquire some equipment that was not included in the original project, including a multi-functional surface that will cover the cement slab of the arena during the spring and the summer to open the door for practicing other sports. An indoor walking path will also be installed.

"In order to add that equipment, we had to get partners and we found an important one here. (...) Initially, we had budgeted \$230,000 for that kind of part-



Photo: G. Gagné

On February 25, Andrée Côté, the director general of the Caisse Desjardins de la Baie-des-Chaleurs; Joël Dallaire, the president of the board and Roch Audet, the mayor of Bonaventure were glad to unveil the contribution to the town's recreational centre on February 25.

nership and we have surpassed that. We will keep trying to get more partners just

the same," states Roch Audet, the mayor of Bonaventure.

The board president of the

Caisse Desjardins de la Baie-des-Chaleurs, Joël Dallaire, points out that his group of

administrators "was impressed with the multi-functional and intergenerational aspects of the recreational centre," and consequently greeted the Town of Bonaventure's request positively.

Mayor Audet points out that the total cost of the project went from the initial amount of \$8,146,000 to \$8,375,210.

"It is not a cost overrun. It is just that we decided to add elements to the project. If we raise more money than expected from additional partners, we will look for outside equipment for the site," he states.

Bonaventure's recreational centre will bear the name of Desjardins for the next 15 years. The contractor, a partnership between Construction LFG and Honco, will have the building completed in May.

Chandler: Towards the end of the SDEIC

Nelson Sergerie

CHANDLER - Everything indicates that the Chandler Economic and Industrial Development Corporation (Société de développement économique et industriel de Chandler – SDEIC) will be dissolved.

Its last asset, the Sept-Îles Lake dam, which was the last Gaspésia property, was handed over to the Town of Chandler.

"We wanted to get rid of the land as quickly as possible because our insurance as administrators was extremely high," said President Tim Sutton.

Insuring the dam cost \$12,000, an amount that will only be \$500 for the Town, a significant saving for citizens, according to the deputy mayor, Bruno-Pierre Godbout.

Due to the organization's difficult legal past, the insur-



Photo: G. Gagné

The Chandler Economic and Industrial Development Society was created after the modernization project of the paper mill was stopped, due to a cost overrun, in January 2004.

ance premium for directors was \$35,000.

\$340,000 remains in the coffers and discussions are continuing to determine who will benefit from this amount.

"The council adopted a res-

olution last July to the effect that we would like to receive the \$340,000 to carry out development. It will be up to the Chandler Economic Development Fund to decide," says the acting mayor.

Sports and leisure projects

Chandler is depositing \$1.3 million in sports and recreation projects with the Quebec government in hopes of obtaining

assistance for their completion.

Seven projects are submitted in the districts of Newport, Pabos-Mills, Pabos, Saint-François and Chandler, ranging from the renovation of softball fields and outdoor skating rinks to the creation of a multifunctional track for the practice of walking, racket and fat-bike and addition of a tennis court or deck-hockey.

The deputy mayor wanted to take advantage of the Recreational and Sports Infrastructure Financial Assistance Program to move forward.

"These recommendations were made in consultation with the Sports Committee. We cut elements that were extremely expensive. If approved, we will go with a borrowing by-law of \$400,000 that will respect the taxpayers' ability to pay," says Mr. Godbout.



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Listuguj blockade lifted on 25th day, allowing rail traffic resumption

Gilles Gagné

LISTUGUJ – After reaching an agreement with Luc Lévesque, director general of the Gaspésie Railway Society, protesters who had formed a railway blockade on February 10 lifted it 25 days later, on the afternoon of March 5 at 4 p.m.

Mr. Lévesque indicated that the agreement pertained to “after blockade conditions,” in order to maintain goodwill relations between the transporter, a non-profit company under municipal control, and the protesters.

Removal of the Listuguj blockade came about three hours after the removal of the Kahnawake one, which was the second last barricade in Canada.

“It is of prime importance that such a problem doesn’t occur again in the future. It would be very difficult to recover from a second blockade,” stated Mr. Lévesque shortly after negotiating the barricade lifting.

Two hours later, as the protesters were removing the barricade, Luc Lévesque added that he wishes to see the ministry of Native Affairs “conduct discussions so to avoid another blockade.”

The mood was a mix of relief and fatigue in the ranks of demonstrators as they were collecting the signs and the material used to make shelters. They didn’t talk to all the media but Raquel Barnaby indicated to Radio-Canada that their goals had been reached.

They wanted the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to leave the traditional land of British Columbia’s Wet’suwet’en First Nation. They also wanted the hereditary chiefs of Wet’suwet’en to get an agreement proposal regarding the Coastal GasLink project. The hereditary chiefs are against the project and they are currently reviewing a proposal that could allegedly change the path of the pipeline.

Luc Lévesque says after 25 days of standstill, filled with hopes, disappointments, layoffs, and talks, the Gaspésie Railway Society staff wants “to move on to something else and simply resume the rail service as soon as possible.”

Up to 150 freight cars loaded with windmill blades, cement, lumber and woodchips were stranded east of Listuguj after February 10. The first train, consisting of 72 cars carrying 48 windmill blades, left



Photo: G. Gagné

Luc Lévesque, director general of the Gaspésie Railway Society, is relieved that the barricade was lifted. There is a lot of work ahead to reassure the customers though, he says.

Nouvelle four hours after the blockade lifting on March 5. That train was initially supposed to leave New Richmond for Texas on February 15, nineteen days earlier. It had been in Nouvelle since February 29 because of a first failed attempt to pass in Listuguj that evening. An agreement reached with some demonstrators was rejected by others.

On March 5, Luc Lévesque expected to return to normal operations within five days, which meant delivering to Canadian National, the 150 cars stranded east of Listuguj and taking delivery of the numerous freight cars, in excess of 200, immobilized in Matapédia and Mont-Joli before being sent to their customers, namely Temrex, McInnis Cement and LM Windpower.

Considering that the Gaspésie Railway Society delivers roughly 100 carloads to CN in Matapédia weekly, that the blockade lasted close to four weeks and given the 150 cars that were waiting for delivery, the transporter probably lost 250 carloads between February 10 and March 5. Its lost revenues amount to at least \$500,000 for the stretch. Only a part of that shortcoming is recoverable, including windmill blade traffic.

“We were afraid to lose permanently that windmill blade traffic at one point,” states Luc Lévesque about the transporter’s largest source of revenues. Cement hauling contracts were also a source of concern for the Gaspésie Railway Society.

“We will now have to manage many consequences over the next weeks,” notes Mr. Lévesque, referring to the de-

livery schedule of windmill blades to southern United States construction sites, as they are tied to a strict installation schedule.

“We will have to reassure customers about the reliability of rail transport,” he says. For a while, he also feared that the Kahnawake blockade would be the only one to draw news coverage because it was close to Montreal “while the consequences were way worse in the Gaspé Peninsula.”

Even if Quebec Premier François Legault stated that he would seek compensations from the federal government because of the financial losses caused by the blockades, Luc Lévesque has “no expectations” on that point.

“We receive an annual grant from the Quebec government and we will probably rearrange some aspects of it in order to recoup some money,” he points out concerning the \$2.5M grant.

Had the blockade lasted longer, the Gaspésie Railway Society would have moved its cement, lumber and woodchips transshipment operations to Matapédia on March 9 in order to keep its customers. “It would have cost a lot of money but we were ready to do it in order to maintain good relations with the customers,” says Mr. Lévesque.

The blockade lifting occurred eight hours before the end of the period covered by a February 25 injunction stipulating that the protesters had to lift the barricade. The injunction never came close to being enforced, as the Sûreté du Québec and the Listuguj Police Department always ruled out that option.

Police report

Isaac Moffat Swasson, 29, of Listuguj, will return to the New Carlisle courthouse on March 23 for a follow-up proceeding relating to November 13, 2019, charges. Those charges were a result of damages at the New Carlisle prison on April 30, 2019. That day, he allegedly caused damage exceeding \$5,000 as at least one broken toilet bowl, a broken sink, damaged pipes, smashed electronic devices and other damage to equipment were reported. Up to 16 cells had to be closed temporarily and eight inmates had to be moved temporarily to another prison as a result of those actions.

Isaac Moffat Swasson faces charges of mischief exceeding \$5,000, intimidation, damage to a prison and assault against prison guards. He will likely appear on video on March 23 since he is now remanded in custody at the Rivière-des-Prairies penitentiary. “After the April 30 incident, he was transferred to the Orsainville jail where he allegedly caused damage as well, before being transferred to Rivière-des-Prairies,” explains Crown Prosecutor Maxime Rocheville-Paradis.

Isaac Moffat Swasson was in prison on April 30, 2019, because he was already facing criminal charges in another affair. On February 21, 2019, in Listuguj, he allegedly committed an armed robbery, a forcible confinement and uttered three death threats.

“He has a record of violent crimes. In 2013, he was sentenced to a four-year penitentiary term for aggravated assault,” points out Maxime Rocheville-Paradis.

The procedure linked to initial criminal charges laid against him will be heard on April 8, also at the New Carlisle courthouse. Isaac Moffat-Swasson did not have a lawyer as of February 28.

He will likely attend the Marche 23 pro forma trial through a video conference. It is a necessary procedure step that will eventually lead to the determination of his trial date.

Two occupants of a vehicle received minor injuries following a vehicle accident that occurred in Bonaventure East on March 4. At approximately 12:55 a.m., a Sûreté du Québec patrol vehicle met a car going west on Highway 132. That car was speeding. The police officers activated their emergency vehicle lights, turned around and started following the speeding car. “The vehicle was going so fast that the police officers lost sight of it. We can’t even call it a chase. It took the SQ a little while to reach the speeding vehicle and when they saw it, the car was upside down, on the road. It looked as if the car had hit a snowbank and rolled over,” says Sûreté du Québec spokesperson Sgt. Claude Doiron.

The driver, a minor male, and a young adult female were injured but the two other occupants were unscathed. The two injured occupants were sent to Maria hospital by ambulance for an evaluation. Highway 132 was closed until 7:30 a.m. so that a technician in accident reconstitution could assess the scene. An investigation is ongoing and could lead to dangerous driving charges. The Crown Prosecutor at the New Carlisle courthouse will soon receive the report.

The Sûreté du Québec, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the police departments of Montreal, Quebec City, Laval and Longueuil as well as the Bank of Canada are uniting to fight fraud and asking the population to be vigilant. The number of fraud cases in Quebec and Canada are on the rise. March is the month of fraud prevention.

Fraudulent manoeuvres are constantly evolving and police departments want the public to show vigilance in order to counter fraud attempts. Until the end of the month, police forces will conduct a publicity campaign on social media and hold many activities to cover topics such as theft, fraudulent identity, romance scams, urgent payment manoeuvres through phone calls, banking scams, business fraud, forged money and three-dimension fraud. In Quebec alone, identity fraud caused losses amounting to \$5.3 million last year. In Canada, the total of protection breaches reached \$28 million. Romance scams account for \$2.1 million in fraud in Quebec.

Additional information can be obtained at Canada’s Antifraud Centre. The phone number is 1 888 495-8501. Sûreté du Québec’s Twitter feed and facebook page are also providing



Commentary

Gilles Gagné

Important to maintain communication links

There are lessons to be learned from the blockades that were set up in Canada. Since February 6, protesters have been backing the Wet'suwet'en First Nation hereditary chiefs in their attempt to get respect regarding their community's traditional lands, trespassed by the consortium behind the Coastal GasLink project.

Some of the lessons were evident during this crisis and now that the demonstrations are over other lessons are becoming evident as well. Others will gradually emerge in time.

Given that the lessons are presented in no particular order, it nevertheless makes sense to start with the statement made by federal Transport Minister Marc Garneau, to the effect that the controversy stemming from the Wet'suwet'en First Nation's reaction to the Coastal GasLink venture was a matter that had to be dealt with by the province of British Columbia. He added that the eventual dismantlement of the barricades that had been set up across Canada was also a provincial matter.

Mr. Garneau apparently ignored that there is a Department of Native Affairs at the federal level, that most Native issues are of federal jurisdiction, that the RCMP, quite present in most Canadian provinces, is a federal police force and that talks had to be conducted with the Natives, instead of imposing police interventions.

A more astute, to say it politely, statement by Marc Garneau would likely have contributed to an earlier dialogue between the Wet'suwet'en representatives and government officials, be them federal or provincial. Chances are that the escalation of protests would not have degenerated to the point of a largely paralyzed railway network. Such situations also trigger harsh, unnecessary anti-Native comments that sometimes start further escalation of demonstration means.

So Minister Garneau, unless he receives ample information about the Native issues that

have characterized the history of the country, should be left out, if other protests of the same nature occur.

Quebec Premier François Legault also deserves a dishonourable mention for the way he exposed on February 26 the presence of AK-47 assault rifles in Kahnawake, where a blockade was also in force.

Although it had been proven in the past that such assault rifles were present in Kahnawake, linking that to the barricades or mentioning that potential presence in the middle of a crisis, without proof of that link, in the middle of demonstrations that had been peaceful so far, was a cheap political move by the premier. It looked, and it probably was, an attempt on Mr. Legault's part to discredit the Mohawk stand for Wet'suwet'en and strengthen prejudice in the general population that there are more extremists on the Native side. It was irresponsible, another polite expletive for the premier's behaviour that time around.

Suppose that dynamite is stolen in September in a village near Montreal, far from a Native community for the sake of an example. Suppose that months later, there is a week-long demonstration made by a small group of business people regarding a decision that doesn't imply the Quebec government. Would the premier comment on that dynamite robbery? He would not say a word about it.

By fueling prejudice against the Natives, François Legault proved his ignorance of Aboriginal affairs. Unlike Marc Garneau, he will likely have to take stands on Native issues in the future, because he is Quebec's premier. He too needs some training on Native history if he is to make brighter remarks in the future.

In fact, all elected politicians in Quebec and Canada should get training on Native issues. A better understanding of Aboriginal affairs would certainly allow the society to avoid a fair number of crises or reduce their magnitude.

In the Gaspé Peninsula, the 25-day blockade demonstrated that communication must be improved between Natives and non-Natives.

It is striking to realize that none of the region's provincial or federal elected officials directly concerned by the Listuguj blockade stopped there in 25 days or attempted to talk to the protesters.

Sylvain Roy, Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure; Diane Lebouthillier, Member of Parliament for the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine riding; and Christina Michaud, Member of Parliament for Avignon-

Mitis-Matane-Matapedia, all voiced concern during the blockade, but they gave an opinion about a situation they had not witnessed, however, a 25-day period was plenty of time to acknowledge that situation for real.

The management of the Gaspésie Railway Society made those attempts and it did more to resolve the crisis than any distant political move.

It is a sign that better communications will have to be established between the transporter and the Mi'gmaqs. The recent events prove that the management people can only count on themselves in that kind of situation.

The protesters must also realize that over 25 days, they targeted a small not-for-profit enterprise, not a transportation giant like CN. The recent history of the Gaspésie Railway Society includes a lot of passing over government hurdles, just like the Natives have done in the past.

After running into financial problems that basically left the transporter to start from scratch at the end of 2014, the management of the Gaspésie Railway Society worked unbelievably hard to rebuild the trust of the Quebec and Canadian governments. The line east of Caplan came close to abandonment, because governmental authorities ignored its potential.

The hard work of the transporter, and of other Gaspésians who believed in the future of our railway, convinced Quebec and Ottawa to earmark \$280.8 million for the coming years in order to return the line to working order. That reality has to be communicated to the Natives of the Gaspé Peninsula, who must acknowledge it in return.

Over the years, the Mi'gmaqs of the Gaspé Peninsula have made good breakthroughs in commercial fisheries and wind energy. There might be room for them in railway activities. Who knows?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Each week in Spec I have been reading with great interest the updates on the Family Ties project "Putting Pen to Paper". Elizabeth Dupuis has kept readers up-to-date on the many various events and activities that are being offered. Words are important, whether written or spoken and taking the time to handcraft one's thoughts and feelings is a worthwhile endeavour. I was so pleasantly surprised to see that cursive handwriting was one of the workshops being taught to younger children as part of this larger project. Many schools no longer teach cursive in favour of keyboarding skills. Scientific studies tell us that there are cognitive and visual benefits to children learning cursive writing. Such a worthwhile activity!

*Diane Skinner
Coldwater, Ontario*

My compliments to Emma Buckley on her interesting and informative blog/article, however, as a Gaspesian living in the temperate and beach abundant Sydney, I reckon I might have scored the better bargain.

*Brian Dea
Sydney, Australia*

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Federal government adopts measures to protect right whales

Gilles Gagné

CHANDLER: - Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans will implement new measures of protection for right whales in 2020 and do away with some of the measures that applied in 2018 and 2019, including the static zone imposed over those two years from April 28 and on.

That static zone, which blocked fisheries in a rectangle ranging between 2,400 last year and 4,690 square kilometres the year before, will be replaced by a set of dynamic and much smaller rectangles where catches could be forbidden for the rest of the season if two right whales are seen in one or more of them.

Last year, a rectangle of 70 square miles was to be closed for two weeks when one right whale was seen in it. If the whale moved around, other

rectangles were added to the temporarily closed surface. That method will be strengthened in 2020.

So according to a set of measures announced on February 27, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will implement "new season-long fishing closures in areas where whales are aggregating in the Gulf of St. Lawrence; impose new gear marking requirements and work with the fishing industry on implementing other gear modifications to be phased in starting in 2021," mentions a press release.

By "aggregating" the ministry means two or more whales. If only one whale is sighted, the two-week ban on fishing will be imposed, like last year. This year as well, the ministry will also authorize rope-less fishing gear trials in closed areas.

Fisheries and Oceans min-

ister Bernadette Jordan also announced that a contract is now in place with a third party icebreaker owner to open harbours for spring fishing activities in northern New Brunswick.

Following a call for tenders issued at the beginning of the year, the \$596,736 contract was awarded G X Technology Canada. The company is tasked with providing ice-breaking services in the Acadian Peninsula, Bay of Chaleur and Northumberland Strait. "This will ensure the snow crab fishery in the region can start as early as possible, when safe to do so, before the whales' arrival in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence," mentioned minister Jordan in a press release.

As was the case since August 2017, Transport Canada will also participate in the protection measures applied to

prevent whale collisions with vessels through re-implementing "the mandatory speed limit of 10 knots in the western Gulf of St. Lawrence; and continue to allow vessels to travel at safe operational speeds in parts of the shipping lanes north and south of Anticosti Island when no North Atlantic right whales are detected in the area."

Those speed limits will be compulsory in the designated areas between April and November. As is the case for many aspects of the February 27 announcement, further details will be provided later.

Both ministries added two seasonal management measures that will apply to a restricted area in the Shediac Valley, where vessels will be required to avoid the area or reduce their speed to eight knots and a trial voluntary speed limit of 10 knots for the

Cabot Strait for parts of the season. Those measures apply to vessels longer than 13 metres.

There are only about 400 right whales left in the world and they are all along the United States east coast and Eastern Canada. They are consequently considered an endangered species. About 30 dead right whales were sighted in American and Canadian waters since 2017, a higher mortality occurrence than over previous years. Some of those deaths were linked to entanglement in fishing gear and collisions with ships.

The feeding patterns of right whales have changed over the last decade and that is why they are more numerous in Canadian waters. The rising temperature of water is one important element of those feeding pattern changes.

RIGHT WHALE:

Protection measures criticized by lobster fishermen representative

Gilles Gagné

CHANDLER: - The new right whale protection measures are being criticized by O'Neil Cloutier, director general of the Southern Gaspé Professional Fishermen Group. That group represents the region's lobster fishermen. Mr. Cloutier suspects the federal government of adopting measures that will complicate the life of coastal fishermen and reduce Ottawa's budget earmarked for right whale monitoring.

O'Neil Cloutier agrees with the elimination of the static zone, "something that should never have been created." He thinks that the implementation of dynamic rectangles where fishing could be forbidden until November if two or more right whales are seen in it is lame.

"It is strictly an exercise to reduce the operational costs. There will be less surveillance once an area is closed for the rest of the season," says Mr. Cloutier.

As far as the lobster fishermen are concerned, the buffer zone that excluded fishing closure in a water depth inferior to 20 fathoms (120 feet) is maintained. It was established in 2019, however, and despite the fact that right whales are rarely if ever seen in such shallow water, O'Neil Cloutier says that the new 2020 rules could have a



Photos: G. Gagné

O'Neil Cloutier says the 2020 protection measures look like a way to save surveillance money.

twisted consequence for lobster fishermen.

"If two right whales are seen in 10 fathoms of water, fishing will not reopen in that area. We are talking about an area of seven miles per ten miles of coast closed until November," he points out.

He emphasizes that while representing the region's lobster fishermen, the Southern Gaspé Professional Fishermen Group also represents coastal groundfish, herring, mackerel and snow crab fishermen.

"The defunct static zone could now be called a seasonal static zone. We think there is a risk of causing fishing closures over a much larger surface, and during a much longer period. It will af-

fect our coastal fishermen of herring, groundfish and snow crab. It is clear when we look at the map that right whales tend to stay longer in the northern Gulf of Saint Lawrence. That is our part," adds Mr. Cloutier.

This year alone, the Southern Gaspé Professional Fishermen Group will get a snow crab allocation of approximately 500,000 pounds. If the price stays close to \$6 per pound like last year, its value will near \$3 million.

"We have five fishermen designated to catch that allocation. It might prove complicated for them to get those catches. It shouldn't be the case," states O'Neil Cloutier.

He criticizes the very low level of consultation carried out by the federal ministry of Fisheries and Oceans.

"We were never consulted about the protection measures. The snow crab consultative committee was held on February 25 and 26 in Moncton and we were never informed of the measures. They were announced the following day. The Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Transport Canada ministries are saying that they communicated with us and each other. That is completely false. Transport Canada did not even attend the February 27 announcement," states Mr. Cloutier.

Daniel Desbois, president of the *Association des cra-*

biens gaspésiens, the group representing the Gaspé Peninsula snow crab fishermen, expresses mixed feelings about the new protection measures. He is happy about the abolition of the static zone and thinks that the seasonal rectangles of closure will not hurt the snow crab fishermen too much.

"Last year, between 80 and 90% of the rectangles closed during the season remained closed until the end of the snow crab season. Those closed rectangles did not prevent us from catching most of our quota but it made the process complicated though," says Mr. Desbois.

He points out that there is still a lot of uncertainty re-



Crab fisherman Daniel Desbois says that a lot of details remain unknown about the way the right whale protection measures will be applied.

garding some details pertaining to the protection measures and the way they will be enforced.

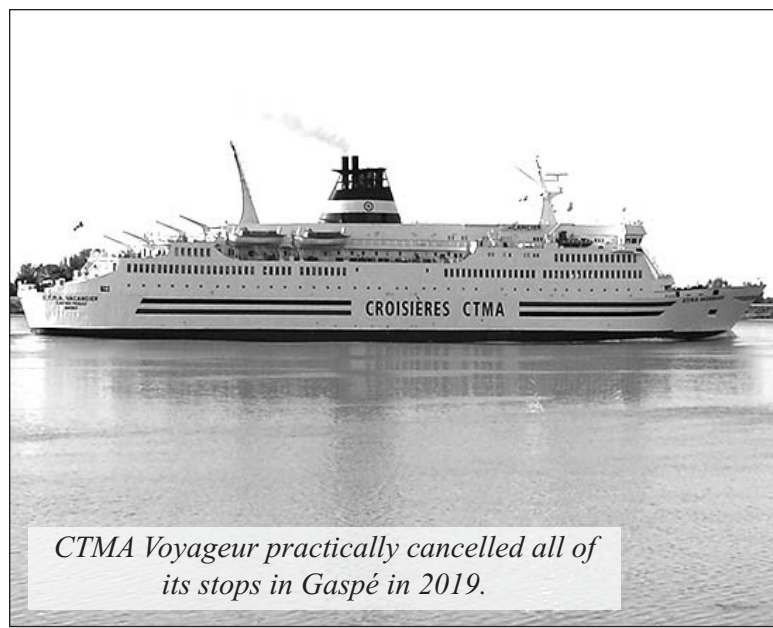
"Last year, they were closing the feeding areas but they were not closing other areas. For instance, they were not closing the area around the Magdalen Islands because it is not considered a feeding area. We don't know what they (Fisheries and Oceans Canada managers) will do this year," adds Mr. Desbois.

Another unknown must be clarified soon, namely the work W X Technology will carry out to clear the Acadian Peninsula harbours of ice and make sure that snow crab fishing can take place before the arrival of the right whales.

"We don't have any information about that. The only thing we know is that the company must be available between March 15 and April 30 for that task," says Daniel Desbois.

The right whales rarely make it to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence before mid-May but Fisheries and Oceans Canada usually considers that they can arrive as early as April 28.

In 2018 and 2019, the ministry failed in its commitment to assure an early opening of the snow crab season. It started on May 3 two years ago and on April 29 last year. By then, the static zone was closed to the fisheries.



CTMA Voyageur practically cancelled all of its stops in Gaspé in 2019.

Photo: N. Sergerie

No more large cruise ships in Gaspé

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - Escalade Gaspésie is mourning the loss of large cruise ships as a result of Ottawa's imposed speed restrictions in the Gulf for a fourth year in order to protect right whales.

Ships of 1,500 to 2,500 passengers will make way for smaller boats with 500 to 1,500 passengers.

Escalade's director, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, says there are 43 stopovers planned this year, amounting to 21,000 cruise passengers and crew members.

"The impact is direct. It potentially materializes in terms of cancellation for the next season. Nothing new under the sun. There is less and less breathing room on the ability to access the Gulf of St. Lawrence. I don't think anything will change in the near future," he explains.

He admits it's difficult. "We reviewed the operating model. We reviewed the budgetary framework. We have reviewed our priorities in terms of investments in both marketing and development but there comes a point when we come to the end of the rope."

Sixteen of the 41 vessels scheduled cancelled their stop at Gaspé last year.

"Since 2017, 137 stopovers were scheduled and 44 were cancelled. More than a third of our ships and more than half of our clientele for the past three years," says the Escalade Gaspésie director.

Return of the VIA Rail shuttle

Nelson Sergerie

NEW RICHMOND - The RÉGÎM summer shuttle bus will return this summer. The board of directors made this decision even if it must use its accumulated surpluses to provide this deficit service.

The president, Daniel Côté, considers that this shuttle is part of the Régie intermunicipale de transport Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine's mandate.

"It represents costs for the organization. On the other hand, our vision is to offer travel opportunities to citizens here and elsewhere," says Mr. Côté.

Last summer, 447 passengers used the service to the tune of \$35,000, but the RÉGÎM has not yet set a goal for this year.

VIA Rail pays the portion of the Matapedia-Gaspé ticket to the agency, which finances half of the operation.

"We have a certain financial surplus which allows us to offer it to the population, but we will not be able to maintain this service either without funding from Quebec," says the president.

During the Christmas holidays, 15 shuttles were offered and 169 used the service. That is 19 less passengers compared to 2018 when 187 people used the service. The deficit was \$8,000.

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Irish of the Gaspé

Diane Skinner

In the 1840s waves of Irish immigrants were crossing the Atlantic in search of new homes because the potato famine was causing mass starvation in Ireland. The Irish Potato Famine, as it was known, occurred between 1845 and 1852. It was caused by the potato blight which is a fungus that spreads quickly and destroys potato crops, which was the main source of food for Irish people at that time.

The most famous of the shipwrecks was the Carricks which was carrying Irish immigrants who were heading to Montreal. They never made it because the ship was destroyed in a storm off Cap des Rosiers. Some of the passengers survived and settled in the area.

The Gaspé is an interesting cultural mosaic which has been created by a blend of cultures and people, including: Mi'gmaq, Acadians, Portuguese, Jersey Islanders, English Loyalists, Scottish

and Irish. This mix of ethnic groups, languages, and cultures coexist in the Gaspé. The influence of all these groups and people is evident in the accent of Gaspésians (in English and French), in the words we use, the foods we eat, and in our traditional music.

In Douglastown, where fiddle music remains popular, the fiddle tunes are of Irish origin. Many present-day Gaspésians have Irish heritage and the influence and historical impact of their presence is evident. Towns such as Cascapedia-Saint-Jules and Douglastown are still home to many Irish descendants. Family names include Sexton, Connolly, Delaney, Kelly, Foley, Howell, Kennedy, Mal-

oney, McCabe, McAuley, McDonald, Mulrooney, Nellis, and Drody to name some. Street names and churches, such as St. Patrick's in Douglastown, bear Irish names. Gaspésian notables such as La Bolduc, Michael Gratton O'Leary and John Hall Kelly had Irish heritage. In fact, John Hall Kelly became Canadian High Commissioner to Ireland.

The Gaspé like many parts of Canada is a cultural mosaic and not simply a melting pot. Our many cultures have contributed to the unique society that exists here today. The Irish descendants of the Gaspé are proud of their Irish heritage and many honour their ancestors through celebration and music.



"Ce Leis Thu?"

Gary Briand

We are about to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. In memory of my mother, Mary Mulrooney-Briand, who directed over thirty-seven Irish concerts at Douglastown, I offer you some brief notes on the land of the free!

Canada is home to the only Irish-language place name outside Europe. When Irish fishermen arrived in Newfoundland around 1650, they called the island "Talamh an Eisc" or "Land of the Fish." This name still survives today and the influence of "Gaeilge," the Irish language can be heard in several Newfoundland English words like "sleveen" meaning "rascal" and "streeel" meaning "slovenly person".

We are told that St. Patrick drove the snakes from Ireland. If this is so, then he also drove away all moles and weasels, polecats or roe deer, all of whom are found in Scotland, England and Europe!

Want to see the world's tallest cliffs? Go to Croaghan on Achill Island! There you will find cliffs rising 688 metres above the Atlantic Ocean. Except for the cliffs of the Faroe Islands at Cape Ennil-

berg- measuring 718 metres- those cliffs at Croaghan are the second highest in all our world.

What is the greatest natural harbour in the world? Australia claims Port Jackson to be the best natural harbour but Ireland's Cork harbour is a very close second.

Not missing are astounding Irish scientists. The astronomer, William Edward Wilson (1851-1908) took the earliest photographs of the stars, the moon, the sun and a solar eclipse. In 1889, he became the first human to calculate the surface temperature of the sun - 6590° C. The temperature of the same sun is now calculated to be 6075° C. Contributing to the English language, Ireland has given over one hundred and eighty words to our language. One of the most noted is "boycott". In 1880, Captain Charles Boycott acted as the land agent for an absentee landlord who owned much land in Ireland while he lived in Ulster.

Captain Boycott was requested by some sixty tenants to lower their rent. He categorically refused. The whole community began to ostracise him to the point that even taverns would not serve him. *The Times of London* came to use

his name as a term for organized isolation and so it came into English usage.

Let us never forget the Irish famine. Chief among its effects was the founding of a group called Young Ireland. They took an oath to free Ireland from Britain, even if armed rebellion had to be embraced. One of the founding members was Thomas D'Arcy McGee, who landed in Montreal in 1857 and went on to become a Father of Confederation.

Ireland has evolved into the twenty-first century as the following narrative reveals. Benjy, a handsome coloured bull with a curly hide resembling a sheepskin turned out at two years to be interested more in the bulls that in young cows. His owners described him as "useless" or "no good." In County Sligo, the decision was made to send him to the slaughter house, however, the people from his parish staged a protest and raised some \$19,000 to save Benjy. They bought him from the farmer and sent him to a gay bull's farm in Norwich, England, where Benjy has now spent eleven happy years.

**Happy
St. Patrick's Day!**

Diane Skinner

Traditional Irish Blessings

May there always be work for your hands to do.
May your purse always hold a coin or two.
May the sun always shine on your window pane.
May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain.
May the hand of a friend always be near.
May God fill your heart with gladness and cheer.

May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind always be at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
And rains fall soft upon your fields.
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Irish Sayings

The Irish are known for their storytelling, sayings and blessings. Many of them are humorous and clever, and some are slightly naughty. Some of these may be familiar, some new but they all demonstrate the Irish spirit.

May your day be touched by a bit of Irish luck,
brightened by a song in your heart and warmed by
the smiles of the people you love.

A kind word never broke anyone's mouth.

May you live as long as you want and never want
as long as you live.

As you ramble through life, whatever be your goal;
keep your eye upon the doughnut, and not upon the hole.

The older the fiddle the sweeter the tune.

May you be at the gates of heaven an hour before the
devil knows you are dead.

May you live to be 100 years with one
extra year to repent.

May the holes in your nets be no larger
than the fish in it.

Ireland has one of the world's heaviest rainfalls.
If you see an Irishman with a tan, it's rust.

May the luck of the Irish be with you!



PUBLIC NOTICE

LEGAL SERVICES AND CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

Enactment of By-law

By-Law 1416-20 « décrétant l'adoption d'un programme d'aide sous forme de crédit de taxes et de remboursement du droit de mutation immobilière suite à l'acquisition d'une habitation unifamiliale sur le territoire du quartier 1 et d'une partie du quartier 3 de la ville de Gaspé. »

GIVEN at Gaspé, March 12, 2020.

Sébastien Fournier,
Town clerk assistant.

In accordance with the by-law concerning the publication of public notices, the city of Gaspé informs you that you will find all of these notices on the website of the city of Gaspé at the following address: ville.gaspe.qc.ca in the section of public notices.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY ACTIVITIES ON THE COAST

DOUGLASTOWN:

SATURDAY, MARCH 14:
St Patrick's Parish
4 p.m. Mass
5 p.m. Supper. On the menu:
choice of pork loin or Irish stew.
Adults \$12, children under 12 \$5.
Everyone welcome.

YORK:

SATURDAY, MARCH 14
St. Patrick's supper and dance at the
York River Community Hall.
Cocktails at 5 p.m. with supper at
6 p.m. BYOB.
Irish coffee will be available.
Cost is \$15 members and \$20 non-members.
Deadline for tickets March 6.

PORT DANIEL

SATURDAY, MARCH 14:
St. Patrick's Day potluck
supper beginning at 5 p.m.
for members and
invited guests.
Entertainment to follow.
BYOB

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

SUNDAY, MARCH 15
St. Patrick's Supper will take place on
Sunday, March 15 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the
Community Centre. The cost is \$13 for adults
and \$6 for children 12 and under.
There will be bar service at the Legion
in the afternoon from 1 p.m.



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HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

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The annual
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place on Sunday, March 15 from
5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the
Community Center. The cost is
\$13 for adults and \$ 6 for children
12 and under.

There will be bar service in the
afternoon from 1 p.m. at the
Legion in the basement.
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Gaspesian Notables: Michael Gratton O'Leary

Diane Skinner

In honour of St. Patrick's Day and our articles about Irish ancestry on the Gaspé, this week's Gaspesian notable is Michael Gratton O'Leary. He was born on Irishtown Road, Percé, in 1888. He left school at 12 years of age and worked at a variety of jobs. These include a brewery, a store and a lumberyard. Even though he left school early he continued his learning with the assistance of the Bishop of Gaspé. Michael continued to educate himself in the evenings. It is said he would study by candlelight.

Michael O'Leary spent a couple of years working at sea and then he made a big life change. He pursued a career in journalism with the St. John Standard, a daily newspaper located in St. John, New Brunswick. Shortly after, in fact after just a few months, he moved to Ottawa and began writing for The Ottawa Journal. One of his very first big assignments was to interview the survivors of the Titanic when they arrived in New York. He must have impressed the Board of Directors because he later became editor of the paper.

Michael O'Leary was a member of the Parliamentary Press Gallery for over 20 years. This is an association that oversees the rules and responsibilities of Canadian journalists when at Parliament Hill. In addition, he was the correspondent for The Times and regularly contributed to magazines in Britain, the U.S. and Canada, including Maclean's. He was a prolific writer, often penning two or three editorials



Michael Gratton O'Leary was born in 1888 on Irishtown Road, Percé, and his work ethic led to his significant success in journalism and politics.

a day.

In 1925 he ran as a Conservative Party candidate in the riding of Gaspé but was defeated. Over time he became friends with Prime Ministers Arthur Meighen and John Diefenbaker. In 1962 Michael Gratton O'Leary was appointed to the Senate by Diefenbaker.

In 1969, Mr. O'Leary had been appointed rector at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. He was forced out of the position because of student pressure for being "out of touch with student needs." Possibly his conservative views clashed with the

times.

Michael Gratton O'Leary passed away in Ottawa in 1976. He was a very successful newspaper reporter, writer, editor, publisher and senator. All of this is quite the accomplishment for a young lad who quit school at the age of 12 in order to work. Although his accomplishments were fulfilled away from the Gaspé, his strong, hard-working roots began here.

There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work and learning from failure.

Teachers' Guide

Comprehension:

1. Tell about Michael Gratton O'Leary's early life.
2. He was an accomplished newspaper man. Tell about his achievements.
3. He dabbled in politics. In what way? What two Prime Ministers did he become friends with?
4. Why was he pressured to resign as Rector of Queen's University?
5. O'Leary was successful at almost everything he attempted. Why do you think that was?

Vocabulary: Define ancestry, correspondent, candidate

Extra: O'Leary was a friend of John Diefenbaker. Who was Diefenbaker and what are some of his accomplishments? Why should Michael Gratton O'Leary be considered a Gaspesian Notable?

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



50 Shades of Green

"We may have bad weather in Ireland, but the sun shines in the hearts of the people and that keeps us all warm."

Top of the morning to you! It is the time of year to celebrate all things Irish. Get out your green clothing, your beloved Irish Rovers CDs and enjoy some Irish cuisine or maybe a wee taste of Irish whiskey. We live in a society with many different cultures and aren't we lucky to be able to experience a bit of them all?

The wearing of green is the most visible example of people marking St. Patrick's Day. So, with the green on our minds see how many of these questions about green you know.

1. Why is Ireland referred to as the Emerald Isle?
2. The flag of Ireland is referred to as the tricolour. What are the three colours?
3. What is the longest river in Ireland?
4. What dog originated in Ireland?
5. Why would you kiss the blarney stone?
6. Ireland is the only country which has a musical instrument as its national symbol. What is it?
7. St. Patrick is reputed to have chased all of the ____ out of Ireland.
8. How many litres of beer per year do the Irish drink?
9. During the 1840s a crop failed leading to the Great famine. What was the crop?
10. Name at least three other words for the colour green.
11. A green shamrock symbolizes _____.
12. What gem is traditionally green?
13. What Dr. Seuss book has green in the title?
14. Who famously recorded the song, *The Green, Green Grass of Home*?
15. What Muppet sings *It Ain't Easy Being Green*.
16. One of Canada's most famous children's books has the word green in the title. Can you name it?
17. A little trick for remembering (known as a mnemonic) the colours of the rainbow in their correct order is ROYGBIV. Can you name the seven colours?
18. What does it mean if someone has a green thumb?
19. If somebody reminds you to "eat your greens," what do they mean?
20. Name at LEAST one song recorded by the Irish Rovers.

Good luck and feel free to ask a friend or research any answers.

- ANSWERS**
1. The beautiful, lush green fields
 2. The flag is green, white and orange
 3. Shannon River
 4. Irish wolfhound
 5. Whoever kisses the blarney stone will have the gift of eternal eloquence.
 6. The harp
 7. Snakes
 8. 130
 9. potatoes
 10. lime, mint, emerald, sage, seafoam, chartreuse, olive
 11. good luck
 12. an emerald
 13. Green Eggs and Ham
 14. Tom Jones (and many others)
 15. Kermit
 16. Anne of Green Gables
 17. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.
 - To remember the trick, think of it as a man's name - Roy. G. Biv)
 18. A successful gardener
 19. Eat your veggies!
 20. The Unicorn, Wasn't That a Party...

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Irish Descent and Traditional Music

Diane Skinner

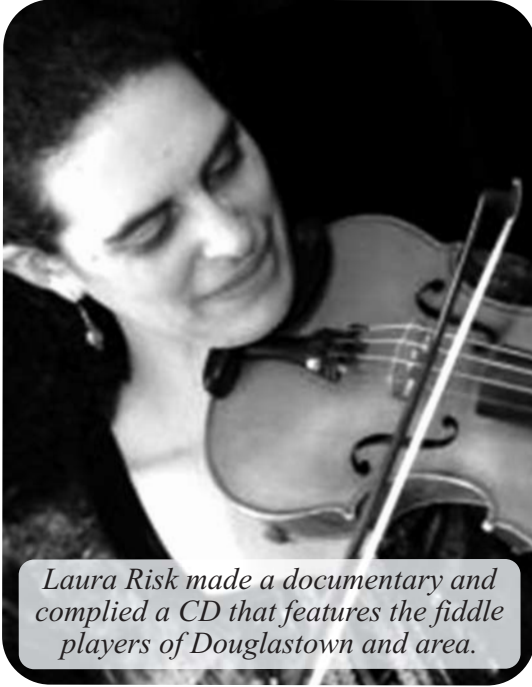
Linda Drody, who hails from an Irish fiddling family tells us, "There were fiddlers who participated in fiddling contests but mostly they preferred to play without being judged. No one took lessons. Some learned from their family members while others just learned the tunes from catching on to the air while listening to a father play. That is the way it was in my father's home. Their father and uncles played the fiddle so most of the kids played the fiddle too. There were a lot of fiddlers back 50 or 70 years ago."

About six years ago, Laura Risk made a documentary and a CD of fiddle tunes primarily from the Douglstown area. The documentary is entitled *Keeping the Music of Douglstown, Gaspé, Quebec, Alive*.

Laura Risk has done extensive research into the traditional music of Quebec. "Douglstown was representative of many small communities in Quebec... where traditional music held the

community together. Locals would get together to sing, dance play and enjoy each other's company. Often music would be played at house parties, in kitchens where all the chairs and tables would be taken outside to make room for people." Many Gaspeians, up and down the Coast, have memories of those kitchen parties.

As part of this project she recorded and used old home recordings of music made by community members. Some of the songs were from the 1960s and include fiddlers who were born in the 1880s. Laura and her team went through the recordings, some on reel-to-reels and cassette tapes. Some of the fiddlers include: Erskine Morris, Charlie Drody, Brigid Drody, Ernest Bolduc, Gérard



Laura Risk made a documentary and compiled a CD that features the fiddle players of Douglstown and area.

Photo: Quasitrad

Durette, and James Henry Conley. Titles include: *Shannon Reel, Beautiful Gaspé, New Carlisle Waltz, Gaspé Reel* and *Tommy Rooney's Jig*.

The CD *Douglstown: Music and Song from the Gaspé Coast* can be found online for \$20 and you can sample each song which cost .99 to download individually. You can listen to a clip of any song and I am sure you will be tapping your toes along with the fiddle music. (The audio CD is currently unavailable on Amazon.)



Gathering Irish Moss

The Black Whale craftstore pictured above was established in Percé in 1938. It was the project of several Anglophone women from Montreal who spent their summers in Percé.

In 1948 The Black Whale Cookbook was compiled by Mrs. Ethel Renouf in her capacity as longstanding president. The cookbook included many traditional, historical recipes going back to pioneer days, including Lavender Water, Chowder for a Foggy Day, Braised Moose, Seabird Pie, Gaspé Cod Tongue Stew, Apple Roly-Poly.

The following information about Irish Moss is included in that cookbook. Irish moss is a type of seaweed. Early settlers were expert foragers out of necessity.

Irish moss is a flat forked seaweed 2 – 12 inches in length growing on the rocky shores of Gaspé Peninsula. It is green, or purple reddish brown, but when dried and bleached in the sun becomes creamy white. When fresh it is flexible but hardens and becomes brittle on drying. It may be gathered at any season. It is used in making blancmange*, jelly, soups, etc. All seaweeds contain iodine, and many could be used for food. Dulse is another seaweed that is dried and used as food, and considered a great delicacy.



Irish moss, rich in iodine, could be foraged from the shores of Chaleur bay and used in the preparation of foods.

Photo: Wikipedia

*Note: Blancmange is a sweet dessert made with milk or cream, sugar and thickened with gelatin or Irish Moss.

Empress of Ireland

Diane Skinner

The Empress of Ireland sank on May 29, 1914, near Rimouski and the tragedy was one of the worst maritime disasters in Canadian history.

At the time, the start of WWI and the sinking of the Titanic overshadowed the tragic news of the Empress. In dense fog it was struck at 1:20 a.m. by a Norwegian coal-carrier and sank in less than 15 minutes. Over 1,000 passengers and crew lost their lives. The passengers, not exclusively Irish, were European immigrants who were sailing up the St. Lawrence with their final destination being the Canadian West.

It was, at that time, one of the fastest ships making the trans-Atlantic trip to Canadian ports. The water was cold and the current strong and most passengers were below deck sleeping at the time of the collision.

The remains of the Empress of Ireland still rest on the bottom of the St. Lawrence River. Many artifacts have been salvaged from it and these items can be seen at Pointe-au-Père Maritime Museum. A visit to the museum would give some in-



Photo: Pointe-au-Père Museum

A poster of the Empress of Ireland, owned by Canadian Pacific, boasting about the fast and luxurious service it offered.

sight into the fate of other ships, such as the Carricks. The bilingual staff is dressed in costumes of the day and will explain the displays. It is worth a visit if you are in the

Rimouski area, especially for those who find history fascinating. Pointe-au-Père. No reservation required. 1000 rue du phare, Rimouski. 418-721-0815.

Irish laughs...

Diane Skinner

The Irish are often great story-tellers who might be prone to a wee bit of exaggeration in the interest of making a story comical.

O'Malley was driving down the street thoroughly worked up because he had an important meeting and he couldn't find a parking place. Looking up to heaven he said, "Lord, take pity on me. If you find me a parking spot I will go to Mass every Sunday for the rest of me life and give up me Irish Whiskey."

Miraculously, a parking place appeared.

O'Malley looked up again and said, "Never mind, Lord, I found one."

An elderly couple was driving through County Kerry, Ireland. Irene was driving when she got pulled over by the police, who asked her, "Ma'am did you know that you were speeding?" Irene turns to her husband, Mick and enquires, "What did he say?" "He says you were speeding!" The policeman said, "May I see your license, please, ma'am?"

Irene, once again, turns to Mick and says, "What did he say?" Once more, Mick, shouts out, "He wants to see your license!" Irene gives the policeman her driver's license.

The policeman retorts, "I see you are from Kerry. I spent some time there once and had the worst date I have ever had."

For the final time, Irene turns to Mick and asks, "What did he say?" Mick yells very loudly, "He thinks he knows you!"

(from Will & Guy's Funny Stories)

Musical Heritage of Douglastown: Geroid Allurham

Diane Skinner

Geroid Allurham who was born in Ennis, County Clare, Ireland, now teaches and does research for Concordia University. He is considered a leading ethnomusicologist,

(someone who studies music from the cultural and social aspects of the people who make it) and is an author, musician, and historian. His specialty is Irish music and in particular the contributions and influence of Irish people on the culture, religion, and economy of Quebec.

Linda Drody, originally from Douglastown, assisted Geroid Allurham with his recent study of the music of Douglastown and surrounding areas. He is, in addition, the writer and director of a 2019 documentary *Lost Children of the Carricks*.

The Carricks was carrying Irish who were fleeing the Great Potato Famine. They made this voyage of 3,000 miles hoping for a new life. Only 48 of the 173 passengers survived. Geroid tells us, "Unlike most shipwrecks, there is no official list of survivors from the Carricks final journey in 1847. There is a movement unfolding on facebook and in genealogy forums to crowd source a list. I hope the film will contribute to that effort in reuniting families and healing broken family trees on both sides of the Atlantic." Linda Drody says, "This is a wonderful film we saw last summer. It is not for sale yet but will be. You may see a small clip of that on facebook under Geroid's name."



Photo: Concordia University

Felix O'Hara

Diane Skinner

Felix O'Hara was born in Ireland circa 1730 and settled in the Gaspé in 1764. Accompanying him was his wife and two sons. They were one of the earliest English-speaking families in the region, near the York River. He quickly became head of a fishery and a year later was named Justice of the Peace. In 1767 Lieutenant Guy Carleton gave 1,300 acres of land to O'Hara. Two years later O'Hara attained a license to sell alcohol. He was, in addition, a store and sawmill owner, and raised livestock. He was a very successful and hard-working entrepreneur.

He was appointed in 1779 to be a judge along with Charles Robin and Isaac Mann. Felix was subsequently appointed to be a collector of customs.

He was at one time taken prisoner by privateers who accused him of the crime of "being rich." They later freed him, unharmed.

He also encountered some trouble with Loyalists who settled in the area. He criticized them for being difficult



Photo: Canadian Government

This plaque honouring Felix O'Hara states that he was Gaspé's first citizen.

and the Loyalists responded by setting fire to O'Hara's woodland.

O'Hara also served as an evaluator for land grants and was appointed to be a judge on the provincial Court of Gaspé in 1793. He passed away in 1805, at age 75 and his will contained an unusual omission. He left nothing to his wife who was forced to take a government pension. He left land in the area of Pabos to his grandsons.

O'Hara was a hard working, intelligent man. He made many decisions about land and commerce that benefitted

him greatly. He recognized that the Gaspé was bountiful in resources and in particular forestry and fishing.

Three of his sons were very successful. Oliver O'Hara was the customs agent in New Carlisle. Edward O'Hara was a politician who became a member of the Assembly of Lower Canada. His son Hugh O'Hara became a Justice of the Peace and in addition was a successful businessman. As an aside, Hugh perished after becoming ill with a fever after coming in contact with some new immigrant settlers in Gaspé.

Irishtown

Diane Skinner

Irishtown is a small community located in what is now called Cascapedia-Saint-Jules, where Irish immigrants began to settle after the 1830s. The Canadian government offered the settlers tools, provisions and farmland to encourage them to establish there. The area where the Irish settled was then considered to be part of the municipality of Maria, where many Acadians had previously settled. Family names include Carroll, Connors, Lawlor, Gough, Nellis, Hughes, Walsh and Sexton. Many of these Irish immigrants came from County Cork in Ireland and they have maintained a strong attachment to their Irish heritage. In 1949 Irishtown became part of St. Jules of Cascapedia.

Mary Robertson recalls, "I grew up in Irishtown and from the time that I was a little girl, St. Patrick's Day was a reason to get all dressed up and celebrate the knowing that we were Irish. My mother was a Carroll and my grandmother on my father's side was a Lawlor both from here, so we always felt a strong connection to our Irish roots. It was all about singing Irish songs, doing the Irish jig and wearing a shamrock. I remember the fuss there was in our house as Mom tried to get all of her 8 kids dressed up to go to the St Patrick's concert because most of us sang or danced in it and we all had to wear something green. I remember the Irish stories, the courage of the Irish people, the laughter and the sense of community that brought us all together on March 17. When I hear the song, *When Irish Eyes are Smiling*, it always reminds me of where I came from and where I still belong, right here in my little part of the world called Irishtown!"



Photo: Debbie Sams

The Drodys (Brigid, Anthony, Joe and Mary-Ellen) from Douglastown continue the musical family traditions.

Douglastown

Diane Skinner

The Irish began to settle in Douglastown around 1800. Many family names that reflect Irish heritage still live in the area. These include Drody, Kennedy and Finn. Street names tell the story too, including Kennedy, St. Patrick, Maloney, McAuley, Rooney, Trachy, Delaney and Morris. There is a Nellis Street named for Father Nellis who came from the St. Jules area and served in Douglastown for many years as a priest in the St. Patrick's Catholic Church. In addition, the elementary school, which is now the community centre was originally named St. Patrick's School.

Evidence of the Irish settlers are still apparent today. The importance of traditional Irish fiddle music is quite evident at festivals, such as Irish Days Festival and community gatherings.



Announcements...



Obituary



PATTERSON: Bernice Alette (née Ofrebro)

The family of Bernice Patterson announces her unexpected passing on February 8, 2020, at the age of 84 years. She will be forever loved and remembered by her beloved husband of 60 years, Mac; three daughters: Michele, Patrice, and Kathryn (Greg) and three grandchildren: Trevor Dallyn, Dale and Meredith Albert. Also left to miss her dearly are two brothers: Maurice (Margie) and Lyle (Marilyn); two sisters: Ellen (John) and Leone (Harold); as well as numerous extended family and friends. Bernice was predeceased by her parents: George and Gladys; younger sister Marlene; and brother-in-law Dennis.

Service was held at St. Timothy's Anglican Church on Wednesday, February 19, 2020. Interment took place at Northern Lights Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Bernice's memory to St. Timothy's Anglican Church, 8420 - 145 St. Edmonton, Alberta, T5R 0T2 or to the charity of your choice.



In Memory



COUTURE: Martial

In loving memory of a dear father and grandfather who passed away two years ago, March 14, 2018.

*You were a dad who was so special
And who was loved so very much,
You brought so much happiness
To the many hearts you touched.
You were always kind and caring,
And so understanding too,
And, if help was ever needed, Dad,
It so freely came from you.
You were a gift to all the world
And brought joy to everyone,
And life has never been the same,
Since God has called you home.*

Always loved and remembered by your son Michael (Holly); and grandchildren: Brad, Ethan, Luke, Lucy and Leah.

FLOWERS, Alma

In loving memory of a precious grandmother who passed away March 2, 1983.
*Today brings back memories
Of our loved one gone to rest.
She will never be forgotten
By the ones who loved her best.
Peacefully sleeping, resting at last,
The world's weary troubles and trials are past.
In silence she suffered,
In patience she bore,
Until God called her home,
To suffer no more.*

Lovingly remembered and cherished forever by Carol and Richard Smollett.

RENOUF: Harold (Buddy)

In loving memory of a husband and father who passed away three years ago, March 16, 2017.
*Sometimes I just sit quietly,
Reflecting for awhile,
Imagining your voice, your face,
Your warm and loving smile.
For it's so lovely to recall
The happy times we had
When you played such a special role
As both husband and Dad.
We've seen a lot of happiness,
And shared our worries too.
You're never far from thought,
And always here in heart,
But I still have my memories
And since we've been apart.
It comforts me so much to know,
That you're still in my heart.*

Loved and missed by wife Leila, Karen and Richard, Donald and families.

SMOLLETT, Robert

In loving memory of a dear brother who passed away March 2, 2014.
*He bade no one a last farewell.
He said goodbye to none.
His spirit fled before we knew
That Robert from us had gone.
At night the silent stars look down
On a grave not far from here
Where sleeps the one we won't forget,
The one we loved so dear.
Unseen, unheard but always near,
Still loved, still missed, still very dear.*

Lovingly remembered by brother Richard and sister-in-law Carol.

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You can also send your photo by mail or drop it off at the office. It is essential that the photo is not a copy printed at home or by the funeral home. It will not reproduce well.

Thank you



Pansy Jean Flowers (née Huntington)
October 27, 1930 - February 11, 2020
89 years old

*We do not lose the ones we love.
They only go before,
Where there is everlasting life,
Where sorrow is no more.
There, the souls will always live,
And peace is everywhere.
We do not lose the ones we love,
God takes them in his care.*

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone, family and friends, for your thoughts, prayers, flowers, for keeping us well fed and for your donations in memory of Mom. We appreciate your kindness and support at this difficult time.

Laird (Karen), Richard (Helen), Kim (Todd), Sandra, Val and families.

Grenier & Grenier

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Jules Grenier, b.a.ll.i.

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LAND FOR SALE: Completely serviced lot in New Carlisle, Quebec, located on Church Street, south of Route 132. Lot number 6041558. Asking \$28,000. For more information, please contact Richard at 905-299-3695.

URGENTLY NEEDED: Volunteers to deliver Meals-on-Wheels in the New Carlisle area. If you are interested, please call Rita at 418-752-5577, ext. 3.

COAST ROUND-UP

GASPÉ:

Gaspé County WI

March 14: Bake sale from 10 a.m. to noon at the Carrefour in Gaspé. There will also be raffle tickets on a basket of Irish cheer.

YORK:

York River Seniors

March 14: St. Patrick's supper and dance at the York River Community Hall. Cocktails at 5 p.m. with supper at 6 p.m. BYOB. Irish coffee will be available. Cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Deadline is March 6. For tickets contact Elaine Coull 418-368-3935, Ron Eden 418-361-5270, Tony Patterson 418-368-3276 or Alfred Casidy 418-368-2011.

DOUGLASTOWN:

St. Patrick's Activities

March 14: St. Patrick's Parish will be holding the following activities: 4 p.m. Mass; 5 p.m. Supper. On the menu: choice of pork loin or Irish stew. Adults \$12, children under 12 \$5. Everyone welcome.

DOUGLASTOWN:

Community Centre

Wednesdays: Workout class 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. (with baby), stretching and foam roller with Isabelle Provencher, \$70/session, \$8/drop-ins. Sessions until March 25.

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.

PORT DANIEL:

Three Star

Golden Age Club

Every Wednesday: Pé-tanque from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Cost \$3. Come and join the fun and learn a new game!

Sundays: Line dancing from 7-8 p.m. Cost \$8. Everyone welcome.

March 14: St. Patrick's Day Potluck Supper at 5 p.m. Members and their guests. Entertainment to follow. BYOB event

March 22: Breakfast/Brunch \$10 adult, \$5 children under 10 yrs, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

PORT DANIEL:

St. James

Anglican Church

March 30: Gift bingo at the Three Star Golden Age Club beginning at 7 p.m. All are welcome.

SHIGAWAKE:

Shigawake

Community Centre

April 11: Breakfast for all from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. \$10 adults, free Easter Bunny and breakfast for children under 12.

April 13: Gift bingo beginning at 7 p.m. All welcome.

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.

HOPE TOWN:

Community Centre

Every Thursday: Weekly crib tournament beginning February 6 at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Linda at 418-751-4398.

March 14: Military Whist beginning at 8 p.m.

NEW CARLISLE:

Royal Canadian Legion

First Tuesday of every month: General Meeting at 7 p.m.

March 29: Brunch held at St. Andrew's Anglican Church in New Carlisle from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. \$10 per adult and \$5 per child under 12.

April 18: Crib afternoon tournament beginning at 1 p.m. Bring a partner. \$10 per person. To register call Norma at 418-752-6214.

NEW CARLISLE:

Heritage New Carlisle

Upcoming Workshops

March 14, 21, & 28: Needlepoint: Tapestry with animator Noellie Doiron. Cost \$35.

April 4, 11, & 18: Stained glass: House of glass with animator Mario Boulianne. Cost \$35.

To register please contact heritagenc@globetrotter.net, 418-752-1334 or facebook.

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 - 7:30 p.m. All are welcome.

NEW CARLISLE:

LLB Curling Bonspiel

Anyone wishing to participate in the LLB Curling Bonspiel on **March 13, 14 and 15**, please call Dave Douensard to register your team at 418-752-6645.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

St. Patrick's Supper

March 15: The Mutual Aid Committee of Cascapedia-St-Jules is pleased to announce our Annual St. Patrick's Sup-

per to be held at the Community Centre from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. \$13 per adult and \$6 children under 12. Welcome to all.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

Fifty Plus

Every Tuesday: Grocery Bingo at 7 p.m.

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

March 13/April 17: Jam session open to all musicians and spectators. Doors open at 7 p.m. with entertainment beginning at 7:30 p.m. Welcome to all.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

Book Room

Every Wednesday: The book room is now open from 1 to 4 p.m. For more information, call Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

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.

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 wel-

come! For more information, call 418-759-3522.

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.

ROTARY CALENDAR WINNERS

he winners for the week of March 1 are: Lisa Cyr, Louis-Paul Cyr, Patrick Williamson, Rémi Poirier, Lisette Bourdages, Angela Ball and Réjean Moiusse.

UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, March 15

2 p.m. Hope Town

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Sunday, March 15

New Carlisle

10 a.m. Morning Prayer

Hope Town

10 a.m. Morning Prayer

Shigwake /Port Daniel

Worship with United in

Hope Town at 2 p.m.

PARISH OF GASPÉ

Sunday, March 15

St. Andrew's - York

9:30 a.m. Lent 3



ANNOUNCE ALL YOUR UPCOMING EVENTS!

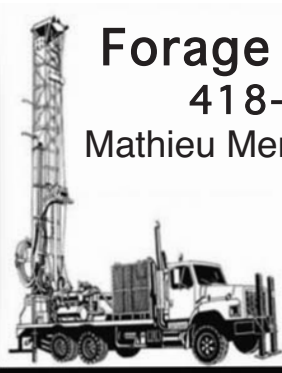
We have a great deal for you!
\$60 per year Coast Round-Up Plan

If your organization is a frequent user of the Coast Round-Up section of Spec, we would like to offer you a special deal! For a flat rate of \$60, we will publish all your Coast Round-up announcements for **one year**.

This should prove financially beneficial and more convenient for you. If you would like to take part in this deal, just send us your cheque for \$60, with the name and address of your organization.

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On the lighter side...



Why do they say

by Gary Briand

About a year ago SPEC published an article in which I challenged readers to identify a piece from Old English. The sounds were very guttural, almost Germanic, but two words were immediately recognizable.

The day after my article's publication, the erudite Tom Matthews met me at Provigo in Gaspé and said, "My, I see that you are now printing the Our Father." I was not surprised in that Tom is a learned man, and probably well versed in Old and Middle English.

Shortly after his intervention, SPEC phoned to tell me that Donatien Grenier had also made the correct identification. Then news that Miss Susan Fitzpatrick had emailed the answer to SPEC. I was greatly pleased at her intervention because of her young age and the fact that I knew her dear late father, Leo.

I have a bank of other articles on English usage, some of which are in finished form while others are in rough. Among the latter is the expression "an arm and a leg." Peter Ross, a good friend, recently spoke with me from Ontario and informed me what he had determined on that expression. I was half asleep at the time but, on getting up, I looked up my notes and confirmed what Peter had told me.

The expression has everything to do with portrait painting. In the eighteenth century; prominent families were very fond of a commissioned portrait of the family's leader. The format was a facial rendering, waist to head portrait or a complete reproduction from head to foot. It goes without saying that the more surface painted the higher the cost.

Arms depicted cost more than the head; legs and feet shown - more money for the artist. Thus, the phrase: "my new coat cost me an arm and a leg".

Rockin' Red Velvet Trifle

Makes 8 servings

- 1 packet hot cocoa mix
- 2 tablespoons mini semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup moist-style devil's food cake mix
- 1/2 cup moist-style yellow cake mix
- 1/4 cup fat-free liquid egg substitute
- 1/2 tablespoon red food colouring
- Dash of salt
- 4 ounces fat-free cream cheese
- 2 tablespoons Jell-O Sugar-Free Fat-Free Vanilla Instant pudding mix
- 2 tablespoons Splenda No Calorie Sweetener (granulated)
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 8-ounce container Cool Whip (thawed)
- 4 cups chopped strawberries



Preheat oven to 350° F. Spray an 8-inch by 8-inch baking pan with nonstick spray. Place the cocoa mix and 1 tablespoon chocolate chips in a glass measuring cup. Add 1/4 cup very hot water, and stir until mostly dissolved. Add 1/3 cup cold water.

In a large bowl, combine the cake mixes, egg substitute, food colouring, and salt. Add cocoa mixture, and whisk until smooth.

Pour batter into the baking pan, and sprinkle with remaining 1 tablespoon chocolate chips.

Bake 26 to 28 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the centre comes out almost clean. Let cool completely, about 30 minutes in the pan and 30 minutes out of the pan on a cooling rack.

Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, stir cream cheese until smooth. In another medium bowl, combine pudding mix with Splenda. Add vanilla extract and 1/4 cup cold water, and vigorously stir until smooth and slightly thickened. Add cream cheese and 1 cup Cool Whip, and stir until uniform. Cover and refrigerate.

Cut cake into 1-inch cubes. In a large glass bowl or trifle dish, layer half of the cubed cake. Spread all of the pudding mixture over the cake layer. Top with half of the strawberries.

Continue layering with remaining cubed cake, Cool Whip and strawberries.

MANAGE TIME WORD SEARCH

D B C E O L T S P A G E N D A U C L U W
D P O R P B P S U C O S T N T D G U E T
G W N F P P X E W A N T A E N M S W H E
N P T I O R H N O Y H E R T E T M P F M
I R E L R O G I L H L A I A M N E G Z O
C E X E T J A S L C W N D N E I Z N W D
R K T S U E Z U O T T O N I G R I I S E
U C Z W N C H B F O E I O T A P T N M R
O A W J I T A O R R C T I S N E I N O A
S R P Y T R S G M S N A T A A U R A D T
L T D P Y X A L C S A R A R M L O L E I
I U D A O N Z R I E L U M C Z B I P L O
P M G J I I C Y E R A D I O R Z R C E N
L F T Z H L N W K D B G T R Y M P L A N
E J E J H O Y T G D N P S P I K U D O C
C D L G O A L S M A G A E N A D J I O G
F A B S E N C E I E M C N Z E O T D C S
U B C R I T E R I A N I A H U C E K K Z
W S T K M E E T I N G T C R A T I M E I
P A T A D T J I F P N S N N H C I P H T

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

ABSENCE
ACTION
ADDRESS
ADJOURN
AGENDA
APPOINTMENT
BALANCE
BLUEPRINT
BUSINESS
CLEAN
CODE
CONTEXT
COST
CRITERIA
DAILY
DATA
DURATION
ESTIMATION
FILES
FOLLOWUP
GOALS
MANAGEMENT
MEETING
MODEL
MODERATION
OPPORTUNITY
ORGANIZED
PLANNING
PRIORITIZE
PROCRASTINATE
PROJECT
SCHEDULE
SOFTWARE
SOURCING
TIME
TRACKER

CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to kidney health.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 17 = e)

A. 24 21 22 10 17 8

Clue: Organ of the body

B. 2 11 19 24

Clue: Rear

C. 4 21 5 9 17 1

Clue: Cleans out particles

D. 19 5 17 11 10 7

Clue: Removes dirt



ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

This week should begin with seemingly little activity, Aries. But like an iceberg, much is hidden beneath the surface ready to be exposed when the time comes.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, there is no need to take everything on this week, Taurus. Focus on small details to keep yourself occupied and engaged for some time to come.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

Gemini, you have unique goals and

ambitions. Do not let others' preconceived notions get in your way. Stay the course and reap the rewards of your hard work.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

Think long and hard about what you have to say before you start sharing your opinions, Cancer. It is hard to retract statements, so choose your comments wisely.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Move outside of your comfort zone this week, Leo. Doing so can be especially valuable as you embark on a new path that you believe will help you in the future.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, skip any shortcuts this week, however tempting they may be, be-

cause they'll only cost you more time in the long run. Invest the time up front and you'll be rewarded.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, some time off in the days ahead provides a great opportunity for some relaxation and reflection. Make the most of this free time and form a plan for the future.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, your social schedule has been busy of late, and the roller coaster ride does not figure to end anytime soon. Take some time for yourself to get away for a few days.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, an influential person may come into your life this week and make some big changes to your per-

ceptions about the future. It may be an exciting time.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Some powerful people have taken notice of your efforts, Capricorn. Your hard work may be paying dividends before you know it. Expect to see more of these people soon.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, it is alright to share your latest successes with close friends or family and perhaps shout it to an even wider audience. You are modest about much of what you do.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Your brain is currently wired to make top-notch business deals, Pisces. Put all other plans on hold for the time being.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- MARCH 8
Lester Holt, Journalist (61)
- MARCH 9
Oscar Isaac, Actor (41)
- MARCH 10
Robin Thicke, Singer (43)
- MARCH 11
Terrence Howard, Actor (51)
- MARCH 12
Liza Minnelli, Actress (74)
- MARCH 13
William H. Macy, Actor (70)
- MARCH 14
Daniel Gillies, Actor (44)



all about Saint Patrick's Day

Up your St. Paddy's Day savvy with these fun facts about the year's most popular party day!



The Celtic Cross

St. Patrick often combined traditional Irish beliefs with his teaching of Christianity. This is why the Celtic Cross incorporates the sun, an important Irish symbol, into the Christian cross.

Wearing o' the Green

Associating the color green with St. Patrick's Day traces back to the Irish Rebellion, when Irish soldiers wore green as they fought against the British. Until then, blue was the color associated with St. Patrick's Day.

A Wee Bit of History...

In the Irish Tradition...



Leprechauns

In Celtic folklore, leprechauns were ill-tempered "shoemaker" fairies who used trickery to protect their hidden pots of gold. The modern-day perception of jolly leprechauns associated with St. Patrick's Day may come from the Walt Disney film *Darby O'Gill & the Little People*, released in 1959.



Corned Beef & Cabbage

Cabbage and bacon were the Irish foods popularly consumed on Feast Day. At the turn of the century, Irish immigrants living on New York City's lower eastside began substituting corned beef as a cheaper alternative to save money.

Shamrocks

According to legend, St. Patrick used the three-leaf clover to teach the concept of the Christian Holy Trinity to the Irish people. The Irish traditionally considered shamrocks sacred plants, symbolizing the fortuitous rebirth of spring.



Saint Patrick's Day, also known as the Feast of Saint Patrick, celebrates the foremost patron saint of Ireland on what is believed to be the date of his death, March 17. This cultural and religious celebration commemorates the life of Saint Patrick and his role in bringing Christianity to Ireland.

St. Patrick's Day occurs during the Christian season of Lent, however, Lenten restrictions on the consumption of meat were lifted on this Feast Day, tying the celebration to a tradition of eating and drinking. The consumption of alcohol was traditionally frowned upon on St. Patrick's Day and has become associated with the holiday over time largely due to the marketing efforts of beer producers.

St. Patrick was most likely born in Scotland as a Roman citizen, but was captured and enslaved by Irish pirates and brought to Ireland at the age of 16. His original name was Maewyn Succat, which he changed to Patricius, stemming from the Latin term for "father figure," after becoming a priest.



13 Million

The number of Guinness pints consumed worldwide on St. Patrick's Day

\$5.3 Billion

The total amount of money spent on St. Patrick's Day

70%

The increase in cabbage shipments during the week of St. Patrick's Day

70 Million

The number of people across the globe claiming Irish heritage or ancestry

Source: WalletHub's St. Patrick's Day By The Numbers 2017 report

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