

## Nurses demonstrate for better working conditions

Gilles Gagné

MARIA – Fifteen members of the *Syndicat des infirmières, des infirmières auxiliaires et des inhalothérapeutes de l'Est-du-Québec*, the SIIIEQ, demonstrated on the premises of the Maria hospital on November 25 to demand better working conditions eight months after the end of their collective agreement.

The union representing 1,050 nurses, auxiliary nurses and respiratory therapists in the Gaspé Peninsula, also held demonstrations in Gaspé on November 17 and in Chandler on November 26 to sensitize the population of the importance of their cause in the middle of the pandemic's second wave.

"We are not asking for better salaries, we want better working conditions. Our members are exhausted and they are exhausted because of the way their schedules are made," explains Pier-Luc Bujold, president of the SIIIEQ.

Nurses are forced to accept 12-hour shifts in the current system and must consequently



The demonstrators in Maria are calling for changes in the way their work schedules are devised, in order to prevent exhaustion, sick leaves and premature retirements.

Photo: G. Gagné

work too many hours in addition to their normal schedule, with the result that they cannot find a balance between work and their personal or family life.

"We have a high rate of young nurses abandoning the profession during the first five years of their practice because they can't find that balance, a normal life. (...) The workers find that there is a lack of respect shown by the Gaspé

Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Service Centre and a toxic attitude, management-wise," he states.

"We lose nurses because they go on sick leave. We also lose nurses retiring prematurely because they can't cope with the burden of the working conditions," adds Mr. Bujold.

The way work schedules are currently devised also breaks up teams that can hardly find cohesion, he also

mentions.

Moreover, the number of students opting for nursing in the region has also declined steadily over the last years, he says, and it is a direct consequence of the working conditions.

"With 20% of our staff slated for retirement between 2020 and 2025, it is a rather worrying reality," points out Pier-Luc Bujold, who refers to the motto of the demonstra-

tion, "In the health sector, things must change now."

The negotiating methods of the Quebec government are lame, he says, and do not reflect the reality of 2020.

"The government is not presenting interesting offers during the negotiations. (...) Government officials only want to pay overtime after 12 hours of work. They want to pay overtime only after 75 hours of work accumulated in two weeks. It means that a nurse could work 50 hours the first week and 25 hours the second week without getting overtime for the first week. That is going back 50 years in time," deplors Pier-Luc Bujold.

He doesn't understand why government officials don't change their attitudes, given that the coming months will be crucial in the fight against COVID-19.

"Many experts say that the pandemic is here to stay until 2022. We might have a third wave, and a fourth wave. (...) I don't think the government is deploying the proper means to counter that," concludes Mr. Bujold.

## Paspebiac raises taxes for home daycares

Nelson Sergerie

PASPEBIAC – Childcare operators in Paspebiac are criticizing the move by the municipality to raise their taxes because these operators are being categorized as businesses.

Water, sewer, and residual materials taxes are billed twice. The spouse of one of the operators, Stéphane Parent, points out that the CSN, which represents daycare operators, has sent the Town a formal notice.

"You cannot do this form of taxation illegally and continue to do so even if you think it is correct," says Parent.

For its part, Paspebiac persists and signs on the legality of invoicing these costs.

The mayor, Réjean Bastien, emphasizes respect-

ing the law because the Town does not impose a commercial tax rate.

"We don't have a business tax. What the law allows is pricing for services," says the mayor, who puts the bill for those rates at around \$500.

Mr. Bastien says that the council analyzed the issue in 2018 and will think about it again in the development of the 2021 budget, because there is a lack of child care spaces.

"We will see if there is an advantage in promoting the establishment of family day care centres to attract young families."

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs seems to agree with Paspebiac. Asked about the legality of the additional costs, the ministry replied that "municipalities can, by regulation, put into force a higher tariff for



Childcare service operators criticize the taxation applied by Paspebiac.

Photo: N. Sergerie

certain services because of the second use observed in the residence." The ministry adds that only a court can invalidate such a provision.

For her part, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Andrée Laforêt, will not comment on the question since the file seems to want to go to the courts, however, her office stresses that the minister is in

contact with the deputy for Bonaventure, Sylvain Roy, and the Minister of Families. In a note, the minister's office reiterates the position transmitted by her ministry.

Sylvain Roy directly criticizes the management of Mayor Réjean Bastien, "It's not very attractive. It does not give a very good signal on the mayor's governance. It calls

into question his credibility and his desire to develop his region. Who is going to open daycare centres in Paspebiac in a context where they are taxed more than in the municipality next door?", asks the deputy.

Carleton-sur-Mer reached an out-of-court agreement in 2018 with childcare providers for a similar dispute.





# Take self-isolation seriously

**In the fight against the spread  
of COVID-19, we must self-isolate:**

- in case of symptoms
  - after testing
  - if the test is positive
- after returning from a trip
- after being in contact with someone  
who's tested positive

[Québec.ca/selfisolating](https://quebec.ca/selfisolating)

📞 1 877 644-4545

# Pointe-à-la-Croix claims to pay too much for its gasoline

Nelson Sergerie

POINTE-À-LA-CROIX - The mayor of Pointe-à-la-Croix is criticizing the large gap between the price of gasoline in his community and that of Campbellton, New Brunswick.

Since the start of the pandemic, there has been a persistent gap between the two border municipalities. "In the 1980s, the retailers in Pointe-à-la-Croix fought a large battle. A consensus was formed to post an equal rate with New Brunswick. Since the start of the pandemic, we have noticed that there is a difference of four to seven cents. We deplore the situation," explains Pascal Bujold.

Pointe-à-la-Croix benefits from a provincial tax rebate of \$0.08 due to its proximity to the neighbouring province. The mayor tried a first approach with Quebec which re-

turned the file to Ottawa, who then stressed that everything falls under the province.

Mr. Bujold intends to challenge the deputy for Bonaventure. Since mid-August, a persistent difference of five to 10 cents has been observed in the Gaspé between the realistic price of the Energy Board and the price at the pump.

## Competition Bureau Discretion

A year after being informed of a disparity between prices in the region compared to the rest of Quebec, the Competition Bureau remains discreet about the investigation into the price of gasoline in the Gaspé.

Asked whether the case was progressing, the office replied by email to the SPEC that all of its activities are done on a confidential basis,

but that the fight against anti-competitive behavior in the gasoline sector is a priority.

The mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté, believes the file is still open. "The negotiations with the Competition Bureau have always continued. The last information we received from them, they said "let us do our job." This is a sign that the investigation is not closed," says the Mayor Côté, who launched the battle a year ago.



Photo: N. Sergerie

## Police report

Facing a charge of complicity in a hit and run causing bodily harm, Julie Laurencelle, 28, from Val d'Espoir was granted bail by Quebec Court Judge Janick Poirier on October 17 at the Percé courthouse. The accused is also charged with three counts of driving without a permit.

The hit and run occurred on May 20 in Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé and a woman in her sixties was seriously injured after being run over by a side-by-side all-terrain vehicle. The side-by-side was allegedly driven by Michael Athot, who also lives in Val d'Espoir. He is also charged in that case and is remanded in custody until at least November 30.

The mother of Athot, Rachel Poulin, is also charged as she allegedly attempted to mislead police officers, thus allegedly committing obstruction in the work of a police officer. Laurencelle, Athot and Poulin were arrested on October 13, almost five months after the crime and following a complicated investigation. As the SPEC was reaching its November 27th deadline, the next court appearances of Athot and Poulin were scheduled for November 30. Athot's bail hearing was to take place on November 30.

Michaël Athot faces four charges of driving while his permit was suspended, one charge of hit and run causing bodily harm, one count of aggravated assault, one count of assault with a weapon, one count of obstructing the work of police officers and one charge of mischief causing damage of less than \$5,000 to a Sûreté du Québec vehicle when he was arrested.

A communication ban was imposed on October 13 so that the three accused cannot communicate with each other until further instructions.

Julie Laurencelle already has a hit and run record. On August 6, 2017, she was driving a car that struck and killed a 62-year-old woman from Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé, Luce Hautcoeur. After initially entering a plea of non-guilty, Laurencelle pleaded guilty on January 29, 2019. Judge Janick Poirier imposed a sentence of six-months less three days of prison at the time. Laurencelle had turned herself in a few hours after the collision.

David Isaac, 27, from Listuguj, appeared in court on November 23 to face charges of aggravated assault, assault with a weapon and breach of probation, in connection with a November 19 assault at a Listuguj house. A man suffering from life-threatening injuries was found in that house in the middle of the afternoon. He was in critical condition at the Campbellton hospital. The Listuguj Police Department launched an investigation, with the assistance of the Sûreté du Québec, which happens regularly in similar conditions.

David Isaac was arrested on November 23 and appeared at the New Carlisle courthouse in front of Judge Janick Poirier. He was remanded in custody in Rimouski and returned to court for his pro forma bail hearing on November 27. Another date for the actual bail hearing was to be determined that day. David Isaac was already charged with breach of probation in another violent crime case for which he had served prison time.

A second person was arrested by the Listuguj Police Department in that case but he was not charged. The warrant issued for him was motivated by the necessity to ask questions with regards to the case, not as a potential suspect. The Listuguj Police Department is also looking for another potential suspect, unidentified for now.

A November 25 fire completely destroyed a house on the Fourth range west in New Richmond. The firefighters were called around 2 p.m. but the house was already engulfed by flames upon their arrival. Nobody was in the house when the fire broke out. There was a lot of traffic along the Fourth Range, since the smoke was visible from many kilometres away and drew onlookers.



Photo credit facebook

## Better cell coverage in Quebec

Nelson Sergerie

CHANDLER - Quebec is trying to convince the CRTC to review its way of calculating the efficiency of a cellular zone. Currently, if a sector has good coverage in general, the CRTC considers that entire sector to be well-served.

The Minister for Digital Transformation, Eric Caire, is trying to convince the federal body to reduce these areas. "This statistical model means that totals are not available for the regions because statistically the average coverage is good. There are still significant pockets. The first thing is to change that vision," said the minister in charge of the digital November activity held on November 23.



The Minister for Digital Transformation, Éric Caire

Photo: facebook

In the Gaspé, as soon as a person is no longer near the coast, it is very difficult to have access to cell signals, a situation repeatedly criticized by the mayors from the Bay of Chaleur and Côte-de-Gaspé municipalities.

An example of the lack of coverage was highlighted, in 2017, when the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC adopted a resolution calling for cellphone protection for public safety reasons on the Route 198 between Anse-Pleureuse and Gaspé. Telus said, at the time, that it could not make these investments without public assistance.

In addition to Route 198, sectors of Route 132 in the Matapeia Valley and Route 299 between Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and New Richmond are also not covered by cellphone service.

## The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 64 would like to thank the following families and businesses who purchased symbolic wreaths in memory of veterans and to those who donated to the Legion.



Reid Sawyer - The family / Lionel Gilker - Crystal & Tracie Smith / Charles Young - Ross Smith / Dave Doherty - Wife Marjorie & family / Everett Dea - Margaret Flowers & family / Lorne Beck - Ella Beck & family / Romaine Chapados - The Family / Shearer Veterans - Garnet Shearer / Edward, Ralph, Aubrey and Leighton Huntington & Lester Flowers - The Flowers family / Thomas Turnbull - Tom Turnbull / Thomas Turnbull - Paulette Cyr / Gerald LeFloch, Ken MacDonald, Weston Palmer - Scott Family / Alvin & Frank Scott - Scott Family / Andrew, James & Fred Starnes - sister Nellie Starnes Main & family / Ralph Main, Arthur Gallon, Rolston Hardy & Real Bissonnette - sister-in-law Nellie Starnes Main & family / Goldie Ramier - Celia Smith Delaney Veterans - Ida Delaney / All Veterans - Olive Smollett / Thomas Craig - Wife Bessie & family / Lauder, Carl, Bert Sweetman, Walter, Bert Laurence - Margaret Sweetman & Gary Mauger / Baptiste Pearson, Norbert Frances Nadeau, Raymond Enright, Charlie Dea, Tony Ahern - Margaret Sweetman Mauger / Lloyd, Claude Huntington - Huntington family / Austin, Frank, Merle Assels - Jim & Sue Assels / James Starnes - Ruth, Shena & family / Alex Woods - Mary Woods / Bill Smith - Veronica Smith & family / Clyde Gallon - Clyde & Eleanor Gallon / Arthur Gallon - John, Irene, Fauline & family / Francis Flowers - Lisa & family / Charles Smith - Yvette Smith & family / Arnold Ross - The family / All veterans - John Kaye Walker & family / Lyall Hayes - The family / Albert Billingsley - Wife Constance & family / Haswell, Percy Chisholm - The family / Smith Astles - Gino, Gina, Tina & families / Robert Jacobson - Irene and family / Darryl & Lorraine Gray / Bertha Hayes / Eurda Lodge / Municipalité du Canton de Hope / Municipalité de Saint-Godefroi / CASA / Marcil Branch Q.W.I / Dépanneur 2000 - Mandy Clark & Joey LeBlanc / Les Constructions de la Baie - Joey Leblanc / Municipality of Port Daniel-Gascons / Shigawake-Port Daniel School / Matériaux Gaspésiens / Heritage New Carlisle / Good Samaritan Masonic Lodge #68 / Chaleur Bay Shrine Club

DONATIONS ARE STILL BEING ACCEPTED AND ARE MUCH NEEDED AND APPRECIATED.

Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 64  
1 Mount-Sorrel, New Carlisle, Quebec G0C 1Z0



# Second wave of the pandemic clearly loses vigour in the Gaspé

Nelson **Sergerie**

NEW CARLISLE – The second wave of the pandemic clearly lost some vigour during the last week of November in the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, considering that the number of active cases decreased by half, from 210 on November 20 to 103 on November 27.

It was the second significant decrease in as many weeks. During the previous corresponding period, the number of active cases had gone from 240 to 210. Moreover, two significant outbreaks in the Bay of Chaleur area, the Centre d'Accueil in New Carlisle and the Manoir Lady Maria in Maria were declared over on November 27.

The Centre d'Accueil's outbreak ends with a total of 18 employees and 15 residents infected before November 27. Four of the residents died of COVID during that outbreak.

The Manoir Lady Maria outbreak involved 44 residents and 13 employees. Nobody died during that eight-week long outbreak.

As of November 27, two outbreaks were still active in the Gaspé Peninsula, including the Manoir Saint-Augustin in Gaspé, the largest by far to hit the region since the beginning of the pandemic, with 36 infected employees and 68 infected residents. Seven people living in that private residence died of COVID-19 before November 27, including two during the last full week of that month.

The Mgr. Ross outbreak was also still active in the seniors' residence part of that building. Less than five employees were infected, as well as six residents. One of them died as a result of the outbreak.

The New Carlisle prison outbreak also decreased during the November 20-27 stretch, as the number of active cases fell from 45 to 14. The total number of inmates also decreased during that period, from 55 to 48.

Region-wise, the number of cases since the beginning of the pandemic reached 1,355 on November 27, compared to

1,292 (+63) a week earlier. A total of 1,141 (84.2%) of those cases occurred since September 1.

Only four people from the Gaspé Peninsula were hospitalized on November 27, five less than a week before. The total number of people from the region that have been hospitalized since March reached 99, only one more than on November 20. Three people died during that week, for a total of 41 deaths since the pandemic start.

The number of recovered cases increased, from 1,044 to 1,211 (+167), likely the biggest such progress since March.

On a per MRC basis, the largest improvement took place in the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC, where the number of active cases fell from 118 to 39 (-79) between November 20 and 27.

In the Avignon MRC, it fell from 20 to 12 cases, while in the Bonaventure MRC, it decreased from 33 to 21 cases. In the Percé Rock MRC, the drop was nine cases, from 36 to 27.

Cont'd on page 6

# New childcare centre is needed in Bonaventure

Nelson **Sergerie**

BONAVENTURE - The CPE de la Baie is trying to convince Quebec to move towards new construction rather than expanding and modernizing the facilities of the former Bonaventure presbytery.

Thirty-two places are authorized in the project valued at \$600,000, but the renovations are estimated at around \$1.2M.

Faced with this situation, the CPE is trying to convince Quebec to construct a new building instead.

"A change of opportunity would be very relevant. We have great collaboration from the Town of Bonaventure, which has offered us land. This is really the time for administration and politics to come to an understanding," says director of the CPE Julie Dalpé.

The CPE estimates the cost of a new building at \$1.4M.

The government must listen to reason, says the deputy for Bonaventure, Sylvain Roy. "Making new with old is never a good idea. I do not understand why the government does not

agree to a new building. It would be more efficient, more effective. We will put pressure on the minister," says the deputy.

## Expansions

After a five-year wait, work to expand the CPE de la Baie's Maria and Campbell Street (New Richmond) sites is underway.

Twenty-one places including five for infants will be added in New Richmond and 16 in Maria awarded in 2016. During calls for tenders, construction costs increased from \$100,000 to \$200,000 per project.

"What especially delayed it was the fact that we had to find exceptional envelopes for both projects because the costs really exploded," says Ms. Dalpé.

Even though 37 new places will be available, there will still be a shortage of 400 in the Bay of Chaleur area.

The CPE de la Baie has five facilities, the maximum allowed. Management would like to try to secure places for a new

Cont'd on page 6

## Editorial section

Gilles Gagné  
Commentary



### When criticism goes too far

Collectively, do we really need Premier François Legault's, and to a lesser extent Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's, regularly scheduled media appearances to understand that the upcoming Christmas holidays will be unusual because of COVID-19 and that we need to remain very cautious about greeting people, if we are to greet visitors at all?

François Legault currently benefits from an astounding level of popularity, electorally speaking. He would win a second term hands down if an election was to be held now. He is consequently targeted by Opposition parties for all kinds of reasons, and by certain groups for the rather awkward management of his government regarding the pandemic.

One of those sources of criticism stems from the fact that he has adjusted the way Quebecers should approach the Christmas and New Year holidays.

He first said that four days would be reserved for family parties, from December 24 to 27 inclusively. In another intervention, he readjusted the notion of four days and affirmed that families would have to select two days out of four for festivities.

That statement raised anger because hundreds of thousands of people, if not millions, felt betrayed, as they had already planned four days of partying.

But seriously, who really thought, after one minute of reflection, that the December 24 to December 27 stretch would translate into four days of unbridled partying?

Did people forget that during his first intervention, Premier Legault made it clear that adjustments would likely be made before the Christmas break should a deterioration or a major betterment of the situation

occur? It seems that the reference to adjustments was flatly forgotten.

What happened last spring in Quebec, by far the leader in COVID cases in Canada, proportion-wise, is a situation that was not only manhandled by the government but by the whole population. The roots of the pandemic effects were planted deep in the past, as we collectively neglected the fate of most seniors, their housing conditions and the services they must receive when they want to stay longer in their homes.

The previous governments neglected a situation that could not be corrected in 18 months, and the Coalition avenir Québec was, it must be admitted, ill-prepared for the pandemic.

Other governments in Canada that bragged about the efficiency of their COVID fight during the first wave are paying a heavy price for having underestimated the effects of the second wave. Suddenly, Quebecers are not alone in the kingdom of indiscipline. Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and British Columbia have joined in.

Premier Legault would have gained in credibility if the "social contract" he referred to during his first intervention about the Christmas holidays had been a written document, a relevant suggestion made by interim Parti Québécois leader Pascal Bérubé since.

He could probably still write that social contract. It would be a good way to remind the population that the coming break will be marked by caution above all.

Dealing with the coronavirus is a calculated risk. If everybody sticks to a lockdown context, the number of mental health problems will far outweigh the inconveniences of the pandemic, death toll included.

Some people are more fragile than others when dealing with the solitude triggered by lockdowns, social constraints and we tend to forget that in rural regions the sometimes very limited possibilities of getting out in cities.

People feeling stronger in the COVID-19 context have greater responsibilities, such as contacting vulnerable friends, co-workers and family members more often. Sometimes, those increased responsibilities will raise the burden of the strong ones but they can also feel a higher degree of usefulness, with the positive effects that come along.

We often forget that on any normal year, tens of thousands of Quebecers don't get any visitors during

the Christmas holidays. Despite the coronavirus constraints, most people will be able to meet with family members this year. It will be less than usual, it might not be the big party most of us need, but it can be fun, nevertheless.

More importantly, the coming break will provide most of us with an opportunity to think about the people who are alone, year in, year out, on Christmas and New Year's. They are mostly seniors. We could collectively come out stronger from this year's break, and with the resolution of leaving fewer seniors behind in the coming years.

Besides, larger get-togethers can be held outside. Some precautions are still recommended but there are ways of dealing with our weather. People in the Gaspé Peninsula are lucky for that. With 20,202 square kilometres for about 80,000 inhabitants, every group of four or five people can count on one square kilometre as a backyard or playground. It is enough for social distancing while having fun.

There will be Christmases that are more fun in the future. They will be even more fun if we have used the means necessary to protect our loved ones that are more vulnerable, because they will still be around.

*The Gaspé Spec*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**  
**President:** Roger Wise  
**Vice-President:** Elaine Sexton  
**Treasurer:** Ray Venables  
**Secretary:** Maria Chatterton  
**Directors:** Hayden Sams, Bonita Annett, Bethany Paetkau, Patricia Ste-Croix Annett

**Publisher:** Penny MacWhirter  
**News Editor:** Gilles Gagné  
**Office Manager:** Joan Imhoff

**JOURNALISTS:** Nelson Sergerie, Diane Skinner  
**CONTRIBUTORS:** Cynthia Dow, Jeanie LeLacheur

208-B Gérard D. Levesque New Carlisle, Que. G0C 1Z0  
**Tel: 418-752-5400**  
**specs@globetrotter.net**  
**thegaspespec.com**

Published every Wednesday by: **Les Publications de la Côte Inc.** (Sea-Coast Publications Inc.)

*(Taxes included)*  
 1-year (paper or digital): \$46  
 6-months (paper or digital): \$25  
 Outside Canada:  
 1-year paper \$165 digital: \$46

SPEC welcomes letters to the editor on subjects relevant to topics covered by the paper. **Letters must be kept within 300 words or less** and may be edited for clarity or to remove any slanderous, sexist, racist or homophobic statements. We reserve the right to reject any letters. Opinions or letters published do not necessarily reflect the editorial policies or beliefs of this newspaper. All letters must bear the handwritten signature of the writer and include the address and number(s) for verification purposes. (Address & phone number will not be printed.) **The Publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The Publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with any advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.**

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

**Canada Québec**

Member of: **News Media Canada** **Médias d'Info Canada** **C.M.C. AUDITÉ**



# Mystery still looms about a potential acquisition of McInnis Cement

Gilles Gagné

PORT DANIEL – Three months after the release of information regarding the possible acquisition of McInnis Cement by Votorantim Cimentos, a Brazilian company, the aura of mystery remains complete with regards to that transaction. The parties involved have been silent concerning any detail that could confirm the possibility of such a transaction taking place.

When contacted by the SPEC, the spokesperson of Votorantim, Christopher Mason, pointed out that the company doesn't comment on "rumours and speculations." The firm, which rates as the eighth most important producer of cement in the world with an annual output of 32 million tonnes, is already well established in Canada, considering the presence of its Ontario subsidiary, Saint Mary's Cement, in Bowmanville, a town located 75 kilometres east of Toronto, along Lake Ontario.

An annual output of 32 million tonnes translates into 15 times what will eventually come out of the Port Daniel facility once it reaches its peak production of 2.2 million to 2.3 million tonnes yearly.

There is also quite a bit of discretion on the part of the *Caisse de dépôt et de place-*



Photo: G. Gagné

*The Port Daniel plant still has not reached its optimal capacity of production.*

*ment du Québec*, the controlling shareholder of McInnis Cement.

"As you know, the Caisse does not comment on rumours and speculations. We have said for a while that the Caisse is not a long term operator of a cement plant and that we could consider the opportunities that could occur," simply notes Serge Vallières, spokesperson of the organization managing many pension funds of Quebecers.

The *Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec* has in-

vested at least four times in McInnis Cement since the official announcement of the plant on January 31, 2014. Serge Vallières only provides "a range of values" to specify the compounded magnitude of the amounts invested in the cement plant.

"Since it is a private investment and considering that we have already mentioned that in the past, the amount injected by the Caisse is included in a range between \$300 million and \$500 million as of December 31, 2019," says Mr.

Vallières.

It is permitted to think that the participation of the *Caisse de dépôt et de placement* in McInnis Cement is closer to \$500 million than \$300 million. That organization invested \$100 million in the capital of the company in January 2014, and \$40 million when the project was marred by a \$444 million cost overrun, as reported by the *Globe and Mail*.

In August 2016, the Caisse reinjected \$125 million in the venture to become the control-

ling shareholder of the project, which was led until then by Beaudier, the holding owned by the Beaudoin and Bombardier families.

In July 2019, the *Caisse de dépôt et de placement* lent \$150 million to McInnis Cement, while Beaudier lent \$50 million. Those amounts were part of a \$500 million refinancing plan that also included \$200 million improvements to the Port Daniel plant and terminals located in Ontario and the United States.

The investments made by the Caisse to McInnis Cement consequently total at least \$415 million, so \$265 million in capital and a loan of \$150 million. This excludes other amounts that could have been invested recently, and the accounting value that can be attributed to the Caisse's share of the loans made by a syndicate of 11 Canadian and international banks that have lent money to McInnis Cement since 2014.

Since the sales revenues of McInnis Cement are confidential, as well as its profit margin, if there is one to this day, and considering the unknown rate of loan reimbursement over a project that has costed between \$1.6 billion and \$1.7 billion since July 2019, the value of the *Caisse de dépôt et*

Cont'd on page 6

## McInnis Cement's trace of money in ten steps

Gilles Gagné

• **December 2012:** McInnis Cement presents the cement plant project to the population. The company brass talks about an investment of \$750 million. The limestone deposit has been known since the beginning of the 1980s and the project has been brewing since 1992.

• **January 31, 2014:** The official announcement of the venture takes place at the Gascons Community Centre. The president of Beaudier, Laurent Beaudoin, and Quebec's then premier, Pauline Marois, are on hand to present the main aspects of the project. *Investissement Québec* announces a \$250 million loan and a \$100 million capital investment in McInnis Cement. The *Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec* injects \$100 million in the company's capital.

• **May 2014:** The construction of the cement plant starts. The total investment has now reached \$1.025 billion. The tab has increased because the company now includes the construction of marine and land terminals in the west part of Quebec, in Ontario and in the United States.

• **November 2014:** First construction site visit: the cost of the project now stands at \$1.055 billion. The number of employees will be 153, according to McInnis Cement, fewer than the 400 mentioned when the project was announced 10 months earlier.

• **June 29, 2016:** Quebec's Minister of the Economy, Dominique Anglade, confirms that the project is hit by a major cost overrun of \$444 million. The *Caisse de dépôt et de placement* adds \$40 million to the capital of the project.

• **August 11, 2016:** The *Caisse de dépôt et de placement* replaces Beaudier as the control shareholder through adding \$125 million to the capital of the project. The Caisse now controls 55% of McInnis Cement and Beaudier, 45%. The Caisse has now invested \$265 million in the company and also guarantees a \$125 million debenture allotted by finance giant BlackRock.

• **End of June 2017:** The cement plant starts its commercial production.

• **January 2018:** Bloomberg, the business publication, announces that the *Caisse de dépôt et de placement* is considering the sale of its participation in McInnis Cement, partly or wholly, because the Caisse rarely keeps a majority stake in a firm.

• **July 17, 2019:** McInnis Cement announce the closing of a

\$500 million refinancing operation, comprised by a \$300 million loan granted by a syndicate of 11 Canadian and international banks, and \$200 million in facility improvement and new equipment funded by a \$150 million loan from the *Caisse de dépôt et de placement* and a \$50 million loan from Beaudier. That move notably translates into the reimbursement of BlackRock's

\$125 million debenture, lent in August 2016. Silos are added in Port Daniel.

• **November 12, 2020:** In his economic update, Quebec's Finance Minister Éric Girard mentions an estimated loss of \$378 million for the funds invested in McInnis Cement by *Investissement Québec*. Cement McInnis now employs 225, including 150 at the Port Daniel plant.



VILLAGE  
Real Estate Agency

**Suzanne Landry**

CERTIFIED REAL ESTATE BROKER AEO  
418-752-0792  
suzannelandry@royallepage.ca  
www.suzannelandry.ca

Friendly bilingual service  
from Matapedia to Port Daniel  
19 years experience



# Gaspésie Railway Society invests \$300,000 to lay new track for windmill blade train loading

Gilles Gagné

**NEW RICHMOND** – The Gaspésie Railway Society invests \$300,000 to build a new track just north of its New Richmond yard in order to be ready by the beginning of January to facilitate the loading of windmill blade trains there instead of on the property of Fabrication Delta. By doing so, the Gaspésie Railway protects its biggest source of revenues, as windmill blade trains represent about 40% of its annual income.

Fabrication Delta had been loading windmill blade trains since that traffic was secured by the Gaspésie Railway Society in October 2016. The first train was loaded in November and left on December 3 of the same year.

However, Northern Crane Services, the General Electric subcontractor, charged to settle arrangements for all its crane needs across Canada, and Fabrication Delta failed to reach an agreement pertaining to the renewal of the contract that would have covered the year 2021.

“Northern Crane had other options. They could have gone



Photo: G. Gagné

*About 15 workers work together to lay the new spur that will be used in January in order to continue loading windmill blade trains in New Richmond. On November 24, six of those workers installed the new switch.*

to Matane to load the blades. They could have gone where they wanted elsewhere. We wanted to keep the windmill blade trains, so we offered to build that track. That will allow us to save our most important source of income and it also allows us to renew the contract of windmill blade transport for the next two years,” explains Éric Dubé, president of the Gaspésie Railway Society.

Work started on November

17 when the regional transporter was informed that there would be no agreement between Fabrication Delta and Northern Crane Services. The new track will measure close to 2,000 feet in length, or 600 me-

tres. It is located on a piece of land already owned by the Gaspésie Railway Society but the blades will be stored on an adjacent lot that was rented by the transporter on November 16.

The windmill blades are produced in Gaspé by LM Wind Power. They are trucked between the plant, located in the York Industrial Park, and New Richmond because the railway is under repairs between Caplan and Gaspé. The whole length of the line between Caplan and Gaspé will likely not be functional before 2025.

The Gaspésie Railway Society is a municipal entity owned by the four MRCs on the southern side of the Gaspé Coast, namely Avignon, Bonaventure, Percé Rock and Côte-de-Gaspé. It acts as the operator of the line owner by Quebec’s Department of Transport.

The expansion of the New Richmond yard is funded en-

tirely by the Gaspésie Railway Society, without any grant, because the transporter owns the land. The renewal of the windmill blade hauling contract between New Richmond and Matapédia, where the Gaspésie Railway Society’s line interconnects with Canadian National’s network, will bring in several millions of dollars annually to the regional transporter. Its annual revenues hover around \$9.5 million.

General Electric has been buying the whole production of LM Wind Power’s Gaspé plant since the summer of 2016. Those blades, 1,200 per year since the expansion of the plant between November 2016 and the spring of 2017, are all exported to the southern part of the United States, essentially to Texas. Those blades are used to repower existing windfarms. The models exported range between 42 and 46 metres in length.

## MCINNIS:

### ▶ Cont'd from page 5

*de placement du Québec’s stake in the cement plant remains unknown, or difficult to establish.*

Another reality could have an effect on the value of McInnis Cement, namely the company’s capacity to reach its optimal production of 2.3 million tonnes per year, a little less than three-and-a-half years after its production started. McInnis Cement’s spokesperson, Maryse Tremblay, is vague about when the plant will be able to reach its optimal production.

“We continue to progress and we are very satisfied with the current production, despite the May halt caused by the pandemic. Our production data remain confidential for competitiveness reasons,” says Ms. Tremblay, who refuses to comment on the “hypothetical questions” tied to Votorantim.

Invoking the independence of the Caisse in decision-making, the Government of Quebec is providing very few clues regarding the talks between Votorantim, and the manager of Quebecers’ public pension fund, and the possibility that McInnis Cement’s shares will be wholly sold or just partially.

The role of Beaudier remains another very important factor in the equation, given that stock transfers carried out

over the spring have propelled the holding back into a leading position, for the number of shares. By virtue of a complicated deal, the *Caisse de dépôt et de placement* remains, decision-wise, the controlling shareholder.

On November 12, Quebec’s Minister of Finance Éric Girard gave an indication that an eventual transaction to sell McInnis Cement will translate into a major loss for the financial arm of the government, *Investissement Québec*. That body injected a loan of \$250 million and \$100 million in the capital of the Gaspesian plant in 2014.

Mr. Girard mentioned an estimated loss of \$378 million, more than the \$350 million invested in McInnis Cement. Could a write-off of anticipated gains stemming from the loan and the value of shares explain the amount referred to by the minister? Mr. Girard did not provide a breakdown of the amount.

If a transaction occurs with Votorantim or any other potential buyer, another element will be interesting to watch; will the new owner move on and invest in the integration of wood residues to provide part of the fuel needed to feed the plant’s kilns? That project would reduce the greenhouse effect gas emissions of the cement plant, which receives criticism from a wide array of stakeholders, notably environmental groups, because it will eventually become Quebec’s biggest source of polluting emission once it reaches its optimal capacity. Those emissions will then reach 1.75 million tonnes annually.

“We are reaching the last chapter of the feasibility study, the project progresses well and the interest is there,” stresses Maryse Tremblay, of McInnis Cement.

That venture will require an investment of tens of millions of dollars and could cut 150,000 tonnes of greenhouse effect gas emissions yearly.

## COVID:

### ▶ Cont'd from page 4

The Haute-Gaspésie and the Magdalen Islands keep standing out in the COVID-19 fight. Both areas had a total of three cases on November 20 and it increased to four cases a week later.

As the SPEC was reaching its November 27 deadline, about 40 students and parents from Listuguj were demonstrating on the J.C. Van Horne bridge and beyond in order to put pressure on the New Brunswick Department of Education, which is still refusing

access to Sugarloaf High School to about 115 Mi’gmaq students from the Gaspé Peninsula side. That access was denied two months ago after Listuguj and Pointe-à-la-Croix were expelled from the Campbellton area COVID-19 bubble.

Since the beginning of October, the Listuguj students attending Campbellton’s Sugarloaf High School have been forced to do their courses online.

On November 27, some students were able to cross the Campbellton checkpoint, in an attempt to reach their school.

## DAYCARE:

### ▶ Cont'd from page 4

site out of the 500 waivers granted by Quebec.

### Bay of Chaleur childcare providers reach agreement

Of the 3,000 childcare providers affiliated with the CSN, including the 75 in Avignon and Bonaventure, 86% accepted an agreement in principle with Quebec.

The agreement provides for

an increase of 11.8% over four years, but the CSN stresses that the rate should not hide the great discontent of women as the pandemic has turned negotiations upside down. Reducing administrative burdens is also part of the deal. A significant gain is being made as a committee will have to determine the actual compensation that will report by September 2021. The CSN indicates that these women work 55 hours per week for less than \$ 30,000 per year.

*Changement de pneus etc.*

418-752-5896  
418-752-8306

LAWNMOWER AND SNOWBLOWER REPAIR      SANDBLASTING AND WELDING

*The Changing etc.*

**193 RUE CHURCH STREET, NEW CARLISLE, QUEBEC**



# Wind energy sector expects more cooperation from Joe Biden and his government

Gilles Gagné

**GASPÉ** – The Quebec wind energy cluster is looking forward to dealing with president elect Joe Biden and the Democrats of the United States, despite that party's economic protectionism.

Mr. Biden has committed to relying more on renewable sources of energy, which should more than counter-balance its protectionism. Consequently, the wind energy sector expects to maintain its growth and even accelerate its development.

Frédéric Côté, director general of Nergica, the Gaspesian and Quebec-wide organization promoting renewable energies, points out that current president Donald Trump, a stern partisan of fossil fuels, failed to block the development of wind energy despite an aversion for renewable sources of energy expressed repeatedly since his January 2017 swearing-in ceremony.

"Trump, despite his love for coal, was never able to prevent that same coal from declining rapidly. Globally, and I insist that it is my reading of the situation, the electing of Joe Biden is perceived positively. It is good news because of his acknowledging the usefulness of renewable energies in practice. It is good for the environment and it is good for the economy. Wind energy costs less and supplies ecological benefits," says Mr. Côté. "The wind energy cluster is also generating infrastructure investments when developers build electricity production windfarms. That is also an economic contribution of the wind," he adds.

"The Democratic Party protectionism is not a real cause of worry because the states have a big say in energy decisions (...) The elected people have understood the advantages of renewable energies for a long time. We can foresee a more favourable growth with Joe Biden. Even Trump was not able to prevent wind energy investments. It (the investment trend) should continue. We are not expecting a 180-degree turn because the change is already well established," assures Frédéric Côté.

In a report issued by the American Wind Energy Association, the American organization promoting wind energy reveals that new electricity generating projects relying on

wind reached \$14 billion US in 2019 alone. That is \$19 billion Canadian. Wind energy counted for 39% of all the new projects slated to produce electricity south of the border last year.

The situation in Quebec is quieter, as very few large wind farms have been installed over the last five years. A small wind farm is currently entering production in the Magdalen Islands.

"Why is it moving more in the United States? Energy transition, to decarbonize the economy, has only reached the early start stage south of the border. The closure of coal and gas propelled generating stations is taking place in the United States. In Canada, Quebec, Manitoba and British Columbia are important producers of hydroelectricity. Ontario produces a lot of electricity from nuclear power plants. So in Canada, a high proportion of electricity is already decarbonized. Here, the energy transition gains will be made in transportation," stresses Frédéric Côté.

Transportation modes generate 44% of all polluting emissions in Quebec.

Can the Quebec-based wind energy cluster take better advantage of the American situation? Quebec is already making good in the United States, he says.

"LM Wind Power exports

100% of its production to the United States," mentions Mr. Côté regarding the Gaspé plant employing close to 500 people. The plant has, in fact, been exporting its production to Texas since the summer of 2016 and its management works very hard to stay connected to the American markets for many more years.

"Marmen, from Matane, made its way in exporting its (steel windmill towers) production to the United States. There will be a low point soon but in that case too, people work hard to regain markets south of the border and the company also owns plants in the United States," points out Frédéric Côté.

LM Wind Power and Marmen are far from the only Quebec firms to get contracts in the United States. The 100 or so companies included in the Quebec wind energy cluster employ 4,500 people, with about 1,000 of them in the Gaspé Peninsula in the Matane MRC.

"There are developers (of wind farms) that will benefit from it. There are smaller enterprises in specialized fields of expertise, like beacons and wind farm maintenance. Firms like Techéol and Eastern Winds (from Maria) are following what is going on. I think employment will progress among existing players. Those companies can ex-

pand or diversify," explains Mr. Côté.

The merits of Quebec companies working in wind energy is all the more remarkable considering that they get by without any growth generated in the provincial market, he notes. In most countries where a wind energy cluster exists, the domestic market supports that industry in a continuous way.

"The future of energy is electricity, and the future of electricity is wind energy and solar energy. In Quebec, after a few years (of wind farm construction), they were left to keep going alone," he says about the suppliers of equipment and services.

That "so-so reality," is now leaving room for "a more positive mindset" for the players of the Quebec wind energy cluster because of what is gradually appearing on the horizon regarding future projects of new electricity producing capacity.

"There will be movement. Hydro-Québec has started consultations for eventual energy acquisitions. We see a new way of doing things being deployed. In the past, we were witnessing calls for tenders by cluster, so one for forestry biomass, one for solar energy and one for wind energy. What's coming up is Hydro-Québec calling for so many terawatt-hours of electricity, no matter

the production mode. Wind energy is currently the cheaper mode of production," he points out.

The energy surpluses invoked with insistence for years by Quebec Premier François Legault are "gradually vanishing. The blockchains, the farms of computer servers and industrial greenhouses where tomatoes and marijuana are grown, all combine to such an extent that disposable energy is diminishing. There would be surpluses until 2025-2026 (in Quebec), however, if we have to develop energy for 2025, we must decide now. It takes four to five years to install wind farms, and much longer, between 10 and 15 years, for power dams," analyzes Frédéric Côté.

The intermittence of wind energy, a characteristic attributable to the fact that the wind is not always blowing, "is not scary anymore. In Quebec, the unpredictability of wind energy is no longer a factor. Hydro-Québec is able to predict wind energy production over the short and long term. Here, water is used as a battery when the wind blows, since we accumulate water in the dams. Elsewhere, the batteries are used as intermediates. Moreover, the capacity of huge batteries increases rapidly, with technological development," he concludes.



## How fast does the weather change?

Gilles Gagné

**CHANDLER** – November 10 was a day to remember along the southern side of the Gaspé Peninsula because of the heat and the pleasantly mild breeze coming from the Bay of Chaleur and the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. Temperature reached what is believed to be record levels in many places. In Shigawake and Port Daniel, the thermometer indicated 19.5 degrees at 9 a.m. and 20 degrees an hour later. In the Pabos Mills area of Chandler, it reached 21 degrees at 10:20 a.m. the same day. It was a little cooler in Percé. Nearing noon it was 15 degrees and dozens of people were seen having their lunch outside along the boardwalk. The mercury hit 23 degrees in Douglstown about an hour before lunchtime. In Chandler, Aurélien Bisson from Bonaventure and local players Jean-Paul Shannon and Pierre Georges, as well as Roger Bisson from Grand River enjoyed a game of golf. Amazingly, it was still 17 degrees in New Richmond at 5 p.m., and 15 degrees around 7 p.m. in Carleton. November 9 and 11 were not as hot, but they, nonetheless, stood out as mild days, especially considering the cold days of the last stretch of October and beginning of November and the snow this week.



# Be there for yourself the way you're there for others



**You are always there when your loved ones are going through difficult times. But don't forget about yourself—solutions exist to help you feel better.**

The current situation may cause you distress. Experiencing various levels of anxiety in some spheres of life is normal. When this happens, you may find it more challenging to deal with your thoughts, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others. Most people succeed in adapting, but listening to your needs is vital. **Don't hesitate to do whatever is necessary to help yourself.**

## Take care of yourself

- Rely on your personal strengths and have confidence in your abilities.
- Remind yourself of the winning strategies you used in the past to overcome difficulties. There is no one-size-fits-all solution! Each and every one of us must take steps to foster our own well-being.
- Enjoy life's little pleasures, such as listening to music, taking a warm bath, reading, exercising, etc.
- If you live close to nature, make the most of it. Breathe deeply and slowly as you walk.
- Learn to delegate, and allow others to help you.
- Ask for help when you feel overwhelmed. **It is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of strength when you are strong enough to do what is necessary to help yourself.**
- Lend a hand in your community in a way that respects your personal limits and public health directives. By helping others, you can improve their wellness and your own as well.
- Think about what has meaning and value for you. Reflect on the important things in your life that you can hold onto in hard times.
- Reduce the stressors in your life.
- While it is important to stay informed, limit the amount of time spent reading about COVID-19. Information overload can increase stress and anxiety, and even cause depression.



## The Getting Better My Way digital tool

*Getting Better My Way* is a digital self-management tool for emotional health. If you are experiencing stress, anxiety or distress, this tool can help improve your well-being by identifying practical things you can do to feel better. Learn more at [Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter](https://Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter)



## Give voice to your feelings

- Keep in mind that having a range of emotions is normal. Feelings play an important role in life, and it is essential to experience them without passing judgment.
- Use words to express what you are going through. Do you feel alone? Are you worried?
- Allow yourself to share your feelings with a trusted friend or family member. It might also be helpful to write down how you're feeling or call a helpline. Find what works for you!
- Those closest to you may not necessarily be able to "read" you. Express your feelings.
- Leave space in your life for your feelings and those of your loved ones.



## Make judicious use of social media

- Use critical thinking before sharing something on social media. Ill-advised information can have harmful effects and be detrimental to everyone's efforts in these times.
- Use social media to share positive actions.
- Watch videos that make you smile.



## Choose healthy living habits

- Try to keep to a routine for eating, resting, sleeping and other daily activities.
- Take time to eat well.
- Go to bed at an hour that lets you get enough sleep.
- Be physically active on a regular basis, while complying with public health directives.
- Reduce your consumption of stimulants like coffee, tea, soft drinks, energy beverages, chocolate, etc.
- Drink lots of water.
- Lower your alcohol, drug and tobacco consumption, or simply say no to them entirely. The same goes for gambling.

## Help and resources

We are all going through unprecedented times that can intensify our emotional reactions. For example, you might feel greater fatigue or have fears that you can't shake, or even have trouble just dealing with the day-to-day. Focus on these signs of a problem and, as soon as you can, contact resources that can help you to better manage your feelings and develop new coping strategies.

- **Info-Social 811**  
Info-Social 811 is a free and confidential telephone consultation service available 24/7
- **Regroupement des services d'intervention de crise du Québec**  
Provides 24/7 referral services for people in distress (French): [centredecrise.ca/listecentres](https://centredecrise.ca/listecentres)
- **Suicide prevention crisis helpline**  
Crisis helpline that provides suicide prevention services 24/7: 1 866 APPELLE (277-3553)

For a host of other helpful resources, visit [Quebec.ca/gettingbetter](https://Quebec.ca/gettingbetter)





# Reflections

by

**Diane Skinner Flowers**



## Better safe than sorry

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year but be cautious so that those very things that bring cheer and happiness do not harm you or your children. Minimize the chances of this happening by checking trees, decorations, lights, children's jewelry and toys.

### Lights and decorations:

- Use only CSA (Canadian Standards Association) approved lights. Be careful when ordering from online sites such as Wish whose goods come from China. They do not have the same standards for safety as Canada does. Their lights are cheaper, but may be inferior or unsafe.
- Make sure that the lights that are labelled for indoors are not used outdoors. Similarly, do not use outdoor lights inside. Check the packages.
- Check your lights for broken bulbs. Replace them with the correct bulb type.
- Do not use frayed extension cords.
- Do not put extension cords under a carpet where they might be stepped on and damaged and then overheat.
- Do not plug too many lights into one outlet. If overloaded, a circuit can overheat and start a fire.
- Turn off indoor Christmas lights when you go out.

### Trees:

- If using a real tree, buy it while still fresh. Use the "needle test" to check. If the needles are hard to pull off it is fresh
- Real trees must be watered every day.
- Try to place trees away from heating sources such as fireplaces, wood stoves, and vents.
- Do not use real candles on a tree.
- Place decorations higher on the tree in case small children pull them off. For example, the hooks on decorations are a choking hazard.
- After Christmas, get rid of your tree when the needles start to fall.

### Toys:

- Buy quality toys.
- Buy age-appropriate toys.
- Watch for small parts that may be a danger for a younger child.
- After unwrapping presents, gather and dispose of all plastic, staples and other materials used to package the toy.
- Make certain that small children cannot get batteries out of a toy.

### Children's jewelry:

- Lead is often used in costume jewelry. If a child puts it in their mouth, it can be harmful.
- Cadmium is also used to make children's jewelry. It is also harmful to children if licked or chewed.
- If you suspect that some jewelry contains lead or cadmium, throw it out. Not to be an alarmist, a child who swallows jewelry with lead or cadmium is at risk of serious even life-threatening effects.

**A few precautions and awareness of potentially harmful situations can keep you and your family safe this holiday season.**

## Three bike path projects planned in Gaspé

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - Three bicycle path projects are being developed in Gaspé.

The first will connect Haldimand and Douglastown with a footbridge added to the railway bridge and via the already existing paths unofficially on the site.

This project, which was the subject of a public presentation in French on November 9 and in English on November 16, is roughly estimated at \$2.3 million. If all goes as planned, the circuit would be accessible in 2024 and would extend the already existing path that leaves the intermodal station near the city centre, passing through Sandy Beach and ending near the beach in Haldimand.

This project is receiving support from the Ministry of Transport as Quebec has to redo the railway infrastructure in its railway rehabilitation project. Its realization would have advantages, says one of the presenters, Pascal Savard: "It would channel the traffic that takes place all over the dunes. It would provide a durable surface to prevent erosion, among other things."



The second project is also ambitious. It involves creating a loop to connect Penouille, Cap-aux-Os, Cap-des-Rosiers and Anse-au-Griffon. The 70-kilometre path that would emerge over a seven-year period provides for a first phase in 2021 between Penouille and Cap-aux-Os.

"This trail is intended to be a new niche for recreational tourism, a reunification of the three communities around the park and an economic development tool," explains the project manager, Gérald Farfard. The search for funding for the feasibility study is ongoing. Parc Forillon is a collaborator of the project as is the Town of Gaspé.

In addition, a path project valued at \$1.2 million is about to be announced for the Rivière-au-Renard sector. Sector adviser Réginald Cotton wrote via Facebook that the funding is almost complete.

## GO FOR A Modern and Affordable Well designed Quality home

### Dream it! Build it! Live it!

**CHOOSE AN HMC BUILT HOUSE**  
Factory-built, sheltered from the weather using a method which reduces costs and production time offering the highest quality standards and the best energy efficiency

IMAGINE YOUR HMC HOME A move in ready home with the decor of your choice and designed the way you want, no hassles, no worries

**hmc**  
Les Habitations Mont-Carleton

1 877 666-3168  
[hmcmaison.com](http://hmcmaison.com)  
RBQ: 8000-7883-06

Representative  
Robert Bilodeau



# Simple Acts of Christmas Kindness:

*Kindness is like snow. It beautifies everything it covers*

Diane Skinner

The last nine months have been a challenge. COVID has changed how we interact with others. We need to be mindful of distancing and who we have in our bubble. We need to take precautions that we have never had to consider before, such as masks and hand sanitizing. Now we are into the winter months when we spend more time indoors and we have been told by scientists and health professionals that this may mean increased numbers of COVID infection.

Isolation, particularly for older people, is challenging and Christmas makes that even more so. Christmas has been traditionally a time for large family gatherings. This Christmas perhaps thinking of others is even more important. Simple acts of kindness can mean so much.

Complete this *Tree of Kindness* by doing something, big or small, every day for 12 days for a neighbour, a friend, family member or even a stranger. You could do this as a family activity. It would be a perfect opportunity to talk with your own children about kindness. You could fill the tree with 12 acts of kindness all by yourself or do a few thoughtful things for someone else – no need to write it down.

These acts can be big or small. They can be material things or even a phone call to someone who may be lonely. Get in touch with an old friend and catch up. Drop a parcel at someone's door. Bake some cookies and share. Clean out your bookshelf and take the books to a friend who may like them. Knit a scarf, socks or mittens for someone who may enjoy them.

## Here are some ideas to get you thinking:

Give an unexpected compliment.

### Call an old friend.

Buy a grocery card for someone who may be struggling to buy food.

### Donate flowers to a nursing home.

Smile at a stranger.

### Go through your clothes and give them someone who may need them.

Give old blankets and towels to an animal shelter.

### Compliment someone.

### Tell them what they mean to you.

Deliver a coffee to someone.

### Shovel a neighbour's sidewalk.

Make a double batch of cookies.

The second batch is to give away.

### Offer to walk an older person's dog.

Know somebody who just had a baby or an operation? Deliver a hot supper to them.

### Send in some supplies to your child's teacher such as boxes of tissues, colourful sticky notes or a box of colourful pens.

Forgive someone. You don't even have to tell them. Do this for you.

### Apologize to someone if needed.

Remember someone's birthday with a card and a call.

(Those with birthdays close to Christmas tend to be forgotten.)

### If you are going to the store, offer to pick up items for someone.

Pay for the coffee for the person behind you at the drive-thru.

### Handwrite a letter to a friend.

Send Christmas cards.

### Make time for your grandparents or parents.

*Giving to others is not only good for them and the right thing to do, it makes the giver feel happier as well. Giving connects us to others. These connections create stronger and hopeful communities. We cannot change that we are living through COVID. Simple acts of kindness can help to get us through these times.*



# A green Christmas

Diane Skinner

We might be dreaming of a White Christmas but this year let's make Christmas a little bit green as well. This season being kind and caring to our planet is a win-win situation. If we can avoid some of the waste and over consumption, we also help to reduce the effects of climate change. This, in turn, means that we can pass the earth on to our children and grandchildren in better condition. Let's be part of the shift away from waste and needless buying.

## WAYS TO KEEP A GREENER CHRISTMAS:

**1. Quality over quantity.** Buy one large gift rather than a number of small gifts that might be unwanted, or not needed.

**2. Draw names.** Rather than give gifts to everybody, draw names and buy one really nice gift. Now your Christmas list is shorter!

**3. Eco - friendly wrapping.** Avoid the shiny metallic paper and glitter because it cannot be recycled. In Canada, the annual waste from gift wrap and shopping



Quality wooden toys will nurture a child's imagination, in addition to them lasting generations.

bags is almost 600,000 tons. Many stores now use brown paper bags. Just cut these open and flatten them to use for wrapping paper. Dolly it up by using ribbon (reused from a previous gift) and tuck in a sprig from a pine tree. Name tags can be made from last year's Christmas cards. Make fabric gift bags that can be used for many years.

**4. Gifts that last.** Try not to buy something just to tick off that person's name on your

list. Buy something useful. Look for presents that can be used many times. This could be live plants, tablets, snow shoes, an air fryer, a diary, crafting supplies or any items that will be used and enjoyed after the Christmas season.

**5. Handmade gifts.** If you can bake, knit, sew or craft there may be someone on your list that would appreciate hand made jewelry, warm mittens, a scarf, a painting or a wooden bench.

**6. Christmas crackers.** Make your own. Use toilet paper rolls, tissue paper, and place some small age appropriate treats inside such as candies, lottery tickets, sea glass, hair scrunchies, and don't forget a little joke or fortune. This can be a fun family activity that becomes a yearly tradition.

**7. Leftovers.** If you have leftovers, freeze them in individual portion sizes like a homemade tv dinner. Take a

couple of those to someone celebrating Christmas by themselves.

**8. A live tree.** Buy a potted evergreen and then transplant it in the spring.

**9. Feed the birds.** Show your love for nature by using suet, pine cones rolled in peanut butter and birdseed, or seed bells in a tree that you can see from your window. Everyone will enjoy watching the birds come and go. There is an opportunity to teach children bird identification. Binoculars would be a gift that could be used year-round. Add to that a bird identification book and a notebook to keep track of what birds you have spotted.

**10. Use LED lights.** They use 95% less energy than traditional bulbs.

**11. Recycle old electronics and batteries responsibly.**

**12. Give gift cards.** No wrapping required. These cards are available for so many different stores – gas, grocery stores, coffee shops, restaurants, SAAQ and Amazon. Idea: For hard to shop for teens, let them choose what they want from an online store.

*May Christmas 2020  
be white – with a little  
bit of green!*

# Shhh! Somebody is sleeping

Diane Skinner

It is the season when some of the animals are sleeping soundly. Many of the wild creatures of the Gaspé spend the winter months in hibernation or in a type of hibernation. Others, such as foxes, beavers and moose do not need to hibernate because they are equipped to hunt for food in winter. For many animals, hibernation is all about survival. Food supplies become scarce during the winter months. By going into a deep sleep, the animal survives these months and wakes when food becomes more plentiful.

There are three types of hibernation: true hibernation, brumation and torpor.

During true hibernation the animal will usually only wake if there is a loud noise or if they are moved or touched. Their body temperature and heart rate become lower. These changes mean that the animal conserves energy. There is very little food available for them so this helps them to survive.

Brumation is similar to



true hibernation, however the cold-blooded animals such as amphibians and reptiles who use this method to survive the cold weather may rouse to drink water and then return to a deep state of sleep.

The third state, torpor, is also referred to as "light hibernation." Animals who sleep most of the time may

wake up on warm, sunny winter days to hunt for food.

Members of the deer family do not hibernate at all. They are perfectly equipped to hunt and forage in the cold and deep snow.

Bears prepare for a long rest in winter by eating as much as they can find in the fall. The bear's heart rate does

slow down when they hibernate, but they do not sleep the whole time. They spend most of the winter sleeping and can go for a long time without eating, up to 100 days, however, they do get up and walk around their den. A pregnant female will give birth and nurse her cubs during the hibernation period.

Bats are some of the longest hibernators. They will not need to eat but may wake up to drink. Their heart drops from 1000 beats per minute to 25 and may only take a breath every two hours.

Bees are unable to fly when the temperature is lower. The honeybees will huddle together in the centre of their hive. The queen stays in the very centre where it is warmest because it is imperative that she survives. This "winter cluster" allows the bees to rotate from the outside to the inside to allow all bees to stay warm.

Snails simply go into their shell and close up the hole that keeps the inside of their shell moist. They do not have to eat anything during this

time.

Garter snakes like to hibernate in groups. In fact, there may be hundreds of garter snakes huddled together for warmth. They can travel several kilometres to spend their winter in the same spot each year.

Raccoons, skunks and chipmunks wake on mild winter days to search for food or to change dens.

Some animals store food to consume later, such as squirrels, chipmunks, blue jays and owls. Some owls will store rodents they have hunted and will sit on them to "defrost" them. Squirrels, for example, can't build up enough fat so they stash their food. They will sleep up to 20 hours a day but head out to feed in the early morning or late afternoon.

Hibernation is a way that some animals deal with harsh winter weather. This deep sleep helps them survive. By saving energy they do not require a lot of food. It is the perfect solution. As Aristotle said, "In all things of nature there is something of the marvellous."





# Easy Christmas treats

Diane Skinner

Christmas is a time for traditions, however, there is nothing wrong with taking a few shortcuts using a new recipe so that you can sit back and enjoy your time as well. These treats are all super simple to make and some require no baking. They may even become part of your family Christmas traditions.

## White Chocolate Dipped Rice Krispie Treats

It's Christmas. You are busy. This is so easy, looks great and is super yummy. You can make your own Rice Krispie treats or use premade ones. Makes about 16 – 20 treats.

Store-bought or a batch of homemade Rice Krispie treats  
 White chocolate chips or, if you can find them, a package of white chocolate melts. If you cannot find white chocolate, use brown chocolate chips.  
 2 tbsp. shortening  
 Christmas sprinkles

1. Unwrap treats or cut your homemade ones into rectangles of 2 by 3 inches.
2. Melt white chocolate and shortening in the microwave. Do it in 30 second intervals and stir after each time. When chocolate is smooth it is ready.
3. Dip about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Rice Krispie rectangle into the white chocolate.
4. Let excess chocolate drip back into bowl.
5. Sprinkle with a variety of Christmas sprinkles.
6. Place on parchment paper or waxed paper and stand them up to set the chocolate.

## Fudgy Mint No Bake Cookies

There are three layers in these cookies, but they are still quick and easy to make. Makes about 24.

Layer 1: Cookies  
 ½ cup butter  
 2 cups granulated sugar  
 ½ cup milk  
 ½ cup cocoa  
 1 tsp. vanilla  
 ½ tsp. salt  
 3 ½ cup quick oats  
 2 ½ cups shredded coconut (unsweetened)

Layer 2: Icing  
 ½ cup butter (at room temperature)  
 1 ½ cups icing sugar  
 1 tbsp. milk  
 ½ tsp. mint extract  
 Green food colouring

Layer 3: Glaze  
 ¾ cup semisweet chocolate chips  
 1 tbsp. milk  
 1 tbsp. butter

1. Line 2 cookie sheets with parchment paper.
2. Combine butter, sugar, cocoa and milk in a large pot. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Stir until at the point of boiling and allow to boil for 2 minutes. Keep stirring.
3. Take off the heat and add vanilla and salt. Then add coconut and oats. Stir with a wooden spoon.
4. Drop onto parchment paper by the spoonful. Place in fridge to cool and set.
5. **Icing:** Using a hand mixer or a stand mixer, add butter, icing sugar, and milk. Beat until creamy and well blended. Add food colouring and mint extract. If it seems too thick, carefully add a tbsp. of milk. If it seems too runny, add a tbsp. of sugar.
6. Take cookies out of fridge and spread with icing. Put back in fridge to set.
7. **Glaze:** In a small pot over very low heat, add chocolate chips, milk and butter. Cook while stirring constantly. When smooth (this won't take long) take off heat and cool for about 10 minutes.
8. Spread glaze on cookies. Return to fridge.
9. Store them in the fridge until you serve them. Place parchment paper or waxed paper between the layers because they will be slightly gooey but totally delicious.

## Truffles

These are so easy to make and would be a nice gift for a friend or neighbour. This simple recipe will make about 60 truffles.

3 packages semi-sweet chocolate chips (175 g packages)  
 1 can of Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk  
 1 tbsp. vanilla

Coatings: chocolate or rainbow sprinkles, cocoa powder, icing sugar, very finely chopped nuts  
 Small paper cups (like muffin paper cups but tiny)

1. Melt chocolate chips over low to medium heat.
2. Using a wooden spoon, stir in sweetened condensed milk.
3. Remove from heat and add vanilla.
4. Allow to cool for about two hours.
5. Shape into little balls (about 1 inch or 2.5 cm)
6. Roll into coatings. Place on parchment lined baking sheet.
7. Chill again.

## Peanut Butter Toffee Bark

This is surprisingly delicious and simple to make.

40 – 50 saltine crackers  
 1 cup butter  
 1 cup light brown sugar  
 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips  
 1 1/3 cups smooth or crunchy peanut butter

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Line a large cookie sheet with foil and spray with nonstick oil spray.
3. Place the crackers touching each other. Cover whole pan, but only a single layer.
4. Add butter and brown sugar to a medium pot and stir over medium heat. Allow to come to a boil and then simmer until the colour is caramel. This will only take a few minutes.
5. Pour mixture slowly over all crackers.
6. Place cookie sheet in oven for about 4 minutes. Watch for the caramel to start to bubble. Take out of oven and set aside.
7. Add chocolate chips and peanut butter to a microwavable glass bowl and heat for about 1 minute. The mixture should be melted and smooth.
8. Very slowly pour the peanut butter/chocolate mixture evenly over the caramel layer. Spread with a spatula to even the mixture.
9. Place pan in freezer for 15 minutes or more.
10. When the layers are hard and cold, break them into pieces. Do not worry if they break into irregular shapes. Store in fridge.



**CLASSIFIED**



**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.

**Kittens to give away:** Call 418-752-2676.

**COAST ROUND-UP**

**GASPE: Gaspé Cancer Foundation**

Members and supporters of the Gaspé Cancer Foundation are asked to please note that our office at the Gaspé Hospital has been temporarily closed due to COVID-19. To renew or become a member of the Foundation, please send your twelve dollar (\$12) payment to the address indicated below. For members who have travelled outside the region for treatment while we are closed, please send your referral paper(s) with your address and phone number to: The Gaspé Cancer Foundation, CP 6078,

Gaspé, QC, G4X 2R6. Your request will be processed and a cheque will be mailed to you.

**NEW CARLISLE: Gospel Meetings**

The meetings that have been held at Fair Haven Bible Camp grounds all summer will now be held at the New Carlisle Bible Chapel, Sundays at 2 p.m. COVID-19 considerations/social distancing will be respected. All are welcome - invite a friend! For more information, please call 418-752-3372.

**NEW CARLISLE: Linda LeMore-Brown Foundation**

Members and supporters of the Linda LeMore-Brown Foundation are asked to please note that our office located at 168 Gerard D. Levesque, New Carlisle, is closed to the public due to COVID-19. To renew your membership or to give correspondence, we ask that you please mail it to our office. For financial support travelling outside the region for cancer treatment or any other information, call the office at 418-752-5995. To make an appointment you must also call the office. Walk-ins will not be permitted. We thank you for your patience and cooperation during these difficult times.

**NEW RICHMOND: Food Drive**

St. Andrew's United Church, New Richmond, is holding a food drive this coming **Sunday, Decem-**

**ber 6.** Please drop your offerings at the church between 10 and 11. During this season when we celebrate the joy of giving, we are hoping for your generosity in support of those who need help providing food for their families.

**Rotary Calendar Winners**

The winners for the week of December 13: Gisèle Boudreau, Gilles H. Bujold, Claude Cyr, Noëlla Béchar, Réjean Gosselin, Société Cascapedia and Fondation Santé B.D.C.

Winners for the week of December 20: Louise Cayouette, Fondation Santé B.D.C., Béatrice St-Pierre, Michel Boudreau, Serge St-Pierre, Chantal Deraîche (\$500 - Dec. 25), and Jean-François Boudreau.

The winners for December 27 to December 31: Éric Cormier, Philippe Leblanc, Lise Leclerc, David Sawyer and Argée Garant.

**QCNA BLANKET CLASSIFIEDS**

Puppy Adoption: Free to good home, two Yorkie puppies rehoming, AKC Reg. Contact me via Email for more details on: jamesmark3091@gmail.com

**ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA**

**Sunday, December 6**  
New Carlisle  
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Keep in touch with the Gaspé Coast!**

**Subscribe to The Gaspé Spec today!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_

Canada (taxes are included in prices)  
**1 year \$46**  **6 mths \$25**  Digital

Please enclose your cheque or money order, or call 418-752-5400 with your credit card information.

**The Gaspé Spec**  
208B Gérard D. Levesque Blvd  
New Carlisle, Québec G0C 1Z0  
[thegaspespec.com](http://thegaspespec.com)

**Grenier & Grenier**  
LAWYERS



Réal Grenier, b.a.ll.i.  
Jules Grenier, b.a.ll.i.

96 Gérard D. Levesque Blvd, P.O. Box 519  
New Carlisle (Quebec) G0C 1Z0  
Tel.: (418) 752-3308 • Fax (418) 752-6935

**This advertising space could be yours!**

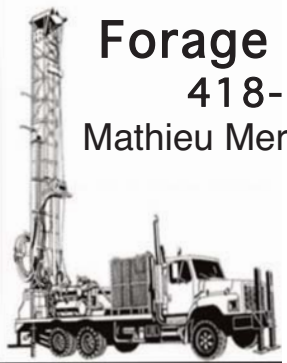


**Tremblay & Barriault, notaires inc**  
Notaries & legal counsel

Gaël Tremblay, notary  
Serge Barriault, notary

119B Perron Blvd West, New Richmond, Que.  
Tel.: (418) 392-5282 • Fax: (418) 392-6155  
E-mail: gaeltremblay@notarius.net

FULLY BILINGUAL SERVICE



**Forage Moreau Inc.**  
418-392-9501  
Mathieu Mercier - Driller/Owner

- Artesian Well Drilling
- Budgetary Price
- Bilingual Service
- RBQ: 5672-1467-01

foragemoreaumercier@gmail.com



By Appointment

**Richard Ste Croix**

Denturologist

Construction and repair of dentures.  
We also make dentures on implants.

9 Adams Street, Gaspé Tel.: (418) 368-1525  
Quebec G4X 1E5 Fax: (418) 368-1542



**GROUPE OHMEGA**  
GROUP

Going beyond and reliable since 1982



Electricity - Plumbing  
Automation  
Industrial computing  
Counter sales

3 Rue Cerisiers  
Gaspé, Québec G4X 2M1  
Tel. (418) 368-5425

Fax (418) 368-7290

[www.groupeohmega.com](http://www.groupeohmega.com)

**Distributors of petroleum products: diesel, furnace oil, stove oil, gas and motor oil**



**Les Pétroles C. Poirier inc.**

Proud to serve you!

**HEAD OFFICE: Bonaventure**  
125 Route 132  
Bonaventure, QC G0C 1E0  
Tel.: (418) 534-2777  
Fax: (418) 534-4210  
[csc@petrolescipoirier.com](http://csc@petrolescipoirier.com)

**Chandler**  
125 Route Leblanc  
Pabos, QC G0C 1K0  
Tel: (418) 689-2595

**Gaspé**  
216D Montée Sandy Beach  
Gaspé, QC G4X 2B3  
Tel.: (418) 368-8777



**IN BUSINESS FOR OVER 35 YEARS**



# On the lighter side...



## CHRISTMAS TREES WITH A TWIST



### WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to fireworks.

**C R T O E K**

□ □ □ □ □ □

Answer: Rocket

Whatever you decide to do with your life, make sure it makes you happy!



### Guess Who?

I am an actor born in Pennsylvania on September 25, 1968. Before becoming an actor, I was a member of a hip-hop duo under a "fresh" moniker. My breakthrough role was on a popular sitcom. I've since added an impressive number of film credits to my name.

Answer: Will Smith

### HOROSCOPES

**ARIES** – Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, this week you feel more energized and ready to hit the ground running with a special project at work. It's also a great time to do something for yourself.

**TAURUS** – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, a couple of days this week you may need to roll over and catch a couple extra minutes with your head on the pillow. Being extra tired may indicate you need to scale back.

**GEMINI** – May 22/June 21

A social butterfly, you are eager

to socialize this week, Gemini. Figure out a day when a few friends are available to get together and catch up. Then plan an event.

**CANCER** – Jun 22/Jul 22

Cancer, it is essential to practice self-care; otherwise, you easily can run yourself ragged. Put yourself ahead of others sometime this week, even if it feels indulgent.

**LEO** – Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, take an opportunity to share your big heart with someone who may need an extra emotional boost. Spend some quality time with this individual.

**VIRGO** – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, you are eager to get caught up in all the details. This can keep you on track and orderly, but you

may miss some spontaneity if you're always following the rules.

**LIBRA** – Sept 23/Oct 23

Relationships are important to you, Libra. You may be eager to develop some new friendships in the days to come. Think about pursuing new hobbies or interests.

**SCORPIO** – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, everyone around you knows if they put you in charge you will get the job done successfully. Others may not be in tune with who you are, so open up a little bit.

**SAGITTARIUS** – Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, you are always eager to learn new things. This week take time to explore the world around you and pick up some

facts along the way.

**CAPRICORN** – Dec 22/Jan 20

It can be challenging to find a balance between giving your all at work and enjoying your personal life. That's because you're such a hard worker. Devote more time to home.

**AQUARIUS** – Jan 21/Feb 18

The smallest steps can lead to the greatest results, Aquarius. Don't discount any strides you make in the direction of success. You will get there eventually.

**PISCES** – Feb 19/Mar 20

Be mindful of where your dollars are going, Pisces. This will help you strike a greater balance between spending and saving.

### FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

NOVEMBER 29

Don Cheadle, Actor (56)

NOVEMBER 30

Chrissy Teigen, Model (35)

DECEMBER 1

Zoë Kravitz, Actress (32)

DECEMBER 2

Aaron Rodgers, Athlete (37)

DECEMBER 3

Amanda Seyfried, Actress (35)

DECEMBER 4

Tyra Banks, TV Host (47)

DECEMBER 5

Maddie Poppe, Singer (23)

**ENERGY**  
TRANSPORTATION GROUP

ASSET-BASED 3PL

Powered by Integrity. Driven to be Different.

gaspe@shipENERGY.com  
shipENERGY.com | 1-866-530-9555

**abca**<sup>+</sup>

Société de comptables professionnels agréés

AN APPROACH THAT PAYS!

ASSOCIATES

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

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

**DIANE LEBOUTHILLIER**

MP • Gaspésie–Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Serving the English-speaking community of our beautiful region!

Grande-Rivière office  
418 385-4264

Magdalen Islands office  
418 986-1489

Sainte-Anne-des-Monts office  
418 764-2890

New Richmond office  
581 355-0060

Email: diane.lebouthillier@parl.gc.ca



# Finish your Christmas shopping early!

Give  
subscriptions  
to  
**The Gaspé Spec  
this year!**

**It's hassle-free!  
No having to visit  
busy malls!  
One size fits all!  
No assembly required!**

## SPEC GIFT SUBSCRIPTION FORM

*I wish to send Spec to the following people:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your gift message: \_\_\_\_\_

Canada: 1 year: \$46  6 mths: \$25  Paper  Digital

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your gift message: \_\_\_\_\_

Canada: 1 year: \$46  6 mths: \$25  Paper  Digital

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your gift message: \_\_\_\_\_

Canada: 1 year: \$46  6 mths: \$25  Paper  Digital

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your gift message: \_\_\_\_\_

Canada: 1 year: \$46  6 mths: \$25  Paper  Digital

Mail your form along with your cheque or money order to  
The Gaspé Spec, 208-B Gérard D. Levesque Blvd, New Carlisle, Quebec G0C 1Z0  
or call the office 418-752-5400 with your credit card.

Gift subscriptions can also be purchased at: [thegaspespec.com](http://thegaspespec.com)

*A gift card is sent at Christmas time to let your family and friends know that  
The Gaspé Spec is on its way from you!*