

WINTER Fun



Ann Lavoie of Ristigouche Sud-Est built these amazing winter structures. She says that the snow castle tower took "90 big buckets of hard-packed, icy snow."



Have you built, constructed, sculpted or designed an exceptional winter creation?

Please include the full names of those in the photo, along with a brief description of the creation, including which town it was built in.

If you'd like to share your creation with Spec readers, send your photo to:

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Specialists question the governance of the CISSS

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The departure of Ann Béland from the board of directors of the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) signals the need to explore the governance of the organization. This is according to two experts from the National School of Public Administration (ÉNAP) consulted by The Gaspé SPEC.

"The person who carries the competence of governance leaves the board precisely because she is worried and dissatisfied with transparency, I find that this is enlightening on the problem,"

explains Renée Lamontagne, associate professor at ÉNAP and specialist on the governance of health and social services establishments.

On the issue of nepotism, Ms. Lamontagne pointed out that Ms. Béland did not mention this issue in her resignation and this remains an allegation to date.

Since February 9, the CISSS has been in turmoil not only with the departure of Ann Béland, but also over allegations of nepotism and favouritism in the hiring of family and close long-time collaborators of the President and CEO, Chantal Duguay, and nepotism regarding the

Director of Nursing, Johanne Méthot, since her spouse, daughters and sisters work in the organization.

The former PQ health minister in Bernard Landry's government in 2001 and now health policy analyst at ENAP, Rémy Trudel, believes there is a lack of "enlightened transparency" at the CISSS.

In his eyes, the family ties between different administrators seems to show an appearance of privilege. "The appearance of the facts is quite disturbing. Yes, it can

Cont'd on page 10



Renée Lamontagne



Rémy Trudel

Photos: Courtesy of ÉNAP

CISSS: Sylvain Roy sends first report

Nelson **Sergerie**

CARLETON-SUR-MER - The Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure sent the Minister of Health and the premier's office a summary of the information received to date on the governance of the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS).

Sylvain Roy assures us that confidentiality is protected because people are afraid of being the object of reprisals. "It doesn't just touch nepotism. It also affects other sections of governance. We are in the process of putting together other documents with more explanations on each of the items discussed," explains the MNA.

The elected official hopes the government will launch an investigation - perhaps even a public inquiry - and wants the Auditor General to look into the matter. He thought the file would extinguish itself, however, the fire is still blazing.


"There are many more

people who are affected by the governance of the CISSS than we thought. This consolidates the report and the information that I will send to the government," says Mr. Roy who is in contact with the Minister of Health, Christian Dubé, his cabinet and the Premier's office on this file.

The Minister of Health has remained silent and his cabinet has refused to follow up with SPEC. His press attaché referred SPEC to the Ministry of Health, which remains stingy with comments on the audits underway at the CISSS.

In an email on February 23, the ministry specified to verify with the CISSS certain information with the alleged facts, in particular with regard to the process of staffing positions.

The email does not answer questions regarding if the Chairman of the Board, Richard Loiselle or the President and CEO, Chantal Duguay, have been met with, or if discussions have been held with the resigning board member, Ann Béland.



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Police report

The Caprivore farm’s barn, located in Bonaventure, was destroyed by a February 19 fire. Specialized in goat production, the Caprivore barn contained 50 animals. The goats, pigs and alpacas all perished while a calf and all the chickens were able to escape. The alarm was given at 1:30 a.m. by Sûreté du Québec officers who passed by the farm. They called the firefighters. Their intervention prevented the fire from threatening the nearby house. The co-owner of the farm, Éliane Gélinas-Frenette, is a volunteer firefighter.

Her spouse, Vincent-Olivier Bastien, points out that they will resume farming at one point but it is too early to determine the extent of the investment to come. “For now, we are not there. We have a slaughterhouse and a boutique and we will reopen soon. We will be back in farming but we have not defined yet how we will do it.” He also stresses that his girlfriend received a lot of support from her fellow firefighters.

Hours after the fire, Maurice Quesnel, director general of the Baie-des-Chaleurs Chamber of Commerce, launched a Gofundme drive that gathered \$25,000 in five hours. “I don’t know them (the couple) and they are not members of the Chamber of Commerce, however, it is not a matter of being members or not. They are in a domain that is important for the area, the type of enterprise we want to see, that is characterizing the region. I made sure that they agreed with the Gofundme initiative before launching it,” explains Mr. Quesnel.

Six days after the fire, the campaign had surpassed the \$52,000-mark. At first, Vincent-Olivier Bastien says the couple was not sure about accepting that kind of support. “We didn't want people's pity, then we realized it wasn't pity but unconditional love.”

The firefighters evaluate the material loss at an amount between \$300,000 and \$400,000.

Fifteen additional fines related to not respecting COVID-19 sanitary measures were handed out between February 15 and 21 inclusively. Eight of them were tied to not respecting the curfew regulation. Since January 11, the Sûreté du Québec police officers have handed out 89 tickets, including 60 curfew related ones, since the tightening up of the sanitary rules linked to the pandemic. The fines now total \$133,500.

Meanwhile, CHNC reports that two Pointe-à-la-Croix men are contesting court tickets handed out during the first wave of the pandemic last spring. Richard and Yvon Ratté are challenging two tickets they received on April 13 at a Sarto Street house as they, accompanied by their two girlfriends, were together in the same dwelling. After a conversation with the police officers, the brothers each received a \$1,546 fine. The group could have received four, according to the regulation.

Their trial took place on February 18 at the New Carlisle courthouse. They were defending themselves. The girlfriend of one of them testified to say that she contacted Info Santé or the Public Health Board on April 11 and she was told that gatherings of 10 people or less were permitted. The prosecutor replied that such gatherings were prohibited on April 13 and that the premier was holding daily press conferences to remind the public of the rules. Judge Sonia Cyr, of the Quebec Court, will render her verdict on May 17.

The mayoress of Chandler's appeal heard on April 26

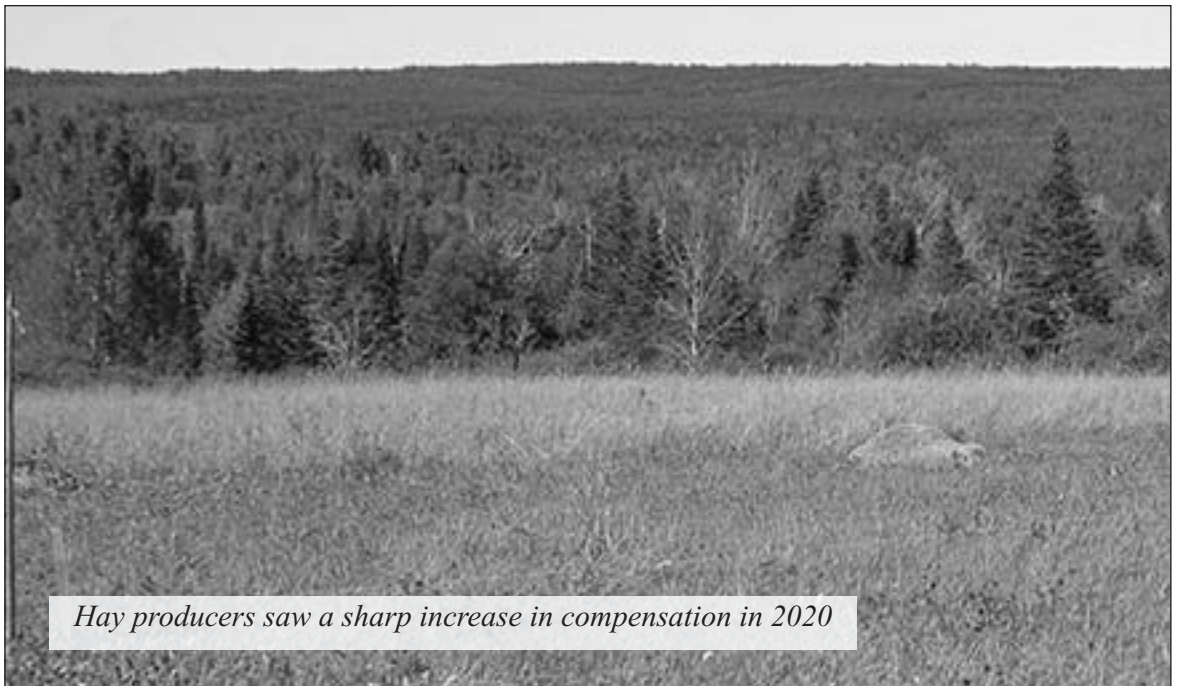
Nelson Sergerie

CHANDLER - The appeal of the mayoress of Chandler who is challenging her 180-day suspension by the Municipal Commission before the Superior Court will be heard on April 26 at the Montreal courthouse.

The chief justice agreed to hear by preference the case which could lead to a decision in July.

The magistrate shows an openness to allow Chandler to become a party to the appeal, but will leave the decision to his colleague on April 26. In the meantime, the Town will have to file a brief on March 2.

In addition to her effective suspension since January 11, Louisette Langlois is calling for the annulment of the decision of October 9 relating to the request for a stay of proceedings and to contest the notice of hearing on sanction which had been rejected by Judge Sandra Bilodeau of the Municipal Commission.



Hay producers saw a sharp increase in compensation in 2020

Photo: N. Sergerie

Sharp increase in compensation for hay in the Gaspé

Nelson Sergerie

CAPLAN - The compensation paid to hay producers in the Gaspé region increased significantly in 2020. La Financière agricole paid all 74 producers \$1,368,000, more than double the \$640,000 reimbursed in 2019.

Drought is the main reason

"The regrowth in the second growing period was not there and that the price for hay in the region has exploded are the main causes," explains Alain Proulx, territorial director for Lower Saint Lawrence, Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands at the *Financière agricole*.

Producers have absorbed more of the loss as the deductible increased from 85 to 88% to

limit an increase in premiums, but it seems inevitable that it will cost more to insure the producers with the last four summers being so dry. The search for a solution is underway.

"We are at the beginning of the search for an alternative," he explains.

A system to review

The compensation system leads to the impoverishment of producers, says the Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure, Sylvain Roy. He says that even if the producers are insured, they still have to absorb 15% of the shortfall.

"There aren't many companies that can survive like this, in a context where the Financial (Industry) has made phenomenal surpluses in the past 10 years. We are talking about billions of dollars in surplus. I

have already asked the minister to review the way insurance works to really support producers in difficult times," says Mr. Roy.

The deputy is asking for compensation equal to the losses to enable them to survive.

Breakdown of 2020 compensation

Eighty agricultural producers in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands will have received compensation totaling more than \$1.5 million in 2020. In its overall report, the *Financière agricole* emphasizes that almost all of the compensation has been paid to hay producers. Compensation of \$77,000 was also paid for the potato producers. A total of 102 companies were insured last year with a value of almost \$9 million.

Gaspé must better coordinate the work of firefighters

Nelson Sergerie

GASPE - Gaspé must better align its fire protection service with surrounding municipalities. This is the main recommendation of the Ministry of Public Security which analyzed the service.

“For example, if there is an accident on the border between Gaspé and Percé, there is automatically a call made to the Barachois firehouse. In short term, the transfer of information between municipalities should be improved, according to Public Security. This is the case in almost all municipalities in Quebec,” explains Mayor Daniel Côté.

Other minor examples such as call logs where errors are found need to be im-

proved, but Côté believes the service is very efficient.

Quebec had asked to analyze a more global coverage by MRC, but the extent of the territory makes the exercise very complex. The Estran municipalities have held discussions in this regard.

Progress for daycare centres

Daniel Côté who chairs Union of Quebec municipalities, a committee on childcare services, is satisfied to see that the message about the extreme lack of space has finally been heard.

Daniel Côté points out that more budget will be needed to meet the needs and rules will need to be simplified for new

projects.

“There are a lot of steps we could take to get to the goal faster. Have more flexibility and not necessarily wait for one call for projects per year that flow through a series of stages and end up with a handful of places in the regions. We will let the minister do his analysis," says Mr. Côté.

According to the mayor, the minister is aware of the problem and that it is a serious challenge. Daniel Côté hopes that the entire government of Quebec will support Mathieu Lacombe in the reform.

Last week, the minister admitted that the development of the network no longer works under the current rules.



Guest Commentary

Gilles Gagné

Canada and United States relationship: back to some predictability

There are bridges to rebuild in the relationship between Canada and the United States after four years of Donald Trump administration and the first real episode of that reconstruction operation went well, on February 23 as American President Joe Biden and Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau first met, online, because of the pandemic.

The two men had evidently talked since Mr. Biden's November election and January inauguration, but the February 23 meeting, in addition to being a public relations exercise, also represented a thorough "the United States are back" message, the same way Justin Trudeau declared "Canada is back" on the international scene in November and December, 2015, after close to ten years of Stephen Harper's moribund foreign policy practice.

Canada and the United States are the closest business partners in the world. The value of their commercial exchanges surpasses slightly \$2 billion per day, however, since 2016, Canada was treated like a third string water boy on a minor league team by the Trump regime. Nobody up here knew what to expect from the American government except that it would likely look like a right hook.

The next four years will not be necessarily easy but they will be easier. Joe Biden and his vice-president Kamala Harris like Canada and they admire, to a certain degree, the social and economic systems of their neighbour. They would like to implement some aspects of our country into theirs,

notably health care. They understand that it is silly to increase a mortgage because a family member has a broken leg and the hospital bill will likely reach a five-digit number.

In foreign relations, the United States are undoubtedly counting on Canada to revive their international reputation and influence, which has been much-maligned over the last four years. Some European countries have gradually given a rising importance to China recently, the result, no doubt, of the United States' lame and erratic foreign relations. Donald Trump was obsessed with domestic issues and had little consideration for international affairs, except that it provided him with an occasion to show his Rambo manners.

By and large, the United States has shown protectionism over recent years and the situation will likely not change with Joe Biden. In fact, one of the first moves made by the new president following his inauguration was to enhance the "Buy American Act," the policy ruling the acquisition of supplies by the central government. A fair number of the 50 states are also heavily influenced by that federal act.

That policy stipulates that the purchase of goods by the United States government must be characterized by at least 50% domestic content. The 50% clause also applies to the cost of the items or services, not just the physical aspect of it.

The American government buys goods and services worth thousands of billions of dollars annually. For Canada, working on the 50% share that can come from a foreign country still represents a good business opportunity!

Deals can be worked out as part of the Buy American Act. There are exemptions. There is also a way to work with some states, something Canada is already doing. We had to, considering the unpredictability of the Trump administration. Some states were glad to keep a close relationship with Canada; and with some provinces for instance, Quebec and California, for example, maintained solid trades links over the last four years.

Canada will not get everything we would like to obtain under the Joe Biden administration, but the tone of negotiations will clearly be more civilized. There is room for real talks, not just a unidimensional and often illegal stand made by a power-hungry president like Donald Trump.

Another interesting aspect of the new American

government pertains to the post-pandemic economic plan of Joe Biden. He wants to put emphasis on reducing the effects of climate change. It makes a huge contrast with Donald Trump's pro-oil, pro-coal and pro-gas measures. The new president's emphasis on renewable sources of energy might also provide business opportunities for a region like the Gaspé Peninsula.

Overall, it represents another manifestation of policy alignment with Canada, as Justin Trudeau has already presented a program to fight climate change, however, the current Canadian administration has also, and is still, investing massive sums of money in pipelines and is still supplying fiscal support to oil field development, so the prime minister's stand on hydrocarbons is marked by contradictions.

In fact, as of now, Joe Biden's measures to counter climate change looks much more convincing and vigorous than Canada's. He is following Justin Trudeau, time wise, but he will undoubtedly pass him if Canada's stand doesn't get much needed stamina. At least, the two countries are headed in the same direction, somehow.

Shall Justin Trudeau reopen talks about the Keystone XL pipeline project, abandoned by Joe Biden just after his inauguration despite the fact the oil transmission line was already under construction?

Symbolically, he shall mention his support for the project, something Mr. Biden is already aware of, but Justin Trudeau shouldn't insist on resuming the project or in asking for money compensations. Firstly, insisting would be a very bad way to start a new business relationship with the United States and, secondly, it would cast a reasonable and justified doubt on Canada's degree of advancement on environmental matters, concretely and figuratively.

Let's not forget that the current federal government has refused to include an obligation of results in the policy we are supposed to follow to reach greenhouse effect gas reduction targets.

Canada will again be confronted by American protectionist measures in lumber and energy trade, and invasive dairy exports. Such realities will probably always exist. It is not a surprise. Back in the 1780s, just after the United States emerged as a country, one of the first moves of their government was to impose a tax on... lumber.

That is another form of predictability.



Guest Commentary

Emma Buckley

Taking some time offline

Back in pre-pandemic times, I was chatting at the pub with a friend of a friend about her work. How could I find out more about it? I inquired. "Are you on facebook?" she asked. I replied in the negative. "Good on you!" she said emphatically. She paused for dramatic effect. "Of course that means you don't exist."

I laughed at her mock-serious response which, for me, neatly illustrates the contradictions that define our relationships with social networks. We want to be "in the loop." We don't want to miss out on the fun others are having (or seem to be having). Yet we are increasingly frustrated by social media's capacity to rob us of our time, energy, and happiness.

Social media is a force for good in many ways. In some countries it is a vital tool against oppression, allowing citizens to freely share information and access facts that may be deliberately obscured by ruling powers. It has united and mobilized people championing worthy causes, from social justice to the environment. For people suffering from various disabilities, the opportunity to connect with others online has been life changing.

Social media has altered lives in darker ways, however. It distorts reality; we measure our regular, everyday lives against the carefully selected high-

lights of others' online lives, and often comes up feeling short. A large body of research links heavy use of social media to depression and anxiety, especially amongst younger people. Cyber harassment and intimidation are serious problems with often terrible consequences.

Social media did not create fake news and misinformation, but it has provided optimal conditions for its flourishing. The largest study of fake news to date, published by MIT in Science magazine in 2018, found that fake news on Twitter spreads six times faster than factual stories, in part due to the emotional response fake stories generated. (Note well: if a story in your social media feed outrages you, verify its accuracy).

Behind social networks are advertising-based business models that strive to keep users in front of their screens. It's up to us to limit our use. I've found that even just turning off smartphone notifications can bring a sense of relief, of freedom from interruptions. Experts suggest spending just 30 minutes a day on social media. (This figure looks conservative in light of the current pandemic, during which social media has been for many a source of support and information). Our reasons for using social media also affect health outcomes: interacting with friends and family or seeking educational content is preferable to staying online due to FOMO (fear of missing out) or trawling for entertainment. (I'm not sure where my own guilty pleasure - viewing live music performances on YouTube - falls on the spectrum, but I've made a mental note to curtail it regardless).

Recently I've started thinking about the sheer amount of time we collectively spend passively or re-

actively watching other people's online lives, sometimes at the expense of living our own. With all our scrolling, are we missing out on memorable, real-life moments - a completely new experience, making something by hand, a long conversation with a friend - that feel deeply nourishing and satisfying?

Not everyone will want (or need) to go cold turkey on the social media front, but psychologists suggest that a detox will never go astray, nor will thinking about, and focusing our attention on, what makes us feel truly happy and well-balanced. I like to think we can still trump an algorithm at that.

The Gaspé **Spec**

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AUDITE

Lobster season likely to start on April 21 if weather permits

Gilles Gagné

SAINT-GODEFROI – The 2021 lobster fishing season in the Gaspé Peninsula will likely start on April 21, which is the middle of the week. The date was decided upon at the beginning of February following a tight vote by the 160 permit holders of the region.

That date would apply to the fishermen in zones 20a and 20b, which cover the area between Gaspé and Bonaventure East. Fishing usually opens a week or more later, in zones 19 and 21 because of rougher weather conditions in the first case and the presence of ice coming from the rivers in the second area.

“Some fishermen wanted to start the season on April 17 and others were opting for the 24, two Saturdays. The fishermen’s vote was too tight to choose so we agreed to put the opening date in the middle of the week,” explains O’Neil Cloutier, director general of the Southern Gaspé Professional Fishermen’s Group, which represents the region’s 160 lobster fishermen.

The weather conditions can be tricky in April and they have regularly delayed the start of the lobster season in the past. April 21 might pose that kind of problem also, says Mr. Cloutier.

The lobster fishing sector experienced another banner year in 2020, landing-wise, as 2,963 metric tonnes of shellfish were delivered to the various wharves of the region. The revenues totalled \$33,636,000, a number that remains preliminary until the Fisheries and Oceans Canada’s final report is issued. This figure doesn’t include the landings of Anticosti Island, essentially made by Gaspesian fishermen. They totalled \$9.9 million in 2020.

“The landings were excellent. The small zones at the extremities performed well, like the Bonaventure to Carleton sector, and on the north side of the Gaspé Peninsula. What is going on over the north side of the region is very special. It looks as if the good state of the stock is having repercussions up to Anticosti. The central areas also performed well. The Newport to Saint-Godefroi sector, including Port Daniel and Gascons, brought 4% to 5% more catches compared to 2019. We have a good nucleus of fisher-

men there. In zone 20a, between Gaspé and Chandler, we see a 7.4% increase but in zone 19, in Forillon, the catches rose by 14.5%, which is very good. In Newport, the report shows a 1.4% hike while in zone 21, there is a slight decrease, at 1.2%. There are just six or seven fishermen in that portion of the Bay of Chaleur and the landings remained excellent just the same,” says Mr. Cloutier.

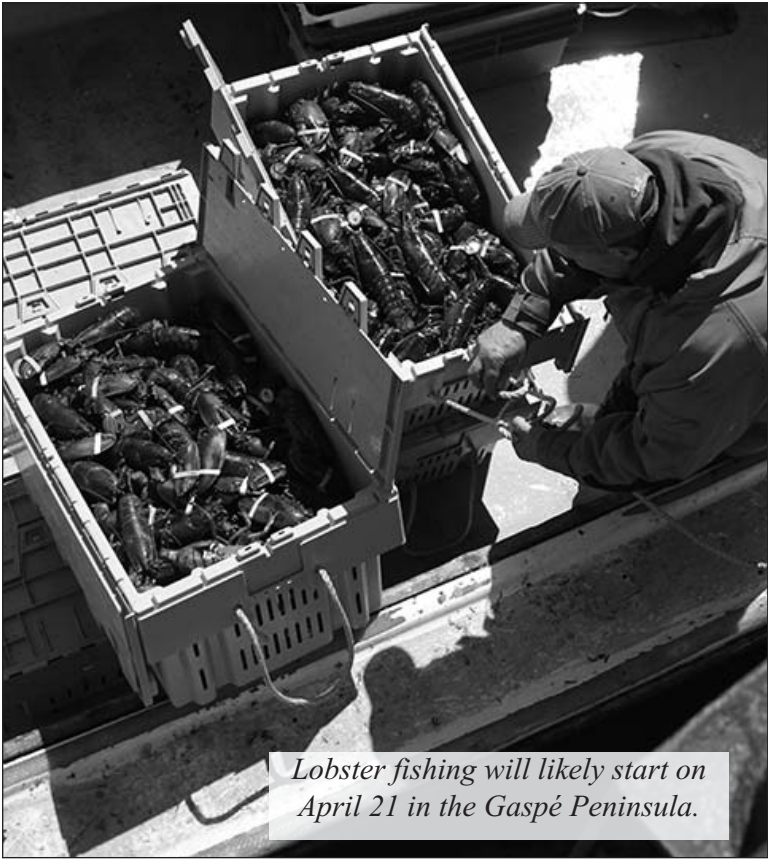
The price is another story

The price of lobster was not a source of satisfaction for O’Neil Cloutier though, and he finds it hard to explain why it was so low, even considering the COVID-19 pandemic context. The price paid in 2020 was \$5.16 per pound on the average in the Gaspé Peninsula, compared to \$6.78 in 2019.

“It is about a \$1.60 difference. It was a big drawback in 2020. According to the information available, we gather that the price for consumers was the same as in 2019. So the commercialization partners made \$1.60 on the backs of the fishermen. We are talking here about the processing plants, the distributors and the supermarkets,” deplores Mr. Cloutier.

“We have very few tools to force negotiations. I am gathering that for my members, and they gather the same thing. I can say that we initiated talks last year to change that reality,” he comments

Would a supply management model be considered as a solution, as is the case in the



Lobster fishing will likely start on April 21 in the Gaspé Peninsula.

Photo: G. Gagné

shrimp industry?

“The fishermen are asking for it but they don’t go further. The last time we voted on that topic, in 1993, the proposition was approved in a 52%-48% proportion but it would not have lasted. It takes 90% of support to work,” stresses O’Neil Cloutier.

Right Whales

During a February 4 working session with the Fisheries and Oceans Department, a follow up on a right whale sightings project was presented. Renowned biologist Lyne Morissette is a consultant working on that initiative.

“It is a project designed for us, lobster fishermen, to check the sightings of right whales in 20 fathoms of water or less. It is the third year of the project. We have evidence that no

right whales are coming to those zones. It draws the same conclusions as the arguments our group has defended over the last three years. There are no right whales in lobster fishermen’s waters,” insists Mr. Cloutier.

The lobster fishermen also obtained a five-year eco-certification tied to their activities.


Source of concern

Meanwhile, O’Neil Cloutier is worried about the upcoming enforcement in Canada of the MMPA, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, adopted when Barack Obama was president of the United States in 2015.

“Barack Obama convinced Justin Trudeau to apply it to Canada. It will be effective on November 30, 2021. It means that the Americans will have the capacity to examine our means to protect sea mammals. For the right whale, we don’t foresee problems but for the other ones? They will scrutinize our measures to protect whales and probably seals. We will have to prove that we are taking the appropriate measures. In practice, the new rules will be enforced from 2022 and on. The Americans will tell us if our measures are acceptable,” underlines Mr. Cloutier.

A failure to satisfy the assessment deriving from the Marine Mammal Protection Act would have important economic consequences in Canada.

“Our products will no longer access the American market if we fail. One must realize that 80% of the volume we take out of the water is sent to the American market. It is very serious. If we don’t watch the situation closely, we will have a surprise, a bad surprise. The conformity obligation is not only valid for Quebec. There will be a lot of Maritimes’ lobster on the Montreal market, for example. If the supply is too abundant, the price will fall. Years of commercialization will then be nullified,” fears O’Neil Cloutier.



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE EASTERN SHORES
EASTERN SHORES SCHOOL BOARD

ADOPTION OF BY-LAWS
PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that the Eastern Shores School Board adopted the following By-Laws:


BY-LAW 9: CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR COMMISSIONERS

BY-LAW 10: VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION

The present by-laws adopted by their respective resolutions C21-02-683 and C21-02-684, replace all previous versions and will take effect on the date of their publication by a public notice indicating their adoption.

Given at New Carlisle, Quebec this 24th day of February 2021.

Hugh Wood
Director General



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE EASTERN SHORES
EASTERN SHORES SCHOOL BOARD

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 392 of the Education Act, public notice is hereby given that the Council of Commissioners of Eastern Shores School Board intends to adopt at the meeting of March 23, 2021, the following BY-LAW:

By-Law 11: Student Ombudsman

Pursuant to Section 392 of the Education Act, public notice is hereby given that the Council of Commissioners of Eastern Shores School Board intends to repeal at the meeting of March 23, 2021, the following BY-LAW:

By-Law 7: Delegation of Powers to the Building Capital Committees

A draft of the By-Laws may be examined at the office of the Secretary General of Eastern Shores School Board, situated at 40 Mountsorrel Street, New Carlisle, Quebec.

Given at New Carlisle, Quebec this 24th day of February 2021.

Hugh Wood
Director General

A new regional minister

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The new minister responsible for Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine wants to establish collaboration with regional players.

Appointed on February 24 in this function by Premier François Legault to replace Marie-Ève Proulx who had been responsible for the region since October 2018, Jonatan Julien wants to quickly meet elected officials in order to submerge himself in the issues and he is giving himself 10 days to get to know the files.

Premier François Legault insisted on the importance of wind power to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. "We are able, among other places, in the Gaspé, where there are a lot of wind power projects, to renew



Jonatan Julien is the new minister responsible for Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

Photo: Facebook

these contracts but by lowering prices to be competitive and then be able to sell this energy," says the premier, confirming the appointment of Mr. Julien.

The new minister says

that Quebec could run out of energy around 2026-2027.

New calls for tenders could be launched in 2022. "This energy is now made economically very advantageous. Wind power will carve

out an important place in Hydro-Quebec's supply. The Gaspé has great projects with the Lower Saint Lawrence. We're going to work on it," the minister said a few hours after taking office.

The minister was referring to the Alliance de l'Est project, a public-private 1,200 megawatt wind power project proposed to the Government of Quebec. The Régie de l'énergie de la Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Bas-Saint-Laurent and the MRCs of L'Islet and Montmagny, as an example of answering the request from Quebec to prioritize three structuring projects per region for the economic recovery.

Without making it a condition, Mr. Julien wants to see public-private partnerships like those in the Gaspé

Peninsula develop. "We want communities to be able to diversify their sources of income. Yes, that's a good element and there is nothing better than the participation of the community in terms of social acceptability and community ownership. I believe a lot in these projects. I think this is a model that we have to involve."

A criticism made against former minister Marie-Eve Proulx was the vast expanse of territory with three regions to cover. Mr. Julien adds the region to the North Shore and says he will be able to combine the two functions.

"Without a doubt," said the minister, who intends to come to the region at least eight times a year. It will not be just to show off, to say that I went," he is making it a commitment.

A well-received announcement

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The appointment of Jonatan Julien as Minister responsible for Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine is being well received in the region.

The Member of the National Assembly welcomes his arrival. The new regional minister called Sylvain Roy in the minutes following his appointment on February 24 to discuss the main issues in the region.

"He gave me the opportunity to meet with him fairly quickly to discuss regional issues and right away, I told him about the governance of the CISSS de la Gaspésie and other issues."

Even if Minister Julien will

have to fight against Gaspé Énergie, which wants to explore and exploit Galt, near Gaspé, Sylvain Roy still fears that the hydrocarbon sector will be revived.

"We are heading towards a potential economic crisis. Everything will be on the table with the Legault government. The population just needs to be alert," the MNA fears.

This is a position that the mayor of Gaspé does not share when the Galt site is 20 kilometres west of his town.

"The proof is that the minister is adamant about the interpretation of his regulations in the courts where the Galt project would like to have more flexible rules. The minis-

ter is holding his own," comments Daniel Côté.

The elected representative sees this appointment as good news for the wind industry, noting in passing that the issues of the North Shore, for which Jonatan Julien is already the minister responsible, resemble those of the Gaspé, whether in wind, maritime or transport. In the context where the region has several wind power development projects and must renew current infrastructures in the coming years, Mr. Côté is confident.

"When it is the Minister of Energy who is at the table for the region, it is certain that he can be a facilitator," said the mayor of Gaspé.

CHANDLER: Bruno-Pierre Godbout decides to run for mayor

Nelson *Sergerie*

CHANDLER - Bruno-Pierre Godbout who has acted as pro-mayor of the Town of Chandler since January 11 following the suspension of Louisette Langlois by the Municipal Commission will be a candidate for the mayoral race.

Bruno-Pierre Godbout confirmed his candidacy on February 18. The main stakeholder is focusing on development. "It's economic, tourist and residential development also shows that Chandler is a prestigious city. We want to bring dynamism, positivism and work without quibbling for the next few years," indicates the candidate who wants to be inclusive.

"We must restore the image of the town. We must act in transparency. I believe in having an inclusive approach that encourages taxpayers. I want to present myself as a unifier to restore the image of the town," advises the Newport councillor.

Louisette Langlois is back?

Louisette Langlois had always said she was in her last term when re-elected in 2017, however, she confided that people have approached her about running both on the phone and in person.

The outgoing mayor admits to thinking about it but is not ready to take the plunge. Currently, she is challenging her 180 day suspension issued by the Municipal Commission. She was found guilty of 20 of 21 breaches of the Code of ethics for elected officials in Chandler.

The court must rule on various requests, in particular on the joining of the two appeals filed by its prosecutor before setting the dates for hearing the case.

The other candidate for mayor, Chandler councillor Denis Pelchat, has still not yet made known his intentions.

Asphalt: back to square one

Nelson *Sergerie*

GASPÉ - No solution has been found to lower the price of asphalt in the Gaspé. This is the conclusion of the *Regroupement des MRC de la Gaspésie* after studying the file in all its forms over the past year. It is a big disappointment for the president, Nadia Minassian. "Yes, because we worked closely with the Ministry of Transport to consider a solution."

The municipalities submitted information to the Transport Ministry and the Ministry carried out analyzes and for the moment, it is not conclusive to make formal agreements."

A study of the kind conducted by the now defunct Regional Conference of Elected Officials came to the same conclusion.

No question of giving up

"The case should not be sealed indefinitely, however, what was thought to be the right solution has not been proven successful. Hopefully we can find another one quickly," says Nadia Minassian. The exercise was launched after seeing in 2019 that the price of asphalt had jumped 30% in Gaspé as Eurovia had regained its monopoly in the region.

The Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure remains convinced that there is a possibility of lowering the costs. Sylvain Roy emphasizes that infrastructure work will accelerate the revival of the economy. "In a context where we are going to have more and more asphalt spreading, I think it would have been wise to assess the possibilities to reduce costs," says Mr. Roy who believes that elected officials must once again work together to better plan the work in terms of geography and timing.

The other solution would be for the MRCs to create their own structure. "Either the MTQ buys on behalf of the MRCs or the MRCs go there internally and install their own asphalt plan or there is a consultation to plan the work to avoid travel," says the elected official.





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Temrex fined \$83,602 for two work accidents, including a fatal one

Gilles Gagné

NOUVELLE – The *Produits forestiers* Temrex sawmill in Nouvelle was recently fined \$83,602 by the CNESST, Quebec's authority in health and safety at work. The amount is related to two working accidents, one that took place in March 2018 and another one that occurred in July 2019.

The July 8, 2019, accident happened in the morning and claimed the life of Martin Boudreau-Labilliois, a young worker whose head was crushed when a loader's hose lost its pressure. The loader's grapple, open until then, closed suddenly upon that pressure loss.

The Workplace Safety Tribunal fined Temrex \$58,371 on February 18 for failing to make the mechanical garage safe for its workers. In that particular case, the lack of procedure to prevent a

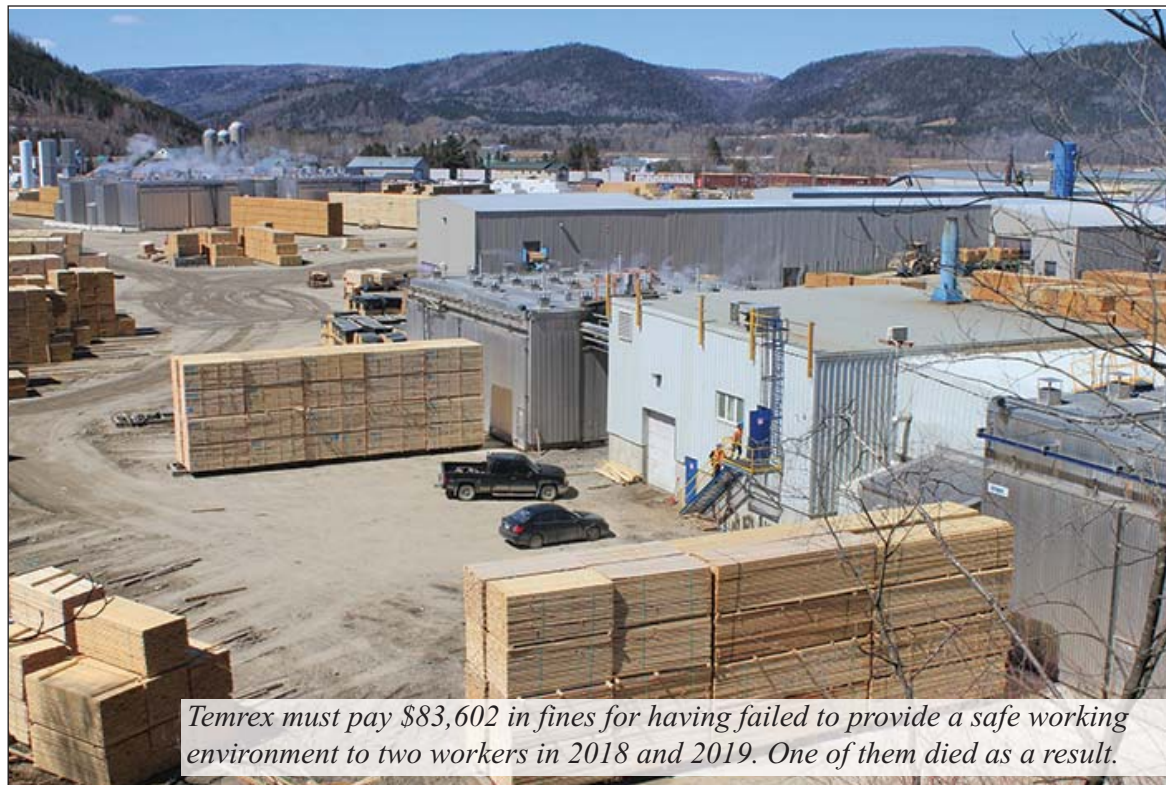


Photo: Gilles Gagné

worker from finding himself between the two claws of a grapple justified the fine. The amount was suggested by the two opposing parties, following a plea of guilty by the company.

In the March 2018 case, a worker was pinned between two bundles of lumber, at the exit section of the sawing room. His body's mid-section was seriously injured.

The CNESST investiga-

tion revealed that the worker had free access to that area of the sawmill when wood was still being piled up at the exit of the sawing line. A locking system should have been installed to prevent the chains

that move the wood bundles from being active when a worker is located between them. The absence of another working method was also underlined by the investigators.

In that case, the fine amounted to \$25,231. The company entered a plea of guilty and the amount was the result of an agreement between the prosecuting party and the defence.

The previous Temrex infraction linked to health and safety rules had taken place in 2017 when a worker fractured his hand when it was caught between two rollers located in the planer area of the sawmill.

The case was heard in November 2017, five months after the accident. The lack of a locking system in that area was also a conclusion of the CNESST investigators. The fine amounted to \$35,760 at the time. Temrex entered a plea of guilty there as well.

COVID number of cases remain low as number of vaccine shots increases

Gilles Gagné

MARIA – The number of Gaspésians and Magdalen Islanders that have received a vaccine shot as of February 21 had reached a total of 9,357, according to the data issued by the *Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec*, the provincial body in charge of Medicare.

Those 9,357 individuals have an address in the region. They have only received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. The proportion of people from the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands vaccinated as of February 21 reached 10.3%, more than double Quebec's percentage of 4.1%.

The great majority of the region's people who received their coronavirus shot were vaccinated in the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands. The distinction is important because some people from the area received their vaccination in another region while working there temporarily. Some having their permanent address elsewhere also received their vaccination in the region be-



Photo: Gilles Gagné

As the March break approaches, nobody is hospitalized due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

cause they work there, notably in the health sector.

Those residing in the Magdalen Islands had the greatest rate of vaccination, as 17% of them had received their first shot, followed by a 16% proportion of the Avignon MRC population.

The proportion of people aged 80 or more who have received a vaccination stood at 45% on February 21.

The total number of people having received their shot in a vaccination centre of the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands numbered 9,756, so 399 more people than the permanent residents of the region having also been given their shot.

In 55% of the people vaccinated, the product came from the Pfizer pharmaceuti-

cal company.

Among the shots administered to the people, 40% were given to health care workers. 32% went to people aged 80 or more without chronic illnesses and 12% were given to people suffering from chronic illnesses.

In publicly owned seniors' homes, the proportion of residents having received their vaccination reached

97% as of February 21.

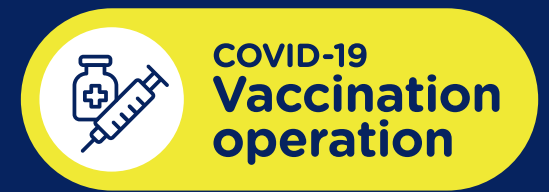
The last week of February the numbers were very low in the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands. The number of new cases stayed at three for the week, but the only person hospitalized due to the COVID-19 pandemic was released on February 24, a deduction drawn from the Public Health Board's daily report.

The number of active cases fell from seven on February 19 to one a week later. By including the absence of any hospitalizations, the February 26 Public Health Board report presented the best numbers since September. In early February, there was a stretch of zero active cases but two people remained hospitalized, no longer suffering from the coronavirus but nonetheless still hospitalized for other reasons.

Since March 2020, 1,714 people from the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands have received a positive COVID-19 test. Unfortunately, 46 of them have died from that illness. A total of 1,667 people have recovered from the coronavirus.

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We all want to know more about COVID-19 vaccination



There are many reasons to get vaccinated, including protecting ourselves from the complications and dangers caused by infectious diseases, but also to stop the return of infectious diseases that are avoidable through vaccination.

The COVID-19 vaccination campaign now underway is aimed at preventing serious complications and death from COVID-19. We also use vaccination as a way of protecting our healthcare system and getting back to a more normal life.

When did the vaccination campaign start?

COVID-19 vaccination in Québec began in December 2020 with the delivery of the first vaccine doses. Because the availability of vaccine is limited, categories of people deemed at higher risk of developing COVID-19 complications have been given priority. As more vaccine becomes available in Canada, the categories of recipients will be extended.

Order of priority of recipients of COVID-19 vaccines

- 1 Vulnerable people and people with a significant loss of autonomy who live in residential and long-term care centres (CHSLDs) or in intermediate and family-type resources (RI-RTFs)
- 2 Workers in the health and social services network who have contact with users
- 3 Autonomous or semi-autonomous people who live in private seniors' homes (RPAs) or in certain closed residential facilities for older adults
- 4 Isolated and remote communities
- 5 People 80 years of age or older
- 6 People 70 to 79 years of age
- 7 People 60 to 69 years of age
- 8 Adults under 60 years of age who have a chronic disease or health problem that increases the risk of complications of COVID-19
- 9 Adults under 60 years of age who do not have a chronic disease or health problem that increases the risk of complications, but who provide essential services and have contact with users
- 10 Everyone else in the general population at least 16 years of age

What supply strategy was used to acquire the vaccines?

The Government of Canada signed advance purchase agreements for seven promising COVID-19 vaccines with the following companies: AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Medicago, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer and Sanofi Pasteur/GlaxoSmithKline. The purchases are conditional upon approval of these vaccines by Health Canada.

To date, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been approved for distribution in Canada. Soon, other vaccines from these companies will be used to speed up COVID-19 vaccination.

What types of COVID-19 vaccines are being studied?

There are three types of vaccine currently being studied.

- 1 **mRNA vaccines:** These vaccines contain part of the RNA of the virus which has the ability to make the S protein located on the surface of the virus. Once the RNA messenger is inside our cells, they make proteins similar to those on the surface of the virus using the instructions provided by the RNA messenger. Our immune system recognizes that this protein is foreign and produces antibodies to defend itself against it. The RNA fragment is quickly destroyed by cells. There is no risk that this RNA will alter our genes.
- 2 **Viral vector vaccines:** These contain a weakened version of a virus that is harmless to humans. Once in the body, the vaccine enters our cells and gives them instructions to make protein S. Our immune system recognizes that this protein is foreign and produces antibodies to defend itself against it. Once in the body, the vaccine enters our cells and gives them instructions to make protein S. Our immune system recognizes that this protein is foreign and produces antibodies to defend itself against it.
- 3 **Protein subunit vaccines:** These contain non-infectious fragments of proteins that mimic the envelope of the virus. Our immune system recognizes that this protein is foreign and produces antibodies to defend itself against it.

Will an mRNA vaccine alter our genetic code?

No. Messenger RNA does not enter the cell's nucleus or come into contact with the nucleic DNA. As such, it cannot alter our DNA in any way.

How do COVID-19 vaccines work?

When someone receives the vaccine against the virus that causes COVID-19, their body starts to defend itself against the virus. An immune reaction occurs which neutralizes the virus producing antibodies and activating defense cells.

Most COVID-19 vaccines in development prompt the production of antibodies to block protein S; the protein that allows the virus to infect the human body. This prevents the virus from entering and infecting human cells.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is composed of strands of ribonucleic acid (RNA) genetic material surrounded by a crown-like envelope with proteins that include the S (spike) protein, hence the name "coronavirus."



What side effects can be expected from injection with the COVID-19 vaccine?

Some minor side effects may occur, such as redness or pain at the injection site and fatigue, fever or chills. These symptoms are less common among vaccine recipients over the age of 55, are usually benign and do not last long.

As of now there are no known serious side effects from mRNA vaccines. While other random problems may arise, such as a cold or gastroenteritis, they are not related to the vaccine per se.

Because the vaccine does not contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus, it is not capable of causing COVID-19. However, people who come into contact with the virus in the days leading up to their vaccination or within 14 days of receiving the vaccination could still develop symptoms and get the COVID-19 disease.

As such, following health measures remains important until such time as a majority of the population has been vaccinated.

Why did it take 40 years to develop a flu vaccine but only nine months for one against COVID-19?

Past efforts, particularly during the SARS epidemic in 2003, advanced coronavirus vaccine research and accelerated the fight against COVID-19.

There are currently over 50 COVID-19 vaccines undergoing clinical trials around the world, the result of unprecedented scientific cooperation. Considerable financial and human resources have been invested in the development of vaccines that meet regulatory requirements in such a short span of time.

Public health and regulatory authorities in many countries, including Canada, are working hard to ensure that as many safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines as possible become quickly available to their populations.

Why are two vaccine doses required?

The second dose "reminds" the immune system to continue producing antibodies and ensures long-term protection. In current circumstances, where COVID-19 is spreading very fast, administration of the second dose may be delayed somewhat to be able to vaccinate more people with the first dose.

Town of Paspebiac leads project for 40-unit apartment building

Gilles Gagné

PASPEBIAC – The Town of Paspebiac is working on a project that would lead to the construction of a 40-unit apartment building at the intersection of Third Avenue and Day Road, which is close to the shopping centre and the main commercial services of the municipality.

Mayor Regent Bastien says that the town administration has been reflecting on the necessity to add housing in the immediate area and planning the first stages of the project for 18 months. Time has only increased the need for this kind of initiative, he mentions.

“The shortage of housing is a major problem in the region, and that includes the entire Baie des Chaleurs area. Local people need additional units and we also need some room for people relocating here. There are no apartments and there are just a few houses for sale as well. Many seniors want to sell their house and move to a single or a double-bedroom apartment because they are tired of maintaining a house but they can’t find that. If they could find apartments, that would free some houses for younger people, either from here or from away,” explains Regent Bastien.

The Town of Paspebiac has already conducted a survey with 201 people regarding the needs in the town’s area but that exercise goes back a year-and-a-half now and the reality has probably changed.

“We are starting a new consultation in order to get a more accurate picture of the situation. We are asking people to tell us what kind of dwelling is needed, what are the age



Photo: G. Gagné

Paspebiac mayor Regent Bastien and the municipal council are working on a 40-unit apartment building venture that would alleviate the pressure created by the shortage of housing in the area.

groups that should be prioritized, and what kind of services should be offered, like janitors, meals and so on. As we see it now, we think we could go with a multi-clientele apartment building, a mix that would fill our needs, with a wing for seniors that could qualify for a *Maison des aînés* status,” points out the mayor.

The *Maison des aînés* is a concept launched by the Quebec government to improve the housing services offered to seniors. The Town of Paspebiac has shown interest for that specific type of residence since the government presented it, slightly more than a year ago.

A ballpark figure for the cost of a 40-unit apartment building could hover in the vicinity of \$5 or \$6 million, thinks Regent Bastien.

Financing such a project requires public funding and there are programs for that.

“We have the Popular

Housing Board in Paspebiac and there is also the Baie des Chaleurs Housing Board, which takes care of the area’s projects. The project is also

getting some technical support from the *Groupe ressources en logement collectif* of the Gaspé Peninsula and its director Ambroise Henry. At the provincial level, we will apply for financial support from the *Société d’habitation du Québec* and at the federal level, from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation,” describes Regent Bastien.

The *Groupe ressources en logement collectif* of the Gaspé Peninsula offers advice and technical support to the towns and organizations planning to land new multi-dwelling housing projects where the residents pay a rent. The *Société d’habitation du Québec* is the provincial body offering funding for such projects.

Those initiatives must find some community funding in the areas that will greet new housing units. “That funding part from the community

reaches about 10%. It can vary a little. The piece of land at the corner of Third Avenue and Day Road is owned by the municipality and that contribution counts in the community contribution. Also, when town administrations give a 25-year municipal tax break to that type of project, and it happens often, that contribution counts as community contribution,” explains Regent Bastien.

The Town of Paspebiac owns other pieces of land that could eventually greet the project if the current survey suggests a better location.

The time frame of the initiative will require some patience, says Mayor Bastien.

“An optimistic scenario calls for an approval of the project in 2022. A construction start in 2023 would be great. It is a type of project that takes three to five years before reaching fruition,” underlines the Paspebiac mayor.



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Photography Project - Now You See Us

The 7- Day Photography Challenge gives you the opportunity to practice and improve the photography techniques presented in the online workshops. Look out for the daily prompts and capture an image every day for one week.

Add a short description to each photograph to let viewers know where the photograph was taken and the title of your photograph.

Tip of the Week Composition

To draw the viewer's eye into the image and place more emphasis on the subject is by implementing the Rule of Thirds. To do so, break your photo into 9 segments, by using 3 vertical and horizontal. Then, line up the shot so your subject falls along one or more of the lines

Another way to guide a viewer's eye to the photo's subject is with the travel photography composition rule of leading lines. These are aspects of the scene that naturally draw our audience's eyes to where we want their focus to be. Things like roads, rivers, boardwalks, crop rows, etc. are great for this!

Registration info

Elizabeth Dupuis,
Project Coordinator
Edupuis-familyties@hotmail.com
or via Facebook
(418) 752-7265

Tuesday, March 10 : Shooting Styles with Kayla Caplin
Tuesday, March 16: Photography Basic Fundamentals with Mike MacLennan

*Note that Now You See Us
photography sessions end in April.*

DAILY PROMPTS

Monday: **Nature**- Take photographs of the natural world including animals, plants and scenery.

Tuesday: **People in my Community** - Portraits of people you know or people you find interesting, people at work or play. *Note that you must stick to government safety directives related to COVID-19.*

Wednesday: **Historical buildings** - Examples of old buildings in your community; houses, churches, barns, etc.

Thursday: **In the News** - Through photography, show stories of local interest, not necessarily national news. If you are stuck for ideas, take a photograph to illustrate a news story in The Gaspé Spec newspaper.

Friday: **Beauty in Everyday Life** - Look at things around you from a different angle. Look for beautiful colours or interesting textures and shapes.

Saturday: **Black & White** - Emphasize the contrast in the photos you take through the use of black, white and shades of grey. Tell a story by highlighting your subject and expressing emotions.

Sunday: **Getting to Know You** - Take a photograph that tells us something about you, such as a collection of objects or a special place.

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NEPOTISM

▶ *Cont'd from cover*

exist. But on one condition: explain them clearly, in public, before hiring,” says Mr. Trudel.

The professor wonders about the number of cases identified at the CISSS and is also concerned about the role of board members in the face of these allegations of nepotism.

If he was still Minister of Health, Rémy Trudel would ask for an express verifica-

tion, "to inquire about the facts, to correct them if this is not in accordance with the spirit of the law, which seems to be the case here and above all, ensure that this does not mar the role recommended by all the boards of directors of the CISSS in Quebec."

Professor Lamontagne suggests having discussions with Chantal Duguay and the chairman of the board, Richard Loiselle. “Before making judgments, my main concern would be to fully understand the situation."



Canadiens need a better balance between veterans and young players' ice time, says former coach

Gillies Gagné

CHANDLER – Jean Perron, the former Montreal Canadiens' head coach, knew that Claude Julien, fired on February 24 after another loss by his team against the weaker Ottawa Senators, was running on borrowed time.

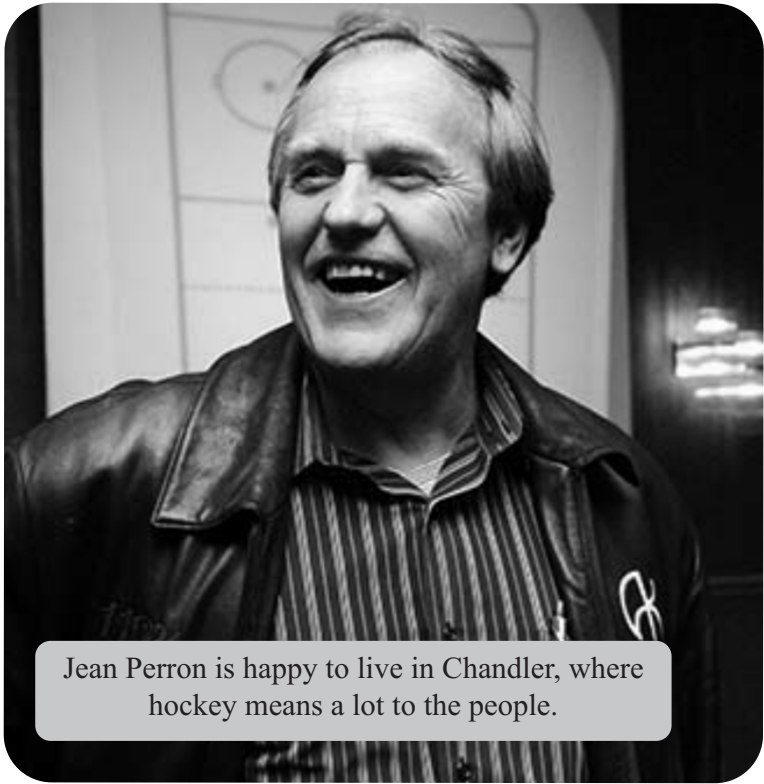
A full-time resident of Chandler since 2015, Jean Perron was one of two Montreal Canadiens coaches to have won the Stanley Cup with that team over the last 42 seasons. He won it as a rookie head coach in 1985-1986 with a mix of veterans and very young players. The Canadiens' last Stanley Cup was won in 1992-1993, under coach Jacques Demers.

Jean Perron still loves talking about hockey, and he lives in a hockey town so that sport is never far. He shares his life with Carole Chedore, and they own a restaurant in the Pabos Mills part of Chandler, la Loge à Perron. He comments with animation on the disappointing stretch of his former team.

"I am not surprised. It is clear that considering the season start they had, and then the bad results of the eight previous games as the team was going nowhere, I could see things like Mete (Victor) playing after his agent sent threats (to the club), Tatar (Tomas), their leading scorer last year not dressed for a game and watching it with journalists, Byron (Paul) put on waivers, Romanov (Alexander) put out of the lineup after being praised as one of the four best defencemen of the team, so I wondered what was going on but if they had accumulated victories, it would have been different, however the situation took a different turn," says Mr. Perron.

The overtime period played by the Canadiens the day prior to Claude Julien's firing was "disastrous," he adds.

"Marc Bergevin gave a \$6 million contract to Brendan Gallagher and he didn't play one second of overtime! Julien's judgement was questionable in that regard. It doesn't make sense to sign a player like that without putting him on the ice. I saw Weber (Shea, a defenceman) coming to the bench when the puck was entering the defensive zone. He is the captain! I gathered at that point that something was



Jean Perron is happy to live in Chandler, where hockey means a lot to the people.

Photo: Courtesy of l'Acadie Nouvelle

going on. We heard comments to the effect that "negative waves" were circulating in the locker room. Something had to give. I was thinking that Julien was going to lose his job and it happened," stresses the former coach.

From a fast team with bigger defencemen than last year during the first 10 games of the year, the Canadiens turned into a flat-footed bunch over the eight ensuing games, during which they lost six games. They had won seven of their first 10 games. Jean Perron thinks that there is an odd-balance between the playing time given to the young players and that of the older players.

"When I was coaching the Canadiens, I had a solid core of veterans, Robinson (Larry), Gainey (Bob), Bobby Smith, Ryan Walter, and I had a good bunch of youths, Richer (Stéphane), Lemieux (Claude), Skrudland (Brian) and Patrick Roy. I always paid attention to the necessity of not embarrassing veterans and you embarrass veterans when you give more playing time to your youth. It is tough to accept for those veterans. When I saw Tatar on the press gallery, I thought it was going too far. You can cut a bit of playing time over a period when a player is not performing well but you don't take a player like that and send him to watch the game with journalists. I saw Nick Suzuki taking important face-offs instead of Danault (Philippe), Danault who is one of the league's best in those situations. You are not supposed to do that. Kotkaniemi (Jesper) is also taking too many face-offs. I know that Bergevin's philoso-

phy is to give young players more ice time, like Suzuki and Romanov, but here you have the club's spark plug, Gallagher, who is playing less than all the younger players. No wonder it is not working well. That makes disgruntled players and a toxic atmosphere in the dressing room," analyzes Mr. Perron.

"I have no doubt that Ducharme (Dominique, who replaces Claude Julien), who has coached many young players in his life, will make young players understand, in a step-by-step approach, that playing time must be deserved. Young players often think that they know best and that they can take the spot of any player. It doesn't work that way. They must learn how to walk before running. He (Ducharme) understands that and he will recoup the most experienced players' leadership. It is important that Gallagher, Byron, Petry (Jeff) and Weber feel that they are leaders. They will guide the younger players. I don't know why that notion was lost. I think Julien received orders from Bergervin to put young players on the ice. I think he went too fast," points out Jean Perron.

He believes that Claude Julien lost the control of his "bench" which, in hockey terms means that the players were no longer listening to him.

"The fact that Shea Weber recently said after another match against Ottawa that there were negative waves in the dressing room, and we are talking about the team's captain, means that the veterans were not happy," concludes Jean Perron.



Special deduction for employees working from home due to COVID-19

One of the few advantages (or not, depending on your point of view) of the COVID-19 situation is the increased ability to work from home. In the past, employees working remotely were able to claim as a deduction certain expenses that were not refunded to them by their employer, but were necessary to be able to adequately work from home. Tax form T2200, certified by the employer, was issued as proof that home work was indeed carried out, and the taxpayer had to itemize the expenses and keep receipts of all claims should Revenue Canada or Revenue Quebec wish to audit them.

This deduction remains in place for 2020, but the Revenue Canada Agency has simplified the process for claiming home office expenses. They have put in place a new, temporary flat tax method. This means that an employee can decide to keep using the customary way of deducting his/her home expenses or switch to this new method, whichever is more advantageous. Note that you cannot combine these methods; it is one or the other. Here are some details of the new measure.

As an employee (this does not apply to those who are self-employed), you may be able to claim a deduction for office supplies, certain phone and computer expenses and others related to work-space-in-the-home. The eligibility criteria for this deduction are as follows;

- you worked from home in 2020 due to COVID-19 or were required to do so by your employer
- you worked more than 50% of the time from home for at least four consecutive weeks in 2020
- the expenses were used directly in your work during the period

The new simplified, temporary flat rate method lives up to its name. You can claim \$2 for each full-time or part-time day worked from home in 2020, up to a maximum of 200 days. That means the total maximum deduction would be \$400.

Please use form T777s, Statement of Expenses for Working at Home Due to COVID-19, to calculate the claim for home office expenses, and keep it with your tax documents for 2020.

Revenue Quebec has also adopted this simplified method in 2020, using the same criteria. The deductible amount is set at \$2 per day, capped at 200 days.

We will know later if this temporary measure will be extended for all or a part of 2021 as the pandemic plays out. If uncertain, please consult with a tax professional for advice on these or other tax time situations.

Donna Harrison
H & S Tax Services

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Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



International Women’s Day 2021 Moving forward together

The facts tell the story. Women are 60% less likely than men to go from middle management to upper levels. Girls lose their confidence early. The percentage of girls who say they are confident in grade 6 is 36% and by grade 10 only 14% feel confident. More than 1.5 million women in Canada live in poverty.

As the twenty-first century marches on, have the lives of Canadian women improved? How do we measure that? The above-mentioned statistics say that things have not improved as much as they could have.

A rather new approach to feminism, and it can in fact be applied to all people including men facing challenges in improving their lives, is called “intersectional.” This approach to examining the challenges of others, or our own, includes factors such as gender, race, ability, age and sexuality. Any person, who is different in any way or in any ways, can face a more difficult life with less chances of improving their situation.

This theory comes from Kimberlé Crenshaw, an American lawyer who first used the term to examine how black women face more than one barrier – gender and colour – hence the intersection of two or more challenges.

Women can face hurdles, just because they are women – but add to that, for example a woman who is old and she may face discrimination on two fronts. Now add to that being a person of colour or having a learning disability and it all comes together, at an intersection! As time went on, Crenshaw’s theory expanded to include gender, race, ability, age and sexuality plus ethnicity, language, nationality, socio-economic situation and more.

Poverty and women - Women make less money and often work at jobs that are less stable. Women earn 75 cents for every dollar earned by men. A woman from a racial minority makes about 67 cents for every dollar earned by men. Now let’s imagine other “intersections.” A single mother is three times more likely to live on a low income than a couple. A woman with a disability, physical or intellectual, is two and a half times more likely to live on a low income.

Why is intersectional feminism important? – Women face barriers in society. We should recognize that people (men and women) face more difficulties if they are “more” different. Sometimes it may be difficult, or impossible to know what factor is making life more difficult for a person. Some examples are a white woman, a black woman, a disabled white woman or man, a disabled black woman or man, an old white woman or man, an older Indigenous woman or man, an anglophone with disabilities, and so on. When two or more factors collide at the “intersection,” it can make life more difficult.

This way of thinking about feminism can be helpful. To say someone does not get ahead because they are from a visible minority and a woman makes us look more closely at what is going on. Is it just because they are female? Is there something else holding them back? How?

So for Women’s Day 2021, let’s root for each other but let’s recognize the fact that some women (and men) face more complex struggles because they are dealing with more “differences,” and therefore more barriers.



Signs of a heart attack are different for women!

Diane Skinner

The signs of a heart attack are quite different for women than men. We have all heard of men having heavy chest pain which can mean heart problems, but for women the signs are more varied, even subtle.

Difficulty breathing – If you feel a shortness of breath, even a feeling of gasping for air – not after doing a physical activity - this may be the signs of a possible heart attack.

Sweating – Many women who may have an impending heart attack begin to sweat – a lot. This can be a cold, clammy sweat but is not from a hot flash.

Exhaustion – An overwhelming and unexpected feeling of exhaustion may be a sign.

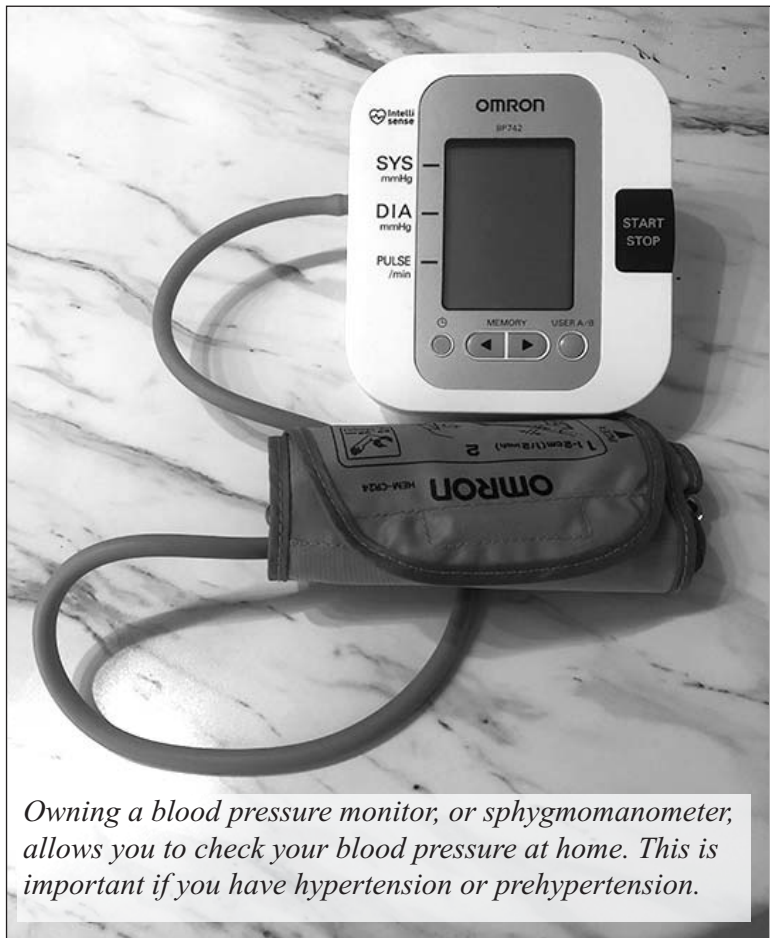
Stomach pain – Some women have only one sign of a possible heart attack – pain in the stomach.

Sharp pain - Men feel a weight on their chests, but it is common for women to feel a sharp pain in their upper body or an increasing dull pain in the jaw, upper arms and neck. Some women feel a tightness in their chest, not just on the left side.

Rapid heart rate – A very rapid heartbeat may be a sign of a heart attack.

Nausea – This can happen a few days before a heart attack and may include indigestion and diarrhea.

Arm pain - Not just the



Owning a blood pressure monitor, or sphygmomanometer, allows you to check your blood pressure at home. This is important if you have hypertension or prehypertension.

Photo: D. Skinner

left arm, women can feel pain in either arm.

Aches - You may feel aches and pains in any area close to your chest. This includes neck pain which can increase to feel like a burning feeling in your throat.

Light-headed – You may feel dizzy or even like you might pass out. This may be caused by reduced blood flow to the brain.

Janeway lesions – Though rare, it might be worth mentioning to your doctor. These are nodules, small swellings, on the palm of your hand or soles of your feet and can be a sign of “infective endocarditis.” This is

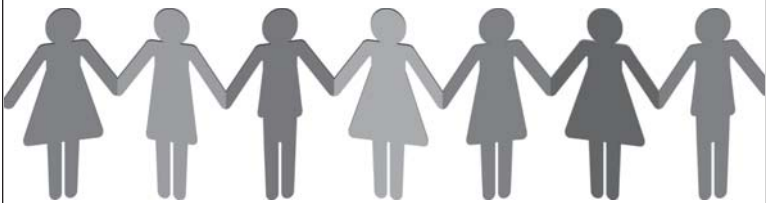
an infection of the inner surface of your heart, usually the valves. This could be a serious condition.

Take care of yourself – Make an appointment to ask questions about this issue if you are at all concerned. Quit smoking – a huge risk for heart attacks can be diminished quickly when you do. In fact, after one year, your risk of heart disease is cut by 50%. Start to exercise. Just 30 minutes a day of walking will lower your risk of heart attack and stroke. Change your diet to include more plant-based foods, reduce fats and use leaner cuts of meat.

Call 911

If you are concerned that you might be experiencing heart problems, call 911 and get medical help quickly, especially if these symptoms occur in combination.

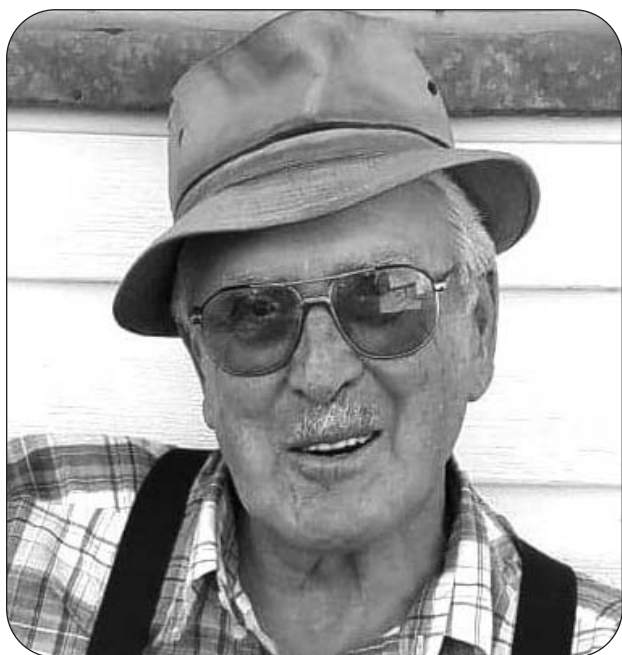
1. Pain in one or both arms, back, neck, jaw or stomach. It may feel very uncomfortable and definitely out of the ordinary.
2. Shortness of breath, not related to physical exertion.
3. Feelings such as nausea, cold sweat and dizziness.



Announcements...



Obituary



SAWYER: Garnett

The family of Garnett Sawyer is saddened to announce his passing on January 5, 2021, at the age of 88 years.

Garnett was predeceased by his parents Ben and Bertha; sisters: Audrey, Hannah, Eva, Ila and Hazel; and brothers: Reid and Ray. He is survived by his wife Helen (née Hall) of 54 years; sister Olive; sons: Aaron (Auramarina) and Derek (Karen); grandsons: Ben and Alexander; granddaughters: Isabella and Emily; and many nieces and nephews.

A private wake was held at the New Carlisle Funeral Parlour on Sunday, January 10, and funeral service at St. Andrews Anglican Church in New Carlisle on Monday, January 11. Interment will be at the St. Andrew's Anglican Church Cemetery.

The family would like to thank the staff of the CHSLD in New Carlisle for all of their care and support.



In Memory



FLOWERS: Pansy

In loving memory of a dear mother and grandmother, Pansy Flowers, 1930 - 2020.

It is always sad but comforting to silently recall

Your smile and dear familiar face,

So loved by one and all.

For the world may keep turning

And change from day to day

But precious memories of you will never fade away,

And here's hoping that this message,

Which carries so much love

Will somehow find its way to you

In heaven up above.

It's to let you know, dear mother,

That although you are at rest,

You will live forever in the hearts

Of those who loved you best.

It has been a little over a year since we lost you, but our love remains the same. The family.

Happy 67th Anniversary Two amazing people Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Flowers



Married - February 17, 1954

Wow!! Sixty-seven years! Not many reach this day. Sending all our love and best wishes as you celebrate another year of love and affection for one another. May your love continue to hold strong and grow with the passing of the ages. Another year has passed, and you continue to show the world that true love does exist.

Happy Anniversary, Mom and Dad

Love from your family

xxxxxxx

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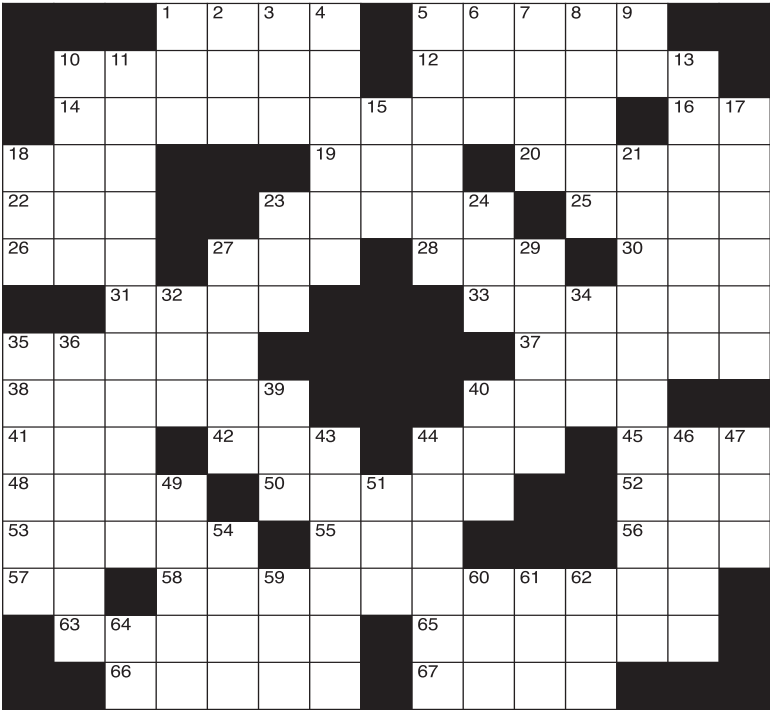
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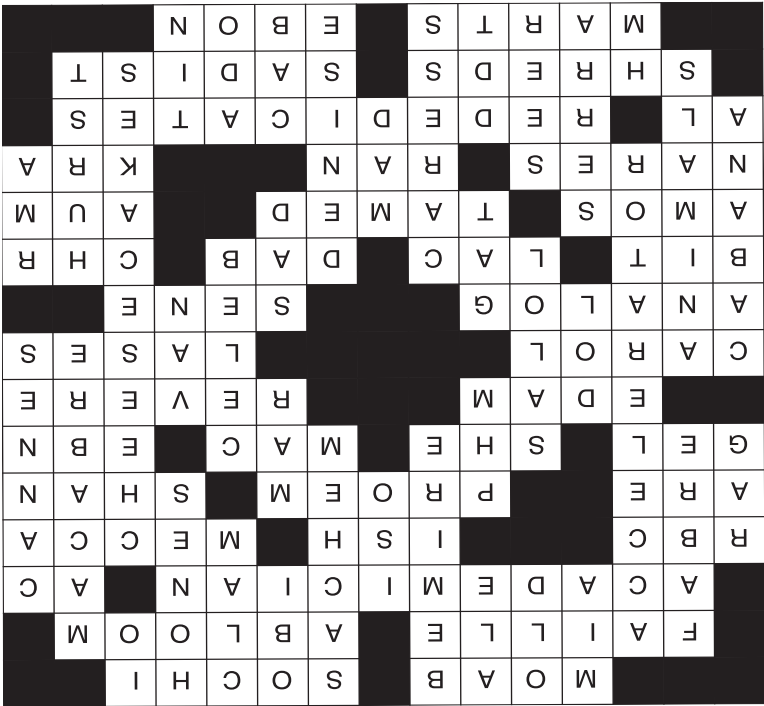
CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
- 5. 2014 Winter Olympics host
- 10. Soft fabric
- 12. Covered in flowers
- 14. Works at a college or university
- 16. Keeps us cool
- 18. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
- 19. Similar
- 20. Birthplace of Muhammad
- 22. They __
- 23. Preamble to a book
- 25. Southern China people
- 26. Hair product
- 27. The woman
- 28. Partner to cheese
- 30. One point north of due east
- 31. Round Dutch cheese
- 33. Be in awe of
- 35. Christmas song
- 37. Emits coherent radiation
- 38. Something that is comparable to another
- 40. Monetary unit
- 41. The cutting part of a drill
- 42. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects
- 44. Touch lightly
- 45. Toyota SUV
- 48. __ and Andy, TV show
- 50. Made less dangerous
- 52. Assets under management (abbr.)
- 53. Nostrils
- 55. Moved quickly
- 56. Thai isthmus
- 57. TV personality Roker
- 58. Honors anew
- 63. Rags
- 65. One who obtains pleasure from inflicting pain or others
- 66. Marketplaces

67. Dark brown or black

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Nowhere to be found (abbr.)
- 2. Not new
- 3. Brew
- 4. Stain with mud
- 5. Chief or leader
- 6. Luke Skywalker's mentor __-Wan
- 7. Type of sauce
- 8. Sharpens
- 9. Priestess loved by Zeus
- 10. Jean Henri __, French entomologist
- 11. Regulates supply of fuel
- 13. Disturbing and horrifying
- 15. Equal (prefix)
- 17. Hosts film festival
- 18. Tattered piece of clothing
- 21. Rich desserts
- 23. Unique motor (abbr.)
- 24. Disfigure
- 27. Chemical substance
- 29. Slang for famous person
- 32. Department of Labor
- 34. The A-team rode around in one
- 35. Beach cabin
- 36. Living things
- 39. Gun (slang)
- 40. Disconsolate
- 43. Stroke gently
- 44. Actress Richards
- 46. "Cletus Hogg" actor
- 47. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
- 49. Brazilian mountain range
- 51. Upset
- 54. One with supernatural insight
- 59. Insecticide
- 60. Taxi
- 61. "Much __ about nothing"



Why do we say...

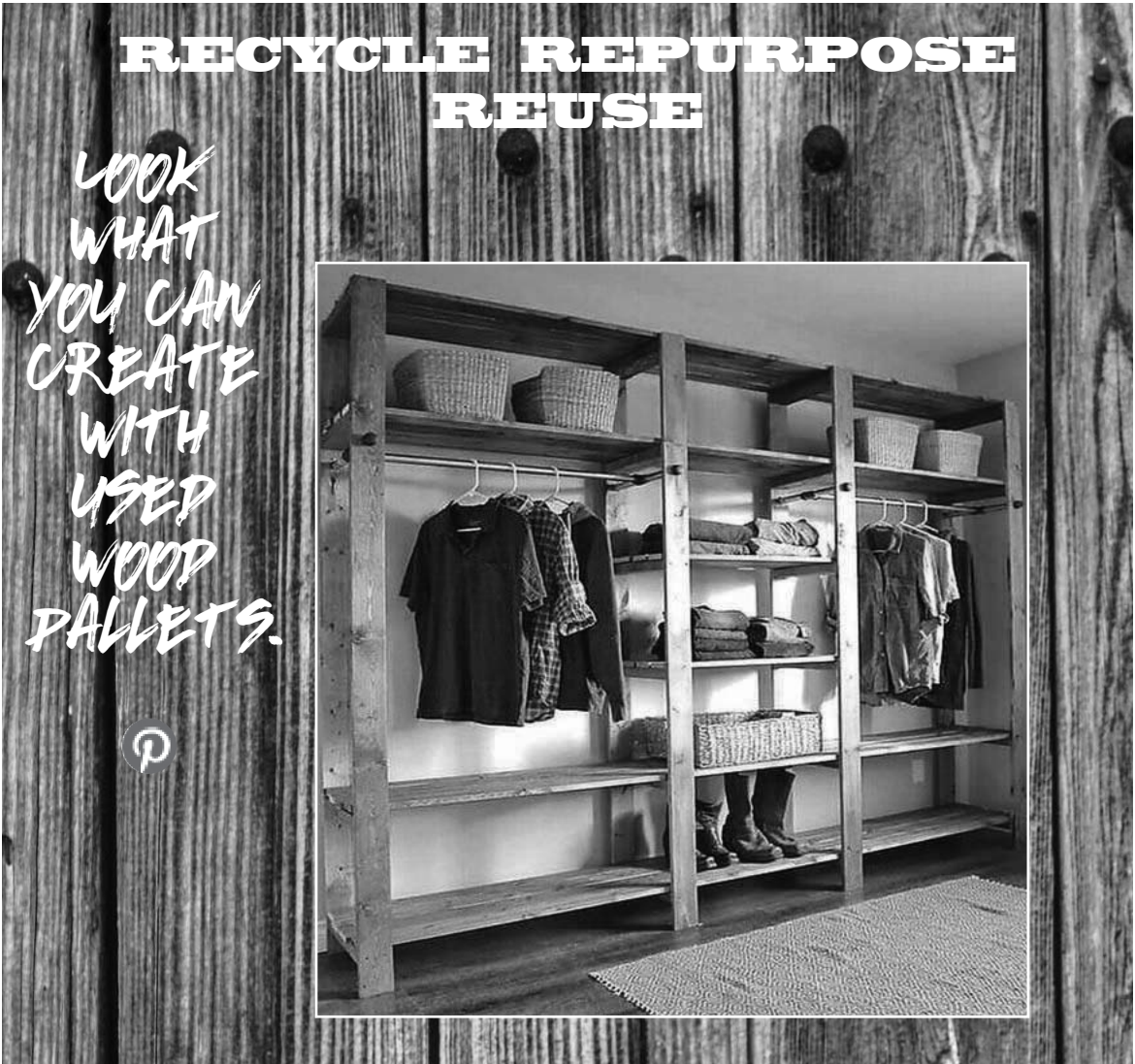
by Gary Briand

A friend from Bathurst asked me to give him a few of Shakespeare's original contributions to the English language. I sent him an abbreviated list of 58 words and phrases. For example, I took the word "inauspicious!" It has been remarked by several that no other English word has had a premiere as "inauspicious." In Romeo and Juliet, Romeo crys:

Here, here will I remain
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
From this world-wearied flesh

Shakespeare probably invented "inauspicious" as he did "auspicious" in The Tempest. Of course the word means favourable or leading to success. He took the words from the Latin "auspex," a word for the famed Roman bird watcher who deduced omens from the pattern of bird flights.

Was Shakespeare well versed in Latin? Many experts in English literature think so!



ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
Expect to be in high demand this week, Aries. You have the time and energy to give to others, so make the most of each chance to lend someone a helping hand.
TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
Now is a good time to focus on your relationships, Taurus. There may be a close friend who can use a little more attention from a confidante and you can fill that role.
GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21
There is work to be done, Gemini. If your work space is a tad chaotic, then hunker down somewhere less hectic. This can provide the right environment for focus.
CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, make a habit of finding the silver lining to any situation. This shift in attitude can bring more positivity and sunshine into your life, particularly when you need it most.
LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23
Shift your focus to your home life, Leo. Find various ways to make things more pleasant at home so it can be the respite that it should be.



VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
You are usually better at focusing on the tasks at hand than most other astrological signs, Virgo. Don't be hard on yourself if you get a tad distracted in the next few days.
LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Get a firm grasp on your finances this week, Libra. Start browsing your bank accounts so you have a better idea of your spending. This way you can better plan for the future.
SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
Normally you are very good at keeping your emotions in check, Scorpio. However, letting others see what's beneath the surface can be beneficial to you in the weeks to come.
SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
Take your foot off of the accelerator, Sagittarius. You don't have to race to the finish line; enjoy the scenery for a change. Stop as many times as you can along the way.
CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
Capricorn, no matter how much time

you want to devote to your personal goals, you just may find that other activities require much more attention than you anticipated.
AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
Aquarius, don't be surprised if you have your patience tested a bit this week, especially at the workplace. You'll find a way to come out shining, however.
PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Take a big, deep breath and focus on all the good things in your life, Pisces. This will help you ride out any rough spots that crop up.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS
FEBRUARY 28

Jason Aldean, Singer (44)

MARCH 1

Justin Bieber, Singer (27)

MARCH 2

Rebel Wilson, Actress (41)

MARCH 3

Camila Cabello, Singer (24)

MARCH 4

Catherine O'Hara, Actress (67)

MARCH 5

Taylor Hill, Model (25)

MARCH 6

Shaquille O'Neal, Athlete (49)

Mentoring:

Women encouraging other women



Diane Skinner

When women help other women, it can be a wonderful, inspiring, encouraging and helpful experience. It can lift us up or calm us down. These women can be family, friends, neighbours, classmates and fellow workers, and may become trusted advisors. Women in our lives who are there at just the right moment can be so important. Sometimes we do not realize their mentoring or advice came at that perfect time. This realization can come weeks or even years later. Girls, women, ladies, remember to pay it forward.

“My boss and mentor at the Gaspésie Literacy Council, Cheryl Henry, once told me to have confidence in myself. She encouraged me to believe in myself, that I could do hard things, and if I believed and acted like I could, I would be able to achieve it. Do not waste your time saying things like “I hope I can,” or “I think I can,” say “I can and I will.” It changed my perspective in both my personal and professional life.”

Chelsea Flowers

“I would like to recognize two women who mentored me years ago at Hopetown School. They were so important in my growth as an educator and advocate for children’s rights. They are Bertha Hayes, the Head Teacher and my boss; and Pat Hayes, my co-worker. Bertha was in charge and sometimes it was tough love, however, the well-being and best possible education for the students was always her priority. I never would have been given a chance with the School Board if not for Bertha. There were about 50 kids for kindergarten in the



Photo: Courtesy of Chelsea Flowers

Chelsea Flowers says her boss at the Gaspésie Literacy Council, Cheryl Henry, has helped her to change her perspective in both her personal and professional life.”

fall of 1978 and she informed the Board that we needed some help. I was hired the very next day, even though I had applied months before! Pat Hayes was the Special Education - Specialist and she was always so calm and caring. She challenged her students and the ones with difficulties excelled in her class. They learned so much more than the “3 Rs.” The most important thing about my years at Hopetown School was that we were a team. Everyone had the same goals and worked together. I learned so much.”

Lynda MacWhirter

“My mom, Joan Sawyer Imhoff, is the most incredible woman in my life. She is always there for me no matter what and I always need to hear her thoughts before making decisions both big and small. She taught me to be strong, independent and honest. She also taught me to

live in the moment and that it's okay to laugh at yourself. My mom is not only my role model but my best friend and I can't go a day without talking to her. I hope that one day, I will be lucky enough to share the same kind of bond with my daughter. Love you, Mom. Happy Women's Day!”

Heather Imhoff

“My mother was not a woman to give a lot of advice except to be honest and kind. She encouraged me to work on my strengths and expressed her pride when I did well. As a teenager I lacked self-esteem but my good friend, Natalie, did not. In our times spent together she encouraged me, gave me reasons to be proud of who I am and encouraged me to stand up and take hold of what I wanted in life. Today, I have a few good friends in my life who stand beside me, pray with me, and talk art and business with me. These

friends are complete opposites from one another but each share a common denominator with me. I am so grateful for the ladies in my life who encourage me and have helped me become who I am today. Thank you, ladies!”

Linda Drody

“After my film 'My Father's Tools' came out, a number of people encouraged me to keep going. One was Cynthia Dow who was so supportive and has offered to help me. The other woman I want to mention is Lisa Roth, from Rezolution Pictures, who I worked with during the filming of Gespe'gewagi: The Last Land. She is a producer and has always been truly supportive, looking out for me and encouraging me. Lisa also taught me many things on the set while making the series and was incredibly patient.”

Heather Condo

“I am fortunate to have had a close circle of women in my life, which included my mother, sisters and several good friends and I have learned that when we are going through challenges, a simple conversation with another female is often the best way to sort through our problems and find a solution. Sometimes we think that no one else will understand us, but I have learned that, as women, we are more the same than we are different. A supportive conversation can often inspire, encourage and motivate us to make positive changes in our lives. Another woman can often talk us through our fears, perceived limitations and remind us that we can and must do what is best for our own well-being.”

Mary Robertson

“When I think about women who have mentored me, I would have to say Jackie Rowan, the wife of Fair Haven Bible Camp's first director, impacted me as a teenager. She would say the tough things I needed to hear. When I found the work hard or unevenly distributed, she didn't make it easier. She would say, “You are just getting your rough edges smoothed off.” I really didn't appreciate her wisdom at the time and she didn't make things easier for me but she helped me to mature and build positive character traits. Thank you, Jackie. You were a great mentor to me.”

Rose McColm Roussy

“As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands - one for helping yourself, the other hand for helping others.”

Audrey Hepburn

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Continue to celebrate
Next year in person!



Diane Skinner

International Women’s Day, held on March 8 each year, is a day to celebrate and appreciate women. It can also be a day to examine what supports or changes may be needed to help lessen gender inequality.

Try this. Quickly, as fast as you can, name five famous people. How many were women? Most people will reply with all or mostly men’s names.

Many years ago, well over fifty, this riddle was going around.

“There’s a man and his son who get into a car crash. The father is killed and the son is rushed to the hospital. The surgeon on duty says, “I can’t treat this boy. He’s my son.” The riddle is “How can this be true?”

The answer, of course, is that the surgeon is the boy’s mother.

Fifty years ago, this riddle was quite difficult for people to solve because years ago there were so few women



Photo: Courtesy of Family Ties

Women’s Day celebrations of the past remind us that getting together with other women is an opportunity for a positive social event. In the photo above, left to right, are Jewell Roy, Donna Jiona, Diane Middleton, Leah Watt and in front Sharon Guignon and Loretta Noel showing off their fancy hats at a Little Black Dress Event held a few years ago in New Carlisle organized by Family Ties.

doctors.

Well, times have changed. More than half the graduating doctors in 2021 are female. Progress is happening.

Women have, and continue

to make huge contributions to society. For many years a woman’s worth was based on how many children she had and how well she baked and cleaned her home. This is a

valuable role in society and should never, ever be looked down on.

Many women today may balance a job and often the bigger share of child rearing

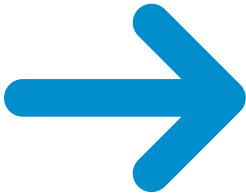
and household management. We are, because we have to be, multi-taskers. Men can do this too and many are very involved fathers as well. Times are slowly but surely changing.

On the Gaspé, it is encouraging to see so many capable women in positions of responsibility. Women are increasingly advocating for themselves and supporting each other. Everyone benefits in a world that is fair.

It remains important to celebrate Women’s Day. Local celebrations, but none this year thanks to COVID, are important because they provide an opportunity for women to get together at a positive social event.

International Women’s Day is about togetherness, reflection, advocacy, celebration and action. Next year let’s resume the spotlight at local Women’s Day celebrations – together and in person - and hope for a world where there is opportunity and respect for all people.

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