

ESSB teachers hold first strike of the spring

Gilles Gagné

SHIGAWAKE - PORT DANIEL – The teachers of the Eastern Shores School Board network held a strike on April 14, like the other teachers who are members of the unions affiliated with the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec*, including the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers. The strike was announced in advance and came more than a year after the end of the collective agreement between the teachers and the Quebec government.

Five days of strike have been voted for by the different unions of teachers in Quebec and the April 14 strike was the first one. Officially, it began at midnight and ended at 9:30 a.m.

Due to the pandemic, many Quebec schools, especially the ones located in larger cities, opted for virtual learning for the rest of that day if they were not already forced to do so. In the Gaspé Peninsula, because of the yellow colour code, most children were picked up by their school bus 90 minutes later than usual.

Eastern Shores Teachers Union president, Gillian O'Rourke-Garrett, points out that the "main points in the negotiations haven't changed" over recent months.

"However that being said, the level of anger and frustration amongst teachers has increased exponentially. Teachers are tired of their health and safety being constantly ignored. Students are not getting the support that they deserve, both in terms of special needs students and students who are catching up because of being out of school all of last spring. Throughout the pandemic, teachers have been expected to be in class, ensuring that everyone is following sanitary measures all the time, dealing with constantly changing rules and a tremendous lack of personnel and services for students, all the while working for over a year without a contract. Enough is enough!" she deploras.

Several teachers who met

along the April 14 picket lines are also frustrated by the so-called five-hour issue, a period of time the Department of Education is trying to get control of.

"The five-hour issue is that currently teachers have five hours a week built into their timetables of personal work, which generally consists of planning and marking. Teachers also choose where the five-hour period is placed on their timetables. The government wants to remove those five hours and make the time assigned time, meaning that the administration decides what is done during that time and also where it is placed on teachers timetables. What that means is potentially the five hours can be filled with meetings and administrative tasks and teachers will be left doing all of their planning and marking on their own time, in the evenings or on weekends," explains Gillian O'Rourke Garrett.

Money-wise, she feels that the request made by the teachers' representatives during the negotiations is very reasonable.

"Our salary demand is 6% over three years. Currently, Quebec teachers are the lowest paid teachers in Canada and it takes up to 15 years to reach the top of the salary scale. Teachers' salaries are not currently keeping up with inflation," she points out.

Mrs. O'Rourke Garrett and the teachers who met during the strike were encouraged by the reaction of the public.

"We had a lot of support from colleagues, parents and the general public. There was little to no negative comments or feedback. Teachers were really encouraged at the huge show of support," she concludes.

Meanwhile, a second strike of the 73,000 teachers represented by the CSQ will take place on April 27. The walkout will take place from 2:45 p.m. to 5 p.m. that day. Those 73,000 teachers work in 58 French-language school service centers or English-language school boards in preschool, elementary, secondary and vocational training.



Shigawake-Port Daniel School

Photo: G. Gagné



New Carlisle High School

Photo: G. Gagné



New Richmond High School

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Gaspé Elementary School

Photo: N. Sergerie

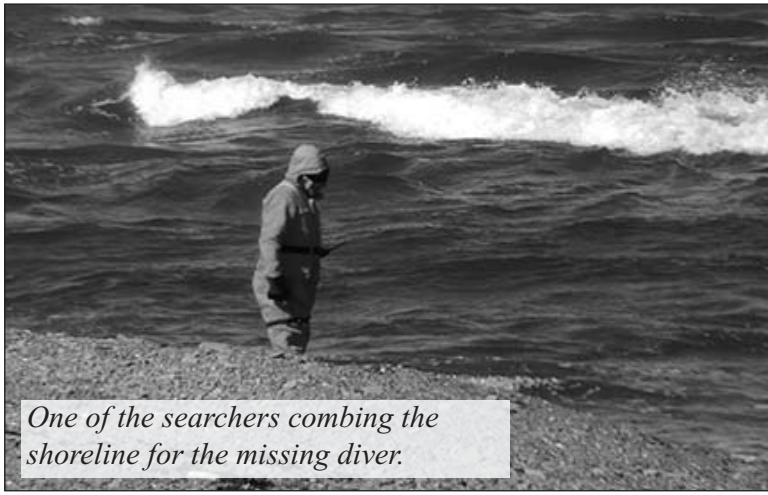
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Police report



One of the searchers combing the shoreline for the missing diver.

Photo: N. Sergerie

On April 11 at 4:30 p.m., a snorkeler from Gaspé was found dead in the Rivière-au-Renard area, 20 kilometres east of where he was last seen two days earlier, in the water near a friend's house in Anse-à-Valleau. Sûreté du Québec received an emergency call at 7 p.m. on April 9. The search was minimal that evening because of the darkness. On April 10, the Canadian Coast Guard search and rescue boat came near the location where the victim, René Gagnon, aged 53, living in nearby Petit-Cap, was last seen, however, shallow waters prevented the search from progressing with the Coast Guard boat. The Sûreté du Québec helicopter and its crew joined the search in mid-afternoon and that operation was not conclusive.

"All-terrain vehicles for the shoreline search, scuba divers of the SQ and the firefighters all contributed to the search. The Sûreté du Québec established a temporary base in L'Anse-à-Valleau during the operation," pointed out Hélène Nepton, spokesperson of the police force. The search operation resumed the following morning and the helicopter crew then located Mr. Gagnon on the Rivière-au-Renard shore. An autopsy will be performed on the body in order to determine the cause of death. Even if drowning is the likely cause, he could also have suffered from a stroke.

Mathieu Bélanger, 39, from Saint-Omer died at the Maria Hospital during the night of April 10 to 11, several hours after being rescued from the waters of the Bay of Chaleur. He and four friends had left the Miguasha East shore to go fishing. Three men were in one boat, while the victim and another man were in other boat. A strong southeast wind was blowing that Saturday afternoon on the Bay of Chaleur and the waves likely caused the boat with the victim and his friend to capsized.

"A friend from the other boat dove in the water to help them. At first, outside assistance came from the firefighters, and they were able to rescue the group. Two men were sent to the hospital, including the victim. We feared for his life when he was hospitalized. The second man was sent to the hospital as a precautionary measure," explained Hélène Nepton, spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec.

Isaac Moffat-Swason, 30, from Listuguj is charged with armed robbery, forcible confinement and uttering three death threats. He will return to the New Carlisle courthouse on September 9. He should find out at this time when the trials will be conducted. He last appeared in court on April 8. The case was delayed over five additional months because the attorney representing him, Marcel Guérin, had died on April 6 in Sorel. Isaac Moffat-Swason will now be represented by Reginal Victorin, who was working with attorney Guérin. "Time is given to attorney Victorin so he can get familiar with the evidence and the other aspects of the case," points out Crown Prosecutor Florence Frappier-Routhier.

The accused spent most of 2020 looking for an attorney. In December, he finally informed Superior Court Judge Raymond W. Pronovost that he had found a lawyer. The above-mentioned charges laid against Isaac Moffat-Swason are linked to events that occurred on February 21, 2019, in Listuguj. Initially, the trial in that case was supposed to take place in December 2020 but it was repeatedly postponed because the accused could not find a lawyer.

Isaac Moffat-Swason also faces numerous charges in another case involving the April 30, 2019, damage he allegedly caused at the New Carlisle prison. He presumably broke a toilet bowl, a sink, pipes, electronic devices and other prison equipment. A wing of the prison was closed following those actions. Reginal Victorin will represent him in that case as well and the date of that second trial will also likely be set on September 9.

Snow crab price reaches historical record at \$7.50 per pound

Gilles Gagné

PASPEBIAC – The scarcity of snow crab this spring propels its landing price to record levels since the beginning of the season in the Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence. The starting price of the season was already set at a record level of \$5.75 on April 2 when the fishermen began fishing but 10 days later, they were already receiving as much as \$7.50 per pound from most processing plants.

Bill Sheehan, vice-president of E. Gagnon et Fils, the largest buyer of snow crab in the Gaspé Peninsula, points out that most plants have no choice but to follow the upward move, if they want any supply. The rising price is also being paid by the plants located in the Saint Lawrence estuary, where a high price was given right from the first day of fishing there, on March 24.

"We pay \$7 per pound for the boats equipped with an ice-filled hold and \$7.50 for those equipped with a water-filled hold. (...) It is not surprising to see a price adjustment so early in the season even if it is unusual in crab fishing. The previous record was \$5.75 per pound in 2019, which we matched at the beginning of the season. So, at \$7 and \$7.50 like now, the price is a historical record. The market takes it well and I wouldn't even be surprised to see another price hike but we must be careful. We fear a backward move. We must remember that the snow crab business is not like the lobster business, where the price moves up and down as the season progresses. In snow crab, we set a minimum price and it is adjusted upwards at the end of the season. It is not the case this year," explains Bill Sheehan.

He hesitates a bit before calling the current situation a price war but he concedes that "certain fishermen are wandering, shopping for a price but they don't want to be stuck with their crab in the boat. The plants are operating, the landings are good and we must keep up with the price even if we have to reduce our (profit) margins. That's why I am saying that I would not be surprised to see another increase in the price paid to the fishermen," adds Mr. Sheehan.

If the price is so high, it is essentially because the international buyers, mainly American wholesale companies, want to make sure that they will get sufficient crab supplies to satisfy their customers. Another



The landing price of snow crab is reaching record levels early in the season.

Photo: G. Gagné

factor is the lesser degree of uncertainty compared to last year at the same time, he stresses.

"The 'pipeline' is completely empty. (...) There is a market that wasn't there last year. In the United States, the restaurants are all open this year. The cruise ship operators want to resume their operation over the month of June. They must get supplies now because otherwise, it will be impossible," says Mr. Sheehan.

While Quebec crab fishermen are experiencing a quota reduction in most zones this year, including a 26% cut in the Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence, the Newfoundland contingents are increasing enough to counterbalance the cuts in Quebec and the rest of Atlantic Canada, however, Newfoundland products are reaching the markets late due to poor weather, so the scarcity of products remains.

For Gaspésians who love snow crab, buying the beloved

shellfish is quite expensive, as two sections often cost as much as \$25 or \$30.

"We have seen that in Quebec, those prices are hardly appealing. The consumers are starting to find it exorbitant. We are also working with a currency that doesn't help as well. The exchange rate is hovering around \$1.25 (CAN/US). It is presently stable. It is 10 to 12 points less than last year but it (this year's rate) is still not an advantage for Canadians. Our enterprise expects to sell less on the domestic market this year," notes Bill Sheehan.

An average price of \$7 to \$7.50 per pound this year would bring in about \$100 million to the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands crab fishermen in the Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence. That number excludes the landings of Gaspésians fishing snow crab in the Saint Lawrence estuary and the added value provided by the processing plants.

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COVID-19 cases increase in the region without getting out of control

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – The number of active COVID-19 cases increased noticeably during the week of April 9 to 16 in the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, from 14 cases on April 9 to 37 on April 16. The situation was fuelled by 43 new cases reported by the region's Public Health Board, compared to 14 during the previous week.

The Public Health Board started reporting statistics on the number of confirmed or alleged variant cases in the region on April 13. As of April 16, the number of variant cases was 19,

and on April 16, there was one new hospitalization.

Geographically, the Percé Rock MRC was by far the most infected area of the region on April 16, with 19 active cases, compared to 8 in the Avignon MRC. That left 10 active cases for the MRCs of Bonaventure, Côte-de-Gaspé and Haute-Gaspésie, and for the Magdalen Islands, each of which had less than 5 cases. Incidentally, the Avignon and Percé Rock MRCs were the only areas where the *Centre de services scolaires René-Lévesque* reported active cases in schools. Two cases were each reported since Easter

in the Saint-Omer, Cap d'Espoir and Pabos elementary schools, however, the Sainte-Marie School (Cap d'Espoir) and the Saint-Paul School (Pabos) were the only ones closed for three days, due to the necessity of completing the epidemiological investigations. Classes were also suspended for two days at the Bon-Pasteur Elementary School in Grand River due to a staff shortage. One classroom of the Sainte-Marie School will remain closed for 14 days, until April 26.

Meanwhile, the Public Health Board reported on April 15 that the COVID laboratory

division of the Chandler hospital will be closed temporarily, and the coronavirus analyses are being carried out in Maria and Gaspé in the meantime.

The COVID sampling centre in Chandler remains. Public Health Board spokesperson Jean Morin explained that the "the laboratory was giving too many false positive tests, between 15 and 18, so it required adjustment and equipment verification. The laboratory remains open for all the other types of tests."

In Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé, Mexican workers due to start crab processing duties on April 5 at the E. Gagnon et Fils plant

finally received the green light from Public Health on April 15, says company vice-president Bill Sheehan. Two workers out of 40 had received a positive test upon their arrival in the region, after receiving three negative tests during their stay in Montreal.

As of April 12, the proportion of Gaspésians and Magdalen Islanders that had received their first COVID vaccination reached 34.5%, compared to 22.5% in Quebec. The proportion of vaccinated people in the Magdalen Islands was 75.1% that day, compared to 28% in the Gaspé Peninsula.

Editorial section

Gilles Gagné

Commentary



Mathematical illiteracy, sheer stubbornness or willful blindness?

The Quebec and Canadian governments are currently insisting on people getting vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus, no matter which vaccine is used. They notably put emphasis on the AstraZeneca product, much-maligned in certain European countries. Denmark even stopped the distribution of that vaccine, invoking thrombosis problems, or blood clots, that could be triggered by the product.

On the other hand, the AstraZeneca vaccine has been widely distributed in Great Britain, with fairly satisfying results, considering that an increasing range of activities is emerging again in that country.

A sizeable proportion of the population is quickly finding flaws in the AstraZeneca vaccine. Its efficiency level to prevent people from being infected with the coronavirus is lower than the Pfizer and Moderna products. It is rather hard to put numbers on those efficiency levels because they are moving targets. As more people get vaccinated, the efficiency rates are adjusted.

The AstraZeneca efficiency rate, believed to be around 65% at first, is slowly increasing. So is the efficiency rate of the other products. Some people are also confused by the different meanings attached to the efficiency rate. By and large, it means the risk of being infected by the COVID-19.

So far, the AstraZeneca vaccine prevents people from dying from the coronavirus as efficiently as the other products. A person vaccinated with that product will be not be as sick as another person having refused it, assuming that both will be infected and get sick. Vaccines also prevent infected people from being sick.

The AstraZeneca, like the other products, reduces the viral attack of the virus. It means that vaccinated people can still be contagious but to a much lesser extent than non-vaccinated people. That can save lives too.

The arithmetic side of vaccines also represents

valuable food for thought for the people hesitating or flat out refusing to be vaccinated.

There are close to 8.6 million living in Quebec right now. As of April 15, the official number of fatalities caused by the coronavirus was 10,778 people. In addition to that, 332,544 people tested positive for COVID-19 since March 2020.

It means that one Quebecer out of 798 died of COVID in 13 months. It also means that every 26th Quebecer received a positive COVID-19 test. Somewhere between those 26 and 798 numbers, a significant number of Quebecers were very sick and will deal with long term, sometimes permanent damage.

Add to the equation the fact that the battle is far from over. Hundreds more Quebecers will likely die of COVID-19 in the coming months or year. Tens of thousands will receive a positive test, and thousands will be very sick, either at home or in hospitals.

If that is not enough, add the exhaustion and stress experienced by the health sector employees. They have been highly solicited for years, they have lived through the rounds of budgetary cuts of the 2014-2017 Couillard government austerity measures and they had not recovered from that highly demanding period when the COVID crisis started.

They were forced to work in an environment ill-prepared and ill-equipped to deal with a pandemic. Now, despite the fact that a minority of health sector employees are not too keen on being vaccinated, most of them rightfully entertain hopes that the public's adherence to the vaccines will be almost unanimous. Health sector employees need that break.

At the beginning of April's first week, close to 500,000 AstraZeneca vaccines, 480,000 to be accurate, had been given to Canadians. Nobody had died and only one case of thrombosis complications had been diagnosed. The person was treated and is recuperating to everyone's satisfaction. The number of fatalities was still zero at the time. Moreover, the direct link between the AstraZeneca vaccine and that patient remained to be proven. Thrombosis cases happen in real life, whether they are triggered by vaccines or not.

Dr. Supriya Sharma is chief medical adviser at Health Canada. He manages the regulation of the COVID-19 vaccines. He recently told CTV News that "the risk of... regular clots with COVID is much, much, much higher," than getting clots from the AstraZeneca vaccine.

He also stresses that blood clots are also much riskier when taking certain medications, including birth control pills. About one in 1,600 patients on that pill will develop a clot.

Overall, the clotting syndrome is often called VIPIT, the short way of saying vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia, which occurs when the body's immune system begins to attack blood platelets, leading to clots. It is treatable.

Dr. Sharma explains that COVID-19-caused clots are not the same as those caused by VIPIT, but one in five patients hospitalized with COVID-19 will develop a clot. The risks increase for patients who end up in critical care, as one in three will develop a clot.

It is reasonable to assume that out of the 10,778 Quebecers that have died of COVID-19, hundreds, maybe a few thousands, suffered and died from blood clots. You can more than double that number if you prefer the larger Canadian context, as 24,439 people had died of the coronavirus as of April 15.

There are 2.3 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine that will be distributed in the coming weeks in Canada. The sooner they will be given to people, the higher the number of lives that will be saved. Considering that Moderna will deliver fewer vaccines than expected before the end of June, about 650,000 instead of 1.2 million doses, and given the conservation constraints tied to the Pfizer product, vaccine pickiness is ill-advised.

One must wonder if the people refusing the AstraZeneca vaccine are acting out of mathematical illiteracy, sheer stubbornness or willful blindness. That too should be food for thought.

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PERCÉ:

Lots of enthusiasm for the future “green” commercial street

Nelson **Sergerie**

PERCÉ - Percé wants to innovate by launching a commercial street project in the heart of the village that will be asphalted with a mixture containing recycled plastic bags.

Since 2019, the Town has been working in partnership with the *Régie intermunicipale de traitement des matières résiduelles de la Gaspésie* (RITMRG). In partnership with Consulchem, *École de technologie supérieure* and Université Laval, the RITMRG is responsible for developing the innovative formula for the asphalt.

With the revaluation of these plastics difficult to liquidate on the market, the construction planned in 2022 with this mixture should generate savings of 8% says the general management

As for what type of business will be located on the new commercial street, Percé Mayor Cathy Poirier explains: “We are still in the process of determining the costs. We may not accept all projects. For sure, there will be extra points for a year-round business. We want diversification, complementary services to what is currently of-



The future Commercial Street in Percé.

Photo : Courtesy of the Town of Percé

fered and there will be additional points if the second floor is transformed into housing.” There is a considerable lack of housing both in the Town and in the Rocher-Percé MRC. Workers cannot come and settle in the tourist capital due to this major shortage.

The project is stirring quite a bit of enthusiasm as no less than 200 requests for information were made to the municipality. “Probably not that the 200 will apply, but there's a lot of interest in it. We are very satisfied,” says Ms. Poirier.

The new street must largely be self-financing through the sale of land. Government grants

will be requested to complete the financial package.

“Everything will be done along the way with the share of land and the share of subsidies. We will have time to build the financial structure. Precisely, we cannot mention it right away,” adds the mayor, who cannot specify the cost of building the street.

By combining the construction of the street and the establishment of businesses, the investments could generate spinoffs of \$5 million.

Percé is on a roll. After the worldwide recognition of the Percé Geopark in 2018, and the reconstruction of the Percé

walking path at a cost of \$40 million, the municipality is working on a Convention Centre by converting the Saint-Michel Church and establishing

a school of permaculture and innovative agriculture to continue its momentum.

The Town relies on its tourist reputation with approximately 500,000 visitors annually generating spinoffs of \$130 million to attract future investors.

A first draft rejected

In November 2016, a first attempt to revitalize the street that connects the Geopark to Route 132 had caused chaos in the municipality.

The rejection by referendum of 953 votes to 745 of a \$1.8 million-project had prompted the resignation of Mayor André Boudreau and five councillors in addition to the town being placed under supervision by the province.

Sharp increase in the unemployment rate in March

Nelson *Sergerie*

GASPÉ - An increase in the number of people entering the job market has inflated the unemployment rate by more than 2% in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands. The rate stood at 15.5% in March, compared to 13.4% in February. The labour force increased by 1,100 people last month, increasing the rate.

Even though 200 jobs were created last month, there are an additional 900 people unemployed in the region. Of these jobs, Statistics Canada notes a loss of 300 full-time positions, partially offset by the creation of 550 part-time jobs.

29,400 workers were employed last month, 1,900 less than March 2020, at the very start of the pandemic.

Lobster season underway between Cape Gaspé and Bonaventure

Nelson *Sergerie*

SAINT-GODEFROI – The lobster season is now underway in the largest portion of the Gaspé Peninsula. The April 21 start for fishermen located between Cape Gaspé and Bonaventure East is 18 days earlier than in 2020, when the beginning of the season was marred by pandemic uncertainty.

While last year's catches were very good in the Gaspé Peninsula, the price fell by close to 25% compared to that of 2019, going from \$6.78 per pound two years ago to \$5.16 last year. A volume of 2,963 metric tons were caught by Gaspesian lobster fishermen in 2020, including 871 tons from Anticosti Island, where the fishermen are essentially from the Gaspé Peninsula.

While the buyers have not openly discussed what the price will likely be, most assume there will be a sharp increase. A few fishermen, who did not want to be quoted directly said they wouldn't be surprised if the initial price hit \$8 per pound, since the season won't start until April 30 in Northern New Brunswick and May 9 in the Magdalen Islands.

It means that the Gaspé Peninsula lobster will be the only lobster on the Quebec market for at least 10 days, given that it takes a few days for products from New Brunswick and the Magdalen Islands to reach Montreal or Quebec City. The inventories are also low in the United States.

When met on the Saint-Godefroi wharf on April 14, Shigawake fisherman Jeffrey Vautier had heard very little about the lobster price then. He was essentially fuming over the Fisheries and Oceans Canada decision to launch spring herring fishing on April 19 in the Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence. “That leaves us only two days to get our bait before the start of lobster fishing. It is not enough. Forget it. Once more, Fisheries and Oceans Canada disadvantages the Gaspé Peninsula fishermen. For example, New Brunswick lobster fishermen only start their season on April 30. It means that they have nine more days to catch herring. We (Gaspé Peninsula herring fishermen) decided to quit the herring committee meeting,” explains Mr. Vautier.

Catching their own herring proves advantageous for the lobster fishermen because it reduces their operating costs and secures their bait supply. A rising proportion of the bait used by the Gaspesian fishermen is now imported.



Ottawa supports several winter tourism projects

Nelson *Sergerie*

GASPÉ - Seven projects aimed at developing winter tourism in the Gaspé are receiving \$915,000 from Ottawa.

Chic-Chac in Murdochville will receive the largest sum of \$266,000 for the development of a church which will be converted into a central pavilion. Over the years, the organization has specialized in off-course skiing in particular and is helping to revitalize the former mining town.

The Marquis de Malauze Snowmobile Club in Matapedia is getting \$220,560 and the As de la motoneige in Cloridorme will receive \$222,300.

“We will have access to a new, efficient, larger groomer, which consumes less. The club can also use its financial resources to improve safety on its trails,” states its president, Germain Leblanc.

The Camp de base de Coin-du-Banc will receive \$165,000, the Entrepôt de l'Anse-au-Griffon committee (\$15,600), the Éclairs de Gaspé cross-country ski club (\$13,220) and Gaspesia Events (\$12,240).

The funds for the Camp de Base Coin-du-Banc and CHIC-CHAC projects were granted under the Quebec Economic Development Program of Economic Development Canada. This program aims to help communities seize promising development and economic diversification opportunities.

Funds for the “Les Éclairs” cross-country ski club in Gaspé, and the Entrepôt de l'Anse-au-Griffon committee, Gaspesia events, the As de la motoneige and the Club sportif Marquis de Malauze were granted under the Winter Tourism Initiative, intended to increase the popularity of winter sports and activities on trails and resulting in economic spinoffs.

The funding allows organizations to acquire equipment and maintain activities related to the safe maintenance of cross-country ski, snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle trails. Investments total \$2.8 million.

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.

Québec.ca/COVIDvaccine

1 877 644-4545

Bonaventure River ZEC changes plan regarding users' fees for autonomous excursionists and daily quotas

Gilles Gagné

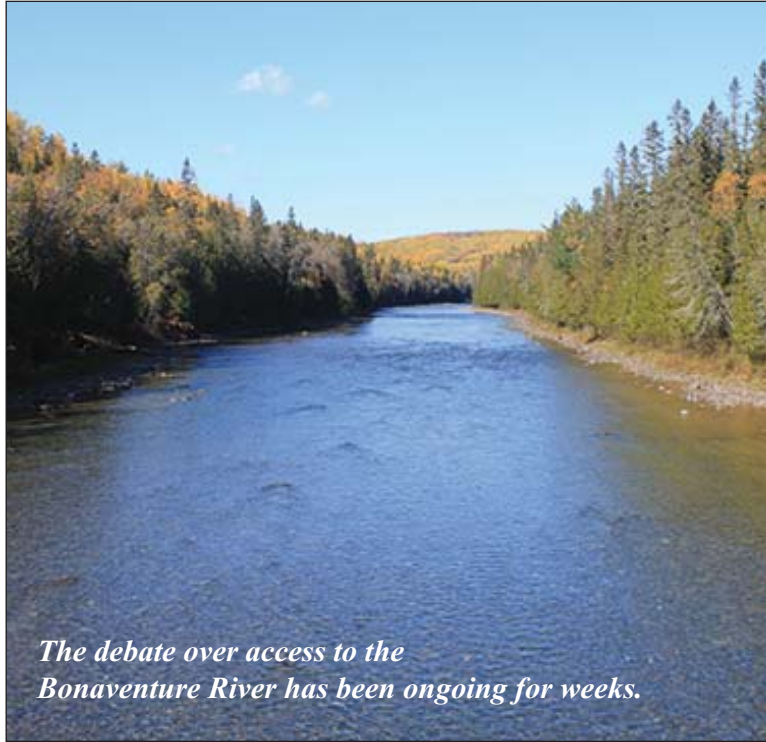
BONAVENTURE: - The Bonaventure River ZEC has changed its initial strategy regarding the possibility of charging user fees to those wanting to go down the river in canoes, kayaks and paddle boards. Those autonomous paddlers won't have to pay.

The river management has also decided not to impose daily quotas to those autonomous excursionists, something that was included in the initial development plan submitted on March 26 to the Quebec Department of Forest, Wildlife and Parks. All those measures will be subjected to the approval of that department before being enforced.

On April 7, the ZEC had announced that the development plan, called PDAR for *Plan de développement des activités récréatives*, was proposing a \$12 daily fee to all canoeists, kayakers and paddle boarders, whether they were using the services of a commercial business, namely Cime Aventures, or organizing their own excursion.

On April 14, the morning before a scheduled online public meeting, the ZEC management announced changes in the plan tabled on March 27, referred to as "an evolutive process" by its president, André Hébert. He explained the changes as a will to adapt to the public's expectations.

A debate between different groups of Bonaventure River users has been ongoing for



The debate over access to the Bonaventure River has been ongoing for weeks.

Photo: G. Gagné

years but it has intensified since December 2020, as the ZEC initiated meetings pertaining to the development plan the organization then wanted to submit to Quebec's Department of Forest, Wildlife and Parks.

The daily quota on the number of boats that would be accepted on the river and the \$12 user fee raised much controversy. Opposition came from not only Cime Aventures, the company which offers excursions and a campground, but also from other users not connected to that company, including property, home and cottage owners along the river.

At the other end of the spectrum, the ZEC, which represents sports fishermen, some of the other property owners are of the view that the river has reached its sustainable capacity, especially in 2020, as the

Gaspé Peninsula became a magnet for nature hungry tourists.

The debate has been intense to the point that many knowledgeable people don't want to comment on the file, for fear of being targeted by the partisans of the two main movements, or both.

Cime Aventures director general, Élodie Brideau, thinks that the ZEC position boils down to a return to the "privatization of the river and to a limited public access to it."

The ZEC's position regarding the imposition of 100-boat and 150-people daily limits would mean a 75% reduction in clientele for Cime, affirms Ms. Brideau. ZEC president André Hébert is talking about a cut of a little over 60%.

Élodie Brideau stresses that there is no study proving that the river has reached its capac-

ity and that a continuation of the current boat traffic would jeopardize the environment. In fact, she blames the ZEC for interrupting a study pertaining to those questions. The study was conducted by a neutral entity.

André Hébert cites a *Conseil de l'eau Gaspésie sud* (Southern Gaspé Water Council) observation to the effect that the aquatic enthusiasts on the Bonaventure River have already noticed deterioration in the quality and clarity of the river's water.

A quiet meeting

The April 14 citizens' meeting on the development plan lasted two-and-a-half hours and attracted, at one point, 235 online viewers. Moderator Carol Cotton informed the audience that he wanted respectful interactions.

About 20 people asked questions after the presentation of the development plan by the ZEC. They mainly took advantage of the platform to clarify certain questions, for example, the reasons for choosing 22 of the river's 98 pools and imposing a swimming ban there, or the way in which registration will be controlled. A few comments were also heard without questions being asked.

"I don't see how anyone could complain about the (price of) \$12 for the commercial business. (...) I think that over the years, the contribution of fishermen has been in the millions to preserve the river,"

commented sports fisherman Rusty Ouellet.

Dan Henry, a resident of Bonaventure, criticized the process that led to the citizens' meeting. "I still find that the information has been very controlled and (divulged) little by little."

Another Bonaventure resident, Pier-Luc Bujold, remarked along the same lines that "there was no broad-spectrum consultation before today," he deplored.

"I find that the exercise allows us to understand, and I think that it is important and that it is a (first) step, that the problem goes beyond the opposition between the fishermen and the other users of the river," remarked Annie Arseneault, who uses the river as a canoeist, swimmer and sports fisherwoman.

Another participant, Christophe Rabin, stressed the importance of banning motorized boats on the river, something that is currently not part of the plan, he underlined.

Compulsory registration will be voted on on April 27 at the ZEC's annual general meeting. The ZEC management hopes the Department of Forest, Wildlife and Parks will approve the plan by June 1, when the Atlantic salmon fishing opens.

Élodie Brideau denounces the "improvisation shown by the ZEC in the preparation of the development plan" and hopes that the plan will not be approved as it is by the Quebec government.

A new air carrier in Gaspé

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - After talks three years ago, Pal Airlines is moving to Gaspé on May 31. Mayor Daniel Côté is pleased to see his town appear in the company's Atlantic Canada expansion plan.

The elected official hopes that air transport will resume once the population is vaccinated. "It is probably not for nothing that these private companies are positioning themselves on the Gaspé market," believes Mr. Côté.

The carrier would operate a basic service to Quebec and Montreal. Other connections might be possible.

Surprise for Pascan

Pascan, which has been in Gaspé since August 2020 as a

replacement for Air Canada, is surprised. "On average, we have two, three or four passengers a day. I don't know what will happen, but at some airports there will be more planes than passengers to board," explains co-owner Yani Gagnon.

"It's a new competitor on the scene, but once again, it is the laws of the free market that govern," replied Daniel Côté.

The ghost of Air Canada

Member of Parliament Minister Diane Lebouthillier is saddened that Air Canada will not serve Gaspé directly, despite the \$6 billion in assistance from Ottawa.

The elected official for the Gaspé Peninsula and Mag-

dalen Islands even believes that the people of Gaspé are not ready to see the business return anytime soon.

Air Canada wants to subcontract its services to Gaspé and Pascan would be a serious candidate for the national carrier. The member will make sure that the connections with the network are made.

"They must commit to having interline agreements so that a person who leaves Gaspé can go anywhere, that the small company can do business with Air Canada and that the baggage follows," says the Ms. Lebouthillier.

Ms. Lebouthillier argues that a sum of 59.2 million is planned by Ottawa for Quebec to promote, among other things, the implementation of

improved services, modernizing facilities and the operating expenses of regional airports. A federal announcement was made in March.

Asked why a share of the \$6 billion for Air Canada would not be paid to carriers who will be subcontractors in Quebec, Ms. Lebouthillier evaded the question.

In the past, Air Canada has tried to break down competition by lowering prices, but the member talks about the principle of free competition.

What is important for her is that the population is well served both in terms of prices and in terms of service.

The Quebec plan

The Parti Québécois demands that the CAQ govern-

ment unveils its plan for air transport.

While the agreement between Ottawa and Air Canada excludes Quebec, PQ transport spokesperson Joël Arseneau wants to know Ottawa's share for regional carriers in Quebec.

The elected representative from Magdalen Islands stressed that the Quebec plan is still pending, although its presentation was expected in January. "What is his vision for a new model of regional air transport service that he has often called crucial, like us? Now is the time to take action. We don't necessarily want Air Canada to come back, but if it's not there, how will the regions be served?" asks Mr. Arseneau.

Tragic air crash, 1942

Diane Skinner

On April 21, 1942, a military plane crashed in a field in New Carlisle. The residents were used to seeing military planes pass over from time to time but they knew that something was not right this particular evening. The plane kept circling and the occupants were dropping flares. This was an unusual occurrence. Some citizens attempted to help the plane which was clearly in distress. A few people put out flares of their own along the beach and others waved lighted flares to let the pilot know where the beach was. The citizens of the town quickly figured out that a soft landing might be possible on the sand.

A number of people were concerned that the plane would hit the 430-foot-tall transmission tower for the CHNC radio station. Also, the town had a number of churches with tall steeples so this was a concern as well. There is no way to know if the pilot saw the efforts of the townspeople, but they all knew when the plane crashed.

The plane was a Lockheed Hudson Bomber, a plane that was produced from 1938-1943. It was an American-built light bomber used for coastal reconnaissance. That refers to military observation of a region to locate an enemy or gain intelligence. They were also used for transporting personnel and delivering



MARRIED THREE MONTHS, KILLED IN CRASH
Sergeant Robert Kember, 22, was married three months ago, on graduating from Mountain View bombing and gunnery school. Sergeant and Mrs. Kember are seen here. Tuesday he was killed in the crash of a twin-engine Hudson bomber. Killed, too, was Squadron Leader Joseph T. Gutraj, also of Toronto, married six months ago.

Photo: Toronto Star

A historical clipping from the Toronto Star, 1942, of Sergeant Kember, 22, and his wife of three months, Viola Kember.

agents into occupied France.

The Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) C768 flew them as part of their anti-submarine squadrons. The Royal Air Force (RAF) ordered 200 of these planes and they were used throughout the war.

The crash occurred at approximately 10:45 p.m. and there was debris scattered all over the area. There were no survivors. This crash site was

on the south-east corner of the intersection of Billingsley St. and Normandy Street in New Carlisle. The area had many trees. It is noted that the residence close to the crash site at the time belonged to G. Chatterton, just south of the crash site and further south, the residence of C. Beebe.

John K. Walker, who was seven years old at the time, recalls standing outside of his

house with his dad that evening and hearing and seeing the crash. All these years later he has a clear memory of the event.

The three airmen who were killed in the crash were RCAF Squadron Leader Theodore Gutraj (pilot) from Toronto; RCAF R97050 Sgt. Robert Richard Kember (wireless) from Toronto; and RAF 1291065 Sgt. Patrick Albert Beavis (navigator) from London, England. Squadron Leader Gutraj had been married for just six months before the fatal crash and Sgt. Kember had been married for just three months. Squadron Leader Gutraj was aged 26 and Kember was just 22 years of age. Data for Sgt. Beavis proved difficult to locate.

The Lockheed Hudson Bomber FH335 left Presque Isle, Maine, at 5:03 p.m. on April 22, 1942. The final destination was to be Prestwick, England, with a stopover first in Gander, Newfoundland. The flight to Gander should have taken from four to five hours. The mystery that cannot be solved is why the plane which had flown some five hours was way off its intended course. There is also a dispute about the time of the crash. Townspeople say that it occurred at 10:45 p.m. but the Air Ministry records the time of the crash as 3:30 a.m. April 22! Further, we will never know the cause of the crash on

a clear, spring evening. It is a mystery lost in time.

Dave Doherty, who was the president of Branch 64 of the Royal Canadian Legion in New Carlisle, wrote an article about this crash published in The Gaspé Spec in the late 1970s. Mr. Doherty told about how he and some other Legion members discussed the fatal accident and the need to erect a marker to honour the men who perished that day. Mr. Doherty wrote, "Many letters were written and people interviewed who were living in New Carlisle at the time. With their help and cooperation, it became possible for me to bring this epic of our past to the attention of the present generation."

You can visit that plaque that honours the three men which has been installed on the boardwalk on the Green in New Carlisle. Family Ties was instrumental in making this come to reality with credit to Mr. Doherty who started it all and to other members of the Legion. It is important that we honour our fallen heroes, even all these years later – especially all these years later. Seventy-nine years ago, three young men lost their lives. We remember them.

(With gratitude to Dave Doherty, past president; John K. Walker past president and Laura Flowers current president of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 64.)

New Carlisle
DURANT LA SECONDE GUERRE MONDIALE
DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Les militaires allemands sont transportés de l'étranger.
RCAF C768 Squadron Leader Theodore Gutraj (pilot) Toronto
Sgt. Robert Richard Kember RCAF R97050
Sgt. Patrick Albert Beavis RCAF R1291065, originaire de Londres, Angleterre

Werner Von Janowski fut envoyé au Canada car l'Allemagne croyait que des renseignements relatifs à la préparation de la relève. Suite à son arrestation, Janowski devint agent double sous l'opération Watchdog transmettant de l'information aux forces alliées à Hambourg en Allemagne. Après une période de 18 mois sans progrès significatifs, il fut transféré au Camp 522 en Angleterre jusqu'à la fin de la guerre.

Il fut ensuite transféré en Allemagne, où il fit partie de son détachement.

La Deuxième Guerre mondiale a eu un impact économique et social sur le Canada. Les citoyens de New Carlisle, se sentant concernés, se sont mobilisés. Au total, 550 hommes de New Carlisle et des municipalités environnantes se sont joints au personnel militaire canadien. Ceux qui étaient incapables de combattre trouvaient tout de même une façon de supporter l'effort de guerre ici au pays. La guerre exigeait énormément de ressources, de mobilisation et d'argent et exerçait une pression considérable sur les salaires et le prix des denrées.

Deux événements marquants sont survenus à New Carlisle durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale :

1942 Un avion bombardier militaire laissa tomber des fusées éclairantes en tournant en rond dans le ciel au-dessus du village. Les habitants ont rapidement tenté de guider l'avion vers la rive, en allumant des feux de camp et en signalant l'avion avec des lampes de poche puissantes, dans l'espoir que le pilote réussisse à atterrir sur la plage. Malheureusement, le Lockheed Hudson Bomber Mk III portant le numéro FH335 s'est écrasé dans le village à l'angle des rues de Normandie et Billingsley. L'avion avait décollé à Presque Isle dans l'État du Maine aux États-Unis, en route pour Prestwick en Écosse, en passant par Gander, Terre-Neuve. La cause de cette peripétie demeure un mystère, à savoir comment l'avion qui avait réussi à voler pendant 5 heures, a terminé sa route à peine 160 miles de son point de départ.

1942 Werner Aldred Waldemar Von Janowski, lieutenant allemand, débarqua d'un sous-marin allemand sur la plage de New Carlisle. Son but était de prendre le train à partir de la côte gaspésienne afin d'atteindre Montréal pour rejoindre des fascistes canadiens. Remarquant son complet européen, son fort accent, ses allumettes belges et des devises qui n'étaient plus en usage, le fils du propriétaire de l'hôtel Carlisle, Earle J. Annett Junior, devint méfiant. Janowski déclara aussi être arrivé à New Carlisle en autocar le matin même, malgré le fait qu'aucun autobus n'était programmé. Les autorités furent alertées et l'individu fut rapidement arrêté. Il avoua être un espion allemand et fut pris en charge par la Gendarmerie royale du Canada (GRC) à Montréal. Malgré des recherches approfondies avec deux navires de guerre (le HMCS Burlington et le Red Deer) et des avions de l'aviation royale canadienne, aucune trace du sous-marin allemand dans la baie des Chaleurs ne fut découverte.

The Second World War affected Canada both economically and socially. New Carlisle was no exception and saw participation in the war effort as an important responsibility. 550 military personnel originating from New Carlisle and the surrounding areas served in the war. Those unable to join in active service helped on the home front. The war demanded vast amounts of money, people and resources, placing extensive stress on wages and prices.

There were two notable events which occurred in New Carlisle during World War II.

1942 A military bomber plane started dropping flares as it circled the town. The citizens quickly started fires on the shoreline and signalled the plane with flashlights in hopes it would land on the beach. Unfortunately, the Lockheed Hudson Bomber Mk.III, No. FH335 crashed on the corner of Normandie and Billingsley Street. The plane left Presque Isle, Maine, U.S.A. and was headed to Prestwick in Scotland via Gander, Newfoundland. It is still a mystery why the plane flew for over five hours and crashed about 160 miles from its origin.

1942 Werner Aldred Waldemar Von Janowski, a German lieutenant, disembarked from a submarine on the beach in New Carlisle. His goal was to take the train to Montreal to contact Canadian fascists. However, his European cut suit, thick accent, Belgian matches and out of circulation currency raised the suspicions of the Carlisle Hotel owner's son, Earle J. Annett Jr. Janowski also claimed that he arrived by bus that morning even though there was no bus scheduled. Authorities were alerted and he was quickly arrested. He confessed to being a German spy and was turned over to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Montreal. An extensive search was conducted to find the U-boat in the Chaleur Bay by two warships, HMCS Burlington and Red Deer, assisted by RCAF aircraft, but was unsuccessful.

SAVIEZ-VOUS QUE?
Le Lockheed Hudson Bomber Mk III était équipé de 7 mitrailleuses de calibre .303, trois de plus que le modèle précédent et plusieurs stratèges ont pu observer l'engin mort qui était présent dans le moule MK II.

DID YOU KNOW?
The Lockheed bomber Mk III was equipped with a total of seven guns, three more .303 machine guns than the Mk II in order to remove the blind spot that existed in the previous model.



Photo: Joan Imhoff

One of the heritage plaques on the New Carlisle boardwalk honours the three fallen servicemen who lost their lives in the 1942 crash.

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COAST ROUND-UP

GASPE:

Gaspe Cancer Foundation

The citizens of the MRC of Côte de Gaspé are asked to please note that the Annual Gaspe Cancer Foundation Membership Campaign is in full swing. The blue registration form can be found in your Publisac. May we remind you that membership fees are \$12 per year. New members have a 30-day waiting

period before being eligible to receive their travel assistance. If you are a member in good standing, are afflicted with cancer, and must travel outside the region for treatment, you are eligible for the following travel assistance: Chandler \$40, Maria \$70, Rimouski \$170, Rivière-du-Loup \$190 Québec \$210, Montreal and Sherbrooke \$270.

NEW CARLISLE: Heritage New Carlisle

Just published! Now available: The Cox House of New Carlisle

by Historian Bob Chisholm. Born and raised in New Carlisle, Quebec. Mr. Chisholm lived in the Cox house from 1936 to 1940. The famous Cox house, built circa 1786, holds many stories from New Carlisle's early days, including the Courthouse and the Caldwell family. Mr. Chisholm always had an interest in family history. Included in his various writings, he has had several publications, including the Chisholm Family and his memoirs. Cost: \$20 plus postage and handling: \$5. To order by email:

heritagenc@globetrotter.net. Telephone: 418-752-1334 or facebook: centre culturel et d'interprétation Kempffer-page officielle.

ROTARY CLUB WINNERS

The winners for the week of April 11 are: Anne-Frédéric Boulay, Gwen Coull. Luc Gauthier, Succession Lucen Lepage, Jacques Lamarche, Éric Paulin and Céline Legouffe.

thegaspespec.com

UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, April 25

10 a.m. Hope Town

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Sunday, April 25

New Carlisle

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

On the lighter side...



Why do we say ... by Gary Briand

A Grade 11 student from Campbellton, a grandson of a friend of mine, had been pestering his parents to allow and fund him to get a tattoo. They reluctantly agreed but insisted that he write them a five hundred word essay explaining the history of "tattoo" and the various forms the art manifests. The grandparents would send me the work and await a call from me telling them the value of the boy's work.

The essay won my approval. He had found the word "tattoo" originated when Captain James Cook sailed his ship Endeavour into Tahiti in 1796. While there he attended a tribal dance. Cook remarked how the Tahitians cut their skin and injected a black dye that later left a permanent mark when the wound healed. The black dye, he noted, was produced by boiling leaves from local trees.

Later that evening while Capt. Cook was recording the day's events in his logbook, he tried to give a name to what he had seen. A member of his crew came by his cabin and Cook asked him what he suggested as a name for the process. Cook's sailor answered that he had heard a word that he believed was articulated "tattou". Returning to his writing, Capt. Cook wrote the word "tattouing" in his narrative of the day. Twenty-two years later the word was being spelled "tattoo" in English.

By the way, my friends' grandson did get his tattoo.

Guess Who?

I am a shock rocker born in Ohio on January 5, 1969. I first worked for a music magazine while trying to break into journalism. My stage name blends two cultural icons of 1960s, and I am known for theatrical concerts and stage makeup.

Answer: Marilyn Manson

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Some things are entirely out of your control, Aries. You may come up against some such obstacles this week. Focus your energy on the things you can control.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, if you're seeking new horizons, establish a game plan and then do your homework. This will help determine if it is practical to make a move.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

Your expressiveness and affections are drawn out this week, Gemini. It could put you in the mood to push some limits socially or creatively. Chances are things will work out well.

CANCER – June 22/July 22

Cancer, some focus and harmony enables you to find balance in your personal and professional relationships. You will begin to see eye-to-eye with many people.

LEO – July 23/Aug 23

It is a good thing to center yourself emotionally because many decisions are heading your way,

HOROSCOPES

Leo. You may find ideas and plans centre around domestic issues.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

You are inclined to seek some mental stimulation this week, Virgo. Invest in some puzzles or even a recreational pursuit such as an escape room experience.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Take a break from overthinking, Libra. Involve yourself with pleasurable activities that don't require a lot of forethought. Others can join the fun.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

This is a good week to focus attention on your personal needs, Scorpio. Perhaps you are looking for personal fulfillment. Try volunteer work.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Others may be elusive this week, Sagittarius. Don't take it as a sign of your relationships being in need of mending. Others are just busy, so enjoy the downtime.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

People may demand a little more of

your time in the days ahead, Capricorn. If you are not sure you can devote extra effort, tell these people as soon as possible.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Disagreements can arise if others are not reading you well, Aquarius. Focus your efforts on effective communication this week to avoid any confusion.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

You don't need to know every detail of an issue to be able to take a side or a stance, Pisces. Your ability to make choices will improve.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

APRIL 18

Chloe Bennet, Actress (29)

APRIL 19

Joanna Gaines, Designer (43)

APRIL 20

Miranda Kerr, Model (38)

APRIL 21

James McAvoy, Actor (42)

APRIL 22

Jeffrey Dean Morgan, Actor (55)

APRIL 23

Gigi Hadid, Model (26)

APRIL 24

Kelly Clarkson, Singer (39)

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Creating during the pandemic

Andrea MacWhirter and Shawn Martin, A & S Creations

Diane Skinner

During the pandemic, a number of Gaspesians have stayed busy by creating products. These products are unique, useful and lovely and prove that life can go on during COVID-19.

Andrea MacWhirter and her brother-in-law Shawn Martin have been making a variety of truly-lovely items since last year. Andrea and Shawn obtain their ma-

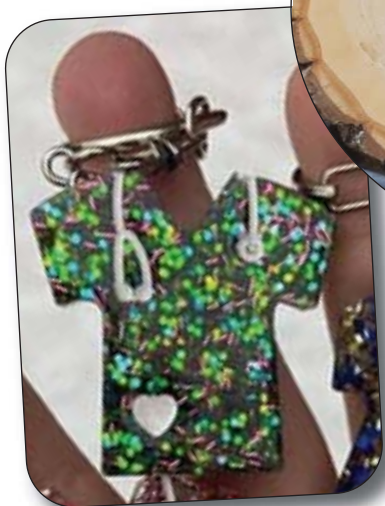
terials online and also from local hardware stores. They use wood, resin, leather and acrylic. They also have a laser engraving machine that allows them to personalize items.

Andrea and Shawn, known collectively as A & S Creations, started off using resin because they thought it was a

carefully. It becomes solid after a few hours. The resin mixture is poured into a silicone mold and Andrea comments that it solidifies well, as long as the mixture was measured correctly.

They have received many positive comments about their unique products. This encourages them to keep creating their items and new ones as well. When asked if they use the decorative pieces in their own homes, Andrea replies, "Of course!"

If you would like to see these products, which also would make terrific gifts, go to their Facebook page A & S Creations which they update often with new items.



great material that can preserve things such as flowers. Using resin is a two-step process. The resin and a hardener need to be measured

Photos: A & S Creations offers a variety of products including key chains and laser engraving on basswood.

Photos: Andrea MacWhirter



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Live on The Gaspesian Way Facebook page.

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Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



Grandma's Kitchen

How we welcome visitors into our homes says a lot about who we are and what is important to us. As I recall, my grandmother welcomed every visitor warmly into her big country kitchen.

You might have visited her kitchen many years ago and have been greeted thusly: *It's so nice to see you. I was just thinking about you. Sit right down! Come in. We have missed seeing you. Pull up a chair. Oh, look who is here! Come and sit and we will have a nice talk.*

My grandmother's kitchen had seating for at least ten, but chairs were easily carried in from the "front room" for extras. As children we just knew to get up and make room for the adults when the kitchen chairs were filling up. It was often, in winter, very hot because the old wood stove would be crackling away, throwing its bone warming heat around the room. The person who snagged the cot behind the stove would be woozy from the heat, but it was a coveted seat, usually reserved for my grandfather. That way he could throw his Player's Plain butts into the wood stove and never have to get up.

This kitchen was a lively place. There was lots of animated conversation, discussions, "Did you hear about...," and the occasional disagreement, but never, ever an argument. The laughter was guaranteed and my grandmother always took the seat of honour – her rocking chair placed near the fridge which gave her full view of the people coming and going. She was the centre of all discussions. She could be talking to someone sitting at the table but knew what was being discussed in every corner of the room.

The noise level was sometimes deafening. My family were all loud talkers, no whisperers in the bunch. I recall a visitor "from away making a comment after his first visit to "The Kitchen." His comment was "Your family is kind of rude. They interrupt each other all the time." That's not how I remember it at all. We were full of excitement and loved a lively discussion. We were not interrupting; we were just getting our way into the conversation. I think of it as merging onto the highway. You cannot get into the flow of traffic if you travel at 50 km. You have to "give her" when you can. Get into that conversation or be left behind. Anyway, it was part of the joy of that kitchen.

When I was about ten years old, I recall a boy of the same age who would visit in the morning. He was not a relative but called my grandmother, "grandma." My grandmother would often pour him a cold glass of cherry Kool Aid or Freshie. However, I was always a little bit perturbed by him claiming my grandmother as his. After all, she had 37 grandchildren and did not need one more. I know now, of course that she welcomed and accepted, even loved all of the visitors to her kitchen.

Those days are done, just beautiful memories. Many of the visitors to that kitchen are no longer with us. I remember that as people rose out of their chairs to go, she would often say, "There's lots of time!" She meant of course that they were welcome to stay a bit longer.

However, looking back at it all today, I know full well that time is the one thing that we all eventually run out of.

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Earth Day 2021: *The earth is what we all have in common*

Diane Skinner

Earth Day (marked annually on April 22) originated over 50 years ago. In 1970 there was a great deal of activism for all things involving nature and the health of our planet. Scientists looked around and saw that the growth of industry after World War II was having a huge impact on the earth, air and water.

Earth Day was created to support the healthy well-being of our home, this planet. Greta Thunberg, the teenaged Swedish environmentalist, is a well-known climate change activist. However, she cannot carry this 'torch' all by herself. There are many scientists, authors, reporters, photographers and activists trying to get the message out there and hoping to influence change.

Earth Day 2021 provides us with a moment to reflect. We cannot change anything in just one day. What it does



On Earth Day let the kids plant something! Children love to play in the dirt so get them involved. People who work in the garden as children are more likely to do so as adults.

Photo: D. Skinner

is provide us with is a reminder during these days when we are preoccupied with so many other critical

things. Earth Day is an opportunity to talk to children about the need to save the Earth and try to restore and

maintain its health in the future. After all, when we are gone, the planet will belong to them. They are the future.

There are a number of ways that you can celebrate Earth Day, either on your own or as a family:

1. Cut down on your use of electricity. Use a broom instead of a vacuum. Turn off lights that are not needed. Use LED bulbs. Read a book instead of watching television. Let your family brainstorm ways to do this.
2. Donate or trade things you do not need. This can be toys, books or clothes, even furniture. Rather than sending it to the garbage, pass it along to someone.
3. Plant something. Kids love to play in the dirt so get out and plant a tree, a shrub, some flowers or vegetables. This is a real hands-on activity that children can under-

stand. Ricky Gervais wisely commented, "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."

4. Have a clean-up. Use disposable gloves and pick up garbage on the beach or anywhere that litter has been dropped.

5. Recycle on Earth Day and every day.

6. Buy less and reuse what you have. Packaging and over packaging are a huge source of garbage.

7. To make a point, do not drive on Earth Day. Walk or bike instead. Be mindful of not going to the store every time you need an item. Make lists and instead of three trips, try for one. The planet will be grateful.

8. Commit to change. Try to be a good citizen of the Earth every day, not just on Earth Day!

Some wise thoughts to keep in mind all year

"Only when the last tree has died and the last river been poisoned and the last fish been caught will we realize we cannot eat money." -Indigenous saying

"What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?" -Henry David Thoreau

"The use of solar energy has not been opened up because the oil industry does not own the sun." -Ralph Nader

"He that plants trees loves others beside himself." -Thomas Fuller

Can we slow down the trend? Can we make a difference? We cannot give up. It is always best to try to make changes for the better. Earth Day 2021 is the perfect time to begin or continue the fight - the fight for the planet's survival.

A terrific movie available for children (but watch it with them) on Netflix – Bigfoot Family who take on an evil CEO and save a wildlife reserve from the oil industry.



450 YEARS

The amount of time it takes for a plastic bottle to break down when left in the natural environment.

Here are the breakdowns on some other plastic convenience items:

Straw	200 years
Disposable Diaper	450 years
Six-Pack Holder	450 years
Fishing Line	600 years

Source: NOAA/ Woods Hole Sea Grant

Earth Day Milestones



1970
First Earth Day celebration takes place in the U.S.

1990
Earth Day Canada is established, and a worldwide campaign mobilizes 200 million people in 141 countries to observe Earth Day.

2009
The United Nations recognizes Earth Day as International Mother Earth Day.

2020
Earth Day celebrates its 50th anniversary.

1:1 The ratio of plastics to fish in the ocean by 2050

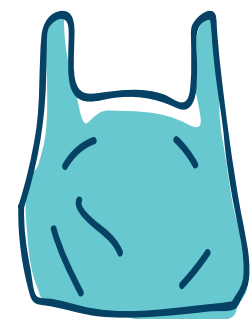
Source: World Economic Forum

279 billion tons of ice

per year was lost by Greenland between 1993 and 2019, while Antarctica lost about 148 billion tons annually.

Source: NASA

Doing Your Part Adds Up!



1 reusable bag = 600 plastic bags

One reusable bag can prevent the use of 600 plastic bags in its lifetime.

Source: National Geographic