

Nature conservancy asks mowers to give bees a chance!

Cynthia Dow

Want to have a good excuse not to mow your lawn? The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) has it! They've launched a campaign called No Mow May to try to encourage people to let flowers bloom early in the summer season to help pollinators like bees and butterflies get a better start on the warmer season.

Andrew Holland, National Media Director for the NCC, is located in Fredericton. He told SPEC he has loved his visits to the Gaspé Coast. "It's a beautiful drive." He indicated that in New Brunswick a number of municipalities are participating in the No Mow May campaign and are waiving fines for unsightly premises which some towns have.

"There is no doubt that some people feel peer pressure to cut their grass, but perhaps at least for the month of May they could consider giving Mother Nature a helping hand," Mr. Holland said, "This would give the pollinators a good start on the season, give them a fighting chance right out of the gate."

The NCC reports that, "In recent years, there has been a sharp decline in some pollinator populations due to climate change, habitat loss (including the loss of native plants) and pesticides." One impact of the loss of insects is a corresponding drop in the number of songbirds: The NCC estimates that Canada has lost an astounding 5.9 billion birds over



Bumble bees love hawkweed, which flourishes in the late summer.

Photo: C. Dow

the last 50 years, Mr. Holland noted.

The loss of insect life also threatens us: the US Natural Resources Conservation Service says that "three-fourths of the world's flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world's food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce."

Avoiding mowing in May and mowing less often throughout the summer will support flowering plants which in turn help the pollinators. In one study undertaken in the United Kingdom, it was found that changing mowing routines created enough nectar for 10 times as many pollinators. The study showed that the most effective mowing cycle for the production of flowering plants is once every four weeks.

Mr. Holland noted that if you still feel the urge to mow,

perhaps you could reduce the amount of lawn you cut. For example, you might decide to cut only where there is significant outdoor activity, such as right close to your house or where children play, or you can use a whipper-snipper and cut higher, leaving flowers to bloom. On his corner lot in Fredericton, Mr. Holland leaves a section not mowed for the pollinators.

The NCC also urges people to mow at a slow speed so that insects, frogs and other wildlife have a chance to escape the blades. Mr. Holland encourages mowers to walk through their lawn first to alert insects to the fact that they may be disturbed. Insects, toads, frogs, grass snakes and other wildlife are not only killed or injured by the blades but may be smothered under heavy grass.

According to the NCC,

Canada has an estimated 6.2 million lawns. Allowing lawns to flourish could have a huge impact in recreating a healthy environment. "People hear a lot of debate about the environment and see diminishing wildlife. This is something they can do in their own backyard to support their environment," Mr. Holland told SPEC.

There are over 800 native species of bees in Canada according to Canadian Geographic, and some 302 butterfly species, although most butterflies are not native

to this country. They all play an important role in our environment.

Many common wildflowers are great nectar producers and some are out at this time of year before nursery plants can thrive. Coltsfoot and dandelions are essential for giving bees a good start. Other wildflowers that the pollinators really love include asters, daisies, daylilies, goldenrod, hawkweed, knapweed, pearly everlasting, and yarrow. Having access to native wildflowers is very important to native species of pollinators.

Bees have always been respected for their hard work and the lovely sweet honey they produce. Honey is well known as a healing substance, having antibacterial and anti-inflammatory qualities. Beeswax candles are noted for burning with little smoke and a light, natural scent. They are a better choice for the environment than paraffin candles since they require no chemical processing.

The Nature Conservancy website has lots of ideas about how to help pollinators. Check out this link: <https://www.natureconservancy.ca/en/blog/archive/saving-the-bees.html#.YFN85dt7nOQ>

Messengers to the spirit world

Cynthia Dow

New Zealand writer Robin Clark, in a post on Facebook, writes that Celtic people thought bees were important messengers between humans and the spirit world. Many of our ancestors would have maintained beehives to produce their own honey. It is likely they would have practiced a tradition called "telling the bees."

People would go down to their hives and share with the bees important family news, such as births, deaths and marriages. It was believed that bees could pass on messages to the dearly departed as well.

People could often be heard beseeching bees not to leave them after a family loss. Housewives would tell the bees, "Your master is dead, but don't you go. Your mistress will be a good mistress to you."

Staying safe from stings

Cynthia Dow

One of the disadvantages of some pollinators such as bees and wasps is the risk of being stung, but you can take action to protect yourself.

According to Hinterland Who's Who, avoid the following when you are outside:

- Clothing with bright colours or patterns
- Walking barefoot
- Perfume or cologne
- Sudden movements
- Leaving foods, especially sweets, exposed

Try to stay away from hives or nests, as bees and wasps are most likely to sting when protecting their homes. If you see a lot of them in an area, it's a good bet their home is nearby. Otherwise, bees far from home are busy foraging, and are not likely to sting unless they are disturbed. Keep your eyes and ears open and you will likely be able to avoid a nasty surprise!



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Police report



An investigation was launched on May 12 to locate a suspect who allegedly committed a sexual assault in the English-speaking section of the C.-E. Pouliot School in Gaspé. The acts were perpetrated slightly before noon on May 12. They triggered a lot of emotion among the students. "A young girl was accosted by an individual in a hallway. Without going into details, we are talking about a sexual assault. The girl who managed to escape was shaken by the events," explains Sgt. Claude Doiron, spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec. The alleged victim was not injured. A crime scene investigator and technician are working to solve the crime, including meeting with witnesses. A crisis unit was set up to support the young girl and the other students. The Sûreté du Québec was discrete in commenting on the individual targeted. Sgt. Doiron cannot disclose whether the suspect had any connection with the C.E. Pouliot school.

The bail hearing of the 38-year-old Maria man charged on March 17 with assault with a weapon still has not taken place. The man, whose identity the Department of Justice isn't revealing in order to protect the name of his alleged victim, still has not received confirmation from the lawyer studying his case. The attorney is Caroline Bérubé of Rimouski. The alleged victim is the accused's wife. She received hammer blows to the head and was hospitalized for many days after fleeing the house where they were residing on March 17.

Attorney Bérubé was contacted by the accused at the end of April. As of May 13, she was still reflecting on the possibility of representing him. Judge Janick Poirier, of the Quebec Court, has postponed the case on a few occasions since the accused has been looking for a lawyer. He is remanded in custody at the New Carlisle jail in the meantime. He appeared in court on May 11 to inform the tribunal that he was still waiting on news from Caroline Bérubé.

There are eight charges laid against him. They were laid on three occasions, the last one taking place on April 12, as Crown Prosecutor Florence Frappier-Routhier filed two counts of uttering threats. Those charges were added to six previous charges of assault, assault with a weapon and assault causing bodily harm, among other accusations.

Judge Poirier prohibited him from coming into direct or indirect contact with the victim, her relatives and his sister. Officially, the identity of the man could have been released when he was first charged. However, Crown Prosecutor Florence Frappier-Routhier has asked the media to refrain from releasing his name and so far they have cooperated.

Until now, two lawyers have refused to represent him due to a lack of time. A third lawyer has also refused to represent him but the reasons were not disclosed in front of the court. His bail hearing will only take place once he secures a lawyer. The accused qualifies for legal aid.

The period covered by the alleged crimes goes from January 2004 to March 16, 2021. In details, the assault causing bodily harm charges are presented as "injuring, mutilating, disfiguring or endangering the life of his wife." A count of failing to respect a court order was added in the week that followed his first court appearance as he allegedly failed to comply with a court order forbidding him to attempt to contact his sister and the victim.

The 2020 tally on Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands roads is down sharply at all levels. The *Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec* released the data on May 12. The year is described as atypical, due to the pandemic, which reduced road traffic everywhere in Quebec. On the region's roads, fatalities fell by 20% last year, from 10 to eight. It is the best record since 2016. Serious injuries fell by 17% to 24, from 29, after peaking at 38 in 2018. The best record is shown in those with minor injuries at 354, down 20.8% from 2019 and 28% over a six-year period. In total, 386 people were involved in collisions, all categories included, the best record in the past six years.

Daniel Côté is elected president of the Union of Quebec Municipalities

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - After serving as second vice-president and vice-president of the *Union des Municipalités du Québec*, the mayor of Gaspé becomes president of the provincial organization for a one-year term.

Daniel Côté was unanimously chosen by his peers at the organization's 99th annual meeting on Wednesday.

The mayor of Gaspé becomes the organization's 58th president. He happens to be the first Gaspesian to hold such a position and also became, at age 41, the youngest president since the founding of the UMQ in 1919.

Mr. Côté's main priorities are: post-covid economic recovery, the fight against climate change, housing and childcare spaces.

According to the elected official, it will be possible to reconcile the function of mayor of Gaspé and president of the UMQ. "All the mayors before me have succeeded! It gives me access to national forums to defend municipal issues which are often local issues. When we talk about housing, daycare or transportation, these are issues that can be promoted provincially.



Photo: N. Sergerie

I think it can be interesting for us," says the mayor.

As chairman of the Air Transport Committee and of the UMQ daycare services file, Daniel Côté is also the Prefect of the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC, President of the *Régie intermunicipale de transport Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine* and co-president of the Intermunicipal board for the management of residual materials in the Gaspé. Noting that he might have to step down, Mr. Côté first wants to take the time to see if he can reconcile his many hats.

Mr. Côté succeeds the

mayor of Sainte-Julie, in Montérégie, who becomes ex-officio president.

The new president has already announced his intention to seek a third term as mayor of Gaspé.

The former town director and former deputy for Gaspé, Minister of Regions in the Marois government, Gaétan Lelièvre, is being asked by some in the business community to run for mayor.

Mr. Lelièvre preferred not to comment on the information, still not hiding his interest in politics, both municipal and provincial.

An easier winter for the deer

Nelson Sergerie

CAPLAN - White-tailed deer had favourable conditions over the winter, ensuring their survival in the Gaspé.

According to the Ministry of Wildlife, the small quantities of snow received in the forest this winter, warmer than usual temperatures and a lower sinking rate of the animal, 30% less than normal, are factors favourable to the species.

"We also had a very early spring, which made food available quickly during a critical period for deer generally. Once again, these are the conditions that are favourable," explains biologist Martin Dorais.

Spring observations of young adult deer from the road network provide another clue. "This year there has been a slight increase in young deer. This is another indicator that leads us to believe that the situation will improve over the next year,"



Photo: archives

The winter has been favorable for deer in the Gaspé

says the biologist.

Last year, the hunting harvest had increased by 13% as 334 animals were harvested in comparison to 298 in 2019 and 955 in 2018. Mr. Dorais believes success will be on the rise next fall. It was the first year of the new manage-

ment plan which split the hunting areas in two. It is too early to draw any conclusions from the plan, which is in effect until 2027.

There are about 3,000 deer in the region, a figure that is expected to increase with observations in the field.

Gilles Gagné
Commentary



Bonaventure River: time to change the parameters

Over recent weeks, a debate has been held, mainly in the Bay of Chaleur area but also among people from other areas, about the attention that should be paid to the Bonaventure River. There are different visions in the way activities should be held and their intensity on that river. All agree on at least one point: this river is a treasure.

Salmon fishermen, canoeists and kayakers, property owners, swimmers, hikers, tourists, entrepreneurs, people enjoying the scenery, campers, visitors of all sorts, the list of interested parties is very long, and it does not come in any particular order.

At the end of March, the Bonaventure River ZEC submitted a recreational activities development plan, what the organization calls a cohabitation plan. The main particularity of that plan is clearly to reduce traffic on the river.

The debate between users has intensified over the ensuing month. Truth be told, the situation had been simmering for a few years. Many people believe that we have reached an over-tourism situation along the Bonaventure River. Others fear a return to privatization of the river, like it was before the late 1970s.

There are five main angles of analysis to consider in that debate: the appreciation of salmon fishermen, the viewpoint of canoeists and kayakers; the perception of swimmers and hikers; the opinion of residents, be them owners or tenants, whether they live there all-year-long or temporarily and, finally, the environmental impact of human presence in the broad sense.

The latter point involves wildlife: animals, insects and plants, as well as the integrity of the landscape, which is a landscape altered by the presence of houses and chalets, bridges and forestry exploitation.

From the Quebec government perspective, the Bonaventure River ZEC is the main canal of management after the Department of Forest, Wildlife and Parks and a few other ministries involved in various degrees of intervention, like the Environment and Sustainable Development Department.

The ZECs flourished at the end of the 1970s when the Quebec government decided to de-privatize most of the salmon rivers. ZEC means *Zone d'exploitation contrôlée* in French, an area under controlled exploitation.

So the ZECs are responsible for the development, exploitation and conservation of fauna, in addition to facilitating access to the territories for users. The Association of Sport Fishermen of the Bonaventure River, an organization founded 43 years ago, fills that role within the boundaries of the ZEC.

The agreement proposal submitted in March by the Bonaventure River ZEC is not a first. For example, the ZEC; Cime Aventures, the company offering excursions on the river; Camp Bonaventure, which is an outfitter; and the Watershed Council signed an agreement that covered the 2006 to 2014 period. Hence, CIME Aventures must obtain from the ministry of Forests, Wildlife and Parks an annual trade authorization to carry out its activities.

The current debate was, as in many tough situations, sparked by the lack of open dialogue between the ZEC and Cime Aventures. The lack of a neutral forum to mediate the dialogue, or lack there off, represents a major handicap in that context.

The ZEC wants to ensure the sustainability of an internationally renowned jewel by relying on a broad regional consensus. That is a fair goal, however, despite the merit of having initiated the process for the

preparation of the next cohabitation plan, the ZEC is not the neutral body to carry out this exercise.

Even if, at its annual general meeting, the ZEC received an 85% support rate regarding its proposal to register the canoeists and kayakers using Cime Aventures' services, some other aspects of its cohabitation plan raised a wide controversy.

At first, the ZEC's initial version of the cohabitation plan required autonomous excursionists and Cime Aventures clients to pay a \$12 daily fee to have access to the river. Both the initial plan and the last version would impose a daily quota of 100 boats carrying no more than 150 people on the river if the Quebec government approves it.

At the beginning of April, the Bonaventure River ZEC president, André Hébert, referred to the initial points as items having been approved through a broad consensus!

First, bringing a dozen organizations around a table and consulting them largely in writing does not meet the definition of a broad consensus, however, that is what André Hébert called a broad consensus.

The ZEC held an online meeting on April 14, hours after dropping elements of its cohabitation plan that were called essential before that. The \$12 charge to autonomous excursionists and a quota for them were abandoned. Swimmers would be forbidden in 22 pools determined by the ZEC but could swim for free elsewhere.

Until the annual general meeting of April 27, there was not a single woman sitting on the ZEC board. It is therefore questionable to have an organization stating that a broad consensus was reached when 50% of the population is not represented at all on its board. Since April 27, there is one woman sitting on the ZEC board.

The main problem with the ZEC cohabitation plan remains the fact that the public was not consulted before its initial version was submitted to the Quebec government.

Since March 27, the ZEC has made concessions. For its president André Hébert, those changes are a sign that his organization is flexible, that it shows its capacity to conduct an evolutionary process.

From the outside, it looks as if the ZEC tried to apply *Colbert's Art of Plucking the goose without making it cry* - but it didn't work. It is either that or improvisation, or a certain quantity of both. The ZEC's initial cohabitation plan did not contain concessions for the sports fishermen. Those concessions were all coming from the other users. It was not the best strategy and it was not a surprise. Plans drawn by an association representing salmon fishermen will think of salmon fishermen first.

Cime Aventures has also made questionable decisions, such as raising funds for its Association for the Protection and Accessibility of the Bonaventure River, a deactivated site. The use of the money raised was not clear.

The Bonaventure River ZEC remains a leader in salmon fishing management. The rising traffic on the river is a cause of concern for many people. Part of that rising traffic comes from the increasing clientele of Cime Aventures, another dynamic organization in its field.

Both bodies have very good track records but both are not well-placed to determine a strategy that will create a balance between the different activities taking place on the river, even if the ZECs were chosen by the Quebec government at the end of the 1970s to manage most rivers.

Things evolve in life. Considering the importance of the stakes, considering the rising number of different users on certain rivers like the Bonaventure, it is time for the Quebec government to think of appointing a neutral organization to arbitrate and probably manage the broader aspects of our rivers.

There are numerous studies pertaining to the Atlantic salmon population, to the effects on the fish of the catch and release practice, to the impact of motor boats on a river, an activity still permitted on the Bonaventure River. There is also a wide array of studies covering the topic of tourist overcrowding.

Basically, a larger consideration must be given to science in that kind of process. A calm assessment of the Bonaventure River context must be undertaken before a cohabitation plan is applied.

The salmon fishing season will start soon, on June 1. It would be quite presumptuous to implement the last version of the cohabitation plan filed by the ZEC this year. Some kind of temporary midway point must be set up by the Ministry of Forest, Wildlife and Parks in the meantime.

A vast operation to educate users must be initiated as soon as possible to prevent a deterioration of the situation. That education operation comes with fees, but the advantages will far surpass those fees.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Proposed Bill 101 Overhaul Disregards Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms

The Quebec Community Groups Network deeply regrets that proposed changes to the Charter of the French Language override fundamental human rights and will erode the vitality of our English-speaking minority community.

"The proposed legislative changes are more far-reaching than we could have ever imagined," QCGN President Marlene Jennings said following a quick review of Bill 96: an act respecting French, the official and common language of Quebec. "The bill, which invokes the notwithstanding clause throughout, puts the collective rights of French-speaking Quebec ahead of the fundamental rights and freedoms of individual Quebecers."

"At a recent meeting with Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette and subsequent public comments, the government had assured us its objective is not to take away or diminish the rights of English-speaking Quebecers, divide the two language groups, or act to the detriment of the institutions of the English-speaking community," said Jennings, "Unfortunately, this bill will have the opposite effect."

QCGN is taken aback that the government of Premier François Legault is proposing to unilaterally amend the Canadian Constitution to recognize the linguistic specificity of the Quebec nation. "That's a constitutional curveball we certainly were not expecting," said Jennings.

"This is a fundamental shift in the Canada/Quebec relationship and one we believe is unconstitutional," she added. "This is a closed-in, narrow vision of a Quebec that is increasingly distancing itself from the rest of Canada."

"Stricter regulations for commercial signs and the imposition of the notwithstanding clause to supersede the rights and freedoms of Quebecers represents a huge step backward that will create unnecessary conflict and division."

The QCGN and its stakeholders are also concerned about the plan to extend the application of Bill

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Guest Commentary

Emma Buckley

Immigration discussion needs nuance, not a fixation with numbers

Dear Monsieur Legault,

Something you said the other day made me feel very low, so I've decided to write you a letter. It's about your recent comments, your 'obsession' with raising the average salary in Quebec, and how accepting migrants who earn less than 56k is "making your problem worse." Now I know that you are an accountant, and there is a pragmatic number-crunching logic to your comments: migrants with higher salaries pay more taxes and can help fund the public purse and more of the "jobs payantes" that you mention so often, but immigration (and the role of migrants in meeting labour shortages) is a highly complex affair, as you know. Your comments do not acknowledge this complexity. Plus we're talking about people here – not numbers: people who contribute to Québécois society in so many different ways.

As a relatively new immigrant in Quebec, I thought I'd share with you a little about my own situation. Back in my home country I studied hard at university and got myself one of those "jobs

payantes." Then I moved to Quebec with next to no knowledge of the official language, and things got a little tougher. I earn most of my income from working with my partner in his small hospitality business. (We're a long way from the city and operational only part of the year, and he has great difficulty finding Canadian staff for niche roles, but that's a whole other letter).

Over the years my ability to function in a French-speaking environment – such as the workplace, social situations, community organizations – has grown. The sensation is like that of a flower unfolding: I feel a fierce and deep pride in what I've achieved. The free French classes offered by the Quebec government have really helped with my integration, and I pass on my heartfelt thanks for that, but we need to be realistic. Migrating to a new country often involves professional hurdles and set-backs. A 2020 study by World Education Services found that less than 40 percent of immigrants in Canada have jobs similar in type and complexity to their pre-immigration positions. It's generally understood that second-generation immigrants will outshine their parents, economically.

Immigrant friends of mine have shared tales of starting over in Quebec. One has never had her (impressive) foreign qualifications recognized here. Another, tertiary-educated and hugely talented on the violin took the job she was offered as a new immigrant in Montreal working on a production line in a factory. She eventually found work teaching music, but she never made 56k, Monsieur Legault. (She has since returned to her native country).

What she did do was establish a tango-playing string quartet that played at local events, bringing a haunting beauty, elegance and cultural richness to small church halls in our far-flung region.

A third immigrant friend moved into the production of organic vegetables. He's not making 56k either, but I have such admiration for him, because he's doing work he really believes is important, work that our society now refers to as essential. This work that keeps society from grinding to a halt is what many immigrants do: caring for others, preparing, packaging and delivering the food we eat and cleaning the facilities where our elderly relatives live. In addition, they have made up a substantial proportion of our vital front-line workers during the pandemic.

No one's value should be reduced to their earnings. Immigrants – like all citizens – contribute to society in a myriad of ways, paid and unpaid. Like many immigrants, I am a strong believer in community service, Monsieur Legault, and I have regularly donated my time and skills as a volunteer since arriving in this wonderful country. Like everyone, I have professional ambitions, hopes and dreams, and I believe I have so much to offer, even if the number on my T4 reveals me to be part of the "problem." (I prefer to view the situation through a longer-term lens: statistics reveal that with time, immigrants go on to earn comparable salaries to native-born Quebecers.) It may not have been your intention, Monsieur Legault, but your words have left me and many others feeling distinctly unworthy. I just hope you can understand why.

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101 to businesses with between 25 and 49 employees and the amount of red tape created by a fresh multitude of complicated rules and regulations.

"This bureaucratization will make it more difficult for small businesses to operate and flourish in Quebec, within Canada, and to build strong links with North America and the world," said Jennings: "The government's priorities are ill thought out. Many businesses are struggling to stay afloat and the pandemic has had a devastating impact on small businesses in every region of this province. This is certainly not the time to make the lives of these hard-working merchants and businesspeople even more difficult."

Jennings added that the QCGN "is certainly pleased that the government is widening access to French-language training – a longstanding demand of our community, particularly from our youth." She called this "a positive and welcome step that will allow more English-speaking Quebecers to find gainful employment and remain in Quebec."

The QCGN will take the necessary time to fully examine the details of the 96-page bill, which amends 25 separate statutes including the Charter of the French Language, the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms and the Civil Code of Quebec. Notably we will evaluate any and all parts of the bill that will have the effect of limiting access to government services in English.

"English-speaking Quebecers – part of a largely bilingual community committed to working with Francophones – must also be part of ongoing discussions to update the Charter of the French Language," Jennings concluded, "We are all Quebecers. All of our voices must be heard in the coming debates around our common language."

The Quebec Community Groups Network (www.qcgn.ca) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together English language community organizations across Quebec. As a centre of evidence-based expertise and collective action it identifies, explores, and addresses strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec and encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions, and leaders.

Rita Legault, Director of Communications, QCGN

REGIONAL COVID UPDATE:

Situation worsened before improving

Gilles Gagné

MARIA – The COVID-19 situation in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands deteriorated to a certain point between May 7 and May 14, as the number of active cases increased steadily to reach 74 on May 11, but the situation stabilized after that. The number of active cases gradually went down over the three following days and reached 62 on May 14.

On May 7, the number of active cases was 43. May 7 had the most new cases for a single day, since the beginning of January with 14 new cases. It occurred in the middle of a bad stretch when the number of daily cases averaged ten-and-a-half over six days, between May 4 and 9 inclusively.

However, as the region's director of Public Health, Dr. Yv Bonnier-Viger, had indicated on May 4, all those cases were generated by known and controlled outbreaks. So during the four days between May 11 and 14, the daily average decreased to five cases.

There was a periodical peak of four hospitalizations as of May 11, but two of those cases were released three days later. No fatalities were reported over the last months in

the region.

The Public Health Board reported 102 cases of variants in the region on May 14, but that number includes recovered cases and it takes into account the fact that all positive cases are now considered variants, before a second laboratory analysis.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the region has recorded 1,937 coronavirus cases in 14 months, 1,829 people have recovered from it. Forty-six people unfortunately died as a result of the virus.

For the first time since March 2020, the Haute-Gaspésie MRC is dealing with the highest number of COVID cases in the region, 22. There are 14 cases in the Bonaventure MRC and 12 in the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC. There is not a single case in the Magdalen Is-

lands. That leaves 11 cases between the MRCs of Avignon and Percé Rock. The number is under five in the first cases and undetermined in the second cases, although logically reaching at least seven.

The rate of vaccinated people in the region reached 52.7% on May 10, the last report available. It was 10.7% more than the Quebec rate.

On May 14, the Integrated Health and Social Service Centre mentioned that all seniors living in private residences had received their second vaccine but after a double check asked by the SPEC, the authorities rectified the information.

"Vaccinations will be advanced (it is upcoming) but it is not late," specified Jean Morin, the organization's spokesperson.



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Photo: N. Sergerie

Teachers from the Gaspé campus walked through the downtown streets of Gaspé.

Strikes disrupt classes at Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - The Legault government's inaction at the negotiating table prompted Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles professors to walk out on May 11, 12 and 13.

The most recent walkout occurred on May 13, when the 112 teachers at the Gaspé Campus affiliated with the *Centrale des unions du Québec (CSQ)* used this strategy to have their voices heard. The workload is the main issue on the negotiation table. Union advisor Magalie Larochelle uses the pandemic as an example.

"On the one hand, the government is providing resources to offset the increase, but on the other hand, it does not want to recognize this increase," explains Ms. Larochelle.

Support for particular students, unfunded distance education, insecurity and the immobile financial framework are also points raised. "What we are seeing are students who are finishing high school in the context of a pandemic and who will be arriving at CEGEP. It will take resources to support them well," says Ms. Larochelle.

The union is demanding an increase of 6% over three years, rather than a lump sum.

Teachers affiliated with the CSN are also involved

Their colleagues from the Carleton-sur-Mer campus and the Grande-Rivière School of Fisheries and Aquaculture, affiliated with the CSN, called a strike on May 11 at

noon. It lasted 48 hours. For their part, they denounced Quebec turning a deaf ear for the last 18 months.

"The government always comes up with the same offers. There have been no improvement in the employers' offers," criticizes the president of the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine Central Council, Serge Saint-Pierre.

For example, resources are requested to support students in difficulty. "If we want better leaders or better nurses, we have to provide the tools to improve the world of education," said Saint-Pierre.

The CSN claims \$2 an hour for the first year or the better between \$0.75 an hour or 2.2% for the other two years.

The collective agreement expired on March 31, 2020.

Ottawa invests in airport fence

Nelson Sergerie

Gaspé's Michel-Pouliot Airport is getting a little over \$1 million from Ottawa to replace the fence that protects wildlife from airport activities.

Gaspé is one of the projects selected under the Airport Capital Assistance Program, in which the federal government added \$186 million over two years to improve infrastructures despite the loss of revenue related to COVID-19.

The Town had applied recently and is surprised at how quickly the aid application has been accepted. The work will be fully paid for by Ottawa.

Gaspé is one of the four projects selected in Quebec. The announcement was made by MP Minister Diane LeBouthillier in a virtual press conference where journalists were required to submit their questions in writing, without being able to ask sub-questions

Just over 30,000 people were employed in April

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - The employment rate is gaining strength on the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands.

After a difficult period, due to the pandemic in the past year, 30,300 people were working in the region in April, 1,800 more workers than at the same time a year ago.

The number of unemployed people is also decreasing, 1,500 fewer individuals than a year ago. More people also started looking for work during the same period.

A similar observation was made between March and April when 900 additional workers were employed.



Photo: N. Sergerie

The Grande-Rivière branch of the SQDC

Gaspé is preparing to welcome an SQDC

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - Gaspé is preparing to welcome a branch of the *Société québécoise du cannabis (SQDC)*.

The town wishes to modify the zoning by-law to allow the retail sale of cannabis and cannabis products at Carrefour Gaspé.

The process was started after a request from the owner of the mall, SandalWood, who wants to host such a store within its walls.

"These are preventive steps to accelerate in case the SQDC makes a request," specifies the director of the shopping centre, Daniel Brousseau.

A written consultation is being conducted by the town and will end on May 21. If no one objects, the zoning change will be adopted, once validated by Côte-de-Gaspé MRC.

The SQDC, wrote by email "that we cannot confirm or deny the arrival of a potential branch in the region, as we are still working on the deployment plan."

In addition to the branch already in operation in Grande-Rivière, the SQDC has announced the establishment of a second store in Carleton-sur-Mer next fall.

Notice of interest

Société québécoise des infrastructures

SEARCH FOR LAND AVAILABLE FOR SALE IN NEW CARLISLE OR PASPÉBIAC

Request: D43048

The Société québécoise des infrastructures (Société) invites any interested owner to send information about a vacant lot or a building that is vacant and can be demolished, whether it is a single lot or a combination of several lots (Land), available for sale and meeting the following criteria:

A) Area: The Land must have a minimum area of 11,000 square metres.

B) Perimeter: The Land must be located in the municipality of New Carlisle or Paspébiac.

C) Exclusion: Land in an agricultural zone located in Paspébiac and/or the presence of power lines and railroad tracks on the lot.

D) Municipal services: The Land must be located in an area served by municipal services.

Interested parties may find the free information form to be completed on the following website: www.sqi.gouv.qc.ca, in the section "Faire affaire avec nous", under the heading "Avis d'intention et d'intérêt". For further information, please contact Ms. Marie-Hélène Robitaille at 418 646-1766, extension 3035.

All information forms and required documents must be received **no later than 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 26, 2021** at the Société québécoise des infrastructures, to the attention of Marie-Hélène Robitaille, at the following address: Direction de l'évaluation et des transactions immobilières, 1075, rue de l'Amérique-Française, Québec (Québec) G1R 5P8.

Each Land Proposal (form and required documents) must be submitted in a separate sealed envelope marked: "Notice of Interest - Site Search D43048"

Important: This is neither a request for proposals nor an invitation to bid.

This request for information does not constitute a call for tenders or a request for proposals. It is intended only to gather general information on the availability of land for sale. Submissions must demonstrate that the lands available for sale meet or will meet the above criteria.

The Corporation will not be obligated to solicit bids or purchase any of the lands and reserves the right to choose any other method of acquisition.

Québec

www.sqi.gouv.qc.ca

Family ministry takes shortcuts to increase number of daycare places earlier than expected

Bonaventure daycare model used to inspire the rest of Quebec

Gilles Gagné

BONAVENTURE – Thanks to a few shortcuts, Quebec’s Department of Family is able to increase the number of daycare places available throughout the province earlier than expected by using temporarily available space while respecting the norms. The model adopted by the ministry was suggested by the Bonaventure’s *Centre de la petite enfance de la Baie* located in the centre of the town.

In that case, the daycare management proposed the use of the Centre Bonne Aventure, a multipurpose municipal building that has a number of empty rooms since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is located a few dozen metres from the daycare. The Town of Bonaventure, the owner of that community centre, agreed enthusiastically on the proposal of the daycare.

The CPE de la Baie’s organization has been waiting for years for a \$670,000 expansion that will provide 32 additional places. Its director, Julie Dalpé, saw a way to temporarily hasten the addition of 26 of those 32 spots accepted as part of the expansion project. She just had to glance at the neighbouring building to find a solution.

Submitting to the high pressure of dealing with a shortage of 51,000 daycare places across Quebec, the demobilization of staff stemming from a deterioration of working conditions and a governmental mechanism that is admittedly too slow, Family Minister Mathieu Lacombe praises the work of Julie Dalpé.

“She shows that we can be flexible and that we can innovate when it is necessary. (...) I want to salute the work, the dedication, the passion and the energy of Ms. Dalpé,” says Minister Lacombe, who also praises the flexibility of Bonaventure mayor, Roch Audet.

Mayor Audet points out that temporarily adapting the Centre Bonne Aventure for a daycare “will help solve our shortage of places more quickly. It is one step towards helping people who are settling in Bonaventure. (...) We also have to deal with a shortage of housing,” says the



The expansion of the CPE de la Baie should be completed in eight months. In the meantime, 26 additional places are created through the use of the neighbouring building, the Centre Bonne Aventure

Photo: Courtesy of Julie Drapeau (CIEU FM)

mayor, mentioning another big challenge he is working on.

Minister Lacombe points out that the innovation developed in Bonaventure can only be applied to “places (already) granted during preceding calls for tenders and currently in a realization process.”

The family ministry’s staff will make sure that fire safety and the presence of sanitary equipment are present in the temporary locations chosen to house additional daycare places while the permanent project is completed. An amount of no more than \$50,000 can be invested in a temporary move.

“Investing hundreds of thousands of dollars would not be a wise use of public funds for a temporary move,” indicates Minister Lacombe.

In the case of Bonaventure, the 32 additional places that are part of the expansion project will be integrated to the new wing of the former presbytery in about eight months, when the construction of that wing will be completed. The Centre Bonne Aventure can only house 26 children. The CPE de la Baie is already located in the presbytery.

Appreciative of the Family Ministry flexibility, Julie Dalpé stresses that the temporary places are timely in a region that is greeting “a decent migration (of people) given the COVID and people working from home. It was taking projects like that to show that we are active and that we keep innovating. (...) We are making 26 happy families, whose father or mother can go back to work. (...) We are grooming the trail but I hope that other daycares will follow.”

To make the development of temporary places easier, Minister Lacombe reduced from 19 to 7 the number of compulsory steps leading to the approval of a temporary daycare, whether they are located in a municipal building, schools with vacant spaces, notably in the summer, or a private building.

Julie Dalpé assures having based her project on the document pertaining to moving a daycare. She took into account norms like the number of square feet per child, the quality of lighting and the safety of the location. She adds that the entire staff of the daycare was instrumental in landing the project.

Minister Lacombe points

out that elsewhere in Quebec, about ten projects are progressing seriously towards something similar to Bonaventure’s initiative. He did not specify how many daycare places will likely be cut from the province-wide waiting list of 51,000 places.

One of the main stakes consists of supporting projects that were part of the 2011 and 2013 waves of announcements and that have been put aside by the previous governments, he says.

Minister Lacombe points out that the context is different for the 4,359 places he announced in October 2020.

It is a brand new canvas. It will be easier to accompany the directors of those daycares so to give them access to tem-

porary locations,” he says.

Quebec’s *Association des centres de la petite enfance*, the body coordinating the advancement of daycares, recently stressed that an array of factors would accelerate the creation of 20,000 places across the province, thus reducing the shortage of 51,000 places.

The spokesperson of the association, Geneviève Bélisle, reiterates her support to initiatives that will alleviate the current shortage “including the structuring solution (temporary places) offered by people who know daycares.”

Questioned about the other big factor that is worsening the shortage of places, namely daycare workers opting for other occupations that offer better conditions and a better salary, Minister Lacombe refused to make a lengthy comment, choosing to trust “the current negotiation process between the unions and the government representatives,” but he wishes that daycare workers receive a better salary in the future.

Of the ten new projects currently being analyzed by the Ministry of Family, none other than Bonaventure’s case are based in the Gaspé Peninsula. In the region, including the Magdalen Islands, the shortage of daycare places hovers between 500 and 700.

The SQ will have to return the alcohol to the Association Amis des jeunes de Newport

Nelson Sergerie

CHANDLER - The court orders the Sûreté du Québec to return the alcohol seized during a police operation in December 2018 at a party to recognize the work of volunteers in Newport.

The police seized some 150 bottles on warrant after no permit had been requested for the service of alcohol during the party which was taking place in a municipal building.

The alcohol belonged to the *Ami des Jeunes association* which supports the purchase of school materials with the profits generated by the sale of drinks.

The court issued a fine of \$175 for the unlicensed sale, but the SQ must return the liquor valued at \$1,500.

“The judge demanded that they return the alcohol that was seized to us and, on top of that, some bottles are past date. Now, what will be the steps for our losses to know if we can be reimbursed. We’re going to take a close look,” says Luc Legresley of the *L’Ami des Jeunes Association*.



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Listuguj councillor Cathy Martin submits candidacy for National Chief of Canada's Assembly of First Nations

Gilles Gagné

LISTUGUJ – Listuguj councillor and former chief councillor Cathy Martin has submitted her candidacy to be elected as National Chief of Canada's Assembly of First Nations. Her nomination papers were deposited on the second day of nomination, May 13. The nomination period ends on June 2 and the election will be held on July 7.

Cathy Martin, who holds a Doctorate degree in Educational leadership from the University of Phoenix, Arizona, might be the first person from Listuguj to submit a candidacy for the position of National Chief.

If she is elected on July 7, she will become the first woman to hold the position of National Chief since the inception of that title in 1968. Dr. Martin is confident that she has the qualities to fill that leadership role.

"All candidates are passionate about the issues that affect First Nations in this country and I do share that passion. There have been good attempts to rectify some of these issues by the federal government over the years, however, I feel the solutions must come from within each of our First Nations as we are all independent First Nations that can't be given blanket and Band-Aid solutions. My strategy comes from my research and belief with building relationships based on



Photo: Courtesy of Cathy Martin

If she is elected on July 7, Cathy Martin will become the first female National Chief in the history of Canada.

an understanding of different value systems," she stresses.

Cathy Martin is also a published author. She launched her latest publication, *Strengthening Canadian Indigenous Relationships and Decision-making Processes* during the National Summer Solstice Indigenous Festival in Ottawa on June 24, 2019.

That book presents "the contrast of hierarchical and wholistic value systems with suggestions for improving intergovernmental relationships.

My strategy and suggestion for solutions not only involve understanding the issues from different perspectives, but are also based on inclusion of having our individual Nation's voices heard at decision making tables." adds Dr. Martin.

She was raised and resided most of her life in Listuguj. She is currently an elected member of council for the Listuguj Mi'gmaq Government and has previously served for three terms. For two of those terms, she was elected Chief Council-

lor, which means that she gathered more votes than any other member of the council on election day.

During her council administrations, she remains a council representative for the Tri-council of the Mi'gmaq of the Gaspé. She sat in the past on the Mi'gmaq constitution building committee for the Mi'gmaq Nation of the Gaspé. Cathy Martin also continues to uphold productive communication with the Mi'gmaq Hereditary Chief of the seventh District Council. The seventh district includes the Gaspé Peninsula.

"I believe that the most important relationship that will strengthen our people is to build alliances within each of our communities with our Hereditary or Traditional Governments and our elected chief and councils. Both these governments have legal authority and both these groups are within given First Nations. Forming alliances within our First Nations will diminish the divide that occurred since the implementation of the elected government for our peoples," she affirms.

"Respectfully facilitating this alliance will need the redefining and realigning of the charter of the AFN while maintaining the respect of the individual diversity of each nation," adds Dr. Martin.

She was most recently employed as the director of Lifelong Learning for Walpole

Island First Nation in Ontario, while she serves as councillor-elect, remotely, for her constituents in Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation. She sees her experience interacting at the grassroots level and various levels of government as an advantage in the leadership race that is just starting.

"My academic and career experiences have brought me to utilize my skills from coast-to-coast, including the isolated northern Cree community of Chisasibi, and urban centres of Ottawa and Montreal," she affirms.

A proud grandmother in her early fifties, Cathy Martin was also the writer and researcher for the development of the First Nations Health Directors Curriculum Manual for health directors of British Columbia. Over the years, she worked as a speech-language pathologist, educator, director, entrepreneur, restorative justice, consultant, author, and advocate for First Nation people on a variety of issues.

She remains closely connected to community-oriented initiatives, such as her most recent endeavor, which consists of building a homeless shelter within Listuguj through fundraising efforts with the help of volunteers.

"My goal is to bring my expertise of advocacy and strengthening governmental relationships to the national political level," she concludes

Right whale partially disentangled by New Brunswick rescue team

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON - The Campobello Whale Rescue Team, supported by the Fisheries and Oceans Canada staff, rescued an entangled North Atlantic right whale near Miscou Island, New Brunswick, on May 11. The entanglement did not occur in Canadian waters, as the whale was previously seen entangled in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, in March.

The New England Aquarium has identified the whale as Eg #3560, or "Snow Cone", a 15-year-old female. A marine mammal rescue team in the United States was able to partially disentangle the whale on March 10 and 12, but some of the gear remained on the animal.

The whale was first spotted in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence on May 10, 2021, by a Fisheries

and Oceans Canada surveillance aircraft, approximately 65 kilometres east of Shippagan, New Brunswick. The whale was swimming but was dragging rope from its mouth.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) aerial and sea teams were able to relocate the whale on May 11 approximately 45 kilometres east of Miscou Island. The Campobello Whale Rescue Team, assisted by the DFO fishery officers from another vessel, reached the animal at 4:00 p.m., Atlantic time. Hours later, the Campobello Whale Rescue Team was able to remove some of the rope attached to the animal.

The rope was turned over to DFO. It appears to be from the previous entanglement that was first recorded in the United States in March 2021. The ori-



The Campobello Whale Rescue Team was able to disentangle partially Snow Cone, a 15-year-old female right whale. Campobello is located in the bay of Fundy area but its rescue team has intervened in many parts of Eastern Canada, including the Southern Gulf of Saint Lawrence, like in this case.

Photo: Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Science division - Aerial Survey Team.

gin of the gear is not presently known. In all likelihood, it is doesn't come from a New Brunswick or a Gaspesian fishing boat, present in the waters east of Miscou Island.

Disentanglements are only attempted if they can be done in a safe manner. Factors considered include the whale's behav-

our, weather, and sea conditions. The weather that followed May 11 was not favourable for disentanglement work.

Members of the disentanglement team indicated the whale appears to be in good condition. DFO will continue to track the whale.

If weather and sea conditions allow, efforts may be made in the coming weeks to attempt further disentanglement.

Campobello is located in the Bay of Fundy area but the whale rescue team of that region covers a large territory in the Atlantic region.

Count me in! Census 2021

Diane Skinner

You may have heard this joke before. How do you get five Canadians to get out of the pool? You say, "Please get out of the pool." Canadians follow the rules and this is true when it comes to filling in their census form every five years. In 2016 the return rate for census forms in Canada was over 98%! This officially puts Canada as the number one country in the world for returning completed census forms. We're Number One!

Every five years, Canadians are asked to participate in the census. The data collected is for our benefit. It gives a portrait of Canadians, where we live and who we are. This data is then used to help planning that impacts our family, our community and businesses.

Every five years the Census of Agriculture is also conducted about every agricultural operation in the country. All residents of Canada are legally required to complete the census questionnaire.

The information that is collected and used by the government is for planning services including education, health care, transportation and the transfer payments from the federal government to the provinces. The numbers are also used to determine the number of Members of Parliament for each province and territory. Further, the census provides social data such as the number of single-parent homes, Indigenous people, immigrants, seniors and language groups.

The questions that you answered last Tuesday, May 11, involved education, ethnic diversity, income, pensions and more. There are questions about religion only in every other census, so every ten years. So, questions about religion were included in this census, as they were not asked in 2016.

Three out of every four households received a short-

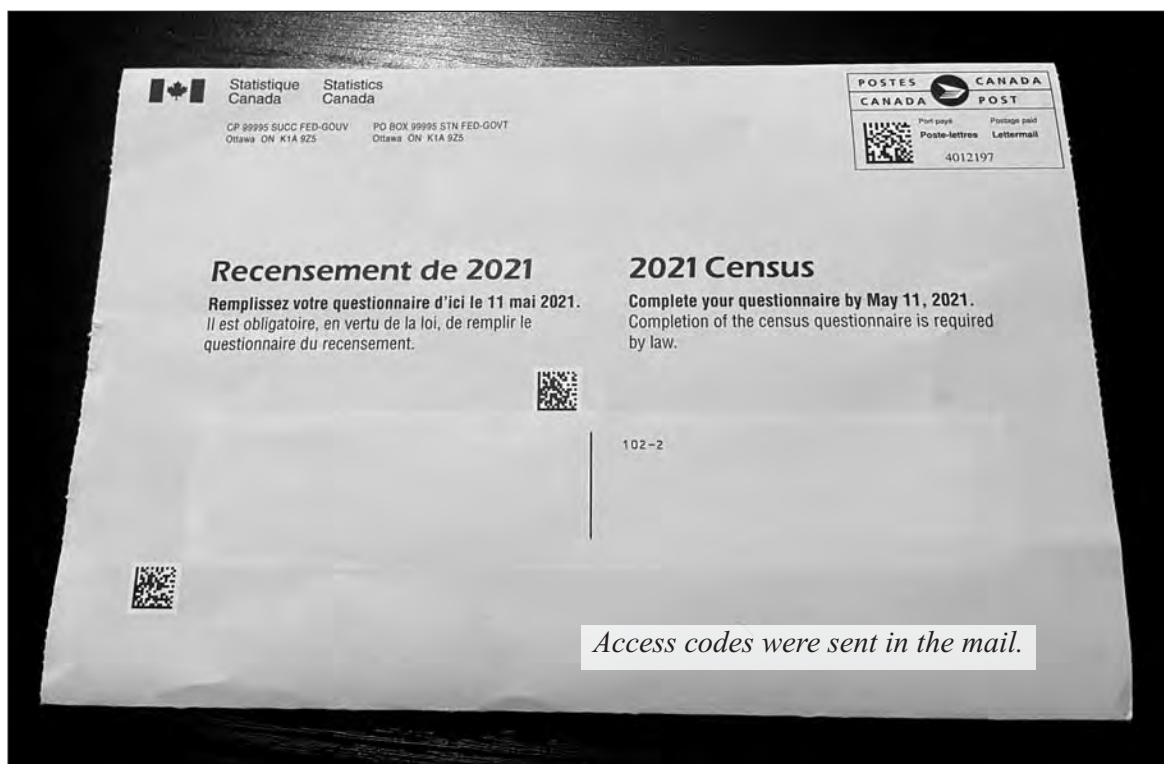


Photo: Holly Smith

form. These collect basic information. The remaining 25% received the long-form questionnaire which included extra questions about social and economic issues and information about the homes or dwellings they live in.

The population statistics gathered in the census are normally under reported by two to four percent (the results are probably lower than they really are). There are a variety of reasons for this including people not fully understanding the census form

History of the Census in Canada

The very first census in what is now Canada took place in New France in 1666. That census asked just a few questions including age, sex, marital status and occupation. The total number of inhabitants who replied that year was 3,215. Acadia also conducted its own census from 1671 to 1755.

The Constitution Act of 1867 states that a national census must take place every ten years, though now we complete it every five years. The first census under that law was held in 1871 and all inhabitants of Canada (what was then Canada) including

Indigenous people were included. The four provinces who participated were Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. In 1881 census takers, who went door to door, were required to take an oath of secrecy. By that year Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories were included in the census. In 1906 the Prairie provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba began to take their own census about population and agriculture. Newfoundland has been included since 1951.

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics who had been collecting the statistics for the census was renamed in 1971 to Statistics Canada.

Privacy

Statistics Canada has very strict procedures to protect your privacy. Under the Statistics Act, all employees are sworn to secrecy and those with access to personal information are only permitted to do so in order to complete their work as directed by the government. If you completed your census online, there are a number of measures including a secure login process and encryption be-

tween your computer and Statistics Canada. After all the information is gathered, it is stored on a highly secure network.

COVID-19

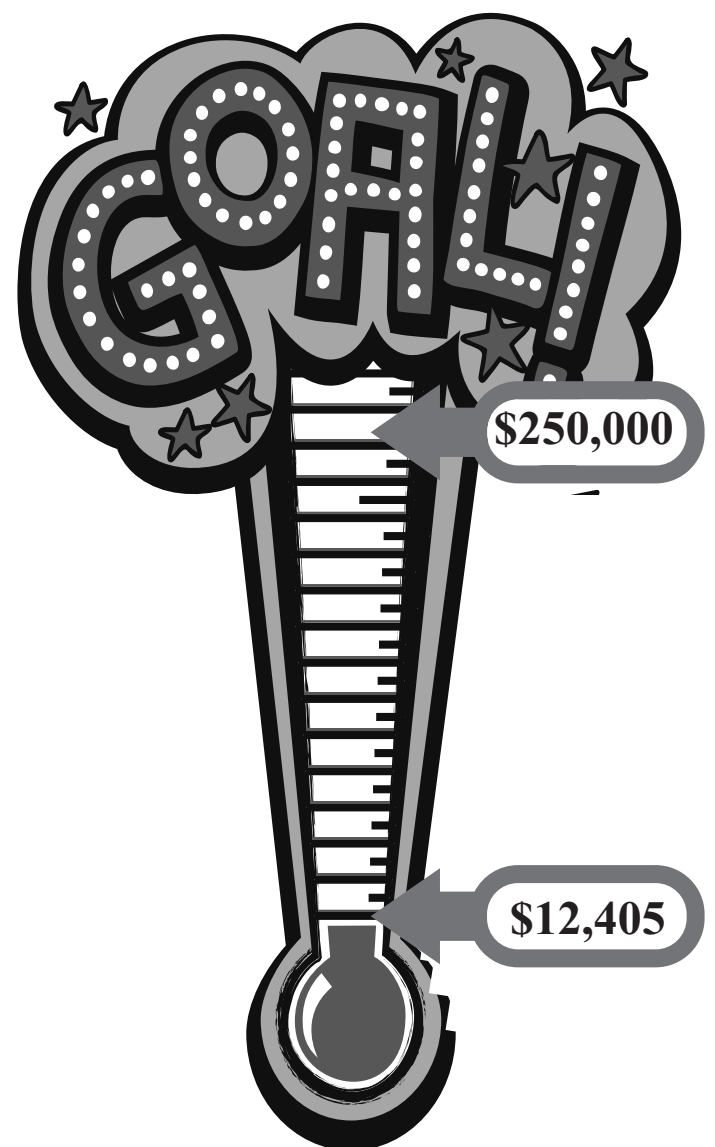
The pandemic has affected almost every aspect of

our lives and even the census has been impacted. When COVID-19 hit in March, 2020, the census form was being developed, in fact it was in the final stages. This is the first time you can complete your census online. A census employee will only go to a home when absolutely necessary and will never enter a home in order to maintain safe social distancing. Statistics Canada says that safety is always a consideration in these times.

Why?

Why should we bother filling out our census forms? It is important for us, the citizens of Canada, not just the government. The information that we supply helps the government to understand who we are: our jobs, our families, our needs. The information you return in your census helps the government with decision making and policy development.

Family Ties Fundraising update



"Family Ties gives so much to the community and have asked for so little. Now they are looking to community for a helping hand, so they can continue to support the community the way they do. I have been part of FT in many ways; from bringing my children to various activities and now as an active volunteer. I have seen first hand what a blessing they have been to our families. So please everyone, donate!" - From the gofundme page

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Shrimp fishermen win their case

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The shrimp fishermen won their case on May 13, but uncertainty remains as the position of the processors was not yet known as Spec was reaching its deadline.

The Quebec Agricultural and Food Markets Board ruled at the end of the day on May 13 in favour of the arguments of the Quebec Shrimp Fishermen's Office.

The price paid to fishermen for the period up to June 30 was set at \$1.48 per pound for large shrimp, \$1.15 per pound for medium shrimp and \$0.96 per pound for small ones. The processors offered \$0.97, \$0.89 and \$0.78 respectively.

The Quebec Fishing Industry Association maintained

that the pandemic continued to affect the market and that there was a risk of a fourth wave, that European shrimp prices were falling and that the level of inventory remained high.

The Quebec Shrimp Fishermen's Office replied that inventories were much lower and that market conditions were better than anticipated, although they were more difficult and the economic negotiations in the United Kingdom following Brexit created a favourable situation for northern shrimp.

The management considers that the AQIP's proposal appears to be out of step with respect to the market context and has submitted little verifiable data to support its arguments. The management also notes a

drop in inventories of two million pounds between 2020 and 2021.

Last year, on June 9, a hard-hitting deal was struck between shrimp fishermen and processors amid uncertainty surrounding the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The shrimp boats received \$1.65 per pound for large shrimp, \$1.35 for medium ones and \$0.84 for small from ones June 9 to 30, 2020 as decreed by the Régie des marchés agricoles.

The price negotiated as of July 1, 2020 was set at \$1.20 per pound for large shrimp, \$1.00 for medium and \$0.78 for small.

The Office and the AQIP were scheduled to discuss the situation on May 15.

Beginning... Plants to suit the inexperienced gardener

Diane **Skinner**

If you are a newcomer to gardening, you might want to begin slowly and carefully and then build on your successes. There are a few plants that you might consider if you want your garden to definitely produce some edibles. If you are a first-time gardener, these vegetables grow quickly.

Choose from some of these vegetables to begin with and those that you enjoy eating. It is fun to grow enough so that you can give some away to friends and family, especially in times of COVID-19 when any act of kindness is much appreciated. Good luck with your new adventure in gardening!

Radish

Radishes grow quickly and can be ready to harvest in four to six weeks.

Cucumbers

Super easy to grow, and do try some different varieties. There are lots to choose from, if you use seeds. A garden centre will offer seedlings for sale if you want to begin with a plant, not seeds. This increases your odds of having success in your garden.

Beans

Quick, easy and delicious cooked fresh from the garden. These must be tied up, and not left to lay on the ground where pests will devour them.

Arugula

Super easy to grow! You can start them inside and then transplant the seedlings OR plant the

seeds directly in the soil. They may be ready to harvest in as little as 30 days.

Lettuce

You can grow lettuce on a patio in a container or in the garden and this might be a great way to become familiar with gardening. It is fast growing and you can mix varieties in the same pot or garden bed.

Kale

This veggie is a powerhouse of nutrition and will grow well in a container or in the garden. They are hardy, so if there is a cold spell they should be just fine.

Bok choy

A member of the cabbage family, these are fast growing and grow well in a garden or container. They are tasty when cooked gently in an Asian stir

fry or added to soup.

Tomatoes

Tomatoes are such a satisfying plant to grow. Watching them take form and then change colour is one of the great joys of growing your own food. Try a variety of seeds or seedlings. Cherry tomatoes, heirloom - the variety is huge to choose from.

Zucchini

If you want a 'bumper' crop, this is the vegetable for you. Give them lots of water and the room they will need to grow - and they surely will. Zucchini bread, anybody?

Swiss chard

Super easy to grow! If you like spinach, you will enjoy swiss chard. A hardy plant, you may be very pleased with your harvest.



Garden centres offer seedlings for sale if you prefer to begin with a plant rather than seeds.

Photo: D. Skinner

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



You are enough!

I don't know how it was in your home and community half a century ago, but I recall that one way you never wished to be was 'big feeling.' If you were immensely proud of yourself, it was best to keep that to yourself. I think we learned to channel these ideas. I call that inner pride.

Where did this notion come from? Does it originate from religion? Throughout the Bible we are told about the consequences of too much pride. In Proverbs 16: 18 - 19, it tells us, "Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. Better to be lowly in spirit and among the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud."

However, the Bible does not say that there is anything wrong with confidence or feeling that you have done something well. That is a good thing, but it is possible that over hundreds of years the message may have been misinterpreted. I think that the feeling to be avoided is excessive pride. I think that most of us do think that a 'show-off' is not who we want to be. It is a fine line.

Confidence is what we can aim for and that is good. That is a healthy and quietly powerful feeling. Being confident helps us to be successful. We can envision what is possible and what we can achieve, because we feel capable. At different times in life, we all go through moments of self-doubt. We all struggle with having confidence in certain areas. Believing in yourself, even when having these unsure moments, is important and possible

Behaviours of those who are confident include:

- Keeps learning and growing.
- Can laugh at themselves.
- Likes spending time with others.
- Risk taker.
- Positive thinker.
- Admits mistakes.
- Takes responsibility.
- Gives compliments.
- Open minded.
- Makes decisions easily.

Behaviours of those who lack confidence:

- Stays stuck in old ways and bad habits.
- Worries what others will think.
- Dislikes people and is judgmental.
- Negative thinker.
- Blames others.
- Makes excuses.
- Close minded.
- Can't make decisions.
- Thinks people are out to get them.
- Always stays in the comfort zone.

Psychologists tell us that there are ways to move from being insecure towards more confidence.

1. Look for what you do well.
2. Improve something that you do not do well.
3. Do not constantly compare yourself to others.
4. Hang around with people who value you and your abilities.
5. Be true to yourself. Here is where you will find confidence.
6. Learn something new.
7. Look at those whose confidence you admire. Learn from them.
8. Believe this: Wherever you may be in your feelings of confidence, say to yourself, and believe it "I am enough."

Confidence can be your choice. What we tell ourselves is powerful. You are enough.

COAST ROUND-UP

GASPE:

Gaspé Cancer Foundation

The citizens of the MRC of Côte de Gaspé are asked to please note that the Annual Gaspé Cancer Foundation Membership Campaign is in full swing. 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 follow-

ing 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.

NEW RICHMOND: Fifty Plus Club

June 5: From 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., weather permitting. We are having a yard sale to raise money for the club. Due to Covid-19, we haven't been able to have any of our regular functions which keeps the club going every year. We are now at the point where we

need to do something to raise money or we will have to close the club permanently. We will be at the club all day on May 29 to accept any donations you are willing to give for us to sell at the yard sale.

UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, May 23

2 p.m. Hope Town

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Sunday, May 23

New Carlisle

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

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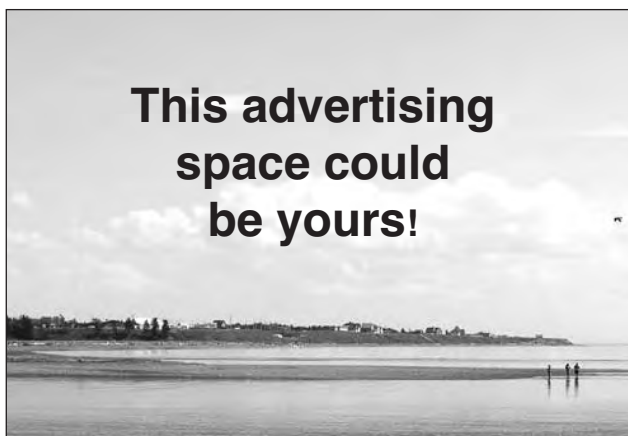
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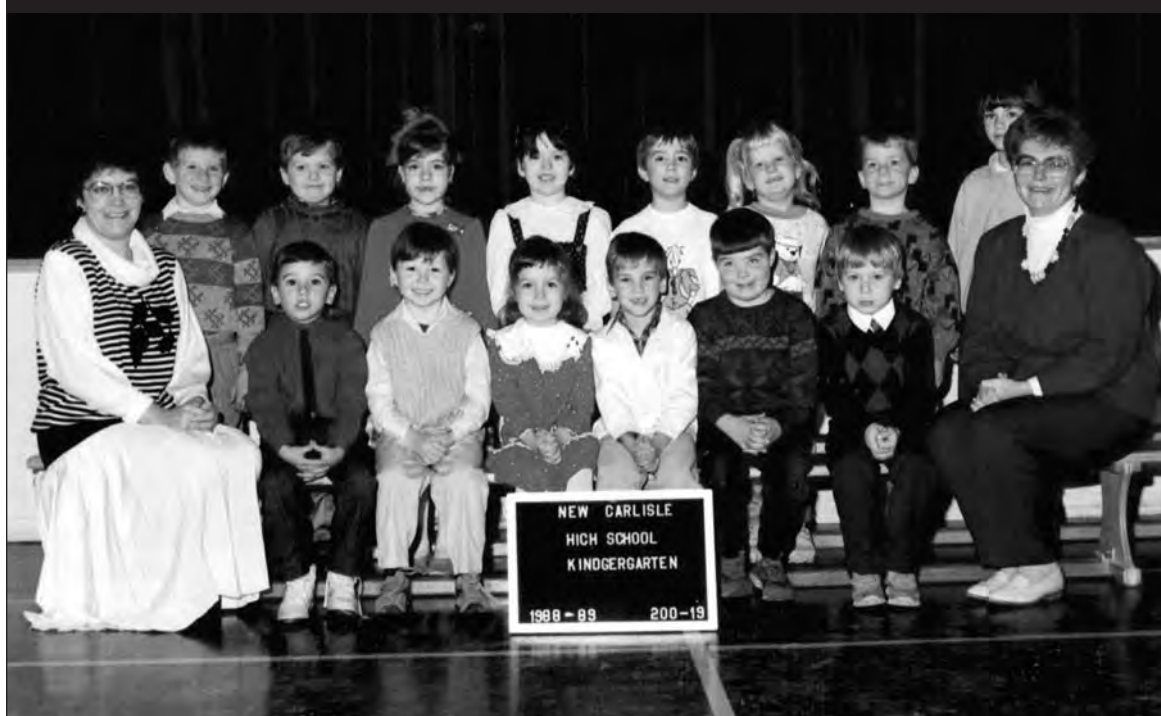
by Gary Briand

"On the wagon" is a phrase used to describe a heavy drinker's abstinence from alcohol. Originally, the phrase was "on the water wagon" which is no longer heard.

During the late 1800's water carts drawn by horses wet down the dust on roads in towns in mid-summer. At the height of the prohibition crusade in the 1890's men who vowed to stop drinking would often say that they were mighty thirsty but would rather board the water cart to get a drink of water than break their pledges. From that sentiment came the expression "I'm on the water cart," i.e I'm trying to stop drinking whiskey. The phrase first appeared in Alice Rice's Mrs Wiggs of Cabbage Patch in 1901.

The more alliterative "wagon" soon replaced "cart" in the expression and was by 1912 shortened to "on the wagon." "Fall off the water wagon" made its debut in 1914 and indicated that the thirsty man had sworn off water to return to alcohol.

Days gone by....



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Front Row: Rose-Marie Stanley, Tyson Mitchell, Paul Huntington, Tracy LaPointe, Lloyd Gallon, Jimmy Smith, Ryan Smith and Enid Bechervaise.

SUDOKU

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

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

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

ANSWER:

Spinach-Walnut Stuffed Chicken

Serves 4

- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 cup finely chopped fresh mushrooms
- 1/4 cup finely chopped celery
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 1/2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- 1/4 cup crumbled Gorgonzola cheese
- 4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves, 6 ounces each
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 egg white
- 1/4 cup ground walnuts



In a small skillet, saute the onion, mushrooms, celery and garlic in oil until tender. Stir in spinach and cheese. Remove from the heat.

Cut a lengthwise slit through the thickest part of each chicken breast. Fill it with spinach mixture. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place egg white and walnuts in separate shallow bowls. Dip one side of chicken in egg white, then in walnuts.

Place in an 11-inch x 7-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F for 25 to 30 minutes, or until chicken juices run clear.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, altruism is a noble trait, but remember to also devote some time to your own interests. There is a way to find a balance between all of your actions.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Travel plans may be on your mind, Taurus. Weigh all of the pros and cons of traveling before purchasing your plane ticket or booking that hotel.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21

Gemini, when opportunities spring

up sometime this week, you may need to grab that golden ring quickly or it is bound to pass you by in a flash. Then regrets may sink in.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

It is easy to miss the forest for the trees, Cancer. Making decisions based on one detail will not do you justice. You have to look at the bigger picture before making a decision.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, after a few amendments to your plan, you will have some good options to go on. Scorpio can give a look as well and offer some advice on how to proceed this week.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, if each day seems like a mental marathon, then you definitely need

to find some "me" time to unwind and disconnect. Schedule time each day to devote to yourself.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

It may seem productive to look at the world through rose-colored glasses, Libra, however, repeatedly guarding others from anything unpleasant can be a disservice.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Continue to stay on top of all the nuts and bolts of your daily life, Scorpio. You have been a champ at managing schedules and deadlines for yourself and others.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Health news may bring a scare, Sagittarius. If anyone can whittle down the facts and get on a solid course, it is

you. You'll get through this challenge.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, it is time to start looking for new hobbies to pass the time, especially if you've been spending a lot of time at home. You could transition into a new career.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Big changes are in store for you this week, Aquarius. You could get the news that you have been waiting for. This may mean you will have to quickly rise to action.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, while others are taking in the scenery this week, you are getting down to business. This can set you on a productive path.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

MAY 16

Megan Fox, Actress (35)

MAY 17

Bob Saget, Actor (65)

MAY 18

Jack Johnson, Singer (46)

MAY 19

Kevin Garnett, Athlete (45)

MAY 20

Rachael Platten, Singer (40)

MAY 21

Gotye, Singer (41)

MAY 22

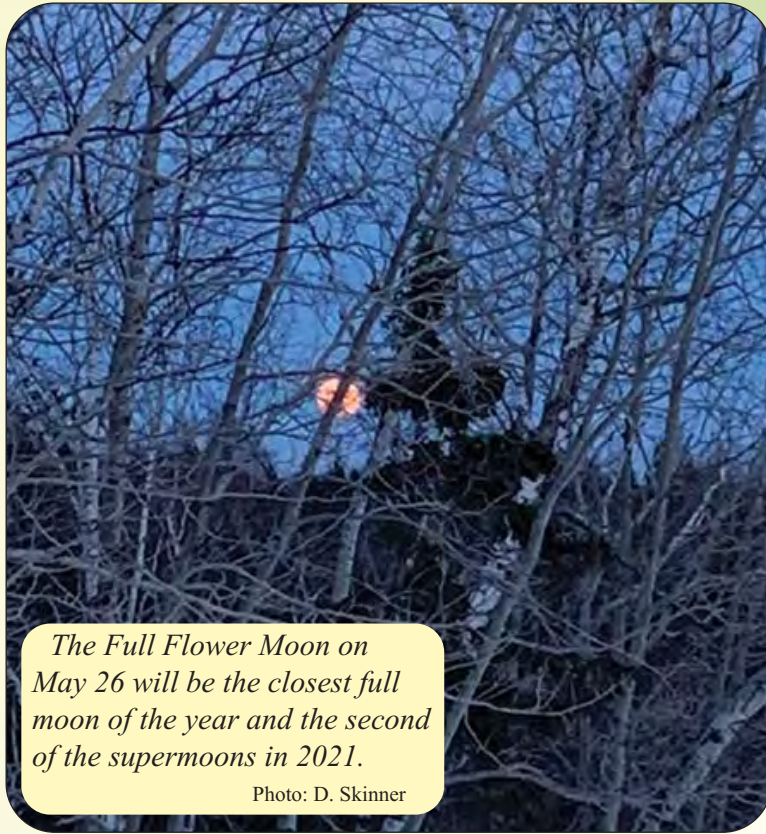
Julian Edelman, Athlete (35)

Full Flower Moon

Diane Skinner

Mark your calendars! The next full moon will be on Wednesday, May 26, 2021. This full moon will be the closest full moon of the year and the second of two supermoons. The first supermoon was April's Full Pink Moon. If you want to view this moon, weather conditions permitting, you can also see it nearly full on the night of May 25. Photographers and sky watchers look forward to these lunar events because it is a great opportunity to capture a beautiful photo. The Gaspé is the perfect environment to take outstanding photos of nature in all its forms!

There will also be a total lunar eclipse on the twenty-sixth of this month. A lunar eclipse occurs when Earth is



The Full Flower Moon on May 26 will be the closest full moon of the year and the second of the supermoons in 2021.

Photo: D. Skinner

directly between the Moon and the Sun. This means that the Earth casts its shadow on the Moon. During a total lunar

eclipse, the Moon is fully hidden by Earth's shadow which makes the moon appear red. This is where we get the term

"blood moon". Some areas will be able to witness a total lunar eclipse, but it will not be visible on the Gaspé Peninsula. Residents of western North America and western areas of South America will be able to view it.

Where did the name Flower Moon originate? The name is not surprising because flowers begin to sprout in May and that name comes to us from Algonquin culture. Other groups, peoples and cultures have alternative names for the Flower Moon and other full moons. Alternative May full moon names refer to the arrival of spring and warmer weather. These include Budding Moon, Planting Moon, Frog Moon and Moon of the Shedding Ponies.

Are humans more likely to act strangely on and around a full moon? Scientists disagree on this, however, the word "lunatic"

comes from the word luna, meaning moon. Everyone has a story of some strange behaviour on a full moon but no conclusive evidence exists.

Cross your fingers that there is a clear sky on May 26 so that you may see the lovely Full Flower Moon.

Traditional Names for Full Moons throughout the year

- Full Wolf Moon
- Full Snow Moon
- Full Worm Moon
- Full Pink Moon
- Full Flower Moon
- Full Strawberry Moon
- Full Buck Moon
- Full Sturgeon Moon
- Full Corn Moon
- Full Hunter Moon
- Full Beaver Moon
- Full Cold Moon

The Quintessential Gaspesian Meal

Diane Skinner

What meal says "home" to you? Is there a supper that says I'm on the Gaspé Peninsula? Seafood, stews, barley soup, homemade baked beans, lobster, crab, salt cod suppers... Is it any of these? They are the traditional meals.

Spec asked a number of Gaspesians, some who live elsewhere, what their ideal made in the Gaspé meal is. What is the meal that guests from away want to enjoy when they come for a visit? The variety of foods that people told us were their dream meals is surprising! It was not always the traditional ones.

"It doesn't matter what time we arrive home for our holidays, my mom always has a pot of barley soup made for us and we just grab a bowl and we know we are home. Our other perfect Gaspesian meal would be smelt with day-old potatoes, heated in the oven. Also, lobster with potato salad!" *Debbie Gallon-Manson and Laura Manson*

"I love fresh shrimps cooked in garlic butter, served with potato salad, crusty garlic bread, and macaroni salad." *Linda Kosman*

"I grew up with a father who loved to fish cod on weekends and he thought that salt cod, potatoes and grillades were about the best darn meal anyone could eat. I didn't care for it as a child but today I make my own recipe of salt



Photo: Ruth Flowers

A number of people chose the traditional salt cod supper with frying pork and potatoes with the skins on as their favourite Gaspesian meal.

codfish cakes and when I have Gaspesians visit from 'away' I often serve both fish cakes and fresh cod. I like to cook so we have plenty of extras such as creamy mashed potatoes, fresh vegetables that are in season along with garden salad topped with my own creamy dressing. I usually serve a sweet and sour chick pea salad. If I have time, I make egg bread to serve with the meal. My visitors usually come in summer so I often serve a strawberry rhubarb cake, using our own rhubarb, topped with whipped cream. It is heavenly. That is my most Gaspesian meal!" *Linda*

Drody

"My first favourite is fried flounder fillets with baked potatoes and green beans. We always eat beets, fried onions and homemade pickles with this meal. My second favourite meal would be baked ham with pineapple juice, scalloped potatoes and baked broccoli with cheese melted on top." *Becky Renouf*

"It just isn't Christmas without homemade meat pies. My husband's brothers never miss a chance to get Dixie Lee because they can't find it in Montreal. They also love crab and lobster when they visit because its harder

to find the ones fished in the Gaspé, in the city." *Holly Smith-Couture*

"I have a couple of favourite things I look forward to having when I go home. I guess that one would be smelt fried with lots of butter, new potatoes so you can eat the whole thing, skin and all, green onions, yellow beans, and coleslaw and dessert, if I had any room, would be date squares. Another favourite is boiled codfish, frying pork, of course, homemade chow, and for dessert chocolate bites. Also, lobster and potato salad after which there is no room left for dessert. Homemade pea soup and there's nothing like homemade barley soup with baking powder biscuits. I guess that these meals are something that just don't taste the same as when you are back on the Gaspé Coast!" *Darlene Gallon-Chang*

"My daughters say that they look forward to eating codfish, potatoes and Dixie Lee coleslaw when they come home. A close second is my husband Nelson's homemade meat pie with Grace's pickles, also homemade." *Rose Roussy*

"I'll speak about friends and family who visit here and what they crave is Dixie Lee. I have relatives who live in Calgary and they say there is

nothing like Dixie Lee. Actually, last time they were here, they went three times, lol!" *Elaine Sexton*

"Afternoon Tea is not a new fad. It's been enjoyed by many people wanting to have guests for an afternoon of visiting and enjoying good food. Many British people enjoy this ritual. In the Gaspé, it's beginning to catch on as a way to entertain. The menu is usually served on a three - tiered stand with sandwiches, sweets and scones or biscuits, often with lemon or cream or jams. When it comes to sandwiches, cucumber sandwiches are a must. Others such as egg salad, ham and cheese are popular as well. The best china is used to set the table." *Anne MacWhirter*

"Galvaude! The first time I ever had it was on the Gaspé and there is nothing like it in Ontario. I also love fresh crab legs from the Gaspé served with lots of garlic butter." *Valerie Skinner*

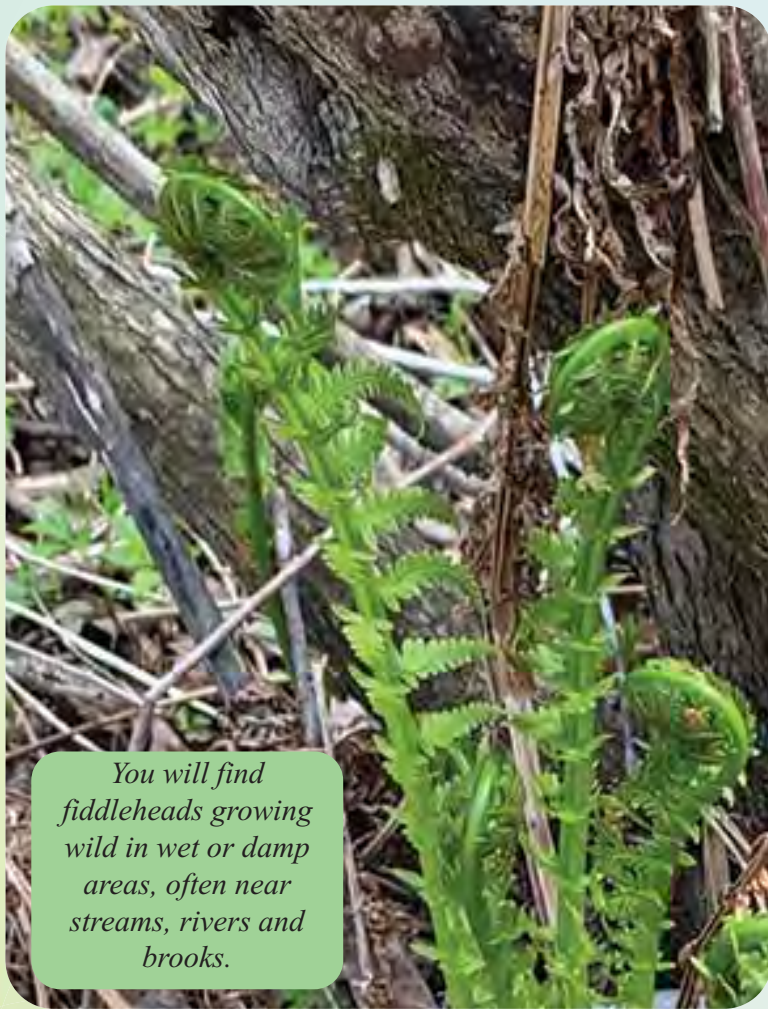
"Without a doubt - lightly salted cod fillets, potatoes with skins on, grillades (unsalted pork cut up in small pieces, cooked very slowly for an afternoon, lots of onions added at the end), rhubarb relish and canned peas. Everything except the peas all mixed together. Doesn't look really appetizing, but - ohhhh - the taste!!! Wishing I could have some right now!" *Ruth Dugdale*

Fiddleheads

Diane Skinner

Whether you pick your own, buy them in a store or from a roadside stand, or even from a neighbour, get them quickly! If you buy them in a store, the price is often high. If you see them, that is the time to buy them. The season is short and most often their little “fiddles” appear in mid-May. Fiddleheads are the furled fronds (say that five times quickly!) of a young ostrich fern. They are foraged, which means they are picked by hand in the wild by people who will either feast on them, give them away or sell them. Either way, for those who love to eat them they are one of spring’s earliest earthy treats.

Fiddleheads are so named because the top looks like the top of a violin or fiddle. The curled-up frond may also be referred to as the crozier, which is the curved staff carried by a Bishop which in turn was similar to the shepherd’s crook. When picking fiddleheads, only pick the top half of the tops on each plant or cluster. Over-picking is not good because it will result in fewer fiddleheads growing next season. Always leave



You will find fiddleheads growing wild in wet or damp areas, often near streams, rivers and brooks.

Photo: D. Skinner

some for next season and the next person.

You will find fiddleheads growing wild in wet or damp areas, often near streams, rivers and brooks. Fiddleheads have been harvested and eaten in the Gaspé for centuries. Native communities introduced fiddleheads to Europeans who settled here. The village of Tide Head, New Brunswick, is considered to be the Fiddlehead Capital of the World.

Fiddleheads, also known as fiddlehead greens, are a vegetable and are a nutrition powerhouse.

They contain antioxidants and that is good. Antioxidants are substances that remove potentially damaging oxidizing agents in living organisms. They are also a source of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, vitamins A and C and they are high in iron and fibre. In short, they are good for

you.

The flavour of fiddleheads is distinctive and some describe it as tasting similar to asparagus, another spring-time vegetable, or spinach. Others say they remind them of mushrooms, because of their earthiness, or even artichokes. In short, they taste like spring.

Beware because fiddleheads can cause food poisoning, but just follow a few simple routines to avoid this. Wash them a few times in a colander with cold running water. This gets rid of any dirt. Using your fingers remove as much of the brown papery husk on the fiddlehead as possible. Never eat fiddleheads raw.

Fiddleheads are very delicate and they quickly lose their flavour and crispiness so use them as soon as you get them. Blanching and cooking them fully will reduce the chance of food poisoning. It will also reduce any bitterness in the fiddleheads. Health Canada recommends that you cook the fiddleheads in boiling water for 15 minutes or steam them for 10 to 12 min-

utes. Add butter and a squeeze of lemon for a delicious treat.

Ferns

Ferns are one of Earth’s most ancient plants. Ferns existed before flowering plants. Ferns are fascinating because they do not have flowers or seeds. So how do they reproduce? They have spores which are a tiny one-celled unit that can create a new plant. This is also how mushrooms reproduce. Because of this unique way of reproducing, ancient people believed that ferns were magical. In the Middle Ages it was believed that ferns produced seeds once a year at midnight on June 23, at the summer solstice. The seeds were said to be invisible.

Ferns have historically been used for medicines. The underside of a fern can reduce stinging of the skin and also to treat wounds, snake bites, cuts and bruises. A paste made from the fern leaf was used to get rid of headaches and stomach pain.

Blanching Instructions

1. Wash and clean the fiddleheads.
2. Add them to a pot of boiling water, with a tsp. of salt added, for about one minute.
3. Drain. Rinse with cold water.

Sautéed Fiddleheads

- 2 pounds blanched fiddleheads
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- salt and pepper

1. Boil for 15 minutes. (per Health Canada)
2. Heat a frying pan or wok and add some butter. Add garlic, and onion until soft but not brown.
3. Add fiddleheads and sauté for about one to two minutes. Do not cook until mushy.
6. Add lemon and salt and pepper to taste.



Seasoned Fiddleheads

- 4 cups rinsed, trimmed and blanched fiddleheads
- 8 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. red-wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp. water
- 1 clove minced garlic (or use bottled, minced garlic)
- 1/2 tsp. brown sugar
- 2 drops Tabasco Sauce (if you like them spicy)
- 1/2 tsp. basil
- Salt and pepper

1. Steam blanched fiddleheads over hot water for about 15 minutes.
2. Mix the dressing ingredients (all other ingredients listed) and stir well with a small whisk.
3. Toss hot fiddleheads in the dressing. Serve.

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