

The Gaspé **SPEC**

ESTABLISHED • MAY 1975

VOLUME 47 / NO 21, JUNE 2, 2021

Contract 400119680
\$1.50 (Tax included)

Gaspésians give nature a helping hand

Gaspésians have jumped on The “No Mow May” bandwagon. The trend has gained momentum throughout the world following requests from many environmental organizations including the Nature Conservancy of Canada to postpone mowings.

Journalist Cynthia Dow first featured the topic on the front page of the May 19 issue of SPEC and it seems SPEC readers have taken the task to heart.

Although the flowers are

for the bees, children and pets sure love to play in them as well. A field of dandelions is truly a beautiful sight. Perhaps in the future we’ll view the dandelion a little differently.

As June starts, we can easily guess how many Gaspésians will be spending their upcoming weekend, so enjoy those wildflowers for now.

If you have a “No Mow May” photo that you’d like to share, send it to specs@globe-trotter.net.



Rayna Almond, 9 months; Elliott Arsenault Briggs, 10 months; and Eleanor Almond, 6 months

Photo: Raven Flowers



Aralyn Jade Dow, 9 months old



“If you build it, they will come.” Spec Vice President, Elaine Sexton, says she had a lot of visitors to her lawn, mostly birds but some bees as well.



Nova Marie Benwell, age 2



Jamie Smith and Pamela's Kruse's dog Simba is picture perfect surrounded by dandelions



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Police report

A fatal accident took place in Port Daniel East, in the early morning of May 25 around 4:30 a.m. The driver of a car going west missed a curve, his vehicle left the road, hit a light pole and telephone pole, and rolled several times before ending up in the ditch. "The driver was ejected from his vehicle. He was rushed to Chandler hospital, where he was pronounced dead," explains Sgt. Claude Doiron, spokesperson of the Sûreté du Québec. "A technician was sent to reconstruct the accident scene. Speeding appears to be the clear factor, considering the force of the impact needed to break two poles. There is no criminal element (alcohol) involved," adds Sgt. Doiron. The victim is Dany Samson, aged 37, from Bonaventure.

Sûreté du Québec police officers gave out 11 fines for COVID-19 infractions between May 17 and 23 inclusively, bringing the total since January 9 to 250. Out of the last 11 fines, one was to a person not respecting the curfew effective in his or her region of residence. Fines given out since January 9 in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands now total \$375,000. The Sûreté du Québec will stop publishing these statistics now that curfews are being removed.

Epanow Joseph, 19, from Gesgapegiag, faces charges of uttering threats, assault with a weapon, assault causing bodily harm, break and enter as well as mischief. He will be back in front of Quebec Court Judge, Embert Whittom, on August 13 at the New Carlisle courthouse. Epanow Joseph last appeared in court on May 26 for his pro forma bail hearing. He is now officially represented by Legal aid attorney, Hugo Caissy, who appeared on behalf of his client on May 26. Attorney Caissy informed the court that his client is waiving his bail hearing. The August 13 court appearance will be used for the orientation and declaration of the accused regarding his case. Epanow Joseph was charged following an incident that occurred in a residence located along Highway 132 in Bonaventure, on the evening of May 15. He was charged on May 17, a few hours after his arrest. The victim is a man in his thirties. He was hospitalized due to his injuries, which were not life-threatening. He was hit with a rotund object. A forensic technician analyzed the crime scene on May 16. The Sûreté du Québec is not excluding other arrests in that case.

The Gaspé Peninsula, Magdalen Islands and Lower Saint Lawrence road statistics for the three-day long weekend in May show tendencies that vary, compared to the 2020 numbers. Eleven collisions with injuries occurred, three more than a year ago, however, three people were arrested while driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, an improvement compared to the 10 cases of 2020. One driver was fined for not respecting the zero-alcohol rule in his or her blood.

During the long weekend, 356 people were fined for speeding, while seven more were stopped for not fastening their seat belts. Six drivers were fined because they were using their cellular phones while driving. Sûreté du Québec officers also handed out 208 additional infraction tickets related to other offenses. A total of 578 infractions were given to drivers on May 22, 23 and 24 of this year compared to 418 a year ago.



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

A study will identify the problems at the Chic-Chocs School Service Centre.

Chic-Chocs School Service Centre undergoes an organizational analysis

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - Plunged into turmoil since the resignation of six administrators and the director of human resources in recent weeks, the Chic-Chocs School Service Centre is undergoing an organizational analysis to find a way out of the crisis.

There's no question of going on a witch hunt warns the board of directors which detailed on May 26 the process after its adoption on the evening of May 25. The contract will be given by June 4, but due to the summer vacation period, it is more realistic to estimate the tabling of the report for September.

Over the months, those who resigned, along with the Parents' Committee have targeted management in particu-

lar, but administrator Anik Truchon isn't questioning the management.

"We are undertaking a collective process to shed light on what is happening by involving all the people concerned. We are referring to employees, members of the board of directors and members of the board of directors who have resigned, in order to have a global picture," explains Ms. Truchon.

Without making the report public, the administrators promise to reveal the conclusions of the analysis.

The general manager, Deslilas Fournier, has been on sick leave since Tuesday. The Member of the National Assembly for Gaspé, Méganne Perry Mélançon, welcomes the approach, noting that the pres-

sure of recent weeks, linked in particular to the toxic climate and psychological harassment following the departure of administrators and the director of human resources, is yielding results.

For its part, the Parents Committee considers that the decision to order an organizational analysis is a step in the right direction, however, remains cautious for what follows.

The treasurer, Nancy Chicoine, agrees that the process be confidential for people who wish to testify, but requires that the results of the process be made public.

The committee had unveiled several issues in a recent resolution in which it appealed to Minister Jean-François Roberge.



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE EASTERN SHORES EASTERN SHORES SCHOOL BOARD

AVIS PUBLIC ADOPTION D'UN RÈGLEMENT

EST PAR LES PRÉSENTES DONNÉ par le soussigné, directeur général QUE :

Lors de la séance ordinaire tenue le 25 mai 2021 le conseil des commissaires de la Commission scolaire Eastern Shores a adopté le règlement suivant :

REGLEMENT 14 : DÉLÉGATION DE FONCTIONS ET POUVOIRS

Le présent règlement adopté par la résolution C21-05-719 entre en vigueur dès sa parution par avis public indiquant son adoption.

Fait à New Carlisle (Québec)
Le 26 mai 2021

Hugh Wood
Directeur General

PUBLIC NOTICE ADOPTION OF BY-LAWS

IS HEREBY GIVEN by the undersigned, the Director General, that:

At the regular meeting of the Council of Commissioners of Eastern Shores School Board held on May 25, 2021, the following By-Law was adopted:

BY-LAW 14: THE DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

The present by-law adopted by resolution C21-05-719 will take effect on the date of its publication by a public notice indicating its adoption.

Given at New Carlisle, Quebec, this 26th day of May, 2021

Hugh Wood
Director General

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COVID-19 Avignon-West outbreak effect diminished by the end of May

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – The COVID-19 situation improved drastically in the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands between May 22 and 28 inclusively, as the number of new cases reported by the Public Health Board was 19 for the week, compared to 67 over the previous week.

The new cases remained concentrated in the Avignon

MRC during the last full week of May but to a much lesser extent. From a daily average of close to 10 new cases between May 15 and 21, that average went down to a little fewer than three new daily cases over the ensuing week. Originally, 66 new cases were reported during the May 15 to 21 week but a case was added a few days later, for statistical purposes.

Most of the active cases were concentrated in the Avi-

gnon MRC as of May 28. That part of the region recorded 32 of the region's 41 cases. That is 78% of the region's cases. It was the only area of the peninsula and the archipelago where the number of cases was revealed.

The Côte-de-Gaspé MRC and the Magdalen Islands are exempt of COVID-19 cases as of May 28. There were also fewer than five active cases in the Bonaventure, Percé Rock

and Haute-Gaspésie MRCs. In the latter case, it was a major improvement compared to the first half of May when, for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic, the Haute-Gaspésie MRC was hit by an important outbreak and was leading the whole region in the number of active cases.

The Avignon MRC outbreak is mainly due to cases reported in the west part of the area, as cases were first noticed

at the Saint-François and Deux-Rivières schools, located in Saint-François and Matapédia respectively. A teacher who had travelled to Quebec City to take part in an anti-mask demonstration was apparently the source of the outbreak; a scenario the regional Public Health Board refused to confirm.

Both schools remained wholly or partly closed until

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Editorial section

Gilles Gagné Commentary



Olympic Games: downsizing is needed

The Olympic Games will start on July 23 in Tokyo, Japan, but the level of opposition in the Japanese population is hitting record levels since the postponement in the spring of 2020 due to the pandemic. The slight improvement of the worldwide COVID-19 front hasn't convinced the Japanese that the games can proceed, 50 days down the road.

The reasons are numerous. Japan's government's management of the pandemic is a major source of frustration for the country's population. The number of fatalities is relatively low, but the very low level of vaccination in Japan, an incredibly mediocre proportion of 4%, has the Japanese disgruntled with their government.

As of May 20, up to 40% of Japan's population was in favour of postponing one the greatest sporting events on the planet, while 43% was rooting for the cancellation of the games. Add those numbers to the fact that 70% of Japanese disapprove of their government's management of the pandemic and it is easy to understand that people hardly support the authorities now.

Moreover, 88% of the Japanese population think that their country's situation will worsen with the arrival of 15,000 athletes and 90,000 Olympic officials, journalists and support staff from all over the world.

The excitement about the games, conspicuous early in 2019 has practically vanished. The Japanese are quick to point out that their government only recently approved the use of the Moderna and AstraZeneca vaccines to support Pfizer's, in the hope of having 25% of the seniors vaccinated with their first shot when the games will end on August 8. Elders represent a significant proportion of

Japan's population, but vaccinating 25% of them by August 8 will only allow the country to reach between 10 and 15% of vaccinated people, overall.

For the authorities, be them the government and the International Olympic Committee, cancelling the games is not an option.

Japan has been counting on the event to show the world that the nation has overcome the financial crisis of the 1990s, which slowed down its economy for slightly more than two decades. Holding the games is a matter of pride. It is also a matter of money. Japanese governments have spent in excess of \$15 billion to hold the games. It is always difficult to know the exact figures. Most governments brag about having settled a good business deal when they get the Olympic Games but they are then caught by the fever of showing the world how beautiful their country is. Frivolous spending and cost overrun then take over.

It is also a matter of money for the International Olympic Committee (IOC), which is reportedly functioning with \$5.7 billion over a four-year cycle, however, 91% of that amount is tied to the Olympic Games taking place, since 73% of the money comes from the television rights and 18% derives from sponsorships, the visibility private firms are getting through putting banners and sports gear here and there. The IOC will keep half of the \$5.7 billion to organize the next winter and summer games. The other half will be spread between the participating countries' sports federations. That is why the pressure comes from all over the world to hold the Tokyo games, no matter what.

Over the last 30 years or so though, a rising number of people around the world are questioning the relevance of keeping the model used to choose the city and country for the Olympic Games. Politics and money have become increasingly front and centre in the selection process.

Not that money and politics were strangers to that process before. Olympics Games have almost always

been used to promote political systems and bribe people. Back in 1936, Adolf Hitler used the Berlin games to exhibit the power of a country that was practically moribund 10 years earlier.

Over the years, other political issues have marred the games. Now, television rights have become such an important part of the Olympic Games that they can be held even if the stands are 90% empty. NBC, has become such an important part of the equation that at the Beijing games in 2008, its management imposed swimming finals early in the morning in China so that they could be aired live during the evening in the United States, given the time zone. The athletes count very little in that context. The show must go on.

For a lot of people who like sports, the Olympic Games are a gem, however, they have likely become too big. It has reached a point where the number of countries in a financial position to organize the game is going down. Only a handful of them show up nowadays. Even rich countries are not entering bids to get them anymore. The cost is too exorbitant and the advantages too low for the countries that don't want to use them for political gains.

There are more efficient ways to stimulate sporting in the population and keep facilities up-to-date. Elite sport competitions certainly reach some people but it is not the best way to encourage people to be active. A couch potato watching the Olympic Games will switch to another sport aired on television once they are over. The overall benefits of being active physically are better served by investment in public health and facilities all over a country, compared to the billions of dollars necessary to hold the games.

Doping has also cast a doubt on the reputation of the athletes, the system and the means involved in reaching the top. Too many clean athletes suffer from that doubt while a lot of television viewers are blinded by what they see on their screen.

Olympic Games, like other professional sports, have become ridiculously huge. Something needs to trigger a reflection on the relevance of current system. It is far from sure that such reform will take place. A lot of people continue to watch sports as a method to forget their other problems and there's no guarantee that will change.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Having heard that NCHS may be relocated, it certainly brought back memories of its importance as a historical landmark not only for the town of New Carlisle but also for the whole of the Gaspé. The building, over the years, underwent certain renovative work which obviously didn't prove beneficial in the long run. Then again century old buildings are always a challenge to restore and very costly. In today's way of constant 'co\$t'- thinking, it seems to be the first solution – that to demolish and start anew. Unfortunately and far too often, we tend to forget about the intrinsic values, the history, the passion that was invested and nurtured within its halls and rooms for well over a century. This iconic building was home and bastion of a community's identity. It hosted stage performances, harvest suppers, regional tournaments, conventions, Home & School meetings and most importantly it gave a respectable education to thousands of students who graduated from NCHS over the years.

At what point does one come to realize that it sometimes isn't an issue of money but more of intrinsic value to a town's community? Stripping a community of its heritage-based infrastructures may be more costly in the long run and a threat to its survival.

Normand Desjardins

Former teacher at NCHS, Arts Department.



The Gaspé Spec

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

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

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

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DENTAL CARE:

Insufficient reimbursement impacts return to work

Gilles Gagné

PASPEBIAC – Viateur Langlois, a man from Chandler, is criticizing the small sums paid by the *Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec* as reimbursement of dental prostheses for social assistance recipients. According to him, those small sums considerably slowed down his momentum to re-enter the labour market.

Mr. Langlois, who is 62 years old and looking for employment is struggling to find a denturist willing to take him on as a client. Those difficulties are complicated by the fact that denturists are more and more reluctant to install a poor-quality dental prosthesis, ill-suited to clients. This is likely to happen because the sums offered by the *Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec*, Quebec's public health insurance body, only allow the acquisition of cheap prostheses or partials.

A prosthesis for the upper dentition is worth only a reimbursement of \$717 by the *Régie de l'assurance-maladie* (RAMQ) while a lower prosthesis is worth \$924. A partial,

whether for the top or the bottom, only generates a refund of \$439. These numbers have not changed for eight years, says Mr. Langlois.

"It's been six months since I've had any teeth on the bottom. The problem is that denturists and dentists are opting out because the *Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec* does not reimburse sufficient amounts. It's ridiculous, as amounts. Denturists know it, and they say it, the prostheses they can put in with those amounts will be of poor quality; plastic won't last and will hurt. People can't chew on it. If those aren't quality prostheses, it's wasted money," explains Viateur Langlois.

Having already paid \$3,500 for an upper prosthesis and a partial one eight years ago, Mr. Langlois knows for sure that the \$1,641 offered by the RAMQ will not be enough to replace his upper prosthesis and make him one at the bottom. That's less money for more work than in 2013, excluding inflation.

"I have lost 50 pounds since last year. My top prosthesis no longer works. I have to stick it there every day.



Viateur Langlois wants to reintegrate into the labour market but his dental problems are a serious obstacle in the achievement of that goal, he says.

Photo: Gilles Gagné

RAMQ's logic is hard to understand

Gilles Gagné

The president of the *Association des denturologistes du Québec*, Benoit Talbot, is inexhaustible in the face of what he calls the incongruity of the government's dental care apparatus for social assistance recipients.

"Yes, it's \$717 for a full denture on the top and \$924 for a denture on the bottom, but it's \$1275 for both! For a partial, \$439 is crap! It doesn't cover the cost of doing so. These are effectively the same rates since 2013-2014," says Mr. Talbot.

"Dentists no longer do prostheses for \$800; therefore 95% of prostheses are made by denturists. If I were a dentist, I wouldn't make them either," he adds.

Benoit Talbot is not surprised to see the case of Viateur Langlois. "Denturists are withdrawing from RAMQ. We no longer make prostheses for social assistance recipients," he said.

When the Gaspé SPEC asks him if this refusal to make prostheses for this clientele

does not amount to taking them as hostages, Mr. Talbot assures that it is not the case. Denturists "are trying to make something happen."

He specifies that his colleagues have very few means to "move something" at the governmental level, to change the current context.

Are there any discussions with the RAMQ? "The discussion is non-existent. The reason is simple. We do not sit on the negotiating committee for these rates. When she was Minister of Health, Ms. Marois (Pauline) had reserved spots for two of our members in 2002. But there was a change of government. The dentists are supposed to negotiate for us. But what's the point of negotiating things you don't do? I'm giving a number for the example but if dentists see \$10 million at stake and \$9,999,999 comes back to them, why would they negotiate (for the missing dollar)?" asks Mr. Talbot.

It gets worse, he says. "The denturist is required by law to make the partial for \$439. I have to say no to him (the cus-

Since I had to have my lower teeth pulled out, my partial is no longer useful and I need a prosthesis," he adds.

"I would pay the balance with my credit card. The only denturist I was able to meet refused. I don't know why. He didn't tell me (...) The other problem was that I called other denturists elsewhere. I won't have a date (an appoint-

ment) for a year. I would pay the difference between the RAMQ amount and the actual cost out of my pocket. I'm tired of not having teeth. I want to eat something solid," he insists.

Viateur Langlois has lived through a few fights in his life.

He was diagnosed with bipolar disorder at the age of 20, having completed two years of training to become a police officer.

"I went through the strait-jacket, the injections, the prejudices. I've known it all. I have also given 45 conferences in mental health in Quebec. I have a certificate in mental health from Université Laval. I act as a peer helper. I have a background in tourism and worked in that field for 14 years. I used to be a forestry worker. I have travelled to several countries," he says.

In 2019, he successfully fought metastatic thyroid cancer. In his journey to resume a normal life, Mr. Langlois lost weight, notably through bariatric surgery in 2020.

"I've been taking five less medications since losing 50 pounds. I want to return to the job market. My mental health is good. My physical health is good, but it's hard to think that I can contribute more to our society without bottom teeth, without eating normally," he concludes.

Inconsistency in coverage

Gilles Gagné

A small change in the age range for a denturist's client can make all the difference in the quality of treatment, says Benoit Talbot.

"Recently, the Ministry of Health and Social Services, the same ministry that sets RAMQ rates, released a rate chart for people in CHSLDs. A full top denture (is valued at) \$1,080 and a full bottom denture, \$1,380. The two together are worth \$2,168. For partials, it's \$1,365, top or bottom. This means that Mrs. Tremblay, 64, who is a welfare recipient, is entitled to a plastic partial at \$439. Mrs. Gagnon, 65, who lives in a CHSLD (public residence for seniors) is entitled to a metal partial at \$1,365! That makes two categories of citizens!" stresses Mr. Talbot.

The Gaspé SPEC attempted to obtain confirmation of the amounts for prostheses and partials from the *Régie de l'assurance-maladie du Québec*, while asking whether it is true that the amounts have not been indexed in eight years.

"You must contact the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity. The dental prosthesis program for social assistance recipients is under its responsibility," replied the RAMQ.

After presenting at length the various eligibility conditions for dental care despite not being asked to do so, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity indicates "for any information concerning the amounts provided for dental prostheses, you must contact the RAMQ."

Benoit Talbot is not surprised by this hot potato game played by the two ministries.

"Eleven years ago, we met the former Minister of Health (Yves) Bolduc. He understood everything. Nothing happened. Then, we met minister (Gaétan) Barrette; he understood everything, nothing happened. During the last meeting with RAMQ officials, we were told: "we guarantee you that you will be listened to! Hey! Do you think I'm satisfied, going home, after having been told that I'm guaranteed a listen?" he says.

"The price guide of the *Association des denturologistes du Québec* offers \$2,600 for two complete prostheses, the CHSLDs (offer) \$2,168 and the RAMQ, \$1,275. I think \$2,000 for two full dentures for welfare recipients would be acceptable," he concludes.

Calls for the suspension of the CEO of the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS

Nelson **Sergerie**

CHANDLER - The Member of the National Assembly for Bonaventure is asking Quebec to suspend the President and CEO of the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS), while the Auditor General completes the audit on the administrative management of the organization.

Sylvain Roy believes that the Minister of Health cannot ignore the audit into Chantal Duguay's administration.

The audit, announced on May 20, comes in the wake of allegations of favouritism raised last February. Disclosures about the presence of family members or long-time close associates of the CEO in the organization had been publicized. Close family ties between the director of nursing, Johanne Méthot, had been revealed as her



Photo: N. Sergerie

The President and CEO of the CISSS de la Gaspésie, Chantal Duguay.

spouse, daughters and sisters worked in the organization. Various elements on administrative management were also mentioned.

People are invited to participate by submitting facts and documents to advance the audit on the auditor's

website.

"If the Auditor General is investigating the CISSS de la Gaspésie, there is evidence that leads her to do so. As a precautionary measure and sound management, the Minister should ask the CEO to step down from her duties

and she should do so," says Sylvain Roy.

Since the announcement, the Parti Québécois Member of the National Assembly has received several comments from people who no longer believed in this audit as he continuously received information on questionable management since his first election in 2012.

Mr. Roy had forwarded to the government and to the Auditor General dozens of documents received in recent months. "The file that was filed was strong enough to announce an investigation. There were a lot of testimonies and a lot of documents, proof in support of certain administrative behaviors which could be verified," says Mr. Roy, who indicates that it is now up to the population to transmit all the information in order to advance the audit.

The gesture proves that

the allegations heard in recent years challenge the Auditor General, according to the Union of Nurses, Auxiliaries and Respiratory Therapists of Eastern Quebec.

"It must be relatively worrisome what is on the drawing board for her to decide to lead this investigative process," says President Pier-Luc Bujold.

The union will wait to see the report before taking a position, hoping that the Auditor will do a thorough investigation.

Mr. Bujold is not sure at this time whether the union will file any documents during the audit. "We are going to look at all this in union proceedings to analyze the situation and see if we should file anything, according to what has already been filed," explains Mr. Bujold.

The auditor expects to release her findings next spring.

Regional organizations provide ideas for childcare services

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - Regional organizations and childcare service partners in the Gaspé Peninsula-Magdalen Islands and Lower Saint Lawrence are asking the Ministry of Family to put children back at the forefront of the network.

This is the conclusion that emerged after the first regional consultation held by Minister Mathieu Lacombe on May 25 that occurred in a virtual setting.

The Gaspé Peninsula-Magdalen Islands and the Lower Saint Lawrence are the first two regions to be heard by the ministry.

The *Centre de la petite enfance* (CPE) network is 25

years old and the minister in his opening remarks, says change is needed. "It is a consultation exercise that will be a comprehensive basis that will allow us to develop an innovative vision of the future of educational childcare services. I am very convinced of the relevance of this approach," indicated Minister Lacombe.

Several ideas were raised during the consultation: the enhancement of the profession and the flexibility of permits in rural areas or "floaters" teams to replace family managers during their holidays were mentioned in particular, as well as the reduction of the administrative and regulatory burden.

The director of the CPE

Voyage of my childhood in Gaspé, Gilles Chapados, proposed more predictability in the development of the network in each of the regions. "If we have a scope on how the plan will be developed over three or five years, we are able to form a collective action plan," says the director, which would avoid unhealthy competition between

organizations to obtain places.

The definition of residence for home childcare providers (RSGs) must be relaxed.


"You have to see it as a living environment where one or two RSGs could be found. We could review the ratio, the subsidies and perhaps the bonus that could be attached to it," according to his colleague from

the CPE Joyeux Marmots in Carleton-sur-Mer, Karine Pelletier.

Once the exercise is complete in the regions, a provincial consultation will take place on June 16 and 17. A study by the *Regroupement des MRC de la Gaspésie* estimated the lack of spots in the region to be at least 612.



Children must be the priority when reforming childcare services.



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE EASTERN SHORES EASTERN SHORES SCHOOL BOARD

<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">AVIS PUBLIC</p> <p>Conformément à l'article 392 de la Loi sur l'instruction publique, avis public est donné par la présente que la Commission scolaire Eastern Shores prévoit modifier les dates et les heures des réunions du comité exécutif et du Conseil des commissaires pour l'année scolaire 2021-2022.</p> <p>Le nouvel horaire sera présenté pour adoption à la réunion du Conseil des commissaires du 22 juin 2021 qui se tiendra à 18 h 30 au Centre administratif de la Commission scolaire Eastern Shores situé au 40, rue Mountsorrel, New Carlisle (Québec).</p> <p>Donné à New Carlisle, Québec de 26e jour de mai 2021.</p> <p>Hugh Wood Directeur général</p>	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">PUBLIC NOTICE</p> <p>Pursuant to Section 392 of the Education Act, public notice is hereby given that the Council of Commissioners of Eastern Shores School Board intends to modify the dates and times of the Executive Committee and Council of Commissioners meetings for the 2021-2022 school year.</p> <p>The new schedule will be presented for adoption at the June 22, 2021, meeting of the Council of Commissioners to be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Eastern Shores School Board Administrative Centre situated at 40 Mountsorrel Street, New Carlisle, Quebec.</p> <p>Given at New Carlisle, Quebec, this 26th day of May 2021.</p> <p>Hugh Wood Director General</p>
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Bonaventure MRC launches cultural policy to “create bridges”

Cynthia Dow

On May 26, Bonaventure MRC launched a new cultural policy by means of a live Facebook event staged from the *Site historique du Banc de Paspébiac*. Emcee Johanne Lebrun introduced a few guests, all strategically distanced within the historic warehouse.

The event started with a beautiful Mi'gmaq song by Jeannette Martin of Gesgapegiag.

One of the members of the committee who worked on the policy, Dave Felker, gave a bilingual presentation on the objectives of the policy, which includes making cultural events and activities more accessible to a larger share of the population, encouraging exchanges between the different ethnic groups in the region, and supporting artists, musicians and other producers.

“Through this policy, we want to highlight the rich culture of our MRC, mobilize the cultural sector and help it stand out. We want to help both individuals and the community develop and grow culturally,” Mr. Felker explained.

Bruno Mainville, project



Photo: MRC of Bonaventure

Artist Michelle Larouche; Mayor Roch Audet, who chaired the committee; Éric Dubé, Prefect of the MRC; cameraman Gabriel; Éric Proulx of La semelle verte; Jeannette Martin; Dave Felker; Bruno Mainville, project manager; singer-songwriter Éric Dion; MC Johanne Lebrun; Maité Samuel-Leduc; Thomas Martens and Andrée D'Amours of the Paspébiac site, and their team.

manager, told SPEC, “It was my passion from the beginning to make sure the committee reflected the various ethnic groups in the area, as well as people from different sectors such as historic, artistic, a gender balance, elected officials. I found it very agreeable to work with our little group.”

The Mayor of Bonaventure, Roch Audet, who chaired the committee also

addressed the internet audience. He noted that the committee had been working since February 2020 and thanked the members for their work. He also thanked Mélissa Bélanger, who provided administrative support. “The MRC is going to be hiring a cultural coordinator to carry out this policy,” the mayor explained.

Asked when the policy will be implemented, Bruno

Mainville noted that “work has already begun to implement the action plan, and I have already started to form

committees. For example, CASA participated in a meeting on heritage and multi-culturalism. They shared their projects and I brought them up to date on where the MRC is heading. We'll just have to decide what we can do together.”

Next step is to establish a cultural development committee. So far Dave Felker, Thomas Martens, Chantal Robitaille, and Mayor Roch Audet from the original committee have agreed to continue.

During the online event, which lasted about half an hour, music was provided by Éric Dion, and a video produced by La Semelle Verte was shown. Visual artist Michelle Larouche worked on a mixed-media artwork during the launch.

(Full disclosure: Cynthia Dow served on the committee)

Coming Home: New principal for Gaspé Polyvalent

Jeanie LeLacheur

Shauna Simpson recently stepped into the role of principal for the Gaspé Polyvalent. How does it feel coming home to a position at the high school she graduated from? “Excited, a little nervous and really happy about coming home to live near my family and the ocean,” says Ms. Simpson.

Professionally, Shauna wants to give back to her community, and like so many students who didn't have a great high school experience, she hopes to contribute to a feeling of belonging for students, a place where they feel safe, where they can be comfortable and successful as they work towards their goals.

No stranger to the mountains and valleys of the education system, Shauna, a graduate of Gaspé Polyvalent and Gaspé Cegep, went to Bishops University where she earned an Education degree and spent the past 13 plus years working in the schools of Northern Quebec. Committed to team work, Shauna says it's not about telling people what to do but rather getting to know the strengths of the Poly's staff and having clear expectations because “you can't hit a moving target.”

Will there be challenges? Yes, including the Covid-19 pandemic and measures which have added stress to the school functioning and essentially the first year will be an adjustment period; one where trust will need to be built, and in Shauna's words, “people will learn what I'm all about, a year to get and give feedback, and find the tools and strategies that allow a group of individuals to work respectfully and safely together for the success of students and staff alike.”

Shauna is settling in on the Coast, she has welcomed a new niece and is the honored godmother. She especially appreciates the time she gets to spend with family including her grandparents.



Photo: Courtesy S. Simpson

Birthplace of Canada: Nautical activities



Photo: Birthplace of Canada, Simon Bujold.

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - The Birthplace of Canada site in Gaspé will offer recreational and tourism activities on the water as of summer 2022.

The organization, which already had two docks on the eastern part of the point for small autonomous non-motorized boats, will add six floating docks of 11.5 metres each by recovering the facilities that

were in Penouille in Forillon Park and which belong to Escalé Gaspésie. They will be located to the west of the site.

Boaters will be able to stop there for a few hours and take a stroll downtown.

There will be small floating docks and a gangway linking the docks and the shore.

A selection of activities such as pedal boats and kayaking could possibly be offered as well. “We often had the comment

that we have an exceptionally beautiful body of water and we should use it. Over the past few months, we have really done everything we can to promote this project. We are going to energize and offer maritime activities,” states the general manager, Laurie Denis.

The \$309,000 project is in the authorization stage. A building will be erected to offer water activities.

**Even once vaccinated,
you still need
to protect yourself.**



Let's work together to keep respecting health measures
so we can protect each other.

[Québec.ca/coronavirus](https://Quebec.ca/coronavirus)

Proud to be Gaspesian

Gaspesian Day! Journée de la Gaspésie! Gespe'gewa'gi!

Diane Skinner

This will be the fifteenth year that Gaspesian Day will be celebrated by all cultures on the Gaspé Peninsula. It is celebrated yearly on the first Thursday of June. This year that will fall on June 3.

On this day we are all encouraged to show our pride in being Gaspesian. This can be done in a variety of ways. Many ESSB schools celebrate the day and ask students to wear blue!

You can buy a t-shirt, hoodie, sweatshirt, socks and more merchandise all in the royal blue colour that represents the Gaspé Peninsula. Go online to *Vivre en Gaspésie* and select Collection Gaspésie. Items may be purchased until June 7, 2021, or possibly longer. Prices posted are adult T-shirt \$22.95, adult hoodie/sweatshirt \$37.50 / \$32.95, child's hoodie \$34.50,



The students of St. Patrick's School proudly displaying their Gaspesian blue in 2018. Looking forward to seeing all of your 2021 Gaspesian Proud photos.

child's T-shirt \$18.95, socks \$11.95, headband \$9.95 and badges \$4.95.

Of course, you do not need to buy one of the items in this year's Gaspé Collection. Wear blue clothing of any sort on June 3 to show your Gaspesian

Pride! You can post a selfie of you wearing your 'Gaspé blue' or just use your existing Facebook profile photo and edit it by adding a free Gaspesian Pride filter. Just click on your profile picture and you will see "Select frame." Type in Gaspesian

Pride and the filter will be offered in English, French and Mi'gmaq. Click "add frame."

On Thursday, June 3, at 7 p.m., *Vivre en Gaspésie* will be broadcasting a virtual show featuring the music of Pamela Rooney, The Pop Trigger group

and The Triculturals (M'Lou, Dave Felker, Kevin Jones and Melissa Girvan). The show will be hosted by Stephanie Gauthier and Jennifer Hayes. Watch the show on the Facebook page of *Vivre en Gaspésie*.

Vivre en Gaspésie

This website is active all year and is well worth a look. Their mission is to feature all that the Gaspé has to offer and interest people in moving to the Gaspé. Besides Gaspesian Day, it offers information on the region and photos and comments from people who have either moved here or moved back to the Gaspé. It also has many job postings listed.

Celebrate your Gaspesian pride on June 3!

You know who you are. You're Gaspesian. Be proud. Yell it out. Don't be shy. Yell it out loud!

The Great Gaspesian Quiz - 2021

Here is a quiz that tests your knowledge about your beloved peninsula just in time for Gaspesian Day, 2021. Some questions are historical and a few are geographical. So, grab a pen and give it your best. It's all for fun and there are no prizes, other than the sense of pride you get from having so much Gaspesian knowledge. - Diane Skinner

- The mountain range that extends onto the Gaspé Peninsula is part of the _____ Mountains which begin in Alabama.
 - The highway that travels around the peninsula is known as Route _____
 - At the northeastern tip of the Gaspé is a large park called _____ National Park.
 - Murdochville has a varied history. Historically, it was a booming centre for _____
 - Miguasha has been named a World Heritage Site. Why? _____
 - In what year did Jacques Cartier first land on the Gaspé? _____
 - One of the most splendid gardens in the world can be found on the Gaspé Peninsula. What is it called and where is it located? _____
 - Charles Robin, a merchant from Jersey, set up a fishing post in _____ (town)
 - The rich supply of _____ (name the fish) was an important part of the economy and every year for centuries hundreds of tons of these fish were shipped to South America, the U.S., and Europe.
 - In 1968 an award-winning movie was made here on the Gaspé, which starred Genevieve Bujold and Al Waxman as well as many locals. What was the name of the movie? _____ Directed by _____, a man who spent lots of his time on the ancestral family farm in Shigawake. This director/author also wrote a series of 8 novels set on the Gaspé entitled *The Alford Saga*.
 - During the Second World War, on November 9, 1942, a Nazi spy named _____ landed on the Gaspé.
 - In the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Gaspé was visited by pirates and privateers. What is the difference? _____
 - What extremely rare green mineral is named for the Gaspé? It was first found in Murdochville in 1968. _____
- What are the following Gaspesians famous for?
- Hazel McCallion _____
 - La Bolduc _____
 - Alfred Miller _____
 - The Gaspé Spec was founded in _____ and is the only English community newspaper in the province, east of _____
 - When is Gaspesian Day this year? _____

ANSWERS on page 16

New Carlisle, Hope Town and Shigawake to protect their municipal bilingual status

Gilles Gagné

NEW CARLISLE – The municipalities of New Carlisle, Hope Town and Shigawake will protect their bilingual status, in the wake of changes to Quebec’s language laws.

The Coalition avenir Québec government’s newly proposed Bill 96 has provisions to grant a francophone status to municipalities where the anglophone population is less than 50%. However, it also has dispositions for the municipalities where the English-speaking population is less than 50% but and there is a will to maintain an existing bilingual status.

In last week’s issue of Spec, we looked at the position of the mayors of Escuminac and Cascapedia, when it comes to maintaining their bilingual status.

This week Spec features the remaining municipalities with bilingual status in the region: New Carlisle, Hope Town and Shigawake. There is a willingness among those municipalities to protect their bilingual status so that they can continue providing services to their taxpayers in English and French.

Bill 96 does not pose a problem for the municipalities where the proportion of the population stands clearly above the 50% mark but those that are under but close to the percentage will have to express their will to remain on the bilingual status list.

Population-wise, New Carlisle’s situation, with a



Photo: G. Gagné

New Carlisle will not have to apply for a Bill 96 derogation due to the large number of Anglophone residents.

61.5% proportion of its citizens being primarily English, is secure. So is the situation in Hope Town and Shigawake but to a lesser extent, as they respectively show proportions of 54.4% and 57.6% primarily using English, according to Canada’s 2016 census data.

Those are the numbers available now but 2021 is also a census year, however, Bill 96 will likely be adopted relatively fast in time and the 2016 statistics will be the rule then.

“Our numbers are relatively high, at 61%, so we will not need derogation. I think our council would, nevertheless, opt for derogation, would our proportion of English users be under 50%. We stay in touch with other municipalities that have a bilingual status like Côte-Saint-Luc near Montreal. They are feeding us with the information they re-

ceive,” says Denise Dallain, director general of the municipality of New Carlisle.

“It is important for the citizens to receive their services in the language of their choice. Our tax bill is bilingual. Our regulation is adopted and available in both languages. We find it important to explain what is going on in English. Our meetings are bilingual,” explains Ms. Dallain.

In 2016, the population of New Carlisle was 1,388, with 465 unilingual Anglophones, 205 unilingual Francophones and 615 bilingual citizens. The number of people using English first was 785, compared to 485 for French and 10 people who use both languages equally.

In Hope Town, Mayor Linda MacWhirter knows that the Anglophone population is near the 50% mark. She does-

n’t want to presume the municipal council’s upcoming position on the bilingual status “but we will definitely bring up the subject at the next municipal meeting,” she says.

Considering the 54.4% proportion of Hope Town’s population mostly using English, she feels that the bilingual status could be threatened after the next census results, given that small population movements can bring the Anglophone proportion under 50%.

“Even if we don’t reach the 50% proportion one day, it will be nice to have services available to the citizens in English and French. We don’t want to lose our bilingual status and the new bill allows us to do that,” she says.

Linda MacWhirter also intends to bring the subject up at the next Bonaventure MRC meeting.

In 2016, 339 people lived in Hope Town; 120 of them were unilingual Anglophones, 105 unilingual Francophones and 110 were bilingual citizens. The number of people using English first was 185, compared to 155 for French and five people were using both languages equally.

In Shigawake, Mayor Co-

lette Dow confirms that Bill 96 will be discussed during the next public meeting, on June 7.

“There is still an Anglophone majority in Shigawake and we are considered a bilingual municipality since Bill 101 was adopted in 1977. The council established our bilingual status back then. If we eventually go under 50%, we will adopt a motion to protect our status. We won’t take chances,” reacts Colette Dow.

“There is no problem here. Things are going well regarding the language. There is no problem in the Gaspé Peninsula. Tourism is important and serving them in the language of their choice is useful. As for our taxpayers, they are also entitled to be greeted in their tongue. The protection of services in English could encourage more Anglophones to get involved in municipal affairs, something I would like to see,” she stresses.

In 2016, 292 people were living in Shigawake, and 100 of them were unilingual Anglophones, compared to 75 unilingual Francophones; 115 people were bilingual. English was the first tongue spoken by 175 citizens, compared to 120 for French.

Continued from page 4

May 28 inclusively. Only the secondary part of the Deux-Rivières school was closed for almost two weeks.

As of May 28, the region was recording 2013 COVID cases since the beginning of the pandemic. During the fourth week of May, 12 false coronavirus cases were subtracted from the Magdalen Islands total, due to problems encountered in April with the laboratory of the archipelago, which was registering false positive tests for a while.

Two people were hospitalized on May 28, one more than a week before. Since March 2020, 1,926 people from the region have healed from the COVID-19, and 46 have died.

Meanwhile, the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands are administering vaccinations quite well. In fact, the region reports the highest rate of vaccinated people in Quebec, according to statistics published by the Public Health Board. As of May 24, the part of the population that had received its first vaccine was 67% and 12,1% of them had received their second shot.

In Quebec, 53.7% of the population had been vaccinated by the same date, and 5.2% had received their booster shot.

In fact, counting the results of the two appointment-free vaccination days held in New Richmond and Paspébiac during the last week of May, the Public Health Board administrators were confident

to bring the vaccination rate of the region slightly above the 70% mark by May 28 but the statistics were not available yet.

For the people aged between 60 and 69 inclusively, the vaccination rate reached 90.8%, and it increased to an outstanding 99% for the people aged 70 to 79. 97.8% of people aged 80 or more are now vaccinated.

May 28 was marking the opening of the Gaspé Peninsula to visitors from other regions, as the parts of Quebec characterized by the red colour alert signs were at least brought to the orange code. Quarantines must still be followed coming into a yellow zone like the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands.

Family Ties Fundraising update



*“Wow! Amazing support for a wonderful organization”
- From the gofundme page*

Announcements...



In Memory



CARTER: Simon Peter
BUTTLE: Keith Kermit William

In loving memory of my son who passed away June 6, 1998 and my husband who passed away June 6, 2020.

*God called your names so softly,
That only you could hear.
No one heard the footsteps
Of the angels drawing near.
This day is remembered and quietly kept.
No words are needed. We shall never forget.
For the ones we love don't go away.
They walk beside us everyday.
Dear Lord, please cherish my son and husband,
Their presence we miss
And their memories we treasure.*

Sadly missed by wife/mum Fern, Sascha (Doug), Ashley and great-grandchildren.

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To Jesus through Mary
Prayer to the Blessed Virgin (never known to fail)
O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendour of heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God. Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. O Star of the Sea, help me and show me that you are my Mother, O Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of heaven and earth. I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succour me in my necessity (make request). There are none who can withstand your power. O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (3 times). Holy Mary, I place this prayer in your hands (3 times). Say this prayer for 3 consecutive days and publish, and it will be granted to you.

St. Jude's Novena
May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us. St. Jude, helper of the hopeless, pray for us. St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us.

Say this prayer nine times a day for nine days. On the eighth day your prayer will be answered.

M.B.

The New Carlisle
Funeral Association
extends sympathy to the family of
Martin Poirier

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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 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.

NEW CARLISLE: Drive-In Gospel Meetings

Meetings at Fair Haven Bible Camp grounds. Sundays at 2 p.m. beginning May 30. Rain or Shine. COVID-19 considerations/social distancing will be respected. All are welcome - invite a friend! For more information, please call 418-752-3372.

CASCAPÉDIA-ST-JULES: Fifty Plus Club Yard Sale

June 5: From 9 a.m. to 2

p.m., weather permitting. We are having a yard sale to raise money for the club at 319 Route 299, Cascapédia-Saint-Jules. 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 the 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.

ROTARY CLUB WINNERS The winners for the week of May 16 are:

Gilles Arsenault, Céline Leblanc, Brigitte Bourgeois, Lisa Armisha, Sylvie Moses, Wendy Willett and Mathieu Mercier.

The winners for the week of May 23 are: Chesley Galbraith, Gilles Arsenault, François Pineault, Michaël Casey, Daniel Duchesneau, Léthicia Pilote and Ève Bernatchez.

UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, June 6
10 a.m. Hope Town

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA Sunday, June 6

New Carlisle
11 a.m. Morning Prayer

On the lighter side...



Why do we say...

by Gary Briand

A young high school girl from Doaktown, NB, who knew a classmate of mine, was directed to me to have an explanation of the saying, "stone walls do not a prison make."

The response I gave her must have thrown her into a state of depression. Those famous words are from a poem, "To Althea from Prison," written by the great poet Richard Lovelace in 1642. At the time, Mr. Lovelace was imprisoned at Westminster for having presented a petition to the British House of Commons on behalf of the deposed King Charles I in Cromwell time. Lovelace paid his own bail from his own pocket, about sixty thousand dollars, a huge amount for that time.

In 1648, Lovelace was again imprisoned and while in jail composed another poem, "To Lucasta, Going to the Wars," which contains the more famous lines, "I could not love thee (Dear) so much / Lov' d I not Honour more." Lucasta was the name used for Lucy Sacheverell, his bride to be.

Unfortunately, news came from France that Lovelace had been killed. Lady Lucy promptly forgot all about Richard and married another beau. But Richard Lovelace was alive!

By the time Richard had returned to England all of his money had been spent. Discouraged, he died in an underground stairwell without money to buy any food. The year was 1658, Richard Lovelace's fortieth birthday year.

Great Ideas for old WINDOWS & DOORS



HOROSCOPES

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

You feel most comfortable when things are organized, Aries. However, flexibility is handy as well, and sometimes things may not be in order as much as you like. Adapting is key.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, once you get into a groove, you will find that many of your tasks are much easier to manage. Keep plugging and you'll hit your stride soon enough.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

Gemini, sometimes it may seem like

the smallest issue is suddenly a major mountain that you must scale. Change your approach and you'll soon realize you can handle anything.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22

Many things may come to you more easily than usual, Cancer. Ride this wave of ease that has fallen into your lap. Enjoy the break that comes with it as well.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

You can get far with minimal effort this week, Leo. Simply set your sights on an end goal, and before you know it you will reach that destination.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, check your messages frequently this week, as someone needs to get in touch with you. He or she

may have some news that can change your course.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, don't focus too much on emotions this week. Instead, put all of your energy into intellectual musings, which will help you complete a project in the days ahead.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, even with the frenzy of activity around you, try not to be overwhelmed by the situation. Your first reaction may be to fly off the handle. Keep it together.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Consider calling up an old friend or a former romantic partner who has the potential to stir up some passion inside of you, Sagittarius. More excite-

ment is on the horizon.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, this is one of those weeks when you get sidetracked at seemingly every turn, Capricorn. Don't be too hard on yourself about the delays.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, embrace some difficult tasks this week. These projects will make you appreciate the value of hard work and put simpler tasks in perspective.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

This is your week to make short work of chores, Pisces. You may be lacking patience, but everything will get done, especially if you ask for help.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS MAY 30

Idina Menzel, Actress (50)
MAY 31

Colin Farrell, Actor (45)
JUNE 1

Morgan Freeman, Actor (84)
JUNE 2

Wayne Brady, Performer (49)
JUNE 3

Jill Biden, First Lady (70)
JUNE 4

Angelina Jolie, Actress (46)
JUNE 5

Joe Gatto, Comic (45)

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



Waste is a terrible thing to waste

Every week I prepare to put my grocery order away by cleaning out my fridge and food cupboard. I often think that throwing out food is a terrible thing and vow to do better the next week. I do not always succeed. Some food waste is unavoidable, but there are foods that could have been eaten while fresh – but were not.

Why do we have so much food waste? Some of that waste is unavoidable such as tea bags, coffee grounds, egg shells and vegetable peelings. (More on these later.) Mostly it is because we buy too much, cook too much or do not store the food properly.

The numbers do not lie and the picture they paint is shocking.

Over 60% of the food Canadians throw away could have been eaten.

For the average household that adds up to 140 kgs of wasted food per year.

The foods most commonly wasted are vegetables (30%), fruit (15%), leftovers (13%), bread and bakery items (9%), and dairy and eggs (7%).

Every day Canadians waste 470,000 heads of lettuce, 1,200,000 tomatoes, 2,400,000 potatoes, 750,000 loaves of bread, 1,225,000 apples, 555,000 bananas, 1,000,000 cups of milk and 450,000 eggs.

However, when we throw away food, we are not only wasting that which could have fed us, we are wasting the resources that were used to grow or produce and then distribute the food. Each step of food production takes effort, time and money.

If you are disposing of food, it is better to compost the foods that can be, either in your own compost pile or through local waste management if they offer compost pick-up. This is much better than sending all your food waste to a landfill. For every tonne of food waste that is avoided, it is the same as taking one car off the road for a full year.

IKEA has come up with a great idea and has produced a cookbook titled, *The Scraps Book: A Waste-less Cookbook*. The book contains over 50 recipes for using food scraps that would have otherwise gone into the garbage. The recipes were created in collaboration with chefs all across North America. The book also includes waste saving tips. You can get the book at IKEA stores or (great news) you can download it for free in PDF. That's right! No cost to you at all!

Unavoidable waste?

Used tea bags are good to treat sunburn, tired eyes and inflammation.

Coffee grounds can fertilize your garden.

Egg shells can be used sprinkled in the garden to deter pests or provide calcium to tomato plants.

Vegetable peelings can be composted! Beet greens can be steamed, sauteed or baked for a delicious side dish! (Recipes in this issue of Spec.)

Good news! We can do something about this. It will mean we use more of the food that we buy or produce, spend less on food and live a more sustainable lifestyle. Fewer trips to the store mean less CO₂ being released into the environment.

Buy less, cook less and store your food properly. Throw away less and compost more. Try to waste less.



Six ways to improve garden soil

Diane Skinner

You put in a lot of time, effort and money to plant your vegetable garden. To maximize your bounty, it is best to begin with good, rich soil. The soil feeds your plants so it must be fertile enough to support the needs of your plants. The best soil has plenty of nutrients, organic matter and minerals. In addition, the soil should be loose enough so that the roots can grow, water can drain and the air can circulate.

Besides your time and effort, in what other ways can you improve your soil?

Organic matter is crucial because it provides nutrition for the growing plants. What is organic matter? It is made up of old plants, leaves, animal manure and even grass clippings. If your soil is made up of heavy clay, you can remedy this by adding organic matter, or compost, to your soil. The same is true if your soil is too sandy. Add compost and the roots will get hold and take their nourishment from the organic material. Simply, the most important thing you can do is to add lots of compost. This will also feed earthworms and that is a good thing. They make tunnels in the soil, and this improves the aeration of the soil and leaves behind their 'castings' which makes the soil more fertile. (Worm castings are simply worm poo.)

Aged animal manure. Do not use fresh animal manure because it will harm your



This huge compost pile was started 15 years ago. A tractor is used to regularly turn over the pile of "black gold."

Photo: D. Skinner

plants. The manure should be aged for several months or ideally a year or more. The manure from goats, horses, cows and rabbits are nutrition-rich. Mix animal manure in with organic matter in the compost pile.

Mulch is a layer of material applied to the surface of the soil. This will help to keep your soil moist, improve the fertility of the soil by keeping it cool, reduce weed growth and, if you care about such things, improve the look of your garden. Over time, the mulch will decompose and will in turn feed the soil.

Plant cover plants. Plants such as radish, turnips, peas and kale provide cover for the soil during growing season. At the end of the season, leave some of the plants that have broad leaves which will provide cover for the soil over the winter. Then in the spring turn

over the earth and the decomposing plants will feed your soil.

Prevent soil from being compacted. If the soil is hard and compressed, the water will have a harder time reaching the roots of your plants. In short, the compressed ground will cause your vegetables to get so dry that they will not survive. Limit the walking on and close to your plants. Repeated walking on the soil will compress it. This, over time, will prevent water and air to reach the roots. Creating walking paths will be helpful.

Crop rotation. Rotate your plants every year so that the same vegetables, or family of vegetables, are not growing in the same place each year. This will prevent the nutrition in the soil for that particular plant from being depleted.

Feed your garden soil, and your garden will feed you.

Starting a compost pile

Some gardeners refer to their compost pile as 'black gold.' Over time, your compost will turn black, rich with nutrients for your garden. Clear a space near your garden.

Lay a base of straw or twigs. Add materials. Turn your compost pile every 7 days or so with a pitchfork. If it gets very large, you may have to use a tractor to flip it or you can buy a composter bin for about \$100.

You can use

*Lobster and crab shells
Vegetable and fruit matter
Grass clippings
Newspaper (not shiny pages) and cardboard
Animal manure (chicken and turkey not recommended)
Coffee grounds, tea and tea bags
Dryer lint
Crushed egg shells
Ashes from a woodstove
Seaweed (rinse off salt water)*

Do NOT use

*Meat
Fish
Eggs
Poultry
Dairy products
Fat, lard, grease
Diseased plants
Pet waste*



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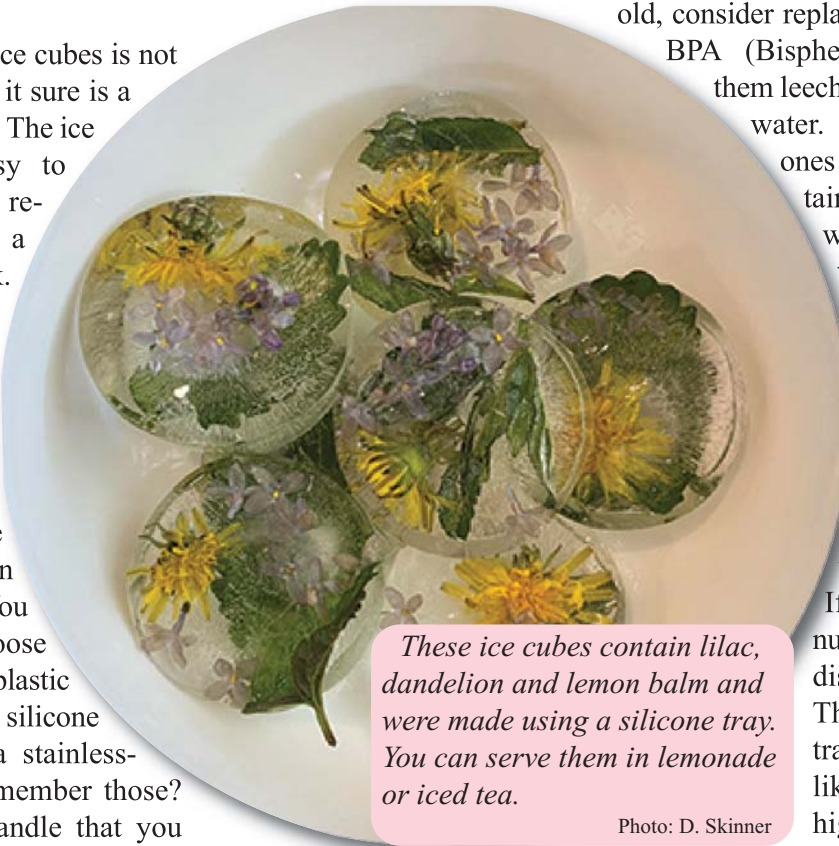
A bit of frozen beauty

Diane **Skinner**

Making floral ice cubes is not a necessity but it sure is a lot of fun to do. The ice cubes are easy to make and they really jazz up a summer drink. Add them to cocktails, lemonade or sparkling water. All you require is water, edible flowers and an ice cube tray. You may also choose from a regular plastic ice cube tray, a silicone one or even a stainless-steel type. Remember those? They had a handle that you lifted up after freezing the water and the cubes would separate and pop loose.

If you have a metal ice cube tray it has likely been making

you cubes for a long time. This type can last a lifetime. Don't



These ice cubes contain lilac, dandelion and lemon balm and were made using a silicone tray. You can serve them in lemonade or iced tea.

Photo: D. Skinner

worry because they are risk free. The only thing to be cautious about is freezing your hands on the metal.

If you have a plastic ice tray that is more than a few years old, consider replacing it. The

BPA (Bisphenol A) in them leeches into your water. The newer ones do not contain

BPA which is used to make plastics harder.

One way of checking is to turn your ice cube trays over.

If you see a number 3 or 7, discard them.

These are the trays most likely to have high levels of BPA. Some

studies have shown that BPA could be a cause for concern. It can cause hormonal changes and may be a cancer risk.

If you are worried about BPA, silicone trays are a great choice. All silicone trays are BPA free. They are flexible so it is easy to pop out your floral cubes. It also makes it easier to get a sharp edge on the ice. Another advantage is that you can buy silicone ice cube trays that make large square cubes, usually four cubes at a time. Silicone trays are available in other shapes, such as the disk-shaped ones used here. This is good if you have a larger flower or even a mint leaf. Large cubes melt more slowly so you have a longer time for your frozen flower to be revealed.

Choose flowers that are edible. You won't likely be eating the flower, because it is more for decoration but you should choose from those that are safe to eat. This includes violets, lilacs, lavender, miniature roses, pansies, marigolds, cornflower, squash blossoms, daisies and nasturtiums. Some

people have had luck with geraniums. You can also use mint or chive blossoms.

What about water? Regular tap water can make the ice cubes cloudy. If you boil distilled water, this will allow your flowers to show through the ice because it will be clearer. In fact, your ice cubes should be almost crystal clear.

If you want the flower to be centred, place a bit of water in the bottom of each section of tray and place the flower inside so that it is centred. Freeze. Then fill trays to the top with water. Freeze again.

They would be fun to serve at a shower or summer luncheon. People will appreciate the effort you have made. Does this seem like a lot of work? It sounds like more effort than it is and besides it is fun because you are creating small bits of frozen beauty.

Edible flowers

Diane **Skinner**

Ahhh, flowers! We love them for their beauty and there are some that are more than that – they may be edible. You may use edible flowers to add a splash of colour. We eat with our eyes first, and food should look appealing. It is essential that you identify flowers correctly and then research if they are safe to eat. Not all flowers are edible.

You can use edible flowers in a number of ways. They can be used to decorate a cake. Purple pansies placed on a vanilla – iced cake looks gorgeous. You can put them in salads and drinks or to add unique flavour to meat, eggs and even as a side dish. A punch bowl for a shower or party can be really jazzed up with floating flowers, or floral ice cubes. They provide a touch of beauty.

Identify any flower that you intend to eat, because some will cause stomach upset and a small few may be poisonous. Lily of the valley are poisonous, but lilacs are not! Furthermore, do not pick flowers to eat that have been sprayed with chemicals. For the same reason do not pick from the side of the road where cars and trucks may have contaminated the flowers. If you have hay fever, stay

away from any flower in the daisy family.

All flowers that you plan to eat should be shaken and washed under gently running cold water. Nobody wants to eat an insect. Also pick off the stamens and styles because they could cause a slight allergic reaction. Then lay them on paper towels to dry. Some flowers can be eaten whole, no need to pick off the stamens and styles. This would include violas, johnny-jump-ups and pansies.

Pick in the morning. Why is this? In the morning they have the highest water content and will last longer. Once the flowers are picked, use them as quickly as possible because they are fragile. Using them the same day is best. If you want to save some for the next day, place them on damp paper towels in a container in the fridge. Flowers, such as violets, can be frozen.

To educate and inform yourself about edible flowers, there are a few places to begin. You can read articles posted online, buy a book or, and this is the best method, talk to someone local who harvests edible flowers.

A handy way to identify flowers in the wild is to download an app on your cell phone that identifies plants by snapping a picture. Two apps to



Lavender blooms are beautiful and edible. Their flavour is floral with a hint of mint and rosemary. This pitcher contains spring's first white lavender, lemonade and gin.

Photo: D. Skinner

try are iPlant and Plant Snap, though there are others available. If you start to gather flowers, keep a small notebook and keep track of what flowers you gathered, whether from your garden or in the wild, and how they tasted.

Lilacs

Sprinkle on ice cream or add to a jug of lemonade for a unique flavour boost.

Pansies

These lovely flowers can be added to cookie dough or used to decorate the top of a

cake. The flavour is slightly minty, so add them to a fresh fruit salad. Feeling adventurous? Put some cream cheese on a cracker and a whole pansy on top!

Johnny-jump-ups

These darling plants will bloom into small but vibrant flowers with a flavour that is slightly like wintergreen. Serve with cream cheese, on a salad or as a beautiful decoration on a cake.

Squash Flowers

When your squash plants

flower in the garden, pinch off the flowers to add to cooked meat such as ground beef, on pizza or in pesto. Zucchini flowers are bright yellow and have a slightly sweet flavour.

Lavender

The flavour of lavender is much what you might expect – sweet and perfume-like. The buds can be sprinkled into a glass of white wine and as a flavour topper on cakes or baked into scones or shortbread cookies.

Roses

The flavour of rose petals is slightly fruity and can be added to salads, hot tea and iced tea, and jam.

Chives

If your chive plants flower, pinch off the flowers to make a chive flavoured vinegar. They are also delicious on green or potato salad.

Dandelions

The petals can be used to make jelly, which has a honey-like flavour.

Many people find edible flowers a far-out, strange idea. However, if you enjoy fiddleheads or wild mushrooms, then foraging edible flowers is pretty much the same notion.

Edible flowers can provide a bouquet of flavours.

Beet greens

Diane Skinner

A few weeks ago, Spec featured an article titled *The quintessential Gaspesian meal*. Readers told us about the meals they most enjoy that make them think “I am on the Gaspé!” One reader remarked that her favourite Gaspesian meal was not included in that article and that is beet greens and fresh brook trout.

Perhaps you have never tasted steamed beet greens served with fresh trout, however, if you want to try a new (to you) traditional meal perhaps beet greens and fresh brook trout might be worth a try.

Before we consider the taste, beet greens are an excellent source of nutrition, in fact, they are among the most nutrient-dense vegetables. Most of us have been throwing them away or adding them to the compost all these years, but I do recall my grandmother feeding them to the pigs who would squeal with delight when fed beet greens. We have been focussing on the beet itself, but those long green leaves and stalks are good for you and taste great too.

Beet greens are considered one of the superfoods. Superfoods are nutrient-rich foods that are especially beneficial



Photo: D. Skinner

Not only are beet greens good for you, they taste delicious and you can prepare them in a number of ways.

for health and well-being.

Other superfoods include salmon, berries, almonds, walnuts and quinoa.

Beet greens contain high amounts of vitamins and other nutrients such as iron, calcium, zinc, magnesium, protein and fibre. Beet greens also contain nitrates which can help to lower blood pressure. They can also help improve digestive health, fight inflammation and they contain anti-cancer properties. There are a lot of health benefits in those greens which are in most homes

treated as scraps.

Not only are beet greens good for you, they taste delicious and you can prepare them in a number of ways to suit your taste. The most common method is to steam them and it is so easy to do.

If you have a garden, beet greens are a very economical side dish. Simply save the tops when you thin out your beets.

There are other foods that we have been throwing away

rind and citrus peel.

The amount of food that is wasted is shocking. At a time when the price of food is ris-

ing, it would serve us well to cut down on waste and to maximize the foods we have available.

Steamed Beet Greens

1 pound (or 3 – 4 big handfuls) of beet greens

Butter

Salt and pepper

Toasted sesame seeds, lemon and vinegar (optional)

1. Use a vegetable steamer that can expand to fit your pot. Steam for about 3 to 5 minutes or until the leaves are wilted.
2. Serve with salt and pepper and butter. Add a dash of lemon juice, if desired. Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds and a few drops of vinegar, to taste.

Sauteed Beet Greens

1 tbsp. olive oil

1 pound beet greens

Garlic

Salt and pepper

1. Heat olive oil over medium heat. When oil is hot, add greens and garlic
2. Toss the greens between 5 and 6 minutes, just until they start to wilt.
3. Drain, add salt and pepper and serve.

Baked Beet Greens

1 pound beet greens

2 tbsp. oil

A pinch or two of sea salt

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spread the greens over a parchment lined baking sheet.
2. Drizzle the oil and sea salt over the leaves.
3. Bake for about 15 minutes, until the leaves are dry and crispy.
4. Serve as a snack or as a topping on salads.

Great Gaspesian Quiz 2021 Answers

1. The Appalachian Mountains. The Appalachian Mountain range begins in northern Alabama, and ends at the tip of the Gaspé Peninsula, where it plunges into the sea. These mountains separate the north and south coasts of the Gaspé, making it difficult to travel north/south across the peninsula.

2. Route 132 and it was completed in 1969. Route 132 is the longest highway in Quebec and it circles the Gaspé Peninsula. There is a Canadian film called *Route 132*, released in 2010. It is about two men who go on a road trip and a crime spree.

3. Forillon has excellent hiking trails where you can see gorgeous seascapes. Most trails take a few hours to hike. A trail of 11km (Le Portage) was originally created so that farmers and woodcutters could have access to Gaspé Bay.

4. In 1921, **copper ore** was discovered in the area. However, it was not until 1950 that Noranda Mines began mining the copper. The mining town was named after James Y. Murdoch, owner of the mine and first president of Noranda.

5. Miguasha has been deemed a World Heritage Site due to

the **significant fossils that are found there.** Some date back 370 million years.

6. Jacques Cartier landed at Gaspé in **1534.** He and his crew erected a wooden cross there on July 24, 1534, overlooking the bay of Gaspé. Planting this cross symbolized the ownership of the area on behalf of the King of France.

7. Reford Gardens, (Les Jardins de Métis) in Metis was established by Elsie Reford from 1926 to 1958. It has been deemed a national historic site. It includes over 3,000 species and varieties of plants over 15 garden areas.

8. Paspébiac in 1767.

9. Cod

10. Isabel - Paul Almond

11. Werner Von Janowski
12. A pirate attacks ships of ANY nationality. A privateer attacks ships of enemy countries only but must give a portion of the loot to their home country.

13. Gaspeite

14. Hazel McCallion was the **long-serving mayor of Mississauga, Ontario.** She was born in Port Daniel.

15. La Bolduc (real name: Mary Travers), was born in Newport in 1894. She was once **known as the queen of Canadian folk singers.** You

can listen to her songs on YouTube.

16. Alfred Miller. Miller, along with his four brothers, **discovered copper ore in rock samples taken from the York River in 1909.**

The Millers sold claims to the Noranda Mining Company in Murdochville, which became a thriving mining centre. He died in 1983 at the age of 103.

17. 1974. Quebec City

18. June 3

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