

High gasoline prices cause concern

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The Minister of Energy and responsible for the Gaspé, Jonatan Julien is relying on the Régie de l'énergie as motorists have been paying an abnormally high price for a litre of regular gasoline.

During the week of November 15, the price at the pump was \$1.574 at most gas stations in the Gaspé, a difference, depending on the day, of between four and seven cents with the realistic price based on data from the authority.

"If you tell me there is a disproportion, the board can do its job adequately and independently to validate these elements. For me, the

information that I have in my hands, says this is not the case, but I will still knock on the Régies' door," explained the minister during his visit to Rivière-au-Renard on November 18.

The mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté, who, along with his elected colleagues from the Gaspé, had asked the Competition Bureau for an investigation about the high prices in 2019.

The mayor still has not received an answer and will be checking back on the file. "We will be relaunching the file with the Competition Bureau once again and with the Régie de l'énergie. We have figures to back it up. The important

thing is to unravel all this and that we pay the right price at the end of it all," says the mayor.

According to the Member of the National Assembly for Gaspé, Mélanne Perry Mélançon, the creation of a Quebec Competition Bureau could be a possibility, while Gaspésians still depend on this type of energy, she says.

"We need to have a Quebec Bureau for Price Development and look at when there are cartels setting abusive prices. There is indeed a Canadian office, but the House of Commons has realized that it has little control over unwarranted price hikes," says the elected official.



Photo: N. Sergerie

The price was \$1.574 on November 18.

Saint-Elzéar forestry co-op invests \$21.4M in sawmill modernization Groupe Damabois invests 16.4 million in Cap-Chat plant

Gilles **Gagné**

SAINT-ELZÉAR - Two Gaspé Peninsula companies, the Association coopérative forestière of Saint-Elzéar and Groupe Damabois, are investing separately in two separate sawmill modernization projects totaling nearly \$38M. Those initiatives will improve the efficiency of their plants and expand the range of products they will be able to produce.

The larger project is located in Saint-Elzéar and it requires an investment of \$21.4M. The lion's share of that, \$17.4M, is being injected to replace the current planer plant with a much more efficient unit.

"We will be able to count on an 80% increase in productivity. Our (annual) planer capacity will increase from 35 million board feet to 65 million, based on 40 working hours per week. Currently, it takes us 47 hours to plan 35 million board feet (annually), with 16 employees working in miserable conditions (...) We will be able to do more work with seven employees after the modernization," specifies Mario Pouliot, director of the Saint-Elzéar sawmill.



Mario Pouliot, director of the Saint-Elzéar Forestry Cooperative Association, David Lord, of the Regional Solidarity Funds FTQ Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands, Maxime Nadeau, of Investissement Québec and Pierre Fitzgibbon, the Minister of Economy and Innovation, explained the advantages of investing in this plant.

The nine jobs recovered from the planer facility will be located elsewhere in the mill. "Nobody goes home without a job," adds Mr. Pouliot. The cooperative provides work for 128 people.

The construction of the new planer unit has started and it will be ready on September 6, 2022, he says. The cooperative has already made part of the total investment in other areas of the plant, including new kiln cells, sawing optimization equipment, a tree species detector separating the fir tree

from the spruce, which gives better drying performance and a new garage.

Investissement Québec is lending \$8.4M to the Association coopérative forestière to support the project, while the Department of Forest, Wildlife and Parks is providing a subsidy of \$1.6 million due to the innovative nature of certain equipment. The FTQ Solidarity Fund is investing \$4M in the initiative.

Mario Pouliot notes that the cooperative is providing a

down payment of \$5M in the project, in addition to the repayment of loans, a situation facilitated by the prices of lumber which have increased from \$425 per 1000 boardfeet at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 to \$2,000 a few months later.

"The investment is necessary to stop becoming vulnerable if the market goes down; I will be able to get through it," says Mr. Pouliot.

The Saint-Elzéar and Cap-Chat investments were an-

nounced on November 15 to take advantage of the presence of Quebec Minister of Economy and Innovation, Pierre Fitzgibbon, and representatives of various lending and investor organizations.

Mr. Fitzgibbon said the Saint-Elzéar project offers the advantage of making the plant "less vulnerable to commodity products (conventional lumber) because it will make into specialty products."

Mario Pouliot, however, has not yet specified the nature of the specialty products that will eventually be made by the sawmill.

LFG Construction is the general contractor selected to erect the new building that will house the new planer. Most of the specialized equipment that will be installed in the building will be supplied by Quebec manufacturers. The concrete slab of the new building is already on the south side of the sawmill.

The Saint-Elzéar sawmill has an annual supply of 260,000 cubic metres of wood from various sources, mainly public land.

Haute-Gaspésie to be part of a dental pilot project

Nelson **Sergerie**,
LJI Journalist

GASPÉ – Residents of the Haute-Gaspésie region will once again have access to dental services, as that area will be part of a Government of Quebec dental pilot project.

The Minister of Health, Christian Dubé, is reserving \$845,764 for the project which will be implemented in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts with, among other things, the buy-out of the former clinic of Dr. Gaston Lepage who has retired. The nearest dental services are now in Matane or even Rimouski.

The objective of the pilot project is to improve access to preventive and curative primary dental care, to develop the integration of dentistry into the health system and to set up service corridors, for example, with emergencies in hospital centres.

Two dentists, two hygienists, two assistants, a secretary and a part-time coordinator will make up the team.

"This is an approach that we want to do locally in a particular situation. We want to act in



The Minister of Health, Christian Dubé, stopped in Gaspé on November 15

Photo: N. Sergerie

regions with local issues. We don't all have the same challenges. We have enough dentists in greater Montreal. We do not have the same here. Therefore, we prefer to take a local approach rather than an across-the-board approach," says the minister

"Tomorrow morning, we'll be active. While waiting for a dentist on site, we have a transitional measure put in place with travelling dentists," launched the president and di-

rector of the Integrated Health and Social Services Centre of the Gaspé Peninsula, Chantal Duguay, who is counting on the return of Gaspesian dentists who now practice in major centres to operate the clinics.

If the process is successful, the project could be extended to reach some 600,000 people, who represent about 7% of the population of Quebec.

Four other projects will take place selected in the Montreal, Outaouais and Estrie areas

which, in total, should provide dental care to approximately 22,000 people below the low-income cut-off or in remote regions.

Quebec's overall envelope is \$3 million for the first year.

Upcoming improvements for ambulance services

In April, the CISSS asked for improved services in Rivière-au-Renard, Pointe-à-la-Croix and on the north side of the Peninsula.

These sectors were forgotten by Quebec in March 2018 when shift schedules were converted to an hourly format for employees between Grande-Rivière and Nouvelle.

The request aims to convert the Rivière-au-Renard ambulance and one of the two teams in Grande-Vallée, Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and Pointe-à-la-Croix. The transformation would cost \$3.2 million to complete the job.

"I think there is something happening in the ministry. I would tell you that we are looking at this very closely. The issue: we didn't want to do an

individual approach. We have several regions that are asking for the same thing," says the minister.

Pressing needs in Maria

In the works for a long time, Mr. Dubé ensures that the upgrade project of Maria hospital is progressing. "We talked about it again today on November 15. It's in our plans. Every year, in the Quebec Infrastructure Plan, new installations are provided, and I hope that Maria will be able to continue to move forward. But I think the needs are pressing," says Mr. Dubé.

At the October board of directors meeting, the CISSS said it was continuing to make representations for a new building after working with a consultant. In June, an estimate of \$390 million was put forward for the construction of a new hospital which could take place gradually over the next decade. In June 2018, the CISSS adopted a resolution to this effect, an idea that dates back to the time of the CSSS de la Baie-des-Chaleurs.

First meeting of Chandler's new council is relatively calm

Nelson **Sergerie**,
LJI Journalist

CHANDLER - Chandler's new council met for the first time on November 15, and the mood was quite different to that of the past few years.

This calmness is a priority of the new mayor, Gilles Daraïche, even making it one of his campaign promises.

"It should go like this. There will definitely be differences of opinion, but what I suggested is that if there are differences, we have to settle them in a plenary meeting. All the members were unanimous in this direction," maintained the mayor.

Daycare project receives support

One of the first decisions of the newly formed council, which consists of three veterans and four recruits including the mayor, is to support the project to create 79 spaces for the La Belle Journée childcare centre.

The council adopted a resolution to cede land near the current facilities to allow the project to be submitted to Quebec. Recently, Quebec reserved



Photo: N. Sergerie

Chandler's newly elected mayor, Gilles Daraïche

between 24 and 74 places for the Rocher-Percé MRC. With the high demand for places, the mayor, Gilles Daraïche, believes the request is justified.

"It is our young families who are having problems and if we want to attract other young families as well, we have to work on this point. That is what we have done," says Mr. Daraïche.

Château Dubuc

The co-owner of Château Dubuc wants to meet with the

new council to discuss the fate of the historic building the previous council rejected in October a request for \$50,000 to move the building back 50 feet to avoid more damage due to winter storms.

"This is an extremely important file. It is the heritage of the Town of Chandler, but I would like to have the full details. We're going to sit down together. It will take place in a working session and a decision will be made," states Mr. Daraïche.

Legal fees for Louise Langlois

In addition, council is staying the course on the resolution adopted in January to claim legal fees in the case between former Mayor Louise Langlois and the Municipal Commission. "We are going to work on this very seriously, but what I could understand is that people wanted to pursue the first resolution passed by the old council," notes Mr. Daraïche. With the invoices that were paid at the Nov. 15 council, the total now stands at \$280,390.

2021, a record summer for tourism

Nelson **Sergerie**,
LJI Journalist

GASPÉ – From a tourism point of view the Gaspé has just had a dream summer that even broke two records.

According to Tourisme Gaspésie, no less than 523,000 visitors came to the region between June and September inclusively. This is an all-time high for the past 20 years, when the organization began collecting tourism statistics.

Another record: the spin-offs for the first time surpassed the \$300 million mark.

Director, Joëlle Ross, mentions that the statistics do not take into account the visits from relatives or friends.

As the summer of 2020 was marked by the pandemic, Tourisme Gaspésie chose to compare the statistics with 2019 when 495,000 visitors had travelled in the region for spinoffs of \$254 million. In 2020, there were 462,000 tourists.

The tourism season is also lasting longer. "People came earlier in May, and easily

stayed up to Thanksgiving," says Joëlle Ross.

Tourisme Gaspésie notes increases of 4.5% in June and July and even 5% in September.

Predictions for 2022

The United States border with Canada reopened on November 8, which will create more of a challenge to attract customers in the summer of 2022.

"We still have to be optimistic because the region has the wind in its sails. There are great development projects coming up, great activities that will be able to meet all of what people want to do when they come to us," says Ms. Ross.

No less than 93% of industry players rated their season as good or excellent. The occupancy rate reached 72.5%, a gain of 3.6% compared to 2019.

Winter promotion is underway with an investment of \$240,000 to attract snowmobilers in particular. Preparations for summer 2022 are also underway.

Police report

The identity of the Gaspé man arrested between November 9 and 11 as one of the 26 suspects arrested in a major operation against child pornography remains unknown. The man in his sixties doesn't have a criminal record. He was released after being questioned by the Sûreté du Québec pending a promise to appear in court at a later date. However, it is now possible to confirm that the man lives within the limits of the town of Gaspé. The Quebec-wide operation involved 270 police officers who conducted 26 searches and led to the seizure of computer equipment. More than a million files were found during the operation carried out by six police forces. The suspects are between 33 and 75 years old.

The Pie Anti-poaching Operation conducted at the end of March by Quebec's Department of Wildlife is yielding results, as 27 of the 48 suspects charged with poaching on November 15 pleaded guilty to various counts at the New Carlisle courthouse. They were each fined hundreds of dollars. At the onset of the operation, more than 100 people were targeted by the game wardens. The network operated mainly in the Bay of Chaleur area, engaged in the illegal sale and purchase of Atlantic salmon, striped bass, smelt, brook trout, deer, moose and partridge. Two men from Carleton, Raynald Maltais and Hugues Roy, charged with forty poaching counts each, will return to court on January 26 along with several other alleged poachers of this network.

The Sûreté du Québec recently released province-wide statistics related to nautical safety over the summer, as water sports are becoming increasingly popular, especially during the pandemic. There was a lot of users on Quebec's waters during the past summer. This reality has led to security issues relating to various types of users sharing a body of water. The nautical patrol of the Sûreté du Québec, in collaboration with its partners, Transport Canada, Nautisme Québec, the Canadian Coast Guard as well as nautical teams from different organizations and police officers in Quebec have been able to adapt and contribute through their interventions and make water bodies safe despite the marked increase in usership.

Statistically, those organizations carried out more than 11,500 nautical interceptions and slightly more than 1,000 fines were handed out. Moreover, 4,300 notices of non-conformity were served. Unfortunately, three fatal collisions involving a watercraft were reported.


This year, drug recognition assessment officers joined the various nautical teams of the Sûreté du Québec in order to intensify the interventions in detection of the impaired driving ability of a watercraft. A significant increase in the number of impaired capacity interventions was noticed this year. Consequently, 91 people provided a breath sample for the approved screening device or performed the movement coordination tests compared to 49 in 2020. As a result, 40 people were arrested for failing impaired driving tests, compared to 15 in 2020. A regional breakdown of those statistics is not available.

Meanwhile, boaters are invited to plan now for the needs of the 2022 season in terms of nautical outings. They must make sure that the required equipment is on board the boat, check the condition of the boat and do the necessary maintenance. They must also ensure that all documents related to the boat are compliant.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Quebec Region, wishes to advise the population of the Gaspé Peninsula that two shellfish harvesting areas in the Port Daniel-Gascons area are closed to harvesting due to pollution. In accordance with the prohibition order QSN-2021-147, related to the Port Daniel Bay centre part (G-20.1.2), an area of 300 metres is closed on both sides of Ruisseau Castilloux Inlet, surrounding the wastewater treatment plant outfall up to 1.75 km seaward. The other prohibition order is called QSN-2021-148 and covers McInnis Cove (G-20.3) from a point 150 metres south of the mouth of the Petite Rivière Port-Daniel to Pointe La Vieille, excluding the barachois area.

Unemployment rate went up in October

Nelson Sergerie
GASPÉ - The unemployment rate increased in October in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands. The region lost 1,000 full-time positions last month, partially offset by creating 300 part-time employments.
According to the Statistics Canada employment report, the number of unemployed rose by 700 in October, increasing from 9.0% in September to 10.7% last month.
It was 9.3% a year ago, but there were few people looking for work, which may have distorted the statistics.
The region has 4,900 additional workers compared to October 2020, confirming the strong recovery in employment in this post-pandemic period.
The labour force, that is, those working or looking for a job, stood at 41,300 last month.



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Notice of Application
to Dispose of Dredged Material
or Other Matter at Sea,
Gaspé Peninsula

Notice is hereby given that Fisheries and Oceans Canada, located at 104, Dalhousie Street, Québec (Quebec), intends on this 24th day of November 2021 to apply to Environment and Climate Change Canada for :

**FOUR DISPOSAL AT SEA PERMITS
under the *CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION ACT, 1999***

to load dredged material in the following harbours in the Gaspé Peninsula for the purpose of disposal at sea at the sites mentioned below, and by the following method: mechanical excavator and towed scows.

Préavis de demande de permis
d'immersion des déblais de dragage
ou d'autres matières en mer,
Gaspésie

Avis est donné par les présentes que Pêches et Océans Canada, sis au 104, rue Dalhousie, Québec (Québec) en ce 24^e jour de novembre 2021 a l'intention de demander à Environnement et Changement climatique Canada :

**QUATRE PERMIS D'IMMERSION EN MER
en vertu de la *LOI CANADIENNE SUR LA
PROTECTION DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT (1999)***

afin de charger des déblais de dragage dans les havres suivants en Gaspésie, pour ensuite les immerger en mer aux sites de dépôt mentionnés ci-dessous, au moyen d'une drague à benne preneuse ou d'une pelle hydraulique ou drague hydraulique et de chalands remorqués.

Harbour	Quantity in cubic metres (m³) place measure	Disposal site	Proposed dates for loading and disposal activities
Port-Daniel (48.18233° N. and 64.96150° W. NAD83)	4 000	PD-6 (48.13500° N. and 64.94167° W. NAD83)	From March 15, 2022 to March 14, 2023
Anse-à-Brillant (48.72117° N. and 64.28950° W. NAD83)	4 000	ABR-1 (48.73200° N. and 64.28200° W. NAD83)	From March 15, 2022 to March 14, 2023
Anse-à-Beaufils (48.47200° N. and 64.30607° W. NAD83)	6 000	AB-5 (48.45000° N. and 64.25000° W. NAD83)	From March 15, 2022 to March 14, 2023
Saint-Godefroi (48.07310° N. and 65.11478° W. NAD83)	5 000	SG-2 (48.04500° N. and 65.08333° W. NAD83)	From March 15, 2022 to March 14, 2023

For further information regarding these activities, please contact :

Mr. Maxime Doyon, Project Technician
Small Craft Harbours Branch
Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Quebec Region
104 Dalhousie Street
Québec, Quebec G1K 7Y7
Maxime.Doyon@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

The public may raise environmental concerns related to this notice or obtain information on the permit issuance process by contacting the nearest Disposal at Sea Program regional office :


Environment and Climate Change Canada, Quebec Region
Environmental Protection Operations Directorate
Disposal at Sea Program Coordinator
105 McGill Street, 4th floor
Montréal, Quebec H2Y 2E7
Phone: 438-342-1563
immersionqc-disposalatseaqc@ec.gc.ca

Pour de plus amples renseignements sur ces activités, veuillez communiquer avec :

Monsieur Maxime Doyon, Technicien de projets
Direction des ports pour petits bateaux
Pêches et Océans Canada, Région du Québec
104, rue Dalhousie
Québec (Québec) G1K 7Y7
Maxime.Doyon@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Le public peut faire part de ses préoccupations environnementales suscitées par ce préavis, ou obtenir des renseignements sur la délivrance des permis, en s'adressant au bureau régional du Programme sur l'immersion en mer le plus près :

Environnement et Changement climatique Canada, Région du Québec
Direction des activités de protection de l'environnement
Coordonnateur, Programme sur l'immersion en mer
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Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – For the third consecutive week, the number of new COVID-19 cases decreased substantially between November 12 and 19, decreasing to 13. Ten of the week’s new cases were in the Percé Rock MRC and three were tied to the Avignon MRC. In the school system, the cases were essentially concentrated in the Percé Rock schools of the Centre de services scolaires René-Lévesque. The organization reported seven cases as of November 19, including four at the Bon-Pasteur School in Grand River, where two classrooms were confined. Another case

was reported at Mgr. Sévigny high school and two cases at Saint-Joseph School, both schools in Chandler. The progress of the regional vaccination rate remains low. The first rate for the first vaccination went from 82.7% to 82.8% between November 7 and 14, according to the last statistics available. The booster shot has now been given to 80.6% of the population, compared to 80.5% as of November 7. The provincial rate was standing at 79.6% on November 14 for the first shot, compared to 79.5% a week earlier. It was a standstill at 77.5% for the booster shot from one week to the next.

The Avignon MRC vaccination rate remains behind the regional numbers, with 75% for the first shot compared to 74.9% a week earlier. The rate for the second shot increased slightly from 72.5% to 72.7% between November 7 and 14. The Avignon MRC COVID incidence also remains puzzling, considering that with a population slightly higher than that of the Haute-Gaspésie MRC, 611 coronavirus cases have been reported between L’Ascension-de-Patapédia and Maria/Gesgapegiag since the beginning of the pandemic, compared to 149 for the area stretching between Cap-Chat and Rivière-Madeleine.

Editorial page

Gilles Gagné
Commentary



Liberal Party of Quebec
pays the price for years
of imposed silence

The Coalition avenir Québec party is quite confident with the electoral campaign starting in about nine months. That confidence is mostly because of the weakness of two of the opposition parties, namely the Liberal Party and the Parti québécois, not necessarily in that order. However, lately, the woes of the Liberal Party look more striking than ever. At the beginning of November, two members of the National Assembly were demoted, Marie Montpetit and Gaétan Barrette. They were critics respectively in health matters and the treasury board. In fact, Ms. Montpetit no longer sits as a member of the Liberal Party caucus. Marie Montpetit oversaw putting pressure on Health Minister Christian Dubé over the last months. However, that didn’t prevent Gaétan Barrette, a former health minister from commenting on Twitter about how the Health Department is managed. She didn’t like some of Mr. Barrette’s interventions and replied to him. She was already under investigation for possible cases of harassment at work. That investigation is complete but tensions within the Liberal Party seem far from over. Marwa Rizqy was also sitting on a party committee on health, with ... Gaétan Barrette and Marie Montpetit. The two women proved that they could not work together, and both could agree on only one thing; they can’t stand Gaétan Barrette. The suspension of Marie Montpetit and Gaétan Barrette from the caucus and critic responsibilities wouldn’t be such an issue for the Liberal Party if a capable candidate was available. The problem is that there aren’t any good candidates to fill the void. That reality is due to recruitment negligence on the part of the party, over the last decade. When Philippe Couillard was elected as the party leader in 2013, he beat two members of the old guard, Raymond Bachand and Pierre Moreau. That old guard never surrendered much power to the new generation. That generation was underrepresented in the party, and nobody saw anything wrong in that, the Liberal Party being considered a party of power. Marie Montpetit is only 42 years of age. She has a vast academic background, having studied successfully in psychology, management and environment. She was the health critic since June 2020, a

crucial period considering the pandemic. Elected in April 2014 and having filled a cabinet position in the government of Philippe Couillard, she was considered a hybrid member of her party. She was, therefore, not a true representative of the old guard of the Jean Charest and Mr. Couillard era, and not a symbol of the necessary renewal wished by the Liberals. While she is still under investigation for harassment at work, her track record in the matter seems to have some substance. During the Philippe Couillard years, the premier also had to deal with similar complaints against Marie Montpetit. The turnover at her office has always been high, especially in her research team, which is not a sign of harmony. The Gaétan Barrette’s situation is a bit different. On Twitter, he commented about the situation of the CAQ government negotiations with general practitioners. It is a Treasury Board issue, so a subject included in his responsibilities. Through the suspension of his duty as Treasury Board critic, leader Dominique Anglade and the Liberal Party “think tank” probably saw an opportunity to get rid of him. For many reasons, Mr. Barrette is highly unpopular in the electorate, as at least 65% of Quebecers don’t like him. People don’t like his bully-type personality, the way he favoured specialists like himself during his term as Health Minister in the Philippe Couillard government, the effects his centralization of power had at the onset of the pandemic, as dozens of senior residences were deprived of proper management, especially of people able to report that the beneficiaries were literally dying due to a lack of care. So, his Twitter comments provided a welcome excuse to suspend him. It is not even sure that he will finish the rest of his term as a Liberal Member of the National Assembly. It leaves the Liberal Party with very few strong and seasoned spokespersons in vital fields like health and the treasury board. It speaks volumes about the inability of the party to recruit valuable candidates over the last decade. The reasons are evident, even if Dominique Anglade can hardly admit it, nine months before the next electoral campaign. Since 1970, the first time the Parti québécois appeared on a ballot, the Liberal Party’s strategy was to brag about its economic program and maintain concerns about sovereignty. With the CAQ at the helm of the government, that tactic doesn’t work anymore. What is the base of the Liberal Party program now? Is it the economy? Between 2014 and 2018, the Philippe Couillard regime ran an unnecessary austerity government that neglected investments in education and health. It deprived the rural regions of valuable development organizations and it took the money “saved” there and transferred it to Quebec City and Montreal. Is it surprising now that there is basically no Lib-

eral National Assembly representation outside Montreal and Quebec City? Three years and two months after the electoral loss of October 1, 2018, the Liberal Party is still struggling to find new and original orientations, a vision that would set it apart from the Coalition avenir Québec. Leader Dominique Anglade is a bright woman and appears to do well at public events, however, she has not shown a knack for solving the internal disputes that have marred her party over the last year. In addition, she also has a problem of retaining staff, with personnel leaving at an alarming rate. Truth be told, membership-wise, the Liberal Party of Quebec is a strange creature to manage, as it is a mix of people coming from quite diverse backgrounds. The promise of beautiful economic pastures and the threat of sovereignty is used to unite members despite their differences. Now, the party suffers from a massive defection of the francophone vote, as only 9% to 10% of the French-speaking electorate now support Dominique Anglade’s team. In a province where French is the main language of about 85% of the population, it means a sure electoral defeat in the 2022 fall election. Over the years, the party has failed miserably in allowing its members to express publicly a plurality of viewpoints. Through the non-written rule of forbidding the expression of dissention, the law of silence prevailed in almost every Liberal Party convention held since the mid-2000 years. The party is now paying a heavy price for that imposed silence.

CORRECTION

In the election results for Caplan in last week’s issue of The Gaspé Spec, the results for Seat 3 should have read Sylvain Bourque (524) and Keven Desbois (260).

The Gaspé Spec

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BAY OF CHALEUR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARDS:

Habitations Mont-Carleton named Business of the Year

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – Carleton-based Habitations Mont-Carleton, a pre-fabricated house builder, won the Business of the Year Award at the 12th annual gala organized by the Bay of Chaleur Chamber of Commerce on November 13 in Carleton.

In addition to receiving one of the most prestigious awards of the evening, Habitations Mont-Carleton was also selected by the jury in the Market Expansion and Growth category.

Company president Éric Harrison made two speeches. Upon receiving the Expansion and Growth Award, he mentioned that the turning point was signing a contract to build 21 luxurious cottages for Terfa. Those cottages are at Réserve Duchénier in the backcountry of Rimouski which is managed by Terfa. “That sparked the growth of the company, even if things were already going really well,” explained Mr. Harrison.

After receiving the Business of the Year Award, he praised the staff. “Our team is our source of growth. Our team is the factor behind shaping the dream of each of our customers. I tell them that when they drive each nail, they are shaping the dream of each of our customers,” he added.

Habitations Mont-Carleton employs 36 people. The Réserve Duchénier contract was awarded to the company in November 2020 and should be completed by the fall of 2022.

“It is hard to sort out exactly the impact that contract had on the growth of our staff... We could hire 20 more workers for the various needs of the company but finding employees is a serious problem,” points out Éric Harrison.

Mélanie Langlois, from New Richmond, owner of the Liber bookstore, won the Business Personality of the Year Award, five years after buying the business. Earlier in 2021, she won another significant award, Quebec’s Independent Bookstore Owner of the Year for her innovative practices.

For her part, Mélanie Langlois was pleased beyond her expectations after winning.

“I am a bookseller. Years ago, I never thought that I would own a business and then, it happened. So, getting a business-oriented award is something that had never crossed my mind,” she said, after thanking her staff.

The owner of Distillerie des Marigots, Joseph Saint-Denis-Boulanger, of Caplan, won two awards: Young Entrepreneur of the Year and Young Business of the Year.

Érablière Escuminac, the largest organic maple grove in the Gaspé Peninsula and a former Quebec-wide gold medal winner of UPA’s agricultural merit, won the Regional Environment Council Award for the company that stands out for its environment and climate change record.

Through various initiatives, including the use of electric tools and vehicles in the maple grove, Érablière Escuminac reduced by 100



Photos: G. Gagné

Cristelle Arsenault and Guy Cayouette present Habitation Mont-Carleton’s Éric Harrison (centre) the Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year Award. Mr. Cayouette’s company, Entreprises PEC, had won the same prize in 2019. Ms. Arsenault is vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce. The award ceremony did not take place in 2020 due to the pandemic.

tonnes its annual greenhouse gas emissions. The award was handed out the last day of the COP26 Worldwide Environmental Conference in Glasgow, Scotland.

“It is just a matter of paying attention to small details. We are trying to improve every year,” said Martin Malenfant, the president of Érablière Escuminac.

The Professional Services Large Business Award went to Bonaventure’s Solutions Infomedia, while Les petits thérapeutes, zootherapy specialists, also based in Bonaventure, won the corresponding prize in the small business category.

The Not-for-profit Organization of the Year was Culture Gaspésie, while New Richmond’s Liber bookstore won the Retail Business of the Year

Award.

In the Tourism, Leisure and Culture category, the award went to Lillojeux, a store based in Maria.

The Business Succession Award went to Rail GD, of New Richmond, while the Self-employed and Microenterprise of the Year was won by Steph Gauthier Animation, of Saint-Siméon.

Carleton’s Dixie Lee restaurant left the gala with the Human Resource Management Award.

The Jury’s Special Award was given to Maille, atelier collaboratif, a firm based in New Richmond.

The Radio CHNC Award, given to A business that stood out for its customer service, went to Paspebiac’s La belle vie sailing,

The Bay of Chaleur Chamber of Commerce also presented regional awards. A Performance and Outreach Award went to the Stratégie vivre en Gaspésie organization, which recruits people and improves the demographics of the region.

The Québec Maritime Excellence Award went to Forillon Shipyard, based in Gaspé. The Social Responsibility

Award was given to the F.L. Bélanger clothing store of Carleton, formerly of Nouvelle, where it was founded 91 years ago. Owner Sandy Gauthier’s commitment to her community was therefore recognized.

Three special awards were also given by the Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with the René-Lévesque School Service Centre to encourage school perseverance.

The first, the Involvement and Success Award in the General Adult Education and Vocational Training category, was handed out to Karine Bourdages and Patrick Cyr.

The second, for Support in Academic Success, wishing to highlight the involvement of a company that welcomes student interns in order to enable them to acquire new skills and develop their talent, was given to the Integrated Health and Social Services Centre of the Gaspé Peninsula.

Finally, the third prize, Perseverance and Success, was awarded to Michaël Gauthier Dubé, a student who, through his academic progress and his efforts, has distinguished himself among his peers.



Martin Malenfant, president of Érablière Escuminac, received the award for their Outstanding Environmental and Climate Change practices from Bruce Wafer, president of the Regional Environment Council and Caroline Duchesne, the organization’s director general.

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Earlier on November 15, Groupe Damaboïs had announced an injection of \$16.4M to modernize its Bois

Chic Chocs plant, located in Cap-Chat which specializes in processing white birch and poplar for pallets.

The Cap-Chat project will consist of setting up a recovery centre for shade-intolerant hardwoods, such as white birch

and poplar. These are underutilized species of trees.

New products will be added to the Bois Chic Chocs line to maximize the use of logs.

The company also aims to optimize its transformation

process by adding computerized equipment.

Groupe Damaboïs benefits from two Investissement Québec loans totalling \$7.9M, and a grant of \$2.5M from the Department of Forest, Wildlife and Parks.

The company's down payment therefore amounts to \$6 million, excluding loans repayable to Investissement Québec.

Pierre Dufour, Minister of Forests, Wildlife and Parks, attended the announcement.

Cornélius-Brotherton Foundation rewards students studying in the region

Press release

Gaspé, November 12, 2021. - For a 14th consecutive year, the foundation of the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles is proud to distribute \$6,000 in scholarships to 11 students newly admitted to one of the programs offered at the institution's four campuses. These entrance scholarships are divided into three sections.

The "Welcome" section is exclusively for graduates from high schools and adult education centres located in the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine administrative region and the graduates from high schools within the Eastern Shores School Board. A \$500 scholarship is awarded by random draw to a student from each of these schools or centres. This year, not all are represented due to a lack of applications. The winners from the anglo sector are: Kayla Kathryn Drohan McGovern from Gaspé Polyvalent and Faith Flowers from New Carlisle High School.

The Immersion Section is intended for students who begin their college education in total or partial immersion at the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles. It encourages the acquisition of a second language. This year, there were no eligible candidates for the English Immersion Scholarship. The French Immersion Scholarship of \$500 was awarded to: Nykolos LeGresley from Gaspé Polyvalent. The Leadership section is intended to reward the exceptional extracurricular or community involvement of a student. Following the analysis of the selection committee, the \$500 scholarship is awarded to: Faith Flowers.

In addition to promoting education in general and particularly in the region, all the actions of the Cornelius-Brotherton Foundation aim to facilitate access to post-secondary education for Gaspésians and Madelinots. The Foundation organizes benefit activities to raise funds to finance its projects. The revenues from these activities are redistributed in the form of scholarships for students and financial support for projects related to the development of programs of study and/or the revitalization of student life on the four campuses of the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles: Gaspé, the Magdalen Islands, Carleton-sur-Mer and the École des pêches et de l'aquaculture du Québec in Grande-Rivière.

Gaspesian with several health issues wants to know if those treating him are vaccinated

Nelson Sergerie

SAINTE-ANNE-DES-MONTS - A citizen of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts with multiple health problems is criticizing the fact that it is impossible to know if the caregivers who visit him at his home are adequately vaccinated.

Cyrille Gibeault is on hemodialysis, immunosuppressed, suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, and awaiting a kidney transplant. He receives his health care both in the hospital, family physician clinics, in CLSCs and at home.

He has received three doses of the COVID-19 vaccine and points out that a vaccination passport is needed to attend several public places, but there isn't any proof needed to protect high-risk people such as himself because Quebec no longer requires adequate vaccination from health personnel.

"Initially, I was happy to know that it was mandatory and then the government backs down by asking for it everywhere else except them (health workers). I have a hard time understanding that," he says, still afraid of catching the virus and dying from it.

"I would have liked the Minister to keep his firm position or to place them elsewhere where they have no contact with people," says Mr. Gibeault. He wants to be the bearer of the message for all those who find themselves in the same situation as he is.

When asked about this aspect during his visit to Gaspé on November 15, the Minister of Health, Christian Dubé, said this issue was the subject of a debate when the first deadline for compulsory vaccination was postponed to October.

"I would like to reassure people. We have asked that at least three tests per week be done for people who are not vaccinated. I didn't do it joyfully, but in the past week we have put out 200 people without pay throughout the network who did not agree to be tested. We will continue to be rigorous because for me, it is safety that counts," says the Minister.

"I hold you responsible as well as the CISSS (Integrated Health and Social Services Centre) and the orders of the employees relating to health, for all the inconveniences that your decision-making causes me and I recommend that these services be done in a safe environment," wrote Mr. Gibeault in a letter to the minister.

As of November 15, 29 CISSS de la Gaspésie workers have not been vaccinated and 30 are not adequately vaccinated. Three of those employees are suspended without pay because they refuse to be tested.



Photo: Facebook

Cyrille Gibeault wants to know the vaccination status of the staff treating him.

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Hotel Bérubé, 1852-2021

Gilles Gagné

NEW RICHMOND – It was initially called Hotel New Richmond, when the first section of the inn was built in 1852 and, much later, after three expansions, it became known as Hotel Bérubé, or plainly Bérubé’s. It was a hotel, but it was also a very popular bar, and generations of young people drank their first glass of alcohol there, legally and sometimes not.

After standing 169 years, the building was demolished on November 16, much to the chagrin of many New Richmond residents. It would, however, have been hard to salvage, says New Richmond Mayor Éric Dubé. The wear and tear with time and the recent abandonment made it almost impossible to undertake any restoration of the building.

“For a building of that age, the new regulation requires a municipal administration to ask the Department of Culture permission before issuing a demolition licence. They (representatives of that department) came and inspected it. Unfortunately, the cost of saving it would have been prohibitive, if possible, at all. It was rotten. It could have collapsed, and vermin had taken over the building. Upon demolition, the stench that came out of it reached the drugstore. Going inside required wearing a mask at times,” explains Mr. Dubé.

“We sent several notices to the owner, as the building was dangerous. The notices requested that the owner renovate it or demolish it, as it presented several hazards, such as arson. People had entered the building since its closure to commit vandalism,” points out New Richmond’s town planning director Jean-Sébastien Bourque.

The original house was built by Gratien Cyr in 1851-1852. It was first expanded to the east by John B. Cyr between 1860 and 1880, according to a site called Évolution du patrimoine bâti et des paysages au Québec, which provides documentation about Quebec’s heritage buildings.

Between 1930 and 1935, John B. Cyr or his relatives expanded it a second time, to the west. Between 1940 and 1945 Hector Cyr made the final expansion to the east side of the building.

According to the Town of New Richmond registry of transactions, John B. Cyr’s wife became owner or part owner of the business between 1938 and 1941 with her son

Hector, before he succeeded in the control of the inn. Between 1941 and 1958, all the municipal permits were granted to Hector Cyr, until another member of the Cyr family, Yvon, appeared as co-owner, between 1958 and 1961.

From there, Reynold Fallu bought it and owned it between 1961 and 1967. In 1965, a man called Donald Phillips rented it for six months. In 1966, Wilbrod Bérubé rented it and bought it the following year. He ran it over 14 years. His wife Alida Lacasse then owned it between 1980 and 1994.

A company named 3104-2344 Québec Inc. and controlled by Serge Bérubé, the son of Alida Lacasse and Wilbrod Bérubé, appears as the owner of the latter firm and he controlled the hotel until 2003. That year, Roger Beaudry, owner of a company called 9132-2983 Québec Inc, acquired the business and kept it until 2016, when it was closed. By 2016, not long after its closure, the building was bought by Gestion immobilière Vadnais, the owner of the Lady Maria and Saint-Charles residences for seniors, located in Maria and Caplan respectively. The company also owns at least one apartment building in Carleton.

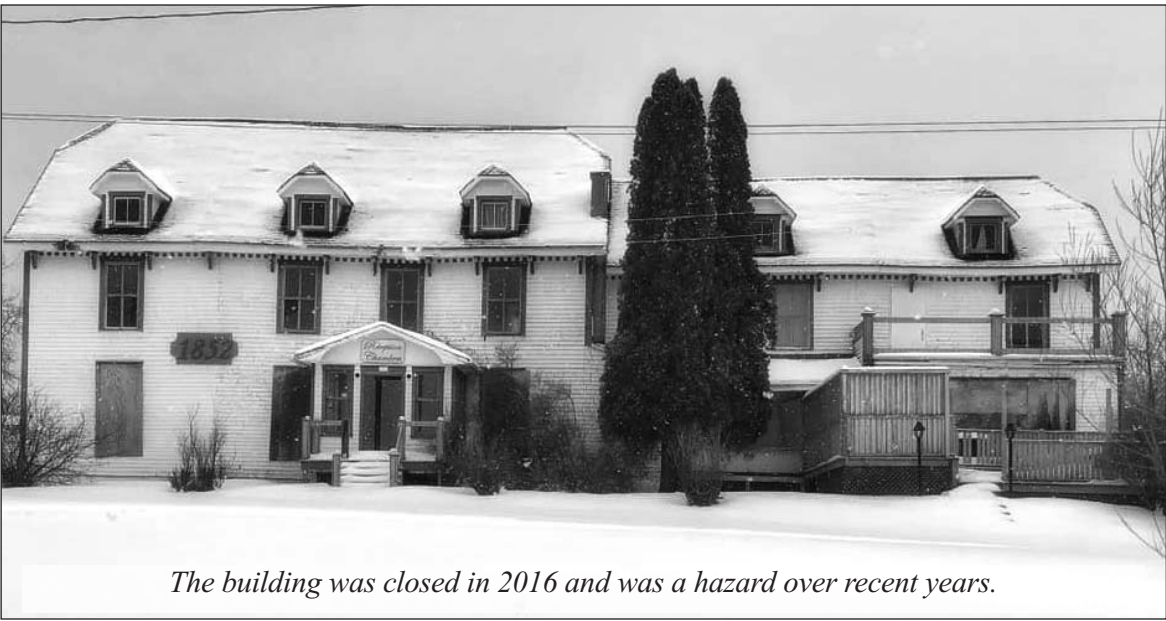
For now, Francis Vadnais, of Gestion immobilière Vadnais, has not expressed his intentions for the property tied to the former hotel.

Mayor Dubé recalls that his predecessor, Nicole Appleby, wanted to have the building classified at the beginning of her tenure, which went from 2001 to 2013. “She originally wanted to move the town hall to that building.”

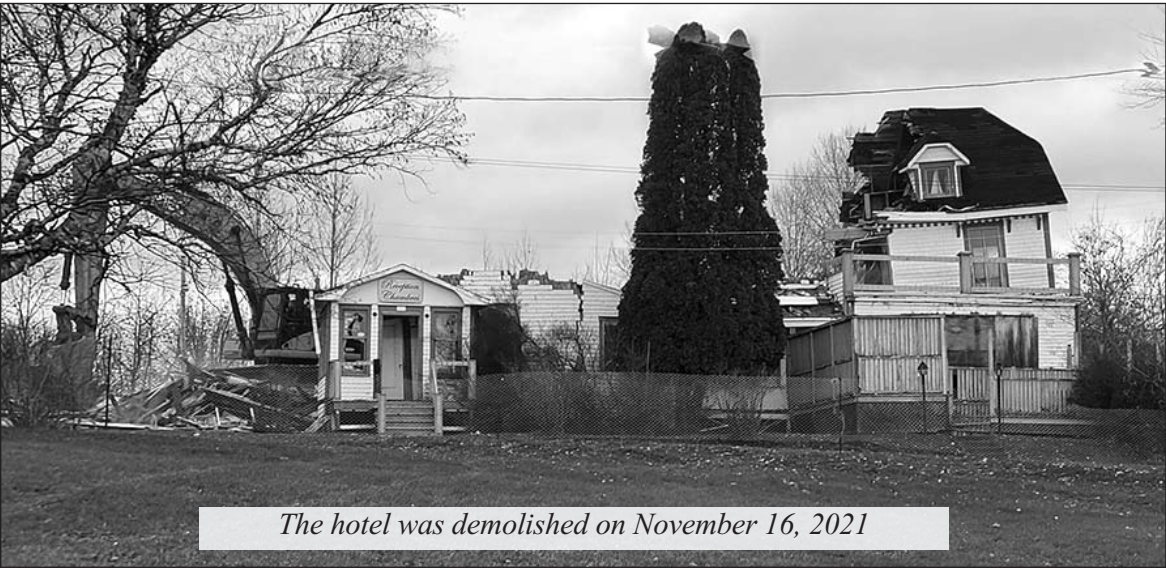
The land included with the former hotel and an L-shaped property belonging to New Richmond’s Harold Francoeur represents a prime property for an eventual development, says Éric Dubé.

Without knowing exactly the plans of Francis Vadnais, the mayor is aware that “he has projects. It is the best piece of land available downtown, where you can build just about anything. It has the residential and business status, zoning-wise. It could be a store in the basement and apartments in the upper floors. Soon, the two properties will have access to Chemin Cyr and Terry-Fox,” he explains.

Mayor Dubé can’t help but think about the loss of a heritage building. “It is sad, but like the old railway bridges of Cascapedia-Saint-Jules, some-



The building was closed in 2016 and was a hazard over recent years.



The hotel was demolished on November 16, 2021

Photos: Cyr family facebook

times, we can’t save old buildings or infrastructures. The foundation of the hotel was rotten. It would have been extremely costly to save it. At the beginning of the 2000s, a study revealed that it would have cost \$2 million. What would have been the cost today, \$10 mil-

lion?”

The Dubé family also has tales tied to the hotel. “We are turning a page filled with history. My son is 29 now and like many young people, he chose Hotel New Richmond as the place where he would celebrate turning 18. My wife and I went

without him knowing that we would show up and his face showed disappointment when he saw us. He was wondering what we were doing there. We just told him and his friends that we had come to pay a round. Then, he was happy,” concludes the mayor.



PUBLIC NOTICE of the results of the election

Ville de Percé

Polling day: November 7, 2021

After being informed of the complete results of the election,

Gemma Vibert, returning officer, indicates, by this **PUBLIC NOTICE**, that the following persons have been declared elected to the positions mentioned below.

Position	District	Name of the person declared elected
Mayor	-----	Cathy Poirier
Councillor	District no. 1	Allyson Cahill-Vibert (candidate elected by acclamation)
Councillor	District no. 2	Shanna Roussy
Councillor	District no. 3	Michel Rail
Councillor	District no. 4	Yannick Cloutier
Councillor	District no. 5	Gaétane Hautcoeur
Councillor	District no. 6	Doris Réhel (candidate elected by acclamation)
Councillor	District no. 7	Jonathan Côté (candidate elected by acclamation)
Councillor	District no. 8	Nicolas Ste-Croix (candidate elected by acclamation)

Issued in Percé, on November 15, 2021.

Gemma Vibert,
Returning officer

Business & Professional DIRECTORY

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*Though your smile is gone forever,
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Still we have so many memories,
Of the one we loved so much.
Your memory is our keepsake
With which we'll never part.
God has you in His keeping.
We have you in our hearts.*

Always remembered and sadly missed by Mum,
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Wednesday at 4 p.m. in order to appear in following week's issue.



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COAST ROUND-UP

BARACHOIS:
Christmas Market

The Barachois Christmas Market will be held at Belle Anse School on **Saturday, November 27**, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. There will be over 15 tables of art, crafts, baking, preserves, and lots more! Vaccine passports will be required to enter, and masks are to be worn at all times. For further information, contact Sandy at 581-887-1417.

NEW CARLISLE:
Christmas Bazaar

December 4: A Christmas Bazaar will be held at the Gilker Residence from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Covid restrictions are in effect. Have your vac-

cination passport on hand.

NEW RICHMOND:
St. Andrew's
United Church

November 28: Jesse Tree Sunday - bring a gift of warm mitts, toques, scarfs, etc., for our tree.

December 5: White Gift Sunday.

December 12: Angel Tree Sunday - Angels can be bought for \$5 by contacting Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

December 19: Food Bank Sunday - Bring in your non-perishables for the local food bank.

December 24: Christmas Eve Service with communion at 6 p.m.

A warm welcome is extended to all to join us for these special Christmas services.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:
Christmas Parade

The 1st Annual Cascapedia-Saint-Jules Christmas Parade will take place on **Saturday, December 4** at 6 p.m. (note time change). All floats, decorated vehicles and sponsors are welcome. Please register your float or vehicle with Lisa Cleary by email: lcleary79@gmail.com. Deadline for registration is Wednesday, December 1. The parade will end at the Cascapedia Saint Jules Community Centre with a bonfire. Hot chocolate, soup, and hot dogs will be served. Prizes for Best Overall Float, Best Themed Float, Best Costume, Most Christmas Spirit, and Best Ugly Christmas Sweater will be awarded to attendees. Floats are to meet at Cascapedia Enter-

prises (247 Rte 299), no later than 5:30 p.m. Santa is excited to see everyone in attendance this holiday season.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:
Fifty Plus Club

Bingo has resumed for the season. Card pricing is \$10 for 3 cards and \$1 for each extra card. All activities are anticipated to start depending on the Covid-19 situation. Everyone is welcome to attend.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:
Book Room

The book room is once again open on Wednesday after-

UNITED CHURCH

Sunday, November 28

2 p.m. Hope Town

noons from 1 p.m to 4 p.m. A large selection of books is on hand. For more information, please contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

ANGLICAN
CHURCH
OF CANADA
Sunday, November 28

New Carlisle
10 a.m. Morning Prayer
Hope Town
10 a.m. Morning Prayer
Port Daniel
10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

PARISH OF GASPÉ
Sunday, November 28

St. Paul's - Gaspé
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

On the lighter side...



CHRISTMAS DECOR IDEA



Gaspesian Whodunit Answers

- MESSAGE 1: Truck tracks were found at the crime scene.
- MESSAGE 2: The hairdresser noticed ashes on the floor after doing styles for the ladies group.
- MESSAGE 3: Straps and rope would also be needed.
- MESSAGE 4: Prudence Smith is a friend to all. She would never steal.
- MESSAGE 5: The culprit has the same last name as the victim.
- THE THIEF IS: HAZEL LUPINE

Congratulations to the
contest winners:

Crystal Duguay
Joan Manning
Stephanie Gallan
Julia Walters
Terence Sweetman



ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, family tops your list of priorities. You are likely to spend considerable time with loved ones in the days to come. Relish in all the opportunities to enjoy one another.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
You may feel uneasy or worried for unknown reasons, Taurus. Trust your gut in this instance and steer clear of trouble should it try to find you.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21
Gemini, focus on keeping your cool

even if others are trying to provoke you. Be the bigger person in all of your interactions. You have great control of your emotions.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, you have been working very hard lately and this may result in an overactive and tired mind. You should factor in a break so you can recharge your body and spirit.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23
The conditions are right for finishing important tasks, Leo. You will be able to come up with wonderful ideas that have true staying power. Pursue your options.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, your energy will remain high this week, enabling you to get many

things done. Additionally, you may have a big change coming, like buying property or landing a new job.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Be confident and listen to your instincts, Libra. Do so before undertaking any important tasks that turn up in the days or weeks ahead.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
Scorpio, it may be tempting to shirk your responsibilities right now, but resist that temptation. Keep your head down and keep working. It will all soon prove worth it.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, you may have to reset your priorities, as new information has come to the surface. Prioritize responsibilities so major issues are

taken care of first.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
Capricorn, unavoidable situations may cross your path and it is important that you stay the course. Committing to tackling things head on is the most productive approach.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
Aquarius, you treasure friends and family, and this week calls for an important decision that could affect them all. It may be tough but you will make the right call.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, minor obstacles are in your path and it's easy to get frustrated. Once you clear the hurdles it will be smooth sailing before long.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

NOVEMBER 21
Jena Malone, Actress (37)

NOVEMBER 22
Scarlett Johansson, Actress (37)

NOVEMBER 23
Justin Turner, Athlete (37)

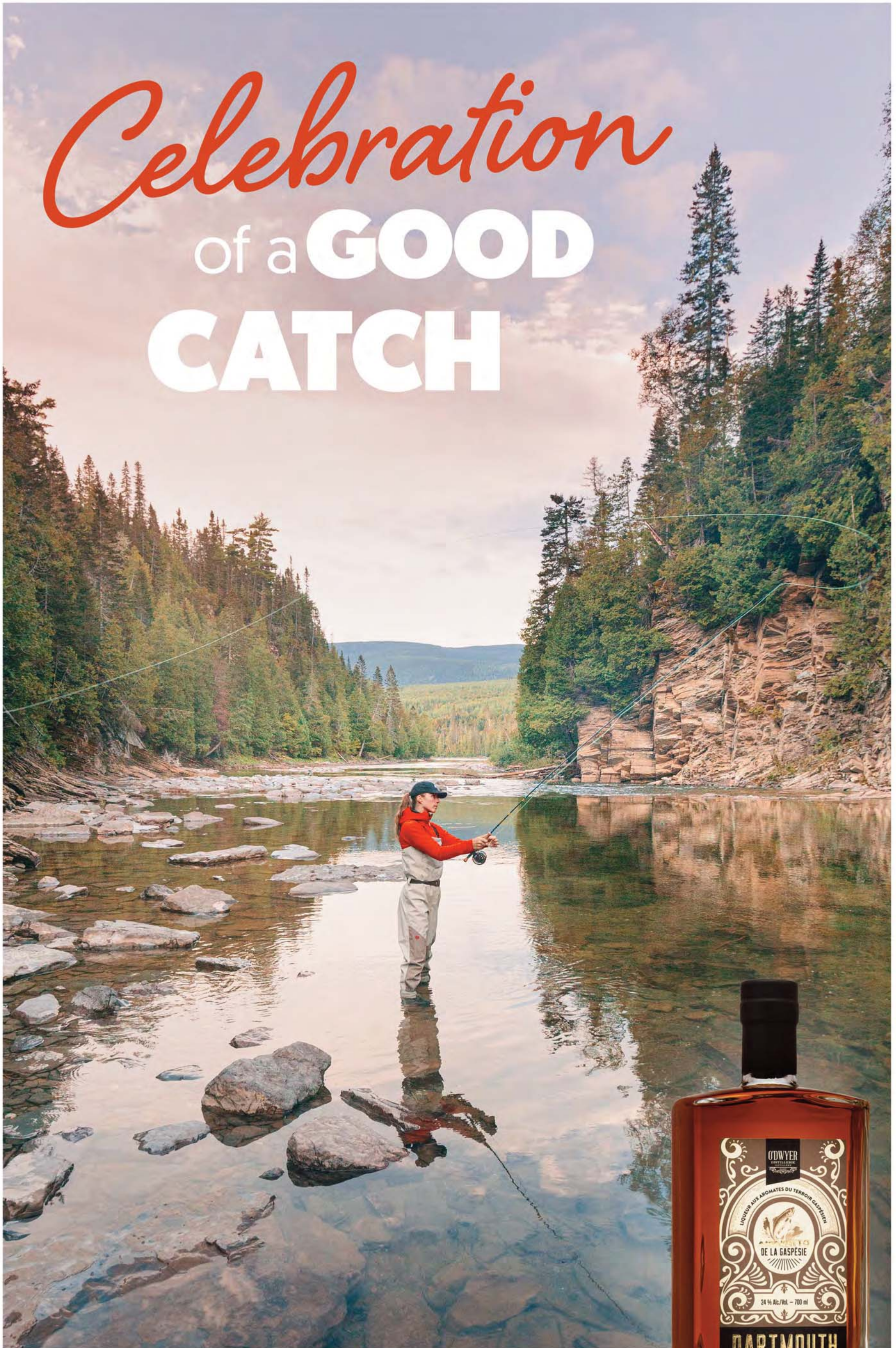
NOVEMBER 24
Peyton Meyer, Actor (23)

NOVEMBER 25
Christina Applegate, Actress (50)

NOVEMBER 26
Rita Ora, Singer (31)

NOVEMBER 27
Jaleel White, Actor (45)

Celebration of a **GOOD** **CATCH**



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