

Gesgapegiag celebrates National Indigenous Peoples Day

Gilles Gagné

GESGAPEGIAG – The importance of National Indigenous Peoples Day has been increasing over recent years in the Gaspé Peninsula and June 21 of this year made no exception.

The day was celebrated by hundreds of Gaspésians in Gesgapegiag, as citizens from a wide range of communities gathered for the day's events, including a parade, traditional songs and chants, a first meal around lunchtime, a performance by Head dancers Amanda Larocque and Craig Isaac, live music with Roger Lee Martin, activity stations for the kids and a mid-after-

noon feast. That feast, consisting of salmon and lobster, capped a day of sharing that brought a smile on everyone's face, and warm thanks to the organizers, like Jeannette Martin, who had enthusiastically promoted the activities before the event. By 4 p.m., the big top was full of people, with a line up of a few dozen people. Jeannette Martin had mentioned that there would be good food for everybody and it couldn't be truer.

The whole day charmed attendees because of the genuine generosity of the Gesgapegiag people. It looks as if the event can only grow in the future.



Great sharing time for everybody, courtesy of Gesgapegiag.

Photo: G. Gagné

Groupe Lebel invests \$4.5M in its Nouvelle sawmill to optimize lumber production

Gilles Gagné

NOUVELLE – The Groupe Lebel sawmill in Nouvelle is benefitting from investments totalling \$4.5 million over two years, a decision geared at optimizing the yield of lumber produced annually out of a determined volume of wood. A part of \$2.5 million has already been invested.

Groupe Lebel acquired the sawmill, known for more than 15 years as the Temrex plant. The acquisition was announced on April 30, 2021, after months of negotiations with the former owner, publicly owned Investissement Québec.

Groupe Lebel President Frédéric Lebel says the mill's operations are going very well since acquiring it almost 14 months ago. The company owns three major sawmills the size of Nouvelle's plant and about 15 smaller facilities.

"We kept this (Nouvelle) unit relatively independent



Photo: G. Gagné

The Groupe Lebel plant in Nouvelle is benefitting from investments of \$4.5 million between 2021 and 2023.

from the other plants. We are working with people on site to see how to improve certain aspects of production. We have made some investments to improve these points. We are establishing some synergies in the sales department though.

We try to share the good points," explains Mr. Lebel.

Groupe Lebel maintained in 2021 the strategy of the former owner, Investissement Québec, and proceeded with a \$2.5 million capitalization plan to improve operations.

"That strategy included \$400,000 for upgrades to maximize one of the aspects we wanted to improve on. What concerns us is material yield; we want to improve our boardfeet production out of the supply we have. We want

to make more wood and fewer wood chips," he adds.

Since May, Groupe Lebel has adjusted the investment strategy slated for the Nouvelle plant.

"We are redesigning the plan for the next 12 to 24 months. It is not going as fast as we would like. Equipment manufacturers are very busy. You have to move rapidly if you want your equipment delivered. Not everything expected for the next year or so is decided upon and negotiated. I can say that we already have another \$2 million in investments earmarked for the next while," stresses Frédéric Lebel.

The markets haven't changed since the acquisition of the Nouvelle plant by his group, despite lumber prices that are still really high 27 months after the start of the pandemic.

"They haven't necessarily

Cont'd on page 3

Minister Lamontagne to put pressure on Ottawa in support of pelagic fishermen

Gilles Gagné

PASPEBIAC – After meeting with representatives of the pelagic species fishermen on June 20 in Paspebiac, Quebec, Fisheries Minister André Lamontagne committed to helping them in their request to convince Fisheries and Oceans Canada to unveil urgent support measures.

Minister Lamontagne, who heads the Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Department, spent a little less than an hour with the pelagic fishermen spokesperson Ghislain Collin, who represents 15 permit holders who depend almost solely on herring and mackerel catches.

Those 15 fishermen were caught completely offguard on March 30 when the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans suspended the spring herring season and mackerel fishing for the whole year, due to depleted stocks.

Over the last three months, the 15 fishermen have not received any kind of compensation, revenue wise or quota wise, and some of them have stopped receiving unemployment benefits for days or weeks.

Minister André Lamontagne described his meeting with the fishermen as positive. He recognizes that Quebec's powers are limited within this federal jurisdiction, but he promises to work on a twostep plan. First, he wants to support fishermen whose financial situation is stressful, particularly in their efforts to extend the period of unemployment insurance benefits, by making representations to the federal department. In the longer term, he wants to ensure that Ottawa compensates fishermen adequately.

“The federal government should have come forward with compensation measures as soon as the season cancellation was announced because that decision has an impact on the fishermen. For now, my preoccupation and that of my team targets consists of explaining their situation in Ottawa putting pressure on the federal government so that moves are made in that regard. Honestly, the signal I receive, as of now, is that people are working so that things will pan out,” said Minister Lamontagne after meeting with the fishermen.

Although he was glad to be offered an occasion to explain to the minister the situation of the pelagic fishermen, Ghislain Collin finds inconceivable the fact that Fisheries and Oceans Canada has not applied any compensation measure in three months for a group that is depending on one.

“There are 15 fishermen with some compensation needs. There are more than 15 permit holders of mackerel and herring in the Gaspé Peninsula but 15 heavily depend on pelagic fisheries. Some other pelagic fishermen have been fishing for crab for the Southern Gaspé Professional Fishermen Group now but I don't know how many. Out of our 15 permit holders, 5 are aged 64 and older and they are facing the black hole. They already are or will be caught without revenues very soon. Most of the young fishermen were able to find a job for the season on a crab boat,” explains Ghislain Collin.

Most pelagic fishermen already receive small quotas of halibut but the youngest fishermen can only get a few hundred pounds, which is not enough to justify putting the boat in the water, points out Mr. Collin, who suggests short-term solutions that would be perfectly viable, he insists.

“Our young fishermen want a shot at some emerging species, like squid. There is a squid experimental fishery presently conducted in the Magdalen Islands and it could work here as well. We see squid along our coast. We can fish it with exactly the same gear as mackerel, with the same hooks. We could fish it for human consumption and make sure that the boat's hold keeps them cold,” stresses Ghislain Collin.

The current stock of striped bass in the southern part of the Gaspé Peninsula coast could also sustain an experimental fishery, he adds.

“The species is overabundant in the Bay of Chaleurs area. It would also be possible to catch and keep it cold for human consumption. It is also catchable with the same hooks used for mackerel. Striped bass is sold for \$18 or \$19 per pound in fish markets. It comes from Spain. The problem here is that the stock is managed by Quebec, not by



Photo: G. Gagné

Although the landing value of pelagic fisheries is low, at \$2.8 million in 2021, for example, the bait made with some of those catches allowed lobster and snow crab fishermen to deliver \$385 million worth of shellfish during the same year.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Commercial fishermen would come last, after requests already made by outfitters and so on. We would never see the end of it. There is no way we would deplete the resource though. I see striped bass in my lobster traps! There are so many,” underlines Ghislain Collin.

“This is a sector where the Quebec government could help though. Minister Lamontagne mentioned that he will put pressure on Ottawa but he also said that his power is limited. It is easy to say that Ot-

tawa is not moving but Quebec is not moving either. We don't need additional equipment for commercial striped bass fishing. We only need an exploratory quota. We would receive help from the Fourchette bleu coordinator, Sandra Gauthier, who is involved in commercializing less known species. Processing plants often pay a poor price, which forces the fishermen to catch big quantities. It could be so different with emerging species,” analyzes Mr. Collin.

He thinks that the pelagic

fishermen issue must temporarily be dealt with at a higher echelon of the Quebec-Canada talks.

“Minister Lamontagne wants to represent us as a Quebec minister but his role seems limited as of now. He raises his voice and sends letters. I think that a short intervention by Premier (François) Legault with (Prime Minister) Justin Trudeau would solve the matter rapidly. It is a provincial-federal stake. Ms. Lebouthillier (Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Member of Parliament and Minister) finds the closure unacceptable and savage but we don't see her intervening in Ottawa. She is leading a fine life in Percé. She criticized her colleague (Fisheries and Oceans Canada Minister Joyce Murray) from here but not much more,” says Ghislain Collin.

He stresses that pelagic species are vastly underrated because of their low landing value. In 2021, the value of herring, mackerel and capelin reached \$2.8 million in Quebec, compared to \$3.2 million in 2020.

“One of their uses is bait for lobster and crab fisheries, and in those cases, the value of landings reaches hundreds of millions of dollars annually,” points out Ghislain Collin.

In 2021, the combined value of crab and lobster landings reached \$385 million in Quebec.

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Seventh balanced budget for the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS

Nelson Sergerie

CAPLAN - Despite the significant impact of the pandemic on its finances, the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) maintained a balanced budget of just over half a billion dollars in the last fiscal year ended March 31.

The 2021-2022 financial statements show a record \$522 million budget, according to documents filed with board members on June 15, the statutory deadline.

"For the seventh consecutive year, the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS has filed a balanced budget for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022. By the same token, we also tabled the budget for the year 2022-2023 and it is also a balance, but in a context in which there is a lot of uncertainty related to the end of the health emergency last May 31. We are waiting for information from the ministry, but there could be financial pressures on all institutions in the province," said Jean-Pierre Collette, director of financial services at the CISSS.

The budget is expected to be reduced to \$439 million for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the same level as in 2020-2021, which totaled \$440 million including allocations for COVID-19.

COVID-19 Vaccination

A new COVID-19 vaccination recall campaign will be launched in mid-August by the CISSS de la Gaspésie.

The Regional Director of Public Health, Dr. Yv Bonnier Viger, mentions that a variant is hitting the United States and others are running in Europe and South Africa.

The specialist is not worried about the summer, but from the end of August and the fall it could be more problematic, hence the recall campaign for people 60 years and older, health care workers and the most vulnerable in the first place.

"It's going to be a big push starting in mid-August to try to increase our herd immunity," says the medical specialist.

As for what happens next, Dr. Bonnier Viger prefers not to comment.

"For the moment, it's not too worrying. We will try to live a little normally. There are no plans to implement population-based measures," says the Regional Director of Public Health.

The last major measures, such as wearing masks on public transit, have been cancelled in recent weeks.



A COVID-19 vaccine booster campaign is coming this fall.

Photo: G. Gagné

SAWMILL

▶ Cont'd from cover

changed for us. The integration of the Nouvelle plant sales department members to the Lebel sales teams went smoothly. We have the same sales strategy. The market has experienced significant fluctuations, it is true," says Frédéric Lebel.

He is concerned about the overall context of transportation, especially regarding the trucking shortcomings, a global problem in the country, not just in the Gaspé Peninsula.

"We are experiencing major logistical problems, such as a lack of equipment

(trucks) and manpower (drivers). The imposition of the log book for drivers and the vaccine passport were big hurdles. It is better in railroad transport, where more equipment is assigned. Logistics are quite important in the lumber business but we are doing well in Nouvelle. The Nouvelle plant and the plant we own in Maine have access to the railroad. It happens sometimes that there is a shortage of railcars. As for the Daaquam sawmill, we have to transfer our shipments to Quebec City, sometimes to Saint-Jean-Port-Joli and even Montreal sometimes in order to reach a railway," points out Frédéric Lebel.

Police report

Johanne Woods, 60, from Hope Town, died in a June 21 Highway 132 collision shortly before 4 p.m. after her vehicle collided head-on with a school bus in Hope Town. She was attempting to pass another vehicle. Ms. Woods was pronounced dead at Maria Hospital. The bus driver suffered a serious but non-life threatening injury, according to Sûreté du Québec spokesperson, Sgt. Claude Doiron.

"At least ten children were on the school bus but there were no injuries among the young people. They were able to get off the bus without any problem," adds Sgt. Doiron. He says that one of the children, shaken up, was taken to the hospital as a preventive measure.

"Highway 132 was closed in both directions until 8:15 p.m. for accident reconstruction purposes, while a collision reconstructionist was able to assess the scene," says the police officer. "There is no criminal element related to the accident but the investigation is not over," also notes Sgt. Doiron. The accident occurred on a straight stretch of Highway 132, which is the case along most of its course in that area, located just west of the Fipec fishing gear fabrication plant.

Arrested on June 17 in the woods behind New Richmond, Raynald Croussette, 70, from Les Méchins (between Matane and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts), was remanded in custody after his appearance at court in New Carlisle that day. He is charged with theft of more than \$5,000, hit and run, and breach of probation. As the SPEC was reaching its June 24 deadline, he was scheduled to appear in court again on June 27 when additional charges were likely to be laid.

The Sûreté du Québec arrested the man around mid-day on June 17 and they had to use a Taser gun. "He resisted his arrest, which followed a three-week wave of break and enters and thefts of various objects in the sector of New Richmond. The police intervention had been underway for a while when he was arrested. We increased the number of staff members during the period that preceded his arrest," explains Sgt. Claude Doiron, spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec.

The arrest of Raynald Croussette was complicated by the fact that, in all likelihood, he was practically living in his car and in the woods before being arrested, adds Sgt. Doiron. "He had no contact in the Bay of Chaleur area and no next of kin. (...) He was not carrying a weapon when he was arrested," he stresses.

Prior to the arrest there were many comments published on Facebook criticizing the work of the police force and the Town of New Richmond in that case. "People were dissatisfied with the work of the SQ and they decided to take justice, and take charge of the investigation, via social media. Those are initiatives that we do not support. It is not the way to do it. We must let police officers do their job. We cannot investigate using social media. We can only use information passed on to us directly," adds Claude Doiron.

The accused was sent to the hospital after his arrest, which is standard procedure when someone is arrested with the assistance of a Taser gun.

Raynald Croussette had just served a sentence of 6 months less 2 days of imprisonment, for a case of violence for which he was convicted on October 7, 2021, for events that took place near or in his hometown. He had also already been sentenced to six months in prison for a charge related to the use of firearms in 2012 and was on probation relating to an assault in 2000.

A New Richmond citizen, Trudy Brown, is highly disappointed by the way the case was handled by the Town of New Richmond and the Sûreté du Québec. "I am appalled with how there were criminal acts going on in New Richmond for weeks and the public wasn't at least notified through the Town of New Richmond Facebook page. It takes five seconds to write a post that could potentially save someone having to deal with insurance due to theft or breaking and entering. That Thursday (June 16), I called my neighbour, who is in her 70s, as I knew that she wouldn't know that there were various bizarre acts going on in the community: peeping toms, thefts of vehicles and breaking and entering. So I called her to let her know to stay safe and keep everything locked up. Wouldn't you know, that same night she called me after she had called the cops. The man was on her back porch at 10 p.m. People are known to do desperate things when they are confronted. Had she not known, who knows what could have happened?" says Ms. Brown.

One of the two men at the centre of a major poaching network dismantled in the Bay of Chaleur area pleads guilty to 30 of the 43 offenses laid against him. Raynald Maltais received fines totalling \$72,571. The other individual involved, Hugues Roy, will return to court on August 23. The criminal and penal prosecutor and the defence are still in discussions regarding his numerous files. On March 17-18-19, 2021, more than a hundred people were targeted in Operation Pie by wildlife officers. The network worked mainly in the Bay of Chaleurs area. The network was involved in the illegal sale and purchase of Atlantic salmon, striped bass, rainbow smelt, brook trout, deer, moose and partridge. Up to 40 game wardens were mobilized by the investigation that started months before the March 2021 operation. Most people questioned after the poaching bust were buyers of game meat.

Groupe Lebel has increased its rail shipments by 51.5% out of the Nouvelle sawmill between the Temrex results of 2020 and the 2021 numbers, despite having owned the plant for just eight of the 2021 year's twelve months.

The Nouvelle plant works with an annual supply of

about 500,000 cubic metres of wood. The logs come from various sources, the public forest being the main one. The Dunière freehold, still owned by Investissement Québec, comes second, volumewise, while the Gaspé Peninsula Wood Producers

Syndicate comes third. About 140 people work

for Groupe Lebel in Nouvelle. The plant generates almost as many indirect jobs. The annual production is reaching 130 million board-feet, usually all dried at the local kilns. Those kilns' capacity was increased due to an \$8 million investment that was completed in February 2019.



Gilles Gagné
Commentary

Time to reflect on the progress made by Indigenous

A growing number of people in this country are taking the opportunity provided by the National Indigenous Peoples Day, which took place on June 21, to reflect on the progress made by the Natives over the years. However, that reflection time should spread to a larger proportion of the population.

There is undoubtedly progress. The proportion of Natives getting educated to a higher degree is rising rapidly and although superior studies are not a compulsory passage towards better leadership and an access to competences, it helps. It is an indicator of progress.

The Native communities have also been able over the years to get recognized as potent business partners. They are now considered and asked to intervene in an increasing number of resource development initiatives. Such is the case of wind energy, and the Gaspé Peninsula communities of Listuguj, Gesgapegiag and Gespeg are Canada-wide leaders in that field.

Commercial fisheries, lumber production, silviculture, outfitting and retail businesses, to name a few, are other sectors benefitting from the Native imprint.

In fact, we can sometimes see that the non-Natives are benefitting more from the Aboriginal presence in resource management than the other way around. Commercial fisheries, for example, have fared better since the Marshall decision in 1999, allowing First Nations to have a share of the sea resources, than over the two previous decades. It looks as if the presence of Natives, and lessons from the past, like the near extinction of cod stocks, have taught non-Natives to be more careful about resource management.

Native leadership is also spreading politically. Alexis Wawanoloath was the first elected Aboriginal Member of National Assembly, in 2007 in a region, Abitibi, where the perception of First Nations still had to make forward strides, a reality still present

today, in fact.

On June 21, Québec solidaire presented publicly five Native candidates who will run for the party during the coming fall electoral campaign. Those five candidates all show solid leadership qualities, including solid communication skills.

They are following in the footsteps of people like Stanley Volland, a Pessamit-born doctor and surgeon who has opened so many doors for his First Nations sisters and brothers. He is not a politician but his stands on our society's issues have convinced a lot of Natives that they can accomplish something similar, or at least try, notably in politics. The increasing involvement of Natives at the Québec-wide and Canada-wide political levels has some analysts worried about the relevance of opting for provincial or federal leadership instead of the role they could play in their communities.

What if they get politically "assimilated," that is to say swallowed by the Non-Native model of power deployment, the party lines and the obligation to take into account a majority of interests that have nothing or very little to do with urgent aboriginal stakes?

Will the political involvement of a rising number of Natives at the national level cause a leadership shortage in the aboriginal communities?

It represents food for thought. The age pyramid of Native communities, generally characterized by a strong representation of youths, might provide a fair answer. Leadership has to be nurtured, notably through education and mentorship. However, it looks as if a growing number of such communities are taking care of the leadership aspect.

Some help from non-Natives could materialize as well in that process. A recent survey carried out by Environics indicated that 46% of Canadians think that central governments are not doing enough for the Native communities. It is a 10% increase since 2020. Besides, 71% of the country's aboriginal population is also of the view that the Canadian government should do more.

Provincial governments could also do more but they are improving faster than Ottawa, where slowness in providing services to individuals has vastly taken over in recent years, with the possible exception of COVID-related benefits.

In the First Nation community of Neskantaga, northern Ontario, June 20 marked its 10,000th day under a drinking water boil advisory. This is the

longest period of time any First Nation community in Canada has lived under such an obligation.

The community of about 300 people located 450 kilometres north of Thunder Bay has consequently survived in that context for more than 27 years! Officially, the project to give that essential service to Neskantaga was completed two years ago, but it is still not functional.

How can federal government representatives, either politicians or high-ranking civil servants, talk frequently about reconciliation in that context? Words remain words, and they lead to very little action, despite the important amounts of money earmarked for the Aboriginal Affairs Department.

How can federal government officials, with decent means, explain the slowness in transferring youth protection services to the First Nations?

Observing the situation from the outside gives the impression that federal government officials are so absorbed by their perception that First Nations communities are an "outside world" that they are paralyzed when the moment comes to move.

First Nations might have become a "different world" but that reality stems mostly from what governments have decided over the last couple of centuries, marked by the Indian Act, as well as by a clear and shameful lack of resource sharing.

The current context of idleness generated by the federal slowness in action must be replaced by a capacity to listen and make moves. The First Nations are already showing a better listening capacity despite the grudge they could hold, given the little action they have witnessed over the years.

Although Native leaders don't always agree between themselves about the best way to develop their communities, a lot of other work remains to be done in purveying some basic tools, like drinkable water, enhanced education departments and resource sharing.

The reassuring element noticed in recent years, and the National Indigenous Peoples Day in Gesgapegiag was a proof of that, comes from the fact that Non-Natives are growing increasingly aware of the links they must forge with their aboriginal neighbours. It works for the environment, for a sustainable development of national resources and at the individual level.

Those links will help make the switch between the perception that we live in two estranged worlds. We share the same world, and having different perceptions is not deplorable if we communicate soundly. In fact, differences can be a source of inspiration.

If we can make traditional politicians understand that, and pressure them to accelerate their interventions, we will have accomplished a feat.

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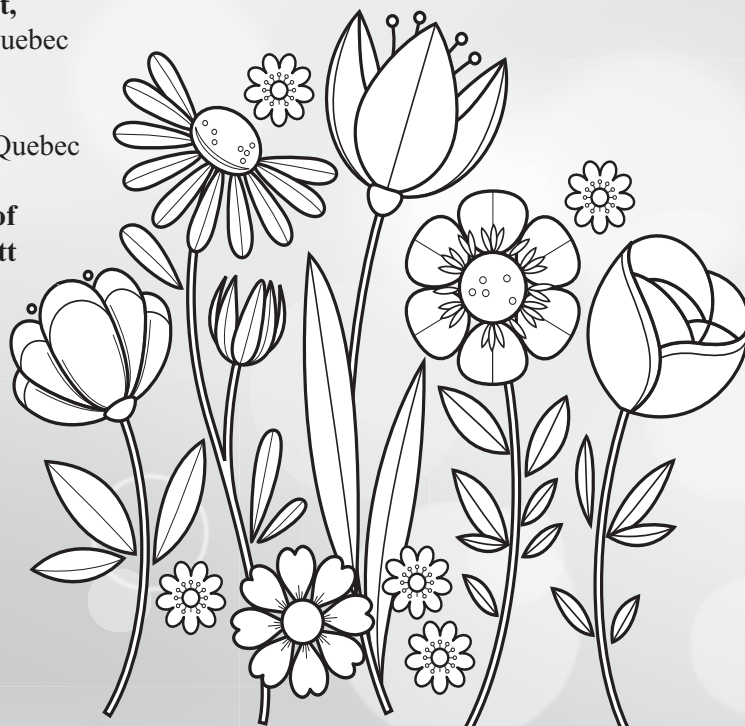
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Dead gannets pile up on Paspébiac shoreline

Nelson **Sergerie**

PASPÉBIAC - Paspébiac will collect the carcasses of gannets found dead on the shore in recent days. A citizen, Sylvie Aspirot, counted on June 20, 26 gannets and a seal on one side of the local beach.

The cleanup operation will be initiated in the next few days.

“For the past few weeks, and this is probably related to the avian flu, there have been bird carcasses on the beaches. The town has undertaken to set up a structure to collect them,” says Mayor Marc Loisel, who added that this operation will be done every

week.

“We want to make sure that the beach is clean and safe,” he added.

The elected official reminds his citizens to act with caution when walking on the shoreline. “Even though humans may not be affected too much, you have to be vigilant. People who have poultry or small birds in their homes can transmit the virus,” suggests Loisel.

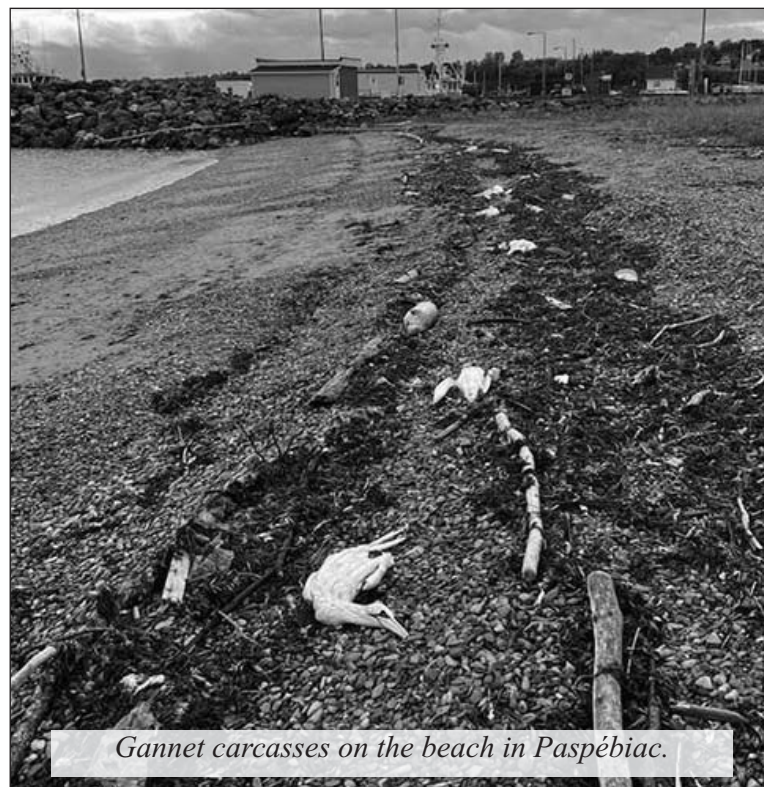
The town will see if Quebec has a program to fund such an operation. “Maybe we can check, but for the moment we haven’t stopped at that level. We have decided to act as quickly as possible,” concludes the elected official.

In recent weeks, gannet carcasses have been found in several places in the Gaspé along the shoreline.

Ariane Massé, a biologist with the Biosecurity and Wildlife Health Division of the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, stresses that the risk of transmission to humans is rare and adds the usual instructions when a dead wild animal is found.

“We do not touch a carcass with our bare hands. We don’t let our pets go near it,” Ms. Massé recommends.

The virus appeared in Europe in 2020 and in North America in late 2021. Bird migration brought the first cases to Quebec in April.



Gannet carcasses on the beach in Paspébiac.

Photo: Sylvie Aspirot

New wave of vandalism in Chandler

Nelson **Sergerie**

CHANDLER - A new wave of vandalism is hitting Chandler. The Circuit des bâtisseurs and the Town Hall were both vandalized, as well as other locations.

“There was the Chenal canteen which was vandalized. It was a place for young people. Unfortunately, it was damaged. They had to shut it down. We just renovated the Rona stage. We don’t want that to happen there. It is the people’s money that is used to build and repair this. It is the people’s money, unfortunately, that is used to repair it when there is vandalism,” underlines the mayor, Gilles Daraïche.

Mr. Daraïche notes that in recent years, the Chandler Marina had been affected by vandalism, where young people have caused significant damage.

The Town is looking for the perpetrators of these acts of vandalism, in particular, by viewing surveillance cameras.

The mayor would like to remind the public that good citizenship is essential.

Fire ladder truck

Chandler will attempt to convince the other mayors in the Rocher-Percé MRC that a ladder truck should be acquired to fight fires.

The Town has been renting such equipment for a year at a cost of approximately \$60,000 per year. Its acquisition would be around \$400,000.

The mayor believes this



Photo: Town of Chandler

This installation of the Circuit des bâtisseurs was vandalized.

would be a plus for fire protection. “We would do well to unite. In Chandler, we are centred. I think all municipalities could have a need for it. Of course, we will look to have partners in this purchase, because it would be useful to everyone,” says Mr. Daraïche.

In March 2020, the mayor of Grande-Rivière, Gino Cyr, launched an exercise following a fire that had ravaged an apartment building.

The objective was to optimize the risk coverage plan against fires in the MRC.

The cost of gasoline impacts the budget

The marked increase in

gas prices over several weeks will have an impact on the budget.

The mayor hopes to be able to address this increase from within the regular budget.

Without being able to quantify it precisely, he notes that if the trend continues, the council will have to review its priorities once again.

“Unfortunately, that is a lot of money for a town. We’re going to do what has to be done. We are going to cut elsewhere as we did in the budget. We had to buy a lot of things on the list that we postponed. We will adjust along the way,” says the mayor.

Escuminac councillor may be suspended

Nelson **Sergerie**

ESCUMINAC - The Quebec Municipal Commission is serving a warning to Escuminac councillor Roch Savoie that he must complete mandatory ethics training by July 21. Failure to do so could result in suspension from office.

Following an investigation, the town commission cited the councillor on May 24 for failure to complete the training.

That’s because the law requires a councillor or mayor - new or re-elected - to take the course within six months of taking office.

In an email, the commission states that an elected official who fails to take such training within the prescribed time period, without serious cause, may be suspended by the commission for an indefinite period of time, until the training is taken.

The hearing was held on June 21 before the commission’s administrative tribunal.

Fertility rate reaches a peak

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands region has recorded its best birth and fertility rates in 10 years.

The Institut de la statistique du Québec has established the total fertility rate at 1.84, which is an increase from the 1.76 recorded in 2020, ranking the region sixth. The Quebec average is 1.58.

In terms of births, the region recorded 750. This is the best rate since 2013, when 750 births were also recorded, after a low of 646 in 2016.

This is the third consecutive year that births reached 700 or more. The last time the birth rate was greater than 750 was in 2011, when there were 772 births.

The Avignon MRC had the most births with 169, a high since 2013. There were 155 in Bonaventure, 144 in Côte-de-Gaspé, 106 in Rocher-Percé, 103 in the Islands and Haute-Gaspésie recorded the fewest with 73.

Quebec recorded 84,900 births last year, an increase of 4% over 2020. Births are returning to the level of 2019 when 84,309 infants were born.

Engagement & Wedding Announcements



Announce your Engagement or Wedding in The Gaspé Spec

Engagement Announcement:
\$30 (\$35 with picture) up to 20 lines

Wedding Announcement:
\$40 (\$45 with picture)
max. of 300 words

Côte-de-Gaspé SADC invested \$834,000 in area in 2021

Gilles Gagné

GASPÉ – The Société d'aide au développement des collectivités (SADC) invested \$834,000 over the past year, supporting a total of 76 projects in the five municipalities of the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC. The organization's annual report was released recently in Grande-Vallée.

In addition to delivering special programs related to the pandemic, the Gaspé SADC team provided professional coaching to more than sixty entrepreneurs as they worked to complete their start-up, growth or succession projects over the last year, which ended on March 31.

The biggest share of the organization's interventions took the form of loans totalling \$484,000. They were used to complete the financing structures of some twenty business projects.

The SADC also provided funding for thirty technical support packages for business consultants, with \$292,000 being invested during the year in the Strategic Technical Assistance Program and \$222,000 for 14 other projects, most involving tourism and cultural businesses as well as retail outlets.

Also, 18 projects received a total of \$49,000 from a program called PATEO, Technical Support Program for Enterprises and Organizations, including several initiatives in digital innovation and business succession. Virage Vert (Going Green), a new ecological program meaning, supported one project requiring a \$22,000 investment in the water management field.

"The impact of our SADC in the community is undeniable. Our assistance programs are greatly appreciated by entrepreneurs and organizations. This translates into a high volume of applications for support and financing, to which our small team does its best to respond," says Dave Lavoie, director general of the organization.

Local projects with major spinoffs

The SADC has also invested \$58,000 in some twenty local economic development projects. These initiatives will generate over \$3.5 million in investments in the region.

The SADC also offered business mentoring services to fifteen entrepreneurs and organized its annual tourism consultation activity. It also continued its involvement in



Photo: SADC of the Côte-de-Gaspé

Côte-de-Gaspé SADC President Patrick Denis and Director General Dave Lavoie are satisfied with the results their organization accomplished for the year that ended on March 31.

sustainable development, youth entrepreneurship and the English-speaking community of the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC.

"The SADC is proud to have been able to support so many projects over the past year. These projects will help revive the local economy during this post-pandemic period," adds Patrick Denis, chairman of the board of directors, through a press release. He thanks the members of the team and the volunteer administrators for their involvement over the last year. The year's financial results and the 2022-2023 action plan will be presented at the annual general meeting on Tuesday, September 6. Details of the event will be announced later this summer.

A favourable economic situation in the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC

In an interview with the SPEC, Director General Dave Lavoie points out that the good results of the year that ended on March 31 stem from two factors, the recovery that seems to characterize the last few months, as the pandemic's negative effects have somewhat ebbed away, and the favourable context prevailing in the MRC.

"Before the pandemic, we had a record year of \$1.2 mil-

lion in loans only, while our yearly average was \$400,000 until then. We went back to \$400,000 in loans annually during the pandemic. (...) It is rising again. For the first

three months of 2022-2023, we will almost reach the levels of loans of 2021 (the year that ended on March 31, 2021). Our investment committee is preparing to approve loans worth \$300,000," explains Dave Lavoie.

The Town of Gaspé is booming economically but the SADC director general is quick to point out that the four other municipalities of the MRC are also showing strong signs of vigour. "In Grande-Vallée, Mayor Noël Richard has promised that 100 new families would settle in his municipalities during his first term and it happened. In Murdochville, winter tourism is going well and it has had a positive effect on the price of houses. Not so long ago, people couldn't get a loan because the value of their house was negligible. In Petite-Vallée, the Festival en chanson is the centre of everything, and the municipality is working on a residence for seniors. Cloridorme's new mayor also has

plans to get his municipality going strong," remarks Dave Lavoie.

He points out that there are also factors slowing down the economy of the Côte-de-Gaspé.

"We also have major challenges: rising construction costs, the cost of concrete, asphalt, the lack of availability of manpower, and housing and these issues could well cut our momentum. On the other hand, what is certain is that, on the ground, we feel confidence in the development of our municipalities and confidence in the economy is the basis of development," concludes Mr. Lavoie.

The mission of the SADC de Gaspé is to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life and overall development of the Côte-de-Gaspé territory by providing technical and financial support to local businesses and organizations. Over the last three years, the SADC has invested over \$4.1 million in the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC.

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HAPPY CANADA DAY!

Canada Day 2022: Did you know?

Diane Skinner

Canada Day 2022 is here and using your math skills, answer this: How old is Canada on the first day of July 2022?

Canada is bordered by three oceans. They are the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Arctic Ocean.

China shares an international border with 16 other countries, the most of any other country in the world. Canada shares a border with just one.

Canada has six time zones: Pacific, Central, Mountain, Atlantic, Newfoundland and Eastern Time Zones.

The population of Canada is close to 37,000,00 but the new census data will be released on August 17, and that will contain collected data on language.

Canada's system of government is a Federal Parliamentary Democracy and Constitutional Monarchy. Furthermore, Canada is a federation, which means powers are shared between the federal, provincial and municipal governments.

Canada has just one officially bilingual province and that is New Brunswick. The mother tongue of approximately 32% of New Brunswick residents is French, with the majority living in the Campbellton – Miramichi area.

The majority of Canadians work in the service industry which refers to work that is done for a customer and occasionally provides goods but is not a manufacturer. Examples include

banking, communications, wholesale and retail trade, all professional services such as engineering, computer software development, and medicine, nonprofit economic activity, all consumer services, and all government services, including defense and administration of justice.

Canada is huge and its area is more than half of the Northern Hemisphere. Its area is 9,970,610 square kilometres. From east to west it spans 7,560 km and is the second largest country in the world, but it has just one half of one percent of the world's population.

Canada is a cultural mosaic, comprising many different cultures. About four percent of the population is First Nations. The descendants of British and French immigrants make up about half of the population. Many Canadian citizens are immigrants and their descendants from Europe, Asia and Africa.

About 20% of all the freshwater on the planet is in Canada.

Can you name all the provinces and territories? Using a mnemonic (a pattern of letters that helps to remember something) might be useful. These might be helpful if you are assisting a student to learn the provinces. To remember the province in order from west to east, try this helpful hint: Buy Al's Scary Men On Quilts Now. The first letters

of each word give you British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Newfoundland. That seems a bit cumbersome, so you can take the first letter of each province to make a word: BASMOQN. (Pronounced bas-moq-n) The territories (there are three) can be remembered by Y-N-N. (Yukon Territory, Northwest Territory and Nunavut.) What about the three Maritime provinces? That's easy, just imagine the three-pointed triangle of P.E.I., New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Be glad you do not live in Algeria which has 58 provinces!

The first people to come to Canada arrived between 15,000 and 30,000 years ago. They crossed over a land bridge that joined Asia and North America

Canada produces 80% of the world's maple syrup. In 2012 the Great Canadian Maple Syrup Heist happened when 3000 tons of maple syrup were stolen in Quebec. This was no small crime because the sweet "loot" was worth \$18 million dollars.

Happy Canada Day! Canada, you are now 155 years old! May you exist long and prosper.

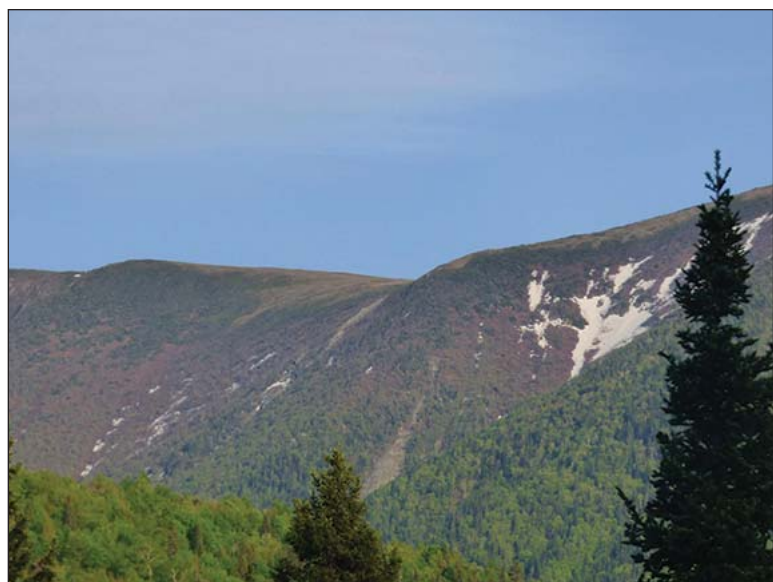


Photo: Chic-Chocs Mountains Protection Committee, Louis Fradette.

A study will determine the recreational tourism potential of the Chic-Chocs

Chic-Chocs could become an international destination

Nelson Sergerie

SAINTE-ANNE-DESMONTS - Making the Chic Chocs in Haute Gaspésie a destination of international caliber is what the political and economic stakeholders in the Haute-Gaspésie MRC are banking on. They commissioned a study to define a development plan for the next decade.

To achieve this, the Local Development Centre (CLD) of the Haute-Gaspésie is obtaining \$428,700 in financial support from the federal government.

"We would like to have an international showcase, but to achieve this, it takes world-class facilities," says the mayor of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, Simon Deschênes, who refers to what has been done in Banff, Alberta.

"The region has recognized that off-trail skiing should be an axis of regional development. We can review what is being done in Western Canada," explains the mayor.

"The non-repayable contribution allows us to look to the future and dream big. Our potential is immense and world-class," adds the prefect of the Haute-Gaspésie MRC, Guy Bernatchez.

The challenge for the next few months is to set up a plan that will bring everyone together and that will bring recreational tourism to a higher level, according to the prefect, who believes that the plan which will be tabled in March 2023 will make it possible to knock on the government doors for support of its implementation.

"A lot of work has been done with the Percé Geoparc. We have Forillon Park. When I've visited, I've always considered the Haute-Gaspésie and the Chic-Chocs to have a particularity that we do not find elsewhere in the territory," mentions the Member

of Parliament, Minister for the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands, Diane Lebouthillier, who made the announcement on behalf of the Liberal government on May 27. She pointed out that this issue was part of her electoral platform last October.

Caribou

With the fate of the woodland caribou in danger, the Member of Parliament stresses that we cannot do this without worrying about the environment. "We are going to protect the environment. We will protect our landscapes. We will help develop the economy while protecting the environment. It has a value," says Ms. Lebouthillier.

"The work will get done. Are there going to be challenges? Yes, there will be challenges, but we can always come up with solutions when we want to," says the federal elected official. "We are making concrete progress in this dream. We are an international destination. It's up to us to do things," she adds

"It could become a strength for us and perhaps become an attraction. It could become an example at the national and international level if we manage to work as a team to save this emblematic species," adds Mr. Bernatchez.

"If we have to move away from the caribou territory, we have such a vast territory that we can distance ourselves and succeed in the two challenges: its protection (the caribou) and development at the recreational tourism level," says Mr. Bernatchez.





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Critical shortage of staff at Gaspé hospital lab

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - Laboratory technicians at the Gaspé hospital are holding the department at arm's length, which is extremely fragile, "critical" even according to the union.

In one year, the number of technicians has dropped from 14 to six. According to the Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé (APTS), four people have resigned since the summer of 2021 and four others are on sick leave and the situation is far from ideal for those who remain in place.

"Many people are close to a generalized burnout. They can't take it anymore, doing mandatory overtime for several months," says Jenny Tardif, regional spokesperson for the APTS.

The Lower Saint Lawrence Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS), which has been managing Optilab in the Gaspé Peninsula for five years, following a reform of services in the regions, is aware of the problem.

The management agrees that the situation has been very worrisome "for three or four months."

It is stated that there is only one technician in the evening and one at night.

In the current situation, spokesperson Gilles Turmel admits that if two technicians joined the ranks, the pressure would be less.

Work is concentrated on evening and night shifts.

The laboratories at the Chandler, Maria and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts hospitals operate with more flexibility.

Even with goodwill, the union does not believe that the solution lies with the Lower Saint Lawrence CISSS. "A political will to put in place financial incentives to encourage attraction and retention, that would be the solution. But it is at the governmental and political level that it must be done," says Ms. Tardif.

The CISSS mentions that

in Quebec, there were 191 graduates, while there are needs for 325 technicians.

However, according to the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS, the seriousness of the situation has no impact on the hospital's activities for the moment.

The director services at the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS, Dr. Nathalie Guilbeault, confirms that on call periods have been set up for emergencies.

"Certain examinations that could be requested at night and that can wait until the morning, we will try to help in this way. There is no service disruption. There is an on call service for emergencies," the doctor emphasizes.

The situation is not ideal. "The Lower Saint Lawrence CISSS is working hard to recruit or find other people who could support the current team," adds Ms. Guilbeault.

Daniel Côté will not be entering provincial politics

Nelson *Sergerie*

GASPÉ - Daniel Côté denies the rumour that he would be a candidate for the Coalition Avenir Québec in the riding of Gaspé next fall.

His name comes up regularly in conversations about who could possibly run for the CAQ. "I have never closed doors to eventually run for provincial politics or otherwise. That said, I will deny the rumours. There hasn't been any approach. There are no discussions," said the mayor who was re-elected for a third term last November as mayor of Gaspé.

"There have already been discussions with different political parties. I've never hid it. But, honestly, the chances are infinitely small that I will be a candidate in the provincial election this fall," adds the politician.

The elected official says he really likes his current job doing local, regional and even provincial politics as part of his duties as president of the Union des Municipalités du Québec.

"I have already said that if they wanted me to move elsewhere, it would take an offer I could not refuse. There is no offer in this sense that has been made," said the elected official who wishes to continue doing what he is doing now.

"I would be the first to be surprised to see myself on a candidate's ballot this fall," says Mr. Côté.



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NCHS 11 am

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GREEN (Gazebo)	Noon – 4 pm
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GREEN – Reserved area (next to canteen)	12:30 – 3 pm
GREEN	1 pm
GREEN Playground	1 pm (after pageant)
GREEN	2 pm
GREEN	6 – 8 pm

Parade (gathering at 10:30 am)
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Grande-Rivière becomes owner of its industrial park

Nelson **Sergerie**

GRANDE-RIVIÈRE - It has taken 36 years, but Grande-Rivière has finally acquired the industrial park which was owned by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Ministry (MAPAQ).

Quebec will pay \$4.7 million to upgrade the infrastructure.

Only a few administrative details remain to be completed so that the transaction will be finalized in September.

Minister André Lamontagne was in Grande-Rivière for the long-awaited announcement on June 20.

"I can't get lost in conjecture, but sometimes, in order to make a transaction, each of the parties must want the transaction to be made under agreeable terms. This had not happened before we (Coalition avenir Québec regime) came to government," said the minister.

The money from Quebec will be used to upgrade the waste water reject system, the pumping station and the power supply. "These are realistic sums to upgrade this equipment," adds the minister. Grande-Rivière Mayor Gino Cyr confirms that statement.

"In the \$4.7 million, there is a contingency that has been put forward with a percentage.

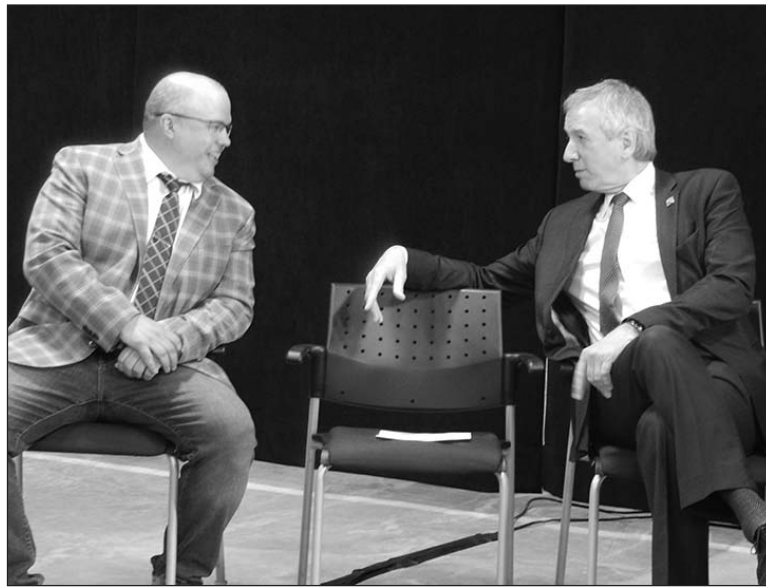


Photo: N. Sergerie

Mayor Gino Cyr and Minister André Lamontagne in discussion shortly before the announcement. The atmosphere seemed relaxed.

There are evaluations that have been done by engineering firms. You don't have to wait five years to do the work. Everyone is willing," notes the mayor who had made this commitment to complete the file during his first term in 2017.

"It's a start. It will allow us to have economic expansion projects. It could not be done without the secession of the land," says Gino Cyr. He adds: "It's everything, like a puzzle. The announcement of the Carrefour de l'innovation, the university branches, the start of the municipalization of the park will permit companies to ex-

pand and the big property behind that is the Blue Economy Zone," adds the elected official.

All that is missing is the gantry crane to complete the file. The mayor maintains that the file is at the federal government level. "The boat wintering park makes up one of the five issues. In the innovation zones, for prospective projects, there are ways to get money," says the mayor. However, Minister Lamontagne maintains that the file must go through the Fisheries Fund in Ottawa.

"I can't imagine moving forward on this without a com-

mitment from the federal government. They're looking at what we've just done: \$22 million that we've just invested. They have to take note of that. I really thought that the Fisheries Fund was an extraordinary lever to do this. The last time I checked, they didn't have that vision," says the minister, who says that in the end, the project must succeed.

The Grande-Rivière industrial park is important, as it is the third fishing port out of 89 in Quebec for the highest value and volume of landings made in 2021.

Later, the Minister went to Sainte-Anne-des-Monts to announce \$3.7 million to the Exploramer Museum to enhance the experience offered to visitors. This government contribution comes from the Tourism Industry Recovery Program.

The support granted will allow Exploramer to improve its service offer with new facilities. "It is really to increase the attraction and the museum capacity of the site. It's great news for people who will go there to learn more about all the educational issues related to nutrition and seafood products," says Mr. Lamontagne.

In addition, Exploramer also receives financial support of \$376,000 from the Ministry of Culture and Communica-

tions for the renewal of its museum experience.

Finally, the Minister announced more than \$2.6 million to support seven projects related to the commercial fisheries and marine products processing sector in the region.

The financial assistance granted will contribute directly to the development of marine product processing companies and organizations supporting the fishing industry.

Unipêche M.D.M. of Paspébiac receives the most significant amount, \$1 million for the modernization of the current plant and the acquisition of equipment.

Lelièvre, Lelièvre, Lemoignan is getting \$486,075 for the automation of raw and cooked product processing operations.

E. Gagnon et Fils and Marché Blais are receiving approximately \$250,000 each for various improvements.

The Bureau d'accréditation des pêcheurs et des aides-pêcheurs du Québec is receiving \$115,000 to improve the processing of accreditation applications and the Regroupement des pêcheurs professionnels du Sud de la Gaspésie is getting \$100,000 to improve traceability with the identification of Gaspesian lobster for the 2022 season.

Town of Gaspé update: Technical issues have slowed down the 144-unit project

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The 144-unit housing project near Carrefour Gaspé in Gaspé is progressing a little slower than the promoters would like.

Logements CVP has been faced with technical issues: the steeper than expected slope has forced the developer to go back to the drawing board, erasing hopes of launching the construction this year.

The pandemic is also causing delays for materials, which is pushing the start of construction back to the original 2023 plan.

Expected to cost \$25 million, inflation could impact costs by 30%.

CVP is looking to optimize the project to keep rent prices reasonable. As a condition of the sale of the land by the Town, the developer must have the first 36-unit complex built by the end of 2023.

Future CPE nearby
The future 80-place Centre



Photo: N. Sergerie

The promoters and elected officials of Gaspé during the announcement in September 2021.

de la petite enfance (CPE) in Gaspé will be located near the Carrefour Gaspé.

"Although there are still a few details to be worked out, everything leads us to believe that we will be able to have our new CPE near the Carrefour Gaspé," confirms Gilles Chapados, director of the CPE Voyage de mon en-

fance.

As all the strings are not tied, the director does not dare to give a date for the opening, still planned for 2023.

The emergency CPE set up this winter on Jacques-Cartier Street will increase from 24 to 37 places at the beginning of the school year.

"We are adding a nursery

of five and a group of eight at the end of August, hoping that this will help a little more with the needs of the population," says Mr. Chapados.

As for the expansion of the Bolduc site, the plans will be submitted to the department for approval. Tenders could be issued in the fall for work next spring.

Leases for the beaches

The Town of Gaspé and Quebec will sign the leases for the public land very soon so that the Town can manage the beaches this summer.

The authorizations of the parties have been obtained and the mayor, Daniel Côté, is proceeding with a view to co-management with the Micmac Nation of Gespeg.

"It is the same type of agreement as the previous year and we are still working on establishing a co-management principle with the Gespeg First Nation," says Mayor Daniel Côté.

In 2021, no spills or unsightly acts were noted on the beaches of Haldimand, Douglstown and Boom Defense.

People were invited to go to a campsite or the overflow site. No penalties were served.

In 2020, some campers had mistaken the beaches for a garbage site, without respect for nature.

Announcements



In Memory



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August 19, 1931 – June 28, 2018

In memory of C. Wilfred Hocquard who passed away June 28, 2018.

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Always loved and never forgotten, your wife Sheila; children, Marlene, Steven (Mary Lynn), Brent (Janique); grandchildren; and great-grandchildren, along with their spouses and mates.



MACNAUGHTON: Rita (Willett)

We invite you to join us in celebration, to share memories and laughter.

Please join us on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Cascapedia 50+ Hall located at 319 Route 299, Cascapedia-St-Jules.

Happy 65th Anniversary



Shirley and Lowell Dow

Anniversary: June 29



Funeral and Burial

GALLICHAN: Ronald

There will be a graveyard service for Ronald Gallichan in Sandy Beach on July 16 at 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome. There will be a light lunch at the Gallichan home afterwards.

PATTERSON: Melrose

The funeral service and visitation for Melrose will be held at St. James Church in Wakeham.

Visitation will be on July 5 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and July 6 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

The funeral will take place on July 6 beginning at 2 p.m. Burial will take place at the cemetery after the service.

WILLIAMS: Lois

A funeral for the late Lois Marie Williams (Briand), will be held on Friday, July 22, 2022 at 2 p.m. at Saint James Anglican Church, Port Daniel mountain.



Celebrations of Life



GIRARD: Doreen Sarah

Please join us in the Celebration of a Life Service for our beloved mother Doreen Sarah Girard.

It will take place at St. Peter's Anglican Church, St. Georges de Malbaie, August 25, 2022, at 1 p.m.

Our mother's ashes will be buried beside our father, her late husband. All are welcome afterwards to join us at the family home to share your memories, stories, and refreshments.

PHOTO QUALITY

When submitting a photo for this page, please send in a digital photo (.jpg) to specs@globetrotter.net. You can also send your photo by mail.

It is essential that the photo is not a copy printed at home or by the funeral home. It will not reproduce well.

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Lewis Smollett

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Obituary or Wedding: \$40 (\$45 with picture) (Max. 300 words). If it is more, we will give you a quote.

SUBMISSIONS FOR THIS PAGE MUST BE IN OUR OFFICE BY WEDNESDAY AT 4 P.M.

COAST ROUND-UP

YORK:

York Anglican Church Women

July 23: The York Anglican Church women will be holding their annual summer sale beginning at 2 p.m. in the York River Community Hall located at 702 Blvd York West, Gaspé, Quebec. There will be homemade handicrafts, baked goods, mystery parcels, white elephant table and used books for sale. It will be followed by afternoon tea (\$5 each) Everyone is welcome. See you there!

CORNER OF THE BEACH: Historical Society

July 1: The public is invited to a wine and cheese open house for the Corner of the Beach Cultural Museum from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

July 8 - 10: Art exhibition and sale under the direction of Kathryn Chicoine. Vernissage will take place on July 8 beginning at 7:30 p.m. Please

come and support these emerging local artists.

July 14: Enjoy an evening of beautiful music at the Corner of the Beach Cultural Museum presented by Zoe Jean-Deslauries beginning at 8 p.m. Zoe is a graduate of the McGill School of Music and entertains in both English and French with her beautiful voice and musical talent. For further details see Corner of the Beach Cultural Museum page on Facebook.

PORT DANIEL:

Three Star Golden Age Club

Tuesdays: Pétanque is starting once again. Come out from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. every Tuesday evening to have fun and learn a new game. Cost is \$3.

NEW CARLISLE:

Bible Chapel

Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Breaking of Bread for believers. Drive-In Gospel Meetings at 2 p.m. at the park in New Carlisle (parking at the arena) from June 26 to July 31. In case of rain,

meetings will be held at the Bible Chapel. All are welcome. Invite a friend. Sponsored by the New Carlisle Bible Chapel. **Thursdays:** 6:30 p.m. Prayer Meeting and Bible Study In person and on Zoom. For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

NEW CARLISLE:

Royal Canadian Legion Branch #64

Saturdays: Open at 1 p.m. Everyone welcome.

July 2: Free Bingo for children ages 4-12 beginning at 1 p.m.

July 2: Music with Gery Harrison beginning at 8:30 p.m. \$10 entry.

September 6: General meeting at 7 p.m. at 1 Mount Sorrel, New Carlisle.

NEW CARLISLE:

Funeral Association

Saturday, July 30: Gift Bingo beginning at 7 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion, New Carlisle. \$10 a series or 3 for \$20. Anyone wishing to donate a gift or a cash dona-

tion please contact Betty Ann Crozier.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

Book Room

The book room will be closed until **September**. Anyone who needs assistance this summer can contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

50 Plus Club

Tuesdays: Grocery Bingo every Tuesday night beginning at 7 p.m.

July 8 and 22: Jam sessions, open to all musicians and spectators. Doors open at 7 p.m. with entertainment beginning at 7:30 p.m.

July 16: BBQ at 319 Route 132 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cost is \$15 for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. Hot dogs, hamburgers and salads will be served. Everyone welcome.

ROTARY CLUB WINNERS:

The winners for the week of June 19 are: Ginette Cyr, Annie-Marie Martin, Riché

Morin, Claudine Gallant, Josée Darveau, Fabien Leblanc and Raymond Astles.

UNITED CHURCH

NEW RICHMOND

Sunday, July 3

10 a.m. Service

UNITED CHURCH

HOPE TOWN

Sunday, July 3

No Service

ANGLICAN CHURCH

OF CANADA

Sunday, July 3

NEW CARLISLE

10 a.m. Morning Prayer

PORT DANIEL

10 a.m. Morning Prayer

PARISH OF GASPÉ

Sunday, July 3

St. John and St. Phillip

Sandy Beach

6 p.m. Special Vestry Meeting

St. John and St. Phillip -

Sandy Beach

7 p.m. Holy Eucharist with Rt. Rev. Bishop Bruce Myers



ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, you are on fire lately. There's seemingly nothing you touch that won't turn to gold afterward. This trend will continue, but try not to let it go to your head.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, unless you take swift action, you could be heading for a financial free-fall. Start to pull back spending for a while and see if the situation will right itself.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21
It's time to make amends with someone who did you wrong, Gemini. Life is too short to hold grudges, and this person has mended his or her ways since.

CANCER – June 22/July 22
Cancer, when plans change on a dime, you are ready to roll with the new situation. Higher-ups could get a peek at your quick thinking, which can land you a promotion.

LEO – July 23/Aug 23
Make the most of every opportunity that comes your way this week, Leo. You may not get many chances to prove your worth in the

weeks to come, so it's important to act now.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, it is important to remember that your online presence never goes away. Watch what you post and say in social media groups, as it could come back to bite you.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Something that started out as a part-time venture could turn into much more, Libra. Figure out if this is the path you see yourself going and then jump on it.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
Let loose and have fun for a change, Scorpio. Don't delay when others want to invite you out for a night on the town or even a brunch. Say "yes" to any and all opportunities.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
There's a lot going on right now and it may have your head spinning, Sagittarius. Delegate some of your workload if you can. Don't be too hard on yourself.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
Family matters come to the forefront this week, Capricorn. You must dig in deep to address them. There are two

sides to every story, so try to get all the facts first.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
Just when you started to lose hope, that new horizon you were seeking comes into view, Aquarius. It is well-deserved and there will be smiles for the weeks ahead.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, if you find yourself with too much extra time on your hands, why not volunteer with the community to pass the time?

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JUNE 26

Ariana Grande,
Singer (29)

JUNE 27

J.J. Abrams,
Filmmaker (56)

JUNE 28

Elon Musk,
Entrepreneur (51)

JUNE 29

Kawhi Leonard,
Athlete (31)

JUNE 30

Fantasia Barrino,
Singer (38)

JULY 1

Pamela Anderson,
Actress (55)

JULY 2

Margot Robbie,
Actress (32)

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Pride Month Canada

Diane Skinner

In June, many Canadians recognize Pride Month. It is a recognition of the diversity of individuals within the LGBTQ+ communities. LGBTQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning or queer.

Pride Month is a celebration but years ago it all started with protest movements and the demanding of equal rights for gay and lesbian people. The fight for equality is still ongoing. Over the years, Pride events have become more mainstream with governments and corporations endorsing the celebrations.

As of 2022, Pride Month is officially recognized in Australia, Canada, Cuba, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, United Kingdom and the US.

The rainbow flag has become a recognized visual sym-

bol for the Pride movement. It was designed by a man named Gilbert Baker in 1978 in San Francisco. The original design had eight colours, each symbolizing something different.

Pride Month aims to inform and encourage understanding and acceptance of those who in the past had to hide who they were. Awareness is important so that all identities are represented and deserving of respect.

The Bay of Chaleur LGBT+ group can be contacted at their website <https://lgbt-bdc.net/en/> or through Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/LGBT.BDC>. They can respond to Indigenous, francophone, anglophone and allophone citizens of the Bay of Chaleur. They offer direct support



Photo: Jacques Gratton

which can be through listening or referrals. To break isolation and foster community, LGBT+Baie-des-Chaleurs also offers programming that features different activities and workshops. You can sign up to receive their newsletter. You may also contact the organization by email info@lgbt-bdc.net or by phone at 581-886-LGBT.

BIOPARC: Native species of the Gaspé

Diane Skinner

BONAVENTURE: Do you like animals? Do you like the outdoors? Then you might enjoy visiting the Bioparc in Bonaventure. The Bioparc is home to about 40 native animal species, native to the Gaspé Peninsula and Quebec, and it is now officially open for the 2022 season. You can stroll around the trails and view the animals in a habitat created to be like their homes in the wild.

You can see and learn more about mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and insects and you might be visiting at feeding time! Before COVID, the Bioparc had about 30,000 visitors a season. Last year, 2021 was a record year with 37,000 visitors.

The aim of the Bioparc is to raise awareness of the animals and their habitats and what each of us can do to help protect them. Stéphanie Bentz, the Bioparc's educational biologist since 2013 states, "By seeing the animal up close, it is easier to get attached and understand why every single animal is important. Furthermore, we can demystify preconceived ideas and help people to like misunderstood animals. Finally, we can take care of some animals, for a while or for life, that would not survive in nature, orphans, and injured animals for example."

Stéphanie supervises the



Stéphanie Bentz, educational biologist, has been working at the Bioparc in Bonaventure since 2013. Pictured here she is with a couple of her favourite insects because, as she states, "I really like bugs."

Photo: Courtesy of the Bioparc

guides and prepares various activities that are offered onsite. She does interpretation both outside and indoors where there are classrooms and a library. She also writes blogs and monthly updates for the radio. In addition, she coordinates any activities related to education, including educational panels and other special projects.

Some of the animals you will see at the Bioparc include: Mammals: caribou, black bear, grey wolf, moose, beaver, deer, coyote, red fox, porcupine, skunk, otter, raccoon and seal. Birds: snowy owl, bald eagle, crow, raven, kestrel, and Canada goose. Amphibians and reptiles: garter snake, wood turtle, spotted salamander, leopard frog and wood frog.

A very special experience is

offered called "Dormir avec les loups." (Sleep with the wolves) This activity is offered once the Bioparc is closed to the public. Participants visit the park at sunset, eat a three-course meal in a group shelter with big windows looking out on the wolf habitat and sleep in newly constructed cabins, close to the wolf enclosure. The evening includes a snack by the fire, breakfast and a day pass for the Bioparc.

Another special experience for those who enjoy visiting in the evening, but not overnight, there is a full moon activity. Check the website for information about dates.

Exhibits and signs are all available in English and some of the staff are bilingual. Your ticket gives you access to the Bioparc for the day from 9 a.m.

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



History 101 - Part II

What is the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms outlines the rights and freedoms that Canadians believe are necessary in a free and democratic society and is part of the Canadian constitution. The Constitution is a set of laws about how Canada operates.

Who does the Charter protect?

The charter protects all people living in Canada, whether they are Canadian citizens or not. This includes permanent residents and newcomers to the country. Some rights are just for Canadian citizens, such as the right to vote.

When did the Charter become law?

The Charter has existed since April 1982 with some sections taking effect three years later so that Canadian laws could be aligned with the Charter.

How does the Charter work with Canadian laws?

The Constitution is the supreme law of Canada and since the Charter is part of the Constitution it is the most important law we have in Canada. Charter rights can be limited (as in the case of hate propaganda) if those limits are shown to be in line with a country that is a free and democratic society.

Can the Charter be changed?

Not usually but laws can be changed to align with the Charter. For example: language rights have been confirmed for official language minorities; equality rights as outlined in the Charter have led to the enforcement of rights for minorities and disadvantaged groups; and the rights of the accused in criminal matters have been clarified.

These issues, and many more, are considered by referring to the Charter. It is a powerful document and the cornerstone of Canadian law, fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, mobility rights, equality rights, minority language education rights and official language rights.

What is the notwithstanding clause and why did Premier Legault use it?

The notwithstanding clause, Section 33 of the Charter, gives provinces the power, through passing a law, to change certain parts of the Charter for a five-year term. The clause can only be applied to certain sections. For example, it cannot be used to damage our democracy – that could create a path to dictatorship. The five-year term allows challenges to a government's decision to use the clause. This has already been done by the Montreal English School Board as pertains to Bill 96.

Previously, the clause was controversially used by Quebec to prohibit public sector workers, including teachers, police, and judges from wearing religious symbols such as hijabs and turbans at work in Quebec (Bill 21) in 2019.

In May 2022, Quebec passed a new comprehensive language law, Bill 96, that toughens laws for the French language in Quebec. Premier Legault has said that the notwithstanding clause applies to all of Bill 96.

What's next? Keep reading and listening to the news because Bill 96 is a bold and radical move with the potential to change the province, particularly, First Nations people, anglophones, minority linguistic cultures and newcomers.

until 5 p.m. There is no entry after 4 p.m. One-day ticket for adults is \$21.30 and a family pass is \$60.88 for 2 adults and 2 children (3 – 14 years old). (First Sunday of the month is free.) Season passes are offered at reasonable prices. Check online for other specific prices.

Website available in English. Dormir avec les loups price is \$150 (adult) and \$120 (child). Available Wednesdays and Saturdays. Must be prebooked. 123, rue des vieux-ponts, Bonaventure, Quebec 1-866-534-1997 Email info@bioparc.ca

Fête du Pêche: Learning to fish

Diane Skinner

Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime.

NEW CARLISLE: On Saturday, June 4, and Sunday, June 5, a total of 90 children aged 3 to 16 years and their parents spent the day at White Lake learning to fish. This opportunity was initiated by the Municipal Council of New Carlisle and the event was free of charge. The title of the seven hour course, offered over two days, is Pêche en Herbe and the attendees were equally represented by females and males.

Robert Benwell, a municipality of New Carlisle councillor, planned and coordinated the event assisted by other members of the council and community: the New Carlisle Fire Department, Family Ties and CASA.

The event consisted of a training session about how to set up the fishing rods and how to rig the line for fishing trout. Instruction also



Photo: Tracy-Lee Pelletier



Photo: Becky Renouf

The turnout for Fête du Pêche on June 4 and 5 in New Carlisle was well over 200 people! Ninety of those were children and youth who completed the one-day fishing course, 50 on Day 1 and 40 on Day 2. Many of the people commented on how great it was to be able to get together again!

covered the importance of fishing safely and fishing ethically. Stations were set up to instruct the participants on how to tie knots, the anatomy of fish and the different species of fish.

Besides the training being completely free, a bar-

becue and snacks were provided. Face painting added to the fun. Fishing licences were awarded that are valid until the children turn 18 years of age. Along with that, fishing rod kits were given to the children by Fondation de la Faune du Que-

bec and by the Municipality of New Carlisle. Hendrix Marin, 7 years old, commented, "I love fishing! I enjoyed the day and I've gotten better with casting my line!"

Besides the Fondation and the municipality, the

other sponsors include Pêche en Herbe, Ministère des Forêts de la Faune et des Parcs, and Canadian Tire.

The Municipality expresses their gratitude to all the sponsors and volunteers and the plan is to offer the course again next year.

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