

## Quebec government unveils final details of air access program

### \$500 tickets limited to three round trips per year

Gilles Gagné

BONAVENTURE – Announced on April 19, the Quebec Regional Air Transport Plan came into effect on June 1 and further details about the strategy were revealed on May 31 by Transport Minister François Bonnardel ... new Regional Air Access Program.

The program, whose alleged goal is to make available air travel at an affordable price, is divided into two parts. As announced on April 19, airfare reimbursement for residents of remote and isolated areas still varies from 30% to 60% of the ticket value, depending on the region of residence, but there is no longer a yearly limit to the amount of reimbursement.

That first part of the air access program applies to people from the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, the Lower Saint-Lawrence, the North Shore, Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean, Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Eeyou Istchee-James Bay.

The second part of the program deals with a determined maximum price. This component supports air carriers so that they can offer tickets at a maximum price of \$500 for a round trip or \$250 one way on certain targeted routes. These subsidized tickets are for sale on the platforms of the carriers adhering to the program and are clearly identified.

The number of tickets offered at an affordable price is limited to six one-way tickets per person for a fiscal year, from April 1 to March 31, or three round trips. A round trip is equivalent to two one-way tickets.

Minister Bonnardel explains that in order to stimulate the regional economy and the resumption of tourist activities, the offer is also accessible to travelers who are not residents of Quebec and to foreign students.

The Regional Air Access



*Pascan, which serves the Gaspé and Bonaventure airports, is one of the companies that has been retained by the Quebec government to offer cheaper airfares.*

Photo: G. Gagné

Program will be in effect until March 31, 2024. It has an envelope of \$38 million for 2022-2023 and \$48 million for 2023-2024. The Quebec Regional Air Transport Plan will be in place until March 31, 2027. The budget will likely be adjusted in 2024 for the next period.

“Affordable air service plays a decisive role in the de-

velopment of our vast territory, in addition to being sometimes essential to ensure basic access to health care, education and personal mobility. With the PAAR, we facilitate the travel of citizens to our regions and at the same time support the recovery of the tourism and airline industries. We had promised to be the government of the regions and, with this

program, we prove once again that we are,” said François Bonnardel, Minister of Transport, on May 31.

His colleague, Minister of Tourism Caroline Proulx, added the same day that “the revival of tourism in Quebec is based, among other things, on greater accessibility to our territory and its attractions.

The program put in (...)

will allow Quebecers to explore our regions at an affordable price and take advantage of a more attractive tourist offer.”

Julian Roberts, the president and chief executive officer of Pascan, the main transporter serving the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, stressed that “this is a great day for Quebec and it is clear that the government has taken the lead nationally to ensure safe and affordable air transportation for its population. With today’s announcement of the RAAP (Regional Air Access Program), I firmly believe that this project will help stimulate travel in Quebec as well as strengthen its economy by providing affordable access to regions and downtown areas. We are very proud to be a partner of the Government of Quebec and its regions in this innovative program.”

The airports of Bonaventure, Gaspé and Mont-Joli appear on the list of airports where the Regional Air Access Program is accessible.

## Regional air service: Government is missing the target, according to Joël Arseneau and Gaétan Lelièvre

Gilles Gagné

BONAVENTURE – The Member of the National Assembly for the Magdalen Islands riding and parliamentary leader of the Parti Québécois, Joël Arseneau, says the Coalition avenir Québec government continues to miss the target on air transport in that the adjustments announced Tuesday favour the people of the urban centres and not the citizens of the regions.

The Quebec Regional Air Transport Plan, which came into force on June 1, puts citizens of the regions at a disadvantage when their destination is not Montreal, Quebec City or Saint-Hubert (in the sub-



*Joël Arseneau thinks the Quebec government missed an opportunity to implement an innovative model, adapted to people’s needs.*

urbs of the metropolis). The plan does not respond to the desire to establish ‘a new

model,’ notes Joël Arseneau. “Not only are there no improvements, but we are con-

tinuing with the idea that to support the regions, we subsidize tickets for city dwellers and people from abroad to visit people from Quebec. In the (May 31) press conference, it was announced on the one hand that the AFRP (Airfare Reduction Program) would be renewed except for one detail, the reimbursement ceiling, which has been abolished. But, on the other hand, the AFRP refund was expected to be immediate when the initial announcement was made. This is not the case. A person from Europe will pay \$500 once in Quebec and the person from Gaspé will pay

Photo: Courtesy of Joël Arseneau

the full price and will be reimbursed months later," he criticizes.

On June 1, this airfare reduction program became the Regional Air Access Program, the RAAP.

"It does not meet our needs in terms of service reliability, frequency, diversity and obviously the number of seats, and ultimately the price. To put it short, it is a program that is not intended for people in the regions. This is what is confirmed," underlines Mr. Arseneau.

The RAAP is not intended for people in the regions, he says, because a woman in Gaspé wanting to go to Abitibi and come back, for example, will consume four, and not two, of the six annual discounts of \$250 she is entitled, under the terms announced on May 31.

"People from regions such as the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, Lower Saint Lawrence, the North Shore, the Lower North Shore, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean and Abitibi will have to pay twice for a \$500 ticket to go through Quebec City, Saint-Hubert, Montreal. They will not really be able to take advantage of the \$500 discount when they must change carriers in one of these three urban airports. It is unfair," notes the Magdalen Islands representative.

If someone wants to go from Gaspé to Rouyn-Noranda, he will have two choices. "I can use the 30% discount (the RAAP) and apply it to a \$1,500 ticket. I will have \$450 off, but my ticket will still cost \$1050. My other option is to pay \$500 twice, between Gaspé and Montreal, then between Montreal and Abitibi, for a total of \$1,000. It's still expensive!"

Joël Arseneau also regrets that the RAAP has not been improved for small businesses. "Thirty percent of pre-pandemic ridership came from personal travel. If we want to stimulate 70% of transportation, our businesses also need services, but the government does not see that. The new program only addresses individual needs. The "\$500 component" is designed for tourism. It is a waste of public funds for people across the country and abroad. We had to work on a new model, and we arrive with a scoop so that people from the city can go for a trip in a region. For a family trip, the car will still be preferred."

Joël Arseneau believes that



Photo: G. Gagné

*Gaétan Lelièvre deplores that the new strategy doesn't deal with the lack of seats on the aircrafts serving the Gaspé Peninsula.*

carriers are the big winners of the Regional Air Access Program.

"I suspect it will hit a peak during the summer, but the regions need more robust and attractive air transport. That's the issue. Twenty briefs were submitted during the work of the air transport intervention group, from July to October 2020 (...) and none of the proposals submitted were retained. But, two years later, we are releasing \$500 tickets, a shaky proposition," concludes the Member of the National Assembly.

#### Gaétan Lelièvre disappointed with the lack of competition

Signatory of numerous analyses on air travel over the years, regional development consultant Gaétan Lelièvre also expresses his disappointment at reading the information disseminated by the Minister of Transport of Quebec, François Bonnardel and his government.

"They won't lower the regular prices!" The carrier has no interest, since the govern-

ment subsidizes it. They (government officials) decided to feed the monster instead of replacing that monster with a solution. The monster is regional air transport in Quebec, which costs two to three times more than elsewhere in Canada. We come to say with this program that in Quebec, it is normal that we pay two to three times more for plane tickets," says Mr. Lelièvre.

"The subsidy can go up to \$1,500 per ticket. We are not solving the problem highlighted by the report of the IREC (Institute for Research in Contemporary Economics) according to which people travel two or three times less by plane in Quebec than in the rest of Canada. The government has chosen to subsidize the lack of performance of carriers. We continue in the same pattern. We remain the last of the pack in Canada," he deplores.

Gaétan Lelièvre also notes that once the three \$500 tickets have been used up, or three round trips, which will happen for people who need to travel frequently, regional users will be forced into component 1 of the PAAR, carrying a discount of 30%.

"We have a ticket price that varies between \$800 and \$1,200 and even \$1,400 in some cases. Even with the discount, people will pay between \$560 and \$980 for round trips. In addition, 40% of the time, there are no tickets available two weeks in ad-

vance for departures from Gaspé. Even if the ticket costs \$100 or if it is given away, if there is no space, users are not more advanced," analyzes Mr. Lelièvre.

"We have more and more 12 to 19-seat aircrafts," he also notes, far from being certain that the new program provides incentives for carriers to buy higher capacity aircraft.

Air Canada occupies a place among the companies mentioned in the press release from Transports Quebec.

"We witness the return of Air Canada, with no floor price. We could relive the price war, which generally results in an Air Canada monopoly, and the company then raises prices! I can't help noticing the large number of company representatives quoted in the press release. It seems to have taken a lot of time to attach the carriers, more than to come up with a program that meets the needs of the regions. I also wonder if the number of discounted seats will be limited on planes," concludes Gaétan Lelièvre.

## McInnis Cement strike vote

Nelson Sergerie

PORT-DANIEL-GASCONS - Negotiations between the United Steelworkers Union and workers at McInnis Cement in Port-Daniel-Gascons are getting tougher as workers give themselves a strong strike mandate.

The 15 workers at the quarry voted 100% in favour of this ultimate pressure tactic while their 81 colleagues at the cement plant said yes to a strike by 98.6%.

The mandate will be used at a time deemed appropriate.

The vote comes after the workers unanimously rejected a so-called "final and comprehensive" offer from the employer

Negotiations have been stalled over wages, pensions and a few standard articles in the collective agreement.

"Working conditions at McInnis are inferior to those offered at other Quebec cement plants such as Lafarge in Saint-Constant and Ciment Québec in Saint-Basile-de-Portneuf, yet we make twice as much cement. Not only do the employers' proposals not allow us to come close, but they don't even cover inflation. Our members refuse to be impoverished," said Renaud Langlois, President of USW Local 9602.

McInnis Cement workers had reached a first collective agreement in 2018. A next round of negotiations is scheduled for June 13 and 14.

### INDEPENDENT TRUCKERS:

## A satisfactory agreement for the moment

Nelson Sergerie

SAINTE-ANNE-DESMONTS - Independant truckers in the Gaspé Peninsula are satisfied with the agreement reached on May 27 with the Quebec government.

Members of the National Association of Incorporated Artisan Truckers (ANCAI) demonstrated on May 9 across the province to demand better compensation for fuel.

The government has committed to making changes to the monthly rate adjustment based on changes in fuel

prices.

The adjustment will be triggered as soon as the difference reaches 5% rather than the 10% currently in effect.

"It's satisfying. They committed to negotiate the new rates within 10 business days. We are talking about hourly rates or per kilometre for transportation. Rates are outdated. If we get along, everything will be perfect," notes the representative of the Gaspé-Nord truckers and director at the national table of the ANCAI, Gilles Brisebois.

The Transportation Rates Table will be reactivated to be able to reach an agreement and Mr. Brisebois hopes that everything will go smoothly. Normally, the rates are adjusted in January and there has always been a delay.

The objective is to have the 2023 rates from the beginning of the next season. "For the moment, we are ruling out any means of pressure. If the negotiations are going well, it will be perfect, if not, the pressure tactics will resume," explains Mr. Brisebois.

At the beginning of the

month, the ANCAI representative explained that the truckers received \$99.18 per hour and a 10.14% fuel cost premium, which amounted to approximately \$110 per hour, a rate that barely covered fuel and labour costs, without taking into account the maintenance and repairs of the trucks.

The situation had been described as inconceivable by the truckers who had demonstrated in front of several service centres of the Ministry of Transport and the offices of the Members of the National Assembly.

# Dr. Simon Prévost to cycle 7,800 km between Yukon and New Richmond

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – A New Richmond general practitioner, Dr. Simon Prévost, will cycle 7,800 kilometres over two-and-a-half months between Yukon and New Richmond in order to raise \$100,000 for a health-related project to build a palliative care home in the Baie-des-Chaleurs area, a \$4 million initiative.

The Baie-des-Chaleurs Palliative care home venture has discretely been planned for three years by a group of people who wanted to develop it thoroughly before releasing some information about it publicly.

“This house, which will offer its care free of charge, will be provided with a team of specialized professionals and volunteers. The objective is to offer human and personalized support for people who will stay there,” explains project manager Renée-Claude Maltais.

Occupying a prominent place in the Gaspé philanthropic landscape for more than 30 years, the Baie-des-Chaleurs Health Foundation contributes to the financing of projects allowing the development of health care and social services offered in the area. These projects are led by the objective of improving health and well-being of the population, while encouraging community participation.

“It is without hesitation that the Baie-des-Chaleurs Health Foundation agreed to be part of this project! Palliative care is an integral part of the life of a person in the same way as a birth,” says its director Amy Chloé Bernard.

Dr. Simon Prévost, who has been dealing with palliative care patients on a regular basis, was part of the team set up in 2019 by members of OGPAC, the Gaspé Peninsula organization helping people dealing with cancer, and volunteers. This team wanted to found a palliative care home in the Baie-des-Chaleurs area.

A board of directors was formed last March. Doctor Prévost agreed to fill the position of president. The time has now come to raise funds in order to realize the dream of accommodating dying people with dignity.

Dr. Prévost, who has been a general practitioner in the Baie-des-Chaleurs for 20 years, decided that a physical challenge could represent a good start for a fund-raising campaign. He wanted to be involved, hence the organization of a journey called La Grande Traversée de Simon.

“I am 53 years old and I re-



Photo: G. Gagné

Amy-Chloé Bernard, Dr. Simon Prévost and Renée-Claude Maltais spearhead the challenge that will lead him to cycle 7,800 kilometres for the benefit of the future Baie-des-Chaleurs palliative care home.

cently experienced slight health problems. Diabetes is something I can, nevertheless, have some control over, considering that it is at an early stage. I have always had this dream of crossing Canada on my bicycle, like a lot of people. I decided to start it in Yukon, a place I have always been attracted to,” he says.

He started training for the journey on March 22. He was already active before his diabetes warning and he hasn't found his training routine too tough.

“The preparation process is as mental as it is physical, probably more mental in fact. I have already thought that if it rains, if the wind blows, if it is cold, it will be harder. However, I consider it a privilege to tackle this kind of challenge. My Family Medicine Group colleagues have accepted that I'll leave for more than two months. They could have been disgruntled by my absence but they didn't say anything,” he says with a smile.

He will leave the Gaspé Peninsula on June 30 in order to reach his Yukon departure point on time for July 16. He should arrive in New Richmond on September 30.

“We have to drive there because I will be accompanied all the way by a vehicle, driven by my family members, including my daughters. I intend to cover 130 kilometres daily but I don't have to carry saddle bags. From Yukon, I will go down to Jasper, then to Banff (Alberta). From there, I'll head east. There will be hills of course but they won't be too steep. It would have been different had I started in Vancouver,” points out Dr. Prévost.

It is through the purchase of kilometres that the Baie-des-Chaleurs Health Foundation encourages people to make a donation for the benefit of the

palliative care home. It is possible to buy it now to support the project at [grandetraverseedesimon.com](http://grandetraverseedesimon.com).

“The \$100,000 goal is quite attainable,” says Simon Prévost. “I am even tempted to say that it is not enough,” he concludes.

Although the Ministry of Health and Social Services will subsidize, on a recurring basis, part of the costs related to care, initial financing of \$4 million to \$4.5 million dollars from the private sector will be needed for the palliative care home, its equipment and costs related to care. The funding required is therefore based on the mobilization and generosity of the entire community. “Explains Renée-Claude Maltais, project manager for the Baie-des-Chaleurs Palliative care home.

## AVIAN FLU:

### Gaspé Peninsula cases of dead gannets under analysis

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – After being found in the Magdalen Islands, dead gannets were also sited along the shores of the Gaspé Peninsula. The first cases were reported on May 27-28 in the Chandler area, and then on Bonaventure Island and along its cliffs. On May 30, one carcass was seen in Carleton near the golf course.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food biologist, Ariane Massé, confirms that some dead birds were sent to a laboratory for analysis but, as of June 2 she had not received confirmation of the presence of the avian flu virus in any of the carcasses.

“From now on, though, it

## Police report

Valérie Guindon, a young woman from Saint-Arthur, near Campbellton, was attacked on the railway bridge spanning between Matapédia and the New Brunswick side of the Restigouche River on the evening of May 29 around 9:15 p.m. The Sûreté du Québec police, whose station is located less than one kilometre away from the railway bridge, and the Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP) are investigating the case. On Facebook, Valérie Guindon wrote that “I went to the train bridge at Matapédia. I went to sit on the bridge to look at the water before leaving for the campground. I stayed there for a little while, about 15-20 minutes. When I got up to go to my car, a man dressed in black attacked me. It happened so fast. I struggled, hit my head on the train track and when I regained consciousness, the man was walking away. There was a train on the way so it scared him. My clothing was torn on my back. My legs are all scratched up from struggling. I fled to my car and immediately called my spouse. The police are aware. I spent the night at the station. I just wanted to warn girls/women to be careful in that area. I wouldn't want that to happen to anyone else.” Officially, the case is being investigated by the RCMP because Ms. Guindon laid her complaint in Campbellton but the Sûreté du Québec is supposed to increase its surveillance in the railway bridge area.

A Saint-Alphonse house and the nearby garage were completely destroyed by a June 2 fire. The alarm was given at about 3 a.m. When the firefighters arrived, the garage behind the house was already burned and the fire spread to the house, which was totalled shortly after. The two occupants of the house were not injured. Slightly more than 20 firefighters from St-Alphonse, Caplan and New Richmond fought the blaze. According to the fire chief, Réjean Poirier, the cause of the fire is not known yet but nothing indicates that it would be criminal. Sûreté du Québec Nicolas Scholtus points out that police officers were called in to assist the firefighters and left the investigation to the firefighters since no foul play is suspected to explain the fire. The residence is close to the fire station but the couple had to go to a neighbour's place to call for help due to a lack of a cellular phone network. Fire chief Poirier affirms that the lack of cellular phone service represents a major safety problem in Saint-Alphonse.

Traffic is slightly disrupted on the J.C. Van Horne Bridge. Public Services Canada advises motorists that there will be an alternating lane closure on the J.C. Van Horne Bridge between Pointe-à-la-Croix-Listuguj, Gaspé Peninsula, and Campbellton, New Brunswick, for maintenance work that started on June 1 and will probably last until Wednesday, June 15, between 7 p.m. and 5 a.m. During this period, one lane will remain open at all times to allow alternating traffic. Motorists can expect minor delays. These closures will have no impact on cyclists or pedestrians as the sidewalk will remain open at all times. The schedule may change depending on weather conditions.



Photo: Julie Drapeau

A dead gannet was observed in Carleton on May 29 near the golf course.

is important to remember that we must stop focussing on cases. So far, we have focussed on avian flu cases. As we follow, we document mortalities and we do a sub-sampling of species, and the types

of birds affected but it is also important to realize that each carcass is not analyzed and will not be. The number doesn't really matter anymore.

Cont'd on page 8



Gilles Gagné

## Commentary

### Immigration: François Legault chose the wrong target

Quebec Premier François Legault gave a good indication of the Coalition avenir Québec next election's political platform on May 29 when he put emphasis on the party's eventual requests to get more immigration powers from the federal government.

Quebec already controls "economic immigration," which brings a little over one half of the 50,000 immigrants the province greets yearly. The other 50% share consists of refugees and family reunion candidates.

Premier Legault wants Quebec to have control over the family reunion immigration candidates, who represent about 14,000 people yearly. He thinks, or so he declares, that it is a matter of survival for the French language in the province.

Although the survival of French will always be a concern in Quebec, family reunion immigration is not the problem. Out of 14,000 such immigrants, 7,000 are children who will learn French in schools. If we subtract the migrating adults of that group that already speak French, it leaves about 3,000 people who don't speak Quebec's main language. Do they represent a threat? No.

He gave the example of Louisiana - a place, he said, that used to be predominantly French-speaking but no longer is. Like Quebec, the Cajun population of Louisiana was and is surrounded by a nearly monolingual English-speaking country.

Although French in Quebec will always have to be protected, because of the hugely powerful influence of American culture and its minority status in Canada, François Legault is ill-informed or expressing bad faith if he really thinks that his province and Louisiana are comparable, language-wise.

First of all, Louisiana has not been predominantly French-speaking since its inclusion in the United States. The Cajuns at one point represented about 30% of the

total population of that state and most of these people were speaking French. The proportion of people who can speak French in Louisiana is now down to about 6% and the capacity to speak French doesn't mean that they use it.

In Quebec, francophones represent 85.4% of the population, according to the latest data, compared to 13.7% for the anglophones. The proportions have not varied much over recent years and new data will be available in August when the census numbers will be released.

So the Quebec situation and that of Louisiana have never been comparable, even more so considering the control the province has over its education system, a degree the state never reached.

So why is François Legault using misleading impressions and lame statistical evidence to communicate with Quebecers? He does that strictly for political purposes, as an important share of the CAQ electoral base is sensitive to those arguments and will not question them.

François Legault is a former Parti québécois minister who was rooting for Quebec's independence at the time, before pulling out of politics in June 2009, tired of having been in the opposition for six years. He came back to found his own party 29 months later. He was no longer a sovereigntist but a nationalist interested in increasing Quebec's wealth and autonomy.

His Coalition avenir Québec (CAQ) took advantage of the traditional parties' decline, namely the Parti québécois and the Liberal Party, to occupy a wide spectrum of political options. It rallies federalists who are Quebecers first and foremost, business people who are only interested in companies' results and soft sovereigntists, who wanted to try something else than the Parti québécois.

The CAQ, through the way François Legault talks to "ordinary" or "middle-class" Quebecers, also gets support from the growing proportion of the population that is not really interested in politics, sometimes people who are ready to opt for simple, or simplistic, programs.

François Legault's approach is also rooted in the fact that in 1996, French was the language spoken at home for 82% of Quebecers, a number that fell to 79% in 2006. Some demographers think that it could be 76% in 2036.

However, this data could well be secondary. A lot of immigrants wish to keep their original language alive and that's a rather good thing. It enhances cultural diversity.

Immigration is a complicated issue. François Legault sometimes talks about complicated issues without the proper knowledge to do it eloquently and clearly. He wants to defend French but the quality of his language is not impressive.

Is it because it is too complicated or because he has not taken the time to understand the issue? Quebec is imposed by Ottawa's immigration policies that are far more problematic than family reunion candidates.

In a study submitted to Quebec's Ministry of Immigration, francization and integration economist Pierre Fortin points out that Quebec has lost control of its immigration policy because of the explosion in the number of temporary immigrants, either workers or students, under programs for which the federal government has exclusive responsibility.

This loss of control risks harming the francization of immigrants whom Quebec no longer selects, in practical terms. Moreover, Canada, with a threshold of 451,000 new immigrants in 2024, is pursuing an expansive immigration policy that will lead to an acceleration of the demographic minorization of Quebec.

Based on that threshold, statistically, Quebec should greet close to 100,000 immigrants out of 451,000, while François Legault thinks that the province's capacity to integrate newcomers hovers around 50,000 people, a number that came out of his mind, not studies. In other words, the weight of Quebec regarding Canada's population is diminishing.

While the number of so-called economic and other immigrants selected by Quebec was only 29,000 in 2021, there were 177,000 temporary immigrants, like farm workers.

Reached in 1991, the Canada-Quebec agreement on immigration was to allow the province to choose 65% of its immigrants, whether permanent or temporary. The agreement is obsolete now, as Ottawa no longer respects it, nor does the Quebec government, which can no longer keep up.

In the meantime, the delays to obtain permanent residence in Quebec are getting longer, reaching two-and-a-half years, and the pool of foreign workers who want to emigrate is growing. The pressure for Quebec to increase its targets is mounting. Canada's government would like the CAQ government to be forced to do so that it would not act otherwise.

The number of Quebec premiers winning battles over Ottawa is quite low. The opposite has often happened, though. There is irony in the fact that the federal government management of immigration is close to a disaster, efficiency-wise.

François Legault is far more at ease with economic issues than with immigration. He probably didn't raise the economic value of immigration at his May 29 party caucus because it would have meant talking about a complicated subject he doesn't fully master. He has a couple of months to increase his grasp over that issue before the electoral campaign, unless he is so confident of winning the October 3 poll that he won't care about sharpening his immigration skills.

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# Study to add plastic to asphalt supported by Ottawa

Nelson Sergerie

GRANDE-RIVIÈRE - Ottawa is contributing \$238,000 to the project to introduce flexible plastics in the preparation of asphalt and the manufacture of street furniture.

The Intermunicipal Residual Materials Processing Board has been working since 2020 to recover these plastics, promoting a full-circle economy.

The spark for this project came in parallel with the eco-responsible Commercial Street project in Percé where up to 10% of the asphalt could contain plastic.

With this funding amount, the board will be able to hire specialized resources and purchase or rent conditioning and recycling equipment, including a densifier, a granulator and a grinder.

"It's a complementary plastic processing line. We will add a building with equipment that will make flakes that we can sell to buyers. We can go to an even more local transformation with a mold and a press and manufacture parts of street furniture," says the director, Nathalie Drapeau.

For asphalt, plastic flakes will replace part of the bitumen and aggregate. The goal is to avoid using virgin resources. The recipe is being developed by researchers, but it is believed that, ultimately, there will be a re-



Photo: N. Sergerie

*The director of the Gaspé Peninsula Intermunicipal Residual Materials Management Board, Nathalie Drapeau, and Minister Diane Lebouthillier with potted plastic flakes.*

duction in greenhouse gas emissions.

"So far, studies have shown that in terms of aging or impermeability, the properties are very interesting. The Percé project will test boards and ensure that in terms of aging and rutting, we are in line with the studies carried out," explains Ms. Drapeau.

### Judicious use of the raw material

These avenues would make it possible to reuse some 500 tons of flexible plastic per year and other partnerships could arise to

find other outlets for the flakes.

"It's all about everything. How we can work with other companies. It's links with universities, research, development, and private companies. How we can do better for the planet and for us, but also for our children and our grandchildren?" says Minister Diane Lebouthillier, who made the announcement on behalf of the federal government.

The federal government's goal is to achieve carbon neutrality by supporting these types of innovative projects.

# Dominique Anglade on tour in Gaspé

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - On June 3, Liberal leader Dominique Anglade completed a three-day tour of the Gaspé Peninsula where she met with activists, mayors and socio-economic stakeholders in the region.

The leader of the Official Opposition came to talk about the Charter of the Regions a few weeks after having launched it in Trois-Rivières.

"Concretely, what it says is that there will be a deputy minister for the Gaspé. There will be a voice in the government to represent the region. It was announced that the ferries will be free because we think that it is an extension of roads that do not exist. This is a very concrete measure. We announced that we wanted to have a minister of Fisheries. I think that these are all elements that we are putting in place so that the region has the means to achieve its ambitions," says Dominique Anglade.

She returned to the issues of inflation and housing as the region launched a site on June 1 to stimulate the construction of apartments.

"We need to stop using urban solutions blindly in rural areas, and do custom solutions. There is a mayor who told me that he has three or four different projects, but he does not have a contact to land his project. Accès-Logis was taken away and replaced by something that is not necessarily better in that we do not see how there will be an acceleration of housing with this program,"

she believes.

"That is the challenge of decentralization. One of the themes addressed in the Charter of the Regions is equity. You can't do everything. For example, in Gaspésie, we say that the priority will be tourism, fisheries, housing. These are the three issues that will be addressed," said the Liberal leader.

"There is no one who is accountable. A regional minister, a deputy minister who lives in the region and understands what it takes, he is able to intervene," she says.

Transportation must be a priority in a region like the Gaspé, according to the elected official, who believes that bus transportation must be strengthened.

"Transportation is an essential service here. We can't afford to have a weaker service from a regional point of view. Yes to air, yes to bus. It all has to be part of an integrated vision. We need to get serious about interregional transportation and fund it. We occupy a territory. We have to be aware that there is a cost associated with this," says Ms. Anglade.

As for the safety of Highway 132, she believes that it is first and foremost a question of political will to protect it. Climate change should not be a reason not to repair or find new ways to do things.

The Liberal government bought the Gaspé rail in 2015 and announced a first \$100 million five years ago that has just

Cont'd on page 8

# Caplan mayor overstepped her responsibilities

Nelson Sergerie

CAPLAN - The Quebec Municipal Commission has concluded that Caplan's elected officials failed to take due diligence in filling the position of director general within a reasonable period of time and that Mayor Lise Castilloux exceeded her responsibilities under the Municipal Code.

This was the broad conclusion conveyed to the municipality on June 1 as a result of a disclosure of wrongdoing received at the commission.

In its report, the commission noted that the town director general left office on or about September 2.

The document mentions that the municipal council did

not initiate the process to find a new director general, nor did it appoint an interim person. The former council preferred to wait until after the November 7 elections to proceed.

The process was not initiated until December 6 and the posting did not come out until February 14.

During the recruitment period, eight candidates submitted their applications, but the term was extended on May 2.

The commission also notes that the replacement must occur within 30 days of the vacancy.

However, at the time of the investigation, eight months had passed without the appointment of an interim and without analysis of the appli-

cations received.

"We are compelled to conclude that the current and former members of Council have not acted diligently to meet the requirements of Sections 166 and 210 of the Municipal Code," the report said.

### Double duty

During the vacancy in the executive office, the investigation found, among other things, that the mayor was performing duties that fell, in whole or in part, under the jurisdiction of the town administration.

In addition, council passed a bylaw on April 4 that temporarily adds \$3,557 per month to the mayor's salary

between March 1 and December 31, 2022, retroactive to January 1, 2022, to the salary set at \$16,732 per year.

The commission notes that this increase does not respect the established legal framework which does not provide for this possibility.

The Board does not question the good faith of the mayor and the assistance provided to municipal employees during the transition but, in doing so, she was in violation of the provisions of the Municipal Code.

The commission makes five recommendations including: to proceed with the appointment of an interim director general as soon as possible; to accelerate the

process of hiring a permanent director; to immediately terminate the administrative duties of the mayor, who was director general of the municipality for more than 14 years before being elected; and to repeal the bylaw on additional remuneration.

The commission will also evaluate the advisability of filing an action for a declaration of disqualification in Superior Court.

The organization is asking the municipality to follow up on the corrective measures put in place by August 1.

When contacted, Lise Castilloux declined to comment, saying she will call a press briefing to respond to the report.

# Good expectations for the next tourist season

Nelson **Sergerie**

**GASPÉ** - Tourisme Gaspésie's tourist season and Gaspésie Gourmande's 2022 gourmet season were launched simultaneously on May 26 at the Micmac Nation of Gespeg, the first in-person launch since the start of the pandemic two years ago.

Throughout the day, dozens of stakeholders from these two industries visited various sites in the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC.

"It was a nice day. People are happy, happy to meet again. These people will also be able to talk about it at home," says the director of Tourisme Gaspésie, Joëlle Ross.

"We work with passionate people. We were lucky with the pandemic. We have had a lot of people in the last two years, which means that our entrepreneurs have not been discouraged. We hope that the price of gasoline does not scare people away so they go elsewhere. People want to take vacations, have made reservations and are going to honour them," says Ms. Ross.

## 2021 was excellent

The Gaspé Peninsula received 779,383 visitors in 2021, up 14.3% over 2020 marked by the pandemic. This is almost the same num-

ber as the record year 2019 which attracted 785,145 visitors.

The economic spinoffs reached a record high of \$418 million last year and we are confident to exceed those numbers for 2022.

The winter tourism season, from November to March, saw 179,400 visitors, which represents a 40% increase over 2020. Spin-offs increased by 57% to \$86.4 million. February and March occupancy rates reached record levels of 47%.

Joëlle Ross believes that 2022 will be no exception. "I think because since those years, lots of new developments have been created, lots of new cabins, full of small businesses that have the wind in their sails. People have to learn to book (ahead)," says the director general.

## Gaspésie Gourmande: Greater visibility

In addition, Gaspésie Gourmande took advantage of the moment to promote local products. "Tourists when they come to the Gaspé Peninsula want to taste the territory and eat Gaspesian products. Many food companies have kiosks," says the director, Johanne Michaud, who does not risk talking about the novelties. "Because there are several," she says.



Credit: Gaspésie Tourism

*Chef Christopher Lebreux-Mamelonet received the Paul-Hachey Prize for the use of regional products in his cooking.*

Gaspésie Gourmande now has 180 members and efforts are being carried out to make products more accessible in the markets with Espaces Gaspésie Gourmandes, which makes life easier for merchants.

"We have created a turnkey service that allows you to have around twenty products from a dozen producers in a single call. We are going to enhance the Espace Gaspésie Gourmande," explains Ms. Michaud.

The project now has 14 grocers spread around the peninsula. "We want to make the products better known.

There are new things all

the time. Product knowledge never ends. We come to make life easier for consumers and grocers," she notes.

The Gaspésie Gourmande magazine guide will be available in two weeks.

## Honours for some

On the sidelines of the launch, four people from the tourism and gourmet industry were honoured. Alexander Reford of the Reford Gardens in Metis Beach, who was administrator and president of Tourisme Gaspésie, received the Tourism Excellence Award.

"The Reford Gardens was

a great project. It's a job I've had for 28 years. I gave a lot. It is the recognition of our path, of our career," explains Mr. Reford.

The co-owner of Chic-Chac de Murdochville, Guillaume Molaison, received the next generation administrator award, in particular for the transformation of the local church into the headquarters for his business.

"We have, nevertheless, doubled our capitalization in the last year. We have been very daring with major investments with so much uncertainty during the pandemic," says Mr. Molaison.

The president of the Gaspé Peninsula Magdalen Islands Agricultural Producers Union and owner of Pata-sol, Michèle Poirier, was awarded the Excellence Gaspésie Gourmet Prize.

"I probably received this award for interpersonal skills, for mobilization, because I like working in a team. Gaspésie Gourmande is very close to my heart. Farmers, too," says the farmer.

The chef of the famous restaurant La maison du pêcheur in Percé, Christopher Lebreux-Mamelonet, received the Prix Paul-Hachey given to a chef who uses Gaspesian products in his menu. He was absent during the awards ceremony.



Diane **Skinner**

**NEW CARLISLE:** Xavier Beliard-Astles, age 6, had never had his hair cut which was well below waist length. He had mentioned to his mom about wanting to get his hair cut when they saw that Kylianne Horth had cut her long hair and donated it to Angel Hair for Kids. (Article in Spec, May 4, 2022.) Xavier and his mom talked it over and both loved the idea of cutting and then donating his hair which will be made into wigs for children who have lost their hair due to cancer or other autoimmune diseases.

**Family Ties**  
**Golden Games Afternoons**  
*Activities for Seniors*

Family Ties is pleased to present monthly online game afternoons for seniors.

Please join us:  
**Tuesday, June 14th, 2022**  
**1:30-3:30 PM**  
**Online by Zoom**

**Tablets & all materials will be delivered**

**GAME TIME!** \*Space is limited. Please RSVP by Monday, June 13th, to Melissa Mercier at 418-752-8891 or by private message to the Family Ties Facebook page.

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program

# World Kidney Cancer Day 2022

*Kay (Karen) Ross*

The theme for World Kidney Cancer Day, Thursday, June 16, is “We Need to Talk About Treatment Options”. The reason for focussing our awareness on treatment options is that, around the world, many kidney cancer patients aren’t currently aware of the treatment options and clinical trials available to them to prolong their lives. In the year 2000, when David, my husband, was first diagnosed with kidney cancer, patients had only two systemic options and both had a very low response rate. Fast forward to 2022, where there are many systemic treatment options available with much improved response rates. Many patients do not feel informed or empowered to ask their doctor questions.

On the other side of the desk, for a variety of reasons, many clinicians are not initiating conversations about their patients’ options.

**WE NEED TO TALK!** Studies show that doctors and patients making treatment decisions together lead to better outcomes and fewer side ef-



David Ross

fects.

In order to facilitate a conversation, the International Kidney Cancer Coalition has prepared six questions that every kidney cancer patient should feel able to ask their doctor. To help you take an active role in your treatment decisions, bring these questions with you to your next appointment. These questions could actually be applied to any cancer situation.

- What are my treatment options and what are the benefits and risks?
- How will this treatment make me feel?
- How much experience do

you have with this treatment?

- Are there any clinical trials I could be a part of?
- How will we know if this treatment is working?
- Can I get a second opinion?
- Another question you should never be afraid to ask is “Can you explain that again?”

Kidney Cancer Canada has planned some activities around World Kidney Cancer Day. We are hosting eight Coffee Chats, four via Internet, and four in person in the Maritimes along with a webinar about Small Renal Masses and also a movie premiere “Le Robot” with Dr. Fred Pouliot on robotic assisted surgery and answers to frequently asked questions. Niagara Falls will also be lit green for a short period of time on June 16 for World Kidney Cancer Day. Information to attend any of these can be found at our website.

Remember, if you or anyone you know is diagnosed or living with kidney cancer, please consider going to [www.kidneycancer.ca](http://www.kidneycancer.ca) or calling us at 1-866-598-7166 for support and information that will be of great help.



Camping reservations are going well

Photo: Courtesy of Parc Forillon Roger Saint-Laurent

## Another busy summer at Forillon Park

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The 2022 season at Forillon Park looks promising as the park opened its doors on May 27.

Already, some 6,000 camping reservations have been made via the reservation centre.

The busiest period, July and August, is practically full with a few scattered places available.

“It’s going very well. This progression is really excellent. We are expecting a very busy year. It has been growing in recent years and we seem to be maintaining the trend and everything suggests that we will have an excellent tourist season this year,” says the manager of visitor experience, Frédéric Sainte-Croix.

The trend towards a lengthening of the season is evident with more reservations in June and September. “The park is beautiful in the summer, but it is also beautiful in the fall. In September, we experienced it last year with an increase in traffic in the fall. The trend is definitely present,” notes Mr. Sainte-Croix.

### 100% open

The past two years were impacted by the pandemic. “This year, all of our locations will be open. The Dolbel-Roberts House, the Hyman Store, the Blanchette House

will all be open this year. We will have guides to welcome people, orient them, guide them and even participate in certain interpretation activities. All of our sites will be active this summer,” says Mr. Sainte-Croix.

### Novelties

Several new features will be offered. For example, the acquisition of a bicycle wheelchair in the Cap-des-Rosiers sector will facilitate access to park trails for people with reduced mobility.

In addition, access to virtual reality glasses as part of the exhibition presented at the reception and discovery centre will allow visitors to live an extraordinary experience while diving in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

A new restaurant will be in place at the recreation centre and a trail race, the Ultra Trail Forillon, will be presented on September 24 with Events Gaspésia.

Forillon Park is no exception and must deal with a lack of manpower.

“We experience it like everywhere in Quebec and in the country. We have our recruitment challenges, but we will be able to offer a good tourist season and our activities to our visitors,” says the manager.

The season will end on October 10.



Photo: Ashley Renout

## Club has first meeting since start of the pandemic

*Kim Harrison, CASA Community Correspondant*

The Fleurant Point Community Club held its first meeting since the beginning of the pandemic on May 25. Several new members have joined the board of directors. They are pictured in the above photo with outgoing directors Marlene Armishaw and Dorothy Bujold, two invaluable volunteers who have been the heart and soul of the club for close to 20 years.

The Fleurant Point Community Club organizes numerous community-based events and activities, from dances to community gardening, and manages the Fleurant Community Hall in Escuminac. The Fleurant Community Hall Facebook page lists all upcoming events at the Hall.



**Register now!**

[cegepgim.ca/english-section](http://cegepgim.ca/english-section)

**Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles**

# Getting involved in the Gaspé Peninsula

*Building Gaspésie together, one home at a time, to counter the housing shortage*

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON— Two organizations, the Regroupement des MRC de la Gaspésie and Vivre en Gaspésie are launching the new image of the regional brand Getting Involved in the Gaspé Peninsula, a campaign that positions the region as occupied with the issue of housing in the region.

“Building Gaspésie together, one home at a time” is the campaign’s slogan. The first stage of this marketing campaign is aimed at the Gaspé Peninsula population and aims to demonstrate that the region is proactive and that citizens can make a difference.

“The Gaspé Peninsula is growing and housing solutions exist on a human scale,” says Mathieu Lapointe, President of the Regroupement des MRC de la Gaspésie, prefect of the MRC Avignon and mayor of Carleton.

The Gaspé Peninsula has reported a positive balance in migratory movements over the last five years, which means that more arrivals than departures have characterized that period. Last year, the positive balance reached 1,378 people.

Danick O’Connor, director of Vivre en Gaspésie, says that the interest of Quebec’s other regions’ inhabitants remains very strong, even if it has decreased a little since the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Every day, we are contacted by a person, a family, or a couple we have not contacted directly. They see our advertisement but they come to us without having been reached previously. So the interest remains strong,” he says.

Among the key messages of the campaign is the interrelationship between the services offered at the community level



Photo: G. Gagné

*Danick O’Connor says that the interest in moving to the Gaspé Peninsula remains strong from Quebecers living outside the region.*

as well as the labour needs, juxtaposed with the growing demand for housing in the territory.

The two organizations’ stakeholders note that the solutions are multiple and that the population can contribute concretely to improving the situation of housing in the region.

“If you plan to build a house soon, have you thought about the duplex option which allows you to generate income and offer a new environment for a family? Your house has become too big since your children left the family nest, have you ever considered converting your basement into rental space? You have a free room and you would like to host a worker to share the costs,” illustrates Mr. Lapointe.

In addition to launching a call for the Gaspé Peninsula people’s solidarity in contribut-

ing to solve the housing shortage solutions, the prefects of the region recall the availability of the financial assistance program from the Regions and Rurality Fund component and called “Support for Construction of Residential Rental Housing.” Totalling \$2 million, the regional program aims to support construction projects for rental units offered on an annual basis, including financial support of \$10,000 per unit, up to a possibility of \$200,000 per project.

“This envelope was announced recently after a year of reflection on the part of the region’s elected municipal officials. It is a proof of the resilience shown by Gaspésians,” adds Prefect Mathieu Lapointe.

According to 2019 data from the Société d’habitation du Québec, new constructions

for rental housing in the Gaspé Peninsula stand at 2.6% of the total, compared to 56% for the rest of Quebec. As for single-family properties, new construction consequently reached 97.4% of the total, compared to the Quebec average of 24.2%.

“In 2001, the Gaspé Peninsula population stood at 85,500 people and the issue of housing was not a problem at the time.

However, even if in 2021 the region had fewer residents, at 79,000 people, our different way of occupying the territory exposes us to a growing need in housing,” stresses Mr. Lapointe.

Several steps preceded the launch of the new regional brand image in housing such as a behavioral analysis of targets, consultation with marketing experts, a focus group with real estate investors, participation in meetings of consultation related to the issue of housing in Gaspésie, planning, filming and presentations to elected officials in the region.

The marketing approach was a rigorous process, points out Catherine Miousse, strategy and marketing expert for Vivre en Gaspésie, the group recruiting new citizens for the region.

“It was essential for us to create a tailor-made image that allows us to send a strong signal that rallies the Gaspé Peninsula population around the issue of housing, the priority for our region,” stresses Ms. Miousse.

The campaign will be broken down into two phases: “Today, we launch the first phase of the marketing cam-

paign. This phase consists of positioning the issue of housing and to inspire the population with a multitude of potential solutions to develop our region, one home at a time,” adds Ms. Miousse.

She specifies that there will be a second phase to this campaign, which this time will aim to stimulate real estate investments. This step requires more time to implement as the regional needs must be assessed.

“The economic parameters must be taken into account. It costs 20% more to build in the Gaspé Peninsula. Reaching profitability takes more time in the Gaspé Peninsula. They (real estate people) could take that money and invest it in other fields but they are also fond of the region and want to see it prosper. However, they are also people used to dealing with (financial) numbers and the break even point must be reached,” explains Catherine Miousse.

The communication tools used by the current campaign include the website investirengaspésie.com. The communication strategy includes variety in three streams, namely digital, television and radio.

The elected municipal officials entrusted the mandate for the development of the marketing campaign to Living in Gaspésie as well as the Regroupement des MRC de la Gaspésie who have worked together at each stage of the process. This initiative is made possible through the financial contribution of the Government of Quebec’s Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

## ANGLADE ON TOUR:

**▶ Cont’d from page 5**

been spent in a context where some wonder if rail services will ever reach Gaspé again.

The elected official says that it must. “The money was already available. It took a long time for the money to be disbursed. Again, it takes political will,” says Anglade, who recalls that the CAQ and François Legault were against wind power and have just discovered its virtues.

“The next step is green hydrogen. We will have to do much more. Green hydrogen is electricity that we need. It’s wind power that we need. There is tremendous potential for the region in terms of economic growth and development while fighting climate change. I think it’s very impor-

tant for the region because I say to myself: we have the territory, we have the people, we have the will. There is a lot of potential,” she believes.

The Liberals will soon present large chunks of their election platform to allow people to make up their minds right away.

At 18% in the polls, Anglade will continue to hit the ground running to meet people and explain her platform.

“When people see the charter of the regions, 1400 people met even during the pandemic, I get messages from people who tell me they never voted Liberal, but they think this might be the time. I hear it more and more,” says Ms Anglade, who will soon announce the candidates for Bonaventure and Gaspé.

## AVIAN FLU:

**▶ Cont’d from page 3**

With the mortalities since the beginning of April, avian flu is confirmed in Quebec, and it was predictable since there are wild populations of migrating birds involved,” explains Ms. Massé.

“What is of utmost importance now is that owners of domestic poultry stay vigilant and apply strict sanitary measures, such as cleaning their boots and changing their clothes when they take care of their birds because that is where we want to prevent the

virus from spreading. I insist that we must remove the emphasis from individual cases.

The absence of cases does not mean that the virus is absent. Birds are mobile. With the mortalities observed in other regions, we can confirm that the virus is indeed present. Monitoring is still ongoing. Specimens will be analyzed but not all dead birds will. It is not possible,” affirms Ariane Massé.

Can the current avian flu bout decimate an entire colony of birds? “I have no crystal ball and it is too early to predict the impact of the

current infection on gannets and other species like eiders.

Researchers are doing long-term monitoring and they will be better placed in a while. In Europe, where the avian flu infection has been ongoing since 2020, there is no decimated population. In the past, for example, eiders have experienced episodes of avian cholera, marked by significant population declines but, generally, it takes a few years and we see a recovery.

“It is also important to note that avian flu doesn’t jump to human beings,” she concludes.

# Announcements



## Obituaries



**GALLON: Florence**

December 21, 1932 - February 3, 2022

We have fond memories of our Nanny or who everyone else knows as Florence Gallon. A wife, mother, aunt, sister, grandmother, great-grandmother and a Facebook friend!

We all knew her house had treats that we ate more than our parents wanted us too. Just ask her neighbours how their dog became so plump. You see, Nanny, had selective hearing and didn't listen to orders too well, especially being told not to feed the neighbour's dog. Mya, a black lab which was supposed to weigh 80 pounds ended up weighing a stocky 135. Mya was spiritually adopted by Nanny and renamed Myron because she could never remember her name. Mya would never miss her extra meals, in fact she lived to the age of 15. So she had to be feeding her something right!

She loved her iPad, and of course Facebook to keep up with the news. She was tuned in with technology at 89 years old. She sipped pink wine with ice and shopped on Amazon like it was nobody's business! If her perm was getting loose and grey roots were showing she didn't want to leave the house, not even her purple lipstick could cut it! God forbid she might look "homely."

We will all miss her dry sense of humour, and how she made us cry tears of happiness in her last moments with her witty jokes.

She leaves behind her beloved husband Kenny whom she loved more than life itself. Her three children: Marlene (Roger), Ethel (Lloyd) and Wade (Lynn), her sister: Doris, brother: Albert (Bud) *deceased June 1, 2022*, her grandkids Tracy-Lee, Jason, Kristal, Lloyd, Lucas and Eva and many nieces and nephews. Last but not least her great-grandkids Hendrix, Thora, Savannah and an unborn great-granddaughter that she had the pleasure to know about before passing. And of course her 284 Facebook friends! We miss her dearly, she's always in our thoughts and forever in our hearts.

Viewing will be held at 1 p.m. and service at 2 p.m. on June 18, at the Saint Andrew's Anglican Church in New Carlisle.



**KEYS: Sybil Miller**

December 11, 1916 - May 20, 2022

Sybil Miller Keys died peacefully at Riverpath Retirement Residence on May 20, 2022.

She was preceded in death by her husband, J. Russell Keys and her son-in-law Barry M. Rowles. She is survived by her daughter Barbara Keys Rowles; her son James M. Keys (Elizabeth Campbell-Keys; three granddaughters, Kimberly (Tom Awram), Alexandra (Daniel Lackner) and Mika Keys; and four great-grandchildren, Mika and Lola Awram and Kaia and

Liam Lackner.

She loved to regale many generations of friends with stories of early Gaspé. She was the omnipresent Matriarch to many who would share their teenage heartthrobs, heartbreaks and dreams; always with optimism and wisdom. She also taught us to be loyal, forgiving, just and last but not least, to dance. She loved her family, her friends, Gaspé but, above all, her beloved Haldimand Beach.

She leaves an emptiness in our hearts. There will be a service at St. Andrew's, York in August.



## Celebration of Life

**SUDDARD: Shawn**

The celebration of life service for Shawn Suddard will take place on Saturday, June 11, at 2 p.m. in Saint John's - St. Philips Church in Sandy Beach.

The family will receive condolences at the church before the service from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

The New Carlisle  
Funeral Association  
extends sympathy to the family of  
Albert (Buddy) Gallon

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HUSBAND OF  
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*Covering Port Daniel to New Richmond*

# COAST ROUND-UP

COAST ROUND-UP: \$5 per week  
CLASSIFIED: \$6 per week

### COAST ROUND-UP

#### YORK:

##### York River Seniors AGM

**June 16:** The York River Senior Citizens Club will be holding its annual general meeting at 7 p.m. at the York River Community Hall. Ten draws for \$25 gift certificates will be held and light refreshments will be offered. Please call: 418-355-4732 or email: ronaldmundle@gmail.com to confirm your presence.

#### 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.

**June 11:** Card Party, cost is \$5 beginning at 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

#### 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 donation please contact Betty Ann Crozier.

**September 3:** Pot Luck Supper beginning at 5 p.m. at the Town Hall. \$15 per adult and \$7 for children under 10. Anyone wishing to donate a casserole or other food items, please contact Mary Woods or Betty Ann Crozier.

#### NEW CARLISLE:

##### Royal Canadian Legion Branch #64

**Fridays:** Darts at 7 p.m. New members are welcome. \$5 to play. Bar opens at 6 p.m.

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

**June 11:** Music with Vern Huntington beginning at 8 p.m. \$5

**Notice:** The June Legion

meeting is cancelled and the next meeting will be Tuesday, September 6 at 7 p.m.

**June 18:** The Browns - 9 p.m., \$15, Contact Tammy Chatterton 752-8514.

**June 19:** Fathers Day breakfast from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. \$12 (nonmembers) \$10 (members) \$6 (kids 12 and under)

**June 26:** Triathlon - shuffleboard, darts, washers \$20 per person

**July 2:** Children ages 4-12 free bingo starts 1 p.m.

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

#### NEW CARLISLE:

##### Bible Chapel

**Sundays:** 9:30 a.m. Breaking of Bread for believers. Drive-In Gospel Meetings at the Fair Haven Bible Camp grounds at 2 p.m. Covid-19 considerations/social distancing. Rain or shine. Sponsored by the New Carlisle Bible Chapel.

**Thursdays:** 6:30 p.m. Prayer Meeting and Bible Study.

Everyone welcome, in person and on Zoom. For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

#### CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

##### Book Room

The book room is closed until September. Anyone who needs assistance can contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

#### CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

##### 50 Plus Club

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

**June 19:** Father's Day Brunch from 9 a.m. to 12 (noon), \$15 per adult and \$10 for children under 12. Everyone is welcome to attend.

#### ROTARY CLUB WINNERS:

The winners for the week of May 22 are: Jonathan Fyfe, Luc Loubert, Donald Dugas, Genevieve Dion, Martin Beauchemin, Sarto Perron and Alexandre Olscamp.

#### UNITED CHURCH

##### NEW RICHMOND

##### Sunday, June 12

10 a.m. Service

#### UNITED CHURCH

##### HOPE TOWN

##### Sunday, June 12

10 a.m. Service

#### ANGLICAN CHURCH

##### OF CANADA

##### Sunday, June 12

##### NEW CARLISLE

10 a.m. Morning Prayer

##### HOPE TOWN

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

##### SHIGAWAKE

10 a.m. Morning Prayer

#### PARISH OF GASPÉ

##### Sunday, June 12

##### St. James - Wakeham

9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

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# Rhubarb: Root of the Barbarians

Diane Skinner

Let's talk about rhubarb which is now ready to pick! What is the appeal of rhubarb because it is so sour? Is it a fruit or a vegetable? Many people love it – but it seems that just as many people dislike it. People tend to respond to rhubarb in one of two ways. “Yum, I love it!” or “Yuck, no, thank you!” Which group do you fall into?

It's hard to believe that anyone eats it because, at first bite, the flavour is so sour that it puckers your mouth. It is botanically classified as a vegetable, though people use it as you would prepare fruit for desserts and jam. A stick of rhubarb, dipped in sugar, can be eaten as a treat.

One pound of raw rhubarb gives about ¾ cup when cooked. It is not necessary to completely peel rhubarb, just trim the ends and discard the leaves. It is a delicious blend when combined with strawberries.

If you do appreciate the flavour of the lovely pink, red or green stalks, there are always friends and neighbours willing to give you some. Heather Imhoff, who lives in Shigawake, tells SPEC, “I love rhubarb and my neighbour keeps telling me to dig it up and take it. I enjoy rhubarb raw and dipped in sugar and I also make a rhubarb pudding, kind of like



Rhubarb stalks are tasty but do not eat the leaves which will cause stomach upset. The leaves could be toxic but a person would have to eat over 5 pounds to be lethal.

Photo: D. Skinner

pudding chomeur!”

It makes the experience all the sweeter, when a neighbour gives you some of the tasty pink, red and green stalks and particularly when you add sugar, which you must. The redder the stalk, the sweeter the taste, is not always true. However, eat only the stalks because the leaves contain oxalic acid which can upset your stomach.

Have you heard that rhubarb leaves are poisonous? Well, the answer is, “Yes” but a human would have to consume 5 pounds of the leaves to be toxic. Let's gain an understanding and appreciation for this fine vegetable.

## More About Rhubarb

The word rhubarb comes from the Latin word rhabarum which means ‘root of the barbarians.’ Rhubarb has been eaten for thousands of years. The Chinese have been growing rhubarb for over 5,000

years. In the early 1500s rhubarb was more expensive than cinnamon in France and double the price of opium in England.

Rhubarb is a healthy choice because it contains fibre and can increase good cholesterol. Rhubarb also has plenty of Vitamin K which promotes a healthy brain. Also rich in antioxidants it can make your skin appear healthier. Add to that list of benefits: bone health, tissue repair, and reducing inflammation. Some scientists also say rhubarb appears to have cancer fighting properties. It tastes delicious, too! If you want to enjoy genuine made on the Gaspé rhubarb wine, visit Ferme Bourdages in St. Simeon. This wine is semi-dry and golden in colour.

## Planting Rhubarb

Plant in full sun. Plants can grow more than three feet tall with a spread of four to five feet. So, do consider this when

choosing where you will plant. Dig a hole 1 to 2 feet deep. Fill with a mixture of soil and compost. Insert your plants. Cover with one inch of good soil. Keep well-watered. Remove flower stalks when they appear. Beware: Do not pick stalks the first year to allow the roots to strengthen. Once it takes root you should have many years of rhubarb ahead of you. Don't forget to share with friends and neighbours.

This sweet little “email” (below) was contributed by Patricia Ste. Croix Annett of Barachois.

To: Rhubarb Lovers  
From: Rhubarb Fairy  
When picking rhubarb, always grab it at the base of the stalk

and give it a good tug and twist to pull it out by the root. Never cut rhubarb!

The brains of the rhubarb plant are in its roots. When you pull the stalk out by the root, the rhubarb feels it and says to itself “Oh my goodness, I have lost a stalk, I'd better grow more stalks. And it does!

If you cut the stalk, the plant doesn't know how to grow more stalks. What is left below your cut rots into the root. The rhubarb feels very badly then and doesn't grow another stalk. Secondly, a lot of us have had great pickings of rhubarb and now the plants are quite depleted. They need some recovery time. Please leave them for a couple of weeks to recover.

Yours sincerely,  
The Rhubarb Fairy

## Rhubarb Crumb Pie

### Ingredients:

1 9-inch pie crust (bottom)  
Filling:  
2 beaten eggs  
1 ½ cups white sugar  
3 cups chopped fresh rhubarb  
1 ½ tsp. vanilla  
3 tbsp. flour

### Topping:

3 tbsp. melted butter  
¾ cup flour  
1/3 cup brown sugar  
1/3 tsp. baking soda  
1/3 tsp. baking powder

### Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350°F  
Mix all the filling ingredients in a medium bowl. Pour into pie crust.  
In a smaller bowl combine flour, brown sugar, baking soda and baking powder.  
Add the melted butter and stir until the mixture forms into “crumbs.”  
Sprinkle crumbs over the pie and bake for 45 minutes, depending on your oven. Adjust time as required. Top should be golden when done.  
Serve with vanilla ice cream.

Rhubarb when raw is so tough  
And its leaves contain poisonous stuff.  
But when cleaned and desoiled  
Dipped in sugar and boiled  
Then the stalks are quite tasty enough.

# Reduce food and other kitchen waste and save money!

Diane Skinner

You may wish to be more eco-friendly in your home and a great place to focus on is the kitchen. Being eco-friendly can also save you money and that is becoming more important as the cost of food rises. Cutting down on waste is a win-win scenario.

**Compost:** Food scraps can go back to the earth and help to feed your plants and gardens. In addition, less is going into the landfills. Food scraps will decompose but when they are wrapped in plastic bags and placed in the garbage bin that process is substantially hindered. If you do not compost, place food scraps in paper or compostable bags. Think of compost as free fertilizer!

**Use up those wilted vegetables.** Rather than disposing



Composting is an easy practice that benefits the environment and can feed your garden.

Photo: D. Skinner

or composting them, use them to make soups and sauces. This will save you some money. If the carrots are not as crispy as they once were, they could still be very edible. If your zucchini are a wee bit soft, they can be chopped or

grated and put in spaghetti sauce.

**Use washable, reusable cloths instead of paper towels.** It is not just the cost of the paper towels to consider: the true cost includes transporting goods and the use of fossil

fuels to get it to your grocery store and then home. Those paper towels come wrapped in plastic.

**Before you go shopping take an inventory of your fridge and freezer.** Make a list based on what you actually need and will use. Do you ever get that guilty feeling when throwing out an old lettuce or bread past its “best eaten by” date? Cut down on that by using the food you have bought before bringing in newer foods.

**Store your food carefully.** Keep them fresh longer. Avoid single-use plastic wrap. Look for reusable beeswax wraps. Use reusable bowl covers. Though made of plastic, they are reusable many, many times. Containers come in a variety of plastics – and some are better than others. Avoid BPA or Number 7 plastics by checking the bottom of the

container. Better still use glass or stainless-steel bowls with lids. The initial cost is higher but they will last a longer time.

Plan to use what foods are in the fridge today and build your meals around those foods.

Shopping for large sized containers is often cheaper, such as family sized cereal boxes. Fewer trips to the store saves money. Less packaging, that's eco-friendly. A caveat: only buy in bulk if you are going to actually use the food before it expires.

**Cook once and eat twice.** The benefits of this strategy are many: saves you time, use of hydro, possibly trips to the grocery store, and less meal planning! If you ask cooks their least favourite thing about feeding the family, they often reply that it is the planning. This will take off a bit of the stress of planning.

# Is your job hard to do? That was one of the many questions asked to career fair participants

Penny MacWhirter

GASPÉ: On May 18, Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi, Eastern Shores School Board, the Gaspésie Literacy Council, Vision Gaspé-Percé Now and Gespeg partnered to hold a career fair.

Organizers started working together on the preparations in January hoping to make the event a success. Their goal was to provide information about the various career path possibilities with professionals from the community present to promote, educate and respond to questions.

Their hard work paid off, considering over 25 businesses and organizations were featured at the career fair and the students who visited the various booths were ready with lots of questions.

In attendance were students from Belle Anse and Gaspé Elementary Schools (grades 4 to 6), followed by Secondary 1 to 5 students from Gaspé Polyvalent. In the afternoon the general public was encouraged to visit the various kiosks.

When asked how she thought the day went, Crystal Element from the Gaspé Literacy Council said, "The day started off with rain and clouds, but nothing could take away the smiles of our youth as they entered the career fair. This day was all about them! Our future! Having the elementary students attend the career fair was a wonderful learning experience. It is important to expose them to different careers and give them a chance to see how their interests and hobbies can translate into real world jobs."



Students circulated among the many kiosks, including a mechanic, a farmer of the sea, and a hairdresser.

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