

New Richmond resident wonders why she can't get dialysis closer to home

Gilles Gagné

NEW RICHMOND – A 32-year-old woman from New Richmond, Jenn Harrison, wonders why she cannot qualify to get hemodialysis services at the Maria hospital, considering that she is a single mother, living alone with an eight-year-old daughter and given her general condition is deeply affected by diabetes.

Her current routine consists of spending between 10 and 11 hours on the road weekly, compared to an hour-and-a-half at most, if she could get the same service in Maria.

At age 8, Jenn Harrison was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, which means that she developed that condition naturally, independently from her living habits, which is generally the case for people with the type 2 form of that illness.

Between age 8 and 31, four daily insulin injections were required. She also had other complications as a result of diabetes. In March 2021, it was clear to the doctors following Ms. Harrison that her condition was gradually deteriorating.

“We found out it was progressing last year on March 21, 2021, when I started seeing a nephrologist in Rimouski. Dialysis started on May 14, 2022,” explains Jenn Harrison.

Those dialysis sessions took place in Rimouski, three-and-a-half hours away from New Richmond when the weather cooperates. It means a seven-hour return trip. She was and is still receiving hemodialysis on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. A dialysis treatment filters the blood poisoned by the effects of diabetes.

Why Rimouski? “They told me that there were not enough workers to service the machine in Maria,” says Ms. Harrison.

Receiving treatment in Ri-



Photo: G. Gagné

Getting hemodialysis treatments in Maria would greatly simplify Jenn Harrison's life and allow her to spend more quality time with her daughter Dezirea.

mouski forced her, considering her very tight budget, as she is receiving social assistance, to spend five-and-a-half days per week in that Lower Saint Lawrence town. Making three weekly return trips was too exhausting, too costly in gas and causing maintenance fees on her “not so reliable” older vehicle. When in Rimouski she stayed at a facility specifically designed for patients from away.

Ms. Harrison says the worst part of sleeping in Rimouski five nights a week was spending all that time far from Dezirea, her daughter, and having to mobilize her family members and friends more than what she considered reasonable while being away.

“It is hard to be away from my daughter. I would get to spend my Sundays with my daughter. She tells me, ‘I want to be with you,

Mommy.’ She doesn't understand why I can't get help from the hospital close to home,” says Jenn Harrison, holding back tears.

Her situation improved a bit in July when her nephrologist told her that she would receive her dialysis treatments in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, still 150 kilometres away from home though, a tad less than 50% of the distance between New Richmond and Rimouski. She now gets to Sainte-Anne-des-Monts with the help of a volunteer driver supplied by the Nouvelle-Saint-Alphonse Volunteer Action Centre.

“The switch to Sainte-Anne-des-Monts came in mid-July. It still takes from between one hour-and-a-half and one hour and 45 minutes to get to Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. We ran into the moose problem already. It is nerve-racking to have to drive through the park. Peo-

ple working with the Volunteer Centre are all retired citizens. They have already told me that, with the coming cold season, ‘we are not risking our life and we are not risking your life.’ I have to get up at 3:30 in the morning in order to be in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts on time for the treatment, which goes from 7:00 to 11:00 a.m. Then, we have to drive back to town. After that trip, I am played out. I am tired. I don't really have a life. My life revolves around my treatments,” she recounts.

Other medical issues

Jenn Harrison is fighting other health issues related to diabetes. In 2016, while pregnant, she suffered from a detached retina in her left eye and now has a prosthetic eye.

“I lost the baby, following a medically advised abortion,” she says.

Over the years, diabetes has also caused pain in her feet and she cannot walk long distances or quickly. “I have nerve damage on my feet, a consequence of diabetes,” she adds.

In August, another problem came out of nowhere. “I had a quadruple bypass surgery, after suffering from two mini heart attacks at home. It happened on August 5, a Friday, and I was supposed to go to Sainte-Anne-des-Monts that day. I was experiencing my mini heart attacks. I had been vomiting. I was hot. I called the volunteer who was supposed to drive me to Sainte-Anne-des-Monts to say that I was too sick to go. The volunteer told me: ‘If you are still sick in a while, call me and I'll drive you to Maria Hospital.’ My heart was functioning at 25% of its capacity. On Saturday morning, I was flown to Quebec City. It happened fast. I thought it was dehydration. It wasn't. They told me in Quebec City I was lucky to be

alive.”

On May 14, a catheter was connected to her jugular blood vessel to provide dependable intravenous access and enable hemodynamic monitoring and blood sampling.

Jenn Harrison, who would love to work but who can't because of her medical condition, figures that all those problems should qualify her to get her dialysis treatments in Maria.

“When will I be able to go to Maria? The nephrologist told me that it will not be possible for at least a year and ‘you are fifth on the list.’ I am not asking to take anybody's place but the problem is the lack of trained staff, not the machines. It takes six to seven weeks to train a nurse to work with the machine,” she stresses.

“Once I get the service in Maria, I can figure out how to put her (Dezirea) on the bus and then go to the hospital. The treatment takes four hours, plus the 15 minutes it takes to plug me in, plus 15 minutes to unplug me. She gets on the bus at 7:50 a.m. and she gets off the bus at 2:50 p.m. That gives me enough time to get my treatment,” explains Ms. Harrison.

Services in English

Jenn Harrison is not fully bilingual. She gets by in French and her second language has been improving in recent years because of her frequent trips to Rimouski and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. However, when someone is sick, they usually want to speak their own language and be sure they fully understand what is being said.

“It would be nice to be spoken to in English. When (hospital) people see that I can understand some French, they switch to French. It is more difficult for me. They

Catherine Cyr Wright and Québec solidaire propose solutions to counter gender-related violence

Gilles Gagné

NEW RICHMOND - To tackle the problems of gender-based violence and remedy the situation, a Québec solidaire government would establish a Ministry of Women and Gender Equality with a permanent budget, and that government would adequately fund organizations that support victim-survivors, such as women's centres, CALACS and shelters.

Such a government would also implement the recommendations of the transpartisan report *Rebâtir la confiance* (Rebuilding trust). Québec solidaire would then prioritize remote regions and the most vulnerable cross sections of the population in its interventions.

Catherine Cyr Wright, candidate for Québec solidaire in Bonaventure, presented those commitments on September 9 in New Richmond, and a brief portrait of gender-based violence in the region, as well as other measures she and her party would put in place once she enters the National Assembly.

"In recent months, a femicide and several situations of



Catherine Cyr Wright believes that better support can be supplied to women impacted by all forms of violence.

Photo: G. Gagné

domestic violence that took place here in the riding of Bonaventure have been reported in the media and have shaken up the population. This summer, several women were intoxicated against their will with date rape drugs at festivals in our region," points out Catherine Cyr Wright.

She is not naming the most recent case of domestic violence that shocked the Bay of Chaleur area but she is referring to the David Guy file, a

38-year-old man from Maria who was sentenced to four years of prison after having abused physically and verbally his former wife for 17 years. She didn't feel safe even if David Guy was imprisoned in March 2021 and that he entered a plea of guilty on August 12 of this year.

She died five days later in her Rivière-du-Loup apartment. There was no sign of recent violence on her body when she was discovered by

her son but she remained extremely fragile physically and emotionally despite fleeing the house in March 2021.

Using the latest Public Health study on the well-being of the Gaspé Peninsula population, released in 2017, Ms. Cyr Wright stresses that young girls in the region are victims of sexual offences at a rate that is 58% higher than the provincial average.

Between 2011 and 2013 in Quebec, this rate was 342.1 offences per 100,000 girls under the age of 18, while in the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, this rate rose to 539 offences, says Catherine Cyr Wright.

An update of this survey with more recent data is planned for 2022 or early 2023. "Presently, the next victim is still alive," insists Catherine Cyr Wright, "We have already lost a lot of time, and we cannot afford to wait for the next femicide to take place. The victims and survivors in the Gaspé Peninsula deserve our concern and I promise to make it a priority when I am elected."

The Québec solidaire candidate in Bonaventure argues that despite all the activism done by feminist groups in the Gaspé, measures adapted to the territory are still pending.

Ms. Cyr-Wright points out that the vastness of the territory increase the vulnerability of victims in the region.

Hypothetically speaking, "If Chantal wants to leave her violent spouse... but she can't move to an apartment, even if there was one available. And if she doesn't have a car to cover

the 100 kilometres between her residence and the shelter where women who are victims of violence can get services, what is she supposed to do?" asks Ms. Cyr Wright, illustrating the need for better and adapted services for regions like the Gaspé Peninsula.

"The same lack of service availability affects younger women and girls," she states.

"There is shame attached to experiencing sexual assaults but if the victims have opportunities to talk more about it, they will receive good advice if we can train more people in that kind of counselling," she says.

There is also an issue with staff working conditions shelters. "It is difficult to maintain stability when some of the working conditions are not good," she says.

Catherine Cyr Wright works in education with Native women and she is disconcerted by the lack of halfway houses facilitating the return to a normal life in Aboriginal communities, once they have spent time in a shelter.

"In Quebec, no Aboriginal community can count on a halfway house for women who have experienced violence," she criticizes.

Catherine Cyr-Wright held her September 9 press briefing in New Richmond, behind Place Suzanne-Guité, where the Salle de spectacle is located. Suzanne Guité was a well-known Gaspesian artist between the 1950s and the beginning of the 1980s. She was murdered by her husband in 1981.

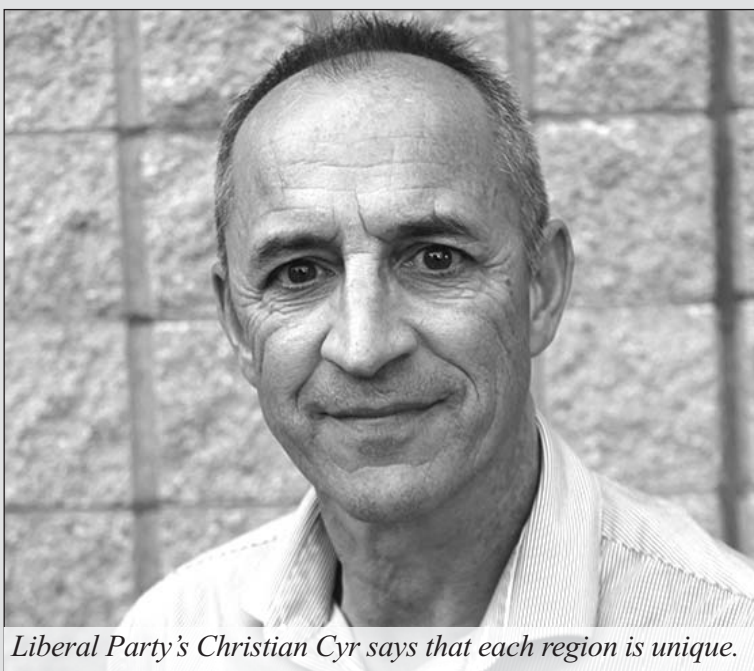
Liberal Party candidate Christian Cyr proposes a charter of regions

Gilles Gagné

NEW RICHMOND - The regions of Quebec are subject to policies and sectoral measures that are not suited to the reality of the Gaspé Peninsula. Abitibi is not the Lower Saint Lawrence, just like Quebec City is not the Magdalen Islands and Montreal is not the Gaspé Peninsula, says Christian Cyr, Liberal Party candidate for Bonaventure.

The Charter of the regions proposed by the Liberal Party of Quebec is the solution to effectively meet the needs of each of the regions because each of them will develop its own development and planning strategy. According to Mr. Cyr, "The Charter of Regions signifies the end of wall-to-wall (same measures no matter the area) in the policies of the Government of Quebec which concern the regions."

With the Quebec Charter of Regions, local governments - the municipalities and the MRCs will be the privileged partners of the government and they will have increased powers to establish development planning for their region. Local governments know their region



Liberal Party's Christian Cyr says that each region is unique.

Photo: G. Gagné

and its needs best. They are the ones who can set the priorities," he adds.

For several months, Christian Cyr has made observations with entrepreneurs, business managers and in the municipal world and he concludes that there is still a standard and non-adapted approach to economic development and a flagrant lack of coordination between the various ministries supposed to deal with severe labour and housing shortages, and by the immigration record.

"The regions of Quebec

face many challenges that are specific to them and to which we must respond. With our Charter of Regions, we will allow each of them to develop their full potential by promoting decentralization and proposing solutions from the field that will be better adapted to local realities. It is not enough to migrate jobs to the regions to boast of being a government of the regions. You need a real vision, listening and mutual respect. This is what a Liberal government will offer Quebecers," says Mr. Cyr.



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Photo: G. Gagné

Maria Hospital could get a fourth chair this fall.

Hemodialysis chair could be added to Maria Hospital this fall

Gilles Gagné

MARIA – The Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre spokesperson, Lou Landry, explains that currently adding time slots is not possible due to labour challenges, which confirms what patient Jenn Harrison was told this spring.

“For example, at Maria (Hospital), there are hemodialysis treatments on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. With our current workforce, it would be impossible to consider adding Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. This is why we are aiming, as an alternative solution, the addition of chairs which increases our services

without requiring such a significant increase in the workforce instead,” says Mr. Landry.

“As for physical constraints, they are very real at Maria (Hospital), where the aim is to double the number of chairs from three to six. We should, however, be able to add a fourth chair this fall. The additional seat in Maria will involve the addition of a trained nurse,” he adds.

Elsewhere in the Gaspé Peninsula, Chandler and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts already have six chairs. “Gaspé is also experiencing space issues, but we also have a project underway that would allow us to increase (the capacity) to six chairs within two years,” explains Lou

Landry.

He adds that the region’s Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) is in a solution mode with the intention of adding seats. “Adding treatment days is obviously also a solution, but it requires sufficient human resources to do so. On this subject, the CISSS is in action at the level of the workforce. Several recruitment actions are in progress. The major action for the fall is the arrival of 40 nurses from the African continent,” says Lou Landry.

With regard to the patient referral method, priority is given by the nephrologists according to the possibility for the patient to receive hemodialysis, he concludes.

DIALYSIS:

▶ *Cont'd from page 1*

do make an effort in Maria. I was born there. They know me. I don’t know if it is good or not but they say: “Hi, Ms. Harrison.” I have gone there so often,” she mentions.

Jenn Harrison has been using the services of Family Ties in New Carlisle since Dezirea was a few months old. Family Ties’ coordinator of the parent support group called Destination Family, Carolyn Taylor, explains that at times, “Jenn has called me from Rimouski because she needed some French (help).”

The Rimouski dialysis

team members offered another solution to Jenn Harrison.

“They asked me if I would consider moving up to Rimouski when things started, so I could have Dezirea with me; but I refused because I wouldn’t have support from my group, my mom, and a few friends,” says Jenn Harrison.

Dialysis at home?

Dialysis can be provided at home. Ms. Harrison thought that she would be a good candidate to get a dialysis machine at home.

“I was led to believe that I would get it. The nephrologist told me that it poses a problem

because of my bypasses. Home treatment is not a good idea right now. That was the final straw. I felt like giving up. I asked if they (health authorities) could transport a machine to Maria. I was told again the problem is not a shortage of machines, it is a shortage of staff,” she explains.

She asked more questions about the time it takes to train people to work with hemodialysis machines.

It takes five to seven weeks to train some staff. “I asked: ‘Can you take some money from the budget and train more people?’ It gets foggy when I try to get answers. The more you pry, the less you get an-

Police report

A 74-year-old woman from Saint Elzéar, Réjeanne Poirier, died a little after 1 p.m. on September 12 when she lost control of her vehicle while exiting Highway 132 in the Bonaventure East sector. The accident occurred on a curve and did not involve other vehicles. The victim’s car went straight ahead into a ditch. The victim remained stuck in her vehicle and the emergency services called to the scene, the firefighters in this case, had to use the jaws of life to extricate her. She was taken to Maria Hospital, where she was pronounced dead. The police officers of the Sûreté du Québec were busy during the work of the firefighters to ensure the safe maintenance of traffic, first on one lane to protect the emergency teams, before the complete recovery on two lanes at 3 p.m. “A stroke could explain the crash. This is one of the hypotheses to explain this accident. It remains under investigation,” says Stéphane Tremblay, spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec.

On September 15 at the New Carlisle Courthouse, Raynald Croussette, 70, from Les Méchins, entered a plea of guilty on 16 of the 21 charges laid against him during the spring and the summer, after his June 17 arrest in the back-country of New Richmond. Quebec Court Judge Janick Poirier sentenced him to 36 months of prison to be served in a federal penitentiary.

“Four charges were amalgamated to a fifth one. Only one charge was dropped, the voyeurism one. The 36-month sentence was a mutual suggestion from both sides. Considering that he has spent 136 days of preventive time in prison, as of today, he still has 31 months and 18 days left to serve,” explains Criminal Prosecutor Cédric Leblanc-Falardeau. A day of preventive prison time counts for a day-and-a-half of official time.

Raynald Croussette entered a plea of guilty on four charges of break and enter in houses, one break and enter in a building that was not a house, theft of more than \$5,000, and hit and run as well as breach of probation.

The breach of probation charge was tied to the conditions set when he served a prison sentence of six months less two days for a case of violence that occurred on October 7, 2021.

The Sûreté du Québec officers had to use a Taser gun to arrest him on June 17. He had no known address in the Bay of Chaleur area. His arrest came after complaints laid by New Richmond citizens following a wave of thefts committed in many properties. Raynald Croussette had previously served a six-month prison term for illegal use of a firearm in 2012 and a probation period was imposed on him in 2000 after he committed an assault.

swer,” says Jenn Harrison.

The medication she takes since her bypasses makes it preferable to get her hemodialysis treatment in a hospital.

“It could take between six months to a year before getting off that medication and having the service at home. I have a catheter in my jugular and it would have to be changed. If I were to transition into a home treatment, they would have to change the catheter and wait two weeks,” she says.

“At home, I would use a smaller machine to put on a table or the side of a bed. I would be able to do it alone. The training takes five to seven days in the hospital, to make

sure I can do it. If there is a problem, there is a round-the-clock service,” points out Jenn Harrison.

Family Ties’ Carolyn Taylor can hardly understand why a little extra effort couldn’t be made by the health authorities to accelerate Ms. Harrison’s transfer to the Maria hospital for dialysis.

“Do they just go down the list, without other considerations?” asks Ms. Taylor, suggesting that the gravity of some cases should prevail.

“I had a heart attack. What else do I have to experience before moving up the list?” concludes Jenn Harrison.

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Gilles Gagné

Commentary

Will Pierre Poilievre adopt a softer approach?

Pierre Poilievre will have to refocus his political strategy if he wants to stand a chance to become Prime Minister of Canada one day. His September 10 landslide victory against his opponents, former Quebec Premier Jean Charest among them, is impressive but Canadians like centre-right or centre-left politics, a reality still valid in 2022, and likely to remain so for several more years.

Mr. Poilievre's win was stunning. He won 68% of the members' votes, compared to only 16% for Jean Charest, the closest opponent. For the first time, the party leadership was won according to a first-ballot round of votes.

The new leader also finished first among the members' vote in 330 of the country's 338 ridings. It means that the party's members chose Pierre Poilievre even in the ridings of the Members of Parliament rooting for the other leadership candidates.

The party's members only represent a cross section of Canada's voters though. Canadians are far from genuine environmentalists who put climate change issues at the forefront of their preoccupations. However, most of them believe in climate change and a rising proportion of them will witness the snowballing effects of climate change in the years to come.

In Canada, the political system allows a political party to win a majority at the House of Commons with 36 or 37% of the total ballots. However, those votes have to be fairly well distributed geographically. The proof is that Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party won the last two elections with fewer votes than Andrew Scheer and Erin O'Toole, of the Conservative Party, in 2019 and 2021, respectively. The latter's support was too concentrated in Western Canada.

Pierre Poilievre, a true right wing politician who favours the role of the private sector in about every field of activity, who said a few months ago that he wanted to give more room to crypto-currencies in our economy, among other things, will need to get more support in Ontario and Quebec if he wants to be the prime minister eventually.

He started trying to attract more Quebecers right after the confirmation of his victory by putting a lot of French in his first speech. Lately, he has also stopped almost completely referring to the importance of crypto-currencies in his strategy, about firing the governor of the Bank of Canada, and about last winter's truckers convoy, which he supported.

In that inaugural speech, he didn't bother much about the party's unity. When you win with 68% of the ballots in the first round, and given that your closest opponent is 52% behind, why would you care?

Pierre Poilievre will try to play the charm game by putting emphasis on his modest origins, on the fact that he was raised by his adoptive parents, not in the luxury his main opponent, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, benefited from. He wants Canadians to differentiate the two main leaders of the country.

He is also trying to ignore journalists by failing to give them interviews and holding press conferences. He totally waived interviews and press meets following his September 10 victory.

Four days after his win, Pierre Poilievre called a "press conference," or so he thought. Global News reporter David Akin, one of the most respected journalists in the country, started asking questions to the Conservative Party leader. David Akin interrupted Pierre Poilievre because he knew there wouldn't be a question period, like there is supposed to be in a press conference. In the Conservative Party leader's mind, journalists were only there to act as a driving force and report solely what he was saying in his speech.

It doesn't work that way. If a politician calls a press conference, he must expect that questions will be asked. If that politician makes a speech, he must also expect questions about that speech. If a politician has aspirations to become the country's prime minister in a minority government context, he can guess that questions will be asked about other subjects of daily interest.

Pierre Poilievre is making the bet that he can make his way without answering journalists' questions. He is entitled to think so. Most people don't have a high opinion of journalists. It is in part deserved at times. However, at one point, he will have to deal with the fact that journalism is one of democracy's foundations. It might be unfortunate but so far, the world has evolved according to that principle.

Pierre Poilievre has also opted for the hard line with Alain Rayes, a Quebec Member of Parliament who decided to sit as an independent Member of Parliament (MP) following the new Conservative leader's victory.

The Conservative Party sent a text message to all the members of Mr. Rayes' riding of Victoriaville, asking them to call his office and ask for his resignation as an MP. Needless to say, Alain Rayes' office was completely dysfunctional for days, which affected the constituents' capacity to get services. The Conservative Party's message also blamed Mr. Rayes for his refusal to fight inflation, as if his leaving the caucus automatically meant that he was favouring higher prices.

Is this Pierre Poilievre's kind of democracy? The Conservative Party apologized late on the evening of September 13, blaming the message on some computer error. It is a silly excuse and a garbage apology because a human being wrote that message and decided to press the "send" button!

The tone will undoubtedly change at the House of Commons, now that Pierre Poilievre will be the official leader of the opposition. Will he keep using his pitbull manners, his Donald Trump-like insults and declarations that are often far from proven as a political strategy?

It is quite likely, at least at first. He will try to destabilize Justin Trudeau, who has not helped his own cause through letting the quality of federal services deteriorate. The current prime minister, therefore, left a wide open door to Pierre Poilievre, who says the private sector is better at offering services than civil servants.


However, it is far from sure that Justin Trudeau will be at the helm of the Liberal Party, come the next federal election.

If Chrystia Freeland becomes the leader of the Liberal Party, for example, it might be interesting to see if Pierre Poilievre's caveman political strategy will fly.



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Québec solidaire puts emphasis on day care spots and housing in its regional platform

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – The two Québec solidaire candidates in the Gaspé Peninsula, Catherine Cyr Wright in Bonaventure and Yv Bonnier-Viger in Gaspé, put emphasis on solving the shortage of day care places and housing, in the regional development platform presented on September 12 in Chandler.

This regional platform presents tailor-made proposals to meet the needs of people in the region, according to the candidates.

“We often have the impression that the decisions made in the National Assembly do not take into account the realities of the regions, particularly those of the Gaspé Peninsula. We know it: we lack services, we lack housing, we lack funding to operate a green shift. It is time for the people of the Gaspé Peninsula to be taken into account, and that is exactly the goal of our regional platform,” says Catherine Cyr Wright.

The shortage of childcare places and the housing crisis are detrimental to the economic and social development of Gaspé communities, they say.



Photo: G. Gagné

Québec solidaire leader Manon Massé and Bonaventure riding candidate Catherine Cyr Wright think that the shortage of day care places and housing are the main hurdles to the region's development.

“The housing shortage in the Gaspé Peninsula has serious consequences for the development of our communities. This summer, nurses who came to work in the region to take care of Gaspésians were forced to camp because they had not found accommodations. At Québec solidaire, we want to put an end to this type of situation, which is why our platform offers several commitments to tackle the housing crisis head-on and in a sustainable way,” adds Yv Bonnier Viger.

“The development of Airbnbs for tourists has unfortunately made a big impact on the availability of housing, and on its affordability. We have reached a point where we have homeless people in the region,” adds Mr. Cyr Wright, referring to the fact that some people sleep on friends' couches, in trailers or camping in cars between the end of the spring and the fall.

“We have also lost a fair number of day care workers over recent years. This factor doesn't help maintain a sufficient

number of day care places,” she points out, referring to the “negligence of the CAQ government in that regard.”

Québec solidaire co-leader Manon Massé, who came to Gaspé, Chandler and Carleton to promote the regional platform of the party, adds that Airbnb houses people for a handful of months, “but it subtracts from the market a high number of housing units for 12 months,” because of the revenues generated.

Québec solidaire is com-

mitting to offer an emergency infant benefit of \$870 per month for parents of children aged 18 months and under who do not have childcare spaces. They would also like to create micro-daycares and a new model of Centre de la petite enfance that adapts to small communities. They propose to create a rent register to put an end to abusive rent increases, as well as build 250 social housing units for the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands region during their first term. Québec solidaire also aims to provide municipalities and MRCs the means to apply regulations aimed at limiting short-term rental accommodation intended for tourists.

“I think that this regional platform demonstrates to the people of the Gaspé Peninsula who want a future where we take care of our people, our public services and our planet, that the Québec solidaire candidates in Gaspé and Bonaventure are ready to carry their voices and concerns to the National Assembly. At Québec solidaire, we suggest that you build together a resolutely inclusive, open and independentist social project,” concludes Manon Massé.

Vandalism of electoral signs

Nelson Sergerie
Local Journalism Initiative

GASPÉ - Electoral billboards of the candidates of the Coalition avenir Québec, the Conservative Party of Quebec, the Liberal Party and the Parti québécois in the riding of Gaspé were the target of vandalism twice on September 10 and 13.

The large format panels were torn from their anchorage to the ground at the intersection of the Mgr Ross Bridge in downtown Gaspé.

Only the billboards of Québec solidaire facing those of the other parties remained intact during the two incidents.

“We wonder because Québec solidaire has not been affected. Once is fine. A second time, we are seriously wondering. It would be important that, on the side of Québec solidaire, the organization comes out to tell us what is happening,” says the Parti Québécois delegate to the returning officer in the Gaspé riding, Mauril Minville,

who was busy reinstalling the panels for candidate Méganne Perry Mélançon when SPEC was on location on September 13.

“What the Parti Québécois is trying to put on the back of Québec solidaire is a bit twisted. It is disrespectful to other organizations. Me, I think it's a slippage and the PQ had to apologize because it's not a respectful attitude to other organizations,” replies the Solidaire candidate in Gaspé, Yv Bonnier Viger.

“It goes against our democratic morals and it is reprehensible,” says Dr. Bonnier Viger, who points out that his organization has also been the victim of vandalism during the campaign.

The two political parties filed a complaint with the Sûreté du Québec.

“The Sûreté du Québec arrested young people with signs when they committed the mischief. The police are aware,” Mr. Minville said.

“I asked the SQ to do its in-



On September 13, signs were once again vandalized near the Gaspé Bridge.

Photo: N. Sergerie

vestigation,” adds the Solidaire candidate.

The Sûreté du Québec is not commenting on the ongoing investigations, but confirms that several wrongdoings have been carried out across the province. The police force recalls that this is a criminal act punishable by imprisonment and invites witnesses of such acts to denounce them.

The first incident occurred

on September 10.

“We are in an election campaign. It's time to share our ideas. Everyone should be able to do it with respect. Attacking the placards of candidates, regardless of the political party, is not the right way to express yourself,” said CAQ candidate Stéphane Sainte-Croix after the first event.

“It is a lack of respect for democracy. Our teams are

working hard to put up these posters and we hope that we won't have to do it again before the end of the campaign,” says Ms. Perry Mélançon.

“I find it deplorable. The basis of everything is respect and, here, I believe that there is a serious lack of respect towards the candidates who have suffered vandalism,” explains the Conservative candidate Pier-Luc Bouchard.

Conservative Jean-Pierre Pigeon is surprised by Pierre Poilievre's strong victory

Nelson **Sergerie**

SAINTE-ANNE-DESMONTS - Conservative candidate in the last three federal elections in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands, Jean-Pierre Pigeon, is surprised at the extent of Pierre Poilievre's victory over Jean Charest in the race for the party leadership.

Mr. Poilievre won the race in the first round with 68% of the vote, compared to 16% for Mr. Charest.

"I would have thought that Mr. Poilievre would have won, but not to the extent that we saw on Saturday evening (September 10). The ball is in his court," comments Mr. Pigeon.

The president of the Conservative Association of the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands knew that the campaign would not be easy. In a consultation with its members at the start of the campaign, Mr. Pigeon calculated that the two candidates were neck and neck, but the



Photo: N. Sergerie

Jean-Pierre Pigeon could be a Conservative candidate in the next federal elections under Pierre Poilievre.

more the campaign progressed, the more Mr. Poilievre stood out, says Mr. Pigeon who has served in the party since Joe Clark in 1979. According to Mr. Pigeon, the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands gave its support to Pierre Poilievre.

Having been strongly supported by the libertarian right wing of his party, Mr. Pigeon now hopes that Mr. Poilievre will refocus his speech. "I am

a progressive. I dare to hope that he will come back to the

centre so that we can win. In Canada, to win, the leader must move closer to the centre-right. Canadians like it. Mr. Trudeau has won his last three elections like this. Mr. O'Toole tried," says Mr. Pigeon.

Following the departure of Stephen Harper, who was party leader from 2004 to 2015, the Conservative Party had two leaders who only passed through: Andrew Scheer (2017-2020) and Erin O'Toole (2020-2022).

"I dare to hope that he will be there longer than the last two leaders. I dare to hope that it will not last just a mandate, or a year or two. He has drive. All I want is for him to be a

good leader and Mr. Trudeau will have difficulty when Mr. Poilievre intervenes in the House of Commons," says Mr. Pigeon.

During the conversation, Mr. Pigeon points out that he was a candidate under Mr. Harper, Mr. Scheer and Mr. O'Toole. He does not close the door to serve under Mr. Poilievre.

"Right now, I'm thinking. I'm getting older, but once a Conservative, always a Conservative," says the president, who agrees with the choice of members.

Mr. Pigeon says there have never been so many Conservative members in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Is-

CAQ could take the Gaspé Peninsula

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - Gaspesian voters would have chosen the Coalition avenir Québec (CAQ) to represent them in the National Assembly if the elections had been held on September 15.

Following an update of data on September 15, the Quebec125.com polling website projected that the CAQ candidates for Bonaventure and Gaspé, Catherine Blouin and Stéphane Sainte-Croix would have been elected on that day. However, nothing is certain as there is a margin of error in polls and projections.

Projections for the Bonaventure riding are: CAQ's Catherine Blouin is credited with 29% of the votes, while Parti Québécois' Alexis Deschênes collects 28%. Québec solidaire comes third with 16%, one point ahead of the Liberals with 15% while the Conservative Party gets 9%. The margin of error is 7%. The riding is represented by former PQ Member of the National Assembly, Sylvain Roy, who announced his departure from political life in June.

Projections for the Gaspé riding are: Stéphane Sainte-Croix of the Coalition avenir Québec would collect 33% while the outgoing PQ MNA, Mégan Perry Mélançon, is credited with 28% of the votes. The Liberals of Michel Marin would receive 15%, followed by Yv Bonnier-Viger of Québec solidaire with 12% and Pier-Luc Bouchard of the Conservative Party would be last with 10%. The margin of error is 8%.

Advanced voting will take place on September 25 and 26. The general vote is October 3.

CAQ candidate Catherine Blouin wants to lengthen tourist season

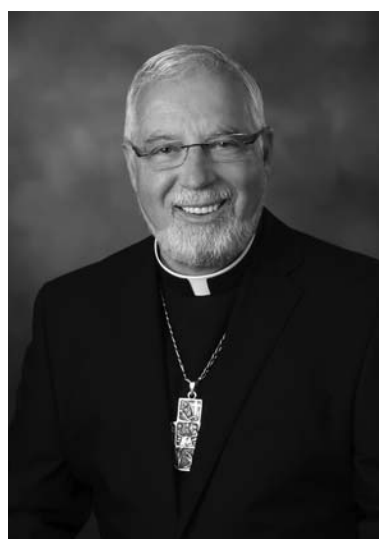
Gilles **Gagné**

MATAPEDIA - The candidate of the Coalition Avenir Québec for the riding of Bonaventure, Catherine Blouin, made a recent stop in Matapedia to talk about one of her campaign priorities - extending the tourist season in Gaspésie.

She says that tourism is one of the region's biggest economic sectors and she intends to support projects that will ensure the development of this industry. In working in concert with all the stakeholders involved, Ms. Blouin considers that promoting autumn and winter tourism would be beneficial to the economic development of the Gaspé Peninsula.

"Our summer tourist season is recognized around the world. Our territory is full of initiatives that people could benefit from all year round! I want Bonaventure to be able to exploit all this potential and benefit from the economic spinoffs, both for municipalities and businesses! With the CAQ, which has proven to be the party of the regions and the economy, we can count on the support of a future government to develop the Gaspé Peninsula!" she affirms.

Ms. Blouin will have the support of a possible CAQ government in the pursuit of her goal, which recently awarded a maximum grant of \$7.35 million to the Table of Prefects of the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands to improve the off-road vehicle regions. The government also handed out a financial support of \$320,000 to the Geoparc de Percé Solidarity Cooperative to support the construction of five chalets to be rented to visitors and a four-season restroom on the campsite it operates in the heart of the town.



Mgr Gaétan Proulx, O.S.M.
Crédit, Photographie Dachowski

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CIEU-FM debate yields good exchanges

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – On September 14, The CIEU-FM radio station team organized the only debate that will likely occur in the riding of Bonaventure during the current electoral campaign. Catherine Blouin of Coalition avenir Québec, Catherine Cyr Wright of Québec solidaire, Christian Cyr of the Liberal Party and Alexis Deschênes of the Parti Québécois participated in the debate.

François Therrien of the Conservative Party of Quebec was invited to the debate but he turned down the occasion to present his ideas. Seven themes were covered during the debate and all candidates had their strong moments.

One of the most interesting moments of the debate occurred when the candidates were offered the occasion to talk about a topic that is geographically located outside the region, but whose incidence represents a Quebec-wide talk



Catherine Cyr Wright of Québec solidaire, Alexis Deschênes of the Parti Québécois, Catherine Blouin of Coalition avenir Québec and Christian Cyr of the Liberal Party participated in the September 14 debate organized by Carleton's CIEU-FM.

Photo: G. Gagné

of the town, Quebec City's Third Link, part of the climate crisis theme. This tunnel project spearheaded by the Coalition avenir Québec (CAQ) generated many sparks.

Talking to CAQ's candidate Catherine Blouin, Alexis Deschênes, of the PQ, pointed out that "with the Third Link, the only thing you will do is

encourage people to use their car."

Often targeted because she represents the party that was in power over the last term, Catherine Blouin replied "the Quebec City and Lévis people are best placed to determine what they need."

Quickly, Québec solidaire's Catherine Cyr Wright

confronted Ms. Blouin by saying: "With our money!"

Catherine Blouin replied that "over \$800 million was invested in transport in the Gaspé Peninsula over the last four years. We are not paying this alone. It is a give and take. We will need money from outside to make the train reach Gaspé."

Catherine Cyr Wright remarked that the Third Link "will cost \$10 billion!" Again, Catherine Blouin pointed out that the government spent in excess of \$850 million in transport in the region over the last term.

Liberal Party's Christian Cyr joined the exchange by telling Catherine Blouin that the Third Link means "\$10 billion for a political caprice versus \$800 million for essential services." The crowd of close to 200 people applauded that last remark.

The SPEC has asked Catherine Blouin to submit a breakdown of the amount of \$850 million plus invested in the region over the last term. Ms. Blouin's team sent a series of governmental links as a reply. The newspaper will try to sort out the exact number for its next issue.

Animated exchange also characterized the themes of health care, housing, day care places, immigration and labour, among others.

GAS PRICES:

Daniel Côté suggests people should complain

Nelson Sergerie
Local Journalism Initiative

GASPÉ - The Mayor of Gaspé suggests that motorists complain to the Energy Board and the Competition Bureau as gas prices remain higher in the Gaspé Peninsula than elsewhere in Quebec.

In 2019, Daniel Côté initiated steps with the Competition Bureau which launched an investigation.

"The Competition Bureau of Canada has told us that they (at the Bureau) are still under investigation. It has been almost three years that the investigation is "in progress". We have no news and when we relaunch, we are always told that they are under investigation," explains the mayor.

"What we see is that there is always a discrepancy between the prices at the pump and those told to us by the Energy Board. I say this out of respect for our retailers. I don't think they are filling their pockets. I think there is a price dictate that comes from above. I guess so. I am not able to demonstrate it. It is up to the Competition Bureau to prove it," says Daniel Côté.

"When there was a form of monopoly that was disman-

bled in Central Quebec, it took years for the Competition Bureau to establish the evidence and dismantle it. I am not saying that there is a cartel in the Gaspésie. What everyone finds suspicious is that all the retailers change the prices at the same time and it is always more expensive than the price recommended by the Energy Board, with rare exceptions," says the mayor.

Citizens send him prices in other regions of Quebec, in particular in the Magdalen Islands, which recently posted lower prices than in the Gaspé Peninsula. "Which makes no sense given the transportation costs and the geographic distance," says Mr. Côté.

"What more is there to do? Should other people file petitions with the Energy Board and the Competition Bureau? I have come a long way with the support of several municipalities in the Gaspé," suggests the mayor.

As soon as messages circulate on the price of gasoline in the Gaspé Peninsula, the internet ignites while Gaspésians complain each time about the high prices.

Moreover, the region has once again posted the highest average retail gasoline margin in the province in the past

year, at 15.8 cents per litre, according to CAA-Quebec. CAA-Quebec avoids using the word 'collusion', but no longer hesitates to describe the prices displayed by retailers as exaggerated when the organization was called upon to comment on the matter by Quebecor.

In August, Gaspesian retailers demanded an average of 6 cents more than the data from the Energy Board.

In July, the Regroupement des MRC of the Gaspé Peninsula had already expressed concern about the high gas prices in the region.

In 2019, the Town of Gaspé asked the Competition Bureau to investigate the price in the Gaspé Peninsula after noting between June 3 and August 26 an average margin between 8.3 and 18.5 cents per litre higher than the estimated minimum price by

the Energy Board.

At the beginning of 2020, the Energy Board had established that Gaspesian retailers had accumulated a profit margin twice as large as the Quebec average in 2019.

In its report, the board even indicated that in five years, the Gaspé Peninsula was, in 19% of cases, the region with the highest price in Quebec. For 2019, the percentage increased to 34%.



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Photographer captures stunning photos of the Northern Lights

Diane Skinner

You may have seen some exquisite photos of the Northern Lights posted widely on Facebook in the past week. Photographer Mike MacLellan generously shares some information with SPEC about how he captured the unique shots he has taken on the Gaspé.

Mike has roughly fifteen years of experience with photography but has never taken a course. He tells SPEC, “I have never taken any courses. I learned everything over time on my own. I have had contracts and leases for photos in previous years.”



Mike MacLellan is a self-taught photographer who relocated to the Gaspé two years ago. He reflects, “It was probably one of the best things I’ve ever done in my life.”

His shots of the Northern Lights were taken with a Nikon D5500. He suggests that a Dslr or mirrorless camera and even some cellphones can capture the aurora. He is a fan of Nikon cameras and he plans to upgrade his camera body in January. Mike

states, “The lens you use and how much light it can allow in is crucial as well. I shoot auroras and other night sky subjects using Sigma 18-35mm f1.8 lens. It’s a nice wide angle so you get a lot of your subject in the frame and the aperture (amount of light let in) can be quite wide! With Auroras... long exposures are needed. I generally shoot between 5 to 30 seconds depending on the moonlight, brightness of the foreground, and brightness of the aurora!”

He is most interested in shooting Northern Lights and storms. He also enjoys photographing landscapes and wildlife. He says, “The sky is nature’s painting... and you choose how to capture it!” He is a semi-professional photographer and has sold his work to many clients, including contracts and leases on photos with local businesses.

Born and raised in Nova Scotia, Mike then lived in New Brunswick for 13 years before relocating to the Gaspé two years ago. He extols the beauty of the Gaspé Peninsula which offers, “Amazing skies, like many places in the world... but there is a diverse amount of terrain! Mountains, rivers, lakes, beaches, farmland, waterfalls... the list goes on! Moving to the Gaspésie was probably one of the best things I’ve ever done in my life!”

Mike is grateful for the many people who have seen and liked his photos on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. He has received considerable attention for his photos of the beautiful auroras over the recent long weekend. For those who love to view the Northern Lights, Mike informs us that in 2025 we will see maximum peaks, so expect to see more auroras and possibly even bigger shows.

If you want to see more of Mike MacLellan’s work, go to Peak to Sail Photography on the platforms mentioned to see more of his amazing photos.



PEAK TO SAIL PHOTOGRAPHY

Local photographer Mike MacLellan took this stunningly beautiful shot in New Carlisle at 1:30 a.m. on Saturday, September 3, 2022, of the Billingsley family’s ancestral home.

Northern Lights - Nature’s light show

Diane Skinner

The Northern Lights appear to be magical but can be explained by science. The Northern Lights also called the aurora borealis appear in our region most often in September. Aurora borealis translates as “light of dawn.” This year was not a disappointment. For those who kept watch on the night skies on the Gaspé recently, they were rewarded handsomely. The vibrant colours dancing across the sky were spectacularly beautiful. In the southern hemisphere, the lights are called the aurora australis.

The Northern Lights appear when tiny particles from the sun hit the earth’s atmosphere. These particles provide energy to atoms and molecules in gases in our upper atmosphere. The atoms and molecules can-

not hold their energy and quickly give off that energy as the colours of the aurora borealis. The atmosphere is like a giant blanket of gas that surrounds our planet. It protects us from harmful radiation from the sun.

Different particles in our atmosphere make different colours that we see in the Northern Lights. Oxygen produces red and green light. Nitrogen makes blue light. Because our eyes distinguish green the best, we see green as the brightest when viewing the Northern Lights.

It is easier to spot the auroras when it is very dark and away from cities which produce so much light. The Lights are most commonly visible between 60 and 75 degrees latitude and in northern Canada, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Alaska, Iceland and Russia.

The Northern Lights are most visible around the North and South Pole. This is due to the tilt of the earth’s axis.

Auroras can occur year-round, but are most often too weak to see. This is why they are seldom observed from May to July, when it is sunnier. The strongest lights tend to appear between 9 p.m. and 2 a.m. By 4 a.m. there is normally too much daylight to see the aurora.

If you spot the Northern Lights, you will see that they appear to be “dancing.” At times these displays are subtle but, at others, they ripple and flow with colours on full display. It is almost magical to observe and how would our ancestors have felt hundreds of years ago when they did not know the scientific explanation of this beautiful phenomenon?



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Boutique volunteers for 2022: Jack McInnis, Ethel Meredith, Madge McInnis, Blanche Fallow, Sharon Leggo, Myrna McCormick, Sharon Mercier, Gail Martin-Harrison, Debbie McInnis Duthie, Sheila Starrak and Joyce Munro. Missing from the photo: Alice Dell and Cynthia Dow.

Photo: C. Dow

La Boutique “has seen worse” seasons

Cynthia Dow

Sales at the handicraft boutique in New Richmond started off slowly this June, and the season never really took off. Treasurer Debbie McInnis Duthie told SPEC that, although the final numbers are not yet tabulated, La Boutique brought in \$1,000 less in sales compared with last year. The nonprofit was also down considerably in terms of donations, receiving \$2,000 less. “It was not a great season, but we have seen worse,” Mrs Duthie said. She is hopeful, once the final financial statement has been made, that the organization will have enough to cover its expenses.

On closing day, Saturday, September 10, the last event was held as volunteers gathered for the draw for a lovely quilt made by Madge McInnis. The winning ticket was drawn by president and founding member Blanche Fallow, and the lucky winner was Stacey Mooy of Whitby, Ontario. Started in the 1970s, the nonprofit shop provides a place for local artisans, painters, knitters, sewers, weavers and cooks to sell their goods to the general public. This year more than 30 local producers sold their wares at this little log cabin in downtown New Richmond.



Photo: G. Gagné

Gaspé's Mgr Ross seniors residence is one place where newly-trained health care workers are employed.

Difficult to retain beneficiary attendants

Nelson Sergerie, LJI

PASPÉBIAC - The retention of beneficiary attendants trained during the pandemic is lower at the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) than the provincial average.

According to data provided by the CISSS, of the 64 graduates of the first three month training offered in June 2020, 31 were still employed by the network as of September 7.

For the second cohort launched in June 2021, 11 of the 13 registrants are still working at the CISSS.

Thus, of the 77 who completed their training, 42 are still employed by the CISSS.

The retention rate of 56% is lower than the provincial average of 81%. On the other hand, some have remained employed elsewhere in the province, while others have found that this work was not for them.

A three month training program in Grande-Rivière and a nine month program in Carleton-sur-Mer and Gaspé will be launched this fall.

With the future Rivière-au-Renard Seniors' House, which will need approximately 30 workers, students in Gaspé will be eligible for a \$9,210 scholarship if they work at the CISSS for one year after the course.

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 **Cégep de la Gaspésie
et des Îles**

Gaspé Kidney Walk raises over \$34,000

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - The Kidney Walk held on September 10 in Gaspé has so far raised over \$34,000.

The honorary president of the fifth edition and ardent activist for the development of the hemodialysis service in the Gaspé Peninsula, Jean Lapointe, is satisfied with the amount raised so far. Donations will be accepted until December 31. Nearly 200 people took part in the march.

"It went well. The Kidney Walk Committee is proud of the result," says Mr. Lapointe, who points out that the funds are used for research. A recovery fund is also in place for people who need a financial boost.

The battle to improve hemodialysis services in the Gaspé Peninsula continues. According to Mr. Lapointe, seven people are waiting to receive care in the Gaspé

Peninsula, a figure confirmed by the Integrated Health and Social Services Centre of the Gaspé Peninsula.

"I find that the CISSS always waits until the last minute to move forward. They are still waiting for patients to be in trouble to do something," says Mr. Lapointe.

In August, the CISSS launched the process to redevelop the hemodialysis room at the Gaspé hospital in the spaces left vacant by the move of the emergency department to its new premises in July 2021.

The area of the unit will increase from 65 square metres to 584 square metres, a project that was estimated in March at \$2 million. The seating capacity will increase from three to four clients at a time and the space is to be designed to accommodate up to six treatment seats by December 2023. "I'm satisfied, but we've been in a closet for



Photo: Courtesy of the Kidney Walk

The \$34,000 raised during the walk was presented on September 10 in Gaspé

five years. It's time," Mr. Lapointe does not hesitate to say.

The CISSS also wants to redevelop the hemodialysis department at Maria Hospital. The organization has just launched preliminary studies in order to set up a project that will be submitted to the

Ministry of Health for approval.

Currently, the region has six hemodialysis chairs in both Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and Chandler and three in both Gaspé and Maria for a total of 18. Mr. Lapointe calls for a decentralized service.

"The Rimouski nephrolo-

gists are down to four. They are able to go around the Gaspé at least once a month to see patients rather than patients going to Rimouski. It's the least that can be done," says Mr. Lapointe.

Mr. Lapointe will not give up the fight until he obtains complete satisfaction.

Fabien Sinnett honoured for the Birthplace of Canada site

Nelson **Sergerie**

GASPÉ - A tribute was paid on September 10 to the founding president of the Corporation Gaspé. The Birthplace of Canada site was rebuilt in 2014 thanks to the tenacity of Fabien Sinnett.

The corporation took advantage of its 20th anniversary to pay tribute to the man who had long dreamed of rebuilding the site where he lived for many years, which was demolished in the 1970s to make way for a shopping centre and a boulevard.

The objective behind the reconstruction of the site was to preserve and showcase the rich history of Gaspé and provide a gathering place on the downtown waterfront.

Construction of the Pointe O'Hara historic site began in the summer of 2012 and was carried out in two phases.

The first involved the construction of the Three Nations wharf and the construction of five interpretation buildings.

The second included the relocation of the road, the relocation of the Horatio LeBouthillier House, the construction of the naval base as well as the construction of the Mi'gmaq longhouse.

The six buildings were built according to information



Photo: Mathieu L'Heureux-Roy

Mr. Sinnett, Alexandre Boulay, Laurie Denis and Daniel Côté mounting the tribute plaque to the founder of the Corporation Gaspé, Birthplace of Canada, Fabien Sinnett.

available on the original buildings and with materials from the time. It cost about \$17 million.

The site was inaugurated on July 24, 2016, 482 years after the arrival of Jacques Cartier in Gaspé.

In addition to the usual speeches, an honorary plaque to highlight the contribution of Mr. Sinnett in the creation of this site was unveiled and is located at the entrance to the site.

On the plaque, we can read that the now 90-year-old founding president is the main craftsman who led to the construction of this historic site.

Mr. Sinnett dreamed for a long time of its reconstruction and with his audacity, his insight and his tenacity, he realized his dream for the benefit of people from here and elsewhere and the duty of memory.

The site tells the story of Gaspé at different times.

The place has also become a cultural and lively gathering place for and by the community with various activities during the summer period.

The outdoors also occupies a place this year with the rental of various boats to navigate the water in the harbor of the York River and Gaspé Bay.

Community organizations share their priorities

Nelson **Sergerie**
Local Journalism Initiative

GASPÉ - On September 13, the Liberal Party, Quebec Solidaire and Parti québécois candidates from the Gaspé riding took part in a meeting with the Côte-de-Gaspé community organizations.

Issues such as poverty, mental health and housing were addressed by the group of community organizations.

"We wanted to know the broad social issues that affect the population and the groups with which the organizations work," explains the head of the Table of Community Organizations, Gabrielle Neveu, who initiated the meeting.

"The questions aimed to see if the parties are committed to the social safety net. There were some concrete

commitments, but the candidates expressed great principles," declared Ms. Neveu who notes that the discussion was adapted to the circumstances.

The absence of Conservative candidate Pier-Luc Bouchard and CAQ candidate Stéphane Sainte-Croix was a disappointment. "For sure we would have found the comparison between the different ideas interesting. The organizations were there to make their concerns heard with a view to popular education. But three out of five in a very short electoral context, it was satisfactory," says Ms. Neveu.

"But it would have been nice to have the CAQ candidate to defend his party's record, which was criticized by the other candidates present," Ms. Neveu concludes.

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CHANDLER MUNICIPAL UPDATE: Vandalism costs Chandler \$40,000

Nelson **Sergerie**

CHANDLER - The Town of Chandler is upset with having had to spend about \$40,000 due to a wave of vandalism that hit the Town.

Traffic signs portraying a child were installed in the middle of the road to encourage motorists to slow down. These were the targets of malicious people.

The bill for the repair of these panels alone amounts to \$8,000 at the rate of \$800 per sign. Ten were damaged.

Pro-mayor Bruno-Pierre Godbout is angered by the issue and shocked that people can destroy signs that look like children.

"We have \$40,000 worth of vandalism. When doing the municipal budget, \$40,000 is equivalent to a 1 cent increase in the tax bill. It is the citizens who pay at the end of the day. I find it deplorable," adds Mr. Godbout.

Earlier this summer, the Circuit des bâtisseurs and the town hall suffered damage, as did the Rona stage.

In June, the mayor, Gilles Daraïche, noted that in recent years, the Chandler Marina has been targeted by young people who caused significant damage.



Photo: Town of Chandler

This sign valued at \$800 is one of vandalized signs.

Mayor Louise Langlois saga

Invoices are postponed in the saga of the former mayor Louise Langlois. For now, the town council refuses to pay a new bill of \$10,631 from her lawyer.

The costs are related to

legal preparation. The Town is claiming the costs related to her defence before the Municipal Commission and the disputes that ensued.

"We receive modified invoices, without details of the dates. It's black all around. The council requested verification from our prosecutor.

We are going to check with the Quebec Bar to find out if it is normal to receive this kind of invoice," says Mr. Godbout, who adds that the Town's lawyers charged half the amount for the preparation of the case which should be heard in January.

"There are discussions behind the scenes, but we are starting to find that the amounts are high," adds the elected official. Before this new invoice, the sum of this saga totaled \$308,190.

Sale of the marina building

Chandler is selling the building near the marina in an effort to revitalize this area.

According to the pro-mayor, Bruno-Pierre Godbout, the Town does not have the means to go ahead and prefers to sell the building to a private person. Promoters have already come forward for the building advertised at \$675,000.

The Town has set certain conditions to carry out a possible transaction. "If we look at the environment of this sector, there is a beach and boats that go there. It is certain that we do not want a condo tower. We are really

aiming for a recreational tourism project as we see elsewhere in other municipalities such as a distillery, a microbrewery with catering. This is what we are aiming for," says the pro-mayor.

Currently, the building is occupied by a restaurant, the management of the marina and public spaces.

The purchase of a ladder truck

Chandler will still go ahead with the purchase of a ladder truck for the fire department, even though the bill is over budget. The council had set aside \$450,000 for the acquisition and the only bid received was \$465,000.

The Town validated with a consultant whether the offer was reasonable. "Despite the rising costs, we will proceed. We tried to negotiate and there was no way to do it with the only bidder. We were at midnight minus one: we bought it or we refused it," says Mr. Godbout.

The new vehicle will be available in three months. However, the Town obtained a rental truck for free until the arrival of the new one. With this savings of \$15,000, the budget planned for the purchase will be respected.

Alexis Deschênes aims to improve health services in Avignon West

Gilles **Gagné**

MATAPEDIA - In order to meet the needs of citizens in the western part of the MRC of Avignon, the candidate of the Parti Québécois in Bonaventure, Alexis Deschênes, proposes to improve the services in the CLSCs of Matapedia and Pointe-à-la-Croix so that they are open 12 hours a day for minor emergencies. He shared his health proposals during a September 12 press briefing in front of the Matapedia CLSC. He was accompanied by Jean-Paul Landry, a resident of St-André-de-Restigouche, who testified to the poor services he received when he had to go to Campbellton Hospital.

"Currently, between 2,000 and 3,000 people do not have a family doctor in the Bay of Chaleur and must go to the emergency room to have access to a doctor. The result is that the hospital emergency

rooms are overflowing while 60% of visits are for minor emergencies. The citizens located from Pointe-à-la-Croix to the Plateaux of Matapedia must go to the emergency room of Campbellton Hospital. However, I received many testimonies from citizens of the sector in the last year who say they have been poorly served. It is time to review service delivery in the sector," says Mr. Deschênes.

"After suffering a heart attack this year, I had to wait more than an hour and a half in an ambulance before obtaining treatment from the medical team at the Campbellton Hospital," says Jean-Paul Landry.

Alexis Deschênes therefore proposes to improve services in CLSCs and to renegotiate the agreement with New Brunswick. Quebec now pays to this province approximately \$10 million per year.

"We need to get more for our money. We are proposing to in-

crease funding for CLSCs by \$500 million per year and to rely on specialized nurse practitioners and clinicians to improve access to primary care. The nurse will be responsible for directing the patient to the correct healthcare professional. The patient can go without an appointment to the CLSC, which will be open twelve hours a day," he says.

As for service delivery, a Parti Québécois government will adjust CLSCs' management. A board of directors made up of users will be able to better identify the needs and services required.

"We want to decentralize decision making and bring the health system closer to the citizens," explains Mr. Deschênes.

He favours a working schedule set up by the nurses in order to avoid compulsory overtime. The model was implemented in the Charlevoix area with great results.

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The Queen, her Coronation and the Canadian contingent

Diane Skinner

NEW CARLISLE: The Delaney family of New Carlisle has a proud tradition of military service. Just this week some amazing photos of Private Leonard Delaney were shared with SPEC by his son Jim and Aunt Hazel and they are very timely.

Leonard Delaney was part of the Canadian contingent that was sent to London to be part of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation. In 1953 in London, England, a young man from the Gaspé Peninsula marched with other members of the Canadian Forces in the Queen's Coronation Procession

Private Delaney (who would later become Sergeant Delaney) was born in New Carlisle in 1930 and served his country. Two of his proudest moments in his military life were being part of the young Queen's coronation and meeting the Queen at an official function again in Ottawa in 2010!

He was one of a family of 11 children, seven boys and four girls. All seven of the

brothers were veterans of the Canadian military and one of the sisters. His brother, Hudson Delaney, lived in New Carlisle until his passing about ten years ago. One brother, Morris, was killed in Hong Kong. Their mother was chosen more than once to be the Silver Cross Mother on Remembrance Day ceremonies. A Silver Cross Mother is chosen each year to lay a wreath on behalf of all mothers who have lost children in the service of their country. Leonard passed away in 2018 and had been married for 56 years to his wife, Ann. He met her while in England at a pub owned by Ann's uncle. At the time Leonard was a member of the Royal Canadian Regiment that had been serving in Germany.

SPEC spoke with Leonard's widow, Ann, and she proudly recounted some wonderful memories of Leonard meeting the Queen. In 1953 he was a member of the Canadian contingent that was part of the Queen's Coronation. The next day, the newly crowned monarch personally pinned a



Photos: Delaney Family

Leonard Delaney had another opportunity to meet Queen Elizabeth in 2010, when he was 80 years of age and wearing the very same "Dress Blues" he wore in 1953!

medal on every member of the Canadian soldiers who were at her coronation.

Mr. Delaney met the Queen in 2010 and his wife Ann accompanied him that day and took photos. Remarkably, Private Delaney wore the same "Dress Blues" he had worn all those years before!

Ann says that both she and her husband were great supporters of the monarchy and consider themselves 'Royalists.' She adds that he remained a fit and active gentleman playing golf and walking regularly right up until he passed away in 2018.

The President of the New Carlisle Legion, Tammy Chatterton, shared some photos of the two Delaney brothers (Leonard and Hudson) that are displayed in the Legion. Other veterans of this remarkable family can be viewed there. The room is respectfully maintained by the Legion and photos are sometimes shared on the Legion's Facebook page. We shall not forget.

A young man from New Carlisle, Leonard Delaney, met Queen Elizabeth at her corona-

tion in England in 1953 and that memory is still proudly shared by his widow Ann and his son Jim as well as other family members. He is not forgotten. The grace and service

of that young Queen are remarkable. Leonard Delaney got to witness that first-hand. She met those men from Canada the next day to thank each of them personally for their service.



Pictured above is Leonard Delaney in 1953 keeping guard outside Buckingham Palace. He was selected to be part of the Canadian contingent who participated in the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. A little moment in history.



Private Delaney was a member of Canadian Forces that were part of the Queen's coronation procession in 1953. (Leonard in back row, right)



JOB OFFER

Family Ties is searching for a Coordinator to implement a Canadian Heritage Cultural Project entitled "Back to Nature: Hunting and Fishing in the Gaspé Through Stories, Arts and Crafts"

The responsibility of the coordinator is to increase the Official Language Minority Communities pride and sense of belonging in their community by inspiring English speakers of different ages from New Carlisle and surrounding area to explore the folklore centred around hunting and fishing and give the Official Language Minority Communities skills to express their experiences through a range of cultural activities.

Qualifications:

- Strong communication skills: both oral and written
- Excellent writing and grammar skills required
- Dynamic, self-motivated, organized, self-reliant
- Must have a valid driver's license and have own means of transportation
- Computer skills necessary including the ability to create publications
- Flexible hours – Evening and weekend work may be required
- Bilingualism will be considered an asset
- Successful applicants will be required to pass a police screening

Education / Work Experience

- Post-secondary education required
- Relevant work experience will be taken into consideration

Salary and Work Period:

- The salary of the coordinator is \$20 per hour
- 28 hours of work per week
- The duration of the work is from October 3rd, 2022 until August 25th, 2023

We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Please forward resumes to Heather MacWhirter at familyties@telus.net no later than September 26th, 2022.

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



Tradition isn't what it used to be

The British monarchy is steeped in tradition and we have witnessed a great deal of that tradition over the past few weeks as the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II unfolded. We have witnessed Britain's new monarch, King Charles III, with all the pomp and circumstance that surrounds the investiture of the new king.

Traditions are those customs and beliefs that are passed on from one generation to the next and can be formal (like installing a new King) or informal (putting up the Christmas tree on December 1 every year). To be termed a tradition, the custom must have existed for a long time.

Are traditions important? Should we follow traditions and, if so, why?

How we celebrate holidays is most likely akin to the way our family did when we were children. Where did our parents' traditions come from - their parents before them, and so on? The details may differ slightly but chances are many family traditions have been passed from one generation to the next.

My gaspesian mother used to tell us stories about her Christmases as a young child when there was not a lot of money and few gifts. But many of her early traditions we have kept, but altered them slightly. We continue to eat turkey and other traditional family foods, such as mashed potatoes, gravy, turnips and carrots mashed together. My mom received an orange in her Christmas stocking and we always served a fruit platter with loads of citrus choices. We make our stuffing the age-old way - with the addition of lots of winter savory grown right on the Gaspé Peninsula. Christmas is a time when traditions connect us to our ancestors.

Tradition is our culture. Tell me your family traditions and I will know a bit about who you are and where you came from. I have Scottish heritage and we always make traditional Empire biscuits, those delectable double shortbread cookies sandwiched together with a spoonful of strawberry jam, iced with thin vanilla icing and topped with a maraschino cherry. Wouldn't be Christmas without them!

Traditions are not just about Christmas and all are critically important. They are not just what we do, but who we are and who we were. These ways of celebrating things, both big and small, give us a sense of belonging and comfort. It is the glue that holds a family and even a culture together.

Doing things in the same way provides a blueprint for life. These ways of doing things provide a sense of belonging. Research shows that children who know about their family's heritage and customs feel that they belong. Regular family Sunday suppers tell children that family is important.

Having family rituals shapes who we are. The rituals were part of our childhood and we pass that on to our children and grandchildren. It is part of the circle of life.

We all have a personal history and are a part of a larger family history. It is our identity. It brings a sense of security.

The traditions do not stay exactly the same ("Tradition isn't what it used to be") but changes over time and with the times but they still connect us to those who have gone before us, even in a modified form, and that is important.

Why do we say...

by Gary Briand

About three years ago, Mrs. White, the wife of a deceased former childhood playmate of mine, phoned to ask if I would explain "... be careful with the water or you'll drown the miller..."

I must apologize for the delay in answering the lady's request. It took me three connections with Scotland to solve the enigma. Complicating things, too, were my move to Pointe Claire and declining health.

The woman's query arose from her frequent recollection of a phrase often heard by young girls who were helping their mothers or grandmother prepare to bake bread.

When it would come time to pour water on the mixture, the older woman would caution the younger helpers to be cautious with the amount of water poured over the ingredients, for too liberal an amount would "drown the miller."

I found the expression common in Wakeham and York and even Sandy Beach. It was unknown in Douglstown and Barachois. I spoke with a researcher at York University who informed me that the expression was common in rural Ontario. He put me in touch with a gentleman at the university of Glasgow in Scotland who explained the following:

In fifteenth century Scotland scones and bread were often mixed at a common grist mill driven by a wheel with paddles. The miller took an integral part in the process, assuring that water was not wasted. His standing among the bread mixers gave rise to the admonition "... not to drown the miller."

We do know that the majority of Wolfe's army came from Scotland and many settled at Sunny Bank in 1761. Could it be that the expression still heard in Gaspé originates from them? We think so.

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20
This should be a very interesting week, Aries. Money matters will be at the heart of it. Figure out what you want to do with the extra cash that you have accumulated.

TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21
Treat everyone with a bit of caution, Taurus. Some person in your circle may need a little extra support this week, and your calm and even approach could be just what's needed.

GEMINI - May 22/Jun 21
Gemini, this week has the potential for a few bumps in the road that could be avoided if you simply slow down a bit. Think things through or you could trip yourself up.

CANCER - Jun 22/Jul 22
An exciting few days lie ahead, Cancer. You may be tempted to spend much more than you usually would. Have fun, but keep track of your finances.

LEO - Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, even if you have plans to hang out with friends, something at home could crop up that will need your immediate attention. Be flexible and at the ready.



VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, find balance where you feel out of sync. Maybe you have been having relationship woes or seem out of touch with family. Make an effort to respond to these feelings.

LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, even if your best plans do not work out, that doesn't mean you have to scrap everything and sulk. Make the most of what worked and build on that.

SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22
Scorpio, you may find yourself in a situation that tests your levelheadedness in a big way this week. It could throw off your equilibrium when your plans go awry.

SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, focus on communication in the days to come. The ability to communicate effectively will be a true asset as you work more with others.

CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20
A problem that arises may initially seem insurmount-

able, Capricorn. But you're more than capable of overcoming this obstacle. Look to Pisces for help.

AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18
Are you ready to take action and get to work, Aquarius? An unexpected home project has fallen into your lap, and it will take some effort to get it all done.

PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20
You could wind up learning something simply by letting the wind take you where it will, Pisces. Firm plans are unnecessary this week.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- OCTOBER 23
Ryan Reynolds, Actor (46)
- OCTOBER 24
Wayne Rooney, Manager (37)
- OCTOBER 25
Nancy Cartwright, Actress (65)
- OCTOBER 26
Seth MacFarlane, Actor (49)
- OCTOBER 27
Lonzo Ball, Athlete (25)
- OCTOBER 28
Brad Mondo, Stylist (28)
- OCTOBER 29
Winona Ryder, Actress (51)

Guess Who?

I am an actress and talk show host born in New Jersey on October 2, 1970. I was a cheerleader and ballet dancer during high school. I spent 12 years on an ABC soap opera before landing a gig as a morning talk show host.

Answer: Kelly Ripa

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to surfing.

L B S A E R R

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Answer: Barrel

Announcements



In Memory



MACKENZIE: Warren W.J.
 May 3, 1931 - September 25, 2019.
We cherish the memories. Loved forever.
 Wife Edith and son Warren.

SIMON: Courtney

In loving memory of dear father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather who passed away September 21, 2002.
*As time unfolds another year,
 Silent thoughts of times together,
 Hold memories that will last forever.*
 Forever in our hearts and sadly missed by Eleanor, Clayton, Garfield, Sandra, Carolyn, Donald, Frank and families.

Happy 60th Wedding Anniversary Lowell and Joyce Watt!



August 11, 1962
 60 years together, seems like yesterday.
 Love Always,
*Randall (Amanda), Allan (Sandie), Gary (Aya),
 Linda (Marc-André), Brent (Mélanie), Kent
 (Sylvie), Kirk (Adelle), 18 grandchildren and
 two great-granchildren.*

Announcements

Deadline: Wednesday at 4 p.m. to appear in following week's issue.

Obituary/ Wedding: \$40 (picture +\$5) for up to 300 words. If it is more we will give you a quote.
All other announcements: \$30 (picture +\$5) for up to 20 lines. If it is more we will give you a quote.

Items must be typed and can be submitted by mail or online.

**The New Carlisle
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COAST ROUND-UP

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NEW CARLISLE:

Bible Chapel Meetings

Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Breaking of Bread for believers. Drive-In Gospel Meetings will be held at Fair Haven Bible Camp in New Carlisle Sundays at 2 p.m. 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. For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

NEW CARLISLE:

LLB Membership

Please note that member-

ship renewals for the Linda LeMore-Brown Foundation will start on October 15, 2022 for the 2023 year. You can renew your membership by sending \$20 cash, e-transfer or cheque by mail to: C.P. 219, 168 Gérard D. Levesque, QC G0C 1Z0 or in-person on Tuesdays or Fridays between 9 and 11 a.m. For more information, please call 418-752-7223. Thank you.

NEW CARLISLE:

**Royal Canadian
 Legion Branch #64**

Please be advised that Legion memberships are available for \$45. Returning and new members welcome.
Saturdays: Open at 1 p.m. Everyone welcome.
September 23: Darts beginning at 7:30 p.m. Everyone welcome.
September 27: Special meeting concerning Legion by-laws beginning at 7 p.m.
October 4: General meeting at 7 p.m. at 1 Mount Sorrel, New Carlisle.
October 7: Music with

Tammy Adams beginning at 8:30 p.m.

October 29: Halloween dance beginning at 9 p.m.

NEW CARLISLE:

**St. Andrew's
 Anglican Church**

Due to Covid-19, St. Andrew's Anglican Church, New Carlisle is holding a Harvest Supper Fundraiser Campaign for 2022. Please bring your donations to St. Andrew's Sunday Church Service in an envelope with your name (and church envelope number if applicable) marked "Harvest Supper Donation". You can also give your donations to Norma Chedore (418-752-6214) or Chris Fraser-Ward (418-752-6837). Thank you in advance for your continued support.

NEW CARLISLE:

**Heritage New Carlisle
 Annual AGM**

Heritage New Carlisle will hold its Annual General Meeting on **Wednesday, September 28**, at 7 p.m.,

at the New Carlisle Town Hall, 138, Boulevard Gérard-D. Levesque, New Carlisle. The Canada Economic development for Quebec Regions (CED) investment will be discussed. HNC has received money under the Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF). The goal of this project is to upgrade the Kempffer Cultural and Interpretation Centre, which will include a complete colour change for the Kempffer building. Refreshments will be served. Come and hear all about it!

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

50 Plus Club

October 7-9: Fall Fest.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

**Book Room
 Reopens**

The book room will be re-open every Wednesday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. beginning **October 5**. Anyone who needs assistance can contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

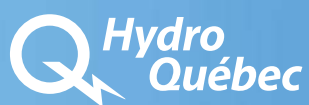
ROTARY CLUB WINNERS:

The winners for the week of September 4 are: Danielle Bourdages, Roland Cloutier, Roxane Leblanc, Sarto Perron, Sylvie Gallien, Doris Mercier and Jonathan Fyfe.

**UNITED CHURCH
 NEW RICHMOND
 Sunday, September 25
 10 a.m. Service**

**UNITED CHURCH
 HOPE TOWN
 Sunday, September 25
 No Service**

**ANGLICAN
 CHURCH
 OF CANADA
 Sunday, September 25
 NEW CARLISLE
 11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 HOPE TOWN
 9 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 SHIGAWAKE
 10 a.m. Morning Prayer**



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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7

5:30 p.m.	Grosse Isle	MRC Avignon Stage	Free
8 p.m.	Le Tranino with Yaëlle Azoulay : call. Traditional dance evening	Congress Center	Stand \$10 / Sit \$15
11 p.m.	Dominique Dupuis	Microbrewery Le Naufrageur	\$15

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8

10 – 5 p.m.	Public market	Cégep Court	\$3 (admission fee to access the site)
12 p.m.	Various shows MRC Avignon Stage, activities for children held by Satourne Circus School	Cégep Court	\$3 (admission fee to access the site)
1 p.m.	Fernand Alain	Studio at the Quai des arts	\$22
8 p.m.	Cédric Dind-Lavoie and Le Vent du Nord	Studio at the Quai des arts	\$35
10:30 p.m.	Les Grands Hurleurs with Nicolas Pellerin	MRC Avignon Stage	\$15

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9

10 – 5 p.m.	Public market	Cégep Court	\$3 (admission fee to access the site)
12 p.m.	Various shows MRC Avignon Stage, activities for children held by Satourne Circus School	Cégep Court	\$3 (admission fee to access the site)
1 p.m.	Folkloric gathering	Studio at the Quai des arts	\$10
7 p.m.	Porteurs de pas	Studio at the Quai des arts	\$25
9 p.m.	Les Veillées de La Virée Trad with the artists participating in this 21th edition. Jam Session. Welcome to all trad musicians	MRC Avignon Stage	Free

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