

## Golf Fort-Prével will submit its business plan to Quebec to renovate the infrastructure

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - The directors of the Fort-Prével Golf Club are taking up the torch again and will try to convince the Quebec government to help them upgrade the facilities left in poor condition by Sépaq in 2015.

The pandemic slowed down the work of convincing Quebec of the merits of its development plan.

The directors have relaunched a committee to upgrade the business plan to be presented to government authorities and have already obtained the support of the towns of Gaspé and Percé as well as the MRCs of Côte-de-Gaspé and Rocher-Percé.

The business plan adopted at a special general meeting last November and presented to the municipal councils and the MRCs still includes two phases.

The first phase is an upgrade of the golf clubhouse, and inn.

Since 2015, the organization has still carried out urgent work to maintain the integrity



Photo: Prevel

*The reception of the Fort-Prével lodging.*

of the infrastructure pending major work.

This component is now estimated at \$2.24 million, considering adjustments needed due to inflation in construction materials.

Among the urgent work done while waiting for a com-

plete renovation, was the roof that was leaking and the water inlet had to be repaired, eating into the organization's meager surplus.

Phase 2 is still the development phase of the site.

The Board of Directors wants to enhance the site that

was used during the Second World War with a reception structure that will focus on the facilities that were in place at the time to defend the region and Canada against the German invaders.

Other parts of the second phase still include the installa-

tion of water games for children and the upgrading of the accommodation component by offering more upscale facilities in order to generate more revenue.

This second component is now estimated at \$2.79 million.

The overall upgrade of the facilities should generate more profitability to ensure its development.

A ready-to-camp component could also be added to the project.

The club is ready to present its game plan to the new Member of the National Assembly for Gaspé, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, who has reportedly told the club that he is "ready to help".

The administrators want to put the puck in play now in hopes for a quick response to launch the first phase of work next fall.

In 2022, the club generated about \$1 million in revenue and is expected to have a small budget surplus.

During the last year of operation by the government-owned Sépaq, the site recorded a deficit of \$750,000.

## Sawing operations paralyzed for a few weeks at the Saint-Elzéar Association coopérative forestière

**GILLES GAGNÉ**

SAINT-ELZÉAR – Sawing activities will be paralyzed for a few more weeks at the Association coopérative forestière plant of Saint-Elzéar following the damage caused to the company's electrical system in the early morning of January 6. The plant is the second biggest sawmill in the Gaspé Peninsula.

Sixty of the 100 workers of the cooperative have found themselves in forced unemployment. They had returned to work three days earlier after the holiday break. Christian Bourdages, the new director general of the Association coopérative forestière, speci-

fies that some of the building and the sawing equipment were spared by the fire. The alarm was given at 3 a.m.

"The building is not affected much. We were lucky. Emergency services were prompt and the sprinklers worked well. It is mostly the electrical network that has been affected. We do not think that the equipment has been affected but we can have surprises. Water and humidity may have caused damage. It's like a roll of the dice. There will be tests when the electrical network is repaired," notes Mr. Bourdages.

A team of electricians started working on evaluating

the damage and carrying out the repairs on January 10. Christian Bourdages was expecting a few days of repair work before being able to specify in terms of money the extent of damage and the time required before resuming operations.

"The two sawing shifts, 30 people per shift, have been stopped, but planing, drying and forestry operations continue," he says.

Apart from the 100 people employed by the cooperative, several dozen subcontracted workers depend on the activities of the company, which transforms approximately 250,000 cubic metres of wood

annually.

Founded in 1944, the ACF

is the oldest forestry cooperative in Quebec.



Credit: Association coopérative forestière of Saint Elzéar

*A team of electricians began the evaluation and repairs on January 10.*



# “Good luck” for the repairs of the railroad to Gaspé, says Lebouthillier

## *Federal Minister raises controversy with her skepticism*

GILLES GAGNÉ  
JEAN-PHILIPPE THIBAUT

GRANDE-RIVIÈRE – Member of Parliament for the Gaspésie-Magdalen Islands, Minister Diane Lebouthillier, seems unconvinced of the feasibility of rehabilitating the railway to Gaspé, a project relaunched in 2017.

“If you want to bring the rail back to Gaspé, I say good luck to you,” she said on January 10 during a press conference on her last year's report. The Member of Parliament and Minister of the Canada Revenue Agency explains that she had a front-row seat during the storm from December 23 to 24, 2022.

Gusts of 94 to 115 kilometres per hour were officially recorded at the Gaspé and Cap d'Espoir weather stations, causing extensive damage in some spots, however, it was relatively limited in the case of the railroad.

Diane Lebouthillier was on site in Chandler during the early hours of Christmas morning to see the extent of the damage. “At 7:30 a.m., I was on the Banc de Pabos taking pictures and to see the condition of the rail and I can say that if you want to bring the rail back to Gaspé, I say good luck to you because we have 24 kilometres in the erosion zone,” she says.

On August 26, 2019, just 16 days before the official start of the electoral campaign, the federal government, represented by Diane Lebouthillier, committed \$45.8 million to rehabilitate the rail network which extends over 325 kilometres along the south side of the Gaspé Peninsula, between Matapédia and Gaspé.

This amount is administered by Transports Québec, which has owned the railroad since 2015. That ministry must use the money to mainly rehabilitate the last section between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé, in an attempt to cope with coastal erosion.

### **No doubt among municipal politicians**

The doubt expressed on January 10 by Diane Lebouthillier does not seem to affect the faith of the mayor of Gaspé to see the project come



Photo: Anthony Bernard Prince

*Despite damage to the track, a few hours would be enough to repair this damage, according to Luc Lévesque, director of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie. Long-term repairs there, like the improvement of the rock dyke, are also perfectly feasible, he says.*

to fruition in its entirety. “The important thing is not that people believe it or not, it's that we're going to do it and I can confirm that we're going to do it,” says Daniel Côté, mayor of Gaspé.

He also sits on the board of directors of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie – the entity that operates the trains on the active part of the railway. He is a member of the infrastructure monitoring committee with the Government of Quebec. Mr. Côté says he is in close and frequent contact with engineers specialized in several railroad-related fields, and that beyond the striking images that were captured following the storm, the problem will be relatively easy to solve.

“What we are told is that the Banc de Pabos sector can be settled in a snap. It's very easy to fix without being very expensive. Visually speaking, it looks big for the average man looking at it from the outside, but the railroad engineers tell us that these are peccadilloes compared to the whole work, so I will trust the experts. I have no concerns. We should not base our opinion on the visual appearance of this sector. It would be a monumental mistake and I won't do that,” adds Mr. Côté.

The mayor of Gaspé would also like to point out that the repair of the line is the responsibility of the Government of Quebec, where the will is clear. “Both the Minister of Transport and her ministry intend to restore it. I will rely on them for the repair work and we will continue to push in this direction,” he summarizes.

He also claims to have a verbal commitment from VIA Rail's senior management for a return of passenger trains to the Gaspé Peninsula, but the public corporation would return to the region only when it was certain of being able to do so safely to Gaspé.

For her part, Diane Lebouthillier wants the trains to at least go to New Carlisle and maybe Port-Daniel-Gascons. “We are working hard to bring the rail back to the [McInnis] cement plant. When we have the goods, the work will continue with VIA Rail. My objective is indeed to bring the passenger train back at least to New Carlisle,” says the MP.

The president of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie (SCFG), Éric Dubé, intends to take Diane Lebouthillier's wish for “good luck” in “a good way” although he does not rule out

that the words of the minister may have been tinged with skepticism.

She also raised controversy in May 2022 by telling CHNC radio that she will believe in a return of rail services to Gaspé when she sees it. The president of the SCFG calmly notes “that we are working so that she sees it”.

Diane Lebouthillier launched this “good luck” after criticizing the quality of air services in Quebec, saying that it had not improved since her election in 2015 and that it is “worse than it has ever been”. The Gaspé SPEC then asked her if it was not time to emphasize the plurality of the inter-regional transport offer considering that coach services have also been cut over the last decade by more than 60%.

It was then that she retorted that SCFG is working hard to bring the rail back to Port-Daniel for goods and VIA Rail to New Carlisle for passengers. New Carlisle is halfway between Matapédia and Gaspé. The press briefing ended quite abruptly when she was asked to elaborate on what she meant by “good luck.”

The director general of the SCFG, Luc Lévesque, also specified that work to rein-

force the Banc de Pabos will be carried out in 2023 or 2024. Like the mayor of Gaspé, he assures that a few hours at most will be enough to fill the hole dug by the December 23-24 storm.

“The railway had been summarily repaired last summer to transfer equipment from one side of the Banc de Pabos to the other. The Ministry of Transport made a temporary repair because it was cheaper to transfer this equipment by rail than by road. It was not money put on the fire. We are in discussion with the ministry to make riprap,” he says.

“A lot of teams have gone through this: specialists in rockfill, environment and climate change. The project is on track. We do not need the comments of the ‘peanut gallery’ who do not know the rail infrastructure. When major work is done on the Banc de Pabos, it will be to ensure the sustainability of the railway. There has always been repair work in this sector, such as on Highway 132 on the north side of the Gaspé Peninsula. And let's be clear: the railway on the Banc de Pabos protects Highway 132. If we let the railway go, we let the road go,” says Mr. Lévesque.

He also ensures that the “24 kilometres in the erosion zone” to which Ms. Lebouthillier refers include sectors relatively close to the sea, without any threat weighing on them in the short or medium term. “There is a threat at all in some cases. It is just on the seaside,” says Mr. Lévesque.

During her controversial remarks in May 2022, she added to her skepticism about the rail situation east of Port-Daniel: “I am not sure I would board a train,” referring to the Banc de Pabos area.

In the middle of her first federal election campaign of 2015, Diane Lebouthillier raised controversy when she stated that, in her priorities, the bus was coming before aerial services, and aerial services were coming before the train. At the same time, regional leaders were fighting to convince the Quebec government of the relevance

**Cont'd on page 8**

## 2022 REPORT: Gains for Quebec despite major challenges

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON - The fall has been busy for Kristina Michaud, Member of Parliament for Avignon-Mitis-Matane-Matapédia, in particular with the study of Bill C-21 on the control of firearms; her visit to Poland to discuss the situation in Ukraine as well as her participation to the COP15 meeting in Montreal.

With the addition of the passport crisis, the employment insurance fraud and the difficulties with immigration files, Ms. Michaud also points out that 2022 was certainly marked by the rise in the cost of living, a situation that greatly affects people of her riding.

Despite the hard times, she mentions “being very proud of the work of the Bloc Québécois team, which led important battles in the House of Commons to improve the lives of Quebec women and men.”

Other important stakes were numerous, ranging from health transfers to the protection of French in the reform of the Official Languages Act, as well as the Roxham Road and oil drilling off Newfoundland.

“All interventions made have led to essential reflections and changes. I can only salute the work of my team at the local level who accompanied people from our area to all places where the federal government has failed. Whether it is with their employment insurance file child allowance, permanent residence, passport or old age pension, we have been there to help our people,” underlines Mrs. Michaud.

At a time marked by the increase in the cost of living, the Bloc Québécois Member of Parliament salutes the work of parliamentarians in the rapid adoption of support measures such as the improvement of the goods and services tax (GST) credit and the abolition of the maximum number of hours that an international student can work per week.

Kristina Michaud also stresses the adoption of Bill C-238, which aims to protect workers’ pension funds and which has been supported for years by the Bloc Québécois, as a major gain.

Despite this, the member regrets that the government has once again failed to increase the pension for those aged 65 and over and that in the health sector, it persists in



Photo: G. Gagné

*Member of Parliament for Avignon-Mitis-Matane-Matapédia  
Kristina Michaud*

imposing conditions on the Quebec government before transferring the sums Ottawa owes to that province.

“This stubbornness is hurting hospitals in the region as emergency rooms are overflowing and service disruptions are unfortunately becoming the norm. Health is a Quebec jurisdiction. The resistance shown by Ottawa is sterile. The federal government should concentrate on its job in the passport file and immigration, for example. Health expertise is in Quebec. Everyday, we just have to watch the news to see a reminder that the health sector needs more resources, even if money will not solve all the problems. The pandemic has hurt the health sector. Surgeries were delayed and many cancers were not diagnosed,” deplures Ms. Michaud.

She mentions that various problems characterizing employment insurance recipients, like identity thefts, fraud, delays and the determination of the right benefits, affected in excess of one million files at one point or another in 2022.

“It represents one million files but the government seems to forget that we are talking about one million people. Meanwhile, we are still waiting on the unemployment insurance reform. We will put pressure on the government to make sure that it is announced in 2023 and that the treatment of pending files is accelerated,” points out Kristina Michaud.

She says that immigration files have recently taken over employment insurance files in her offices.

“People have problems getting answers from the Immigration Department, or

can’t get their visa and so on.

We were glad to greet the first Ukrainian family in Maria over the year but the second family gave up. We are also dealing with racism at the expense of African students wanting to come here,” she says.

She intends to keep a close eye on the VIA Rail file, given that the railroad will likely be in service at the end of 2023 or the beginning of 2024, to New Carlisle and Port Daniel.

“We had a meeting with VIA Rail people in 2022 and we received a categorical ‘no’ to our resumption of service request over one part of the line, Matapédia to New Carlisle. VIA Rail people insist on a service resumption over the whole length. However, a ‘no’ is not an option. There is a way to work temporarily with a bus service to get to Gaspé before the line is wholly repaired. On our part, we are showing good faith. As taxpayers, we deserve the service though. We pay the same taxes as other people,” states Kristina Michaud.

She is worried about the resumption of oil drilling off the coast of Newfoundland, authorized by the federal government over the course of 2022.

“The climate crisis is still around and the government seems to forget about it, through authorizing drilling permits in a zone near Bay du Nord. As much as 30% of our waters should be protected between now and 2030 but we are dealing with a government wanting to increase oil exports. Minister Krysta Freeland went to Europe to say so over the fall. If such is the case, we are going straight to a wall,” concludes Ms. Michaud.

## Police report

Investigators from the integrated firearms trafficking division of the Sûreté du Québec conducted an operation on the morning of January 11 in a Pointe-à-la-Croix house, in their fight against organized crime, arms trafficking and narcotics. The search took place in a residence on Chemin Petite-Rivière-du-Loup and also aimed at the execution of an arrest warrant for the resident of the premises, Jérémy Paquin-Herchel, 25, in connection with charges for prohibited weapons trafficking and drug trafficking.

He had also been arrested on June 15, 2022, by the same investigators in Godmanchester, a Quebec municipality located near Huntingdon, on the South Shore area, close to Montreal. He was found in possession of weapons and narcotics at the time.

Arrested early in the morning, Jérémy Paquin-Herchel appeared in the afternoon of January 11 at the New Carlisle courthouse. “He appeared in court here for practical reasons because it could be done rapidly but the whole file was transferred to the Longueuil judicial district, where the rest of the procedure will be continued. The man was transferred as well,” points out criminal prosecutor Cédric Leblanc-Falardeau.

The operation conducted in Pointe-à-la-Croix stems from an investigation initiated in October 2021 by the integrated firearms trafficking division of Montreal following information received from the public. From June 1, 2022, and over the following days, the police carried out a series of searches and arrests aimed at neutralizing a firearms trafficking network that was linked to street gangs and which operated mainly in the Montreal area. Jérémy Paquin-Herchel is suspected of having supplied this distribution network with firearms and narcotics.

“He was not originally from the (Gaspé Peninsula) area. He had moved here recently but the investigators had kept track of his whereabouts,” adds Sûreté du Québec spokesperson, Sgt. Claude Doiron.

The operation was part of the CENTAURE strategy, which has the mandate to ensure constant pressure on organized crime and thus actively fight against armed violence in Quebec. CENTAURE allows all partner police forces to maximize their efforts at the national, regional and local level targeting the supply, import, distribution and illegal possession of firearms. Sûreté du Québec officials add that any information related to the possession, trafficking or use of firearms can be communicated to the CENTAURE information line at 1-833-888-ARME (2763).

A January 11 all-terrain vehicle caused very serious injuries to a Gaspé man in his fifties who was driving, and minor injuries to his passenger. The accident occurred at about 5:30 p.m. along a secondary road known as Orée du bois, in the Petit-Cap sector of Gaspé. “The two men were driving on the all-terrain vehicle. The driver lost control of it and the vehicle hit a tree. He was driven to the Gaspé hospital where he was later transferred to a Quebec City hospital. His injuries are life-threatening. The two men were wearing their helmets and the first information coming from the investigators doesn’t mention that foul play could be a factor in the accident,” explains Sgt. Claude Doiron.

A 58-year-old woman from Chandler, Lisette Hautcoeur, formally charged on August 12 with the non-premeditated murder of Richard Allard, 64, returned to the Percé courthouse on January 11 for the orientation and declaration step of procedure but the hearing was postponed until March 13. The victim, who was living in the same apartment building as the accused, was found dead on July 1 at home. The exact nature of the relationship between the accused and the victim remains unknown. Both resided on Mgr-Ross Street East in downtown Chandler and they were “acquaintances” according to the Sûreté du Québec upon the conclusion of the investigation that led to Ms. Hautcoeur’s arrest. The death of Richard Allard was initially considered suspicious and the possibility of a homicide was put forward by the police a few days after the discovery of the body. In 2019, Lisette Hautcoeur was convicted of extortion. The court waived a sentence and placed the woman on probation for two years, with community work and a fine. (A person found guilty of non-premeditated murder faces a life sentence, with eligibility for parole at any time between 10 and 25 years.)

Karine Rioux, a 35-year-old woman who faces two criminal charges following a December 2021 accident that claimed the life of Patrick Donovan, a 63-year-old man from Gaspé, underwent the first part of her preliminary hearing on December 19 and 20 at the Percé courthouse. The accused, who is also from Gaspé, is charged with one count of impaired driving causing death and one count of driving with more than 80 milligrams of alcohol in her blood. The driver, who struck the victim on Gaspé Boulevard at the end of the day on December 16, 2021, was released the following day under several conditions including a ban on driving and consuming alcohol. She will be back to court on January 23 for the second part of her preliminary hearing. Witnesses will be assigned to testify that day. Quebec Court Judge Jules Berthelot presides over the case.



Gilles Gagné

## Commentary

### Hydro-Quebec: Sophic Bochu will be hard to replace

We might never learn the reasons behind Sophie Brochu's departure from Hydro-Québec's position of chief executive officer and president, however, a glance at the events that occurred since the end of August should convince a lot of Quebecers that her decision to leave was almost written in the sky.

A set of midsized to major clashes marked the last five months of her tenure at the helm of Quebec's public utility.

It started at the onset of the electoral campaign when incumbent Premier François Legault mentioned that building additional power dams was needed to meet expanding public, industrial and American demand for Quebec's electricity. That orientation was not even in the Coalition avenir Québec's program priorities and it became overnight a pillar of Mr. Legault's electoral strategy.

Ms. Brochu calmly remarked the same day that Hydro Québec's recent strategic plan was not including additional power dams.

A second clash erupted when Premier Legault started evaluating the option of merging the economy and energy portfolios into a vast ministry that would be run by Pierre Fitzgibbon. Ms. Brochu rapidly talked about quitting because she was opposed to diverting electricity towards power-hungry industries, an orientation that would jeopardize sustainable and ecological ventures.

Further manifestations of that second clash occurred here and there over the last months. Ms. Brochu used a very strong image when expressing the necessity for the government to choose more carefully the industries it recruits: "Quebec shouldn't become the Dollarama of electricity." She was, therefore, saying that drawing additional power-hungry industries was not the way to build a clean economy.

A third and more discrete clash likely occurred when Premier Legault appointed, as mentioned earlier, Pierre Fitzgibbon to the dual economy and energy po-

sition despite the reluctance widely expressed that concentrating such power in the hands of a controversial minister was far from a good idea. The premier offered Ms. Brochu a seat on the all-important green energy transition committee the minister presides over. She accepted the invitation to join the committee. Did she have a choice? A refusal would have been equivalent to quitting her Hydro-Québec position right then, in October. She wanted to give a chance to the initiative.

#### Premier François Legault lacks the flexibility of thought

Despite its alleged importance, the committee's members met only once over two-and-a-half months. In the meantime, the Legault regime kept referring to the necessity of bringing more flexibility to Hydro-Québec's governance. "Flexibility" in that context notably meant accepting more power dams and offering cheap rates to bid industries.

Sophie Brochu had shown in the past that she can be flexible. Before being selected to run Hydro-Québec, she was coming from 32 years of work in the hydrocarbons industry. She was able to make the transition from an industry that generates a heavy amount of greenhouse effect gases to a utility renowned for its renewable energy.

Over the years, the allegedly clean power dams have proven not as environmentally friendly as presented initially. Their construction generates polluting emissions and creates a heavy impact on the scenery and nature. The last decade or so has also proven that the best rivers have already been harnessed and that another source of renewable energy, wind power, is now significantly cheaper.

Above all in Ms. Brochu's mind, Quebecers must become more selective in their electricity consumption patterns. The cheapest electricity is the one you already have, the one that can be saved, that you don't have to harness at a very high cost.

Quebecers are likely the heaviest electricity consumers in the world. Our production capacity reaches 46,380 megawatts, mainly consisting in power dams' output of 40,000 megawatts. Various studies show that we could save at least 10% of the energy we consume. Considering that we also export a fair share of our production, it is reasonable to think that we could probably save 3,000 megawatts of capacity through various measures and avoid building new power dams, especially if we don't opt for Premier Legault's already expressed will to make Quebec the "battery of North America".

He doesn't adjust well to change, especially when change means adopting new trends, and adapting to more modern ways of life. Saving energy, paying attention to details that could modify our daily activities and modifying old habits, are now necessary.

Some people of the Quebec Premier's age quickly understand those stakes and make adjustments. He doesn't. It took him years to understand that wind energy is now cheaper than hydro-electricity. He started

understanding the advantage of wind power in February 2021, when the Apuiat wind farm project slated for the North Shore was announced.

#### Will we ever know the real reasons?

We will likely not know for a long time, and maybe never, what happened exactly between Premier François Legault and Pierre Fitzgibbon on the one hand, and Sophie Brochu on the other hand.

However, it is clear that this very intelligent and articulate woman of 60 years of age didn't need useless clashes to end a career that had so far been a staple of stability. She spent the first 10 years of her career at SOQUIP, a Quebec-government controlled public corporation in charge of finding oil and gas, followed by 22 years at Gaz Métro-Énergir.

Ms. Brochu was able to understand over the last few years that going all out with hydrocarbons was not promising.

On the surface, Premier Legault likes to say that he understands the necessity to change the way our society functions, however, he rarely goes beyond cosmetic changes. His Third Link project between Quebec City and Lévis has been modified over the years from an all-out automobile-oriented venture to an initiative that would integrate more commuter services. However, it remains an unnecessary project of the 20th century, 23 years into the 21st century.

Sophie Brochu is not perfect, however, she had decided to try and convince Quebecers and the government of the relevance of changing some habits, despite what looked like an insurmountable challenge. Quebecers think that the cheapest electricity rates in the world are owed to them, while government officials are of the view that Hydro-Québec must bring in billions of dollars in profits annually. The reluctance of the premier's regime to help her likely proved too much.

She needed the support of at least one side, the population or the government, ideally both, to succeed. The lame electoral system prevailing in Quebec, and in the rest of Canada, prevented her from knowing if she had popular support. The Coalition avenir Québec (CAQ) won 71% of the National Assembly seats on October 3 with 41% of expressed votes. Only 27% of all registered voters opted for the CAQ.

Image-wise, the departure of Sophie Brochu and of the Hydro-Québec board president Jacynthe Côté hurts Premier Legault's government, especially considering the fact that they refrained from the temptation of slamming the door. They will stay until the beginning of April.

Sophie Brochu will be hard to replace. Finding someone with her understanding of the energy stakes, her overall thoroughness and her communication capacity will prove difficult for the CAQ government. However, Premier François Legault and Pierre Fitzgibbon will obviously try to appoint someone more malleable in order to get their ideas across.

Some of those ideas are outdated though and they, and Quebecers, will likely find it out the hard way. Sophie Brochu will, therefore, be sorely missed.

### How to reach The Gaspé Spec while office building is closed

As many of you know, The Gaspé Spec office is under construction. During this period there are several ways to reach SPEC.

**Option 1:** Call 418-752-5400 and leave a voicemail, include your name, number and the reason for your call. Rest assured someone will call you back.

**Option 2:** Email [specs@globetrotter.net](mailto:specs@globetrotter.net) (yes, indeed Spec still has a globetrotter address).

**Option 3:** Inbox The Gaspé Spec on Facebook, we will get back to you during business hours.

**For subscriptions,** all the above methods are available, plus buying online from [THEGASPESPEC.COM](http://THEGASPESPEC.COM), or mailing a cheque or money order to: 208-B blvd Gérard D. Levesque, New Carlisle, Quebec, G0C 1Z0

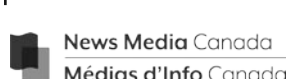


208-B Gérard D. Levesque  
New Carlisle, Que.  
G0C 1Z0

Tel: 418-752-5400  
[specs@globetrotter.net](mailto:specs@globetrotter.net)  
[thegaspespec.com](http://thegaspespec.com)

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

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



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



**Publisher**  
Penny MacWhirter



**News Editor**  
Gilles Gagné



**Office Manager**  
Joan Imhoff



**Circulation Manager**  
Holly Smith

**JOURNALISTS:**  
Nelson Sergerie  
Diane Skinner  
Cynthia Dow,  
Jeanie LeLacheur

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**  
Elaine Sexton  
Maria Chatterton  
Bethany Paetkau  
Hayden Sams,  
Bonita Annett  
Patricia Ste-Croix Annett  
Fred Kirch  
Roger Wise

SPEC welcomes letters to the editor on subjects relevant to topics covered by the paper. Letters must be kept within 300 words or less and may be edited for clarity or to remove any slanderous, sexist, racist or homophobic statements. We reserve the right to reject any letters. Opinions or letters published do not necessarily reflect the editorial policies or beliefs of this newspaper. All letters must bear the handwritten signature of the writer and include the address and number(s) for verification purposes. (Address & phone number will not be printed.) The Publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The Publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with any advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.



# Percé hit hard by the December 23 storm

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PERCE - Three areas of Percé were hit hard by the severe storm that crossed the Gaspé Peninsula on December 23, but the l'anse du Sud area, near the Normandie Hotel, was the hardest hit and work will need to be done in the coming weeks.

"We're in discussions with the Department of Public Safety. We don't have a timeline because, like I say, we're in discussions. I expect it to be done by spring, or as soon as possible," says Mayor Cathy Poirier.

Following the storm of December 30, 2016, which had completed the destruction of the old boardwalk built in the 1970s, work had been initiated by adding small and medium-sized rocks and the relocation of some buildings at a total cost of \$20 million, which included \$16 million from Quebec, \$3 million from Ottawa and the balance paid by the Town of Percé.

More rocks were added in 2019 to correct the beach.

"In front of the Normandie, which was the most affected portion of the beach in 2016 during the last big storm before the addition of rock, it is still the most affected portion. We're really talking about major work that will need to be done quickly," the elected official explains.

"You can see under the boardwalk that it has started to cave in. We also have a concrete beach access that is no longer supported by rock. It was already due for work. Now, we will have to see how it will be done with the board-



Photo: N. Sergerie

*This area of l'anse du Sud in 2019 near the Normandie Hotel saw the most damage from the December 23 storm.*

walk so as to not further damage the infrastructure," suggests Ms. Poirier in order to avoid a catastrophe.

When the choice to add rock had been decided in 2017, it was the most economical option knowing that in the future follow-up work would have to be done. Initially a period of five years was granted to evaluate the evolution of the situation.

In 2019, corrections were made in collaboration with the Department of Public Safety.

"It was very difficult to get a follow-up on what will happen for the next 10, 20, 30 and 40 years. For the Department of Public Safety, this work was carried out by the department that acts in emergencies and then they close the file. In this case, it is not a work that ends. How can we negotiate the future of this project and

ensure that the Town of Percé is not responsible, after five or ten years, to pay with municipal funds for a project that was stated as a pilot project?

A proposal had been made to the town for this new work, but Quebec then passed the responsibility on to the municipal administration.

"It's clear that the town does not have the funds for this type of work. We are negotiating with the ministry that will come and do this new work. They're going to present us with the sketches to see if it will be bigger than what was done in 2017. We have to make sure that the town will not be doing the normal maintenance work afterwards," said the mayor.

For the Coin-du-Banc area, which was also hit hard by the December storm, the Town could have done emergency work quickly after.

"But as long as we're doing work, it's important to have good recommendations," says the mayor, who prefers to have a more global picture before intervening.

The area is made up of three elements: residences that have access via Highway 132, those that have to pass by the waterfront street and the area of the town-owned sanitary block, and the railway station used by the tourist train.

The Department of Public Safety may intervene for the waterfront section where residents are directly affected. In this area, holes have formed and the roadbed has been affected. Access to homes is not in danger at this time. Everything is to be analyzed.

"What we want to do is make the right decisions to tie these three sections together and do the right work," says Ms. Poirier.

Another problematic element in the making is the sector of Mont-Joli Street, at the foot of the wharf and near the Villa Frederick-James, the future Espace bleu of the Gaspé.

The remnants of the 1970s boardwalk that had survived protected this area that became vulnerable following the reconstruction of the wharf completed in the fall of 2020.

"What we saw last week is that the cliff at the end of this boardwalk, which is very close to Mont-Joli Street, is starting to be affected a lot. Is there going to be any work that needs to be done more quickly? It is really another section where there are problems and that the storm of December 23 has accentuated," says Ms. Poirier.

The l'anse du Nord area also suffered significant damage to some private properties during the storm.

"We must not make hasty decisions. It's important to make the right decisions. Now it's about doing it at the right time. In l'anse du Sud, if there had been rock added beforehand, probably it would have protected more. But we really need to look at the big picture," says the mayor, who poses a big question about what will need to be protected in the future.

"What sections will have to be protected and we have to tell ourselves the truth: what sections can no longer be protected? There are places where we will probably have to let nature take its course. We must make the right decisions and make the appropriate assessments," concludes the mayor of Percé.

## The protective wall near Percé wharf: Quebec promises its support

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PERCE - The Ministry of Transport has assured the Town of Percé that if work is required on the boardwalk, east of the wharf, it will take care of the work.

Mayor Cathy Poirier says she has received assurances from the ministry that the town will be helped if the protective wall is damaged or washed away by storms.

However, there is nothing in writing to formalize this.

The foundations of the wall are loose, which makes

the infrastructure vulnerable whenever severe weather hits the tourist capital.

"The pier in its new form has caused damage. We all witnessed what happened with the beach that was there. Currently, this portion of the boardwalk is in the process of being removed. It's just a matter of time before it's demolished," says the mayor.

However, the wall withstood the December 23 storm. The search for a solution is underway.

"The Department of Transportation has done studies to

see what could happen and what would be the best result. We have been presented with some sketches. Right now, the choice has been made to observe rather than react too quickly," adds Ms. Poirier.

With the storms this fall, the mayor says the infrastructure will not hold up.

"The Ministry of Transport has committed to take responsibility for this portion of the walkway and to repair it in due course," she says.

Cont'd on page 6



**TRANSPORT**  
BAIE-DES-CHALEURS

### JOB OPPORTUNITY

**School bus driver in the New-Carlisle area  
(New-Carlisle High School)**

Type of employment: Full-time replacement.  
Monday to Friday, daytime according to the school timetable. Competitive salary.

**Requirements:**

- Hold a class 2 driver's license
- Speak English
- No criminal record
- Experience would be an asset
- Be courteous and punctual

Start date of employment: January 2023

If you are interested in joining our team or for more information, contact us at 418-364-3993 or [tbdcl@globetrotter.net](mailto:tbdcl@globetrotter.net)

**PROTECTIVE WALL**

**▶ Cont'd from page 5**

Meanwhile, dredging will have to be done again in the spring at the Percé wharf.

This is the third time this type of work must be done to ensure that commercial activities can be held safely.

Dredging work in the amount of \$248,200, paid for by Ottawa, had been initiated in the spring of 2021, but had to be stopped due to the presence of capelin in the area. The work did provide some access to the landing.

Work resumed in the fall, but approximately 5,000 cubic metres remained to be removed, according to the Quebec Ministry of Transport.

In the spring of 2022, 1875 cubic metres of sediment were removed to avoid compromising the lobster

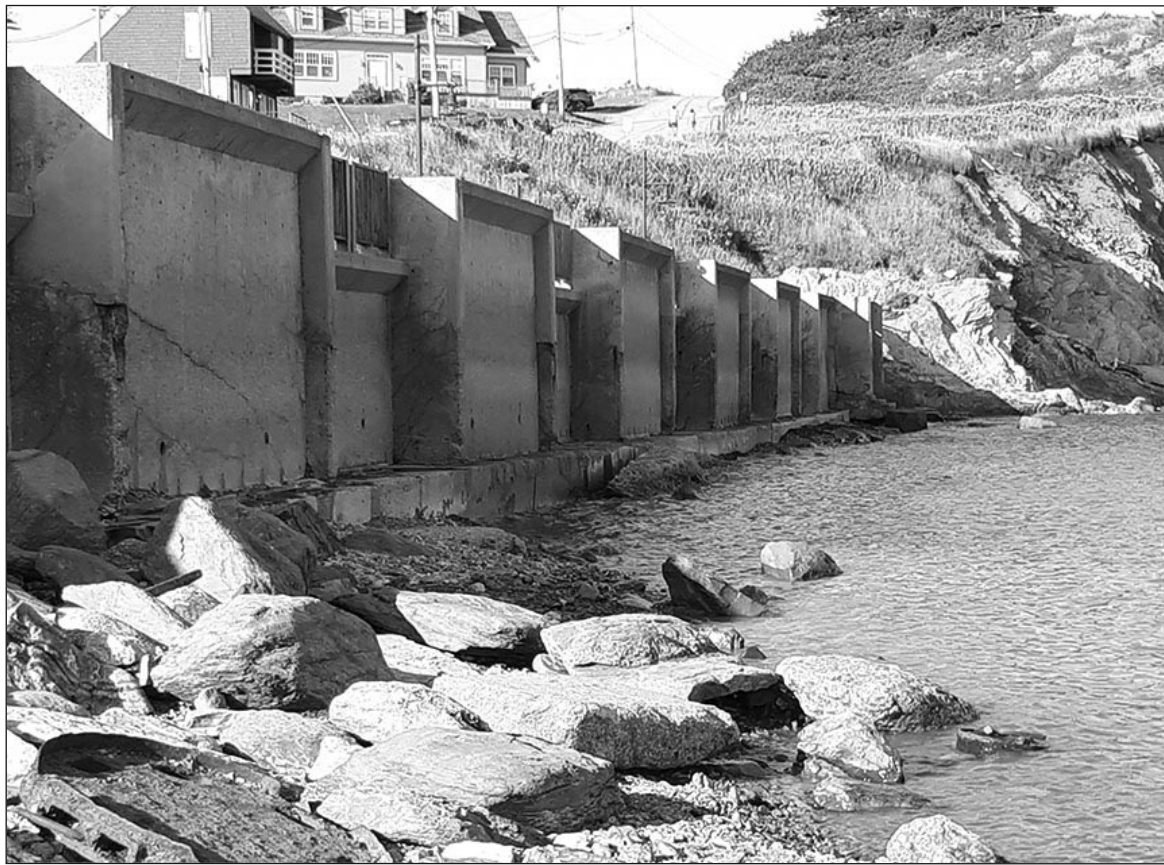


Photo: N. Sergerie

Quebec assures that it will be there if this portion of the protective wall in the wharf should break.

fishery and the tourist season. This work, paid for by Quebec, cost \$71,601.58.

To remove the remaining sediment and regularize the situation, the Department

wishes to carry out new dredging in 2023. This work would be carried out in ap-

proximately the same area as that carried out in 2021.

Quebec will once again pay for this work, adding that depending on the intensity of future winter storms, the beach will continue to change as sediment continues to move towards the wharf and onto the lower beach along the wharf.

"It is, therefore, expected that, in the short term, dredging work will have to be carried out to allow adequate use of the wharf's infrastructure, pending the implementation of a sustainable solution to the wharf's silting problem," says the Quebec Ministry of Transport.

The wharf was delivered in the fall of 2020 and sediment accumulated quickly on the beach, which caused the silting up of a significant part of the landing area of the brand new infrastructure, the construction of which cost \$7.7 million.

## Quebec changes course and allows MRCs to invest in housing again

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON-SUR-MER - Quebec's MRCs will once again be able to intervene in the housing crisis.

Although they have received a favourable verbal opinion from Quebec, a legislative change will be required in the next parliamentary session to make this a reality.

A few weeks ago, the MRCs of the Gaspé region came up against the Ministry of Housing, which no longer allowed it to grant funding or assistance in files to promote the construction of apartments.

Even though it is one of the regional priorities for several years, the situation had been denounced by the president of the Regroupement des MRC de la Gaspésie, Mathieu Lapointe.

The MRC of Rocher-Percé had put in place an incentive for the construction of housing and the MRC of Avignon financed a resource that accompanied the promoters to set up projects.

Just before the beginning of the holiday season,

The mayor of Gaspé and president of the Union des municipalités du Québec, Daniel Côté, spoke with the office of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Andrée Laforest, to raise the issue and the region won its case.

"We raised the issues. The regional branch of the min-



Photo: N. Sergerie

A legislative change will formalize MRC involvement in new housing construction.

istry was telling us something positive, but they were rebuffed by the national management. But once the minister speaks, she has the authority. All the pitfalls seem to have been ironed out but

this will be resolved, thanks to the pressure that came from the Gaspé," explains Mr. Côté.

Even if the situation seems to be evolving favourably, Mathieu Lapointe is still cautiously optimistic.

He spoke on December 21 with the office of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and he believes that there is a political will to authorize the MRCs to act in housing.

"All the signals are positive. Now we will wait for the next parliamentary session. Everything leads us to believe that the will is there and that the changes will take place, but it will require a change in the law to give this jurisdiction to the MRCs," says Mr. La-

pointe.

Aware of this issue, the Member of the National Assembly for Gaspé, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, had mentioned that he was confident of "getting rid of this irritant and finding a solution".

As for the \$390,000 bill for the construction of housing and the CPE near Carrefour Gaspé, nothing has changed.

Daniel Côté intends to come back to the regional minister.



# Reconnect with the Coast!

## Buy a subscription to The Gaspé Spec!

**1 year \$46,  
6 months \$25**

**Call 418-752-5400  
or go online at  
thegaspespec.com**



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

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

Please join us:  
**Wednesday, January 25th, 2023**  
**1:30-3:30 PM**  
**Online by Zoom** 

**Tablets & all materials will be delivered**

**GAME TIME!** \*Space is limited. Please RSVP by Monday, January 23rd 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 



# New Richmond arena is newly renovated

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW RICHMOND – The Town of New Richmond reopened its arena on January 9, a few weeks later than expected due to delivery problems of the building materials. The cooling system, the boards, the roof and the lighting system were replaced during the eight-month construction period.

The \$4 million contract was carried out by CB4S, a company based in Saint-Arsène, near Rivière-du-Loup.

New Richmond mayor, Éric Dubé, points out that many aspects of the arena remain to be improved but, for now, the most urgent upgrading elements were dealt with.

“The restrooms in the locker rooms and the restrooms for the public remain



Photo: G. Gagné

*The New Richmond arena was renovated between May and the first days of January.*

to be upgraded. The cost has not been evaluated yet. The locker rooms don't have to be fixed. They are made of concrete and they will last for-

ever. We have to repaint them sometimes and that's it. The next phase will come later. We are trying to qualify for a program that would provide

grants. As for the concrete slab under the ice, we extended its life by putting a sealing product to make it waterproof. There can be

leaks on occasion but the problem is mainly solved. We hope that it will last 10 years. Changing the cement slab would cost about \$2.5 million,” indicates Mayor Dubé.

The Town of New Richmond received a little over \$1 million of outside support for the \$4 million project, including \$500,000 from the Quebec government for the cooling system, \$300,000 from the same government for the roof, \$200,000 from Caisses Desjardins for the rest of the project, as well as various smaller contributions, notably one from the Bonaventure MRC, for the general aspects of the venture.

The arena was originally built in 1969 and had not benefited from any significant refurbishment in 53 years.

## Cellular: a study to locate dead zones in Avignon MRC

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON-SUR-MER – The issue of cellular service remains on the forefront in the Gaspé Peninsula as various stakeholders are once again calling for a service worthy of the 21st century.

The Avignon MRC has just commissioned a study to locate the places where cellular signals are non-existent, essentially dead zones on its territory.

“We want to position ourselves to have coverage throughout the territory. The first step is to fully understand these dead zones and that is what we are going to look at,” says Prefect Mathieu Lapointe.

The report should be available during this winter. The document will serve as a lever to claim once again better cellular service in the territory.

“We know that there is a desire in Quebec to ensure cellular coverage throughout the territory. We want to do our homework to position ourselves well in these steps to be sure of having good coverage on the territory of the MRC of Avignon,” adds the prefect.

This request comes at a time when the municipality of Pointe-à-la-Croix, located in the MRC, is experiencing failures with the already existing coverage.

The mayor, Pascal Bujold, indicates that a complaint has been filed with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecom-



Photo: N. Sergerie

*The lack of cellphone service in some areas of the region continues to be a concern.*

munications Commission (CRTC) to resolve this deficiency.

According to the mayor, the implementation of 5G technology in Campbellton, New Brunswick, on the other side of the Interprovincial bridge, is causing problems. The coverage isn't as good as it was.

“You can drive a vehicle on Interprovincial Boulevard and suddenly it cuts out. There is no more cellphone service. There are many citizens who tell me that in their residence, the signal has become problematic,” explains Mr. Bujold. A response from the CRTC is pending.

“We want cellular service everywhere. In the municipality where we had the service, now we have problems, I think we should look at fixing that,” says the mayor.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the territory, on the MRC of Côte-de-Gaspé, the prefect, Daniel Côté, will once again prioritize filling the existing cellular gaps on his territory.

The CRTC recently launched a new call for tenders under the Broadband Fund which included cell phones. Over the past decade, the MRC has adopted multiple resolutions to fill this communications gap.

“There are several dead zones, even near urban perimeters and between villages. For example, it cuts out between Grande-Vallée and Petite-Vallée. In short, there are several places where it cuts out and, of course, the long stretch on Route 198 between Gaspé and Murdochville which is practically without any coverage. Perhaps they re-launched the file following pressure from different regions including ours,” says Mr. Côté.

In August, a demand for more than a decade from elected officials in the Gaspé was partly answered when Telus' requests to improve cellular coverage had finally been heard by Ottawa.

The Canadian telecommunications giant submitted projects to the CRTC in 2020 via the Broadband Fund program with the aim of improving wireless coverage in the Gaspé Peninsula, Matanie and La Matapédia MRCs.

Three major road segments were proposed: Route 299 near the municipality of Cas-

capedia-Saint-Jules and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts to the Gîte du Mont-Albert; highway Route 132 between Sainte-Florence and Matapédia, and Route 195 between Matane and Amqui.

At the time, the company estimated these joint investments at several million dollars for an estimated coverage of more than 100 kilometres of road, in addition to covering all or part of the neighbouring communities.

The CRTC responded favourably to the request by releasing \$6.5 million in one of the 10 projects accepted across Canada.

LTE-A technology will be deployed which will provide access to unlimited data, according to the CRTC.

A sum of \$2.5 million was released to cover the 35 kilometres between Matapédia and Sainte-Florence which will serve 10 households and \$4 million will be for the axis of Route 195 between Matane and Amqui as well as Route 299 to serve Cap-Seize, Cas-

capedia-Saint-Jules and the Gîte du Mont-Albert for 60 kilometres of roads, 13 communities and 180 households.

Telus has still not detailed the investments to be made as well as an implementation schedule.

Beyond the recent demands of elected officials, there are still several other sectors to cover.

Requests have been made for years in the backcountry of the MRC de Bonaventure including Saint-Elzéar and Saint-Adolphe.

The Rocher-Percé MRC has adopted resolutions in the past to obtain the road signal for the Lemieux Road, the transit road allowing Percé to be bypassed.

In October, Quebec launched a provincial call for tenders to find out about “cellular dead zones” and the solutions to be applied according to three scenarios.

The Coalition avenir Québec had promised during the election campaign to “complete cellular coverage.”



COMMISSION SCOLAIRE  
Eastern Shores  
SCHOOL BOARD

### PUBLIC NOTICE 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Eastern Shores School Board would like to extend an invitation to the public to attend the presentation of the 2021-2022 Annual Report at the meeting of the Council of Commissioners on February 7, 2023 to be held at the hour of 6:30 p.m.

The report may be consulted on the School Board's website [www.essb.qc.ca](http://www.essb.qc.ca).

Given at New Carlisle, Québec this 11th day of January 2023.

Denis Gauthier  
Secretary General



# Former mayor of Gaspé, Arthur Drolet dies

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - Former Gaspé Mayor, Arthur Drolet, passed away on January 2 at the age of 82.

Mayor of the Town of Gaspé from 1999 to 2005, Mr. Drolet died at his home. The reasons for his death were not given.

In 2005, at the age of 65, Mr. Drolet chose to leave politics, indicating at the time that he wanted to devote his time to his family.

At the end of his mandate, the citizens of Gaspé elected François Roussy to power.

The current mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté, paid tribute to him on January 6 on Facebook.

"I remember him as a good person, frank, dedicated and with a beautiful vision. He was recognized for his sense of sound management and he provided the Town with im-



Credit: Valère Fortin Funeral Home

Arthur Drolet

portant infrastructures. He was also part of the team that brought LM Wind Power to Gaspé during the recovery from the economic downturn of the late 1990s," wrote Côté.

Mayor Côté offered his

condolences to his family, especially to his son, Jean-François Drolet, engineer and director of Major Projects for the Town of Gaspé.

The funeral date will be announced at a later date.

## TRAIN

### Cont'd from page 2

of repairing the whole line between Matapédia and Gaspé.

#### The pace of repairs is slowly increasing

So far, in nearly six years, Transports Québec has either invested or committed just over \$100 million of its own funds to repair the Gaspé railway, out of a total of \$235 million announced. This sum does not include the federal amount of \$45.8 million.

The pace of work was slow in 2017 and 2018, with less, and sometimes much less than \$10 million invested in the line upgrading.

In 2020 and 2021, the yearly amount invested or earmarked surpassed the \$20 million mark, and it surpassed \$40 million in 2022.

Transports Québec has committed to reopening the Caplan-Port Daniel portion of its network in 2024, two years after the previous deadline of 2022. This is not the first delay for this ministry. In 2017, the railway was supposed to be reopened to Port Daniel by 2020.

In December 2022, Transports Québec committed to supplying a more accurate account of its investments in the Gaspé Peninsula railroad dur-



Photo: G. Gagné

*Diane Lebouthillier election: The remarks of Member of Parliament for Gaspésie-Magdalen Islands, Diane Lebouthillier, do not worry the municipal sector of the Gaspé Peninsula.*

ing the first weeks of 2023.

VIA Rail trains have not run between Matapédia and New Carlisle since August 2013, and between New Carlisle and Gaspé since December 2011.

Since 2015, due to the state of certain bridges, the freight service has been limited to the Matapédia to Caplan stretch of the line, with the Caplan to Gaspé portion being closed until thorough repairs are completed.

The slowness in the line upgrading has caused major

revenue shortcomings for the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie between 2017 and the first part of 2022, since its two main customers, Port Daniel's McInnis Cement and Gaspé's LM Windpower, are located along the dormant section of the line. Trucking cement and windmill blades to New Richmond, for their transfer to railcars, has so far deprived the SCFG of important sales and it has affected the profitability of the two plants and that of the transporter.

## Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



### A friend in need Not sure what to say? Just show compassion

If someone in your life is going through a tough time, which we all do at one time or another, do not say "Call me if you need anything." Very few will take you up on that offer because it is more like a platitude - a remark or statement that is used too often and can be insincere. Psychologists tell us that social support from friends and family help them get through the toughest of times.

To be helpful to a friend in need, offer some specific things that you can do for them. The simple act of putting ourselves in the other person's shoes may be helpful and can guide you. Treating others the way you would wish to be treated is a strong and valid principle in life.

First check to make sure they are not so down that they might harm themselves. For some, at low points in life, the pain they are experiencing can be unbearable. This can lead to suicidal thoughts. Ask them directly if they are thinking about harming themselves. This shows compassion and that act alone can break those dark thoughts. It is an uncomfortable discussion but may be a necessary topic for further discussion and support. Emotional pain can be unbearable.

Be a non-judgmental listener. Ask them how they are and listen, without interrupting. Then ask questions. Questions like, "How does this make you feel? What else is on your mind?" This helps to show that you are listening and genuinely care about their situation.

Nonverbal communication can say a lot, and this is not a contradiction. Look at them and make that connection of one human being to another. It shows your support. Ask more questions if needed. This shows that you are listening and are there to provide concern and support. Short messages that show you are listening such as, "I see that you are in a lot of pain right now. I know it is a tough time for you." In the movie 'Avatar', the Indigenous Navi people greet each other with the phrase, "I see you." This connects people to each other and acknowledges their being.

Now ask specific questions of how you can be of help. Ask how you can support them and what you can do to be of help. Do not dole out unasked for advice but asking them how you can be of help shows that you do not presume to know everything about their needs. Be reassuring but avoid judgmental and unhelpful statements. Such assertions as "It could be worse, or stop thinking that way," are not helpful at all and could be downright harmful. A better comment might be "There's help available and I can help you to find that help," or just simply "I believe in you."

There is no perfect thing to say to someone who is struggling. Keeping the channels of communication open, showing compassion and caring and being a good listener can be helpful. The world can feel like a lonely place when you are depressed and struggling. Having a compassionate connection with another can make all the difference.



# Sixth positive interregional migration balance for the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

**GASPÉ** - The Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine is experiencing positive inter-regional migration for a sixth consecutive year and the Haute-Gaspésie is the MRC that is making the most gains in the Gaspé.

According to the Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ), net migration was 742 for the period between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022, the second-best year in 20 years after the record of 1,378 set in 2020-2021.

Among the remote regions, Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine is the best positioned, ahead of Bas-Saint-Laurent and Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, while the North Shore, Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Nord-du-Québec regions show negative migration balances.

Thus, 2,398 people chose the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine for the reference period, while 1,656 citizens moved elsewhere in Quebec.

This represents a growth rate of 0.8%, which is the 5th best rate among Quebec's ad-



Photo: N. Sergerie

*Gaspésie remains the most popular remote region in the Quebec migration record.*

ministrative regions, according to the ISQ.

By MRC, excluding the Magdalen Islands, the Haute-Gaspésie is the big winner at the regional level with a growth rate of 1.38% and a net gain of 153 inhabitants. In absolute numbers, it is the MRC that has the best positive balance of the five Gaspé sectors.

"We are reacting very positively. Long-term work has been done on the territory with different stakeholders

involved in recruiting, both at the social, economic and development levels. It's a break on the situation of the MRC (considering the hardship of the last decades) and a lot of people can be given a pat on the back," said the prefect of the MRC of Haute-Gaspésie, Guy Bernatchez, while this MRC is known as one of the most devitalized in Quebec.

For the past three years, the MRC has managed to curb the mass exodus with net gains of 213 in 2020-2021 and 87 in 2019-2020.

According to the prefect, this may be the end of the gloom in his MRC.

"Without a doubt in my mind. We are in a period of effervescence. We still have great projects to come to our MRC. We have people with boundless energy and an extremely high level of ambition for our part of the

country. This is just the beginning," says Mr. Bernatchez.

Intensive work is being done to build new housing for newcomers.

"We have been tackling this seriously for several months," he said.

The Bonaventure MRC has a positive balance of 143, down from 202 the previous year. Rocher-Percé has a balance of 124 (232) and Avignon is up 123 (290).

The MRC de la Côte-de-Gaspé is far behind with a positive balance of just 33, down from 238 for the 2020-2021 period.

"The Côte-de-Gaspé is the MRC that has experienced the strongest economic growth in recent years, which has created pressure on housing. We are possibly experiencing the greatest housing shortage in the region and

possibly in the regions. This means that we can no longer accommodate as many newcomers as we would need to support our economic development. Hence the importance of building as many housing units as possible and returning to the top of the list of statistics because we have been for a long time", says the prefect, Daniel Côté.

Vivre en Gaspésie is pleased with these statistics.

The gain of 742 comes following the impacts of the pandemic when the region had seen record highs.

"To see that we are with the second-best net migration that the region has ever had, is really good news and what it tells us is that the region will continue to be attractive in the coming years," said the director of the strategy Living in Gaspésie, Danik O'Connor. The strategy has now been in place for 10 years.

Some twenty stakeholders are working to attract people to the region.

As mentioned by the elected officials, the lack of housing and childcare places is slowing down the reception of newcomers.

"Probably the migratory balance would be higher than what it was this year. That's why everyone is working on it," says O'Connor.

He expects the gain to stabilize between 500 and 700 per year.

With a regional population of 92,403, the target of 100,000 is possible in the long term, according to the strategy.

## December was rainy and mild

NELSON SERGERIE

**GASPÉ** - The Gaspé received significant amounts of rain in December, according to the monthly summary published by Environment Canada.

In total, the Gaspé airport received 241 millimetres of rain and snowfall, or 206% more than the normal which is 117.

77.8 centimetres of snow fell. The normal is 75 centimetres. However, 164.7 millimetres of rain were received, four times more than the average of 42 millimetres.

On December 8 New Carlisle received 77.1 millimetres of precipitation.

December 13 and 14 brought more snow with 20 to 30 centimetres in general and 50 to 70 centimetres on high ground. The December 23 to 25 storm left a mix of precipitation in Gaspé: 77 millimetres of rain and 21.7 centimetres of snow fell.

Almost everywhere, erosion has left its marks, particularly on the railway line in the Banc de Pabos sector in Chandler. There was slight damage on Highway 132 in Haute-

Gaspésie, not to mention slight coastal overflows, among others, in Carleton.

However, more significant damage was caused on the beach on rue du Banc in Rivière-au-Renard.

The beach area will have to be repaired early this spring in Anse du Sud in Percé where a concrete platform and part of the wooden boardwalk were emptied of rocks during the storm.

Thousands of Hydro-Québec customers were deprived of electricity during the worst part of the storm while some found themselves spending Christmas Eve by candlelight.

Two heat records were broken on December 30 and 31 in Gaspé to end 2022.

An old record from December 30, 1932, was 4.4 degrees Celsius. At Michel-Pouliot airport on this same day 90 years later, the thermometer marked 6.1 degrees Celsius.

On December 31, it was 6.4 degrees Celsius, beating the 5.2 degrees Celsius of 2003. Normal temperatures on this date are minus 5 degrees Celsius during the day and minus 16 Celsius at night.



*Sally Walker*

SENIORS OUTREACH WORKER

CASA's Seniors Outreach Worker is here to help seniors and their families.

Free and confidential support for English-speaking seniors

We can help.

- Organize friendly home visits
- Provide regular telephone support
- Listen and help find solutions to concerns
- Accompany individuals in steps to improve quality of life
- Prevent abuse and mistreatment
- Locate and access appropriate community resources
- Obtain health services for both physical and mental wellbeing.

418-752-0855  
sally@casa-gaspe.com






# No more surprises for fishermen, promises Lebouthillier

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GRANDE-RIVIÈRE - Fishermen will no longer have any last-minute surprises as the Member of Parliament for Gaspésie-Les-Îles-de-la-Madeleine, assures that there will be no more moratorium a few days before the opening of the fishing season.

Following the outcry raised last year by the suspension of pelagic fishing a few days before the opening of the season, Diane Lebouthillier wanted to be reassuring in a press conference on January 10 to present a wrap-up of 2022 and to present the challenges of 2023.

"We know that this has a significant impact on the community with fishermen. I had some important talks last year. We don't want fishermen to learn a few weeks before the start of the fishing season when fishermen have made major investments, that they are being told that there is a moratorium or a drop in quotas. We are looking to be proactive with Fisheries and Oceans Canada so that the announcements are

made in the best possible way," explains Ms. Lebouthillier. She understands the consequences of such a decision in a context where certain species are experiencing declines.

Because barely \$15 million of the \$42 million have been spent in the Fisheries Fund, the program is extended for two years and will end on March 31, 2026.

The program had a difficult start in 2019 when Ottawa, Quebec and stakeholders did not agree on the definition of innovation in the fisheries sector.

Ms. Lebouthillier recalls that the criteria were put in place by people in the community and there is no question of relaxing the rules to support investments such as the gantry crane and the Grande-Rivière slipway.

"Usually it takes a year, a year and a half before people take ownership of the criteria and think about where and how to invest. I firmly believe in the fisheries sector that we have an extraordinary resource that no one can take away from us. It

is an innovative and important sector. We will continue to make investments," says the elected official who will ensure that the \$42 million is invested.

## Employment Insurance

Regarding employment insurance, the Member of Parliament reiterates that the long-awaited reform from 2015 will be a reality in 2023.

Ms. Lebouthillier recalls that when she entered politics, it was to create jobs.

"There are still a lot more jobs in Gaspésie and the Îles-de-la-Madeleine," she mentions.

The improvement of the labour market in Canada has an impact on seasonal workers who must work more to qualify for employment insurance.

"We have a particularity in our environment in terms of seasonal work. The discussions are held so that we take into account the particularities of the environment, but at the same time, we live with a shortage of labour in all sectors," she specifies.

## December Storm

The storm of December 23 caused damage to several infrastructures, particularly in the MRCs of Rocher-Percé and Côte-de-Gaspé.

Ms. Lebouthillier ensures that Ottawa is present in emergency situations.

"We saw it at the end of September with Fiona when the east coast and the Magdalen Islands experienced devastation. The federal government, whether in a situation of this storm, whether it's the fires in the west, or whether it's the floods in British Columbia, is always there to support the communities," she said, recalling that since 2015, the conditions for obtaining federal funds have been relaxed, particularly for small communities.

On the other hand, for the infrastructures themselves, Ms. Lebouthillier recalls that the municipalities must contact Quebec, which makes its global requests to Ottawa after having selected its files.

## Air Transport

On the issue of air transport, the MP recalls that the situation has challenged her since 2015 and the pandemic has only worsened the situation.

"It's worse than it's ever been," she says as there is a shortage of manpower at all levels in this sector.

Not wanting to intervene in the \$500 program created by Quebec – air transport was under federal jurisdiction – Ms. Lebouthillier wanted to ensure the safety of aircraft passengers first.

Since her re-election in October 2021, Diane Lebouthillier says that \$106 million has been invested in the riding, including \$40 million for the port of Cap-aux-Meules, in the Magdalen Islands.

Amounts have been announced at Forillon Park, in the terminal of the MRC du Rocher-Percé airport in Grande-Rivière, in companies from the Fisheries Fund and in tourism projects in Haute-Gaspésie.



**Family Ties**  
"Where everyone is part of the family."

## Hunting and Fishing Stories Contest

Send Family Ties your best hunting and fishing real life stories, myths and legends to be entered into a draw for various prizes.

To submit: email [david@projetrural.com](mailto:david@projetrural.com), call 418-752-0374

or send it through Facebook messenger to the Family Ties page.

Submit by February 17th to be included in the draw.

Part of the Family Ties **Back to Nature** project funded by: 



# Economic stability or decline for groundfish and pelagic fish in 2022

## Gaspé Peninsula fishermen experienced a good halibut season

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON – Economic outcomes for groundfish and pelagic fish were stable in the first case and negative in the other case last year in Quebec. For pelagic fish, the fishing moratorium on mackerel and the suspension of the spring herring catch greatly reduced the spinoffs linked to these species.

In terms of groundfish, overall capture revenues decreased slightly in 2022 compared to 2021, from \$15.7 million a year ago to \$15.5 million this year, a decrease of 1.3%. Catch volume fell from 2,643 to 2,559 metric tonnes, a drop of 3.2%.

As it has become the norm for several years, Atlantic halibut landings made up the majority of groundfish revenues with a catch value of \$8.6 million. This is 56% of the total value of all groundfish species and \$1.2 million more than the average revenue of the last five years, which was \$7.4 million.

Turbot, or Greenland halibut, took second place, as has also been the case in recent years, with catches totalling \$3.9 million in value, or 25% of total groundfish revenues.



Photo: G. Gagné

*Herring fishermen experienced a tough season in 2022. It was even worse for mackerel as a ban on fishing was imposed at the last minute by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.*

However, this is less than the \$4.6 million average of the last five years.

Cod catches remained marginal, based on a value of \$400,000 in 2022.

“We see stability in groundfish. We saw a slight drop in total volumes, but prices are up for Atlantic halibut, Greenland halibut and cod,” says Marilou Des Roberts, research analyst at the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Regionally, the Gaspé Peninsula dominated groundfish catches with the highest volumes among the sectors of maritime Quebec. The 1,784 metric tonnes of catches in 2022 represented 69.7% of Quebec's volume, and the resulting \$10.5 million made 67.75% of the province's revenues. These revenues had reached \$10 million in 2021, and catches had reached 1,609 tonnes, respectively 63.7% and 60.9% of the Quebec to-

tals. In the Gaspé Peninsula, revenues have, therefore, increased by 5% between 2021 and 2022, while catches have increased by 11%.

On the North Shore and in the Magdalen Islands, the drop in catches offset the increase in the Gaspé Peninsula.

In the archipelago, groundfish catches fell from 513 to 406 metric tonnes between 2021 and 2022, a drop of 20.9%. Revenues fell from \$3 million to \$2.6 million, a

lesser drop of 13.33%.

The North Shore was more affected, with a drop from 523 to 370 metric tonnes in catch volume, or 29.3%. Here, too, the decline in income was less severe, from \$2.7 million to \$2.3 million, at 14.8%.

The pelagic fish sector is without doubt, along with cod for groundfish, the most worrisome area of commercial fishing in Quebec. Between 2021 and 2022, total catches, already half of those in 2015, fell from 4,485 to 4,019 metric tonnes, a decrease of 10.3%. Revenue followed an even steeper downward trend, dropping from \$3.21 million to \$1.93 million, a 39.8% drop between 2021 and 2022.

Mackerel catches, worth \$910,000 in 2021, have been wiped off the chart last year. There remained \$1.84 million for herring and \$93,000 for capelin. The North Shore dominated in volume, thanks to catches of 2,943 metric tons, compared to 1,066 in the Gaspé Peninsula.

The value of herring catches on the North Shore reached close to \$1 million, compared to \$900,000 in the Gaspé Peninsula. Catches and revenues are now very low in the Magdalen Islands in terms of pelagic fish.

# Percé hires a director for its fire department

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PERCÉ - Percé will now have its own director of fire protection service to cover its vast territory, going against the current trend which is more towards municipal groupings, particularly in the MRCs of Avignon and Bonaventure.

Percé had previously shared a director with the Town of Grande-Rivière.

“Percé has a vast territory. We have three fire stations, which is quite exceptional in the Gaspé. We have difficulty with recruitment and retention,” said Mayor Cathy Poirier.

The Town had looked at certain groupings at the MRC level and worked with Grande-Rivière to see the outcome of such a collaboration.

“After several years, our number of firefighters is not growing. We have fewer firefighters than we had. For the municipal council, it was important to have a permanent director,” adds Ms. Poirier.



Photo: N. Sergerie

*Percé will have its own director of fire protection*

“We are correct. We are safe, but we cannot afford to lose firefighters. This is what motivated the council to have its own director to enhance the service,” says the mayor, who makes it a matter of security. The additional expense will be \$15,000 for taxpayers.

“We were paying \$57,000 for the Town of Grande-Riv-

ière to have a director shared between three municipalities. For an additional \$15,000, we have a permanent director. I think it's an investment that will be worth it,” calculates the elected official.

**No overhead poles**

As part of the repair and ex-

pansion of the Villa Frederick-James, the Société québécoise des infrastructures, which is acting on behalf of the Ministry of Culture in the project, is asking the Town for authorization to install a three-phase overhead power line to feed the future Espace bleu of Gaspésie.

“Electric poles on Mont Joli, directly in front of Percé Rock, it's a bit inconsistent,” said Mayor Poirier.

The ministry authorized this installation, while citizens must bend over backwards to meet the requirements related to the heritage site of Percé in place since 1973.

Owners who want to carry out work on their buildings in the heritage site must obtain authorization from the ministry. Delays are sometimes very long and have been resented for several months by citizens on the municipal council.

For example, a taxpayer who wishes to change the colour of his building must ob-

tain the approval of the ministry.

The request for an overhead line is, therefore, seen as an inconsistency by the municipal council, which is asking for the electrical wires to be buried.

“We know it could be a long wait (before getting an answer), but we don't want poles on Mont Joli,” insists the elected official.

The Town wants to be a good sport by allowing the Société québécoise des infrastructures to study the project, but the resolution does not authorize construction easements.

“The pole locations must be on municipal land. This is where the council could say ‘no’. We don't want to be fussy but we want it to be understood: the council does not want aerial poles,” adds Ms. Poirier.

According to her, the Espace bleu construction project is going well and the deadlines are being met for the opening scheduled for next October.

# Business & Professional DIRECTORY

## Grenier, Grenier & Grenier LAWYERS



**Réal Grenier, b.a.ll.l.**  
**Jules Grenier, b.a.ll.l.**

96 Gérard D. Levesque Blvd, P.O. Box 519  
New Carlisle (Quebec) G0C 1Z0  
Tel.: (418) 752-3308 • Fax (418) 752-6935



## Gagnon Claveau Law Firm

**Isabelle Gagnon**  
Attorney and family law mediator

**Ann-Chloé Boudreau**  
Attorney

418-392-3542  
www.gagnonclaveau.com  
info@gagnonclaveau.com

Fully  
bilingual  
services in  
the whole  
Gaspé  
peninsula

**GAËL TREMBLAY**  
Notary and legal counsel

TREMBLAY & BARRIAULT, NOTAIRES INC.  
119B Perron Blvd West  
New Richmond, (Québec) G0C 2B0  
Tel.: (418) 392-5282  
Fax: (418) 392-6155  
E-mail: gaeltremblay@notarius.net

**Tremblay & Barriault**  
Notaries and legal counsel

FULLY  
BILINGUAL  
SERVICE



## Forage Moreau Inc.

418-392-9501  
Mathieu Mercier - Driller/Owner

- Artesian Well Drilling
- Budgetary Price
- Bilingual Service
- RBQ: 5672-1467-01

foragemoreaumercier@gmail.com



By Appointment

## Richard Ste Croix

*Denturologist*

Construction and repair of dentures.  
We also make dentures on implants.

9 Adams Street, Gaspé Tel.: (418) 368-1525  
Quebec G4X 1E5 Fax: (418) 368-1542

**OHMEGA**  
Going beyond and reliable sir

3 Rue Cerisiers  
Gaspé, Québec G4X 2M1  
Tel. (418) 368-5425  
Fax (418) 368-7290  
www.groupeohmega.com

Electricity - Plumbing  
Automation  
Industrial computing  
Counter sales



VILLAGE  
Real Estate Agency

**Suzanne Landry**  
CERTIFIED REAL ESTATE BROKER AEO  
418-752-0792  
suzannelandry@royallepage.ca  
www.suzannelandry.ca

Friendly bilingual service  
from Matapedia to Port Daniel  
19 years experience

To reach the anglophone  
population, advertise in  
**The Gaspé Spec!**  
Contact our  
Advertising Representative  
Heather Imhoff  
**581-233-2062**  
gaspespec.revitalization@gmail.com

*Pro Pieds de la Baie*  
*Roxanne Major N.D.*  
*Foot Care Technician*

Service in the comfort of your own home.  
**418-752-3670**  
NEWPORT TO NEW RICHMOND  
Free advice with every visit!

ANQ  
ASSOCIATION DES  
SANTHÉRAPEUTES  
DU QUÉBEC

**Dr. Pascal Cyr**  
Optometrist

**Dr. Stacey Starrak**  
Optometrist

CLINIQUE D'OPTOMÉTRIE  
**L'ÉMERILLON**

LENSES CRAFTED ON THE PREMISES

PASPÉBIAC: 104 Gérard D. Levesque Blvd West • 418-752-5553  
CHANDLER: 260 René Lévesque Blvd East • 418-689-5553  
MARIA: 435 Perron Blvd West • 418-759-5553

**BILINGUAL SERVICE**

MEMBER OF

Canada's Largest Network of Optometrists

**Harnois Énergies**

**H&O Mobil™**

**YOUR MULTI-ENERGY SUPPLIER**

Diesel | Gas | DEF  
Heating oil | Lubricant

Available everywhere in Gaspésie.

125, Route 132, Bonaventure (QC) G0C 1E0 | 418 534-2777 harnoisenergies.com

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Paper or Digital: 1 year \$46 6 mths \$25 (taxes are included in prices) Paper  Digital:

Enclose cheque or money order or call us with your credit card or order on line at: **thegaspespec.com** Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Gaspé Spec**  
ESTABLISHED • MAY 1975  
208-B Gérard D. Levesque Blvd  
New Carlisle, Québec G0C 1Z0  
**418-752-5400**



# A very special ceremony to launch the construction of a fishing boat

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

**GASPÉ** - A coin ceremony was held on December 15 at the Chantier naval Forillon in Gaspé to mark the launch of the construction of a future boat that will be dedicated to crab and redfish fishing.

The \$8 million investment is important for captain and owner Marco Turbide who admits taking a chance when redfish fishing is not yet authorized, even if observers admit that redfish are very present in the Gulf of Saint-Lawrence.

"The primary goal is the future redfish fishery," explains Mr. Turbide. The redfish population is very promising. I'm betting that it is the fishing of the future," mentions the fisherman.

The boat will be at the cutting edge of technology and to guarantee the freshness of the fish, a new technique will be used.

"I bet on the quality of the fish. When it comes out of the water, it is plunged back into a tank of cold water with a solution that will retain its



Photos: N. Sergerie

*The future owner, Marco Turbide, posing with the coin that will be welded onto his ship.*

colour and freshness. It will prevent the fish from oxidizing," explains Mr. Turbide.

The crab fishery will ensure the profitability of the vessel while the redfish will add additional profits.

The shipyard's CEO, Jean-David Samuel, explains that several innovations will be in place on this new boat.

"On naval architecture, we worked a lot on the hull to

make it more efficient. We worked on the stabilizers which will be much more efficient, much less energy-consuming. We will reduce the drag. We are also working on the power of the engine and the electronics to be efficient," explains Mr. Samuel.

On deck, the builder is working on ergonomics to make it more comfortable for the sailors, while working

with trawl suppliers to be on the cutting edge in this area.

"The boat will be able to crab with a chilled water cooling system. This is what we see more and more on new boats," says the builder.

"The fish will be in bins and frozen immediately on-board the boat. The liquid ice will be produced on board and it will surround all the fish. It will be A1 quality for sale to the consumer," says Samuel.

The shipyard says the ves-

sel will be "in service when the redfish fishery resumes."

The beginning of the construction was marked by a coin ceremony, where a coin is welded under the keel which will remain in place throughout the boat's life at sea as a symbol of good fortune.

It is a tradition dating back to Viking times that brings blessings and luck to its crew.

Even today, this practice is an important milestone in the construction of a ship.



*Welder Serge Minville affixes the coin to the part that will serve as the base of the ship.*

## Cutting down on food costs but not on flavour

**DIANE SKINNER**

We are all looking for ways to stretch our grocery dollars as the cost of food rises. Many of us are feeling concerned about the rising cost of food, which along with shortages is impacting our food budget in significant ways.

Arianne Arsenault, Collective Cooking Animator at Family Ties, New Carlisle suggests that is wise to home cook meals as much as possible and cut down on expensive and less healthy pre-prepared or processed food. Buy on sale when you can and plan your meals ahead. She adds, "Join a collective cooking group or get together with a group of friends and family. It's fun and saves on costs. You can make something low-cost and healthy by using your imagination. Bon appétit."

As we search for ways to make our money go a little further, there are a few helpful strategies that can make a difference.

Start with taking an inventory of what you have in the fridge, freezer and pantry. Check best before dates and plan to use items that expire



*Check flyers and Flipp, a free cellphone app for sale prices to help your money to go further.*

soon. Always put older food to the front and use first.

Stock up on canned and frozen foods when they are on sale. Purchase food you will eat because buying 24 cans of sardines does not help your budget if you dislike eating sardines.

Go shopping with a list, either on paper or on your cell phone. This will help you to cut back on impulse buying. Do not go shopping when you are hungry because you will impulse buy!

Check flyers and Flipp. (A free smart phone app that has all the current flyers in your area).

If you compare prices of two brands for a similar item, check the sizes of the two items.

Check out no-name products which are often as nutritious as the name brand foods. Foods that are sold in single-serve sized packets are usually more expensive. You are paying for the packaging. Best to buy the full-size version and

divide it at home.

"Less than perfect" items may be just as good, but less expensive. Some larger grocery stores offer imperfect apples for example at a lower price.

The price of meat is still rising so you may wish to consider exploring some plant-based meals. Proteins such as chickpeas, lentils, canned beans, edamame or tofu can really stretch your budget – while you are serving foods lower in fats.

It is particularly important to check prices for meat, chicken and seafood. These big-ticket items, if on sale, will save you proportionately more.

Look for cheaper cuts of beef such as eye of round and sirloin tip, but just adjust the cooking – low and slow.

Lean ground beef and ground chicken go on sale often and that is the time to stock up.

Canned fish, including salmon, tuna often goes on special.

In the winter, fruits and vegetables are more expensive so look for frozen and canned. These will be high in nutrition but low in waste. Frozen fruit is perfect in smoothies or added to cereal or yogurt.

If you buy in bulk, oats and rice can be stored in airtight containers.

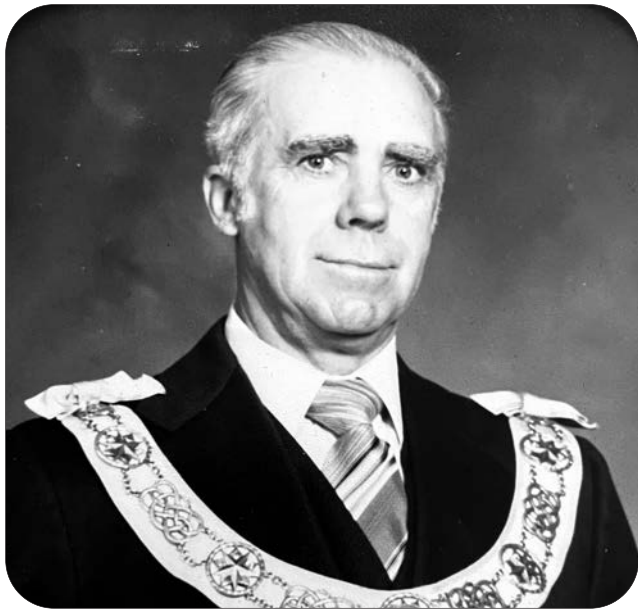
Cook once and eat twice. Prepare extra and store it for the next day. This will save you time and money.

Root vegetables, including squash, carrots, turnip and potatoes tend to be less expensive and will last longer than, for example, romaine lettuce.

# Announcements



## Obituary



### LEPAGE: William Vane

It is with profound sadness that the family of William Vane LePage (Pop) announces his passing in Montreal on January 9, 2023, at the remarkable age of 97.

He will be dearly missed by his sister Faye, son Frank (Iva), daughter Noreen (Wallace); grandchildren Bill (Donna), Francis, Randy, Meagan (Ryan), Amber, Evan (Catherine); and many great-grandchildren.

Born in Gaspé, Quebec in 1925, Vane was an active member of his community, church, and the Masons. His memorial and burial will take place in St. Georges de Malbaie, Gaspé, in the summer of 2023.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the All Saints by the Sea (St. Peter's) Church in Malbaie.

Days have turned into years since you left and here we all are still missing you. Dorothy, Dale, Lynn, Tony and their families.



### GOYETTE: Eric

June 13, 1984 - January 19, 2012

In loving memory of our son, brother and uncle. *Those we love remain with us, For love itself lives on.*

*Cherished memories never fade, Because a loved one's gone. Those we love can never be More than a thought apart, For as long as there's a memory, They'll live on in our hearts.*

Love always, Mom, Jean, Patrick, Emilie, Noemie And Nelly.

### WYLIE: Arnold

In loving memory of Arnold Wylie.

#### We Miss you

*Our hearts still ache with sadness, And many tears still flow. What it meant to lose you, No one will ever know. We hold you close, Within our hearts, And there you will remain. To walk with us, throughout our lives, Until we meet again.*

Always loved and will never be forgotten by your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

#### 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, online or in person.*



## In Memory

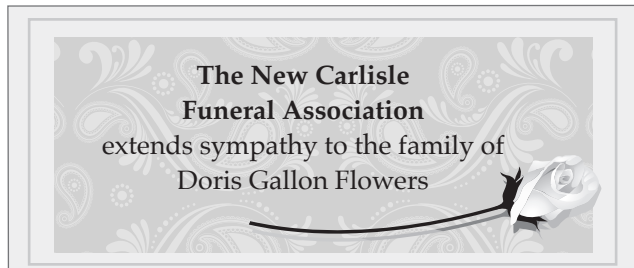


### BOULANGER: Paul

June 4, 1937 – January 24, 2015

In loving memory of Paul Boulanger.

*He was never one to boast  
He just went on quietly working  
For the ones he loved the most.  
His dreams were seldom spoken  
His wants were very few  
And most of the time his worries  
Went unspoken too.  
He was there... A firm foundation  
Through all our storms of life  
A sturdy hand to hold onto  
In times of stress and strife.  
Someone we could turn to  
When times were good or bad,  
One of our greatest blessings  
The man that we called our Dad.*



## COAST ROUND-UP

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

#### COAST ROUND-UP

#### GASPE:

**Royal Canadian Legion**  
Please be advised that Legion memberships are available for \$50. Returning and new members welcome.

#### PORT DANIEL:

**Three Star Golden Age Club**  
**Tuesdays:** Pétanque from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. every Tuesday evening to have fun and learn a new game. Cost is \$3.

#### HOPE:

**Hope Baptist Church**  
**Sundays:** Sunday School starting at 10 a.m. Worship service beginning at 11 a.m.

#### NEW CARLISLE:

**Royal Canadian Legion Branch #64**  
Please be advised that Legion

memberships are available for \$45. Returning and new members welcome.

**Wednesdays:** Cribbage beginning at 7 p.m. Bring a partner.

**Thursdays:** Open from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

**Fridays:** Darts beginning at 6:30 p.m.

**Saturdays:** Open at 2 p.m. Everyone welcome.

**February 7:** General meeting at 7 p.m. at 1 Mount Sorrel, New Carlisle.

#### NEW CARLISLE:

**Bible Chapel Meetings**  
**Sundays:** 9:30 a.m. Breaking of Bread for believers. 2 p.m. Gospel meeting.  
**Thursdays:** 6:30 p.m. Prayer Meeting and Bible Study.

**UNITED CHURCH  
NEW RICHMOND  
Sunday, January 22**  
10 a.m. Service

Everyone welcome. For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

#### CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

##### Book Room

The book room will be open beginning **January 11**. Anyone who needs assistance can contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

**UNITED CHURCH  
HOPE TOWN  
Sunday, January 22**  
2 p.m. Service

**ANGLICAN CHURCH  
OF CANADA  
Sunday, January 22**  
**NEW CARLISLE**  
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
**SHIGAWAKE**  
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist





## SUDOKU

6								
		5	1			3		4
			9				8	
2					9		6	
			4	7	6		5	9
							3	
	6	7	3		2			
	3		6	7				1
1								

### Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Advanced

### Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

3	7	7	6	4	9	8	2	5
4	3	8	6	5	7	9	2	1
9	6	7	3	1	2	8	4	5
5	9	6	2	8	1	4	3	7
8	1	3	4	7	6	2	5	9
2	7	4	5	3	9	1	6	8
3	4	1	9	2	5	7	8	6
7	2	5	1	6	8	3	9	4
6	8	9	7	4	3	5	1	2

ANSWER:

## Why do they say ...

by Gary Briand

A friend of mine from Granby asked me to describe the meaning of the expression "the whole shebang." The simplest explanation is to see "shebang" as meaning the sum total of anything. The word "shebang" probably comes from the Irish word "shebeen." The American author, Walt Whitman, made it clear what the word "shebang" meant in 19th century America in his book Specimen Days which he published in 1862.

"Besides the hospitals, I also go occasionally on long tours through the camps, talking with the men. Sometimes at night among the groups around the fires, in their shebang enclosures of bushes."

Clearly, then, Whitman used the term to mean a very rustic dwelling. But ten years later, its meaning had widened considerably. Mark Twain in his work Roughing It (1872) was using the word to mean a vehicle:

"You're welcome to ride here as long as you please, but this shebang's chartered, and we can't let you pay a cent."

By 2000 shebang came to mean "anything and everything" - the whole lot, or all the pieces.

## Chase away chills with a thick, filling stew

Slow cookers can be unsung kitchen heroes any time of the year, but particularly during the colder seasons. That's because slow cookers take on one-pot meals with ease. A person simply places all the ingredients inside the crock, then returns in 8 hours or so to a completely cooked meal.

Certain recipes, including stews, lend themselves well to the slow-cooking method. While beef is often associated with stew, plenty of proteins can take the place of beef, including pork. This recipe for "Golden Harvest Pork Stew" utilizes pork and combines it with potatoes, carrots and corn for a stew that some may even mistake for a chowder.

### Golden Harvest Pork Stew

Makes 4 servings

- 1 pound boneless pork cutlets, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 medium potatoes, unpeeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 1 ear corn, broken into 4 pieces, or 1/2 cup corn
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- Chopped parsley



1. Toss pork pieces with 1 tablespoon flour; set aside. Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add pork; cook until browned on all sides. Transfer to slow cooker.
2. Add remaining ingredients, except parsley and 1 tablespoon flour. Cover; cook on low 5 to 6 hours.
3. Stir 1/4 cup cooking liquid into remaining 1 tablespoon flour in small bowl. Stir flour mixture into stew. Turn slow cooker to high. Cook 10 minutes or until thickened. Adjust seasonings, if desired. To serve, sprinkle with parsley.

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to music.

A B E S T

□ □ □ □ □

Answer: Beats

## Guess Who?

I am an actress born in England on February 23, 1983. I garnered much acclaim on the British stage before coming to the United States. Since then, I've played everything from a fashion assistant to a Queen.

Answer: Emily Blunt

☉ ✱ ☽ ☼ ☾ ☿ ♁ ♃ ♅ ♇ ♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓

## CRYPTO FUN

☽ ☼ ☾ ☿ ♁ ♃ ♅ ♇ ♈ ♉ ♊ ♋ ♌ ♍ ♎ ♏ ♐ ♑ ♒ ♓  
Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to roller skating.  
Each number corresponds to a letter.  
(Hint: 9 = E)

A. 5 2 19 6

Clue: Place to skate

B. 21 22 9 9 14 10

Clue: Moving components

C. 22 17 3 3 24

Clue: Personal interest activity

D. 10 7 9 9 23

Clue: Rate of movement

Answers: A. rink B. wheels C. hobby D. speed

### ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

You may be in a meditative mood this week, Aries. You may think about mundane things or even complex issues. It's an ideal time to stay indoors and relax with your thoughts.

### TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Obligations to friends or family could interfere with other things you had intended, such as spending time with your partner. As more people call upon you, step back and consider.

### GEMINI – May 22/June 21

You have a strong desire to clean and organize your home this week, Gemini. Spring cleaning certainly comes early. Conquer that clutter.

### CANCER – June 22/July 22

All of that extra work on the job will pay off in the days to come, Cancer. Expect an email or personal meeting from a supervisor to discuss.

### LEO – July 23/Aug 23

Practical matters, such as the household budget, may need your attention this week, Leo. A big purchase is on the horizon, so get your finances sorted out.

## HOROSCOPES

### VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Giving back to the community can boost your morale, Virgo. Think about offering to shop for an elderly neighbor or volunteer at a food pantry a few days a week.

### LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Careful penny pinching may now result in a nice nest egg you can use any way you desire, Libra. Enjoy the fruits of your labor when you can loosen the purse strings.

### SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, a sense of duty to loved ones may have you taking on tasks that you otherwise may never consider. Your willingness to pitch in won't go unnoticed.

### SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Don't be surprised if the people you help this week are willing to go to bat for you in the future. Consider any assistance you provide an investment in friendship.

### CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Some people know exactly which buttons to push to get a rise out of you,

Capricorn. Try to be the bigger person and turn the other cheek.

### AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

A momentary loss of confidence may catch you off-guard, Aquarius. Brush these feelings aside and take on any task or challenge that comes your way.

### PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Nostalgia could hit you hard this week Pisces. Enjoy an unexpected trip down Memory Lane. Contact others who might enjoy it as well.

### FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS JANUARY 15

Dove Cameron, Actress (27)

JANUARY 16

Lin-Manuel Miranda,

Actor (43)

JANUARY 17

Steve Harvey, Comic (66)

JANUARY 18

Dave Bautista, Wrestler (54)

JANUARY 19

Dolly Parton, Singer (77)

JANUARY 20

Skeet Ulrich, Actor (53)

JANUARY 21

Emma Bunton, Singer (47)

# Hearing loss can affect overall health

DIANE SKINNER

As we age many health concerns emerge and one of those new challenges is the loss or reduction of hearing. In the age group 18 to 39, only about five percent report hearing loss. In those aged 40 to 69, about 20 percent have some form of hearing loss. People over the age of 70 report hearing challenges at over 40 percent. Hearing loss is a problem for seniors.



When hearing becomes a concern, it is most commonly finding difficulty distinguishing voices from background noise. Another sign is tinnitus or ringing in the ears. These changes can affect our quality of life and lead to depression, social isolation and even dementia.

The causes of loss of hearing may be genetic, ageing, certain medications, head injury, infections and prolonged exposure to loud noise. The recent research into reduced hearing as people age due to genetic links (it is in the family) show that the structure of your ear that you have inherited may originate in the

inner ear, the cochlea. Scientists are using this recent discovery to guide them towards developing new drugs to combat hearing loss.

Older people are not getting their hearing tested until the hearing loss is severe. Many elderly patients (80 percent) say that their own family doctor has never asked about their hearing. Over 70 percent of seniors have not had a hearing test.

Hearing loss can lead to depression. In fact, those experiencing hearing loss are almost 50 percent more likely to have feelings of sadness and depression. This may be

due to feeling socially isolated, something which already affects seniors to a much greater degree.

Once hearing loss has been confirmed by an audiologist, hearing aids may be purchased. However, almost 60 percent of these individuals report not wearing their hearing aids all the time. This may be due to discomfort or embarrassment.

Hearing loss is a serious concern, especially as we age. Getting tested and wearing prescribed hearing aids can be helpful in preventing social isolation in the elderly.



Credit: Miranda Willett

One of the joys of winter is going for a skate and then enjoying a nice, hot cup of cocoa afterwards! Some residents of Cascapedia-Saint-Jules tried out the ice last weekend.

## Cascapedia-Saint-Jules Ice rink operational: Lots of outdoor winter fun

DIANE SKINNER  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CASCAPEDIA-SAINT-JULES: Miranda Willett, the recreational director for Cascapedia-Saint-Jules tells us that the community rink is ready to use. Jeff Hall has been flooding the rink and is maintaining the ice. Located at 65 rue Gallagher Road in Cascapedia-Saint-Jules, the rink is available for use on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings and all day Saturday and Sunday.

Miranda reminds the community that donations of unwanted skates and helmets would be appreciated. Simply take them to the Youth Centre during open hours.

Many families showed up last weekend to test out the ice and all had a great time. There will be various upcoming events this winter such as disco skating, pickup hockey games, movie nights and more.

Everyone should check the Recreation Facebook page for more information.



Register now!  
cegepgim.ca



# Business & Professional Directory



**DIANE LEBOUTHILLIER**

MP • Gaspésie—Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Serving the English-speaking community of our beautiful region!

Grande-Rivière office 418 385-4264  
Magdalen Islands office 418 986-1489

Sainte-Anne-des-Monts office 418 764-2890  
New Richmond office 581 355-0060

Email: [diane.lebouthillier@parl.gc.ca](mailto:diane.lebouthillier@parl.gc.ca)

diane

**AXIO**  
arpenteurs-géomètres inc.  
land surveyors  
1518, Avenue de Grand-Pré, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Alexandre Babin, Arpenteur-géomètre  
C abag@axioag.com  
Guillaume Lapierre, Arpenteur-géomètre  
C glag@axioag.com

Membre de l'Ordre  
des Arpenteurs-Géomètres du Québec

418 534-3113 / [info@axioag.com](mailto:info@axioag.com)  
[axioag.com](http://axioag.com)

T 418-364-7082 / 1-844-664-7082

**PROUD PARTNER IN  
YOUR CONSTRUCTION  
PROJECTS FOR  
MORE THAN  
45 YEARS!**

[constructionlfg.com](http://constructionlfg.com)

Gaspésie—Les Îles | Côte-Nord | Bas-Saint-Laurent

BUILDINGS
ENERGY AND CIVIL ENGINEERING
INDUSTRIAL MECHANIC

**WHAT MAKES US  
DRIVEN TO BE DIFFERENT?**

DISCOVER MORE

[www.shipENERGY.com](http://www.shipENERGY.com)