

Lobster season off to a good start in Saint-Godefroi

GILLES GAGNÉ

SAINT-GODEFROI — The lobster fishing season kicked off on the right foot in Saint-Godefroi and the surrounding wharves on April 29 and 30, as the weather was just about perfect, with practically no wind and a temperature that hovered between 3 degrees in the wee hours of the morning and close to 10 degrees by lunchtime.

Shigawake's Jeffrey Vautier, who has not missed a lobster season in over 35 years, points out that the Saturday, April 29, trap-setting operation was the fastest since he started fishing. He was also glad the following day with his landings which were between 800 and 900 pounds.

A storm then occurred over the first two days of May, but the fishermen based in Saint-Godefroi all went out on May



Charles Brière (right) is starting the season as a captain, after having acquired a boat and a licence. He is shown here with fisherman helper Daniel Gignac.

1 before the gale. Some fishermen, however, preferred to stay at the wharf the following day. The wind had gone down a bit but the waves were still

quite large.

The results of the April 30 landing were relatively good as most fishermen met by the SPEC landed between 600

and 1,200 pounds of lobster. This volume would have been exceptional 12 or 15 years ago but is now considered an average season start, consider-

ing the remarkable improvement of the state of the resource over the last 15 years.

The big question remains the price that will be paid to the fishermen, an answer that will likely only be given around May 15.

"We will receive a base price for now and it will be adjusted later when we get the price of the Magdalen Islands," says Jeffrey Vautier, referring to the price determination process adopted a few years ago by one buyer, Réal Nicolas of the Grande-Rivière firm, Poisson salé gaspésien.

Since then all the other buyers have adopted that same method. The first lobster landings in the Magdalen Islands were expected on May 8, and it takes a week to get a fair market price that fits in

Cont'd on page 9

Saint-Elzéar sawmill becomes the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie's newest customer

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW RICHMOND — After numerous attempts to get the Association coopérative forestière of Saint-Elzéar to ship lumber by rail, the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie (SCFG) has landed a trial load. On May 5, a car was loaded in New Richmond to be sent to Ontario.

The attempts to attract this new client were made on numerous occasions over the last decade and, at times, even prior to 2013. "We are starting with one car. We would like it to be a regular thing, as in loading two or three cars per week," says Luc Lévesque, director general of the SCFG.

Back in the 1990s, the Saint-Elzéar sawmill regularly shipped lumber by rail. The owner of the Matapédia-Gaspé line at the time, Canadian National (CN), put much effort in landing new customers before putting the Matapédia-Chandler part of the railroad up for sale in July 1996.



The construction of the new railway bridge at Ruisseau-Leblanc will progress rapidly over the coming weeks.

As a municipal entity, the SCFG, initially called Corporation du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie, acquired the Chandler-Gaspé section in March 1997, after reaching an agreement with CN, which had previously tried to abandon it. The Québec Railway Society, a private company, took over the Matapédia-Chandler stretch in December 1996 and sold it to the SCFG in 2007.

The fact that the Saint-Elzéar Association coopérative forestière quit as a railway



The 73-foot long lumber car was spotted on May 4 by an SCFG employee using a track mobile unit, and it was loaded the following day.

client can be attributed to a number of factors: one being, for many years, the relative proximity of its clients, often based in the Maritimes. Rail is more competitive over longer distances. The lack of trucks and truck drivers, the cost of fuel and environmental advantages have convinced some companies to come back to rail.

In the meantime, a significant portion of the railway upgrading project is progressing very well at the municipal limit of Caplan and Saint-Siméon, as Construction Polaris, in charge of replacing the Ruisseau-Leblanc bridge since the spring of 2022, installed the spans of the new structure on May 4 and 5 after bringing in two heavy duty cranes.

The work associated with the \$7.9 million contract will likely be completed at the end of June, or the beginning of July, which is way before the scheduled resumption of rail traffic between Caplan and Port Daniel which is expected to occur at one point in 2024.

Demonstrations take place throughout the Gaspé Peninsula for International Workers' Day

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - Public sector workers demonstrated on May 1 at five locations in the Gaspé Peninsula as part of International Workers' Day.

Under the theme *We are not taking advantage of inflation!* the demonstrations took place in Cap-Chat, Carleton-sur-Mer, Gaspé, Grande-Rivière and Paspébiac.

"Currently, it is very difficult for workers. It is not true that our salary increases cover everything for inflation. In the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, when we look at housing, food, and transportation, these are elements that affect us quite a bit," explains the president of the Union of Education Workers of Eastern Quebec, Anne Bernier, who demonstrated in front of the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, Gaspé campus.

The Quebec government is offering public sector workers 9% for the next five years.

"Knowing that inflation is much higher, the government must understand that our purchasing power can be mini-



On May 1, a small group gathered at lunchtime in front of the Gaspé campus of the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles.

Photo: Courtesy CSN

mally what we had and even increase it. This would be necessary," says Ms. Bernier.

The Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), the Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) and the Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé (APTS) unions have mobilized to denounce that the Quebec government is doing nothing to contain the housing crisis which has been going on for several years with access to housing becoming more and more difficult.

The coalition is also criti-

cizing large grocery chains which are taking advantage of inflation to generate staggering profits creating a negative impact on the cost of living for a large part of the population.

In Gaspé, there were only about fifteen demonstrators present.

"What is important is not the number. We know that the population is there with us. On the other hand, to mobilize, to go out, it takes time and shows the heaviness of what people are experiencing," comments Ms. Bernier.



The roof of the C.-E. Pouliot will be redone over the next three summers.

Photo: N. Sergerie

A new roof for the C.-E. Pouliot School in Gaspé

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - The C.-E. Pouliot school in Gaspé will receive a \$7.5 million investment over the next three years to completely redo the roof.

Since the project is rather large, the Centre de services scolaire des Chic-Chocs will divide the work into three phases.

"It's a very, very large area to cover and for work of this magnitude, school attendance must be taken into account," says Josée Synnott, the director general of the Centre de services scolaire des Chic-Chocs.

Work on the first phase, which is valued at \$2.2 million, will start as soon as students are on summer vacation.

"In addition to the roof, the replacement of mechanical equipment that is at the end of its useful life, such as fans, is planned," adds Ms. Synnott.

C.-E. Pouliot welcomed its first students in 1972. The last time there were renovations (to the roof) was in 1996 following a fire that ravaged the roof. Damage at the time was estimated at \$3 million.

Right to Food: A Consultation to Feed Everyone with Dignity

Press release

NEW CARLISLE: - Quebec Collective Kitchens Association (RCCQ) held a series of consultations throughout the province with its members, allied partners and the public on the right to food. On April 27, Family Ties hosted the only English consultation on the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands in partnership with the RCCQ. The consultation was held at the Municipality of New Carlisle Town Hall where 13 people participated in exchanges about the right to food. The skyrocketing cost of food, monocultures and toxic substances, among other topics are of growing concern to citizens and highlight the fact that food is not a recognized right in Quebec and that it is high time to take action!

During the consultation, participants shared their opinions and experiences on the challenges they face to gain access to food with dignity and offered many solutions to improve the situation.

The results of the consultation indicate that the right to food is a critical issue for many people in the MRC of Bonaventure.

Participants stressed the need to ensure access to quality food for all, regardless of socio-economic status or place of residence.

The many consultations allowed the RCCQ to understand the issues related to the right to food and the regional differences. This fundamental right, recognized by the United Nations and by Canada, is broken down into these components: accessibility (to food), availability and stability (of supply), adequacy (adequacy of food) and sustainability (of food systems).

Regional consultations have generated a growing commitment and have raised awareness of this important and urgent issue. The RCCQ hopes that the results of these consultations will help create concrete actions to ensure fair access to food for all Quebecers.

The public will, while powerful, is insufficient to guarantee the right to food. This is why we are asking the government of Quebec to implement, protect and enforce the right to food in the province.

The results of the consultations will be collated and will allow the Quebec Collective Kitchens Association (RCCQ) to draft framework legislation allowing the entire population of the province of Quebec and future generations to be fed with dignity.

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Family Ties

Growing Wise Together

Activities for Seniors

Family Ties is pleased to present monthly garden activities for seniors.

Please join us:

Wednesday, May 17th, 2023

1:30-3:30 PM

Online by Zoom

Tablets & all materials will be delivered

This month's activity: Container Gardening

*Space is limited. Please RSVP by Monday, May 15th 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

Canada



Photo: Facebook

MAPAQ seizes 95 dogs in Pointe-à-la-Croix and Escuminac

GILLES GAGNÉ

POINTE-À-LA-CROIX - The Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPAQ) seized 95 dogs on May 2 from properties on chemin de la Petite-Rivière-du-Loup and rue des Méandres in Pointe-à-la-Croix, as well as a property on Shipyard Road in Escuminac, following a series of inspections, including one carried out during the third week of April.

The operation was conducted jointly with the Sûreté du Québec and MAPAQ collaborators who provided services for 74 adult dogs and 21 puppies. In April, the ministry received a complaint from the Municipality of Pointe-à-la-Croix after receiving reports from citizens concerned about the fate of the animals.

The MAPAQ usually needs to be informed by a municipal authority that a situation may require at least an inspection.

"It was judged that the rules to ensure the well-being of the animals were not respected, rules concerning shelter, nutritional aspects and the general condition of the animals," specifies Johan Dallaire-Boily, spokesperson for the MAPAQ. He has for now no specific details on the condition of the 95 dogs, many of which remained to be assessed the day following the seizure. Mr. Dallaire-Boily also explained that it is sometimes necessary to allow time between inspections and a seizure when it becomes inevitable. The inspection carried out in mid-April was reported by some regional media outlets.

"The operation is being carried out with various partners

to assist us, in addition to the assistance of the Sûreté du Québec. You have to make sure you have the required number of cages, and accommodations with our partners in the region concerned, the Gaspé Peninsula, and perhaps in the Lower Saint Lawrence. It is certain that there are logistics to be respected in relation to a similar operation. The dogs must be relocated and assessed by a veterinarian," explains Mr. Dallaire Boily.

People who bought animals from the owner of the places where the seizure was carried out reported on social media that some of these dogs had wounds, that they were dirty and that they sometimes had erratic behaviour.

Sgt. Claude Doiron, the spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec, specifies that the police did not face any resistance at the scene of the operation.

Johan Dallaire-Boily indicates that now the MAPAQ team must complete its investigation before submitting a file to the Criminal and Penal Prosecutions Department at the New Carlisle court house.

"We have 90 days to file an offence report and, after that, it no longer depends on us, but on the judicial system, if it judges that there are grounds to file charges. A first offence (for failure to ensure animal welfare) can lead to a fine ranging from \$1,000 to \$250,000. A second offence can lead up to 18 months in prison," says Mr. Dallaire-Boily.

The president of the Baies-des-Chaleurs Animal Protection Network, Mia Ste-Marie, writes that the members of her organization are "happy with the outcome of the intervention

Police report

On April 28, Jean-Marc Ferland, 35, who resided in Port-Daniel over a period of a few years, pleaded guilty to various charges of a sexual nature involving violence. He received a five-year sentence to be served in a federal penitentiary. Quebec Court Judge Janick Poirier sided with the agreement that had recently been reached between the criminal prosecutor and the defence attorney. Jean-Marc Ferland will also have his name placed on the sex offender list for the next 20 years and he must provide a sample of his DNA.

The agreement reached between the prosecution and the defence covers 5 of the 11 charges filed in October 2022 against Mr. Ferland, which included sexual assault, assault with a weapon, assault, sexual assault by choking and assault by suffocating. "The facts admitted extended over a long period, first in Bedford in the Eastern Townships, and then in Port-Daniel," specifies the criminal prosecutor at the New Carlisle courthouse, Maxime Rocheville-Paradis.

"The out-of-court agreement saves the victim from a long and painful testimony," adds the prosecutor, to explain the withdrawal of important charges. Initially, Jean-Marc Ferland was also accused of human trafficking, forcing someone to commit an act of bestiality, pimping, of obtaining a pecuniary benefit from pimping and of having participated in a sexual assault with another person, on the same victim. The identity of the victim is protected by the court, as are any identifying details.

"He has been imprisoned since October. He had four years and 56 days left to serve in the federal penitentiary as of April 28, since there was a period of preventive detention," says Attorney Rocheville-Paradis, who had opposed a release from prison at Ferland's bail hearing, a month after the charges were filed.

Although there was not an official publication ban, The Gaspé Spec had chosen not to identify the accused in the fall of 2022 to protect the identity of the victim. The April 28 judgement changes that situation.

These crimes admitted by Jean-Marc Ferland were committed between September 1, 2018, and September 22, 2022. The investigation began at the end of September and the indictment took place in early October.

At 7:30 p.m. on May 2, a body was discovered by a passerby in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. The body was found very close to a brook behind a gas station on Boulevard Sainte-Anne Ouest. Sergeant Claude Doiron, the spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec, explains that the death was not recent. "We can say that it is the body of a man but we cannot say more. An autopsy and a coroner's report will be needed before we can add to this information." For the moment, the Sûreté du Québec is not connecting this discovery and the disappearance in November 2022 of Julien Harrisson, a man from Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, who is still missing. The identification methods used by the coroner will likely involve the use of the man's dental record.

Convicted of several counts of sexual offences against two minors in Gaspé, Louis-David Côté, 22, will be sentenced on September 26. In January, Mr. Côté pleaded guilty to charges of luring from a computer and sexual contact with a teenage girl at the C.-E. Pouliot high school, as well as having made available sexually explicit images of a second victim under the age of 18. The defence attorney has already told the court that he intends to challenge the one-year minimum sentence for this type of offence. He will send a document to the Attorney General of Quebec at the end of June. His client has no criminal record. The events alleged against Louis-David Côté occurred in 2021 when he was 20 years old.

The trial of Jonathan Rail, 39, from Pointe-à-la-Croix, charged with aggravated assault with a weapon, is scheduled for August 17. Mr. Rail, who has a criminal record, allegedly injured his victim with a knife following an altercation in November 2022 on Chaleur Street in Pointe-à-la-Croix. The victim was taken to the Campbellton Hospital Centre to treat serious but not life-threatening injuries. Jonathan Rail opted for a trial by judge alone. He was released on bail last fall, under numerous conditions.

Sory Keita, who is suspected of an attempted robbery at a McDonald's restaurant in Gaspé in November 2022, will return to the Percé Courthouse on May 29. Mr. Keita escaped a closed therapy centre on March 7 but turned himself in seven days later. He was attending therapy to help with his drug addiction problem. Criminal prosecutor Isabelle Gavioli, from the Percé Courthouse, opposed the release of Sory Keita on April 12, however, Judge Denis Paradis opted to give Mr. Keita a second chance so that the accused could reintegrate in the therapy from which he had escaped in March.

Following Sûreté du Québec's Operation Influence, which was held last March, many roadside checks targeting mainly alcohol and drugs among vehicle drivers took place, as the police maintained their efforts to tackle one of the main causes of fatal collisions and serious injuries in Quebec. A total of 11 arrests were carried out during March. Six drivers were arrested for driving with a blood alcohol level above the legal limit, while five others were arrested for driving under the influence of drugs. The police officers of the Rocher Percé MRC detachment in Chandler remind drivers of the many risks associated with driving while impaired by alcohol and drugs, in particular the risk of causing a fatal collision. Checks for impaired driving will continue throughout the summer throughout all regions in Quebec in an effort to make the road network safer.

carried out by the MAPAQ, a process that may seem long for some people, but which must be rigorous and must follow a protocol. It requires a lot of planning in order to be able to house the seized animals. We are talking about 74 dogs and 21 puppies. These are animals that will require professional care, a health assessment by a veterinary team and a desensitization process. Dogs are so-

cialized for up to six months. After that, it's desensitization, because they haven't been socialized and they have developed quite particular behaviours," she notes.

The dogs seized are mostly golden doodles, a variety obtained from a mix between a golden retriever and a poodle.

The owner of the properties where the seizures were made sold the dogs but, recently, after

apparently being overwhelmed by the number of dogs or perhaps fearing a MAPAQ inspection, he gave some away, a situation criticized by the Baies-des-Chaleurs Animal Protection Network because most of the dogs need an evaluation made by a professional, as well as specific care. Those evaluations cannot be carried out by the MAPAQ once a dog has been given away or sold.



Gilles Gagné

Commentary

Recyclables: going back to outdated methods is a lame idea

Those who are dedicated to using their blue bins and recycling their household materials wonder, at least a few times every week, what to do with item packaging. Is it reusable? Is it recyclable?

Thirty years or so after implementing sorting centres, where our waste is sorted and distributed for various recycling purposes, a lot of people are still unsure about which items are actually recyclable.

The reason is relatively simple. Our waste management authorities, which go beyond the Environment Ministry, have not established clear rules and valid incentives to increase the amount of waste that bears recycling potential. Moreover, the industries selling us their products have shown way more interest in marketing than caring for humanity's future, which is threatened over the long term by various factors, including the way we manage waste.

It was in the early 1990s when the pick-up for recyclable material was first introduced. A few years later huge containers were made available, usually alongside popular locations such as public buildings, municipal garages and arenas. Citizens wishing to recycle could bring their plastic, glass, paper and metal to these locations.

Later the use of blue containers was introduced with variable levels of enthusiasm. At first, the container was an open hard plastic box, before being replaced by a larger closed container. Thirty years later, a large percentage of citizens take the disposal of recyclables seriously. However, employees at sorting centres still find diapers, bags of dog poop and even moose carcasses at times.

However, garbage found mixed with recycled material is not the main problem slowing down the recuperation rate of plastic, glass, paper and metal in Quebec. Outdated packaging habits and weak packaging rules represent the biggest hurdle.

Plastic, for example, stands out for many reasons. Plastic micro-particles poison our environment. They literally make people sick by accumulating in the human body. Collectively, we consequently have to cut down our plastic consumption and increase the recuperation of the plastic we still need.

According to Recyc-Québec data, 60% of the plastic used in the province, and likely in the rest of North America, is not recyclable. It means that no matter the level of citizens involvement, more than 60% of the plastic used daily goes to a landfill. Add to that the proportion of recyclable plastic sent to a dump while it should have been recycled.

The imposition of strict packaging norms could change that reality relatively quickly. It is some-

thing that should have been done decades ago. That negligence also explains why we often look at some packages, and wonder if it is recyclable or not.

Europe's example

All packaging should first be down-phased and recyclable. In most European countries, packaging has to be recyclable. In fact, there are directions on it to indicate the nature of that packaging: cardboard, plastic, metal, which part is made of what, and how it should be disposed of.

At the other end of the environmental practice spectrum, non recyclable packaging currently represents a volume of 1.9 million tonnes of material sent to landfills yearly in Quebec. This is roughly 500 pounds per citizen annually.

Instructions like what is used in Europe are sometimes present here but it is still a marginal phenomenon. Refusing to buy items not respecting certain packaging norms would be an outstanding start at sending manufacturers a strong message that the world is changing. Indicating to a store manager why we don't buy products symbolizing poor environmental practices would also yield results. Store managers receive bonuses when they reach sales targets, which isn't exactly a good ecological practice to start with.

Besides this aspect though, if they are notified that people refrain from buying certain items because of poor environmental practices, notably packaging, you can be sure that the message will reach the management at the manufacturer. If hundreds, not even thousands, of such messages, are sent, packaging practices will change.

If our governments join the movement by imposing rules forcing manufacturers to adopt clean and healthy practices, the whole society will gain immensely. We will not clog our landfills in a record time and we will subtract micro-particles from the water we drink and the food we eat.

Forget about old methods

The useless amount of waste treated in sorting centres creates twisted reflections. A number of decision makers wonder if Quebec should abolish selective sorting at home. We would all put our waste in garbage cans, the way we were doing 35 or 40 years ago!

Then, the sorting operation would be carried out in huge facilities, downstream, considering the alleged efficiency of new technologies.

This "solution" comes without a doubt from people associated with companies that have something to sell. Those companies care very little about the poor quality of recyclables that would be extracted from bulk waste, paper dirtied by strawberry jam, and broken glass stuck on plastic containers with the assistance of honey or dog

poop. This goes without talking about the poor working conditions prevailing in such facilities.

Going backwards is rarely, if ever, a way to move ahead. Time has proven that the majority have adopted disciplined recuperation practices and one can think that such practices would be improved if 52% of Quebecers didn't think that some of the recyclables they sort out at home go straight to a landfill.

Most people have known for years that grade 6 plastics, the cheapest plastic, usually presented in the form of thick bags or thin containers, don't make the cut in the sorting centre and are sent directly to the dump. How is it that North America is permitted to still use them widely?

How is it that glass bottles are not all consigned, thus giving money to their users who bring them back to stores? Some stores will argue that their storage space doesn't allow it. How about setting up an every-second day pick-up routine? If the volume of glass improves, it will be profitable to do so, economically, environmentally and socially.

For example, beer bottle consignment was established in 1808. That was 215 years ago. By simplifying the sizes of jam, mustard, mayonnaise, honey and whatever glass containers are used for food, it would be possible to consign them. In an era where there are worries about finding the material utilized to make glass, it would be bright to limit the crushing operation taking place when the recyclable truck unloads blue bins.

Beer bottles can be reused between 14 and 20 times before being rejected and since they are consigned prior to rejection, the glass is recycled without contamination problems that would stem from the other material found in blue bins.

Up to 98% of beer bottles are reused. The worst recuperation percentage of other consigned containers hovers around 65 and 70%, which is still fair. It is generally higher. That proportion would improve even further if consignment could be imposed on a wider range of containers like wine bottles.

The Quebec government, which is less advanced than most other Canadian provinces in consignment, was supposed to increase on November 1, 2023, the number of containers worth money when brought back to stores. It recently backtracked and will adopt a step-by-step approach, limiting improvements to aluminum.

The environmental file will therefore remain one of the weak points of the Coalition avenir Québec government, while our society should accelerate the pace.

It sure looks as if, once more, the leadership will come from sensitized citizens instead of from high-ranked government officials.

The multiplication of bridges, tunnels and roads is not the solution for the future.

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The mayor of Gaspé hands over the presidency of the Union of Quebec Municipalities

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - After completing two one-year terms, Daniel Côté, the mayor of Gaspé, must give up his position as president of the Union of Quebec Municipalities (UMQ).

Union by-laws dictate that a candidate cannot hold this office for more than two terms.

Mr. Côté had set three main objectives in his two years as union president: adaptation to climate change, open relations with First Nations, and immigrant labour and regional development.

“In all three cases, I think we have made quite significant progress. Everything is not perfect. All is not settled. I arrived at the start of my mandate in a planetary crisis which was the pandemic and I am leaving in a planetary crisis which is inflation. We couldn't settle everything in the space of two years,” explains Mr. Côté.

He notes that governments have paid hundreds of millions for climate change. There has been significant progress with the First Nations and the UMQ will hold a summit on decentralized cooperation internationally.

As far as regional development is concerned, the outgoing president notes the community's cooperation with the mining and forestry sectors and the many interventions in transportation.

“Intercity transportation:



Photo: N. Sergerie

The mayor of Gaspé ended his mandate as president of the UMQ on May 3.

we did a lot of interventions.

Air transportation: it has been brought back to the forefront on the national scene. Nobody was talking about it. Everyone was looking at it, but no one wanted to touch it. By talking and convincing, we managed to put stakeholders at the same table," maintains the ex-officio president who recalls that he was the first Gaspesian to occupy this position in 100 years, in addition to being the youngest elected official to be the head of the organization.

At the regional level, Mr. Côté believes that his time as the head of the UMQ has made it possible to position the region at the provincial level.

“For the people here, the

network of contacts and influence from this corner of the country is possibly what people here will remember. I hope other Gaspesians will take these steps to get there. It is good for our towns, and our regions to have these networks. I can confirm it: when all the ministers know you, know your town, know your issues, it gives a boost when we present a file,” says Mr. Côté.

A file that the ex-officio president would have liked to settle is the whole question of interregional transport.

“I would have liked to have heard more from Ottawa and Quebec. In Quebec, we ended up moving again, after the pandemic, on air transport. I may be in too much of a rush, but I would

like us to go faster on this kind of file. It's not a regret, but I had hoped to have better results,” says Mr. Côté.

The mayor of Gaspé maintains that the town has not suffered from his presence on a provincial scale.

“The provincial political agenda resembles the agenda of the Town of Gaspé,” he says, mentioning, for example, the arena or the lack of housing.

“Whenever we have provincial files, in the vast majority of cases, we link it to local files. By having all the cell phone numbers of the ministers in Quebec, it seems to me that it gives me interesting contacts I would not have if it were not for the presidency of the UMQ. For the rest of things, we are clearly well equipped. Without the presidency, I would

not have this address book and contacts in my pockets. When it's time to move things forward, it's going to go even faster,” says the mayor.

Succession

Daniel Côté, the mayor of Gaspé, and Mathieu Lapointe, the mayor of Carleton-sur-Mer, will remain on the executive committee of the Union of Quebec Municipalities following the board meeting held on May 3. The mayor of Varennes, Montérégie, Martin Dampousse is the new UMQ president.

Cathy Poirier, the mayor of Percé, however, will no longer sit on the executive committee.

The UMQ held its 101st annual meeting in Gatineau from May 3 to 5.

QCNA GENERAL MANAGER JOB POSTING - April 2023

The Association

The Quebec Community Newspapers Association (QCNA) is a 42-year-old association dedicated to the professional and economic development of English-language and bilingual community newspapers serving Quebec's minority-language communities.

QCNA provides advocacy, government representation, marketing and promotion for member papers and is engaged in the professional and economic development of newspapers serving the English-language communities of Quebec.

The association's 30 member newspapers distribute weekly, biweekly, monthly and daily to some 384,000 readers across the province.

The Opportunity

To fulfill its mandate, the association has an immediate opening for a manager who can oversee the daily operation of its office and supervision of a small staff. The successful candidate will report to the board of directors and assist with planning and executing programs prioritized by the board.

Abilities

- The board is seeking a university-educated, bilingual, well-organized individual with experience in budgeting and bookkeeping practices
- Knowledgeable about project-writing and reporting
- Demonstrated experience in executive leadership and a solid understanding of board meeting procedures, recording minutes and related compliance issues
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Ability to represent the association to government bodies
- Skilled at forging strategic partnerships and expanding existing networking alliances
- Grant writing experience
- Project-writing, management and reporting skills
- Capable of working autonomously to assist the volunteer board of directors fulfil its strategic objectives
- Keep member newspapers informed of programs and opportunities

Our Offer

The association offers a competitive salary and benefit package to the right candidate.

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Brenda O'Farrell, Interim President
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Conservative Jean-Pierre Pigeon no longer comments on political news

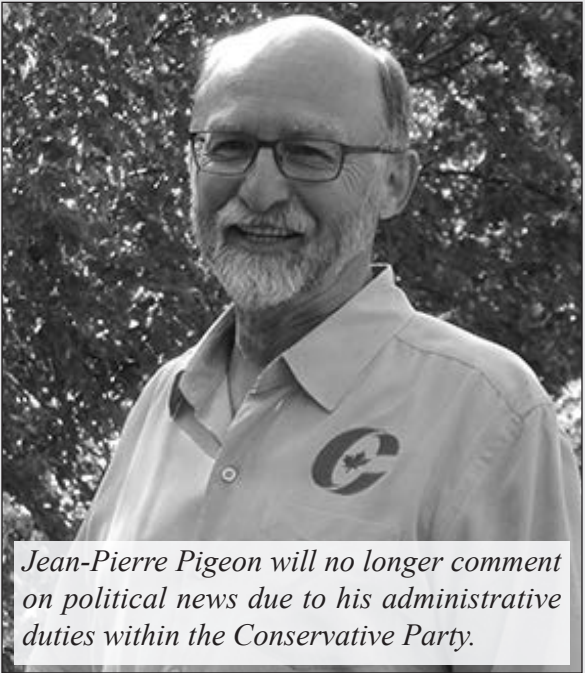
Nelson Sergerie

SAINTE-ANNE-DES-MONTS - The president of the Conservative Association for the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands can no longer comment on current affairs because of his functions within the Conservative Party of Canada.

In January, Jean-Pierre Pigeon became the organizer of the Conservative Party Association in eastern Quebec.

Now occupying a position of an administrator rather than a politician, Mr. Pigeon explained that he must therefore be reserved, referring journalists to the Conservative Party for comments on current affairs.

Mr. Pigeon, also indicated that he would be stepping down as president of the regional association at the next scheduled general meeting.



Jean-Pierre Pigeon will no longer comment on political news due to his administrative duties within the Conservative Party.

Photo: N. Sergerie

VIA Rail reservation system no longer offers the RéGÎM shuttle

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON-SUR-MER - The overhaul of the VIA Rail reservation system is forcing the Gaspé Peninsula Intermunicipal Transportation Board (RéGÎM) to abandon its summer shuttle that transported travellers to the train in Campbellton, New Brunswick.

The RéGÎM Board of Directors is not taking this decision lightly. "We are very sad to announce this withdrawal of service. The decision was made following an announcement by VIA Rail that there would be no more partnership. VIA Rail changed its reservation system at the start of the year and there is no longer any room for connection partners," explains RéGÎM director Marie-Andrée Pichette.

The RéGÎM would have to develop a reservation platform to make links with VIA Rail clientele, which would have been a complex task.

"There was a lot at stake and a lot of complexity for a small team like ours," says Pichette about developing another software. She adds that the shuttle was operating at a significant deficit.

The RéGÎM is still open to reconsidering its decision, but VIA Rail mentions in a press release that there is no possi-



The RéGÎM VIA Rail shuttle will not be running this summer.

Photo: N. Sergerie

bility of integration. "We are launching a new dispatch system at the Transit Authority in the next few weeks. We will see how our system could support the development of a component that could take reservations from VIA Rail in the future. But the decision was announced too recently that we didn't have time to develop the system for this summer," says the director, who says there is still a possibility for a shuttle during holidays or next summer.

The suspension of this service adds to the difficulties for people travelling to and from the region.

"These are major challenges. This is a major con-

cern, both at the rail level, as well as for the bus and air travel. What we want is to have as many interregional means of transportation as possible. We continue to work to get VIA Rail to Gaspé," says the president of the Table of Prefects for the Gaspé Peninsula, Mathieu Lapointe, who also points out that the table works on the transportation issue almost daily.

The shuttle was created in 2017 to replace the train that has not been running since 2011 to Gaspé and 2013 to New Carlisle. A Christmas shuttle has also existed for a few years now.

Last year, the shuttle had 76 departures and transported 400 passengers.

Renée Condo nominated for the Sobey Art Award

GILLES GAGNÉ

GESGAPEGIAG - Renée Condo, a Mi'gmaq artist from the community of Gesgapegiag, is one of five Quebec artists appearing on the list of candidates for the 2023 Sobey Art Award, which is the most prestigious honour awarded to contemporary Canadian visual artists. The stakes are high since the big winner of the contest will receive \$100,000.

The National Gallery of Canada unveiled the names of the 25 candidates on April 25, which includes five from Montreal. Of the five Montreal nominees, two are teams of two artists. Renée Condo, 43, who is from the community of Gesgapegiag is one of the five nominees from Montreal. She uses the technique of beadwork to create large-scale works of art that explore the



Photo: National Gallery of Canada

Renée Condo could win the most prestigious honour awarded to contemporary Canadian visual artists.

links between the Western vision of the world and that of her community.

All nominations will be reviewed by an independent jury composed of one distinguished representative from each of

Canada's five regions: the Atlantic Provinces, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairies and the North, and the West Coast and Yukon. The jury also includes one international juror. The jury will oversee the selection process and establish the long and short lists as well as the winner of the award.

The Sobey Art Award is recognized as one of the world's most generous privately funded prizes for contemporary visual artists and is open to Canadian artists of all ages.

This year a total of \$400,000 in prize money will be awarded: \$100,000 to the winner, \$25,000 to each of the shortlisted artists, and \$10,000 to the remaining longlisted artists. In addition, the five shortlisted artists will be featured in an exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada in the fall of 2023.



Photo: N. Sergerie

Cynthia Patterson has been fighting to maintain rail service in the Gaspé Peninsula for 35 years.

Coalition of Gaspesians for the return of the VIA Rail passenger train is disappointed

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PERCÉ - The Coalition of Gaspesians for the return of VIA Rail's passenger train says that the rail carrier has chosen to put intermodality aside with the redesign of its reservation site.

This decision forced the Gaspé Peninsula Magdalen Islands Intermunicipal Transportation Board (RéGÎM) not to offer the VIA rail shuttle this summer. That service allowed users to meet the train in Campbellton.

"It's difficult because here, in Gaspésie, we are in a horrible situation in regional public transport and now it's even worse," says the spokesperson for the coalition, Cynthia Patterson.

For the Coalition, it is inconceivable that, in 2023, the VIA Rail's new reservation system is less efficient than the former one, considering that we are in a time of phenomenal technological development.

"It's a choice. If there is a will from VIA Rail and the federal government, VIA Rail can take a different option. It's not that the technology doesn't exist, it's their choice, and that choice is not acceptable," says Ms. Patterson.

In the context of climate change and Canada's commit-

ment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the situation is inconceivable.

"Our federal government has made national and international legal commitments to make choices (and VIA Rail's decision) prevents people from taking the train or the RéGÎM. This is not acceptable," adds the spokesperson.

She appeals to both entities to correct this aberration.

The Coalition is currently campaigning for the return of the VIA Rail train to New Carlisle as soon as infrastructure permits, as a first step towards restoring full service to Gaspé.

A possible regional bus carrier will then be necessary in order to optimize this public transport service by bringing passengers to the train stations east of New Carlisle. The rail carrier has been repeatedly saying for years that the Chaleur train service will only resume to Gaspé once the rail is rehabilitated and safe.

Quebec has promised that the railway will be renovated to Port-Daniel-Gascons in 2024 but has still not submitted a budget or timetable for the Port-Daniel-Gascons-Gaspé section.

In early April, the coalition started an online petition. As of May 5, just over 14,800 signatures had been collected.

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CSSS UPDATE:

First midwife hired for the Côte-de-Gaspé area

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

SAINTE-ANNE-DESMONTS- The first midwife in the Côte-de-Gaspé area has been hired.

The project, which has been in the works for 10 years, was finally submitted to the Ministry of Health last September. The funding was granted in December.

Alexandra Ross-Rioux, who is the midwife hired to serve the Côte-de-Gaspé area, will work part-time until September and then be available full-time to expecting mothers.

Between now and September, “She will upgrade her training with the Birthing Centre to be comfortable with childbirth. She will begin a three-year contract on September 4,” says the Assistant Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS), Connie Jacques.

The midwife will build bridges between the various stakeholders and, subsequently, offer all services in partnership with the Perinatal Centre of the Parenfant family home in Gaspé.

A shrinking deficit

The CISSS projected deficit is shrinking by half, going from \$7 million to \$3.5 million on February 25, the date of the last

reading for the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Contributions from the Government of Quebec during this period explain the decrease. “We had confirmations from the (Health) ministry of funding that we were expecting, but that we could not enter on the books. We expect a few messages like that over the next few days,” explains the president and CEO of the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS, Martin Pelletier.

Since its creation in 2015, the CISSS has never had a deficit, but Mr. Pelletier remains cautious about this objective at the end of the fiscal year on March 31, the last elements of which have not yet been accounted for. “I couldn't say enough about that,” he says.

The CISSS has asked Quebec for additional funding, in particular, to cover certain costs of independent labour and COVID-19 related expenses.

80% of specialist positions are filled

The region’s shortage of medical specialists is in specialties that are greatly affected by a labour shortage, making recruitment quite difficult.

One in five positions has not been filled, but the CEO prefers to speak of the 80% of the workforce positions that are filled. Mr. Pelletier says that he



The Côte-de-Gaspé will have its first full-time midwife by the fall of this year.

considers 80%, an excellent performance.

Not easy to attract new specialists

“It is not just our region that is rural. It is a question of the volume of activity, and the mode of practice. All of that has to be considered,” says Martin Pelletier.

In addition, the needs are in very specialized sectors. “The shortcomings we have are glaring throughout the province. This is not obvious at the psychiatric level among others. In geriatrics, we have just recruited one (specialist) in Haute-Gaspésie. Another one is missing. In urology, two radiologist (positions) are to be filled,” explains the CEO.

Towards sustainable development

Sustainable development will be reinforced within the organization. The global situation makes it essential. Mr. Pelletier mentions that the principle of sustainable development was mentioned back in 2010 within the Gaspesian network.

Measures are already in place and the organization wants to go further by setting up a committee to reflect on them. “We really want to set up a sustainable structure that will allow us to have actions from the moment something starts, for example, in renovations. We will try to take in all the angles. We already have electric vehicles. We have some interesting things, but which must be maintained and developed,” states the CEO.

The implementation of the brown bin will be a challenge, admits Mr. Pelletier, especially in the kitchens and cafeterias. Its absence in the Bay of Chaleur for the moment is also an issue. A follow-up of sustainable development will be done with each board of directors.

More expensive for hemodialysis in Gaspé

The reorganization of the hemodialysis service at the Gaspé hospital will cost more than expected.

The Gaspé Peninsula CISSS is at the preliminary plan and specifications stage, but the \$4 million budget will be insufficient.

“The professionals have submitted estimates and they are higher than the budget we had established. We are working on finding ways to optimize construction costs to get as close as possible to the initial budget,” says the director of technical services, Harris Cloutier.

Steps are being taken to seek additional funds from the Ministry of Health. The site will be moved to the former emergency unit of the Hôtel-Dieu hospital in Gaspé. The number of seats will increase from three to four, in a room that will be designed to accommodate six. The project is currently delayed. It was supposed to be completed by December.

A pilot project to counter unintentional drugging and sexual assault at festivals

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - Organizations and summer festival organizers are joining forces with the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Women's Groups Round Table to combine their expertise to create a pilot project to combat unintentional drugging and sexual assault during festivals.

The Festif & Safe project can count on the organizations Mi-Chemin de Gaspé and the Calacs de la Gaspésie et des Îles-de-la-Madeleine, along with collaboration from the Festiplage in Cap-d'Espoir, Bleubleu in Carleton-sur-Mer, Festival musique du bout du monde in Gaspé and the Sea Shacks in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts.

The program aims to put in place effective and guilt-free prevention measures for the

victims.

Events that occurred in 2022 during festivals in the region led the table to create this partnership.

“Being an organization for the defence of collective rights, we had a lot of questions about it. We know that women are often the victims. There was a call for projects with funding and we realized that it would be interesting to work on this component and create new partnerships with cultural organizations. It was a great door opener,” says the Table’s project officer, Sara Ternoir.

“Each festival expresses its needs to us. We look at what is being done in the festive space to allow for safe spaces for people who might feel the need. We wanted a title that would be comprehensive in both French and English. We also want to train targeted people in the organization on how to act when

we witness an attack or involuntary intoxication,” explains the project officer.

Documentation will also be produced for awareness and prevention.

“We bring a feminist perspective to all the measures already in place. We will also make our work visible. Poster material will be very visible to indicate that there is zero tolerance,” adds Ms. Ternoir who could not quantify the incidents that took place at Gaspesian festivals last year.

“The most important thing is to create spaces with people identified and aware of the issue and to be a resource person for a person who could be experiencing an attack,” continues Ms. Ternoir who reflects on the measures to be taken if ever there was an attack.

Festivals hope that by practicing the principle of zero tolerance, it is hoped this kind of



Photo: Festiplage website

The project wants to avoid situations such as those that allegedly occurred last year.

unfortunate incident will not happen.

According to the table, several initiatives already exist to ensure the safety of women in this type of situation elsewhere in Quebec and around the world.

This project is made possible thanks to the financial support of the Regions and Rurality Fund of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Fisheries study submitted to elected officials

NELSON SERGERIE

CARLETON-SUR-MER - The Regroupment of Gaspesian MRCs wants to get closer to the fishing sector following a commissioned study that allows elected officials to better understand the scope of this vital industry for the regional economy.

“We realized that we didn’t know much about the fine details of this sector. What we wanted was a specific portrait by MRC to know the particularities of all fisheries in all MRCs,” says the president of the regroupment of Gaspesian MRCs, Mathieu Lapointe.

The 250-page document produced by researcher Gabriel Bourgault-Faucher of the Institute for Research in Contemporary Economics (IRÉC) makes several obser-



The study will make it possible to better target the interventions of elected officials.

Photo: N. Sergerie

“We feel the impact of climate change in the fishing in-

dustry, the challenge of marketing within Quebec, and that of maintaining the ownership of companies at the Quebec level are among the challenges raised,” says Mr. Lapointe.

“All the people interviewed for this study want to

work in collaboration with regional elected officials. We can work together on different files,” says the president.

The group intends to fully analyze the document and to be better prepared to act in the future.

“It’s the first step. We are going to make a game plan to see how we intervene. But, clearly, the stakeholders in the fishing industry want to work with the municipalities, the MRCs and the group. We’ll see how we’re going to do it,” says Mr. Lapointe, who will take the next few months to achieve this.

The work of supporting and financing projects will also be part of the analysis.

The IRÉC document is presented as an informative tool aimed at providing MRCs with an analysis and reference framework to establish priorities for action and informed decision making.

The research also warns of the concentration of the sector

on snow crab and lobster, which are experiencing strong growth. Betting everything on these two species is an “aberration”.

“There are lessons to be learned from the collapse of groundfish stocks in the early 1990s to avoid repeating the same mistakes,” the document states.

The study documents, in detail, the contribution of each of the fisheries in each of the MRCs as well as the value of landings over several years, but does not provide an overall value of the economic benefits of this sector.

Last summer, a study commissioned by the Grande-Rivière Economic Development Corporation and conducted by the firm Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton, estimated that the fisheries sector in the Gaspé Peninsula generated around \$800 million in spinoffs, \$329 million coming from the Rocher-Percé MRC.

Marie-Ève Gagné-Lévesque’s death linked to epileptic seizure

Nelson Sergerie

NEW CARLISLE - Coroner Renée Roussel concludes that the cause of death of Marie-Ève Gagné-Lévesque is possibly related to an epileptic seizure triggered by the stress experienced during the trial of her ex-husband David Guy, who was sentenced last September to four years in prison for spousal abuse.

On August 17, Ms. Gagné-Lévesque, 37, was discovered unresponsive at her home in Rivière-du-Loup by family members, only days after she testified against her ex-husband who assaulted her for years.

Ms. Gagné-Lévesque was severely abused by her spouse. She received multiple injuries, including several head injuries over a long period of time, and was deprived of medical care and medication.

In March 2021, Mr. Guy attacked her with a hammer, striking her several times in the head which resulted in Ms. Gagné-Lévesque being hospitalized.

Ms. Gagné-Lévesque suffered from epilepsy from a young age. The coroner’s report mentions that these multiple head injuries may have aggravated and caused new forms of epilepsy not documented in the medical file because she was deprived of medical care for so long.

The document also mentions that the years of violence left physical, psychological and emotional scars.

Faced with this portrait of health, Coroner Roussel writes that it is not surprising that during the month of August 2022 during the trial of her ex-spouse where she had to appear and testify, she felt a lot of emotions and anxiety.

The information gathered during the investigation suggested that the victim suffered almost no seizures during the period prior to her death. She, however, had one on August 11 and a second on August 17 which was fatal.

Among the recognized factors that can increase the risk of having an epileptic seizure, stress is one of the major contributing factors.

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LOBSTER:

▶ Cont'd from cover

the accounting equation chosen by the Magdalen Islands fishermen, therefore, an accurate remuneration for the Gaspé Peninsula lobster fishermen will only be known on May 15.

Another lobster fisherman, Francis Vautier, expects a fair price for this year's lobster. "Even if the price of snow crab

has gone down quite a bit (by 66% so far this year), we are talking about two different products. Almost all the snow crab is frozen before being sold. Most of the lobster is sold alive. The demand for lobster remains strong. I expect a good price this year," he says.

In 2022, the average price for lobster in the Gaspé Peninsula reached \$7.95 per pound, the second highest in history, after \$8.51 in 2021.



The first two days of the season bring more people than usual to the wharf, waiting for family and friends to come back, and check how it went.

Photo: G. Gagné



Although the morning was quite crisp, Ty McRae, who is almost 7 months old, kept watch for the safe return of his Grandpère, Captain Vincent McRae and his dad Jason McRae who were both aboard the Cindy Steeve.

Photo: Kayla Major



Nicholas Renouf was quite happy with his first catches of the season.

Photo: G. Gagné

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MUNICIPAL UPDATE:

Chandler changes its approach for the federally owned wharf

NELSON SERGERIE

CHANDLER - Chandler is still interested in the federally owned wharf but only for recreational tourism purposes. For years, the Town of Chandler has wanted to take over the wharf while maintaining an industrial vocation, but its main client, McInnis Cement, does not have enough volume to transship to ensure the profitability of the infrastructure. "The only major industry was McInnis Cement. We met the company and presented a business plan. The company replied that the quantity was not sufficient to justify 25 years of service," says the mayor of Chandler, Gilles Daraïche. A business plan has been filed with Transport Canada,

but Ottawa needed confirmation from the client since the plan focused exclusively on this deal. "At the time, the quantities given of what could have passed through the Chandler wharf were much larger than those received recently. We looked at the file with the consultant and with the new data, we realized that it was not profitable," adds the director general Roch Giroux. The town did not want to let go of its initial plans but the industrial vocation was no longer feasible. A new plan is now in the works. "It is to negotiate with Transport Canada for a more recreational tourism project. We don't want Transport Canada to come in and say there's no customer, tear it down and rock it. We want

more than that," says the director who points out that there is also a marina nearby. The town will call on the Member of Parliament for the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, Diane Lebouthillier, to obtain her support for this project. "We hope to make the best of the situation," says Mr. Giroux. **Large garbage pick-up** Chandler could do some of the large garbage pick-up this spring. The MRC must discuss the file with the town again in two weeks. The topic is up for discussion following the Gaspé Peninsula Intermunicipal Residual Materials Processing Board decision to not go ahead with the annual spring large garbage pick-up, due to an explosion of costs.

The management estimated this collection at \$83,000, but the two bids they received were for approximately \$140,000. The Town of Chandler would do the work internally. "Unfortunately, if the five towns do not agree to do it the same way as us, it could not get done," says the mayor. For this collection, which would be special, the Town of Chandler would focus on large household appliances or mattresses, on the condition of recovering its share paid to the management to finance the project.

Water park A water park could be installed in the summer of 2024 on part of the former Gaspésia land near the train station. Councilor Raynald Leblanc has invited citizens to attend a public meeting on May 17 to learn more about the project. "We did our job. The sketches are there. We are ready to move forward. For this project to be carried out in 2024, we have a lot of proce-

dures to follow," says Mr. Leblanc. **A bill that continues to grow** The overall tab for the conflict between the former mayor, Louisette Langlois, and the town following her suspension by the Commission municipale du Québec in 2021 continues to increase. The town's prosecutors from the Morency law firm filed \$12,800 in bills over the past two months, bringing the total for this saga to \$333,400. Discussions for the hearing of the case between the two parties are still in preparation as Chandler filed a motion in January 2022, claiming \$230,411 from the ex-elected alleging that she multiplied the procedures before the commission, the Superior Court and the Court of Appeal to try to overturn the 180-day suspension in 2021 for 20 breaches of the Code of Ethics for elected officials. Chandler reserves the right to adjust its claim. The case won't be heard until the fall.

Musée de la Gaspésie

wins national award

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - The Musée de la Gaspésie has won the Canadian Museum Association's Outstanding Achievement Award for its permanent exhibition *À la confluence des mondes*. "It is a very high distinction and it is truly extraordinary. It adds recognition to others who tell us to continue our work and it underlines the professionalism of the people who work at the museum. For a regional museum – I insist on this – it's really great," says the director of the museum, Martin Roussy. According to Mr. Roussy, there are several reasons why the Musée de la Gaspésie was chosen. "It's a set of elements: the fact that we have technological elements but also the balance between the presentation of the artefacts, historical narrative and the tone of the exhibition. One of the major elements, I think, is the fact that we have decolonized our approach. By making an exhibition where we integrate from the start the three founding peoples, the British, French and those who were there long before us, the Mi'gmaq Nation, created a beautiful effect. The integration of several partners and the addition of the three languages in the titles contributed to receiving the award," states the director. When embarking on a proj-



Photo: Courtesy of the Gaspésie Museum

*The permanent exhibition *À la confluence des mondes* is recognized across Canada.* ect, the museum doesn't make plans with awards in mind. "Each time, we hope to do our best. Obviously, it's getting results. We don't put that pressure on ourselves," says Mr. Roussy. This award is in addition to a multitude received over the years. "Several years ago, the museum experienced a significant shift in museological approach. Coming up with interactive exhibitions with the innovative integration of virtual reality, and living portraits, that's all this approach. We continue it because it is significant and when we look at the approaches in other museums, I would not say that we are at the forefront, but we are not far away. There is no catch-up. We are at the right time for what needs to be done," says Mr. Roussy. The museum is working on the application of the strategic plan unveiled last fall. "We are waiting for funding responses to launch the pilot project for a museum branch in (Rivière) Madeleine. We are waiting for funding with other museums in Quebec to continue to shine. The La Bolduc exhibit, (which features the career of Mary Travers, one of Quebec's first singers and songwriters) is still on tour and when it returns, we have plans for them. There is no lack of work," says the director.

Final road construction

cost is cheaper than expected

Nelson Sergerie GASPÉ – A rarity these days, the cost to redo part of the Montée de la Pointe-Navarre in Gaspé will cost less than expected. The work to rebuild the most damaged section of this road, which serves as a detour when the Saint-Majorique crossing is closed, was estimated at \$1.7 million. "We saw the indexation of costs. Our engineers estimated the work at \$1.7 million, in link with the subsidy we received for the work. It came out at \$1.4 million plus taxes. We are at the bottom of the estimates, which is good news in itself," explains Gaspé mayor, Daniel Côté. The contract was awarded to Eurovia. "On the other hand, there will still be a bit to do to finish the detour route. We will go back to applying for financial aid. We had been refused for the second section. We are going to hound the Ministry of Transport to also have compensation to finally put an 'x' next to the Pointe-Navarre detour file," hopes the elected official. Quebec granted \$1.6 million for this first phase. The mayor would have liked to settle the file with Quebec more easily. "We understand the situation but we are told there are plenty of places in Quebec where there is a similar situation. I don't think there are many places in Quebec where a crossing or a bridge is closed as frequently as the Saint-Majorique crossing. This is what we have reiterated from the start," says the mayor. Of the 140 kilometres of municipal roads in the Town of Gaspé, Mr. Côté notes that this is the only place where the road deteriorates so quickly. "And it is the only municipal road where there is so much heavy traffic that has to circulate because there is a Quebec Ministry of Transport road that has to close. We can add one plus one," explains the mayor.

Opening of Apo’Qon’Ma’Tultinej Gegapegiag Cultural Centre

DIANE SKINNER
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

“Strengthening links inside the community and with neighbours - Natives, Anglophones and Francophones are welcome.” Jeannette Maltan Martin

GESGAPEGIAG: The official opening of Apo’Qon’Ma’Tultinej, which means “Let’s help each other” and in French “Aidons-nous les uns les autres” took place on Thursday, April 27. This multipurpose building, formerly the Jehovah Witness Kingdom Hall, was purchased by the Gesgapegiag community in 2021.

Jeannette Maltan Martin, Director of Communications and Policy in Gesgapegiag, has been overseeing the transformation of the building into a place that is open to everyone, Native and non-native, French and English. Jeannette states, “The goal is to make the culture and the Mi’gmaq language available and to make efforts to share the culture and

the language.” The idea behind this is to strengthen the links inside the community and with neighbours - an important goal in a time of reconciliation.

The cost of the project cannot be confirmed yet because the work is still ongoing. In fact, Jeannette Maltan Martin says she envisions this as a five-year project as many other exciting plans are being discussed and others are in the process of being completed.

The backyard of the building is currently being prepared to create a one acre community garden. The building is the site of the Gesgapegiag Food Bank, so fresh produce from the gardens can supplement the food that will be offered to the community. Some of the plants will be used for traditional medicines. Jeannette mentions that the IGA in Maria continues to be a generous contributor to the Food Bank.

The facility will house a catering service, on a smaller scale than the Galgosiet Centre. Approximately sixty people can be accommodated in



Photo: G. Gagné

The main room at the Cultural Centre in Gesgapegiag.

the Apo’Qon’Ma’Tultinej building for events, meetings and catered meals.

Currently, an exhibit featuring photos taken by Estelle Marcoux is on display. The plans are to change the exhibits, with the next one, in a few months time, focusing on women and salmon fishing. After that exhibit, another is being planned on the youth of Gesgapegiag.

Other plans include infor-

mation technology onsite available for community use and additional movie screenings from the Gesgapegiag archives going back to 1981. John Martin and Clem Bernard are featured in some of the movies/videos. The backyard will provide sweat lodges and a greenhouse is another goal. Jeannette will be purchasing instruments for musical events where all will be welcome. Language and culture work-

shops may include the role of SEPAQ and river management groups.

Jeannette Maltan Martin reflects that the building is a work in progress and the goal is to offer a safe place for community members and a place for that community to share their culture with others.

She adds, “Stay tuned for upcoming activities by checking our Facebook site. We can all work together.”

Centr’Elles hosts Larocque exhibit celebrating traditional Indigenous arts

CYNTHIA DOW

SAINT OMER: - The Centr’Elles women’s centre in Saint Omer is hosting month-long art exhibits by local women. The month of May is devoted to a display by Gesgapegiag’s Denise Larocque. Entitled “Dish With One Spoon,” the exhibit is about “relearning and reconnecting to my culture,” Ms. Larocque told the crowd at the opening held the evening of May 4.

Featured in the art show are a waltès game board and pieces, cedar and sweetgrass woven ropes, a cedar braid based on the traditions of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples of the West Coast, and two wampum belts. But the highlight of the show is surely Ms. Larocque’s traditional Mi’gmaq woman’s beaded peaked cap.

This striking black and white creation is based on a pattern by Rhonda Besaw, an Abenaki artist from New Hampshire whose work is inspired by traditional Wabanaki cultures. The Wabanaki Confederacy in-

cludes the Mi’gmaq people and the Abenaki, Penobscot, Passamaquoddy and Maliseet nations.

Made of black felt with brilliant white beads, the peaked cap is the kind of apparel that can often be seen in eighteenth and nineteenth-century paintings of Mi’gmaq women throughout Atlantic Canada. At the bottom of the cap, four traditional Mi’gmaq design elements are representative of Ms. Larocque’s four children.

“When you show up, the Universe greets you halfway,” Ms. Larocque explained to the participants at the opening, “I have found my voice to return to my spiritual ground. Preparing these pieces has allowed me to reconnect to that sense of who I am.”

The symbolism of the wampum belts is also of interest. The Haudenosaunee-inspired belt, based on the “Dish With One Spoon” traditional design, relays the message of sharing and environmental stewardship.

“The dish represents the Earth, and the spoon is like a beavertail, representing food.



Photo: C. Dow

Denise Larocque spent many hours beading the black felt cap which mirrors traditional peaked caps worn by Mi’gmaq women in the past

At feasts, everyone brought their own dish with one spoon, and all was shared. Even children were expected to take that responsibility to bring their own dishes,” Ms. Larocque explained.

If Ms. Larocque has a particular wish for her exhibit, it’s that it will contribute to reconciliation between In-

digenous people and descendants of settlers. “We were once much wiser than we were led to believe,” she said,

“Indigenous peoples were masters at using the resources at their fingertips.” She hopes that the exhibit will “open discussions” about the legacy of the Indigenous worldview and its potential impact on our re-

lationship with the Earth.

The “Dish With One Spoon” exhibit is on until May 26 at Centr’Elles, located at 105 Rte 132 E, Saint-Omer, (former Caisse Desjardins building across from the Catholic Church). The women’s centre is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



Is there a future for the monarchy in Canada?

The coronation of King Charles III (wow, that is hard to get used to) will take place on Saturday, May 6. With the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, a much-admired monarch, discussions are heating up about the future of the monarchy in Canada.

Canadians are divided about the future of the monarchy. When asked now that Queen Elizabeth II has passed, should we end our formal ties to the British monarchy? 79% of Quebecers agree that we should. The numbers vary in other provinces – in Ontario, that number is 45% and in British Columbia the number is about the same as Ontario.

Why should we keep formal ties with the monarchy?

Canada has had a monarchy for centuries, under France in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, then under the British in the subsequent centuries. In 1982, Canada repatriated our constitution from the authority of the British parliament to Canada. At that time our constitution was updated with a Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The reasons to maintain those ties tend to affirm that it makes us distinct from the U.S. which has a very different system of government. It is, people assert, part of our identity and our history. Our system of government is a constitutional monarchy and to sever ties would mean changing our constitution. Canadians tend to be wary of opening that debate. Finding consensus on constitutional matters is a potential powder keg. Just look at the repatriation of 1982!

Why should we cut ties and amend our constitution?

Some will argue that the Royals are nothing more than celebrities and that their role in the affairs of Canada is irrelevant. A strong argument for abolishing monarchical ties is the wretched history of colonialism. Colonialism is the practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers and exploiting it economically. Overall, is Canada truly an independent country if we support and maintain formal constitutional ties with the monarchy?

Also, we must consider the high regard in which Queen Elizabeth II was held in contrast with the public opinion about King Charles and Camilla, the Queen Consort. Almost 50% of Canadians have a very or somewhat favourable opinion of King Charles III, while the Queen Consort has an approval rating of just 25%. The royals and heir to the throne: William, Prince of Wales; and Catherine, Princess of Wales; are considerably more popular. Can the monarchy survive a somewhat unpopular King and Queen consort for the next decade or two?

What does the monarchy cost Canadians?

We don't give money to the monarchy directly, but our ties to them do come at a cost to taxpayers, estimated to be \$60 million each year. Costs include funding the Governor General's office, maintaining historic buildings and other historic items, and expenses for visiting royals.

What do we Canadians get for this cost? Supporters say we continue to have a historically strong governmental system. The Monarchist League says that the Royals contribute to making our Canadian society strong and unique.

If we replaced the monarchy, after constitutional wrangling, there would have to be a new position created – a Canadian head of state. Would it lead to a redefined role of the Governor General? There are costs for that role to be amended too.

It is not easy to change the constitution. Is it worth the challenge to cut constitutional ties with the monarchy? What is your opinion?



Member of National Assembly for Bonaventure pays tribute to David Felker

GILLES GAGNÉ

SHIGAWAKE – On April 27 at the National Assembly in Quebec City, the Bonaventure riding Member of the National Assembly, Catherine Blouin, took a few moments to pay tribute to the contribution of Shigawake's David Felker to his community and the Gaspé Peninsula region in general.

Ms. Blouin highlighted Mr. Felker's multi-faceted involvement, mentioning his role in establishing links between anglophones, Mi'gmaq and francophones. The homage was made during a period reserved for current affairs at the National Assembly, and was presided over by Nathalie Roy, who was raised in New Carlisle, where her father worked for CHNC.

"Madam President, today I would like to highlight the involvement of a citizen of Shigawake, a dynamic village in the riding of Bonaventure. David Felker is a real matchmaker between the anglophone, Mi'gmaq and francophone communities of our territory. He deploys more



David Felker's involvement recognized at the National Assembly of Quebec. Dave Felker and the Triculturals band members Marilou Brière, Melissa Girvan and Kevin Jones.

Photo: Jennifer Hayes

successful opportunities to highlight the Gaspé Peninsula anglophone culture and promotes the inclusion of Mi'gmaq and francophone artists. He is also part of the musical group called The Triculturals, which has composed an original song to declare the band members' love for the Gaspé Peninsula, in the three languages," said Ms. Blouin.

"David weaves lasting bonds between citizens. He also supports organizations in

their development projects of all kinds. He recently contributed to the expansion of the services offered by the dance hall in Shigawake, which now hosts artistic workshops of various kinds all year round, in a village of about 300 inhabitants. For your commitment to get involved with convictions in your community, David, thank you for helping to break down the barriers between our communities," she concluded.

Spring clean... your finances

DIANE SKINNER

You have finished spring cleaning your home and have started to clean up outside. Spring is a time for a fresh start and organizing your finances is just as important. With your finances in order and old papers disposed of, you will feel so much better, even lighter. It is as important as cleaning the house.

Clean out your old papers

If you have a box, drawer or tub with papers all helter-skelter, a purge of papers that are no longer needed is just the thing to set you on a good path. Sort papers into two piles - papers to keep and those to be discarded. Papers that you keep will need to be organized into envelopes or folders and labelled. Some possible categories include taxes, receipts and warranties, government paperwork, bills to be paid, and personal papers such as a passport, deeds to property and wills. Label clearly, so when you need to put your hands on a certain paper it will not be a wild hunt. Papers to be discarded should be shredded, torn into small pieces or burned in a fire pit. We live

in a time when our identities and personal information can be dangerous if they fall into the wrong hands. Sad, but true.

Read over your budget (or create a budget)

Don't have a budget? This is the perfect time to create one. If you want to get your finances in order, a budget is critically important. It does not have to be super complicated, just the necessities. This is very important if you are planning on paying down debt.

A plan is very helpful. Some people keep a budget book with a page for each month. Write income at the top, with amounts. Write monthly bills and cross them off as you pay them. This can also be done by using an app on your smartphone, or a spreadsheet on your computer.

Then track your spending, even for a month or two. It will then be obvious where you can cut back. You control your money, not the other way around. Most important part of a budget? Sticking to it.

Speaking of debt...

Having a lot of debt, the kind that is difficult to pay off, is a

heavy burden to bare. Make a plan. Take a close look at what you owe and the amount of interest you are paying. This can be a very sobering moment. If you are making small payments, you might only be paying interest and the principal is not decreasing at all. You may need to pay more each month to get the debt under control. Commit (to yourself) to pay a certain amount each month that will knock down that debt. In the meantime, try not to increase that debt by buying more. If you can consolidate your debt at a lower interest rate, speaking to your bank advisor will help greatly. If you can't consolidate, pay off the debt with the highest interest rate first.

Start saving!

Saving is important for several reasons: emergencies (such as car or home repairs), a trip, an illness, or losing your job. Savings give you peace of mind. Start with small amounts and over time you will be pleasantly surprised as your savings grow. Spring is the time to renew, refresh and look forward to better weather and improved financial well-being.

Announcements



Obituaries



FRASER: Aubrey Allan

Aubrey passed away at home in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, on February 28, 2023 surrounded by love at 81 years of age.

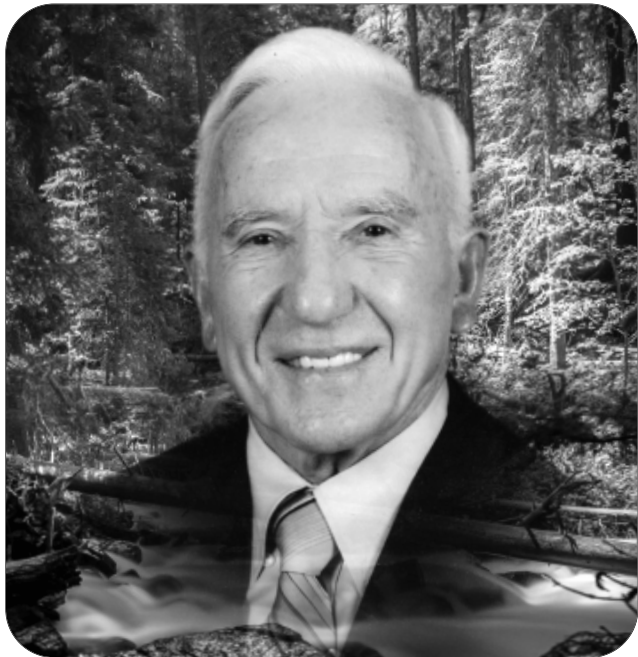
He was born in New Carlisle, Quebec on May 1, 1941.

He is survived by his wife Madeleine (Langlois); children: Lise (Brad), Conquerall Mills, Nova Scotia; Dean (Leigh-Anne), Mission, British Columbia; and Michael (Paula), Ottawa, Ontario. He was so very proud of his five grandsons.

Entering military service at the age of 17, he proudly served our country for 22 years.

Aubrey loved to play hockey in his younger years, fish, golf and camp. He also hoped he could beat his wife at Scrabble (he never did!)

There will be no funeral service as per Aubrey's wishes with final interment in New Carlisle, Quebec, at a later date.



MCCALLUM: Alton

On Sunday, April 2, 2023 in Gaspé, Mr. Alton McCallum residing at Sandy Beach, husband of the late Mrs. Mary Alice Miller, passed away at the age of 91.

Mr. Alton McCallum leaves to mourn his sons Ron (Line), David (Thérèse) and Brian, his grandchildren Kristin, Megan, Derrick, Alex, Jeffrey, Dustin and Marissa, and his ten great-grandchildren, many nieces, nephews and friends.

The family received condolences at the Valère Fortin Funeral Home in Gaspé on Tuesday, April 11, beginning at 7 p.m. Visiting hours were from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The funeral took place at St. Paul's Church on Wednesday, April 12, at 3:30 p.m. On the day of the funeral, the family received condolences at the St. Paul's Church beginning at 2 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Société Alzheimer Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine.



In Memory



CHESSER-MARCOUX: Janice

In loving memory of Janice Marcoux-Chesser who was taken from us unexpectedly on May 11, 2022.

*There was no time to say goodbye,
But this I ask, please do not cry
Remember me as you think best
The happy time, forget the rest.
Look for me and I'll be there
And you will find me everywhere
In the gentle touch of breeze
That cools the skin or swirls the leaves.
In the scent and colour of flowers
That gave to me such happy hours
On sunny days under sunny skies of blue
Just think of me, I'll be with you.
In winter when there's cloud or mist,
The rain will give to you my kiss
As wood smoke lingers in the air
Look for me and I'll be there.
Where seagulls cry above the sea
And surf rolls in so endlessly.
Among towering trees that soar above
In all these things that I once loved
Look for me and I'll be there
You'll feel my presence everywhere.*

Dearly remembered by husband Michael, son Brandon, and the Marcoux family. "Until we meet again."

CHESSER-MARCOUX: Janice

April 8, 1961 – May 11, 2022

*It has been one year
Since the Lord has taken you away,
To all of us it seems like yesterday.*

*We hold you close and dear,
Because of us you are always near.
Sadly missed along life's way,
Quietly remembered every day.
No longer in our lives to share,
But in our hearts you're always there.
An empty place no one can fill,
We miss you, and we always will.
A prayer, a tear, are all we can give,
These we will have as long as we live.*

Always remembered and sadly missed by sister, Glenna, Robert and family. "Until we meet again."

FRASER: Aubrey Allan

*To my brother
Loving and kind in all his ways,
Upright and just to the end of his days,
Sincere and kind in heart and mind,
What beautiful memories you left behind.*

Always in my heart brother. Never forgotten. I miss you, love your brother Jr. xoxoxo

WILLETT: Ralph

In memory for Ralph James Willett.
July 1, 1949 to May 12, 2017

*It's been seven years,
As life passes by.
As you are no longer here,
To share your life with us.
But you are quietly remembered,
In our thoughts and in our minds.
Not a day goes by,
That something isn't said,
That keeps your memory alive.*

Always cherished, always remembered, but sadly missed, Marilyn and family.

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GASPÉ:
Cancer Foundation

All new membership and renewals, \$15 per person or \$25 per couple, can be sent to Gaspé Cancer Foundation, P.O. Box 6078, Gaspé, Quebec G4X 2M6, or by e-transfer to gaspe45@hotmail.com. Please include your name, address, phone number and email address. For more information, please contact Tony Patterson at 418-368-3276; Beatrice Coffin at 418-368-1566 or Patricia Ste. Croix at 418-649-3779.

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.
May 13: Mother’s Day tea

from noon to 2 p.m. \$10 per person.

HOPE:
Hope Baptist Church

Sundays: Sunday School starting at 10 a.m. Worship service beginning at 11 a.m.

HOPE TOWN:
Sports and Recreation Club

May 20: Gift bingo beginning at 7 p.m. at the Saint Godefroi Optimist Club. Bring your dabbers. Organized by the Hope Town Sports and Recreation Club and the Saint Godefroi Optimist Club.

NEW CARLISLE:
Funeral Association

June 18: The New Carlisle Funeral Association will be having a Father's Day Brunch at the New Carlisle Chalet from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Adults \$15, children ten and under \$10. Hope to see you all there.

NEW CARLISLE:
Royal Canadian Legion Branch #64

Please be advised that Legion memberships are available for \$45. Returning and new members welcome.
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!
June 6: General meeting at 7 p.m. at 1 Mount Sorrel, New Carlisle.

NEW CARLISLE:
Linda LeMore-Brown Foundation

May 17: The Linda LeMore-Brown Foundation will be having its Annual General Meeting beginning at 4 p.m. at the CASA office. Please contact Ashley Renouf at 418-752-5995 extension 107 or email: ashley@casa-gaspe.com to confirm your presence.

NEW CARLISLE:
Bible Chapel Meetings

Sundays: 9:30 a.m. Breaking of Bread for believers. 2 p.m. Gospel meeting and Sunday School.
Thursdays: 7 p.m. Prayer Meeting and Bible Study. Everyone welcome! For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

NEW RICHMOND:
United Church Luncheon

May 21: Luncheon in

house or takeout from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Church Hall. Cold cuts, salads and dessert. \$12 per person. All proceeds will go to the humanitarian fund.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:
Book Room

The book room is now open. Anyone who needs assistance can contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

ROTARY CLUB WINNERS:
The winner for April 1 is: Jocelyne Ferguson.
The winners for the week of April 2 are: Christine Cyr, Linda Gignac, Sarah Duguay, Benoît Cyr, Marjory Gallon, Société Cascapédia and Bernard Jerome.
The winners for the week of April 9 are: Marilyn Coull, Louiselle Godbout, Ken Budd, Julie Thériault, Sébastien Cantin, Marie-Hélène Bourdages and Gilles Dugas.
The winners for the week of April 16 are: Hélène Landry, Diane Smith, Roland Cyr, IGA Arbour-Leblanc, Marie Claude Audet, Doris Poirier and Ghislain Cyr.
The winners for the week of April 23 are:

Éliane Berthelot, Marcel Roy, Patrick Cyr, Viviane Dea, Marlyne Cyr, France Bujold and Yvette Huard.
The winner for April 30 is: Richard Cyr.

UNITED CHURCH
NEW RICHMOND
Sunday, May 14
10 a.m. Service

UNITED CHURCH
HOPE TOWN
Sunday, May 14
10 a.m. Service

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Sunday, May 14
NEW CARLISLE
10 a.m. Morning Prayer
HOPE TOWN
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
SHIGAWAKE
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

DEADLINE FOR THIS PAGE:
WEDNESDAY AT 4 P.M.

Please send your Classified or Coast Round-Up to: holly.smith@globetrotter.net



ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, pay attention to the smaller details, as those are the ones most often ignored. You’ll be highly regarded if you pinpoint any errors in a timely manner.
TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
Work to the best of your ability, Taurus. Focus on your own work and serve as a source of encouragement to those around you who may be experiencing some difficulties.
GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21
A loved one may be hinting at a few things he or she wants to do with you, Gemini. Find the time to make these things happen. Let

loose and have fun.
CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22
It could be tempting to hole up in a bookstore or a coffee shop for hours in the days ahead, Cancer. However, avoiding certain issues is not the way to go. Confront them head on.
LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, if you are going to leap, do so with both eyes open; otherwise, you may miss some of the dangers along the way. Always take the bigger picture into consideration.
VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, accept that you may be different from most of the people with whom you associate, and that is perfectly fine. What makes you unique

is what others like about you.
LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, explore all possibilities at work rather than pigeonholing yourself into one role. How will you know what things are like if you don’t try stuff out?
SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
You may need to roll with the punches this week, Scorpio. Things are coming at you at a record pace and it could take a lot of effort to keep up. Learn and adapt as you go.
SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, even though you have been faced with a number of challenges lately, you have managed to come through with your head held high. Keep up the progress.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
There’s not much that will bother you this week, Capricorn. It seems you have all of your ducks in a row. Enjoy this good fortune while it lasts.
AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
Remarkable opportunities are coming your way, Aquarius. All you need to do is sit back and wait for them to start. There is no need to do much legwork in this situation.
PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Big changes can sometimes be scary, Pisces. But change is just what you need to do right now to spice things up.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS
MAY 7
Eagle-Eye Cherry, Singer (55)
MAY 8
Stephen Amell, Actor (42)
MAY 9
Collins Key, Magician (27)
MAY 10
Bono, Singer (63)
MAY 11
Sabrina Carpenter, Singer (24)
MAY 12
Rami Malek, Actor (42)
MAY 13
Stevie Wonder, Singer (73)

Happy Mother's day

- Diane Skinner

Shortest Mother's Day Poem
You're my mother!
I would have no other!

A Mother's Love
Of all the special joys in life,
The big ones and the small,
A mother's love and tenderness
Is the greatest of them all.

Ways to celebrate your mother
Breakfast in bed.
Flowers or a lovely green plant.
Mother and daughter/son movie evening.
Home spa day.
Gift certificate for hair, massage or nails or Canadian Tire!
Have a dance party.
Have a photoshoot.
Go for a hike or a walk on the beach.
Look at old photos together.
Cook a favourite recipe together.
Go for a bike ride.
Make a craft together.
Knit or crochet together.
Share a bottle of wine.
Buy her a gift bag and fill it with bath pampering products: a bubble bath, a loofah, tea lights to create a relaxing mood, and body lotion.
Go shopping together.
Go for a leisurely stroll.
Practice yoga together.
Go for a drive.
Prepare a high tea. Bake scones. Dress up!
Buy a jigsaw puzzle and work on it together.
Play a game of cards or a favourite board game.
**Remember, life doesn't come with a manual.
It comes with a mother.**

Mother's Day Quiz

"All that I am, or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother." Abraham Lincoln
"It's not easy being a mother. If it were, fathers would do it." Golden Girls
It is that time of the year when mothers are celebrated and honoured by their children. On the second Sunday of May, many moms will receive cards, flowers and may be treated to a delicious meal. Whatever you choose to do for your dear mom, as long as you remember the day and give her a message of love, she should be satisfied. A nice piece of jewellery would be appreciated too!

- Why is it that the word "mother" starts with "ma" sound in almost every language?
- Mother's Day is the busiest day for _____ (What kind of establishment?)
- Lots of flowers are sold on Mother's Day. Name two other special days when lots of flowers are sold as gifts.
- Is more money spent on gifts for Mother's Day or Father's Day?
- What do they call Mother's Day in England?
- If a stay at home mother was paid for all the jobs she performs in the home, approximately how much would her yearly pay be?
- What is the heaviest human baby ever born? (On record)
- What is the current average age when women become first-time mothers? That number is rising.
- How old was the oldest woman to ever give birth?
- What percentage of one-parent families is headed by women?
- How many diapers does a parent (mom and/or dad) change by the time a baby is 2 years old? Prepare to be shocked.

ANSWERS in NEXT WEEK'S issue.

I Love You, Mom!
Mom's smiles can brighten any moment,
Mom's hugs put joy in all our days,
Mom's love will stay with us forever
and touch our lives in precious ways...
The values you've taught,
the care you've given,
and the wonderful love you've shown,
have enriched my life
in more ways than I can count.
I Love you, Mom!

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