

## Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse closed to public

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - On the morning of July 13, nearly 100 people attended a demonstration around the newly installed fence to protest the closure to the public of the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse. They are demanding the Government of Canada to repair the centuries-old lighthouse.

Citizens, cultural organizations, players in the tourism industry and the provincial deputy for the riding of Gaspé in the National Assembly wanted to send a clear message to the federal authorities and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, owner of the monument which was erected in 1858.

"I have been fighting for the lighthouse since 2013. We sent petitions, and we wrote to the minister. All we wanted was for it to be restored to ensure its longevity and so that people could continue to visit it. It is a



*A day after the closure of the lighthouse by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, around a hundred people mobilized at the foot of the fence that was blocking access to the lighthouse.*

Photo: N. Sergerie

source of local income. We have employees and we want to pay them. For us, it is an essential tourist attraction. We need political support so that money can be allocated for the restoration of the lighthouse,"

says Lucie Bergeron, who is the treasurer of the Maritime Historic Site of the Cap-des-Rosiers Lighthouse.

"The main goal (of the demonstration) is to support our committee of volunteers

who have been working for more than 10 years to save the lighthouse. I find that outrageous. We have requests: first, that the department assess the infrastructure and allow visits to resume as quickly as possi-

ble. We also ask for the restoration of the lighthouse. It's been dragging on for too long," adds the district's municipal councillor, Charlie-Maude Bossé Giroux.

Originally from Cap-des-Rosiers, the Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Gaspé, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, wanted to be present on the site to show his support for the local committee.

"We have a pinch in the heart to see the state of the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse," he says.

"As an MNA (Member of the National Assembly), I am concerned about the state of place and the lack of a roadmap for the preservation and enhancement of the lighthouse. We will try in the next few days to have a dialogue with Ms. Lebouthillier, to better understand why we have come to this

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## HOPE TOWN: Citizens want the municipality to do its homework before deciding on the relevance of prohibiting construction on sectors of Le Petit 2

GILLES GAGNÉ

HOPE TOWN - A group of 20 citizens from the municipality of Hope Town, who are owners of lots located along a section of the Le Petit 2, want the municipal administration to study all the technical aspects of water quality before deciding on the relevance of adopting by-laws that would ban construction on a large part of Le Petit 2 in Hope Town.

Those properties are located within a 500-metre radius of either the former dump that closed about 40 years ago or the current site. The former dump was located in the east part of Le Petit 2. The current trench landfill is situated at the other extremity of Le Petit 2.

The 500-metre radius around the current trench landfill site affects 11 property owners whereas the buffer zone around the former dump site involves 27 landowners.



*Gilles Gagné was expecting more transparency from the municipal administration.*

Photos: G. Gagné

The landowners and the Municipality of Hope Town have different interpretations of the regulation pertaining to the buffer zone that applies around the former dump which was an open facility where garbage

was burned and not buried.

The landowners argue that given the nature of the old dump, the protection radius is limited to 300 metres, which means that building would be prohibited between the former



*Robert Loisel called people and knocked on doors to make sure that people knew about the new regulation proposed by the municipal administration.*

dump and that distance. They argue that the 500-metre protection radius applies to today's trench dumps, where the soil is moved with heavy machinery. The landowners have a letter from Quebec's Department of

the Environment to support their position.

On the other hand, the municipal administration wants to adopt a regulation created by

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We are not making a commitment because it is not within our jurisdiction, but we are committed to establishing a dialogue and seeing how we can actively participate in its preservation,” says Stéphane Sainte-Croix.

Several players from the tourism industry were also on site at the foot of the lighthouse, which was a welcomed presence according to Pascale Rémillard, the director of Destination Gaspé.

“We hope that our appeal will be heard. This closure affects the entire tourism industry. It is a very important emblem for us. It's not true that we're going to let it go. There will be things that will move and everything we can do to help, we will do it,” said Pascale Rémillard to the crowd.

In an email sent to SPEC the Citizens Committee for the Development of Gaspé adds its voice and denounces the gesture “which is an insult to the committee responsible for receiving tourists, to the entire population of Gaspésie and the residents of Cap-des-Rosiers in particular. We also denounce the passive position of the Member of Parliament of the Gaspésie, who is not worthy of the confidence that the population entrusted to her during the last election.”

“The Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse is a cultural and heritage icon of our beautiful region. This is why our



Photo: N. Sergerie

One of the visibly apparent cracks on the lighthouse.

government actively monitors it and makes the necessary checks to ensure the safety of the site and its visitors. I want to reassure everyone that the announced closure is only temporary while waiting for the necessary repairs to be carried out. Until then, I have full confidence in Fisheries and Oceans Canada to do this important work and I can assure you that every effort will be made to keep the site as accessible as possible,” wrote the Member of Parliament (MP), Diane Lebouthillier, in an email sent by her constituency office.

On the evening of July 12, the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC adopted a resolution in support of the committee and called on Ottawa to repair it as soon as possible.

The situation has been going on for years, according to Daniel Côté who is the mayor of Gaspé and prefect for the

Côte-de-Gaspé. “The council of mayors demands that the federal government assume its responsibilities with regard to the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse. It is absolutely abnormal that the Canadian government has abandoned the highest lighthouse in the country, left it in a state of decrepitude, and prefers to invest in fences rather than in repairs. We find it absurd and insulting,” says an upset Mr. Côté.

In his eyes, the solution is simple: transfer the infrastructure from Fisheries and Oceans Canada to Parks Canada.

“I had personal discussions with the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, who was to follow up with our MP to set this in motion. Nothing moved. We do not feel the will to settle the matter once and for all. During this time, we put up fences and we will wait for it to fall. We will continue to put

pressure,” adds the prefect.

Mr. Côté also indicates that the Town of Gaspé will soon adopt a resolution to also demand the repair.

According to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, a visit to the lighthouse on June 20 led to the closure.

“I cannot describe to you the state of the lighthouse. You have to understand that I visited on June 20 and found that there was a deterioration compared to the last studies. I had concerns. It was at this time that we took action to try to take measures as quickly as possible to carry out an assessment, but I am not in a position to ensure the health and safety of the people who will visit the interior of the lighthouse or its vicinity,” explains Maryse Sohier, Regional Property Manager of Fisheries and Oceans Canada Technical Services, Quebec Region.

#### Next step: Technical study

“We are pushing to get it (technical study) as quickly as possible. As I wish, before the fall, we will have an evaluation for this purpose,” says Maryse Sohier.

She, however, cannot provide information on the work that needs to be done.

“That's our wish, but in the federal government, it's all about funding approvals. I want to take all actions to ensure its sustainability, but it is conditional on funding,” says Ms. Sohier.

The lighthouse has not been

considered a “surplus” infrastructure since 2021 by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which was a surprise for site managers.

“That means there could be steps taken to restore it, maybe not fully. Perhaps in part over several years. They haven't closed the door to that, but we have to find the funds to do it,” says Lucie Bergeron, of the Maritime Historic Site of the Cap-des-Rosiers Lighthouse, who learned of this situation during a videoconference announcing the closure.

The infrastructure was built between 1853 and 1858 and still remains a landmark at the entrance to the St. Lawrence River and is still registered as a reference for navigation.

Every year, the site receives some 8,000 visitors who pay to go to the lighthouse. It is a major attraction for Cap-des-Rosiers and an important source of income for the committee to ensure the condition of the site.

“It is a political will to restore the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse,” says Ms. Bergeron.

This is not the first time the lighthouse has been closed due to structural issues. In 2017, emergency work was done to ensure the safety of visitors following an inspection in September 2016. At that time, the restoration work was valued at \$6.5 million.

The Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse was recognized as a National Historic Site on June 11, 1973, and a heritage building on March 31, 1994.

## Fifth BleuBleu festival attracts record crowds

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON – In its five years of existence, the Festival BleuBleu has based its reputation on the diversity of the music genres and the wide array of original venues, rather big or small, where the shows are featured. Among those venues, the Cabane à Eudore, an old shed that was owned by a commercial fisherman many years ago, has become one of BleuBleu's focal points.

Shigawake's Shaina Hayes sang at the Cabane à Eudore in 2021 when she was invited by BleuBleu. Gaspé's Nash Stanley and the Triculturals were also present in 2021.

This year, Joe Grass, who has been playing with numerous well-known bands over the last couple of decades, was invited to present a solo show which occurred in the late afternoon of June 23, during a heat wave and smoky air com-



Photo: G. Gagné

Joe Grass presented his own show on June 23, at the Cabane à Eudore, a shed that used to belong to a Carleton fisherman. He had performed the previous evening with Marie-Pierre Arthur, a well-known singer born in Grande-Vallée, on the north side of the Gaspé Coast.

ing from Northern Quebec's forest fires.

Joe Grass who is originally from Moncton, New Brunswick, has become well-known in the Gaspé Peninsula,

especially since the creation of the Shigawake Music Festival in 2009, an event that is held jointly with the Shigawake Agricultural Fair. He will not attend the Shigawake event this

year due to other commitments, one of which will be the birth of his second child.

Mr. Grass indicated that he loved playing at the Cabane à Eudore. “It is one of the coolest places where I have played,” he told the crowd, after notifying the attendees of the sight of a mother deer with her fawn along the sand bar. Some people thought he was joking but he had taken pictures before the show to prove it.

Some Gaspesian artists also presented a show at BleuBleu this year, Q052, also known as Gesgapegiag's Quentin Condo, and Marie-Pierre Arthur, née Fournier, who was born and raised in Grande-Vallée, on the north side of the Gaspé Peninsula, has been leading a solid Quebec-wide career since 2009.

The founders of BleuBleu, Myriam Sophie Deslauriers and Anne-Julie Saint-Laurent, were quite happy with the results of the 2023 festival.

“We had a great popular response, with 6,000 entries being recorded, a record since the creation of BleuBleu in 2019. Some of them were freebies but people still had to get a ticket,” they both explained following the event.

The event will be back in 2024, again around the Fête nationale du Québec, they point out. The budget for BleuBleu is now at \$500,000, including service exchanges.

Since 2019, BleuBleu has presented shows in 17 different venues, including two gravel pits, the summit of Mount Saint Joseph, as well as the wharf, which has also become a popular venue due to its capacity and scenery.

“The campground point could be one. We are asked to organize a show on a forest trail. We have many more original ideas for show locations,” remark event founders Myriam Sophie Deslauriers and Anne-Julie Saint-Laurent.

# Lobster fishing season: Fishermen happy with the high catches and prices

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON-SUR-MER – Although statistics have yet to be released, Gaspé Peninsula lobster fishermen believe that their 2023 season catches could constitute an overall record, as catches remained high throughout the season, which began on April 29.

Although catches were high, the overall average price was not as high as the average of \$8.52 per pound in 2021 or \$7.95 in 2022. The price remained between \$7.31 and \$8.25 for the 10 weeks for fishermen stationed between Anse-à-Brillant and Bonaventure-Est.

Fishermen in Zones 19 and 21, which cover the northern side of the Gaspé Peninsula and the west part of the Bay of Chaleur, will likely reach an average of \$7.70 per pound when the season is completed.

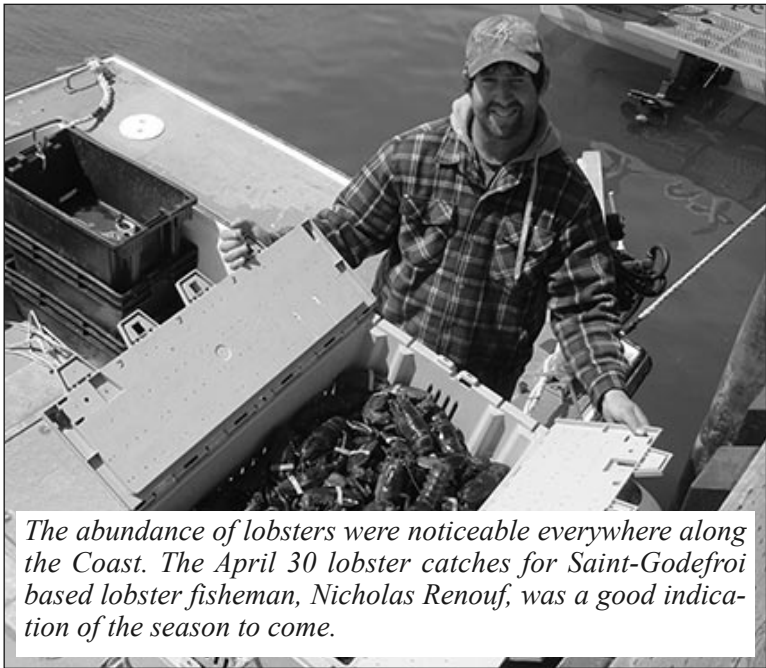
Mr. O'Neil Cloutier, director of the Southern Gaspé Professional Fishermen Group, believes that the 2023 catches could possibly break the record of 4,719 metric tonnes set in 2021, a year that was also marked by a record average price at \$8.52 a pound. The revenues from those catches marked an all-time high of \$88.1 million.

"There has clearly been an increase in landings in 2023 compared to 2022. Last year, the season took place in the majority of areas without an increase, but areas 19 and 21 performed very well. This year, I think it was beyond 2021. It was abundant and constant. That's what we noticed the most. From one day to the next and from one week to the next, rain or shine, it was good," describes Mr. Cloutier.

As SPEC was reaching its deadline, there were still a few days of fishing left in Zone 21 which covers the lower section of the Bay of Chaleur; Zone 20a which covers between Brillant Cove and Cape Gaspé (the south side of the Forillon peninsula); and Zone 19 which covers the fishing sector between Cape Gaspé and Mont Louis. In 2022, 4,263 metric tons of lobsters were caught, with revenues reaching \$75 million.

O'Neil Cloutier regrets that statistical monitoring is not available during the lobster fishing season, however, statistics are also not available for lobster that are caught in the Magdalen Islands or for snow crab caught by local fishermen.

"We used to receive data a



*The abundance of lobsters were noticeable everywhere along the Coast. The April 30 lobster catches for Saint-Godefroi based lobster fisherman, Nicholas Renouf, was a good indication of the season to come.*

Photo: G. Gagné

few years ago. I have shared this problem with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and we should have a preliminary report for the first five weeks very soon. It is certain that in the six zones of the Gaspé Peninsula, it is good. Those (fishermen) I reached told me that it is good everywhere but at what level? I cannot answer," states Mr. Cloutier.

Mr. Cloutier, who is also a lobster fisherman, says his season was exceptional. "It was my best year, absolutely. The climatic conditions were appalling. We had a lot of wind from the northeasterly sector regularly throughout the season. It's rare. Usually in June, it should have been southwest wind but the south wind arrived at the end of June, shrouded in mist. The last eight days of fishing were spent in the fog but, despite that, we had good catches," he states.

The weather which prevented some fishermen from collecting their catches did not affect his number of days at sea.

"I still fished 66 days out of 68 but, at my wharf, some fishermen lost 12 to 13 days, like the lobster boats in the sector from Cannes-de-Roche to the mark of (Percé) Rock. They suffered trap losses but their landings were still higher than last year," says Mr. Cloutier.

Mr. Cloutier is also satisfied with the prices paid in 2023. "It has risen to more than \$8 in the last two weeks, \$8.16 in the ninth week and \$8.25 in the tenth. Its lowest level was \$7.31 during the sixth week, to increase continuously thereafter. This is a good price, given the global circumstances. We have nothing to complain about," notes Mr. Cloutier.

In Brillant Cove, Travis Henry also experienced an outstanding lobster fishing season. "My lobster season was unbelievable. I have never seen so

many lobsters in all my life. It was a record-breaking season, a season for the ages," he sums up.

## Lobster marketing: live products sell very well

Gaspé lobster processors like the company E. Gagnon et Fils received massive quantities of products right from the first day of landings, on April 30.

"It depends on the sectors, for the volumes of lobster, because we are on a large territory. Not all sectors have increased but, overall, we will break the 2021 record. When we look at the trend from one year to the next, we notice a seesaw performance, except that when it goes down, it's still very good, but when it goes up, the leap is often spectacular," says Bill Sheehan, vice-president of E. Gagnon et Fils, who processed about half of the region's catches and is the largest buyer of lobster in the Gaspé Peninsula.

Despite a fairly high price, likely the third highest price given in history, the Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé based company had no trouble selling lobster.

"There is a lot of live lobster that is traded. In Ontario, on the other hand, it is way less fruitful, but it is a good year for live lobster. It is more difficult on the processing side. The sizes of lobster tails pose a bit of a problem. They are often smaller than the market would like them to be. There is a little inventory left," says Mr. Sheehan.

"The price of lobster was also satisfactory, both in the live product market and in the frozen product market. The end-of-season increase has been an observable phenomenon for several years," says Mr. Sheehan, due to the growing popularity of lobster consumption on statutory holidays be-

## Police report

On July 11, Sûreté du Québec police officers from the MRC of Côte-de-Gaspé in partnership with the organized crime investigation and coordination division carried out a search and arrest at a residence on York Boulevard East in connection with drug trafficking.

Maxime Patterson St-Yves, 39, was arrested and briefly appeared on July 12 at the Percé Courthouse. He was charged with possession of a sum of money exceeding \$5,000 obtained through criminal activities. He was remanded in custody and as the SPEC was reaching its deadline, he was scheduled to return to court on July 14. Additional charges of illegal drug possession and possession for the purpose of trafficking were expected to be laid against him. This police intervention followed an investigation initiated a few months ago.

During the search, the police seized more than 2 grams of cocaine, more than 30 grams of cannabis ready to sell, approximately \$7,000 in Canadian currency, two electronic scales, an accounting list and bags probably used to sell drugs.

The Sûreté du Québec reminds citizens that any information relating to drug trafficking, drug possession, distribution or production of narcotics may be communicated at any time, in a confidential manner, to the crime information centre at 1-800-659-4264.

Sûreté du Québec officers are investigating the robbery of the Coopérative forestière de la Gaspésie ambulance, which occurred in a forestry sector called Reboul, in the backcountry of Saint-Elzéar. The ambulance is used to assist forestry workers. The vehicle was found relatively shortly after being stolen at Kilometre 6 of the Saint-Elzéar road. Two important items were stolen from the vehicle: a brand-new heart defibrillator and a large first aid kit. The two items are essential tools given the tough working conditions of the forestry workers.

Sûreté du Québec officers are investigating a July 8 fire on the patio of a house located along Highway 132 in Hope at 1 a.m.. The fire was quickly extinguished by the local firefighters but the police are investigating the case because foul play is suspected. July 8 was a Saturday and the couple living in the house had been married the previous day. "I can only say that samples were taken at the scene in order to be analyzed. We cannot release additional details because it could hamper our investigation," explains Sûreté du Québec spokesperson Sgt. Audrey-Anne Bilodeau.

Although Sûreté du Québec officers intensified surveillance and increased the number of interventions, eight deaths occurred from collisions on its territory during the weekends of June 23 to 25 and from June 30 to July 2. According to the provisional report, none of the deadly accidents occurred in the Gaspé Peninsula. The report is almost identical to that of last year. Patrol officers were numerous on the road network to ensure the safety of road users during those two long weekends, particularly targeting speeding, driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs, or motorists using cellular phones while driving. As the construction holiday nears, the Sûreté du Québec's Audrey-Anne Bilodeau wishes to reiterate its message of prevention for road users. They are encouraging motorists to plan ahead in order to avoid distractions, wear their seatbelts and respect speed limits.

ginning with the Fête nationale du Québec, followed by Canada Day and the July 4, Independence Day in the United States.

"In the live lobster market, it is the price of the joint marketing plan. You do not have a choice. The price of the joint plan is made according to the live lobster market. If there are too many on the market, you sell for less. You have no choice. It is alive. It is perishable. The volume increased here, in Quebec, but it decreased elsewhere. New Brunswick has increased its legal catch measure and there has been a lot of wind, both of which have reduced catches. In Nova Scotia, too, they lost days of fishing due to the weather," says Bill Sheehan.

"These factors have helped the marketing of Quebec lobster. In the Magdalen Islands, the landings were also very strong," he notes.

Landings in the Magdalen Islands slightly exceeded 15 million pounds during the nine weeks of the season. The season there is one week shorter than elsewhere.

In the Gaspé Peninsula, if the 2021 record of 4,719 metric tons is broken, total landings will, therefore, exceed the 10.4 million pound mark.

This year, the various divisions of the firm E. Gagnon et Fils delivered nearly 6 million pounds of lobster, including the fishery that was still active as of July 13 and the catches of Gaspesian fishermen from Anticosti Island.



Gilles Gagné

Commentary

The Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse symbolizes Ottawa’s negligence

On July 18, 2017, Canada’s Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, visited the Gaspé Peninsula for the first time since being elected in October 2015. While on the Coast he stopped on the north side of Forillon National Park where he was asked what he would do to ensure repairs would be made to the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse.

He replied that he would talk about it to Member of Parliament (MP) Diane Lebouthillier, who represents the Gaspésie-Magdalen Islands riding. Well, talking to Ms. Lebouthillier was obviously not enough because nothing was done to upgrade the structure. The Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse, which is the highest lighthouse structure in Canada, was closed on July 12 for an undetermined period of time. To add insult to injury, it was the day prior to Quebec’s Lighthouse Day!

When asked about the importance of repairing the lighthouse quickly, Diane Lebouthillier has repeatedly said since being elected almost eight years ago that “the lighthouse will not fall down tomorrow morning.”

Wow! What a responsible statement, some of us are tempted to say. What a promising way to make sure that the second most photographed site of the Gaspé Peninsula, after Percé Rock, remains structurally sound and eye-catching for years to come!

Not repairing the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse is an insult to Gaspésians and to the importance of the regional and national heritage. After five years of construction, the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse was inaugurated in 1858, nine years before Canada’s Confederation, which marked the official foundation of the country.

An important proportion of the rocks used to build the lighthouse came from Scotland; ballast stones that were used to stabilize the ships during the transatlantic crossings. The ships were coming to the Gaspé Peninsula to load fish or lumber and they needed ballast when they were empty before reaching our shores.

The lighthouse has guided hundreds of thousands of ships in its 165 years of history. The ballast stones story is just one of an endless number of stories involving the lighthouse.

Consequently, the lighthouse fully deserved the

recognition it received from the Canadian government in 1973 as a National historical site and then as a Heritage building in 1994. In 1977, Justin Trudeau’s father, Pierre-Elliott, came to the lighthouse to unveil a plaque highlighting its historical importance.

What did the government do after that? It neglected the lighthouse. It is the last remaining lighthouse structure of this empire type in Canada. There were four at one point, including one on Anticosti Island. The three others have crumbled, which should have added another factor rooting for the importance of protecting the iconic Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse.

The way the federal government deals with this file and other issues of the same nature is a monument to responsibility denial.

The lighthouse belongs to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which manages the Canadian Coast Guard. It was considered for a while before 2021 a surplus lighthouse, or non-essential, before getting back its status of a primary navigation beacon.

When Justin Trudeau came to the region in July 2017, the lighthouse had received in the prior months a bit of patchwork in order to be open to tourists. The overall evaluation of a thorough renovation of its structure amounted to \$6.5 million at the time. It had been much less before but such a structure repair cost is always sky-rocketing past a certain point of neglect.

Can we imagine right now what the tab will be following the upcoming study that is supposed to determine the list of repairs and the feasibility of carrying them out? Since the pandemic, construction costs have exploded and finding contractors has become a highly uncertain venture.

Not the first symbol of federal negligence

The closure of the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse follows a deplorable streak of events marked by the federal government inaction. In September 2016, the wharf in Chandler was closed due to poor maintenance, not because of a lack of users. A cruise ship, the CTMA Vacancier, was making 30 stops there yearly and a few commercial ships were still using it to unload de-icing salt.

The Carleton commercial wharf was also closed in 2017 even if it was still used several times yearly by ships delivering steel, salt and ground wood. In that case, a lack of vision from the municipal authorities paved the way for Transport Canada’s strategy of abandoning wharves.

In June 2016, the same federal government closed and moved the Rivière-au-Renard Canadian Coast Guard maritime radio station to Les Escoumins on the North Shore, with the 15 jobs that were created by its presence. There, as well, Diane Lebouthillier did not move much. The decision had been made by the previous Conservative Party government before she was elected. She had eight months to prove that she was going to save it which she did not.

It is now obvious that she is weak when the time comes to defend important regional stakes.

Symbolically, it is rather mind boggling and embarrassing to see a minister in charge of the Canada Revenue Agency express in words and through lack of action such negligence. It has become evident now that unless Minister Lebouthillier gets a serious wake-up call, she is hardly part of the solution.

We are still wondering why Joyce Murray, the current Fisheries and Oceans Canada Minister, even came to the Gaspé Peninsula over the spring.

There is unanimity in the Town of Gaspé that Ms. Murray’s ministry is no longer the solution, if it ever was, to have the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse refurbished for good. Fisheries and Oceans Canada prefers investing in fences to prevent people from visiting the lighthouse rather than repairing it.

The lighthouse is just a few hundred metres away from the limit of the Forillon National Park. Parks Canada has the financial means to carry out upgrading work in the lighthouse, which should be integrated into the park.

The floating nature of Parks Canada might have something to do with the negligence of the last decades. Since 1998, Parks Canada has become a service also known as the Parks Canada Agency. Since 2003, Parks Canada has been under the responsibility of Environment Canada, run by Minister Steven Guilbeault.

From 1994 to 2003, Parks Canada was under the jurisdiction of the Department of Canadian Heritage. From 1979 to 1994, Parks Canada was under the responsibility of the Department of the Environment, and from 1966 to 1978, under the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the North.

Regular changes regarding the ministry in charge of Parks Canada created the perfect context to trigger neglect and responsibility denial. Those factors coupled with the lack of political will to make things move bring us to the mess we are in now.

Will Steven Guilbeault, Canada’s Environment Minister, fare better than others with the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse file? He can hardly do worse, except if he declares its total abandonment. In a minority government context, it is unlikely.

It will, however, take some more involvement of volunteers to push the file upward and establish a fair contact with Minister Guilbeault.

Volunteers have protected the lighthouse to the best of their capacity over the last decades, keeping the premise attractive and fit for the 8,000 visitors that visit from the end of spring to the beginning of the fall. All that with a paltry budget of \$80,000 a year. Their work over the years has been invaluable.

The knowledge of history usually makes citizens stronger. It is easier to move forward when you know your past, what your ancestors did. That’s one of the reasons why it is important to make sure that the lighthouse will be repaired and opened again.

Gaspésians should not have to be penalized because of the neglect of the Canadian government that spans several decades.

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CMC AUDITE



# MAPAQ hands out \$1.05 million for food development in the Gaspé

GILLES GAGNÉ

PASPEBIAC - The Government of Quebec recently confirmed funding of \$1.05 million as part of the renewal of the sectoral agreement to support the agricultural and agri-food priorities of the Gaspé Peninsula for the 2023 to 2025 period.

The Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Minister responsible for the Centre-du-Québec region, André Lamontagne, the Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Bonaventure, Catherine Blouin, as well as her colleague for Gaspé, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, made the announcement in Paspebiac on June 13 during a tour of the region.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, referred to as MAPAQ, is granting an amount of \$650,000 while the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is investing an amount of \$400,000.

Overall, including local contributions, the new funding announced will inject \$1,317,018 into the region's economy over a three-year period. The regional partners in this new sectoral agreement are the region's five MRCs and the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Union of Agriculture Producers (UPA).

This new agreement confirms the mobilization of all partners to continue to support the development of the bio sector through the implementation of projects related to the strategic planning of the agricultural and agri-food sector in the Gaspé 2023-2028.

The purpose of the agreement is to define the terms of participation of the parties in pooling financial and technical resources, regional consultation, coordination and implementation of projects related to the 2023-2028 strategic plan, and implementation of projects stemming from the devel-



Photo: G. Gagné

Stéphane Sainte-Croix, André Lamontagne, Johanne Michaud, Catherine Blouin and Michèle Poirier were present for the renewal of a three-year agreement.

opment plans of the MRCs' agricultural territory.

The agreement's governance will be ensured by a management committee made up of a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPAQ); the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; the five MRCs in the region; the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands UPA Federation, which represents local unions; and Gaspésie Gourmande, which promotes the use of local products in the region. Gaspésie Gourmande will act as a fund manager and will have the mandate of administering the funds paid by the signatories.

The five MRCs are adding \$242,718 to the fund of \$1,317,018 and the local UPA unions are adding \$24,300. The agreement could be enhanced by further community commitment.

## Reactions

Johanne Michaud, director general of Gaspésie Gourmande, points out that even if her organization doesn't contribute financially to the deal, the agreement renewal is the result of seven to eight months of work and represents the

base of a multi-year strategy.

"The agreement is not the only tool we have (to promote local food) but it is an outstanding one. We will fill the mandate to manage the agreement with care and professionalism. In this agreement, there is a small amount for Gaspésie Gourmande. It is a first of its kind," she says about the management responsibility.

Gaspésie Gourmande currently has almost 175 members. In addition to promoting local food, the organization also develops branding for its members.

"I am pleased to announce that our government is renewing its financial support for the benefit of agri-food development in the Gaspé! The experience acquired during previous agreements has made it possi-

ble to demonstrate the powerful leverage effect provided by concerted action within a territory. It is by targeting the common needs within a region and by acting in coherence with regional specificities that we promote prosperity and increase our food self-sufficiency," says André Lamontagne, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

"The bio sector plays a major role in our region. I am pleased with the renewal of the agreement, which demonstrates the desire of the community and the various partners in the agri-food sector to join forces and work together. For our community, these investments will have environmental, economic, social and tourism benefits," adds the Member of the Na-

tional Assembly for Bonaventure, Catherine Blouin.

"I salute the consultation of the bio-food sector. It has adopted a shared vision for the development of its sector, which plays a key role in the region's economy. This sectoral agreement certainly marks a step forward in the development of the bio-food industry for the Gaspé region," stresses Stéphane Sainte-Croix, the MNA for Gaspé who is also the government assistant to the Minister responsible for the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands.

"The UPA Federation and its local unions are proud to work with all of their partners to bring this new sectoral agreement to fruition. This tool is a valuable asset to support the women and men who work to feed and develop our region through their agricultural business," says Michèle Poirier, president of the UPA Federation of Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands.

"The renewal of this agreement, which is closely linked to the all-new strategic planning of the agri-food sector, demonstrates the full strength of concerted action by players in the region. It is also a great recognition of the importance of the sector for the development of the region as well as the role of animation and coordination of the regional agri-food consultation that Gaspésie Gourmande plays," concludes Gilbert Berthelot, president of Gaspésie Gourmande.





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## HOPE TOWN:

### ▶ Cont'd from cover

the MRC of Bonaventure which stipulates that a 500-metre protection radius is compulsory, no matter the type of dump. The buffer distance can be reduced to 300 metres in the case of old dumps only if a hydrogeological study is carried out to prove that the water quality is good between the buffer zone extremities, which extend from 300 to 500 metres from the dump.

### A consultation without much notice, says the citizens

During a July 12 public consultation which was called to present the regulation draft tied to the norms characterizing the buffer zone, land owner Gilles Gignac, who lives along the Chemin de la Rivière in the east part of the village, expressed his frustration at the strategy deployed by mayor of Hope Town, Linda MacWhirter.

“Why didn’t you tell us in advance about tonight’s meeting? The notice was put on the municipality’s website on June 28 and I attended last Thursday’s (July 6) meeting. I asked you about a coming meeting and you said ‘soon’ while you already knew that it would be tonight. Some of us only received the notice in today’s mail and some not yet,” asked Mr. Gignac.

“I knocked on doors and called everybody concerned by the draft regulation. Otherwise, it would have gone unnoticed,” added Robert Loisel, who owns 15 lots along the Second range.

Mayor MacWhirter replied that the municipal administration thought that the proper means had been used to inform the citizens and that the July 12 meeting was not slated for decision making.



Photos: G. Gagné

Mayor Linda MacWhirter committed to informing people in advance from now on.

The landowners present contested the municipality’s eventual ban on construction in the area located between 300 and 500 metres from the old dump because it would considerably reduce the value of their land if nobody can buy and build on it or dig a well.

Before the beginning of the meeting, Gilles Gignac told the SPEC reporter that “There is an owner whose house was built years ago. His house is located 310 metres from the closed dump and his water is perfectly drinkable, supported by tests.”

Most landowners are under the impression that the draft resolution pertaining to the determination of the rules in the buffer zone is pushed by the MRC of Bonaventure.

Linda MacWhirter stated during the July 12 meeting that Hope Town wants to follow in the steps of neighbouring municipalities that have already adopted the resolution brought forward by the MRC.

“In New Carlisle, the MRC regulation was adopted on May 16, 2022; in Paspebiac, on April 11, 2022; in Hope, on February 1, 2022; in Saint-Godefroi, on May 2, 2022; and in Shigawake, on February 7, 2022,” she stressed.

That affirmation did not change the land owners’ viewpoint, notably because Le Petit 2 of Hope Town offers great potential for building.

“We are practically alone (in the MRC of Bonaventure) to be located in a white zone, where we can build. For years, we have accepted the garbage of New Richmond and Bonaventure and now, we cannot build,” states Robert Loisel.

Many municipalities of the MRC of Bonaventure are bound by the constraints of green zoning, which essentially forbids the construction of new houses. Derogations are hard to obtain and they are often refused. The municipality of Shigawake must notably deal with such constraints.

### Who should pay?

Mayor MacWhirter says that depending on the magnitude of the study, a hydrogeological study to establish the quality of water could cost be-

tween \$60,000 and \$170,000 in the area affected.

Robert Loisel and Gilles Gignac have both checked and such a study for a single landowner could cost as much as \$25,000.

When asked if the municipality would pay for a hydrogeological study applied to the area surrounding the old dump, Linda MacWhirter did not give a clear answer.

Some of the citizens like Guy Dubois made suggestions as to who should pay the bill, with the municipality being on that list. His house is located along Highway 132 but the property, like it is the case for many others, extends to Le Petit 2.

“Suppose that I pollute my piece of land. You will come and see me and rightfully so. I would pay the bill. Suppose now that our piece of land might have been polluted by everybody. Who should pay? It seems evident,” remarked Mr. Dubois.

He later added that “the dump was yours (it was run by the municipality) and I don’t see open-mindedness on your part to understand our position.”

Like some other attendees, Guy Dubois expects a complete study, encompassing bacteria, listeria, carcinogens and heavy metals checks.

Robert Loisel pointed out that the issue of construction permits along the east part of Le Petit 2 has been in limbo since 2019-2020. “We have been patient. It was first raised just before the Covid and it was postponed because we couldn’t hold public meetings. It looks as if you don’t want to listen to

us,” he said.

Guy Dubois stressed that it would be important for the municipality to decide before adopting any resolution. “Why wouldn’t you commission a study? It would then be relevant to make decisions based on facts.”

Another citizen, Diane Thériault, affirmed that the municipality’s current position to hesitate before paying for a study is “not logical considering the long-term benefits that could come from construction permits on the Second Range (Petit 2).”

Other citizens said that the revenue taxes generated by a handful of new houses that could be built on the Le Petit 2 would more than make up for the hydrogeological study tab.

Amy MacWhirter presented another aspect of the issue, as she and other residents “want to pass on one or several pieces of land” to their next of kin. The value of that land is not the same if they can’t build on them, she explained.

Repeatedly, the citizens who talked denounced the lack of transparency of the process leading to the July 12 meeting, notably the fact that some of them learned about it just a day or hours before the scheduled meeting.

Mayor MacWhirter promised that the follow-up will be clearer, “that you will receive a letter in the mail,” way ahead of the meeting.

Asked to specify a schedule for what will come next, Ms. MacWhirter said that it will be carried out “as soon as possible.” She added that the municipal administration will assess all the legal aspects of the file.

## A class action lawsuit is being considered by some citizens if the draft regulation is adopted as it stands

### GILLES GAGNÉ

HOPE TOWN – Gilles Gignac, Robert Loisel and quite a few of the 20 Hope Town citizens who participated in the July 12 meeting are considering a class action lawsuit if the municipal administration sticks to the current zoning by-law relating to former sanitary landfills, former dumps and trench deposits in the municipality.

“I am ready to go for a class action,” warned Mr. Gignac at the end of the meeting. He had already sought legal counsel that afternoon. Robert Loisel and a couple of attendees had also mentioned the possibility of a class ac-

tion earlier in the meeting.

Other participants talked about it outside the municipal meeting room, either before or after the 70-minute meeting. However, everybody favours negotiations with the municipality.

The notice of motion of by-law draft was given on June 7, 2023, at the Municipality of Hope Town. It was proposed by councillor Élizabéth Thériault, supported by Lida Francoeur and resolved by a majority of the council members. Gisèle Delarosbil withdrew from decision making.

As it stands, the by-law draft stipulates that “no new drinking water intake or catch-

ment facility used for human consumption may be located within 500 metres of a former trench deposit, sanitary landfill or landfill. This distance could be less if a scientific (hydrogeological) study shows that the location of a new drinking water intake or new catchment facility for human consumption does not pose any risk of contamination to the population.”

Gilles Gignac’s interpretation of current regulations after talking with employees at the Quebec Department of the Environment is that the buffer zone between a former dump and a future well can be 300 metres instead of 500.



Amy MacWhirter is worried about the potential value of the land if her next of kin cannot build on it.

# Bernard Jerome and Roderick Larocque will run for chief of Gesgapegiag

*Fifteen candidates are running for a position on the council*

**GILLES GAGNÉ**

GESGAPEGIAG – Former chief Roderick Larocque and Bernard Jerome, an elder and former chief of Gesgapegiag in the 1990s who is just ending a term on the band council, will be running for chief of Gesgapegiag in the upcoming August 12 election in Gesgapegiag.

Incumbent Chief John Martin will not run for the top position, as he has decided to run for a spot on the council, something he did a few years ago. Mr. Martin has been involved in Gesgapegiag politics for about 30 years.

Fourteen other candidates will join Mr. Martin in an attempt to win one of the eight council positions. They are incumbent candidate Aaron

Condo, Angelique Condo, Harry Condo, Lina Condo, Tracy Condo, incumbent Dorothy Gedeon, Shannon Gedeon, Anthony (Tony) Jerome, Elias Jerome, Lynn Jerome, Robert Jerome, Margaret Ann (Dolly) Martin, Shawn Martin and Preston Paul.

The nomination period ended on July 8. Incumbent councillors Christianne Bernard, Danny Condo and Tammy Martin have decided not to run this year. The two other positions were not filled at the end of the term.

Currently, the total population of Gesgapegiag is 1,542, with 712 members living in the community and 830 members living outside the community. Many members live in Gesgapegiag's neighbouring villages and

towns. All members are allowed to vote, whether they live in or outside the community.

In 2019, John Martin won with 256 against incumbent chief Roderick Larocque, who had held the position since 2013. The outgoing leader was seeking a third term at the time. The third candidate for the same position, Isaac Wiinikainen, received 31 votes.

Christianne Bernard obtained the highest number of votes in 2019 with 272. Tammy Martin and Dorothy Gedeon are the only elected candidates of 2019 who stayed on the council for the duration of the four year term.

In August 2019, Gesgapegiag had 506 members living in the community and 753

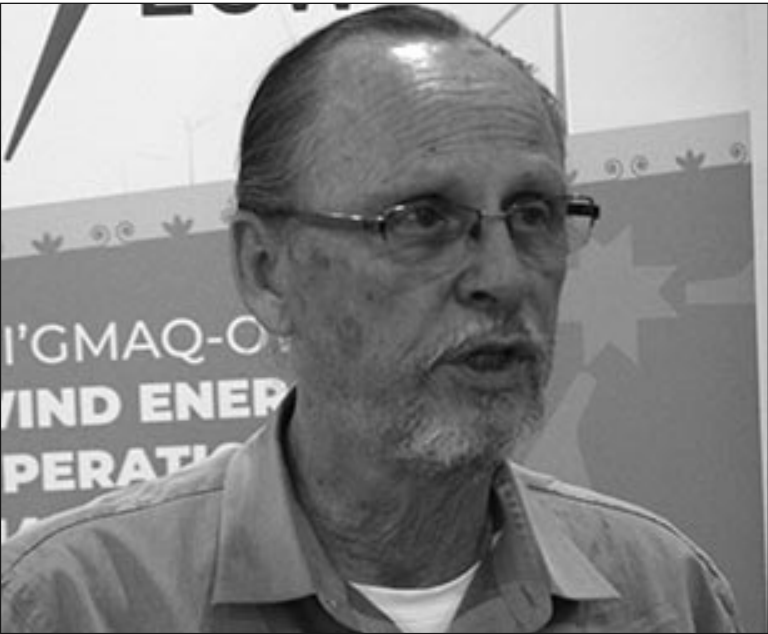


Photo: G. Gagné

*John Martin has decided to run for a councillor position instead of his current position as chief of Gesgapegiag. Mr. Martin has held the position as chief many times since the 1990s.*

members living outside the community, of the 1,259 members who were able to vote, 466 people from the two groups participating in the election.

## GASOLINE: Mayors of Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts denounce prices

**NELSON SERGERIE**

GASPÉ - The mayors of Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts denounce the high prices that their citizens have to pay when it comes time to fill up their gas tanks.

Since the end of May, the posted price has been at \$1.794 per litre in the Chandler, Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts sectors and has not budged despite decreases in acquisition prices.

During the week of July 3, that difference in price was even more sizable with motorists paying 10 cents above the realistic price.

On July 10, the date analyzed by SPEC from data collected from the Energy Board and the price calculated by CAA-Quebec, the average price of gasoline was reported at \$1.74 per litre.

Motorists in these sectors are paying five to six cents above the realistic price; that money going into retailers' profits. In fact, on July 10, the difference was almost 20 cents in Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts.

Data collected on July 11



Photo: N. Sergerie

*The price of a litre of gasoline has been stable at \$1.794 in Gaspé since the end of May, a price that is above the average price paid in other parts on the Gaspé Peninsula.*

indicated that motorists in the Bay of Chaleur areas paid, on average, \$1.68 per litre, compared again to the price of \$1.794 paid by other sections on the Coast.

According to the Energy Board, a retailer in the Bay of Chaleur area maintains an average margin of approximately 12 cents per litre, 14.4 cents in the Rocher-Percé MRC and this margin is close to 16 cents in Gaspé and Haute-Gaspésie.

“There is a form of control that seems to be exercised by whoever. We cannot be told of free competition in a situation like this. It's recurring. What we see is that the North of Gaspésie pays much more than the South of Gaspésie,” says the mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté.

“It is abnormal that there is such a disparity,” he adds.

In 2019, Gaspé launched an approach with the Competition Bureau, which was quickly followed by several other municipalities and MRCs in the region.

The results of this request for an investigation are still pending, but a balance was created after the compilation of data which showed high profit margins during the summer of 2019: a litre of gasoline was selling for 8.3 cents to 18.5 cents more than the minimum price estimated by the Energy Board between June 3 and August 26, 2019.

“We inquired and, somewhere, we were told to let them do their job. I can't wait

to hear the conclusion and if there is any cleaning to be done, let it be done. If we are paying the right price, let them say it too, but I don't think people will believe it that easily,” continues the mayor, whose parents were gasoline retailers.

Simon Deschênes, the mayor of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, also deplores the high gas prices. “It's normal. We see that in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, Gaspé and Chandler, we are among the most expensive prices in Quebec,” says Mr. Deschênes.

“It is difficult to understand and get answers to our questions. I think this is something that we will have to review soon to see the possibilities of trying to obtain a fair and equitable price that will resemble the average in Quebec,” suggests the mayor of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts.

According to CAA-Quebec, Gaspésie had the highest regional average in Quebec on July 10 at \$1.77 per litre.

The Lower Saint Lawrence had an average of \$1.75 per litre and Côte-Nord an average of \$1.74 per litre.



# TOWN OF GASPÉ UPDATE: Seniors' residence project in Saint-Majorique

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - An affordable housing project for seniors in the Saint-Majorique district of Gaspé could see the light of day.

The town of Gaspé has purchased the building and the large lot from the former Caisse Populaire Desjardins for the sum of \$142,500 to launch the project for a seniors' residence. This project was proposed by citizens who wanted to keep seniors in the village.

"We don't even know if the current building will remain. There will be a needs analysis. A group has been wanting to build housing for seniors for a long time because the service does not exist. The people of the village want the elders to be able to continue to live there. They came up with the concept. We embarked in principle. We needed land because there is little in the centre of the village. The Caisse wants to close its institution and offers it (the building) and a large lot with a beautiful view of the bay. We said 'yes' to the housing project and 'yes' to the Caisse project," explains the mayor of Gaspé Daniel Côté.

The Caisse Desjardins de la Pointe de la Gaspésie ensures that the sum of the transaction will be reinvested in the community in addition to supporting the project as such, according to the mayor.

The project could qualify for various government programs to support the construction of these affordable housing units.

## A breakwater that no longer does the job

The town is asking Fisheries and Oceans Canada to analyze the breakwater of the Rivière-au-Renard fishing harbour.

During major storms, the section on the side of Boulevard Renard Ouest sees the water of the high tides pass over the infrastructure.

"We know that the breakwater is worn out. There is an analysis to be done to guard against a new high tide, new strong gales or a new hurricane that will bring big waves inside the bay. We want the federal government to double down quickly," comments the mayor, who adds that erosion is occurring on public and private properties in this sector.



The Town of Gaspé has acquired the former land and Caisse Desjardins building in the Saint-Majorique district.

Photo: N. Sergerie

## A new agreement with MAPAQ

A new agreement has been signed between the Town of Gaspé and the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) for the management and maintenance of the Rivière-au-Renard Industrial Park.

As for the retrocession of MAPAQ to the Town, the point is not on the horizon.

"For us, we always have the same conditions: we want the infrastructure to be fully upgraded before talking about retrocession. We have just agreed on new financial parameters. We agreed on the arrears due to the Town, on the

payment of infrastructure costs, in short, we are in partnership," says Mr. Côté.

Since 1996, the Town has received \$50,000 in compensation for site maintenance, an amount that has never been indexed. The new agreement valid for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024 provides for an adjustment to the current value of this sum, which will allow the Town to receive \$100,000 per year under this new framework.

"The \$50,000 has been frozen for all these years. We're at about \$100,000 a year. This is good news in itself and the ministry has given some respite," adds the mayor, who

points out that relations with MAPAQ have improved in recent years, particularly on the issue of infrastructure.

In 2013, the equipment update was valued at \$6 million.

"Before sitting down to negotiate the handover, the infrastructure must be upgraded. I imagine the costs have gone up. There has been maintenance in the meantime, but not a complete upgrade as desired. Once done, we could be 'chatty' as they say," says the mayor.

For the time being, the current agreement suits all the players involved.

"I think we are in the best of both worlds," concludes the mayor.

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# Canada has significant offshore wind potential

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - According to the brief submitted on July 11 by the Gaspé-based renewable energy research centre Nergica, the potential for the development of offshore wind farms exists in Canada, but the federal government will have to review its regulations to encourage their development.

In particular, the document reveals that the potential for such wind farms lies in the Atlantic, Pacific and Great Lakes regions.

It is estimated that there is a potential of 9,321 gigawatts (9,321,000 megawatts) of wind energy which would help Canada reach its goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

"It is extremely promising and in our opinion should be considered as a solution to increase production capacity. Yes, we must focus on energy efficiency and energy sobriety, but to achieve the objective of carbon neutrality by 2050, we will have to produce more renewable electricity in Canada and Quebec and, in this context, offshore wind power must be taken seriously," says Nergica Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Frédéric Côté.

The most recent carbon-neutral scenario produced by the Canada Energy Regulator indicates that electricity demand will increase by 135% from 2021 to 2050.

In Europe, this type of energy production is already

well established and the United States is now embarking on this path with the construction of the largest offshore wind farm in New Bedford, Massachusetts, located about 50 kilometres south of the Cape Cod Peninsula in the United States.

When completed, this farm will contain 62 wind turbines and will produce 800 megawatts of electricity, enough energy to supply the needs of more than 400,000 homes and businesses in Massachusetts.

The LM Wind Power plant in Gaspé produces the 186 wind blades that are 107-metres in length to equip that wind farm, which should come into operation in 2024.

"Even if we make a lot of effort, we'll really have to produce more. In Quebec, just to meet the needs of carbon neutrality - I'm not talking about economic growth projects - we have studies produced for the Ministry of the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change. The image is striking: it's about the equivalent of an extra half of Hydro-Québec! We're talking about more than 100 terawatts/hour. That's a lot. We need to look at all the renewable energy sources available to us," says Mr. Côté.

He recalls that Quebec has developed expertise in the last 20 years in the wind energy market and that companies can position themselves for

offshore wind energy. The fact that Canada has not yet reached this stage does not mean a delay in this development.

"It's because the opportunities are different here. In Europe, they turned to offshore wind because they were faced with access to territory: the ability to install wind turbines on land with the population density is difficult. We don't have that challenge. In the United States, it happened later. We also see that it is developing even if there is a project off Cape Cod. The boom on the American side is more recent. We are talking about 18 to 24 months. Here,

Cont'd on page 12

## Microbrasserie La belle aventure: A Festive Gathering Point

When opening the *La belle aventure* micro brewery in August 2022, three young Gaspésians wanted to offer Bonaventure an establishment featuring a bistro-bar, a restaurant and an events location. Meeting with a co-owner, Sébastien Cayouette.

### IN WHAT WAY IS YOUR BUSINESS UNIQUE?

First of all, according to Sébastien, it's because of its various features. "At the bistro, there is a different atmosphere which is new to Bonaventure and the area. This is a place for joyous gatherings!" According to him, the beer which is brewed here is outstanding due to its quality, local ingredients and accessibility. Blond and white beers "are popular with everyone who wants a first taste of microbrewery beer."

### HOW DID SUPPORT FROM THE SADC HELP YOU?

*La belle aventure* obtained loans from the investment fund and from the SADC Strategic Youth Program. "They got on-board with the project right away!" underlined Sébastien. "They were the first ones to accept and they were always very flexible with the loan conditions. They are very proactive. It's easy to work with them."

### TELL US ABOUT A NOTEWORTHY ACHIEVEMENT, NAMELY IN THE FIELD OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Since December 2022, *La belle aventure* is marketing its beer in cans in the various stores in the Baie-des-Chaleurs region. "Within one year, we'll be targeting the complete Gaspesian peninsula," proudly said Sébastien. On the other hand, to enhance its production residues, the micro brewery will be delivering the spent grain from its beer production to the *Le Caprivore* farm to be used as animal feed. It also undertakes various experiments with local products. "It's important for us to enhance home-grown products."

### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ANYONE WHO IS CONSIDERING STARTING UP A BUSINESS IN THE BAIE-DES-CHALEURS REGION?

"Persevere" said Sébastien. Not listen to people who try to discourage you. If you believe in your idea, you have to do it! He said that he and his partners had to overcome various obstacles in developing their project during the pandemic. According to him, when challenges appear, you mustn't back down but rather "find innovative ways of rising to meet them."

Founded by Marc-Olivier Forest-Poirier, Sébastien Cayouette and Marie-Pier Dion, the *Microbrasserie La belle aventure* features in-season classical and local beer.



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# TOURIST TAX: Percé councillors are divided on how to proceed

NELSON SERGERIE

PERCÉ - The request to appeal the June 16 judgment, to invalidate Percé's tourist fee did not receive a unanimous vote by the Town of Percé's municipal council.

On July 6, four councillors voted in favour of the decision to appeal the case and three voted against it. Councillor Allyson Cahill-Vibert was absent for family reasons and was unable to cast her vote.

The mayor of Percé, Cathy Poirier, assures that Ms. Cahill-Vibert was in favour of appealing the decision.

The decision was made in front of around 70 people gathered in the council chamber under police surveillance. Supporters and opponents of the tourist fee made their presence felt throughout the evening.

Tempers ran high from the start, especially when it came time to vote on the resolution that would allow the municipal council to move forward and challenge the Superior Court's decision. Citizens demanded to voice their opinion before the council voted, which was refused by the mayor, who indicated that they would follow the established agenda.

After exchanges which sometimes resulted in verbal attacks, the session proceeded, the mayor of Percé indicating to citizens that she would give time to all those who wish to express themselves during the period reserved for this purpose.



Some 70 citizens and merchants went to the municipal council meeting to hear the position of the council.

Photo: N. Sergerie

Describing the situation facing the town as "pitiful", Mayor Poirier noted that Judge Isabelle Germain's decision did not take into account the jurisprudence enacted by the Supreme Court in this type of case.

"We think we have to appeal because, indeed, there are judgments made at the Supreme Court in which the Superior Court did not take into account. We believe that these elements must be defended. After that, we'll have to wait and see what happens next," explains Ms. Poirier.

From the beginning of her mayoral address at the opening of the municipal session, Ms. Poirier bluntly stated that: "A handful (of business owners) are blocking something essential."

During her speech, she also mentioned the possibility of

going to the Supreme Court if the Court of Appeal did not hear or uphold the decision of the Superior Court.

"It is too early to tell. We will go step by step. The idea is not to defend all that in legal proceedings ad vitam aeternam. We will go there with the decision being made this evening and we will see in time and place but as I mentioned, judgments in the Supreme Court were not taken into account," underlines the elected official.

Several citizen interventions asked the two parties to find common ground.

"We will never have unanimity. Yeah, I think we can get along. We are committed to meeting with merchants in the fall. But I would be very surprised to have unanimity. That's what I would have liked. There is no decision to change something that does not bother people," says the mayor.

Jonathan Massé, a Percé merchant, recalled that he is not against the principle of a tourist fee, but is against the way it is applied. Although he is one of the main opponents of the regulation put in place by Percé, he is open to discussions with the town.

"Unfortunately, the official speech of the mayor is that she consults us and everyone is happy, but when we arrive to have a real conversation and raise the issues, we are not listened to," says Mr. Massé.

"I have solutions! But I had no opportunity to tell them," adds Mr. Massé.

"If there's a real committee, as some citizens have suggested, to set up a table where people can listen, I'll be happy to participate but people will have to listen to what's not working," insists Mr. Massé,

denouncing the fact that the town has never made public the legal opinions obtained to draw up its by-law.

So far, the legal fee to challenge this new tax has cost Percé taxpayers \$70,000. The mayor mentions an additional bill of \$30,000 to \$40,000 in the appeal process.

The Union of Municipalities of Quebec has already paid \$10,000 towards legal fees, since it is a cause of interest for all municipalities. The Town of Percé is asking for support from other municipalities to share the bill.

Ms. Poirier recalled the importance of diversifying the town's sources of revenue to maintain tourism infrastructure, the bill which amounts to \$800,000

According to her, 15% of Percé taxpayer money is currently used for maintenance.

According to a citizen, Jean-Marie Thibault, it is not up to the people of Percé to pay this bill since they do not directly benefit from the infrastructures.

The settlement was struck down by the Superior Court in a June 16 decision.

The tourist fee regulation was adopted in its first form on September 28, 2021, and amended on June 14, 2022, Judge Isabelle Germain writes in her 24-page decision that "the Court is of the opinion that both By-law 575-2021 initially adopted by the defendant and

Cont'd on page 11

## MNAs send complaints to the Competition Bureau

NELSON SERGERIE

CARLETON-SUR-MER - The Competition Bureau will once again receive complaints because of the high prices charged for gasoline on the Gaspé Peninsula.

The Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Bonaventure, Catherine Blouin, and her colleague from Gaspé, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, will send a letter to the federal agency to express their frustration.

"It is unacceptable that people in my riding have to pay

more for gas than elsewhere. It is for this reason that I sent a letter to the Commissioner of the Competition Bureau of Canada to ask questions and denounce this situation. I also intend to contact the federal Member of Parliament (Diane Lebouthillier) since this is the responsibility of her level of government and I am appealing to her collaboration to help us in this file," explains Catherine Blouin.

Her colleague from Gaspé, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, agrees with this message initiated by Ms. Blouin, and he quickly

joined.

"I add my voice to that of my colleague from Bonaventure and I support the steps taken by the municipalities and MRCs of the region. The Competition Bureau of Canada must look into the higher price of gasoline in the Gaspé. Citizens of the Gaspésie must pay a fair price for their gasoline!" says Mr. Sainte-Croix.

The office of the federal Member of Parliament, Diane Lebouthillier, said it would not comment on her provincial colleagues' approach for the

moment.

In 2019, the Town of Gaspé requested an investigation from the Competition Bureau.

The mayor of Gaspé argued at the time that the situation was reminiscent of the oil cartel in the Victoriaville and Sherbrooke regions in the 2000s. In 2004, the Competition Bureau uncovered a conspiracy to fix gas prices in Sherbrooke, Thetford Mines and Victoriaville. Charges were laid and 32 people and seven companies were convicted.

The region supported

Mayor Daniel Côté in his efforts.

The Parti Québécois MNAs of the time, Sylvain Roy representing Bonaventure and Méganne Perry Mélançon in Gaspé also supported the efforts being made by Mr. Côté.

At that time, a compilation made by the Town of Gaspé revealed that a litre of gasoline was selling for 8.3 cents to 18.5 cents higher than the minimum price estimated by the Energy Board between June 3 and August 26, 2019.

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# MI'GMAW IMMERSION: Acquiring language through land-based and experiential learning

DIANE SKINNER

LISTUGUJ: A momentous graduation took place on Tuesday, June 20, at Alaqsite'w Gitpu School in Listuguj. Attended by over 80 people, ten students graduated from their sixth year in Mi'gmau immersion classes. The students began their immersion classes in preschool and have just completed grade four.

The ceremony began with students entering while singing the Honour Song led by the music teacher, Doug Pictou. A former student, Charlie Pictou, said a prayer in Mi'gmau and the ceremony continued with remarks by Mr. Jarrett Francis and teacher Karen Martin.

The students introduced themselves in Mi'gmau, and told a bit about themselves, their families and where they came from. Then eagle feathers, gifted by Christie Metallic, were presented to each of the students along with a certificate of completion. The ceremony concluded with the Mi'gmau Whale Song and a closing prayer by Ronnie Swasson, a current student of the adult immersion program.

The immersion classes all engage in land-based and experiential learning, which is a critically important aspect of learning the language which is so closely tied to experiencing the land and territory.

All the teachers who instruct in the immersion program, along with a fluent speaker in the classroom, are either certified teachers who are fluent in Mi'gmau or are learning the language. Another important aspect of the Mi'gmau immersion program at the Alaqsite'w Gitpu School is that mentors are paired with teachers who are still develop-



Photo: Courtesy of Karen Martin  
*Graduating student Abygail Wysote (right) introducing herself in Mi'gmau. Teacher Karen Martin (left) is standing beside her. This Listuguj graduation was significant because it was the highest number of graduates in the history of the immersion program.*

ing their language skills in the classroom. Currently, there are three mentors, Pernell Wysote (grade 3/4), Paul Jacques (grade 2), and Brennie Barnaby (Forest Kindergarten).

These mentors support language learning for both teachers and students. Teachers from the school that are not fluent speakers of Mi'gmau and would like to teach immersion can apply for a leave from their teaching position to learn Mi'gmau for one year in the adult immersion program. Priority is given to parents who have children enrolled in the Alaqsite'w Gitpu School Mi'gmau immersion program but is open to all community members.

Teacher Karen Martin remarks, "I have an appreciation for the parents who have chosen to go down the immersion path because they are our biggest champions of the program. They believe in the hope that their children will learn their language, but I think they also understand that with the language their child will learn more about their culture and who they are as

Nnu people."

The revitalization of the Mi'gmau language is important because it also ensures that cultural knowledge is kept alive. Karen Martin states, "Mi'gmau words not only come from the land but from the way the territory presents itself throughout the seasons and how it supports us. An example is place names which typically identify a strong feature of that location. Through the language, there are rich cultural teachings about how the ancestors viewed Mi'gma'gi, which was based on respect and a sacred relationship with the territory."

A critically important aspect of the program is parental involvement. Teachers have noted how much pride parents have for their children who are learning the Mi'gmau language.

The graduation ceremony was a great way to end the year and celebrate the students' accomplishments. This graduation was significant in that it was the highest number of graduates in the history of the program.

## Reflections

by  
Diane Skinner Flowers



### Everything changes, even the night skies

*Dog days bright and clear  
Indicate a happy year.  
But when accompanied by rain,  
For better times we hope in vain.*

The old expression "Dog Days of Summer" can be slightly confusing. As children we heard it but did not fully understand the meaning. We just applied our own meaning for it from the context in which we heard it. Many of us were sure it meant the time of the season when dogs were so hot that they would lie around panting. Apparently, that is not the correct origin of the expression. So, where does it come from?

The ancient Romans, who at one time were the most advanced civilization in the world, called the hottest days of summer Dog Days because they associated the hottest and humid days with the star Sirius. Sirius was also called the Dog Star because it was the brightest star in the constellation Canis Major. (Canis translates as dog.) The Romans observed that Sirius was especially bright and concluded that it emitted extra heat in the summer months.

During ancient times, the Dog Days were from mid-July until mid-August but over thousands of years, the constellations have drifted. The Old Farmers' Almanac states that the Dog Days this year are from July 3 until August 11. The number of Dog Days is 40, but the hottest weather does not always align within these 40 days. Climate change will likely impact when those hottest days may occur. The seasons seem to be shifting. Dog Days are when our temperatures are usually hottest, but it is the tilt of the Earth which causes hot summer weather not the Dog Star. In the summer, in the Northern Hemisphere, the Earth's tilt causes the Sun's rays to hit us more directly and for a longer time during the day. This means longer, hotter days in summer.

Sirius started all this talk of Dog Days, but can you spot Sirius in the night sky? You can install a free app on your cell phone called Night Sky which can help you locate Sirius. The Dog Days are based on astronomy so look up, way, way up, however, only for now because the night sky is shifting about one degree every 50 years. Scientists predict that thousands of years from now, about 13,000 or so, Sirius will only be visible in midwinter and humans of the future will have to rename the Dog Days of Summer to Dog Days of Winter. Those will be the days when it's so cold that dogs huddle up and stay inside because it is too cold to play outside!

Everything changes. We know that and even the skies change. Though Dog Days have come to mean hot, humid summer weather; in the future, it will mean something else entirely.

## TOURIST FEE:

Cont'd from page 10

the 600-2022 are void in that they do not comply with the enabling powers prescribed by the CTA (Cities and Towns Act) relating to municipal royalties. It is true that this framework allows a municipality to go through an agreement to make a third-party collector of the royalty, but this role of collector cannot be imposed as in this case. In doing so, it oversteps their powers."

The judge added that "the court can only find (...) that the provincial legislature has not delegated to the municipalities the power to regulate the collection of such a royalty without prior agreement."

Therefore, the regulations must be declared null and illegal, writes the magistrate.

The town of Percé has suspended the application of the settlement until the Court of Appeal renders a decision.

In its only year of application in the summer of 2022, a

sum of \$155,000 was collected by the tax fee. Those funds are frozen until the legal debate is over.

In the by-law put forward, a royalty of \$1 would be applied to each transaction of \$20 or more in businesses, in particular restaurants, the sale of souvenirs and recreational tourism activities.

Non-taxable products, alcohol and cannabis were exempt.

Hotel stays were also taxed at \$1 per night.



*One of the opponents of the tourist tax, Jonathan Massé*

# JGS Group acquires the Fort Prével Golf Club

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - Another chapter in the history of the Fort Prével Golf Club is being written with the sale of assets to Groupe JGS.

At a July 9 meeting, the members of the golf club unanimously accepted the transaction which provides for the payment of \$1 million immediately and overall investments of \$5 million over three years to refresh the facilities, which were left in poor condition by SÉPAQ in May 2016.

"It's an acquisition, but we're still talking about a partnership because we're in continuity with the partners of Relance Fort Prével and the community who want to see the site developed, to see it respected and at the same time, it's a jewel that we want to see shine," says spokesperson and asset manager for the JGS group in eastern Quebec, Jean-François Fortin.

The announcement allows the agreement on a promise to buy/sell and the transaction will be finalized in the coming months.

Despite everything, even before the final signature, JGS intends to start work quickly to upgrade the chalets, motel units, the inn, as well as the water and sanitary facilities, which should require an investment of \$2 million.

Guarantees have been deposited to demonstrate the seriousness of JGS.

"Sums in trust and bank guarantees will ensure that we will initially spend this sum. In



Photo: N. Sergerie

*The Fort Prével reception building will be updated as part of the JGS investment plan.*

the first two years, which is provided for in our accommodation requalification plan, we will spend more than two-thirds. It's still a big investment," says Mr. Fortin, who plans to start construction at the end of the tourist season.

The historical aspect of the site will be highlighted.

"Currently, the fortifications are not accessible. It is a witness of regional and world history. The Second World War came to America in Gaspé. The idea is to bring together partners from different levels of government and there are financial programs in order to make them accessible, interpret them and explain the DNA of Fort Prével," adds Mr. Fortin who underlines that this is a piece of national history.

The recovery committee has tried everything to upgrade the facilities but has come up against all kinds of pitfalls, standardized programs and difficulties in financing the up-

grade of the site, despite the promises of Philippe Couillard's government to pay a sum of \$2 million on the condition that the committee proves its worth.

"We have a financial perspective for carrying out our projects that we never had. We have taken steps, political representations, set up projects to make it attractive, all of this has always been well understood by the authorities, but we have always come up against limits. It sometimes becomes a bit demotivating from year to year to take steps that have been relatively meager in terms of results," said the spokesperson for the Relance Fort Prével strategic committee, Gilles Pelletier.

JGS's offer, which was unsolicited, was seen as an opportunity to ensure the sustainability of the site.

"It was a process that was carried out with great transparency and in a climate of

trust, which allowed us to put fears and concerns on the table on certain aspects and we managed to find winning conditions for each side," believes Mr. Pelletier.

"Now, what we presented to the JGS Group as priorities have been accepted and integrated into a development plan and an upgrade plan that fully respect what we had in mind," adds Mr. Pelletier.

Fort Prével had updated its business and development plan in phases last fall.

The first is an upgrade to the golf clubhouse, the pavilion and inn and is estimated at \$2.24 million.

Phase 2 consists in highlighting the site which was used during the Second World War with a reception structure focusing on the installations in place at the time to defend the region and Canada against the German invaders.

The other parts of the second stage still include the installation of water games for children and the upgrading of the accommodation component by offering more upscale facilities in order to generate more income.

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

The promoter wants to make sure to maintain connections with the recovery committee.

"We want them for as long as possible. When you have people involved and people giving you feedback on the concerns of the community, it's a win-win situation. I think we have everything to gain by

maintaining a monitoring committee over time. We're following in the footsteps of the committee members," emphasizes Mr. Fortin, who plans to develop a golf and accommodation tourist circuit, including other tourist infrastructures.

The recovery committee has confidence in the future of Fort Prével with JGS.

"If we hadn't had confidence, we wouldn't have gone ahead," says Mr. Pelletier, recalling all the pitfalls of recent years.

"I salute the volunteers who have always been there and who will always be needed and also the considerable efforts of the employees who, if they had not abandoned their collective agreement, there would have been none at Fort Prével. If there is an interest in Fort Prével, it is because of all this work," says Mr. Pelletier.

SÉPAQ announced in October 2015 its intention to close the site if no buyer showed up before January 2016.

The corporation which is run by the Quebec government had tried in 2013 to reach an agreement with the Micmacs of Gespeg who wanted to make it an Aboriginal tourist complex, but the Nation withdrew in the face of the financial risks.

In 2014, Sépaq launched a call for tenders to find a partner, without success.

In 2013, the organization had lost \$750,000 and no less than \$3.4 million in the previous five years.

In 2022, the club generated \$1 million in revenues and posted a slight budget surplus.

## WIND ENERGY

Cont'd from page 9

it is time to ask the question in front of the needs," analyzes the director.

Ottawa is, therefore, challenged to continue its leadership in this area and adjust the rules of the game.

"We suspect that building wind farms at sea involves several jurisdictions, sometimes even a division of powers between the federal and provincial levels. We need to update ourselves," he says.

The mandate of the Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Board, which manages offshore drilling projects, is expanded to include renewable energy.

"This is a development that is happening now and it is time to position ourselves in this emerging industry, knowing that we are at the point of

making energy choices to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050," continues Mr. Côté.

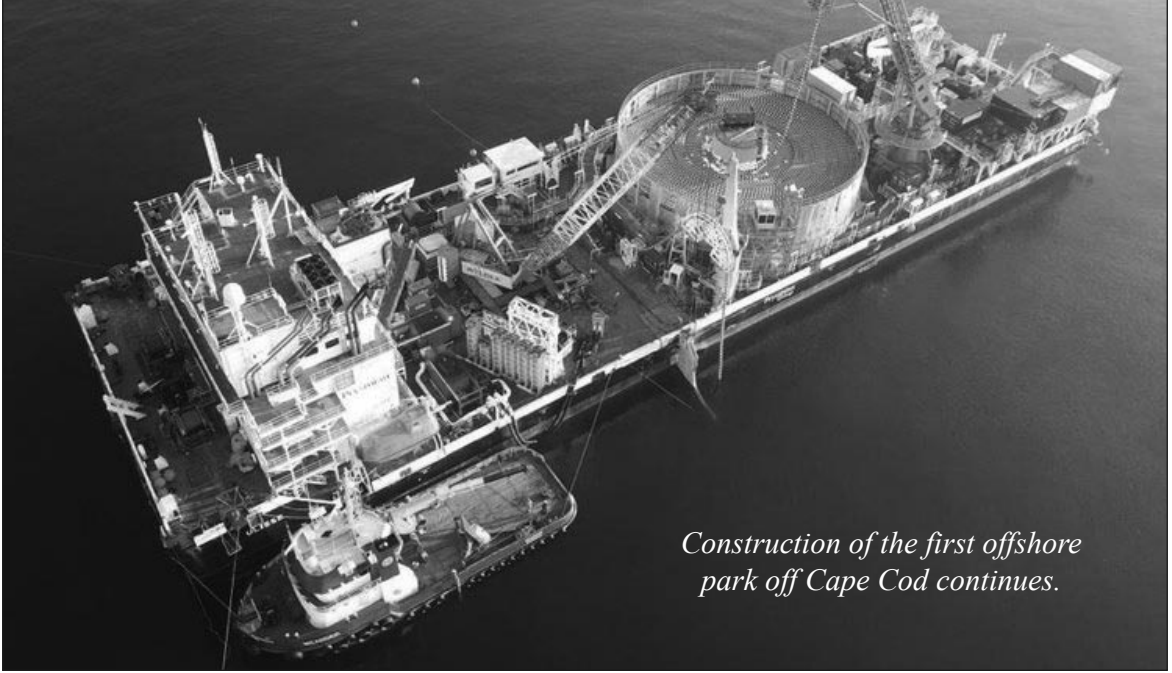
Further studies will have to be done to determine the potential, including the coasts of Quebec and the Magdalen Islands.

"It remains to be seen whether it is a potential that can be exploited in the right way," says the director.

Nova Scotia is ahead in this regard, having announced its intention to deploy 5,000 megawatts off its coasts in addition to developing green hydrogen.

The goal is to have development by 2035, but the project could be accelerated.

"2030 is even a pivotal date as Canada wants to stop using coal for electricity generation. Nova Scotia is stuck with coal. It is a priority for them to find alternatives in order to meet Canadian stan-



*Construction of the first offshore park off Cape Cod continues.*

Photo: Wineyardwind.com

dards in this regard," specifies Mr. Côté, who mentions that the province is showing leadership in this area.

"The Atlantic provinces are in the process of positioning themselves and it would be interesting for Quebec to

be able to look into this opportunity. We already have companies active in the field that could further develop this sector."

The brief submitted suggests four axes: clearly define the regulatory requirements

for offshore wind projects; promote active collaboration with international partners in the offshore wind industry; encourage and support offshore wind development projects in Canada and support research and development.



# If I could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow...

## Grade 5 and 6 students from Gaspé Elementary School

DIANE SKINNER

GASPE: Gaspé Elementary School, with a 2022-2023 school enrolment of 120 students, is committed to “fostering a safe and engaging learning environment.” One of the school’s ongoing objectives is the continuation of two French programs – regular and enriched. The school promotes and encourages bilingualism, and a large percentage of the students move “seamlessly” between the languages.

Pamela Patterson’s Grade 5 and Grade 6 students from Gaspé Elementary School were asked to respond to the question: **If I could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what would that rule be?** Here are their responses.

### Grade 5

... it would be not to bully because one person who’s a bully can make many people miserable. There are so many ways that people bully. It makes so many people think poorly of themselves. -Keeyan

... it would be that everyone could have a job no matter their colour or gender. -Alexi

... there would be no more wars because it is not right to fight for more land and to kill people. -David

... it would be to be kind because I heard that there was calling names in high school in grade 7. -Annabelle

... it would be world peace because wars would stop, and no one would get hurt if there were no wars. Everyone would be happy, and no one would get hurt. -Kiana-Lou

... it would be that everybody must have at least three no charge hospitals because everyone deserves free health care. -Kaitlyn

... it would be to clean up the plastic all around the world because this would be a better way to have less pollution on our planet. -Justin

... it would be to be kind to all animals and humans in the world. -Nohas

... it would be to be peaceful to everything because then there would be no war and that leads to less people and animals being hurt. -Raphaëlle

... it would be that everyone would have to stop being mean to people and if they don’t follow that rule, they would go to jail. -Lucas

... it would be to stop bullying because some people bully



Photos: Pamela Patterson

Grade 5 students from Gaspé Elementary School offer some thoughtful replies to the question, “If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what would that rule be?”

and it’s not nice and it can cause depression and other stuff. Let’s say you get bullied at school. You are probably not going to go to school. -Elliot

...it would be that you have to take better care of the Earth. If we don’t take care of the Earth, it will be impossible to live on. -Evelyn Lily

...it would be to stop throwing trash away and keep the Earth safe so that everyone in the world would respect the Earth because it helps the Earth’s environment. -Charles

...it would be to stop bullying because we lose many lives from suicide because of bullying every year. Stop bullying. You are hurting people. -Alyssa

... it would be to not litter because littering is hurting the Earth. -Lexi

... it would be to respect others because it would make them happy to be with you. -Bentley

... it would be no guns because it would minimize wars and deaths across the world. -Emric

### Grade 6

... it would be no bullying because people should stop calling people names because it is tiresome. -Patrick

... it would be to have gym when students want because it is fun, and it is better than work. -William

... it would be that no one is allowed to lie because then you don’t have to question if someone is a good person or not. It also just makes things easier. -Jasmine

... it would be to eat popcorn every day because it is yummy. -Trinity

... it would be not to bully because bullying is very annoying for the person being bullied. -Landon

... it would be no bullying

people because it makes people feel bad about themselves and it is not fun to be bullied. -Julie

... it would be to stop bullying because there are lots of people who bully for no reason sometimes. -Makenzie

... it would be no body shaming because you should be comfy in your own body and should not be called out for being fat or skinny. It is just wrong. -Bella

... it would be no bullying someone because they have a disability because lots of suicides happen each year and no one wants that to happen. -Alexa

... it would be don’t steal because when people steal from others it hurts them. -Maelie

... it would be to always be kind because the world would be better. -Aspyn

... it would be don’t litter because there is a lot of plastic in the oceans and turtles and other

animals are in trouble. -Turner

... it would be to make the world peaceful because everyone could be friends, and no one would fight. -Taylen

... it would be to be kind and respectful to people because people don’t treat everyone the same way. -Chase

... it would be to stop bullying because when a person bullies someone it hurts the other people inside and then they’re nervous to go anywhere because they’re scared. -Abby

... it would be that everyone has to treat others with respect. I would choose this rule because I think that it would make the world a lot more peaceful. -Olivia

... it would be to stop bullying because bullying isn’t nice, and it could hurt someone. -Miley

... it would be for everyone to stop bullying because bullying sucks. -Megan



The grade 6 students from Gaspé Elementary School give their thoughtful responses to the question “If I could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what would that rule be?”

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20  
Sometimes you feel a need to be in charge to prove that you are capable, Aries. This week take a back seat and fall in line with the established modus operandi.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21  
You may get into the habit of focusing on past mistakes, Taurus. This week, instead of falling into old habits, think about how you can grow and learn from your mistakes.

GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21  
Gemini, it's time to be sociable and put out feelers for different adventures. Make sure you share on social media channels that you're available and ready to have fun.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22  
Cancer, keep track of your mood this week, as it is easy to swing from glad to glum in no time at all. Friends can help keep you on a more even keel for the time being.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23  
Leo, a refreshing sense of energy comes your way, and you start to jump head-first into all of those projects that have been pushed aside. You'll sail through tasks in no time flat.



VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22  
An interesting travel opportunity comes your way, Virgo. However, at first glance it might not seem like the type of trip you would normally take. Keep an open mind and be surprised.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23  
Treat yourself to something special in the days to come, Libra. Perhaps it is a costly fragrance you've been spying on or a new piece of furniture. You earned the indulgence.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22  
It's time to take your foot off the gas and slow down to a crawl, Scorpio. A well deserved break should be on your itinerary; otherwise, you may burn through all of your fuel prematurely.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21  
Sagittarius, teamwork is the answer right now, especially when your to-do list seems to be growing exponentially. Recruit some close confidantes to help you along the way.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20  
Make your career a priority this week, Capricorn. You may be feeling unsettled where you are now. There is no saying where things will go, so exercise caution when making decisions.


AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18  
Aquarius, wanderlust is on your brain. You've been fantasizing about all of the grand adventures you can take. Figure out a way to fund a getaway and get started.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20  
Pisces, something profound may have happened to you and you may need to sift through all of your feelings over the next few days. Take all the time you need to process.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

- JULY 16: Will Ferrell, Actor (56)
- JULY 17: David Hasselhoff, Actor (71)
- JULY 18: Vin Diesel, Actor (56)
- JULY 19: Jared Padalecki, Actor (41)
- JULY 20: Julianne Hough, Dancer (35)
- JULY 21: Rory Culkin, Actor (34)
- JULY 22: Shawn Michaels, Wrestler (58)

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**Dr. Pascal Cyr**  
Optometrist




**Dr. Stacey Starrak**  
Optometrist



**CLINIQUE D'OPTOMÉTRIE L'ÉMERILLON**

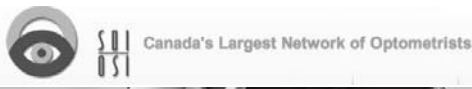
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# Announcements



## Obituary

### DUNCAN: Thomas Murray

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Thomas Murray Duncan, aged 94, of Cascapedia-St-Jules, Quebec, on June 25 in Prince Edward Island.

Beloved husband of Shirley Kitching and father of Ian Duncan. He also leaves to mourn one sister Marjorie and numerous in-laws and close friends.

Born in Banff, Alberta, Tom was the son of Constance Coleman and Donald Duncan. Tom and his sister moved at a young age to the Eastern Townships to live with an aunt and uncle when their mother died and their father went off to war. He completed his education at Sir George Williams University and began a career which led him to the Iron Ore company of Canada in Seven Islands, Quebec, where he met and married his wife Shirley, a teacher from Quebec City. As an adventure in 1960 they moved to Gaspé Copper Mines of Canada in Murdochville, Quebec, and have lived on the Gaspé ever since. Tom retired from his position of personnel manager from Belledune Plant in 1986.

Tom was an active member of every community in which he lived and his leadership skills meant that he was a prime mover in many organizations particularly the Murdochville Ski Club where he was instrumental in the building of the Ski Centre and was president of the club for many years. He was a man for all seasons, skiing in the winter and enjoying his other passion which was salmon fishing throughout the summer.

Tom was one of the organizers of the Cascapedia Salmon Society. His love for community involvement led him to become Mayor of Cascapedia for a few years and he was a leader in the founding of the Richmond Manor, becoming president of the board for 15 years.

Throughout their life together, Tom and Shirley travelled extensively visiting old friends and making new ones. A man of honour, courage and wisdom, he will be greatly missed.

There will be a visitation at the Thibodeau Funeral

Home in New Richmond from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. on Friday, July 21, with a Masonic service, followed by a celebration of Tom's life at the St. Andrew's United Church, in New Richmond at 3 p.m.



## Visitation and Celebration of Life



### MCDONALD: Bridget Bond

A celebration of life service for Bridget (Bond) McDonald will be held on Saturday, July 29, 2023, at St. Patrick's Church in Douglastown. Visitation will begin at 1 p.m. followed at 2 p.m. by the service and burial.

Following the burial, family and friends are invited to the Douglastown Community Centre (lower level) for light refreshments.

Pay online at  
[THEGASPESPEC.COM](http://THEGASPESPEC.COM)



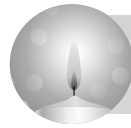
## Burial of Ashes

### POLLARD-MERCHANT: Bonnie

The burial of ashes of Bonnie Pollard Merchant will take place on August 11, 2023, beginning at 10 a.m. at the Black Cape Cemetery for close family and friends only.

Everyone is then invited to a Celebration of Life beginning at 12 p.m. (noon) at the 50 Plus Club in Cascapedia-St-Jules. All are welcome to meet with the family.

Donations can be made in memory of Bonnie to the Maison de Soins Palliatifs de la Baie des Chaleurs. Thank you.





## In Memory

### ASSELS:

#### One day at a time

Thinking of parents Ena Laurine Assels, July 5, 1991; Frank Everett Assels, January 9, 1999; brother Earl Assels, July 25, 2020; grandparents; Fred and Alice Assels, uncles and aunts. Last in the family to pass away in 2023, Uncle Charlie. Sorry I could not attend all the funerals, but love you all; always miss you and thinking of you. The Assels Family. Written by Laurine Assels Vezina.



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# COAST ROUND-UP

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

## COAST ROUND-UP

### BARACHOIS:

#### BADC

**July 22:** The Barachois Public Market will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 noon under the tent at the Malbay Festival (at the Barachois Rec. Centre) 1062 Route 132 East, Barachois. Bakers, Crafters, Artisans (maybe some produce). To reserve a table, (\$10) contact Sandy Coombs at (581) 887-1417.

### CORNER OF THE BEACH:

#### Historical Society

The Corner of the Beach Historical Society is pleased to present a series of eight concerts every Wednesday of July and August at the Corner of the Beach Cultural Museum (former St. Luke Anglican Church). The church

will be entirely lit with more than 200 candles for the occasion. The full schedule is available on the Musée culturel de Coin-du-Banc Facebook page.

**July 26:** Yvette Thériault, Carmen Léger and Monique Allen in concert beginning at 9 p.m.

**August 2:** Claude Hurtubise trio in concert beginning at 9 p.m.

**August 9:** Flore Laurettenne solo in concert beginning at 9 p.m.

**August 16:** Char in concert beginning at 9 p.m.

**August 23:** Ibal Zadok on sitar and Shawn Mativetsy on tabla in concert beginning at 9 p.m.

### 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.

### SHIGAWAKE:

#### 75th Celebration

**July 22:** The 75th Celebration of the Marcil Branch of the QWI will be held from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Shigawake Fair Grounds.

### HOPE:

#### Hope Baptist Church

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

### 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 CARLISLE:

#### Royal Canadian Legion Branch #64

Please be advised that Legion memberships are available for \$45. Returning and new members welcome.

**September 5:** General meeting at 7 p.m. at 1 Mount Sorrel, New Carlisle.

### NEW CARLISLE:

#### Spec AGM

**September 12:** Save the date! Spec AGM, more details to follow.



### CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

#### River Museum

Hear the stories of the world famous salmon river and discover the life-cycle of the Atlantic Salmon. Open Monday to Friday until **August 21**, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. **September 4 to 14** open from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Tea Room will also be open on **Tuesdays** from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. For more information please call 418-392-5079.

### UNITED CHURCH

#### NEW RICHMOND

#### Sunday, July 23

10 a.m. Service

### UNITED CHURCH

#### HOPE TOWN

#### Sunday, July 23

2 p.m. Service





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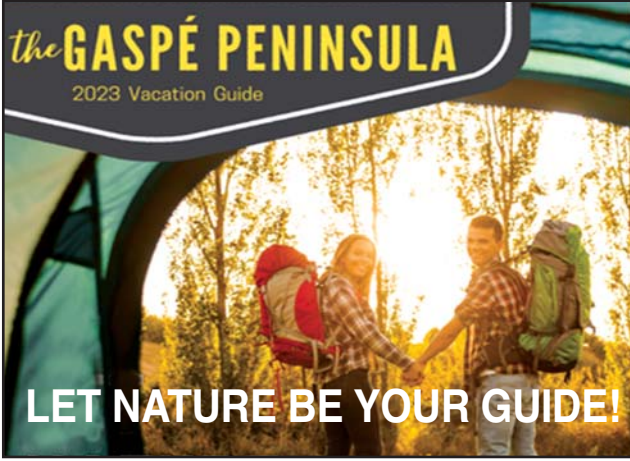
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For more information,  
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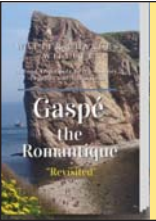
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