

MARIA HOSPITAL: Management prompted to store body in food cold room during power outage

GILLES GAGNÉ

MARIA – A power outage, affecting the morgue on June 22 and 23 prompted management at Maria Hospital to put the remains of a patient in a cold room in the facility's food wing.

The remains were protected to prevent any contact with food, which was also protected so as not to be in contact with the body, according to the Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) of the Gaspé Peninsula.

The situation is denounced by the Union of Nurses, Practical Nurses and Respiratory Therapists of Eastern Quebec (SIIEQ), which deplores that the staff assigned to the task of placing the body in the cold room were instructed to refrain from talking about it.

“They (the hospital man-



A body was placed for a few hours in a cold room in the food section of Maria Hospital.

Photo: G. Gagné

agement) asked that people (staff) not talk about it. We talk about it because if you don't work on it, to correct this

type of incident - it's a situation that doesn't make much sense - it could still happen tomorrow. We must put the

table on the pot,” specifies the president of the SIIEQ, Pier-Luc Bujold, meaning that people must refrain from re-

peating this scenario and be transparent.

He notes that the remains, according to what he learned, could not be sent to a funeral home, “due to the protocol established by the coroner,” concerning the conditions or circumstances of certain deaths.

“I think it was an error in logic to have placed the remains in a cold room. At the CLSC in Paspébiac, there is no morgue. In the event of death, there are other means, such as using ice, instant ice bags,” explains Pier-Luc Bujold, who is also a nurse.

In writing, the CISSS directors specified that “there was no notice sent not to talk about this situation. Management also wants to be clear: transparency is one of the fundamental values of the current

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After several tumultuous months, the mayor of Percé throws in the towel

NELSON SERGERIE

PERCÉ - Cathy Poirier, who has been mayor of Percé since 2017, resigned during a press briefing on July 2 in l'Anse-à-Beaufils, stating how harassment, personal attacks, assault and intimidation made her commitment difficult to fulfill.

“Leaks of information, lack of trust, disunity, and an investigation process like we are currently experiencing, because several elements are confidential and the members of the council were not able to know what was happening at the municipal hall. I have my head held high in the face of the upcoming investigations and I have no fear in the face of the results,” replied Ms. Poirier when asked about the major reasons that brought on



Cathy Poirier announced her resignation on July 2, in Anse-à-Beaufils.

Photo: N. Sergerie

her resignation.

In recent months, the mayor had been disavowed by the council three times: putting a halt to the development of Commercial Street, reopening

the Tourist Information Office and, above all, stopping the permission to appeal the decision invalidating the tourist fee.

Ms. Poirier also referred to the internal investigation still

underway into allegations surrounding the director of urban planning, Ghislain Pitre, her spouse, who faces serious allegations of fraud, theft of large sums of money and falsification of documents and the Quebec Municipal Commission, which launched an investigation by seriously warning all those directly or indirectly involved from collaborating with the organization.

The Commission had indicated that the investigations department was carrying out an investigation “into possible breaches of the rules of the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct applicable to elected officials of the Town of Percé as well as possible reprehensible acts committed or about to be committed.”

“I welcomed these investigations. The municipality had

made the request but it was not heard. It was not at the request of the municipality that the Commission came, but following complaints and the grievance filed against me. They came to investigate the mayor only to realize that the climate was not linked to the mayor, but much broader than it seemed. I will not give any other details,” says the former mayor.

In March, the CSN (Confédération des syndicats nationaux), which represents municipal employees, filed a grievance against the elected official citing verbal attacks and inappropriate behaviour by Cathy Poirier. The grievance has still not been heard by the Administrative Labour Tribunal.

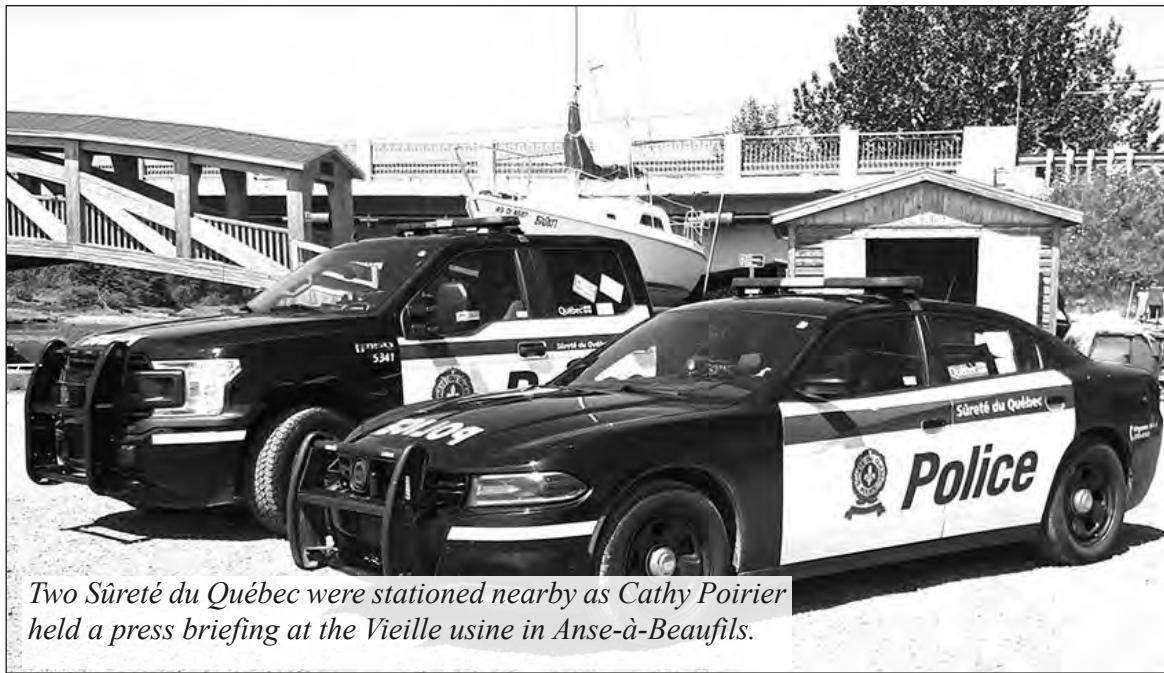
Cont'd on page 2

“It was presented as a collective grievance but I won't tell you the number of employees who came directly to my house to say that it was completely false. Employees were not consulted. It was a challenging moment for me,” she explains.

Ms. Poirier justifies her decision to leave now rather than wait for the results of the investigations.

“I no longer have any connection with the majority of the municipal council, except a few. I no longer support the decisions they make and the new directions that will be taken this evening do not suit me. I consider that this is the time I am leaving,” says Ms. Poirier.

“Anyone who knows me knows that I have never created a toxic climate anywhere I have been in life. The sole purpose of this grievance was to get it out in the media, which was done. It's illegal. A grievance is confidential. A week later, it was in the media,” she says.



Two Sûreté du Québec were stationed nearby as Cathy Poirier held a press briefing at the Vieille usine in Anse-à-Beaufils.

Photo: N. Sergerie

The former elected official mentions that a reform must be made in the municipal world considering that since the last election, approximately 800 elected officials have left, often citing intimidation or harassment.

Ms. Poirier talks about the end of the question period at municipal councils.

“It's an era that should be over. During the pandemic, we had sessions via broadcast platforms. The municipal world can respond every

day of the month. Public consultations must be maintained, but question periods have become boxing rings, places to complain, make demands and misinform. With what I discussed with my colleagues – I was on the Democracy Committee of the Union of Municipalities – there is something to be done,” says Ms. Poirier.

“Coming in front of the microphone brings people who need to be heard... and these aren't even real ques-

tions. It's an attack, repetitive microaggressions. When it affects friends and family, it is unacceptable,” she continues.

However, the Minister of Municipal Affairs disagrees. Andrée Laforest made it clear to Le Soleil newspaper stating that Question Period is an essential part of a healthy municipal democracy.

According to the Minister, citizens must be able to express themselves and their opinions to their elected representatives, as long as it is done in a civilized manner.

The Quebec government passed Bill 57 to protect elected officials from harassment and grant police officers the authority to issue fines of up to \$1,500.

When Ms. Poirier campaigned in 2017, she had one big goal. “My mandate was to think about the future in 10 years, in 20 years. How do we take action so that in 10 years, 15 years or 20 years, things will be better? We cannot manage a municipality with public funds by putting out fires daily. The ideas

changed in recent months are all decisions made by resolution by the same council,” explains the former mayor.

A by-election will be held to fill the mayor position.

Since Ms. Poirier has resigned, she will not receive a transition allowance. She will focus on her business. As for her political future, the elected official is not ready to think about it. “There is no thought for a political future. Zero, period. But we don't know the future. You should never say never, but that is rather very, very far in my intentions. I rather want to enjoy life. I know what I'm worth. I don't have to go through that,” she replies.

Another departure from the Percé council

Another departure is taking place from around the Percé municipal council table. Councillor Nicolas Sainte-Croix, who represented the citizens of the Saint-Georges-de-Malbaie sector, tendered his resignation on July 2, effective immediately.

The letter was presented to the municipal council on the evening of July 2, where the other elected officials were informed of the situation.

According to Town Clerk Gemma Vibert, the letter does not contain any reasons for the elected official's decision.

Since the resignation comes more than a year before the November 2025 election, a by-election will have to be held within the next four months.

Reactions to Cathy Poirier's resignation

NELSON SERGERIE

PERCÉ - Elected officials from the Rocher-Percé MRC deplore the departure of the mayor of Percé, Cathy Poirier, who announced her resignation on July 2.

The prefect of the MRC, Samuel Parisé, has lost an ally. “It's a big piece that we're losing for the Rocher-Percé MRC. Mayor Poirier was a person who was committed to the development of Percé but also of the Rocher-Percé MRC. She was my alternate prefect. She accompanied me to several regional meetings,” states the prefect, noting Ms. Poirier had become a friend since her entry into politics in 2021.

The mayor of Chandler, Gilles Daraïche, notes that elected officials are there to make decisions. “The fee was a suicide decision for her, unfortunately. She believed in her decisions and we can never blame her for being a strong woman and accomplishing things,” states the mayor.

Ms. Poirier spoke about harassment and intimidation during her press briefing.



The prefect of the Rocher-Percé MRC, Samuel Parisé

Photo: N. Sergerie

Mayor Daraïche has also experienced his share of problems. “Intimidation unfortunately with social networks is part of the task that the mayor must put into his daily life. It's a shame because we're talking about more than 800 resignations at the elected level and it's going to increase,” says the mayor.

The idea mentioned by Ms. Poirier of removing the question period from municipal councils is well received.

“It's a very good idea. With that, we could reduce resignations, according to me, by 80%. The questions will come by email and we will answer

them,” he says as a suggestion.

“People have, as Ms. Poirier said, 30 days to come and meet us. Some people do it and do not show up for the question period which has become a comment period which does nothing for the population,” explains Mr. Daraïche.

“Most of the time, there are no questions on the agenda. People prepare for a month to bring their idea, which is often misinformation and it's unfortunate because it leads to unnecessary discussions,” adds the mayor.

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Funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program

Canada

June was warmer than normal

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - Gaspé recorded a much warmer month of June while precipitation was slightly below normal. According to Environment Canada, the average temperature was 15.5°C, or 2.3 above normal.

High temperature records were set on June 19 and 20 in Cap-Espoir and New Carlisle with temperatures exceeding or close to 30°C.

Only 64 millimetres of rain fell at Michel-Pouliot airport,



Photo: SOPEU

which represents 81% of the normal amount of 79 millimetres.

June was the third consecutive month to receive less than the normal average of precipi-

tation, with May only receiving 48% of the average precipitation and April 71%.

The forest fire season has remained calm since the start of the season in the Gaspé Peninsula. So far, there have been five fires, ravaging a total of 10.6 hectares, the largest occurring on June 2 in Pointe-à-la-Croix, burning 7.4 hectares alone.

The most recent was a lightning fire on June 19 between Gaspé and Murdochville burning 2.1 hectares.

A ban on open fires was is-

sued at the beginning of June for the MRC of Avignon, which was later extended to the entire Gaspé Peninsula, impacting the tradition of bonfires on the Fête nationale du Québec on June 24.

In the province of Quebec during June, the number of forest fires was down by 30%.

The North Shore was particularly affected by fires so far this season.

Photo: SOPFEU planes have not been very active since the start of the forest fire season in the Gaspé Peninsula.

Police report

On July 4 at the Percé Courthouse, Quebec Court Judge Denis Paradis sentenced Karine Rioux to two years less a day. The 36-year-old woman, while driving under the influence of alcohol, struck and killed Patrick Donovan, 63, from Gaspé, on December 16, 2021. Ms. Rioux will also be subjected to a two-year driving ban following her release, and will only be allowed to drive if her vehicle is equipped with an alcohol level detector. The accident occurred under darkness, after a hail storm, and the victim was wearing dark clothes. However, he was hit on the shoulder of the road.

Karine Rioux, who now resides in Matane with her parents and her young son, had entered a plea of guilty on September 28, 2023, to two counts of impaired driving causing the death of Patrick Donovan and driving with more than 80 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood and causing death. The court resumed its work on July 2 for the representations on the sentence that would be imposed on Ms. Rioux. The defence had asked on January 12 the postponement of the sentence to allow all the members of the Donovan family to be present during those representations.

Mr. Donovan was walking on Boulevard de Gaspé when he was struck on December 16, 2021. He was coming out of his workplace, a car dealership. The test showed a level of 90 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood, which is 10 milligrams above the legal limit or 80 milligrams. Although the charges laid against Karine Rioux could potentially have led to a sentence of life imprisonment, she had no criminal record before December 16, 2021, a factor that was taken into account by the court.

Judge Paradis compared the two recommendations expressed by defence attorney Damir Musafendic: a two-years-less-a-day sentence to be served at home, including 240 hours of community work, and the sentence suggested by criminal prosecutor Anne Joncas-Côté, two-years-less-a-day in prison.

Using the pre-sentence report prepared by an expert, Judge Paradis acknowledged that Karine Rioux recognized the facts, that she expressed regrets and empathy towards the Donovan family, that a social worker follows her, that she receives support from her family and that the risk of recurrence is limited. She was experiencing personal problems and alcohol was an outlet, according to the report.

On the other hand, Judge Paradis also gave a lot of weight to the testimonies presented by Patrick Donovan's widow and their two daughters. They said that they were not mad but wanted to send a strong message to people thinking of drinking and driving. He was a good father, a good husband, a good grandfather, a friend and a good neighbour much involved in the community. It leaves a scar that will never heal, said family members. A work colleague, Rebecca MacDonald, is experiencing survivor's remorse, as a last-minute phone call prevented her from walking with him along the road. She has been wondering since why he was hit and not her.

Judge Paradis opted for the dissuading factor linked to a prison term and added a two-year probation period. He wished her luck and wished peace to the Donovan family.

Quebec Court Judge Celestina Almeida set the bail hearing of Jaid Isaac, 25, from Listuguj, for August 15 at the New Carlisle Courthouse. Her last court appearance took place on June 25, also at the New Carlisle Courthouse. Jaid Isaac is charged with negligence after allegedly abandoning two young children without care for a minimum of three days. The events occurred in Listuguj between November 19 and November 22, 2022. The two children, one 17 months old and the other 29 months old at the time, were allegedly left to fend for themselves. The woman faces charges of criminal negligence causing injury. She is also accused of endangering the children's lives and exposing them to a situation that could have permanently damaged their health. According to the indictment, she also allegedly failed to provide the necessities of life for the two children when they were desti-

tute and unable to meet their own needs. Such an omission likely put their lives in danger.

Moreover, Jaid Isaac also faces a charge of animal cruelty concerning the November 2022 events. She was first imprisoned but was released on November 25, 2022, two days after her first court appearance during which she pleaded not guilty. She was arrested in April in Ontario following an October 30, 2023, arrest warrant after failing to appear in court so that the procedure initiated against her in November 2022 could move forward. "The June 25 court appearance will only deal with the bail hearing," says criminal prosecutor Florence Frappier-Routhier. Jaid Isaac faces other charges in Ontario. The defence attorney is Stéphanie Gariépy.

Michael Martin, 35, from Gesgapegiag, who faces 18 charges in connection with a January 30 altercation that took place at a home on Miguasha Road in Nouvelle, will return to the New Carlisle Courthouse on August 12 for a pro forma court appearance that could be used to set his trial dates. "The preliminary hearing in that case took place on June 5. We are waiting for the stenographic notes in order to move on with the case. We will see if they are ready by August 12. The trial date could be set then," explains Cédric Leblanc-Falardeau, the criminal prosecutor in that file. Mike Martin and Nouvelle's Marc-André Lavoie, whose case is now complete after he entered a plea of guilty, were arrested in Gesgapegiag a few hours after the altercation. The two men allegedly broke and entered the Miguasha Road residence. Mike Martin faces charges of break and enter, forcible confinement, assault, assault with a weapon, robbery, armed robbery, intentionally wounding a dog, uttering threats and several additional charges related to the use of a firearm. He is represented by lawyer Camille Marceau-Bouchard. One of the house's occupants sustained minor injuries during the altercation.

Philippe Demeule, 45, from Grande-Rivière is sentenced to six years in prison after admitting to trafficking drugs. "The case was heard on June 26 at the Percé Courthouse. (Quebec Court) Judge Denis Paradis agreed to impose the common suggestion from me and from the defence attorney to impose a sentence of six years. Considering that Mr. Demeule has been in prison since January 23, 2023, he still has a little less than four years to serve. His accomplice in the January 2023 events, Jocelyn Nicolas, had dealt with his case in December and received a sentence of six years to be served in a penitentiary. Every day of preventive detention counts for a day-and-a-half," points out criminal prosecutor Émilie Landry-Therriault. The January 2023 operation that concluded with the arrest of the two men was spectacular, as the police chase started in the streets of Grande-Rivière at a high speed. The men left their vehicle at one point and were arrested on foot. Police officers seized two kilos of cocaine and 37,000 methamphetamine tablets in Philippe Demeule's garage, as well as a certain quantity of cash. In addition to the drug charges, Demeule was accused of refusing to stop when pursued by the police. A lifetime firearm ban and supplying a DNA sample were also added to the sentence.

Emergency services were called shortly before 3 p.m. on July 2 regarding a house fire on Highway 132 in Port-Daniel. "The damage is estimated at several tens of thousands of dollars. Since the cause of the fire is suspicious in nature, the investigation was transferred to the Sûreté du Québec. An investigator was onsite, as well as a fire scene technician to clarify the causes and circumstances surrounding this event. The case is ongoing," explains Frédéric Deshaies, Sûreté du Québec's communication officer. He refuses to provide further details about the house, including the address and the name of the owner because they are nominal information. He also refuses to confirm that fuel was used to enhance the strength of the blaze because it is a potentially important element of the investigation.



Gilles Gagné

Commentary

Drinkable water: different ways of dealing with crises

On June 6, a main supply pipe failure deprived the Calgary population of 60% of its drinkable water needs, forcing Mayor Jyoti Gondek to ask the city's residents to drastically reduce their consumption. No showers, no dishwasher use, and no car washing were cited as measures asked by the municipal administration to the population to alleviate the burden.

Twenty-five days later, on Canada Day, Mayor Gondek, who communicated with the citizens regularly, announced that repairs to the drinkable water system were close to being completed.

The Calgary crisis was temporary, dealt with diligently, and showed how a municipal administration can cope with unexpected events when provided with satisfactory means, financially and logistically.

About 2,000 kilometres east of Calgary, in Northern Ontario, the Neskantaga First Nation residents have experienced a boil water advisory since... 1995! That's almost 30 years, not 25 days. The advisories that affect them range from boil water orders to drinking bans, marring their daily life in profound ways.

It means that practically two generations of Neskantaga residents haven't had spontaneous access to drinkable water unless they bought it or boiled some in advance.

They are not alone. Dozens of First Nations reserves, probably a few hundred, out of the 630 or so such communities in Canada, experience the same hardship.

The degree of response shown in Calgary is simply inaccessible in an alarming proportion of First Nations communities due to bureaucratic apathy, lack of funding and systemic neglect. The resources to solve water problems are simply insufficient.

Promises

Some promises to fix the drinking water problems of First Nations communities go at least as far back as the 1960s. Such promises were made by representatives of federal and provincial governments, and from many political parties. Sadly, we can observe that numerous communities still live without clean water.

As Native university professor Robert Falcon Ouellette recently observed in an article he wrote about the access to drinkable water in First Nations, historical neglect, inadequate funding, logistical challenges and political indifference explain the current context.

Moreover, the disparity in responses highlights a fundamental inequality in crisis management and prioritization, he says. Mr. Ouellette has seen the problem from various angles. He grew up on the Red Pheasant Cree Nation of Saskatchewan. He has studied anthropology and notably specializes in Indigenous education and political science. He also served in the Canadian Armed Forces and was the federal Liberal Member of Parliament for Winnipeg Center between 2015 and 2019.

A broader look at the situation is needed

Living without drinkable water has deep impacts on health, education and economic development. In First Nations communities, children miss school due to illnesses caused by unsanitary conditions, adults cannot rely on tap water for cooking or bathing, and the overall quality of life is severely diminished. This ongoing crisis exacerbates other socio-economic disparities and contributes to a cycle of poverty and marginalization.

It complicates people's lives and forces advocating time that should be spent doing something else. It also affects some people psychologically because they might think that their life is worth less than that of other citizens of the same country. The fact that there seems to be no crisis ending in sight is also discouraging and therefore generates psychological effects such as hopelessness.

The lack of clean water in these communities is not only an inconvenience, it is a serious health risk and a violation of basic rights.

Knowing that, what are we doing now? A year away from the next federal election, we must collectively put the drinking water issue at the forefront of future debates. Ideally, some First Nations leaders could make a priority of it. With a rising number of economic ventures involving Natives and Non-Natives, such as in wind power, taking the opportunity to sensitize a wider range of people to the necessity of supplying quality water to all Aboriginal communities would gain momentum. Why wouldn't it be an important campaign question across Canada, come the 2025 election?

As Robert Falcon Ouellette sums it up, the resilience shown by Calgarians during their recent crisis offers a model for action. Their coordinated efforts, transparent communication and community cooperation demonstrate how significant challenges can be managed effectively. These same principles must be applied to resolve the water crisis in First Nations communities.

Means must be deployed to force Canada to recognize that the right to clean water is universal and act with the same urgency and commitment for First Nations communities as was seen in Calgary. This requires not only emergency measures, but also long-term investments in infrastructure, health services and community support.

Although Calgary's water crisis has been challenging, it has sparked a united and effective strategy and the actions that followed. In contrast, many First Nations communities continue to face an ongoing water crisis with insufficient support and attention. At times, it looks as if they are facing indifference.

This discrepancy in responses highlights a sig-

nificant inequality that needs to be tackled. Canada must ensure that all its citizens, regardless of where they live, have access to clean and safe water. The time to act is now, and the lessons learned from Calgary's response should serve as a guide for efforts to resolve the water crisis in First Nations communities forever.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Heroes of Normandy

Death struck deeply into those who waded ashore on June 6, 1944. They were struggling to quickly move from their landing craft to the sand of Normandy beach, burdened by the heavy weight of their equipment, and the sights and sounds around them. Before them lay a terrifying array of obstacles waiting to trap, maim, and destroy anyone who attempted to challenge the terrible might of the Nazi occupation of France.

Service men and women came from all across Canada. Local militia units like Les Fusiliers Mont Royal, Régiment de la Chaudière and Black Watch were mobilized for active war service. These part-time "Saturday Night" soldiers were busy in their armouries and drill halls, recruiting and training its new members. Some would find themselves "storming Juno beach" on June 6, while others arrived sometime later, joining the 3rd Canadian Division as they consolidated their foothold on the Normandy coast.

The liberation campaign slowly progressed, mile by bloody mile, across France until Paris was freed on August 25, 1944. In its wake were left countless dead and injured and destroyed towns and cities. Names of places became etched into the memories of the soldiers who fought in battles like Bourguébus Ridge, Carpique Airport, Caen, the Falaise "Gap", Vaucelles, and Verrières Ridge. The campaign to liberate France from its occupiers would end up taking the lives of 5,021 Canadian soldiers.

The number of war veterans who fought in the liberation campaign have steadily declined as the years have passed. Fortunately, some of these remarkable old soldiers are still living. They are resilient people who followed a path of duty, endured hardship, faced danger and experienced things we could never imagine. Through the National Order of the Legion of Honour medal program, the Embassy of France in Canada continues to bestow their nation's highest medal to our veterans who are proudly known as the liberators of France.

Guy Black, Recipient of the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation




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Publisher: Penny MacWhirter
News Editor: Gilles Gagné
Office Manager: Holly Smith
Circ. Manager: Holly Smith

JOURNALISTS:
Nelson Sergerie
Cynthia Dow

Tel: 418-752-5400
specs@globetrotter.net
thegaspespec.com

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Quebec government says “no” to Gaspé arena project

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - Gaspé faces another refusal from the Quebec government for financing the first phase of its multisports complex, estimated at \$28 million.

This is the second time that the Town has been told “no” for the construction of a new arena, the first refusal occurring in 2020 when the entire project was estimated at \$21 million.

“The only reason we have is that there was not enough money in the envelope to meet all the needs,” says the mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté.

Upon receipt of the letter from the Quebec government, the Town asked for elaboration to understand the decision.

“We had the evaluation criteria before submitting and we checked almost all the boxes there were to check. We had plans and specifications that were practically 100% complete at the time of submitting the application and having plans and specifications should give several points in the analysis. We will investigate to see what happened,” notes the mayor.

One of the criteria was consultation, which the Town of Gaspé had done.

According to the mayor, the Member of the National Assembly for Gaspé is also disappointed following this announcement.

“I still have a little anger in my heart the day after this announcement. It's disappointing. It's frustrating,” said the mayor.

Daniel Côté hopes that the



The complex project was presented last November.

Photo: Town of Gaspé

Quebec government will respect its promise of \$1.5 billion over five years at the rate of \$300 million per year for sports and recreational infrastructures.

The Town of Gaspé intends to resubmit the project in a future round.

“We have no clue about our ranking. We will also investigate that. We are going to make access to information requests and whatever it takes to get answers about what happened. There were only five major projects that have been accepted. How did these projects succeed? Is it political or purely administrative as we have been told?” questions Mr. Côté.

Everything was done to fit into the program and have the best chance of obtaining a positive response.

“We split the project in two because the project was too big. We were told if you have plans and quotes, that will help

you. We put \$1.2 million out of our pocket without subsidies to check the boxes of the program. We have the support of consultation from all users, but the result is not there,” indicates the mayor.

“Is it because we are not very populated?” he wonders. The project included six changing rooms, a room for referees and stands for a total of 504 seats positioned facing the players' benches.

It also included a 200-metre running circuit that could allow approximately 300 additional people to attend an event presented in the amphitheatre.

Multifunctional rooms would also be included, in addition to the usual elements found in an arena.

Initially, the project was worth \$34 million, but to fit within the \$28 million budget, VIP boxes were removed, the size of the rooms was revised, the number of parking spaces

was reduced and it is shared with the school.

The project was phased in two due to the scale of the costs because the initial concept in 2020 included an arena, synthetic field and multi-sports halls valued at \$21 million at the time.

Even if the Town chose to build a classic arena, the costs are between \$20 million and \$40 million, the mayor calculates, while the Financial Assistance Program for Recreational, Sports and Outdoor Infrastructure (PAFIRSPA) offered up to \$20 million in grants on projects worth up to \$30 million.

The mayor recalls that the last program was for \$294 million and \$1.2 billion in projects had been submitted.

“Not so long ago, a standard arena was between \$8M and \$12M. Now, a standard arena, that is to say, a sheet metal dome with ice inside, is worth \$20 million and, in Gaspé where we want to put it downtown, we want it to be a little cuter than a tin dome. We want something that has style,” explains the mayor.

“The more we are refused, the more the cost will increase. Today, we are at \$30 million. If it (Quebec Government) re-opens the program at the end of the year, maybe the \$30 million will be \$32M, \$33M, or \$34M? It's a surprise box. We will perhaps succeed in re-

cutting but, at some point, we will end up with a sheet metal dome and it will be ugly,” says Mr. Côté.

In the meantime, the current arena has exceeded its useful life. The mayor will ask his council some of the questions.

The concrete slab, foundation and refrigeration would have to be redone and alone are estimated at around \$10 million.

“\$10 million without financial assistance to restore an old infrastructure that remains obsolete and damaged is money wasted. We are going to get together and look at the scenarios and determine the limit for investing to keep our old infrastructure afloat,” says Mr. Côté.

“We deserve to have an arena worthy of the name. We do not have the fiscal capacity to afford a new one without government aid. We expect a minimum of fairness,” demands Daniel Côté once again.

“No” was also the answer in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts

Sainte-Anne-des-Monts also received a negative response to its project to upgrade the municipal swimming pool located at the Gabriel Le-Courtois secondary school.

“I will not hide our strong disappointment with this government decision considering that we were very confident in landing the project,” states Sainte-Anne-des-Monts mayor, Simon Deschênes.

The pool is almost 40 years old and needs an upgrade.

The renovation was estimated at \$14 million.

“The project remains among the Town's priorities. We will look at the options,” says Mr. Deschênes.

Like Gaspé, Sainte-Anne-des-Monts received a letter mentioning that the requests received far exceed the \$300 million envelope for the first year of the new program.

Only eight projects were selected totalling \$2 million

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - Only eight projects were selected in the Gaspé Peninsula as part of the Quebec Government's Financial Assistance Program for Recreational, Sports and Outdoor Infrastructure, totalling barely \$2 million, while the overall envelope across the province was \$300 million.

The Quebec government published the projects selected across the province on July 3 while the towns that received rejection notices had already made announcements.

The largest grant, totalling \$805,509, goes to the Eastern Shores English School Board for the construction of a multi-sport field and a soccer field at the new school that will be built in New Carlisle between this year and the end of 2025.

The restoration of the Maria tennis courts comes in second place with support of \$427,000. Subsequently, the project to renovate the skateboard park and add a pump track in New Richmond was granted \$178,149.

Hope Town receives two grants: a first of \$167,673 for the redevelopment of the old school in addition to \$36,085 for the improvement of the Belvédère trail.

The expansion of the Grand Pabos Recreation Club building will cost \$143,509.

Finally, the Chic-Chocs School Service Centre obtained \$75,000 for the development of a gathering place at Saint-Maxime school and \$34,277 was paid to Grande-Vallée for the construction of a pump track.

The Quebec government finances these projects up to 66%, with the balance to be paid by the beneficiaries.

Much to the ire of the mayors involved, the major projects for the new Gaspé arena (\$28 million) and the upgrade of the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts swimming pool (\$14 million) were rejected.





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Canada Day Celebrations in New Carlisle



Siblings, Hendrix (9) and Thora (5) showed their Canadian pride as they waited for the New Carlisle Parade to begin.

Photo: Tracy-Lee Pelletier



The long weekend festivities started with Maltais Performance feminine softball tournament. Spectators were treated an impressive demonstration of softball skills. The Coyotes took first place.



The Royals won second place.



Gage Assels won first place in the 50-60cc class at the annual chainsaw cutting contest.

Photo: Gage Assels



The Rookies won third place.

Photos: S.D Captures



The Family Ties float is always a hit for the entire family.

Photo: S.D Captures



Many types of vehicles took part in the Barachois parade, even a picnic table!

PATRICIA ANNETTE

BARACHOIS: - Canada Day was celebrated in a big way, in Barachois. More than 30 vehicles took part in the parade. The Legion Branch 261, served refreshments, including hot-dogs, cake and drinks to a full house.



Canada Day at Duthie's Point: A perfect day!

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW RICHMOND – The weather was perfect, and so was the range of activities on Canada Day at Duthie's Point as a lot of families converged to the site on the afternoon of July 1. Kids played in the inflatable games for a while, before resting in the barn to have their faces painted by Lulu Berlue, a Bonaventure-based artist. Children and parents were served food, beverages and cake around midafternoon, as some other adults were practicing their washer toss abilities, maybe anticipating a future tournament. Other people simply came for a chat in the shade or under a bright and hot sun.

During the evening, The Irish Narrows took over the stage for a well-attended show. The band members: Nathan Hayes, Bethany Paetkau, Dave Felker, Kevin Jones, Catherine Malde-may and Dominick Briand were photographed just prior to their performance by Kayla Court. Duthie's Point was more animated this year than in 2023, which also featured perfect weather. (Photos: Kayla Court and Gilles Gagné)



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VIA Rail changes Ocean train schedule

GILLES GAGNÉ

MATAPEDIA – Since June 19, VIA Rail has modified its passenger train schedule between Montreal to Halifax, and Halifax to Montreal, due to constraints imposed by Canadian National (CN), the owner of the railway tracks.

The eastbound Montreal-Halifax train has had 45 minutes added to its schedule, while the westbound Halifax-Montreal train has had 90 minutes added. The train now leaves Montreal 30 minutes earlier than before June 19, at 6:30 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m.

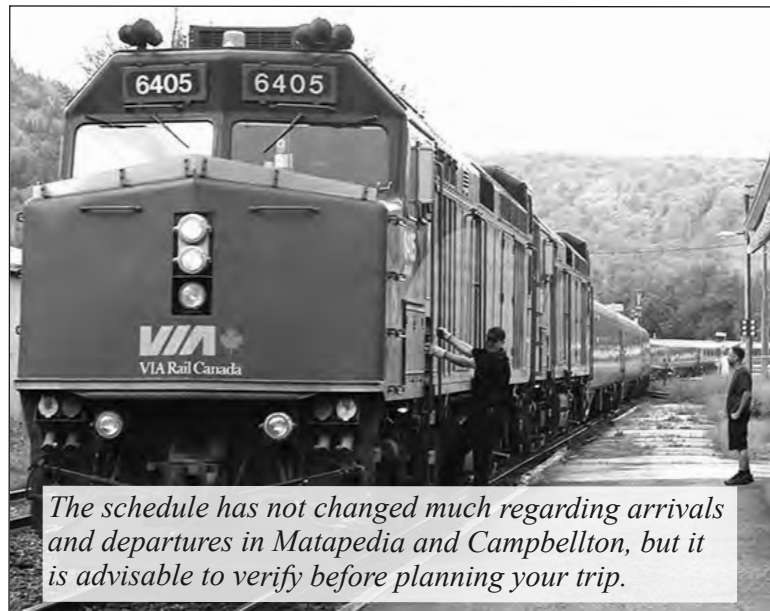
“As the vast majority of railway tracks between Montreal and Halifax are owned by CN, VIA Rail is subject to CN’s constraints when operating the Ocean route, and remains dependent on CN’s ability to resolve any related problems. With their infrastructure,” replied VIA Rail’s public relations department to SPEC’s question.

The main restrictions are still located on the Newcastle subdivision, which covers the line between Campbellton and the Moncton suburb. So the impact is greater for the passengers going to or coming from the east.

“In 2014, VIA Rail paid more than \$18.3 million to CN for necessary repairs on a 70.8 km section of their Newcastle subdivision between Bathurst and Miramichi, which CN is responsible for maintaining. These funds were exceptionally spent to maintain the status quo of passenger train service on the Ocean, while CN was considering abandoning this portion of the subdivision,” adds VIA Rail, a public transporter owned by the Government of Canada.

The significant sum of money given to CN by VIA Rail had little effect on the state of Newcastle subdivision. In fact, passenger trains remain slow on that portion of the Halifax-Montreal route.

“Unfortunately, since then, the current state of this same subdivision has resulted in operational changes. In response to recurring speed restrictions imposed by CN, as well as a deterioration in operational speeds on this infrastructure due to track conditions, VIA Rail had no choice but to adjust the schedule of the Ocean as of June 19, in order to offer passengers a timetable that



The schedule has not changed much regarding arrivals and departures in Matapedia and Campbellton, but it is advisable to verify before planning your trip.

Photo: G. Gagné

better reflects actual (longer) travel times,” specifies VIA Rail’s communication department.

Asked by SPEC if CN could carry out this maintenance work other than during VIA Rail’s peak season and if VIA makes representations in this sense, the public transporter replies “that we are not responsible for the level of track maintenance, we are not the competent authority to answer questions about the condition of the tracks, the evolution of operating speeds in recent years, the nature and results of work and maintenance carried out on the infrastructure or any other information relating to the railway infrastructure owned by CN.”

VIA Rail’s Ocean train coming from Montreal now arrives in Matapedia at 5:40 a.m. and in Campbellton at 7:23 a.m. (local time) on Thursday, Saturday and Monday. The train spends 10 minutes in Campbellton before

continuing its journey.

In the other direction, the Ocean train arrives in Campbellton at 10:08 p.m. (local time), and in Matapedia at 9:52 p.m. on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.

Between 1986 and 2024, CN’s maintenance shortcomings on the Newcastle subdivision have added two hours and 21 minutes to the Ocean’s train travel time between Moncton and Campbellton, including the little stretch on the Gort subdivision, which passes in downtown Moncton.

The total travel time between Halifax and Montreal has increased by three hours and six minutes between 1986 and 2024, considering that the Ocean was covering the distance in 20 hours and 17 minutes in 1986, compared to 23 hours and 23 minutes now.

About everywhere in the world, the speed of passenger trains has increased over the years. In Canada, train speed has decreased on most routes.



Photo: Société de gestion des rivières de Gaspé

Fewer salmon returned to the rivers this year in Gaspé

Fewer salmon runs in Gaspé

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - Salmon runs on the Gaspé rivers are down significantly this year compared to last year but, for the York River, the data remains close to the average of the last 13 years.

The Société de gestion des rivières de Gaspé published figures on July 3 and 4 on the situation.

On the York River, the count shows 526 large salmon returned upriver as of July 1. These figures are lower than the 725 last year and the 1,239 two years ago. However, the number is closer to the average of 670 over the past 13 years.

As for grilse, there were 61 this year, compared to 91 last year and 218 two years ago. The 13-year average is 79.

The Société notes that in 2018, there were only 348 large salmon as of early July.

To allow their capture in August, the magic number of large salmon is 732.

On the Saint-Jean River, the figures counted on July 3 show 565 large salmon and 112 grilse compared to 1,064 large salmon and 133 grilse on the same date last year.

“It must be said that, last year, we had good returns. Water conditions are very different from last year. Water levels are much lower and seem to cause fish to move up the river quickly before it runs out of water. It’s difficult to certify,” notes the director, Rémi Lesmerises.

A little more precipitation would therefore be welcome.

Attendance on the rivers is slightly down

The water level, but also

the message sent by the Quebec government, may have influenced fishermen’s decision to visit the region’s salmon rivers this season.

“The government’s speech indicated that there would be risks of poorer runs in their projections. This could have an impact on fishermen’s decision to take a trip to Gaspé,” suggests Lesmerises.

The fact that the Matane River opened its season earlier, on June 1, could also have influenced the destination of the fishermen.

“All in all, we still have a decent season. It’s not the desert. Ultimately, it even satisfies people who found that there were too many people on the rivers in recent years,” adds the manager.

On saprolegniosis, a fungus that attacks the skin of salmon, the disease has spread.

“We are seeing it a little early this year. It seems to fit with the weather a little early this year. We have mortalities. For the moment, it’s hard to say if it will be worse or less worse than last year. We have not reached the maximum of the disease,” explains Mr. Lesmerises.

The study to understand the disease will continue this year.

“In partnership with the Ministry of Wildlife, there will be weekly dives and water samples to see the presence of the disease in different sectors and at different times. Captures of juvenile (salmon) will be made to see if the disease is also present. We continue to search, but we do not always have a certain cause. We have hypotheses but nothing to confirm on which we could move forward publicly,” worries the director.

Fair Haven Bible Camp New Carlisle, Quebec

Little Campers (A) <i>boys and girls</i>	7 - 9 years	June 30-July 5
Girls Camp	10 - 12 yrs	July 7-12
Little Campers (B) <i>boys and girls</i>	7 - 9 yrs	July 14-19
Boys Camp	10 - 12 yrs	July 21-26
Teen Camp	13 - 18 yrs	July 28-Aug 2

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Fires, Tuck Time,
Crafts and
Chapel



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To reserve: e-transfer your registration fee to rose.roussy@gmail.com or mail payment to Nelson Roussy, 371 rte 132 east, New Richmond, QC, G0C 2B0

Include camper’s name and which camp they are attending.

NEW CARLISLE: ESSB receives four tenders for new school

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – The Eastern Shores School Board received four bids from contractors interested in building the new school that will replace New Carlisle High School, whose original section was constructed in 1913 and opened in 1914.

All the bids respect conformance with the school board parameters. The lowest bid was submitted by Matane's contractor Habitat Construction Matane (1986) Inc. at \$22,157,534.00, followed by Carleton's L.F.G. Construction Inc. at \$22,185,000.00, Quebec City's Construction Citadelle Inc. at \$22,244,069.00 and finally by Saint-Arsène's Construction



A sketch of the new school.

Photo: Eastern Shores School Board

Béton 4 Saisons / 9125-5455 Québec inc., at \$22,985,000.00. All the amounts exclude taxes.

The tenders also respect the budgetary envelope of the school board and Quebec's Ministry of Education. The

overall envelope amounts to \$32 million but the contractors' bids exclude the equipment that will be installed in

the school.

In a written statement, the Eastern Shores School Board specifies that "the information was sent to the Ministry of Education (MEQ) after the tenders were opened. We are now awaiting their response to proceed with awarding the contract. The Ministry has a maximum of 45 days to get back to us."

Discussions about replacing New Carlisle High School began 35 years ago. In recent years, the aging building has undergone repairs to address issues such as mould. If the contractor is chosen quickly, the new school is expected to be ready by January 2026. The new name of the school remains unknown for now, pending a naming contest.

Quebec announces its cellular plan for the Gaspésie

NELSON SERGERIE

SAINT-ELZÉAR - After years of effort, six municipalities will see their cellular coverage improve within a year and a half at the latest, promised Premier François Legault who was in Saint-Elzéar on June 28 to make the announcement.

Saint-Elzéar, one of the municipalities that is targeted experienced a national security alert failure in September 2022 when an alert involving a dangerous individual on the run was heard throughout the province, but not in the municipality concerned because cell phone coverage is not available. Saint-Alphonse, Hope and Listuguj are also priority areas.

Two other sectors in the Gaspé town area will be served as well, but the announcement regarding them will be later in the year, according to the government of Quebec.

"We have a large and beautiful territory and today, we need to be connected for three reasons: security, information, and economic development," mentioned the Premier in a press briefing.

"The role of governments



Premier François Legault was in Saint-Elzéar on June 28 to make the announcement on cell phone coverage.

Photo: Michel Morin

is to invest in infrastructure. When we talk about infrastructure, it's energy and connectivity. The development of businesses needs to be connected. From Bonaventure or Saint-Elzéar, we can contribute to economic development," explains Mr. Legault. The government went to the big telecommunications players and asked how much it would cost to build towers with subsidies to cover deficits.

"We had an agreement with three companies, Telus, Videotron and Sogetel. We are going to give them \$170

million to connect nine regions," specifies the Premier.

"They must commit by the end of 2026 at the latest, to have everyone connected," adds Mr. Legault.

In a press release issued on July 4, Telus indicated that it wanted to invest \$6 million of its own funds combined with government aid for the deployment and updating of

its cellular networks in the region.

With the contribution of \$7.25 million from Quebec and \$6 million from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, Telus plans to add approximately ten new 5G wireless sites in the Gaspé Peninsula.

"The investments from the Quebec government announced in April 2024 will allow the addition of nearly five new sites, which will increase the level of service for cellular coverage. They will also be located in the municipalities of Gaspé, Percé, Saint-Alphonse and Saint-Elzéar. Other sites for the region are currently being analyzed, and planning and preparatory work will begin in 2024. Telus anticipates that the first sites will be in service from 2025," mentions the Canadian telecommunications giant.

"As part of the CRTC Fund, the details of which

were revealed last year, two new sites will be put into service in Mont-Albert in the coming years. A cellular site will be activated by the end of the year in Cascapédia-Saint-Jules, while Saint-André-de-Restigouche will benefit from improved connectivity with the addition of two 5G sites in the coming months," continues Telus.

By 2028, Telus plans to invest \$10 billion in the Quebec economy for its infrastructure, activities and spectrum licenses, and to improve the coverage, speed and reliability of its networks.

The other regions that will be served are the Lower Saint Lawrence, Mauricie, Eastern Townships, Abitibi-Témiscamingue, North Shore, Chaudière-Appalaches, Laurentians and Centre-du-Québec.

Fifty tower sites have already been decided, and the others are in the acquisition process.

Successful spaghetti supper raises nearly \$2,000 for local foundations

Patricia Annett

On May 24, the Fondation Santé Côte-de-Gaspé and the Gaspé Cancer Foundation joined forces to host a spaghetti supper, generously presented by Marché IGA Cronier. The event raised a net sum of \$1,996, with profits divided equally between the two foundations.

Marché IGA Cronie sponsored the spaghetti sauce, and Distributions Dean Jacques provided the bread for the supper. The event took place at the Royal Canadian Legion #59 of Gaspé, which also hosted a 50/50 raffle draw, awarding \$241 in prize money to the winner. The funds raised from the supper will support the ongoing work of both the Fondation Santé Côte-de-Gaspé and the Gaspé Cancer Foundation.

THEGASPESPEC.COM
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MARIA HOSPITAL:

▶ Cont'd from cover

administration of the CISSS and that is why we are explaining the situation as it is.”

The CISSS confirms the breakdown having affected “certain parts of the hospital on June 22 and 23, including the morgue for a certain period.”

The CISSS further notes that “considering the need to preserve the integrity of the body, in the cir-

cumstances of an electrical failure affecting the morgue, the body was moved, during the night of June 22 to 23, to a cold room. It is important to mention that this is an exceptional situation in which a rapid solution had to be deployed in order to preserve the integrity of the body as required clinically.”

The CISSS message mentions that “the space was not used by staff at that time. The body had not been in contact with food. The body was protected

and the food was also protected. Furthermore, each body is doubly protected in the event of death.”

In order to avoid a repeat of such a situation, the CISSS ensures that it is working “as of now to provide the cold room of the morgue with electrical backup via the generator, which is not currently the case.”

The CISSS checked whether another similar situation had occurred in the past, but after consulting existing employees, it seems that this is not the case.

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, you may be full of more energy than you have had in a while, helping you to sail through all of your tasks this week at a record pace. Enjoy this wave while you ride it.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, heed your body’s messages that it needs some rest right now; otherwise, you may not be up for social engagements that are on the horizon. Pisces comes into your life this week.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

You cannot hang out with every person who is trying to get a piece of your time right now, Gemini. It’s likely you will need to space out socializing over a few weeks to meet with them all.

CANCER – June 22/July 22

Cancer, you have been working hard to make professional progress, and it might be time to think about your next step. It could be time to take your talents elsewhere.

LEO – July 23/Aug 23

Leo, you are often drawn to unfamiliar experiences that can teach you something new. This week could provide a host of opportunities to try something new.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

It is time to get off the fence and commit to one decision or another, Virgo. Your professional life



hinges on your ability to take a path and then stick with it.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, you might be tempted to accept every invitation that comes your way. However, it is better to be smart about the people with whom you associate. Use every opportunity to network.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, take a look at how things should operate before you hit the floor running. You want to be strategic in how you expend your energy; otherwise, you may experience burnout.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

You lean toward being one of the more passionate signs in the zodiac, Sagittarius. That passion will be on full display this week. You’ll wear your heart on your sleeve.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Domestic issues come to the forefront, Capricorn. You’re inclined to spend time at home with loved

ones. Take this time to work around the house and yard.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Aquarius, your popularity is growing and it’s time to get out there and hang with the movers and shakers. Soon even more people will learn who you are.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Strengthen your ideas with a concrete foundation, Pisces. Only then will your plan come to fruition in the right manner, leading to better success.

FAMOUS BIRTHDAYS

JULY 7

Ringo Starr, Musician (84)

JULY 8

Maya Hawke, Actress (26)

JULY 9

Courtney Love, Singer (60)

JULY 10

Sofia Vergara, Actress (52)

JULY 11

Alessia Cara, Singer (28)

JULY 12

Steve Howey, Actor (47)

JULY 13

Harrison Ford, Actor (82)

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Announcements



Obituary



PATTERSON: Martina

It is with much sadness that we inform you of the passing of Martina Bernice Patterson (Tina Frost), on June 14, 2024. She was 94 years old. She has joined her parents Drusa Bechervaise and Jerry Patterson, her son Ricky, brother Macartney and his wife Bernice. She now watches over her daughter Gina (Michel Lessard); son: Danny; grandchildren: Maude, Joel and Marissa; their spouses; great-granddaughter: Léana; as well as nieces: Michele, Patrice and Kathryn; and friends.

A celebration of her life will be held on August 4, 2024, at the Place des Citoyens in Sainte-Adele, Quebec. Having given to others all her life, you are invited, if you would like, to make a donation in her honour to your favorite charity.

Mom, you will be forever in our hearts!



Celebration of Life



DRODY: Ernest

May 13, 1930 - August 29, 2023

A service and funeral to celebrate the life of Ernest Drody will be held at the Douglastown church, on Wednesday, July 24, 2024 at 2 p.m. Condolences to the family will take place at 1 p.m.

Baptism



We are delighted to announce the baptism of Korbin Kyle Anez, the beloved child of Kyle Anez and Vanessa Plusquellec. Korbin was baptized on June 30, 2024, at St. Andrew's church in New Carlisle. Korbin's proud godparents, who will be there to guide him are Tamisha Bujold and Lucas Anez. Congratulations on your baptism. We wish for you to grow in grace, wisdom and happiness.

Love; Uncle Al, Auntie Jill and Lauren.

*Deadline to submit an announcement
is Wednesday at 4 p.m.*

COAST ROUND-UP

COAST ROUND-UP: \$8 per week
CLASSIFIED: \$8 per week

YORK:

York ACW

July 20: The York ACW will be holding its Summer Sale and Afternoon Tea beginning at 2 p.m. at the York River Community Hall. There will be handicrafts, baked goods, mystery parcels and a white elephant table. Afternoon tea will be served for \$7.

BARACHOIS:

The Gaspé Cancer Foundation

August 1: Gift Bingo beginning at 7 p.m. at the Barachois Legion. Ages 18 and over are welcome.

August 4: A luncheon social starting at 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. held at Barachois Legion will include soup, hotdogs, sandwiches, grilled cheese, desserts, tea and coffee. Donations at the door.

November 2: A ticket draw and luncheon starting at 11:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. held at Barachois Legion will include soup, hotdogs, sandwiches, desserts, tea and coffee, donations at the door.

PORT DANIEL:

St. James

Anglican Church

August 5: Gift bingo with gift cards and money, starting at 7 p.m. at the Shigawake Community Centre. \$20 a series, canteen service available.

SHIGAWAKE:

Community Centre

July 25: The Shigawake community centre will be holding a Strawberry social tea with bake sale at the Shigawake Community Centre, more details to follow.

HOPE TOWN:

Sports Club

July 20: Hope Town Sports club will be hosting a gift bingo at 7 p.m. at the Hope Town Community Centre.

HOPE:

Hope Baptist Church

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

NEW CARLISLE:

Kempffer House

The tea room is back! Open

every Wednesday with sittings at 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. Cash only, children \$8, adults \$12, and \$15 for the alcove. Reservations required. For more info: 418-752-1334 or heritagenc@globetrotter.net

NEW CARLISLE:

Bible Chapel Meetings

Sundays: Breaking of Bread for believers - 9:30 a.m., Gospel meeting and Sunday School - 2 p.m.

Thursdays: Prayer Meeting and Bible Study - 7 p.m. Everyone welcome! For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

50+ Club

Tuesdays: Grocery bingo every Tuesday at 7 p.m. \$10 for three cards. Extra cards are \$1 each.

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

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

August 17: BBQ from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. 13+ \$16, 7-12 \$8, and 0-6 free.

ROTARY CLUB WINNERS:

The winner for the week of June 1: Jacques Rivière

The winners for the week of June 2: Stéphane Gagné, Judy McDavid, François Blouin, Jean-François Bourdages, Léonce Poirier, Agathe Bourdages and Réjean Poirier.

The winners for the week of June 9: Josée St-Onge, Hélène Cyr, Marlyne Cyr, Dominique St-Lauren, Louis-Simon Binette, Gilles Leblanc and Sarah Thomas.

The winners for the week June 16: Sylvain Poirier, Mario Cyr, Jacqueline Holmes, Diane Bourdages, Claude Roy, Patrice Deslauriers and Barry O'Neil.

The winners for the week June 23: Rodrigue

Bujold, Christian Audet, Andrée Delarosbil, Lyne Cormier, William Dow, Pierre-Alain Langlois and Léonce Poirier.

The winner for the week of June 30: André Leblanc.

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Sunday, July 14

New Carlisle

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Hoptown

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Shigawake

10 a.m. Morning Prayer

PARISH OF GASPÉ

Sunday, July 14

St. Andrew's - York
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Every Wednesday
St. Paul's - Gaspé**
10 a.m. Morning Prayer

Wejgwapniag celebrates National Indigenous Peoples Day

Cynthia Dow

GESGAPEGIAG: - It was a colourful morning on Friday, June 21 as the Wejgwapniag School in Gesgapegiag celebrated the summer solstice with their annual mawiomis in the gym. Host drum for the event was Spirit Bear from Listuguj. Singing, dancing and drumming resounded through the large room as the community gathered for the activities and a shared meal. National Indigenous Peoples Day was declared as a new event in the Canadian calendar in 1996 by then Governor-General Roméo LeBlanc.

The summer solstice was chosen as this day of recognition since so many aboriginal communities celebrated the solstice as part of their own traditions. Originally named National Aboriginal Day, it was in 2017 that the name was changed to better reflect the variety of Peoples and Nations that make up the Indigenous landscape of this country.

Photos: Kayla Caplin Photography



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