

Drinking water: Finally an agreement between New Carlisle and Paspébiac

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

NEW CARLISLE - After five years of efforts, a memorandum of understanding between New Carlisle and Paspébiac for their drinking water supply was finalized.

This agreement opened the door to an increase in government assistance, easing the financial burden on the two municipalities, each of which had various tasks to complete to keep their water systems up to date.

“After several studies on solutions, whether it be a green sand filtration system, the production capacity of the Town of Paspébiac, the distribution and supply capacity between the two municipalities together to supply both systems and once the study was presented that mentioned sharing the network, a protocol was developed that took a year and we arrived with a great agreement,” says New Carlisle Mayor David Thibault.

The protocol outlines the roles and responsibilities in terms of infrastructure, production costs and billing.

The mayor of New Carlisle sees three advan-



The drinking water agreement took several years to come to fruition.

Photo: N. Sergerie

tages for both municipalities. “On the west side of Paspébiac, there was a little lack of pressure. During a fire or a breakdown past the Tim Horton’s, it lacked pressure. The planned New Carlisle reservoir will be able to supply the west side of Paspébiac. By combining the infrastructures, rather than 65%, we could get 90% or 95% of subsidies to update the Paspébiac distribution network and the New Carlisle reservoir. It’s a win-win for both municipali-

ties,” says Mr. Thibault.

However, New Carlisle faces a challenge with the new school that is currently under construction. While the water and sewer network was connected in the summer of 2024, it lacks the pressure needed to supply the school’s sprinklers.

“The urgency to act is that during the winter, we will work on the plans and specifications for the reservoir in the centre of the municipality which will compensate for the

lack of pressure for the sprinkler network. Subsequently, it ensures the technological update for the distribution of the Paspébiac network, which is 30 or 40 years old, because the two networks of Paspébiac and New Carlisle must talk to each other,” notes Mr. Thibault, who is also a firefighter.

In 2022, the project was estimated at \$10 million.

“At 90%, there will be \$1 million left over 30 years. It is not a large amount, but the

result will be extraordinary for both sides,” calculates the mayor.

New Carlisle had a problem with the aesthetics of the water, which turned brown, caused by a chemical reaction between manganese and chlorine. The issue, however, had no impact on the health of the population.

The project still requires approval from the Quebec government, but with the new school project at stake, there is an urgent need to move forward quickly.

“The issue of the delay will be approval for the PRIMEAU program. During the winter, the Eastern Shores School Board will put pressure on the Ministry of Education, and us with our local MNA (Member of the National Assembly) to move forward as quickly as possible. If we get an OK this winter, we will make the plans and specifications for construction in the summer of 2025 for commissioning in the fall for the opening of the school in 2026. That is our schedule. It is a response to the delay of civil servants. We want to reach the finish line at the same time,” says the mayor.

Budgetary efforts for ESSB and School Service Centres

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE - The Eastern Shores School Board (ESSB) and the School Service Centres (SSC) in the Lower Saint Lawrence, the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands have been solicited by the Quebec government to contribute to the effort to reduce education spending. For the fiscal year ending March 31, 2025, the expenditure reduction target will amount to more than \$4 million for ESSB and the School Service Centres in Eastern Quebec. Each organization will take the time to assess its overall needs to determine which services will be affected. Despite the budgetary situation, the SSC general managers reiterate their determination to minimize the impact on students. ESSB will soon draft a cost-cutting plan. The Eastern Shores School Board provides educational services to over 1,280 students (youth and adults), across elementary, secondary, vocational and general adult education levels. It serves three administrative regions, covering 187 municipalities across 20 regional county municipalities (MRCs). It employs more than 400 people, of which over 75% work directly with students.



New Carlisle Mayor David Thibault says that both municipalities will benefit from the water supply agreement.

Photo: G. Gagné

\$383 million invested over two years in the Gaspé riding, according to Stéphane Sainte-Croix

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - In his mid-term report, Stéphane Sainte-Croix, the Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Gaspé says that the Quebec government has invested more than \$383 million in two years in the riding.

Taking stock of his first two years in the National Assembly on January 8 in Gaspé, Stéphane Sainte-Croix gave a long list of projects supported since the October 2022 election, saying he was proud of the results.

“To have succeeded in taking my place, bringing my complex issues. There are 125 MNAs. There are challenges everywhere in Quebec. When I look at my roadmap, I am very proud of what we do every day,” said Stéphane Sainte-Croix, mentioning his team’s contribution to achieving this.

The MNA mentioned \$55 million invested in culture and heritage, \$64 million in health, including the renovation of the emergency room at the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts hospital, the redevelop-

ment and expansion of the hemodialysis unit and the short-term hospitalization centre at the Gaspé hospital.

Another \$40 million was put forward for seniors, including the Maison des aînés in Rivière-au-Renard.

He also mentioned the fisheries sector with \$58 million, particularly to support the industry affected by the shrimp crisis, assistance for the workforce, innovation and the continuation of the Fourchette bleue program to promote Quebec marine products.

Mr. Sainte-Croix also mentioned the \$14 million invested in the protection of the coastline in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, \$32 million for affordable housing in Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, but above all the element he says he is most proud of is the \$514 million for the Port-Daniel-Gascons-Gaspé section of the vast rail refurbishment project.

“The railway. It’s a promise I made and to which I have a strong commitment. We’re going to keep it. I’ve been on the other side of the fence and I’ve fought for this infrastructure that I consider



Photo: N. Sergerie

Gaspé MNA says he is proud of his mid-term results.

strategic in the same way as ports and airports,” said the elected official, who added that it’s difficult to target a specific point in his record. The electoral map and the law that protects the constituencies of Gaspé and Bonaventure for the next election, the Villa Frederick-James whose activities remain to be specified and the visit of 17 ministers including Premier François Legault twice is also mentioned by Mr. Sainte-Croix in his re-

port.

He also indicates his support via his discretionary budget of some \$150,000 per year to 150 community organizations.

In addition, 1,000 citizen files were opened during the first two years of the mandate.

Stéphane Sainte-Croix indicates that much remains to be accomplished between now and the October 2026 election.

Health, especially the sit-

uation of an aging population is of particular interest to him. “There are several (priorities), but the aging of the population and the impacts on the health care offer, workforce issues at this level, specialized services in the region, this is an important issue for a region like the Gaspésie, considering that we have unique characteristics specific to our region and we will have to come up with solutions that will provide answers,” says the MNA.

In the context of tightening finances, the MNA indicates that he has received no signals of budget cuts for programs, citing in particular the Financial Assistance Program for Recreational, Sports and Outdoor Infrastructure (PAFIRSPA).

Gaspé had submitted its project for a new arena and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts the upgrade of its municipal swimming pool.

Matane managed to obtain funding for its aquatic centre and the elected official is aware of the population’s expectations.

“We also hear this fact.

Cont’d on page 6

CAQ MNAs defend Quebec’s budget cuts

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – The Gaspé Peninsula’s Coalition Avenir Québec Members of the National Assembly are defending the budget cuts requested by the Quebec government in a mission to reduce the province’s deficit of \$11 billion.

The topic was debated in their report on the fall parliamentary session in Quebec City.

The Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre was asked to reduce its budget by \$40 million, while the School Service Centres received a request for an overall reduction of \$200 million, in addition to the one concerning capital expenditures earlier this year.

The Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Bonaventure, Catherine Blouin, notes that the budgetary situation dictates the decision. “We have a difficult budgetary situation. At some



Photo: N. Sergerie

MNAs Stéphane Sainte-Croix and Catherine Blouin.

point, we have no choice but to do a rigorous exercise and say, no more cost overruns. We ask you to respect your budget,” she mentions in a review interview.

Her colleague from Gaspé echoes the same sentiment. “There is no cut necessarily, but a request for respect and

rigour. We hope that we will get there and good collaboration between stakeholders is necessary to get there,” adds Stéphane Sainte-Croix.

The Bonaventure MNA mentions that the project to rebuild the emergency room and intensive care department at Maria Hospital is a path full of

obstacles, but the file remains her priority for next year.

She notes, in the last session, the \$50 million invested on Highway 132, the \$25 million on the Petit Pabos River bridge in Chandler, the \$30 million on the English school in New Carlisle, and investments at the Bioparc. The MNA wanted to highlight the four medals awarded to four students from the Antoine-Bernard school in Carleton-sur-Mer after winning a culinary competition in Paris in July.

“Young people in our riding are even more interested in cooking and food autonomy, in developing skills. I wanted to recognize that,” says Ms. Blouin.

The Gaspé MNA wanted to highlight the work done by Jean Lapointe, who has been fighting for a decade for the establishment of hemodialysis services in the Gaspé Peninsula, who gave him a petition with 10,000 names this fall to demand a nephrologist in the

Gaspé Peninsula.

“The Commission (of Health and Social Services) will take up this at the beginning of the winter 2025 session. We will pay particular attention to the rest of the work. I am very happy to have carried out this project,” says Mr. Sainte-Croix.

Among other issues, the tightening of admissions of foreign students should not have an impact on the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles. According to Mr. Saint-Croix, the measure mainly targets urban institutions.

In fisheries, the sector is not in its first crisis, but the recent aid to equip fishermen for the redfish fishery is a positive step forward.

In wind power, with the recent challenges at LM Wind Power in Gaspé, the MNA is aware of the situation.

Compliance with international trade agreements will dictate the path forward, but he remains convinced that the industry can benefit from it.

Police report

Lisette Hautcoeur, 60, from Chandler, pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of manslaughter on January 9, four days before her trial was set to begin. She was charged with non-premeditated murder during the summer of 2022, in connection with the July 16, 2022, death of Richard Allard, 64. The victim was found in his Chandler apartment by a neighbour. He was struck multiple times and the scene reportedly contained significant amounts of blood. Lisette Hautcoeur was arrested on August 11, 2022. Her guilty plea on January 9 followed a joint recommendation by her defence attorney and the criminal prosecutor handling the case. She entered the plea from the Orsainville prison. Superior Court Judge Guy De Blois ordered Lisette Hautcoeur to appear at the Percé Courthouse on January 13 for sentencing representations. The defence and prosecution are recommending a 15-year sentence, however, the judge is not obligated to accept this suggestion.

Involved in a violent break-in in December 2023 in Percé, Jonathan Racette, 30, originally from Port-Daniel-Gascons was sentenced on January 7 at the Percé Courthouse to two years less a day in prison. He is left with a balance of 729 days in prison, considering 93 days of preventive detention was deducted from his sentence. In the fall of 2024, Jonathan Racette pleaded guilty to charges of assault causing bodily harm, break-in, mischief and uttering threats against police officers. Known to the justice system, the individual must provide a DNA sample, is prohibited from possessing a weapon for 10 years and is subject to three years of probation.

One of his accomplices, André Roussy, 38, was previously sentenced to 33 months in prison. As for Tommy Albert-Lantin, 26, and Michael Bourque, 29, the files are still active. An attempted theft of narcotics is at the centre of this case in which the victim was severely beaten.

On December 12, the Sûreté du Québec Major Crimes Squad conducted a search in the Rue des Écoliers area in Cap-Chat for narcotics. Maxime Hamilton, 28, and Jennifer Labrie-Pelletier, 26, both from Cap-Chat, were arrested and appeared a few hours later to face charges related to drug trafficking. "The investigation tends to link Maxime Hamilton and Jennifer Labrie to the event of November 24 in Port-Daniel. In this regard, they appeared on December 19 on several charges including discharging a firearm with intent to endanger a person's life, breaking and entering, and possession of a prohibited firearm," explains Sûreté du Québec communication officer Frédéric Deshaies.

"The investigation into this incident is still ongoing. We are in fact talking about several investigations here. Those investigations tend to demonstrate that some violent crimes perpetrated in the region lately are interlinked, and they are connected to the control of narcotics. In that regard, they are tied to organized crime and we are investigating to counter that drug traffic," adds Officer Deshaies.

On November 24, shortly before midnight, the Rocher-Percé MRC police officers were called following gunshots heard near a residence located near Highway 132 in Port-Daniel Gascons. The suspects fled before the police arrived. Fortunately, no one was injured during the incident. The Chandler-based Major Crimes Squad police officers arrested an individual on December 17 in the parking lot of a New Richmond business. In addition, two searches were conducted in a vehicle and a property located in the Rue des Cèdres area in New Richmond. Réjean Couturier, 49, from the region, appeared in court on several charges, including discharging a prohibited firearm, breaking and entering a private residence, possession of a prohibited firearm without a permit authorizing him to do so, disguising himself with a balaclava with the intent to commit a criminal act, breach of condition, breach of probation, and charges related to drug trafficking. He remained in custody following his first court appearance.

On December 19, Floribert Bélanger, 74, from Saint-Alphonse, was sentenced at the New Carlisle Courthouse to three years in a federal penitentiary after being found guilty in February 2024 of two counts of sexual assault and one of indecent assault. "I was asking for six years of imprisonment. He has a criminal record. He has served some prevention detention time in this case, notably since last fall because he failed to show up in court for the first date set for his sentence," explained criminal prosecutor Sam Bernard on January 9.

Floribert Bélanger will have his name entered on the sex offender registry, a DNA sample was taken and he must respect a 10-year ban on possessing a firearm. The victim was under 18 at the time of the events which spanned more than 11 years. "The last assault took place in 2002. The three offences occurred in the Baie-des-Chaleurs area," added prosecutor Bernard. Floribert Bélanger had spent 22 months in detention in 1991 and two years less a day in 2011 for similar offences.

Félicia Leclerc, 26, from Montreal, was recently sentenced to a 12-month suspended sentence for a violent home invasion that occurred in August 2023 in Sainte-Thérèse de Gaspé. The sentence was imposed after a joint suggestion by both parties. The woman is subject to a curfew during this period and will be subject to two years of probation, one of which will be monitored. Félicia Leclerc will have to provide a DNA sample and is prohibited from having a firearm for 10 years. The woman had brass knuckles during the assault. Her accomplice, Michael McInnis Desbois, 33, was to receive his sentence by Quebec Court judge Denis Paradis as the SPEC was reaching its deadline.



Walter Hottot, 69, of Port-Daniel-Gascons was recently found guilty of sexual assault on a minor victim for events that occurred in the 1980s. According to CHNC, the 69-year-old was cleared of a similar charge against another victim. The events Walter Hottot was charged with occurred in 1983 and 1986. He faced similar charges in 2001, 2002 and 2003. Sentencing representations are scheduled for April 23. His brother, Claude, 63, and his sister, Nancy, 58, will appear in court in January to face similar charges. The three individuals were reportedly involved in exchanging some of the victims.

Any criminal act has been ruled out by the Sûreté du Québec following the discovery of a suspicious package on December 11 at the post office in the Port-Daniel sector of Port-Daniel-Gascons. The investigation determined that the package contained personal items and nothing dangerous. A team of explosives experts from the police force came from Quebec City to neutralize the package. The event has no connection with armed assaults and shootings that occurred in the municipality on November 24. "Only personal belongings were found in the parcel. Nothing proves a criminal intent," says Frédéric Deshaies, of the Sûreté du Québec.

A man will eventually face justice following a series of misdeeds committed on the night of January 4 in Gaspé. A 20-year-old man was arrested by the Sûreté du Québec after painting graffiti, notably at the Saint-Hubert restaurant, Motel Adams and on an Orléans Express bus. "The suspect was released after questioning and will eventually be summoned to appear in court," points out Sûreté du Québec spokesperson Frédéric Deshaies.

The lawyer of Diane Chrétien, 61, from Gaspé, and the Criminal Prosecutor's Office in Percé, are negotiating a possible settlement in a case of fraud and theft of more than \$5,000 from the Alban Aspirault grocery store in Rivière-au Renard. Diane Chrétien must also face two similar charges of fraud and theft for amounts less than \$5,000. The fraud victims in the latter case are employees of the grocery store. According to CHNC, the alleged offences occurred between January 2016 and June 2022 for the grocery store and between December 2021 and June 2022 for the employees. Diane Chrétien is scheduled to return to court on March 10.

Emergency services were called on January 8 around 6:15 p.m. in the Forillon Boulevard area in Gaspé following a road incident involving a vehicle and two occupants. The driver, a man in his thirties from the region, suffered serious injuries that are not believed to be life-threatening. As for the passenger, he suffered minor injuries. "A blood sample was taken to determine the driver's level of intoxication and see if that level of alcohol contained in his blood was over or under the legal limit. It could help us determine if it (alcohol) was a factor in the accident," explains Sûreté du Québec communication officer Frédéric Deshaies.



Gilles Gagné

Commentary

A compressed leadership race for the Liberal Party of Canada

The January 6 resignation of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is forcing the Liberal Party of Canada to hold a leadership race under less-than-ideal circumstances.

This is an understatement. The new leader of the Liberal Party of Canada will be chosen on March 9, and that person will likely be precipitated in a soon-to-be-held election, likely to take place at the end of May, although the “Let’s get an election soon” position of the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Québécois can change if their leaders think they can get something out of the new prime minister.

Typically, the Liberal Party of Canada’s leadership races takes three to four months.

At the same time, the Liberal Party minority government will have to deal with the expansionist vision of American President Donald Trump, who will take the oath on January 20 for the second time in a decade. The weeks following January 20 won’t be a picnic for the Canadian government, which needs a captain and officers because of a president who wants to bring the country to its knees.

Justin Trudeau will remain Prime Minister of Canada until March 9. His successor will not benefit from much time to deal with the Trump administration and a likely election, given that a new parliamentary session will begin on March 24 with a throne speech.

Such a throne speech usually requires the consent of the majority in the House of Commons. Based on the statements expressed before and since Mr. Trudeau’s decision to resign, the House of Commons vote might not provide that consent, which would trigger an election.

All of this suggests that Justin Trudeau planned his last year in politics poorly. His tenure should have ended at least 10 months earlier for many reasons.

He forgot the wear and tear of close to a decade at the helm of the country. It happened to his father, even if Pierre Elliott Trudeau served for 15 years as prime minister of Canada. His successor, John Turner, lost a landslide to Brian Mulroney in 1984. Mr. Mulroney failed to prepare for succession by staying close to nine years in power. He stretched his second term close to the legal limit of five years, and his successor, Kim Campbell, left with

a worn-out Progressive Conservative Party in the fall of 1993, was served the worst loss a reigning party ever experienced in the history of Canada, through saving only two ridings, country-wide!

Similarly, Jean Chrétien also stayed in power for ten years, from November 1993 to December 2003 and his successor, Paul Martin, only won a minority government, in part because the conservative forces were still not unified during the electoral campaign that led to the June 2004 election.

Stephen Harper also failed to prepare his succession. He won two minority governments in 2006 and 2008, and a majority in 2011. He tried to break the decade mark in October 2015 and lost his gamble.

Justin Trudeau had the same idea, wanting a battle against Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre this year, a battle he had no chance to win.

Mr. Trudeau favoured his own pride at the expense of his party’s future and also at the expense of the country’s economy. The goods and services tax break given over the fall for a period of two months was arguably the worst decision of his three terms, as it favoured wealthy people instead of low-income citizens. The bad decision-making behind that measure is probably worse than the impact on the government finances but it confirmed once more that the prime minister has lost most of his judgement.

The current situation in the Liberal Party could have been avoided, had he given more consideration to the future of his team than of taking care of his vanity.

Now, who will run?

The leadership candidates of the Liberal Party must officially enter the race by January 24. They are required to pay a \$350,000 nomination fee. Voters must also have a party membership card and be Canadian citizens as of January 24, in order to prevent foreign influence.

As of January 10, two men had voiced their interest in the Liberal leadership, former Member of Parliament (MP) Frank Baylis and current Nepean MP Chandra Arya. However, neither is expected to win.

Recently appointed at the helm of Finance following the resignation of Chrystia Freeland, Dominic Leblanc, a close friend of Justin Trudeau, is seen by a high number of Liberal Party MPs and partisans as the best candidate available.

Mr. Leblanc’s withdrawal from the race greatly disappoints a lot of people. He is a kind man, he has an ability to make friends, even with people from another political party, and he is not an ideologue, in the way that he favours pragmatism, something that could be useful in the coming months with Canada’s negotiations with the United States on trade tariffs.

He could probably hold his own against the pit bull manners of Pierre Poilievre. The discrepancy between their styles and Mr. Poilievre’s emptiness when he is asked to come up with solutions instead of sheer criticism could reduce the gap between the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party before the election.

It is hard at this point to assess the reasons behind Mr. Leblanc’s withdrawal. Is it his sense of statesmanship or his perception that the next Liberal Party leader will be sacrificed because the Conservative Party’s lead cannot be overturned?

Can he let himself be convinced before March 24? Will he enter the real leadership race that might follow a likely liberal defeat in the next poll?

The next leader might be perceived as a stewardship leader, someone who will sacrifice himself or herself, only to get some retribution once the Liberal Party comes back to power. Labour minister Steven McKinnon could play that stewardship leader role.

The number of current ministers reflecting on their leadership potential was significant as of January 10, from Transport minister Anita Anand to House leader Karina Gould, including Innovation, Science and Industry minister François-Philippe Champagne, who is often referred to at the Duracell rabbit, for the energy he deploys.

Former Bank of Canada governor Mark Carney is also seriously considering a leadership run. He will turn 60 in March and he must evaluate his chances of winning an election this year, although he wouldn’t be too old to come back for another election, especially if the Conservative Party gets a minority government in 2025. He is the liberal leadership candidate most feared by Pierre Poilievre because of his economic strength.

Mark Carney could also give Donald Trump a run for his money in trade talks.

For now, Chrystia Freeland’s name doesn’t appear on the list of leadership candidates. A lot of Members of Parliament won’t forgive her December 16 resignation, the move that precipitated Justin Trudeau’s decision to call it a political career, even if Ms. Freeland did the right thing.

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Obstetrics in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts: A situation that could happen elsewhere in the Gaspé

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

SAINTE-ANNE-DES-MONTS - A disagreement between the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) and two independent labour nurses has led to service disruptions and shortages in the obstetrics department of the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts hospital since December 22.

Two experienced nurses, who requested anonymity for fear of backlash, had been working at the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts hospital for two years through their respective agencies.

The CISSS provided \$120 per night to cover the costs of their accommodation. The presence of the two nurses kept the obstetrics service running. However, one nurse renting an AirBnB-type home revealed that her accommodation fees had not been paid since September 5, without having been notified of the situation.

The nurses had been staying at the same residence since December 2022. Their accommodations were cancelled and the CISSS wanted to relocate them to an apartment, one where they wouldn't be permitted pets or their spouses to stay with them, and they'd be sharing an apartment, similar to mining sector workers.



Photo: N. Sergerie

Obstetrics in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts: a situation that could happen elsewhere in the Gaspé

One nurse expressed dissatisfaction with the arrangement, stating that she did not want to live in a community "...like when I was in CEGEP."

Moreover, the CISSS adopted such a policy last fall in order to reduce costs, which reach nearly half a million dollars per month to house independent workers.

"There is something other than the situation mentioned," says Yannick Sauvé, the director of procurement and logistics for the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS, who remains cautious given the confidentiality of workers' files.

"We do not take any deci-

sions lightly. In this case, following an administrative investigation, we decided not to go ahead with what they were asking. We will take legal action to recover the overpaid amounts," says Mr. Sauvé.

The internal investigation had shown irregularities, without revealing specific details since the dispute could ultimately end up in court.

"Yes, accommodation is changing. These are specific cases. To act as we are, we had judged that there was a major problem. It is not related to the accommodation policy. It is really a specific case related to these people," he says, adding

that exceptional measures could have been applied given the situation in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. Mr. Sauvé points out that full-time positions are open to join the team.

"They chose to remain independent workers where the advantage is that we pay the entire rent. We have people who come to work here to cover all the costs. It's a question of fairness," says the manager.

The Quebec government has granted a deadline until October 2026 to free the Gaspé network from independent workers.

In addition to this particular situation in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS indicated that it was using 400,000 hours of work by independent workers to ensure continuity of care.

A situation similar to that experienced in Haute-Gaspésie could arise in other establishments in the Gaspé Peninsula. "We are not here to put spokes in the wheels, but we have to think that it is \$500,000 per

month that we will save if we have our people full-time. \$500,000 per month is care for the population. We do not do this lightly. We do it on a case-by-case basis because we do not want to cut off access to care," says Mr. Sauvé.

When questioned, Gaspé Member of the National Assembly Stéphane Sainte-Croix preferred not to comment on this specific case.

However, he remains concerned about the eight service disruptions or interruptions in 2024. "I am very concerned. We are never reassured in front of our citizens during a service disruption. There is a particular situation for the repetition of service disruptions. We must question ourselves. We will try to understand the situation and address it to find a way out," says Mr. Sainte-Croix. The obstetrics department in

Sainte-Anne-des-Monts relies entirely on independent labour to remain operational, requiring six nurses to ensure optimal service.

Gaspé Peninsula CISSS needs to reduce 160,000 working hours

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - The Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) is considering how to respond to the request to reduce hours worked by 3% in order to make up for part of Santé Québec's shortfall.

The organization calculates that this request represents 160,000 working hours, equivalent to 100 full-time positions.

However, for the current year, the use of independent labour to maintain services alone represents 400,000 working hours and costs between \$25 million and \$30 million.

In an email, the CISSS in-

dicated that it is continuing its review of how to reorganize services to reduce hours worked, with the intention to prioritize a reduction in independent labour.

This could ultimately result in a reduction in hours worked, without reducing the number of positions as is happening in other regions of Quebec.

The review also involves maintaining a sufficient number of employees to provide services.

Among other measures, a moratorium is underway on the posting of administrative positions which will lead to a reduction in hours worked.

In addition, discussions are held every week with Santé Québec on the evolution of the financial situation and on the

directions to take.

The Gaspé Peninsula CISSS must recover \$40 million by March 31 to meet the budgetary restraints requested by Quebec, which is the equivalent of a month and a half of activities.

The President and CEO of the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS, Martin Pelletier, has already indicated that it was impossible to achieve this objective in the short time frame set out by the Quebec government.

"I'll tell you right away. It won't be \$40 million. It will be what we are able to do. Forty million dollars in five months would take drastic measures. We will not do that," the leader said at the organization's last board meeting at the end of November.

New services offered by the region's Alzheimer's Society

Gilles Gagné

January being Alzheimer's Awareness Month, the Société Alzheimer Gaspésie/Îles-de-la-Madeleine (SAGÎM) has partnered with the Fédération québécoise des Sociétés Alzheimer (FQSA) to convey an essential message: "Alzheimer's disease: The sooner you know, the better." The goal of this campaign is to raise public awareness of the importance of acting as soon as the first signs of Alzheimer's disease and other neurocognitive disorders appear. Up to 50% of people living with a neurocognitive disorder are diagnosed at an advanced stage of the disease, depriving them of accessible support from the onset of the disease. Common signs include difficulty retaining new information, confusion about time or space and objects lost in unusual places: these signs can reveal the beginnings of the disease. Seeing a doctor quickly can make all the difference.

SAGÎM is pleased to offer a brand new training course specially designed for caregivers (family, spouse, friend, neighbours) who accompany a person living with a cognitive disorder. The training course "Learn to help without forgetting yourself" provides knowledge and tools to support them throughout their journey. It will be offered in person and virtually throughout Gaspésie and the Islands.



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Historical site gets a boat built locally 62 years ago

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE - The Paspébiac National Historic Site recently made an important step in its project to build a reception pavilion by repatriating the Marie Thérèse, the boat that will be on display in its future building.

The Marie-Thérèse is an authentic, traditional cod-fishing barge. While at the time, hundreds of them could be found on the Gaspé coast, today this type of boat is increasingly rare, if not practically extinct.

Inspired by the American whaler, the barge is a typical Gaspé boat that appeared towards the end of the 18th century. Pointed at both ends and clinker-planked, it is a schooner that generally has two masts and three sails. It is also fully decked, making it a sailboat capable of going fishing on the high seas.

The Marie-Thérèse, measuring 40 feet in length by 12 feet in beam, was built in Paspébiac in 1962 by René Chapados and his brother-in-



Photo: Courtesy of Louise Cyr

The Marie-Thérèse arrived on a flatbed truck on November 21 in New Carlisle, where it was placed in storage.

law Aldéric Delarosbil. For the record, the boat is named Marie-Thérèse in connection with the daughter of René Chapados.

“For a while, we were not sure about the year the boat was built. It was sorted out upon the arrival of the Marie-Thérèse. Family members

drawed some conclusions based on events that took place during the construction of the boat. Thérèse Chapados, whose name was taken for the boat, and Robert, the son of Aldéric Delarosbil, were present when the boat arrived and was put in storage,” explains Louise Cyr, director general

of the Paspébiac National Historic Site.

Kept since 1978 at the Atlantic Fisheries Museum in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, the Marie-Thérèse represents an inestimable value for the region, adds Ms. Cyr.

“It is in an exceptional state of preservation, the mu-

seum restorers having taken care to preserve its smallest construction details. They just didn’t have enough room to keep it in Lunenburg,” adds Louise Cyr.

The boat was transported by truck from Lunenburg to New Carlisle, where it arrived on November 21. It is kept in a New Carlisle storage building and will eventually be integrated into the Paspébiac National Historic Site when the reception pavilion is built. It is an \$8.5 million project that will be conducted in two phases. The first phase will require an investment of \$4 million. Over the fall, the community had amassed a little over \$200,000 of its goal of \$300,000 through a fundraiser that was initiated in 2022. The board of the Paspébiac National Historic Site expects to reach that \$300,000 target by 2025.

Including the donations from philanthropic organizations and large firms, the community share of the entire \$8.5 million project is expected to total \$1 million.

SAINTE-CROIX:

▶ Cont'd from page 2

We are not disconnected from the feelings of the citizens. We have two arenas in Gaspé, one of which is at the end of its life. We are in favour of the project. The idea is to support the municipality. We are confident,” he said, considering \$1.5 billion is on the table over 10 years.

A first call for \$300 million was made in 2023 with requirements of \$2.7 billion. “This is a project that has significant value. We are talking about an ice rink and a project that could be reviewed and corrected. We will let the town do its thinking. We have a serious and well-conceived project. It remains to be seen how we will approach the rest of things. I am not here to judge the value of the project. We have budgetary and time considerations. We have an arena in Gaspé. There are elements to reconsider. The mayor is aware of the reality and we will see how the town will align its project. But we are faced with an interesting and necessary project,” continued the MNA. For the future of Villa James, the transfer of ownership to SÉPAQ is not yet

complete and should be announced in the next budget.

The programming for the Villa has not yet been defined. “We would like there to be a project for the next summer season, but we will take the time it takes. We are confident for the future. It remains to be defined who will be the day-to-day operator. That is up to them and these discussions are ongoing. I do not see any problem in the development,” says the MNA for Gaspé.

On wind power, Mr. Sainte-Croix is aware of the difficulties encountered in particular by the blade manufacturer LM Wind Power of Gaspé.

“It is a major concern. We have unique know-how and we hope that this episode will be behind us. It is an important issue. We will hope that the sun will shine in the future,” mentions the MNA while the manufacturer has been in the hot seat in the United States for major manufacturing defects on the 107-metre blades.

Mr. Sainte-Croix points out that Quebec cannot impose strict standards in calls for tenders in order to avoid defaulting on international trade agreements.

However, Quebec could

somehow circumvent the rules to give Quebec companies a chance. “We won’t be able to do things differently. We have to respect the rules of the game. There has always been a certain form of added value in the scoring of calls for tenders on regional or Quebec content. From a Quebec perspective, we will stay attuned regarding Quebec content. In terms of obligation ‘no’, in terms of promoting, ‘yes’,” says the elected official.

On cellular coverage, \$10 million is planned to add coverage in the Mont Albert sector in Parc de la Gaspésie and on the section of Route 198 between Murdochville and Gaspé. With the Mines Gaspé revival project in Murdochville, the planning for upgrading the various infrastructures to support the restart of the copper mine around 2030 has begun.

“We will have an important announcement in Murdochville. When we talk about pooling expertise, issues, and how we will address them, in terms of roads, ports, railways, workforce, and municipal infrastructures to support the development of the future mining deposit, these are issues to be addressed in the

coming months and years. I dare to believe that we will soon have a list of issues and ways to address them,” notes Mr. Sainte-Croix.

The protection of the caribou is also an important element for the coming months. Work meetings have been held in recent weeks with elected officials from Haute-Gaspésie and the authorities of the various ministries involved.

“This is a sensitive, complex and important issue. This

is a major concern as our community faces economic challenges. Yes to protecting the animal, but there is also the economic protection of the Haute-Gaspésie. We are being very sensitive,” the MNA mentions.

“The idea is to succeed in promoting the drafting of a regulation that satisfies the stakeholders in terms of the economy, access to the territory and obviously protection of the caribou,” he concluded.

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Water and sewer project finally settled in Gascons

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PORT-DANIEL-GASCONS: - After being on the table for two decades, the water and sewer project in the Gascons district of Port-Daniel-Gascons has finally received authorization from Quebec to begin the tendering process for the work.

"This is my fourth term as mayor of the municipality. In other words, I have been working on the water and sewer files in the Gascons sector for 16 years. As soon as the holidays are over, we will launch the tendering process," says Mayor Henri Grenier.

In the long term, 100% of

the population will be served by the water system and 75% will be served by the sewer network.

It was an obstacle course since finding the water to supply the water system was complicated. "Every time we did tests, it was never conclusive enough," says the elected official.

In 2009, a water source was found, but further studies in 2014 revealed that it could not provide sufficient water.

The municipality has invested several million dollars into water research.

The mayor would have liked to extend the Port-Daniel water system, but the government of Quebec preferred

Chandler, namely the Newport district, due to lower costs.

A first memorandum of understanding was concluded in 2018 for the work to be carried out, but costs have since skyrocketed.

"The pandemic hit and the cost of living increased. The price of materials doubled. We had to make new government representations to get the project accepted. We were listened to and our provincial MNA (Member of the National Assembly) worked hard on the file," emphasizes Mr. Grenier. In total, the Quebec government will subsidize 95% of the water supply, regardless of the bill, and a fixed portion of the sewers network costs, which

could represent 85% of a \$40 million project.

The call for tenders will be launched in January. The opening of proposals will take place in late February or early March. The mayor hopes construction will begin next summer, with the work expected to last two years.

Of the 170 easements required, 60 have been completed. "Things are going very well. People are cooperating. 80% of people consume non-potable water. It was a public health issue and it was a big point in the file," notes the mayor.

Once the work is done, the sector could experience potential for residential develop-

ment.

"In Port-Daniel, there is a water supply and sewer network, but construction is limited. In Gascons, with the water and sewer service, it's a good service to have when in the summer, there was a water shortage," says the mayor.

Mr. Grenier does not want to make it a political legacy. "I will remain humble, but I can tell you one thing: I worked hard. I believed in it. Perseverance pays off. I am very happy to have concluded this file for the people of Gascons," says the mayor.

He plans to seek a fifth term to oversee construction. "I want to see it through to the end," concludes the mayor.

Diane Lebouthillier silent on Justin Trudeau's announced departure

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - The Liberal Member of Parliament (MP) for the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands, Diane Lebouthillier, is refusing to comment on the decision of her leader, Justin Trudeau, to resign as Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Party.

In a press briefing on January 6 in Ottawa, the resigning leader announced that his departure would take effect once a successor is chosen.

Additionally, the Parliament of Canada has been prorogued until March 24, which generally implies the presentation of a Speech from the Throne, to which a vote of confidence is attached. This could lead to elections in the spring. When asked to comment, the constituency office of the Member of Parliament and Minister indicated that Ms. Lebouthillier would not provide a response to Mr. Trudeau's press briefing, which took place less than an hour after the announcement.

Justin Trudeau will have been in power for almost 10 years. During his tenure, he visited the Gaspé Peninsula on three occasions. The first was in 2017 when he went to Forillon Park and Percé without holding a formal press conference. In an impromptu press briefing in Percé, he addressed the issue of supply management in the new NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and the employment insurance reform. He also met with the mayors of



Photo: N. Sergerie

Diane Lebouthillier accompanied the resigning Liberal leader and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in 2022 to New Richmond.

Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts.

In 2021, the Prime Minister participated in the announcement of the \$170 million expansion of the LM Wind Power plant in Gaspé, which included \$25 million from Ottawa to manufacture 107-metre blades for the North American

market.

In 2022, he visited the Bay of Chaleur to tour Ferme Bourdages Tradition and two industrial companies in New Richmond.

On all these visits, he was accompanied by Member of Parliament Diane Lebouthillier.

Annual closure of shellfish harvesting

Gilles Gagné

As is customary every winter, shellfish harvesting has been prohibited since January 1 on the North Shore, the Gaspé Peninsula, the Lower St. Lawrence and in the Magdalen Islands, under the Atlantic Fishery Regulations. The closure of all shellfish harvesting will remain in effect from January 1 to March 1, 2025, for the North Shore, Gaspé Peninsula and Lower St. Lawrence areas. In the Magdalen Islands, the closure is in effect from January 1 to 15, 2025, except for soft-shell clams and oysters, for which harvesting remains prohibited until March 1, 2025. For more information on shellfish harvesting and open and closed harvest areas, people can consult the Fisheries and Oceans website at www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/CheckBeforeYouHarvest.



Photo: N. Sergerie

Han Logement project in Chandler will have eight additional units, according to the mayor.

More housing units in Chandler than originally anticipated

Nelson Sergerie

CHANDLER - The Han Logement project initially consisted of the construction of 48 housing units, but following discussions between stakeholders, the number of units will increase to 56, according to Chandler mayor Gilles Daraïche.

As a result, seven buildings with eight units each will be constructed. "We signed the land donation. We know that at one point, there was a bit of contamination, but now that's behind us. We're now talking about 56 housing units. The financing for a good portion of these units is already attached. They want to do everything at the same time. They will start with 48 and do the rest fairly quickly," Mr. Daraïche mentioned.

Construction is set to begin in March or April, with the housing units to be located on rue des Micmacs. While the mayor cannot confirm the overall investment, he estimates the total cost could be around \$18 million based on the projects underway in Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts.

"There are still small projects starting in Chandler all over the place. We are talking about three or four housing units. We will be approaching some 75 apartments in the next year," estimates Mr. Daraïche.

Trump Tariffs: The importance of Quebec content in developing the industry

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON – The threat of imposing a 25% tariff on Canadian goods imported into the United States is an additional argument for equipping Quebec with a policy to ensure a good share of Quebec content for components of future wind farms.

Frédéric Côté, director general of Nergica, a renewable energy research and development centre based in Gaspé, shared his concerns, a few weeks before the possible imposition of customs tariffs, as suggested on November 26 by the President-elect of the United States, Donald Trump.

On May 30, Hydro-Québec announced an energy plan aimed at equipping the province with wind farms with a total capacity of 10,000 megawatts (MW) by 2035. Since installing each megawatt generally requires an investment of about \$3 million, it will take about \$30 billion to build these wind



Photo: Nergica

Nergica director Frédéric Côté specifies that the government has every interest in encouraging the production of components in Quebec.

farms.

However, the Coalition avenir Québec (CAQ) government and Hydro-Québec have not accompanied this strategy with a minimum content requirement from manufacturers operating in the targeted territory. For Frédéric Côté, this Quebec content must be ensured.

“That’s the message we’ve always been sending. It takes an industrial strategy around our energy strategy. Does that involve a percentage of content? We don’t know if that applies. Hydro-Québec’s strategy offers tremendous



Some exporters of wind components, such as LM Wind Power, have active contracts with American firms and fear the imposition of tariffs by the upcoming Trump government.

Photo: G. Gagné

potential. We see it in construction, where Hydro-Québec ensures that there will be enough workers to build these wind farms. We also want to see it in (the manufacturing) industry,” says the director of Nergica.

Frédéric Côté believes that the percentage of Quebec content “Would be a good idea, yes (but), we need to look at other ways,” that could have a beneficial effect on the Quebec component manufacturing and service sector for energy producers.

“They (Hydro-Québec managers) can offer support, training, or it can come from a financing strategy, for example, from Investissement Québec. We see it as Hydro-Québec meets its (modernization) needs in its hydroelectric power plants. The important thing is to ensure that we are “aggressive” to the extent that what we are about to deploy, on an international scale, is major. And that is enough to allow us to have expectations. Predictability and volume are the keys to development,” analyzes Mr. Côté.

Until recently, wind turbine component manufacturers and Quebec wind farm construction contractors could not count on this predictability, much less on volume. In 2022-2023, Quebec emerged from a six-year period during which the development of these farms was reduced to almost nothing.

“There, we have predictability, with a horizon of 2035, and we have volume with 10,000 MW of new projects. In addition, there are 4,000 MW of re-equipment to be planned for existing wind farms, which are gradually reaching their renewal deadline,” emphasizes Frédéric

Côté.

He points out that by adding certain private projects, such as that of the firm Rio Tinto, between 15,000 and 16,000 MW of wind-generated electricity will be under development or being modernized over the next decade in Quebec.

Variable impact of the slump

The six-year slump without any announcements of a new wind project has had variable effects on the Quebec component production cluster.

Enercon’s tower production plant in Matane closed its doors, and the Marmen plant, also in Matane, saw its activities greatly reduced between 2021 and 2024, before a recovery since the summer.

In Gaspé, the LM Wind Power plant experienced considerable growth between 2016 and 2024, mainly through an enormous export contract to the southern United States, followed by contracts to supply giant blades for offshore wind farms on the American East Coast.

However, this offshore development did not produce the expected results, and LM resumed its exports to the southern United States by equipping land-based wind farms. These contracts would provide work for the Gaspé plant and its 450 employees for a period of 18 months. GE (General Electric, which controls LM Wind Power) remains discreet in this regard.

As for Marmen, a company headquartered in Mauricie, the slack period from 2016 to 2022 and American protectionism convinced its management to set up a

tower manufacturing plant in the United States, in North Dakota.

There are currently only two wind turbine blade manufacturing plants in North America, and LM owns both, the other being located in South Dakota.

Doesn’t this scarcity guarantee work for the LM plant in Gaspé, in a context of supply for Quebec wind farms of at least 10,000 MW by 2035?

“It can benefit us, but we see that projects can be done even if the blade does not come from Quebec. We have seen projects here carried out with blades from Europe. The competition is global,” says Frédéric Côté.

And Donald Trump in all this?

The wind industry is worried about the tariffs that Donald Trump is threatening to impose the day after he is sworn in on January 20, 2025.

“With what is happening in the United States, in general, the entire Canadian economy, including the wind sector, is holding its breath. We can see that this is not strictly a trade issue. The president-elect wants to negotiate issues other than trade. However, there is still an underlying energy transition and it is a vector of development. It is the way to make this transition that requires us to be attentive. Plans are changing. There is still a significant demand in Canada. Until recently, there was a concern: will the United States siphon off our production capacity? We must also recognize that states have a say in the energy transition. It is not all that comes from the American federal government (in terms of decisions). The American

economy needs electricity and the Canadian economy also needs electricity. Beyond GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions, the “renewable” component is competitive in terms of cost,” explains Frédéric Côté.

Several economists agree that a systematic imposition of 25% tariffs on goods imported by Americans would be a major factor in inflation in the United States, even as Donald Trump presents himself as an ace in the fight against rising prices.

“We see it in the last Trump term, tariffs were placed on aluminum and American aluminum can manufacturers spoke out against this measure. The tariffs were cancelled. We must see all this in a framework of negotiations and interlocutors who play with the balance of power when they talk about their economic orientations. We will be able to seek agreements that can be made to the benefit of all. There will be turbulence. We see a desire to bring manufacturing production closer, in the wake of the pandemic. We are witnessing a desire for ‘re-industrialization’. Mr. Trump’s aim is to target China a lot. (...) It’s up to us as partners to assert our ability to make it clear that we are important,” adds the director of Nergica.

Although wind turbine towers and blades are regularly discussed in the talks on components, Quebec has diversified its skills in wind-generated energy, and it has well-established firms in several disciplines. For example, there is Pesca, for environmental impact studies, Technostrobe, for aerial light beacons to locate wind turbine towers at night, and the Ohmega Group, which monitors from Gaspé the parameters of wind farms in California and Hawaii.

“The idea is really to see how to diversify. In Quebec, we still experienced a six-year period without domestic demand. We have seen good diversification despite that. What is happening to us is that the election of Donald Trump is bringing us a change, but a change that is not clear. We must see how to adapt a business strategy when development is uncertain. Uncertainty is never good for business,” concludes Frédéric Côté.

Carleton-sur-Mer Golf Club gets new irrigation system

NELSON SERGERIE

CARLETON-SUR-MER: - The town of Carleton-sur-Mer is investing \$410,000 to redo the irrigation of the part of its golf course overlooking the Bay of Chaleur.

The project has been on the table for several years, "The system was really at the end of its life. It is critical to water the greens, especially. Without watering, we lose the greens, and that is a big issue," notes Mayor of Carleton-Sur-Mer, Mathieu Lapointe.

The work will be done in the spring, and the golf course's activities will not be disrupted. "The chosen company will be able to do the holes one at a time. The golf course will be able to stay open, but there will still be a hole on the bay side closed during the work," ex-

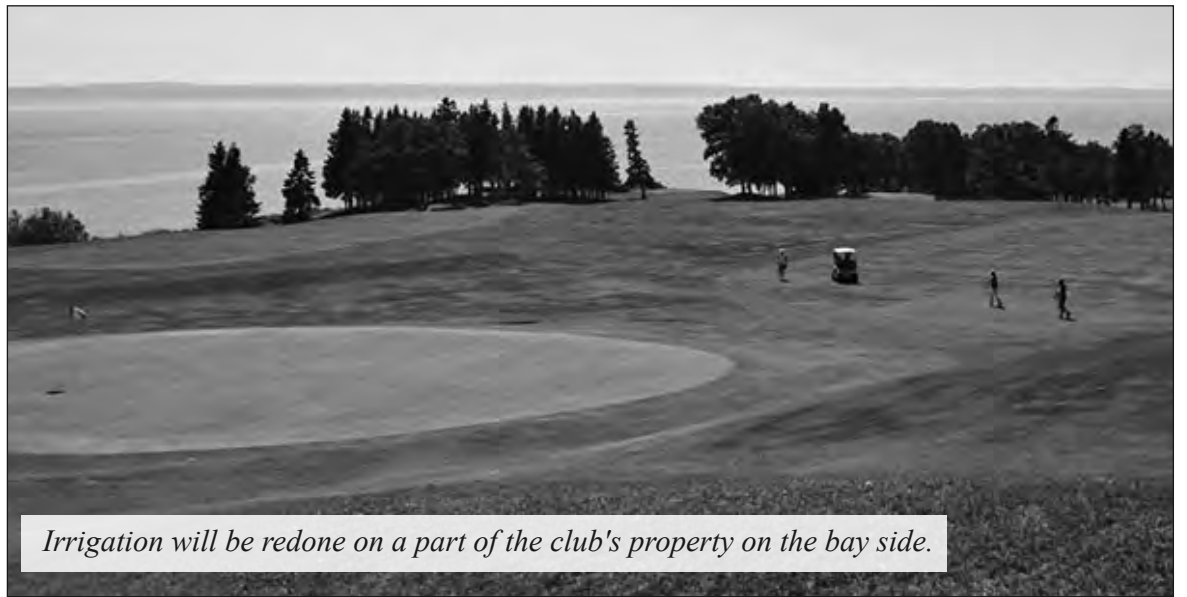
plains the mayor.

The project includes changing the pipes, and the system will be fully automated and controlled remotely. Once this work is complete, the Club's renovations will be finished. A few years ago, \$600,000 was invested in the chalet, and the reception and the boutique were relocated.

"There are still small elements. There are always improvements to be made to the maintenance equipment, but with irrigation, the course is really levelled for the coming years. We don't see any major investments coming," says Mr. Lapointe.

Since the golf course is located near the bay, erosion could cause some problems in the medium term.

"There is a hole that we are monitoring. We asked for an



Irrigation will be redone on a part of the club's property on the bay side.

Photo: Facebook, Carleton-sur-Mer Golf Club

expert to do an assessment to see if there are any corrections to be made to make this hole

safer or if it needs to be moved. It's the tee that is threatened. These are lower-cost works

than a green. It is more realistic as works", maintains the mayor.

Survey indicates some anglos hesitant to speak English in public

Cynthia Dow

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES: - In late December 2024, Statistics Canada released a report on a survey of Official Language Minority communities across the country, conducted in 2022. The report indicates that young anglophone Quebecers are once again considering leaving the province, and some feel discriminated against in shops, banks and the workplace.

The report, entitled The Situation of English-speaking population in Quebec and French-speaking populations in Canada Outside Quebec, is the first detailed look at the lives of Official Language Minorities (OLM) since 2006. It was conducted with funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, which provides financial support programs to anglophone community groups in Quebec and francophone community groups outside the province.

Here are some of the results of the survey:

In 2022, 51% of children in a minority situation in Quebec attended French-language daycare, 37% went to bilingual daycare, and 12% to English-language daycare. Some 66% of anglophone parents intended to enroll their children in an English-language elementary or secondary school.

The vast majority (89%) of adults who learned English in childhood spoke English most often at home. In Quebec, 80% of English-speaking adults used English daily or a few times a week

in the public sphere outside of work with people other than family or friends. This proportion was higher in the Montréal area (83%) than in the rest of Quebec (69%).

Across the country, approximately one-quarter (27%) of adults in the OLM population had experienced a situation of linguistic insecurity over the previous five years—in other words, a situation in which they hesitated to use the minority official language. This proportion was slightly higher in Quebec (31%) than in Canada outside Quebec (24%). And one in four adults in the OLM population (25%) consider they were discriminated against or treated unfairly based on their use of the minority official language in the five years preceding the survey. This proportion was higher in Quebec (36%) than in Canada outside Quebec (13%).

Experiences perceived as linguistic discrimination occurred in a variety of contexts. For example, among English-speaking adults in Quebec, more than half (57%) had such experiences in a number of contexts, the most common being personal business, such as banking or shopping (68%), followed by work (36%) and consulting a medical professional (30%).

The data show that 18% of English-speaking adults considered that the presence of English in their municipality had increased over the 10 years preceding the survey, while two in five adults felt that it had remained the same (41%) or decreased (41%).

In 2022, 38% of anglophone children used English only or used it more than French when participating in recreational activities or organized sports, while 40% used French only or used it more than English. More than half of the children (61%) used both English and French when participating in these activities.

Among English-speaking adults who felt it was important to receive health care or services in English, 52% always or often received these services in English in their community, 41% sometimes or rarely did, and 7% never received these services in English.

The proportions of English-speaking adults who had always or often been able to use English with governments in the two years preceding the survey were 73% at the federal, 45% at the provincial level or 48% at the municipal level. These proportions were similar to 2006, except for the federal level where a decrease was observed from 78% in 2006.

Overall, the proportion of English-speaking adults in Quebec planning to move out of the province was slightly higher in 2022 (14%) than in 2006 (11%). The percentage of English-speaking youth aged 18 to 24 planning on moving out of the province was much higher at 28%.

Should you wish to consult the survey yourself, you can find the report at <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2024008-eng.htm>



Photo: N. Sergerie

The construction site has been quiet for several weeks.

Demolition work on the former MTQ in Gaspé to resume

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - Following several weeks of standstill, the resumption of the demolition work on the former service centre of the Quebec Ministry of Transport (MTQ) in downtown Gaspé is scheduled for the coming weeks.

The Société québécoise des infrastructures (SQI) confirmed in an email that additional analyses are underway to properly guide the continuation of the demolition work.

Despite this delay, there will be no impact on the schedule for the decontamination work, which remains slated for 2025.

The buildings are expected to be deconstructed in the coming weeks. Adjustments will be made, to the schedule for dismantling the concrete foundations, based on snow accumulations.

The demolition of the buildings that began in October was delayed following an investigation by the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST).

On October 18, the CNESST issued a correction notice to the project manager of the site so that the latter would modify its demolition procedure to take into account all the risks associated with this type of work in relation to the buildings in place and the materials found there.

The centre, built in the 1950s, contains lead and asbestos. Démolition des rivières de Lévis had obtained the contract following a public call for tenders at a cost of \$876,000.

The agreement provided for work to begin at the end of September and was originally scheduled to last 12 weeks.

A new excavator was delivered to the site on January 7, which suggests that work will resume imminently.

Announcements



Obituary



MAHAN: Lorne

July 13, 1954 - December 26, 2024

Passed away suddenly at the age of 70 and six months.

He was predeceased by parents Bert Mahan and Françoise Proulx. He leaves to mourn his wife of 52 years Mary Savage, father to Nancy and Garry (Marie-Eve), two grandsons Malik and William, sister Linda (Jeannot) godchild Liann (Kevin) and cousin June. Several brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces as well as many relatives and friends.

Lorne was a hard worker, he was an ambulance technician, paramedic, and owner of Service ambulance Percé for 50 years.

He will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.

The family received condolences on Saturday, January 11, 2025, from 12 to 1:55 p.m. at the St-Michel church in Percé, and the funeral was at 2 p.m.

Gone but not forgotten. He will be forever in our hearts.



In Memory



GOYETTE: Eric

In loving memory, 1984 - 2012.

Right from the time we lost you,

Life hasn't been the same.

We wish we had another chance,

To see your smile again.

The sun still rises with each dawn,

Night still follows day.

But there's always something missing,

Ever since you went away.

The tide comes in, the tide goes out,

The sands of time pass by.

But thought of you will never fade.

We hope you are peaceful wherever you are,

Life has surely lost it's sparkle the world often feels

Blue, but what gives us strength,

And hope is the precious memory of you.

Love Mom, Jean, Patrick, Emilie, Noemie and Nelly.

MANN: Sheila Sullivan

In loving memory of a loving wife, mother and grandmother.

There's a face before us,

And a voice we love to hear.

We miss your smile, we miss your laughter,

We miss your caring heart.

But most of all, we miss you.

Always in our thoughts Ken, Lori, Tanya, Mackenzie, Kaitlin and Chris.

SIMON: Elson (Sonny)

In loving memory of a dear husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather who passed away on January 12, 1983.

No matter how our lives may change,

Or whatever we may do.

We will never forget those precious times,

The ones we spent with you.

We hold you close within our hearts,

And there you shall remain.

To walk with us throughout our lives,

Until we meet again.

Loved and sadly missed by wife Merle and family.

WYLIE: ARNOLD

In loving memory of our dear daddy.

Broken chain

We were saddened on that morning,

That God called your name.

In life we loved you dearly,

In death we do the same.

It broke our hearts to lose you,

You did not go alone;

For part of us went with you,

The day God called you home.

Our family chain is broken,

And nothing seems the same.

But as God calls us one by one,

The chain will link again.

Greatly loved, and deeply missed by your family.

Thank You



On behalf of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 64 New Carlisle, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to Michael Flowers for his generous donation of a heat pump, along with its installation in our basement.

Your kindness and support have made a significant difference, and we are truly grateful for your contribution. This thoughtful gift will help us ensure a comfortable and welcoming environment for all our members and guests. Thank you once again, Michael, for your generosity and for making a positive impact on our community!



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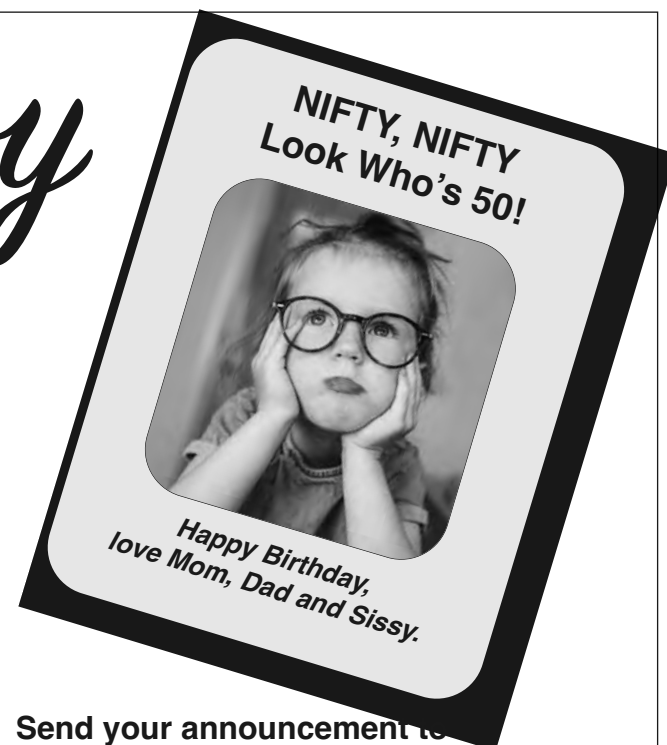
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NEW CARLISLE:
Household Contents Sale. Monday, January 13 until Saturday, January 18 (noon to 6 p.m.). The Estate of Elaine Annett - 183 Gerard D. Levesque. All contents must sell. Cash only.

Coast Round Up

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: 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.

NEW CARLISLE:
New Carlisle Legion
Every Monday: From January 20 to February 17, a five-week cribbage tournament will be held starting at 7 p.m. \$10 one time registration and \$3 per player per night, bring a partner.
Wednesdays: Shuffle board beginning at 4 p.m. Line Dancing beginning at 7:30 p.m. for \$7.
Thursdays: Darts beginning at 7 p.m. for \$10.
Saturdays: Pool beginning at 8 p.m. \$1 per game.
February 4: General meeting at 6 p.m. at 1 Mount Sorrel, New Carlisle.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:
50+ Club
Tuesdays: Weekly bingo every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. \$10 for three cards. Extra cards are \$1 each
February 15: The Cascapedia 50+ club presents

Nash Stanley beginning at 8 p.m., \$20 per ticket. Tickets sales are limited so get yours now by contacting Kim Bater at 418-999-0879 or Tammy Campbell at 418-391-2060.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:
Book Room
Please be advised that the book room is open. Anyone who needs assistance can contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896

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2 p.m. Service

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January 19
10 a.m. Service

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Shigawake
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