

The Gaspé Spec

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The Gaspé Coast's only English paper needs your help

ELAINE SEXTON

As we are approaching our 50th anniversary, our financial situation, though improved from the previous year, has the Sea-Coast Publications Inc. board of directors, and our dedicated staff questioning the future of SPEC

Several issues brought us to this point. The cost of printing, which includes paying for the delivery to the office, the price of postage, the lack of advertising, and sadly, the loss of some of our loyal readers who have since passed on, have thus resulted in a decrease in subscription numbers.

On a positive note, Meaghan, our sales intern, has certainly been working extremely hard to get new clients and asking former companies and small businesses to come back on board.

The rest of our hard-working staff certainly work hard, often seven days a week, to put together an informative and engaging paper every week.

This situation we are in did not begin yesterday. It's been decades that we have been finding ways to get new readers, new subscribers and advertisers. It is ironic to say that March 13, 2020, the beginning of COVID, gave us a reprieve of sorts because of the provincial and federal advertisements that I'm sure many of you remember reading.

We are certainly not giving up hope, as a Revitalization Committee along with our board members, Penny and Gilles, has been established to discuss how to get more income and more importantly to get new readers.

There's an expression, "We don't know what we are missing until it is gone" and this is the perfect example.

You may be wondering what you can do to help. The most important thing is to keep reading, keep getting your subscriptions, or pick up your issue at your local businesses

Tell a friend to subscribe



and say, "I'm not sharing mine this week." A funny thing to say I know, but that simple gesture may get us quite a few more readers.

We often ask people to send in pictures, and short articles about their schools, sporting activities and family events and we're asking once again. Unfortunately, we do not have enough reporters to cover everything that happens, and we know we are a busy little coast, so we are asking you our dear readers, members of the community, school staff, and

parents to publish your child's accomplishments, spread the local events happening in your small towns.

We know that people want local news. Who better to provide that than the people living here?

The more context like this the more people will buy the paper, and hopefully they will get a subscription and advertisers will see there is a good reason to be in our paper.

To our francophone readers, and we know we have many, spread the word that there is a

paper that is published weekly, that is filled with information on local governments, events and fun things like the horoscope, up-and-coming activities, puzzles, and many other topics.

Please donate today to help us continue to publish SPEC regularly. We need your help. Ways you can donate:

- Add an amount when you renew
- Mail or drop off a cheque (payable to The Gaspé Spec).
- Use your debit or credit card directly at the SPEC office.

- Call the office 418-752-5400 and make a donation by credit card.

- Complete the attached form and mail it.

As an added bonus we will soon be recognized as a charitable organization. Several years ago when SPEC was struggling, the outreach from all of you was so important and so appreciated.

We know this is a lot of information that many of you did not expect to read today. We will be as transparent as possible to tell you our ideas as we move forward, knowing that we, the board, and most importantly the entire staff, are committed to keeping this magnificent paper going and not becoming an unfortunate statistic and closing our doors as many English papers had to do.

We are pondering ideas such as going to a biweekly format, changing the size of the newspaper and reaching out to other local organizations asking them to up their advertising in SPEC. If you have ideas or comments, please contact SPEC at 418-752-5400 or specs@globetrotter.net. Keep the faith.

On behalf of the board, staff and volunteers, we thank you for your continued support. Elaine Sexton, President

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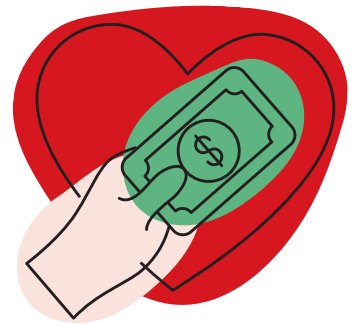
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Prison guards: Third demonstration in 17 months

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – About 30 prison guards working for the New Carlisle detention centre held a two-hour demonstration on January 28, calling for better working conditions and, above all a decrease in compulsory overtime hours.

Their colleagues in Percé demonstrated for the same purpose two days later. In fact, correctional service officers held demonstrations across Quebec during those two days, as they denounced the fact that their collective agreement expired in April 2023, 22 months ago.

In New Carlisle, the demonstration was held in front of the courthouse and the prison. The purpose of that action was to accelerate negotiations with the Quebec Department of Public Security and its minister, François Bonnardel.

Members of the SAPSCQ-CSN (Syndicat des agents de la paix en services correctionnels du Québec, or peace officers working in Quebec prisons, affiliated to the CSN union) slightly slowed down traffic and attracted the attention of motorists by using coloured smoke bombs, waving rattles, bells and flags during the demonstration.

Besides compulsory overtime hours, vacation ratios and work schedules are the points that are making negotiations drag over such a long period. Demonstrators showed many signs against compulsory overtime.

“We are here to support our colleagues at the negotiation table since our collective agreement expired in April 2023. The national union and



Photos: G. Gagné

About 30 prison guards took part in the demonstration, slowing traffic somewhat. The number of demonstrators varied throughout the day as night shift workers joined after their shifts and others left to begin their shifts.

the employer have the same observation: we have a staff shortage problem. This leads to a lot of mandatory overtime requisitions among correctional officers, but the solutions proposed by our national union are not accepted by the employer,” explains Noémie Boudreau, president of the local section of the organization.

She also pointed out that in 2024, the 45 officers of the New Carlisle detention centre accumulated about 4,200 hours of mandatory overtime “Just in January, we have accumulated 610 hours of overtime. Some agents have been forced to take mandatory overtime four times a week. That’s a lot. It complicates a family life and our members are tired,” adds Ms. Boudreau.

At the current rate, about 7,200 hours of compulsory

overtime could be racked up in 2025.

The January 28 demonstration was the third one in 17 months, considering the first one was held on September 12, 2023, and the second one on February 7, 2024. The first two events were also related to the state of the New Carlisle prison, considered by peace officers to present safety hazards for the staff and the inmates.

A matter of offering attractive jobs

In a press release sent to the media the day before the Quebec-wide demonstrations, Mathieu Lavoie, national president of SAPSCQ-CSN, reiterates the importance of finding lasting solutions to the problems caused by mandatory requisitions. Mathieu Lavoie puts a particular emphasis on the importance of finding ways to better support employees who have to deal with psychological health issues.

“For the moment, the employer's offers are attacking our working conditions head-on, which is further distancing (the employer) from its desire to be an employer of choice, competitive and attractive, who keeps correctional agents employed. We have proposed several solutions in this regard and we are more convinced than ever that it is by improving our working conditions, including our salaries, that the employer will achieve its objectives,” writes Mr. Lavoie, National President of the Union of Peace Officers

members want.

Noémie Boudreau specifies that the employer is demanding greater flexibility in terms of employee schedules, which is not what the union members want.

“The situation is already difficult for New Carlisle correctional officers to bear,” she says.

The union representative also deplores the employer's inability to hire new workers to give existing correctional agents a break. According to her observations, five correctional service officer positions are currently vacant at the New Carlisle detention centre.

Noémie Boudreau also underlines that it is important to raise public awareness about the working conditions of those who labour inside the prison walls since these places are very inaccessible to the public.

“It is not only our safety that is at stake, it is also the inmates’ condition that must be protected,” she concludes.

Snow wanted

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - While 26.8 centimetres of snow fell on Gaspé on January 29, that total doesn't come close to breaking the record for the least snowy month.

According to data compiled by Environment Canada, January 2025 ranks 11th overall for the least snowfall recorded since data collection began in 1895.

The lowest amount was in January 1934, when only 10.4 centimetres was measured in Gaspé.

There is only 2 centimetres of snow cover on the ground at Michel-Pouliot airport. This matches the record set in 1995 but, for now, does not surpass the single centimetre recorded on January 31, 1986.

Winter activities such as snowmobiling and downhill skiing are largely absent on the Gaspé Peninsula due to the lack of snow.

In total, however, Gaspé has received 114 centimetres of snow since the start of the cold season, which represents only 59% of the seasonal average of 195 centimetres as of January 31.

The 15 years with the least snowfall in Gaspé since 1895 (as of January 29, 2025)

1	1934	10.4 centimetres
2	1949	11.5 centimetres
3	1957	15.1 centimetres
4	1916	17.7 centimetres
5	1932	19.3 centimetres
6	2003	19.8 centimetres
7	1930	22.4 centimetres
8	2013	22.8 centimetres
9	1949	22.4 centimetres
10	1985	23.4 centimetres
11	2025	26.8 centimetres
12	1972	27.2 centimetres
13	1992	28.6 centimetres
14	1947	30.3 centimetres
15	2005	30.4 centimetres



Local union leader Noémie Boudreau indicates that mandatory overtime puts a lot of pressure on the current staff, as some guards are asked to fill such shifts four times a week.

Not an easy working environment within the Gaspé fire brigade

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - Tensions are rising between a group of firefighters and the Town of Gaspé over the direction of the fire department following the departure of former chief Carl Sinnett.

Two factions have formed within the brigade, which has 85 firefighters: those who were supporters of the former chief and those who wanted new blood and an improvement in the service. According to information obtained by people familiar with the matter, a dispute over the purchase of jaws of life led to friction between some members of the brigade, which explains the intervention of the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST) last summer.

It was then that some firefighters formed a group against Carl Sinnett and attended the investigation that ultimately led to his departure.

In October, The SPEC revealed a toxic environment within the brigade, which contributed to Carl Sinnett's one-week suspension in connection with a harassment case.

The Town of Gaspé declined to comment, citing employee confidentiality. The CNESST confirmed that "a prevention-inspection intervention file was opened for the fire station of the Town of Gaspé and an inspection was conducted on July 23, 2024, to verify the implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the regulations applicable to psychosocial risks."

At the time the Town ordered a study on the work climate. The results have been received and are currently



Discontent is being heard among the Gaspé firefighters.

Photo: N. Sergerie

under review by authorities.

Our sources within the brigade say that the arrival of the interim director Éric Fugère, who is also director of the Percé fire department, has caused further friction.

They claim that Mr. Fugère has been using a Town service vehicle "for personal purposes," particularly in the Percé territory.

A photo of unit 148, taken in Percé during the Polar Dip in December, was even circulated.

Furthermore, according to our sources, the interim chief informed firefighters that more specialized rescues, such as water rescue, high-altitude rescue, and hazardous materials response would be required since the training of Gaspé firefighters does not meet the necessary criteria and must be provided by the National Firefighters School.

Our sources express concerns that citizens are unaware of the situation. They also allege that Mr. Fugère is making questionable decisions regard-

ing the risk coverage plan, our sources continue.

On several occasions, fire stations were put on standby, resulting in costs for taxpayers, and the interim director did not know the Gaspé area very well. Our sources wonder if these situations are normal.

Several firefighters have left the department in recent weeks, some of whom had several years of service.

At the Town Hall, the mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté, also a firefighter is not commenting on this matter. Communications Director Jérôme Tardif wrote: "The Town of Gaspé wants to reassure the population: the fire safety service remains fully functional, and firefighters continue to provide security coverage across the entire territory."

Regarding the departure of firefighters, Mr. Tardif notes that "With the improvements in our processes and the implementation of the recommendations of the work climate report, several fire-



Photo: Anonymous

The Gaspé 148 pickup truck was seen at the Percé wharf in December.

Police report

Bobby Mercier Chedore, 26, from Chandler, currently living in Bonaventure, is facing several charges following his arrest in the early hours of January 28 after a break-an-enter at a Bonaventure residence. The Sûreté du Québec was called shortly before 3 a.m. regarding a threatening man who had allegedly entered a private home. The individual, known to the police, was arrested shortly thereafter. "He had also attempted another break-and-enter in a nearby house not long before his arrest," says Sûreté du Québec communication officer Frédéric Deshaies.

No one was injured during the arrest. The accused was taken into custody and appeared at the New Carlisle Courthouse later that day. He was charged with break and enter, assault with a weapon and two charges of breach of conditions. "He is also charged with break and enter in another house in Bonaventure. He returned to court this morning (January 30 for his bail hearing) but he was sent to a hospital in the region for a five-day assessment of his capacity to stand trial. He did not speak during either of his court appearances, despite being asked questions, which explains why he must undergo an evaluation," explained criminal prosecutor Maxime Rocheville-Paradis.

At the time of his arrest, Bobby Mercier Chedore was allegedly carrying a knife. He was known to the Sûreté du Québec, having been arrested in the past. "He has served a prison term in the past," added prosecutor Rocherville-Paradis.

Bobby Mercier Chedore is also wanted at the Rimouski Courthouse, as he is the subject of an arrest warrant for an animal cruelty case. "He will likely face a charge of breach of probation in Rimouski," adds Maxime Rocheville-Paradis. In connection with the Bonaventure charges, he is scheduled to return to the New Carlisle Courthouse on February 4 following his psychiatric assessment.

Emergency services responded to a garage fire on Giroux Street in Chandler shortly before 11 p.m. on January 29. The building was completely destroyed, but no injuries were reported. Since the Town of Chandler fire department was unable to identify the cause of the blaze, the Sûreté du Québec has taken over the investigation. "We are just starting the investigation to determine the cause and the circumstances of the fire. There is no apparent cause as of now and it might take some time before we can pinpoint the cause. It is too early to say that it was a suspect blaze," explains Sûreté du Québec communication officer Frédéric Deshaies.

While the exact value of the damages has yet to be confirmed, the police officer mentions that "We are not experts in assessment but there was heavy machinery lost in the blaze. We are not misleading anybody if we say that the value of damage reaches hundreds of thousands of dollars," adds Frédéric Deshaies.

fighters have decided to leave the fire safety service. Despite everything, our staff remains sufficient to ensure coverage of the territory."

The Town has made "significant investments" in firefighter equipment as well as in recognized training, to optimize operations and the development of our staff.

Additional measures will be deployed in the coming

months to further strengthen this essential service.

Regarding the company vehicle, the Town mentions that the contract with the interim fire director - for three months - provides access to the same company vehicle as the former director, under the same conditions.

The position of fire department director is currently open for applications.



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Gilles Gagné

Commentary

Another small break before the tariffs

The Bank of Canada gave another small break to the Canadians on January 29 by cutting its policy interest rate by 0.25%. This was the sixth reduction in seven months, bringing the rate down to 3%, a full 2% lower than it was in June 2024, when the country's central bank decided that 5% was too high.

In other words, citizens need an additional rest after seeing their mortgage payments increase to a worrying level between 2021 and mid-2024.

The Covid-19 benefits, implemented by the federal government to support the economy following the 2020 pandemic slowdown, had triggered considerable inflation, as there was a historical peak of money to spend, and by 2024, it became necessary to stop the inflationary surge.

Through lowering the policy rate, the Bank of Canada, a public entity, sends a message to the private banks to reduce their own interest rates. It is a conventional way of reducing the weight of mortgages and say that the fight against inflation is under control. It was not under control between 2021 and 2024, which explained the past rise of policy rates.

A policy rate cut usually translates into a consumption stimulus, and it explains in part the decision announced by Bank of Canada governor Tim Macklem on January 29.

Influenced by the "Trump factor"

Mr. Macklem did not spend too much time on the Donald Trump factor but the 0.25% cut in the policy rate, which was following sturdier reductions of 0.50% last fall, is linked to the uncertainty over potential United States trade tariffs.

The Bank of Canada drew four scenarios for the coming months. The worst-case scenario predicts a 2.4% contraction of the country's economy, which could qualify as a recession, if a full scale global trade war erupts due to Donald Trump's tariffs policies.

For comparison purposes, this 2.4% contraction scenario is a tad more than six times lower than the 15% drop in economic activity recorded between March and June 2020, when the pandemic hit the

world head-on.

Other economists, such as Clément Gignac, Quebec's Minister of Natural Resources between 2009 and 2012 as well as an experienced consultant, expect a 1.5% contraction of the economy, which would mean an impact ten times smaller than that of the pandemic's peak period. Nobody wants to go back to the pandemic's worst period but it gives an idea of what to expect. The impact will likely be much lower.

Economics is not a perfect science. Some observers like to mention that it is not a science. However, the trade tariffs imposed by the United States will not stay forever and despite Donald Trump's statement to the effect that he wants to bring Canada to commercial submission and make it the 51th state of his country, he will have to mellow down his position sooner rather than later.

Less than three weeks into his second term, a growing number of Americans question whether he is fit for office. In Canada, most people know that he is not, independent from the tariff issue.

Just a few hours after the Bank of Canada announced a 0.25% cut of its policy rate, the Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell waved a Donald Trump recommendation to lower the American similar rate and kept it in the 4.25% to 4.50% range, as the United States system is a little different. The Federal Reserve is the equivalent of the Bank of Canada south of the border

Donald Trump was insisting on a reduction of that policy rate in order to keep stimulating consumption in his country. Jerome Powell decided to leave that rate at a standstill because he thinks that inflation is still high in the U.S. Mr. Powell's position also reflects the uncertainty stemming from the arrival of Trump to power.

An upcoming clash between the two men seems unavoidable, as Trump has been advocating for months now that the president should have an influence in the Federal Reserve decisions, despite the institution's tradition of independence from political influence.

Trump wanted a policy rate reduction because he thinks lower mortgage costs will be enough to put more money in Americans' pockets and have them convinced that inflation is decreasing.

Jerome Powell kept the policy rate intact for now because a reduction would have increased consumption, a factor feeding inflation, according to the Federal Reserve vision of the economy. Inflation is still higher than 2%, Mr. Powell's target, south of the border.

Chaos Generates Uncertainty

Donald Trump, like other wealthy people, bases his assessment of the economy's health on stock markets. While those stock markets reacted positively to his November 5 victory, there is more to the economy.

The stock markets, as if they are a person, manifested signs of nervousness over recent days. There are reasons for that. Uncertainty is one. Speculators hate uncertainty.

Let's remember that Donald Trump also promised a decrease in oil prices through higher production. However, the price is, firstly, determined by global markets, not the American's. Secondly, oil companies usually increase their production when the prices rise. There is a split between the capacity of the companies to produce more, as there is room for that in the United States, and what will happen economically.

For most of the last 50 years, the only factor that has convinced oil companies to increase their output is inflating prices. Period.

That hurdle will be complicated by Donald Trump's two other hardcore agenda targets, high trade tariffs and mass deportations, both of which will more than likely fuel inflation!

The first days of his second term consisted essentially in a brutal demonstration of Trump and his close friends' power. However, there are signs that the solidity of their armour will become increasingly vulnerable.

During the first weekend following his inauguration, Trump looked "presidential" to a certain degree when he went to Los Angeles to reassure the victims of the forest fires.

Six days later though, the real Trump reappeared, through his way of managing the tragedy at Washington Reagan National Airport, which claimed 67 lives.

Asked by journalists whether he would visit the crash site on the Potomac River, Trump replied: "What's the site? The water? You want me to go swimming?"

He later said that diversity, equity and inclusion policies were responsible for the tragedy.

That was unproven and a blatant lie. It will be followed by more lies and unacceptable distortion of reality. The Americans voted for that, as his behavioural flaws were known years ago.

It will backfire at one point though. Stock markets, despite their tendency to ignore human issues, ultimately respond to economic realities. And when they do, they could make life very difficult for Donald Trump. To be continued.

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Gesgapegiag and Pin Rouge partner to support accessibility to recreational sports

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW RICHMOND – The Pin Rouge Tourist Resort and the Gesgapegiag community announce the signing of a strategic partnership aimed at strengthening ties between the region's economic development and the local community. As part of the agreement, Gesgapegiag has secured 200 additional seasonal passes for its community members.

The project thus aims to promote inclusion and provide sports opportunities to members of the Gesgapegiag community, while consolidating Pin Rouge Tourist Resort's mission to make winter sports accessible to a wide audience.

Pin Rouge is committing to offering adapted sports programs, training and accessible infrastructure to members of the community.

"This partnership with the Gesgapegiag community is fully in line with our mission to promote access to winter sports for all. We are proud to collaborate with the community to make these activities more inclusive, especially for the region's youth," says Gaëlle Gabin, director of the Pin Rouge Tourist Resort.

The director general of the Gesgapegiag community, Amanda Larocque, expresses her enthusiasm for this collaboration. "We are delighted to see our partnership with the

Pin Rouge resort evolve and to contribute concretely to the development and sustainability of Pin Rouge. This collaboration is an excellent way to encourage physical activity and provide tangible benefits to the population in a unifying and family-friendly environment," she says.

The steps to solidify the community's involvement in supporting the development of the resort began at the end of the summer when the Pin Rouge board of directors welcomed Ken Arsenault, Gesgapegiag's Forestry director to the group.

Both parties are not disclosing for now the amount earmarked by Gesgapegiag.

Gaëlle Gabin points out that Gesgapegiag was quick to express interest in providing its community members with an opportunity to practice a sport at Pin rouge, when the ski centre management and representatives of the First Nation initiated discussions.

"We started talks a few months ago, in September, as we knew that the Town of New Richmond would change its status regarding Pin rouge. Gesgapegiag had already raised a hand to become a financial partner. We greeted a representative of Gesgapegiag on our board. That contribution helps in our daily operations and Gesgapegiag reaches a goal of giving its



The deal reached with Gesgapegiag significantly increases the local clientèle of Pin rouge.

Photo: G. Gagné

population, notably the youth, a way to be active. We therefore have 200 new members for tubing and skiing. We will provide skiing lessons, and give the youth access to gear. It is an excellent initiative," explains Ms. Gabin.

"It is the first year of the partnership. We would like Gesgapegiag to be a recurrent partner. We will sit down after the winter and see if we can improve the agreement, and fine-tune it. Gesgapegiag is sending a beautiful message in supporting concretely and rapidly Pin rouge. We certainly wish to reach such agreements with neighbouring municipalities. We are in discussions with some of them," adds Gaëlle Gabin.

The Town of New Rich-

mond has been supporting Pin rouge by taking care of the regional park credit line, which means an annual contribution of \$175,000. Over the last three years, that amount has only paid the interest of the line of credit, instead of lowering the capital owed by Pin rouge. The facility's debt stands at \$2.9 million.

The municipal administration is about to secure a loan to reduce the interest fees to a lower level than that of a credit line.

The number of seasonal passes sold by Pin rouge neared 250 before the agreement with Gesgapegiag.

"The pre-season number of passes represented a little drop because of the prices of

last winter but with Gesgapegiag, we now have 450 seasonal passes. We are lucky to offer good skiing conditions this year considering the low quantities of natural snow we received. Our snow-making equipment and our crew were really efficient in providing snow on our runs in December. It was the first time that we were able to complete the snow-making laying of our three main runs," underlines Ms. Gabin.

In response to the increased demand Pin rouge has expanded its operating schedule in February, opening four days a week instead of three. During the March school break, the resort will be open daily for 16 consecutive days.

Obstetrics service disruptions in the Haute-Gaspésie are worrisome

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

SAINTE-ANNE-DESMONTS - The prefect of the MRC of Haute-Gaspésie is concerned about a recent break in obstetric services at the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts hospital.

After briefly resuming operations, the service was interrupted again from January 24 to February 13.

The department had reopened on January 16 after a series of disruptions since December 22.

"It's a service that we managed to get back over the years that we can no

longer do without. "Having an obstetrics department at the Hôpital des Monts is one of the factors that makes a region attractive," says Guy Bernatchez, who regularly discusses the situation with the CISSS de la Gaspésie.

"We must not forget that the department returned after a long battle. The discussion revolves around the situation that has arisen in recent months. The CISSS de la Gaspésie assures us that we are working to resolve the situation once and for all," adds the prefect.

The department was shut down from 2008 to 2012 due to a shortage of doctors.

A committee has been

formed to explore solutions, an initiative announced last November for the local network of Haute-Gaspésie and the Gaspé Peninsula region.

"Solutions will be needed in terms of training the workforce specialized in obstetrics. If we have this problem, it is because the workforce is scarce and we need to find solutions to get to the source of the problem so that in the educational institutions we can make strides towards these areas," says Mr. Bernatchez. "I dare to believe that we will find a solution with the committee set up," he continues.

The lack of nurses to staff the services is the primary

reason for the breakdown. The department is expected to partially reopen on February 13 and 14, with an obstetrics resource on site.

The Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) hopes that the department will be fully operational by February 15.

Eight pregnant women are affected by the latest disruption and have been informed of the situation.

The CISSS has implemented a service corridor with the Matane hospital centre, an hour's drive from Sainte-Anne-des-Monts. "For women further west in the MRC, it may not be a prob-

lem to travel to Matane. But to the east of the MRC, the travel time can be up to two or two and a half hours to get to Matane. Touch wood. Two women have given birth outside the MRC since these service breaks and it went well. Let's keep our fingers crossed for the future," says Mr. Bernatchez.

Pregnant women who wish to do so can obtain accommodation in Matane, and the CISSS is offering additional solutions to those who need them.

The Sainte-Anne-des-Monts hospital must rely exclusively on independent workers to provide obstetrics services.

Kristina Michaud to step away from politics

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON — Kristina Michaud, who has been Member of Parliament for the riding of Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia since October 2019, has announced she will not seek re-election in the next federal election due to her pregnancy. She was supposed to represent the same party, the Bloc Québécois, in the new riding of Gaspésie-Magdalen Islands-Listuguj.

Ms. Michaud won two landslide elections, the second having taken place in 2021. Since that year, she has served as the Critic for Climate Change, Youth, Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness in the Bloc Québécois shadow cabinet.

“Over the past few months, I have thought long and hard about my political future and have decided not to seek a new mandate in the new riding of Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj in the next federal election. I will soon give birth to my first child and I want to devote myself en-



Kristina Michaud will pull out of active politics because she doesn't want to be a part-time mother. She will finish her current term.

Photo: Office of Kristina Michaud

tirely to this beautiful and great adventure that motherhood represents,” she explained in a written statement issued on January 28.

The size of her new riding played a role in her decision to put her political career on hold. “My current political reality, that of a new and very large riding to conquer that is several hundred kilometres from Parliament, is simply not compatible with my vision of a healthy

and fulfilling motherhood. Since 2019, I have represented the population of Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia to the best of my abilities and always giving the best of myself,” she added.

“In the current context and out of respect for my fellow citizens, I do not want to be a part-time Member of Parliament and even less a part-time mother. I will therefore end my term with the same passion that

has driven me since the very beginning and will follow the next electoral campaign closely, from home with my baby in my arms,” specified the 32-year-old woman born and raised in Amqui.

She took the occasion to thank her constituency team, as well as her Bloc Québécois colleagues. “For their trust and dedication. Above all, thank you, dear voters, for the trust you have placed in me twice, in 2019 and in 2021,” she concluded.

As a 26-year-old first-time candidate in 2019, she ousted Liberal Party incumbent Rémi Massé with an absolute majority, gathering more votes than her six opponents together. She received the support of 18,500 voters, which represented 51.43% of the riding's electorate, compared to Mr. Massé's 12,188 votes.

Her second victory was even more decisive, with 19,776 votes and a 59.8% rate of overall support. Liberal Party candidate Louis-Éric Savoie finished a distant second with 7,095 votes and a

21.5% rate of support. Four other candidates shared the remaining 18.7% balance.

Professionally, Kristina Michaud started her political involvement shortly after ending her studies in international relations when she was hired by Matane-Matapédia Member of the National Assembly Pascal Bérubé, of the Parti Québécois.

While Mr. Bérubé was the parliamentary leader of his party, Ms. Michaud was a member of the research team. Mr. Bérubé actively supported her candidacy for the Bloc Québécois and her electoral campaign. When she first started out in politics, she quickly stood out for her rigour, her in-depth knowledge of the issues and her communication skills, says Mr. Bérubé.

“I wish her much success in the projects she undertakes in the future and I offer her my best wishes for happiness with her family. No matter what path she chooses, I am certain that she will continue to have a positive impact on our region and beyond,” concludes Pascal Bérubé.

Bloc leader understands Kristina Michaud's decision

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

OTTAWA - The leader of the Bloc Québécois understands Member of Parliament (MP) Kristina Michaud's decision to devote herself to motherhood rather than the next electoral campaign. Yves-François Blanchet points out that the two have been discussing the situation for several weeks.

“The timing is simply bad. The election is coming at the end of her pregnancy, which is not ideal for Kristina. It's a new riding which reaches the Magdalen Islands and then, with a baby, to travel regularly to Ottawa. It's huge,” mentions the

Bloc leader.

Usually, accommodations are possible to support young mothers. “Here, we are in an unreal situation. I understand the situation very well,” adds Mr. Blanchet. He notes that six or seven MPs have had children during the current legislature.

“It works very well, but Kristina Michaud's case is something else,” continues the Bloc leader.

“Kristina was very brilliant in the political world and she will come back, I am convinced of it,” praises Mr. Blanchette.

Without belittling the other members of his caucus, replac-

ing Ms. Michaud at short notice will be a challenge. “We have an obligation to have a candidacy that will be brilliant. It's a challenge that we will overcome in the coming days with enthusiasm,” he assures, adding that he does not want to drag things out, especially since an election could come quickly.

“We have so much momentum that the choice of candidates is going very well,” says the leader.

Several names have been suggested

Asked whether Guy Bernatchez, who was a Bloc candidate in the last two elections, was approached, Mr. Blanchet remains reserved. “I am not mentioning any names because only one candidate will emerge at the end of the process and I do not want to overshadow those who will not be candidates,” explains the Bloc leader.

When contacted, Mr. Bernatchez, who was in the running in 2019 and 2021, finishing behind Liberal MP Diane Lebovillier, did not want to give an interview. He simply mentioned that he would have to think about it.



Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre and potential candidate Jean-Pierre Pigeon at a meeting in Rivière-du-Loup last summer.

Photo: Courtesy of Jean-Pierre Pigeon

The withdrawal of Ms. Michaud, who had indicated last April in Grande-Rivière that she was in the race in the new riding of Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj, has also sparked discussions within the Conservatives.

A Conservative candidate in 2015, 2019 and 2021 in Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Jean-Pierre Pigeon indicates that he is in discussions with the senior authorities of his party about a possible candidacy for the next election. Having worked in the insurance industry for 50 years, Mr. Pigeon is focusing first on the end of his career as he has sold

his firm. The transaction will be effective on March 1. If he decides to run, the man who has been campaigning for the party since the days of Joe Clark would be in his fourth fight against Liberal MP Diane Lebovillier, first elected in 2015.

Asked to comment on Ms. Michaud's departure, the Liberal MP sent a short reaction. “We hope she has a good end to her pregnancy and that she fully enjoys this precious moment as a mother,” said Ms. Lebovillier from Newfoundland and Labrador, where she was on tour as the Minister of Fisheries.



Kristina Michaud and Yves-François Blanchet last April in Grande-Rivière.

Photo: N. Sergerie

FEDERAL RIDING MODIFICATIONS:

Application for judicial review heard by federal court

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPE - On February 3, the application for judicial review challenging the decision to abolish the federal riding of Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia was heard before the Federal Court.

On January 22, Droits collectifs Québec received the court summons to present legal arguments, which are expected to take the entire day, as both parties filed their briefs last fall.

"There will be exhibits, factual elements, but above all, it will be a major legal debate on whether the voters of Gaspésie have the right, in the name of the principle of elective representation, to have their own riding or not. This is the issue

that will be debated before the courts and that will be decided later, quickly, we hope, by the Federal Court," notes attorney François Côté for Droits collectifs Québec.

The application for judicial review is based on an opinion given by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Saskatchewan Provincial Electoral Districts and Electoral Boundaries Readjustment Act Reference.

"We ask ourselves whether democracy and life across a state is only a matter of absolute numbers or is there such a thing as regional interests, that local particularities deserve to have a distinct voice even though numerically, they would not be on par. And the answer to this question for more than 300 years in our modern democracies is 'yes,

they do,'" argues Mr. Côté.

In the debate, regions, communities, geographic areas and regional histories also play a significant role.

However, the Attorney General of Canada, in his factum, argues for numerical parity. "The argument of the Attorney General of Canada and Elections Canada is numerical parity. In theory, the argument is not without validity in an absolute world. If you have 100 voters for one MP (Member of Parliament) while in another riding, you have 50 voters for one MP, the voters in the second riding have twice as much power. This is the calculation made by the Attorney General and Elections Canada: the population density of the Gaspésie does not justify having so many ridings," says Mr.

Côté.

The prosecutor notes that at the provincial level, Quebec backed down on its electoral map revision and maintained the riding of Gaspé for the moment with the same concept of elective representation.

The adopted map that was presented in the summer of 2022 provoked much protest from the entire political class in the Gaspé Peninsula.

Avignon and Matanie are sent to the new riding of Gaspésie-Les-Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj while Matapédia and Mitis are in Rimouski-La Matapédia.

The Federal Court had not granted a stay to maintain Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia pending a decision on the merits. With elections likely in the spring, the matter

remains urgent.

"Given the urgency of the situation, we made it clear to the Federal Court. We made representations. Everyone understands that there is an imperative to decide the matter quickly. We hope that the deliberations will not take too long. With a hearing on February 3, we can hope for a judgment before the election is called," says the prosecutor.

The possibility of filing an urgent motion remains if circumstances require it.

"Initially, we filed a stay that was refused by the court because we did not meet the urgency criterion. However, as soon as an election is called, it would be possible to obtain a stay during the deliberations. The option is always there," he believes.

Respiratory viruses are circulating in the region

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - According to the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Public Health Department there is currently a moderate number of respiratory virus cases in the Gaspé Peninsula, which is comparable to last year.

Following the holiday season, a time which is conducive to the spread of viruses, many people posted on social media about having contracted a virus.

"The data we have indicates that we are in it (flu season). It is a fairly normal season," says the interim Public Health director, Dr. Christine Dufour Turbis.

It is difficult to have an accurate picture since people who have mild symptoms do not seek medical attention. However, "the number of calls for flu-like symptoms to the 811 service is not very high," says the specialist.

COVID-19 in the region has stabilized after a surge in September. "There was more COVID in September. It is decreasing and has been stable for a few weeks in the region. There are a few outbreaks in some CISSS establishments, but it is quite stable," comments Dr. Dufour Turbis.

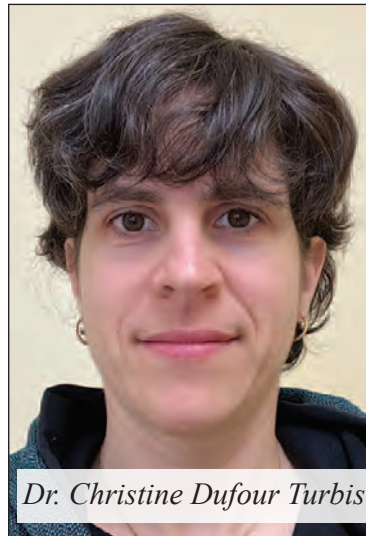
The influenza virus arrived in mid-December. "Currently, it is increasing. We have a rate comparable to

a regular season. The 2024-2025 season does not stand out compared to other seasons for the moment," she says.

Dr. Dufour Turbis anticipates an upcoming wave, as the virus is present in other parts of Quebec. "We feel that it is coming," she warns.

The respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) also made its appearance in early December, primarily affecting very young children.

Whooping cough, which is bacterial, is on the decline after a highly active 2024. "Since the start of the school year, it has been decreasing.



Dr. Christine Dufour Turbis

Photo: Gaspé Peninsula CISSS

I know there were a few cases during the holiday season, but the last news is that it

was decreasing. But the disease is still present in the region," states Dr. Dufour Turbis.

Meanwhile, although measles has made a comeback in Quebec it is currently not in the Gaspé Peninsula.

A provincial monitoring effort has been reintroduced.

"In the region, we have good vaccination coverage. It is a strength of the region. We have a vaccine that protects individuals well against measles. We are preparing regionally but for the moment, we are not affected at all, nor by the wave that hit elsewhere in 2024 in Quebec,"

she emphasizes.

Vaccination campaigns against influenza and COVID-19 are ongoing. Even late, the vaccine remains effective. "The people we are targeting are those who have risk factors. Everyone can get vaccinated. These viruses mutate and we will not be able to eliminate them through vaccination. The goal of vaccination is to prevent complications of the disease and deaths in people at risk," explains the doctor, who reminds us that if people have any symptoms of the flu, it is better to stay home or wear a mask in public places.

Last phase of work on the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - The final work to preserve the integrity of the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse, which was closed to visitors in the summer of 2023, will be completed by June.

This is according to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, which notes that work is underway to manage humidity inside the lighthouse. The humidity control is considered the final task to be completed in the short term.

Following an inspection on June 20, 2023, the decision was made to close the site to visitors on July 13, a move that sparked an outcry from local and regional stakeholders.

The ongoing work, which has been carried out since 2023, is a direct result of the inspection's findings. The total cost of the studies and repairs in 2023 and 2024, aimed at allowing the lighthouse to reopen to the public in the summer of 2024, amounted to approximately \$185,000.

The work consisted, among other things, of masonry work, including the repair of unstable stones and the anchoring of the exterior window sills, waterproofing of exterior openings, repair of the boards inside the lighthouse and the steps, painting and dealing with mold issues.

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A beach replenishment will be necessary in Percé

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PERCÉ - After noticing that the Anse du Sud beach will have to be replenished this year, Percé Mayor Daniel Leboeuf raised the issue with the Ministry of Public Security. The mayor noted work done in the 2010s, including the rebuilt promenade, and the beach replenishment which protects the promenade but it remains vulnerable in certain areas.

"The emergency work carried out in the fall of 2023 made it possible to secure the promenade and other structures. Adjustment work was planned for 2024, but it happened at the beginning of the summer. There was a difference of opinion with what the Ministry of Public Safety was proposing and there were other incidents," explains Mayor Leboeuf, referring to, without saying so, the resignation of former Mayor Cathy Poirier.

"From one point of view, it was a good thing because, before Christmas, we had a few high tides that encroached on the recharge and the promenade is close to being in danger. We will need it done in 2025 and discussions with the Ministry of Public Safety have begun," he says.

In 2023, a massive recharge had been done, even going so far as to practically eliminate developments carried out in 2017.

"It's a bit of trial and error. We identified a few places where we would need to add more," explains the mayor.

The Ministry of Public Safety will assume the bulk of the costs, with a game plan expected by the end of January. Meanwhile, emergency repairs to the old promenade wall inside the fishing harbour, done last year, will need to be redone. The Ministry of Transport has been called in to address this portion.

"The end of this promenade has been affected. Even the emergency work is starting to fail. We are losing big chunks of it," says the elected official. "We will have to see if we will have to find another solution," he says.

Organizational diagnosis

The Town of Percé has commissioned an organizational diagnosis to assess its municipal administration, following a report published last year on its operations. A contract worth \$63,256, with the possibility of reaching \$70,000 with various amendments, was awarded to the firm GO RH.

At the January 14 municipal council meeting, some citizens questioned this expense, asking why the work was not done internally. "One of the problems we have to face is the shortage of municipal officers. The director of urban planning has left, the clerk has retired, and



Photo: N. Sergerie

Percé Beach at the end of the summer in 2024.

the municipal inspector is not in the office. It would be asking for extra work from the remaining employees for a human resources specialist approach," explains the mayor.

Using specialists who have experience could be beneficial for the Town of Percé. "They have seen other things and can find ways for us to operate more efficiently and perhaps even with a more reasonable budget. We found that it was a good investment," he states.

The town plans to meet with the firm in the coming days to define the schedule and the mayor hopes to submit the report by the end of the year.

Even though the Commission had not made it an obligation, this exercise was strongly suggested. "When the school principal recommends that we

line up and enter the classroom, we obey," says Mr. Leboeuf

Petition in support of Mr. Émile

A petition to support the relocation project of Fumoir M. Émile de Percé has collected 634 signatures and has been submitted to the municipal council.

The ten existing jobs, the strengthening of the agri-tourism economy, supporting the next generation of entrepreneurs, the international recognition of the product and its local pride are cited in support of the request. The petition, initiated by the employees, was submitted by co-owner Cathy Poirier to the elected officials.

The company had requested

a zoning change to allow a larger building at Anse-à-Beaufils, which was refused in December.

"I would ask you, Mr. Mayor, if you could sit down with the council again to discuss the situation. The project will respect the district of the sector in its architecture, its attractiveness, etc.," argued Ms. Poirier.

In the event of a positive response, Ms. Poirier added that a building permit would be required, which would allow for all the elements to be detailed in accordance with an amended by-law.

The council has accepted the petition.

In December, the request filed by Alain Méthot consisted of amending the zoning by-law in the Anse-à-Beaufils sector to increase the maximum occupied surface area from 250 square metres to 420 square metres to allow for the installation of a smoking room on the street in Bonfils.

The company's objective was to bring together its facilities on Highway 132, rather than maintaining activities on Chemin d'Irlande.

The council's rejection of the zoning change was perceived by Ms. Poirier as a form of revenge, as she had resigned from the municipal council in July following several months of tension with certain council members and ongoing issues at the town hall.

The federal government provides support for the development of winter cruises

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

QUEBEC - The St. Lawrence Cruise Association is receiving funding from the federal government to continue its activities for the next four years, including the development of winter cruises.

Canada Economic Development will provide \$1,860,000 to the organization, awarded by the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Jean-Yves Duclos, taking advantage of the visit of the first winter cruise aboard the Commandant Charcot to the Port of Quebec City. The vessel had stopped in Gaspé on January 21.

A first non-refundable installment of \$960,000 is part of the renewal of the association's support. This funding

will cover a period of four years, and will allow the organization to support businesses in developing and structuring the tourism offering and marketing outside Quebec, in collaboration with the Quebec Ministry of Tourism, the Quebec Tourism Industry Alliance and ecosystem partners.

The second non-refundable portion, totalling \$900,000, will help the association promote a new winter cruise offer and improve the cruise tourism offering in Quebec.

This funding will support a dozen tourism businesses in the regions, including five cruise stopovers, four of which are in the regions of the Magdalen Islands, Gaspé, Sept-Îles and Saguenay, in addition to the Quebec stopover, which serves as the port of embarkation

and disembarkation for cruise passengers.

With this support, local businesses and tourism organizations throughout the province will benefit from financial assistance to enhance their tourism products and experiences, helping to attract more visitors to the regions.

"The support from Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions has allowed us to support stopover organizations so that they can equip themselves with essential equipment and infrastructure to improve the offering and ensure the comfort and safety of reception staff operating in winter conditions. The renewal of our agreement will also allow us to continue to support companies in the sector for the development of cruises in Quebec," commented René

Trépanier, General Manager of Croisières du Saint-Laurent.

Gaspé is scheduled to receive four more stops by the Commandant Charcot this

winter, bringing a total of approximately 500 passengers for this first experience. If successful, the ship may return to the St. Lawrence in 2027.

CPEs announce another strike day

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - Unless an agreement in principle is reached, approximately 300 educators affiliated with the CSN in 12 CPEs (Centres de la petite enfance) in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands will hold the second of five planned strike days on February 6. The strike is intended to pressure the Quebec government into reaching an agreement to renew the collective agreement.

The union, which represents 12,000 educators in the province, made that decision following a day of negotiations on January 28 that it deemed insufficiently productive.

During the first strike day on January 23, approximately 150 educators demonstrated in Gaspé.

The key issues are the workload, working conditions to attract and retain female workers, regional disparity bonuses and support for children with special needs.

The future of the TDLG is still being considered

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - The Traversée de la Gaspésie (TDLG) continues its reflection on the future of winter activity due to the increasingly low snowfall in recent years.

"We realize it. I meet a lot of people in the community who say, it's incredible, there's no snow. The barachois aren't even frozen. It's increasingly difficult to organize big crossings where we walk from one village to another in magnificent conditions. The realization, we have it in our face," notes Claudine Roy, president of the TDLG.

Being the founder of the TDLG, she points out, for example, that the Gaspé cross-country ski centre is not open due to the lack of snow. There is no question of holding a half-measure event.

"When we organize

events like the great Traversée and 200 people arrive in our part of the country, we have to offer the product they signed up for. Otherwise, we are the ones in trouble. We have to be realistic," she says.

"It's like sailing. We have to find the right direction to keep moving forward. What will be the solutions to find a profitable event again? If we decide no, there won't be one. We have to take the time to think," continues Ms. Roy.

The 2024 edition was also cancelled due to the non-existent winter conditions and a significant increase in the costs of organizing the event.

Last year, Ms. Roy explained that it was becoming increasingly difficult to hold what had become a winter classic due to the decreasing snowfall and warmer temperatures in February in recent years. The last edition took place in the winter of 2023,



Photo: N. Sergerie

The arrival of the TDLG in downtown Gaspé in 2014.

after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic.

The difference over the last 15 years is substantial. Ms. Roy mentions that in 2009, the ship chartered to make the Traversée got stuck in the ice. This year, for example, Gaspé Bay doesn't even have any ice.

"The first Traversée, we left from Grande Grave and we could practically ski 30 kilometres on Gaspé Bay to get to the downtown. We could ski all the way to Cap Gaspé. Today, forget it!" says Ms. Roy.

"The last two years that we did the Traversée, we

weren't even able to ski on Gaspé Bay. This year, it's not even frozen. It's 15 years later. It's sick, it's crazy," she says, adding that TDLG regulars understand the situation.

"There are some who still come to do other winter activities. Some people are sad. It was a must-see event. It was on their agenda year after year. We need to change our habits when it comes to sporting events," explains the president.

The "on foot" event could become the flagship event. "It's all part of the thought process. We haven't decided what the direction will be, but it's part of the process," says Ms. Roy.

The year 2025 will be decisive for what happens next "To find the formula or find something else. If there's a change to be made, we'll do it in 2025," concludes the founder.

Major changes to Quebec's recycling program

SHIRLEY DUNCAN
LIFE ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

NEW CARLISLE - L.I.F.E. Association (Living Is For Everyone) held its 2024 Annual General Meeting at The Anchor in New Carlisle. During the meeting, the financial reports for the year, audited by Louis Sexton, financial advisor, were accepted.

The Social Integration

Class for adults with challenges in the Bay of Chaleur area was the main recipient of financial assistance for its many activities.

Teacher Vicky Marsh explained the many activities for the group including shopping, bowling in New Richmond, sports at a local gym and outdoors and visits to local attractions, all of which promote social skills. Cooking meals

with the help of Family Ties and CASA were also a favourite activity, along with enjoying treats from Tim Hortons.

L.I.F.E. Association president, Shirley Duncan explained that while the Centre de Readaptation (CR) manages the VIMY PLACE residence, L.I.F.E. owns the building and is responsible for all major maintenance costs, which re-

main significant. Roof repairs were approved for this year, along with some window replacements.

The Board of Directors was reinstated for 2025 as follows: Shirley Duncan (President), Richard Flowers (Vice President and treasurer), Colleen Huntington (Secretary), Joan Manning (Bookkeeper); Vicky Marsh (Social Integration Teacher) Alistair Campbell

(Parent Rep). A Town Council Rep has yet to be chosen. A revised Constitution was also adopted.

The President expressed her gratitude to the The Anchor staff, and residence manager Peggy Dalgleish, and staff, along with those who provided financial support. She also announced that a fundraising campaign would be undertaken again this year.

Major changes to Quebec's recycling program

CYNTHIA DOW

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES - The Quebec government has announced ambitious changes to its ongoing recycling program, but there are still issues to resolve.

The new non-profit responsible for Quebec's recycling program, Éco Entreprise Québec (EEQ), represents companies which produce packaging. They are now putting in place incentives to reduce packaging as much as possible and to recycle more efficiently.

The EEQ has launched a message that "everything can be put in the blue bins except for aerosol cans, styrofoam (polystyrene) and compostable bags." The organization is even encouraging the public to start putting chip

bags and pizza boxes into the blue bin.

However, it would appear more detailed instructions are necessary: there is no buyer for used chip bags, so they are going to the landfill. Additionally, members of the public are not always very well informed about what should not be put in the blue bin.

Maël Flouriot is the administrative assistant at the recycling centre in Grande Rivière operated by the Régie intermunicipale de traitement des matières résiduelles de la Gaspésie (RITMRG). He told SPEC that he could not give a percentage of the materials received that have to be sent to the landfill, but "It amounts to several tons per week."

He said the blue bins sometimes contain clothing, wood and even food, all of which

are not recyclable.

There are various second-hand clothing depots along the Coast where clothing could be reused. Wood must be taken to the landfills, while food can be composted in backyards or through the public composting program available in Rocher-Percé MRC and the Town of Gaspé.

In November, another recycling change was made when the refund for aluminum beverage cans was doubled from 5 to 10 cents apiece. This is part of a plan to raise the recycling rate of cans to 90% by the end of the year.

But critics claim that a major problem remains: plastic water bottles, milk and juice containers and liquor bottles are still not redeemable and are mostly ending up in landfills.



Sylvain Berthelot is a foreman at the recycling centre in Grande Rivière.

Photo: Courtesy of RITMRG

Announcements



Obituaries



GAVEY: Carolyn Simon

It is with much sadness that we announce the sudden passing of our sister on December 28, 2024. She was predeceased by her parents, Courtney Simon and Vera Roberts and husband, John Gavey. Born in Indian Cove, Gaspé on October 21, 1950, she lived most of her life in Montreal.

She leaves to mourn one sister, Eleanor (Clayton); two brothers, Garfield (Sandra) and Donald (Frank); nieces; nephews and many friends.

Burial will be at a later date in Châteauguay next to her husband John.

Carolyn, you will be dearly missed. Lovingly remembered by family and friends.



PATTERSON: Vera (1930-2024)

Vera Patterson passed away peacefully in her home on December 24, 2024, at the age of 94. She leaves to mourn her sisters: Velma White (Ivan), Dora White (Sylva), and Donna Roberts; brother-in-law Carter; numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. She is predeceased by her parents Bernice (Falle) and Richard Patterson; brothers: Alpheus, Francis, Harris and Elias; sister Ivy; and her long-time partner Norbert Kennedy.

Funeral service was held on Saturday, December 28, 2024, at 11 a.m. at St. Paul's Anglican Church Gaspé, Quebec. Burial of ashes to be held at graveside in June 2025. Her family would like to extend a big thank you to all those who attended the funeral, Douglas Johnson who conducted the service, Elizabeth Baird for her music, all those who sent cards, called, made donations and sent flowers. Your kindness will never be forgotten.

Vera was a well-known lady in the community and she will be greatly missed by many people. She is forever in our hearts and thoughts.



In Memory

BOURGAIZE: Eunice

In loving memory of a dear sister who passed away February 4, 2020.

*No matter how life changes,
No matter what we do.*

*A special place within our hearts,
Will always be with you.*

Forever in our hearts, loved and sadly missed by Dolly, Merle, Clayton (Eleanor), Bradford (Shirley) and families.

Happy 95th Birthday



On Saturday, December 14, 2024, an Open House was held in Edith Carney's honour at daughter Claudia and son-in-law Leslie Major's house in Stratford, Ontario. Her daughter Evelyn attended from Toronto, as well as many friends in the area. She received many beautiful flowers, cards and phone calls to mark this special occasion.

She still knits scarves for the House of Blessing in Stratford. To date, she has made over 100 for the homeless.

We all wish her many more years of good health and happiness!

Love, the family.

The New Carlisle
Funeral Association
extends sympathy to the family of
Gilles Bujold.

*With Deepest
SYMPATHY*

*Deadline for this page is
Wednesday at 4 p.m*

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150-250 words - \$55
250+ words - quote will be provided

In memory: 150 words - \$35
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YORK:
Wakeham-York Winter Carnival

February 7: 6 p.m. Disco skating; 7 p.m. bonfire, fireworks, cash bar and music with Coco and Dodo.

February 8: Pal airlines family day. 10 a.m. family snowshoeing; 1 p.m. masquerade, tea boiling contest, ice bowling and nail driving; 3:30 p.m. hockey bottine; and 7 p.m. Texas holdem.

February 9: 1 p.m. bingo; 5:30 p.m. super bowl party with pizza, hot dogs, wings and nachos.

February 11: 7 p.m. tuck tournament, bring a partner.

February 12: Polyvalent activity day.

February 13: 7 p.m. line dancing with JR country dancer.

February 14: Valentine Hoedown dance, 6 p.m. for ages 6-12; and 8 p.m. for ages 13-17.

February 15: Snowmobile poker run, 7 to 10 a.m. breakfast; 10 a.m. leaving York rink; 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. return to hall; 7 p.m. dance with music by John Gedeon.

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! Formore 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:
Book Room

Please be advised that the book room is open. Anyone who needs assistance can contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

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:
Family Day

February 16: There will be games for kids, a Family Feud tournament, maple taffy, campfires and more, at 65 Gallagher Road. The rink will also be open for those wanting to skate. There will be a puck toss fundraiser for the Eagles Club with the winner receiving half the money raised. All money raised during family day will go towards bursaries and supporting the local day camp.

UNITED CHURCH
NEW RICHMOND

February 9 and 16
10 a.m. Service

ANGLICAN
CHURCH
OF CANADA

Sunday, February 9
New Carlisle

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Port Daniel

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Sunday, February 16

New Carlisle
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Shigawake
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

PARISH OF
GASPÉ

Sunday, February 9
St. Paul - Gaspé

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Sunday, February 16
St. Paul - Gaspé

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Worship Wednesday
10 a.m. St Paul's

UNITED CHURCH
HOPE TOWN

February 9

10 a.m. Service

February 16

10 a.m. Service

Puzzle solutions from January 8

SOLUTIONS ACROSS
1-MANO, 5-EBERT, 10-SAILOR, 12-NAPALM, 14-ANNIHILATOR, 16-AB, 18-RBI, 19-SAM, 20-SENNA, 22-HEM, 23-COCOS, 25-ROAR, 26-PRO, 27-CON, 28-RBC, 30-ITO, 31-SOHO, 33-WORSEN, 35-UTICA, 37-GHEES, 38-NOTARY, 40-DOOM, 41-SUI, 42-RAW, 44-BAN, 45-AAR, 48-ARES, 50-MASHY, 52-KEA, 53-FISKE, 55-TAU, 56-EDD, 57-ES, 58-INSECTIVORE, 63-TARTAR, 65-ACCESS, 66-CLODS, 67-NERD

SOLUTIONS DOWN
1-MIN, 2-ALI, 3-NOH, 4-ORISON, 5-ENAMOR, 6-BAT, 7-EPOS, 8-RARER,

9-TL, 10-SABER, 11-ANIMOSITIES, 13-MANATEE, 15-LAC, 17-BARONS, 18-RHP, 21-NOISEMAKERS, 23-COO, 24-SBW, 27-CHARR, 29-COGON, 32-OCA, 34-RHO, 35-UNSAFE, 36-TOURIST, 39-YAM, 40-DAY, 43-WATERS, 44-BHUTAN, 46-AEDES, 47-RAD, 49-SKIRL, 51-SAC, 54-ENTO, 59-SAD, 60-ICE, 61-VCR, 62-OED, 64-AC.

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

Horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

You're in the mood to get things done this week, Aries. Your ambition is fueled and it is the perfect time to take charge and tackle overdue projects. Be careful not to rush things.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, your focus shifts to personal growth and intellectual exploration this week. You might find yourself investigating travel plans or diving into new hobbies.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

Money and other resources take center stage this week, Gemini. Whether you are reevaluating your investments or getting your finances in order, you may need to make a few tweaks.

CANCER – June 22/July 22

Cancer, you may find you're a bit more introspective than usual. Your emotions are running deep, and it is a key time for some self-reflection. Be mindful of insights com-

ing your way.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23

Leo, it is a week of transitions for you. Something in your life may seem like it will come to an end soon, but this closing of one chapter is necessary for personal growth.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Work and your career take center stage right now, Virgo. Since you're in a productive phase, you will make great headway on projects that can really boost your resume.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Think big this week, Libra. Try to see how your efforts can have an effect in the future and not just right now. There is an opportunity to expand your horizons.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, your financial world is looking quite favorable this week. You might have an opportunity to solidify your position on a project or embark on a completely new path.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

The focus is on you this

week, Sagittarius. If you have been feeling stuck or unsure, now is a great time to put new intentions into action. People will be drawn to your energy.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

The quiet side of life takes over for the week, Capricorn. You might feel the need to reflect on recent experiences or recharge at home alone. Don't hesitate to take a step back.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Your social life is booming right now, Aquarius. Networking events, group activities or spontaneous meet-ups are ways to connect with some like-minded individuals.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, this week you are all about setting goals and following through with your plans. The universe is on your side right now, and you will find it is quite easy to succeed.

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LAWYERS



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Jules Grenier, b.a.ll.l.

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