

2025 Shigawake Agricultural Fair and Music Festival

GILLES GAGNÉ

SHIGAWAKE – The 2025 Shigawake Agricultural Fair and Music Festival was marked by a good attendance and mostly nice weather from August 14 to 17. The rain that fell between noon and 4 p.m. on Sunday, August 17, was taken philosophically by most attendees, as the previous couple of weeks had been extremely dry.

The heat wave that characterized the August 3 to 14 stretch worsened the drought for farmers. Singer Shaina Hayes, who is also a farmer, perfectly expressed the ambivalence of the situation during her Sunday afternoon solo set under the tent when she said that the rain was a bit too bad for the festival goers, but that as a producer, she was glad to see it fall.

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Stephanie Meredith and Mariah Renouf.

Photo: Holly Smith



Arlayn Dow was one of this year's Tots and Wheels winners.

Photo: Emily Hocquard



As always, the lawn tractor race drew a big crowd.

Photo: Michel Couture



Do you want another New Richmond Fair in 2026?

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW RICHMOND – The New Richmond Agricultural Fair attracted strong attendance between August 21-24 at the Fairgrounds. The weather turned out far better than early forecasts predicted, and popular events such as the gymkhana and lawn tractor races attracted a high number of competitors.

Behind the scenes, however, discussions revealed some worry: a couple of board members are ready to pass on the torch to other volunteers and lately, very few people expressed interest to take over.

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In the adult gymkhana event, New Richmond's Ashley Ferguson was the main star.

Photos: G. Gagné



Emma Chamberlain was this year's winner of the Aubrey Court trophy for the horse rider showing the best sportsmanship qualities of all participants.

VIA Rail is waiting for the track to be repaired to Gaspé before returning to the Gaspé Peninsula

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - VIA Rail will not return to the Gaspé Peninsula until the rail line to Gaspé has been refurbished.

The rail carrier reiterated its position on the sidelines of its annual general meeting, held online on August 21.

"We have always been committed to returning when the infrastructure is in good condition and with an acceptable travel time, and one of our strategic pillars is safety," said VIA President and CEO Mario Péroquin.

The company mentioned that this issue was raised several times during the period when VIA was receiving comments from the public by email in preparation for the annual general meeting.

There is no question of a partial return to New Carlisle or Port-Daniel-Gascons, as repeatedly requested by the



Photo: Taylor Main

Via Rail will not return to the region until the entire track has been refurbished.

Coalition for the Return of VIA Rail Passenger Trains. "Unfortunately, this is impossible due to train logistics, reversing, and other factors that we do not want to do and cannot do," added the president.

In addition to the Coalition, Alexis Deschênes, the Member of Parliament for the Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj riding, mentioned after meeting earlier this summer with Denis

Boucher, VIA Rail's Director of Government and Indigenous Relations, that his position was to bring VIA Rail back to the Gaspé Peninsula as quickly as possible and that he wanted to help make

that happen as soon as possible.

During Mr. Boucher's visit, the coalition expressed its intention to continue its efforts and ask VIA Rail and the Quebec government to gradually resume train service as soon as the tracks to Port-Daniel-Gascons are ready.

In May, the National Assembly passed a motion asking VIA Rail to restore its rail service in the Gaspé Peninsula this summer.

In her summer review, Bonaventure MNA Catherine Blouin indicated that work was continuing on the approaches to the tunnel in Port-Daniel-Gascons and that the deadline was November, provided that the Quebec government engineers' strike did not delay the schedule once again.

Technically, the train could have been running to the Port-Daniel station since mid-summer.

Citizen mobilization day for the return of passenger train

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON - The Coalition for the Return of Passenger Train Services in Gaspésie will participate in a day of mobilization to be held on Saturday, September 6, 2025, in collaboration with the Table d'échange et de mobilisation sur le transport rail.

In the morning, the Coalition invites the public to a major rally at the region's train stations between Matapédia and New Carlisle, with a small suitcase, starting at 10:30 a.m. This symbolic action aims to demonstrate that passenger trains in Gaspésie are necessary.

At 1 p.m., this activity will continue simultaneously at the Gaspé and Port Daniel stations, where regional elected officials, as well as citizen and business representatives, will speak to request on the one hand the resumption of work to complete the rehabilitation of the tracks to Gaspé and, on the second hand, the gradual return of passenger trains to Port-Daniel immediately and to Gaspé as soon as possible.



VIA Rail's service between New Carlisle and Gaspé was suspended in December 2011.

Photo: Gilles Gagné

The Gaspé event receives the collaboration of citizen movement Solidarité Gaspésie. Between Matapédia and New Carlisle, there are train stations in Carleton, Bonaventure and New Richmond.

VIA Rail's passenger train has been suspended between New Carlisle and Gaspé since mid-December 2011, and be-

tween Matapédia and New Carlisle since September 2013.

When the service was fairly reliable at the end of the 2000s, between 25,000 and 30,000 people were using the Montréal-Gaspé train annually. When the train was circulating daily, that number was reaching 90,000 passengers, according to VIA Rail's statistics of 1979.

Railway tracks: Construction rules relaxed

Nelson Sergerie

CHANDLER: - The Quebec government has quietly eased regulations governing construction near railway tracks, much to the satisfaction of elected officials in the Rocher-Percé MRC.

Last fall, the Quebec government announced a regulation increasing the construction margin to 300 metres from a railway line and 1,000 metres from a marshalling yard, raising concerns among the mayors of Grande-Rivière and Chandler.

The revised rules will allow construction within 30 metres of a railway line and 300 metres of a marshalling yard.

"This is very good news. It is the result of efforts by the MRC, the mayor of Chandler, the mayor of Grande-Rivière, and other elected officials elsewhere in Quebec. It was a major obstacle for everything related to residential and commercial development," explains MRC Prefect Samuel Parisé.

He added that the 30-metre margin is sufficient. "In some places, municipal regulations will be stricter. We want to ensure that people build their homes in safe areas and that people are safe," explains Mr. Parisé. Additional safety features may be added if municipalities deem them necessary.

In the MRC of Rocher-Percé, the railway line runs through the centres of Port-Daniel-Gascons, Chandler, Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé and Grande-Rivière. The rules announced last fall were becoming restrictive. "It was jeopardizing certain residential developments. We won't hide that. We need housing to accommodate our people. It was essential to change the 300-metre rule," explains Mr. Parisé.



Samuel Parisé, Prefect of the Rocher-Percé MRC.

Photo: N. Sergerie

A partnership to develop up to 6,000 megawatts involving the Mi'gmaq concluded

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - A historic partnership has been concluded between Hydro-Québec, the Eastern Energy Alliance, and the three Mi'gmaq communities in the Gaspé Peninsula to develop up to 6,000 megawatts of wind power in the Gaspé Peninsula.

Premier François Legault travelled to the Gaspé Peninsula on August 27 for the announcement. "This is the largest project in the history of the Gaspé Peninsula and the Lower St. Lawrence," the Premier began.

Such a large amount of energy would provide electricity to the Island of Montreal.

The investment could reach \$18 billion, not including the extension of the transmission line to connect these potential wind farms to the Hydro-Québec grid.

"We've long wanted to develop ties with the Mi'gmaq First Nations of the Gaspé Peninsula. We've been talking for a long time. Today, we're nearing the end of a great adventure," says Michel Lagacé, President of the Eastern Energy Alliance and President of the Lower Saint Lawrence Intermunicipal Energy Board.

The sites remain to be studied

"The next steps remain to be defined. What's important to remember is that we're getting down to the drawing board to define the potential of 6,000 megawatts in Eastern Quebec, the Gaspé Peninsula," added Simon Deschênes, Vice-President of the Alliance and President of the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Intermunicipal Energy Board.

A structured and joint approach to assess social and environmental acceptability, as well as the integration of



Photos: Nelson Sergerie

Chiefs Roderick Laroque of Gesgapegiag, Céline Cassivi of Gespeg, Scott Martin of Listuguj, and Frederic Vicaire, Executive Director of the MMBC.

First Nations knowledge and priorities, will be launched.

The Wolastoqiyik Wampanoag First Nation in the Lower Saint Lawrence region is already a member of the alliance, but the Mi'gmaq Mawioimi Business Corporation (MMBC), the economic arm of the Mi'gmaq First Nations of Listuguj, Gesgapegiag, and Gespeg, is a business partner in this agreement.

The economic benefits could amount to \$1.8 billion, split 50-50 between Hydro-Québec and the alliance. Since 2017, the Alliance has generated \$90 million in profits, including \$30 million donated to the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Intermunicipal Energy Board.

The MMBC welcomes this partnership to explore the territory's wind power potential.

"We know Hydro-Québec's ambition. For our communities, for MMBC, for our community members, for Indigenous businesses, we won't just receive royalties. We will co-develop and be shareholders in these projects," says MMBC Senior

Advisor François Olivier Gagnon.

Hydro-Québec's 10,000 megawatt development strategy opened the door to becoming a member of this tripartite agreement.

"It's probably one of the best days we've had in recent years," said Mr. Gagnon about the potential of the partnership.

MMBC is already a partner with Innergex in two wind farms, Mesgi'g Ugju's'n

1 and 2, in the backcountry of the Avignon MRC, and will produce 252 megawatts once Phase 2 is operational, scheduled for 2026.

The Premier noted that the agreement covers 6,000 megawatts zone by zone, and private partnerships could be added.

The problem of transporting energy will be resolved with a transmission line.

A phase 1 project had already been announced, head-

ing toward Matapédia.

"If we want to be able to produce 6,000 megawatts, there has to be a portion that is exportable. The line has to be built as well. Everything is underway," says Mr. Legault.

Hydro-Québec is promising to purchase the maximum amount of equipment in Quebec. But there is no firm commitment or obligation, as has been the case in the past.

"It's difficult to even begin to say that there will be an obligation. Charity begins at home, especially when you look at how Donald Trump is treating us," says the Premier, referring to the customs duties imposed by the United States.

Hydro-Québec President and Chief Executive Officer Claudine Bouchard mentioned that wind power is part of the province's energy transition plans. "The partnership we are announcing between the Mi'gmaq Nation, the Eastern Energy Alliance, and Hydro-Québec represents the largest commitment to wind power in North America," says Ms. Bouchard.

The potential of this energy to be developed involves a transmission line as part of a vision.



The guests for the announcement made by Premier François Legault.

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Commentary

Wind energy priorities might differ between the government and Hydro-Québec

During a short visit to Gaspé on August 27, Quebec's premier François Legault once again refused to guarantee regional content for the upcoming wind farms that will be installed in the province over the next decade. He has accumulated such refusals since Hydro-Québec and his government announced the wind energy development strategy in May 2024.

In fact, Mr. Legault had also refused to confer regional advantage to manufacturers of windmill components prior to that, let's say between February 2022 and May 2024, as it became evident that Hydro-Québec would have difficulties adding a wide range of power dams.

People might remember that François Legault comes from far in the matter of renewable energies, wind power in particular.

He spent two electoral campaigns, those of 2014 and 2018, making wind energy bashing, notably during television debates. In April 2019, during his first visit to the Gaspé Peninsula following his October 2018 electoral victory, he was invited, in the middle of a New Richmond stop to make a

railway announcement, to hop on the front locomotive of a windmill blade train that was about to leave.

The blades, made in Gaspé by LM Wind Power, were bound for the southern United States. In almost every photo, the expression on the premier's face is one of incomprehension, as if asking him to understand the positive side of wind power is too much.

LM Wind Power was exporting, and still does, blades to Texas and the surrounding states, contracts that had been won without grants, and through beating two other much closer plants, in South Dakota and Arkansas, belonging to the same manufacturer.

Despite the fact that Donald Trump had been in power for a little over two years back then, the American president hadn't had the time to concentrate on sabotaging renewable forms of energy the way he does now. So, wind farm developers were still benefiting from useful yet reasonable production tax credits in 2019, support that was available no matter the origins of the components.

Back to Mr. Legault, his smirk while the pictures were taken on the front engine of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie train was a sign that grasping rapidly such wind energy notions was expecting too much from him, even considering that blades exports were bringing solid trade funds to Quebec.

The Apuiat turn

On a mid-week day of February 2022, the Quebec government announced that it, as well as Hydro-Québec, had reached an agreement to build

the Apuiat windfarm on the North Shore, spearheaded by the Innu First Nation.

It came as a surprise because the project had stalled during the Philippe Couillard years (2014-2018) and stalled again between 2018 and the beginning of 2022, under François Legault's government. The premier had finally understood the meaning and usefulness of partnering with First Nations and the relevance of wind energy in a country of strong breezes! His accountant training was finally put to good use.

However, the Apuiat turn was seemingly not enough to make Mr. Legault perfectly cognizant of the windmill component cluster in Quebec. Up to 5,000 Quebecers now earn their living in wind power in general, including a tad more than 1,000 in blade, tower and smaller device manufacturing. Most of them are based in Gaspé and Matane.

Another important cross section of people is mobilized by civil engineering and construction workers, the teams specialized in wind farm building. This includes First Nations people, who are also part owners of wind farms. A rising number of Native workers are also involved in construction, technical maintenance and management related to renewable sources of energy, wind power first and foremost.

Where do we go from there?

There are a few ways to interpret François Legault's repeated refusal to earmark regional and Quebec-wide content in the coming wind power calls for tenders.

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Fred Kirch

Guest Commentary

Rolling Out the Red Carpet for Putin

By all accounts, the August 15 Trump-Putin meeting in Alaska was a complete failure. No agreements were reached, no breakthroughs were announced, and no diminishment of the conflict took place. The entire thing was a waste of time. But the question was never whether the meeting would succeed in producing substance. It was not going to.

The real story is how the very staging of the encounter all but guaranteed that one man, Vladimir Putin, would walk away with something valuable: the optics.

A former U.S. Ambassador to Russia put it bluntly — the symbology was wrong. From the moment Putin's plane touched down, the visuals conveyed deference rather than discipline. A red carpet was rolled out. American jet planes were lined up along the tarmac, followed by a flyover that lent a military flourish to the reception. And in what may be the most striking image, Putin was given a ride in the Beast — the heavily armoured presidential limousine, itself a carefully cultivated symbol of American power and security.

The red carpet alone set the tone. In diplomatic practice, such treatment is typically reserved for close allies or heads of state whose friendship a host nation wishes to showcase. To extend it to Putin — at a moment when relations are defined by confrontation over Ukraine, sanctions, and cyberattacks — elevated him symbolically to a position he has long sought but does

not deserve. Each additional flourish only reinforced the sense that the United States had rolled out not firmness, but flattery.

For Putin, the theater of diplomacy is not a sideshow; it is the show. He has built his political career on projecting strength at home and legitimacy abroad. Sanctions, international criticism, and isolation after the invasion of Ukraine have eroded Moscow's position. Yet here was the American president, treating him as not just an equal but an honoured guest. For Russian state media, the footage writes itself: America needs Russia, and Putin commands respect on the world stage.

For Trump, the incentives were different. He thrives on spectacle, equating pomp with achievement. If the meeting itself produced little, he could still point to the "historic" nature of the gathering. He might spin the stalemate as proof that he gave nothing away, or that his personal rapport with Putin kept tensions from spiraling further. For a domestic audience, the image of Trump holding court with a global rival could be framed as success in itself.

Yet this framing overlooks the structural reality. U.S.-Russia relations are fraught with deep conflicts: Ukraine, NATO's eastward posture, sanctions, cyber operations, nuclear arms treaties. These are not issues resolvable in one meeting, especially one with limited preparation and mismatched goals. Putin comes to summits strategically, with a clear script. Trump, by contrast, ad-libs, seeking short-term image victories. That asymmetry alone makes substantive agreements unlikely.

But in diplomacy, when substance fails, optics endure. And in Alaska, the optics told a one-sided story. Putin was feted as a peer, accorded honors that even traditional allies might envy. The lack of concrete outcomes mattered less than the symbolism, which Russia can now package for both domestic and international

audiences. At home, it bolsters Putin's narrative that he restored Russia to great-power status. Abroad, it suggests cracks in U.S. discipline, a willingness to flatter and indulge where firmness was needed.

Trump's team may argue that no concessions were made, that the U.S. lost nothing. But in international politics, appearances can be concessions. Allowing Putin to bask in red-carpet treatment, to revel in military flyovers, and to share in the symbolism of the Beast, handed him propaganda victories that will last far longer than the empty communiqués of the meeting.

The Alaska summit thus stands as a cautionary tale. Foreign policy is not just about what is said behind closed doors, but also about what is staged in front of

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Poaching at McInnis Cement

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PORT-DANIEL-GASCONS – Malicious individuals are reportedly hunting deer on the grounds of McInnis Cement in Port-Daniel-Gascons, a situation that was unknown to St. Marys Cement, the owner of the cement plant.

According to information received, this poaching occurred around August 21.

Citizens are concerned about individuals hunting deer illegally on this private land, which belongs to the cement plant. According to them, a drone was even used to locate the animals, which are abundant in the Gascons area.

According to reports, at least one animal was shot, and a stray bullet hit a construction machine without injuring its operator.

Informed of the situation, the Ministry of Wildlife has launched an investigation.



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

Poachers allegedly operating on cement plant grounds in Port-Daniel-Gascons.

When questioned about this practice on its land, St. Marys Cement emphasized that “management has not received any reports of trespassing or gunshots on its site and has contacted the Sûreté du Québec.”

“As a matter of principle, St. Marys Cement strongly

condemns any action that could compromise the safety of its employees, contractors, and neighbours. It would report such actions to the authorities if it were informed of them and would cooperate fully with them in their investigation,” says the email from communications officials.

Drinking water: \$10,000 fine for Gaspé man

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - A man from Gaspé was found guilty of two violations of the Drinking Water Quality Regulation and fined a total of \$10,000 by the court.

The charges against Gilles Bouchard date back to between July 1 and October 31, 2019, in Gaspé.

Mr. Bouchard was responsible for a private water distribution system that served buildings numbered 251 to 267 on Boulevard de Gaspé and buildings numbered 1 to 13 on Rue Louise.

The small private water system is located near the Motel Ramsey.

According to the indictment, he failed to sample the distributed water or have it sampled in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in section 14 of the Regulation respecting the quality of drinking water, for the purpose of monitoring the in-



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

The area where the private network is located on Gaspé Boulevard and Louise Street.

organic substances listed in Schedule 1 of that regulation.

During the same period and at the same locations, Mr. Bouchard also failed to sample or have the water sampled as required by section 14.1 of the same regula-

tion, for the purpose of monitoring lead and copper.

For these actions, he was ordered to pay two fines of \$4,000 each and must also reimburse the applicable contributions amounting to \$2,000.

Police report

Rock slide claims life at Henderson beach

An August 16 rock slide at New Richmond’s Henderson beach claimed the life of an 86-year-old man from Pike River, Eastern Townships. “The emergency call was received at 9:45 a.m., as passers-by found a seriously injured man next to a rock slide. The victim was rushed to the hospital where he was pronounced dead,” explains communication officer Frédéric Deshaies, of the Sûreté du Québec.

The victim, Clément Ménard, was a regular visitor to the Henderson beach sector during his trips to the Gaspé Peninsula, according to residences of the Black Cape area.

“As it is the case of all violent deaths, whether foul play is suspected or not, the investigation is carried out by the major crime squad of the Sûreté du Québec. Then the file is transferred to Quebec’s Coroner’s Office, from where the report will be issued,” adds officer Deshaies.

Although the municipal access to Henderson beach was closed shortly after the incident, people were still able to reach the area via private properties on either side.

Quebec’s department of Public Safety prepared a technical report on the geological aspects of the Henderson beach’s cliffs. The report was delivered to the Town of New Richmond on August 26. The engineer notably analyzed whether other rockfalls could occur on this popular beach.

“We read it the same day and we had a meeting with the author of the report the following day in order to get further explanation and understand every aspect of the document. Henderson beach will remain closed until next year. The report was prepared by a Department of Transport engineer. If we listen to what he recommends, we will install concrete blocks and move our road away from the cliff. I think we can’t put nets to prevent rocks from sliding. We would have to do that all around the Gaspé Peninsula,” opines Mr. Dubé.

“The report also indicates that the risks have always been present, and our types of cliffs in the Gaspé are susceptible to erosion,” says Mr. Dubé.

By “next year,” he means that the municipal administration will reflect on the case and come up with a decision for the beginning of 2026, in order to adapt the place to the measures adopted, if there are some decided upon. “We have a bit of time. The beach is not the most popular spot in the winter months. If something has to be installed, it should be ready by May, when more people go,” concludes Éric Dubé.

Fatal loader accident in Racine

Daniel Fontaine, a 72-year-old man from Racine, Eastern Townships, died on the evening August 17 when the loader he was using in the woods flipped and rolled over several times down a sharp slope. The victim was ejected from the loader. “The emergency services were called at 9:45 p.m. He was transported to the (Sainte-Anne-des-Monts) hospital when he was pronounced dead,” says Frédéric Deshaies, of the Sûreté du Québec. The incident is not considered a workplace accident by the CNESS, Quebec’s workplace safety board. The Coroner’s Office is investigating.

Court date for Bonaventure man

Environmental activist Pascal Bergeron, 44, will return to court on October 6 following an August 20 appearance at the New Carlisle courthouse. His defence attorney and the criminal prosecutor agreed to postpone the case until October. A publication ban is imposed on the identity of the alleged victim. The alleged offences occurred between September 1, 2022, and September 1, 2023, in Nouvelle or elsewhere in Quebec. In addition, since May, Bergeron also faces a charge of criminal harassment involving the same alleged victim.

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Gaspé council updates: Erosion, decontamination and gas files

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - Work is progressing on the project to protect Rue des Touristes in the Anse-à-Valleau sector of Gaspé.

On August 18, the municipal council of Gaspé authorized approximately \$30,000 in spending to carry out provincial and federal environmental studies and soil tests to finalize the plans and specifications.

The town has still not managed to convince the Quebec government to protect the entire area.

"If we only do part of the work, the effect of the waves on the rocks will cause further erosion. This is basic logic that anyone with a little knowledge of water dynamics will be able to understand. It's unfortunate that the Quebec government has not understood this," explains Mayor Daniel Côté.

The Quebec government is proposing to protect a central area where most of the erosion occurs. The town wants the Quebec government to cover 75% of the costs, estimated at \$3.5 million a few years ago, to protect the entire area next year. Severe damage was ob-

served during a heavy storm in December 2016.

No delay for future downtown land

The postponement until 2026 of the decontamination of the land of the former Ministry of Transportation service centre in the town centre does not impact Gaspé's plans.

Consultations are still underway for the site's future use.

"We would like there not to be too much additional delay. If we already had a project attached to it and it was delayed, I would probably be more upset," notes the mayor.

The council had hoped to propose a vision before the election, but that is no longer certain.

"Ideally, yes. We would like to submit it before the next municipal election," says Mr. Côté.

The town had initially planned to present consultation results in September.

The Société québécoise des infrastructures recently told CHNC that the discovery of asbestos during demolition work has led to a study to determine the area to be decon-

taminated and the estimated costs.

Gasoline: The town criticized

Criticized by internet users for Gaspé's "inaction" on the issue of high gasoline prices, the mayor explains that he has no leverage to change things. He notes that he has been lobbying on the issue since 2019.

"If the Competition Bureau in Ottawa is twiddling its thumbs and the Régie de l'énergie in Quebec City is doing nothing, it's not our fault. We have no power over this," replies Daniel Côté.

He also cannot explain the regional price differences.

"What's absurd is that there's often an 8-cent difference between Gaspé and Chandler. It makes no sense whatsoever. We don't know who controls the prices or how they are controlled. But it's clearly not competition at work," the mayor adds.

On August 20 the price in Gaspé was \$1.57 with a profit margin of 19.8 cents.

In Rocher-Percé, the average price is \$1.47 with a margin of 9.8 cents, and \$1.50 in Baie-des-Chaleurs with a mar-



Rue des Touristes in L'Anse-à-Valleau.

Photo: N. Sergerie

gin of 14.6 cents, according to the Régie de l'énergie.

Cell phone coverage

A new cell tower will be installed in the Corte-Real area of Gaspé to improve the signal, but it will not solve all coverage problems.

Telus has asked the town for permission to install it (new cell tower), and the town has agreed.

"I'm thinking of the Haldimand area or the airport area, where there is a need. I'm also thinking of the areas between villages or towns that are not well covered, for ex-

ample between L'Anse-à-Valleau and Cloridorme," says Mr. Côté, who is also the prefect of the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC.

There are no plans to build towers, for example, on Route 198 between Gaspé, Murdochville, and L'Anse-Pleureuse, a costly project that would not add any customers, which would be unjustified for a company.

"Nowadays, cell phone service is no longer a luxury, but a basic service. It can also be an emergency service, hence the need for public investment in the cellular network," says Mr. Côté.

Death of Veteran Jacques Plourde at age 101

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - The death of one of the last World War II veterans, Jacques Plourde, 101, of Rivière-au-Renard, has left the community with feelings of grief and gratitude.

Mr. Plourde chose medical assistance in dying at 10 a.m. on August 14, a decision made by someone still very sharp despite illness that had weakened him over the past year. SPEC spoke with him for several hours before the procedure.

"If I do this, I'm sure I won't suffer anymore," the veteran said bluntly when asked about his motivation for taking this step. "I had cancer and I tried several kinds of pills, but they didn't work. I was on Tylenol," Mr. Plourde said. Despite taking powerful medication, the pain had become unbearable. "They treated me as if I had lung cancer," he adds.

Passing away at the age of 101 leaves a long legacy for the community. A World War II veteran who served in the Merchant Marine to supply



Photo: Simon Plourde

Mr. Plourde at the Remembrance Day ceremony on November 11, 2024, in Gaspé.

Europe ravaged by Nazi Germany, he went on to found and run his transportation company in Rivière-au-Renard from 1951 to 1981, after studying business, before passing the reins to his son and granddaughter.

Mr. Plourde was deeply involved in his community, notably as a founding member of the Knights of Colum-

bus, the Royal Canadian Legion and the Volunteer Action Centre, where he delivered meals on wheels, even at 100 years of age.

It was a way for him to contribute to the development of his community, which allowed him to make a profit, particularly through public contracts for snow removal on the region's road network.

"I did a lot of volunteer work. I started doing that when I started making money," he said. "I enjoyed it. I put a lot of time into it," he added, still sharp as a tack. Reflecting on his life, he pointed out: "I'm happy to be leaving. I have no complaints about the life I've led."

The mayor pays tribute to him

The mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté, paid tribute to him on social media after learning the news from the SPEC.

"It really means something to us. He is a pillar of the community," explains Mr. Côté, highlighting his in-

volvement in the community.

"101 years old! I think he had a full life. A life spent building and preserving our values of freedom and peace as a soldier, and as an entrepreneur, developer, and community leader. Almost everyone knew him, saw him, was familiar with him, and he will leave a huge void in the community," notes Mr. Côté, who offers his condolences to his family.

His memory will be honoured

"It's clear that we collectively cannot afford to forget

a monument like him. We will let the family grieve. There are deadlines to be met by the Commission de la toponymie du Québec before naming buildings or other structures. We will let time take its course," says the mayor.

Mr. Côté notes that a public place has been reserved in his honour since 2023 and emphasizes the importance of remembering his contributions. Since the family announced his death, social media has been filled with messages of sympathy celebrating the life of a remarkable man.



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CEGEP: Quebec does not guarantee an end to cuts

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – While the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles is coping with a \$650,000 cut for its fiscal year, the Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Gaspé cannot guarantee that the cuts will end in the coming years.

Despite the effort required, the CEGEP still submitted a balanced budget of \$43 million this year. The Cégep fears further budget cuts in the coming years.

"We have a balanced budget, there are no job losses or cuts. There is an increase in the number of young people at the institution – the best year in 15 years for the college – and there are still significant indicators of growth. On the budgetary front, the CEGEP has done an excellent job with great rigour," comments Stéphane Sainte-Croix.

For the rest, he leaves the ball in the court of Higher Ed-

ucation Minister Pascale Déry and Finance Minister Éric Girard.

The fall economic update could give a signal for what lies ahead.

"We are not in a dynamic of spending growth. But we are very happy because it is possible to do things in a difficult context. I would like to highlight the collaboration of the CEGEP's management through the dialogue we have had," adds the MP.

However, the impacts of this year's cuts could be felt in the medium term.

"This is what we must avoid and come up with initiatives. There are other ways of looking at the future. Our role is to ensure that we get the most out of our budgets, and I think we have done that with the CEGEP," he said on the sidelines of the announcement of a contribution from Quebec for a mobile wind energy training unit on August 21 in Gaspé.

During the budget inter-

view at the start of the school year, CEGEP director Yolaine Arseneau mentioned that the requested cut represented 1.5% of the budget, but that for a small CEGEP like the one in Gaspésie and the Islands, the impact was still significant.

She mentioned that in preparing the budget, "we understood that there could be further cuts in the next fiscal years 2026-2027 and 2027-2028. It will spread over the next five years," Ms. Arseneau said in the interview.

The CEGEP has an accumulated surplus of \$2 million prior to the filing of the 2024-2025 financial statements. However, the college wishes to use these funds for development rather than allocate them to the operating budget.

Private surgery

A series of measures across the province could reduce surgery waiting lists for patients who exceed the expected wait



No reinvestment was granted to colleges this year after the cuts in May.

Photo: N. Sergerie

times.

The Quebec government plans to use the private sector to reduce the lists rather than turning to the public sector, where capacity may be available. However, the Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) could contribute to certain surgeries.

The idea will be analysed by the Member of the National

Assembly.

"The issue of public supply remains. The issue of waiting lists does not have the same impact here as elsewhere. One does not exclude the other. There are specific issues in large centres where waiting lists are growing. It is a set of measures that will ensure that innovative solutions are found," believes Mr. Sainte-Croix.

More students at Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles is seeing its largest enrollment in 15 years, with 1,352 students returning to class on August 18. This represents an increase of 73 students compared with 2024.

"We are very pleased," notes Director of Studies Serge Rochon.

A highlight this year is the introduction of the Police Techniques program, which has 28 students in its first year. The second-year cohort will expand to 50 students.

"We are very happy to have this in the Gaspé Peninsula. Of the 28 students, 22 are from the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands. This new program meets the aspirations of young people in the region, which is good news in terms of accessibility," notes Mr. Rochon.

Student retention from the region remains high, thanks to the variety of programs offered throughout the territory. "We have run some great promotional campaigns and convinced young people to stay in the region, which also explains the increase in admissions this year and in recent years," notes Mr. Rochon.

However, international student admissions remain chal-

lenging. Of 109 foreign students, 61 are new admissions; but only 31 have their study permits and 30 have not received their documents from the federal government.

A total of 172 applications were received during the registration period.

The CEGEP gave them a one-week grace period to regularize their situation, otherwise they will have to wait until next year to pursue their plans.

Yet, the federal government has known for years that the CEGEP's school year begins in the third week of August.

"This is unacceptable. Often, processing times were two weeks. In recent weeks, the delay has increased from two to ten weeks. It's as if the reality of CEGEP is being ignored. There have been so many new rules from both federal and provincial authorities. It's as if there is an unspoken goal to have fewer international students," says Mr. Rochon.

Some pending cases have been resolved, thanks in part to the intervention of the Member of Parliament (MP) for Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj riding.

Alexis Deschênes seized the opportunity after being informed by the CEGEP that processing times had increased significantly.

The MP and his team worked hard to speed up the issuance of study permits by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

Alexis Deschênes wrote to Minister Lena Metlege Diab to inform her of the situation and request priority intervention. His political advisers made numerous representations to immigration officials. The CEGEP had submitted 17 cases to her for discussion with federal authorities.

"The international students they recruit contribute to the vitality of our regions, and many go on to join our labour market. We will remain vigilant to prevent the federal government from placing obstacles in their path," said the Bloc Québécois

MP.

"At this point, three-quarters of the newly admitted foreign students have their study permits and will be able to begin their experience at the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles shortly," said communications officer Sarah Gonthier.

This means that 46 of the 61 'recruits' will begin their academic journey. "There are always some who decide on their own to abandon their studies. This is a normal phenomenon," said Ms. Gonthier, referring to the 15 students whose status remained undecided.

Continuing education is also growing, from 203 to 262 students. This growth is expected to continue this winter with the start of a new cohort

PRELIMINARY ADMISSIONS DATA - FALL 2025-2026

CAMPUS	2025-2026	2024-2025
Gaspé, French-speaking	665	653
Gaspé, English-speaking	83	99
Magdalen Islands	151	130
ÉPAQ	102	117
Carleton-sur-Mer	351	280
Total general education	1,352	1,279
Continuing education (AEC)	262*	203
Total	1,614	1,482

Source: Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles

Work on the Cégep campus residence in Gaspé nears completion

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - Seven years after the process began, renovations on the residences at the Gaspé campus of the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles are nearing completion.

Following a fire that ravaged one of the residence buildings in 2018, discussions began about renovating the entire complex, which was built when the Cégep was founded in the late 1960s.

At the time, the scale of the work and, above all, the estimated cost of \$30 million dampened enthusiasm and led the leaders at the time to consider renovating in stages.

When the project was launched, the cost of renovating the buildings was estimated at \$9 million.

"It's really not a problem to welcome families to the residences on the Gaspé campus," says director Yolaine Arse-



Photo: N. Sergerie

A section of the residences undergoing renovation on the Gaspé campus.

neau.

The work is expected to be completed in December 2025.

The project is moving to the "Z" building, which was used as office space and has been converted into housing,

bringing the campus's capacity from 300 to 350 units.

"We are really happy. This rejuvenation was necessary in Gaspé. We are reaching the end. We are entering our final year of renovations," says the

director. The total cost will reach \$17 million.

"This is a project that was started before the pandemic. We know what happened with the pandemic, with the explosion in the cost of both materials and labour," Ms. Arseneau adds.

With the addition of the residence in Carleton-sur-Mer, these two accommodation buildings are expected to help attract students to the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles.

"We are convinced that it will. It will facilitate access to higher education in the region. It will make us more attractive," says the director.

Grande-Rivière still in the plans

The idea of providing École des pêches de Grande-Rivière with a student residence is moving forward. The Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles is expected to work on

plans and specifications in the coming year.

However, financing conditions have changed since the Carleton-sur-Mer complex was developed.

"We are no longer looking at projects that are 75% funded, but more around 50%. It's definitely becoming a little more difficult to finance these projects," explains the director.

Initially, the construction of a complex similar to the one in Carleton-sur-Mer, with 24 apartments at a cost of \$7.7 million, had been discussed. However, it is too early to say whether the project will proceed.

"The need may not be as great as in Carleton-sur-Mer. There may be half as many students at the fisheries school," says Ms. Arseneau. The analysis is in its initial stages.

On August 11, the CEGEP inaugurated its new student residence in Carleton-sur-Mer.

Electoral map: Prefects back Alexis Deschênes

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON-SUR-MER - The Bloc Québécois Member of Parliament (MP) for Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj will receive financial support from the Table des préfets de la Gaspésie as he appeals the abolition of the Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia riding.

Alexis Deschênes is asking the Federal Court of Appeal to review the February 21 decision that upheld the riding's elimination.

"As is the case at the provincial level, at the federal level, it's the same issue of the weight of the regions across Canada. We want to provide financial support for the proceedings. We don't have the amounts yet. We'll wait to see how the case develops, but we'll be there to support him," says the table's president, Mathieu Lapointe.

The costs of the appeal are unknown, and the Table has not set a maximum contribution. Since the MP is working pro bono, the table would help cover legal expenses if Deschênes loses.



Photo: N. Sergerie

Alexis Deschênes will receive financial backing from the Gaspésie Prefects' Table in his fight against the abolition of the Avignon-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia riding.

In the first instance, the legal bill totalled \$8,000, shared equally between the MP and Droits Collectifs Québec.

Mr. Deschênes, who is also a lawyer and representing himself before the Federal Court of Appeal, highlights the "area criterion" in his July 17 brief. The Attorney General of Canada had 45 days to respond.

Three arguments are put forward: the law states that the constituency must not be too large, that area must be a factor in the analysis, and that the electoral commission did not

conduct a rational analysis in this regard.

In 2012, the area principle was recognized, but the commission was not bound by it in the last revision.

A hearing date is expected to be set in late September for late 2025 or early 2026.

The Table, as an involved party, has already invested more than \$50,000 challenging the law that prevented a revision of Quebec's electoral map, one that would have resulted in the loss of a riding in Gaspésie. That case is also under appeal.

Arena: Carleton-sur-Mer disappointed with Nouvelle

Nelson Sergerie

CARLETON-SUR-MER - Nouvelle's decision not to contribute to the operating deficit of the Carleton-sur-Mer arena has disappointed the mayor of the Avignon MRC's central municipality.

"This is not what we wanted. We really wanted to reach an intermunicipal agreement. It is the council's sovereign choice. We will move forward with double pricing for residents of Nouvelle who want to use the Léopold-Leclerc arena," says the mayor of Carleton-sur-mer Mathieu Lapointe.

This means a bill of \$800 per individual for youth minor hockey and figure skating and \$275 for recreational hockey.

Nouvelle, which would have had to contribute nearly \$15,000 under the proposed agreement, said it will reimburse part of the bill to arena users. The municipal council prefers to invest in the Louis-Sleigher sports centre.

Nouvelle feared the contribution would set a precedent for other Carleton-sur-Mer facilities such as the Quai des arts or the municipal campground.

"That is not the town's intention at all. The arena is the most expensive infrastructure to operate and the most used by people from outside the town. Our intention was to restore fiscal equity for this infrastructure, which is not the case for other infrastructure," says Mr. Lapointe.

The \$337,000 deficit will be shared differently after discussions with New Richmond, Maria, Escuminac, and Cascapédia-Saint-Jules. The share covered by partner municipalities has been cut from 75% to 50%, with users contributing \$100 per session.

"We reviewed all of this. The municipalities had told us yes, we can perhaps do our part, but users also pay a portion for the use of the ice. Everyone will have to pay this amount," explains Mr. Lapointe.

New Richmond, Maria, and Escuminac have adopted resolutions to formalize the agreements. Cascapédia-Saint-Jules has not finalized its decision but appears favourable.

The agreement will be in effect for one year. "This will allow us to adjust during the year to see if the terms of the agreement are acceptable to the parties. Then we can move forward with a multi-year agreement," concludes mayor Lapointe.

Opponents of Dalhousie pozzolan project seek answers from municipal officials

GILLES GAGNÉ

MIGUASHA - One year after the first demonstrations against the New Brunswick pozzolan mining project in Dalhousie, Gaspé Peninsula residents opposing the development of this quarry deplore the lack of clarity from municipal officials, particularly from the MRC Avignon.

Lisa Mosher and Jean-Marc Beaulieu, who own land and a cottage in Miguasha, across from Dalhousie, attended the MRC Avignon public meeting in July. They were shocked to see that, after a year, the MRC leadership still had no clear position on the project.

"We requested a socio-economic impact study to measure the potential effects that pozzolan mining could have on the Gaspé side of Bay of Chaleur. We haven't received a clear answer on this. In a year, it seems to me that the elected officials have had enough time to form an opinion," explains Jean-Marc Beaulieu.

"We've been waiting for a year. Honestly, we didn't feel welcome at the MRC meeting, which is public. We felt like intruders. We were offered to speak first, even though the question period is always at the end of the meeting. We felt like the mayors wanted to get the issue out of the way and move on to something else," add Lisa Mosher and Jean-Marc Beaulieu.

The company EcoRock Dalhousie plans to exploit a pozzolan deposit four or five kilometres from the Gaspé coast, depending on the location, where the Restigouche River flows into Baie des Chaleur, starting in 2028. The company is targeting a production volume of 3 million tons per year. The project would require an investment of \$200 million to \$300 million, potentially creating around 160 jobs.

Pozzolan is a volcanic rock found abundantly in Dalhousie, a town with a heavy industrial past that is now part of the amalgamated municipality of Baie-des-Hérons. This rock is used in certain cement powder recipes. Its volcanic history reduces the need to heat it to the same temperatures as limestone, which remains a key ingredient in cement.

One of the options being considered by EcoRock Dalhousie is to dredge the channel leading to the port of Dalhousie



Photo: G. Gagné

Miguasha Park lies just across the bay from Dalhousie, where the pozzolan mining project is planned.

in order to load ships for export. However, the sediment in this channel is contaminated by Dalhousie's past industrial activities, and its re-suspension from dredging is one of the issues facing opponents.

A paper mill, a plant producing chemicals and a power plant using hydrocarbons as fuel were Dalhousie's main industries.

The prefect wants to respect municipal power

Mathieu Lapointe, prefect of the MRC Avignon, confirms that his organization "does not yet have a position" on the pozzolan mining in Dalhousie. He urges caution and the need to respect the guidelines of the Town of Heron Bay, even though it is in another province.

"We haven't yet taken a position, among other things, because what we wanted was a federal impact study. It (the federal government) refused to conduct this study. Also, it's a project in another province. We're a little reluctant to take a position on a project because it's a territorial governance issue, which falls under municipal jurisdiction, among other things. If the municipality (of Heron Bay) deems that this project meets certain acceptable criteria, we respect that. We're cautious about any actions we might take," says Mathieu Lapointe, who expects

the other side of the bay, when you're in New Brunswick. It's a bit the same with the pozzolana issue," he adds.

Jean-Marc Beaulieu doesn't subscribe to this game of comparisons. "Mesgig Ugu's'n is much less invasive. The wind turbines are dozens of kilometres from the coast. There's not dynamiting every day (at the wind farm), the ships, the port and its incessant traffic are forgotten in this (prefect's) evaluation. It's not comparable in terms of health, pollution, and noise," he emphasizes.

Mathieu Lapointe suggests that the MRC Avignon is still making progress on the pozzolan issue. "There will be a dialogue. What position will emerge? We don't know."

Lisa Mosher, commenting on the prefect's reference to a dialogue, adds, "We didn't leave the July meeting with the impression that we would meet again anytime soon," she points out.

SÉPAQ is keeping itself busy

Lisa Mosher is also trying to obtain a clear position from the Société des établissements de plein air du Québec, which

manages Miguasha Park, a fossil park that has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site for 26 years.

A year ago, SÉPAQ suggested it needed to do its research before expressing an opinion on pozzolan mining. The EcoRock Dalhousie quarry is located five kilometres straight from Miguasha Park, practically across the bay, which is often still called the Restigouche river.

"There's a new leader at the head of the SÉPAQ board of directors. They're responsible for Miguasha Park. They haven't done much on this issue (pozzolan) when they should be taking action. We made inquiries in Paris, at UNESCO headquarters. The park's mission is to protect the coastline from erosion. It's ironic, to say the least, that the SÉPAQ hasn't expressed any concern about the increasing erosion that huge quantities of products shipped by vessels could cause over the next 80 years," says Lisa Mosher.

Miguasha Park contains fossils remarkably well-preserved for their age, dating back 380 million years, offering insights into the transition from marine to terrestrial life.

Heron Bay mayor resigns

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON - The mayor of Heron Bay, Normand Pelletier, resigned from his duties on August 18 by sending a letter to the municipal administration. He had been suspended in May and June for failing to respect the municipal code after giving an interview in which he heavily criticized another municipal council member.

On social media, Normand Pelletier states that this decision was not taken lightly. He explains that his recent suspension by the municipal council and the relocation of the mayor's office to the second floor of town hall during his suspension, in a much smaller room, were the final straw.

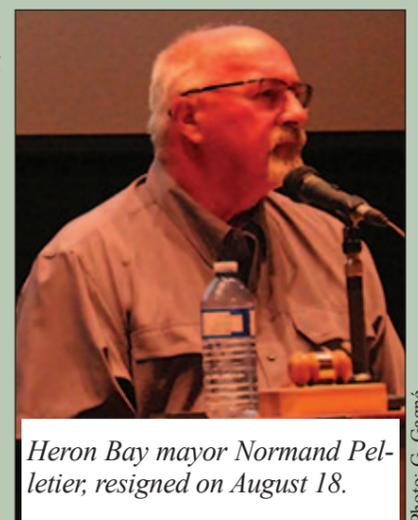
He also stresses that the suspension added to the hatred and threats against him and his family members. He concludes that resigning is the most responsible decision, according to the letter posted on his Facebook page.

Normand Pelletier emphasizes that his goal has always been to revitalize the municipality. "Unfortunately, the fact that key discussion topics and development opportunities are constantly ignored during meetings by council members, and recent events, have completely destroyed my ambitions and my desire to continue," he underlines in his letter.

The pozzolan exploitation file, which has been heavily supported by Mr. Pelletier, divided the council, as three councillors were rooting for the project, while three others were not. He has refused to give interviews about his resignation since August 18.

Meanwhile, former Madawaska-Restigouche Member of Parliament René Arseneault, is now employed by EcoRock Dalhousie, less than five months after ending his last term at the House of Commons. Mr. Arseneault, who served three terms between 2015 and March 2025, had announced in December 2024 that he would not seek a fourth term. Towards the end of his third term, he secured a grant conferred to EcoRock Dalhousie, which prompted project opponents to suggest that he is involved in a conflict of interest.

René Arseneault, a trained lawyer, told Radio-Canada that he checked ethics rules before accepting the position, tied to corporate affairs and business development.



Heron Bay mayor Normand Pelletier, resigned on August 18.

Photo: G. Gagné

Construction is booming in Grande-Vallée

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GRANDE-VALLÉE – Since 2018, no fewer than 29 housing units and 19 additional residences have been added to Grande-Vallée, and yet this is still not enough for the community of nearly 1,100 people.

According to the municipality's count, in March 2024, 165 newcomers settled in Grande-Vallée. "They needed homes. In addition, in 2021, we adopted a bylaw allowing a tax credit for citizens who were first-time homeowners and who lived there permanently," explains Grande-Vallée Mayor Noël Richard. The municipality had budgeted \$80,000, and the envelope has already been exhausted.



Photo: Noël Richard

Construction is booming in Grande-Vallée.

"We are short of housing. We had submitted an application to the Société d'habitation du Québec, the COFA, for 24 housing units," notes the

elected official. The project was approved on August 22 by the Quebec government in agreement with the federal government to accelerate

housing construction.

"If Osisko moves to Murdochville, it would create additional demand. But we estimated that about 50 additional housing units, with the COFA, would meet the needs," he said.

The eventual reopening of the Murdochville mine could add pressure to the demand for housing. "Absolutely. If Osisko moves in, the coastal villages will benefit, as was the case when Grande-Vallée had 2,000 people. People will travel, and Osisko would have a major impact on the Gaspé Peninsula," believes Mr. Richard.

At the time, three buses ran between Grande-Vallée and Murdochville for Mines Gaspé workers. Property tax

value rose from \$72 million in 2028 to \$118 million in 2025.

"This is due to construction, sales of more expensive homes, and higher construction costs," notes the mayor.

Mr. Richard offers an explanation for the excitement surrounding Grande-Vallée.

"It's a beautiful village with many services: the CLSC, ambulance, local shops, schools, all of which encourage families to come and settle here. There are many jobs available. The quality of life we offer has attracted many people from outside the area to settle here," the mayor explains.

Despite the aging population and deaths, demographic data remains positive. "We think things are going very well," concludes Mr. Richard.

WIND:

▶ Cont'd from page 4

First, he still needs to be convinced that the wind energy manufacturing cluster is important in Quebec, and that keeping it will be useful in the future as the international demand for windmill components will only increase in the future.

Asian countries are very competitive in that field, as we saw for the Mesgig Uguj's'n 2 wind farm, in Escuminac's back country. This wind farm will be equipped with Asian towers and blades instead of Gaspesian and Lower Saint Lawrence ones. However, the Gaspé and Matane plants have proven their export potential in the past. LM Wind Power is still delivering its production south of the border.

Secondly, François Legault might have decided to shut his mouth about Quebec content in the coming calls for tenders in order to protect the local component manufacturers from strict international trade rules pertaining to protectionism.

Hydro-Québec president and chief executive officer Claudine Bouchard clearly indicated in Gaspé that there is a will to maintain the province's dynamic windmill component manufacturing cluster alive at the utility, and that upcoming calls for tenders will be assessed accordingly. We understand from that statement that supplemental points can be granted to a Quebec de-

veloper including local components in its windfarm project. That edge could favour our manufacturers.

So, there might be some unsaid reality between Mr. Legault and Ms. Bouchard that will prevent Quebec from being penalized by international trade rules, since the competition will come from overseas.

There is a third reason that could convince François Legault to be discrete about favouring Quebec wind energy manufacturers. It will take time to plan, run calls for tenders totalling 10,000 megawatts and install all that power.

Quebec has also been very slow in making sure that power transport lines must be upgraded between Rivière-du-Loup and Lévis before more wind farms are added in the Gaspé Peninsula and the Lower Saint Lawrence regions, where the potential might attract 6,000 of the 10,000 megawatts. In fact, such upgrading remains to be confirmed.

Hydro-Québec is often defined as a state within the state, to explain that even if it is a public utility, it is managed according to a set of rules that is not automatically in line with a government driven by a will to be re-elected.

We all know that the Coalition avenir Québec is far from certain to be re-elected come October 2026. Because of that, the Hydro-Québec brass is probably marching at a pace that is not dictated by political considerations.

A mobile training unit for wind turbine maintenance

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - A mobile training unit has been designed at the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles for the training of wind turbine maintenance workers.

This is a need in the context of Quebec's development of 10,000 megawatts of wind energy in the coming years. "This training doesn't necessarily involve assessment. We have a competency-based approach. We're in a context that's conducive to learning with a view to removing barriers and making training increasingly accessible," notes the college's director of continuing education, Éric Couillard.

Quebec is contributing \$1.3 million, and the CEGEP is adding \$200,000 for a \$1.5 million project. "This is the beginning of a new approach to training, particularly in the regions. Establishing partnerships with communities and businesses," says Gaspé MNA Stéphane Ste-Croix.

Since May 12, eight students from the Mi'gmaq communities of Listuguj, Gesgapegiag, and Gespeg have been recruited. The need is estimated at 400 new technicians by 2029.



Photo: N. Sergerie

The college's director of continuing education, Éric Couillard, shows the interior layout of the trailer used for mobile training.

▶ Cont'd from page 4

cameras. Optics frame perceptions, and perceptions shape power. By mismanaging the theater, Washington not only squandered an opportunity for firmness but amplified Putin's stature.

Trump's instincts for showmanship may serve him well in the world of domestic politics, where headlines and imagery often matter more than legislative detail. But in the unforgiving arena of international diplomacy, spectacle without substance can be costly. In Alaska, the stagecraft became the story, and the story was one of more American missteps, Russian gains and failure to

PUTIN: resolve a conflict that is threatening to the entire world.

I believe that the war in Ukraine is at a tipping point. Not because Ukraine lacks courage or motivation, but because the balance of resources and political will is shifting. If Europe and its allies don't step in more decisively than they have, the cost of delay could indeed be Ukraine's survival as a sovereign state.

Ukraine cannot outlast Russia alone, but the combined economic power of Europe, the United States, Canada, Japan and others dwarfs Russia's economy many times over.

The political question is whether the Western nations are willing to use that leverage

fully, even if it means higher short-term costs at home. The alternative may be far costlier; a Europe where Russia is emboldened, Ukraine is destroyed, the credibility of Western deterrence is shattered, and it's just a matter of time before Russia turns to another country in its quest to resurrect the Soviet Union.

The time has come to stop relying on Donald Trump, who has made very clear that his sympathies lie totally with Vladimir Putin, ignore him, and pursue a strategy of "bankrupting Russia.". Russia has shown it can absorb battlefield losses and domestic hardship, but it cannot withstand the steady erosion of its economic foundation.

Regrouping of municipal housing authorities planned in Rocher-Percé

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CHANDLER – After exploring the idea in 2023, a project to regroup municipal housing authorities is being launched in the Rocher-Percé MRC.

Organizations in Percé, Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé, Grande-Rivière, Chandler, and Port-Daniel-Gascons have begun discussions to this effect.

"We passed a resolution supporting the project. It's moving forward. It could be beneficial for everyone," believes Mayor Gilles Daraïche, who commented on the issue following the August 25 municipal council meeting.

The process is in its preliminary stages.

"We have to provide good service in every municipality. We mustn't forget anyone. It's important to manage this well. We'll be bigger. We'll see how it goes," adds the mayor.

In 2023, Grande-Rivière floated the idea in light of the difficulty of finding a resource for the general management. Discussions had even been initiated with Chandler in December of the same year, but they did not come to fruition at that time.

\$30 million to convert the wharf

The project to develop a recreational and tourist wharf on Chandler's former commercial wharf is estimated to cost approximately \$30 million.

On August 26, the mayor spoke with Alexis Deschênes, the Bloc Québécois Member of Parliament for Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj, in order to move the issue forward in the federal government.

"The figures we received were in that range. I would like it to be less. That will have to be evaluated. The wharf is in very poor condition. We have a great project to allow people to fish safely, as they did in the 1970s and 1980s," he said, noting that people currently venture there at their own risk.

Discussions are ongoing with Transport Canada, and a 3D presentation of the project



Photo: N. Sergerie

According to the mayor, the project to create a recreational tourism wharf would cost \$30 million.

is scheduled for the end of September.

The work is not expected to begin until 2026-2027.

Over the years, the cost of refurbishing the wharf has varied between \$16 million and \$60 million.

The wharf was closed in September 2016 for safety reasons due to its dilapidated condition. The infrastructure was inaugurated in 1970 to meet the needs of the former Gaspésia paper mill, which closed in 1999.

Interest in West Commercial Street

Investors are interested in the 11 potential sites of the defunct Gaspésia. This summer, the City commissioned a characterization study to determine the construction possibilities on these sites and measure the level of contamination after decades of paper mill operations in the heart of the town.

The council awarded a contract for a complementary characterization study for the reuse of these strategic plots on West Commercial Street. Housing and businesses would be possible.

"I would really like to see businesses. It would bring back the Commercial Street of the good old days, when it was bustling with lots of shops. It would be fun to see that again. People are asking about the size of the land, etc. It's coming. It's moving forward," says the mayor with certainty about the outcome of the studies.

A bakery, a pizzeria and a barber shop have been added in recent months to the downtown artery.

Purchase of a snow removal truck

The town of Chandler wants to take over street maintenance in the Newport sector. To do so, the Town has tabled a notice of motion proposing the purchase of a truck and equipment for \$419,950.

"It has increased every

year, and significantly. We're talking about more than \$100,000 per year, closer to \$150,000. We're going to purchase a truck and we think that in the short and medium term, we'll save money and be able to offer this service," calculates the mayor, who has no complaints about the contractor who was doing the work.

A more accurate assessment of needs and costs is currently underway. The mayor does not rule out adjusting the borrowing by-law

based on the acquisition costs of the machinery.

Vandalism under control

Vandalism has calmed down after a wave at the beginning of the summer when several pieces of equipment were damaged by people, some of which were even defaced with a Nazi swastika on a footbridge.

According to the mayor, the situation has returned to normal.

"There was an arrest this summer. People were questioned. Things have changed. We added cameras. We will add more in specific locations," said the elected official, a statement that the Sûreté du Québec could not confirm at the time of writing.

The mayor once again deplores this situation. "Every time we start to spruce things up, a week later, people start vandalising them. It's unfortunate, but that's the way it is. It's money down the drain. It seems that people are more aware of this. They are reporting it more," said Mr. Daraïche.

Citizens have denounced these deplorable acts on social media.



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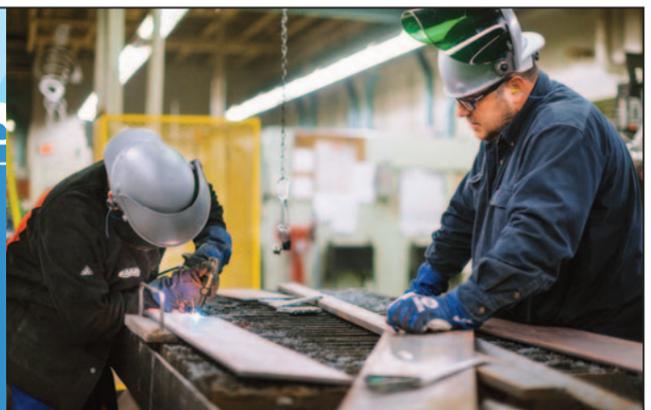


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SCAN ME

1983 was another banner year for news

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE: – Anyone, even slightly interested in history will like reading about 1983. That year was a turning point in so many fields including mining, fisheries, politics and education, not necessarily in that order. So, let's dive into it.

**Vol. 9, No 1
January 4, 1983**

- SPEC's first issue of 1983, features children playing outside; a real winter is underway.
- Sharon McCully reports on a fine shopping season prior to Christmas despite the recession.
- In "What's in a name – the right to be for one thing", Robert Alexander reports on the health system's new policy "which sees married women registered under their maiden names, with only scant and obscure reference to their spouse's name".
- Inside, an article indicates that York River is recovering from the 1982 acid spill triggered by Mines Gaspé.

**Vol. 9 No 2
January 11, 1983**

- On page one there is a photo of Gerard D. Levesque, who discusses government interventions during an interview with SPEC.
- "Bomb threat at Bonaventure Polyvalent", explains that the return to school was marred by a mean phone call. "Gaspésians recovering from flu bug" and "Union explains Bill 70 roll back" are the other page 1 titles.
- Bill 70 was denounced due to salary cuts for government employees. Inside, Mines Gaspé announces that, due to budget cuts, the firm will no longer support Murdochville's recreational complex, including the arena, the swimming pool, the curling rink and the bowling alley.

**Vol. 9 No 3
January 18, 1983**

- "Cancer Info-Center to open January 24th", also called Organization of Gaspé-

sian Persons Affected by Cancer, or OGPAC, "Vehicle registration period to be extended" and "Prospects not good – not hopeless" at Mines Gaspé are the headlines. The latter article shows that with a copper price at 68 cents in American currency, the Murdochville mine can hardly compete with countries like Chile, where the salary of a miner is 10 times smaller. However, developing a new ore deposit would cost \$155 million in Murdochville, and three times more in Chile.

**Vol. 9 No 4
January 25, 1983**

- "Strike to close school, Thursday, January 27", "Flu hits Gaspé schools", "Health study soon to be released" and "Gaspé minor hockey league cancellation of games" are the headlines. The latter topic deals with disgruntled minor hockey vice-president Albert Patterson over the way the Town of Gaspé imposed fees. Sharon McCully reports on Phil Doddridge's retirement party on page 7.

**Vol. 9 No 5
February 1, 1983**

- "Strike action mounting daily" covers the public sector employees' strike, while "Virus still alive" explains the extent of the winter's flu.
- A picture and caption underlines Escuminac's William Court's 103rd birthday. Also in Escuminac, Byron Edwards explains that the local school offers Adult Ed introduction to computers' courses.

**Vol. 9 No 6
February 8, 1983**

- The headlines are "Lévesque holds teachers off for another week", "2nd annual New Carlisle Festival", "Precedent set in mill decision" and "Mines Gaspé study made public". On the latter issue, Robert Alexander mentions that "the report found no areas of grave concern". However, respiratory problems, namely chronic coughing, was found in 5.7% of non-smoking workers, indicating sulphur dioxide "as a possible serious



Gaspé Girls

Vol. 9, No. 4

problem".

- Inside, readers learn that the Cross Point sawmill was destroyed by a fire.

**Vol. 9 No 7
February 15, 1983**

- "Municipal council under fire for hiring policies" in New Carlisle, "Alliance-Quebec leader in Gaspé", and public employees' "Strike into third week" are the headlines. The New Carlisle controversy arose from contracts given to companies from neighbouring municipalities when locals could have worked. Eric Maldoff, president of Alliance-Quebec, came to Gaspé to help Anglophone groups understand the current minority problems and their solutions. Inside, a Gaspé citizen, Gertrude LeBouthillier, is turning 100.

**Vol. 9 No 8
February 22, 1983**

- "Teachers and students return to classes", "The English of the Lower North Shore" and a picture-caption about a group of 45 students who attended a cross-country ski clinic at New Carlisle's Optimist chalet make page 1, issue 8, dated February 22.
- We also learn that Gaspé Bottling is cutting its working schedule from five to four days weekly because of the recession.

**Vol. 9 No 9
March 1, 1983**

- Belle Anse's "Parents overruled by Board" and Gaspé's "Homecoming con-

firm's more event" make the front page. Belle Anse parents contest the school board decision to regroup grade 7-8 at Gaspé Polyvalent.

**Vol. 9 No 10
March 8, 1983**

- VIA Rail confirms that the Gaspé-Montreal straight through service will be back in May. The schedule is made to accommodate passengers living in the Drummondville area.
- "UIC payments suspended during strike" and "74th birthday for Agricultural Society" of Bonaventure also make the front page.

**Vol. 9 No 11
March 15, 1983**

- "Parents willing to give away a cow if allowed to buy back the milk!" explains the New Richmond area francophone parents being asked, and refusing, to move their children from the Carleton Polyvalent to Bonaventure.
- The paper also presents a photo report to go with "New Carlisle Carnival wind up".
- SPEC's reporter Sharon McCully is chosen as New Richmond's personality of the month.
- Historian Ken Annett keeps delivering long articles to SPEC.

**Vol. 9 No 12
March 22, 1983**

- A photo of CHNC's striking workers demonstrating in the New Carlisle streets with other CSN colleagues, a "Lock out at Chandler Print-

ing" article, and "Quebec Indians represented in Ottawa", at recent constitutional talks.

- A long article about the Sunny Bank hatchery.
- Newport's Maurice Beauchamp again wins the yearly fiddling contest.

**Vol. 9 No 13
March 29, 1983**

- "It's great to be Irish – even better if you live in Douglstown", "The school board: who are they – what do they do?" and "\$775,000 for repairs to Gaspé CEGEP" on page 1.

**Vol. 9 No 14
April 5, 1983**

- "N.B. workers fight for jobs" is the main title. New Brunswickers complain about Quebec workers' entry in their province.
- In "School administrators on vacation as orders arrive", readers learn that all school boards refused to provide to Quebec's Justice department the list of teachers who participated in the illegal common front strike.
- "Gaspé's first satellite dish?" tells how Sunny Bank's Terry Miller expanded his television reception.

**Vol. 9 No 15
April 12, 1983**

- The top story is "Maria resident granted Indian status". John Martin, who was Education director of the Maria reserve then, had to fight up to the Supreme Court to get recognized as an "Indian". He was the "illegitimate", as it was also called then, son of an Aboriginal father and a white mother. Even if he was raised by his father in Quebec and the United States, the Indian Affairs department refused him several times status as his father's son. Mr. Martin first wrote letters to the federal government at 16, and it took him 12 years, and the hiring of a lawyer at 23, to get the Supreme Court verdict.

Next page



1983 was another banner year for news

- Other headlines included “Robert Bourassa to visit Gaspé” and “Quebec teachers participate in British exchange”.

• Meanwhile, Gaspé mayor Lewis Fitzpatrick comes back from Ottawa with \$2.5 million secured for the Sandy Beach wharf upgrade.

**Vol. 9 No 16
April 19, 1983**

• “CASA presents John Allan Cameron”, a singer who once accompanied legend Anne Murray, fills a big part of page 1.

• “Murdochville smelter down – no off-shore concentrate”, reminds readers that the closure of the Sandy Beach wharf handicaps Mines Gaspé’s capacity to compete on import ore market.

• “Gaspé CEGEP to give diploma course in data processing” is the other main title. The April 26 issue, number 17, is missing from our archives.

**Vol. 9 No 18
May 3, 1983**

• “House of Commons committee investigating self-gov’t” fills the front-page top. Restigouche chief Ronald Jacques proposes a native government that would manage health, formal and cultural education, child welfare and matrimonial matters.

• “Hundreds enjoy regional choirs” covers a gathering of 500 singers in New Richmond.

**Vol. 9 No 19
May 10, 1983**

• In “Communities unite to oppose spray”, Sharon McCully reports on the strong opposition of Gaspésians living between Escuminac and Port Daniel to herbicide spraying on Gaspé Peninsula tree plantations. People fear birth defects, spontaneous abortions, heart diseases and cancer.

• A picture and caption cover the Toronto-Dominion Bank expansion in Gaspé.

• “1500 fishermen remain jobless” explains the uncertainty tied to the Quebec government seizure of 6 Magdalen



5th Annual Spring Festival in New Richmond.

Vol. 9, No. 20

Islands boats, and the lack of cash flow for seven Gaspé Peninsula and Maggies plants.

**Vol. 9 No 20
May 17, 1983**

• In SPEC’s 20th issue, dated May 17, “Quebec Liberal financial campaign exceeds objective”, “Possibility of masters programs for Gaspé teachers” and “Yves Gélinas Home” make the headlines. The masters’ programs are proposed by McGill. Yves Gélinas is an accomplished sailboat navigator and documentarist who left Gaspé aboard Jean du Sud on December 23 and came back there on May 9 after circumnavigating the world alone. He broke his mast after moving through a hurricane off the coast of Australia.

**Vol. 9 No 21
May 24, 1983**

• VIA Rail’s return with a through service to Montreal is not exactly what the public corporation had announced. There is no restaurant and the sleeper is limited to 14 roomettes, sold on a first come, first serve basis. The schedule is also controversial, as the westbound train passes past midnight in New Richmond and Carleton, arriving in Montreal after lunch. Matapedia’s anglophone

• “Parents and students unhappy with school board deci-

sion” deplore the plan to send grade 7-9 children to Escuminac, which would mean an almost two-hour drive one way. Parents will block Matapedia Intermediate School on May 24.

• The “Polyesters headline at variety show” explains how a New Carlisle show raised money for two children causes. Inside, the federal government announces \$18 million for Gaspé riding fishing harbours. However, Grande Rivière loses to Mont-Joli a \$20 million oceanography research centre later called Maurice-Lamontagne Institute.

**Vol. 9 No 22
May 3, 1983**

• Matapedia parents and grades 7-9 children demonstrate in front of their school, to avoid the move to Escuminac. The Regional School Board of Gaspesia argues that 17 students require 1.5 teachers, but the curriculum content calls for 3.6 teachers.

• In “Gaspé hosts Legion Convention”, Debbie Phillips reports on the event that attracted 250 delegates from all over Quebec.

• The herbicides topic is raging as public hearings are held about the use of 2,4D and 2,4,5T products. CASA also presented a comprehensive study. Gaspé doctor Robert Noiseux expresses what most

people think: “there is no safe level of dioxin” in general, including those herbicides.

• Consolidated Bathurst invests \$3.9 million on environment protection projects. Howard Miller is elected president of the Gaspesia Teachers Association.

**Vol. 9 No 23
June 7, 1983**

• “School commissioned asked to resign” by Matapedia parents opposed to their children’s move to Escuminac, “Nine ticket agents laid off by CN” and “More power – more speed – more fun”, about the 1983 Gaspé Regatta, are page 1 titles.

• Oddly, despite VIA Rail’s birth in 1977, the station agents were still filled by CN employees. The positions cut are located in Barachois, Percé, Grande Rivière, Newport, Port Daniel, Bonaventure, Caplan, Maria and Nouvelle.

• Despite losing money in Murdochville, Mines Gaspé’s offer to its 1,300 unionized employees maintains status quo in pay, and is accepted.

**Vol. 9 No, 24
June 14, 1983**

• “Yvon Charbonneau on teachers and tactics”, “Bechervaise calls SPEC reports misleading” and a picture showing a bicycle safety event at New

Carlisle High School make page 1.

• Lynden Bechervaise did not like the report stating that children taking the bus from Mann’s Settlement to Escuminac were in for two hours. A “dummy run” made by school board representatives, with stops and transfers, took 50 minutes.

• Robert Alexander writes a long story about two new CN retirees based in Gaspé, Edgar Coull and Bernard Clements.

**Vol. 9 No 24
June 21, 1983**

• “Herbicide spray program cancelled” says it all, as Quebec has decided to halt it until further study is complete.

• “New Richmonder chosen in NHL draft” informs readers that Éric Cormier was drafted in the 8th round by the Winnipeg Jets.

• “Sea Shepherd trial postponed” deals with the legal procedure engaged against Paul Watson, who tries to halt seal hunting.

• Inside, an article describes the summer project of four students checking if there is enough artifacts and interest to establish a railway museum in New Carlisle.

• Ken Annett delivers a long article about the O’Hara family of Gaspé.

**Vol. 9 No 26
June 28, 1983**

• “14 million over five years for tourist development”, “Full CBC coverage to precede Santa” and “Despite poor weather, Regatta success” make the front page.

• The CBC story mentions that Gaspésians will at last get news from Quebec.

**Vol. 9 No 27
July 5, 1983**

• “Paspebiac Historic Site opens for summer” makes the only front-page title. The site, saved in extremis by local citi-

1983 was another banner year for news

zens, reveals the erection of a fisheries business, and much more, by Jerseyman Charles Robin.

- A picture and caption feature the blaze that destroyed the 103-year-old Restigouche Salmon Club's clubhouse in Matapedia.

- Another picture-caption combo shows New Carlisle's Canada Day celebration New Carlisle.

- A VIA Rail executive is satisfied to see that the through service between Gaspé and Montreal is 75 to 80% full, but explains that the addition of a dining car is ruled out because of economics.

Vol. 9 No. 28
July 12, 1983

- "Fish plant and community prosper", as Helen Bond writes an article about the Manigo plant and market in Brillant Cove, owned by Denver Leggo and Gérard Bernier.

- "Douglastown July 1 a big success" and "Lifestyle Certificate of Merit awarded to a Gaspesian resident", namely Leonard MacBrearty, for his role in Fondation Maguire, which supports disabled children, also make page 1.

- A long article, presents the farm of Mark and Nikki Clinton, who notably produce ice cream made from goat milk, "a science" producing "simply delicious" ice cream, writes Helen Bond.

Vol. 9 No. 29
July 19, 1983

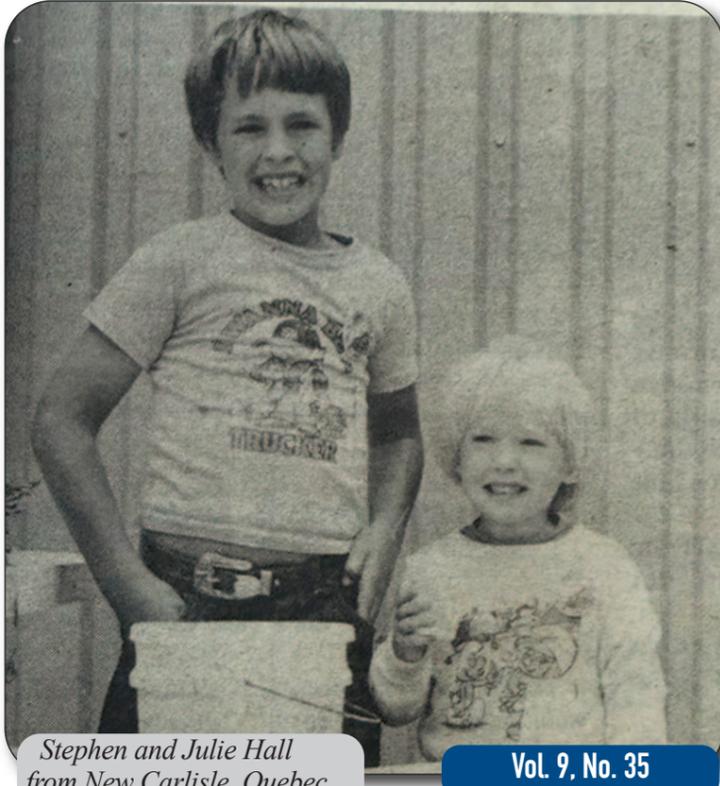
- "Major federal development plan for the Quebec fisheries", "Rough seas defeat swimmers" and "Enid Legros Exhibition a success" make the headlines.

- The fisheries plan was released upon the paper's deadline. It calls for \$160 million over five years.

- The rough seas article explains that waves forced the swimmers out of Paspebiac's 14 milles race.

- Enid Legros' exhibition took place at the Paspebiac Historic Site. Her work was unveiled by her mother, Ms. Arthur Legros.

- Lynden Bechervaise, Don Kerr, Stuart Richards, Buddy



Stephen and Julie Hall from New Carlisle, Quebec.

Vol. 9, No. 35

Campbell and Douglas Hunt spearhead a project to build a boat for the 1984 bicentennial of the Loyalist landing in Paspebiac and the 450th anniversary of Jacques Cartier's arrival in Gaspé, in 1984.

Vol. 9 No. 30
July 26, 1983

- "En route to Newfoundland", about 12 sail boats travelling from Hamilton to the Atlantic province, "Gerard Levesque not a candidate for Liberal leadership" and "Les 14 milles de Paspebiac: hits like a hammer" are featured on page 1.

- Mr. Levesque decides to stay as interim leader. The article about the 14-mile swim gives details about its halt, when New Zealander Philipp Rush was ahead.

Vol. 9 No. 31
August 2, 1983

- "CBC on location in the Gaspé", makes the front page of SPEC's August 2 issue, describes how a French movie is shot between Prevel and Gesgapegiag. It was aired by Radio-Canada in fall of 1984.

- "Cold temperature affects swimmers" explains that only four of seven athletes finished the Forillon to Haldimand race. Gaspé's Mimi Arsenault won it.

- There is a report on Port Daniel West's 100th anniversary,

sary, attended by Hazel McCallion, and another one, "Celebration in Restigouche", about Saint Anne's day.

Vol. 9 No. 32
August 9, 1983

- "70th wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Lawrence" crowns the front page. The Barachois couple got married in September 1913. "Eric Cormier Personality of the month", in New Richmond says it all for the hockey player and university student.

- "Parade flags in Chandler" and "Questions remain about municipal firing" in New Richmond complete page 1.

Vol. 9 No. 33
August 16, 1983

- "Pat St. Onge - Elmo Whittom receive union promotions". Mr. St. Onge now represents six mills instead of two, and Mr. Whittom now covers Eastern Canada's paper mill workers.

- "School enrollment down slightly for 83-84" indicates a reduction from 1,768 to 1,676 students in the Gaspé and the Maggies.

- "Discoverer of Gaspé Copper dies at 103" (Alfred Miller). "Margaret Leblanc appointed to the board of Le Casbestan" and "Outdoor volleyball, a smashing success" make the other headlines.

- John Eden writes that "Sit-

uation in Murdochville looks brighter" but Mines Gaspé director Michel Lefebvre affirms that the company's staff will not go back to 1,800 people, as 800 is realistic.

Vol. 9 No. 34
August 23, 1983

- There's a photo of Daniel Johnson Jr., who is campaigning in Gaspé for the leadership of Quebec's Liberal Party.

- In "No advance warning of Hydro spraying", the use of defoliant 2,4D, which contains Agent Orange, is received coldly by land owners.

- "Sewer causing stink in Hopetown", "Rail travel survey" and Auction No. 4 down, do I hear 5", are the other headlines, the latter pertaining to cattle auctions.

- Inside, a study reveals that a rebuilt Pointe-à-la-Croix sawmill would be profitable.

Vol. 9 No. 35
August 30, 1983

- This issue features "1983 tourist season", "Farmer's market popular in New Carlisle", "A wealth of history" (Percé of old), "Students improve community" and "Bourassa, the force of experience" on the cover, the latter confirming the former premier's attempting a comeback.

- Overall, the tourist season was the best in four years, ac-

ording to Wayne Adams, of Adams Motels.

- As for CASA's farmer's market, it went so well that two more events will be held in September.

- In New Carlisle as well, 105 students each worked two days for the community. Ken Annett runs "The search for petroleum in Gaspé".

Vol. 9 No. 36
September 6, 1983

- "Three sharks captured this summer" and "Over 5,000 visit New Richmond West fairgrounds" are the main titles. The basking sharks, also called bone sharks, feed on plankton. "Shigawake Fair improving with age", "Numbers up at the Gaspé CEGEP" and "What's to come in 84" are other front-page titles. The unofficial number of students at the Gaspé CEGEP nears 1,300.

Vol. 9 No. 37
September 13, 1983

- "The silver lining to a black cloud" describes the expectations arising from CASA's recent annual meeting, attended by close to 100 people, including Wendell Sparks, off-Montreal vice-president of Alliance Quebec. The organization must

Page 16

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deal with the departure of outgoing president Don Miller, who moves to Quebec City.

- “Museum changes name”, for the Musée de la Gaspésie, and “Gaspé County Fair”, which went well despite so-so weather, “Anniversary celebrations wind down in Escuminac”, which turns 75, also appear on page 1.
- The ministry of Energy and Resources still studies the effects of the 2,4,5T herbicide.

**Vol. 9 No 38
September 20, 1983**

- “Polish citizens to stand trial on robbery charges” and “Delegates selected for the QLP convention” are the main titles. The robbery took place in Barachois. “Farmers profit from auction”, “School bus drivers on strike” and “SPEC holds annual general meetings are also mentioned on page 1.
- Inside, regional stakeholders denounce the “pessimistic view of the economy of Gaspésie” feature in an August 30 report aired by Radio-Canada. At its AGM, SPEC joined with CASA in honouring Dave Doherty for his weekly Legion column.

**Vol. 9 No 39
September 27, 1983**

- “3rd annual Terry Fox run”, “Poles re-appear in New Carlisle court” and “Largest drug seizure on Gaspé Coast” are the feature articles.
- The two Polish citizens will undergo trial on November 21. Inside, readers learn that the Port Daniel Women’s Institute turns 60.

**Vol. 9 No 40
October 4, 1983**

- “Church suppers, pot lucks now taxable”, “New Richmond hosts Cuboree” (for scouts), “Matapedia children back home, for how long?” and a picture of the 52-foot Loyalist boat, out of the Paspebiac shipyard, fill page 1.
- The Matapedia parents have accepted for a month the trips their children make to Escuminac and are bringing their

children back home. The children are exhausted by travel, according to the parents.

**Vol. 9 No 42
October 18, 1983**

- Features the new leader of Quebec’s Liberal Party, in Robert “Bourassa takes 75% of votes in comeback”, the front-page title. That victory was expected.
- In “Grande-Vallée wins out”, Daniel Sams, a new reporter for SPEC, explains how almost two weeks of demonstration by local people convinced the Quebec government to reopen the Northern Gaspé sawmill. The plant had been closed for 18 months. It was then owned by government-controlled Rexfor.
- SPEC runs the part 3 article about the Royal Rifles of Canada, who fought in Hong Kong.
- Gaspé mayor Lewis Fitzpatrick decides to refrain from running again in November, due to council tensions, and an article about upcoming small business week.

**Vol. 9 No 43
October 25, 1983**

- Sharon McCully runs a long article about the Murdochville situation, as 1,200 of Mines Gaspé’s initial workforce of 1,800 workers are laid off. Most have decided to stay around, hoping for a full-scale resumption of activities, despite company’s Michel Lefebvre statement to the effect that it is unlikely.
- “New drainage system for Gaspé”, “New election methods proposed by Quebec”, “Most Gaspésians like VIA summer service” and “MEQ gives Matapedia group a more definite No” are the other page 1 titles.
- MEQ is Quebec’s department of Education. The positive perception of VIA’s service follows the return of full meals on the train.

**Vol. 9 No 44
November 1, 1983**

- Six titles endow the front

page, “CASA brings theatre group to schools” and “Campaign fever is running high” are the headlines, the latter dealing with municipal elections. A smaller title informs readers that Robert Pidgeon will run against Amédée Dumaresq in Gaspé for mayor. “Bill 57 unconstitutional”, “Nearly \$10 million for school boards in region 1” (Gaspé Peninsula and Lower St. Lawrence are still regrouped) and “Rémi Bujold meets fishermen in Shigawake” are also mentioned on page 1. Mr. Bujold wanted to see how many fishermen are using the Shigawake wharf. No decision is made that day.

**Vol. 9 No 45
November 8, 1983**

- “Tall ship captains visit Gaspé” featured on the cover. Readers learn that Robert Pidgeon won with ease Gaspé’s mayoral election.
- A picture shows Gaspesian veteran Hedley Michel leaving for France’s ceremony to celebrate 1918’s Armistice, then 65 years ago.
- “\$65 million for Mines Gaspé” covers a project that could potentially lead to the opening of another underground mine in 1984.
- “CIEU-FM officially on the air” and “Jacques Cartier ski expedition” are the other page 1 title. The last topic deals with the opening of a cross-country ski trail from Hull to Gaspé.

**Vol. 9 No. 46
November 15, 1983**

- “Barn fire: losses estimated at approximately \$500,000” is the headline. The blaze destroyed Port Daniel’s Lawrence Watt’s farm, and 100 cattle perished.
- A picture shows a Calais, France, cemetery to underline recent Remembrance Day.
- “Industrial Hockey League”, “Election wrap-up” and “Monseigneur Blanchet returns from Rome” are the other page 1 titles.
- “Fourteen new houses for Maria Reserve” is good news.

**Vol. 9 No 47
November 22, 1983**

- CHNC employees pictured, after 13 months of dead-

lock negotiations.

- “Revenue Quebec eats crow over pot luck suppers” explains that non-profit organizations don’t have to pay taxes over meals prepared by volunteers and sold to guests. “Social services and the juvenile delinquent” provides valuable information on the topic.
- Magdalen Islands Erica Pomerance runs a long analysis on the state of Quebec commercial fisheries.

**Vol. 9 No 48
November 29, 1983**

- “Who cares for rain?” covers a CASA show presented at New Richmond High School while the weather was capricious.
- “Community says No to strippers” reports on the Cascapedia citizens’ refusal to see the local hotel offer “dirt”, the word used by a municipal councillor.
- “Plans for ferry in making”, pertaining to the possible return of a Miguasha-Dalhousie ferry service, “Quebec cancer foundation seeks improved conditions for cancer patients”, “Helicopter rental available to Gaspésians” (it is based in Gaspé) and “New Richmond captures A title in express bonspiel” are the other main titles.

**Vol. 9 No 49
December 6, 1983**

- A winter photo is on the cover.
- “Ronald Joseph Metallic received jail term for at-

tempted murder”, “Oil in Gaspé; is it just another rumour?” and “Satellite receiving dishes becoming common sight in Gaspé area” are other front-page titles including some text.

- “Bill on commercial fishing and aquaculture”, “History of Port Daniel WI”, (for Women’s Institute) and Hydro reports damage due to vandalism” complete page 1 titles.

**Vol. 9 No 50
December 13, 1983**

- The memorable December 7, 1983 storm is reported on. “Near tragedy in Chandler” tells the story of a Peruvian cargo liner, the Unisol, which ran aground midway through the storm, as the captain, seeing his ship was breaking his mooring at the wharf, attempted to reach a spot off the coast. “Aground” was Dupuis island, which had also “greeted” a Chinese ship in 1969. The storm also caused damage to fishing wharves, including Shigaweake’s, and CN tracks in Chandler and Barachois, among other places.

**Vol. 9 No 51
December 20, 1983**

- The last newspaper of the year, a 60-page “book” including a Seasons Greetings section reports on “Radio Québec filming feature on anglo-phones” and “School concerts”. The Radio Québec (now Télé Québec) film is scheduled to go on the air in February 1984.

1983 and 2025: What about election participation rate?

Gilles Gagné

NEW CARLISLE – Topics common to 1983 and 2025 are easy to find. Similarities in context are also numerous. Differences are as interesting. One striking difference between the two years is the participation rate in elections. There wasn’t any federal or provincial election in 1983 but there were municipal elections. In Gaspé, the participation rate was 60% that year. The short article about it mentions that “the low participation rate can be partially attributed to the weather, and to the fact that people don’t seem to care who runs the municipality”. Nowadays, some federal and provincial elections don’t make it to 60%. A cross-section of the population thinks that a higher participation rate won’t change anything. How about trying to reach a rate that was common 30 or 40 years ago, like 80% or 85%? Would it solidify democracy?

“This project has been made possible by the Community Media Strategic Support Fund offered jointly by the Official Language Minority Community Media Consortium and the Government of Canada.”



Shigawake Fair

SHIGAWAKE FAIR:

▶ *Cont'd from cover*

Having been on the coast since May, she also praised the work of the organizing committee and the volunteers, sincerely thanking them.

About everything went well

Asked to comment about the organization's overall appreciation of the "Shigawake 2025," event spokesperson Dave Felker was quick to answer.

"We are all very, very happy. We didn't run into any major problems this year. Usually, there is a problem that sets us off but not this year. We didn't run out of food, or out of booze. Unfortunately, we had rain on Sunday afternoon and we had to cancel the Gymkhana as a result," he explains.

On the music side, the program went smoothly. "We came up with a good mix on Saturday with rock, bluegrass, indie rock and country. Sunday is usually quieter, and people sit down in the tent and listen. The Irish Descendants were amazing. Band leader Con O'Brien has been there for 35 years and he said that our event is one of the cleanest, nicest festivals he has played in. It is one of those bands you can dance to and listen to. They performed twice. Some older folks might not come on Saturday. They chose to come on Sunday afternoon and that band was perfect for both styles," adds Dave Felker.

Some sets were lengthened to avoid breaking the night party mood too often, notably on Saturday.

"Tammy (country singer Adams) went on at 10:30 p.m. and stayed until midnight. We made things a bit different. A 45-minute set always seems tight. We let them go a little longer now," he points out.

It is too early to run some numbers, attendance and finance wise. "Not yet. We are still waiting to get some bills and calculate our numbers. Regarding the attendance Saturday, we decided, the members of the organization, that crowds were not the biggest (in the event's history), but the most sustained and well-spread, from 7 p.m. and on. Some years, the tent is full and the Trough is almost empty and other years, the Trough remains full and there are less people in the tent. This year, both places were full," concludes Dave Felker.



Photo: Gilles Gagné

Shaina Hayes and Brad Barr each presented their own set on Sunday. The two shows were greatly appreciated by the attendees, who were lucky enough to see the two of them together at one point in Shaina's set. Brad Barr had also performed the previous night as a member of the Barr Brothers, another highlight of the Shigawake event.



Photo: Gilles Gagné

The Irish Descendants, a band from Newfoundland, were hired for two shows, one on Saturday night and the other scheduled to close the Shigawake Agricultural Fair and Music Festival. Both crowds expressed a high degree of satisfaction during the shows. The four members are accomplished musicians and singers. Their humour is also remarkable.



Photo: Samantha Main

Both the single and double horse haul was well attended.



Photo: Samantha Main

Horse haul referee and colour commentator Robert Wylie also entered his horse into this year's competition.



Photo: Gilles Gagné

Gaspé's country singer Tammy Adams delighted her fans by ending the music program in the big tent on Saturday night with a 90-minute performance.

NEW RICHMOND FAIR:

▶ Cont'd from cover

Nancy Robertson, the announcer for the gymkhana events, took the occasion to inform the August 23 evening crowd that more involvement is needed to assure that the fair will be back next year.

“Do you like the New Richmond Fair? Do you want it back in 2026?”, she asked the crowd just before the start of the adult gymkhana, around 6 p.m.

The crowd’s answer was an enthusiastic “yes”. Then, Ms. Robertson calmly explained that the current board needs additions, and asked if some attendees are ready to get involved. The answer was not as loud as the previous one but there were some “yes” heard here and there.

Former president James Martin, who filled that role for years and who is always around when a volunteer contribution is needed, finds an explanation for the fair’s current recruiting problems.

“We skipped a generation in recruiting board members, the generation in the middle. There are youths and retirees but not many people in between. Youths have their children later in life than before and they are not often available for volun-



Photos: G. Gagné

The lawn tractor race was a big drawing card for the New Richmond Fair. It was mostly held under a beaming sun, which contrasted sharply with the weather forecast. One tractor driver, a young woman from Woodstock, New Brunswick, gathered attention by her cleverness around the ring. Her tractor smashed a wall at one point. She was shaken up, took a few seconds before standing up, bowed to the crowd, which responded with a standing ovation.

teer work,” he explains.

Also met at the fair was another president, Arthur Blais, of Cascapedia-St-Jules, who sees things like James Martin. “The New Richmond Agricultural Society was \$15,000 in debts when Jim and I got involved in

1994. It was a lot of money back then. We worked hard, with other people, to put it back in order. It would be too bad to see it fall. I know that the fair is not rich but I would say they are about breaking even. They need relief though,” affirms

Arthur Blais.

This year’s event came close to cancellation over the spring because some board members were ready to quit.

“The fair needs a president and secretary-treasurer. If you are interested, go to our Facebook page and write a private message on Messenger,” said Nancy Robertson to the Saturday evening crowd.

Current president Francis Sweetman has informed other board members that he is stepping down.

Kayle Court, who is deeply but informally involved in the New Richmond Agricultural Fair, was approached by several people over the weekend to apply eventually for the president position.

“It is always nice to see that people trust me. It is early but I am interested,” she simply said.

Reassuring signs

While the fair is no longer the large-scale event it was in the 1970s and 1980s—when a downtown parade was part of the program—it remains popular and relevant.

Eighteen youths were registered in the junior gymkhana, and close to 30 adults in the similar event. Good crowds attended both competitions and the participants put on an ex-

cellent show.

Music is always a must in a Gaspesian event and this year’s fair was rich in that regard. Whether musicians were jamming in the bar during the day or playing formally, like John Gedeon Jr, Nash Stanley and the Garage Band there was always someone singing and playing guitar in the place after lunch time, sometimes before.

“The bar ran out of beer last night,” pointed out Dave Felker, of the Garage Band, on Sunday, as he was there that day to accompany the ladies offering the CASA’s workshops.

The lawn tractor race was held over four hours on Sunday afternoon, thanks to the number of entries and, to a lesser extent, because of the heat, which required drivers to take occasional breaks because they were competing in many of the five categories, sometimes in all of them.

Another positive sign at the fair is the fine number of volunteers involved in events requiring legs, arms and brains, like the gymkhana and tractor races.

“The potential is there to save the event and improve it. I care for it. I used to spend my summers here in a trailer, with my dad,” remarked Kayle Court.



New Richmond’s Darlene Meredith has been teaching horse riding for decades. At 70 years of age, a number she reveals without hesitation, she doesn’t have anything to prove. She was competitive in the gymkhana events she entered and marvelled the crowd with the way she handled the key hole event, as she and her horse literally turned on a dime. Here, she does the slalom.



One of the most spectacular gymkhana events is the relay. Leighton Gedeon is about to receive the baton from Ashley Ferguson.



Some of the best moments of the fair took place in the bar, with local musicians jamming. One starts with a song or two, followed by another, and so on. At times, the circle comprised about ten singers.



Léa Maltais and Laurie Aubut Larocque competing in the exhilarating relay race.

Towards a historic drought

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ - August could be one of the driest months on record in the Bay of Chaleur area if the conditions continue. However, the lack of precipitation is less significant in the Gaspé region, according to Environment Canada.

In Carleton-sur-Mer, only 9.9 millimetres of rain fell between August 1 and 20. It is even drier in New Carlisle, with barely 7.1 millimetres.

Based on historical data from Environment Canada for the Campbellton, New Brunswick, weather station, which has a long history, according to the federal agency, the driest August dates back to 1947 with only 17 millimetres of rain. However, the federal agency points out that a single event could change the statistics.

"We are well below normal. We can say that so far, it has been a dry August, below seasonal norms. But we'll have to wait and see what happens between now and the end of the month," says meteorologist Alexandra Cournoyer.

The situation is less problematic in Gaspé, with 31 millimetres. Still, that's only a third of the normal rainfall for August, which is 91 millimetres.

"There are still two weeks left. Some major localized events could change the precipitation picture," notes Ms. Cournoyer. She mentions Hurricane Erin, which moved up the United States East Coast during the week of Au-



A tanker plane was deployed on August 15 to fight a fire in the Carleton-sur-Mer area.

Photo: CHNC

gust 18.

Difficult times for forests

The dry weather has had an impact on the Gaspé forests, with seven fires recorded during the week of August 11.

"These are mainly fires caused by lightning," says SOPFEU spokesperson Isabelle Gariépy.

The largest occurred in the Mont de la Serpentine area, west of Gaspé, which ravaged 10.8 hectares, according to data compiled by SOPFEU.

On August 18, 20 people and helicopters were deployed to control the fire.

"It can happen that lightning strikes several fires in a row," she notes, given the extreme index throughout the region during the week of August 11.

According to Environment

Canada, here is a list of the driest months.

Five driest months in Campbellton:

1947: 17 millimetres
1945: 19 millimetres
1957: 22 millimetres
1960: 24 millimetres
1942: 25 millimetres
2025: 7.1 millimetres in New Carlisle (August 1 to 20)

Five driest months in Gaspé:

1994: 15 millimetres
1928: 18 millimeters
1996: 21 millimetres
1936: 23 millimetres
1933: 24 millimetres
2025: 31 millimetres (August 11 to 20)

Do not consume pesto produced by La Passerelle

Nelson Sergerie

NEW RICHMOND - Organic garlic blossom pesto sold by the mental health support association "La Passerelle" in New Richmond should not be consumed.

The Quebec Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food (MAPAQ) emphasizes that the food was not prepared and packaged in a manner that ensures its safety.

This product, sold until August 9, could promote the proliferation of Clostridium botulinum bacteria.

Available at the New Richmond Public Market, it was packaged in a glass jar with a metal lid and sold refrigerated.

The advisory not to consume the product is a precautionary measure, and consumers who have it in their possession should return it to the store where they purchased it or throw it away.

Even if the product shows no signs of spoilage or suspicious odour, it could still promote bacterial growth.

Botulism is a rare but serious illness caused by bacteria called Clostridium botulinum, contaminated food can cause the following symptoms when ingested: facial paralysis, unresponsive or fixed pupils, difficulty swallowing, drooping eyelids and vision and speech disorders. In severe cases, the illness can be fatal.

If symptoms appear, it is advisable to consult a health care professional.

No cases of illness associated with the consumption of this product have been reported to date.



Photo: MAPAQ

This product is subject to recall.

Canada Day to return to Gaspé in 2026

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ: - After being cancelled in 2025 due to a lack of volunteers, Canada Day celebrations are expected to return to Gaspé on July 1, 2026, thanks to the involvement of nearly a dozen new volunteers who stepped up following a call for help.

In mid-June, the organizing committee announced the 2025 cancellation, citing a decline in volunteer numbers, cuts to federal subsidies, shrinking budgets, and delayed responses to funding requests.

"For 2026, we will have a Canada Day celebration in Gaspé," assures André Ouellet, one of the founding committee members. Traditionally, July 1 has marked the start of the summer season in Gaspé, drawing hundreds of people to the downtown rest area for festivities.

Securing funding remains a key challenge. "We are going to take a new approach to seeking sponsorships in Gaspé, in addition to federal government funding and a contribution from the town of Gaspé. The committee will decide," says Mr. Ouellet.

"We will confirm with Heritage Canada that a new committee has been created in Gaspé. We will receive the forms to apply for grants for July 2026," adds Mr. Ouellet.

An attempt to recruit volunteers last fall drew no response, leading to most members resigning, except Mr. Ouellet, who is now spearheading the relaunch.

A new high-tech CT scanner now operational at the Maria hospital

GILLES GAGNÉ

MARIA - Maria Hospital is now equipped with a brand-new computed tomography scanner, often called a CT Scan, an essential device for the rapid and accurate diagnosis of numerous conditions.

The new device and its options represent an investment of nearly \$990,000, to which must be added the installation and renovation costs, estimated at \$390,000, bringing the total investment to \$1,380,000.

The Gaspé Peninsula Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSS) replaced the old device, which had reached the end of its lifespan, with this latest-generation model, while the Baie-des-Chaleurs Health Foundation contributed \$109,312 toward the project.

"The CISSS buys the equipment and the Foundation's contribution allows the integration of technologies that improve the patient's experience and diagnosis quality, as well as avoid travel for users to major centres. The replacement of the CT scanner at Maria Hospital represents an important step forward for the accessibility and quality of care in our region," says Martin Pelletier, president and chief executive officer of the CISSS.

"We are very pleased to be able to offer patients modern, high-performance equipment, while continuing to focus on local care," adds Maryse Tremblay, president of the Baie des Chaleurs Health Foundation.

"The base model was already very efficient. The options added with the amount donated by the foundation have surprised me, performance-wise. There are little details that help the patient relax, like the coloured light. Its practicability and occupational therapy advantages are tested now and the results are quite



Assistant chief technologist Josée Bujold Babin and radiologist Marie-Claude Thériault are already impressed by the performance of the new device.

Photo: Gilles Gagné

positive," points out radiologist Marie-Claude Thériault.

Useful donations

Thanks to the commitment of its donors, the Baie-des-Chaleurs Health Foundation wanted to enhance the basic equipment by financing the addition of four cutting-edge technological options, for a total amount of \$109,312.

These additional options, which were not included in the offer financed by the public health system, improve both the patient experience and image quality, while expanding the diagnostic capabilities of the device.

One of the options is the patient experience because the device is pro-designed to improve comfort and reduce anxiety. This option offers a more human environment because of soothing ambient lighting, music, relaxing videos and ergonomic controls for staff.

Secondly, cardiac imaging is another cutting-edge technology for exploring the coronary arteries, allowing non-invasive diagnosis of heart disease, thanks to synchronization with the heart rhythm and very high-resolution images. "For now, we want to limit the use of the CT scan in cardiology to the pa-

tients referred by the specialists in internal medicine. Otherwise, if general practitioners refer their patients, we will be overwhelmed," specifies Marie-Claude Thériault.

Thirdly, the CT scanner will be used in CAD, namely Computer-Aided Detection, an artificial intelligence tool designed to automatically detect lung abnormalities, such as suspicious nodules, and thus support the early detection of lung cancer. "It is a positive use of artificial intelligence, which allows us to have access

to a series of comparative images in order to detect similar cases," stresses Ms. Thériault. Fourthly, the CT scanner options open the door to dual energy direct angio, an advanced function for vascular examinations, allowing for better visualization of blood vessels, particularly useful for monitoring aneurysms or stenoses.

"Thanks to the community's ongoing commitment, the Foundation can support concrete projects that improve the care provided right here in the region. This new CT scanner, and the options we were able to add, demonstrate the direct impact of our donors' generosity," sums up Health Foundation president Maryse Tremblay.

"This device, enhanced by the options funded by the Foundation, provides us with a top-notch technical platform, directly benefiting patients in the Baie-des-Chaleurs region. Not only can we make faster and more accurate diagnoses, but we can also expand the range of tests offered here, saving many patients the hassle of traveling to other centres. The improved patient experience, thanks to the calming atmosphere and new fea-

tures, also helps reduce stress, which is particularly valuable for children, anxious patients, or those requiring extended exams," adds Marie-Claude Thériault.

According to Martin Pelletier and this venture's other partners, this collaboration between the Gaspé Peninsula CISSS and the Baie-des-Chaleurs Health Foundation illustrates the importance of partnerships to improve access to quality care in the region. Together, they pursue the same goal, provide quality, accessible, and compassionate healthcare for the entire Bay of Chaleur area population.

Holding a prominent place in the Gaspé philanthropic landscape for 35 years, the Baie-des-Chaleurs Health Foundation contributes to funding projects that enable the development of health care and social services in the Bay of Chaleur region. These projects are guided by the noble objective of improving the health and well-being of the population, while encouraging community participation.

The Gaspé Peninsula CISSS operates a network of 51 public health and social service facilities.

Nouvelle Cultural Centre to be inaugurated on September 6

Nelson Sergerie

NOUVELLE - The new Nouvelle Cultural Centre will be inaugurated on September 6 with a family day featuring singer Daniel Boucher.

Located in the former small schoolhouse dating back to 1908, which has been carefully restored and redesigned, the Maison de la culture aims to be a unifying, inclusive and lively place where culture is expressed in all its forms.

Thanks to the support of the Avignon MRC and the federal and provincial governments, the \$800,000 project is becoming a reality.

"This space symbolizes the importance we place on culture as a driver of local development and collective vitality. It is a promising project at the heart of our vision for the future of Nouvelle," says Mayor Rachel Dugas.

The opening day will feature free cultural activities, a guided tour of the premises and various performances. The fall-winter program will be unveiled at the same time.

"This day marks a turning point for our municipality. With the Maison de la culture, we are making a clear choice to promote our creators, offer a place for artists to express themselves, and focus on accessible and vibrant culture," says Benoit Cabot, the municipality's director general.

The Maison de la culture de Nouvelle is part of a broader effort to strengthen the cultural offering in the region, support local creativity and promote Nouvelle as a place of culture, identity and encounters.

Come Join Us !
 SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 6TH FROM 9AM - 12PM
 SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 13TH FROM 9AM - 1PM
10TH ANNUAL GARLIC FESTIVAL
 LIVE MUSIC - LULU BERLU - PRIZES TO BE WON
LOCATED BESIDE THE NEW CARLISLE TOWN HALL

Marché Local market
 NEW CARLISLE

From tractor talk to canvas: Family Ties captures Gaspesian sayings through art!

DAVE FELKER
PROJECT COORDINATOR

NEW CARLISLE - In working through the “Do you see what we’re saying” project, I’ve had the chance to meet up with many different Gaspesians to discuss some of their favourite Gaspesian expressions. One hot day, leading up to Shigawake Fair time, I had a chance to catch up with George Hayes, passing by the fairgrounds on his tractor. We were chatting up what was left to be done to be ready for the fair, and while I had his attention, I thought I’d ask him about some Gaspesian expressions that he was aware of and used from time to time.

“When I was a child,” he started, “I would hear many people using Gaspésien expressions. I still do hear some now and then but as the years go by, a little bit less and less. If something back in the day was really good or really bad, it was either terble good or terble bad. That got used a lot.” I agreed that I still hear that often enough, however, I do hear “some bad” and “some good”

as well.

“The expression ‘me son’ also gets used a lot,” he continued. “Some people would end every sentence with it when telling you a story. Like, ‘she broke right through the fence, me son’.”

George thought for a moment. “Another Gaspesian expression that comes to mind is a ‘piece of work.’ A child that is often disobedient would be referred to as a ‘piece of work.’ Any peculiar event or behavior could be described as a ‘piece of work’.”

I was about to ask him if he knew of any sentences or phrases that combined multiple expressions, but he was growing impatient. And without skipping a beat, he climbed back up onto the tractor and declared, “Anyways it’s terble hot today, me son. I am trying to get some hay made and there’s so much traffic. It’s a terble piece of work.” Perfect. Thank you, George.

If you’d like to be a part of the upcoming Family Ties art workshops, join us on September 6 in Shigawake at the Fair-



Photo: Dave Felker

People of all ages work on painting various Gaspesian expressions during the New Richmond Fair, which was held from August 21 to 24.

grounds for Book Nook creation and Painting, starting at noon. Or meet up with us in New Carlisle at the market on September 13, starting at 9

a.m., for Book Nook creation, Painting, and Collage. There will also be another Collage session in Shigawake at the Fairgrounds at 2 p.m. on Sep-

tember 13. Hope to see you there!

Please note: This is a paid advertisement. All content has been provided by Family Ties.

What are your favourite
Gaspesian expressions,
me son?



“Where everyone is part of the family.”

Send us your favourite Gaspesian expressions,
and use them in an example.

Every entry puts your name into a draw for a
2026 Family Ties “Do you see what we’re saying”
artistic expressions calendar.

Send your entries to dave.familyties@gmail.com
no later than October 12th to be entered into the
draw.

This project is supported by:



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Announcements



Obituaries



BOYLE: Hazel (née Coombs)

With deep sadness, we announce the passing of Hazel Boyle (née Coombs), beloved wife of Elmer Boyle, on August 16, 2025, at the Hôtel-Dieu hospital, Gaspé, Québec.

Hazel was born in Barachois, Québec, daughter of Eleanora and Anthony Coombs. Family was especially important to her - she was a devoted mother to daughters Denise (Roger), Natalie and Stephanie, a caring grandmother to Emily and Fae, and had a special place in her heart for their father Jacques. She often shared stories of her past, including times spent with her brother Carl (Josie), and sisters Fawn (Bob), Arlene (Preston), Marjorie (Brian) and Mary (Guy). She enjoyed family get-togethers with her nieces and nephews, and their children, including picnics at Coin du Banc and pot lucks at the Golden Age Club.

For most of her 88 years, she led an active life and loved to garden, go for walks, knit, paint and decorate, and create beautiful quilts and afghans. One of her greatest passions was rescuing strays, and, together with her husband Elmer, saved the lives of many unwanted cats.

Hazel will always be remembered for her determination, resilience, and courage. She'll be missed more than words can say.

A memorial service will be held in 2026 at St-Peter's church in Barachois, Québec, followed by her burial and a gathering of family and friends. Details will be shared once arrangements have been made.



Photo: Aurore Boréale

HENDERSON: Sandra Journeaux

Sandra Journeaux Henderson, C.M. age 85, of Whitehorse, Yukon, passed away peacefully on August 8, 2025, after a brief and courageous battle with pancreatic cancer.

Born on July 24, 1940, in Port Daniel, Quebec, Sandra was one of eight children of Sarah and Herbert Journeaux. A nationally recognized educator and tireless advocate for students, she dedicated her life to French language education and to building a more inclusive, bilingual Canada.

Throughout her 50-year career, Sandra inspired generations with her warmth, wisdom, and belief in the power of language to connect and uplift. She believed deeply in the potential of every student, encouraging them not only to learn a language, but to find their voice and place in the world.

The only thing that meant more to Sandra than her love of teaching was the deep and abiding love she had for her family. She is survived by her daughters Hayley Henderson-Thur (Craig Thur) of Whitehorse and Jennifer Henderson (Justin Hogan-Doran) of Sydney, Australia; beloved granddaughters Aubree, Margot, and Sibyl; brother David Journeaux of Stoney Creek, Ontario; and many friends, colleagues, and former students. She was predeceased by husband Richard Henderson, parents, and siblings Doug, Darby, Jack, June, Gail, and Gary.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to Lauren Hill and the team at Wind River Hospice House for their tender care during Sandra's final days. Special thanks to Doctors Blais, Avery, Rockenstein, Kmet, MacDonald, and social worker Jenny Charchun for helping her maintain dignity, strength, and a sense of agency throughout her journey.

A private family interment will be held. Details of a celebration of life will be shared in the coming months.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Yukon Foundation toward a memorial fund in her name, supporting scholarships for students pursuing post-secondary education in French.

Her voice uplifted others. Her legacy will endure.

HENDERSON: Sandra Journeaux

Sandra Journeaux-Henderson, C.M. âgée de 85 ans, de Whitehorse, au Yukon, est décédée paisiblement le 8 août 2025, après un court et courageux combat contre le cancer du pancréas.

Née le 24 juillet 1940 à Port Daniel, au Québec, Sandra était l'une des huit enfants de Sarah et Herbert Journeaux. Éducatrice de renommée nationale et défenseure infatigable des élèves, elle a consacré sa vie à l'enseignement du français et à la construction d'un Canada plus inclusif et bilingue.

Tout au long de sa carrière de 50 ans, Sandra a inspiré des générations grâce à sa chaleur, sa sagesse et sa conviction dans le pouvoir du langage pour rassembler et élever les autres. Elle croyait profondément au potentiel de chaque élève, les encourageant non seulement à apprendre une langue, mais aussi à trouver leur voix et leur place dans le monde.

La seule chose qui comptait encore davantage pour Sandra que l'enseignement était l'amour profond et indéfectible qu'elle portait à sa famille. Elle laisse dans le deuil ses filles Hayley Henderson-Thur (Craig Thur) de Whitehorse et Jennifer Henderson (Justin Hogan-Doran) de Sydney, en Australie ; ses chères petites-filles Aubree, Margot et Sibyl; son frère David Journeaux de Stoney Creek, en Ontario; ainsi que de nombreux amis, collègues et anciens élèves. Elle rejoint dans l'au-delà son époux Richard Henderson, ses parents, et ses frères et sœurs Doug, Darby, Jack, June, Gail et Gary.

La famille remercie sincèrement Lauren Hill et l'équipe de la Wind River Hospice House pour les soins attentionnés prodigués à Sandra durant ses derniers jours. Elle adresse également une reconnaissance particulière aux Drs Blais, Avery, Rockenstein, Kmet, MacDonald ainsi qu'à l'intervenante sociale Jenny Charchun pour avoir aidé Sandra à préserver sa dignité, sa force et son autonomie tout au long de

son parcours.

Une inhumation privée en famille aura lieu. Les détails concernant une célébration de sa vie seront communiqués dans les mois à venir.

Au lieu de fleurs, des dons peuvent être faits à la Yukon Foundation pour un fonds commémoratif établi en son nom, destiné à soutenir des bourses pour les étudiants poursuivant des études postsecondaires en français.

Sa voix a élevé les autres. Son héritage perdurera.



<https://yukondn.fcsuite.com/erp/donate>



MCLELLAN: Robert Warren

Born April 30, 1950, in Montreal, Quebec, Robert Warren McLellan was raised in Caplan by his loving father, Russell, until his passing in 1973. Robert later settled with his family in Pointe-à-la-Garde, where he lived until his accidental passing at age 75 on August 8, 2025.

Robert dedicated 35 years to teaching English before retiring in 2005. His passion for teaching was matched by his devotion to sharing the Gospel. In 2011, he answered God's call to serve as lead Pastor at Église Baptiste Chaleur in Atholville, where he ministered faithfully until his passing.

He will be remembered as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, and friend. Robert is survived by his beloved wife of 46 years, Annette Henry-McLellan; his five children, Sarah (Matt Leblanc), Rachel (Tarek Foley), Kevin (Chelsey), Rebekah (Daniel Reda), and Naomi Ruth (Brandon Crook); grandchildren Jacob, Anna, Chelsey, Angelie, Chloe, Terrence, Calum, Mila, Brooks, Ava, Samuel, Boston, Nora, June, and Quade; great-grandchildren Katie, Claire, Emma, and Bethany; loving sister Jean; aunt Peggy; stepfather Eric; brother Erwin; sisters Karen, Kim, Krista, and Katherine; and extended family. He was predeceased by his infant son James, mother Nora, father Russell, and brother Ralph.

Visitation was held at Savoie Funeral Home, Campbellton, New Brunswick, on Thursday, August 14, 2025, from 2-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. (New Brunswick time). The funeral service took place at First Baptist Church, 18 Andrew St., on Friday, August 15, 2025, with viewing at 10 a.m. followed by the service at 11 a.m. (New Brunswick time).

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Église Baptiste Chaleur in memory of Robert's lifelong service (e-transfer: ebchaleur1975@gmail.com)



PLOURDE: Jacques
1924 – 2025

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Jacques Plourde, a beloved veteran, community leader, and dedicated volunteer, who passed away peacefully in Gaspé, Quebec, at the age of 101.

Born in 1924, Mr. Jacques was a proud resident of Rivière-au-Renard, where he began his early education at École St-Rosaire before continuing at the Séminaire de Gaspé. His thirst for knowledge led him to pursue professional studies in mechanics and electrical welding at the École Avion Montréal and later administration training at HEC Montréal.

A proud veteran of the Second World War, Mr. Jacques served with honour aboard a Royal Canadian Navy vessel. His wartime contributions earned him several military distinctions, including the 1939–45 Star, Atlantic Star, War Medal 1939–45, and the Canadian Voluntary Service Medal. For decades following the war, he remained active in veterans' affairs through the Royal Canadian Legion, sharing his experiences with younger generations at schools and community events.

In 1951, Mr. Jacques founded Garage Jacques Plourde and Jacques Plourde Transport, businesses he managed with dedication until passing them on to his sons in 1981. He also served his community as president of the local school commission and was an instructor for the Rivière-au-Renard cadet corps from 1970 to 1976.

A man of deep faith and service, Mr. Jacques was a founding member of the Knights of Columbus Council 5931 in Rivière-au-Renard, where he served in several leadership roles, ultimately being named a 4th Degree Faithful Navigator. His decades of volunteer work also extended to the Centre d'Action Bénévole Le Hauban and CentrAide Gaspésie, where his contributions were invaluable, particularly in initiatives serving seniors.

Mr. Jacques's long-standing commitment to blood donation efforts through Héma-Québec, especially during challenging times like the pandemic, reflected his tireless dedication to the well-being of others.

Over the years, Jacques received numerous hon-

ours for his public service and volunteerism, including recognition from the National Assembly of Quebec, Héma-Québec, the Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec and the Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec.

Jacques will be remembered not only for his impressive accomplishments but for his humility, generosity, and unwavering dedication to his community, country, and family.

He leaves behind a legacy of service that will continue to inspire all who had the privilege of knowing him.



In Memory

FLOWERS: Elmer Clyde

In loving memory of precious father who passed away September 5, 2018.

*What we would give if we could say,
Hello Dad, in the same old way,
To hear your voice, and see your smile.
To sit with you and chat awhile.
Our hearts still ache with sadness,
And silent tears still flow.
What it meant to lose you Dad,
No one will ever know.
Dear God, please take a message,
To our precious dad in heaven above.
Tell him how much we miss him,
And give him all our love.
Dad, you may be gone from our sight,
But you are always in our hearts.*

With all our love, daughter Carol and son-in-law Richard.

FLOWERS: Lloyd Elmer

In loving memory of a dear brother who left us suddenly September 5, 1979 as the result of a car accident.

*There is always a face before us,
A voice we always hear.
A smile we will always remember,
Of a brother we loved so dear.
Deep in our hearts lies a picture,
More precious than silver or gold.
It's a picture of our brother,
Whose memory will never grow old.
Every day in some small way,
Memories of you come our way,
Though absent, You are ever near.
Still loved and missed, always dear.*

Lovingly remembered by sister Carol and brother-in-law Richard.

SMITH: Harvey

In loving memory of a dear father, father-in-law, grandfather, and great-grandfather who passed away 20 years ago on September 3, 2005.

*Twenty years have quietly passed,
Since you went on your way.
But in our hearts, your gentle voice*

*Still lights our darkest day.
Though time moves on, your memory stays,
A warmth that never fades.
Your love remains our guiding grace.
Your laughter echoes through our lives,
Your kindness still our steady guide.
In every story, every smile,
We feel your presence all the while.
Together, we hold you close and near,
Your spirit's love forever here.
Though you have gone beyond our sight,
Your love remains our shining light.*

Loved and missed by your daughter Holly, son-in-law Michael, grandchildren Brad, Ethan, Luke, Lucy, and Leah, and great-grandson Leo-James.



Funeral Announcement



MACKENZIE: Sarah Lillian Watt

Family and friends are invited to a Celebration of Life for Mrs. Sarah Mackenzie on Thursday, September 19, at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Shigawake. The celebration will begin at 1 p.m., followed by the service and interment at 2 p.m. Refreshments will be served at the Community Centre following the service.



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October 22 for the **October 29** issue

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LOOKING TO BUY: Antiques of all kinds: furniture, dishes, trinkets, toys, tools, items from the first and second world wars, cast iron items, hockey helmets from the 70's. For further information contact Francis at 418-368-9167.

Coast Round-up

GASPÉ:

Gaspé County W.I.

September 6: Gaspé County W.I. will be hosting the annual W.I. fair at the York River Community Hall, 702 York Boulevard West. The hall will open at 3 p.m. for public viewing of all the exhibits. A delicious salad supper will begin at 4:45 p.m., takeout is also available, cost: adults \$15 and children \$10 (12 and under.) We look forward to seeing lots of people participate in our local W.I. craft fair and supper again this year. Everyone is welcome.

SHIGAWAKE:

Harvest Supper

September 27: The St. James Anglican church and

the Shigawake Community Centre will be hosting a Harvest supper at the Shigawake Community Centre, 320 Route 132. Take-out will begin at 4 p.m. and sit down will begin at 4:30 p.m. Cost: adults \$20, children \$10, under 6 free.

SHIGAWAKE:

Shigawake

Music Festival and Agricultural Fair

September 6: Breakfast beginning at 8 a.m., cost: adults \$12, children under 12 \$8. Four-wheeler rally will begin at 11 a.m., registration is \$10.

HOPE TOWN:

Hope Town Sports Club

September 14: Hope Town's 22nd annual Terry Fox Walk, registration will be between 12:30 - 1 p.m. at the Hope town Community Centre, the walk will start at

1 p.m. Please join us to raise funds for this worthy cause. For more information please contact Linda MacWhirter at 418-751-4398.

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

September 6: Gift Bingo at 7 p.m., doors open at 6:30

p.m.

September 28: Sunday Social beginning at 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., free soup and sandwiches. Donations are welcome.

October 4: Fall Supper will be held at the New Carlisle Anglican Church beginning at 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., take-out and delivery available between 3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Cost: adults \$15, children (12 and under) \$10. To reserve please call Carol at 905-987-3294.

October 31: Halloween dance with DJ Ash (18+)

December 6: Annual Christmas gift bingo.

December 13: Christmas dance with Tammy Adams.

December 14: Santa visits

the legion.

December 31: New Years eve dance, details to follow.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES: 50+ Club

September 20: A Harvest Bingo will begin at 1 p.m. until finished, doors open at 12 p.m.

September 15: Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.

October 20: Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.

November 17: Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.

December 21: Annual General Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

Sunday, September 7 New Carlisle

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Shigawake
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Sunday, September 14 New Carlisle

10 a.m. Morning Prayer
Hope Town
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Port Daniel
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

UNITED CHURCH NEW RICHMOND

Sunday, September 7

10 a.m. Service

Sunday, September 14

10 a.m. Service

UNITED CHURCH HOPE TOWN

Sunday, September 7

10 a.m. Service

Sunday, September 14

2 p.m. Service

PARISH OF GASPÉ

Sunday, September 7

St. Andrews-York

9 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday, September 14

St. James - Wakeham

9 a.m. Holy Communion

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Reality Check program prepares teens for life after high school

HOLLY SMITH
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPE - For many students in the region, life after high school means leaving home for college, trade school or to work in larger cities. Moving away can be exciting, but it also brings new responsibilities and challenges, especially managing money and living independently.

To help students prepare, the Gaspé Literacy Council (GLC) offers a program called Reality Check. The program gives teens a clear view of the costs and decisions they will face when living on their own.

Angelina Leggo, Executive Director of GLC, says, "The Reality Check Program is designed to introduce essential skills and ideas to students on the cusp of graduating high school. We are very conscious of the fact that many young people leave the area following high school and want to make sure they are prepared to deal with life outside of their family homes."

The program is aimed at

students in Secondary 4 and 5, particularly those planning to move away from the region.

"Many young people leave the region to pursue higher education or better job opportunities elsewhere in Quebec/Canada, but may not be prepared for the costs of living on your own," says Ms. Leggo. "The Reality Check helps to prepare them for realistic costs and basic budgeting so that they successfully accomplish their goals," she adds.

A key focus of Reality Check is financial literacy, which prepares students for real-world decision-making. Teens learn to budget, plan expenses, and compare costs with expected income. "The Reality Check really focuses on financial literacy, and it complements other types of financial and digital literacy support that we offer to students approaching graduation.

The skills we work on developing are related to budgeting and financial planning, making sure that students have a good idea of the cost of liv-

ing versus income, and how to navigate a balance between the two," says Ms. Leggo.

The program uses an interactive approach to make learning practical. Students visit booths that represent costs like housing, transportation, and food, and make spending decisions within a set budget. "We run this program in partnership with local organizations, so that each broad cost category (food, transportation, housing, etc.) has a booth. Students are provided with a budget and have to visit each booth, making decisions about what to 'spend' to have a balanced budget at the end," Ms. Leggo explains. This hands-on experience allows students to see the consequences of their choices before facing them in real life.

In the region, most teens leave home within five years of graduation, making programs like Reality Check particularly important. "Across our territory, most teens prepare to leave home within 0-5 years of graduating high school, whether this is to at-

tend CEGEP, university, trade school, or to pursue better opportunities for employment.

Our experience has shown that a lot of these young people are not necessarily prepared for the financial realities of life in larger cities and out of province, where costs are different than they are at home. By offering a chance to experience those costs and how to manage them, we're hoping to better prepare students for the realities of life on their own," says Ms. Leggo.

Reality Check is usually held during the school day, in partnership with local schools. This arrangement makes it easy for students and teachers to participate without disrupting other classes.

Students who have taken part in the program have responded positively, reporting that it gave them a better understanding of independent living. "Students have overall been very engaged and interested in the program and get a lot out of it," Ms. Leggo says.

Looking ahead, the GLC plans to keep Reality Check

focused rather than adding new topics, while expanding the program to reach more schools. "For now, there are no plans to expand the program beyond finding new schools to engage with. Last year, Queen Elizabeth High School in Sept-Îles ran the program for the first time, with some support from us. I don't think that we can feasibly add new topics to the Reality Check within the time limits we have, but each year we review the material presented and make sure that it reflects current trends. Again, we don't do this in isolation, but as part of a wider community-led team that involves multiple partners," Ms. Leggo says.

By teaching practical financial skills and providing a realistic look at life on their own, Reality Check helps teens gain confidence, make informed decisions, and prepare for the responsibilities of independence. Schools interested in the program can contact the Gaspé Literacy Council for more information.

Blind Date with a Book: GLC boosts literacy with surprise reads

HOLLY SMITH
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ: - For book lovers and casual readers alike, the Blind Date with a Book program offers a fun and unique way to discover new reading material. Organized by the Gaspé Literacy Council (GLC), the initiative gives community members the chance to pick up a free book without knowing exactly what they are getting, a literary surprise wrapped in brown paper.

The program was created to help increase access to English-language books in communities where options are limited. According to Angelina Leggo, Executive Director of the GLC, a comprehensive needs assessment in 2022-2023 showed that residents often struggled to find books in English. "By leaving books for free in local businesses, we're able to grow personal libraries without asking community members to invest time, energy, or money for new reading material. And those who have books are much more likely to read them, which will help increase literacy levels for our communities and break cycles for families who may not be



Deciding what information to put on the wrapping was one of the program's trickiest parts.

Photo: GLC facebook page

able to prioritize reading," she says.

The program takes place once a year, usually in the spring, around March Break, though the timing could vary. "We wrap up a selection of books in brown paper, add a package of hot chocolate and a bookmark with our info, write an age range and a one-liner about the book to help people choose what they want/need, and leave them in local busi-

nesses," Ms. Leggo explains. The program prioritized small, locally owned businesses over large chains to encourage people to explore the community while picking up a new book.

The variety of books used in the program are broad, covering all age groups and genres. "GLC aims to provide as wide a variety of books as possible. We always make sure to have a wide range of age-appropriate books, from young

children to adults, and a variety of genres. We also include books for those who don't necessarily like to read fiction, like adult colouring, reference books, and biographies," says Ms. Leggo.

Deciding what information to put on the wrapping was one of the program's trickiest parts. The GLC staff often relied on one-liners from the book itself, trusted reviews, or summaries of the blurbs from the back cover. The goal was to provide just enough information to pique interest without spoiling the surprise. "During the first two years, we distributed 50 books in five businesses. Each time, the books were more or less gone within a few days," says Ms. Leggo.

Readers seem to enjoy the element of surprise as much as the books themselves. Ms. Leggo noted that picking up a wrapped book in a local store created excitement and curiosity. "I think there's a lot of appeal in not seeing the book before owning it—particularly when you don't have to invest anything. After all, who doesn't like a good surprise package? And I think the excitement of going to a store to find it, makes it attractive as

well. But mostly, I think readers just love getting a free book—I know I do!" she says.

While the main distribution occurred once a year, the GLC ensured that books were available year-round through a Little Free Library (or a Book Cruncher) outside their office at the Douglas Community Centre. This allowed residents to pick up books anytime.

The program was organized and executed entirely by the GLC staff, who selected the businesses, wrapped the books, and delivered them. This year, the council planned to explore whether volunteers could help with some aspects of the program. Ms. Leggo also encouraged community members to get involved. "We would be happy to speak with volunteers willing to help us run the program in Gaspé or other places. But if you want a book, you'll have to keep a close eye on our social media!"

By bringing books directly into the community and creating a sense of surprise and excitement around reading, Blind Date with a Book offered a creative way to support literacy in the region and build personal libraries for readers of all ages.

GLC distributes summer literacy kits

HOLLY SMITH
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – Over the summer, the Gaspé Literacy Council (GLC) helped children stay connected to reading and writing through its new Summer Literacy Kit program. The initiative aimed to give students fun, interactive tools that would keep their literacy skills sharp during the school break.

The program was created with the goal of supporting children’s learning while encouraging a love of books. According to Angelina Leggo, Executive Director of the GLC, the kits were intended to “Increase personal libraries and offer children resources to gain essential skills.”

While the kits were designed mainly for elementary-aged children, families of all ages could request one. “We communicate with parents before delivery so that each kit can contain an age-appropriate book,” explains Ms. Leggo.

Each Summer Literacy Kit included a mix of items to inspire creativity and engagement. “We include things like pens, highlighters, notebooks,



The program distributed 50 kits to the first fifty families who responded to a social media post.

Photo: GLC facebook page

stickers, and a book, as well as writing prompts and other ideas of how to use the kit,” says Ms. Leggo, who described the contents as appealing to a wide range of interests.

Although the Summer Literacy Kits were new in 2025, the GLC had experience with similar programs during Covid shutdowns. The first official run of this program was in Spring 2025, and feedback from families will help shape it in future years.

“Based on feedback we received in Spring 2025, we’ll be doing it a bit differently next year to make sure that more people across our territory have access to the program,” Ms. Leggo explains.

The kits were also intended to combat the so-called “Summer Slide,” when students lose some of the knowledge and skills gained during the school year. Ms. Leggo noted that early engagement can help maintain literacy: “By providing them with

something new and fun right as the break starts, we’re hoping that students will use the Kits to keep practicing some of those skills and slow down the effects of the Summer Slide,” hopes Ms. Leggo.

The program distributed 50 kits to the first families who responded to a social media post. Parents reported positive reactions, and children enjoyed exploring the contents. “Very positive feedback from parents who came to collect the Kits, we are looking for-

ward to touching base with parents this fall to see if they were put to good use,” says Ms. Leggo.

Funding for the Summer Literacy Kits came from the GLC’s Literacy Summit project, supported by Canadian Heritage. While other parts of the Literacy Summit involved multiple partners, this kit program was managed entirely by the GLC. Ms. Leggo said, “No decisions have been made yet on how the project will be funded or run this year.”

Looking ahead, GLC hopes to expand the program and welcomes community input. Residents, families, and local organizations are encouraged to share ideas for improving the kits and reaching more children. “We are, of course, open to any suggestions or comments from the community for the development of this program. How it will develop will be determined this Fall, once our staff are back in office,” says Ms. Leggo.

Families interested in participating in future programs are encouraged to contact the Gaspé Literacy Council for updates and registration information.

MEET THE GLC

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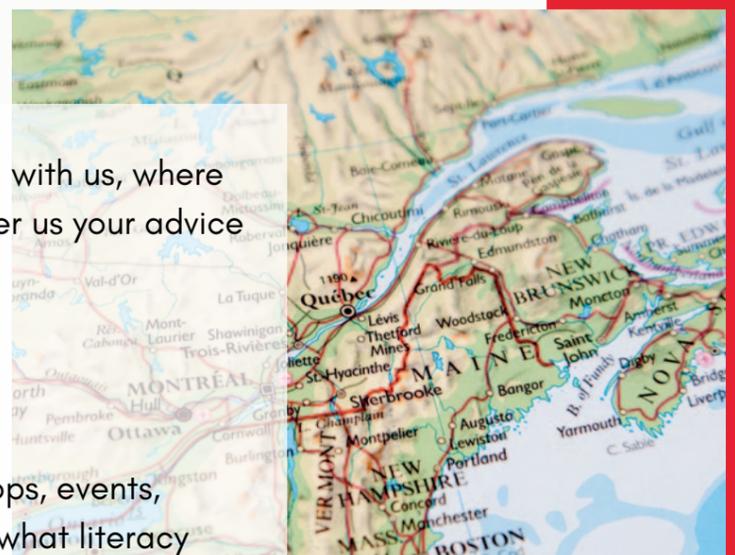
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Community

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for upcoming workshops, events, and giveaways. Check out our **website** to learn more about what literacy is and how we work for change: www.gaspelit.ca



Bright Beginnings: Supporting young families across the Gaspésie and Magdalen Islands

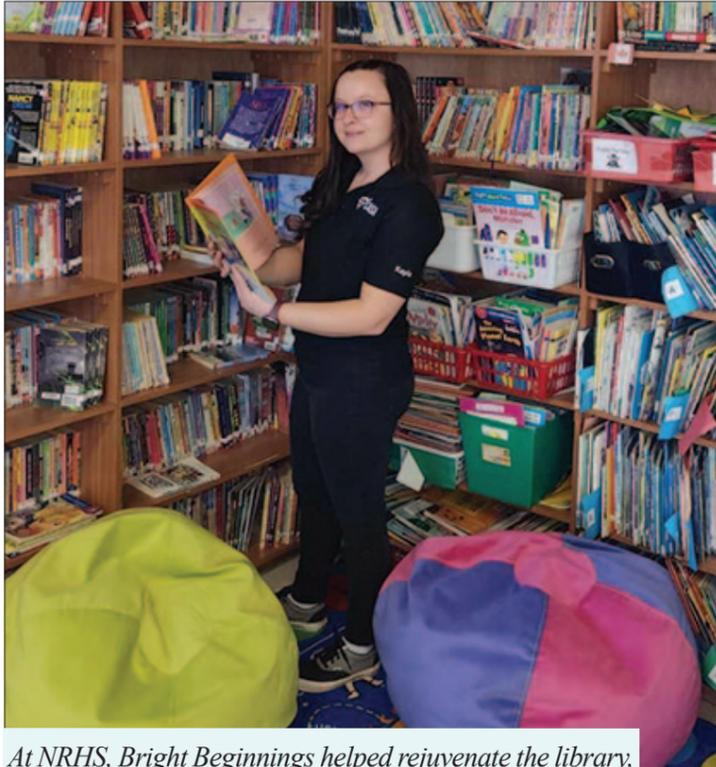
EMILY HOCQUARD
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

NEW CARLISLE - Since its inception in 2017, Bright Beginnings has been a cornerstone program supporting English-speaking families across the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands. Developed through a collaboration between CASA (Committee for Anglophone Social Action), CAMI (Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders) and VGPN (Vision Gaspé-Percé Now), the project was designed to adapt regional services and programs to better meet the needs of English-speaking children and their families. “The program has since been adopted by the CHSSN (Community Health and Social Services Network) as a provincial framework for English-speaking families and communities” states Kayla Gallan, Bright Beginnings Program and Activity Coordinator.

This recognition has further enabled the program to grow and strengthen partnerships.

“Bright Beginnings is a project that is dedicated to assisting and supporting children and their families in the Gaspésie and Magdalen Islands,” Kayla Gallan explains to SPEC. “Through our various activities and programs, we aim to advocate for and encourage the cultivation of the development of motor skills, social-emotional growth, parental support and literacy promotion” she continues.

For Kayla Gallan, a long-



At NRHS, Bright Beginnings helped rejuvenate the library, by donating the carpet, bean bag chairs, wall decals and books.

time team member, the journey has been deeply fulfilling. “I have been a part of CASA’s Bright Beginnings team for nearly four years, and I’ve truly cherished every rewarding moment. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve and support the English-speaking families within our communities. The smiles and happiness on the children’s faces make every effort truly worthwhile” she shares.

The program originally focused on children ages 0 to 5 but has since expanded its reach to include children up to the age of eight. This expansion has allowed Bright Beginnings to offer more

comprehensive support during the crucial early years of development.

“Bright Beginnings’ primary goal is to nurture and support the English-speaking children and their families within our communities,” says Ms. Gallan. “This is exhibited through prioritizing development and literacy promotion while providing meaningful support to parents and creating enriching experiences for all those involved,” she continues.

Operating from Matapédia to Corner-of-the-Beach, the initiative provides year-round programming. During the school year, families benefit from various ongoing activi-



Example of the kits that are created for preschoolers.

Photos: Courtesy of Kayla Gallan

ties, and in the summer, the BiblioNook program, also through CASA, continues that engagement with opportunities for reading, learning, and fun.

“Promoting literacy is a central focus of Bright Beginnings’ programs and activities. We offer story-times, book giveaways at events, and donations of books to schools and community centers,” explains Ms. Gallan. In addition, the team collaborates with local organizations to enrich their events with games, crafts, and learning experiences that promote reading and comprehension.

Looking to the future, Bright Beginnings has ambi-

tious goals. They hope to integrate initiatives like BiblioNook into year-round activities, as well as exploring innovative ways to support parents, and create more opportunities for children to thrive. “Our focus is on strengthening existing partnerships while developing new ones, ensuring sustainable programming, and expanding access to resources for families,” concludes Ms. Gallan.

As Bright Beginnings continues to grow and adapt, Ms. Gallan hopes to create “a positive impact, fostering a sense of connection and empowerment for families throughout the region.”



On this International Literacy Day, the CASA team encourages you to take the first step in your child’s lifelong journey of learning through reading!

To get informed on current activities in your community, contact Kayla Gallan

kayla@casa-gaspe.com

Bright Beginnings GMI on Facebook

418 752 5995 EXT. 106



Hidden Treasures Flea Market finds a permanent home

JILLIAN O'CONNELL
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

NEW CARLISLE: — Hidden Treasures Flea Market officially reopened at its new location on August 1, offering locals not just shelves of unique finds, but a renewed sense of purpose, heart, and community spirit.

Behind its vibrant displays is a hardworking team of volunteers and paid staff, all united by a shared mission: to make sustainable living accessible and to strengthen the bonds of the local community. When SPEC asked if they solely rely on donations only? Manager Tammy Chatterton confirmed “Yes”, emphasizing the market’s unique, community-led approach. “Donations to a flea market can be many things... clothing (new or gently used), furniture, books, toys and games, home décor, tools and equipment, electronics (working), kitchenware, craft supplies, artwork and jewelry,” states Ms. Chatterton.

The market’s path to becoming an independent organization involved multiple administrative and legal steps. Ms. Chatterton outlined the process, saying “The organization needed to secure financial independence, legal setup, forming a board of directors, defining roles, creating bylaws, marketing, securing and managing a location,” listing the



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steps involved.

Securing a permanent location was a key milestone in the market’s development. The new site allows the organization to operate on a consistent schedule, maintain displays year-round, and expand its offerings to meet community needs. In addition to clothing and household items, visitors can browse collectibles, handcrafted jewelry, and other unique items.

Renovation support was funded by the MRC of Bonaventure through Volet 4 of the Fonds régions et ruralité (FRR). Known as Coopération et gouvernance municipale, Volet 4 is a key component of the Gouvernement du Québec’s FRR program. It is designed to

strengthen collaboration and improve municipal governance throughout the province. By emphasizing inter-municipal cooperation, the program encourages joint initiatives that benefit multiple municipalities while fostering stronger local leadership.

Ms. Chatterton emphasized that the market also contributes to environmental sustainability. “Flea markets are more than just places to shop; they’re living breathing parts of the community, by shopping second hand, you’re reducing waste and keeping perfectly good items out of landfills,” states Ms. Chatterton. “We love seeing kids and families discover treasures and neighbours socialize. Hidden Treasures is built on the idea that community matters and we’re proud to be a space where everyone is welcome. Every market day is different. Whether you’re a collector, a bargain hunter, or just browsing, you’ll always find something unexpected, from vintage vinyl to handcrafted jewelry,” she concludes.

Visitors can use the market to declutter homes, acquire second-hand items, or engage with the community. Open year-round, the market welcomes visitors every Wednesday and Friday from 1 to 4 p.m., and on the first Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. to noon.



Hidden Treasures Manager Tammy Chatterton.

Photos: Hidden Treasures Facebook page

The benefits of shopping at a flea market or second hand shop

Penny MacWhirter

Shopping at a flea market can be beneficial for the consumer and society as a whole, as well as the environment.

Environmental benefits: One of the best gifts you can give the environment is reducing your need to buy new items. Choosing to buy secondhand items such as clothing and furniture encourages sustainable consumption, while supporting local non-profits, and fostering a strong sense of community. Shopping at a flea market promotes recycling and upcycling, this results in reducing your carbon footprint and minimizes the demand for new manufacturing. It extends the life of “goods” that would otherwise end up in a landfill. As the old proverb goes, “One man’s trash is another man’s treasure.”

Economic benefits: Flea markets boost the local economy, keeping more money circulating directly within a community, while providing non-profits with an opportunity to generate revenue. In addition, the money you save can be used for more important purchases, such as groceries and utilities. Taking your children on a flea market shopping trip can provide a great money-saving teaching opportunity. You could discuss the importance of quality over quantity, as well as, budgeting.

Social and personal benefits: People who frequent flea markets can attest to the activity fostering community connections. It’s an opportunity to meet up with people from all walks of life and chat with fellow “deal seekers”. There is always the thrill associated with finding a great deal or an especially sought after item, and who better to share that excitement with, than someone who enjoys the same thrill?

Making the most of your flea market excursion

If you’re new to flea market shopping, you might be surprised by the hustle and bustle that meets you when the door opens. Many flea market shoppers are regulars and are eager to not miss out on their next great find. Here’s some advice, so that you too can find exactly what you’re looking for, and maybe, something that you didn’t even know you needed.

Be prepared: Bring cash and shopping bags. Some flea markets have special “fill a bag” days, so be sure to check out their Facebook or newspaper ads. Also be prepared to do some searching, you may have to look through several racks or bins before finding what you’re looking for.

Arrive early: Be there when the doors open to have a chance at the best deals. The early bird gets the worm!

Have a list: Bring a list or photos on your phone of the types of items you’re looking for. If it’s a piece of furniture you’re looking for, make sure you have an idea of the dimensions required.

Be thorough: Check any items thoroughly. Make sure clothing isn’t missing buttons and that zippers are functional.



Hidden Treasures Flea Market

COME VISIT US AT OUR NEW LOCATION

FLEA MARKET

DONATIONS WANTED!

HOURS
WEDNESDAY 1 PM - 4 PM
FRIDAY 1 PM - 4 PM
FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH 9 AM - 12 PM

137, Boul. Gerard D. Levesque
New-Carlisle, QC G0C 1Z0

(418) 752-8514

DROP-OFF ON SITE

- Clothing (all sizes)
- Household Items
- Sports Equipment
- Baby Items
- Large Furniture

