

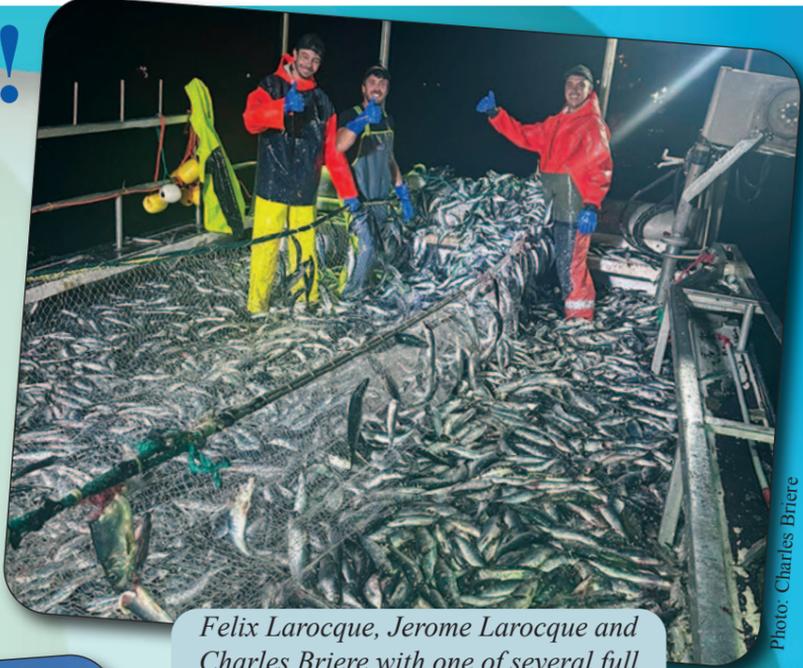
What a catch!

EMILY HOCQUARD

NEW CARLISLE: - Now that lobster and crab seasons have closed, many Gaspésian fishermen are turning their attention to tuna and herring.

Tuna fishing takes strength and patience, as these big fish can put up quite the fight to then hopefully bring a good price at market.

The change in season means shifting from traps to lines. A change in equipment which isn't always simple, but fishermen are used to change. Families and friends usually help prepare and enjoy tagging along for an exciting experience, as seen in the photos!



Felix Larocque, Jerome Larocque and Charles Briere with one of several full loads of fall herring!

Photo: Charles Briere



Captain Kirby Journeaux (second from left) and his tuna fishing team.

Photo: Allen Richards



"Another year in the books" says Captain Michael Sullivan after catching this year's tuna!

Photo: Michael Sullivan

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VIA Rail called to order by 400 Gaspésians who want their passenger train service back

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE AND PORT-DANIEL – Approximately 400 Gaspésians gathered on September 6 at seven train stations between Matapédia and Gaspé demanding that public carrier VIA Rail restore passenger service this fall between Montreal and New Carlisle, or better yet, to Port-Daniel.

VIA Rail's service was suspended, not eliminated, between Montreal, Matapédia, and Gaspé in stages due to the condition of the track and, more importantly, the bridges. An initial reduction was imposed between New Carlisle and Gaspé in December 2011, then between Matapédia and New Carlisle in September 2013.

However, in March 2015, the Quebec Ministry of Transport acquired the Matapédia-Gaspé railway line before announcing its complete refurbishment in May 2017. Despite an investment of \$355 million in this refurbishment so far, its functional portion is limited to the Matapédia-New Richmond stretch, just over a third of the 325-kilometre distance between Matapédia and Gaspé.

However, this refurbishment is almost complete between New Richmond and Port-Daniel, approximately 80 additional kilometres. By the end of October, the work there will be completed, and perhaps even the inspections required before trains pass through. This reality prompted the Coalition of Gaspésians for the Return of Passenger Trains to call for



VIA Rail retirees Allan Dow, centre, and James Gough, right, attended the Port Daniel gathering to support the Coalition. Mr. Gough also attended the Carleton gathering earlier the same day.

Photo: G. Gagné

VIA Rail's return.

"Since 2013, the Coalition has worked tirelessly to bring this train back. What we de-

velop is that VIA Rail had committed to returning if the track was passable, (...) The rail line was in good condition for at

least 30 years. We ask VIA Rail to stop giving invalid excuses to avoid returning," says Coalition spokesperson Micheline Saint-Onge.

VIA Rail refuses to return in stages

One of the arguments used by VIA Rail's management over recent years to justify its refusal to reinstate the Gaspé train before the end of 2025 is the difficulty of returning in stages between Matapédia and Gaspé, because Gaspé represents its largest market on the peninsula.

"The train was suspended in stages. It can return in stages. It's an essential service. The railway will be reopened all the

A white shark spotted close to shore in Carleton

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON-SUR-MER — Experienced Pointe-à-la-Garde fisherman Eugene Perkison had already seen a white shark during excursions along the coast between Carleton and Miguasha, but he had never seen one within 30 centimetres of his hand!

That changed on Tuesday, September 2, about sixty metres from the shore, at the tip of the Carleton lighthouse, near the local campground. Captain of a small but fairly heavy and very stable tour boat, the *Per-sévérance*, he was accompanying a couple of German tourists fishing for striped bass and mackerel. Mr. Perkison wasn't expecting a white shark so close to shore.

"We tried for striped bass, but they weren't biting. I suggested mackerel because there are some big ones, very big ones even, this summer. We must have caught 150. The customers didn't want to keep

Your arm!" adds Mr. Perkison.

"It happened so fast that I didn't have time to be scared. I didn't see it again," notes the Pointe-à-la-Garde resident, who has some sixty years of experience in sport fishing, whether on the ice, at sea, or in rivers, throughout the Gaspé Peninsula. Few people have doubted his word since September 2, based on his good reputation.

He estimates the length of this great white shark at "10 to 12 feet (3 to 3.5 metres). I didn't measure! We were in about twenty feet of water (6 metres). Last year, I saw two in Miguasha, but at a certain distance from the boat, maybe 20 feet, and in 60-70 feet of water."

He is adamant about the origin of the fish seen a few days ago. "The underside was white and the back was charcoal gray. What impressed me most were the teeth and the eyes. The head is this wide. I

Port-Daniel and further east, where they are fished commercially. Carleton-sur-Mer, despite its name, and Miguasha, are firmly at the bottom of Chaleur Bay, and in the latter case, at the mouth of the Restigouche River.

Sightings of white sharks

have increased over the past decade along the Canadian coast. Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and the Magdalen Islands have generated their share of sightings.

For the past five years, various signs have been pointing

to their presence along the Gaspé coast, such as seals that have been seriously mutilated or have had a significant portion of their body amputated. A few seal carcasses were found on the shores of the Gaspé Peninsula, notably in the Pabos Mills part of Chandler.



Eugene Perkinon shows where his hand was when the white shark tried to grab the mackerel he was trying to unhook.

Photo: G. Gagné

the fish. We were fishing with single, barbless hooks. They don't hurt the fish. They were biting like crazy," says Eugene Perkison.

Then the great white shark appeared. "The lady had caught a big mackerel. She wanted to pull it out of the water so I could unhook it. I stretched out my arm to grab it. It (the shark) came out of the bottom! It hit the boat. It bit next to my hand, maybe a foot (30 centimetres) away. The impact tilted the boat. She (the lady) flew back to the other side of the boat. The shark dove and its tail hit the boat's railing. Without the guardrail, the tail would have broken my arm," says Eugene Perkison.

"She was sure I no longer had a left arm. She was German, so we spoke in English. She kept saying 'Your arm!

didn't measure that either," he says, spreading his arms 60 to 75 centimetres.

Though concerned about the state of certain resources, such as the smelt caught in winter in Pointe-à-la-Garde, Eugene Perkison assesses the presence of other species differently.

"It's been 10-12 years since I've seen mackerel like this year. I'm seeing mackerel weighing 3-4 pounds (1.4 to 1.9 kilos). It's been 20 years since I've seen one this big. This year, I saw three bluefin tuna, two right whales, many fin whales, and porpoises. A bluefin tuna even bit one of our lines. Five seconds later, there was no more line. He unwound 800-900 feet of reel. It's so fast," he concludes.

Bluefin tuna generally live closer to the open ocean, as in

DON'T PLAY AROUND WITH YOUR SAFETY



RAILS AREN'T TRAILS: STAY AWAY FROM RAILWAY TRACKS

Votre gouvernement

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Sailboat missing off Gaspé found in the Maritimes

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – The sailboat, which had not been seen since August 28 off the coast of Gaspé, was finally found on the morning of September 4 between Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

The sailboat was spotted by a PAL Airline aircraft around 10:30 a.m. between Cape Breton and Souris. A Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary unit was deployed to reach the sailboat and tow it to Margaree Harbour, Nova

Scotia. The captain was reported to be in good health.

The Canadian Coast Guard was informed on September 1, around 1:30 p.m., that a man in a sailboat was possibly disabled in the Gaspé area. The Coast Guard and the Sûreté du Québec deployed several maritime, air, and land resources to search for the sailboat and obtain more information. Radio messages were broadcast over marine radio stations to contact the man and inform mariners who might encounter him.

On social media, the sailor's relatives were not overly concerned, noting that he was capable of ensuring his own survival.

The Coast Guard reminds all mariners of the importance of filing a travel plan during an extended sea voyage. To do this, they can notify a loved one and the Marine Communications and Traffic Service of the planned itinerary, and regularly communicate their position to ensure their safety and allow rescue resources to more effectively locate them if necessary.

Alexis Deschênes' priorities for fall session in Ottawa

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON-SUR-MER – Alexis Deschênes, the Member of Parliament (MP) for Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj, plans on prioritizing the train, fisheries, and infrastructure during the fall session in Ottawa.

The Bloc MP attended his party's caucus on September 8 and 9 in Quebec City in preparation for the parliamentary session that opened on September 15.

"...The return of passenger trains as soon as the rail line is completed. We know that in Port-Daniel, the locomotives and cars can travel on the rail line. We're going to put maximum pressure on VIA Rail to get them to come back with their analysis, which they're currently conducting, and to go back to the drawing board and tell us where they stand. What we're hoping for is a partial return," says Mr. Deschênes. "If that's not the response we get, we'll just increase the pressure until they change their minds," he adds.

Mr. Deschênes hopes to see the federal government's involvement in the next budget for rail to Gaspé. "Can the federal government contribute? We'll exert pressure in that direction," says the MP.

In other infrastructure, he



Alexis Deschênes with his leader, Yves-François Blanchet, on September 8 in Quebec City.

Photo: Courtesy of Alexis Deschênes

notes the Port of Matane and the extension of the runway at the Magdalen Islands airport.

In the fisheries sector, the MP will prioritize the Fisheries Fund, which will need to be renewed, along with the diversification of export markets. "It's really important. Money needs to be made available for this," says the MP.

The pozzolan mine and the Cap-des-Rosiers lighthouse are also on his list of priorities, as he aims to bring these citizens' demands to Ottawa.

In the upcoming budget, expected this fall, Alexis Deschênes hopes for a response to his concerns. "Funding to enable the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-

Madeleine region to acquire infrastructure that will improve mobility and prosperity, and a renewed Fisheries Fund because it allows for innovation," he says.

The big question will also remain, the size of the deficit, which could reach \$100 million.

Mark Carney's Liberal government will table a budget this fall. "We'll see to what extent Mr. Carney has managed to outspend Justin Trudeau in just a few months, something we didn't think possible," the Bloc member emphasizes.

Over the summer, Mr. Deschênes built a team to support him in his role as MP.

Police report

Maria man charged with arson and criminal harassment

Nicolas Morin, 41, was arrested on September 4 following a fire that heavily damaged his Rue des Cardinaux house in Maria. He faces four criminal charges following two court appearances that took place on September 5 and 10. Nicolas Morin's house was heavily damaged by a morning fire that prompted firefighters to intervene at about 9:15 a.m. on September 4. "He was first charged with criminal harassment on September 5 at the New Carlisle Courthouse. We objected to the suspect's release and the case was postponed until September 10. Then, additional charges were laid, of arson, attempt to defraud an insurance company and possession of arson material," states criminal prosecutor Alice Lemieux.

"We also objected to the release of the suspect during the second court appearance. The pro forma bail hearing is now scheduled for September 29," adds Ms. Lemieux. Nobody was injured as a result of the fire, but its intensity forced the evacuation of the next door neighbours. Nicolas Morin was arrested near the scene shortly after police officers arrived. A criminal scene investigator has gathered evidence regarding the causes and circumstances surrounding the fire.

Driving licence suspension for going 206 kilometres per hour

On August 30, shortly after midnight, Sûreté du Québec officers responded to several calls reporting a vehicle traveling at high speed in the Haldimand and Sandy Beach area of Gaspé. A vehicle was later caught traveling at 206 kilometres per hour (km/h) in a 70 km/h zone on York Boulevard South, while dangerously passing. The vehicle was finally stopped on Douglas Boulevard.

The 17-year-old driver from the area was driving with three minor passengers. He was arrested for driving while impaired by alcohol. At the police station, he failed breathalyzer tests, yielding results of 130 milligrams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood or more. He was released pending further legal proceedings and could face charges of dangerous driving and impaired driving.

In addition, he was issued several tickets for excessive speeding, including a \$961 fine and 30 demerit points, as well as a \$375 fine and four demerit points for violating the zero-alcohol tolerance rule for minors. His drivers licence was suspended for 90 days.

The Sûreté du Québec reminds motorists that speeding and drinking and driving are very high-risk behaviours that endanger not only vehicle occupants but also all road users.

Almost 800 operations held in school zones throughout Quebec

Sûreté du Québec officers conducted a road safety operation across its territory on September 9. A total of 796 operations were carried out, and 1,454 speeding tickets were issued in school zones. Accompanied by more than 30 partners, including all municipal police forces in Quebec, the officers' goal was to ensure the safety of students traveling between the bus stop and their homes, when boarding, disembarking, and during the bus ride. Particular attention was paid to young walkers on the way to and from elementary school.

Between peak travel periods, police officers intervened with drivers displaying behaviours that endangered their safety and that of other road users such as speeding, distraction, and failure to wear seat belts.

A total of 5,780 tickets were issued. They included:

- 2,640 for speeding, including 1,454 in school zones;
 - 115 for failure to wear a seat belt;
 - 216 for using a cell phone while driving;
 - 2,738 for various other Highway Safety Code violations
 - 70 tickets for failure to stop at a school bus stop sign.
- Specifically, for the Gaspé Peninsula, Magdalen Islands and Lower St. Lawrence regions, the statistics were:
- 192 for speeding, including 43 in a school zone;
 - 10 for not wearing a seat belt;
 - 6 for using a cell phone while driving;
 - 63 for various other Highway Safety Code violations; and
 - 0 tickets for failure to stop at a school bus stop sign.

This operation is part of the 2021-2026 Transportation Network Safety Strategy "Human Life, at the Heart of Our Actions," which aims to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury collisions throughout the territory served by the Sûreté du Québec. Measures covering each of the Strategy's areas: partnership, intervention, awareness, technology and evaluation are being implemented by the Sûreté du Québec and its partners to work toward a common goal: making roads, trails, and bodies of water safer.

SPECS@GLOBETROTTER.NET



Gilles Gagné

Commentary

Cabinet shuffle: Too little too late!

Over the last 50 years, or probably more, not one Québec cabinet shuffle has saved a government from being beaten in the next election. Other factors have sometimes played that role, like scandals hitting an opposition party, or the resignation of a political leader, but not a cabinet shuffle.

So, Premier François Legault's September 10 new cabinet nominations, and the fact that he got rid of some other ministers, will likely not be a determining factor in the October 2026 election.

People can say "Never say never" or "One year represents an eternity in politics." However, with only 11% of voting intentions for the Coalition avenir Québec party, according to the latest Pallas Data-L'actualité survey, it's hard to see how Mr. Legault's cabinet decisions could become the exception that proves the rule. The survey was also taking into account data analyzed by Quebec125, a survey aggregator run by highly competent Philippe J. Fournier.

According to Pallas, the CAQ is currently 27 points behind the Parti Québécois (PQ) and 16 points behind the Liberals. Even Quebec's Conservative Party would have finished in front of the Coalition avenir Québec party (CAQ), had an election been held on September 6.

The survey was carried out with 1,187 respondents, two days after François Legault's testimony before the Gallant Commission investigating the \$600 million cost overrun hitting the Société de l'assurance-automobile du Québec, the SAAQcliq affair that is increasingly called a scandal. Other ministers' testimonies heard there before the premier's were and remain devastating for the CAQ government image.



Fred Kirch

Guest Commentary

Tariff Tantrums

From our side of the US-Canada frontier, Donald Trump's tariff policies have never been about sound economics. They have been about coercion, political favoritism, and theatre, all while showing a stunning ignorance of how tariffs actually work. Trump has used them to bludgeon allies, reward friends, and punish perceived enemies, regardless of the facts or the economic fallout.

For most Canadians, this isn't a distant trade squabble. It has meant real harm to our industries, unnecessarily higher prices for our consumers, and a growing risk of inflation.

A tariff is a tax on imported goods. When an importer in the United States buys Canadian aluminum, Chinese electronics, or Mexican produce, they must pay the tariff before the goods are allowed to enter the country. That cost is almost always passed on, not to foreign governments as Trump pretends, but to American businesses and consumers.

Trump invariably describes tariffs as being paid to the U.S. government by the country from which the goods are ordered and that is incorrect. Either the importer or the end-user must pay them, and they, in turn either eat that cost or add it onto what the end-user is

So, the Parti Québécois would have won with 38% support rate, with the Liberal Party finishing second with 27%. The Conservative Party would have received the nod of 15% of the electorate, with Québec Solidaire closing the ranking with 8%.

In 2017, former premier Philippe Couillard also resorted to this expedient to revive his government, bringing four new Members of the National Assembly (MNA) into the cabinet. At the time, Mr. Couillard's Liberal Party was only trailing by five points behind the CAQ, and the shuffle had no effect. On the contrary, the gap continued to widen from then on.

François Legault will need a miracle to save his party one year before the election. In fact, the September 6 survey shows that he lost 4% compared to June, with most of the loss going to the Parti Québécois.

A fourth place in surveys by a reigning party is unprecedented in Quebec. However, it must be specified that, for a sizeable part of the last 60 years, and even 75 years, the province's electoral results have essentially favoured a two-party system, thanks in great part to the constitutional debate between federalists voting for the Liberal Party and sovereigntists rooting for the Parti Québécois.

Same old, same old

As in 2017, Education is the only one of the five ministries that embody the state's major missions, which are Health, Education, Justice, Economy and Finance, to be replaced. Former Treasury Board minister Sonia Lebel replaces Bernard Drainville, who loses Education.

In other fields, very little-known Members of the National Assembly gain cabinet positions. It is therefore hard to figure out how Premier Legault can ask recruits to transform the image of a government worn down by seven years in power when their reputation is practically nonexistent outside their constituencies. Add to the reality the fact that they will have little time to prove themselves in positions that don't offer much visibility! There is a challenge there.

—Continued on page 18

expected to pay.

Properly used, tariffs can serve specific purposes such as protecting domestic industries, applying targeted pressure, and raising government revenue. In skilled hands, they are a narrow tool, to be deployed sparingly, usually in coordination with allies. In Trump's hands, they have become clubs swung wildly, often in the wrong direction.

In 2018, Trump imposed sweeping tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminum, claiming that our metals posed a "national security threat to the United States", which is ludicrous. Canadian producers lost business, U.S. manufacturers faced higher costs, and relations between two of the world's closest trading partners deteriorated.

Then came something even more bizarre: Trump threatened tariffs unless Canada stopped the "flow" of fentanyl across the border. In reality, almost all fentanyl entering the U.S. originates in China and moves through U.S. ports of entry on its southern border. The amount coming from Canada is negligible. That fact is well known. But Trump wasn't interested in facts. He was interested in looking "tough" for the cameras, even if it meant insulting an ally and undermining trust.

Trump's misuse of tariffs wasn't confined to Canada. In 2019, he threatened to put escalating tariffs on all Mexican goods unless Mexico acted to stop Central American migrants from reaching the U.S. border. It was just after Mexican officials refused to interfere in the U.S. prosecution of former Mexican defense minister Salvador Cienfuegos.

—Continued on page 18

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I always look forward to receiving the Spec newspaper; it let's us know what is happening in our Gaspésie region, and this latest issue was very special with your anniversary insert on the news from the mid 70s. A fine time to be living in that era, and thanks for the very interesting content of what went on back then.

Also, just an opinion on the spruce budworm spray program. Granted, the issue of this insect with regards to its damage to the trees is not good, but spraying with an insecticide just has to stop. "They" can toot its benefits and safety all they want and dress it up to look "completely" safe, but a chemical mix used to kill insect larvae doesn't sound too safe to me. What about the other larvae not related to the spruce budworm?

Why didn't Ms. Labonte name the biological insecticide so we can know what it is they are using?

I have personally been in an area where the spraying was done near water, so that can't be good.

"Managing the forest" should not always be left to humans. History has shown it's not always the best plan.

Ann Lavoie, Restigouche-Sud-Est, Quebec

Is this what young people deserve? Reflections on International Youth Day

Five months ago, when Mark Carney was on a mission to woo Canadians in his bid to lead both party and country, he wrote: "Young people deserve more from their government. They deserve to have optimism and confidence in their future. That's the Canada I want to build." 58 days after being elected and nearly ten years after his landmark "tragedy of the horizon" speech about acting with foresight to prevent climate harms, Carney's government rammed through Bill C-5 – legislation that gives cabinet sweeping powers to bypass environmental reviews and protections. As the second-worst wildfire season in Canadian history forces evacuations from coast to coast to coast and leaders muse about taxpayer-funded fossil fuel expansion, I have to ask: is this the "more" that young people deserve? Or are we seeing the continued sidelining of young peoples' rights to a climate-safe future, leaving them with no choice but to litigate? On International Youth Day, I celebrated the bravery of the seven young Ontarians in Mathur v. Ontario for taking their government to court over climate harms. For them, and for me, actions speak louder than words.

Claude Francis Huguet, Cloridorme, QC

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EcoRock Dalhousie considers scenarios requiring less dredging

GILLES GAGNÉ

LISTUGUJ – EcoRock Dalhousie chief executive officer Francis Forlini says that his firm is considering two scenarios requiring less dredging at the Port of Dalhousie, in New Brunswick, in anticipation of pozzolan shipments. This adjustment is intended in part to satisfy First Nations, who are opposed to this dredging, as well as opponents to the company's project.

In the initial pozzolan shipment plan, EcoRock Dalhousie wanted to dredge the Port of Dalhousie, and the channel providing access to it, to a depth of 12.5 metres, which would have allowed it to accommodate ships with a capacity of 70,000 tons. Such dredging would have required the removal of 350,000 cubic metres of sediment over an area of 257,000 square metres, the equivalent of a channel 128 metres wide and two kilometres long.

"There is less dredging if we use smaller vessels. If we return Dalhousie's harbour to its initial depth of 10.4 metres, we would have to remove 90,000 cubic metres of sediment over an area of 74,000 square metres (...) There is a third option, but it is confidential. In this case, it is more difficult to find common ground,"

explains Francis Forlini.

A draft of 10.4 metres would open the door to smaller vessels, "between 15,000 and 35,000 tons of capacity, such as cement vessels," he adds.

Sediments have accumulated for about 15 years at the port of Dalhousie, which was quite active until 2008, and used occasionally after, until 2012.

Pozzolan is a volcanic rock found in abundance in a quarry located in Dalhousie, a central borough of the new municipality of Heron Bay. This quarry has been exploited for decades as a source of construction aggregates.

Pozzolan is used in certain cement powder mixes. Having been heated by a volcano, it reduces the amount of limestone in a given volume of cement powder. This reduces the greenhouse gas impact of this powder to a certain extent. Limestone, on the other hand, must be heated to very high temperatures.

The Dalhousie deposit, however, is located 200 metres from a school and houses. Mining it would require frequent blasting, dust, crushing, and grinding. The Dalhousie port supported the town's heavy industrial activity for nearly 80 years, starting in the late 1920s. It was contaminated by numerous chemicals, and its dredging



Photo: G. Gagné

Personally, Listuguj councillor Wendell Metallic opposes the project because of its potential impact on salmon and lobster.

is consequently highly controversial.

Since the summer of 2024, the EcoRock Dalhousie project has encountered strong opposition in its New Brunswick sector, but also just across the Restigouche river and Baie des Chaleurs in the Gaspé Peninsula, particularly in Miguasha, where a fossil park is located, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The project is also enjoying significant support.

The Indigenous Factor

Francis Forlini concedes that the perspective of the Mi'gmaq of Listuguj, in the Gaspé Peninsula, and Eel River Bar, near Dalhousie, has changed EcoRock Dalhousie's initial strategy, which consisted of exporting large volumes of pozzolan to Europe, where this

material is used more than in North America.

"We have frequent discussions with them, and their main objection is definitely dredging. They consider the Restigouche River their main (natural) source of food, a point of view shared by Listuguj and Eel River Bar," he explains.

Francis Forlini rules out the use of another port, this one currently active, in Belledune, about fifty kilometres to the east.

"The distance from the quarry is too great to transport the pozzolan to Belledune. It's unthinkable to take the pozzolan elsewhere. It would require handling the pozzolan twice during transport. This isn't a product that will make a profit of \$300 per ton. (Land) transport at \$40 per ton would kill the project," assures the director of EcoRock Dalhousie. Shallower-draft barge transport between the Port of Dalhousie and transshipment onto a ship moored nearby is not ruled out. It is not currently preferred, nor is the use of cofferdams to load ships some distance from shore. "The currents are strong off Dalhousie," argues Mr. Forlini.

Listuguj will unveil its position in a few weeks

Listuguj councillor Wendell Metallic heads an advisory committee that includes two other band council members, Tanner Isaac and Macey Metallic.

"Speaking for myself, I'm against the project. Dredging and dust would negatively affect our two most important food resources: salmon and lobster. Our committee will submit its work to the band council in mid-September, and after that, the councillors will make a decision," says Wendell Metallic, a councillor who has served continuously since 1992.

So far, Eel River Bar residents have also spoken out against the EcoRock Dalhousie

project in public meetings, also on an individual basis.

Resignation and Appointment

Furthermore, the former federal Member of Parliament for Madawaska-Restigouche, René Arseneault, has been employed by EcoRock Dalhousie since May, about a month after the end of his political term. He is vice-president of legal affairs and business development, which prompted comments to the effect that he is in a conflict of interest, having secured grants for the company during his third and last term.

Francis Forlini points out that René Arseneault was indeed hired very quickly after the end of his political term. Mr. Arseneault did not seek another mandate in connection with the April 28 federal election.

Mr. Forlini rules out a conflict of interest in this hiring, as the federal government has granted EcoRock Dalhousie \$3.1 million in aid in 2023 and 2024.

"The grant was confirmed in 2023 and 2024, two amounts of \$1.9 million and \$1.2 million for a total of \$3.1 million. The second amount was confirmed in 2024 and came into effect in March 2025. I have trouble understanding why people are talking about a conflict of interest. He was active with ACOA (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency). He was in favour of the project and did his job to develop the region. We hired him because we were seen as outsiders and we were going to leave with the money, leaving environmental damage. Mr. Arseneault is from the region, his children are in the region. It should reassure people," explains Mr. Forlini.

In the plan presented publicly at the end of 2024, EcoRock Dalhousie foresees to invest between \$200 million and \$300 million to exploit the pozzolan in 2028 and create between 160 and 170 jobs. The plan also included exporting construction aggregates from 2026 and on, but this part of the venture is now excluded, he also mentions.

The mayor of Baie-des-Hérons, Normand Pelletier, a supporter of the pozzolan mining project from the beginning, submitted his resignation on August 18, notably because he was unable to build a strong consensus among his councillors in favour of this industrial development.

Quebec supports Gespeg's request for an economic reserve

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - The Quebec government plans on letting the federal government know they are in favour of the Micmac Nation of Gespeg creating an economic reserve.

The Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs has the file on its desk. "We're working on it. The Quebec government cannot do this alone. We have to work with the federal government. When reserve lands are added, it has to be done with the federal government. For our part, we are here, we are partners with Gespeg. We hope that things will move forward. How quickly? I can't tell you that today. We are working with Ottawa. We are in favour of it," said Ian Lafrenière, the Minister responsible for Relations with First Nations, during his recent visit to Gespeg.

Gespeg's request targets three properties in the area surrounding the Nation's administrative centre. This initiative will give Gespeg access to additional funding programs to support its economic and social development, as well as programs supporting community infrastructure.

The Town of Gaspé has already given its support, continuing the collaboration established in 2017 between the municipal council and the Gespeg council.

Gespeg is focusing on socio-economic development, particularly the construction of social infrastructure and diversifying economic development. The creation of this economic reserve would provide access to 26 assistance programs, whereas Gespeg currently only receives assistance from five programs.

Recognized since 1972,



Photo: N. Sergerie

Minister responsible for Relations with First Nations, Ian Lafrenière.

the Micmac Nation of Gespeg had its application rejected in the mid-1970s. After efforts in the 1990s, the process resumed in 2020. A new application was filed in 2024.

Gespeg Chief Céline Casivi declined to comment on the issue when she was contacted by SPEC.

Surplus of \$977,000 in Percé

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PERCÉ - Two months after submitting its 2024 financial statements to the municipal council, Percé presented its results to the public on September 2, showing a surplus of \$977,000 on a budget of \$8.5 million.

Among the highlights, tax revenues were \$500,000 higher than projected, due to a \$4 million increase in taxable value over the past year. Meanwhile, expenses remained relatively stable, with the exception of legal fees which totalled \$170,000. Mayor Daniel Leboeuf notes that a large part of the legal bill was related to the administrative inquiry by the Quebec Municipal Commission and the legal proceedings surrounding the tourist tax.

Long-term debt fell from \$16.4 million to \$14.8 million. The town has a financial cushion of \$1.7 million. "Our liabilities are reasonable. We have a good unallocated fund. We are in a good position to move toward 2026," says the mayor.



Percé Mayor Daniel Leboeuf.

Photo: N. Sergerie

When asked about the council's intentions, given that \$155,000 from the single year of tourist tax collection in 2022 generated revenue for the town, the mayor indicated that legal advice had been sought to determine how the money should be used, while merchants want the amount to be returned to them.

In addition, the town council supports the idea of con-

solidating low-income housing in the Rocher-Percé MRC. The mayor noted that this would simplify management, facilitate hiring and, above all, provide the organizations with a renewed board of directors, as candidates for this volunteer position are becoming increasingly scarce. The town of Chandler gave its agreement in principle to such a consolidation.

Avignon East fire brigade asks government for assistance

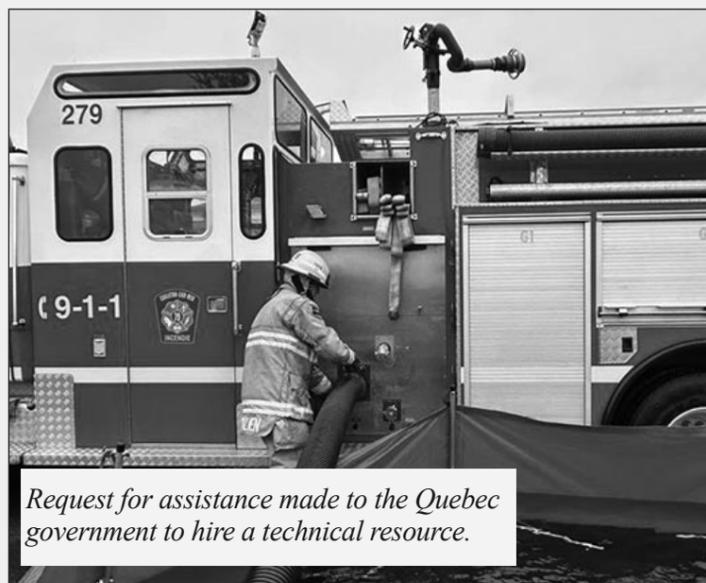
NELSON SERGERIE

CARLETON-SUR-MER - The municipalities partnering with the Avignon East Fire Department want to acquire technical resources to maintain the fire department's vehicles and equipment.

Maria, Carleton-sur-Mer, Nouvelle, and Escuminac joined forces on January 1, 2024. At that time, the organization was hoping for \$250,000 in support from the Quebec government as part of a municipal service sharing program, but the request was rejected because the funds had been exhausted.

The brigade is back with a request for \$250,000 for the technical component.

"The program has been replenished and we will be submitting a new project. We want to acquire a technical resource, a firefighter-mechanic. This is something we don't currently have. It's an addition to our services and we will be submitting



Request for assistance made to the Quebec government to hire a technical resource.

Photo: Avignon Est Fire Department

the program in the hope of obtaining \$50,000 over five years," explains Carleton-sur-Mer Mayor Mathieu Lapointe.

The central town of the Avignon MRC is responsible for managing the service. The person hired would be responsible for equipment in each municipality.

They would be responsible for maintaining trucks, vans, snowmobiles, and ATVs. In addition to vehi-

cles, they would maintain hoses, clean protective clothing and masks, and ensure that procedures are followed.

"There are a lot of small elements that add up, and all of that together means that we would need a full-time person. Sometimes we outsource contracts for the maintenance of small equipment. With this resource, we could do all of that in-house," says Mr. Lapointe.



Photo: N. Sergerie

Saint-Elzéar's cellular tower is finally operational.

Cell phone signal finally available in Saint-Elzéar

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

SAINT-ELZÉAR: - The cell-phone situation is finally resolved in St. Elzéar. In September 2021, the town made headlines when an emergency alert was not received by cellphones in the town.

The improved service is due to a cellular tower which has been operational since August 29 and covers an area of some 60 square kilometres.

Construction of the tower, which began in November, was completed in the spring. All that remained was to install the telecommunications equipment and put it into service, which has now been completed.

"People are happy because it was a matter of safety. Remember the September 4, 2021, incident and the shooter who made headlines even on the international scene. It's a significant investment, and people are very happy," notes Saint-Elzéar Mayor Pâquerette Poirier.

The 2021 incident the mayor is referring to involved the municipality not receiving a national alert via cellphones when an armed individual was at large in that municipality. The lack of alert was due to inadequate cellphone coverage.

Quebec Premier François Legault traveled to Saint-Elzéar on June 28, 2024, to

announce the deployment of the cellular network in the Bonaventure backcountry, including Saint-Elzéar and Saint-Alphonse, with financial support from the Quebec government through Telus.

Within days the telecommunications giant announced a \$6 million investment of its own funds, combined with government assistance, for the deployment and upgrade of its cellular networks in the Gaspé Peninsula. With a contribution of \$7.25 million from the Quebec government and \$6 million from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, Telus announced the addition of approximately ten new 5G wireless sites in Gaspé, Percé, Saint-Alphonse and Saint-Elzéar. The communities of Hope and Listuguj were also mentioned by the premier at the time.

The Quebec government has committed to putting all towers into service by the end of 2026. The Saint-Alphonse tower is expected to be operational in October.



GASPÉ MUNICIPAL UPDATE:

Dangerous dog to be euthanized

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ: — The Town of Gaspé wants to euthanize a dog that has been declared dangerous, which would be a first in the Gaspé Peninsula.

The town is basing its decision on a measure in the Regulation to implement the Act to promote the protection of persons by establishing a framework concerning dogs.

The Quebec government delegated responsibility for dangerous animals to municipalities following various tragic incidents involving dogs in the province through a law passed on June 13, 2018, which came into effect on March 3, 2020.

A notice of intent was filed at the September 2 council meeting. "We have a potentially dangerous dog here, which has been declared very dangerous by a veterinarian. This is a dog that has killed another animal. Everything has been proven and admitted by its owner. We must begin the process of determining what to do with the dog. What was discussed with the council is that



Mayor Daniel Côté at the September 2, 2025 meeting.

Photo: N. Sergerie

since we are dealing with a dog that has been declared very dangerous by a veterinarian, we must issue a notice of intent," explains the Mayor of Gaspé Daniel Côté, who remains very cautious in the face of a legal and possibly judicial process.

The town became involved following an incident that occurred on July 17, when the

"dangerous" dog, a Labrador mix, fatally injured a small dog.

"There are steps to follow. It can take several weeks or even months. We are fortunate to have a veterinarian in Gaspé who can analyze the dog's dangerousness and behaviour. In this case, it went fairly quickly," notes the mayor. The owner of the animal has five days to respond to the notice of

intent filed by the council.

"All costs and preliminary analyses up to euthanasia, which is the ultimate solution in this case, are the responsibility of the owner," says the elected official.

The mayor points out that, according to the Civil Code, the owner is responsible for the care, control, supervision, and health of the animal. "We must remember this because I feel that this notion of individual responsibility is forgotten in our society," says Mr. Côté.

The council was scheduled to revisit the issue on September 15.

The SHQ will have to pay

A 1974 agreement is coming back to haunt the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ), which will have to pay 100% of the renovation costs for certain low-rent housing units in Cap-des-Rosiers.

The mayor of Gaspé suggests that this may be related to the construction of these housing units following the mass expropriation of residents when

Forillon Park was created.

"A series of low-income housing units were built around the Forillon peninsula. Perhaps it was in connection with this that the SHQ, to make up for the expropriations, assumed 100% of the relocation costs. Perhaps that is the situation. We brought up this agreement and the SHQ agreed to pay 100% of the renovation costs," says the mayor.

The work is estimated at \$8.2 million. If the municipal administration had not brought up this agreement, the town would have had to pay its 10% share, or \$820,000.

"We obviously searched for any kind of agreement that could exempt us from the 10% bill. But everything that was in the agreement, we got," notes the mayor.

There are other low-income housing renovations that need to be done, and the town will pay its 10% share. This is particularly the case for the renovation project on Rue des Grandvillais, a \$1.6 million project for which the town will have to pay approximately \$100,000.

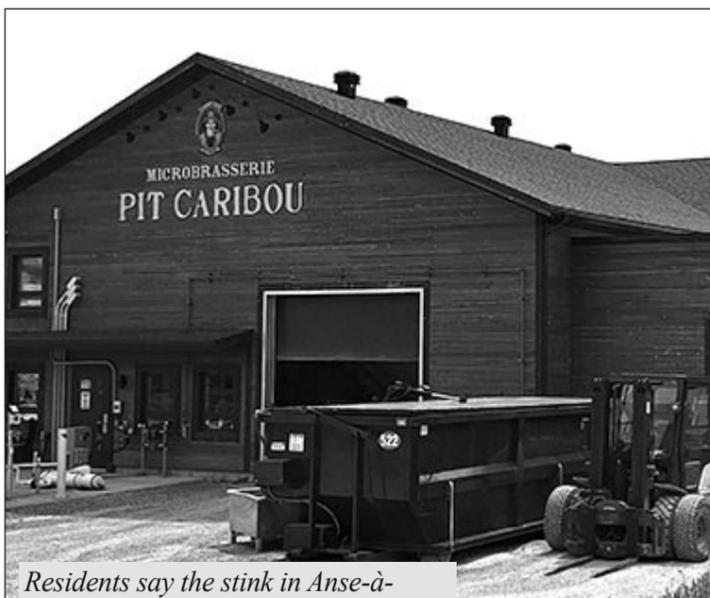
Percé: Citizens complain of disturbing odours

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

PERCÉ - Since June, residents of the Anse-à-Beaufils sector of Percé have been dealing with intermittent nauseating odours, a situation that is not the responsibility of the town.

"I'm aware of the odours. I'm not an ecological engineer, but I know it smells bad at times," says Mayor Daniel Leboeuf. Residents complained to the municipal office, but zoning regulations do not cover airborne odours. "We referred them to Urgences Environnement, and I'm aware that inspectors took samples to try to determine the source. I haven't received a report on these inspections yet," notes the mayor.

If the problem is a municipal responsibility, the mayor assures that action will be taken if there is a problem with a septic tank or accumulated algae. "We must protect air quality. We have a bylaw on nuisances, but we can't im-



Residents say the stink in Anse-à-Beaufils is coming from Pit Caribou.

Photo: N. Sergerie

pose solutions. The Ministry of the Environment is better qualified than us to tell us what to do," says Mr. Leboeuf.

The Ministry of the Environment received a report on September 2 via the Emergency-Environment hotline. The ministry indicates that the complaint was about odours and wastewater discharge from the Pit Caribou

microbrewery.

Some citizens are pointing their fingers at the Pit Caribou microbrewery for the nauseating smells.

The company installed a new wastewater treatment system following a previous regulation non-compliance warning.

The Ministry of the Environment inspected the site at the end of July and will ensure

its compliance. Following the September 2 complaint, this item could be added to the file.

No sanctions have been issued since October 2023, and no legal action is pending against the company. Pit Caribou received a \$5,000 financial penalty for a violation of the Environment Quality Act. The Ministry accused the company of installing an overflow pipe on the process water retention pit, which had the actual or potential effect of releasing a contaminant into the environment, namely process wastewater, not covered by the initial authorization.

This Ministry intervention followed two complaints. The first complaint was filed on June 12, 2023, by the Town of Percé after receiving complaints from residents "Because the microbrewery appeared to have a wastewater management problem," the ministry stated at the time.

Following these complaints, the company con-

tacted the ministry's Analysis and Expertise Department and Environmental Control Department, which conducted several audits.

Furthermore, two weeks later, another complaint was filed regarding "An accumulation of questionable and foul-smelling substances on the bank in the area of the establishment and to the effect that the company had carried out riprap repair work without authorization."

The \$5,000 fine was issued on October 5, 2023. Inspectors visited the site four times in June, November, and December 2023 to conduct inspections and take samples.

"Notices of non-compliance were sent to the company on August 8, 2023, and February 21, 2024, informing it of breaches of the Environment Quality Act and the Regulation respecting activities in wetlands, bodies of water and sensitive environments," continued the ministry, which indicated at that time that it was not ruling out any recourse to

Tenants without telecommunications

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

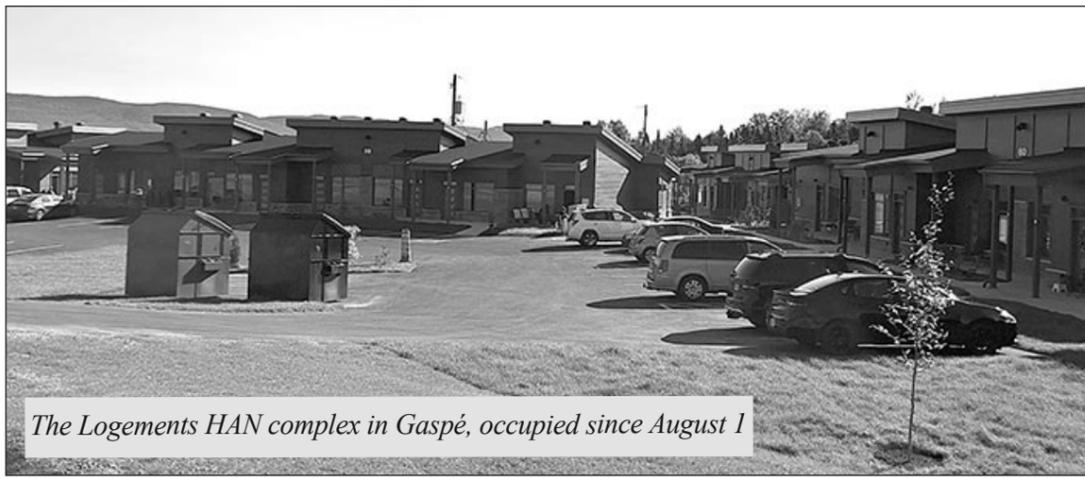
GASPÉ – Tenants of the new Logements HAN complex, which opened on August 1, complain that neither Telus nor Cogeco offer them adequate telecommunications service, which they say is unthinkable in 2025.

"The problem is that we don't have internet, television, or a telephone. There are people who need Médicalert services and they need the internet for that, and nothing works. We call the networks, and nothing happens," says the tenant spokesperson, Gérald Fournier.

The complex accommodates people with disabilities, and for some of them, communication is essential.

Even the cellular network has difficulty functioning in the complex's parking lot, at the end of Forest Street. Inside the apartments, the signal is practically nonexistent.

"We haven't heard anything about connection. We try to get



The Logements HAN complex in Gaspé, occupied since August 1

Photo: N. Sergerie

it, and often, people hang up on us. We need a phone, TV, cable, and the Internet," says the tenants' spokesperson.

The residents don't even have confirmation of a possible connection date. "Two days ago, they started saying in a few weeks or a year or two," says Mr. Fournier, who decided to alert the media. "It's an essential service. This is not right," he adds.

Representations have been made to elected officials. Housing HAN understands the

situation of its tenants. "We usually contact service providers three to five months before the tenants arrive. When we start a construction project, the procedures are public. The providers are aware that we're coming," explains Logements HAN spokesperson Yves Comeau.

"In the case of Gaspé, we did this two to three months before the tenants arrived and we specified a move-in date of August 1. Hydro-Québec did what needed to be done. They

haven't had access to the internet, telephone, or cable for a few weeks. We're a bit like tenants in this situation," continues Mr. Comeau.

Logements HAN has been in contact with the providers, but hasn't given a connection date. "In the past, it's very rare for providers to be unable to connect before the tenants arrived. This is a first for us," emphasizes the spokesperson.

The organization has projects in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, Chandler, and New

Richmond.

It acknowledges the events in Gaspé. "We're working with municipal governments. We're aware of these events. When we start a project, these suppliers are certainly already included. We'll continue our processes. What we can do to make a difference is that when we see that there are fewer people in certain neighbourhoods, we can ask companies to give us technical advice sooner. We're a bit like consumers. We ask questions and depend on what they tell us," notes Mr. Comeau.

On the technical side, a source told SPEC that engineering studies had to be conducted, and the conclusion was that the entire Forest Street line had to be redone to serve the 32 apartments, as the network wasn't capable of providing such a volume.

The equipment arrived on September 4, and installation work began. Telus confirms that the equipment is currently being installed.

An almost historic drought

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - August 2025 will go down in history as one of the driest months since authorities started keeping weather records for the Gaspé Peninsula.

During August, Environment Canada measured only 16.5 millimetres of rain in New Carlisle, while 28.6 millimetres fell in Carleton-sur-Mer.

According to the federal agency, this was the second driest August in history. In August 2010, only 15 millimeters of rain fell in New Carlisle. As for Carleton-sur-Mer, it was the third driest, surpassing August the 28.8 millimetres recorded in 2020 and the years 1916 and 1920.

"It's very low for this month, and we're in the top five driest years on record," notes meteorologist Alexandra Cournoyer.

Although the Environment Canada compiles a list, it's not precise. "These are smaller weather stations. Sometimes there may be missing or not officially verified data. That's why we have to make a reservation when we want to create an official record, but we can still derive a general average. We're in the driest years on record," explains Ms. Cournoyer.

Gaspé received slightly more rain, with 48.1 millimetres, which places August 2025 as the eighth driest August in Gaspé. The driest August there was recorded in 1994 with only 15 millimetres. The average in August at the Michel-Pouliot Airport is 91 millimeters.

This very dry weather was marked by several high temperature records. An especially hot heatwave, which peaked between August 9 and 13, stood out for its duration and intensity.

In New Carlisle, on August 12, the mercury reached 35.5°C, exceeding the previous daily record set in 1917 by 6.4 degrees.

Gaspé recorded five consecutive days above 30°C, an unprecedented occurrence for an August and, for a summer, since 1963.

An all-time record was set on August 12 in Gaspé with 36.2°C. The previous high temperature record in history was 36.0°C, set on June 27, 2003.



Photo: Archives

August was one of the driest months in history.

Gaspé informs public utilities during major projects

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

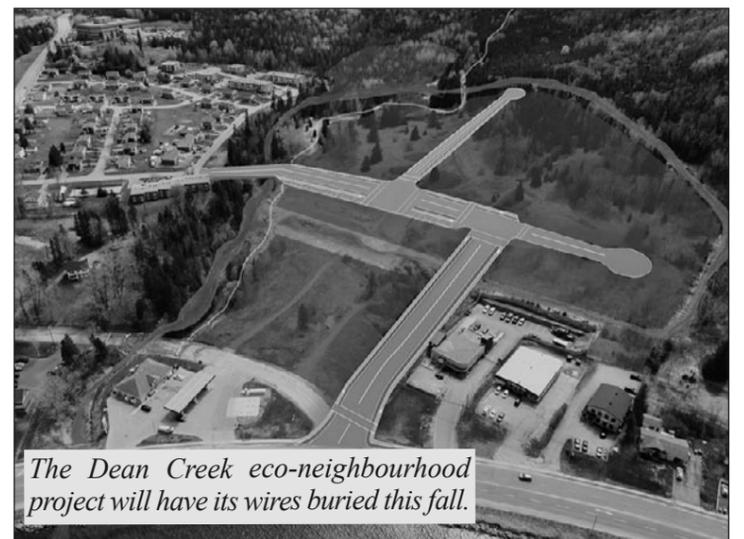
GASPÉ – With the recent mishap experienced with Logements HAN regarding the connection of telecommunications services, the Town of Gaspé ensures that when major projects are launched, public utility services are informed well in advance of development projects requiring additional capacity.

The question arises in connection with a major project underway by Gestion Bourgade in the Dean Creek area, near the downtown.

"There is a delegation of municipal work to the land developer. Normally, it's part of the protocol that public utility companies are informed and prepare accordingly," notes Mayor Daniel Côté. He notes that, in this specific case, there is no construction underway under a building permit.

Sophie Bourdages, Vice President of Gestion Bourgade, notes that the process is already underway.

"Since public utilities such as electricity, optical telephone lines, and cable television will be buried, work will be carried out in parallel with the con-



The Dean Creek eco-neighbourhood project will have its wires buried this fall.

Photo: Gestion Bourgade

struction site to provide water and sewer services to the neighbourhood, since this requires excavation," the manager explains.

Distribution points have

been planned at the entrance to each lot so that owners can connect to the services. The work is expected to be completed this fall.

More on page 9



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Logements HAN: Telecoms knew for 1.5 years

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – Telecommunications companies have known since May 28, 2024, that a connection for telephone, internet, and television services would be required for the Logements HAN buildings at the end of Forest Street in Gaspé.

"As part of this project, as early as May 28, 2024, municipal authorities notified telecommunications services and Hydro-Québec that this project was coming. Hydro-Québec acted to connect the housing units as soon as they were ready. However, as far as telecommunications services are concerned, that doesn't seem to be the case," says



Installers working to connect the HAN Housing buildings in Gaspé.

Photo: N. Sergerie

Mayor Daniel Côté.

Tenants with disabilities have been moving in since

August 1 and are still without telecommunications service. Furthermore, cell phone serv-

ice is very limited in the area. "It's a shame, especially since we're talking about a vulnerable clientele who can't afford to travel like everyone else. These are people who need these services at home, probably more than the average person. It's a significant need for them. I can't explain the delays. I'm starting to find it long," added the mayor.

The Town of Gaspé was contacted during the week of September 1, and the mayor on September 6.

"We started working (on the issue) at the beginning of the week," says the mayor, noting that no deadline was available prior to the tenants' media appearance.

It was a group effort to get the file moving. On September 9, Telus employees were seen at the location carrying out work to connect the housing complexes to the network.

The Canadian communications giant responded by email late in the afternoon of September 9. "We understand the Han Logement Group's

concerns. Our team, which has been on site since September 8, 2025, is making every effort to proceed with the installation and activation of services, and this should be completed quickly in the coming days, as planned. The complexity of the work, particularly the limited space within the complex, has caused additional delays and a revision of the initial plans. We thank our customers for their patience," wrote Communications Director Jacinthe Beaulieu.

According to information obtained by SPEC, the network engineering in the area had to be revised because the line between Montée de Sandy Beach and the complexes, which runs via Forest Street, was not designed to accommodate 32 additional apartments.

A new wire must be installed before connecting the complexes. Its design is intended to eventually accommodate a Phase 2 project currently being planned for HAN Logements in this area.

Increasing budget at the RéGÎM

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CHANDLER - The 2026 budget of the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine Intermunicipal Transport Board (RéGÎM) will increase by \$1 million, for a total of \$5.8 million.

The cost of transportation contracts with subcontractors, amounting to \$600,000, and capital projects totalling \$400,000 explain this significant budget increase.

"Contracts are indexed annually when there are no calls for tenders. When there is a call for tenders, they often increase by 20%, 30%, or 40%. Rising transportation costs are the main factor in the budget increase," says RéGÎM President and Mayor of Gaspé, Daniel Côté.

Three capital projects are on the table

"We continue to make progress on the electrification of transportation. There are plans to add bus shelters and a mobile application project that has been partially completed and will continue to be developed," says the president. Gas tax revenues are expected to decrease by \$200,000 due to the electrification of transportation.

The board will have to draw \$400,000 from its accumulated surplus to balance its budget. "To stop dipping into surpluses, we will have to increase the MRCs' contributions by around one hundred thousand dollars for the next year. According to the Ministry of Transportation



RéGÎM's 2026 budget will be \$5.8 million.

Photo: N. Sergerie

regulations, the municipal level must provide at least 20% to the organization to receive government subsidies," explains Mr. Côté.

By the end of 2024, the surplus was only \$1 million. The authority had drawn \$350,000 to balance its 2025 budget, which should end the fiscal year with a smaller deficit, Mr. Côté calculates.

"We need to find new sources of revenue. We could cut expenses, which means cutting services, but the population is demanding more," notes the president.

The shuttle service implemented this summer in the Forillon area at a cost of \$100,000 was a success. "We would like to repeat this type of project, but without additional revenue, we won't be able to repeat it, but we'll have to cut services. That's when we ask ourselves questions about the future of the organization and the revenue to be collected to make it profitable," continues Mr. Côté.

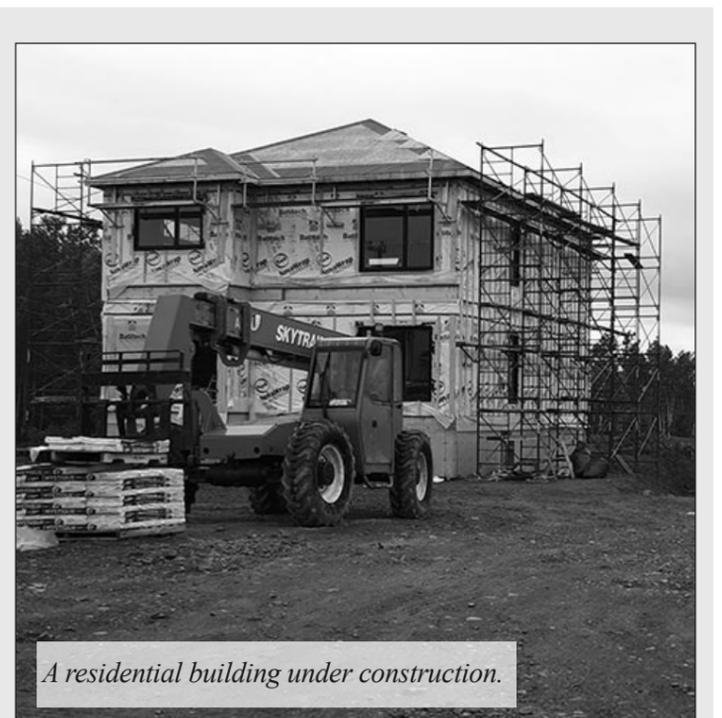
There's no question of ask-

ing users to pay more to avoid a return to solo driving.

Discussions on the registration tax continue

"We've done preliminary calculations to see if it would be worthwhile. Yes, it could be, but it's complicated administratively. The ministries are forcing us to go back to the MRCs to seek support in principle," explains Mr. Côté.

The registration fees in Quebec City and Montreal range between \$90 and \$150, but the scenario would be much lower in the Gaspé Peninsula. "We were talking about a dozen or so at most. We've come up with scenarios of \$10, \$20, \$30, and \$40. The \$40 figure has already been ruled out. It doesn't cover all vehicle categories. We wouldn't need \$150 to provide services. The goal is to ensure we maintain a certain level of transportation and support paratransit, which suffers from chronic government (under) funding," the president adds.



A residential building under construction.

Photo: N. Sergerie

New Richmond maintains its support for housing

Nelson Sergerie

NEW RICHMOND – New Richmond will continue its support for housing construction over the next two years, following the success of recent years.

The town is offering \$15,000 in assistance per door for any contractor who builds at least two-unit buildings in its territory. To achieve this, on September 8, the municipal council authorized a borrowing by-law of \$612,000 spread over 10 years.

The first version of such a program was successful. More than 70 housing units have been built in the last two years, with about \$900,000 in financial aid distributed.

The funds will be available for 2025 and 2026. "There's already a 20-unit project, plus a six-unit project and an eight-unit project that should begin construction before winter. We're getting ahead of the curve to be able to provide financial assistance," states the Mayor of New Richmond Éric Dubé.

Vandalism in Saint-Siméon

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

SAINT-SIMÉON – Minor acts of vandalism have occurred in Saint-Siméon, and municipal authorities believe they have an idea of who may be responsible.

Even though the damage is not significant, it is a source of concern. "These aren't major acts of vandalism, but there's a beginning to everything, and we don't want it to escalate," notes St. Siméon Mayor Denis Gauthier.

This is the first incident of its kind in at least a year and a half. "It's like a cycle at some point, but it's been a while since we've experienced anything like this," says the mayor. The Sûreté du Québec was notified by the town of the dam-



Acts of vandalism were discovered in Saint-Siméon.

age. "Without giving too many details, we may have some leads and have mandated the Sûreté du Québec to clarify the matter," says the mayor.

Mr. Gauthier encourages parents to discuss the issue

with their children. "We're trying to raise awareness, especially among parents who have children who own motorcycles, to ensure that their children are supervised when they ride their motorcycles," urges Mr. Gauthier.



Photos: Municipality of Saint-Siméon

This footbridge was possibly damaged by a small motorcycle.

More vandalism in Chandler

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CHANDLER – After a break of a few weeks, vandalism occurred once again on September 6 and 7 at the rest stop in the Newport sector of Chandler.

Mayor Gilles Daraïche once again brings attention to the situation. "Damage to the restrooms, the sinks... They threw trash cans down the stairs. They broke fences, they broke two chairs, a wooden table. We've never had vandalism in Newport," notes the mayor.

Citizens will once again have to foot the bill. "The town is growing. We're doing a lot of great things. There's



Restrooms were the target of vandals.

a signature with paint that we saw in Newport. It's roughly the same signature we saw in

Chandler. It's probably the same group of individuals," says the mayor.

Security cameras have been installed in strategic locations in Chandler. "We can't put them everywhere. Because we installed cameras, maybe that's why there aren't any more in Chandler. We'll have to install some in the Newport sector as well," criticizes Mr. Daraïche.

Early this summer, a camera located in the Chandler wharf area captured an individual throwing a brand-new picnic table into the water. The images were forwarded to the Sûreté du Québec and at the time, the mayor appealed for civic-mindedness, a message that clearly has not reached everyone.



Photos: Town of Chandler

Trash cans were thrown down the stairs at the Newport rest stop.



Photo: N. Sergerie

Fewer people were active in the job market in August.

Fewer people were active in the job market in August

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ – Although the region lost 700 jobs in August, the unemployment rate fell by 0.6% to 5.3% in the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands.

This decrease is explained by 1,000 people leaving the job market over the past month, while the number of unemployed fell by 300 month over month, to 2,300.

The labour force decreased from 44,300 to 43,300. This means that 41,000 people were working, 700 fewer than in July. Of this number, 35,000 worked full-time, a loss of 400, and another 6,000 worked part-time, a decrease of 200.

Compared to August 2024, the situation remains relatively stable.

The region recorded a gain of 300 part-time workers, but lost 800 part-time workers. The number of unemployed stood at 1,900, and the unemployment rate was 4.4%.

Despite the polls, Catherine Blouin stays on course

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON-SUR-MER - Despite the CAQ's (Coalition avenir Quebec) crushing defeat on August 11 in Arthabaska and unfavourable polls, the Member of National Assembly (MNA) for Bonaventure stays the course one year before the elections.

Catherine Blouin traveled the length and breadth of the riding this summer to hear voters' concerns.

"We're continuing our work. We're not letting ourselves be distracted, and the summer allows us to fill our toolbox with voters' concerns and needs," says the MNA.

Several issues were raised: access to a family doctor, drinking water, cell phone coverage, and Maria hospital.

"There is a lot of work to be done in Bonaventure. We are working on a ton of issues, and we are seeing results: finally, after 20 or 25 years, the citizens of Port-Daniel-Gascons will have access to drinking water. We have beach replenishment in Maria," says Ms. Blouin.

In reality, Ms. Blouin forgets that the Nouvelle to Maria stretch of railroad was already in good condition prior to the election of a Coalition avenir Québec government in October 2018. Traffic was never stopped on that part of the line. Windmill blade trains started



Photo: N. Sergerie

Member of the National Assembly Catherine Blouin.

circulating between New Richmond and Matapedia in November 2016, for a same-year December 3 first loaded train. Moreover, weight restrictions were normal at all times between Nouvelle and Maria.

The opening of section 2 between Caplan and Port-Daniel-Gascons could see its first train loaded with cement in November.

"For the famous Port-Daniel-Gascons tunnel, we are talking about a November 2025 deadline. There are pressure tactics being used by Quebec government engineers. If there is a strike, it could have an impact on the schedule. It should also be noted that the main customer, the cement plant, also has work to be done," explains the MNA.

The elected official is hearing the message following the crushing defeat in Arthabaska. "We are in listening mode. That's exactly what the premier said, and that's what we do when we're on the ground. We bring back the concerns. In Bonaventure, it's really the people of the riding who guide us, no matter what happens at the national level," says Ms. Blouin.

Cell phone coverage, modernization of the hospital's intensive care unit, and the railway are on the agenda for the last year of the mandate.

"I can't choose a single priority. Before the fall session, I will provide details on the priorities," the elected official promises.

According to Québec125.com, on August 13, the Parti Québécois would win 52% with a margin of error of 8%, far ahead of the Liberals, who are in second place with 18% and a margin of 6%. The CAQ and Catherine Blouin would only win 16% with a margin of 6%.

"I'm not letting myself be distracted. Assumptions have never guided our actions. We are concerned about the people we meet. People are happy to see me. I dare to believe that this is a pat on the back for all the work done with my team," replied the elected official.

(With the collaboration of Gilles Gagné)

\$3.5M in wind power royalties

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CHANDLER: – The Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands Intermunicipal Energy Board will pay \$3.5 million in royalties for the year 2025 to the five MRCs of the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands.

The amount, which was agreed upon by the board of directors at its September 3 meeting in Chandler, represents what had been budgeted for 2025.

The distributions come from the operation of the Le Plateau 2, Roncevaux, Nicolas-Riou, and the Dune-du-Nord wind farms.

The board is, however, keeping a cushion. "This will give us greater stability. Remember that we haven't had the expected distributions for two years, due entirely to the wind resource. We are taking advantage of this year to put surplus funds in the bank to ensure a more stable income for our members," says Simon Deschênes, president of the board and mayor of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts.

In 2024, \$3.5 million was paid out, but the board had forecast \$4 million.

"We will manage this way with good predictability. There may be years when we pay out more money, but we

no longer want to distribute below the planned budget. This is a directive from the board of directors, and I think it's also sound management," notes the president.

In 2026, the board plans to pay out \$4 million in royalties. "With the small cushion, we can afford an additional \$500,000 for all the communities in the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands," projects Mr. Deschênes, who avoids disclosing the accumulated surplus, which is not that substantial.

Since 2016, the board has paid \$33 million in royalties to its members. "These funds are reinvested in the communities. They serve as a lever for development. Municipalities often operate on subsidies, and there is always an initial investment, municipal contributions. The money from wind power allows us to do more in our local communities. This is excellent news," notes the president.

The cushion will not be used to finance the construction of wind farms currently underway in the Lower Saint Lawrence region, the Montmagny and L'Islet MRCs, nor the 6,000 megawatts planned by the Alliance de l'énergie de l'Est, Hydro-Québec, and the Mi'gmaq First Nation of the Gaspésie.

A hard Days Night: Family Ties takes a look at Gaspesian expressions that tell the tale of hard times

By Sandi Beebe with input from Dave Felker

NEW CARLISLE - During times of trouble, or spells of hard times, Gaspesians have been heard using some classic expressions that tell the tale.

Up the creek, or the more commonly used, less gentle term which includes not having a paddle, was perhaps first heard during World War 2, and is a colloquial expression that means being stuck in a hopeless situation with no way to fix it.

Let's say, in today's world, someone has been **living high on the hog**: a luxurious lifestyle, probably better than the regular folk.

Now, if things go **to hell in a handbasket**, it means life is deteriorating rapidly or heading for disaster.

Expressions that involve humans being transported to hell go back to the 17th century. The handbasket was a very ordinary item at the time; this suggests that such a small harmless thing could carry you to ruin.

Wha' da' ya' suppose?! This expression might be heard from members of the community upon hearing of a fellow citizen's demise. This denotes an expression of surprise, but there is also a hint of **I told you so** in that phrase.

Furthermore, **hold your tongue!** might be heard within the population, meaning that

this is truly unbelievable.

This subject might make some of us want to get **three sheets to the wind!** Yes, if there is no way out, you might want to get drunk.

Sources: *Mots and Phrases of the Gaspé (1995)* by Arthur Campbell and *Memories from living in the Gaspé*

Please note that Family Ties is wrapping up the "Do you see what we're saying?" project, through which community members have learned new artistic skills and have interpreted some classic Gaspesian expressions through art. Some of this work will be on display during the market at Fall Fest in Cascapedia-St-Jules on Saturday, October 4.



Emmett Boucher glues the moss to the inside of his Book Nook before putting the sides together.

PAID ADVERTISING

A new Regional Minister for the Gaspésie

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – Premier François Legault has entrusted the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands to a new addition to the cabinet: the Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Rivière-du-Loup-Témiscouata, Amélie Dionne.

Ms. Dionne will also hold the Tourism portfolio in addition to being the Minister Responsible for the Lower Saint Lawrence region.

Daniel Côté, the mayor of Gaspé, notes that Ms. Dionne is the only minister who will have two administrative regions under her wing.

"The Premier has chosen to no longer have a minister in Eastern Quebec, except for Ms. Dionne, who is in Rivière-du-Loup, in the western part of Eastern Quebec. "This is taking us further and further away from power," notes Daniel Côté.

"Basically, I think that no matter the region of Quebec it should have its own regional minister. The two MNAs from the Côte-Nord sit in the cabinet. Here, it's not the Premier's choice (he will be responsible for another re-



Photo: National Assembly Screenshot

New Regional Minister Amélie Dionne signs the register of ministers alongside Lieutenant Governor Manon Jeannotte.

gion), and he's imposing a minister responsible for two mega-regions. That's where the problem lies. It's as if the Gaspé were being submerged in the Lower St. Lawrence, and as citizens of the Gaspé, we've never liked that because there are different realities," criticizes the mayor of Gaspé.

He is citing as examples Ian Lafrenière, an MNA based in Montreal who covers Northern Quebec, and François Legault, who is the Minister Responsible for Abitibi-Témiscamingue.

With Donald Martel at the Ministry of Agriculture Fish-

eries and Food (MAPAQ), Mayor Côté believes the new member of the cabinet has good contacts in the region, and he feels he would be able to raise awareness of fisheries issues.

As far as the new Minister of Municipal Affairs, Geneviève Guilbault, Daniel Côté says he has spoken with her in the past and he is under the impression that she understands the issues very well.

On the rail front, with Jonatan Julien now Minister of Transport, the mayor of Gaspé is confident, especially since he was also the Minister

Responsible for the Gaspé region, with whom relations were good.

Eric Dube, the mayor of New Richmond and president of the Société du chemin fer de la Gaspésie agrees with that observation. "We worked a lot with Mr. Julien on the rail issue. I think he should remember that. We should be able to establish contacts fairly quickly for the next steps." says Mr. Dubé.

Quebec put the project back into a "study" phase in March following significant cost overruns to rehabilitate the third section.

Regarding Amélie Dionne's arrival, Éric Dubé is giving her a chance and isn't offended by the fact that she isn't from the Gaspé region. "What I asked for was to have the best person to handle our issues. If the Premier decided it was her, I'll give her a chance," he says.

The Baie-des-Chaleurs Chamber of Commerce and Industry called for a minister from the Gaspé region. "We would have preferred to have a minister from the Gaspé region. We're open to giving her a chance and we hope to meet with her soon to make our priorities known and for regional

development to be a priority for her," says the director, Valentine Palma.

Gaspé MNA Stéphane Sainte-Croix is relieved to see this shuffle process now a thing of the past.

"As for what's next, we'll roll up our sleeves tomorrow to establish strategies to meet with the new ministers as soon as possible and bring our issues to them," says Mr. Saint-Croix.

He's giving Amélie Dionne, with whom he spoke briefly a few minutes after her appointment as Regional Minister, a chance. The MNA for Gaspé welcomes the arrival of Jonatan Julien as Transport Minister for the rail file.

With the CAQ polling at only 11%, Mr. Sainte-Croix believes that the reshuffling of the cabinet will give his party and the government new wings. "The roadmap for what's next is known. We'll roll up our sleeves and do what we have to do to regain people's trust," he believes.

As SPEC went to press, the MNA for Gaspé was unsure whether he would remain government assistant for Fisheries under the new Minister of Fisheries, Donald Martel.

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1984 spells festivities and uncertainty at once

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – The year 1984 was marked by the festivities surrounding the 200th anniversary of Loyalist presence in the region and the 450th arrival of Jacques Cartier in New France. It also provided a light break, recession-wise, but was also marked by the uncertainty of Murdochville’s copper mine and smelter.

Vol 10, No 1
January 3, 1984

- \$320,000 will be handed out to ten municipalities of the Gaspé Peninsula, the Magdalen Islands and the Lower Saint Lawrence regions to repair the damage caused by the December 6-7, 1983 storm.

- Roch “Moïse” Thériault is on the cover for having violated the terms of his release. He was arrested on December 23 at New Carlisle’s Maison Blanche, with “Nathan,” another cult member. They were visiting other members, despite Moïse being forbidden to set foot in the Gaspé Peninsula. After a brief stay in prison and a court appearance, police officers send him back to Quebec City.

- The cover also informs readers that the recession might ebb away in *Best season in many for merchants. English TV in Gaspé, a problem not yet solved* is the other title.

Vol 10, No 2
January 10, 1984

- *Ski expedition* provides details about a 33-day, 1,500-km ski journey between Gaspé and Hull, to kick off the Gaspé 1984 festivities that mark the 450th anniversary of Jacques Cartier’s. Gaspé’s André Labbé is one of the participants.

- Other items include *CLSC Chaleurs wins retraction from CKBC*, readers learn that the Bathurst radio station must correct a report that mentioned in 1976 that specific services were offered in French only, which was false. *Tax increase for Gaspé residents, Agriculture Canada’s outlook summary* and *Federal monies available to fishermen* also appear on the cover.

- Inside, *Bonaventure Poly-*



It was small by design and by comparison but the organizers of the first Hopetown Carnival planned it that was. The one day schedule was chock full of outdoor games and a community dance.

valent School student, Tammy Fessenden (will) attend Terry Fox Youth Centre. Readers also see the second edition of a column, *Loyalist 200, 1784-1984*, providing information about festivities marking the 200th anniversary of Loyalist presence in the region. Sharon McCully runs a profile of Cynthia Dow, now executive director of the Townshippers’ Association.

Vol 10, No 3
January 17, 1984

- “RSBG meets to discuss bills and boats provides an update on decisions made by Regional School Board of Gaspesia regarding the building of the Loyalist 200, a 52-foot-long boat for the summer. *Ice fishing losing popularity, Ontario attracting highlights of Quebec’s 84 festivities* and *Another season of snowmobile racing* are the other front-page titles.

Vol 10, No 4
January 24, 1984

- *Bar too close to the belfry*, readers see some Escuminac residents and municipal council members fearing that the acquisition of Pointe-à-la-Garde’s Shack III Hotel by Bar Roy owner Jean-Guy Roy might spread nude dance shows featured in the latter. *TV viewers to wait* adds another chapter to Gaspé residents’ problems obtaining English television signals. *Mines Gaspé’s Expansion given go ahead* reports that a \$65 million sum received by the Mur-

dochville company might develop a copper deposit underneath the town. The project will prevent 100 workers from layoffs. The mine’s workforce is expected to climb back to 900 in 1985-1986.

- In *Construction underway on Maria reserve school*, we learn that the new school, worth \$850,000, will be completed by May and ready to receive its first pupils in September.

- Businessman Ivan Dow is New Richmond’s *personality of the month*.

Vol 10, No 5
January 31, 1984

- *Four new channels* informs readers that Radio Québec installed antennas in the Gaspé Peninsula to cover 80% of the region’s population and will air a documentary on Anglo-Gaspesians, *Gaspé: a place to visit in ’84*, Daniel Sams presents the festivities’ schedule. *1984 Miguasha Smelt Festival, Races held in spite of cold and Truck-bus accident sends two to hospital* are titles on the cover.

- Inside, an article features a write-up and photos of four CN new retirees, Robert Joseph, Dave Doherty (SPEC’s Legion columnist), Maurice Imhoff and Ivan Flowers. Accountant Jean-Marie Bujold is New Richmond’s *personality of the year*.

- The SPEC, like 15 other English Quebec newspapers, runs a four-page feature, *The expulsion of the Killinik Inuit*, written by Bob Dawson, about

a November 1975 agreement between the Quebec and federal government to extinguish the Inuit’s native claims, rights, titles and interests in Canada. It notably led to the closure of Fort Burwell.

Vol 10, No 6
February 7, 1984

- *Gaspesians takeover CBC newsroom* covers the recent openness of CBC to increase its rural areas’ news content. In *More courtroom than classroom for Education director*, Sharon McCully reports on Alliance Quebec’s and CASA’s efforts to curtail the potential effects of Bill 40, which aims for modifying the role of school boards. *William Court celebrates 104th birthday* reports on the Gaspé Peninsula oldest citizen.

Vol 10, No 7
February 14, 1984

- *Hydro-Québec plans new administration centre for Gaspé* reports on a \$4.5 million service and management centre. Up to 47 people will work there once delivered, over the spring of 1985. Page 1 also shows a helicopter that landed next to Paspébiac’s Robin store. The title is *Coffee break???*. The other front-page title, *Annual Shigawake Festival fun despite weather* gives a list of winners in many competitions.

- The Bonaventure MRC mayors vote 9 to 6 in favour of receiving the minutes of the monthly meetings in French only. Prefect Jean-Guy Poirier alleges that the translation was too costly.

Vol 10, No 8
February 21, 1984

- *1st Hopetown Carnival* makes the front page. With 250 participants. *Doctors ask for support* tells the story of the Paspébiac CLSC doctors and dentists wanting to raise public awareness about the necessity to get better funding and more laboratory staff. SPEC also runs on page 1 an article about the Gaspé ’84 schedule of important events. *Phantom ship membership drive, New census figures for municipalities* and

Cultural program for Gaspé ’84 are the other page 1 titles.

On page 3, a picture and caption shows a ceremony held to mark the retirement of L. Gontran Berthelot, known as “Doc”, after 41 years for CN. Born and raised in Nouvelle, he was until 1984 superintendent in Campbellton.

- In the sports section, New Richmond swimmer Bruce Ritchie, of the Saumoneaux, won the most medals at a regional meet, five gold medals and one silver.

Vol 10, No 9
February 28, 1984

- *24-hour service at CLSC Chaleurs???* makes a headline, as managers, doctors and dentists are investigating the possibility of having a round-the-clock service in Paspébiac. *Return of ATV signal promising* says it all as a follow up on the Gaspé South Telecasting Syndicate to improve services at the eastern tip of the region. A picture shows Dale Royal and her son Matthew, who will celebrate a day later their 8th and 1st birthdays. In fact, they are turning 32 and 8, because of their February 29 birthdays.

Vol 10, No 10
March 6, 1984

- Sharon McCully asks *Who wants extended service at CLSC and at what cost?* Health authorities are engaged in a debate over the relevance of such service in Paspébiac. The *Town of Gaspé Municipal employees (are) on strike* in an attempt to win a collective settlement. The other front-page title is *Gaspé South to relocate tower* on Puddingstone mountain to better serve its Percé clientele.

Vol 10, No 11
March 13, 1984

- *General Motors and Gaspé ’84 travelling together* explains that GM makes available nine vehicles for the coming summer festivities. *New Carlisle mayor Barry Tennier resigns* and “Jean Léon Roy to run for mayor” are the other cover titles. The resigning mayor

From Page 13

invokes the necessity of taking care of his business, while Mr. Roy says that citizens asked him to run. Inside, Daniel Sams reports on the asset transfer of the previously bankrupt Pêcheurs Unis, a fishery coop operating many plants in the Gaspé Peninsula, to a new entity called Pêcheries Cartier.

**Vol 10. No 12
March 20, 1984**

- *Pointe-à-la-Croix Protestors await mill decision*, as Member of Parliament Rémi Bujold assures former sawmill workers that his government is assessing a request to get federal funding to rebuild a plant recently destroyed by a fire. About \$1.5 million is needed for a new plant, and private interests have already committed \$600,000. In *Basketball honors to Richmond girls and Quebec (City) boys*, Daniel Sams reports on a Quebec-wide small school tournament held in Gaspé. A front-page picture illustrates carnival fever at New Richmond High School.

**Vol 10. No 13
March 27, 1984**

- *St. Jules' St. Patrick's Day brings out talent* makes up a big part of page 1. An article mentions that *Expropriation rumors frighten Miguasha residents*, regarding the expansion of the fossil park's protected zone. *Darryl Gray to seek nomination* relates to the Escuminac teacher and farmer's desire to be the Progressive Conservative candidate in Bonaventure. Inside, *New CBC English stations cover the Gaspé* gives an update on the public broadcaster's progress in the region.

**Vol 10. No 14
April 3, 1984**

- *Quebec \$\$ for Gaspé '84* is the front-page's main title. The money, \$130,000, comes from Quebec's ministry of Cultural Affairs. It brings the total funding of the event to \$500,000. *Bert Poirier, candidate for mayor* indicates that there will be a race in New Carlisle. *Attempted murder charge laid in New Carlisle* provides info about Paspébiac's Terry Kruse's attempt to kill his brother.

**Vol 10. No 15
April 10, 1984**

- *The English fishery industry is no longer alone in the province of Quebec* explains that Grande Rivière's Fishery School will offer training in English. *Home destroyed by fire* shows a picture of a destroyed New Carlisle house. A long article entitled *Miguasha residents not satisfied with Gov't explanation on expropriation* recants that area's people dissatisfaction about the government lack of consultation on the park matter. Inside, a picture-caption shows Sharon McCully and Wayne Lucey hosting an English show aired by CIEU-FM every Sunday. Ms. McCully also runs a profile of Port Daniel's Hughie Journeaux, who operates a fish processing plant.

**Vol 10. No 16
April 17, 1984**

- *Gaspé municipal employees demonstrate* is one of the front-page titles. The employees have rejected in a proportion of 72% the last town offer. *Committee formed in Miguasha* is the follow up of the citizens worried about the expansion of the Miguasha Park. The SPEC runs *Young and old enjoy maple sugar tradition* on page 1. *Indian village for Gaspé '84* features the Gaspé Micmac band building a temporary village for the summer. Inside, we learn that Zeller's opened a

store at Carrefour Gaspé.

**Vol 10. No 17
April 24, 1984**

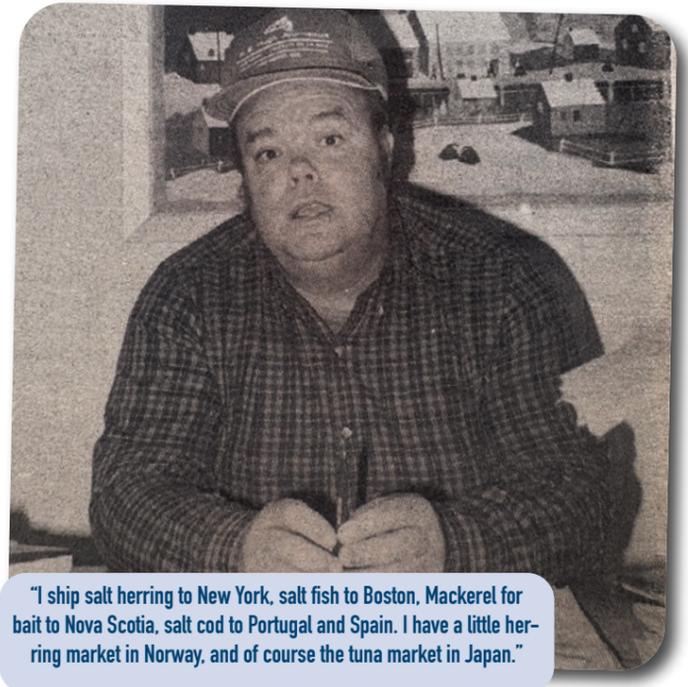
- *Flood strands ten families* reports on the Restigouche river flood in Matapédia. *Jean-Léon Roy declared mayor* mentions his victory over Bert Poirier. *Paving the way* consists of an article about federal politician Iona Campagnola's visit to the Gaspé.

**Vol 10. No 18
May 1, 1984**

- *Trial on manslaughter charge ends* makes the headline. The trial of Eugene Isaac, a Restigouche man charged with manslaughter related to the death of Brian Arsenault, is nearing the end in New Carlisle as the jury will receive instructions. *Local fisherman defies Prov. government* explains how Port Daniel plant owner Hughie Journeaux no longer accepts Quebec inspectors in his facility, as he considers them incompetent. *Tall ships entries may visit Paspébiac* is related to the 1984 celebrations. Inside, Newport's Maurice Beauchamp wins CASA's third annual fiddling contest.

**Vol 10. No 19
May 8, 1984**

- *Lynden Bechervaise resigns as CASA chairman* (after nine years), *Gaspé municipal strike drags on: no solution in sight* and *Gaspé doctors off the job* (to protest the lack of general practitioners) are the main titles. Inside, readers see Hughie Journeaux, with the support of 14 other fish plant operators, able to convince the Quebec government to waive recent infraction, when he kicked a provincial inspector out of his plant. Meanwhile, Martin Cauvier also tries to get nominated to represent the Progressive Conservative Party in Bonaventure. Eugene Isaac is



"I ship salt herring to New York, salt fish to Boston, Mackerel for bait to Nova Scotia, salt cod to Portugal and Spain. I have a little herring market in Norway, and of course the tuna market in Japan."

sentenced to five years of prison for the death of Brian Arsenault.

Inside, Gaspé coach *Pat Drohan* is named *Quebec high schools' coach of the year*.

**Vol 10. No 20
May 15, 1984**

- Daniel Sams explains the *Lack of general practitioners in Gaspé*, while *Hours are reduced at CLSC Chaleurs*. Meanwhile, the federal government announced *\$1.5 million for Gaspé '84*. In Chandler, parents deplore that English high school students have to attend courses given in French for certain topics. Quebec-wide bill 40, which was threatening school boards' role, was postponed.

**Vol 10. No 21
May 22, 1984**

- *CBC films three Gaspesian families* makes the main headline. The three families are those of Kathleen and Cranston Campbell of New Richmond, Margot and Ken Sullivan of Shigawake, as well as Belle Anse's Carol and Vernon Adams. The documentary will go on the air in June. *Exploration continues at Mines Gaspé* and *Slow start for fiddlehead pickers* also make page 1. Mines Gaspé notably explores in the area of the former Federal mine, along road 299.

**Vol 10. No 22
May 29, 1984**

- Readers see *Quebec Nordiques coming to New Richmond* for a softball game, *NCHS celebrates National physical activity week*, including a big photo, and *Gaspé Doctors back to work*.

**Vol 10. No 23
June 5, 1984**

- *Loyalist 200 launched*, referring to the 52-foot-long sailboat built at Paspébiac shipyard over recent months. The SPEC 12-page tourist guide is included in this issue.

**Vol 10. No 24
June 12, 1984**

- *Vandals strike festivities site in Gaspé*. Damage amounted to \$16,000, and included the destruction of the Micmac Village. *Loyalist 200 sails off Paspébiac* after her launch. "Complaint registered against two New Richmond policemen" complete the cover titles.

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Cynthia Flamand

From Page 14

**Vol 10. No 25
June 19, 1984**

- Picture of one of the Tall Ships that stopped in Gaspé. Fishermen express anger over ban covers a demonstration against minister of Fish and Game Guy Chevrette over the seizure of salmon commercial fishermen's catches. *CBC goes Gaspé* reports on Quebec A.M.'s radio show in Gaspé in early June. Inside, *Miguasha site declared national park* informs readers about the new status of the fossil reserve.

**Vol 10. No 26
June 26, 1984**

- Readers learn that Bonaventure Island is now *A new provincial park*. The cover also features *Gaspé celebrates the Tall Ships*, with a photo of Quebec premier René Lévesque, who was on hand for the event, which included one of Cirque du Soleil's first shows. Up to 20,000 people lined the beaches from Forillon Park to Percé to see the ships. In *Liberal leadership convention*, SPEC runs Canada's new prime minister John Turner's photo. He beat Lloyd Axworthy. Pierre Trudeau is retiring.

**Vol 10. No 27
July 3, 1984**

- This issue reminds people that the Loyalist celebrations get underway. A picture of Member of Parliament Rémi Bujold informs readers that he was given the Regional Development portfolio by John Turner. *A Gaspé O'Keefe fast-ball league* and *Few are exempt from Hydro (Québec) spray* complete page 1. Sharon McCully denounces in her editorial the lack of *honest appraisal of the risks* tied to the herbicides used by Hydro Québec.

**Vol 10. No 28
July 10, 1984**

- Smooth sailing for Loyalist Days* occupies all the cover, with a long article ending on page 5 and three photos. There is additional coverage inside about Douglastown's festivities.

**Vol 10. No 29
July 17, 1984**

- Loyalist Days wrap-up* makes the headlines, with more coverage of page 5. *Boat runs aground off Shigawake* tells the story of a New Brunswick fishing boat, and the efforts deployed to save it. *Opening of Parc récréatif de Gaspé* in Haldimand is another cover title. Inside, an article presents the worry of Miguasha residents who fear losing their properties, or part of them, as a result of the provincial park expansion.

**Vol 10. No 30
July 24, 1984**

- Last chance for Mines Gaspé* makes the headline. Against all odds, 300 to 400 employees will be rehired by the Murdochville firm. The firm fears to lose its qualified staff. *The opening of Wakeham/York Homecoming Festival* and *P.C. Party chooses Darryl Gray for Bonaventure/Magdalen Islands* also make the cover.

**Vol 10. No 31
July 31, 1984**

- Remi Bujold to run for re-election* in Bonaventure/Magdalen Islands, *450 years of history*, about the Jacques Cartier arrival in Gaspé, and *Pêcheries Cartier Inc.*, which specifies that the new company, born from a restructuring of the Pêcheurs Unis Coop following its bankruptcy, make the headlines. Inside, Helen Beck writes about the *30 years of success for SPDS*

**Vol 10. No 32
August 7, 1984**

- Political parties get ready for the upcoming election. *Liberal convention* informs readers that incumbent Alexandre Cyr will be the candidate in Gaspé, while *Gaspé county P.C. candidate Dr. Charles Eugène Marin* will be his main rival. *Loyalist village in planning stages* presents the possibility of establishing such an attraction in New Richmond.

**Vol 10. No 33
August 14, 1984**

- Asmuth triumphs at 14 miles covers another victory for

the Californian at the swimming Grande Anse-Paspebiac race. He finished ahead of New Zealand's Philip Ruch. A woman, Monique Wildshut, finished fourth. *Prime minister Turner visits Gaspé* provides a report on the Liberal Party leader, three weeks before election day. In *Visa, Master Charge and now American Express*, readers learn that the NDP will have Martin Cauvier as candidate in Gaspé, days after he lost the Progressive Conservative convention.

**Vol 10. No 34
August 21, 1984**

- Tourism '84* presents a positive picture of the tourist season. In *Your land! Who really owns it?*, Sharon McCully explains that a new Quebec law now allows people who live on public land with incomplete or non-existent titles to acquire it. In *Mayor demands apology for being identified as Péquiste*, readers learn that Michel Goudreau, then mayor of Pointe-à-la-Croix, left a MRC meeting after being called "péquiste" by Maria mayor Marc Gagné. *Numbers up at CEGEP and School board shuffles administration* are on page 1. Inside, *Peter Campbell (is) named manager of Consolidated Bathurst* in New Richmond.

**Vol 10. No 35
September 4, 1984**

- Maria hospital's *Psychiatric unit to open officially September 4th* and *SPEC poll reflects national trend to Conservatives* make the cover. A picture shows the sod turning ceremony of Hydro Québec's new building in Gaspé.

**Vol 10. No 36
September 4, 1984**

- Shigawake Fair celebrates 75th* and *4,500 attend New Richmond Fair* are the main titles, with articles and pictures, of SPEC's issue 36, dated September 4. *Improved psychiatric services for Sanatorium Ross*, *VIA services during papal visit*, *Farm transfers need long-term planning* and *\$8.5 million for fishing vessel modernization program* also make page 1.

**Vol 10. No 37
September 11, 1984**

- School is in for all ages*, *Conservative wave includes Marin and Surprise and jubilation at Conservative headquarters* make the headlines. The last two titles are related to the federal election, which led to the election of Charles-Eugène Marin and Darryl Gray.

**Vol 10. No 38
September 16, 1984**

- SPEC puts *Farmers record best auction sales and Gaspé County Fair* on the cover. The prices obtained by farmers at the auction were deemed excellent.

**Vol 10. No 39
September 25, 1984**

- Gaspé Lucky winners Elaine Scott and Robert Bond* are featured because they won the Super Loto draw of \$1 million. *A Drop-out program for Gaspé* is implemented to convince youth to attend school. *Quebec Liberals press for provincial election* and *Preliminary hearing on Indians salmon fishery postponed* are the other main titles.

**Vol 10. No 40
October 2, 1984**

- Demonstrators and allegations meet minister at public hearings* makes the headline. Minister Guy Chevrette met angry Miguasha citizens over the project to expand the limits of Miguasha Park. *CASA continues to work for Anglophones*



and *Construction company bails out* are the other headlines. The last subject deals with the financial woes of a firm involved in New Carlisle road work. A 24-page Loyalist Days souvenir edition with numerous pictures is included in this issue.

**Vol 10. No 41
October 9, 1984**

- Programs offered for the young and unemployed* describes the doors the youths can knock at if they don't have a job. *The Picture of health: a study of region 01* shows an imbalance between the needs of the population and the place where they can get services. *Gaspé teacher regular marathon runner* consists of a feature of Clarence Lemieux.

Page 16

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From Page 15

Vol 10. No 42
October 16, 1984

- *Undercover operation nets 11* reveals that RCMP cops arrested drug traffickers in Gaspé. *Still working on the railroad* brings readers to Hopetown, as CN retiree Eugène Chapados has built a replica of a steam locomotive and put it in front of his house. *In Parel program halted in Shigawake*, readers see that the municipality's housing renovation projects benefiting from it are stopped until a proper priority list is established.

Vol 10. No 43
October 23, 1984

- *Mixed reaction to housing*, an article describing why some local people are disgruntled by the fact that an important multi-dwelling project was awarded to an outside firm instead of a local one. *A Rural schools Conference* was held in Gaspé. *One Greenpeace environmentalist freed, the other awaits decision* and *160 jobs created with sale of fish plant* also make page 1. The latter topic deals with the much-needed re-opening of Paspébiac's plant by San Won, a South Korean firm.

Vol 10. No 44
October 30, 1984

- *Micmac Co-op celebrates 20th anniversary* is the main headline. In *Builder of Tall Ships*, readers discover the model building talent of Gaspé's Albert Cassidy. In New Carlisle, *Surveyors prepare sewage plan*.

Vol 10. No 45
November 6, 1984

- *Eastern Quebec P.Q. members meet* in Paspébiac, while the *Gaspé South (Telecasting Syndicate) holds AGM*. Members learn that the organization has no debt but a small cash flow. Inside, *Journeaux meets government in legal arena* reports that the Port Daniel businessman refuses to pay his share of inspection fees, a matter that will be settled in court.

Vol 10. No 46
November 13, 1984

- *Gaspésians remember their war dead* is the only title of the issue. Four pictures accompany the article.

Vol 10. No 47
November 20, 1984

- *Gas prices hard on Gaspésians* makes the headline. The lower taxes in New Brunswick make life difficult for Quebec stations. *Milk prices rise – even higher in Gaspé (where cows are plentiful)* and *Universal health care not as universal as it should* are the main titles. Inside, an article reports on the fire that destroyed Grande Rivière's Fisheries School, and 3,200 high value historical documents. Quebec Telephone announces that calls between 368 and 645 are toll-free.

Vol 10. No 48
November 27, 1984

- *Gaspé's Family medical unit inaugurated* makes the headline of SPEC. *Independence causes PQ split* reports on premier René Lévesque's decision to put sovereignty on pause, which prompts some ministers to leave. *Salaries for Gaspé doctors???* deals with a remuneration change suggestion by Gaspé practitioners. Inside, *Pointe Navarre's William Stanley is 100 years old*.

Vol 10. No 49
December 4, 1984

- *Insurance company responds quickly* informs readers that Royal Insurances quickly made its first payment of \$1 million for the rebuilding of Grande Rivière's Fisheries School. *MLCP minister gives \$37,692 to Cross Point project* (a recreational centre), *Bomb threat evacuates Montreal-Gaspé train* and *Toll free numbers save long distance charges* are the other cover topics.

Vol 10. No 50
December 11, 1984

- *Gaspé '84 states position* that the festivities were marked by a \$265,775 deficit, in part due to sponsor revenues and sales lower than expected. A picture and caption shows six recent CN retirees, George Prentice, DCF Beebe, Dave Doherty, J.L. Joseph, W.J. Asseles and W.M. Imhoff was honoured in New Carlisle.

Harbour to be enlarged in Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé, CIEU-FM holds annual general meeting and Co-op housing for Gaspé?? make the cover.

Vol 10. No 51
December 18, 1984

- Shows photos of youths visiting seniors at Harrison Home in Cascapédia-St. Jules. The other front-page title is *New textile industry underway* in New Richmond. This edition has 64 pages due to ample Holiday Season ads.



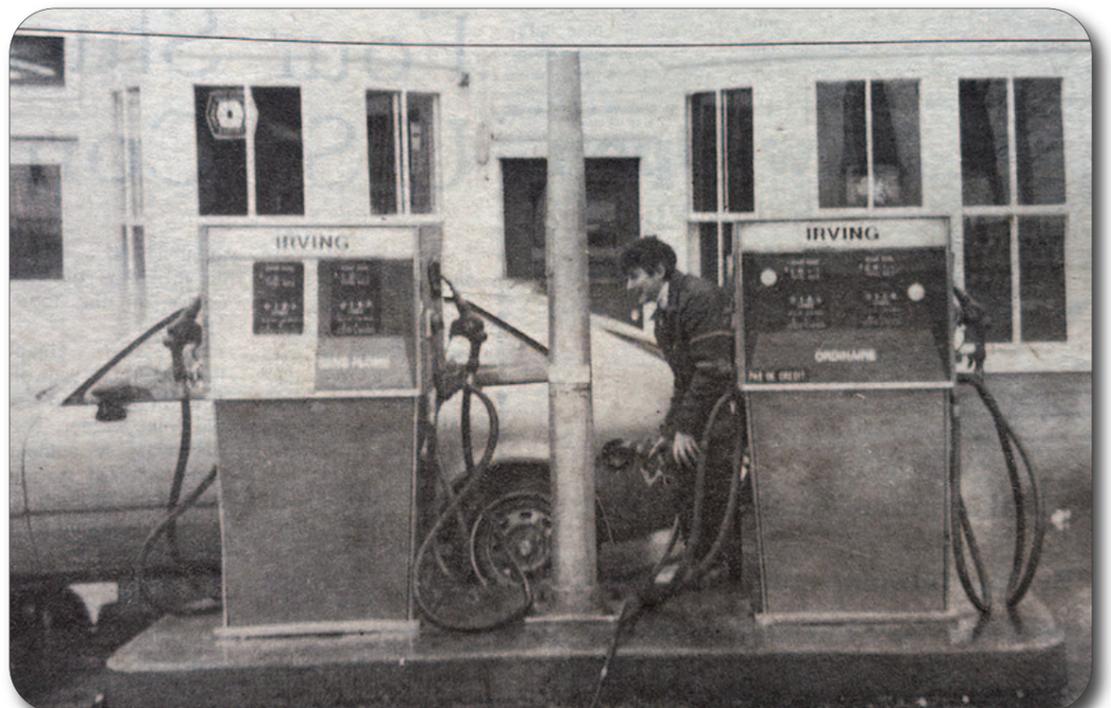
Members of the Black Cape W.I. in the Loyalist Days parade. The driver of the team is Bobby Brown. The horses belong to Artie Campbell.

Similarities between 1984 and 2025: Worries about hospital laboratories

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – In the February 21, 1984 issue, SPEC reported that Paspébiac CLSC doctors and dentists wanted to raise public awareness about the necessity to get better funding and more staff for their laboratory, a vital tool when it comes time to identify infections and viruses, among other problems.

It is odd to see that 41 years later, the Gaspé Peninsula hospitals cannot count on a full laboratory schedule, in great part because of the centralization that occurred during the Optilab policy implemented in 2017 by the former minister of Health, Gaétan Barette. That policy led to moving many specialized laboratory analyses to bigger hospitals, Rimouski, in the Lower St. Lawrence region, now serving Maria, Chandler, Gaspé and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, with huge delays of up to a day for certain results. A shortage of technicians resulted in the process, and some patients needing fast lab test results are often sent outside the region with their samples.



In the article *Prices Hard on Gaspésians*, it is mentioned that regular leaded gas costs 61.4 cents a litre and unleaded 63.5 cents a litre in New Richmond. Prices are a bit higher in Nouvelle with leaded at 61.6 and unleaded at 64.6. It also mentions that west of Nouvelle gas prices begin to decrease. In Cross Point station operators were given permission to charge New Brunswick prices of 50.4 cents for leaded and 57.9 cents for unleaded.

Canada

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.

Partridge hunt raises money for Gaspé Cancer Foundation

PENNY MACWHIRTER
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - On September 20, partridge hunting enthusiasts in the Gaspé area will have the chance to put their hunting skills to the test, while raising money for a good cause.

It is the third year for the Partridge Hunt. In 2023, the hunt raised \$3,330 for the Gaspé Cancer Foundation, and almost doubled that amount in 2024, raising \$6,476. Their goal for 2025 is \$8,000.

Co-organizer Jennifer Jean-Clark says family history played a role in their inspiration to hold such an event. "Our husbands lost their dad at a young age to cancer; they also lost a brother, and two of their siblings now have cancer. My sister and I have a cousin who is fighting cancer right now. My mom had colon cancer at the age of 49 but recovered from it. I used to participate in the Relay for Life but the money didn't stay in our community," says Ms. Jean-Clark, who adds that she loves how this money helps people in her community.

The event is open to anyone who has a small game hunting permit. Participants can register as of September 14, right up



Photo: Courtesy Ms. Jean-Clark

until after the breakfast on the morning of the twentieth. The cost of participation is \$20 per person.

Hunting begins at sunrise and hunters are welcome to hunt in their preferable location. Hunters and the public are invited to a breakfast from 6 to 10 a.m. at Melanie and Paul Clark's camp along Clark's Road at the end of Wakeham, five kilometres off the paved road. Jennifer's husband, Rodney Clark, works on the road prior to the event to ensure all vehicles can make it to the

camp safely and everyone can participate in the activities. For those unfamiliar with the area, there will be signs directing the way. "The cost of the breakfast is \$10 per plate and includes eggs, bacon, bologna, hash-browns, Gail Dorion's delicious homemade beans and my brother-in-law Paul's homemade bread," says Ms. Jean-Clark. In addition, the Gaspé Tim Horon's is donating the coffee for the event.

Hunters usually start straggling back to the camp with their catches at around 4 p.m.

when a light meal of soup and hotdogs (which is included in the participation fee) is served. They have until 6 p.m. to register their catches.

For the second year local duo Dodo and Coco will be on hand from around 1 to 6 p.m. to entertain the crowd. "It is really a great day for family and friends to begin our beloved hunting season and a good way to give to such a good cause," says Ms. Jean-Clark.

In the past they've been able to give a door prize to each registered hunter and hope to be able to do so again this year. "We are getting close to \$3,000 in prizes, including the firearm and crossbow that we are selling tickets on. Prizes are given for the biggest, smallest and heaviest catch. This year the hunt is in honour of Virginia Eagle Sinnett who lost her battle with cancer this past spring. Her daughter Karen will be on hand to give out the prize for the biggest partridge," says Ms. Jean-Clark.

"This year we have a great sponsor. Les Entreprises Morin Donovan has donated over \$1,500 in prizes, including a crossbow, hunting tent, duffle bag and backpack. We also have donations from other local businesses."

In addition to the hunting activity, to raise funds organizers are selling tickets on a crossbow and 410 shotgun. The tickets are \$5 and can be purchased by contacting any of the organizers listed below, or by messaging Jennifer Jean-Clark on messenger. "The winner of the firearm must pick it up at Filet Sport Gaspésien in Gaspé, so they'll need to have a Possession and Acquisition Licence to get it," notes Ms. Jean-Clark.

If you would like to support this initiative but can't attend the event, organizers are able to accept your donations. If donating by cheque, it should be made out to the Gaspé Cancer Foundation.

The organizing team consists of Jennifer Jean-Clark, Melanie Jean, Paul Clark, Rodney Clark, Taylor Clark, Dylan Clark, Émilie Rochefort, Marc-Olivier Curadeau and Kassandra Dubé. Ms. Jean-Clark notes that they try to cover as many of the expenses as possible between the three businesses their family own (PAC Pélouse Gaspé, Multi Services JRC and Dépanneur du Versant). "We want as much money as possible to go to the Gaspé Cancer Foundation," explains Ms. Jean-Clark.

Get to know the Gaspé Cancer Foundation

PENNY MACWHIRTER
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPE - The Gaspé Cancer Foundation came about after Noreen Hackett attended a women's symposium and learned about the LeMore-Brown Foundation location in New Carlisle, which financially helps cancer patients in the Bonaventure MRC. Noreen realized such an organization was also needed in the Gaspé area.

"We became a registered non-profit Foundation in July of 2003, yet after 22 years of working hard to promote the organization there is still a large percent of the population that are unaware of the services that we provide to our members," says Gaspé Cancer Foundation President Tony Patterson, who hopes to spread the word about what an important resource the foundation is. The foundation is managed by volunteers, it is 100% non-profit, and serves a clientele from Grand Vallée to Corner-of-the-Beach, including Murdochville. "We do not pay salaries, wages or remunera-

tions. All funds raised are used solely and exclusively for the benefit of its members," add Mr. Patterson.

The Foundation acts as a bilingual information centre, and its purpose is to provide financial assistance to those suffering from cancer who must travel outside of our region to receive treatment or consultations. "To this end, the foundation is responsible for providing financial assistance to all members who must travel to Chandler, Maria, St. Anne de Monts, Rimouski, Rivière-du-Loup, Québec City, Montréal or Sherbrooke," explains Mr. Patterson, who adds, that the foundation is often confused with l'Association du Cancer de l'Est du Québec.

"Unfortunately, many find out about us after they have been diagnosed and have already been sent outside the area for consultation or treatments. Cards must be purchased, and membership paid 30 days in advance of becoming eligible for financial aid," explains Mr. Patterson. In other words, it is important to buy a membership, while you

are healthy, hoping to never have to use it. But if you receive a cancer diagnosis, you'll have the reassurance of support from the Gaspé Cancer Foundation.

The Foundation operates as follows: The cost of membership is \$15 per person or \$25 per couple including any children under the age of 18. To receive assistance, a member must be in good standing with the Foundation for at least 30 days. All members are eligible to receive financial assistance, without discrimination. "Currently, we have over 1,400 paid memberships, with over \$50,000 in assistance given to members of the 2024-2025 fiscal year," says Mr. Patterson. Since forming in 2003, the foundation has distributed over \$650,000 in financial assistance to its members.

The Foundation's membership year runs from March to March of the following year. "Every year at the beginning of March we have our renewal campaign and over 10,000 blue forms are distributed to every residence and business in the MRC of Gaspé," ex-

plains Mr. Patterson

In addition, the Gaspé Cancer Foundation raises money through the sale of annual membership cards, in memorial cards, donations, and fundraisers and can issue tax receipts for any amount over \$10. "We do not receive financial assistance from any governments, local, provincial or Federal," says Mr. Patterson.

For members, the financial assistance reference sheets are also available the organization's website. When signed by the attending physician where the treatment is administered, the member must mail it to the P.O. Box address on the bottom of the form. Payments are made after verifying the members' information.

The Gaspé Cancer foundation holds an annual general meeting every year, and all activities of the Foundation for the previous year and its financial position are presented to those in attendance. New Directors are also elected at this time.

Mr. Patterson has been the president of the foundation for

eight years and was a director for 12 years as well. "We have a great Board of Directors with a number of directors in long standing, who have been with us since the beginning," says Mr. Patterson. He is thankful for the community support, which helps to ensure the organization's longevity, "We are very fortunate to have a number of private individuals, like Jennifer Jean and friends who have over the years have either volunteered for or held events to raise funds for the foundation. They are all greatly appreciated and as a non-profit foundation we could never continue to exist without their support."

Payments for renewals, new memberships, in memorial cards and donations can be made using Paypal at: www.fcg.gcf.com, by cheque, or buy e-transfers: gasp45@hotmail.com.

To learn more about the Gaspé Cancer Foundation visit their website or email info@fcg.gcf.com.

Mailing address: Gaspé Cancer Foundation, C.P. 6078. Gaspé, QC G4X 2R6

Railway repairs remain on track according to premier

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – Premier François Legault is keeping railway repairs on track and intends to see the project through to completion in Gaspé.

When asked about this issue, which continues to generate a lot of talk, during his visit to Gaspé on August 27, Mr. Legault said that phase 2 between Caplan and Port-Daniel-Gascons is going well.

"The money is there, everything is planned. For phase 3, there is a significant cost overrun estimate. We are reviewing the project, but we are still committed to moving forward with it," said the premier.

He reiterated that the Prime Minister of Canada has clearly expressed his willingness to invest in the transportation of minerals that are essential to the development of the defence sector. "This is a great opportunity. Mark Carney is waiting for projects. We have a lot of projects," he said.

In June 2023, Quebec Transportation Minister Geneviève Guilbault announced in Gaspé that section three between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé would require \$517 million and that the project would be completed in December 2026.

When the budget was tabled last March, the government caused a widespread commotion by returning the project to the planning phase after "enormous" cost overruns in the 2024 tenders.

When asked whether the government was setting an investment ceiling for the work and a time frame, the premier remained vague. "There is a significant cost overrun compared to the estimates at the time Ms. Guilbault announced it. It is certainly not money that has expired and is no longer available. We will examine and analyze how much it will cost to build section 3. It is our intention to do so," he replied, without giving any date for the completion of the work to Gaspé.



Premier François Legault.

Photo: N. Sergerie

At least there's that. As for the rest, since the budget announcement, I have understood that we as a region will have to continue to fight to get the train running to Gaspé," said Éric Dubé, president of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie.

Transports Québec also commissioned major repair works in the Black Cape area of New Richmond between the fall of 2023 and the spring of 2025. No trains have circulated between Black Cape and Caplan as a result.

\$4.9M for walls along Highway 132 in Haute-Gaspésie

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - Work to repair the protective wall along Highway 132 in the Haute-Gaspésie has cost the Department of Transportation \$4.9 million this summer.

In May, the department reinforced the retaining wall in the La Martre sector with riprap to protect it following a storm. This was a temporary measure and the quickest option to protect the only road connecting the communities between Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and L'Anse-Pleureuse.

Repair work on the retaining walls in three areas between La Martre and Marsoui began in June and is expected to conclude in September.

The goal of this work is to replace the slats that support the walls and to replace the deflectors—the section of the wall that allows water to return to the sea when it hits the wall—that were displaced or fell as a result of storms.

Protecting Highway 132 in the Haute-Gaspésie is one of the Ministry of Transport's priorities in the Gaspésie.



A construction site on Highway 132 in Haute-Gaspésie.

Photo: N. Sergerie

— Continued from page 4
Cabinet shuffle:

In 2024, CAQ Member of the National Assembly Youri Chassin resigned with much fanfare, criticizing his government for abandoning the "profound change" promised by François Legault before the 2018 electoral victory. "We applied the old formula of throwing money at problems rather than trying to do things differently," stated Mr. Chassin, a fervent right-wing partisan, in the sense that he wanted much less government intervention.

A year later, François Legault presented his "new" cabinet, designed to impose

"shock treatment" to escape the "straitjacket" of bureaucracy. Better late than never, they say, but who believes he will accomplish between now and the September 2026 electoral campaign what he didn't even try to do in seven years? His team will have to work within parameters that won't change anytime soon.

With the now scratched reputation of a star minister like Geneviève Guilbault, who said she knew nothing about the SAAQclie cost overrun before the Auditor General's report earlier this year, until documents brought to the Gallant Commission proved otherwise, François Legault undoubtedly

did what he could with what he had at hand.

However, there are limits to passing off old as new. While it would have taken a huge "wow" to rectify such a catastrophic situation, the reshuffle is likely to be greeted with a "meh" of indifference.

Of challenges

Who really believes that Bernard Drainville will be an effective minister of the Environment and Fight against Climate change? People remember the "Don't bother me with GHG!" shouted when, as minister responsible for the Lévis area, he was asked what

he thought of the greenhouse gases that would be generated by the Third link project between Quebec City and his area. In fact, cutting corners when it comes to environmental assessments of major projects shouldn't cause him any trouble with his conscience. François Legault, who also cuts corners environmentally, is happy to see him there!

Geneviève Guilbault, who had a narrow escape after the SAAQclie fiasco, is moving to Municipal Affairs, which is not a real demotion. Her successor at Transports Québec, Jonatan Julien, now has to deal with the hot potato of the Third link. He will have a lot of

"fun", as the people of Quebec City and Lévis don't trust the CAQ government anymore over that project, while the rest of Quebecers think that the Third link will be useless.

The Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands electors will now deal with Rivière-du-Loup MNA Amélie Dionne, in charge of Tourism as the minister responsible for their region. She will also be responsible for her region, the Lower Saint Lawrence. It remains to be seen that she will efficiently tackle new ministerial functions and cover two geographically large regions enough to make a difference within a year. Good luck!

— Continued from page 4
Tariff Tantrums:

The messages were clear, Trump was willing to weaponize trade policy to shield a political ally. This wasn't an economic strategy. More recently, the same pattern emerged from Brazil where Brazil's former president Jair Bolsonaro is facing prosecution. Trump threatened high tariffs if the present Brazilian government proceeded with Bolsonaro's prosecution. This too has nothing

to do with trade.

For Canada, Trump's erratic tariff policies have meant uncertainty for exporters and manufacturers where Trump tweets can disrupt markets and Trump insults can send supply chains scrambling. Cross-border industries, from auto parts to agriculture, rely on the predictability of rules. Under Trump, predictability has been replaced with chaos.

The U.S. economy didn't escape unscathed either. Studies by leading economists found that Trump's tariffs

raised prices, cost jobs and failed to meaningfully shrink the trade deficit. Farmers, for instance, need billions of dollars to offset lost markets.

And the damage doesn't stop at the border. Canadians are already feeling the impact of higher costs for goods sourced through the U.S. market. When American importers pay more, so do consumers. Trump's reckless tariff policies push both of our countries toward higher inflation.

The danger isn't just eco-

nomic. Trump's approach sets a precedent that tariffs can be used as personal or political weapons rather than tools of legitimate economic policy. It blurs the line between national interest and personal favour-trading. For allies like Canada, it erodes trust. For the global economy, it undermines the stability of trade systems built over decades.

Tariffs are blunt instruments that can inflict real damage on industries, jobs, and international relationships. In competent hands,

they are used carefully, strategically, and rarely. In Trump's hands, they have been impulsive, self-serving, and destructive.

From Canada's perspective, the lesson is clear; We cannot afford more tantrum tariffs. Not when economies are so closely intertwined, not when inflation is a looming risk, and not when the world's trading system depends on leaders who understand that economic policy is more than a stage for personal drama.

VIA:

▶ *Cont'd from cover*

way to Gaspé, and we'll keep pushing until that's done, and as quickly as possible. Until then, we have to provide service wherever the train can pass," insists Ms. Saint-Onge.

Recently, at VIA Rail's annual public meeting, its president, Mario Pélouquin, mentioned the difficulty of returning the train to a location that isn't equipped with a wye, such as Port-Daniel.

Alexis Deschênes, Member of Parliament for the riding of Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj and an enthusiastic supporter of the Coalition, took advantage of the September 6 rallies to remind Mario Pélouquin that it's not necessary to turn a train to make it go in the opposite direction.

"The Montreal-Halifax train returns to Montreal by placing its locomotives at the other end of the train," explains the Bloc Québécois Member of Parliament (MP).

"A train could therefore return from Port-Daniel to New Carlisle, where it can be turned," explains Gilles Lamy, a retired railway worker who spent nearly 40 years of his life



Inn owner Benoit Pilon, from Port-Daniel, assures that over the long term, tourism contributes to the demographic recovery of the Gaspé.

at CN and VIA Rail. He is one of the founders of the Coalition. "VIA Rail has been saving money at our expenses. The money for the Gaspé train is still included in VIA's budget, but we haven't received the service since 2013. At \$5 million annually, it amounts to \$60 million in 12 years. VIA owes it to Gaspésians, and must come back," explains Mr. Lamy.

A necessary public service in the Gaspé

Chandler mayor Gilles Daraïche points out that Gaspe-

sians have lost a lot in terms of interregional public transportation since 1990, when the VIA Rail train went from a daily service to three round trips per week between Montreal and Gaspé.

"We had this train, and we lost it. We almost lost the (Kéolis) bus. We're already a remote region; we don't want to become an isolated region. We want the train for people who need services outside the region, for business people, for students. In Chandler, our CEGEP students have to go to Gaspé, Carleton, and Rimouski. Our university students go to Quebec City, Montreal, and Rimouski. The train offers many advantages," stresses Mr. Daraïche.

In the same breath, MP Alexis Deschênes denounces the arguments he hears from VIA Rail, such as that there aren't enough people in the Gaspé, that providing the service is too expensive, and that it's too complicated.

"When VIA Rail suspended service in 2013, the region's population was 94,000. It's now 92,300, and it's growing by 300 to 400 people a year. If the train were to return, it would be even easier to attract people," he says.



Photos: G. Gagné

Thanks to technology, Micheline Saint-Onge, spokesperson for the Coalition of Gaspésians for the Return of Passenger Trains, spoke from Port Daniel to Gaspé residents mobilized by the need to restore VIA Rail services.

Economically, Mr. Deschênes points out that public services like the Montreal metro and intercity buses in Longueuil, Montreal and Laval are all characterized by significant annual deficits. "All we're asking for is not a handout. It's a development tool."

Inn owner Benoit Pilon, from Port-Daniel, combines tourism and demographic factors when considering the train's usefulness. The VIA station is a stone's throw from his establishment. "Guests who came by train have bought houses here. They now live in Port-Daniel permanently."

Hope Town artist Enid Legros-Wise, who attended the New Carlisle gathering, with 65 other citizens, can't help but think of the usefulness of VIA Rail years ago, and the kindness of the staff.

"I was going to Montreal's Salon des métiers d'art with my porcelain pieces. I had so much luggage! I missed the train in New Carlisle. As I rushed to take it in Bonaventure, we saw

it going very slowly, almost stopped it seemed. The crew was waiting for me. I finally took it in Bonaventure!" she recalls.

A well-attended service

During its last decade of full service between Montreal and Gaspé, until 2011, the VIA Rail train carried between 25,000 and 30,000 passengers per year, more than the two Abitibi and Saguenay trains combined. Service is still maintained in these two regions.

The 400 citizens who expressed their support for the train's return on September 6 gathered in Matapédia, Carleton, New Richmond, Bonaventure, New Carlisle, Port-Daniel and Gaspé.

Including the amounts already invested, committed and to come, the Matapédia-Gaspé road rehabilitation project was estimated at \$872 million in June 2023.

See page 20



Many of the supporters for the return of the train came to the station with their suitcases, as seen here in Carleton, where the largest gathering took place, with 110 participants.

Railway demonstration: Organizers satisfied

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – With nearly 400 people from Matapédia to Gaspé calling for the resumption of refurbishment work on Section 3 and the partial return of VIA Rail to the Gaspé, the Gaspésie Rail Transportation Mobilization Roundtable believes the ball is now in the Quebec government's court.

"We are very satisfied. More than 400 people from Matapédia to Gaspé; 400 people who took the trouble to come. This gives us momentum to continue the mobilization," notes the roundtable's

spokesperson, Carol Saucier.

Will the message be heard by the Quebec government? "We hope so. We have very specific demands. The idea behind Saturday's event was to put pressure on both Quebec and Ottawa. We intend to continue to exert pressure. We know very well that we have to push to make things happen," added Mr. Saucier, noting people's interest in the return of freight and passenger trains.

"We're telling the government: it's urgent. Relaunch the calls for tenders for the last section and let's complete the rail repairs to Gaspé as

quickly as possible," suggests the spokesperson.

The committee and its partners will take a step back and intend to write to the Quebec Minister of Transport once the cabinet shuffle is complete to reiterate their demands.

"We will contact the minister (Jonatan Julien, appointed on September 10) and Mr. Legault as well. This will be done soon. At the committee level, we will meet this fall to see what happens next," says Mr. Saucier, leaving no scenario off the table.

The committee is hoping for a positive sign in the budget update, which is nor-

mally released in the fall.

"Yes. That's very clear, particularly the re-inclusion in the Quebec Infrastructure Plan. There was \$512 million for the entire section 3. We would like the amounts to be guaranteed, and we will monitor that in the budget update," notes Mr. Saucier, who demands that the federal government keep a close eye on the situation should the federal government ever want to contribute to the rail repairs.

Of the \$872 million announced, the federal government has so far only promised \$45.8 million, the spokesperson points out.



Spokesperson for the Gaspésie Rail Transportation Mobilization Roundtable, Carol Saucier.

Photo: N. Sergerie

Mobilization for the refurbishment of the railway to Gaspé

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – About 75 people responded to the September 6 invitation of the Mobilization Table on Rail Transportation in the Gaspésie to demand the resumption of VIA Rail services in the region and the complete rehabilitation of the railway line between Port Daniel and Gaspé as soon as possible.

Carol Saucier, spokesperson of Mobilization Table of Rail Transportation, pointed out that "We want to demonstrate once again to the Quebec government and VIA Rail our unwavering commitment to getting the train back on track as soon as possible."

Recalling that Quebec had paused rail rehabilitation last March, Mr. Saucier noted that the major problem is the lack of a timeline for reaching Gaspé, stressing that the train was scheduled to return to Gaspé in early 2027.

"We are asking the Ministry of Transport to relaunch the pending calls for tenders. We are asking the Quebec government to reinstate the Gaspé rail rehabilitation project in the Quebec Infrastructure Program. We are also asking for the necessary funding to be guaranteed to complete the work to Gaspé," Carol Saucier demanded, also calling for the gradual return of VIA Rail to Gaspé.

From Port Daniel, Coalition of Gaspésians for the Return of Passenger trains spokesperson Micheline



Photos: N. Sergerie

In Gaspé, there were about 75 people calling for the resumption of work on the track to Gaspé.

Saint-Onge spoke with the Gaspé attendees and once again deplored VIA's position of refusing to return to the Gaspé Peninsula until the track is rehabilitated all the way to Gaspé.

Old bridges

Ms. Saint-Onge notes that the amount of money required to repair the rail line seems colossal, but points out that a couple of old bridges were built in 1893 before being replaced.

"The annual investment is still quite relative. For example, on Highway 132, over the past few years, \$93 million has been invested. We must keep in mind that the investment in the rail line to Gaspé is an amount spread over the next 30 years," notes

the spokesperson.

At the political level, the elected officials recalled the fight they have been waging since 2013 to convince various governments to invest in the Gaspé line.

On site in Gaspé, Éric Dubé, president of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie, noted that he could soon be dealing with a sixth Minister of Transport since becoming president in 2014.

"We will never give up on the complete rehabilitation of the railway, whether for goods or people, all the way to Gaspé," says Mr. Dubé.

"Today, the signal that the population is sending throughout the region is a good message to remember two things: the railway belongs to the Government of Quebec and VIA Rail is fed-

erally managed. Local elected officials, in each MRC, will not give up the fight," assures Mr. Dubé.

Gaspé Mayor Daniel Côté took a few moments to summarize all the steps taken since 2013. He recalled that in 2014, efforts to refurbish the railway were going nowhere, referring to Father Labelle in the Laurentians, who had fought since the 1860s for a train linking Montreal and Mont-Laurier. In 2016-2017, after several meetings, the region's politicians of the time succeeded in obtaining \$100 million from Philippe Couillard's government, which was announced in 2017 in New Carlisle.

In 2019, Mr. Côté recalled that, along with Éric Dubé and the former prefect of the Rocher-Percé MRC, Nadia Minassian, they met with Premier François Legault.

"When we left the office, he was convinced and he said it publicly: I am committed to rebuilding the railway to Gaspé. He didn't say at all costs, but almost," notes Mr. Côté, who also refers to the \$45.8 million the federal government contributed in the meantime.

"We also see that the political directions, which were so clear in 2019 and in the following years, have become less and less clear to the point where the project has disappeared from the PQI (Quebec Infrastructure Program)," recalls Mr. Côté, noting that the premier Legault is now trying to shift the debate onto the federal govern-

ment.

"For me, it's a diversion. I don't want to have a diversion, either between us or on the national scene. We have to keep the objective: ultimately, it's to have a functional line to Gaspé. No track, no train. Let's keep that in mind," says Mr. Côté.

"This is not the time to throw in the towel. We have political promises and they must be honored until the end. Let's continue to do as Father Labelle did, and we'll have our railway. Not just the upper classes," the mayor of Gaspé strongly asserted.

Closing the speeches, the Member of Parliament for Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj, Alexis Deschênes, attempted to demolish all the arguments against rehabilitation regarding costs, profitability, and the complexity of the work.

"A human resources director for a major company in Gaspé told me this summer that if the train came back, it would be even easier to attract workers from outside," the federal elected official noted.

Like he had mentioned in New Carlisle earlier that day, he pointed out that transportation infrastructure will never be profitable.

"If we compare, there's \$9 billion invested in the REM in Montreal. We don't want to take anything away from them. It's just for comparison. For the (Quebec City-Lévis) Third link, \$10 billion in public investments is planned from the Quebec government, and a month ago, it released \$275 million," explains Mr. Deschênes.

He also notes that the Montreal metro's operating deficit is \$125 million annually, and public transit buses cost \$1 billion a year in the metropolitan area. "The profitability argument is not an argument," he says.

Bonaventure Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Catherine Blouin attended the Carleton-sur-Mer rally.

Gaspé MNA Stéphane Sainte-Croix was unable to attend due to a long-standing commitment, he informed organizers.

In August 2019, a similar rally in Gaspé had attracted about 150 people.



Éric Dubé, president of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie; Daniel Côté, mayor of Gaspé; Carol Saucier, spokesperson for the Mobilization Table on Rail Transportation in Gaspé; and Alexis Deschênes, Member of Parliament for Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj, were at the Gaspé rally, held at the intermodal station.

Shigawake: Inauguration of MacKenzie's Trail and the Ken Duguay Park

EMILY HOCQUARD
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

SHIGAWAKE: - On Sunday, August 24, the Municipality of Shigawake proudly marked a momentous occasion with the official opening of two long-anticipated community projects: the newly restored Mackenzie Trail and the beautifully upgraded Ken Duguay Park. Both developments are a testament to community initiative, partnerships and willing volunteers that Shigawake is lucky to have.

MacKenzie's Trail

The once-beloved nature walk that had been left overgrown, unsafe and nearly forgotten has now undergone a remarkable transformation,

thanks to the vision of the Shigawake Municipality, the trail is now fully revitalized and ready to be enjoyed once again! "The trail's name has been chosen by the landowner, Mrs. Joyce Mackenzie and her family, in honour of Mr. Arnold Mackenzie and the entire Mackenzie family" says the mayor of Shigawake, Rolande Beebe.

With funding from the PRIMA project (Municipal Infrastructure Program for Seniors) through the provincial government, the municipality was able to contract La Coop Du 3 to completely overhaul the trail. By clearing away years of brush and fallen debris, the safety, beauty and usability of this nature passage was restored. Every detail was carefully considered to ensure minimal environmental im-



Shigawake municipal councillors smiling for the cutting of the ribbon for the Ken Duguay Park. Michael Hayes, Sheryl Hayes, Heather Imhoff (cutting the ribbon), Crystal Duguay and Nancy Skene.

Photos: Pascal Caron



Mrs. Joyce Mackenzie proudly cutting the ribbon for the official opening of the Mackenzie's Trail accompanied by Shigawake counselors, Georgette Chapados (left) and Marcel Gagnon (right).

pact, meaning natural materials from the trail itself were used to fix the nature walk. "We are honoured to be able to work on this trail and we are happy to make such a beautiful place accessible to everyone and promote one more attraction in our municipality. We appreciate the Municipality of Shigawake for making our participation in this project possible" shares Pierre Jeanneau of La Coop Du 3.

The new and improved Mackenzie's Trail will offer a safe place for people of all ages to explore all year round. "People will be able to snowshoe and cross-country ski all winter," says Mrs. Beebe. The trail has been given a second life and has become a beautiful space for the community to enjoy and connect with nature.

Ken Duguay Park

Ken Duguay Park has seen major upgrades. With funding

through the FRR4 (Fonds Régions et Ruralité 4) project from the MRC of Bonaventure, the municipality received \$100,000 in funding for the pump-track infrastructure and \$50,000 for new play structures. An additional \$3,000 was contributed by the Caisse Populaire to help cover final installation costs. The Municipality of Shigawake contributed roughly \$20,000, towards the large project.

Although the play structures were purchased when the plans first came to fruition in 2023, a shortage of contractors available to install the equipment led the municipality to request, and receive, a one-year extension on the original grant deadline. "Installation was completed by a Gaspé-based contractor, Espace Nature, who did excellent work," states Mrs. Beebe. With significant volunteer support from brothers Johnny and Jordan Ross, who landscaped and

excavated immensely to prepare the grounds, and W.J. Mackenzie who completed the final landscaping using his own equipment, the long wait is now over. "Volunteers are not something we lack here in Shigawake, when we ask for help, we always get it," shares the mayor. This new reform marks an incredible upgrade to the park and provides a revitalized recreational space for local families and visitors alike!

When asked by the SPEC what the future looks like for the log cabin and skating rink this winter, mayor Rolande Beebe projects that it will be open and running. "We are already planning renovations to the building through the PRIMA project to make it accessible for everyone," she shares. A space which was once the heart of the little town, with four-season fun, is step by step becoming the spot to be once again!

Two projects move forward in Avignon West

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

POINTE-À-LA-CROIX – Two heritage-related projects continue to develop in the western sector of the Avignon MRC.

First, Pointe-à-la-Croix is receiving two grants from the Avignon MRC totalling \$236,000 for its Vieux-Quai park development project. An initial sum of \$100,000 has been awarded through the Vitalization program, and \$136,000 is being provided by the Signature Innovation program. The project aims to highlight the rich history of the Mi'gmaq, Acadian and English-speaking communities in the region.

"The development project is progressing very well, and soon the Vieux-Quai Park site will be recognized as an essential tourist attraction, thanks to a cultural infrastructure that showcases the richness of our heritage, including the history of the Mi'gmaq, the courage of the Acadians, and life along the Restigouche River," says Pascal Bujold, mayor of Pointe-à-Croix.

This project is part of the municipality's economic development strategy and a broader effort to diversify the municipality's economic benefits, focusing on outdoor activities, tourism, industry, commerce and community life.

The funds are in addition to

the \$600,000 from the federal government on the one hand, as well as \$40,000 from Tourisme Gaspésie and the Québec government already secured on the other hand for the \$1.2 million project. The balance, about \$325,000, will come from sponsorships and the municipality.

Work on the site is progressing well, with the park expected to be unveiled in late fall and fully completed by spring.

Close to the goal for the church in Nouvelle

The fundraising campaign for the lighting project to showcase the church in Nouvelle is nearing its goal.

To date, \$26,800 has been raised out of the \$32,000 target. The "Lights on the Nouvelle Church" project aims to highlight its exceptional architecture by projecting beams of light that will showcase the beauty of the bell towers, façade and window characteristic of architect Dom Bellot's design.

The project's success depends solely on financial support from the public. Contributions have come from individuals and businesses in the MRC of Avignon, the Gaspé Peninsula, and even across Canada.

The work will take place in September and will be carried out by local companies.



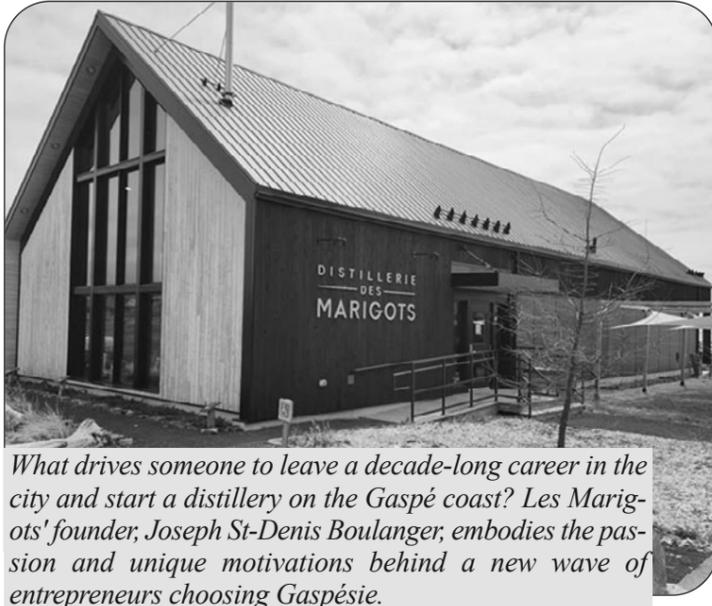
Photo: N. Sergerie

The church in Nouvelle.

The spirit of starting up: Les Marigots and the new wave of Gaspesian businesses

ARTHUR POIRIER-ROY
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

This article marks the beginning of a new series for The Gaspé SPEC, one that seeks to understand the pulse of entrepreneurship here on the peninsula in the years since 2020. Why are people choosing to start businesses in Gaspésie now? What are the catalysts, the challenges, and the unexpected joys? To kick off this exploration, I sat down with Joseph St-Denis Boulanger, the owner, creator, and driving force behind Les Marigots distillery in Caplan. His story is a compelling window into the forces at play.



What drives someone to leave a decade-long career in the city and start a distillery on the Gaspé coast? Les Marigots' founder, Joseph St-Denis Boulanger, embodies the passion and unique motivations behind a new wave of entrepreneurs choosing Gaspésie.

Photo: A. Poirier-Roy

CAPLAN: - For ten years, Joseph worked as an engineer in Montreal. Life seemed set on a conventional path until, tragically, the death of his still-born first child in 2018 served as a profound catalyst for change. Borrowing a Westfalia van, he and his family embarked on a trip back to his native Gaspésie. After 15 years away, this return to his roots wasn't just a visit; it was the beginning of a complete recalibration, a search for a new project for life.

Joseph admits he's always been a devotee of the pleasures of the table – food and drink. While food production was considered, the industry's complexities led him towards distilling. It was a practical choice born from a passion for the sensory experience of eating and drinking, a choice that swiftly blossomed into a deep passion for the craft itself.

While there are several other distilleries making gin in Gaspésie, Joseph found a way to distinguish Les Marigots early on. His most prized pos-

session, a handmade copper alambic imported from Cognac, France, is central to this. Unlike standard stainless steel stills, the artisanal copper machine offers superior bacterial control and, crucially, positively impacts the flavour profile of the spirits. As Joseph puts it with conviction, "You can make good spirit with any pot still, but to make an exceptional spirit, you need an exceptional still."

Initially, whiskey was the primary goal, a long-term endeavour producing only a few

hundred bottles annually after years of aging. But the process of developing their gin revealed an unexpected joy. Gin production became their immediate focus and, ultimately, their claim to fame. It's on gin, produced in the tens of thousands of bottles yearly, that Les Marigots thrives. Joseph discovered a passion in the experimental, kitchen-like process of mixing and testing ingredients. The first Les Marigots gin, featuring around 14 carefully selected botanicals, was the result of extensive trial and error, a creative process Joseph clearly relishes, contrasting it with the more rigorous, chemistry-like discipline of whiskey making. Crucially, these ingredients don't come from a generic corporate supplier. They are sourced directly from the Gaspesian landscape – berries picked from the forest, leaves from specific trees, even bushes found along rivers. "What is tasted in a Marigots' gin is the very land on which we walk," Joseph states, connecting his product directly to its environment.

Being based in Gaspésie is not a disadvantage for Joseph; he sees it as inherent marketing. He believes the very name

"Gaspésie" adds value and draws visitors to his unique building in Caplan in a way a city location never could. He actively collaborates with local producers like Arbor & Flora, Naufrageur, La Ferme Bourdages, Gaspésie Sauvages, and La Cigale et la Fourmis for ingredients, further embedding his business in the local ecosystem.

Moreover, Joseph highlights the supportive environment for new businesses here. He found local institutions welcoming and significantly helpful, describing it as a major advantage for newcomers. There's a tangible sense of local pride in the venture; Joseph has even had volunteers offer their help, spreading the word about Les Marigots throughout the community.

Joseph St-Denis Boulanger's journey from Montreal engineer to Gaspesian distiller is a rich tapestry woven from personal change, practical choices, unexpected passion, and a deep connection to place. It's a powerful first example in our series exploring the driving forces behind the entrepreneurs shaping the future of business in Gaspésie today.

The warmth and wonder of the wood at Les Marigots

ARTHUR POIRIER-ROY
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CAPLAN - A visit to Les Marigots distillery in Caplan offers a compelling, large-scale example of timber's potential in modern construction. Joseph St-Denis Boulanger, the visionary behind this ambitious project, didn't opt for concrete, steel, or cheaper alternatives when planning his distillery building; he chose wood, massive, locally sourced timber crafted by Art Massif of St-Jean Port Joli.

Stepping inside the enormous structure, which stretches impressively in length and height, the immediate sensation is one of warmth. Joseph confirms this was his primary motivation. "It was about the warmth it brings," he explained, the natural grain and hues of the wood creating an inviting, almost living atmosphere that simply cannot be replicated by colder materials. The building isn't just a functional space for

brewing spirits; it was conceived as an integral part of Les Marigots' identity – a piece of art, an economic engine, and a fundamentally human space.

Joseph's vision was challenging, requiring compromise with engineers to achieve his desired open concept. While he initially aimed for a completely column-free space, one necessary support column stands as a reminder of engineering realities. However, the result is breathtaking: vast open sections punctuated by intricate, crossing timber structures that soar overhead, holding the roof with a graceful strength that feels both ancient and utterly contemporary. It's a space where engineering meets art in perfect harmony.

Beyond the aesthetic appeal and welcoming feel, Joseph emphasized the practical and ethical benefits of his choice. While far from the least expensive option upfront, wood offers exceptional durability. Furthermore, se-

lecting timber meant choosing a material that acts as a carbon sink, capturing and storing carbon dioxide for the lifetime of the building – a decision aligning perfectly with the values he, his family, and his company embody. It's an investment not just in a physical structure, but in sustainability.

Joseph sees the building itself as his most significant prototypical investment – a term referring to an inspiring or persuasive appeal. Instead of vast marketing campaigns, the sheer beauty and unique presence of the wooden building draw people in from afar. And while the RACJ initially expressed concerns about moisture and humidity in a distillery, Joseph fought for his material choice, understanding that modern timber alloys, as Art Massif demonstrates with their work on pools and other demanding structures, are perfectly capable of handling such conditions. He conceded on many legal and technical points during the project, but the battle

for the wood was one he thanked fully won.

Considering the immense mass of carbon now locked away within these beautiful wooden walls and the undeniable beauty they add to the Caplan landscape, his determination was well-placed.

In an era where expediency often dictates construction choices, Les Marigots stands as a powerful example of the immense long-term value, both for the planet and, eventually, the pocketbook, of investing in durable, beautiful, and environmentally conscious materials like wood. These buildings are built to last, a solid foundation for future success.

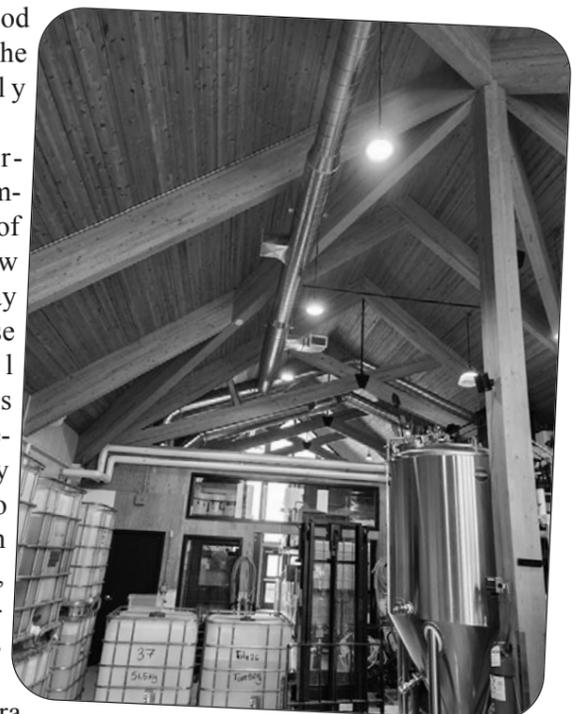


Photo: A. Poirier-Roy

Photo: Beyond the spirits brewed within, Les Marigots distillery in Caplan stands as a testament to the power and beauty of wood construction. It's a building that feels both grounded in the earth and reaching for the sky, a truly striking sight on the Gaspesian coast.

Honouring Our Heroes: A Community Call for Remembrance

Lynden Bechervaise, Chairperson, Veteran's Historical Committee

NEW CARLISLE: - The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch #64, has been proud to bring Veterans together monthly to foster remembrance, connection and educa-

tion. These gatherings are organized by the Veteran's Historical Committee, chaired by Lynden Bechervaise, and support three core objectives:

Honouring the Fallen

Through research and remembrance, those who lost

their lives in combat or because of their service are honoured.

Special banners detailing their stories will be prominently displayed throughout the New Carlisle during the week of November 11.

Sharing Military Experiences Veterans are invited to share their military experiences with the general public, fostering understanding and appreciation of their service.

Motor Corps Formation

Organizers are working to establish a "Motor Corps" to showcase military vehicles from our community in parades and other local events.

They are currently seeking the community's help in gathering information, photographs and family stories for the fol-

The Great War (1914-1918): Honouring Those Who Died in WW1

In Action:

Herman Astles
Thomas Blampied
Allan Balleine
Benjamin Caldwell
Edmond Duguay
Gordon Fraser
William Lagace
John Lagace
Oliver Lawrence
Harold Legallais
Emilie Levesque
Philip Lecornu

Francis Maguire
Stewart McLean
George Rene
William Sherar
William Smith
Charles Young

On Service:

Webster Bearisto
John Duval
Francis Hamon
Stanley Legallais
John Montgomery



A sample of the large panels that will be on display in New Carlisle.

lowing individuals from the First World War era. Any contributions would be greatly appreciated.

Funding for the project was made possible through Veterans Affairs.

Please send information to:

Ashley Renouf at: ashley@casa-gaspe.com or by mail to 1 rue Mount Sorrel, New Carlisle, QC G0C 1Z0

Bishop Lamoureux visits Gesgapegiag

ELAINE SEXTON

GESGAPEGIAG - Bishop Claude Lamoureux of the Diocese of Gaspé celebrated Mass with Parish Priest Emmanuel Obidilé, and Pastoral Agent Doris Jerome at the Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Mission in Gesgapegiag.

Bishop Lamoureux expressed his happiness at being among the parishioners and thanked Doris and her husband Peter, the church singer, for their hospitality.

Father Obidilé extended his gratitude to the bishop and expressed appreciation for Doris, whom he considers his second mother, for her daily dedication alongside her. The young adults from the Philippines, who now live in the



Bishop Lamoureux visits Gesgapegiag.

Photo: Guylène Lévesque

area, were moved when they met Bishop Lamoureux, whom Pope Francis personally chose to ordain in the Diocese. Smiles all around marked what was clearly a blessed day.

A light, lovely lunch was served afterward.

Prayer of Saint Kateri Tekakwitha

This prayer is read after

every celebration at the Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Mission:

"Almighty and merciful Father, we give you thanks for the witness of your beloved daughter, Kateri Tekakwitha who shone

among the First Nations people as an example of innocence of life.

By her unwavering trust in your mercy, she became a sign to the world, a world in much need of hope.

By following the example of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, she was perfected in charity and filled with fervor for your will.

Now, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and through the authority given to your Holy Church this Pure Lily is counted among your Saints.

Through her intercession, may we rely on your Divine guidance.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen"

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Mission Church.

Meteorological Seasons vs Astronomical

PENNY MACWHIRTER

HOPE TOWN - If fall is your favourite season of the year, and you're craving a pumpkin spice latte—hesitate no longer. Meteorological fall has arrived!

Meteorologists define seasons differently than the astronomical seasons we're more familiar with.

Meteorological seasons divide the year into four three-month periods based on temperature cycles. Unlike astronomical seasons, the number of days never change, except for leap years. Astronomical



A hot soup and warm biscuits - the perfect comfort combination as days get shorter and the weather colder.

Photo: P. MacWhirter

seasons, on the other hand, are based on Earth's position relative to the Sun, starting on specific dates like the solstices and equinoxes. The astronomical

seasons have different lengths due to Earth's elliptical orbit.

By using full calendar months, it's simpler for meteorologists to describe the sea-

sons and compile statistics. Not only are they easier to remember, but they also correlate with temperatures for the seasons. For example, the coldest

months of the year in the northern hemisphere are typically December, January, and February, while the warmest are June, July and August.

Meteorological seasons
Spring: March 1 to May 31
Summer: June 1 to August 31
Fall: September 1 to November 30
Winter: December 1 to February 28 (or 29)

Astronomical seasons
Spring: Vernal equinox around March 20
Summer: Summer solstice around June 21
Autumn: Autumnal equinox around September 22
Winter: Winter solstice around December 21
These dates vary a bit year to year due to Earth's orbit.

Announcements



Obituaries



CLEARY-CAMPBELL: Patsy

We would like to announce the death of our dear sister Patsy Cleary Campbell who passed away at Maria Hospital on July 5, 2025.

Left to mourn is her husband Irvin; brother Frank (Lena); sisters: Betty (Roger), Theresa (Michael), and Ethel (Conrad).

A Special Sister

*We have een a lot of happiness,
And shared our worries too.
We believed in dreams and made up plans,
About all we could do.
Though each day we are not together,
We are really not apart.
Your never far from thought,
And always near in heart.*

TheGaspespec.com



DOW: Shirley Cora (née Roberts)

July 25, 1935 - August 26, 2025

It is with a heavy heart that we had to say goodbye to our Mom, wife of late Lowell Dow. She passed away peacefully surrounded by loved ones, at the Teresa Dellar Palliative Care Residence.

She'll be lovingly remembered by her friends and family and mostly by her children: Bert (preceded in death by Karen), Bonnie (Peter) and Randy (Brenda); grandchildren: Brett (Sarah), Brodie, Jenna-Leigh, Cole, Courtney (Kassidy), Megan and Carter; sister: Patricia Roberts and many nieces and nephews.

Shirley will also be remembered for her extensive volunteering with her church, schools, the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides.

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to the wonderful staff and volunteers at the Teresa Dellar Palliative Care Residence. You all made our mom's last days filled with caring, love and dignity.

A celebration of life service will be held on Sunday, October 12, 2025, at 2 p.m. at the Rideau Memorial Gardens, 4275 Boul. Des Sources, Dollard-des-Ormeaux, Quebec.

In lieu of flowers please make donations in Shirley's name to the Teresa Dellar Palliative Care Residence.



In Memory

SIMON: Courtney

In loving memory of a dear father, father-in-law, grandfather and great-grandfather who passed away September 21, 2022.

*A special father, a special face,
Someone we love and can't replace.
Never selfish, always kind,
These are the memories he left behind.*

Always loved and remembered by your loving family.

The New Carlisle
Funeral Association
extends sympathy to the family of
Ronnie Gallon.

*With Deepest
SYMPATHY*

CLARK
SCOTT B. CLARK
1948 - 2022
HUSBAND OF
CAROL A. TEED
1947

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581-233-2101

Covering Port Daniel to New Richmond

Announcement Deadlines:

September 24 for the October 1 issue

October 8 for the October 15 issue

October 22 for the October 29 issue

Delivery Methods:

Email: specs@globetrotter.net

Facebook Messenger: Friends of the SPEC

Phone or text: 418-752-5400

Obituary

150 words - \$50

150-250 words - \$55

250+ words - quote will be provided



In Memory:

150 words - \$35

150-250 words - \$45

Photo: \$10 extra.



**Funeral, Celebration of Life,
Card of Thanks, Engagement,
Birth, Prayer, Birthday - \$35**

Wedding - \$55

Classifieds

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 70s. For further information contact Francis at 418-368-9167.

Coast Round-up

YORK:

York River Seniors

September 28: The York River Seniors Club is celebrating 50 years of service and operations to the seniors in our community. To highlight this important milestone, a wine and cheese open house will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. at the York River Community Hall. **October 26:** A Harvest Supper will be held at the York River Community Hall. Takeouts will be from 4 to 4:45 p.m. A first seating will be at 5 p.m. with a second seating at 6 p.m. The cost is \$15 per person. Diners over the age of 18 are permitted to bring their wine as the Club has procured an alcohol license. Welcome to all.

GASPE:

Christmas Sale

November 1: The Friends of St. Paul's will be having

its Christmas Sale in the basement of the St. Paul's Church beginning at 9 a.m. There will be a wide variety of goods for sale, a bake table, raffle tickets and snacks. Everyone welcome!

MALBAY:

Harvest Supper

October 11: Harvest Supper at St. Peter's Church Hall in Malbay. Two seatings are available, 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Take-outs from 4 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tickets will be pre-sold starting Tuesday September 16. Contact Janet Harvey at 418-355-4899. E-transfers are available.

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.

HOPE:

Hope Baptist Church

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

NEW CARLISLE:

New Carlisle Legion

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.

NEW CARLISLE:

Bible Chapel Meetings

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

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

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

50+ Club

September 20: A Harvest Bingo will begin at 1 p.m.

until finished, doors open at 12 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.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:

St. Andrew's United Church

September 19: Starting at 4 p.m. there will be a "Teaspoon night." It will be an evening of tasting, chatting and laughing. The best dishes in the "soup, meat, vegetables and pudding" categories can choose a prize from the white elephant table.

ROTARY CLUB WINNERS

The winners for the week of June 1 are:

Nancy Gough, Denis Cyr, Claude Trépanier, Jeff Berthelot, Jocelyne Cormier, Sylvia Martin and Steven Cyr.

The winners for the week of June 8 are:

Diane Imhoff, Lynn Sulli-

UNITED CHURCH HOPE TOWN

Sunday, September 21

10 a.m. Service

Sunday, September 28

2 p.m. Service

van, Kathleen Paquet, David Huard, John Homoroczky, Normand Cyr and Raynald Ritchie.

The winners for the week of June 15 are:

Sonia Arsenaault, Manon Leblanc, Magalie Bujold, Sylvie Ritchie, Bernard Dubé, Michel Rivière and Harry Best.

The winners for the week of June 22 are:

Renaud Cyr, Marie-Marthe Cyr, Karine Roussy, Suzanne Boudreau, Réal Bernard, Nancy Budd and France Cellard.

The winners for June 29 and 30 are:

Paul-Aimé Therrien and Nathalie Vachon.

UNITED CHURCH NEW RICHMOND

Sunday, September 21

10 a.m. Service

Sunday, September 28

10 a.m. Service

PARISH OF GASPÉ

Sunday, September 21

St. Philip/St John

9 a.m. Holy Communion

Sunday, September 28

St. Matthew's Peninsula

9 a.m. Holy Communion

HOROSCOPES

September 14 to September 20

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20 - This week sharpens your focus with daily routines and well-being, Aries. It's an excellent time to streamline your schedule, tackle neglected tasks and prioritize self-care.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21 - Creativity and joy are themes for you this week, Taurus. Engage in hobbies, spend time with loved ones and embrace fun pursuits. Your artistic side may be especially inspired.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21 - Your home and family life take center stage right now, Gemini. You might be focused on domestic projects, redecorating or spending quality time with the people you love.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22 - Communication is key this week, Cancer. Expect a busy social calendar. Important conversations and new learning opportunities

also may pop up. Your words carry weight.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23 - Leo, financial matters are center stage this week. This is a good time to review your budget, look for new income or make sensible investments. Your practical instincts are strong.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22 - This week is all about you, Virgo, especially if your birthday falls during these days. Focus on personal goals and self-improvement. Set strong intentions for the year ahead.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23 - It is time for rest and introspection, Libra. You might feel a need to retreat and recharge your batteries in the days to come. Pay attention to what your body is telling you.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22 - Social connections and networking are driving you right now, Scorpio. Spend time with friends or host a party so others can stop by and mingle. You also can join group events.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21 - Sagittarius, your career and public image are in focus this week. Opportunities for advancement or recognition could arise. Be professional and show off your leadership skills.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20 - Expand your horizons, Capricorn. This is a great week for learning, planning travel or exploring new hobbies. Try to step outside of your comfort zone as much as possible.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18 - Aquarius, you might be dealing with financial arrangements or deepening a close bond with someone. Regardless, trust and vulnerability are important concepts right now.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20 - Personal and professional relationships are your priority this week, Pisces. It's important to compromise and seek harmony in all you do.

HOROSCOPES

September 21 to September 27

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20 - Partnerships require extra attention this week, Aries. Focus on clear communication and mutual understanding. Compromise will lead to positive outcomes in all situations.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21 - This week your health and wellness comes into focus, Taurus. Consider a new exercise program or make adjustments to your diet. It's also a good time to get organized.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21 - Gemini, you might feel a surge of inspiration related to hobbies, artistic pursuits or even your social life. Embrace all of the creative endeavors that will come your way.

CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22 - You may find yourself redecorating or enjoying quiet time in the house, Cancer. Your life right now puts a strong focus on domes-

tic pursuits and you may spend more time at home.

LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23 - Leo, your mind is sharp and curious. Consider taking a class or joining a group hobby you find engaging. This week largely will be about local connections.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22 - Virgo, financial stability is a key theme in your life right now. Review your budget and look for practical ways to save money. You also may have to seek ways to boost your income.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23 - This week is a great time for self-improvement and setting new goals, Libra. Project confidence when interacting with your professional network, and pursue what matters to you.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22 - You are comfortable being out of the spotlight, Scorpio. This will serve you well when you spend some time in quiet reflec-

tion this week. Look inward and assess your goals.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21 - Connect with your friends or community and take part in group activities that bring you joy, Sagittarius. You might just find new inspiration to widen your social network.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20 - Your professional life takes center stage this week, Capricorn. Opportunities for recognition and advancement may pop up. Showcase your people skills.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18 - Aquarius, broaden your perspective. This is a fine week for learning new things or engaging with novel ideas. Embrace any challenges that get you thinking.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20 - Pisces, you might be dealing with financial matters that require collaboration with family members. It is important to have open conversation before reaching any conclusions.

On the Lighter Side...

POEMS

CREATIVE WRITING

PUZZLES

WHAT'S THIS CHALLENGE

SPEC GETS AROUND

RECIPES

Having attained that plateau called the golden years, by some, I thought the following words might come close to summing up how many must feel about that title.. "The Golden Years"

The Golden Years

Some kind soul in the annals of time
Back ions of years ago
Dubbed ' fifty plus folks' with a special name
Like old pickles, with a Golden Glow.

He invented a title to serve all mankind
When the half-of-a-hundred is past
The 'Golden Years' shall be that stage
And oh how that title held fast.

A title for sure, but what's in a name?
Did the chap have no sense of fair?
When fifty-plus comes we don't even possess
Our so cherished head of gold hair.

The gold in our teeth falls down in the sink
And the gold on our finger's too big
The gold in the bank has dwindled away
And our golden hair's changed to a wig.

The golden sunset has a less golden sheen
And the gold on the tea cup has faded.
The gold on the door-knob is turning to rust
But we gold-folk are not easily jaded.

We've acquired with age the aches of the times
A rheumatoid, cardiac nation.
With our sugar too high and iron too low
We're a pill-popping gold generation.

But gold if it's pure, never loses its shine
So we spruce up and keep right on going
And put up with the pokes, the cracks and the jokes
Some younger folk just keep on throwing.

Each dog has its day, the old pundits say
Each one has his kick at the can.
And before you can say 'get out of my way'
You too are a silver-haired man.

And those golden years though mixed with tears
And rumors and stories of sadness
Are full of sweet blessings, too many to count
And moments God sprinkles with gladness.

So golden hope shines in the darkest of times
As we cling to each other's gold spirit.
And the music's still sweet, on life's golden street
Just listen a moment, you'll hear it.

So do not despair at the wrinkle-faced glare
In the golden-edged glass as you hold it.
The last lap's the best, in the race that we run
So just let God gently unfold it.

The golden years will come to a close
And all good books have an ending.
And the end of the road is as straight as a string
True as a die, never bending.

Golden handles, six hands will carry
A box perhaps stained with tears.
To that golden gate, where better times wait
At the end of our Golden Years

—Art MacPherson

It's zucchini time!

Summer's bounty knows no bounds, especially when it comes to zucchini.

If you've had your fill of zucchini muffins and zucchini relish, this is a great recipe to use up some of those giant zucchini taking up space in your kitchen.

Spiced Zucchini Cake

Ingredients:

2 cups flour
4 eggs
1 cup canola oil
1 cup brown sugar
1 cup white sugar
2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1/4 tsp. ginger
1/4 tsp. cloves
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
3 1/2 cups freshly grated zucchini
Frosting:
1/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 (8 oz.) container cream cheese, softened
1 tsp. vanilla
3 Tbsp. heavy whipping cream
1 3/4 cups icing sugar
1 cup walnuts, roughly chopped and lightly toasted

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
Spray a 9x13 pan.
Beat sugars, eggs and oil.
Sift the flour,spices, baking powder, soda and salt.
Mix the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients.
Stir in the zucchini.
Pour the batter evenly into the pan.
Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until a tooth pick inserted into the cake comes out clean.
Cool completely before frosting

For the frosting:

Whip together all ingredients except the heavy cream and icing sugar. Slowly add the sugar Slowly add the heavy cream and sugar.
Whip well until it is a creamy frosting like texture.
Frost the cake and garnish with toasted walnuts.

** To toast the nuts, place the nuts in a small saucepan on low and stir around for about 5 minutes. Cool completely before placing them on the top of the cake.*



Nature FACT:

Leaves
change
colour in the
fall due to
the break-
down of this
substance.

Answer: Chlorophyll

FUN FACT

Zucchini is botanically classified as a fruit, not a vegetable, because it develops from a flower and contains seeds.

Embrace the beauty of September

September is the bridge between summer warmth and crisp autumn air. September has that reflection of a deep jubilee of autumn colours and Gaspesians embracing the beauty in their own backyard.

Many Gaspesians begin their mornings with a hot cup of coffee or tea at their kitchen table. A simple glance out the kitchen window can be inspiring with the magnificent colours, and morning dew on the rugged fields in the distance.

There is comfort in our small towns, where the calmness of September, along with that pure salt water Chaleur air adds a touch of warmth, even as we prepare for the months ahead.

Ken Ross, New Carlisle, Quebec.



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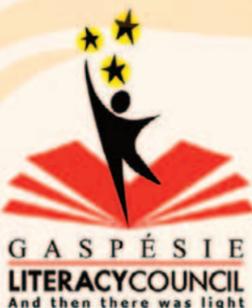

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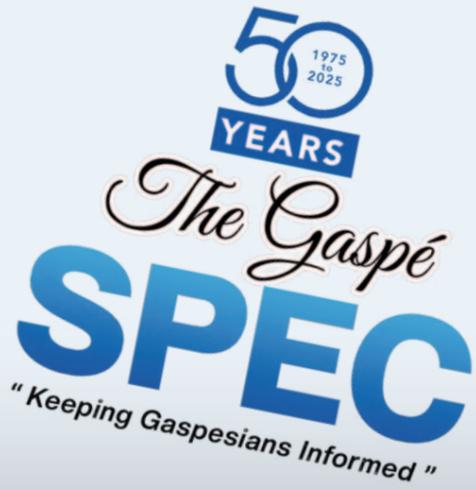
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