



## GASPE MINES:

# Pit to be dewatered as early as next year

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

**GASPÉ** – A major step in the potential reopening of the Gaspé Mines in Murdochville is about to take place with the delicate process of dewatering the pit, an operation expected to begin next year and last nearly three years.

The flow rate at the pit outlet will be one cubic metre per second, and the water will pass through three water basins over five kilometres before reaching the York River. The goal is to remove 35 billion litres of water from the pit, which contains a low copper content.

Osisko Metals asserts that the quality of the water leaving the pit will not affect the York River.

“Yes, we are 100% certain. With all the studies we’ve conducted, we exceed all provincial and Fisheries and Oceans Canada standards. We are very confident that we will be able to reduce the copper content to 10 parts per billion. Anything lower than that would be distilled water. We cannot imagine that it could affect salmon,” says Osisko Metals chief executive officer (CEO) Robert Wares.

The Quebec standard is 100 parts per billion, and the pit is at 60 parts per billion.

“At 10, plus the natural dilution in the York River, I’m sure it will drop below that,” the CEO assures. The method used to dilute the copper will be the same as that used in water treatment plants for municipal water systems.

Continuous, real-time monitoring will be conducted to ensure water quality, in collaboration with researchers from the National Research Council of Canada and the National Institute of Scientific Research. Nearly \$1.5 million will be invested in the various projects, some of which is funded by Osisko. These results could be used in future projects across Canada.

“We hope to dewater (the



A drill rig near the pit at the Gaspé Mines in Murdochville.

Photo: Osisko Metals

pit) next fall,” says Mr. Wares.

### One step closer to production

In 2025, 118,000 metres of drilling was completed in the surrounding mountains, and 150,000 metres since operations began in 2022. The copper in Murdochville is believed to be of excellent quality.

“The concentrate produced at Mines Gaspé has always been of very high quality on global markets, and this will be the case for the future mine. There is always a good market for high-quality copper concentrates,” says the executive, who was a geologist in Noranda in the 1990s and previously worked in Murdochville.

The company plans to produce 500,000 tonnes of concentrate per year once operations resume. All production will be sold to Glencore, the mining company that sold the Murdochville site to Osisko during the pandemic.

“There is a demand for copper. By 2050, global production, which currently stands at around 23 million pounds of copper metal, will need to double due to the development of the global economy and artificial intelligence,” says Mr. Wares.

According to him, nothing will hinder the mine's eventual start-up. “The further we get into it, the more delays there are. Right now, we’re aiming

for 2032. We’ll need a partner for the operation,” says Mr. Wares, who doesn’t rule out selling Osisko if a company receives a good offer.

### \$3 billion needed to restart operations

“Last year, we were talking about \$1 billion for an opera-

tion of 50,000 tonnes (of mineralized rocks per day sent to the concentrator). That didn’t turn out to be very favourable from an economic standpoint. We worked to increase the resource. Currently, for our preliminary economic study, we’re considering 150,000 tonnes per day,” explains Mr. Wares.

There are no plans to build a smelter on the site due to the environmental complexities.

“In North America, it’s practically impossible to obtain a smelter permit. The concentrate will be shipped by vessel to smelters in Europe or Horne in Abitibi,” he notes, referring to the Rouyn-Noranda smelter.

The rail link is still part of the plan. “I imagine Glencore will send some of the production to the Horne (smelter). It would be important for the railway to be repaired. It’s not in a condition to accept railcars full of copper concentrate. Quebec will have to get involved to get the railway back in good condition,” the executive suggests. This element will be part of the preliminary economic study.

Mr. Wares hopes the project will qualify for accelerated

Cont'd on page 2

## Pin rouge likely to open on December 20

**GILLES GAGNÉ**

**NEW RICHMOND** – While recent winters have been capricious in the Baie des Chaleurs area, often complicating operations for Pin rouge ski centre staff, the relatively cold weather since the beginning of December, combined with major equipment upgrades, is setting the stage for a pre-Christmas opening.

Guy Desroches, the spokesperson for Pin rouge, indicates that major investments were made since the spring to increase both the versatility of the snow-making system and the variety of available runs.

“We have invested \$1.6 million out of a \$2.4 million phase 1. We have a new family run, a magic carpet for the beginners’ run, which improves



An earlier season at Pin rouge could be possible this year.

Photo: Gilles Gagné

access for families. We have also installed a brand new snow-making system, including the replacement of the poles, 72 of them, throwing snow all over the runs. The system can make snow when the temperature is -2 degrees, instead of -6 or -8. It expands our snow-making schedule a lot,” explains Mr. Desroches.

One of the Pin rouge off-

season highlights was the renewal of the agreement with Gesgapegiag for the purchase of 200 seasonal ski passes for the First Nation community members. The agreement covers the next two winters.

As for the opening date, Guy Desroches simply says: “Stay tuned. Consult our pages or call us. But December 20 is our target.”

# Gaspé-Bonaventure: Méganne Perry Mélançon wants to fight

NELSON SERGERIE

**GASPÉ** – The woman who quickly announced her intention to run in Gaspé in the October 2026 election following her defeat in 2022 does not want to commit to a candidacy in the merged riding of Gaspé-Bonaventure if the proposed electoral map ultimately becomes a reality.

Méganne Perry Mélançon was the Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Gaspé from 2018 to 2022, when she was defeated by (Coalition Avenir Québec) CAQ MNA Stéphane Sainte-Croix.

She was elected under the banner of the Parti Québécois after Gaétan Lelièvre, who held the seat from 2012 to 2018, announced his retirement from politics.

In March 2023, Ms. Perry Mélançon confirmed her intention to seek a “rematch” against the current CAQ member, who has indicated

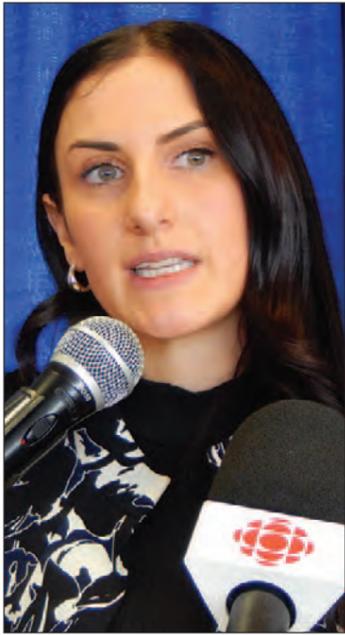


Photo: N. Sergerie

Méganne Perry Mélançon.

on several occasions his intention to run in the election in 10 months.

But the context has changed since then with the Electoral Representation Commission's proposal,

tabled twice, to merge the ridings of Gaspé and Bonaventure.

For the moment, her attention is focused elsewhere rather than on running in an enlarged riding.

"The Court of Appeal's decision has just come down. We are much more focused on preserving what we have achieved and preventing this decision from going ahead. We still expect to have two ridings in 2026. That is really the focus," says the woman who became the spokesperson for the Parti Québécois after her defeat.

"I reiterate that I want to be a candidate for the riding of Gaspé, which is already large enough as it is. We are really working on one thing at a time. We'll talk about a decision again when the scenario for the upcoming general election is set," she says.

Even though the commission's initial decision was

made a year and a half ago, the former elected official does not want to say whether she has considered running in the new riding since then.

"There has been no discussion with my team on this. You know that there is a nomination process for our political party. There are still many issues to consider with the team. I intend to submit my candidacy for the riding of Gaspé, and I don't have time to think about my personal future. We are thinking about the future of the people of Gaspé first and foremost," she says.

The national spokesperson noted that there is a lot of work in progress following the submission of the revised report.

"The deadlines are quite short. We are working hard in the National Assembly to explore the options. We still believe that the merger of the two counties can be avoided," she explains.

## The PQ in Gaspésie denounces

Local Parti Québécois (PQ) associations in Bonaventure and Gaspé denounce the possible merger of the two ridings.

"It is becoming an acceptable position to reduce the weight of the regions for purely mathematical reasons without taking other parameters into account. In our opinion, this is bad news for all regions of Quebec," says Ludovic Landry-Ducharme, president of the Parti Québécois in Gaspé.

The PQ in Gaspésie believes that the exception status may suffice for the time being.

"For us, the ultimate goal is to keep the Gaspé and Bonaventure ridings within their current boundaries in order to maintain the political weight of Gaspésie in the National Assembly," concludes Mr. Landry-Ducharme.

# Dangerous intersection: Minister Julien made aware of the issue

NELSON SERGERIE

**MARIA** – Transportation Minister Jonatan Julien, was made aware of the on-going issue at the intersection of Boulevard Interprovincial and Route 132 during his recent visit to Maria on December 1.

The mayor of Pointe-à-la-Croix has been campaigning for several years for the installation of a roundabout at this important site leading to Campbellton, New Brunswick.

In November, Pascal Bujold had a discussion with Bonaventure Member of National Assembly (MNA) Catherine Blouin, who promised him a meeting with the Department of Transportation.

"This is a long-standing issue. It's an accident-prone location. The Department of Transportation has taken action by adding markings and changing speed limits. But that doesn't solve the problem. There are still accidents, and it's still dangerous. We are asking the department to come up with a more effective solution," says Mathieu Lapointe, prefect of the Avignon MRC.

Accidents are on the rise despite intervention by the ministry in May 2023. Road markings were changed at the three approaches to the intersection to better define traffic lanes and turning lanes. The work created a dedicated left-turn lane on Route 132 for drivers wishing to turn onto In-

terprovincial Boulevard. The speed limit on Route 132 was reduced from 90 to 70 km/h on the approaches to the intersection.

Even at the time, Mayor Bujold said that this would not change much, since the geometry of the intersection remained the same.

"The important thing is to make the section safer. Whatever the solution, whether it's a roundabout or a traffic light, if the ministry has other ideas. We're telling the ministry to find us a solution. The one currently in place is not working," added the prefect.

Mayor Bujold favours a roundabout intersection.

The Department of Transportation is reluctant to take

action, according to the prefect.

"The department is reluctant to take any measures that could reduce traffic flow. Yes, travel time between Gaspé and Rimouski is one thing. But first and foremost, safety must

take precedence over travel time across the Gaspé Peninsula," says the prefect.

During the summer season, Interprovincial Boulevard is the most heavily used artery in the Gaspé Peninsula, as it is the entry point to New Brunswick.

## GASPÉ MINE:

### Cont'd from cover

environmental assessments, as Ottawa and Quebec want strategic projects, particularly those involving critical minerals, to be analyzed more quickly.

The project's environmental steps will come after the preliminary economic study is submitted, which is expected in February 2026. If the process

follows the regular channels, it (the environmental assessment) could take up to four years.

Furthermore, Osisko has implemented a strategy to involve the citizens of Murdochville in the development. To date, nearly 200 residents have been actively involved in the discussions.

Osisko plans to drill an additional 40,000 metres to further define the resource in 2026.

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# Saturday's high tide: more fear than harm

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

**GASPÉ** – The high tide of 6.9 feet recorded on December 6 at the Sandy Beach wharf in Gaspé caused coastal flooding along the Gaspé Peninsula shoreline, but fortunately without causing significant damage, as winds were calm when the water reached its peak.

"It worried us. We made sure everything was okay. We were scared. We almost had to shut off the sewer system on Rue des Tournepierres. Luckily, there was no wind. It happens every fall," notes Maria's mayor, Patricia Chartier.

With the cold weather that has settled in over the past few days, ice is beginning to form along the shoreline.

"We should be fine in December," the elected official adds, referring to the period between then and the end of the month.

This new high tide highlights the importance of the beach replenishment project, which is nearing completion.

"We still need to focus on Pointe Verte. The area under the Ministry of Transportation,



Photo: Nathalie Dugas

The water rose once again on Rue des Tournepierres in Maria.

behind the grocery store, will be protected for several years. This shows we made the right choice," Ms. Chartier maintains.

Regarding Pointe Verte, six households have chosen to leave. "But there are still several others who are considering it. It's difficult to estimate how many will leave before we open a new street. We're conducting topographic surveys to determine which houses can be relocated, at what cost, and

where the new street would be accessible. We remain supportive of those who wish to leave," the mayor explains.

The beach replenishment should be completed very soon.

"We plan to take stock at the beginning of next week (mid-December). The work is pro-

gressing, and we'll provide an update," the elected official notes. Mother Nature cooperated, allowing this major project to be completed on schedule.

## Elsewhere

Water also rose on Rue du Quai in Carleton-sur-Mer. "The teams are conducting an on-site assessment, but everything is on track to be okay," states mayor Mathieu Lapointe.

Water also flooded Pointe-Taylor in New Richmond, particularly around the children's play areas. Aside from the ice that formed, no major damage has been reported.

Water also rose in Port-Daniel-Gascons and on Rue de la Plage in Gaspé. In that area, a resident reported that the water arrived quite quickly. A pump was needed to remove the water before it reached the residence, which could have caused much more significant damage.

The Town of Gaspé's communications department indicated that no damage had been reported over the weekend.

This high tide occurred 15 years to the day after the devastating storm surge of December 6, 2010. A major low-pressure system and very strong winds caused damage throughout eastern Quebec.

The wind came from various directions, generally those most likely to cause damage, namely southeast along the south side of the Gaspé coast, and northeast on the region's north side.

Highway 132 was closed in Marsoui and Mont-Louis. The storm surge left devastation in the Sainte-Luce and Sainte-Flavie areas of the Lower St. Lawrence region.

In Sainte-Flavie, dozens of residents living near the sea had to be relocated due to the destructive waves. A beach replenishment project, larger than the one in Maria, was carried out there in 2024.



Water also rose on Rue des Quai in Carleton-sur-Mer.

Photo: Facebook

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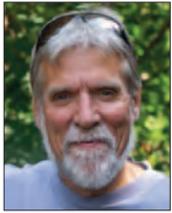
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*Happy Holidays*

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Gilles Gagné

## Commentary

### The year in review

So, 2025 is not finished, but we can certainly draw a few sector-by-sector conclusions, with a priority given to the regional level, sometimes with references to the broader picture, since we are heavily influenced by what is going on in the rest of Quebec, Canada, North America and the world.

**So, let's do it, in alphabetical order.**

**Education:** Almost 39 years after the implementation of the allegedly autonomous region called the Gaspé Peninsula-Magdalen Islands, there is still no regional office of that utmost important government department, as our regional office is located in Rimouski, in the neighbouring region of the Lower Saint Lawrence. Although we have a Cegep and three school boards, no one is working directly in the region to look for better programs, or in support of the regular employees of the schools. Worse yet: no one seems to care

about the absence of a regional office.

**Energy:** As a partial owner of wind farms through the Gaspésie-Magdalen Islands Energy Board, the region made progress in 2025, since it has a stake in projects that are emerging in the neighbouring region of the Lower Saint Lawrence, as the two regions work together in that file, whether the turbines are producing energy in one or the other.

The regional leaders vigorously tried to convince the Quebec government to impose regional content in the recent and upcoming calls for tenders. So far, they haven't succeeded. The LM Wind Power blade manufacturing plant in Gaspé is still producing at an accelerated pace, despite exporting its output essentially south of the border. However, at one point, the LM facility might need domestic sales, as it has solely depended on exports since 2016.

**Fisheries:** With landings carrying a value of \$222 million, a fine level but not a record one, Gaspesian fisheries are seemingly going well. There are, however, some concerns. The region's fisheries revenue depends on two species, lobster and snow crab, in a proportion of 90-91%. Ten years ago, the top two species were accounting for 50% of the region's landing revenues.

The current imbalance means that some species are at risk, namely shrimp, cod, 32 years after the first moratorium, mackerel, still hit by a moratorium, and redfish, handicapped by low prices. Advanced processing of some species remains complicated and reduces

their economic impact.

**Forestry and wildlife:** United States tariffs are having a significant impact on the lumber industry. They restrict access to the American market. So, most Canadian sawmills are turning to the much smaller domestic market, with the oversupply contributing to downward prices. Fortunately, so far, most Gaspesian sawmills have been able to keep producing, thanks to solid contacts on the Canadian market.

In 2025, only one Gaspesian sawmill closed temporarily, although for a lengthy period, the Damabois plant in Cap-Chat. The reason given by its administration was the weak supply of logs due to the enlarged protected area designated to caribou. However, almost 20 months after a \$59.5 million Quebec government program to improve caribou's habitat and help the forestry industry cope with such protective measures, the extremely centralized Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) regime has failed to come up with any significant progress on the wildlife front.

**Health:** By and large, Gaspesians are lucky to count on reliable emergency services and family doctors in proportions that outweigh those of urban areas. However, 2025 was a trying year for expectant women living in Haute-Gaspésie and, to a lesser extent, in the Côte-de-Gaspé MRC and Baie-des-Chaleurs areas. Fifty years ago, women were giving birth essentially

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Cynthia Dow

## Guest Commentary

### Extreme drought calls for water conservation

It has been a very dry summer in the Baie des Chaleurs area, with dozens of households in the New Richmond area alone having to dig new wells. In fact, according to Agriculture Canada we are experiencing "extreme drought" here on the Coast, and 99% of agricultural land throughout Ontario and Quebec is affected by unusually dry conditions.

Canada's Climate Change Institute indicates this is likely to become an ongoing dilemma as we fail to deal with the pollution causing greenhouse gas effects. Like the air we breathe, water is an absolute necessity for life. We need to start treating our drinking water like the precious resource it is.

When I was a kid, the well at home used to run over often, so my father dug a ditch beside the house to drain the run-off into the field below. That wetland was a great place to find fireflies and bullrushes! Brooks, streams and wetlands lay all around us.

Now, all the brooks and streams around my home in St-Jules have been dry since mid-summer. The local spring where I collect my drinking water has been dry since the end of August, with no sign of running any time soon. I've been forced to mooch off relatives since my well water contains too much sulphur to drink regularly.

It's often noted that Canada has the largest quantity of freshwater in the world. But how long will that continue given how very wasteful we are compared to billions of people around the world? Nothing impressed me so much about my trip to China many years ago than the importance of clean water to drink and bathe in. I saw women pounding clothes on rocks at a river's edge, a mother bathing her baby out of a soup bowl, and one metal faucet located in the middle of a courtyard for the use of about three dozen families.

Those scenes have never left me. It is impossible for me now to leave a tap running without immediate need for the water coming out of it. I have become a maniac about careful use of what comes out of the tap.

So, I thought I would share a list of water-saving

techniques:

I put about three inches of water and soap in the sink once a day for the entire day's worth of dishes. I don't have a dishwasher. If I did, I would make sure it was absolutely full before operating it. I put about two inches of cold water in my second sink with a little cleaning vinegar to rinse the dishes and cutlery.

(Online resources tell me that dishwashers use at least three gallons of water to wash a load. They claim this is less than handwashing: I don't know how they wash dishes, but I can assure you I use a lot less than three gallons to wash mine!)

Leftover tea goes into plant pots (once it has cooled, of course).

In the bathroom, I pour a small amount of water into a cup, dunk my toothbrush, and use the remainder to rinse my mouth and brush.

If I need hot water, I let the cooler water run into my watering can to be used on my plants or to fill the pet's bowls.

I love my bathtub, but use it sparingly as it takes a lot of water to fill it. Showering uses much less

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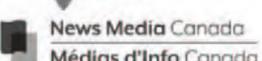
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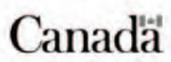
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# Police Report

## Listuguj's Dylan Barnaby still missing

In connection with the November 14 disappearance of 32-year-old Dylan Barnaby of Listuguj, the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) is once again asking for the public's help to advance the investigation.

The Sûreté du Québec is asking residents of Listuguj and the surrounding area to check their surveillance camera footage, whether residential or commercial. Any footage that could show Dylan Barnaby or the grey 2019 GMC Sierra, license plate AGT 43X, with its missing rear tailgate, could prove crucial.

Investigators also encourage residents to remain vigilant while travelling and to report any information that could help locate the missing vehicle or individual. Following the checks carried out so far, police have also requested assistance from the Canadian Coast Guard to help locate the vehicle associated with this disappearance.

Dylan Barnaby was last seen on November 14 in Listuguj. He may be travelling in a grey 2019 GMC Sierra. His family has reason to fear for his health and safety.

He stands 1.80 metres in height, or 5 feet 11 inches. His weight is unknown. His hair is short and red. His eyes are brown. As for distinguishing features, he wears dark glasses and has tattoos on both forearms. When last seen, he was wearing a white hat, a black coat, dark jeans, light-coloured shoes, and a gold chain.

"We have nothing new so far. He is still missing and so is his vehicle," points out Frédéric Deshaies, spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec in the Gaspé Peninsula.

The first press release pertaining to Dylan Barnaby's disappearance was issued by the Listuguj Police Department. Anyone with information is asked to contact 911. Information can also be provided confidentially to the Sûreté du Québec's Criminal Information Centre at 1-800-659-4264.

## Drug bust in Murdochville

Two people were arrested on December 4 in Murdochville following a drug bust carried out by Sûreté du Québec police officers. They seized roughly one



kilogram of cocaine in two houses located on First Street and Seventh Street during this operation. A revolver with ammunition, two knives, approximately \$11,000 in cash and tools used in drug trafficking were also seized. The same day, Jean-Daniel Harvey, 49, faced accusations of drug possession for the purpose of trafficking. He was remanded in custody. A 27-year-old woman was questioned and released. She will likely be summoned to appear in court later.

## Increased police presence on the roads during the holiday season

Quebec police services, in collaboration with the road safety officers of the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ), have started intensifying their operations as of December 4, 2025, and will maintain the pace until January 4, 2026, as part of the national coordinated operation (NCO) targeting impaired driving due to alcohol or drugs.

These operations include, among other things, screenings that may be conducted during roadside checks. Police officers also held a national day of road safety operations to combat impaired driving and, at the same time, conducted winter tire checks on December 5 throughout Quebec.

In conjunction with this NCO, an awareness campaign has been launched, notably on the various social media platforms of police organizations. This campaign aims to remind drivers of the consequences of driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs.

For its part, the SAAQ is continuing its holiday awareness campaign, which began on November 10 and runs until December 21, 2025. The campaign aims to raise awareness among drivers about the importance of not driving after consuming alcohol or drugs, since the risks and consequences associated with this behaviour are enormous, not only for the driver but also for those around them.

It is worth noting that driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs remains one of the leading causes of death on Quebec roads. Between 2019 and 2023, on average, alcohol was a factor in 28% of fatal collisions and 15% of collisions resulting in serious injuries. It remains crucial to warn the public about the various myths circulating regarding the possibility of regaining one's ability to drive more quickly in certain circumstances. Only time allows the effects of alcohol or drug consumption to dissipate.

Furthermore, the practice of estimating one's own blood alcohol level before driving presents significant risks and is therefore strongly discouraged. The effect of even a single drink should never be underestimated. When people consume alcohol or drugs, they should not drive.

This coordinated national operation is organized as part of a partnership between the Sûreté du Québec, the Association des directeurs de police du Québec, the SAAQ, and all police services in Quebec.

— Continued from page 4  
The year in review:

in the hospital serving their area. For many reasons, some complicated and some not, that proportion has fallen. Solving the current problem doesn't look like rocket science but it seems hard to make progress.

**Housing:** We finally see some daylight in this field, thanks to the constant work of our regional leaders in denouncing the housing shortage over the last decade. The problem was only recognized in April 2022 by the Quebec government. The federal government moved slightly, but is still not up to par, considering the needs. Some

community and private sector projects are emerging, and there is room for optimism in the coming years. Social housing is needed to alleviate the burden felt by low-income families and this segment of the population is also generally taken care of by our municipal leaders.

**Politics:** We had a federal election! We have a new Member of Parliament (MP), Bloc Québécois' Alexis Deschênes, who was successful at this level after two ill-fated attempts at the provincial level for the Parti Québécois (PQ), including one in the Bonaventure riding in 2022. A Legal Aid lawyer until February, Mr. Deschênes ousted Diane Lebouthillier, who was

not exactly shining on regional issues. The new MP shows far more vigour to defend the region than she did. He is ensuring thorough follow-ups on issues such as fisheries, regional transport, the lumber industry and so on. He has to improve his grasp of First Nations topics, but he is willing to listen, something Ms. Lebouthillier, who is stubborn, was not good at.

At the Quebec level, Members of National Assembly (MNAs) Catherine Blouin and Stéphane Sainte-Croix made gains in certain fields, such as housing, but they had a hard time finding an attentive ear regarding transportation and health issues, to name a few.

**Tourism:** This sector ex-

perienced a good year in the Gaspé Peninsula, not as strong as record years but considering that the end of the pandemic has widened the options of travelers, Canadians have resumed going all over the world, which increases the competition that regions like ours must face. Capricious winters, snowfall-wise, have hampered the Gaspé Peninsula popularity with skiers and snowmobilers. Overall, the region has reached a strong degree of maturity and professionalism. Paying hotel mortgages and other tourist-oriented infrastructures remains a challenge because of the short season.

**Transportation:** Inter-re-

gional transportation remains the weak point of the region, economically and socially. Our leaders are repeatedly reminding Quebec and Canada's politicians of this reality and receiving weak answers from both levels of government. This topic will be covered again in this column in 2026. It doesn't make sense that Gaspésians cannot take VIA Rail's train east of Matapédia, or must pay \$1,600, sometimes more, for a Bonaventure-Montreal or Gaspé-Montreal return plane ticket.

*For the moment, on behalf of the SPEC team, enjoy the upcoming holiday season and have an outstanding 2026!*

— Continued from page 4  
Drought:

water and if you turn off the tap while shampooing, that's even better.

I do not wash my car at home, and not often elsewhere. This is not a valid use for clean, potable water as far as I am concerned.

I catch rainwater in pails for my garden. There was not enough of that this summer, and I was forced to use the hose a few times. (I finally gave up on my zucchini, they simply didn't prosper.)

In the laundry, I use HE machines that require very little water. The washer weighs the clothes put in, and then deter-

mines how much water is needed to clean them.

And now, for a tip that not everyone will like... I do not always flush. I remember well visiting friends who had a sign on the back of their toilet: "If it's yellow, let it mellow. If it's brown, flush it down!" and that is now my motto. It is ridiculous that we use clean, drink-

able water to flush our toilets. At some point I would love to have my "grey water" recycled to use in the toilet bowl.

And by the way, we should avoid buying bottled water if at all possible. First of all, buying water creates a huge recycling and garbage issue with all those plastic containers to deal with. Secondly, it encourages

the idea of commercializing water. As a prerequisite for life, water should never be used as a commercial object. It should be free to all, at any time.

If you have other water-saving tips you would like to share with SPEC readers, please send them to specs@globetrotter.net.

# Lobster catches dominate Quebec Fisheries in 2025

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON-SUR-MER – In 2025, Quebec commercial fishermen landed a slightly higher catch volume than in 2024, with deliveries of 41,876 metric tons, generating revenues of \$492.7 million, a significant increase of 31.1%. In 2024, revenues had totaled \$376 million.

The increase in revenues attributable to lobster and snow crab landings explains this jump of nearly \$117 million in 2025, in nominal terms. The value of lobster landed at Quebec wharves reached \$298 million in 2025, compared to \$230 million in 2024. Snow crab landings reached \$155 million, a significant increase of 40.5% compared to \$111 million in 2024.

These two species almost entirely account for the \$117 million hike in the value of landings between 2024 and 2025, representing \$112 million of this increase. The 2025 data is still preliminary, as some landings, particularly for shrimp, have yet to be recorded. For the first time, these figures include catches made by Quebecers outside Quebec, totaling 2,252 tonnes and valued at \$9.1 million.

## Lobster continues its progress

Economist Simon Desrochers, from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, points out, based on this data, that lobster has held the top spot in value among Quebec-landed species for the sixth consecutive year.

"In fact, lobster is the most

important species in terms of both value and volume," he notes. In 2024, lobster and snow crab tied with 35% of the volume share each.

"When we look at the volume shares, it's interesting to note that in 2016, the two most important species represented 50% of the total (volume of) catches," adds Mr. Desrochers.

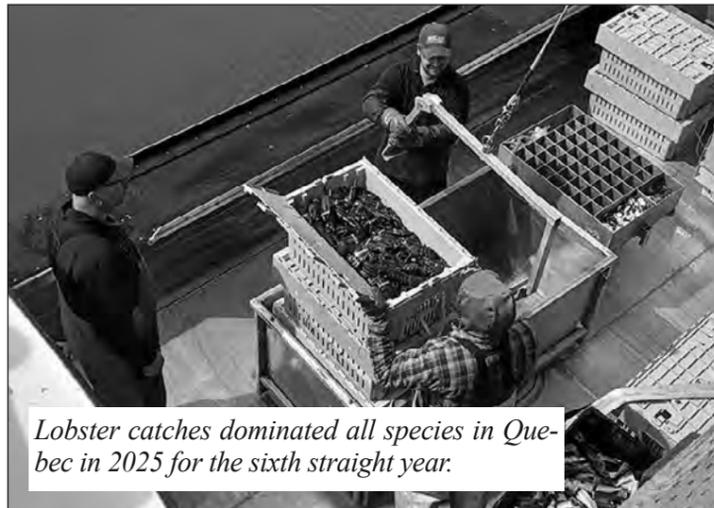
This combined 70% volume share dipped slightly in 2025, to 69%. However, the value of these lobster and snow crab catches has increased from 90% to 91% of total Quebec commercial fisheries revenue. This is a record level of concentration since Fisheries and Oceans Canada began keeping accurate statistics in 1984.

"In terms of total volume, if we look at the 10-year trend, 2025 was a better year than 2024, but it's still below the 2016-2025 average of 51,800 metric tonnes. We know the story; shrimp landings have declined over the decade. They reached 2,111 tonnes this year. That's slightly better than in 2024, but they reached 30,745 tonnes in 2016. That's why it (the total volume of Quebec catches) is lower than the average," explains Simon Desrochers.

Lobster catches reached 17,505 metric tonnes in 2025, representing 41.8% of the total catch volume. In 2016, shrimp accounted for 43.9% of the total catch from Quebec's commercial fisheries.

"Now, lobster has replaced shrimp as the leading species in terms of catch volume," the economist notes.

As an economist, Simon Desrochers points out that be-



Lobster catches dominated all species in Quebec in 2025 for the sixth straight year.

Photo: Gilles Gagné

yond nominal amounts, it's always best to keep in mind the amounts in present value dollars, which take inflation into account.

"When we look at all of Quebec, in real (present value) dollars, from 2016 to 2024, we arrive at an average of \$475 million, if we exclude 2020, the worst year of the pandemic. In nominal dollars, this year's \$493 million is a record, but not in real dollars. The official record in real dollars was set in 2017, at \$585 million," the economist explains.

## All sectors of maritime Quebec benefit from lobster

By maritime sector, the Gaspé Peninsula and the Lower St. Lawrence saw the strongest revenue growth in 2025, with a jump of 50.1%. This increase was primarily driven by higher landing prices, as volumes only increased by 6.47%, rising from 15,553 to 16,559 metric tons.

"In the Gaspé Peninsula and the Lower St. Lawrence, we are seeing a downward trend in catch volume, as the average

for the last 10 years is 23,900 tonnes. The 2025 catch is therefore 30% below average, but it is slightly higher than in 2024.

The low point may have been reached in 2024," notes Simon Desrochers.

Lobster significantly contributed to landings totaling \$221.6 million, nearly \$76 million more than in 2024, though these figures are still preliminary. It should also be noted that the value of landings in the Lower St. Lawrence region reached \$24.3 million, representing approximately 11% of the total for both regions.

Lobster alone accounted for \$48 million of the increase in the value of catches in the two regions, while snow crab added another \$23 million.

On the North Shore, from the Upper, Middle to the Lower North Shore, revenues also saw significant growth between 2024 and 2025, jumping 40.6% from \$77 million to \$108.3 million, while total landings remained virtually unchanged at 12,556 metric tons in 2024 compared to 12,554 in 2025—a paltry decrease of two metric tons.

"In terms of volume, we're back to 2017-2018 levels, helped by lobster permits. It's a bit like the Gaspé Peninsula: we're seeing a recovery in value for those with lobster permits," explains Simon Desrochers.

The increase in total revenue was more moderate in the Magdalen Islands, primarily due to a decline in lobster volumes, the first in four years.

Revenue from all species still reached \$154 million, compared to \$139 million in 2024. "In the Islands, the overall situation was similar, and therefore above the average of the last two years, due to a rise in lobster prices. Scallops also contributed," explains Simon Desrochers.

Revenues associated with lobster landings increased from \$117 million to \$122 million, even though quantities declined from 7,490 to 7,145 metric tons, a drop of 345 tons, or 4.6%. For all species, the volume fell from 10,861 to 10,538 metric tons, a 3% decline, driven entirely by lower lobster catches.

For groundfish, 2025 was characterized by increased volumes and revenues. The catch increased from 1,728 to 1,929 metric tons, for a value of \$12.9 million, compared to \$12 million in 2024. Halibut landings dominated all the other species.

Molluscs and echinoderms followed the opposite trend, with catches decreasing significantly from 3,773 to 2,757 metric tons, while revenues declined slightly less, relatively speaking, from \$11.9 million to \$10.5 million.

*Merry Christmas*

**Wishing our community a wonderful holiday season!**




# Three years of support to rural regions' museums

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

**GASPÉ** – After requesting \$2.5 million from the Quebec Government in October, museums in remote regions, including the Musée de la Gaspésie, have obtained part of the amount requested.

This was announced on December 5 by Minister of Culture Mathieu Lacombe.

Even though the museums have had part of their request granted, the battle is far from won.

"It's a step in the right direction because there is an increase in funding for the next three years, but it's not the amount we requested," says Martin Roussy, Executive Director of the Musée de la Gaspésie.

In the end, museums in remote areas will receive half of the \$2.5 million requested.

"This will give us some breathing room. However, if we want the money to be structural and, in addition, if we are granted the supplement related to remoteness, it must be reflected in the 2026 budget because that is when there will be confirmation and continuity of the funds announced. For now, we only have it for three years," explains Mr. Roussy.

For the time being, the 43 museums in remote regions are seeing their funding increase by an average of 22%. Some have received little or nothing at all. "We have a 14% increase. We're a little below



Photo: Courtesy

*The general management teams of the museums of Gaspésie (Martin Roussy), Rimouski (France Leclerc), Bas-Saint-Laurent (Mélanie Girard), Côte-Nord (Mélicha Lacroix), Mer aux Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Carole Lemieux) and Jean-François Royal, president of the Société des musées du Québec, held a press conference on October 28, 2025, to inform the government and the public of the urgent need to adjust their funding.*

average, but we're happy with what we're getting. It's not huge. We're talking about \$44,000 per year. We can go a long way with that. The next meeting is for the 2026 budget, and we are confident that the Minister of Culture will sell the idea to the Minister of Finance," says the director, who believes that the minister has made a gesture with the limited resources at his disposal.

When the museum directors went to Quebec City in October, all parties supported the requests.

"Next year, if we go by the polls, we could have a change of government. If we do have a change of government, we assume we will be well received," hopes Mr. Roussy.

In October, the museums sent a message to the Quebec government to ensure the survival of 43 museums in remote areas.

The Musée de la Gaspésie had suffered three consecutive years of deficits and depleted its reserves.

Without additional financial assistance, the museum's survival was in jeopardy.

Fifty percent of the regional museum's revenue comes from independent sources.

The director had indicated that an exhibition coming to Gaspé cost twice as much as an exhibition in the Montreal area due to logistics and transportation costs.



Photo: Facebook

## \$640,000 to maintain local food supply

*Nelson Sergerie*

**GASPÉ** – Five grocery stores located in the Gaspé Peninsula are receiving \$637,963 from the provincial government to ensure that citizens have access to essential products close to home, including food, everyday consumer goods, fuel, and building materials.

In the region, the funds allocated are going to the food sector.

In Baie-des-Chaleurs, \$150,000 is being granted to the Coop IGA store in Maria to renovate part of the building, install a cardboard press and a generator to make savings and improve the long-term viability of the business.

The Coop IGA store in Bonaventure is receiving an equivalent amount to install an electronic product and price tagging system and add two self-checkout registers.

The other three markets are located in Haute-Gaspésie. Marché Lemieux et compagnie in Saint-Maxime-du-Mont-Louis, is also receiving \$150,000 to purchase and relaunch the assets of Épice-rit ML, which has been closed for several weeks.

The N. Essiambre grocery store in the Tourelle sector of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts is receiving \$141,399 to modernize its food processing and preservation equipment and facilities in order to ensure continued access to quality food.

Finally, Marché chez Julie in Mont Saint-Pierre, is receiving \$46,564 to upgrade the grocery store's infrastructure and purchase certain butchery and ready-to-eat equipment.

These projects are part of 92 local businesses in communities with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants selected by the provincial government to ensure access to essential goods and services. A little over \$10 million is being paid to these businesses.

This announcement follows the second call for projects under the Local Business component of the Regional and Rural Development Fund.

## The illuminated church in Nouvelle

*Nelson Sergerie*

**NOUVELLE** – Light shone on the church in Nouvelle when the new lighting was turned on for the first time on December 7, highlighting the exterior of the religious building.

The fundraising campaign for the project raised \$34,715. The installation of part of the lighting system cost \$34,692.

The funds came from citizens, parishioners, and businesses. "Since it is still an active place of worship, governments, municipalities, and MRCs cannot donate because the Secularism Act prohibits donations to places of worship," campaign manager Daniel Bujold tells CHNC.

He got the idea from the lighting on the Saint-Jean Gate in Quebec City and the church in Bonaventure.

"The church in Nouvelle is architecturally stunning. There are two bell towers at the front. They are spires that rise toward the sky and are straight lines. The facade is vaulted, and with targeted lighting, we can highlight its architecture," says Mr. Bujold.

The lighting allows people to highlight the beauty of the bell towers, facade, and window characteristics of architect Dom Bellot.

The organizers hoped to raise \$40,000. "We wanted to do the west side, which we're going to put aside. We had enough money to do the east side, which is the most prominent from Route 132, the facade, and the two bell towers. The west side could come later," says the organizer.

## Christmas and New Year's greetings

Dear Brothers and Sisters,



† Claude Lamoureux  
Bishop of the Diocese of Gaspé

At this Christmas season, as we contemplate the child of Bethlehem, I give thanks for the light of faith that continues to shine in the heart of our communities.

To welcome Christ is to welcome the new life that he comes to sow in each one of us. It is also to welcome others, as they are, as brothers and sisters with whom we are called to share the mission that the Lord entrusts to his Church: to make known his love and mercy.

May this light of Bethlehem impel us to share the Word, to carry together the mission of the Church and to discern in prayer what the Holy Spirit expects of us today.

May we, as the new year progresses, grow in trust, fraternity and the joy of serving the Lord.

**With all my heart, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and may this new year 2026 be filled with peace, hope and love.**

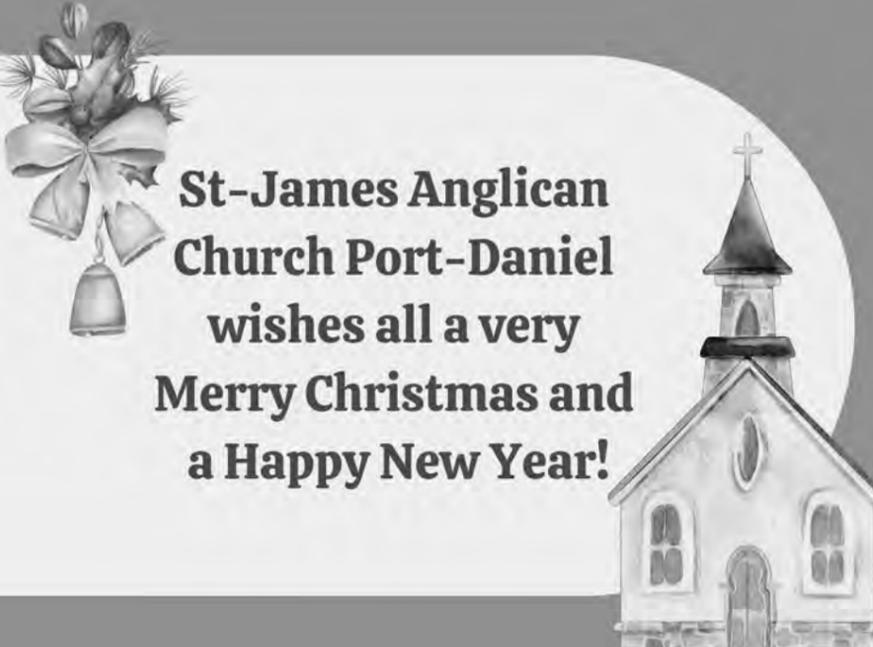
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# Kuma Brakes taken over internationally

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – The company Plaque de frein B & B, also known as Kuma Brakes of Gaspé, which declared bankruptcy on November 3, has been taken over by a multinational corporation.

Dellner Wind Solutions, a global leader in the design and manufacturing of braking and hydraulic systems for the wind energy sector, has acquired the assets. The buyer has signed a short-term lease with the Town of Gaspé, as the company is located in the Sandy Beach industrial park.

"We don't have the details yet. Since we own the building, the buyer has contacted us for a new three-month transitional lease. Will there be any interest in continuing operations here? I'm hopeful," says Mayor Daniel Côté.

Kuma Brakes manufactured brake pads for wind turbines and developed brakes for railways with its own innovations.

"Let's hope that the company can continue to grow in Gaspé with its current staff," says Mr. Côté.

Dellner has facilities in the United States, Brazil, Europe, and Asia. The mayor is betting that the company will stay in Gaspé.

"There's nothing stopping them from having a business in Gaspé. There is major wind



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

*Mayor Daniel Côté during the presentation of the 2025 budget. No commitment at this time on an inflation-targeted tax account.*

power potential coming with 10,000 megawatts in Quebec. There are already several wind farms in Quebec. Kuma Brakes had American customers and could develop international customers," says the mayor.

Daniel Côté was unable to speak with the company directly, and Dellner did not respond to our emails.

## An economic portfolio

As surprising as it may seem, Gaspé did not have a portfolio to present economic data to developers of all categories.

"We had some internal data that we highlighted when we met with investors. We went at it informally, without having a big marketing plan to

attract them," admits the mayor.

"We are going to develop a document to attract investors in general, whether in real estate, commercial, or industrial. The document is intended to be attractive, with socioeconomic data aimed at generating investment," explains the elected official. The firm LGP is responsible for putting together the document under an \$8,850 contract.

## Maritime ferry service

Developments regarding the maritime link between Gaspésie, Anticosti, and the North Shore will take place in the coming weeks as the promoter, the Port of Havre-Saint-Pierre, is set to provide an update. The port had commissioned economic studies to validate the feasibility of re-establishing a ferry service.

"We are getting closer to something more concrete. Every time we talk to politicians in Quebec City, there is a lot of openness. That wasn't always the case. Opening up Anticosti Island and developing tourism are big talking points," explains Mr. Côté.

The mayor also sees economic potential in supplying the island from Gaspé, much like Relais Nordik, a subsidiary of Groupe Desgagnés, does from Rimouski for the Lower North Shore.

"The economic studies are conclusive. More results will be revealed at an upcoming press conference organized by the project leader," says the mayor.

## Train

The mayor of Gaspé remains confident that the rail line will be rehabilitated to Gaspé, even though at the turn of 2026, nothing has transpired, and the provincial government has referred the file back for study in last March's budget.

"It would be unusual for the government to throw in the towel, especially since a lot of work has been done on the Port-Daniel-Gascons-Gaspé line. There is still work to be done on certain structures," notes the mayor.

"A fully restored railway must be viewed over a 100-year horizon. They are capable of investing in various transportation projects. If no work was done between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé, I would scratch my head. Currently, there is a lot of work being done. Are we going to leave bridges that have been renovated at a cost of tens of millions of dollars? It doesn't make sense," states Mr. Côté.

The mayor points out that the potential for rail development lies in Gaspé with the export of wind turbine blades.

"I think we're going to have a plan accordingly. MTQ engineers are at the drawing board re-evaluating costs. Maybe they'll present a plan B or C to the Minister of Transportation. We continue to believe in it," says Mr. Côté. "They've started the job. I think they'll finish it," he says.

In June 2023, the provincial government announced \$571 million for section 3. The bids came in \$150 million to \$200 million higher than estimated.

Discretion on the budget

Elected officials have begun work on defining the 2026 budget. However, there are too many unknowns to make a projection, given that the new council only took office on November 14. Bills still need to be entered, organizations need to be met with, and the three-year capital plan needs to be analyzed. The budget will be tabled on December 22.

No promise of a tax increase above the inflation target of 3.2%.

"I cannot guarantee that we will be at gross inflation. Over each four-year period, we have respected inflation. That is a commitment I can make for this term of office. As for the upcoming budget, I cannot commit to anything at this stage. There are still too many parameters to consider," says the elected representative.

# Prefects in Quebec City to defend the two Gaspé ridings

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – The five prefects of the Gaspé Peninsula are continuing their fight to maintain the two ridings of Bonaventure and Gaspé and traveled to Quebec City on December 4 to defend their case.

The Table des préfets wanted to make its voice heard by elected officials in the National Assembly.

"We met with representatives from all political parties to remind them of the law that was passed unanimously, that they wanted to maintain two ridings in the Gaspé Penin-

sula. We met with Minister (Jean-François) Roberge. We are holding more and more political meetings to hammer home the message, ensure that it is well understood, and that solutions are quickly put in place to secure these two ridings in the Gaspé Peninsula," said Mathieu Lapointe, president of the Table.

The principle of protecting the two ridings in the Gaspé Peninsula is well understood, which led to the adoption of Bill 59 on this issue in May 2024. However, the Court of Appeal invalidated the bill.

"It's how to get there that

we feel there might be some disagreement. We don't care about the means. What we want is for the two ridings in Gaspésie to be guaranteed. We want the will of parliamentarians to be respected and for everyone to reach a consensus," Mr. Lapointe continued.

The prefects spoke with Jean-François Roberge, the minister responsible for democratic institutions.

"The minister wants to wait for the outcome of the consultations. The commission could still review the map. He is also looking at the

legal option to see what he will do with the ruling. There are different scenarios being evaluated, but we feel that there is a willingness and openness to ensure that the Gaspé Peninsula keeps its voices in Quebec City," said Mr. Lapointe.

The prefects' visit to Quebec City was well received.

"We had many discussions in the corridors with members of all parties. They all support us. It's important for us to be present, to make ourselves heard, to make ourselves seen," notes Mr. Lapointe.

As soon as the revision of the electoral map was announced, the Table participated in consultations, particularly in the Gaspé Peninsula, as well as in the legal challenge.

"Now we are on the political track, with the legislature. This is well understood, and we will continue to be present. There is still work to be done. To enshrine the uniqueness of the Gaspé Peninsula, the Election Act must be amended. We will be there and continue to hammer home our message," concluded Mr. Lapointe.



*Best wishes from our team to you this holiday season!  
Please accept our most sincere appreciation  
and have a very Merry Christmas!*



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# Maria Hospital's technical facilities at capacity

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

**MARIA** – The electro-mechanical, structural, and civil components of Maria Hospital are unable to accommodate new loads, and more than \$50 million will need to be invested to build a new power plant.

The study on the components, commissioned in 2024 and whose conclusions were submitted on November 14, examined not only the emergency room and intensive care unit project, but also future developments anticipated in the next 15 years.

According to the needs assessment, the site will need to expand from 17,000 square metres to 30,000 square metres.

The study also notes that two-thirds of the site has reached the end of its useful life, as the first elements were built between 1950 and 1980.

“We need an expansion project. The objective of the study was to determine whether, if we undertake the expansion project, we can connect to the electro-mechanical components. The answer is no,” says Harris Cloutier, Director of Technical Services at the CISSS de la Gaspésie.

“We will have to build a power plant for the new emergency room and intensive care unit project. The minister also asked us to analyze new additions to Maria.

Now we have clear, concise, and accurate information,” Cloutier continues.

Next, the CISSS will have to prepare an opportunity study to calculate more precise costs.

“We are waiting for approval from the Council of Ministers to move on to the opportunity study stage. But we have already taken steps that will allow us to accelerate the project. That's what we're expecting in the upcoming announcements,” says Mr. Cloutier.

Nevertheless, as this is a project that could exceed \$50 million according to the CISSS presentation, the file will have to go through the Quebec Infrastructure Plan and the Société québécoise des infrastructures.

The budget will then be determined in the opportunity study.

The next steps will involve determining the configuration and location of the facility.

The emergency and intensive care project, which has been on the table since 2018, was granted “clinical relevance” status in the fall of 2022, meaning that the Ministry of Health recognized the need for it.

## Towards a new hospital

Once it was established that two-thirds of the facility no longer met building standards because it was over 50

years old, renovating the wings would require a major upgrade.

The Clinical and Real Estate Master Plan already showed in the spring of 2022 that the hospital, whose first wing was built in 1952, was no longer suited to modern practices, especially the emergency room, where the last renovations date back to 1972.

“This had been assessed at the time, and we recommended building a new hospital. Why? Renovating the existing building and maintaining the activities and shortcomings we have versus a new construction, we are fortunate to have a large site behind the hospital, so we recommended construction versus renovation,” says the director.

Installing new ventilation ducts, electromechanical components, and the necessary headroom to do so would complicate the renovation work.

In addition, advances in technology and the specialization of care require more space than was needed at the time.

The current hospital is still in good condition.

In 2021, a new hospital was estimated to cost nearly \$400 million.

The CISSS has not updated this data since then.

In June 2018, the CISSS passed a resolution to move forward with a new construction to replace the current fa-



Maria Hospital Centre.

Photo: Allen Doug Shaw

cility, a scenario that dates back even before the creation of the CISSS.

In the meantime, the modernization of the emergency room was prioritized.

The new emergency room and intensive care unit at the Gaspé hospital, inaugurated in 2021 in a new building connected to the existing facility, cost \$31.7 million.



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## 1,700 jobs lost in November

Nelson Sergerie

**GASPÉ** – The Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine region lost 1,700 jobs in November, according to Statistics Canada.

This information comes from the Labour Force Survey for the past month, released on December 5.

From one month to the next, the number of people employed fell from 38,000 to 36,300. All 1,700 jobs lost were full-time positions.

With this significant decrease, combined with a reduction in the labour force — that is, people who are working or looking for work — the unemployment rate rose from 5.7% in October to 7.4% in November.

By way of comparison, the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine region had 37,500 workers in November 2024. Of those, 30,600 were full-time workers, while the number of part-time workers remained stable at 5,700. A year ago, there were 5,100 part-time workers.

The number of unemployed rose by 600 to reach 2,900 last month. There were 3,000 unemployed in November 2024. The unemployment rate was also 7.4% a year ago.

Wishing you and yours much happiness during this festive season!

We thank you for your kind support.



Royal Canadian Legion, Branch #064  
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# Merry Christmas



The mayor, councillors and employees of the Municipality of New Carlisle wish everyone a Happy Holiday and a safe and prosperous New Year!

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# Pascan diverted to Grande-Rivière

NELSON SERGERIE

GRANDE-RIVIÈRE – Pascan planes have been diverted to the Rocher-Percé MRC airport in Grande-Rivière in recent weeks because de-icing services are no longer available at the Bonaventure airport.

This information comes from Grande-Rivière Mayor Gino Cyr.

“Passenger flights have landed here in Grande-Rivière. We are in the process of planning for the airport to determine its needs. The fact that Pascan is landing here is a good test to make sure we have everything in place to offer passenger flights in Grande-Rivière,” says the

mayor.

Strategic planning could include this element as work is being done to attract carriers.

“If Pascan wants to offer service here, it would be important to maintain good relations in order to eventually obtain recurring and permanent service in Grande-Rivière,” Mr. Cyr dreams.

The mayor makes no secret of his desire to see the airport expand. He points out that his town's development is based on the blue economy and, eventually, cargo shipping.

“We want to ensure that the environment is in place to support cargo development, and our goal is to have passenger flights directly from

Grande-Rivière. This would be an asset for the Rocher-Percé MRC,” says the elected official, who added that nine aircraft have landed in Grande-Rivière in recent weeks.

Mr. Cyr has not spoken with Pascan directly, as the matter falls under the jurisdiction of the MRC.

“As mayor, I find it interesting to see that we are able to welcome carriers to eventually offer passenger travel,” concludes the mayor.

Transport Minister Jonatan Julien, indicated on December 1 during his visit to Maria, that he was seeking a solution with the Avignon and Bonaventure MRCs and the Town of Bonaventure to bring



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

A Pascan aircraft at the airport in Grande-Rivière.

aircraft de-icing back to Bonaventure Airport.

The minister said that his department had made “a good decision” to revoke the \$550,000 contract for six de-icing operations. He said he was in favour of de-icing, agreeing that the fallback option at the Rocher-Percé airport in Grande-Rivière was not optimal.

As of December 11, bringing back aircraft de-icing at Bonaventure airport was close to an agreement, as six Town of Bonaventure firefighters were about to get trained to carry out those duties. The sharing of the cost was still not announced that day. De-icing the Quebec government ambulance aircraft will be the main goal of the firefighters.

# Gespeg hopes to soon have its economic reserve

NELSON SERGERIE  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – After 50 years of efforts, the Micmac First Nation of Gespeg believes it has never been closer to achieving its goal of obtaining its economic reserve. Community leaders say the sense of momentum is stronger than ever.

Chief Céline Cassivi met with Indigenous Services Canada Minister, Mandy Gull-Masty, during her visit to Gaspé on November 11.

“We have never been as close as we are today. Our file is under review in Ottawa. The minister did not want to comment. We have completed all the necessary steps. We were hoping for an answer in 2025 because it has been 50 years since a reserve was granted in Quebec. It would be a great year to make an announcement,” says the chief.

Recognized since 1972, the Nation saw its initial request rejected in the mid-1970s. After renewed efforts in the 1990s, the process resumed in 2020. A new application was filed in 2024.

“This is a priority issue for Gespeg. It's time to obtain our economic reserve status so we can develop further and provide jobs for our members,” says Ms. Cassivi.

For the Nation, this recognition would mean more support from the federal government.

“We have access to seven programs and would be entitled to many more—26 pro-



Gespeg Chief  
Céline Cassivi.

Photo: Nelson Sergerie

grams, I believe. That would mean more funding and more services for our members,” notes Ms. Cassivi.

Gespeg's request targets three lots in the area surrounding the Nation's administrative centre.

The Town of Gaspé has already offered its support, continuing the collaboration established in 2017 between the municipal council and the Nation Council. The Côte-de-Gaspé MRC has also given a favourable opinion to the federal government.

During his visit to Gaspé in August, Quebec Minister of Relations with First Nations, Ian Lafrenière, indicated that he was partnering with Gespeg and working with the federal government to advance the file.

Gespeg is focusing on socioeconomic development, particularly the construction of social infrastructure and diversifying economic activities to strengthen long-term stability for future generations.

Receiving the minister was a historic moment.

“I can't even tell you the last time a federal minister visited Gespeg. We didn't miss the opportunity to show her around our offices. It was an honour for us to welcome her,” says Ms. Cassivi.

Gespeg is always overlooked by ministers, who usually visit Listuguj or Gespegagiag.

“Gespeg is now taking its place. That is my vision. I want to establish it for Gespeg. I want to be more visible and take the place that we have not always taken,” Ms. Cassivi continues.

## Water shortage continues

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ – The months go by and look the same, and November was no exception, with the 11th month of the year showing another precipitation deficit.

This is shown by data from Environment Canada.

There was 47 millimetres of rain and 26.9 centimetres of snow, for a total water equivalent of 71.3 millimetres, just 68% of the normal 105 millimetres.

“In November, most regions received precipitation generally close to normal. However, while Baie-des-Chaleurs and Gaspé experienced rather dry conditions, areas south of the St. Lawrence Valley, in the eastern Lower North Shore and near James Bay, on the other hand, recorded above-normal precipitation,” the federal agency summarizes in its monthly report.

As for snow, the 26.9 centimetres received is within the normal range of 32 centimetres for November.

The first significant snowfall came on November 16, with 7.8 centimetres, which remains within the normal range.

Snow arrived later in the region than elsewhere in Quebec, according to Environment Canada.

Between June and October, 265 millimetres of rain fell, two-thirds of the normal 400 millimetres for the period.

The average monthly temperature reached 0.9 degrees, compared to the normal 0.2 degrees.



# SPEC direction cut losses in half in 2024-2025

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – Seacoast Publications Inc., the non-profit organization managing the Gaspé SPEC, declares a deficit of \$47,629 for the year that ended on March 31, 2025. While the amount is significant, it represents a clear improvement compared to 2023-2024, marked by a deficit of \$93,537, or 2022-2023, when the deficit reached \$85,637.

The difference between 2024-2025 and 2023-2024 is explained by several factors, an employment grant from Emploi Québec, an internship program from Community, and an improvement in advertising revenue.

Revenues totalled \$329,467 in 2024-2025, compared to \$289,310 the prior year, for a difference of \$40,157. Expenses were cut from \$382,847 in 2023-2024 to \$377,096 last year, for a difference of \$5,751. The cut is essentially explained by reductions in postage fees, since



Photo: Gilles Gagne

*The annual general meeting was held during a power failure, as shown here by Louis and Elaine Sexton, who had to use a flashlight to read their presentations.*

the SPEC is now published bi-weekly, as well as reductions in salaries and benefits.

During the December 10 annual general meeting, Louis Sexton, who prepares Seacoast Publication financial statements, took some time to

talk about the much brighter situation of the newspaper since the end of March.

“A lot of work was done by the staff to get transition grants. The paper’s position was not a good one before, to be honest. The fact that we

made a move for a bi-weekly instead of a weekly helped. The quality of the paper has improved. It didn’t affect the income and the expenses were cut. For the first eight months of the current financial year, the in-house advertising stands at \$51,000 compared to \$10,000 last year. Essentially, it is the advertising that is driving the improvement of the paper. As a result, the net revenues are \$38,000 since the end of March, instead of minus \$24,000 last year at the same time,” explained Mr. Sexton.

The work of Emily Hocquard, who was hired at the beginning of the current fiscal year to sell advertising, was praised by SPEC board members and the annual general meeting attendees.

“I thank the previous sales people, who have built a loyal clientele. They walked so that I can run,” she humbly said.

In her report, board president Elaine Sexton also thanked the other employees Holly Smith and Jillian

O’Connell, who “went above and beyond in their respective roles and truly worked together as a team.” She also thanked the stringers, the volunteers and the merchants for their support.

Office manager Holly Smith notably praised the work of her colleague Jillian O’Connell, project coordinator for SPEC’s 50th anniversary. “She has been working hard to ensure a year-long celebration of this important milestone.”

SPEC will keep celebrating its 50th anniversary over a fair part of 2026.

The annual meeting led to the nomination of two new board members, Marjorie Lepage, a 27-year-old lawyer practicing her profession in New Carlisle, and Gaspé’s Cheryl Henry Leggo, an active member of the community.

The terms of Elaine Sexton and Patricia Sainte-Croix-Annett had come to an end, but they both accepted a renewal during the meeting.

*Merry Christmas*

*Thank you to all our customers for your loyal patronage!*

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# Logements HAN too greedy for Chandler

NELSON SERGERIE

CHANDLER – The mayor of Chandler says that HAN Housing is asking for too many concessions to set up in his town. Negotiations are underway to find common ground.

“What they asked us for initially was a piece of land. We moved quickly. We had to relocate our soccer field at a cost of \$100,000. Now they're asking us for an exemption from municipal taxes and services. I don't like this situation. It wasn't asked for initially,” says Gilles Daraïche.

According to the elected official, these new requests can be explained by the tightening of government subsidies in a context of tight finances.

“The availability of subsidies is not what it used to be. Chandler will not benefit from the assistance given to other municipalities. That doesn't suit us. We are negotiating as low as possible,” says the

mayor.

Discussions are ongoing between the two parties.

“It's part of the negotiations. We're trying to give as little as possible to get this great project,” says the elected official. An initial phase of four eight-unit complexes is planned for a \$10 million investment on Micmacs Street. Logements HAN had hoped to begin preparatory work before the holidays.

## Budget

The budget is currently being prepared, and without revealing the broad outlines of the 2026 document, the mayor is making a commitment.

“Every year, we always try to ensure that taxpayers are affected as little as possible,” says the mayor.

However, the cost of waste collection will increase from \$335 to \$350.

“But there will be incentives for people who sort their waste

properly. This will be announced,” he says.

The MRC's share will also be increased. The mayor indicates that the calculations have been made so that the increase is in line with the inflation rate at most.

## Council meetings will be held on Tuesdays

Previously held on the first Monday of the month, with some exceptions, municipal council meetings will now be held on Tuesdays.

There are several reasons for this change.

“We used to hold our working meeting on the Wednesday before the following Monday's meeting. On Wednesday, we couldn't finalize our meeting because there were things coming in on Thursday, Friday, and Monday. We would arrive at the meeting and have to gather earlier to go over the agenda, which took a long time,” ex-

plains the mayor.

The time between the plenary session on Monday and the meeting on Tuesday will thus be shorter.

“We will be better prepared,” says the mayor.

## A lineup of shows

The first effects of the Town of Chandler's takeover of the concert hall are becoming apparent. Sapinart, which had managed the hall for 40 years, stepped down due to a lack of succession. The Town's Culture Department seized the opportunity.

On December 18, Johnny Arsenault and his orchestra will kick off the new season, followed by a tribute to Pink Floyd on January 3.

“I ask the public to come out. That's what will ensure that there will be more,” says Mr. Daraïche.

Adding Chandler to the circuit of artists who stop in New



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

## Mayor Gilles Daraïche

Richmond and Gaspé could help reduce the cost of shows for the three venues.

“We are in the process of rebuilding ties with agencies. We will be asking them to have artists stop in Chandler. Every time we add a stop, the prices are better,” says Mr. Daraïche. More shows could be added during the winter.

## Organizations hold memorial ceremony to pay tribute to École polytechnique mass femicide

Gilles Gagné

CARLETON – Half-a-dozen organizations based in the Baie-des-Chaleurs region held a memorial vigil on Saturday, December 6, at 4:30 p.m. in front of Carleton's Quai des Arts to commemorate the slaying of 14 women studying engineering at Montreal's École polytechnique, exactly 36 years earlier.

The vigil was organized to remind everyone that violence against women concerns everybody and to foster solidarity in the fight against this violence. Thirty-six years ago, the antifeminist attack at Polytechnique took place. Fourteen women were killed for the simple reason that they were women.

Spokespersons from CALACS La Bôme Gaspésie, a sexual assault support and prevention centre, women groups Centr'Elles and Femmes en mouvement, l'Émergence, the centre helping women and children victims of violence, the CAVAC of the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands, which provide support to the victims of criminal acts presented brief speeches.

They reminded the attendees that this violence against women is still present today, as shown this year, when sixteen women were victims of femicide in Quebec. It is important to underline the memory of all victims of femicide and to fight to ensure that no more are killed, they also said. Feminist demands, hopes, and grievances were also presented during the short ceremony.

The speeches were followed by a minute of silence in tribute to the victims of femicide. Soup, hot drinks, and snacks were served following the ceremony, so that participants could express themselves.

The vigil was organized in partnership with the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, Carleton campus, and the Source alimentaire Bonavignon, the food bank based in Maria.

Christelle Parker, of CALACS la Bôme Gaspésie, reminds people that femicides are part of a broader spectrum of violence against women, including sexual, psychological, and domestic violence, as well as coercive control. If someone is worried about themselves or a loved one, several resources are available in the area, she insists, mentioning L'Émergence (1-866-759-3411 or text-messages (418) 392-1984), CALACS La Bôme Gaspésie (418 364-2424), Centr'Elles, the Avignon MRC women's action committee (418 364-3157), Femmes en Mouvement (418 534-4345), LGBT + Baie-des-Chaleurs (581 886-9359) and Listuguj Haven House (418 788-5544).





Photo Credit: Sara Gagnon



SOCIÉTÉ  
DU CHEMIN DE FER  
DE LA GASPÉSIE

The Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie would like to inform residents of the Baie-des-Chaleurs region that rail traffic will soon be active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, between New Richmond and Port-Daniel.

Trains will also continue to operate between Matapédia and New Richmond.

**Please stay alert at railway level crossings, obey all signage, and avoid trespassing railway property at all times.**

**These precautions are essential for your safety and the safety of your loved ones.  
Thank you and be careful.**

## 1991, a recession year with some room for hope

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – The beginning of the 1990s was particularly challenging, as Gaspésians were split between the promise of project development stemming from the 1988-1989 Socio-Economic Forum, and the emergence of a recession. The federal government delivered several direct blows to the region's infrastructure and social tools, including the railway, CBC and the income tax exemption for remote areas.

**Vol 17. No 1  
January 8, 1991**

- Issue 1, dated January 8, SPEC headlines with “Quebec’s proposed medical reforms stress getting more doctors to outlying regions”, a feature written by Glen Wannamaker, of the Mainland Press at the time. We learn that the CLSCs of the Gaspé Peninsula were operating with only 38% of the doctors they need. Inside, New Carlisle author, sculptor and conservation activist Jean-Paul Dubé appears as one of the first five recipients of an award recognized by Fisheries and Oceans Canada acknowledging outstanding achievements in the field of recreational fisheries. Leroy Leggo reports on the December sinkings of two fishing boats, Rivière-au-Renard-based Bout de ligne, which took three lives, and the Magdalen Islands’ Nadine, which took nine lives. He wraps up a disastrous season.

**Vol 17. No 2  
January 15, 1991**

- In issue 2, dated January 15, “Royal Rifle POWs join 45th Pilgrimage to Hong Kong”, an Irene Dallain report pertaining to the Hong Kong war veterans, including Gaspésians Bob Olscamp and Paul Dallain, who went back to where they were held prisoner between 1941 and 1945. “Gaspesia Company: 3 months to buckle up” (reduce costs), “Fisheries act offences in the Gaspé Peninsula”, “Money for community organizations”, “Gaspé’s second city flourishes on the ice” and “Helicopter to

arrive in February” for Chic-Choc skiers also make page 1.

**Vol 17. No 3  
January 22, 1991**

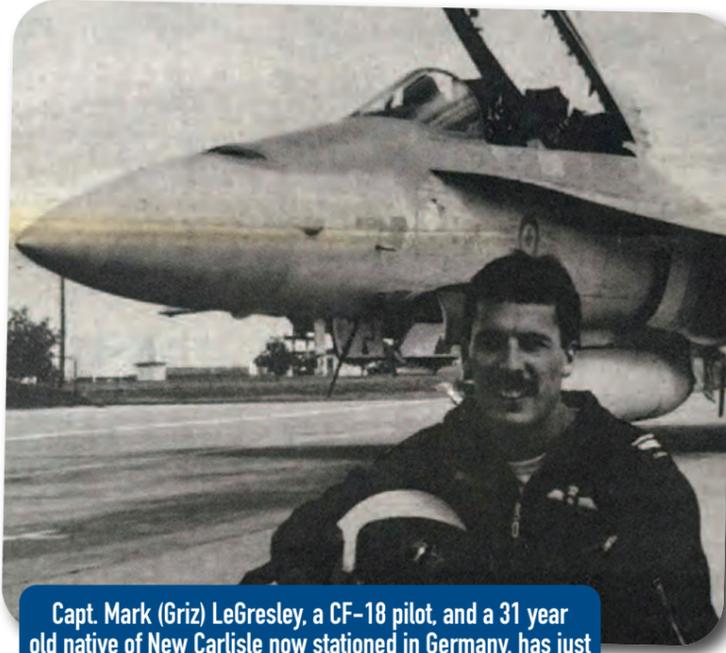
- “Our boys and girls in the Gulf”, featuring captain Mark Legresley of New Carlisle, reports on the participation of Gaspésians in 1991’s Persian Gulf War. Harvey Flowers and Jimmy Cahill were also in that area, as mentioned in issue 3, dated January 22. “Wakeham/York Festival committee holds first meeting of the year”, “Douglastown residents fight for cable hook-up” and “No action on VIA cutbacks” also make the front-page. In VIA’s story, Chandler mayor Jean Paquin says discouragement has taken hold among Gaspésians over the state of passenger train services.

**Vol 17. No 4  
January 29, 1991**

- “Hi Ho! Hi Ho! It’s off to war they go”, reports that both Gaspé Peninsula Members of Parliament offered their services to the Canadian Armed Forces, Darryl Gray in communications and Charles-Eugène Marin as a psychiatrist. Minister Marc-Yvan “Côté unveils new health law”, “Provincial Police pleased” with fewer car accidents, “New Richmond Mill cuts purchases from woodlot owners” and “Stone Consolidated: Mum’s the word”, complete page 1 titles of issue 4, dated January 29.

**Vol 17. No 5  
February 5, 1991**

- Two titles, “What does Quebec want?” and “CASA slams Allaire commission report” are tied to the recent commission pertaining to Quebec’s future in Canada. Commissioned by premier Robert Bourassa, the report calls for decentralization. “Not quite the million for Pabos Mills” (\$911,000 for the development of the Bourg de Pabos’ archaeological site), “CLSC Malauze boss forced to resign” and “Quebec makes final offer”, which also pertains to the Allaire Commission, complete page 1 titles of issue 5, dated



Capt. Mark (Griz) LeGresley, a CF-18 pilot, and a 31 year old native of New Carlisle now stationed in Germany, has just returned from a stint in Qatar.

February 5.

**Vol 17. No 6  
February 12, 1991**

- “Axe falls on Chandler/Gaspé train” and “Strike inevitable at mill”, namely Stone Consolidated in New Richmond, headline issue 6, dated February 12. The National Transportation Agency grants CN permission to abandon that portion of the region’s railway. Rural Dignity’s Cynthia Patterson reacts: “This will be like gangrene: once we lose part of it, we’ll lose it all”. CN must maintain the line until February 1992.

**Vol 17. No 7  
February 19, 1991**

- “Fun Fun Fun in winter-time”, a picture and caption of skiers at Pin rouge”, and “MLCP meets the public over Hall river plans”, as the ministry of hunting and fishing evaluated whether the Bonaventure River’s affluent qualifies as a salmon river, headline issue 7, dated February 19. “Allaire report just a stalling tactic: sovereigntist”, “Gaspé applies to host ’93 Quebec Summer Games”, “RSBG faces art course dilemma”, “Two new exhibitions at Gaspé Museum” and “Channel Island Update” also make page 1.

**Vol 17. No 8  
February 26, 1991**

- Issue 8, released on February 26, features “Meals-on-

wheels come to Douglastown”, “Negotiations a success” to avoid a strike at New Richmond’s Stone Consolidated mill, and “Student doctors for Chandler”, as the hospital is officially recognized as a teaching institution by the Quebec Federation of Doctors.

**Vol 17. No 9  
March 5, 1991**

- Issue 9, dated March 5 headlines with “Bert Dimock shuts down” as owner Alain Mercier, files for bankruptcy. The car dealership is no longer owned by the Dimock family. The looming recession taints another title, “Chandler: no reason for champagne”, as the mill loses money due to unreliable equipment acquired by Abitibi-Price, which the company admits. “Gaspé: new tax evaluations for residents”, “Wanted: job to pay for driving course”, “Chandler terminus unlikely for VIA trains”, “Local men want to buy CN line”, the men being Brian Legresley and James Almond, and “Almost 7 million for health care centres” also make page 1.

**Vol 17. No 10  
March 12, 1991**

- “Bonaventure, ZEC buy section of river” from Stone Consolidated, at the mouth of Bonaventure river, and “Community papers get three-month break” on postal rates, make the headlines of issue 10, dated March 12. “Fish farming – Norwegian style”, a Leroy

Leggo report, “Postal hikes may kill many weekly papers” and “Coyotes devastating deer population” also make page 1.

**Vol 17. No 11  
March 19, 1991**

- Issue 11, dated March 19, headlines with “Housing for elderly accepted in Barachois, rejected in Cross Point” and “Overproduction costs jobs” temporarily at New Richmond mill, as inventories accumulate, due to the recession. “Learning about drama” at Bonaventure Polyvalent also makes page 1, as students follow workshops.

**Vol 17. No 12  
March 26, 1991**

- “Citizen’s Forum on Canada’s future visits Gaspé” covers most of the front page of issue 12, dated March 26. Also called the Spicer Commission, the group heard anglophones worried about the lack of people defending Canada. “Mayors strongly denounce Ryan’s plan” because it implies major tax increases, “Murdochville school keeps grade 9 for now”, “Fishermen vote to increase lobster measure”, “Rotary Club gives to community groups”, “Barachois Legion hands out bur-saries” and “Douglastown celebrates St. Pat’s Day” also appear on page 1.

**Vol 17. No 13  
April 2, 1991**

- In issue 13, dated April 2, readers see New Carlisle’s “Centre d’accueil not discriminating, director says”, as Arthur Bélanger explains that every potential resident must go through the preadmission committee. “Centre d’accueil extension once again tabled”, “Lobby group (Transport 2000) appeals decision on CN rail abandonment” “Joan Dow named New Richmond citizen of the year”, “Drop in student population means financial loss for RSBG” and “Cancer society fundraiser kicks off in Carleton” are the other page 1 titles.

From Page 17

**Vol 17, No 14**  
April 9, 1991

- “CN fights back” and “Exam results give RSBG good standing” headline issue 14, dated April 9. In court, CN alleges that the firm was not forced to take the environmental impact of its Chandler-Gaspé line abandonment into account. As for RSBG, the school board placed 8th out of 36 boards serving anglophones.

**Vol 17, No 15**  
April 16, 1991

- Issue 15, dated April 16, shows “Career day at Gesgapegiag” and “Health care reform to benefit anglos, MNA (Russell Williams) says”, make the headlines. “New Richmond concert hall almost finished”, “Police inquiry probes police conduct following (1989) fatal crash”, Henri Mitchell Sr. being the victim, “New Carlisle student (Nathalie Kerr) off to Europe”, “Turban makes councillor sikh!”, New Richmond “Town offers subsidies, tax breaks for new homeowners” and “New Carlisle council will probe emergency snow clearing issue” following an ambulance stuck in snow on Green street, also make page 1.

**Vol 17, No 16**  
April 23, 1991

- “MPs claim they can save CN, VIA trains in the Gaspé” and “Gaspé: The Chosen City” for the 1993 Quebec Summer Games, headline issue 16, dated April 23. The MPs are Bonaventure’s Darryl Gray and André Plourde, of Rivière-du-Loup, who can “only make suggestions to the

cabinet.”

**Vol 17, No 17**  
April 30, 1991

- “Water floods basement, homeowner blames government” in New Carlisle, as Hugh Campbell says the Transport Department’s drain causes water to rise on his property, headlines issue 17, dated April 30. “Bodies recovered after Gaspé shipwreck”, four bodies of seamen recovered 10 kilometres off Percé following the sinking of the tug Patricia B. McAllister is another headline. “International resort: something for everyone” in the Chic-Choc mountains, and “Former CN president (Maurice Leclair) says that decision to abandon tracks was short-sighted”, as a government-appointed commission wants review of rail abandonment, also made the front-page.

**Vol 17, No 18**  
May 7, 1991

- “Lobster season in full swing”, despite a low price of \$1.75 a pound, and “New budget will encourage families, Levesque says” headline issue 18, dated May 7. “Wakeham-York Homecoming Festival captures award”, handed out by the Caisse Populaire, for its economic impact, “Market dictates temporary closure at Gaspesia” mill and “Transport 2000 picks up fight to keep trains” also make the front-page. The Gaspesia mill production halt will total seven weeks from May to October.

**Vol 17, No 19**  
May 14, 1991

- “Molson/O’Keefe expands operations in Bonaventure, cuts in Chandler”, “J.A. Campbell new CASA president” and “Appeal granted in



Students pick up a wide variety of brochures which will help them decide their careers.

**Vol. 17, No. 15**

rail abandonment”, which is in fact permission to appeal, make the main titles of issue 19, dated May 14. “MRC opens door to developer on Cascapedia River” and “Black Cape street to remain unfinished, council says”, about Normandeau street. Inside, Gérard Poirier is still running his “Growing up in New Carlisle” articles.

**Vol 17, No 20**  
May 21, 1991

- Stéphane Giroux headlines with “Killer road: 132 is province’s most dangerous” in issue 20, dated May 21. A study identifies the risk of dying between Maria and Matapedia as three times higher than anywhere in Quebec. “RSBG finances under review”, “Visually handicapped author in cross-Canada walk”, “NRHS hosts Granby students”, “Learning about train safety” and “Anse-à-Brillant: goats galore” complete page one’s titles. The author is Ken McColm, who has strong roots in New Richmond and Grand Cascapedia.

**Vol 17, No 21**  
May 28, 1991

- “Strength in numbers” makes a big part of the front-page of issue 21, dated May

28, as it reports on the Ralliement gaspésien et madelinot, a May 26 event attended by 6,000 people in Chandler, where they voiced their discontent with government neglect of the region. “Thieves strike Gaspé Polyvalent”, New Carlisle’s “Environment-friendly guides”, “Gaspé Cegep holds awards ceremony”, “More donations sought for concert hall” and “Malbay Festival underway” also make page 1.

**Vol 17, No 22**  
June 4, 1991

- “Waiting game over: St. Jules/Cascapedia bridge under construction” and Benoit Bouchard, federal “Minister announces development corporation”, headline issue 22, dated June 4. New Carlisle’s “Centre d’accueil expansion plan cancelled”, “Forest fires rage near Gaspé” and “Unprecedented show of force” in Chandler also qualify for the front-page. The show of force features a deeper report on the May 26 event, Ralliement gaspésien et madelinot.

**Vol 17, No 23**  
June 11, 1991

- “Poll shows Bloc Québécois ahead in Gaspé, Bonaventure” and “RSBG

staff takes 10% pay cut” headline issue 23, dated June 11. “Cascapedia mayor (Allister Willett) wants to build salmon museum” and “Percé concerned with maintaining heritage”, notably through protecting beautiful buildings, also make page 1 titles.

**Vol 17, No 24**  
June 18, 1991

- In issue 24, dated June 18, readers see “Government OKs Centre d’accueil conversion” to house ten chronic care patients, barely a month after its administration withdrew from such a project. “Rural Dignity suspicious of Gaspesian agency” recently announced by the federal government because of infrastructure cuts, “Crime wave continues in Gaspé”, “Sending the message straight to Ottawa”, as BPS students, Allen Richards among them, will meet with prime minister, “Gaspé students honoured”, “Regional business fund ready” and “Cook jumps off Soviet ship”, but is still missing, also make the front-page.

**Vol 17, No 25**  
June 25, 1991

- “Is Pin rouge in the red? Administrator denies closing rumours” makes the only headline of issue 25, dated June 25. Pin rouge has not paid its Hydro Québec bill, and the Quebec government admits that owner, hotel magnate Raymond Malenfant, has not paid its share of the \$6 million project. “Gerard D. Levesque, 35 years and still counting”, “Stone Consolidated inaugurates pollution control device” and MEQ bails out RSBG for now”, MEQ being Quebec’s ministry

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From Page 18

of Education, also make page 1.

**Vol 17. No 26  
July 2, 1991**

- “Historical Societies meet in Gaspé”, with a program including lectures by historians Ken Annett and David McDougall, and “Wood producers taking a green turn” through protecting regeneration, headline issue 26, dated July 2. A picture and caption combination shows Kim Legros’ Valley side stables in Shigawake.

**Vol 17. No 27  
July 9, 1991**

- “Major development shaping up” in Port Daniel is likely the first reference of a cement production plant in SPEC pages, in issue 27, July 9. Two promoters want to exploit McInnis Cove’s limestone, Ressources minérales Gaspésie and SGA International. “Miguasha/Dalhousie faces shutdown, company sends conflicting signals” as it needs a \$100,000 loan from New Brunswick to pay ship repairs, “Stanley House to remain closed” and “Chandler celebrations: reflection of our history” make the front-page, along with pictures showing the Canada Day celebrations, with additional material inside coverage.

**Vol 17. No 28  
July 16, 1991**

- “Puppies rescued by young ‘pups’” and “Matapedia School final closing” headline issue 28, dated July 16. Eight students from grades 1, 2 and 3 remained at Matapedia Intermediate; they will move to Escuminac School in September. The rescue operation happened in Gesgapegiag. “Gaspé environment group receives grant”, a \$15,000 sum to the Committee for the protection of Health and the Environment of Gaspé, and “The O’Hara cemetery: did you know” also make the front page.

**Vol 17. No 29  
July 23, 1991**

- “Carroll Baker wows them at the festival” in Wakeham/York, and Baie-des-Chaleurs “Rally fun” take much of the space in issue 29, dated July 23. In “OCQ puts an end to paint project”, readers learn that Quebec’s Office of Construction blocks Douglstown’s Challenge 91, a project having a student repaint the Church’s trims, windows and doors.

**Vol 17. No 30  
July 30, 1991**

- “Forillon overflowed with tourists”, and “Cement factory will have to wait” headline the front-page of issue 30, dated July 30. “Man charged after axe assault” in Hopetown, “Fitzpatrick will run for mayor” in Gaspé, “Dalhousie/Miguasha ferry remains open”, “Wakeham/York Festival: another big splash” and New Carlisle “Billboard welcomes visitors” complete page 1 titles. The cement plant article mentions that SGA International promoter Réjean Aucoin doesn’t have the means for his ambitions.

**Vol 17. No 31  
August 6, 1991**

- “Pollution keeps Carleton beach closed, Town suffers serious drop in tourism” makes the headline of issue 31, August 6. “Malbay Festival, a huge success”, “New Richmond road serves as testing ground for Hydro” regarding herbicide use and “RSBG wants to cut crosswalk guard” complete the front-page titles.

**Vol 17. No 32  
August 13, 1991**

- In issue 32, dated August 13, readers see “Cement project very much alive, mayor says”. Robert McInnis points out that other important investors are interested in McInnis’ Cove’s limestone. “RSBG defends crosswalk guard decision”, “New Richmond and Cowansville: a historical twinning”, “Percé: 100 and raring to go”, the century-old citizen being Elizabeth



**“Puppies rescued by young pups”**  
Pictured above are Thomas Condo, Francis Gideon and Steven Gideon.

Tardif, “Douglstown: gas at last”, as young entrepreneur Jean-Guy Thibault opens gas station, and “New Carlisle: town water safe for drinking” complete page 1 titles.

**Vol 17. No 33  
August 20, 1991**

- Issue 33, dated August 20, features main titles “PC convention had few Bonaventure (riding) delegates”, only two, including Member of Parliament Darryl Gray, and Cascapedia St.-Jules’ “Bridges under construction”, since August 10.. Texas “Vacationing family gets costly hospital bill” of \$900 plus \$400 in entry fees, for a stop at Gaspé’s Hôtel-Dieu for a feverish 18-month-old girl. “Stormin Norman takes on Restigouche” covers the fishing trip of American commander Norman Schwarkopf on the salmon river. Inside, a short article features hockey legend Maurice Richard during his stop at the Acadian Museum.

**Vol 17. No 34  
August 27, 1991**

- Written by Gordon Drody, “Sharks find their way into nets” tells the story of a Gaspé fisherman who pulled an eight-and-a-half-foot long shark off Sandy Beach. “Hurricane Bob’s messy legacy”, a storm that caused extensive damage all over the Gaspé, Paul Almond’s movie “(The) Dance goes on” to premiere in New Richmond”, “New Richmond/Cowansville: a friendship deal” and “Who’s VE2FGS?”, featuring New Carlisle and Bonaventure am-

ateur radio enthusiasts Ray Smollett and Art MacPherson, complete page 1 titles of issue 34, dated August 27.

**Vol 17. No 35  
September 3, 1991**

- “Jean Chrétien visits the Gaspé” and “Movie war brewing between promoters”, namely New Richmond concert hall and Bonaventure drive-in owner Louis Roy, headline issue 35, dated September 3. “Bus driver vs. parents: trouble ahead” (the New Carlisle bus driver wants the children to always stay quiet) and “Greenpeace, EVP fight chemical spraying” in public forest make other front-page titles.

**Vol 17. No 36  
September 10, 1991**

- Shigawake stars in issue 36, dated September 10, as

SPEC provides ample coverage of Paul Almond’s ‘The Dance goes on’ premiere. The New Richmond concert hall was packed. “Suspicion growing around cement factory ‘promoter’” Réjean Aucoin, who is broke. “RSBG saved from bankruptcy”, with the Ministry of Education’s help, says director Shirley Duncan, who used the word “broke”, “Crosswalk guard back on duty” and “Postal terrorists”, a Stéphane Giroux commentary, fill the rest of page 1.

**Vol 17. No 37  
September 17, 1991**

- “Moving day was a traffic stopper” features over three-quarters of page 1 Brown house’s movement to a new Loyalist Village location, in issue 37, dated September 17. Port Daniel’s 11 “Poachers convicted” following the 1990 bust, “Water, sewage and roadwork construction announced” for Port Daniel, “CAP program modified” as fishermen are allowed to catch under-exploited species, and municipal “Elections set for November 3rd” also appear on page 1.

**Vol 17. No 38  
September 24, 1991**

- New Carlisle’s “Caisse Populaire set to open this winter” headlines issue 38, September 24. The paper runs a “Birds on a wire” picture and caption to underscore the arrival of the fall. “Art co-op

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celebrates 20th anniversary” in New Richmond, “Neighbourhood watch substantially cuts crime rate” in Gesgapegiag and “Poachers show little concern for local economy” complete page 1 titles.

**Vol 17. No 39  
October 1, 1991**

- “Education minister announces reform plan”, notably trying to identify early potential drop-outs, and “Dome car on a doomed line” make the headlines of issue 39, dated October 1. VIA Rail and CN made a successful attempt to pass in Port Daniel’s tunnel with a dome car, six months before the potential closure of the Chandler-Gaspé line. “Task force on English education will stop in the Gaspé”, “Stone Consolid lays off 22” workers as recession hits, and Gérard Poirier’s “Lobsters and clams” column complete page 1 titles.

**Vol 17. No 40  
October 8, 1991**

- “Now, just a minute, my friend”, a picture-caption combo taken during the New Carlisle Optimist Club go-cart race, fills most of the front-page of issue 40, dated October 8. “VIA may be saved”, the Gaspé service that is, “Breast cancer more prevalent in the Gaspé”, “Bishop Stewart’s visit to the Gaspé”, a Ken Annett piece, and “Vandals strike again” at Moulin Rouge campground, complete the front-page titles.

**Vol 17. No 41  
October 15, 1991**

- “To live and die in New Carlisle – social services can’t assist helpless man” who lives in a 6-by-12 foot homemade trailer without heat, electricity and running water, appears in issue 41, dated October 15, reported by Stéphane Giroux. “PBS vs ABC”, an article on Gaspé cable subscribers being able to choose between the two channels, cement plant pro-

ducer Réjean “Aucoin arrested”, following a Montreal Police warrant because he allegedly uttered death threats, and “Lucien Bouchard preaches Quebec’s independence” complete the front-page titles.

**Vol 17. No 42  
October 22, 1991**

- Issue 42, dated October 22, emphasizes the coming municipal elections, through “Councils back by acclamation” and “Elections set in Hopetown, Paspebiac, Chandler, Percé and Gaspé”. Also, “Ken Duguay (is) re-elected by acclamation” in Shigawake. There is more coverage inside. “Hallowe’en scarecrows” features New Carlisle Doogie Carter. “Special education reaches dramatic proportions in the Gaspé” refers to a page 2 article on the task force on English education. There is a feature about La Boutique’s 20th anniversary on page 17.

**Vol 17. No 43  
October 29, 1991**

- “A Gaspé round-up: Dumaresq, Fitzpatrick and Caron facing off” provides details about the Gaspé elections, just like “Hopetown: Four candidates in council race”, in issue 43, October 29. “Consider it done” shows the sod-turning ceremony for the construction of New Richmond’s senior citizen’s home, endowed with 20 units. “Gesgapegiag housing project gets federal \$” and “Commandair takes off” between Bathurst and Bonaventure airports complete page 1 titles.

**Vol 17. No 44  
November 5, 1991**

- “Dumaresq re-elected in Gaspé – Doris Aubert new Percé mayor” covers most of the front-page of issue 44, dated November 5. “Campbell store closes its doors” in Grand Cascapedia after 100 years, “Port Daniel: poacher (Alain Duguay) gets stiff sentence” of nine months in prison, “Government has to follow task force’s recommendations – Gretta Chambers” also make the front page.

**Vol 17. No 45  
November 12, 1991**

- “More layoffs at paper mills, 45 cut at Stone Consolidated, 50 at Gaspesia in Chandler” provides a regional indication of the 1991 recession effects, in issue 45, dated November 12. Both mills respectively had 400 and 625 employees before the cuts. “The Port Daniel-PEI connections”, by Ken Annett, “Movie house will wait” in New Carlisle and “Environmental group fears for its future”, namely the Conseil régional de l’environnement de l’est du Québec”, make the other page 1 titles.

**Vol 17. No 46  
November 19, 1991**

- “Remembering on the Eleventh Hour” in Port Daniel and “Hundreds turn out on Remembrance Day” in New Carlisle make the front-page of issue 46, dated November 19. “Pin rouge is re-opening”, Escuminac’s “Recounts take victory away” in ward 3, and “Waiting for a miracle” as New Carlisle’s Ausburn Astles can’t get affordable prescription for a drug alleviating his kidney

failure, complete page 1 titles.

**Vol 17. No 47  
November 26, 1991**

- “Murdochville’s Intimate School”, instead of Intermediate, presents a feature of the mining town’s English school, attended by 15 students. In 1974, there were 299. “Port Daniel no longer served by Paspebiac CLSC”, “Nez Rouge gearing up for after-parties” and “New Richmond ends the year in the red” complete the front-page of issue 47, November 26. Inside, Ausburn Astles gets his kidney medication.

**Vol 17. No 48  
December 3, 1991**

- The news awaited by most Gaspésians, “VIA will maintain its service in the Gaspé”, headlines issue 48, dated December 3. Transport minister Jean Corbeil thus reverses National Transportation Agency’s verdict. He affirms that the Montreal-Gaspé train is an element of Canada’s rail system that must be maintained. “Campbellton mayor (Bruce MacIntosh) denounces Quebec workers in N.B.” and gets flak across the

board, notably because Gaspésians buy in New Brunswick businesses. “Le Cabestan (readaptation centre) may cut services in English” and “Shelter for women has a successful year” in Gaspé, complete page 1.

**Vol 17. No 49  
December 10, 1991**

- “Government to investigate Mgr. Ross Hospital”, following complaints of irregularities, almost entirely covers the first-page of issue 49, dated December 10. “Campbellton mayor stands by his declaration”, “Malbay Fest distributes profits” exceeding \$6,000 to buy computers for local schools, and “Schoolboard elections to be held in New Carlisle” make smaller page 1 titles.

**Vol 17. No 50  
December 17, 1991**

- Issue 50, dated December 17, gives the front-page to Santa Claus, “A Beaver’s Christmas”. Inside, “Judy Gallan wins school board election” and New York journalist John Henry, a Gaspé Peninsula fan, writes a commentary titled “Train should be promoted.”

## Link between 1991 and 2025: uncertainty characterizes both periods

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – Year 1991 spelled uncertainty to a high degree. Lobster prices were depressed, the cod stocks were still declining sharply, and tourists were spending much less than usual even if they were numerous coming to the Gaspé Peninsula. Moreover, our pulp and paper mills, producing linerboard and newsprint, were suffering from low consumption. Boxes and newspapers were smaller than usual.

In 1991, instead of spending most of their time supporting development ventures, regional leaders were fighting to maintain services that had already been downsized, VIA Rail’s passenger train, the Gaspé-Chandler freight train service and rural schools, to name three, while the tourist sector was slowly getting better organized.

In 2025, another mobilization is currently taking place to save our two electoral ridings, ensuring a political representation that fits our needs. Those efforts could otherwise be used to put additional pressure on our governments to improve the housing context and the number of available daycare places, for example. At the same time, our lumber industry closely following the trade context triggered by American president, Donald Trump, who is torpedoing the economy of his own country, sending it, and others, toward a potential recession. This is without mentioning the erosion of peace that the new attitude of the United States government is presently generating. Yes, difficult and uncertain times are looming.

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# A Stock-Car champion with Gaspé's roots

SYLVAIN LAUWERS

GASPE - What do the shores of Forillon, three consecutive asphalt stock car championships, and annual vacations in Gaspé have in common? They are all tied to some of Neal Leblond's fondest memories.

Who is he, and what is his connection to Gaspé? Neal, a businessman from Gatineau, Quebec, in the Buckingham sector, is the son of Kathy Simon, who is originally from Rosebridge (Gaspé), where she still owns a home. He also happens to be a multiple paved track stock car champion.

Neal Leblond spent a good part of his childhood summers on the shores of Gaspé Bay with his grandparents, the Simons. His Mom, Kathy remembers: "Neal, since he was a baby, always was interested in cars, that was his favorite toy, he could sit by himself for hours and play with his little dinky cars. At only 3 years old, my son could drive his 2 wheeler with no trouble at all."

Even today, he returns regularly with his girlfriend, Maude Grandmaison, and their three daughters.

He tells us: "In the early



Photo: Sylvain Lauwers

*Neal Leblond spent a good part of his childhood summers on the shores of Gaspé Bay with his grandparents, the Simons.*

years, we took the train from Montreal. It was so pleasant when, after a night in a sleeper car, we arrived at the Gaspé train station. My aunt worked for a long time at Forillon National Park. I still love going for walks in Forillon. All those places are so beautiful. For me, Gaspé represents the good life. People there respect each other, and it's much more relaxed than in the city."

Born in 1988, hence the number 88 on his race car, Neal caught the racing bug long be-

fore he reached adolescence. Kathy explains "As we moved to St-Eustache, we started going to the races at the Autodrome de St-Eustache. Our son was always very interested in anything with speed. Neal was around 19 or 20 when he started racing in St Eustache his first Mini Legend. On his first race, he wiped out and landed on his top and did several turns. I was in the stands I couldn't even stand up."

In 2014, this driver with deep Gaspé roots won his first

championship at Capital City Speedway (Ottawa) in the Thundercar class.

It was with the help of his father, Jean Leblond, who owns the Canadian Tire franchise in Buckingham, that Neal acquired his first Sportsman race car. When the St-Eustache Autodrome closed in 2020, he headed to the ICar oval track, located on the tarmac of the former Mirabel airport, to continue pursuing his passion.

In 2022, he finished second in the local sportsman championship. During the following winter, he and his father spared no expense in preparing the number 88 race car, sporting the colours of the family business and NAPA Auto Parts.

The car and its engine were completely overhauled, allowing him to win his first championship on the ICar track on October 30, 2023. He successfully defended his title in 2024 before repeating the feat this season.

Despite his on-track successes, the Gatineau resident remains humble. "Three championships in a row is good, but it's not a dynasty yet. If I won 5 in a row, I could talk about a dynasty, but not for the moment," says the three-time ICar

Sportsman champion.

And it is here that the racing champion with roots in Gaspé reveals a scoop for Spec readers: "I will have a brand new racecar to begin the 2026 season. Next season I intend to compete not only in Mirabel but also in Vallée-Jonction, Quebec, and Montmagny, Quebec, in order to familiarize myself with these oval tracks... for the day I make the jump to the NASCAR Canada Series, but only on the oval tracks in the eastern part of the country."

So! Stock car fans on asphalt, from our beautiful Gaspé Peninsula, remember this name: Neal Leblond, proud of his Gaspé roots; it is very possible that you will see him competing in the NASCAR Canada Series.

We will let the last words to his mother Kathy Simon: "If Neal isn't racing, he is helping another team to achieve their dreams, or he is gone to Daytona to watch the races. Neal never ceases to amaze me, from a gentleman driver to the 'Buck of Buckingham.' He loves motorsports and he is very good at it. He is lucky to have his Dad to back him up and his team to get the race car race-ready."



Happy holidays!

Stéphane Sainte-Croix  
Member for Gaspé  
[stephanesaintecroix.com](http://stephanesaintecroix.com)

ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE DU QUÉBEC

## Avis aux membres (version courte)

### **ACTION COLLECTIVE AUTORISÉE CONTRE LE DIOCÈSE DE GASPÉ**

La Cour supérieure a autorisé le 6 août 2025 l'exercice d'une action collective contre le **Diocèse de Gaspé** portant le numéro 110-06-000002-240.

Cette action vise à obtenir une indemnisation pour toute personne victime d'agression sexuelle commise par un ministre ordonné diocésain et/ou préposé laïc sous la responsabilité du **Diocèse de Gaspé**. La notion de « ministre ordonné diocésain » inclut les évêques, prêtres, diacres et abbés, mais exclut les prêtres religieux, soit les prêtres appartenant à une congrégation religieuse.

Messieurs Beaudoin Francoeur et Marc-Alain Marticotte agissent à titre de représentants de tous les membres du Groupe, ayant eux-mêmes été victimes d'agressions sexuelles commises par des ministres ordonnés diocésains du **Diocèse de Gaspé**.

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#### **EXCLUSION DU GROUPE**

Si vous ne souhaitez pas faire partie du groupe, par exemple parce que vous préférez entreprendre un recours en votre propre nom contre le diocèse, il est **nécessaire** d'envoyer un avis écrit **par courriel** aux avocats du groupe au [litige@lambertavocats.ca](mailto:litige@lambertavocats.ca) ou **par la poste** au Greffe de la Cour supérieure du Québec situé au 124, route 132, Percé (Québec) G0C 2L0, au plus tard le 17 janvier 2026.

Si vous avez déjà intenté une poursuite individuelle contre le diocèse afin d'obtenir une indemnisation pour une agression sexuelle commise par un ministre ordonné diocésain et/ou préposé laïc sous la responsabilité du diocèse, vous êtes exclu du groupe, à moins que vous ne vous désistiez de cette poursuite individuelle au plus tard le 17 janvier 2026. Les personnes qui sont exclues du groupe ne peuvent bénéficier d'un éventuel jugement favorable ou entente de règlement qui accorderait une indemnisation aux membres du groupe.

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## Notice of authorization (shortened version)

### **CLASS ACTION AUTHORIZED AGAINST THE DIOCESE OF GASPÉ**

On August 6th 2025, the Superior Court of Quebec authorized a class action against the **Diocese of Gaspé**, bearing the court number #110-06-000002-240.

The class action aims to obtain compensation for each person who was the victim of a sexual assault committed by an ordained diocesan minister and/or lay employee under the responsibility of the **Diocese of Gaspé**. The term “ordained diocesan minister” includes bishops, priests, deacons and abbots, but excludes religious priests, who are priests belonging to a religious congregation.

Mr. Beaudoin Francoeur and Mr. Marc-Alain Marticotte were granted the status of class representatives, having themselves been sexually assaulted by ordained diocesan ministers of the **Diocese of Gaspé**.

#### **YOU ARE CONCERNED BY THIS CLASS ACTION IF:**

1. Between **May 5th, 1922**, and **today**;
2. You were the victim of one or more sexual assault(s);
3. Committed by an ordained diocesan minister and/or a lay employee under the responsibility of the **Diocese of Gaspé**.

The **Diocese of Gaspé** notably includes the following regions:

Sainte-Anne-des-Monts	Gaspé	Chandler	New-Carlisle
Bonaventure	Carleton-sur-Mer	Îles-de-la-Madeleine	<i>And others...</i>

Registering to this class action is **free** (no lawyer fees) and **confidential** (registration is anonymous).

#### **OPTING OUT OF THE CLASS**

If you do not wish to be a member of the class action, for example because you prefer to introduce your own legal proceedings in your name against the diocese, you are **required** to send a written notice **by email** to the class’ lawyers at [litige@lambertavocats.ca](mailto:litige@lambertavocats.ca) or **by mail** at the following address: 124, route 132, Percé (Québec) G0C 2L0, at the latest on January 17th 2026.

If you have already filed an individual lawsuit against the diocese to obtain compensation for a sexual assault committed by an ordained diocesan minister and/or lay employee under the responsibility of the diocese, you are excluded from the class action, unless you withdraw your individual claim at the latest on January 17th 2026. Individuals who are excluded from the class action will not benefit from a possible favourable judgment or settlement agreement which would provide compensation to class members.

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# Visitors from loved ones the majestic cardinal

DIANE SKINNER

NEW CARLISLE - Cardinals are not native to the Gaspé, but there have been sightings.

Northern Cardinals can be sighted but it is considered rare or unusual for our region.

The species is normally found in the southern parts of Quebec, but its range has been expanding northward. This is due to factors like bird feeders, warmer winters and climate change. Cardinals do not migrate, so if you do spot one, chances are that they remain on the Gaspé year-round.

Thelma Day of Fauvel (Bonaventure) shared recent photos of a cardinal that visits her bird feeder. She notes that the cardinal appears in the morning and again in the late afternoon just before sunset, staying for about half an hour. She hopes he will remain throughout the winter.

You cannot miss them. Their striking red plumage makes them instantly recognizable, especially against a



Photo: Diane Skinner

*There is a common belief that cardinals represent visits from loved ones who have passed.*

snowy landscape. Recently they have become an increasingly recurring symbol in Christmas cards and décor.

Cardinals are a meaningful bird, symbolizing hope, love and spiritual presence. There is a common belief that cardinals represent visits from loved ones who have passed. Particularly at Christmas time this can be very heartwarming. On top of that, their bright red colour resonates at Christmas on a snowy background.

If you do not see the bird

itself, cardinals can be seen on Christmas ornaments, cards, table décor and even outdoor displays. People are drawn to them for emotional and aesthetic reasons. Beauty is alluring. Items with cardinals on them can bring natural beauty into indoor settings.

Cardinals add emotional warmth to Christmas decorating and remind us of the beauty that can be found even in the coldest months, and perhaps, of a visit from a loved one.

## Christmas Cards a thing of the past?

DIANE SKINNER

NEW CARLISLE - Many years ago, Christmas cards would start arriving in the mail at the beginning of December and continue all month. We would have to find a place to display them. Some people used their mantle, then expanded to taping them around door frames or even hanging them on string across the room.

I recall sitting at the kitchen table, addressing cards for hours. But the payoff came when you received all the different cards in return from a wide variety of places.

Once upon a time those cards arriving in the mail marked the start of the season. But today, we are all well aware that the tradition is declining, almost to the point of receiving no cards at all.

The origins of sending Christmas cards goes back to the mid-1800s and peaked in popularity in the mid to late 20th century. Christmas cards were a way of staying connected across distances.

In 2025, I have received one card, but it was placed at my



*Fewer Christmas cards are being sent each year.*

door by a neighbour. Are they about to disappear totally? Digital communication has replaced paper mail. Also, people are busier and have less time to address all those cards. Add the cost of postage and people have lost their passion for sending cards. This is particularly true for the younger generations who feel it is an unnecessary tradition. The demographics are clear. Those who continue to send cards are more likely to be senior citizens.

What can replace Christmas cards? Some have turned to e-cards or social media greetings, while others have embraced printed photo postcards. And

yet, for many, nothing truly replaces the traditional card in 2025.

But what is lost, if anything? The personal touch! Handwritten cards that include personal messages were valued. Some sent family updates.

The ritual of receiving and opening the cards is gone. In a nutshell, the emotional warmth and tangible connection have all but disappeared.

Are Christmas cards a thing of the past? It would seem so. But even as they slip into memory, the spirit of connection remains as important as ever. The question now is: how do we keep that connection alive?

## Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



### Home for Christmas

Being one of the diaspora of the Gaspé Peninsula, a member of a group of people from a common region who are scattered across the world and who maintain a shared identity, culture and connection, I know firsthand what it means to come home.

This is especially true at Christmastime. Many of us have made the trip home by plane, bus, car or going back in time, the train. Of these by far the most memorable is the train.

There is universal anticipation about returning home for Christmas. The excitement begins as travel plans are made in October and November. For many the journey home is more than physical – its emotional and tied to tradition and memories.

There is always a countdown leading up to the trip after booking tickets, packing suitcases and the phone calls home. What are we looking forward to? Family, friends and home-cooked meals and desserts. Many leave a little bit of room in their suitcase to bring home some home-made fudge or cinnamon rolls.

The trip is always exciting but it's the moment of arrival including hugs, laughter and the first shared meal. Then the first sit-down together maybe over a coffee or cup of tea, is usually an animated, lively chance to reconnect. People telling stories, children hearing about Christmases past and the chance to share some of the rituals of Christmas. Perhaps decorating the tree, then placing gifts underneath, attending church and the cooking of favourite dishes.

There is always excitement for a fresh snowfall because what is Christmas without the "diamond snow," creating a blanket of white as far as the eye can see. The snow that has an extra sparkle to it is created by the sun reflecting off ice crystals. Have you ever noticed how peaceful the world seems after a good snowfall? Snow makes the world seem quieter, at least until the plows, snowblowers and skidoos get out in the world.

Going home for Christmas strengthens the meaning of the season – reminding people of their family ties and shared history. Bittersweet memories of those who have passed makes us aware of the passage of time. Being a member of the English-Gaspesian diaspora is something to be proud of. It is who we are and who we were, and we can always return home!

Going home for Christmas is more than a vacation – it is a return to a feeling of belonging. It reminds us of where we come from. This trip home will make us feel the glow long after we return home, with a suitcase stuffed with home baking!



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# Source Alimentaire Bonavignon: no one is immune to needing help



MARY ROBERTSON

MARIA - The Source Alimentaire Bonavignon is a community-based organization located in Maria, which is dedicated to supporting residents experiencing food insecurity in the St-Alphonse to Nouvelle area. Its mission is to ensure that those in need have access to healthy food.

The organization offers a variety of services, including emergency food hampers, community kitchen programs, and educational initiatives designed to build practical food skills. It also supports collective projects, such as a community kitchen and garden, which encourage long-term food autonomy.

Through these programs, Source Alimentaire Bonavignon plays a vital role in reducing food insecurity and strengthening community solidarity. Part of its mandate is also to raise awareness in the community and with decision-makers about the importance of food self-sufficiency.

Founded in 1992, the non-profit organization was established to address growing

food insecurity in the communities of Nouvelle, Saint-Omer, Carleton-sur-Mer, Maria, Cascapedia-St. Jules, Gesgapegiag, New Richmond, Caplan, and Sainte-Alphonse. In its early years, the organization acquired and renovated a building to better serve the local population.

Over the past 33 years, Source Alimentaire Bonavignon has dealt with many challenges and has assisted countless individuals and families during their times of hardship.

According to Lorie Munro, who works at the centre, "No one is immune to needing help. Life changes can bring unexpected financial difficulties, and anyone can find themselves facing food insecurity at some point." During these times, the organization provides individualized support, helping people develop a plan to meet their family's grocery needs.

They also refer them when needed to resources, such as the Centre d'Action Bénévole St-Alphonse-Nouvelle and other community-based organizations in the region.

Under the leadership of



Photo: G. Gagné

According to Lorie Munro, "No one is immune to needing help."

Suzanne Lamarre, who has directed the organization for the past 25 years, Source Alimentaire Bonavignon, along with its staff, and volunteers have provided food and support based on the increasing needs of the region. The community garden offers fresh produce during the summer months, and gatherings at the collective kitchen bring people together to learn how to prepare healthy, homemade meals throughout the year.

This year, with the rising costs of groceries and rent, there are more requests for food. During the month of

November, the centre provided 88 food hampers for individuals and families. This was the highest demand for food since the organization opened in 1992. With the arrival of winter and the holiday season, the Source Alimentaire Bonavignon expects to have more than the usual demands, and the staff will depend on the generous donations of the local community to provide for those in need.

Local grocery stores, businesses, and community groups contribute food and financial help throughout the year, and especially during the holiday season. For example, the United Church in New Richmond delivers groceries on the first Monday of every month, donated by its members, and also provides small gifts to include in the yearly Christmas baskets. On December 5, the members of CASA's Cascapedia-St. Jules Wellness group brought groceries, non-perishable items, toys and money to their Christmas party to donate to the Source Alimentaire Bonavignon.

The community is encour-

aged to support the organization throughout the year, especially during La Guignolée, a yearly fundraiser that invites residents to donate groceries or money to fill holiday food baskets. Although many good causes seek support during the giving season, providing food for a family in need is an essential act of kindness that makes a real difference.

As Lorie Munro reminds us, "Everyone is entitled to a Merry Christmas and a good meal because it's Christmas."

Source Alimentaire Bonavignon is available to anyone in need of food assistance in the region, and someone at the centre can be reached by calling 418-759-8000. Together, the community can make a lasting difference for its most vulnerable members. Donations can be dropped off at the centre in Maria or made online and sent by mail. Note that La Guignolée fundraiser campaign ends on December 19, but it is never too late to donate. For more information, visit their Facebook page, Source Alimentaire Bonavignon.

## Centraide aims to raise over \$695,000

NELSON SERGERIE

SAINTE-ANNE-DES-MONTS – Centraide Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine is launching its annual fundraising campaign with an ambitious goal: to raise more than the \$695,000 collected in 2024.

The success of last year's campaign can be attributed to one particular gesture.

"Hydro-Québec employees and retirees in particular chose to run a campaign exclusively for Centraide. They alone contributed \$200,000," notes Executive Director Stéphan Boucher.

Workplace campaigns play a major role in raising funds for



Photo: Centraide Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine

Centraide hopes to exceed the \$695,000 raised in 2024.

those in need.

"Thirty-three independent community organizations working in health and social services receive support. To qualify for assistance, organizations must meet basic needs, support children and families, or break isolation," explains Mr. Boucher about the benefi-

ciary organizations.

According to Centraide, nearly 25,000 residents of the Gaspé Peninsula and Magdalen Islands, or about one in four people, receive assistance thanks to the donations collected.

"What we're seeing is that the face of poverty has changed

significantly. Twenty years ago, the organizations supported people who were very far removed from the job market. Today, I often use the example of a single mother working at minimum wage who can no longer make ends meet and frequents organizations supported by Centraide," says Mr. Boucher.

Last year, \$468,000 was donated to organizations, representing 80% of the funds raised.

"This year, we also have a fund for organizations working with the homeless, as well as a \$50,000 emergency fund to support organizations facing force majeure," explains Mr.

Boucher.

The executive director emphasizes that the campaign is not about setting a precise target to meet all needs.

"The generosity of those who contribute to Centraide is already very great. We can't talk about the real needs of organizations because they are so big. The contribution of the Ministry of Health through the community organization support program helps however, organizations have been asking for an increase in base funding for a long time. It is very difficult to assess the real need. But Centraide always makes a difference," concludes Mr. Boucher.



# Announcements



## In Memory

### DUGUAY: Ken

In loving memory of a special husband, father, father-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, grandfather, uncle and friend. Who passed away on December 24, 2023.

*Thank you for your endless love,  
That gets us through each day.  
And thank you for the memories,  
That never fade away.  
You were the husband, father, father-in-law,  
Brother, brother-in-law, grandfather,  
Uncle and friend that we loved,  
and made us very proud.  
Every day in some small way,  
We honour your life.  
And though its heartbreaking to think,  
Of the way things were before.  
When we are reunited,  
It will be forever more.*

Love you and missing you, Sarah, Darrel (Ondina), Shelly (Louise), Crystal (Lewis) and families.

### GAVEY SIMON: Carolyn

In loving memory of a dear sister, sister-in-law and aunt who passed away on December 28, 2024.

*Of all the special gifts in life,  
However great or small.  
To have you as our sister,  
Was the greatest gift of all.  
May the winds of love blow softly,  
And whisper in your ear.  
We love and miss you sister,  
And wish you were here.*

Forever in our hearts and deeply missed by Eleanor (Clayton), Garfield (Sandra), Donald (Frank) and family.



### HAYES: Jean

### HAYES: Ralph

### HAYES: Larry

Remembering my brother Larry, my parents Jean and Ralph Hayes, not just today, but everyday.

Growing up on the Gaspé Coast has left many fond memories and I know Larry loved going home for Christmas.

My parents looked forward to summer vacation there in familiar places with family and friends.

Thinking of all the wonderful family and friends that are no longer with us. Gone but not forgotten. Sending love to you all in heaven.

*Brenda Morrison and family.*



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## ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

### Sunday, December 21

**New Carlisle**

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Port Daniel**

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

### Tuesday, December 23

**Location TBA**

2 p.m. Mission of St. Mary

Magdalene Service

### Wednesday, December 24

**New Carlisle**

9 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

**Shigawake**

7 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

**Port Daniel**

4 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

### Thursday, Christmas 25

8 a.m. Christmas morning

in the chapel

### Sunday, December 28

No Service

### Sunday, January 4

**New Carlisle**

11 a.m. Holy Eucharist

**Shigawake**

9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

## UNITED CHURCH NEW RICHMOND

### Sunday, December 21

10 a.m. Angel Tree Service

### Wednesday, December 24

4 p.m. Christmas eve hymn

with Holy Communion

### Sunday, December 28

10 a.m. New Years Service fol-

lowed by social time

### Sunday, January 4

10 a.m. Service

## UNITED CHURCH HOPE TOWN

### Sunday, December 21

10 a.m. Service

### Wednesday, December 24

No Service

### Sunday, December 28

2 p.m. Service

### Sunday, January 4

10 a.m. Service

## PARISH OF GASPÉ

### Sunday, December 21

**St Pauls - Gaspé**

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

### Wednesday, December 24

**St Pauls - Gaspé**

2 p.m. Christmas pageant with

Holy Eucharist

**St Andrews - York**

7 p.m. Holy Communion

### Sunday, December 28

No Service

### Sunday, January 4

**St. Andrews - York**

10 a.m. Holy Eucharist

# COAST ROUND-UP

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

**BARACHOIS:**  
**Mountain View Golden Age**  
**Tuesdays:** Weekly indoor curling beginning at 1:30 p.m.  
**Wednesdays:** Weekly evening card games at 7 p.m. starting October 22.

Bonaventure Agricultural Society will be hosting their Annual General Meeting at 7 p.m. at the Shigawake Fair grounds. Storm Date: January 27.

**NEW CARLISLE:**  
**New Carlisle Legion**  
**December 31:** New Years eve dance, details to follow.

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

**CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES:**  
**50+ Club**  
**December 21:** Annual General Meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.

**SHIGAWAKE:**  
**Bonaventure Agricultural Society**  
**January 26:** The

**HOPE:**  
**Hope Baptist Church**  
**Sundays:** Sunday School starting at 10 a.m. Worship service beginning at 11 a.m.

**NEW CARLISLE:**  
**Bible Chapel Meetings**  
**Sundays:** Breaking of Bread for believers - 9:30 a.m., Gospel meeting and Sunday School - 2 p.m.  
**Thursdays:** Prayer Meet-



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**HOROSCOPES - December 22 to December 28**

**ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20**

If you are feeling half-hearted about what you are working on, then put it off for a bit and focus on something more interesting this week, Aries. You can use the rest.

**TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21**

Make it your business to remind others not to take life so seriously this week, Taurus. The best way to do that is to show them how to laugh by example.

**GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21**

Your thoughts are on an important decision that you need to make, Gemini. It's best to wait a few days before you get into the thick of things. You need to mull all possibilities.

**CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22**

Cancer, you may have the courage and the confidence to deal with whatever life throws at you right now, but not everyone is as dedicated as you. Make allowances

for others this week.

**LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23**

Sensitive feelings are coming to the surface this week and you are not sure what to do about them, Leo. You won't find peace of mind until you have dealt with them thoroughly.

**VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22**

Virgo, some unexpected news could come your way between now and the weekend. It may seem like a lot, but in the grand scheme of things, it will only be a minor issue.

**LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23**

You have reason to be suspicious of someone's motives this week. Just don't go to extremes and start reading into every message or nuance, Libra.

**SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22**

Scorpio, you might look super confident on the outside, but underneath you get anxious like everyone else. At some point this week you may need to ask for some

help.

**SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21**

It is easy to believe you have enemies around every corner, Sagittarius. Although you might have rubbed a few people the wrong way, most people actually are on your side.

**CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20**

Capricorn, usually you couldn't care less what other people think about you. But this week it seems important to get another person's approval for your actions.

**AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18**

Aquarius, be careful when dealing with someone in a position of power. They may have sights on a promotion you also hope to earn. Keep your cards close to the vest.

**PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20**

Pisces, some people believe the world is full of gloom, but you know that every day is what you make of it. Brighten the days of others with your positivity.

**HOROSCOPES - December 29 to January 4**

**ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20**

Strange things are happening, Aries. It may be better to go with the flow right now. You might like the change that ensues, and the change could be a positive.

**TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21**

Better days are ahead, Taurus. It's just a matter of having a little patience and waiting a little longer for things to settle down. Start a new project to take your mind off things.

**GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21**

Make the most of time spent with friends and family this week, Gemini. You may need to step away for a while, so cherish this time you get to spend with those you love.

**CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22**

Cancer, someone special is able to take a peek into your inner thoughts this week. Their ability to see you so personally could reinforce your outlook.

**LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23**

You might feel a bit melancholic as the holiday season nears its end, Leo. It's understandable based on how much has been going on. Maintain a strong social calendar.

**VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22**

Virgo, generosity is an admirable trait, and now is a good time to indulge your love of helping others. Make a concerted effort to pitch in where your assistance is necessary.

**LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23**

When one door closes, another door opens, Libra. Look at all of the positive things in your life and embrace the great changes that are coming your way. This is an exciting time for you.

**SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22**

Scorpio, there are so many things going on right now but you can still function effectively. The pace might be hectic right now, but things will calm down soon

enough.

**SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21**

A relationship is blooming, Sagittarius, and you're not sure how you feel about it just yet. Take a few more weeks to work through all of your feelings.

**CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20**

You have an eye for deals, Capricorn. Even though you have been spending a lot this past month, you can't resist a discount on some post-holiday sales.

**AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18**

Take a firm hold of your finances for the next few weeks, Aquarius. Overspending could complicate an important relationship if you're not careful. Curb any purchases for a few days.

**PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20**

You are not sure how to harness your artistic energy this week, Pisces. You might take a class or engage in a hobby that interests you. Redesigning a room in a home also might be an idea.

**Christmas in Our Gaspesian Communities**

Soon we Gaspesians will begin to welcome the Christmas season not only with rejoicing, but with moments of reflection on the things that matter most. Christmas is at the heart of giving, and we Chaleur Bay folks have always carried that light of love for those who need it most.

As we face December's cold winds, the spirit of the holiday season can lift our spirits—warming us with joy, greetings, and the gathering of families filled with laughter. The beauty of Christmas shines in glowing lights, brightly wrapped gifts, and music drifting softly through the air.

The hearts of the Chaleur region hold a true "heart of gold," kindling kindness and hospitality as we reflect on what Christmas truly means. So, Gaspesians, let's continue to love and support one another.

I'll end with this verse: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men."

*Ken Ross  
New Carlisle, Quebec*

**Welcoming 2026 with Hope Along Chaleur Bay**

Many residents along our picturesque Chaleur Bay area are waiting for the New Year with fresh ideas, new hope, and new opportunities to make our lives the best they can be. Let 2026 ring in with a new leaf of gladness, warm tidings, and a canvas filled with unique expectations rooted in positivity and accomplishment.

Gaspesians always appreciate that fresh sunrise each day, and with that spirit, let 2026 open with colourful celebrations of true love and peace for us all.

May this year bring a glow to our hearts, renewed spirits, and uplifting attitudes. With faith and determination, 2026 can fill our small towns with prosperity and inspiration, for God can give us the strength to overcome many challenges.



**Happy Holidays**

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# Santa



## Letters from Shigawake Port-Daniel School

## Letters from New Carlisle High School

Dear Santa,  
How are your reindeer going? Can I have a Stitch Labubu please Santa? I have been trying to be on my best behaviour today. I can't wait for Christmas this year!  
*Love, Oceana*

Hello Santa,  
I have been a good girl. I listen to Mommy and Daddy. I would like a makeup-set please. My sister would like one too. Naomi wants a Labubu, please.  
*Love, Ava*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Kamilia-Rose. I am 5 years old. This year I have been naughty and nice. Something I did that was nice was being kind to my sister. For Christmas this year, I would really like a dog and a cat.  
*Thank you!*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Mia Curtis. I am 5 years old. This year I have been naughty and nice. A few things I did that were nice are: sharing with my cousin and helping Mom decorate. For Christmas this year, I would really like an elf dress and a unicorn night light.  
*Thank you!*

Dear Santa,  
I have been good this year. Can I have a koala plushy? Can I have a scooter? I cannot wait until Christmas. I help my Dexton when he cries.  
*Love, Alyvia Rose*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Aralyn. I am 5 years old. This year I have been naughty and nice. Something I did that was nice is I helped Mama with wood. For Christmas this year, I would really like a unicorn light.  
*Thank you!*

Dear Santa,  
Can I have a plushy duck please? I have been good. I help people.  
*From, Annabelle*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Sophia. I am 5 years old. This year I have been very nice. A few things I did that were nice are: gave hugs and being a good friend. For Christmas this year, I would like a unicorn night light.  
*Thank you!*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Charlize. I am 5 years old. This year I have been very nice. A few things I did that were nice are: being friendly and making breakfast in bed for Mom. For Christmas this year, I would really like a board game and a squishy Oreo.  
*Thank you!*

Dear Santa,  
How are your reindeer doing? Which reindeer is your favourite? I like Rudolph. Can I have markers? I like markers. I have been good this year.  
*Love, Thomas*

Dear Santa,  
I really want a tractor Lego set for Christmas. I've been really good this year!  
*Love, Carsen*

Dear Santa,  
I really want a Titanic Lego set for Christmas. I've been really good this year!  
*Love, Niko*

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like a dinosaur stuffy.  
*Love, Dustin*

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like a lego mobile and crafts.  
*Love, Hector*

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like a toy gun.  
*Love, Adrian*

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like a robot.  
*Love, Loan*

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like super hero toys.  
*Love, August*

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like a toy gun.  
*Love, Noah*

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like a mini-fridge.  
*Love, Emma*

Dear Santa,  
I really want a puppy play set for Christmas. I've been really good this year!  
*Love, Hallie*

Dear Santa,  
I really want a puppy play set for Christmas. I've been really good this year!  
*Love, Sofia*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Mya. I help my friends. For Christmas I want a pug, a parrot, art supplies and a teddy.  
*Love, Mya*

Dear Santa,  
I want an art kit. How is Rudolph? My name is Quinten. I like to draw. For Christmas I want Pokemon cards. I have been a good boy. I am in grade 2. I live in Canada. How are you Santa?  
*Love, Quinten*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Hannah. Nice to meet you Santa. I want a peanut jelly cat. I like to play in the snow. I have been good this year. My favourite colour is dark blue. I am 8 years old, in grade 2. How is Rudolph?  
*Love, Hannah*

Dear Santa,  
How are you Santa? I like to paint. My name is Victoria. I live in Canada. I have been a good girl for Christmas. I want a paint set please.  
*Love, Victoria*

Dear Santa,  
I live in Canada. My name is Wesley. For Christmas I want Pokemon cards. Santa, the second thing I want is stencils and art supplies. The third thing is Lego.  
*Love, Wesley*

Dear, Santa  
My name is Rowan. I have been a very good boy. For Christmas I want 3 Lego sets and a Nintendo Switch 2.  
*Love, Rowan*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Latisa. I am 10 and in grade 4. I have 1 dog, his name is Rex. I like to play on my Skidoo, but my lag is broken. I want a new lag please.  
*From, Latisa*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Emmett. I am 9 years old, in grade 4. I like to play drums and play in the snow. I have a cat and a dog. I also have a brother. Why do you live in the North Pole? My favourite reindeer is Rudolph, what's yours?  
*From, Emmett*

Dear Santa,  
How are you doing? I like your red sleigh and Rudolph, his red nose is so shiny! I'm 8 years old, soon 9. I am very excited. I wish you a Merry Christmas.  
*From, Grayson*

—Continued on page 33

## Letters from St. Patrick's Elementary School

Dear Santa,  
My name is Khy Roussy. I am 5 years old. This year I have been very nice. A few things I did that were nice are: caring for my friends and helping. For Christmas this year, I would like a little side-by-side.  
*Thank you!*

Dear Santa,  
How are you and your reindeer? Elves too? I want a bey-blade drop attack set this year. I tried to be good this year. At school I do my work.  
*From, Jace*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Brad. I am 5 years old. This year I have been nice. For Christmas I would like: a camera, a drone, a robot dog, saja boys and an orange poof-poof. Thank you, Santa!  
*From: Brad*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Mya Moore. I am 6 years old. This year I have been nice. For Christmas I would like: a camera, two K-Pop dolls, a rabbit house, a purple poof-poof and a memory game. Thank you, Santa!  
*From: Mya Moore*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Kayla. I am 4 years old. This year I have been nice. For Christmas I would like: a barbie, a camera, a robot dog, K-Pop dolls and purple shoes. Thank you, Santa!  
*From: Kayla*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Owen. I am 5 years old. This year I have been nice. For Christmas I would like: a blue poof-poof, a camera, a drone, a robot and saja boys. Thank you, Santa!  
*From: Owen*

Dear Santa,  
My name is Chelsey. I am 5 years old. This year I have been nice. For Christmas I would like: K-Pop dolls, one dog that walks, barbies, grinch dolls and a baby doll. Thank you, Santa!  
*From: Chelsey*





*Merry  
Christmas  
and Happy  
New Year*



*Merry Christmas*

May this holiday season bring light to your days, hope to your heart, and happiness to your home.

Here's to creating wonderful memories and welcoming a bright, joyful New Year!

We thank you for another year of your support for The Gaspé Spec.

This is the **last issue** of The Gaspé Spec for 2025.

The office will be closed on **Thursday, December 18, 2025.** Staff will be available beginning **January 5, 2026.**

The first issue of The Gaspé Spec in the new year will be January 14, 2026.

*The Gaspé* **SPEC** 50 YEARS  
Keeping Gaspésians Informed



THE  
MUNICIPALITY OF  
SHIGAWAKE



*Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year*

to our community, neighbours and beloved friends, on behalf of the elected officials and entire municipal team!

*Merry  
Christmas*

*and thank you to our loyal employees and valued customers.*

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**Dear Santa,**  
 My favourite game is wild craft. I like to play with my friends. I have a dog, a cat and a little sister. I make snowmen and I like rolling in the snow. My favourite food is tacos! Do you like tacos? I love reindeer. I will give you carrots for them on Christmas Eve. Please say hi to the reindeer for me! Merry Christmas!

*Love, Isabelle*

**Dear Santa,**  
 My name is Landon, I am 9 years old and in grade 4. I have a dog, a cat, and two sisters. I love to go on the Skidoo in the winter time. My favourite subjects are gym and math. For Christmas, can I have a big Lego tank? My favourite reindeer is Prancer. I hope you have a safe travel across the world!

*Love, Landon*

**Dear Santa,**  
 My name is Oliver. I am 9 years old and in grade 4. I love Roblox and Minecraft. I play with my brother Rowan. I have a dog named Rusty. In the winter I like to have snowball fights. My favourite subject in school is art. On Christmas, I have a stocking. I would like a Pokemon Megaset. We put our Christmas tree in the living room. I have turkey supper which is my tradition. This year I will give the reindeer apples.

*Love, Oliver*

**Dear Santa,**  
 My name is Savanah. I am 10 years old and in grade 4. My sister's name is Felicia. I have 2 cats and a dog. On Christmas I go to my aunt's house for Christmas dinner. Santa, please have safe travels!

*From, Savanah*

**Dear Santa,**  
 My name is Isabella. I am 9 in grade 3. I like to build snowmen with my sister and brother. On Christmas Eve I leave out milk, cookies and carrots for you and your reindeer. For Christmas I would like a new barbie. Please say hi to everyone at the North Pole. I hope you have safe travels.

*Love, Isabella*

**Dear Santa,**  
 My name is Joseph. I am 9 years old and in grade 3. I like to make snowmen. For Christmas I would like Seth Rollins and Fin Balor. Can you do that please? I have a question. How do you travel the world in one night? My favorite reindeer is Rudolph. The red nosed reindeer! Tell Sparkles that I am excited to see you!

*From, Joe*



Merry Christmas and  
 Happy Holidays!





**WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



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*Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season!*




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**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**  
 AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!



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**Family Ties**  
*Merry Christmas*

May the holidays bring you love and laughter with the people you cherish. At this special time of the year, let's also celebrate the goodwill, helping hands and meaningful connections that help to strengthen our wonderful community.

With warmest wishes  
 from your Family Ties family.

# SPDS Journalism Club

## MY FAVOURITE CHRISTMAS TRADITION

In early December, my family puts up the tree. We all decorate it, and my mom and dad put the presents under the tree. On Christmas Eve night, we put cookies and milk on my table and some food for the reindeer. My favourite tradition is when we decorate the tree because we all work together. After Christmas, we take down the tree, and I'm grateful that I can help to clean up.

*Leah Couture*



## HOLIDAY SNOWMAN CRAFT



**Materials:**  
 One piece of wood - 15cm x 5cm  
 One piece of wood - 22 cm x 10cm  
 One plastic wreath  
 White, black and orange paint  
 Face stencils (if wanted)

Let's start our holiday snowman. **Step 1** Paint your small piece of wood all black (back, sides and front). **Step 2** Take your large piece of wood and paint the top half black in a slant. Once dry, paint the other end white. **Step 3** While the big piece of wood is drying, paint the snow on the edge of the small and big piece of wood. **Step 4** Hot glue the small piece of wood onto the big piece of wood following the slant. **Step 5** Cut your wreath to the size you want and hot glue it on. **Step 6** Paint the face.

Hope you have a wonderful holiday season and happy crafting!

*Lucy Couture*

## CHRISTMAS TREE HOLIDAY CRAFT



**Materials:**  
 • cut piece of wood  
 • paint  
 • paintbrushes

### Instructions:

1. Cut a square shaped piece of wood.
2. Gather all the colours of paint you would like.
3. Take a pencil and draw a Christmas tree
4. Paint the tree, the garland like a candy cane, the ornaments, the background and the snowflakes.
5. Then outline the tree with black paint
6. Let it dry and display it.

*by McKenna Flowers*

## Nanaimo bars

### INGREDIENTS:

#### Bottom layer

Butter or hard margarine ¼ cup  
 Granulated sugar ¼ cup  
 Cocoa ½ cup  
 1 Large egg, beaten  
 Apple sauce ¼ cup  
 Graham cracker crumbs 1 ¾ cup  
 Fine or medium coconut ¾ cup  
 Walnuts, finely chopped ½ cup

#### Second layer

Butter or hard margarine, softened ½ cup  
 Milk 3 tbsp.  
 Vanilla custard powder 2 tbsp.  
 Icing (confectioner's) sugar 2 cups

#### Top layer

Semisweet chocolate chips ¾ cup  
 Butter or hard margarine 2tbsp.

### DIRECTIONS:

**Bottom layer:** Melt first 3 ingredients in top of double boiler or in heavy saucepan. Add beaten egg and stir to cook and thicken. Remove from heat. Stir in graham crumbs, coconut and walnuts. Press firmly into ungreased 9x9 inch (22x22 cm) pan.  
**Second layer:** cream butter, milk, custard powder and icing sugar together well. Beat until light. Spread over bottom layer.  
**Top layer:** melt chocolate chips and butter over low heat. Cool. When cool but still runny, spread over second layer. Chill in refrigerator. Cuts into squares. Enjoy!

**APPROVED**

by Aubree Ross



## My favourite Christmas tradition

Every year my mom invites the whole family from her side and my dad's side. My Grandma brings in baked goods and my mom and dad make a big dinner. We hang out all together for about two to three hours and then we eat. When we are done we go to the living room and sing Christmas songs.

*Leony Cormier*



## BANANA BREAD

### Directions

1. Set oven at 325°F, grease 2 loaf pans
2. Mix baking power and buttermilk, whisk until frothy
3. Add and mix the next 5 ingredients
4. Stir the remaining ingredients and mix thoroughly until there are no more lumps
5. Pour the mixture into the greased loaf pan and bake for 50 min or until toothpick inserted comes out clean.

### Ingredients

1 tsp baking power  
 1/4 cup buttermilk  
 3/4 cup oil  
 3 eggs  
 1 cup sugar  
 5 very ripe bananas (very dark or black), mashe  
 Pinch of salt  
 2 1/2 cups flour  
 1 tbsp ground cinnamon  
 1 tsp baking powder  
 1 cup chocolate chips (optional)

**APPROVED** by Juliana Gallant

## Choccy Biccys



This is a British family recipe therefore some ingredients can only be found online, but there are replacements...

### INGREDIENTS:

- 225g Digestives
- 100g butter
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp golden syrup (can be bought on Amazon or substituted with Maple syrup or corn syrup)
- ¼ cup sugar
- 150g chocolate

### Directions

1. Crush Digestive biscuits - keep it somewhat chunky.
2. Melt butter in a small saucepan. When melted add 2 tbsp of cocoa powder and 2 tbsp of golden syrup (or other). Dissolve sugar into mixture and add crushed digestives. Mix well ( may be a bit crumbly).
3. Press mixture hard into a greased pan - make sure it's not too big. Refrigerate mixture.
4. Melt chocolate either in a double boiler or in the microwave- 10 seconds, stir repeat. Spread melted chocolate over cookie mixture. Return to fridge overnight, cut into squares and enjoy!

**APPROVED**

by Alex Evans

## Double Rich Chocolate Cookies

### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp Salt
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup dark brown sugar, packed
- ½ cup white sugar
- 1 cup Salted butter, softened
- 3 large eggs
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 300°F
2. Combine flour, baking soda, salt and cocoa powder in a bowl; set aside.
3. Beat brown sugar and white sugar until grainy.
4. Add butter and beat well.
5. Add eggs and vanilla. Beat until fluffy.
6. Mix in dry ingredients and chocolate chips until combined.
7. Drop rounded tablespoons onto ungreased cookie sheet.
8. Bake 21-23 minutes.
9. Transfer to a cooling surface.

**APPROVED** by Liam Hottot

## Soft and chewy gingerbread cookies

### Ingredients

1 cup granulated white sugar  
 ¾ cup unsalted butter at room temp  
 ¼ cup molasses  
 1 large egg  
 2 ¼ cups all purpose flour  
 2 teaspoons baking soda  
 1 teaspoon ground Cinnamon  
 ½ teaspoon ground Ginger  
 ½ teaspoon ground Cloves  
 ¼ teaspoon ground Nutmeg  
 ½ teaspoon salt  
 granulated white sugar for rolling

### Instructions

1. In a large bowl, add the sugar, butter, molasses, and egg and beat on medium until light and fluffy.
2. Add in the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, nutmeg, and salt. Stir well with a spatula until fully combined.
3. Cover with plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for at least an hour.
4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats. Set aside.
5. Pour approximately 1/2 cup of sugar into a small bowl (for rolling).
6. Use a medium cookie scoop to shape the dough into approx. 1" balls. Roll in sugar and place 12 per baking sheet onto your prepared sheets.
7. Bake for 9-10 minutes or until just set (they will puff up then flatten while baking).
8. Remove from oven and let stand on the cookie sheet for 1 minute before transferring to a cooling rack to cool completely.

**APPROVED**

by Tori Skeene





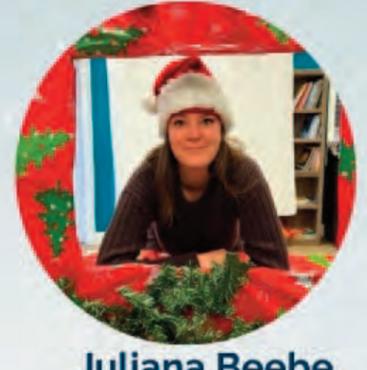
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**Wishing you health,  
happiness and a  
bright holiday season!**



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**Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!**  
**With warm wishes from the CASA Board of Directors and Staff**