

Hope Town's Olena Kulik raises money for abandoned animals in Ukraine

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON – Olena Kulik, a woman living in Hope Town, raised \$1,250 during and following a three-day walk to support animal shelters in her native Ukraine, where war has now been raging for four years.

Ms. Kulik walked 90 kilometres from Hope Town to Carleton on February 12, 13 and 14, stopping in Bonaventure and New Richmond for two nights. She sustained a few blisters, but overall, the journey went well. She was accompanied by her dog, Kozak.

“Nature was on our side. The weather was perfect for walking. We spent one night at a friend's house and one night in a hotel, courtesy of an anonymous donor. The night in the hotel room was particularly good for my dog. He is calmer. When we go to friends' places, he is more agitated and doesn't rest as well as when it is quiet,” she explains.

Her fundraiser remains active since the end of her journey.



Photo: Gilles Gagné

The Olena Kulik completed her 90-kilometre journey on February 14 in Carleton after three days of walking to raise funds for abandoned animals in Ukraine.

“I've already sent some money to Ukraine. I realize that the prices in Ukraine are the same as here. The dogs and cats eat a lot there as well,” she says.

Olena Kulik is originally from Zaporizhzhia, located 20 kilometres away from the war front. She therefore has contacts there, which makes it easier to send money to

organizations caring for abandoned animals.

“Volunteers go to find the animals in abandoned villages. There are many animals to rescue, not just a few. It is a huge number. The animals are often injured, and they need veterinary services, medication, and placement in foster homes. Animals are also roaming free, and reproduce. So, after find-

ing cats and dogs, the volunteers of the shelters take the appropriate measures; the animals must be sterilized. This has a cost too,” explains Ms. Kulik.

People can still donate through her Facebook page. The process is simple. In addition, Ms. Kulik, a visual artist, has partnered with Paspébiac artist Anik Loisel to raise more money by selling four art pieces they created, two by each artist. The works, depicting animals, were put up for sale on February 20.

“The pieces are depicting animals. It will remain open for a week, until the 27 (of February). I posted my email address on Facebook where people can find videos and invoices from Ukraine, so people can see where the money is going and videos of the people receiving the animals”, further explains Ms. Kulik.

Harsh winter in Ukraine

Ms. Kulik moved permanently to the Gaspé Peninsula

two years ago, although she and her Gaspesian husband have been spending significant time in the region for the past 22 years.

She deeply hopes that the war in Ukraine, triggered by Russian President Vladimir Putin, will soon come to an end. February 24 marked four years since the conflict began.

“Ukraine experiences a particularly harsh winter, with days of -15 and -20 degrees. It makes it difficult for both the animals and the volunteers. I know the shelters' people personally. A week ago, a missile struck a shelter for abandoned animals, destroying the site and killing some animals instantly.” she adds.

“The war is still there, and we are tired of it, but never as tired as the Ukrainian soldiers. Every little gesture counts. I ask people to contact me. It is simply Olena Kulik on Facebook. It is easy to find, and I am always open to provide further explanations about what we do with the money,” she concludes.

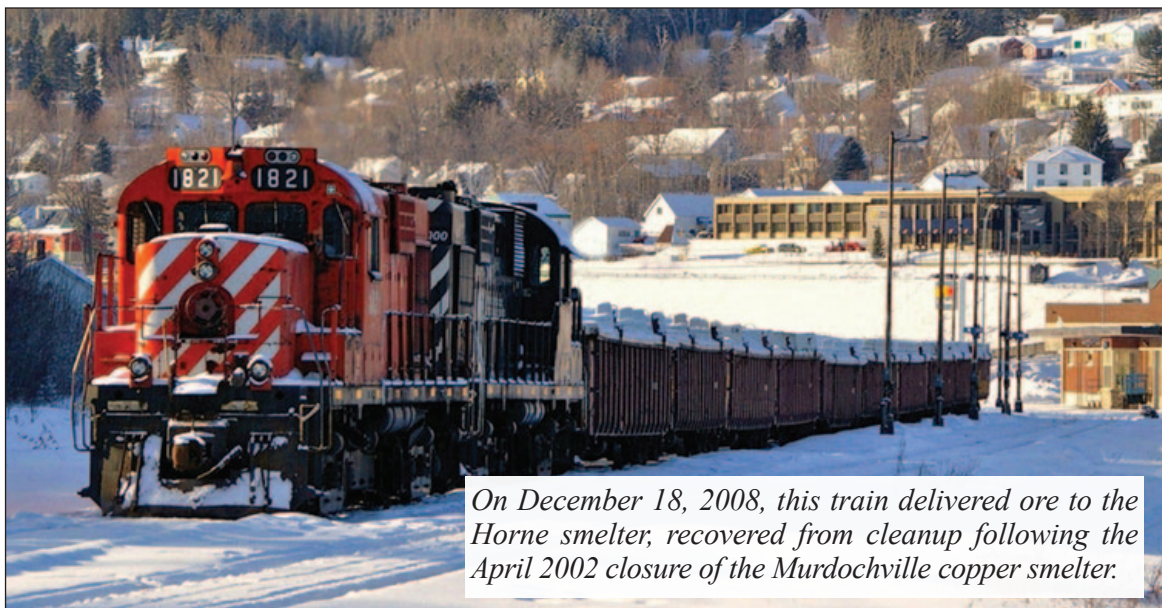
Possible Horne smelter closure by Glencore: No Impact for Osisko

NELSON SERGERIE

NEW RICHMOND – The announcement of the potential closure of the Horne smelter in Rouyn-Noranda in March 2027 does not change Osisko Metals' game plan, which aims to relaunch operations at Mines Gaspé in Murdochville around 2030.

Glencore, the smelter's owner, announced it was suspending investments to reduce emissions in Rouyn-Noranda after the Quebec government declined financial assistance. The Legault government has said it wants to find a way to avoid a closure.

Osisko's chief executive officer, Robert Wares, says it would be "tragic" to see the only Canadian copper smelter



On December 18, 2008, this train delivered ore to the Horne smelter, recovered from cleanup following the April 2002 closure of the Murdochville copper smelter.

Photo: David Morris

close and hopes for an agreement with the Quebec government to maintain operations beyond the date set by the metallurgical giant.

The Horne division also

processes copper ore from Sudbury, Ontario. Osisko has an agreement to sell the ore produced in Murdochville to the multinational firm, whose head office is located in Switzerland.

The potential closure would not affect Osisko's economic plan, since the product could be shipped from Gaspé to Europe rather than by rail from Abitibi-Témiscamingue. Mr. Wares de-

clined to give an interview at this stage.

Impacts on the SCFG

Osisko had indicated before the Christmas holidays that it needed rail to send copper to the smelter in Rouyn-Noranda. Should the Horne smelter close, such a decision will have an impact on the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie (SCFG), which would have gained a valuable ally in convincing the Quebec government of the need to complete the rehabilitation of the railway between Port Daniel and Gaspé.

“When we saw it in the news, it added another layer of

Gaspé: drinking water, arena and Gespeg

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – The arena, the water supply in Anse-au-Griffon and a potential partnership with Gespeg were among the key topics discussed at the Gaspé municipal council meeting on February 2.

The arena is holding up

After a forced closure on December 27, when the ice surface failed and abruptly ended a senior hockey game between the Corsaires de Forillon and the Vikings du Rocher, and additional issues that led to another closure during the weekend of January 9, repairs appear to be holding.

“We hope it will hold up during the Innergex Cup. In that case, we should have had a thaw (by then, in March). It will be more difficult at that point. For now, the ice is holding up, the system is working, and the minor adjustments made by our employees are working. We hope to hold out until the end of the season in



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

The arena continues to be a concern for the municipal administration, as the complex will be used for the Innergex Cup in March.

April,” says Mayor Daniel Côté.

The Innergex Cup tournament is scheduled for March 19 to 22.

If the arena experiences problems again, the town has contingency plans in place.

“Grande-Rivière, Chandler, and Murdochville would be the closest options. When we say it's important to have an arena in Gaspé, it's for these reasons. There is no arena nearby. When people

say, ‘Yeah, but you have two arenas in Gaspé,’ I remind them that it's 12 former municipalities that have merged, and no, it shouldn't hurt us because the distances are astronomical,” argues the mayor.

Meeting with Gespeg

The mayor of Gaspé and the chief of Gespeg, Céline Cassivi, met in January to discuss potential economic partnerships following the

Mi'gmaq First Nation's new economic reserve status obtained just before Christmas.

The mayor said he does not want to interfere in the Nation's internal affairs but sees opportunities for collaboration.

“Beyond political rhetoric and extending a hand, there may now be money involved in the venture, which was more difficult before reserve status and before the Nation had access to various forms of financial assistance. We are beginning to discuss how we can work together,” says the mayor, recalling the close ties between the citizens of Gaspé and the members of the Gespeg Nation.

“We have issues with the arena. We are starting to discuss them. There are economic development issues. Territorial partnerships that we can plan. The sky is the limit. All the issues we see at the municipal level could become inter-community issues, except for basic infrastructure. But we want to do it together, by mutual agreement. Since this is new, we are first agree-

ing on certain ways of doing things,” the mayor continues.

Water in Anse-au-Griffon

Residents in Anse-au-Griffon ran out of water during the last weekend of January, raising concerns among users who have faced supply problems for 15 years.

The mayor noted that the system is a private network owned by a former cooperative.

Water source searches have been conducted without success.

“There are always investigations that we put a lot of pressure on. It takes a municipal network to supply the 40 or so houses in Anse-au-Griffon. If it were easy, it would have been resolved long ago. We have to find water. We have always been pushed towards groundwater. Recently, we were given permission to look for surface water. At least the file is moving in that direction,” says the mayor.

The water remains undrinkable for users of the local supply system.

Step forward for wastewater in Rivière-au-Renard

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – The Town of Gaspé has taken another step forward in its extensive project to rehabilitate the water and sewer systems in the Rivière-au-Renard sector.

Several preliminary measures have been completed in recent years to move the wastewater component toward concrete implementation, including property acquisitions, deforestation and soil testing.

The project has now reached the planning and specifications stage. Council has tabled a notice of motion to proceed with a \$2.3 million investment.

“We will also take advantage of this opportunity to install a septic tank sludge treatment facility. This part is not subsidized. Of the \$2.3 million, almost \$2.1 million is subsidized at 85%. Given the subsidy, I don't think we can pass it up,” says Mayor Daniel Côté.

The wastewater project has been under discussion for about 10 years.

A screening system has been in place since the early 2000s, but it no longer meets current environmental standards. The Town is now planning to install aerated ponds to

properly treat wastewater.

Currently, the Town of Gaspé sends its sludge to Chandler through an agreement with the Régie de traitement des matières résiduelles de la Gaspésie (Gaspé Peninsula Waste Management Board), and to Matane when Chandler cannot accommodate additional volumes.

Under the new plan, sludge from the northern sector, as well as end-of-season overflows, could be treated directly in Rivière-au-Renard.

In its 2026 three-year capital plan, the Town has earmarked \$58.9 million for sewer and water system upgrades in the Rivière-au-Renard sector.

Investments for firefighters

The town of Gaspé is also planning a \$1.1 million investment to renew personal protective equipment for its fire department.

The mayor notes that individual pumps are included in the package.

“It's a range of small equipment that needs to be updated. The equipment is not past its prime, but there are several items that will be past their prime within the next

two years. The bulk of the equipment consists of replacing individual breathing devices,” notes the mayor.

This includes protective masks and oxygen tanks that allow firefighters to enter burning structures safely. That portion alone represents approximately \$500,000 in equipment.

The Town is also continuing to study the possible purchase of a ladder truck to ensure adequate protection for taller buildings. Municipal officials are working with experts to assess the specific needs of a community like Gaspé.

A new fire station is also being planned for the Gaspé area.

Altogether, these items are included in the Town's 2026 three-year capital plan, representing a total investment of \$7.75 million.

The military naval base

Following strong reactions to the idea of positioning Gaspé as a potential site for a naval base, the mayor sought to clarify the situation.

He explained that he simply seized an opportunity presented by the Canadian Navy and urged residents to remain

cautious.

“Before getting excited or upset, can we see what the project is? Right now, there isn't even one. People were suggesting that we consult. I'm willing to consult, but on what project?” says the mayor.

The Town's immediate goal, he added, is to highlight Gaspé's military history during the Second World War.

“On the other hand, I will at least have contributed with a few hundred thousand views

on Facebook to positioning the port of Gaspé as a strategic port and our naval industry as being at the forefront of Canada,” the mayor says.

According to him, Gaspé could serve as a complementary location to the Halifax naval base.

The elected official made it clear that he intends to continue promoting the region's strategic potential.

“No one is going to stop me from putting Gaspé in the spotlight,” he says.

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Rural Regions Fund: Quebec's changes satisfy the Gaspésie region

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON-SUR-MER – After long criticizing the new terms proposed by Quebec for the management of the Rural Regions Fund (FRR), the Table of Prefects of the Gaspésie is satisfied with the changes made by the Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) government.

In the fall of 2025, a consultation tour of municipal associations, municipalities, and partners was conducted to identify the main issues related to the FRR and propose improvements that take into account the reality of the regions, particularly remote MRCs.

"This is excellent news. The FRR is a major lever for developing projects, and we needed to relax the criteria. This will allow us to support more projects, especially in more devitalized municipalities, and to support resources within the MRCs that work to assist municipalities and organizations in the territory," says Mathieu Lapointe, presi-



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

Mathieu Lapointe, president of the Table of Prefects of the Gaspésie, is satisfied with how events have unfolded.

dent of the table, citing the main complaints about the changes suggested by the government at the time.

The Quebec government is implementing adjustments that concern, among other things, the terms and conditions for the payment of financial assistance, assistance rates, and the eligibility of organizations; administrative relief is also planned.

In short, the community's room for manoeuvre is being increased in order to encourage investments that will

stimulate regional development, particularly by offering certain municipalities, especially the smallest ones, budgets that are better suited to their reality and a reduction in their accountability obligations.

"There are still some details to be worked out. We've had a summary presentation. We'll have to wait for all the wording to be finalized to get the details of the projects we'll be able to support," Mr. Lapointe continues.

The MRCs should see an

increase in their financial support, with the Quebec government allocating an annual budget of \$277.5 million.

According to the government of Quebec, the adjustments consist of changes to the terms and conditions of subsidies and the cumulative rates of government assistance, to the benefit of municipal and community organizations, an increase in the assistance rates for component 2 for projects whose applicants are located in the 54 MRCs characterized by greater revitalization challenges, the possibility of supporting projects in the health and education sectors, if they are carried out in a municipality with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants. It will also be possible to pool infrastructure and services.

The new version of the program also includes new distribution of the budget envelope for component 1, in order to increase the amount available for projects that are not part of regional priorities; and a change in the terms and conditions for the payment of

financial assistance for components 2 and 3, in order to add a payment during the 2026-2027 fiscal year based on the progress of expenditures.

The measures are also accompanied by an increase in the rate applicable to eligible administrative expenses of the MRCs and the removal of certain accountability requirements.

"The major irritants have been corrected. For us, this is excellent news and will mean more help for organizations in the region," says Mr. Lapointe.

The Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Gaspé, Stéphane St-Croix, points out that his government took the time to thoroughly analyze the MRCs' requests before revising the program.

"We received the criteria based on the requests of those involved in project development, reviewed the criteria, and made health and education projects eligible. We are proud of how far we have come," says the elected official.

The Wave Centre meets the needs

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – The Eastern Shores School Board's (ESSB) Wakeham Adult and Vocational Education Centre (Wave Centre) in Gaspé is meeting the needs of the region's community.

The centre, which opened in January 2025, replaced the outdated Wakeham Centre. It was custom-designed for training purposes.

"It's a nice change. We're in a new centre. Everything is custom-made. We're seeing a lot more students in general adult education. We're very happy. The Wakeham Centre was six kilometres from downtown. Getting there was difficult for some of our young adults. Where we are at Carrefour (Gaspé), getting around is much easier," ex-



Photo: ESSB

Students in class at the Wave Centre in Gaspé.

plains Colin Henderson, Assistant Director of Adult Education, Vocational Training, and Business Services.

The centre offers general education to complete high school diplomas, as well as a training program in school childcare—a program in high

demand—and, new this year, a hybrid English-language vocational diploma in accounting. Other programs are planned.

"We also offer continuing education from Transport Canada for English-speaking fishermen in the region and

safety training," adds Mr. Henderson.

"We have a lot of ideas and want to offer as many training courses as possible at Wave. We took the word Wave, which stands for Wakeham Adult and Vocational Education," he explains.

In December, the school board, in partnership with the Centre de services scolaire des Chic-Chocs, announced the launch of a new bilingual vocational certificate in shipbuilding this month.

The goal is to meet the high demand for skilled labour in the maritime sector, which is booming thanks to the National Shipbuilding Strategy and major investments.

Training is provided in the classroom, but also through

partnerships with local companies, including Chantier Naval Forillon, Atelier de soudure Gilles Aspirault, and Groupe Océan via Chantier Maritime Verreault. In-company training will account for 20% of the program.

The certificate consists of 570 hours of paid training at up to \$25/hour for 12 participants, six English speakers and six French speakers. Bilingual instruction is designed to help French speakers to learn the terminology in English.

The centre is also preparing additional training programs based on emerging needs in the field.

Rénovation CM de Grande-Vallée was awarded the contract for the layout of the centre's premises at a cost of \$903,000.

Innovative?

Analytical?

Communicative?

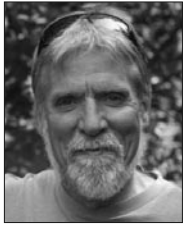
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Gilles Gagné

Commentary

Our commercial fisheries remain vulnerable despite sound revenues

When March is knocking at the door, it is more than time to start thinking about Quebec's commercial fisheries. There is room for both optimism and worry in this sector, which provides employment to close to 4,000 people living in three administrative regions.

Let's start with optimism. Quebec's commercial catches value reached at least \$493 million in 2025. It is a significant improvement compared to the \$376 million recorded in 2024.

In nominal terms, the 2025 results stand as an all-time record. However, in indexed terms, which take into account the effects of inflation, the real record occurred in 2017, with a \$585 million equivalent.

All this to say that money-wise, commercial fisheries contribute heavily to the fate of maritime sectors like the Gaspé Peninsula and the Magdalen Islands, which are part of the same administrative region, the North Shore, a huge territory spanning from Tadoussac to Blanc-Sablon, and, to a much lesser extent, the Lower Saint Lawrence.

Landings of \$493 million, once processed, reach an overall value of close to \$1 billion. That is huge for two regions and the portion of a third one, the east part of Lower Saint Lawrence, populated by slightly less than 400,000 people. In fact, it is closer to 300,000 inhabitants if we include only the part of Lower Saint-Lawrence where commercial fisheries have an economic effect.

Soft spots

The 2025 figures confirm a growing tendency observed over the last decade, lobster and snow crab now monopolize a rising share of Quebec's commercial fisheries revenues. In 2025, even if the statistical results are not official yet, the share tied to the two shellfish amounts to 92% of total landing revenues.

Part of that reality stems from the formidable increase in lobster catches. Fifteen years ago, Quebec

lobster catches were hovering between \$30 million and \$40 million in annual value. Last year, that value reached \$298 million, almost 10 times more. For the first time, Gaspé Peninsula revenues surpassed those of the Magdalen Islands, \$132 million to \$122 million.

Snow crab remained strong at \$155 million in 2025, but it is no longer the undisputed revenue leader it was 10, 20 or 30 years ago.

We can certainly predict at this point that lobster catches will remain at the top of all species landed in Quebec for years, barring a market disaster that is hard to foresee. Lobster was, is and will remain the favourite seafood of North Americans.

Its price, without being accurately predictable, remains relatively stable because, unlike snow crab, there is no real substitute elsewhere in the world. Its price can vary by 10 to 25% between two consecutive years, but rarely more.

Snow crab is different. In a span of two years, it can double or be cut in half. It can be worse or better. In 2021, Gaspesian snow crab fishermen received about \$7 per pound for their catches. By 2023, it had fallen to about \$2.25 and it climbed back to \$7 per pound last year.

Such a roller coaster was not a first, because our Saint Lawrence estuary and gulf snow crab faces strong competition from other species, namely the Alaskan one, which is declining, though, and also from the Barents Sea, where the Russians are quite active. They have practically taken over the Japanese market, as Japanese buyers get better deals from Russian fishermen because of their proximity.

We certainly can't complain about the strength of lobster and snow crab in our commercial fisheries, but we can be worried about the sharp decline of other species such as shrimp, turbot and cod.

Redfish stocks certainly rose between 2010 and the 2024 resumption of commercial catches for that species, but that green light came seven to eight years too late, according to biologists, and the damage to the shrimp stock, as shrimp are redfish prey, was already done.

For now, Quebec's commercial fisheries are strong revenue-wise, but they are vulnerable because they depend essentially on two species.

How about American tariffs?

For thirteen months now, American president Donald Trump has imposed trade tariffs to dozens of countries, including Canada, decisions often based on his morning mood, false economic assumptions or an ill-interpreted quote coming from

another country's stakeholder.

It seems odd that Trump has not hit Canada's commercial fisheries with such tariffs yet.

A close look at recent trends shed light on a reality that would hurt the United States as much as Canada, should tariffs be imposed on our products, mainly shellfish.

Take lobster for example. Americans consume about 300 million pounds of this species annually. South of the border, lobster can only be found along the northeast coast of the United States, essentially in Maine, with negligible catches between that state and New York. Even in Maine, lobster catches have been cut in half over the last 20 years or so, and landings now hovering between 100 and 110 million pounds in most years.

Guess where Americans find the balance of their supply? Yes, they import it from Canada. For lobster alone, it represents about 200 million pounds yearly, coming from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Newfoundland. A chain like Red Lobster is a phenomenal buyer. Can Americans envision Red Lobster being short of the species included in its very name and looking for tens of millions of pounds elsewhere, in places where it doesn't exist?

About 90% of Canada's exported fishery products go to the United States, but 90% of the fishery products imported by the United States come from Canada. The American president probably ignores those numbers, but chances are that he doesn't want to worsen the situation of his country's food consumers by imposing tariffs that would fuel inflation.

Besides, Donald Trump is currently very busy trying to understand the implications of the February 20 Supreme Court decision nullifying the trade tariffs imposed on 100 countries during the spring of 2025, on what he called Liberation Day!

Half of \$250 billion amassed through tariffs are hit by the Supreme Court decision. American companies, who are responsible for collecting tariffs on imports, are asking for reimbursements. Moreover, those companies have already integrated the tariff fee to the goods sold to their customers, who are also likely to ask for reimbursements from the companies. See the real hornet's nest?

Donald Trump really deserves those problems, as he abused power in that case, as in others.

In the meantime, Quebec's commercial fisheries sector will have a better grasp of what to expect in 2026 after the Boston Seafood Show, officially called Seafood Expo North America, held from March 15 to 17 inclusively.

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Police Report

Isaac Moffat Swasson to return to court on March 4

The case of Isaac Moffat Swasson, a 35-year-old man from Listuguj found guilty of several criminal offences in October 2024, was postponed again on January 19 before Quebec Court judge Annie Trudel, who was expecting representations on the sentence that will eventually be imposed.

The January 19 postponement was following a first delay on November 27 at the Quebec City courthouse because there was a new lawyer on the file, retained by Isaac Moffat Swasson around November 20. Judge Trudel wanted to give the defence attorney enough time to get familiar with the case.

"There is no development in the case for now. The defence attorney asked to postpone the case for the same reason invoked the last time (get familiar with the case,)" explains criminal prosecutor Fabien Villemare.

On October 3, 2024, Isaac Moffat Swasson was found guilty of uttering death threats, forcible confinement, aggravated assault and assault with a weapon. The charges were linked to a February 21, 2019 event during which two men living in Listuguj were seriously injured in an altercation with him. He also threatened to cause harm to the family members of one of the victims.

Imprisoned following his arrest, Isaac Moffat Swasson caused extensive damage to the New Carlisle prison on April 30, 2019, forcing its temporary closure due to a police intervention that required the use of pepper spray before his arrest. Electronic devices and plumbing elements were heavily damaged. A section that could house eight inmates was damaged to such an extent that it took Quebec's Department of Public Security years to repair it. Isaac Moffat Swasson was therefore charged with mischief of over \$5,000 and intimidation, the latter charge pertaining to the intervention of police officers and prison guards that day.

Over the years, several defence attorneys were retained by Isaac Moffat Swasson, but none remained long enough to conduct the case to the end of the proceedings. He represented himself most of the time until the third week of November. Louis Belliard is now the defence attorney.

Fabien Villemare will ask judge Trudel to declare Isaac Moffat Swasson a dangerous offender under section 753(1) of the Criminal code and impose a sentence of detention in a penitentiary for an undetermined period, and render any order that complies with the standards of justice. He is relying on an assessment carried out by experts at Montreal's Louis-Philippe-Pinel Institute to support his request. Mr. Villemare based his arguments on the February 2019 assault in Listuguj to formulate his detention request.

Drug bust carried out in 2022 reaches court conclusion

Pierre-Luc Synnott-Savage, of Gaspé, was recently sentenced to 15 months in prison after pleading guilty to drug-related charges at the Percé courthouse. Judge Éric Morin, of the Quebec Court approved the agreement, adding an 18-month probation period, 12 of which are to be served with supervision.

Based on a CHNC report, the judge cited the sale of hard drugs, which causes devastating damage to society, as an aggravating factor. Judge Morin acknowledged that the sentence could have been harsher, but Synnott-Savage's guilty plea, sincere remorse and acceptance of responsibility, were taken into account.

In September 2022, following police surveillance, the Sûreté du Québec raided the suspect's home. Forty-eight grams of cocaine, 584 grams of cannabis, 60 grams

of hashish, brass knuckles and cash were seized. The court also confiscated \$13,430.

2021 seizure of pornographic material case leads to judgement

Sylvain Duquette, 65, from Gaspé, was recently found guilty on two counts of possession and distribution of child pornography at the Percé courthouse.

According to CHNC, while delivering his verdict, Quebec Court judge Éric Morin said he did not believe the accused, who claimed during his trial that he was unaware he possessed such material obtained through the Shareaza software and that any files he acquired by mistake during file transfers were deleted immediately or whenever he had the time. Duquette's testimony contained numerous inconsistencies, judge Morin stated.

During a search of the man's home in Gaspé on November 11, 2021, police discovered 108 classified files of child pornography on various computer storage devices.

Judge Morin strongly advised Duquette, who appeared at his trial without a lawyer, to find legal counsel for the sentencing hearing scheduled for June 4. Pre-sentence and sex offender risk assessment reports have been ordered.

Newport drug bust will likely lead to charges

Following an investigation launched last January, and thanks to information received from the public, police officers from the Rocher-Percé Regional County Municipality (MRC) conducted a February 6 search at a residence located on Route 132 in the Newport area.

The operation resulted in the seizure of a quantity of cocaine, psilocybin mushrooms, illicit cannabis, prescription medications, approximately 400 contraband cigarettes, \$400 in Canadian currency, and drug trafficking paraphernalia.

A 31-year-old man from Newport was arrested during the raid. He was released following legal proceedings. He could face charges related to drug trafficking and violations of the Tobacco Tax Act.

Anyone with information related to drug trafficking or illicit tobacco smuggling can communicate it confidentially to the Sûreté du Québec's Criminal Information Centre at 1-800-659-4264.

Saint-Elzéar man charged with possession of pornographic material

Yan-Éric Bélanger, a resident of Saint-Elzéar, was charged with producing child sexual abuse and exploitation material on February 17 at the New Carlisle courthouse.

Officers from the Chandler Major Crimes Unit executed a search warrant at the 28-year-old suspect's home, also on February 17. Computer equipment was seized for analysis.

Bélanger was released under strict conditions, including not being in the presence of or communicating with minors except under the supervision of the Youth Protection Services (DPJ), not possessing or using any software capable of altering digital images or photographs, and not using social media.

As the investigation is ongoing, further charges could be laid against the suspect, who is scheduled to return to court on March 30.

The return to class for students at Bourg School in Carleton-sur-Mer is going well

NELSON SERGERIE

MARIA – After a forced nine-day break caused by a fire at Bourg School in Carleton-sur-Mer, 172 students had what officials described as a "second first day of school" on February 6 at their temporary location, Saint-Paul School in Maria.

"It's going really well. I asked the principal what word she would use to describe this second start of school, and she said 'success,'" says Sandra Nicol, director of the René-Lévesque School Service Centre.



Saint-Paul School in Maria.

Photo: Octave Thibault, CHNC

"The students were happy to see their new classrooms, to be reunited with the staff and their friends, to have a life again. Our teachers were also eager to welcome them, and the

parents were grateful and reassured," the director continues.

An open house held on February 5 helped reassure families ahead of the return.

Psychosocial services were offered to those affected by the forced evacuation on January 26, when a fire damaged part of the Bourg School building.

Only a few students made use of the service.

What's next for Bourg School

An assessment by loss adjusters is expected in the coming days, which will help

determine the scope of the work required and establish timelines for the next steps.

Asbestos was discovered in the school, which is not surprising for a building erected in 1948.

Asbestos is not dangerous as long as it is not handled.

"Special measures must be taken for the work," says Ms. Nicol.

The service centre is not yet able to estimate the cost of demolition and reconstruction.

It is now confirmed that Bourg School students will complete the school year in Maria.

Please be advised that the SPEC office will be closed from March 2 - 6 inclusively. Our next issue will be mailed out on March 11.

Logements HAN has two projects underway

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CHANDLER – Construction work is well underway by Logements HAN in Chandler and New Richmond. Additional expansion projects are also in planning.

In Chandler, 48 accessible and affordable housing units are under construction, representing an investment of \$14.4 million. The six complexes will include 36 three-and-a-half-room units and 12 four-and-a-half-room units, with occupancy expected to begin in the summer of 2027.

"We are very pleased to have been able to start pre-development work in December. Financing is always the most difficult part. Our business model starts with the donation of land offered by the Town of Chandler. It's never easy," notes Logements HAN president and chief executive officer, Anik Roy Trudel.

The community's contribution requires between \$400,000 and \$500,000 to complete the financial pack-



Photo: N. Sergerie

age.

"We already have \$80,000. We have donations from the Caisse populaire, La Maison du pêcheur, VIA, and Rona Maurice Goupil. We have a special coffee from Mich Café. Things are going well. It's still an ambitious goal. We don't expect all the donations to come from the community. The more we have in the community, the easier it will be to knock on the doors of large foundations," explains Ms. Roy Trudel.

Over the next few weeks, several small campaigns will

be launched to raise the necessary funds.

New Richmond and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts

Construction has also begun on the 40-unit housing project on the extension of Rue des Cèdres in New Richmond. Local fundraising is not yet underway, but preparations are in progress. The construction cost is estimated at \$12.5 million, following the same design as the Gaspé complexes. A local fundraising campaign will still be required, targeting \$450,000

to \$500,000.

Meanwhile, in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, the search for funding to launch the project to build 48 housing units continues.

"We have some promising avenues. I am optimistic that we will receive positive responses this spring. We are still looking for potential funding partners. But nothing is set in stone. Our goal is to start as soon as we receive a positive response for funding. We are ready. We hope to announce good news soon," explains Anik Roy Trudel.

Avignon in the discussions

Logements HAN is continuing discussions with various stakeholders interested in obtaining such a complex in the Avignon MRC.

"We've had several good conversations with various municipalities, but nothing concrete to say that we're moving forward. We are not closed off to the idea at all. We are talking more about projects for

2027 or 2028. As long as there is demand, people are interested, and we are able to secure funding, we say, why not? It is our mission to provide adapted and affordable housing in Quebec," says Ms. Roy Trudel.

Phase 2 in Gaspé

She also mentions a phase 2 for Gaspé, as the last leases were recently signed for the final available apartments in phase 1.

"Sometime later this year or next year on the same land. A minimum of 16 units and a maximum of 24, depending on the potential of the land," suggests the manager. Phase 1 includes 32 units and costs \$10.3 million.

There is currently a shortage of approximately 420,000 units across various regions of Quebec. "HAN Housing wants to help solve this part of the housing crisis, which concerns housing adapted for people with disabilities and seniors who cannot find suitable housing," says the president and CEO.

Electoral map: the Supreme Court gets involved

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – The regional respondent in the legal saga surrounding the redrawing of the provincial electoral map is cautiously optimistic after the Supreme Court of Canada agreed to hear the dispute concerning the law that halted the map revision process in May 2024.

On February 16, the Supreme Court accepted the Quebec government's request to expedite its application for leave to appeal.

In its decision, the court stated that the schedule for the service and filing of appeal documents will be set by the registrar, who has set the date for April 22.

The country's highest court will have to consider the law passed by the National Assembly in May 2024, which maintained the status quo on the electoral map after an initial scenario that would have resulted in the loss of a riding in the Gaspé Peninsula.

The Superior Court upheld the legislation. However, the Court of Appeal overturned that ruling last December and struck down the law.

In the hours following that decision, the Electoral Representation Commission finalized the new electoral map. The revised boundaries eliminate one



Photo: N. Sergerie

Daniel Côté.

riding in Gaspésie and one in Montreal, while creating two new ridings in Centre-du-Québec and the Laurentians. The changes were made official by decree on January 14.

The Quebec government requested permission to appeal to the Supreme Court on December 23.

"This is good news. If the Supreme Court agrees to hear the case, it means that it sees something wrong with the Court of Appeal's decision. Otherwise, it would have quickly confirmed the Court of Appeal's decision," says Daniel Côté, who has not often seen the Supreme Court make a quick decision on an appeal.

"It's also good news because it could prevent us from

going ahead with an election in 2026 with the new map that takes away one of our ridings. It's a sign that the game isn't over yet on the legal front," he adds.

However, Mr. Côté maintains that the ultimate solution lies with Quebec's elected officials. "I maintain the same position. The Quebec National Assembly already has the legislative power to come up with a new way of calculating the map, to provide for exceptional ridings, to determine the number of members required, and to avoid these endless debates while protecting the two ridings of the Gaspé Peninsula. There are parliamentary and legislative mechanisms that existed even before the Supreme Court's decision," believes the trained lawyer.

In his view, the question before the Supreme Court is straightforward. "The Supreme Court will not say whether the map is good or bad. It will say whether the National Assembly had the power to suspend the work of the electoral reform commission. That's all there is to it," says Mr. Côté.

"There is still a chance that it will say yes," he believes. He describes the legal debate as compelling.

"The Court of Appeal ruled that it was invalid because there were means that the National

Assembly could have used that were less detrimental to the democratic system. The National Assembly could have passed a law preserving the two ridings in the Gaspé Peninsula. That's what we're asking for. It's an interpretation that the Court of Appeal found very acceptable," says the mayor.

The Chief Electoral Officer is asking the Supreme Court to clarify the powers of the National Assembly with regard to the electoral map. "I think it could be interesting," says Mr.

Côté, who does not believe that the Supreme Court will go so far as to review the criteria of the 1991 Carter decision on electoral representation.

"Since it agreed to hear the case as a matter of urgency, I'm not sure it will extend its reach into the sphere of representation. It's a fascinating case," he concludes.

The hearing will be held virtually. Daniel Côté will not participate in the proceedings, just as he did not take part in the previous stages.

OSISKO:

Cont'd from Cover

uncertainty. We see how interdependent we are with what's happening in the province. We don't want to get too alarmed. We understand that discussions are underway. The smelter isn't going to close tomorrow morning. We're hoping for an agreement so that we can work on developing ore transport," comments the SCFG president, Éric Dubé.

Even if Osisko were no longer a potential customer, the rail rehabilitation remains crucial.

"There's more traffic than that. LM Wind Power is still there and could put blades on the train. There are several

discussions with others. The more potential there is, the better the chances. That's what Transport minister Jonatan Julien told us in December when they sent the ministry back to do its homework for the feasibility study. That's what we're working on. It doesn't just depend on one company, but it (the potential closure of the Horne smelter) will certainly have an impact," he says.

Mr. Dubé notes that the economy is experiencing upheaval, particularly in the last year with the arrival of American president Donald Trump.

The SCFG president points out that rail travels in both directions, so inputs for businesses could also come to the Gaspé Peninsula by rail.

The Table of Prefects

condemns cuts to public transportation

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CARLETON-SUR-MER — The \$200 million cut to the public transportation assistance program by François Legault's Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) government has been condemned by the Table of Prefects of the Gaspésie.

The reduction will translate into a \$300,000 loss in government support for the Régie intermunicipale de transport Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine (RÉGÎM), applied retroactively to the 2025 budget.

"These cuts are very painful for regions that offer public transit. We are asking the Department of Transportation to restore its subsidy to the planned level. In addition, this cut comes after the fiscal year has ended. We need these funds at the RÉGÎM," says Table of Prefects president Mathieu Lapointe.

The committee noted that regional public transit represents only eight per cent of the total provincial transit budget.

"So much money is allocated to transit organizations in large cities. Some of it must go to the regions. Cutting funding in the regions is not the right solution," adds the president.

The RÉGÎM no longer has a financial cushion to absorb additional deficits.

In addition, the Quebec government has refused to increase the fuel tax from one



Photo: N. Sergerie

Orléans Express has no plans to reduce its services in the Gaspé Peninsula despite cuts to the program to offset deficits on regional routes.

cent to two cents per litre to finance operations.

The last potential revenue tool is a vehicle registration tax.

"This solution is currently being analyzed. It requires validation by all the MRCs. We are considering whether to pursue this option," says Mr. Lapointe.

Concerns over interregional transportation

The Bus Carriers Federation, of which Orléans Express is a member, also denounced the cuts.

The federation warns that the \$200 million cut could force carriers to suspend services on certain regional routes.

Financial assistance per deficit route would be significantly reduced. "The pro-

gram makes funds available to maintain services when the deficit is too large and the solution would be to reduce services. The aid would drop from \$185,000 to \$125,000 per line per year, while costs are rising," calculates Vice President Nicolas Maheux.

Keolis Canada, which operates Orléans Express, sought to reassure customers. "Keolis Canada fully understands the concern that a reduction in public transit funding can cause. For Keolis Canada and Orléans Express, the regions are at the heart of our concerns. That is why we want to confirm that Orléans Express will continue to serve the entire Gaspésie region.

We know how essential our services are to the mobility of its residents, and no changes are planned regarding our stops in the region," says Martin Latulippe, Director of Operations, Intercity Transportation, in an email.

In 2015, following previous cutbacks, departures from the Gaspésie region to major centres were reduced from six to two, and the number of municipalities served dropped to 13.

Despite those assurances, the committee says it will remain vigilant. "Everything related to public transportation in the region and interregional transportation is weakened by these announcements. We will monitor this closely so as not to lose service at the RÉGÎM level, but also at the Orléans Express transportation level," says Mr. Lapointe.

In the Gaspé Peninsula, the Quebec government has been contributing \$120,000 per year for the past 10 years to Orléans to maintain service between Grande-Rivière and Gaspé, including Percé. The MRCs provide additional support, bringing the total annual contribution to \$165,000.

Government response

Transportation Minister Jonatan Julien said on Febru-

ary 6 that no further cuts to public transit are planned.

The government did indeed reduce the available budget from \$1.2 billion to just under \$1 billion, drawing criticism.

However, the minister indicates that "\$750 million has actually been used [by cities] and no eligible projects have been rejected," he writes on X.

He indicates that organizations that have already applied under the old 2025 criteria will be "compensated" if necessary, the minister assures.

However, the president of RÉGÎM, Daniel Côté, believes it is far from certain that the 2025 deficit will be eliminated.

"We don't know any of the terms associated with this commitment from Minister Julien. We are in a unique situation. We are a municipal body. We are not a non-profit organization. A municipal organization cannot adopt deficit financial statements. To balance the budget, we had appropriated the remaining surplus. Will we be penalized because we are a municipal structure and had a small cushion? I hope not," says Mr. Côté, who has not yet seen the details of this announcement and wants to know them before celebrating.

Coalition's hearing about VIA Rail postponed until March

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ - The hearing of the Coalition for the return of passenger rail service in the Gaspé Peninsula, scheduled for February 11 in Ottawa, has been postponed.

The tragic events of February 10 in Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia, which claimed eight lives, led Parliament to suspend all business on February 11. The question period was cancelled and replaced by a moment of silence. Following this, Members of Parliament (MPs) made statements related to the tragedy.

According to Bloc Québécois MP Alexis Deschênes, representing Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj, VIA Rail's next hearing could take place during the week of March 9. The House of Commons Standing Committee on Transportation will hold its next meeting on February 23, but VIA Rail representatives were unavailable for that date.

The coalition wants to know why VIA Rail has not resumed service between Matapedia and Port Daniel, now that the track is repaired and freight trains are running. The service would restore passenger rail connections that have been missing since December 2011 between New Carlisle and Gaspé, and since September 2013 between Matapedia and New Carlisle.

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AVIS PUBLIC est, par les présentes, donné par le soussigné, David Bourdages, en sa qualité de greffier-trésorier de la Municipalité Régionale de Comté Avignon, que les immeubles ci-après désignés seront vendus à l'enchère publique, selon les dispositions du Code municipal, au bureau de la MRC, 473, boulevard Perron, Maria (Québec), G0C 1Y0, le neuvième jour du mois d'avril 2026 (**9 avril 2026**) à **10 h a.m.** pour satisfaire aux taxes municipales et scolaires impayées, avec intérêts, pénalité, et frais encours, à moins que ces taxes, intérêts, pénalité et frais ne soient payés avant la vente (selon les sommes qui seront dues au moment du paiement).

Ces immeubles seront vendus avec bâtisses dessus construites, s'il y a lieu, circonstances et dépendances, sujets à toutes servitudes actives ou passives, apparentes ou occultes pouvant les affecter.

Le prix de l'adjudication et les frais de chacun de ces immeubles seront payables au moment de l'adjudication soit en monnaie légale du Canada ou par chèque visé ou mandat poste.

Les immeubles acquis dans le cadre de la vente pour taxes sont assujettis à un droit de retrait pendant une période d'un (1) an suivant la date d'adjudication (art. 1057 et suivants du Code municipal).

Note importante – Pour éviter la vente d'un immeuble, un paiement complet (capital, intérêts, pénalité et frais) doit être fait directement à la MRC Avignon. Si le paiement est fait par voie électronique, il appartient à la personne concernée, d'une part, de s'informer auprès de la MRC du montant total dû (à la date du paiement) en capital, intérêts, pénalité et frais et, d'autre part, d'en informer la MRC (en faisant clairement la preuve du paiement) pour que le processus puisse être interrompu.

AVIS IMPORTANT POUR TOUTE PERSONNE DEVANT SE PORTER ADJUDICATAIRE D'UN IMMEUBLE

La taxe fédérale sur les produits et services (TPS) et la taxe de vente provinciale (TVQ) s'appliquent à la vente pour taxes sauf s'il s'agit d'un immeuble d'habitation. L'adjudicataire d'un immeuble taxable qui est un inscrit auprès des gouvernements eu égard à ces taxes doit fournir ses numéros d'inscription ainsi que la preuve que ceux-ci sont valides le jour de l'adjudication. Une version imprimée des sites gouvernementaux où cette validation aura été faite le jour de l'adjudication devra être remise lors du paiement du prix de vente de son adjudication. La validation doit être faite sur les sites Web suivants : <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/esrvc-srvce/tx/bsnss/gsthstrgstry/menu-fra.html> http://www.revenuquebec.ca/fr/sepf/services/sgp_validation_tvq/default.aspx

Conditions pour enchérir Personne physique : (pièce d'identité) - Nom, date de naissance, adresse résidentielle complète et postale, s'il y a lieu, mandat ou procuration si elle représente une autre personne physique. **Personne morale :** Nom, forme juridique et loi constitutive (no NEQ), adresse complète et postale du siège social, s'il y a lieu **ET Pour le représentant d'une personne morale :** (pièce d'identité) – Nom, qualité du représentant (mandataire), copie de la pièce justificative l'autorisant à agir (ex : résolution, mandat, procuration ou autre).

Mode de paiement : Argent comptant, mandat poste, traite ou mandat bancaire ou chèque visé fait à l'ordre de la MRC Avignon.

Donné à Maria, au bureau de la Municipalité Régionale de Comté d'Avignon, ce 6e jour de février 2026 (2026-02-06).

David Bourdages
Directeur général et greffier-trésorier
MRC d'Avignon
473, boulevard Perron
Maria (Québec) G0C 1Y0

SECTEUR L'ASCENSION-DE-PATAPÉDIA	TOTAL :	2,711.79 \$	SECTEUR MATAPÉDIA
HERNANDEZ ORELLANA, Salvador Isaac, & CARON BARNES, Stéphanie. 5, route du Chamberland. Matricule 2310-78-0860.	KENNY, Michel. 143, boulevard Perron. Matricule 1435-82-6783.		CHABOT, Danie. 242, chemin Riverside. Matricule 4513-70-9773.
Lot 5 463 915 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.	Lot 4 733 141 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.		Lot 5 630 485 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.
MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 842.44 \$ TAXES SCOLAIRES : 278.10 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$ TOTAL : 1,327.33 \$	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2,456.79 \$ TAXES SCOLAIRES : 243.99 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$ TOTAL : 2,907.57 \$		MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 836.51 \$ TAXES SCOLAIRES : 26.64 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$ TOTAL : 1,069.94 \$
SECTEUR MARIA	LABRIE, Guy. Rue des Grands-Ducs. Matricule 1839-45-6786.		OLSCAMP, Guy. 17, rue du Ruisselet. Matricule 4515-35-3916.
BEAULIEU-LEFEBVRE, Vanessa. 493, rue des Sittelles. Matricule 1738-16-2958.	Lot 4 733 544 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.		Lot 5 630 608 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.
Lot 4 732 924 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 167.11 \$ TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$ TOTAL : 373.90 \$		MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1,366.08 \$ TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$ TOTAL : 1,572.87 \$
MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2,378.47 \$ TAXES SCOLAIRES : 101.74 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$ TOTAL : 2,687.00 \$	PORLIER, Léopold. Boulevard Perron. Matricule 1434-45-3563.		SECTEUR NOUVELLE
BOURGOIN, Louis. 82, rue des Étourneaux. Matricule 1738-47-0849.	Lot 4 732 752 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.		BERNARD, Jonathan. Rue des Érables Est. Matricule 9133-32-7638.
Lot 4 733 128 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 450.75 \$ TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$ TOTAL : 657.54 \$		Lots 5 874 987, 5 875 626, 5 875 627, 5 875 631, 5 875 635 & 5 875 636 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.
MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2,406.58 \$ TAXES SCOLAIRES : 98.42 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$			MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1,897.27 \$

TAXES SCOLAIRES : 163.03 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 2,267.09 \$

SECTEUR POINTE-À-LA-CROIX

BOUDREAU, Mélanie. 568, chemin de la Petite-Rivière-du-Loup. Matricule 6228-89-1942.

Lot 6 177 876 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2,058.43 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 116.85 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 2,382.07 \$

CAISSY, Mike, 86, boulevard Interprovincial. Matricule 6420-67-7819.

Lot 6 178 336 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 398.37 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 605.16 \$

CHAMBERLAIN, Danny. 10, rue Blais. Matricule 6421-40-6248.

Lot 6 178 176 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 241.98 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 448.77 \$

HACHÉ, Nadine. 27, rue Sarto. Matricule 6520-61-7539.

Lot 6 178 417 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 481.80 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 688.59 \$

LANDRY, Cathy. 467, boulevard Perron Est. Matricule 7425-00-9501.

Lot 6 033 743 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1,532.27 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 75.04 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 1,814.10 \$

LANDRY, Mélanie. 488, chemin de la Petite-Rivière-du-Loup. Matricule 6327-21-7099.

Lot 6 177 856 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2,198.77 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 122.42 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 2,527.98 \$

LEPAGE, Joël. 31, rue de la Mer. Matricule 6520-70-6158.

Lot 6 583 240 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 4,051.20 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 115.91 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 4,373.90 \$

LÉVESQUE, Lionel, OUELLETTE, Corinne & LÉVESQUE, Gaétane. 42, rue Sarto. Matricule 6520-81-5376.

Lot 6 178 443 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 615.83 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 822.62 \$

MCGRATH, Jonathan. 26, rue Berthelot. Matricule 6420-37-7563.

Lot 6 178 266 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 820.86 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 1,027.65 \$

MIOUSSE, Marcel, 517, chemin de la Petite-Rivière-du-Loup. Matricule 6327-07-0446.

Lot 6 177 866 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 983.50 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 1,190.29 \$

PHILIPPE, Éric & LÉVESQUE, Isabelle. 894, rue Principale. Matricule 6433-77-7768.

Lot 6 178 064 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1,028.74 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 34.59 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 1,270.12 \$

SAVOIE, Jean-Roch. 291, chemin de la Petite-Rivière-du-Loup. Matricule 6324-53-2724.

Lot 6 177 812 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 3,203.82 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 6.77 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 3,417.38 \$

SAVOIE, Jean-Roch. Chemin de la Petite-Rivière-du-Loup. Matricule 6324-12-8054.

Lot 6 177 999 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 370.86 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 577.65 \$

SECTEUR ST-ALEXIS-DE-MATAPÉDIA

BOISSONNAULT, Marie-Pier. 200, rue Principale. Matricule 3814-14-7025.

Lot 5 629 789 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2,218.50 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 62.06 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 2,487.35 \$

BOSSÉ, Mathieu. 199, rue Principale. Matricule 3814-14-4080.

Lot 5 629 767 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2,271.64 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 54.31 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 2,532.74 \$

GALLANT, Régis. 170, route Léonard. Matricule 4012-88-6505.

Lot 5 630 028 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 0 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 113.43 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 320.22 \$

GESTION EVS INC. (ROBICHAUD, Ève). 199, route Léonard. Matricule 4113-63-6619.

Lot 5 630 062 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1,278.55 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 38.30 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 1,523.64 \$

LÉVESQUE, Sacha. 168-168A, rang Saint-Benoit. Matricule 3417-67-8712.

Lot 5 630 903 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 719.05 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 925.84 \$

SECTEUR ST-FRANÇOIS D'ASSISE

BOSSÉ, Mathieu. 104, rue des Bouleaux. Matricule 2916-51-5824.

Lot 5 463 224 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 3,071.11 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 171.83 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 3,395.73 \$

LANDRY, Yoland. 406, chemin Central. Matricule 3016-20-1710.

Lot 5 463 430 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1,650.04 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 33.61 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 1,890.44 \$

MICHAUD, Laurent. Rang 6. Matricule 3015-37-8246.

Lot 5 463 456 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 43.94 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 250.73 \$

ST-ONGE, Jean-Paul. 153, rang St-Jean. Matricule 2613-22-9823.

Lot 5 463 502 au cadastre du Québec, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 2.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1,083.18 \$
TAXES SCOLAIRES : 0 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 206.79 \$
TOTAL : 1,289.97 \$

*Certains frais s'ajouteront à ce montant et leur paiement doit être effectué pour empêcher la vente. Il en est de même de tout montant qui deviendrait exigible après cette dernière date de même que des intérêts et pénalité qui devront être calculés au moment du paiement. L'ensemble de ces taxes, frais, intérêts et pénalité seront par ailleurs annoncés au moment de la vente.

David Bourdages
Directeur général et greffier-trésorier
MRC d'Avignon
473, boulevard Perron
Maria (Québec) G0C 1Y0

Electoral map: \$81,000 to defend the Gaspé

NELSON SERGERIE

CARLETON-SUR-MER – The Gaspésie Table of Prefects has invested \$81,813 to date to defend the retention of two electoral ridings in the region, while the Electoral Representation Commission has ruled that only one riding will survive after the final map was submitted in January.

On December 2, the commission submitted a map that maintained the abolition of one electoral riding in Gaspésie, merging Bonaventure and Gaspé and sending Haute-Gaspésie to Matane-Matapédia.

The first proposal announcing this scenario had been submitted in September 2023.

From that point on, the region took action to denounce this loss and demand public hearings in the region to make the Gaspé Peninsula's point of view heard.

Despite everything, the commission maintained its position.

Meanwhile, in May 2024, the elected Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) unanimously passed a law maintaining the current electoral boundaries for the 2026 election.

Elected officials from the Laurentians and Centre-du-Québec, which each gained a riding in the new redistribution thanks to the elimination of a riding in Montreal and in the Gaspé Peninsula, as well as various organizations, challenged this law in the Superior Court, without success.

However, the appeal process ended in a reversal of the situation, allowing the commission to file its revised map in December, which was made official by decree on January 14, with its publication in the Gazette Officielle.

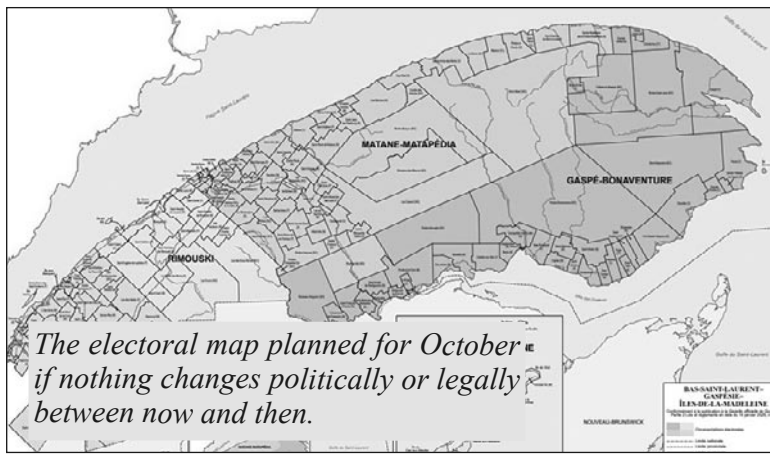
Just before the holiday break, the Quebec government asked the Supreme Court for permission to appeal the Court of Appeal's decision.

The country's highest court has not yet ruled on that request.

According to the Supreme Court's website, the court's docket is set for the end of May.

The Table of Prefects de la Gaspésie expressed its support for the Quebec government during these legal proceedings before the first two courts, resulting in a total bill of \$81,213.14 paid to date.

"This was a necessary step. The region had to show its sup-



port for the Quebec government's actions. We must continue in this direction. We are evaluating our options for the Supreme Court," explains the president of the table, Mathieu Lapointe.

For the table, it is important that the region make its voice heard both legally and politically on the importance of keeping the two Gaspésie ridings.

As deadlines stretch out, officials say the solution must ultimately come through political action.

"Yes, there is the legal route with its long delays. We believe that to resolve this situation, it must go through the political route with the tabling of a bill in the National Assembly to guarantee two ridings in Gaspésie. That is our wish. That is our request. We

have been working hard on this for several weeks," says Mr. Lapointe, who expects regional solidarity on the issue.

"The law, as it stands, does not allow commissioners to recognize our situation under the current criteria. That is why we must review the criteria to guarantee two ridings in Gaspésie," concludes Mr. Lapointe.

In Quebec City, a consensus appeared to be emerging at the beginning of the year to increase the number of seats in the National Assembly to 127. The proposal would add two ridings provided for in the new map while preserving the two ridings in Gaspésie and the one in Montreal.

Impact of the new map

Under the new map,

Gaspé-Bonaventure would have a positive deviation of 11.6%, while the other ridings in eastern Quebec would have a deviation within the provincial average, with the exception of the Magdalen Islands, which maintain their exceptional status under the law with a negative deviation of 78.0%.

Furthermore, regarding the exceptional status enshrined in the election law, the commission is of the opinion that "if such status were granted to the ridings of Gaspé and Bonaventure, other ridings in Quebec should also benefit from it. Indeed, they are not the only ones with a special situation in Quebec. Nearly 20 electoral districts are distinguished by one or more specific geographical characteristics, such as their size, their extent, the number of municipalities they encompass, their distance from the National Assembly, or the size of their urban centre. Increasing the number of exceptions in the Act is not desirable, as it would diminish the exceptional nature of the ridings concerned and significantly increase inequalities in representation."

The new map will be in effect for the October 5 election.

No cause for concern about measles in Gaspésie

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – Although a case of measles was detected in Bas-Saint-Laurent in January, it is unlikely that the virus will take hold in Gaspésie.

At least, that is the assumption of the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine Public Health Department. The region's population is well protected against this disease.

"Concerned? Yes and no. Basically, measles is a disease that we don't like. Almost everyone has forgotten about it because we haven't had it in decades. It's an extremely contagious disease. A group that has not had the disease or is not vaccinated will see it spread rapidly. It could have serious consequences that could be fatal for one in 3,000 people," comments Public Health Medical Advisor, Dr. Jean-François Lefebvre.

In the region, almost the entire population is vaccinated.

"More than 95% of our young people are vaccinated. It is very, very rare to catch it

when you are vaccinated, and if you do catch it, it will be less severe. Everyone born before 1970 is considered to have had it because it was so contagious at the time when there was no vaccine," summarizes the specialist on the state of protection in the region.

Measles had been eliminated from Canada and North America thanks to vaccination.

"Unfortunately, it is so contagious that as soon as the vaccination rate drops, it spreads. If you are vaccinated, you don't have to worry about measles," Dr. Lefebvre continues.

Young people receive the vaccine at 1 year and 18 months of age, with a booster shot in high school if they haven't been immunized.

"We are a particularly well-vaccinated population in the Gaspé Peninsula compared to the rest of Quebec. We are at 97% or 98%. These are rates that allow us to avoid outbreaks," says Dr. Lefebvre. Symptoms of the disease ap-

pear 10 to 14 days after exposure. Fever, runny nose, and cough develop, followed by a rash that begins on the face and spreads down the body. The eyes also become red.

Respiratory viruses

After peaking during the holidays, the flu has subsided, and the worst seems to be behind us. COVID-19 did not peak significantly: the virus gradually increased and decreased.

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a slightly greater concern, with cases on the rise.

"The good news about RSV is that we have means of protection that we didn't have two years ago. It is a particularly troublesome virus in very young children, newborns, and the elderly. Since last October, babies have been receiving an antibody to protect them and prevent bronchiolitis. The elderly have had the opportunity to be vaccinated," explains Dr. Lefebvre.

New tax credit in Carleton

Nelson Sergerie

CARLETON-SUR-MER – Residents of intergenerational homes will enjoy a tax break in Carleton-sur-Mer, following a request made by citizens. On February 9, the municipal council adopted a resolution creating a tax credit for water and sewer services. Under the measure, a home that brings together, for example, parents and children or siblings in a duplex would pay only one service tax instead of two.

"When there are two dwellings, two service taxes are charged. We will refund one of the two taxes in situations where members of the same family live in intergenerational housing," says Mayor Mathieu Lapointe.

The town is currently unable to determine the exact impact on municipal revenues, but an initial estimate places it between \$10,000 and \$20,000. Between 12 and 25 residences could benefit from the measure. "It's something we can afford within the budget. It's been under consideration for a while. We'll have the exact figure after the first year," adds the mayor.

A new fire truck

Carleton-sur-Mer will purchase a new fire truck to renew its fire protection fleet.

The town has allocated \$908,000 for the acquisition, which includes studies to determine specifications and equipment needs.

The increase in costs is partly due to some equipment being sourced from the United States, even though the trucks are assembled in Quebec. "We want to replace a 20-year-old truck. It had reached the end of its useful life," explains the mayor.

Even though Carleton-sur-Mer has joined the Avignon-Est Fire Department, each municipality remains responsible for its own equipment.

At the end of the five-year agreement, that arrangement could be reviewed "There is no great inequity in the territory. Eventually, it could simplify things to have everything grouped together in the same organization," says Mr. Lapointe.

High gas prices: another report confirms it

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – Year after year, it's the same story at the gas pump: motorists in the Gaspé Peninsula, and Gaspé in particular, pay far more for gasoline than elsewhere in Quebec, according to yet another report.

The Régie de l'énergie du Québec's annual report on the retail gasoline market highlights what critics describe as excessive profits by gas retailers in the region.

In 2025, the average price in the Gaspé Peninsula was \$1.58 per litre, compared with the Quebec average of \$1.53. This ranks the region second among the provinces' highest-priced areas. Northern Quebec ranked first due to transportation costs, while Montreal tied with the Gaspé Peninsula at \$1.58 per litre.

The higher price in Montreal is explained by additional taxes for public transit. That makes it even more difficult to justify the high prices in the Gaspé Peninsula, which benefits from a 4.6-cent provincial tax credit, except in areas bordering New Brunswick. The credit was intended to offset higher transportation costs, which were estimated at five cents by the board last year.

An explanation

Part of the reason lies in retailers' profit margins. Motorists in Gaspé have not seen much benefit from the abolition of the price floor. In 2025, the average margin was 13 cents per litre, down two cents from 2024, but still well above the Quebec average of 9 cents.

A closer look at the board's data shows that the highest



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

A new report confirms that gas prices in the Gaspé Peninsula and Gaspé remain among the highest in Quebec.

margin in the region remains in Gaspé, at 13.6 cents last year. It is 12.3 cents in Rocher-Percé and 11.4 cents in Baie-des-Chaleurs. In comparison, the average margin is 11 cents in Bas-Saint-Laurent and Montreal, 10 cents in Quebec City, and 9 cents on the North Shore.

One factor that could put additional pressure on gas retailers in Gaspé and the region in the coming months is a new data collection method by the board. Starting April 1, every price change at a gas station will be published on the board's website, allowing closer monitoring of regional data.

A lasting trend

A report prepared by researcher Robert Clark at the request of the Quebec government in 2024 found that the pre-tax price per litre of gasoline sold in the Gaspé Peninsula was the highest in Quebec over the past decade.

The then Minister of Energy, Pierre Fitzgibbon, asked

the professor of economics at Queen's University and affiliate professor in the Department of Applied Economics at HEC Montréal to conduct a study to understand what was happening in the retail gasoline market in Quebec.

The researcher focused in particular on the case of Gaspé, which week after week had the highest prices in the province, and found that the average margin had risen from 9 cents in 2021 to 15.2 cents in 2023, nearly doubling in just two years.

"The idea that prices are higher in some regions than in others because companies have to compensate for lower volumes with higher prices does not make sense and is probably not the explanation for the higher prices observed," he notes, concluding that the lack of competition in Gaspé would explain this.

This report confirmed two investigations conducted by the Régie de l'énergie (energy regulatory agency) which found that retailers were making more profits in Gaspé than elsewhere in Quebec.

In early 2024, in a report following increased monitoring of gasoline prices in the Gaspé Peninsula between October 30 and December 15, 2023, only estimated that retail margins seemed to explain the price difference observed, the government agency noted.

Between 2018 and 2023, these margins increased from 9.4 cents/litre to 14.7 cents/litre, compared to 6.5 cents/litre to 10.2 cents/litre for the same period in Quebec as a whole, the board wrote.

Sharp rise in unemployment rate in January

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ – Unemployment jumped 2.1% in January in Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

According to Statistics Canada, the increase is attributable to a slight rise in the labour force — the number of people working or actively seeking work — combined with a decline in employment.

The region lost 300 jobs last month, bringing the total to 35,700.

Of these, 29,200 were full-time positions, down 500 from December, while 6,500 were part-time, an increase of 100.

Despite the monthly decline, employment remains 400 positions higher than at the same time last year, when 35,300 jobs were recorded.

The number of employment insurance claimants rose by 900 to 4,600.

That figure is still lower than a year ago, when 5,700 people were unemployed.

The unemployment rate reached 11.4% in January, compared to 13.9 per cent a year ago.

Pressure tactics at LM Wind Power

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ – Unionized workers at the LM Wind Power wind mill blade manufacturing plant in Gaspé have begun pressure tactics as they seek to renew their collective agreement. However, a strike has been ruled out, at least for the time being.

The six-year agreement expired in December 2025. Jean-Éric Cloutier, president of the CSN-affiliated union at the plant, was reluctant to comment, saying only that discussions with the employer are continuing and declining to discuss the main issues at the bargaining table.

In January, about 140 experienced Filipino workers at LM Wind Power faced the possibility of deportation in 2026 and 2027 due to stricter federal rules for temporary foreign workers. The new regulations require companies to meet higher wage thresholds to retain temporary foreign workers. This threshold, which allows companies to comply with the high-wage category, had already been raised by 20 per cent in 2024 and was set at nearly \$35 per hour in June 2025.

At that time, the union president was more vocal: "We agree with this wage threshold principle. We are asking LM Wind Power to increase our wages and benefits to \$35 per hour in the next collective agreement, but we fear that this will not be enough to retain our employees. This scale has increased in recent years. Even if we reach the current threshold, we may only be buying time, as it could be raised significantly again during the agreement," explained Mr. Cloutier back then. The CSN indicated that its members were earning \$28 per hour.



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The BAPE consults on the extensive Route 132 protection project

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – The Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement (BAPE) is launching a public information period on the Ministry of Transport infrastructure protection program in the Bas-Saint-Laurent and Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine regions in response to coastal hazards linked to climate change.

Studies have been underway since 2021 to protect Route 132 in the Gaspésie region from erosion and coastal flooding.

In the project notice filed in July 2021, the ministry indicated that recent events had demonstrated the importance of ensuring road user mobility and taking preventive action.

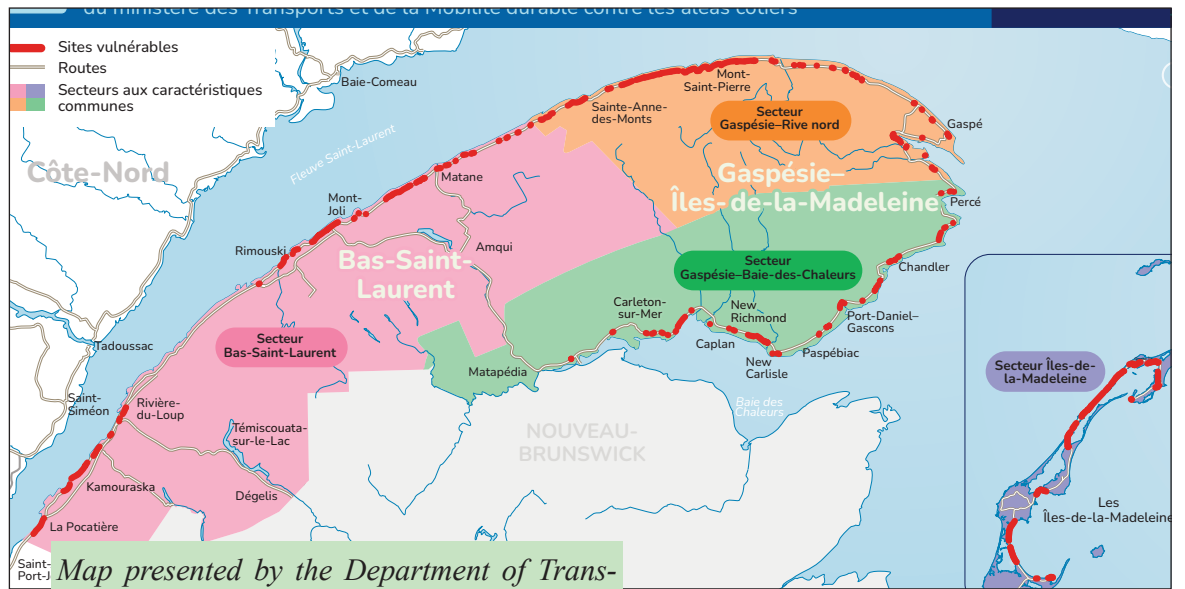
The document estimated that 273 coastal sites were vulnerable in the long term.

In its final version, filed in November 2024, the ministry stated that its intervention program would ultimately cover 228 sites, representing approximately 266 kilometres of roadway across 45 municipalities.

As the department cannot intervene at all of these sites, it plans to carry out work on the 97 it considers priorities. However, the list may change depending on future events.

These sites are distributed as follows: 23 in the Bas-Saint-Laurent sector, 37 in the northern Gaspé Peninsula, 15 in the southern Gaspé Peninsula and 22 in the Magdalen Islands.

For the northern sector, work is planned in Cloridorme, Gaspé, Grande-Valée, Petite-Vallée, Rivière-Saint-Jean, Cap-Chat, La Martre, Marsoui, Mont-Saint-Pierre, Rivière-à-Claude, Sainte-Anne-des-



Map presented by the Department of Transportation showing the areas that will be affected.

Photo: BAPE



Photo: MTQ

Route 132 was washed away during a severe storm in December 2016 between La Martre and Marsoui.

Monts, Sainte-Madeleine-de-la-Rivière-Madeleine, and Saint-Maxime-du-Mont-Louis.

In the southern sector, targeted municipalities include Maria, Carleton-sur-Mer, Escuminac, Pointe-à-la-Croix, Bonaventure, Caplan, Saint-Godefroi, Saint-Siméon, Shigawake, Chandler, Percé and Port-Daniel-Gascons.

As part of the consultation process, the ministry submitted a 416-page document covering technical aspects, environmental issues, biodiversity and socioeconomic impacts. Consultations were conducted with MRCs, municipalities, environmental organizations, First Nations and the public to present the ten-year action plan and the tools developed, and to identify and validate key concerns.

Nine major issues were identified for the ten-year intervention program, including protecting coastal biodiver-

sity, ensuring the sustainability of the close relationship between built and coastal environments, and improving coordination among the many stakeholders responsible for the road network.

Sector-specific issues include supporting the economic vitality of coastal communities dependent on the road network in the northern Gaspé Peninsula and preserving access to the shoreline for water sports in the southern Gaspé Peninsula.

Issues specific to First Nations include supporting the harvesting of resources for food and domestic purposes and ensuring the conservation of cultural and archaeological heritage.

Given the generic nature of the program submitted to the BAPE, the ministry currently cannot specify what interventions would be carried out at each site.

It will first define potential approaches and assess their

impacts before establishing control and analysis tools to determine the most appropriate solutions for each location. Required environmental authorization applications will then be filed.

According to the ministry, this approach will allow for more effective management of the road network in the face of coastal hazards.

If road relocation is ultimately considered at any site, it would constitute a separate project and be subject to its own authorization process.

The 30-day public information period will run from March 4 to April 7. The deadline for submitting requests for a public hearing or mediation is April 7.

Dates for public information sessions had not been confirmed as SPEC was going to press.

A report will be released at the conclusion of the process. All documents are available on the BAPE website.

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Year 1995: The last referendum on Quebec's sovereignty

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – The year 1995 started with the certainty that a referendum on Quebec's sovereignty would be held. It received a lot of coverage in the SPEC, as most members of the anglophone community were worried about the potential impact of a vote favourable to independence.

Vol 21, No 1 January 8, 1995

- In issue 1, dated January 8, "94 in retrospect" and "Crazy or Courageous", a picture leading to a page 2 article about the Annual New Carlisle Polar Dip, make the headlines. The previous year's retrospect is a particularly thorough, spreading over five pages. "Investigation continues into Causapschal derailment," an event that occurred on December 14, blocking traffic in the Matapedia valley for a full week, "Municipal budgets announced" and Fisheries and Oceans minister Brian "Tobin announces cuts in fisheries" make the other page 1 titles.

Vol 21, No 2 January 15, 1995

- "Anglophone participation in hearings unclear" with regards to Referendum '95 and "It's going so well", a picture-caption combo about the good season start at Pin Rouge, make the headlines of issue 2, dated January 15. "Highlights of 1995 budgets", "Still no estimate in Causapschal derailment", an accident caused by a communication malfunction at CN, "New tourist office for Chaleur Bay" following a symposium, "English movies return to Chandler" and "Another derailment: this time it's VIA, but no injuries" in Trois Pistoles, also make page 1.

Vol 21, No 3 January 22, 1995

- "New Richmond's Royal Legion: Branch 172 swears in first female president", namely Nancy Doddridge, and Chamber of Commerce Alphonse "Bernard to sit on regional commission" which will hear public input on the proposed



Pictured above are the students who took part in the 1995 program "Our Region, Our Future". Bottom left to right: Tammy Chatterton, Tanya Campbell, Lynne Cochrane, Jennifer MacWhirter and Donna Harrison (animator). Top Trudy MacWhirter, Sarah Hause, Patrick Sullivan, Hamish Singh, Treva Assels, Gordie Fairservice, Cathy Campbell and Roxanne Leblanc.

law on Quebec sovereignty, headline issue 3, dated January 22. "Citizens denounce abusive taxes" in Gaspé, "Maria hospital to get orthopedic specialist" and "Appearances of lobster claws on local beaches 'worrisome'" also appear on page 1.

Vol 21, No 4 January 29, 1995

- Issue 4, dated January 29, shows "Gaspé-born general decorated by France", namely Sydney Valpy Radley-Walters, and "Commission members announced: Cynthia Patterson and Joe Gray named" as headlines. Former general Radley-Walters, a Saint-Georges-de-Malbaie native, received the coveted Legion of Honour for his role in the Second World War. Patrick "Gagnon organizes federal forces, deplores confusion" regarding Referendum '95, "English programs to be shown on community TV" in Gaspé, "British Heritage Centre holds AGM" and "Centraide short of goal, but satisfied", complete page 1 titles.

Vol 21, No 5 February 5, 1995

- "Albertina loves red tuques!", the story of Leonard and Paul Hayes' decision to breed ostriches at their Port Daniel farm, and "Liberal plot strategy: a cold hard look" at sovereignty, headline issue 5, dated February 5. "Local heifer test station a first in Quebec", "Valerie Gilker named director of Restigouche Gallery" and "Cegep students protest Ax-

worthy reforms" about unemployment insurance, also make the front-page.

Vol 21, No 6 February 12, 1995

- Issue 6, dated February 12, headlines with "One of 'American's most wanted' identified by former New Carlislers", as Richard Tozer, who operates construction companies in Toronto, and his employees recognized Stephen Bray, alias Bob Hall, a workmate, when his photo was featured in the American TV show. Stephen Bray was wanted for his connection with the 1982 murders of his wife and mother-in-law in Kentucky. "Mock ritual delights crown" at Robbie Burns 5th annual banquet in Gaspé, "In-home medical services now available", "Regional Health Council juggling cuts", "Native chiefs plot referendum strategy", "Region prepares for conference on future of private



The grade six students at Wejgwapniag school in Gesgapegiag. From left standing: Tracy Condo, Melissa Jerome, Bobby Martin and Trevor Bernard; below: Crystal Dawn Jerome, Evelyn Mallette and Nathalie Jerome.

woodlots" and "Que-Tel. to centralize services in Rimouski" also make page 1.

Vol 21, No 7 February 19, 1995

- "Hearings across Gaspé focus on decentralization", for Referendum '95 and "Grand opening of education centre" in Gesgapegiag headline issue 7, dated February 19. "Youth Commission in future of Quebec begins", "Wade Gifford named assistant D.G." of the school board, "First consultation on private woodlots, a great success", "Regional groups to hold sessions on social reform" and "Wakeham/York Carnival celebrating 20th anniversary" also appear on page 1.

Vol 21, No 8 February 26, 1995

- "Fisheries forum satisfies Landry", Marcel, the minister, despite lack of repatriation of power from the federal government, and "Costs of regional commissions still unclear", regarding Referendum '95, make the main headlines of issue 8, dated February 26. In New Richmond, "Carnaval de l'Amitié will be repeated" also makes page 1.

Vol 21, No 9 March 5, 1995

- "Liberals elect new executives – preparing for referendum battle" and "Hearings wind up Gaspé – Anglophones unanimous in rejecting draft bill", also a Referendum '95

topic, dominate issue 9, dated March 5. Federal "Budget's impact contested" by Bloc Québécois Yvan Bernier and "VIA urges unions to return to table", as a CN and CP strike is looming, also appear on page 1.

Vol 21, No 10 March 12, 1995

- In issue 10, dated March 12, Cynthia Dow runs a long feature, "Parents working hard to keep Belle Anse School" showing how that community institution is supported. "Hearings outcome clear: people badly want a change" in Referendum '95, "Cuts at DFO have province concerned – but (federal minister Brian) Tobin confident of 'more effective service'" and "Bill 57 on native police – minister responds to concerns" also make the front-page titles.

Vol 21, No 11 March 19, 1995

- "Gaspé loses prominent citizen: James Russell Keays dead at 81", and "Winter woes cause extensive damage", notably to farms, headline issue 11 (although written 10 on the cover), dated March 19. Mr. Keays was a very successful businessman and a federal and municipal politician.

Vol 21, No 12 March 26, 1995

- "CN-VIA: On strike", as railway workers have spent more than a year without a collective agreement, and "A continuous celebration of Irish roots", about St. Patrick's Day, headline issue 12, dated March 26. "Smelt fishing season extended", "Commission report: sovereignty or not", "Budd family update: Tiny Taylor in very serious condition", "Proviso to cut 35 jobs in Matapedia" and "Darryl Gray named president of Conservative Association" also make page 1. Inside, Patrick Martin, 32, originally from Gesgapegiag, is murdered at work in California.

From Page 13

Vol 21, No 13
April 2, 1995

- St. Peter's Anglican "Malbaie rectory needs more renovation" and a picture-caption combo showing New Carlisle trees damaged by pileated woodpeckers make the main titles of issue 13, dated April 2. "Study gives go ahead for March Creek project" in New Carlisle, "Winners of the 1995 Tourism Awards", "Study begun on Gaspé Bay ecosystems" and "RCMP: Musical ride to be performed in New Richmond" also make page 1.

Vol 21, No 14
April 9, 1995

- "No such thing as a welfare bum – Ministry launches information campaign", "Deer plan draws flak" as hunters and trappers complain about Wildlife ministry not doing enough, and "Chaleur Bay area: Groupe action tourism ready for conventions" headline issue 14, dated April 9. "Gaspé municipal update", "Painting attracting support for hospital", "Quebec Order of Nurses celebrates 75 years", "Gaspesian veterans: CASA and Legion to pay tribute" and "Beau Dommage returns" make other page 1 titles.

Vol 21, No 15
April 16, 1995

- "Winter of '95 worst in 100 years", "Kevin Parent launches first album" and "Study recommends cut in hospital beds Gaspesians are 'over-hospitalized'", make the headlines of issue 15, released on April 16. "Murdochville Copper Centre/P.D. (Port Daniel) cement plant projects approved", "British Heritage Centre launches fund-raising campaign – objective is \$50,000" and "Gaspé wood producers ready for Quebec conference" also appear on page 1.

Vol 21, No 16
April 23, 1995

- "Population exodus continues – Lobby groups dispute importance of figures" covers most of the front page of issue 16, dated April 23. Rural Dignity's Cynthia Patterson de-



Lynden Bechervaise, CASA president, with contest winners Rose McCollm Roussy (Adult Essay), Travis Condo (Elementary Essay), Emerence Murray (Photo) and Sarah Griffiths (Secondary Poetry).

nounces the apocalyptic figures submitted by Quebec's Statistical Institute. "I want a baa-baa!" shows New Richmond's Colin Campbell holding a lamb. Marcel "Landry announces major construction – Route 132 in Escuminac to be upgraded", "New crab strategy has some crab association fuming" because quota will be shared with other fishermen, and "Federal budget changes – UI changes still being debated" also appear on page 1.

Vol 21, No 17
April 30, 1995

- "Matapedians breathing easier" and "Private woodlot owners riled – petition against sales agency gathering momentum" headline issue 17, dated April 30. Matapedia citizens are relieved because the Canadian Coast Guard hovercraft Waban-Aki broke the Restigouche river's ice floe upstream, preventing the area from living heavy damage like in 1994. National "Bank president's remarks draw heavy criticism", "PD cement plant: feds kick in \$325,000", "Patrick Gagnon and the Internet: the Gaspé is no longer isolated", "Local Legions gearing up for anniversary" and Yves "Gonthier exhibit links people, land, horizon" also make page 1.

Vol 21, No 18
May 7, 1995

- "Regional council adopts health care cutbacks – CSN disputes claim won't affect services", "City, government meet over Haldimand water problems" and "Snow crab allocations: a conflict could delay opening" make heavy head-

lines for issue 18, dated May 7. "Chris wins a new career" also appears on page 1, as Hope Town's Chris Major is "cop for a day" in New Carlisle.

Vol 21, No 19
May 14, 1995

- "Wood marketing agency on hold" and "Gaspesians celebrate 50th anniversary" marking the end of the Second World War's end, headline issue 19, released on May 14. "Seniors complain of discrimination", "Development should focus on family" in Cascapedia-St-Jules, former Cascapedia mayor "Allister Willett dead at 51" following a cancer battle and "Scenes from 'Canada Remembers'", a photo report, also appear on page 1.

Vol 21, No 20
May 21, 1995

- "Tragic fire claims three lives" in Gessapegiag, those of Shirley Gideon, who was five months pregnant, and her daughter Nancy Martin, headline issue 20, dated May 21. "Parizeau visits the Coast – Cement developer confident construction to begin in 1996" is the other headline. "Spec celebrating 20th anniversary May 28th", "Residential development project still provoking dissatisfaction" in Sandy Beach and "SPDS hosts Junior Public Speaking Competition" also appear on page 1.

Vol 21, No 21
May 28, 1995

- "Haldimand water problem: City and gov't still battling it out", "Another record tourist season expected" and "Blue lobster for sale", a specimen

caught by Jacques Brière off Saint-Godefroi, cover the front-page of issue 21, released on May 28.

Vol 21, No 22
June 4, 1995

- "SPEC debt dismays AGM – but new president hopeful" headlines issue 22, released on June 4. New president Dennis Drainville calls the \$65,000 debt "challenging" but "this is not a hopeless situation by any means." "Estate-general on education – Gaspesians want profound change", notably the protection of villages' last school and additional resources for the Anglophones, also make the front-page.

Vol 21, No 23
June 11, 1995

- "SPEC triumphs at QCNA meeting" and "Haldimand: Gaspé makes progress on polluted water" cover a big part of the cover of issue 23, dated June 11. Cynthia Dow was notably named the outstanding journalist for 1994 among the Quebec Community Network Association newspapers. A picture also shows Gaspé's Catherine Lacasse eating a hot-dog as part of a fundraiser for Hôtel-Dieu Hospital. "Forestry work: \$600,000 available for groups", "Gaspé Cegep honours English grads" and "Environment office: New Richmond and Gaspé to lose out", also make page 1.

Vol 21, No 24
June 18, 1995

- "Wood sales agency will go ahead: Régie backs Syndicat des producteurs de bois" through an eight-page legal de-

cision, headlines issue 24, dated June 18. "CSST uses Gaspé pilot project to re-organize", "Gaspé: two vying for mayor's job – Dumaresq hasn't confirmed" and "Village hopes for a good crop", namely New Richmond's British Heritage Centre, also appear on page 1.

Vol 21, No 25
June 25, 1995

- "Access to H&SS for Anglos – Jeffrey Hale problem could influence Gaspé plans", following proposals to change Quebec City's Jeffrey Hale from a general hospital to a long-term care unit, headlines issue 25, dated June 25. "Breakfast program impact considerable" at New Richmond High School, "Gas prices: minister could impose a ceiling", "Gaspé oil and gas being explored", "School authorized deficit budget" and "New Carlisle; 175 years of Presbyterian worship celebrated" also make page 1.

Vol 21, No 26
July 2, 1995

- "Forest fire danger stalls woodcutting", the result of several blazes, "Committee proposes no closings in Gaspé" regarding Employment offices, and "SEPAQ negotiating with government to acquire site" of Gaspé's fish hatchery headline issue 26, dated July 2. A picture-caption showing a ceremony held in New Carlisle to recognize René Lévesque's house as a historical monument also appears on page 1.

Vol 21, No 27
July 9, 1995

- New Richmond's "Tourist operators unhappy" because of road construction and Gaspé Peninsula's "Fires burn out of control – may take six weeks to die out" headline issue 27, dated July 9. "Gazette article on Newport fish plant – Aide says minister disappointed", "Fascinating Forillon: an incredibly diverse natural history", "McCord Exhibit opens at Listugué" and "Paspebiac: CLSC accident care reviewed" also make the front-page.

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**Vol 21. No 28
July 16, 1995**

- President of Canada's Privy Council "Marcel Massé in charge of referendum" and "Local team places third", namely Mike Robertson and Joël Goulet, at the Baie-des-Chaleurs Rally, headline issue 28, released on July 16. "The Gaspé could lose a (federal) county", "Grand opening of gym takes place" in Gesgapegiag and "Employees and two MRCs angry with Ottawa" following the reorganization of Employment centres, also make page 1.

**Vol 21. No 29
July 23, 1995**

- Issue 29, dated July 23, features two forest fire topics on the cover, "Prompt action prevents spread of fire" in Gaspé, and "Forest protection office accused of inefficiency", regarding the north of Bonaventure's fire that destroyed 68 square kilometres of forest, where SOPFEU is blamed for not reacting quickly. "Cod stock still at lowest level ever" completes the front-page.

**Vol 21. No 30
July 30, 1995**

- Pierre Marsan, "Liberal health critic visits local hospital – minister moving too fast", "Another good tourist season – but road blocks troublesome," and "Fiddle festival attracts good crowd" at the British Heritage Centre headline issue 30, dated July 30. "Malbay: biggest festival yet!" and "Turbot fishermen end demonstrations – for now" also make page 1.

**Vol 21. No 31
August 6, 1995**

- "Excellent season with high prices" and "New 18-hole course at Fauvel officially opened" make two positive front-page titles of issue 31, dated August 6. However, sad news appears at the bottom of page 1, "Tiny Taylor (Budd) dies of SCIDS", the genetic immune deficiency that has marred the life of the two-year-old New Richmond girl. "Barachois Beach: swimming hole or death trap", "Referendum: still no federalist strategy", and "Fascinating Forillon: The

British put down roots" also appear on page 1.

**Vol 21. No 32
August 13, 1995**

- "Axworthy's axe falls on employment centres", meaning 45 jobs lost in the Gaspé Peninsula, and Bonaventure Polyvalent School "Reunion rekindles many friendships" headline issue 32, dated August 13. History "Magazine to be relaunched – 'Gaspésie' may be available next March", completes the front-page.

**Vol 21. No 33
August 20, 1995**

- "SPEC's problem exposed: A community challenge", headlines the front-page of issue 33, dated August 20. The article is a message to the readers written by board president Dennis Drainville. He informs them that the board is in action to reduce the debt, but that donations are needed. "Latest (forest) fire a catastrophe", and "Where cowboy meets Clown", a report on the New Richmond agricultural fair, also appear on page 1. Overall, the summer's forest fires have destroyed wood whose lumber value nears \$225 million. Inside, SPEC runs a list of Gaspésians wounded and killed in action during WWII.

**Vol 21. No 34
August 27, 1995**

- In issue 34, dated August 27, Gerard-D. "Levesque honoured by street name – PM (Jean Chrétien) attends ceremony in Paspébiac", as Notre-Dame avenue will now bear the name of the former Bonaventure Member of the National Assembly. "St. Alphonse: minister makes no promises about CAAF changes", CAAF being the sawmill's supply, "Forum on decentralization: full speed ahead", "Gaspé Cegep: enrollment down this year" and "Pre-referendum visits evoke little interest – Chrétien, Johnson, PQ force draw small crowds" also appear on page 1.

**Vol 21. No 35
September 3, 1995**

- Excursion ship "John Hamilton Gray held up by storm" off the Magdalen Islands' coast for 32 hours, wait-



The ladies of SPEC with their prizes: Managing Editor Sharon Farrell, Proofreader Irene Dallain, Ad Rep. Jocelyn Caissy, News Editor Cynthia Dow and Bookkeeper Joan Imhoff.

ing to come back to Carleton, headlines issue 35, dated September 3. "Governor general visits Gaspesian British Heritage centre", "Revenue Canada warns Canadians about GST scam", Escuminac's "Computer-circus camp combination a smash hit" and "On the referendum trail" make other page 1 titles.

**Vol 21. No 36
September 10, 1995**

- "Decentralization: Gaspé (region) may be pilot project", an idea accepted in principle by the Quebec government, and "Enumeration for referendum happening this week: those temporarily out of province can vote" headline issue 36, dated September 10. "SPEC update: community support amazing, but government demands unrealistic", "VIA offers savings on eastern trains", "Decentralization forum interests anglophone Cegep students" and "Fish plant workers: pre-retirement package approved" also make the front-page. Inside, Cynthia Dow is running part 7 of her Fascinating Forillon series.

**Vol 21. No 37
September 17, 1995**

- Historian "Ken Annett honoured by Gaspé Museum", British Heritage Centre's "Fall Fest attracts hundreds – CASA meeting a great success" and "Channel Islands AGM held in Paspébiac" and attended by 50 members, headline issue 37, dated September 17.

**Vol 21. No 38
September 24, 1995**

**Vol 21. No 39
October 1, 1995**

- "Dismantling of graveyard causes heartaches" in St-Jules, as old tombstones were replaced by one large memorial, Audrey "Acteson charged with UI fraud – fish plant included in court case", which will be heard later, and "School holds special event for SPEC" headline issue 39, dated October 1. "Rodrigue Joncas is in the race" for Gaspé mayoralty, "Four new specialists at Maria Hospital" and "Chamber of Commerce going into business" also appear on page 1.

**Vol 21. No 40
October 8, 1995**

- "Native social service changes cause lay-offs – Centre Jeunesse left with costly dilemma", "Municipalities gearing up for elections" and "Authors of explosion" at Gaspé Polyvalent still unknown cover the whole front-page of issue 40 dated October 8.

**Vol 21. No 41
October 15, 1995**

- Quebec Fisheries minister Marcel "Landry accuses Feds of pilfering Quebec fisheries – estimates loss of \$1.2 billion and 1,700 seasonal jobs" and

"Bonaventure poll: 'No' in the lead by 5% - Landry gets higher rating than (Member of Parliament Patrick) Gagnon" headline issue 41, released on October 15. "Herring largely wasted – no money for marketing, say plants", "Committee formed to review merger of Mgr. Ross, Hôtel-Dieu", "Doctors back emergency service at CLSC" in Paspébiac and "Youth for the 'No' speak out" also appear on page 1. Inside, Cynthia Dow's series covers the Forillon expropriation.

**Vol 21. No 42
October 22, 1995**

- "Municipal level: intense interest in upcoming elections", "'Yes' out in force: no Supreme Court to 'interfere': Bégin", Quebec's Justice minister, and federal minister Paul "Martin visits business people: Inconceivable that Quebec should separate" completely fill the front-page of issue 42, dated October 22.

**Vol 21. No 43
October 29, 1995**

- Federal minister Lucienne "Robillard confident of victory despite polls – Gagnon (Patrick) will resign if it's a Yes" and "Who was here first", a short article covering a youth discussion in Gesgapegiag about the referendum, headline issue 43, dated October 29. Federal politician Jean "Charest visits the Coast", export "Marketing secretariat announced for the Coast", "Chamber comes out against

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air travel costs” and “Regional poll shows ‘Yes’ in the lead but 40% wouldn’t say” complete page 1 titles.

**Vol 21. No 44
November 5, 1995**

- “Not a victory, a draw” was Member of Parliament Patrick Gagnon’s reaction to the “No” close victory during the October 30 referendum on Quebec’s sovereignty. Quebec premier Jacques Parizeau steps down after defeat – Anglos, ethnics concerned about concession speech” completely fill the front-page of issue 44, dated November 5.

**Vol 21. No 45
November 12, 1995**

- Rodrigue “Joncas replaces Amédée Dumaresq” as Gaspé mayor and “Chandler’s Hunt brothers (Alfred, Hector and Arnold) receive Hong Kong Bar” for their overseas contribution to WWII, headline issue 45, released on November 12. MP Yvan “Bernier is in for extra period”, “Municipal elections: Bonaventure County results show some close calls”, “New Carlisle: movie festival starts Nov. 10” and “We salute our heroes” also appear on page 1.

**Vol 21. No 46
November 19, 1995**

- “Paspebiac: man accused of mother’s murder” and “Sullivan Farm wins fourth milk award” cover most of the front-page of issue 46, dated November 19. “Health & social services: changes don’t augur well for English services”, “Stone invests another \$25 million at NR mill” and “Enid Legros-Wise retrospective draws appreciative

crowd – ‘we are all creators’, artist insists” also appear on page 1.

**Vol 21. No 47
November 26, 1995**

- Issue 47, dated November 26, headlines with “Tim Horton’s and McDonald’s: is the competition good for Gaspé? English-speaking restaurateurs disagree” and “New Carlisle: pressure grows again for light at intersection” of Church Street and Route 132. Carleton “Dairy must prove support – Financial backers want 30% of the market”, “Hydro line: local sub-contractors still not paid”, “Minister (Brian Tobin) asks for public reaction to new fishing fees” and “World-renowned pianist (André Gagnon) to play at Salle de spectacle” also make page 1.

**Vol 21. No 48
December 3, 1995**

- Issue 48, dated December 3, shows “Prime minister’s offer puts onus on Bouchard, says (Bonaventure MP Patrick) Gagnon – Chrétien ‘not coherent’ according to (Gaspé MP Yvan) Bernier as its main headline, a constitutional matter. “Gaspé will have own environmental council – regional summit to be held in January” also headlines, while “New Gaspé council makes some quick changes” makes a smaller title.

**Vol 21. No 49
December 10, 1995**

- “Budget cuts provoke anger among municipalities” and “New program may spell trouble, delay” for Gaspé Senior residence, make the front-page bulk of issue 49, dated December 10. “Only one more week ‘til Santa comes!”, a picture-caption combo, also makes page 1, just like “UI changes of con-



Angela and Chantal Ball show off their medals. They were students with the New Richmond figure skating club. Angela won gold in the M category and Chantal won the silver in the I category.

cern to many” and “Provincial salmon conference – priority will be to educate youth against poaching”.

**Vol 21. No 50
December 17, 1995**

- “Access to health and so-

cial services in English: Improvements have been steady, says (Regional Health) Council” and “If this is fall, what’s the winter gonna be like!?” headline issue 50, dated December 17, the last paper of the year. “Cegep strike: \$18,000 given to youth, Ralliement”

gaspésien et madelinot by the teachers, also makes the front-page. Inside, “Gesgapegiag trains volunteer firefighters” appears on page 3. Cynthia Dow concludes her Fascinating Forillon series with “Hiking trails, campgrounds – and broken dreams”.

Similarities between 1995 and 2026: a referendum could be in preparation

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – When the Parti Québécois (PQ) won the September 1994 general election, then premier Jacques Parizeau made it clear that a referendum of sovereignty would take place the following year.

Currently, the Parti Québécois of Paul Saint-Pierre-Plamondon is leading in surveys. It is clear that if the PQ wins the October 5 election, another referendum could take place relatively soon after, not in 2026, but before the end of the term, as specified by the man often called by his initials, “PSPP.”

He might face a few hurdles though. Six months will elapse between the end of February and the likely official start of the electoral campaign. Many events can change the context of referendum preparation.

The Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ) leadership race will likely end with Christine Fréchette’s victory. The Economy minister will likely put on the backburner the highly unpopular Third link tunnel project between Lévis and Quebec City. Just that factor could save a few CAQ seats, a valuable commodity in a Quebec election that will pit five parties.

The Liberal Party just ended its leadership “non-race”, won by Charles Milliard, who needs to be better known only to protect the party’s current National Assembly seats. However, he will likely be helped by the referendum promised by PSPP, which could stimulate the federalist vote.

As the SPEC was reaching its deadline, Québec solidaire (QS), the much-maligned left-wing party, was about to announce that Alexandre Boulerice, the last heavily popular figure of Canada’s NDP in Québec, will represent QS in the riding made available by the retirement of co-leader Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois. This element could be a shot in the arm for QS.

Quebec’s Conservative Party might be able to win at least a seat this time around. All this suggests that a minority government could be elected, come October 5. It might then be hard for the Parti Québécois to hold on to its promise to hold a referendum during a first term, as previous 1980 and 1995 referendums were triggered by strong majority governments.

It likely takes a favourable National Assembly vote to trigger a referendum process, and the Parti Québécois is far from assured that this will be the case.

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

Clic Santé: English speaking communities to benefit from new service

JEANIE LELACHEUR
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPE - Jessica Synnott, Executive Director of Vision Gaspé Percé Now, states that the new Clic Santé service, which offers bilingual online appointments with counselling professionals, is a very important tool for the English speaking community, largely due to its lack of mental health services in the region.

Clic Santé, the free online platform available throughout Quebec for finding and booking appointments for various health care services over its vast geographical region, is now offering appointments with relationship therapists (MARA certified). Online distance appointments are available both with and without fees, and English consultations are offered to people anywhere in the region.

A MARA-certified counselling professional supports individuals facing personal, emotional, or social difficulties through active and compassionate listening. They use professional techniques to

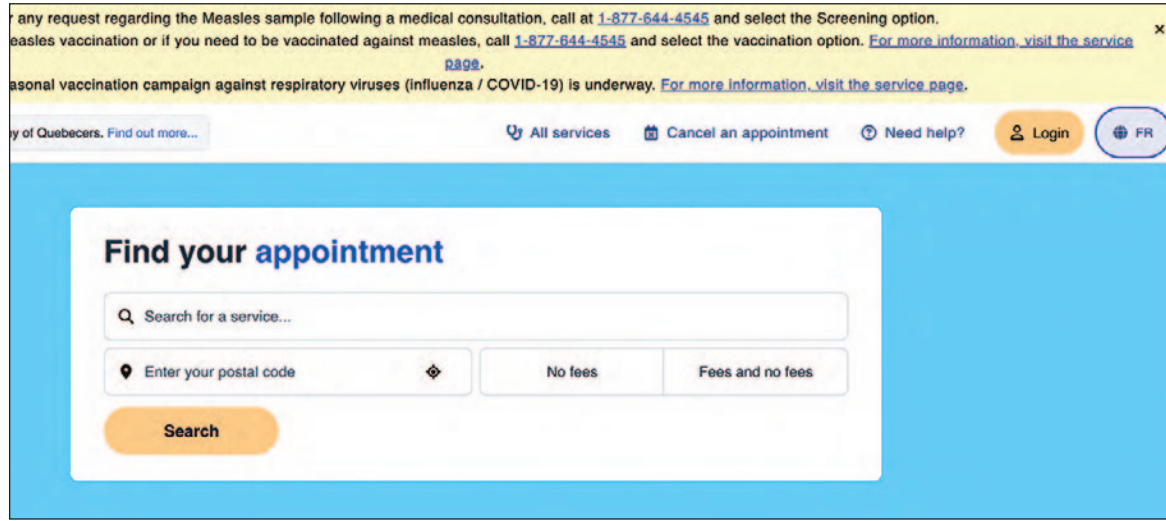


Photo: Clic Sante website

English appointments are available with or without fees through the Clic Sante website.

promote well-being, conflict resolution, and personal development. Therapeutic methods and tools vary depending on the approach chosen. Their support is confidential and tailored to each individual's needs.

These professionals are "helping professionals" (such as coaches or support workers) but are neither psychotherapists nor psychologists. They have a duty to refer clients to the appropriate resources if a situa-

tion falls outside their scope of practice. They cannot diagnose or treat mental health disorders or other conditions that fall under the exclusive domain of psychologists or psychiatrists.

What the service does provide is guidance to help individuals understand themselves better, draw on their own internal resources to cope with life situations—including bereavement, loneliness, and major life changes such as marriage and family chal-

lenges. The approach is designed to boost self-confidence, improve stress management, accompany people through challenges, and help them develop their full potential.

To access the site and its services, users can visit Clic Santé (<https://portal3.clic-sante.ca/en>) and select English or French in the upper right-hand corner. Users can create a personal account, but it is not required to access services, which include booking

appointments for vaccinations, blood tests, medical consultations, screenings, pharmacy services, nursing care, telehealth, and home care.

The reservation, confirmation, and reminder processes for clients are fully automated, user-friendly, and suitable for all ages.

Considered pandemic software, the Clic Santé platform was originally developed during the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic and remains the only platform in Quebec that distributes millions of appointments in emergency situations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was developed into a full-scale technology solution that maintained access to healthcare services without compromising the safety of patients or medical staff.

Clic Santé currently partners with the Quebec government for the COVID-19 vaccination program. Both organizations have a consent form and are part of discussions regarding the vaccine passport registry. With information from: msss.gouv.qc.ca

Delivery delay for Chandler's Villa Pabos

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CHANDLER – Unexpected levels of contaminated soil have delayed completion of the new seniors' residence being added to Chandler's Villa Pabos.

The building will now be delivered to the CISSS de la Gaspésie next summer, instead of last fall as planned.

This is according to the Société québécoise des infrastructures (SQI) when asked about the progress of the \$75 million project. "Work on the Chandler seniors' home is progressing well, in accordance with the plans and specifications. More extensive soil decontamination work than anticipated has resulted in a slight delay in delivery, now scheduled for summer 2026. Finally, costs are within the authorized budget of \$75.6 million," the SQI replies in an email.

The expansion will add 48 rooms organized into four 12-unit households. The project will accommodate 36 hospital residents and improve living conditions for the 62 current



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

Martin Pelletier, President and CEO of the CISSS de la Gaspésie.

residents.

"There will be a whole transition period before people move in to make sure everything goes smoothly. We have a portion that we need to move to free up the existing space. We are doing the move. The contractor is finishing the work in the existing building. It will take about 10 months before users move into the new building," says CISSS president and chief executive officer (CEO) Martin Pelletier.

Maria Hospital project

Meanwhile, the head of the Gaspé Peninsula health network remains hopeful that the emergency and intensive care expansion project at Maria Hospital will move forward in the coming year.

Last fall, technical studies showed that any addition to the current hospital would require the construction of a new power plant at a cost of at least \$50 million.

"It starts with this sector, and I remain positive about an announcement. It will take a year and a half to complete the plans and specifications. That would be the next step," says Mr. Pelletier.

All preliminary work required of the CISSS has been completed.

The plans and specifications represent only a few million dollars within a total estimated project cost of approximately \$300 million.

"The right amount still needs to be set aside in the Quebec Infrastructure Plan (QIP). What's happening right now is that the files are being

underestimated. When we get to complete them, there's not enough money. So the government is forced to make a selection within the QIP itself," notes the manager.

If all goes according to plan, construction could begin in 2028 or 2029.

Reducing reliance on agency staff

The CISSS continues to employ about 100 agency workers to maintain services. Under the Quebec government's roadmap, the health network must eliminate its reliance on independent labour by October 18.

Mr. Pelletier acknowledged that meeting that deadline will be difficult given the region's staffing needs.

Despite recruitment efforts, approximately 60 agency workers could still be required by October.

"We will go through the provincial flying squad or even a call to all. That's the reality we face in the Gaspé Peninsula," says the CEO, who is keen to maintain all services.

"Even in obstetrics, we are sometimes forced to use independent contractors. We have respiratory therapists, psychologists, social workers, and special education teachers," he notes.

Given ongoing recruitment challenges, an exemption could be requested, as has been done in other regions.

"The fact remains that these people are important members of the teams. When we don't have them, there is a risk of understaffing," he says.

At Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, five of the six obstetrics nurses are agency workers.

The CEO said he hopes to maintain the service over the long term, despite similar challenges being experienced elsewhere in Quebec.

"We are working to find other ways. A call has been put out across the province to find enough obstetric nurses. When we made the call, we already had a network available in Quebec, but it is unable to meet the needs. Everything has to be reorganized according to the needs. We hope that this will be accomplished by October," says Mr. Pelletier.

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned, François Bujold, Director General and Clerk-Treasurer of the Regional County Municipality of Bonaventure, that the immovable properties described hereunder will be sold by public auction at the New Carlisle Municipal Hall, located at 138 Gérard-D.-Lévesque Boulevard, New Carlisle, Québec G0C 1Z0, on Thursday, April 9, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., for municipal and school taxes and other costs incurred or to be incurred, unless such taxes and costs are paid prior to the sale.

These immovable properties will be sold with any buildings thereon erected, if applicable, together with all rights and appurtenances thereto, subject to all servitudes, active or passive, apparent or latent, which may affect them.

The purchase price and costs for each property shall be payable at the time of adjudication, in legal tender of Canada or by certified cheque or money order.

The properties sold shall be subject to a right of redemption of one (1) year.

GIVEN IN NEW CARLISLE, FEBRUARY 3, 2026



**François Bujold,
Director General
Clerk-Treasurer**

MUNICIPALITÉ DE SHIGAWAKE		Bonaventure 1.	circonstances et dépendances.
VENTE 2026-01	WHITE DENNIS 190, Route 132 Shigawake (Québec) G0C 3E0	Le tout avec bâtisse dessus construite portant le numéro 77, 3e avenue Est, Paspébiac (Québec) G0C 2K0, avec circonstance et dépendances.	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1 437,56 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 1 687,56 \$
Un immeuble connu et désigné comme étant le lot (5 954 448) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC dans la circonscription de Bonaventure 1.		MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 3 947,04 \$ MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 81,63 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 4 278,67 \$	VENTE 2026-09 ROUSSY THÉRÈSE 223, rue Desroches Paspébiac (Québec) G0C 2K0
Avec une maison dessus construite, située au 190, route 132, Shigawake, (Québec), G0C 3E0.			Un terrain situé dans la ville de Paspébiac, mieux connu et comme étant le lot (5 234 927) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.
MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2 966,08 \$ MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 144,09 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 3 360,17 \$		VENTE 2026-06 DENIS LÉONIDAS 128-5, rue Lemarquand Paspébiac (Qc) G0C 2K0	Situé sur la rue Desroches de Paspébiac. Avec circonstances et dépendances.
		Un certain terrain ou emplacement sis et situé dans le deuxième Rang Est de New Carlisle, dans la ville de Paspébiac, mieux connu et désigné comme étant la subdivision numéro UN au lot originaire (5 234 715) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 701,02 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 951,02 \$
	MUNICIPALITÉ CANTON DE HOPE		VENTE 2026-10 WOODS KAVEN 67, Avenue Huard Paspébiac (Québec) G0C 2K0
VENTE 2026-03	DUGUAY NADINE 85, 6ème Avenue Est Paspébiac (Québec) G0C 2K0	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 361,76 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 611,76 \$	Un terrain situé en la Ville de Paspébiac, comté de Bonaventure, province de Québec, connu et désigné comme étant la subdivision UN au lot originaire (5 234 533) au cadastre officiel, Canton de Cox, dans la circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.
Le lot originaire numéro (5 766 820) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.			Le tout avec la maison dessus construite portant le numéro civique 67, avenue Huard, Paspébiac (Québec) G0C 2K0 avec circonstance et dépendances.
Situé au rang 3 dans la municipalité de Hope. Sans bâtisse. Circonstances et dépendances.		VENTE 2026-07 DENIS LÉONIDAS 128-5, rue Lemarquand Paspébiac (Qc) G0C 2K0	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 9 447,63 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 9 697,63 \$
MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 419,18 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 669,18 \$		Un certain terrain ou emplacement sis et situé dans le deuxième Rang Est de New Carlisle, dans la ville de Paspébiac, mieux connu et désigné comme étant la subdivision numéro UN au lot originaire (5 234 726) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.	
	VENTE 2026-04		MUNICIPALITÉ DE NEW CARLISLE
	JOSEPH MICHEL 153, Sycamori Blue Montain (Ontario) L9Y 4E4	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2 816,44 \$ MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 13,06 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 3 079,50 \$	VENTE 2026-11 BLAIS FRÉDÉRIC GALLON AMY 272, rue Chartier Sherbrooke (Québec) J1J 3B2
Le lot originaire numéro (5 766 626) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.			Le lot originaire numéro (4 934 293) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.
Situé sur la route 132 dans la municipalité de Hope. Sans bâtisse. Circonstances et dépendances.		VENTE 2026-08 ROUSSY FRANCE 2262, rue de l'Aube Lévis (Québec) G6J 0K5	Avec bâtisses dessus construites, portant le numéro civique 21, rue Saint-Étienne, New Carlisle, (Québec), G0C 1Z0. Circonstances et dépendances.
MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1718,63 \$ MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 86,46 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 2 055,09 \$		Un certain terrain sis et situé dans la ville de Paspébiac, mieux connu et désigné comme étant une partie au lot (5 234 838) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.	MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 4 142,03 \$ MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 116,30 \$ FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$ TOTAL : 4 508,33 \$
	VILLE DE PASPEBIAC		
VENTE 2026-05	CASTILLOUX MARIE-PAULE 77, 3ème Avenue Est Paspébiac (Québec) G0C 2K0	Situé au deuxième rang de Paspébiac (Québec) G0C 2K0 avec	
Un immeuble situé en la ville de Paspébiac, mieux connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (5 234 187) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de			

VENTE 2026-12

**DOW TOMMY J.
HUNTINGTON KERRY LEE**
183, rue Church
New Carlisle (Québec) G0C 1Z0

Le lot originaire numéro (4 934 200) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec bâtisses dessus construites, portant le numéro civique 183, rue Church, New Carlisle, (Québec), G0C 1Z0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2 338,50 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 98,16 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 2 686,66 \$

VENTE 2026-13

HUNTINGTON KERRY LEE
183, rue Church
New Carlisle (Québec) G0C 1Z0

Le lot originaire numéro (4 934 164) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Sans bâtisse. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 254,89 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 504,89 \$

VENTE 2026-14

LEBLANC MARIO
232, rue Church
New Carlisle (Québec) G0C 1Z0

Le lot originaire numéro (6 327 529) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec bâtisses dessus construites, portant le numéro civique 232, rue Church, New Carlisle, (Québec), G0C 1Z0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1 558,71 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 57,26 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 1 865,97 \$

MUNICIPALITÉ DE SAINT-ELZÉAR**VENTE 2026-16**

LLOYD MARVIN
1906, Linn Street
Boone (Iowa) 500 36

Un immeuble situé dans la municipalité Saint-Elzéar, district de Bonaventure, désigné comme étant le lot numéro (5 767 318) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Situé route François-Arsenault dans la municipalité de Saint-Elzéar, sans numéro civique et sans bâtiment dessus construit. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1 228,77 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 1 478,77 \$

VILLE DE BONAVENTURE**VENTE 2026-17**

ARSENAULT MARTIN
136-A, route de la Rivière
Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Un immeuble situé dans la Ville de Bonaventure connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 311 556) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec chalet construit portant le numéro civique 136-A, route de la Rivière, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0. Avec toutes les circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1 219,17 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 54,36 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 1 520,53 \$

VENTE 2026-18

BERNARD JULIE
111, route Évangéline
Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Un immeuble situé dans la Ville de Bonaventure connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 656 258) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec maison construite portant le numéro civique 111, route Évangéline, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0. Avec toutes les circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 6 100,17 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 423,47 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 6 773,64 \$

VENTE 2026-19

BERNATCHEZ JIMMY
150, 3ÈME Rang Ouest
Saint-Siméon (Québec) G0C 3A0

Un immeuble situé dans la Ville de Bonaventure connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 312 133) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec immeuble à logements construit et portant le numéro civique 103-11 à 103-24, rue Charpentier, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0. Avec toutes les circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 5 119,28 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 5 369,28 \$

VENTE 2026-21

D'ORLÉANS CÉDRIC
104, avenue Port-Royal
Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Un immeuble situé dans la Ville de Bonaventure connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 311 859) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec maison construite portant le numéro civique 104, avenue de Port-Royal, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0. Avec toutes les circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 3 465,88 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 199,77 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 3 915,65 \$

VENTE 2026-22

DUBÉ YANNICK
106, Avenue de Petite-Rochelle
Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Un immeuble situé dans la Ville de Bonaventure connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 312 139) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec maison mobile construite portant le numéro civique 106, avenue de Petite-Rochelle, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0. Avec toutes les circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1 427,51 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 107,30 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 1 784,81 \$

VENTE 2026-23

**SCALDAFERRI MARIETTE
KULKA ADELE**
865, S Deer Meadow Loop
Tucson (Arizona) 85745

Un immeuble situé dans la Ville de Bonaventure connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 311 610) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Terrain non aménagé situé sur l'Avenue de Port-Royal, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 266,18 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 516,18 \$

VENTE 2026-24

ST-DENIS CATHERINE
233, Chemin de Normandie
Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Un immeuble situé dans la Ville de Bonaventure connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 656 709) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec maison construite portant le numéro civique 233, chemin de Normandie, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0. Avec toutes les circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1 272,72 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 2 50,00 \$
TOTAL : 1 522,72 \$

VENTE 2026-25

TOZER DEBBIE
503, Route Cox
Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Un immeuble situé dans la Ville de Bonaventure connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 656 604) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec maison construite portant le numéro civique 503, route Cox, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0. Avec toutes les circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 3 226,95 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 268,60 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 3 745,55 \$

MUNICIPALITÉ DE CAPLAN**VENTE 2026-30**

**DUFAULT JORDAN
AYOTTE MARIE-PIER**
181, boul. Perron Ouest
Caplan (Québec) G0C 1H0

Un immeuble connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (5 382 652) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec maison dessus construite portant le numéro civique, 181, boul. Perron Ouest, Caplan (Québec) G0C 1H0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 8 433,11 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 367,34 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 9 050,45 \$

VENTE 2026-31

GAGNÉ RODRIGUE
29, rue des Pommiers
Caplan (Québec) G0C 1H0

Un immeuble connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (5 382 551) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec maison dessus construite portant le numéro civique 29, rue des Pommiers, Caplan (Québec) G0C 1H0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2 301,73 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 133,76 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 2 685,49 \$

VENTE 2025-33

MORIN DEAN
257, boul. Perron Est
Caplan (Québec) G0C 1H0

Un immeuble connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (5 381 966) et le lot (5 383 325) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de Bonaventure 1.

Avec maison dessus construite portant le numéro civique 257, boul. Perron Est, Caplan (Québec) G0C 1H0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 1 481,38 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 70,96 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 1 802,57 \$

VENTE 2026-34

ARSENAULT JEAN-PIERRE (SUCCESSION)
199, route Arsenault
Caplan (Québec) G0C 1H0

Un immeuble connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (5 382 205) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, circonscription foncière de **Bonaventure 1**.

Avec maison dessus construite portant le numéro civique, 199, route Arsenault, Caplan (Québec) G0C 1H0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2 259,49 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 93,96 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 2 603,45 \$

MUNICIPALITÉ DE SAINTE-ALPHONSE

VENTE 2026-35

**BOUCHER VANESSA
BERTRAND DAVID-CHRISTOPHER**
106, rue Principale Est
Saint-Alphonse (Québec) G0C 2V0

Un immeuble situé dans la municipalité de Saint-Alphonse, connu et désigné comme étant le lot (5 523 092) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de **Bonaventure 1**.

Avec maison dessus construite, située au 106, rue Principale Est, à Saint-Alphonse, Province au Québec, G0C 2V0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 4 674,96 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 164,54 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 5 089,50 \$

VENTE 2026-36

CHAREST JOHANNE
151-A, rue Principale Ouest
Saint-Alphonse (Québec) G0C 2V0

Un immeuble situé dans la municipalité de Saint-Alphonse, district de Bonaventure, connu et désigné comme étant le lot numéro (5 522 463) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la

circonscription foncière de **Bonaventure 1**.

Avec la maison dessus construite, circonstances et dépendances, portant les numéros 151, 151B et 151C, rue Principale Ouest, Saint-Alphonse (Québec) G0C 2V0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 3 741,83 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 296,07 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 4 287,90 \$

VENTE 2026-37

**TREMBLAY ANNE-MARIE
TREMBLAY FRÉDÉRIC**
326, rue Principale Est
Saint-Alphonse (Québec) G0C 2V0

Un immeuble connu et désigné comme étant le lot (6 594 246) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de **Bonaventure 1**.

Avec la maison dessus construite portant le numéro 326 rue Principale Est, Sainte-Alphonse, Province au Québec, G0C 2V0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 2 799,20 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 90,79 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 3 139,99 \$

**MUNICIPALITÉ DE
CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES**

VENTE 2026-38

BUJOLD FRANCINE
1014, boul. Saint-Germain Ouest
Rimouski (Québec) G5L 8Y9

Un immeuble situé dans la municipalité de Cascapédia-Saint-Jules, district de Bonaventure, désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 930 641) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de **Bonaventure 2**. Circonstances et dépendances.

Un immeuble situé dans la municipalité de Cascapédia-Saint-Jules, district de Bonaventure, désigné comme étant le lot numéro (4 931 544) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC dans la circonscription foncière de **Bonaventure 2**. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 171,77 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 597,43 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 1 019,20 \$

VENTE 2026-39

NORMANDEAU NICOLE
140, Route au Rang 2

Maria (Québec) G0C 1Y0

Un immeuble situé dans la municipalité de Cascapédia-Saint-Jules, district de Bonaventure, désigné comme étant le lot numéro (5 242 982) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de **Bonaventure 2**. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES MUNICIPALES : 98,06 \$
MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 308,72 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 656,78 \$

**CENTRE DE SERVICES
SCOLAIRE RENÉ-LÉVESQUE**

VENTE 2026-40

HACKETT PETER

39, boul. Gérard D Lévesque
New Carlisle (Québec) G0C 1Z0

Un immeuble connu et désigné comme étant le lot (5 583 478) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC dans la circonscription de **Bonaventure 1**.

Avec une maison dessus construite, située au 39, boulevard Gérard D Lévesque, New Carlisle (Québec) G0C 1Z0. Circonstances et dépendances.

MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 357,69 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 607,69 \$

**TERRITOIRES NON ORGANISÉS DE LA
MRC BONAVENTURE TNO**

VENTE 2026-43

**PETITCLERC JONATHAN
SAUVAGEAU MÉLANIE**
174, boul. Perron Ouest
New Richmond (Qc) G0C 1T0

Un immeuble situé dans les Territoires non-organisés de la Municipalité régionale de comté de Bonaventure, connu et désigné comme étant le lot (6 492 621) au CADASTRE DU QUÉBEC, dans la circonscription foncière de **Bonaventure 1**.

Situé sur la rue Leblanc, sans bâtiment dessus construit.

MONTANT TAXES SCOLAIRES : 85,32 \$
FRAIS DE VENTE (MRC) : 250,00 \$
TOTAL : 335,32 \$

DONNÉ À NEW CARLISLE, CE 3 FÉVRIER 2026

**FRANÇOIS BUJOLD
DIRECTEUR GÉNÉRAL
GREFFIER-TRÉSORIER**

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QESBA launches eligibility campaign

PENNY MACWHIRTER

HOPE TOWN - In January, the Quebec English School Board Association (QESBA), which represents nine English language school boards and one special status centre, launched an awareness campaign urging Quebec parents and guardians with children attending French schools to apply for their Certificate of Eligibility to English School.

The campaign includes on-line and radio advertisements and features the catchy slogan "Use it, or lose it!"

The campaign is timely, considering its registration time at most Quebec school boards, and an ideal time to make sure your child has this important documentation.

"Having a certificate of eligibility on file before the end of high school education can safeguard rights, such as the rights to receive government communications and services in English and to pass on the right to attend English school to one's children," according to Ed-ucaloi.qc.ca.

In Quebec, French is the only official language, making it the language of instruction in preschool, elementary and secondary schools, except where the Charter of the French Language allows otherwise. This means that without a Certificate of Eligibility (COE), commonly known to many anglophones as their Bill 101 certificate, a student is not entitled to instruction in an English-language school.

Categories of exceptions

There are three categories of exceptions under which a child may be declared eligible: Children residing permanently in Quebec: If the child or a sibling received the major part of their elementary or secondary education in English in Canada; if one parent is a Canadian citizen who attended an English-language elementary school in Canada; or if a parent attended school in Quebec after August 1977 and was

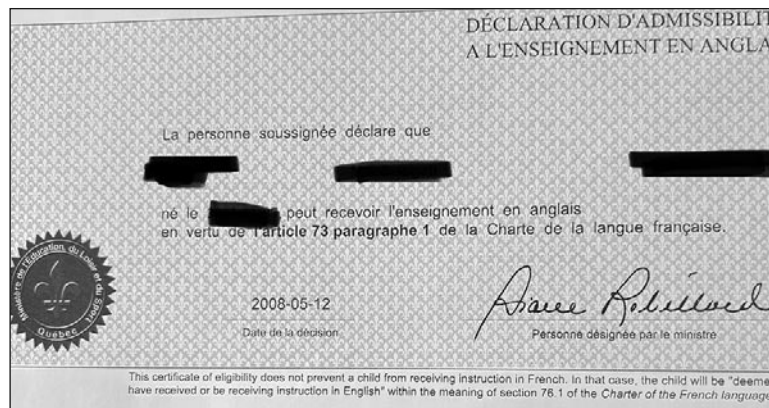


Photo: Penny MacWhirter

A Certificate of Eligibility (COE) is an important document that follows a student throughout their educational life.

declared eligible for English instruction at that time.

Children in Quebec for a temporary stay: This includes children of foreign nationals holding a valid certificate, permit, or exemption; dependents of Canadian citizens or permanent residents from another Canadian province; and children of non-citizens temporarily posted in Quebec as representatives of another country or international organization.

Special circumstances

When a child has serious learning disabilities or when eligibility is justified for serious family or humanitarian reasons.

It is important to note that children who are declared eligible for English education may still attend a French school while retaining the right to pass eligibility for English instruction on to their children.

COE and post-secondary education

Although a COE is not required to attend adult education centres, CEGEPS or universities, it can influence a student's chances of being admitted to an English-language institution.

Currently, there aren't any restrictions on who can attend an English CEGEP. There is, however, a cap on the number of students in the province who can be registered to study at the CEGEP level in English. It is important to note that the cap

your child has their COE on file before reaching Grade 11, as applications submitted later are often refused.

How to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility

Parents or legal guardians must apply for a COE through an anglophone school board or a private school while the child is of school age.

For parents or legal guardians enrolling their students in pre-kindergarten, the process of getting a COE is fairly simple and handled at registration time. "Parents need to present themselves for registration at the school with their child's birth certificate, the long form with both parents names on it; the birth certificate of a parent who attended English school; and a parent or sibling's Eligibility Certificate if already issued," explains Donna Major, School Organization Technician with the Eastern Shores School Board.

"They will then complete the eligibility form and school registration for the upcoming school year," adds Ms. Major.

Parents considering applying for a COE are encouraged to first ensure they have a long-form birth certificate for their child. If not, one can be ordered online in advance.

The approval process generally takes between 10 and 21 days, and Ms. Major says the paperwork will be mailed directly to the parents. Parents do not need to give the school a copy of the certificate.

Parents of children currently attending French schools, or families moving to Quebec from another Canadian province, will need the same documentation. They may contact Donna Major directly to begin the process and ensure their child has a COE on file, helping to keep future educational options open.

Eligibility inquiries: 418-752-2247 Extention 1256 or registration@essb.qc.ca.

Is your child ready for English School in Quebec? A quick checklist for parents

Eligibility Categories

- Child resides permanently in Quebec
- Child or sibling attended most of their elementary/secondary school in English in Canada
- One parent is a Canadian citizen who attended English school in Canada
- Parent attended school in Quebec after Aug. 1977 and was declared eligible
- Child is in Quebec temporarily
- Child of foreign nationals with a valid certificate, permit, or exemption
- Dependent of Canadian citizens or permanent residents from another province
- Child of non-citizens temporarily posted in Quebec (government/international)
- Special circumstances
- Serious learning disabilities
- Humanitarian or family reasons

Gather Required Documents

- Child's long-form birth certificate
- Parent's birth certificate who attended English school (if applicable)
- Parent or sibling's Eligibility Certificate, if already issued

Apply for a COE

- Contact your local anglophone school board or private English school
- Complete eligibility form at registration
- Submit all documents at the school registration office
- Wait 10–21 days for approval (certificate mailed directly to parents)

Important Notes

- Children declared eligible can still attend a French school and retain the right to pass eligibility to their children
- COE is not required for adult education, CEGEPS, or university, but it may influence admission chances in English programs
- Students with COE can take the English Exit Exam instead of the French one
- Applications submitted after Grade 11 may be refused—apply early

Please be advised that the
SPEC office will be closed from
March 2 – 6 **inclusively.**

Thank you for your understanding!
- The Gaspé Spec Staff



Church closure may end in sale

CYNTHIA DOW

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES - After 82 years of serving the local Roman Catholic community, the church in St-Jules has been closed and may be about to change vocation.

A letter dated January 27, 2026, from the Sainte-Famille parish has been circulated in Cascapedia-Saint-Jules, inviting parishioners to share their comments on the possible sale of the church.

Signed by pastor Joachim Rakotoarimanana and president of the parish council, Denis Henry, the letter indicates that at a meeting held on November 13, 2025, several scenarios for the future of the church building were discussed, including the possibility of putting in place “sustainable fundraising strategies.”

But the letter goes on to say, “Faced with the lack of mobilization of community members, the sale or transfer of the building will have to be considered.”

The letter indicates that the state of the building makes the need to act urgent: “...the condition of the building would require major repairs to make it compliant and safe.”

The final service was held in the church on December 24, 2025. Since then, it has been closed to reduce heating and insurance costs.

Long-time church warden Thérèse Gallant told SPEC that “...like any old building it needs repairs, and it’s large, so it’s very expensive to heat with the current price of oil.” She noted that there are no grants available for places of worship, given Quebec’s laws



Photos: Mary Robertson

The imposing building, shown here in a photograph from a few years ago, has been at the heart of the community since its construction in 1945.

on the secularism of the state.

While grants are not available for operating places of worship, a grant program to help restore religious buildings of heritage value exists but was suspended last year by the provincial government.

“We also used to have a lot of volunteers who were willing to do things. Now we have to pay and it’s expensive.” She noted that with the aging population the church has “...lost a lot of parishioners. A lot of our good donors are gone.”

Mrs. Gallant told SPEC that the building, which can accommodate about 200 people, was packed for the final mass. “It’s really sad, but this is the way things are going,” she noted. She explained that, since COVID, “...not too many of the faithful attend any more. People live their faith in a different way.”

The letter from the parish gives those interested in the future of the building until

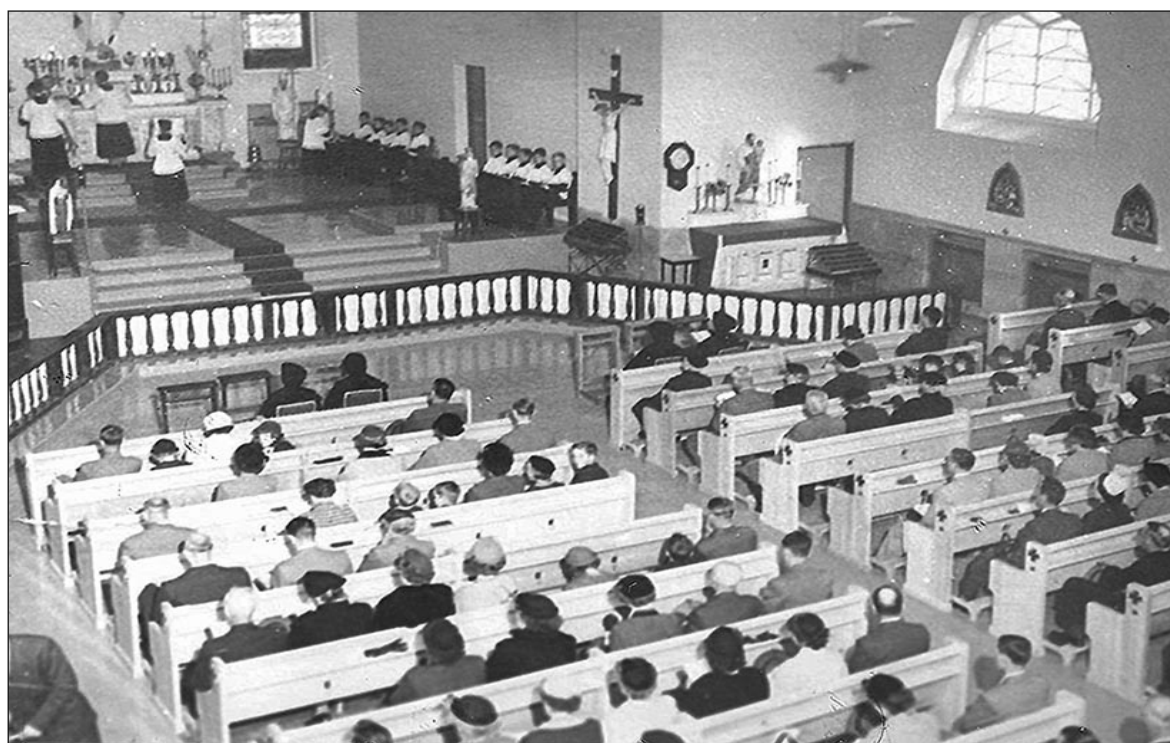
Saturday, February 28, to get in touch with the president of the parish council at secretariat.ndsa@hotmail.ca.

“Any option is open if someone wants to fix it and operate it for some purpose,” the warden said.

The current church was built in 1945 and consecrated in 1946 by the second Bishop of the Diocese of Gaspé, Albin Leblanc.

It replaced at least three previous structures: a small chapel from the 1800s, a wooden structure which burned down shortly after being finished in 1912, and another wooden building completed in 1913 that was struck by lightning in August 1943.

This decision adds yet another to the long list of chapels and churches along the Gaspé Coast which have been closed over the last few decades. Many have been refurbished as private enterprises, libraries or homes.



The St-Jules church used to be crowded at Sunday masses, which this photo, likely from the 1960s, shows.

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



Doomscrolling

There was a time when watching the news was a way to unwind and stay informed after dinner. The dishes were done, and for a half hour or so, we would sit and find out what was happening in the world. One reason why the news feels heavier, even depressing, is that it no longer waits politely until six o’clock. News is available 24/7. By phone, car radios and social media, you can access news constantly. And it’s not good news.

The word for this is doomscrolling or doomsurfing when we spend an excessive amount of time watching or listening to news, particularly negative news online or on social media.

This term first appeared in 2018 and became more common during the COVID pandemic. It was accompanied by conspiracy theories, false or fake news and misleading information. Over the years, this trend has only worsened.

Turn on CBC News, and you will hear stories about Donald Trump, the rapidly changing global landscape, inflation, global tensions, wars, housing challenges and the overburdened health system. Politics adds a big part to doomscrolling and Prime Minister Mark Carney is often the lead story. He is making a noble attempt to divest Canada of our reliance on the United States. That gives us some hope that our future may be more secure. We can no longer rely on the United States as an ally to the extent we have before.

The polarization of politics is constant now and it makes the news seem hopeless. Can differing views of the world ever come together to find real solutions? In the United States it appears less likely all the time. Republicans and Democrats are worlds apart and the constant struggle is discouraging.

News is meant to inform, but sometimes it hits home hard. This is true about economic anxiety. For many families the rising cost of well, everything, is not a story about others. It is about us. Hearing repeated stories about financial difficulties is not just informing us, it touches on our own worries and reminds us of how the news is not an abstract concept.

Ignoring the news once in a while doesn’t mean you are uninformed, but gives your brain a needed rest from doom. Maybe the solution is to listen to the news in moderation. By all means we need to be informed but we are not obligated to watch the news all day. The world has always had troubles but we now receive it faster and more of it. We are saturated with news.

So, if we lower the volume, switch channels or walk away from our phones, that will likely serve our mental well-being. Knowing what is going on in the world is important but balancing that with peace of mind is important. Canadians have an instinct to be informed, as we should, but with a hopefulness that better times are ahead. The world has always been complicated, but now we are reading and hearing about it constantly. Taking a break from it does not make you uninformed, it is a form of self-care. After all, we are Canadian, and we are a hopeful people.



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Announcements



In Memory



ASSELS: Charles Edwin

In loving memory of a very dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, who passed away February 14, 2023, at the age of 89.

*Just a prayer from us who loved you,
Precious memories fond and true.
In our hearts you'll live forever,
Because we thought the world of you.
It isn't always what we write,
Or even what we say.
It's what we feel within our hearts,
As we think of you every day.
What more is there to say,
Except to wish with all our hearts,
That you were here today.*

Always loved and will never be forgotten by wife Gertrude; daughters Brenda (Clifford), Darlene (Dave), Wanda (Boyce); son Charles (Liz); and families.

ASSELS: Edmond

1906 - 1980.

ASSELS: Sybil (Bisson)

1914 - 2001.

*Those we Love,
Don't go Away.
They walk beside us,
Every Day.
Unseen, Unheard,
But always Near.
Still Loved, Still Missed,
And Very Dear:*

Kenny, Lorraine, Albert and Carter.





BOURGAIZE: Elaine Mary (née Holland)

April 8, 1940 - February 26, 2023

Three years gone. In loving memory of my wife Elaine, mother of Janice and Kevin, grandmother of Alexandria and Dimitri.

*I thought of you with love today,
But that is nothing new.
I thought about you yesterday,
And the day before too.
I think of you in silence,
I often speak your name.
All I have are memories,
And your picture in a frame.
Your memories are my keepsake,
Which I will never part.
God has you in his keeping,
I have you in my heart.*

Your loving husband Elwood and family.

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LANGLOIS: Vera Simon

In loving memory of a dear mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and great-grandmother who passed away February 18, 2019.

*Your memory lives forever on,
And though our hearts still ache,
We cherish every thought of you,
Each moment we're awake.
Though absent,
You are ever present.*

Always remembered and sadly missed by Dora, Sandra (Ivan), Duane (Hermeline), Laura (Real) and families

MCWHIRTER: Lindsay

June 5, 1937 - March 2, 2016.

In loving memory from your wife Viola.

MCWHIRTER: Shown

October 7, 1977 - February 27, 2023.

In loving memory of a son, brother, husband, father, grandfather and friend. We will miss you forever.

Happy 99th Birthday



Heartfelt wishes to Hartley Briand of Douglastown who celebrated his 99th birthday on February 20.

With love from your family: Annetta, Colleen (Derek), Donna, and Suzanne (Joey); grandchildren Erika (Peter) and great-grandson Finn, Aaron (Bobbi Glenn), Kellie (Curtis) and Amy (Alexis).

This photograph was taken last September during a family picnic.

Congratulations!

Announcement Deadlines:

March 18 for the March 25 issue

April 1 for the April 8 issue

April 15 for the April 22 issue

Delivery Methods:

Email: holly.smith@globetrotter.net

Facebook Messenger: Friends of the SPEC

Phone or text: 418-752-5400

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On the Lighter Side...

POEMS CREATIVE WRITING PUZZLES WHAT'S THIS CHALLENGE SPEC GETS AROUND RECIPES



COAST ROUND-UP

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

NEW CARLISLE:
Bible Chapel Meetings
Sundays: Breaking of Bread for believers - 9:30 a.m., Gospel meeting and Sunday School - 2 p.m.
Thursdays: Prayer Meeting and Bible Study - 7 p.m. Everyone welcome! For more information: 418-752-3372 or 418-752-6011.

NEW RICHMOND:
St. Andrews United Church
March 29: We will be holding our annual chili luncheon from 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Chili, with all the trimmings, rolls and dessert. Cost: adults \$10 and children under 12 \$6. Take-outs are available by calling Kathleen at 418-392-4896,

UNITED CHURCH NEW RICHMOND
Sunday, March 1
10 a.m. Service
Sunday, March 8
10 a.m. Service

no later than March 27.
CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES 50+ club
March 14: Afternoon music with John Gedeon Jr. from 2 - 4 p.m., \$10 entry fee at the door and bar service will be available.

CASCAPEDIA-ST-JULES Book Room
UNITED CHURCH HOPE TOWN
Sunday, March 1
2 p.m. Service
Sunday, March 8
10 a.m. Service

Wednesdays: The book room will be open from 1 - 4 p.m. For more information please contact Kathleen at 418-392-4896.

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA
Sunday, March 1
New Carlisle
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Shigawake
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Sunday, March 8
New Carlisle
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Port Daniel
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist

PARISH OF GASPÉ
Sunday, March 1
St. Andrews, York
10 a.m. Morning Prayer
Tuesday, March 3
Rectory
7 p.m. Evening Prayer
Sunday, March 8
St. Pauls, Gaspe
10 a.m. Holy Communion
Tuesday, March 10
Rectory
7 p.m. Evening Prayer

CANNED GOODS WORD SEARCH

L T F T T F B H S E V H N S U U B K O V
O L V F O Y N L L H L R Z O R T I N F N
R N A Y N B Y A E H E I M U U C A V P E
I R I N O I B G T Z L L P B T C I P A P
E L E S K E E I O U I N F K G T Y E C Z
T L H H L R P R N A E R V T C B T U K U
C L C N Y S L R O R U K U N M O I T I G
R Z G Z O D K G O T A D N T E N O T M N I
L R K N N I R S N C A B G S T O O S G Z
S I F G I M T A E P E T E Y V S B K V U
Y L D R E N I A T A U S I H R E A M O V
P L L C E E I G T E L R S O E O E P P I
C I M K S V S L A N E I C I N H I F E U
C L A C Z I I R S Y T E Z N O N K F I N G
B A A K U A T E S M R M N G P G A L E V
U E N V L E Z I S I P R R U O H Y L R E
H K V I R I N R F E L I R E U A N E G N
F Y V I B A N E L S R Y H Y F V I D U I
S I L Y C S H G Z U S P K D O A S D S R
K E A Y U B U V E P Y M S T O R A G E B

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

- BRINE
- CAN
- CANISTER
- FERMENTATION
- FILLED
- LABEL
- LID
- LINING
- OPENER
- PACKING
- PASTEURIZE
- PICKLING
- PRESERVE
- PROCESSING
- REHYDRATE
- ROTATION
- SEALING
- SHELF
- STERILE
- STOCKPILE
- STORAGE
- SYRUP
- TIN
- VACUUM

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



HOROSCOPES - February 23 to March 1

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20
Unleash your inner architect, Aries. Your focus is laser sharp this week. Use this incredible mental clarity to map out a long-term goal that can lead to professional success.
TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, you might uncover a previously unnoticed talent or find a fantastic, easy way to increase your income stream. Your instincts about finances are particularly sharp.
GEMINI - May 22/June 21
You are stepping into a week of elevated confidence and personal magnetism, Gemini. It's the perfect time to make a splash, meet new people or launch a personal project.
CANCER - June 22/July 22
This week brings soothing energy, allowing you to find deep comfort and resolution with any lingering personal matters. A moment of quiet reflection will

bring a profound realization about your path forward.
LEO - July 23/Aug 23
Your social connections are bringing incredible joy and opportunity, Leo. A friend or colleague has valuable information that can directly benefit your goals.
VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22
All eyes are on your professional achievements, and recognition is due, Virgo. Expect positive feedback, a nod from an important figure or a chance to take on more responsibility.
LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23
This week ignites your desire for learning and adventure, Libra. If you've been putting off a trip or a new course of study, the time to commit is now.
SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22
Complex issues feel manageable this week, Scorpio. You have the emotional intelligence to navigate and resolve long-standing challenges in shared resources or relationships.

SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, your one-on-one relationships, both personal and professional, are reaching a new peak of understanding and support. A shared goal with a key person becomes much clearer.
CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20
You feel a vibrant surge of energy and vitality this week, Capricorn. It's an ideal time to commit to a new health routine or simply enjoy the ease and flow of your daily tasks.
AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18
Dive into what sets your soul on fire, Aquarius. Your creative imagination is running wild, delivering innovative solutions and exciting ideas for self-expression.
PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20
The cosmos is supporting your home and emotional life, Pisces. You feel a wonderful sense of security and belonging. It's a great time for connecting with your roots.

HOROSCOPES - March 2 to March 8

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, your natural charisma is at an all-time high right now. A bold idea you've been sitting on finally gets the green light. Put your plan into action this week.
TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21
Comfort and luxury find you this week, Taurus. Expect a heartwarming moment in your personal or professional life that restores your sense of peace and well-being.
GEMINI - May 22/June 21
Your social circle may expand this week in the best way possible, Gemini. A new connection brings a refreshing perspective to a creative project. Now you'll work out the details.
CANCER - June 22/July 22
Recognition is coming your way, Cancer. Your hard work hasn't gone unnoticed. A small win will

feel like a major victory, helping to inspire you to keep going.
LEO - July 23/Aug 23
Leo, adventure is calling you this week. Whether you take a trip or get involved in a new book, your mind is expanding and your imagination is soaring.
VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22
A solution to an unsolved puzzle finally clicks into place, Virgo. You will feel a deep sense of relief and clarity. Don't take on too much more right now, and ride this high that you are feeling.
LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23
A conversation with a loved one could bring you two closer together than ever before, Libra. In fact, harmony will be a major player in all of your relationships right now.
SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22
You are a magnet for productivity this week, Scorpio. You will breeze through your list of things to

do with plenty of time left over for self-care.
SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, creativity is your superpower this week. Do not be afraid to express yourself through art, music, writing, or other creative pursuits.
CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20
Your foundation this week feels rock solid, Capricorn. A family matter is resolved with grace, leaving you feeling supported and loved. You will share good fortune with others.
AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18
This is the perfect week to share your vision with the world, Aquarius. Your communication skills are sharp. People will come around to your way of thinking.
PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20
Abundance is flowing toward you, Pisces. Keep your eyes open for a surprise gift or a sudden increase in the tools you need to get things done.

March Break Fun That Won't Break the Bank

HOLLY SMITH

NEW CARLISLE - March Break is almost here, and while social media might suggest you need a plane ticket or a pricey activity pass to keep kids happy, the truth is much simpler: you don't.

If you're trying to stretch the family budget this year, there are plenty of ways to make March Break memorable without spending much at all. In fact, some of the best ideas cost next to nothing, just a bit of creativity and time together.

Turn the outdoors into an adventure

We live in one of the most scenic regions in the province. That's a gift, and it's free.

Bundle up and head outside. Turn an ordinary walk into a scavenger hunt: animal tracks, the biggest icicle, something red, something older than you. Bring along a thermos of hot chocolate and call it a "winter expedition."

Try a snow obstacle course, snow bowling (using a ball and recycled bottles), or a family



March Break doesn't have to be expensive to be fun.

snow sculpture contest. When kids are involved in planning, the excitement doubles.

Create Theme Days at Home

A week at home doesn't have to feel ordinary. Assign each day a theme and build simple activities around it.

- Baking Day: Let the kids take over the kitchen (with supervision). Measuring, mixing and decorating cookies or muffins becomes part cooking lesson, part memory-making.
- Movie Day: Close the curtains, make popcorn, create

handmade tickets and let the kids design the movie schedule.

- Camp-In Day: Build blanket forts, eat lunch inside them and tell stories with flashlights.
- Talent Show Day: Singing, magic tricks, comedy routines, everyone performs.

The key isn't perfection. It's participation.

Get crafty without buying supplies

You don't need expensive craft kits. Recycle what's already in the house.

Cardboard boxes become

castles or cars. Old magazines become collages. Empty jars can be painted into lanterns. Create homemade board games or design your own family trivia challenge.

Kitchen science and DIY challenges

YouTube might be full of elaborate experiments, but simple ones work just as well. Baking soda and vinegar volcanoes. Growing crystals with sugar. Making homemade playdough.

Create a building challenge: who can build the tallest structure using only spaghetti and marshmallows? Who can design the best paper airplane?

You'll be surprised how competitive, and engaged, everyone becomes.

Give back as a family

March Break can also be about community. Older kids can help shovel a neighbour's driveway, tidy up a yard, or bake something for someone who lives alone. It doesn't cost anything, but it teaches empa-

thy and connection.

Plan a "Staycation Day"

Pick one day and treat it like a vacation, at home. Sleep in. Make a big breakfast. Go somewhere local you haven't visited in a while, a lookout, a walking trail or a nearby beach. Take photos. Pretend you're tourists.

Pack a lunch instead of buying one. The outing feels special without the restaurant bill.

The real secret

It's easy to feel pressure to "do something big." But children rarely measure March Break by how much money was spent.

They remember the snowball fights. The forts. The kitchen disasters that turned into laughter. The extra time.

This March Break, give yourself permission to keep it simple. Slow down. Get outside. Make a mess. Make memories.

Fun doesn't have to be expensive. It just has to be shared.

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International Women's Day: A celebration of strength, sisterhood, and possibility

EMILY HOCQUARD

NEW CARLISLE - International Women's Day is more than just a meaningful date — it's a worldwide celebration of courage, creativity, and community. Celebrated each year on March 8, the day honours the achievements of women while also shining a light on the importance of equality. Far beyond the history and the headlines, it's also a vibrant, feel-good moment to appreciate the incredible women who shape our lives every single day.

The roots of this celebration stretch back over a century. In the early 1900s, women across Europe and the United States began organizing for better working conditions, fair pay, and the right to vote. At a time when women had limited rights and opportunities, speaking up required tremendous bravery. In 1910, German activist Clara Zetkin proposed the idea of an international day dedicated to women's rights and equality. Her suggestion sparked a global movement. What began as rallies and political meetings has grown into an annual celebration recognized

around the world.

Today, International Women's Day carries both a powerful message and a joyful spirit. It's a reminder of how far society has come, and how much potential still lies ahead. Women now lead countries, run global businesses, explore space, design groundbreaking technology, and create art that moves millions, all while carrying babies on their hips! Inspirational female figures continue to advocate for education and equal opportunities, proving that there is no barrier in making a difference. The beauty of this day is that it celebrates not only internationally known leaders, but equally importantly, the everyday heroes among us.

Think about the women who inspire you personally. It might be a mother who somehow balances a million responsibilities with grace. A teacher who encouraged you to believe in yourself. A friend who listens without judgment. A colleague who leads with confidence and kindness. International Women's Day invites us to pause and say, "I see you. I appreciate you." Most times, this simple recog-

nition means everything.

Around the globe, celebrations are colorful, creative, and full of energy. Purple is often the signature color of the day, symbolizing justice and dignity, while green represents hope. Cities host marches, networking events, concerts, and workshops surrounding this wonderful day. Schools organize activities highlighting women's contributions to history, science, and the arts. Social media buzzes with empowering messages, inspiring quotes, and stories that uplift women from every background. In some countries, it's also tradition to give flowers or small gifts as tokens of appreciation.

What makes International Women's Day especially meaningful is its balance between celebration and purpose. Yes, it's a day for smiles, laughter, and recognition, but it's also a reminder that equality is an ongoing journey. Conversations about fair pay, equal access to education, representation in leadership, and safety for women continue to shape the global dialogue. However, rather than feeling heavy, the day carries a sense of momentum and optimism.

A reminder of how far we have come and how much further we still can go! It encourages people of all genders to be part of the solution and to support one another.

One of the most uplifting aspects of International Women's Day is its emphasis on unity. Women from different cultures, professions, and generations come together to share experiences and build connections. Young girls see role models who inspire them to dream big. Older generations share stories of progress and resilience. Communities unite around the shared goal of creating a future where opportunity is not limited by gender.

At its heart, International Women's Day is about possibility. It's a day to celebrate achievements while imagining even greater ones. It's about recognizing strength,

not only the bold, headline-making kind, but also the quiet resilience shown in daily life. It's about creativity, compassion, determination, and the powerful impact women have on families, communities, and the world every single day.

So, whether you're attending an event, posting a tribute, sending flowers, or simply expressing gratitude to a special woman in your life, International Women's Day is a chance to celebrate loudly and proudly. It's a day to cheer for progress, support equality, and honour the countless women who make life brighter, stronger, and more inspiring.

This day reminds us of something simple yet incredibly powerful: when women thrive, everyone benefits, and that, is definitely something worth celebrating.

**From board rooms to classrooms,
farms to front desks, women
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**HAPPY
INTERNATIONAL**

Women's Day
MARCH 8TH, 2026

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*Today we celebrate the
Women
who lead with courage,
lift with compassion,
and strengthen our entire
community.*

CASA

Digging Into the Past: SPEC's scavenger hunts explore local history in Port Daniel and Escuminac

GILLES GAGNÉ

PORT DANIEL AND ESCUMINAC – As part of the 50th anniversary, SPEC's staff ran scavenger hunts in Port Daniel on February 10 and in the Pointe-à-la-Garde part of Escuminac on February 17. The staff had previously held similar activities in Matapedia in November and Gaspé in January.

The Port Daniel and Escuminac activities were held in collaboration with CASA's Wellness Centre and focused on local history. Questions mainly pertained to events and people from the communities where the activities took place.

Participants searched past issues of SPEC, bound into books covering 1975 to 2004, which greatly facilitated research. The questionnaires were prepared by Jillian O'Connell, SPEC's coordinator for the 50th anniversary.

During the hunt or afterward, when SPEC provides the answers, interesting discussions often arise. In Port Daniel for example, readers asked why there are not longer social notes in the paper. Office manager Holly Smith replied that new privacy regulations make it very hard to run such columns. Ferne Langlois remarked at that point that the social notes helped her find a family when she moved here.

In Escuminac, Miguasha resident Marlene Wafer Armishaw highlighted that her sensitivity to environmental issues increased after reading a 1984 edition of SPEC showing that aluminum can-opening clips could be collected and exchanged to buy wheelchairs for people with disabilities.

SPEC readers seem to appreciate the scavenger hunts, and so does the staff!



Attendees were able to explore the archives while taking part in the scavenger hunt at the Escuminac senior wellness session.



Participants search through the newspaper archives during a scavenger hunt at the Port Daniel senior wellness event.



Marilyn Mcguire and Elsie Mcgie dig through a SPEC archive book, hunting for answers to their scavenger hunt questions.



Sarah Duguay, Kathy Jacobs and Terry Linthorne hunt for items in the newspaper archives at the Port Daniel event.



Dee Anne Deschamps McNally and Marlene Wafer Armishaw search through the archives during the Escuminac scavenger hunt.



Lucie Anne Landry and Dawn Doddridge explore the newspaper archives as part of the Escuminac scavenger hunt.



Office manager Holly Smith helps Edith Huntington navigate the newspaper archives during the Port Daniel scavenger hunt.

Photos: G. Gagné

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We provide **free** one-on-one tutoring for adults 16+ who want to build confidence and **skills that matter**.
Get help with reading, writing, using your cellphone or tablet, understanding basic finances, and more!
Learn at your own pace with friendly, personalized support.

info@eqlit.ca   www.eqlit.ca



Hidden Treasures Flea Market

COME VISIT US AT OUR NEW LOCATION

HOURS

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



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

FLEA MARKET DONATIONS WANTED!

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

(418) 752-8514   **DROP-OFF ON SITE**



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Gaspesian organization for people affected by cancer

SUPPORT SHARING ACCOMPANIMENT MUTUAL AID

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