

Cascapedia-St. Jules' Chase Cleary gets drafted by the Halifax Mooseheads

GILLES GAGNÉ

CASCAPEDIA-ST. JULES – Chase Cleary, a hockey player from Cascapedia-St. Jules, was drafted by the Halifax Mooseheads in the sixth round on June 6, becoming the 97th overall pick in the Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League's annual draft.

The draft was held in Halifax and attended by his parents Ashley Milligan, who is the mayor of Cascapedia-St. Jules, and Jamie Cleary. Chase's brother Nathan, along with other family members and friends, was also present to support him.

In fact, when his name was pronounced at the Scotiabank Centre, the television commentators noted that Chase was surrounded by a strong support group, as their reaction could be heard loud and clear throughout the arena, one of the largest in the league.

"We are very proud and I



Photo: Courtesy of Ashley Milligan

Chase Cleary got a firsthand look at the Halifax Mooseheads' locker room during draft weekend in Halifax.

guess we are still on cloud nine. The reality has not sunk in yet. It is hard to believe that we have reached this step," reacts Ashley Milligan three days after the draft.

A centre known for his play-making ability and cerebral approach to the offensive side of

the game, while remaining responsible defensively, Chase Cleary spent his early minor hockey years in the Baie-des-Chaleurs area, first with the Légonnais and later with the Gladiateurs.

He then began travelling extensively, attending Bois-Vi-

vant School in New Richmond during the week while practising and playing in Rivière-du-Loup on weekends as part of an elite Lower St. Lawrence hockey program. Other young players from Gaspésie have followed a similar path.

Chase followed that routine

for two years before moving to Rivière-du-Loup for the 2024-2025 season. In 2025-2026, he played for Académie Notre-Dame, also located in Rivière-du-Loup.

"He played in the M18 despite starting the season at 15, as he only turned 16 in February," explains Ashley Milligan.

M18 means less than age 18. Despite being among the youngest players on his team, he scored nine goals and added 13 assists for 22 points in 42 games, finishing the season with a plus-5 rating.

At the end of the school year on June 19, Chase will return home for two weeks before heading to Fredericton.

"He will attend a hockey camp for three weeks, followed by a power skating session after that. He will be gone for three-and-a-half weeks of hockey," points out Ms. Milligan.

The Mooseheads camp will

Cont'd on page 7

Chick hatching adventure

AMBER CURTIS

CHANDLER - The preschool class at St. Patrick's Elementary was thrilled to take part in a chick-hatching project this spring. A new incubator was purchased and a special observation station was set up so the children could watch the process unfold.

On Day 20 of the incubation period, excitement filled the classroom when the first crack appeared in one of the eggs. Throughout the day, the children eagerly observed as the crack grew larger and tiny peeping sounds could be heard from inside the shell.

The following morning, the children arrived at school eager to check on the incubator. As they approached the classroom, peeps could already be heard from the hallway. The children rushed inside and were delighted to discover a fluffy little chick waiting for them. They learned that the chick needed to remain in the warmth of the incubator a little longer to dry off and rest before it could be handled.

Once the chick was ready, its new temporary home was prepared with fresh bedding, food, water and a heat lamp to keep it comfortable. The children were proud to help create a safe space for their newest classroom visitor while continuing to watch the remaining eggs in anticipation of more chicks hatching.

The next day brought another fluffy arrival. The children came in with big smiles and quickly chose the names Oreo and Brownie for the two chicks. Throughout the week, they carefully observed the chicks' behaviours, documented their findings and learned about the life cycle of chicks. The children also worked hard to create their own chick-hatching books, complete with illustrations and written observations.

After spending a week in the classroom, Oreo and Brownie were moved to a farm, where they will continue to grow, explore and thrive. The hands-on learning experience provided wonderful opportunities for observation, responsibility, creativity and discovery, and it is a memory the preschool class will cherish for years to come.



Photos: Amber Curtis

An investment of over \$7.5 million transforms the Bioparc de la Gaspésie

GILLES GAGNÉ

BONAVENTURE – After two years of intensive construction supported by an investment of more than \$7.5 million, the Bioparc de la Gaspésie has completed a major modernization project.

The initiative, which forms Phase 1 of the attraction's 2022-2028 development plan, allows the Bioparc to unveil several significant new features for the summer season.

With new animal habitats, landscaped areas, an exhibition pavilion, themed zones and redesigned service areas, the Bioparc is reaching a pivotal milestone in its history.

Director general Marie-Josée Bernard points out that the phase 1 of the development plan was the third expansion since the inauguration of the Bioparc in 1998 and is expected to increase attendance by between 10% and 15%.

“We are starting from 32,000-35,000 visitors, according to the numbers of the last years. We are in constant progression. We are aiming for 37,000-38,000 visitors for this year. We are also lengthening the average duration of the visit from 3.5 hours, what it is so far, to 4.5 hours. People stay longer on site, and it might lead them to stay longer in town. In due time, we are aiming for 40,000 visitors,” explains Ms. Bernard.

Surveys indicate that the tourist season will be good in Quebec, she adds. “We hear



Photos: G. Gagné

The Bioparc's expansion includes larger and improved habitats for several species, including Arctic foxes.

that many Quebecers will come here, to the Gaspé Peninsula,” she adds.

The first expansion of the Bioparc took place in 2008-2009 with the additions of the cottages along the Baie des Chaleurs and the insectarium. In 2015-2016, the animal spaces, notably that of the amphibians, was enlarged.

“The total of the three expansions brings the amount invested to close to \$20 million since 2008,” points out Marie-Josée Bernard.

The yearly attendance at the Bioparc was a tad over 18,000 visitors in 2008 and climbed to a record of 37,000 in 2022, its best year. Attendance fell to 30,000 in 2025, but there was a reason for that decline, as the Bioparc shortened its operating season by five weeks to accommodate

construction work.

The expansion in details

Among the new features, the tundra area has been transformed with a modernized habitat for caribou, the arrival of Arctic foxes, and the addition of a walkway and ground-level viewing windows. The river otter habitat has also undergone a complete redesign, providing the animals with expanded living space and a large swimming pool.

Named the Desjardins Pavilion, the new cultural space is hosting the temporary exhibition "Browns, Whites, Blacks: Canada's Bears," which offers a thorough glimpse into the world of these famous mammals.

The new development improves comfort for both visitors and animals, stresses Marie-Josée Bernard.

“To enhance the visitor experience, several aspects have been improved: new restrooms, an enhanced picnic area, a new covered area for better viewing of the activities, and improved, landscaped observation areas,” she says.

“Less noticeable to visitors, other renovations are just as important because they improve the animals' living spaces and the facilities required for their well-being. The new animal care building and the animal transfer facilities are examples of this,” she

adds.

Refreshed programming

To enrich the visitor experience, the Bioparc has also developed a program of exhibitions and scientific outreach activities offering a fresh perspective on biodiversity.

The outdoor trails feature a new science interpretation circuit, with interactive stations designed to deepen knowledge in a fun and engaging way. The amphibian and reptile corridor has been transformed into a thematic gallery showcasing Quebec's herpetofauna through a series of captivating photographs. Herpetofauna means all the amphibians and reptiles that live in a given region or ecosystem.

In addition, a new selection of wildlife artwork by Monique and Gisèle Benoît is displayed throughout the visitor circuit, offering a unique artistic perspective on local fauna.

Natives of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, Gisèle and Monique Benoît have spent decades photographing and illustrating wildlife, developing a particular affinity for moose, birds and, beyond the region, wolves.

Loyal partners

The completion of these major projects demonstrates the strength of the support surrounding the Bioparc, points

board president Claude Desbiens.

“We commend the commitment of the governments of Quebec and Canada, Groupe Desjardins and the Town of Bonaventure, whose confidence was the necessary driving force behind the consolidation of our mission. Thanks to this support, the Bioparc now has infrastructure that matches its ambitions,” he says.

The mayor of Bonaventure, Pierre Gagnon, praises the role the Bioparc plays in the community and surrounding region.

“It brings a lot to the town, it is our pride. Bonaventure hands out \$20,000 annually to the Bioparc, according to a five-year agreement. The Town also helps with some municipal services and there is a growing number of volunteers helping out,” remarks Mr. Gagnon.

Tribute to Bernard Arsenault

The expansion was officially inaugurated on June 2. During the visit that followed short speeches, a plaque paying a tribute to one of the main promoters of the Bioparc in the 1990s and over the following years, Bernard Arsenault. He passed away in 2020.

Claude Desbiens and Mr. Arsenault's wife, Chantal Robichaud, unveiled the plaque.

“I am convinced that no matter where he is now, he is touched by this tribute,” pointed out Ms. Robichaud with emotion.

Bernard Arsenault was first involved with the Bonaventure Zoo, which occupied the site before the creation of the Bioparc. The zoo operated for approximately 25 years before its concept and infrastructure became outdated. Mr. Arsenault embraced the transition and worked closely with the small team that developed the Bioparc.

The site now employs 30 people, including two positions created as part of the expansion project.

The expanded facilities have been open to the public since June 7.



Bioparc board president Claude Desbiens and Chantal Robichaud unveil a commemorative plaque honouring the memory of Bernard Arsenault, one of the key figures in the development of the Bioparc.

THEGASPESPEC.COM
418-752-5400

“Ma place au travail” proposes nine recommendations to improve child care services

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – As the shortage of child care spaces continues to grow and recruiting educators becomes increasingly difficult, the “Ma place au travail” movement has put forward nine recommendations to strengthen Quebec’s child care system in a newly released white paper.

The organization estimates there is currently a shortage of 361 child care spaces in the Gaspé Peninsula, up from 327 in 2021, despite promises by the Quebec government and the creation of new spaces in recent years. At the same time, the number of qualified educators has declined from 74 to 62.

A white paper is a comprehensive and authoritative document on a specific topic. It generally presents a problem and proposes concrete solutions.

Several factors contribute to the situation. “There’s a labour shortage that means spots are created but aren’t accessible; family-based settings can close quickly; retirements—there are plenty of factors to consider, but the main issue is that there are fewer spots for infants,”



Photo: LinkedIn

notes Marjorie Peyric, communications and special projects coordinator for Ma place au travail.

Among the priorities identified in the report is the need to provide parents with better information about the child care system.

“When we held our public consultation last year, we realized that parents weren’t well informed. The types of child-care services, how to find a spot... We had the 0-5 age group. Now, it’s the new portal. You have to go on social media, find contacts for family-based settings. There are lots of dif-

ferent paths that aren’t always easy to navigate,” she adds, noting the complexity of the current system.

The organization also argues that the registration process should be simplified. Under the current system, parents must wait until a child is born before beginning the registration process.

Another recommendation calls for greater flexibility within the Quebec Parental Insurance Program (QPIP).

“To ensure a smoother transition between accessing child-care and returning to work. Parental leave ends after about a year. The children are infants, and there are fewer spots available; if the child is born in the spring, spots are even scarcer. There’s a certain rigidity. We propose working toward a smoother transition and ensuring that access to a spot is a right for all children in Quebec, just as it is for school,” she demands.

The report also argues that a universal network remains the best way to ensure equal access to services.

“We want the network to be a societal project. It’s an investment; it’s a lot of money. We

should view it as a fully-fledged component of education,” says Ms. Peyric.

The white paper has been sent to the new Minister of Families, Bonaventure Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Catherine Blouin, as well as to opposition parties.

“Early childhood is so important. If parents cannot return

to work, it exacerbates the labour shortage. The quality of child care services impacts children’s academic success and social integration. That is why we must make this a societal priority. During an election period, we want the issue to be on the table so that the next government takes it seriously,” she concludes.

The nine recommendations proposed
Strengthen efforts to inform parents about the child care system beginning in the prenatal period.
Simplify registration and placement processes.
Ensure a seamless transition between QPIP (Quebec Parental Insurance Program) benefits, access to child care and returning to work.
Guarantee families access to a universal network centred on their needs.
Make accessibility and quality inseparable principles of the system.
Ensure the network serves as a model of inclusion.
Develop a fully publicly funded network focused primarily on Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs).
Support the development of community-based services connected to local communities.
Fully recognize child care as an integral part of education and a lever for social justice.

Gascons water system to be operational this fall

NELSON SERGERIE

PORT-DANIEL–GASCONS – The major project to provide the Gascons sector of Port-Daniel–Gascons with water and sewer services is progressing smoothly.

The installation of the main water supply line is nearly complete. Only a few smaller roads remain to be connected to the network.

“The section east of the community centre should be connected by July. The rest should be done by October. It’s moving along—it’s unbelievable,” says Mayor Henri Grenier.

The contractor, Projex of Sainte-Marie in the Beauce region, has earned praise from the mayor.

“It’s very well executed. They are exceptional workers,” continues Mr. Grenier.

Construction of the sewer system is progressing on a similar schedule and remains ahead of the original timeline.

“So far, there have been no unpleasant surprises,” says the mayor of the project, which



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

Residents of the Gascons sector of Port-Daniel–Gascons are expected to have access to drinking water this fall.

now totals approximately \$52 million, including construction, supervision and related costs.

The Quebec government allocated \$40 million toward the project, including the preparation of plans and specifications. The municipality will cover the remaining costs, which are expected to be somewhat higher than originally anticipated.

At the time the project was initially assessed, the total cost

was estimated at \$40 million.

The project has been in development for nearly 20 years.

The water supplying the system will come from the Newport sector of Chandler under an intermunicipal agreement, after all attempts to locate an adequate water source in the Gascons sector proved unsuccessful.

A water source identified in 2009 was determined to be insufficient to serve the approximately 400 homes in the area, about 80% of which have non-potable water.

The agreement reached with the Quebec government in 2018 included provisions for a water supply source, water and sewer networks, and two wastewater treatment systems.

At that time, the Quebec government agreed to increase its contribution for the water and sewer infrastructure to \$26 million.

Prior to that agreement, the province had offered only \$11 million toward what was then estimated to be a \$28.5-million project.



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

Deep potholes and a wavy road surface have developed on the Mgr Ross Bridge since the end of winter.

Asphalt deteriorating on Mgr Ross Bridge

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ – Since the end of winter, several deep potholes have formed on Gaspé’s Mgr Ross Bridge as chunks of asphalt have broken away from the concrete deck.

Drivers have also noticed a wave-like effect on the bridge surface. The Ministry of Transportation is aware of the situation.

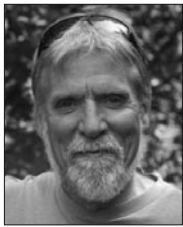
“A patching operation using hot-mix asphalt will be carried out in the coming weeks to improve driving comfort. This will be a temporary intervention,” says ministry spokesperson Julie Marcoux.

A complete resurfacing of the bridge will have to wait. “The ministry is currently assessing the work required to correct the problem over the longer term. The deterioration of the asphalt surface is due to the normal aging of the concrete deck, which reduces the asphalt’s ability to adhere to the concrete,” she explains.

The ministry is working to find the “best solution” to ensure the asphalt properly bonds to the bridge deck. “If we simply repave the bridge now, we will have the same problem again,” she notes.

No major work is currently planned in the near future. In the meantime, targeted repairs will be carried out as needed.

The bridge was last repaired in 2016. The ministry maintains that the structure, which was built in 1979, remains safe for traffic.



Gilles Gagné

Commentary

High-speed train project: where is the tact?

The leader of the Parti Québécois, Paul Saint-Pierre-Plamondon, threw a brick in the political window on June 9 when he published on social media X a message to the effect that a government formed by his party would prevent the province from being involved in the Quebec City-Toronto high-speed rail train project.

Mr. Saint-Pierre-Plamondon noted that the project does not address the needs of Quebecers. He alleged that the real problem for Quebecers is not that they can't efficiently commute to Toronto, but that they can't effectively move within their own city or their own region.

He added that Quebec's infrastructure, like hospitals, schools and roads, are hit by an investment deficit, and that the federal money slated for the high-speed train would be requested to upgrade dilapidated infrastructure.

The Parti Québécois (PQ) leader is right on some points and wrong on others.

He is right about the dilapidated state of Quebec's infrastructure. A recent evaluation of the province's road network revealed that it would take an immediate investment of \$31 billion to restore it into good condition. Instead, the annual sums earmarked for this network, between \$4 billion and \$4.5 billion, remains insufficient to prevent further deterioration. In other words, the picture will worsen in 2027, and again in 2028, pushing the infrastructure deficit above the \$31-billion mark.

The same can be said for our schools and hospitals. Their condition continues to deteriorate due to repeated maintenance shortcomings. The current assessment brings the deficit to approximately \$45 billion.

It always costs less to maintain infrastructure before it falls into disrepair. However, politicians often prefer inaugurating a new school rather than repairing 10 older ones.

Unsubstantiated figures

Paul St-Pierre Plamondon relied on a figure cited in May by a Bloc Québécois member of Parliament, who suggested that the high-speed rail project could cost as much as \$200 billion, to argue that Quebec's share of the venture, approximately \$40 billion, could instead be used to upgrade the province's infrastructure.

As it is presented by Alto, the federal government corporation founded to lead the project, the high-speed train project is supposed to cost between \$60 billion and \$90 billion. Considering that all major infrastructure projects on the planet, not only in Canada or Quebec, are plagued by various cost overruns, it is fair to assume that the high-speed train's tab will cost above \$100 billion. However, the \$200-billion estimate remains unsubstantiated.

There will be no high-speed rail project if the Parti Québécois opposes it, especially given the possibility that the party could win the October 5 election. Faced with the jurisdictional constraints the reigning party could place in the way of the federal initiative, the project would likely become unfeasible.

However, Mr. St-Pierre Plamondon is wrong if he believes that the federal government would simply hand Quebec \$40 billion to repair its infrastructure. Federal-provincial politics do not work that way.

Truth be told, Canada's Minister of Industry, Mélanie Joly, is equally wrong when she says that Quebec is not contributing financially to the project and that "it's the federal government that's doing it."

Yes, it is a federal initiative, but until further notice, Quebecers still pay taxes to the Government of Canada, accounting for approximately 22% of its revenues. Therefore, Quebecers should have a say.

Nation building

Prime Minister Mark Carney has made no secret of his intentions. He is promoting projects aimed at strengthening trade links between the provinces in response to the threat represented by American President Donald Trump, who has sought to bully Canada since returning to office in November 2024. At times, he has succeeded.

Notably through military development and rising exchanges within Canada, Mr. Carney is doing "nation building." That's one of the tactics he intends to use in order to counter Donald Trump.

Paul St-Pierre Plamondon leads a party that seeks Quebec's independence. He fears that Mr. Carney's nation-building efforts could weaken support for a future sovereignty referendum. That concern is compounded by the fact that support for Quebec independence rarely exceeds 35% in public opinion surveys.

Major flaws in the project

The high-speed train gets strong support from the mayors of the cities that will be on its path. A majority of Quebecers also want this project.

However, the number of questions that remain unanswered is still staggering, 18 months after former prime minister Justin Trudeau announced that Canada would get its high-speed train.

If Quebec City, Trois-Rivières, Montreal and Laval citizens will get the chance to board this train close to home, what about the other Quebecers? If more than \$100 billion is invested for this project, including an important share of that amount in Quebec, how much will be invested for passenger rail service in the Gaspé Peninsula, Lower Saint Lawrence, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Abitibi,

Charlevoix and the south shore between Lévis and Longueuil?

Will those regions get a daily service, at a fair speed, on a rail network that doesn't leave passengers with the impression that they are in for a multi-hour human shake?

What about the Maritimes, where more than two million residents still do not have access to daily passenger rail service?

VIA Rail's current network serving less-populated areas, a network that might not survive the deployment of a high-speed train, given the federal government's poor consideration for rural areas, is characterized by trains circulating at speeds that are lower than those of 60 years ago, sometimes 100 years ago.

Is the federal government, considering the financial size of some of its initiatives, ready to correct the historical mistake of selling the rails in 1995, when it privatized Canadian National Railways (CN)?

Selling the rolling material and the majority of CN's buildings to the private sector was one thing, but leaving the railroads to a freight company only interested in profits, with very little consideration for the people travelling on that network, was a huge mistake.

31 years later, the federal government still hasn't forced CN and CP to keep its tracks in a state that would make passenger travel pleasant and practical, and give priorities to VIA Rail over freight trains. The land supporting those railway networks was given to those companies.

Alto must show a desire to listen

So far, Alto is presenting the project to the population living along the high-speed train path as if the concept is gently shoved down people's throat.

Lately, farmers have been holding demonstrations against the project. It is odd to see that Alto doesn't put emphasis on the way high-speed train projects were built in Europe, on agricultural land. Information sessions are being held, but information does not necessarily mean consultation.

The construction of the high-speed train line is expected to begin in 2029. Many good and bad things can happen between now and then. Mark Carney's government, which can only count on a slim majority, will have to navigate with a soft touch in the Alto project.

Otherwise, this initiative will be mothballed, just like the similar and shy attempts undertaken over the last 40 years.

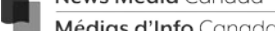


208-B Gérard D. Levesque
New Carlisle, Que.
G0C 1Z0

Tel: 418-752-5400
specs@globetrotter.net
thegaspespec.com

(Taxes included)
1-year paper \$50
6-months paper: \$29
1-year digital \$50
Outside Canada:
Contact office for a quote

Published every second
Wednesday by:
Les Publications de la Côte Inc.
(Sea-Coast Publications Inc.)





News Editor:
Gilles Gagné



Publisher
Circulation / Office Manager
Holly Smith



Office Assistant
Jillian O'Connell



Sales Manager
Emily Hocquard

JOURNALISTS: Nelson Sergerie, Cynthia Dow, Diane Skinner, Mary Robertson and Jeanie Lelacheur

SPEC welcomes letters to the editor on subjects relevant to topics covered by the paper. Letters must be kept within 300 words or less and may be edited for clarity or to remove any slanderous, sexist, racist or homophobic statements. We reserve the right to reject any letters. Opinions or letters published do not necessarily reflect the editorial policies or beliefs of this newspaper. All letters must bear the handwritten signature of the writer and include the address and number(s) for verification purposes (address & phone number will not be printed). The Publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The Publisher's liability for other errors or omissions in connection with any advertisement is strictly limited to publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue or the refund of any monies paid for the advertisement.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Elaine Sexton
Hayden Sams
Bonita Annett
Greg Leblanc
Steven Parent
Marjorie Lepage
Cheryl Leggo
Patricia Ste-Croix
Annett



We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada.
We acknowledge special funding from the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications.



Page 4, June 17, 2026 - Spec

Grande-Rivière student hospitalized after suspected cannabis candy incident

NELSON SERGERIE

GRANDE-RIVIÈRE – A student at Bon-Pasteur Elementary School in Grande-Rivière was taken to hospital after possibly consuming a candy containing cannabis, according to information obtained by The SPEC.

The incident occurred on June 2, and the school administration sent a letter to parents the following day.

“We wish to inform you that an unusual situation involving the accidental consumption of a candy containing an unauthorized substance has occurred,” states the letter signed by Principal Martin Langlois, a copy of which was obtained by The SPEC.

“As soon as the school was informed of the situation, staff intervened immediately with the students and parents concerned. We also involved our partners in the health network, Youth Protection Services and the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) to ensure the situation was handled appropriately. Awareness activities were also conducted in the classroom with students. Out of respect for confidentiality, we will not provide further details regarding the situation,” the René-Lévesque School Service Centre states in an email.



Bon-Pasteur School in Grande-Rivière.

Photo: CSSRL

“In the interest of transparency and to encourage parents to discuss the matter with their children, the school and the School Service Centre felt it was appropriate to communicate with parents,” the statement adds.

The School Service Centre maintains that the incident was isolated.

Parents told The SPEC that a child allegedly consumed a cannabis-infused candy given to him by another student. The child was reportedly transported to hospital after losing consciousness.

“The Sûreté du Québec is aware of the information circulating regarding a candy that may have been contaminated with a substance and consumed by one or more students. However, we will not comment on whether an investigation is underway, nor will we disclose

any steps that may be taken in this matter,” says SQ spokesperson Frédéric Deshaies.

Police say they take any information of this nature seriously.

Another incident

Some parents claim the school had been informed about drugs allegedly circulating within the school about a month earlier.

“After verifying with the school, no one was aware of a situation involving candies containing unauthorized substances. Over the past few weeks, interventions were carried out regarding other situations that were unrelated to the matter addressed in the letter. The parents concerned were informed,” the School Service Centre states.

Coroner rules death of Brandon Langlais accidental

Nelson Sergerie

GASPÉ – The death of 18-year-old Brandon Langlais of Gaspé, who was found dead on September 30, 2023, in a room at the Riôtel in Matane, has been ruled accidental by the coroner who investigated the case.

In a report released recently, coroner Jean-Pierre Chamberland concluded that Mr. Langlais died of respiratory distress caused by alcohol intoxication combined with the likely consumption of an unknown illicit substance.

According to the report, three friends from Gaspé had travelled to Matane and visited Mr. Langlais, who was studying at the Cégep de Matane, the day before his death.

The four young men left Mr. Langlais's apartment and stopped at a Société des alcools du Québec store to purchase alcohol before renting a room at the Riôtel.

Using the hotel's security camera footage, the coroner was able to reconstruct their movements and observe alcohol consumption at the hotel's pool area.

According to statements gathered by police, the victim's friends said he was snoring when they returned to the room around 10:10 p.m. and left him to sleep. One of the friends later observed that he was still snoring at approximately 2:30 a.m.

It was not until about 11 a.m. the following day that the three friends contacted emergency services.

Toxicology testing revealed a blood alcohol concentration of 219 milligrams per decilitre. A trace amount of medication was also detected, but only in minimal quantities.

However, friends reported that Mr. Langlais had allegedly consumed half a tablet of a substance referred to as “Percocet” or “Perk.”

“Mr. Langlais's consumption of this unknown substance, combined with his heavy alcohol consumption, is the only plausible and reasonable explanation for his respiratory distress,” writes coroner Chamberland.

The report concludes that Mr. Langlais likely died from the combined effects of alcohol and an unidentified illicit substance, which caused depression of the central nervous system leading to respiratory failure and cardiac arrest. The coroner ruled out both suicide and third-party involvement.

Police report

Simon Dufort-Chouinard sentenced to 13 years in prison after pleading guilty to manslaughter

Simon Dufort-Chouinard, one of the two accused in connection with the tragic May 10, 2023, incident that claimed the lives of Gabriel Noël, 19, and Dylan Samuel-Francoeur, 18, in Rivière-au-Renard, was sentenced on June 11 to 13 years in prison after pleading guilty to two reduced charges of manslaughter.

Simon Dufort-Chouinard, 21, also pleaded guilty to one count of dangerous driving. In delivering the sentence, Superior Court judge Raymond Pronovost accepted the joint recommendation of the criminal prosecutor and the defence, as the abundant case law is clear on this point, particularly the rulings of the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court. The judge also added a 10-year driving ban upon his release from prison, a ban on possessing a firearm, and the obligation to provide a DNA sample.

The accused was facing a sentence ranging between 10 and 15 years, and potentially up to life imprisonment. Having been detained since his arrest, he received credit for 1,694 days already served, leaving him with just over eight years remaining to serve.

The guilty pleas came after negotiations between the criminal prosecutor and the defence, while the accused faced charges of premeditated and non-premeditated murders.

The criminal prosecution side did not believe it could prove beyond a reasonable doubt on the charges of murder based on the evidence in its possession. A publication ban prevents the media from revealing the facts surrounding this tragedy, as his father, Marc-Jules Chouinard, is still before the court in the same case.

Marc-Jules Chouinard, 51, faces two counts of non-premeditated murder, as well as charges of criminal harassment, uttering death threats, and criminal negligence causing death. As the SPEC was reaching its deadline, he was scheduled to return to court on June 17 for further proceedings. His trial, which had been scheduled for earlier this spring, was postponed after he dismissed his lawyer and requested time for new counsel to become familiar with the case. An out-of-court agreement also remains a possibility.

The trial of former SQ spokesperson Claude Doiron now underway

The trial of Claude Doiron, former spokesperson for the Sûreté du Québec in Eastern Quebec, began on June 8 at the Percé courthouse. The 63-year-old man faces charges of sexual assault, sexual contact and invitation to sexual contact with a minor under the age of 14, for events that allegedly occurred between May 1 and September 30, 1988, in Cloridorme, Northern Gaspé Peninsula.

Claude Doiron was arrested in Quebec City in late June 2023, a few days before his retirement. He had reportedly gone to meet with a Sûreté du Québec specialist regarding retirement pension matters when he was arrested. He was released after questioning and formally charged shortly thereafter.

The criminal prosecutor called two witnesses: an SQ investigator and the complainant, whose identity is protected by a publication ban. She was 12 years old at the time of the alleged events. The undercover investigator is a woman who conducted part of the investigation that led to the charges laid against Claude Doiron. He is defended by attorney Jean-François Boucher.

When the SPEC reached its deadline, the defence was planning to call seven witnesses during the two-week trial. Judge Pierre Lortie, of the Quebec Court is not expected to render a decision immediately and anticipates delivering a verdict in October.

Off-court agreement in Bryan Lafontaine's case?

Negotiations between the criminal prosecutor and the defence attorney are continuing in an effort to settle the case involving Bryan Lafontaine, 40, who is suspected of attempted murder, among other charges. The Percé resident faces 14 charges, the most serious of which occurred on January 18 at a residence on Loisel street in Paspebiac. The victim, a woman, sustained injuries that were not life-threatening and was hospitalized for a few hours. Mr. Lafontaine allegedly stabbed her in the neck.

He also faces charges of breaking and entering, unlawful confinement, assault, assault with a weapon, attempting to communicate with the victim despite being prohibited from doing so, criminal harassment and assault, all of which occurred before his arrest on January 18. He is also suspected of numerous breaches of probation and conditions. “Yes, there are discussions to reach an agreement. The file will nevertheless be postponed to another date, which remains to be determined”, mentioned criminal prosecutor Maxime Rocheville-Paradis to the SPEC, on June 11. Bryan Lafontaine was scheduled to return to court on June 15. He was arrested during a routine police check on the afternoon of January 18 while operating a snowmobile.

Chandler posts \$347,000 surplus in 2025

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

CHANDLER – The Town of Chandler recorded a surplus of \$347,000 for the 2025 fiscal year on a budget of approximately \$14 million.

“We managed things well. Expenses were cut as much as possible. There were also property transfer taxes, and a lot of building and renovation permits. The winter wasn’t very harsh. We’re trying to save money across the board while transforming our town to provide better services to residents,” says Mayor Gilles Daraïche.

Among the notable expenditures during the year were the purchase of a snowplow truck for \$440,000 and a boom lift truck for \$70,000.

“Every time we rented one, it cost us \$1,000, sometimes \$2,000. These are expenses that are great investments that save us money,” says the mayor.

The Town’s accumulated surplus now stands at \$777,787.

Bringing municipal finances under control was one

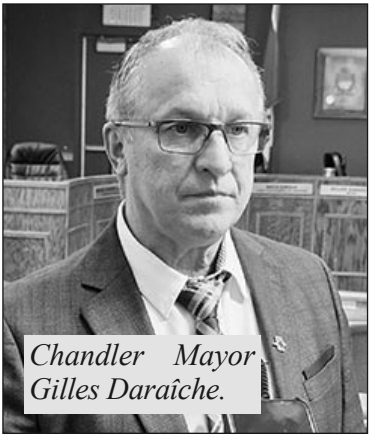


Photo: Nelson Sergerie

of Mr. Daraïche’s key commitments when he was elected in 2021.

“I came in with a deficit of about \$450,000. To have a surplus of \$777,000 today—it’s great to see that. We have a cushion that allows us to respond if there are any unforeseen events,” the mayor notes.

The municipality’s debt stands at \$20 million, an increase of \$2 million from the previous fiscal year.

Residents raise concerns about stray dogs

Residents of the Pabos sector raised concerns about stray dogs during the June 2 town council meeting.

A delegation attended the meeting to urge council to take action, with some residents expressing concerns for their safety while walking in the neighbourhood.

The mayor says some dog owners continue to allow their pets to roam freely despite municipal regulations requiring dogs to be kept on a leash.

“This isn’t being followed. People who own dogs should be considerate. They aren’t. We’ll have to review the contract with Espoir Canin. It hasn’t been renewed yet,” says Mr. Daraïche.

Espoir Canin has submitted a renewal proposal to the Rocher-Percé MRC, which is responsible for animal control services.

“It will be up to them to handle it. We have a contract for that. We pay a significant amount,” says the mayor.

The council has not ruled out bringing animal control services back under municipal responsibility if it is not satisfied with the current arrangement.

The Town previously managed such issues directly.

Wildlife office to remain open

The Minister responsible for Wildlife, Pascale Déry, confirmed during parliamentary budget hearings that the Chandler wildlife office will remain open for the coming year.

Mr. Daraïche says he remains in contact with the office of Bonaventure Member of the National Assembly (MNA) and Minister of Families Catherine Blouin.

“I was told they were working on a long-term project for Chandler. We’re working behind the scenes right now and hope to have news soon. That’s what we want,” he says.

More than 100 citizens participated in a demonstration in late April calling for the office’s long-term retention.

Arena project and second term

The Town is also preparing an application under the Programme d’aide financière aux infrastructures récréatives, sportives et de plein air

(PAFIRSPA) to continue renovations at the Newport arena, which is used for deck hockey.

“The roof is leaking; we need to repair the building’s structure and install heating and air conditioning, which would allow us to use the deck hockey facility 12 months a year. There’s a lot of demand. If we could use it year-round, it would always be full,” he believes.

The municipality has committed \$1.5 million toward the project. If approved by the Quebec government, the Town’s remaining contribution would be approximately \$400,000.

Mr. Daraïche also notes that his second term has been considerably calmer than his first.

His first mandate was marked by threats and intimidation that at times required intervention from the Sûreté du Québec.

“Things are going very well. There have been no incidents. I thank the residents. Being mayor is not an easy job. We accept the role. But for now, things are going very well,” he says.

Intimidation is a thing of the past in Saint-Godefroi

NELSON SERGERIE

SAINT-GODEFROI – After being the target of anonymous letters, intimidation and insults during his 2021 election campaign—events that ultimately led to his resignation in February 2022—the mayor of Saint-Godefroi says his new term is proceeding much more peacefully.

Genade Grenier endured a difficult period between his election in November 2021 and his decision to step down just a few months later.

Despite those experiences, the man who won the November 2025 election with 76% of the vote says things have gone well since returning to office.

“There was a very high turnout from the people of Saint-Godefroi during the No-

vember election. I saw that people agreed with my decision to return to politics,” he believes.

“Things have been going well since the election. We have a great team on the municipal council, and we’re working together to move issues forward in the municipality,” explains Mr. Grenier.

The atmosphere is markedly different from what he experienced in 2021 and 2022.

“I’ve put those events behind me and decided to move forward with my head held high and continue working for the people of Saint-Godefroi,” he says.

The council is currently working on several municipal infrastructure files.

“We don’t have a single main issue right now because

they’re all interconnected. We’re talking about infrastructure, roads, and all that. We’re working to improve all of that,” says the mayor.

Several incidents in the region

Saint-Godefroi was not the only municipality where elected officials faced intimidation in recent years.

The mayor of Chandler, Gilles Daraïche, filed a complaint with police in 2023 after receiving threats over the phone. A municipal councillor also reportedly received death threats.

That same year, two elected officials from the Estran sector resigned from their positions.

In Petite-Vallée, Mélanie Clavet stepped down, stating



Photo: Bonaventure MRC

Genade Grenier, Mayor of Saint-Godefroi.

that “the current climate in municipal politics, where small communities are tearing themselves apart with threats and verbal abuse, does not encourage young elected officials to

enter public service.”

In Cloridorme, Mayor Pierre Martin cited harassment when discussing his decision to resign and even considered legal action. He ultimately stepped down for health reasons, saying he could no longer endure the stress.

A wave of municipal resignations in 2023, both in the region and elsewhere in Quebec, prompted the Quebec government to launch a campaign promoting healthy democracy at the municipal level following numerous reports of intimidation and harassment directed at elected officials and municipal employees.

In 2024, the mayor of Percé, Cathy Poirier, also resigned, citing, among other factors, the harassment she had experienced.

Employment rises in May

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – The gradual resumption of seasonal activities helped lower the unemployment rate in Gaspésie–Îles-de-la-Madeleine by 1.4% between April and May, bringing it to 9.7%.

According to Statistics



Photo: Metro Creative Graphics

Canada, 1,100 jobs were created in the region last month, for a total of 37,400 posi-

tions. Of those positions, 29,900 were full-time jobs, an increase of 800 compared to April. Part-time employment also rose by 300 positions, reaching 7,500.

The number of unemployed people fell by 500 to 4,000. The unemployment rate dropped significantly despite the return of 700

people to the labour market. The region’s labour force was estimated at 41,400 people in May.

While the month-to-month figures were encouraging, employment remained below the level recorded a year earlier. In May 2025, the region had 38,100 employed workers, meaning

employment has declined by 700 jobs over the past 12 months.

However, unemployment was higher at that time, with 4,700 people out of work. Given that more people were also participating in the labour market, the unemployment rate stood at 11% in May 2025.

Lyme disease slowly advancing towards Gaspésie

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – Lyme disease is slowly but steadily advancing towards Gaspésie as a result of climate change and rising temperatures.

The Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine Public Health Department has recorded just over a dozen cases in the region over the last several years, although only one infection was acquired locally.

Across Quebec, the tick population is increasing, contributing to the spread of Lyme disease.

“We can’t say that our region is at very high risk yet. For now, ticks are not fully established in the region, or they are only beginning to become established. We haven’t really seen a strong signal yet. However, when we look at climate projections, conditions could become favourable for ticks in certain parts of Chaleur Bay by 2030. By 2050, much of the bay area could support their establishment, and by 2080, con-

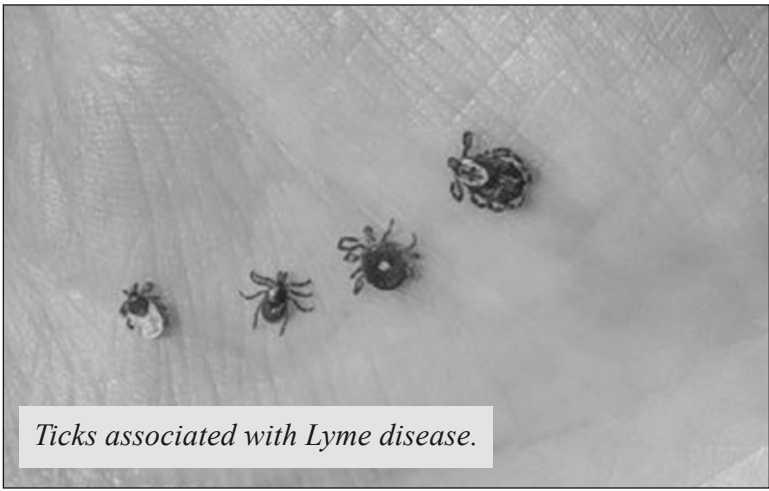


Photo: CIUSSS Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec

ditions could be favourable across the entire region,” explains Public Health physician Dr. Arianne Courville.

Warm temperatures and humidity help ticks survive. However, shorter winters is the main factor allowing them to thrive and complete their life cycle.

The blacklegged tick, commonly known as the deer tick, is the species that can transmit Lyme disease to humans.

“Humans are not its preferred host, but when a person passes nearby, the tick may take advantage of the opportu-

nity,” says Dr. Courville.

While the species is well established in southwestern Quebec and parts of New Brunswick, ticks found in Gaspésie are generally brought into the region by animals.

“These ticks can be found on both people and animals, and when one is discovered, it is sent to Quebec’s public health laboratory for analysis. We do find some, although not in large numbers, but that does not necessarily mean they are completing their life cycle in the region,” she notes.

Spending time in tall grass

or wooded areas increases the likelihood of exposure to ticks.

Over the last decade, ticks have regularly been introduced into Gaspésie from outside the region.

“The vast majority of Lyme disease cases we see were acquired elsewhere. People were bitten in another region and developed the disease after returning home. Looking at all of our probable cases, we estimate about 12 cases over the last 10 to 15 years, but only one was actually acquired in Gaspésie,” says Dr. Courville.

If a tick is removed within 24 hours of attaching itself, the risk of contracting Lyme disease is considered negligible. If it remains attached longer, a red skin lesion may develop around the bite site.

Common symptoms include fever, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes and redness around the bite. Anyone experiencing these symptoms after a tick bite is encouraged to seek medical attention.

Lyme disease can be treated with antibiotics.

What to watch for after a tick bite

Redness at the bite site (occurs in approximately 60% to 80% of cases)

The redness gradually expands over several days and can quickly reach five centimetres or more in diameter. It may take several forms, including the classic bull’s-eye appearance.

The rash is usually painless and not itchy, and it typically lasts at least 48 hours.

It is important to distinguish this rash from a normal inflammatory reaction, which appears within 24 hours of the bite, measures less than five centimetres and usually disappears within 24 to 48 hours.

Other symptoms that may accompany the rash include:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Stiff neck
- Muscle and joint pain

SOURCE: CIUSSS Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec

May rainfall eases drought

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – After several months of relatively dry conditions, May brought much-needed precipitation to the region. However, despite the wetter weather, a significant precipitation deficit remains over the past year.

According to Environment Canada, Gaspé received 158 millimetres of precipitation in May, nearly one-third of which fell on the first day of the month. A total of 47 millimetres was recorded on May 1 at Michel-Pouliot Gaspé Airport. The normal precipitation for May is 92 millimetres. It was the first time in a year that monthly precipitation exceeded

the seasonal average.

Despite the wet month, only 68% of normal precipitation has been recorded over the past 12 months, contributing to drought-related problems for farmers and owners of artesian wells last summer.

Since June 1, 2025, Gaspé has received a total of 790 millimetres of precipitation, including snowfall, compared with the normal annual total of 1,161 millimetres.

No snowfall was recorded in Gaspé during May, although the monthly average is five centimetres, or 50 millimetres.

The average temperature for the month was 7.6°C, matching the seasonal norm despite the persistent feeling of cool

weather.

Temperatures exceeded 15°C on only nine days during the month. The warmest day was May 20, when the mercury reached 25.8°C.

Nighttime temperatures remained cool. On May 31, the temperature dipped below freezing to -0.6°C.

The heavy rainfall on May 1 caused approximately \$50,000 in damage to a culvert in Chandler that provides access to Lac Sept-Îles.

Several rivers also overflowed their banks, including the Cascapedia River, which forced the temporary closure of Route 299 for a few hours.

No major damage related to river flooding was reported.

Limited wildfire activity

According to SOPFEU, eight wildfires burned a total of 2.4 hectares in the Gaspé Peninsula during May.

That is one more fire than the 10-year average. However, the area affected was much smaller than usual, as the average area burned over the past decade is 14.6 hectares.

No individual fire exceeded one hectare in size.

The two largest fires each burned 0.7 hectares. One occurred on May 24 in the Chemin à Pierre area of Port-Daniel-Gascons, while the other was reported on May 13 near York Ouest Boulevard in



Photo: Town of Chandler

This culvert leading to Lac Sept-Îles collapsed following heavy rains.

Gaspé.

In both cases, the fires were caused by human activity.

CHASE CLERY:

Cont'd from cover

start slightly before mid-August. “He will train hard over the summer. His goal is to go there, to Halifax, for the season. Otherwise, he will go back to Rivière-du-Loup for one more year. After the draft, the team invited us to visit the Mooseheads’ facility. It was cool,” she says.

Chase Cleary stands five feet 10 inches tall and currently weighs 167 pounds. At 16, he is still growing and developing.

Minutes after being



Photo: Courtesy of Ashley Milligan

drafted, he was asked by a Halifax television reporter what he planned to work on during the summer. “I think I have to

work on about everything, just to make the fans happy, and my teammates. It would be great for them.” The reporter re-

sponded that Halifax fans would love him for that attitude.

Over the last four years, the Milligan-Cleary family has spent a great deal of time travelling, whether accompanying Chase while he played in Rivière-du-Loup and studied in New Richmond, or travelling themselves to watch him play.

The travelling will likely continue, whether Chase earns a spot with the Mooseheads or returns to Académie Notre-Dame in Rivière-du-Loup to maximize his ice time.

“If he makes it in Halifax, we will go and see him play in

Moncton and Rimouski, and in Halifax at times,” remarks his mother.

Just before the pandemic, another talented athlete from Cascapedia-St. Jules made headlines, soccer player James Harrison, who also studied in Rivière-du-Loup and was selected to play in a Caribbean professional league over the summer. He is now studying at Université Laval in Quebec City.

“James and Chase are good friends. We have very talented kids in our little town,” concludes Ashley Milligan.

Woodchip traffic by rail resumes at Groupe Lebel

GILLES GAGNÉ

NOUVELLE – Groupe Lebel’s sawmill in Nouvelle resumed shipping woodchips by rail at the beginning of May, ten months after the closure of the White Birch Paper mill in Rivière-du-Loup in July 2025. That closure was initially expected to be temporary, but on December 23, the mill went bankrupt.

Since November 2009, the Nouvelle sawmill, then owned by Temrex, had been sending woodchips by rail to the Rivière-du-Loup plant. At the time, woodchips became the largest source of traffic for the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie (SCFG), with annual traffic ranging between 600 and 1,200 carloads. Windmill blades became the SCFG’s largest source of traffic in 2017, and cement traffic also surpassed woodchips in 2018. Windmills were hauled by rail until May 2022.

Luc Lévesque, director of the Société du chemin de fer de la Gaspésie, says that the Nouvelle woodchips “are now sent to the Papiers Masson mill,” located on the outskirts of the city of Gatineau, in the Outaouais region. Details about the tonnage or number of railcars expected to circulate between Nouvelle



Photo: G. Gagné

SCFG woodchip cars are back in service at the Nouvelle sawmill.

and Masson are not being released for now by the SCFG.

The woodchip cars used for that traffic are owned by the SCFG. Most of them were acquired at the end of the spring of 2025. The municipally controlled company had already owned 32 such cars since 2017. A year ago, it purchased Canadian National’s fleet of 256 woodchip cars, bringing its total fleet to 288 units.

The SCFG supplies most of its woodchip cars to shippers outside the Gaspé Peninsula. Those mills wanted to continue renting the cars in the same way they had used CN’s woodchip fleet. CN was no longer interested in

marketing that service, but the railway company still hauls the cars, along with other railway operators such as the Quebec-Gatineau Railway, which has acquired portions of Canadian Pacific trackage.

Papiers Masson is also owned by White Birch Paper, like the former F.F. Soucy mill in Rivière-du-Loup. Following its bankruptcy, that facility was purchased by Groupe Lebel at the end of March. The company does not expect to operate the plant as a newsprint mill and has indicated that up to a year may be needed to determine a new vocation for the Lower Saint Lawrence facility.

Return of the DÉPART Program

NELSON SERGERIE

CARLETON-SUR-MER – The Quebec government is re-launching the DÉPART program, which had run out of funding several months ago, by injecting approximately \$25 million over the coming year, a move welcomed by the Table of prefects of the Gaspésie.

The DÉPART program aims to help small and medium enterprises (SME) in the MRCs to obtain financing more easily.

The funding is available to support the creation, growth, and development of businesses through grants ranging from \$15,000 to \$125,000 per project. The program also aims to encourage the emergence of new businesses, helping regional entrepreneurs diversify and strengthen their operations while revitalizing the regional economy.

“This is a program that works and effectively addresses



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

the challenges and needs of local businesses. Officially, there have been no funds left in the program since March 31, but unofficially, this has been the case for several months,” notes President Mathieu Lapointe.

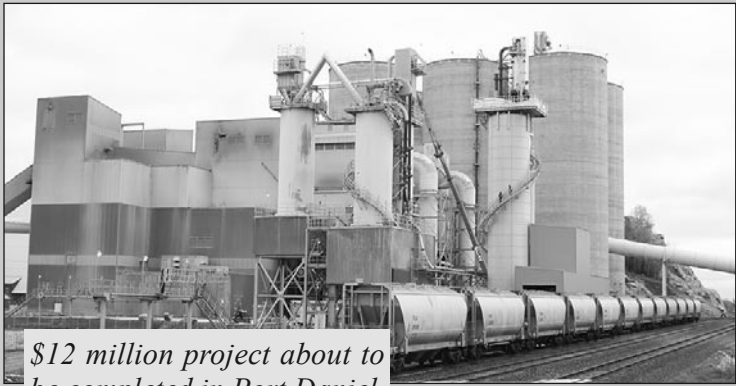
“There are elements that are more restrictive than what we had before when we had our own program for the region, FAIR, but it’s a program we appreciate,” he adds.

DÉPART, launched in 2023 with an initial budget of \$75 million through March 31, 2026, replaced the FAIR program in the Gaspé Peninsula, which had been introduced under the Parti Québécois government of Pauline Marois.

In its final year, the program included an \$8-million allocation reserved exclusively for the region.

DÉPART targets MRCs that fall within the bottom quintile of the Institut de la statistique du Québec’s economic vitality index. Eligible territories include the MRCs in the Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine region, as well as the MRCs of Appalaches, Granit, Maskinongé and Charlevoix-Est.

The program also includes Indigenous communities located within the boundaries of eligible MRCs and belonging to one of the nations recognized by the National Assembly of Quebec.



\$12 million project about to be completed in Port Daniel.

Photo: Gilles Gagné

Port Daniel rail-loading project enters final stretch

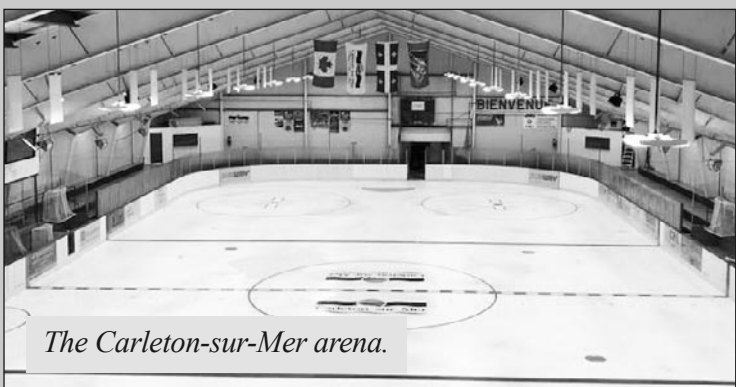
Gilles Gagné

PORT DANIEL – A \$12 million project will be completed before the end of June at the Saint Mary’s Cement plant in Port Daniel, allowing the company to ship cement by rail using a brand-new silo. So far, the company has regularly used railcars to ship part of its production, notably to the Maritimes and Maine. Until now, this was done using a temporary loading system located just west of the plant. Additional cement railcars were also loaded in New Richmond from a silo built in 2017.

That facility allowed the company to continue shipping cement while the railway between New Richmond and Port Daniel remained out of service until it was repaired in December 2025.

According to Saint Mary’s Cement, “if all goes according to plan, railcar loading operations are expected to begin in July 2026.” However, trials could take place before the end of June.

The company received the required permit for the installation and operation of the rail loading station on June 30, 2025.



The Carleton-sur-Mer arena.

Photo: Carleton-sur-Mer

Negotiations underway to share Carleton-sur-Mer arena deficit

Nelson Sergerie

CARLETON-SUR-MER – After the first year of operation under a shared funding arrangement, the Town of Carleton-sur-Mer and neighbouring municipalities are discussing a longer-term agreement to share the operating deficit of the Centre Léopold-Leclerc.

A proposed agreement was submitted at the end of May to the municipalities of New Richmond, Cascapédia-Saint-Jules, Maria, Nouvelle and Escuminac.

During the first year of the arrangement, the municipalities agreed to share 50% of the arena’s operating deficit, which totalled \$337,000. Users also contributed \$100 each toward the facility’s operation.

“We expect this agreement to continue. Based on discussions over the last few months, the municipalities were comfortable with the principle. We’ll see how things develop, but we expect it will be renewed,” says Mayor Mathieu Lapointe.

The parties are now seeking to conclude a three-year agreement.

Under the proposal, the reference deficit for the first year would be set at \$356,000. In the second year, the amount used for cost-sharing would be based on the average deficit recorded over the previous two years. In the third year, the calculation would be based on the average deficit from the previous three years.

“This will help smooth out variations in operating deficits from year to year,” says Mr. Lapointe.

The agreement is expected to be finalized by August, when registrations open for minor hockey and figure skating programs.

Bill 3 adopted: The Gaspé Peninsula retains its two ridings

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – After a long and arduous journey that began in 2024, the Gaspé Peninsula will keep its two provincial ridings in the election on October 5. The National Assembly adopted Bill 3 – An Act to ensure the effective representation of voters – without a vote at the very end of the current session, on June 12. It was therefore adopted unanimously.

Bill 3, which is only six pages long, was introduced on May 7, but independent Member of the National Assembly (MNA) for Saint-Jérôme, Youri Chassin, prevented its expedited adoption.

This decision by Youri Chassin led the National Assembly to bring it before a parliamentary committee before submitting it to a final June 12 vote.

MNA Chassin, who will not run on October 5, remains steadfast. “I am still opposed, and for the reasons that everyone knows. But this is only one component of Quebec’s representative democracy. I imagine there will be many others that will be preserved,” he stated in the Red Room just

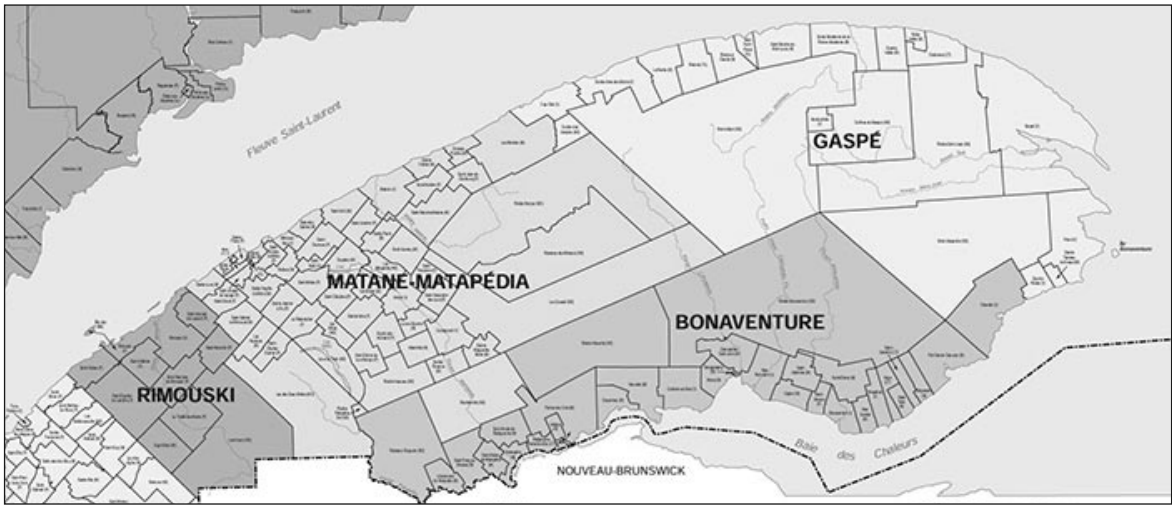


Photo: Archives

The electoral map that will be in effect in the region for the October election.

before the bill was passed.

“In keeping with our democratic institutions, a bill developed collaboratively by Members of the National Assembly from all political parties deserves to be supported and implemented for the effective representation of all Quebec voters,” argued the Minister responsible for Democratic Institutions, Jean-François Roberge, before the vote.

The newly adopted Act maintains the current boundaries of four ridings in the Gaspé Peninsula and Lower St. Lawrence regions: Matane-Matapédia-Mitis, Rimouski, Bonaventure, and Gaspé.

Eight ridings in Montreal remain unchanged, and the boundaries of the other ridings established by the Electoral Representation Commission in January 2026 will remain in effect.

The law also provides for the creation of a study committee on electoral representation in Quebec, its composition and duration, as well as the analyses it is to conduct.

A retired judge, a former member of the National Assembly, and an expert will make up the committee, which will travel throughout Quebec once the new National Assembly Members are in place after

the election.

Youri Chassin had blocked the swift adoption of the law on May 7 and delayed parliamentary work until the very end before finally joining his colleagues at the last minute by not opposing its implementation.

A long battle

From the moment the new map proposed by the Electoral Representation Commission was released in September 2023, a wave of protests erupted in the region against the proposal to merge Gaspé and Bonaventure and transfer the Haute-Gaspésie MRC to

Matane-Matapédia, located in the Lower Saint Lawrence region.

In May 2024, the Quebec government tabled a law to protect the Gaspé Peninsula, but it was challenged, notably by elected officials from the Laurentians and Central Quebec. The government won the first round in Superior Court, but the court ordered the commission to continue its work behind closed doors.

The elected officials from the two contesting regions, namely Centre-du-Québec and the Laurentides, won in the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court, which led the National Assembly to table Bill 3 after the Electoral Representation Commission tabled a map on December 2 that upheld the abolition of a riding in the Gaspé Peninsula, merging Bonaventure and Gaspé and transferring the Haute-Gaspésie MRC to Matane-Matapédia. The Commission was then upholding the Supreme Court’s decision as well.

This map was scheduled to come into effect on July 15. Due to the SPEC deadline, reactions of the region’s elected officials will be published in the next issue.

Second Liberal MNA visits Gaspé in a month

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – A second member of the Quebec Liberal caucus, Enrico Ciccone, visited the Gaspé Peninsula from June 1 to 3 to get a sense of the issues facing the region ahead of the next provincial election.

At the end of April, fellow Liberal Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Monsef Derraji made a similar visit.

“Besides lobster,” jokes Mr. Ciccone, “we’re obviously on the eve of an election. It’s important to come and meet people and understand the issues. We’ve identified quite a few concerns. Since taking on the social solidarity and community action portfolio, I’ve been meeting with organizations to learn about their challenges. We have to write an election platform, and I’m going to fight for the issues in my portfolio.”

During his visit, Mr. Ciccone met with representatives from several community organizations, including the CDC Région Matane, Récup.

alimentaire Haute-Gaspésie, the Collectif Aliment-Terre in Paspébiac and the Avignon-Bonaventure Carrefour jeunesse-emploi.

He also met with the mayors of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and Gaspé, who raised concerns about the PAFIRSPA (Programme d’aide financière aux infrastructures récréatives, sportives et de plein air) recreation and sports infrastructure program. The Sainte-Anne-des-Monts swimming pool project ranked 14th in Quebec, while Gaspé’s arena project ranked 19th.

“It’s important for the region to have these sports facilities. Both projects ranked very high on the list. We need to understand why they were not selected. We have to dig a little deeper. I’ll be speaking with Karianne Bourassa, the new Minister of Sport, to ask that question,” says the MNA.

He concluded his visit by meeting with representatives of the Corporation de gestion des rivières Matapédia et Patapédia.

“I saw the challenges they

face when it comes to protection, and they’re not getting much support from the government. I find that outrageous. We need wildlife officers across this vast territory to do the job because once limits are exceeded, it can take generations to restore what has been lost. Salmon are important here, not just for Gaspésie, but for all of Quebec,” says the MNA.

Wildlife offices in Chandler, Causapscal and Sainte-Anne-des-Monts are currently at risk. The Chandler office ranks among the busiest in Quebec in terms of complaints and operations.

“How are we supposed to protect our territory? It’s going to become a free-for-all. People feel they’re no longer being watched. River management organizations have staff working on protection, but they don’t have the investigative powers that wildlife officers do. Complaints can be filed, but nothing happens. People acting in bad faith will take advantage of that,” says the Marquette MNA.

Mr. Ciccone also expressed concern over the proposed electoral map changes. While he understands the principles guiding Quebec’s Chief Electoral Officer, he believes common sense must prevail.

“Eliminating a riding in the region would create major challenges for my colleagues because of the distances involved. There’s also a safety issue. We need to move quickly if we want to keep all three ridings. All the parties agree, except for one MNA who opposes it. Youri Chassin is against it. Discussions are continuing, and we hope to convince him. We cannot move forward with what has been proposed by the DGEQ,” he says.

The Liberals remain hopeful they can win back the two Gaspé ridings in the next election. However, Mr. Ciccone says the recent visits by Liberal MNAs are about more than electoral strategy.

“Of course we want to win them back, but we’re not coming here just to get elected. We care about the region, and just



Photo: Enrico Ciccone Facebook page

Marquette MNA
Enrico Ciccone.

because it’s not represented by our party doesn’t mean we won’t work for it. Ministers and government MNAs are not the ones who are going to tell us the reality on the ground. Their role is to defend their government,” he says.

This was Mr. Ciccone’s second visit to the Gaspé Peninsula in less than a year. He previously toured the region in September 2025.

“Historic” agreement between Gespeg and Gaspé

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – The Town of Gaspé and the Gespeg Mi'gmaq First Nation have entered into what they describe as a historic partnership and will jointly submit a proposal for a new arena to be built on the former Ministry of Transportation site in downtown Gaspé.

The June 8 announcement was made in a spirit of reconciliation and recognition between the nations that have shared this territory for nearly 500 years.

“This is the largest partnership project between the Town and the First Nation. In absolute terms, the multisport complex project is the largest project in Gaspé’s history. To do this together and to develop a large plot of land downtown together while consulting our communities is unprecedented. We’ve never come this close. We’re onto something big,” comments Mayor Daniel Côté.

“Gespeg has never been involved in such a large project involving so many millions,” says Chief Céline Cassivi.



Gespeg Chief Céline Cassivi and Gaspé Mayor Daniel Côté.

Photo: Nelson Sergerie

The project is estimated to cost between \$30 million and \$32 million.

The terms of the partnership are yet to be established.

“We’re not there yet. The discussions we’re having right now suggest there could be a substantial contribution from the Nation. We’re going to build it together. We’ll include a figure in the program proposal,” explains the mayor.

“We’re starting to look at funding options with our funders to see if there might be funds available for Indigenous

communities that aren’t necessarily available to the Town,” adds Chief Cassivi.

PAFIRSPA, the sports infrastructure program through which the partners will submit their application, covers 66% of eligible costs up to a maximum of \$20 million.

The program can provide up to 90% government funding.

Bringing in the Gespeg Mi'gmaq First Nation could give this project a major boost, as the current arena infrastructure is nearing the end of its useful life.

The town administration approached Gespeg. “It’s the Town, but we were kind of expecting it. I had met with the minister before the calls for bids to review the criteria, and I remember keeping my camera rolling—Daniel was there. Collaboration with First Nations is one of the criteria. We expected it,” says Ms. Cassivi.

The rest of the site

The arena is expected to occupy no more than one-third of the land left vacant following the Ministry of Transportation’s departure.

For now, what will be developed on the remainder of the site remains to be determined.

“We’re in consultation mode. The partnership is new. We had begun a certain form of consultation with the Town. We had agreed with the community that we wanted to develop a specific urban planning strategy. Do we have ideas for concrete projects? That would be moving too fast,” explains the mayor.

“I have a vision of reconciliation, I would say. But the

council doesn’t have a clear vision. We’ll see in the future,” adds Chief Cassivi.

“Was I talking about a space for reconciliation? Will that be the outcome? We’ll see what the community has to say,” continues Mayor Côté.

This broad partnership would be a first in Canada, according to the two elected officials.

“I think we’re paving the way in Quebec—and potentially across Canada—for an extremely strong collaboration between the two Nations,” believes the mayor.

Gaspé must submit its proposal to the Quebec government by June 22.

A response is expected around the beginning of 2027.

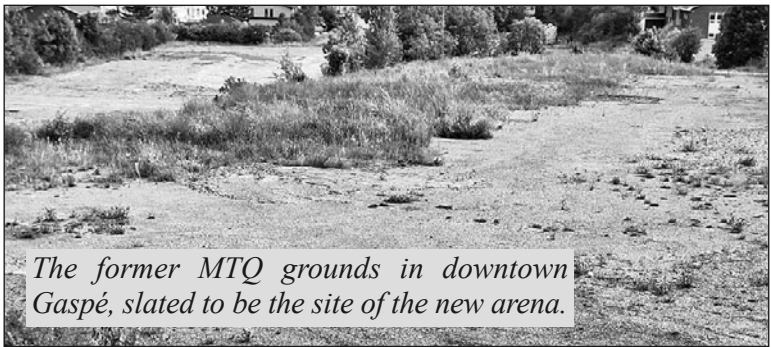
In the event of a positive response, a call for tenders for the final plans will be issued, with construction expected to begin in the summer of 2027 and completion targeted for 2029.

Gaspé and Gespeg began collaborating in 2017 to forge ties between the two entities, a relationship that has evolved into a special partnership between the two councils.

Decontamination of former MTQ site

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – The Société québécoise des infrastructures (SQI) is still unable to specify when decontamination work will begin on the former Ministry of Transportation site in downtown Gaspé.



The former MTQ grounds in downtown Gaspé, slated to be the site of the new arena.

Photo: Nelson Sergerie

In an email, the SQI stated that preparations for a call for tenders are underway, including the steps required to obtain environmental permits for the site's remediation plan.

The work schedule will be finalized once the permits have been obtained and a contract has been awarded following the call for tenders.

“The work will be carried out in compliance with current regulations, under the supervision of a firm specializing in environmental matters,” the SQI states in an email.

The process of returning the land for future development can begin once remediation work has been completed.

Gaspé has selected the site for the construction of a new arena in partnership with the Gespeg Mi'gmaq First Nation.

The partners also intend to develop the remainder of the property.

“There was a clear commitment from the SQI to complete the decontamination by 2025, I believe. That had been post-

poned to 2026. We have the luxury—so to speak—until mid-2027 because we’re awaiting responses from PAFIRSPA in early 2027. That gives us a few more months to launch the bidding process to finalize the plans and specifications and begin construction. There were clear commitments, and we dare to hope they will be honoured,” says Mayor Daniel Côté.

The Town plans to follow up with the organization. “Our teams will double-check with the SQI teams to ensure it will be ready. We’re hoping for the end of 2026. If it spills over into early 2027, it won’t be a disaster. But the site must be ready three months after we receive the request for financial assistance,” adds the mayor.

An environmental characterization study was commissioned from the firm Englobe to assess the extent of contamination on the property.

As expected, the study confirmed last fall the presence of

contaminants directly linked to the site's historical use by the Ministry of Transportation, particularly for mechanical work and storage activities.

The most affected areas are located at the rear of the property, where the former repair garage, fuel pump and traffic signal warehouse were located.

The study identified the presence of hydrocarbons, including oil and fuel residues; volatile organic compounds derived from solvents and fuels; and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons associated with petroleum products and combustion processes.

In addition to hydrocarbon contamination, a copper concentration exceeding regulatory thresholds was detected in a trench near the former garage.

Copper was also detected in one groundwater monitoring well located near the former abrasives warehouse, while the other five wells met applicable standards.

The SQI notes that this groundwater does not affect the municipal drinking water system.

Last fall, the agency indicated that the contamination was confined to the areas identified by the study and would be fully remediated.

According to the SQI, these measures will ensure the site is safe and compliant before it is redeveloped.

The contaminants identified

during the study are in addition to the asbestos and lead previously found in buildings on the property, which delayed demolition work until the fall of 2024.

The former MTQ service centre, built in the 1950s, contained both asbestos and lead.

The SQI plans to begin the process of returning the land for redevelopment once decontamination work has been completed.

Fair Haven Bible Camp New Carlisle, Quebec

Little Campers (A)	7 - 9 years	July 5 - 10
Girls Camp	10 - 12 yrs	July 12 - 17
Little Campers (B)	7 - 9 yrs	July 19 - 24
Boys Camp	10 - 12 yrs	July 26 - 31
Teen Camp	13 - 17 yrs	August 2 - 7

ACTIVITIES:
Beach Time, Group Games, Field Sports, Water Sports, Picnics, Hikes, Camp Fires, Tuck Time, Crafts and Chapel.


CITQ 085164

Rate: \$140 (includes \$30 non-refundable registration fee).

To reserve: e-transfer your registration fee to **darykandnicole@onehopecanada.ca** or mail payment to Nelson Roussy, 371 rte 132 east, New Richmond, QC, G0C 2B0

Include camper's name and which camp they are attending.

Rumour of Fort-Prével sale unfounded

NELSON SERGERIE

PERCÉ – The Fort-Prével golf club has not been sold.

A rumour circulating recently suggested that the JGS Group had sold the property, but that is not the case, says the company's asset manager for Eastern Quebec, Jean-François Fortin. JGS stands for Jean-Guy Sylvain, the founder of the company.

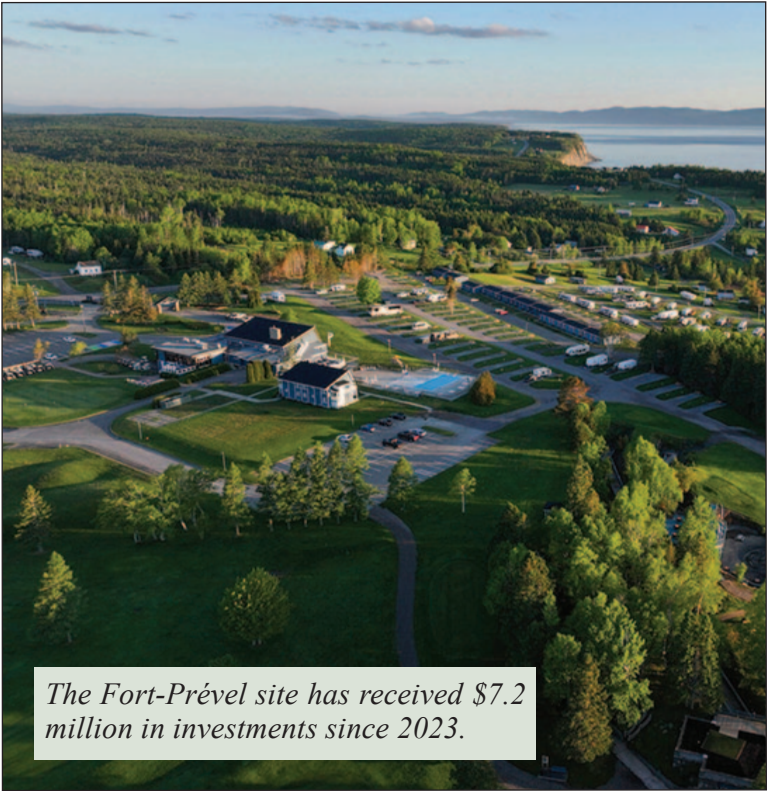
“The JGS Group is still the owner. There have been internal transactions. Mr. Sylvain is retiring. The ownership structure has changed, but the JGS Group still owns Fort-Prével,” Mr. Fortin explains, referring to an internal reorganization.

Since acquiring the site in the summer of 2023, the company has invested \$7.2 million in improvements.

“There was a lot of work involved in upgrading the site. We’re not quite finished, but we’ve settled into a more gradual pace of continuous improvement. We’re proud to have a site of this scale,” he says.

Approximately \$2 million remains to be invested under the development plan.

“It’s more on the hospitality side. We’re talking about renovating the rooms. We quickly modernized everything that was worn out and outdated in the motels, including the furniture. There are sections that were renovated a few years ago, and we’d like to improve them. In any case, it’s a great property: we want to pour our heart into it. We’ve listened over the past few years and want to stay in tune with users—like the golf course management—and adopt best practices. We’re committed to continuous improvement,”



The Fort-Prével site has received \$7.2 million in investments since 2023.

Photo: From Fort-Prével’s Facebook page

says Mr. Fortin.

A new chef from Château Montebello will lead the dining operations, following the relaunch of Le Bastillon two years ago.

The restaurant is now hitting its stride with a dining experience “worthy of top-tier restaurants,” according to Mr. Fortin.

“It’s a complex site to manage. We had to get to know it. We got up and ran quickly. There was a lot of work to be done. There are two restaurants to manage, motels, campgrounds, lodging facilities, hotels, and cottages. There are several businesses all in one place.”

Reservations for 2026 are on the rise both at Fort-Prével and at the group’s other properties in the Gaspé Peninsula.

The idea of a tourist circuit connecting the various JGS sites is also taking shape.

“We have an internal proposal to create a circuit. We’re working to improve it. We’re looking at development in the Gaspé Peninsula.

It’s a vast region. We want to let people enjoy all the facets of the Gaspé Peninsula—several places, each with its own charm,” he explains.

As for financial figures, Mr. Fortin says the company’s investment speaks for itself.

“We didn’t invest such a significant amount simply to not benefit the site and generate a positive impact in the Gaspé region,” suggests Mr. Fortin, emphasizing the importance of working in partnership with the community and seeking to develop relationships with local stakeholders.

JGS Group assets in the Gaspé Peninsula and Bas-Saint-Laurent regions: • Boule Rock Golf Club in Métis-sur-Mer (January 2022) • Le Gaspésiana Hotel in Sainte-Flavie (June 2022) • The Aquamer Thalasso-Spa Hotel in Carleton-sur-Mer (December 2022) • The Grand Hôtel in Baie-Comeau (April 2023) • The Fort-Prével Golf Club in Percé (June 2023)



Photo: Gilles Gagné

Alan and Nina Freed of Massachusetts will travel through the region aboard their yellow 1957 Pontiac, specially adapted for use on railway tracks.

Another mobilization to push for the prompt return of the passenger rail train

Gilles Gagné

NEW CARLISLE – The Coalition of Gaspésians for the Return of the Passenger Train will welcome railway enthusiasts Alan and Nina Freed of Massachusetts on June 21 as they travel through the region aboard their yellow 1957 Pontiac, specially adapted for use on railway tracks.

Their journey will begin at the Matapédia station and include stops in Carleton-sur-Mer, New Richmond, Bonaventure and New Carlisle before ending at the Port-Daniel station.

The approximate times of passage are 9 a.m. in Matapédia, 11 a.m. in Carleton-sur-Mer, 12:30 p.m. in New Richmond, 2 p.m. in Bonaventure, 2:30 p.m. in New Carlisle and 4 p.m. in Port-Daniel.

Following the trip, the public is invited to gather at the Green in New Carlisle at approximately 5 p.m. to highlight the importance of passenger rail service for the social, economic and tourism development of the region.

Organizers say information will be provided regarding VIA Rail’s plans to prepare for the gradual return of quality passenger rail service to the Gaspé Peninsula.

The Coalition, joined by the Gaspé Peninsula Rail Transport Exchange and Mobilization Table, is also using the event to highlight the rehabilitation of the railway line to Port-Daniel–Gascons and the need to complete the remaining work to Gaspé as quickly as possible. (Photo: Gilles Gagné, taken in August 2016)

Enjoy reading The Gaspé Spec on your tablet, smartphone, or laptop.

Download app for iOS and Android

Google play

Download on the App Store

ST. ANDREW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH NEW CARLISLE

SUMMER YARD SALE!

Fundraising for new heating system!

PLEASE JOIN US:
SATURDAY, JULY 18, 2026

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
**OLD NEW CARLISLE
HIGH SCHOOL**

**ACCEPTING DONATIONS OF QUALITY ITEMS INCLUDING:
KITCHENWARE, TOOLS, FURNITURE, ART, CLOTHING,
TOYS ETC.**

Items can be dropped off at the old New Carlisle High School on July 4th and July 11th from 10-3 with Jean Goyette. To arrange pick-up, contact Jean @ 581-233-2234.

Page 11, June 17, 2026 - Spec

CELEBRATING CANADA, CELEBRATING HOME!

Holly Smith
NEW CARLISLE – Canada Day has a way of sneaking up on us. One minute we are welcoming warmer weather and planning for summer, and the next communities across the Gaspé Coast are preparing for parades, barbecues, concerts and fireworks.

While larger cities may host grand celebrations, Canada Day on the coast is often about something simpler. It is a chance to gather with family, friends and neighbours and enjoy the sense of community that makes our region special.

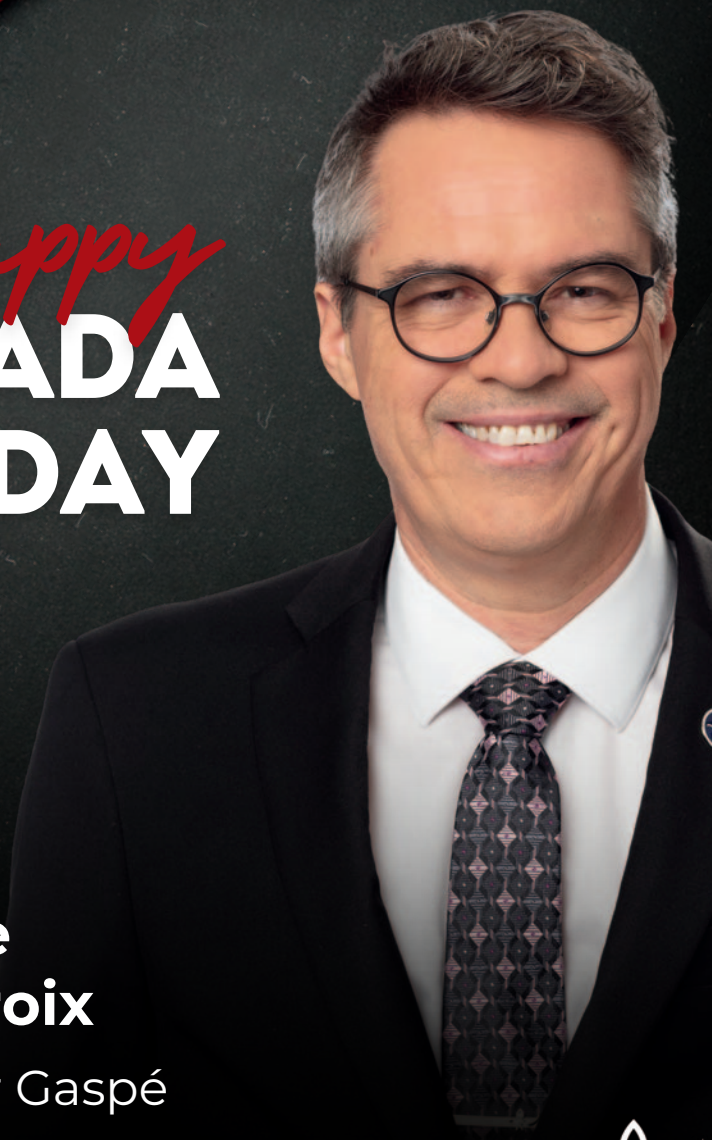
In the days leading up to July 1, Canadian flags begin appearing on porches and in front yards, while volunteers work behind the scenes organizing activities and preparing gathering places. Across the Peninsula, people make plans for where they will spend the day and who they hope to see.

For many, Canada Day marks the true beginning of summer. Schools have closed, vacation plans are taking shape and long sunny days stretch ahead. It is also a time when former residents return home, bringing families together and filling communities with familiar faces.

Food is always part of the celebration, whether it is a community barbecue, a family picnic or a meal shared outdoors overlooking the water. After a long winter, there is something special about simply being outside and enjoying the season.

As evening approaches, attention turns to the fireworks. Children eagerly wait for the first burst of colour while adults keep an eye on the sky. When the display begins, conversations pause and everyone looks up together.

Perhaps that is what Canada Day on the Gaspé Coast is really about. It is not any single event or performance, but the opportunity to reconnect, celebrate our communities and enjoy the simple moments that make summer memorable.



Happy CANADA DAY

Stéphane Sainte-Croix
Member for Gaspé

418 368-5827
stephanesaintecroix.com

ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE DU QUÉBEC



TOYOTA BAIE DES CHALEURS
20 boul. Perron ouest – Caplan GOC 1H0
(418) 388-5544 – toyotabaiedeschaleurs.com

Enjoy a safe and Happy Canada Day!

1 JULY



Hyundai GASPÉSIE AUTO
gaspesiehyundai.com

339 Avenue de Port Royal
Bonaventure GOC 1E0
418 534 2191
gaspesiehyundai.com

A&R Decorations
Wishing you a safe and exciting Canada Day!

166, Rte 299, Cascapédia
(418) 392-4686

BMR
LES MATÉRIAUX GASPÉSIENS

WISHING YOU HAPPY CELEBRATIONS FOR CANADA DAY!

125 Rue Desroches, Paspébiac, GOC 2K0
(418) 752-5933

Ville de **NEW RICHMOND**



HERE'S TO THE PEOPLE, PLACES, AND TRADITIONS THAT MAKE CANADA SPECIAL.
HAPPY CANADA DAY!



E. GAGNON & FILS LTÉE

Gaspé Shore E. GAGNON TRANSPORT GASPÉSIE INC. GASPÉ MARINAUD

CELEBRATING CANADA, HAPPY CANADA DAY!



Carrefour Gaspé 45^{and}
39, montée Sandy Beach, Gaspé

sports experts Club C

GRENIER Hart IGA L'ÉQUIPEUR

BANQUE NATIONALE Suniprix Société de l'assurance automobile Québec

SIMPSON COMMISSION SCOLAIRE Eastern Shores SCHOOL BOARD

HAPPY CANADA DAY !





HAPPY CANADA DAY

ON BEHALF OF THE CASA STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CASA Committee for ANGLOPHONE SOCIAL ACTION

MP Deschênes writes to the Minister of Health

NELSON SERGERIE

SAINTE - ANNE - DES - MONTS – The Bloc Québécois Member of Parliament (MP) for Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine-Listuguj is continuing his efforts to overturn the decision to close the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) office in Sainte-Anne-des-Monts by writing to Federal Health Minister Marjorie Michel.

In a letter obtained by SPEC, Alexis Deschênes described how he learned of the closure and outlined its impact on employees at the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts office and throughout Haute-Gaspésie.

“This breathtakingly beautiful region is also recognized as the most economically depressed area in Quebec and ranks among Canada’s most socioeconomically challenged regions. Despite this, citizens and local stakeholders are rolling up their sleeves and working with determination to revitalize their region. In this spirit of rebuilding and progress, seeing the federal government cut jobs and essential services is causing a wave of outrage,” the MP wrote to the minister.

The Bloc Québécois MP points out that Haute-Gaspésie is experiencing a resurgence in the fishing sector, particularly with lobster. “It strikes us as surprising, to say the least, that the Agency, in the face of this revival of the fishing sector, would choose to withdraw by closing one of its offices in one of the regions of Quebec where commercial fishing activity is most significant. I believe this is a mistake,” the MP



MP Alexis Deschênes wrote to the Minister of Health to explain the situation.

continues in his letter.

Mr. Deschênes also notes the potential opening of new clam fishing sites in the Baies-des-Chaleurs, and how the Agency’s collaboration will be essential for conducting safety tests.

“I am writing to you to inquire about the situation and to ask your CFIA officials to reconsider their decision, to reopen the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts office, and to find another way to meet cost-cutting targets that does not involve reducing staff in Quebec’s most economically depressed MRC,” the elected official concludes.

On May 20, Mr. Deschênes, accompanied by the mayor of Sainte-Anne-des-Monts and the prefect of Haute-Gaspésie, Sylvain Tanguay, denounced what they described as the office’s quiet closure in March.

The office’s two employees were reassigned to Rimouski. The government of Prime

Minister Mark Carney reduced the Agency’s budget by 15%, or \$300 million.

In an email, the CFIA said the closure of the Sainte-Anne-des-Monts office would not affect its activities in the region.

“The Agency maintains all of its inspection activities in eastern Quebec, including the Gaspé Peninsula, the Magdalen Islands, and the Lower St. Lawrence region. The office was staffed by two CFIA inspectors. The same inspection activities are now handled by the Rimouski office,” the Agency stated in an email response to our questions on May 22.

The CFIA maintains four offices in eastern Quebec, located in Gaspé, Chandler, the Magdalen Islands and Rimouski.

About ten inspectors cover the Gaspé Peninsula, the Magdalen Islands and the Lower St. Lawrence region.



Photo: Gilles Gagné

Price paid to lobster fishermen drops slightly during week 5

Gilles Gagné

SAINT-GODEFROI – Gaspé Peninsula lobster fishermen received \$7.96 per pound following the fifth week of the fishing season. It was the second consecutive decline after three weeks of increases at the start of the season. The price is once again being determined using a formula based on the three largest transactions recorded during the fifth week, according to an equation determined years ago by processing plants in the Magdalen Islands. The system was later adopted by Gaspé processors before the pandemic.

The price was set at \$8.38 per pound during the first two weeks of the season, which began on May 3 in the main zones of the Gaspé Peninsula. It then increased to \$8.48 during the third week before falling to \$8.14 in the fourth week and \$7.96 in the fifth week.

Prices are expected to increase during the latter part of June and the first weeks of July due to heightened demand associated with holidays in Quebec, Canada and the United States, as well as the end of the school year.



CRAFTING CONNECTIONS

Activities for Seniors

Family Ties is pleased to present monthly activities for seniors.

Please join us:

THURSDAY JUNE 25TH 2026
12:00-2:30 PM
NEW CARLISLE TOWN HALL

THIS MONTH'S ACTIVITY:
"SPARKLE" WITH JENNIFER FLOWERS MAJOR
*** A light lunch will be served ***

***Space is limited. Please RSVP by Tuesday June 23rd, 2026 to Madelyn Hayes at 418-752-5583.**

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program





CANADA DAY FESTIVITIES NEW CARLISLE 2026

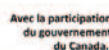


WEDNESDAY JULY 1ST

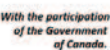
NCHS	11 am	Parade (gathering at 10:30 am) <i>(No children under the age of 9 can go on a float without an adult. If you are decorating your ATV as a float in the parade, you must be 16 years old and over, wear a helmet and the ATV must be plated and insured. You will not be able to circulate once the parade is over except to return home immediately)</i>
	After parade	Welcoming / Raising of the Flag / Singing "O Canada"
GREEN	Noon	Canada Day Market
GREEN	Noon	(Pre-register with Townhall @ 418-752-3141) FAMILY DAY ACTIVITIES (various) (More details will be available on Facebook)
GREEN		Lulu Berlu DANCE - FLY MOVEMENT (Jessie Walker) Music with DJ 12 - 3 pm Teddy Bear Picnic (12 & under - Free) (Light lunch - face painting - games and animation) LINE DANCE - With Rino & Christine
GREEN - Reserved area (*Family Ties) (next to canteen)	6pm	Music - John Gedeon
GREEN	8:30pm	Music - The Browns
GREEN	7 pm	Men's Softball Game - ASTROS vs. ATHLETICS
GREEN	8:30 pm	Men's Softball Game - PHILLIES vs. METS
	9:30 pm	Fireworks
	10 - 11pm	Music - The Browns

BEER GARDEN (open at 11), **MASONS CHILI DOGS**, **MÉCHOUI DE LA BAIE** (Pork strips)
La Maison du M Burger (Fries & Poutine)
***SCHOOL ACTIVITY FUNDRAISERS...** (HotDogs-Taco in a bag-refreshments)
**** NO BICYCLES WILL BE PERMITTED ON THE SITE**
**** CAMPING PROHIBITED EVERYWHERE ON THE BEACH AND ON THE GREEN**
**** NO GLASS BOTTLES WILL BE PERMITTED - NO BACK PACKS**

Avec la participation du gouvernement du Canada.



With the participation of the Government of Canada.







Page 14, June 17, 2026 - Spec

Gespeg reserve project moves forward

NELSON SERGERIE
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ – Members of the Gespeg Mi'gmaq First Nation will be consulted over the coming weeks to define the broad guidelines for the reserve status, which was granted in December 2025.

“We recently held a special general meeting with our members to hear their vision. The plan is to create a committee of members that will meet approximately every two weeks to gather ideas and consult with members to determine what kind of development they want for the reserve,” says Chief Céline Cassivi.

The reserve is located on land surrounding the Nation's administrative centre in Saint-Majorique and encompasses three lots.

“We had acquired a large piece of land behind the administrative offices for the fu-



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

The reserve would be located on land adjacent to the Nation's administrative center in Saint-Majorique.

ture daycare centre. We actually have a larger plot than initially planned. It is this land that is currently considered part of the reserve,” explains the chief.

Should the Nation acquire additional land or businesses,

members may apply to the federal government to have those properties incorporated into the reserve.

“The steps are the same. They're still quite lengthy. Anything is possible. That's Gespeg's vision right now,”

says the Indigenous leader.

Initially, the project was referred to as an “economic reserve,” but Chief Cassivi notes that it is simply a reserve.

“That's because we wanted to pursue economic development, not residential development. Nothing would prevent us from doing residential development one day. Except that it requires land that has already been paid for to develop. That's not easy. It's not realistic for Gespeg at the moment,” she explains.

The Nation currently has just over 2,200 members, most of whom live in the greater Gaspé region, although many also reside in the Quebec City and Montreal areas.

Gespeg obtained reserve status on December 19, 2025, after nearly 50 years of advocacy and negotiations.

The designation opens doors that were previously closed, including opportunities for economic development and

diversification, as well as access to funding for education, health care and other community initiatives.

Previously, the Nation had access to seven federal programs. With reserve status now in place, that number has increased to 26.

Recognized since 1972, the Nation faced a setback when an earlier reserve application was rejected in the mid-1970s. Following renewed efforts in the 1990s, the process resumed in 2020, leading to the submission of a new application in 2024.

The Town of Gaspé supported the initiative, continuing a collaborative relationship established in 2017 between the municipal council and the First Nation's Council.

The Côte-de-Gaspé MRC also submitted a favourable opinion to Ottawa, as did the Quebec government, which supported the recognition effort with federal authorities.

Town of Gaspé posts a \$4.3-million surplus in 2025

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – Thanks in part to two exceptional items, the Town of Gaspé ended the 2025 fiscal year with a surplus of \$4.3 million. Excluding those one-time items, the surplus would have been approximately \$2.3 million.

“The surplus is artificially high because we allocated \$1.3 million to balance the 2025 fiscal year. We also received a one-time grant of \$762,000 from Éco-entreprises Québec covering two fiscal years as part of the modernization of Quebec's recycling system. If we remove these two items, the actual surplus is just over \$2.3 million,” explains Mayor Daniel Côté.

The mayor points to strong economic activity as another contributor to the surplus.

“More homes are being built than we anticipated. This is good news for the economy. More homes mean more renovations and more changes in ownership. We always anticipate an increase, but last year there was so much activity that we have just over \$550,000 in additional revenue,” says Mr. Côté.

On the expenditure side,



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

Gaspé Mayor Daniel Côté.

labour shortages also contributed to the positive financial result.

“Over the past year, we've had quite a few vacant positions and several people on leave. We've generated a surplus of \$850,000 in payroll. That may seem like good news, but it puts a lot of pressure on the team. We can't manage this way in the long term,” the mayor cautions.

Michel-Pouliot Gaspé Air-

port also posted a surplus of approximately \$300,000.

Mr. Côté rejects suggestions that the surplus is evidence residents are being overtaxed. “I can understand that perspective, but we're not allowed to run a deficit. Good luck to anyone who can predict sick leave, how many litres of fuel will be sold at the airport, or the number of construction projects that will take place in the area. We budget based on realistic projections grounded in past years. If anyone can budget a town like Gaspé down to the penny, we'll hire them right away!” says the mayor.

As of December 31, 2025, the Town's accumulated surplus stood at \$9 million.

“I asked our auditors three times to make sure I knew whether the surplus was excessive. On a \$38 million budget, is having a \$9 million cushion too much? Indecent? Insane? The answer is no, it's not too much. It's a cushion in case of a major breakdown or economic disaster,” says Mr. Côté.

As an example, the mayor points to the potential impact that a major industrial closure, such as that of LM Wind Power, could have on municipal revenues.



**EASTERN QUEBEC
LITERACY
COUNCIL**

COME JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY

We are seeking dedicated volunteers who want to build experience, support literacy, and make a positive impact in our community.

YOUR SUPPORT CAN CHANGE A LIFE

- ✓ Help someone improve their reading, writing, math or digital skills.
- ✓ Flexible scheduling with training provided.
- ✓ Help us hold community events and programs.

HOW TO JOIN OUR TEAM?

Fill out our volunteer form by scanning this QR code.



Visit our website: eqlit.ca
Follow us on Facebook: [@eqliteracy](https://www.facebook.com/eqliteracy)
Send us an email: info@eqlit.ca

Heartfelt testimonies mark Family Ties' 30th annual general meeting

GILLES GAGNÉ

NEW CARLISLE – The 30th annual general meeting of Family Ties, the New Carlisle-based organization dedicated to supporting families, was marked by heartfelt testimonials highlighting three decades of service to the community.

Over 30 years, the organization has also maintained remarkable stability, a factor that has undoubtedly contributed to Family Ties receiving numerous regional and provincial awards.

During the June 10 annual general meeting, Kaneesha Smith and Tammy Leblanc were among those who shared stories of gratitude after years of attending, volunteering with and, in some cases, working for the organization.

Now a councillor in re-education at the ANCHOR, the trade and vocational school lo-



Photos: Gilles Gagné

Rory Flowers and Gracie Assels received the Youth Volunteer of the Year awards from Maria Chatterton.

cated about a kilometre east of Family Ties' building, Kaneesha Smith delivered a heartfelt account of a relationship that spans virtually the entire history of the organization.

"I have been attending Family Ties since 1995, and I am one of the original

Munchkin Mansion kids," she first said, drawing surprise from the attendees, who realized that she has covered the life of the organization.

"My mom was involved with Family Ties long before I was old enough to understand what it was, and because she was involved, I grew up involved too," added Kaneesha Smith.

Through activities such as the Teddy Bear picnic, treasure hunts, potato sack races and face painting, she developed a strong bond with the organization.

"Still to this day, Family Ties gives my family opportunities to spend time together through activities like strawberry picking and hascap picking. In fact, I probably never would have known what a hascap was if it weren't for Family Ties!" she underlined with a grin.

As she got older, she became a volunteer in programs, helped with fundraisers, making pizzas, painting floats and spent time at the Drop-in centre.

"Volunteering taught me responsibility, the importance of helping others, and what it means to be part of a community. Family Ties also opened doors to me. Through the organization, I had opportunities to work in the library and as a camp counsellor. The references, support, and even getting a bursary helped me as I continued my education and moved onto CEGEP and then university," she explained.

Kaneesha Smith pointed out that Family Ties contributed importantly to developing values that shaped her life, like kindness, responsibility, community and helping others.

"One of the things I appreciate most about Family Ties is the feeling you get when you walk through the door. The staff always greet you warmly. You never feel judged. You feel welcomed, supported and like part of the family," she also remarked, adding that the ensuing clientele feels the same.

Tammy Leblanc, a founder of Munchkin Mansion in 1995, when she was the CLSC social worker for the English-speaking community, also spoke warmly of the organization. As a parent whose children attended Family Ties programs, she witnessed their impact firsthand.

"I and my family know for a fact that Family Ties hosts and leads many activities, workshops and celebrations throughout the year. And these are life-changing for many of us in the community. They have a heart-warming effect that lasts a lifetime," she affirmed.

Volunteers of the year

Youth programs coordinator Maria Chatterton presented the Youth Volunteers of the Year awards to Rory Flowers and Gracie Assels, who quickly developed the traditional qualities needed to be appreciated by kids.

"They have certainly shown that they are up for anything, from playing duck duck goose, hula hoop challenges, dance competitions, building race cars, that we could only make go backwards, sneakily making sure all the kids won a bingo game, wrapping up like mummies, chasing the kids during dodgeball, red rover, soccer and trying not to get caught, they have done it all," explained Ms. Chatterton.

Executive director Heather MacWhirter also announced that Lisa Gallon was the recipient of the Adult Volunteer of the Year award. A member of Family Ties' steering committee, she was described as a lady "always willing to lend a hand." (Note: a second report will present in our next issue more statistics about Family Ties' last year)



Lisa Gallon, left, was awarded the Volunteer of the Year award, presented by executive director Heather MacWhirter.

Business & Professional DIRECTORY



Going beyond and reliable since 1982

3 Rue Cerisiers
Gaspé, Québec G4X 2M1
Tel. (418) 368-5425
Fax (418) 368-7290
www.groupeohmega.com

Electricity - Plumbing
Automation
Industrial computing
Counter sales



LÉONARD LOISEL & FILS INC.
General Contractor
R. B. Q.: 2155-8705-95

Foundations - Landscaping
Sale and delivery of sand and gravel

Office: 176 rue Saint-Pie-X,
Paspébiac (QC) G0C 2K0
(418) 752-2028
Garage: 138 rue Day,
Paspébiac (QC) G0C 2K0
(418) 752-5061

Pascal Loisel: (418) 752-0048
Luc Loisel: (418) 752-0407
aloisel4305@gmail.com



Repair & Services

- Gen. Repairs
- Alignments
- Oil Changes
- Brake Service
- Tire Changes & Rot
- AC Maintenance

And more!

581-886-3676

Follow us on facebook!

134 Boul. Perron Est, New
Richmond, QC G0C 2B0





Dr. Pascal Cyr
Optometrist



Dr. Stacey Starrak
Optometrist

CLINIQUE D'OPTOMÉTRIE
L'ÉMERILLON

LENSES CRAFTED ON THE PREMISES

PASPÉBIAC: 104 Gérard D. Levesque Blvd West • 418-752-5553
CHANDLER: 260 René Lévesque Blvd East • 418-689-5553
MARIA: 435 Perron Blvd West • 418-759-5553



BILINGUAL
SERVICE

MEMBER
OF

Canada's Largest Network of Optometrists

Éli Pelletier earns place in Gaspé's guest book

NELSON SERGERIE

GASPÉ – Former Gaspé Barracudas swimmer Éli Pelletier, now competing on the college circuit with Cégep de Lévis, received a rare honour on May 28 when he signed the Town of Gaspé's guest book.

"It is an honour and a privilege to welcome you," Mayor Daniel Côté told the athlete during the ceremony.

The mayor highlighted the swimmer's achievements over the past year: Canadian champion in the 50-metre freestyle and the 4×100-metre relay; Canadian runner-up in the 50-metre backstroke; third in Canada in the 100-metre freestyle.

At the Quebec championships, he finished second in



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

the 100-metre backstroke and third in the 50-metre backstroke.

During the Quebec Senior Cup, he captured the title in the 50-metre backstroke and placed third in the 100-metre backstroke. He also set collegiate records in both the 100-

metre freestyle and the 100-metre backstroke.

"These are performances that give us goosebumps, that let us see incredible promise. We're truly confident that this is far from over," says Mr. Côté, noting the pride of seeing Éli Pelletier's name associated with Gaspé.

Despite his accomplishments, Éli Pelletier remains humble. He says the recognition is a source of pride, but he remains focused on continuing to improve.

Making the transition to the college circuit required an adjustment period, but one he feels he successfully navigated.

"It's always about improving, loving my sport, and making progress," he says.

While he does not rule out a

future Olympic dream, he notes there are many milestones to achieve before reaching that level.

"I don't think I've reached my peak yet. I still believe I can improve," the athlete says.

Barracudas head coach Jérémie Hamel, who worked with Éli Pelletier for two and a half years, says his former swimmer stood out from the beginning.

"He was a natural talent. He was very easy to coach and a pleasure to work with," says Mr. Hamel.

"He's the best athlete we've ever had in Gaspé in the club's history, with so many medals and titles, and this is the first time a Barracuda has competed in the Canada Games," he adds.

"I'm very proud to see that I'm in the right place and helping athletes reach their full potential," he says.

The club has experienced substantial growth over the past year, adding about 70 young swimmers as well as a similar number of adult and masters swimmers.

"He'll always give his all and go as far as possible. We haven't seen his ceiling yet, but I don't want to set any limits for him just yet," says Mr. Hamel.

Éli Pelletier's season is not over. He still has two major competitions remaining: team trials and the Canadian trials.

After that, he plans to take a six-week break from the pool, giving himself an opportunity to recharge and try other sports before returning to training.

CASA deals with growing needs, affirms president Carl Garrett - AGM wraps up busy 50th anniversary

GILLES GAGNÉ

MATAPEDIA – The Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA) used its June 6 annual general meeting in Matapedia to officially conclude its 50th anniversary celebrations, a period described by president Carl Garrett as both busy and special.

Rather than reading his annual message aloud, Mr. Garrett and executive director Allen Richards invited attendees to consult it in the organization's annual report while CASA staff presented highlights from their respective programs.

"Like many organizations, we have faced challenges over the past year, including increasing needs within our community and the ongoing realities of delivering services across our large region. However, these challenges have also underscored the importance of CASA's presence and have motivated us to continue strengthening our programs and partnerships," points out Mr. Garrett in his report.

He praises the "staff's commitment, passion, dedication and hard work". He also commends the partners and funders for their "continued support and trust" in CASA.

"As we look to the future, CASA remains focused on building on our strong foundation. We will continue to develop programs that serve and empower the anglophone community, foster connections and ensure that our organization re-



Photo: G. Gagné

CASA president Carl Garrett says the organization will continue building on its strong foundation while responding to growing needs within the anglophone community.

mains responsive, relevant and sustainable for years to come," adds Mr. Garrett.

In his message, Allen Richards underlines that over the past year, "CASA has experienced significant growth in cultural development, health and social services, and employability while maintaining our pillars of seniors and early childhood. Local musicians have united to compose original works, thereby enriching the artistic fabric of our community," he wrote.

As demonstrated during the annual general meetings through statistics presented by regional employment coordinator Dave Felker, who also plays an important role in cultural development, Allen Richards points out that the "Homegrown show has expanded to include a youth component, affording emerging bands and first-time musicians

the opportunity to perform, and fostering a vibrant atmosphere for young talent to flourish."

The financial picture

During the annual meeting, financial controller John LeGrand presented a picture of the funding situation that is slightly better than that of a year ago.

The total revenues decreased by \$83,644, from \$1,587,233 as of March 2025 to \$1,504,689, a situation essentially attributable to a \$45,504 decrease in grants and \$38,140 reduction in miscellaneous sources of income.

However, explained Mr. LeGrand, CASA posted a \$39,359 surplus, compared to a \$1,965 deficit a year ago, which he had then compared to a balanced budget, given the small proportion of the shortcoming, compared to the over-

all revenues and expenses of the organization.

In the expense column, two budgetary items were marked by a substantial reduction, salaries and employee benefits, a drop of \$89,834, while spending on project materials fell from \$93,219 to \$44,406, a reduction of \$48,813.

"We were able to reach a surplus because of old projects that we were able to put away. The big figures are pretty much the same they were last year," explains John LeGrand.

He also pointed out that preparations for CASA's 50th anniversary celebrations had increased certain expenditures in previous years and that those costs are no longer being incurred.

Mr. LeGrand further noted that CASA receives funding from "23 different pockets of money," supported by 13 federal, provincial and regional funding sources.

The programs

CASA employees presented summaries of the organization's programs and services for 2025-2026. Areas highlighted included employability services, Bright Beginnings programs for children and youth, health and wellness initiatives, support for seniors, arts, culture and heritage projects, as well as digital communications and Bonfire media.

The presentations combined statistical results with personal stories illustrating the impact of CASA's services on commu-

nity members.

In no particular order, Kathy Gallon, Sally Walker, Dawn Assels, Cindy Carney, Carissa Dempsey, Kayla Gallon, Vanessa Walker-Plusquellec, Tammy Chatterton and Dave Felker, some of them wearing several hats, presented the highlights of their field. By and large, the number of people reached during 2025-2026 increased compared to that of 2024-2025.

Recruitment of board members

Before the meeting concluded, board member Tony Conoley noted that there is still room for additional candidates interested in serving on CASA's board of directors.

"According to our constitution, our board cannot have fewer than seven members and no more than 13," he said.

A year ago, the board consisted of eight members. Gabrielle Labbé resigned during the year for family reasons.

Currently, Stella Kennedy and Tony Conoley represent the Belle-Anse-to-Gaspé sector, while Carl Garrett and Douglas Hunt represent the Port Daniel-to-Barachois area. Nancy Doddridge and Alfred Cassidy fill the two positions reserved for the Cascapédia-Saint-Jules-to-Saint-Siméon sector, while Dave Douesnard and Paspebiac's Heather MacWhirter (not working for Family Ties) fill the positions designated for the Bonaventure-to-Shigawake territory.

Carleton CEGEP teacher Koreen Hayes receives province-wide recognition

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON - The Quebec Association for College Teaching awarded an honourable mention to Koreen Hayes, a teacher and coordinator in the Criminology Intervention Techniques program at the Carleton-sur-Mer campus of the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles, during its annual conference held June 2 to 5 in Drummondville.

Koreen Hayes was recognized for the quality and scope of projects that have contributed to the program's appeal and to the academic and professional success of its students.

Her innovative practices have inspired many members of the teaching staff and earned recognition from her peers. She and colleague Amélie Dallaire also received the conference's "coup de cœur" award for their presentation. AQCP stands for Association québécoise des professeurs de Cégeps.

Examples of her contributions over the past few years, illustrating her role as a facilitator and agent of change, inclusion and innovation are numerous. Among them is the establishment of a simulation room, providing students with a safe environment in which to practice and receive direct feedback that supports the development of their professional skills.

She also played a key role in developing a follow-up procedure for first-semester students aimed at promoting academic success. In addition, she has been actively involved in the First Peoples Allied Campus project, notably through the organization of an annual awareness day, fundraising efforts and various initiatives designed to increase the project's impact within the CEGEP community.

Moreover, Koreen Hayes made a significant contribution to the creation of the work-based learning model



Photo: Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles

Koreen Hayes, centre, upon receiving her award in Drummondville.

for the Criminology Intervention Techniques (CIT) program by designing teaching tools that are now accessible to other departments on the staff portal. She has also established partnerships with a variety of intervention settings.

She was also a major factor in the creation of a dedicated space for the CIT program, providing students with a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for both studying and socializing. She also helped establish the program's "Wall of Fame," which highlights inspiring alumni and their accomplishments.

"These concrete achievements, combined with her positive, dynamic, and principled attitude, make her an ambassador of whom the Carleton Cégep can be proud," states a press release issued by the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

Each year, CEGEPs across Quebec establish selection committees to identify faculty members who have made significant contributions to the development of their institutions. The awards are presented during the AQPC's annual conference.

The only post-secondary institution in the region, the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles comprises three campuses

and a national school. It offers pre-university, technical and vocational training programs and distinguishes itself through the quality of its teaching, the diversity of its programs, its research activities, continuing education offerings and international outreach.

Originally from Miguasha, Koreen Hayes completed her studies at the Carleton campus of the Cégep de la Gaspésie et des Îles. She was part of the institution's first Humanities cohort in 1989 before pursuing criminology studies at the Université de Montréal.

After returning to the region, she worked at a youth group home in Campbellton, where she served as an educator, coordinator and director.

When a Correctional Services Attestation of College Studies (AEC) program (designed to prepare people to work in the correctional system) was launched in Carleton, she made the leap into teaching. Although the AEC program was eventually discontinued, she continued teaching when the Diploma of College Studies (DEC) program in Delinquency Intervention Techniques was introduced. That program later evolved into today's Criminology Intervention Techniques program, where she continues to teach. *From a press release.*

Reflections

by

Diane Skinner Flowers



Waiting for a Gaspesian Summer

Every year, it happens the same way. Slowly. After many months of clearing snow off the car and bundling up to go outside, there are definite signs that summer will arrive. Summer on the Gaspé is welcomed, even though we are well aware that it is brief. I do not mean to be a Debbie Downer (apologies to all the Debbies who are positive) but we know that the short Gaspesian summer is a real thing.

Summer is something we dream about and perhaps appreciate more because we know it won't last forever. We talk about summers past, when the excitement was real. For those of us who are vintage, we can reminisce for hours about walking to the beach and staying all day with no sunscreen, no hat and no water. We would take a cream soda, a chocolate bar and a bag of chips. No wonder we were baked to a crisp and dehydrated by evening. The walk home, truly uphill, was a challenge.

The Gaspé has more than saltwater beaches. We have beautiful, crystal-clear lakes and rivers to be enjoyed. Take a picnic and a paddleboard and plan to have a truly gorgeous summer day. No technology. No fancy but useless stuff to buy. Enjoy nature and respect her. She gives us so much.

What special equipment or expensive purchases are required to enjoy the waters of the Gaspé? Not a lot is necessary. The outdoors can be enjoyed by all. In summers past, a new pair of flip flops were the big purchase. Summer can be an equal-opportunity season. If you have the will to enjoy summer outdoors, there is a way for sure.

A favourite activity for many is searching the shores for sea glass. The joy is the search and the aha moment when we spy a tiny treasure and quickly scoop it up. Did you know there is a hierarchy of colours? We appreciate finding green, brown or clear, but the beauty of blue sea glass is particularly magical. Each piece is unique and has been shaped by the waters of the Gaspé. Each piece has history. Where did it originate? We could make up some magical stories about their beginnings.

Summer says, "Let's get outdoors!" Food tastes better on a deck or a picnic table. A hamburger or poutine at a canteen feels like a feast when eaten outside. Summer is not complete without eating a meal or two at a canteen. Enjoying an ice cream while watching the waves lap the beach is a sweet summer moment.

Live outdoor music provides some beautiful memories. It's not just the music, though it is often homegrown and top-notch. It's meeting up with old friends and those home on vacation. Canada Day fireworks provide an exciting evening for all.

Summer is also berry-picking season. Many of us have memories of picking strawberries, raspberries and blueberries. Way back it was an extended family event. Echoes of my grandfather reminding me repeatedly to "pick clean" still remain sharp in my memory. It was all worth it because my grandmother would make a whole winter's worth of jam to be stored in the pantry and waiting to be eaten in the winter.

A highlight is when family and visitors come home from away. From the initial moments of great excitement until the inevitable departure, it is full of memory-making times. Summer is short. Enjoy as much of it as you can. Take pictures. Find lots of sea glass, especially blue. Enjoy all the small moments. But don't worry, summer is on its way. And we will be ready to welcome it.

**Please be advised that the SPEC office
will be closed from July 23 to August 2, inclusively.**

Issues will continue to be mailed as usual.

Our summer publication dates are: July 1, 15 and 29. August 12 and 26.

Héma-Québec's blood clinics brought in 716 donors

GILLES GAGNÉ

CARLETON – The four blood clinics held by Héma-Québec in Carleton, Bonaventure, Grande-Rivière and Gaspé around mid-May brought in 716 donors, a little short of the goal of 740, but nevertheless satisfactory for the organization responsible for blood drives in the province.

The Gaspé clinic exceeded the objective of 225 donors and attracted 230 people, including 38 new donors. The Bonaventure clinic also met Héma Québec's goal, with 177 donors out of a target of 175. In Carleton, donors nearly reached the objective of 200, as 192 people showed up.

In Grande-Rivière, 117 donors came. Even though the goal of 140 was not reached, 13 new donors showed up, including a person who gave blood for the 146th time. In Gaspé, another donor gave blood for the impressive 142nd time.

In Carleton, a donor gave blood for the 113th time, and



Photo: Gilles Gagné

Most Héma-Québec employees were wearing a t-shirt with "respect" written on it to express dissatisfaction with the negotiation of their labour agreement.

in Bonaventure, another donor reached a 66th donation.

"We had the opportunity to meet with very dedicated committees and donors who were very present at the blood drives. The Carleton blood drive also benefited from the involvement of students from Le Bois-Vivant school in New Richmond. Their contribution, both in terms of recruitment and volunteering on the day of

the drive, was remarkable. It was a mobilizing and inspiring collaboration for these young people, who were able to see firsthand the impact of their commitment" comments Émilie Morneau-Guérin, donor recruitment advisor at Héma-Québec's customer experience department.

In Gaspé, Héma-Québec received support from the Lions' Club, the Cercle des

Fermières and the Hauban Volunteer Action Centre. In Grande-Rivière, the Cercle des Fermières and the Knights of Columbus provided assistance throughout the blood drive, while in Bonaventure, the local firefighters and various volunteers played the same role. In Carleton, the Knights of Columbus and the 50-plus Club supported the Bois-Vivant students during the blood clinic.

Most of the nurses and other Héma-Québec employees were wearing t-shirts reading "respect" on it during the Gaspé Peninsula blood clinics.

"Our collective agreement ended close to three years ago and we haven't reached another agreement yet. We have had 22 negotiation meetings so far and the 23rd meeting is scheduled today. Negotiations are so long that when we reach an agreement, it is already the time to start negotiating for the next agreement, because the one we just signed has already expired," explained a disgruntled nurse on May 13.

Oddly, an agreement in principle was reached later that same day, May 13. The agreement was submitted to union members, with the union's recommendation, on May 3 and was accepted.

Héma-Québec was incorporated as a non-profit corporation on March 26, 1998. It subsequently became governed by a special law, Bill 438, ratified by the National Assembly on June 20, 1998, to take over from the Canadian Red Cross Society, which withdrew from the blood management system following the contaminated blood scandal.

The Canadian Red Cross Society mismanaged the blood system, mostly between 1986 and 1990, triggering a major public health crisis in which blood products contaminated with HIV and hepatitis C were distributed. This tragedy infected thousands of Canadians and led to a complete overhaul of the blood transfusion system. Similar scandals occurred in several other countries during that period.

Major beach replenishment planned for Percé in 2027

NELSON SERGERIE

PERCÉ – Ten years after major upgrades restored natural access to the sea following the devastating storms of 2015 and 2016, which washed away the former boardwalk, a significant adjustment to the beach replenishment project carried out after those events is being planned for 2027.

Before the work can proceed, several studies must be completed with support from the Ministry of Internal Security, formerly the Ministry of Public Security.

A site characterization study must first be conducted.

"It's one of several studies that must be approved. It looks at the natural environment, such as counting ferns or bird nests, in order to plan the work scheduled for the fall of 2027," says Mayor Daniel Leboeuf.

Work to adjust the beach had originally been planned for 2025 but was delayed.

"Some sections of the beach nourishment project eroded more quickly than expected. They are revisiting their studies because this was a pilot project. We and the Magdalen Islands were the first communities in Quebec to try this technique. Conditions along the Gulf of St. Lawrence are different from the models de-



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

A temporary adjustment to the South Cove beach nourishment project in Percé was completed in September 2024.

veloped in Europe and elsewhere. They want to adjust their model and extend the beach as much as possible," explains the mayor.

North Cove also being monitored

Engineers from the Ministry of Internal Security also used their visit to Percé at the end of May to assess conditions at North Cove, another area affected by coastal erosion.

"We are still on the list of projects being considered for a possible intervention. Our ball is in the bingo drum, but we don't know when our situation

will be considered urgent enough. It could be anywhere from one to five years, depending on other priorities. For now, we are in monitoring mode, like many communities along the St. Lawrence. The most urgent projects are selected first, as happened in Maria last year," says Mr. Leboeuf, noting that Maria had been identified as a priority area in 2021.

As for Percé's fishing harbour, the concrete seawall along the boardwalk could receive rock armour protection as early as this fall. The structure is considered at risk as erosion has weakened its foundation.

"With rock protection in

place, it would be secure. It's a temporary measure to prevent the wall from collapsing and to protect our historic buildings and Mont-Joli Street," the mayor explains.

Tourism infrastructure fund

Percé will allocate up to \$150,000 from quarry and sand pit royalties to upgrade the road leading to Emerald River Park.

In addition, a portion of the town's unallocated surplus will be transferred to the Tourism Infrastructure Maintenance Fund, which was created in March.

"This is money generated by tourists and visitors who pay to access the park. Last year, we recorded significant surplus revenues," says the mayor.

As a result, the town will transfer \$208,000 into the fund this year.

Going forward, 66% of the fund will be dedicated to Emerald River Park, while the remaining 33% will be used for other attractions, including the boardwalk and roadside rest areas.

According to Mr. Leboeuf, future years should generate similar amounts, allowing the fund to continue growing.

Percé also still holds \$155,000 from the former tourism levy that was struck down by the courts in June 2023.

"The money has been placed in a trust until September 2027, which corresponds to the limitation period. Once that deadline has passed, the funds can be added to the recreational and tourism infrastructure fund," says the mayor.



VILLAGE
Real Estate Agency

Suzanne Landry

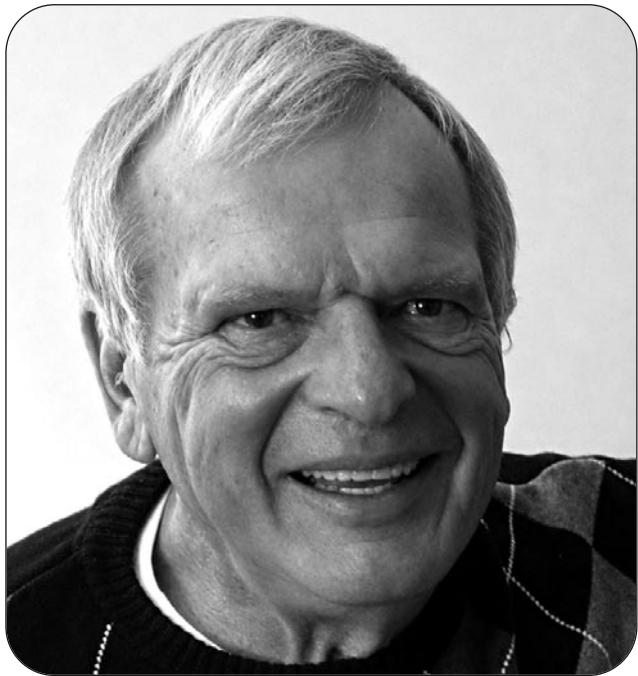
CERTIFIED REAL ESTATE BROKER AEO
418-752-0792
suzannelandry@royallepage.ca
www.suzannelandry.ca

Friendly bilingual service
from Matapédia to Port Daniel
24 years experience

Announcements



Obituaries



BISSON: David Charles

With deep love and sadness, we announce the passing of David Charles Bisson at his residence in Port Daniel, Quebec, on May 21, 2026, at the age of 80.

Born on October 7, 1945, in Campbellton, New Brunswick, David was the son of the late Herbert Bisson and Isabel Hubert. He is survived by his loving wife of 58 years, Ursula (née Dea); his daughters, Rebecca and Jodi (Paul Park); and his two adored granddaughters. After several moves over the years, David and his family ultimately called Oakville, Ontario home.

David dedicated his entire professional career to Scotiabank, a journey that took his talents to Montreal, Toronto, the Caribbean, and Central America. Outside of his professional success, David was a man of simple pleasures and deep passions. He was an avid sports enthusiast, a master griller, and a profound dog lover whose loyal canine companion was never far from his side. In his later years, he embraced the role of "Papa" with joy, finding delight in watching his grandchildren grow and sharing in their impish adventures. David spent his retirement summers in the place he loved most, pouring his heart into turning his Port Daniel property into a beautifully manicured masterpiece.

David's strength, sharp wit, and dedication to his loved ones will live on in the hearts of his family.

In expression of sympathy, the family welcomes donations to a charity of your personal choice.

Obituary: 150 words - \$50
150-250 words - \$55 - 250+ words
- quote will be provided

In Memory: 150 words - \$35
150-250 words - \$45

**Funeral, Celebration of Life,
Card of Thanks, Engagement,
Birth, Prayer, Birthday - \$35
Wedding - \$55**



FESSENDEN: Sheila Brake

It is with deep love and sadness that the family of Sheila Brake Fessenden announces her passing at her home in Black Cape on April 2, 2026, at the age of 86.

Predeceased in 2020 by her husband of 56 years, James "Butch" Fessenden, Sheila was the daughter of Violet Enright (1916-2012) and Robert "Robin" Brake (1905-1981), and the sister of Roderic (1935-2011), Bryan (1942-2021) and Barry. She leaves behind her children, Matt, Kim, Tammy, Randy and their spouses; grandchildren, Wyatt, Cole, Jordan, Sophie, Emma, Peter, James, Jazmin and Jade; and great-grandchildren, Jaycee, Haylee, Zoey and Atlas.

Nana was a devoted and proud grandmother, as well as a beloved aunt, friend and neighbour. She and Papa created a home filled with warmth, laughter, and unconditional love, memories that will be cherished forever. We are very grateful for the care and support that we have found in our community; in particular, Dr. Bazinet and the staff at the CLSC in Caplan. Sheila will be deeply missed and always remembered.

A service celebrating the lives of Mom and Dad will be held at St. Andrew's United Church, New Richmond, on August 6, at 2 p.m. The committal service will follow at Black Cape Cemetery. With much love, Kim and Tammy.

Thank you

New Richmond Manor celebrated "Gaspesian Day" in Style!
Some good old Gaspesian music, fun trivia, followed by a craft using shells from the bay, is all that was needed for an afternoon filled with Gaspesian Pride!
Thank you, ladies, for your smiles and your positive energy!!!
Lorri



INGROUVILLE: Hermina Lemieux

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Hermina Lemieux Ingrouville on Monday, February 9, 2026, at the age of 90.

She is reunited with her husband, Gerard Ingrouville of Barachois; mother, Genevieve Chicoine; father, Herman Lemieux; brother, Ralph; sister, Angela; and grandson, Christopher Tonin.

She leaves to mourn her four children: Grace (Ferdinando), Melvin (Carol), David (Joyce), Tracy (Daniel) as well as her grandchildren: Anthony (Connie), Aaron (Chelsea), Neil (Meghan), Derek (Kristina) Ryan, Adam, and Laura-Grace. Great-grandchildren, Melania, Filippo and Finn.

She is survived by her six sisters and five brothers who reside in Barachois and Gaspé, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba.

A funeral mass will be celebrated on Monday, August 3, 2026, for both Hermina Lemieux Ingrouville and her late husband, Gerard Ingrouville at St. Peters Church in Barachois.

In honour of Hermina and Gerard's kindness, the family invites you to make a donation to St. Peters Church in Barachois.

The New Carlisle
Funeral Association
extends sympathy to the family of
Marcelle Mallet.

With Deepest
SYMPATHY

**Four Generations
of Monument Craftsmen**

HIGHEST QUALITY - BEST PRICES

MONUMENTS, MARKERS, CEMETERY LETTERING,
LASER DESIGNS AND PORTRAITS

SALES REP:

Steven Imhoff 418-752-6041
581-233-2101

Covering Port Daniel to New Richmond

Announcements



REHEL: Estelle Mary

It is with heavy hearts that we inform you of the passing of Estelle Mary Rehel, born January 6, 1949, who passed away on February 3, 2026, with her family by her side. She was a remarkable woman who was deeply loved and will be profoundly missed by all who knew her.

Estelle was the daughter of Eric Lemieux and Edwina Cain. She had three brothers, Nellis (Brenda), Cletus (Lise) and Leo (Heidi), who have all predeceased her. She leaves behind two sisters, Gladys (Mike) and Stella (Henry).

Estelle was a supportive and loving wife to Andrew Rehel. She was a devoted sister-in-law to Lucy (Carl), Ruth (Charlie), Ann (Roger), Murray (Elizabeth), Raymond (Doreen) and Irene (Marge). She was predeceased by Nora (Earl), Guy (Mary) and Billy.

She was an amazing mother to Patrick and Jennifer (Dean), whose lives she shaped with her love, guidance, and constant support, always placing her family at the centre of her world. One of her greatest joys in life was being a doting grandmother to Andrew, Bradley, Connor, and Hannah. She cherished every moment spent with

her grandchildren and took immense pride in each of them.

Estelle was also an unconditional friend. She had a natural gift for connection and kindness and she was truly loved by all who met her. Whether through heartfelt conversations, shared laughter, or simply being present, she made people feel seen, valued, and cared for.

She loved life and lived it fully. Estelle enjoyed a good chat, listening to music, and sharing a beer with friends. She never missed a party and believed in celebrating moments, big and small. Her laughter, warmth and vibrant spirit brought people together and made every gathering better simply because she was there.

Estelle will be remembered for her generosity, her love of people and the joy she brought into the lives of so many. Though she may be gone, her memory, love and spirit will live on forever in the hearts of her family and friends. She will be deeply missed and forever loved.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 261 in Barachois, Quebec.

A funeral mass and burial will be held on Wednesday, July 29, at 1 p.m., at St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Barachois, Quebec.



In Memory

FESSENDEN: James Douglas Steele

With loving hearts, we remember the passing of James Douglas Steele Fessenden at his home in Black Cape on August 26, 2020.

James (Butch) was born in Montreal in 1938 and visited Black Cape throughout his childhood with his parents, Clifford Fessenden (1899-1958) and Martha Steele (1900-1960), and sister, Ann (1933-2024).

He loved his summers on the coast, and he eventually moved to Black Cape, then married the girl next door. Together, they made a home

that welcomed their children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and all of their friends as well.

Dad and Mom never said no to a visit and were always sad when it was time to say good-bye. Dad, Poppa, Uncle Butch, Jim was cherished by his family and supported by his many friends and neighbours. We are grateful for their help and the compassion of Dr. Bazinet and staff at the CLSC in Caplan. He has left a hole in our hearts, and we continue to remember his kindness, laughter and love.

A memorial service will be held on August 6, at 2 p.m. at St. Andrew’s United Church, New Richmond, with an interment at Black Cape Cemetery to follow.

With much love, Kim and Tammy.

WYLIE: Viola

In loving memory of a very dear mommy.
*Life is not the same without you,
You were a mommy who was so wonderful.
With love always, we remember you.
With fond memories, we think of you.
It’s hard to believe, you’re no longer here.
You were a mommy so precious and dear.
Words cannot describe the sadness it brings,
Or how very dearly you are missed.
You were a wonderful mommy,
In more ways than one.
You were truly one in a million,
No one could ever take your place.
You were loved more than words could ever say.
Although you are gone, your memory lives on,
Secure and unremovable.
For deep within our hearts,
There’s a special place reserved for only you.
It’s filled with precious memories of you,
That could never fade away.
We cherish them dearly and always will,
We’ll treasure them forever and always.*

Loved, missed and will never be forgotten.
From your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

The Perfect Gift For Anyone

Subscribe today

Name: _____

Address: _____

Your gift Message:_____

Canada: 1 year: \$50 6 months: \$29

Name: _____

Address: _____

Your gift Message:_____

Canada: 1 year: \$50 6 months: \$29

Name: _____

Address: _____

Your gift Message:_____

Canada: 1 year: \$50 6 months: \$29

Name: _____

Address: _____

Your gift Message:_____

Canada: 1 year: \$50 6 months: \$29



Mail your form along with your cheque or money order to:
The Gaspé Spec
208-B Gérard D. Levesque Blvd,
New Carlisle, Quebec, G0C 1Z0

Call with your credit card at
418-752-5400 or
order online at
thegaspespec.com

Page 21, June 17, 2026 - Spec

GASPÉ:
Gaspé County W.I
September 12: Gaspé County W.I. Fair. Do you want to enter the W.I. Craft Fair competition? It's time to register with the Gaspé W.I. Here's what you need to know: the fair will be held at the York Hall, the registration fee is \$15, you can enter as many craft, cooking, and/or garden items as you wish. You can register with Bonita Annett at 418-368-3453 or gaspe22@gmail.com and she will give you a copy of the Fair List for 2026. The last date to register is July 31. Everyone welcome!

Lotto draw.
July 10: Money and gift bingo beginning at 7 p.m.
July 25-26: Garage sale from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Tables may be rented for \$10.
August 8: Spaghetti or Lasagna supper. More information to follow.

SHIGAWAKE:
Shigawake Music Festival and Agricultural Fair
June 20: Father's Day lobster/rib supper. Cost: \$35 per person or \$60 for two. First seating at 5 p.m., second seating at 6:30 p.m. Bar service available. To reserve or for information, contact Emilie Woods at 438-881-9295 or info@shigawakefair.ca.
June 27: Music by Hall Band. Doors open at 7 p.m. and music will begin at 8 p.m., Admission is \$15. Bar and canteen service available.
July 4: Four-wheeler rally. Breakfast begins at 8 a.m., and the rally starts at 10:30 a.m. Registration is \$10. Bar and canteen service available. For more information, contact Bobby Wylie at 418-752-4514.

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

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

HOPE TOWN:
Hope Town Sports club
August 22: A gift bingo will begin at 7 p.m., held at the Community centre.

PARISH OF GASPÉ
Sunday, June 21
St. Philip - St. John, Sandy Beach
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Sunday, June 28
Camp Fort Haldimand
10 a.m. Outdoor Holy Eucharist
St. Matthews, Peninsula
7 p.m. Evening Prayer

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

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA
Sunday, June 21
New Carlisle
9 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Port Daniel
11 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Sunday, June 28
New Carlisle
10 a.m. Morning Prayer
Shigawake
10 a.m. Morning Prayer

PORT DANIEL:
3 Star Golden Age Club
June 26: Mini Lotto raffle: five tickets for \$10, \$1,000 prize. The winning ticket will be determined by the last three numbers of Mini

UNITED CHURCH HOPE TOWN
Sunday, June 21
10 a.m. Service
Sunday, June 28
10 a.m. Service

UNITED CHURCH NEW RICHMOND
Sunday, June 21
10 a.m. Service
Sunday, June 28
10 a.m. Service

HOROSCOPES - June 15 to June 21
ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
Management opportunities are coming your way, Aries. It is time to step up and take the lead. Your confidence has long been a strong character trait, so push forward.
TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
Taurus, patience will pay off big time when a long-awaited piece of news finally arrives. The weekend is a perfect time for walking in nature or tending to the garden.
GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21
Your curiosity is leading you down a fascinating path right now, Gemini. This could spark a new interest. Stay flexible, as a last-minute change of plans might be in the cards.
CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, emotional clarity might help you address a minor concern with grace and ease. You often project a gentle strength that helps to draw people closer to you.
LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23
It's time for your inner child to come out to play, Leo. Say yes to a game night or a creative pursuit. Joy will be the primary focus this week, leading you to have more fun.
VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, a breakthrough in your wellness routine may be on the horizon, leaving you feeling energized and refreshed.
LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, artistic inspiration might just be everywhere you look this week. Whether gazing at the clouds or the buildings around you, you might be inspired to create something.
SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
Transformation is in the air, Scorpio. You might be shedding an old habit for a better one. You may be stepping into a more powerful version of yourself soon enough.
SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
Sagittarius, it's time to share your knowledge with others, which can bring you a sense of fulfillment that you might not have seen coming.
CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
Career goals are moving forward at a steady, satisfying pace, Capricorn. Keep your eyes on the future and trust the process. You're doing amazing work.
AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
Social activism or community work may give you a sense of purpose that is much-needed right now, Aquarius. Your ability to think creatively will help immensely.
PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Your kindness this week will create a ripple of positivity that flows right back to you, Pisces. Reach out to a friend in need when you have a moment.

HOROSCOPES - June 22 to June 28
ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20
Aries, physical activity can boost your mood and clear your mind for some big decisions that are ahead this week. Tackle some larger projects.
TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21
Indulge in simple pleasures this week, Taurus. They will lead you to the happiness you deserve. You may discover a new favorite recipe or cozy nook to hang out.
GEMINI – May 22/Jun 21
Networking may feel less like a chore and more like a party this week, Gemini. A chance encounter could open a door to an excellent opportunity.
CANCER – Jun 22/Jul 22
Cancer, right now your home is filled with laughter and shared memories. It's a great week to host a small gathering or a movie night with close friends to share all the good vibes.
LEO – Jul 23/Aug 23
Leo, today you are a beacon of light and a source of inspiration. Use your unique position as a leader to spread positivity and watch good fortune multiply.
VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22
Virgo, you are often a master of finding practical solutions to tricky problems both at work and at home. Your reliable nature is a great gift to those around you.
LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23
Libra, some diplomacy this week can help you navigate a complex situation with ease. Find moments for mindful meditation so you can create a calm atmosphere wherever you go.
SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22
If you are brave enough to voice it, a secret wish just might come true, Scorpio. After some difficult days, you can use a bit of magic and mystery to change your perspective.
SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21
You're definitely a glass-half-full kind of person, Sagittarius. This optimism will open doors to a new horizon. A sudden urge to learn something new leads to an opportunity.
CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20
Discipline will be rewarded with a measurable success that can feel very uplifting, Capricorn. Your hard work is finally getting the recognition it deserves.
AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18
Be your most authentic self this week and watch how it attracts those you want in your circle, Aquarius. A weird coincidence may lead to a funny situation.
PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20
Pisces, calmer waters ahead allow you to reflect on yourself and recharge your emotional batteries. You may emerge at the end of the week centered and ready for anything.

EXPLORE
The GASPÉ
PENINSULA

Check out our
2026 travel guide!



SCAN ME



Honouring those who make a difference

Emily Hocquard

NEW CARLISLE - Father's Day is a special occasion dedicated to recognizing and celebrating fathers, stepfathers, grandfathers, and father figures who play an important role in our lives. Observed each year in June, Father's Day provides an opportunity to express gratitude for the love, guidance, and support these men provide to their families and communities all year through.

Being a father is about much more than sharing a last name. Fathers often serve as teachers, protectors, role models, and trusted advisors. They help shape the values and character of their children through everyday actions, whether it is teaching them how to ride a bike, helping with homework, offering words of encouragement, or simply, yet most importantly, being present during life's moments. While every family is unique, the positive impact of a caring father or father figure lasts a lifetime.

Father's Day is also a reminder that fatherhood comes in many forms. Some children are raised by stepfathers, grandfathers, uncles, mentors, or other influential men who provide love and support. This day recognizes all those who step up to guide, nurture, and inspire the next generation. Their dedication and commitment deserve all the appreciation and respect.

One of the most meaningful aspects of Father's Day is that it does not require extravagant gifts or expensive celebrations. Often, the greatest gift is spending quality time together. A family meal, a phone call, a handwritten card, or a simple "thank you" can often mean more than any material item. These small gestures allow families to reflect on cherished memories and strengthen the bonds that connect them.

For many fathers, the rewards of parenthood come from seeing their children grow, learn, and succeed. The countless sacrifices made behind the scenes—working long hours, providing support during difficult times, and always being there when needed—often go unnoticed. Father's Day offers a chance to acknowledge these efforts and show we appreciate the dedication they demonstrate every day.

Communities also benefit from strong fathers and father figures. Their involvement in schools, sports teams, community organizations and local events creates positive environments where all community children can thrive. By encouraging responsibility, kindness, and perseverance, fathers contribute to building stronger families and communities.

As we celebrate this special day, let us take a moment to recognize the fathers and father figures who have influenced our lives. Whether they are near or far, their lessons, encouragement, advice, and love continue to shape who we are every day. By expressing our gratitude and spending time with those we cherish, we honour the important role they play in our families and society.

Father's Day is ultimately a celebration of love, commitment, and the lasting impact of fatherhood. It is a day to say thank you, create new memories, and recognize those who are present and help guide us through life's journey.

A Dad's work is never done

Every year, each of the twelve months brings a holiday or special occasion. June 21 is special because it is Father's Day, an important day for fathers everywhere.

Often, a dad's footsteps can be difficult to follow, but his ambitions, quiet strength and steady determination help us understand that his long hours of hard work will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Many Gaspesian fathers, whether still with us or gone, have been anchors of strength, filled with wisdom and offering that occasional wink reminding us that a dad's work is never truly finished.

People throughout the Gaspé understand that a father's day is never done. It begins early in the morning, and when the dust begins to settle in the west at day's end, it is only a pause before tomorrow's work begins again.

Happy Father's Day to the fathers of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

*Ken Ross,
New Carlisle, Quebec.*

BMR
LES MATÉRIAUX
GASPÉSIENS

**HAPPY FATHER'S DAY
FROM OUR TEAM
TO YOU!**

125 Rue Desroches, Paspébiac, G0C 2K0
(418) 752-5933

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY !

39, montée Sandy Beach, Gaspé

carrefour
Gaspe

45
ans

Club

GRENIER

sports experts

L'ÉQUIPEUR

Société de l'assurance automobile Québec

IGA

SIMPSON
AUTOMOBILES

uniprix

Page 23, June 17, 2026 - Spec

Were you born in a barn? and other things dads say

HOLLY SMITH

NEW CARLISLE - Father's Day is a chance to celebrate the men who taught us how to bait a hook, stack firewood, change a tire, and somehow fix almost anything with a roll of duct tape and a bit of determination.

While every dad is different, some things seem to be passed down from generation to generation. Whether your father worked on the water, in the woods, on the farm, or in an office, chances are you've heard at least a few of these classics.

"Turn off the lights. We're not paying to light the whole neighbourhood." Often deliv-

ered after discovering every light in the house blazing away while nobody is in the room.

"Close the door! Were you born in a barn?" A timeless favourite, usually heard during winter when the north wind is blowing.

"It's not broken. I can fix it." Sometimes true. Sometimes it leads to three trips to the hardware store and a project that lasts until next weekend.

"Don't touch that until I look at it." Words often spoken when a child discovers a mysterious machine, tool, or appliance.

"You don't need a new one. The old one still works." Whether discussing tools, ve-

hicles, lawn mowers, or nearly anything else.

"Go ask your mother." A strategic move that has saved countless fathers from making difficult decisions.

"When I was your age..." The beginning of a story that may or may not involve walking uphill in deep snow, both ways.

"Are you trying to heat outdoors?" Usually directed at whoever left the door open in January.

"Looks like rain." No weather app required. Many Gaspesian dads can forecast the weather simply by looking out the window.

"Hand me the other wrench." The challenge, of

course, is figuring out which wrench is "the other wrench."

"Don't make me stop this car." A classic road-trip warning that somehow works every time.

"That's not going anywhere." The final words spoken before securing a load with enough rope and straps to survive a hurricane.

Fatherhood has changed over the years. Today's dads are just as likely to be helping with homework, navigating smartphones, and attending dance recitals as they are fixing fences or teaching someone how to cast a fishing line. Yet some things never change.

Dads still worry.

They still teach. They still help when things go wrong. And they still seem to have a collection of sayings that every child recognizes instantly.

This Father's Day, take a moment to appreciate the fathers, grandfathers, stepfathers, and father figures in your life. And if you hear one of these familiar expressions, just smile. Chances are, the next generation will be saying the same things someday.



Local Business Directory

LOCAL BUSINESS ADVERTISING SPECIALS
CONTACT US TODAY FOR DETAILS!

Sales Manager
Emily Hocquard

418-752-5400
sales.gaspespec@gmail.com

LES ENTREPRISES PEC INC.

No R.B.Q.: 8003-3228-31

ENTREPRENEUR GÉNÉRAL

152A Chemin de St-Edgar, New Richmond (Québec)

www.entreprisespec.com

LFG CONSTRUCTION

PROUD PARTNER IN YOUR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS SINCE 1975!

constructionlfg.com

Gaspésie - Les Îles | Côte-Nord | Bas-Saint-Laurent

418 364-7082 / 1-844-664-7082

BÂTIMENT ÉNERGIE ET GÉNIE CIVIL MÉCANIQUE INDUSTRIELLE

AXIO
arpenteurs-géomètres inc.
land surveyors

151B, Avenue de Grand-Pré, Bonaventure (Québec) G0C 1E0

Alexandre Babin, Arpenteur-géomètre
C abag@axioag.com

Guillaume Lapierre, Arpenteur-géomètre
C glag@axioag.com

Membre de l'Ordre des Arpenteurs-Géomètres du Québec

418 534-3113 / info@axioag.com
axioag.com

ENERGY
TRANSPORTATION GROUP

WHAT MAKES US DRIVEN TO BE DIFFERENT?

www.shipENERGY.com

DISCOVER MORE

Hidden Treasures Flea Market

COME VISIT US AT OUR NEW LOCATION

FLEA MARKET DONATIONS WANTED!

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

HOURS

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

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

(418) 752-8514

DROP-OFF ON SITE

OGPAC
Gaspesian organization for people affected by cancer

SUPPORT SHARING ACCOMPANIMENT MUTUAL AID

1 888 924-5050 | ogpac.ca