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Air Canada strike



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Exploring Deux-Montagnes's natural heritage



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Working together to clean up Rosemère's Shoreline

The Town of Rosemère invites residents to participate in its "Shoreline Clean-up Drive," which gets underway on Saturday, September 6, 2025 along the shores of the Rivière des Mille-Îles. This annual clean-up drive has been held for several years, in collaboration with neighbouring municipalities and community partners, with the goal of protecting aquatic ecosystems by helping curb waste in the region's waterways.

Be part of the movement!

Anyone interested in joining the Town of Rosemère's Shoreline Clean-up Drive must go to the meeting point on September 6 at 9 a.m. The event will take place from 9 a.m. to noon.

Meeting point: Sainte-Thérèse filtration plant located at 111 Curé-Labelle Boulevard in Rosemère.



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Full house and debates mark Rosemère's August council meeting

DYLAN ADAMS LEMAÇON

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Rosemère's monthly town council meeting on Monday, August 18 drew a packed room, with residents gathering to hear about key updates and decisions, including the presentation of the city's new special planning program (PPU).

Mayor Eric Westram opened the meeting on an optimistic note, telling the crowd, "We will start with good news." The announcement centered on the city's adoption of a draft version of the PPU urbanism plan. This framework includes the potential for 1,400 to 2,000 new housing units, additional green spaces, and new circulation measures.

The main goal of the plan, according to the council, is to ensure Rosemère remains both economically viable and an attractive place to live. The draft will undergo public consultation in September before its final adoption scheduled for October 1.

Council debates over urbanism

While much of the agenda moved forward smoothly, urbanism items prompted the most debate. During discussion of a request to allow alternative construction materials for a detached garage project, Councillor René Villeneuve proposed a change. His suggestion was rejected by the council, creating some confusion over how to proceed with the vote.

Later, Villeneuve once again stood apart from his colleagues when he voiced his disapproval of the PPU plan itself, saying he found it incomplete. His dissent was met with applause from the crowd, as he was the only councillor to vote against.

The mayor challenged Villeneuve, asking why these concerns had not been raised earlier in the planning process. Villeneuve responded briefly: "I've made my point." Despite his objections, the measure passed by majority vote.

This moment underscored ongoing divisions within the council, with municipal elections set for November likely to shape future debates.

Community life and safety concerns

The council also reminded residents about the

upcoming Fête des Citoyens, where members of the council will be in attendance and even personally serve corn to attendees. They also highlighted updated safety rules for residential pools and encouraged compliance with the new government guidelines.

During the question period, safety was a recurring theme. Resident Pierre Dubois once again raised concerns about an unsafe path near his home, where blind spots make it difficult to see cyclists and pedestrians. The mayor assured him public works would review the issue, though Dubois expressed frustration at having raised the matter several times without resolution.

Another resident brought up street safety near a tennis court and baseball field in his neighbourhood, noting dangerous U-turns that put children at risk. Councillor Marie-Élaine Pitre supported the concern, pointing out that signage in the area is either lacking or unclear when it comes to parking.

Frequent attendee Daniel Robinson also took the floor, continuing his ongoing criticisms of the council, though by now his monthly confrontations have become familiar to regulars.

As the evening closed, the meeting reflected both the challenges and engagement of local governance: a community eager to participate, and a council balancing ambitious urban plans with residents' pressing safety concerns.



Mayor Eric Westram looks on and listens as the question period unfolds at the Rosemère town hall. (Photo: Dylan Adams Lemaçon, North Shore News)



Deux-Montagnes council meeting blends light moments with calls for action

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At Thursday night's Deux-Montagnes city council meeting on August 14, residents heard updates on upcoming events, voiced frustra-

tions over unresolved issues, and proposed ideas for the city's future.

Mayor Denis Martin opened the meeting by highlighting recent and upcoming community events, including the popular Deux-Montagnes en fête, set to take place on August 16. The council quickly moved through the evening's agenda, approving all motions presented.

One lighthearted moment came when the mayor addressed the Christmas Parade, still more than four months away. He joked that he was "sad to even have to talk about this now," prompting laughter from the audience. The council room will once again be designated for photos with Santa during the event.

During the question period, residents raised concerns about city services and environmental issues. Pierre, a local resident, suggested that Deux-Montagnes establish its own eco-centre, noting that nearby municipalities already have one. He argued that such a facility would improve waste management and convenience for residents.

Another resident, Gina Parenteau, voiced her support for the eco-centre idea, adding that improper sorting of waste is a recurring issue, with residents placing random items in the wrong bins. Her comment prompted the city's Director General to note that, starting next year, government-funded inspectors will be monitoring garbage disposal in the city.

Other concerns included difficulty in contacting public works, particularly when reporting issues such as illegal wood-cutting in protected forest areas. The Director General advised that, for now, residents can use the city's info email address listed on its website, which currently routes messages directly to his inbox due to staff vacations. The mayor stressed that cutting wood in the protected forest is not permitted and pledged to look into the matter promptly.

As a side note, one resident raised an issue about invasive weeds encroaching on her yard from a neighbouring property, as well as a long-standing issue with an overhead electric cable. The mayor said it was the first time he had heard of these problems and promised a follow-up.

Outside city hall before the meeting, a large sign caught attention — a caricature of the mayor and two council members tearing up a collective agreement, with text referencing the city's police officers being without a contract for more than 30 months. When asked about it afterward, Mayor Martin said he wasn't ready to comment publicly on the issue but admitted he "had a good laugh" when he first saw the caricature.

With the November municipal elections approaching, residents can expect council discussions — and the political atmosphere — to heat up in the months ahead.



A caricature of the mayor and council members outside city hall highlights a long-standing collective bargaining dispute with the city's police officers. (Photo: Dylan Adams Lemaçon, North Shore News)

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OPINION & Editorial



It's parents who drive a child's academic success

Teachers guide, but it's parents who set the tone for how their children learn and grow

With a new school year just around the corner, it's up to parents to lay the foundation for their children's success by choosing the right school and staying engaged with teachers.

Obviously, everyone wants their kids to have a smooth transition back to school. For those who are attending a school for the first time, it's even more important to do some key things.

The first is to ensure that you choose the school that works best for your children. Most parents send their kids to the neighbourhood public school, and this is often a good choice. Other parents choose to enrol their children in an independent school, while some parents prefer to homeschool their children, either on their own or in cooperation with other home-schooling families.

Remember that when it comes to educating your children, you have more than one option available. There's nothing wrong with switching your children from public school to an independent school or vice versa. If your current school isn't working out for your children, never be afraid to explore other options.

Once you've decided where your children will attend, take advantage of every possible line of communication. School administrators are usually in the building at least a week before school starts. Feel free to call the school and ask to meet with the principal or vice-principal. Most administrators will welcome the opportunity to meet with you. It is a definite advantage for school administrators to know you and to recognize that you want to help teachers do

their best job.

If you haven't already done so, make sure you visit the school's website if it has one. This is a great way to learn the names of the teachers, review various school policies, find out about programs of study, and check out upcoming school events. The more information you have about your child's school, the better equipped you will be to handle sensitive issues that may arise during the year.

It's also important to meet with your child's teachers as soon as possible. Many schools host open houses at the beginning of the school year, providing a great opportunity to meet the teacher and visit your child's classroom. If you can't make it to the open house, email the teacher and ask whether you can stop by briefly either before or after school. Most teachers are happy to accommodate your schedule.

Tell the teacher that you are looking forward to having your child in their classroom. Also tell the teacher that you have told your child that your family supports them, and you want the teacher to know that.

One thing to watch out for is when teachers try to push their personal political views on their students. The good news is that most teachers will never do this and will simply want to ensure that the students receive the best education they can provide. Feel free to let the teacher know how important it is for the school personnel to respect your family's values. This is an excellent message for teachers to hear.

Be careful not to overreact if you discover that a teacher's personal or political beliefs differ

from your own. Just because a teacher expresses certain views on social media or volunteers with a political party during election campaigns doesn't necessarily mean they are pushing these views on students during class. Most teachers are aware of how important it is to stay impartial when teaching.

If you do run into problems with a teacher, don't escalate things unnecessarily. Posting your complaints about a teacher on social media might get you a reaction, but it's unlikely to help you resolve the underlying issue. Your child's teacher deserves to be treated with respect. So, go straight to the teacher and express your concerns directly in a confidential discussion. Most of the time you should be able to work out a solution without much fuss.

If speaking with the teacher doesn't resolve the issue, make an appointment with the school principal or vice-principal and express your concerns in a confidential meeting. If you are still unsatisfied, work your way up to the superintendent. Beyond that, you can contact your local trustees or possibly even your provincial MLA. The key thing is to exhaust all lower levels of communication before moving on to higher levels.

Sending your children to school should be a positive experience. By doing research first, communicating regularly with your children's teacher and following the proper channels when you want your concerns addressed, you will go a long way to give your children the best chance for a successful school year.

Michael Zwaagstra

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Quebec's CEGEP network stretched thin, unions warn

NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA
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Quebec's CEGEP network is entering the new academic year with fewer staff, aging buildings, and more students than ever, a mix union leaders say is unsustainable.

From support workers to professional staff, those on the ground say they are being asked to do more with less as a government-imposed hiring freeze and budget reductions collide with steady growth in student enrolment.

Valérie Fontaine, president of the Fédération du personnel de soutien de l'enseignement supérieur (FPSES-CSQ), said more than around 50 positions have already been cut in the 13 colleges her federation represents. "For sure it's gonna bring some work overload for those people still there," she said. "You cannot have people to do more with less resources."

Support roles disappearing

The positions being lost are not just administrative jobs, Fontaine said, but front-line roles that directly serve students. Recreation technicians, social work technicians, laboratory staff, and special education workers have all been affected. "Those are all positions that give direct services to the students," she said. "So, for sure there's gonna be an impact."

The cuts come as CEGEPs are welcoming more students with special needs than in the past. Fontaine noted that while some schools once served just a handful of students requiring accommodations, many now have a large population.

Aging infrastructure

Physical infrastructure is also showing its cracks. Fontaine said many colleges have long delayed necessary repairs, with two-thirds of campuses reporting urgent needs last year. But the freeze has tied their hands even further. "Last year we weren't even able to buy books," she said. "Imagine working in a CEGEP without being able to buy books— it makes no sense for us."

Laboratories and classrooms are also increasingly ill-suited for modern learning. Fontaine warned that without proper funding, equipment and facilities will only fall further behind.

Professional staff under pressure

For professional staff, who provide psychological services, academic guidance, and counselling, the situation is just as dire. "If a CEGEP used to have three guidance counsellors and now we're down to two, of course that will eventually have impacts," said Éric Cyr, resident of the Fédération du personnel professionnel des collèges (FPPC-CSQ). He's witnessed hiring restrictions and cuts affecting nearly every role. "There's a limit to what we can do."

Cyr said the consequences are already clear: waiting lists for counsellors, students being redirected to the private sector, and heavier workloads for those who remain. "The worst consequence that could happen is that students would not have what they need to persevere and get a diploma," he said.

Professionals are already reporting increased

pressure to do more with less, a situation Cyr says may lead to burnout, sick leave, or resignations. The result, he warned, is fewer services precisely as student numbers climb.

A growing student body

At the same time, enrolment is climbing. Both Fontaine and Cyr stressed that student numbers are rising steadily, with this fall marking one of the largest increases yet.

"We don't have money, they're gonna have less services, and we have more students," Fontaine said. "We need space because we're lacking space too."

Cyr agreed, pointing out that today's CEGEP students often arrive with a wider range of learning needs than in past generations. "Many students now come to CEGEP who would not have been in the system 30 years ago," he said. "Professional services are really needed in great numbers if we want to keep these students getting diplomas and succeeding."

Even the Centrale des syndicats du Québec's (CSQ) president, Éric Gingras, described in a press release the situation as part of "the slow erosion of a network once considered a Quebec treasure," adding that elected officials appear "completely indifferent."

Extra strain on English CEGEPs

For English-language colleges, an added pressure comes from Law 14, which expanded French language requirements in 2022. Cyr said complying with the law has created "a lot of extra work" for staff, just as resources shrink. "Now there's gonna be less resources for our colleagues in the English CEGEPs to do that work," he said.

Morale and mental health

Both leaders flagged staff morale as a growing problem. Fontaine noted that while support workers are dedicated to their colleges, rising workloads risk pushing many out of the system, with mental health concerns at the forefront.

Cyr said professional staff are in the same position. "We will do everything we can to give great services and help the students," he said. "But eventually something will have to give."

Calls for change

Union leaders say the quickest step would be to lift the hiring freeze so that vacancies from retirements, sick leave, or departures can be filled. Fontaine argued it is unreasonable to expect colleagues to cover the work of three positions. "It's not normal for the colleague to take all the jobs," she said.

Cyr said the priority should be restoring depleted counselling and psychology positions, which he called essential to student success. "Direct services that are now impacted since last May--- those would have to be the priority if we want all these new students to have a good experience with CEGEPs and stay there and get a diploma," he said.

For both Fontaine and Cyr, the message is the same: Quebec's CEGEP network cannot keep doing more with less.

The FPPC-CSQ represents over 2,200 professional staff across 38 CEGEPs in Quebec. It is affiliated with the Centrale des syndicats du Québec.



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Quebec residents stranded amid Air Canada strike

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Air Canada passengers across Canada and abroad were left scrambling last week after more than 10,000 of the airline's flight attendants took to the picket line. The strike, which lasted from Aug. 16 to 19, grounded flights at the peak of the summer travel season and affected nearly half a million people worldwide.

The walkout ended after a tentative deal was reached between Air Canada and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), but backlogs continued for days as travellers tried to make their way home.

"I can't even explain the emotional rollercoaster that we went through," said Quebec resident Rosy Trimboli, the uncertainty turned her family's first trip to Europe into a drawn-out ordeal. "It's been hell to say the least."

The flight

Trimboli's return flight to Montreal was scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 17. On the Thursday previous, she received an early notice warning of potential disruptions. Before she knew it, Air Canada flights were grounded, and her family's return was suddenly in question.

Attempts to reach Air Canada took hours, with spotty Wi-Fi connections and long waits on hold. When she finally connected with an agent, she was told her original flight was still

technically intact— meaning the airline could not yet rebook her family onto a competitor. The only other option was to reschedule for later in the week.

"It was like a real-life gambling decision on the spot," she said, describing the pressure of deciding whether to rebook or hold onto her original flight.

Faced with uncertainty, Trimboli tested her luck: her eldest would fly alone on Thursday, while the rest of the family would follow Friday through Frankfurt. Hours later, news broke that a tentative agreement had been reached.

Under Canada's Air Passenger Protection Regulations, airlines are required to rebook customers on other carriers if flights are cancelled. But because strikes are considered beyond an airline's control, Air Canada is not obligated to cover additional costs like hotels or meals.

Still, the carrier expanded its policy, pledging to reimburse "reasonable" out-of-pocket expenses such as lodging and transport for travellers affected between Aug. 15 and 23.

For Trimboli's family, the uncertainty stretched over days. As they weighed their options, they also booked a separate set of refundable tickets at a steep cost.

"Hours of searching and thinking and how can we get out of here," Trimboli said. "We were just throwing money to get home."

Ultimately, the family cancelled those tickets, hoping the rebooked Air Canada flights would



hold. The decision added to an exhausting stretch of second-guessing and mounting costs, including multiple Airbnbs and meals for the extra days.

Air Canada expects most delayed passengers to be rebooked by the end of the week, though it acknowledged that clearing the backlog will take time.

After a cruise

While Trimboli grappled with uncertainty overseas, other Quebec residents faced similar challenges closer to home.

Christine, who asked that her full name not be published, had just disembarked from a cruise with her family of five when she discovered their return flight was cancelled the night before departure. With limited phone access on the ship, she scrambled for alternatives.

Flights back to Montreal quickly became unaffordable, so Christine cobbled together a patchwork itinerary through the northeastern United States. Her family eventually flew into Albany, New York, then drove across the border to Quebec.

"It was chaotic and stressful," she said, adding that a looming hurricane in Florida only heightened the pressure.

Part of her frustration came from how little information she could get from the airline while trying to make arrangements. She also questioned why action from authorities only came once flights were already grounded. "What's even more disappointing, to be honest, is that the government didn't get involved at all before this," she said.

Despite the disruption, Christine said she had no resentment toward the crews who formed the picket line. "I totally agree that these people should be paid from the moment they get on the plane and not just when they're in the air," she said. "I absolutely sympathize with the flight attendants."

Labour issues

The tentative agreement with CUPE includes annual raises over four years and, for the first time, pay for work done on the ground. Newer attendants would see a 12 per cent increase retroactive to April, while those with more seniority would receive eight per cent. Salaries would continue to rise gradually, with the cap moving from \$80,000 to \$88,000.

Ground pay would also be phased in, starting at half an hourly wage and rising to 70 per cent by the end of the contract. Union members are expected to vote on the deal between Aug. 27 and Sept. 6.

For Zareh Asparian, another Quebec resident, the strike meant turning a weekend trip to Edmonton into a cross-country road journey.

He had travelled with his wife and daughter for a skating certification event, only to find return flights to Montreal repeatedly cancelled. After exploring connections through the country and even the U.S., he and his family were left without viable options.

Instead, they extended their car rental and drove the 3,700 kilometres back to Quebec over three days.

"There are worse things in life," he said. "But where I have a hard time is... you can't leave people stranded."

Asparian said he supports fair pay for flight attendants but called striking a tactic "outdated." "I think things could be handled in a much more professional manner," he added.

Back to work

This summer's unrest is not the first time Air Canada passengers have found themselves caught in the middle of a labour dispute. In 2011, flight attendants and ground crews staged separate walkouts over pensions and wages, only to be forced back on the job through federal legislation. The following year, pilots protested imposed contracts with coordinated "sick-outs," disrupting hundreds of flights before Ottawa again stepped in.

Similar tensions have flared before, including a nationwide strike in 1998 and repeated disputes after Air Canada's merger with Canadian Airlines in 2000. Labour unrest has been a recurring challenge for the country's flagship carrier.

The strike was the first since 2011 to defy a federal back-to-work order. Labour Minister Patty Hajdu invoked Section 107 of the Canada Labour Code, which grants the government power to intervene in work stoppages deemed disruptive to industrial peace. Critics say the measure undermines unions' bargaining leverage, while advocates argue it protects the travelling public.

For many passengers, the broader debates about contracts and labour law mattered less than the immediate toll of being stuck far from home.

Trimboli said the hardest part was the lack of clarity. "I was just hoping for a bit more transparency as opposed to a little bit every day of like, here, you're cancelled, we don't know," she said.

Air Canada has encouraged passengers to submit claims for reimbursement. However, some travellers may face long waits for resolution as CBC reported that Canada's complaints backlog is already at more than 87,000 cases.

For Trimboli, the experience left a lasting impression. "People told me there are worse places to be stuck. But there's nowhere in the world that you want to be stuck when you just want to get home," she said.

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What's changing this school year in Quebec

NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA
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The 2025 school year marks the beginning of several major changes introduced by Quebec's Minister of Education, Bernard Drainville. From a full cellphone ban to mandatory formal speech and new guidelines for artificial intelligence (AI), here's a quick guide to help you navigate what's new.

Full cellphone ban

Announced with much fanfare in May, the complete ban on cellphones in schools takes effect this fall for both elementary and high school students. Students will be prohibited from using electronic devices both inside school buildings and on school grounds.

While many school administrators and experts

support the move, others argue that it must be paired with engaging alternatives to keep students interested and occupied. Each school will determine how the ban is enforced. Some have opted for escalating sanctions, including confiscation of devices for up to five days.

To ensure communication between students and parents, some school service centers will make the school's main office phone available for use.

Mandatory formal address

Starting January 1, 2026, all students in elementary and secondary schools will be required to address teachers using formal language—specifically “madame” or “monsieur”—and use the respectful “vous” form in French.

Schools have until the start of 2026 to define the consequences for non-compliance, which may

include “restorative actions” rather than traditional punishments. While some educators welcome the change as a step toward reinforcing respect, others question its necessity and the practicality of enforcement.

New AI guidelines

In higher education, the Quebec government is introducing a new guide for best practices in integrating artificial intelligence into academic settings. AI has raised concerns among educators due to the risk of plagiarism, but it also holds potential for enhancing research and creativity when used appropriately.

The government is encouraging institutions to establish clear boundaries and frameworks for AI use to ensure it supports learning rather than undermines it.

Budget concerns

The summer began with a directive from Minister Drainville for schools to implement \$500 million in budget cuts. This sparked one of the most signed petitions in the history of Quebec's National Assembly, with over 150,000 signatures urging the minister to reconsider.

In response, Drainville announced a reinvestment of \$540 million aimed at student services. However, the Federation of School Service Centers estimates that the net budget cuts still amount to \$85 million.

Meanwhile, in the college system (CEGEPs), the union representing government professionals criticized the requirement for institutions to dip into their surpluses to meet \$151 million in budget reductions.

5 tips for a successful return to school

Are you ready to go back to school in the hopes of landing the career or promotion of your dreams? Whether you've spent the past few years in the workforce or caring for your family, this decision brings exciting challenges. Follow these practical tips to ensure you succeed without burning out.

1. Assess your workload. Review your course outlines to understand the requirements. This will help you mentally prepare and evenly distribute your

efforts throughout the semester.

2. Set aside study blocks. Organize your time effectively to balance your studies with work and family responsibilities. Plan regular study sessions and inform your family to minimize distractions during these times.

3. Divide your tasks into stages. Break down your homework or exam prep into smaller tasks. This approach will make it easier to manage your time. Plus, you'll gain a sense of accomplishment every time you complete a task.

4. Take frequent breaks. Allowing yourself time to unwind will help you maintain focus and avoid burnout. Incorporate short breaks into your schedule, like taking a walk or calling a friend, to maximize your efficiency.
5. Ask for support when you need it. If you run into difficulties, don't hesitate to seek help. Use the resources available at your school, such as discussion forums, to connect with fellow students who share your experiences.

Set yourself up for a successful return to school and achieve your career goals with these easy-to-implement strategies.

Have a fantastic school year!



Wishing a great year to everyone returning to school!



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Exploring the natural and civic treasures of Deux-Montagnes

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The City of Deux-Montagnes is putting a spotlight on its natural heritage this summer, inviting residents and visitors alike to explore five key waterfront destinations accessible from the ERRE terminal at Parc du Centenaire. The initiative underscores not only the recreational opportunities in the area but also the civic importance of preserving public green spaces and waterways.

The ERRE program, which promotes sustainable river travel, offers a unique way to discover natural and community sites while highlighting the value of Deux-Montagnes' riverfront assets. From quiet resting spots to vibrant bird habitats, these destinations illustrate how civic planning and environmental stewardship intersect.

Parc Aimée-Struthers

Located along the Mille Îles River, Parc Aimée-Struthers features a welcoming dock where visitors can pause, enjoy sweeping views,

and take in the calm of the waterfront. The park embodies the city's commitment to accessible green spaces for relaxation and wellness.

Berge de l'Anse

Just across from Laval-Ouest lies Berge de l'Anse, a small riverside beach that provides a setting for picnics and rest. As a civic asset, it reflects the growing emphasis on creating inclusive recreational areas where families can gather in close contact with nature.

Berge aux Quatre-Vents

This lively area offers a change of pace. With its beach and accessible dock, Berge aux Quatre-Vents is designed for leisure and community life. It showcases how riverside development can balance activity with environmental awareness.

Héronnière de l'Île Rathé

For birdwatchers, Île Rathé is an ecological treasure. The heronry is home to species such as herons, cormorants, and turkey vultures, making it a prime example of the city's biodiversity. Its protection aligns with wider

regional efforts to conserve habitats along the Mille Îles.

Berge du Grand Brochet

This site, notable for its aquatic vegetation and diverse wildlife, illustrates the role of urban ecosystems in supporting biodiversity. For the City of Deux-Montagnes, it highlights the civic responsibility of maintaining ecological corridors that benefit both residents and the environment.

Together, these five destinations represent more than leisure spots. They are civic landmarks that connect residents to their natural environment, promote sustainable tourism, and strengthen collective responsibility for environmental preservation. By promoting access to these areas through the ERRE program, Deux-Montagnes demonstrates how municipalities can integrate recreation, conservation, and community engagement into their urban vision.



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Happy Labour Day!



17 FUN-PACKED ACTIVITIES for the long weekend

Mark your calendars: Labour Day weekend is fast approaching and it's the perfect opportunity to relax and unwind. Need some inspiration? Here are a few things you can do — either alone or with friends and family — this last long weekend of summer.

1. **Visit an orchard.** Pick and savour in-season fruit.
2. **Go to the zoo.** Learn more about the animals that inhabit our planet.
3. **Go for a hike.** Take a stroll through the forest and admire your local wildlife.
4. **Visit an amusement park.** Try new rides, gorge on cotton candy and try your hand at an array of carnival games.
5. **Go shopping.** Scour the end-of-season sales and ramp-up your wardrobe for fall.
6. **Practice your swing.** Take in a friendly game of golf or visit the driving range.
7. **Drop by the ice cream shop.** Enjoy a scoop or two of your favourite flavours.
8. **Spend a day at the spa.** Pamper yourself with a well-deserved massage or beauty treatment.

9. **Go camping.** Spend the weekend in the wilderness connecting to nature.
10. **Wine and dine.** Sip on a cocktail or enjoy a good meal on the patio at your favourite restaurant.
11. **Go for a bike ride.** Explore your town on two wheels or cycle along your favourite off-road trails.
12. **Rent a cottage.** Gather your loved ones and spend the long weekend together enjoying the countryside.
13. **Have a backyard bash.** Set up the barbecue and invite friends and family over for an afternoon or evening.
14. **Go paddling.** Rent a kayak or a canoe and spend the day on the water.
15. **Take in a movie.** Choose a flick that captures your interest and spoil yourself with popcorn and candy.
16. **Visit a museum.** Art, history or science — choose an exhibit that piques your curiosity and spend the day expanding your mind.
17. **Have a picnic.** Pack a lunch and enjoy a day outdoors at your favourite park. Don't forget the Frisbee!

Happy Labour Day!

How will you enjoy the Labour Day long weekend?

Labour Day marks the unofficial end of summer, but it's also the perfect opportunity to savour one last dose of freedom before heading back to school. Whether you feel like getting active or winding down, you have plenty of options to make the most of this long weekend.

If the weather cooperates, hit the trails for a hike, pick apples at a local orchard, enjoy an outdoor show at a festival or stock up on fresh produce at a farmers' market. You could also visit a museum, catch the latest movie at the theatre or

browse new products in boutique shops. The possibilities are endless!

If you need to unwind, pamper yourself with a therapeutic massage or body treatment at a local spa—or treat yourself at home! What could be better than sharing a delicious meal with loved ones? Whether you dine in a restaurant, at home or in a park, take the time to enjoy good food in great company.

This long weekend, prioritize activities that bring you joy. Happy Labour Day!



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RIPTB 2024: A year of transition, prevention, and community partnerships

MARIA DIAMANTIS

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The Régie intermunicipale de police Thérèse-De Blainville (RIPTB), which serves the municipalities of Boisbriand, Lorraine, Rosemère, and Sainte-Thérèse, released its 2024 annual report highlighting both operational challenges and community-focused achievements.

Leadership changes

One of the year's most significant moments was the retirement of Director Francis Lanouette after 32 years of service. Lanouette, who had led the RIPTB since 2015, was recognized for advancing community policing, developing intelligence-led strategies, and forging partnerships, including with First Nations police services. He was succeeded by Luc Larocque, confirmed as director in November 2024, who had previously held leadership roles across all divisions.

Key operations and divisions

The RIPTB, comprising 187 employees and 12 cadet police officers, operates through three main divisions: territory surveillance, criminal investigations, and operational support.

Territory surveillance: Patrolling 24/7, officers addressed urgent calls, carried out targeted road checks, and prioritized mental health interventions. Agents of proximity focused on vulnerable populations, reinforcing a model of community

policing.

Criminal investigations: Teams handled cases ranging from general crimes and narcotics to domestic violence. Investigators also contributed to regional anti-cannabis, anti-organized crime, and anti-corruption units.

Operational support: Officers focused on youth prevention, school-based interventions, neighbourhood patrols, and commercial safety, including a renewed partnership with Place Rosemère to reduce theft and fraud.

Notable incidents and initiatives

Fire evacuation: On February 29, officers evacuated residents from a Boisbriand apartment building engulfed in smoke, rescuing a mobility-impaired woman without injury.

Hypertrucage awareness: In March, RIPTB warned about "deepfake" sexual images created by youth, noting their potential classification as child pornography under Canadian law.

E-scooter safety campaign: In July, the RIPTB and its four municipalities launched Quebec's first municipal campaign on safe use of electric scooters, emphasizing helmets, speed limits, and road sharing.

Blood drive: The RIPTB exceeded its target by collecting 63 blood donations, potentially benefiting nearly 190 patients.

Opération père Noël: Officers contributed to a province-wide initiative that distributed more than 30,000 gifts to children from vulnerable families.

Youth rehabilitation:

The RIPTB participated in the opening of a new rehabilitation center in Sainte-Thérèse, designed to accommodate up to 90 youths in difficulty.

Cadet officers were also active in 2024, completing more than 7,200 site visits, attending 124 community events, and conducting over 550 interventions.

Statistics and trends

The report shows mixed results across operational data:

Emergency calls: Calls rose to 53,571 in 2024, an increase linked partly to flooding in August.

Mental health interventions: Social intervention cases increased by 8% to 637, with most related to disturbed mental states. Suicide attempts, however, decreased by 22%.

Traffic safety: Road accidents declined by 5% to 354, and impaired driving incidents dropped by 22%.

Crime: Overall crime rose by 15%, reaching 2,814 cases. Property crimes saw the sharpest increase, driven by fraud (notably false representations and "grandparent" scams) and break-ins. Auto theft, however, decreased significantly.

By municipality, crime rose sharply in

Boisbriand (+21%) and Sainte-Thérèse (+20%), while Lorraine saw a 34% increase. Rosemère recorded a 5% decrease, mainly in crimes against persons and traffic-related offences.

Looking ahead

The RIPTB emphasized that many increases in crime mirror broader provincial and national trends, particularly fraud-related offences. Despite this, decreases in road accidents and impaired driving were seen as indicators of successful prevention efforts.

The report concluded by reaffirming priorities: ongoing officer training, support for vulnerable populations, and collaboration with municipalities and community partners to maintain safe living environments across its 57-square-kilometer jurisdiction, home to about 80,000 residents.



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Carney announces removal of retaliatory tariffs on CUSMA-compliant U.S. goods

CFIB wants retaliatory tariff revenue channelled back to smaller Canadian businesses

MARTIN C. BARRY
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After warning that nearly one in five small Canadian businesses impacted by tariffs couldn't last more than six months without intervention by the federal government, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business changed its tune late last week, saying it welcomed Ottawa's decision to drop retaliatory tariffs on a wide range of U.S. goods.

Damaging retaliation

"This is a step in the right direction and will take some of the pressure off Canadian small businesses as trade talks continue," said CFIB vice-president of advocacy Corinne Pohlmann.

However, she maintained that many small business owners had told the CFIB before then that Canada's retaliatory measures were almost as damaging as the U.S. tariffs themselves.

"While small firms were in favour of Canadian counter tariffs as the trade war began, their support has been falling since February," Pohlmann added.

While maintaining that the government's announcement provided some relief going forward, she said the CFIB still wants Ottawa to immediately release tariff revenue to small businesses and work quickly to resolve small business requests still tied up in the remissions process.

Free trade is on again

In a statement issued by Prime Minister Marc

Carney's office last week, Carney said that the Canadian government decided to match the United States by removing all of Canada's tariffs on U.S. goods, specifically those covered under the Canada-US-Mexico trade agreement.

The decision takes effect on September 1. "In short, Canada and the U.S. have now re-established free trade for the vast majority of our goods," Carney said.

However, Canada will retain tariffs on steel, aluminum and autos as it works intensively with the U.S. to resolve the issues there. The federal government underscored the fact that Canada is the second-largest foreign investor in the U.S.

Carney said that to address challenges in strategic sectors from agriculture to autos, the government will soon announce a new comprehensive industrial strategy that protects Canadian jobs, boosts Canadian competitiveness, buys Canadian goods, and diversifies Canadian exports.

Small business hit hardest

The CFIB said before the government's announcement that new data it obtained revealed small businesses were being hit hardest by U.S. and Canadian tariffs on steel and aluminum and Canada's own retaliatory tariffs on other U.S. goods. In addition, according to the CFIB, nearly one-third of Canadian SMEs would be negatively affected by the loss of the \$800 U.S. de minimis exemption.

U.S. President Donald Trump had signed an executive order on July 31, raising tariffs on some Canadian goods to 35 per cent. Canada might have been able to avoid the hike had it

managed to strike a new trade deal with the U.S. by an August 1 deadline, although that didn't happen.

The Canadian government had imposed retaliatory tariffs on U.S. goods three times since the trade war began, including counter-tariffs on \$60 billion worth of U.S. consumer goods and additional tariffs on U.S. autos.

Bad deal vs. lasting uncertainty

"Small businesses don't have a lot of runway left," Pohlmann warned last week before the federal government's latest announcement. She said the worst outcome for Canada in the trade war would be "a bad deal," but the second worst outcome would be the regularization of an uncertainty that small business owners had been contending with for the past six months.

"The federal government needs to provide some stability and return tariff revenue to help small businesses," she said. "We've suggested several options, including temporarily reducing the federal small business tax rate to zero or a tariff rebate designed on earlier models, like the carbon tax rebate."

CFIB data indicates that nearly two-thirds (62 per cent) of small businesses face higher expenses, while many are also seeing lower revenues (48 per cent), supply chain disruptions

(41 per cent), and paused investments (36 per cent).

As well, nearly one in five (19 per cent) of small businesses dealing with extra tariff costs reported they would not be able to last more than six months if the tariff status quo remained, while nearly four in 10 (38 per cent) said they would last less than a year.

What happens to collected tariffs?

With Ottawa having collected billions in additional tariff revenue on U.S. imports, a strong majority (82 per cent) told the CFIB the government should ensure that any tariff revenue that is returned includes support for smaller businesses affected both directly and indirectly by trade disruptions.

"The trade war's impact on Canada's small businesses should be top of mind for the government as Canada continues its negotiations with the U.S. Canada can't fix its productivity crisis without empowering its entrepreneurs," according to Pohlmann.

"If the government wants to build one Canadian economy, it needs to ensure small businesses are part of the solution and that includes providing them with tariff support during this very challenging time," she said.



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Canadian Federation of Independent Business executive vice-president for advocacy Corinne Pohlmann wants Ottawa to redirect retaliatory revenues taken in by Ottawa towards small Canadian businesses. (Photo: Courtesy of CFIB)

Lorraine charts a new path for families and seniors

MARIA DIAMANTIS

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The City of Lorraine has officially adopted its new Policy for Families and Seniors, a three-year plan that will run from 2025 to 2028. The document outlines a comprehensive approach to improving quality of life across generations, with an emphasis on accessibility, inclusion, and active participation in community life.

The policy follows the completion of the city's previous action plan in 2021 and was developed through a broad consultation process launched in January 2024. Four public meetings and an online survey gathered input from more than 400 residents, helping to identify the needs and priorities of families and older citizens. A multidisciplinary steering committee was also created to oversee the process, ensure that different perspectives were considered, and provide annual follow-up once the plan is in motion.

Lorraine's demographic profile illustrates the stakes: with a population of 9,738 residents in 2025, nearly 18 percent are aged 65 and over, while youth aged 0 to 19 account for just

over 26 percent. The average age is 40.7 years. According to the city, this balance between aging residents and young families guided the vision for an intergenerational and inclusive policy.

The action plan is structured around ten fields of intervention. Public spaces and municipal buildings will be modernized to improve accessibility, and parks and cultural facilities will be upgraded. Housing measures will encourage intergenerational living and support community initiatives such as collective gardens. Transportation priorities include safer pedestrian and cycling networks and collaboration with regional authorities to improve public transit.

Volunteerism and social participation are highlighted through commitments to recognize and support community involvement, including among youth. Recreational programming will be expanded to serve children, adolescents, and seniors, with events designed to encourage interaction between generations.

Respect and social inclusion form another pillar, with measures to improve universal accessibility in municipal buildings, promote intergenerational exchanges, and ensure vulner-



Back row (left to right): Isabelle Baignée, Isabel Moreau, Clarisse Baillargeon, Yves Carrières, Chantale Séguin, Brigitte Camden, Edith Proulx, Stéphanie Glaveen, Larissa Fillion. **Front row (left to right):** Martine Guilbault, Éric Huard, Kathy Van Broswyk, Isabelle Champagne, Laurene Pelletier, Alain Lavoie, Lyne Rémillard.

able groups are better integrated into community activities. Communication efforts will also be adapted, combining digital platforms with paper formats to reach residents of all ages.

On the health and social services front, the city plans to strengthen awareness of available resources, promote healthy lifestyles, and support seniors in maintaining independence at home. Safety measures are also included, with commitments to road safety, stronger police presence around schools, and updated civil security and emergency plans. Education rounds out the action plan, with initiatives ranging from early childhood programs to adult and lifelong learning opportunities, including potential partnerships with the Université du

Troisième Âge.

The policy is guided by values of accessibility, audacity, solidarity, benevolence, openness, and pleasure. It also aligns with Quebec's "Vieillir et vivre ensemble" framework and the World Health Organization's guidelines on active aging, emphasizing participation, health, and safe living environments for seniors.

According to the city, the new policy represents a collective achievement involving residents, community organizations, municipal staff, and external partners, with support from Espace Muni and financial assistance from Quebec's Secrétariat aux aînés. Annual reviews will ensure the plan remains adapted to the community's needs through 2028.

Rosemère moves forward with redevelopment vision for regional hub

MARIA DIAMANTIS

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The City of Rosemère has taken a significant step toward the redevelopment of its regional commercial hub. At its council meeting on August 18, the municipality adopted a notice of motion and the first draft of a by-law amending its urban plan (By-law 800-06) to integrate a new Special Planning Program (SPP) for the sector.

The SPP outlines a long-term vision to transform the area into a mixed-use district combining residential and commercial development, with an emphasis on sustainability and green space. The project could accommodate between 1,400 and 2,000 new housing units while aiming to address issues such as traffic, infrastructure capacity, and environmental impact.

Rosemère also passed a resolution requesting an extension from Quebec's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing until July 2026 to finalize concordance by-laws aligned with the new plan.

Public consultations and community input

The proposed redevelopment follows a series of public consultations. In spring 2025, the town held meetings with landowners, a citizen consultation, an online survey, and a workshop with the business community. Officials reported about 360 contributions through these activities. The process builds on earlier consultations held between 2018 and 2023.

Residents expressed general support for redevelopment provided that population growth remains moderate, traffic concerns are

addressed, and more green space is incorporated to mitigate heat islands in the sector.

Next steps

A public consultation meeting on the SPP is scheduled for September 10, 2025, at the Rosemère Community Centre. The session will include a presentation, a Q&A, and opportunities for discussion. Final adoption of the amended urban plan is expected at the municipal council meeting on October 1, 2025.

From fall 2025 through summer 2026, the town plans to develop and adopt concordance by-laws, which will also undergo public consultation in accordance with provincial legislation.

Two-stage planning approach

The municipality is proceeding in two stages: first by amending the urban plan to include the



SPP, then by drafting concordance by-laws. This approach, officials say, allows time to incorporate findings from ongoing studies on traffic, infrastructure, and economic feasibility before construction permits are considered.

About the special planning program

The SPP is part of Rosemère's broader urban plan and provides specific guidelines for strategic development areas. Adopted within the framework of By-law 24-02 of the MRC Thérèse-De Blainville, which came into effect in January 2025, the SPP for Rosemère's regional hub will guide development through 2040.

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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

NO MR. DARCY

Q I will try to make this brief as I can. My husband and I separated over a lot of issues, the main one being I thought he was cheating.

Well, I think he may have been, because we were not even apart a month when I found out he is seeing his mother's chore worker. I was devastated. I loved him and wanted this marriage to work.

I called near divorce time to tell him where to send the papers. We had nothing but angry words to one another before that call. He was sweet. I told him I was so sorry our marriage ended, but thought of him often and still loved him. I just wanted to cleanse old wounds. One hour later he called back asking to come to my home to clear the air.

We both cried and talked about where we went wrong in the marriage. He asked me to give him time. He said this other woman did not want him; he barely ever saw her. But then he revealed her daughter and her daughter's husband are living with him. Just give him time to clean up this mess, he said.

When he told the other woman I called, she came running back into his life. He still leads me on and tells me he wants to try. I am getting played the fool, but I am having the worst time letting him go. I try but I can't. He is the love of my life.

He sees me wanting out, then he spews out words to hook me again. I feel like a fish getting thrown in and tossed back time and again. I know she is not living with him, but she sees him two or three times a week. Then he gets cool and distant toward me. But if she stays away, he leads me down this cruel path.

I have prayed, remained faithful to him, and now I am at my wits' end. How could anyone do this to another for a second time? Help me let him go, please. I have always been a

strong woman, but this time I find no strength to be that woman.

Beatrice

A Beatrice, how could he do this to you for the second time? The same way he could do it to you for the first time. This mess is a mess made by him. It was his mess to make, and it was his mess to clean up. But he has made another choice.

He is not willing to do without a body in his bed. If she's not there warming his bed, he wants you to be there warming his bed, with not a care about how either of you is affected by this.

There is enough of the charmer, or the serpent, about this man that he can receive the benefit of having two of what he should only have one of, at a time. Someone you can spend your life with, share your bed with, share your deepest thoughts with—someone like that is someone not like this man.

In Jane Austen's novel "Pride and Prejudice" there is a clergyman named Mr. Collins. Mr. Collins is a bootlicker and dense as a board. But in the novel he says one wise thing. After Lizzy Bennet rejects his offer of marriage, Mr. Collins says, "I have often observed that resignation is never so perfect as when the blessing denied begins to lose somewhat of its value in our estimation."

This man is not the love of your life, though you want him to be. You wanted one wedding and one lifetime marriage. You cannot have that with him. You can never rest with an easy head or an easy heart. He won't stand by you. To free yourself, he has to lose some of his value in your estimation.

Wayne & Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF (www.yourotherhalf.com)

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From housing to health

Blainville unveils its first social development roadmap

MARIA DIAMANTIS

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Blainville unveiled its first municipal social development policy along with an accompanying action plan on August 21, marking what officials describe as a major step toward improving quality of life for residents. The launch brought together members of the steering committee that guided the project since 2023, community partners, and municipal department directors.

At the heart of the new policy is the aim to reduce the impacts of social and economic inequality while strengthening inclusion. “We wanted to bring together the various policies we have adopted over the years for families, children, and seniors,” said Blainville Mayor Liza Poulin. “We expanded that scope to include people in vulnerable situations, individuals living with disabilities, newcomers, women, and the LGBTQ+ community.”

The policy is the result of extensive collaboration among municipal services, local organizations, institutions, and residents, all of whom will continue to play a role in its implementation.

A plan with tangible impact

The action plan is organized into nine areas of activity, covering issues that affect residents on a daily basis:

- Housing and living environment
- Transport and mobility
- Recreation and culture
- Social participation
- Respect and inclusion
- Overall health
- Safety
- Communication and information
- Local infrastructure and urban planning

Concrete measures outlined in the plan include improving accessibility of municipal buildings for people with disabilities, enhancing safety in neighbourhoods, and supporting projects for affordable and adapted housing.

Broad community consultation

Development of the policy was anchored in a wide-ranging consultation process. Between September 2023 and February 2024, more than 1,000 people participated, including over 700 who completed an online survey.

“Building a policy and action plan that truly reflect the needs of our community requires listening to people and going out into the field,” explained Marie-Claude Collin, co-chair of the steering committee.

Target groups such as seniors, people with disabilities, immigrants, parents of children in daycare, and individuals living in poverty were directly consulted through meetings and surveys.



Jean-François René (citizen representative for seniors), Véronique Veilleux (head of community life and associations), Jacques Fortin (citizen representative for seniors), Nancy Laplante (community support coordinator at the Office municipal d'habitation de la Rive Nord), Marie-Claude Collin (co-chair of the steering committee), Liza Poulin (Mayor of Blainville), Marie-Claude Perron (co-chair of the steering committee), Serge Paquette (municipal councillor delegated to seniors), Moïra Duguay (director of the Maison des jeunes), Tanya Champoux (citizen representative for families) and Sonia Charbonneau (community organizer at the CISSS des Laurentides).

From steering to follow-up

The project began in February 2023 with the creation of a steering committee composed of representatives from multiple sectors. Consultants Marie-José Dubé and Claude Barsalou assisted the committee in its work.

Initial steps involved reviewing existing policies and defining social development priorities, including family, seniors, target groups, areas of action, and values such as collaboration and complementarity. The committee also conducted a social and demographic assessment of Blainville, analyzing housing, education levels, and health.

The results were first shared with community organizations in January 2025, and the policy along with the action plan was officially adopted by the municipal council on February 18.

To ensure long-term progress, the council has also created a follow-up committee made up of elected officials, municipal staff, and representatives from community organizations.

“Together, they will act as guardians of this policy and ensure it remains dynamic and aligned with the real needs of Blainville’s population,” said Véronique Veilleux, head of community life and associations for the city’s Leisure, Culture, Library, and Community Life Department.



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The luckiest signs this week:
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ARIES

You'll take on new responsibilities at work that will push you beyond your current skill level. This experience will help you grow and may pave the way for a promotion. You'll also get the go-ahead on an innovative project.



TAURUS

You'll feel inspired to go back to school and work toward a degree, setting yourself up for a brighter future. A romantic getaway will revitalize your relationship and deepen your connection with your partner.



GEMINI

Work has become monotonous, and you need a change. You can steer your career toward exciting new opportunities with a solid plan and some preparation. Boldness will be the key to your success in long-term projects.



CANCER

It's often easier to get along with people with whom you have no emotional connection. You might face challenges regarding discipline with one of your children. Use your diplomacy skills to resolve any conflicts.



LEO

Every detail counts. You'll plan a large work event that will bring many people together. Communication may be difficult, so your patience and calmness will be essential to overcoming these obstacles.



VIRGO

Your leadership will shine, whether at work or in your personal life. You'll first have to overcome doubts or a lack of self-confidence. However, others will recognize your abilities once you do, and you'll earn praise for your achievements.



LIBRA

A loved one could slow you down as you rush to make all your appointments on time. It might be time to consider a change, such as moving out of the family home. The space has become too big since your children left.



SCORPIO

Expect a lot of travel for work or family commitments. Numerous details will be vying for your attention. A surprising secret could come to light. You could forge new friendships with people who live close to you.



SAGITTARIUS

You'll receive the green light for financing a project, like purchasing a property. The idea of starting a business with a family member could appeal to you. Let inspiration and intuition guide you.



CAPRICORN

Everything is changing quickly, but things may not be happening fast enough for your liking. You'll suggest interesting ideas to your partner, who will be impressed. You could win a sports competition.



AQUARIUS

Health issues could slow you down, but this break will allow you to take a step back and gain a fresh perspective on your professional and personal life. Lean into spirituality; you'll find it to be a source of peace and well-being.



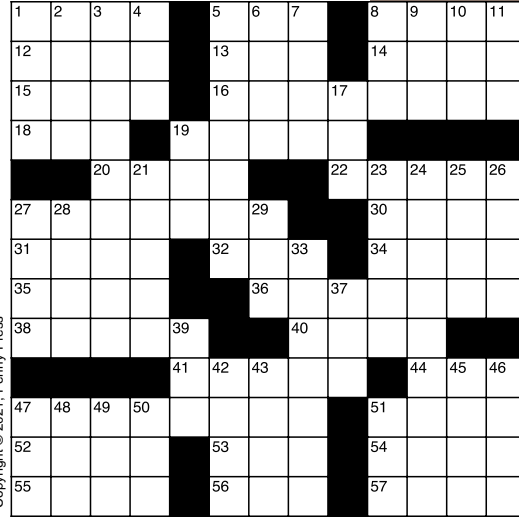
PISCES

You'll feel stressed this week, but it may also give you more energy and boost your efficiency. You can accomplish great things when you're in a time crunch. You could be struck by love at first sight. However, if you're in a relationship, it may lead to some confusion.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

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ACROSS

1. Photos
5. ____ in the bag!
8. Owl sound
12. Scope
13. Touch-me- ____
14. Immobile
15. Child's steed
16. Cattle rush
18. Picnic-crashing insect
19. Blockade
20. Operates
22. Quizzes
27. Menaces
30. Boat
31. Downpour
32. Small taste
34. Few
35. Mexican cheers
36. Pointed
38. Gave medicine to
40. Etiquette maven
- Emily ____

DOWN

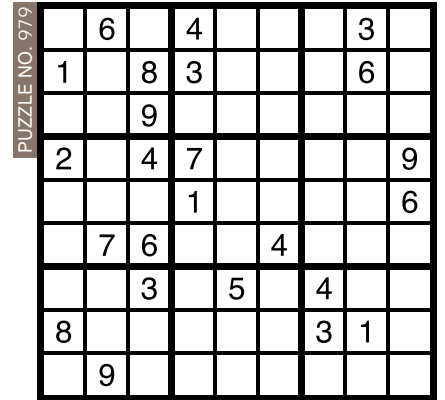
41. Annoyed
44. "Mary ____ a little lamb"
47. More crunchy
51. Infant
52. Word of pain
53. "____ How She Runs"
54. Needs aspirin
55. Conform
56. Finish
57. Difficult journey
11. Golf mound
17. New York ballplayer
19. Briny blue
21. Reason
23. Winding curves
24. Cat type
25. 8:01, e.g.
26. Accelerated
27. Trampled
28. Angel's hat
29. Rest
33. Covered decoratively
37. Pea's abode
39. Chip's companion
42. Stand up
43. Enthusiastic
45. Qualified
46. Schoolroom item
47. Dove's comment
48. Chafe
49. Polar sight
50. Timid
51. Baseball club

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY:

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.

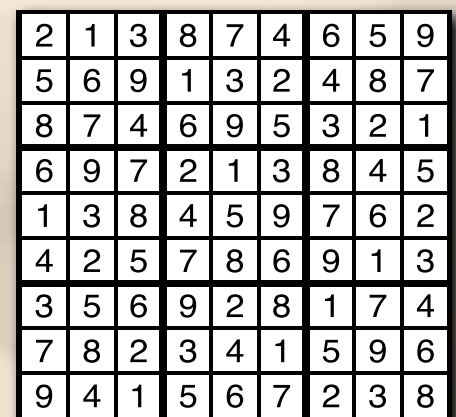


Last Issue's Answers

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- Lettuce
- Garlic (2)
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