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Vol. 21-18

September 26, 2025

450-978-9999

www.ns-news.com

editor@newsfirst.ca

## West Nile virus in Rosemère



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## Volunteers clean up 742 lbs of trash in Deux-Montagnes



Page 3



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# West Nile virus: public health officials urge caution as positive samples detected in Rosemère

**MARIA DIAMANTIS**  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter  
info@newsfirst.ca

Public health authorities are urging residents of the Laurentians to remain vigilant against mosquito bites following the detection of West Nile virus (WNV) in mosquito samples collected in Rosemère at the end of August.

The Town of Rosemère confirmed that laboratory analyses carried out by an environmental consulting firm revealed the presence of the virus. Results were immediately communicated to Quebec's Ministry of Health and Social Services (MSSS). Although WNV has been present in Quebec for many years, particularly in southern regions, its seasonal appearance is once again a reminder of the importance of prevention.

## Risk of infection remains low, but seniors most vulnerable

The Direction de santé publique du Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) des Laurentides stressed that while the overall risk of contracting WNV or developing severe illness remains very low, certain groups are more vulnerable. People aged 50 and older, those with chronic illnesses such as diabetes or cardiovascular disease, and individuals with weakened immune systems face higher risks of serious complications. These can include meningitis (infection of the lining of the brain) or encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) if bitten by an infected mosquito.

## Local mosquito control efforts

Rosemère runs an annual biological mosquito

control program using specialized contractors. This initiative helps limit mosquito proliferation in the community, but officials emphasize that residents also play an essential role in reducing breeding grounds and protecting themselves.

## Preventive measures for residents

- Authorities recommend several simple yet effective measures to reduce exposure to mosquito bites:
- Apply insect repellent containing DEET or icaridin to exposed skin, following manufacturer instructions.
- Wear light-coloured clothing that covers arms and legs, especially at dawn and dusk.
- Use mosquito screens on doors, windows, and tents.
- Cover strollers and playpens with mosquito netting.

- Avoid handling sick or dead wild birds, which can carry WNV.

In addition, eliminating stagnant water remains a crucial step to preventing mosquito breeding. Buckets, flowerpots, clogged gutters, garden furniture, tires, and children's toys should be checked regularly and emptied of standing water.

## Staying informed

Residents with health concerns related to mosquito bites can call Quebec's Info-Santé line at 811 (option 1). More information on WNV prevention and safe repellent use is available on the Quebec government's website at quebec.ca.

Public health officials stress that community cooperation is essential. "The best way to prevent infection is to protect yourself from mosquito bites and reduce their numbers in your environment," the CISSS des Laurentides noted in its advisory.

# Nearly 430,000 Quebecers left an emergency room without treatment last year, finds the MEI

**EMMANUELLE B. FAUBERT**

Across Canada, over 1.2 million patients left emergency rooms untreated last year.

## Economist at the MEI

The number of patients leaving Quebec's emergency rooms without being treated is rising, reveals a report published this morning by the MEI.

"These patients are not leaving because they feel better, but because the system is failing them," says Emmanuelle B. Faubert, economist at the MEI and author of the report. "Thousands of Quebecers are being denied access to care each year."

In 2024, Quebec recorded over 3.7 million emergency room visits. Of these, 428,676 ended

with a patient leaving before receiving treatment, representing 11.6 per cent of all visits.

This marks a worsening trend, with the ratio of patients leaving increasing by 8.8 per cent since 2019.

Patients in Quebec walk away from emergency rooms without receiving care at a rate that is higher than the national average of 7.8 per cent.

Across Canada, 16.3 million emergency room visits were made last year, and 1,267,736 patients were left untreated—around one in every thirteen visits. This data doesn't include patients living in Saskatchewan, or those covered by New Brunswick's Vitalité Santé health network, those health authorities having both failed to provide the requested 2024 data in time for publication.

The deterioration is observed nationwide, as rates of premature departures have risen

significantly since 2019. Last year the number of Canadian patients leaving without treatment increased by 35.6 per cent.

Most patients leaving an emergency room untreated in Quebec are classified as either P4 or P5, representing semi-urgent and non-urgent cases. Because they are deemed low priority, these patients are pushed to the back of the line and face some of the longest ER waits. This testifies to a lack of access to primary care.

The MEI researcher emphasized that patients forced to delay or forgo care often end up suffering from worsening conditions, which lead to more complex cases.

In a U.S. study conducted between 2019 and 2020, researchers found that 55 per cent of patients who left an emergency room before being treated ended up consulting a healthcare professional within three weeks of their initial

visit.

The MEI recommends increasing access to upstream care, which includes:

- Increasing the use of specialized nurse practitioner clinics;
- Granting the broadest scope of practice to pharmacists; and
- Allowing for the creation of non-governmental Immediate Care Medical Centres, based on the French model, to treat non-life-threatening emergencies.

"Solving the crisis in primary care is essential if we want to keep patients from continuing to fall through the cracks," says Ms. Faubert. "Policymakers must find the political courage to open up healthcare delivery to independent and alternative providers, or else this crisis is bound to get worse."



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# Deux-Montagnes volunteers pull 742 lbs of trash from local shoreline in “Grand nettoyage riverain”

**MARIA DIAMANTIS**

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info@newsfirst.ca

Residents of Deux-Montagnes turned out last weekend to haul 742 pounds (337 kg) of trash off the city's waterfront, part of a citizen-powered “Grand nettoyage riverain” organized with the non-profit Mission 1000 Tonnes. City officials applauded the effort and thanked the organization and volunteers for mobilizing to restore the shoreline.

According to the Ville de Deux-Montagnes, this riverbank cleanup is now a recurring civic activity held along the banks of lac des Deux-Montagnes, a key node of the Ottawa-St. Lawrence watershed where wind and currents concentrate floating debris. The city's 2025 notice invited residents to assemble on Saturday, September 13 for the latest edition, underscoring the municipality's commitment to community-led environmental action.

## What Mission 1000 Tonnes does

Mission 1000 Tonnes (Mission 1000 Tonnes / Mission Mille Tonnes) is a Quebec-based initiative founded in 2018 that organizes public cleanups of riverbanks and waterways, partners with municipalities and community groups, and runs awareness activities aimed at reducing plastic and other waste at the source. Since its creation, the group has staged thousands of collective cleanups across Quebec and beyond, engaging families, schools and businesses in hands-on stewardship. Media coverage this summer highlighted the scale of its annual St. Lawrence expeditions, which blend shoreline cleanups with public participation.

Beyond cleanup days, the organization offers municipal and corporate cleanup services and outreach programming. It also maintains a scientific team led by marine biologist Dr. Lyne Morissette, providing ecology-grounded guidance on debris impacts and best practices for local interventions. That combination—grassroots activation and scientific backing—has helped Mission 1000 Tonnes become a go-to partner for Quebec towns looking to translate environmental concern into measurable, local results.

## A regional push, with local results

The Deux-Montagnes tally of 742 lbs formed part of a broader regional push the same day; Mission 1000 Tonnes reported an additional 445 lbs removed in nearby Lorraine, illustrating how coordinated, same-weekend actions can add up across the North Shore.

Earlier in August, the group kicked off a multi-stop St. Lawrence campaign that moved from the Soulanges Canal to Montreal's Lachine Canal, clearing waste with the help of citizen volunteers at each stop.

## Why it matters for Deux-Montagnes

Perched where rivers and lake meet, Deux-Montagnes is particularly exposed to litter that travels via streams, storm drains and wind. Removing bulky plastics, tires, scrap metal and assorted packaging reduces hazards to wildlife, prevents microplastic fragmentation, and improves public access and enjoyment of the shore. The city's continued partnership with Mission 1000 Tonnes signals a pragmatic approach: empower residents to take visible, local action while aligning with a province-wide movement that brings equipment, know-how and momentum.

## Get involved

Residents who missed this cleanup can watch the Ville de Deux-Montagnes events page for future dates and sign up directly with Mission 1000 Tonnes when regional actions are announced—especially around World Cleanup Day each September, when the organization often coordinates simultaneous “grandes corvées” across multiple boroughs and towns.

Bottom line: 742 pounds less trash on the shoreline is a concrete win for the lake and for residents. With continued municipal partnership and citizen turnout, Deux-Montagnes can keep turning one-day cleanups into long-term shoreline recovery.



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Layout: MEDIA TREK

Distribution: DIFFUMAG

Printing: TC. TRANSCONTINENTAL

Project funded in part by  
**Canada**

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Quebec Community  
Newspapers Association  
& Canadian Community  
Newspapers Association



National Representation:



ISSN number : 1923-0648

Annual subscription : \$97.38 tax incl. • Per copy : \$1

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# OPINION & Editorial



## AI is making students smarter cheats, not better thinkers

*Some educators think AI can replace memorization, but that's a shortcut to ignorance*

A few weeks into the school year, Canadian teachers are seeing firsthand how quickly artificial intelligence is changing the classroom—and not always for the better.

Technology has always been a mixed blessing in schools. For example, while calculators made it easier to solve advanced math problems, they also gave students a ready-made excuse for not learning their multiplication tables. This created a problem for classroom teachers who knew the importance of these skills.

Of course, it would have been a mistake to stop teaching basic math to students just because calculators were available. Good teachers know that calculators are a tool, not a replacement for memorization and critical thinking. More recently, the internet has made it much easier for students and teachers to access specific information from anywhere around the world.

Now teachers must deal with the growing use of AI.

Not only can AI programs, such as ChatGPT, write formal essays, create original stories and craft elegant poetry, they are getting better at it every day. It's becoming increasingly difficult for teachers to distinguish between assignments written by AI and those written

by students.

ChatGPT-5 is the latest version of this evolving chatbot. It's designed to learn your habits and anticipate your latest needs. Instead of just drafting a letter when you ask it to, ChatGPT-5 suggests that it's time to send a letter before writing it for you. It really does seem designed to take the place of human thinking.

Unsurprisingly, the growing popularity of AI has led to many educators suggesting that there's no need to have students memorize facts or commit historical events to memory. Rather, they argue that it's time to move away from so-called rote learning and embrace creativity and critical thinking instead.

While this argument has a certain amount of intuitive appeal, it is dead wrong. The reality is that it's impossible to think critically about something you know nothing about. There's a huge difference between a student who knows by memory the factors that led to Canadian Confederation in 1867 and students who need ChatGPT to tell them the names of the provinces involved.

One of the most essential concepts in education is cognitive load theory. Cognitive load theory says that because our working memory

is limited, it's important to transfer as much knowledge as possible into our long-term memory. This is why it's nearly impossible for someone to solve a multi-step algebraic equation if they don't know basic math facts such as the order of operations.

In addition, there is a strong correlation between background knowledge and reading comprehension. Simply put, the more you know about the topic of an article or book, the higher your ability to understand what it means. This is why students usually have no trouble reading complex books and articles about topics that they have studied and are interested in, because they already possess considerable background knowledge.

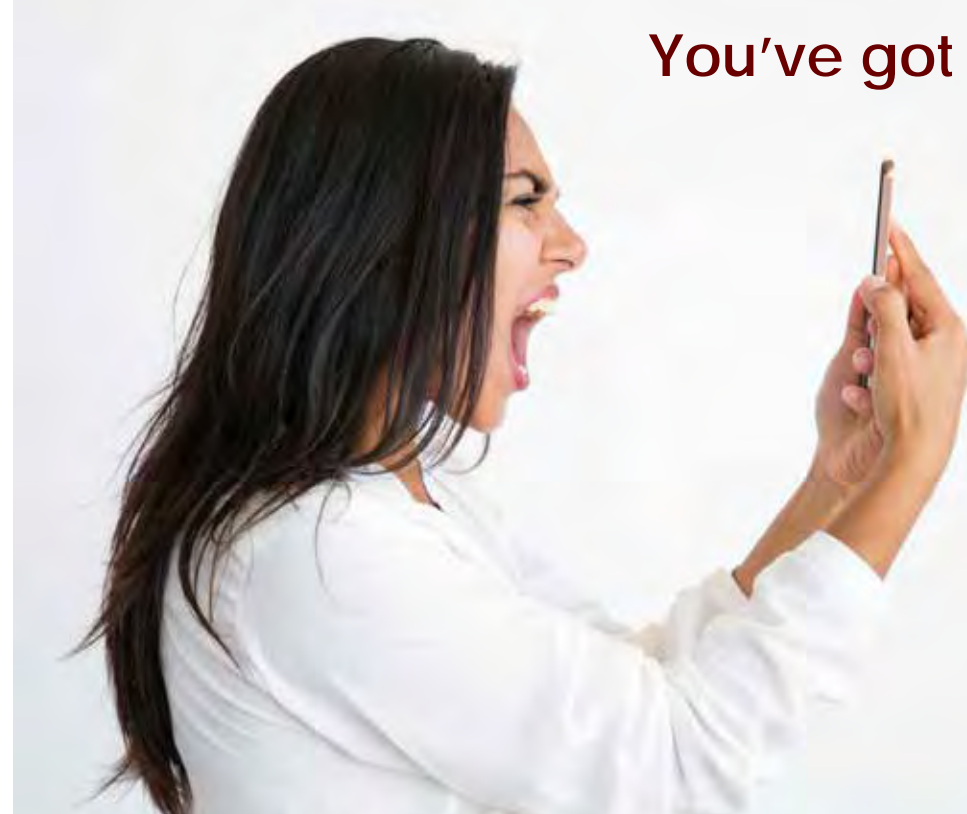
Thus, while AI is having an undeniable impact in classrooms, it's crucial that we remain focused on the things that matter most. Students need to continue learning their math facts, and they also need to memorize plenty of historical and scientific facts. The use of these basic skills will never change.

Good teachers, of course, will focus on these basics, and their students will be thankful.

*Michael Zwaagstra*

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# Thérèse-De Blainville unites for Journées de la culture 2025

**MARIA DIAMANTIS**

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From September 26 to 28, residents across the MRC of Thérèse-De Blainville will come together for the 29th edition of Journées de la culture. With 17 free events scheduled in all seven municipalities—Blainville, Boisbriand, Bois-des-Filion, Lorraine, Rosemère, Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines, and Sainte-Thérèse—the three-day initiative underscores the role of arts and culture in civic life.

## A regional celebration of belonging

The annual province-wide initiative, led by Culture pour tous, operates this year under the theme La culture fait du bien (“Culture does good”). For local leaders, the event is more than entertainment—it’s a chance to strengthen community ties.

“Culture is the beating heart of our communities. It brings people together, fosters belonging, and enhances our quality of life,” said Eric Westram, mayor of Rosemère and prefect of the MRC.

Christine Beaudette, mayor of Boisbriand and president of the MRC’s cultural action table, emphasized culture’s civic value: “It unites people, sparks ideas, and creates emotion. This is an invitation to experience it firsthand, not just observe.”

## Wide-ranging programming

The programming spans painting, theatre, music, dance, storytelling, photography, history, and digital arts, designed to be accessible to all ages.

Highlights include:

- A live painting session by artist Daniel Martel in Blainville.

- The showcase Vitrine sur la création! at Boisbriand’s Centre de création.
- An interactive drawing workshop with the Société des arts technologiques (SAT) in Bois-des-Filion.
- A family cultural fair at Parc Richelieu in Sainte-Thérèse.
- Outdoor art exhibitions, festive days in local parks, and participatory workshops across the region.

## Civic importance beyond the arts

While the weekend will showcase artistic talent, it also carries wider civic importance. With a population nearing 168,000, the MRC of Thérèse-De Blainville is among the fastest-growing suburban regions north of Montreal. Organizers see cultural investment as vital to strengthening civic identity, especially as the area experiences demographic shifts and rapid urban development.

Events like Journées de la culture also help municipalities highlight local heritage and foster inclusion across diverse communities. By making all programming free, the initiative reduces barriers to participation and ensures equitable access to culture—a goal that municipal leaders say is central to civic life.

## Looking ahead

This weekend’s programming is not only a celebration but also a reminder of the role culture plays in public life—bridging generations, enriching education, and supporting social cohesion. For residents, it is a chance to discover new artistic expressions while connecting with their neighbours.

Full schedules for each municipality are available on the MRC’s website and local municipal pages.



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Christine Beaudette, mayor of Boisbriand and president of the MRC’s cultural action table, emphasized culture’s civic value: “It unites people, sparks ideas, and creates emotion. This is an invitation to experience it firsthand, not just observe.”



“Culture is the beating heart of our communities. It brings people together, fosters belonging, and enhances our quality of life,” said Eric Westram, mayor of Rosemère and prefect of the MRC.



# Thérèse-De Blainville MRC invests \$2.6 million in climate adaptation projects

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The Regional County Municipality (MRC) of Thérèse-De Blainville is moving forward with a series of climate adaptation initiatives after receiving \$2.6 million in financial assistance from Quebec's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAMH). The funding comes through the Accélérer la transition climatique locale (ATCL) program, part of the province's Plan pour une économie verte 2030

## Targeting climate resilience

Eric Westram, Prefect of the MRC and Mayor of Rosemère, welcomed the support, emphasizing the importance of proactive measures.

"We must continue to act in a proactive manner to protect our living environments," he said, noting that the financial support confirms the rigorous work undertaken with partners to build resilience in the region

The funding follows recognition of the MRC's

Climate Adaptation Plan, which was accepted as a partial Climate Plan by Quebec's Ministry of Environment in June 2024. That approval made the MRC eligible to submit projects under the second phase of the ATCL program, six of which have now been selected for financing

## Projects across four municipalities

The money will support projects in Blainville, Lorraine, Rosemère, and Sainte-Thérèse. Priorities include sustainable stormwater management and reducing flood risks.

- **Blainville:** \$424,000 for plans and designs to reduce heat islands through tree planting, surface demineralization, and stormwater management in parking areas.

- **Lorraine:** \$265,576 for a watershed and stormwater study in the southern sector.

- **Rosemère:** \$252,000 for a sustainable stormwater management plan and \$487,004 for a program to assist vulnerable property owners in reducing flood risks.

- **Sainte-Thérèse:** \$487,004 for a similar program aimed at vulnerable property owners, and \$725,684 for a vulnerability study and analysis of flood mitigation solutions

"These actions align with the priorities of our Climate Plan. Adaptation and mitigation are two complementary levers to face tomorrow's climate challenges," said Gilles Blanchette, Chair of the Climate Plan steering committee and

Mayor of Bois-des-Filion.

## Long-term climate plan

The MRC's Climate Plan will extend until March 2027. It is based on two main strategies:

- **Adaptation:** adjusting practices to better manage unavoidable effects of climate change while identifying new opportunities.
- **Mitigation:** reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing carbon absorption through ecological initiatives

Located north of Montreal, the MRC of Thérèse-De Blainville encompasses seven municipalities with a combined population of nearly 168,000. The region is recognized for its natural assets, cultural heritage, and growing residential appeal.

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# A bold new look: RIPTB unveils next-generation patrol vehicle



**MARIA DIAMANTIS**  
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Residents of Sainte-Thérèse, Rosemère, Boisbriand, and Lorraine will soon notice a striking new presence on their streets: the Régie intermunicipale de police Thérèse-De Blainville (RIPTB) has unveiled its brand-new patrol vehicle design, a bold reimagining that fuses modern aesthetics with the force's core values. The official unveiling took place last Thursday in Sainte-Thérèse, with mayors Christian Charron (Sainte-Thérèse), Éric Westram (Rosemère), Christine Beaudette (Boisbriand), and Jean Comtois (Lorraine) in attendance.

The event celebrated not just the sleek design but also the collaborative spirit that brought it to life.

## A project born from the ranks

The idea didn't come from an outside agency or a top-down directive—it started with two patrol officers, Nicolas Crompt and Jérémy Primeau. Last winter, the pair proposed a fresh approach to vehicle lettering, one that would better reflect the RIPTB's identity and mission. What followed was a model of collaboration. Crompt and Primeau consulted widely with colleagues, ensuring that the redesign resonated across the force. Their initiative culminated in a new look that carries a powerful message.

## Symbols on wheels

Painted in a sleek black base, the new patrol cars are instantly recognizable thanks to their innovative two-tone accents: blue striping on one side, green on the other. The design is more than eye-catching—it's symbolic. Emblazoned on the vehicles are four words that define the RIPTB's ethos: Peace, Partnership, Strength, Accessibility. These guiding principles now ride alongside every officer on patrol, serving as a visible reminder of the force's commitment to the communities it serves.

"This new vehicle is far more than just a tool of the trade," said RIPTB Director Luc Larocque. "It embodies our pride, our modernity, and the strong sense of belonging that unites our men and women."

## A step toward modernization

The unveiling signals the beginning of a larger effort to update the organization's image and reinforce its ties with the public. By placing values front and center, the RIPTB hopes to strengthen community trust and highlight the human element behind the badge. For the officers who will soon be behind the wheel, the redesign is a daily affirmation of purpose. For residents, it's a fresh and dynamic

visual symbol of security and partnership.

In the coming months, citizens across the RIPTB territory will gradually see the new fleet roll out onto local streets—bringing with it not only a new look but also a renewed promise of service.



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## Crime and safety rise as top issue as parliament resumes

**Liberals and Conservatives tied**

BY DAVID COLETTO

From September 12 to 17, 2,230 Canadian adults were surveyed. Here are the results.

### 1. Affordability still dominates, but crime is rising fast

57% of Canadians say the rising cost of living is a top issue. But the most notable movement is around crime and public safety: now 20% put it in their top three issues, up from 16% just two weeks ago. This is one of the fastest-rising issues we've tracked all year. Concern is highest among older Canadians, Ontarians, and Conservative voters.

### 2. Liberals and Conservatives are tied

If an election were held today, both parties would receive 40% of the vote. The Liberals are down slightly since earlier this month, the Conservatives are holding steady, and the NDP has edged up to 8%. Regionally, the Liberals lead in Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada, while the Conservatives are strong in the Prairies and slightly ahead in BC.

### 3. Seniors show signs of shifting

Perhaps the most important demographic movement we see is among Canadians 60 and over. Liberal support has dipped to 42%, down from 45% earlier this month, while Conservative support has inched up to 40%. That narrows what was a 7-point Liberal lead among seniors to essentially a tie.

### 4. Leaders' images are stable

Prime Minister Mark Carney's approval remains at 50%, with a net favourability of +18. Pierre Poilievre's ratings have also held steady at -1 net. Both leaders remain competitive as the fall session begins.

### The big picture

This wave underscores a political environment that is both competitive and unsettled. Affordability continues to dominate public concerns, but the rise in crime and safety as a priority issue could shape the debates this fall. At the same time, small shifts among seniors—an important part of the Liberal coalition—signal potential vulnerabilities.

You can read the full analysis and detailed numbers online at [abacusdata.ca](https://abacusdata.ca).

#### FEDERAL VOTE INTENTION

	CURRENT VOTE SHARE	SEPTEMBER 2, 2025	CHANGE
LIBERAL	40%	43%	-3
CONSERVATIVE	40%	40%	NC
NDP	8%	6%	+2
BQ	7%	7%	NC
PEOPLE'S	1%	1%	NC
GREEN	3%	2%	+1
OTHER	1%	1%	NC

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# DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

## MOTHER AND CHILD

**Q** I have always valued my relationship with my mother-in-law. We typically get along well. However, now that I am pregnant, she has become very forceful with "suggestions" regarding the baby and has said some pretty hurtful things. It is getting to the point I do not want to answer the phone because I am tired of arguing about things I do not feel are her decisions to begin with.

She will argue with me about everything from breastfeeding to circumcision to how I decorate the nursery. My husband has been understanding because she acts that way to him all the time. But I don't want to put him in a position where he has to side against his mother.

I feel like saying, "You got to raise your two sons the way you wanted, now please let me raise my children the way I want!" Any advice on how I can nicely tell her to back off without damaging my relationship with her or further involving my husband?

Tisha

**A** Tisha, today the word "nice" means agreeable, but the original meaning of the word "nice" is foolish or stupid. Sometimes in our attempt to be nice we let a veneer of politeness triumph over what is important. That is foolish.

You are carrying a new life. You are the mother bear willing to protect her cub against all comers. Being nice should not outweigh that deeper sense of what you are doing. You don't have to tell off your mother-in-law, but you can treat her opinions like elevator music. They are just background noise.

An election has been held, and you've been voted mommy. You've won. It is your breast and your baby and the final decisions are yours. When we fulfill our legitimate roles in life, we never have to justify ourselves to others. When we sacrifice the roles in life we are entitled to play, we sacrifice our life itself.

Wayne & Tamara

## HUSBAND AND FATHER

**Q** Even if I don't write English too good, I will try to be as clear as possible. My wife and I have been married a year and a half, and we have a baby five months.

My mother-in-law came to take care of our baby. She puts her opinion like orders and thinks she is the one who knows everything. She takes decisions which are not her part. When I try to speak to her about the baby, she orders me what to do. But if I don't speak up, that is offensive to her too.

This is killing me. Every morning when she arrives or when I come back from work, she is like the manager of the house. This is hard to say but I even have problems with her as role model. She thinks she is 20 or 25 when she is actually more like 60.

I spoke millions of times to my wife, but she says her mother is trying her best. She says the one who should change is me. That is something I am not willing to do because I cannot lose my

place inside the place I live.

Luis

**A** Luis, when you are able to act like a husband and father, then you know why you get up in the morning and go to work. But if someone interferes with your normal rituals and role, it disturbs the rhythm and purpose of your life.

Your marriage is between you and your wife, not between your wife and her mother. It cannot be any other way. In the years that follow, how will you explain what decisions were made to your child? Well, grandma decided that...

You need to have one very important conversation with your wife. She must understand if you don't get to be husband and father, then there is no place for you in this house.

Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF ([www.yourotherhalf.com](http://www.yourotherhalf.com))

Send letters to: Direct Answers, PO 964 Springfield, MO 65801-0964

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# Canadian smaller businesses pay between 20-23 per cent more taxes than the U.S., claims CFIB report

**Trump's 'Big Beautiful Bill' will make things worse, says Canadian Federation of Independent Business**

**MARTIN C. BARRY**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter  
marty@newsfirst.ca

To improve Canada's tax competitiveness and boost economic productivity, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business is calling on the federal and provincial governments to lower corporate income tax rates for small firms, and increase the small business deduction threshold while indexing it to inflation.

## Quebec businesses overtaxed

The motion comes after the CFIB recently issued a report that compared business tax loads in Canada and the U.S., concluding that small businesses in Quebec and Atlantic Canada were among the most overcharged in the ten provinces.

A Canadian microbusiness (which the CFIB defines as being made up of four employees) pays on average a whopping 20% more in taxes than a similar firm in the United States, stated the report which compared tax loads in 10 Canadian provinces and 20 U.S. states.

By comparison, a small business (25 employees) pays 23% more in taxes than its U.S. counterpart, the CFIB found. But even the most competitive provinces (B.C. for micro businesses, Saskatchewan for small firms) had an average tax burden higher than the vast majority of U.S. states.



**"We can't ignore the widening gap between Canadian small firms and their U.S. competitors," said Juliette Nicolaj, the CFIB's policy analyst for national affairs and the report's other co-author.**

## Trump's 'Big Beautiful Bill'

The CFIB notes that recent pro-small business changes in the United States through the "Big Beautiful Bill" driven through by President Donald Trump made the tax gap between the two countries even wider.

The conclusion the federation came to? "Canada needs to lower taxes or risk driving investment south of the border," they said in a September 11 statement.

"U.S. tariffs are not the only competitive issue facing Canadian small businesses," said Bradlee Whidden, a CFIB senior policy analyst and the report's co-author.

"When you look at the numbers, it's crystal clear: smaller businesses in Canada are already at a serious tax disadvantage, which was just made permanent by recent pro-small business changes in the United States through the Big Beautiful Bill.

"If Canada wants to compete and raise our standard of living, we need to cut taxes," added Whidden. "Payroll taxes are heavy on both sides of the border, but the real gap is in corporate and property taxes. Here in Canada, that gap means less money going back into wages, business operations and growth."

## Quebec's poor tax performance

On a province-by-province level, Quebec and Atlantic Canada

performed the poorest, the CFIB said, while western Canadian provinces ranked a bit higher, but still significantly below the average of U.S. states that were analyzed.

However, even the most competitive provinces (B.C. for micro businesses, Saskatchewan for small firms) had an average tax burden higher than the vast majority of U.S. states, the CFIB concluded.

Among microbusinesses, the five best (1 – 5) and worst (26 – 30) jurisdictions in the report were:

1. South Dakota (USA)	26. Newfoundland and Labrador (CAN)
2. North Dakota (USA)	27. Prince Edward Island (CAN)
3. Wyoming (USA)	28. Nova Scotia (CAN)
4. Florida (USA)	29. New Brunswick (CAN)
5. Texas (USA)	30. Quebec (CAN)

Among small businesses, the five best (1 – 5) and worst (26 – 30) jurisdictions are:

1. South Dakota (USA)	26. Nova Scotia (CAN)
2. Wyoming (USA)	27. Prince Edward Island (CAN)
3. North Dakota (USA)	28. Newfoundland and Labrador (CAN)
4. Florida (USA)	29. New Brunswick (CAN)
5. Texas (USA)	30. Quebec (CAN)

In addition to the recommendation to the federal and provincial governments, the CFIB is also suggesting that municipalities, working in conjunction with provincial governments that oversee them, should reduce property taxes and close the property tax gap between commercial and residential properties.

"Trade disruptions have put the spotlight on Canada's uphill battle to remain competitive with the United States," said Juliette Nicolaj, the CFIB's policy analyst for national affairs and the report's other co-author.

## Gap can't be ignored, says analyst

"While we can't control what other countries do, we can't ignore the widening gap between Canadian small firms and their U.S. competitors," she added. "It's time for governments to step up with policies that lower the cost of doing business in Canada."



**"U.S. tariffs are not the only competitive issue facing Canadian small businesses," says Bradlee Whidden, a CFIB senior policy analyst and the report's co-author.**



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# HOROSCOPE

Week of September 28 to October 4

The luckiest signs this week:  
PISCES, ARIES AND TAURUS



## ARIES

Change can be scary, but it can lead to incredible opportunities. You'll find balance in your home, work and love life, enabling you to resolve conflicts and achieve happiness.



## TAURUS

Rushed agreements often lead to problems. To avoid future complications, take the time to discuss and clearly define all terms. Focus on the details to significantly increase your chances of success.



## GEMINI

Prepare for a busy week on the job! Meticulous organization and efficient work methods will boost your income and increase your likelihood of receiving a promotion. You'll inspire your team as you lead by example.



## CANCER

Your hard work will finally pay off. You'll be applauded for your achievements. Expect to receive a medal to symbolize your victory. You'll hear the word "respect" uttered about you frequently, which will boost your self-esteem.



## LEO

Now is an excellent time to consider buying a property, and you have the resources to do so. Your family will support you, both financially and emotionally. If you're in a new relationship, you'll seriously consider moving in together quite soon.



## VIRGO

Take some time to treat yourself and relax. If you want to travel somewhere new, plan your route carefully with a GPS app to save time and avoid getting lost.



## LIBRA

Take the leap and apply for your dream job at that amazing company. This bold move will resolve your financial worries and set you on the path to achieving your goals. Action is the key to your success.



## SCORPIO

It's time to make some changes in your life. Doing so will help you find the tools you need to take your journey in a more fulfilling direction. The law of attraction is on your side.



## SAGITTARIUS

Great opportunities await you, both professionally and personally. Before making any decisions, analyze each situation carefully. Seek advice from trusted sources who can help you see things from a different perspective.



## CAPRICORN

Let the warmth of your loved ones envelop you and bring you peace. By tapping into your creativity and following your heart, you'll create something exceptional. Every great project starts with a dream; don't be afraid to dream big!



## AQUARIUS

Your hard work will pay off and could even lead to an unexpected promotion. If you adopt a healthier lifestyle, you'll see visible results in no time. Don't forget to embrace joy and harmony in your love life.



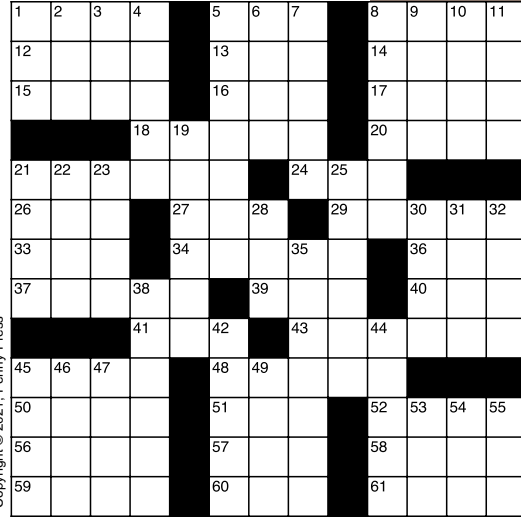
## PISCES

Explore your inner self through a spiritual practice. This will bring unexpected richness into your life. You'll find your place within a group, forging strong bonds. Get ready to go on an exciting getaway planned by your significant other.

# Coffee Break

## CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 288



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### ACROSS

- Small dispute
- Hooter
- Actor Pickens
- Yearning
- Garden buzzer
- Tortilla dish
- "The Raven," e.g.
- Fancy resort
- Afresh
- Treaties
- G-men
- Slumber
- Santa's worker
- That guy
- Picnic intruder
- Daisylike bloom
- High card
- Wary
- Keats work
- Therefore
- Focus
- Hinged top

### DOWN

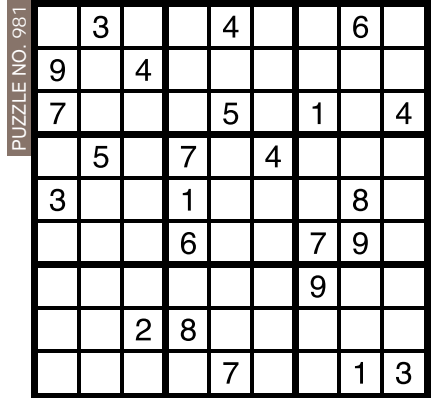
- Talk over
- Safes
- Purpose
- Hymn finales
- Salad fish
- Excavation
- Sound gear: hyph.
- Elemental part
- Lemony drink
- Equal
- Holds up
- British title
- Bar orders
- Frosted
- Cuts the grass
- Flowering shrub
- Persian king
- Agreeable
- Harbinger
- Nonprofessional
- Steepled brew
- Road tax
- Prepare for press
- Crimson hues
- "Rosie the \_\_\_\_"
- Lotions
- Mamas' mates
- Bridegroom's attendant
- "\_\_\_\_ Wars"
- Station wagon, e.g.
- Door handle
- Wailed
- \_\_\_\_ skirt
- \_\_\_\_ League school
- Charge for service
- Winners

# Sudoku

### HOW TO PLAY:

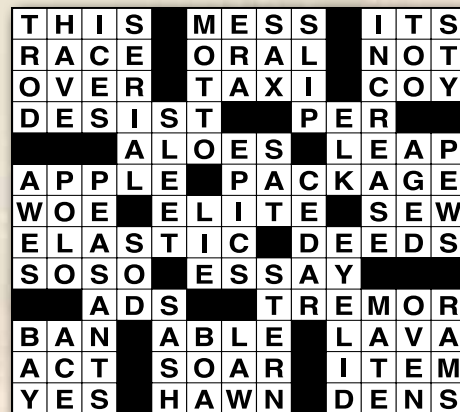
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

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.

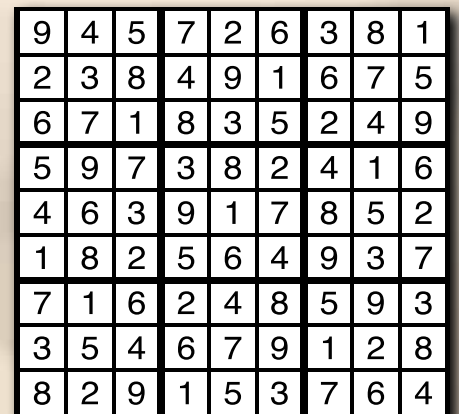


## Last Issue's Answers

### CROSSWORDS



### Sudoku



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- Mushrooms (Quebec)
- Corn (3) (Quebec)
- Bananas (4-5)
- Golden Apples (3) (Quebec)
- Oranges (3)
- Lettuce (Quebec)
- Cucumbers (organic) (Quebec)
- Avocados (2)
- Tomatoes (flavor minis) (3) (Quebec)
- Potatoes (~3lbs) (Quebec)
- Nappa Cabbage (Quebec)

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