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New pedestrian crosswalks along Chemin d'Oka



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Deux-Montagnes pays tribute to Dave Byers



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Dave Byers (second from left) helped organize Deux-Montagnes's Canada Day celebrations on numerous occasions, including this instance in 2014. (File photo: Martin C. Barry, North Shore News)



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Hands-on visit for students at Saint-Eustache hospital



The Best Choice
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During the summer of 2017 when hockey season was over, Dave Byers used the pro shop at the Deux-Montagnes Olympia arena to display and share items from his vast collection of memorabilia from Expo 67 and Canada's Centennial year. (File photo: Martin C. Barry, North Shore News)

MARTIN C. BARRY
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In a community like Deux-Montagnes where volunteerism and the spirit of giving have long been among the most cherished values, Dave Byers was somebody who came to be especially admired.

A key figure in the Deux-Montagnes Lions Club and the Deux-Montagnes Canada Day Committee, Byers passed away last February at age 79, leaving behind an unparalleled legacy of nearly 60 years of local volunteer service.

Married to Heather Brown, father of two daughters and grandfather of two grandchil-

dren, Byers was known as a tireless volunteer. Upon arriving in Deux-Montagnes in the early 1970s from eastern Ontario, he fit in perfectly in the community he chose, dedicating himself almost immediately to local causes.

Always a devoted Lion

Byers served as president of the Deux-Montagnes Lions Club from 2000 to 2002 and was its treasurer for some twenty years. He was the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, which he received in recognition of his extensive volunteer work. He could always be found at the forefront of various activities organized by the Lions, such as the

Deux-Montagnes remembers Dave Byers

Community mourns loss of Canada Day co-organizer and relentless Lion

winter carnival, the book fair, the Seniors' Day and the yard sale.

As can be attested by many file photos found in the *North Shore News* archives, Byers was involved with virtually every Canada Day celebration held in Deux-Montagnes over more than 50 years, while also serving on the organizing committee for more than 20 years including as president.

He was an active volunteer with the Firefighters Association and the Maison des citoyens. As well, he was a key member of the committee for the annual Santa Claus Parade, which is now organized by the City of Deux-Montagnes.

An 'Expo' souvenir collector

Perhaps less well-remembered, although just as important as an indicator of the extent of Dave's hobbies and interests, he ran a small boutique, beginning in the summer of 2017, at the City of Deux-Montagnes' Olympia Arena when the hockey pro shop was closed for the season.

There, Dave shared some of the many items of memorabilia he had gathered over the years relating to Expo 67 and Canada's Centennial year. The year 2017 was the 150th anniversary of Canada and the 50th anniversary of the Montreal World's Fair.

The items included vintage (and probably by then fairly rare) Expo 67 postcards, an official Expo 67 guidebook in good condition, and old

Expo 67 vanity license plates. The Confederation items included glass steins stencilled with colourful Confederation symbols, coffee mugs and commemorative serving plates.

The collection also included a few mementos of the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games. "To be honest with you, a lot of this stuff was bought over the years at garage sales, at flea markets and all that," Dave said in an interview with the *North Shore News* at the time.

Tributes to Dave Byers

There were many online tributes to Dave Byers following news of his passing. "The #CanadaDay Committee and the entire Deux-Montagnes community have lost a true pillar," the committee stated on its Facebook page.

"He was a deeply proud Canadian, and while his passing leaves a gaping hole in our community, we are so grateful for the time we had with him," they added. "Our deepest sympathies go out to Heather, his family and all the friends and volunteers touched by Dave's life. He will be greatly missed."

"Our community has lost a truly remarkable man," Linda Lapointe, the Liberal MP for Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, wrote in a post on her Facebook page. "David Byers will be remembered for his generosity, his warmth and the quiet kindness that touched so many lives. His legacy will live on in the people and community he cared for so deeply."

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School park dispute escalates during council meeting

Parents, city clash over stalled playground agreement in Deux-Montagnes

MATTHEW DALDALIAN

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A dispute between the City of Deux-Montagnes and representatives tied to Mountainview School over a stalled playground agreement spilled into a tense public exchange during the town's May council meeting, as parents accused the municipality of backing away from earlier commitments tied to a school park project.

The disagreement centred on a proposed agreement involving public access to the schoolyard outside school hours, maintenance responsibilities and the installation of new playground equipment.

Parents and school representatives told council they believed the city had previously committed to funding and installing approximately \$100,000 worth of playground infrastructure while helping maintain the site. Municipal officials, however, argued the project cannot move forward until a formal agreement is signed.

The debate comes as Deux-Montagnes continues to face pressure tied to population growth, residential development and access to public recreational space.

Parents say commitments changed

Speaking after the meeting, Mountainview Elementary School Home and School parent group President Kimberly Allen said parents became frustrated after what they viewed as changes to a long-running agreement with the city over access to the schoolyard and the installation of new playground equipment.

Allen said the school's existing playground is more than 30 years old and has become a growing safety concern for families.

"It's fallen apart. It's actually dangerous," Allen said.

According to Allen, discussions with the city originally involved a \$100,000 municipal investment toward a new playground project while parents and the school community separately raised funds for additional equipment.

"The city was willing to invest for one structure," Allen said. "Parents and some measures from the school were able to provide another module."

Allen said the arrangement initially focused on limiting public access to a portion of the schoolyard while protecting newer school infrastructure installed in recent years, including outdoor classrooms, play areas and ping pong tables.

"From past experience when we have let the public in, we've had situations where beer bottles are in the garbage, spray paint, garbages overflowing and it became dangerous," she said.

Allen said tensions emerged after council members changed and negotiations were revisited.

"They wanted access to the whole school," Allen said. "They want access to the school on weekends, which we use, we rent out."

She added that the project is now at a standstill despite playground equipment already being purchased and installation timelines approaching before students return in September.

However, Allen said discussions with Mayor Denis Martin following the meeting left her more optimistic about a possible compromise.

"He's agreeing to keep the fence, not have access to the school, not cut the grass and continue with the investment of \$100,000," Allen said. "It's all in the interest of the kids."

She added that parents remain open to sharing the space with the broader community if protections remain in place for the school property.

Mayor defends city position

Mayor Denis Martin pushed back on accusations that the city abandoned the project, repeat-



Deux-Montagnes's May council meeting on May 7, 2026.
(Photo: Matthew Daldalian, The North Shore News)

edly stating the municipality remains prepared to invest in the playground if a formal agreement is signed.

"We're ready to put in a \$100,000 module," Martin said. "Just sign the agreement."

Martin argued the city does not want to maintain parts of school property that remain inaccessible to the broader public.

"We are not going to maintain a schoolyard where people don't have access," he said.

The mayor also said the municipality previously had access to school facilities such as gymnasiums under older agreements.

"Before, we had access to the gyms, but now we don't," Martin said.

During the exchange, parents repeatedly challenged the city's interpretation of the proposed agreement, arguing the original discussions focused specifically on the park area rather than broader access to school facilities.

Maria Stamadianos, who spoke outside the council meeting, said many parents feel frustrated by the prolonged negotiations.

"The grounds are being found in less-than-ideal conditions after a weekend," Stamadianos said.

Stamadianos urged both sides to finalize an agreement, and hoped it's seen through.

"We want them to know that, you know, there is an agreement, and we expect them to uphold that agreement and to meet us halfway," she said.



Maria Stamadianos, who spoke outside the council meeting, said many parents feel frustrated by the prolonged negotiations on May 7, 2026. (Photo: Matthew Daldalian, The North Shore News)

Noise complaints tied to growth

The council meeting also featured complaints from residents living near major construction projects in Deux-Montagnes.

One resident described persistent noise and vibrations linked to excavation and foundation work near residential properties.

"The noise is at a point where you need earplugs outside your own property," the resident said in French.

The resident said nearby homes continue to experience constant vibrations from heavy machinery and concrete work.

"We thought the excavation phase was ending, but now there are still concrete trucks and vibrations," they said.

Mayor Martin acknowledged the difficulty of regulating construction noise once major projects are already underway.

"To impose noise walls after a project has already started is more complicated than you

think," Martin said in French.

However, he said the city may consider stronger requirements for future developments.

Another resident raised concerns about privacy impacts tied to a nearby residential development, saying a four-story building was constructed closer to neighbouring homes than expected.

"All I ask is that developers take into account the privacy of people living around the building," the resident said.

Other municipal decisions

Council also approved several administrative and planning measures during the meeting.

Municipal officials adopted a bylaw tied to the city's right of first refusal, allowing Deux-Montagnes to potentially purchase certain properties before outside buyers in specific situations.

The city also awarded an \$881,000 professional services contract to WSP Canada for work tied to the redevelopment of streets in the Grand-Moulin sector.

Mayor Martin said the larger infrastructure project could eventually total around \$20 million and would focus heavily on stormwater management.

Council additionally approved support for a community barbecue organized with ABL Immigration on May 30 at the police station parking lot.

The event is intended to help welcome newcomers and encourage stronger ties between residents.

"It's a coming together of communities," Martin said.

The meeting also included approvals for volleyball tournaments planned later this summer.

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OPINION & Editorial



Motherhood, the first and last frontier, and everything in-between

This is a belated Mother's Day reflection, written after the holiday has passed, but the truth it carries does not belong to one day alone. Mothers are often honored in speeches, cards, and public gestures, yet the real meaning of motherhood is found in the ordinary days that rarely get noticed. It is found in the sacrifices, the patience, the worry, the planning, and the quiet endurance that shape a family's life. For many people, including me, the strongest example of that sacrifice was my mother, whose daily acts of love were often invisible to the outside world but deeply felt by those closest to her.

Motherhood is rarely simple. It begins long before sunrise and often ends long after everyone else has gone to bed. A mother is expected to remember the appointments, organize the meals, manage the emotions, solve the problems, and keep the household moving forward, often while carrying her own burdens silently. There is no true pause in the work. A child is sick, another needs help with school, the phone rings, the bill is due, dinner is late, and somehow, she keeps going. What looks like routine from the outside is often a constant balancing act on the inside.

One of the heaviest burdens mothers' carries is the mental load. This is the invisible labor of remembering everything and anticipating what might go wrong before it happens. It is not just cooking dinner or washing clothes. It is knowing what supplies are missing, what child needs attention, what family obligation is coming up, and what problem may need solving tomorrow. My mother lived this kind of sacrifice without complaint. She carried responsibility with a kind of quiet strength that taught me more than any words could. She did not always speak about her exhaustion, but her actions made it clear how much she

gave every day.

Financial pressure adds another layer of difficulty. Many mothers work hard to stretch limited resources, often putting their children's needs ahead of their own. They make choices that others never see. They delay their own purchases, skip their own comforts, and find ways to make very little go very far. A mother's sacrifice is often measured not in grand gestures, but in the things, she gives up so that her children can have what they need. My mother understood that kind of giving deeply. She was the kind of person who made sure others were cared for first, even when it meant she had less for herself.

There is also the emotional work of motherhood, which is just as demanding as the practical work. Mothers are often the ones who comfort, mediate, encourage, and hold the family together during difficult times. They absorb stress, calm fears, and stay steady when others are breaking down. At the same time, they are expected to remain patient and composed even when they are tired, anxious, or hurting themselves. That emotional responsibility can be draining. My mother carried that role with grace, and like many mothers, she made sacrifice look ordinary even when it was anything but.

The challenge becomes even greater when mothers are judged by impossible standards. Society often expects them to be endlessly available, perfectly organized, emotionally calm, and completely selfless. If they work outside the home, they may be told they are not present enough. If they stay home, they may be underestimated. If they are strict, they are criticized; if they are lenient, they are questioned. No matter what they do, someone is often ready to evaluate it. This makes motherhood not only exhausting, but lonely. A mother can

be doing everything she can and still feel as though she is falling short.

For single mothers, the responsibility is even heavier, because there is no one else to divide the work. Every bill, every appointment, every emergency, and every emotional need falls on one person. For mothers raising children with special needs or serious health concerns, the demands can be overwhelming in a different way. They are not just parenting; they are advocating, coordinating, learning, and often fighting for support. These are forms of sacrifice that require extraordinary resilience. They deserve to be recognized not only in words, but in policy, community support, and everyday understanding.

My 97-year-old mother remains, for me, the clearest example of what sacrifice looks like when it is rooted in love. She gave of herself in ways that were practical, emotional, and deeply personal. She made sure others were fed, supported, encouraged, and protected. She put her family before her own comfort more times than anyone could count. And yet she did so without asking for applause. That is what makes a mother's sacrifice so powerful. It is not performed for attention. It is lived quietly, repeatedly, and faithfully.

A belated Mother's Day reflection also reminds us that appreciation should not be limited to a single day. Mothers need more than flowers, messages, and formal recognition once a year. They need rest. They need support. They need understanding. They need communities that see the weight they carry and help lighten it. If we truly honor mothers, then we must do more than celebrate them. We must create a world that respects their labor and acknowledges their humanity.

Renata Isopo

Letters to the Editor

A thousand things to watch but only a few steps to do what's really important



Dear people constantly on their phone, Do you sometimes feel like someone you know, or even yourself, is ruining their life by being glued to their screen? Scrolling for an unhealthy amount of time? A few years ago, my usual academic performance and grades were getting worse over time. I already knew the reason. What led to my focus being all over the place was the amount of time I spent on my screen, instead of emphasizing on what's really more important. I still struggle to manage my time efficiently and my life could've been a lot better.

Social media apps these days all have this mindless scrolling that has taken over, ruining our minds and time by feeding us with a flood of information that might be not even necessary to look at. We consume what the algorithm constantly feeds us, and in the end, we can never stop. Our attention span gets bad to the point that we can't even focus on a simple task. In the end, this engaging stimulation becomes a

revolting procrastination that can lead to failure

Today, even more people now have access to a screen and kids unfortunately also do. These kids can spend hours on their devices and it's quite troubling me. These kids already have their minds ruined by the digital world and you're telling me that they're society's future? I see kids online who are stimulated by their Ipad's showing them useless reels and yet, they can't fully focus on a specific one. In the end, it slowly deteriorates their minds and the way they can think.

This has always bothered me considerably, especially due to the terrible experience I've had with it and still today. My final secondary school years, alongside college years, were seeing diminishing results over time because it became quite frustrating. I see myself from back then, scrolling Reddit instead of completing my tasks. Did this ever happen to you? Instead of focusing on a task, you drifted away from what was important by choosing a quick distraction instead. I wouldn't like anyone to suffer the

same situation as I did, because I know well how hard it is to get out

Nowadays, scrolling has become too encouraged by developers that wish to create a better immersive digital experience. But at what cost? We will be even more addicted and disconnected from the real world and our main goals. Will we be able in the future to learn to prioritize what's important first?

There aren't any clear solutions to end this everlasting growing problem. Experts have taken actions to help us by imposing a limited restriction, but it's not enough. We need, as a community, to spread awareness on how dangerous scrolling can slowly become, as well as finding alternatives for entertainment. The next time you'd like to scroll mindlessly online, you should ask yourself if it's worth wasting most of your precious time on. As we grow older, we should prioritize accomplishment and progress over wasting time on a wasteful distraction.

Sidney Dao-Hoang

Rosemère weighs growth concerns

Residents press council on housing, flooding and Place Rosemère redevelopment

MATTHEW DALDALIAN
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Rosemère residents spent the May 12 town council meeting to press elected officials on several development files, including a proposed housing project near a train station, the future of Place Rosemère and flood-protection work in vulnerable areas of town.

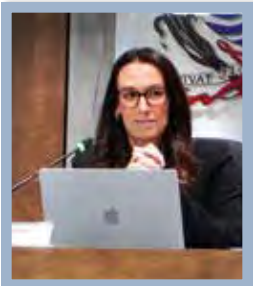
Council tabled a resolution for a multifamily housing project on William Street, made up of two two-story buildings with five units each. The town said the project would use temporary powers under Quebec's housing legislation, allowing municipalities to authorize some housing projects that depart from local planning rules before Feb. 21, 2027.

Councilor Marie-Hélène Fortin said the file was suited to that approach because of its location near the train station.

"This is obviously a project that, under Bill 31, allows us to move a little faster to propose housing," she said in French. "In this case, it is very close to the station, so it seems to me like a project that is well suited for very gentle densification, obviously over two stories."

Mayor Marie-Elaine Pitre said it is the first time Rosemère council has used the tool

"It is a tool that allows us to derogate from our regulations," she said in French.



Residents question density

During the question period, one resident asked whether Bill 31 meant there would be no public consultation.

"We are going to hold one," Pitre said.

The mayor said the law allows the town to override some local rules, but still requires that residents be informed.

"They ask us at least to inform people," she said.

One resident also raised concerns about whether the same approach could apply to other lands near the station. The attendees were informed that the William Street file had a specific context because it is next to the station parking lot and located in an area already close to redevelopment zones.

Place Rosemère remains key issue

The Place Rosemère redevelopment also returned to the floor, with residents asking about building heights, parking structures and how the town measures public acceptance.

The town's regional hub special planning program, known as the PPU, covers the Place Rosemère sector and is intended to guide redevelopment of the area. Rosemère says the PPU is tied to the Place Rosemère regional hub and its citizen participation process.

Resident René Villeneuve said he had spoken with residents who were surprised by the scale of possible redevelopment.

"When I talk to them about the Place Rosemère project, that buildings could reach around 16 stories, I had to walk around with the bylaw to show them," he said in French.

Pitre pushed back on that number, saying the town had heard concerns and changed the height limits.

"There are no 16 stories," she said.

She said the revised rules would be presented

when the file returns next month.

"It's 12 stories that are allowed, and people were in favor of that," The mayor said

Parking garage questioned

Resident Alain Aubé also raised concerns about a possible four-story outdoor parking structure in the Place Rosemère sector, saying its location could shape the town's image from Highway 640.

"The first thing people will see of Rosemère is a four-story outdoor parking lot," Aubé said in French.

Pitre said the project is not at the permit stage and that any parking structure would have to go through the town's architectural review process.

"There are different provisions for integration, for improving the visual aspect of the garage itself," Mayor Pitre said.

Aubé also asked whether the PPU would include a firm cap on the number of units expected over the next 15 years. Pitre said the PPU as a whole allows roughly 1,400 to 2,000 doors over that period, but that number covers more than Place Rosemère alone.

"The only discussions we have with Place Rosemère, their first phase over a 15-year horizon, is 650 doors," Pitre said.

Flood protection advances

Council also dealt with several flood-related files, including studies and work tied to Rosemère's flood-protection structures.

The town said it has three flood-protection works: the Nicolas-Mantet sector dike, the Charbonneau Park sector dike and the David-Morris Street sector dike. Council committed to producing a performance study by March 1, 2028.

For the David-Morris dike, council said the town could not confirm it had no information suggesting a possible non-compliance. A simulation presented through the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal showed raising work would be needed to meet a 100-year flood elevation level.

Council also authorized steps to obtain the required provincial environmental authorization for work on the David-Morris dike.

Environment and infrastructure

Council approved the inclusion of several town-owned lots in the Rivière-des-Mille-Îles wildlife refuge expansion.

Coun. Sébastien Jacquet said the lots include areas near the Rivière aux Chiens, the Rivière des Mille Îles and several areas.

Pitre added that the move would protect nearly 80 hectares of Rosemère territory "in perpetuity."

Council also awarded a contract for two electric dump trucks at a cost of \$514,515.38 and adopted a program to support properties vulnerable to pluvial flooding and sewer backups.

High-speed rail discussions

Rosemère also authorized its director general and acting clerk to sign documents tied to discussions with VIA HFR – VIA TGF Inc. (Alto) on the proposed Toronto-Quebec City high-speed rail project.

The federal Alto project is planned as a mostly dedicated and electrified high-speed rail line with stations including Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, and Quebec City.

Council also proclaimed May 17 as the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia.

The proclamation noted that Quebec's Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms protect people from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.



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New flashing crosswalks installed along Chemin d'Oka to improve pedestrian safety

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The City of Deux-Montagnes has announced the installation of four new rapid flashing pedestrian crossings along Chemin d'Oka, a move aimed at improving safety for pedestrians travelling through some of the municipality's busiest residential and recreational sectors.

According to information released by the city, the newly installed crossings are equipped with rectangular rapid flashing beacons, highly visible warning lights designed to alert motorists and cyclists when a pedestrian is crossing or preparing to cross the roadway. Pedestrians can activate the lights by pressing a button before entering the street.

The four new crossings have been strategically placed in areas that attract significant pedestrian traffic, particularly families, students, and park visitors. The locations are:

- At the corner of Grand-Moulin Street, near Parc du Centenaire



- At the corner of 14th Avenue, near École des Mésanges
- At the corner of 16th Avenue, near the Dairy Queen commercial area
- At the corner of 26th Avenue, near Parc Armitage

City officials say the installations are part of ongoing efforts to make local streets safer and more accessible for residents of all ages.

Chemin d'Oka is one of the main arteries crossing Deux-Montagnes and sees a steady flow of both vehicle and pedestrian traffic throughout the day. During school hours, weekends, and the warmer months, the corridor becomes especially active as families access parks, businesses, and nearby neighbourhoods on foot or by bicycle.

The addition of rapid flashing beacons reflects a growing trend across municipalities in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada, where enhanced pedestrian crossings are increasingly being adopted as a practical safety measure. Studies conducted in North America have shown that flashing pedestrian beacons improve driver awareness and increase the likelihood that vehicles will yield to pedestrians at crossings.

The crossing near École des Mésanges is expected to be particularly important during school arrival and dismissal periods, when children and parents regularly cross Chemin

d'Oka. Meanwhile, the crossings near Parc du Centenaire and Parc Armitage aim to improve access to recreational spaces frequently used by residents during the spring and summer seasons.

The commercial sector near 16th Avenue, which includes restaurants and businesses such as Dairy Queen, also experiences high foot traffic, especially among teenagers and families during evenings and weekends.

In its public notice, the city also issued an important safety reminder to pedestrians. Officials emphasized that even with the new flashing systems in place, pedestrians should always establish eye contact with motorists and cyclists before crossing in order to ensure they have been seen.

Road safety experts often stress that technology and infrastructure improvements work best when combined with cautious behaviour from both drivers and pedestrians. While flashing beacons increase visibility, attentiveness from all road users remains essential in preventing accidents.

The project forms part of broader municipal efforts seen in many Quebec communities to encourage active transportation while improving safety standards around schools, parks, and commercial corridors. Enhanced crossings are considered especially valuable in suburban



municipalities where wide roads and steady traffic can create challenges for pedestrians attempting to cross safely.

Residents have generally welcomed the initiative on social media, with many parents expressing appreciation for the added safety measures near schools and parks.

The City of Deux-Montagnes has not indicated whether additional flashing pedestrian crossings will be added elsewhere in the municipality in the near future, but the latest installations signal a continued focus on pedestrian safety and accessibility throughout the community.

Deadly dust: what North Shore residents need to know about hantavirus

MARIA DIAMANTIS
info@newsfirst.ca

As warmer weather returns and many North Shore residents begin opening garages, sheds, cottages and storage spaces that sat closed all winter, health experts are reminding Canadians about a rare but potentially deadly disease linked to rodents: hantavirus.

The virus has recently returned to international headlines following a suspected outbreak linked to a cruise ship near the South Atlantic, where several deaths were reported. While cases remain uncommon in Canada, public health officials say awareness and prevention are essential because hantavirus infections can become severe very quickly.

Hantavirus is primarily spread through contact with infected rodents, especially deer mice, which are found across much of Canada. The virus is not usually transmitted directly between people. Instead, humans become infected after inhaling tiny airborne particles from rodent urine, saliva

or droppings.

That means activities many North Shore homeowners consider routine, cleaning a garage, opening a cottage, sweeping a shed, or clearing out a basement, can become dangerous if rodent contamination is present.

Health Canada warns that one of the biggest mistakes people make is sweeping or vacuuming mouse droppings. Doing so can launch virus particles into the air where they may be inhaled. Instead, contaminated areas should first be sprayed thoroughly with disinfectant or a bleach solution and left wet for at least 10 minutes before cleanup begins.

Early symptoms of hantavirus infection often resemble the flu. Patients may experience fever, chills, headaches, muscle pain, fatigue, nausea and dizziness. In more severe cases, the illness can suddenly progress into serious respiratory distress, causing coughing and difficulty breathing as fluid accumulates in the lungs.

The North American strain is associated with Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome, or HPS, a



disease with a fatality rate estimated between 30 and 38 percent in severe cases.

There is currently no approved vaccine or specific antiviral treatment. Doctors focus on supportive care and breathing assistance, which makes early medical attention extremely important.

Experts say residents should watch for signs of rodent activity including droppings, shredded nesting materials, gnawed food packaging and strong ammonia-like odours.

Preventing rodents from entering homes remains the best protection. Public health agencies recommend sealing cracks and openings, storing food

in rodent-proof containers, removing clutter and keeping woodpiles away from buildings.

People cleaning cabins, garages or sheds after long periods of closure should ventilate the space first and wear gloves. In heavily contaminated areas, experts recommend a high-filtration mask such as an N95 or HEPA respirator.

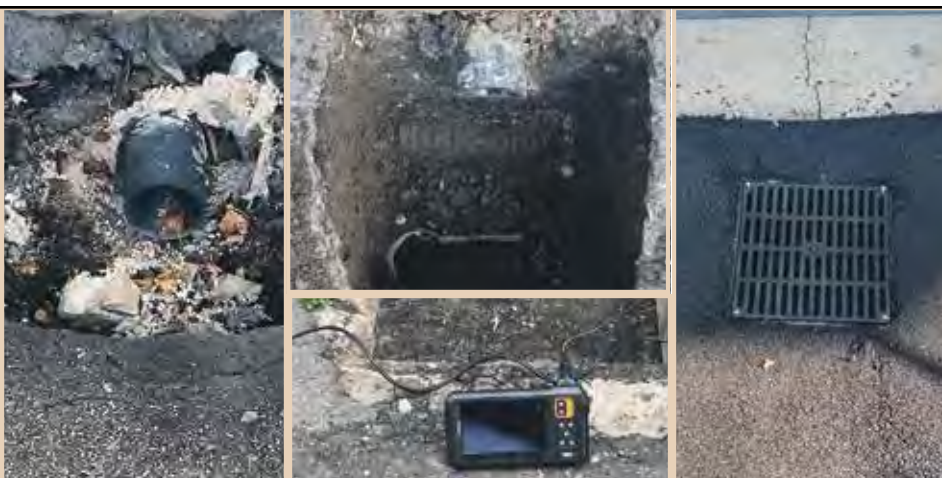
Although hantavirus infections are rare, health officials stress that awareness is critical because the disease can escalate rapidly. A few mouse droppings in a forgotten corner may seem harmless, but improper cleanup can create a serious health risk.

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Victoria Day

MONDAY, MAY 18, 2026



National Patriots' Day (*Journée nationale des patriotes*) is celebrated across Québec to commemorate democracy and patriotic struggles for freedom from the British rule during 1837-1838. The day's commemorations can be traced back to 1937, in which citizens of Saint-Denis-sur-Richelieu organized the 1837 centennial celebrations.

About 25 years later, annual observances were held in November to remember patriots who fought against the British colonial power in the province. In 1982, the Québec government recognized the importance of the historic events that took place in the province during 1837-1838. The government proclaimed a decree that Patriots' Day would be observed on the Sunday closest to November 23 to honor the patriots.

On November 20, 2002, the Quebec government moved for National Patriots' Day to be an annual provincial statutory holiday to honor the memory of the patriots on the Monday preceding May 25 of each year. National Patriots' Day has been held as a provincial statutory holiday since May 19, 2003, replacing another holiday known as la Fête de Dollard (Dollard Day), which was held in honor of the 17th century soldier Adam Dollard des Ormeaux.

HOW DO PEOPLE CELEBRATE VICTORIA DAY?

Many people in Québec attend various celebrations and events, and take part in historic activities that are organized throughout the province on National Patriots' Day. Celebrations include marches, music concerts, public speeches, and award ceremonies. Many societies, organizations, and community groups organize different events and activities that occur on or around National Patriots' Day. Special commemorative dinners may also be organized during this holiday.

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Blainville joins "Dandelion Challenge" to support pollinators and biodiversity

MARIA DIAMANTIS
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The City of Blainville is once again taking part in the growing environmental initiative known as the "Défi Pissenlits," or Dandelion Challenge, encouraging residents to rethink the role of dandelions in urban ecosystems and help protect pollinating insects.

As part of the initiative, the municipality announced that it will temporarily suspend lawn mowing on municipal green spaces during the dandelion flowering period. The measure applies to all municipal lands except parks, school parks, sports fields, and walking trails.

According to the city, more than 341,500 square metres of green space will be preserved during the campaign.

Municipal officials say the initiative is designed to support pollinators such as bees and other insects that play a critical role in maintaining biodiversity and healthy ecosystems. While dandelions are often viewed as weeds, environmental experts increasingly recognize them as an important early-season source of nectar and pollen for pollinating species emerging after winter.

During the spring, food sources for pollinators can still be limited, making flowering dandelions particularly valuable.

Bees rely heavily on early blooms to rebuild energy reserves and sustain colonies after the colder months.

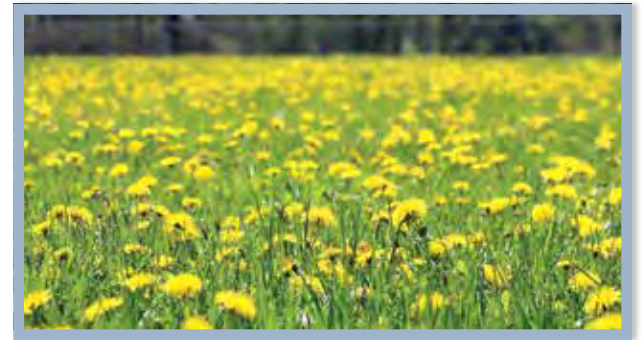
The Dandelion Challenge has gained popularity in municipalities across Quebec and other parts of Canada in recent years as communities search for practical and low-cost ways to contribute to environmental protection and biodiversity conservation.

By reducing mowing during this brief flowering period, cities can create temporary pollinator-friendly zones without requiring major infrastructure changes or costly environmental projects.

The City of Blainville is also encouraging residents to participate by allowing grass and dandelions to grow naturally on private properties during the challenge period. Citizens are specifically being asked not to remove or uproot dandelions while they are in bloom.

Environmental organizations have long warned about declining pollinator populations worldwide due to habitat loss, pesticide use, climate change, and reduced access to flowering plants. Pollinators are considered essential to both natural ecosystems and agriculture, as they contribute to the reproduction of many flowering plants and food crops.

Municipal initiatives such as the Défi Pissenlits are increasingly being viewed as small but meaningful actions that can collectively have a positive environmental impact when embraced by large



numbers of residents.

The campaign also serves an educational purpose by encouraging citizens to reconsider common perceptions about urban lawns and "weeds." Dandelions, despite their reputation, are among the first widespread flowers available to pollinators in the spring and can provide an important bridge until other plants begin blooming.

Blainville's participation reflects a broader movement among municipalities seeking to balance urban maintenance with ecological responsibility. By temporarily allowing nature to take its course, the city hopes to contribute to healthier pollinator populations and increased biodiversity throughout the region.

Residents wishing to take part in the initiative are encouraged to delay mowing their lawns and let dandelions bloom freely during the early spring weeks.

Multiple arrests made following violent armed assault near Saint-Eustache high school

MARIA DIAMANTIS
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Police in Saint-Eustache have arrested six suspects following a violent armed confrontation that left several people injured near a local high school last year.

According to the police, the incident took place on February 28, 2025, at approximately 8:30 p.m. near École secondaire des Patriotes. Authorities say the altercation involved more than a dozen individuals and resulted in injuries to at least three people, all of whom were transported to hospital for treatment.

Investigators allege that several dangerous weapons were used during the confrontation, including knives, telescopic batons and pepper spray.

On the morning of May 7, police carried out a coordinated operation involving the Service de police de la Ville de Saint-Eustache and the Service de police de la Ville de Châteauguay. Five suspects between the ages of 17 and 19 were arrested and questioned by investigators. They were expected to appear before the court in Saint-Jérôme later that same day.

Police also confirmed that a sixth suspect was arrested in the Quebec City region in connection with the same investigation and is also scheduled to appear before the courts.

The case has raised renewed concerns among North Shore residents about youth violence and the growing presence of weapons in confrontations involving teenagers. Incidents occurring near schools often create lasting anxiety among parents and local communities, particularly when multiple weapons are allegedly involved.

Authorities are continuing their investigation and are asking anyone with information related to the case to contact the Saint-Eustache police confidential tip line.



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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

TEST OF TIME

Q *I have been lucky in life, growing up in nice neighborhoods, going to good schools, with parents who are very successful financially. I am about to finish my bachelor's degree and work full-time at a good job. I am 20 and things are going great.*

My wonderful boyfriend is 22 and has been less lucky. He was raised by an amazing single mother who has worked two jobs to support her four children; they are from a low-income, mostly Latino community, where the schools are poor. As a result, life has been harder for him.

Unlike my parents who have given me money to save, he has had to work full-time, often living paycheck to paycheck. Because of this he had been out of school but just started working on his degree again.

My boyfriend and I couldn't be happier. We are living together and know that we want to spend the rest of our lives together. We can't imagine it any other way. In fact, we are treating the economic downturn as a great opportunity and are hoping to buy a small house at the end of the year.

The problem is my parents consistently make nasty remarks about him and our relationship. They say he's riding my coat tails, taking advantage of me, and once we've cohabitated long enough, will take half of what I have. The things they say come off as classist and even racist, and my mother and father know these remarks hurt me deeply. Should I tell my parents to take a hike?

Keely

A *Keely, you can't imagine your life without your boyfriend, but at 20 you can't imagine a world with rotary telephones. At 40 you won't be able to imagine what you did at 20. Let's take a step back and try to decide if it's fair to tell your parents to take a hike.*

Wayne & Tamara

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

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

or email: GetInTouch@WayneAndTamara.com

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AVIS PUBLIC – Jour, heure et lieu des séances ordinaires du conseil des commissaires et du comité exécutif de la Commission scolaire Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier pour l'année scolaire 2026-2027

AVIS PUBLIC est par la présente donné que le règlement n° BL2000-CA-05 : *Jour, heure et lieu des séances ordinaires du conseil des commissaires de la Commission scolaire Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier* ET le règlement n° BL2008-CA-15 : *Jour, heure et lieu des séances ordinaires du comité exécutif de la Commission scolaire Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier* seront modifiés à la séance ordinaire du conseil des commissaires de la Commission scolaire Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier du 25 juin 2026, à 19 h 30, afin d'établir les dates des séances pour l'année scolaire 2026-2027.

Les membres du public qui souhaitent examiner ces documents peuvent le faire en visitant notre site Web à l'adresse www.swlauriersb.qc.ca.

La séance ordinaire du conseil des commissaires du 25 juin 2026 se tiendra dans la salle 32A du centre administratif situé au 235, montée Lesage, Rosemère (Québec), et sera diffusée en direct sur Internet. Les membres du public souhaitant y assister à distance pourront le faire en se rendant sur le site Web suivant : <http://bit.ly/swlsbcouncil>.

Fait à Rosemère (Québec)

30 avril 2026

M^e Anna Sollazzo, secrétaire générale

PUBLIC NOTICE – Day, Time and Place of Regular Meetings of the Council of Commissioners and the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board for the 2026-2027 School Year

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that by-law no. BL2000-CA-05: *Day, Time and Place of Regular Meetings of the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board* AND by-law no. BL2008-CA-15: *Day, Time and Place of Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board* will be amended at the regular meeting of the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board on June 25, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. in order to establish the meeting dates for the 2026-2027 school year.

Members of the public wishing to examine these documents may do so by visiting our website at www.swlauriersb.qc.ca.

The regular meeting of the Council of Commissioners on June 25, 2026, will be held in room 32A of the Administration Centre located at 235, montée Lesage, Rosemère (Québec) and broadcast online. Members of the public who wish to attend this Council meeting at a distance may do so on the following website: <http://bit.ly/swlsbcouncil>.

Given at Rosemère (Québec)

April 30, 2025

M^e Anna Sollazzo, Secretary General

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Students explore health-care careers through hands-on hospital visit

MARIA DIAMANTIS
info@newsfirst.ca

A new collaboration between the CISSS des Laurentides and École secondaire des Patriotes is giving students a firsthand look at the realities of working in Quebec's health-care system.

On April 24, students in Secondary 4 and 5 visited Hôpital de Saint-Eustache as part of a pilot initiative titled *Visite ton avenir en santé: journée découverte des métiers*. The project was organized jointly by the CISSS des Laurentides and the Centre de services scolaire des Mille-Îles to introduce young people to careers in the health and social services network.

The students, accompanied by guidance counsellors and CISSS representatives, began the day with a presentation by Dr. Jessica Perreault-Bishop, Director of Medical Education at the CISSS des Laurentides. She spoke about her academic background and professional journey, offering students insight into the educational pathways and personal commitment required in the medical field.

Following the presentation, students toured several departments within the hospital, including emergency services, nuclear medicine, pharmacy, food services and rehabilitation. During the visit, they met and spoke with a range of health-care professionals, including respiratory therapists and nursing staff, learning directly about the daily realities and challenges of frontline work.

Alain Laplante, principal of École secondaire des Patriotes, praised the collaborative effort behind the project and highlighted the contribu-

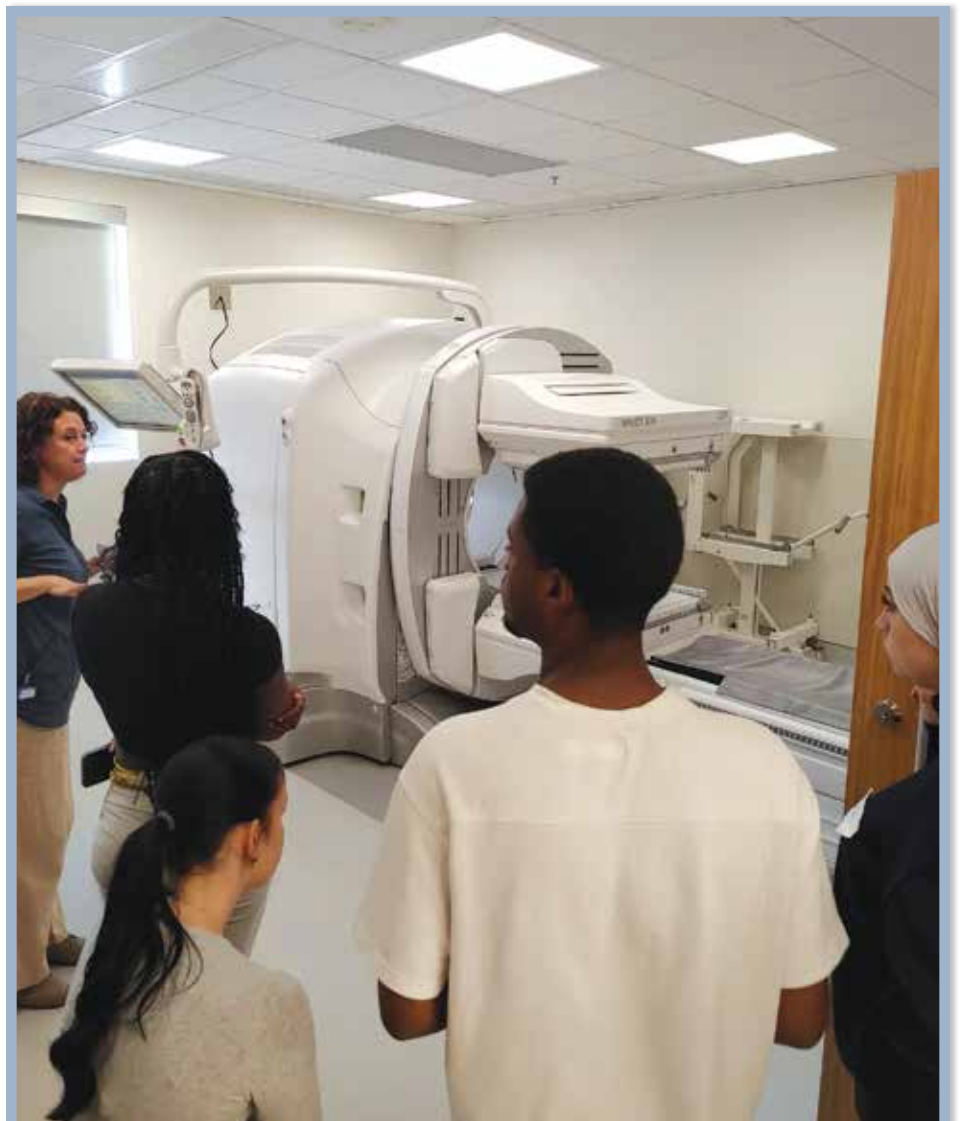
tions of guidance counsellor Marc Bastien and CSSMI counsellor Cathy Forget. According to Laplante, the initiative gave students a practical opportunity to explore health-care professions while helping them reflect more seriously on their future career choices.

Julie Delaney, President and CEO of the CISSS des Laurentides, also emphasized the importance of opening hospital doors to younger generations at a time when the province continues to face staffing shortages in several sectors of the health-care network. She stated that introducing students to these professions early can help build long-term interest in the field while strengthening connections between schools and the public health system.

Across Quebec, health-care institutions have increasingly sought new ways to encourage recruitment and retention, particularly in nursing, respiratory therapy and specialized technical fields. Programs such as this one reflect a growing recognition that career exploration at the secondary-school level can play an important role in developing the next generation of workers.

For many of the participating students, the visit provided more than just information. It offered an opportunity to see the human side of health care, from emergency response to rehabilitation services, and to better understand the teamwork required to keep a modern hospital functioning.

Organizers say the pilot project may serve as a model for future partnerships between schools and health institutions in the Laurentians region.



HOROSCOPE

Week of **MAY 17 TO 23, 2026**

The luckiest signs this week:
VIRGO, LIBRA AND SCORPIO



ARIES

This week, you'll focus on your home. Renovations, reorganization or relocation may occupy your time. A loved one will need your presence and support, drawing you deeper into family responsibilities.



TAURUS

You'll face a dilemma around discretion. Keeping a secret may become challenging and could risk exposure. You'll gain more by listening rather than speaking, as you'll gather useful, strategic information without compromising yourself.



GEMINI

You may make a real estate purchase or sale, proving your resources match your ambitions. In romance, outbursts of affection will strengthen the balance in your relationship and highlight a bond undergoing deep transformation.



CANCER

Disruption will require quick action. Challenges, surprises or sensitive decisions will guide you toward the right choices. Meanwhile, loved ones and colleagues will finally respond positively to your efforts, making them far more rewarding.



LEO

Your creativity will peak, inspiring you to start a personal project or launch a bold initiative. An exhibition or performance will leave a lasting impression on you. Your generosity will deepen your relationships and strengthen your emotional connections.



VIRGO

Your social life will be buzzing this week. Both old and new friends will seek you out. Invitations, events and meaningful conversations will reveal important truths. These exchanges will strengthen your bonds and deepen your understanding of others.



LIBRA

A remarkable professional opportunity is coming, such as a job promotion or the launch of your own business. This long-awaited dream will materialize, marking an important step toward lasting security and personal fulfillment.



SCORPIO

A secret will come to light, whether intentionally shared or discovered by chance. At work, you may have to speak a foreign language or decode an important message. In your love life, a meaningful exchange will mark an important emotional turning point with your partner.



SAGITTARIUS

Your emotions will run high this week, but for happy reasons. A child or loved one will accomplish something deeply moving that will fill you with pride and joy. You'll shed tears of deep and sincere happiness.



CAPRICORN

At work, the facts must outweigh your emotions. Logical thinking will help you have more successful negotiations. Respecting rules and regulations will prevent complications and reinforce your professional success.



AQUARIUS

An avalanche of professional responsibilities will slow you down. If your health is unstable, your body will demand rest. By managing your energy more wisely, you'll regain the strength and efficiency you need to face new challenges.



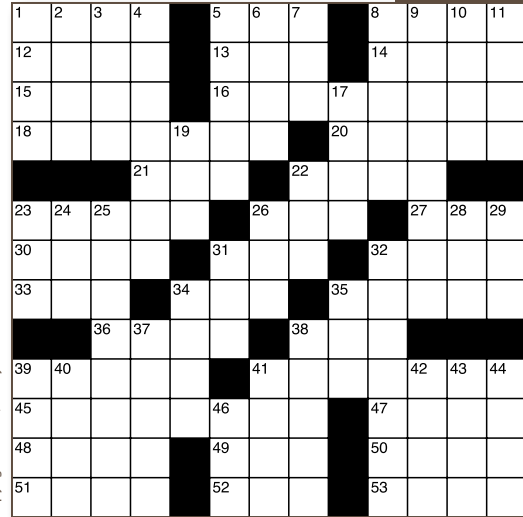
PISCES

A certain success will fill you with pride and highlight your hidden talents. Family tensions may create stress and throw off your inner balance. You'll have to carefully navigate this period of adjustment.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORD

PUZZLE N° 304



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ACROSS

1. Insult
5. Fabric layer
8. _____ and found
12. Game of chance
13. Shad _____
14. Place
15. Hooked on
16. Conflicting
18. Sound systems
20. Assembles
21. One of Santa's helpers
22. Seedless plant
23. Do a body search
26. Light source
27. Hit lightly
30. Lease payment
31. Head for the hills!
32. Inheritor
33. Kooky
34. Unruly crowd
35. Rice field
36. Give off

DOWN

38. Baby tiger
39. Implant
41. Ice-cream flavor
45. Kept
47. Warty creature
48. Hymn closer
49. Feasted
50. Pimples
51. Puts down turf
52. Picked up
53. Foot parts
1. Hits the slopes
2. Pre-Easter time
3. Feed the pot
4. Worst
5. Affirmation
6. Clips
7. Not nope
8. Light beam
9. Familiarized
10. Wired
11. Tickets
17. Foretelling sign
19. Forest animal
22. Amusing
23. '60s do
24. Caught _____-handed
25. Under obligation
26. Pinch hitter, for short
28. Give support to
29. Use a lever
31. Decay
32. Environment
34. Calf-length skirt
35. Wordplay
37. Wealth
38. Service academy student
39. Notable periods
40. Reminder
41. Presidential "no"
42. Coco _____ (rum cocktail)
43. Country path
44. Lime drinks
46. Remind constantly

Sudoku

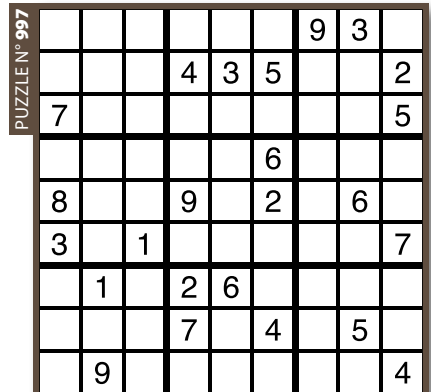
HOW TO PLAY

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.

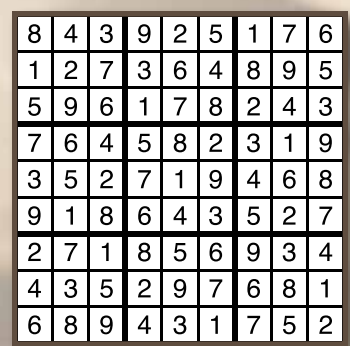


LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

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Sudoku



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|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Local Asparagus | 8. Cucumber |
| 2. Sweet Pineapple | 9. Lime |
| 3. Crunchy Red
Grapes (~2 lbs) | 10. Local Apples |
| 4. Sweet Snaps
Peppers | 11. Sweet
Cantaloupe |
| 5. Fresh Tomatoes
(4) | 12. Fresh Purple
Garlic |
| 6. Oyster
Mushrooms | 13. Lemon |
| 7. Green Beans | 14. Green Onions |
| | 15. Lettuce |
| | 16. Blackberries |

SMALL BASKET (\$22)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Local
Asparagus | 6. Juicy Jumbo
Oranges (2) |
| 2. Sweet Corn (2) | 7. Fresh Purple
Garlic |
| 3. Lettuce | 8. Blackberries |
| 4. Bananas (3) | 9. Cucumber |
| 5. Honeydew
Melon | 10. Tomatoes (2) |

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