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Rose-Art's Symposium Ste-Rose draws crowd of over 20,000 people



Page 3

Linda Lapointe's summer BBQ draws large turnout

Page 7



Linda Lapointe giving a speech at
her Member of Parliament's BBQ.

OSM brings world- class music to Rosemère



Page 6



The Best Choice
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Police step up electric scooter and e-bike enforcement across four North Shore cities

Project Voltage combines education with targeted patrols as officers report risky riding and confusion over Quebec's rules

MARIA DIAMANTIS
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Electric scooters, e-bikes and one-wheel devices have become a common sight on local streets. Now, the intermunicipal police service for Thérèse-De Blainville is intensifying a summer campaign aimed at riders who may not know the rules or choose not to follow them.

Project Voltage is operating in Boisbriand, Lorraine, Rosemère and Sainte-Thérèse. The Régie intermunicipale de police Thérèse-De Blainville, or RIPTB, says the campaign combines public information, prevention and enforcement as the popularity of electric mobility devices grows.

Police say officers have observed more risky behaviour and received more complaints from residents. The service has also found that many riders, particularly young people, are unfamiliar with age limits, helmet requirements, speed restrictions and the places where different

devices may legally be used.

Parents do not always know the rules either, according to the police service. Project Voltage therefore brings together patrol officers, neighbourhood officers, traffic personnel, prevention teams and communications staff, with the four municipalities helping distribute safety information.

What Quebec's rules require

Under Quebec's motorized personal transportation device pilot project, riders of electric scooters, electric unicycles and similar devices must be at least 14, carry proof of age and wear a properly fastened helmet. The devices are limited to 25 km/h and may be used on roads with speed limits of 50 km/h or less and on associated bicycle lanes, unless signs prohibit them.

Riders cannot carry passengers, wear headphones or use a handheld phone or entertainment screen while moving. Sidewalk riding is generally prohibited. Quebec says violations of

the pilot-project rules can lead to fines ranging from \$100 to \$200, depending on the offence.

Electric bicycles fall under different rules. Quebec requires riders to wear a compliant bicycle helmet. Riders must be 18 or older, although people aged 14 to 17 may operate an electric bicycle if they hold a Class 6D moped licence. A compliant e-bike must have operable pedals, a motor rated at no more than 500 watts and assistance that stops at 32 km/h or less.

Education first, tickets when warranted

Throughout the summer, police have used social-media posts, educational encounters

and targeted operations. The RIPTB says officers will continue to favour education when circumstances allow, but tickets will be issued when they observe dangerous behaviour or regulatory violations.

"Our first objective remains to inform citizens and equip parents so they understand the rules governing these devices," Chief Inspector Karine Desautniers said in the release. She described the safety of riders, pedestrians and other road users as a shared responsibility.

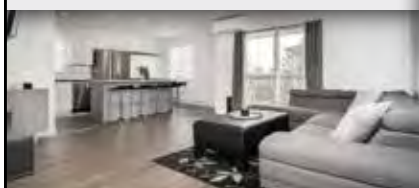
The police service did not provide figures for complaints, stops, warnings, tickets or collisions associated with the campaign. Project Voltage is expected to continue over the coming weeks across the four municipalities.



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More than 20,000 attended Rose-Art's 30th annual Symposium Ste-Rose

Artists and sculptors showcased their best in Laval's Vieux Sainte-Rose

MARTIN C. BARRY

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While summer rain in recent years has been a constant worry for the organizers of the annual Symposium Ste-Rose, there was hardly a drop of moisture in the air during this year's three-day art event. However, the threat came from another force of nature – wind.

As most of the artists exhibit their works outdoors in tents, efforts this year to set up the equipment in Laval's Vieux Sainte-Rose neighborhood had its challenging moments, according to Oprina Félicia Dolea, president of the Corporation Rose-Art which organizes the symposium.



Attendance at the Symposium Ste-Rose was up this year, possibly because of the good weather, according to Oprina Félicia Dolea, president of the Corporation Rose-Art which organizes the symposium. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Newsfirst Multimedia)

Coping with nature's forces

"We started installing them at six in the evening the day before we opened and we had to deal with the wind – but now everything is okay," she said.

If anything, the lack of rain seemed to have encouraged people to turn out in larger than usual numbers this year – which was the Symposium Ste-Rose's 30th anniversary. For some of the artists, that meant brisk sales of art pieces and canvases – or just greater public exposure for their art.



Legendary Quebec chanteuse Shirley Thérour (seen here with one of her abstract paintings) was the official spokesperson for the 2026 Symposium Ste-Rose. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Newsfirst Multimedia)

From July 23 to 26, appreciators of quality sculpture and art from all over Quebec, as well as Ontario and other parts of eastern Canada, gathered in Vieux Sainte Rose for an event that has come to be recognized as one of Quebec's leading and most prestigious outdoor art shows.

Shirley Thérour singer and artist

For the third time, the organizers were able to persuade legendary Quebec singer Shirley Thérour – a talented visual artist in addition to her musical talents – to be the official spokesperson for the symposium.

Thérour had a string of hits in Quebec, as well as in Eastern Ontario, Atlantic Canada and other French-speaking regions of the country, during the 1960s and 1970s. She was also a highly popular late-afternoon program host on French-language television in Quebec. Several of Thérour's art works were featured in a special segment of the 2026 symposium.

After years of developing herself as a painter of figurative or representational art, Shirley Thérour exhibited a selection of paintings she produced since last year as abstracts. "I worked on this one six months," she said in an interview, noting that abstract is far more difficult, requiring more concentration than most people imagine.

AI makes inroads into art

"It takes time to study your canvas, to verify the colors to see that everything is in the right place – why there is green here and black there – it's not just tossing paint randomly – it's not like that at all," she added.

As Artificial Intelligence continues to make its way into a growing number of sectors of human activity, it was only a matter of time before AI would begin to influence the world of art – and the Symposium Ste-Rose.

Oprina Félicia Dolea acknowledged that she and others in the art collective were aware that AI might actually have been used to help create some works in this year's symposium, while adding that Rose-Arts has no guidelines or rules for how AI is used by participating artists. Still, she suggested it could have legitimate uses in the creation of art as a new kind of tool alongside canvases, paints and brushes.

Home of renowned artists

In addition to Thérour's support, the symposium's honorary president this year was Christopher Skeete, Member of the Quebec National Assembly for Sainte-Rose.

As always, the symposium took place alongside the Rivière des Mille-Îles in the charming and historic Laval neighbourhood. The village is renowned as the birthplace of internationally-acclaimed Québécois painter Marc-Aurèle Fortin. Sainte-Rose was also at one time the home of landscape painter Clarence Gagnon. Both influenced generations of artists in Quebec as well as around the world.

Awards of excellence

After winning a range of awards for excellence over nearly three decades, the symposium's organizing committee continues to uphold the standards that have established the Symposium Ste-Rose's reputation for excellence in art circles across eastern Canada.

In 2019, the Laval Chamber of Commerce and Industry presented them with a Dunamis award for helping to promote tourism in Laval. They were also a finalist for a second Dunamis in 2020 and 2022, as an environmentally-sustainable organization or enterprise.

An estimated 20,000 people attended. Although most are usually from the Laval and greater Montreal regions, the busy vacation season typically also draws in visitors from Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, as well as from the U.S. states of New York, New Hampshire and Vermont.



Among the artists from outside Laval who exhibited at this year's Symposium Ste-Rose was Maria Astadjov from Deux-Montagnes on the North Shore. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Newsfirst Multimedia)

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OPINION & Editorial



Is Ottawa about to break its own supply management law?

If the rumours prove correct, Canadians should brace for more cheques to dairy farmers and more milk dumping U.S. President Donald Trump's latest tariff threat has pushed Canada back to the negotiating table. An additional 50 per cent tariff on specified Canadian goods, scheduled to take effect Aug. 19, appears to have caught Ottawa flat-footed.

The federal government is now scrambling to limit the damage to several industries, including roughly \$1.5 billion in agri-food trade involving Canadian alcoholic beverages, whisky and dairy products.

Start with the provincial bans on American alcohol. Perhaps they were intended to create negotiating leverage, but consumers faced fewer choices and less competitive pressure on prices, while purchases shifted to Canadian brands or non-American imports.

That is not what economic leverage looks like. Real leverage comes from assets other countries need: energy, critical minerals, transportation infrastructure, market access and regulatory cooperation. Restricting consumer choice and suppressing competition is political theatre masquerading as economic strategy.

The dairy file is more complicated and potentially far more consequential.

Late last week, it was reported that Ottawa was considering concessions involving greater access for American dairy proteins. Depending on how such a commitment is structured, it could place the government on a collision course with Bill C-202, the law Parliament adopted in 2025 to prevent future trade agreements from increasing tariff-rate quotas or reducing over-quota tariffs for supply-managed products.

Those quotas determine how much foreign dairy can enter Canada at lower tariff rates.

Although Bill C-202 received support across the political spectrum, that unanimity did not make it sound policy. The legislation effectively told the dairy industry that future governments would protect supply management from further

trade concessions, reducing one of the few remaining incentives to prepare for greater competition, invest in processing capacity and develop a serious long-term strategy.

Now the Americans may be testing just how firm that protection really is.

Ottawa should not grant additional access to American dairy proteins simply to get through the current trade dispute. If concessions are necessary, they should be part of a broader Canadian plan to make the dairy sector more competitive and less vulnerable.

Those who believe American dairy products could never penetrate the Canadian market are missing the point. The Americans are not necessarily trying to sell cartons of milk to Canadian households; they want to sell proteins to Canadian processors. Companies such as Saputo, Agropur and Lactalis could use those lower-cost ingredients in cheese and other manufactured products.

Processors could save money, but consumers would have no guarantee of seeing those savings at the grocery store while Canadian dairy farmers could face reduced demand as processors substitute American proteins for Canadian ones.

Canada has been down this road before.

During the controversy over diafiltered milk proteins, from roughly 2015 to 2018, American proteins entered Canada tariff-free as protein ingredients but could then be treated as milk by Canadian processors. This lowered processors' ingredient costs while displacing some Canadian milk.

Canada responded with milk Classes 6 and 7, allowing domestic proteins to compete at lower prices. The United States objected, and Canada eventually eliminated those classes during negotiations for the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA).

Ottawa then compensated dairy farmers.

And that is where we could be heading again. Canada protects the system, eventually makes concessions when trade pressure becomes too great, compensates producers and leaves the underlying problems for another day.

The costs are not trivial. Ottawa has committed more than \$4.8 billion in compensation and support for supply-managed sectors affected by market access granted under CUSMA, the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

There is another problem. Canada already struggles with surplus non-fat milk solids, and additional American proteins could reduce demand for Canadian milk proteins even further, creating more pressure to dispose of milk Canadian farmers have already produced.

Ottawa could find itself in a very awkward position. Barely a year after Parliament passed Bill C-202, the government may have to accommodate American demands anyway, leaving Canadian dairy farmers with fewer market opportunities while taxpayers are asked once again to compensate them.

None of this means supply management needs to be abolished. But protecting the system is not the same thing as strengthening it.

Canada needs greater transparency, independent reporting on milk disposal, more investment in domestic processing and gradual modernization of quota policy.

Bill C-202 was supposed to protect Canadian dairy from future trade concessions, but trying to legislate away trade pressure was never a substitute for reform.

The choice is not between abolishing supply management tomorrow and preserving it unchanged forever. Canada can reform the system on its own terms or wait until pressure from Washington leaves it with fewer choices.

Dr. Sylvain Charlebois

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Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac gives playground equipment a second life at Félix-Leclerc Park

A play structure and swings moved from another municipal park have replaced aging installations, allowing the site to reopen without buying new equipment



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Playground equipment removed during a major renovation at one city park has found a new home at another, extending the life of municipal assets while replacing installations the city described as outdated.

Work at Félix-Leclerc Park is now complete, and all areas of the park have reopened. The project replaced a play structure and swings with equipment transferred from Parc des Bourrasques, according to the City of Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac.

The equipment remained in good condition but was no longer needed at Parc des Bourrasques, where a broader reconstruction introduced new play areas and other amenities. Instead of disposing of the older structures or purchasing replacements for Félix-Leclerc Park, the city relocated the usable equipment.

The city said explicitly that the transferred structures were not new acquisitions. It has not published a separate cost for the work at Félix-Leclerc Park or an estimate of the savings produced by reusing the equipment.

Part of a wider park renewal program

The transfer connects the smaller Félix-Leclerc project to a much larger program of municipal park investment. Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac previously estimated the first phase of its parks and green-spaces master plan at \$7 million, covering major work at Parc des Bourrasques, Parc Clair-de-Lune, Parc Maurice-Binette and Parc

Municipal, as well as improvements near the 13th Avenue boat launch.

At Parc des Bourrasques, the city planned new play structures, including one designed for universal accessibility, along with a climbing area, fitness course, large bamboo-style play feature, additional furniture, shade structures, landscaping, paths and rest areas.

The wider program was developed under the city's 2025-2035 Parks and Green Spaces Master Plan. Municipal information published in 2025 said residents reviewed proposed designs at a public consultation held June 9 before plans were finalized.

Reuse adds a sustainability dimension

Relocating the play equipment gives the Félix-Leclerc project an environmental as well as recreational dimension. Keeping serviceable structures in use can delay disposal and reduce the need for new materials, although the city has not released a calculation of avoided waste or emissions.

The work also shows how improvements at one public site can supply another. Equipment made surplus by the Bourrasques reconstruction was used to renew a neighbourhood park at 2965 chemin d'Oka, rather than leaving the older Félix-Leclerc installations in place.

The city announced the temporary work in July and said some areas would close for public safety. With the project finished, the play zones and other sections of Félix-Leclerc Park are again open to residents.



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OSM brings world-class music to Rosemère

ALESSANDRO COMMISSO

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For one evening, the grounds of Externat Sacré-Cœur sounded less like a school campus and more like an outdoor concert hall.

Thousands of residents gathered in Rosemère on August 7 as the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal (OSM) brought its annual OSM in the Parks tour to the municipality. It transformed the school's athletic grounds into a destination for music lovers from across the lower Laurentians.

Presented as part of Externat Sacré-Cœur's 50th anniversary celebrations, the free concert offered audiences a rare opportunity to experience one of Canada's premier orchestras outside the traditional setting of Montreal's Maison symphonique. Families spread blankets across the grass; lawn chairs filled every available space and spectators arrived well before the performance began to secure a good view of the stage.

By the time the orchestra took its place, anticipation had been building for hours.

The evening began with remarks from local dignitaries and school officials who highlighted the significance of hosting an internationally recognized orchestra. Rosemère is typically a town better known for its quiet residential character than large-scale cultural events.

"We're so proud to welcome everyone here to our beautiful city of Rosemère to celebrate music and culture," Mayor Marie-Elaine Pitre told the crowd before the performance.

Her comments reflected the mood of the evening, which felt as much like a community celebration as a concert.

The event was the result of a partnership between the Town of Rosemère, Externat Sacré-Cœur and the OSM. For the school, the concert represented a major milestone in a year dedicated to commemorating five decades since its founding.



The sun sets over Externat Sacré-Cœur as Rafael Payare conducts the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal during its outdoor performance in Rosemère.

Principal Jasun Taparauskas described the occasion as a tremendous honour for the institution and thanked the many partners who helped make the evening possible. Hosting the OSM as part of the school's anniversary festivities, he said, was a fitting way to celebrate a history rooted in education, community involvement and the arts.

The opening portion of the evening also shone a spotlight on the next generation of musicians. Before the OSM's arrival on stage, student performers from Externat Sacré-Cœur were given an opportunity to showcase their talents before the large audience, earning enthusiastic applause from spectators.

Their performance served as a symbolic bridge between aspiring young musicians and one of the country's most accomplished professional ensembles. Once conductor Rafael Payare appeared on stage, however, the focus shifted squarely to the orchestra.

Payare, who has become one of the most recognizable figures in Canadian classical music since assuming leadership of the OSM,

conducted a program designed to appeal to both dedicated classical enthusiasts and those experiencing a symphony orchestra for the first time. The performance also featured several veteran OSM musicians, including violinist Marianne Dugal and bassoonist Stéphane Lévesque, both of whom have spent more than two decades performing with the orchestra.

What made the evening particularly remarkable was the accessibility of the experience.

Classical music is often associated with formal concert halls, expensive tickets and strict etiquette. In Rosemère, none of those barriers existed. Children ran across the grounds before the performance began, families shared picnic dinners and residents who may never have attended a symphony concert found themselves listening to a world-class orchestra only minutes from home.

That accessibility is a central part of the OSM's summer park series, which aims to bring orchestral music directly into communities across Quebec.

"It is an immense privilege to have the

Orchestre symphonique de Montréal play for us in Rosemère," said Mayor Marie-Elaine Pitre. "Thanks to this collaboration with Externat Sacré-Cœur, we have the opportunity to offer our residents a cultural experience of truly exceptional quality, accessible to all and staged in a magnificent setting. This is exactly the kind of inclusive event that helps bring our community to life."

Throughout the performance, audience members sat attentively, many visibly captivated by the scale and power of the orchestra's sound. Others simply closed their eyes and let the music wash over them as the sun gradually set behind the campus.

The relaxed outdoor setting created a different experience than a traditional concert hall. Rather than rows of assigned seats and formal attire, the evening featured neighbours gathered together under open skies, sharing a cultural experience that felt both intimate and grand.

The concert was also another example of Rosemère's continued investment in cultural programming. While communities frequently host festivals and outdoor entertainment during the summer months, opportunities to see an ensemble of the OSM's calibre remain relatively rare outside major urban centres.

For many residents, that rarity was part of what made the event special.

The concert culminated in a fireworks display that illuminated the night sky above the school grounds, drawing cheers from the crowd and providing a fitting conclusion to an evening that celebrated both music and community.

As Externat Sacré-Cœur continues its 50th anniversary celebrations, organizers will undoubtedly view the OSM's visit as one of the year's defining moments. For a few hours, Rosemère became the cultural centre of the North Shore, proving that world-class music doesn't always require a trip to Montreal. Sometimes, it can be found right in your own backyard.



Rosemère Mayor Marie-Elaine Pitre, MP Linda Lapointe and other guests were among those in attendance for the OSM's free outdoor concert, presented as part of Externat Sacré-Cœur's 50th anniversary celebrations.



Many residents arrived well before the 7:30 p.m. start time, setting up chairs and blankets to secure a spot for the concert.

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Linda Lapointe's summer BBQ draws large turnout

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What was meant to be an outdoor summer barbecue became a cozy indoor community gathering on Thursday, July 9, as Member of Parliament Linda Lapointe welcomed residents to a free BBQ at Sugar Shack Farsa.

Heavy rain forced organizers to move the event indoors, but the change in plans did little to affect attendance. From 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., constituents from across Saint-Eustache and the surrounding riding gathered inside the rustic venue for a fun-filled afternoon.

Upon arriving, attendees were welcomed with a small Canadian flag and pin, along with a bag of candy and refreshments. Guests were then treated to a complimentary meal featuring hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and soft drinks.

Throughout the event, members of Lapointe's team worked behind the scenes and at serving stations, helping distribute food, greet residents and ensure everything ran smoothly. As dinner service got underway, lines quickly formed as attendees made their way through the serving area, adding their choice of condiments to freshly grilled hot dogs and hamburgers before finding a seat and enjoying the afternoon's festivities.

Beyond serving meals, Lapointe's constituency team spent the afternoon engaging with residents and answering questions about local and federal issues. The event gave attendees an opportunity to meet the people who work behind the scenes in the riding office and learn more about the services available to constituents throughout the year.



The barbecue featured a simple but popular menu, with guests lining up to receive their meals before finding seats throughout the venue. The relaxed format allowed residents to enjoy dinner while spending time with friends, family members and neighbours. For many attendees, the event served as both a community gathering and an opportunity to engage with the constituency office in a more informal setting than a public meeting or town hall.

Lapointe was on hand throughout the event, greeting attendees as they arrived and taking time to speak with residents. Addressing the crowd during the evening, she thanked the community for attending despite the weather. "Even though it rained today I'm so glad that we were able to do the activity indoors," she said. "Thank you for coming out in such big numbers; I'm blown away."

A family-centric event

The event was free and open to the public, attracting families, seniors and residents from throughout the riding. The gathering also highlighted a recurring theme that emerged during Lapointe's remarks: the importance of family.

Throughout her speech, she emphasized the role her family has played in supporting her political career. Several members of her family were present, including her partner, one of her four children and two of her grandchildren.

"If you want to be successful in politics, you need to be heavily supported by your family," Lapointe told attendees as she introduced relatives seated among the crowd.

She also spoke about the demands of life in politics and acknowledged the support her family has provided throughout election campaigns and parliamentary sessions. Their presence at the event offered residents a glimpse into the personal side of a public

figure whose work often takes her between Ottawa and her constituency.

The evening's focus on family was reflected not only in Lapointe's speech but also in the makeup of the crowd. Families gathered around tables to share a meal, while community members of all ages took advantage of the opportunity to spend time together in a welcoming setting. The attendance of Lapointe's own family reinforced the personal message she sought to convey throughout her remarks.

From table to parliament

In addition to discussing local issues with constituents, Lapointe used the event to provide an update on some of her recent work in Ottawa.

Among the topics she highlighted was a law called C-16, also known as the Protecting Victims Act, legislation that received Royal Assent on June 18. The bill introduces a series of criminal justice reforms designed to strengthen protections for victims of gender-based violence, intimate partner violence and sexual exploitation, while also expanding measures aimed at protecting children from predators.

Speaking about the work completed during the most recent parliamentary session, Lapointe pointed to the law as one example of legislation that she believes will have a tangible impact on Canadian families.

"This past June we passed a law called C-16. It's a piece of legislation that aims to protect victims and keep kids safe from predators," she said.

The legislation includes measures targeting child sexual exploitation, online abuse and the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, including sexually explicit deepfakes. It also creates a new Criminal Code offence

addressing coercive control in intimate relationships and introduces additional protections for victims navigating the justice system.

Lapointe said the bill reflects ongoing efforts in Parliament to address modern forms of victimization while providing law enforcement and the courts with stronger tools to respond to serious offences. The legislation was one of several parliamentary accomplishments she referenced while reflecting on the past year of work in Ottawa.

She also spoke about her role as president of the Liberal Women's Caucus and the importance of improving representation in politics.

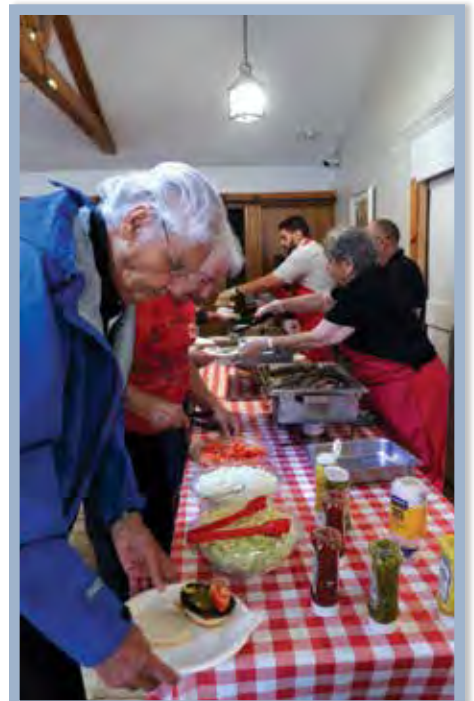
According to Lapointe, having more women in positions of leadership helps bring a wider range of perspectives to decision-making and creates opportunities to advocate for issues affecting women and families across the country. She noted that the increasing number of women serving in Parliament represents an important step toward ensuring that government institutions better reflect the diversity of the population they serve.

Her comments also carried a message of encouragement for younger women. She stressed that opportunities exist across a wide range of fields, including trades, technology and the sciences, and encouraged young people to pursue their goals regardless of the career path they choose.

While the weather may have changed the venue, it did little to dampen the sense of community that filled the room throughout the afternoon.



Linda Lapointe greets attendees and chats with constituents during the indoor community BBQ on July 9.



Residents make their way through the serving line as members of MP Linda Lapointe's team serve hot dogs and hamburgers.

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Laurentides health authority urges residents to consider alternatives to emergency rooms

The regional network is directing people with non-critical concerns toward 811, pharmacies, clinics and provincial appointment services



MARIA DIAMANTIS
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Santé Québec Laurentides is reminding residents that several public health services may be available before a visit to a hospital

emergency department is necessary.

In a July 31 release, the regional health authority encouraged people who are ill or concerned about their condition to contact Info-Santé 811 and speak with a nurse before going to an emergency room when the situation is not critical. The general Info-Santé service is free, confidential and available around the clock, according to the Quebec government.

The guidance is intended to help residents reach an appropriate service while preserving emergency departments for people who need urgent assessment and treatment. The release did not provide regional emergency-room occupancy figures, average wait times or an estimate of how many visits could be handled elsewhere.

Options depend on a resident's situation

Santé Québec Laurentides said residents whose symptoms continue may consult a pharmacist or contact their medical clinic. People without a family doctor can use Quebec's Primary Care Access Point, known as the GAP,

by calling 811 and selecting option 3 or by using the provincial online service.

The Quebec government describes the GAP line as a service for people without a family doctor. Its published Laurentides telephone hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends and public holidays. These hours differ from the 24-hour availability of the general Info-Santé nursing service.

The release also directed residents to Québec Medical Appointment Scheduler, or RVSQ, for medical appointments. The province says the online scheduler is free and available to people with a Quebec health insurance card. Screening appointments may be available through Clic Santé or by telephone at 1-877-644-4545.

Emergency care remains necessary for critical conditions

The health authority stressed that people whose condition is critical or requires urgent care should go to an emergency department or call 911. The alternatives are not a substitute for emergency help when immediate care is needed.

Laurentides health network welcomes 264 nursing recruits for summer 2026

Santé Québec Laurentides says candidates and student externs are already working in hospitals and long-term care centres across the region

MARIA DIAMANTIS
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The Laurentides public health network has added 264 early-career nursing recruits this summer, placing them in hospitals and residential and long-term care centres across the region.

Santé Québec Laurentides said in a July 24 release that the group includes 109 candidates for entry into the nursing profession, known in Quebec by the French acronym CEPI, and 155 nursing externs. The recruits have been

working in regional facilities since May.

The intake is significant for a public health system that depends on maintaining enough trained staff to deliver care. The organization said the recruits are working alongside existing teams and contributing to services for patients and residents. The release did not provide a breakdown by facility, job assignment or municipality.

The health authority also pointed to retention among last year's recruits. According to president and CEO Julie Delaney, 93 per cent of the CEPI employees hired in 2025



remain with the organization. She said that represents 96 nurses who chose to begin their careers in Laurentides facilities.

The figure was supplied by Santé Québec Laurentides and was not independently verified. The release did not specify how retention was measured or whether the percentage included all recruits hired during 2025.

Support before professional exams

Santé Québec Laurentides said it offers the recruits a tailored orientation and integration

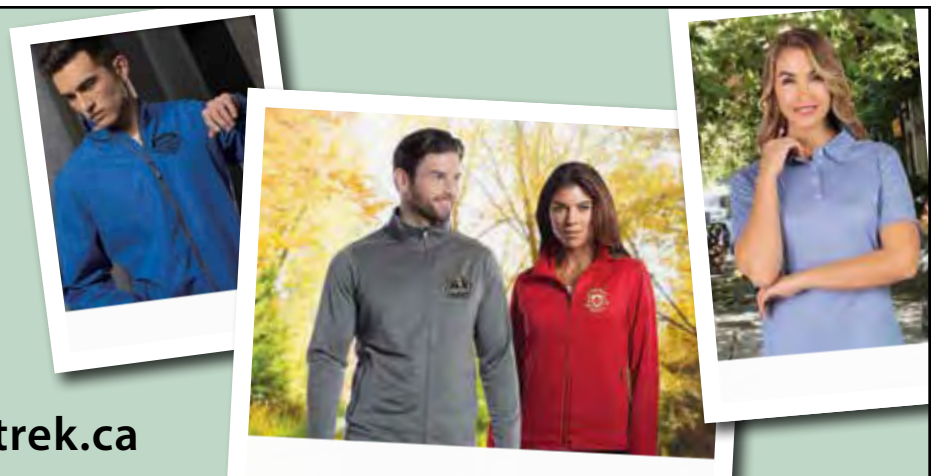
service, along with preparation programs for professional examinations administered by the Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec and the Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers auxiliaires du Québec.

The programs are intended to support candidates as they prepare for licensing exams and enter the workforce. The organization said its candidates' exam success rate has remained above the national average in recent years, but the release did not include the current rate, the provincial comparison figure or the number of candidates assessed.

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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

EXPIRATION DATE

Q I have been with my boyfriend two years, and we've had our disagreements. I believe we always come out of them better people realizing we both have aspects of our personality we need to work on.

He thinks it would be a good idea to live together before we get married. I do not. My thinking is, if you want to live with me then why not just get married? This argument went on and on until I compromised and said, "I will live with you only if I have a ring and a wedding date."

My boyfriend has his own apartment, which I do not have the key to, and I have been spending a lot of time there lately. About a year ago, he left me because we had a difference in religious beliefs, but the next day he came back and apologized. I forgave him and we sorted everything out.

A month ago we had a discussion about him liking it when I was at his apartment. He said he wants me in his life, I help him figure things out, and he wished I could be there all the time. I told him, "You can easily fix that...it's called engagement." And then I left.

I called him back in a few hours and said, "Fine, we'll do the counseling thing. It would be good for both of us." He says he is not ready for marriage because he can't tell me when he's upset with me. We are in counseling for this, and my fear is he will keep coming up with excuses why we can't marry.

I promised myself I will not be one of those girls who sits around every holiday and birthday, thinking, "Oh! Maybe he'll give me a ring now!" I'm not like that, and I never want to be. When he told me he's afraid I will walk out on him again, I remind him he has always walked out on me.

I'm afraid I am wasting my time. I want to be married, and I want to have children and so does he. Should I stick it out or walk away?

Nicole

A Nicole, if you are looking for a strategy to get what you want, skip the counseling and save the money. There is a cheaper solution. Stop delivering yourself to his apartment. The current arrangement doesn't even cost your boyfriend the time to date you.

It's not that you have an old-fashioned sensibility. Rather you have a down-to-earth nature, and you are no country bumpkin. You know moving in will make it too convenient for him not to marry you. When he tires of the arrangement, he won't need a divorce. He will simply tell you to move out.

A man who loves a woman wants to make her his own. Counseling sessions are a sign that the deep connection, which must be there for love to last a lifetime, is absent. The most obvious conclusion is that your boyfriend isn't confused. He knows what he wants. He wants you without marriage.

Wayne & Tamara

OLD BUSINESS

Q I have decided to divorce my husband. I have done everything I could to save this marriage. I am so worn out and angry with myself for not leaving sooner.

One of his retorts is, "What took you so long to figure out you are miserable?" That implies I am so dumb I don't know what's good for me. My question is, how can someone who has

everything on the ball, fall victim to this and not make a move before now?

Neva

A Neva, people are loss-averse. They hold on to losing stocks and bad investments far too long because to cash them out is to admit an error. We all have a terrible time admitting mistakes, and that is why you held on for so long.

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

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Blainville en fête returns Aug. 22 with country concert, shuttle service and road closures

The free municipal festival will feature Matt Lang, family activities, fireworks and drones at Parc équestre

MARIA DIAMANTIS
info@newsfirst.ca

The city will hold the 39th edition of Blainville en fête on Saturday, Aug. 22, bringing a day of free public programming to Parc équestre and temporary traffic changes to nearby streets.

Country singer Matt Lang is scheduled to headline the municipal festival at 8:30 p.m. The site will open at 1 p.m. with inflatable games, face painting, roaming entertainment, creative workshops and activities for young children, according to information published by the City of Blainville.

A youth circus and theatre performance staged on a fire truck

is set for 3:30 p.m. Country line-dancing instruction will begin at 7:30 p.m., before the main concert. The city says fireworks and a drone display will close the evening at about 10 p.m.

The event page describes admission and the scheduled activities as free, although food will be sold on site. The city's announcement did not state the municipal budget for the festival, the cost of the headline performance or the value of partner contributions.

Shuttles and parking

The city is encouraging visitors to walk, cycle or use a free evening shuttle. Four buses are expected to operate between Blainville station and Parc équestre, with departures about every 10 minutes. Shuttle service is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. from the station and its alternative parking area.

Municipal parking will also be available at city hall, the Paul-Mercier library, École des Semailles and École de la Seigneurie. Parking at Parc équestre, located at 1025 chemin du Plan-Bouchard, will be limited.

Road closures planned for the evening

Chemin du Plan-Bouchard will be closed between boulevard Céloron and rue de la Mairie. Rue de la Mairie will be closed between rue Coron and chemin du Plan-Bouchard. The closures are planned in both directions from 5:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., but the city says the timing may change depending on attendance and surrounding traffic.

Blainville says it has limited its municipal fireworks to this festival while retaining the traditional display and adding illuminated drones, a format used since 2022. The city cited the environmental impact of fireworks as part of that decision, but its event information did not provide estimates for emissions, noise or wildlife effects.



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Week of **AUGUST 16 TO 22, 2026**

The luckiest signs this week:
CAPRICORN, AQUARIUS AND PISCES



ARIES

Taking a step back will be enough to resolve major issues affecting your future. Discussions and negotiations will be necessary, and you'll need to carefully consider each option before finalizing an agreement.



TAURUS

Finding a solution that satisfies everyone is difficult when opinions clash. You'll need to be creative to ease tensions, come up with original compromises and restore a harmonious atmosphere around you.



GEMINI

A series of small victories will restore your confidence. With this renewed self-esteem, you'll feel more comfortable defending an idea or a personal project and taking concrete steps to implement it.



CANCER

Your priority will be to design an efficient and inspiring home workspace. With solid organization, your leadership qualities will shine through, and you'll be ready to develop your own ventures with confidence.



LEO

Matters of the heart will occupy your thoughts. Through thoughtful gestures, discreet acts of kindness and sincere words, you'll help the relationship grow, gradually deepening both your feelings and those of your partner.



VIRGO

The prospect of a real estate transaction could arise: a sale, a purchase or a renovation. You'll explore more advantageous options, both to reduce expenses and to improve the comfort and stability of your home.



LIBRA

Several people will call on you, leading to frequent trips. The increased volume of travel could become an opportunity to treat yourself to a few small pleasures, or even to consider upgrading to a vehicle better suited to your lifestyle.



SCORPIO

By carefully analyzing your budget, you'll realize that your financial resources are sufficient to move forward with a major project. What you thought was out of reach will suddenly become achievable, opening the door to a dream you've had for a long time.



SAGITTARIUS

The weight of your responsibilities might discourage you at first, but your recent progress will prove that you have solid resources at your disposal. Once you realize this, you'll finally dare to act with an unstoppable determination.



CAPRICORN

Taking a step back will help you clarify your goals. Professionally, you're aiming higher and more precisely, but this progress will require a gradual evolution, patiently built over time.



AQUARIUS

The holidays are barely over, and you're already dreaming of your next getaway in good company. At the office, you might lead a big meeting with colleagues or partners, creating a defining moment for your organization.



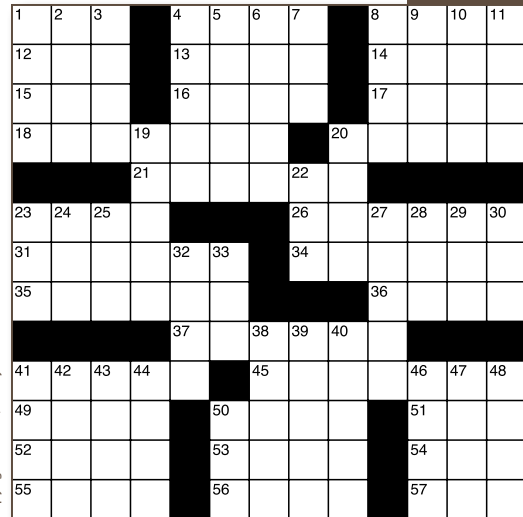
PISCES

You're feeling a need to grow internally and intellectually. You might be considering a career change or a journey of personal development. Embracing these changes could prove deeply beneficial for your growth.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORD

GRID N° 309



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ACROSS

- Current measure, for short
- Huck's boat
- Wilts
- Douglas
- A woodwind
- October gem
- Summer drink
- Funny
- Sub shop
- Parachute part: 2 wds.
- Gold purity measure
- Reach
- Rosary component
- Gathered
- Apprehend
- Creepier
- Skin design
- Just
- Top's counterpart
- Dull pains

DOWN

- Out of range
- Skirt style
- Get ready
- R2-D2, e.g.
- Cancel a space launch
- Henry or Jane
- 20th letter
- Cola, e.g.
- Imitator
- Festive event
- Narrow gash
- Military student
- Dangers
- Feet of
- Sample tape
- Suffer
- Grade
- Prayer ender
- Use snow runners
- Wool producers
- Simple
- In the know
- Joint
- Great wrath
- Baseball stick
- Chapter in history, perhaps
- Gallery exhibit
- Pleasing smell
- Dowel
- Wiggly sea creature
- Not wet
- Cries
- Also
- Subject
- Meeker
- Atmosphere layer
- Land division
- Animal's nail
- Detest
- Organs of sight
- Hasty
- Embankment
- Fall
- Water barrier

Sudoku

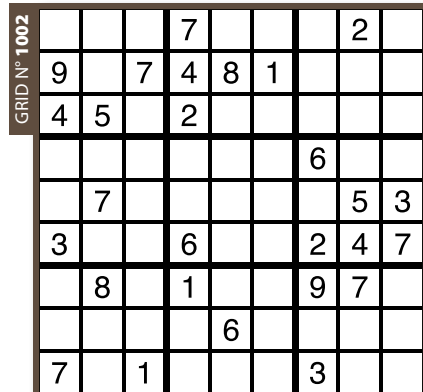
HOW TO PLAY

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.

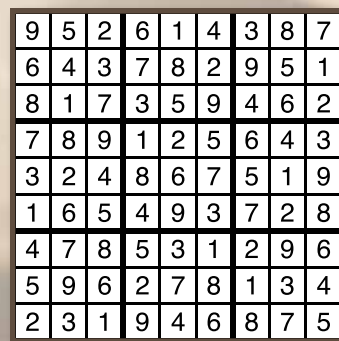


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Sudoku



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BIG BASKET (\$40)

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Blueberries (Quebec) | 11. Broccoli (Quebec) |
| 2. Oyster Mushrooms (Ontario) | 12. Sweet Corn (4) (Quebec) |
| 3. Pineapple (Honduras) | 13. Green Bell Peppers (2) (Quebec) |
| 4. Avocados (2) (Mexico) | 14. Zucchini (2) (Quebec) |
| 5. Flavour Tomatoes (Ontario) | 15. Mango (Mexico) |
| 6. Cantaloup (Quebec) | 16. Beets (Quebec) |
| 7. Lebanese Cucumbers (Quebec) | 17. Iceberg Lettuce (Quebec) |
| 8. Romaine Hearts (Quebec) | 18. Mini Onions (Quebec) |
| 9. Green Beans (Quebec) | 19. Bananas (4) (Costa Rica) |
| 10. Cactus Pears (3) (Mexico) | 20. Limes (2) (Peru) |

SMALL BASKET (\$22)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Pineapple (Honduras) | 6. Iceberg Lettuce (Quebec) |
| 2. Cauliflower (Quebec) | 7. Mango (Mexico) |
| 3. Kiwis (2) (Greece) | 8. Sweet Corn (2) (Quebec) |
| 4. Flavour Tomatoes (Ontario) | 9. Bell Pepper (Quebec) |
| 5. Lebanese Cucumbers (Quebec) | 10. Red Onion (Quebec) |
| | 11. Bananas (3) (Costa Rica) |

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