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Highway 640 concerns continue to dominate Rosemère council discussions



Rosemère Mayor Marie-Elaine Pitre listens as resident Rebecca Wright speaks about the impact of Highway 640 traffic noise on residents living near the highway. (Photo: Alessandro Comisso, The North Shore News)

Page 3



Linda Lapointe
accompanies students in
visit parliament to learn
about democracy

Recently, Members of Parliament Linda Lapointe and Madeleine Chenette (Thérèse-De Blainville) welcomed students from Académie Sainte-Thérèse to Parliament. The visit served as an educational opportunity for the youths, allowing them to learn firsthand about Canada's democratic institutions and the inner workings of Parliament.



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Pickleball overrides senior scams at Deux-Montagnes council meeting

ALESSANDRO COMMISSO

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
alessandro@newsfirst.ca

The Deux-Montagnes city council meeting on Oct. 8 was much more subdued than previous meetings. While most of the discussions remained civil throughout the evening, a handful of hot-button issues still managed to spark reactions from members of the crowd.

Residential real estate

Mayor Denis Martin and his council approves several real estate developments on October 8. In section 8.2 from letter A to R, council approved 18 real estate development projects in and around the downtown area of Deux-Montagnes.



Mayor Denis Martin responds to questions from residents during the Oct. 8 Deux-Montagnes city council meeting. (Photo: Alessandro Commisso, The North Shore News)

The final three, from P to R, were cadastral projects. Cadastral projects are legal land registry modifications that allow property owners or developers to subdivide, merge or reconfigure lots before future construction or redevelopment can proceed.

In this case, the projects involve properties at 44 10th Avenue, 323-325 17th Avenue and 408-410-412 8th Avenue. These types of operations do not necessarily authorize new construction on their own. Rather, they establish or modify the legal boundaries of a property and ensure that municipal and provincial land records accurately reflect the intended use of the site. Cadastral operations are often a key step in residential development, as they can create new building lots, consolidate existing parcels, or reorganize a site to accommodate future homes and infrastructure. Their inclusion on the agenda suggests that redevelopment and infill projects continue to move forward in several established neighbourhoods across Deux-Montagnes as the city seeks to manage growth while maximizing the use of available residential lands.

Senior scams

A representative from the Deux-Montagnes police department was present to warn residents about a recent rise in phishing and fraud calls targeting seniors. According to the officer, police have received between 50 and 75 reports in the past two weeks alone, highlighting just how common these scams have become.

The scams often begin with a phone call from someone pretending to be a family member or loved one in distress. In other cases, fraudsters

pose as sympathetic individuals facing an urgent financial situation, hoping to gain the victim's trust. Once a relationship has been established, the scammers will ask for money, credit card information, or other valuables. Some claim they need funds for gas, transportation, or emergency expenses, while others arrange for jewelry or cash to be picked up directly from the victim's home.

Police reminded attendees that legitimate organizations and family members should never pressure someone to provide financial information over the phone. Residents were encouraged to verify the identity of callers, contact relatives directly to confirm any story they hear, and report suspicious calls to local authorities immediately. By remaining cautious and taking a few extra moments to verify information, seniors can significantly reduce their risk of becoming victims of fraud.

The need for pickleball in Deux-Montagnes Resident Luc Bouchard, one of the 138 members of the pickleball association in Deux-Montagnes, asked Mayor Denis Martin for an update on the possibility of new pickleball courts. Bouchard said members of the association are pushing for more courts, arguing that the current facilities are no longer meeting the sport's growing demand.

According to Bouchard, the area they use right now is too small and becomes uncomfortably hot during the summer. He also noted that higher fences are needed, as players regularly lose balls that end up outside the playing area.

Bouchard finished his remarks with a simple question for council:

"How much money do you have set aside for permanent pickleball courts in the 2027 budget?"

To the amusement of the audience, which included roughly 10 to 15 pickleball players, Martin responded by saying that the demand for more pickleball facilities is "very serious" to him.

The mayor went on to praise the social side of the sport and the sense of community it creates.

"The demand for pickleball is there, but we need more than a couple of months to make it happen in Deux-Montagnes," said Mayor Martin.

While some people in attendance were not entirely satisfied with the answer, most seemed to understand the challenges involved. After a brief discussion among themselves, one woman pointed out that a single tennis court can often be converted into four pickleball courts.

The suggestion appeared to catch the mayor's attention.

"I completely agree with that. It's definitely something we can look into," said Martin. "Give us at least two years. We're seeing growth all across the North Shore, and we want to make sure we do it properly."

Mayor Martin finished by saying that during the budget meeting in December, there will be a more concrete allocation for pickleball.

Halloween night

To close out the meeting, council approved a community-focused item under section 10.4 of the agenda concerning this year's Halloween celebrations. The resolution authorizes the temporary closure of Lucien-Robillard Street on Oct. 31 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., allowing families and children to enjoy Halloween activities in a safer environment. The measure was one of several items under the Recreation and Community Development section and reflected the city's continued efforts to support local events and neighbourhood gatherings.

Highway 640 concerns continue to dominate Rosemère council discussions

"We're here because our daily lives have been changed in a way none of us have asked for"

ALESSANDRO COMMISSO

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
alessandro@newsfirst.ca

The ongoing battle over Highway 640 once again took centre stage at Rosemère's Oct. 13 council meeting, where frustrated residents urged elected officials to continue pushing for solutions to traffic noise, speeding vehicles and what many say has become a declining quality of life.

Few residents captured that frustration more clearly than Du Colibri sector resident Rebecca Wright, who arrived at council chambers with a petition containing more than 500 signatures, including 320 from Rosemère residents.

"I'm here today with over 500 signatures and 320 come from Rosemère's residents who are exhausted, who are worried and who are honestly heartbroken," Wright told council.

She said the issue has evolved far beyond a simple nuisance and has become a daily struggle for many of the families living closest to the highway.

"We're here because our daily lives have been changed in a way none of us have asked for and we can't keep living like this."

Wright said residents increasingly feel as though there is no escape from the traffic noise that now surrounds their neighbourhoods throughout the day and night.

"The noise has been unbearable. It now invades our homes. Now we even hear it when our windows shut morning and night, we never get a break"

According to Wright, many residents are now experiencing interrupted sleep, elevated stress and growing concerns about the long-term effects on both their physical and mental well-being.

The presentation set the tone for much of the evening, as discussion repeatedly returned to concerns surrounding Highway 640 and the impacts being felt in nearby neighbourhoods.

Council continues pushing for Highway 640 mitigation

The residents' concerns were reflected throughout the council agenda, with multiple resolutions directly linked to the ongoing Highway 640 file.

Among them was a request asking Quebec's Ministry of Transport and Sustainable Mobility to participate financially in the construction of a proposed 300-metre vegetative barrier along Highway 640. Council also approved a contract for revegetation work in the Du Colibri sector, one of the areas most affected by highway noise.

In addition to those projects, elected officials moved forward with zoning amendments that would establish standards for fences, sound barriers and low walls for properties located adjacent to Highway 640.

While technical in nature, the proposed changes represent another step in the town's efforts to provide residents with additional tools to lessen the impact of traffic noise.

Taken together, the measures demonstrate how substantially the Highway 640 issue has shaped municipal priorities over the past several months. What began as a resident complaint has increasingly become a planning and infrastructure issue requiring cooperation between municipal and provincial governments.

Modified vehicles become another source of frustration

While Highway 640 dominated much of the discussion, residents also used question period to raise concerns about loud modified vehicles travelling through town during overnight hours.

Resident Camille Leblond told council that one particular vehicle has become a near-nightly disturbance.



Councillor JeanFrançois Gagnière provides updates from his areas of responsibility during the Oct. 13 Rosemère council meeting. (Photo: Alessandro Commisso, The North Shore News)

"At 1:30 a.m. to 2 a.m., it's always the same car. Maybe the guy has to work nights because it's almost every night," he said.

Leblond added that despite the recurring problem, he rarely sees police presence monitoring the area.

"It absolutely hell, I've never seen a police car there to monitor it."

The comments echoed concerns frequently heard throughout suburban communities, where residents have increasingly complained about modified exhaust systems and excessive vehicle noise.

Mayor Marie Elaine Pitre acknowledged the issue and assured residents the town would continue pressing police authorities for action.

"Yes, of course we will be putting pressure on the police so that they can regulate this," she said. "We are your voice and we will be bringing it up to them."

The mayor's remarks drew support from several residents in attendance who applauded the town's willingness to continue advocating on their behalf.

"From Lorraine to the 15 it's a racetrack"

The discussion surrounding Highway 640 continued later in the evening when resident John Paul Moutinho proposed a potential solution that he believes could address both speeding and noise concerns.

"We've heard tons of people speak about it tonight but something I suggest you speak to the Minister of Transport about is installing a photo-radar on the 640," Moutinho told council.

According to him, the stretch of highway between Lorraine and Highway 15 has developed a reputation for excessive speeding, particularly during evening hours.

"From Lorraine to the 15 it's a racetrack. Maybe we could finance a part of the wall with money collected from the photoradar."

Moutinho argued that a photo-radar installation could act as a deterrent for speeding motorists while simultaneously reducing noise levels experienced by residents living nearby.

"This will also help reducing noise levels at night because as it stands right now, it's a racetrack," he said. "A simple photoradar around exit 24 would be a deterrent for people. It would fetch a lot of extra money and give the residents there a much better quality of life."

The suggestion drew an enthusiastic response



Resident Rebecca Wright speaks during question period at Rosemère's Oct. 13 council meeting, where she raised concerns about the impact of Highway 640 noise on nearby residents. (Photo: Alessandro Commisso, The North Shore News)



Resident Camille Leblond addresses council about late-night vehicle noise, saying modified cars have become a recurring disturbance in his neighbourhood. (Photo: Alessandro Commisso, The North Shore News)

from Mayor Pitre.

"I love the idea, thank you very much," she replied.

Although any decision regarding photo radar would ultimately rest with provincial authorities, the proposal appeared to strike a chord with both council members and residents seeking more concrete measures to address the ongoing issue.

Growing pressure for results

Beyond discussions surrounding Highway 640, council dealt with a number of routine municipal matters, including planning applications, financial resolutions and administrative files.

Still, by the end of the evening, it was evident that traffic-related concerns remained the dominant issue on residents' minds.

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VP Sales & Marketing

George S. Guzman
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Graphic Design

Lareine Zakhour
Elena Molter
Thomas Bakoyannis

Advertising

George S. Guzman

Editorial Staff

Martin C. Barry
Alessandro Comisso
Dimitris Ilias
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OPINION & Editorial



Ottawa bet against fossil fuels and lost

Its anti-oil and gas obsession sacrificed Canada's economic growth for zero environmental gain

"There will come a day, far off but inevitable at some point, when traditional energy sources will no longer be needed," said former prime minister Justin Trudeau in 2017.

Politicians across the Western Hemisphere, including Canada's leadership for at least the past decade or more, have bought into the notion that a massive transition away from fossil fuels is underway, and the end of their use is somehow preordained.

In fact, since the Chretien government signed on to the Kyoto Protocol, a significant portion of Canada's political class has insisted that fossil fuels are a relic of the past.

But a new study from the Fraser Institute says that argument never really held water. The main finding in the report is that fossil fuels accounted for 76.3 per cent of Canada's domestic energy consumption in 2024. Compare that to 76.8 per cent in 1995.

In other words, over the course of nearly 20 years, including a decade under the Trudeau government that pursued climate transition policies like a consumer carbon tax and spent hundreds of billions of dollars on so-called clean energy initiatives, the needle barely moved. Canada is just as reliant on fossil fuels today as the country was prior to signing on to the Kyoto Protocol.

Canada's largest energy-consuming sectors remain heavily reliant on fossil fuels, with nearly 75 per cent of industrial energy use and over

half of residential energy use still tied to those traditional energy sources.

And yet for decades, Canada sacrificed economic growth, all for the sake of climate goals.

Not only did Trudeau try to hold down domestic fossil fuel consumption, but he also claimed that there was "no business case" for exporting Canadian natural gas to countries like Germany and Japan in an effort to block the development of the domestic energy sector for export purposes.

Prime Minister Mark Carney seems to recognize that the Trudeau government's climate policies were a failure.

"The climate plan we inherited from the previous government was well-intentioned ... but as times have changed we must change our plan," said Carney earlier this summer.

"We can't afford to restrain the growth of an important part of our energy mix-oil and gas - to meet a short-term goal," Carney added.

The Carney government has also recently signed agreements with other countries to export Canadian natural gas abroad, a massive departure from Trudeau's "no business case" approach.

Of course, there always was a business case for exporting more Canadian oil and natural gas abroad.

India and China, for example, continue to build coal plants at a breakneck pace. If Canada's political class genuinely wants to see global

emissions go down, there is a clear case for producing and exporting more Canadian oil and natural gas, both of which have less of a negative impact on the environment than coal.

There is both an environmental and economic case for building more pipelines and increasing Canada's capacity to produce energy, both to meet the needs of domestic consumers and to meet the needs of countries that would otherwise have to turn to dirtier forms of energy.

Although Carney remains an improvement from Trudeau, his approach to unleashing Canadian energy is far from perfect. He continues to insist on tying any future pipeline development to expensive initiatives like carbon capture and storage (CCS) and talks constantly about the need to "decarbonize" Canada's energy sector.

As other countries, like the United States, unleash their energy sectors, the Carney government seems to still want to have Canada's energy sector operate with one hand tied behind its back. While superior to the Trudeau approach of trying to stymie the growth of the sector completely, the Carney approach to energy could still use some improvement.

For the sake of Canada's economy, the diversification of our trade, and even for getting global emissions down, it's time for the federal government to embrace the full-throated development of Canada's oil and gas sector.

Jay Goldberg

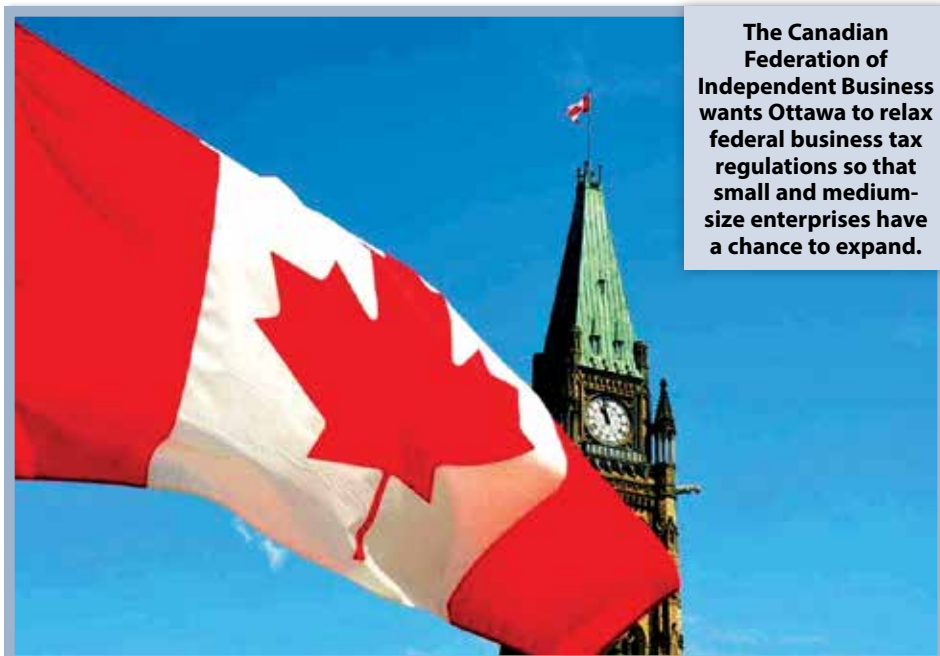
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The Canadian Federation of Independent Business wants Ottawa to relax federal business tax regulations so that small and medium-size enterprises have a chance to expand.

MARTIN C. BARRY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
marty@newsfirst.ca

Only seven per cent of small businesses in Canada plan to grow or diversify significantly over the next 12 months, according to some of the latest research compiled by the Canadian Federation of Independent business.

The Toronto-based SME lobby group says a third of small businesses (31 per cent) indicate they aren't growing because of cost and economic pressures, and of those over half (59 per cent) cite the tax burden as the biggest barrier preventing their business from expanding.

'Time to listen'

"When small business owners are telling you they're stuck in neutral and it's taxes that are the number one thing standing between them and growth, it's time to listen," said Corinne Pohlmann, the CFIB's executive vice-president of advocacy.

"Small firms have been crystal clear that they would rather see government reduce taxes than announce programs and grants that only target a small pool of applicants," she added. "The best way to invest in Canada's small businesses is for government to get out of the way. Cutting the small business tax rate should be government's number one priority in the upcoming fall budget."

Pre-budget recommendations

CFIB is making 13 tax recommendations to the federal government for its upcoming annual budget. They include:

- Reducing the small business tax rate from 9 per cent to 6 per cent, increasing the deduction threshold from \$500,000 to at least \$700,000 and indexing it to inflation moving forward;
- Increasing the GST/HST threshold (unchanged since 1991) from \$30,000 to at least \$60,000 and indexing it to inflation moving forward;
- Exempting taxes from gains following the sale of a business (shares and assets) when the proceeds are reinvested in a Canadian CCPC within the next three years;
- Introducing a lower capital gains inclusion rate for all small firms of 33 per cent on the next \$2 million of gains beyond the Lifetime Capital Gains Exemption;
- And providing the self-employed with some type of standard business deduction or refundable tax credit of up to \$20,000 similar to the Qualified Business Income (QBI) Deduction recently made permanent in the U.S.

Impact of federal policies

The CFIB's latest Fiscal Policy Survey was a special exercise designed to capture small business perspectives on government spending, taxation and fiscal policy. It explored the impact of current policies on business competitiveness and operations, while identifying key challenges and opportunities for improvement and helping to inform the CFIB's advocacy priorities.

According to the CFIB, nearly two-thirds of survey respondents (62 per cent) said their top priority would be for Ottawa to cut the small business tax rate.

Tax and cost pressures curtailing small business expansion, CFIB claims

A third of Canada's SMEs say they aren't growing, national lobby group maintains

While three in five (58 per cent) of small businesses said they'd use tax savings to increase employee wages, nearly half (48 per cent) said they would pay down debt, while 47 per cent said they would expand their business.

"Every dollar Ottawa takes in small business taxes is a dollar that doesn't go toward an employee raise, a new hire or new equipment," said Jasmin Guénette, CFIB's vice-president of national affairs.

Opening Canada to investment

"Entrepreneurs know where the money will do the most good, and time and time again they tell us it goes straight back into their people and their businesses," he continued.

"The upcoming budget is an opportunity for the government to be bold and send a clear message to Main Street that Canada is the best place to start, run and grow a business. That starts with fixing our tax system so that it works for small businesses."

The CFIB says its petition urging the federal government to cut the small business tax rate has nearly 10,000 signatures. According to a controlled-access online CFIB survey conducted between August 6 and September 3, most Canadian small businesses are focused on stability rather than expansion.

Most want to stay the course

More than half of those responding to the survey (56 per cent) intended to maintain their current course, including 31 per cent doing so because of cost pressures and economic uncertainty, and 25 per cent because their business is stable and performing as desired. About 30 per cent were planning to grow or diversify.

Other key findings:

- Business owners strongly prefer broad-based competitiveness measures over targeted supports. Four in five (80 per cent) believed that fostering a competitive business environment would be a better way to promote economic growth than providing targeted support to specific sectors or industries.
- Capital gains tax changes would encourage investment and business growth. Overall, 65 per cent said a lower capital gains inclusion rate on gains exceeding the Lifetime Capital Gains Exemption (LCGE) would be a moderate or strong incentive to invest, while 59 per cent said the same about increasing the LCGE to \$2 million and keeping it indexed to inflation.

The survey results were based on responses from 1,694 CFIB members who are owners of Canadian independent businesses from all sectors and regions of the country.

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Goodbye, old fridge

Blainville introduces free home pickup for refrigerating appliances

MARIA DIAMANTIS
info@newsfirst.ca

New municipal partnership makes it easier to dispose of refrigerators and air conditioners while reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

That old refrigerator gathering dust in the garage may be doing more environmental damage than its owner realizes. In Blainville, residents now have a new way to get rid of unwanted cooling appliances without paying for collection or transporting heavy equipment to a recycling centre.

On October 13, the City of Blainville announced a partnership with GoRecycle, introducing a free doorstep collection service for refrigerators, freezers, wine coolers, portable and window air conditioners, dehumidifiers and water dispensers.

The initiative addresses an environmental problem that is often overlooked. Refrigerating appliances contain gases and other components that require specialized handling when the equipment reaches the end of its useful life.

Improper disposal can allow refrigerants to escape into the atmosphere. Some of these gases have a global warming potential many times greater than carbon dioxide, making their recovery particularly important.

According to figures published by the City of Blainville, properly recycling a single refrigerator can prevent an average of one tonne of greenhouse gas emissions.

That is a substantial environmental benefit

from an appliance that might otherwise end up abandoned in a basement, garage or backyard.

The new service is intended to remove one of the biggest obstacles to responsible disposal: convenience.

Previously, residents wishing to recycle bulky appliances could use designated collection points, but transporting a refrigerator or freezer is not always practical, particularly for seniors or households without access to a suitable vehicle.

Under the new arrangement, residents can request a pickup online, select an available collection date and leave the appliance outside their home.

There are, however, a few important conditions. Equipment must be emptied before collection and placed outside the residence, but not directly at the curb.

The program complements existing drop-off services rather than replacing them.

Beyond reducing emissions, proper appliance recycling also allows recoverable materials, including metals and certain plastics, to be redirected into recycling streams instead of being discarded.

For households replacing an aging refrigerator or air conditioner, the initiative provides an opportunity to consider what happens to the old equipment after the new one arrives.

The broader environmental challenge is significant. As appliances become more numerous and technology evolves, municipalities face increasing pressure to manage discarded equipment responsibly.



By making collection free and relatively simple, Blainville hopes to encourage residents to choose proper recycling rather than leaving unwanted appliances in storage or disposing of them improperly.

Residents can consult blainville.ca/gorecycle

for eligibility requirements and to schedule a collection.

The real test will be how many appliances the program succeeds in recovering—and how much potentially harmful refrigerant is kept out of the atmosphere.

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PQ pitched 7 measures to help Quebecers cope with rising costs



NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA
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With affordability dominating the 2026 election campaign, the Parti Québécois (PQ) put forward a series of proposals aimed at easing pressure on household budgets. Party leader Paul St-Pierre Plamondon argued that the measures would reduce taxes, lower transportation costs, help first-time homebuyers and provide greater support for young families.

Scrapping the QST on used goods

Among the PQ's flagship promises was the elimination of the Quebec Sales Tax (QST) on used goods. The proposal would have applied to purchases such as used vehicles, household appliances, bicycles, sporting equipment and clothing.

The party argued that removing the tax would

put money back into consumers' pockets while encouraging the reuse of goods and reducing waste.

Cutting the QST on gasoline in half

The PQ also promised to reduce by 50 per cent the provincial sales tax applied to gasoline for at least one year. The party said the measure would also eliminate what it described as "double taxation," where the sales tax is calculated on top of another provincial fuel tax.

According to PQ estimates, motorists could have saved roughly seven cents per litre at the pump.

A \$125 rebate for lower-income Quebecers To offset the impact of higher fuel and grocery prices, the party pledged an annual \$125 rebate for Quebecers earning less than \$40,000 a year.

The measure was presented as targeted assistance for those hardest hit by the rising cost of living.

A universal \$95 transit pass

Public transit was another key element of the PQ platform. The party proposed a province-wide transit pass costing \$95 per month that could be used across Quebec's public transportation networks.

The plan also included discounts for inter-city bus travel. The PQ estimated that up to 2.5 million Quebecers could benefit from the initiative.

Tax refund on a first newly built home

In an effort to make homeownership more accessible, the PQ promised to refund the Quebec Sales Tax on the purchase or

construction of a first newly built home, up to a maximum of \$45,000.

Bigger tax credit for first-time homebuyers The party also proposed increasing the tax credit for first-time homebuyers from \$1,400 to \$3,000.

The enhanced credit would have applied not only to newly built homes but also to existing properties and condominium purchases.

Enhanced parental benefits

The PQ further pledged to strengthen Quebec's Parental Insurance Plan (RQAP).

Under the proposal, eligible parents would have received a minimum benefit of \$300 per week, while income replacement rates would have been increased. The party said the changes could translate into thousands of dollars in additional annual support for many families.

Every vote counts... especially for Party Funding

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info@newsfirst.ca

When we say that every vote counts, it is true in more ways than one. On the one hand, the electoral system is designed so that the party that elects the most members to the legislature is best positioned to form the government. On the other hand, the percentage of votes received by each political party also determines the amount of annual public funding it will receive.

For the October 5 election, each voter registered on the electoral roll is worth \$1.99, based on the funding rate in effect for 2026. In the most recent election, 6,495,984 Quebecers were registered to vote.

The government then distributes the total funding pool according to the share of valid votes obtained by each political party.

Based on the latest election results, the five leading parties will divide \$12,927,008 in annual public funding as follows:

- Parti Québécois (PQ): \$3,622,148 for

28.02% of the vote

- Quebec Liberal Party (PLQ): \$3,132,214 for 24.23% of the vote
- Conservative Party of Quebec (PCQ): \$2,670,720 for 20.66% of the vote
- Québec Solidaire: \$1,605,534 for 12.42% of the vote
- Coalition Avenir Québec (CAQ): \$1,725,756 for 13.35% of the vote

However, the annual allocation is only one of several ways political parties are financed. Other sources of funding include individual

contributions from voters, matching funds provided by the state based on those contributions, party membership fees, and loans.

During a general election campaign, the Chief Electoral Officer also provides an additional allocation to political parties. This supplementary funding is paid ten days after the election is officially called.

The system ensures that public financing reflects both voter participation and electoral support, reinforcing the principle that every ballot cast has an impact beyond election day.

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Three viruses, one winter

Laurentians urged to protect themselves before respiratory season hits

MARIA DIAMANTIS
info@newsfirst.ca

For many families, winter means snow, holidays and gatherings around the dinner table. For health authorities in the Laurentians, it also means the return of three unwelcome visitors: influenza, COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).



With respiratory infections expected to increase as temperatures fall, Santé Québec Laurentides launched its seasonal vaccination campaign on October 14, encouraging vulnerable residents to get protected before winter arrives in earnest.

The message is particularly important for older adults and people living with chronic illnesses, for whom an infection that begins with a cough or fever can sometimes develop into pneumonia, hospitalization or other serious complications.

But there is another virus increasingly attracting the attention of medical experts: RSV.

Long associated with respiratory illness in babies, RSV is also a significant threat to older adults. According to Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization, the virus can cause severe respiratory disease, particularly in people with existing heart or lung conditions.

The Canadian Immunization Guide reports that approximately 2% of Canadian infants are hospitalized with RSV during their first year of life. Among older adults hospitalized with the infection, reported mortality is approximately 5% to 10%, illustrating why prevention has become a growing public-health priority.

This year, Laurentians aged 75 and older can receive an RSV vaccine free of charge, alongside their influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations.

The campaign also provides free flu and COVID-19 vaccines to residents aged 65 and older, pregnant women, healthcare

workers in contact with vulnerable patients, and people aged six months and older with certain chronic illnesses.

National recommendations issued in April 2026 also identified additional groups who could benefit from RSV immunization, including adults aged 65 to 74 with elevated medical risks. However, provincial eligibility and publicly funded coverage are determined separately.

For families with newborns, preventive treatment against RSV is also available, offering another layer of protection during the months when respiratory infections tend to circulate more widely.

The campaign has implications beyond individual households. Preventing severe infections can also help reduce avoidable pressure on emergency departments and hospital services during the winter.

Residents of Saint-Eustache, Sainte-Thérèse, Boisbriand, Blainville, Lorraine and Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac can book vaccination appointments through Clic Santé (www.clicsante.ca) or by calling 1-877-644-4545.

Health authorities continue to recommend frequent hand-washing, wearing a mask when experiencing respiratory symptoms, limiting contact with others when sick and staying home when fever develops.

Winter may be inevitable. Serious respiratory illness, however, is a risk that vaccination and everyday precautions can help reduce.

One hour, 115 donors

Boisbriand residents challenged to roll up their sleeves

MARIA DIAMANTIS
info@newsfirst.ca

Héma-Québec is calling on residents to participate in a November blood drive, reminding the community that an ordinary act of generosity can make an extraordinary difference.

An hour out of someone's day might not seem particularly important. But for a patient undergoing surgery, a cancer treatment or emergency medical care, that hour could make all the difference.

That is the message behind a new appeal from Héma-Québec, which is inviting Boisbriand residents to participate in an upcoming blood drive with an ambitious but achievable target: 115 donors.

The collection will take place on Friday, November 20, at the Maison du citoyen et Place de la culture, located at 955 Boulevard de la Grande-Allée, between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Announced October 19, the initiative aims not only to collect

blood but also to encourage first-time donors to overcome their hesitation and discover how straightforward the process can be.

For many people, the biggest obstacle is not a lack of willingness but uncertainty. Questions about eligibility, discomfort or simply what happens during a donation can discourage potential volunteers.

Héma-Québec is hoping to change that perception.

The organization emphasizes that trained personnel are available throughout the process to guide participants, answer questions and reassure those who may be nervous about needles.

The importance of blood donation extends far beyond the immediate community.

Héma-Québec is responsible for supplying hospitals throughout the province with blood and other biological products needed for medical treatment.

According to the organization, it distributes approximately 800,000 human biological products annually to Quebec

hospitals, supporting patients facing a wide range of medical conditions.

Its operations rely on more than 200,000 donors of blood, plasma and other biological products, together with employees and volunteers who help maintain the province's supply system.

Unlike many charitable contributions, blood donation cannot simply be replaced by a financial contribution. Hospitals depend on a continuing supply of donated blood products to meet patients' needs.

That makes community collections especially valuable.

For Boisbriand, the November event offers an opportunity for residents to contribute directly to a provincial healthcare system that ultimately serves their own families, neighbours and communities.

Héma-Québec recommends making an appointment before attending. Reservations can be arranged online at hemaquebec.ca/prendre-rendez-vous or by calling 1-800-343-7264.

Anyone uncertain about their eligibility can contact the donor information service at 1-800-847-2525.

The target of 115 donors is more than a number. It represents 115 individual decisions to give something that cannot be manufactured on demand.

And for someone waiting in a hospital bed, that decision could be priceless.



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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

HORSE SENSE

Q I have a question about ending a friendship. I would like to feel I did what I had to do, that I was not just being too sensitive.

The woman in question was a friend of mine for some eight years. We shared a passionate love of horses; it was our common interest. In addition, during our friendship we both had troublesome relationships and helped each other through the worst times.

Some months ago, however, I had photos taken of my horse and I. When I showed them to my friend, she accused me of being vain and basically said my horse was ugly. I stopped talking to her. I was horribly hurt. After several months, I made contact and slowly we resurrected our friendship.

Well, just this week I bought a new horse, a 1-year-old Arabian. He is not the most expensive or impressive of his breed, but he is undeniably beautiful. When I showed his photos to my friend, she immediately criticized his appearance and asked if he was even purebred. I said, Of course, I have paperwork to prove it. My friend was openly hostile. She ended an

email saying my new horse was ugly. She said she did not want to have to say that, that she was initially being polite for the sake of our friendship, but I "forced" her to say it. Her final word was an angry acknowledgment that she is not allowed to use the word "ugly."

When I read that, it seemed to me she is more interested in being right than in keeping me as a friend and saying a real sorry. This is all the more hurtful considering she made it sound like she was the victim.

Maggie

A Maggie, this woman used her spurs on you, and you bucked her off. Bravo! You shouldn't feel bad. She's intentionally cruel. Her remarks were barbed and meant to hurt.

Giving her a second chance allowed her to revictimize you. That's irritating, but you don't need her to acknowledge that you are right. You just need to end this. People like her are always right, especially when they are wrong.

Wayne & Tamara

SEMIANNUAL REVIEW

Q My husband and I have been married 12 years and have two kids. He has been asking for a divorce every six months since we got married. He says I don't treat him right, but I cook, clean, work part-time and we are together at least two times a week.

Four months ago he again asked for a divorce and went to Reno to get his head straight. From phone records I found out he was having an emotional affair with a girl he went to school with, who lives in Reno. Then I learned he's been in contact with another ex--you know, the one who got away, the true love of his life. Later I found a message to a third girl that said, like a fine wine you grow more beautiful each day.

He says I am blowing this all out of proportion. He yells at me and calls me every name in the book when we discuss it. He even spit in my

face. Am I supposed to forget this all happened because now he wants to work this out?

Dani

A Dani, grain merchants use long probes to collect samples from different levels of a rail car or truck. They do this to measure the quality of the grain and to check for toxins. Your husband has collected samples of your marriage every six months and found it rotten.

That you haven't gone to a counselor, women's center, or divorce lawyer after his threats shows how much his "sampling" has damaged you. You are too good for him and he knows it, so he beats you down. Contact one or more of the three sources we mentioned to escape this rotting relationship.

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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MARIA DIAMANTIS
info@newsfirst.ca

New partnership between the MRC de Thérèse-De Blainville and Desjardins aims to turn environmental ambitions into practical business projects.

What if reducing waste, cutting electricity bills or finding a second life for discarded materials could also bring financial support to a local

business? For entrepreneurs across the North Shore, a new initiative is offering an incentive to turn environmentally friendly ideas into reality.

The MRC de Thérèse-De Blainville and two Desjardins credit unions have launched their first joint sustainable development competition, offering five awards with a combined value of \$30,000 in financial assistance and professional services.

Announced October 14, the initiative targets retail businesses and social economy enterprises interested in improving their environmental practices, whether they are taking their first steps or already pursuing ambitious sustainability goals.

For businesses in Blainville, Boisbriand, Sainte-Thérèse and Lorraine, the possibilities range from installing energy-efficient equipment to reducing packaging waste, introducing repair and reuse programs, or reconsidering how products and materials are sourced.

The program recognizes a reality facing many smaller businesses: environmentally responsible changes may make economic sense over time, but the initial investment and technical expertise required can be obstacles.

Rather than offering identical grants to every

applicant, organizers have created five distinct awards.

Two provide professional consulting services worth \$5,000 each, helping businesses either begin their sustainability journey or advance an existing project.

A \$10,000 Excellence Award will recognize a business demonstrating outstanding environmental leadership, while a \$7,500 award will support innovation and emerging entrepreneurs. A further \$2,500 special recognition award will highlight a particularly promising initiative.

The distinction matters: \$20,000 is being offered as direct financial awards, while \$10,000 represents professional assistance, rather than cash grants.

Liza Poulin, prefect of the MRC and mayor of Blainville, emphasized that meaningful environmental progress does not depend exclusively on major government policies.

In announcing the initiative, she argued that local businesses can make a significant contribution through practical changes that benefit both their operations and the wider community.

Desjardins representatives similarly highlighted the importance of helping entrepreneurs

overcome the financial and organizational challenges involved in adopting more sustainable practices.

The initiative also raises an interesting question for the region's business community: could environmental responsibility become a competitive advantage rather than simply another operating expense?

Reducing energy consumption, limiting discarded materials and improving resource efficiency can potentially lower costs while responding to growing expectations surrounding environmental responsibility.

For the MRC, which encompasses seven municipalities and nearly 168,000 residents, encouraging such projects represents an opportunity to connect local economic development with longer-term environmental objectives.

Applications opened October 14 and must be submitted by noon on December 4, 2026.

Eligible businesses can obtain the application form and program details through the MRC de Thérèse-De Blainville website.

The ultimate measure of success will not simply be how many businesses apply, but whether the winning projects deliver lasting improvements after the awards have been distributed.

Music bridges generations at Blainville seniors' residence during culture days

MARIA DIAMANTIS
info@newsfirst.ca

From familiar melodies to creative workshops, the Laurentians' annual cultural celebrations brought residents, families and younger generations together.

Music has a remarkable ability to bring back memories. A familiar melody can transport someone decades into the past, revive a cherished moment or simply bring a smile to a face. At the CHSLD de Blainville, that power of music took centre stage during this year's Journées de la culture celebrations.

Under the theme "Blainville en harmonie," the long-term care residence celebrated its cultural heritage through musical performances and activities designed to bring generations together. The event emphasized something that can sometimes be overlooked in institutional care: the importance of human connection, creativity and shared experiences.

The Blainville celebration formed part of a larger regional initiative held September

25–27, involving 19 residential care facilities across the Laurentians, including CHSLDs and seniors' residences.

Throughout the region, residents, families, employees, volunteers and community partners participated in activities ranging from painting and textile arts to collaborative artistic projects.

At the CHSLD Pavillon Philippe-Lapointe in Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, residents worked alongside children from a local daycare centre to create a mural. Elsewhere, seniors painted decorative stones for a project involving the organization À Vélo Sans Âge, which helps older adults enjoy bicycle outings.

But in Blainville, music provided the common language.

The significance of such initiatives extends beyond entertainment. For older adults living in long-term care, particularly those experiencing reduced mobility or cognitive difficulties, opportunities for artistic expression and social interaction can play an important role in maintaining emotional well-being.



Music brought generations together at the CHSLD de Blainville during the Journées de la culture celebrations. Under the theme "Blainville en harmonie," musical performances and cultural activities highlighted the community's heritage while creating moments of connection, shared memories and emotion.

Music is especially meaningful because familiar songs can stimulate memories and encourage participation, even when other forms of communication become more challenging.

The broader question is how to ensure that opportunities for cultural participation remain part of everyday life in residential care, rather than being reserved for occasional celebrations.

Julie Delaney, president and CEO of Santé Québec Laurentides, welcomed the participation of families and community members, emphasizing that such initiatives contribute

to residents' well-being and quality of life.

For the families who visit loved ones in long-term care, activities like these can offer something particularly valuable: an opportunity to share an experience rather than simply make a visit.

And for the residents of the CHSLD de Blainville, the celebration carried a simple but powerful message. Growing older does not mean leaving music, creativity or community behind.

Sometimes, bringing generations together requires nothing more complicated than a familiar tune.

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HOROSCOPE

Week of **OCTOBER 25 TO 31, 2026**

The luckiest signs this week:
CANCER, LEO AND VIRGO



ARIES

You're brimming with positive energy. An emergency at work requires an immediate response to limit the damage. A promotion is on the horizon. Despite the stress and adjustments, it will boost your personal and professional satisfaction.



TAURUS

The end of long-standing obligations, postponed for weeks, is finally in sight. Once you clear this hurdle, take time to rest before beginning new challenges. This essential pause will preserve your health.



GEMINI

The wait for medical results, whether for yourself or a loved one, will cause anxiety. A positive update will ease your concerns. Such clarity will allow you to look ahead with greater calm and confidence.



CANCER

Handle minor tensions in your family or at work with composure. A promotion may require a revamp of your schedule. Attractive compensation and appealing responsibilities will make it easier for you to make a quick and positive decision.



LEO

You're already thinking about the end-of-year holidays. Whether you travel solo or go with family, friends or that special someone, be sure to book early to avoid a last-minute rush. Your forethought will make planning easier and more pleasant.



VIRGO

An international assignment or training opportunity awaits you at work. Prepare for potentially challenging exchanges with colleagues who aren't fully fluent in your language. Your adaptability is your greatest asset.



LIBRA

Your relationship deserves special attention. Open a frank dialogue to rekindle the spark and avert misunderstandings. These thoughtful adjustments will restore harmony and tenderness and strengthen your daily connection.



SCORPIO

Every negotiation requires effort and compromise. The significant changes you're initiating, whether in your diet, your daily schedule or your environment, will improve your health in the long term. These choices will positively change your daily life and vitality.



SAGITTARIUS

A major professional success is on the horizon. A promotion, a new position or public recognition awaits you. At the same time, encouraging health news rewards your perseverance after a difficult period. You'll fully appreciate this double victory.



CAPRICORN

The idea of purchasing a home that better accommodates your family is taking shape. This project prompts you to reorganize your life for more efficiency, helping you rediscover a sense of well-being. You'll see increased harmony at home.



AQUARIUS

Recharge your electronic devices every night to avoid communication outages. Be prepared for requests to act as the family's shuttle service. These small gestures will help routines run smoothly and keep moods serene.



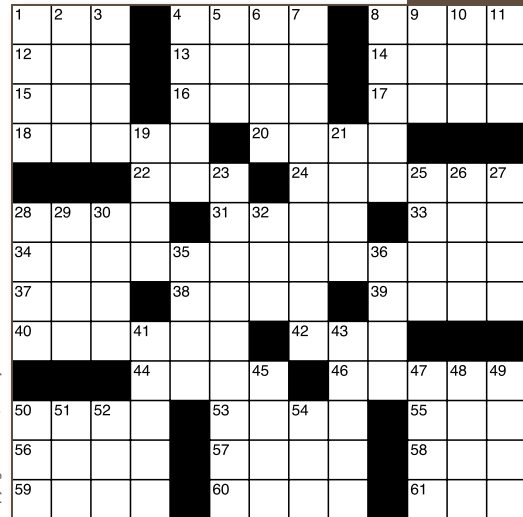
PISCES

Your honesty is forthright this week. You'll express what others are thinking. You won't hesitate to point out your partner's unnecessary impulse purchases. This frank approach will help preserve harmony in your relationship.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORD

GRID N° 314



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ACROSS

- Health facility
- Catholic service
- Snout
- Pull behind
- Poker beginning
- Acorn bearers
- Monkey's relative
- Matinee hero
- Pupil's site
- Varnish ingredient
- Some domesticated animals
- Dawn drops
- Swiss export
- Make dirty
- Pinch
- Through
- Amusement
- Perfect serve
- Division word
- Inquires
- House of worship
- Young louse

DOWN

- Night sight
- John XXIII, e.g.
- Amazes
- Down East
- Also
- Cease
- Choice
- Roar
- Rower's need

- Take to the slopes
- Curvy turn
- Unused
- Word of comparison
- Saw
- Dusks
- Basin
- Noshes
- Couch
- Fairy-tale start
- Bit of info
- Cereal type
- Provoke
- School subject
- Playful trick
- Fit to be tied
- Checked vehicle
- Scamps
- Nifty
- Solely
- Unearth
- Exist
- Stocking tip
- Rummy game

Sudoku

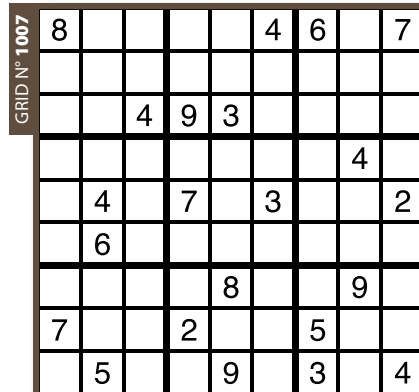
HOW TO PLAY

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.

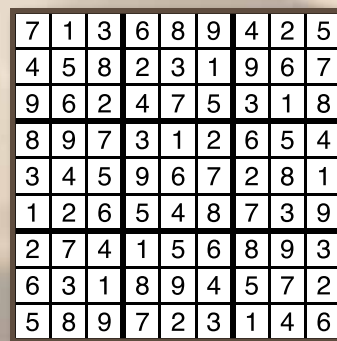


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Sudoku



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BIG BASKET (\$40)

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Asparagus | 10. Clementines (5) |
| 2. Black Grapes | 11. Carrots (2 lbs) |
| 3. Strawberries | 12. Mushrooms |
| 4. Raspberries | 13. Cucumber |
| 5. Broccoli Crown | 14. Garlic |
| 6. Dragonfruit | 15. Peppers (2) |
| 7. Tomatoes Wild Wonders | 16. Bananas (4) |
| 8. Lettuce | 17. Yellow Onion |
| 9. Apples (3) | 18. Lemons (2) |

SMALL BASKET (\$22)

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Asparagus | 7. Bananas (3) |
| 2. Raspberries | 8. Broccoli Crown |
| 3. Clementines (3) | 9. Lettuce |
| 4. Dragonfruit | 10. Coriander |
| 5. Avocado | 11. Zucchini |
| 6. Limes (2) | |

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