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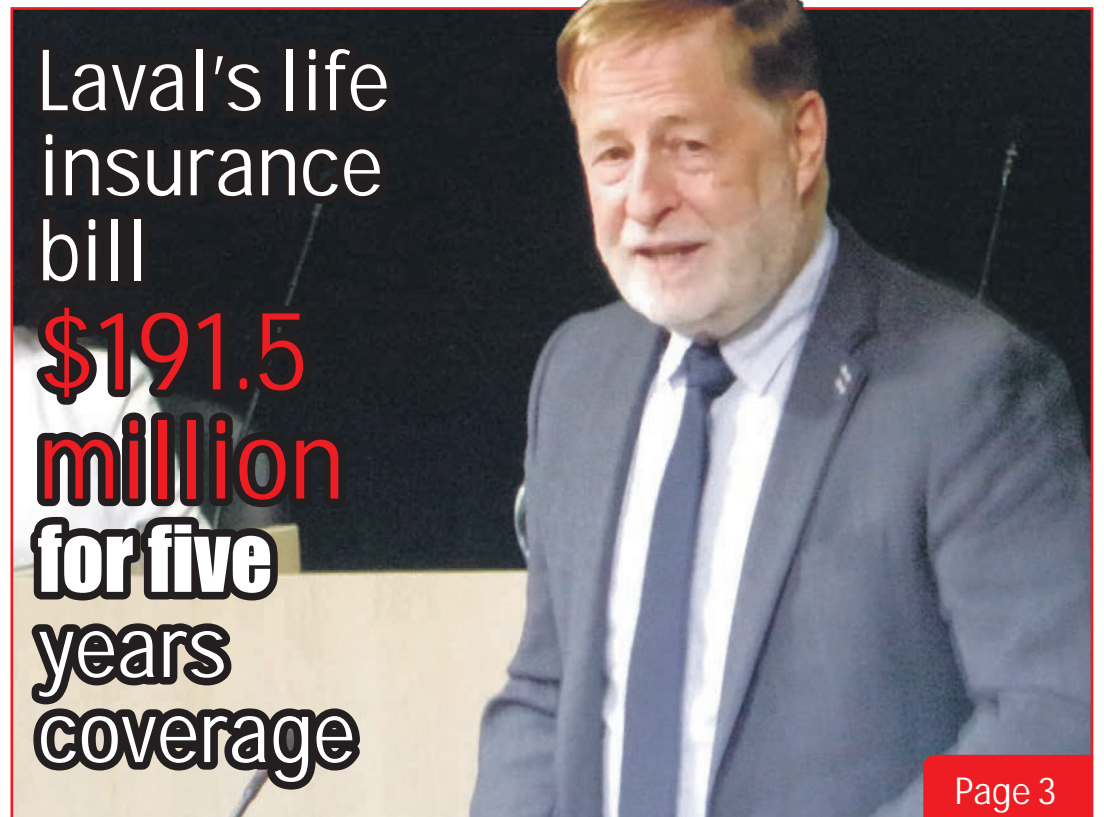
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# Laval's life insurance bill rises to \$191.5 million for five years coverage

*New Desjardins contract is 133 per cent higher and most costly ever, says opposition*



**MARTIN C. BARRY**  
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The City of Laval will be paying Quebec financial services giant Desjardins more than \$191 million for employee life insurance coverage over the next five years, in what the official opposition at city hall claims is the largest contract in the municipality's 56-year history.

The agreement was one of number of expenditures approved by the members of Laval city council during their webcast monthly meeting on Aug. 10.

## Cost between city/employees

The Desjardins contract might have gone unnoticed, as do many routine expenditures during council meetings. However, Parti Laval city councillor for Fabre Claude Larochelle singled out the agreement, which amounts to exactly \$191,549,842.

While the sum, even when spread out over five years, may seem somewhat staggering – the City of Laval's total budget for 2021 is \$932 million – it's worth noting that the city itself will be paying only 60 per cent, with the remaining 40 per cent coming from deductions taken from employee salaries.

## A 133 per cent increase

However, according to Larochelle, the new contract will raise Laval's bill for premiums paid on employee life insurance by 133 per cent over the coming five years. "Maybe it's the best deal, but we didn't go to public tender, so we don't know exactly," he said.

"And it would have shown a little respect to the elected officials to get together a presentation for the biggest contract in the history of the city, and to explain it to the elected officials. Because it's our residents who are going to be paying for this."

"The tenant on Cartier Blvd. who's earning \$16 an hour and has no group insurance will be paying the \$191 million," added Larochelle. "So, I think we would have deserved to receive some good explanations, which was not the case."

## Position on climate change

With an extremely pessimistic report on global climate change issued the day before the council meeting by the United Nations, Mayor Marc Demers read out a statement at the opening of the meeting in which he outlined the City of Laval's efforts in recent years to combat environmental warming.

"In the most optimistic scenario, where we would succeed in curtailing greenhouse gas emissions quickly and drastically, the experts are predicting a climate warming by around 1.5 degrees Celsius between now and 2030," he said, noting that this shortens the window of time since the last assessment by around 10 years.

## Action needed, said Demers

"It is clear that among those of us who govern, we are confronted by an urgent need to act and to take even more action than we have until now."

Among the efforts Demers said the City of Laval has undertaken to do its part to help are a range of subsidies to help pay for electric cars and bicycles, to convert oil-fired furnaces to electric, and a program to recycle old refrigerators containing environmentally-hazardous coolants.

"All these things are steps forward for a greener world," added the mayor. "We have done a lot, but in light of this latest report, you will understand that I am strongly encouraging those who will follow us on council to do more. We are all responsible to future generations."

## St-Elzéar wetlands threatened

During the public question period, several residents of the Saint-Elzéar Ouest neighbour-



Laval mayor Marc Demers speaks during the webcast August 10 city council meeting.

hood between Curé Labelle and Chomedey boulevards noted that there are number of wetlands in the area, although they maintained the city is doing little to protect them environmentally.

Pointing out that on a recent day in August several residents caught some individuals using equipment in an elaborate attempt to drain one of the wetlands known as the Oasis Bergerac, they asked what sort of commitment city officials would be willing to make to establish better safeguards.

## More condos than trees

Vimont city councillor Michel Poissant, who is running for mayor under the banner of his Laval Citoyens party, referred to the Bergerac sector as an "immense heat island" where "there are more cars and condos than there are trees. The wetlands there are important because they are located at the heart of an ensemble of condos."

While suggesting that Laval appears to still be actively encouraging the development of heat islands by allowing so many condo projects to proceed, he said the city would be better off buying up wooded lands, perhaps with the help of the Quebec environment ministry, and developing more green spaces.

## Protection needed, says Boyer

Although the City of Laval owns some of the wetlands in question and others are protected by environmental decrees, Deputy Mayor Stéphane Boyer acknowledged that most are not protected from being drained by private owners.

"We'll see if there is something we can do to strengthen the protection regulations," said Boyer, adding that the city began to look at the possibility in recent weeks of buying up private tracts of wetland "because this is in fact a very beautiful area which must be protected."

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# OPINION & Editorial



## Laval's new consultative committee on seniors' issues should be diverse

With the City of Laval's announcement last week that the executive-committee's recommendation for the creation of a new special committee for senior citizens' issues is being adopted, some constructive suggestions to fine-tune the committee might be helpful at this time.

According to a statement from the city, the Comité consultatif des personnes âgées lavalloises (CCPAL) will be constituted in a manner similar to other city council committees, such as the Conseil des Lavalloises (which encourages women to participate in municipal politics), the Consultative Committee on Youth and the Committee for Intercultural Relations.

In its statement, the city says that the mission of the members of the new committee will be to shed light on issues of particular concern to senior citizens in Laval as well as other age groups, while drawing those issues to the attention of the executive-committee so that they can be acted on.

"This is a point of view that we didn't already have from among our committees and it is an analysis that we couldn't do without given the magnitude of the issues that can potentially affect this important segment of the population," says Deputy Mayor Stéphane Boyer who is the executive-committee's vice-president.

Boyer says the vast array of life-experiences lived by those who will eventually sit on the CCPAL should prove to be immensely valuable in helping to guide the executive-committee in its future decisions.

"In fact, I am hoping the members of this committee will be able to analyze our ideas to build bridges between the generations," Boyer continues. "It's worth noting that the solidarity of the entire Laval community must be built while maintaining an ongoing dialogue, one that is founded on altruism and an intergenerational understanding."

That said, the Secretariat of Governance (a department at Laval city hall put into place to ensure that the appointment of commission members takes place responsibly and equitably) will be overseeing the procedures for creating the new senior

citizens' committee. This will include a call for candidates interested in becoming committee members.

Laval city councillor for Souvenir-Labelle Sandra El-Helou, who is responsible for dossiers involving senior citizens and women's issues, raised a point with respect to the commissioners selected to sit on the CCPAL.

"I hope that the seniors from the greater Laval community and from all origins will hear the call to commit themselves to being on the committee for the good of senior citizens, but also so that the wealth of their experiences may benefit the entire population, which includes all generations," said El-Helou.

"I am feeling especially proud and enthusiastic at the idea of seeing this committee coming into being, something that I had been thinking about for some time," she added. "Since I have had responsibility for seniors' dossiers, they had always let me know about their abiding wish to participate in the society being built here in Laval."

The City of Laval's population of Anglophone residents has continued to grow to the point where more than 21 per cent of people in Laval are now considered to be English-speaking. Plus, when some of the latest demographics are taken into account reflecting residents who either speak English as their first language (anglophones), or any of the many other languages now spoken in Laval other than French or English (allophones), the number of people living in Laval in either of these two categories is said to be nearly 50 per cent.

Therefore, with these numbers in mind, and as Councillor El-Helou's comments suggest, it would be a good idea for Mayor Marc Demers and his administration to seriously consider appointing a well-balanced board of Laval residents to the CCPAL.

This would accurately and equitably reflect Laval's evolving multicultural landscape, while at the same time respecting the distinct historical and cultural origins of Quebec's third-largest city.

– Martin C. Barry –



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# Laval gets a pass from Auditor General – despite noted shortcomings

## City still needs to improve its snow removal strategy, says Véronique Boily



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In her fifth annual report presented to city council last week, Laval Auditor General Véronique Boily acknowledged that the Demers administration could do more to improve its financial statements, as well as its compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, but that overall the administration gets a passing grade.

“This fifth report produced since I took office highlights common issues that emerge from the analysis of the various subjects audited this year,” said Boily, who summarized the report for journalists during a webcast press conference last week.

“This analysis can enable the city to go beyond the isolated treatment of the findings and recommendations presented in each of the performance audits and improve certain key aspects of its management,” she said. The report includes four performance audits which resulted in recommendations from Boily’s office.

### Snow removal

Boily notes that in October 2015, the City of Laval adopted a new snow removal strategy to help guide its snow removal operations. Despite the fact the strategy sets clear priorities and deadlines for situations considered normal, “the strategy is incomplete,” she concluded.

Referring to “recurrent under-estimation” by the administration, she said the budget allocated to snow removal “is not based on real needs and does not constitute a tool for controlling expenditure as it should.” She said the city has developed several useful and relevant performance indicators, except for abrasives spreading operations.

In addition, she said the city hasn’t developed a comprehensive management plan that includes measures to improve the efficiency of the spreading activity and reduce costs, while contributing to a better environmental balance.

### Information technology

Boily’s office also examined whether the city manages its information technology (IT) projects to ensure that they are completed successfully and efficiently. While admitting that the project management framework follows accepted approaches, she said it isn’t supported by a methodology.

She said the content of deliverables, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders, are missing from the city’s strategy. “This opens the management framework to interpretation regarding how documents are completed and the presentation of relevant project information,” said Boily.

In addition, she said the cost estimate of IT projects was absent or incomplete for projects audited by the Office of the Auditor General because the cost of internal resources, among other things, was not included. “The risk analysis register is well designed, but not always used,” she said.

Finally, she observed that authorizations to move from one phase to another for IT projects is supposed to be granted by the governance committee. “But since this committee does not exist, these steps have not been subject to a



**In her latest annual report, City of Laval Auditor General Véronique Boily found a number of deficiencies in the way the administration operated last year.**

request for authorization,” she added.

### Monitoring of infrastructure

Boily noted that a significant portion of the City of Laval’s annual budget is allotted for the maintenance, improvement and development of infrastructure. She said management information for monitoring infrastructure work in the engineering department “is difficult to produce and insufficient to allow department managers to exercise proper governance.”

As well, she said some contracts were not reported to the executive-committee, as required by the contingency management and framework policy. Several non-compliances with contracts, the city’s monitoring guide and other internal forms were also identified by her.

Finally, Boily said the department has no documented analysis to support decisions on whether to carry out monitoring work internally or externally and has not assessed the risks associated with its reliance on external firms.

### Pesticide, fertilizer and invasive species

On a somewhat brighter note, Boily pointed out that in recent years, the city adopted policies, strategies and objectives potentially affecting pesticide and fertilizer use and invasive species management. She said her team confirmed that the city’s actions to manage invasive species and reduce risks associated with pesticide and fertilizer use “are effective and consistent with the principles of sustainable development.”

She said the City of Laval is complying with applicable laws and regulations regarding the use of pesticides and fertilizers. However, even though it has adopted several recommended practices to reduce the impact on health and the environment, “it still has some progress to make in certain areas,” Boily concluded.

In the meantime, she added that the city is taking numerous actions to control the spread of invasive species such as ragweed. “However, these actions are not part of a structured, multi-year control plan,” said Boily.

### Boily’s overall observations

Overall, she said that to a greater or lesser extent, all the audits carried out this year by the Laval Auditor General’s Office “reveal a lack of control to ensure compliance with the frameworks in force. A lack of operational guidelines or instructions was observed in some audits. This deficiency is affecting the uniformity of practices in the various sectors of activity.”



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## Laval reports positive economic results, in spite of COVID-19 pandemic



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Despite a less than ideal economic climate due largely to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Laval managed to finish the 2020 fiscal year with signs of future growth and promising results, according to figures released last week by city officials.

In its 2020 report of economic results, the City of Laval says the region outperformed all other municipalities in the greater Montreal area with the lowest recorded negative economic growth at - 4.1 per cent (according to Desjardins), with an economic upsurge of +10 per cent forecast until the end of 2021 (which is higher than the average for all of Quebec).

While negative growth is considered anathema in normal economic times, the pandemic has turned it into an everyday factor that many governments and corporations are taking for granted these days.

According to the city, the impact of the pandemic has been in Laval primarily in the sectors of tourism and retail commerce.

### Some sectors prospered

However, Laval has also benefited from the fact that other sectors, such as high-technology and the bio-sciences, have been able to seize on opportunities created by the pandemic for the products and services they provide.

"Laval's performance indicates to us that we are well-positioned to regain our momentum despite the difficult economic environment," said Mayor Marc Demers. "I would like to recognize the entrepreneurs and businesses from Laval for their capacity to adapt and their energy."

"It's mostly thanks to them if Laval has come out of this so well," Demers added. "I would also like to point out the collective effort involved: All together, we are taking the means to meet challenges brought on by COVID-19 in order to establish solid bases on which we will regain our momentum for the years ahead."

### A positive outlook

Deputy Mayor Stéphane Boyer, who is vice-president of the executive-committee and oversees economic dossiers, has also been feeling optimistic lately about the City of Laval's prospects for growth in the years ahead.

"We have all been affected, as we survey the impact of the pandemic on our businesses here in Laval," he said. "Nonetheless, we have also been fortunate to see how, through incredible will and the mobilization of all the economic partners, our businesses were able to collaborate in order to get things done."

"This solidarity by our businesses, with help provided by the city and higher governments, became a force against the difficulties that the business community as a whole was able to confront," added Boyer.

According to Desjardins' economic evalua-



tion of Laval for 2021, the city will be seeing an economic rebound during the coming year. Here are some highlights from the 2020 report:

### Employment

Laval had an unemployment rate of 8.2 per cent in 2020, which is substantially lower than metropolitan Montreal (10.1 per cent) and the province of Quebec (8.9 per cent).

### Real Estate

Through various economic sectors in Laval, the value of new residential and non-residential real estate investments totaled \$857.7 million, for a drop of 18.6 per cent, according to the city. The city says these numbers were negatively affected by a 36.2 per cent drop in industrial and institutional real estate investments.

The city says the number of residential housing starts grew by 68.3 per cent compared by 2019 to reach 2,851 units, a peak since 2009.

### Support for business

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the city says it has put into place various emergency measures to support businesses, including deferring property tax payments, COVID-19 business loans, and a moratorium on repaying loans.

### Covid and Cité de la Biotech

The city says that since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than a dozen businesses in Laval involved in bio-tech and bio-sciences have been actively involved in efforts to fight COVID-19.

Whether it was research for finding new vaccines, medications, diagnostic tests or decontamination technology, the expertise of these businesses proved to be indispensable and put Laval on the global stage. The city is currently planning a major expansion of the Cité de la Biotech to further encourage this success.

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# Ottawa invests over \$85 million in garage expansion at the STL

## *Project to include 100 new parking spaces to recharge electric buses*



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On Aug. 10, federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities Catherine McKenna, along with Laval-Les Îles MP Fayçal El Khoury, Alfred-Pellan MP Angelo Iacono, Vimy MP Annie Koutrakis and Marc-Aurèle-Fortin MP Yves Robillard announced more than \$85 million in federal funding to expand a garage for the Société de transport de Laval (STL) by nearly 20,000 square metres.

### For public transit

The project will include approximately 100 new parking spaces to recharge electric buses, as well as additional vehicle maintenance and repair bays.

"The government of Canada is proud to invest in infrastructure that supports public transit in Quebec," McKenna's ministry said in a statement.

"While creating good jobs, these investments will provide Quebecers with more options to get around, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote the electrification of public transit."

### Efficient and safe

According to the Infrastructure and Communities Ministry, Ottawa is contributing to the STL's project through the Public

Transit Infrastructure Stream of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. The government of Quebec is also investing in the project and will reveal its contribution at a later date.

"Investments in public transit infrastructure allow Quebecers to travel efficiently and safely," said McKenna. "I am pleased to announce today federal funding of more than \$85 million for the STL garage expansion."

### Fighting climate change

"Thanks to this project, the STL will continue its transition to green and sustainable energy, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support our fight against climate change," she continued. "Canada's infrastructure plan invests in thousands of projects, creates jobs across the country and builds cleaner, more inclusive communities."

The four local MPs were impressed by the government's contribution and grateful for the amount allotted. "I would like to thank the federal government and Minister McKenna for having thought once again about the safety and quality of the public transport network in Laval by investing more than \$85 million in a major project to expand a garage of the Société de Transport de Laval," said El Khoury.

### 'A positive impact'

"Through this investment, residents of my riding of Alfred-Pellan will enjoy greener services from the STL and I am proud to be

*"Through this investment, residents of my riding of Alfred-Pellan will enjoy greener services from the STL and I am proud to be a partner for Laval residents," says Member of Parliament Angelo Iacono*

a partner for Laval residents," Iacono added. "This collaboration reinforces my commitment and that of our federal government to keep on investing in infrastructure projects that have a positive impact in our Laval community."

"As the Member of Parliament for Vimy, I am proud of this announcement from our government and I thank Minister McKenna for this investment in the STL," said Koutrakis. "Our investment of more than \$85 million will benefit all transit users in Laval and help further protect our environment."

### Electrification necessary

Yves Robillard noted that the federal government's contribution comes at a time when electrification is becoming increasingly necessary to eliminate the use of fossil fuels in order to deal with the long-term consequences of climate change.

"In order to achieve our goal of a 45 per cent reduction in greenhouse gases by 2028, we must encourage the electrification of public transportation," he said.

"In this regard, I am very pleased with the government's funding announcement made by Minister McKenna. This announcement of \$85 million will allow the Société de transport de Laval to double the surface area of its current site to provide it with new infrastructure adapted to electric buses."

### Overall Quebec investment

According to McKenna's ministry, the federal government will be investing more than \$7.5 billion in Quebec between 2018 and 2028 through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) for cultural and recreational infrastructure projects, green infrastructure, public transit and infrastructure in rural and northern communities.

As well, adds the ministry, since 2015 the government has invested \$7.3 billion in Quebec in more than 1,880 infrastructure projects under Ottawa's Investing in Canada plan.

## City council creates a new committee for senior citizens

### *Laval's seniors will finally be getting a voice of their own*



(TLN) During the August 10 city council meeting, the council members adopted a resolution officially creating the new Comité consultatif des personnes âgées lavalloises (CCPAL) to represent the interests of Laval's senior citizens.

### To better understand

The city says that the purpose of the committee is to come to a better understanding of the realities and preoccupations of Laval's senior citizens, who represent 20 per cent of the city's population.

The committee's mandate will be to study and formulate advice or recommendations on all questions posed by the executive-committee relating to issues involving senior citizens in Laval.

### Several new committees

This committee will be added to several other city council committees implemented since 2019, including the Conseil des Lavalloises

(which encourages women to participate in municipal politics), the Consultative Committee on Youth and the Committee for Intercultural Relations.

"The City of Laval proudly wears its title as a Municipality Friendly to Seniors (MADA), confirming our desire to pay particular attention to the needs and issues of seniors living in Laval," says Mayor Marc Demers.

### Helping with decisions

"This committee will be able to deepen our understanding while inspiring new measures and decisions that will respect the reality of these people."

The city is currently seeking candidates for the new committee. From five to seven committee members are expected to be appointed and the selection process will be taking place over the coming weeks. The appointments are for two years and are renewable. The deadline to submit an application is Oct. 1.

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# ELECTIONS 2021

## Canadians Reaction To An Early Election Call

By Bruce Anderson & David Coletto

According to an ABACUS DATA national survey of 3,000 Canadian adults conducted (August 6 to 11, 2021), while only a minority prefer an election now, the vast majority (83%) are not upset.

When asked, "If the Prime Minister asks for an election to be held this fall saying he would like to give Canadians a chance to select the government they want to take the country forward, how would you feel about this?":

38% say they would be happy to have a chance to cast a ballot and help choose the government to take us forward, 44% would prefer not to have an election but it isn't something that would affect how they vote, while 17% say they would be upset at Mr. Trudeau because an election seems unnecessary.

Most (72% of the 17%) of those who would be upset about an election call are supporters of opposition parties – 40% Conservatives, 17% NDP, and 8% BQ. 28% are Liberal supporters.

Among current Liberal supporters, 13% would be upset. Among accessible Liberals (those open to voting Liberal but don't support the party), 17% would be upset.

### WHAT IF THERE'S A 4TH COVID WAVE?

Asked how people would react if a fourth COVID wave happens during an election campaign. Two-thirds (66%) say it wouldn't have any effect on how they vote, 20% would be angry enough not to vote Liberal while 14% say they would be more likely to vote Liberal because they feel they have don't a reasonable job already managing the pandemic.

Those who say they would be angry enough not to vote Liberal include 10% of current Liberal supporters and 20% of accessible Liberals.

### GOVERNMENT APPROVAL

Today 45% approve of the job being done by the Trudeau government, while 37% disapprove – which is the lowest disapproval rating since January 2021. This +8 net score nationally breaks down to a +15 in BC, -20 in Alberta, -13 in Man/Sask, +15 in Ontario, +8 in Quebec, +27 in Atlantic Canada.

### DESIRE FOR CHANGE

Over the past few months, the desire for change has inched up but is still far below views held at the end of the last campaign in 2019.

Today, 43% say it's definitely time for a change

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|----------------------------|-----|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------|---------------|
|                            | ALL | Liberal Accessible | Conservative Accessible | NDP supporters | BQ supporters |
| Liberal majority           | 36% | 59%                | 16%                     | 26%            | 16%           |
| Liberal minority           | 27% | 30%                | 17%                     | 47%            | 42%           |
| Conservative majority      | 26% | 6%                 | 53%                     | 11%            | 16%           |
| Conservative minority      | 12% | 4%                 | 15%                     | 16%            | 26%           |

in government while another 23% think it would be good to have a change (66% want change), but it's not that important to them. In contrast, 20% say it's definitely best to keep the Liberals in office while another 13% would like to keep the Liberals but say it's not that important to them (33% want Liberals re-elected).

To put this in context, the strong desire for change is 9-points lower overall today than when Canadians voted on Election Day in 2019 (43% vs. 52%) – an election in which the Liberals won the most seats in the House of Commons.

### HOW DOES THIS TRANSLATE INTO VOTE INTENTION?

If an election were held now, the Liberals would win 37% of the vote, the Conservatives 28%, the NDP 20%, the Green Party 5% and the BQ at 22% in Quebec (15-points behind the Liberals and down 9 points since earlier this month). The People's Party captures 4% of the vote, the highest we have had in our tracking while the Maverick Party is at 0% nationally but registers a bit in Alberta (1%) and MB/SK (2%).

• In BC, we see the Liberals ahead of the NDP and Conservatives (36% to 29% and 26%). In 2019 the Conservatives won BC with 34% of the vote, followed by the Liberals at 26% and the NDP at 32%.

• In Alberta, 46% would vote Conservative compared with 22% for the NDP and 21% for the Liberals, 7% for the People's Party and 3% for the Greens. In 2019, the Conservatives won 69% of the votes, compared to 14% for the Liberals and 12% for the NDP.

• In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the

Conservatives are only slightly ahead of the Liberals (36% to 31%).

• The Liberals (with 41%) have a 13-point lead over the Conservatives (28%) in Ontario, with the NDP at 22% and the Green Party at 5%. In 2019, the Liberals won 42% of the vote, compared to 33% for the Conservatives and 17% for the NDP, and 6% for the Green Party.

• In Quebec, we see the Liberals with 37%, followed by the BQ (22%), the Conservatives (19%) the NDP at 12%. In 2019, the Liberals won 34% of the vote compared to 32% for the BQ, 16% for the Conservatives and 11% for the NDP. The BQ is down by 9-points from earlier this month.

• In the Atlantic provinces, the Liberals (47%) are well ahead of the Conservatives (24%) and the NDP (21%).

We are also resuming testing levels of motivation, by asking people how likely they are to turn out and cast a ballot on election day. Among the 77% of respondents who said they would definitely be voting, the Liberals lead by 9 as well: 38% Liberal, 29% Conservative, 20% NDP, 5% BQ and 4% Green. 4% would vote for the People's Party.

### WHAT OUTCOME WOULD PEOPLE PREFER?

We asked respondents which of four outcomes they would prefer to see happen – a Liberal majority, a Liberal minority, a Conservative majority, or a Conservative minority.

Overall, 64% would prefer to see some form of Liberal government over a Conservative one (37% majority vs. 27% minority) while 36% would prefer to see some form of Conservative

government over a Liberal one (26% majority vs 10% minority).

75% of current NDP supporters would prefer to see a Liberal government, including 26% who want a Liberal majority. Among BQ supporters, 58% would prefer a Liberal government while 42% would prefer a Conservative one.

Most interesting, among those open to voting Conservative – 34% would prefer to see a Liberal government including 16% who want to see a Liberal majority.

### UPSHOT

Voters don't usually reward governments but it's hard not to imagine that the general satisfaction with the direction of the country and the handling of the pandemic is not part of the math that gives the Liberals the lead today. Will this election be as much about Justin Trudeau the leader as 2015 or 2019, or more about the policy direction he proposes and the lack of a strong desire for change?

The mood of the country has not been this positive in years, fewer disapprove of the federal government's performance than at any time in 2021, the desire for change remains much lower and dislike for Mr. Trudeau is far less intense. When the 2019 campaign started, the Liberals trailed the Conservatives by 4. Today they lead by 9.

But that doesn't mean a Liberal victory is a forgone conclusion. There are a few things to watch closely.

The first is whether the NDP can capitalize on the goodwill Mr. Singh has developed. He's the most popular leader and the NDP's pool of accessible voters is larger today than when the 2019 campaign started. Perhaps more important, people think the Liberals will win giving those inclined to vote NDP freedom to vote NDP given the chance of a Conservative government seems so low.

Second, while Mr. O'Toole's personal numbers are quite weak, many still don't know much about him giving him an opportunity to introduce himself to people for the first time and try and change some people's views of him. He starts the campaign well back and a short campaign may not give him enough time to catch up – but I wouldn't completely count him and the Conservatives out at this point.

Finally, tracking interest in the campaign will be critical to understanding likely turnout. Who is more motivated and who will turnout? What impact will early voting and mail voting have?





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By Martin C. Barry

## Two suspects arrested after shots fired in Chomedey

The Laval Police made two arrests and have launched an investigation after shots were fired on the afternoon of Aug. 9 in Laval's Chomedey district.

A police spokesperson said the LPD received an initial call reporting gunfire shortly after 3:30 p.m. on Aug. 9.

Several police officers who were nearby answered the call and saw two men walking away from the area from where the first report of gunfire had been made.

One of the suspects fit the description of a possible suspect and both were apprehended for questioning, according to the LPD.

A subsequent on-site investigation found spent shell casings near the intersection of 2nd St. and 80th Ave., although it appeared no one had been injured.

Two days after the shooting, the LPD issued another statement saying two individuals had been arrested.

The LPD identified one of those arrested as Grant Alexandre Jean- Louis, age 25, who was arraigned at the Laval courthouse and charged with illegally discharging a firearm.

The second suspect, age 21, wasn't identified by the police and was released with conditions after making a statement. The LPD said two handguns were seized during their intervention.

Anyone who feels they have information regarding this incident can contact the Laval Police confidentially at their Info-Line at 450 662-INFO (4636), or by calling 911. The file number is LVL 210809 053.

## Murder attempt, three suspects arrested

The Laval Police Department has confirmed that three individuals have been arrested following an incident which took place on July 10 at the Aztec Bar in Chomedey.

According to the LPD, around 1 am that night, an altercation broke out involving several individuals inside the Aztec. Then, around 1:20 am, another altercation broke out in the parking lot outside.

The LPD says one gunshot was fired, injuring two individuals and they were transported to hospital. An investigation led to the identification and arrest of three suspects believed to be associated with the incident.

The three suspects were arraigned at the Laval courthouse and face charges of attempted murder. They are identified as Marc Kenson Milien, 28, and Chayanne O'Neil Peralta Garcia, 27 ans. Both remained in custody last week.



The third suspect, identified as Johaina Fahmy, 21 ans, was released with a number of conditions to be followed. All are expected back in court on Aug. 19.

Anyone with information about the above incident is encouraged to call the Laval Police Department's confidential Info-Line at 450 662-INFO (4636), or 911. The file number is LVL 210710-009.

# 2020 review: reduction in the number of fires

## A year of challenges for the Fire Department



**MARTIN C. BARRY**  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter  
For The Laval News  
marty@newsfirst.ca

Laval, August 12, 2021 — On August 11, the Service de sécurité incendie de Laval filed a report on its 2020 activities, in which there was a 19% decrease in calls and, above all, a 14% decrease in fires. These findings show that despite the pandemic that began in March 2020, the constant efforts and creativity of practices to ensure services to citizens while prioritizing the safety of staff in the field have borne fruit.

"The people of Laval can be proud of their Fire Safety Department. The year covered by this report was one of challenges for firefighters and management. This report demonstrates that the mission of prevention is fulfilled thanks to the imagination and creativity of the head of division and her team. In terms of interventions, the field teams have improved response times, and we can only congratulate them on that. Once again, congratulations to all the staff of the service and management for their outstanding work. »

— Sandra Desmeules, member of the executive committee, responsible for public safety issues and municipal councillor

"The year 2020 will be marked forever in our memories, with the additional challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these, all of

the fire department's resources have maintained at a high level our mission to protect the lives and property of the population as well as the City's infrastructure. »

— Patrick Taillefer, Director of the Fire Department

### Prevention: a priority

The year 2020 was marked by the temporary cessation of on-site inspections. From March to September, the Prevention Division team chose to modify its practices in order to carry out the follow-ups required to ensure the safety of citizens. It was therefore by making telephone calls that the re-inspections were carried out. Awareness-raising and education work with daycares, schools and seniors' residences, among others, has continued with some technological transformations to reach all audiences. Since September, inspectors have resumed face-to-face visits, while respecting public health guidelines.

### Strike force never known to date

The strike force consists of 10 firefighters arriving in 10 minutes at the scene of a medium- and low-risk building fire (within the urban perimeter), with an additional 5 firefighters within the next 5 minutes for high- and very high-risk buildings (within the urban perimeter). In 2020, 96% of the response time was obtained, which is a significant overshoot of the initial target: in the revised fire risk coverage scheme, it was 90%.



Photo Rapport annuel incendie 2020\_Vincent\_Girard (002)

### Interventions of all kinds

In addition to fighting the flames, firefighters responded to a multitude of other situations, including:

- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
- Dumping of hazardous materials;
- Road accident and release from custody;
- Flooding;
- Ice rescue and nautical rescue;
- Gas leakage;
- Civil protection disaster.

### Some highlights

- 1,321 fewer calls than in 2019, for a total of 5,752 calls.
- 38 fewer building fires than in 2019, a decrease of 14%.
- 490 fewer responses for unfounded alarms, a decrease of 20%.

Between 1 May and 31 October, firefighters carried out 14,400 home prevention visits to residences in Laval; this represents approximately 400 addresses per team (group or fire station). This prevention work has made it possible to achieve 99% of the initial objective of the revised fire risk coverage scheme 2015-2019.



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## A Hostage Situation

**Q** My husband applied for a job behind my back and accepted the job without my consent. He convinced me, if I came with him, it would only be for a year. He moved my son and me from sunny Southern California to freezing North Dakota.

The year came and went. We renegotiated a three-year stay for economic reasons, then had a second son. Well, that temporary stay came and went, and now it's been seven long, cold years! I've tried to be patient, but I can't stand these nine-month winters anymore!

He says he wants to continue to live here until the economy gets better back home, which will not likely happen for at least three or four more years. Ugh!

In order to stay home with my children, I have not been working. But now that my youngest is ready for kindergarten, I've asked my husband if I could seek a job to help us relocate. He says no, because I can't make as much money as he can. He has an IT degree, and in my field I can only make half what he does.

It gets worse.

He suffers from anxiety, so he has more fear than the average person. He has opened a separate bank account in his name in order to keep me from accessing our money. He puts \$900 a month in our joint account for me to buy food and other needs.

He then doles out food money to buy more groceries the second half of the month. I've told him I dislike how he has set up our money and that the control is unfair.

For a year he's claimed he will add my name to the second account, but he has not done so. He is a conflict avoider, who tells me what I want to hear or tells me "this is not a good time" to discuss matters.

We have absolutely no family close by. I'm neglected emotionally, financially, and spiritually. I take my boys to church and attend weekly Bible study in order to have some friends and support.

But my patience has run out. I told him the boys and I are going home to my parents to spend time with my family. What he doesn't know is I'm going to pursue employment, and, if I succeed, get

an apartment and live there with my children. I will offer to let him join us and sell our North Dakota home so we can restart in California. Or he can visit us all he can.

As it is, he is already in an uproar over me wanting to visit.

If it weren't for our boys, I would never have come here. I was trying to keep the family together.

**Harper**

**A** Harper, doling out money and making major decisions without your consent makes you less a wife and more an indentured servant. Your position in the family is the same as your children. Powerless.

Your husband has clipped your wings to keep you from flying away, and the more you telegraph your feelings, the more he will tighten his grasp.

He's decided you aren't leaving, but he isn't saying that. Instead, he "tells me what I want to hear," which is an interesting euphemism for lying.

Whether he has anxiety issues or not doesn't matter. He doesn't have the right to take your life away from you. Whether you admit it to yourself or not, this marriage may be over.

You devised a plan. You thought it was fair. He did these things to me, I get to do this one thing to him. But you must consider the legal implications.

Before you do anything, privately and without your husband's knowledge, see a lawyer to sort out custody issues. You may need to have your parents pay for the attorney or even go to another town to ensure your visit is confidential.

In addition, your husband is in IT. Nearly everything you do on your home computer or phone is recoverable by someone with sophisticated knowledge. Take steps to make sure all your communications remain private.

If you are worried about his reaction (and you should be), you need to be very cautious about your safety and the safety of your children. Believing you can only leave him surreptitiously means you know he could be dangerous. A lawyer can advise you here as well.

You are not the proverbial bird in a gilded cage. You are a bird in a cage of ice—emotionally, financially, and spiritually. You need two plans, one legal and one for safety. Once you have them, the next step will emerge.

**Wayne & Tamara**

# Congregation Shaar Shalom

is inviting you to join us on a very moving and inspirational author presentation of her parents survival.

**Do not miss this exciting presentation on Roslyn Franken's parents survival. It will be very interesting.**

Join us for a riveting journey back in time as author Roslyn Franken recounts the unforgettable story of her internationally acclaimed book entitled MEANT TO BE about how



her parents, as two Jewish teenagers, survived captivity continents apart during World War II to find everlasting love and triumph over tragedy against all odds – Her mother survived the concentration camps in Nazi Europe including Auschwitz while her father survived the Nagasaki atomic bomb as a prisoner of war in Japan.

How did they survive? How did they meet? How did they end up in Montreal where they married and made a beautiful life together despite the trauma of their past? Their daughter Roslyn reveals the answers to these questions and more in a presentation that has been described as "Emotionally charged. Uplifting. Inspiring. Breathtaking." and known for leaving her audiences filled with wonder and inspired with hope.

Roslyn provides a powerful combination of masterful storytelling with compelling audio-visual elements including family photos, video clips from a Gemini award-nominated CBC television documentary about her parents and more for a very memorable and meaningful presentation.



Her book is also being made into a feature film currently in development.

Roslyn and her book, MEANT TO BE, have been featured in numerous newspapers, on television and radio across North America and Israel including the Canadian Jewish News, The Montreal Times, CBC News, CTV News, CJAD Radio, Jewish Press of Tampa, NBC Daytime, ABC Action News, AISH.com and more.

Roslyn will be available for questions following the presentation.

**Date: Wednesday August 25th, 2021 at 7:45PM**

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8548084446?pwd=MzN4Rit-LUG1STJhMVVklISVl4ZzlaQT09>

**Meeting ID:** 854 808 4446 **Passcode:** 154749

(ZOOM will open at 7:30 PM in Montreal time)

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## MY FIRST JOB

Finding a first job involves learning and working with a few select words — autonomy, freedom, maturity, projects, money, and the future. And to get the job you want, you have to be proactive. You have to roll up your sleeves. You have to be the best candidate for the job that you desire.

Of course, if it's your first job, you won't have a lot of experience under your belt. Finding an employer who is willing to give you your first chance could be a challenge. You're not entitled to your first job; you have to earn it. You have to take the initiative and be interested in all possibilities, even those that are not quite what you had in mind! Starting at the bottom of the ladder is a fact of life. You just have to see this step as a springboard. Who knows where your first job may lead you?

### Sell yourself

Of course, you probably don't have much to say

in your resume at this point in your life. But think about including everything that makes you unique. Mention your education, training, volunteer or paid work, prizes, special mentions, awards, and scholarships. They could make a difference. Don't be afraid of selling yourself; you're eager to learn!

### Make yourself visible

Make visits to trade fairs, conferences, and workshops in your domain. On site, adopt a professional and self-assured attitude. Inquire about the companies that interest you. What are they looking for? Get busy linking with contacts in the field, through business networks such as LinkedIn.

Your arrival in the job market will add some more new words to your vocabulary — bosses, coworkers, effectiveness, efficiency, working conditions, and salary. They'll appear as if by magic in this brave new world!

Court File No.: E130762

Court Registry: Kelowna

#### IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Claimant : NATALIE LOUISE ROSE**

also known as

**NATALIE LOUISE TKACH**

**Respondent : DANIEL ROSE**

#### NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

**To: The Respondent, Daniel Rose**

**TAKE NOTICE THAT** on June 24, 2021 an order was made for service on you of a Notice of Family Claim issued from the Kelowna Registry of the Supreme Court of British Columbia in family law case number E130762 by way of this advertisement. In the family law case, the Claimant claims the following relief against you: a `divorce. You must file a Response to Family Claim within 30 days after the publication of this notice failing which further proceedings may be taken against you without notice to you. You may obtain a copy of the Notice of Family Claim and the order for service by advertisement from the Kelowna Registry at 1355 Water Street, Kelowna, BC V1Y 9R3. This advertisement is placed by the Claimant whose address for service is 5000-505 Doyle Avenue, Kelowna, BC V1Y 0C5.

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# In Memoriam & Obituaries

## What to do if a loved one passes away abroad



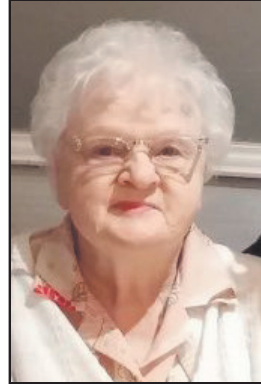
Learning about the death of a loved one is never easy, especially if they passed away while abroad. Managing formalities in a country where the language, laws and customs differ from your own can make the grieving process that much more harrowing for family and friends involved. If a loved one has sadly passed away while abroad, continue reading to find out the right course of action.

### FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

The representative must quickly decide if the deceased's body will be repatriated (either in a coffin or urn) or buried in the country where the tragedy occurred. It's important to keep in mind that funeral practices and related costs (burial, cremation, etc.) vary greatly from one country to the next. In fact, certain regions in the world prohibit cremation while others impose strict time constraints for embalming or incinerating a corpse.

Furthermore, specific documents and certificates are necessary in many cases. Depending on the circumstances and place of death, long delays, among numerous other factors, can interrupt the body's repatriation. In addition, every airline has its own requirements and restrictions in relation to the transport of coffins or cremated remains.

Finally, all the costs related to the funeral arrangements and repatriation of the deceased's corpse or ashes are the family's responsibility. In the case where the deceased had travel insurance, the insurer may cover the entire or partial cost of related expenses.



**Duplessis, Pauline**  
1925 - 2021

In Laval, on August 7, 2021, at the age of 95, passed away Mrs. Pauline Duplessis, wife of the late Yvon Laverdière. She is survived by her children Richard (Lucie), the late Murielle, Lorraine (Richard), Jocelyne (Sylvain) and Carole (Mario), her grandchildren Nanny (Christian), Nathalie, Marie-Eve, Ginette (Éric), David, Jean-François, Jennifer (Louis-Alexandre), Christine (Samuel) and Jérémy (Sabrina), his great-grandchildren Eve, Nicolas, Vincent, Kim, Louis and Éliane as well as many relatives and friends.



**Vandal, Gisèle**  
1932 - 2021

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Mrs. Gisèle Vandal, wife of the late René Létourneau. She is survived by her children Michel (Lorraine), Pierre (Jacinthe), Francine (Gilles), Bernard (Sylvie) and Johanne (Roland); his grandchildren and great-grandchildren; her sister Carmen as well as several relatives and friends and especially her friend Fernand.



**Lévesque, Joseph**  
1931 - 2021

At La Cité de la Santé in Laval, on January 29, 2021, at the age of 89 passed away Mr. Joseph "Jos" Lévesque, son of the late Irène Lemaire and the late Elzéar Lévesque. He is survived by his brothers and sisters, Maurice (Ginette), Fernand (Fernande) Gérald, Rolande, Liliane, and Monique (Pierre), his wife Liliane, his children: Denise Julien (Denis), Marlita (Raymond), Yves (Sylvie), Lucie (Yvan), and Guy (Rubi), his grandchildren, great-grandchildren and nieces, cousins, cousins as well as several friends and neighbors.



**Héroux, Pierre**  
1941 - 2021

Pierre Héroux passed away on August 10, at the age of 79. He is survived by his daughters Caroline (Jacques) and Chantal (Louis-Philippe), his grandchildren Pierre-Olivier (Anaïs), Anouk, Geneviève, Maxime (Anaïs) and Shahnai, his three great-grandchildren, his siblings, relatives and friends.

Contact us today to place an obituary or in memoriam in our next issue  
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# HOROSCOPE

Week of **AUGUST 22 TO 28, 2021**

The luckiest signs this week:  
**TAURUS, GEMINI AND CANCER**



## ARIES

Avoid burning the candle at both ends, especially if your health isn't great right now. All it takes is reconnecting with a lo-ved one to create memorable moments. You'll discover a new approach to spirituality that improves your well-being.



## TAURUS

You'll need to upgrade your wardrobe for work. With new clothes and a fresh look, you'll be more confident in your ability to do business. Creativity is a good tool for professional development.



## GEMINI

You'll be in charge of a major meeting at work or a large family reunion. Your com-p-asure will fuel your accomplishments and even lead to resolutions. With a bit of planning, almost anything is within your grasp.



## CANCER

As you complete a training program of some kind, you'll clearly redefine your career path so that it better aligns with your goals and values. A quick getaway might be organized at the last minute.



## LEO

You'll feel like you're on an emotional rol-ler coaster. Take the time to talk with lo-ved ones about what's on your mind. Their open-minded responses will surprise and calm you. Change brings its own host of concerns.



## VIRGO

Consensus and harmony aren't easy to achieve with some people. In particular, avoid talking about money with family members. After a turbulent period, resto-ring the peace requires a lot of patience.



## LIBRA

At work, you'll be responsible for dealing with a variety of urgent situations, and you'll have to walk on eggshells around certain colleagues and clients. Tact and diplomacy are needed to help keep the peace. The same is true in your relationships.



## SCORPIO

It'll require a lot of effort to accomplish everything on your to-do list. You'll likely be applauded for one reason or another. All sorts of people will praise you for a particular accomplishment.



## SAGITTARIUS

Spending quality time with your family requires a fair bit of energy, but it also brings a feeling of gratitude. Your loved ones will feel confident around you, and you'll be the focus of their attention.



## CAPRICORN

You'll have a lot of errands to run, and your kids could have you playing chauffeur. Don't forget to figure out where you're going before you hit the road. You'll finally hear from someone living abroad.



## AQUARIUS

You'll have a few loose ends to tie up with your bank. You'll also get some clarity about matters of the heart. Good communication skills can work miracles in any ci-r-cumstance. Learn to be more assertive.



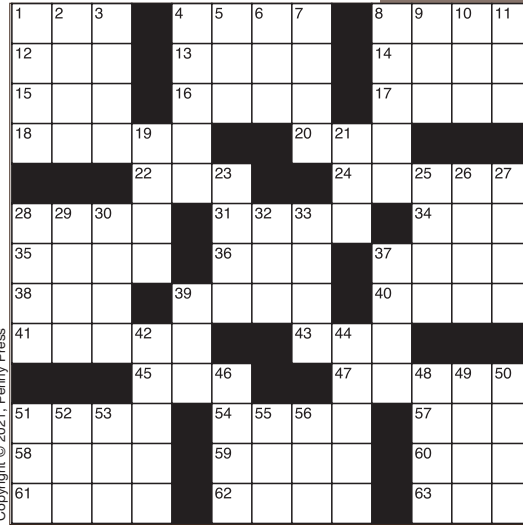
## PISCES

You've got a busy week in store. You might even take up a new sport with a great deal of enthusiasm. Your love life will feel like an exciting adventure. As for your work, you'll find new ways to consolidate your income.

# Coffee Break

## CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 090



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### ACROSS

1. Mom's fellow
4. Strait-laced
8. Quote
12. Wintry
13. Talk wildly
14. Opera tune
15. "Look \_\_\_ ye leap"
16. Forewarning
17. Lincoln coin
18. Conditions
20. Morse code symbol
22. Long fish
24. Records
28. Creeps
31. Copied
34. Assembled
35. Avails
36. Lock opener
37. Soft drink
38. Ump's relative
39. "Chicago" star
40. Hideous
41. Louisiana marsh

43. Mock
45. Troublesome tyke
47. Villain
51. October stone
54. On the cutting \_\_\_
57. Adam's wife
58. Official helper
59. Food fish
60. Male or female
61. Bassoon, e.g.
62. James Brown's music
63. Gallery offering

### DOWN

1. Say no to seconds
2. Land measurement
3. One who colors
4. Not poetry
5. Barnyard animal
6. "\_\_\_ Got Sixpence"
7. Heal
8. Desert plants
9. Bitter resentment
10. \_\_\_ can
11. Chew and swallow
19. Army cafeteria
21. Secondhand
23. Huron, e.g.
25. Haze
26. Relate, as a story
27. Stick around
28. Sidewalk border
29. On a voyage
30. Challenge
32. \_\_\_ your request
33. Observer
37. Mince
39. Mouth part
42. Greased
44. Best
46. Household animals
48. Flat hill
49. Concluded
50. Succeeding
51. Paddle's kin
52. Baked dessert
53. Citrus cooler
55. Twins
56. Large antelope

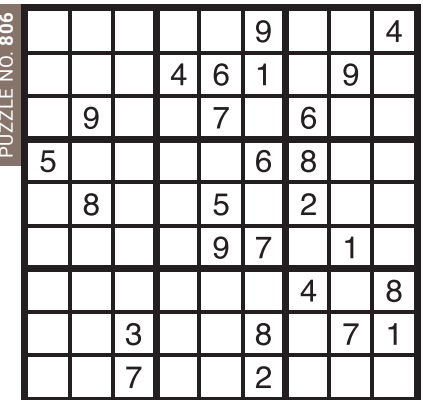
# Sudoku

## 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.**

PUZZLE NO. 806

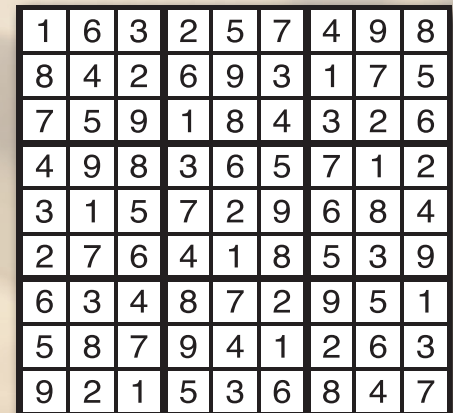


## Last Issues' Answers

## CROSSWORDS



## Sudoku



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- Cherries
- Strawberries
- Grapes
- Spinach or Chou frisé
- Broccoli
- Green beans
- Eggplant
- Plums
- Corn
- Mango
- Oranges
- Peppers
- Leek
- Zucchini
- Bananas
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber
- Mystery item

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