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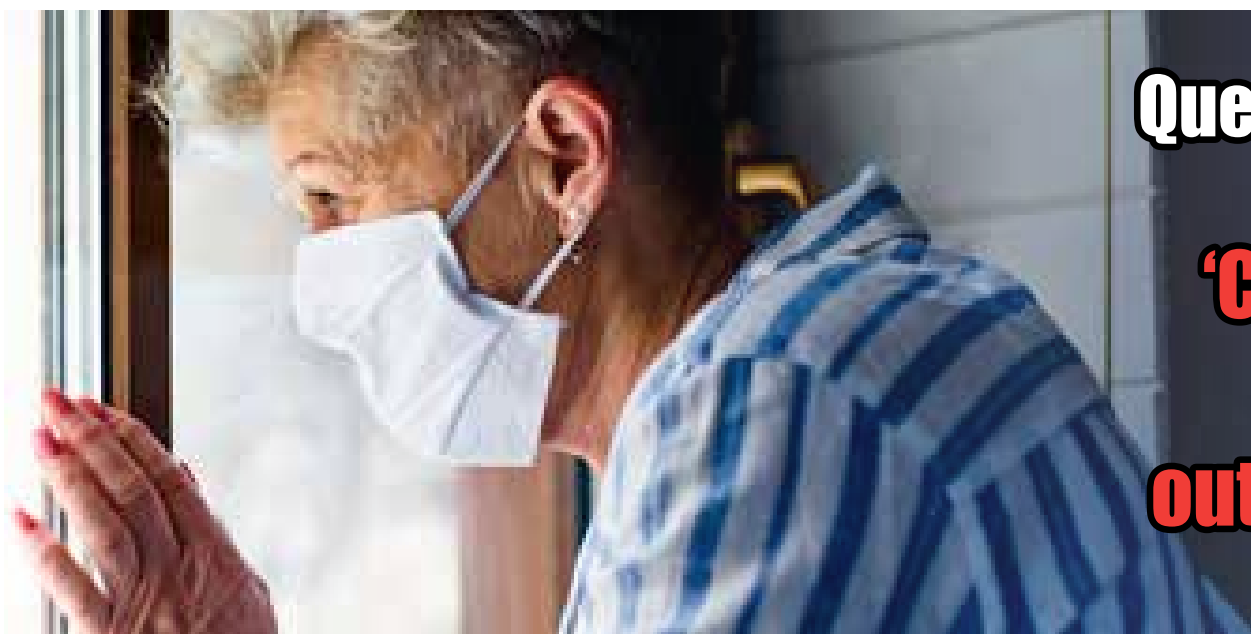
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Canada Post workers on unpaid leave, because of Covid vax non-compliance

During leave without pay, anxieties increase within families, says CUPW's Alain Robitaille



MARTIN C. BARRY
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For The Laval News
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The labour union representing Canada Post workers is contesting the crown corporation's temporary suspension without pay of employees who are not complying with the federal government's order that they become fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus.

Covid vax mandatory

On Oct. 6, the Trudeau Liberals announced their government's plan to require COVID-19 vaccination across the federal public service and federally regulated transportation sectors. Under the new policy, federal public servants in the core public administration, including members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, were required to confirm their vaccination status by Oct. 29.

Those who were unwilling to disclose their vaccination status or to be fully vaccinated were to be placed on administrative leave without pay as early as Nov. 15. Crown corporations such as Canada Post and separate agencies were asked to implement vaccine policies mirroring the requirements announced for the rest of the public service.

Leave without pay

According to Alain Robitaille, president of the greater Montreal local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), the deadline for postal employees to comply with Ottawa's order was midnight Nov. 26, failing which they would be placed on leave without pay until further notice.

"The postal union is not against Covid vaccination," he said. "We are aware that it is the best solution possible for the population in general. We know that it is a good thing and we feel it is important to say so. However, what we are contesting to an arbitrator is that we feel there are alternatives for those who don't want to be vaccinated which are also valid – including frequent screening."

Many non-compliance reasons

Although the anti-vax movement has perhaps created in certain people's minds a stereotypical image of those who oppose mandatory Covid vaccination, Robitaille said there are

many reasons why some CUPW members are reluctant to or don't want to comply, including concerns over individual rights, religious convictions and health issues.

"A certain number of members of the postal workers' union have all sorts of concerns about the vaccines, both founded and unfounded," he said in an interview with Newsfirst Multimedia. "I am sure that a certain number of those concerns are unfounded. However, that being said their fears are very real."

In all, the CUPW's Montreal region local (which takes in Montreal Island, the South Shore, Laval and the North Shore) has around 6,000 members, around 600 of those being from Laval.

Workers feeling the strain

Robitaille said that 10 per cent of the membership have expressed concerns about the government's order to become fully vaccinated, corresponding roughly to a trend seen in the rest of the population. He said the government's decision to enforce the vaccination requirement has greatly impacted the postal workers and is weighing heavily on some of them.

"During leave without pay, debts accumulate, anxieties increase within families, damage is done," he said, noting that the postal service has been one of the few sectors of the country's economy that continued to operate without stopping since the start of the pandemic early last year.

'Hard on families'

"We've been on the job since the beginning. It's been hard on families, on human resources. And now this latest development will be yet another blow they'll have to deal with just as the Christmas season is starting."

On Nov. 25, the national CUPW announced that a "cease and desist" order the union had sought in court against Canada Post's vaccination position wasn't granted.

The arbitrator did, however, order a hearing on the merit of CUPW's case, allowing the union to present its arguments within a shorter period than would ordinarily be the case. "CUPW is disappointed by the result, but we still feel we have a good case on the merit," said Carl Girouard, the CUPW's national grievance officer.



Photo: Alain Robitaille, president of the CUPW's local for the greater Montreal region, says Ottawa's 'leave without pay' order for the Covid-unvaccinated is "yet another blow" some of the union members have to deal with just as the Christmas season is starting. (Photo: Courtesy Radio-Canada)

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OPINION & Editorial



THAT'S WHAT I'M THINKING

Robert Vairo



Did Climate Change Cause Noah's Ark?

I don't want to get into a climate change debate, but one thing is for sure. Climate change is happening and it can not be reversed by humankind. It's just the way it is and has been since the Big Bang, some 14 billion years ago. It's been "expanding, cooling and evolving" ever since. Can it be slowed? According to most, yes it can. But stopped or reversed, no. Our earth has been fluctuating from 'super green house to an ice house' many times since life began. Some semblance of records, we are told, began only in the 19th century. That's not very long ago. In fact, it's a grain of sand considering the period we stopped climbing trees and eventually began to walk upright three to six million years ago. So, what did really happen?

Do you believe in Noah's Ark? The Bible says he did build it, but that's not enough to convince everyone. The fact is, evidence indicates massive floods in then called Mesopotamia, today known as Iraq, were prevalent, with heavy and continuous periods of rain flooding the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Egyptian archeologists among others, have found evidence of fossiliferous "flood deposits", in Iraq.

According to The National Center for Science Education, over hundreds of thousands and millions of years have resulted in "changing configuration of continents and oceans, changes in the Sun's intensity, variations in the orbit of Earth, and volcanic eruptions." This is climate change.

A Saskatchewan farmer once told me overlooking his field of golden wheat, "It's hard to imagine all this was underwater long ago. Yup, that's Mother Nature". Today it's called climate change.

Which brings us to the BC 'flood of the century'. We now say, and especially those directly impacted "we've never seen anything like this". Of course not. It doesn't mean it never happened. It did. So, one has to wonder why politicians did not heed the warning signs.

Yes, there were warning signs. This could have been avoided. In the 1920's one huge B.C. Lake called Sumas, was actually drained and the water that naturally flowed into it was stopped, diked, and voilà, there was suddenly one very fertile prairie where just about anything and everything could grow. It was hailed as a great engineering feat.

But this has to be underlined. As early as three years ago, 2018, a B.C. historian had a warning. Chad Reimer wrote a book, Before We Lost the Lake: A Natural and Human History of Sumas Valley. Author Reimer warns of the evidence of flooding every 45 to 100 years that "should not lull us in a false sense of security. This complacency has been unfounded". Reimer was spot on! Oh yes, politicians from every

level had been commissioning reports and studies, but let's face it, spending taxpayers' money on solidifying infrastructure does not attract votes. And today, Canada is paying for it. Yes Canada, not just BC, because we were literally cut off from the Port of Vancouver for a week. Yes, the folks in BC had to ration gasoline, because the Alberta pipelines of oil and gas were shut, but a lot leaves and arrives from the west coast that serves all of Canada, and parts of the U.S. And with roads and rail snapped like uncooked spaghetti, the gateway of goods from around the world stopped. I'm referring to the Port of Vancouver which handles everything from "clothes and candy, to electronics, grain and produce, canola oil, chemicals, fuels, lumber products, machinery, and automobiles."

In fact, the Vancouver Port handles \$1 of every \$3 of Canada's trade in goods outside of North America. It has 120,000 employees, compared to the much smaller 19,000 at the Port of Montréal. This life-line is a federal jurisdiction, so the onus is clearly on Ottawa to stop the focus on carbon taxes and more on floods. Implement measures with immediate results, to assure this destruction does not happen again in Newfoundland Labrador, and on the 'wet coast'.

Notes:

Omicron and other variants will occur as long as the other half of the world is not vaccinated.

In Saskatchewan, if you own an EV, there is now \$150.00 yearly tax on your car because owners don't pay the 15 cents per liter gasoline tax. Fair is fair.

Shamefully, no one in the Trudeau cabinet condemned self-proclaimed environment king David Suzuki for suggesting domestic terrorism, pipelines will be blown up if more is not done on climate change.

Joe Biden is importing 844 000 barrels of oil a day, from Russia. He killed the Canadian XL Keystone pipeline, (no objection from our P.M.) which would have delivered the same amount of Canadian oil to the U.S.

After stopping our oil exports, Biden's EV tax credits to Americans could kill Ontario's auto industry. Thanks so much smiling Joe.

Comedian Rick Gervais "I hope the next generation cancels the 'cancel culture' generation"

That's what I'm Thinking.
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ANGRY? FRUSTRATED? ANNOYED?

Centre De Pédiatrie Sociale Laval asks community to lend a helping hand

Pediatrics centre sets ambitious \$50,000 goal for Laval's most vulnerable children



MARTIN C. BARRY
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For The Laval News
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In time for the upcoming holiday season, the Centre De Pédiatrie Sociale Laval is launching its annual Guignolée, which will be held from Dec. 1-17 in the four corners of the city.

After a year's break due to the Covid pandemic, the organization is back on the streets and in front of Laval businesses to raise awareness of social pediatrics in the community and to give Lavallois the opportunity to support it.

An essential role



The organization, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, played a more crucial role than ever with vulnerable children in Laval during the pandemic.

Indeed, say organizers, the prevention of child neglect and abuse is of paramount importance in this context of uncertainty. The report of the Laurent Commission, published last spring, emphasized the importance of funding front-line services to protect children.

The demand is overwhelming

However, the Centre De Pédiatrie Sociale has a waiting list of 56 families residing in some of the least privileged neighbourhoods of Laval. Some of these families have been on their own for almost a year and some of the children on the waiting list are in a very vulnerable situation. They are at risk of neglect, integration difficulties, developmental delays, food insecurity, anxiety and depressive disorders, as well as academic failure.

Unsuitable premises

The centre says that two of its three points of service have very limited capacity, which reduces the proper functioning of their activities. As a result, the team is currently looking for a new space that would be better suited to social pediatrics services, as well as funding

for this purpose.

But with the real estate market on the rise, they say, it is currently impossible for the centre to invest in space without cutting professional resources dedicated to clinical services.

Space lacking, says director

"Our workers and doctors have the time and desire to take care of more toddlers, but the space to accommodate them is not adequate," says Mylène Du Bois, executive-director of the centre. "As a result, the children are waiting impatiently for their turn, which, when the time comes, will give them access to a better future."

"The need to expand our premises in order to be able to adequately meet the needs of the children is one of our most pressing issues," adds Me Jean Marius Mottet, president of the centre's board of directors. "Access to an adapted space would allow us to double the number of interventions on a weekly basis and thus ensure that we fully realize our mission."

Chomedey a critical sector

According to the centre, Chomedey, the third most vulnerable neighbourhood in Quebec, is currently in an emergency situation. They say the Centre De Pédiatrie Sociale Laval would need to take action immediately in order to avoid potentially tragic incidents within families.

Unfortunately, the news of the last few months shows how much children are affected. As Régine Laurent, president of the Special Commission on the Rights of the Child and the Protection of Youth, said in a report released earlier this year: "We can no longer accept, in 2021, in a society that has the means to do so, that children do not have their most basic needs met."

Many ways to support

The Centre De Pédiatrie Sociale Laval is asking the Laval community to help raise \$50,000 to continue to provide clinical services to vulnerable children in Laval. Donations can be made online at cpslaval.org, or at street corners in the downtown area and at various partner businesses on Saturday Dec. 11.

"More than a third of our funding comes from private donors and 90 per cent of the donations collected go directly to the children through much needed services: social workers, psycho-educators, speech therapists, music therapists, etc. Together, let's form a caring community that takes care of its children," Du Bois says.

Here for Laval's children

The centre de Pédiatrie Sociale Laval is a non-profit organization that provides activities and care to children in the community. The centre contributes to the overall development of children and adolescents with developmental, social or health problems in disadvantaged areas.

The centre also promotes the interests and rights of children and their families. Its mandate is to offer interdisciplinary health services to a vulnerable clientele that is at odds with the current service network, in a living environment integrated into the community.



#NewsMatters:

The National Assembly Report

By Raquel Fletcher

Liberal leader slams "historic anglophones" reference

Quebec Liberal Party leader Dominique Anglade is trying to distinguish her party from the governing Coalition Avenir Québec on at least two fronts – anglophones and climate change.

During the Liberal's policy convention this past weekend in Quebec City, Anglade slammed Premier François Legault for his reference to "historic anglophones," in a speech last month to open a new session of the National Assembly. Many anglophones find the term offensive.

"I have a message for him and to all English-speaking Quebecers," Anglade said during her address to party members Friday night at the convention.

"I hear your concern and, yes, your suspicion, when you witness the Premier choosing the word 'historic' to describe your place here. Let him understand, here, now and always: You are Quebecers," she said.

However, Westmount-St. Louis MNA, Jennifer Maccarone said she recognizes the Liberal Party has its own work to do to win back the esteem of English speakers.

"I hear that people feel that we haven't been there, and that is absolutely something that we need to address," she said.

The Liberal Party supports the government's controversial French language reform, Bill 96, but MNAs insisted they are fighting for amendments to protect the rights of Anglophones.

\$100 billion for climate change

Seeking to redefine the Liberal Party heading into next year's provincial election, Anglade promised a \$100 billion plan to combat climate change if her party wins back power.

Project Eco would nationalize green hydrogen production, a clean fossil fuel alternative that can be used where hydroelectricity

cannot, such as to fuel ships and planes. Anglade wants to make the environment the party's top priority while setting it apart from political rivals.

"There's no question that we had to make a decision about where the party is going," Anglade said. "I've been saying all along that the biggest challenge we have is the challenge of climate change."

The Liberals suffered an historic loss of seats in the 2018 provincial election and Quebec Solidaire is currently polling higher among francophones. However, Liberals brushed off the suggestion the party is moving towards the left to draw voters away from the second opposition.

"We are much more pro-business," said MNA Pierre Arcand.

CAQ not doing enough on environment: Liberals

At the same time, the Liberals criticized the CAQ for being too focused on the economy and not including any money to fight climate change in its economic update unveiled last week.

Finance Minister Eric Girard announced \$11 billion in new spending over the next five years, including a special rising cost of living allowance for low and middle-income wage earners, who will receive a cheque for \$275 (\$400 for a couple) in the new year.

In the past, Legault has responded to criticism he is not doing enough for the environment by expressing his desire to export more hydroelectricity to neighbouring states and provinces and make Quebec the "battery of North America." The government has also talked about producing green hydrogen, but has yet to invest major sums of money.

Raquel Fletcher is Global News' National Assembly Reporter

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City of Laval receives 'AA' score from S&P Global Ratings

Newly-elected mayor Stéphane Boyer praises city's sound financial management

(TLN) In a report released on Nov. 22, the U.S.-based credit rating agency Standard & Poors (S&P) Global Ratings said it was maintaining the City of Laval's "AA" rating.

In a statement, the city says that S&P confirmed that the observable dynamics, the expected strong growth of economic activity and the sound financial management of the city were factors that favoured maintaining Laval's credit score.

A stable economy

The report also notes that the diversity of economic sectors active on Laval's territory was a factor in helping to keep Laval's economy stable while attenuating any potential volatility.

"Beyond the numbers, this outcome allows us to take advantage of some very real benefits for all Laval residents, such as an excellent credit rating," said Mayor Stéphane Boyer. "For several years, we are in excellent shape financially, and this is something we can be proud of."



Restarting the economy

Duvernay-Pont-Viau city councillor Christiane Poirier, who sits on the executive-committee with responsibilities for economic development, commented, "Our sound management of public funds allowed us to be there for local businesses while the pandemic was striking a number of industries. This good result shows our commitment to pushing forward the Laval business community so that it can reap the benefits of a robust economic restart."

According to the city, each year it goes to great efforts to be as transparent as possible to publicly account for all its investments and expenses. "The rating accorded by S&P Global Ratings demonstrates that the City of Laval has the capacity to respect its commitments while ensuring that the level of debt remains predictable and under control," city officials said in a statement.

Laval executive-committee approves purchase of more woodlands

During a meeting on Nov. 24, the members of the City of Laval's executive-committee approved the purchase of three wooded lots in several districts of Laval in order to add to the city's growing inventory of woodlands and green space.

In keeping with the city's plan for improving and conserving Laval's natural areas, the executive-committee members gave the go-ahead for a disbursement of \$213,200 for the purchase of the lots.

More green space added

Some of the lots in question are located in the City of Laval's Val-des-Arbres district and are part of a wooded area measuring more than a hectare which has several wetlands. Another lot, located in the Auteuil woods near the Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, is also part of an area that conservationists and the city have had their eyes on for some time.

The acquisitions are taking place as part of a greater Montreal regional plan, known as the Trame verte et bleue, which is aimed at carefully planning the preservation of natural spaces and biodiversity in the Montreal region, while taking into account the impacts of climate change at the same time.

Who's on the executive-committee?

The City of Laval's executive-committee meets weekly to make decisions on a range of issues. The committee's lead members are Mayor Stéphane Boyer and Sainte-Dorothée councillor Ray Khalil (vice-president). Regular members are Concorde-Bois-de-Boulogne councillor Sandra Desmeules, Duvernay-Pont-Viau councillor Christine Poirier, Laval-Îles councillor Nicholas Borne, followed by associate members Saint-Martin council Aline Dib, Souvenir-Labelle councillor Sandra El-Helou, and Laval-des-Rapides councillor Alexandre Warnet.



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Accepting the award for Marquise Condominiums, were Hugo Deschênes, Six Communication Marco Brissette, VP APDIQ, Diane Carrier GE Appliances, Élias Gouvakis DevMeta

Marquise Condominiums Laval shines at 2021 Habitat Design Awards

RENATA ISOPO
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
For The Laval News • renata@newsfirst.ca

Les Prix Habitat Design’s annual competition which aims its spotlight at the housing industry and rewards the best-equipped model units and sales offices, has awarded the *Marquise Condominiums Laval* the 2021 People’s Choice prize in the category of Furnished Model Unit Component.

The awards are part of the much-appreciated and much anticipated contest that focuses on promoting better design for living. In the *The People’s Choice* competition, Marquise Condominiums Laval scored top marks for attractive design and functionality.

Better design for living

Marquise, with their creative architect, translates unique tastes and aspirations into forever homes with visions of hassle-free design, offering unique and elegant lifestyles which cater to many tastes, supported by outstanding recreational amenities, esteemed scholarly and health facilities, transport, and shopping, benchmarks of exclusive community living, winning designs which reflect modern luxury, warmth, and effortless elegance.

Award winning Marquise’s approach to luxury is about craftsmanship, curation, and a sense of authenticity, a more ethereal quality to the design of the buildings, telling the essence of this city that is about a sense of lightness, the sense of transparency.

“Buyers love the more and more varied proposals that are presented to them,” say the Habitat Design Awards organizers. “For builders, the buyers visits, this translates into beautiful, finely decorated model units, (and) buyers can thus fill up with ideas of a future new home.”

Multidisciplinary adjudication

For the Furnished Model Unit Component, the jury was made up of interior designers who are all members of APDIQ (Professional Association of Interior Designers of Québec) – Michèle Lalumière, Jean de Lessard, Lucie Roy, and Mélodie Violet.

“The promotion of the design professions, all disciplines combined – architecture, landscape, interior design, graphic design – is an avenue that we must clearly support to ensure a better design of our living environments. The Habitat Design Awards challenges us in this regard. An important and highly relevant initiative, these awards demonstrate the soundness of interprofessional collaboration,” notes renowned industrial designer Michel Dallaire, who sat on the multidisciplinary committee that adjudicated the Habitat Design Grand Prize in the category of Jury’s Choice.

The sponsors and partners of the 2021 Habitat Design Awards are the Professional Association of Interior Designers of Quebec (APDIQ), the Association of Landscape Architects of Quebec (AAPQ), the Society of Graphic Designers of Quebec, duProprio, Électroménagers GE, Rinox, as well as FORMES magazine.



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Quebec Ombudswoman's COVID-19 report points finger squarely at Legault government

Of the 5,634 Covid deaths reported up to June 30 last year, 69 per cent were in CHSLDs



MARTIN C. BARRY
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For The Laval News
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In a special report tabled last week in the National Assembly on how the COVID-19 crisis was managed in CHSLDs during the first wave of the pandemic, Quebec Ombudswoman Marie Rinfret makes 27 recommendations, while clearly allowing the facts to suggest negligence on the part of the CAQ government.

They 'were the blind spot'

As they braced for COVID-19, Rinfret's report states, government authorities were quick to make hospitals the focal point. Then, in order to free up hospital beds, many patients were transferred to CHSLDs. Of the 5,634 COVID-19 deaths reported up to June 30 last year, 3,894 (69 per cent) were in CHSLDs.

"CHSLDs were the blind spot in bracing for COVID-19," said Rinfret. "The truth is that, above and beyond the CHSLDs, it was the residents who were cast aside when the attack against the virus was being mounted."

CHSLDs 'were doubly hit'

A progress report released by Rinfret's office in December 2020 highlighted firsthand witness statements. The new report includes an analysis of accounts by experts and government authorities in key areas, including health institution management, geriatrics, crisis management, epidemiology, and infection control and prevention.

"Our investigation made it possible to dig deep and understand why CHSLDs were doubly hit – under siege during the pandemic, and unable to deal with the outbreaks and deaths," Rinfret said in a statement. "Our report brings into sharp relief the frailty of services, structures and communication channels."

Were already short-staffed

The Ombudswoman's office said the CHSLDs "already short-staffed, did not have the resources needed to accommodate the sudden influx of people who were already fragile. As a result, decisions were made by authorities who did not have the wherewithal to adequately gauge the ability of CHSLDs to fulfil this unusual mission."

According to Rinfret, other factors contributed to a decline in service and disorganization, including the authorities' underestimating CHSLD residents' vulnerability to the virus. The effects of staff absenteeism due to COVID-19 hadn't been foreseen either. She said the complex nature of the jobs of the healthcare



In a scathing new report on the provincial government's performance last year during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, Quebec Ombudswoman Marie Rinfret provides evidence that CAQ government officials made decisions which may have worsened the situation.

teams should have quickly sounded the alarm about why things went as they did and required an urgent solution.

province, the Ombudswoman's office recommended that the Ministry of Health and Social Services put in place various mechanisms. Here

'CHSLDs were the blind spot in bracing for COVID-19,' said Rinfret

Knowledge was lacking

Rinfret said that when planning for the pandemic, the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services hadn't considered how serious it was that CHSLD staff knew very little about best practices in infection prevention and control during major outbreaks.

Given the circumstances, she added, the virus spread widely, exacerbated by a lack of personal protective equipment, as well as outdated facilities. Moreover, Rinfret continued, lack of managers in each CHSLD often slowed the response to a succession of ever-changing instructions from health authorities.

The recommendations

Given the extent of the crisis during the first wave and the dramatic repercussions on the

are the principal ones:

- A risk assessment and management policy concerning CHSLDs;

- A detailed plan for strengthening the CHSLDs' ability to apply infection prevention and control measures;

- A personal protective equipment supply strategy;

- A provincial plan for deploying emergency personnel within the health and social services network to make the most of back-up resources;

- Protocols with professional orders, federations and associations, unions, and educational institutions for deploying extra staff in exceptional circumstances;

- A Quebec strategy to combat staff shortages and to promote health and social services trades and professions;

An action plan to recognize the complexity of care and service provision in CHSLDs.

Memorials should be held

Rinfret said all the reforms should include the introduction of reliable and efficient information systems. The Ombudswoman's office also recommended that the ministry organize annual services of commemoration for the COVID-19 victims in CHSLDs and for the people who worked with them directly or indirectly.

"It is important to remember what these people went through so that their experiences are the catalyst for sustainable action and change," said the ombudswoman's office. Rinfret also asked the minister to provide a progress report about the implementation of the recommendations by March 1 next year and that a follow-up schedule be agreed upon.

Premier Legault's reaction

In Quebec City, Premier François Legault reacted to Rinfret's 66-page report, saying it was relatively easy for an onlooker to second-guess the situation, but that the provincial government did its best to manage given the extreme circumstances.

"With the information I had, I did the best I was able to do at the time," he told journalists last week. "It's tough to take decisions when you don't have all the information."

"And the information we had was that we would have problems in our hospital ERs and not in our long-term care facilities. So, it's easy Monday morning to say you should have done things differently. But I think with the information we had we did the best we were able to do."

'No real action taken'

Despite the government's claim it warned CHSLDs to prepare for the pandemic as early as January 2020, the report states that no real action was taken until April, when devastating Covid outbreaks in Montreal and at Laval's CHSLD Sainte-Dorothée led to hundreds of Covid deaths.

Rinfret's report described a disconnect between Quebec's Ministry of Health and Social Services and the regional health authorities overseeing the CHSLDs. Staff absenteeism worsened the problems.

The report states that between March 1 and June 14 last year, 13,581 health-care workers contracted COVID-19, representing 25 per cent of all reported cases in the first wave. While eleven health-care workers died, many others were left psychologically and emotionally scarred by the death and suffering they witnessed first-hand.



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DIRECT? ANSWERS

From Wayne & Tamara

Basic Needs

Two years and some change ago, a woman and I touched each other intimately and kissed passionately. It was all in secret.

Since that time I have not been touched. Let me tell you, not one day goes by that I don't miss being touched and kissed. "Find someone else" is what some professionals would say. If it were that simple, I would not be typing this letter.

I was raised in a certain circle where all my family and friends are into keeping your hands to yourself until you are married. Even then sexual expression is limited by certain "moral standards."

I am not against abstinence and morality; they can literally be a lifesaver. But for well over two years my hormones have been left in the "on" position. I crave intimate contact, but if anyone in my circle finds out, I'll be an outcast. My brother, with whom I share an apartment, would kick me out. I have nowhere else to go.

I have been to almost all the online personal sites I can afford, placing and responding to ads. I haven't gotten even one response.

This uneasiness is affecting my work life. It is really getting to me. What can I do short of drugs or surgery?

Sheldon

Sheldon, you cannot find the answer to a problem until you understand what the problem is. Once the problem is understood, the solution appears.

Dumpster Diving

Four years ago I dated a family friend. Since then I have dated three other people, but my feelings for Ted haven't changed. He is the person I would love to share the other half of my life with, but I left him because I didn't think he cared about me.

When I am with my current boyfriend, I feel I am hurting Ted in some way. My boyfriend understands my moods, but he is sometimes insensitive. He can break a date very fast if something else comes up.

Wayne & Tamara

Your problem is not that you can't find a woman to be intimate with. Your problem is that you are not free to be who you are.

If Tamara and I could give you some gimmick to find a woman, you would still be sneaking around, afraid family and friends won't accept you or her.

Like every human being born on this planet, you are not here to fulfill the wants, desires, and designs of other people. You are here to fulfill your own life. The problem is the people who occupy the caring positions in your life now, only accept you when you are what they want you to be.

This life is strangling you. You need to back away from the things which are crushing you. Only then can you decide what role, if any, they will have in your life. Only then can you be yourself. Only when you are yourself, can you attract the right woman.

If there was some other solution, you would have found it by now.

I didn't get anything right in my life by letting someone else choose for me. No, that is how I made all my mistakes. Everything right in my life, I chose for myself based on my inner feelings.

You don't alter the man to fit the suit. You fit the suit to the man. You are the man, the elements and people in your life are the suit. Fit the suit to the man.

Wayne & Tamara

I need some advice on what to do or what not to do.

Suzanne

Suzanne, your current boyfriend is not working out. Now you are looking through past relationships to see if you can recycle one of your ex-boyfriends.

You've said all you need to about Ted. You broke up because he didn't care about you.

You don't go forward, and add good things to your life, by picking through discards.

Wayne & Tamara

Albert Lévy presented with National Assembly medal



For more than 15 years, Albert Lévy, his family and his entire team have been actively involved in the cause of autism and have succeeded in raising over \$450,000 over the years. Mr. Lévy was presented with the National Assembly medal by Vimont MNA Jean Rouselle, (photo above) to celebrate all the efforts he has put for this cause that is so dear to him.

It was in 2006 that the unconditional involvement of Mr. Lévy and his family began. Éric Chamberland, who was the supervisor at the time, announced that his daughter Alice had been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. From that moment on, the Lévy family made a commitment to get involved to support Alice and families that have been affected by the same diagnosis. They decided that at every McHappy Day, they would raise funds for the Fondation Autisme Laurentides and other organizations that help families with an autistic child or adult. At the 2006 McHappy Day, Mr. Lévy brought together politicians and many

business leaders to announce that the Fondation Autisme Laurentides would be the recipient of the funds raised. During this event, they also announced the construction of a respite care home for families with an autistic child. Several guests including construction contractors and politicians expressed their interest to be involved in this beautiful project. In 2007, the respite care home, which today is known as la Maison de répit Nicola & Albert Lévy located in Blainville, opened its doors to the families.

"I am extremely honoured to receive this medal which I share with all the people who have helped me over the years. The cause of autism is very close to my heart. My wife, my children and I will always continue to help all the families involved. We still have much to accomplish. I have great admiration and respect for the love and unconditional energy that families put into caring for their children," says McDonald's franchisee Albert Lévy proudly.

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LPD sets up neutral zone for e-commerce exchanges

In keeping with a growing trend among police forces to provide protection to citizens when they are completing purchase transactions initiated on the Internet, the Laval Police Department has decided to set up a “neutral space” to support the safe exchange of goods or for any other situation that requires a neutral meeting area.

The location, in the parking lot outside the LPD’s headquarters building (2911 Chomedey Blvd.), is under 24h video surveillance. The site, which can be used for free, is accessible at any time and does not require authorization.

Police forces everywhere have seen it necessary to create such spaces given a growing number of reports of individuals being victimized by perpetrators of fraud or theft who take advantage of the relative anonymity provided by e-commerce transactions.

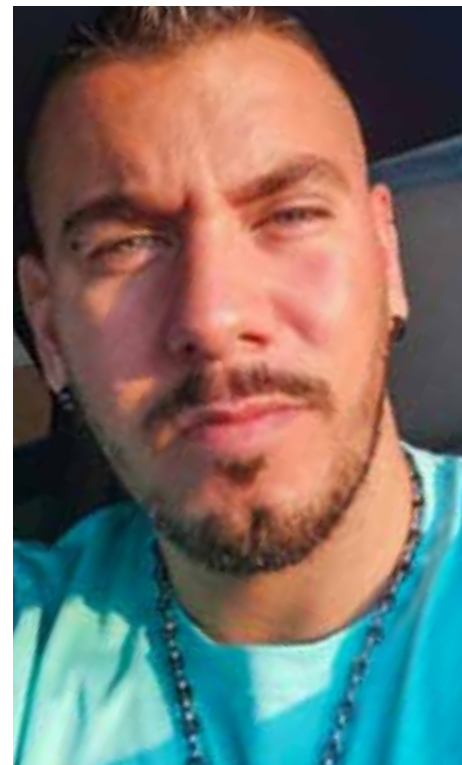
Some suggested uses

- A seller and buyer who make a trade on an online site (Kijiji, Marketplace, etc.) can meet there to complete the exchange safely.
- Separated parents can also transfer custody of their children peacefully in this location.
- By next spring, the LPD is expected to set up two additional zones. Their openings will be announced by the force as soon as they are set up and become operational. These sites will also be monitored around the clock by security cameras.



Some tips for safe e-commerce transactions

- Never give out personal information;
- Take screenshots of the ad, the seller’s information and all communications between the parties;
- Check the seller/buyer’s name in a search engine (Google etc.);
- Only bring the amount of money required for the transaction;
- Don’t give the money to the seller until you take possession of the item;
- Take note of the buyer/seller’s licence plate number;
- If you have any doubts or are not comfortable during the transaction, feel free to call off the deal if necessary.



Laval-based prostitution pimp being sought by several police forces

Police from Laval and other areas of Quebec say they are seeking the public’s help to determine the whereabouts of a suspected pimp who is wanted in order to answer charges he was living off the avails of prostitution.

According to the police force, Blake Charbonneau, who has a long criminal record, is also being sought to face charges of sexual assault and armed assault over a period of several years. The 35-year-old Laval resident is being sought by the inter-police Escouade intégrée de lutte contre le proxénétisme (EILP), which is made up of police from Montreal, Laval, Longueuil, Quebec City, Gatineau, the Sûreté du Québec and the RCMP. Charbonneau is 5’7” tall, weighs 176 lbs., has black hair and blue eyes, and wears ear rings. Anyone with information or who thinks they’ve seen him is urged to call 9-1-1, or the SQ’s Centrale criminelle de la Sûreté du Québec, at 1 800 659-4264.

Suspect in Laval daycare arson incidents finally arrested

A suspect who the Laval Police believe may have been involved in the attempted torching of a children’s daycare centre in Sainte-Dorothée was arrested on Nov. 20.

Jordan Picot Sudano, 24, was taken into custody by the LPD just two days after they had posted and distributed security camera images showing the act of arson allegedly being committed by him.

In all, three fires were set at CPEs in western Laval, including the Centre de la petite enfance (CPE) Les Soleils du monde, located on Lauzon St. The most recent was on Nov. 6 and was linked to the suspect.

In the security camera images released by the LPD, he was seen deftly approaching the CPE with an incendiary object in hand. He was seen placing the object at the base of the building, then leaving as fire began to spread.

The two previous arson incidents took place in October as well as in August. The suspect, who is a Laval resident, was not previously known to the LPD, they said, although he now faces charges of arson and possession of incendiary materials for criminal purposes.

He was released by the police with special conditions and is scheduled to go to court on March 9 next year. The suspect’s possible motives remain unknown



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Healthy holiday habits

How to stay healthy over the holidays



It can be challenging to make healthy choices over the holiday season given that so many celebrations and gatherings revolve around food. Here are five tips to help you eat moderately and stay healthy over the holidays.

1. LOAD YOUR PLATE WITH VEGGIES

Pile vegetables, fruits and green salads onto your plate. These foods are low in calories, high in fibre and will keep you satiated. Don't worry, you don't have to forgo the turkey or any of the side dishes; just be mindful of your portion sizes.

2. EAT SLOWLY

It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to register fullness once you start eating. Therefore, to avoid overindulging, try to wait five or 10 minutes before refilling your plate. By doing so, you may realize you're already full.

3. WATCH WHAT YOU DRINK

Both non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks can

add additional calories, sodium and sugar to your holiday meal. Consequently, try having a glass of water or seltzer in between the eggnog, cocktails and hot chocolate.

4. BE ACTIVE

Staying active can help make up for eating more than usual over the holidays. It can also help reduce stress and improve your sleep. One good way to keep moving is to encourage your friends and family members to go for a walk after your meal. Partaking in winter sports, such as skiing and snowshoeing, is also a great way to refresh your mind and body.

5. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

To stay healthy over the holidays, remember to regularly wash your hands, cough into your elbow and stay at home if you feel sick. Don't overextend yourself and give yourself enough time to rest in between parties.

Happy holidays!

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In Memoriam & Obituaries

Final wishes

Maintaining the quality of life of your loved ones



Life insurance exists to protect the surviving members of your family from financial loss associated with your death. Theoretically, people who have the most to gain from taking out life insurance are those who will leave others in need when they die, such as a spouse or children.

By taking out sufficient life insurance, you can guarantee the preservation of your family's lifestyle and goals in the event of your death. The first step is to evaluate your personal situation. The best way to go about this is to establish an up-to-date financial plan that takes into account your family's needs. The goal is to calculate the immediate living expenses that must be met so that your family will not have to deal with any financial worries in case of death.

An estimate of final expenses should also be made, especially funeral expenses, lawyer fees, as well as estate taxes —when a death occurs, the assets of the deceased are taxed before being passed on to heirs. The policy holder's debts should also be taken into consideration, such as credit card balances, a mortgage, and personal loans.

The death of a family member will have an effect on the family budget; there will, of course, be a drop in income if the deceased worked, but this might be balanced by a reduction in certain expenses, such as groceries, clothing, and transportation. In short, a sufficient amount has to be planned for so that beneficiaries will be able to maintain the lifestyle they are used to.

Adequate life insurance can prepare you and your family for the unexpected.



HASHIMOTO John Junichi
1926 - 2021

It is with much sadness that we announce the passing of our father, John Hashimoto, peacefully, in Laval on Friday, November 26, 2021, at the age of ninety-five. Daddy is reunited in heaven with his cherished wife, our Mom, Lois Yuriko. Daddy was a devoted and loving father to us, George (Pierrette), Emiko, Anne (Mike), Grace (Danny), and Gordon. He was the proud Grandpa of Philippe, Valérie, Kimiko (Kinzer), Andrew, Allyson (Mike) and Emily.



DAVID Dominique
1975 - 2021

Dominique David passed away in Laval on Wednesday, November 24, 2021. He is survived by his wife Karine Julien, his children Camille and Jeremy, his parents Mireille and Georges, his brother Christian, his sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, his many friends and all those who had the opportunity to rub shoulders with his great generosity and benevolence.



WOODCOCK Alva
1965 - 2021

It is with deep sadness that the family announces the passing of ALVA WOODCOCK at the age of 56 years. He will be sadly missed by his two sons Carlos and Jahmire, his brothers Gary, Jude, Randolph, sisters Naomie Ahwan, June Woodcock, Christel Evernor and many other family members and friends.



GUAY Lucie
1941 - 2021

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Mrs. Lucie Guay, on November 24, 2021, at the age of 80. She is survived by her sons Eric (Jacinthe) and Patrick (Mélissa), her grandchildren Anaïs, Zachary, Jade and Evelyne, her brother Renald (Murielle) and her sisters Lise (Jean-Guy) and Ginette (Claude), her nieces and nephews, as well as many relatives and friends. Madeleine, other relatives and friends.

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The luckiest signs this week:
ARIES, TAURUS AND PISCES



ARIES

If you have a big holiday celebration planned for this year, you'll need to keep on top of the planning. Time will be in short supply, but you'll be able to pull it off. In love, it's the little things that ensure the longevity of a relationship.



TAURUS

You'll need to fly away from the nest to make great discoveries. The new year is coming up, and it's already inspiring you to get a fresh start. By signing up for a few courses, you'll open more doors for your future.



GEMINI

A special person or situation will move you. At work, you'll find that any changes that arise will prove beneficial to you. If you're single, you'll be surprised to find love when you least expect it.



CANCER

You'll be easy to get along with. You're not afraid to take on projects at work, and you'll agree to organize a few of the upcoming events. You'll be worried about a conflict in the family.



LEO

You'll find yourself taking the lead at work while your boss takes a well-earned vacation. This will have a positive impact on your career. If your relationship is lacking affection, it could eventually cause your feelings to fade too.



VIRGO

You'll be in the spotlight for one reason or another. In particular, you could save someone, if only by lending them a sympathetic ear. You'll get recognition for all that you do.



LIBRA

You'll spare no expense when it comes to gifts for your loved ones. You're in a generous mood, and this will have a positive impact on your well-being. You'll need to give a family project some more thought.



SCORPIO

It's not easy to maintain an interesting social life when work is so demanding. You need to let loose, so don't hesitate to accept an invitation to go out and join in on a few activities with loved ones.



SAGITTARIUS

You'll get your hands on some extra money, and you'll be sure to treat yourself. Whether you're buying a property or starting a business, you'll finally get the green light to finance your project.



CAPRICORN

You'll challenge yourself to gather the whole family together and throw a big party to make up for last year. As an artist, you'll have plenty of inspiration to draw upon as you create your own work.



AQUARIUS

There's an artist within you that will awaken in a pretty spectacular way. If your head is in the clouds, write down any ideas that come to mind so that you can bring them to life one day. Otherwise, they'll be lost forever.



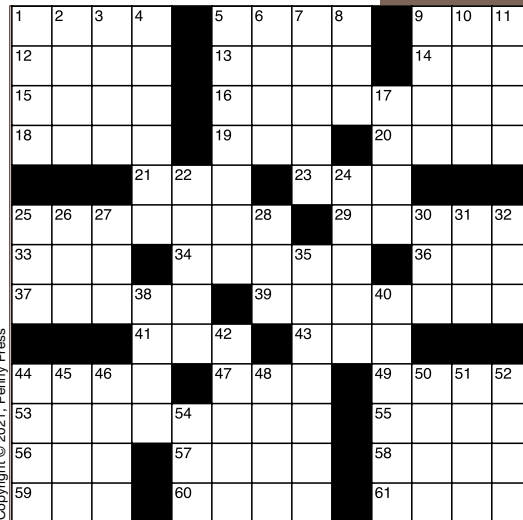
PISCES

You'll receive a whole host of invitations, and you'll be more than happy to accept every one of them, even if you feel like you're a candle burning at both ends. Some rest will be needed when all's said and done.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 105



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ACROSS

1. Soup veggies
5. Grouch
9. Fool
12. Light fixture
13. Dilly
14. Hatchet
15. Computer operator
16. Excessive vanity
18. Mimicking bird
19. Burnt wood
20. Tree home
21. Finished first
23. Footballer Donovan
25. Do away with
29. Violinist Stern
33. Just released
34. Acquire knowledge
36. Common ailment
37. Investigate in depth
39. Slip
41. Radio spots
43. ___ neckline

44. Singer Campbell
47. Solid water
49. Nautical hello
53. Small sofa: 2 wds.
55. Great review
56. Lode yield
57. Peer
58. Personnel
59. Animal enclosure
60. Join by heat
61. Towel word

17. Tiny insects
22. Lubricated
24. Shower off
25. Also
26. Spelling ___
27. Bird of prey
28. Glazed ___
30. Toward the back, matey
31. Brewery beverage
32. Coffee container
35. Fastened
38. Fan blade
40. Look (for)
42. Blockade
44. Goopy substance
45. Folk knowledge
46. Fairly matched
48. Shout
50. Hound's quarry
51. Atop
52. Some evergreens
54. Mama pig!

DOWN

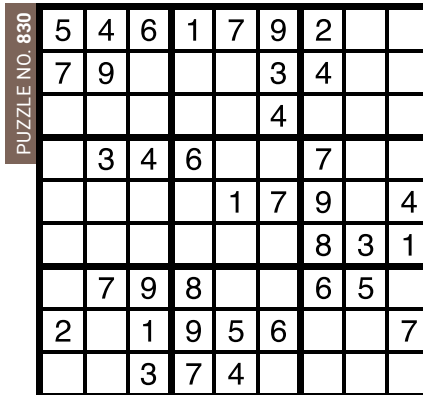
1. Purple fruit
2. Simple
3. Sermon response
4. Spread awkwardly
5. Purify
6. Carpets
7. Island greeting
8. Tramp
9. Right-minded
10. Rotation center
11. Soil additive

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY:

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

Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: **You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.**

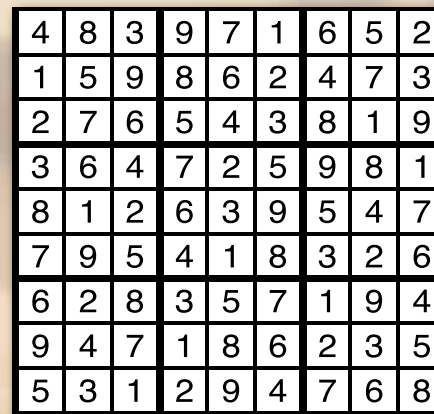


Last Issues' Answers

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Sudoku



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