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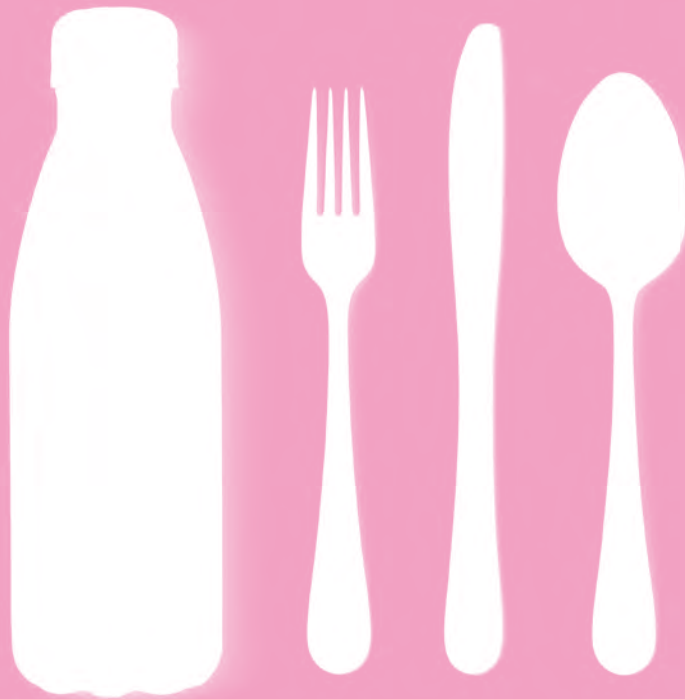
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Legault government's immigration stance flies in the face of labour shortage

'The economic consequences are significant,' warns Conseil du Patronat's Karl Blackburn



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The CEO of the Quebec business community's most influential employers' lobby group says he doesn't disagree that the Coalition Avenir Québec government seems motivated lately more by political and electoral priorities – rather than Quebec's economic well-being.

Still, Karl Blackburn of the Conseil du Patronat du Québec, which represents more than 70,000 Quebec employers, says he and the CPQ stand firmly behind most of the elements in the controversial Bill 96 language law.

A growing labour crisis

However, the CPQ disagrees with the Legault government's ongoing policy of keeping immigration in Quebec at a relatively low level, with a noticeable impact on the province's economic performance.

"The first priority for our employers, and for city councils also because city councils also are employers, concerns the labour shortage," Blackburn said in an interview with Newsfirst Multimedia after he met with Laval mayor Stéphane Boyer to discuss common issues.

"The impact of the labour shortage affects them [cities] and their organizations, and this is why we need to address that situation."

Immigration must rise, says CPQ

On May 16, the CPQ released a "white paper" on immigration, in which the council maintained that the provincial government needs to increase the number of immigrants entering Quebec to 80,000 per year for the next four years in order to meet economic development targets.

This goes against a statement issued by Quebec Immigration Minister Jean Boulet that same day, to the effect that the CAQ government will be holding the immigration level at no higher than 50,000 new arrivals annually over the same time period.

Getting the gov't to agree

In addition to the suggested higher immigration level, the CPQ has also tabled a range of recommendations to encourage the government to allow in more immigrants. They include improved recognition of the professional and trade qualifications of immigrants, prioritizing immigrants who are French-speaking, and implementing a temporary work permit program for certain immigrants.

Blackburn noted that between now and the year 2026, 1.4 million Quebecers currently in the work force are expected to retire, increasing the necessity to find a solution for the current labour shortage before it becomes an acute crisis.

Processing slow in Quebec

Besides the relatively low level of immigration allowed in Quebec, the CPQ is also critical of the provincial government for its slowness to process immigrants, compared to other regions in the country.

"The delays are longer here in Quebec than everywhere else in Canada," he said. "The bureaucracy and the capacity to address specific issues are very, very complicated in Quebec."

Blackburn pointed out that according to the former Liberal government's estimates in 2017, an annual immigration rate of at least 64,000 new arrivals would have been necessary to meet job demands in the province.

Detrimental to the economy

While he was reluctant to agree that the government's current policy for immigration appears to be motivated primarily by political considerations, he conceded that the CAQ's reasoning is "debatable" and "I can question the arguments made by the government," he said.

When we suggested that the government appears to be courting the support of nationalist voters by holding back immigration to the detriment of the province's economy, Blackburn added, "Exactly – one could certainly arrive at that conclusion."

With an election set to take place in October, Blackburn said it was his hope the campaign would cause the worker deficit



The Laval News Exclusive

Conseil du Patronat du Québec CEO Karl Blackburn, right, met with Laval mayor Stéphane Boyer last week and Duvernay-Viau city councillor Christine Poirier (who is an economic development adviser to Boyer) to discuss common issues.

issue to be brought forth and debated by all the political parties, including the one that currently forms the government.

General support for Bill 96

"Because this is not good news, being in the midst of a labour shortage," he said. "On the contrary, it is very bad news and the economic consequences are significant."

Regarding Bill 96, Blackburn said the CPQ's membership stands behind most of the legislation, except for a relative minority of members who are owners of businesses with 20 to 50 employees.

Under Bill 96, these companies are being asked to comply with new legislative measures to reinforce use of the French language in the work place, and they feel ill-equipped to do so with the limited human resources at their disposal, Blackburn said.



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OPINION & Editorial



Quebec's Bill 96 reeks of Premier François Legault's flawed populism

Say what you will about the Coalition Avenir Québec government's Bill 96: If you are among the nearly 6.25 million people in this province who are French-speaking, then you probably like it.

But if you are one of the 20 per cent of Quebec residents who speak English or some other language, chances are you see Bill 96 as an ominous threat.

So, if Bill 96 and the bureaucratic red tape it almost inevitably will generate, has become the best excuse yet some people have found to leave Quebec for English-speaking Canada or the freedom-loving United States, consider the following.

Would you rather be living in the U.S.A., where gun violence has reached a level so severe that children are no longer safe attending school?

Or would you prefer to take your chances with Quebec's reinvigorated language police, who may soon be knocking at your business's door to seize computers or their contents – as mandated by Bill 96 – because they are not in compliance with the updated language legislation?

Some useful statistics: As of 2011, English was the mother tongue of nearly 650,000 Quebecers (8 per cent of the population), constituting the second largest linguistic group in the province.

Although most of the remainder of the

non-French minority is made up of allophones speaking a range of international languages, their growing presence in Quebec – combined with the declining number of historically-rooted Québécois francophones – is in itself the most important reason the CAQ government has enacted Bill 96 – as a desperate measure to artificially shore up the majority's defences against an outside invader.

But allow us for a moment to give the leader of the CAQ government, Premier François Legault, credit where credit is due to him. Where governments in this province in the past have frequently fallen when trying to deal judiciously with the issue of language, Legault has squared the circle.

He has managed to pass a massive bill dealing with something as sensitive in Quebec as language, while reconciling – through the clever and dexterous application of populism – enough support to please what appears to be the vast majority of Quebec's French-speaking citizens.

And he did this without having to invoke, as the Parti Québécois did so often when it was in power, the threat of Quebec sovereignty or separatism. For the CAQ is, after all, a party that Premier Legault custom-built from the beginning to his own specifications, while making him essentially the embodiment of power in

this province.

But in all of this, and in keeping with Legault's flawed populist approach to politics, the anglo and allophone minorities have been completely left out. As such, it remains to be seen if the Premier's magic formula can be sustained by the CAQ when Legault inevitably has to step down as leader.

In the meantime, radicals on both sides of the linguistic divide are complaining Bill 96 has either not gone far enough, or it won't stand Supreme Court of Canada scrutiny because it violates the Canadian constitution.

By the time Bill 96 reaches Canada's Supreme Court, where key sections most likely will be struck down, Legault may be changing his tune, and confirming to those who have long suspected, that he has indeed been a sovereignist all along, and was simply waiting for the opportune moment to reveal the truth – when it most suits him for political purposes.

It's worth noting that during the final adoption of Bill 96 in the Quebec National Assembly on May 24, Chomedey Independent MNA Guy Ouellette was among the 29 elected members in the 125-seat chamber who voted against the law.

Martin Barry

Conservative leadership race comes down to Poilievre or Charest

There was no mistaking that the crowd was rooting for Jean Charest last week during the Conservative Party of Canada's French-language leadership race debate, which took place in Laval.

But on the other hand, there was also no hiding the fact that his main rival, Pierre Poilievre, had the wind in his sails competing against Charest, even though the former Quebec Premier had the advantage of playing on "home ice" as a native Quebecer.

Since the smart money seems to be favoring Poilievre and Charest as the likeliest front-runners in the leadership race, we are concentrating here mostly on what each is offering.

Poilievre's grasp of the far more radical spirit that currently animates forward-looking conservatives – including a threat to fire

Bank of Canada governor Tiff Macklem, and Poilievre's embrace of cryptocurrencies, even as they deep-six – goes up against the far staid approach being taken by Charest.

And considering that Poilievre enthusiastically embraced the truckers' "Freedom Convoy" that occupied the nation's capital in January and February, it's clear he wants to be identified more with conservatives impatient for a hard-right turn, than with those, like Charest, who would rather take a more business-as-usual approach.

However, as of last week, Poilievre was still the front-runner in the race, underscoring the fact that Conservative Party of Canada support is strongest outside Quebec, especially in western Canada.

At the same time, in spite of his popularity

among CPC members in Quebec, Charest trails in support from conservatives elsewhere in the country, according to pollsters.

So, between now and September when the CPC membership finally votes, the front-runners have the summer ahead to solidify support from their backers.

What those voters will have to remember until then is that the next Conservative leader will be going head-to-head against Justin Trudeau, who has frustrated the ambitions of every CPC leader since Stephen Harper.

By late 2025, when the next general election is scheduled to take place, it should be about time Canadians were offered a real and fair choice for their next Prime Minister.

Martin Barry

Montreal lawyer Julius Grey to head legal team challenging Bill 96

Constitutional expert sees key areas he believes will not stand up to legal scrutiny



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Almost as soon as the Coalition Avenir Québec government's Bill 96 was passed into law on Tuesday last week, Montreal constitutional rights lawyer Julius Grey was announcing the creation of a legal team to contest the legislation updating the province's 45-year-old Bill 101 language law.

Wide ranging measures

The sweeping measures contained in Bill 96 stand to affect everything under provincial jurisdiction, including immigration, education, health care, business, municipalities and the legal system.

Perhaps most controversially, the legislation grants the Office québécois de la langue française (OQLF) search and seizure powers without the need for a warrant to ensure compliance.

Long fight ahead

In several interviews with media since last week, Grey has said he expects a long and drawn-out fight over the constitutionality of Bill

96, possibly going beyond the Supreme Court of Canada to international courts.

Two days after the bill was passed in the National Assembly, the English Montreal School Board announced it would be launching a legal fight of its own, while the Quebec Community Groups Network, which represents dozens of English-language groups across Quebec, is also joining the fray.

QCGN's position

"We will also be supporting upcoming legal challenges to the law, while ensuring that its nefarious impacts on Quebecers are brought to the public's attention and are debated in the upcoming election campaign," the organization led by Marlene Jennings said in a statement.

Although the exact nature of legal challenges to Bill 96 hasn't yet been revealed, last week Julius Grey highlighted several important areas of Bill 96 that his legal team will probably be focusing on. Here are two of them:

Bill 96 would make citizens pay for French translations


According to Grey, the basic right to justice in Canada can't be overruled by the notwithstanding clause, which the Legault government

is relying on to pre-emptively defend Bill 96 against constitutional challenges. As such, he believes forcing people to pay to translate certain documents submitted to courts in Quebec won't withstand a challenge.

The OQLF could search lawyers' and notaries' offices

The OQLF monitors the use of French in Quebec at workplaces and in public settings, such as on signage. Although its powers are made greater in Bill 96, including searching business computers for materials that violate the language law, Grey believes some things in the work of lawyers and notaries must remain untouchable – including notaries' or lawyers' files – and abrogating this will not withstand a legal challenge.





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Streets June 5 for Course des pompiers de Laval

In order to ensure the best possible security during the 10th annual Laval Firemen's Race taking place on June 5 from 6 am to 1 pm, certain streets in some Laval neighbourhoods will be closed and not available for parking.

The city is asking motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to plan ahead in order not to have nasty surprises on the day of the event.

A schedule and details on the streets that will be affected are available on the website (<https://coursedespompiers.org/fermeture-de-rues/>) set up for the event.

Volunteers and police officers will be overseeing the safety of one and all. All the intersections where the runners will be heading through will be subject to special supervision.

City of Laval's libraries are the place to be this summer

Staff at the City of Laval's public libraries are getting into gear for a long summer of fun, educational and free activities through the coming months.

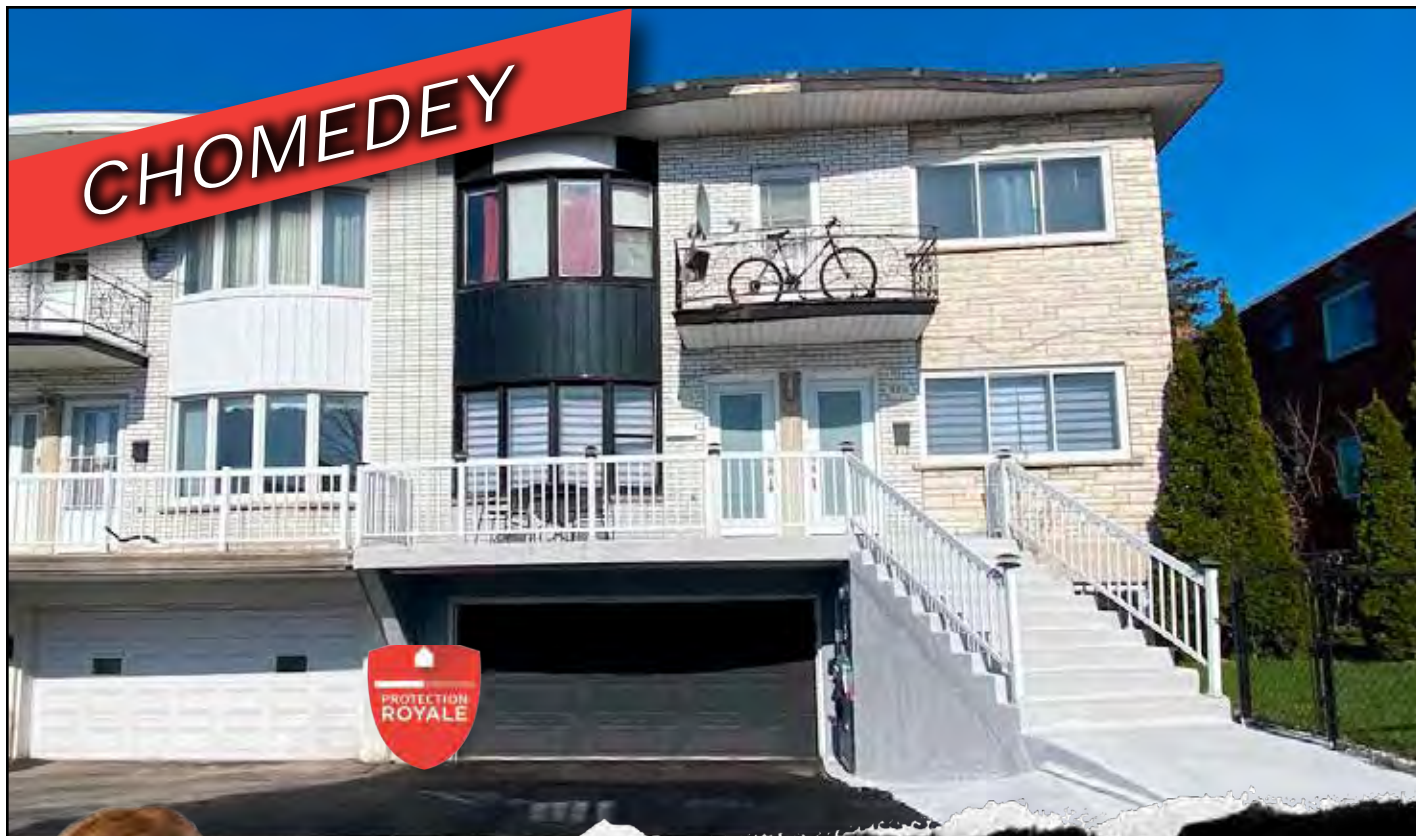
In all, 215 activities are planned. In addition to some 30 activities taking place within the library branches, library personnel will also be going out into local parks and to swimming pools where other activities will also be held.

"This summer, it's a big return to activities taking place in person," says Laval city councillor for Sainte-Rose Flavia Alexandra Novac, who is responsible for library services, noting that the Covid pandemic appears finally to be ending.

"We will also have the great pleasure of welcoming the new Bibliomobile, which will allow the population to browse books from outside the libraries," she added. "Our teams can't wait to be in contact once more with families in order to present to them the diverse program of programming and activities planned for young and old alike."

For kids, the TD Summer Reading Club is back this year, with reading suggestions and free activities for children 12 years of age and younger, until the end of the summer.

Children can register for the program beginning on June 16, after which they will be able to pick up a complimentary theme bag containing an information booklet, a games book and a coupon to take part in a raffle draw to win books, board games and a free family pass for a fun activity.



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Quebec to open 'project office' for potential Metro orange line extension

Rapid transit buses also under study for Notre-Dame and Saint-Martin axes



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The provincial government has announced it will be setting up a project office in Laval in order to study the feasibility of implementing an improved north-south public transit axis between Laval and Montreal – including a Metro orange line extension from Montreal to the western and northern districts of this city.

The announcement was made on Thursday last week by CAQ Transport Minister François Bonnardel, along with Laval mayor Stéphane Boyer and Sainte-Rose CAQ MNA Christopher Skeete.

Although they were vague as to the form the project will take, they said the project office will be mandated to carry out studies to determine the best way to implement efficient service, while seeking ways to reduce road traffic congestion.

Transit improvements

“We are giving ourselves the means to support sustainable mobility in Laval through projects that will be complementary in the north-south and east-west axes,” Bonnardel said, adding that the provincial government has been spending record sums on public transit since first being elected nearly four years ago. “These projects will help provide efficient public transit options for citizens,” he said.

At the same time, Bonnardel announced the implementation of a new rapid transit bus service (BRT) to be located on Notre-Dame and

de la Concorde boulevards in west and central Laval. The route would be set up between Curé-Labelle and des Laurentides boulevards.

According to the government, the Transport Ministry will also examine the feasibility of creating another BRT on Saint-Martin Blvd. to relieve congestion on this very busy artery.

Improved mobility

Mayor Boyer said the three announcements hold the potential “to positively change the daily lives of the entire Laval population since they will completely improve our mobility.”

He said the Saint-Martin Blvd. public transit project alone would connect half the neighbourhoods in Laval to one another, and would promote the development of the city.

A statement issued by the transport ministry said the government was expressing its “willingness to support” the Notre-Dame/de la Concorde SRB project through the creation of the project office, without offering any specific commitment.

Overseen by project office

It might be noted that in the past, similar offices have been created for projects such as the extension of Cavendish Blvd. in west-end Montreal, even though the Cavendish project, after a multitude of announcements, is still far from going ahead, fifty years after first being proposed.

The Société de transport de Laval currently provides 600 bus service transits per day in the areas the Laval project office will be studying, transporting 13,500 passengers daily. The STL says that it has already established a project



office of its own, in conjunction with the City of Laval, the Ministry of Transport and the Autorité régionale de transport métropolitain (ARTM).

Taking action, says Skeete

“In fifteen years or so, Laval has seen itself transformed into a true centre of employment,” said Christopher Skeete. “Therefore, it is necessary to take significant actions for mobility in order to improve the quality of life of all Laval residents. These three important projects will help support sustainable and responsible

development in the region.”

Planning ahead

In the decade from 2011 to 2021, the City of Laval has seen its population increase by 9 per cent. According to projections made by the Institut de la statistique du Québec, the acceleration in population will reach 15 per cent in the coming two decades.

Officials at the municipal and provincial levels believe that this rate of demographic growth will place a heavier burden on basic local infrastructure, including public transit services.

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Continued gov't deficits threaten economic recovery, Fraser Institute claims

Think-tank warns of 'significant long-term consequences' from deficit spending



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As the Covid pandemic appears to be passing and public relief programs are winding down, questions are starting to be asked as to when governments across Canada will be moving towards balancing their budgets and paying down their massive debts.

In that vein, a new essay released by the B.C.-based Fraser Institute notes that the federal government recorded a \$327.7 billion deficit in 2020-21 and a deficit of \$113.8 billion in 2021-22.

Deficit larger than 2008

This, the conservative-leaning public policy think-tank notes, is 27.8 per cent larger than the deficit incurred in the aftermath of the 2008 subprime mortgage financial crisis despite a strong recovery.

The Fraser Institute feels that while there was some justification for emergency spending and deficits during 2020 and 2021, "there is little or no justification for a \$52.8 billion deficit in 2022," states the report's author.

"Some people may think that deficits don't matter since governments across Canada racked up so many before and during the COVID-19 pandemic," says Matthew Lau, an adjunct scholar with the Fraser Institute and author of 'When is it Appropriate to Run Budget Deficits?'

Deficit consequences

He and the institute maintain that there are significant long-term consequences to deficit financing – even if they're not immediately visible.

The essay acknowledges that there are times when deficits are unavoidable for governments, such as during recessions and other economic shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic.

During such times, unemployment rises, which increases government spending at the same time that government revenues fall, resulting in deficits.

Crowding private sector

However, once the economy starts to recover, such as it is starting to now, government spending normally should decline while revenues increase, allowing for balanced budgets and even surpluses.



The Fraser Institute and its contributing analysts claim that continuing to run deficits during periods of recovery and growth can crowd out and compete with the private sector, which they believe actually can harm recovery and economic growth.

A second essay published recently by the institute, authored by Professor Donald J. Boudreaux of George Mason University in Virginia U.S.A., regarding James M. Buchanan and the Political Economy of Debt Financing, emphasizes theories of public spending first set out by Buchanan, a Nobel-laureate economist.

Burden on the future

The essay attempts to explain how the burden of repaying government deficits of today may fall on future generations of taxpayers, who will either have to pay higher taxes or forego other government programs in order to repay

public debt.

Boudreaux also sets about to explain how Buchanan warned against deficits because of their corrosive effects on democracy, in that the bills of today's spending are passed onto the next generation who have no current political voice or decision-making authority.

Spending others' money

"Buchanan's warning on government deficits and debt was crystal clear: we spend other people's money less wisely than we do our own, and that lesson still holds true today," says Boudreaux.

"It is almost always politically advantageous to spend now and pay later. But doing so unfairly punishes future generations. And so, governments should be restrained in how they spend other peoples' money."

Public Health warns of carbon monoxide hazards from generators

Advisory also issued about consuming food after six hours without refrigeration



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Following the numerous electric power blackouts that swept the region after major rain and wind storms, public health directors have issued a reminder of the various risks attached to operating gasoline-fuelled electric generators.

Carbon monoxide is a toxic gas which is invisible and odourless. Carbon monoxide poisoning can leave permanent damage or can even cause death. Only a carbon monoxide detector can alert you to the presence of this dangerous gas.

Never indoors

The public health office is warning that appliances which operate on fuels such as natural gas, gasoline, propane etc., and which include hotplates, heaters or barbecues, should never be used inside a dwelling.

As well, electric power generators should never be installed and operated inside a dwelling or even from inside a garage, and they should be run at a considerable distance from the nearest doors or windows because exhaust fumes containing carbon monoxide can accumulate

and enter a residence without your being aware of it.

Carbon monoxide detector

In these times, when gas operated generators are being used frequently by many people, the best way to protect against this type of hazard is to be equipped with a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector and alarm which will remain activated even during power blackouts.

In addition, it should be noted that smoke detectors are not equipped to detect carbon monoxide and cannot protect you should carbon monoxide build up in significant concentrations in your dwelling.

Beware food spoilage

The public health office is warning at the same time that the freshness and safety of foods requiring refrigeration or which need to be kept frozen can become compromised during electric power outages lasting more than six hours.

It is recommended that you take no risks and that you not consume food products which may have been spoiled, in order to avoid coming down with poisoning from food-borne bacterial pathogens.

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Federal Court will decide on unvaccinated question



Maxime Bernier, Brian Peckford and five others filed a lawsuit against the Government of Canada for travel bans on the unvaccinated

People's Party of Canada leader Maxime Bernier, a former Premier of Newfoundland/Labrador and five other people have filed a legal action against the Government of Canada over travel bans on unvaccinated people.

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As we gradually leave the pandemic behind, the provincial governments of Canada have removed almost all health measures for Covid-19. Remaining in place as one of the last mandatory measures is the wearing of face masks on public transportation as well as in hospitals and nursing homes.

On the other hand, however, the federal government believes it should continue enforcing a tougher line towards those who have not yet decided to receive the preventive treatment of vaccination, and so it has excluded them from some basic activities, such as travel.

This response to the situation, which some believe to be extreme, is being opposed by People's Party of Canada leader Maxime Bernier, former Premier of Newfoundland & Labrador Brian Peckford, and five other Canadian citizens, who have taken legal action against the federal government.

The Federal Court of Canada has agreed to hear the case, which was brought forth by the Canadian Center of Justice, and a hearing is set for next Sept. 19. Of four separate instances cited in the case, two have been brought by former Premier Peckford. The case is being heard on a speedy basis, given the claim of a serious violation of mobility rights guaranteed by the Canadian Constitution and the Charter of Human Rights, as the plaintiffs allege.

"The honourable Maxime Bernier, leader of the People's Party of Canada, is prevented from participating fully in his political role by orders issued by Transport Canada, under the prime minister's direction," Mr. Bernier's office stated. Mr. Bernier is being represented by Quebec lawyer Samuel Bahad, an external adviser to the Center for Justice.

"By implementing these mandates, Mr. Bernier is limited from participating in democratic debates and the electoral process," a press release

further said. "As the leader of Canada's fifth-largest political party in 2021, Mr. Bernier flew more than 79,000 kilometers for labor purposes. As party leader, Mr. Bernier is invited to reach thousands of people every year and participate in various political, intellectual and philanthropic activities in all regions of the country. Travel, other than by air, is reasonably possible only within a relatively limited radius of his residence in Quebec."

It should be recalled that on Oct. 30, 2021, the federal government announced that anyone travelling by air, train or boat must have received two doses of vaccine for Covid-19.

"The travel vaccination order prevented about six million unvaccinated Canadians (15% of Canada's population) from traveling in or out of Canada," said Bernier. "Canadians cannot travel to help sick loved ones, go to work, attend university, visit their family and friends, take an international holiday and live an ordinary life like other citizens."

The federal government filed evidence in April on behalf of 16 witnesses, including five experts, in defense of the travel ban. However, the plaintiffs also submitted new evidence they claimed to be scientific, which suggested that the slowed spread of Covid-19 had nothing to do with the vaccination program, as they alleged at the same time that the vaccines could be linked to possible health damages, including myocarditis and effects on fertility.

Justice Centre lawyers are currently involved in cross-examination of government witnesses ahead of a full trial in September. The process is ongoing and will continue until the end of June.

The program of education is as follows:

- 30 May 2022 | Completion of the cross-examination of the applicants' affidavits
- 30 June 2022 | Completion of the cross-examination of the affidavits of the respondents
- 20 July 2022 | Delivery and filing of the applicants' files
- 2 September 2022 | Service and filing of the respondent's file
- 19-23 September 2022 | Hearing

Newsfirst Multimedia submitted an invitation for an interview to Mr. Bernier, which the leader of the PPC graciously accepted.

Here's the interview:

Newsfirst: Mr. Bernier, what did you base your reasoning on to take legal action against the government regarding travel restrictions for citizens who chose not to be vaccinated?

M. Bernier: "My legal challenge is based on my particular role as a federal party leader who needs to travel to do his job properly. If the court accepts my arguments as well as that of former Premier Brian Peckford and others who have initiated similar cases (all cases will be heard on the same day), then all the unvaccinated will benefit from the decision. My reasoning is explained in the attached affidavit."

Newsfirst: The government's decision to ban travel is certainly contrary to the Constitution of Canada and the Charter of Human Rights. However, the Government considers this to be a temporary measure, and that it is being done due to the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic, to protect public health. What is your opinion on this?

M. Bernier: This argument is unfounded and makes no sense. Everyone, vaccinated or not, can catch and transmit the virus. Preventing unvaccinated people from travelling has no effect whatsoever on public health."

Newsfirst: In recent weeks, the following phenomenon has been observed in Canada: On the one hand, the provincial governments have cancelled all the measures related to the pandemic and allowed all activities for all citizens, without discrimination in terms of vaccination, and on the other hand, the federal government insists that travel by the unvaccinated should be banned. Why do you think there are so many decisions to the contrary?

M. Bernier: "Because the Prime Minister is playing political games with this issue instead of governing for the good of all Canadians. During last fall's election, he used vaccine orders and widespread fear of the coronavirus among Canadians as a "tool" to increase his support. This was evident when he attacked the unvaccinated, whom he described as racists and misogynists. I think he is still using this issue to pretend to be a public safety advocate, even if he has no basis in science. It divides Canadians and marginalizes about 15% of those who are unvaccinated because they believe it continues to benefit him politically."

Newsfirst: Citizens see two completely opposite decisions and do not know which science to believe in. Why do you think this is the case? Is there a specific reason?

M. Bernier: "It should have remained a medical issue, but unfortunately it has been highly politicised, as was mentioned in the previous answer. When you use a pandemic as a pretext to restrict freedom of speech and create all sorts of new programs that would not be acceptable in normal times, and when billions of dollars are spent to support the economy as a consequence of unnecessary restrictions, then it is inevitable that somehow all these measures have to be politically justified."

It's worth noting that towards the end of our question-and-answer session, Mr. Bernier said the federal government, after being apprised of the lawsuit, had not responded to the allegations.



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Quebec National Assembly officials open new CHSLD Val-des-Brises

Long-term care facility will take in up to 232 residents by autumn



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

Several elected members of the Quebec National Assembly from the Laval region managed to abandon partisan divisions momentarily on May 18 to gather just north of the city's Duvernay district for the official opening of the new CHSLD Val-des-Brises long-term health care facility on Robert-Bourassa Boulevard.

Will be full by fall

Mille-Îles Liberal MNA Francine Charbonneau joined Sainte-Rose CAQ MNA Christopher Skeete, as well as Minister Responsible for Senior Citizens and Caregivers Marguerite Blais, and Minister Responsible for the Laval Region Benoit Charette, for a tour of the new and state-of-the-art facility.

CHSLD Val-des-Brises has welcomed more than 100 residents since early May and is expected to reach a capacity of 232 by this autumn.

By and large, the residents will be those suffering from moderate to severe neurocognitive disorders, often associated with Alzheimer's disease, although they may be caused by other medical conditions such as Parkinson's and traumatic brain injury.

which look and feel very much like what the average person might find in their own home. There are also several gardens on the exterior grounds and a pond where apparently fishing will be possible.

Will be leased 15 years

The building contractor, Montoni, managed to complete the project in time, in spite of the challenges over the past two years from the Covid pandemic. The CISSS de Laval is leasing (rather than owning) the facility from Montoni under terms of a PPP agreement over the next 15 years.

"The official opening of the new CHSLD Val-des-Brises in Laval will offer a quality lifestyle to its residents," said Blais, who had been under fire for more than a year over shortcomings in the response to the Covid pandemic in the network of CHSLDs. (Still, Blais' name only came up once in Quebec coroner Géhane Kamal's recent report on the province's slow response to the first wave of the pandemic in 2020.)

A winning combination

"They will be able to live in a secure environment that is adapted to their needs," Blais added. "I am pleased to see that this project is promoting a clinical approach as well as elements resembling those found in seniors



Quebec Senior Citizens Minister Marguerite Blais, left, walks alongside Mille-Îles Liberal MNA Francine Charbonneau during the opening of the new CHSLD Val-des-Brises on May 18.
(Photo: Martin C. Barry, Newsfirst Multimedia)



Quebec Minister for Senior Citizens and Caregivers Marguerite Blais wields a shovel during the planting of a tree on May 18 outside the new CHSLD Val-des-Brises.
(Photo: Martin C. Barry, Newsfirst Multimedia)

Feeling at home

The residence's living units were designed in a manner so as to make those living in them feel truly as though they are at home. The building is divided into units, each with 11 residents, with a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

The presence of personal caregivers is being encouraged to promote relationships and to sustain the morale of residents. Following a tour of the CHSLD, employees and officials gathered on the lawn on Robert-Bourassa Blvd. to plant a sapling tree symbolizing the open spirit of the new facility.

Each room has its own bathroom and common areas, including a kitchen and dining rooms,

retirement homes."

Charrette said he was pleased to see the new facility had been designed and built to offer its residents a welcoming, secure and warm environment.

"I would like to thank all the teams who combined their efforts to complete this magnificent project for the Laval region," he said. "This will make a big difference for the persons living here and their caregivers."

Mille-Îles MNA impressed

Charbonneau (a former Senior Citizens Minister under the Liberals) was especially impressed by the warmth and homelike atmosphere of the new facility.

She said the residents are sure to feel as though they are indeed in a place that is welcoming when soup is made in the kitchen area and the aroma reminds them of what home is really about.

"The coming together of this major project is in itself an important advancement for our community," said Skeete.

"This new and modern facility will contribute without any doubt to the well-being of our seniors, while seeing that they are in a place that is pleasant and better adapted to their needs. A project like this bears witness to the efforts which are made collectively to improve the quality of life of persons suffering from a loss of autonomy."



Common areas at the new CHSLD Val-des-Brises were designed to resemble the interior of a home as much as possible.
(Photo: Martin C. Barry, Newsfirst Multimedia)



Laval among cities where police \$32.5 million worth of meth

Laval was one of several cities across Quebec where police officers conducted a series of sweeping raids last week, during which large quantities of methamphetamines trafficked by organized crime were seized in a record haul said to be worth more than \$32.5 million.

In all, 28 warrants were executed in Laval, the Laurentians, the Montérégie, Centre-du-Québec and in Mauricie. Major amounts of illegal drugs were seized in Saint-Léonard, Boucherville, Chambly, Val-David, Yamachiche, Lanoraie, Saint-Anne-des-Plaines, Saint-Hubert, Sainte-Thérèse and Belœil.

Eight suspects were arrested and the drugs seized included:

- 6.5 million tablets of amphetamines;
- 21 firearms;
- 481 kg methamphetamine powder;

- 11 kg of pure meth;
- 5,000 tablets of MDMA (ecstasy);
- Several hundred tablets of Cialis and Xanax;
- 13 presses for making tablets;
- 1,002 cutters for shaping tablets;
- 250,000 bags for wrapping;
- 10 cell phones and one computer;
- Nearly \$300,000 in cash.

According to the police, around a million tablets of illicit drugs were withdrawn from circulation as a result of the raids. The investigation had been underway since September 2021. Among other things, it revealed that around \$5 million per week was being earned by the suspects from sale of the drugs. The clients for methamphetamines are typically teenagers and young adults.

Crown seeks six-year sentence for woman who molested boy

A crown prosecutor told a judge in a Laval courtroom last week that the courts need to send out a clear message that sexual assault is unacceptable and won't be tolerated, regardless of whether the perpetrator is a man or a woman.

As such, the prosecution is seeking a six-year jail sentence for Josianne Lévesque, a 43-year-old former grade-school teacher, who was previously found guilty of sexually abusing an eight-year-old boy who had been one of her students.

Over a period of 17 months, while tutoring the child, she took advantage of him sexually. It was only after he complained to his parents that the abuse stopped. Before then, Lévesque had told the boy not to reveal what had been going on because it would get her into a lot of trouble.

While the prosecution was demanding the higher sentence, Lévesque's lawyer was seeking 25 months, claiming that she had shown signs of remorse. The judge is scheduled to render a decision in October.

LPD pass suspicious death in home invasion over to SQ

Investigators with the Laval Police Dept. opened a file following the discovery of the lifeless body of a man in his early 20s inside the Sainte-Rose home of a well-known UFC ring fighter on May 24 following what is believed to have been an attempted home invasion.

LPD officers received a 911 call at 1:55 a.m. from a couple who had fled the home and took refuge at a family member's nearby home. The two people, a man and a woman, told police they had just been robbed at their home on Place du Cormoran in the Champfleury sector.

When officers arrived at the scene, they found the alleged home invasion suspect's body. It was

later revealed that it bore signs of having been stabbed multiple times.

The Journal de Montréal identified one of the people in the house during the incident as Eduardo «Icho» Larenas, a UFC fighter, while the other was identified as his spouse, Gladys Rosana Lopez.

According to the French-language tabloid, the 250-pound, 6'3", 42-year-old Larenas, who is said to have contacts with organized crime, called the police to report that a home invasion had taken place. The file has been handed over to the Sûreté du Québec because of the alleged organized crime connection.

Laval Police set off on long-distance bike tour



From May 30 to June 4, 14 officers with the Laval Police Dept. are bicycling more than 1,100 kilometres in six days in order to raise funds for Opération Enfant Soleil.

The cycling officers set off from Laval city hall at 8 am last Monday and are scheduled to get back to LPD headquarters around 4 pm on Saturday June 4.

Their route during the five days will take them through 80 municipalities between Laval and Quebec City, while travelling through Montreal, the Montérégie region, the Eastern Townships, the Beauce, Mauricie and Lanaudière.

"Over the coming week, our police officers will be facing a major sports challenge," said LPD chief Pierre Brochet. "For every pedal stroke, each kilometre travelled, they hold out the hope of a healthy future for all the children and parents in need."

Since 1997 when the event was first held, the LPD's cycling tour has raised more than \$1.7 million. As they pass through the Beauce and the provincial capital, the LPD officers will be accompanied by colleagues from the Quebec City Police Dept.

Laval man among those charged in alleged truck training fraud

A Laval resident and a man from neighbouring Saint-Eustache are among a group of six people facing fraud charges linked to a two-year investigation in Ontario into allegations related to commercial motor vehicle driver training.

In March 2019, the Ontario Provincial Police was advised by the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) of fraudulent passenger and licensing activities, which led to a criminal investigation.

The investigation revealed three major components of a serious fraudulent scheme, said to significantly impact the safety of Canadian highways.

Use of an interpreter to fraudulently complete

required licensing knowledge tests; Non-Ontario residents applying for an Ontario driver's licence;

And circumvention of Ontario's Mandatory Entry-Level Training (MELT) standard.

The investigators identified more than 200 incidents in which students had committed a variety of fraudulent activities to obtain a commercial vehicle licence.

It is alleged that the suspects allowed their foreign clients to obtain a class 5 (passenger vehicle) and possibly a class 1 (heavy goods vehicle) driver's license using falsified documents.



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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

PROVENANCE

Q I met my now husband seven years ago. When I first met him, he was getting out of a tumultuous relationship with a woman who ended up pulling a gun on us one night. It was horrible.

Another night we drove up to his house and found a “box of love” that she left. In it was everything he ever gave her. I didn’t look, but he told me he bought her pearls and she returned them. I’m not sure what type of pearls, or if it was earrings, a necklace or a bracelet. He just said “pearls” and that he gave them to his mother.

Here we are seven years later, and I had my birthday over this past weekend. At my party, I received a beautiful pearl necklace, bracelet and set of earrings. I was extremely happy and they are beautiful. Twenty minutes later, it felt like a ton of bricks hit me. I thought back to the time this woman returned his gifts.

So I nicely said, “How did you do this without me knowing?” He said, “A little bit at a time.” You see, we share a bank account and we both keep an eye on it. So I just said okay, and let it go.

Today, for some reason, I can’t let it go and it’s making me feel like an unappreciative, selfish person. Maybe I am since I’m thinking this way! We did receive cash from his mom for Christmas, and he put that in a safe place in the house. I saw he deposited some of it in our account, and I believe I accounted for the rest after we used it on a trip.

Should I let this go and be happy with pearls that I’m going to make a family heirloom, to be passed down to my daughter and to her daughter? I don’t see any way of asking him, “Are these the pearls you gave so-and-so?” But should that matter?

Kirsten

A Kirsten, in one Zen teaching story two monks, a student and a master, are traveling along a road. When they come to a stream, they see a beautiful young woman unable to cross, so the master picks her up and carries her to the other side. Then the monks resume their travels.

Later that night, when the student scolds the master for having intimate contact with a woman, the master replies, “I put her down on the other side. Are you still carrying her?”

Sometimes it’s hard to know what to put down and what to carry. There are reasons to think these are not the same gems. Would an ex-girlfriend return a set of heirloom-quality pearls? Would someone who pulls a gun be likely to think, “The right thing to do is give them back.”

But even if this woman once had them, after seven years the whammy has worn off the pearls. And if they are not the other woman’s, what a horrible thing to bring up to your husband.

We look at it this way. Pearls are assets, like bonds, Krugerrands or diamonds. It would be ridiculous to let something of great value go to waste, or to take them to a jewelry store and not receive full value. After seven years it is not regifting. After seven years, they are his.

Our favorite detective story is *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins. In that tale, a gem is stolen from the head of an idol in India and, through treachery, ends up in England. But legend says the jewel will always return where it belongs, and in the end that is what happens.

Perhaps this incident is a sign to let this woman go as if she never existed. Even if she once had the pearls, they have returned to their proper place. They were meant to adorn the woman who is his wife.

Wayne & Tamara

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

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or email: DirectAnswers@WayneAndTamara.com

WAYNEANDTAMARA.COM

‘Cercle des fermières’ receives National Assembly Medal

Sainte-Rose MNA Christopher Skeete presented members of the Cercle des fermières de Laval with the National Assembly Medal last week, on the occasion of the group’s 100th anniversary, having been founded in 2022 by Anna et Rita Ouimet.

Receiving the medal were relatives of the Ouimet sisters, Brigitte, Chantal and Christine Fournier. Attending the ceremony were city councillor for Sainte-Rose Alexandra Flavia Novac and city councillor for Auteuil Jocelyne Frédéric-Gauthier.

One hundred years ago, the mission of the Cercle des fermières was to help improve condi-

tions for women and their families through the promotion of local heritage, culture and values.

In those days in mostly rural and agricultural Laval, the women were frequently heavily burdened with chores, and the Cercle des fermières offered opportunities to relax and enjoy moments of leisure.

The two Ouimet sisters grew up on Sainte-Rose Blvd. in Sainte-Rose – in fact, in the house which is today the Dame Tartine breakfast restaurant. They both were musicians, and Rita was the organist at the Sainte-Rose parish church.



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5 business email etiquette tips

As remote work becomes increasingly popular, employees are sending out more digital messages than ever. Here are five tips to help you craft a perfectly polished business email.

1. Include a subject line.
Don't leave the subject line blank. Include a clear and concise header that accurately reflects the content of your email.

2. Use a professional greeting.
Avoid using laid-back salutations such as "Hi folks" or "Hey guys." Instead, start your email with phrases such as "Good morning," "Good afternoon," "Good evening" or simply "Hello."

3. Keep the message brief.
Use short paragraphs and formatting such as bullet points to make

your emails easy to skim. In addition, instead of sending a long email, consider arranging a phone or video call to get your message across.

4. Proofread the message.
Take the time to re-read and spell check your emails to ensure they make sense and have the right tone before you press send.

5. Reply to all emails promptly.
Try to reply to all emails within 24 hours, even if it's just to acknowledge that you received the message.

Lastly, emails can easily be misinterpreted without context. Consequently, be careful about making jokes or using sarcasm as you don't want to confuse or offend the recipient.



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Losing a loved one can be an overwhelming ordeal. Nevertheless, the deceased's family typically must oversee a variety of administrative tasks and make numerous decisions to organize the funeral service. To ensure your loved ones don't have to deal with these burdens while grieving your passing, make the necessary after-life arrangements without delay.

There are two contracts you'll need to sign off on: one for the funeral arrangements and one for the burial.

The former specifies the services that will be afforded upon your death, which may include cremation, embalming and a ceremony. This document also outlines the purchase of associated items such as the coffin, urn, monument and/or flowers.

The burial contract, on the other hand, has to do with the purchase and maintenance of your final resting

place. This may pertain to a cemetery plot, a mausoleum or a space in a columbarium.

Advantages

When you pre-arrange your funeral, you ensure that your after-life services will unfold according to your personal preferences and beliefs. Additionally, you'll be doing your loved ones a kindness by preventing them from undertaking on such a trying task at a time when they're already grieving.

Making pre-arrangements for your funeral also has many financial benefits. For example, given that you'll pay for all goods and services at their current price, and that no additional amounts can be charged after your death (even if your coffin costs twice as much by then), you'll avoid the costs associated with inflation.

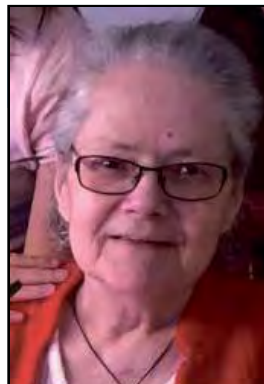
For all of the above reasons, making pre-arrangements for your funeral is the wise and compassionate thing to do.



COUSINEAU-MALLETTE, Marguerite
1934 - 2022

It is with sadness that we announce the death of Mrs. Marguerite Cousineau-Malette, which occurred on May 27, 2022, at the age of 87.

She was the wife of the late Jean Malette. She leaves to mourn her daughters, Diane, Lucie, Carole, her grandchildren, Annie, Karine, her great-grandsons, Auguste, Félix, Alexis, her nephews and nieces, as well as several relatives and friends.



LAFLEUR, Monique
1936 - 2022

It is with sadness that we announce the death of Mrs. Monique Lafleur, which occurred on May 25, 2022, at the age of 86.

She is survived by her children, Christiane (Marc), Benoit (Danielle), her grandchildren, Léa Mei, Ann Xiuli, Marie, Gabrielle, her brother and sisters, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, her nephews and nieces, as well as some precious friends.



POULIOT, André
1947 - 2022

From Laval, on May 25, 2022, at the age of 74, passed away Mr. André Pouliot.

He is survived by his loving wife of the past 54 years Claudette Lévesque, his sons Stéphane and Sylvain (Chantal), his grandchildren Lily-Jade, Sébastien and Jonathan, his brother Gilles, his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, his nephews and nieces, his longtime friend Daniel Leclerc and several relatives and friends.



LANGLAIS, André
1944 - 2022

At the Rivière-du-Nord palliative care home, on May 25, 2022, at the age of 78, passed away André Langlais, spouse of Louise Cantin.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his brothers Maurice (Reine), Gilles (Rose), Robert (Rose-Anne) and his sister Louise. He also leaves to mourn his brother-in-law Gilles (Claudette), his goddaughter Caroline, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends.

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The luckiest signs this week:
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ARIES
You have a lot of work ahead of you. The small details may take a long time to sort out. You may also be promoted at work, which will materialize gradually over the next few weeks.

TAURUS
You'll be highly charismatic. People will love, support and follow you wherever you go. You'll suggest interesting projects to your boss and significant other, and they'll both agree with you.

GEMINI
Your children will be demanding, and you'll become involved in their various activities. You'll also get the green light from the bank to finance a property or significant home renovation.

CANCER
You'll express yourself clearly when it comes to money and finance. You'll make big plans with your significant other, such as buying a house, to ensure that you have a promising future together.

LEO
Now is an excellent time to ask for a loan, perhaps to consolidate your debts. Don't hesitate to ask your boss for a raise; they won't be able to refuse you this week.

VIRGO
A new and exciting challenge awaits. There may be a new beginning on the horizon. You may take steps to go back to school or deepen your spirituality.

LIBRA
Your health may get in your way. Find a good doctor or research treatment to improve your quality of life. You'll see results, which will put you on top of your game.

SCORPIO
You'll expand your network of professional contacts, grow your circle of friends and increase your following on social media. You'll be able to combine business with pleasure at work, at home and in your free time.

SAGITTARIUS
Whether at work or home, you'll be involved in a demanding project that will be profitable over time. You must be patient; abundance is slow in coming. However, it'll be yours soon enough.

CAPRICORN
Training over the next few months will enable you to obtain a new qualification in your field. You may go on an adventure that broadens your horizons and boost your self-esteem.

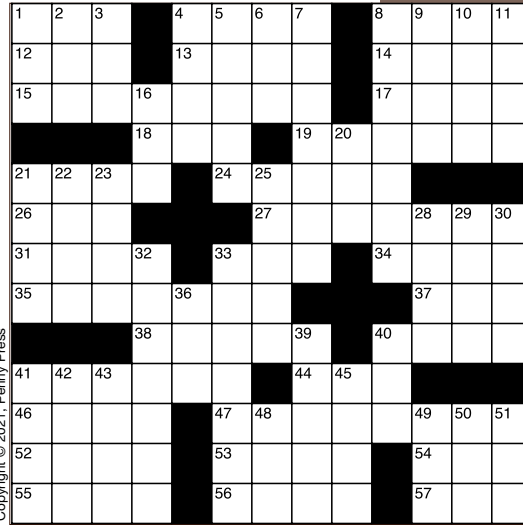
AQUARIUS
If there's tension in your relationship, you'll take serious measures to find a solution. Planning quality time with your partner is essential. However, avoid topics about external problems.

PISCES
If you're single, someone you don't know will offer to take you on an adventure. A business trip will turn out to be profitable if you have mastery of the subject matter. Weigh the pros and cons before making a decision.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

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ACROSS

- Derby, e.g.
- "___ a Wonderful World"
- Long narrative
- Spud bud
- Long-eared animal
- Heroic poem
- Harbors
- Egg holder
- Acorn bearer
- Browns bread
- Roger Moore role
- Fast
- Iron or Stone
- Surrounds
- Santa's vehicle
- Relay portion
- Gather a crop
- Won over
- Time division
- Harsh sound
- Mine products
- Straightens

DOWN

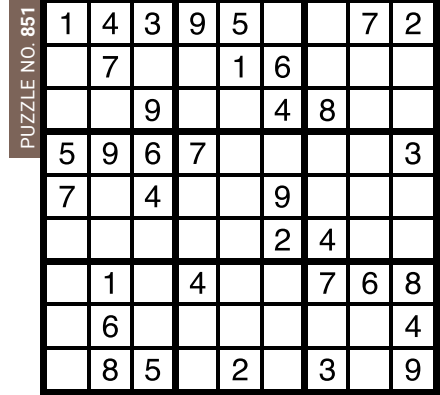
- Males
- Pirate's yes
- Afternoon gathering
- Halt!
- Listens
- Painting or photography
- Sampling
- Member of Congress
- Copycats
- Meaning
- Behaves
- Legume holder
- ___-the-wall
- Deep tone
- Rude look
- Require
- Undesirable plants
- Rude glance
- Chance
- Some resorts
- Underground prison
- Free time
- Not pro
- Restaurant customer
- Young's opposite
- "The Sun ___ Rises"
- Coil
- Loafing
- Laze around
- Green veggie
- As well
- Squirt gun, e.g.
- Shepherd's charge

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.**

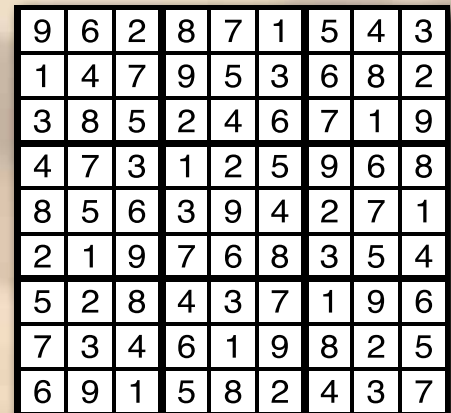


Last Issues' Answers

CROSSWORDS



Sudoku



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