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Aglaia Revelakis awarded with medal



(THE LAVAL NEWS) - Senator Leo Housakos (on the left) recently presented the King Charles III Coronation Medal to Chomedey city councillor Aglaia Revelakis.

This prestigious Canadian medal honours individuals who have made significant contributions to their communities or achieved outstanding accomplishments that bring credit to Canada. Senator Housakos highlighted Aglaia's exceptional dedication, noting that she has gone above and beyond in serving all the Laval communities.

Her tireless efforts and commitment to public service exemplify the values celebrated by this award, making her a deserving recipient of this national honour.



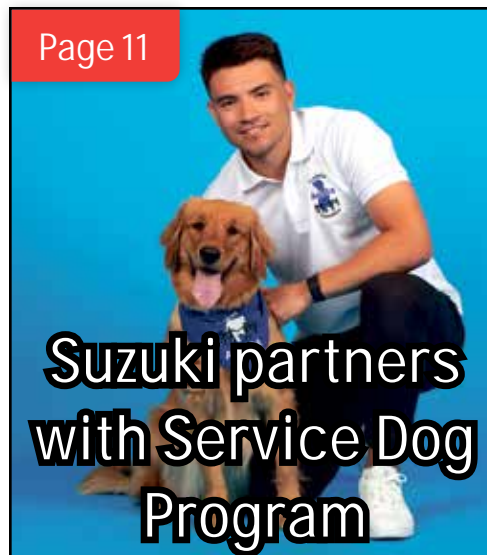
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Fabre MNA honours citizens with National Assembly Medal

(NEWSFIRST) - As part of their role at the National Assembly, elected members of The National Assembly, have the opportunity to award honorary medals to recognize individuals whose exceptional dedication and contributions help improve our society. These distinctions celebrate those who, through their commitment, have had a profound and lasting impact on their communities.

Recently, Alice Abou-Khalil, MNA for Fabre, had the honour of recognizing three outstanding individuals who have dedicated themselves to building a more inclusive, supportive, and engaged society. Whether through social involvement, community service, or the promotion of values that strengthen our collective well-being, each of these recipients has made an undeniable difference in the lives of many.



Since 2008, he has provided thousands of young people with the opportunity to thrive through adapted, inclusive, and supportive instruction. His dedication, alongside a team of committed instructors, has made Karaté Autisme a leading initiative in promoting inclusion through sports.

Aline Dib

First elected in 2013, Aline Dib, City Councillor for the Saint-Martin district in Laval, embodies transparency, integrity, and a deep connection with citizens. She works tirelessly to improve the quality of life for Laval residents by supporting families, assisting community organizations,



and leading environmental projects. Actively involved in social development and immigration, she is committed to strengthening solidarity and ensuring an inclusive and dynamic living environment for the people of Laval. Her unwavering commitment makes her a true role model in municipal politics, and her dedication has earned her the distinction of being the first Laval City Councillor to receive a National Assembly Medal in recognition of her exceptional service to her community.

Through these distinctions, MNA Alice Abou-Khalil highlights the vital role of community engagement and honours those whose actions embody the values of inclusion, solidarity, and kindness. Each of these individuals has demonstrated remarkable leadership and generosity, making Quebec a stronger, more compassionate, and more united place.



Bishop Paul-Marwan Tabet

A key figure in the Maronite community in Canada, Bishop Paul-Marwan Tabet, Eparchial Bishop of the Maronite Catholics, was honoured for his outstanding commitment to education and fostering unity and solidarity. Through his compassionate leadership, he has worked to build bridges between generations and cultures, creating a strong sense of belonging within the community.

André Langevin – Founder of Karaté Autisme
Through his remarkable journey, André Langevin has shown how passion and resilience can change lives. A career police officer and black belt in Kyokushin karate, he founded Karaté Autisme after witnessing the transformative impact of karate on his son Philippe, who was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.



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VP Sales & Marketing:

George S. Guzman
sales@newsfirst.ca

Graphic Design:

Lareine Zakhour
Elena Molter
Thomas Bakoyannis

Advertising:

Jean Paul Chamberland

Editorial Staff:

Martin C. Barry
Dylan Adams Lemaçon
Renata Isopo
Maria Diamantis
Dimitris Ilias
Savas Fortis
James Ryan

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OPINION & Editorial



Light sleep and dreaming

What have our governments done to protect us from the highly predictable situation that has now arisen? In essence, our biggest ally from the south is threatening our national sovereignty through its unpredictable and egotistical president and his group of super-billionaire "friends." We knew him who he was, almost a decade.

Did our politicians believe that with Biden, America was going back to its good old self? How much does one have to bury one's head in the sand to understand that when half of America votes for MAGA, Trump's re-election was a one-way street?

Our dependence on American trade is still enormous. Normally, Canada was supposed to be a superpower. We should have invested long ago in other markets for our vast mineral wealth, rare earths, timber, energy and all the other commodities we produce. Now, in Saturday's cake, when we are threatened with tariffs, we remembered the EU, Indonesia and China. At the same time, with its enormous mineral wealth, our heavy industry must expand and grow if we want economic independence.

The decision of the provincial premiers to visit the White House was a complete failure and a disgrace. What a sad sight was this, where our leaders stayed out for an hour, supposedly passing a check, only to meet a few petty thugs? The result? Niente! But they were assured that Trump really wants us to be the 51st U.S. state, while insisting on calling Trudeau governor. Militarily, we are now paying for Canada's

peace-loving reputation for decades. Canada had to be a nuclear power. Its military power is equal to that of France at least. The U.S. protected us for so long to call us here and now Anschluss. Blind to the "enemy" Russians! Our government's lukewarm reactions to the 51st state were disheartening. Why accept the accreditation of the new American ambassador when his country threatens your country's sovereignty?

As for NATO, it now seems to have lost its unified strategic orientation, functioning as a leaderless alliance. Europe must recognise this reality, it can no longer rely solely on the Atlantic Alliance for its security. It urgently needs to play its part and create a truly operational Euroarmy that is independent of US strategic choices, but at the same time capable of working with the West's traditional allies.

Such an initiative must not be confined to the borders of the European Union. The creation of an institutional framework for defence cooperation with Canada would give greater strategic autonomy to both Europe and North America, strengthening the transatlantic relationship on a new footing. Canada's strategic geographical location, combined with its know-how and defence capabilities, could be a cornerstone for a stronger and more autonomous Euro-Atlantic cooperation.

Canada's relationship with the United Kingdom must not stagnate, nor be based solely on historical and cultural ties. On the contrary, more substantial defence and economic cooper-

ation is needed if Canada is to maintain its active role on the international stage, both in security matters and in trade and investment.

At the same time, Canada's membership of the Commonwealth cannot be merely symbolic. Although it is one of the oldest institutions of international cooperation, its potential remains largely untapped. Strengthening Canada's defence and trade ties with Commonwealth member states, particularly India, could add new value to the alliance, making it a more functional and effective organisation capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

It's time for Canada to be self-critical and make its big decisions. The fury of Canadians against everything American, Buy Canadian, the recent glorious victory in hockey, must not be defeated by the apathy, boredom and golden rule of many movements, which have an expiration date when social media stops engaging with them. It is encouraging that already in the tourism sector the Canadians have given a solid slap to their neighbours. The EU, UK, Australia and other countries have similar democracies to us. To exploit neighboring ideologies in the mutual interest of our countries commercially and defensively, especially now that the US is now a hostile state.

The nonsense about the separation of Quebec and other provinces must now give way to facilitating trade between the provinces. Parliament must let go of its childish antics and suspension and come to its senses and face the danger.

Dimitris Elias

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Boyer headed to Washington with Canada/ U.S. delegation of cities

St. Lawrence/Great Lakes municipalities find common cause opposing tariffs

The City of Laval announced on Monday that Mayor Stéphane Boyer will be in Washington D.C. from March 5-7 as Laval's official representative in a delegation in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative.

In addition to promoting the protection of the Great Lakes and the Saint Lawrence River, the alliance (made up of 244 Canadian and U.S. cities) shares the common purpose of defending its members against President Donald Trump's 25 per cent tariffs scheme.

In a statement issued by Laval City Hall on Monday, the city says Laval will be representing the interests of its businesses and employees.

During the gathering in the U.S. capital, Mayor Boyer will be meeting elected congressional officials, leaders of economic interest groups and representatives of the Trump administration. "This mission is taking place in a preoccu-

pying economic context," says the statement.

"Uncertainty is hanging over, while tariff measures are foreseen by the United States, directly threatening cross-border commercial trade.

"A 25 per cent hike on Canadian goods imported into the United States could have grave consequences for the regional economy, putting in peril jobs and the ability of local businesses to compete."

"The question of tariffs is worrying," says Mayor Boyer. "Hundreds of jobs are at risk in Laval. We will therefore be collaborating in initiatives aimed at preserving commercial trade from one side of the border to the other.

"We will also be taking advantage of this mission to strengthen the economic links between Laval and other Canadian cities from the Great Lakes region," he added.



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Financing hurdles, red tape among challenges facing newcomer businesses

CFIB/Scotiabank report suggests more support would 'empower' immigrant entrepreneurs

MARTIN C. BARRY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The Laval News
marty@newsfirst.ca

As Canada navigates economic challenges – including heightened Canada-U.S. trade tensions this week – a new economic report commissioned by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business concludes it is essential for all entrepreneurs – including immigrants – to be set up for success.

Assisting newcomers

With that in mind, the report (*From Challenges to Opportunities: The Newcomer Entrepreneurial Experience in Canada*), looks at the leading hurdles facing newcomer entrepreneurs and their motivations for starting a business in Canada.

It also includes recommendations to policymakers and financial institutions on how to better support these important contributors to the country's economy.

Sponsored by Scotiabank, the report notes that newcomer entrepreneurs – those who have been in Canada less than 10 years – own more than 7 per cent of enterprises in Canada, although they face unique challenges impacting their entrepreneurial growth and integration in the broader business community.

Entrepreneurial experience

"It takes a lot of courage and resilience to move to another country and open a business," says Marvin Cruz, CFIB's director of research and the report's co-author. "Newcomer entrepreneurs play a crucial role in enhancing the Canadian business landscape and economy by bringing in diverse perspectives and skills."

The top challenges facing newcomer entrepreneurs include securing financing (considering their limited credit history in Canada), navigating government regulations and compliance, building trust and networks, overcoming culture and communication differences, and accessing information and resources.

A range of backgrounds

Newcomer entrepreneurs choose to start a business in Canada for a wide range of reasons, including their previous entrepreneurial experience from their country of origin, access to market opportunities, the country's strategic location, the pursuit of autonomy and financial success, and the appeal of a high quality of life and safety.

"As Canada navigates economic challenges, including Canada-U.S. trade tensions, strengthening entrepreneurship is more important than ever," says Francesca Basta, CFIB's research analyst, who was also a co-author of the report.

"To enhance Canada's productivity and global competitiveness, it's essential that all entrepreneurs, including newcomers, are set up for success," she continues. "That's why it's important for policymakers and financial institutions to provide better and ongoing support to Canada's newcomers in their entrepreneurial journeys."

Role of policymakers

CFIB recommends that policymakers work to increase awareness of existing government grants and support programs, create an easily accessible and centralized platform to host critical information on tax rules, labour laws,

and licensing requirements, and simplify regulatory compliance while enhancing customer service.

CFIB also recommends expanding immigration options for foreign entrepreneurs in Canada and to continue to support and promote newcomer organizations and settlement agencies that have proven to be effective.

As well, it is suggested that financial institutions should continue to promote mentorship programs and financial literacy resources, remove barriers to improve access to capital for newcomer entrepreneurs and simplify the banking setup process.

Immigrant entrepreneurs

According to the report, immigrants are more likely to be entrepreneurs than individuals born in Canada. While immigrants make up 23 per cent of the population, they own 28 per cent of Canadian enterprises. Additionally, immigrant owned businesses have similar longevity to those owned by Canadian-born entrepreneurs, with 80 per cent lasting two years and 58 per cent lasting seven years.

"As the country seeks to enhance its global competitiveness, the role of newcomer entrepreneurs – those who have immigrated to Canada within the past 10 years and are starting, managing, or expanding a business – has become increasingly important," the report states.

Perspectives and innovation

"They bring diverse perspectives and innovative ideas which enrich and contribute to the vibrancy of Canada's business landscape. For many, entrepreneurship is a conscious and empowering choice, allowing them to not only forge their own path to success in Canada, but to create jobs and contribute to local economies."

"Considering most businesses in Canada are small, supporting newcomer entrepreneurs is crucial for driving growth and innovation in this sector," the report maintains. "As Canada's productivity remains stagnant, and business openings are struggling to outpace closures, immigrant entrepreneurs play an essential and needed role in strengthening the Canadian business landscape."

Favourable survival rates

In addition to underlining their resilience, the report says immigrant entrepreneurs play an important role leveraging their international background and knowledge to expand Canadian trade opportunities. It found that the survival rates of immigrant-owned businesses are comparable to those of businesses owned by Canadian-born entrepreneurs.

After two years, on average, 78 per cent of businesses owned by immigrants remained in operation, compared to 80 per cent of those owned by Canadian-born entrepreneurs. After seven years, the survival rate was 56 per cent for immigrant-owned businesses, closely mirroring the 57 per cent for Canadian-born entrepreneurs.

The report notes that newcomer entrepreneurs bring immense potential to Canada's economy, but face unique barriers that can impact their growth and integration. It concludes that strengthening support systems for newcomer entrepreneurs "would empower them to thrive, unlocking their full potential and enriching Canada's business landscape."



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"It's like a Joni Mitchell song, you really don't know what you've lost until it's gone."

Local news makes a difference *for English-speaking communities*

The importance of local media is a topic that has been the subject of many discussions in the last decade as news outlets across North America struggle to stay alive.

But nowhere is the topic more important than within the English-speaking community of Quebec.

As the provincial government has moved to systematically reduce the amount of information in English available, the need for English media becomes more vital.

"We are the only ones explaining basic services and issues," said Nikki Mantell, publisher of *The Low Down to Hull and Back News*, which covers the Gatineau hills region in western Quebec.

As elements of Bill 96 approved in 2023, which has reinforced the Charter

of the French Language, are implemented and enforced, the amount of information in English in all sectors of Quebec is diminishing.

Quebec-based companies must now ensure that all information on their websites are in French.

The provincial government itself has reduced information available in English.

And at the municipal level, only towns with bilingual status retain the right to provide some services and information in both French and English. Although, this includes offering English on their websites, many reports and some documentation

are often available in French only.

For English-speaking residents who live in municipalities that do not have bilingual status, the information available to anglophones in English is disappearing.

"Now more than ever we need a place where the community comes together," Mantell said. "It's like a Joni Mitchell song," Mantell continued. "You really don't know what you've lost until it's gone."

In this climate, ensuring that English-language media survives in these communities, she said, is that much more important now.

But it is not just information in Eng-

"We are the only ones explaining basic services and issues."
— Nikki Mantell, publisher of *The Low Down to Hull and Back News*

lish that is important, said Brenda O'Farrell, president of the Quebec Community Newspaper Association. It is also having journalists on the ground, doing the research, asking the questions and providing the context of what is happening at the municipal level that is crucial.

"Journalism puts issues in context," said O'Farrell, who is also the editor at three community newspapers.

"We can't lose sight of what is happening with public administration," she added. "If local media is not doing it, it simply doesn't get done, and the majority of residents will never learn about what is going on at town halls, where public money is being managed."

"It takes work," said Mantell, referring to covering town councils.

Owners and publishers of local independent newspapers don't take anything for granted. But neither should readers, said Ilka de Laat, manager of the QCNA. Especially, she explained, when we see so much of the media disappearing.

"Journalism puts issues in context."
— Brenda O'Farrell, QCNA president

Canada only G7 country where media is banned on Facebook

The cat videos are still there. The questions from new homeowners looking for recommendations for a reliable contractor pop up every so often. And posts that highlight a new chicken-and-orzo recipe continue to appear, complete with a list of ingredients in the comments. But the link to the story about the hike in your municipal tax bill is not. Neither is the link to the article about the impact on the economy of the little town of Les Cèdres, west of Montreal, in the days after Amazon announced it planned to shutter its Quebec operations.

It has been a year and a half since Meta, the owner of Facebook and Instagram, has banned news from its social media platforms, making Canada the only G7 country where news from legitimate me-

dia sources cannot be seen. The ban is a result of federal legislation, Bill C-18, the Online News Act, which came into force in June 2023. The aim of the legislation was to force large tech giants like Meta and Google to pay media outlets for news content shared on their platforms. But Meta opted to deny news outlets access to its social media sites, making it exempt from the new law. The move created another hurdle for community newspapers to get over. Meanwhile, a deal struck with Google to provide \$100 million in funding to Canadian media, will see most of the money go to large media companies. The result is the struggle for the smallest media outlets has become more difficult, as it no longer has the ability to engage

with their readers on the biggest social media platforms. "As a society that cares about the truth and cares about having a population that's informed to ensure better democratic outcomes and to hold politicians to account, this is extremely bad news," said Aengus Bridgman, director of Media Ecosystem Observatory, which published a study last June, marking the one-year anniversary of the Meta news ban. "Less news is being consumed by Canadians," the report stated, which highlighted the increasing risk of Canadians being informed on politics and current affairs through a "more biased and factual lens than before."

Content provided by QCNA



“News no longer flows down from the big media outlets.”

Shifting the directional flow of news

COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS AT EPICENTRE OF A REVOLUTION

In the first 11 months of 2024, 36 local news outlets closed in Canada. Twenty-nine were community newspapers, while seven were privately owned radio stations, according to the Local News Research Project at Toronto Metropolitan University’s School of Journalism.

That is in addition to the more than 500 news outlets that have ceased operations in Canada since 2008.

For those that remain, surviving does not mean striving – not by any means. Just about every other news operation in the country that remains – from Bell Media to the CBC, Postmedia to the Torstar group of papers – have slashed jobs and pulled back on coverage.

Canadians across the country are losing their news media, bit by bit, reporter by reporter, newspaper by newspaper – except for you, at least for now.

What makes you so different from a growing number of Canadians?

The mere fact that you are reading this, means you are served by a community newspaper that is still in operation. In fact, in a few very rare instances, you are reading a newspaper that just started publishing in the last few years.

If these areas were to be located on a map, they would be identified as “the starting point.” It’s where news begins.

And this is where the one bright light in the story

of the Canadian media shines. It is where a little revolution has started to rumble. It’s the epicentre that is shifting the directional flow of news in Canada.

“News no longer flows down from the big media outlets,” said Brenda O’Farrell, the president of the Quebec Community Newspaper Association. “It flows up, from the small, independent community news operations that still have reporters in communities outside the big city areas.”

O’Farrell calls it the “Trickle Up Theory of News.” “No longer are major news outlets covering all areas. They are only focusing on major metropolitan centres,” she explained. “But so many people live outside of those regions.”

The stories that reflect these communities – stories that are important to these Canadians – are being covered by community newspapers.

“And these stories are trickling up to the major news operations – the CBC, the nearby daily, the Bell Media or Global News television stations. They pick up on our stories,” O’Farrell explained.

If it wasn’t for community news outlets, Canada’s major media outlets would only cover the big cities and nothing else. They no longer have the resources to do it.

That is why community newspapers are so important and need support, says Ilka de Laat, manager of the QCNA.

They also deserve your support, De Laat said, adding, “Your local newspaper reflects your issues,

because the journalists live in the same community. They are your neighbours. This is how accountability and trust works. A big-city reporter being sent to your small community from a corporate media outlet, they won’t appreciate your situation.”

Which brings us to context. Local reporters understand the local context – what is important to residents and why.

But for this “trickle up” to succeed, readers in all these communities that still have a community newspaper have to buy in. They cannot take their newspaper for granted. The stories from their towns are important. Readers have to become stakeholders in the process. And the way to do that is to subscribe.

“Look at what is happening in the U.S.,” O’Farrell said. “We can’t rely on social media platforms that are ready to drop fact-checking, ban news like Meta has done in Canada, and change the name of the Gulf of Mexico as they pander to a president who will allow them to avoid regulations that could affect their bottom lines.”

And on this side of the border, in Quebec, where municipalities that do not have bilingual status will soon have to eliminate information in English from their websites as aspects of Bill 96 are enforced, access to information in English is going to become more crucial.

Having reporters cover municipal councils will be crucial for the English-speaking community. And only your local community newspaper does that.



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Climate change affects the scope, intensity and timing of spring runoff. We are therefore adapting our practices so that we can continue to do our utmost to limit the impact of spring flooding on communities.

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www.hydroquebec.com/generation/spring-runoff/



Hundreds more rental housing units to be built in Laval and Terrebonne

Ottawa contributing \$257 million through Apartment Construction Loan Program

MARTIN C. BARRY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The Laval News
marty@newsfirst.ca

The federal Liberal government announced last Monday that it is investing more than \$257 million to pay for 781 rental units in Laval and Terrebonne on the North Shore through the Apartment Construction Loan Program (ACLP).

The announcement was made by Vimy Liberal MP Annie Koutrakis, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister Responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada Quebec Region.

The EXAL De la Concorde project in Laval will a 268-unit residential complex developed and built by Construgep, in partnership with Groupe MACH and Sarees Investments. The federal Liberal government is contributing \$90 million to the project through low-interest loans.

LEED status sought

Situated on Léo-Lacombe Avenue in the heart of Laval, the complex is in a strategic location close to the De la Concorde intermodal transportation station and the Route verte network of cycling trails. The project is aiming for LEED certification, which will guarantee high energy performance and sustainable development standards.

With a design based on sustainability and well-being, EXAL De la Concorde will integrate a number of green initiatives, including electric car-sharing and electric bike-sharing services for residents, urban agriculture on the roof, a bike repair shop and electrical charging stations. In addition, investments have been announced for two other large-scale housing projects, Central Parc Laval and WE Terrebonne.

Central Parc project

Located at 3385 Le Carrefour Blvd. in Laval, Central Parc Laval will be a 960-unit project, with phases 4 and 5 funded by the federal government with a total of \$132 million in low-interest loans. Central Parc will offer a complete living environment with numerous amenities, including a bike repair station, electric car charging, an outdoor play area, an

outdoor pool and a gym.

“The Government of Canada has committed to working with communities to meet the challenge of building more housing in Laval and across Quebec,” said Koutrakis. “Through the Apartment Construction Loan Program, our government is increasing the supply of new rental housing by investing over \$257 million in the construction of 781 housing units. These units will benefit middle-class individuals and families and will have a positive effect on our economy.”

A rapidly evolving market

“The development of Phases 4 and 5 of Central Parc Laval reflects our ambition to offer modern rental housing tailored to the realities of a rapidly evolving market,” said Steven Bastien, director of property management for the Central Parc Laval project.

He said two new phases will introduce 419 additional residential units and a state-of-the-art shared amenity space, designed to enhance well-being and foster a sense of community.

“In a market where rental demand remains high and vacancy rates are historically low, this investment is a concrete response to the needs of Laval’s residents,” added Bastien.

“With the support of the federal government and funding from CMHC, we have been able to accelerate the realization of this ambitious project, which will contribute to Laval’s urban development and continued growth by providing thoughtfully designed living spaces built for the future.”

10-year-long planning

The federal government’s National Housing Strategy (NHS) is a \$115-plus billion plan, spanning over 10 years. Progress on programs and initiatives is updated quarterly on the Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada (HICC) website.

As of September 2024, the federal government had committed \$57.57 billion to support the construction of more than 156,000 housing units and the repair of an additional 297,000. The measures, according to the government, prioritize those in greatest need, including seniors, Indigenous people, people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and women and children fleeing violence.



Nick Suzuki and Asista score a hat trick for Service Dog Program

Habs team captain throws his support behind Laval-based mental health initiative

MARTIN C. BARRY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The Laval News
marty@newsfirst.ca

As many dedicated fans of the Montreal Canadiens know well, Nick Suzuki has long been recognized for his leadership – both on and off the ice.

With that in mind, the Habs captain, along with the Asista Foundation, proudly began a third year of collaboration recently as partners in the Hero Within All of Us campaign.



No, that's not the chairman of the Asista Foundation board seated with Habs captain Nick Suzuki, even if he seems to be calling the meeting to order. (Photo: Courtesy of Asista Foundation)

Located along the eastbound Autoroute 440 service road in Chomedey, the Laval-based foundation promotes its work by highlighting community heroes, while also raising crucial funds for Asista's Facility Service Dog Program.

A native of London, Ontario, Nick has been a proud ambassador of the Asista Foundation since 2022, actively supporting the foundation's mission to provide life-changing service dogs to individuals and organizations in need.

Overcoming challenges

Through his professional experience, Nick has been able to witness the various hurdles faced by people impacted by mental health challenges. He feels confident that his contributions to Asista will raise awareness, promote the cause to the public and have a meaningful impact in the community.

The A Hero Within All of Us campaign highlights the influence and power everyone has to positively change lives through concrete actions and positive support.

Collaborative partners like Nick also support the current fundraising activities of the Asista Foundation and join their voices to raise public awareness of the importance of the foundation's mission.

Helping to transform lives

Founded in 2011, the Asista Foundation has been transforming lives through a dual mission.

It consists of giving a second chance to dogs emerging out of challenging situations, then training them as service animals for individuals facing challenges and organizations who support those with mental health needs.

With 104 service dogs currently in action, Asista serves communities across Quebec and Ontario, providing essential support thanks to the dedication of its volunteers, donors and partners. Continuing the success of previous years, the Asista Foundation is firmly grounded and remains committed to fulfilling its mission.

With Nick Suzuki leading the cause as a dedicated ambassador, the foundation is expanding its reach and impact even further with a mobile version of its Facility Service Dog Program.

Nick's valuable assistance

"We're thrilled with how far we've come in just a few years," says the Asista Foundation's vice-president for public affairs John Agionicolaitis. "Nick's unwavering support has been instrumental in helping us reach more people in need and bringing new life to the conversation about our work and mental health."

According to the foundation, the second annual Nick Suzuki Heroes Golf Tournament, held in August last year, was a tremendous success, bringing together athletes, supporters and community leaders, while raising \$120,500 for the Facility Service Dog Program.



With Nick Suzuki leading the cause as a dedicated ambassador, the foundation is expanding its reach.

The 2025 version of the tournament, scheduled for August 21, aims to set new fundraising records with all proceeds from the flagship event and the Hero Within All of Us campaign supporting the Facility Service Dog Program.

Making an impact

"I'm incredibly proud to support such an important cause," says Suzuki. "Through various initiatives, like the Hero Within All of Us campaign and our annual golf tournament, I'm excited to continue making a meaningful impact in the lives of those who need it most."

As the campaign grows, the Asista Foundation remains dedicated to rescuing more dogs, training them for service, and providing essential support to individuals and establishments supporting those who are struggling with mental health challenges.

The Asista Foundation invites individuals, businesses and communities to get involved by donating, volunteering or spreading the word. Every contribution – big or small – leads to a world where mental health resources and compassionate support are accessible to all.

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MARCH 8 International Women's Day



How to *celebrate* International Women's Day

International Women's Day takes place every year on March 8. On this day, many organizations and companies around the world celebrate the role of women in society. Here are five ways you can mark this special occasion.

1. REFLECT ON THE HISTORY OF FEMINISM

Take a moment to remember all the people who fought for societal change and helped advance women's rights throughout history.

2. BRAINSTORM WAYS TO TAKE ACTION

Consider ways to help combat feminist issues like violence against women and gender inequality in the workplace. Ask

your friends and family to help you come up with things you can do to make a lasting difference.

3. HIGHLIGHT THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OTHERS

Mark the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. Celebrate the important steps that have been taken to create a more fair and just society.

4. CHAMPION GENDER EQUALITY

There are many ways you can make a difference for women. You can wear a purple ribbon, participate in feminist rallies or take action to fight for gender equality.

5. CHALLENGE DECISION MAKERS

Call on elected officials and other influential people to join the fight for gender equality and take action to advance women's rights.

In addition, you can look for initiatives in your community that promote the role of women in society and contribute to the feminist struggle.



Why *gender equality* is important

As of 2014, 143 countries guaranteed equality between men and women in their constitutions. However, legalizing gender equality doesn't necessarily mean that in practice women have the same opportunities as men.

International Women's Day is celebrated on March 8 and is the perfect time to highlight how gender equality benefits everybody.

MULTIPLE INEQUALITIES

In many places, women have fewer employment opportunities than men and are denied fair access to health care and education. In fact, on average, women still earn 24 per cent less than men.

Every day, nearly 37,000 girls under 18 are forced into marriage, jeopardizing their education. In 2020, 32 million girls were unable to attend primary school.

SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

A lack of education means that young women aren't equipped with the skills needed to compete on an equal footing with men. However, giving women greater economic empowerment significantly

increases economic growth.

AN ESSENTIAL BALANCE

Gender equality is a fundamental right. In fact, advancing gender equality is critical to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education, protection and well-being of girls and boys.

According to the United Nations, women have a critical role to play in the organization's sustainable development goals. Consequently, women's equality isn't only a goal, it's a solution.

Find out how you can make a difference by visiting un.org or investigating initiatives in your community.



March 8 Happy International Women's Day



**Aglaia
Revelakis**
Municipal Councillor
Chomedey
a.revelakis@laval.ca
514 242-5761

Happy International Women's Day



On March 8, we celebrate women from all around the world as well as their many accomplishments, past, present, and future.



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MARCH 8 International Women's Day



WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE How to *claim your seat* at the table

There are a variety of obstacles that can prevent women from achieving their career goals, whether it's assumptions about their leadership potential or a lack of support for work-life balance. Here's some advice to help women thrive in male-dominated fields and claim their seat at decision-making tables.

- **Redefine expectations.** The bias about "bossy" women persists, but pushing yourself to be assertive and not hold back in discussions can boost your self-confidence and change how these traits are perceived in female employees.



- **Find your own voice.** While it's important to be confident, women should avoid trying to emulate "masculine" leadership traits if that isn't who they are. Instead, recognize the value in the unique strengths and perspectives you bring to the table.

- **Forget about perfection.** Women have a tendency to only apply for a job if they think they meet all the criteria for the position. Don't be afraid to take risks and seek opportunities where you can learn as you go.

- **Build a support system.** Women can benefit from finding a mentor as well as sharing resources and knowledge with other women in their field. In addition, having a supportive partner who takes on an equal amount of responsibility at home is key.

Adopting these attitudes in the workplace can help you achieve your career goals and empower other women to do the same.

Women in politics: advice for getting started

An increased presence of women in government has been associated with a number of benefits, from improved confidence in democratic institutions to greater public spending on health and education. Here's some advice for women who want to get into politics.

FIND A CAUSE AND START LOCAL

Reflect on the problems that affect your community and how you could fix them if you were in government. Even if you don't run for office right away, identifying causes you care about will give you the drive you need to pursue a career in public life. Additionally, this will help you identify where you should direct your efforts to have the most impact. Consider different levels of government, school boards or lobbying groups.

GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE AND THE PROCESS

Volunteering for a political campaign or working for an elected official is a great way to gain practical skills and learn the ropes. You'll also have plenty of opportunities to interact with people from all walks



of life, hear their concerns and familiarize yourself with the issues that matter most to the community.

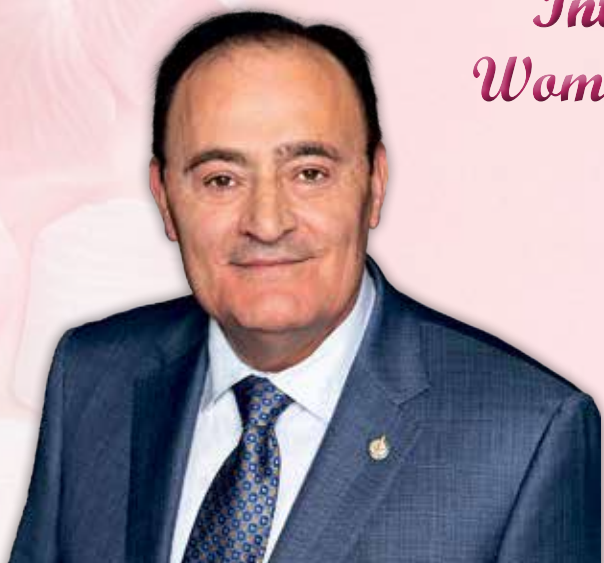
AVOID LINGERING ON THE SIDELINES

You don't have to wait until you're the "perfect" candidate to run for public office. If you have decent public speaking skills and a passion for making a positive difference in your community, you can have a real impact. Besides, the best public servants are those who continuously learn from their constituents and colleagues.

Finally, women who are successful in politics don't go it alone. Find a mentor, reach out to family and friends for support, and get assistance from organizations that offer training and advice.

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internationale des femmes !***

*My best wishes on the occasion of
**International
Women's Day!***



**FAYÇAL
EL-KHOURY**
MP FOR LAVAL-LES ÎLES
faycal.el-khoury.c1@parl.gc.ca



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International Women's Day

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*Journée
internationale
des femmes*



SONA LAKHOYAN OLIVIER
Députée de / MNA for Chomedey
450-686-0166 | Sona.LakhoianOlivier.CHOM@assnat.qc.ca

With U.S. tariffs poised to kick in, Plastitel isn't bothered with consequences

Plastics firm and Laval économique get a combined \$1.5 million in subsidies from Ottawa

MARTIN C. BARRY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The Laval News
marty@newsfirst.ca

With 25 per cent tariffs on exports from Canada into the U.S. poised to kick in this week, nobody at Plastitel Products in Laval's industrial park seemed very concerned last Friday about the fallout.

While Vimy Liberal MP Annie Koutrakis was there primarily for a tour as well as to confirm a \$900,000 subsidized federal loan to the company, Plastitel management's motto might well have

been *What me worry?*

Sleeping well, in spite

The plastic thermoforming sub-contractor is the second medium-size locally-based manufacturer to declare to *The Laval News* in recent weeks that the tariffs don't have them losing much shuteye at night.

This is partly because Plastitel has a solidly established client base within Quebec. However, they also had the foresight to prepare for a challenge like this by providing themselves with a buffer through expansion into the U.S. years ago.



From the left, Plastitel general manager Sabrina Bolduc explains the functioning of a new piece of plastic thermoforming equipment to Vimy Liberal MP Annie Koutrakis and Laval executive-committee member Christine Poirier during a tour last week of the company's Laval industrial park facilities. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)



Plastitel's Sabrina Bolduc explains the plastic thermoforming company's operations to visiting officials last week. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

"There's no doubt we need to evaluate the situation," Sabrina Bolduc, general manager of the company, said in an interview regarding the tariffs, while adding that Plastitel benefits from the fact it now has two factories on American soil.

Shift to U.S. not ruled out

While acknowledging that Plastitel's management has been contemplating the possibility of transferring some operations and assets to the U.S. to compensate for the tariffs impact, she said, "It's not what we would prefer. But we might not have a choice because we have to focus on development of new clients."

She noted that some of Plastitel's customers in Canada were already being served by the company's subsidiaries in the U.S., just as customers in the U.S. were receiving products from Plastitel's Canadian factories.

"We're always good to find our way around," she said. "There's no doubt this is not the best of circumstances. But it's not the last word by any measure."

Complex plastic forming

Plastitel specializes in contract thermoforming of strategic plastics for the medical, transportation and water treatment industries, with expertise in complex moulding processes such as twin-sheet moulding.

The business is using the federal loan to acquire and install state-of-the-art digital production equipment, enabling Plastitel to improve the automation of its capacity while enhancing competitiveness.

"This financial support enables us to accelerate our adoption of new automated technologies that will transform our production," said Bolduc.

"Thanks to this equipment, we are improving our competitiveness by reducing manufacturing times, optimizing the quality of our products and

decreasing the physical effort required from our employees."

Boosting competitiveness

She said the new equipment will also enable Plastitel to reduce its energy consumption and environmental footprint, aligning with the company's vision for sustainable high-performance growth.

CED also announced a \$600,000 non-repayable grant to Laval économique, the City of Laval's official regional economic development agency.

According to the federal ministry, the money will be helping Laval économique in its mission to offer advisory services and guidance to businesses in Laval in order to support their efforts to develop and diversify export markets.

Export and innovation

"This funding is that much more important in the current context, as it will be possible to help businesses that want to export, innovate and diversify their markets to pursue their growth," CED says in its statement.

"Helping businesses in all regions across the country to soar is essential to build an innovative, strong, diverse economy," said Koutrakis, who is Parliamentary Secretary the Liberal minister responsible for CED. "These investments will make it possible for Laval businesses to grow and be more competitive, as well as dynamize the region. I am delighted with this excellent news for the Laval economy."

"I want to congratulate you on your efforts to automate your procedures," said Christine Poirier, who in addition to being on the City of Laval's executive-committee is the city councillor for Duvernay-Pont-Viau.

"I encourage you to continue on that direction and you can count on me and the support of Laval économique," she added.

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Plastitel's Sabrina Bolduc explains the plastic thermoforming company's operations to visiting officials last week.

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March 1 to March 30, 2025

Celebrate Ramadan!

Canadian Muslims celebrate Ramadan

The month of Ramadan is upon us once again. For Muslims across the globe, these few weeks are a sacred time for worshipping Allah.

This time period offers Muslims an opportunity for devotion, reflection and celebration of the mercy and love of Allah.

As the Islamic calendar is based around the lunar cycle, the Holy month of Ramadan rotates by approximately ten days each year.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection, and community. The annual observance of Ramadan is regarded as one of the Five Pillars of Islam and lasts twenty-nine to thirty days, from one sighting of the crescent moon to the next.

It is a commemoration of Muhammad's first revelation.

Fasting from dawn to sunset is obligatory for all adult Muslims who are not acutely or chronically ill, traveling, elderly, breastfeeding, diabetic, pregnant, or menstruating. The predawn meal is referred to as suhur, and the nightly feast that breaks the fast is called iftar.

Although rulings have been issued declaring that Muslims who live in regions with a midnight sun or polar night should follow the timetable of Mecca, it is common practice to follow the timetable of the closest country in which night can be distinguished from day.

The spiritual rewards of fasting are believed to be multiplied during Ramadan. Accordingly, during the

hours of fasting, Muslims refrain not only from food and drink, but also tobacco products, sexual relations, and sinful behavior, devoting themselves instead to prayer and study of the Quran.

The month of Ramadan contains the most blessed of nights, also known as Laylatul Qadr, about which Allah asks:

"What will make you realize what the Night of Power is like?

The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.

Angels and the Spirit descend upon it with their

Lord's permission with every command;

There is peace that night until the coming of dawn." [Quran: 97:1-5]

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J'aimerais souhaiter à toute la communauté Musulmane un joyeux Ramadan

I would like to wish all Muslims a happy Ramadan

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Mes vœux les plus chaleureux à tous les musulmans à l'occasion du Ramadan !

My best wishes to all Muslims on the occasion of Ramadan!



FAYÇAL

EL-KHOURY

MP FOR LAVAL-LES ÎLES

faycal.el-khoury.c1@parl.gc.ca



Things to do

UPCOMING

Looking for something to do? Here are some upcoming events happening in the Laval area.

ROCKET DE LAVAL

Sports



Until April 19

Afternoon or evening games

Place Bell

1950 Rue Claude-Gagné, H7N 5H9

Affiliated with the Montreal Canadiens, the Laval Rocket is a professional team playing in the American Hockey League.

Visit [Ticketmaster](#) for tickets

VICTOIRE DE MONTRÉAL

Sports



Until April 28

Afternoon or evening games

Place Bell

1950 Rue Claude-Gagné, H7N 5H9

For the 2024-2025 season, Montreal's women's hockey team *La Victoire* will be playing its games in the heart of Laval.

Visit [Ticketmaster](#) for tickets

MIRO

Shows and concerts



March 12

8 PM

Salle André-Mathieu

475 Boul. de l'Avenir, H7N 5H9

After touring the *belle province* and Europe with his *Géant* show, Miro returns to the stage for a completely explosive show!

Regular ticket: \$30.50

BILLY TELLIER

Humour



March 13

8 PM

Salle André-Mathieu

475 Boul. de l'Avenir, H7N 5H9

Proud of the success of his last tour, with over 50,000 tickets sold and nearly 200 performances, Billy Tellier presents his 3rd one-man show *Kicker la ruche*.

Regular ticket: \$43.50

NBA G LEAGUE

Sports



March 14

7 PM

Place Bell

1950 Rue Claude-Gagné, H7N 5H9

The Long Island Nets, an NBA G League club-school affiliated with the Brooklyn Nets, plays the last of a six-game home series at Place Bell.

Starting at \$25

OWL!

Outdoors



March 7 - March 14

7:30 PM - 9:00 PM

Bois de l'Équerre (CANOPÉE)

49 Rang de l'Équerre, H7L 6A3

Did you know that you can go owl watching? Canopée, Laval's woodland network, invites you to spot these astonishing nocturnal birds at dusk.

Free

MANU KATCHÉ

Shows and concerts



March 15

8 PM

Salle André-Mathieu

475 Boul. de l'Avenir, H7N 5H9

Manu Katché, legendary drummer for Sting and Peter Gabriel, visits us for his very first tour of Quebec.

Regular ticket: \$47.50

MADO LAMOTHE

Humour



March 19

8 PM

Salle André-Mathieu

475 Boul. de l'Avenir, H7N 5H9

Freely inspired by her most recent *Madographie*, published by Éditions La Presse, Mado's show is a tribute to her 35-year career.

Regular ticket: \$40.50

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Home invasion suspect to be arraigned at Laval courthouse

One of three suspects arrested following a household invasion in early February in Saint-François is expected to be arraigned at the Laval courthouse on Thursday March 6.

Samuel Pouliot, age 27, remains detained by the Laval Police. He and the two other suspects were arrested on February 11, a little more than a week after the alleged incident.

Pouliot faces charges of break and enter, armed assault, assault causing injuries, extortion and forcible confinement.

On the evening of February 3, the Laval Police responded to a call for intervention at a home on des Mille-Îles Blvd. in Saint-François where a home invasion was reported to be in progress.



Samuel Pouliot, age 27 years, faces an arraignment at the Palais de Justice de Laval on Thursday this week on charges he took part in a home invasion on Mille-Îles Blvd. in Laval's Saint-François district. (Photo: Courtesy Laval Police Dept.)

Recent LFD fire calls



A mechanical or electrical failure is being blamed for a fire that broke out in a home on Riviera St. in Laval-Ouest last month, forcing four occupants to seek shelter elsewhere for

the the being.

Just after 8 pm on February 21, a call was received at 9-1-1 that the dwelling near the corner of 24th and 30th streets on the edge of the Mille-Îles River was ablaze.

In spite of the firefighters' efforts to contain the blaze, damage was estimated at \$200,000 by the time it was put out, with an additional \$100,000 in damages to interior furnishings and property.

An overheated electronic battery pack was identified by investigators with the Laval Fire Dept. as the probable source of a fire that damaged a house and three cars, including at least one which was a collector's item, on Mille-Îles Blvd. at the east end of Saint-François

on February 24.

LFD firefighters arriving on the scene around 9:50 am immediately spotted flames shooting out of the garage where the three vehicles were parked.

The crew was able to keep the flames from spreading from the garage to the house and they had things under control within less than an hour.

Structural damage to the house were estimated at \$70,000, with an additional \$100,000 for damaged interior furnishings and property losses.

Telemarketing scams: old news or more convincing than ever?

Telemarketing scams have been around for ages, and fraudsters are now making them harder to spot. Picture this: a trusted company calls offering a better plan. It sounds like a great deal, so you accept.

Be on the lookout: fraudsters can pretend to be from any well-known company and offer convincing deals to trick you into giving away personal information. Their goal is to steal your identity, your money, or better yet, both. This impersonation is very convincing, and even those who are scam savvy can fall for it.

Fraudsters use professional-sounding scripts and can fake a company's phone number by using advanced technology. They may pressure you to act quickly, hoping you'll give in based on the fear of missing a "special offer".

Watch for warning signs:

- High-pressure sales tactics influencing you to act fast.
- Deals that sound too good to be true.
- Calls from unknown or suspicious numbers.
- Requests for personal information, such as account details, passwords, or PINs.

Protect yourself:

- If you get a call claiming to be from your provider, hang up and call them back using the official number on their website.
- Look into offers that seem too generous.
- Regularly check for unauthorized transactions or changes in your bank account.
- Never share your password, usernames, or other personal details over the phone.
- Remember, your provider will never ask for sensitive account details like your password or PIN during a call.

Criminal responsibility in Sainte-Rose bus crash to be decided

A Quebec Superior Court judge will be deciding in early April whether former Société de transport de Laval driver Pierre Ny-St-Amand was mentally fit when he drove an STL bus into the entrance of a Sainte-Rose children's daycare in early February 2023, killing two children and

injuring six others.

A crown prosecutor and a defence lawyer say they will be presenting a joint statement of facts at the next hearing.

According to statements made by the crown during preliminary hearings, two psychiatrists

who examined Ny-St-Amand have concluded he should not be held criminally responsible because he has a mental disorder.

In addition to a recounting of the facts, the hearing on April 7 is also expected to include testimony from both psychiatrists.

Man dies after being crushed by truck at Laval recycling plant

A 58-year-old man was declared dead at a recycling facility in Laval's Saint-François district recently after he was crushed by a truck.

The Laval Police responded to the scene at AIM Recycling around 6 am Sunday morning.

As the police could find no evidence of any criminal act, they immediately transferred

the case to the Commission des normes, de l'équité, de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CNESST), Quebec's worker health and safety agency.

Two CNESST investigators, assisted by officers with the Laval Police, were reported to have visited the site and were there to interview witnesses over the following days.



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Create your own book in 5 steps

Do you have a story you want to share with your friends and family? Here's how to make your own book in five steps.

1. WRITE THE STORY

Write down your story in a lined notebook, on a scrap piece of paper or on the computer. Your story should have:

- An **introduction** establishing the location and characters
- A **trigger** like an unexpected or surprising event
- A **plot**, including the obstacles that the characters must face and overcome
- An **ending** that explains how the hero or heroine solved the problem



2. REVISE THE GRAMMAR

Every published book goes through a revision process. Therefore, ask a friend, parent or teacher to help you correct your grammar.



3. MAKE A COVER

The cover of your book should contain a title, the author's name and an illustration. You can paint or draw your own book cover or use a printed photo.

4. FORMAT THE BOOK

Print or transcribe your text on paper, and if you want, create a thank you page and dedicate it to the people who helped you make your project come to life.

5. BIND THE BOOK TOGETHER

Bind the pages of your book together in the correct order. You can use staples or string. If your book is thick, staple small stacks of pages together and then use decorative tape to secure them.

Lend your book to friends and family while you write the next one.

Send secret messages with invisible ink

Do you like playing spies with your friends or siblings? Want to be able to write secret messages? Here are a few ideas for making invisible ink to create top-secret notes.

HEAT-ACTIVATED

Mix together milk and white vinegar or lemon juice in a small bowl. Get a sheet of white paper and a writing utensil like a cotton swab or a small paintbrush. Soak the tip of the writing utensil in the liquid, then write your secret message.

The invisible ink must dry completely before you try to decode it. The person who receives the message must place the paper over a heat-producing light bulb or another heat source. If using a candle, do so only with permission and adult supervision. The heat will reveal the hidden text.

LIQUID-ACTIVATED

Combine equal parts of water and baking soda in a small bowl. Dip your writing utensil in the mixture and create your message. Once the invisible ink has dried completely, explain to the person receiving it that they need a paintbrush and a glass of grape juice. The hidden text will appear when they cover the paper in a thin layer of juice.

You can also write your message with a white pencil or wax crayon and replace the grape juice with water-based paint to achieve the same effect.



Sudoku 4 x 4

	2	1	
			2
4			
	3	4	

COMPLETE EACH GRID WITH NUMBERS FROM 1 TO 4, KEEPING IN MIND THAT:

- a number can only appear once per row
- a number can only appear once per column
- a number can only appear once in each box of 4 squares

1	4	3	2
3	2	1	4
2	3	4	1
4	1	2	3

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Age group

- 5 to 7 years old
- 8 to 11 years old
- 5 to 11 years old
- 5 to 11 years old
- 5 to 7 years old
- 8 to 11 years old
- 12+ years old
- 2 to 4 years old
- 5 to 7 years old
- 8 to 11 years old
- 12+ years old
- Adults 5 to 7 years old
- 8 to 11 years old
- 12+ years old

Activity

- Arts & Crafts class
- Arts & Crafts class
- Dollhouse-making class
- World of Slime class
- Science & Technology class
- Science & Technology class
- Science & Technology class
- STEAM MeliMelo Explorers class
- Painting Adventure class
- Painting Adventure class
- Abstract Art class with Emart
- Abstract Art class with Emart
- Glee Style Choir class
- Glee Style Choir class



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JUST kidding

Q: Why do seagulls fly over the sea?

A: Because if they flew over the bay they would be bagels.



JUST kidding

Q: Why did the tomato turn red?

A: It saw the salad dressing.



JUST kidding

Q: What dog keeps the best time?

A: A watch dog.





DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

GO ASK ALICE

Q I am involved with a woman whose husband abandoned her. At first our relationship revolved around her heartbreak over his actions. He was unfaithful to her and moved out of the house twice. The first time he left she begged and begged for him to return, and he eventually did.

He promised he would be the perfect husband, but less than a year later he left a note in the kitchen saying he was leaving again and took all his stuff. He abandoned her completely. He had emotionally abused her in too many ways to mention.

I met her four months later. Initially, I provided a sympathetic ear for all her problems. Slowly we became closer until one day she told me I made the pain go away and she loved me. I fell in love also, and she filed for divorce.

After he was served papers, I overheard a telephone conversation and was shocked to hear the abuse coming from him. He screamed profanities and made threats. I watched as she listened and afterwards told her his behavior was awful. She stated, "He's just mad," no big deal.

I was leery that she was so prepared to rationalize for him, but she swore everlasting love to me. About six weeks ago her ex found out about our relationship. He promised he would do anything, including go to church, if she would take him back. He kicked it up a notch and confessed he was the worst husband ever.

He called and cried, playing the I'm-still-your-husband card. He kept her on the phone and dragged out the conversation. Last week she

agreed to see him. More tears and begging. I told her this was pure manipulation and so did every friend and member of her family.

After a day of agony we recommitted our vows to each other, and I thought we were going to get through this. Last night we had a wonderful evening together. Then when she got home, he was waiting for her.

Around noon, I received this email. "Real love requires risk, putting one's feelings out there in the most vulnerable state. The thought of risking another chance with him scares me to death, but in reality, the risk would be no less with anyone. I believe this with all my heart." She is ignoring my phone calls, and I need advice.

Tyler

A Tyler, she is an abused woman who is not ready to break the cycle of abuse. Framing her decision in terms of love makes sense to her, but that is a measure of how distorted her thinking is. Real love has nothing in common with her relationship to her ex.

A person eases into abuse one small step at a time. No one step seems large, but over time a person's perception of reality is changed. The leap from where she is to where you are is too great for her to make. It will be years before she can choose a healthy relationship over an abusive one. If there was something you could do to change her behavior, we would gladly share it, but the best thing you can do is accept her decision and move forward with your life.

Wayne & Tamara

A WEEK LATER

Q Wow, you guys were right on the money. I learned today she let him move back in! How does one move from one bed to another so quickly? I don't know who is the bigger idiot, her or me.

Tyler

A Tyler, without warning you were dropped into Oz, and like Dorothy, you are disoriented. You found yourself in a world where the rules most of us share don't apply. It is easier for her to leave her interior world intact than to step into your world. Life is simple in Oz, once you know the rules and decide not to question the man behind the curtain.

Wayne & Tamara

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

Send letters to: Direct Answers, PO 964 Springfield, MO 65801-0964

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HOROSCOPE

Week of March 9 to 15

The luckiest signs this week:
LIBRA, SCORPIO AND SAGITTARIUS

ARIES
You'll captivate an audience with your natural charisma, even if you're shy. You'll receive a medical treatment that surprises you, helping to resolve a long-standing health concern.

TAURUS
It's not in your nature to relish being in the spotlight. However, you must remember that many accomplishments deserve applause and could bring you extra attention for a period of time.

GEMINI
You'll begin the process of buying a new home or finding a place to live. Your children will bring you immense joy, especially as they take their first steps or get accepted into university.

CANCER
You're known for being talkative and have a knack for making jokes, no matter the context. You'll crack a joke to lighten a tense mood. Your goofy side will be welcome at work or home this week.

LEO
You may succumb to the urge to make an impulsive purchase. You'll also likely feel the need to move around and explore new horizons. However, you must keep an eye on your finances.

VIRGO
Make sure you get enough rest to start your week off right. Take full advantage of your beauty sleep to improve your performance and achieve your goals.

LIBRA
As an artist, you'll draw inspiration from the diverse cultures around you to enrich your work. If you're feeling tired, consider taking a vacation to recharge your batteries and give you a change of scenery.

SCORPIO
You'll start building a remarkably loyal clientele at work. You'll be working on various tasks this week, strengthening your financial stability and motivating you to pursue interesting projects.

SAGITTARIUS
You may plan a spontaneous trip this week. You may also explore opportunities to work in a different area that will offer new and rewarding experiences. Taking a course could also provide valuable insights.

CAPRICORN
Embrace the call of change and let your inner voice guide you to live life to the fullest! You'll broaden your horizons and let yourself be carried from one discovery to the next.

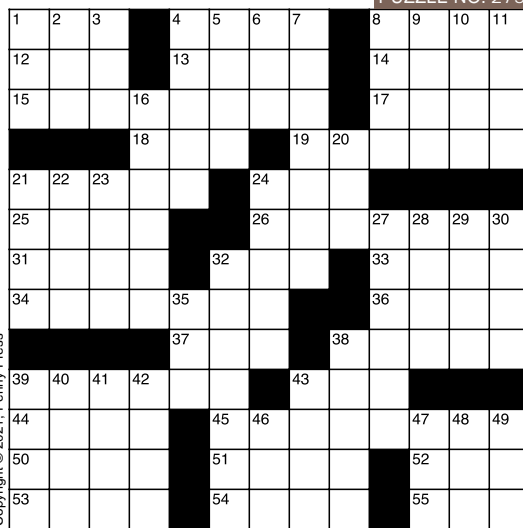
AQUARIUS
Life will present you with challenges that align with your aspirations. You'll surprise yourself with your enthusiasm and joy. Your boldness will lead you toward fulfilling your destiny.

PISCES
You'll need to negotiate at work to reach an agreement following a disagreement. You'll likely take an active role in trade unions or community activities.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 275



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ACROSS

1. Jump
4. Choice word
8. Hit sharply
12. Hot temper
13. Harness strap
14. Clock cycle
15. Ocean's shoreline
17. Small bit
18. Kooky
19. Give a job to
21. Signal
24. Half of a bikini
25. Not theirs
26. Restoration
31. Appoint
32. Covered up
33. No part
34. Cleaning utensil
36. Be stuck (on)
37. Seeded loaf
38. Autumn beverage
39. Place of learning

DOWN

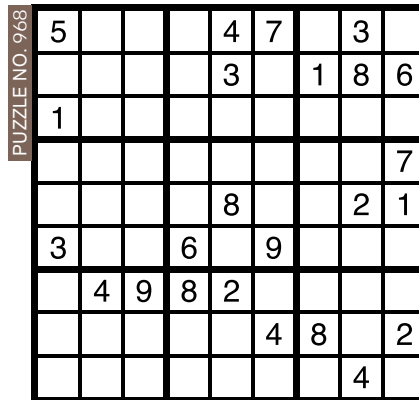
1. Towel monogram
2. Valuable dirt
3. ___ soup (dense fog)
4. Wear down
5. Clue
6. Family member, for short
7. Enrolled
8. Transport
9. Fleece
10. Car
11. Cafeteria item
16. Old-time girdle
20. Game piece
21. Affectionate
22. Hawaiian gala
23. "A Farewell to ___"
24. Pickling solution
27. Finale
28. Knock on ___
29. Contribute a share
30. Look suggestively
32. Barn area
35. Major-leaguer
38. Egyptian capital
39. Phase
40. Blacken
41. "Spenser: For ___"
42. Lone
43. Somersault
46. Small gulf
47. Abbott ___ Costello
48. Moreover
49. Easter edible

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.

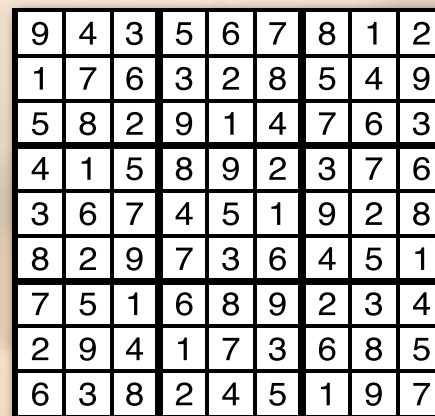


Last Issue's Answers

CROSSWORDS



Sudoku



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