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Page 3



**636 complaints  
to ombudsman**

Nathalie Blais says snow removal has been slowly improving in Laval. (Photo: City of Laval)

Page 10



**Quebec Liberals debate**

Page 14



**Guy Ouellette  
receives medal**

Page 17




**Gala de l'Espoir raises \$77,000  
for sarcoma research**

The Kayali family stands alongside Dr. Sophie Mottard and invited researchers during the Gala de l'Espoir, held at Le Challenger in Saint-Laurent on May 6, 2025.

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# Chomedey residents want bicycle path removed

*Recent shootings prompt Duvernay man to question Laval Police's abilities*

*'The next time somebody will be killed,' Michel Saintonge tells city council*

**MARTIN C. BARRY**

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

Firearms incidents which have become more commonplace in recent years in the City of Laval's otherwise tranquil residential neighbourhoods were the focus of a complaint made by a Duvernay resident to city council during its May 6 public meeting.



**Laval city councillor for Sainte-Dorothée Ray Khalil, who is also the executive-committee vice-president.**  
(Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

## Local attempted murders

Michel Saintonge said he wanted to talk about two recent murder attempts in Duvernay's

Val-des-Arbres sector, the first one having taken place around three weeks earlier. The Laval Police found spent ammunition cartridges in the parking lot as well as the yard of a nearby elementary school.

He said that on the Sunday before, a series of gunshots was again heard, this time on Cap-à-l'Aigle St. also in Duvernay/Val-des-Arbres.

So, while acknowledging that he didn't expect the Laval Police to be everywhere all the time, he asked how it was possible for two "completely out of control" events like this to take place in such a small area of Laval over the space of just three weeks.

## 'Truly unacceptable'

While noting that the target of the second attack wasn't killed – "fortunately for him," added Saintonge – he pointed out that children often play on the nearby streets. "I don't understand the Laval Police's priorities," he said, wondering why they don't seem to be devoting more resources to take care of the situation.

"I find this truly unacceptable, to say the least. The next time somebody will be killed. I hope it won't be a child. But we're going to do what? The journalists will be arriving, the police will arrive. But now for the situation we're in, we're just lucky fortunately that nobody died.

"Two murder attempts with rapid-fire handguns," he continued. "This means they found around seven spent cartridges on the ground, while the second time they found three or four cartridges, including what was in front of the residence of my daughter."

## Daughter 'in shock'

He said his daughter was unable to speak for herself at the May 6 council meeting "because she's in shock," while her two children also have been staying home because they feel so uneasy with how things are going in their neighbourhood.

"So, you have here honest people – honest citizens – who are living in a peaceful neighbourhood. And what are the police doing? I am raising questions about the competence of the management of the police. And I would like to know what concerted action the police will be undertaking in the next hours and days?"

He maintained that the Laval Police haven't been out patrolling the streets. And while the person targeted in the attack still lives there, Saintonge said the police haven't done anything in particular to protect him.

## LPD are onto it, says Khalil

Speaking on behalf of Mayor Stéphane Boyer (who was absent on May 6 for personal reasons, according to a city hall spokesperson) Sainte-Dorothée city councillor Ray Khalil, the executive-committee vice-president, insisted the city and the Laval Police "make every effort to reassure citizens."

Still, he allowed Concorde-Bois-de-Boulogne councillor Sandra Desmeules (who is in charge of public safety dossiers) to respond in more detail. According to her, the police responded immediately and established a security perimeter.

"At the present time, the investigation is underway," she said, while adding the police haven't

been able to provide additional details as it remains an open investigation.

"But I can tell you again that they are still working on the dossier and they are making all efforts possible to make arrests." She took issue with Saintonge's comments on the competence of the police, while defending Laval Police director Pierre Brochet.

## Jacques-Plante bike path rejected

A group of residents from Jacques Plante St. in the city's Chomedey district complained to the council about a bicycle path recently added on their street – "and this without a consultation in our neighbourhood which is directly impacted," according to a spokesperson.

The last time the spokesperson was at council, he left behind a petition containing at least 70 signatures of residents asking for the bike path's withdrawal. "It's been almost six months we have yet to receive an answer specifically for rue Jacques Plante," he said.

## Lost parking and collisions

He said the issues facing the residents include a 50 per cent reduction in parking, narrowing of the street, and increased risk of collisions between bikes and motor vehicles.

"We are asking the city to take all the right steps to find a solution, because the new bike lanes are not secure for both bicyclists and the drivers," he continued. "The whole neighbourhood is complaining about the deterioration on a daily basis and it is affecting our quality of life."

# City of Laval ombudsman dealt with 636 complaint files in 2024

*Snow removal and waste management are constants, says Nathalie Blais*

**MARTIN C. BARRY**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The Laval News  
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In her latest report on the City of Laval's efforts to address residents' complaints about shortcomings in municipal services, ombudsman Nathalie Blais says her department managed last year to cut its response time to less than 48 hours, while dealing with 636 dossiers, most of which concerned routine issues like sidewalk repairs, road paving and street lighting.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> annual report filed by the ombudsman's office, Blais said 124 of the 2024 dossiers were carried over from past years and that 53 dossiers are still unresolved while being processed.

## Learning opportunities

"Above and beyond the quantifiable results, each complaint remains for us an opportunity to learn, to correct and to improve the municipality's services," she said in a statement issued on the same day her report was tabled in Laval city council.

"It's in this spirit that we work with teams from the city to create a culture of listening, of transparency and continuous improvement," said Blais. In all, 32 per cent of the files received by the ombudsman in 2024 were deemed acceptable – that is, the complaints were judged to be founded.

However, of the 68 per cent judged as unacceptable, the administration was found to have initiated corrective action or the process hasn't been completed yet. In those cases, residents who'd sought the help of the ombudsman were steered to the city's 3-1-1 service for follow-up action.

## Public works complaints

In 2024, the municipal services that were the subject of the ombudsman's intervention most often were public works (20 per cent), environment (19 per cent), engineering (15 per cent) and urban planning (9 per cent). In 15 per cent of all the dossiers, municipal services decided not to contest claims.

The ombudsman's office noted that some of the dossiers remain active in 2025 in view of their complexity. One of the more outstanding of the

complaints dealt with by the ombudsman last year was snow removal, which falls under the oversight of public works and engineering.

According to a summary of the ombudsman's work in 2024, the matter remains unresolved, although management at Laval's public works department "has committed itself to revising the internal administrative procedures and to present to the ombudsman a plan of action in 2024."

## Policy being revised

Again, according to the summary, a new policy statement for snow removal is currently being revised by the city's legal affairs department. "Considering the political implications, the adoption of the snow removal policy has been postponed until 2026," states the document.

In an interview with *The Laval News*, Nathalie Blais said snow removal is an issue that comes up in her annual report every year, as does the city's handling of waste removal and recycling. "As regards snow removal, there's probably still a lot of work to be done," she acknowledged.

"There's the new plan that is supposed to be released next year," she said. "But in the mean-

time, things seem to be a lot better this year. Thanks to the work done by the city's environment service in conjunction with the ombudsman's office, we were able to find solutions to make things more efficient."

## Mobility access at Val-Martin


Another issue the ombudsman's office dealt with last year – access by mobility-challenged apartment tenants at the Habitations Val-Martin social housing project – is also currently unresolved.

According to the ombudsman's report, the city's department of engineering services is working in conjunction with the Office municipal d'habitation de Laval (OMHL) to carry out a survey among residents this spring, before making recommendations on the interventions judged to be necessary.

In the meantime, at least one parking space for people with reduced mobility issues was supposed to be implemented at Habitations Val-Martin by this past February. And the engineering department is also evaluating the possibility of installing lowered curbs in order to improve access for the mobility-challenged.



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# OPINION & Editorial



## Who is most fit to lead the Quebec Liberal Party?

With Premier François Legault's Coalition Avenir Québec government having seemingly outlived its usefulness after two terms in office, and the Parti Québécois still far from regaining the groove that kept them in power for nearly a decade, the Quebec Liberal Party is poised for a return.

However, what could make all the difference is who the PLQ chooses for a leader in June, and how that choice is perceived by Quebecers who will be casting ballots in the October 2026 election.

There was a time only a few years back when the party that François Legault assembled from scratch more than 13 years ago was seriously considered an existential threat to the Quebec Liberals.

The CAQ had managed to differentiate itself from the Parti Québécois by seemingly putting aside sovereigntist nationalism, while posing as the party that had all the answers to the province's economic problems, because it was led by a man with an established record of success as the co-founder of Air Transat.

It might be recalled that prior to launching the CAQ, Legault – truly in keeping with his vocation as a corporate maven – conducted extensive market research and focus groups all over Quebec (including some stops in Laval).

It was only then that he decided there was sufficient grassroots support to create a political party, which would be largely built around

himself.

It should therefore come as no surprise that as the nearly 68-year-old Premier mulls whether or not to tempt fate by rolling the dice once more to run in next year's election, the truth is that the CAQ government ran out of energy and started falling apart almost as soon as they won their second term.

As the PQ continues to obsess over language, culture and sovereignty, the CAQ's failure offers the Quebec Liberals everything they need to regain their mantle as the pragmatic centrists with Quebec's economic well-being largely at heart.

Gone now are the demoralized days, concurrent with the CAQ's rise, when the most the PLQ could offer in terms of direction was the short-lived leadership of Dominique Anglade. Five candidates are now vying for the position, although, if anything, it should be noted that none of them is a woman (which is perhaps a shortcoming that may eventually have to be addressed.)

While the CAQ's economic policies have failed to generate results (the government's disastrous Northvolt investment being perhaps the most blatant example), it was populist politics mostly that carried and kept the CAQ in power since 2018. And that is also the challenge the Quebec Liberals now face.

It's well-known that the CAQ's base of power is in electoral ridings located in Quebec's rural

regions. That is arguably where the PLQ will need to concentrate its efforts.

The Quebec Liberals' success in the 2026 election may depend more than they now realize on whether next month they choose a leader with a strong grassroots appeal to voters in the regions, rather than one who is more urbane.

During the PLQ's ongoing leadership debates, former federal cabinet minister Pablo Rodriguez has emerged as the candidate targeted the most often with criticism.

But it's also worth noting that most of the criticism came from Mario Roy, a native of the province's isolated but very independent Beauce region, who demonstrated his willingness to challenge the status quo by speaking out while his colleagues were mostly collegial and silent.

It is perhaps that kind of spirit that the Quebec Liberals should be taking more seriously as they contemplate who to choose as their next leader, as well as the strategy they will employ next year as they campaign for the support of voters all over Quebec.

The Quebec Liberal Party will need a leader who possesses a common touch and embodies populist strength, but also one with a thorough and fact-based knowledge of economics to face the challenges which almost certainly lie squarely ahead.

– Martin C. Barry –

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# Bibliosale of the libraries of Laval: thousands of cultural treasures at low prices

The Bibliovente, the annual sale organized by the Laval Libraries, is set to return from May 23 to 25 at the Enclav in Place Bell. This year, over 50,000 second-hand documents in both French and English will be available at affordable prices. The selection includes novels, documentaries, comic books, magazines, CDs, DVDs, and video games, catering to all tastes and ages. The proceeds from the sale will be used to enhance the services provided by the libraries in the region.

For the second consecutive year, this cultural event will be held at the Enclav of Place Bell, a landmark location that is easily accessible by public transit. Additionally, the indoor parking lot at Place Bell will be available free of charge to motorists attending the event. However, attendees should anticipate a large turnout.

"The Bibliovente is a must-see event in Laval. It makes culture accessible at low prices, while giving a second life to a multitude of interesting documents. I invite all citizens to come and make great cultural finds," said Flavia Alexandra Novac, Sainte-Rose City Councillor and Cultural Files Officer.

**Practical information**  
Attendees are encouraged to bring their own

bags or boxes to carry their purchases. Only cash and Interac payments will be accepted.

**Event schedule at Place Bell**  
**Friday, May 23:** 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
**Saturday, May 24 and Sunday, May 25:** 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Pricing:**  
**Books and comics:** \$3.50/kg  
**Magazines:** \$0.10 per unit  
**CDs:** \$0.50 each  
**DVDs:** \$1 each  
**Video games:** \$5 each

**Access:**  
**By public transit:** 2-minute walk from Montmorency metro station  
**By car:** Free parking at the Place Bell community ice rinks, accessible via Boulevard de la Concorde (consider the expected high attendance)

**Donations accepted starting May 10**  
The items available for sale at the Bibliovente come from the collections of the Laval Libraries



as well as public donations. From Saturday, May 10 to Thursday, May 22, between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m., donations of novels, comics, CDs, DVDs, and video games can be dropped off at the

Enclav reception desk at Place Bell. Residents arriving by car can use the drop-off area on Le Corbusier Boulevard to leave their donations inside at the designated spot.

## FOR SALE

**Laval:** Beautiful ground floor condo, open concept with private entrance and garage. Offering 1 huge master, 1 bath with shower and tub, possibility of second bedroom. Rented semi-furnished with fridge, stove, dishwasher, washer, dryer. Close to highways and schools.

**Montréal:** Large duplex situated in excellent location. Offering 3+1 bedrooms 2 baths, kitchen and separate dining area. Possibility of intergenerational. Double garage. Quick occupancy.

**Montréal:** 4 ½ available for April 1st, and 5 ½ available for May 1st, with all appliances included. Many renovations are being done, to be completed soon. Please call me for more info.

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**Laval:** Cottage for rent, situated in a nice quiet area. Offering 3 bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths. Inground pool, exterior parking. \*Occupancy May 10, 2025\* Call me for more details.

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# Laval Unveils

## Citizen Participation



Getting involved in your community is easier than you might think. There are many forms of citizen participation: you want to put your expertise to good use and connect with people in your field, or you would like to express your opinion on a city project? You have just a few minutes to spare, or you wish to devote a few hours a week to a good cause? Discover the options available to you...



**Suggest ideas, discuss projects**



**Express myself, make my opinion known**



**Get involved and connect with others**

[laval.ca/participationcitoyenne](https://laval.ca/participationcitoyenne)

### A thousand ways to make an impact

#### Neighbourhood assemblies

If, for example, you would like to see a green space developed or a crosswalk created in your area, these structured meetings are your forum for proposing and possibly setting up concrete projects. They put you in touch with your neighbours and enable you to make a real difference in your surroundings. Neighbourhood assemblies are in the form of a pilot project in Auteuil and Duvernay, but are open to all Laval residents.

#### Volunteering

Whether your interests lie in health, education, culture or sports, you're sure to find a cause that suits your interests and skills among our 450 partner organizations. Get involved every week, every month or during special events. As you will see, volunteering is good not only for others. It's good for ourselves, too.

#### The participatory budget

Deciding which projects will be carried out near where you live is really possible... with the participatory budget! Sports facilities, playgrounds or new activity programs—it's up to you to choose how a part of the City's budget will be used. Turn ideas into reality and vote for your favourite project at [repensonslaval.ca](https://repensonslaval.ca) between now and May 31.

#### Advisory committees

Your expertise is invaluable, and you can put it to good use on one of the City's many advisory committees. Whether it's for the environment, the status of women or issues related to aging, discuss with people who share your interests and then submit your recommendations together.

#### Boards of directors

Would you like to put your skills to good use in your community, expand your network and discover rewarding, meaningful assignments that are in line with your values? Sit on a board of directors for one of the City's partner organizations. Check out [jebenevole.ca](https://jebenevole.ca) to see the positions available within these organizations.

#### Public consultations

The Carré Laval innovation park, riverbank redevelopment and the master plan for local leisure are just a few examples of major municipal projects thought through in collaboration with residents at large. Read about all these projects at [repensonslaval.ca](https://repensonslaval.ca).

#### Neighbourhood parties

There's nothing better than a festive get-together to bond with your neighbours! The City is offering four dates this summer for holding these events, and may be able to lend you equipment and materials to organize your own in your neighbourhood. Register now for June 7, July 5, August 2 or September 6—places are limited!

#### Surveys

Citizen participation can also be carried out in the comfort of your own home. The City regularly sends out surveys to Laval residents who have expressed an interest in giving their opinions on various subjects. For each completed survey, you could win a prize! Sign up at [laval.ca/subscribe](https://laval.ca/subscribe).

**As you will see, participation in municipal life can take many forms. You too can be a part of your community's development! Your contribution is important: it's your ideas, your involvement and your generosity that help us grow as a community and fuel our ambitions.**



# Laval unveils 2024 financial results

NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA  
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The City of Laval has unveiled its financial results for the fiscal year 2024, showcasing an operating surplus of \$7.2 million, which represents less than 0.61% of its revenue budget. This achievement comes despite increased municipal responsibilities and reduced government transfers.



"In a context where expectations are growing faster than resources, Laval is showing that it is possible to remain financially solid while continuing to invest for the common good. This report reflects our desire to act with lucidity, to plan rigorously and to always ensure that every Laval resident sees the concrete benefits of our choices," stated Stéphane Boyer, Mayor of Laval.

Yannick Langlois, municipal councillor for L'Orée-des-Bois and responsible for public finances, added, "The investments made in 2024 reflect a clear commitment: to maintain what we have while planning for the future. By devoting 62% of our \$355 million investment to maintaining our assets, we are choosing sustainability, efficiency, and respect for public funds. These decisions are part of a long-term vision: to preserve our infrastructure, improve our living environments, and build a solid future for our community."



## Results at a glance

**Growth in Operating Revenues:** The City generated operating revenues of \$1,189.9 million, \$13.9 million more than budgeted. This increase is attributed to:

- \$7.6 million in transfer revenues (environment, public safety, community support)
- \$3 million from the disposal of capital assets
- \$1.9 million in grants from organizations
- \$1.1 million in contributions from promoters

**Operating Expenses:** The City incurred \$1,074.4 million in operating expenses, which is \$63.3 million more than budgeted. Key expenses included:

- \$33.7 million in compensation and payroll taxes, including the application of Bill 15 concerning municipal sector pension plans and overtime worked by City employees to support citizens affected by Storm Debby
- \$21.5 million in goods and services, mainly for professional fees

**Major Investments in Infrastructure:** Laval invested \$355.1 million in the territory, with \$221.5 million (62%) dedicated to asset maintenance. Funding sources included:

- \$221.6 million in long-term debt
- \$82.7 million in government transfers
- \$98.5 million in financial reserves and surpluses

**Debt Management:** Long-term debt stood at \$1,053.4 million as of December 31, 2024, compared to \$929.3 million in 2023. The debt service-to-income ratio remained stable at 11.26%.

Under the Financial Reserves Management Policy, the City allocates a significant portion of its financial surpluses to reserves to meet minimum thresholds, particularly for snow removal, chemicals, and unaffected operating surplus. Consequently, 50% of the \$1.6 million surplus, or \$0.8 million, is allocated to the financial reserve for the cash payment of capital assets.

## Major infrastructure investments

Capital expenditures totaling \$355.1 million in 2024 enabled the completion of numerous significant projects for Laval residents. The three-year capital expenditure program (PTI) reached 69% progress for the year. Notable investments included:

- \$54.4 million for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of sewer and water mains
- \$28.4 million for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of roadways and structures (bridges, viaducts, culverts)
- \$19.1 million for the Aquatic Complex
- \$13.7 million for the development and maintenance of parks and public spaces
- \$12.3 million for cultural infrastructure in the downtown core (central library and professional artistic creation centre)

## Credibility confirmed by auditors

The financial report was jointly audited by the Auditor General and Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton. Additionally, S&P Global Ratings renewed Laval's AA+ credit rating with a stable outlook for the fourth consecutive year, highlighting the strength of the city's financial governance.



# Grande Fête des pompiers

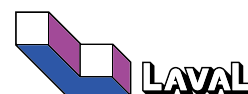
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# Front-running Quebec Liberal leadership hopeful Pablo Rodriguez fends off debate attacks

*Ex-federal minister leads fundraising, with support from more than half the PLQ MNA caucus*

**MARTIN C. BARRY**  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter for The Laval News  
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Although he came out of the first of the Quebec Liberal Party's recent leadership debates relatively unscathed, Pablo Rodriguez took more of a pounding during the second event – especially when fellow leadership hopeful Mario Roy decided to challenge him.

## PLQ hoping for a revival

Former Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec head Charles Milliard, former Conseil du patronat du Québec head Karl Blackburn, Matane commercial lawyer Marc Bélanger and Beauce agronomist and economist Mario Roy are also running for the leadership.

The Quebec Liberals are hoping the leadership race will help revive the party, which has been languishing since the rise of Premier François Legault's Coalition Avenir Québec which bumped the PLQ aside following the province's 2018 general election.

The candidates all seemed to agree that the CAQ's time is up, while saying they would reclaim the PLQ's status as the party most supportive of economic issues. The PLQ membership will finalize their choice of a new leader on June 14. The next provincial election is set for October 2026.

## Rodriguez as frontrunner

As a former senior Liberal minister in the



From the left, Matane commercial lawyer Marc Bélanger, Beauce agronomist and economist Mario Roy, former Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec head Charles Milliard, former federal cabinet minister Pablo Rodriguez and former Conseil du patronat du Québec head Karl Blackburn are running for the PLQ leadership.

Trudeau cabinet – and with 16 years total experience in several federal Liberal governments – Rodriguez has emerged as one of the likeliest candidates to snag the PLQ's leadership.

In the days leading up to the French and English-language debates held respectively in Laval and on Montreal's West Island, it was revealed that Rodriguez had managed to beat out everyone else in campaign fundraising.

As well, it came out within a short time after the second debate that two more Liberal MNAs – Marwah Rizqy (Saint-Laurent) and Greg Kelley (Jacques-Cartier) – had decided to throw their backing behind Rodriguez, raising his support within the party's 19-member caucus to 10.

While Rodriguez leaned heavily on his experience as a federal minister, saying he knows how to deliver, his rivals sometimes pointed to his close relationship with Justin Trudeau as a liability.

Although several Quebec governments have remained staunchly opposed to pipeline development, largely for environmental reasons, during the first debate Rodriguez was among the candidates who said they were open to fossil-fuel projects here as a means to boost Canada's energy independence, while overcoming tariffs imposed by U.S. president Donald Trump.

## Carbon pricing issue

Mario Roy, said he would end Quebec's cap-and-trade program, which he said is making local businesses uncompetitive. Quebec's carbon pricing scheme has been under scrutiny since Prime Minister Mark Carney abandoned the federal carbon tax in April.

Asked what a PLQ government might do differently if elected next year, Rodriguez said they wouldn't engage in cheque-writing politics, an allusion to the Legault government's practice of mailing out cash payments to Quebecers on a number of occasions.

"Another thing we wouldn't do is to give money out to the Los Angeles Kings," he added, referring to the CAQ government's \$7 million payment to the NHL team last year for exhibition matches in Quebec City.

## Rodriguez comes under attack

Blackburn, who as head of the Conseil du patronat was highly critical of the CAQ government's immigration quotas, said a Liberal government under his stewardship would do everything possible to maximize employer access to a qualified workforce.

While the overall tone of the first debate was collegial and tended to see the candidates agreeing with each other more than disagreeing, the second debate saw Mario Roy, the youngest of the contenders at age 31, making especially open thrusts at Rodriguez.

He suggested the former federal Heritage Minister had fundamentally abandoned Quebec's English-speaking universities when the CAQ government passed legislation to force them to increase tuition fees charged to foreign students.

## Ex-minister defends himself

"You did nothing at all," Roy maintained. "You closed your eyes on the problem. The institutions were destroyed right and left, and the federal government looked at it and did nothing. So, when you come here and say, 'We will change what is going on,' why didn't you do it before coming here?"

Rodriguez denied he did nothing, saying that "from day one when the CAQ did this, I came out publicly. I was a minister in the federal cabinet. I came out and I said very strongly: this is bad Mr. Legault, this is a bad idea because you're closing windows and doors to the world. Those are my direct quotes. Go back and read the papers. That's exactly what I said."



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# David De Cotis honoured with King Charles III Coronation Medal

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Action Laval proudly announces that Mr. David De Cotis, municipal councillor for the district of Saint-Bruno and a dedicated member of their political party, has been awarded the prestigious King Charles III Coronation Medal. This accolade, bestowed by the Government of Canada, celebrates individuals who have made significant contributions to Canadian society or achieved remarkable feats that enhance the nation.

The Coronation Medal acknowledges Mr. De Cotis' outstanding commitment to his community, his leadership within the city of Laval, and his unwavering dedication to public service.

"I am deeply honoured to receive the Coronation Medal from King Charles III. This recognition is a profound privilege and a significant symbol of appreciation for service during a pivotal moment in our country's history. I accept it with heartfelt gratitude and a renewed commitment to serve with dedication and integrity. I extend my sincere thanks to Senator Leo Housakos for presenting me with the King Charles III Coronation Medal," expressed David De Cotis.

For Action Laval, this honour underscores the dedication of its elected officials and the impact of their daily efforts. Interim leader Achille Cifelli remarked, "David De Cotis' recognition is a source of immense pride for our entire party. It reflects not only his exemplary career but also the values of service, community engagement,



and integrity that we collectively uphold." Action Laval reiterates its pride in having such a devoted elected official among its ranks and extends gratitude to all those who, like David De Cotis, contribute to building a city and a country that align with our aspirations.

# David De Cotis joins McHappy Day

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On May 8, David De Cotis, City Councillor for the Saint-Bruno district and leader on Council for Action Laval, enthusiastically participated in the Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) fundraising campaign.

At the Vimont branch, he greeted customers and served their favorite sandwiches, contributing to the foundation's mission of supporting over 26,000 Canadian families annually.

"This mission is crucial as it allows families

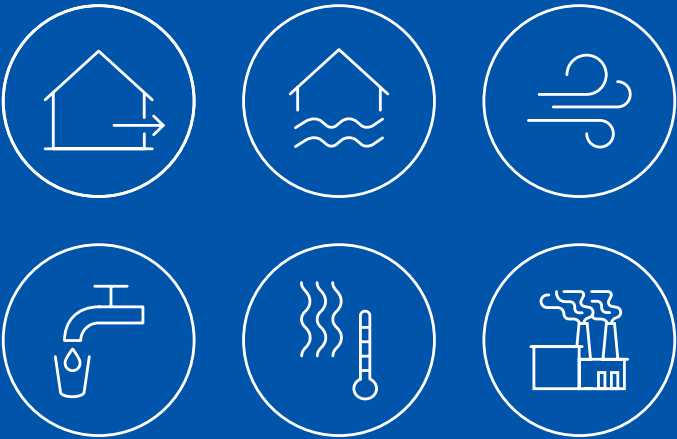
affected by illness to stay together during their challenging times," said Mr. De Cotis. "Having family by a child's side during illness makes the child stronger."

Mr. De Cotis embraced his role with dedication, joining the restaurant staff during peak hours to serve customers. "It's wonderful to see families from my district participating in this event," he noted. "For those who give, it's a small gesture, but for those who benefit, it makes a significant difference."

Committed to community involvement and charitable activities, Mr. De Cotis is always ready to lend a hand whenever possible.



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# What happened? The 2025 Canadian election post-mortem

DAVID COLETTA

For much of 2023 and 2024, Canadians were deeply entrenched in a scarcity mindset—a psychological state characterized by anxiety about the accessibility and affordability of basic necessities. This mindset had profound political implications, creating widespread discontent. Life felt perpetually uncertain, with essential items and services harder to obtain, increasingly expensive, and prone to sudden loss. Such sentiments inevitably translated into fierce anti-incumbent sentiment, a trend vividly captured by the [Financial Times' global analysis](#) showing 2024 as one of the worst years for incumbent governments globally in over 100 years. Whether it was Biden's Democratic Party in the US or Macron's coalition in France, not a single ruling parties anywhere saw its popular support increase from the previous time it faced voters.

Canada was no exception. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government, already battered by growing dissatisfaction over affordability and economic insecurity, faced catastrophic polling numbers by late 2024. When Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland resigned in December, just 12% of Canadians believed the Liberal government deserved re-election—a clear indictment of voter fatigue and desire for change. Trudeau's subsequent resignation announcement plunged the party into unprecedented depths, with the Liberals trailing Pierre Poilievre's Conservatives by a remarkable 27 points—47% to 20%, the largest margin Abacus Data had ever measured in its extensive polling history.

Yet, the narrative quickly shifted following a seismic political event south of the border. Donald Trump's return to the US presidency in January 2025 drastically reshaped the Canadian electoral landscape. Trump's provocative talk of annexing Canada and threats and then the imposition of aggressive tariffs swiftly replaced domestic scarcity concerns with an even more profound feeling: [precarity](#). Unlike scarcity, precarity is rooted in deep-seated fears about the stability and reliability of foundational systems—employment, healthcare, economic independence, national security. The Canadian public was gripped by uncertainty, worried not just about immediate survival but the integrity of long-term societal structures.

In this atmosphere of heightened anxiety, Mark Carney's entry into the Liberal leadership race was impeccably timed. Carney—a figure synonymous with steady-handed economic stewardship from his tenure as Governor of both the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England—represented precisely the leadership style voters craved amidst turmoil. His subsequent victory was not just a leadership win but a complete reset in public perception about federal governance. Indeed, Abacus Data's extensive tracking illustrates a dramatic recovery in government

approval immediately following Carney's assumption of office, surging from a paltry 27% approval to an impressive 43% in mere weeks. Carney quickly became the reassuring figure voters felt could capably address the imminent threat posed by Trump's America and Justin Trudeau was now in the rearview window.

Heading into the 2025 election, two distinct ballot questions emerged, deeply dividing the electorate: handling the Trump threat versus delivering political and economic change. Initially, Trump dominated the narrative; voters prioritized security and stability, heavily favouring the Liberals, who enjoyed an overwhelming advantage on handling relations with Trump. Indeed, among the 21% of voters who saw Trump as the most critical issue, a staggering 76% thought the Liberals could best deal with the issue compared to just 13% for Conservatives. The Conservatives, in contrast, lead by 11-points, when those who ranked the cost of living as the top issue were asked which party could best deal with that issue.

However, as the campaign progressed, the salience of the Trump issue waned slightly, replaced increasingly by voters' desire for change. By election day, 55% of Canadians saw "change" as their primary voting determinant, significantly up from earlier polling waves conducted by Abacus Data. This shift dramatically favoured the Conservatives, with 57% of these "change voters" supporting Poilievre's party versus 30% for the Liberals.

Still, Carney's leadership effectively mitigated the damage from this shift. Critically, he captured a substantial 30% of "change voters," illustrating his success in distancing himself from Trudeau's unpopular legacy. Trudeau was undeniably Carney's kryptonite, just as Trump was Poilievre's. Without Trudeau's departure, Abacus Data's hypothetical polling indicates the Liberals would have suffered a severe loss, polling just 28% compared to the Conservatives' 46%.

Carney's positive impact on the Liberals was underscored by voter impressions. Both major party leaders finished the campaign with net

positive ratings—remarkable given the polarized political environment. Carney, notably, ended with an impressive +17 net approval, remarkably stable throughout the campaign. Poilievre also managed a respectable +2, signifying widespread recognition of his focus on economic and social change, though clearly overshadowed by Carney's aura of expertise and stability.

Leadership attributes emerged as pivotal determinants in voter decisions. Abacus Data's polling revealed that voters viewed Carney significantly more favourably on key leadership metrics: "standing up to a bully" (46% Carney vs. 38% Poilievre) and "captaining a ship through a bad storm" (40% Carney vs. 35% Poilievre). Carney's commanding lead in these areas underscored voters' yearning for stability and reassurance.

The ultimate election result reflected these nuanced dynamics. Liberals narrowly edged Conservatives nationally, securing 44% of the vote to the Conservatives' 41%, while the NDP collapsed to just 6%, its worst performance historically. This result was decisively shaped by voter flows.

Notably, the Liberals lost 16% of their 2021 voters directly to the Conservatives but significantly compensated by winning 42% of former NDP voters, while Conservatives gained 21% of past NDP voters. This voter shift encapsulates the electoral dynamics perfectly: progressive voters, fearing Trump, strategically consolidated around Carney's Liberals.

Age demographics also played a critical role. The Liberals performed strongest among voters over 60, gaining a remarkable 19 points compared to 2021. Conversely, Conservatives showed the strongest gains among voters aged 30 to 44, increasing their vote share by 17 points, highlighting generational divides in election priorities.

Abacus Data's Precarity Index clearly demonstrated precarity's electoral significance. Among high-precarity voters, Liberals outperformed Conservatives significantly (49% to 35%). Remarkably, 42% of high-precarity Liberal voters did not vote Liberal in 2021—most having supported the NDP or abstained entirely. This

underscores the Liberals' success in attracting voters profoundly concerned about long-term stability and systemic risks.

Carney's personal appeal was evident in detailed image assessments conducted by Abacus Data. He scored highly on trustworthiness, competence, and the ability to unite Canadians. However, Carney wasn't perceived as particularly "in touch" with everyday Canadians—a significant departure from past elections, where relatability was seen as a crucial trait. Notably, Carney openly admitted on Radio Canada TV that he does not do his own grocery shopping. Despite this, almost half of Canadians had a positive view of Mr. Carney, underscoring his broad electoral appeal.

When compared with Poilievre, Carney was ahead by 13 on "smart", by 9 on "ready to be Prime Minister", by 6 on "a leader" and by 7 on "principled". The only areas where Poilievre beat Carney were "mean" by 13 points, hypocritical by 5, and on tough by just one point.

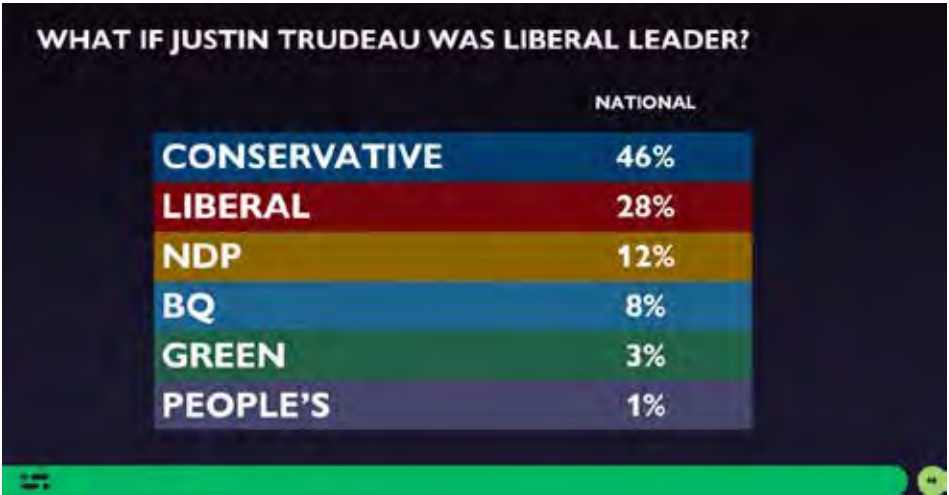
Policy preferences post-election clearly prioritize immediate economic relief and security: tax cuts, permanent dental care, and mental health funding ranked as top priorities among voters, highlighting continued economic anxiety and the desire for systemic reassurance.

We asked Canadians what three issues they want the new Carney government to prioritize, and the results underscore their continuing desire for immediate economic relief, improved affordability, but also protection from the precarity.

Half (50%) identified cutting income taxes as one of their top three priorities, clearly highlighting ongoing economic anxiety and a strong preference for direct financial relief. Cancelling the carbon tax ranked second at 40%, reflecting continued sensitivity around cost-of-living concerns tied to energy prices. Additionally, 36% of respondents equally prioritized dental care, building 500,000 new homes, and capping temporary immigration, highlighting a balanced demand for investments in healthcare, housing affordability, and controlled population growth. Mental health funding (28%) also featured prominently, underscoring the public's recognition of mental health as an integral aspect of overall well-being in an era marked by persistent uncertainty. Collectively, this data suggests Canadians expect swift action from the government on pocketbook issues and tangible policy interventions aimed at securing both short-term relief and longer-term stability.

## The upshot

Reflecting on the 2025 election, three interconnected events reshaped Canada's political trajectory: Trump's re-election, Trudeau's resignation, and Carney's emergence as Liberal leader. Each was indispensable. Trump refocused Canadians on existential risks, Trudeau's



▶ Continued on page 13

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departure offered the Liberals a desperately needed reset, and Carney's leadership provided voters with confidence amid deepening precarity. Without any of these factors, the Liberal victory would likely have been impossible.

The 2025 Canadian federal election serves as a clear example of how quickly voter sentiment can shift under the influence of external events and internal party dynamics. While the election was not exclusively about Donald Trump, it was undeniably shaped by his return to power and provocative interventions. Trump's threats of annexation and aggressive tariffs fundamentally altered the electoral landscape, swiftly transitioning Canadians from a scarcity mindset—concerned primarily with affordability and immediate economic pressures—to a precarity mindset, characterized by deeper anxieties over national security, long-term stability, and systemic reliability.

Useful insights

For anyone in public affairs, several useful insights emerge from this election.

Firstly, the resilience of leadership narratives cannot be overstated. Mark Carney's success demonstrates that in moments of crisis, voters prioritize perceived competence and stability above relatability. Despite being openly detached from everyday experiences—highlighted starkly by his own admission of not doing his grocery shopping—Carney triumphed because voters were searching not for a relatable figure but for a reassuring presence capable of managing threats and delivering systemic stability. The public's strong preference for Carney's leadership traits, such as "standing up to a bully" and effectively "captaining a ship through a bad storm," underscores the premium placed on decisive, authoritative leadership during precarious times.

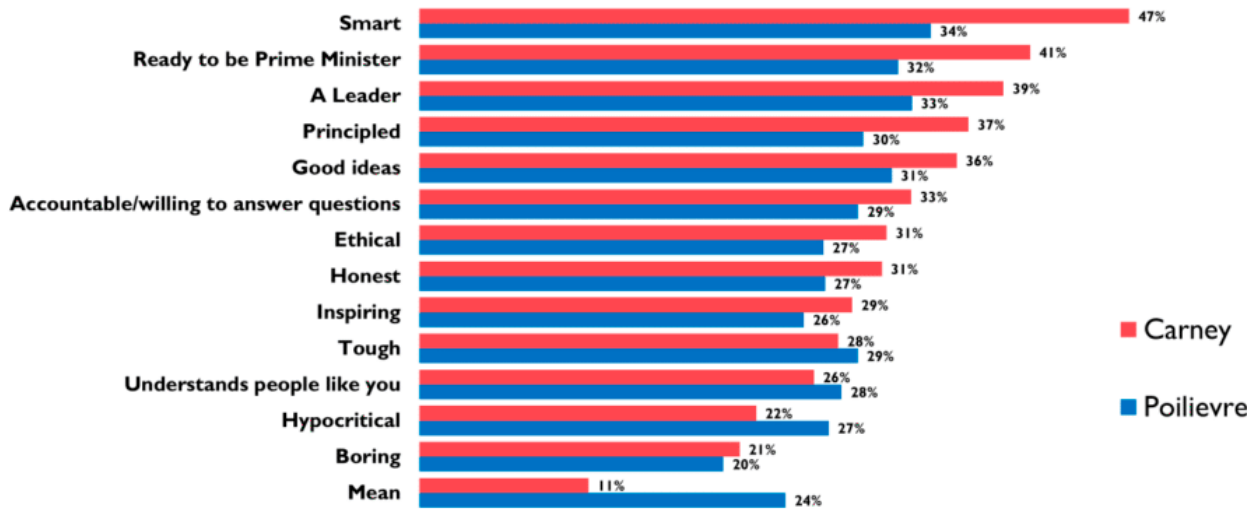
Secondly, the dramatic shift in public opinion following Trudeau's resignation cannot be ignored. Abacus Data's hypothetical scenarios clearly illustrate that had Trudeau remained leader, the Liberals would have faced electoral disaster, polling at just 28% compared to the Conservatives' commanding 46%. This highlights how strongly Trudeau had become synonymous with voter frustration and dissatisfaction. The Liberals' recovery hinged on their ability to distance themselves from Trudeau's legacy, allowing Carney to reposition the party as credible guardians of national interest and stability. Carney would be wise to reflect on that and find ways to demonstrate this distance from the Trudeau era both in substance and process.

Thirdly, strategic framing of ballot questions significantly impacted voter alignment. Throughout the campaign, two dominant narratives competed: the existential threat posed by Trump's America versus the widespread desire for economic and political change domestically. Carney adeptly managed this duality by capturing a significant share of "change voters," despite the Liberals' incumbency. This indicates



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The Image of Carney & Poilievre  
(Applies 8-10)



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2025 FEDERAL ELECTION TRACKER | ABACUS DATA | WAVE 8 | MAY 2025 | POST-ELECTION



18

that effective campaign strategy involves not only addressing primary voter concerns but also skillfully positioning oneself as capable of managing multiple competing narratives simultaneously. Something the Conservatives failed to do sufficiently.

Moreover, the collapse of the NDP vote—down to a historic low of 6%—offers a critical lesson in electoral realignment driven by strategic voting. Progressive voters, alarmed by Trump's aggressive posture and anxious about the stability of Canadian society, overwhelmingly consolidated around the Liberals, abandoning the NDP. This underscores the volatility and fluidity of voter allegiance during periods of heightened insecurity, revealing an opportunity and challenge for parties to effectively communicate relevance and urgency.

Finally, we should recognize the enduring significance of economic reassurance as a policy priority. Even post-election, voters remain deeply concerned about affordability, healthcare accessibility, and financial security. Policies aimed at addressing these areas—tax relief, dental care expansion, mental health funding—resonate strongly, reflecting the precarity mindset's emphasis on long-term systemic stability.

The 2025 election illustrates the potent interplay between external crises, leadership perception, and voter psychology. Anyone in public affairs needs to be acutely aware of how rapidly shifting circumstances and targeted interventions by external actors—like Trump—can profoundly reshape electoral dynamics, redefining what voters demand from their leaders and their government.

Good research and the best public opinion advisors can help you navigate this complexity

by providing timely insights into shifting voter priorities, clearly mapping the dynamics driving public sentiment, and identifying opportunities to effectively communicate your message.

Team Abacus exactly this—trusted, influential, precise, and actionable insights that make us the best in the business and essential partners for understanding and responding to rapidly changing electoral landscapes.

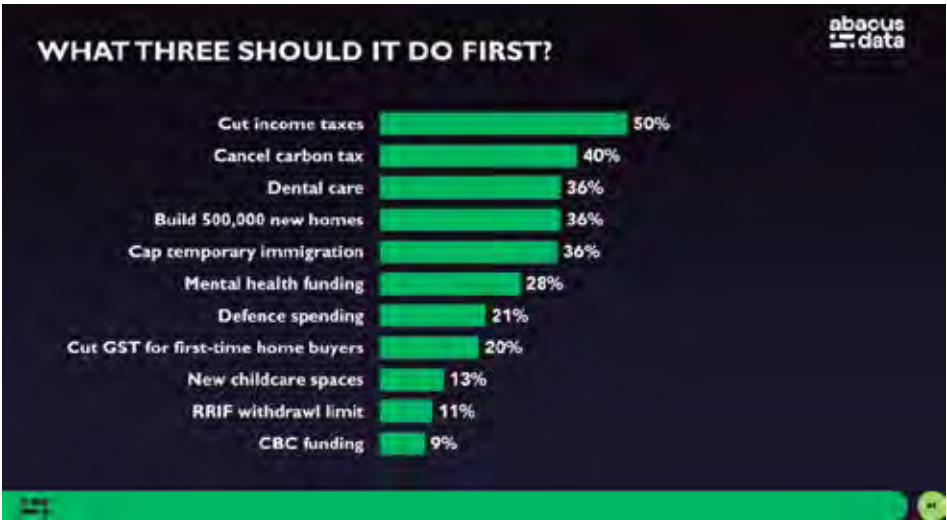
Data in this analysis comes from...

A post-election survey conducted with 1,500 adult Canadians over the age of 18 from April

29 to May 2, 2025. A random sample of panels were invited to complete the survey from a set of partner panels based on the Lucid exchange platform. These partners are typically double opt-in survey panels, blended to manage out potential skews in the data from a single source.

The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is +/- 2.6%, 19 times out of 20.

The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Canada's population according to age, gender, educational attainment, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.





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# Ex-Chomedey MNA Guy Ouellette receives King Charles III Coronation Medal

*Former SQ investigator has been hard at work on TV crime series since retiring*

**MARTIN C. BARRY**  
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Former Chomedey MNA Guy Ouellette was one of two people who were presented with the King Charles III Coronation Medal by Canadian senator Claude Carignan in Saint-Eustache in April. It was in recognition of Ouellette's many years of service in the National Assembly as well as in law enforcement.

## Wide-ranging career

Ouellette served for more than 30 years as a provincial police officer and crime investigator with the Sûreté du Québec. He was the Member of the National Assembly for Chomedey from 2007 until 2022. For most of that time, he sat with the Quebec Liberals, although as an independent during his last term.

At the same time, former Canadian pro boxer Marie-Ève Dicaire, who is a two-time IBF female super-welterweight World champion, was also presented with the King Charles III Coronation Medal. Both were cited for their "exceptional contributions to the community, to Quebec and to Canada."

## 'Humbled and honoured'

"I accept this recognition with pride and humility," Ouellette said in a message posted on his LinkedIn feed, following the ceremony which took place at Saint-Eustache city hall. "Thanks to Senator Claude Carignan, to [Saint-Eustache] mayor Pierre Charron and to Marie-Ève Dicaire, a model of perseverance," Ouellette added.

In an interview with The Laval News, Ouellette said that receiving the medal was an emotional

experience for him. "Because all my life, I always gave more than I received," he said. "And when you receive something and you don't know what to say, that's what happens. For me, that was something special. I was humbled and honored to receive it."

## A prolific author

In addition to his law enforcement and legislative work, Ouellette is also the author of several books. They include 'Mom,' an in-depth work of non-fiction about former Hells Angels Quebec leader Maurice 'Mom' Boucher.

Ouellette also wrote 'Qu'on accuse ou qu'on s'excuse: Les dessous de mon arrestation illégale,' a 2020 full-length examination by Ouellette, closely examining the circumstances surrounding his arrest, without being charged, by Quebec's Unité permanente anticorruption (UPAC).

Since retiring from politics, Ouellette has also worked with Quebec screenwriter Luc Dionne (who created the Quebec television series Omerta, the second most popular series in Quebec television history) as a consultant on the Dionne script for the 2024 TV series 'L'appel.'

## Contributed to TV series

According to a description of L'Appel posted by Videotron where it is available for streaming, it "tells the story behind this important piece of Québec judicial history, the prosecutors' and investigators' take on the case, and the steps that led to the arrest and conviction of Maurice 'Mom' Boucher."

As well, Ouellette said he is working on a second project, based partly on his experiences as a Sûreté du Québec investigator, while adding "not that I can talk about it," although he might be able to in a few months.



Ouellette also worked as an expert consultant on Godasse: Le vrai visage d'un tueur des Hells, written by Jean-Louis Fortin and Éric Thibault and published this past February. It offers a look at

hired assassin Stéphane 'Godasse' Gagné, whose witness testimony finally put Mom Boucher behind bars where he died of throat cancer in July 2022.

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# Victoria Day

## Journée nationale des Patriotes



Victoria Day is a Canadian statutory holiday celebrated on the Monday preceding May 25 in every province and territory. It honours Queen Victoria's birthday.

In Quebec, this holiday was officially renamed Journée nationale des patriotes ("National Patriots Day"), and commonly referred to as Fête des Patriotes. The celebration also became unofficially known as the fête de Dollard (after Adam Dollard des Ormeaux, a colonist and soldier of New France) during the 1920s.

Find out more about the history and observance of Victoria Day, the celebration of the Sovereign's birthday in Canada; a tradition unique to our country.

### HISTORY OF THE SOVEREIGN'S BIRTHDAY

The Sovereign's birthday has been celebrated in Canada since the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901).

May 24, Queen Victoria's birthday, was

declared a holiday by the Legislature of the Province of Canada in 1845.

After Confederation, Queen Victoria's birthday was celebrated every year on May 24 unless that date was a Sunday, in which case a proclamation was issued providing for the celebration on May 25.

After the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, an act was passed by the Parliament of Canada establishing a legal holiday on May 24 in each year (or May 25 if May 24 fell on a Sunday) under the name Victoria Day.

The birthday of King Edward VII, who was born on November 9, was by yearly proclamation during his reign (1901-1910) celebrated on Victoria Day.

It was not an innovation to celebrate the birthday of the reigning sovereign on the anniversary of the birth of a predecessor. In Great Britain, the birthdays of George IV (1820-1830) and William IV (1830-

1837) were celebrated on June 4, the birthday of George III (1760-1820).

The birthday of King George V, who reigned from 1910 to 1935, was celebrated on the actual date, June 3 or, when that was a Sunday, by proclamation on June 4.

The one birthday of King Edward VIII observed during his reign, which lasted from January to December 1936, was also celebrated on the actual date, June 23.

King George VI's birthday, which fell on December 14, was officially celebrated in the United Kingdom on a Thursday early in June. Up to 1947 Canada proclaimed the same day but in 1948 and further years settled on the Monday of the week in which the United Kingdom celebration took place. George VI reigned from 1936 to 1952.

The first birthday of Queen Elizabeth II, in 1952, was also celebrated in June.

Meanwhile, Canada continued to observe Victoria Day. An amendment to the Statutes of Canada in 1952 established the celebration of Victoria Day on the Monday preceding May 25. It remains so to this day as per the Holidays Act.

### FLYING THE ROYAL UNION FLAG

Where physical arrangements allow, the Royal Union Flag, commonly known as the "Union Jack", is flown along with the National Flag at federal buildings, airports, military bases and other federal buildings and establishments within Canada, from sunrise to sunset, to mark this day.

Physical arrangements mean the existence of at least 2 flag poles; the Canadian flag always takes precedence and is never replaced by the Union Jack. Where only 1 pole exists, no special steps should be taken to erect an additional pole to fly the Union Jack for this special day.



FAYÇAL

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# Laval and the STL reactivate public bus service for seniors

NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA  
info@newsfirst.ca

The City of Laval, in collaboration with the Société de transport de Laval (STL), is excited to announce the resumption of public bus services for seniors residing in retirement homes. Starting Monday, May 12, the STL will operate four dedicated bus lines (102, 104, 106, 107) to serve nine seniors' residences that are located more than 200 meters from a regular bus stop. This service is exclusively for residences that were previously served before June 2024.

Each of these routes will provide one round trip per week between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., continuing until the end of December 2025. A re-evaluation of the service is scheduled for mid-December to assess its impact and make any necessary adjustments.

This initiative has been made possible through funding from the City of Laval, aiming to enhance the mobility of seniors and combat social isolation, a growing concern in our communities.

Mayor Stéphane Boyer expressed his satisfaction with the return of these bus lines, emphasizing their importance for seniors in retirement homes. "In a context of limited public finances, we worked with the STL to develop a targeted solution focused on the most underserved sectors. The mobility of seniors remains a priority for Laval. This service, fully funded by the City, complements existing measures, including the free bus pass for people aged 65 and over, to promote accessible and inclusive travel," he stated.



Jocelyne Frédéric-Gauthier, Chair of the Board of Directors of the STL, highlighted the significance of the City's financial support. "The recommissioning of these revised lines allows the STL to fulfill its mission of providing transportation services that meet the needs of the Laval community while promoting access to public transit. Despite presenting a balanced budget for 2025, funding challenges persist in a context where the population's travel needs are increasing," she noted.

This renewed service underscores Laval's commitment to supporting its senior residents and ensuring their mobility and social inclusion.

### Additional Information

The following residences will benefit from the revised transportation service once a week. The routes of the bus lines concerned have been adjusted according to the new service.

- Domaine des Forges 1 and 3 (Ste-Rose district)
- Thérèse Casgrain Manor (Ste-Rose district)
- Plateau-Ouimet Residence (Ste-Rose District)
- Manoir Marc-Aurèle-Fortin (Ste-Rose district)
- Vimont Residence (St-Bruno district)

- Manoir du Sablon (district of Chomedey)
- Manoir de La Giraudière (district of Marigot)
- Manoir des Prairies (Laval-des-Rapides district)
- Manoir St-Claude (district of Marigot)

Information on the new routes and timetables for the four lines dedicated to residences will be available in the coming days at [stlaval.ca/reseau/horaires-residences](http://stlaval.ca/reseau/horaires-residences)

For any questions related to residential service, customers can contact the STL's Customer Contact Centre at 450-688-6520.

*Triste nouvelle. Notre fidèle représentant pour près de 25 ans Jean-Paul Chamberland est décédé le 6 mai 2025 à la Cité de la Santé de Laval. Jean-Paul était très discret sur sa vie privée et ses clients ignoraient sans doute qu'il était atteint de la maladie de Parkinson depuis plusieurs années. Sa bonne humeur et son professionnalisme nous manqueront. Nous lui souhaitons un repos sans souffrance pour la suite.*

*Sad news. Our faithful representative for near 25 years, Jean-Paul Chamberland passed away on May 6, 2025 at the Cité de la Santé in Laval. Jean-Paul was very discreet about his private life and his clients were probably unaware that he had been suffering from Parkinson's disease for several years. His good humour and professionalism will be missed. May he rest in peace.*

George Bakoyannis  
George Guzman



# Action Laval criticizes administration's improvisation amid partial return of Senior Transportation Services

NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA  
info@newsfirst.ca

Saint-Bruno district's municipal councillor David De Cotis, member of Action Laval, along with mayoral candidate Frédéric Mayer, have acknowledged the recent announcement by the City of Laval and the Société de transport de Laval (STL) regarding the partial reinstatement of four bus lines serving certain seniors' residences. This decision comes nearly four months after Action Laval proposed the reinstatement of this essential service, which was unjustly withdrawn in 2024.

Mr. De Cotis, who has been vocal about the issue since August 2024, expressed his frustration: "The partial return of the service is good news, but it comes far too late. What seniors have experienced since last year is unacceptable. We must stop playing yo-yo with essential services. The improvisation of this administration has lasted long enough."

Despite the service's partial restoration, which affects nine residences, several establishments remain without service. The current plan offers only one round trip per week, which is insufficient to address the isolation and needs of the elderly.

"This is not a gift; it is an obligatory retreat by the mayor in the face of popular pressure. This partial return is a step forward, but it also highlights the lack of vision of the current administration. Laval deserves better than this amateurism," stated Frédéric Mayer, mayoral candidate.

Public transit in Laval continues to face significant challenges. The current administration has struggled to prioritize effectively and be accountable for its decisions. The purchase of expensive software following service and staff reductions is highly questionable. Coupled with the elimination of bus lines, increased registrations, and the fare hikes announced for July, Laval residents are paying more for fewer services.

# Gala de l'Espoir raises \$77,000 for sarcoma research in Quebec

**MATTHEW DALDALIAN**  
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter  
info@newsfirst.ca

At Le Challenger venue in Saint-Laurent on May 6, more than 200 people gathered in memory of a 19-year-old girl most had never met — and helped raise \$77,000 in her name.

The second annual Gala de l'Espoir, hosted by the Laval-based Dania Kayali Foundation, paid tribute to Dania Kayali, who died in 2021 after a four-and-a-half-year battle with osteosarcoma, a rare and aggressive form of bone cancer. The evening combined personal testimony, medical insight from doctors and researchers, and community action, all aimed at tackling a disease that remains deeply under-recognized in Quebec.

"We want to be able to fund research and initiatives so that [doctors] have the correct treatment for the correct patient — so that they can save more lives," said Chadi Kayali, Dania's brother and co-founder of the foundation.

Sarcoma, a cancer of the body's connective tissues, is not a single disease but a family of tumors that can appear in muscles, bones, fat, or nerves. It affects people of all ages, and according to experts, it accounts for about 15 per cent of pediatric cancers. Yet, it receives only a fraction of the attention and funding of other cancers.

"Sarcoma is difficult because it presents in all stages of life... and it affects every tissue of

the body," explained Dr. Sophie Mottard, an orthopedic oncology surgeon at Maisonneuve-Rosemont and Sainte-Justine Hospitals. "Every tumour is different, every patient is different, every location is different."

Dr. Mottard, who treated Dania, spoke earlier in the evening about the need for specialized research, new treatment protocols, and earlier detection. She emphasized the challenge of diagnosing sarcoma in its early stages, especially in children. "It needs to be taken seriously. Dania had pain in her knee, and even then, it took a long time to reach a proper diagnosis," Mottard said.

She also addressed the broader research gap: pharmaceutical companies are hesitant to invest in treatments for rare cancers like sarcoma because patient numbers are small and the biology is diverse. "That's why philanthropy in sarcoma is very important," Mottard said. "We need events like this to fund [research], pay research assistants, and support lab work — because the government and big pharma aren't stepping in."

The foundation, started by Dania's family shortly after her death, has taken that challenge head-on. Its flagship initiative is Zone Sarcome Québec, a province-wide platform that unites researchers, doctors, patients, and families to come together for a day and strategize around treatment and innovation.

Dania's father Amjad Kayali, who serves as the foundation's president, described the

emotional promise that began it all. "In her final moments, Dania made me promise we would keep fighting. That we would make sure other kids wouldn't go through what she did," he said. "We didn't even know what sarcoma was before she got sick. Most people still don't."

The evening featured two young sarcoma patients, whom the younger Kayali dubbed the "stars of the night," who helped with a prize giveaway. A family member of another young sarcoma victim took the stage to share her experiences and hopes for greater awareness and support for those affected by the disease. The night also included a fundraising auction, with proceeds going toward the foundation's research and awareness initiatives.

Later in the evening, the foundation officially announced its newest initiative — The Great Sarcoma Race, set to launch later this year. Participants will be encouraged to raise a minimum of \$200 and choose between 3 km and 6 km walking or running options.

"This race wouldn't be possible without them," said the younger Kayali, referring to the guests who joined the organizing efforts. "They spoke to the city, they've been also helping with the foundation. They want to help. And I think it starts with that."

After the final speeches and a round of applause, organizers took to the stage to thank sponsors and supporters. A check was presented revealing the evening's fundraising total: \$77,000 raised in one night.



**Dr. Sophie Mottard addresses guests at the Gala de l'Espoir, speaking about treating sarcoma on May 6, 2025.**

"We hope that they understand the need to do something," said Chadi Kayali. "[Guests] need to take action, and understand how under-researched and underfunded [sarcoma] is." He continued, "it's there. And we need to take action."

## New consumer protection measures in Québec

*Tipping calculated before taxes and clearer grocery prices*

**NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA**  
info@newsfirst.ca

The Minister of Justice, Attorney General of Québec, and Minister responsible for Consumer Protection, Simon Jolin-Barrette, has announced the implementation of new regulations aimed at enhancing consumer protection. These changes include new rules for tipping suggestions and clearer price displays at grocery stores. Additionally, the amount provided for in the Price Accuracy Policy has been increased from \$10 to \$15, effective immediately.

### Tip calculation before taxes

Under the new regulations, tip suggestions must be calculated based on the bill amount before taxes. These suggestions should be displayed in a neutral and uniform manner, ensuring all options are equally visible on the

payment terminal. Customers must also have the option to determine the amount of the tip they wish to leave, and this option must be clearly visible.

### Clearer food prices

The new rules mandate that the list price, unit price, price per unit of measure, and "non-member" price must be clearly visible on product labels at all times. If a food item is taxable, this information must be indicated near the advertised price. These measures apply to grocery stores, convenience stores, and any business selling food products. This clarity is essential for Quebec families to make informed choices based on their needs and budget.

### Increased price accuracy policy amount

The discount provided for in the Price

Accuracy Policy has been increased from \$10 to \$15. In businesses using optical reader technology, items advertised at \$15 or less must be given away free of charge if the price read at checkout is higher than the advertised price. For items valued at more than \$15, a \$15 discount must be offered.

### Minister's statement

"In the current economic context, we understand the importance of every dollar to Quebec families. The new rules on price display and tipping suggestions will simplify daily life by eliminating common irritants. It is crucial that families have access to all the information they need to make the best choices based on their needs and budget. Our government is committed to protecting Quebecers' wallets," said Simon Jolin-Barrette, Minister of Justice, Attorney General of Québec, and Minister



**Simon Jolin-Barrette, Minister of Justice, Attorney General of Québec, and Minister responsible for Consumer Protection.**

responsible for Consumer Protection.



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## Spring quiz

Spring is in the air! Test your knowledge of this sunny season with this short quiz.

1. What's the first day of spring called?

- a) The vernal equinox
- b) The spring solstice
- c) The Easter equinox
- d) The Easter solstice



2. On the first day of spring, day and night are nearly the same lengths. How long are they?

- a) 10 hours
- b) 12 hours
- c) 14 hours
- d) 8 hours



3. Is spring considered the year's first, second, third or fourth season?

- a) First
- b) Second
- c) Third
- d) Fourth



4. Which of the following holidays doesn't happen in spring?

- a) Easter
- b) April Fool's Day
- c) Mother's Day
- d) Valentine's Day



5. What does spring symbolize?

- a) Peace
- b) Love
- c) Rebirth
- d) Hope



6. Spring is often associated with allergies. What's considered the biggest allergy trigger?

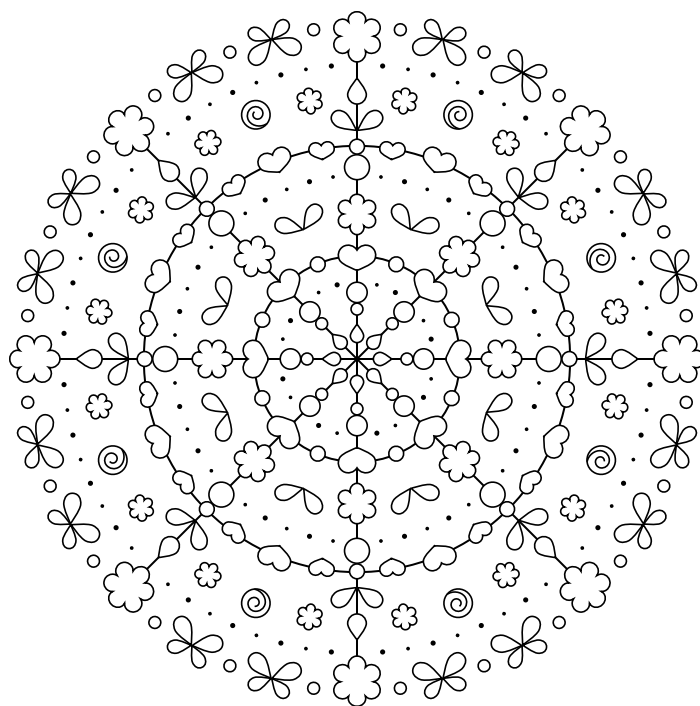
- a) Mould
- b) Dust
- c) Pollen
- d) Dander



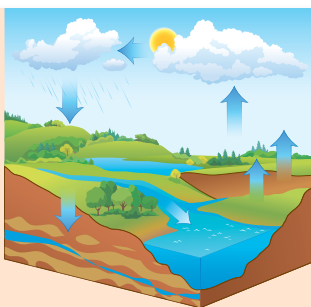
ANSWERS  
1. a) In the northern hemisphere, spring usually begins on March 20 or 21 but can sometimes start early on March 19.  
2. b) The day is slightly longer than the night on the first day of spring.  
3. a) The seasons go in order from spring, summer, fall and winter.  
4. d) Spring lasts for about three months and ends on June 21.  
5. c) Spring is all about new beginnings and starting fresh.  
6. c) Hay fever is what you call a pollen allergy.

# KIDZONLINE

## Make a mandala



## What makes it rain?



Ever wonder why drops of water fall from the sky? Here's an explanation.

The sun heats large bodies of water like seas, lakes and rivers, causing the water to evaporate and rise as vapour. As the moisture moves

upward, it cools and condenses to form clouds. These clouds are blown toward land by the wind. As the clouds move, they gather water droplets and become heavy. Eventually, gravity makes the water droplets fall as rain. The water returns to earth, and the cycle starts all over again.

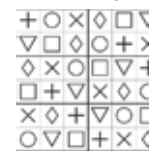
It rains more in the spring and summer because it's warm. Warmth produces more evaporation, producing more clouds that make rain.

◇			□		
	○	△		◇	
		×	△		□
	△	□			◇
×					
			×	○	

## Sudoku 6x6

COMPLETE EACH GRID WITH THESE SIX SYMBOLS.

Symbols can only appear once in each line, once in each column and once in each box of six squares. Each box of six squares is marked by darker lines. Some symbols are already included in each box to help you get started. Don't forget: a symbol can't be repeated in the same line, column or box.



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By Martin C. Barry

## LPD seeks victims of man charged with sexual assault on minors

The Laval Police are asking potential victims of a 31-year-old man facing sexual assault charges involving minors to come forward and provide additional information.

According to a press release issued by the LPD, Dillon Buckley is charged with harassment, luring on the internet, invitation to sexual contact and sexual assault.

The LPD alleges that Buckley used social media to contact victims, although they say he was also known to contact them in public places where he would provide them with a telephone number to call. Once he had gained the trust of victims, the police allege, he would meet and sexually assault them.

The acts, all of which are alleged to have taken place in Laval, were between September 2024 and April 2025, although the victims were not Laval residents.

Anyone who believes they may be among the victims is urged to call the LPD's Info Line at 450 662-INFO (4636), or the 9-1-1 emergency line. The file number is LVL250415058.



## Intercepted at 209 km/h on the A15

Two young cowboys behind the wheel, who thought Highway 15 in Laval was the ideal place to race on Sunday night, were intercepted while driving at more than 200 km/h.

The two budding Jacques Villeneuves, both in their early twenties, were fined a combined sum of more than \$7,000 for driving at 209 km/h on

expressways.

They were intercepted around 1:30 a.m. by Sûreté du Québec police officers from the Laval highway station.

They gave them a first statement of offence of \$1976 and 24 demerit points for their excessive speeding and a second of \$1576 and 12 demerit

points for participating in a street race.

Their driver's license was also suspended immediately for a period of 7 days.

The Sûreté du Québec took the opportunity to remind motorists that speed remains one of the main causes of fatal collisions on the province's roads.

## Two suspects arrested for murder outside Laval reception hall

Last week, the Laval Police announced the arrest of two suspects believed to be connected with the murder of a man outside a Saint-Martin Blvd. reception hall in December 2023.

The suspects, Mewael Tesfit Betsuamlak, 20, and Hamza Hamud Ali, 23, are believed by the police to have been the perpetrators of the shooting of Marc Issa El-Khoury, thought to be linked to organized crime, while he was attending a wedding reception.

One of the two suspects shot El-Khoury as he was standing outside the reception hall.

Working in conjunction with other law enforcement officials, the LPD were able to track one of the suspects to Kitchener in Ontario, while the other was already behind bars at the provincial Donnacona detention centre near Quebec City where he was serving a six-month sentence for illegal possession of a firearm.

The murder is believed to be related to organized crime rivalries between Hells Angels in Ontario and street gangs in Montreal, both of which are involved in drug trafficking.

## LPD asks for Duvernay residents' help after Cap-à-l'Aigle shooting

The Laval Police are asking residents of Cap-à-l'Aigle Street in the city's Duvernay district for permission to view their homes' security camera images as part of an investigation into a shooting incident that took place during the late-night hours on Sunday May 4.

Officers from the LPD responded to a 9-1-1 call around 11 pm after shots were fired at a residence on the street. Although there were no reported injuries and no arrests have been made, LPD investigators are seeking leads to identify the perpetrators.

## Recent fire calls

May 10 | 03:42 am // Building fire on Dagenais Blvd. in Laval's Vimont district. Multi-unit building. Flames apparent upon arrival of firefighters. Source of fire traced to a kitchen within building. Firefighters called in a 10-09 code, requesting additional units, with further aggravation possible.



May 3 | 18:58 pm // Building fire on 37th Avenue in Laval's Fabreville sector. Residential building. House was completely engulfed in flames upon firefighters' arrival. Firefighters called in a Code 10-12, requesting additional units following a second alarm.

## Sainte-Dorothée home heavily damaged by fire

A house on Desjardins St. in Laval's Sainte-Dorothée district suffered more than \$250,000 in damages from a fire that broke out in the early morning hours on May 3.

Firefighters who arrived on the scene around 4:10 am could see flames within the house's kitchen.

Although they succeeded in preventing the

blaze from spreading further, three people are now temporarily homeless.

As well as the damage done to the building, there was an estimated \$100,000 in additional

damages to interior furnishings.





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# DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

## MOVIE RIGHTS

**Q** I am married to a pastor for 25 years, though for the past two years we have been separated. My husband has been having an affair with the associate minister from our former church, and also with the town prostitute. I had no idea. He is also involved with an officer of a local ministry aide organization, as well as the chairperson of a civic group.

Now I've been informed what this last woman does for a living: feeds on married men, as well as men of prominence, to pay her way through life. That makes sense because my husband is currently a silent partner in her store, a woman's consignment shop I'll call "Sweethearts." How funny is that?

The long and the short of it is she has been labeled the town trollop. Meanwhile additional women are in the mix. Please keep in mind I recently found this out. The information is staggering. I even learned my husband embezzled money from our former church. For years I've lived with a man living a double life.

Do you think I can sell this story to a television network and watch it played out for all the world to see?

Kayla

**A** Kayla, who speaks up when a wrong is done? It is almost always the victim. Everyone who listened to your husband, believed in him, or trusted him for guidance has been betrayed. Every life comes up against every other life. Your husband gave you this story to tell, if that is your choice.

A biblical verse says a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. But in the same way, a rancid ingredient corrupts the whole lump. The shepherd is supposed to shepherd the flock, but when no one shepherds the shepherd, he can run amuck. Publicizing your story may forewarn others; for those who have been victims, it may be a consolation to know they are not alone.

We are often blind to reality. Fact is stranger than fiction because fiction has to make sense. You never suspected what was going on because what was going on was so unexpected. Why would a good person suspect criminal or immoral acts from someone they cared about?

Good stories are irresistible, and you have a good story to tell. It is a story about the difference between appearance and reality. You have a right to see it on the small screen, though a screenwriter may have to tone it down a bit to make it more believable.

Wayne & Tamara

## THE OPPOSITE SEX

**Q** I agree that men have a different level of sexual desire than women, but at the same time I don't agree they need to bring images of other women in their mind for self-gratification. As a woman I also have desires to be released, and I don't need to get images of men to get the job done!

This is not because I am not a visual person; it is because I find it would be disrespectful. There are other ways to take care of business.

Dolly

**A** Dolly, in the musical "My Fair Lady" Professor Henry Higgins sings, "Why can't a woman be more like a man?" We often

get letters from women who seem to be humming a tune called "Why can't a man be more like a woman?"

Two thousand years ago the Roman poet Ovid wrote about Pygmalion, a sculptor who was revolted by the flaws of the female sex. This confirmed bachelor created a statue of a woman so realistic he fell in love with it. Then the goddess Venus took pity on Pygmalion and brought the statue to life.

No one will bring to life a woman's idea of what a man should be like, nor bring to life a man's idea of a woman. But understanding what we are actually like makes possible a love deeper than anything we can imagine.

Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF ([www.yourotherhalf.com](http://www.yourotherhalf.com))

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

or email: [GetInTouch@WayneAndTamara.com](mailto:GetInTouch@WayneAndTamara.com)

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## HOROSCOPE

Week of May 18 to 24, 2025

The luckiest signs this week:  
TAURUS, GEMINI AND CANCER



### ARIES

Your trust in a friend is starting to crumble. You'll have more clarity this week to identify who in your life is genuine and who is just taking advantage of you. This will help you reconnect and spend time with those who truly bring you joy.



### TAURUS

It will be up to you to take charge and plan a major project. You'll also have a chance to showcase your talents and skills in front of a large audience. This could increase your chances of getting a promotion.



### GEMINI

You'll feel a strong urge to travel this week. In your haste, you'll reach out to your travel agent to ensure you have the perfect summer vacation lined up. You might also consider some training opportunities.



### CANCER

Your attention may be preoccupied with strong emotions this week, and you may feel overwhelmed with a desire for change. Sometimes a small refresh, like buying new clothes or getting a new haircut, can bring just the right amount of satisfaction.



### LEO

Your emotions will fluctuate this week. It's up to you to bring your loved ones together and enjoy some pleasant moments. You may also find joy and satisfaction at your place of work.



### VIRGO

Prepare for a busy week at work with plenty of tasks on your plate. If you stay carefully organized, you'll easily tackle your ever-growing workload. Avoid the temptation to procrastinate.



### LIBRA

You'll face challenges that drive you to outdo yourself. You have the potential to achieve something remarkable this week, a feat that's sure to fill you with pride.



### SCORPIO

Happiness is within reach at home and with your loved ones. Take this opportunity to bring your friends and family together for a pleasant meal as you welcome better weather.



### SAGITTARIUS

Now is the perfect time to make much-needed changes. You might secure the financial support required to pursue new projects, like travel or professional training.



### CAPRICORN

Make time for physical activity this week to take your mind off your worries. If your relationship is still in the early stages, you may be overcome with affection and feel ready to take the next step. However, you may be worried about losing your independence.



### AQUARIUS

By taking action, you'll achieve success. You're someone who builds dreams with confidence. If you plan to move this summer, start packing now to avoid last-minute stress later.



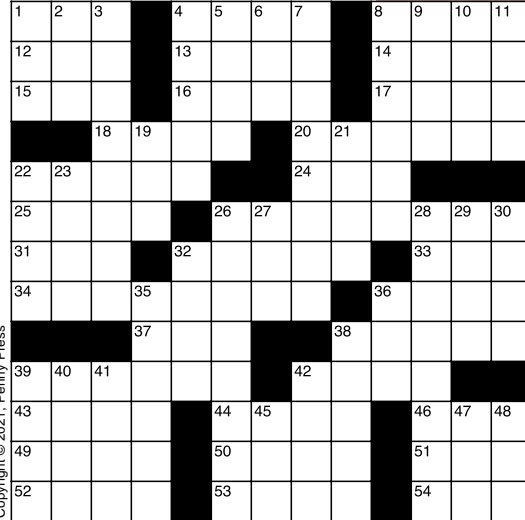
### PISCES

Even though you're feeling tired and under the weather, you won't back down easily. Focus on regaining your energy, and you'll find the clarity and strength you need to move forward.

# Coffee Break

## CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 280



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### ACROSS

- Boring tool
- Store
- Little devils
- Asian sauce source
- Perceive sound
- Capture
- Feminine pronoun
- Feed the pot
- Penalty
- Ailments
- Whimpered
- Transfer sticker
- Small hotel
- Anxious
- Climbing flower: 2 wds.
- "\_\_\_\_\_ the season ..."
- Celestial bodies
- Film critic Reed
- Height above sea level
- Bridge charge
- Rouge color

### DOWN

- Fire residue
- Suffering
- Ira Gershwin, famously
- "\_\_\_\_\_ We Dance?"
- Chicks' mothers
- Grain
- Movie opening
- Baby

### ACROSS

- Old hat
- Salary
- Canvas cover
- Colorful sign
- Lunch hour
- Easter edible
- Feel concern
- Pulls
- Bashful
- Parodied
- Command to Fido
- Male turkey

### DOWN

- Leading
- Yearn for intensely
- Winter coaster
- Young fellow
- Change for a five
- Computer input
- Sermon topic
- Pupils
- Bundle of bills
- Possibility
- Snaky swimmers
- Automobile part
- Derive
- Did a laundry chore
- Sticky roofing material
- Violet variety
- Ancient Peruvian
- Kind of tide
- Essence
- Nero's garment
- Pitcher's goal
- Thick stuff
- Bodybuilder's place

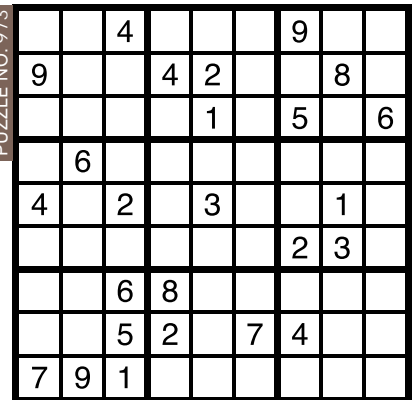
## Sudoku

### HOW TO PLAY:

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

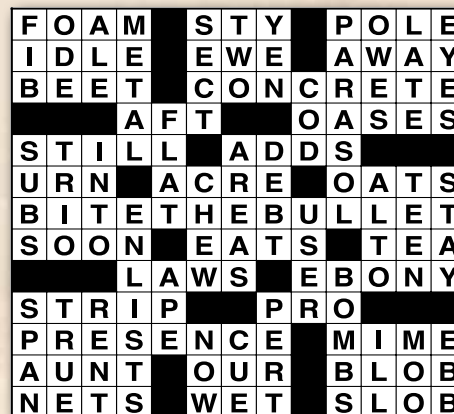
Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.

PUZZLE NO. 973

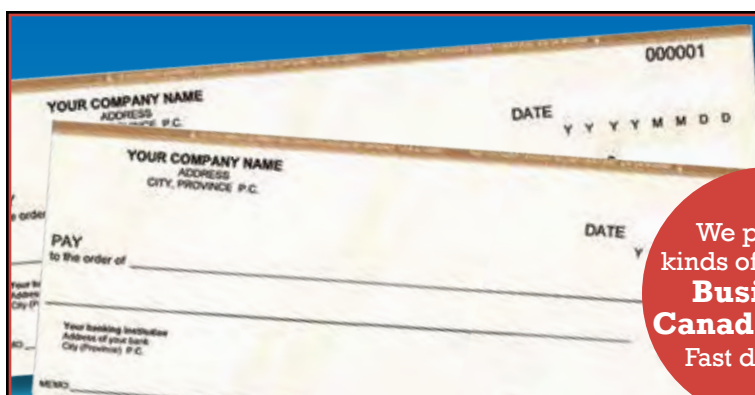
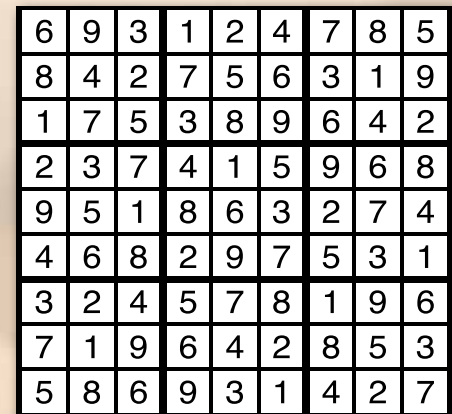


## Last Issue's Answers

### CROSSWORDS



### Sudoku



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