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Among the officials on hand for the official opening of the Centre communautaire Simonne-Monet-Chartrand were a half-dozen city councillors, Mayor Stéphane Boyer, as well as the executive-directors of the city's housing authority and the centre itself. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

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Laval city councillors table petitions during September council meeting

Karidogiannis submits motion for a memorial recognizing contributions of Laval's Greeks

MARTIN C. BARRY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
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In a municipality the size and as populous as the City of Laval, one of the many things that takes place during city council meetings is the tabling of petitions from residents seeking interventions on a range of issues.

At every monthly council meeting, there is a period around the beginning when councillors in the 21 districts formally present the petitions, which are accepted and registered by the city's chief clerk.

Petitions tabled during meeting

During the September 9 council meeting, Laval-Les Îles councillor Nicholas Borne presented a petition started by Robert Papillon of Pesant St. in the district, asking that the city conduct an analysis of speed bumps installed on the street. According to Councillor Borne, 43 residents of the street signed the petition.

A petition was also tabled by Duvernay district councillor Achille Cifelli, regarding a skating rink at Val-des-Arbres Park, where, according to the 222 residents who signed the petition, the rink is in poor condition and has been moved to various locations over time, most recently to make space for a dog park.

Safety issues on Lévesque Blvd.



Independent city councillor for Saint-Vincent-de-Paul Paolo Galati tabled a petition gathered by residents of St-Jean St. and Lévesque Blvd. East in his district, expressing concern about the safety of pedestrians, many of

them children, as well as public transit users, because of traffic hazards on Lévesque Blvd.

"Traffic on Lévesque Blvd. East has become much too fast and too dense," Galati said while tabling the petition.

"Vehicles are passing regularly at an excessive speed, making it extremely dangerous to cross, especially for children going to school, to the park or to neighbourhood activities, as well as for families who must cross this artery, and users of the STL who most cross to get to bus stops."

Girl killed by car in 2016

Galati said that over the years, he's often raised the issue, and that in 2016 a young girl was killed after being hit by a car on Lévesque while she was walking along with her father, her grandmother and another child.

He said the residents are therefore demanding that the city act urgently and concretely by implementing the following measures: installation of a pedestrian crosswalk with an adapted traffic light, reduction of the maximum speed to 40 km/h between des Cépées Blvd. and Roger Lortie Ave., and addition of a solar panel with a digital speed display.

"This citizen initiative is a pressing appeal for prevention in order to avoid that a serious accident, or worse a tragedy like the one in 2016, does not happen again," added Galati, demanding that the city's traffic department develop an action plan quickly.

Suicide Prevention Month



During a period reserved for councillors' statements and new business, Chomedey independent councillor Aglaia Revelakis noted that September has been set aside on the calendar as the National Month for the Prevention of Suicide.

"This is a moment that reminds us undeniably of those persons in our community who are in need of help, as well as those who have been impacted by this problem," said Revelakis.

"Mental health is important and asking for help is a sign of strength rather than weakness," she continued. "Together, let us create a community where support, compassion and understanding make all the difference."

At the same time, Revelakis wished her Jewish constituents a happy Rosh Hashanah, and she wished good luck to all the incumbent and new candidates in the upcoming municipal elections taking place on November 2.

Memorial sought for Greeks



L'Abord-à-Plouffe city councillor Vasileios Karidogiannis noted that he recently met with the newly-elected president of the Hellenic Community of Greater Montreal, Basile Angelopoulos, to discuss a variety of issues.

Karidogiannis added that Laval's Greek population is among the five most significant multicultural communities in the city, with more than 20,000 people being of Hellenic heritage.

He tabled a resolution during the council meeting proposing the installation in a public place along Souvenir Blvd. of a memorial of some kind paying homage to the contributions made in Laval by the Greek diaspora.

Crime and safety rise as top issue as parliament resumes

Liberals and Conservatives tied

BY DAVID COLETTTO

From September 12 to 17, 2,230 Canadian adults were surveyed. Here are the results.

1. Affordability still dominates, but crime is rising fast

57% of Canadians say the rising cost of living is a top issue. But the most notable movement is around crime and public safety: now 20% put it in their top three issues, up from 16% just two weeks ago. This is one of the fastest-rising issues we've tracked all year. Concern is high-

est among older Canadians, Ontarians, and Conservative voters.

2. Liberals and Conservatives are tied

If an election were held today, both parties would receive 40% of the vote. The Liberals are down slightly since earlier this month, the Conservatives are holding steady, and the NDP has edged up to 8%. Regionally, the Liberals lead in Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada, while the Conservatives are strong in the Prairies and slightly ahead in BC.

3. Seniors show signs of shifting

Perhaps the most important demographic movement we see is among Canadians 60 and over. Liberal support has dipped to 42%, down from 45% earlier this month, while Conservative support has inched up to 40%. That narrows what was a 7-point Liberal lead among seniors to essentially a tie.

4. Leaders' images are stable

Prime Minister Mark Carney's approval remains at 50%, with a net favourability of +18. Pierre Poilievre's ratings have also held steady

at -1 net. Both leaders remain competitive as the fall session begins.

The big picture

This wave underscores a political environment that is both competitive and unsettled. Affordability continues to dominate public concerns, but the rise in crime and safety as a priority issue could shape the debates this fall. At the same time, small shifts among seniors—an important part of the Liberal coalition—signal potential vulnerabilities.

You can read the full analysis and detailed numbers online at abacusdata.ca.

BEFORE ELECTION WAS HELD TODAY, WHICH NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTY WOULD YOU VOTE FOR? (UNDECIDED REMOVED)

	CURRENT VOTE SHARE	SEPTEMBER 2, 2025	CHANGE
LIBERAL	40%	43%	-3
CONSERVATIVE	40%	40%	NC
NDP	8%	6%	+2
BQ	7%	7%	NC
PEOPLE'S	1%	1%	NC
GREEN	3%	2%	+1
OTHER	1%	1%	NC



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OPINION & Editorial



Towards a silent campaign?

Until now, the 2025 municipal election campaign is unfolding in an unusually hushed manner. Political parties, traditionally eager to court public attention through rallies, debates, and media coverage, have opted for a minimalist approach this year. Instead of inviting journalists to cover their events or engaging in public discourse, they are relying almost exclusively on press releases to communicate their platforms and activities and social media.

This shift toward a "silent campaign" raises troubling questions about transparency, accountability, and the health of democratic participation in Laval.

The 2025 campaign feels more like a corporate rollout than a democratic exercise. Candidates and parties are issuing carefully worded press releases, often devoid of meaningful detail or direct engagement.

This strategy may be efficient, but it is also exclusionary. By avoiding live events and direct

media interaction, political actors sidestep scrutiny. There are no follow-up questions, no spontaneous moments, no opportunities for journalists to probe inconsistencies or challenge vague promises. The result is a sanitized narrative that benefits incumbents and well-resourced campaigns while leaving voters in the dark.

Democracy thrives on debate, dissent, and dialogue. When political parties choose to bypass the media, they also bypass the public conversation. Press releases, no matter how informative, cannot replace the dynamic exchange of ideas that occurs in interviews, debates, and town halls.

Residents rely on their two newspapers, Laval News and Courrier Laval, for election coverages. Throughout their existence they have proven their journalistic integrity.

Without access to events where they can ask pertinent questions, their ability to inform the public is severely limited. The media's role is not just to report—it is to challenge, contextualize, and amplify. When political parties exclude jour-

nalists, they undermine this role and weaken the democratic fabric of the city.

Citizens deserve better

Laval's residents deserve a campaign that respects their intelligence and values their participation. They deserve candidates who are willing to speak openly, answer tough questions, and engage with the community.

The silent campaign may be convenient for political actors, but it is a disservice to the electorate. It fosters apathy, erodes trust, and diminishes the legitimacy of the electoral process.

A call to action

It's not too late to change course. Political parties in Laval should reconsider their approach and invite the media back into the fold. Citizens should demand more from those who seek to represent them.

George Guzman
Co-publisher
Laval News



Letter to the Editor

Disappearance of cats

To the Editor,
I am writing to raise awareness about a troubling pattern affecting pet owners near the Chomedey woods in Laval. Several residents whose homes border or are close to the woods have reported the sudden disappearance of their cats. Personally, I lost two cats within one week; I live directly across from one of the trailheads.

One neighbor on 58e Avenue, whose property borders the woods and the Biotech Park, saw

what she initially thought was a dog—but there was no owner in sight. Others walking their dogs in the area have heard reports of two young coyotes possibly residing in the woods.

While we lack concrete footage, the consistency of these accounts strongly suggests coyotes may be responsible for the missing pets. I contacted the Ville de Laval's Service de l'environnement, but have yet to receive a response. Another resident also reached out to the city

and was disappointed by the lack of follow-up.

At the very least, I believe the city should investigate these reports and issue a public advisory. Pet owners, especially those with cats and small dogs, deserve to be informed and take precautions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.
Sincerely,

Amalia Caporicci
Chomedey, Laval

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Laval declares its efficiency improvements to be a success

Nearly a year after the initial implementation of a municipal efficiency plan, officials with the City of Laval say they have achieved some real improvements in services offered to the city's population.

"By setting clear objectives, transparent management and a structured accountability, the administration is modernizing its practices in order to offer its citizens an experience that's smoother, more efficient and better adapted to the population's needs," the city states in a press release issued last week.

"We were looking for some in-depth change and the results are there," said Mayor Stéphane Boyer. "The services are faster, more accessible,

more efficient and simpler.

"This is the result of some hard work, of a clear vision and commitment from everyone in the organization," he continued. "Modernizing our administration means we are fully taking up our responsibility towards all citizens, which is to offer quality services, at a fair cost while meeting expectations."

The city reports that during the first months this year, the average waiting time for callers to its 311 centralized info service fell to 63 seconds, representing an 87 per cent improvement over 496 seconds in 2021.

During the same period, 81 per cent of requests were dealt with within that time frame, for a

10 per cent improvement compared to 2024. The city says this was in spite of an 11 per cent increase in the number of calls received.

The improvements were achieved, according to the city, through the use of a digital platform, the Mon Dossier web portal, which was developed internally. More than 85 per cent of requests received for things such as permits, subsidies or declarations are processed via this platform now. "By going for digital solutions like the Mon Dossier portal, we are simplifying access to services, while also making the internal process lighter," said Tania Fonrose, director of the city's citizen experience department.

"This reorganization of work allows not only

an improvement in citizen experience, but also for better use of resources. The 311 service, for example, was able to absorb a significant increase in requests with additional staff, thanks to the efficiency gains generated."

Beginning this winter, permit applications and certificates from the urban planning department can be obtained online through the Mon Dossier portal. The City of Laval has won a number of awards for its work on resolving these issues, including some from the Institut d'administration publique du Québec (IAPQ), the Réseau de l'informatique municipale du Québec (RIMQ) and the Project Management Institute of Montreal.

A new concert hall and events venue opens in Saint-François



Residents from all over Laval will be able to enjoy a range of shows and entertainments at the latest concert hall and events venue to be completed and opened by the city.

Located in the Espace citoyen des Confluents (ECC) in the district of Saint-François, the multipurpose hall hosted its first show on September 20, although there will be more to come, according to the city.

"As the first professional quality concert hall in eastern Laval, it offers 180 seats in a modern and quality building," says Laval city councillor

for Sainte-Rose Flavia Alexandra Novac, who is responsible for cultural dossiers on city council.

"With the opening of this new hall, the ECC will be a gathering place that's even more outstanding for the community of Laval, especially those from the east end of the island," added Novac.

Some of the events and shows on the schedule at the hall over the coming months:

- **Liberté Big Band:** A jazz and classical ensemble made up of seasoned and professional musicians.

- **Guided tour:** On the city's Journées de la culture, learn more about the workings of a professional concert hall, including acoustics.
- **Boubacar Ndiaye:** A spoken word event combining art and music.
- **Salsalazar:** Music from Québec, Cuba, Peru Colombia and Chile.
- **Kutsi Merki:** Folklore from Bulgaria with dance.
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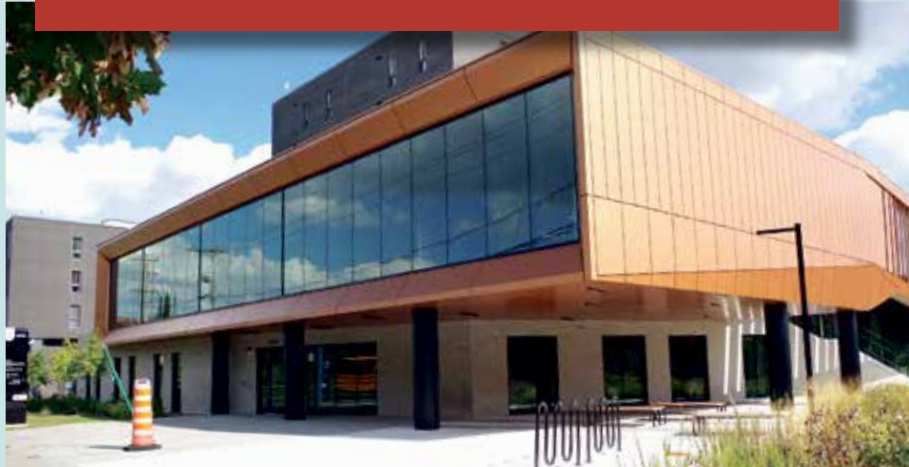
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 LAVAL

Laval opens new community centre in Val-Martin



MARTIN C. BARRY
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
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A new municipal community centre in one of Laval's more disadvantaged neighbourhoods was officially declared open earlier this month by officials from the city as well as community activists who had long urged Laval to move forward with the project.

The Centre communautaire Simonne-Monet-Chartrand is located on Notre-Dame Blvd. on the boundary that separates the city's Chomedey and l'Abord-à-Plouffe neighbourhoods.

Designed to primarily serve residents of the nearby Val-Martin social housing district, the community centre (costing \$17 million, not including the housing) was conceived to fit in snugly with a seven-storey subsidized residential building.

Old replaced with new

Completion of the project also marked the culmination of the first phase of a major overhaul of the Val-Martin neighbourhood, which was started by former Laval mayor Marc Demers and continued under Mayor Stéphane Boyer.

At one time, Val-Martin was notorious for its run-down and mould-infested subsidized housing units, many of which were condemned and demolished.

And indeed, a certain number of the old units can still be seen on nearby streets, boarded over and abandoned, as new units (paid for largely with sums from higher levels of government) are gradually built to replace them.

Phase One completed

According to a press release issued by the City of Laval, this was the conclusion of the first of several phases to revitalize Val-Martin.

It was a process that was kickstarted in 2016 by the municipal housing department (Office municipal d'habitation de Laval OMHL), in conjunction with the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp (CMHC). In all, 359 new social housing units will have been completed when all is said and done.

The centre was named after labor activist, feminist writer and pacifist Simonne Monet-Chartrand. In addition to her social activism, she was married to Quebec labor leader Michel Chartrand.

A multifunctional place

Conceived to encourage inclusion, creativ-

ity and communal living, the centre includes focused facilities for youths and families, a food bank and a community kitchen, a large communal gathering space, multifunctional rooms, as well as interior spaces for dancing and other types of artistic and cultural events.

With the task of building now accomplished, the City of Laval is seeking to have the Centre communautaire Simonne-Monet-Chartrand certified LEED Gold as an internationally-recognized, environmentally-sustainable facility. Worth noting is that the centre was designed to be easily accessible by pedestrians and by public transit.

"Taking into consideration the scarcity of affordable housing, the inauguration of the Simonne-Monet-Chartrand community centre demonstrates that Laval acts decisively to create living spaces that are accessible, sustainable and unifying," said Mayor Stéphane Boyer.

'Building neighbourhoods'

"This project demonstrates our willingness to go higher than the simple construction of housing," he continued. "We are building entire neighbourhoods where apartments, services and meeting spaces are side by side. With our partners, we are setting down the bases for an exemplary revitalization that restores dignity, hope and a sense of belonging to the families of Val-Martin, and, more widely, to the entire community in Laval."

"The centre is much more than just a building," said the centre's executive-director, Noémie Barolet. "Our vision is a clear one: to make Chomedey a neighbourhood where you can grow. With the Centre Simonne-Monet-Chartrand, we are laying down a cornerstone to get there, by wagering on the strength of the collective, along with citizen creativity and solidarity."

A 'magnificent project,' says opposition

The project's completion received praise not only from the mayor's side of the Laval city council chamber (it's located just within the boundaries of l'Abord-à-Plouffe councillor Vasilios Karidogiannis's district), but also from Claude Larochelle, leader of the Parti Laval (the official opposition).

"It's a magnificent project," Larochelle said in an interview with The Laval News, while adding that the city chose to locate the centre in the best possible place where it was most needed. "This is a place where a project like this was most needed. That said, my hat's off to a good project in the right location."

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Assistance dog helps Laval youth in sensitive interventions

MATTHEW DALDALIAN
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Two years after his arrival, an assistance dog named Mac is being credited with helping hundreds of children navigate some of the most difficult moments of their lives in Laval's youth protection system.

The Centre Intégré de Santé et de Services Sociaux (CISSS) de Laval says the furry



companion, trained by the MIRA Foundation, has taken part in more than 300 interventions since 2023. The dog works alongside criminologist Daphnée Morency Mac Donald at the Direction de la Protection de la Jeunesse (DPJ).

Officials describe Mac's presence as a way to reduce anxiety and build trust when children face interviews, court proceedings or emotionally charged announcements. "Mac acts as a bridge between the child and the caregiver. He reduces anxiety, eases tension, and opens the way to authentic exchanges in moments when speaking is sometimes difficult," Mac Donald said in a CISSS presse release.

Frontline role

In an interview with The Laval News, Mac Donald noted that Mac's role is specific to youth protection interventions. "There really is a nuance," she said.

That can mean accompanying a child during a police video interview, sitting quietly at their side in court, or simply being present during the delivery of difficult news such as a foster placement or the death of a parent.

"It doesn't necessarily make the task easier, but it does make it more calming for the child because of the dog's presence," Mac Donald said.

She noted that children also interact with Mac during less formal moments, such as waiting for appointments or during supervised visits. Sometimes they simply play with Mac in the

corridor, giving them what she described as "a more normal time."

Concrete impact

Mac Donald recalled cases where Mac's presence shifted the outcome. In one file, a teenage girl requested the dog's support at multiple steps of her journey, from youth protection meetings to appointments with a psychiatrist. "Mac brought some comfort in what was coming for her," Mac Donald said.

Another case involved a child with selective mutism who had not spoken during earlier interventions. With Mac in the room, she said, the child began to verbalize. "Once the dog was there, we saw that the process was moving forward."

According to Mac Donald, colleagues in other units also requested the dog's support for their cases, with his growing reputation inside the DPJ.

A steady companion

Mac Donald noted that part of Mac's effectiveness comes from his ability to remain calm and available for long periods "except when there are moments when he can allow himself not to." She credits this tendency to switch between modes to his effectiveness in dealing with children.

The CISSS said the project was made possible with funding from the Fondation Cité de la Santé. Jean-François Payette, director of



Daphnée Morency Mac Donald, criminologist, and Mac. (Photo courtesy of CISSS)

youth protection in Laval, called it a hopeful example of innovation in social services. "This assessment is a source of hope. It shows that innovation in health and social services can take unexpected, but profoundly effective forms," she said.

Broader context

The CISSS de Laval employs more than 13,000 people across over 30 facilities, including the Hôpital de la Cité-de-la-Santé and several youth and rehabilitation centres. Affiliated with Université de Montréal and McGill University, it has positioned Mac as part of a larger push to test human-centred approaches.

For Mac Donald, the results speak for themselves. From quiet companionship in a courtroom to playful moments in a hallway, she said, the dog has become a steady presence for children facing upheaval.

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Laval Unveils

The results of the Participatory Budget vote



Six ideas will come true



The winning projects in the 2nd edition of the city of Laval's participatory budget have now been announced and are scheduled to be carried out by 2027. Created and voted on by Laval residents, the projects are intended to beautify our neighbourhoods and improve our quality of life.

Projects in all districts

1

Des potagers dans nos quartiers (Vegetable gardens in our neighbourhoods)

Enhancing activities at all Laval's community gardens to encourage urban agriculture and strengthen community ties

2

Du fun pour les personnes âgées (Fun for seniors)

Planning a program of fun-filled and learning activities to be offered at all libraries in order to create opportunities for socializing and enjoyment

3

Sécurité alimentaire à Laval (Food safety in Laval)

Planning a program of educational activities focusing on cooking and healthy eating at existing community kitchens and dedicated organizations

4

Haltes mécano vélo (Bicycle repair and rest areas)

Installing bicycle repair and rest facilities at 9 locations to encourage active transportation

5

Utiliser l'inutilisé (Using the unused)

Creating walking paths and trails with rest areas and local artwork in Notre-Dame and Venise parks
(Fabreville-Est / Sainte-Rose district)

6

Tout le monde en selle (Everyone in the saddle)

Improving bicycle and pedestrian safety along various sections of Boulevard du Souvenir
(Pont-Viau, Laval-des-Rapides and Chomedey districts)

A participatory approach makes a difference

The Participatory Budget process provides an opportunity for residents to participate in public decision-making by selecting projects to be implemented on city territory.

This participatory process came to a close with a vote in which 5,534 people took part. This rate of participation represents 1.24% of the population – a rate that is in line with the best international practices.

See the full project descriptions at
repensonslaval.ca/budget-participatif



Liberals make appearance as Val-des-Brises festival draws big crowds



Victoria Belluscio (left), representing Orange Theory Laval East, a fitness studio said the festival helps cement ties with residents on September 14, 2025 (Photo: Matthew Daldalian, Laval News)

MATTHEW DALDALIAN
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The annual Val-des-Brises Neighbourhood festival turned into both a block party and a political stage Sunday as hundreds filled the streets for food, games and face-to-face time with Quebec's Liberal leaders.

The community festival, now in its 16th year, closed off roads in the Duvernay district and spilled into Parc du Royal-22e Régiment for a day of music, inflatable games for kids, a small train ride and even a live-horse carousel. Food trucks lined the pavement— including one from Tim Hortons— while local businesses set up booths offering everything from gym memberships to real estate advice.

Organizers billed the event as a way to bring residents together and raise money for community causes. Volunteers in orange shirts oversaw activities while families mingled under late-summer sun. All proceeds from this year's edition were donated to the Centre de services scolaire de Laval and to the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board Foundation to fund local educational and community projects.

A political showcase

Leader of Quebec's Liberal party, Pablo Rodriguez used the stop to underline his party's momentum ahead of the 2026 provincial election. Surrounded by Laval MNAs Virginie Dufour and Sona Lakhoyan Olivier, he praised the grassroots energy on display.

"When you look at all the orange shirts, it's amazing," Rodriguez said, pointing to the volunteers staffing the festival. "If all the work done by volunteers had to be paid by the government, we couldn't do this. Hats off to them."

He told attendees the Liberals are climbing in the polls and cast the event as proof of a party re-energized in Laval.

Dufour, who represents Mille-Îles, said residents are showing new openness after years of frustration with the governing Coalition Avenir Québec. "People are listening. They're happy to see us. They're happy to see that the Liberals are back," she said.

Lakhoyan Olivier, MNA for Chomedey, struck a similar note, saying locals were eager to meet Rodriguez in person. "Whoever sees Pablo, even today, wherever we are, they run to say hello," she said.

Community front and centre

Still, politics were only one part of the day. Booths from local businesses drew steady traffic from passersby. Victoria Belluscio, representing Orange Theory Laval East, a fitness studio said the festival helps cement ties with residents.

"There's a lot of energy today," she said. "We already have a lot of people from Val-des-Brises who come to the gym, so this is just getting more integrated with the community."

A wheel of prizes at her table offered free classes, week passes and merchandise, attracting curious families and first-time gym-goers.

Real estate agent Alex Haddou, taking part for the eighth year, said his team sees the event as a chance to give back. "It's not only about the business. It's more about community," he said, recalling past partnerships with local grocers and sports clubs.

Children gravitated to his booth for balloons and other giveaways while parents lined up to ask about the housing market.



Leader of Quebec's Liberal party, Pablo Rodriguez with Laval MNAs Virginie Dufour and Sona Lakhoyan Olivier on September 14, 2025. (Photo: Matthew Daldalian, Laval News)

A block party feel

Residents described the festival as one of the rare occasions where neighbours from across Val-des-Brises come together on such a scale. Streets were filled with families moving from booth to booth, music echoing over the crowd and the smell of food wafting from the trucks.

Rodriguez, who at one point joked about trying the cannoli on offer, said the chance to share food and conversation is what he values most about the festival. "Meet people, shake hands and try some food," he said.

The event was organized by Achille Cifelli, municipal councillor for Val-des-Brises, with all proceeds from this year's edition going to the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Foundation to fund educational and community projects for local students.

Looking ahead

For Liberals, the festival was an early test of their ability to connect with voters on the ground. Rodriguez positioned his party as a responsible alternative ready to take over in 2026.

"We have to help [small and medium-sized businesses] to become more productive through innovation, through research and development," he said, tying economic priorities to the family-focused setting of the fair.

But for most who came out, politics were secondary to the sense of neighbourhood belonging. From children laughing on the carousel to parents balancing bags of fried food and drinks, the Fête de quartier de Val-des-Brises again proved itself as Laval's late-summer block party— one where residents, businesses and politicians share the same street.



Real estate agent Alex Haddou and his team took part of the festival for the eighth year on September 14, 2025. (Photo: Matthew Daldalian, Laval News)

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Nearly a month after Air Canada's four-day strike stranded hundreds of thousands of passengers worldwide, Laval residents are now wading through the airline's compensation process. While some report relatively smooth experiences, others say they are still waiting for answers.

The strike by more than 10,000 flight attendants between August 16 and 19 disrupted more than 3,000 flights and left some 550,000 people scrambling for alternatives. It was the first flight attendant walkout since 2011 not immediately halted by federal back-to-work legislation.

Filing claims

For Laval resident Rosy Trimboli, whose family trip to Europe was stretched into an exhausting ordeal, the aftermath has been surprisingly straightforward.

"I submitted the... out of pocket expenses for extra week. So Airbnb, food, taxis, all the extra expenses incurred as a result of the strike. And within, I think it was the next day, I received a confirmation with a case number," she said.

Trimboli also filed for additional compensation under EU261, a European regulation that entitles travellers departing from the EU to up to 600 euros per passenger.

The airline confirmed her claim. "Everyone got confirmation that their request had been received and they were entitled to the compensation of €600 per passenger plus the expenses that I submitted out of pocket," she said. "All in all, I'm quite content with the outcome, to be honest. It was still stressful. It was, you know, it

wasn't a fun five days. But I didn't have to fight too much."

She added that the payout could take "up to four to six weeks" but said she is reassured by the confirmation number and approval notice.

Others still waiting

Other passengers say the process is less straightforward.

Christine, another Laval resident whose family trip was disrupted by the strike, said she applied for compensation but has not yet received a response. She expects the delay to stretch until at least the end of September, since Air Canada told her the timeline for claims is four to six weeks.

Similarly, Laval resident Jennifer Bovin said her family's request is still in process. She confirmed the claim has been filed but that she has not

heard back from the airline.

The differences reflect a patchwork system where outcomes depend on the jurisdiction of travel. Under Canada's Air Passenger Protection Regulations (APPR), a strike is considered outside of an airline's control, meaning passengers are not entitled to cash compensation—only refunds or rebooking. But under EU and U.K. rules, the strike is considered within the airline's control, making customers eligible for compensation on top of reimbursement.

Millions potentially owed

According to Toronto-based startup Airfairness, Air Canada could owe passengers more than \$66 million under EU261 and UK261 rules alone. The firm, which scrapes aviation data to help travellers file claims, estimates that thousands



of passengers are eligible for sums of up to 600 euros or 520 pounds sterling depending on the jurisdiction.

Air Canada, for its part, previously told the Toronto Star that it is processing claims on a rolling basis and said it follows all applicable regulations in the jurisdictions where it operates.

Long waits

Online forums such as the Air Passenger Rights Facebook group, which Trimboli credited for guiding her claim, remain filled with frustrated passengers comparing experiences. Some cite days of silence, while others say the airline has rejected receipts or delayed reimbursements.

The Canadian Transportation Agency, which enforces the APPR, reported a backlog of more than 85,000 complaints even before the August strike. Advocates argue that Canada's protections remain weaker than those in Europe.

For Trimboli, persistence and paperwork paid off. "I had entered all my expenses, I had scanned all the invoices or the receipts, submitted everything. I mean it was work," she said. I was surprised, but it's fair and it was rather quick."

But for others like Christine and Bovin, the wait continues.

Nearly 430,000 Quebecers left an emergency room without treatment last year, finds the MEI

EMMANUELLE B. FAUBERT

Across Canada, over 1.2 million patients left emergency rooms untreated last year.

Economist at the MEI

The number of patients leaving Quebec's emergency rooms without being treated is rising, reveals a report published this morning by the MEI.

"These patients are not leaving because they feel better, but because the system is failing them," says Emmanuelle B. Faubert, economist at the MEI and author of the report. "Thousands of Quebecers are being denied access to care each year."

In 2024, Quebec recorded over 3.7 million emergency room visits. Of these, 428,676 ended

with a patient leaving before receiving treatment, representing 11.6 per cent of all visits.

This marks a worsening trend, with the ratio of patients leaving increasing by 8.8 per cent since 2019.

Patients in Quebec walk away from emergency rooms without receiving care at a rate that is higher than the national average of 7.8 per cent.

Across Canada, 16.3 million emergency room visits were made last year, and 1,267,736 patients were left untreated—around one in every thirteen visits. This data doesn't include patients living in Saskatchewan, or those covered by New Brunswick's Vitalité Santé health network, those health authorities having both failed to provide the requested 2024 data in time for publication.

The deterioration is observed nationwide, as rates of premature departures have risen

significantly since 2019. Last year the number of Canadian patients leaving without treatment increased by 35.6 per cent.

Most patients leaving an emergency room untreated in Quebec are classified as either P4 or P5, representing semi-urgent and non-urgent cases. Because they are deemed low priority, these patients are pushed to the back of the line and face some of the longest ER waits. This testifies to a lack of access to primary care.

The MEI researcher emphasized that patients forced to delay or forgo care often end up suffering from worsening conditions, which lead to more complex cases.

In a U.S. study conducted between 2019 and 2020, researchers found that 55 per cent of patients who left an emergency room before being treated ended up consulting a healthcare professional within three weeks of their initial

visit.

The MEI recommends increasing access to upstream care, which includes:

- Increasing the use of specialized nurse practitioner clinics;
- Granting the broadest scope of practice to pharmacists; and
- Allowing for the creation of non-governmental Immediate Care Medical Centres, based on the French model, to treat non-life-threatening emergencies.

"Solving the crisis in primary care is essential if we want to keep patients from continuing to fall through the cracks," says Ms. Faubert. "Policymakers must find the political courage to open up healthcare delivery to independent and alternative providers, or else this crisis is bound to get worse."

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With the searing heat of summer finally over, what could be more fitting for fitness-conscious



FILIA founder and executive director Johanna Tsoublekas summarized the group's activities over the past year prior to the start of the Walk a Thon in Chomedey. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

For a certain number of senior citizens from Laval who are loyal supporters of FILIA, the group's September Walk a Thon is an outdoor event at Saint Norbert Park in eastern Chomedey never to be missed.

The 19th annual Walk a Thon on Sept. 15 drew a loyal following of FILIA members, as well as a few elected officials who have provided a significant amount help to the organization for years.

The goal of the day was to raise awareness of the needs of senior citizens – including regular physical exercise – while also raising funds for FILIA so it can continue providing a range of crucial services to seniors, such as a meals-on-wheels program, but also interesting field trips to locations in and outside the Montreal region.

Led for around 30 years by Johanna Tsoublekas who continues to provide guidance and management, FILIA's services include home housekeeping and supervision, volunteer training and a healthcare clinic for the feet.

"For me, this is a must annual gathering," said Laval city councillor for Souvenir-Labelle Sandra El Helou who is responsible for senior citizen dossiers on city council. "It's nearly eight years I've been following FILIA and its mission, and it is as important as ever to provide support," she added.

"It's great to see the number of people who come out here year after year to participate



FILIA supporters walk along Third St. at the corner of 65th Ave. in Chomedey during the 2024 Walk a Thon on Sept. 16. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

and support the meals-on-wheels program," said Montreal city councillor for Parc Extension Mary Deros. (FILIA was initially based in her district, but the last ten years it also serves Chomedey as part of Montreal's Greek population migrated here.)

"Johanna brings people together," said Deros. "She provides the FILIA members with a reason for being. She keeps them active in mind and in body, which is a great accomplishment. Especially when you come to a certain age, sometimes you want to be alone or quiet. But she gets them out of that and keeps everybody active."

Although FILIA's mission at one time was to provide assistance to Greek women of the Parc Extension Hellenic community, then later throughout the Montreal region, the organization's mandate now is to serve senior citizens and people from all backgrounds – with a growing emphasis on the population of Chomedey.

With advancing age, Johanna has been looking over the past two years for someone who might be willing to take over at least some of her responsibilities. In the meantime, her son, Bill, has stepped in, and he was on hand at the Walk a Thon providing assistance.



From the left (foreground standing), Montreal city councillor for Parc Extension Mary Deros, FILIA founder and executive director Johanna Tsublekas and Laval city councillor Sandra El Helou (responsible for senior citizens' issues, are seen here in Saint Norbert Park in eastern Chomedey before the start of the annual FILIA Walk a Thon on Sept. 15. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)



Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News



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Laval residents press city on Berger Blanc contract as euthanasia rates draw scrutiny



Protestors and residents demanded accountability over the city's ongoing contract with Le Berger Blanc outside the city's council meeting on September 9, 2025. (Photo: Matthew Daldalian, Laval News)

MATTHEW DALDALIAN
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At Laval's most recent city council meeting, animal welfare concerns once again took centre stage. Protestors and residents demanded accountability over the city's ongoing contract with Le Berger Blanc, the private shelter and animal control service that has faced criticism for years.

The push follows a June demonstration outside the facility where protestors raised red flags about adoption practices, euthanasia rates, and what they described as a lack of transparency. This time, citizens brought their concerns directly to councillors and Mayor Stéphane Boyer.

Access to information sparks outrage

Among those speaking was Sylvie Desrosiers, a Laval resident who used Quebec's access to information law to request euthanasia statistics from the city earlier this year.

"I've been there on several occasions," she said. "The animals, to visit them, you have to take them out in the parking lot. They clearly aren't being taken outside otherwise. No volunteers, no enrichment. It raises real questions about the conditions they live in."

Desrosiers said she was "shocked" when she reviewed the figures. Between 2023 and April 2025, a total of 1,906 animals were euthanized at the shelter, while 944 were adopted and 413 reclaimed by their owners. In 2024 alone, 960 dogs and cats—about 45 per cent of the animals housed there—were put down.

"The volume of animals that pass through Berger Blanc is immense," she said. "It's worrying."

Calls for systemic reform

Patrick Devos, a retired hospital worker who now advocates for animal welfare, urged the city to consider a broader rethink of how animal services are run in Quebec.

Devos pointed to a 400-page "livre blanc" (white book) authored by former Mont-Saint-Hilaire official Denise Loiselle, which proposes creating a provincial Crown corporation to oversee animal services, replacing for-profit

contracts with publicly run or nonprofit centres.

"I think that in 2025, we should have the money to improve the living conditions of animals so that there will no longer be pounds, but rather animal centers that are ethical and have practices that promote animal welfare," Devos said.

The former hospital worker hopes Laval officials will agree to meet with Loiselle and hear her proposals.

"The city has adopted an ethical and animal welfare philosophy... we have to walk the talk," Devos said.

Organizers keep pressure on

For Any Vézina, a protest organizer who also addressed council, the stakes are too high to ignore.

"We want answers on why there's no transparency, why cages are so small, why so many animals are euthanized," she said. "We want to know why, when the city does its four inspections a year, they don't see what regular citizens see in a single visit."

Vézina warned that unless change comes soon, demonstrators will return each month. "It's impossible that so many of us can witness irregularities, but the city sees nothing," she said.



Any Vézina, a protest organizer who also addressed council, believes the stakes are too high to ignore. Photo taken September 9, 2025. (Photo: Matthew Daldalian, Laval News)

Quebec municipalities, reduces feral populations through vaccination and neutering rather than euthanasia.

Boyer defends city oversight

Mayor Stéphane Boyer acknowledged residents' concerns but defended the city's approach, stressing that Berger Blanc has changed since its widely publicized scandals of 2011.

He said the city receives regular reports and statistics, uses independent veterinarians, and investigates complaints.

Boyer did concede that Berger Blanc's lack of a social media presence limits its reach. "In 2025, it's probably a good idea to be on Facebook to get animals adopted," he said, promising to consider adding such requirements in future contracts.

Debate not going away

For many, including Desrosiers, the city's assurances do little to dispel doubts. "I myself called Berger Blanc a few times. Depending on who you talk to, you get different versions," she said. "It doesn't really advocate transparency."

With Laval paying Berger Blanc \$1 million annually to manage animal control, critics argue that taxpayers deserve greater transparency. The tension reflects a broader debate over whether animal services should be profit-driven at all—a concern echoed in June by Montreal SPCA director Sophie Gaillard, who said municipal or nonprofit models remain the gold standard.

As Vézina put it: "They are living beings. They deserve respect. And if necessary, we will come here every month until we have reached our goal."

Political response

Parti Laval councillors Claude Larochelle (Fabreville) and Louise Lortie (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin) both expressed support for protestors during the council meeting. Lortie, who previously met with demonstrators outside the shelter, spoke about her personal experience hearing about Berger Blanc's conditions.

Both pledged that, if elected in this fall's municipal election, their party would introduce a CSRM program—capture, sterilization, return, and maintenance—focused mainly on stray cats. The model, already in place in other



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Canadians enter the fall with heightened anxiety about stability and the future

BY EDDIE SHEPPARD & DAVID COLETTTO

For many Canadians, September is a time to reset. Kids and students head back to school. Parliament resumes after the summer break, and now troubling headlines about a slowing economy and rising unemployment fill news reports. These moments, while familiar, feel different this year. They come against a backdrop of deepening uncertainty, where families are being forced to make harder choices and where even small disruptions can create cascading effects on household budgets and future plans.

Earlier this year, we introduced the concept of a precarity mindset: a growing feeling that stability is fragile and the next disruption always feels close at hand. Our recent release revealed how this mindset has taken root, showing a sharp rise in the number of Canadians reporting high and extreme levels of perceived precarity.

This follow-up looks at how that growing sense of precarity is playing out in the day-to-day lives of Canadians. It explores what families are feeling as back-to-school costs pile up, how financial fragility is forcing people to delay major life milestones, and how anxiety about the future is leaving many feeling emotionally exhausted as the fall political season begins.

What we find is clear: precarity is no longer just a set of economic indicators or a mood in the polling numbers – it is a lived, daily reality for millions of Canadians. And as Parliament returns, leaders will face the challenge of not just managing short-term crises, and building for the long-term, but rebuilding confidence that the systems Canadians depend on are strong enough to weather what comes next.

Affording the basics

For many Canadians, precarity isn't an abstract concept, it's a lived, daily reality that shows



If you lost your main source of income tomorrow, how long could you maintain your current standard of living?

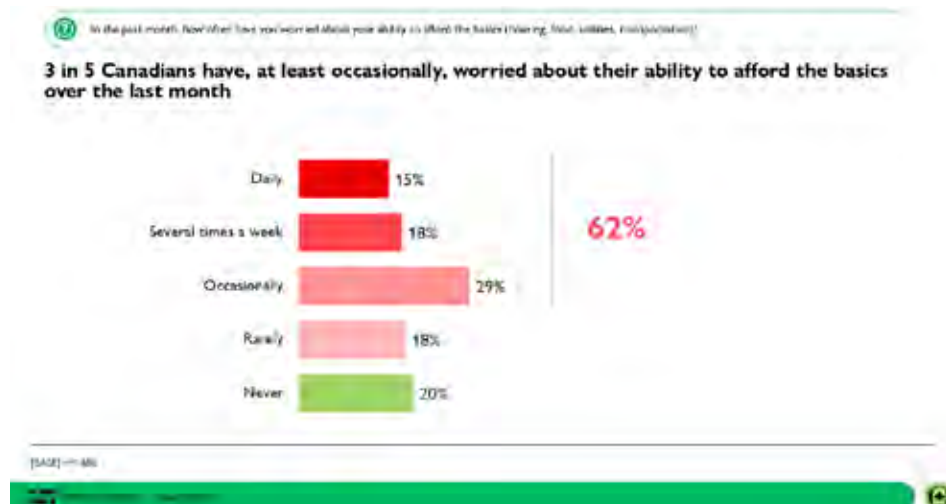
ABILITY TO WITHSTAND INCOME LOSS

Column %	TOTAL	AGE				INCOME			CHILDREN			PRECARITY INDEX					
		18 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60 and older	< \$25k	\$25k - \$50k	> \$100k	No. Ch.	0-1	2-3	4+	Low	Mid	Mod-High	High	Extreme
NET: Less than a month + 1-3 months	47%	54%	35%	54%	49%	62%	48%	33%	53%	45%	60%	31%	41%	43%	53%	51%	
Less than a month	24%	30%	29%	27%	14%	35%	19%	17%	27%	25%	26%	21%	14%	16%	23%	26%	29%
1-3 months	23%	29%	26%	26%	15%	24%	29%	16%	26%	30%	19%	18%	17%	25%	19%	26%	22%
3-6 months	18%	30%	19%	18%	17%	17%	18%	25%	16%	31%	30%	17%	12%	16%	31%	13%	24%
More than 6 months	25%	11%	16%	21%	43%	14%	25%	37%	19%	21%	21%	25%	44%	36%	26%	19%	10%
NET: 3-6 months + More than 6 months	43%	14%	11%	38%	60%	27%	43%	62%	40%	52%	52%	56%	57%	47%	47%	40%	
Not sure	10%	9%	10%	8%	11%	11%	9%	5%	12%	3%	4%	10%	12%	7%	11%	10%	8%

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10



Q12 In the past month, how often have you worried about your ability to afford the basics (housing, food, utilities, transportation)?

CONCERNS ABOUT ABILITY TO AFFORD THE BASICS IN THE LAST MONTH

Column %	TOTAL	AGE	INCOME	CHILDREN	PRECARITY INDEX												
		18 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60 and older	< \$25k	\$25k - \$50k	> \$50k	No. Ch.	0-1	2-3	4+	Low	Mid	Mod-High	High	Extreme
NET: Daily + Several times a week + Occasionally	62%	81%	70%	62%	43%	77%	62%	50%	66%	74%	69%	49%	75%	60%	56%	74%	64%
Daily	15%	20%	18%	17%	9%	21%	13%	9%	17%	18%	19%	13%	8%	10%	10%	19%	24%
Several times a week	18%	25%	25%	19%	4%	24%	16%	13%	21%	24%	19%	13%	11%	9%	17%	19%	12%
Occasionally	29%	37%	27%	27%	36%	28%	31%	26%	32%	30%	26%	3%	31%	21%	21%	16%	22%
Rarely	18%	11%	17%	21%	21%	14%	24%	17%	18%	18%	22%	25%	24%	21%	21%	15%	4%
Never	20%	8%	10%	14%	56%	15%	20%	20%	17%	10%	14%	25%	54%	36%	22%	15%	10%

[BASE] n=1,000

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up every time they open their wallets. Nearly two-thirds (62%) report worrying, at least occasionally, about their ability to afford the basics in the past month, and one in three (33%) say this worry strikes several times a week.

This anxiety cuts sharply across age, income, and family life. It's highest among younger Canadians – 81% of those 18–29 and 70% of those 30–44 worry regularly about covering essentials. Families with children under 12 are also deeply affected (74%), especially during back-to-school season when added costs for supplies and activities spike stress. Lower-income households (73%) face similar strain, highlighting how financial pressure hits hardest for those already struggling.

The link to precarity levels is unmistakable. Among Canadians with a high level of perceived precarity, nearly three-quarters (74%) worry about affording the basics, while that figure jumps to 84% among those in feeling extreme

precarity. These numbers reveal how economic unease is concentrated most heavily among those already living closest to the edge, where even small disruptions, like a missed paycheck or unexpected expense, can quickly spiral into crisis.

Fragile financial security

When asked how long they could maintain their current standard of living if their main source of income was lost, almost half of Canadians (47%) say less than three months. This financial fragility is greatest among younger Canadians – 59% of those 18–29 and 55% of those 30–44 say they could not sustain their lifestyle beyond that window. Lower-income households earning under \$50,000 are even more exposed, with 62% reporting they could not last three months.

► Continued on page 15



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◀ Continued from page 14

Here again, the precarity lens sharpens the picture. Those in our high precarity (55%) and extreme precarity groups (51%) are far more likely to acknowledge their limited financial runway, showing how precariousness translates into an immediate sense of insecurity about the future.

This financial fragility underscores how precarity is not just about attitudes – it reflects a very real vulnerability to economic disruption.

Life on hold: how precarity delays major decisions

The current economic, political, and social climate is causing many Canadians to put their lives on pause. Across the country, 27% say they've avoided making a major purchase, 12% have delayed buying a home, and 11% have postponed changing jobs or careers due to uncertainty.

However, a closer look at the data reveals that younger Canadians and young families are feeling this pressure most acutely. Among those aged 18–29:

- 23% have postponed starting or growing their family.
- 23% have postponed moving to a new city or province.
- 21% have delayed buying a home.
- 21% have held off on changing jobs or careers.

- 19% have delayed pursuing higher education or skills training.

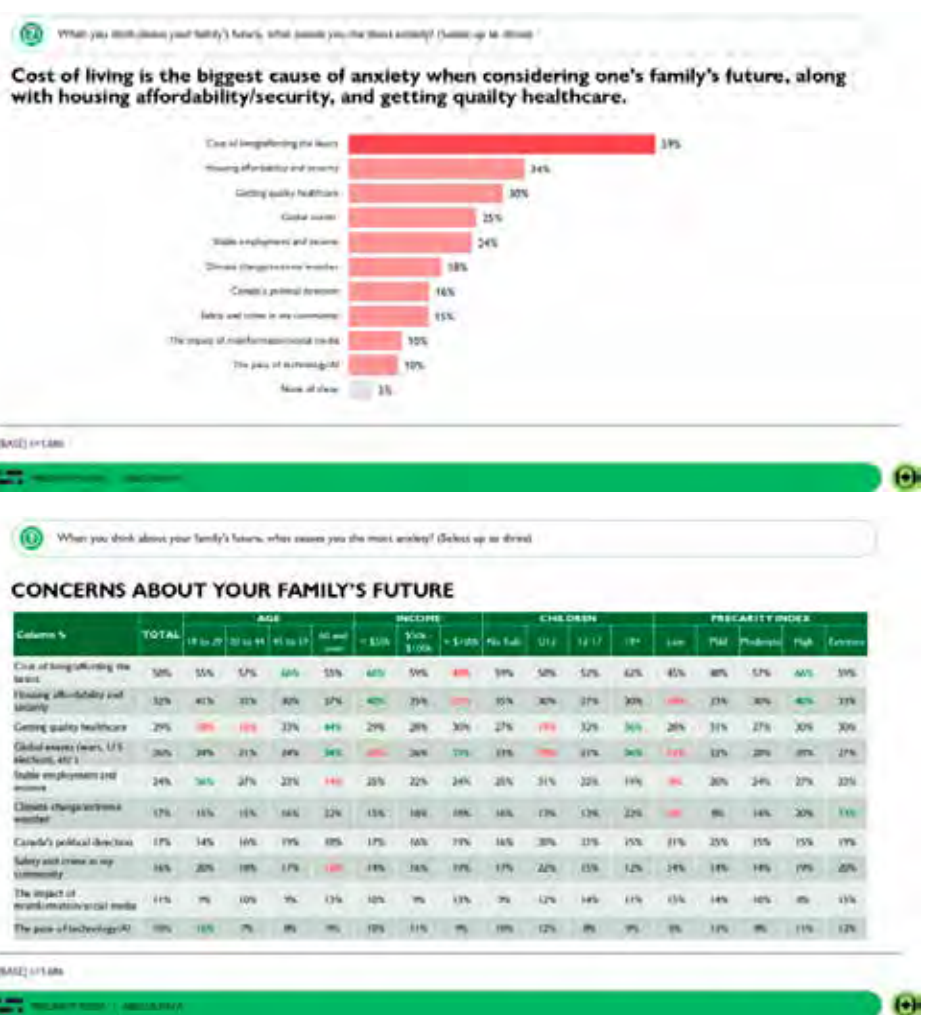
The same trend is seen among households with young children, highlighting how today's environment is disproportionately impacting those at pivotal life stages. For young adults and parents alike, precarity isn't just about day-to-day stress – it's reshaping the milestones that define adulthood, forcing many to hold off on decisions that could shape their futures.

What keeps Canadians up at night

When Canadians think about their family's future, cost of living looms largest – 59% cite it as their greatest source of anxiety. Housing affordability and security follows at 34%, alongside concerns about access to quality healthcare (30%), global events (25%), and stable employment or income (24%).

Demographic divides show how different generations process risk. Canadians aged 45–59 are most likely to worry about the rising cost of living (66%), while those 60+ are significantly more concerned with healthcare (44%) and global instability (34%). By contrast, younger adults (18–29) express higher levels of concern about employment and income security (36%).

Overlaying the precarity index reveals sharper differences. Canadians in high precarity are most likely to highlight cost of living (66%) and housing affordability (40%) as pressing issues. Those in extreme precarity are distinct: along-side cost of living, they express significantly



heightened concern about climate change (33%), reflecting how their anxieties extend beyond immediate economic stress to broader long-term risks.

The emotional toll of precarity

This climate of insecurity leaves a heavy emotional mark. Most Canadians report feeling worried about the year ahead (43%), while roughly a quarter say they feel exhausted (27%) or powerless (27%). Yet there is still resilience – 29% say they feel hopeful about what's to come.

These emotions map closely to levels of precarity. Those in extreme precarity are most likely to feel worried (55%) and powerless (39%). Canadians in high precarity mirror that worry (55%) but are also more likely to report exhaustion (36%). By contrast, those in low precarity are significantly more optimistic, with 36% saying they feel hopeful about the year ahead.

The balance between worry and hope is defined by how secure – or exposed – Canadians feel in today's uncertain climate.

The upshot

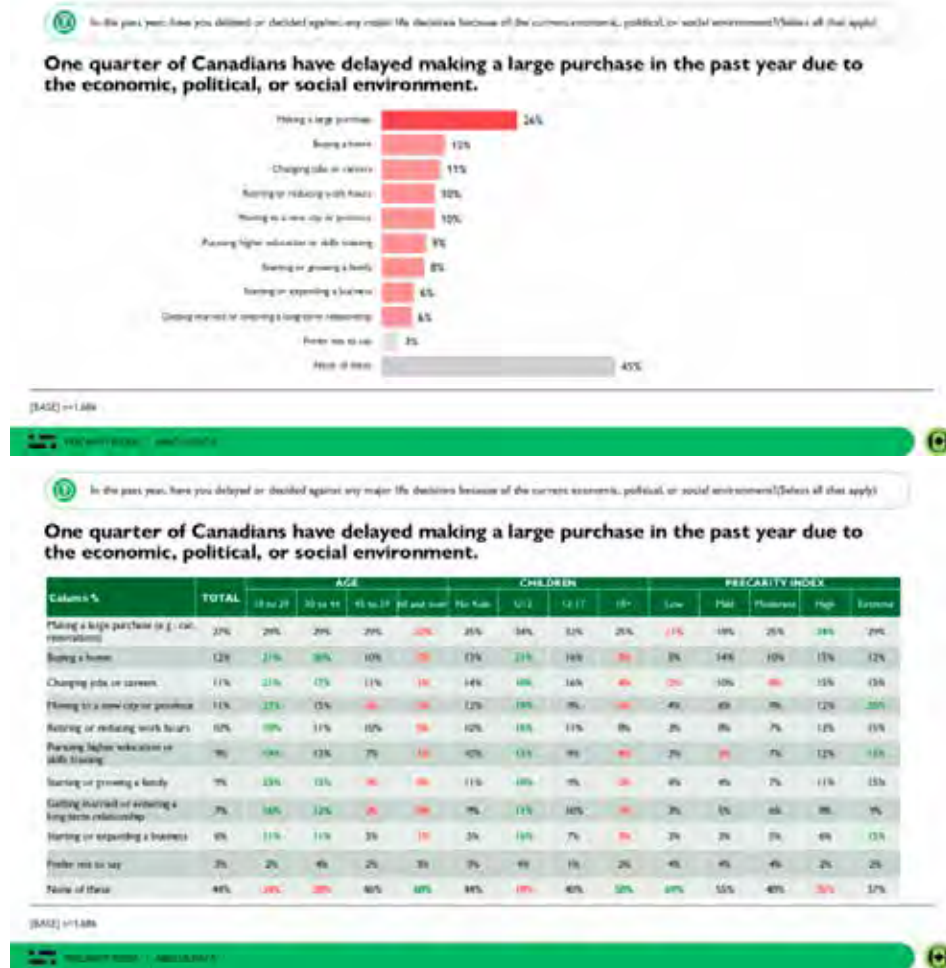
As Parliament prepares to resume, kids head back to school, and headlines about a slowing economy dominate the news, Canadians are entering the fall with a growing sense of uncertainty. What began as concern over rising prices and was disrupted by fears of Trump's tariffs, has evolved into something deeper: a precarity mindset, where stability feels fragile and the

next disruption always seems close at hand.

For households, especially those with young children, precarity has become part of everyday life. Rising costs and fragile finances are forcing families to make difficult trade-offs, while even small disruptions can quickly throw carefully balanced budgets into chaos. This uncertainty goes beyond day-to-day stress; it is reshaping the milestones that define adulthood. Many young adults and families are putting their futures on pause, delaying decisions about buying a home, changing careers, or growing their families because the future feels too unpredictable.

For the economy, this creates a ripple effect. When households focus on survival rather than growth, they spend less, take fewer risks, and hold back on investments, slowing recovery and deepening the very vulnerabilities that caused the hesitation in the first place.

Taken together, these forces signal a pivotal moment. The return to Parliament comes at a time when Canadians are not just grappling with temporary shocks, but with a deeper question: whether the systems they rely on – housing, healthcare, jobs, and education – are strong enough to withstand what comes next. How leaders respond in the months ahead will shape whether this period of heightened precarity becomes a lasting source of division and distrust, or a turning point that restores confidence and stability.



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Five HGregoire dealerships named among Canada's best places to work in automotive for 2025

HGregoire is celebrating a major milestone as five of its dealerships have earned a spot on

Automotive News Canada's prestigious 2025 list of *Best Dealerships to Work For*. This annual

recognition, awarded to only 40 dealerships nationwide, highlights organizations that foster

outstanding workplace environments in the automotive sector.

"This recognition is a true testament to the passion and dedication of our teams across the network," said John Hairabedian, president of HGregoire. "Our employees are the heart of our success, and this honour belongs to them."

The five HGregoire dealerships recognized this year are:

- HGregoire Mitsubishi Laval
- HGregoire Nissan Chomedey
- HGregoire Hyundai Vaudreuil
- HGregoire Infiniti Laval
- Candiac Toyota

Each of these locations will be featured in a special issue of *Automotive News Canada* on October 20, profiling the award-winning teams and their workplace culture. A national gala celebrating all honorees will also take place in Toronto later in October.

Founded in 1993, HGregoire has built its reputation on simplifying the car-buying experience through transparency, innovation, and a customer-first philosophy. With operations in both Québec and the United States, the company continues to grow while maintaining its commitment to excellence in employee experience.



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Celebrating inclusion and community: the 40th anniversary walk for Fondation Le Pilier

On Sunday, October 5, 2025, the Fondation Le Pilier will mark a major milestone—its 40th anniversary—with a vibrant, inclusive, and free community walk at the Village des arts in Laval's Centre de la nature. From 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., participants of all ages and abilities will gather to celebrate four decades of compassion, advocacy, and support for individuals living with physical and intellectual disabilities, as well as those on the autism spectrum.

This special event is more than just a walk—it's a symbol of unity and progress. With two accessible routes of 2.5 km and 5 km, the walk is designed to welcome everyone, including those using wheelchairs. Rain or shine, the atmosphere promises to be warm, festive, and deeply meaningful.

A cause close to the heart

Actor Vincent-Guillaume Otis, ambassador for the 40th anniversary, will be present to lend his voice and support. Known for his powerful performances on screen, Otis brings a personal connection to the cause—his brother lives with an intellectual disability. "I know how much proper support and access to adapted resources can improve daily life," he says. "It's with joy that I stand alongside Fondation Le Pilier to highlight the vital role it plays in our community."

Win big while giving back

To further commemorate this landmark year, Fondation Le Pilier is hosting a travel-themed lottery with exciting prizes. For just \$20 per ticket, participants have a 1 in 300 chance to win one of several generous rewards:

- Two round-trip economy tickets to any Air Canada destination in North America, including Hawaii, Mexico, and the Caribbean (valued at \$2,100)
- An escape package for two at Auberge Godefroy, including a night in a Prestige room, gourmet meals, and access to wellness facilities (valued at \$600)
- A \$500 gift certificate redeemable at Quebec Casinos and Hilton Lac-Leamy
- A weekend stay at Domaine Kaaloo's accessible chalet, La Mésange d'Olivier (valued at \$500)
- A \$300 Jean Coutu gift card, courtesy of Gestion Jacques Bourget et associés
- A gourmet gift box featuring levantine cuisine from Les Filles Fattoush (valued at \$120)



Vincent-Guillaume Otis and his brother, Jean-Sébastien.

Tickets can be purchased online at jedonneenligne.org/fondationlepilier/40LOTO.

A pillar of support for hundreds of families

Founded in 1985 by a group of committed citizens, Fondation Le Pilier emerged in response to deinstitutionalization, offering people with disabilities a chance to live in real homes rather than hospital settings. Today, the foundation supports nearly 500 individuals through eight safe living environments in Laval, Blainville, and Sainte-Thérèse, a day activity center, and respite services for caregivers.

"This 40th anniversary represents four decades of collective commitment to our people," says Nassim Belaïd, executive director of Fondation Le Pilier. "It's a moment to honor those who built this organization and to affirm our vision for the future—one rooted in ambition and innovation."

How to get involved

Supporters can contribute in many ways—by donating online or by mail, volunteering individually or as a group, or simply by showing up to walk in solidarity. Every gesture helps strengthen the foundation's mission and improves the lives of those it serves.

To register for the walk, visit lepilier.org. Whether you come alone, with family, or with friends, your presence will help make this celebration unforgettable.

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Things to do



UPCOMING

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

JOURNÉES DE LA CULTURE Culture  September 27 - 29 Journées de la culture 4750 avenue Henri-Julien, bureau R-050 H2T 2C8 For its 28th edition, the <i>Journées de la Culture</i> return to Laval under the theme "The Community". Free	URBAN FOREST RALLY Outdoors  October 4 10 AM - 12:30 PM Centre de la nature: Forêt urbaine 4121 blvd. de la Concorde E, H7E 5A5 The Canopée team will be hosting a short activity to introduce you to a new rally and to help you discover the new interpretive panels. Free	GUIDED FAMILY FISHING Outdoors  Saturdays, until October 4 Between 9:30 AM & 4 PM Berge du Garrot & Ste-Rose Archipel 345 boulevard Sainte-Rose, H7L 1M7 Accompanied by a guide, young and old alike will learn about the different species of fish that inhabit the river and the best places to catch them. \$26	PLAY: LE PRÉNOM Culture  October 8 7:30 PM Salle André-Mathieu 475 boulevard de l'Avenir, H7N 5H9 Vincent, in his forties, is happy to have a child for the first time. Anna, his wife arrives to the family dinner in the middle of a confrontation. Starting at \$63
KAYAK AT DUSK Outdoors  Until October 11 Timetable according to sunset Berge du Garrot & Ste-Rose Archipel 345 boulevard Sainte-Rose, H7L 1M7 As soon as night falls, we get the kayaks out for an expedition on the river. Guided by an animator, discover the wildlife that hides on the islands. \$45.75	ANIMALIER D'UN JOUR Science  Sundays, until October 12 10 AM - 12 PM Parc de la Rivière-des-Mille-Îles 345 boulevard Sainte-Rose, H7L 1M7 This workshop will give you the opportunity to actively participate in the well-being of animals in rehabilitation at Éco-Nature. \$23.50	AUTUMN FESTIVAL Outdoors  October 12 1 - 4:30 PM Bois de l'Équerre 4204 boul Industriel, H7L 0E3 Come celebrate Thanksgiving and nature in the woods of Laval with an afternoon on the trails of Bois de l'Équerre; fun for the whole family. Free	RALLYE NATURE SANTÉ Sports  Until October 15 During opening hours Parc de la Rivière-des-Mille-Îles 345 boulevard Sainte-Rose, H7L 1M7 A self-guided walk in the forest, this rally is the perfect activity for getting active and learning as a family. Free



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By Martin C. Barry

Laval Police officer facing luring and child porn charges

The Laval Police confirmed last week that it arrested one of its own, Constable Anthony De Melo, to face charges of luring and transmitting sexually explicit materials to a person believed to be a minor.

De Melo was arraigned in Quebec Court, with the LPD noting that the alleged offences occurred outside of the police officer's working hours.

Initial information released by the LPD

indicate the alleged offences took place last March in the Châteauguay region south of Montreal.

The 46-year-old officer was exposed following efforts made by amateur pedophile hunters.

Driver in Laval daycare bus crash being considered for high-risk offender status

Legal proceedings got underway at the Palais de Justice de Laval last week to determine if a high-risk offender status should be imposed on a 53-year-old former STL bus driver.

He was previously found not criminally responsible for killing two children and injuring six others while driving a Laval city bus into a daycare in February two years ago.

Pierre Ny St-Amand was previously declared not criminally responsible after a Superior Court Justice accepted a joint recommendation from the Crown and defence that he was probably psychotic and unable to determine right from wrong when he crashed the bus.

Last week, Ny St-Amand was present in the courtroom, not handcuffed, but inside a secured area where he listened during the hearing. Members of families with children from the daycare were also present.

19-year-old hospitalized after stabbing outside Laval movie theatre

A 19-year-old man is in hospital after an armed assault outside of Laval's Colossus movie theatre on the night of Sunday September 21.

At around 9:55 p.m., the LPD received a 911 call regarding the stabbing. Upon arrival, the

19-year-old male victim was found with serious stab wounds.

He was taken to hospital for treatment of life-threatening injuries, according to the LPD. In the meantime, the force's Crimes Against

Persons unit has taken over the investigation.

The crime scene was analyzed by investigators and crime scene technicians Sunday night, the SPL said, although no arrests had been made by early Monday.

Contraband worth nearly \$49,000 intercepted at Leclerc Detention Facility

Quebec's Ministry of Public Security reported recently that the vigilance and rapid action of staff at the Leclerc-de-Laval Detention Facility led to the seizure of several prohibited items, including tobacco and narcotics, with an estimated value of nearly \$49,000, thus preventing their entry into the facility.

According to the ministry, several measures are being implemented in Quebec detention facilities to counter the smuggling of illicit goods.

"The detection and recovery of prohibited items contributes to achieving the primary objective of ensuring the safety of individuals and premises," a ministry spokesperson said in a statement.

They say the province's correctional services division is taking action to combat contraband to maintain and strengthen security in detention facilities.

To this end, significant investments were announced in October 2023.

The Ministry of Public Security says that

since then it has implemented self-supporting fences, window screens, body scanners and security arches to combat contraband in its detention facilities.

Last June 3, the ministry also announced a series of technological measures to combat the delivery of contraband by drones and to facilitate searches by correctional services officers across Quebec.

These measures include a new generation of more efficient drone detectors, cell phone detection devices, and mobile X-ray detectors.



Recent LFD fire calls

16 September, 11:09 am

Building fire on Place des Sarcelles in the district of Sainte-Rose. One-storey residential building. Flames were visible on the roof upon arrival of firefighters. Fire code 10-12, meaning a alarm was called in.



20 September, 08:17 am

Building fire on Jean-Picard St. in the district of Chomedey. Multi-unit residential structure.

Flames apparent in basement to firefighters upon their arrival. Code 10-07, necessitating intervention.



21 September, 12:36 pm

Building fire on La Perrière St. in district of Saint-François. Residential structure. Flames apparent on the roof. Code 10-09, meaning full intervention required secours engagé à plein, with aggravating circumstances possible.





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Discover the hidden powers of spices

As you know, spices add flavour to food. Just the thought of gingerbread men, cinnamon sweets or dishes from India and Mexico is enough to get your mouth watering.

Many spices are famous for their robust scent and are used in perfumes, air fresheners and candles. However, many spices can play other roles, some of which might surprise you. Here are some examples:

- **Turmeric** can be used as a natural fabric dye
- **Cinnamon** is a natural preservative
- **Cloves** destroy disease-causing germs
- **Star anise** soothes stomach aches
- **Ginger** relieves cold symptoms



like cough and sore throat

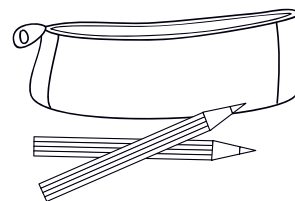
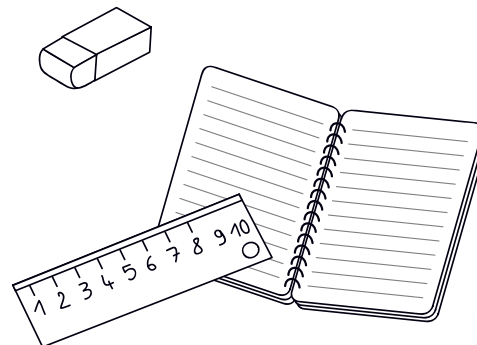
- **Black pepper** keeps wild animals and insects out of the garden

Spices can be used in many forms, including plain, infused, powdered or in essential oils. However, even if you love them, you shouldn't consume too much of them. Some spices can be dangerous to your health in large doses.

Cardamom, curry, cumin, nutmeg, paprika, saffron – the list goes on! What are your favourite spices?



For the up-and-coming artist



JUST kidding

Q: What has one head, one foot and four legs?

A: A bed



JUST kidding

Q: Why did the birdie go to the hospital?

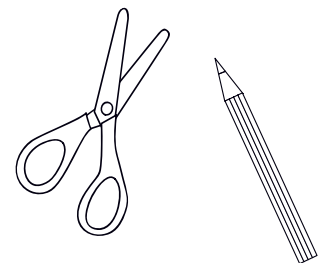
A: To get a tweetment.



JUST kidding

Q: What is the difference between a school teacher and a train?

A: The teacher says "Spit out your gum!" and the train says "Chew, chew, chew."



Fun rainy-day activities

You may wish for blue skies all summer long, but the sun doesn't shine every day! It's likely that bad weather may interfere with some of the fun things you have planned, like picnicking or drawing in the park. But there's always a plan B when

the weather doesn't cooperate. Here are a few ways to help you keep busy – and keep smiling – when it rains.

OUTSIDE

If you're not having a thunderstorm, you can go outside and play in the rain. Don't forget your rubber boots and rain jacket. Here are a few fun games to try:

- Float paper boats or plastic ducks in puddles
- Build castles or animals with wet sand or dirt
- Observe little critters that come out when it rains like snails and earthworms

AT HOME

If you don't feel like going outside, there are countless ways to have fun in the comfort of your home:

- Do a craft with a little more detail than usual, like characters made of homemade play dough or paper maché
- Prepare a short puppet show, dance recital or concert
- Cook a delicious recipe, like cookies, fruit salad or cheese skewers

OUT AND ABOUT

Can you ask an adult to drive you somewhere? If so, there are many possibilities. For example, you could:

- Go to the library and check out an interesting book
- Swim in a public indoor pool
- Test your skills at an entertainment venue like an arcade or bowling alley

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FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

MOTHER AND CHILD

Q I have always valued my relationship with my mother-in-law. We typically get along well. However, now that I am pregnant, she has become very forceful with "suggestions" regarding the baby and has said some pretty hurtful things. It is getting to the point I do not want to answer the phone because I am tired of arguing about things I do not feel are her decisions to begin with.

She will argue with me about everything from breastfeeding to circumcision to how I decorate the nursery. My husband has been understanding because she acts that way to him all the time. But I don't want to put him in a position where he has to side against his mother.

I feel like saying, "You got to raise your two sons the way you wanted, now please let me raise my children the way I want!" Any advice on how I can nicely tell her to back off without damaging my relationship with her or further involving my husband?

Tisha

A Tisha, today the word "nice" means agreeable, but the original meaning of the word "nice" is foolish or stupid. Sometimes in our attempt to be nice we let a veneer of politeness triumph over what is important. That is foolish.

You are carrying a new life. You are the mother bear willing to protect her cub against all comers. Being nice should not outweigh that deeper sense of what you are doing. You don't have to tell off your mother-in-law, but you can treat her opinions like elevator music. They are just background noise.

An election has been held, and you've been voted mommy. You've won. It is your breast and your baby and the final decisions are yours. When we fulfill our legitimate roles in life, we never have to justify ourselves to others. When we sacrifice the roles in life we are entitled to play, we sacrifice our life itself.

Wayne & Tamara

HUSBAND AND FATHER

Q Even if I don't write English too good, I will try to be as clear as possible. My wife and I have been married a year and a half, and we have a baby five months.

My mother-in-law came to take care of our baby. She puts her opinion like orders and thinks she is the one who knows everything. She takes decisions which are not her part. When I try to speak to her about the baby, she orders me what to do. But if I don't speak up, that is offensive to her too.

This is killing me. Every morning when she arrives or when I come back from work, she is like the manager of the house. This is hard to say but I even have problems with her as role model. She thinks she is 20 or 25 when she is actually more like 60.

I spoke millions of times to my wife, but she says her mother is trying her best. She says the one who should change is me. That is something I am not willing to do because I cannot lose my

place inside the place I live.

Luis

A Luis, when you are able to act like a husband and father, then you know why you get up in the morning and go to work. But if someone interferes with your normal rituals and role, it disturbs the rhythm and purpose of your life.

Your marriage is between you and your wife, not between your wife and her mother. It cannot be any other way. In the years that follow, how will you explain what decisions were made to your child? Well, grandma decided that...

You need to have one very important conversation with your wife. She must understand if you don't get to be husband and father, then there is no place for you in this house.

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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Canadian smaller businesses pay between 20-23 per cent more taxes than the U.S., claims CFIB report

Trump's 'Big Beautiful Bill' will make things worse, says Canadian Federation of Independent Business

MARTIN C. BARRY
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
marty@newsfirst.ca

To improve Canada's tax competitiveness and boost economic productivity, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business is calling on the federal and provincial governments to lower corporate income tax rates for small firms, and increase the small business deduction threshold while indexing it to inflation.

Quebec businesses overtaxed

The motion comes after the CFIB recently issued a report that compared business tax loads in Canada and the U.S., concluding that small businesses in Quebec and Atlantic Canada were among the most overcharged in the ten provinces.

A Canadian microbusiness (which the CFIB defines as being made up of four employees) pays on average a whopping 20% more in taxes than a similar firm in the United States, stated the report which compared tax loads in 10 Canadian provinces and 20 U.S. states.

By comparison, a small business (25 employees) pays 23% more in taxes than its U.S. counterpart, the CFIB found. But even the most competitive provinces (B.C. for micro businesses, Saskatchewan for small firms) had an average tax burden higher than the vast majority of U.S. states.



"We can't ignore the widening gap between Canadian small firms and their U.S. competitors," said Juliette Nicolaj, the CFIB's policy analyst for national affairs and the report's other co-author.

Trump's 'Big Beautiful Bill'

The CFIB notes that recent pro-small business changes in the United States through the "Big Beautiful Bill" driven through by President Donald Trump made the tax gap between the two countries even wider.

The conclusion the federation came to? "Canada needs to lower taxes or risk driving investment south of the border," they said in a September 11 statement.

"U.S. tariffs are not the only competitive issue facing Canadian small businesses," said Bradlee Whidden, a CFIB senior policy analyst and the report's co-author.

"When you look at the numbers, it's crystal clear: smaller businesses in Canada are already at a serious tax disadvantage, which was just made permanent by recent pro-small business changes in the United States through the Big Beautiful Bill.

"If Canada wants to compete and raise our standard of living, we need to cut taxes," added Whidden. "Payroll taxes are heavy on both sides of the border, but the real gap is in corporate and property taxes. Here in Canada, that gap means less money going back into wages, business operations and growth."

Quebec's poor tax performance

On a province-by-province level, Quebec and Atlantic Canada

performed the poorest, the CFIB said, while western Canadian provinces ranked a bit higher, but still significantly below the average of U.S. states that were analyzed.

However, even the most competitive provinces (B.C. for micro businesses, Saskatchewan for small firms) had an average tax burden higher than the vast majority of U.S. states, the CFIB concluded.

Among microbusinesses, the five best (1 – 5) and worst (26 – 30) jurisdictions in the report were:

1. South Dakota (USA)	26. Newfoundland and Labrador (CAN)
2. North Dakota (USA)	27. Prince Edward Island (CAN)
3. Wyoming (USA)	28. Nova Scotia (CAN)
4. Florida (USA)	29. New Brunswick (CAN)
5. Texas (USA)	30. Quebec (CAN)

Among small businesses, the five best (1 – 5) and worst (26 – 30) jurisdictions are:

1. South Dakota (USA)	26. Nova Scotia (CAN)
2. Wyoming (USA)	27. Prince Edward Island (CAN)
3. North Dakota (USA)	28. Newfoundland and Labrador (CAN)
4. Florida (USA)	29. New Brunswick (CAN)
5. Texas (USA)	30. Quebec (CAN)

In addition to the recommendation to the federal and provincial governments, the CFIB is also suggesting that municipalities, working in conjunction with provincial governments that oversee them, should reduce property taxes and close the property tax gap between commercial and residential properties.

"Trade disruptions have put the spotlight on Canada's uphill battle to remain competitive with the United States," said Juliette Nicolaj, the CFIB's policy analyst for national affairs and the report's other co-author.

Gap can't be ignored, says analyst

"While we can't control what other countries do, we can't ignore the widening gap between Canadian small firms and their U.S. competitors," she added. "It's time for governments to step up with policies that lower the cost of doing business in Canada."



"U.S. tariffs are not the only competitive issue facing Canadian small businesses," says Bradlee Whidden, a CFIB senior policy analyst and the report's co-author.

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HOROSCOPE

Week of **September 28 to October 4**

The luckiest signs this week:
PISCES, ARIES AND TAURUS



ARIES

Change can be scary, but it can lead to incredible opportunities. You'll find balance in your home, work and love life, enabling you to resolve conflicts and achieve happiness.



TAURUS

Rushed agreements often lead to problems. To avoid future complications, take the time to discuss and clearly define all terms. Focus on the details to significantly increase your chances of success.



GEMINI

Prepare for a busy week on the job! Meticulous organization and efficient work methods will boost your income and increase your likelihood of receiving a promotion. You'll inspire your team as you lead by example.



CANCER

Your hard work will finally pay off. You'll be applauded for your achievements. Expect to receive a medal to symbolize your victory. You'll hear the word "respect" uttered about you frequently, which will boost your self-esteem.



LEO

Now is an excellent time to consider buying a property, and you have the resources to do so. Your family will support you, both financially and emotionally. If you're in a new relationship, you'll seriously consider moving in together quite soon.



VIRGO

Take some time to treat yourself and relax. If you want to travel somewhere new, plan your route carefully with a GPS app to save time and avoid getting lost.



LIBRA

Take the leap and apply for your dream job at that amazing company. This bold move will resolve your financial worries and set you on the path to achieving your goals. Action is the key to your success.



SCORPIO

It's time to make some changes in your life. Doing so will help you find the tools you need to take your journey in a more fulfilling direction. The law of attraction is on your side.



SAGITTARIUS

Great opportunities await you, both professionally and personally. Before making any decisions, analyze each situation carefully. Seek advice from trusted sources who can help you see things from a different perspective.



CAPRICORN

Let the warmth of your loved ones envelop you and bring you peace. By tapping into your creativity and following your heart, you'll create something exceptional. Every great project starts with a dream; don't be afraid to dream big!



AQUARIUS

Your hard work will pay off and could even lead to an unexpected promotion. If you adopt a healthier lifestyle, you'll see visible results in no time. Don't forget to embrace joy and harmony in your love life.



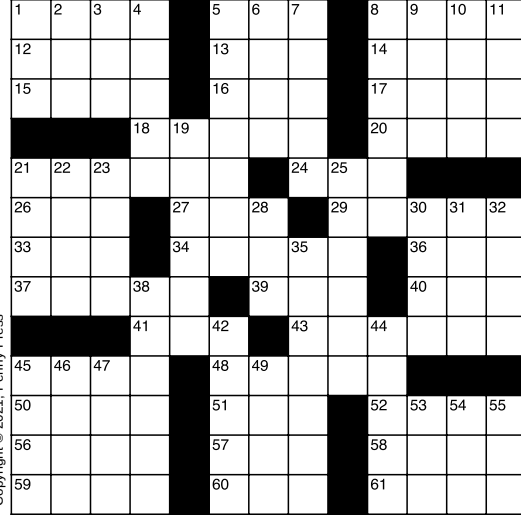
PISCES

Explore your inner self through a spiritual practice. This will bring unexpected richness into your life. You'll find your place within a group, forging strong bonds. Get ready to go on an exciting getaway planned by your significant other.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 288



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ACROSS

- Small dispute
- Hooter
- Actor Pickens
- Yearning
- Garden buzzer
- Tortilla dish
- "The Raven," e.g.
- Fancy resort
- Afresh
- Treaties
- G-men
- Slumber
- Santa's worker
- That guy
- Picnic intruder
- Daisylike bloom
- High card
- Wary
- Keats work
- Therefore
- Focus
- Hinged top

DOWN

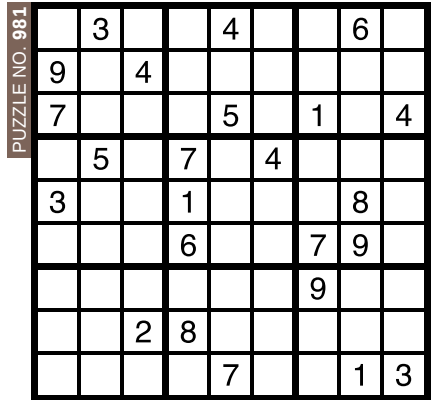
- Dine late
- Not amateur
- Develop
- Musical pace
- Vulgar
- Wailed
- Tenant's contract
- Rods
- Narrow path
- Talk over
- Safes
- Purpose
- Hymn finales
- Salad fish
- Excavation
- Sound gear: hyph.
- Elemental part
- Lemony drink
- Equal
- Holds up
- British title
- Bar orders
- Frosted
- Cuts the grass
- Flowering shrub
- Persian king
- Agreeable
- Harbinger
- Nonprofessional
- Steeped brew
- Road tax
- Prepare for press
- Crimson hues
- "Rosie the ____"
- Lotions
- Mamas' mates
- Bridegroom's attendant
- "____ Wars"
- Station wagon, e.g.
- Door handle
- ____ skirt
- ____ League school
- Charge for service
- Winners

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.**

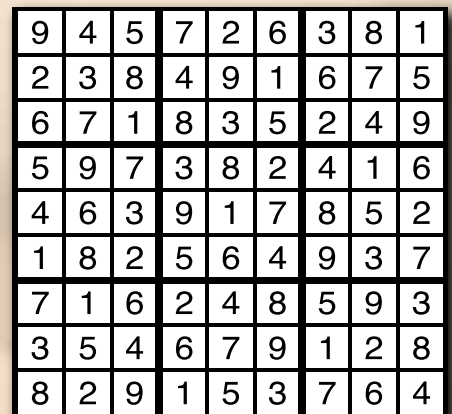


Last Issue's Answers

CROSSWORDS



Sudoku



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