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Vol. 34-10

May 13, 2026

450-978-9999

www.lavalnews.ca

editor@newsfirst.ca

120,000 readers



Page 3

Complaints about garbage pickup changes and dirty streets at city council

City councillor for Pont-Viau Christine Poirier. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, The Laval News)

Laval-based DFense Fortress is on a roll with its 'perimeter protection solution'

Page 8



Modules of DFense Fortress's anti-vehicle ram barrier system are seen here deployed near the corner of Saint-Martin and Daniel-Johnson boulevards in Laval during the summer of 2022. (Photo: Courtesy of DFense Fortress)

Police launch strategy to combat business extortions



Page 14

Officers of the Groupe d'intervention tactique (GTI). (Photo: Courtesy of Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal)

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Laval seeks action on three key dossiers before October provincial election

Council hears complaints about garbage pickup changes and dirty streets

MARTIN C. BARRY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
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Laval executive-committee vice-president Ray Khalil (picture on the right), who was substituting during the May city council for Mayor Stéphane Boyer who was away in Toronto for an economic conference, opened the meeting by drawing attention to a campaign launched recently advising Quebec's principal political parties of the priorities Laval hopes will be taken seriously before the provincial elections in October.



"The campaign aims to concentrate on three dossiers, being the expansion of Cité de la Santé Hospital, the enlargement of our CEGEP Montmorency and the extension of our Orange Line," Khalil said, referring to the Metro public transit system which has three stations in Laval now.

The campaign, being conducted by the City of Laval in conjunction with a coalition of local stakeholding community groups, includes an online petition which can be found at <https://www.jesignepourlaval.com>.

Stakeholders backing city

The stakeholders include Cadillac Fairview, Cégep Montmorency, Chamber of commerce and industry of Laval (CCIL), Cominar, Comité des usagers du CISSS de Laval, Conseil des médecins, dentistes et pharmaciens du CISSS

de Laval (CMDP), Corporation du développement communautaire de Laval (CDC), Fondation Cité de la Santé and Société de transport de Laval.

"Laval is growing rapidly, but its services are not keeping pace," states an English-language message posted on the coalition's website, while noting that "for a third consecutive year, the Laval region ranks 17th out of 17 in terms of government investment per capita."

As a result, they maintain, students are being turned away from CEGEP, access to healthcare is becoming more difficult, and transportation across the territory is increasingly challenging.

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church's 50th

During a portion of the meeting reserved for city councillors' statements, Chomedey councillor Aglaia Revelakis noted that on May 23 Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church will be marking the 50th anniversary of its founding. Saint Nicholas Church was the first Greek Orthodox congregation to be created in Laval.

During the public question period, George Kaoumi, a resident of McNamara Blvd. in city councillor Seta Topouzian's Renaud-Coursol district, voiced a complaint that's probably heard quite often from Laval residents in the spring.

"Our street is always dirty," Kaoumi said, maintaining that the motorized street sweeper hadn't been by on the street yet this year, and that it passed by only three times last year.

"The filth in front of our house is the accumulation from last year until this year," he continued. "It's disgusting, I hate my house and the City of Laval because of this. On the other hand, in Montreal the sweeper passes once every week and does this on a regular basis."

Fewer garbage collection days

Among other things, Kaoumi questioned the city's decision to pick up garbage from residences just once every two weeks, instead of once a week as it was previously. "This will in fact create a climate that favours the spread of insects and parasites, as well as foul odors," he added.

Responding, Topouzian maintained that the city has had 18 to 20 motorized sweepers cleaning streets throughout Laval following the end of winter. "More than 40 per cent of routes have already been cleaned," she said during last week's council meeting.

"Now I understand that your street hasn't been done yet," she continued. "So, I am making a note of this. We are going to make sure that somebody will pass by to clean it. That's a certainty, don't make too much of it. This is part of my responsibilities and it will be my pleasure to take care of it quickly."

More waste disposal complaints

More complaints followed about Laval's updated waste collection system. Salim Masri, a manager with Plan A, a provider in Laval of premium residential and commercial rental spaces, complained about the city's failure to pick up items of bulky waste left outside at least one of the company's buildings.

He also complained about an insufficient number of garbage containers provided by the city to deal with waste from a Plan A apartment building with 110 units, while adding that garbage pickup every two weeks is inadequate to deal with the building's enormous volume of waste.

"We have had no choice but to rent an extra container," said Masri. "It's us who are paying for

the rental of the container and it's also us who are paying for the pickup." Several residents also e-mailed in questions, comments and complaints about the new garbage pickup method.

Khalil responded that most cities in Quebec that have done like Laval by steering away from garbage pickup while emphasizing recycling have in fact managed to lower the amount of garbage they send to landfill. "So, whether we like it or not, we have to try encourage good habits, while forcing it a little bit," said Khalil.

Multisports complex wanted

Also during question period, Lyne Carry (picture on the right) of Saint-Bruno district said that she and others in the community had decided to form a committee for the purpose of encouraging the city to build a multisports complex where track and field, triathlon, tae kwon do, table tennis and judo could all be practiced.



"We are ready to furnish our expertise to make sure that what would be built would meet norms and would be profitable," she said, adding that other sports associations could also join the project. City councillor for Pont-Viau Christine Poirier, who is responsible for dossiers concerning local services on the executive-committee, said the city has no plans currently for a multisports complex.

"In the current budgetary context, together with our willingness to increasingly invest in the maintenance of our existing infrastructure, we are not launching many new projects in the coming years," said Poirier.

Sona Lakhoyan Olivier pledges to contest ruling after scolding over ethics violation



Chomedey MNA faces \$8,000 penalty for using riding office for partisan purposes

MARTIN C. BARRY

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After being publicly scolded for violating the National Assembly's code of ethics by using her riding office to try and help elect Pablo Rodriguez as leader of the Quebec Liberal Party, independent Chomedey MNA Sona Lakhoyan Olivier was vowing earlier this week to contest the ruling, while saying she will not resign.

In a scathing report, Quebec ethics commis-

sioner Ariane Mignolet ruled that Lakhoyan Olivier, formerly a member of the Liberal caucus, also violated rules by trying to impede Mignolet's investigation. She recommended Lakhoyan Olivier be fined \$8,000.

In the report tabled in the National Assembly last week, Mignolet said Lakhoyan Olivier violated Article 36 of the MNAs' code of ethics, which stipulates that resources put at the disposal of MNAs to serve ridings are not to be used for partisan purposes. In the midst of all this, there have also been calls by some

in the National Assembly for Lakhoyan Olivier to resign her seat.

'I am elected'

"I am elected by the people, and I'm continuing working for the people, and there are four months left, and I will continue representing my people," she said in a phone interview with *The Laval News* last Monday afternoon as we were approaching deadline.

In her report, Mignolet stated, "The evidence shows that the riding office and salaries of

personnel were used for partisan reasons between the months of April and June 2025 and two additional moments of the campaign."

"The office thus became the headquarters of partisan activities connected to the party riding association and members of the staff were mobilized," she said.

"This use was in itself sufficiently significant to constitute a violation, but also of great import-

▶ Continued on page 12



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May 13, 2026 • The Laval News • 3

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Deadline for commercial advertising by Friday at 3 p.m.
Deadline for classified advertising by Friday at 3 p.m.
ISSN number : 1923-0605
Annual subscription : \$89.95 • Per copy : \$1

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Layout: Media Trek

Distribution: TC. Transcontinental/
DIFFUMAG

Printing: TC. Transcontinental

Project funded in part by

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Motherhood, the first and last frontier, and everything in-between

This is a belated Mother's Day reflection, written after the holiday has passed, but the truth it carries does not belong to one day alone. Mothers are often honored in speeches, cards, and public gestures, yet the real meaning of motherhood is found in the ordinary days that rarely get noticed. It is found in the sacrifices, the patience, the worry, the planning, and the quiet endurance that shape a family's life. For many people, including me, the strongest example of that sacrifice was my mother, whose daily acts of love were often invisible to the outside world but deeply felt by those closest to her.

Motherhood is rarely simple. It begins long before sunrise and often ends long after everyone else has gone to bed. A mother is expected to remember the appointments, organize the meals, manage the emotions, solve the problems, and keep the household moving forward, often while carrying her own burdens silently. There is no true pause in the work. A child is sick, another needs help with school, the phone rings, the bill is due, dinner is late, and somehow, she keeps going. What looks like routine from the outside is often a constant balancing act on the inside.

One of the heaviest burdens mothers' carries is the mental load. This is the invisible labor of remembering everything and anticipating what might go wrong before it happens. It is not just cooking dinner or washing clothes. It is knowing what supplies are missing, what child needs attention, what family obligation is coming up, and what problem may need solving tomorrow. My mother lived this kind of sacrifice without complaint. She carried responsibility with a kind of quiet strength that taught me more than any words could. She did not always speak about her exhaustion, but her actions made it clear how much she

gave every day.

Financial pressure adds another layer of difficulty. Many mothers work hard to stretch limited resources, often putting their children's needs ahead of their own. They make choices that others never see. They delay their own purchases, skip their own comforts, and find ways to make very little go very far. A mother's sacrifice is often measured not in grand gestures, but in the things, she gives up so that her children can have what they need. My mother understood that kind of giving deeply. She was the kind of person who made sure others were cared for first, even when it meant she had less for herself.

There is also the emotional work of motherhood, which is just as demanding as the practical work. Mothers are often the ones who comfort, mediate, encourage, and hold the family together during difficult times. They absorb stress, calm fears, and stay steady when others are breaking down. At the same time, they are expected to remain patient and composed even when they are tired, anxious, or hurting themselves. That emotional responsibility can be draining. My mother carried that role with grace, and like many mothers, she made sacrifice look ordinary even when it was anything but.

The challenge becomes even greater when mothers are judged by impossible standards. Society often expects them to be endlessly available, perfectly organized, emotionally calm, and completely selfless. If they work outside the home, they may be told they are not present enough. If they stay home, they may be underestimated. If they are strict, they are criticized; if they are lenient, they are questioned. No matter what they do, someone is often ready to evaluate it. This makes motherhood not only exhausting, but lonely. A mother can

be doing everything she can and still feel as though she is falling short.

For single mothers, the responsibility is even heavier, because there is no one else to divide the work. Every bill, every appointment, every emergency, and every emotional need falls on one person. For mothers raising children with special needs or serious health concerns, the demands can be overwhelming in a different way. They are not just parenting; they are advocating, coordinating, learning, and often fighting for support. These are forms of sacrifice that require extraordinary resilience. They deserve to be recognized not only in words, but in policy, community support, and everyday understanding.

My 97-year-old mother remains, for me, the clearest example of what sacrifice looks like when it is rooted in love. She gave of herself in ways that were practical, emotional, and deeply personal. She made sure others were fed, supported, encouraged, and protected. She put her family before her own comfort more times than anyone could count. And yet she did so without asking for applause. That is what makes a mother's sacrifice so powerful. It is not performed for attention. It is lived quietly, repeatedly, and faithfully.

A belated Mother's Day reflection also reminds us that appreciation should not be limited to a single day. Mothers need more than flowers, messages, and formal recognition once a year. They need rest. They need support. They need understanding. They need communities that see the weight they carry and help lighten it. If we truly honor mothers, then we must do more than celebrate them. We must create a world that respects their labor and acknowledges their humanity.

Renata Isopo

Letters to the Editor

A thousand things to watch but only a few steps to do what's really important



Dear people constantly on their phone, Do you sometimes feel like someone you know, or even yourself, is ruining their life by being glued to their screen? Scrolling for an unhealthy amount of time? A few years ago, my usual academic performance and grades were getting worse over time. I already knew the reason. What led to my focus being all over the place was the amount of time I spent on my screen, instead of emphasizing on what's really more important. I still struggle to manage my time efficiently and my life could've been a lot better.

Social media apps these days all have this mindless scrolling that has taken over, ruining our minds and time by feeding us with a flood of information that might be not even necessary to look at. We consume what the algorithm constantly feeds us, and in the end, we can never stop. Our attention span gets bad to the point that we can't even focus on a simple task. In the end, this engaging stimulation becomes a

revolting procrastination that can lead to failure

Today, even more people now have access to a screen and kids unfortunately also do. These kids can spend hours on their devices and it's quite troubling me. These kids already have their minds ruined by the digital world and you're telling me that they're society's future? I see kids online who are stimulated by their Ipad's showing them useless reels and yet, they can't fully focus on a specific one. In the end, it slowly deteriorates their minds and the way they can think.

This has always bothered me considerably, especially due to the terrible experience I've had with it and still today. My final secondary school years, alongside college years, were seeing diminishing results over time because it became quite frustrating. I see myself from back then, scrolling Reddit instead of completing my tasks. Did this ever happen to you? Instead of focusing on a task, you drifted away from what was important by choosing a quick distraction instead. I wouldn't like anyone to suffer the

same situation as I did, because I know well how hard it is to get out

Nowadays, scrolling has become too encouraged by developers that wish to create a better immersive digital experience. But at what cost? We will be even more addicted and disconnected from the real world and our main goals. Will we be able in the future to learn to prioritize what's important first?

There aren't any clear solutions to end this everlasting growing problem. Experts have taken actions to help us by imposing a limited restriction, but it's not enough. We need, as a community, to spread awareness on how dangerous scrolling can slowly become, as well as finding alternatives for entertainment. The next time you'd like to scroll mindlessly online, you should ask yourself if it's worth wasting most of your precious time on. As we grow older, we should prioritize accomplishment and progress over wasting time on a wasteful distraction.

Sidney Dao-Hoang



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Laval Office of Integrity and Ethics (BIEL) tables 2025 report

On May 7, the Laval Office of Integrity and Ethics (BIEL) presented its annual review, outlining the BIEL's accomplishments in 2025.

According to the BIEL, the report illustrates the scope of their interventions, as well as the strength of their partnerships and their enhanced presence on the ground.

"Through concrete and collaborative actions, the city reaffirms with conviction its commitment to exemplary governance, the protection of municipal integrity and maintaining the trust of Laval residents," the BIEL, which reports to the City of Laval, said in a press release.

Building on its past achievements, the BIEL said it will continue to improve its training activities on contract management and supplier relations, with a particular focus on training new staff members upon their arrival to better

prevent and detect risky situations.

"Through these proactive measures, we will collectively continue to build a municipal environment characterized by integrity, trust and collaboration," said Karine Ménard, director of the Laval Police Dept., which has the mandate to oversee the BIEL.

The BIEL's 2025 report contains an account of key field interventions in ethics and integrity. They include:

- 128 reports received, 94 of which were deemed admissible, leading to investigations, internal recommendations, and where appropriate, referrals to the authorities;
- 21 interventions on 11 construction sites deemed high-risk;
- 4 interventions on digital projects;

- Five integrity reviews were conducted with the Public Procurement Authority, including a comprehensive review that led to a company being added to the Register of Companies Ineligible for Public Procurement.

It may also be worth noting that the BIEL saw increased collaboration with the city's Engineering Department and the Project Planning and Implementation Department.

In parallel, efforts to recover public funds, in conjunction with collusion investigations involving fraudulent contractors, continued.

The report said the city's Legal Affairs Department reached four new out-of-court agreements and maintained three civil lawsuits for damages estimated at over \$12.5 million. This brought the total amount recovered since

the establishment of the working group on Bill 26 to \$60 million.

The BIEL said it is also providing ongoing support for ethical decision-making, "which is a key driver for a vigilant and collaborative organizational culture," they said.

They also said that municipal staff remain central to the BIEL's prevention strategy, as demonstrated by numerous support initiatives implemented in 2025, including:

- 46 training sessions were delivered to 712 people;
- 142 requests for ethical advice were registered, demonstrating that teams have adopted the practice of consulting proactively to manage risks;
- 3,927 staff members completed their conflict-of-interest declarations.

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front or side yard garden, coverage is available for 75 per cent of purchase costs for eligible plants and materials (excluding tax), up to a maximum of \$400.

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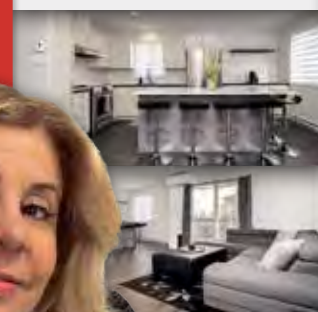
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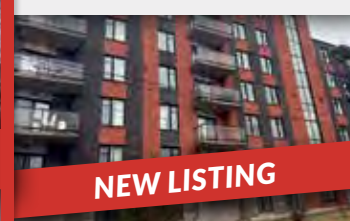
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DFense Fortress founder John Graziadei's Laval-based company is the exclusive Canadian distributor for the "Electric Pulse Glove," a Taser-like security enforcement device that delivers incremental charges of electricity. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, The Laval News)

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If Laval-based DFense Fortress president John Graziadei's uncanny resemblance to the *Breaking Bad*/*Better Call Saul* character Mike Ehrmantraut weren't enough to suggest they were somehow separated at birth, then consider that the similarity doesn't end there.

Like Ehrmantraut, who portrays an ex-police officer turned freelance in the back-to-

Laval-based DFense Fortress is on a roll with its anti-ram vehicle barriers

Cities across Canada are adopting security firm's 'perimeter protection solution'

back monster hit AMC TV 2008-2013 series, Graziadei also has an extensive background in police work, although not as a ranking officer, but as a technically-adept civilian employee formerly with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

"Yes. I had those remarks," he said regarding the resemblance in an e-mailed response to *The Laval News* after an interview last week at DFense Fortress's headquarters on Saint-Martin Blvd. East in Duvernay.

Expanding security sector

Although still comparatively small in the expanding global private security hardware sector, DFense Fortress has been on a roll lately. The company's anti-ram vehicle barrier system was a starring piece of hardware outside the Bell Centre in downtown Montreal in April.

In the security services business, these types of barriers are referred to as "perimeter protection solutions," designed to secure events and sensitive infrastructure.

The Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) installed rows of the barriers to protect outdoor crowds from the possibility of vehicle attacks during the recent first-round playoff matches between the Canadiens and the Tampa Bay Lightning.

They have also been deployed in Laval on occasion. This is not to say that the barriers are entirely new. They were actually first introduced by DFense Fortress in July 2021.

Seizing on an opportunity

In the midst of the Covid pandemic, which had made a lot of people feel insecure generally, the company decided the moment might be right to raise awareness of a product that could keep mask-wearing event-goers safe – but from dangerous motor vehicle intrusions, rather than the SARSCoV2 coronavirus.

"In addition to deterring malevolent individuals, anti-ram vehicle barriers provide quick access of emergency vehicles responding to an incident," the company said at the time in a press release for their new product.

Inspired though not necessarily modeled on European barriers, DFense Fortress maintains it came up with an improved product, while making it 100 per cent Canadian and adaptable to many types of control situations.

In addition to being scalable, removable and easy to install, DFense Fortress claims its anti-ram vehicle barriers make it possible to stop a vehicle within just a few metres.

A former RCMP expert

Until 2015 when he retired, Graziadei worked for the RCMP in London Ont. as well as in Montreal where he was the federal forces' in-house expert on the implementation and use of their 9-1-1 emergency telephone service. While most 9-1-1 calls are routed to local police, the RCMP takes 9-1-1 calls that have international implications.

DFense Fortress recently sold and delivered approximately 60 barriers to the Montreal Police (SPVM), who plan to use them at large-scale events, such as the recent Habs playoffs. It's safe to assume they will probably also be used regularly at various festivals during the upcoming summer season.

The principle behind the barriers is simple: if a vehicle such as a truck hits one, the uprights, which are equipped with spikes, are pushed under the vehicle. The barriers are designed to pierce the vehicle's floor, transmission and engine compartment to immediately incapacitate and immobilize the vehicle.

As each barrier weighs 100 lbs., it can weigh up to 600 lbs. when fully assembled. Equipped with wheels, one of the key advantages and selling points of the system

is its mobility.

A less costly alternative

Whereas police typically bring in concrete jersey barriers or cement blocks as a heightened safety measure during major public events, using a forklift to position them, DFense Fortress's anti-vehicle ram barrier system makes the job simpler and possibly also less costly.

Although it was developed by a team at DFense Fortress, the actual production is done by two companies, Sheltec and Boly Atelier, which are based in Laval and Terrebonne on the North Shore respectively.

As of last week, DFense Fortress had at least nine cities or organizations signed up as clients. Most of them are probably aware of the escalating risks and dangers associated with events involving large crowds.

The equipment is also available on a rental basis. The North Shore city of Mascouche decided to rent to avoid the additional burden of storage. Cities in Ontario, British Columbia and New Brunswick are also said to have expressed interest in the Quebec-made product.

A variant on the 'Taser'

DFense Fortress's anti-vehicle ram barriers are not the only law and security enforcement product being offered by the firm. Although not developed by DFense Fortress, the company is the Canadian distributor for the "Electric Pulse Glove" – a clever variant on the better-known "Taser" – through a partnership with Compliant Technologies.

Worn as gloves by law enforcement and public safety intervenors, they conduct carefully measured charges of electricity in increments that can escalate as long as someone continues to resist being subdued.

Graziadei and his associates operate a second security-related business, in the same suite of Saint-Martin Blvd. E. offices. iDentité Québec offers services in credit screening, pre-employment screening, fingerprinting, drug and alcohol screening, criminal record suspension applications, as well as fraud, identity theft and private investigation.



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DFense Fortress's anti-vehicle ram barrier system is seen here deployed near a major intersection in Laval in June 2022. (Photo: Courtesy of DFense Fortress)

Action Laval hasn't lost hope the city's 'mini-zoo' may re-open one day

Still, opposition party's public consultation draws only a few Laval residents

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While Mayor Stéphane Boyer's administration appears to have decided once and for all to close the mini-zoo at Laval's Centre de la nature, the Action Laval opposition is holding onto a faint hope the decision can be reversed and the facility, popular with children and parents, can be reopened with improvements.

Although initially scheduled to be closed in June, the city went ahead early and shut the hobby farm for domesticated animals in March, replacing some of the activities with a travelling petting zoo that will be operated by a sub-contractor at certain times of the year.

However, the closing of the mini-zoo sparked a strong grassroots reaction, with an online petition opposing the move being launched and circulated by Dennis Fiévét with support from Action Laval, and eventually exceeding 20,000 signatures.

Run-down mini-zoo building

Despite this, the city stood by its decision, noting that the mini-zoo building was outdated and worn out, with reconstruction costs estimated at \$15 to \$20 million. The building itself had an immediate need for a new roof, with a cost for that alone estimated in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Although a public protest in February at the Centre de la nature against the closing, organized by Action Laval city councillor for Saint-François Isabelle Piché, drew up to 100 supporters, a public consultation held by Piché on April 30 at the Pavillon du Bois Papineau in Duvernay suggests that overall public interest in the issue may have gone down since.

Out of a dozen or so people on hand for the unveiling of the results of an Action Laval survey of residents on the mini-zoo issue, around half were Action Laval officials or volunteers.

Boyer's majority on city council

In an interview with *The Laval News*, Piché said that she "didn't want to let down those 20,000 people," especially after the Boyer administration declined to accept a formal suggestion she made in city council that the city hold its own public consultation on the future of the animal shelter.

"For me, it's important to listen to them and hear what they have to say," said Piché. The mayor's party, the Mouvement lavallois, holds an overwhelming majority on the City of Laval's 22-seat municipal council.

In a broader sense, Action Laval sees the administration's decision to close the mini-farm as an example of the Mouvement lavallois's tendency to focus on big projects like Place Bell and the Aquatic Complex, while neglecting smaller more local projects in Laval's neighbourhoods, the impending demolition of the Richard Trottier Arena in Fabreville being a possible example.

This leaves the four opposition councillors, with Action Laval and the Parti Laval, with little other choice but to vote against policies they disagree with – without being able to do much to change or stop things.

'A hope of changing,' says Piché

"We have maybe the ability to change people's minds and make them realize that a mistake is being made, or maybe we can get the mayor to reflect on turning it around," added Piché. "There's



Action Laval city councillor for Saint-François Isabelle Piché said she "didn't want to let down those 20,000 people" who signed the petition asking the City of Laval not to close the mini-farm at the Centre de la nature. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

always a hope of changing things around."

According to some of the survey's results, the mini-zoo, which had been operating for around 55 years, was receiving an estimated 80,000 individual visits per year before closing.

Some of the suggestions Action Laval is making to reopen the facility and make it sustainable again include charging an admission fee, donations from local businesses and private donors, obtaining government subsidies, hosting events that charge fees, selling locally-sourced agricultural products or items, and co-sponsoring projects in conjunction with schools, colleges or universities.

Building's uncertain future

In the meantime, no one, including Action Laval, is quite certain what the city plans to do with the building that was sheltering the animals. For some, this is seen as a positive indicator that city officials (who can change their minds as circumstances evolve) may decide to do something with the building other than demolishing it – as some fear the city may eventually do.



Frédéric Mayer, Action Laval's mayoralty candidate during the most recent municipal elections last November, is seen here speaking during the party's public consultation on the future of the mini-zoo at the Centre de la nature on April 30 at the Pavillon du Bois Papineau in Duvernay. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Laval News)

What Action Laval is suggesting instead is a renovation of the building (rather than a demolition) to create something smaller and easier to manage, while introducing a different mix of animals, and carrying out a transformation into a resource that would serve more of an educational purpose.

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Victoria Day

MONDAY, MAY 18, 2026



National Patriots' Day (*Journée nationale des patriotes*) is celebrated across Québec to commemorate democracy and patriotic struggles for freedom from the British rule during 1837-1838. The day's commemorations can be traced back to 1937, in which citizens of Saint-Denis-sur-Richelieu organized the 1837 centennial celebrations.

About 25 years later, annual observances were held in November to remember patriots who fought against the British colonial power in the province. In 1982, the Québec government recognized the importance of the historic events that took place in the province during 1837-1838. The government proclaimed a decree that Patriots' Day would be observed on the Sunday closest to November 23 to honor the patriots.

On November 20, 2002, the Quebec government moved for National Patriots' Day to be an annual provincial statutory holiday to honor the memory of the patriots on the Monday preceding May 25 of each year. National Patriots' Day has been held as a provincial statutory holiday since May 19, 2003, replacing another holiday known as la Fête de Dollard (Dollard Day), which was held in honor of the 17th century soldier Adam Dollard des Ormeaux.

HOW DO PEOPLE CELEBRATE VICTORIA DAY?

Many people in Québec attend various celebrations and events, and take part in historic activities that are organized throughout the province on National Patriots' Day. Celebrations include marches, music concerts, public speeches, and award ceremonies. Many societies, organizations, and community groups organize different events and activities that occur on or around National Patriots' Day. Special commemorative dinners may also be organized during this holiday.



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Victoria Day
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des Patriotes



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Happy Victoria Day!



SONA LAKHOIAN OLIVIER

Députée de / MNA for Chomedey

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Victoria Day

MONDAY, MAY 18, 2026



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.

From 1953 to 1956, Queen Elizabeth II's birthday was celebrated in Canada on Victoria Day, by proclamation of the governor general, with the Queen's approval. In 1957, Victoria Day was permanently appointed as Queen Elizabeth II's birthday in Canada. In the United Kingdom, Queen Elizabeth II's birthday was celebrated in June.

Over the course of Queen Elizabeth II's long reign, the observance of the Sovereign's birthday on Victoria Day had become ingrained in Canadian custom. Despite this, it was not guaranteed that future Sovereigns' birthdays would be celebrated on this day.

In May 2023, a proclamation fixed Victoria Day as the date on which the Sovereign's birthday would be celebrated in Canada.

The proclamation did not assign this date to the observance of King Charles III's birthday specifically, even though it was issued in the early part of his reign. Rather, the language of the proclamation deliberately mentioned the Sovereign's birthday, indicating that it would apply to all future monarchs of Canada.

This proclamation confirmed what had become established practice, but which is also a uniquely Canadian tradition.

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.

Nous souhaitons à toutes et à tous une Joyeuse fête nationale des patriotes!

We wish to all a Happy Victoria Day!



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ance was that this was permitted and encouraged by the actions and statements of the MNA.”

Mignolet’s report maintains that Lakhoyan Olivier took actions, after the investigation had opened, which effectively impeded the ethics commissioner’s work.

“The evidence reveals the MNA discussed the investigation on several occasions with members of her staff to convince them of the value of her version of the facts and to dictate eventual responses to the commissioner’s questions,” said Mignolet.

Lakhoyan Olivier was suspended from the PLQ caucus more than five months ago, after Mignolet opened the investigation.

PLQ inquiry absolved her

In response to allegations of alleged vote-related cash payments and incriminating text messages exchanged by Pablo Rodriguez’s supporters during the leadership campaign, the PLQ conducted its own investigation, which absolved Lakhoyan Olivier or her associates of having been the source of the text messages.

The PLQ investigation, led by retired Quebec Superior Court judge Jacques Fournier, concluded that the text messages were fabricated and manipulated, and that the analysis and electronic evidence clearly show that they did not originate from Lakhoyan Olivier’s devices or those of her associates.

In a statement issued last week, PLQ leader Charles Milliard, said Lakhoyan Olivier would not be readmitted to caucus and will not be allowed to run again as a candidate for the Quebec Liberals in the fall election.

“The facts presented are serious and of concern,” said Milliard. “This is why I advised Mme. Sona Lakhoyan Olivier that we will support the report (from the commissioner).”

“As a result, it is out of the question to revoke the decision made: the MNA will remain excluded from the caucus,” he continued. “The actions taken are incompatible with the values and standards we are imposing. It is tolerance zero. She will thus not be a candidate for the party in the coming elections.”

Will she run again?

In a previous interview, Lakhoyan Olivier

stated she would only run in the upcoming provincial elections if the Quebec Liberals took her back into the caucus and that she would probably not seek re-election as an independent.

Last Monday, she said, “Right now I’m taking it day by day,” without elaborating on whether she intends to run again. But she left no doubt that she felt betrayed by the party she first served as a volunteer then as an official.

“I’m a member of the Liberal party since a young age, and for me to be treated this way,” she said. “They didn’t even listen to me, didn’t even talk to me. I’m insulted. This is how you take care of your family? As soon as there is a problem, they throw them out of the plane.”

Chomedey, which has been a Quebec Liberal bastion as long as anyone can remember, has seen its sitting Liberal MNA excluded from the PLQ caucus more than once in recent times.

Former Liberal MNA Guy Ouellette was expelled from the Quebec Liberal caucus in 2018 after it was alleged he had leaked classified information to the Coalition Avenir Québec. Ouellette sat as an independent until the end of his last term in 2022.

Ouellette received an official apology after he lodged a lawsuit alleging libel and reputation damage.



“The public recognizes the importance of an independent office to listen to them,” said City of Laval ombudsman Nathalie Blais. (Photo: Courtesy of Laval ombudsman’s office)

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A spokesman for the City of Laval ombudsman’s office is dismissing a suggestion that a positive satisfaction survey published recently by the office – raising its profile and image – was released just as the Boyer administration is carrying out or contemplating budget cuts.

The ombudsman released the results of the survey conducted by Léger Marketing among 505 Laval residents “to measure awareness of the office and the public’s expectations of it,” the office said in a statement last week.

According to the municipal agency, which serves as an arm’s length liaison between municipal departments and city council to resolve residents’ complaints, the results suggest that while awareness remains limited, support for

the ombudsman’s role is particularly strong.

Established in its current form in 2013, Laval’s ombudsman’s office describes itself as an impartial, confidential and free service offered to citizens who believe their municipal rights have been violated or are likely to be.

The ombudsman can intervene on their behalf, at the request of an individual or group of individuals, or at the request of the executive-committee or city council. According to the findings in the survey, only 30 per cent of respondents were aware of the ombudsman’s existence before the survey.

However, once the ombudsman’s role was explained, support by respondents increased, with 88 per cent saying they believed a municipal ombudsman’s office was important, and 84 per cent saying they would be willing to use it if they had a problem.

The survey suggested that for the ombudsman’s office, the main obstacle was not opposition to the role, but a lack of information. It also indicated that a significant proportion of the City of Laval’s population didn’t know how to contact the ombudsman or didn’t fully understand the scope of the role.

In a statement, the ombudsman’s office said “the findings confirm the need to intensify efforts in terms of visibility, institutional education and accessibility,” while adding that the results also show a high level of trust in the principles underpinning the office’s mission.

According to the results, between 92 and 97 per cent of the survey’s respondents associated the ombudsman with values of fairness, transparency and impartiality.

City of Laval ombudsman’s office releases positive survey results

Furthermore, the respondents said they wanted the ombudsman to contribute to improving the communication of decisions, to explain the rationale behind them and to strengthen administrative accountability.

“This perception confirms the legitimacy of this independent body within the democratic process and the Laval municipal ecosystem,” the ombudsman’s office said in its statement.

They said the results indicated that between 95 and 98 per cent of respondents believed the city must fully support the ombudsman, provide the office with the necessary resources and give the office the tools needed to carry out its mission. “Such a high level of support is exceptional,” the office continued in its statement. “It reflects a clear expectation: that of being able to rely on a credible and independent counterweight in the relationship between the municipal administration and the public.”

“This survey sends us a clear message: the public recognizes the importance of an independent office to listen to them, support them and contribute to equitable solutions,” ombudsman office head Nathalie Blais said in the statement.

“It also underscores our responsibility to raise awareness of our role so that every citizen knows that there is recourse when a situation seems hopeless,” she added.

She said the results of the survey will guide the ombudsman office’s future actions, particularly in the areas of communication, accessibility and organizational development.

“The objective remains the same: to raise awareness of the ombudsman’s role, strengthen

public trust and continue to offer an impartial, rigorous and accessible service to the residents of Laval.”

Since tabling the City of Laval’s 2026 budget last December, the Boyer administration has been visibly seeking ways to trim expenses.

“The preparation of the 2026 budget was marked by a particularly challenging financial context,” the city said in a press release issued last year. “The impact of high inflation, which continues to put pressure on the costs of services and contracts, is particularly noteworthy.”

The cuts included the recent and unpopular closing of the mini-zoo/animal farm at the Centre de la nature, which had been in operation for more than 50 years.

Leading up to its re-election in November, the Boyer administration also pledged to follow a path of relative austerity over the next four years, while saying no costly major projects comparable to Place Bell or the Aquatic Complex were planned.

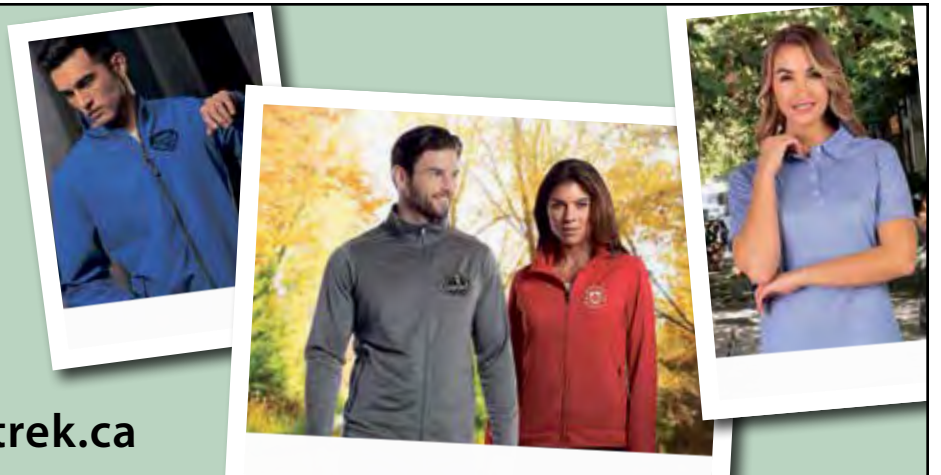
Last Monday, ombudsman’s office spokesperson Pierre Tessier told *The Laval News* that the survey was commissioned and carried out in November and December last year, before the Boyer administration began speaking about budget cuts.

“It was always the intention by the ombudsman to know and measure the pulse,” he said. “Because even though we never doubted the public’s awareness of the role of the ombudsman, we wanted to have actual numbers to be positioned in a few years time to see whether our message was getting out there and bearing fruit.”

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MNA Valérie Schmaltz takes on new role to support Social Services and Homelessness Work

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Vimont MNA **Valérie Schmaltz** has been given new responsibilities in the Quebec government, in a role that connects directly to issues many families and community groups in Laval care about.

The Minister Responsible for Social Services and Homelessness, **Lionel Carmant**, announced that Ms. Schmaltz is now his **Government Assistant**. This means she will help him work on files related to social services, including the growing challenges linked to homelessness.

Minister Carmant said he is pleased to welcome her into this role. He explained that

“Valérie Schmaltz’s appointment is excellent news. Her strong commitment to community organizations gives her a real understanding of what is happening on the ground. At a time when homelessness is a major priority, I’m confident she will help accelerate concrete solutions to better support our most vulnerable residents.”

Homelessness has become more visible in several parts of Quebec, including Laval. Local shelters and community groups have been asking for more support, and Ms. Schmaltz’s new position places her closer to the decisions that shape these services.

Ms. Schmaltz says this issue has mattered to her for a long time. *“Homelessness is a human reality that has touched me deeply, even before*

I was elected,” she said. *“By working closely with our partners — including municipalities — we can make real progress. In Laval, this issue is very real, and I’ve been involved from the start of my mandate. I will continue this work with the same determination.”*

Along with this new role, Ms. Schmaltz will continue as **Government Assistant to the Minister of Immigration, Francization and Integration**, where she works on issues affecting newcomers — an important topic in a diverse city like Laval.

She also recently became **Vice Chair of the National Assembly’s Committee on Transportation and the Environment**, a position she has held since May 5.



Lanvac improves offerings with ‘Libris Aura’ emergency communicator for seniors

Ongoing growth at Canada’s leading third-party alarm monitoring wholesaler

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In the highly competitive domain of security and intrusion detection services, Lanvac Group’s representatives were back at the annual Security Canada East trade show at the Laval Sheraton last month promoting new products and offerings from the Montreal-based firm.

The company, Canada’s leading third-party wholesaler of alarm monitoring, monitors alarm systems for burglary, fire and medical emergencies, and has a sister company, NBG Telecom, which sells alarm products to Lanvac dealers or to any other alarm services retailer for that matter.

The company’s most recently-established division is FindMyAlarm.com.

At past Security Canada East gatherings, Lanvac had announced new undertakings, such as the Lanvac.Mobi web app for Lanvac clients to run system tests, check for signal history, request reports and even create or modify new or existing customer accounts.

Enhanced safety for seniors

For last few years, NBG was distributing the Libris 2 Personal Emergency Response Communicator (now superseded by the Libris Aura) from Numera exclusively in Canada. For vulnerable seniors and other at-risk persons, it came to be regarded as a

comprehensive mobile safety and wellness solution that featured fall detection, GPS location, 4G/LTE support and a 48-hour battery.

Worn around the neck or on a belt, a button activates a medical event alarm which goes to the Lanvac central monitoring station, and a two-way voice call is automatically placed to a human operator at Lanvac. Along with the alarm signal, the user’s GPS coordinates are also automatically sent to central.

New this year, according to Stephanos Georgoudes, a member of a family who have been deeply committed to Lanvac for decades, Lanvac has opened a second alarm monitoring station, located in Montreal North, to serve the island of Montreal.

ULC-certified monitoring

“We’re the only alarm monitoring company in Canada that has two ULC-listed monitoring stations,” Georgoudes said, referring to UL Solutions Canada which is mandated to issue reliability certifications after testing facilities and equipment.

Lanvac’s stations are redundant, serving as back-up in case one or more fails, while the company has additional stations, including one in Toronto. As well, Lanvac’s monitoring stations are located within buildings the company owns, adding a strong element of security to their operations.

This year, Lanvac is promoting an updated two-way voice medical monitoring pendant, the Libris Aura, which improves on the aforementioned Libris 2



From the left, Lanvac and NBG Telecom representatives **Jake Bosse, Victor Dubar, Yianni Fokas and Michel Labelle** at the Security Canada East trade show at the Laval Sheraton last month. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Newsfirst Multimedia)

which had been around for more than a decade. “It’s smaller, the battery’s life is a lot longer,” said Georgoudes, noting that in addition to distributing the Libris Aura, Lanvac also provides full monitoring, while each unit transmits GPS location coordinates in the event of an emergency.

FindMyAlarm.com

In the meantime, Lanvac Group’s FindMyAlarm.com (also another recent addition) is tailored to the needs of end-users, so they can locate local alarm companies should they ever feel a need to compare and switch to another firm.

Although FindMyAlarm.com was designed to promote alarm companies dealing with retail customers, the web portal holds the potential to build a bridge between retail clients and the Lanvac name.

“We created FindMyAlarm.com so that they can find a company closer to them that can serve them better,” Georgoudes explained. “And, of course, those companies are connected with Lanvac.”

With Security Canada conventions also taking place in western and central Canada this year, the gatherings are always a time for security experts

from across the country to focus on building and renewing relationships with hundreds of professionals deeply involved in Canada’s security services industry.

Deep roots in Montreal

Lanvac was founded by brothers John and Bill Georgoudes. Raised in Montreal’s Park Extension district — which was at one time home for most of the city’s Greeks — they turned their initially small burglar alarm business into a national contender.

Lanvac’s first monitoring station was in Parc Extension, in the basement of a building at the corner of Durocher and Jean Talon. Bill got his elementary education at Barclay School on Wiseman Ave., while John attended Strathcona Academy in Outremont.

Bill received his secondary education at the former William Hingston High School, which has since become the area’s most important community centre. John attended another legendary secondary school, Baron Byng High School, which became famous internationally after Canadian novelist Mordecai Richler wrote about it in his narrative fiction.



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Police launch joint strategy to combat extortion of businesses

UNIS project brings coordinated response as intimidation cases rise across the region



Project UNIS discussed at press conference in Montreal on April 30, 2026. (Photo: courtesy of Sûreté du Québec)

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Police forces unite

Police services across Quebec have launched a coordinated strategy to combat violence and extortion targeting businesses, as authorities warn the phenomenon is growing and evolving in Laval and the greater Montreal area.

The initiative, known as Project UNIS, joins the Sûreté du Québec, Service de police de la Ville de Montréal, Service de police de Laval and Service de police de l'agglomération de Longueuil in a joint effort to reduce extortion directed at merchants.

Announced April 30, the project is meant to strengthen police presence, improve intelligence sharing and encourage business owners to report incidents, whether anonymously or not.

"No business should operate under threat," said Benoit Dubé, deputy director general of the Sûreté du Québec, in a statement to the press. "Behind every targeted establishment, there are entrepreneurs, families and employees. Their safety remains at the heart of our commitment."

Laval seeing sustained increase

In Laval, police say the issue has intensified over the past year, with a noticeable increase in extortion cases and a shift in how criminal groups operate.

The Service de police de Laval reports a "marked and persistent increase" in extortion-related activity according to Julie Marois, officer from the Public Affairs Squad, along with a diversification

of the methods used to pressure victims.

Where arson attacks were previously more common, police say suspects are now more likely to rely on threats and intimidation to exert control.

Authorities also note that no single sector of the city is more affected than others. Businesses across a wide range of industries have been targeted, including retail stores, car dealerships, construction companies, restaurants and bars.

"The businesses targeted are generally profitable," Officer Marois said in a written response.

The scope of the problem remains difficult to quantify, in part because many cases go unreported. Police say official data reflects only incidents that are reported and recorded, suggesting the real number of cases may be higher.

A coordinated provincial response

Project UNIS is designed to move beyond isolated investigations and create a province-wide approach to tackling the issue.

The strategy focuses on several key elements: encouraging reporting, strengthening police visibility, supporting businesses with prevention tools and improving the collection and sharing of intelligence.

Police say intelligence gathering plays a central role in identifying criminal networks and detecting patterns across different regions.

"UNIS allows for better coordination between police forces, which avoids working in silos," said Renée Labonne, team leader of the Sûreté du Québec's Distribution and Media Relations Department to *The Laval News*. "Information circulates more quickly; crimes are detected earlier and investigations become

more effective."

The project also aims to target not only those carrying out acts of intimidation, but also the individuals and groups orchestrating them.

Increased presence in Laval

For Laval, the initiative translates into a more visible and proactive police presence across the city.

Officers from multiple units, including prevention, intelligence, criminal investigations and patrol, are being mobilized as part of the effort.

Police say they will conduct visits to businesses in the coming weeks, meeting directly with owners and employees to discuss concerns, identify vulnerabilities and offer advice on security measures.

"All licensed establishments, restaurants and businesses that are facing or could face intimidation, extortion or violence will be visited," Marois said.

Authorities say these visits are intended to build trust and encourage reporting, which remains a key challenge.

Breaking the silence

Police acknowledge that fear of retaliation often prevents business owners from coming forward.

They stress that merchants who have paid money under pressure are considered victims, not offenders, and are encouraged to report incidents.

"Each piece of information can make a difference in an investigation," Marois said.

The initiative also plans to reassure business owners that they are not alone.

"We understand the fear some merchants are living," Labonne said in a statement. "No one should have to fear for their safety simply for trying to earn a living."

Greater Montreal at the centre

While cases have been reported across Quebec, police say the phenomenon is particularly concentrated in the greater Montreal area.

Restaurants and bars remain among the most frequently targeted businesses, though authorities emphasize that any type of business can be affected.

The evolving nature of the threat has also made it more difficult to detect.

Methods used by criminal groups range from verbal threats and repeated visits to break-ins, financial pressure, arson and gunfire.

In some cases, so-called "protection offers" are made, with businesses pressured to pay in exchange for avoiding further harm.

Looking ahead

Police say the success of Project UNIS will depend on improved collaboration between forces and stronger relationships with the business community.

By combining intelligence, increasing visibility and encouraging reporting, authorities hope to better understand the scope of the problem and disrupt criminal networks operating across municipal boundaries.

The initiative will be rolled out over the coming months, with ongoing visits to businesses and the distribution of prevention tools.

For Laval merchants, the fight against extortion requires both enforcement and cooperation.

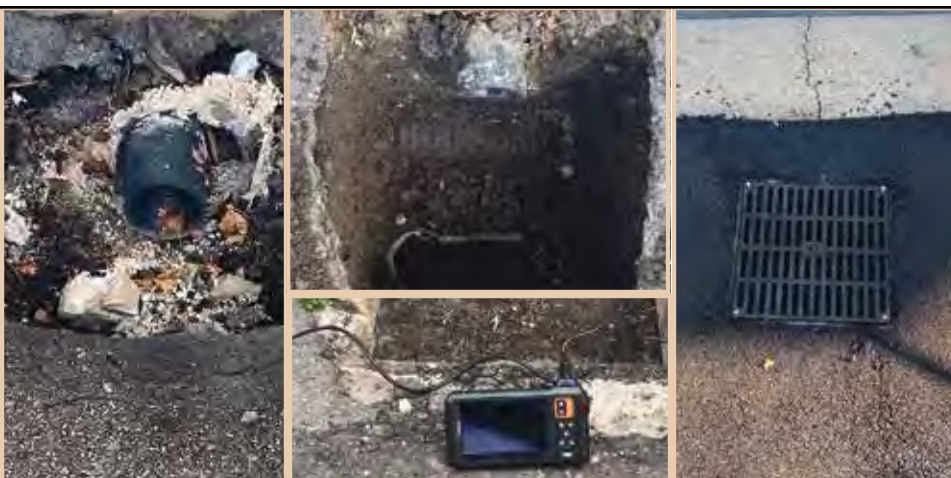
As Project UNIS takes shape, authorities say their goal is not only to respond to incidents, but to prevent them and restore a sense of security for business owners across the region.

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By Martin C. Barry

Man who drove bus into Sainte-Rose daycare seeks to overturn high-risk status

A man found not criminally responsible for driving an STL bus into a Sainte-Rose daycare more than three years ago, killing two children and injuring six others, is appealing to have his "high-risk accused" designation revoked.

Pierre Ny St-Amand was designated a high-risk accused in March following a ruling by Superior Court Justice Éric Downs. His lawyers are challenging the designation, arguing it is inhumane and discriminatory.

They are also challenging whether the high-risk accused classification system in the Criminal Code is constitutional. The designation allows for stricter detention conditions for individuals found not criminally

ally responsible because of a mental disorder.

The Crown can seek the designation in cases where an individual is considered at high risk of violence, or where the offence is deemed so brutal that it suggests an ongoing risk to public safety.

The Superior Court upheld St-Amand's designation, citing both the "brutal" nature of the 2023 offence in Laval and a "marked likelihood" of his reoffending.

St-Amand has been held at the Institut national de psychiatrie légale Philippe-Pinel since the February 2023 incident. His release would require approval from the Commission d'examen des troubles mentaux.

Armed 31-year-old arrested in Laval after driving 156 km/h in a 70 km/h zone

Police were called around 1:00 a.m. on May 7 for a vehicle traveling at excessive speed on the Highway 15 northbound service road near the de la Concorde Blvd. sector in Laval.

The driver received a \$1,693 fine and 18 demerit points. "The intervention also led to the individual's arrest for possession of a prohibited weapon and other firearms char-

ges," the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) said in a press release.

The firearm was seized by the police and the man was released with conditions to be observed, and his driver's license was suspended. The SQ said it wishes to remind everyone that speed is one of the leading causes of fatal collisions in Quebec.

Bike shop fire on des Laurentides Blvd.

An e-bikes shop located on des Laurentides Blvd. in Laval had a close call on Friday May 8 when an overcharged or malfunctioning bicycle battery suddenly caught fire.

The 9-1-1 emergency operator was called around 5:38 p.m. to the store, located just south of de la Concorde Blvd. in Laval-des-Rapides.

Upon arrival at 5:41 p.m., firefighters safely

evacuated the premises and quickly extinguished the threatening blaze, minimizing damage as much as possible.

In recent years, e-bike batteries have proven to be a hazardous source of rogue fires, with many outbreaks reported in cities all over the world. Some fire officials blame imported poor quality batteries.

Recent Laval fires

MAY 9 | 05:19 // Building fire on Rue des Patriotes in the Sainte-Rose sector. Unoccupied residential building. Visible flames. Total engulfment of the building. The Code was 10-07, intervention necessary.



In this incident, a former artists' studio in a garden was razed by a suspicious fire in the early morning of Saturday May 9.

It was 5:19 a.m. when 9-1-1 was alerted to this incident near the Rivière des Mille Îles and the artists' residence located on des Patriotes Blvd., close to the Berge des Baigneurs in Sainte-Rose.

When the first Laval Fire Dept. personnel arrived at 5:25 a.m., the building that once served as a studio for a prominent visual artist was completely engulfed in flames.

The building had been vacant for a long time, awaiting demolition following the floods of 2017 and 2019, so no evacuation was necessary by the 22 requested firefighters.

Due to the widespread fire and significant structural damage, firefighter teams quickly determined that the total loss was estimated at approximately \$75,000.

However, no one was injured during the operation, which ended at 6:06 a.m. Due to the highly suspicious nature of the fire, the Laval Police will be handling an investigation.

MAY 10 | 09:14 // Building fire on 7th Street in the Chomedey sector. Residential building. Visible flames at the garage level. The Code was 10-07, intervention required. One person was injured in the fire.



APRIL 28 | 12:15 // Building fire on Cheillon Street in the Chomedey sector. Residential building. Visible smoke coming from the garage. The Code was 10-07, intervention required.



APRIL 27 | 21:39 // Building fire on Maurice-Gauvin Street in the Chomedey sector. Residential building. Visible flames in the garage spreading to the building. The Code was 10-07, intervention necessary.





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Cacti: prickly and fascinating plants!

Have you ever seen a cactus in a home or garden? Perhaps you've seen them on TV or while you were travelling. These plants stand out from others because of their unusual shapes and, above all, their sharp spines. Learn more about these extraordinary plants.

PROTECTIVE SPINES

Cactus spines have an important job: protection. Since cacti often grow in the desert, they attract thirsty and hungry animals. If you were an animal, would you risk eating food covered in sharp needles that could cause serious pain? The answer is no, of course!

Cactus spines also serve two other important purposes. When it's very hot, they provide shade and collect tiny drops of morning dew. Handy, aren't they?

ABSORBENT STEMS

Cacti are also fascinating because



their large, wide stems are designed to hold water for long periods, acting like sponges. The liquid inside a cactus is a kind of sap, similar to the sap used to make maple syrup.

This superpower allows cacti to survive on very little water. Because they require so little care, it's no surprise that many people choose them to decorate their homes.

BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS

Finally, you should know that most cacti can bloom when the conditions are just right. Temperature, light and water all play a role. To see a cactus produce its bright, colourful flowers is always a wonderful experience.

If you ever receive a cactus as a gift, remember to handle it carefully to avoid hurting yourself. Also, take time to learn how to care for it properly. With the right attention, a cactus can thrive for many years.

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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

TEST OF TIME

Q *I have been lucky in life, growing up in nice neighborhoods, going to good schools, with parents who are very successful financially. I am about to finish my bachelor's degree and work full-time at a good job. I am 20 and things are going great.*

My wonderful boyfriend is 22 and has been less lucky. He was raised by an amazing single mother who has worked two jobs to support her four children; they are from a low-income, mostly Latino community, where the schools are poor. As a result, life has been harder for him.

Unlike my parents who have given me money to save, he has had to work full-time, often living paycheck to paycheck. Because of this he had been out of school but just started working on his degree again.

My boyfriend and I couldn't be happier. We are living together and know that we want to spend the rest of our lives together. We can't imagine it any other way. In fact, we are treating the economic downturn as a great opportunity and are hoping to buy a small house at the end of the year.

The problem is my parents consistently make nasty remarks about him and our relationship. They say he's riding my coat tails, taking advantage of me, and once we've cohabitated long enough, will take half of what I have. The things they say come off as classist and even racist, and my mother and father know these remarks hurt me deeply. Should I tell my parents to take a hike?

Keely

A *Keely, you can't imagine your life without your boyfriend, but at 20 you can't imagine a world with rotary telephones. At 40 you won't be able to imagine what you did at 20. Let's take a step back and try to decide if it's fair to tell your parents to take a hike.*

Wayne & Tamara

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

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

or email: GetInTouch@WayneAndTamara.com

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AVIS PUBLIC – Jour, heure et lieu des séances ordinaires du conseil des commissaires et du comité exécutif de la Commission scolaire Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier pour l'année scolaire 2026-2027

AVIS PUBLIC est par la présente donné que le règlement n° BL2000-CA-05 : *Jour, heure et lieu des séances ordinaires du conseil des commissaires de la Commission scolaire Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier* ET le règlement n° BL2008-CA-15 : *Jour, heure et lieu des séances ordinaires du comité exécutif de la Commission scolaire Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier* seront modifiés à la séance ordinaire du conseil des commissaires de la Commission scolaire Sir-Wilfrid-Laurier du 25 juin 2026, à 19 h 30, afin d'établir les dates des séances pour l'année scolaire 2026-2027.

Les membres du public qui souhaitent examiner ces documents peuvent le faire en visitant notre site Web à l'adresse www.swlauriersb.qc.ca.

La séance ordinaire du conseil des commissaires du 25 juin 2026 se tiendra dans la salle 32A du centre administratif situé au 235, montée Lesage, Rosemère (Québec), et sera diffusée en direct sur Internet. Les membres du public souhaitant y assister à distance pourront le faire en se rendant sur le site Web suivant : <http://bit.ly/swlsbcouncil>.

Fait à Rosemère (Québec)

30 avril 2026

M^e Anna Sollazzo, secrétaire générale

PUBLIC NOTICE – Day, Time and Place of Regular Meetings of the Council of Commissioners and the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board for the 2026-2027 School Year

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that by-law no. BL2000-CA-05: *Day, Time and Place of Regular Meetings of the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board* AND by-law no. BL2008-CA-15: *Day, Time and Place of Regular Meetings of the Executive Committee of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board* will be amended at the regular meeting of the Council of Commissioners of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board on June 25, 2026, at 7:30 p.m. in order to establish the meeting dates for the 2026-2027 school year.

Members of the public wishing to examine these documents may do so by visiting our website at www.swlauriersb.qc.ca.

The regular meeting of the Council of Commissioners on June 25, 2026, will be held in room 32A of the Administration Centre located at 235, montée Lesage, Rosemère (Québec) and broadcast online. Members of the public who wish to attend this Council meeting at a distance may do so on the following website: <http://bit.ly/swlsbcouncil>.

Given at Rosemère (Québec)

April 30, 2025

M^e Anna Sollazzo, Secretary General



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De Cotis and Barrasso support families during McHappy day in Vimont



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Saint-Bruno City Councillor **David De Cotis** rolled up his sleeves on Wednesday as he volunteered at the McDonald's restaurant in Vimont for this year's **McHappy Day**, one of Canada's most recognizable charitable fundraising events.

De Cotis was accompanied by his neighbour, **Barbara Barrasso**, Commissioner with the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board. Together, they greeted residents, served customers, and helped raise funds for **Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC)**, which provides accommodations and support programs for families whose children require medical care far from home.

"McHappy Day is much more than just a fundraising event — it is a meaningful demonstration of compassion and solidarity within our community," De Cotis said. "Every dona-

tion, every meal purchased and every act of generosity helps provide comfort and support to families facing some of life's most difficult moments."

Barrasso echoed the message, highlighting the importance of community engagement. "McHappy Day is a wonderful reminder of what we can accomplish when a community comes together to support families in need," she said. "It was an honour to participate alongside David De Cotis and the many dedicated volunteers who helped make today such a meaningful success."

Throughout the day, residents, volunteers, and McDonald's staff contributed to what organizers described as a strong show of Laval's trademark generosity and community spirit.

De Cotis expressed gratitude to everyone who took part. "Together, we continue to create moments of hope, compassion and support for families who need it most," he said.



HOROSCOPE

Week of **MAY 17 TO 23, 2026**

The luckiest signs this week:
VIRGO, LIBRA AND SCORPIO



ARIES

This week, you'll focus on your home. Renovations, reorganization or relocation may occupy your time. A loved one will need your presence and support, drawing you deeper into family responsibilities.



TAURUS

You'll face a dilemma around discretion. Keeping a secret may become challenging and could risk exposure. You'll gain more by listening rather than speaking, as you'll gather useful, strategic information without compromising yourself.



GEMINI

You may make a real estate purchase or sale, proving your resources match your ambitions. In romance, outbursts of affection will strengthen the balance in your relationship and highlight a bond undergoing deep transformation.



CANCER

Disruption will require quick action. Challenges, surprises or sensitive decisions will guide you toward the right choices. Meanwhile, loved ones and colleagues will finally respond positively to your efforts, making them far more rewarding.



LEO

Your creativity will peak, inspiring you to start a personal project or launch a bold initiative. An exhibition or performance will leave a lasting impression on you. Your generosity will deepen your relationships and strengthen your emotional connections.



VIRGO

Your social life will be buzzing this week. Both old and new friends will seek you out. Invitations, events and meaningful conversations will reveal important truths. These exchanges will strengthen your bonds and deepen your understanding of others.



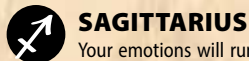
LIBRA

A remarkable professional opportunity is coming, such as a job promotion or the launch of your own business. This long-awaited dream will materialize, marking an important step toward lasting security and personal fulfillment.



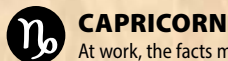
SCORPIO

A secret will come to light, whether intentionally shared or discovered by chance. At work, you may have to speak a foreign language or decode an important message. In your love life, a meaningful exchange will mark an important emotional turning point with your partner.



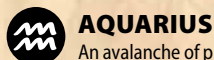
SAGITTARIUS

Your emotions will run high this week, but for happy reasons. A child or loved one will accomplish something deeply moving that will fill you with pride and joy. You'll shed tears of deep and sincere happiness.



CAPRICORN

At work, the facts must outweigh your emotions. Logical thinking will help you have more successful negotiations. Respecting rules and regulations will prevent complications and reinforce your professional success.



AQUARIUS

An avalanche of professional responsibilities will slow you down. If your health is unstable, your body will demand rest. By managing your energy more wisely, you'll regain the strength and efficiency you need to face new challenges.



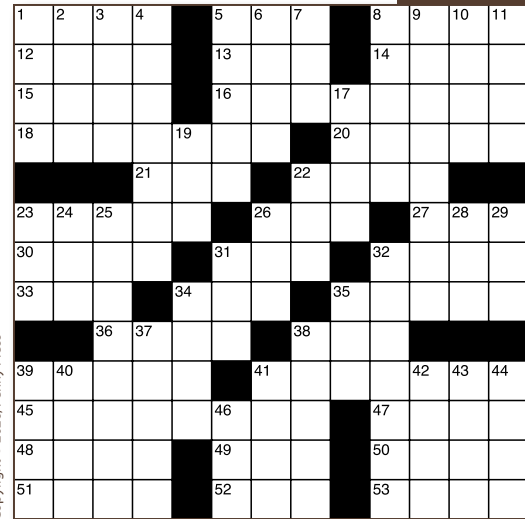
PISCES

A certain success will fill you with pride and highlight your hidden talents. Family tensions may create stress and throw off your inner balance. You'll have to carefully navigate this period of adjustment.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORD

PUZZLE N° 304



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ACROSS

1. Insult
5. Fabric layer
8. _____ and found
12. Game of chance
13. Shad _____
14. Place
15. Hooked on
16. Conflicting
18. Sound systems
20. Assembles
21. One of Santa's helpers
22. Seedless plant
23. Do a body search
26. Light source
27. Hit lightly
30. Lease payment
31. Head for the hills!
32. Inheritor
33. Kooky
34. Unruly crowd
35. Rice field
36. Give off

DOWN

38. Baby tiger
39. Implant
41. Ice-cream flavor
45. Kept
47. Warty creature
48. Hymn closer
49. Feasted
50. Pimples
51. Puts down turf
52. Picked up
53. Foot parts
1. Hits the slopes
2. Pre-Easter time
3. Feed the pot
4. Worst
5. Affirmation
6. Clips
7. Not nope
8. Light beam
9. Familiarized
10. Wired
11. Tickets
17. Foretelling sign
19. Forest animal
22. Amusing
23. '60s do
24. Caught _____-handed
25. Under obligation
26. Pinch hitter, for short
28. Give support to
29. Use a lever
31. Decay
32. Environment
34. Calf-length skirt
35. Wordplay
37. Wealth
38. Service academy student
39. Notable periods
40. Reminder
41. Presidential "no"
42. Coco _____ (rum cocktail)
43. Country path
44. Lime drinks
46. Remind constantly

Sudoku

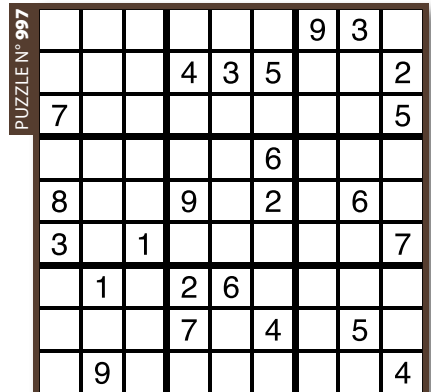
HOW TO PLAY

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.

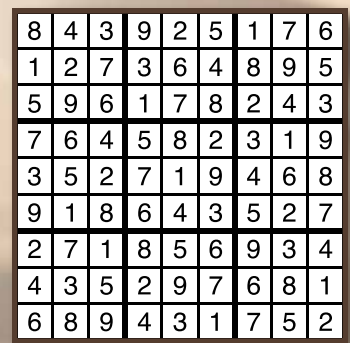


LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

CROSSWORD



Sudoku





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