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Gatineau Hills Fiddle Festival returns to Chelsea for four days of music and dance

The Gatineau Hills Fiddle Festival returns to Chelsea, Quebec, from October 24 to 27, featuring four days of concerts, workshops, and community events, with performances by renowned traditional musicians. (TF)

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GATINEAU HILLS FIDDLE FESTIVAL



Fatal motorcycle crash near Meech Lake, speed suspected, victim unlicensed



Tashi Farmilo
LJI Reporter

A 30-year-old motorcyclist from Gatineau died in a tragic accident near 420 Chemin du Lac Meech on Sunday evening, September 15. The accident occurred at approximately 6:37 pm when the motorcyclist, travelling westbound, lost control of the bike and crashed into an embankment. Despite efforts by bystanders, who attempted CPR at the scene, the victim was later pronounced dead at the hospital.

Police investigators have revealed that the motorcyclist had just left a nearby parking area moments before the crash. "The hypothesis that is most likely at this moment is speed," said Sergeant Martin Fournel, Prevention and Community Relations Officer at the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais police department. Investigators confirmed that the victim did not have a valid driver's licence and that the motorcycle had been borrowed the day before the accident.

A mechanical inspection of the

motorcycle is planned to determine whether any faults in the bike contributed to the crash. Blood samples were also taken, a standard procedure in fatal accidents, to determine if drugs or alcohol were factors, though results are expected to take several months.

This accident adds to a worrying trend in the region. "Since April 1, we've already had 17 motorcycle accidents," Fournel noted. "Most of them involved cyclists losing control and, unfortunately, this latest incident resulted in a fatality."

Sgt. Fournel urged caution for motorcyclists, pointing out that drivers are more vulnerable due to the lack of protection. "You're more likely to get injured because of the size and lack of protection on a motorcycle," he said, advising them to be aware of road conditions and the dangers of excessive speed.

The investigation into this fatal crash remains ongoing, with police continuing to gather evidence and assess the circumstances surrounding the accident.



Tashi Farmilo
LJI Reporter

The Gatineau Hills Fiddle Festival is set to return to Chelsea, Quebec, for its seventh annual edition from October 24 to 27. The four-day event will feature a lineup of concerts, workshops, and community activities that have made it a beloved tradition among folk music enthusiasts.

The festival, hosted at La Fab sur Mill Arts Centre, promises an array of performances by some of the most acclaimed musicians in the fiddle and traditional music scene. Among those headlining the event are Brittany Haas and Natalie Haas, Daniel Lapp and Quinn Bachand, Nathan Gourley and Laura Feddersen, Kimberley Fraser and Margie Beaton, as well as Laura Risk, Nicholas Williams, and Rachel Aucoin. These artists represent a wide spectrum of styles, from American Old-Time and Cape Breton to Irish and Quebecois fiddle traditions, ensuring a rich musical experience for attendees.

Workshops will play a key role in the festival, offering opportunities for both

intermediate and advanced musicians to hone their skills in various fiddle styles, piano accompaniment, and guitar. Highlights include sessions on Cape Breton fiddle by Kimberley Fraser, American Old-Time fiddle by Brittany Haas, and Quebec fiddle by Laura Risk. Natalie Haas will lead workshops on Swedish tunes, while Daniel Lapp will offer insights into British Columbia's unique fiddle repertoire. The festival also promotes youth participation, with several performances showcasing scholarship recipients and young musicians who have benefited from the festival's educational initiatives.

Concerts are scheduled across the four days, with performances beginning on Friday night and continuing through to Sunday afternoon. In addition to concerts, there will be a community dance on Thursday evening, and jamming sessions will take place late into the night after the Saturday concert.

For those looking for detailed information on the festival's schedule, tickets, and lineup, more details can be found on the official website at gatineauhillsfiddlefest.ca.



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Papineau Culture Gala to celebrate regional heritage and creativity



Tashi Farmilo
LJJ Reporter

In a world where cultural traditions often face the pressures of modern life, the upcoming Papineau Culture Gala offers a moment to pause and reflect on the region's artistic heritage. Scheduled for October 12, at the Desjardins Hall of the Petite-Nation in Papineauville, the gala is set to begin at 7 pm and promises an evening that highlights the vibrant cultural fabric of the area.

The gala has established itself as a premier event in the Papineau region, attracting artists, performers, and cultural enthusiasts alike. The evening will feature a thoughtfully curated program, including live music, art exhibitions, dance performances, and interactive workshops. These elements will showcase the region's deep-rooted traditions alongside contemporary artistic expressions, reflecting the unique identity of Papineau.

One of the key moments of the evening will be the presentation of the Cultural Action Centre's honorary awards, which recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the region's cultural scene. Among this year's honorees, Marie-France Bertrand will receive the "Friend of the Centre" Award for her continued support of cultural initiatives. Olivier Favre will be honoured with the Cultural Builder Award in recognition of his efforts to shape and promote the region's cultural landscape, while Michelle Lemire will be celebrated as Cultural Personality of the Year for her outstanding influence



The Papineau Culture Gala, set for October 12 in Papineauville, will be hosted by Frédérique Drolet and will celebrate the region's rich artistic heritage with performances by Natalie Choquette and her daughter Florence K., and an awards ceremony recognizing local cultural contributors. (TF)

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PAPINEAU CULTURE GALA

and contributions to the arts.

Following the awards ceremony, attendees will be treated to a special musical performance by the renowned soprano Natalie Choquette and her daughter, Florence K. The evening will be hosted by Frédérique Drolet, a familiar name in the local cultural scene, ensuring an engaging and festive atmosphere throughout the event.

For visitors looking to extend their experience beyond the gala, the Papineau region offers a wealth of natural beauty to explore. The area's scenic walking paths, particularly enchanting during the autumn months, provide opportunities for both leisurely strolls and more challenging hikes. For those wishing to stay overnight, a variety of accommodation options are available, from charming local bed-and-breakfasts to more luxurious retreats, allowing visitors to fully immerse themselves in the region's tranquil environment.

Dining in Papineauville and the sur-



rounding areas is an experience in itself. Local restaurants will highlight farm-to-table cuisine, featuring seasonal ingredients that showcase the richness of the region's agricultural offerings. Whether seeking a casual meal or fine dining, visitors will find an array of culinary options that complement the cultural and



natural highlights of the region.

Tickets for the Papineau Culture Gala are available for \$60, plus additional fees, and can be purchased online at lepointdevente.com. For further information on the event, including details about the program and accommodation, visit the official website at culturepapineau.org.

Gala Culture Papineau

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\$24 minimum wage -- why not?



FRED Ryan

Wages & salaries are not matching today's rise in rents, home purchase prices, and the general cost of living which hits us all hard, from the supermarket outwards. Ordinary folks have few ways of fighting the continuing rise in our cost of living -- because our major means of keeping up with the whole economy are our wages and salaries. Simply, we need to bring home higher paycheques and pension payments than we do.

Our decline in income is due in part to the decline in labour union membership -- as well as our modern union leadership's general timidity.

Hence, we face the cost of everything

rising, while, at the same time, our income, our ability to match these rising costs, is falling, proportionally. Likely, we can't think clearly about this crisis because too many people are blowing their truck-horns and screaming bloody murder.

The most pro-American of these voices insist on blaming Trudeau and the Liberals for this "...". If only Justin was that powerful! He (and we) are peanut players in this world-wide game.

Minimum wage is one gear within our economy that the provincial governments do control (despite the media onslaught by the corporate world's big guns.) Raising the minimum wage to at least \$24/hour would be a big help to us, our neighbours, and our small-business economy. \$30/hour would be better, creating a small-

business economic revival that shines: more people buying, more shops selling...

But many folks believe the opposite: that a higher minimum wage will harm the economy, since small businesses cannot afford to pay these higher wages. That is partially true, but there are means to side-step that problem.

Avoiding a problem is easier done when it is known, not a surprise. So, instead of trying to avoid a lot of public breast-beating, our government should take the lead in explaining why a higher minimum wage will help the economy, not hurt it. The government needs to speak up and get this message out -- over and over and over.

Second, try a measured approach: not a huge, fearful deadline, but a slow increase in wages. Even some public

money used to assist certain sectors of the economy ... based on higher taxes upon (or reduced subsidies to) the giant businesses which rely on public wealth -- forestry, petroleum, shipping and transport . . .

In other words, a "Small Business Mobilization" -- which uses legalities, fees, taxes and subsidies to assist small businesses. These'd be offered to small businesses in province-wide purchasing programs, all of it government sponsored and guaranteed, to lower the costs to small businesses. Alert: Loblaws is not small business!

Finally, the point powering concepts such as this "Small Business Mobilization" is that there are many solutions to Canada's socio-economic problems. *Canadians are a smart people, remember that!*

LETTERS

to the **Editor** *Opinions expressed are not necessarily shared by the paper*

Tired of tipping

Dear small businesses of Aylmer: Please know that it is very tiring to be always asked to tip. All around town I'm regularly asked to tip when there was very little service rendered. Yes, I buy things in town. But do I need to pay another 20, even 30% more than the price of the coffee to go that I pick up at the counter? I put my own sugar and cream in the coffee, I clean up after myself I do so, and I'm still asked to pay extra!

I didn't realize that the tip amounts are calculated on the bill price after tax! AFTER TAX! What is going on?

Please -- we need to come up with a way that is fair. Business owners, if you can't pay your staff enough, raise the prices but stop asking the public to pay all this extra tip amount when there's nothing in return.

**Name with held upon request
Gatineau**

Promoting and enhancing the French language: Québec launches a call for projects

A call for projects to promote and enhance our common language, French, was launched today by the Minister of the French Language. This call for projects, part of the Programme de promotion et de valorisation de la langue française, will close on November 1.

The Program for the Promotion and Enhancement of the French Language aims to create and maintain conditions conducive to the use of French by the Quebec population, and to ensure its vitality as the common language of Quebec. It supports organizations wishing to develop initiatives that emphasize the added personal and social value of using the French language. Its aim is to establish partnerships between the Quebec government and organizations with a proven ability to access and influence the general public, particularly young people.

Funding ranging from \$10,000 to

\$49,500 can be granted per project, covering up to 80% of eligible expenses.

The enhancement and promotion of the French language is a priority for the Quebec government. Partnerships with organizations that have a real impact in the field are a guarantee of success. We must unite to make French the first choice in the Quebec public space.

The enhancement and promotion of French is a priority for the Quebec government. Partnerships with organizations that have a real impact in the field are a guarantee of success. We must unite to make French the first choice in the Quebec public sphere. This is one way we can turn the tide and promote the vitality of our common language. I encourage organizations with ideas to submit their projects! *Trans. WQP*

**Jean-François Roberge,
Minister of the French Language**

Letters to the Editor Guidelines:

To make sure your letter is published:

All letters must be signed with a phone number (not published).

Any language is acceptable ... but be clear, civil, and not rude.

All letters are edited for grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc, and for length.

Expect your letter to be edited.

No personal attacks, nor promotional pieces for political candidates or parties accepted.

The Editor

West Quebec Post

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A Monkey's wise life observations



Close your eyes for a moment and hear back to those halcyon days of your childhood. Hand in hand with your parents and siblings you walked excitedly to the circus that had come to town. The circus, as it was known in those days, rather than the larger fairs of autumn today, was a major attraction in a town where the wailing of a firetruck enticed townspeople to the scene. You will recall the eager anticipation of the rides at the circus. A merry-go-round was but one of them.

At home you may have ridden a rocking horse; at the circus you were hoisted onto the back of a real looking horse. Slowly as the music played, you floated upwards, then down again in waves as you rode around in circles. No doubt, you will recall smiling broadly as your horse rode past your smiling parents. You felt an attachment to that inanimate creature that you may already have given a name. Off you raced to one more exciting adventure.

There were the bumper cars where you adeptly steered away from others but intentionally bumped into several where a 180° turn of the wheel propelled you backwards. After moving in that direction for a time, you reversed the process yet realized that there was no way of avoiding others. The object then became aiming directly at some unsuspecting car while careening off it into yet one more traffic jam. Just as you got right into the spirit of it all, your trusty car ran out of gas (electricity). The fun was over, on to the next attraction!

Perhaps there was a hotdog, ice cream or cotton candy between those rides. A ferris wheel was but one of them. This time, you were once more rotating in circles. This time it was vertical; this time it was backward. As you reached the apex of that height you were somewhat frightened. As the rotations paused to allow riders to discharge, you were terrified as you were momentarily left dangling high above the ground where neither the chair in front nor behind you were visible. Your stomach felt queasy; you wished that you hadn't eaten that ice cream and hotdog.

You must recall being handed a fistful of dimes and nickels. Perhaps, not counting the pennies you had saved, there was a whole dollar of them. A spinning-wheel barker beckoned you to place your bets.

You placed two nickels on the spades. Three spades turned up. Now you had six nickels. Wow! After repeating the process multiple times, your luck was running out. You turned away from the spinning wheel table with two dimes and a penny to your name.

Off you went to see the monkey show. The monkeys copied your hand waves and expressions. As they mimicked your every move, you laughed aloud. It was you who controlled the monkeys' actions. What you didn't realize is that it was the monkeys who were making fun of you.

A circus was a microcosm of life itself. That would become evident the older you became. Life's like a merry-go-round where you go around in circles. There are unavoidable bumps and collisions along the way. There are times you go up; there are times you go down. There are moments of ecstasy. There are times of loss...of being frightened. As we grow older, we come to understand that these are all part of our human nature. Some are unavoidable while it is we who initiate them. The only solace is that it's all part of being alive. There are times when instead of ruminating on the difficulties, we should just lean back and laugh at ourselves.

Here, courtesy of my sister Mary, is a poem that our late mother Ethel was given by a lady who initialed it J.A.:

IN MONKEYDOM

Three monkeys sat on a coconut tree
Discussing things as they're said to be.
Said one to the others – 'Now listen you two,
There's a certain rumour that can't be true,
That man descended from our noble race --
The very idea is sure a
No monkey ever deserted his wife,
Starved her babies and ruined her life.
And you've never known another monkey
To leave her babies with others to bunk,
Or pass them on from one to another
Till they hardly knew which one is their
mother.
And another thing you will never see --
A monk built a fence 'round a coconut tree
And let the coconuts go to waste,
Forbidding all other monks a taste.
Starvation would force you to steal from me
And here's something else a monk won't do --
Go out at night and get on a stew
Or use a gun, or club, or knife
To take some other poor monkey's life.
Yes man descended – the ornery cuss
But brother, he didn't descend from us!
J.A.



Exploding Pagers: What Was the Point?

by Gwynne DYER

AUTHOR, HISTORIAN & INDEPENDENT JOURNALIST

The exploding pagers that killed at least twelve people and injured 2,800 others in Lebanon and some adjacent places on Tuesday were mostly just a new wrinkle on the exploding cell-phones that Israel has used to assassinate its opponents in the past, but there was one major innovation.

You expect competence and ingenuity from Israel's Mossad spy agency, so it's no surprise that it knew Hezbollah, the Lebanon-based Islamist organisation, was planning to replace the mobile phones of its planners and commanders with old-fashioned pagers. (One-way pagers cannot transmit, so do not reveal the holder's location.)

More impressively, Mossad found the information early enough to use it. Its operatives quickly turned to an obscure Hungarian firm called BAC Consulting that manufactures pagers under license from a Taiwan company called Gold Apollo.

Now come the speculative bits. Was BAC Consulting a front organisation set up in Budapest by Mossad? That seems likely, because sabotaging 5,000 pagers is an industrial-scale operation, not easily hidden. It is not something that can be done by three spooks working in a garage.

And how on Earth did Mossad persuade some senior Hezbollah officials to order five thousand Gold Apollo Model AR-924 pagers from a dubious Hungarian company? Hezbollah will be tearing itself to shreds today as it frantically hunts for the traitors, and some of its senior officials will be facing ruthless interrogations and probably even torture.

Speculations aside, the rigged pagers were all delivered to Hezbollah a couple of months ago and have been in daily use ever since. The obvious question is: what was it all for? The answer to that lies in another question: why so many?

Normal Mossad assassinations target one or two key figures in militant Arab organisations. There seems little point in targeting thousands of mid- and low-level officials, all of whom will automatically be replaced by their immediate subordinates. Unless, of course, you want to take out as many as possible of them on a single designated day.

The technical brilliance of the Mossad

operation was not in how the pagers were manufactured nor in the way the explosive was disguised or concealed. It was in the fact that all 5,000 pagers, widely dispersed across Lebanon and nearby countries, could be detonated simultaneously by a single coded signal.

That is exactly what the Israeli government would want to do on the day it finally launched its long-threatened invasion of Lebanon to 'destroy' Hezbollah.

True, such an operation is unlikely ever to succeed. After eleven months of fighting, the Israel Defence Force (IDF) has not even managed to destroy Hamas, a far weaker foe. But for Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's government, which cannot think of anything else to do, attacking Hezbollah is an almost irresistible displacement activity.

If he finally decides to go down that road, then thousands of pagers exploding and killing or maiming thousands of Hezbollah's key cadres on the first day of the attack would make perfectly good sense.

So why have the Israelis jumped the gun? According to their own leaked explanation, it was because they thought Hezbollah was about to discover that its pagers had been sabotaged. Use them or lose them, even if using them without an accompanying invasion is a far less effective action resulting only in a few thousand shredded hands, faces and groins.

To maximise the damage, Mossad reportedly sent a message alert to the pagers less than a minute before the actual 'explode' command in order to ensure that as many Hezbollah commanders as possible would be looking at their pagers at just the right time. However, the pagers that stayed in trouser pockets did almost as much damage to stomachs and genitalia.

The whole thing is just a footnote in history, really, though a fascinating one. Most of the victims were actual combatants, for once, and the only message it sends is that Israel is not yet ready to invade Lebanon. Whether it ever will be ready remains to be seen, but doing so without crippling Hezbollah's communications first would be a very big mistake.

Government of Quebec invests \$5 million in Gatineau plant to combat climate change



Tashi **Farmilo**
LJJ Reporter

The Government of Quebec is intensifying efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through a \$5 million financial assistance package for Produits forestiers Résolu's Gatineau plant. The investment was announced by Mathieu Lévesque, Member of Parliament for Chapleau and Deputy House Leader, on behalf of Benoit Charette, Minister of the Environment, the Fight Against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks, and Minister responsible for the Laurentides region.

The project aims to significantly reduce the plant's natural gas usage by more than 7.3 million cubic metres per year, resulting in an estimated reduction of over 13,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually—the equivalent of taking more than 3,800 cars off the road. This initiative is a key component of Quebec's 2030 Green Economy Plan.

"With the Green Economy Plan, our government has provided the necessary means to support local businesses so that they can fully contribute to Quebec's climate and



The Government of Quebec, represented by MP Mathieu Lévesque, is investing \$5 million in Produits forestiers Résolu's Gatineau plant to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over 13,000 tonnes annually as part of its Green Economy Plan. (TF)

PHOTO COURTESY OF PRODUITS FORESTIERS RÉSOLU energy transition," said Minister Benoit Charette. "Projects like the one at Produits forestiers Résolu's Gatineau plant are helping us sustainably transform our economy and move closer to achieving our climate goals."

This investment is part of the Bioenergy program, a critical element in Quebec's strategy to combat climate

change and encourage renewable energy adoption. The program, with a budget of nearly \$360 million from 2024 to 2029, supports businesses in implementing sustainable and energy-efficient technologies.

Mathieu Lévesque underscored the importance of this funding for the region, stating, "I am delighted with this \$5 million investment for the Produits forestiers Résolu plant in Gatineau. It will allow the plant to continue its work on renewable and smart energy projects, significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This assistance shows our government's commitment to prioritizing climate action and supporting the energy transition in Gatineau, Chapleau, and Outaouais."

Richard Tremblay, President of the Pulp and Tissue Business Unit at Produits forestiers Résolu, also highlighted the environmental benefits of the project. "This investment, made in collaboration with the Government of Quebec, enables us to reduce our carbon footprint here in Gatineau. With better-adapted equipment, we will reduce natural gas usage and eliminate 13,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year. This project is part of our broader commitment to analyze and reduce GHG emissions across our company."

Union representing federal employees apologizes after "boycott campaign"



Taylor **Clark**
LJJ Reporter

The Public Service Alliance of Canada, the union representing federal employees, is backtracking after its National Capital Region chapter urged its members to "buy nothing" downtown on in-office days.

As of September 9, federal public servants have been mandated to work in the office for a minimum of three days per week, or four for executives, in accordance with the federal government's new hybrid work policy.

Since the announcement of the return-to-work protocols in May, the labour union has challenged the cookie-cutter approach, deeming telework the best solution.

"Remote work has transformed the way we work. The

Government of Canada has an opportunity to shape the future of work in ways that benefit not only workers but our communities," read the labour union website.

Two days into the mandate, the chapter posted to Instagram encouraging its members to limit spending by packing their own lunches and buying from small local businesses.

"The needs of the downtown core shouldn't fall on the back of workers and the federal public service," wrote the union. "Our working conditions shouldn't be leveraged by politicians to appease commercial interests."

Concerned with what it refers to as a "boycott campaign," the Gatineau Chamber of Commerce issued a press release, stating the downtown merchants were not responsible for return-to-work decisions and should not be targeted.

"Civil servants certainly play an important role in our

region, but they are not the only option for ensuring the economic and social vitality of our downtown core. We have made this mistake in the past and it is crucial not to repeat it," wrote the general manager of the Gatineau Chamber of Commerce Etienne Fredette.

The chamber invited constructive dialogue and common solutions to support a sustainable and diversified recovery of the downtown core. "It is imperative to build a resilient economy, capable of adapting to changes while meeting the needs of the community," wrote Fredette.

The union's post was removed the following day and replaced by a statement from the regional executive vice president Ruth Lau MacDonald, clarifying the chapter was not calling for a boycott of downtown businesses.

Continued on page 7

PROBLÈME D'INFILTRATION D'EAU?
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Wakefield Writers Fête 2024 celebrates resilience and the power of storytelling



Tashi Farmilo
LJ Reporter

The Wakefield Writers Fête 2024 will bring together an impressive array of authors, artists, and storytellers for a series of engaging events celebrating literature, culture, and resilience. The festival, taking place in October at the Centre Wakefield La Pêche Cooperative, will feature a diverse lineup of speakers, including notable authors such as Waubgeshig Rice, Kai Thomas, Jane Urquhart, and Heather O'Neill, as well as multidisciplinary artists like Chloé Sainte-Marie and Marc Séguin.

Kicking off on October 16, the event, titled Stories of Resilience, will have Waubgeshig Rice and Kai Thomas in conversation with Adrian Harewood, exploring themes of identity, survival, and cultural renewal. Rice's much-anticipated sequel, "Moon of the Turning Leaves," builds on his exploration of Indigenous life in post-apocalyptic settings, while Thomas's In the Upper Country delves into the history and legacies of Black and Indigenous communities in Canada. Both authors highlight the enduring strength of marginalized peoples and the beauty of



The Wakefield Writers Fête 2024 at the Centre Wakefield La Pêche will feature a diverse lineup of authors and artists exploring themes of resilience, identity, and storytelling through a series of events in October. (TF)

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CENTRE WAKEFIELD LA PÊCHE

their cultural roots.

On October 17, "Stories of Discovery" will feature Jane Urquhart and Heather O'Neill, hosted by Lucy van Oldenbarneveld, in a discussion about how storytelling brings visibility to the invisible. Urquhart's newest novel In Winter I Get Up at Night touches on colonial expansion and scientific progress, while O'Neill's dark fairytale The Capital of Dreams provides a poignant reflection on life, death, and betrayal.

The festival's bilingual programming will be on full display on October 18 with "Passion et Création," featuring Chloé Sainte-Marie

and Marc Séguin. Sainte-Marie, known for her advocacy for caregivers and her work in music, will share her latest multilingual album Maudit Silence, while Séguin, a renowned painter and novelist, will discuss his passion for art and creation.

October 19 will feature "Stories of Courage" with Sally Armstrong and R.H. Thomson, examining the impact of war on individuals and society. Armstrong, a veteran journalist known for her focus on women's rights, will discuss her work in Afghanistan, while Thomson will offer insights from his memoir By the Ghost Light, which intertwines

personal and historical narratives around the human cost of war.

The festival concludes on October 20 with "Stories of Fortitude & Renewal," hosted by Frances Itani. The event will feature Jamal Saeed, Souvankham Thammavongsa, and Lawrence Scanlan in a discussion about resilience, migration, and finding hope in adversity.

Thammavongsa's How to Pronounce Knife portrays the immigrant experience through tender and humorous stories, while Saeed's memoir My Road from Damascus recounts his harrowing experience as a prisoner of conscience in Syria. Scanlan's writing on philanthropy and compassion further emphasizes the importance of generosity and human connection in difficult times.

The Wakefield Writers Fête promises to be an enriching celebration of storytelling in its many forms, with each event offering a unique exploration of resilience, identity, and the human spirit. Tickets are available for individual events, and the festival is committed to making its programming accessible, offering reduced-price tickets for anglophone events. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit the festival's official website at writersfete.com.

Union representing federal employees apologizes after "boycott campaign"

Continued from page 6

"After speaking to local business leaders and our members, I acknowledge that this approach was misguided, and our intention has never been to pit federal workers against small downtown businesses," wrote Lau MacDonald.

The union recognized the challenges small business owners downtown faced with the

COVID-19 pandemic and apologized for the confusion.

"At the same time, it's important to remember that remote work has allowed small businesses outside the downtown core to thrive by giving workers the opportunity to support businesses in the neighbourhoods where they live and raise their families."

Lau MacDonald argued that these busi-

nesses will also suffer as public service workers return to the downtown core. "We're asking for the federal government to work together with municipalities and the business community to revitalize our city centres – without putting the burden on the federal workers."

Gatineau Mayor Maude Marquis-Bissonnette agreed that bringing our downtown

core into a new age could not be placed on the shoulders of public servants.

"That's why we're moving forward on supporting commerce to really have an attractive offer in the downtown area, not just during office hours but so that people want to come on weekends, evenings, to enjoy the cultural offer of restaurants and shops," said Marquis-Bissonnette.



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“Online sale gone wrong” leads to three arrests



Taylor Clark
LJJ Reporter

Gatineau Police reminded the public to exercise caution when entering private sales after three people were arrested following “an online sale gone wrong” in the Gatineau sector.

Officers responded to a call regarding a robbery in a parking lot at 25 chemin de la Savane on the evening of September 21. Police gathered that the individuals met at the location to make an exchange following an online sale.

The press release indicated the two sellers showed up with what appeared to be a firearm and a bladed weapon. “One of them then pointed the gun at the buyer, leading to an altercation between the three individuals,” said police.

All three people were injured during the altercation, with one of the sellers, a 25-year-old man from the Montreal area, still hospitalized as of September 23. The buyer was released without charge, while the 25-year-old seller and the accomplice, who is a minor, will face charges of armed assault, conspiracy, and robbery.

The investigation is ongoing.

NEUTRAL ZONES

Police advised the public to utilize public spaces during busy hours or secure exchange areas to facilitate transactions following online sales. Secure exchange zones have been deployed to the parking lots of the police stations in the Gatineau and Hull sectors. Identified by blue markings and permanent signage, the neutral zones are under camera surveillance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

TIPS FOR SELLERS

As a seller, the police said you should always try to find out about the buyer before making the transaction. If their profile was created recently or provides little information, you should be suspicious. A seller should ensure the validity of the payment before handing over an item to a potential buyer, even if the buyer would like to inspect it before buying.

TIPS FOR BUYERS

Like being a seller, buyers should learn about the seller before making a transaction. If the seller’s profile provides little information or was created recently, be wary. One should also be cautious if the asking price is much lower than the item’s value, especially if the seller indicates the item is new or rarely used. Asking questions and requesting more photos was also important. Reverse image searches can be done using search engines like “Google Images” to see if the item is listed somewhere else. Buyers should always ask to see the item before making a payment to spot any anomalies from a distance.



Avis public d'élection Commission scolaire Western Québec Élection scolaire du 3 novembre 2024

AVIS PUBLIC est, par la présente, donné aux électeurs de la commission scolaire par Rachel Vincent, présidente d'élection, que :

- Les postes suivants sont ouverts aux candidatures:
 - **Poste de présidente ou président**
 - **Commissaires dans les onze (11) circonscriptions électorales de la CSWQ**
- Toute déclaration de candidature à ces postes devra être produite au bureau du président d'élection ou à celui du ou des adjoints habilités à recevoir celle-ci, aux jours et aux heures suivants :

Du **24 septembre 2024** au **27 septembre 2024**
De **8 h 30 à 12 h** et de **13 h à 16 h 30**

Dimanche le 29 septembre 2024
De **13 h 00 à 17 h**

- Si plus d'un candidat pose sa candidature à un même poste,
 - Un scrutin sera tenu le 3 novembre, 2024 de 10 h à 20 h et,
 - Un vote par anticipation sera tenu le 27 octobre, de 12 h à 20 h.
- J'ai nommé M. Eldon Keon pour agir à titre de secrétaire d'élection.

En raison du vaste territoire de la Commission Scolaire Western Québec, les documents de mise en candidature seront reçus aux endroits suivants :

École G. Théberge 38 Boucher St, Box 610 Témiscaming, QC J0Z 3R0 819-627-1212	École Noranda 10 Québec Blvd Rouyn-Noranda, QC J9X 1G2 819-762-2706	École Golden Valley 980, 7th Street Val D'Or, QC J9P 3P8 819-825-3211
École St-John's Elementary 10 Leslie Street Campbell's Bay, QC J0X 1K0 819-648-2149	École Queen Elizabeth Elem 9 Begley Road, Box 240 Kazabazua, QC J0X 1X0 819-467-2865	École Namur Intermediae 333 du Parc Street Namur, QC J0V 1N0 819-426-2996
École Buckingham Elem. 615, George Street Gatineau, QC J8L 2E1 819 986-3191	École Dr. S.E. McDowell Elem. 89, Centre Street Shawville, QC J0X 2Y0 819 647-3800	École Maniwaki Woodland 247 des Oblats Maniwaki, QC J9E 1G6 819 449-2597
Commission scolaires Western Quebec 15 rue Katimavik Gatineau, QC J9J 0E9 819-684-2336		

- Un électeur qui n'a pas d'enfant admis aux services éducatifs de la commission scolaire anglophone ou du centre de services scolaire francophone qui dessert son domicile peut choisir d'exercer ou de révoquer son droit de vote dans la commission scolaire anglophone. L'électeur fait un choix en présentant un avis écrit signé à la présidente d'élection de la commission scolaire anglophone, du 20 septembre au 15 octobre.

- Vous pouvez me joindre, ou joindre mon secrétaire d'élection, aux coordonnées suivantes:

Présidente d'élection
Rachel Vincent
819-592-0895
rvincent@wqsb.qc.ca

Secrétaire d'élection
Eldon Keon
819-661-5965
ekeon@wqsb.qc.ca

Donné à Gatineau, le 11 septembre, 2024

Rachel Vincent
Présidente d'élection



Cette maison est un véritable bijou! Elle est très bien située sur une rue calme où la rivière est au bout de la rue. La marina est tout prêt, facilement accessible en faisant une courte balade, ou en vélo le long du sentier. Le parc des Cèdres est à quelques pas où l'on peut faire des pique-niques et se baigner à la plage surveillée.

This is a gem of a house in a great location. It's on a quiet street and the river is a minute's walk away at the end of the road. Parc des Cèdres starts there, and the marina is a short stroll (or skateboard) along the path. It's an easy walk to the park for a picnic or a swim.

3 br / cc
2 bath / sdb
Patio and private back yard / patio et cour arrière privée

Voir l'annonce sur Duproprio. See the listing on Duproprio.
Le propriétaire/The owner 819 318-1403

Complexe Funéraire Girardot earns top certification for service excellence



Tashi Farmilo
LJ Reporter

The *Complexe Funéraire Girardot*, a leading funeral service provider in Gatineau, has been awarded one of Québec's highest distinctions in the funeral industry: the certification from the Bureau de Normalisation du Québec (BNQ) for excellence in customer service. This recognition places Girardot among a select group of funeral homes across the province that have met the stringent standards required for such accreditation.

The certification, announced by the Corporation des thanatologues du Québec (CTQ), the industry body representing over 500 funeral service companies. This benchmark ensures transparency, quality, and professionalism in funeral services—a vital measure of reliability for families navigating grief and loss. The certification involves an independent evaluation process that scrutinises a funeral home's operations, customer relations, and overall service delivery.

In a ceremony marking the achievement, Geneviève Veilleux, President of the CTQ, praised the Girardot team's dedication to elevating funeral service standards in the region. "The efforts of the Complexe Funéraire Girardot, along with its commitment to service quality, truly set them apart," Veilleux said. "This certification is not only a reflection of their professionalism but also a reassurance to the families they serve."

For Julie Girardot, President and General Manager of the funeral home, the achievement represents years of hard work and dedication by her staff. "We receive this certification with immense pride," she said in a statement. "Our team has undertaken a monumental effort over the past few years, and we can now confidently say that we offer some of the best funeral services in Québec." Girardot stressed the importance of maintaining high standards in a field where families depend on compassion and professionalism during emotionally challenging times.

For more information about the *Complexe Funéraire Girardot* and its offerings, visit: girardot.ca.



Complexe Funéraire Girardot in Gatineau has been awarded the prestigious BNQ certification, recognizing its commitment to delivering exceptional and transparent funeral services, setting a new standard in Québec's funeral industry. From left to right: Geneviève Veilleux, President of the CTQ; Julie Girardot and Emmanuelle Neault-Girardot from Complexe Funéraire Girardot; and Mr. Mitchel Fortin, representative of the BNQ. (TF)

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CTQ



Public Notice of Election Western Quebec School Board - School Board Election on November 3, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given to the electors of the school board by Rachel Vincent, the returning officer, that:

1. The following positions are open for nominations:

- **Chair of the Board**
- **Commissioners in all eleven (11) electoral divisions of the WQSB**

2. Nomination papers for these positions must be filed at the office of the Returning Officer or at those of the assistants authorized to receive them, on the following days and times:

September 24, 2024 to September 27, 2024
8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 29, 2024
1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

3. If two or more candidates are nominated for the same position,

- A poll will be held on November 3, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.,
- An advance poll will be held on October 27, from noon to 8 p.m.

4. I nominate M. Eldon Keon to act as the Election Clerk.

Due to the vast territory of the Western Quebec School Board, nomination documents will be received at the following locations:

G. Thérberge School 38 Boucher St, Box 610 Témiscaming, QC J0Z 3R0 819-627-1212	Noranda School 10 Québec Blvd Rouyn-Noranda, QC J9X 1G2 819-762-2706	Golden Valley School 980, 7th Street Val D'Or, QC J9P 3P8 819-825-3211
St-John's Elementary School 10 Leslie Street Campbell's Bay, QC J0X 1K0 819-648-2149	Queen Elizabeth Elem. School 9 Begley Road, Box 240 Kazabazua, QC J0X 1X0 819-467-2865	Namur Intermediate School 333 du Parc Street Namur, QC J0V 1N0 819-426-2996
Buckingham Elem. School 615, George Street Gatineau, QC J8L 2E1 819 986-3191	Dr. S.E. McDowell Elem. School 89, Centre Street Shawville, QC J0X 2Y0 819 647-3800	Maniwaki Woodland School 247 des Oblats Maniwaki, QC J9E 1G6 819 449-2597
Western Quebec School Board 15 rue Katimavik Gatineau, QC J9J 0E9 819-684-2336		

5. An elector who does not have a child admitted to the educational services of the English-language school board or the French school service centre serving his/her domicile may choose to exercise or revoke their right to vote at an English-language school board. This choice is made by sending a notice in writing to the returning officer of the English-language school board, Between September 20 and October 15.

6. You can reach me, or the Elections Clerk:

Returning Officer
Rachel Vincent
819-592-0895
rvincent@wqsb.qc.ca

Elections Clerk
Eldon Keon
819-661-5965
ekeon@wqsb.qc.ca

Prepared in Gatineau on September 11, 2024

Rachel Vincent
Returning officer

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The Club de Curling de Buckingham prepares for key events and regional collaboration



Tashi Farmilo
LJJ Reporter

The Club de Curling de Buckingham is gearing up for a season of milestone events, cementing its role as a key player in Québec's curling community. This year, the club will host its 9th annual mixed tournament from November 28 to December 1, welcoming 16 teams from across the province. As part of the regional mixed curling circuit, the tournament links Buckingham with other clubs in Chelsea, Thurso, and Maniwaki, offering teams the chance to earn points and compete for a spot in the grand finale at the Club des Collines de Chelsea on April 5, 2025. This highly anticipated event showcases the club's commitment to fostering competition and camaraderie among regional curlers.

Alongside its tournament schedule, the Club de Curling de Buckingham will host an open house from September 30 to October 4, aimed at introducing the sport to newcomers and strengthening ties with the local community. The open house provides residents with a chance to experience curling firsthand, promot-



Members of the Club de Curling du Gouverneur Général at Rideau Hall, Ottawa. (TF)
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CLUB DE CURLING DE BUCKINGHAM.

ing the sport's health benefits and encouraging broader participation. These outreach efforts are crucial for sustaining the club's vitality and ensuring curling remains a dynamic part of the community's sporting life.

The Club de Curling de Buckingham is also closely connected with the prestigious Club de Curling du Gouverneur Général (C.C.G.G.), which celebrated

its 150th anniversary earlier this month. The C.C.G.G., one of Canada's most storied curling institutions, held a four-day celebration in Ottawa from September 6 to 9, culminating in a banquet attended by nearly 170 people. The event honoured the club's long history with special tributes, a visit to Rideau Hall, and the induction of 10 new members. Notably, Alain Deschâtelets, a Buckingham

resident and outgoing president of the C.C.G.G., was one of four individuals recognized as a distinguished member. His leadership has been instrumental in strengthening ties between the C.C.G.G. and clubs like Buckingham.

This relationship highlights a broader collaboration between curling clubs in the region. While the C.C.G.G. operates as an elite organization with a membership that includes former champions, coaches, and key figures in the sport, its connection to clubs like Buckingham ensures that curling traditions are preserved while also embracing modern developments. Through shared events and tournaments, these clubs work together to promote the sport's growth, both locally and regionally.

As the Club de Curling de Buckingham prepares for its upcoming season, it continues to play an essential role in the Outaouais curling community. Whether through competitive events like the mixed tournament or community engagement initiatives like the open house, the club is ensuring that curling remains an accessible and celebrated sport for all.

Quebec launches call for projects to support Indigenous Youth Development



Tashi Farmilo
LJJ Reporter

The Youth Secretariat has launched a new initiative, "Mobilisation, Development and Support of Indigenous Youth," as part of the Quebec Government's broader action plan aimed at fostering the social and cultural well-being of First Nations and Inuit communities. This initiative, which runs from 2022 to 2027, seeks to encourage greater engagement among Indigenous youth, providing them with opportunities to take charge of their own development and the implementation of projects that address the unique needs of their communities.

Organisations working with Indigenous youth have been invited to submit project proposals by October 23, 2024, for a chance to receive funding. The maximum financial support available for a one-year project is \$50,000. This funding is intended to support initiatives that promote the leadership



Quebec's Youth Secretariat has launched a call for projects offering up to \$50,000 in funding to support initiatives that promote the engagement and development of Indigenous youth as part of a broader action plan for their social and cultural well-being. (TF) PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FIRST NATIONS YOUTH NETWORK

and pride of young people in their Indigenous identities, while encouraging active participation in community life. The projects are expected to be designed and carried out in collaboration with the youth themselves, ensuring that solutions are tailored to their specific needs

and realities.

The program's objectives include fostering a sense of empowerment and leadership among Indigenous youth, helping them develop the skills and confidence needed to take on greater roles within their communities. It also seeks

to strengthen ties between organisations working with Indigenous populations, enhancing cooperation in the development of initiatives that support Indigenous youth.

Eligible applicants for the program include Indigenous nations recognized by Quebec's National Assembly, Indigenous non-profit organisations, the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador, and non-Indigenous non-profits that have expertise in delivering services and projects within Indigenous contexts.

The Quebec government's action plan, under which this call for projects falls, is a part of ongoing efforts to address the social and cultural challenges faced by Indigenous communities, while fostering resilience and leadership among Indigenous youth. For further details about the eligibility criteria and application process, interested organisations can visit the Youth Secretariat's website: www.jeunes.gouv.qc.ca.

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FULL-TIME JOURNALISTS WANTED for the *Aylmer Bulletin*, *Gatineau Bulletin*, and the *West Quebec Post*. Immediate start. Salaried position, spoken bilingualism is necessary. A car and a good camera are required. Contact Lily Ryan at: info@bulletinaylmer.com.

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FREE FALL RHAPSODY On Saturday, September 28, come celebrate the arrival of fall with us and admire the magnificent change in leaf color! A day full of magic and fun awaits you. On the program: FREE family activities! Face painting for children: 10 am - 1 pm Inflatable play structure: 9 am - 5 pm Arts and crafts workshop: 10 am - 4 pm Children's entertainment (30-minute presentation): 10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm Guided walking tour: (schedule to be confirmed) Treasure hunt: All day Walking labyrinth adventure: All day Schedule for paying activities: Water labyrinth adventure: 9 am - 9 pm. Don't miss this festive and colorful day! See you on September 28 for an unforgettable autumn experience! 52 Chemin Des Sources, Wakefield, QC.

NEW IN AYLMEYER AT PUTTERS!! CONNAUGHT PLACE HORSE-RACE BETTING SALON showing live horse races on giant screens. Join in the fun! Galeries Aylmer, 181 Rue Principale, Gatineau. 819 557-1188, info@chezputters.ca.

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PREMIÈRE ÉDITION DE « COURONS GATINEAU » - Une course populaire qui s'adresse autant aux novices qu'aux coureurs accomplis et même aux marcheurs. Organisé par Gatineau Loppet, nouvel événement de course à pied à Gatineau, Québec. Épreuves de 2 km, 5 km et 10 km. Le samedi 28 septembre 2024 à 12 h, rue Jacques-Cartier. Courons Gatineau se veut aussi un hommage aux majestueux cours d'eau de l'Outaouais. D'où notre slogan : « D'une rivière à l'autre »! Inscriptions en ligne au <https://couronsgatineau.ca/>.

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