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Canada Post workers on unpaid leave, because of Covid vax non-compliance

During leave without pay, anxieties increase within families, says CUPW's Alain Robitaille



MARTIN C. BARRY
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The labour union representing Canada Post workers is contesting the crown corporation's temporary suspension without pay of employees who are not complying with the federal government's order that they become fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus.

Covid vax mandatory

On Oct. 6, the Trudeau Liberals announced their government's plan to require COVID-19 vaccination across the federal public service and federally regulated transportation sectors. Under the new policy, federal public servants in the core public administration, including members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, were required to confirm their vaccination status by Oct. 29.

Those who were unwilling to disclose their vaccination status or to be fully vaccinated were to be placed on administrative leave without pay as early as Nov. 15. Crown corporations such as Canada Post and separate agencies were asked to implement vaccine policies mirroring the requirements announced for the rest of the public service.

Leave without pay

According to Alain Robitaille, president of the greater Montreal local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), the deadline for postal employees to comply with Ottawa's order was midnight Nov. 26, failing which they would be placed on leave without pay until further notice.

"The postal union is not against Covid vaccination," he said. "We are aware that it is the best solution possible for the population in general. We know that it is a good thing and we feel it is important to say so. However, what we are contesting to an arbitrator is that we feel there are alternatives for those who don't want to be vaccinated which are also valid – including frequent screening."

Many non-compliance reasons

Although the anti-vax movement has perhaps created in certain people's minds a stereotypical

image of those who oppose mandatory Covid vaccination, Robitaille said there are many reasons why some CUPW members are reluctant to or don't want to comply, including concerns over individual rights, religious convictions and health issues.

"A certain number of members of the postal workers' union have all sorts of concerns about the vaccines, both founded and unfounded," he said in an interview with Newsfirst Multimedia. "I am sure that a certain number of those concerns are unfounded. However, that being said their fears are very real."

In all, the CUPW's Montreal region local (which takes in Montreal Island, the South Shore, Laval and the North Shore) has around 6,000 members, around 600 of those being from Laval.

Workers feeling the strain

Robitaille said that 10 per cent of the membership have expressed concerns about the government's order to become fully vaccinated, corresponding roughly to a trend seen in the rest of the population. He said the government's decision to enforce the vaccination requirement has greatly impacted the postal workers and is weighing heavily on some of them.

"During leave without pay, debts accumulate, anxieties increase within families, damage is done," he said, noting that the postal service has been one of the few sectors of the country's economy that continued to operate without stopping since the start of the pandemic early last year.

'Hard on families'

"We've been on the job since the beginning. It's been hard on families, on human resources. And now this latest development will be yet another blow they'll have to deal with just as the Christmas season is starting."

On Nov. 25, the national CUPW announced that a "cease and desist" order the union had sought in court against Canada Post's vaccination position wasn't granted.

The arbitrator did, however, order a hearing on the merit of CUPW's case, allowing the union to present its arguments within a shorter period than would ordinarily be the case. "CUPW is disappointed by the result, but we still feel we have a good case on the merit," said Carl Girouard, the CUPW's national grievance officer.



Photo: Alain Robitaille, president of the CUPW's local for the greater Montreal region, says Ottawa's 'leave without pay' order for the Covid-unvaccinated is "yet another blow" some of the union members have to deal with just as the Christmas season is starting. (Photo: Courtesy Radio-Canada)

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OPINION & Editorial



THAT'S WHAT I'M THINKING

Robert Vairo



Did Climate Change Cause Noah's Ark?

I don't want to get into a climate change debate, but one thing is for sure. Climate change is happening and it can not be reversed by humankind. It's just the way it is and has been since the Big Bang, some 14 billion years ago. It's been "expanding, cooling and evolving" ever since. Can it be slowed? According to most, yes it can. But stopped or reversed, no. Our earth has been fluctuating from 'super green house to an ice house' many times since life began. Some semblance of records, we are told, began only in the 19th century. That's not very long ago. In fact, it's a grain of sand considering the period we stopped climbing trees and eventually began to walk upright three to six million years ago. So, what did really happen?

Do you believe in Noah's Ark? The Bible says he did build it, but that's not enough to convince everyone. The fact is, evidence indicates massive floods in then called Mesopotamia, today known as Iraq, were prevalent, with heavy and continuous periods of rain flooding the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Egyptian archeologists among others, have found evidence of fossiliferous "flood deposits", in Iraq.

According to The National Center for Science Education, over hundreds of thousands and millions of years have resulted in "changing configuration of continents and oceans, changes in the Sun's intensity, variations in the orbit of Earth, and volcanic eruptions." This is climate change.

A Saskatchewan farmer once told me overlooking his field of golden wheat, "It's hard to imagine all this was underwater long ago. Yup, that's Mother Nature". Today it's called climate change.

Which brings us to the BC 'flood of the century'. We now say, and especially those directly impacted "we've never seen anything like this". Of course not. It doesn't mean it never happened. It did. So, one has to wonder why politicians did not heed the warning signs.

Yes, there were warning signs. This could have been avoided. In the 1920's one huge B.C. Lake called Sumas, was actually drained and the water that naturally flowed into it was stopped, diked, and voilà, there was suddenly one very fertile prairie where just about anything and everything could grow. It was hailed as a great engineering feat.

But this has to be underlined. As early as three years ago, 2018, a B.C. historian had a warning. Chad Reimer wrote a book, Before We Lost the Lake: A Natural and Human History of Sumas Valley. Author Reimer warns of the evidence of flooding every 45 to 100 years that "should not lull us in a false sense of security. This complacency has been unfounded". Reimer was spot on! Oh yes, politicians from every

level had been commissioning reports and studies, but let's face it, spending taxpayers' money on solidifying infrastructure does not attract votes. And today, Canada is paying for it. Yes Canada, not just BC, because we were literally cut off from the Port of Vancouver for a week. Yes, the folks in BC had to ration gasoline, because the Alberta pipelines of oil and gas were shut, but a lot leaves and arrives from the west coast that serves all of Canada, and parts of the U.S. And with roads and rail snapped like uncooked spaghetti, the gateway of goods from around the world stopped. I'm referring to the Port of Vancouver which handles everything from "clothes and candy, to electronics, grain and produce, canola oil, chemicals, fuels, lumber products, machinery, and automobiles."

In fact, the Vancouver Port handles \$1 of every \$3 of Canada's trade in goods outside of North America. It has 120,000 employees, compared to the much smaller 19,000 at the Port of Montréal. This life-line is a federal jurisdiction, so the onus is clearly on Ottawa to stop the focus on carbon taxes and more on floods. Implement measures with immediate results, to assure this destruction does not happen again in Newfoundland Labrador, and on the 'wet coast'.

Notes:

Omicron and other variants will occur as long as the other half of the world is not vaccinated.

In Saskatchewan, if you own an EV, there is now \$150.00 yearly tax on your car because owners don't pay the 15 cents per liter gasoline tax. Fair is fair.

Shamefully, no one in the Trudeau cabinet condemned self-proclaimed environment king David Suzuki for suggesting domestic terrorism, pipelines will be blown up if more is not done on climate change.

Joe Biden is importing 844 000 barrels of oil a day, from Russia. He killed the Canadian XL Keystone pipeline, (no objection from our P.M.) which would have delivered the same amount of Canadian oil to the U.S.

After stopping our oil exports, Biden's EV tax credits to Americans could kill Ontario's auto industry. Thanks so much smiling Joe.

Comedian Rick Gervais "I hope the next generation cancels the 'cancel culture' generation"

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#NewsMatters:

The National Assembly Report

By Raquel Fletcher

Liberal leader slams "historic anglophones" reference

Quebec Liberal Party leader Dominique Anglade is trying to distinguish her party from the governing Coalition Avenir Québec on at least two fronts – anglophones and climate change.

During the Liberal's policy convention this past weekend in Quebec City, Anglade slammed Premier François Legault for his reference to "historic anglophones," in a speech last month to open a new session of the National Assembly. Many anglophones find the term offensive.

"I have a message for him and to all English-speaking Quebecers," Anglade said during her address to party members Friday night at the convention.

"I hear your concern and, yes, your suspicion, when you witness the Premier choosing the word 'historic' to describe your place here. Let him understand, here, now and always: You are Quebecers," she said.

However, Westmount-St. Louis MNA, Jennifer MacCarone said she recognizes the Liberal Party has its own work to do to win back the esteem of English speakers.

"I hear that people feel that we haven't been there, and that is absolutely something that we need to address," she said.

The Liberal Party supports the government's controversial French language reform, Bill 96, but MNAs insisted they are fighting for amendments to protect the rights of Anglophones.

\$100 billion for climate change

Seeking to redefine the Liberal Party heading into next year's provincial election, Anglade promised a \$100 billion plan to combat climate change if her party wins back power.

Project Eco would nationalize green hydrogen production, a clean fossil fuel alternative that can be used where hydroelectricity

cannot, such as to fuel ships and planes. Anglade wants to make the environment the party's top priority while setting it apart from political rivals.

"There's no question that we had to make a decision about where the party is going," Anglade said. "I've been saying all along that the biggest challenge we have is the challenge of climate change."

The Liberals suffered an historic loss of seats in the 2018 provincial election and Quebec Solidaire is currently polling higher among francophones. However, Liberals brushed off the suggestion the party is moving towards the left to draw voters away from the second opposition.

"We are much more pro-business," said MNA Pierre Arcand.

CAQ not doing enough on environment: Liberals

At the same time, the Liberals criticized the CAQ for being too focused on the economy and not including any money to fight climate change in its economic update unveiled last week.

Finance Minister Eric Girard announced \$11 billion in new spending over the next five years, including a special rising cost of living allowance for low and middle-income wage earners, who will receive a cheque for \$275 (\$400 for a couple) in the new year.

In the past, Legault has responded to criticism he is not doing enough for the environment by expressing his desire to export more hydroelectricity to neighbouring states and provinces and make Quebec the "battery of North America." The government has also talked about producing green hydrogen, but has yet to invest major sums of money.

Raquel Fletcher is Global News' National Assembly Reporter

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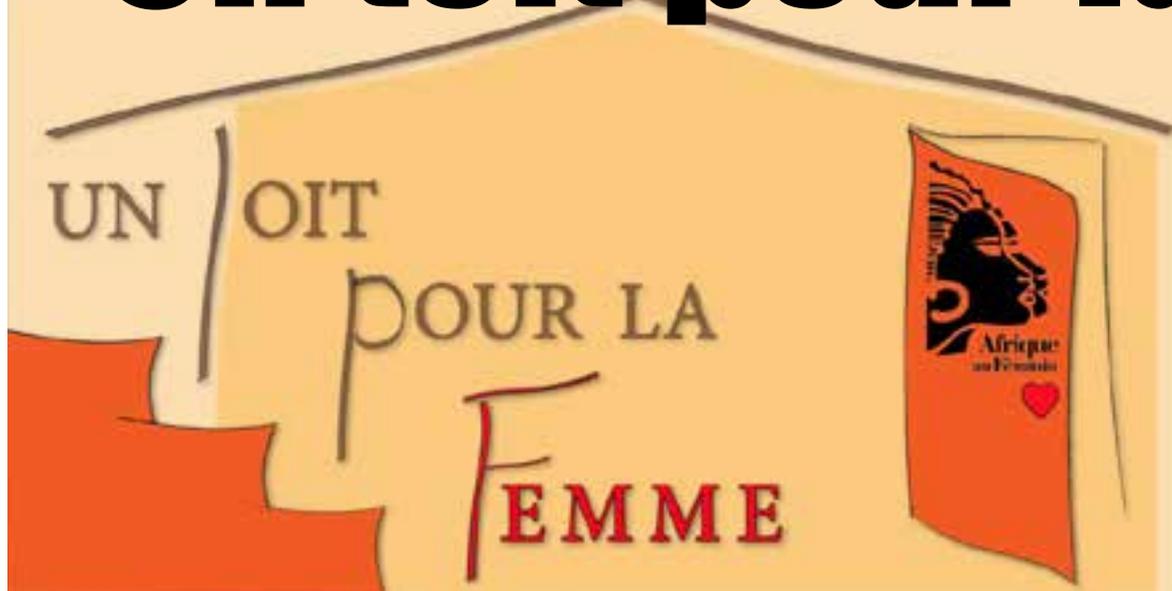
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Afrique au Féminin organise une collecte de fonds pour acheter un nouveau bâtiment

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MATIAS BRUNET-KIRK
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L'organisme communautaire Afrique au Féminin est présent à Parc-Extension depuis plus de 30 ans. Il offre plusieurs services aux femmes de Parc-Extension ayant récemment immigré au Canada, les aidant à relever les nombreux défis que comporte la migration.

Mais l'organisme espère bientôt étendre ses activités en créant un nouveau quartier général

encore le français sont celles qui risquent le plus de subir les pires effets de cette pauvreté.

Le groupe affirme que les deux installations dans lesquelles il opère actuellement sont en mauvais état et nécessitent des rénovations majeures. «Pour être en mesure d'assurer la diversité de Parc Extension et de renforcer les liens d'entraide, il s'avère primordial de profiter des forces du marché immobilier en vue d'un changement d'échelle au sein d'Afrique au Féminin», ajoutent-elles.

Un lieu d'appartenance

L'organisme sans but lucratif souhaite donc consolider ses activités dans un nouveau lieu. «Afrique au Féminin va acheter un bâtiment pour créer un nouveau centre pour femme, qui pourrait englober et bonifier toutes les activités du centre sous un toit», a indiqué l'organisme.

Le nouvel espace comprendrait un espace communautaire, de nouvelles salles de classe aménagées pour des cours de français et des

«*Les organismes communautaires et les regroupements du quartier sont unanimes: une bonification au niveau des infrastructures est nécessaire pour assurer la pérennité des services aux plus démunies.*»,

pouvant offrir tous ses services sous un même toit. Travaillant actuellement de deux plus petits locaux, l'un au 7000 Avenue du Parc et l'autre au Centre William-Hingston, Afrique au Féminin collecte 20 000 \$ pour acquérir et construire un nouveau centre.

Jusqu'à présent, l'organisme a recueilli plus de 1 500 \$ en dons privés par le biais d'une campagne de financement en ligne sur canadahelps.org. L'argent sera utilisé pour acheter un nouveau bâtiment afin de centraliser et d'étendre les services qu'ils offrent.

Besoin flagrant d'infrastructure

Selon Afrique au Féminin, il est nécessaire d'améliorer les infrastructures communautaires de Parc-Extension pour que son organisme puisse remplir correctement son mandat. «Les services communautaires du quartier sont divers et accessibles, mais la demande demeure au-delà de l'offre», peut-on lire dans une déclaration du groupe.

«Les organismes communautaires et les regroupements du quartier sont unanimes: une bonification au niveau des infrastructures est nécessaire pour assurer la pérennité des services aux plus démunies», a déclaré l'organisme.

L'organisme ajoute qu'à Parc-Extension, l'un des quartiers les plus pauvres du Canada, les femmes monoparentales qui ne maîtrisent pas

ateliers créatifs, un studio de yoga, une salle informatique, une garderie ainsi qu'une cuisine communautaire et un espace pour le dépannage alimentaire.

Le nouveau bâtiment accueillera également les bureaux et les activités administratives de l'organisation.

«Il s'agira d'un lieu d'appartenance, de solidarité, d'entre-aide et de justice sociale, où les femmes peuvent venir pour répondre à leurs besoins premiers, ainsi que travailler avec notre équipe pour améliorer leurs conditions de vie», ont-elles ajouté.

Le projet est également soutenu par l'organisme local Briques par Briques, qui offre une expertise immobilière et soutient les initiatives locales de logement social pour les résidents à faible revenu. Afrique au Féminin souhaite également intégrer un projet de logement social dans le nouveau bâtiment.

Des résultats probants

La conseillère municipale Mary Deros salue l'initiative de l'organisme d'acquérir un nouveau local. «Afrique au Féminin a toujours voulu avoir son propre espace», a-t-elle mentionné.

Bien qu'elle affirme soutenir de tout cœur les efforts d'Afrique au Féminin, elle précise qu'en raison d'un budget serré et de la nature du mandat de l'organisme, il est difficile pour

Pourquoi un Nouveau Bâtiment ?

Afrique au Féminin a constaté que les premières personnes à subir les effets de la pauvreté dans ce quartier sont les mères célibataires qui ne parlent pas encore le français. Les services communautaires dans le quartier sont diversifiés et accessibles, mais la demande reste supérieure à l'offre.

l'arrondissement de les soutenir financièrement.

«Ils ont prouvé leur valeur, ils ont prouvé que le travail qu'ils font est vraiment bien accompli», a-t-elle poursuivi, expliquant que les relations solides que les organismes entretiennent avec les différents paliers de gouvernement leur permettront de recevoir les fonds nécessaires à la réalisation du projet.

Mais comme le Centre William-Hingston doit encore être rénové, ce qui contraint tous les groupes communautaires à quitter les lieux, Mme Deros souhaite que l'arrondissement crée un centre communautaire permanent qui pourrait accueillir divers organismes communautaires.

«Je vais continuer à essayer de trouver une solution pour éventuellement avoir un centre communautaire à Parc-Ex qui appartient à la ville, que nous ne soyons plus au gré de la commission scolaire», a expliqué M. Deros.

Une longue histoire à Parc-Extension

Afrique au Féminin a été fondé en 1986 et incorporé en 1988 avec une mission d'aider des femmes immigrantes à s'intégrer à leur terre d'accueil. Afrique au Féminin demeure le seul centre pour femmes de Parc-Extension, offrant plusieurs services et ateliers aux femmes de toutes origines.

La mission de l'organisme est de «Soutenir les femmes immigrantes dans l'amélioration de leurs conditions de vie et faciliter leur intégration au Québec», peut-on lire sur leur site

Comment est-ce que les services d'Afrique au Féminin ont impacté votre vie?

Travailler à Afrique au Féminin est une expérience très incroyable et enrichissante qui a changé ma vie.

Le fait d'avoir rencontré de nombreuses femmes au cours de toutes ces années et d'avoir eu l'opportunité de les aider, de les guider à poursuivre leurs rêves et leurs objectifs, c'est quelque chose qui me donne la satisfaction et l'énergie de continuer à travailler dans un endroit comme Afrique au Féminin.

Qu'est-ce que vous cherchez dans un centre pour femme?

Du soutien, de l'écoute, de respect, un espace de rencontres, des actions collectives, ambiance de solidarité, des références, activités de groupe.

-Connie Jarquin

web. «Il s'agit de les aider à sortir de l'isolement et les outiller afin de favoriser leur autonomie pour une meilleure prise en charge individuelle et collective», peut-on lire dans leur énoncé de mission.

L'organisme mentionne que plus de 50 % des femmes issues des différentes communautés ethnoculturelles de Parc-Extension continuent de faire face à la discrimination et aux obstacles à l'intégration. Bien qu'initialement dédié à l'aide aux femmes d'origine africaine, aujourd'hui l'organisme vient désormais en aide aux femmes de toutes origines, sans distinction d'âge, de langue, de race ou de religion.

Afrique au Féminin est encore à la recherche de soutien pour son projet à venir et accepte toujours les dons via sa collecte de fonds en ligne. La collecte est ouverte jusqu'au vendredi 3 décembre.

On a tous de bonnes questions sur le vaccin

Pourquoi faire vacciner mon enfant s'il court moins de risques qu'un adulte face à la COVID-19 ?



Même si certains symptômes de la COVID-19 peuvent sembler légers, d'autres comme l'essoufflement peuvent durer plusieurs mois.

Bien que les enfants aient moins de risques de développer des complications, ils peuvent facilement transmettre le virus.

La vaccination demeure le meilleur moyen pour protéger votre enfant et ses proches.

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Conformément au 1^{er} alinéa de l'article 79 de la *Loi sur les sociétés de transport en commun* (RLRQ, chapitre S-30.01), AVIS est donné de l'adoption par le conseil d'administration de la STM, à une assemblée ordinaire tenue le 3 novembre 2021, de la résolution numéro **CA-2021-127** concernant le parcours de la ligne d'autobus suivante.

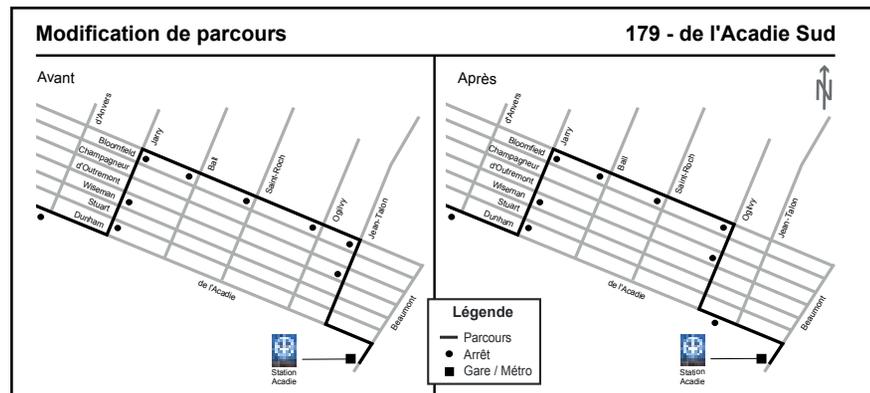
Il est recommandé : d'autoriser la modification du parcours de la ligne

179 - DE L'ACADIE EN DIRECTION SUD

La modification permanente du parcours de la ligne 179, en direction sud, est sans ajout d'heures de service.

Entrée en vigueur : **21 MARS 2022**

Frédéric Roussel
Secrétaire corporatif adjoint



Quebec Ombudswoman's COVID-19 report points finger squarely at Legault government

Of the 5,634 Covid deaths reported up to June 30 last year, 69 per cent were in CHSLDs



MARTIN C. BARRY
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In a special report tabled last week in the National Assembly on how the COVID-19 crisis was managed in CHSLDs during the first wave of the pandemic, Quebec Ombudswoman Marie Rinfret makes 27 recommendations, while clearly allowing the facts to suggest negligence on the part of the CAQ government.

They 'were the blind spot'

As they braced for COVID-19, Rinfret's report states, government authorities were quick to make hospitals the focal point. Then, in order to free up hospital beds, many patients were transferred to CHSLDs. Of the 5,634 COVID-19 deaths reported up to June 30 last year, 3,894 (69 per cent) were in CHSLDs.

"CHSLDs were the blind spot in bracing for COVID-19," said Rinfret. "The truth is that, above and beyond the CHSLDs, it was the residents who were cast aside when the attack against the virus was being mounted."

CHSLDs 'were doubly hit'

A progress report released by Rinfret's office in December 2020 highlighted firsthand witness statements. The new report includes an analysis of accounts by experts and government authorities in key areas, including health institution management, geriatrics, crisis management, epidemiology, and infection control and prevention.

"Our investigation made it possible to dig deep and understand why CHSLDs were doubly hit – under siege during the pandemic, and unable to deal with the outbreaks and deaths," Rinfret said in a statement. "Our report brings into sharp relief the frailty of services, structures and communication channels."

Were already short-staffed

The Ombudswoman's office said the CHSLDs "already short-staffed, did not have the resources needed to accommodate the sudden influx of people who were already fragile. As a result, decisions were made by authorities who did not have the wherewithal to adequately gauge the ability of CHSLDs to fulfil this unusual mission."

According to Rinfret, other factors contributed to a decline in service and disorganization, including the authorities' underestimating CHSLD residents' vulnerability to the virus. The effects of staff absenteeism due to COVID-19 hadn't been foreseen either. She said the complex nature of the jobs of the healthcare



In a scathing new report on the provincial government's performance last year during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, Quebec Ombudswoman Marie Rinfret provides evidence that CAQ government officials made decisions which may have worsened the situation.

teams should have quickly sounded the alarm about why things went as they did and required an urgent solution.

province, the Ombudswoman's office recommended that the Ministry of Health and Social Services put in place various mechanisms. Here

'CHSLDs were the blind spot in bracing for COVID-19,' said Rinfret

Knowledge was lacking

Rinfret said that when planning for the pandemic, the Quebec Ministry of Health and Social Services hadn't considered how serious it was that CHSLD staff knew very little about best practices in infection prevention and control during major outbreaks.

Given the circumstances, she added, the virus spread widely, exacerbated by a lack of personal protective equipment, as well as outdated facilities. Moreover, Rinfret continued, lack of managers in each CHSLD often slowed the response to a succession of ever-changing instructions from health authorities.

The recommendations

Given the extent of the crisis during the first wave and the dramatic repercussions on the

are the principal ones:

A risk assessment and management policy concerning CHSLDs;

A detailed plan for strengthening the CHSLDs' ability to apply infection prevention and control measures;

A personal protective equipment supply strategy;

A provincial plan for deploying emergency personnel within the health and social services network to make the most of back-up resources;

Protocols with professional orders, federations and associations, unions, and educational institutions for deploying extra staff in exceptional circumstances;

A Quebec strategy to combat staff shortages and to promote health and social services trades and professions;

An action plan to recognize the complexity of care and service provision in CHSLDs.

Memorials should be held

Rinfret said all the reforms should include the introduction of reliable and efficient information systems. The Ombudswoman's office also recommended that the ministry organize annual services of commemoration for the COVID-19 victims in CHSLDs and for the people who worked with them directly or indirectly.

"It is important to remember what these people went through so that their experiences are the catalyst for sustainable action and change," said the ombudswoman's office. Rinfret also asked the minister to provide a progress report about the implementation of the recommendations by March 1 next year and that a follow-up schedule be agreed upon.

Premier Legault's reaction

In Quebec City, Premier François Legault reacted to Rinfret's 66-page report, saying it was relatively easy for an onlooker to second-guess the situation, but that the provincial government did its best to manage given the extreme circumstances.

"With the information I had, I did the best I was able to do at the time," he told journalists last week. "It's tough to take decisions when you don't have all the information."

"And the information we had was that we would have problems in our hospital ERs and not in our long-term care facilities. So, it's easy Monday morning to say you should have done things differently. But I think with the information we had we did the best we were able to do."

'No real action taken'

Despite the government's claim it warned CHSLDs to prepare for the pandemic as early as January 2020, the report states that no real action was taken until April, when devastating Covid outbreaks in Montreal and at Laval's CHSLD Sainte-Dorothée led to hundreds of Covid deaths.

Rinfret's report described a disconnect between Quebec's Ministry of Health and Social Services and the regional health authorities overseeing the CHSLDs. Staff absenteeism worsened the problems.

The report states that between March 1 and June 14 last year, 13,581 health-care workers contracted COVID-19, representing 25 per cent of all reported cases in the first wave. While eleven health-care workers died, many others were left psychologically and emotionally scarred by the death and suffering they witnessed first-hand.



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A library of tools

Ville en Vert offers a tool-sharing service to residents



Those who are interested in participating in the program can sign up to become a member on l'Outil-O-thèque's website. Photo: Ville en Vert.



MATIAS BRUNET-KIRK
matias@newsfirst.ca

Since the start of the pandemic, many people have started to cook new, more ambitious recipes or have taken on bigger and more intricate home improvement projects. But a common issue that arises when taking on new challenges is the lack of the necessary tools to complete the job.

Ville en Vert, an environmental organization funded by the city, now offers a service that will try to address this all too common issue. *L'outil-O-thèque* is a tool-sharing initiative that allows residents to borrow specific tools needed for short projects, all free of charge.

Tools range from various kitchen materials such as fondue pots, extra plates or baking supplies, to power tools like drills and circular saws necessary for heavy-duty construction jobs. It also offers all types of other items, ranging from sports materials and toys, to board games and media equipment.

Environmental motivations

The program is available to residents of the Ahuntsic-Cartierville and Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension boroughs and has the social vocation of serving low-income communities in these neighbourhoods.

The organization's program is part of a larger movement around the sharing economy, by providing shared items and tools that if bought individually may only be used a handful of times.

Ville en Vert mentions the advantages of borrowing over buying as being both good for saving money, learning new skills, sharing

resources and being more environmentally friendly.

"Outil-O-thèque offers you an alternative to save money, to protect the environment and to learn new ways of doing things," reads their [website](#).

Workshops

Though the Outil-O-thèque, Ville en Vert also offers several workshops and repair classes, to teach people new skills and how to fix things instead of replacing them. These include bike repair classes as well as classes on repairing small appliances and clothes.

For example, they are offering free workshops in December at their Cartierville location on basic bicycle repair, how to use a sewing machine and a course on how to conserve and jar food.

Their seminars all have an environmental and money-saving tilt, showing people how they can learn the skills necessary to keep things working and give objects a second life, as well as minimizing unnecessary waste. A full schedule of these workshops and classes is available on l'Outil-O-thèque's website.

How it works

Those who are interested in participating in the program can sign up to become a member on l'Outil-O-thèque's website. Members can then browse the [catalogue](#) of items and reserve whatever they need for a pick-up.

Borrowers can then get their items at one of l'Outil-O-thèque's two locations, at both L'Escale Verte in Cartierville or at La Maison du Citoyen in François Perreault. Objects can be borrowed for up to 7 days.

The program is funded in part by the Government of Canada and is supported by both the boroughs of Ahuntsic-Cartierville and Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension.

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Here to stay

TMR Mayor Peter Malouf says fence will remain in place



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matias@newsfirst.ca

The fence separating the two communities of Parc-Extension and the Town of Mount Royal has been a contentious issue for many years now. But after turning into a hot-button topic in Montreal's municipal election, the newly elected mayor of the Town of Mount Royal said the fence was here to stay.

In an interview with *La Presse*, Mayor Peter Malouf said that the fence would not be taken down during his mandate. "What fence?" quipped the Mayor, adding "I see a hedge and trees. After that, I see six lanes for cars."

"There are openings in the fence, and we are going to rearrange them to ensure the safety of cyclists," added Malouf, pointing to the many sections of de l'Acadie Boul. that do not provide enough sidewalk or landing space for pedestrian crossings.

The fence became a major electoral issue and point of contention among parties in the last municipal campaign. Ensemble Montréal mayoral candidate Denis Coderre had promised that if elected he would refurbish de l'Acadie Boul. and work to have the fence removed.

Long history

Erected in 1960, the fence was put in when de l'Acadie Boul. was widened. The rationale for the barrier was to keep children and families on the west side of the fence safe from traffic on the six-lane artery.

Up until the early 2000s, it was a common occurrence for many of the gates in the fence to be locked shut on Halloween night. Many saw this as a tactic to keep the less fortunate, immigrant residents of Parc-Extension from trick or treating in the affluent neighbourhood next door.

After a groundswell of criticism, the neighbouring municipality put an end to the practice

in 2002. The fence is still occasionally locked shut by individuals still unhappy with the situation.

Enclaved neighbourhood

Although the gates now remain for the most part open, many Parc-Extension residents point to the fence as another example of how the neighbourhood is physically separated from the rest of the city, with train tracks to its south and east, highway 40 to its north and a fence to its west.

For many residents, the two-kilometre stretch of road has epitomized the inequality experienced by some Montrealers, with the affluent, lushly tree-lined streets to the west and the densely-populated, concrete jungle of Parc-Ex to the east. The physical separation is both visible from street level and satellite imagery.

"What fence? I see a hedge and trees. After that, I see six lanes for cars."

This was an important topic over the last election period, with Ensemble Montréal mayoral candidate Denis Coderre promising to remove the fence. Borough mayoral candidate Guillaume Lavoie had also called the separation a "blatant social divide."

Although commended for their intentions to green de l'Acadie, the plan was criticized by Mayor Valérie Plante and her party for proposing projects that aren't in the City of Montreal's jurisdiction. The fence and much of the boulevard fall on the territory of the Town of Mount Royal.

Potential for a bike lane

With the election now in the rearview mirror, City Councillor for Parc-Extension Mary Deros hopes the borough and the city will be able to work with the neighbouring municipality to

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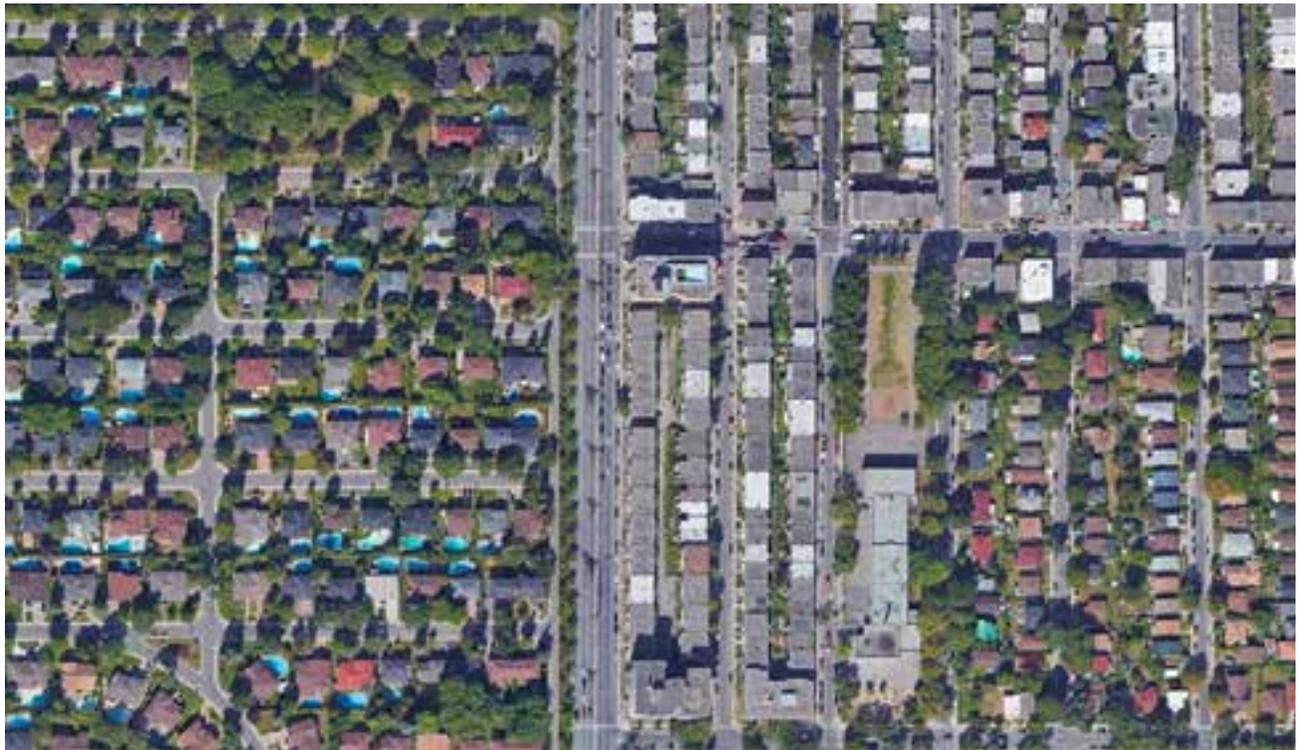
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The fence became a major electoral issue and point of contention among parties in the last municipal campaign. Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST



The physical separation between the Town of Mount Royal (left) and Parc-Extension (right) is visible from satellite imagery. Photo: Satellite imagery (2019) via Google Earth.

address some of the security issues surrounding the fence and its adjacent footpaths.

“What they need to do is redo the entrances and make them safe,” said Deros, adding that the municipality of the Town of Mount Royal needs to “make sure that there are adequate sidewalks for the people crossing when they’re waiting for

the light to change, to give them ample room with their bikes, with their children, to be able to cross.”

Deros also feels that TMR should accommodate the City of Montreal by helping it complete its bicycle path network. Building a bike lane down Chemin Selwood, the street that runs

parallel to de L’Acadie, would ensure a safe and accessible north-south bicycle artery.

“A bike path north-south can be created on the inside of the TMR fence and make a safe cycling path for our cyclists,” said Deros, explaining that it would connect much of the district to Beaumont and the Université de Montréal MIL

campus to the south.

There are no official plans or propositions at the moment to implement such a bike path in the Town of Mount Royal, but Mayor Malouf said he would look at making crossings on de l’Acadie Boul. safer.



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A Roof for Women

Afrique au Féminin raising money to buy new building



MATIAS BRUNET-KIRK
matias@newsfirst.ca

Local community organization Afrique au Féminin has been operating in Parc-Extension for over 30 years, offering various services to women who recently immigrated to Canada, helping them navigate the many challenges that migration entails.

But the organization soon hopes to expand its operations by creating a centralized headquarters and offering all its services under one roof. Currently working out of two smaller and separate locations, one at 7000 Park Avenue and another at the William-Hingston Centre, Afrique au Féminin is raising \$20,000 to acquire and build a new centre.

So far, the organization has raised over \$1,500 in private donations through an online fundraising campaign on canadahelps.org. The money will eventually be used to buy a new building to centralize and expand the services they offer.

Need for new infrastructure

According to Afrique au Féminin, there needs to be an improvement to community infrastructure in Parc-Extension if its organization can properly complete its mandate. "Community services in the neighbourhood are diverse and accessible, but the demand is still greater than the supply," read a statement by the group.

"The organizations and groups in the neighbourhood are unanimous: an improvement in the community's infrastructure is necessary to ensure the sustainability of services for the most vulnerable," stated the organization.

They added that in Parc-Extension, one of Canada's poorest neighbourhoods, single

mothers who do not yet speak French are those most likely to experience the worst effects of that poverty.

The group says that the two facilities they currently operate out of are in poor condition and need major renovations. "In order to protect the diversity of Parc-Extension, combat poverty and strengthen mutual aid efforts, it is essential to scale up the activities of Afrique au Féminin," they added.

Place of belonging

The non-profit organization, therefore, wants to consolidate its operations in a new location. "Afrique au Féminin is planning to purchase a building to open a new women's centre, which could encompass and enhance all of the organization's activities under one roof," said the organization.

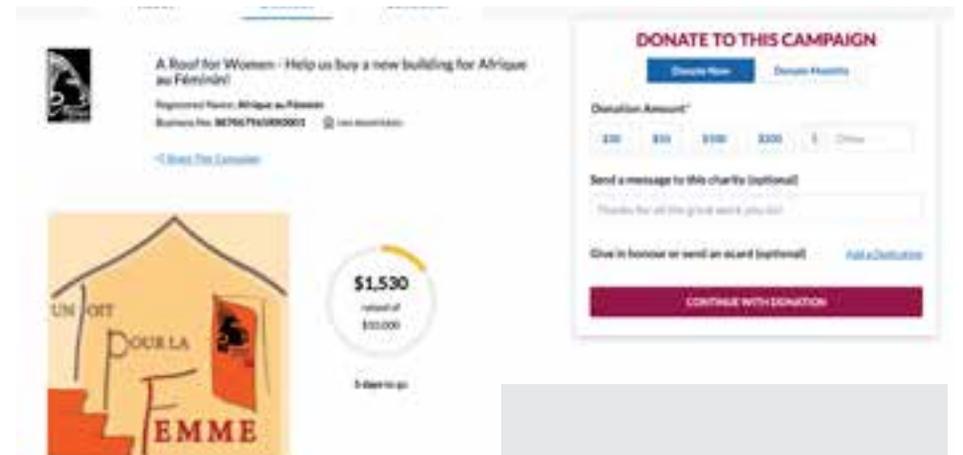
The new space would include a welcome area, new classrooms, set up for French classes and creative workshops, a yoga studio, a computer room, a drop-in daycare as well as a community kitchen and space for a foodbank. The new building would also house the offices and administrative operations of the organization.

"It will be a place of belonging, solidarity, leadership and social justice, where women can come to meet their primary needs, as well as work with our team to improve their living conditions," they added.

The project is also supported by local organization Brique par Brique, which offers real estate expertise and supports local social housing initiatives for low-income residents. Afrique au Féminin also wants to integrate a social housing project in the new building.

Proven track record

City councillor Mary Deros commends the



So far, Afrique au Féminin has raised over \$1,500 of its \$20,000 objective. Photo: Afrique au Féminin

organizations' initiative to acquire a new building. "Afrique au Féminin has always wanted to have their own space," she said.

Though she says she wholeheartedly supports the organization, she said that a tight budget and the nature of the organizations' mandate make it difficult for the borough to support them financially.

"They've proven their worth, they've proven the work that they do is really well done," she continued, explaining that the organizations' sound relationships with multiple levels of government will ensure that they will receive the necessary funds to complete the project.

But with the William-Hingston Centre still set for renovation, forcing all community groups out, Deros wanted to see the borough create a permanent community centre that could house various community organizations.

"I will continue to try to find some solution to eventually have a Parc-Ex community center that belongs to the city, that we are no longer at the whim of the school board," Deros explained.

Long history in Parc-Extension

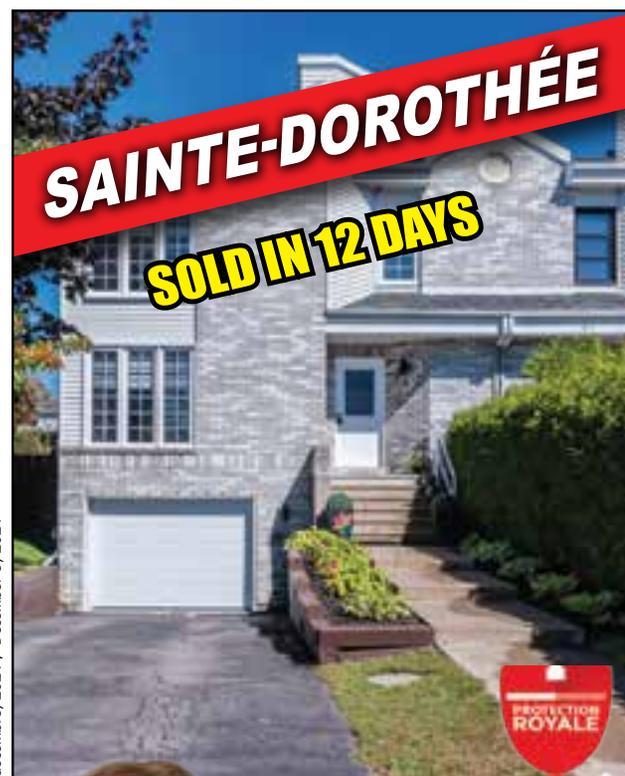
Afrique au Féminin was founded in 1986 and incorporated in 1988 with the express mission of helping integrate immigrant women into their

new homes. It remains the only women's centre in Parc-Extension, offering several services and workshops to women of all backgrounds.

The organization's mission is to "support immigrant women in improving their living conditions and facilitating their integration into Quebec," reads their website. "It is a question of helping them to come out of isolation and equip them with tools with which they can promote their autonomy for better individual and collective care," reads their mission statement.

The organization mentions that over 50% of women from different ethnocultural communities in Parc-Extension continue to face discrimination and barriers to integration. Although initially dedicated to helping women of African origin, the organization now helps women of all backgrounds, regardless of age, language, race or religion.

Afrique au Féminin is still looking for support for their upcoming project and is still accepting donations through their online fundraiser. It runs until Fri, Dec. 3.



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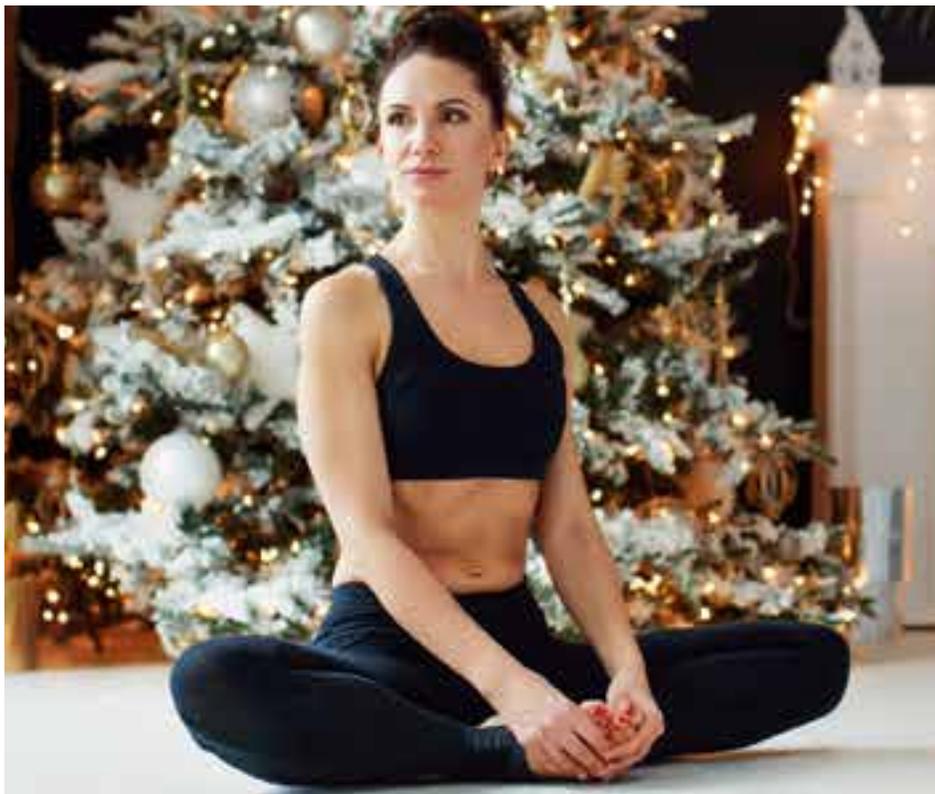


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Healthy holiday habits

How to stay healthy over the holidays



It can be challenging to make healthy choices over the holiday season given that so many celebrations and gatherings revolve around food. Here are five tips to help you eat moderately and stay healthy over the holidays.

1. LOAD YOUR PLATE WITH VEGGIES
Pile vegetables, fruits and green salads onto your plate. These foods are low in calories, high in fibre and will keep you satiated. Don't worry, you don't have to forgo the turkey or any of the side dishes; just be mindful of your portion sizes.

2. EAT SLOWLY
It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to register fullness once you start eating. Therefore, to avoid overindulging, try to wait five or 10 minutes before refilling your plate. By doing so, you may realize you're already full.

3. WATCH WHAT YOU DRINK
Both non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks can

add additional calories, sodium and sugar to your holiday meal. Consequently, try having a glass of water or seltzer in between the eggnog, cocktails and hot chocolate.

4. BE ACTIVE
Staying active can help make up for eating more than usual over the holidays. It can also help reduce stress and improve your sleep. One good way to keep moving is to encourage your friends and family members to go for a walk after your meal. Partaking in winter sports, such as skiing and snowshoeing, is also a great way to refresh your mind and body.

5. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
To stay healthy over the holidays, remember to regularly wash your hands, cough into your elbow and stay at home if you feel sick. Don't overextend yourself and give yourself enough time to rest in between parties.

Happy holidays!

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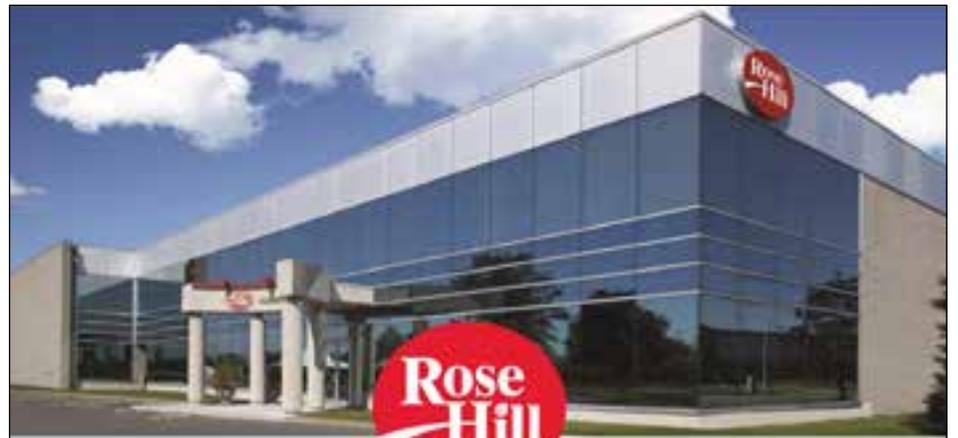
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In Memoriam & Obituaries

Final wishes

Maintaining the quality of life of your loved ones



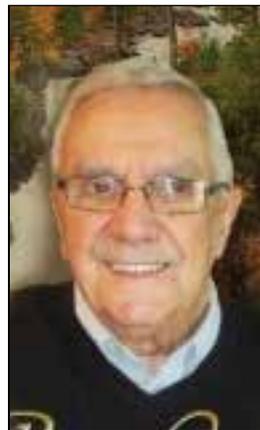
Life insurance exists to protect the surviving members of your family from financial loss associated with your death. Theoretically, people who have the most to gain from taking out life insurance are those who will leave others in need when they die, such as a spouse or children.

By taking out sufficient life insurance, you can guarantee the preservation of your family's lifestyle and goals in the event of your death. The first step is to evaluate your personal situation. The best way to go about this is to establish an up-to-date financial plan that takes into account your family's needs. The goal is to calculate the immediate living expenses that must be met so that your family will not have to deal with any financial worries in case of death.

An estimate of final expenses should also be made, especially funeral expenses, lawyer fees, as well as estate taxes —when a death occurs, the assets of the deceased are taxed before being passed on to heirs. The policy holder's debts should also be taken into consideration, such as credit card balances, a mortgage, and personal loans.

The death of a family member will have an effect on the family budget; there will, of course, be a drop in income if the deceased worked, but this might be balanced by a reduction in certain expenses, such as groceries, clothing, and transportation. In short, a sufficient amount has to be planned for so that beneficiaries will be able to maintain the lifestyle they are used to.

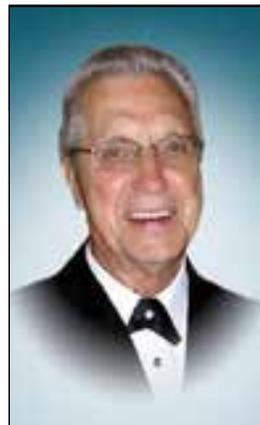
Adequate life insurance can prepare you and your family for the unexpected.



LAREAULT Roger
1935 - 2021

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Mr. Roger Lareault, who passed away on November 23, 2021, at the age of 86. He was the husband of Mrs. Lise Dufour.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his children, Pierre and Serge, his brother Claude, his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, his nieces and nephews, as well as several relatives and friends.



DUMOULIN Émile
1930 - 2021

In Montreal, on November 25, at the age of 91, passed away Émile Dumoulin, husband of Suzanne Perrin. Besides his wife, he is survived by his daughters Manon (Daniel Lelièvre) and Sophie (Patrick Charpentier), his son the late Daniel, his grandson Sébastien, his sister Cécile and other relatives and friends.



GALATI Giuseppe
1931 - 2021

It is with profound sadness and heavy hearts that we share with you the news that our father and beloved husband of Loreta Bove, Giuseppe Galati passed away peacefully, on Monday, November 29th, 2021 at the age of 90, surrounded by his loved ones. Giuseppe was our biggest hero and we are blessed to have shared our lives with him. He loved his wife Loreta with all his heart, his sons, Paolo (Paula), Tullio (Marie) and Gianni (Dora), his precious grandkids, Stephanie (David), Adam, Victoria, Danika, Brianna, Sarah and his great granddaughter Chloe.



RINALDI PERUGINI Giovanna
1970 - 2021

It is with deep sadness that the family announces the passing of PIERINA SCALIA on Monday, November 29, 2021 at the age of 51.

She will be sadly missed by her beloved husband Emmanuele Cammisano, her loving children Pasquale and Enza, her parents Eleonora Sciarra (Late Giovanni Scalia), her sisters Rosalia and Josie (Rosario), her mother-in-law Vincenza, her father-in-law Pasquale Cammisano, her brother-in-law Joe, her sisters-in-law Bonnie (Pat) and Maria (James) as well as nephews, nieces and other relatives and friends.



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HOROSCOPE

Week of **NOVEMBER 28 TO DECEMBER 4, 2021**

The luckiest signs this week:
ARIES, TAURUS AND PISCES

ARIES
If you have a big holiday celebration planned for this year, you'll need to keep on top of the planning. Time will be in short supply, but you'll be able to pull it off. In love, it's the little things that ensure the longevity of a relationship.

TAURUS
You'll need to fly away from the nest to make great discoveries. The new year is coming up, and it's already inspiring you to get a fresh start. By signing up for a few courses, you'll open more doors for your future.

GEMINI
A special person or situation will move you. At work, you'll find that any changes that arise will prove beneficial to you. If you're single, you'll be surprised to find love when you least expect it.

CANCER
You'll be easy to get along with. You're not afraid to take on projects at work, and you'll agree to organize a few of the upcoming events. You'll be worried about a conflict in the family.

LEO
You'll find yourself taking the lead at work while your boss takes a well-earned vacation. This will have a positive impact on your career. If your relationship is lacking affection, it could eventually cause your feelings to fade too.

VIRGO
You'll be in the spotlight for one reason or another. In particular, you could save someone, if only by lending them a sympathetic ear. You'll get recognition for all that you do.

LIBRA
You'll spare no expense when it comes to gifts for your loved ones. You're in a generous mood, and this will have a positive impact on your well-being. You'll need to give a family project some more thought.

SCORPIO
It's not easy to maintain an interesting social life when work is so demanding. You need to let loose, so don't hesitate to accept an invitation to go out and join in on a few activities with loved ones.

SAGITTARIUS
You'll get your hands on some extra money, and you'll be sure to treat yourself. Whether you're buying a property or starting a business, you'll finally get the green light to finance your project.

CAPRICORN
You'll challenge yourself to gather the whole family together and throw a big party to make up for last year. As an artist, you'll have plenty of inspiration to draw upon as you create your own work.

AQUARIUS
There's an artist within you that will awaken in a pretty spectacular way. If your head is in the clouds, write down any ideas that come to mind so that you can bring them to life one day. Otherwise, they'll be lost forever.

PISCES
You'll receive a whole host of invitations, and you'll be more than happy to accept every one of them, even if you feel like you're a candle burning at both ends. Some rest will be needed when all's said and done.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 105

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | | |
| 12 | | | | 13 | | | | 14 | | | | |
| 15 | | | | 16 | | | | 17 | | | | |
| 18 | | | | 19 | | | | 20 | | | | |
| | | 21 | 22 | | | 23 | 24 | | | | | |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | | | | 28 | | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | |
| 33 | | | 34 | | | 35 | | | 36 | | | |
| 37 | | | 38 | | | 39 | | | 40 | | | |
| | | 41 | | 42 | | 43 | | | | | | |
| 44 | 45 | 46 | | | | 47 | 48 | | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 |
| 53 | | | | 54 | | | | | 55 | | | |
| 56 | | | | 57 | | | | | 58 | | | |
| 59 | | | | 60 | | | | | 61 | | | |

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ACROSS

- Soup veggies
- Grouch
- Fool
- Light fixture
- Dilly
- Hatchet
- Computer operator
- Excessive vanity
- Mimicking bird
- Burnt wood
- Tree home
- Finished first
- Footballer Donovan
- Do away with
- Violinist Stern
- Just released
- Acquire knowledge
- Common ailment
- Investigate in depth
- Slip
- Radio spots
- ___ neckline

- Singer Campbell
- Solid water
- Nautical hello
- Small sofa: 2 wds.
- Great review
- Lode yield
- Peer
- Personnel
- Animal enclosure
- Join by heat
- Towel word

- Tiny insects
- Lubricated
- Shower off
- Also
- Spelling ___
- Bird of prey
- Glazed ___
- Toward the back, matey
- Brewery beverage
- Coffee container
- Fastened
- Fan blade
- Look (for)
- Blockade
- Goopy substance
- Folk knowledge
- Fairly matched
- Shout
- Hound's quarry
- Atop
- Some evergreens
- Mama pig!

DOWN

- Purple fruit
- Simple
- Sermon response
- Spread awkwardly
- Purify
- Carpets
- Island greeting
- Tramp
- Right-minded
- Rotation center
- Soil additive

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY:

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

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

PUZZLE NO. 830

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 9 | 2 | | |
| 7 | 9 | | | | 3 | 4 | | |
| | | | | | 4 | | | |
| | 3 | 4 | 6 | | | 7 | | |
| | | | | 1 | 7 | 9 | | 4 |
| | | | | | | 8 | 3 | 1 |
| | 7 | 9 | 8 | | | 6 | 5 | |
| 2 | | 1 | 9 | 5 | 6 | | | 7 |
| | | 3 | 7 | 4 | | | | |

Last Issues' Answers

CROSSWORDS

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | I | T | T | F | R | O | O | P | A | L |
| O | D | O | R | E | A | R | | R | I | L |
| B | O | N | E | W | I | G | | A | G | E |
| S | L | Y | E | R | S | A | I | L | | |
| | | | E | Y | I | N | G | | N | U |
| F | L | A | T | T | E | N | | N | O | O |
| L | O | W | E | R | S | | D | O | U | S |
| A | R | E | N | A | | T | A | R | T | E |
| B | E | D | | C | H | I | M | E | | |
| | | N | E | O | N | | D | O | W | E |
| S | A | G | A | | R | I | P | | D | O |
| I | C | E | R | | S | E | A | | D | R |
| R | E | L | Y | | E | R | | S | E | T |

Sudoku

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| 1 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 3 |
| 2 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 9 |
| 3 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 1 |
| 8 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 7 |
| 7 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 6 |
| 6 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 4 |
| 9 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 8 |



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Jarry Metro**
514 490-0099

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175, René-Lévesque Blvd. West
Place-des-Arts Metro
514 669-1880

**Place du Quartier
(Chinatown)**
1111, St-Urbain St
Place-des-Arts Metro
514 667-0077

Place Alexis Nihon
1500, Atwater Av.
Atwater Metro
514 939-5552

4190, St-Laurent Blvd.
Mont-Royal Metro
514 439-9934

Le Boulevard Shopping Centre
4270, Jean-Talon St East
514 887-7784

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Valleyfield
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Châteauguay
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