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YEAR IN REVIEW 2020 Part II

See pages 6,11,12 & 13



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Quebec imposes curfew till February 8th, as part of a lockdown

The Quebec government is imposing a curfew and extending the closure of high schools and businesses in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Premier François Legault said the lockdown measures, which he described as “shock therapy,” will begin Saturday and be in place for four weeks, until Feb. 8.

Legault made the announcement at the start of his 5 p.m. news conference.

The measures include:

A provincewide curfew from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m.

The fine for breaking curfew will be \$1,000 to \$6,000.

Non-essential businesses will be closed but curbside pickup will be allowed.

Restaurants, gyms and theatres will be closed.

Elementary schools will open as planned on Jan. 11, but children in Grade 5 and 6 will be required to wear a mask.

High schools will remain closed for another week, opening Jan. 18.

Libraries will be open to those who want to study there.

Grocery stores and dépanneurs will close at 7:30 p.m.

The premier had been reluctant to close schools and businesses despite growing concern from health experts, saying he wants to protect families and the economy.

But the rising daily case count and the increasing number of hospitalizations prompted the government to change course.

New restrictions were put into effect over the Christmas break, shutting schools and all non-essential businesses until Jan. 11,

but Legault said Wednesday the measures weren't enough to reduce the spread of the virus.

“We are in a race against time,” the premier said. “Unfortunately, we seem to be losing the race right now.”

As part of the announcement, Quebec also announced an updated, more optimistic vaccination timeline.

It expects to vaccinate 250,000 people by early February, when Legault plans to lift some of the lockdown measures. Those include all those living in long-term care homes and more than half the province's health-care workers.

By the middle of February, Quebec expects to be vaccinating people over 80 in the general population.

Parents worry about extending school closures

Many students have still not caught up after last year's lockdown. As Quebec COVID-19 cases continue to soar, the government is imposing new measures to slow contagion. Among them: keeping schools closed for a week longer than what was planned before holiday break.

In December, with COVID-19 cases rising, Quebec ordered all schools to stop in-person attendance until Jan. 11, with the exception of specialized schools for vulnerable students.

Throughout the pandemic, the value of distance learning has divided educators and parents alike.

Heidi Yetman, the president of the Quebec Provincial Association of Teachers, which represents 8,000 English-language teachers, says students are still catching up on their studies after last spring's lockdown.

“For some students, it's almost as if they didn't go to school at all last year,” Yetman said. “Students are behind, and this pandemic will affect students for years to come.”

Mixed messages

Infectious diseases specialist Dr. Matthew Oughton says inconsistent health guidelines, such as the different rules about masks in schools — a vivid example of how policies have shifted — have



contributed to the spread of the virus.

“There's data that shows schools are important contributors toward community transmission and outbreaks, and have we done a full measure of restrictions when it comes to schools? Clearly we haven't,” Oughton said.

Last summer, the province's plan to send students back to school did not include masks, except for some staff.

That changed in August, when students in Grade 5 and up were told they would be wearing masks when moving around the school, but not in class. But by October, in red zones, all high school students were wearing masks in classrooms.

“Even if there have been a certain level of restrictions, it hasn't been enough to really get this back down under control,” Oughton said. “It certainly leads to a large degree of frustration. People are saying, ‘Well, look. We've been doing this for so long, how come it's not working?’”

On Monday evening, the English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA) of Quebec launched an online survey to assess whether parents preferred their kids to continue distance learning.

Out of the more than 5,000 responses, 62 per cent were in favour of extending online learning beyond Jan. 11, according to EPCA president Katherine Korakakis.

New federal rule on COVID-19 tests for air passengers

From now on, all travellers must show a negative PCR test before boarding a plane destined for Canada.

Since this Wednesday at midnight, all travellers returning to Canada by air from abroad must produce evidence of a negative COVID-19 test before boarding their flights.

Every traveller over the age of five must show a negative test result from a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test administered in the 72 hours before their flight's departure. Some temporary exemptions have been introduced for travellers from St. Pierre and Miquelon and Haiti.

The test must be conducted before boarding the plane, in the flight's country of origin. Other types of tests — such as rapid antigen tests — will not be accepted. The government has directed airlines to turn away travellers who do not present a test result at the time of boarding.

To account for PCR testing limitations in some countries, travellers departing from the Caribbean or South America can use tests conducted within 96 hours of departure (instead of 72 hours) until Jan. 14.

The testing requirement is in addition to the existing mandatory 14-day quarantine period for returning travellers. The travel restrictions on most foreign nationals also remain in place.

Upon arrival in Canada, all travellers will be questioned by Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) officers about their quarantine plans. The government said today CBSA officers will now apply “greater scrutiny” to these plans to improve compliance.

Border officers will also screen for sick passengers and refer those who appear to be ill to Public Health Agency of Canada officials for

further assessment.

For now, travellers will not be required to get a molecular PCR test from certain companies or laboratories, but Transport Minister Marc Garneau said the government may eventually limit the range of tests it accepts.

Garneau acknowledged that testing requirements will lead to “inconvenience” and “frustration” for some travellers but said it's necessary to prevent further importation of the virus from other countries.

“The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over. We need to continue to be vigilant, and we need to continue to take action to reduce the risks of spreading the virus by air travel,” Garneau said.

Garneau, Health Minister Patty Hajdu and Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne stressed that Canadians should shun travel abroad to avoid getting stuck over-

seas without timely access to a PCR test.

Hajdu said the government knows it may be difficult for some returning Canadians to get a test within that 72-hour window.

“This is exactly why we're advising people to not travel internationally. It is difficult to acquire a PCR test in countries that you wouldn't suspect. It's very important people resist the urge to travel internationally unless absolutely essential to do so,” she said.

The temporary ban on flights from the United Kingdom will end tonight now that this new testing regime is in place, Garneau confirmed.

In response to news of a more contagious strain of COVID-19 in that country, the federal government restricted all flights from the U.K. last month. That ban will end now that this new mandatory testing regime is in place for all travellers entering from all countries.



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OPINION & Editorial



What Canadians can expect in the coming year

The good news? Pandemic under control. The bad news? Very slow growth, high debt, higher taxes, high unemployment

The future is imaginary, said philosopher Baruch Spinoza. We don't and can't know what will happen in the future and last year certainly demonstrated that.

Nevertheless, the desire to see what the new year will bring always overcomes the future's inherent mystery.

We peer into our crystal balls and bravely prognosticate, knowing full well that we will be at least partly in error and perhaps totally off base.

However, especially at this time of year the temptation to delineate the coming 12 months is irresistible. Here's my perspective on the medical and economic outlook for Canada in 2021. Feel free to tell me a year from now how wrong I was.

First, the pandemic. A few weeks ago, the outlook was much brighter. The vaccines were coming. By the end of the summer, almost everyone would be vaccinated and the pandemic could be behind us.

The situation is less certain now. There's a new, more contagious version of the virus. We don't know how effective the vaccines are against this or for how long any jab will provide protection. The costs and logistics of getting, distributing and administering the vaccine are considerable.

Will everyone who's offered the virus be willing to take it?

In Canada, anti-vaxxers are relatively few, probably not enough to prevent the herd immunity that ends a pandemic when about 70 per cent of the population is vaccinated.

In the United States, the situation appears to be different. The vaccine is now being offered to health-care workers there. These are people with some scientific background and a face-to-face awareness of what the COVID-19 virus looks like and can do.

Yet over half of such American workers are declining the vaccine. They feel safe because they haven't got COVID-19 yet and think they won't get it later. Or they cite some nebulous 'political' reasons for refusing the jab.

This leads one to expect that an even higher proportion of the general population will also turn down the vaccine when it's offered, delaying herd immunity and breathing more life into the pandemic south of the border.

In Canada, I anticipate pretty full vaccine coverage and thus the removal of most pandemic restrictions by the end of 2021. Having recovered from COVID-19, we can then turn our attention to the economic recovery.

The good news is we'll be heading in the right direction. The economy will be growing. It already has been for several months, albeit slowly, and it still hasn't quite reached the level it was at the start of 2020. Employment has also been increasing but it hasn't yet compensated for the catastrophic drop last March and April.

That we're moving in the right direction is due at least in part to the intervention of governments. The federal government in particular provided generous financial handouts at the start of the pandemic and continues to do so.

That fiscal generosity is what prevented the pandemic from becoming a major economic disaster, but it's contributing to large and growing government debt.

Nor are these funds as effective as they might be.

Dollars are distributed widely to individuals without looking too closely to see who the recipients are. We've all heard of individuals and small businesses badly hit by the pandemic, but who didn't get government help. We've all seen people who the pandemic hasn't hurt financially receiving funds they didn't need, leading to higher savings and a ballooning stock market. Such funds don't directly help the economy.

Government money could be much more effectively spent investing in the infrastructure needed to keep Canada productive and competitive.

Even better, invest in the Canadian people through education, training and labour market information that will enable all those who face pandemic-generated job disruptions to adjust and prosper in the post-pandemic economy.

Where does this leave 2021?

The Canadian economy will grow, but more at a rate that has been called a black zero than anything stronger and this slow growth will continue past this year.

More people will be seeking work and more employers will seek workers as the mismatch between the skills workers have and the ones companies want becomes even wider than it was before the pandemic.


Slow growth, pandemic-related losses and debts mean that firms and governments won't be in a position to offer pay raises.

We can also fearlessly forecast higher taxes, although they may not appear until after 2021.

Most sectors will inch slowly toward their 2019 levels but some will take longer than others. For travel and tourism, some industry watchers don't expect full recovery before 2025. A closed United States border due to an uncontrolled epidemic there would especially hurt the industry.

This year will see the end to the pandemic in Canada, if not everywhere. The situation for most businesses and workers will very gradually improve. But conditions like the 50-year low in unemployment that we enjoyed at the start of last year are still a long way off.

Roslyn Kunin



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Quebec tenants groups are calling for a new assistance plan

Faced with the housing crisis and the many repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Regroupement des comités logement et des associations de tenants du Québec (RCLALQ) called on the Legault government on Tuesday for the establishment of new financial assistance.

The Regroupement thus demanded the establishment of support for the payment of rent as well as the return of the moratorium on evictions which had been established from March to July last.

According to Maxime Roy-Allard, spokesperson for RCLALQ the new confinement will bring its share of job losses and it will still be precarious workers, the vast majority of tenants, who will be the most affected. "An Assistance with rent payment would allow them to breathe a bit and avoid a new wave of evictions for

non-payment of rent" he said.

The suspension of evictions would make it possible in particular to limit the movement of tenants and therefore of the virus, a decision to be considered as a public health gesture according to the spokesperson.

In addition, the Regroupement is concerned about the implementation of a curfew in the province, which could worsen situations of family violence.

"In the absence of decently priced housing, it is not uncommon for housing to be overcrowded. With the pandemic dragging on, family tensions are even more present. If it becomes impossible to go out at night to ventilate or temporarily escape from a hostile environment, the accommodation can become a source of violence," Mr. Roy-Allard denounced.

Québec solidaire réclame un gel des loyers pour l'année 2021



CNW Telbec/- Le député de Laurier-Dorion et responsable pour Québec solidaire en matière de logement, Andrés Fontecilla, presse le gouvernement de la CAQ d'adopter une loi spéciale dès la rentrée parlementaire afin de suspendre les augmentations de loyer pour l'année 2021 et ainsi d'offrir une bouffée d'air aux milliers de locataires qui ont subi la crise économique et sanitaire de plein fouet.

« La crise du logement ne s'est pas mise sur pause au jour 1 de la pandémie. Les loyers ont continué d'augmenter en flèche pendant que des milliers de personnes perdaient leur emploi ou faisaient face à d'importantes baisses de revenus. L'explosion des demandes dans les banques alimentaires et dans les refuges pour

personnes itinérantes nous montre bien que les plus vulnérables ont été fragilisés par la crise. Le gouvernement a tous les outils en main pour décréter un gel des loyers. C'est un geste nécessaire qui peut faire une grande différence pour bien des familles », plaide M. Fontecilla.

Comme chaque année, le Tribunal administratif du logement s'apprête à publier sa mise à jour des critères permettant les augmentations de loyer au Québec. Or, rien ne contraint les propriétaires à respecter ces taux d'augmentation, et certains en profitent pour imposer des hausses abusives, surtout dans un contexte de pénurie extrême de logements disponibles.

Pour le député solidaire, Québec doit prendre les grands moyens pour empêcher des hausses de loyer qui porteraient un coup dur à des gens déjà fragilisés par la crise sanitaire. Il appelle le gouvernement de la CAQ à adopter une loi spéciale pour suspendre l'application de la modification au bail pour un an.

« Aux situations exceptionnelles, il faut répondre par des mesures exceptionnelles. Les entreprises ont bénéficié d'une aide au loyer commercial, mais les locataires, eux, n'ont eu droit qu'à des palliatifs temporaires pour se sortir la tête hors de l'eau. Empêcher les hausses de loyer cette année n'est ni farfelu, ni radical : c'est le gros bon sens. L'Ontario et la Colombie-Britannique ont déjà annoncé des mesures pour geler les loyers résidentiels en 2021. Le Québec le peut aussi », conclut le député solidaire.



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YEAR IN **Part II** REVIEW 2020



Nouvelles Parc Extension News concludes its 2020 'Year in Review' *COVID and social housing issues dominated in last four months last year*

By Martin C. Barry

Nouvelles Parc Extension News is reviewing the past year's events in three parts, the first two of which we published in December. We now present the last installment of our review (covering the months of July to December) in this week's issue.

July

The City of Montreal announced that work would begin in July in the borough of Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension to redevelop three intersections. The City of Montreal was conducting renovations as part of the MIL campus project, costing more than \$2 million. In September 2019, Université de Montréal had opened its MIL campus in Outremont.

Renovations would take place at the following intersections: Acadie and Jean-Talon, Acadie and Beaumont, and Beaumont and Birnam. "We enthusiastically welcome this redevelopment work," said Borough Mayor Giuliana Fumagalli. "It will ensure more functional movement in the Beaumont sector near the new university campus."



Residents of Park Extension joined in a group effort to give meals to residents in need. The effort, led by Abdul Waheed, began in May as Muslims began fasting for Ramadan. The group had reached the milestone of having given away more than 1,000 meals to residents in June. The effort started with the distribution of 50 meals. Demand had only gone up, and the group had kept up. On a recent weekend, the group gave away 165 meals – triple its initial count.

The Montreal Police Department announced that Station 33, located on Beaumont Avenue, closed on Monday June 29. "The non-renewal of the lease for the building which housed the police officers at PDQ 33 leads to a temporary move by the police," SPVM said in a terse statement.

Although management did not want to discuss it publicly, a source confirmed to the Montreal daily La Presse that the decision arose from of a security investigation into a new owner of the building which had housed the police station.



The Park Extension-based Sarker Hope Foundation was one of several community organizations that had received a mandate to distribute hundreds of thousands of protective face masks to protect local people from infection from COVID-19.

The foundation stressed the importance of wearing masks in public. "By wearing one, you not only protect yourself but you also protect others," they said.

Petites-Mains is a non-profit organization that helps immigrant women find jobs. Co-founder and director general Nahid Aboumansour received the Meritorious Service Cross (civil division) for developing an organization to improve the living conditions of immigrant women and the unemployed in the Montreal area. The distinction was awarded on July 1 by Her Excellency Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada.

Masks or face coverings became mandatory in all indoor public spaces across Quebec, beginning Saturday July 18. That coincided with the start of the province's two-week construction holiday, when tens of thousands of Quebecers took their summer vacation.

July 18 marked the first day in which the mask and/or face-covering became mandatory indoors at local businesses. Nouvelles Parc Extension News decided to take a look at some of the supermarkets in the area to see if the new rules implemented were in fact being followed.

The investigation revealed that, by and large, food stores and other businesses in Park Ex were already following the sanitary rules. Employees and department managers were seen wearing face masks in almost all situations, with only a few minor exceptions.

August

In our August 14 issue, Quebec Education Minister Jean-François Roberge announced that elementary school students in Quebec from the fifth grade up would be required to wear protective face masks when back in school in the fall, although they will be allowed to take them off in classrooms.

The announcement came after parents, teachers and others

questioned the CAQ government for what many complained was a lack of clarity on COVID-19 and back-to-school, as well as concerns that the initial guidelines for protection against the virus didn't go far enough.

"I know there are many parents who are looking upon the back-to-school with a certain amount of apprehension," said Roberge, who was himself a parent, while maintaining that new measures should provide some reassurance. "Leaving the school closed would not be protecting children," he said.

While some of Canada's leading economists were suggesting Ottawa wouldn't be able to deal with the second wave of COVID-19 with the same financial largesse it had up to the summer, federal Economic Development Minister Melanie Joly said an interview with Nouvelles Parc Extension News that the Liberal government was well positioned to continue along the path it had been on since the beginning of the pandemic.

Joly noted that Canada was the only country along with Germany that had been able to relatively maintain its pre-COVID-19 credit rating, even though it was dropped from AAA to AA+ by Fitch Ratings in late June. "We're in the best position and we still have firepower in terms of fiscal capacity," she said.

Pandemic or not, nothing stopped the multicultural community groups which are centered in Park Extension from celebrating their roots in August during the three major cultural festivals which take place annually during this month.



On Friday August 14, the sacred celebration of the Dormition of the Mother of God began at Église Koimisis Tis Theotokou Church. Many of the local Park Extension members of the community came to pay their respects and pray during this sacred event in the Orthodox church. Normally, the Icon would be taken from its usual place and a procession would follow around the neighborhood. But due to the current state of pandemic, they were not allowed to do so this year.

Like so many events last summer, the numbers of people that were at the Pakistani Independence Day event certainly paled in comparison to the numbers of the past because of COVID-19. Yet

► Continued on page 11

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Il est possible que la situation actuelle suscite des émotions difficiles ou de la détresse. Il est normal de vivre un certain déséquilibre dans différentes sphères de sa vie. La gestion de ses pensées, de ses émotions, de ses comportements et de ses relations avec les autres peut devenir plus ardue. La plupart des gens arriveront à s'adapter à la situation, mais il demeure important que vous restiez à l'écoute de vos besoins. **N'hésitez pas à prendre les moyens nécessaires pour vous aider.**

Prenez soin de vous

- Mettez sur vos forces personnelles et ayez confiance en vos capacités.
- Rappelez-vous les stratégies gagnantes que vous avez utilisées par le passé pour traverser une période difficile. Il n'y a pas de recette unique, chaque personne doit trouver ce qui lui fait du bien.
- Accordez-vous de petits plaisirs (écouter de la musique, prendre un bain chaud, lire, pratiquer une activité physique, etc.).
- Si c'est accessible, allez dans la nature et respirez profondément et lentement.
- Apprenez à déléguer et à accepter l'aide des autres.
- Demandez de l'aide quand vous vous sentez dépassé par les événements. **Ce n'est pas un signe de faiblesse, c'est vous montrer assez fort pour prendre les moyens de vous aider.**
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- Prenez le temps de réfléchir à ce qui a un sens ou de la valeur à vos yeux. Pensez aux choses importantes dans votre vie auxquelles vous pouvez vous accrocher quand vous traversez une période difficile.
- Limitez les facteurs qui vous causent du stress.
- Bien qu'il soit important de vous informer adéquatement, limitez le temps passé à chercher de l'information au sujet de la COVID-19 et de ses conséquences, car une surexposition peut contribuer à faire augmenter les réactions de stress, d'anxiété ou de déprime.



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- Faites de la place à vos émotions et aussi à celles de vos proches.



Utilisez judicieusement les médias sociaux

- Ne partagez pas n'importe quoi sur les réseaux sociaux. Les mauvaises informations peuvent avoir des effets néfastes et nuire aux efforts de tous.
- Utilisez les réseaux sociaux pour diffuser des actions positives.
- Regardez des vidéos qui vous feront sourire.



Adoptez de saines habitudes de vie

- Tentez de maintenir une certaine routine en ce qui concerne les repas, le repos, le sommeil et les autres activités de la vie quotidienne.
- Prenez le temps de bien manger.
- Couchez-vous à une heure qui vous permet de dormir suffisamment.
- Pratiquez des activités physiques régulièrement, tout en respectant les consignes de santé publique.
- Réduisez votre consommation de stimulants : café, thé, boissons gazeuses ou énergisantes, chocolat, etc.
- Buvez beaucoup d'eau.
- Diminuez ou cessez votre consommation d'alcool, de drogues, de tabac ou votre pratique des jeux de hasard et d'argent.

Aide et ressources

Le prolongement de cette situation inhabituelle pourrait intensifier vos réactions émotionnelles. Vous pourriez par exemple ressentir une plus grande fatigue ou des peurs envahissantes, ou encore avoir de la difficulté à accomplir vos tâches quotidiennes. Portez attention à ces signes et communiquez dès que possible avec les ressources vous permettant d'obtenir de l'aide. Cela pourrait vous aider à gérer vos émotions ou à développer de nouvelles stratégies.

• Info-Social 811

Service de consultation téléphonique psychosociale 24/7

• Regroupement des services d'intervention de crise du Québec

Offre des services 24/7 pour la population en détresse :
centredecrise.ca/listecentres

• Service d'intervention téléphonique

Service de consultation téléphonique 24/7 en prévention du suicide :
1 866 APPELLE (277-3553)

De nombreuses autres ressources existent pour vous accompagner, consultez : Quebec.ca/allermieux

Quebec.ca/allermieux

 **Info-Social 811**

Québec 

Be there for yourself the way you're there for others



You are always there when your loved ones are going through difficult times. But don't forget about yourself—solutions exist to help you feel better.

The current situation may cause you distress. Experiencing various levels of anxiety in some spheres of life is normal. When this happens, you may find it more challenging to deal with your thoughts, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others. Most people succeed in adapting, but listening to your needs is vital. **Don't hesitate to do whatever is necessary to help yourself.**

Take care of yourself

- Rely on your personal strengths and have confidence in your abilities.
- Remind yourself of the winning strategies you used in the past to overcome difficulties. There is no one-size-fits-all solution! Each and every one of us must take steps to foster our own well-being.
- Enjoy life's little pleasures, such as listening to music, taking a warm bath, reading, exercising, etc.
- If you live close to nature, make the most of it. Breathe deeply and slowly as you walk.
- Learn to delegate, and allow others to help you.
- Ask for help when you feel overwhelmed. **It is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of strength when you are strong enough to do what is necessary to help yourself.**
- Lend a hand in your community in a way that respects your personal limits and public health directives. By helping others, you can improve their wellness and your own as well.
- Think about what has meaning and value for you. Reflect on the important things in your life that you can hold onto in hard times.
- Reduce the stressors in your life.
- While it is important to stay informed, limit the amount of time spent reading about COVID-19. Information overload can increase stress and anxiety, and even cause depression.



The *Getting Better My Way* digital tool

Getting Better My Way is a digital self-management tool for emotional health. If you are experiencing stress, anxiety or distress, this tool can help improve your well-being by identifying practical things you can do to feel better. Learn more at [Québec.ca/Gettingbetter](https://Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter)



Give voice to your feelings

- Keep in mind that having a range of emotions is normal. Feelings play an important role in life, and it is essential to experience them without passing judgment.
- Use words to express what you are going through. Do you feel alone? Are you worried?
- Allow yourself to share your feelings with a trusted friend or family member. It might also be helpful to write down how you're feeling or call a helpline. Find what works for you!
- Those closest to you may not necessarily be able to "read" you. Express your feelings.
- Leave space in your life for your feelings and those of your loved ones.



Make judicious use of social media

- Use critical thinking before sharing something on social media. Ill-advised information can have harmful effects and be detrimental to everyone's efforts in these times.
- Use social media to share positive actions.
- Watch videos that make you smile.



Choose healthy living habits

- Try to keep to a routine for eating, resting, sleeping and other daily activities.
- Take time to eat well.
- Go to bed at an hour that lets you get enough sleep.
- Be physically active on a regular basis, while complying with public health directives.
- Reduce your consumption of stimulants like coffee, tea, soft drinks, energy beverages, chocolate, etc.
- Drink lots of water.
- Lower your alcohol, drug and tobacco consumption, or simply say no to them entirely. The same goes for gambling.

Help and resources

We are all going through unprecedented times that can intensify our emotional reactions. For example, you might feel greater fatigue or have fears that you can't shake, or even have trouble just dealing with the day-to-day. Focus on these signs of a problem and, as soon as you can, contact resources that can help you to better manage your feelings and develop new coping strategies.

- **Info-Social 811**

Info-Social 811 is a free and confidential telephone consultation service available 24/7

- **Regroupement des services d'intervention de crise du Québec**

Provides 24/7 referral services for people in distress (French):
centredecrise.ca/listecentres

- **Suicide prevention crisis helpline**

Crisis helpline that provides suicide prevention services 24/7:
1 866 APPELLE (277-3553)

For a host of other helpful resources, visit Quebec.ca/gettingbetter

Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter

 **Info-Social 811**

Québec    

YEAR IN **Part II** REVIEW 2020



◀ Continued from page 6

people still came to honor the event that marked Pakistan more than seven decades of Independence from Britain—essentially known as the British Raj, or British Rule.

There were about forty people in all—give or take a few—and representatives of the government were also on hand to show support and celebrate this most joyous day for members of the Pakistani Community in Park Extension. The event was held at Park Athena on Jean Talon Street between L'Epee and Bloomfield.

Very much like the previous event held in Park Extension the day before celebrating Pakistan's independence, India's Independence Day from British Rule came the following day. And just as we covered the Pakistani Independence Day, we were there for the festivities for India's special day as well.

Food was offered to those that attended and a small ceremony was conducted. Those that turned out for the event respected the mask rules set in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and honored India and what the holiday represents by hoisting the flag and throwing flower petals at the flag, which is a sign of respect, allegiance and adoration for what the day represents.

While maintaining that the severity of a second wave of COVID-19 remained to be seen, Families, Children and Social Development Minister Ahmed Hussien said in an interview published in our Aug. 28 issue that Ottawa was prepared to provide additional help for the homeless should the COVID-19 pandemic worsen.

"What you can count on is that as a government we have demonstrated that we are there for the most vulnerable at the most difficult time," said Hussien. "And in the future, if that is necessary again, we will certainly do that. Because at the end of the day we want to be there for Canadians at their moment of need, both directly but also helping the organizations that do the heavy lifting."

September



By early September, COVID-19 wasn't the burning hot issue it had been just months before – even though that would change. In the Sept. 4 issue of the Nouvelles Parc Extension News, street detours and traffic management were the front-page issues.

"Traffic detours on several arteries and streets in Park Extension, because of work by the City of Montreal to upgrade traffic lights and underground excavations conducted by Hydro Quebec to improve service, have been making life miserable for motorists and pedestrians alike recently in Park Ex," we reported on p. 3.

"They're working all the way from Beaumont to Fleury," Park Extension city councillor Mary Deros said in an interview, describing a massive project undertaken by Hydro Quebec in which the work site stretched northward all the way to Ahuntsic-Cartierville.

But at the same time, all was not gloom. Deros said the City of Montreal was installing improved pedestrian crosswalk signals at the corner of Beaumont Ave. and l'Acadie Blvd. for people to cross more safely southward to the entrance of the University of Montreal's Outremont campus. "These are two corners where there are things that needed to be done for a long time," she said.

In the same issue, Councillor Deros also announced major improvements will be made to the grass turf on three soccer fields in Jarry Park in Park Extension. "They're going to have their grass renewed," said Deros. "That's going to happen after the season finishes this year, so that it won't conflict with the current soccer season."



Our Sept. 11 issue provided coverage of the Park Extension Bangladeshi community's celebrations of patriotism for their country – with special sanitary precautions by some participants because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As our journalist noted, there were two celebrations for Bangladesh that day.

"There were multiple barbecues going, the smell of chicken emanating and rising to my nose and high above towards the trees shading the picnic area around the gazebo on the St-Laurent side of the park, and of course there was Mary Deros, once again, speaking with members of the community, and giving freely of her time," noted reporter Domenic Marinelli.

In addition to the BBQ, he added, there was a massive amount of Tim Horton's doughnuts and coffee, and the overall feel at this gathering was certainly one of community and family, many enjoying themselves and the essence of the celebration regardless of any constraints put upon them by the pandemic.

[sep 11 p 3] Six months into the pandemic, store vacancies caused by a downturn in the local economy were truly beginning to make an impact.

"Driving or perhaps walking around Park Ex, one may have noticed many business fronts closed up," wrote our journalist. "Of course, we're not talking about at the height of Covid-19, we're talking about right now, as the community, the city, the province, the country and the world try to get back on track amidst a threat of a new wave."



The Sarker Hope Foundation, whose primary goal is to create a positive living environment for children who are orphans, was launching a new project with the specific goal of providing assistance to Park Extension residents.

According to foundation founder Mustaque Sarker, the 'Supporting Parc Extension Residents project' is a comprehensive project that would be implemented in Parc Extension. The project's interventions included: A Transportation and Delivery service, Social well-being and mental recovery, Children and Youth recreation events and competitions, and a Face Mask distribution and awareness campaign.

Nouvelles Parc Extension News's Sept. 18 issue cast light on a recent discovery in Park Extension: a set of stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments inset into an outer wall on a Stuart St. building that was under renovation.

"But in the end, could these stone tablets actually be the original?" our reporter wondered tongue in cheek. "Tablets like these have been created for many churches and synagogues and in honor of the original tablets," he added. Park Ex resident Sasha Dyck had pointed out the discovery to the newspaper.

Officials with the centre city and the Borough of Villieray/St-Michel/Parc Extension announced the purchase of a large office building on Hutchison St. for social housing, which had previously been earmarked by a developer for upscale condos.

Rosannie Filato, city councillor for Villieray, stated: "It's going to allow us to preserve diversity: social diversity, economic diversity, and it's going to allow, also, residents of Parc-Extension to continue to reside in their borough, in their district."

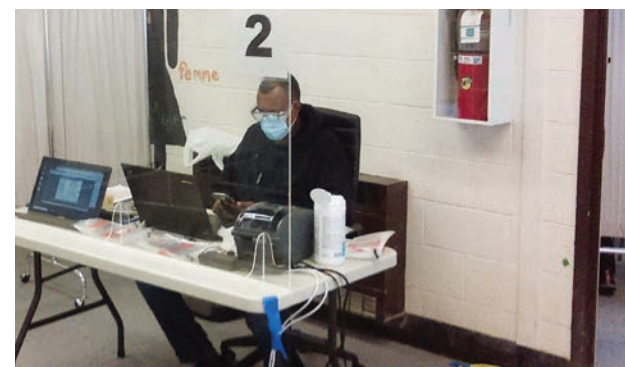
October

This was the month last year, following seven months of pandemic, when an already dire situation really began to hit the fan. "The provincial government has finally decided to put Montreal in another state of lockdown," we noted on p. 3 of our Oct. 2 issue.

"Especially after weeks of slinking toward the red, the decision makes sense to most, as it was imminent, as even the Prime Minister stated in a press conference earlier last week that families getting together for Thanksgiving would be difficult."

A whole batch of rules were set in place for the announced 28-day lockdown starting on Oct. 1, but many were surprised at the rules not present on the list, or rather the places that wouldn't be closing in light of this new lockdown.

Home visits would be forbidden, unless a person who lived alone was being visited by a single person who also lived alone. The other exceptions included visits by healthcare workers. Restaurant dining rooms were completely closed. Only take-out options would be allowed for all restaurants in the affected regions. Bars were closed, as were movie theaters and public libraries.



As we reported in our Oct. 9 issue, the first COVID-19 infection testing clinic in Park Extension was set up in Howard Park. "I spoke to nurses on site (all requested to remain nameless), and they told me that you didn't need ID to get tested," wrote our reporter. "All you needed to do was give your name, a phone

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2020 Part II



◀ Continued from page 11

number or email where the results could be delivered to you.

"The test itself was just under ten minutes," he continued. "At the door, nurses and staff on-hand gave you a new mask to wear and then you were ushered into a back room where the test was performed, in either the mouth or the nose with a cotton swab. Then, patients or rather those being tested were ushered out the back door, urged to use the sanitizer placed there. It was as simple as that."

During the Oct. 5 borough council webcast, the council spoke of its accomplishments from the past year which included: A development of 16 new green alleys, 150 squares of trees and a plantation of 350 trees in the public domain and distribution of 42,000 plants ... an adoption of plans to chart the future in culture and social development; authorization for the construction of three social housing and collaboration in the purchase of four properties for developments future.

And for the New Year, plans were certainly set in place ... A positive plan that definitely looked good on paper: Continuing the fight against urban islands, in particular by planting trees and perennials. Integrate the concepts of ecological transition in all redevelopment projects. Continue to implement measures to improve the cleanliness and beautification of the territory. Develop a vision of urban agriculture.

Although the provincial government announced that \$50 million in compensation would be paid to the operators of cultural venues and live theatres to offset the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, film theatre chain executive Vince Guzzo was wondering why Quebec was penalizing companies like his, while doing nothing to actually enforce COVID-19 sanitation regulations.

Guzzo, whose family founded the Cinémas Guzzo chain 46 years ago, was incensed that the government seemed to prefer not taking concrete action against individuals who were openly breaking sanitary rules, while penalizing companies by forcing them to shut – even though they complied with all the regulations.

"They should be giving tickets," he said in an interview with Nouvelles Parc Extension News. "My argument with the Legault government is: whoever doesn't respect the rules, shut them down. But don't shut down a whole industry. Shut down the restaurant that's violating the rules. The bar that's violated the rules. Shut down whoever's not getting these rules respected."

Tenants in a building on Bloomfield in Park Extension banded together in order to fight their landlord after a rent hike of astronomical proportions. As had been reported by other news outlets, the situation had certainly turned volatile and tempers already flared. Our reporter visited the apartment and was taken

on a tour by Abdul Waheed, a resident who reached out when things started to get really bad.

Before the new owner purchased the building, Abdul Waheed's rent was at \$570 per month and heating and hot water was paid. Now that the new landlord had purchased the building, he prepared a new lease and the new lease stated that Abdul would be charged \$700 per month, and heating and hot water would no longer be included in that monthly rate.

It was in the wee hours—specifically 3:10AM—a few days before the end of October that Noor-E-Madina Masjid on Jean Talon Street was vandalized. A perpetrator was picked up by security cameras after breaking the door window and crested the top of the stairs entering the mosque in hopes of either stealing money from the donation box or committing further hate crimes once inside.



The perpetrator, who was picked up by security cameras entered, but was heard by the Imam who was studying at the time, before he could venture further into the building. The Imam hollered through the closed door of where he was and warned that he would be calling the authorities if he didn't leave. The perpetrator did, but in essence the damage was still felt.

November

In our Nov. 6 issue, we reported that Park Extension had been classified as a "hot spot" for COVID-19 infections. And the reports had many wondering why? "Essentially too many people living under the same roof, mostly students sharing apartments, which isn't at all their fault, only a possibility for the spike in the spreading here in Park Extension," noted our reporter.

Christine Touchette, a service director with the CIUSSS du Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal stated: "That's creating a situation where, you know, if there's a virus, it can spread more easily than in an area where people have more space in between each other."

In the meantime, gym owners all over Quebec, including Park Extension, were protesting the province's forced closure of their establishments because of the COVID pandemic.

Thai Long Muay Thai has been serving the community since 2011. They are on Jean Talon Street and many from Park Extension attend the gym when times are 'normal,' for lack of a better term. But they have suffered severely during the pandemic, like all other gyms. But to the rules set by the government, they say "We need to do whatever is the law."

The CIUSSS du Center-Ouest-de-Île-de-Montréal was the victim of a hacker attack. The healthcare facility saw part of its network attacked with ransom ware, according to information obtained by the Bureau of Investigation. In particular, the appointment booking system was affected, stated a press release.

"During the day-today review of our CIUSSS's computer systems, we discovered a cyber security intrusion. At this time, we do not believe that information about patients or staff has been viewed," wrote Lawrence Rosenberg, CEO of CIUSSS, in a memo to all employees. He said an investigation carried out by experts was underway. "We have also notified the MSSS of the situation, and are working with the ministry's cyber security team," he added.

All over the city of Montreal, real estate was in great condition despite early worries that earlier success during the pandemic would eventually turn toward a downward spiral. Even in Park Extension, things hadn't at all shown signs of slowing down in the slightest.

Director of market analysis at the QPAREB (The Quebec Professional Association of Real Estate Brokers) Charles Brant stated: "With a historic 37 per cent jump in sales in October, the Montreal CMA maintained a strong increase in sales and a substantial decrease in active listings in the outlying areas of the Island of Montreal."

Following months of pandemic lockdown, the Park Extension library was back on Nov. 10, starting at 10 am to allow citizens to borrow books. Citizens could now reserve them (online or by phone at 514 872-6071) and pick them up when they received a confirmation. The entrance hall of the library was still under construction, as renovations still had to be completed. Open yes, but still there will be reduced services in libraries.

"Due to the move of the Montreal Metropolitan Community to Tier 4 - Maximum Alert (red zone), Montreal libraries are offering reduced access to their services to comply with government directives aimed at slowing the spread of COVID-19," library officials said in a statement.

In a keynote speech to CAQ members during the convention webcast on Nov. 7, Legault said the government remains focused on restoring and expanding the province's economy. But at the same time, he suggested there might be economic advantages to be gained despite the pandemic. "It's during trying times that we get to see a people's greatness emerging," Legault said.



The Comité d'Action de Parc-Extension staged two demonstrations at two separate locations. One site was on Jarry West ... tenants were fighting the demolition of a building; construction would create a high end condo, and the committee was demanding that this project not go through.

It was owned by a private owner. The second site was at 7965 de l'Acadie, and it is currently abandoned and up for sale. "Fight the gentrification of the neighborhood and keep tenants that have a lower income, immigrants, in it," CAPE spokesperson Amy Darwish said in a statement.

▶ Continued on page 13

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◀ Continued from page 12

December

It was reported that the police HQ in Park Extension that closed back in June would be finding a new home and merging with another precinct set to close in the near future, putting an end to rumors that have been circulating since June and before.

The building on Beaumont (precinct 33) was closed back in June, the press and the community being told that they were looking for another building. The only other precinct that remained was precinct 31, which is on St. Laurent near Jarry Park.

The first precinct closed in June because of an issue with the building's security. Since its closing, many of the police officers working out of that precinct were relocated to the aforementioned station 31 and of course station 26 on Mountain Sights. The community was also told to use these precincts should they need police assistance or had any questions.



Maxime Bonneau, Jess Albayrak, Alexandra Thibault and their team of street workers at Pact de Rue are dedicated to helping the young in many neighborhoods in Montréal ... and in Park Extension, Jess Albayrak keeps a close eye on those in desperate need of help and support. Pact De Rue has been around since 1991; they are about to celebrate thirty years of influence, helping a community in need, or rather those in the community that need help, guidance and support.

Specifically, they help adolescents aged 12 to 25, through what they call "street work" with any difficulty they may be going through. They also offer clinical support when needed, yearly orientation and different types of training programs to help their street workers develop their skills further.

They only started in May and they still don't have a name they can use officially, but this organization has already helped a community in need, right here in Park Extension. What started as a way to break the Ramadan fast has turned into a food drive worthy of some note in this community. Many stepped up since its inception and community members and business owners alike.

One of Abdul Waheed's friends offered to have 5 meals for his family, but he makes a modest living, so he refused but stated that it would be a good idea to give it (some food) to the homeless in the area.

[dec 11 p3] The Comité d'action de Parc-Extension were at it again in what they do best in front of Parc Metro on Hutchison, protesting the demolition and subsequent building of high end condos at 700 Jarry West ... CAPE demanding that the site be used instead for social housing— many local community members and governmental representatives showed up to support the cause.

The building of luxury condos in Park Extension (as well as other boroughs) seems

to have become a theme in recent decades. But there are certainly those that are against such modes of city planning, preferring the neighborhoods stay as they were, holding the character they originally had, doing away with plans for such condos and allowing buildings for social housing instead.

[dec 11 p 5] In a mysterious and confusing turn of events, elected official Rosannie Filato announced her departure from her position as head of public security issues and will not be running for re-election in the future with the city council ... these decisions thus raising questions of both concern and confusion amongst the community.

A lawyer, Filato resigned from her position as head of public security issues last Tuesday, wanting only to focus on her arrondissement of Villeray - Saint-Michel - Parc-Extension—a position she will also be vacating in a year's time when she will return to a job with a sizeable union. In her time in the aforementioned position, she worked closely with the police and on a matter of issues including finding herself debating in a myriad of avenues, on the overall definition of the police, on systemic racism within the police and on discrimination in arrests—an issue that has gained prominence all over North America in recent months.



Alberto Del Burgo, a longtime contributor to Nouvelles Parc-Extension News who passed away in December, was an actor, a journalist and editor, a writer of books and a newspaper columnist, a photographer, a musician, an artist and a cosmopolitan who decided one day in the late 1960s to come to Montreal from Lebanon.

Alberto was a prolific author of books, and one issue of NPN carried coverage of the launch of his most recent work – 'Jalons 2 : Beyrouth-Montréal – Un voyage de 50 ans', at the seniors retirement residence in Outremont where he lived. Despite his admittedly diminutive physical stature, Alberto's charisma appeared to charm the ladies considerably, for indeed his book's launch was attended by a mostly female crowd of admirers.

With the rate of infection for COVID-19 reaching 17 per cent in Park Extension and 12 per cent in Côte des Neiges, officials at the CIUSSS West Central Montreal were advising residents the two densely-populated Montreal neighbourhoods in our last issue of the year to exercise extra caution and continue with sanitary measures during the upcoming Christmas holiday period.

Christine Touchette, Interim Director of Frontline Integrated Services, said that based on the results of testing for COVID-19 conducted recently, Park Extension and Côte des Neiges now rank as the most infected by the coronavirus in the Montreal region.

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In Memoriam & Obituaries

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DUBÉ, Sylvie 1955 - 2020



At her home in Montreal, on December 15, 2020, accompanied by her lover, passed away, at the age of 65, Mrs. Sylvie Dubé. Originally from Saint-Jean-Port-Joli, she was the daughter of the late Lady Marie-Anne Bernier and the late Monsieur Herménégilde Dubé. She is survived by her husband, Alain Cadieux, as well as his daughter, Marilou. Sylvie was the sister of Monique (late Léopold Caron), late Lucette, Charlotte (Jean-Guy Deschênes), Gaston (Lucie Bélanger), Louise (Pierre Fournier), Ghislaine and Gilles Dubé (Ginette Plante).

CHARTIER, Gilles 1955 - 2021



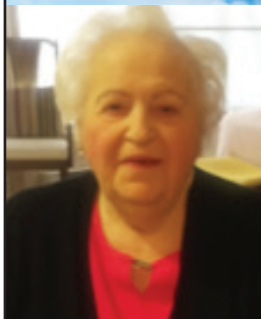
In Montreal, on January 2, 2021, at the age of 65, passed away Mr. Gilles Chartier. He is survived by his sister, Louise (Denis and Florence) his son, Marc-André (Emilie), his grandchildren Charles-William, Lilly-Cate and (Mathis). In addition, he leaves his best friend Manon as well as his ex-wife Celine.

PROULX, Juliette 1932 - 2020



We regret to announce the passing of Juliette Proulx at the age of 88.

ABRAMOVITCH, Elaine 1926 - 2021



Peacefully, on Saturday, January 2, 2021, in her ninety-fifth year. Beloved wife of the late Ralph Abramovitch. Loving mother and mother-in-law of Adele and Stan Segal, Mona and Peter Talbot, Barbara and Loren Hoffman. Cherished Bubby of Richard, Hilary and Jeremy, Shawna and Adam, and Steven. Predeceased by her entire family who perished in the Holocaust; and by her brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, Solomon and Lola Abramovitch, Victor and Anita Pila.



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ARIES

Having rested, you'll return to work with an incredible amount of energy and efficiency, and you'll be offered an attractive promotion. In fact, it'll be nothing less than the boss' chair, or you'll start your own business.



TAURUS

After a disagreement, you'll head off on an exciting new adventure rather than stick around to needlessly bicker. You'll feel a strong sense of being in the right place at the right time, and you'll also have a lot of fun.



GEMINI

You'll feel sensitive, and it'll seem like nothing's going your way. This is simply a sign from the universe that it's time to make some ne-cessary changes in your life.



CANCER

It's important to take some time to weigh the pros and cons before you make a decision. There'll also be an occasion, such as a business dinner, that'll require you to dress to the nines.



LEO

There's a lot of work coming up and plenty of details that can't be overlooked. You'll need to pay extra attention during a speech or conversation in which crucial information will be revealed.



VIRGO

You'll accomplish a task that puts you in the spotlight. You might not always feel comfortable being on a pedestal, but fortunately, this will help you overcome your shyness.



LIBRA

You'll invest yourself in finding a new place to live. You might also take on a renovation or redecorating project. Additionally, your family will demand a lot of your energy.



SCORPIO

You won't keep your thoughts to yourself, especially if someone tries to silence you. Plus, being out-spoken could help get you out of a complicated financial situation and give you a shot at affluence.



SAGITTARIUS

There'll be a lot of action and surprises. At work, you'll be given a new mandate that requires you to manage large sums of money. Fortunately, your salary will increase accordingly.



CAPRICORN

You'll sweep away any negative feelings by engaging in physical activity. You'll need to move in or-der to burn off excess energy, so dedicate yourself to a new work-out routine or fitness class.



AQUARIUS

As you worry about your career path going forward, you'll suddenly realize how to make things better. In terms of your health, you'll finally find the right remedy to cure an ailment.



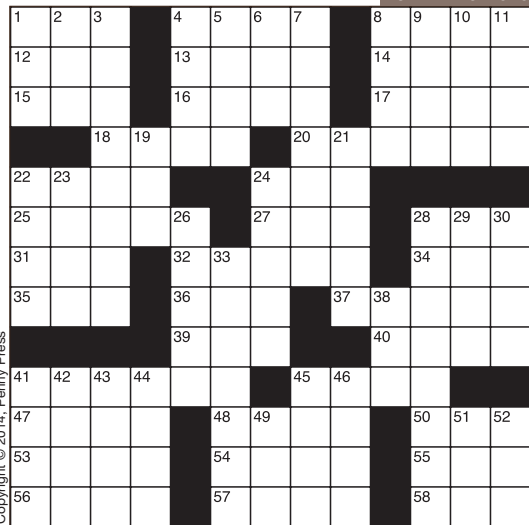
PISCES

At work, you'll be overwhelmed by a large group of clients. At home, there'll be just as much going on and plenty of family activities to or-ganize. You'll be the person everyone relies on to keep things running smoothly.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 1015



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ACROSS

1. Kettle and Bell
4. Has
8. Latest word
12. Swiss mountain
13. Brawl
14. Forget
15. As ____ your request
16. Contribute a share
17. Building's location
18. Florida Key, e.g.
20. Musical beat
22. Goose's cry
24. So-so grade
25. Pertaining to the eye
27. Bagel topper
28. Function
31. Itty-bitty
32. Charm

34. English beverage
35. Cease
36. Bled, as a color
37. Pleasing
39. Band's booking
40. Rural hotels
41. Sign
45. Large vases
47. Skin of an orange
48. Ms. Winningham
50. "____ a Living"
53. Besides
54. Hem
55. Floral necklace
56. Narrow board
57. Poverty
58. Position

DOWN

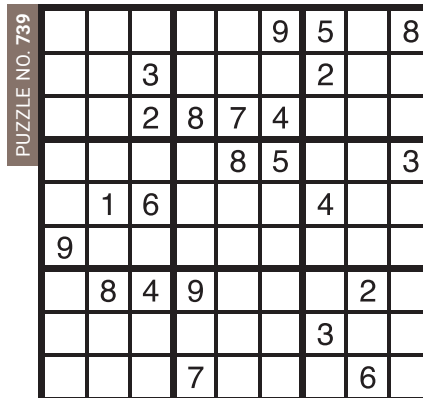
1. Plan out a route
2. Pub offering
3. Moved at full speed
4. Exam type
5. Chablis, e.g.
6. Santana's "She's ____ There"
7. Sound systems
8. Curious
9. Throw off
10. "Gone ____ the Wind"
11. Flower part
19. ____ lodge
21. Spells
22. Inventor Elias ____
23. Unfold
24. Held tightly
26. Shipment
28. Implements
29. Perceived
30. Gobbles
33. Postal carriers
38. Take the gold medal
41. Luxurious resorts
42. Holler
43. Southwestern land formation
44. Smudge
45. Yearning
46. Clarinet component
49. Lemony refresher
51. Casual shirt
52. Tend a baby

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.**



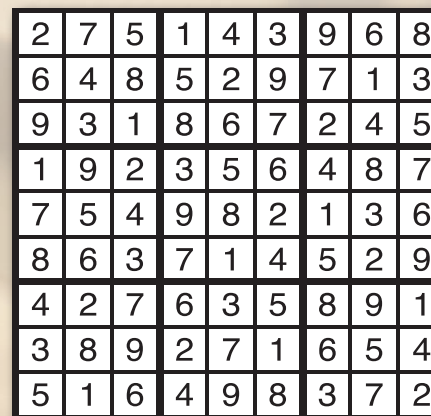
PUZZLE NO. 739

Last Issues' Answers

CROSSWORDS



Sudoku



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appointment.*



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SOLD
IN
5 days!



SOLD
IN
2 days!



SOLD!