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Mary Deros opens campaign office



Page 6

The event closed with party members and guests mingling, discussing and taking pictures in the newly opened electoral campaign office. Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST

Bill 96 public consultations...



CAQ MNA Christopher Skeete, who is also Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers, questioned the QCGN on its Bill 96 memorandum.

Page 3

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Mary Deros opens campaign office

Ensemble Montréal's bid for reelection in Parc-Extension



MATIAS BRUNET-KIRK
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City councillor Mary Deros and her Ensemble Montréal team inaugurated their newly opened electoral campaign office last Wednesday evening in Parc-Extension's north-end.

The office is located at the corner of Champagnieur and Liège and will act as the headquarters for the party's activities in Park-Extension up until the municipal election on Nov. 7.

In attendance was city councillor Mary Deros, along with several other Ensemble Montréal members and candidates. Saint-Michel city councillor Josué Corvil, city council candidate for Villeray Mourad Romdhane and borough mayoral candidate Guillaume Lavoie were in attendance.

Both mayoral candidate Denis Coderre and François-Perreault city council candidate Mike Parente were not present.

Blessing

As in previous electoral campaigns, city councillor Deros inaugurated the new office with a Christian blessing. The religious ceremony was performed by local Greek orthodox Reverend Father Nicolas P. Andreou, who is Deros's priest and from the same Greek island of Samos as her parents.

The ceremony included religious songs and readings from the bible in both English, French and Greek. The reverend then blessed the office using holy water and a bundle of *vasiliko*, known



Reverend Father Nicolas P. Andreou read from the bible in French, English and Greek and blessed the office. Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST

in English as basil.

Although the event was a Greek orthodox religious ceremony, the crowd was made up of people from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds from across the community.

Continued support

Both Deros and Lavoie addressed the group in attendance, thanking them for their continued support. "I'm grateful for your presence," she added to the crowd of her supporters.

"As in every election, we always start our official opening by having our offices blessed by my priest and I appreciate you being here and understanding," said Deros, right before Father



The office is located at the corner of Champagnieur and Liège and will act as the headquarters for the party's activities in Park-Extension Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST

Nicolas P. Andreou began the ceremony.

Once the blessing was over, mayoral candidate Guillaume Lavoie also addressed the crowd. "Thank you all for being here, we need your support," he remarked, adding "we can't do this without you."

"Our solemn commitment to you and the people of Parc-Ex is that we're going to strive, we're going to work tirelessly to make sure that this neighbourhood is as famous and as beautiful and as welcoming and as clean and as prosperous as it is on the Villeray side or the TMR (Town of Mount Royal) side," stated Lavoie.

Prominent residents

The invitation-only event was also attended by prominent citizens from various community organizations. This included the Himalaya Seniors of Quebec president Vathany Srikandarajah and the organizations' general secretary Nizam Uddin.

Jatinder Bandhari along with CB Singh of the India-Canada Association of Montreal were also present at the event. Due to COVID-19 guidelines, capacity was limited to only 20 people, with roughly that number present.

The event closed with party members and guests mingling, discussing and taking pictures in the newly opened electoral campaign office at 752 Liège Ouest. The municipal elections will take place on Nov. 7.



Parc-Extension city councillor Mary Deros, Saint-Michel city councillor Josué Corvil, city council candidate for Villeray Mourad Romdhane and borough mayoral candidate Guillaume Lavoie were in attendance. The event closed with party members and guests mingling, discussing and taking pictures in the newly opened electoral campaign office. Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST

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Bill 96 should be scrapped 'in its entirety,' says Quebec Community Groups Network

New language law 'will change Quebec, and not for the better,' QCGN claims in scathing brief



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In a memorandum presented last week to the National Assembly committee working on the provincial government's Bill 96 to strengthen Quebec's language rules, the Quebec Community Groups Network said that even though the French language in Quebec "can and should be protected," Bill 96 is not the way to go about it.

"Bill 96 is deeply problematic," said QCGN president Marlene Jennings, reading from the conclusion of the English-language community lobby group's statement.

'Outdated and odious'

"Its measures are based on outdated and odious approaches to enforcing the use of the French language. It will create barriers and mistrust. It upsets a social and linguistic peace that has lasted for decades. And it sends a signal to speakers of other languages:

"No matter how integrated into Quebec society or how willing to speak French in the public space, speakers of other languages are not fully 'members' of Quebec society," the statement continued. "Like Bill 21, it re-shapes Quebec law and society to create clear 'insiders' and 'outsiders. And at the same time, it withdraws fundamental human rights protection from everyone."

Overriding human rights

More fundamentally, Jennings and the QCGN contend that Bill 96 is aimed at an entirely different objective – that being "the refashioning of the Quebec state, and the move away from liberal constitutional democracy."

They said that the use of constitutional human rights overrides (notwithstanding clauses) effectively dismantles human rights protections that have been in place for 45 years.

"It expands the power of the National Assembly – and the government in power – and removes the role of the judiciary in reviewing laws for compliance with the Constitution. It increases and centralizes executive power and control over both the public and private sectors.

"These changes are of serious and major concern for democratic governance in Quebec, and should be troubling to all Quebecers. Bill 96 will change Quebec, and not for the better."

Should withdraw Bill 96

The QCGN's number one recommendation is that Bill 96 be withdrawn "in its entirety." If the bill is not withdrawn completely, they say it ought to be overhauled and include changes such as these:

Remove the human rights overrides;

A reference question on the constitutionality and meaning Bill 96 should be sent without delay to the Court of Appeal of Quebec;

The right to communication and services in English should never be based on eligibility for English instruction;

Remove provisions which have the most egre-



The Quebec National Assembly's Committee on Culture and Education heard from the Quebec Community Groups Network last week.

gious impact on business, including francization requirements, justification of hiring practices, language of contracts, justice provisions and education permit restrictions.

The QCGN also emphasized in its brief that "Bill 96 should not in any way interfere with the right to receive health and social services in English as guaranteed in the Act respecting health services and social services. Bill 96 should include an explicit carve-out for this right."

'You accept Bill 101?'

Skeete asked

CAQ MNA fChristopher Skeete (who is Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers) asked Jennings whether the QCGN agrees with Bill 101, which was passed by the Parti Québécois government in 1977 and forms the basis for Quebec's current language laws.

"Does the QCGN accept that this law was necessary for the survival of French in North America?" he asked. "The QCGN is a defender of the French language," Jennings replied. Skeete interrupted, insisting he be given a yes or no answer, "because there are plenty of defenders

of the French language, but they're not all for Bill 101," he said.

Jennings responded, "Yes, the QCGN agrees with Bill 101, in the sense that we think it has had positive influences, and we think that it wasn't used to one hundred per cent. So, we are asking the question why Bill 96, taking into account that there are plenty of things in Bill 101 that are never used."

'Why then not Bill 96?'

Skeete continued, "Why then, if the QCGN accepts the notions in Bill 101, would it want to allow, for example, the schooling of people coming from Great Britain, Australia and India in the public school system as Anglophones or receiving documents in English? Why does the QCGN, if it accepts Bill 101, not want the integration into French of newly-arriving people in Quebec?"

Replying, Jennings said she hadn't understood the question. By the time Skeete rephrased it, Lise Thériault, chair of the Committee on Culture and Education, who was carefully keeping tabs on the time allotted to each participant, declared Skeete's time had run out and Jennings was cut off before she could answer.



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OPINION & Editorial



THAT'S WHAT I'M THINKING

Robert Vairo

A Pandemic of the Unvaccinated, and Tip Toe Through the Tulips with China

It's obvious to anyone treating Covid infected patients that those taking up hospital beds and ICU departments are the unvaccinated. Meanwhile, the vaccinated, waiting for urgent surgery, albeit elective, continue to suffer waiting for the un-vaccinated to get vaccinated, to free up beds, relieve pressure on our doctors and nurses, and generally, allow entire hospital teams to return to some sane level of operation. To be clear, 'elective surgery' does not mean unnecessary or non-urgent. Early diagnosis of cancer for example, can actually lead to a cure, not a treatment. A delay in kidney replacement causes tiring and disruptive daily dialysis much longer than expected. These unvaccinated are getting priority treatment while needy kids and their parents, wait. The cost of anxiety and potential loss of life, is incalculable. One headline recently read, the 'unvaccinated are getting better treatment than the vaccinated'. How sad, but true.

In Alberta, I watched Premier Brian Kenney at a news conference say the 17% unvaccinated in his western province, make up 92% of Covid infected hospital patients. And the stats may vary somewhat in each province, but the overwhelming numbers point to the fact, yes, the fact, that those who are responsibly immunized, are having their paid medical and surgical care refused. Dr Edward Les, an Alberta pediatric emergency room physician says their tax paid services are "curtailed by the pandemic of the unvaccinated."

Like you, I need a break from elections. But I'm a bit uncomfortable because of 'a small stone in my shoe'. I noticed that across the country the Conservative vote plunged in Canada's most Chinese electorates. At least three Conservative candidates in BC, all Asians, were not re-elected. And one of them has spoken out, Kenny Chiu, the defeated incumbent in Canada's largest Asian electorate, Richmond BC, blaming Chinese agents who used the social media www.wechat.com, to spread misinformation. More to the point, Chinese agents in Canada are messaging lies. Chiu presented a private members bill to form a registry of foreign agents in our country, much like the United States and Australia have already done. He ought to be congratulated, not chastised. He wants an investigation. The Conservatives were the only party prior and during the campaign to push Trudeau to stand up to China. And Canadians expect that.

The Chinese use coal as their primary source of energy. And they are running out. They actually are experiencing an energy crisis. Black outs are everywhere in that country these days. They don't care about pollution, much less about climate change. Short of resources to feed a hungry

nation, they have now partnered with Russia to mine Afghanistan with a giant corporation called China Africa Resources. It's easy to understand why Russia, China and the Taliban, are just one big happy family.

So why is Justin Trudeau so soft on Asia? Why has this liberal government not yet told China we do not want your military-owned Huawei as part of our 5G grid, the only western country to stall on what should be an obvious decision? The reason is the following. Mr. Trudeau admitted to a CTV question period during his leadership race "Obviously, my family has historical ties with China." And add to that, the old Liberal party guard "has close and lucrative ties to corporate interests that are deeply invested in trade relations with China" wrote the National Post. Most recently our foreign affairs minister Francois-Philippe Champagne was forced to payoff the \$1.2 million dollar balance owing on his house mortgage held by the Bank of China. It's only a small example of what Canadians know about the relationship our political elite have with China. And it should make it amply clear why Mr. Trudeau tip toes through the tulips with China.

I hope our tax dollars reach those to whom it was intended. A recent federal court decision, awarded \$billions to native children who suffered discrimination in the welfare system. It's fair to continue to ask where all federal funds end up. During the debate Trudeau proudly talked about the billions allocated to natives across the country, but was quickly flagged by the guest native moderator who questioned not the amount, but its minimal results. This year, another 25 billion dollars will be allocated to address native issues, but the question remains if this will reach the people to whom it was intended. Every federal auditor general in recent memory has identified an "incomprehensible failure" of the Indigenous Affairs bureaucracy. There is absolutely no accountability, nor any cap on increased yearly spending as there was under previous governments. No one monitors the results of these enormous expenditures, despite the added abuse and corruption of a few Chiefs. It's no wonder natives still complain about not having safe drinking water, poor housing and education. There was nothing wrong with our Fiscal Accountability Act, scrapped by Trudeau. Bring it back. Canadians want value for their buck, and need to know where their money is going.

That's what I'm Thinking.

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Affordable transport, culture and daycare

Valérie Plante makes her pitch to Parc-Extension families



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Valérie Plante along with borough mayoral candidate Laurence Lavigne Lalonde made another electoral pitch to Parc-Extension residents and families at the William-Hingston Center last Thursday morning.

The press conference was held on the west side promenade and was centred around services to families and the affordability of raising children in Montreal.

Projet Montréal announced several measures that they say would help Montreal families with young children save money and better access important services like public transit, cultural facilities and daycare.

More CPEs

The incumbent mayor promised that she would work towards building more Centres de la petite enfance (CPE) daycare centers across Montreal, but especially in Parc-Extension where there are currently only two. "We're in Parc-Extension and there aren't a lot of CPEs here," said Plante, adding that "it's not sufficient."

Plante added that this would be achieved by reserving spaces in housing developments being built by the city. They would nonetheless have to be built by the provincial government as CPEs are their jurisdiction.

The announcement was made in front of the CPE the William-Hingston Centre which is set for eviction in December of 2021 along with many other community organizations as the building will be undergoing major renovations. Plante did not address the issue during the press conference.

"We have large families in Parc-Extension and Saint-Michel, more so than in the rest of Montreal, families of 3 kids or more, so this measure will support the families of the borough," added borough mayor hopeful Laurence Lavigne Lalonde.

Renoviction

In an interview with *The Montreal Gazette*, interim coordinator at Comité d'Action de Parc-Extension (CAPE) Amy Darwish said the situation at William-Hingston was a "very classic renoviction scenario."

"They're not telling us how long the repairs are going to take; they're not telling us if and when we can come back," the interview continued.

"If the Plante administration is interested in supporting Parc-Extension families, it would be interesting to hear what their plan is around the William Hingston Centre. Are they planning on supporting community groups to find another community centre that is central, accessible?" added Darwish.

Half-price STM

Projet Montreal also announced it will be halving the price of public transit passes for teens as of Oct. 1. This now brings the monthly STM pass for 12 to 17 year-olds from \$54 down to \$27 per month.

Plante hopes that this will help families with multiple children using public transit to save more money and subsequently reinject it into the economy. She added that it would account for total savings of \$648 per year, for two children.

"We really want to encourage young people to keep using public transit," added Plante as a long-term objective.

Montrealers under 18 will also be seeing better access to cultural facilities with the announcement guaranteeing free access to the city's museums and Montreal's *Espace pour la vie*, including the Biodôme, the Planetarium, the Biosphère, the Botanical Gardens and the Insectarium.

"We want to increase the possibility of activities for families from all social classes and especially those from less fortunate families," added Plante on the proposition.


Both Plante and Lalonde said the measures would help families in areas like Parc-Extension save money and have better access to various services. "They will improve the quality of life and the purchasing power of Montreal families," Plante concluded.



Mayor Valérie Plante and borough mayoral candidate Laurence Lavigne Lalonde made the announcement in front of the William-Hingston Centre. Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST




The plan brings the monthly STM pass for 12 to 17 year-olds from \$54 down to \$27 per month. Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST



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Séance du conseil d'arrondissement :

Contrat adopté pour passage à niveau à Ogilvy et deCastelnau



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L'arrondissement a tenu sa séance de conseil d'arrondissement mardi soir dernier, où des conseillers municipaux, la mairesse et des fonctionnaires se rencontrent virtuellement pour répondre aux questions des citoyens et voter sur des initiatives dans l'arrondissement.

Plusieurs sujets ont été abordés ce mois-ci, tels que le contrat accordé pour la construction du passage à niveau entre Ogilvy et de Castelnau, la présentation des lauréats de bénévole de l'année, le départ de la conseillère Rosannie Filato et le maintien du financement de plusieurs organismes communautaires.

La séance de conseil a lieu le premier mardi de chaque mois et les citoyens peuvent y assister virtuellement en rejoignant la diffusion en direct sur le site web de la ville. Les citoyens peuvent également envoyer leurs questions auxquelles la mairesse et les conseillers municipaux peuvent y répondre.

La mairesse Giuliana Fumagalli et les conseillers municipaux Mary Deros, Sylvain Ouellet, Rosannie Filato et Josué Corvil étaient présents, ainsi que des employés de la ville. Il s'agit de la dernière réunion avant les élections municipales du 7 novembre.

Passage à niveau Ogilvy / deCastelnau

Le passage à niveau de la gare Parc était dans l'esprit de nombreux citoyens, compte-tenu que le contrat de construction a été adopté la semaine dernière. Le passage a attiré beaucoup d'attention dans le quartier depuis qu'EXO y avait érigé une clôture en mai.

La ville centre a adopté l'offre faite par Salvex Inc. pour la construction du passage qui a suscité tant de controverse au cours des derniers mois. La facture de ce contrat s'élève à 509 914 \$. Salvex Inc. était aussi la seule entreprise à faire une offre.

Les élus ont salué la nouvelle avec anticipation et ont noté que le passage contribuerait à améliorer la mobilité de tous les habitants. « Vous verrez le chantier prendre forme dans les prochains jours », a déclaré la mairesse, ajoutant qu'il améliorerait l'accessibilité aux deux quartiers.

Selon des documents d'appel d'offres, le nouveau passage permanent comprendra une nouvelle signalisation, des chicanes de vélos des deux côtés et de nouvelles dalles de béton coloré. La ville a également conclu une entente avec le Canadien Pacifique qui empêcherait les trains de siffler au passage à niveau, afin de réduire la pollution sonore dans le coin.

Réaction des citoyens

Bien que plusieurs élus voient l'éventuelle ouverture comme un grand succès, certains citoyens ont un avis plutôt mitigé à l'égard du projet, citant entre autres la facture salée.

Béatrice Calmel est une résidente de Parc-Extension et a milité fortement au cours de l'été pour rouvrir le passage. Elle estime que le projet de construction est excessif et bien trop coûteux pour ce que les citoyens voulaient.

« C'est dépenser l'argent des contribuables pour rien », a déclaré Calmel, remarquant que le prix était beaucoup trop élevé pour deux barrières, deux mises à niveau de trottoirs et du marquage

esthétique au sol. Elle a expliqué que tout ce que les citoyens voulaient était que la clôture soit retirée.

« C'est se moquer du citoyen », a-t-elle ajouté, remarquant « dans Parc-Extension il y a des enfants qui ne mangent pas trois fois par jour, alors cet argent-là serait mieux allé à eux que de mettre de la couleur dans le béton du passage de Parc. »

Bénévole de l'année

Les conseillers municipaux ont présenté les lauréats pour les bénévoles de l'année, remis à des personnes qui ont fait un travail exceptionnel au service de leur communauté dans l'arrondissement.

Pour le quartier Parc-Extension, Lyne Bélisle a été reconnue pour son travail aux Cuisines et vie collectives Saint-Roch. Dévouée, Mme Bélisle est devenue une personne dont la présence est essentielle dans le service de dépannage et qui affecte de manière positive les autres bénévoles ainsi que les percepteurs de paniers alimentaires qu'elle côtoie depuis quatre ans. », a noté un communiqué publié par l'arrondissement.

Elle apporte une aide précieuse à l'organisme, qui a pu permettre au reste de l'équipe de souffler un peu, en ces temps stressants de pandémie. »

Dernier conseil de Rosannie Filato

La réunion de mardi a également marqué le dernier conseil d'arrondissement pour la conseillère de Villeray Rosannie Filato, qui ne se représentera pas aux élections municipales le 7 novembre. Durant un discours émotif elle a remercié ses collègues, des bénévoles et les citoyens de son quartier leur soutien durant son mandat et d'y avoir accordé leur confiance.

« Ce fut un réel privilège de vous représenter tout au long de mon mandat », a noté Filato, ajoutant qu'elle se sentait fière des initiatives qu'elle a mises de l'avant et du travail qu'elle a pu accomplir avec ses collègues.

« J'aimerais féliciter et remercier Rosannie pour tout ce qu'elle avait fait les derniers quatre ans », a déclaré Mary Deros, ajoutant que « ont se sentait pas qu'elle venait d'un autre parti, mais qu'on était des collègues qui ont travaillé ensemble pour l'amélioration de la qualité de vie de nos citoyens. »

La mairesse Fumagalli et les conseillers municipaux Josué Corvil et Sylvain Ouellet ont aussi remercié Mme Filato pour son implication et son dévouement durant son mandat.

Programmes communautaires

D'autres dossiers ont également été adressés, tels que le maintien du financement de certains organismes communautaires. Entre autres, l'organisation des jeunes de Parc-Extension s'est vu octroyer 1 000 \$ pour le reste de l'année grâce au « fonds de mariage » de la conseillère Mary Deros.

Un autre 500 \$ a également été remis à l'organisme Institut F de Parc-Extension, qui œuvre pour contribuer à mettre fin aux problèmes de discrimination raciale, sexuelle et socio-économique que vivent les jeunes et les femmes musulmanes de diverses origines.

Le conseil a également voté sur une motion qui abolirait les frais de retard dans les bibliothèques municipales à partir du 6 octobre, ainsi que donné l'amnistie sur tous les frais déjà imposés. Compte rendu de la date des élections municipales du 7 novembre, la prochaine séance du conseil d'arrondissement aura lieu le 23 novembre.



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Québec 

Borough Council Meeting:

Ogilvy/de Castelnau crossing contract given by city centre



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The borough held its regularly scheduled monthly borough council meeting last Tuesday evening, where city officials and politicians meet virtually to answer questions from citizens and vote on borough initiatives.

Being discussed this month were several topics such as the city contract given to build the footpath between Ogilvy and de Castelnau, the awards ceremony for the volunteer of the year, Rosannie Filato's final borough council meeting and the continued funding of several community organizations.

The meeting takes place on the first Tuesday of each month and citizens can attend virtually by joining the live stream on the city's website. Citizens can also send in their questions to be answered by the mayor and city councillors.

Present were borough mayor Giuliana Fumagalli and city councillors Mary Deros, Sylvain Ouellet, Rosannie Filato and Josué Corvil, along with city employees. This is the last meeting before the municipal election on Nov. 7, which will result in the reshuffle of elected officials on the council.

Ogilvy/de Castelnau crossing

The still unopened foot passage at the Parc EXO station was on the minds of many residents and elected officials this month as the contract for construction was voted on last week. The issue has been a hot-button issue all summer long since EXO barricaded a frequently used passage between Parc-Extension and Villeray.



The meeting takes place the first Tuesday of each month and citizens can attend virtually by joining the live stream on the city's website. Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST

Montreal city council voted to accept the offer made by Salvex Inc. to refurbish and construct the passageway that has attracted so much controversy over the past months. The price tag for that contract comes at a non-negligible \$509,914. Salvex Inc. was the only company to make an offer.

Elected officials received the news with anticipation and said it would benefit the mobility of all residents. "You will see the construction

site take shape in the coming days," said mayor Fumagalli, adding that it would open up accessibility to both neighbourhoods.

According to city documents, the new permanent crossing will include new signage, bicycle baffles on both sides and new coloured concrete. The city also reached an agreement with the Canadian Pacific that would prevent trains from blowing their whistles at the crossing as to impede sound pollution



Montreal city council voted to accept the offer made by Salvex Inc. to refurbish and construct the passageway. Photo: Matias Brunet-Kirk - NEWSFIRST

Citizen reaction

Although many elected officials see the long-awaited opening as a success, some citizens feel differently about the project, citing among other things its high price tag.

Béatrice Musky is a Parc-Extension resident and has been at the forefront of citizen efforts over the summer to reopen the crossing that had been blocked in May. She feels the scope of the construction project is unnecessary and expensive for what citizens wanted.

"It's spending taxpayer money for nothing," said Musky, remarking that the price was far too high for two barriers, a sidewalk lowering and an aesthetic paint-job on the asphalt. She explained that the only thing citizens wanted was for the fence to be taken down.

"It's mocking citizens," she added, further remarking that "in Parc-Extension there are kids that don't even get three meals a day, so that money would do better going to them than in colouring the concrete at the Parc pedestrian crossing."

Volunteer of the year

The start of the meeting also included city councillors giving out their volunteer of the year awards, presented to people in the borough who have done outstanding work in serving their communities.

For the district of Parc-Extension, Lyne Bélisle was recognized for her work at *Cuisine et vie collectives Saint-Roch*. "Mrs. Bélisle has become a person whose presence is essential in the food-aid service and who positively affects other volunteers as well as those receiving food baskets," stated the borough.

"She is a great asset to the organization, which gave the rest of the team a little breathing room in these stressful pandemic times," it continued.

Filato's last meeting

Tuesday's meeting also marked city council-

lor for Villeray Rosannie Filato's last borough meeting, as she is not running for reelection on Nov. 7. She gave an emotional speech thanking her colleagues, volunteers and citizens for their trust and support during her mandate.

"It was a real privilege to represent you throughout my mandate," said Filato, adding that she felt proud of the initiatives she brought forward and the work she was able to get done with other elected officials.

"I would like to congratulate and thank Rosannie for all that she has done in the last 4 years," said Mary Deros, adding that "it didn't feel like we came from opposing parties but rather that we were colleagues working together for the betterment of the quality of life of our citizens."

Thanks and commendations were also issued to Filato by mayor Fumagalli and city councillors Josué Corvil and Sylvain Ouellet.

Community programs

Other issues were also voted on, such as the continued funding of certain local community organizations. Among others, the Parc-Extension Youth Organization was granted \$1,000 for the remainder of the year through city councillor Deros's "marriage fund."

Another \$500 was also awarded to the Parc-Extension-based organization Institut F, which does work to contribute to ending the problems of racial, sexual and socio-economic discrimination.

Council also voted that as of Oct. 6 late fees at city libraries would be abolished and that all previous debts were to be given amnesty and would not be payable.

Given the date of the municipal election on Nov. 7, the next borough council meeting will instead take place on Nov. 23.



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Québec 

Ombudswoman gives Quebec a failing grade for COVID-19 performance

She said they took into account exceptional circumstances during the COVID-19 crisis



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Findings in Quebec ombudswoman Marie Rinfret's 2020-2021 annual report, which was tabled in the National Assembly last week, raise serious questions about the provincial government's ability to ensure the quality and integrity of the services it provided in the past year during the COVID-19 crisis.

Action needed, said Rinfret

The Quebec ombudswoman's office is mandated to act impartially and independently of the government to ensure that the rights of citizens are upheld in their dealings with publicly-provided services.

In a statement issued by the ombudswoman's office, Rinfret suggested quick action will be absolutely necessary to correct known and recurrent problems in the system that compromise citizens' rights.

"We think immediately of the full brunt of the tragedies in residential and long-term care centres during the first wave," the ombudswoman's office said.

Impact of the pandemic

The provincial ombudswoman said the past year exposed an alarming society-wide situation affecting people who were severely impacted by the pandemic, who suffered physical and mental health problems, bereavement, loss of income, increased poverty, isolation, anxiety and violence.

At a press conference in Quebec City, Rinfret pleaded for Quebec public service providers to show more empathy to the public. They must learn "to deal with situations that are outside the rules, outside the framework," she said.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only accentuated

already problematic situations in the provision of public services, notes the ombudswoman.

Examples documented

Beyond the daily case statistics, she said the pandemic created and exacerbated many vulnerabilities for an incalculable number of individuals. Here are some examples cited by Rinfret's office:

A student in an anglophone school was about to start her last year of secondary studies when she informed her that she no longer qualified for instruction in English. The reason: a change in her father's immigration status. In June 2020, her father had approached the examining committee and the decision was cancelled. However, the department was sluggish to act on it. In late September, the ombudswoman intervened. The department immediately sent the family the authorization needed for the student to go back to her school.

The ombudswoman received complaints from the residents of a housing cooperative about, among other things, harassment and bullying by the administrator and the manager. The SHQ had refused to investigate on the pretext that it was not empowered to do this. The ombuds-



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DU CITOYEN**

difficulties during the COVID-19 crisis, for example suspending recovery measures and postponing sending out claim notices.

On the downside, however, the ombudswoman also pointed out that the Ministry of Immigration, Francization and Integration refused applications for the Quebec Selection Certificate because candidates had to be employed at the time of filing. She noted that in the wake of massive business closures because of COVID-19, many applicants were laid off temporarily. On the ombudswoman's recommendation, the department agreed to review the requirement.

Provincial prison and correctional services tried to compensate for the suspension of family visits to detainees. As a result, the Ministry of Public Security decided to use videoconferencing so that detainees could maintain contact with the outside world, although the videoconferences were often cancelled because of staff shortages.

At the beginning of the pandemic, in accord-



'CHSLDs had been grappling with staff shortages for a long time, but the authorities had put the problems on the back burner,' said the ombudswoman

woman argued that the SHQ did have jurisdiction to intervene under the applicable act, and in the end, it agreed to do so.

Rinfret noted that in the past year, the Quebec Ministry of Work, Employment and Social Solidarity took measures to adjust to its clients'

ance with a directive by the Ministry of Health and Social Services, family visits were allowed in hospital palliative care units and hospices. However, some hospitals didn't comply, meaning that many people could not be with loved ones when they died.

Just one bath a week

In other issues raised by the ombudswoman, the quality of home care was denounced. Rinfret noted that a growing number of institutional care facilities now give patients and residents just one bath per week, instead of two or three as previously.

She said there are also disparities in the level of services provided depending on the region of the province. Rinfret also was concerned about the overcrowding of hospital emergency rooms, which she said could jeopardize the quality of care and the safety of patients.

The private sector in Quebec's health services network was not spared her criticisms. Among the shortcomings, she noted that private senior citizens' retirement residences had staff shortages, medication mistakes were made and there was lack of supervision. Her office also received complaints about long-term care facilities.

Exceptional situation

Despite her criticisms about the provincial government's oversights, Rinfret's department said it took into account the exceptional circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 crisis.

"It would be unrealistic and unfair to disregard the enormous challenges for government departments, agencies and healthcare institutions posed by an ongoing unprecedented crisis," the office said. "While respecting citizens' rights requires that public services carry out their mission effectively, the Quebec ombudswoman is aware of the enormous weight of this unfamiliar situation.

'Gov't not exempted'

"However," the office added, "This does not exempt government from listening to the people who come to it and [from] responding with understanding, openness, creativity and compassion so that these citizens receive the public services to which they have a right."

The ombudswoman's office said it handled 21,803 requests over the past year, received 42,038 phone calls, answered 66 per cent of these in under 20 seconds, and had 98 per cent of recommendations accepted by the government's various departments.

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Nouvelles PARC-EXTENSION News

Local man accuses SPVM of racial profiling

Mayor Fumagalli presents an amendment to address the issue



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It was getting late, close to midnight on a cold night in January. Pierre Fritzner, a politically active businessman well-known in the Parc-Extension community, got into his Range Rover and started to head back home.

On his short drive from his accountant's office in Saint-Michel to his house in Parc-Extension, Fritzner was not expecting any issues along the way. Although he usually took the highway, he opted instead to take Jarry westward on the night of Jan. 4.

When he reached the intersection at Saint-Denis, close to the Jarry metro station, he came across an SPVM cruiser pulled over in the opposite lane. Immediately after crossing the intersection at the red light at which he was waiting, the police car did a u-turn and began trailing Fritzner's SUV.

A mere 400m later, he saw the red and blue lights of the police cruiser light up his rearview mirror. Fritzner had not been speeding nor had he broken any laws since the red light. He was given three separate tickets and detained for close to an hour. Pierre Fritzner also happens to be black.

Nothing new

"In my early 20s I would drive luxury sports cars, that my parents bought, so I was always being harassed," recalled Fritzner of his youth, mentioning that when growing up in Villeray he was often one of the only racialized people in the area.

But he was surprised when he underwent the same treatment 25 years later on the night he was pulled over. Fritzner had believed that the SPVM had improved their treatment of racial minorities and had addressed racial issues like the profiling taking place in their ranks.

"Even if you were blind or if you didn't understand, it's flagrant that it was racial profiling," said Fritzner of the unwarranted traffic stop, mentioning that the police purposefully turned around when they saw him at the wheel.

"The police officer told me to 'shut my trap if I didn't want more tickets,'" added Fritzner, remarking the police officer was aggressive and arrogant. After a one-hour wait, Fritzner was issued a ticket for a broken taillight, a ticket for a faulty muffler and a fine for allegedly holding expired insurance documents. Fritzner maintains that all three were false statements on the police's part.

When contacted, the SPVM declined to comment on any particular details regarding the case. "The SPVM does not usually comment on a particular police intervention, as to prevent any influence on a possible judicial, ethical or administrative process," said police spokesperson Anik de Repentigny.

Common occurrence

Racial profiling accusations of the SPVM have become mainstream to Montrealers this year, especially since the Jan. 28 incident which saw the wrongful arrest of Mamadi Camara after the attempted murder of police officer Sanjay Vig during a traffic stop in Parc-Extension.

In August 2019, three independent researchers issued a report that found there was systemic bias in how Montreal police officers performed street checks. Researchers looked through 4 years worth of data and found that Indigenous, Black and Arab people saw the highest proportion of unwarranted stops by police officers. The research had been commissioned by the City of Montreal and authored by sociologist Victor Armony at UQAM and criminologist Massimiliano Mulone from Université de Montréal, along with sociologist Mariam Hassaou from Université TÉLUQ.

Those proportions showed that of the people stopped on the street 17.9% were indigenous, 16.5% were black and 7.9% were Arab. These groups have a 4 to 11 times higher chance of being stopped by police even though they make up a smaller proportion of the population.

Although the authors did not conclude that SPVM officers racially profile people, they said that "even though it is not up to us to determine whether racial profiling exists, it is obvious that the results of our analysis reveal disparities and disproportionalities, which suggest the presence of systemic biases."

They recommended the SPVM should create a street check policy, should produce and publish an annual statistical report that keeps track of how often Indigenous people and visible minorities are stopped by police and develop additional procedures to monitor racial profiling, among others.

The SPVM does not keep this type of data on people involved in traffic stops.

Motion against profiling

Last week, Villeray—Saint-Michel—Parc-Extension borough mayor Giuliana Fumagalli introduced a motion at Montreal's city council to address racial profiling inside the SPVM.

"With this motion, I intend to call the City to order on this major issue that affects young people in our neighbourhoods and contributes

POLICE CHECKS OF RACIAL GROUPS AS PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION



"Even if you were blind or if you didn't understand, it's flagrant that it was racial profiling."

Street checks from 2014 to 2017. Population data from 2016

Graph by: Matias Brunet-Kirk. Source: Équipe Armony-Hassaoui-Mulone

to the deleterious climate with the SPVM," said mayor Fumagalli on the motion, which is also supported by Sue Montgomery, borough mayor of Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce.

The motion demanded the SPVM collect and make available to the public data related to the race of people stopped in vehicles. The motion also demanded that the SPVM "eliminate any candidate showing racial prejudice."

They also asked for the reallocation of public safety resources into programing for housing, food security and community services, including community crime prevention programs, especially in underfunded areas like Parc-Extension. The motion was not adopted and instead sent to be studied.

Red tape

Although Fritzner issued an official complaint on his experience of alleged racial profiling, he

has yet to know if the officers in question have been sanctioned or disciplined.

"A police officer has to be an officer for all, not for a sector, not for a community, you have to be responsible to have that position," said Fritzner, adding that it also gave a bad image to the police as a whole.

Fritzner is by no means opposed to the institution itself, as he feels it fills a vital role in society, but he thinks that there need to be changes inside departments to address this type of systemic racism.

He would like to see better training of police officers on these matters, the introduction of more severe sanctions and the recruitment of officers from more diverse cultural communities. "There needs to be a clear message," said Fritzner, adding that "if you want to continue in the police, you need to follow these guidelines or otherwise lose your job."

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3 tips for at-home workers

Working from home has its perks but for some people, it can be more challenging to remain on task. Here are some tips for being efficient, productive and motivated if you work from home.

1. Have a fixed schedule

To stay focused when working from home, many people benefit from having a fixed schedule that reflects the average nine-to-five workday, complete with the standard coffee and lunch break. Having a set schedule also means truly logging off when the workday ends. Let your colleagues know when you'll be reachable.

2. Invest in your office

Working from home is much more pleasant and productive when you have a good work setup. Get the furniture and equipment you need to work in comfort. An ergonomic chair and desk are essential, as is good lighting. In addition, now may be the time to invest in that second monitor, those noise-cancelling headphones or that fancy espresso machine.

3. Stay in touch with colleagues

For many people, the lack of face-to-face interaction with co-workers and clients is one of the main challenges of working from home. Find ways to stay in touch with your colleagues, whether it's through videoconferencing, telephone calls, online messaging or the occasional in-person meeting.

The most important thing is to figure out what works best for you, as everyone has their own style of working. Don't be afraid to try different approaches, and don't get discouraged if it takes time for you to find your groove.

How to avoid hiring the wrong candidate

Poor recruitment practices can cost a business a lot of money. Here are some tips for weeding out unsuitable candidates and finding the best person for the job.

Be clear about your expectations

Your job posting should be as precise as possible. Include the qualifications and experience you require from the candidate, the tasks the job entails and, if applicable, the duration of the employment contract. This will help to limit the number of applicants and attract the talent that truly meets your company's needs.

Verify candidates' qualifications

Ask technical questions and administer aptitude tests to ensure that candidates have the skills and qualities they profess to possess. In addition, be sure to check up on their references in order to form a better idea of their past job performance and personality. If they have no references, that's a big red flag!



Watch out for "job hoppers"

Hiring and training new staff is costly, so be on the lookout for people who switch from one job to another on a regular basis. Frequent job changes and gaps in candidates' resumes are possible indicators of a lack of commitment.

Once you find the person you want to hire, consider instituting a trial period before you fully bring them on board. At the end of this interlude, both you and the new hire will be free to continue or terminate the collaboration.

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4 services offered by funeral homes

Losing someone you love is difficult, both because of the emotional toll involved and the considerable work that goes into planning a funeral. When the time comes, you shouldn't have to do it alone. Fortunately, most funeral homes can alleviate some of the burden by offering these four services.

1. Legal assistance. Many funeral directors are familiar with the legal aspects that need to be taken care of. They'll be able to ensure nothing falls through the cracks.
2. Funeral planning. This involves choosing a coffin or an urn, determining what kind of reception to hold, when to hold it, whether there'll

be a viewing and more. You'll also need to select flowers and make decisions about other aspects of the ceremony. A funeral director can assist you with all of this, and some may even help you make arrangements with places of worship and cemeteries. They can also organize for there to be a hearse and driver.

3. Repatriation of remains. If the death occurred somewhere far away from the burial location, such as in another country, then you'll need the help of a funeral home to repatriate the remains. It's a complex process that's easier to manage if you have someone in your corner who's familiar with both the paperwork and legal requirements involved.

4. Pre-planning. Making your own arrangements in advance may feel strange, but doing so will give your loved ones peace of mind. They'll be assured that your funeral reflects your wishes and they won't have to make difficult decisions. This will help them process the loss and will ensure you're remembered the way you want to be.

Other services funeral homes offer include cremation, obituary publication and burial. Finding one that can take care of a variety of things will help the most in lightening the load placed on your shoulders.



Goras, Savvas
1940 - 2021

In Montreal passed away on October 1, 2021, at the age of 81, Mr. Savvas Goras, husband of Panagiota Velissaropoulos. In addition to his wife, he is survived by many relatives and friends.



Jean Patrice Galette
1960 - 2021

In Montreal on September 26 died suddenly (J.P.G.) Jean Patrice Galette at the age of 61. He is survived by his three children, Patricia, Fady and Lauranie, his grandchildren Jaysson and Maxine, his sisters Florence, (Suze Marie-Yva), his brothers Georges, Lesly, Berlin, Gary, Sterlin, Johnny and Walker, nieces and nephews, cousins and many friends.



Bouchard, Annetta
1934 - 2021

On September 14, 2021, Annetta Bouchard passed away after a long life filled with dedication and service to others. This woman illuminated the lives of everyone she approached. Thank you again, dear Annetta, for being a part of our lives. She is survived by her beloved twin sister, Annette; his niece Aline Lavoie (Raynald Tremblay) as well as many other newcomers, nieces, grand-nephews and grand-nieces, relatives, friends and his great friend Odette Lacombe.



Lagrange, Louise
1932 - 2021

At the Jean-Talon Hospital in Montreal, on September 30, 2021, at the age of 89, passed away Mrs. Louise Lagrange, residing in Montreal, formerly of Ste-Julienne. She was the wife of the late Victor Moreau and the wife of Gino. The deceased is survived by her sisters Pierrette (Léo Piché) and Monique, nephews, nieces, Lagrange and Moreau families, other relatives and friends.



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HOROSCOPE

Week of **OCTOBER 10 TO 16, 2021**

The luckiest signs this week:
ARIES, AQUARIUS AND PISCES

ARIES
You'll be handed all the urgent problems at work. At home, you'll have to trust other family members with the housework. Your great strength is to bring loved ones together and lighten the mood with your smile.

TAURUS
Before you get started on a new project, it's important to acquire all the necessary information. Even if you don't have a romantic weekend planned, you won't be able to resist temptation if the occasion presents itself.

GEMINI
A few changes are needed if you want to experience growth or stability at work. Be bold enough to sign up for training that will lead to a more interesting position. Any changes will be good for you right now.

CANCER
It's all about the details. How you dress and present yourself will have a significant impact on how your career unfolds. You have a tendency to spoil yourself, and your friends will be quick to encourage you.

LEO
In terms of your health, you should receive some excellent news. You'll finally find the right treatment or medication to suit your needs and improve your quality of life. At work, the emergencies always fall on your desk.

VIRGO
Your powers of seduction will increase exponentially, and very interesting people will be attracted to you. You'll easily expand your client base, to the delight of your boss, whose turnover will double thanks to your interpersonal skills.

LIBRA
You'll discover that you're an exceptional and irreplaceable person in the eyes of your boss. This will increase your salary and allow you to imagine a better future. In your love life, the scope of your plans will match the depth of your feelings.

SCORPIO
You'll turn long days at work into moments of happiness. You'll burn off some excess energy by having dynamic conversations with loved ones. You always have the best ideas to improve discussions with others.

SAGITTARIUS
Whether it's to settle a precarious financial situation or make a major purchase, you'll successfully negotiate a loan that will provide you with a better quality of life. As for matters of the heart, a more sustained demonstration of love would be welcome.

CAPRICORN
When it comes to matters of the heart, you may have to adjust your goals with your significant other. In your relationship, and elsewhere, be careful not to hog the blankets and always look for ways to share. At work, keep an eye on the details.

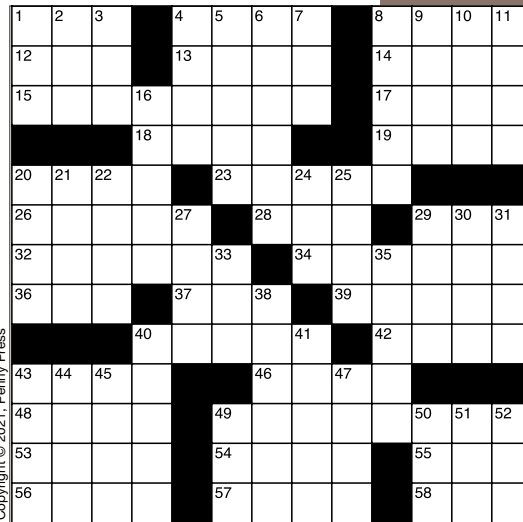
AQUARIUS
Avoid missing out on sleep this week. If you're tired, your concentration will wane and your health will be more fragile. You'll be struck by creativity, and you're sure to complete a great masterpiece.

PISCES
You'll spend a lot of time on social media, and many friends will try to connect with you. A family obligation will get you back on track. You'll discover a new art form that completely captivates you.

Coffee Break

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ACROSS

- Weight measure
- Sentence part
- Random try
- Be in the red
- Rich Little, e.g.
- Humdinger
- Whole
- Cain's bro
- Mimicking bird
- Assignment
- Tent city
- Room
- Skating jumps
- Goof up
- Geese formation
- Tinkered
- Cornflakes, e.g.
- Slippery as an _____
- Sever
- Spin
- Frequently
- Evils

- Glided
- Verb's partner
- Lumber
- Occurrences
- Gambling stake
- Army post
- Acorn tree
- 12-month period
- Flowed out
- Have a brawl

- Pub drinks
- Mass
- Suggest
- Hatteras, for one
- Car's wheel shaft
- Dinner, e.g.
- Circle part
- Ship's staff
- Ego
- Hide
- British noble
- Building wings
- Small mark
- Horned mammal, briefly
- Friend by mail: 2 wds.
- Weirder
- Sound
- Rock back and forth
- Unconnected
- Tad
- Spent
- Ease off
- Medic
- Cock an _____
- Star's locale

DOWN

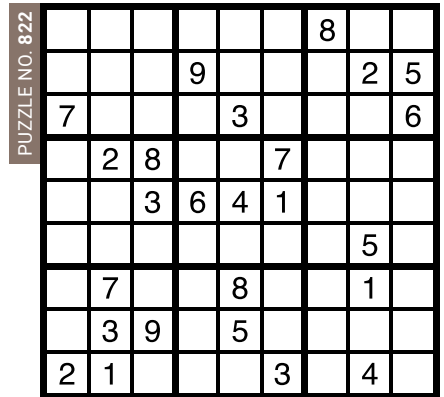
- Tip of Italy
- To each his _____
- Fish snare
- Cautious
- Unlocks
- Record again
- Waterless
- Clean _____
- Large brass horn

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY:

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

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

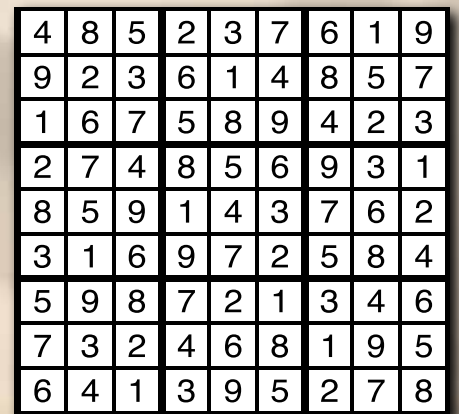


Last Issues' Answers

CROSSWORDS



Sudoku



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