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Noisy Parc Ex bike path/ parking protests enter their third month

Her back to the wall, VSMPE Mayor Lavigne Lalonde pleads for understanding

MARTIN C. BARRY
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VSMPE Borough Mayor Laurence Lavigne Lalonde found herself backed against a proverbial wall, while having to defend her administration's decision to remove hundreds of parking spaces in Parc Extension for more bike paths, after protesters staged yet another noisy demonstration outside the borough council meeting on Oct. 3.



It was the latest instance of local resistance to the borough's plan, stemming from the Projet Montréal administration's ongoing policy which emphasizes environmentally-sustainable mobility while de-emphasizing automobile transport.

Three months of protests

As Parc Extension city councillor Mary Deros noted while ripping into the borough mayor during the council meeting, it was the third month in a row the protestors turned up outside.

The demo drew the scrutiny of a phalanx of Montreal Police officers (a few decked out in riot gear), who set up a barrier near the steps of the borough offices on Ogilvy Ave. to keep the situation in hand.

"You have to always take into account the interests of all the citizens," Deros said during the meeting, noting that opposing voices have even been raised in other sectors of the borough.

"It's been 25 years since I was elected in Parc Extension and never have I seen a degree of discontent like this, not just in Parc Extension but in Saint-Michel too," added Deros.

Lack of empathy accusation

She accused the borough mayor of a serious lack of empathy for the people who've raised concerns about the elimination of parking spaces. "It's not the answer that the citizens had been waiting for from the administration,"

she said.

Deros said the Projet Montréal administration should "add some water to its wine in order to calm down the popular revolt, while modifying the bike paths project to answer all the needs in the neighbourhood."

Pleading for understanding, the borough mayor insisted it would currently be impossible to create safe bike paths in Parc Extension and other areas of VSMPE without removing parking. "And I can guarantee you that if it had been possible to do it, everybody would be happy now," she said, while adding that the administration was unable to strike a compromise.

Coalition's position

In a statement the protest organizers (Coalition for Democracy Park Extension) released to the media outside the Ogilvy Avenue borough offices, they said they are organizing a fundraiser to commence legal action against the City of Montreal, as well as the Borough of Ville-Marie-Saint Michel-Park Extension.

"This is to contest the city's unilateral imposition of multiple four-season-bike lane projects that will eliminate more than 250 parking spaces in Park Extension alone," said the statement. "The city announced the project on a short two-month notice and therefore, the residents were never given the opportunity to question this decision through proper public consultation process."

The coalition maintains that the following borough streets will lose parking as part of the project: Louvain, Ball, Legendre, Querbes, 24e, de L'Épée, 25e and Ogilvy.

Impact on people's lives

Among other things, the coalition claims the bike path project has sparked concerns about the impact on individuals with limited mobility. They say the removal of parking spaces could further restrict access to essential services such as homecare and deliveries, leading to a decline in the overall quality of life.

"Family connections within the community are also being strained," they added. "The scarcity of parking spaces makes it increasingly difficult for family members to visit their elderly relatives. The proposed project, that was conceived without study, is causing unnecessary mental stress to seniors, families and workers who rely on their cars for their day to day needs."



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OPINION & Editorial



Time for a closer look at the plight of substitute teachers in public schools

Into the new school year, in the throes of challenges to survival of English school boards, hidden monsters rear their ugly heads.

Québec's costly Education Budget obliges greater understanding of the substitute-teacher phenomenon. The acknowledged substitute-teacher-shortage reflects low-numbers working countless-days. In the interest of Québec's 1.25 million students and 30,000 non-certified teachers, an unprecedented deep-dive into defining/describing the substitute-teacher-community and its dynamics is warranted.

The Education Ministry and unions, agreeing on shortages of teachers and teachers-on-call - supply - in education-system-jargon, disagree on the problem's gravity, its causes, and how it affects student-learning. Surprisingly, unions offer scant data on the issue.

Substitute-teachers are integral. Teachers get sick, take leaves for maternity/ bereavement/sabbaticals/other reasons, replaced by substitute/supply teachers from school-board on-call lists. Boards insisted on certified teachers. Not anymore. There's no rhyme-or-reason on how substitutes are integrated into schools, provoking many questions.

The unions and Education Ministry agree it's difficult, sometimes impossible, to fill every teacher-opening, but the current crisis is the worst ever. Most openings are specialist positions that have had hiring stress for years, particularly French-Immersion and Special-Education. Getting accurate information on teacher-shortages is difficult, but one would think the contrary, since human resources are-at-play and should-be-at-work.

Québec school regions and union locals struggle for data on open-teaching-positions, uncertified teachers, out-of-province recruitment and teachers-on-call. Semi-official explanations are plagued by conflicting information from school boards and unions. Some boards don't track, thus leaving statistical voids.

Legislation requires certification for public-and-private school-teachers, exceptions/exemptions made through Letters of Tolerance, one-year-passes for university-graduates waiting for certification or relocating from other provinces.

The Ministry of Education must certify more teachers by offering abridged-teacher-education-programs combining online and in-person-classes. Teachers with letters-of-tolerance could earn degrees without leaving their communities for a year, having no income. These pathways would certify many very talented individuals who just don't have formal teaching credentials. Presently, only a Master's program exists, the one-year-program aborted in the 1990s.

In Québec, uncertified teachers aren't rare, many have Bachelor's degrees, having worked for school boards 10-15-20 years, without protection, often treated unfairly, quickly discarded for friends, sons, daughters, nieces and nephews of teachers - in unacknowledged nepotism. No protection for individuals rendering loyal/ professional services.

Why do substitute-teachers pay union dues, without protection, except on working days, deprived of pecking/seniority rights? Unions must do more for these replacement teachers. Common sense questions treatment of these teachers who suffer chronic frustration from non-recognition. Just

because no system exists, doesn't mean that one can't be implemented.

Several individuals, speaking anonymously, fearing reprisals, stated that substitute teachers must have a say in a union, or at least be recognized within present unions as real entities entitled to rights/benefits of certified/tenured teachers. "We want our degrees and years-of-service within Boards recognized, and be called upon in that order, same as permanent staff."

Stop who knows who/warm bodies that exclude people with degrees and long service as replacement/contract teachers. "We're educated. We just don't have brevets. It's not about money, same rate-per-day, degree-or-not, changing only on contract," stated the substitute teacher under cover-of-anonymity.

Substitutes need community support. The plight of substitute teachers excluded from school-board human-resources-deployment must be addressed. They're not taken seriously enough but labour-negotiating-power of unions can change things.

Questions require answers. What's regular pay/benefits? Were these unique needs addressed? Not in current negotiations, said Sébastien Joly, executive-director of QPAT, representing Québec public Anglophone teachers. "The subject never came up," he summed up.

Some bureaucratic top-down-military strategies ignore individuals perceived as emotionless robots devoid-of-human needs. Public education demanded that orders be given and obeyed, structures that persist today, sadly devouring defenseless substitute teachers.

In public schools, 2023, principals/vice-principals reign, omitting support-staff from conversations/equations. Too many administrators and students see substitutes as sub-human, constantly ignored and disrespected, as part-timers.

To move forward, change the title. Substitute Teacher stigmatizes. Substituting isn't easy, try it for a week-or-two. Everyone is an expert on public education but which adults are in classrooms day-in-day-out? Teachers and substitute-teachers. Everyone must be empowered. For public education to improve - start with recognizing substitute- teachers who mitigate difficult scenarios with commitment and grit.

Ultimately, substitute-teachers will need their own provincial union. It would be sinful to write-and-not-be-read, for individuals' names and independence to get lost. Advocating for Individual rights that must-apply-to-all, not just the few, is right. Substitutes are crucial throughout public education, yet are treated like migrant workers, invisible, dispensable.

Correction is imperative. Enhancement of public education demands empowerment of all. Substitute teachers deserve appreciation of their worth and value. Ultimately, if unions don't step up, substitute teachers will have to form their own provincial union, as suggested by several anonymous callers.

To shake things, current substitute teachers discarded or wronged by administration, for benefit of favourites, must file union-grievances, best justice until legitimate pecking orders/seniority lists are created and enforced by school boards and unions.

Renata Isopo

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Mary Deros joins Gujarati Senior Association in celebrating International Seniors Day

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In a heartwarming celebration of community and diversity, Mary Deros, City Councillor for Park Extension, recently participated in the International Seniors Day festivities with the Gujarati Senior Association of Montreal. The event, which took place last Saturday, marked a special occasion to honour and appreciate the contributions of the senior members of the Gujarati community.

Growth of the Gujarati Samaj in Park Extension

Mary Deros highlighted the remarkable journey of the Gujarati Samaj of Montreal, which initially began in Park Extension with just 50 members. Over the years, this vibrant community has flourished and grown into a thriving organization with hundreds of members. The success story of the Gujarati Samaj reflects the resilience and unity of the community, contributing to the rich cultural tapestry of Park Extension.

Community Unity and Cultural Diversity

Park Extension, known for its cultural diversity, has been a melting pot of various ethnic communities, and the growth of the Gujarati Samaj exemplifies the community's commitment to preserving and sharing their cultural heritage. Mary Deros, as a representative of the city council, has actively supported initiatives that promote unity, understanding, and respect among the different cultural groups within the neighbourhood.



International Seniors Day Celebration

The International Seniors Day celebration was a testament to the importance of recognizing and honouring the elderly members of our community. Mary Deros expressed her gratitude for the invaluable contributions of seniors, stating that their wisdom and experiences are an integral part of the neighbourhood's history and identity.

The Gujarati Samaj of Montreal Inc, established in 1976 as a non-profit organization, is dedicated to promoting Gujarati culture, religion, folklore, history, and philosophy in Quebec. Initially focused on the social and cultural needs of Gujarati speakers in Quebec, the organization has evolved to pass on the rich heritage to the Gujarati youth born and raised

in the province.

Embracing the diversity of the Gujarati-speaking community in Montreal, which includes individuals with roots in India, Africa, the Caribbean, and other parts of Asia, the Samaj works to foster cross-cultural appreciation and understanding. The organization collaborates with sister associations across Quebec to promote cultural understanding in Canadian society and cooperates with similar organizations across Canada. Despite its Montreal base, the Samaj's membership includes those interested in Gujarati culture from various regions of India and Canada, fostering diversity within the group. The organization's activities, ranging from ski trips to cultural celebrations, reflect the varied interests and backgrounds of its members, creating a vibrant blend of cultures.





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School violence epidemic

Urgent calls for action in Quebec

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In recent weeks, a wave of violence has swept through Quebec schools, leaving parents increasingly concerned about the safety of their children. The incidents, including a large-scale brawl involving over 100 students at École Secondaire Antoine-Brossard and an alarming assault on a 65-year-old teacher in a Laval-area school, have raised questions about the adequacy of safety measures within educational institutions.

The consequences of these incidents extend beyond the immediate physical harm caused to individuals; they pose a significant threat to the sense of security and well-being and could affect the multicultural community of Park-Extension. As one of the most diverse neighbourhoods in Montreal, Park-Extension is home to a rich tapestry of cultures and ethnicities. The impact of school violence on this community could potentially be not only a matter of physical safety but also raises concerns about the long-term psychological and social effects on its residents.

The incident where a student was hospitalized after perfume was sprayed in her eyes exemplifies the extent of violence that can occur within school premises.

Katherine Korakakis, president of the English Parents Committee Association in an interview she gave in local media, highlights the need for a targeted approach to address the

root causes of school violence. She emphasizes that punitive measures alone are insufficient, advocating for a comprehensive strategy that ensures schools do not become prisons. The delicate balance between maintaining a safe learning environment and fostering a nurturing educational space is particularly crucial in a community that thrives on its multicultural dynamics.

Corinne Payne, director general of the Fédération des comités de parents du Québec, draws attention to the voices of students who have long been advocating for policies to address issues like sexual violence. The disconnect between the concerns expressed by students and the response from educators underscores the importance of listening to the needs of the youth within diverse communities like Park-Extension.

As parents from both French and English-language committees demand action, it's evident that the Quebec government needs to prioritize resource allocation for schools. The statement from a spokesperson for Education Minister Bernard Drainville, acknowledging the government's efforts to formulate a policy to reduce intimidation and violence, is a step in the right direction. However, the urgency of the situation calls for a clear timeline and tangible actions to be implemented promptly.

As the government works towards a policy to address these concerns, it is crucial to consider the unique challenges faced by multicultural communities and tailor solutions that resonate with their specific needs.



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Empowering the community

Montreal's participatory budget 2024

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From now until October 29th, the citizens of Montreal and Parc-Extension are invited to cast their votes, shaping the future of their city through the second edition of the Participatory Budget.

This unique initiative, empowers Montrealers to directly influence the allocation of a portion of the municipal budget. The focus this year revolves around youth, equity, and security – themes that resonated from the 666 ideas submitted by the public in the fall of 2022.

A diverse array of projects is now on the table, each addressing the identified themes. From initiatives promoting youth development to projects fostering equity and enhancing security measures, the options are as varied as the vibrant tapestry of Montreal itself.

What makes this process even more exciting is that the projects receiving the most votes will be declared the winners. All of this, of course, will be done within the framework of a dedicated budget totalling 30 million dollars. Notably, a minimum of 5 million dollars is earmarked explicitly for projects benefiting the city's young population – a clear testament to the commitment to investing in the future.

For those eager to make their mark on the city, the opportunity is now. Voters can select up to 8 projects from the 31 thoughtfully

proposed options, each carrying the potential to shape the cityscape in unique ways.

The anticipation will build until mid-November when the winning projects will be unveiled. The revelation promises not just

a list of accomplishments but a testament to the collaborative spirit and shared vision of the Montreal community.

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VSP adopte son budget de fonctionnement 2024 et son PDI 2024-2033

Les membres du conseil d'arrondissement de Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension ont adopté, hier, lors d'une séance de conseil extraordinaire, le budget de fonctionnement 2024 ainsi que le Programme décennal d'immobilisations 2024-2033 (PDI).

« La qualité de vie est au cœur de ce budget, qui se veut aussi vert et solidaire. On a misé sur nos quartiers et travaillé à rendre nos rues plus agréables et sécuritaires, nos ruelles plus vertes et animées, et nos parcs plus attirants et résilients. On a pris soin de nos jeunes et de nos moins jeunes, en soutenant des projets stimulants et en veillant au sort des plus vulnérables. Et tout ça, on l'a fait avec la notion d'équité territoriale en trame de fond, multipliant les investissements dans les quartiers de Parc-Extension et Saint-Michel », a déclaré madame Laurence Lavigne Lalonde, mairesse de l'arrondissement de Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension.

Priorités 2024

La transition écologique et le verdissement figurent toujours au premier plan des priorités de VSP. Les activités de plantation et d'entretien de la canopée seront au cœur de la stratégie de lutte contre les îlots de chaleur urbains et de protection de la biodiversité. Un premier exercice de participation citoyenne visant la déminéralisation des espaces privés ou communautaires viendra enraciner un peu plus cette volonté de verdir et de rendre les quartiers plus résilients face aux changements climatiques.

La mobilité douce et la sécurité occuperont aussi une place prédominante et s'inscriront dans la continuité des initiatives déjà réalisées. Le déploiement du plan d'apaisement de la circulation de Parc-Extension sera complété et une démarche similaire sera entreprise dans les quartiers de Villeray et de Saint-Michel. Parallèlement, des interventions de sécurisation se multiplieront aux abords des écoles.

L'arrondissement continuera de travailler main dans la main avec ses partenaires communautaires afin de contribuer à accroître le sentiment de sécurité de la population. Une attention particulière sera en outre portée à l'amélioration de la propreté et à l'entretien de l'espace public.

De plus, les jeunes de VSP seront appelés à s'exprimer et à partager leurs idées pour prendre part à l'amélioration de leur milieu de vie, à l'intérieur d'un espace de consultation jeunesse.

Des efforts seront déployés afin d'attirer et d'accompagner les acteurs du logement social dans le but d'accélérer la construction d'habitations destinées aux populations plus vulnérables.

La redynamisation de l'artère commerciale de Jarry Est et le développement du pôle culturel de la Cité des arts du cirque, dans Saint-Michel, constitueront des volets importants de la revitalisation de nos quartiers.

Faits saillants du budget de fonctionnement 2024

L'arrondissement présente un budget équilibré de 66 796 600 \$, soit une hausse de 1

437 100 \$ par rapport à l'année dernière. Cette faible hausse de 2,2%, qui se situe en deçà de l'inflation, reflète une gestion bien contrôlée des dépenses. L'élaboration de ce budget responsable découle de la prise en considération de plusieurs enjeux majeurs. En effet, l'arrondissement a dû composer avec l'absorption des augmentations salariales dictées par les conventions collectives et une inflation élevée pour les autres postes de dépenses. De plus, il accuse une baisse significative de ses revenus due au ralentissement des mises en chantier observé depuis 2022.

En dépit de ces défis, les équipes de l'arrondissement ont mis sur pied un budget qui limite le fardeau fiscal des citoyennes et des citoyens et qui élimine le recours aux surplus budgétaires comme stratégie d'équilibre. Le taux de taxation demeure identique à celui de 2023, soit 0,0538 par 100 \$ d'évaluation foncière. Ce choix éclairé permet de limiter la hausse de la taxe locale à 10,4%. Les répercussions sur le compte de taxes des propriétaires seront, en fait, infimes. À titre d'exemple, pour 2024, l'augmentation de la taxe locale pour un plex d'une valeur moyenne de 734 393 \$ sera estimée à environ 33 \$ pour l'année.

L'ensemble des choix budgétaires énumérés ci-haut a notamment permis à l'arrondissement de pérenniser ses activités de plantation, levier incontournable de la lutte contre les îlots de chaleur urbains.

De plus, la gestion efficiente des ressources figure aussi parmi les mesures plébiscitées pour réussir à rationaliser les dépenses sans toutefois porter atteinte aux services rendus à la population de VSP.

Faits saillants du Programme décennal d'immobilisations (PDI) 2024-2033

Lors de la séance extraordinaire, les membres du conseil ont également adopté une planification d'investissements pour les dix prochaines années. Cette planification présente une vision et une priorisation des projets établis dans le cadre des programmes de réaménagement de réfection routière, des parcs, ainsi que de protection des bâtiments. Des modifications peuvent y être apportées annuellement afin de rester en adéquation avec l'évolution des priorités prédéfinies. Le PDI (brut) 2024-2033 adopté prévoit des investissements de 84 643 000 \$ répartis sur dix ans.

Ces investissements seront répartis de la façon suivante : 44 216 000 \$ pour la réfection routière et réaménagement; 26 762 000 \$ pour la protection des bâtiments et 13 665 000 \$ pour le réaménagement des parcs. Ils seront également financés par différentes sources, tels que le Fonds de parcs de l'arrondissement et différents programmes de la Ville centre.

Ce PDI contribue significativement à poursuivre les efforts déployés en faveur de l'amélioration des milieux de vie des citoyens et des citoyennes de Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension. La transformation majeure du parc George-Vernot et le réaménagement du parc de Villeray en sont de beaux exemples.

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Green transformation and community investment

Unveiling VSP's 2024 budget

DIMITRIS ILIAS

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In a recent announcement, Mayor Laurence Lavigne Lalonde introduced the eagerly awaited budget for VSP for the year 2024. The preface to the budget, delivered by Mayor Lalonde, paints a vivid picture of the transformative strides the city has taken in the past year and outlines the ambitious plans for the upcoming fiscal year.

Urban greenery takes center stage

Mayor Lalonde highlighted the remarkable shift toward green spaces within VSP in 2023. Sidewalk protrusions, flower beds, and public spaces now burst with a diverse palette of colors as grey makes way for a more vibrant cityscape. This change not only adds aesthetic value to neighbourhoods but also aligns with VSP's commitment to climate adaptation. Streets have become quieter, greener, and cooler, enhancing the overall pleasantness and safety for residents and visitors alike.



Parks have undergone a revitalization, becoming more attractive and resilient. They are now vibrant meeting places, accessible and bustling, fostering a sense of community among VSP residents. Even the alleys, once overlooked, are evolving into lively, green environments where neighbours and passersby engage in friendly exchanges.

Social responsibility: a holistic approach

The Mayor emphasized the city's collective commitment to nurturing both the youth and seniors of VSP. Financial support and backing for various projects developed by and for key stakeholders, in collaboration with valued partners, are at the forefront. Additional resources are directed toward places frequented by the youth, ensuring a supportive environment. Special attention is given to addressing the vulnerabilities of girls and others disproportionately affected by specific types of violence.

Efforts extend to vulnerable individuals, with a focus on providing solutions, starting with accessible and affordable housing. Proactive interventions are multiplying, and opportunities are seized to contribute to a more inclusive

rental housing market.

Investment in Saint-Michel and Parc-Extension

Mayor Lalonde underscored an unprecedented investment in the neighbourhoods of Saint-Michel and Parc-Extension. Historically underserved, these areas are receiving attention and resources like never before. The commitment to inclusivity and equity remains steadfast, even in the face of limited resources and the financial challenges citizens face due to inflation.

Administrators of the collective fund emphasize the need for fiscal responsibility. The pursuit of a balanced budget, without relying on surpluses, reflects a commitment to addressing present issues without burdening future generations.

Navigating challenges ahead

Acknowledging the impending climate and social challenges, Mayor Lalonde expressed a realistic outlook. While tough decisions lie ahead, the groundwork laid in this budget aims to cushion the impact and ensure a smoother transition. The emphasis is on unity and collective effort to meet the challenges head-on.

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A2 AUTO

Advancing Canadian healthcare: Federal health minister engages provinces in crucial discussions

Minister Mark Holland focuses on workforce expansion and data integration

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In the heart of Montreal, the borough of Park-Extension is poised to feel the ripples of the comprehensive discussions initiated by Federal Minister of Health, Mark Holland. As federal and provincial authorities convene in Charlottetown to address critical issues in the healthcare sector, the implications of these deliberations extend to communities across the nation, including Park-Extension.

Prioritizing workforce growth

Minister Holland has underlined the urgency of attracting new healthcare professionals into the system while concurrently devising strategies to retain the existing workforce. During a press conference in British Columbia on Tuesday, he highlighted the necessity of scrutinizing foreign credentials and streamlining the process for obtaining pan-Canadian practice permits.

The overarching goal is to fortify the healthcare workforce, ensuring that the system is equipped to handle the evolving demands of public health.

Data integration across provinces

Beyond workforce considerations, the discussions will extend to the improvement of health data integration. This aspect is a key condition of the health agreement proposed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in February. Seamless data sharing among provinces is fundamental to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare services across the country.

Bilateral agreements and funding initiatives

The meeting in Prince Edward Island follows British Columbia's recent signing of the first bilateral funding agreement with Ottawa. The Trudeau government has pledged a substantial \$196 billion over the next decade to support provinces and territories in enhancing healthcare accessibility. This comprehensive funding includes increased federal health transfers and individualized agreements tailored to address specific needs in different regions.

In exchange for this financial support, provincial premiers commit to improving data-sharing practices and implementing measurable benchmarks to track progress toward established healthcare goals and targets.

Challenges and optimism

While all provinces and territories have agreed in principle to the health agreement, Quebec stands out as the exception due to hesitations related to reporting expenditure details to Ottawa. Minister Holland, however, remains optimistic about the federal government's ability to reach a consensus with the last reluctant province.

Crisis management and future initiatives

The Canadian Medical Association (CMA) has expressed concerns about the exacerbation of the health crisis in certain regions,



prompting the government to propose new health agreements in February. CMA President Dr. Kathleen Ross plans to convene a reception to facilitate discussions among ministers on resolving healthcare human resource challenges.

Simultaneously, the federal government is actively working on two major programs outlined in the Supply and Confidence Agreement with the New Democratic Party (NDP). These initiatives have the potential to significantly impact healthcare delivery in the provinces.

Minister Holland has committed to introducing a pharmacare bill by year-end, paving the way for a national pharmacare system likely to be administered by the provinces. Additionally, plans for a dental care program, offering coverage to low- and middle-income families not covered by the private sector, will be unveiled in the coming months.

As the two-day meeting in Charlottetown concludes, Health Ministers from across Canada are expected to address the media in a press conference, shedding light on the outcomes and future directions charted during these crucial discussions. The collaborative efforts between federal and provincial authorities underscore a commitment to fortifying and advancing the Canadian healthcare landscape.



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DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

EMANCIPATION

Q When is it time to divorce a family member? I've been helping my partner manage his father's long-term care. This entails working with his brother, who controls the purse strings. My partner and I are both artists, juggling multiple careers to realize our life work and get the bills paid. Our income is limited.

My partner's brother is a self-made multimillionaire with multiple homes and his own private jet. We give what we can in terms of love, support, and managing round-the-clock care. The brother attempts to make us feel guilty by saying it is normal for all siblings to contribute financially, and why aren't we?

I found this man disgusting, repulsive, and nauseating when I first met him 12 years ago, and I feel exactly the same way now. I have always pretended to have a good time and to love him, which adds my dishonesty to the picture.

The brother is about to limit how much money he contributes for his father's care. He will loan his father the rest. Once the equity is drained from the home and his father becomes indigent, the brother will provide the resources to take care of him.

My partner is at peace that inheritance isn't part of his future, but my life is thrown entirely off balance, and I end up with many sleepless nights. What bothers me is the distortion of reality. I communicate with my partner's brother in writing, but he consistently misrepresents what I've written to him.

When I resend the information again and again, he claims it never happened or continues to

misrepresent what I said. I showed the correspondence to a neutral third party, and she confirmed my perceptions.

This man does not appear to be conscious of his distortions and really believes his lies are true. We've tried telephone communication, but it is simply too traumatizing for both my partner and me to talk with him on the phone.

My counselor of many years has advised terminating the relationship, and my partner is also considering this. What do you think?

Marc

A Marc, the first time you meet an individual who tells you up is down, right is left, and good is bad, it stuns you. You question your own judgment. But there are some people who will look you straight in the eye and lie.

Because you operate from a basis of honesty and integrity, you are dumbfounded that there is not some appeal to goodness or some line of reasoning which will get through to your partner's brother. But there isn't.

Believe the evidence of your own eyes. This man operates from the principle that he always gets to have his own way. You don't need to understand why he is that way. You need only accept how he is.

Your father-in-law is going to be taken care of financially, and that is a wonderful thing. You asked when it is time to divorce a family member. The answer in your case is it was time about 11 years ago.

Wayne & Tamara

INNOCENCE LOST

Q I caught my husband cheating over a year and a half ago. We have worked things out meanwhile and even bought our first home. What is eating me up every day is always wondering if he will ever do this again.

I asked him today if there was someone else, and indirectly he never answered my question. I feel so lost and insecure. What should I do to get past this?

Donna

A Donna, the difficulty with staying with a cheater is you have to believe they won't do again what they were not supposed to do in the first place. The first time your husband cheated, he took away your ability to believe he is faithful. We can't tell you how to get past this. With this man, you can only look out for your own best interests.

Wayne

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

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HOROSCOPE

Week of OCTOBER 15 TO 21, 2023

The luckiest signs this week:
CAPRICORN, AQUARIUS AND PISCES

♈ ARIES
You'll feel on edge, and a particular event will encourage you to consider making life changes. In your career, a competing business will tempt you with an offer for better working conditions and opportunities for advancement.

♉ TAURUS
You'll take time to pamper yourself and indulge in a few small pleasures. You'll negotiate rates to achieve a settlement that will improve both your work and personal well-being.

♊ GEMINI
At work, you'll have to face numerous urgent and complex situations. These experiences may turn out to be beneficial, as they'll give you skills that will serve you throughout your career.

♋ CANCER
Your pride will be tested. Fortunately, you'll have an opportunity to show yourself in a positive light. If you act for the right reasons, you can't go wrong. Share accurate, useful information.

♌ LEO
You'll have some small family chores to handle. You may also have to stay at home for part of the week, perhaps to keep an eye on some work or to wait for a late delivery.

♍ VIRGO
You may need to start multitasking. The telephone may ring incessantly. Maintain harmony by avoiding criticism when you're with your significant other — or anyone else, in fact.

♎ LIBRA
Be prudent with money and try to stick to your budget. Additional expenses related to home or family may arise. You'll need to exercise discipline with your young children.

♏ SCORPIO
As the cold, gloomy weather sets in, you'll feel the need to take care of your body. It would be wise to join a gym to incentivize you to exercise regularly.

♐ SAGITTARIUS
Rather than rushing into a decision, think twice. If you let yourself be carried by the current, it'll take you to your destination. Trust your instincts over the next few days.

♑ CAPRICORN
Take care when speaking, as you could appear foolish to more than one person. Fortunately, only your pride will be affected, and it'll help lighten a heavy atmosphere.

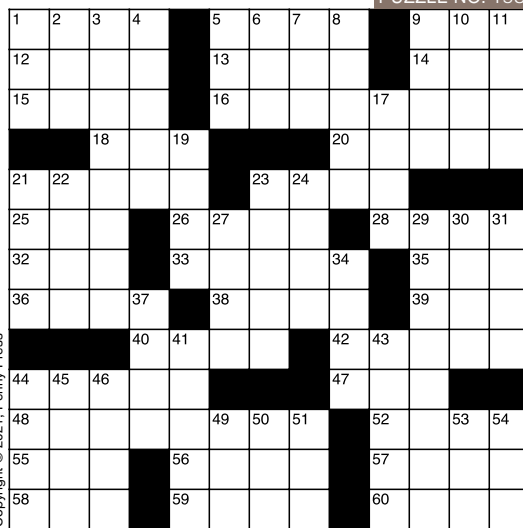
♒ AQUARIUS
Time is valuable. Try not to schedule too many appointments on the same day and run the risk of overlap. A vacation would be beneficial.

♓ PISCES
As the days get shorter, you'll look for an activity that will bring you intense joy. You'll find yourself infused with an energy that moves you to entertain yourself more often.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 158



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ACROSS

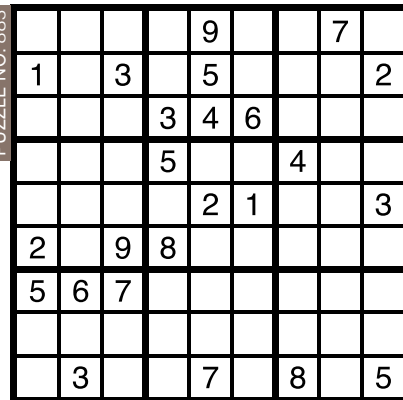
1. Sailors' yases
5. Coral barrier
9. "___ to a Nightingale"
12. Caper
13. In excess of
14. Coffee holder
15. Reflex site
16. Postponing
18. Natural
20. Brief letters
21. Uniform color
23. Face card
25. Naught
26. Urge on
28. Roof extension
32. Unusual
33. Gala
35. Soup veggie
36. Trial
38. Snout
39. "My country, ___ of thee..."
40. Customer

DOWN

1. Biblical vessel
2. In the distance
3. May gems
4. Say
5. ___ and reel
6. Night before
7. Long, skinny fish
8. Former French coin
9. Eliminate
10. Sand ridge
11. Hen products
17. Oxen neckwear
19. Puff of smoke
21. Sharl
22. Pelt
23. Court listener
24. Linkletter and Carney
27. Window unit
29. Talent
30. Mineral deposit
31. Ill at ___
34. Evergreen bushes
37. Grass
41. Appears
43. Angels' headgear
44. Body bandage
45. Popular drink
46. Just
49. Afternoon meal
50. Get sun
51. Writing liquid
53. Far down
54. Footed vase

Sudoku

PUZZLE NO. 883



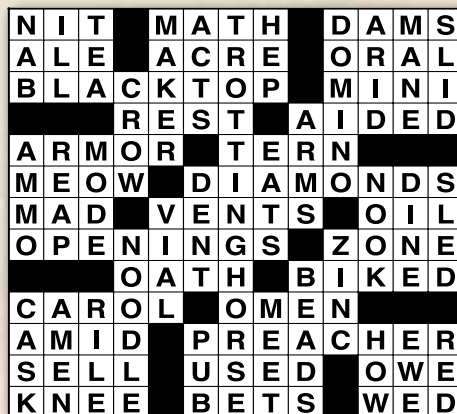
HOW TO PLAY:

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

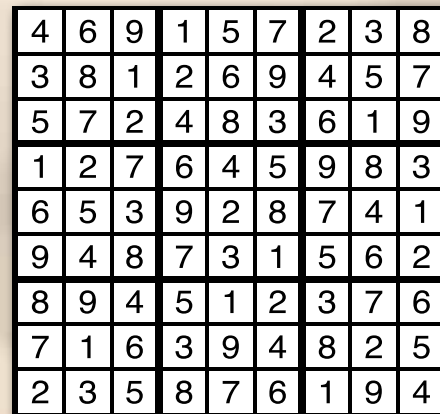
Each 3x3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: You must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column, or 3x3 box.

Last Issues' Answers

CROSSWORDS



Sudoku



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