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Mary Deros to run in elections again

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Parc Extension city councillor Mary Deros (centre) seen here with Ensemble Montréal borough mayoralty candidate Sylvain Gariépy and Ensemble Montréal centre city mayoralty candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada (right of Deros), were surrounded by local supporters during Deros's announcement last week that she is seeking an eighth term.

Futur Montréal

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Citizen Power in Action was sponsored by Futur Montréal, whose co-founder is Joël DeBellefeuille.

The rats are back

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Housing protests



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Ensemble Montréal's first congress

Day of Love & Peace

Page 15



Sheikh Karim Chahal, spiritual leader at the Salahuddin Mosque on Parc Ave. leads colleagues in chants and prayers at the Day of Love and Peace, which also marked Muhammad's birthday, at the William Hingston Centre on May 25.



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Jarry Park anniversary, summer programming, and rat control take focus at June council meeting



Resident Serge Landry voices his concern about what he deems to be a public health and safety matter near his home. (Photo: Dylan Adams Lemaçon, Newsfirst Multimedia)

DYLAN ADAMS LEMAÇON

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The June borough council meeting in Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension covered a wide range of issues, from upcoming summer activities to persistent public health concerns in Parc-Extension. While the council chamber was less full than usual, the agenda included several updates of local significance.

The meeting saw the borough adopt a first reading of a project tied to the future Saint-Michel community centre. Officials also announced a new exhibition marking the 100th anniversary of Jarry Park, now open at the Claude-Léveillé cultural centre. On June 17, residents will be able to attend an online session where a plan regarding Jarry Park will be unveiled. The borough's summer programming schedule is also set to launch soon, offering residents local options for activities during the warmer months. As the mayor said, "No need to go on vacation elsewhere."

A traffic calming plan, previously presented to residents for feedback, is moving forward. According to the mayor, "13 alleys will be secured in the coming weeks" based on citizen input. According to Councillor Mary Deros, two alleyways in Parc-Extension will have modified access under the borough's traffic calming plan. One is located between Stuart and Wiseman avenues, and the other between Ogilvy Avenue and Saint-Roch Street.

The entry points will be limited to pedestrians and emergency services. Cars will no longer be able to use them as shortcuts. Deros emphasized that access to backyards will remain and that the changes are intended to improve safety, particularly around nearby daycares and parks. She noted, however, that most of the alley closures are concentrated in the Villeray and François-Perrault districts.

Councillor Josué Courville offered a reminder that Father's Day falls on June 15 this year, while Councillor Sylvain Ouellet reported on his recent trip to Milwaukee where he represented Montreal at a Great Lakes conference, emphasizing the city's reliance on waterborne trade.

Councillor Nadine Museau Muele highlighted the 30th anniversary of Ville en Vert and upcoming celebrations for Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day.

Speaking on behalf of Parc-Extension, Councillor Mary Deros used her remarks to promote community involvement for the online session regarding the unveiling of a plan for Jarry Park, especially from local sports organizations that use the space. "We have an excellent schedule for the summer," she added, referencing the slate of events planned in Parc-Ex.

Deros gave a status update on ongoing work in Jarry Park, expected to wrap up by early July, and reminded residents to take down temporary car shelters to avoid fines. She also raised the ongoing rat problem in Parc-Extension, noting it's part of a wider issue throughout Montreal.

During the public question period, resident Jacques Tessier Jr. voiced concern over a neglected property in his neighborhood where a car has been parked under a temporary shelter for two years. He claimed the garage was left open and a rat was seen inside. Calling it a matter of "public safety and health". He pressed the council for urgent action. The mayor said it was the first she had heard of the complaint but promised to have her team follow up.

Later, resident Serge Landry raised concerns about how snow was being handled over the winter at the former Carrière Francon site. Public Works Director Marco St-Pierre responded that his team would be in touch with him soon. Another citizen submitted a question online, expressing doubt over how a recent gas leak near Rue Ogilvy was managed. The mayor acknowledged that emergencies are challenging but said the city does its best to provide displaced residents with food and shelter while decisions are made about relocation.

Returning to the rat issue, Councillor Deros asked for an update on extermination efforts. The mayor responded that more pest control contracts have been issued than ever before but noted that some residents are still feeding rats, making the job harder. Deros suggested funding a community group to educate residents door-to-door in the languages spoken locally. "The same way we gave \$10,000 to Vélo Québec," she said, "we can give that much to an organization that will educate the public." The mayor replied that this type of work was already underway and that Ville en Vert had been hired last year to carry out similar outreach.

The meeting wrapped up after all agenda items were adopted.



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OPINION & Editorial



In faith, hope, and love our fathers show us the way

To respectfully and lovingly paraphrase Buffy Saint-Marie's ode and anthem to the Universal Soldier, He's the Universal Man and he really is to blame, his orders come from far away no more, they come from him and you and me, so brothers and sisters can't you see, this is not the way to put an end to war.

Soldiers of a kind are universal fathers of families, clans, tribes, cities, provinces, nations, churches, sects, mosques, synagogues, ashrams, schools, school boards, corporations, or temples of one sort or another.

True enough, the role of fathers has evolved in countless ways, but essence and substance remain the same – the man is still taxed and entrusted, with the enormous responsibility of caring for family, albeit these days, thanks to societal changes, fathers can rely on equal input from the mothers of the children they have chosen to bear.

Sainte-Marie, consummate poet, popular folk-singer, and much-loved bright light in the dark universe of the early 1960s wrote her admonition to all young men (mostly) and young women (some) in a spirit of 'don't blame the prominent fathers of the day' for the ills of the world, especially war, blame yourself for failure to counteract the call to arms with what John Lennon so heart-stirringly prayed for, to give peace a chance.

Has anything changed since the Fathers of Buffy's day - Kennedy, Khrushchev, Ho Chi Min, Mao Zedong, Castro, Nehru and a host of others - wreaked havoc on humanity?

Hardly. These fathers have been replaced by Trump, Putin, Zelenskyy, Netanyahu, Khamenei, and let's not absolve Legault, Carney or Poilievre from this gang that can't shoot straight, although shoot they do, joined by the extensive group of current women leaders of the world, the likes of Meloni of Italy and Sheinbaum of Mexico, preceded by Germany's Merkel.

But as it is too often said, sad but true, that

all politics are local, so it must be considered that peace is also local. Buffy Saint-Marie's 'call to peace' should resonate in all hearts as 2025 brings the world closer to the cataclysms that neither fathers nor mothers may be able to prevent. Soldiers are still tasked to bear arms and will be compelled to keep on doing so by fatherly (and motherly) leaders who continue to be at opposite ends of Jackie De Shannon's What the World Needs Now ... is Love, of which there is too little of ...

In the absence of peace within and without too many nations of the world, it is incumbent upon all who care about the survival of humankind to abide by the truism that if peace, like charity, doesn't start at home, it will not happen anywhere else.

And so, on Father's Day 2025, let every human heart celebrate fathers and their impact on personal and community lives, honoring biological fathers, great-grandfathers, grandfathers, stepfathers, adoptive fathers, teachers, priests, ministers, rabbis, and all father-figures.

An exclusive celebration of dads? No, an inclusive acknowledgement of all father figures who enrich lives in countless ways, guiding, supporting, and caring without expecting recognition. Neighbors, family friends, siblings, teachers, and many more, each in his own way contributing to family peace in unique life-changing ways. Materially, children across the world celebrate fathers with hugs, cards, or thoughtful gifts. Maybe colorful ties? Spiritually, fathers and father-figures, are the unsung heroes who make the world brighter and hearts fuller.

Is there the ideal father? Not likely, but there are fathers who help children grow, often growing with them, attentive to children's accomplishments, putting family before work, encouraging kids for smallest of reasons.

Heroic fathers support children's goals, respond to needs of sons or daughters, actively opening themselves to communication that invites chil-

dren to safely and securely bring both joys and sorrows to mothers and fathers.

A 24-7 task, fathers keep faith, hope and love in-step with their children's failures and successes, putting aside their own desires. Genuine fathers urge children to follow their dreams, shouldering the weight of consequences when children fail, as they often do, exalting in accomplishment when it surfaces.

Unselfish fathers lovingly embrace and endorse their children's career plans, helping ground their efforts in the reality that the world may challenge them but family will always be there to rely on. To be able to rely on someone is a great feeling; knowing that they're there, no matter what. Good fathers are good at being there when it counts most.

Fathers are one thing, dads another. Fathers are genetically related to children. Dads show unconditional reliability and caring for son or daughter.

Father's Day rises above surface-level commercialized razzle-dazzle soaring to heartfelt tributes to unforgettable men - biological fathers, stepdads, mentors, or father-figures who leave indelible imprints on hearts, minds, and often – souls.

A day in appreciation of wisdom imparted, valuable lessons taught and boundless love showered. While traditions and gifts have their place, the essence and substance are shared laughter, unfiltered love, and deep connections cherished.

Happy Father's Day to all fathers, especially Laval fathers, a day filled with bliss, laughter, and the warmth of family togetherness. Bless the power of fatherhood, and of fathers who rejoice with their children, the future of humankind, to dream big and reach for the stars, forever there to catch, hold, and relaunch the star if it ever falls.

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Parc Ex councillor Mary Deros to seek eighth council term in November 2 elections

Supports mayoralty hopeful Soraya Martinez Ferrada and Ensemble Montréal

Parc Extension city councillor Mary Deros (centre) with Ensemble Montréal borough mayoralty candidate Sylvain Gariépy and Ensemble Montréal centre city mayoralty candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada in Parc Extension's Centennial Park last week. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

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Parc Extension city councillor Mary Deros, who is considered the "dean" of Montreal City Council after seven electoral victories, is tossing her hat in for yet another run. She confirms to Nouvelles Parc Extension News that she will be a candidate in the November 2 municipal elections.

First elected in 1998 with Mayor Pierre Bourque's Vision Montreal party, Deros served as an executive-committee member under Bourque.

Proven track record

As well, she served in the administration of Mayor Gérald Tremblay under the Union Montreal party. In more recent years, she ran under the banner of Équipe Denis Coderre, eventually becoming a member of Ensemble Montréal.

During an official announcement last week in Parc Extension's Centennial Park, Ensemble Montréal mayoralty candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada said she felt privileged to have Deros run with her party.

"I'm very, very honored and proud that Mary, who I've known for twenty years now from the borough and city councils, accepted to run again," said Martinez Ferrada.

New blood and experience

"She is somebody who knows the city very well – Mary knows every single street in this district – and we need people like that," she added.

"Not only do we need new people, like Sylvain Gariépy who is running for borough mayor, but we need people with experience who know how to try and make the city great again," said Martinez Ferrada.

"She's seen a lot. She's seen what works and what doesn't work, and it's important to have

that perspective when you're working in a city. Having somebody like that on board puts us in the right place. And that's why I'm so happy that she's here."

In an interview, Deros described her last four years of dealing with an administration dominated by Projet Montréal as "extremely difficult," involving contentious local issues such as the creation of bike paths and loss of street parking, as well as the failure of Projet Montréal to build more social housing in Parc Extension.

Critical of Projet Montréal

"We've been trying to work with an administration and a party that doesn't care, doesn't listen," she said. "I've been asking for certain improvements. Nothing's been done. Although they claim they're putting in the effort, the effort is not there. We have no results. And when you don't have results, it means they're not doing the proper management."

Deros said she felt very confident knowing that Soraya Martinez Ferrada could be taking over the reins at Montreal City Hall. "Having Soraya taking this leap into city politics, I feel very secure

that we're going to have an administration that cares for people, that listens to people," she said.

At the same time, Deros welcomed Sylvain Gariépy, who is running under the Ensemble Montréal banner for mayor of Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc Extension.

Restoring Montreal

"Having worked with the number of people I have over the last twenty-seven years, I feel very confident in this partnership we're forming under Ensemble Montréal with Soraya, Sylvain and all the candidates," said Deros. "It's very encouraging to see that people care and want to put Montreal back on the map. Because we're not a village, we're a metropolis. And for the last eight years, Montreal has been going down."

Gariépy's professional background is in urban planning, having been a partner in two urban planning firms. In that capacity, he worked closely with officials from the City of Montreal, as well as with suburban municipalities.

"I think I can bring good ideas from my experience to the borough, including Parc Extension," he said.



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10 questions to ask your dad on Father's Day

Father's Day is a special time to celebrate the dads in your life. Beyond traditional gifts and gestures, connecting with your dad on a deeper level can create lasting memories and strengthen your bond. Here are 10 meaningful questions to ask your dad to learn more about this crucial person in your life:

- 1. What's your fondest memory of your childhood?
- 2. What was the most trouble you ever got in as a kid?
- 3. How did you and Mom first meet and fall in love? (if applicable)
- 4. What values or lessons from your father have you passed down to me?
- 5. What's something you still hope to accomplish in life?
- 6. What has been the most rewarding aspect of fatherhood for you?
- 7. What's your biggest regret?
- 8. What have you always wanted to teach me but haven't had the chance to yet?
- 9. How do you think being a father has shaped who you are today?
- 10. What's one thing you want me to always remember or carry with me?

Gift ideas for 10 different types of dads

Selecting the ideal gift for Dad can be challenging, but keeping his interests and hobbies in mind can result in a memorable and cherished present. Here are some Father's Day gift ideas for 10 distinct types of dads:

- 1. **The amateur cook Dad.** Consider gifts like a premium-quality chef's knife set, a sous vide precision cooker for mastering restaurant-style dishes at home or a cooking class voucher to refine his kitchen skills.
- 2. **The sports lover Dad.** Elevate Dad's game day experience with tickets to a big game, autographed memorabilia from his sports idols or high-performance sportswear. Cap it off with a sports-themed gift basket filled with snacks and accessories for extra enjoyment on game nights.
- 3. **The DIY Dad.** Power up Dad's handyman spirit with gifts like a comprehensive toolset for his next home improvement project, a woodworking or crafting magazine subscription or a personalized sign for his workspace.
- 4. **The tech-savvy Dad.** Techie dads

- will appreciate cutting-edge gadgets, like a virtual reality gaming system, noise-cancelling wireless headphones or a smart home automation kit.
- 5. **The outdoor enthusiast Dad.** Fuel Dad's adventurous spirit with gifts like a rugged camping tent, a portable solar charger for off-grid expeditions or a national park membership for endless exploration opportunities.
- 6. **The bookworm Dad.** Indulge Dad's love for literature with gifts like a collection of classic novels, a cozy reading nook complete with a plush armchair and reading lamp or a subscription to an audiobook service for literary adventures on the go.
- 7. **The fashion-forward Dad.** Help Dad look his best with gifts like a tailored suit from his favourite designer, a luxury watch or personalized cufflinks.
- 8. **The music lover Dad.** Amplify Dad's passion for music with gifts like a vintage record player, concert tickets to see his favourite band or a premium-quality pair of studio head-

- phones for an immersive listening experience.
- 9. **The gardening Dad.** Nurture Dad's green thumb with gifts like high-quality gardening tools, heirloom seeds for his garden or a personalized sign for his outdoor oasis.
- 10. **The travel junkie Dad.** Dad's wanderlust will soar with gifts like a durable travel backpack, a scratch-off world map to track his adventures, a personalized luggage tag or a travel journal to document his globetrotting escapades.

Whatever type of dad you're shopping for this Father's Day, remember to shop local and support businesses in your community!







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MARY DEROS

Conseillère de la Ville du district de Parc-Extension
Présidente du C.C.U. & Vice-présidente de la commission de la diversité sociale et la diversité montréalaise

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Will 'Futur Montréal' be on the ballot in municipal elections this November?

Political movement seeks party status, according to co-founder Joël DeBellefeuille



The panelists (from the left) were tech entrepreneur Paul-André Savoie, former Liberal MNA David Heurtel, former Liberal MP Eleni Bakopanos, Montreal criminal defence lawyer Ralph Mastromonaco, civil liberties lawyer Geneviève Grey, and constitutional lawyer Julius Grey. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

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Is it a social movement with political aspirations and overtones? Or a full-fledged party in waiting?

Those are questions the organizers of a one-day roundtable seminar held in Côte des Neiges last weekend hope to have an answer to when they find out whether their application for official recognition as a political party has been accepted by the Quebec election registrar's office.

The gathering, Citizen Power in Action, was sponsored by Futur Montréal, whose co-founder is Joël DeBellefeuille.

Was racially profiled

DeBellefeuille, a black Canadian, was involved in a controversial legal battle that began in 2009 when his car was pulled over (for the fourth time within days) by the Longueuil Police who singled him out because they found his name didn't seem to match his racial profile.

After DeBellefeuille was fined in court when found guilty of not cooperating with the officers, he filed a complaint with the Quebec Human Rights Commission. Three years later, the conviction was dismissed and the officers were reprimanded.

DeBellefeuille is also the founder of the Red Coalition, a Montreal-based lobby group that seeks to eliminate racial profiling and systemic racism. "We're here today because we consider civic engagement to be very important," he said in an interview with Nouvelles Parc Extension News regarding last Saturday's event.

A party or a movement?

Although he referred to Futur Montréal as a political movement, DeBellefeuille said they had an application in for political party status and expected to have an answer within two weeks at most.

A panel of presenters who spoke from morning to early afternoon included former Ahuntsic Liberal Member of Parliament Eleni Bakopanos, Montreal constitutional lawyer Julius Grey, former Quebec Liberal MNA

David Heurtel and Montreal criminal defence lawyer Ralph Mastromonaco.

They shared their views and expertise on citizen engagement, each according to their area of action. A moderated question period followed the presentations to allow thoughtful exchanges between the presenters and the public.

Another party welcome

Bakopanos said she was mostly unaware of the forum organizers' efforts to form a political party. "If that's where it's going to go, it's up to Joël and the people around him who want to create another political party, although I think there is room in Montreal for another political party," she told NPEN.

She said she was asked to speak about the involvement of women in politics. "From the time that I worked for the Quebec Liberal Party or as a Member of Parliament, I always believed in encouraging more women, especially those who are members of the ethnic communities, to participate," she said.

Bakopanos mentored a number of women who entered politics, including former Liberal Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly, who was a potential candidate for the Liberal leadership after the departure of Justin Trudeau.

Lawyer criticizes system

In line with the values promoted by the Red Coalition, Ralph Mastromonaco's presentation focused on his efforts to defend many clients who found themselves in trouble with the law with racial profiling as a significant factor.

Among other things, he was critical of the notorious slowness of Quebec's court and legal system, saying it is still operating largely on paper-based documentation, rather than adapting to a more practical and modern digital system.

He was also critical of the overall actions of the police, saying they lacked the basic training to recognize the cultural differences of minorities.

"I don't think police are taught enough about de-escalating and walking away from conflict, because they feel if they walk away from conflict, they're giving up their power," he said.



Happy National Day of Quebec

June
24



Quebec's National Day; a holiday celebration that dates all the way back

In Canada, nearly 10 million people speak French. Held annually on June 24, the National Day of Quebec, formerly known as Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, is an occasion for Francophones across the country to show their pride by celebrating their language and their traditions.

ORIGINS OF THE HOLIDAY

The origins of the National Day date back to immemorial times, when people celebrated the summer solstice. The tradition of this pagan holiday was for a large bonfire to be lit to symbolize the light that was at its peak. In Europe, mainly France, it was later attributed the name of Jean, the cousin of Jesus nicknamed "the Baptist", who first recognized and then baptized the Christ. That is how the link between the light and Saint-Jean-Baptiste was made.

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

In 1827, journalist Ludger Duvernay bought the newspaper La Minerve from Augustin-Norbert Morin, and it quickly became an important newspaper in

Lower Canada. In March 1834, Ludger Duvernay, George-Étienne Cartier, and Louis-Victor Sicotte founded the society "Help yourself, the sky will help you", of which Duvernay is the president. The members gather to discuss politics and literature, conversations that lead to the revival of an interrupted tradition, idea developed by Duvernay. That tradition was the celebration of Saint-Jean-Baptiste. The purpose was to provide French-Canadian people with an annual national holiday.



On June 24, 1834, Duvernay organized a banquet in order to make this project come to life. About sixty people take part in it, and the banquet turned out to be

a real success. Newspapers encourage people to celebrate Saint-Jean-Baptiste in their village in order to promote the union of French Canadians. Duvernay won his bet: the following year, National Day celebrations spread in many villages.

It was mainly celebrated in Montreal and Quebec, but over the years expanded to several regions in the province. However, we had to wait until 1925 before it became official and was declared by the Quebec legislature to be a statutory holiday. This day eventually became an opportunity for people to gather and bear witness to the vitality and cultural richness of the French-Canadian nation. Despite multiple interruptions and obstacles in the course of its history, the holiday persisted and is still celebrated to this day.

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- more than 100 parades

In 2009, when marking the 175th anniversary of the National Day of Quebec, the *Mouvement national des Québécoises and Québécois* celebrated 25 years as the main coordinator of the holiday. They created the "Artisan de la Fête nationale" prize to highlight the invaluable support of those who give meaning to the holiday through their contribution. In this way, the thousands of volunteers who work every year to make the celebrations of the National Day a success are also honoured.

Francophone communities all across the country organize celebrations to honour Quebec, so be sure to stay on the lookout for events happening around you on June 24. For more information about the holiday or the celebrations in the province, visit the fetenationale.quebec website.



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Rat trouble burrows deeper in Parc-Extension as resident's patio is overrun



Parc-Extension resident Angela Thomas says rats are running amok in her area during an interview outside her home on June 11, 2025.

MATTHEW DALDALIAN
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Angela Thomas thought she was stepping out to enjoy the summer weather. Instead, she opened the door underneath her patio to the overwhelming stench of urine and a discovery that would upend the season for her and her family.

"When I saw all the dirt and urine and smell, I just ran out. I couldn't breathe," said Thomas, describing the moment she uncovered torn, soiled pillows and a pile of dirt where she once kept her outdoor cushions. Beneath the stairs and underneath the patio, earth had been pushed up against the wall, suggesting

something had tunneled in. "It looked like from outside, that it was pulling inside."

What she was seeing, she would soon learn, was the work of rats burrowing from outside.

The infestation didn't just destroy furniture. Clothes Thomas had collected to donate were ruined, soaked with urine and thrown out. "I couldn't even put it inside in my washing machine to clean. I had to throw them away."

Infestation

Thomas is far from alone. Across Parc-Extension, residents have reported increased sightings of rats in their yards, alleys, and even

► Continued on page 11



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on sidewalks in broad daylight — a sign, one district councillor says, of a severe infestation. “Every Monday, Tuesday... I get calls regarding the rats every week, nonstop,” said Parc-Extension councillor Mary Deros. “People want to go out in the back, in the front to plant, and they’re amongst rats. They’re afraid to do their BBQ. They’re afraid to let their kids go out.”

Deros, who visited Thomas’ property after she raised concerns, relayed the resident’s frustration at bearing the financial cost alone.

The situation, Deros believes, is partly due to poor enforcement around waste disposal and insufficient education on how to properly store and separate garbage.

The city had put up signs reminding residents not to leave garbage on the doors of residential complexes at certain times, but Deros criticized the move, saying they’ve had little impact. “Nobody stops to read them,” she said, adding that the signage may not be accessible or prominent enough to deter bad habits.

Extermination

The borough’s aging infrastructure and fluctuating waste policies haven’t helped. George Stappas, the longtime owner of S-D Exterminating Services Inc., said broken pipes, open garbage bins, and a three-year municipal pause on certain outdoor rat poison allowed infestations to spiral out of control.

Though the city has partially reversed the ban on some poisons in 2023—calling it a necessary



Photos: Matthew Daldalian, Newsfirst Multimedia

response to a growing public health issue--- Stappas said it’s not enough to reverse years of uncontrolled breeding.

“They haven’t died for three years,” Stappas said. “Usually, we have everything under control... but now [the rats] are three years in advance.”

He pointed to simple measures residents can take to protect their homes: backwater valves to block rats from entering via sewer lines, and smoke tests to check for pipe openings.

The borough’s response

In response to the growing issue, the borough said it has taken multiple steps to contain the problem. A spokesperson for Villeray–Saint-

Michel–Parc-Extension said the borough acts “as quickly as possible to try to eliminate the presence of rats,” using exterminators, traps, sewer maintenance, and awareness campaigns tailored to specific problem zones.

Since April 1, borough officials have carried out six “cleanliness blitzes” in high-risk sectors, including the Parc-Extension district. These involve a special patrol that inspects streets every two weeks, handing out fines to those who leave garbage out at improper times.

Officials have also focused efforts on Place de la Gare-Jean-Talon, where improperly discarded food has attracted rodents. Signs have been installed throughout the square, and contracted exterminators have placed traps across the area. The borough also said local partners like Maxi are helping maintain nearby green spaces.

The borough received 67 rat-related complaints between January 1 and June 11 of this year. While no single cause is identified, they cited construction activity, aging sewer lines, and nearby rail yards as possible triggers.

To prevent future outbreaks, property owners

have been asked to inspect their private sewer systems for damage.

Neighbourhood rat party

Still, the problem isn’t just in the pipes. Thomas pointed to abandoned renovation materials and improperly stored garbage from nearby properties that have yet to be cleaned up. “You walk and you’re gonna see it. There’s no people to clean it,” she said.

Even when residents do their part—storing food scraps in fridges and securing garbage bins—rats continue to run yard-to-yard. “They’re having a party. It’s not just one. Three, four, five during the day—running,” said Thomas. She said she’s shared videos of the animals darting across lawns in broad daylight.

Thomas and her family have begun reinforcing their patio with mesh and wooden material, sealing every gap they can find. But it’s a makeshift solution to a neighbourhood-wide issue.

With no sign the rats are going away soon, residents may be left to defend their homes one trap, one patch, one cleanup at a time.



Angela Thomas’ son, Jimmy Thomas, assessing the damage caused by the rats burrowing under the home’s patio on June 11, 2025.

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Tenants march through Parc-Extension demanding rent control

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Dozens of Montrealers gathered in the rain Saturday to protest new rent regulations introduced by the Quebec government, calling for a province-wide rent freeze and stronger protections for tenants ahead of Moving Day.

The demonstration, organized by tenant advocacy groups and local housing committees, was held in Parc-Extension in front of Parc metro station where rent hikes have hit particularly hard in recent years.



Protester Lina Sam.

New rent regulation

Protesters say the government's newly announced rent control formula, which uses a three-year average of the Consumer Price Index to calculate increases, will push housing costs even higher over time.

"It's being disguised as a good thing when it actually harms tenants," said Lina Sam, a Montreal renter and the creator of the Instagram page TenantRightsQC, which shares accessible legal information, updates on housing policies, and practical advice for renters in Quebec.

Sam pointed out that while the new formula may appear fair in the short term, it paints a misleading picture due to this year's unusually high rent hikes. "This year looks better using this method because we've had the highest increase in over 30 years, so anything would be better than this. But if you look at the years before, and certainly going forward, this method of calculation will not be beneficial." She warned that normalizing such spikes could set a dangerous precedent for future rent increases.

Housing Minister France-Élaine Duranceau has defended the new formula as a way to stabilize rent hikes for both tenants and landlords, but advocates argue the regulation is being rolled out without proper consultation and could compound the housing crisis.

Moving day

Amy Darwish of the Comité d'action de Parc-Extension (CAPE) said the timing is especially troubling. "It's about one month before July 1st.

We're anticipating it's going to be a rough one for tenants this year," she said. "The indicators were already the highest we've seen in about 40 years."

Darwish, who both lives in Parc-Extension and works with local tenants, says many of her neighbors are already buckling under the pressure. "People were already kind of pushed to the limits. Rents were already astronomically high, and many people are saying that they can't afford to pay more," she said. "We're really worried that a lot of people are going to end up having to take second and third jobs... or face eviction for non-payment."

CAPE and other groups are calling for the government to withdraw the regulation and implement enforceable rent control legislation. They say landlords routinely skirt existing rules and tenants often don't know they can contest unlawful rent hikes.

"There are rules in place that landlords are supposed to follow, but there's no repercussions happening when they break those rules," Sam said. "Tenants don't always know that they can say no to rent increases."

Advocates from across the borough opened the event with speeches, denouncing the rising cost of living and calling on the provincial government to take immediate action. After the speeches, protesters marched through the neighborhood, chanting and holding signs, before concluding the demonstration in front of Metro Acadie.



Both Sam and Darwish said they'd like to see more for tenant education and solidarity at the neighborhood level, especially for those who couldn't make it to the protest.

"We encourage tenants to get to know their neighbors," said Darwish. "Often it's difficult to fight rent increases alone, but together we can fight them as a way of responding to this crisis."

Broader campaign

With Moving Day around the corner, many fear the worst is yet to come. The protest is part of a broader campaign led by the Regroupement des comités logement et associations de locataires du Québec (RCLALQ), which has launched a petition demanding the new regulation be scrapped.

Darwish called the formula "a gift to landlords," accusing the housing minister of exploiting the crisis.

Advocates are also demanding that the province introduce permanent rent control measures, following examples like Ontario, where annual rent increases are capped by law.

For tenants like Sam, the issue runs deeper than numbers. "Housing is such a basic thing," she said. "If we can't afford our rents, we can't focus on other things. Housing is at the base of it all."

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Soraya Martinez Ferrada leads Ensemble Montréal's first congress

Mayorality hopeful pledges help to the homeless and first-time house buyers

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Ensemble Montréal mayorality candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada was feeling nostalgic during the party's first congress under her leadership.

As a student, the 53-year-old former federal Liberal cabinet minister and city councillor confided while addressing 300 supporters on June 1 at the Montreal Science Center in Old Montreal, she worked summers at the Old Port, where she emptied trash bins and sanitized washrooms.



A special homecoming

"To be back here as a candidate for the mayorality is quite an exciting homecoming," she acknowledged.

Originally from Chile, Martinez Ferrada served as the city councillor for the district of Saint-Michel from 2005 to 2009 when she was defeated.

A hardworking political organizer and insider, she remained active behind the scenes, first as a political attaché for the federal Liberals in Ottawa. She then succeeded in winning the east-end Montreal riding of Hochelaga in 2019 in a close election that saw the Liberals capturing the seat for the first time since 1988.

As an MP, she served as a parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, then served beginning in 2023 in the Trudeau cabinet as Minister of Tourism and Minister for the Economic Development Agency of Canada Quebec Region.

Willing to listen

"Listening is a form of respect," she said at one point in her address, setting the tone for the type of administration she might hope to oversee if she prevails in the municipal elections taking place on November 2.

With that thought in mind, Martinez Ferrada used the City of Montreal's 3-1-1 phone central access number for municipal services as an example of how communication between residents and the city appears to have broken down.

"Who here has ever called 3-1-1?" she asked, precipitating a murmur of derisive laughter from the crowd. "Have you ever had a call returned? Communicating with this city has become an uphill battle. And this has to change."

'Right to a roof'

Martinez Ferrada suggested the party could be placing considerable emphasis on findings ways to resolve the city's homelessness situation. "Everybody deserves and is entitled to have a roof over their head," she said, echoing words used frequently by the former Trudeau Liberal government while addressing the same problem.

"Housing provides dignity, stability, security," she continued. "Everybody has a right to a roof, because when a family is living in security, it allows children to dream and for everybody to rise and have autonomy. And so, yes, something must be done. But more quickly and more intelligently."

In a statement of pre-campaign policy positions



"Listening is a form of respect," Ensemble Montréal leader and mayorality candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada to party members attending a congress in Old Montreal on June 1. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

issued by Ensemble Montréal, the party is pledging to establish a register of abandoned and dangerous buildings in Montreal during their first 100 days in office.

As well, they would take additional measures that would allow young families to purchase a first home more easily so they wouldn't find themselves forced to move to the suburbs.

Improving with AI

Ensemble Montréal would also implement the use of artificial intelligence (AI) to improve municipal services, including faster delivery of construction and renovation permits to

developers.

The Ensemble Montréal congress was also an opportunity for the party to unveil its new logo. According to a press release from the party, the graphic visually represents their principal ambition, "to make Montreal a clean, secure, affordable and efficient city."

"This change of image reflects who we are: a team that is deeply rooted in Montreal, listening to citizens, and representative of the richness and diversity of our metropolis," Martinez Ferrada commented on the logo, noting that the multi-color design is also meant to reflect Montreal's multicultural diversity.

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Ensemble Montréal leader and mayorality candidate Soraya Martinez Ferrada and Parc Extension city councillor Mary Deros, who is running for another term under the party's banner. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

Montreal opposition party pledges to scrap inclusionary housing bylaw if elected

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Ensemble Montréal, the city's main opposition party, has announced that it will repeal the controversial inclusionary zoning bylaw known as the Règlement pour une métropole mixte (RMM) if elected in the upcoming 2025 municipal election. The policy, which mandates a mix of social, affordable, and family housing in new residential developments, has been a central part of the current administration's strategy to address Montreal's growing housing crisis.

Party leader Soraya Martinez Ferrada made the announcement during the unveiling of urban planner Sylvain Gariépy as Ensemble Montréal's candidate for borough mayor of Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension. Gariépy, a veteran in the field of urban development and former president of the Ordre des urbanistes du Québec, has long advocated for pragmatic solutions to housing shortages and underused public properties.

Challenging the effectiveness of the bylaw

The RMM bylaw, often referred to as the "20-20-20 rule," requires developers to set aside 20% of units as social housing, 10–20% as affordable housing, and 5–10% as family units in larger

projects, depending on location and project scale. While introduced with the aim of fostering socio-economic diversity, critics argue it has hampered development and failed to meet its goals.

Martinez Ferrada asserted that the bylaw has been ineffective, citing the slow pace of construction and the tendency of developers to pay financial penalties rather than comply with the housing mix requirements. According to city records, as of March 2025, more than \$56 million had been collected in compensation fees from developers opting out of building the required units—money that has yet to translate into a significant increase in affordable housing stock.

Instead of mandates, Ensemble Montréal is proposing financial incentives and stronger public-private partnerships to speed up the development of housing. "We need real collaboration with both the non-profit sector and the private sector to deliver housing solutions," Martinez Ferrada said during the event.

Introducing the 'famille propriétaire' program

Another key element of the party's housing strategy is a proposed initiative called Famille propriétaire. Designed to make homeownership more accessible to first-time buyers, especially families, the program would allow the transfer



taxes (commonly known as the "welcome tax") to be paid in monthly installments over the course of a year.

The party views this initiative as a tool to address what it calls the "family exodus" from Montreal—referring to the growing number of young families leaving the island in search of more affordable housing and better living conditions.

A candidate with urban planning credentials

Sylvain Gariépy's candidacy is being positioned as a cornerstone of Ensemble Montréal's housing platform. Most recently a senior advisor at urban development firm BC2, Gariépy said he was drawn to the party's pragmatic approach to land use and housing. "This is the party best positioned to make progress on major issues," he stated.

Gariépy also pledged to prioritize stalled housing projects in the borough, including the redevelopment of the former Chinese Hospital at the corner of Saint-Denis and Faillon streets. Purchased by the City of Montreal in 2019 with the intent of converting it into social housing, the site has remained boarded up ever since.

Standing in front of the vacant structure during

his candidacy announcement, Gariépy criticized the lack of progress and promised action. "We will invest the necessary resources to bring this project to life," he said, adding that other city-owned vacant buildings in the borough also deserve urgent attention and redevelopment.

A changing political landscape

The borough of Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension will see new leadership regardless of the election outcome, as incumbent mayor Laurence Lavigne Lalonde of Projet Montréal has announced her departure from municipal politics at the end of her term.

With the housing crisis continuing to dominate public discourse, the upcoming municipal elections this fall are expected to hinge significantly on which party can present the most compelling and actionable vision for affordability, development, and retention of Montreal's diverse population.

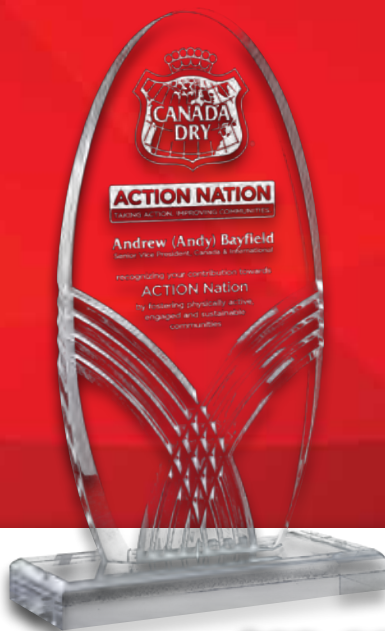
Whether Ensemble Montréal's promise to repeal the inclusionary bylaw and replace it with incentive-based housing initiatives will resonate with voters remains to be seen. What's clear is that housing will be front and centre in what's shaping up to be a critical election for the city's future.

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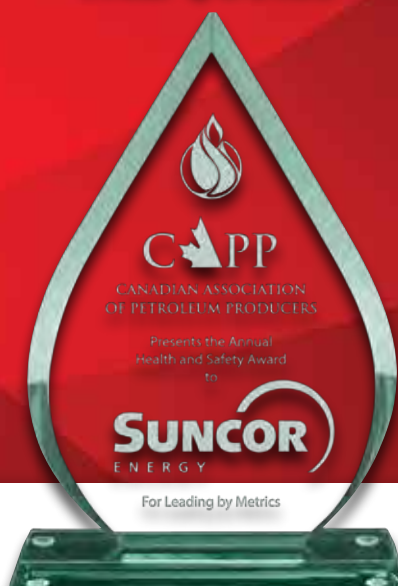
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Parc Exers celebrate 'Day of Love & Peace' at William Hingston Centre

Prophet Muhammad's birthday marked simultaneously at festive event



Muhammad's birthday was observed and led by members of the Salahuddin Mosque during Day of Love and Peace at the William Hingston Centre in Parc Extension on May 25. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)



Himalaya Seniors of Quebec General Secretary Nizam Uddin (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

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Day of Love and Peace, the Himalaya Seniors of Quebec's annual ceremony appealing for harmony and peace in Parc Extension and the world, while also marking the birthday of Mohammad, took place earlier this week minus the presence of dignitaries.

Day of Love and Peace has been celebrated at the William Hingston Centre in Parc Ex by the HSQ for decades. In more recent years, organizers decided also to place emphasis on Eid-Milad-Un-Nabi, which is the birthday of the Islamic prophet Mohammad.

Notable absences

Although elected officials from several levels of government were invited, as were representatives of local community groups including the Corporation de Gestion des Loisirs du parc (CGLP), the Park Extension Youth Organization

(PEYO), the Pakistan Organization of Quebec (POQ), local city councillor Mary Deros and HSQ president Vathany Srikandarajah were not present.

According to HSQ General Secretary Nizam Uddin, both had to deal with last-minute issues involving family members that forced them to alter their plans.

As such, many of the presenters and entertainers were themselves followers of the prophet who was born in the Arabian city of Mecca in 570 and who died in Medina in 632. A group of male singers from the Salahuddin Mosque on Parc Ave. expressed their faith musically as well as in verse.

Praise for Mohammad

While some English and French were spoken, many of the speakers talked in Arabic and Urdu. Sheikh Karim Chahal, spiritual leader at the mosque, animated a session of praise for the founder of Islam, while also speaking about Muhammad's many virtues.

"Let's talk about and analyze what peace is all about," said Chahal, speaking in English as well as Arabic. "And let's talk about a man who firmly, deeply understood what peace means. A man whose legacy reshaped the world, who was moral, and yet still so many people don't know who he really was this great man, the most influential man in history."



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When art serves the city

Parc-Extension exhibition sparks civic reflection

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Parc-Extension is once again making its mark on the Montreal art scene with the launch of a bold new exhibition that blends technology, history, and sensory experience. From June 11 to August 17, 2025, the Maison de la culture de Parc-Extension will host *Études Ectoplasmiques*, a unique collaboration between acclaimed artists Sarah Wendt and Pascal Dufaux.

More than just a gallery show, *Études Ectoplasmiques* is a fully immersive and multi-sensory experience. Visitors will be drawn into a strange and captivating world built on video projections, sculpture, drawing, and reimagined materials. The exhibition is a speculative archive—part science fiction, part spiritual séance—blending internet culture with early 20th-century parapsychology, molecular forms, and ecological collapse. At the core lies an artistic inquiry into humanity's deep fascination with material excess, transformation, and entropy.

"With this exhibition, the Maison de la culture in Parc-Extension reaffirms its role as a space of discovery and reflection on our ever-evolving world," said Laurence Lavigne Lalonde, Mayor of the Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension borough. "It's a powerful platform for local creativity and a unique opportunity to examine our

relationship with matter and imagery from a fresh perspective."

A dialogue between body, space, and substance

Artists Sarah Wendt and Pascal Dufaux, active collaborators since 2016, have developed a singular style that merges visual art with movement and the physicality of dance. Their work investigates how energy flows between body, space, and material, crafting projects that feel as temporal and elusive as they are tangible. Known for their installations in Canada, Europe, and the UK, the duo is particularly celebrated for creating works that provoke deep emotional and sensory responses.

Their latest installation includes imagery drawn from séances, environmental catastrophe, and decaying detritus, assembled into a visual and tactile matrix of poetic speculation. The result is a futuristic taxonomy—part ghost story, part ecological warning—that asks viewers to reconsider what it means to archive and remember.

Civic significance: art as community catalyst

Hosting *Études Ectoplasmiques* is not merely a cultural event for Parc-Extension; it is a civic moment. In a neighbourhood known for its rich diversity, socio-economic challenges, and



dynamic history of immigration, the exhibition speaks to broader themes of memory, presence, and transformation.

The Maison de la culture de Parc-Extension has long been a critical civic space—one that provides residents of all backgrounds access to high-caliber artistic experiences, free of charge. This exhibition continues that mission by not only offering an entry point into contemporary

art for new audiences, but also fostering a sense of collective engagement with complex questions about history, environment, and identity.

In a city increasingly attuned to issues of climate change, cultural representation, and sensory overload, *Études Ectoplasmiques* acts as a mirror and a provocation. It reminds us that art can still surprise, unsettle, and ultimately unite communities through shared exploration.

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Q I'm hoping you might be able to give me some insight. After nearly eight years of marriage, my husband announced he does not want our life together, doesn't feel the same about me anymore, and is moving out to find himself.

During our three counseling sessions following this announcement, I sensed he wasn't interested in working things out, and he admitted this was in fact true. This last year has been rough on us. I'm finishing my last year of medical school, and I have been offered wonderful opportunities to travel and obtain specialized training. So I've been gone quite a bit, and when I'm home I'm insanely busy.

I don't think I could say our relationship has been the best it's been, but the end of the craziness of med school is very close, and I have a good job lined up. My husband always said he supports me in my career ambitions. Now he says he feels we have our own separate lives, and furthermore has felt that way for a long time.

I'm hurt and confused why he wouldn't say anything to me. I knew he had been down for awhile, but when I asked him what was wrong, he would say he didn't like his job or was disillusioned with the degree program he had chosen. Now the truth comes out.

I'm willing to put our relationship as priority number one, since I take my marriage vow very seriously and don't believe it is right to run away from problems. Obviously our problems are mainly with good communication, since he could never tell me he felt our relationship was going under.

I trusted him wholeheartedly to live up to the commitment we made each other. I realize commitments take work, which I'm willing to accept, but it seems he is not. I believe our problems are fixable. He's not sure he even wants to be married. What's the best way to understand how someone who says he loves you keeps a secret like this?

Frieda

A Frieda, you want to see this in terms of right and wrong, with your husband the guilty party for withholding his feelings. We could as easily view you as the physician who noted all the patient's symptoms but failed to make the correct diagnosis because it was not in her self-interest to do so.

Viewing your marriage in terms of right and wrong doesn't make sense. Ordinary good people don't want to play the nagging spouse, so they conceal their feelings. It's a normal pattern of behavior. Your husband stayed with you until a major goal was within your grasp, and that is to his credit. He didn't want to be responsible for your failure.

You would have liked a prewarning before the end, but that's like asking the camel to turn around and tell you which straw will be the last. It simply doesn't happen that way. Marriage is fundamentally an emotional connection, which is why putting your marriage at the top of your to-do list is not likely to succeed.

Too much of life is lost if we say love can be manipulated. If that can be manipulated, then everything can be manipulated. Was the rose given to me because he loves me, or given to cajole me because he felt it was necessary? Is the compliment sincere, or did someone say, give her a compliment every day? If we live a life where people can manipulate our emotions, or work on them, then we will never know the meaning of the rose.

No one in med school says to put your marriage first. Heck, no one even tells you to put sleep first. For four years your spouse has been the pursuit of a career. That is what pulled your heart and mind. That's where your attention has been. There is nothing wrong with that, it's just not right for him.

Wayne & Tamara

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

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The luckiest signs this week:
TAURUS, GEMINI AND CANCER



ARIES

Some of your friends will suggest doing some enriching activities this week. As an artist, you'll discover a wellspring of inspiration once you're in your own private space. Solitude can strengthen your creativity.



TAURUS

You'll need to hold an immediate meeting regarding a delicate situation at work. Your colleagues recognize your leadership abilities and exceptional organizational skills; they rely on you for guidance.



GEMINI

When planning your vacation, make sure to carefully organize every detail, especially if you're going abroad or taking a road trip. To have a smooth and enjoyable journey, you'll need to pay particular attention to several important elements.



CANCER

You'll be in a good position to renegotiate the terms of your mortgage or any loans. This flexibility will allow you to treat yourself to a well-deserved getaway.



LEO

You may soon be faced with a difficult decision. Even when weighing up the pros and cons, you may struggle to choose the right path. The answer is in your heart—listen to your inner voice.



VIRGO

This summer, you may want to slim down, which would be good for your overall health. Now is the perfect time to try a new, healthier diet.



LIBRA

Your voice will captivate the audience as soon as you share your point of view. Your words will resonate far and wide, amplified by the power of social media.



SCORPIO

You have some exciting plans in the works for your home and relationships. You may be planning to move in with a new partner. You may consider starting a family, whether through traditional means or by blending families.



SAGITTARIUS

You'll openly express what others are thinking. Fortunately, your wisdom and maturity will guide your choice of words, allowing you to communicate with tact and diplomacy.



CAPRICORN

You may struggle with keeping your finances in check when visiting an attractive boutique. Having a more spiritual outlook on life will lead to greater fulfillment and align you with your true desires.



AQUARIUS

You'll achieve a significant accomplishment that will fill you with pride. If you're single, your soulmate will steer you toward a promising new beginning. If you're in a relationship, your romantic efforts will rekindle the flame between you and your partner.



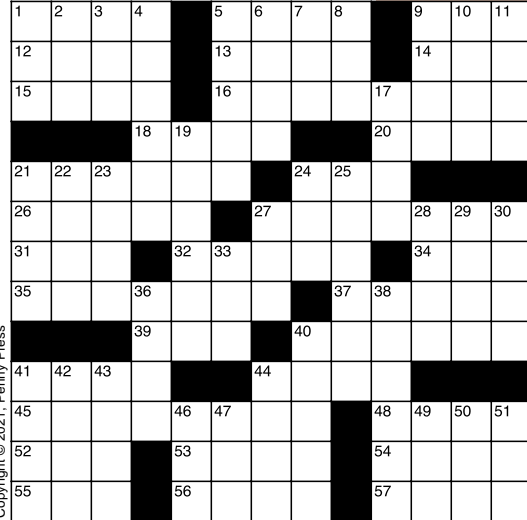
PISCES

You're craving relaxation and rejuvenation. Prioritize a wellness-focused lifestyle to combat the health risks associated with stress.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 282



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ACROSS

- Land measurement
- Sailor's cleaning tool
- Catch sight of
- Name word
- Skin, as an apple
- Gardener's aid
- Roman wear
- And so forth: 2 wds.
- Rap
- Lyric poems
- Clergyman
- Enjoyed a pizza
- Live
- Couple
- House addition
- Domain
- Fifth month
- Disappointment
- Skirt style: hyph.
- Picnic refreshment
- Uttered
- Bungle

DOWN

- Hill-dwelling insect
- Murmur softly
- Shag, e.g.
- Passes a statute
- Piece of pickle
- Electrical unit
- Rainbow's shape
- Second letter
- Lean-to
- _____ over (read thoroughly)
- Affirmatives
- Foot digits

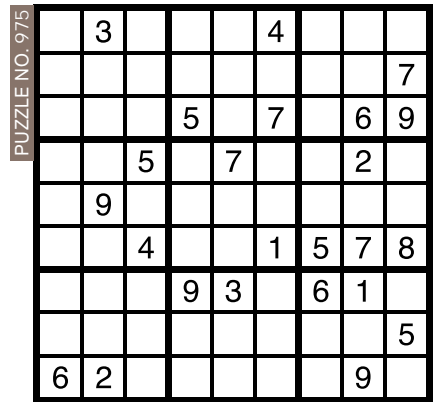
- Fast auto: 2 wds.
- Rind
- Shaft
- River deposit
- Leather punch
- Part of BLT
- Summer skin shade
- Exclude
- Horsehair
- Black-_____ Susan
- Wool-giving mama
- Dizzy
- Placing
- Rip
- Damsel
- Unattractive
- Put away neatly
- The best: 2 wds.
- Nautical rear
- No-win situation
- Negative word
- Herbal brew
- Ancient

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY:

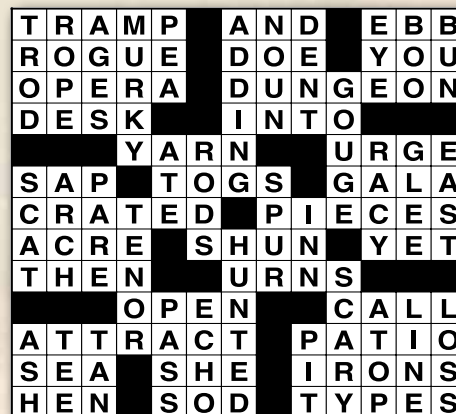
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

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.

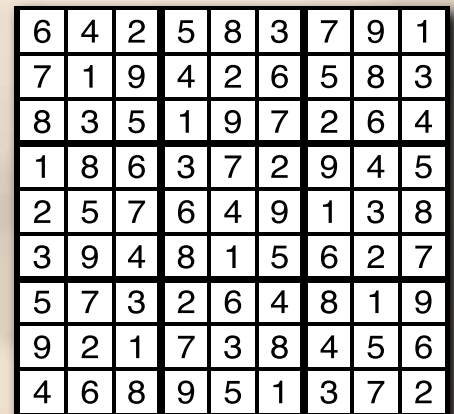


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CROSSWORDS



Sudoku



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