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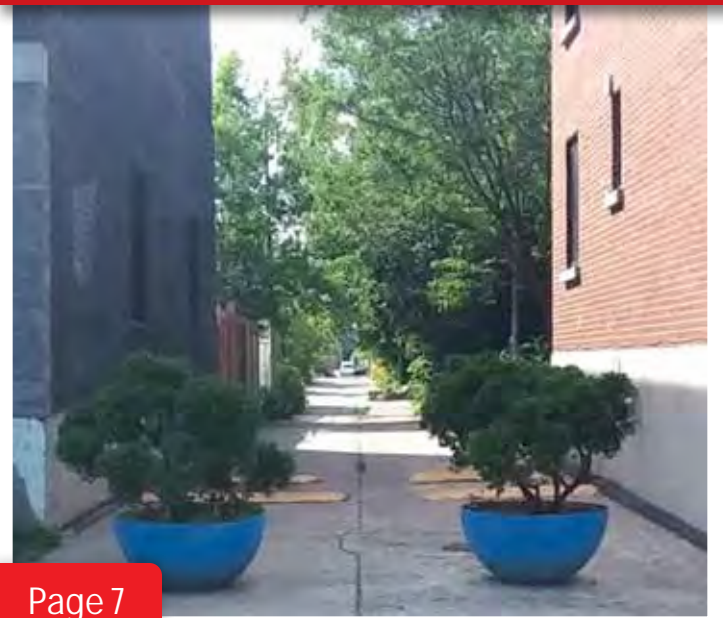
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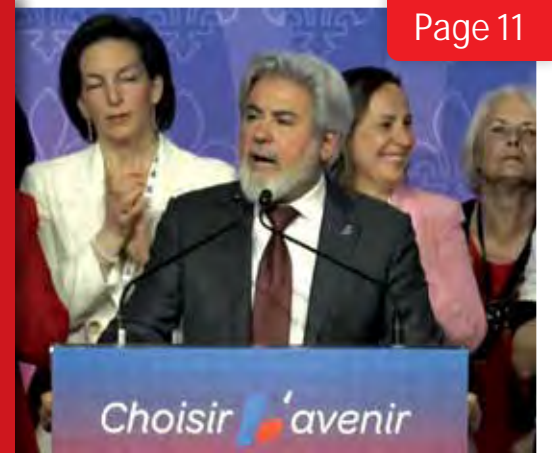
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# Laurier-Dorion MNA honours Parc-Extension residents

**MATTHEW DALDALIAN**

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Ten Parc-Extension immigrants living with precarious status were recognized in a ceremony last week, as Laurier-Dorion MNA Andrés Fontecilla honoured their contributions to the Parc-Extension community.

The event, held on June 20 at Fontecilla's constituency office on Jarry Street East, coincided with World Refugee Day.

Each honouree was presented with a certificate from the National Assembly.

Residents who volunteer, work, and organize to improve local life—often without any formal acknowledgment—are celebrated. This year's recipients included food bank volunteers, tenant rights advocates, and support workers from across the borough.

"People need to receive this kind of recognition because most of the time they are invisible," said Fontecilla. "We often can't see their contributions."

According to the City of Montreal's Mémoires des Montréalais website, nearly 70 per cent of Parc-Extension residents were born outside Canada.

Fontecilla said the event is unique to his district. While federal MPs often hold welcoming ceremonies for new citizens, Fontecilla said there's no similar practice at the local level for refugees or similar populations.

According to the Laurier-Dorion MNA, many of those recognized are active in community organizations such as Afrique au Féminin, Comité d'action de Parc-Extension (CAPE), and the Table de Quartier de Parc-Extension (Parc-Extension Neighbourhood Round Table).

These honourees work in local businesses, pay taxes, and provide essential services—all while navigating an unstable legal status. "These people are important for our economy, for our society, for our neighbourhood," Fontecilla said.

## 22-year-old Amio-Krishana Das



One of this year's recipients was Amio-Krishana Das, a 22-year-old volunteer at several Parc-Extension organizations including Cuisines Collectives Saint Roch, SunYouth, and CAPE. Originally from South Asia, Das has lived in Montreal since April of last year.

"Whenever I get a chance, I do volunteering around the neighbourhood," Das said.

Das said he never sought recognition for his volunteer work, which he described as something he did simply for enjoyment. He added that receiving the certificate came as a surprise, explaining that it was most likely his current organization that submitted his name for recognition.

The young migrant described his experience settling in Montreal as generally positive but mixed. While he found the city welcoming and noted the availability of support systems in Parc-Extension, he pointed out that not speaking French can make integration more difficult for newcomers.

Das also emphasized the importance of formal recognition for people navigating the immigration process. "This certificate can hold a certain kind of value when it comes to their

**Laurier-Dorion MNA Andrés Fontecilla stands with recipient of a certificate, Amio-Krishana Das, in his constituency office on Jarry Street East on June 20, 2025. (Photo: Matthew Daldalian, Newsfirst Multimedia)**

**Laurier-Dorion MNA Andrés Fontecilla addresses attendees in his constituency office on Jarry Street East on June 20, 2025. (Photo: Matthew Daldalian, Newsfirst Multimedia)**



immigration journey," he said. Others in the room echoed that sentiment.

## Acknowledging volunteers

"It feels good to honour the people living in this area who have volunteered along with their work and have done good work for the society," said Santokh Jassi, a member of the board of directors for the Parc-Extension Neighbourhood Round Table.

The Parc-Extension resident was not among this year's honourees but said he knew several of the individuals who received certificates. He attended the event to show his support, having been recognized himself at the same ceremony last year.

Jassi believed the ceremony was meaningful not just for the honourees, but for the whole neighbourhood.

Mr. Fontecilla said events of similar nature shift the narrative around immigration and belonging. He criticized the tendency of governments to scapegoat immigrant populations for social or economic problems.

"They, they got used to it. To put the problems of our society on the back of immigrant people, temporary workers, or refugees," he added. "It's not right."

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# OPINION & Editorial



## Cuts in public education: looking at both sides

Canadian singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell gave the world a lesson in what it takes to be fully human, speaking volumes about love needing to be looked at from Both Sides, Now revealing the uncertainty that comes with love, regardless of who's involved in the act of loving and living.

Tears and fears and feeling proud, To say I love you right out loud, Dreams and schemes and circus crowds, I've looked at life from both sides now, from Up and down and still somehow, It's life's illusions I recall, I really don't know life at all.

Foreshadowing the latest rupture of Quebec society, pitting the Minister of Education, against the armed forces of public education, there is failure on both sides to cooperate in defense and advancement of the quality of public education whose roots were planted by the Parent Report of 1964's seminal re-alignment of the system that reduced 1500 Catholic school boards to a manageable 55, across La Belle Province. To this were added nine Protestant school boards. These major recommendations, implemented soon after, were only two of 500 contained in the report. Thus, public education was taken out of the hands of Catholic and Protestant Committees and handed over to the newly-created Ministry of Education.

Now, more than 60 years later, after subsequent restructuring in 1998, through abolition of denominational boards, replaced by linguistic entities, it appears that in many people's minds a further divide is now compromising the much-needed cooperative relationship between Quebec's two historical communities,

whose schools are currently managed by French Service Centers and English School Boards. This is an erosion of public education bordering on violation of the rights of taxpayers and stakeholders who are entitled to a unified system of public education, delivered in French, English, and both.

As seen by one side, the roaring flames of public education are about to be snuffed out by the water cannons flowing from Premier Legault's CAQ Ivory Tower, upon which sits a powerful force in Education, Minister Bernard Drainville.

On this side of the divide, the nine English School Boards are decrying the reality of having to absorb 10% (\$51 million) of the recent imposition of \$510 Million for all public education, this in addition to the 4% imposed in March of this year. As funding tightens, and student academic needs persist, our school systems will need to wring every bit of value for students from the limited dollars they have. Meanwhile, leaner budgets will invite intense community and employee pressure on where and how to trim the costs.

Our school systems will need more than a governance structure that amounts to going through the motions, is the general mind-set of the English School Boards, while although it is believed that the French Service Centers are of the same opinion, they do not have the latitude to publicly speak out against the massive cuts.

On the other side, Minister Drainville's office defended the budget plan, saying it marks a slowdown in spending growth, not cuts. The education budget has grown by 58 per cent since the CAQ took power in 2018, reaching

\$23.5 billion, said Antoine de la Durantaye, a spokesperson for the minister. "The number of teachers and support staff has grown two to three times faster than student enrolment," he said. "We can't continue at this pace indefinitely — we must set targets." Quebec says this year's education budget grew by \$1.1 billion compared to last year, and staffing levels are expected to rise by two per cent to 152,500 full-time equivalents. "This is not about cuts, but about a slower rate of budget growth," de la Durantaye said. While acknowledging the transition may require tough choices, he said the minister is confident school officials will preserve direct services to students.

Consequently, more than ever, we need school boards resolute in their commitment to keeping budget discussions focused on what's best for students, and to stop protecting 'bureaucrats' positions.

Sadly, a majority of Quebec's nine English school boards is inundated with a bloated bureaucracy; the figures announced in their Organization Charts don't lie.

School board administrators always claim that their boards are underfunded, in part because, according to them, provincial funding is falling below the rate of inflation.

In the meantime, we want readers to know that at the time we went to press we had not received any statements from chairman James Di Sano concerning the budget cuts, which will amount to \$12 million for Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board. We believe that we will receive them in due time for our next edition of July 9, 2025.

Renata Isopo

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# Parc-Extension's housing costs surge as affordability crisis deepens

Photo showing the future modular housing.  
(Photo: courtesy of the City of Montreal)

**DIMITRIS ILIAS**

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For decades, Parc-Extension was one of Montreal's last affordable neighbourhoods—a densely populated, multicultural hub where newcomers could find modest rents and build a life. Today, that reputation is vanishing fast.

In recent years, the cost of renting in Parc-Ex has climbed at a staggering pace. Rents that once hovered around \$800 or \$900 for a family-sized apartment have now doubled, with some units surpassing \$1,500 per month. The shift has strained long-term residents, many of whom now spend most of their income on housing, leaving little for groceries, transit, or medication.

This housing pressure has been building for some time, but the 2019 opening of the Université de Montréal's new MIL campus—just across the tracks from Parc-Ex—has accelerated the transformation. With new academic facilities, increased student traffic, and rising investor interest, the area is experiencing the kind of gentrification that has already reshaped other Montreal neighbourhoods.

New developments are going up, but they're not solving the affordability crisis. In fact, much of the new rental stock is geared toward students and professionals rather than low-income families. Meanwhile, older units are disappearing from the market through evictions, major renovations, or strategic lease

non-renewals. In some cases, landlords undertake minimal repairs and re-list the apartments at significantly higher rates.

City data confirms the trend: rental prices across the borough of Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension rose an average of 16% last year. The sharpest increase was seen in smaller units, with bachelor and one-bedroom apartments spiking by more than 25%. These changes are pushing many tenants out—and for those who remain, survival increasingly depends on drastic compromises.

While visible homelessness remains relatively rare in Parc-Ex, a growing number of residents are facing what experts call “hidden homelessness.” Some rent shared rooms at exorbitant prices. Others rely on overcrowded arrangements, sleeping on couches or living with extended family in tight quarters. Though not always seen, this housing insecurity is no less severe.

In response to the crisis, the City of Montreal

recently announced plans to install modular housing units in the MIL sector. These prefabricated buildings, previously used by Hydro-Québec workers in northern Quebec, will temporarily house around 30 individuals transitioning out of homelessness. The initiative is billed as a short-term measure, supported by community groups that will provide on-site services.

However, critics argue that such pilot projects—while helpful for a handful—do little to address the broader affordability problem. The mismatch between population needs and available housing continues to widen.

The Université de Montréal has acknowledged the campus's impact on local housing demand and has expressed support for student housing initiatives. Yet, the institution maintains that its role does not extend to the creation of social housing—leaving that responsibility to municipalities and the province.

In Parc-Extension, municipal authorities

have taken some steps to limit evictions and aggressive development tactics, particularly in cases of property subdivision or expansion. However, enforcement is difficult, and landlords often find other ways to increase profitability through loopholes or superficial renovations.

As housing pressures intensify, community organizations are calling for stronger rent control mechanisms and large-scale investment in non-market housing. There is movement on this front: the city has begun acquiring land in Parc-Extension for future affordable housing developments, and several cooperative housing projects are currently being discussed.

Still, these efforts remain at the planning stage, and the pace of change on the ground is unrelenting. What was once a working-class neighbourhood offering stable, low-cost housing is now teetering on the edge of transformation—one where affordability may soon become a relic of the past.



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# A new kind of playground

Parc-Extension's back alleys get a safety makeover



## DIMITRIS ILIAS

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In Parc-Extension, where every square metre of public space is cherished, a quiet revolution is underway — and it's happening in the back alleys.

Often overlooked and underutilized, these narrow laneways that crisscross residential blocks are being reimagined as safe, shared community spaces. Once mainly the domain of parked cars, delivery trucks, and hurried shortcuts, the alleys of Parc-Extension are now becoming safe corridors for children, cyclists, and neighbours to mingle and play.

This transformation is part of a broader initiative by the borough of Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension (VSP), which is deploying a “traffic calming” strategy designed to improve the quality of life in high-density urban areas. The plan zeroes in on reducing transit traffic, slowing vehicle speeds, and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist safety — goals that are particularly resonant in a neighbourhood as populated and dynamic as Parc-Extension.

The logic is simple: make the laneways less attractive to through traffic, and more welcoming to the people who actually live there. To achieve this, the city is selectively closing one of the entrances to certain alleys using creative physical barriers. Think less “roadblock” and more “urban gardening” — with installations like large planter boxes, flexible safety bollards, and concrete bells to mark the transformation.

This year, two Parc-Extension alleys are set to receive this safety makeover. One lies between Ogilvy Avenue, Jean-Talon Street West, Stuart Avenue and Wiseman Avenue. The other runs between Saint-Roch Street and the same trio of avenues. These particular sites were not chosen at random. They were identified through public consultations, resident feedback, and an evaluation of key safety criteria: proximity to schools, daycares and parks, the presence of young families, the width of the alley, and the volume of vehicular traffic cutting through.

Parc-Extension, home to one of Montreal's most diverse and youngest populations, is especially suited for such an initiative. With limited access to green space and a constant pressure on public infrastructure, the transformation of back alleys into community-friendly micro-spaces represents more than just a traffic plan — it's a step toward reclaiming public space in a neighbourhood that needs it most.

As children pedal their bikes more freely and neighbours stop to chat in the middle of once-car-dominated lanes, the alley becomes more than a shortcut — it becomes a living part of the community fabric.

By rethinking the purpose of its laneways, Parc-Extension is quietly setting a powerful example for other neighbourhoods. In a city grappling with urban density and climate challenges, sometimes the smartest moves begin not on the boulevards, but in the alleys.



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### 2. DECORATED ATHLETES

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Fleury, Patrick Roy, Roberto Luong and Ed Belfour dominate the top five.

Canada's athletic achievements extend beyond hockey. Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir are the most decorated figure skaters in Olympic history. Clara Hughes has excelled in both speed skating and cycling. You can't mention notable Canadian athletes without honouring the enduring legacy of marathon runner Terry Fox.

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### 4. REVOLUTIONARY INVENTIONS

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Cheers to Canada!



## Canada Day your way

This year, Canada Day falls on Wednesday, July 1. There are plenty of ways you can join in, whether you're alone or with your family. Here are a few of our favourite Canada Day activities:

- **Go to the park.** Has your town planned a day-long event around the park bandstand with live entertainment and fun-fair games? Round up your sun hat, lawn chair and a cooler of drinks and go join the festivities. If there's nothing official happening, the next town over most likely has something going on. Why not take a drive over and see?
- **Join a parade.** Ah, the hottest days of summer. You can finally put on those white summer slacks and red t-shirt and wave the maple leaf flag. See if your town's putting on a kids' red-and-white bicycle-decorating contest and offer to help out. If not, maybe you're just the person to start the tradition.
- **Host a supper.** After a lively day down at the park who wants to end things at home alone? Invite a few friends or neighbours over to keep the celebration going. You may want to offer the hotdogs or hamburgers and invite your

guests to bring the salads and red-and-white desserts. It'll be a sweet Canada Day that everyone remembers.

- **Set up a fireworks viewing.** You can all make your way back to the park for the fireworks, or why not hold on to your guests right up until fireworks time by tempting them with hot drinks and cozy blankets for their legs. Sit back and watch from where you are. What a spectacular end to a great day.

Round up your picnic stuff and head down to the park for the Canada Day festivities.



Joyeuse  
Fête du Canada  
Happy  
Canada Day

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J'aimerais souhaiter à tous une  
Joyeuse Fête du Canada !

I would like to wish you all a  
Happy Canada Day!



**MARY DEROS**

Conseillère de la Ville du district de Parc-Extension  
Présidente du C.C.U. & Vice-présidente de la commission  
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# Montréal-Trudeau International Airport: Summer season travel tips and mitigation measures

**NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA**  
info@newsfirst.ca

With significant passenger traffic at YUL Montréal-Trudeau International Airport and many summer destinations awaiting travellers, ADM Aéroports de Montréal and its community partners are expecting a busy summer at YUL.

ADM would like to remind travellers of some important tips to help them start their holiday on the right foot by preparing properly for their journey through the airport.

## Mitigation measures implemented by ADM for the summer season

To offer users alternatives and avoid feeling puzzled when travelling to YUL, several mitigation measures implemented last summer to facilitate access to YUL are back again this year:

The West Express drop-off zone, located in the P4 multi-level parking lot, offers an additional option to drop off a loved one in preparation for their departure. It is served by a frequent shuttle service, and access to the terminal takes less than 5 minutes.

The East Express drop-off zone is back near Highway 520 and Côte-de-Liesse. It also offers a free shuttle service every five minutes, with a five-minute journey time.

Express drop-off points are free and open 7 days a week, between 1 p.m. and 8 p.m., during peak periods.

A 40-minute free parking period is also being offered for most parking lots on the YUL site until the end of the summer season. This measure aims to limit circular vehicle movements on the site.

The various options available to users to help them plan their journeys to and from the airport can also be found on the ADM website.

## For passengers leaving: Getting ready

Check the status and schedule of your flight before you go to the airport by visiting the ADM website or by contacting your airline.

Check the current occupancy of our available parking lots and reserve your parking space to ensure a spot during your trip and to take advantage of various promotions.

Plan your movements and take the time to check road conditions and traffic by consulting

Québec 511 before heading to the airport.

Find out about the various public transportation options available in your area to get to the airport.

Carefully pack your carry-on baggage to make it easier to pass through security.

Check with your airline to determine the allowable size of your carry-on baggage and the maximum weight of your checked baggage.

## Arrive early

Arrive at the airport 3 hours prior to departure, regardless of your destination, to complete the airport pre-boarding process.

Once you have completed your check-in, immediately go through security. You will then be able to explore and enjoy YUL's retail offerings and family activities in the restricted area.

To take advantage of expedited airport procedures, make use of complimentary services offered at YUL:

Mobile Passport Control (flights to the U.S.), an application that allows you to submit your passport information and customs declaration in advance. This saves you time and gives you access to a priority line at the airport.

YUL Express (all flights departing from YUL), an online booking platform that provides a schedule for security checkpoints as well as a priority line.

Enhanced Passenger Processing (flights to the United States), a new biometric initiative

provided by United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) that is now available only to US citizens. It allows them to use facial recognition technology to speed up the border process when returning home.

## For passengers returning home

Simplify your arrival in Canada by completing your Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) Customs' Advance Declaration, up to 72 hours prior to your arrival in Canada using ArriveCAN. The use of this application reduces the processing time for travellers in the border control area.

To avoid waiting, you can pay for your parking online on your mobile device, 15 minutes before you leave the airport. Simply scan the QR code on your parking ticket and follow the instructions.

## Picking up passengers

Make sure that the passenger you are meeting has arrived and completed arrival procedures before heading to the arrivals level pick-up area, which is very busy. If they haven't arrived yet, use the CellParc waiting lots. You can stay there for up to 2 hours free of charge.

To make it easier to locate passengers, the pick-up area is divided into 5 loading areas: A, B, C, D and E. Pay attention and arrange a precise meeting point.

To find the most convenient drop-off option based on traffic forecasts for the airport area.

# When home becomes hazard Montreal's crackdown on unsafe housing

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By all appearances, it might seem like a quiet street in Montreal. But behind some closed doors, inspectors from the city are uncovering danger-

ous secrets—crumbling ceilings, mold-choked walls, fire hazards, and sometimes even unlivable conditions. And when a tenant or concerned citizen picks up the phone to file a complaint, the

► Continued on page 11



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# Pablo Rodriguez elected Quebec Liberal leader

**MARTIN C. BARRY**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter  
marty@newsfirst.ca

Rodriguez won the race after two rounds of voting with 52.3 per cent support from party members at the June 9-14 leadership convention in Quebec City. His only other close contender was Charles Milliard who finished with 47.7 per cent support.

In his victory speech, Rodriguez talked about his background as an Argentina-born political refugee who arrived in Canada at age eight. His father was a human rights lawyer whose defense of political dissidents made him the target of one of South America's most brutal regimes.

## A Trudeau gov't vet

Rodriguez was first elected to the House of Commons in 2004, representing the Honoré-Mercier riding in Montreal. As a senior member

of former prime minister Justin Trudeau's government, he held various ministerial positions in cabinet, including Heritage and Transport.

He left cabinet and began sitting in the House as an Independent MP in September 2024, after announcing he would be entering provincial politics and becoming a contender for the Quebec Liberal Party's leadership.

Address convention attendees on June 14, Rodriguez called the new role the "honour of a lifetime," while saying it was the beginning of new era for the Quebec Liberals and all of Quebec.

"We need to look toward the future, to build tomorrow's Quebec for our children and grandchildren," he told journalists.

## Won't run until Oct. 2026

Pablo Rodriguez has said that his intention is to wait until the 2026 election to run for a National Assembly seat, rather than running in a by-election sooner. But he still plans to put



in appearances periodically as PLQ leader at the Quebec National Assembly building to give press conferences.

The effect of new leadership at the PLQ was already being felt within days of Rodriguez's victory. A Pallas Data poll conducted shortly afterwards showed a rise in voting intentions for the provincial Liberals at the expense of the currently governing Coalition Avenir Québec.

However, the Parti Québécois (PQ) was still leading with 31 per cent of voter intentions even though the Liberals under Rodriguez were not far behind at 26 per cent. The CAQ was in third

place at just 15 per cent.

The previous Pallas Data poll, published in March 2025, put the Liberals at 22 per cent.

## A polarized election?

Some political observers have noted that Pablo Rodriguez's leadership of the Quebec Liberals may create a polarized political environment leading into next year's election. They suggest his longtime association with federalism will contrast strongly with the separatist doctrine of the Parti Québécois, which currently leads the polls in Quebec voters' intentions.

## ◀ Continued from page 10

wheels of one of Montreal's most decisive housing enforcement processes begin to turn.

In recent months, city authorities have ramped up efforts to respond to concerns about building maintenance, hygiene, and safety. Montreal is making it clear: no resident should live in conditions that threaten their health or dignity. And if a landlord neglects their responsibilities, the city is prepared to step in—forcefully if necessary.

The process begins with an inspection. A designated city agent—armed with official ID and, if needed, a camera—has the legal authority to enter a residence, examine every detail, and document what they find. Whether it's a water leak causing mold, unsafe wiring, or structural instability, inspectors are empowered to demand information, request documents, and even order specific tests or professional assessments. In some cases, they can mandate the installation of monitoring equipment to ensure a building's safety over time.

What happens next depends on the severity of the case. In many instances, owners are required to fix the issue and provide proof of compliance. But when hazards pose immediate risks—such as potential collapses, exposure to toxins, or fire threats—the city doesn't wait. An evacuation

notice can be issued, and residents might be required to leave their homes immediately. City crews can then move the tenants' belongings into storage and barricade the building to prevent re-entry.

Such emergency evacuations, while rare, send a strong message. They are not symbolic gestures—they are binding legal actions. Notices are posted on-site and must remain untouched. Tampering with them is itself an offense. Once posted, the building cannot be inhabited again until all necessary repairs have been completed and verified by authorities.

And for property owners who think they can dodge responsibility by disappearing? The city has a plan for that too. If a landlord refuses, neglects, or is simply unreachable, Montreal can hire contractors to perform the necessary work—then send the bill to the owner. These costs aren't optional. They become legal debts backed by property liens, meaning the city can ultimately recover them through the sale or seizure of the property.

In areas like Parc-Extension—where housing density is high and aging buildings are common—the implications of this policy are particularly potent. While not named specifically in this week's announcement, neighbourhoods with histories of tenant complaints and precarious conditions are

likely to feel the ripple effects of this strengthened enforcement regime.

Landlords, especially those operating older multi-unit dwellings, would be wise to take note. The city's inspectors are not only investigating—they are also collecting data, year after year, to identify patterns of neglect. These patterns can trigger broader interventions and even targeted legal action.

The penalties for infractions aren't just bureaucratic slaps on the wrist. Individual owners face

finest ranging from \$250 for a first offense to \$2,500 for repeat violations. For corporations, those numbers double. It's part of a larger push by Montreal to raise the cost of non-compliance high enough that it's no longer worth the risk.

The message is unambiguous: Montreal is no longer waiting for landlords to do the right thing. Whether it's a three-story walk-up with cracked windows or a boarded-up triplex with sagging floors, the city is ready to knock—and if needed, to kick the door in.

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# Canada is one of the least AI literate nations in the world, new research shows

**Canada ranked fourth lowest in AI literacy and training among 47 countries, a joint study by KPMG International and the University of Melbourne reveals**

NEWSFIRST MULTIMEDIA | [info@newsfirst.ca](mailto:info@newsfirst.ca)

Canadians have among the lowest levels of training, literacy and trust in artificial intelligence systems in the world, new research from KPMG International and the University of Melbourne shows.

Trust, attitudes and use of artificial intelligence: A global study 2025 is the most comprehensive global study into the public's trust, use and attitudes towards AI. The study surveyed over 48,000 people in 30 advanced economies and 17 emerging economies, including 1,025 people in Canada.

The study found Canada ranked 44th in AI training and literacy out of all 47 countries, and 28th among the 30 advanced economies, as defined by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). When it comes to trust in AI systems, Canada ranked 42nd out of 47 countries and 25th out of 30 advanced economies.

The findings underscore the need for increased investments in education, training and regulation to build Canadians' trust in AI and use it as a strategic tool to help solve the country's productivity crisis, says Benjie Thomas, CEO

and Senior Partner of KPMG in Canada.

"Canada's economy is facing multiple pressures – U.S. tariffs are upending global trade systems, geopolitical shifts are increasing operational risks, while technology advances at lightning speed. Now is the time for our organizations, institutions and governments to act boldly to boost prosperity and advance our competitive position – AI offers us a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do that," says Mr. Thomas.

"Low literacy in AI is holding Canadians back from trusting the technology, and that's a major barrier to adoption. The more Canadians know about AI, the more likely they are to trust it and use it. We need to get Canadians and Canadian organizations excited about using AI because it can help boost our productivity and create a more competitive and dynamic economy," Mr. Thomas adds.

## Low AI literacy

The survey focused on three key areas: AI training, knowledge and efficacy. Less than one

quarter (24 per cent) of Canadian respondents said they have received AI training, compared to 39 per cent globally.

"The ability to use AI effectively and knowledgeably is becoming a critical skill in today's economy. AI will re-shape the future of nearly every organization, so it's imperative for Canadian institutions to prioritize AI training and education at all levels – in schools and in the workplace," Mr. Thomas says.

Fewer than four in 10 (38 per cent) Canadians said they have moderate or high knowledge of AI, compared to 52 per cent globally. AI knowledge includes whether respondents feel informed about how AI is used, whether they understand when AI is being used, and whether they feel they have the skills necessary to use AI.

When respondents were asked to self-report their level of AI efficacy – that is, how skillfully they could use, communicate with or evaluate responses generated by AI – only 47 per cent of Canadians said they can use AI effectively, versus 60 per cent globally.

"AI training and education is necessary for all Canadians. With more education, we will all be able to use AI more confidently and safely, and adoption will grow. When AI adoption grows, innovation and productivity growth will follow," says Stephanie Terrill, Canadian Managing Partner for Digital and Transformation at KPMG in Canada.

## Public trust in AI is lacking

Low AI literacy undermines trust in AI systems. According to the survey, only 34 per cent of Canadians are willing to trust information from AI, compared to 46 per cent globally, while only half of Canadians approve or accept the use of AI, compared to 72 per cent globally.

Nearly half (46 per cent) of Canadians believe the risks of AI outweigh the benefits, compared to 32 per cent globally, even though fewer Canadians (39 per cent) have experienced or observed negative outcomes from using AI than their global peers (43 per cent).

Among the negative outcomes Canadians are most concerned about: 87 per cent of Canadians expressed moderate or high concern about cybersecurity risk, even though only 32 per cent said they have personally observed or experienced cyber breaches. Loss of privacy or intellectual property is also a major concern, with 86 per cent of Canadians expressing moderate or high concern about it, but only 38 per cent have experienced it.

"Canadians are understandably concerned about the potential risks of AI but being overly risk averse can stifle innovation and hold us back from being competitive. There are governance mechanisms and frameworks that can boost transparency and security in AI systems, but public and private sector leaders must commit to adopting them – with engagement and buy-in from Canadians. That will help build public trust in AI and by extension, higher adoption," Ms. Terrill says.

## Key highlights:

- 46 per cent of Canadians believe the risks

of AI outweigh the benefits (32 per cent globally)

- 22 per cent believe the risks and benefits are balanced (26 per cent globally)
- 32 per cent believe the benefits outweigh the risks (42 per cent globally)
- 51 per cent of Canadians feel optimistic about AI, compared to 69 per cent globally
- 68 per cent are worried about AI (61 per cent globally)
- 39 per cent are excited about AI (60 per cent globally)

## AI Regulation

To help foster more trust in AI, Canadians want stronger governance, regulation and assurance mechanisms built into AI systems.

Three quarters of Canadians said they want AI regulation, compared to 70 per cent globally. Currently, Canada does not have a federal regulatory framework in place. As an interim measure, the federal government established a Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Responsible Development and Management of Advanced Generative AI Systems, which sets voluntary commitments that organizations can agree to abide by to demonstrate responsible development and management of generative AI systems.

Nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of Canadians agree that governments or existing regulators should regulate AI, and 73 per cent agree with international AI laws. Seven in 10 (72 per cent) said they'd like to see co-regulation by industry, government and existing regulators.

Nearly nine in 10 (89 per cent) Canadians agreed there should be laws to prevent the spread of AI-generated misinformation, while 87 per cent agreed news and social media companies need to ensure people can detect when content is AI-generated.

Over eight in 10 (83 per cent) Canadians said they would be more willing to trust AI systems with assurances such as: mechanisms for human intervention to override or correct AI-generated output; having the right to opt out of personal data being used to train AI models; accountability if something goes wrong; monitoring for accuracy and reliability; adhering to proper standards, governance and regulation; and assurance from a third party.

"Canadians want assurances that AI systems are safe, secure and reliable. Governments, businesses, academic and non-profit institutions must work together with Canadians to advance AI responsibly and ethically, while prioritizing innovation and productivity first and foremost. We need transformational leadership and collaboration," Ms. Terrill says.

Canadians have the most confidence in universities and research institutions to develop and use AI in the best interests of the public, with nearly 8 in 10 (79 per cent) expressing moderate or high confidence in those institutions. By contrast, only 51 per cent expressed the same confidence in commercial organizations, and only 53 per cent in big technology companies.



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# DIRECT ANSWERS

FROM WAYNE & TAMARA

## THINK FOR YOURSELF

**Q** I go out with a nice lady 15 years my senior. Everyone tells me I'm not on the right track! We like each other. Lots of the time she mentions she is too old for me. I'm 70 and she's 85. She looks younger than I, but they all know her age. What am I to do?

We lost our spouses five years ago, and we still enjoy life together. I have lots of friends my age who want me to take them out, but I ignore their pleas. As time rolls on I'm starting to feel lost and empty inside about this. Any ideas?

Robert

**A** Robert, at what point do you get to say, "This is my life. I'm going to do what makes me happy."

When is the book going to be about you, if it isn't in the last chapters? All of our lives, from the time we are born, we find more than enough people wanting us to sacrifice something for them.

Your "friends" aren't interested in you as a person. They are thinking, if he doesn't marry

her, he will marry one of us. Your point is you don't love one of them, but their point is they get to rule over you. Because they are not happy for you, there is no genuine relationship with them.

Age doesn't bring wisdom to everyone. Some people are just as mean-spirited and controlling in retirement as they were when they were younger.

The only time we should sacrifice is when it is not asked for and when it is given out of love. That prevents us from feeling like a martyr or feeling like we sacrificed something. When the gift giver gives without being puffed up, or making another feel beholden, that's a good gift.

Seeing the effect of the gift is all we should ask for. You know you are giving too much when it feels like giving money to a crack addict. That's the lost and empty feeling you have now. You've been asked to sacrifice your life by others who want to manipulate you for their own gain.

Wayne & Tamara

## BIRDS OF A FEATHER

**Q** I'm 19 and currently single. I haven't dated that many men in my life. Going away to college was like being thrust face first into the dating world, and even now, at the end of my freshman year, I still feel lost.

I've been on a lot of dates, but finally found this guy who seems to be different. Male, age 22, was engaged two years ago. He's been through a series of relationships since then and a number of sex partners. He is also involved in drugs (pot and mushrooms). He is currently being treated for a sexually transmitted disease, which he may or may not have.

This male, despite his shortcomings, has won me over in a short amount of time to think he's different from others. He is caring, sweet, intelligent, and we seem to have a lot of the same interests. My only worry is that with all my inexperience I will end up getting way over my

head. Also, I don't think I am comfortable with the fact he smokes pot.

We've only known each other two weeks, but we've already spent hours and hours talking. What should I do? My heart tells me one thing, and my head tells me another.

Anna

**A** Anna, some people have a problem setting their sights too high, but you've set yours too low. Asking for a knight in shining armor may be too much, but that doesn't mean you have to settle for Prince Charming's stable boy.

None of his problems are something an inexperienced dater needs. Until you get your bearings in college, stay with others who are more like yourself: clean slates with all the possibilities of life before them.

Wayne & Tamara

WAYNE & TAMARA MITCHELL are the authors of YOUR OTHER HALF ([www.yourotherhalf.com](http://www.yourotherhalf.com))

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- Pineapple
- Strawberries
- Cantaloupe
- Limes (2)
- Yellow Peaches (3)
- Tomatoes (2)

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- Eggplant

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# HOROSCOPE

Week of June 29 to July 5, 2025

The luckiest signs this week:  
SCORPIO, SAGITTARIUS AND CAPRICORN



## ARIES

This week, work and finances may often cause concern and do little to lower tensions in your already complicated romantic relationship. However, addressing certain issues may ease your worries.



## TAURUS

Cleaning may feel like a major chore that you want to keep putting off. At work, confidently sharing your innovative ideas could prove very lucrative.



## GEMINI

You'll spend time beautifying your home, which will enhance your living space. You'll feel the urge to keep up with the latest technology by adding sophisticated connected gadgets to your home.



## CANCER

You may find it hard to curb your impulsiveness this week. At work, you'll quickly climb the corporate ladder. Be prepared for the significant responsibilities that come with your arrival at the top.



## LEO

You'll need to create a budget for your family life and upcoming projects. Your vacation is just around the corner. Make sure everything is organized so you can relax and fully enjoy every moment.



## VIRGO

If you're generous by nature, don't hesitate to reach out to friends and family who need your support. Just remember to prioritize your well-being to avoid exhausting yourself in the process.



## LIBRA

Whether you're on vacation or not, let your mind wander in the comfort of your own home. What better way to escape reality than by diving into a great book or binge-watching a captivating TV series.



## SCORPIO

You'll feel the sudden need to gather all your friends to celebrate the start of summer. On the job, prepare for a busy week with demanding clients. Expect a constant flow of people who may be difficult to please.



## SAGITTARIUS

Choosing high-quality materials when renovating your home is not a luxury, but a smart investment for your future. If you're in a new relationship, you'll take the first step toward building a new life together.



## CAPRICORN

You'll forge lasting friendships during your travels, at conferences, in training sessions or through group therapy. These encounters will help you create meaningful connections and allow you to release pent-up emotions.



## AQUARIUS

In your relationship, mere gestures of affection won't suffice as proof of love. Your partner must inspire you to chase your dreams and create romantic moments with you.



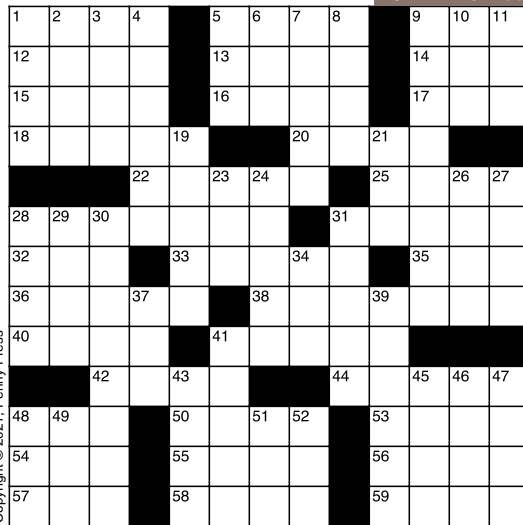
## PISCES

Your vacation is almost here. Don't stay home! Whether you're with family or friends, take the time to balance your chakras and find inner peace within your environment.

# Coffee Break

## CROSSWORDS

PUZZLE NO. 283



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### ACROSS

1. Bathing-suit tops
5. White House staffer
9. Boring instrument
12. Every individual
13. Trickle
14. Feathery stole
15. In any way
16. Teamster's rig
17. Soak
18. Bowler's button
20. Bouncing sound
22. Slender traces
25. Other
28. Summer quencher: 2 wds.
31. Nearer the facts
32. Prom wear
33. Fastener
35. Road covering
36. Rub out
38. Girdles
40. Notation
41. Yell

### DOWN

1. Milwaukee product
2. Acclaim
3. Expert fliers
4. Clever
5. Classified notices
6. Outrage
7. Small coins
8. Long heroic poem
9. Definite

### 10. Seek the love of

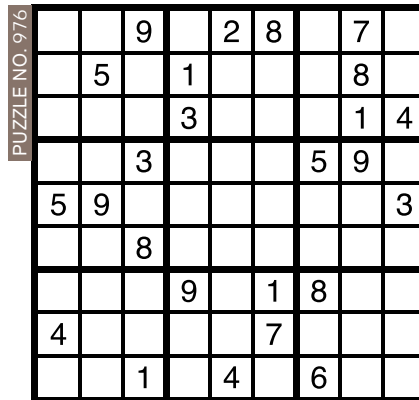
11. Lick at
19. Book name
21. "Tell \_\_\_\_ About It"
23. Neptune's domain
24. Cloth emblem
26. Chair
27. Missteps
28. Thing
29. Preserve
30. Inspected
31. Ache
34. Murmur fondly
37. Turf unit
39. Thin
41. Exhausted
43. Weight
45. Actor Danza
46. Certain woodwind
47. "Broadcast \_\_\_\_"
48. Pair
49. Moray, e.g.
51. Cost
52. Heavy-hearted

# Sudoku

## HOW TO PLAY:

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

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

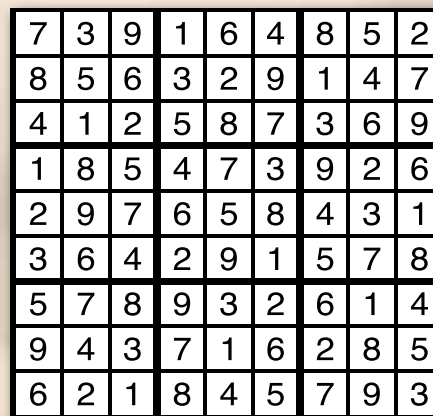


## Last Issue's Answers

### CROSSWORDS



### Sudoku



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# MAKE THE MOVE

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DOWN



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