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Authorities are investigating arson theory **for JPA supermarket fire**

Page 3



Montreal police and fire officials fenced off the collapsed building as crews continued to secure the site and manage debris. (Photo: George Batsoulis)

Théo Abellard: rising jazz keyboardist from Parc-Ex

Page 11



An accomplished pianist in the style of other great players of the instrument from Montreal like Oliver Jones and Oscar Peterson, Theo plays all types of music ranging from jazz, gospel, funk and R&B. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)





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Arson theory emerges in investigation of Parc-Extension fire

ALESSANDRO COMMISSO
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More than a month after a massive fire displaced dozens of residents and destroyed a commercial-residential building in Montreal's Parc-Extension neighbourhood, investigators are exploring the possibility that the blaze may have been deliberately set.

The fire broke out on Oct. 7 on Saint-Roch Street near de l'Épée Avenue, devastating a two-storey building that housed several apartments and businesses, including the JPA Supermarket. Approximately 30 residents were displaced by the blaze.



Investigators are examining the possibility that suspected arsonists may be buried beneath the rubble, though authorities have not confirmed that anyone remains trapped inside the debris. (Photo: George Batsoulis)

On Nov. 18, investigators returned to the site with a dog specially trained in the detection of human remains, marking a significant development in the ongoing investigation.



Reggie, the Labrador dog trained for the detection of human remains.



The former JPA Supermarket was reduced to rubble following the devastating Oct. 7 fire. (Photo: George Batsoulis)

Authorities have not confirmed whether anyone is believed to be trapped beneath the rubble, nor have they stated that human remains have been located. As of Nov. 19, no human remains have been found at the scene.

The SPVM has also declined to confirm reports suggesting individuals may be buried beneath the debris. Nevertheless, the presence of specialized search teams has fuelled speculation among some residents and observers that potential suspects may have been unable to escape the building before portions of the structure collapsed.

At this stage, however, that remains strictly speculation. Investigators have not publicly identified any suspects, nor have they confirmed that any individuals were inside the building when the fire broke out.

The development represents a shift from the early days of the investigation. Shortly after the fire, Montreal Fire Department officials indicated there was no evidence suggesting the blaze was suspicious. More recently, authorities have begun examining whether the fire may have been intentionally set, though no definitive conclusions have been announced.

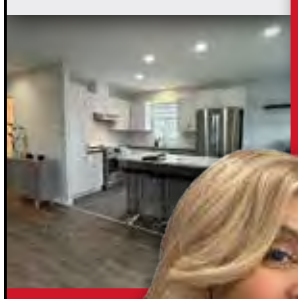
Police and fire investigators continue to examine the scene as they work to determine the exact cause of the fire. No charges have been laid, and authorities have not released further details regarding the arson theory.

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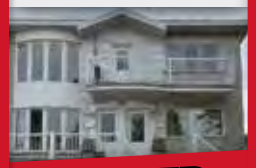
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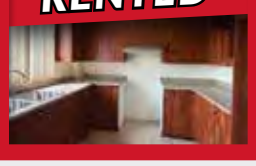
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OPINION & Editorial



Hackers turned up the heat on Europe's grocers. Is Canada ready?

A second wave of suspected cyberattacks on European supermarkets has exposed a vulnerability that Canada's food industry should take seriously. Grocery stores in at least nine countries reported refrigeration failures. One Swedish supermarket said its refrigeration systems had been remotely set to 50 C. Across the affected stores, tonnes of food had to be thrown out. An earlier wave had already hit stores in France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

The economics explain why refrigeration is such an attractive target. Fresh food has a limited shelf life, and grocers and processors depend on a steady flow of deliveries. A few hours of disruption can mean discarded inventory, missed shipments and lost sales. Even when the equipment comes back online, a grocer may still have to discard products if it cannot establish how warm they got or for how long.

The same vulnerability exists in Canada. A cyberattack can force a company to replace inventory, reroute shipments and pay for emergency repairs. Over time, repeated disruptions and higher spending on cybersecurity can put upward pressure on food prices. How much reaches the checkout depends on competition and on who has the bargaining power to pass those costs along.

Ransom is one possible motive. With perishables, attackers have leverage because the cost of waiting rises by the hour. Paying can encourage further extortion, while refusing can leave a company absorbing a substantial loss. The European incidents also raise the possibility of deliberate disruption for its own sake. Public frustration with grocery prices is real, but it tells us little about who was behind these attacks or what they wanted.

For years, cybersecurity barely registered at many food industry conferences. It deserves a place alongside food safety. Refrigeration is the obvious example, but a breach at a processing plant could also interfere with ingredient controls, allergen labelling or the records needed to trace a contaminated batch. Automation helps companies run more efficiently. It also makes it more important to know who can access production controls and how quickly staff can intervene when something goes wrong.

Major grocers and manufacturers are already investing in more resilient facilities and systems. The harder question is what happens when they ask their suppliers to meet the same cybersecurity standards. A national retailer can spread the cost of monitoring, audits and staff training across hundreds of stores. A family-owned processor with a single plant has far less room to absorb those costs. Losing a major retail account over a requirement it cannot afford could put an otherwise viable business at risk.

Canada's largest grocers have enough influence to set cybersecurity standards across much of the food supply chain. They can also help suppliers meet them. Common requirements, shared training and technical support would make it easier for smaller processors to protect their operations without paying for a separate compliance program for every major customer.

Perishability gives attackers a deadline they can use against any food company. A grocer can invest heavily in protecting its own warehouses and still lose a shipment when a supplier's plant goes down. Helping that supplier stay operational is part of protecting the grocer's own business.

Dr. Sylvain Charlebois

Canada could lose out on the global oil boom

The world wants more oil, but higher prices and growing demand are no guarantee Canada will reap the full benefits

Higher gasoline and diesel prices are squeezing consumers, but they are also giving Canada's economy a significant boost. According to TD Economics, Canadian energy exports have increased by an average of $4.5 billion per month over the past six months, strengthening producer revenues, incomes and government coffers.

Diesel has become an increasingly important export. Its share of Canada's energy exports has more than doubled since the outbreak of the U.S.-Israel conflict with Iran, reaching 13 per cent of total energy exports and generating more than $2 billion per month. While those gains benefit the broader economy, higher fuel costs continue to reduce household purchasing power and increase operating costs for businesses.

The conflict involving Iran and concerns over shipping disruptions through the Strait of Hormuz have highlighted the world's dependence on Middle Eastern energy supplies. Countries seeking secure alternatives are increasingly looking toward stable producers such as Canada.

The United States remains Canada's dominant customer, purchasing about 90 per cent of Canadian crude exports in 2025. However, the Trans Mountain expansion has begun diversifying markets. According to ATB Economics, Canadian oil exports to Asia averaged $515 million per month between June and October 2024, compared with negligible volumes before the pipeline expansion entered service.

Governments in Ottawa and Alberta are also advancing plans for Pacific Link, a proposed pipeline capable of moving one million barrels of oil per day from Bruderheim, Alta., to a deepwater terminal near Delta, B.C., creating another potential gateway to Asian markets.

Canada's ability to respond to higher prices is also improving. In Alberta's Clearwater formation, producers can drill and bring new wells online much faster than traditional oilsands projects, allowing them to react more quickly to market opportunities.

Yet challenges persist. On Oct. 15, Western Canadian Select traded at a discount of US$26.40 per barrel to West Texas Intermediate. Transportation constraints, refinery disruptions, growing domestic production and increased competition from Venezuela's returning heavy crude exports continue to weigh on Canadian prices.

Canada has a rare opportunity to expand its role in global energy markets. But capitalizing on that opportunity will require more than higher oil prices. Expanding export infrastructure, reaching new customers and reducing dependence on the U.S. market will ultimately determine how much Canada benefits from shifting global energy dynamics.

Rashid Husain Syed

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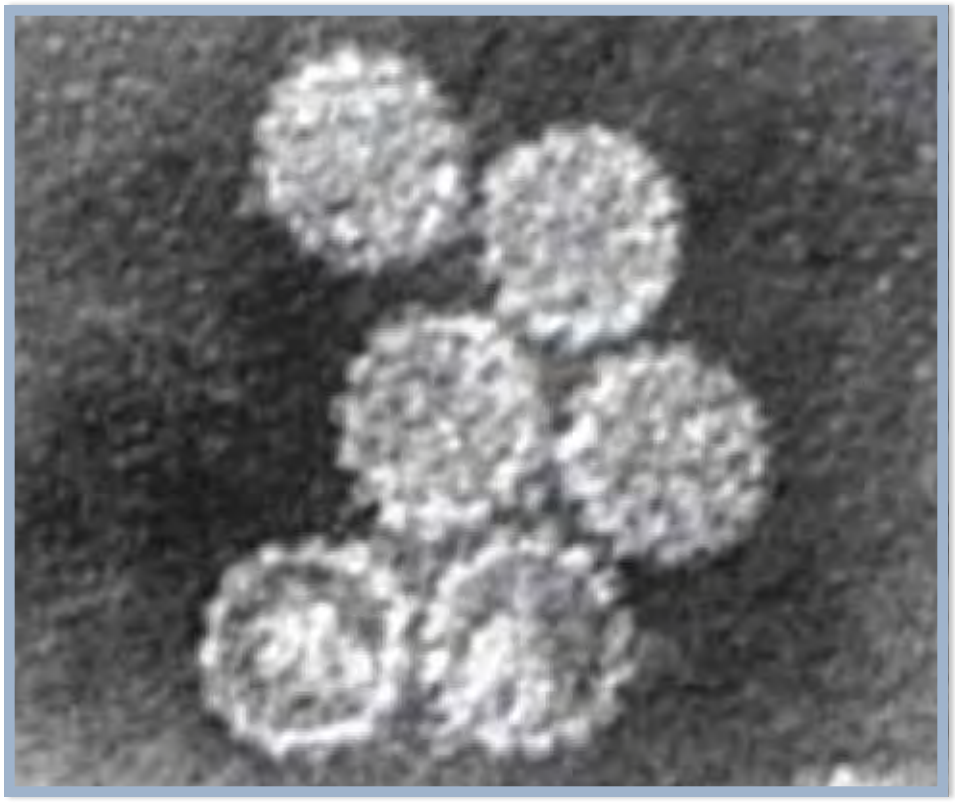
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Quebec faces questions over delays in HPV prevention strategy

Public health expert calls for stronger prevention efforts as schools and families remain central to protecting young people

DIMITRIS ILIAS
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Quebec's approach to preventing human papillomavirus infections is facing renewed criticism following concerns raised this week by a Canadian medical expert who argues that the province is taking too long to strengthen its prevention strategy.

In a report published November 3, Dr. Marc Steben, a specialist in HPV prevention, questioned the pace at which Quebec is implementing measures already being used elsewhere.

The criticism brings attention to a public health issue affecting families throughout Montreal, including those living in Parc-Extension, where access to understandable health information and preventive services is particularly relevant in a multilingual community.

Human papillomavirus, commonly known as HPV, is among the most widespread sexually transmitted infections. Although many infections disappear without causing lasting problems, certain types of the virus can lead to serious diseases, including cervical cancer and other cancers.

Vaccination is an important preventive measure. Quebec has offered HPV vaccination through school-based programs since 2008, helping protect young people before they are likely to encounter the virus.

However, vaccination is only one component of prevention. Screening, public education and access to appropriate medical follow-up also play important roles in reducing the long-term consequences of infection.

Steben's concerns focus on the pace of broader prevention efforts. His criticism does not mean Quebec lacks an HPV vaccination program, nor does it establish that existing school-based services have stopped functioning.

For Montreal families, the distinction is significant. A debate about provincial policy should not be confused with an immediate warning that local vaccination services are unavailable.

Nevertheless, the renewed discussion raises questions about how preventive health information reaches residents, particularly when families must navigate unfamiliar medical terminology or health services in a language other than their mother tongue.

In neighbourhoods such as Parc-Extension, schools, community organizations and health professionals can provide important points of contact between families and the public health system.

Clear explanations of vaccine eligibility, screening recommendations and available services can help residents make informed decisions without relying on misinformation or unverified claims circulating online.

The November 3 criticism also raises a broader question about how Quebec measures progress in disease prevention. Vaccination coverage, participation in screening programs and timely access to follow-up care are distinct indicators that require separate evaluation.

No neighbourhood-specific HPV vaccination or infection figures were established in the reporting reviewed for this article. Consequently, there is no basis for concluding that Parc-Extension has higher infection rates or lower vaccination coverage than other Montreal communities.

What the latest debate does establish is that prevention remains an active provincial policy issue.

For families, the practical message is to seek current guidance from qualified health professionals and official Quebec public health resources while the province's broader prevention strategy continues to face scrutiny.



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Budget 2026: Canadians support many of the measures, **but few expect personal benefits as concerns about affordability and deficits persist**

DAVID COLETTO, ABACUS DATA

A new Abacus Data survey conducted immediately following the release of the federal government's 2026 budget finds Canadians approaching the government's economic agenda with mixed feelings. While more Canadians approve than disapprove of the Carney government, relatively few believe the budget will make their own lives better, and many remain unconvinced that its fiscal commitments are achievable.

The survey of 1,500 Canadian adults, conducted November 6 to 7, finds that just 17% describe Budget 2026 as good news, while 20% consider it bad news. Another 32% see a mixture of good and bad news, and 30% have not formed an opinion.

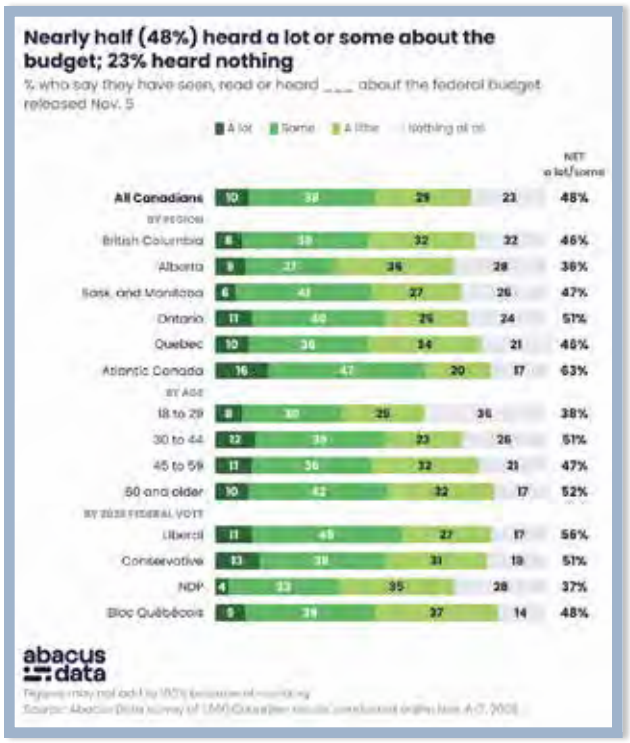
The findings reveal an important tension. Canadians are generally supportive of many of the government's specific proposals, particularly those involving caregivers, homelessness, housing, and grocery assistance. But that support has not translated into widespread confidence in the budget as a whole.

The government appears to have a stronger case when it comes to Canada's economic sovereignty than when it comes to improving household affordability. And while Canadians recognize the potential benefits of investment, many are concerned about the amount of money being borrowed to finance it.

Most canadians have heard about the budget, but their initial reactions are mixed

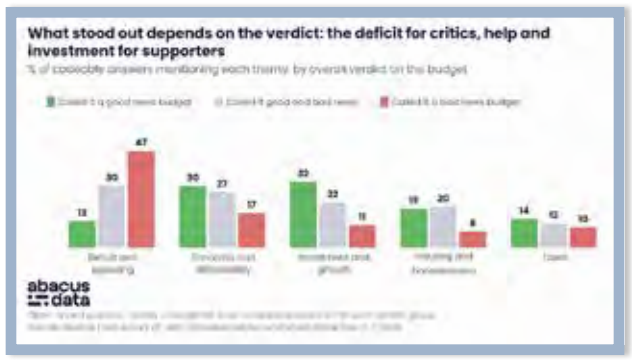
Two days after the budget was tabled, 77% of Canadians report having seen, read, or heard at least something about it. Almost half (48%) say they have heard a lot or some, while 29% have heard a little.

Despite this relatively high level of awareness, Canadians have not reached a clear verdict.



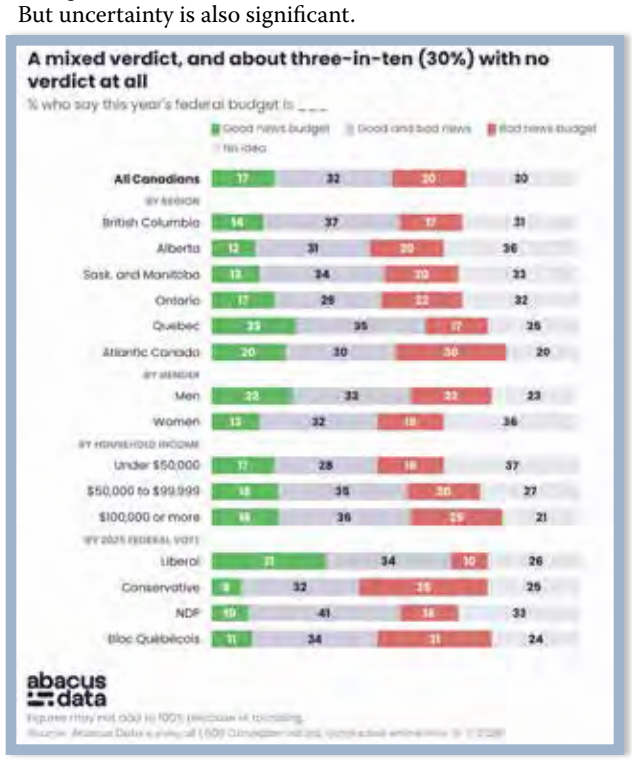
About one in three (32%) describe the budget as containing both good and bad news. Another 30% say they really have no idea whether the budget is good or bad.

Only 17% consider it good news, compared with 20% who describe it as bad news.



Political affiliation shapes these assessments considerably. Among those who voted Liberal in 2025, 31% see good news and 10% see bad news. Among Conservative voters, the pattern reverses, with 35% describing the budget as bad news and just 8% as good news.

But uncertainty is also significant.



Among women, 36% have not formed an opinion, rising to 41% among women under 45. Similarly, 37% of Canadians living in households earning less than $50,000 are unsure how to assess the budget.

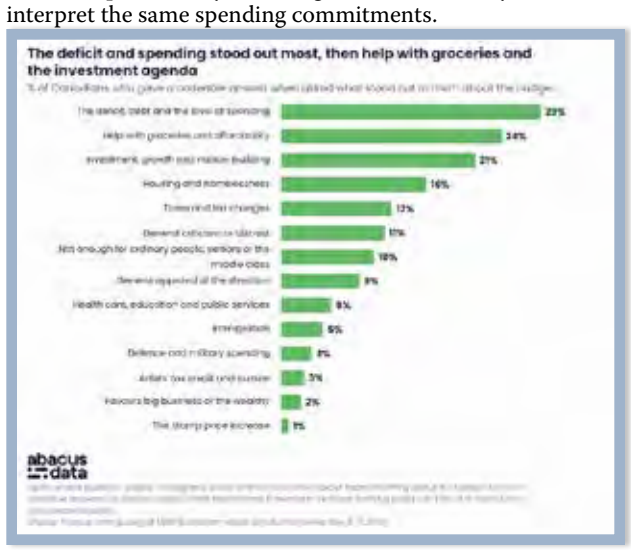
These findings suggest that while the budget has generated considerable attention, its political and public impact is far from settled and for many, may never become something that shapes their views.

Canadians recognize a spending budget, but interpret that spending differently

When Canadians who had heard about the budget were asked what stood out to them, the deficit, government debt, and the amount of spending emerged as the most common themes.

Among those providing a substantive response, 29% mentioned spending or borrowing, followed by grocery assistance and affordability measures (24%), investments and economic growth (21%), and housing and homelessness (16%).

What is particularly revealing is how differently Canadians interpret the same spending commitments.





Among those describing the budget as bad news, 47% spontaneously mentioned spending or deficits. Among those who considered it good news, just 13% did.

Instead, those with positive assessments were more likely to mention investments, grocery assistance, and housing.

▶ Continued on page 9

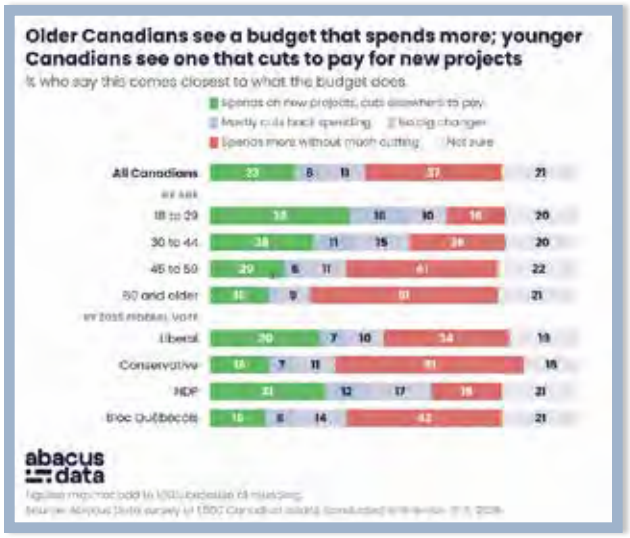
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This difference reflects two competing interpretations of the government's economic strategy.

For some Canadians, the spending represents necessary investment in the country's future. For others, it reinforces concerns about government borrowing and fiscal sustainability.

When asked to characterize the budget's overall approach, 37% believe it increases spending without making significant cuts elsewhere. Another 23% see a combination of new investments and reductions in other areas.



The government is therefore facing a public that recognizes the scale of its ambitions but is divided over whether the spending is justified.

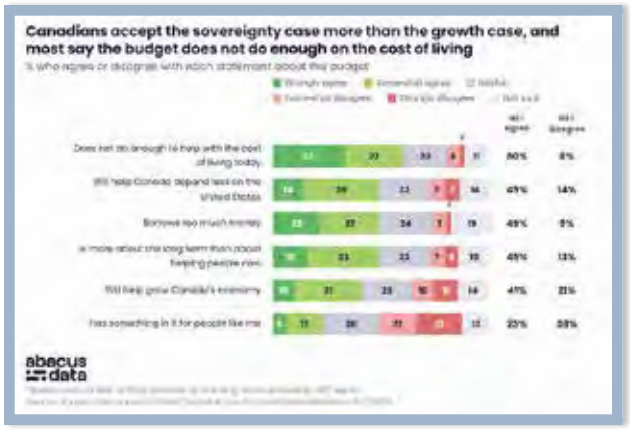
Canadians see the national purpose, but not the personal benefit

Perhaps the clearest finding is the gap between Canadians' assessment of the budget's national objectives and what they expect it to mean for their own financial circumstances.

Almost half (49%) agree that the budget will help Canada become less dependent on the United States.

Another 42% agree it will help grow the Canadian economy.

But only 23% agree that the budget has something in it for people like them, while 37% disagree.



At the same time, 60% believe the budget does not do enough to help Canadians with the cost of living today.

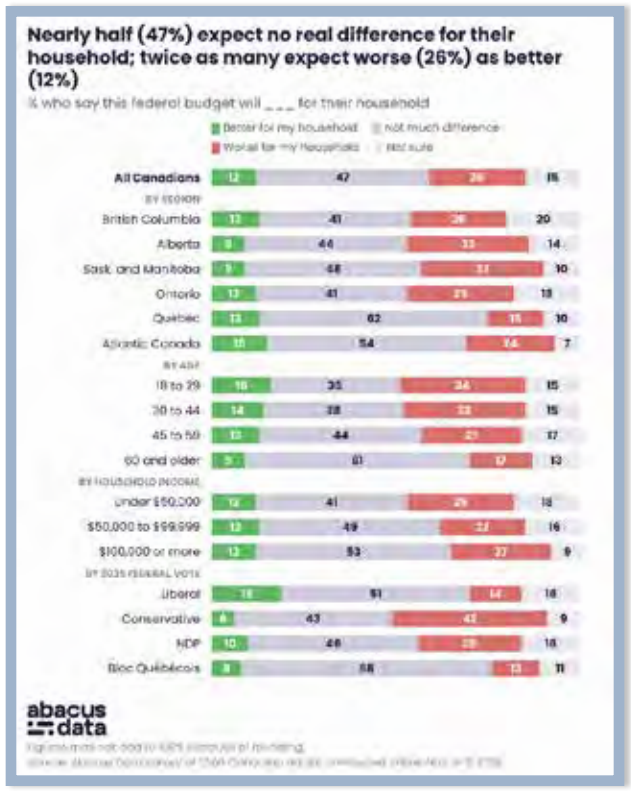
That includes 50% of those who voted Liberal in 2025, along with 74% of Conservative voters and 66% of NDP voters.

The household impact question reinforces this disconnect.

Almost half (47%) expect the budget to make little difference to their household finances. Another 26% expect to be worse off, while just 12% anticipate being better off.

Even among households earning less than $50,000, only 12% expect a positive impact.

The findings suggest that Canadians may accept the need for investments designed to strengthen Canada's long-term economic position without necessarily believing those investments will improve their immediate financial circumstances.



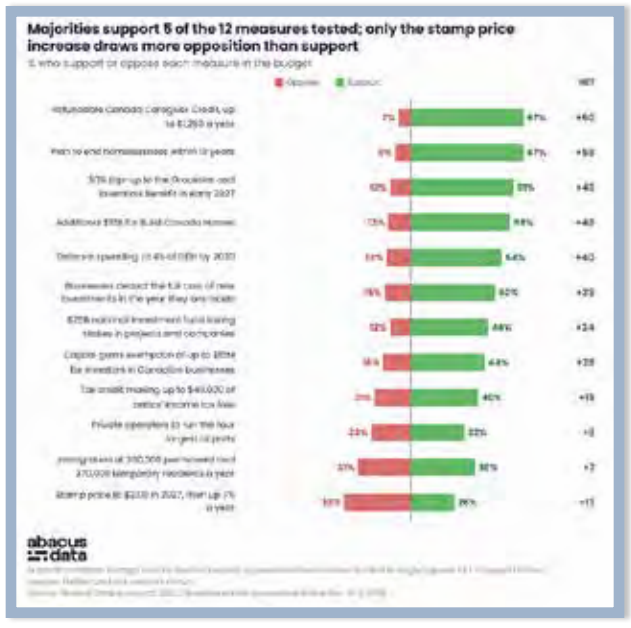
That distinction is central to understanding the budget's reception.

Individual budget measures are more popular than the budget overall

One of the most notable findings is how much more positively Canadians respond to specific measures than to the overall budget.

Of the 12 measures tested, five attract majority support, and only one generates more opposition than support.

The most popular proposals are those connected directly to household needs and social challenges.



Two-thirds support making the Canada Caregiver Credit refundable (67%) and the government's plan to end homelessness within 10 years (67%).

Another 61% support the one-time increase to the Canada Groceries and Essentials Benefit, while 59% support an additional $13 billion for Build Canada Homes.

There is also majority support (54%) for increasing defence spending to 4% of GDP by 2030.

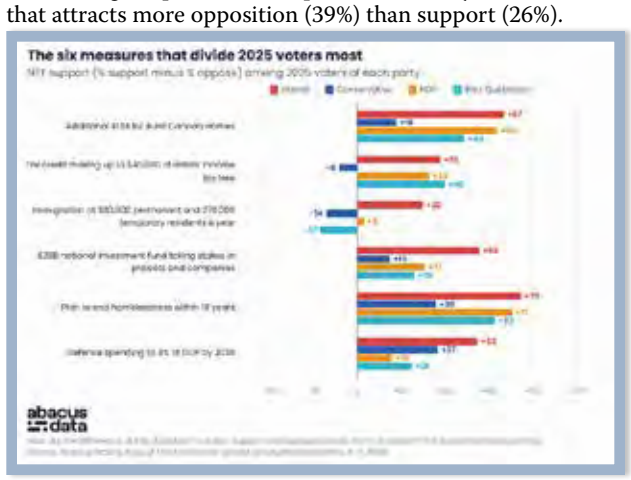
Importantly, several measures attract support across political affiliations.

Among Conservative voters, 62% support the refundable caregiver credit, 53% support the homelessness initiative, and 52% support the grocery benefit top-up.

Other measures generate more divided responses.

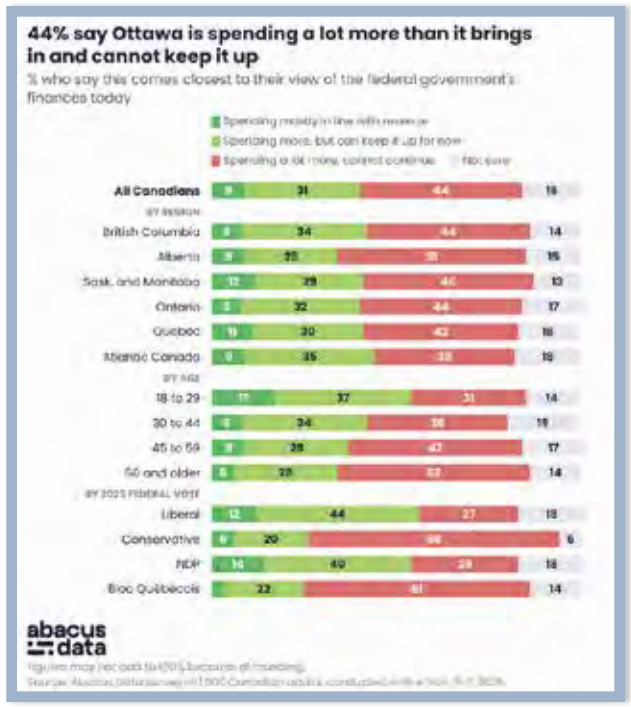
The government's proposed immigration levels are supported by 38% and opposed by 31%. Allowing private operators to run Canada's four largest airports attracts 32% support and 23% opposition.

Increasing the price of a stamp to $2 is the only measure tested that attracts more opposition (39%) than support (26%).



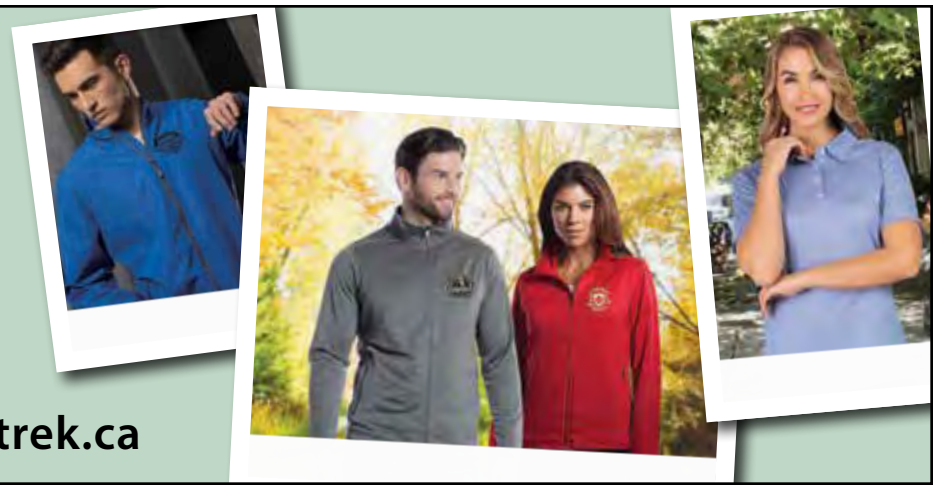
The deficit and fiscal credibility remain significant challenges

Although Canadians support many of the proposed investments, concern about federal finances is widespread.



▶ Continued on page 10

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◀ Continued from page 9

Almost half (49%) agree that the budget borrows too much money.

When asked more generally about the government's financial position, 44% believe Ottawa is spending considerably more than it brings in and cannot continue doing so for long.

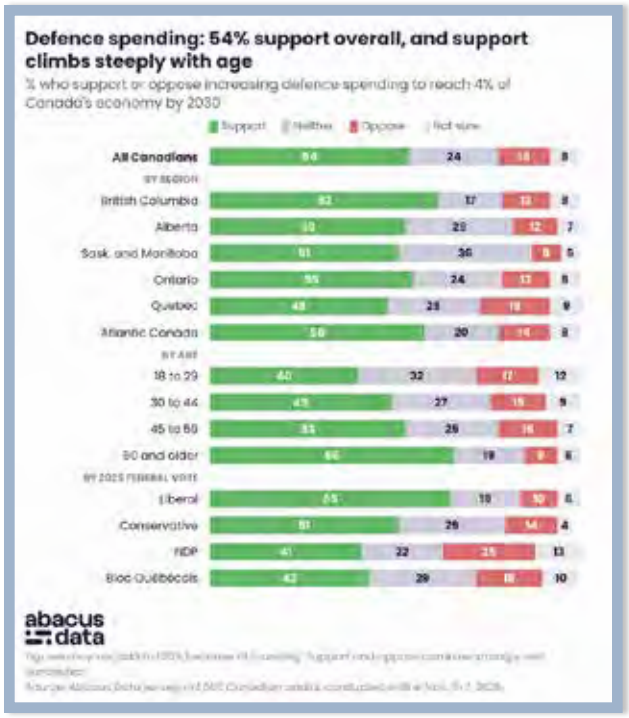
Another 31% recognize that spending exceeds revenue but believe the current approach can continue for now.

There is also considerable skepticism about the government's commitment to balance its day-to-day operating budget by 2027-28.

Just 30% believe that target is likely to be achieved, while 56% consider it unlikely.

That skepticism extends beyond government opponents. While 73% of Conservative voters doubt the target will be met, so do 41% of Liberal voters.

The challenge is not simply opposition to government spending.



Canadians are divided when asked to weigh greater affordability assistance accompanied by larger deficits against less assistance designed to contain borrowing.

The results suggest that fiscal credibility will be an important part of how Canadians evaluate the government's economic strategy.

Generational differences reveal competing expectations

Age is one of the most interesting dividing lines in the survey.

Among Canadians aged 60 and older, 51% believe the budget increases spending without significant cuts elsewhere. Among those under 30, just 16% share that interpretation.

Instead, 38% of younger Canadians see a budget that combines investment with reductions in other spending.

Views on defence also differ considerably.

Two-thirds (66%) of Canadians aged 60 and older support increasing defence spending to 4% of GDP, compared with 40% of those under 30. Yet younger Canadians are more likely to report a positive political reaction.

Among those under 30, 33% say the budget has made them think more favourably of the federal government, compared with 23% who say less favourably. Among Canadians aged 60 and older, 20% report a more favourable impression and 27% a less favourable one.

These differences suggest that Canadians are assessing the budget through different generational priorities, particularly around public investment, fiscal restraint, and the allocation of government resources.

The budget has reinforced opinions more than changed them

Despite the attention surrounding the announcement, the budget has not produced a substantial net shift in how Canadians say they view the government.

About 42% report that what they have heard about the budget has made no difference to their opinion.

Another 25% say they now think more favourably of the government, while 26% think less favourably.

The negative reactions are somewhat more intense, with 14% saying they feel much less favourably compared with 5% who feel much more favourably.

Looking ahead, Canadians are somewhat more optimistic about the budget's effect on the broader economy than their own finances.

Just over a third (35%) expect the budget to make Canada's economy better over the next few years, compared with 25% who expect it to make things worse.

This reinforces the central distinction running throughout the survey: Canadians are more willing to believe the budget could benefit Canada than to believe it will benefit their own households.

The upshot

The first public reaction to Budget 2026 reveals a government with considerable support for its individual initiatives but a more difficult challenge convincing Canadians that the overall plan is the right one.

The budget's emphasis on economic sovereignty appears to have found an audience. Almost half of Canadians believe it will help reduce dependence on the United States, and more than four in ten believe it will contribute to economic growth.

But those assessments coexist with considerable doubts about affordability and fiscal sustainability.

Six in ten Canadians believe the budget does not do enough to address today's cost of living, and only about one in ten expect their household finances to improve.

This is the central tension facing the Carney government.

The public can recognize the importance of building a more resilient Canadian economy while remaining uncertain about when, or whether, those investments will improve their everyday lives.

There is also a striking difference between how Canadians assess individual proposals and the budget as a whole.

Measures involving caregivers, homelessness, grocery assistance, and housing attract broad support, including among many Conservative voters. Yet that support has not translated into a broadly positive overall verdict.

At the same time, the deficit remains a significant vulnerability. A majority doubt the government will meet its operating balance target, and many believe the current pace of borrowing cannot be sustained.

The first reaction, therefore, is neither a clear endorsement nor a decisive rejection.

The government has an opportunity to build support around measures Canadians already favour. But doing so will require convincing people that the investments form part of a credible economic plan and explaining how the benefits will reach their households.

For now, Canadians see a budget with substantial ambitions, several popular initiatives, and important unanswered questions.

The government has made its case for investing in Canada's future. The next challenge is convincing Canadians that this future will be better for them.



Rising jazz keyboardist Théo Abellard returns to Parc Extension

'Piano is my main instrument,' says Théo, who describes his style as 'cinematic'



Theo Abellard interacts with the audience at the Maison de la culture de Parc-Extension on November 7 during his homecoming solo piano concert. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

MARTIN C. BARRY
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter
marty@newsfirst.ca

Montreal-based jazz pianist Théo Abellard – the recent winner of Piano Public on TéléQuébec – was back on his home turf in ParcExtension earlier this month to present a free solo piano concert.

During the concert, staged at the Maison de la culture de Parc-Extension, Théo had a special message for the young: anything is possible and anyone can turn their dreams into a reality. He offered a unique approach to the piano, navigating contemporary jazz, classical influences and modern sensibilities.

Now 30 years of age, it's been 20 years since Théo last lived in Parc Ex. He currently resides in Montreal's Hochelaga-Maisonneuve neighbourhood.

An accomplished pianist in the style of other great players of the instrument from Montreal like Oliver Jones, Oscar Peterson and Paul Bley, Théo plays all types of music ranging from jazz, gospel, funk and R&B.

Piano is his forté

"Piano is my main instrument," he said in a pre-concert interview earlier this month with Nouvelles Parc Extension News. "A lot of jazz, a lot of classical. My training is classical and jazz. But my music I would describe it as a more cinematic kind of music. It's based on the jazz tradition, but it's more like a movie – like painting pictures. That kind of thing. More modern sounding."

That said, is there also an element of interiority of Théo Abellard's musical compositions? "It's very interior," he replied. "My interior world, my spiritual world are very much based on that."

It ought not be surprising if spirituality were to figure significantly in Théo's musical vision. His father was a minister with the Durocher Gospel Assembly, which held services in the same building (the William Hingston Centre) where the Maison de la culture is located.

A blossoming career

Théo's performance in Parc Ex earlier this month featured some of his own dazzling compositions. He has recently been on tour across Quebec. He's also accompanied some major artists during gigs in Ottawa, the nation's capital. As well, he has performed with his own ensemble, the Theo Abellard Trio, at the Montreal Jazz Festival.

The Upstairs Jazz Bar & Grill in downtown Montreal, where Théo has played with his trio, called Théo Abellard "one of the most remarkable jazz musicians of the new generation. An outstanding pianist and exceptional composer, his talent and passion are matched only by his desire to always progress."

As Montreal's jazz community is a small world, Théo is able to say that he knew Oliver Jones (who passed away last summer), the famed jazz pianist, organist, composer and arranger who grew up in Montreal's Little Burgundy neighbourhood. "He was always there for me," Théo said.

Théo and Oliver Jones

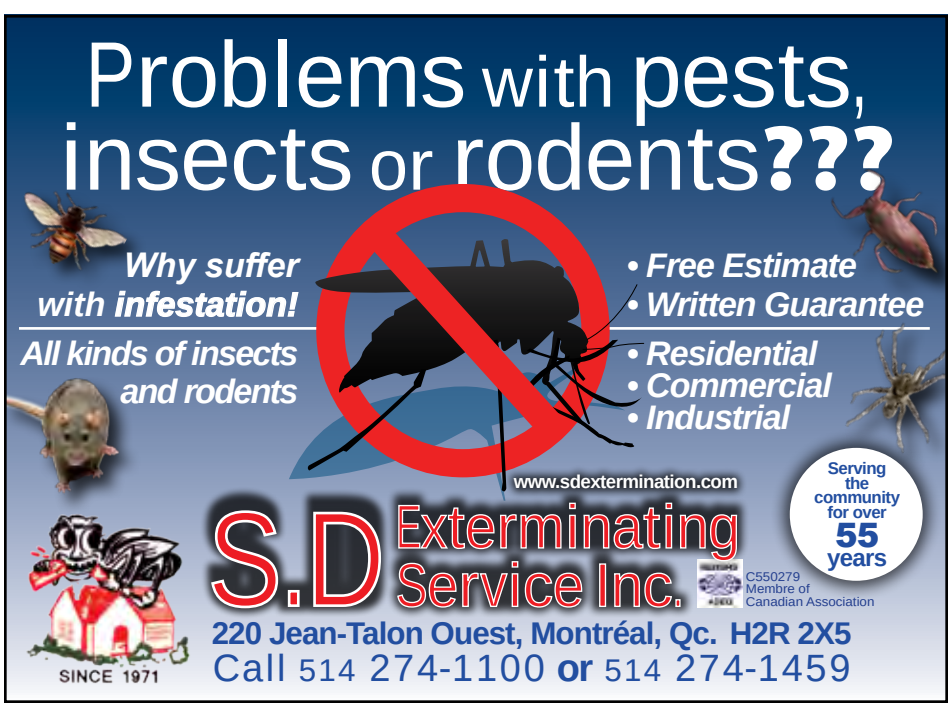
"The first time I actually met him was in this building: he was doing a concert. And that's when I actually heard for the first time that his middle name, Theophilus, was actually the same as my first name. That's the first connection that I had with him. Then later on I got his phone number."



"Piano is my main instrument," says Theo Abellard, a rising talent on the Montreal jazz scene, who grew up in Parc Extension. (Photo: Martin C. Barry, Nouvelles Parc Extension News)

Although Théo initially taught himself to play piano and keyboards, he developed his musical talent further while playing hymns and other sacred music at his father's church services. Later on, he enrolled in a musical program at Vanier College in Saint-Laurent followed by training at McGill University.

While he entertains hopeful notions of eventually being able to expand his professional musical horizons by moving to a place like New York or Los Angeles where the professional connections are far more abundant, Théo says, "Parc Ex will always be my home."





Free weekend activities bring film, storytelling and art to Parc-Extension library

Three days of programming offer local families and residents opportunities for entertainment, creativity and community participation

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Parc-Extension residents looking for affordable cultural activities will have several opportunities this weekend as the neighbourhood's public library hosts a series of free events featuring cinema, storytelling, crafts and art therapy.

The activities, scheduled from November 20 to 22, will take place at the Parc-Extension Library, located at 421 Saint-Roch Street in the William-Hingston complex. The program offers activities for different age groups, reflecting the library's role as an important cultural and educational institution in one of Montreal's most diverse neighbourhoods.

The weekend begins Friday, November 20, with a screening of Super Mario Galaxy: The Movie, scheduled from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Presented under the library's Ciné-pédago program, the screening invites children and families to enjoy an animated adventure featuring the popular video game character.

Admission is free, and reservations are not required, although seating is limited. The activity provides an opportunity for families to enjoy a film together without the expense of commercial cinema tickets.

On Saturday, November 21, the library will turn its attention to younger audiences with Des mots et des bricos, beginning at 10:30 a.m. The activity combines storytelling and creative crafts, encouraging children to explore stories through hands-on participation.

Such programming offers children an opportunity to develop an interest in reading while participating in activities that encourage imagination and creativity. For families with young children, public library programs also provide an accessible introduction to cultural activities outside the classroom.

Sunday, November 22, will feature an art therapy workshop beginning at 2 p.m. Led by a qualified art therapist, the session invites participants to explore personal expression and emotional well-being through artistic creation.

The workshop is free, but registration is required. The activity is designed to provide a supportive setting in which participants can express themselves through art.

Beyond the individual events, the weekend highlights the library's wider contribution to neighbourhood life.

Located in a complex that also houses educational facilities, the Parc-Extension Library welcomes visitors from many cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Its multilingual collection includes approximately 7,600 books in languages other than French and English, including Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi, Tamil, Greek, Italian and Spanish.

The library also provides internet access, educational resources and opportunities for residents to practise French.

However, visitors should be aware that an ongoing strike involving municipal professionals could affect some evening and weekend activities. The City of Montreal advises residents to verify schedules before attending.

Residents can obtain information or register for activities by contacting the library at 514-872-6071.

For Parc-Extension families, the weekend's program demonstrates how neighbourhood public facilities can provide cultural experiences without placing additional financial pressure on household budgets.

Municipal strike disrupts library activities in Parc-Extension

City warns of possible cancellations as labour dispute affects evening and weekend programming

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dimitri@newsfirst.ca

Residents relying on Parc-Extension's public library for educational activities, cultural programming and community services are being advised to check schedules carefully as an ongoing strike by Montreal municipal professionals continues to affect certain city operations.

The labour dispute, which began October 19, involves members of the Syndicat des professionnelles et professionnels municipaux de Montréal (SPPMM). The union's work stoppage covers evenings, overnight periods and weekends, creating uncertainty for some municipal services outside regular daytime hours.

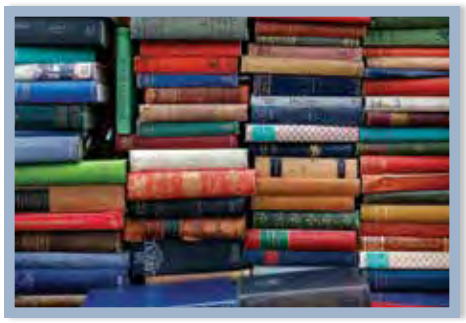
The consequences have become visible in the neighbourhood. The City of Montreal's online calendar identifies a free barbering activity for teenagers, originally scheduled for November 4 at the Parc-Extension Library, as cancelled. The activity was intended to provide registered boys with haircuts from two barbers experienced in working with adolescents.

Although the city has not specified whether that particular cancellation resulted directly from the strike, the library's official website carries a warning that some evening and weekend activities may be cancelled because of the labour dispute.

The distinction matters because the library is more than a conventional book-lending institution.

Located at 421 Saint-Roch Street inside the William-Hingston complex, it shares a building with educational facilities, including an adult French-language training centre and an elementary school. The library welcomes hundreds of visitors from different backgrounds and age groups.

Its services include internet access, educational activities, language-learning resources and community programming. Its multilingual collection contains approximately 7,600 books in languages other than French and English, including Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi, Tamil, Greek, Italian and Spanish.



For residents who depend on publicly accessible spaces to study, improve language skills or participate in free activities, uncertainty surrounding programming raises questions about the continuity of neighbourhood services.

The municipality says essential public health and safety services are being maintained during the strike. However, that assurance does not mean every cultural or recreational activity will proceed as originally advertised.

The city has published a schedule showing that municipal professionals are on strike between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. from Monday to Thursday, and from Friday evening until Monday morning.

Residents planning to attend library activities are therefore encouraged to consult the official municipal calendar and the library's Facebook page before travelling.

The Parc-Extension Library can also be reached at 514-872-6071.

As the dispute continues, the practical question for residents is how consistently neighbourhood services can operate when programming depends on employees affected by the work stoppage. For families and individuals who rely on free municipal facilities, advance notice of cancellations remains particularly important.





Direct Answers

From Wayne & Tamara

Leg To Stand On

Q *My husband applied for a position through an employment agency. He was shortlisted and told by the agency he met all the client requirements. Later the agency informed him he wasn't picked for an interview, and my husband asked why. Their response was, "We would like to know, too."*

Only then was it revealed it was a company where he had a personal issue with one of the employees. The company manager revealed my husband has a reputation for chatting up women. A few months back the woman, her husband, my husband and myself met and resolved all the issues and concerns we had.

My husband contacted the manager and told him it was uncalled for to put his integrity in a bad light with the agency. The manager replied my husband is the ideal candidate, but the decision came from his boss at the head office.

Yes, my husband made a mistake, but should his work professionalism be judged? This has ruined any further prospects with the employment agency. My husband believes the manager's conduct was unethical and this is not fair.

Valera

A **Valera, you are concealing information. We don't know what happened with the woman, whether your husband is currently employed, or what profession we are talking about. We can only assume you're glossing over facts because they don't help your cause.**

Whatever happened was serious enough to require a meeting with a woman, her husband, your husband and you. In addition, your husband's actions with other women have involved inappropriate behavior.

It's obvious your husband has no legal remedies against this woman, other women, the employment agency or the manager. The employment agency learned of your husband's conduct only because he asked them to find out. He brought this on himself. The remarkable thing is the manager of the hiring company told the truth instead of falling back on corporate doubletalk.

When you married your husband, you hitched your wagon to someone else's star. Some stars fade, some stars fall, and some stars die. Rather than defending him, consider the impact of his behavior on your life and your future.

In some countries television shows cannot be aired unless bad acts are shown to be punished. As far as we can tell, your husband is bearing the consequences of his own actions, which is the way the world is supposed to work yet often doesn't.

Wayne & Tamara



Irreconcilable Difference

Q *I have been in a relationship with my girlfriend two years. I love her dearly, who she is and the great times we have together. My problem is I have a healthy, active sex drive and she does not.*

Making love is an important part of a relationship, and since we only physically communicate once every six or eight weeks, it gives me the feeling of eventual relationship doom. That thought scares me because I don't want to lose her.

When I try talking to her about it, she gets upset and won't discuss it. I always end up feeling like a creep and telling myself sex isn't everything. Then my frustration builds, along with sadness and longing for that connection. I am not one to cheat, but I can't imagine a life without intimacy.

Aaron

A **Aaron, you went shopping for a dog and brought home a cat. Now you want the cat to bark like a dog. That can never happen.**

In relationships many people focus on the prize part, not the negative part. But the shine wears off prizes quickly, leaving only the negatives. Each of you needs a person suited to your genuine self, not someone who must make incessant compromises to be with you.

Though your current relationship is not meant to be, you should respect this woman's honesty. Many people, both male and female, conceal their disinterest in sex until after a wedding.

Wayne & Tamara

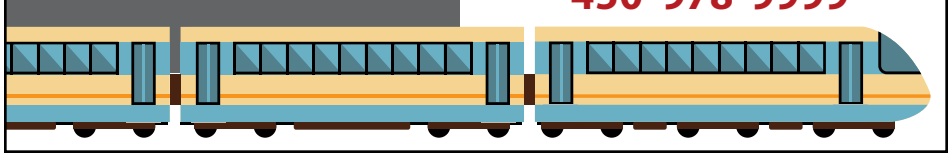
Wayne & Tamara Mitchell are the authors of Your Other Half (*www.yourotherhalf.com*)
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2. Asparagus (1 bunch)
3. Broccoli Crown (1)
4. Blackberries (1)
5. Tomatoes (1)
6. Mini Cucumbers (6)
7. Small Romaine Lettuce (1)
8. Large Avocados (2)
9. Small Leaf Lettuce (1)
10. Peppers (3-4)
11. Mushrooms (1 pack)
12. Onions (3)
13. Garlic (1)
14. Potatoes (~2.5 lbs)
15. Zucchinis (2-3)
16. Bananas (4)
17. Organic Kakis (3-4)
18. Beets (~2.5 lbs)
19. Red Apples (3)
20. Carrots (~2 lbs)

SMALL BASKET ($22)

1. Raspberries (1)
2. Broccoli Crown (1)
3. Peppers (2)
4. Mushrooms (1 pack)
5. Zucchini (1)
6. Bananas (3)
7. Red Apples (2)
8. Oranges (2)
9. Onions (2)
10. Small Leaf Lettuce (1)
11. Potatoes (~2.5 lbs)
12. Avocado (1)
13. Small Romaine Lettuce (1)

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HOROSCOPE

Week of **NOVEMBER 22 TO 28, 2026**

The luckiest signs this week:
LEO, VIRGO AND LIBRA

ARIES
A significant sum of money is on the way, possibly linked to an insurance matter or inheritance. Rely on diplomacy in your interactions, as a hasty word could harm your interests. Master your impatience to protect your position.

TAURUS
You're bursting with energy, and you'll need to channel it into something constructive. Sports, creativity or outdoor activities offer healthy outlets that preserve your morale. Ignoring this need could weaken your emotional and psychological well-being.

GEMINI
Your mind is overflowing with ideas and a desire for renewal. A sudden inspiration may push you toward a surprising professional shift. Welcome these changes, as they'll open promising doors and fuel your thirst for discovery.

CANCER
Your schedule is intensifying, especially in public or group activities. Many people may seek your expertise. Despite your fatigue, this lively period will bring gains, alliances and valuable experiences.

LEO
Transformations are beginning in your professional environment. Even if some situations feel unstable, these changes are laying the groundwork for your advancement. Don't lose confidence; your natural leadership will help you reap benefits from this turning point.

VIRGO
An impulse will push you toward an exciting adventure, whether it's a trip or a major personal project. It'll come with some expenses, but the results will bring satisfaction and a refreshing sense of renewal.

LIBRA
Tensions or disagreements may disrupt your plans. Before making a decision, wait for emotions to settle down. Clear thinking and patience will help you choose the path most suitable to everyone.

SCORPIO
You'll have to make adjustments to achieve balance in your personal and professional commitments. A review of your organization will prove beneficial. On the health front, make rest a priority. Restorative sleep will strengthen both physical and emotional resilience.

SAGITTARIUS
Your desire to build your own success is growing stronger. A business idea or independent project will take shape this week. Stimulating collaborations will emerge, fueling your ambitions and paving the way for sustainable growth.

CAPRICORN
You'll shine under the spotlight of recognition. A public victory, distinction or remarkable performance will enhance your prestige. Celebrate this moment, as it confirms the impact of your past efforts.

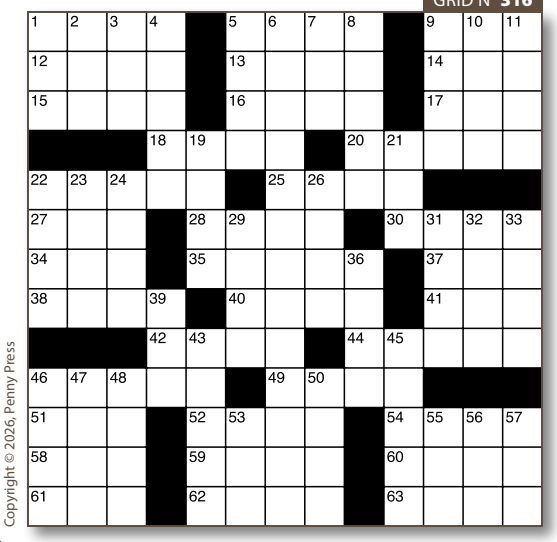
AQUARIUS
A major sorting process is needed in your surroundings. By tidying up your space and reorganizing your priorities, you'll regain serenity and mental clarity. Don't hesitate to assert your authority if a situation requires it; your voice matters.

PISCES
You'll have to deal with vague or critical communicators this week. Confusion may reign for a while, but your diplomacy will shift the dynamic. If you keep moving forward, mutual understanding will eventually take hold and strengthen your relationships.

Coffee Break

CROSSWORD

GRID N° **316**



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ACROSS
1. Cover with gold
5. "God's Little _____"
9. Soaking
12. Place
13. Stop, to Dobbin
14. Poison _____
15. _____ diving
16. Permits
17. Puppy's bite
18. Event
20. Bald bird
22. In short
25. Character
27. Operated
28. Served for a point
30. "_____ Girl"
34. Aardvark's snack
35. Spring bird
37. Glacier material
38. Put on cargo
40. Old stringed instrument
41. Fish "arm"
42. Perceive sound
44. Loses traction
46. Utensil
49. Entry
51. Not loud
52. Ancient
54. Stages of history
58. Prospector's quest
59. Rope
60. "_____ Rider"
61. Tie the knot
62. Flip, as a coin
63. Spout

DOWN
1. Oxygen or helium, e.g.
2. Provoke
3. Hawaiian handout
4. Do the electric slide
5. Hole punchers
6. Popular barbecue items
7. Spoil
8. Artist's tripod
9. Bird's flapper
10. "_____ Woman"
11. Classify
19. Long way off
21. Fore's partner
22. Bikini tops
23. Go on and on
24. Division preposition
26. Emend
29. Kind of soda
31. Sound gear: hyph.
32. Etching liquid
33. Decade numbers
36. Aerie
39. "____ Do You Love"
43. Pass, as a law
45. Holds on to
46. Not very busy
47. Leaf opening
48. Had bills
50. Does arithmetic
53. Sticky glop
55. Musical style
56. Beerlike beverage
57. Do needlework

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.

GRID N° **1009**

						7		2
				7	4		3	
	9		6		2	8		
7	5					2		4
	4							
		9	7		5			
3		6						
		2		5				
	7	5	8			3	6	

LAST ISSUE'S ANSWERS

CROSSWORD

B	R	A	■	A	R	C	S	■	I	T	C	H
O	I	L	■	P	E	A	T	■	T	O	R	E
A	P	P	L	E	P	I	E	■	S	P	U	D
■	■	■	A	D	O	R	E	D	■	B	E	G
M	I	T	T	■	R	O	L	E	■	A	L	E
A	R	R	E	S	T	■	■	C	A	N	■	■
R	E	A	L	M	S	■	T	A	M	A	L	E
■	■	D	Y	E	■	■	H	Y	E	N	A	S
A	R	E	■	A	F	A	R	■	N	A	B	S
R	A	M	■	R	E	L	O	A	D	■	■	■
O	K	A	Y	■	L	O	N	G	S	H	O	T
M	E	R	E	■	T	H	E	E	■	E	R	A
A	S	K	S	■	S	A	S	S	■	R	E	D

Sudoku

7	5	9	2	4	1	8	3	6
6	4	8	5	9	3	1	2	7
3	1	2	6	8	7	4	5	9
1	7	6	3	5	4	9	8	2
4	8	5	9	6	2	3	7	1
2	9	3	1	7	8	5	6	4
5	2	4	8	1	6	7	9	3
9	3	1	7	2	5	6	4	8
8	6	7	4	3	9	2	1	5



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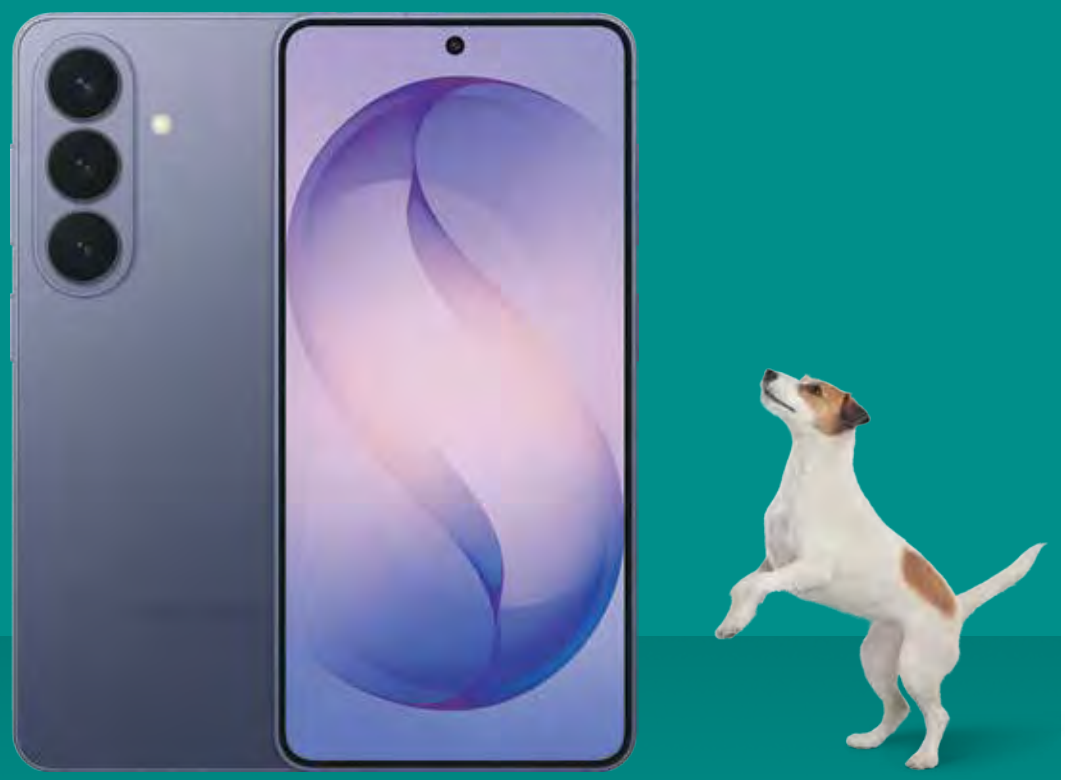
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