

Heritage booth brings Poltimore's history to the fair

Tashi Farmilo
LJ Reporter

A heritage booth built to reconnect residents with their own history made its debut at this summer's Poltimore Fair, where organizers and a handful of longtime locals spent the August 7 to 9 event sharing artifacts, archival photographs and stories from the Val-des-Monts community's past.

Organizer Kirsten LaSalle Morin, who helps plan the fair alongside a fellow volunteer, said the booth was meant to remind people of what the community has produced and endured. Titled "Bridging Communities Through Heritage at the Poltimore Fair," it paired documents and images with local artifacts such as trophies, jerseys and books written about the area's families. This year's edition focused on the story of the fair itself. Organizers described it as a success.

At the centre of the booth were five residents brought in to trade stories with visitors. They included Leslie Mallon, a bilingual cattle farmer born and raised in Poltimore who has served on the fair board and volunteered with a local church for decades, and Barbara Warwick Cheslock, who settled in the village after marrying farmer Garnet Cheslock and has become a reliable source on its history, its churches and its school events. Harold McClelland spoke to a piece of commercial history familiar to most residents: his father, J.B. McClelland, built up the village grocery and hardware store, and Harold ran the Freshmart with his two brothers from their father's death in 1992 until his retirement in 2015. Rounding out the group was Ronald "Ronnie" Nitschkie, a farmer who has spent decades on his wife Catherine's ancestral land and is regarded locally as a keeper of the area's stories.

Also on hand was Cindy-Ann Hough McClelland, a genealogist who grew up in High Falls and moved to Poltimore after marrying Harold. LaSalle Morin's grandmother, she staffed the booth and fielded questions rather than addressing crowds. She is the author of two local histories, "Poltimore's Ties to the Great War 1914-1918" and "The Bonsalls of Poltimore Quebec: here, beyond & back."

The money came through SHARE, a micro-grant program QAHN runs with support from the federal Department of Canadian Heritage to raise the profile of English-speaking heritage in the province and to build ties between anglophone and francophone communities. The network says



The Poltimore Fair's heritage booth team gathers in front of the display, from left: Leslie Mallon, a volunteer, Barbara Warwick Cheslock, Cindy-Ann Hough McClelland, Harold McClelland, Ronald "Ronnie" Nitschkie and organizer Kirsten LaSalle Morin. (TF)

18 organizations across eight Quebec regions shared roughly \$220,000 in its most recent round, with Poltimore the sole recipient in the Outaouais. The project, the first of its scale at the fair, was paid for with a \$2,000 micro-grant from the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) and, according to the network, was the only Outaouais initiative funded in its latest round of heritage grants, announced in June.

For LaSalle Morin, the booth was about more than nostalgia. Small towns across Canada have struggled to draw residents out to community events, she said, and Poltimore is no exception, with many people commuting long hours into the city. She hopes that reminding residents of the community's accomplishments will "bring back the pride of Poltimore." As she put it, "With more pride comes more participation, and with more participation comes a thriving community."

The Poltimore Fair has been part of life in Val-des-Monts since 1952, when it began as an agricultural event. It has since grown well beyond its farming roots, adding the Kioti Professional Rodeo, truck and ATV mud runs, horse pulls, live music, inflatable rides, vendors, food and children's exhibits, though it still bills itself as the best little fair in the Outaouais. Organizers say this year was the



A display panel traces the fair's early years through archival photographs of draft-horse teams and a reprinted 1982 story from The Post, alongside the SHARE, QAHN and Canada logos behind the project. (TF)



Decades of fair programs, including a 1968 edition advertising horse drawing, children's races and livestock judging, are laid out with framed schedules and correspondence from the club's archives. (TF)

PHOTOS: COURTESY

first time the fair had included a heritage element on this scale. They do not intend it to be the last. The storytellers have already begun sketching ideas for the 2027 fair, which organizers say will be its 75th edition, with hopes of showcasing more of the village's past. LaSalle Morin has raised the idea of rotating the booth's theme in future years, from the area's farming families and businesses to its founding families, its sports and Poltimore Elementary School.

Quebec watchdog urges deep overhaul of aging access and privacy laws for the digital age
Page 3

Quebec's English-speaking community urged to weigh in on next federal official languages strategy
Page 6



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See page 3

Over 50 families gather for homeschooling picnic as Quebec election kicks off



Jude Osmond

The Not Back to School Picnic is an annual event hosted by AQED (Association québécoise pour l'éducation à domicile) for parents new to home education. The picnic allows new homeschooling parents to socialize with experienced parents and get information and advice.

This year's edition took place on Thursday, September 3, at Lac Leamy beach and drew over 50 families, both new and experienced, who socialized and enjoyed food brought by the parents. Association members were open to donating used schoolbooks and other materials to help new homeschooling parents for their upcoming year.

"The objective of the picnic is to regroup after a long summer and welcome the new families," said Émilie Salesse Gauthier, the Outaouais regional representative of AQED. "We have a nice social gathering before the school year starts."

AQED is a non-profit association founded by homeschool parent educators who support each other by organizing activities and conferences to reach families in need of homeschooling support in Quebec. AQED was founded in 1997 in support of and



in defence of homeschooling and has since worked to inspire and inform parent educators across the province.

"The message we are extending to new parents is that we know it's a challenging moment for them, but we are a tight community, here to support one another and to welcome them," Gauthier said.

With the school year around the corner, ADEQ is always looking for new members and preparing for another active year of homeschooling.

Émilie Salesse Gauthier, the ADEQ representative for the Outaouais region, enjoying time at the annual Not Back to School Picnic on September 3 (JO)

PHOTO: JUDE OSMOND

MRC warden confirms Maniwaki services will continue after town council opposes Gracefield head office expansion



Tashi Farmilo
LJI Reporter

Chantal Lamarche, warden of the MRC de La Vallée-de-la-Gatineau, made a motion at the August 12 MRC meeting, to reassure residents that the county's Maniwaki office will keep operating, after Maniwaki's town council formally opposed a plan to expand the

MRC's headquarters in Gracefield. The dispute turns on a tension between the two towns: the MRC runs its head office in Gracefield and a second service point in Maniwaki, and Maniwaki fears the expansion will pull staff and resources toward Gracefield at its expense.

That fear drove Maniwaki's council to vote unanimously on August 4 against awarding the construction contract, according to local broadcaster CHGA. Mayor Louis-André

Hubert argued the roughly \$6.5 million project does not serve Maniwaki taxpayers, warned of likely cost overruns, and said his central worry was that a bigger head office in Gracefield would eventually draw away the MRC staff who now work in Maniwaki. The concern is not hypothetical: one MRC job posting notes that a Maniwaki service point is already scheduled to be relocated in 2026-2027.

Continued on page 6



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Quebec watchdog urges deep overhaul of aging access and privacy laws for the digital age



Tashi Farmilo
LJJ Reporter

Quebec's four-decade-old access to information regime and the laws meant to shield personal data can no longer keep pace with an era reshaped by artificial intelligence, the province's access to information commission warned in its 2026 five-year report, tabled at the National Assembly in June with 74 recommendations pressing lawmakers to modernize how governments disclose records and how citizens' data is protected.

The report, titled *Transparence et vie privée : protéger la démocratie à l'ère numérique*, is the Commission d'accès à l'information's first five-year review in a decade. Its last edition appeared in 2016, and the 2021 instalment was deferred to let the province's overhauled privacy legislation, Bill 64, now known as Law 25, take effect. Adopted in 2021 and phased in through 2024, Law 25 rewrote how public bodies and businesses in Quebec must collect, use and safeguard personal information, adding consent rules, mandatory breach reporting and steep penalties, and it is often likened to Europe's data protection regime. President Lise Girard argued that transparency and privacy have become foundations of democratic life



Quebec's access to information commission, led by president Me Lise Girard, has tabled a 2026 five-year report urging a deep overhaul of the province's outdated access and privacy laws for the AI era, with 74 recommendations now headed to a parliamentary committee. (TF)

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE REPORT:
TRANSPARENCE ET VIE PRIVÉE : PROTÉGER
LA DÉMOCRATIE À L'ÈRE NUMÉRIQUE

online, and that Quebec, in her words, must dare to go further.

Much of the report's weight falls on the *Loi sur l'accès*, the statute governing access to public documents, which the Commission notes has not seen a major reform since it took effect in 1982.

That inertia, it says, surfaces as lengthening waits for information and the thin release of records of public interest. The Commission wants the law's primacy reaffirmed by paring back the exemptions and special regimes that carve out exceptions, access restrictions rewritten so the public interest prevails, real consequences when bodies miss response deadlines, and proactive disclosure expanded and made binding on every public body.

On privacy, the Commission targets what it calls the data economy. It proposes stricter rules for all data brokers, clearer limits on harvesting personal information from the web, tighter treatment of supposedly anonymized data, and a ban on the manipulative online prompts known as dark patterns. It also urges lawmakers to reckon with the inferences algorithms draw about people, to build in specific protections for young users, and to open a broader debate on an entirely new approach to privacy, arguing that the principles behind current law are colliding with digital reality.

For the first time, a five-year review takes up the *Loi sur les renseignements de santé* et de services sociaux, the recent law governing health and social services information. The Commission calls it a milestone but says the tools, procedures and technology needed to make it work are not yet in place, and it

recommends that health bodies start logging every access, use and communication of such records now, so patients can trace how their information moves.

The Commission also presses its own case for independence, recommending that its budget and staffing be tied to the Bureau de l'Assemblée nationale rather than left to the government it oversees, and it revisits its powers as an administrative tribunal and the reach of the penalties available under Law 25.

For the Outaouais, the stakes are local as much as legislative. The laws the Commission wants rewritten govern every public body in the region, from the City of Gatineau and surrounding municipalities to school service centres and Santé Québec Outaouais, the regional health authority formerly known as the CISSS de l'Outaouais. Residents and reporters who file requests there face the same delays the report flags, and the health records it wants better safeguarded are the ones the authority keeps for patients across the region.

The recommendations are not binding. Under the rules that follow the tabling of one of these reviews, a parliamentary committee will now study the document and hear from interested individuals and organizations before any of it reaches the statute books.

UniGym Gatineau

New gymnastics hall launched as school returns



Jude Osmond

UniGym Gatineau is finally cutting the ribbon on its new gym at Galeries Aylmer on Saturday, September 12, offering young gymnasts a place to enjoy and learn their craft. The grand opening takes place at the new gym location, the former site of the Lucy-Faris Library, and will include multiple on-site activities, including a barbecue, face painting, inflatable structures, and prize draws.

The new gym has been a long-time-coming project for Aylmer residents, in the works for more than 10 years, and gymnasts and gym-goers have been eagerly waiting for it to be completed so they can access a new modern facility with new equipment.

"We can finally say it has been over 10 years that we've been working on it for the Aylmer sector, and it's amazing news for the Aylmer community," said Myriane Thériault, head

of the Aylmer sector UniGym.

The new gym in Aylmer is measured at 15,000 square feet, significantly larger than the previous gym of 4,000 square feet, allowing more gymnasts and more time for activity, as the club can now offer 50 hours of activity per week.

"Thanks to the perseverance of our team, more than 1,000 gymnasts will be able to train in a suitable and inspiring environment, the result of our commitment and determination," said Jacynthe Harper, Director General.

Members of the UniGym board of directors are President Jean-Paul Caron, Vice-President

Daniel Cyr, Director General Jacynthe Harper, and Directors Jean Dion, Roxanne Brochu, Véronique Rioux, Pascal Croteau, Renée-Susie Labelle, and Benoît Lalonde.

The opening ceremony for the new gym on September 12 will take place from 11 am to 2 pm, and is free for all to attend.

Clothing Collection Returns to Two Gatineau Neighbourhoods



Drazen Seslija

The City of Gatineau will continue its pilot project for curbside collection of clothing and textiles in certain sectors of the Plateau and Angers neighbourhoods in September 2026.

After two initial collections involving more than 1,000 households, the initiative diverted 18 tonnes of clothing and textiles from landfill.

For this third collection, the eligible areas have been slightly expanded, targeting nearly

10,000 households.

Residents must register by September 15 to take advantage of the service. Registration can be done online on the city's website, through the DTRITUS mobile app, or by calling 311.

The collection will take place on September 16 in the Angers neighbourhood, and then on September 17 and 18 in the Plateau sector.

TYPES OF ITEMS AND PROCEDURES

Several types of items will be accepted, including clothing, household linens, shoes,

and accessories such as bags, belts, and hats. Textiles with holes, damage, or fading can also be dropped off, provided they are clean, dry, and free of unpleasant odors.

Items must be placed in a securely closed bag. Bags of all colours are accepted, but the word "TEXTILES" must be clearly marked on black or opaque bags for easy identification.

The collection will be carried out by Tricentris. The collected materials will then be sorted by local organizations and sent to appropriate outlets, including reuse.

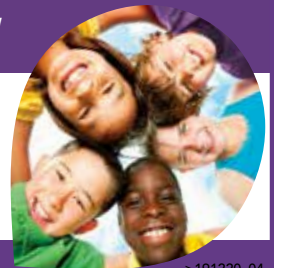
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Guest editorial

Amusez-vous. Have fun.

It's what you say to a six-year-old when you drop them off for a play date. Or to a teenager leaving on a camping trip. Maybe a colleague going on a special date.

You know when it is not appropriate to say 'Amusez-vous'? When you are responsible for communications for the leader of the CAQ and you forward a request for comment to a colleague responsible for media relations, from an English-language newspaper asking if the CAQ is comfortable with the fact that English-speaking Quebecers without access to technology will be unable to access voting information. 'Amusez-vous' does not see like an appropriate tagline.

It would seem more like an indication the CAQ doesn't give two hoots whether English-speakers find their way to the polls since it's highly unlikely many will be voting for their party given four years of discriminatory legislation and bad policy.

Élections Quebec, meanwhile, the agency responsible for ensuring free and fair elections in Quebec, told reporters last week that it had asked the government to allow the distribution of election information in both French and English. The CAQ flexed its Bill 96 muscles declaring English-speakers can access their voting information by scanning the QR code on the French-language printout. The CAQ's 'no harm, no foul' equivalent of 'let them eat cake'.

If a QR code can adequately inform Quebecers on where and when to vote, why not just send QR codes to all Quebecers?

Where was the minister with the oxymoronic title, Minister Responsible for Relations with English-speaking Quebecers, when his government decided a half million Quebecers should not have equal access to the most basic fundamental right in a free society: to elect the people who will form the government.

The notion that co-inhabitants who breathe the same air, pay the same taxes, suffer the same delays in health care, smack into the same potholes, should be treated differently, has always been a mystery.

Surely the government is not suggesting that Quebecers who speak English should not have an equal opportunity to go to the polls to elect the people who will represent them for the next four years. Are they attempting to make the absurd argument that providing voter information in English would threaten the French language?

English-speaking Quebecers are not just Quebecers who speak English. They are co-builders of Quebec. Together they have jointly built, funded, managed and maintained an enviable network of schools, universities, hospitals, churches, community centres, libraries for the benefit and great pride of all Quebecers.

Let me repeat what I've said before. It is not entirely correct to say English-speaking Quebecers do not have any impact on Quebec election results. While it's true the number of English-speaking voters in the 127 electoral divisions of Quebec will have little direct effect at the polls, to argue English-speaking Quebecers do not influence election results is to suggest the Catholic Church did not

have any sway over Quebec politics.

The election game-changer is not the number of English-speakers going to the polls, it's the number of French-speakers who work, live, play and support their communities side-by-side with Anglos and see them as allies and co-builders, and not the enemy.

Here in the Townships where English-speakers represent barely a blip on the radar, there is a historic relationship between the two language groups that transcends the political flavour of any one election and rallies voters to protect what they have built together. English-speakers in the Townships, though small in number, are among the most bilingual people in Quebec, a demonstration of respect for their French-language neighbours and their desire to be participants in the daily life of Quebec and not mere observers.

It is very difficult for political leaders to alienate friends and neighbours and fabricate a sense of urgency to protect and preserve the French language and culture when all around there is evidence of the general acceptance of French as the predominant language of Quebec and the peaceful co-existence of Quebecers of all stripes.

What counts is what transpires between elections and each one of us has an equal say in that. So if you believe creating obstacles for English-speakers to vote will change the result, amusez vous.

Sharon McCully

Publisher, Sherbrooke Record

LETTERS

to the **Editor** *Opinions expressed are not necessarily shared by the paper*

Quebec elections and healthcare

With the Quebec elections approaching, the stakes are high for the Outaouais region. In the critical area of healthcare alone, the situation appears more serious than ever following many years of acute difficulties. According to CISS data, around 122,350 people do not have a designated GP – one of the highest rates in Quebec. The 'Guichet d'accès à la première ligne' system is not solving the problems for our community. A&E departments are overwhelmed, whilst there is a severe shortage of healthcare professionals. In the case of a friend, with all the costs that this entails, a family member has had to travel to Montreal to undergo tests and treatment, as the radiotherapy manager here has left and has still not been replaced. How many relatives, friends and fellow citizens have seen their health compromised because of our lack of services? All of this is completely unacceptable for a region with 428,751 residents. It is quite clear that we feel neglected compared to Montreal and Quebec City, but Quebec includes all of us here too! I would say to all the leaders of political parties: we are already well aware of our problems; we do not want fine words and promises, we want real solutions. (Trans.: BA)

**P. Trottier
Aylmer**

All aboard: Tourisme Outaouais unveils Outaouais Express

Jude Osmond

A new virtual experience has touched down in Gatineau as the Outaouais Express was inaugurated on September 2. The Outaouais Express is a virtual train ride that circles Outaouais wildlife, featuring destinations with photos and videos from Gatineau Park, Omega Park and more.

The Outaouais Express is currently parked at the Place du Centre, near the food court, and is available at no cost for anyone who wants to take a ride.



Alexandre Van Dieren, Geneviève Latulippe and Lélia Bâcle-Mainguy at the inauguration of the Outaouais Express on Wednesday, September 2 (JO)

PHOTO: JUDE OSMOND

West Quebec Post

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Reflections



As one more summer draws to a close, what better time to reflect on another lifetime experience? For a moment, let your mind's eye beckon you to where you were on that first summer morning of June. Were your thoughts turned to a cottage hideaway? Were you thinking of lolling around on a white, sandy beach? An afternoon splash in a swimming pool? A backyard BBQ, perhaps? And Canada Day—oh, those fireworks! What a wonderful sight to behold! Ah, summer... birdsong in the morning, colourful flowers, and seeds and/or seedlings to be sown in newly tilled soil.

Ah, summer—then, poof, your happy dreams faded. Mother nature had other plans for all of us. She presented us with one of those El Niño years. This year's July 1st was minus pyrotechnics. Instead, the sky turned prematurely dark. Down splashed the rain; buckets of it. In some places, over 160 ml. were dumped on us in less than an hour. Our world was drenched. The initial flooding and subsequent heavy rains flooded basements, destroying the belongings of thousands of people. Our dreams of summer were drowned.

When the Portuguese explorer, Ferdinand Magellan, rounded the perilous Strait of South America that would later be named after him, he entered the largest body of water in the world. No doubt grateful for the warm breeze and the calm currents of that vast body of water, he christened it Mar Pacífico.

Mar Pacífico was anything but Pacific, however. There were those days when it was more gentle, perhaps, but the warming of the current that flowed along the east coast of South America from the Equator could become very nasty. Even the most placid of us can occasionally blow our top.

Every one to seven years, the Pacific Ocean does just that. This summer, the Pacific Ocean became very, very angry. This year, El Niño, as the weather event is dubbed, was super angry. Unable to stifle the built up heat of a few hot years any longer, it released that heat into the atmosphere. On July 1st, did you hear it shout: "Take that, you ungrateful polluters. All that extra heat that you generated, I'm sending back to you in spades!"

That heat, generated by us, comes from many different sources. Think of coal-burning furnaces. Think of the refining of crude oil. How about all those jets up there in a clear-blue sky? At any given

moment, there can be 100,000 or more of them in the air. During peak periods of summer vacation time, 250,000 of them are in flight. Unlike birds of the air, their wings are not propelling them. It's jet fuel, fossil fuel, that rockets them forward.

Cruise ships that sail the seas? At one time in history, their sails depended on the winds. Not anymore. Whether they're carrying people or cargo, their source of propulsion is no longer dependant on the wind.

Summer's almost over. Already, we're feeling that autumn chill, especially at night. Meteorologists are predicting a warmer winter with the El Niño affects lasting until spring. A warmer winter? Ah, yes...but don't conjure up images of it yet. Since I've already shattered your dreams of summer, I might as well end this with my own dark predictions. There'll be that powdery white stuff, of course. With El Niño still around, will there be rain, freezing rain, hail, tons of wet snow and grey skies? Oh, the thoughts of a winter ahead like that...

Here's a poem that I wrote from the darker side. Call it an El Niño poem, if you wish.

ROCK-BOTTOM

Rock-bottom feelings and rock-bottom trends,
Saying a wrong word then making amends.

Rocking and rolling, we stumble along,
There are sometimes we're right, at times we are wrong.
Gathered together in God's name, we pray,
Still we are 'we,' while others are 'they.'
Begging forgiveness, saying we'll turn the page.

We'll play our own part on life's busy stage.
Bumper to bumper, one more traffic jam.
Cut each other off, but we don't give a damn.

Giving the finger and blowing our horn,
'We' are the rosebud and 'they' are the thorn.

Speed down life's highway, onward we go,
Better to hurry: no need to go slow.
We rule our own kingdom, wear a perilous crown,

Until like Humpty Dumpty, we come tumbling down.

Rock-bottom feelings and rock-bottom trends,
Should we aim for the top and become better friends?



Wait for September

by Gwynne DYER

AUTHOR, HISTORIAN & INDEPENDENT JOURNALIST

Making predictions in print is rarely a good idea, and saying 'I told you so' is always rude, but rules are made to be broken. On 10 June, one week before the short-lived 'Memorandum of Understanding' (MoU) on the Middle East war was signed, I wrote a piece on that war that predicted what would happen next.

It said: "The next few months should be eventful but not alarming: ceasefires made, broken and remade on the US-Iran front, while Gaza rots....Come September, however, things will probably start to get exciting, because the elections will create deadlines. Not for Iran, of course, but for Trump and for Netanyahu."

I'm not claiming any great insight here. To the contrary, I'm pointing out that the probable course of events was so obvious as to be almost inevitable. The Iranians had already won just by not losing, and Donald Trump had no cards left to play.

It wasn't yet clear that his cartoonish defence secretary, Pete Hegseth, had already managed to squander most of America's large stockpile of precision-guided bombs and missiles with no visible effect on Iranian strategy, but that doesn't really matter anyway. American weapons are of no relevance so long as Iran can keep control of the Strait of Hormuz.

So Trump oscillated between fantasy diplomatic breakthroughs and pointless military threats through the whole summer, while most of us got on with our lives and relatively few people were killed. However, September was bound to follow, and with it comes the prospect of national elections in both Israel (27 October) and the United States (3 November).

As things stand now, Netanyahu's coalition will lose its majority in the Knesset. He could even end up in jail. Trump's presidency is not at stake in these 'mid-term' elections but his party could easily lose control of the House of Representatives, which would open the door to impeachment proceedings.

Either man would benefit greatly from a military victory right about now – and although Trump is still cross about the way Netanyahu suckered him into a surprise attack on Iran that backfired, the two do have a way of egging each other on into doubtful enterprises that neither man might risk alone.

So what kind of enterprises are we talking about here? The context is military, and the lead would have to come from the United States because America has 35 times the population of Israel. There

are really only two things Trump could do that might persuade Iran's rulers to compromise on their claim to control the Strait of Hormuz.

One is a mass aerial onslaught on all the foundations of Iran's status as a poor but 'developed' country: industry, transport, electrical power, oilfields, water supply, desalination plants, etc. "Bomb them back to the Stone Age," as US Air Force General Curtis LeMay once put it (referring to Vietnam).

But Trump has already tried that once – "A whole civilisation will die tonight," as he declared last April – only to call it off at the last minute when the Iranians didn't waver in their defiance. He still has lots of 'dumb bombs' to carry out his threats, but he'd actually have to start the mass killing next time before anybody would take him seriously.

The only remaining alternative, for a leader desperate to end a war that he should never have started, is a threat to drop a single low-yield nuclear warhead in some sparsely populated part of the target country – or maybe skip the threat, because your credibility is shot. Just explode the bomb first, and then invite the enemy for talks.

This is an evergreen topic in strategic circles. From the very beginning of the nuclear era, strategic theorists have struggled to find ways to make nuclear weapons 'useful'. That is to say, usable for purposes beyond mere deterrence against an attack by another nuclear power.

Never mind the hypocrisy of two countries that have had nuclear weapons for several generations (60 years for Israel, 80 years for US) dropping a nuclear bomb on a country that has never had one, on the grounds that it might get one some day. Just consider what Iran would do next.

It would do nothing. Absolutely nothing, except to make clear the horror of what the Americans and/or the Israelis had done. Every American alliance would be wrecked, every deal would be null and void.

The Good Old Days when 'international law' meant something (not much, but something) may be gone, but neither the United States nor Israel has a real nuclear option against Iran. The tricky bit is how to ensure that people like Donald Trump and Pete Hegseth understand that they don't have that option.

Demand for English college in Outaouais collides with Quebec's Law 14



Tashi Farmilo
LJ Reporter

Demand for English-language college education in the Outaouais has climbed sharply this year, but Quebec's Law 14 is preventing Cégep Heritage College from admitting more students, leaving the Gatineau institution unable to meet a 75 per cent jump in first-round applications for 2026-2027.

The pressure comes as the province's college network reports record enrolment. The Fédération des cégeps announced on August 25 that 200,635 students had registered across Quebec's 48 Cégeps this fall, up 3.3 per cent and the highest total on record. In the Outaouais, enrolment rose 5.3 per cent, or 370 students, according to the federation's preliminary figures.

At Heritage College, the only English-language Cégep in western Quebec, that appetite for spots cannot translate into enrolment. Director General Lisa Peldjak said the college's cap for the 2026-2027 year is 1,198 full-time students in its DEC programs (DCS - Diploma of College Studies in English), a ceiling unchanged from last year. Heritage has "the capacity to admit more students," she said, "however, Law 14 prevents us from doing so."

What has changed is interest. Peldjak said applications rose 75 per cent in the first admission round, making Heritage "the only Anglophone Cégep in Quebec to have such an increase."



Facing a 75 per cent surge in applications, Cégep Heritage College in Gatineau cannot admit more students because Quebec's Law 14 caps enrolment at the province's English colleges, leaving Director General Lisa Peldjak to question where a growing Outaouais population will pursue post-secondary education. (TF)

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CÉGEP HERITAGE COLLEGE

Nursing, Science, Business Administration and Electrical Engineering Technology all filled during that round, she said, and Social Science was "full for the first time in years." Early Childhood Education also climbed, and the college is fielding "an increase in students who require support."

Law 14, adopted in 2022 and formerly known as Bill 96, tightened the province's French-language charter and placed new limits on English colleges. It caps their combined enrolment at 17.5 per cent of all Cégep students in Quebec, gives priority to holders of a certificate of eligibility to study in English, and requires students without one to take courses in French and pass a French exit exam to graduate. The law also restricts English colleges from taking in more students than they did the year before.

Its reach extends past the regular sector. Peldjak said Heritage will run two continuing education programs this fall and a third beginning in January, all capped, with enrolment held back "due to the French language requirements" needed to certify them. International numbers have held steadier. The college takes in only "a few international students every year," she said, and has been spared the 9.8 per cent drop in international enrolment the federation reported provincially, a decline that hit several French Cégeps.

For Peldjak, the squeeze raises a question about the region's future. "The population in our region is growing," she said, and she expects demand for admission to keep rising. Her concern is where residents will turn if they cannot get into Heritage or Cégep de l'Outaouais, the region's French-language college.

"Will they give up on pursuing post-secondary education?" she asked. "Will they leave our region?"

Quebec's English-speaking community urged to weigh in on next federal official languages strategy

Tashi Farmilo

English-speaking Quebecers have until November 2026 to tell Ottawa what should matter most in its next Official Languages Strategy, through an online survey that asks residents to help set priorities, including how funding reaches minority-language communities. The questionnaire, hosted by Canadian Heritage, takes roughly 10 to 15 minutes and is open to anyone who wants a say.

The survey is part of a broader consultation launched in June by the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister responsible for Official Languages, to guide the strategy that will follow the current plan. Quebec's English-speaking communities are among the official language minority communities the exercise is meant to serve, alongside Francophone communities outside

the province, and the responses are meant to help shape the support those communities receive.

The questionnaire is one way to take part. Invitation-only in-person sessions for community groups and stakeholders are being held through November, alongside virtual and thematic sessions, though no session list specific to this region has been published. Community organizations that work on behalf of English-speaking Quebecers fall within the stakeholder groups being consulted.

Residents can complete the survey at: pch.surveymonkey.com/r/LNVT88B before the November 2026 deadline. Consultation details, including any sessions added for this area, are posted at: canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/corporate/public-consultations/official-languages-consultations-2026.html.

MRC warden confirms Maniwaki services will continue after town council opposes Gracefield head office expansion

Continued from page 2

In her statement, Lamarche and the 16 members of the MRC council said the project will not cause any job losses and that the Maniwaki office will stay open as an important service point. As evidence of its commitment to the town, the MRC pointed to more than \$2.3 million invested there in recent years, including the purchase of a building and renovation work.

Much of the recent concern centred on how quickly the contract was awarded, and the MRC used the statement to trace the project's history. The plan has been in motion since 2022, when elected officials decided the facilities needed

review to improve efficiency and working conditions and to save money over the long term, and a funding request was approved unanimously at that time. The contested August 5 vote did not launch the project, the MRC said, but only awarded the construction contract, and only after the province confirmed its funding. The work went to CAMA Industries for \$6,488,663 before taxes. Hubert was the only council member to vote against it, which Lamarche said left her disappointed; she added that staff had been consulted at every stage and that some would keep their offices in Maniwaki.

On financing, the MRC received a commitment of \$5,255,250

TALQ survey invites English-speaking Quebecers to shape the election conversation

An online survey launched by TALQ on September 3 is asking English-speaking Quebecers across the province to set out their priorities and expectations before the October 5 provincial election, part of the advocacy group's push to carry the community's voice into the campaign. TALQ, formerly the Quebec Community Groups Network and a long-standing champion of the English-speaking minority, says the responses will shape how it engages with political parties, candidates and the next Government of Quebec. The group is moving quickly to gather them as the main parties fan out with pledges on immigration, transit, taxes and home care, and it has kept the questionnaire to about six minutes so residents can readily weigh in on Quebec's future. It stays open until September 11 and can be completed at www.surveymonkey.com/r/LNVT88B, with organizers encouraging people to pass it along and noting that some may receive more than one invitation, since it is circulating across several platforms.

from the Quebec government on July 23, under a provincial infrastructure program known by its French acronym PRACIM, with additional federal funding still under consideration that could cover a significant further share of the cost. Responding to complaints about transparency, the MRC said the special meeting on the contract was called on July 31, with documents sent to elected officials the same day, and that a public notice was posted on its website, displayed in designated locations, and shared on social media.

Cont'd on westquebecpost.com

A local petition supports the bill that could finally protect Gatineau Park



Tashi Farmilo
LJ Reporter

A petition started by a resident of Mayo is urging people across the Outaouais to get behind Bill S-229, a Senate bill that would hand Gatineau Park its first real legal protection by writing its borders into federal law and making conservation the priority in how the park is run. Launched by John McDonnell, the petition is open for signatures on the House of Commons website until October 29. The petition is in support of one of the region's best known green spaces — the forest and lakes that span Chelsea, La Pêche, Pontiac and Gatineau.

For all its trails, lookouts and swimming spots, Gatineau Park has almost no standing in law. Its boundaries are not set out in any Act of Parliament. They are drawn instead in a management plan produced by the National Capital Commission, a document that can be changed without vote. In practice that means chunks of the park can be sold, developed or handed off without Parliament ever weighing in, and the people who manage it have little authority to protect its wildlife and habitat. The petition points to more than 90 endangered plant species and 50 endangered animal species living within those unofficial lines.



A petition is rallying the Outaouais behind Bill S-229, a Senate bill that would give Gatineau Park its first legal protection by enshrining its boundaries in federal law and making conservation the priority in how the park is managed, before signatures close on October 29. (TF)

PHOTO: TASHI FARMILO

Bill S-229, sponsored by Senator Rosa Galvez, sets out to fix that. It would give the park formal legal status for the first time, lock its boundaries into legislation, and make ecological health the guiding principle behind every management decision. It would bar the sale of public land inside the park apart from narrow exceptions, force any future boundary change or major land transfer to go through Parliament, and require closer consultation with the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nation, on whose unceded territory the park sits, and with the

surrounding municipalities.

Understanding why the petition matters means understanding how slowly a bill like this travels. Every bill has to clear the same gauntlet twice, once in each chamber. In the Senate, where S-229 lives, it went through first reading, a formality that simply introduces it, then second reading, where senators debated the idea itself and voted to keep it alive on April 15. It now waits at the committee stage, in the hands of the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources, where

members can call witnesses, pick over the wording line by line, and propose changes. If it survives committee and a report stage, it faces a final third reading vote in the Senate. Only then does it cross to the House of Commons and begin the entire climb again, first reading through third reading. Once both chambers pass the exact same text, it goes to the Governor General for royal assent and becomes law.

That long road is the whole reason this campaign exists. S-229 is not a government bill, so it does not get guaranteed time or priority. It competes for the scraps of the parliamentary calendar reserved for senators' and private members' business, which makes it slow and fragile. Any bill that has not received royal assent dies the moment Parliament is prorogued or an election is called, forcing supporters to start over from nothing. More than a dozen attempts to protect Gatineau Park over close to two decades have collapsed for exactly that reason. Every stage cleared is ground that can be lost, which is why backers argue that visible public pressure now is what keeps the bill from stalling and quietly. The petition is a way for the people who live closest to the park to tell Parliament that its protection cannot wait for a fourteenth try. Petition e-7579: www.ourcommons.ca/petitions/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-7579

Parking fees coming to the Gatineau Park Visitor Centre



Gatineau Park Visitor Centre (DS)

PHOTO: GATINEAU PARK



Drazen Seslija

Gatineau Park Visitor Centre will soon require payment for parking. The National Capital Commission (NCC) will implement new parking fees effective September 1.

This measure aims to better manage traffic in one of the park's busiest areas and improve the availability of parking spaces. According to the NCC, this measure also aims to promote sustainable transportation and protect Gatineau Park's natural environment. Revenue from parking fees

will be reinvested in activities, programs, and infrastructure.

The first 30 minutes of parking will remain free. After that, visitors will be charged \$3 for each additional 30-minute period, up to a maximum of \$16 per day. Payment can be made by credit or debit card, as well as with exact change.

However, holders of a seasonal parking permit will be able to park for free at the Visitor Centre until October 31. As with other NCC paid parking lots, vehicles displaying an accessible parking permit will be entitled to four hours of free parking.

Drug-related deaths in the Outaouais now claim older, more hidden victims



Tashi Farmilo

The person most at risk of fatal toxic drug use in the Outaouais is not the one most people would picture: on average 51 years old, dying not on the street but in a private home, and most often alone. Santé Québec Outaouais recorded 22 deaths potentially caused by an unintentional overdose or toxic drug supply across the region in the first eight months of this year, figures that describe a crisis unfolding largely in private, beyond the reach of the services meant to prevent it.

The profile cuts against a common assumption. Tainted drug use is often imagined at the margins: the encampment, the alley, the young. This year's dead in the Outaouais look different. About three-quarters died at home, and only a minority were homeless. Their average age is 51, up from about 43 in 2020 and 2021, one of the few figures the health authority tracks clearly over time. Men have historically made up roughly three in four deaths, though this year's preliminary count includes more women. The health authority said the deaths reach people of different ages, backgrounds and circumstances, not only the homeless or those long associated with drug use.

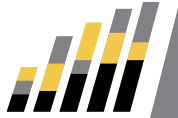
The overall toll is harder to read than the profile. The 22 deaths so far this year compare with 19 over the same period in 2025 and 33 in 2024, and annual counts have swung between a low of 27 in 2019 and peaks of 45 in both 2020 and 2022. The health authority called the recent figures provisional and subject to revision, and cautioned that the year-to-year movement defies any clear direction. It also noted what the numbers omit: the overdoses people survive, many of which never reach a paramedic or an emergency room and so go uncounted. About 80 per cent of the deaths occurred in Gatineau.

What people are dying from is a mix. Most deaths involve more than one substance, and stimulants appear in about two-thirds of them. Fentanyl and its analogues, a heavy presence since 2018, showed up less often in 2024 and 2025 as other opioids figured more prominently. The health authority also pointed to substances found in the local supply in recent months: carfentanil, the veterinary tranquilizers xylazine and medetomidine, and a benzodiazepine not authorized in Canada. It said these are often blended into fentanyl without the user's knowledge, sharply raising the risk of a fatal overdose.

Cont'd on westquebecpost.com



Québec ELECTIONS 2026



Élections provinciales 2026 : les candidats connus en Outaouais



Drazen Seslija

À quelques semaines du scrutin provincial

du 5 octobre, les principaux partis ont maintenant dévoilé leurs candidats dans les cinq circonscriptions de l'Outaouais, soit à Chapleau, Gatineau, Hull, Papineau

et Pontiac. Voici ci-bas les candidatures annoncées à ce jour, en date du 1er septembre 2026.

À noter : la période officielle de mise

en candidature se terminant seulement le 17 septembre 2026 à 14 h, la liste officielle des candidatures demeure susceptible d'évoluer.

The Outaouais asks Quebec to close the gap in this election



Tashi Farmilo
Local Journalism Initiative

Quebec's 39-day election campaign opened on August 27, and in the Outaouais it began already narrowed to a single preoccupation: whether the next government will close a long-standing gap in health funding. Five parties are fielding 24 candidates across the area's five ridings for the October 5 vote, and from the outset the contest here has been shaped by care that is difficult to reach and by a workforce drawn steadily across the river to better-paid jobs in Ontario.

The map favours the incumbents, for now. The Coalition Avenir Québec holds four of the five local seats, a base assembled in 2018 and enlarged in 2022, while the Quebec Liberals, long the dominant force here, are reduced to Pontiac. Two ridings, Gatineau and Papineau, are open, their sitting members not seeking re-election: Robert Bussière in Gatineau and Mathieu Lacombe in Papineau, the latter the outgoing minister responsible for the Outaouais. Three incumbents remain on the ballot, the Liberal André Fortin in Pontiac and the Coalition's Suzanne Tremblay in Hull and Mathieu Lévesque in Chapleau. The opening numbers pointed in two directions at once. The early picture cut two ways. Days into the campaign, Qc125, the poll aggregator maintained by Philippe J. Fournier, still projected the Parti Québécois to win the most seats, yet put its chance of a majority at only about one in ten, with the Coalition Avenir Québec rising, the Liberals sliding toward the seat total of their 2018 defeat and a PQ plurality the likeliest result. The local picture ran the other way: early campaign reporting had the Liberals ahead across Gatineau and the Pontiac, a reversal of the provincewide order that hints at how differently this corner of Quebec reads the national mood.

No file weighs more here than health. Gatineau's mayor, Maude Marquis-Bissonnette, has cast the campaign as a contest about care above all else, citing waits that stretch too long, specialists and family doctors who are hard to secure, and front-line services that thin out, all of it aggravated by pay and conditions that draw staff to Ontario hospitals. The Conférence des préfets de l'Outaouais, which gathers the mayor with the wardens Marc Carrière, Paul-André David and Pontiac's Jane Toller, is asking every party to pledge a three-year plan to bring health funding to parity. Over all of it hangs the long-promised university hospital in Gatineau, for which the province has already purchased the Centre Asticou site.

Fortin, defending Pontiac, is running on a Liberal promise to close the pay gap between Outaouais health workers and their better-paid counterparts across the river. Action Santé Outaouais called that a good start, but warned that pay alone will not fix the shortage of buildings, specialized equipment and trained nurses and family doctors. Québec solidaire has built its local pitch around transit and the future hospital, with the proposed Gatineau tramway front and centre. The Coalition is campaigning on the cost of living and on staying the course after eight years in power. Mefleh has focused on household budgets and support for small business, forestry and tourism. Robertson, a Gatineau native, leans on language, culture and identity. Gauthier, running for the open Papineau seat, promises investment in families, farming, infrastructure and public services. Outside the city, rural leaders add forestry and worn-out roads to the list, and press for stronger front-line care.

Voters are weighing more than hospitals. Education, immigration, public transit and access to daycare have surfaced alongside health care in early local coverage of the race. The cross-river economy is in play as well,

with Gatineau and Ottawa making common cause against U.S. tariffs. Language and identity carry a particular charge in a part of Quebec that presses against the Ontario border and leans federalist: the municipality of Low has objected to the absence of an English-language leaders' debate, a pointed concern in heavily anglophone Pontiac, and while the University of Ottawa political scientist Geneviève Tellier detects real appetite for the Parti Québécois and its leader, she doubts it reaches as far as another sovereignty referendum, the party's defining promise.

The five parties will answer for these priorities together at the Outaouais debate on September 9 at 7 pm, in the main hall of the Université du Québec en Outaouais at 283 boulevard Alexandre-Taché, an evening convened by Culture Outaouais, Le Droit, the university and the Observatoire du développement de l'Outaouais around six themes bound up with underfunding: education, the cost of living, culture, infrastructure, health and sovereignty. Polls open October 5.

CANDIDATES IN THE RUNNING:

PONTIAC



André Fortin, PLQ, incumbent

The MNA for Pontiac since 2014 and a former transport minister, Fortin has served as the Liberals' parliamentary leader of the Official

Opposition while the party rebuilds. He is campaigning on a Liberal pledge to legislate pay parity between Outaouais health workers and their better-paid counterparts across the river in Ontario.



Mariana Mefleh, CAQ

A political science graduate of the University of Ottawa, Mefleh spent years as a political staffer, including as an adviser to the Hull

MNA, before seeking office herself. She is running on household purchasing power and support for small business, forestry and tourism.

Marcela Cazas, PQ



Bolivian-born and settled in the Outaouais for four decades, Cazas is a retired nurse and nursing adviser who also worked in immigration at Canadian embassies in Haiti and Peru.

She casts herself as a credible voice for explaining Quebec independence to people from diverse communities, in a riding the PQ has never won.

Bianca Baldo, Québec solidaire



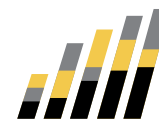
A lawyer and community organizer with more than 20 years advocating for marginalized people, Baldo has led the Aylmer Village Residents' Association since 2018. She is campaigning on social

justice, along with heritage, environment and access to municipal services.

The Conservatives had not confirmed a candidate here as the campaign opened.



Québec ELECTIONS 2026



The Outaouais asks Quebec to close the gap in this election

GATINEAU



William Robertson, CAQ

Born and raised in Gatineau, Robertson spent roughly a decade in politics, including a stint in the premier's office, before running in his home riding.

He is campaigning on language, culture and identity, and on continuity with the Fréchette government.



Bertin Aboussou, PCQ

An information-technology professional in the federal public service, Aboussou brings experience in systems administration and project management.

He is running on road safety, cellular and digital coverage, regional economic development, housing and support for seniors.



running on the PQ's independence project.

Mariève Forest, Québec solidaire

A sociologist with a doctorate, social entrepreneur and trainer originally from the Outaouais, Forest has worked

with community organizations on democratic participation and inclusion. She is campaigning to bring local residents' concerns to the Assembly and to build what she calls a more just and humane Quebec.



Meixia Maltais, PQ

An employee of Hydro-Québec since 2015, Maltais was the first to seek the PQ nomination in Chapleau. She is campaigning on health underfunding, education and the

fiscal imbalance, and argues Quebec independence could improve the province's position.

HULL



David Logue, PLQ

An entrepreneur rooted in the local economy, Logue won a contested Liberal nomination to carry the party's banner in Gatineau. He runs as part of a Liberal slate whose flagship

regional promise is closing the health pay gap with Ontario.



Suzanne Tremblay, CAQ, incumbent

A former teacher and past president of the Outaouais teachers' union, Tremblay won Hull for the CAQ in 2022, unseating a long-serving Liberal and later serving

as parliamentary assistant on education. Seeking a second term, she is running on her record while acknowledging that the government's doctor-pay reform had consequences for the area.



Anne-Marie Couturier, PCQ

Couturier is a longtime federal public servant standing for the Conservatives in Hull. She runs on the party's platform of a

smaller state, lower taxes and faster access to care.



Doryan Pansanel, Québec solidaire

A political science student at the University of Ottawa and a content creator, Pansanel founded a youth theatre company. He is running on the

ecological transition and collective well-being, and on making politics accessible and grounded in daily realities.

CHAPLEAU



Raphaël Déry, PQ

Déry carried the Parti Québécois banner in Gatineau in 2022 and is standing again in 2026. He frames his candidacy as carrying the Outaouais's voice to the National Assembly under the

party's sovereignty project.



Sacha Cannon, PLQ

A lawyer and longtime Liberal activist, Cannon comes from a prominent local political family as the son of former federal minister Lawrence Cannon. He carries the Liberal platform,

headlined regionally by the health-worker pay-parity pledge.



Mathieu Lévesque, CAQ, incumbent

Lévesque took Chapleau from a long-serving Liberal in 2018, held it in 2022, and served as parliamentary assistant to the

justice minister. Seeking a third term, he is running on the government's record, with health care, education and Highway 50 safety long among his stated concerns.



Denis Charron, PCQ

The former mayor of Aumond, Charron brings municipal experience to the Conservative campaign in Chapleau. He runs on the party's platform of lower taxes, a

smaller state and quicker access to health services.

Emmanuelle Tremblay, Québec solidaire



A recent retiree, Tremblay devoted her career to advancing the rights of vulnerable people on the international stage. She is campaigning on Québec solidaire's local priorities,

chiefly public transit, including the proposed Gatineau tramway, and the future hospital.



Paul Fauteux, PQ

A member of the Quebec Bar and an international-law specialist, Fauteux spent 30 years in the federal public service, led Canada's climate-negotiation delegation in the early 2000s and

is a descendant of former premier Honoré Mercier. A longtime sovereigntist, he is



Michel Langevin, PLQ

A former radio host well known locally, Langevin is the Liberals' choice to try to win back Chapleau. He carries the party platform, including its regional

push on health-worker pay parity.



**Québec
ELECTIONS
2026**



Québec ELECTIONS 2026



The Outaouais asks Quebec to close the gap in this election

PAPINEAU



Linda Gauthier, CAQ
Gauthier steps in for the retiring Mathieu Lacombe, the former minister responsible for the Outaouais. She is campaigning on investment in families, agriculture, infrastructure and public services, and on the CAQ's vision of a strong, prosperous Quebec.



Isabelle Sabourin, PLQ
A social sciences graduate of the Université du Québec en Outaouais with graduate training in regional development, Sabourin has spent more than 20 years in strategic roles across the municipal, provincial and federal levels, including as a territorial director for the City of Gatineau. She is campaigning on regional development, rural priorities and the economic and social growth of the Outaouais.



Isabelle Millette, PQ
A strategic adviser in business development and a longtime local entrepreneur, Millette wants to put that experience to work for the area. She frames her candidacy as serving residents with sincerity under the PQ's collective project.



Benoît Renaud, Québec solidaire
A teacher, educational consultant and founding member of Québec solidaire, Renaud sat on the party's national leadership from 2008 to 2012, has run for the party before in Hull, and is a regular political commentator for left-wing publications.



Michel Kadri, PCQ
A businessman standing for the Conservatives in Papineau, Kadri reflects leader Éric Duhaime's bid to make gains in the Outaouais as an alternative for voters tired of the Liberals. He runs on the party's platform of affordability, home ownership and faster care.

Équipe Christine Fréchette lance sa campagne en Outaouais



Drazen Seslija

L'équipe de Christine Fréchette a officiellement donné le coup d'envoi à sa campagne électorale dans la région de l'Outaouais le 31 août dernier, en présentant les cinq candidats qui défendront les couleurs de la Coalition avenir Québec dans les circonscriptions de Hull (Suzanne Tremblay), Chapleau (Mathieu Lévesque), Pontiac (Mariana Mefleh), Gatineau (William Robertson) et Papineau (Linda Gauthier).

LES BONS COUPS ET LA CONFIRMATION DU SITE ASTICOU POUR LE NOUVEL HÔPITAL

Pour la députée sortante de Hull, Suzanne Tremblay, ce lancement a été l'occasion de dresser un bilan favorable de son mandat depuis son élection en 2022. « Les progrès sont énormes depuis le début de mon mandat en 2022 », a-t-elle soutenu, évoquant notamment les logements abordables, la lutte contre l'itinérance, le Village Transition et le programme PRISME.

La candidate a également insisté sur l'avancement du futur Centre hospitalier affilié universitaire (CHAU), confirmant que le site est bel et bien choisi. Avec son acquisition en avril dernier, le site Asticou est destiné à accueillir le nouvel hôpital de 600 lits, une étape qui permet de poursuivre les travaux préparatoires.

« Le terrain a été choisi, maintenant le site a été acquis et bientôt les travaux commenceront! », a lancé Mme Tremblay, qui a aussi cité le futur centre des congrès et le Musée régional parmi les bons coups pour Hull.

INVESTISSEMENTS

À Chapleau, le député sortant Mathieu Lévesque a lui aussi défendu le bilan de son équipe. Il a notamment évoqué le nouvel hôpital, l'élargissement de l'autoroute 50 et le projet du centre des congrès. « Nous avons investi et porté haut nos intérêts », a-t-il affirmé.

Au niveau local, il a également souligné le projet de terrain synthétique au parc Ernest-Gaboury ainsi que la Maison des apprentis destinée aux personnes vivant avec une déficience intellectuelle. En 2024, Québec avait annoncé une contribution de 1,9 million de dollars pour la conversion d'un terrain de soccer naturel en terrain synthétique à cet endroit.

COÛT DE LA VIE ET ÉCONOMIE LOCALE

Du côté de Gatineau, le candidat William Robertson a placé le coût de la vie au centre de ses priorités. « Vous pouvez compter sur moi pour travailler sur le coût de la vie, particulièrement en ce qui concerne le panier d'épicerie et le logement », a-t-il déclaré, tout en affirmant vouloir faire progresser le prolongement de l'autoroute 5 à la hauteur de Wakefield, ainsi que des projets de rénovation et de construction d'écoles primaires.

Pour Pontiac, Mariana Mefleh a pour sa part axé son discours sur l'économie locale et la proximité entre le domicile et le lieu de travail. « Je veux créer davantage d'opportunités ici, dans notre municipalité, pour permettre aux gens de travailler près de chez eux et de dynamiser l'économie de notre région », a-t-elle affirmé.

L'UNION FAIT LA FORCE

Enfin, pour Papineau, Linda Gauthier a placé la campagne sous le signe de la mobilisation régionale. « Je ne veux pas voir Papineau avancer sans vous, sans nous », a-t-elle déclaré. La candidate souhaite notamment mettre de l'avant les besoins des familles, des jeunes, des personnes âgées, des agriculteurs et des entrepreneurs.

Les cinq candidats caquistes sont désormais officiellement en campagne. Mathieu Lévesque et Suzanne Tremblay, tous deux députés sortants, sollicitent un nouveau mandat, tandis que Mariana Mefleh, William Robertson et Linda Gauthier tentent de remporter leur première élection dans leurs circonscriptions respectives.

Letters to the Editor Guidelines:

To make sure your letter is published:

All letters must be signed with a phone number (not published). Any language is acceptable ... but be clear, civil, and not rude. All letters are edited for grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc, and for length. Expect your letter to be edited. No personal attacks, nor promotional pieces for political candidates or parties accepted

The Editor

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COLLECTION OF NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS AND HYGIENE PRODUCTS FOR THE AYLMEER FOOD CENTRE: People who want to make a difference and help our community can drop off their donations at the *Aylmer Bulletin* office, located in the Galeries Aylmer. Thank you for your generosity!

JOB OFFERS

AGENT(E) BILINGUE RECHERCHÉ(E). La SAAQ d'Aylmer cherche à pourvoir un poste au service à la clientèle de 26 heures par semaine. Une excellente maîtrise du français et de l'anglais est requise. Faites parvenir votre CV en français à bureauaylmer@outlook.com.

JOB OFFERS

BILINGUAL AGENT WANTED. The SAAQ in Aylmer is looking to fill a customer service position for 26 hours per week. Excellent proficiency in French and English required. Please send your French resume to bureauaylmer@outlook.com.

PART-TIME JOB OPPORTUNITY: The Pontiac Journal is looking for part-time community reporters throughout MRC Pontiac and the Municipality of Pontiac. This is the perfect opportunity for retirees, those seeking a second income, or anyone interested in occasional work. Do you enjoy attending local events? Do you care deeply about supporting your community? Do you enjoy writing? Do you have access to a car and a camera? Are you looking for a flexible schedule and the chance to be part of a team? Send a brief resume and a cover letter to: editor@journalpontiac.com.

JOB OFFERS

CHEZ PUTTERS IS CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR A BARMAID/BARMAN, WAITER/WAITRESS. Position available immediately. Submit your resume in person at Chez Putters, located at 181 Rue Principale, Gatineau (Aylmer), QC, or by email at info@chezputters.ca.

MISCELLANEOUS

QCNA offers advertisers a one-order, one-bill service. Call us for details on reaching English Quebec and, through classified ads, French Quebec and every other Canadian province and territory. Contact us at sales@qcna.qc.ca or 819-893-6330. For details, visit <https://qcna.qc.ca/>.

PERSONAL CARE

DIMA THERAPY AND BEAUTY CLINIC Body Contouring, Laser hair removal, Hydro Facial. Located at 36 Court Street, Gatineau. 438-985-2911.



BECAUSE WE HAVE YOUR ACTIVITIES AT HEART COMMUNITY EVENTS

ALCOOLQUES ANONYMES PEUT VOUS AIDER. Les Alcooliques anonymes sont une association de personnes qui viennent en aide aux personnes souffrant d'alcoolisme. Nous nous aidons les uns les autres à demeurer abstinents en partageant nos expériences de rétablissement avec d'autres personnes désireuses de mettre fin à leur dépendance à l'alcool. Si tu veux arrêter de boire, nous pouvons t'aider. Tél. : 819-561-2002, AA90.org.

AYLMER LEGION, 59 BANCROFT STREET -Veterans' Get-Togethers, info: Bruce Howarth 613-240-6915. -Mondays: Izzy Dolls Knitting Group from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.; Euchre League at 6:30 p.m. -Tuesday mornings at 9 a.m.: Chair-Assisted Yoga on the (2nd floor). -3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.: Trivia Night. -Thursday mornings at 9 a.m.: Chair Yoga (2nd floor). -Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.: 500 League. -Fridays at 7:30 p.m.: Dart League. -September 15 at 10 a.m.: Coffee Morning (coffee, tea, and muffins provided free of charge). -September 19 at 1 p.m.: Euchre Tournament. -September 19 at 8 p.m.: Karaoke Night. -September 20 at noon: Open House; 1 p.m.: Presentation of Honors and Awards; 3 p.m.: Music and dancing with the band Arc of Fire; 6 p.m.: Buffet. -September 26 at 1 p.m.: Cribbage Tournament. -September 26 at 6 p.m.: Fundraiser – Hamburger Steak Dinner followed by a Harvest Dance with the Gib Rozon Band. Tickets available in advance only by contacting 613-614-7847. -September 27 at 2 p.m.: Annual General Meeting for members. Info or questions? Contact us at: Aylmerlegion33@gmail.com.

BINGO AYDELU 94, rue du Patrimoine, Gatineau (secteur d'Aylmer). Tous les mercredis soir / Every Wednesday night 18 h 45 / 6:45 p.m. Ouverture des portes 16 h / Doors open at 4 p.m. 3 800 \$ en prix / in prizes. 18 ans et plus / 18 years and older.

Places limitées / Limited places. Nouveau programme / New program. Service de cantine / Canteen service. 819 684-7888 ou/or 819 230-2240.

OLD AYLMEER PUBLIC MARKET From June 7 to October 4, come discover Gatineau's largest public market! Every Sunday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Parc Commémoratif. More than 40 local farmers, food producers, artisans, and makers will be on site. Enjoy a friendly atmosphere, live music, and fresh local products. A perfect outing for the whole family! 117 Rue Principale, Gatineau (Aylmer).

OUR LADY OF THE ANNUNCIATION ANNUAL INDOOR GARAGE SALE. 189 Archambault Street, Hull Sector, Gatineau. Saturday, September 12, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Household and personal items, jewelry, tools, toys, Christmas items and baked goods. Hot dogs and drinks. For more information: 819-661-9268.

THE FESTIVAL AU PARC, located behind L'Imagier, near the Aylmer marina, invites you to discover local artists in a warm and intimate atmosphere. At the park's refreshment stand, come discover a unique restaurant and microbrewery! Saturday, September 12: Nick Schofield performs at 7 p.m. and Pony Girl at 8 p.m. At the refreshment stand (meal and beverage options): Ras l'bol. The 3rd edition of Au Parc is produced by l'Imagier. Free admission. Bring your own chairs or blankets.

WILD N'OUEST LINE DANCING FOR BEGINNERS EVERY SUNDAY AT PUTTERS from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. \$10 per person. No registration required. 6:00 p.m.: Arrive early, grab a drink, and come socialize; 7:00 p.m.: Line dance class begins; 8:00 p.m.: Open line dancing. Come one, come all! 181 Principale Street, Gatineau, QC.



Commission scolaire Western Québec
Western Québec School Board

AVIS PUBLIC

ÉTUDE DU BUDGET 2026-2027

AVIS est par la présente donné que le conseil des commissaires de la Commission scolaire Western Québec examinera son budget pour l'année 2026-2027 lors d'une séance extraordinaire qui sera tenue le 22 septembre 2026 à 19 h 00 au centre administratif de la Commission scolaire Western Québec, 15 rue Katimavik, Gatineau.

Donné à Gatineau, Québec le
9 septembre 2026

Berthine Jean Glouzon, secrétaire général

PUBLIC NOTICE

2026-2027 BUDGET STUDYING

NOTICE is hereby given that the Council of Commissioners of the Western Québec School Board will be studying its 2026-2027 budget at a special meeting to be held on September 22, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the offices of the Western Québec School Board, located at 15 Katimavik, Gatineau.

Given at Gatineau, Québec,
9 September, 2026

Berthine Jean Glouzon, Secretary General

West Quebec Post
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