

# THE 1019 REPORT



COVERING THE 1,019 SQUARE KILOMETRES OF VAUDREUIL-SOULANGES

VOL. 7 NO. 6 - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026



## ST. LAZARE

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COUNCIL OPTS TO OK NUISANCE BYLAW **P9**

## Rigaud could be in path of new train

JOSHUA ALLAN  
The 1019 Report

As communities along the proposed corridor for the planned high-speed train between Quebec City and Toronto grapple with what it will mean for them, residents in this region are invited to participate in virtual information sessions hosted by the crown corporation responsible for planning and operating this service.

The meeting may be of special interest to residents of Rigaud and Pointe Fortune, as these towns have been included in the path of one of the options for the potential route of the train line.

An interactive map published by crown corporation Alto illustrates a potential route cutting through part of Pointe Fortune and the rural western section of Rigaud.

The map itself is not a precise plan, as it sketches a corridor that is much wider than what is required. It is an area that stretches from Rigaud and about 20 kilometres across to Hawkesbury and the southern portion of Lachute. This means that the future rail line could be located anywhere within this swath. No other area of the 1019 region falls within Alto's route projection map.

See **TRAIN**, Page 3.



The 1019 Report

High winds causing a number of power outages yesterday also sent branches flying and felled trees, like this one that, for a while during the height of the morning commute, blocked Bedard Avenue in St. Lazare. It was quickly brushed to the side of the road, allowing motorists on the busy artery that leads to Highway 40 to travel without delay. Vaudreuil-Soulanges was one of the areas in the Montérégie that was hardest hit by the power outages. Areas with the largest number of homes affected were in St. Lazare and Vaudreuil-Dorion.

## Call to see hospital's hiring plan met with silence

BRENDA O'FARRELL  
The 1019 Report

A demand issued last month by local political and business leaders for Santé Québec to outline its recruitment strategy for the new Vaudreuil-Soulanges Hospital has so far been met with silence, says the president of the region's economic development agency.

"It's essential to get an answer from Santé Québec," Danie Deschênes, president of DEV Vaudreuil-Soulanges, said last week.

"We still want to see the plan," Deschênes continued. "Is there a plan?"

That question sums up the ever-growing worry the new hospital will fall short of its stated goal of filling 3,500 jobs and recruiting 200 doctors between now and when the facility opens in the spring of 2028.

Deschênes, who is also the mayor of Notre Dame de l'Île Perrot, said she did not expect health officials to jump when DEV formally — and very publicly — issued the request to be brought into the loop on the hiring plan on Feb. 11, explaining regional stakeholders are willing to be patient.

But they are not going to wait indefinitely, she said.

See **STAFFING**, Page 12.



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## St. Lazare narrows scope of building repair bylaw

JOSHUA ALLAN  
The 1019 Report

A bylaw aimed to prevent property owners in St. Lazare from letting buildings fall into disrepair has been narrowed in scope. Originally planned to apply to all buildings in town – including sheds, barns and detached garages – the legislation will now only apply to heritage buildings, commercial and industrial buildings, multi-residential buildings and buildings that have been vacant for more than three months.

“The main complaint was that people were worried about how this would be applied and how it would affect them,” Mayor Geneviève Lachance said in an interview. “Now that we’ve removed all that, I think it will reassure people.”

The bylaw, which was adopted at the March 10 council meeting, aims to ensure the structural maintenance of these buildings. The legislation gives the town the power to inspect the buildings and require the owners to repair any damage or deteriorating features of the structure. Owners who fail to comply risk facing thousands of dollars in fines.

The original version of this bylaw, which had been tabled in February, had aimed to apply this standard to all buildings in St. Lazare, including single-family houses and any structures on private properties. Even old backyard sheds were originally targeted.

The Quebec government requires municipalities adopt a bylaw on maintenance of local heritage buildings by April 1, but

municipal councils have the option to expand this regulation beyond maintaining structures deemed to have heritage value.

District 6 Councillor Lorraine Caron had denounced the broad scope of the initial version of the bylaw, being the only member on council to vote against it in February.

“I thought there would be a social acceptability problem to subject all buildings” to this bylaw, said Caron, who voted in favour of the revised version last week.

While she said she doesn’t perceive this issue as being especially pronounced in her district, Caron pointed to the fact that the town does not have an inventory of all buildings in the town. This, she said, would have presented an obstacle for municipal inspectors, who would have needed to investigate, verify and keep running tabs on each complaint they receive about

any derelict building or structure.

“Not to mention the hassle of having an inspector come to your home and tell you, ‘Well, you need to repair your roof, you need to repair your balcony, you need to repair your walls,’ and so on,” Caron added.

A public consultation Feb. 24 saw several residents voice the same concerns as Caron. Some asked about a timeline for repairs, how low-income residents would be able to afford these repairs, and how it would be determined what qualifies as being dilapidated.

This response from residents pushed the city to amend this bylaw, Lachance said.

“We had a lot of debates internally about this to find the right solution. But I think it’s a good compromise for now.”

*Local Journalism Initiative*

## Help 1019, 1510 West support those who need a hand We’re hosting two food drives

When times are tough and when rising prices add to the financial pressures people struggle with, neighbours help neighbours.

It is with that thought in mind that the team who publishes *The 1019 Report* and *The 1510 West* have decided to host a food drive.

In fact, we — along with our sponsors — are hosting two food drives.

The first will be on Saturday, March 28, in the West Island to benefit West Island Mission. Please drop by McKibbin’s in Pointe Claire, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., to drop off any non-perishable food items or toiletries.

Then, we turn our attention to helping Le Pont Bridging in Hudson and La Source d’Entraide in St. Lazare. On April 11, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., the newspapers’ representatives will be at Cardinal Brewing in Hudson, McKibbin’s Vaudreuil and Duke & Devine’s in Vaudreuil-Dorion to collect food items.

Hope you can join us. Let’s generate a few positive headlines together.

## TRAIN: Info meeting planned

From Page 1

Earlier this month, residents of Chute à Blondeau, next to Rigaud, just across the Ontario border, held a protest against the proposed route that would cut through their town. They were the latest community to stage a demonstration to voice their concerns.

The plan to build a 1,000-kilometre high-speed rail between Quebec City and Toronto was announced in 2025. The first segment of the line, connecting Ottawa with Laval and Montreal, is expected to

break ground in 2029.

The proposed project is predicted to cost between \$60 billion and \$90 billion, would see the train reaching speeds of up to 300 kilometres per hour on mainly electrified tracks.

*The English-language virtual session takes place on Monday, March 23, at 7 p.m. This is followed by a French-language session on Thursday, March 26, at 7 p.m. Those interested in attending must register at <https://www.altotrain.ca/en/public-consultation/virtual-session>*

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Vaudreuil-Soulanges

# Man sentenced for abusing kids in St. Clet, St. Polycarpe, Île Perrot

FREDERIC SERRE  
The 1019 Report

A LaSalle man has been sentenced to 12 years behind bars for sexually abusing six children, ages 5 to 11, in various regions of the province, including St. Polycarpe, St. Clet and Île Perrot.

Forty-two-year-old Michael Michaud was also sentenced for being in possession of more than 45,000 photos and 11,000 videos of boys between the ages of 2 months and 8 years old being sexually assaulted — many of them by Michaud.

With time already served in pre-trial detention, Michaud will be a free man in nine and a half years.

A Quebec Court judge rendered his decision last Friday at the Montreal courthouse as the parents of two of the victims looked on, and after the Crown outlined the grisly details of Michaud's crimes. Michaud appeared by videoconferencing from prison, where he has been held since his arrest in July 2024.

Almost exactly a year ago, Michaud pleaded guilty to sexual assault, invitation to sexual touching, voyeurism and producing and distributing child pornography.

Michaud's crimes occurred between 2011 and 2024 in various municipalities in the Greater Montreal area, after he befriended families with young children, offering them babysitting or mentoring services. It was when he was alone with the children that he sexually assaulted them and filmed his attacks.

Michaud confessed to police last year to having sexually assaulted a 7-year-old boy. Police found videos of the sexual acts on Michaud's phone.

"My son is also serving a sentence: one of fear and memories he never deserved," the victim's mother told the court last Friday.

The child was "more withdrawn and less cheerful" after the day of the crime, his father told authorities. Even today, he

"is suffering terribly," according to his mother, who added that she finds it "unbearable to know that this is not an isolated case."

Michaud admitted to engaging in sexual contact with four other children between 2011 and 2023 and to voyeurism involving a fifth.

Details of how exactly Michaud came into contact with his victims, including those who lived in the Vaudreuil-Soulanges area, were not released to protect the identity of the minors involved.

The accused, who is HIV-positive, gained the parents' trust to spend time alone with the boys. He slept with them or even took baths with them.

"My son was stolen from me," the mother of another victim told the court. "He's distrustful, sometimes lost in his thoughts. He's not the same child any more."

According to a report presented to the court by the Crown, Michaud poses an

above-average risk to society. The accused has "intellectual limitations" and "neurodevelopmental issues," the report states.

"He still has a lot of work to do to understand the harm he has caused," said Crown prosecutor Karine Lagacé-Paquette.

Michaud addressed the court by videoconferencing, saying he feels a great deal of "sadness and regret" over his crimes. "I never want to destroy anyone else's life again."

That is why both parties recommended Michaud serve 12 years in prison. This is a "significant sentence that reflects the extreme objective gravity" of the crimes, said his attorney, Diane Chartier.

For two decades, he will be prohibited from communicating with children, visiting parks or schools, or holding a job involving minors under the age of 16. He will also be required to refrain from using social media.

*Local Journalism Initiative*

# Spot on westbound 40 site of another dramatic crash

FREDERIC SERRE  
The 1019 Report

The driver of a car that rolled over several times after veering off westbound Highway 40 on March 10 in Vaudreuil-Dorion managed to crawl out of the wreckage with only a few scratches, according to the Sûreté du Québec — something that surprised responding officers and firefighters when they reached the

scene.

The accident happened around noon when, for an unknown reason, the driver lost control of his Toyota Yaris, which then drove into the centre median and rolled several times before landing on its roof. The investigation into the cause of the accident is under way, but according to the SQ, the pavement was dry and it was a sunny day, which rules out risky

driving conditions.

The crash occurred at the same spot — kilometre 29 — where, on Aug. 30, 2024, a westbound truck carrying thousands of chickens lost control, crashed into the centre median and overturned, resulting in scores of chickens scattered all over the highway. The accident caused the closure of the highway as work crews cleaned up the mess.

**Rig hits ditch in Pointe Fortune**

In another crash reported last week, the driver of a transport truck travelling along eastbound Highway 40 lost control, jackknifed the rig, sending the vehicle into the ditch in Pointe Fortune.

The accident happened on March 11. The driver was not injured. Police blocked off one lane to traffic to allow the truck to be towed away.



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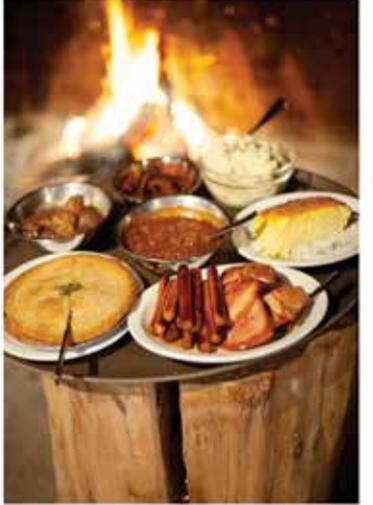


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# Editorial

## This fall, region needs to elect effective advocates

In less than seven months, Quebecers will be voting in a provincial election. And the movers and shakers in this region are asleep at the switch.

Do you want to dispute that assessment?

Go ahead. But answer this question: Who are the candidates who will be vying for your support?

The only declared runners are the incumbents — Marilyn Picard for the Coalition Avenir Québec in Soulanges and Marie-Claude Nicholls for the Liberals in Vaudreuil. There is no race with only one candidate per riding.

Sure, there is an argument to be made that it's too early to be out campaigning. That is not off base. But before there is a campaign, you still need a candidate. And given the poor pool of prospects who were put forward during the last provincial election, party organizers need to do better this time around.

Vaudreuil-Soulanges is one of the fastest-growing regions of the province. It is also a booming economic regional force. It is strategically located between Montreal and Ontario, a vital trade corridor.

The population increase here, according to the last census, showed a growth rate that outpaced both the provincial and national averages. In fact, Statistics Canada showed the Vaudreuil-Soulanges area even surpassed the growth rate of the Montérégie region, which includes 14 MRC districts that stretch from the Ontario border along the South Shore of Montreal to Brome-Missisquoi, and northeast to the Sorel area.

That was the 2021 census.

Since that time, this expansion has accelerated. So let's not dwell on the past. Let's look to the future. Every current indicator — housing demand, development plans, the opening of the new hospital and all the spinoffs it will trigger, job openings — point to a region maintaining a trajectory of growth.

That is the big picture.

Now, let's drill down on the demographic data. Looking at the sub-categories — in terms of age, education, income — Vaudreuil-Soulanges is young, educated, highly employed with strong household incomes and able to fully func-

tion in both French and English. Cut it any way you want, this region deserves proper representation. It needs effective advocacy, as all this growth needs to be accommodated. Municipal officials are managing the growth, but it is the higher levels of government that will fuel the support to build the infrastructure: both the physical infrastructure — the roads and schools — and the structural infrastructure — the services, funding support and policy initiatives that will help towns and community groups manage the growing needs.

With all the polls showing the likelihood that the CAQ will be booted out of government, the Liberal party has an opportunity. But it needs to recognize the region's full potential and importance and not simply view it as a place to parachute someone into. This region needs a boots-on-the-ground advocate that brings a full-range of understanding, talents and experience to the conversation, someone who also possesses the basic courtesy and ability to at least say a few words in English in public. This takes nothing away from functioning fully in French.

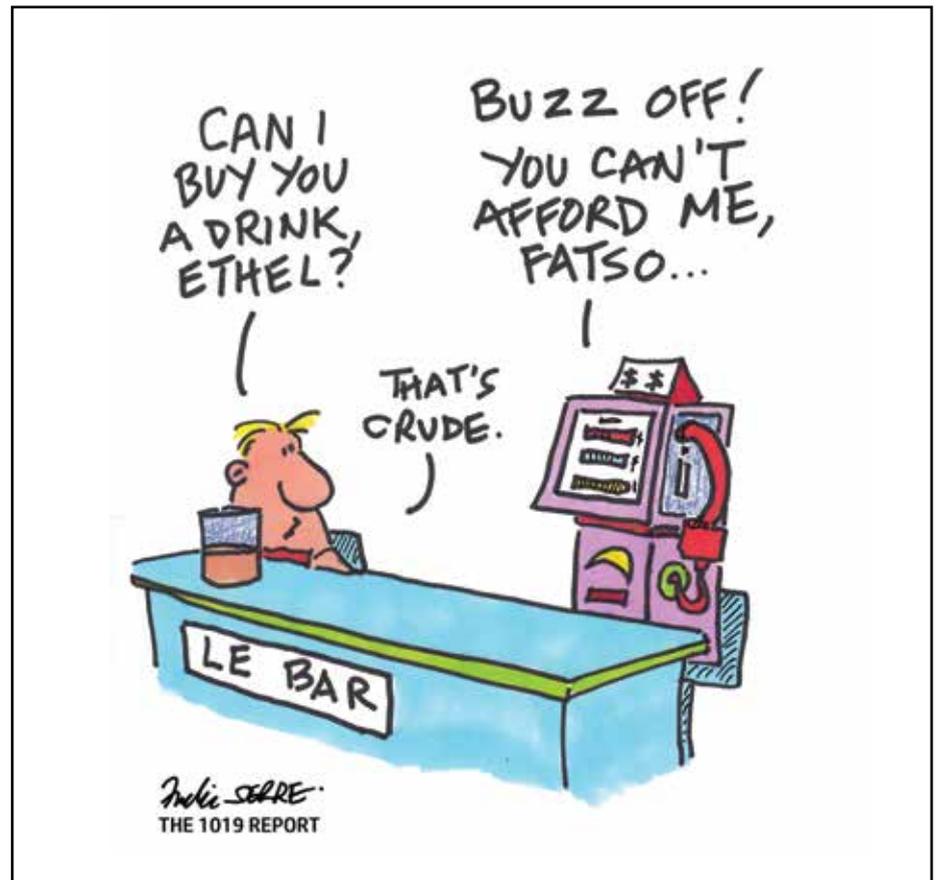
The polls reflect a strong sentiment for change. Parties need to recognize that, including doing things the same old way won't cut it. Political arrogance has fallen out of fashion. Respectful, informed competence is in. The times demand it.

It is time Vaudreuil-Soulanges be given the opportunity to earn its place at the big table. But it has to have the right advocates to fight for it, to make its case, to frame its vision, to formulate and articulate a plan. And in doing so, reflect its future of possibility. This is not an arena where a well-connected party insider from somewhere else, or an aspiring hopeful who has not accomplished anything should be allowed to pretend. There is too much on the line.

And time is running short.

All parties will be running candidates in the next election. They always do. But in this region, they have to do better than what they have shown in the past. Look at the mess this province is in. We can't afford to waste a chance to do better.

**Brenda O'Farrell, Editor-in-chief**



## Letter to the editor

### Hudson senior fed up with noise from neighbouring restaurant

I am a senior living at Manoir Cavagnal in Hudson, which faces the back of the Botté restaurant owned by ex-Hudson town councillor Peter Mate. I am and have always been a senior citizen advocate and, now at the age of 66, a senior. Never in my life did I think that I would be put in a situation where I am bullied on a daily basis, and I now know how the seniors who I have helped felt. It is very stressful and intimidating, degrading and frustrating.

Mr. Mate has absolutely no respect for the seniors living in Building D of the Manoir. In the last few years we have gone through demolition of the old Cripps and Clarence building and the rebuilding of the restaurant, with constant and ongoing loud noise due to construction, garbage and recycling trucks, delivery trucks and clients who pull in with loud music and let their cars run with loud music and gas fumes invading our apartments.

Let's say our lives have taken a 180-degree turn from a peaceful and safe living environment at the Manoir to being exposed to partying, loud music, screaming kids and drunks, spotlights from the building and car headlights shining into our apartments and much more, even children and adults peeing behind cars facing our rooms. We can no longer sit on our patios and enjoy our coffees and flower gardens. We are locked in our apartments with windows closed and at times with

headphones on, we can still hear the music and noise. Even at 10 or 11 p.m., after closing at 9 p.m., there is screaming and loud music from his young employees. They also slam the recycling and garbage bins at all hours, making us jump from the loud impact. The music sometimes starts as early as 9 a.m. while the employees are prepping the tables. Can you imagine waking up to this in the morning and going to sleep to this?

How could this restaurant have been approved by our town council knowing that there are aging seniors who are sick and some in the dying phase to endure all this white noise and disrespect?

The seniors who live here are veterans and people from the community who have raised their families here and built this community.

His latest action of quitting to get attention shows us how far he will go to get what he wants without any regard for other people/citizens' opinion or welfare ("Councillor quits, triggering by-election 3 months after election," *The 1019 Report*, March 4). All seniors living in Building D are dreading the coming summer. As he says, he will get his permit, and we, the seniors, will go through another phase of his renovations and construction again.

**Chantal Pousseur,  
Hudson**

### SUBMIT A LETTER

If you would like to submit a letter to editor for publication, please email your comments to [bofarrell@the1019report.ca](mailto:bofarrell@the1019report.ca).

Please include your full name, address and phone number. Only your name and the municipality in which you reside will be published if your letter is selected for publication. Let's get the conversations started.

## THE 1019 REPORT

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# FACT:

## \$26,175

The amount raised at a fundraiser last Sunday evening for Hébergement La Passerelle, an emergency shelter for women and children in Vaudreuil-Soulanges who are confronting domestic violence. The event was hosted by Vaudreuil MP Peter Schiefke, and brought together about 120 people from across the region, including several municipal elected officials. The funds raised will help cover the cost of needed repairs to one of the shelter's properties that had been damaged by recent flooding.

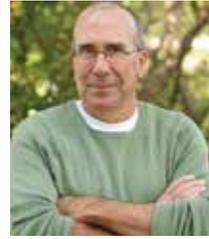
Source: Peter Schiefke



Madeleine Langlois, The 1019 Report

Visual pecking order: Woodpeckers have been busy on this tree in Jack Layton Park in Hudson, providing a clear view of the pecking order in its natural state.

## In an Irish family, a good story is among strongest ties that bind



Tom Whelan

St. Patrick's Day was yesterday. While being Canadian by birth, the Irish roots run deep in my family. So much so that traditions and ways of life have been passed from generation to generation — sometimes intentionally, sometimes just because nobody thought to question them.

I grew up thinking that a roast beef wasn't done until it was grey all the way through; that a little flat ginger ale could cure anything; and that it was perfectly normal to have holy water by the door so you could bless yourself as you left the house — and, God willing, when you returned. In our home, both medicine and theology were conveniently located within arm's reach of the front door.

Family stories were passed along regularly. And there was one story in particular that frequently popped up around this time of year. Given our Irish roots, the story may have been embellished a bit over the years, but the main points remained. I even did a bit of research to verify them, which is always a dangerous thing to do with family lore.

It was 117 years ago, on Wednesday, March 17, 1909, my great-grandfather, Thomas Whelan, set off for work early in the morning as usual, except that he probably had a small sprig of a shamrock pinned to his uniform's lapel. Unbeknownst to him, this St. Patrick's Day was about to take a very tragic turn.

Thomas was a gateman at Windsor Station in downtown Montreal. I can remember being told that he was the station master (that would be the embellishment). No, he was a gateman. Still an important job, just without the fancy title.

Anyway, at about 8:30 that morning, Thomas received a signal that the overnight train from Boston, which he was expected shortly, had just run through the Montreal West station at break-neck speed. Then, word came that the engineer and brakeman had both jumped, or been thrown, from the train near the Westmount station.

Consider this for a moment: in 1909 a train station in a major city would have been absolutely packed with travellers

and people waiting to greet arriving trains. This day was no different. The platform was crowded.

Knowing he had only a few minutes at best, Thomas started yelling and shoving people out of the way. He and a colleague then entered the bustling concourse at Windsor Station and did the same thing. Subtlety was not an option.

They managed to clear almost everyone out before the runaway train barrelled through a shed, smashed the barriers at the end of the track, continued through the wall into the concourse, and then, through the wall on the other side of the station. It finally came to rest teetering over the street below.

Accounts vary as to how many people perished that day. Neither the brakeman, nor the engineer survived. The engineer was hailed a hero, having done everything he could to try to save the fatally damaged train. In the crowded station, it was either two or four people who died, depending upon which version of the story you hear. Hundreds more survived.

There were many other, far cheerier stories passed along over the years, but that is one I always remember around this time of year. And you can be sure that my daughters know the story as well.

That, I suppose, is my point. Every family has its traditions and its stories. One of Thomas's daughters — my great-aunt — was the first to tell me that story. Before she died she asked my sister, brother and me to keep the family memories and stories alive.

Do a little digging. It is so easy to find information online. Even easier, talk to family members. Many of us are only a generation or two away from people who helped build the communities we live in today. And those stories deserve to be brought into the light — any time of year.

Here's hoping you celebrated well and had a wonderful St. Patrick's Day. There is more celebrating to come this weekend. Enjoy the parades. I'll be driving one of the little Shriners' cars in the downtown parade on Sunday.

So, from one very proud Irishman to everyone — whether you're Irish or just wish you were — Sláinte.

*Tom Whelan is a veteran broadcaster who can be heard weekend afternoons on CJAD 800 AM. He can be contacted by email at [info@the1019report.ca](mailto:info@the1019report.ca).*

## QUOTE

**“The imposed adjustments send a worrying signal and will have concrete consequences for customers, particularly in terms of network reliability and energy efficiency.”**

— Hydro-Québec in a statement issued Monday denouncing the decision by the Régie de l'énergie du Québec to limit the rate increases for residential customers to 3 per cent for 2026, beginning April 1; 3 per cent for 2027 and 2.6 per cent in 2028. The decision, which also included lower-than-requested increases for commercial and industrial customers, will leave Hydro with a \$450-million shortfall



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## Some secrets of the past should remain secret — and in the past



Andrew  
Caddell

I am a big fan of “lunch-bucket” science fiction, with themes like time travel instead of bizarre worlds. I read *The Time Machine* by H.G. Wells when I was a teenager, and was hooked on the theme in television shows.

I fervently watched each episode of the short-lived 1960s series *Time Tunnel*, even though it was cheaply made and used Hollywood backlots as the stage for historical events. In recent years, the theme of time travel was taken up by the Apple TV series *Timeless*, which lasted only two seasons.

I have always contemplated what it would be like to go back in time and change events of the past to see what might have been instead of what was. However, because no one has invented time travel, it just is not possible, and we live with the successes or the mistakes of the past.

This brings me to some recent controversial revelations.

Last November, former federal minister Sergio Marchi published his memoirs, *Pursuing a Public Life*. Marchi held the post of Citizenship and Immigration minister in Jean Chrétien’s cabinet back around the time of the 1995 referendum. So when he published his book last year, in interviews with the Quebec media, he was asked about a plan allowing applicants for citizenship to be processed in time to vote in the Quebec referendum of October 1995. Marchi said Chrétien encouraged the decision to fast track 12,000 applicants as potential “Non” voters.

The reports of what became known as “Operation Citizenship” caused a furor in the Quebec media and political circles. The Bloc Québécois demanded Chrétien appear before a House committee. Chrétien refused, but it’s now part of the Parti Québécois and Bloc Québécois’s vendetta against Canada.

Fast forward to this past January, when former CBC president Tony Manera made headlines when an account in his unpublished memoirs alluded to a link between Radio-Canada’s reporting of the 1995 referendum and cutbacks at the CBC. Manera claimed then-Communications Minister Michel Dupuy was upset about coverage of PQ committees looking into the “benefits” of separatism, and suggested there might be cuts to the network as a result. Manera resigned from the CBC in 1995 when Chrétien, along with his finance minister at the time, Paul Martin, reviewed government program funding and cut the CBC’s budget by 30 per cent.

But let’s look back: The cuts in the 1995 budget were enormous, with 53,000 people leaving the public service. This was the experience of anyone in the feder-

al government. Dupuy was not part of the Chrétien “in crowd.” More than likely he was currying favour when he spoke with Manera.

I recently spoke to Manera, and his desire is that future CBC-Radio Canada coverage of sovereignty referendums in Alberta and Quebec be unaffected by political influence. However, his account is already being used by Quebec separatists as proof of federal “cheating” in 1995.

And let’s be clear: Having worked for CBC in Montreal, I can affirm federalist or objective reporters were few and far between in the French network. The proof is the number of journalists working for the French-language service who have become political partisans or elected PQ and BQ legislators. I believe their reporting in the referendum campaign in 1995 helped the Oui side, so much so I could predict the polls according to their reporting.

To return to that time now and reveal confidential conversations provides fuel for the PQ’s Paul St-Pierre Plamondon and the Bloc’s Yves-François Blanchet. And without a time machine, no one can say with absolute certainty what took place so many years ago.

I believe in transparency, but I also believe ministers and senior public servants have a duty to be discreet. And there is no “best before” date on confidential information, although some cabinet discussions are released decades later.

In the past, I worked as a ministerial adviser, public servant and diplomat. And in doing so, I took an oath to not divulge any secrets or cabinet confidences. Since that time, and as a journalist who has been writing about politics for several years, I have never revealed any secrets acquired during my time in public service.

Similarly, the mother of a friend died a few years ago, and in her obituary, it mentioned she was a code breaker at the famed Bletchley Park, the top-secret Allied code-breaking centre in England during the Second World War. She never revealed what she had done during the war. She did so because she had taken a lifelong oath of secrecy.

As the Parti Québécois and Alberta United Conservative Party promised referendums loom large on the horizon, all former federal public servants and ministers should keep in mind the ammunition they could provide to separatists by recounting tales from the past.

*Andrew Caddell is a veteran journalist and columnist. He writes a regular column for The Hill Times, which covers Parliament and the federal government. He is president of the Task Force on Linguistic Policy, a grassroots group that was formed in the wake of Quebec’s Bill 96, which overhauled the province’s Charter of the French Language.*

# Despite opposition, Ste. Justine adopts nuisance bylaw

JOSHUA ALLAN  
The 1019 Report

After setting the issue aside last month amid pushback from residents, Ste. Justine de Newton town council last week adopted the updated MRC-wide nuisance bylaw, a move that comes after a month of voiceful opposition from many residents and a few councillors in the small village to a bylaw they claim does not reflect realities of a rural community.

“I think the residents were afraid of not being free on their properties or in their homes, but that’s not the case,” Mayor Shawn Campbell said in an interview with *The 1019 Report*.

Some residents in Ste. Justine have taken issue with several articles within the harmonized bylaw, which has been adopted by town councils across the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region over the past month.

Their worries mainly centre on articles banning the display of “erotic” or “hateful” content “in or on any public or private area;” a requirement to “immediately” remove all animal excrement from their property; prohibiting residents from having one or more inoperable vehicles on their property; and the ability for a municipal inspector or SQ officer to “visit and examine” properties in order to ensure compliance with the bylaw.

As a small farming town, some locals have expressed concern that this bylaw does not match their rural reality and could leave them vulnerable to fines. The law exempts agricultural workers from

some of the nuisances, but this exemption is only applied “in the course of their agricultural activities.”

The legislation sets a harmonized standard on what is considered a nuisance across the 23 municipalities in Vaudreuil-Soulanges, facilitating operations for SQ officers. The bylaw is drafted by a committee of clerks and other representatives from all towns in the region. Town councils are free to choose not to adopt the legislation, though most do.

Campbell took a moment during the March 10 council meeting to attempt to allay the concerns of his residents. This bylaw, he pointed out, has been in place across the region since 2009, and has had minor updates made over the years. The latest version is nearly identical to its previous version, which had been adopted in 2019.

Campbell also wanted to make it clear that fines for nuisances — which range from \$200 to \$1,000 for a first offence — are rarely issued by SQ officers upon an initial visit.

“Every time that an inspector or a police officer intervenes concerning a nuisance, there’s always an educational component,” he explained.

“For example, you’re having a party, the music is loud (and) there’s a resident who complains because the music is loud. When the Sûreté du Québec shows up at your house, there will be an educational component where the police will explain that the noise is excessive.”

“It’s very rare that a police officer or an inspector will issue a fine on the first visit,” Campbell continued. “There is always the educational component first; explain what happened, explain why it’s a nuisance, and if it’s recurring, after four, five times, for example, there can be a fine.”

What’s more, he pointed out that instances of fines for nuisances in Ste. Justine have been few and far between since 2019. Since that time, there had been 13 fines for nuisances issued in the town. These have included instances of animals roaming free, excessive noise and one instance of a dog biting someone.

Councillor Stéphane Lapointe has been outspoken in his criticism of this bylaw. To him, the fact that there have not been fines issued for the articles in the bylaw that residents take issue with reinforces the question of why these items are included in the legislation at all.

“If there are so few complaints, then why do we need these regulations?” he said.

Lapointe added that just because there haven’t been fines issued for things like the display of erotic content, uncollected

animal excrement or residents keeping inoperable vehicles, does not mean they couldn’t be issued in the future.

“Depending on the police officer who comes when there’s a complaint, depending on the neighbours that we have, people will see it like a Sword of Damocles,” he said, referencing the ancient Greek metaphor for an ever-looming threat.

Lapointe had proposed amendments to the bylaw at the March 10 meeting, which would either remove or change parts. These proposed amendments were voted down by the council. Only District 3 councillor Jean Giroux-Gagné voted in favour.

The council then proceeded with a vote to adopt the bylaw as is, with only Lapointe and Giroux-Gagné voting against.

Campbell does not believe fines for nuisances will be issued carelessly, explaining residents can contest unfair treatment.

“If, for example, there’s an inspector that abuses (their power), the residents always have the means to issue a complaint to the municipality,” Campbell said.

*Local Journalism Initiative*



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Ken Magee, St. Lazare (renewal)  
 Marcel Lessard, Rigaud  
 Paul Laflamme, St. Lazare (renewal)

Diane Hodges, Les Cèdres  
 Jennifer Thom, Hudson (renewal)

# Wildlife birthing season: leave animals be, cautions rescuer

**JOSHUA ALLAN**  
The 1019 Report

The start of spring is a time when many animals begin giving birth to offspring, but what should you do if one of these critters has chosen to create a den or burrow on your property to care for its newborns?

The answer is simple, according to a wildlife rescuer who works in the Vaudreuil-Soulanges region: "Just leave them alone."

"That's the key thing for all wildlife. Just leave them alone," said Rob Boisvert, co-founder of the 269 Animal Rescue group which operates throughout the 1019 region and eastern Ontario.

Trying to remove these animals now would likely spell death for their young, he said.

Around this time of year, it's not uncommon for animals, including foxes, opossums and raccoons to create their dens and burrows on and around rural residential properties in order to birth and care for their young. These dens might be located behind a shed, under a porch, near a chopped wood pile, or in any other small, secluded space.

While mother opossums and raccoons raise their young independently, both fox parents are involved in caring for their pups.

If you spot a fox this month trotting along with freshly caught prey in its jaws, it is most likely a male en route to deliver the food to his mate, who is in the den

producing milk for their litter of between four to six pups. This will continue for the next two months before these pups are able to leave the den.

Though it's early in the birthing season, Boisvert said he is already receiving calls from residents requesting that foxes, raccoons and other critters be removed from yards.

"I try and tell people (during birthing season), 'Can't you just leave the animals alone? They'll be done in a couple of months.'"

This approach is recommended by multiple Canadian wildlife agencies and organizations, who advise property owners be patient during this important time for these animals.

Attempting to relocate the animals at such an early stage in their lives, or separating the parents from the offspring, would likely result in the death of the litter.

Organizations like the Toronto Wildlife Centre say the primary method when it comes to animals rearing their offspring on residents' properties is to wait, as the young animals will likely set out on their own during the summer, and the den will be abandoned.

"If you can wait until the babies are grown and/or have left, you can then close off the access point to prevent other animals from using the den in the future," the centre recommends on its website.

While some might see these animals as pests on their properties, Boisvert said it

could be a unique opportunity, especially for those with children.

"Teach your kids about nature," including how to respect the animals by giving them space, he said.

Boisvert also suggested installing a temporary fence "just to mark off the area so your kids know don't go in there." Fencing off the area, while maintaining a lane for these animals to come and go, would also help to keep pet dogs out of the animals' way, he added.

"We live among these animals because they have nowhere else to go," Boisvert said. "So we have to give and take."

*Local Journalism Initiative*



Madeleine Langlois, The 1019 Report

This fox was spotted in a yard in Rigaud last weekend. He hung around for hours.

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## TV WATCH REPORT

# With friends and family like these who needs, well, you know the saying



Denise Duguay

Don't you hate it when a death ruins a perfectly good friendship? Or, your son turns out to be a Nazi? These are troubled times in TV land, so grab the popcorn and the remote and possibly something to hold in front of your face when the blood starts flying onscreen. Happy streaming?

**IMPERFECT WOMEN (series premieres with the first two of eight episodes Wednesday, March 18, on Apple TV)** "Friendships are built on secrets," says the trailer of this mystery. Yikes. The next time the girls and I get together for drinks, I will engage in some hard staring. Onscreen here, Elisabeth Moss (*The Handmaid's Tale*) and Kerry Washington (*Scandal*) are both stars and producers in this new mystery series, joined onscreen by a solid supporting cast, including Kate Mara (*The Astronaut*), Joel Kinnaman (*The Killing*), Corey Stoll (*House of Cards*) and Leslie Odom Jr. (*Hamilton*). Bottom line:

a crime shatters lives and assumptions in the decades-long friendship of three women. Despite all that, my spidey sense is twitching, so if this is more sizzle than steak, consider *How to Get to Heaven From Belfast* (now streaming on Netflix), also about three longtime female friends thrown into chaos by news of a death. It's darkly hilarious, with some good twisty developments.

**PEAKY BLINDERS: THE IMMORTAL MAN (movie sequel to the series premieres Friday, March 20, on Netflix)** I tried to watch the acclaimed six-season series when it premiered on Netflix in 2013. I had read it was a historically inspired series about post-WWI gangsters in Birmingham, England, and it starred Cillian Murphy, who was impressive even before *Oppenheimer* launched him to interstellar fame. The series was also surrounded by quite a bit of bluster about the gang sewing razor blades into their wool caps and filling the streets with blood. I took an "ick" pass, but always meant to catch up. Instead, I might just dip into this movie sequel, set in 1940, where Tommy Shelby (Murphy) ends his self-imposed exile when his wayward son



Courtesy Apple TV

Elisabeth Moss (from left), Kerry Washington and Kate Mara play best friends in *Imperfect Women*, which hits Apple TV today.

(Barry Keoghan of *Saltburn* fame) takes a shine to Nazism. Tim Roth also joins the cast.

If you are a completist Peaky fan, be advised that this film will be followed by a pair of six-episode sequel series set in the 1950s.

**BAIT (series premieres all six episodes on Wednesday, March 25, on Prime Video)** The actor Riz Ahmed is a seriously good actor, as seen in the serious thriller *The Night Of*, the serious drama *Sound of Metal* and Shakespeare's serious classic *Hamlet*. Here, he has created and stars in a black comedy about a struggling actor Shah Latif, who defies his family, friends, an ex-lover and the world itself as he dares to audition to be

named the next James Bond. Never mind his career: Will Latif himself survive?

**JO NESBO'S DETECTIVE HOLE (series premieres on Thursday, March 26, on Netflix)** In the latest entry in the Nordic noir subgenre, *Det. Hole* (pronounced Hoo-lay, by the way) is brilliant but tormented not only by his own demons and news of a new serial killer but also by his corrupt longtime colleague *Det. Tom Waaler* (Joel Kinnaman). Can *Hole* (Tobias Santelmann) bring both the killer and a bad cop to justice in one nine-episode season? Diligent readers of Jo Nesbo's novel series will recognize the story from Book 5, *The Devil's Star*, and should keep their spoilers to themselves. Subtitled, but you can do it!

## STAFFING: Regional officials warn of workforce crisis

From Page 1

A meeting with DEV officials and local members of the National Assembly — Soulanges CAQ MNA Marilyn Picard and Vaudreuil Liberal MNA Marie-Claude Nicholls — is set for this week, Deschênes said. But no details of a hiring strategy is expected to be shared. And so far there has been no word from Santé Québec officials or representatives of the CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest, the regional health authority overseeing the hiring for the new hospital.

The request for more information from provincial health officials was one of five demands the region's economic development board made last month as it issued an unprecedented and urgent call for a territorial exemption from both the provincial and federal governments for changes to immigration policies to ensure against the loss of temporary foreign workers employed in the region.

Sounding the warning of a pending workforce crisis, DEV officials were joined by a number of employers in the region last month to showcase just how dire the potential loss of foreign workers is being felt. The changes to the programs that affect foreign workers, including those who had been recruited to this region through the *Programme de l'expérience québécoise* (PEQ) that provided selected and qualified workers with a path to residency status, is real, and threatens the area's economic growth, the business leaders said.

The Vaudreuil-Soulanges area is in a unique position, Joanne Brunet, the director-general of DEV, said last month, as she pointed to the what was described as a perfect storm that is threatening businesses in the region. Brunet said the region's proximity to Ontario, which is prepared to welcome temporary foreign workers currently employed in this region who now face an uncertain future as they grapple with the prospect of not being allowed to renew their work permits in this province; the approximately 1,000 job vacancies that currently exist here; and the hospital's hiring needs is putting "significant pressure" on a labour market already struggling to keep up with demand.

Last week, the CISSS Montérégie-Ouest released a video that featured an animated 3D simulation of what the main entrance of the hospital will look like. The online presentation included a link to the agency's hiring portal.

A request to the CISSS for comment from *The 1019 Report* has gone unanswered.

Since construction of the hospital began in 2022, Quebec has twice pushed back the opening of the hospital. Originally planned to open in December 2026, it is now set to opening in spring 2028. The delays, in part, have been attributed to difficulties in filling the more than 3,500 new positions the new facility will require.

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# When it comes to spring weather, we must be careful what we wish for



Terry O'Shaughnessy

## GONE TO GROUND

Just when we thought we might be out of the winter woods, leave it to the Old Farmer's Almanac to bring us back down to earth.

"When March has April weather, April will have March weather," their pundits cautioned recently. In other words, be careful what we wish for.

It's true that the month of March has been pretty agreeable so far, except for that pesky ice storm followed by snow again. But after a winter with tons of snow and a brutal below-zero stretch in February — not to mention the nicely early Easter (April 5) that's on its way — you could start to believe that spring will be early this year.

As a gardener, I've always loved an early Easter. Even when the notorious March storms rage, it makes me feel like winter is over when the tulips come out right after all the greenery of St. Patrick's Day. When on top of it all I get my garden seedlings going on my window sill, it really doesn't matter if winter decides to

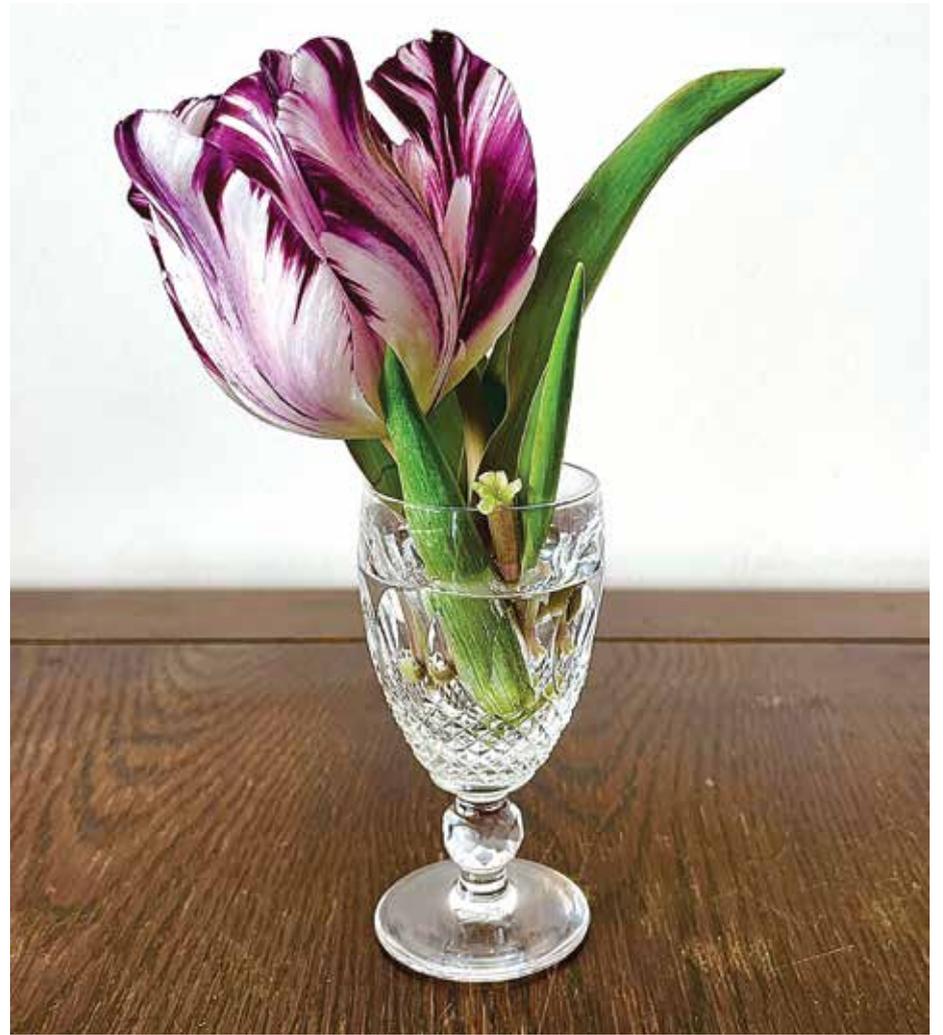
break the mood with another snowstorm or two.

I say early Easter gives us permission to move right past winter into spring. You could start shoveling all the snow you just shovelled off the driveway back on to it so it will melt faster. You could start wearing your running shoes instead of your crampon-studded boots. You might even start to plan your summer garden.

But don't say I didn't warn you when I quote you a further piece from the Old Farmer's recent missive: "Snow in April is manure."

Just how should we begin to understand this piece of advice?

It seems that snow in April is often called "poor man's fertilizer" because it supplies nutrients, especially all-important nitrogen, to the soil. As snow falls through the atmosphere it attracts the nitrates and ammonia in the air, bringing to the ground these two essential ingredients of good garden soil. As if that weren't enough, snow stays on the ground and only melts gradually, so the nitrogen can further seep slowly and evenly into the earth. As the garden warms up in April, any snow cover will keep this gentle nutrient boost going, benefitting all the



Terry O'Shaughnessy, The 1019 Report

It's almost time for tulips.

spring bulbs and perennials waking up after the winter.

Finally, if you did get off to an early start in March, the April snow also acts as a blanket that will protect new growth in

the event of any sudden night chill.

But I have to admit I never thought of snow as manure.

It will add a certain *je ne sais quoi* to the next snowfall, won't it?



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## Colossal Canada Crossword

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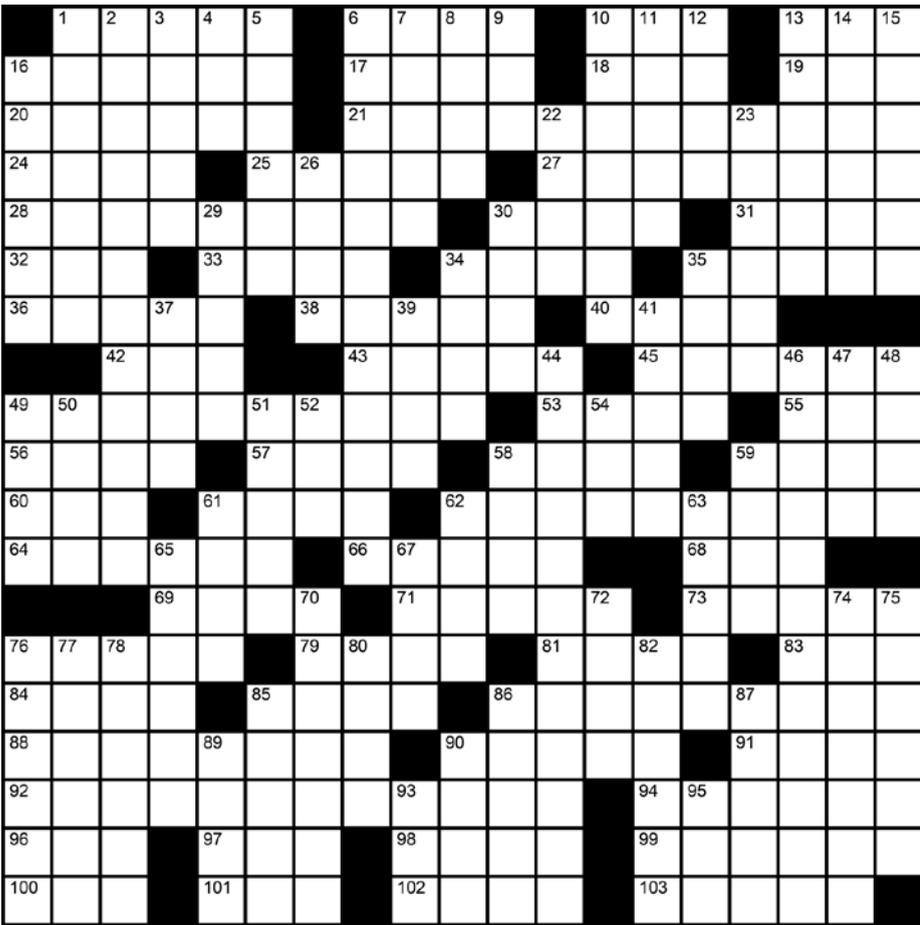
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# THE 1019REPORT

## Colossal Canada Crossword



SEE SOLUTION PAGE 13.

### ACROSS

1. Hollywood - Sunday, March 15th, 2026: "And the \_\_ goes to..."
6. Soaks flax
10. Vegas opener?
13. Ottawa politicians, e.g.
16. Compliment or salute
17. Butter substitute
18. \_\_-advised
19. Grand \_\_ (Wine designation)
20. Hang around too long
21. World War I - Animal associated with Canadian veterinarian and officer Harry Colebourn, she would go on to inspire A.A. Milne's famous story: 3 wds.
24. \_\_ Reader (Alternative digital digest)
25. Canadian Heritage River in the Yukon
27. \_\_-at-Arms of the House of Commons (Security and ceremonial official on Parliament Hill)
28. Canada's Food Guide interest
30. Market
31. Honey, in Quebec
32. Econ. measure
33. Downtown night light
34. "\_\_ Na Ho (Celebration)" by Susan Aglukark
35. Have a hunch
36. Dutch cheeses in red wax
38. Grip' \_\_ (Ziploc baggies technology)
40. \_\_-back (Easygoing)
42. Water source
43. Figure Skating jumps, e.g.
45. Cathedral burial chambers
49. Saskatchewan town sharing the name of where the Council of Europe is located in France
53. 'Guitar' and 'Bass' suffixes
55. "Wow!"
56. Pare
57. Wings, in Latin
58. Not singular [abbr.]
59. Two peas in \_\_
60. Mythical bird
61. Tree log bump
62. 'All the World's a Stage' and 'Exit... Stage Left' for Canadian rock legends Rush: 2 wds.
64. The Arctic Ground Squirrel is also known by what name?
66. Conjure up
68. Annex
69. Citrus drinks
71. Sluggish
73. Russian composer, \_\_ llych Tchaikovsky (b.1840 - d.1893)
76. Jon of "Mad Men", and surnamesakes
79. Jagged cliff
81. Pharmacy amount
83. Canton of Switzerland
84. "Would \_\_ to You?" by Eurythmics
85. "Kiss from a Rose" singer
86. Canadian comic strip... For Better or For Worse family's surname
88. \_\_ wood
90. Less diluted
91. 10th months [abbr.]
92. Northeast Africa civilization featured at the Royal Ontario Museum, in Toronto: 2 wds.
94. Physically present at the place
96. Des' \_\_ (British R&B singer)
97. Robert Burns' refusal
98. Country singer Mr. Paisley
99. Dr. in "The Silence of the Lambs" (1991)
100. As per #76-Down... \_\_ \_\_. Enterprise

### DOWN

101. Assistance
102. Future fate focused forecaster
103. Famed architect, Frank \_\_ Wright
1. Full and rich, as a voice
2. March 17th parade honouree: 2 wds.
3. One giving examples or references
4. Peer Gynt's mother
5. Appraise again
6. Downtown Vancouver public plaza: 2 wds.
7. Ms. Pompeo of "Grey's Anatomy"
8. Patio set wood
9. 'S' of SPCA [abbr.]
10. \_\_ Party of Canada
11. British Columbia village, \_\_ Bay
12. Smelting waste
13. Canadian frozen French Fries maker
14. Trims
15. Understated
16. Dive
22. ' \_\_ Historical Village and Museum, in Hazelton in British Columbia
23. Curative
26. BC football player
29. Police dept. officials, e.g.
30. Balmy
34. Den \_\_ (The Hague ...in the Netherlands)
35. Knightly titles
37. Polite address for a lady
39. Seine tributary in France
41. Cdn. professional performers union headquartered in Toronto
44. 6301 \_\_ \_\_. (Toronto Pearson International Airport address in Mississauga in Ont.)
46. Toronto is Canada's most what?: 2 wds.
47. Radiohead singer Mr. Yorke
48. Covers the yard with grass
49. Belle Isle and Gibraltar, et al.
50. Deanna \_\_ (Counselor on "Star Trek: The Next Generation")
51. 1966: "Walk Away Renee" by The Left \_\_
52. 'Pay' ending
54. Bring forth a case
58. Northern \_\_ (Kind of fish)
59. Competently
61. The \_\_ in the Hall (Canadian sketch comedy legends)
62. Shelley of "Cheers"
63. "Car ton bras sait porter ' \_\_ / Il sait porter la croix!" ("O Canada" part in French)
65. Saturday, in Montreal
67. Science laboratory container
70. \_\_ candles
72. Books bag
74. Travelled in a way as a horse
75. Dishwasher's kitchen partner
76. \_\_ Sulu (#100-Across' helmsman)
77. Styles of skirts
78. Finely chops
80. Furiousness
82. "The \_\_" by Canadian quartet The Diamonds
85. Mount \_\_ (Biblical peak)
86. Butterfly-to-be forms
87. Company known for theatrical fog machines
89. Ms. Horne of "Stormy Weather" (1943)
90. "Light My Fire" funeral thing in The Doors song
93. Saint Joan playwright's monogram
95. "Volare ( \_\_ Blu Dipinto Di Blu)"

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# Weather whiplash

MADELEINE LANGLOIS  
The 1019 Report

Spring is finally peeking around the corner, but Mother Nature seems to have put the weather on a merrygoround. One day we're basking under blue skies, the next day, a veil of fog rolls in, followed by icy sleet, a fresh dusting of snow. It's a full-on weather show all packed in a single week.

Is this weather whiplash? Or, are we on a chaotic climate carousel? Either way, don't let it put a damper on your spring parade.



Photos by Madeleine Langlois, The 1019 Report



Gregory Kelley  
Député  
MNA for Jacques-Cartier

Happy  
St. Patrick's  
Day



Marie-Claude Nichols  
Députée  
MNA for Vaudreuil

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