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Pierre-Hugue, Zachary, Carolie and Benjamin Schinck invite people to vote on line at www.krafthockeyville.ca.

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Voting opens March 30

Huntingdon a finalist for Kraft Hockeyville

ERIC TREMBLAY
TRANSLATED BY CATHLEEN JOHNSTON
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COMPETITION. Huntingdon could receive a visit from some National Hockey League players and \$250 000 to upgrade the Aréna Régionale de Huntingdon Centre Sportif Promutuel. The community of some 3000 people is one of four finalists in the Kraft Hockeyville competition.

Hockey is not just a passion for Huntingdon, it is a feature that unites the community. "The beauty of hockey here in Huntingdon is that half the young people are French speaking and the other half English speaking," said Daryl Ness, coach of the Huskies. "They have fun playing together. The difference in language has never been a problem."

But, the Aréna Régionale de Huntingdon is starting to show its age. Major repairs are being considered. "We have an aging arena that was built in the 50's," explained Érick Faubert, Chair of the Huntingdon Minor Hockey Association. "If we win, our priority will be to change the refrigeration system which is nearing the end of its operating life. It's the heart of the arena."

Heather L'Heureux, Chair of the Arena Management Committee, is frank: no ice, no hockey. And the children need this ice at the Centre Sportif Promutuel. "If we win, we'll be overjoyed," she announced. "We'll be so grateful."

A COMMITTED COMMUNITY

Already on social media, Huntingdon's nomination raised lots of enthusiasm.

Numerous stories and anecdotes were recounted on the Kraft Hockeyville site as a show of support.

Huntingdon will be assigned an NHL player with roots in the region as an ambassador of the program. Nicolas Deslauriers of the Montreal Canadiens, who grew up in Saint-Anicet, would be a natural for this role.

"We were thrilled to receive so many strong nominations this year, choosing only four was especially challenging," declared Joanna Milroy, Director of Portfolio Marketing for Kraft Heinz.

Apart from Huntingdon, Lucan (Ontario), Lafleche (Saskatchewan) and High River (Alberta) are the other finalists.

The only other Quebec town to win the competition in the past 12 years was Roberval in 2012.

Vote for Kraft Hockeyville

The period for voting is between noon on March 30 until 8:30 p.m. on March 31. Voting takes place on line at www.krafthockeyville.ca.

The results will be announced on Hockey Night in Canada on CBC and Sportsnet, March 31.

The Kraft Hockeyville winner will receive \$250 000 for arena upgrades and the opportunity to host an NHL pre-season game.

The three finalists will receive \$25 000 for arena upgrades and all finalists will receive \$10 000 in hockey equipment for their minor hockey programs, courtesy of the National Hockey League Players' Association as part of the players' Goals & Dreams fund.

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Huntingdon
Mayor André Brunette
Appointed at the QMF

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Grove Hall
Auditions for Anne
of Green Gables

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Unearthing a spring attitude



EMILY SOUTHWOOD
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Ah, the best laid plans. So far 2018 hasn't given a wink about my plans and I know I'm not alone in feeling bamboozled by illnesses and erratic weather, and well, life. Personally, I'm way behind on a deadline because of the time I've spent playing nursemaid—soother of ear infections, sinus infections, croup, multiple stomach viruses, unexplained body rashes, and good old common colds. They've all been featured in my family's grievance list, and that's just since January. I also know from friends who've visited the ER, it could be worse. No, we're not all

imagining things. It's been a horrible season of viruses and the hardest hit are the elderly, the young and those in ill health. It's a very real downer.

The best antidote I found over the last week wasn't chicken soup or Ibuprofen, it was hoofing it over to a yoga class at Yoga Phénix in Ormstown to fix my attitude about it all. Stretching and breaking a sweat in a warm (literally) and calming room for Wednesday night hot yoga was the closest thing to a springtime walk I've had in some time. As I stretched out my flu-season angst, I could see that real spring will be coming. If you haven't yet discovered this gem of a studio, give their classes for every level a try. Seriously, your life will thank you.



Rural Arts Project

Auditions now open for Anne of Green Gables

CULTURE. Calling all redheads! - The Rural Arts Project is taking on a slice of Canadiana with exciting plans to tour a live production of the Anne of Green Gables musical throughout the Haut-Saint-Laurent this summer.

A general meeting to explain the scope of this adventurous project will take place on March 24 at Grove Hall. All those interested in hearing more about the production or auditioning are invited to attend to learn about tentative locations, the script based on the beloved novel by Lucy Maud Montgomery, the music, and available roles for musicians, actors and dancers. Official auditions will take place on April 7 with the start of rehearsals scheduled for April 21 with a full group read-through.

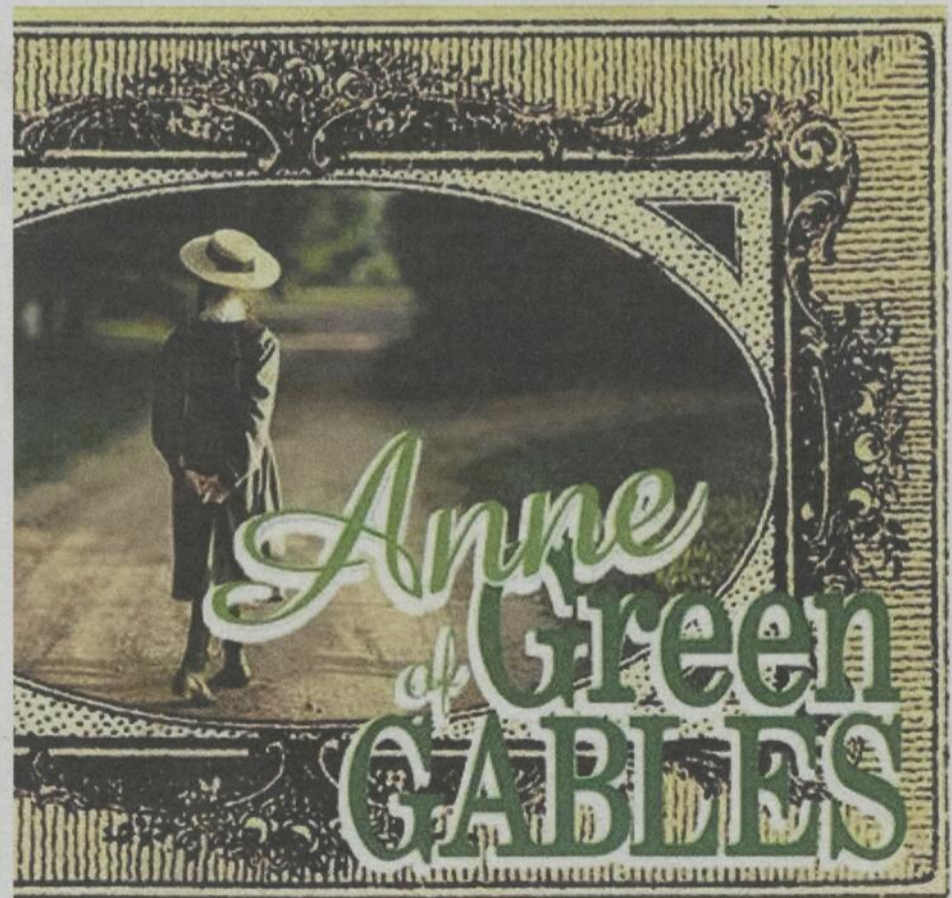
"We wanted to do a big community show that was as inclusive as possible," says Tina Bye, one of the masterminds behind Grove Hall and the Rural Arts Project. Originally, the plan had been to try touring last year's smash hit, On The

Line, however a number of the original cast were unavailable and it made sense to try something fresh and new, "but with a high recognizability factor," she notes.

"Anne of Green Gables was the first novel I read," recalls Bye, who fondly remembers travelling to P.E.I. when she was 8-years-old and the pilgrimage down 'Lover's Lane'. "It was something on my bucket list," she admits.

The nostalgia of Anne of Green Gables and its rural setting in Prince Edward Island also plays well with the landscape and heritage of the Chateauguay Valley. This, coupled with last year's acquisition of a tent large enough for full-scale outdoor productions, offered the perfect opportunity for The Rural Arts Project to recruit new audience members while touring the show over five weeks in July and August.

The auditions are open to anyone with an interest in community theatre, with no previous experience required. More information concerning roles and tips for a successful audition is available online at www.grovehall.ca.



The Rural Arts Project is holding a general meeting and open auditions at Grove Hall for its exciting new production of the Anne of Green Gables musical on March 24 and April 7. Photo Grove Hall

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Huntingdon Mayor at the QMF

MARIO PITRE
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MUNICIPAL. The Mayor of Huntingdon, André Brunette, was recently appointed to be on one of the commissions of the Fédération Québécoise des Municipalités.

Reelected mayor last November 5 with 67% of the votes, Brunette will serve on the Commission permanente sur le développement social, les institutions et la démocratie. This Commission deals with issues related to the operation of municipalities, their governance and democratic life, as well as issues related to culture, education, immigration and the quality of life within communities.

The position of Chair for this Commission is held by Claire Bolduc, Prefect for the Témiscamingue MRC. Members are Raymond Noël, Commission Vice-chair and Mayor of Saint-Célestin, Délicia Ritchie-Roussy, Mayor of Murdochville, Francine Morin, Mayor of Saint-Bernard-de-Michaudville and Prefect for the Maskoutains MRC, Lise Sauriol, Mayor of Saint-Jacques-le-Mineur, Lynda Carrier, Municipal Councillor for Saint-Charles-de-Bellechasse, Francis Bélanger, Mayor of Courcelles, Paul Vachon, Mayor of Kinnear's Mill and Pierre Poirier, Mayor of Saint-Faustin-Lac-Carré.

The Commission permanente sur le développement social, les institutions et la



Huntingdon Mayor, André Brunette. Photo Archives

démocratie (CP-DSID) of the FQM has decided that, for 2018, it will focus on creating favourable conditions for territorial development and concrete mechanisms to support municipal

leadership as local government. This will, in fact, be the main topic at the 3e Rendez-vous du développement local et régional taking place on April 25 in Quebec City, according to the

Fédération web site. The Mayor of Rivière-Beaudette and Prefect for the Vaudreuil-Soulanges MRC, Patrick Bousez, is also on the FQM Board of Directors.

New Frontiers School Board Fundings to Develop Digital Skills

EDUCATION. On Thursday March 15, MP Brenda Shanahan announced that nearly 350 students from the New Frontiers School Board will be able to learn digital skills in collaboration with the organization *The Learning Partnership* thanks to \$1 million in funding from the Government of Canada's CanCode program.

Coding, programming and understanding new technologies to resolve global problems have become essential skills. Learning these skills at a young age helps develop analytical thinking, which is important for future studies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields.

The CanCode program is investing \$50 million over two years to support initiatives that provide educational opportunities for coding and digital skills development to students from kindergarten to Grade 11. Over 63,000 teachers across the country will have access to the training and tools needed to teach these skills to nearly 1 million students.

FOUR PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Students from Howard S. Billings High School and elementary schools St. Willibrord, Mary Gardner and Centennial Park of Châteauguay, as well as from Heritage Elementary of Huntingdon are currently attending workshops. "From my experience with coding, it has helped to motivate students to do better and they want to learn more," says Shelley



Students from Heritage Elementary of Huntingdon are currently attending workshops. Photo The Gleaner

McDonagh, educational consultant at the New Frontiers School Board. "They are engaged in the learning, it empowers them to think differently and overcome obstacles."

"By supporting digital skills development among Canadian youth, our government is ensuring they have the abilities that will be most valued by the labour market," says Brenda Shanahan. "This initiative will help them seize the job opportunities that emerge from our rapidly changing economy." (Press release)

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT

The Regate Kia team is proud to announce the nomination of **Stéphane Fontaine** as **General Director** at their Huntingdon branch. With his 14 years of experience in the automotive field, he is known in our region for his dedication and professionalism towards customers. No doubt his expertise will greatly contribute to the success of his excellent team.

WELCOME and congratulations!

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Information meeting on refugees

Dispelling misconceptions about Roxam Road crossing

IMMIGRATION. An information meeting on March 25, organized by Bridges not Borders, in collaboration with Solidarity across Borders, will aim to dispel some of the misconceptions that now abound over the irregular crossing of refugee claimants into Canada at Roxam Road, near Hemmingford.

According to a recent Radio-Canada report, between 50 and 60 individuals cross into Canada irregularly at Roxam Road near Hemmingford every day, the majority now coming from a number of African countries, Turkey, Pakistan, Yemen and Syria. In an effort to break down why people are crossing irregularly at Roxam Road, the members of Bridges not Borders and Solidarity across Borders have invited a number of special guests to speak to the issue.

To start the meeting, David Smith from Amnesty International will speak about the Safe Third Country Agreement, which is one cause of this irregular migration. Mr. Smith will be followed by a representative from Plattsburgh Cares, who will explain how the recent decisions taken by the Trump administration have left many people feeling unsafe in the USA. She will also talk about the work of Plattsburgh Cares in helping refugees. Finally, those in attendance will be able to hear the testimony of two people speaking about their experience as refugees. One crossed into Canada at Roxam Road with his children, after having transited through different countries. The other has been struggling for almost 10 years to obtain status for herself and her children here in Canada.

AN IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY

Bridges not Borders is a Hemmingford-based citizen's group concerned about the well-being of refugees crossing into Canada. The group is relatively new, having evolved out of a series of meetings last year before formally becoming a group following the July 1 protests at Roxam Road last summer. While raising awareness of the situation facing the refugees who cross near Hemmingford, members of the group also travel to the American side of the border crossing to distribute supplies to help prepare newcomers for a Canadian winter as the Canadian side is now completely closed off.

"We don't actually get to see people," says Grace Bubeck of Bridges not Borders, who suggests there is still a great deal of misunderstanding surrounding what happens to

refugee claimants after they are detained at Roxam Road and transported to Lacolle. "Because there is no contact, we felt it was important for people to see actual refugees speak about their actual experience," she says of the upcoming meeting in Hemmingford.

The afternoon is being co-organized by Solidarity across Borders, which is a migrant justice network out of Montreal that has been active since 2003. Composed of migrants and allies, the group works together to demand an end to deportations, an end to detention, and status for all.

The information meeting will take place on Sunday, March 25, from 2 pm to 4 pm at the Forrest Figsby Hall of Hemmingford's Anglican church. Coffee and desserts will be served. For more information, contact bridgesnotborders.ca@gmail.com

Haut-Saint-Laurent

Looking for candidates for volunteer awards

COMMUNITY. For a third year in a row, the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent will be celebrating its volunteers with an evening dedicated in their honour. The call for nominations for this year's volunteer awards is now open, with the gala scheduled for April 19.

Organizations interested in nominating up to three volunteers have until March 23 to complete the nomination form available to download off the MRC website. This year there are both individual and collective categories, with opportunities to nominate volunteers for their involvement with a community organization, in their municipality or with a educational or health institution. As well it is possible to nominate families that make volunteering a priority as well as a local business for corporate volunteer work by employees. The winners from each category will then automatically be considered for the 2018 Haut-Saint-Laurent Volunteer Award.

The nominees for the 2018 awards will have the chance to join in the distinguished company of Ms. Betty Riel and Ms. Mary Shewchuk, who received the volunteer of the year honour in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

"The volunteers in the Haut-Saint-Laurent are a tight-knit bilingual community able to create little miracles from scratch," says Anick Lacroix, who recently accepted the position of the Social Development Agent with the MRC. Most volunteers are drawn to smaller projects initiated in response to social issues in the region, notes Lacroix, who suggests such projects are initiated by citizens who roll up their sleeves and take matters in their own hands by investing in a cause close to their hearts.

For Lacroix, the initiatives and projects run by volunteers not only serve the community by meeting real needs, they also allow those who give so generously of their time an opportunity to share in the results of their work while gaining a priceless sense of accomplishment.

"Our volunteers are passionate, and we are very fortunate to have so many here at home," says Lacroix. "It is essential that we celebrate their contributions to the well-being of our community and that we thank them."

The annual Volunteer Awards will take place on April 19, however the deadline to submit a candidate is March 23. The nomination form can be found at www.mrchsl.com.

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THIS AND THAT

BAKE SALE

The Little Green Library will be holding a bake sale fundraiser on Saturday, March 24, from 9:30 am to noon. The sale will feature a variety of goodies, from cakes, tarts, squares, and cookies, to breads, muffins and more, all home-made by the library's team of volunteers and members. Come and stock up for Easter!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Athelstan Cemetery Co. will take place on Wednesday, March 28, at the home of Douglas & Joy Grant, 3056 Mtee Shearer, in Elgin. The meeting will start at 8 pm.

EASTER IN HUNTINGDON

The annual ecumenical walk of faith will take place on Good Friday, March 30. The walk will begin at St. John's Anglican Church at 9:30 am, then proceed to St. Andrew's Presbyterian, the County Hospital, Huntingdon United, and conclude at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic. A lunch will be served following the walk.

On Easter Day, April 1, worshippers are welcome to gather at the Gazebo (opposite the Huntingdon County Hospital) for the

community's first Easter service of the day. All are invited to gather in celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. Following the celebration, breakfast will be served at St. John's Anglican, prepared by The Men's Breakfast Group (breakfast is gratis, but donations will be willingly accepted). In case of inclement weather, the service will be held at St. John's.

FIDDLER'S FANCY

Southwestern Quebec's fiddling has a flavour all its own, a blend of American western, Scottish and Gaelic influences, and Quebec French folk music. That's what draws enthusiastic fans of Fiddler's Fancy to the annual spring concert sponsored as a fundraiser by the Hemmingford Historical Archives. Started under the influence of Edmund Priest in 2013, each year some twenty or more well-known performers donate their talent for the cause. Volunteer musicians are co-ordinated this year by Adrien Doucette. This year's gala is on April 7, 2018 from 1 pm to 4 pm, at the new Hemmingford Historical Archives building. Refreshments will be available and a raffle will take place of a Handmade Quilt. Adults \$12.00, students 12+ \$6.00

and children free. Join the fun! Seating is limited so make sure you reserve your tickets in advance.

PANCAKE SUPPER

The Athelstan Presbyterian Church will be holding a Pancake Supper on Saturday, April 7, from 5 pm to 8 pm. Adults eat for \$10, ages 6-12 years \$5 and ages 5 and under are free.

EASTER BAKE SALE

There will be an Easter Bake Sale at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 33 Prince St., in Huntingdon on Thursday, March 29th, from 10 am to 1 pm. Lots of homemade bread, pies, cakes, cookies, squares, fudge etc. Everyone welcome.

NOTE:

If you or someone you know has an event that they would like to see promoted in the paper or in the This and That section, please send an email to rennie.sarah@gmail.com. Please note that all advertising inquiries must be directed to The Gleaner's head office. Due to space constrictions, not all requests can be featured in This and That.