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Christian Vachon, un cadeau du ciel



Jean-Guy Rancourt

La Tribune

(Magog) Il est possiblement le gars le plus populaire en ville. Il pourrait être élu maire de Magog demain matin. Je parle de Christian Vachon, l'homme derrière le Relais du lac Memphrémagog et la fondation qui porte son nom.

Humble, sympathique, poli, généreux, dévoué, Vachon fait l'unanimité partout où il passe. Les adultes le respectent au plus haut point et les enfants le considèrent comme leur grand frère. Sa fondation est un modèle de réussite. Il en va de même du Relais du lac Memphrémagog, son bébé.

Impossible de ne pas apprécier ce Magogois quand on le voit se dépenser corps et âme pour sa fondation qui est venue en aide à plusieurs centaines de jeunes élèves dans leur parcours scolaire. Lorsqu'on fait le décompte de la fondation, on arrive à plus d'un million et demi de fonds récoltés depuis le jour un. Tout ça pour la persévérance scolaire et pour s'assurer que les enfants provenant de familles démunies ne manquent de rien, que ce soit en fournitures scolaires, vêtements ou pour manger convenablement. Quelle idée louable et réconfortante !

Avant de penser à faire bouger le Québec et de parler de saines habitudes de vie, n'est-il pas souhaitable et logique de s'assurer que les enfants aient le ventre plein, des espadrilles aux pieds et quoi encore ? Ne me prêtez pas l'intention de frapper sur les autres campagnes ou collectes de fonds qui ont toutes leur raison d'être. Je suis le premier à les applaudir et parfois même les soutenir. Sauf qu'à mes yeux, l'éducation devrait être la priorité de tous. Et c'est là que je vous rappelle que la Fondation Christian Vachon vient donner une chance égale à tous sur les bancs d'école.

Déchirant

Car un jeune élève qui est isolé parce qu'il est mal vêtu ou encore parce que ses parents n'ont pas les ressources financières pour lui permettre de participer à des activités à l'école, ça fait mal à voir. C'est même déchirant. Christian Vachon avec sa fondation huilée au quart de tour y voit. Les enfants qui ont pris goût à l'école grâce à Christian Vachon sont légion. Le gars a même mis sa carrière de coureur d'ultra marathonien en veilleuse pour eux. Comme ça l'honore !

D'ailleurs, je suis sans mots devant l'indifférence des grands médias du Québec face à Christian Vachon et sa fondation. Il serait grand temps qu'ils sortent voir ce qui se fait en région. Peut-être qu'il faudrait leur dire que Vachon a lui-même été marqué au fer rouge dans sa jeunesse en raison de ses difficultés d'apprentissage. Vachon m'avait déjà raconté qu'un directeur d'école avait mentionné à sa mère qu'il était irrécupérable. J'aimerais donc savoir s'il ne regrette pas ses paroles aujourd'hui.

Ça prenait un front de boeuf à Vachon il y a une dizaine d'années pour cogner aux portes des écoles de la Commission scolaire pour parler de son projet alors que lui-même avait encore de la difficulté à lire quelques lignes sans hésiter, sans bégayer. Il s'en est trouvé pour le regarder de haut.

Aujourd'hui, Vachon répand le bonheur autour de lui. Des jeunes élèves lui seront reconnaissants pour la vie.

Quel cadeau pour une ville d'avoir un citoyen comme Christian Vachon ! Entre-temps, que madame la première magistrate de Magog Vicki-May Hamm dorme sur ses deux oreilles. Christian Vachon n'a aucunement l'intention de se lancer en politique.

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ETSB Student Ombudsman: not much to report

Sherbrooke Record · 28 Sep 2017 · 1 · By Matthew McCully

During Tuesday evening's Eastern Townships Council of Commissioners meeting, Student Ombudsman Christian Beaudry presented a report of the complaints made last year.



"Everything was calm," Beaudry said, adding that was likely due to the efficiency of the board's internal complaint system.

According to Beaudry, 13 complaints were made; 12 from parents of students in the ETSB and one from an adult student.

Beaudry immediately re-directed 10 of the 13 complaints back to the board because the complainants had not followed the proper procedure.

A complainant must first exhaust all options within the board before approaching the ombudsman, according to the ETSB website.

The first step is to deal with the school principal or centre director. If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the next step is to go to the director of the service involved. (For example, if the issue relates to bullying on a bus, the complaint should be addressed to the school first, and then to the director of transportation.)

The third step is to approach the general directorate with the complaint. If still dissatisfied, a written complaint must be sent to the secretary general for consideration. If it is deemed admissible, the secretary general will consider revisiting decisions made that led to the complaint, or forward it to the ombudsman.

The only complaint that Beaudry investigated last year came from the parents of a deaf student who were

unhappy with the services made available to their child.

Beaudry said that before he could render an opinion or initiate mediation of any kind, the parents withdrew their child from the ETSB and moved to another board.

Even so, Beaudry went on to share the opinion he would have rendered, had the parents decided to stay in the ETSB.

Based on his investigation, Beaudry said in his opinion, the ETSB was providing services over and above what was expected for the student in question. He suggested the issue at hand was the result of a lack of understanding on the part of the parents regarding their child's hearing impairment.

Beaudry added that there were two complaints made with allegations of violence and bullying. Both were redirected and the parents weren't heard from again.

New commissioner for Ward 2

Following the resignation of Gregg Thompson, commissioner for Ward 2, a by-election was held to fill the position. The nomination period, which took place from Sept.19-24, attracted a single candidate, Jonathan Murray, who was elected by acclamation at the close of the nomination period.

Murray signed the oath of office and then joined the commissioners for his first meeting on Tuesday.

In the interests of full disclosure, Chairman Michael Murray pointed out that Jonathan Murray is his son.

"You can never have enough Murray's in the ETSB," he joked.

The board announced three new administrative appointments during Tuesday's meeting.

Frédéric Noirfalise was appointed Principal (100 per cent) at Sutton Elementary School, a post he assumed a number of weeks ago.

Eva Lettner was appointed to the position of Director of Continuing Education.

Pierre-andré Arèl is the newly appointed Assistant Director of Human Resources.

Question period

Appalachian teachers Association President Megan Seline had a number of questions for the board on Tuesday.

Seline's first asked if the ententes with the Val des Cerfs (VDC) School Board had been finalized.

Chairman Murray explained that there are multiple ententes with VDC and that updating them was an ongoing process, so the answer to that question would never be a simple yes.

Seline then asked which ones, if any, had been finalized.

Director General Christian Provencher said that the arrangement with Sutton Elementary School was not yet finalized. The focus is the Masseyvanier complex, Provencher said, which includes the high school as well as the adult education and vocational centres.

Provencher added that right now they are working on the entente related specifically to the high school. When asked if there had been any movement in the adult/voc ed sector, Provencher said they have not been worked on yet in any major detail, and will likely be addressed after Christmas.

Seline then asked how the dates for the parent/teacher interviews are determined.

Pedagogical Services Director Kandy Mackey said that previously they were decided within school councils, but issues arose in some regions because elementary and high schools in close proximity ended up on the same night. The current process is to have regional meetings where one year, the high school decides, the following year, the elementary school decides to ensure they are on different dates.

Seline later told The Record that her question was asked on behalf of teachers who have had parent/teacher interviews scheduled the same time as the Quebec Provincial Association of teachers (QPAT) annual teachers' convention, this coming Nov.23-24.

"Some of them were scheduled to present," Seline said.

Seline also drew attention to the recent heat wave. She pointed out that the board has a policy to close schools if there is an extreme temperature low, and asked if there were a policy for an extreme high.

Provencher acknowledged the issue, and said a number of recommendations have been made to schools to address the uncharacteristic weather; he said students should be reminded to drink more water, and teachers, where possible, could hold classes outdoors in a shady area, and keep windows open so that air continues to circulate.

While the obvious solution would be to install air conditioning, Provencher said there is a lot of work to be done in ETSB schools before considering air conditioning.

Murray added that a wishful deadline has been imposed on all schools to be off fossil fuels by 2020. While it may take a bit longer, Murray said that one of the alternatives to oil furnaces was energy efficient geo-thermal heating and cooling systems, something students can look forward to in the future in the event of more mid-september heat waves.

Memphre- magog community school going strong

By Gordon Lambie

The Memphremagog community school will be celebrating tonight as registration opens for its tenth year of night classes. According to Christine Hodge, one of the founding members of the school, the school traces its roots back to an initiative of the Eastern Townships Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC).

"They go into a community, look around, see what is needed, and decide how to get it going," Hodge said. "They realized there is a fair amount of English in the Magog area, but there was nothing to bring us together."

Drawing off of the, at the time, fairly new Community Learning Centre (CLC)

movement, the CEDEC planning team tried to get a night school up and running at the school only to find that there was very low attendance.

"It looked like it would be a lot of fun but nobody came," Hodge said, explaining that she and her husband were two of the three students who signed up for the first session. "I went home and I said, you know, it is too bad because English people are always looking for something and here is a good idea but no one is jumping on it."

Taking it upon herself to work on community outreach, Hodge said that it wasn't long before she was asked to be a part of the planning committee.

Michael Davis, the school's Treasury Director and another of the original co-founders, explained that the committee proceeded to visit the longstanding community school at Heroes Memorial in

Cowansville. The inspiration drawn from that visit, he explained, created a model that has drawn in more than 100 students per semester quite consistently ever since.

"I think we're at the point now where there are about 900 people in the community paying close attention to what we are doing," Davis said, pointing out that by word of mouth the school has become not just a centre for learning but also a way of meeting new people and

strengthening social networks.

While Davis said that the school has essentially been operating on the same successful model for most of the last 10 years, Hodge noted that some small changes have yielded positive growth. Among these she highlighted the addition of a babysitting service to the program that allows younger adults the opportunity to come and experience the courses.

"It's a place to get together, to network, to make new friends and to learn something," she said, explaining that courses take place between 6:30 p.m. and 8pm on Wednesdays, followed by a social time until 8:30.

Hodge invited members of the community to come out to Princess Elizabeth Elementary School in Magog between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. tonight to learn more about the classes being offered this semester, although she said that people can also register online at Magogclc.ca



Richmond Regional to host second annual health and wellness fair

Sherbrooke Record · 29 Sep 2017 · 3 · By Gordon Lambie

The Community Learning Centre at Richmond Regional High School will be hosting a second community health and wellness fair this coming Saturday in parallel with the community craft fair going on over the course of the weekend.



“We listened to feedback from the first year that asked why not twin with another event so that each one can benefit from the clientele of the other,” said Richmond Community Liaison Agent Gwyneth Grant, calling the second fair a “new and improved” take on what was already a successful event last year. “It will be really dynamic,” Grant continued. “We’re going to share the welcome area leading up to the school.”

As in 2016, the fair will involve more than 30 different local health and community organizations at kiosks around the main floor of the school, although this year’s event will also include seven presentations from participating groups in the school auditorium.

“There’s so many groups,” the Liaison Agent said, estimating that participation is even bigger this year than last. “I think it’s going to be a really fun day.”

Gaétan Nadeau, community organizer with the public health authority in the Val-saint-françois, explained that the ultimate goal of the event is to bring services closer to the community.

“It’s a continuation of what we did last year,” Nadeau said, “the idea is to let everyone know what services are available.”

Nadeau said that while last year’s event was focused specifically on connecting services with the local English speaking population, this year’s fair has been planned as a bilingual event in the name of drawing both more organizations and more visitors.

“It’s a real community event,” Grant said, noting that she is expecting groups ranging from the CIUSSS de L’ESTRIECHUS to the local historical society.

The Richmond health and wellness fair will take place on Saturday the 30th of September from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The RRHS Autumn Artisan show, meanwhile, will take place from September 30th to October 1st

Big crowd braves heat for school apples

Stamstead Journal, Sept. 27, 2017



photo Stanstead Journal

Students, parents and grand-parents picked Gala apples at the Stevens Orchard in record-breaking heat, last Sunday, during the annual Gala Event.

Victoria Vanier, Stanstead

Students from Sunnyside Elementary, Jardin-des-Frontieres, their parents and grand-parents came out to pick apples on a sweltering Sunday afternoon during the Stevens Orchard's annual Gala Event. "The good news is that no one suffered frostbite at the event on Sunday. We had a great time, families and friends were enjoying the day. It was nice to see that the two schools equal one community!" commented Harvey Stevens.

cont'd from page 1

Because last Sunday's weather was so hot for the event, Mr. Stevens has offered to host another afternoon of apple picking for both schools this coming Sunday, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. "The weather is supposed to be cooler and more comfortable for apple picking," he added.

The aim of the afternoon is to pick and sort enough Gala apples to provide a ton of free apples to the students at the two schools. These apples are stored in the fridges at the Stevens farm and delivered to the schools regularly until they run out in the spring.