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Quebec to implement COVID-19 vaccine passport on Sept. 1 in the face of 'inevitable' 4th wave



Quebec Health Minister Christian Dubé shows an app on his phone as he announces details of the COVID-19 vaccination passport during a news conference Tuesday in Montreal. The passport will be installed on an app that is being tested this week in a pilot project. (The Canadian Press)

Shelters hope pandemic will spur solution to city's homelessness crisis

"It's an opportunity for us to make the case for what can be done and hopefully gather support from the public," Sam Watts says.

Author of the article: Jason Magder • Montreal Gazette
 Publishing date: Aug 09, 2021 •

Sam Watts is hoping the pandemic will be the catalyst that spurs politicians to finally put an end to the city's homelessness crisis.

"This pandemic potentially gives us the opportunity for the first time to look at the overall system and say: 'We can do better than this,'" he said in an interview with the Montreal Gazette on Monday.

With fewer shelter spots available because of hygiene measures, the number of Montrealers without homes may not have grown, but the homeless have become more visible, said Watts, who is the executive director of the Welcome Hall Mission.

"The pandemic really put a spotlight on something that had largely been hidden," Watts said. "Before that, it was largely assumed that places like Welcome Hall Mission had this under

control. Even the mayor speculated that homelessness has doubled. We have no data to suggest that, but the problem has become much more visible, that's for sure."

Despite the heartbreaking sight of homeless people setting up tent encampments in various parts of the city, or hanging out in areas like Milton Park in increasing numbers, Watts said he's optimistic homelessness is an issue that can be resolved.

Watts said public outcry has turned homelessness into an election issue, with federal, municipal and provincial campaigns expected to be held over the next year.

"It's an opportunity for us to make the case for what can be done and hopefully gather support from the public," he said.

Vaccine passports will be needed to access public events, bars, restaurants and gyms

Sabrina Jonas • CBC News • Posted: Aug 10, 2021 12:11 PM ET

Quebec's health minister says a vaccination passport system will be implemented on Sept. 1 to combat rising COVID-19 cases and an "inevitable" fourth wave.

"Taking into account the increase in cases, the fall coming up with the back to school and back to work and the expected prevalence of the delta variant, the conditions are there to deploy the vaccination passport," Christian Dubé said.

Dubé unveiled some details about the system, announced last week by Premier François Legault, alongside two public health officials — Dr. Yves Jalbert, a strategic medical adviser, and Caroline Roy, an adviser on matters related to the COVID-19 vaccination campaign.

The vaccine passport will be implemented in places with high capacity and a high rate of contact, such as festivals, bars, restaurants,

gyms and training facilities to avoid the widespread closures that marked the first waves of COVID-19 in Quebec.

When asked about religious gatherings and weddings, Dubé said the government is still discussing whether they will be included as events that require vaccine passports.

For the time being, the vaccination passport will not be used in retail stores or schools

Dubé emphasized the system is the only way to keep the economy open and still protect the health system from being overwhelmed as it was in previous waves. He says a fourth wave, driven by the delta variant, is "inevitable" in Quebec.

According to Jalbert, delta is behind a third of new infections in Quebec, but public health officials

See Page 4 Quebec to implement



The Welcome Hall Mission has temporary dorms available at its de Courcelle St. headquarters, but executive director Sam Watts says more 24-hour centres are needed to address Montreal's homelessness crisis. PHOTO BY DAVE SIDAWAY /Montreal Gazette

Montreal is, fortunately, in a better state than most major urban centres in North America, according to Watts, and it's even better off than Vancouver, Ottawa and Toronto. Compared with those cities, Montreal

is only now starting to see the effects of a shortage of affordable housing, he said. He estimates that while roughly 3,000 people in the city are homeless

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From the Publisher's desk

The implications and effects of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on education

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

It is almost the beginning of another school year amidst rising concerns of the Delta variant of the Covid 19 pandemic. We have a lot to think about but one important subject that must be brought up to people's attention is the fact that our life in general is not only related to health concerns but also to economic realities which affect our enjoyment of life in comfort and relative prosperity. In the opening paragraph of an essay written by Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum, he provides an overview of an important event which is evolving in our midst which may not be self-evident:

We stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another. In its scale, scope, and complexity, the transformation will be unlike anything humankind has experienced before. We do not yet know just how it will unfold, but one thing is clear: the response to it must be integrated and comprehensive, involving all stakeholders of the

global polity, from the public and private sectors to academia and civil society.

A comparative description of the past Industrial Revolutions may give us a good start in understanding what is currently affecting all of us. According to Schwab, "The First Industrial Revolution used water and steam power to mechanize production. The Second used electric power to create mass production. The Third used electronics and information technology to automate production. Now a Fourth Industrial Revolution is building on the Third, the digital revolution that has been occurring since the middle of the last century. It is characterized by a fusion of technologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres."

If we begin to be aware of the implications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we may just feel overwhelmed and not know where to begin to prepare ourselves. Most people acquired basic education from their elementary and secondary schooling which had been sufficient in

the past, but during this technological age, the more education one has the better it is to find a good job or to manage a business. The school has always been the place where children learn their fundamental skills starting from the age of six and until the age of 20 to 25 when they graduate from college. But nowadays, it is no longer a good idea to consider one's education complete regardless of the number of degrees one has obtained. It is more advisable to adopt or subscribe to the idea that education is not a process that stops suddenly after a period of time. Rather, we must always think that as long as we live, we must keep on learning, either formally or informally.

Critics of our current educational systems have said that schools are not fast enough in adapting to the needs of an ever changing economy and in providing much needed skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and creativity. What can educators and schools do to prepare students for the Fourth Industrial Revolution? Economic experts recommend a curriculum based on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) In his article for the World Economic Forum (WEF), Verizon Communications CEO Hans Vestberg notes: "...that it's important to instill quality STEM skills to meet the needs

of our "ever-more-technological society", and that "our society must significantly improve its STEM education across all income levels and age groups and among both genders".

Students cannot be complacent with what they were taught or have learned. Instead, they should be encouraged by both parents and teachers to continuously upskill through available resources. An example of this type of course is called "makerspace." A makerspace is a place where people work on projects and network in schools. They "help students develop their skills and creativity, inspiring young learners to engage with the STEAM agenda – Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics."

Evidently, education for the Fourth Industrial Revolution known as Education 4.0 is quite complex and requires not only the acquisition of vast amounts of information but also keeping up to date with the trends in education and business. Moreover, governments must not only support and provide the resources to improve our educational systems but must also be headed by progressive political leaders who understand the meaning and purpose of education for a modern society. Industrial Revolutions will always occur as it has always been part of human history and civilization.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



August 7, 2021

Filipino Star

Dear Editor,

As a Liberal and a federalist, I am delighted to learn that Stephanie Valenzuela will be the candidate for City Councillor in Darlington district for the Ensemble Montreal party.

Her candidacy sends a strong message. There are several thousand Filipinos residing in Darlington and they will be thrilled to have someone from our community as their representative at City Council. Stephanie is likely to be the first Filipino ever elected to Montreal Council and she brings some important attributes. She is known in the community for her work with the Filipino Heritage Month Society. She has volunteered for many good causes and supported charities and food drives.

As a member of a young generation born here, she speaks Tagalog and has been active in transmitting our language and culture to the Filipino youth in our city.

Equally important, she is level headed and pragmatic and understands the real-life challenges of working families. That is why she is associated with our Member of Parliament Anthony Housefather and Councillors Marvin Rotrand and Lionel Perez, both icons in our community.

However, far too often turnout in a municipal election can be low. The last Montreal election saw only 42% of registered voters cast ballots. We cannot assume that our candidate will win and it is for that reason that I make a strong appeal to Filipinos in Darlington who share liberal and federalist values to vote on November 7 for Stephanie Valenzuela.

I want to wish Ensemble Montreal leader Denis Coderre the best of luck in his own efforts to win the Mayor's chair. I was one of the Filipino invited to the recent meeting with him to discuss how to enhance the relationship between Montreal and Manila. I was impressed by his comprehension of the relationship and his action plan. Stephanie Valenzuela once elected can ensure that plan advances rapidly.

Yours truly

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What will Canada's 4th COVID-19 wave look like? Here's what the experts, data say

By Leslie Young Global News

Posted August 14, 2021 7:00 am

Updated August 15, 2021 4:50 pm

The fourth wave of COVID-19 that public health experts have been warning about for months has arrived.

"The latest national surveillance data indicate that a fourth wave is underway in Canada and that cases are plotting along a strong resurgence trajectory," said Dr. Theresa Tam, Canada's chief public health officer, at a press conference Thursday.

However, experts say this wave might look a little different than previous ones. Here's what could happen.

It's already here

If the word of the chief public health officer of Canada isn't enough, data from PHAC shows a clear rise in cases.

"We are seeing an increase in numbers, and it's mostly amongst the unvaccinated," said Dr. Cora Constantinescu, a pediatric infectious diseases specialist with the University of Calgary.

"Our hospitalizations are going up, at least in Alberta. ICU stays are going up as part of the numbers from our chief medical officer of health, and R0, which is how many people one person infects, is going up, which is all a sign of an outbreak or a wave."

Delta will drive it

According to preliminary data from the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Delta variant has essentially taken over in Canada. It was only about eight per cent of cases during the week of May 9, 2021.

By July 11, it was 78 per cent — though the data remains incomplete, so this number could change.

However, public health experts have no doubt that Delta is driving the fourth wave.

"The Delta variant is a very highly contagious variant with a very high R0," said Craig Janes, director of the school of public health sciences at the University of Waterloo.

"So it just means that we're going to see probably this doubling (of case numbers) fairly quickly. With each week you're going to see increasing



Canada's chief public health officer Dr. Theresa Tam said on Thursday that national surveillance data shows a fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic is already underway, being driven by the Delta variant.

cases."

Concerns about holding federal election during 4th wave

Concerns about holding federal election during 4th wave

"Although we're heading into the fourth wave driven by the Delta variant, the good news is that millions of Canadians have rolled up their sleeves to help build a strong wall of vaccination production," Tam said Thursday.

The unvaccinated are most at risk

Experts agree that people who aren't vaccinated — including children under 12 who are too young to be eligible for the shot — are most at risk in this wave of the pandemic.

"They call it the 'pandemic of the unvaccinated,'" Dr. Anna Banerji, an infectious diseases specialist with the University of Toronto, told Global News earlier in the week.

"The vast majority of people that will get COVID will be the unvaccinated people. So, adults who continue to be unvaccinated or under-vaccinated and children under the age of 12 that are not eligible for vaccination right now."

With the combination of the Delta variant affecting children in a way that original strains of COVID-19 didn't and lower vaccination rates in younger people, "We're going to see a lot of younger people getting sick and winding up in the hospital," Janes said.

Ontario recently started releasing data on hospitalization

numbers that include vaccine status.

At first look, unvaccinated people represent 81 per cent of non-ICU hospital patients with COVID-19 in the province. Partially-vaccinated people represent 8 per cent and fully-vaccinated people are 11 per cent.

However, it's worth remembering that most Ontarians — 64 per cent — are fully vaccinated right now. So, taking that into account, the unvaccinated are 15 times more likely to be in hospital with COVID-19 than people who are fully vaccinated: a rate of 1.5 per 100,000 compared to 0.1 per 100,000.

Alberta is showing similar figures. According to the government website, 92 per cent of hospitalized cases since January occurred in unvaccinated people, or in people who got sick less than two weeks after their first dose. Unvaccinated people account for the vast majority of people with COVID-19 currently in Alberta hospitals and ICUs.

"I think the picture has changed for adults because of vaccination and because of our fantastic rate of vaccination in Canada," Constantinescu said.

"I think this has changed for adults to a huge extent. We're not seeing the same hospitalization and death, but for children, it's the same. So because our kids are unvaccinated, the only way our children are safe is if the numbers in our society are low."

Hospitalizations might not

match case numbers

Because of the high vaccination rate, epidemiologists suggest that we might not see hospitalizations stay as closely linked to case numbers as they were in the past.

"You'll see cases going up, but without the corresponding increase in hospitalization," Janes said. He thinks that this is because older people, who are most likely to end up in the hospital, tend also to be the most-vaccinated group.

So even if younger people get infected, they likely won't be going to hospital in the same numbers as older people were earlier in the pandemic, he thinks.

We might be seeing this now in the U.K., he said, where case numbers are rising but hospitalization isn't at the same rate.

Public health measures need to be maintained to control it

How do we stop the fourth wave? "Get vaccinated!" said Constantinescu.

"If you haven't had the first dose, have the first dose," she said, but, "the second dose is much more magical."

Because children can't be vaccinated, it's especially important that those around them are, she said.

Aside from vaccination, she thinks that it's a good idea to continue to wear masks indoors. "There's no doubt in my mind that when indoor masking went down, COVID came up again," she said.

Finally, if you're feeling sick, even with just a sore throat, you should stay home, she said.

Over time, Janes said, "This pandemic may end in terms of waves of hospitalizations and some serious illness, but it's not going to go away. It'll just simply become endemic."

Public health practitioners are most concerned about serious illness, he explained. "It's really the spikes in hospitalization. I think when those level off, we don't see those anymore, that's when I think we can feel we can be somewhat confident that the pandemic is over."

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From Page 1 Quebec to implement

predict that it will account for half of them in the coming weeks.

While clients of certain non-essential services, like bars, will need to be vaccinated and have a QR code to prove it, the same will not be required of staff. Dubé says that mandating vaccines for staff would break labour laws.

Children under 12 will not need to provide proof of vaccination as there are no approved COVID-19 vaccines for that age group. People 12 and older, who are eligible for vaccination, will be required to.

When asked about people who cannot get the vaccine for medical reasons, Dubé said further details will follow regarding exemptions.

Quebec is still considering making vaccinations compulsory for

health workers and promised an update within the next few days. As for schools, Dubé had no additional information. A news briefing with Education Minister Jean-François Roberge is slated for tomorrow.

Dubé also announced the return of weekly news conferences updating the province on the epidemiological situation. 2 pilot projects

The passport will be used on an app that is being tested this week. Two pilot projects are planned: one at a sports bar in Quebec City starting Wednesday for two days, another next week at a gym in the Vimont district of Laval, just north of Montreal.

Dubé says the government wants to have the smartphone application ready for use across the province by September, though people who do not have a smartphone will be able to use the paper vaccination

certificates issued at vaccine centres. They can also print out their QR code or request a paper version by mail.

Dubé says the application will read the QR code sent to people who have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

Businesses will need to download an application to read the QR codes and clients will need a different application to display them. Both apps should be available later this month and will be free.

As for what kind of data the app collects? "None... It's only a reading application, that's it," Dubé clarified.

With regard to travellers from other provinces and from outside the country, Dubé indicated that he is in talks with the federal government to harmonize the vaccination passport with the ArriveCan app.

So far, 84 per cent of eligible

Quebecers (aged 12 and up) have received a first dose, Dubé said Tuesday.

He said he'd like to see all of those who have had one dose receive a second by the end of the month, meaning 1.1 million doses need to be administered by Aug. 31.

Quebec's civil liberties union, the Ligue des droits et libertés (LDL), though, is taking issue with the vaccine passport system, saying there has not been any time for a proper public debate and citing concerns about data security.

Quebec joins two other provinces, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island, that require two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine to access certain non-essential services.

With files from the Canadian Press, Chloe Ranaldi, Radio-Canada

From Page 1 Shelters hope

at any time, fewer than 1,000 actually live on the streets.

However, there is one worrying trend, and that is the growing homelessness among Indigenous people, many of whom hang out in Cabot Square and Milton Park. In recent months, both Resilience Montreal and the Open Door day shelters have received funding to expand their services in those areas, but even those who run the shelters say they are not a permanent solution, only a Band-Aid fix. Groups are lobbying for 24-hour centres with support and counselling services.

While Watts said shelters like the Open Door are necessary, they only help keep people alive, rather than getting them into permanent housing or breaking addiction habits. More services are needed to get to the root problems causing homelessness and to help people stay off the street once they find housing.

"It breaks my heart because whenever I see people who are vulnerable, I see potential that is not being utilized," he said. "There has got to be a way to change the system, because clearly the patchwork we have been doing is not working. (Milton Park) is almost a case study for why we have to stop doing what we have been doing and start doing something different."

To be clear, Watts isn't advocating for governments to stop funding day centres. He's calling for more resources to be available to address the entirety of the homeless problem.

"This is a policy problem," he said. "It takes changes at the policy level. (Day centres) are just going to keep people alive, which is necessary. In Montreal, we should be better than that. We have the resources. There might be a housing crisis, but that doesn't mean there aren't apartments available. We just have to be more creative to find them."

Last month, Welcome Hall,

along with the Old Brewery Mission, opened a ward in the old Hôtel Dieu hospital, which will house 100 people. It will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and aim to ensure that when residents check out, they will be moving into permanent housing. Watts is calling on more such solutions.

He described overnight shelters and day shelters as a form of emergency room in the hospital. Now, there needs to be more services available to provide what he calls a continuum of care, and that includes mental health services, addiction counselling and rent assistance to help people get off substances and stay off the street.

The Welcome Hall has apartments available at its de Courcelle St. headquarters. Those are temporary dorms that serve as an interim step toward finding permanent housing.

"We've gotten 300 people housed permanently during the pandemic, and that's just us," he said. "There's no question we need more resources, but we need to apply those resources in a wise way. If you don't do that, then all you get is a patch. Unfortunately, the system we have inherited is one of patches, when it should move to problem solving."



Starting on Sept. 1, Quebecers will have to show proof of vaccination to access some non-essential services like bars, restaurants, gyms and music festivals. Cyber security experts say because the codes are not encrypted, the personal info in the codes is fairly easy to access. (Submitted by the Government of Quebec)

Could Quebec's vaccine passports expose your personal info?

Experts say risk is low but QR codes can be easily read by third-party apps
Josh Grant · CBC News · Posted: Aug 21, 2021 4:00 AM ET | Last Updated: August 21

Patrick Mathieu says creating an app that can read the contents of Quebec's digital vaccine passports isn't that hard to do.

The co-founder of Hackfest, an annual hacker event in Quebec City, says two of its members built an app that could access a person's name, date of birth and vaccination status by scanning the QR code provided to Quebecers by the Health Ministry.

"Two [people] that are not experts in this at all ... built an application where you scan [the QR code]," said Mathieu. They built the app in about 20 hours.

Starting Sept. 1, Quebecers will have to show proof of vaccination to access certain non-essential activities. Businesses will have access to a free app from the government that simply tells the user whether or not a customer is adequately vaccinated.

But Mathieu says a less scrupulous business owner or employee could build or purchase a third-party app that instead saves their data, which also includes where a customer received their vaccinations and if they have contracted COVID-19.

No location data is accessible from the QR code.

Patrick Mathieu is the co-founder of Hackfest, an annual event in Quebec City and a community of hackers in the province. The group pokes around online looking for possible security issues and alerts organizations so they can fix them. (Radio-Canada)

"Obviously the risk is low," said Mathieu. "But it exists because the government chose technology that is not secure for privacy."

Mathieu says it's not just the QR code that could be exploited — Hackfest also found a bug in the app when it was being developed that led to over 300,000 QR codes being exposed

See Page 13 Could Quebec's

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Montreal in 2024: A \$7 billion budget and a \$780 million “hole”

By BRUNO BISSON, La Presse Torstar Fri., Aug. 20, 2021 timer 3 min. read

MONTREAL - The City of Montreal predicts that its annual budget will exceed the \$7 billion mark by 2024, and that it will be necessary to work hard to fill gaps totaling \$780 million over three years, according to the “preliminary budgetary framework” released

“This is a serious document, which was prepared by the professionals of the City’s finance department, with the City’s secretary general and the City’s treasurer,” insisted Dorais.

This “pre-electoral” portrait of the city’s finances should also make it possible to measure the feasibility of the commitments of mayoral candidates



Thursday by the administration Plante-Dorais.

The chairman of the executive committee, Benoit Dorais, presented this largely theoretical accounting exercise as an unprecedented effort at budgetary transparency. It aims to provide the population with a true picture of the state of public finances on the eve of the next municipal election campaign.

against the figures appearing in these budget forecasts.

But what exactly are these numbers saying?

An increase in spending of \$900 million

In 2021, Montrealers took advantage of a property tax freeze

See Page 18 Montreal in 2024

Biden owns the Afghan exit debacle, but his six predecessors are also to blame

By Gus Mercado (Op. Ed.)

In analyzing the military and human tragedy that is unfolding in Afghanistan, George Santayana’s warning rings loud and clear: “Those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it.” In trying to justify the U.S.’ sudden and chaotic withdrawal

of Saigon. Thousands of Afghan civilians stormed the airport and tried to climb aboard the US transport planes however way they could. Some held on to the underbelly of the plane and fell to their death. About 650 Afghans were allowed to board the US Air Force C17s and flown to safety. But the optics



1975 Saigon evacuation in 1975



2021 Afghan evacuation in 2021

from Afghanistan, President Joe Biden and his Secretary of State Antony Blinken assured the American people that the withdrawal “will not be another Saigon, or another Bay of Pigs fiasco.”

Alas, televised news from the Afghan airport showed a grim spectacle that was eerily similar to the evacuation of the Vietnamese from the rooftops of the US Embassy by US military helicopters during the fall

from the chaotic evacuation were gruesome and did not bode well for President Biden and his administration who are now being blamed for the catastrophe. All they could offer for the intelligence failure that led to the rushed evacuation is the lame excuse that the fall of Kabul came much faster than expected and that the 300,000-strong

See Page 18 Biden owns

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Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)

2020 has been an exceptionally trying year for everyone. We were confronted with a worldwide pandemic, the likes of which has not been seen in our lifetime. While no government is perfect, and in retrospect there are things we could have done differently, I am proud of the way our federal government has stepped up to support Canadians during the pandemic.

My job has been to support my constituents which included providing a constant stream of information; answering your questions; helping individuals and groups with their own files; and obtaining funding and grants. It also meant helping our Government construct and refine programs like the CERB, CEBA, CEWS, CECRA and their successors. It meant fighting for improvements, such as helping to lead the charge for national standards in our long-term care facilities.

Throughout the first 5 months of the pandemic, my staff and I worked 7 days a week to ensure that all phone calls and emails were responded to within 24 hours.

I published a daily update (now weekly) to provide important information to the thousands of constituents who provided us their email addresses. Those updates are also posted on my Facebook page. I encourage everyone who does not yet receive my updates to please email us at Anthony.housefather@parl.gc.ca.

We also had volunteers contact as many residents of the riding as possible, particularly seniors.

Throughout the year, we tried to help resolve the thousands of files that we received from the riding’s businesses, non-profits and organizations. We also assisted them in applying for funding and grants. Simultaneously, Parliament was also functioning and I was also representing you in Parliament, on Committees, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and in the Liberal caucus.

In all the years that I have served as an elected official, this one has been the most challenging but also the most rewarding. I have never before been able to assist so many people directly in such a short time frame and, hopefully, make a positive difference in their lives.

I appreciate the incredible sacrifices everyone has made this year and for this holiday season let us hope for a joyous and HEALTHY 2021.



Anthony Housefather

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Blind Filipino Canadian Woman Empowers and Engages Fellow Blind Canadians

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT-Retired



Elena Laude Aguilar, a BPS Person and Co-founder, D'CENTEX

Being a person with a physical disability especially a "woman of colour", is considered a great burden to people with such an affliction and misfortune. But not to Elena Laude Aguilar, a Filipino Canadian woman who has been a resident of Toronto for the past 17 years. Elen or "Mato" to her family and friends,



anxiety, and difficulties at times to herself, is not a total disappointment, she said.

Emotionally stable and philosophically strong, the visually challenged Elen cites instances that allow her to bravely "face the world" and pursue her passion to do the best she could in helping others in similar situations.

A graduate of AB Economics and with advanced credits in MA in Economics from Centro Escolar University, Philippines, E. L. Aguilar has taught as a college instructor at Roosevelt College-Marikina, National College of Business Administration-Quezon City, and Colegio de San Juan de Letran-Manila. She is a current

D'CENTEX), a registered charitable organization in Pickering, Durham

nurses, teachers, police officers, students, seniors, and persons with



Group photo of "Eye Believe Eye Can" of BPS participants in Atimonan, Quezon 2020.

Region. The Centre provides education, counselling, language instruction, employment support, job search programs, and information programs on Canadian culture and life for landed immigrants, refugees, caregivers, newcomers, and the disadvantaged in the Greater Toronto Area. The hub also offers integrative community living services for the Blind and Partially Sighted (BPS) clientele as well as free Personal Support Workers training, with a college partner, to address the shortage of PSWs and healthcare workers in Ontario, Canada.

A strong advocate and volunteer for the functional development of blind and partially blind individuals through activities of stimulating intellectual, physical, and social skills for normal integration into community living, Elen continues to perform community outreach activities. She co-created and served as event coordinator of the "Amazing BPS Racing Cane Challenge Canada" under the direction and guidance of "Eye Believe Eye Can SEE" (Self-assured, Empowered, Engaged) of the D'CENTEX. It is the first and unique community event in Toronto for the Blind and Partially Sighted (BPS).

Started in July 2015 with only five diversified BPS participants and 15 sighted volunteers, the event has grown in popularity each year to include deaf-blind participants and is supported by more than 100 volunteers -- caregivers,

other disabilities. The Event engages BPS adults 30 years of age or older who are active "white cane users" and who experience and enjoy fun activities showcasing their orientation and mobility techniques as well as their physical, mental, emotional, and tactile abilities.

Decidedly extending her experience and advocacy work, E. Aguilar became the Founder and Executive Director of the "Eye Believe Because Eye Can" organization in her home province. On March 8, 2020, she organized the entity in collaboration with the Association for People with Disabilities under the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in Quezon Province. The non-government organization aims "to empower the blind and partially sighted Quezonians to be independent and become valuable members working toward barrier-free environments" through significant and sustainable projects and programs.

Looking to the future and hoping to continue her "personal passion and mission", Elena Laude Aguilar, despite the uncertainties of the pandemic but purposefully together with her partners and supporters, is fully committed and determined to engage and empower those willing to help themselves "to maximize their potentials and self-worth" and work "towards a barrier-free society built by people with vision impairment".



Members and volunteers of BPS Filipino-Canadians and Canadians in 2019 "Amazing Race" event in Toronto.

who is declared a legally blind person in Canada's living standard and working environment, said her "physical impairment is not a personal hindrance nor an end-at all impediment, but a big challenge and opportunity to people like her" especially when one still would want to contribute and share her skills and talent to society.

E.L. Aguilar, who hails from Atimonan, Quezon, Philippines became legally blind 2 years after immigrating to Canada in 2004. She is an active "white cane user" to guide her daily activity. Her disability, although it causes some fear,

member of the Ontario-based Philippine Teachers Association (PTAC), an organization of internationally-trained and experienced educators from the Philippines.

The sight-impaired Torontonians, a breast cancer survivor for 20 years also, has built an impressive resume while working and living in her adopted country. To her professional credit, in 2008, Elena Aguilar together with FilCan social workers Armela V. Marano and Lailani M. Cuevas, co-founded, and is the Secretary-Treasurer of Durham Centre of Excellence (

Canada moving forward with a proof of vaccination for international travel

August 11, 2021 – Ottawa – While Canadians should continue to avoid non-essential travel worldwide, the Government of Canada recognizes that proof of vaccination credentials will support the re-opening of societies and economies.

Canadians are looking for a more reliable and secure way to demonstrate their COVID-19 vaccination history to foreign and Canadian border officials. To that end, the Government of Canada is collaborating with the provinces and territories to develop a proof of vaccination that will facilitate cross-border travel, while reducing the risk of spread and importation of COVID-19. We are also continuing to engage

with Indigenous partners across the country to ensure that a proof of vaccination credential responds to the needs and rights of Indigenous peoples.

The Government of Canada is working with provinces and territories to develop a secure pan-Canadian approach. This plan is based on advice from our public health officials with priority placed on the safety and security of all Canadians.

For Canadians who decide to travel, using a proof of vaccination will provide foreign border officials with the vaccination history needed to assess whether a traveller meets their public health requirements and provide a trusted and verifiable credential for when

they return home.

Travellers will be able to submit their proof of vaccination in ArriveCAN (mobile app or Canada.ca/ArriveCAN) when coming back to Canada. While the focus is on a digital proof of vaccination, we will also make sure that these documents are accessible for all Canadians who may need to use them.

The Government of Canada encourages everyone who is able to do so, regardless of travel plans, to get vaccinated. Vaccination with a complete series of approved COVID-19 vaccines provides individuals with substantial protection against the virus.

Destination countries determine if or what type of proof of vaccination is

required and the related benefits that may be provided such as reduced or no testing or quarantine requirements. Canadians who do not have a proof of vaccination can travel outside the country, but they may have to quarantine or meet other requirements at their destination country, and they will be subject to mandatory quarantine and testing upon return to Canada.

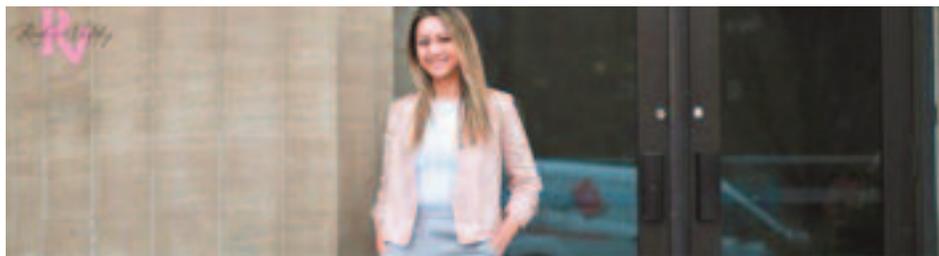
Canadians should always check the Government of Canada's travel advice and advisories, as well as the entry and public health requirements of their destination country, before booking a trip.

Breaking News

Filipino-Canadian Entrepreneur and Baker vies for Member of Parliament Seat

By: Tony A. San Juan, OCT-Retired

RECHIE VALDEZ has been acclaimed on August 15, 2021, to be the Official Candidate for Member of Parliament for Mississauga-Streetsville, Ontario by the Liberal Party of Canada (LPC) in the September 20, 2021, federal election.



A mother of two, Rechie Valdez was a corporate banker for 15 years with cross-enterprise expertise in reporting, project management, change management & strategy and turned into a serial creative entrepreneur, and published baker. Rechie professed that she became a "baker + podcaster + non-profit executive + apparel marketer + basketball newbie in a few short

years...just before turning 40."

Currently, R. Valdez is the vice-president for sales and marketing of Paper Crane & Co., the Paper Crane Express Catering & Co., and Battle Canada. She is also the owner of Chietopia Bakery, a specialty bakery in Mississauga. A sports enthusiast and fundraiser, she is a graduate of BCS

Computer Science from the University of Windsor in 2003 and has completed the Leadership Development Program at BMO Insite for Learning in 2016.

Rechie Valdez becomes the third Filipino Canadian woman to have been acclaimed by the Liberal Party of Canada (LPC) to be an official candidate for Member of Parliament in Canada.

The other two Liberal MP Candidates are Elizabeth Rosaldo Quinto for Oxford County (Ontario), and Virginia Austria-Bremner for Vancouver-Kingsway(B.C.). Any of the three could become the second Filipino and the first Filipina to be elected Member of Parliament since the election of Filipino Canadian MP Rey Pagtakhan more than 22 years ago. The Filipino Canadian communities across Canada are decidedly hopeful though that all the three Pinay MP candidates will turn out successful to represent and articulate the Filipino voice in the House of Commons.

Trudeau calls federal election, voters to go to the polls Sept. 20



Green Party Leader Annamie Paul, Bloc Quebecois Leader Yves-Francois Blanchet, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole and Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau are seen in this composite image. (Images via The Canadian Press)

OTTAWA -- Justin Trudeau has set in motion an early federal election, sending voters to the polls on Sept. 20 and setting up his re-election bid as a chance for Canadians to have their voices heard about who they want to lead the country at this pivotal moment in the pandemic.

The prime minister and Liberal leader visited Gov. Gen. Mary Simon at Rideau Hall Sunday morning where she accepted his request to dissolve the 43rd Parliament and draw up the 338 writs, triggering a summer election.

With voting day scheduled for Sept. 20, the campaign will be 36 days, the shortest possible election period Facing just over five weeks of campaigning, Canadians will be weighing the pitches from each party to determine who they feel is best to carry the country through the rest of the pandemic, and out of it.under federal law.

Following his meeting with Simon—who has been the Queen’s representative in Canada for less than a month— Trudeau spoke to reporters outside Rideau Hall. There, he sought to frame the rationale for a pandemic election while reopening and vaccination efforts are still underway, and given he’s managed to maintain the confidence of the House of Commons.

“The decisions your government makes right now will define the future your kids and grandkids grow up in. So in this pivotal, consequential moment, who wouldn’t want a say? Who wouldn’t want their chance to help decide where our country goes from here? Canadians need to choose how we finish the fight against COVID-19 and build back better,” Trudeau said, facing a series of questions from reporters about why he called the vote after he and his caucus stated multiple times a pandemic election was not in their plans.

“Canadians deserve their say, and that’s exactly what we are going to give them,” Trudeau said. He is kicking off his campaign Sunday afternoon with a virtual townhall with candidates.

“After making it through 17 months of nothing like we’ve ever experienced, Canadians deserve to choose what the next 17 months, what the next 17 years and beyond, will look like. And I know that we have the right plan, the right team, and the proven leadership to meet that moment,” he said. “So to the other parties: Please explain why you don’t think Canadians should have the choice? Why you don’t think that this is a pivotal moment?”

It was a more pared-down first day on the campaign trail than he’s had in previous elections. He held a virtual townhall with candidates from a studio setup inside a downtown Ottawa hotel which the party could rely on throughout the campaign. He then travelled by bus

to Blainville, Que. for a brief meet and greet with local candidates and supporters at a cafe patio. Selfies are one fixture of Trudeau’s appearances that haven’t fallen victim to the pandemic, now they’re just taken with masks on.

Trudeau will be finishing the day in his home riding of Papineau, Que.

All other federal party leaders kicked off their campaigns with remarks in which they framed their focus for the race, and called out Trudeau for triggering the vote while the country is still trying to rebound from the last 17 months.

While the opposition parties have criticized Trudeau’s timing, arguing that the Liberals are unnecessarily putting their own political interests

See Page 18 Trudeau calls

PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH



Stephanie Valenzuela

I proudly present to you our personality of the month of August 2021. Proudly I say because in the short time that I've known her, I find her to be a sincere, personable and competent young woman. In everything she does, she does in earnest. Listening to her speak eloquently on a subject matter, one will be quickly inspired by her wit. I'm talking about none other than

Stephanie Valenzuela, daughter of proud parents Christina Tiburcio and Romeo Valenzuela.

For her education, Stephanie attended Simonne-Monet Elementary school until grade 3 and then went to le Petit Chapiteau from grades 4 to 6. She spent high school at Ecole International de Montreal then went on to Vanier College and finally McGill University. And you will be impressed

to know that she speaks four languages- English, French, Tagalog (Philippine national language), and Spanish! A feat rarely achieved by any kababayan (fellow Filipino)!

Stephanie Valenzuela is a former Director of Communications and Public Relations, Fundacion la Paz Comienza Con los Minors, Mexico in Monteray, Nueva Leon, Mexico. She's currently the director of Communications of the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM).

When I asked her why she entered the world of politics instead of other professions, she explained, "I feel that politics is more of a calling than a career. I knew very early on in my childhood I was interested in improving our society with the people's power revolution in the Philippines and the stories my mother would tell me about martial law during this time. As I started to learn more about politics and how it affected every aspect of our lives, I knew I wanted to focus all of my attention on studying it after high school. However, I never actually thought I would ever run one day as a candidate. It wasn't something I actually thought I can do because as a little girl I never saw anyone who looked like me up on the podium."

Stephanie is running as a Councilor for the district of Darlington in Cotes-des-Neiges, Notre Dame de Grace. She chose to represent the district because of the growing anti-Asian sentiment and the inability of the current administration to come up with concrete solutions. Furthermore, she is interested to solve the housing crisis. She feels that as one who grew up in the neighborhood, she's the best person to push for solutions better than someone coming from elsewhere. She finds strength in growing up in the Cotes des Neiges area where it is sometimes called a melting pot. She knows firsthand the problems in the community. Her experience in living and working in Mexico made her learn to listen and analyze facts before coming to a conclusion. She said that once you've listened to problems, it becomes easier to solve.

Stephanie is running with Ensemble Montreal with former Mayor Denis Coderre at the helm. Stephanie looks up to Nelson Mandela and Barack Obama as political mentors. In my generation, we filled up our diaries idolizing actors and actresses in the film world. Stephanie seems to have different 'idols' to look up to. To her, Mandela and Obama remained their genuine selves and prioritized the needs of the people. They were not perfect but did everything they could for those they served.

Closer to home, she found a worthy mentor in Councilor Lionel Perez who spent 12 years as a Darlington District Councilor. A constant presence in Filipino circles, Lionel is popular and well respected. Stephanie has the privilege of learning from one of the best politicians in town.

When asked about her favorite places in town, she says, "I love

everything about our city and the diversity of it. Every neighborhood has something different to offer and depending on what you're looking for, you will be able to find it across the city."

Stephanie pays homage to her parents for the strong values they have instilled in her when she was young. Her parents also considered a must to know how to speak Tagalog so she can communicate with relatives in the Philippines. She is keen to promote our culture. She is proud to say that Filipinos are extremely hard-working and dedicated, which one can easily observe in places where they work. She hopes people will be happy to taste pancit and egg roll, two common Filipino dishes.

Stephanie frequently visited the Philippines since the age of 2 years old to see relatives in Mandaluyong and Tarlac. She likes trying to visit a new destination such as Bicol. She last visited Palawan and Baguio in 2019. While she was born and raised here in Montreal, her highlights in visiting the Philippines will always be part of her conversations with people. She extols the traits of Filipinos who she describes as welcoming and generous and "even when they don't have much for themselves, they are always offering to everyone else."

Do you wonder what she does during 'downtime'? In her words, "I have always been an advocate for physical and mental health. Personally, I think it is important to find a medium to relieve your stress and decompress. I go to the gym 3-4 times a week regularly. I also enjoy cooking and hosting dinners with friends and family." If you are thinking of courting her, you are out of luck! She is already in a happy relationship with a fellow Filipino, born and raised here in Montreal.

Would you like to know a fun fact about Stephanie? She is terrified of scary movies. She never finishes the movie because she gets nervous and just leaves the cinema or the room. Please invite her to watch comedy or musicals etc. instead!

If (I should say 'when') Stephanie wins as Councilor in Darlington district this coming November, she resolves to serve to the best of her ability. Darlington will be in very good hands. With the win, she'll be the first Filipino to occupy an office in the municipal government level. Good luck to this very young, beautiful, and energetic lady! Get to know her and you will be as impressed as I am and feeling blessed to have found a gem in the heart of the Filipino community!

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Photo Gallery of Community Events



Retirement Party for Councilor Marvin Rotrand organized by FCAAQ headed by Minda Mazzone, August 15, 2021



Dennis Coderre Ensemble Montreal, Aug. 22, 2021 - MacKenzie King Park - Community Meet & Greet



Retirement Party in Hawaiian attire for Councilor Marvin Rotrand, with Councilor Lionel Perez, Stephanie Valenzuela, Sonny Moroz, and MP Anthony Housefather, August 15, 2021



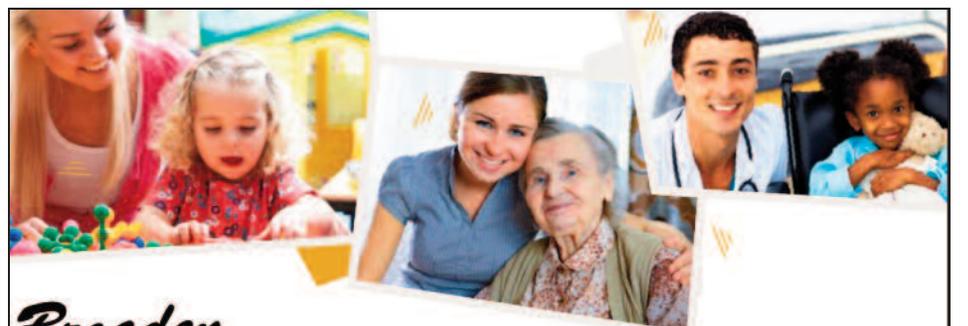
Souvenir photo with Councilor Marvin Rotrand during the Denis Coderre Ensemble Montreal Meet & Greet at MacKenzie King Park, August 22, 2021



Councilor Marvin Rotrand surrounded by well-wishers for his retirement party at MacKenzie King Park, August 15, 2021



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Chicken Curry with Coconut Milk

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp Coconut Oil
- 6 cloves Garlic, peeled and crushed
- 1 medium Onion, chopped
- 2 inch-long fresh Ginger root, peeled and sliced
- 2 tbsp Red Curry powder
- 1 tsp ground Turmeric
- 1 Sweet Potato (or Yam), peeled and chopped into cubes
- 3-4 cups left-over Chicken or 1 (3-lb) Rotisserie Chicken, chopped or cubed
- 1 can Coconut Milk
- ½ can water (use the 14 oz coconut can and fill it halfway with water to measure)
- 2 tbsp paleo-friendly Fish Sauce
- 1 large red Bell pepper, chopped
- 1 tsp brown Sugar (or Honey for paleo), adjust to taste
- Salt and Pepper, to taste

Instructions

- Heat the oil in a large, heavy cooking pot with a lid. Saute the garlic, onion and fresh ginger until aromatic about 1-2 minutes. Adjust the heat to the lowest setting and add the curry powder and ground turmeric to the onion mixture and stir.
- Add the sweet potatoes and chicken. Pour the coconut milk plus 1/2 a can of water, fish sauce and some freshly ground pepper, to taste.
- Bring to a boil, cover and then simmer on low for 8-10 minutes or until the sweet potatoes are tender.
- Add the chopped bell peppers and the brown sugar or honey to balance out the flavor (not to make it sweet).
- Cook for another 2 minutes or until the peppers are heated through. If the sauce becomes too thick, simply add some more water. Adjust the

seasoning if desired. Garnish with some chopped cilantro. Enjoy!



Pork Barbecue

Ingredients

- 4 lbs. pork shoulder sliced into thin pieces
- Marinade ingredients
- ¾ cup soy sauce
- ½ cup juice extracted from calamansi or lemon
- ¾ cup banana ketchup
- 4 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 ½ cups lemon or lime soda

Instructions

- Arrange the pork slices in a large bowl.
- Add all the marinade ingredients. Mix well. Cover the bowl and marinate for at least 3 hours. Note: I strongly suggest marinating overnight for best results.
- Fasten the marinated pork together using bamboo skewers.
- Heat-up the grill. Start to grill your Filipino Style pork BBQ for 3 to 5 minutes per side until the meat is thoroughly cooked. Make sure to always baste the BBQ when flipping it over. Note: the basting sauce ingredients are the same as the marinade ingredients minus the lemon soda.
- Serve with spicy vinegar.
- Share and enjoy!

**“Cooking is at once child’s play and adult joy. And cooking done with care is an act of love.”
- Craig Claiborne**

Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal News Briefs



The FHSM Administrators and Directors 2021

The Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal (FHSM) celebrated Filipino Heritage Month last June 2021 with four virtual events: first, the launching of June as Filipino Heritage Month, second, a play entitled “Mighty Superhero,” third, an interview with Mr. Enrique Rueda Sadosa, who wrote Dr. Jose Rizal Travels 2020, and finally, a celebration of the literary works of Dr. Jose Rizal. Despite their online format, all the events were successful and well-attended. These events, however, are not all that FHSM has recently done.

The organization promotes Filipino culture through its informative interviews and entertaining perform-

continues to support this undertaking as it ends its first year and is about to begin its second. Furthermore, the Newspaper Preservation Project aims to collect, preserve, and digitize old and current Filipino community newspapers. The organization is currently in the process of partnering with newspaper publishers and an institution that will store, safeguard, and make these periodicals available to a broad audience.

Most recently, FHSM has connected with other local organizations such as Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), which aims to link English-speaking organizations together across the



Heritage Hour for August 2021: Jason Patrimonio Palolan

ances on Facebook and Youtube. To serve the community, FHSM connects through its outreach projects and educates through Heritage Hour and their computer literacy programs. The group continues to work on two major projects, particularly La Ville Extraordinaire and the Newspaper Preservation Project. La Ville Extraordinaire, a three-year research project headed by Dr. Cynthia Hammond of Concordia University, is a federally-funded oral history project that will highlight the urban stories of older Montrealers. The Filipino community in Montreal is one of four groups included in this endeavour, which will culminate with an exhibit at the Mémoire des Montréalais(es) Museum. FHSM, as La Ville Extraordinaire’s community partner,

province, and PROMIS, a network of support for newly arrived immigrants and refugees aiming to ease their integration into the Quebecer society. FHSM hopes to build our relationship with these organizations to broaden our support for our community members and access resources needed in terms of minority rights and cultural and social integration. In terms of a more direct approach with our Filipino community, we will hopefully be able to work with the Filipino Family Services organisation, which will truly make a difference and impact the needs of the community.

If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.



Social Tidbits Community News

Fely Rosales Cariño

Hi everyone! I apologize. I was wrong; I spoke too soon. Yes, I announced in the last issue that the pandemic was about to end. However, the Delta variant was making its entrance. In fact, health officials said that it is more deadly and very transmissible. Today, CTV said that the Delta variant is rising in Quebec. For now, the only defense is the vaccine. Unvaccinated people are urged to roll up their sleeves and do it. South of the border, they dangle some sort of compensation to entice people to get vaccinated. Is there such an offer in Quebec? I heard there is. I will verify for next issue.

The short good news of the expected demise of the pandemic made people think of celebrating. First to do it last June 16, 2021 was Maria Kuersteiner. She brought us to Peter Cod Restaurant in Saint-Anne-de-Bellevue. Guests included Mar & Puring Bamba, Carlito & Thelma Arlegui, June d'Silva, Father Chinnappan Laurence, Deacon of St. Luke's Pete Tapia, Father Bertrand, Parish Priest in St. Luke in the West Island, and yours truly. Our seafood feast was welcomed after a year and a half of lockdown. After the dinner, Maria baked two sumptuous cakes and all of us proceeded to her home at Hope Street, DDO for tea and coffee and after dinner drinks. On another date last week of July, the same crowd also celebrated the birthday of Carlito Arlegui at Au Vieux Duluth Restaurant on St. Jean Boulevard in the West Island. After the delicious meal, we again proceeded to Maria's residence to enjoy her treats as well as her signature cakes. Maria, we are indebted to your culinary skills!

Let's say Happy Birthday also to Edith Valenzuela who received a poignant poem from loving husband Milo. Friends and family helped her celebrate. And I can't forget my dear friend Trans Liganor who celebrated her birthday on August 6 at Van Horne Park with Monique Regacho's casino gang. After lunch they had a bingo session.

Here is a very important event in the Filipino calendar, the 123rd Filipino Independence Day held in July this time. The Council of Canadian Filipino Associations of Quebec (CCFAQ) President Sir Dario Boco and his Executive Board prepared a virtual program where invited guests were able to participate. Because of the pandemic, we didn't see the usual parade of beauties in decorated floats...etc. Also missing were the usual folk dances, martial arts, Filipino association booths, and varied Filipino cuisine served in tents. Let's hope we get to enjoy them next year.

The virtual celebration began at

7:30PM. The national anthems were performed by Rose Ann Gines and Kerry Ann Christy Lemon. Alona Amano, the CCFAQ Secretary, gave the Invocation. This was followed by the welcome address of the CCFAQ President Sir Boco. After him came Sir James de la Paz, CCFAQ founder and administrator who started the string of messages and video sent by the following dignitaries: His Excellency Rodolfo Robles (Philippine Ambassador to Canada), Sir Anthony Housefather (MP, Mont Royal), Hon. Dominique Anglade (MNA, St. Henri-St. Anne), Councilor Lionel Perez (Darlington District, Leader of the Opposition, City of Montreal), Councilor Marvin Rotrand (Snowdon District), Hon. Mitchell Brownstein (Cote St. Luc Mayor), Sir Jerremias Singson (Past Supreme Commander, Vice Governor of Ilocos Sur), Hon. Luis Chavit Singson (Narvacan, Ilocos Sur Mayor), Sir Sonny Moroz (Riding Assistant, Government of Canada), Stephanie Valenzuela (Director of Communications, FHSM), Sir Joe Damasco (KGOR, Canada Region Commander), Sir Rey Balansi (Past Area Commander, Eastern Canada Region), Sir Bert Abiera (Knights of Rizal Senior Adviser, Eastern Canada Region), Lady Esphe Manaog (Kababaihang Rizalista President), Sir Alfonso Abdon (FHSM Chairman), Sir Felix de Luna (KGOR, Deputy Chancellor, Canada Region), Sir Romeo Remigio (FAMAS President), Lady Estela Tablas (Pangasinan Association President), and Sir Gerry Danzil (MacKenzie Central Chapter President). In addition were Sir Hector Racuya (Montreal Chapter Commander), Sir Dante Tabamo (NDG Chapter Commander), Sir Angelito Manuel (West Island Chapter Commander), Sir Julius Abad (Mackenzie Chapter Commander), Sir Willie Pasion (Maharlika Chapter Commander), and Manny Lagasca (Chess and Social Club President).

Entertainment participants who enlivened this important event were performers whose musical credentials deserve notice and attention. They were: Thea Cruz (singer, songwriter, multi-gold medalist at World Championship of Performing Arts, WCPA), vocal solo by Astrid Torrico singer/songwriter, medalist at WCPA), vocal solo by Michelle Vargas Lao (singer/songwriter), vocal solo by Michelle Villanueva, dance numbers by the Pamana ng Luzviminda, Visayan Dance Group, and dance exhibition by Sir & Mrs. Boy Galang. Sir Gerry Danzil was on hand to give the closing remarks. If you participate in a virtual celebration you feel that you are not really missing anything. It was a lot of fun and the response was favorable.

July 24 saw the Quebec Association of Canadian Filipino Teachers (QACFT) held a picnic at

McDonald Park on Clanranald, Montreal. It was a very well attended picnic. Led by the present President Bing Estopa were the following past presidents: Joseph Gonzales, Trans Liganor, Elsa Montealegre, Carmen Caro, Procesa Gladysz, Nancy Karides, and yours truly. President Bing's hubby Kennedy was busy tending the barbecue. Guest was Sonny Moroz, candidate for Councilor, Snowdon, ever friendly and ever accommodating. The favourite subject matter of the day was "travelling" - where to go after the pandemic. It seems that everyone wanted to leave for a while and come back fully refreshed.

Members of the Federation of Filipino Canadian Associations of Quebec, FFCAQ, went to Lacolle, Quebec for its anniversary. It was also its President Minda Mazzone's birthday. It was really a day of fun as reported by Ciony Nueva, an invited guest.

This is a good news section! Sonny Moroz has announced that the basketball court at Parc de la Savanne is ready for use. Another good news from Tenne Rose Dayandante, co-anchor of Michael Davantes of Pinoy Pa Rin, is the opening of a new restaurant called MC Restaurant et Traiteur located at 4677 Avenue Van Horne. Is that you, Tenne Rose, sampling the dishes? And guess what, there's a new Filipino restaurant in the West Island called Cebu's Taste on Shakespeare Street in DDO. Word of mouth is that it's very good!

Miscellaneous News! The FHSM under Chairman Al Abdon has lots of programming to offer every week. Nola Manuel of the Filipino Canadian Association of West Island (FCAWI) will soon begin her Zumba class in a West Island park. Details will come later. Now, speaking of green thumbs, you should see the gardens of Benny Bote, Bing Estopa, Linda Danzil, Atina Cleofas, Lolit Odulio, Melinda Antonio, and Claire Boco, You will be delighted to see their vegetable plots.

And guess who are Zeny Kharroubi's furry visitors! They are the five kittens she calls her lovely pets; they just appear in her backyard every meal time. It gives her pleasure just watching them play afterwards. Then they disappear and later come back for the next meal.

Have you seen Bert Abiera's non-stop dancing with several ladies? Please see Al Abdon's Facebook page. It must have been during Bert's 80th birthday at the Hellenic Community Center at 5757 Wilderton, Montreal. He is warning everyone to get ready with your dancing shoes as his 90th is fast approaching! What a guy!

Still apple picking? Nora Arcalas and friends went apple picking last month. After their harvest, they showed their picked apples which looked too tempting to bite.

The Seniors of West Island and Suburbs (SWIS) recently had a picnic last August 13, 2021 for five August-born members: SWIS Chairman Connie Fabro, Chit Bas, Dory Isada, Fely Bisares, Tina Oana and Pete Ison. We had good food and good crowd at Centennial Park in DDO. At lunch time, Frank Baylis, former MP of DDO-Pierrefonds-Roxboro arrived and everyone was delighted to see him. It was just a nice surprise. Frank left

politics to tend to his pharmaceutical business. And the SWIS family is looking forward to another picnic on August 28 at Coolbrook Chalet at Spring Gardens in the West Island.

Even if Snowdon Councilor Marvin Rotrand is retiring, he doesn't let a problem go by without reacting to it. This concerns the renovation in the Cotes-des-Neiges/Notre Dame de Grace area. For any other housing problems (fire safety, cleanliness, mould, etc) Councilor Rotrand suggests that tenants should call the Rental Board at 514-873-2245.

In the midst of it all, let's be mindful to be kind to each other. And I want to encourage you with Romans 12:12, "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."

God Bless and see you in the next issue!

From page 4 Could Quebec's

online. He says they notified the developer, Akinox, and the issue was resolved in 24 hours. But he doesn't have a lot of confidence in the company.

"Their development environment is exposed on the web. We can see their source code, they have bugs," he said.

Developer, Health Ministry insist system is safe In a written statement to CBC News, Akinox CEO Alexander Dahl says the company has been working closely with government experts in cyber security, privacy and protection of personal information throughout the development process.

He says the vaccine passport and everything in the app was thoroughly audited and approved.

Much like people are responsible for protecting the information on their medicare cards and driver's licenses, Quebec's Health Ministry says it's important to not publicly post your QR code, and only share it with businesses that require proof of vaccination.

Risk of 'malicious intent'

Mathieu says someone with "malicious intent" who owns several restaurants and bars could track the movement of a specific client as their QR code is scanned by third-party apps at their establishments.

But he says a more likely scenario is an individual employee looking someone up online.

"You go to a restaurant, the person at the door who scans your QR code thinks you're super cute, gets your name ...stalks you on Facebook, gets into your DMs and harasses you," he said.

He says it's frustrating the government went with a system that has the potential to be exploited, when Quebecers already have physical proof of vaccination.

"They put...20 plus million dollars into something that is not privacy enabled, [has] tons of security issues and in the end you can still go with a piece of paper."

with files from Sarah Leavitt

FILIPINO STAR

SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Iza Calzado recalls journey leading to 'Darna' role: 'A lot of painful parts'



Iza Calzado

Iza Calzado looked back at her years-long journey to land a role as Darna in the upcoming "Mars Ravelo's Darna: The TV Series," saying the "painful parts" of it helped her prepare in becoming the Filipino superhero.

"I honestly never thought or dreamt I would be part of this iconic project even as a child growing up, wanting to be an artista (actor)," the actress admitted through her Instagram page yesterday, Aug. 14.

"The journey to this has been 17 years for me with a lot of painful parts that I have come to accept with grace because I know this is part of my journey to becoming my own kind of Darna," she added.

Given that the role was a long time coming for Calzado, she noted that the experience taught her to believe in divine timing. She also expressed hope that "Mars Ravelo's Darna: The TV Series" will make viewers believe in the "hero that exists in all of us."

"[Imagine] the possibilities of coming together once we've all

tapped into our superpowers? What a beautiful world I see," she told fans. "Celebrating the superhero in all of us today and always!"

ABS-CBN announced that Calzado was cast for the upcoming superhero series last week, an announcement that the actress waited a long time to talk about.

She revealed in a 2014 interview with TV host Boy Abunda that she was supposed to play Darna in GMA Network's series adaptation in 2005, but the project was eventually given to actress Angel Locsin.



In the ABS-CBN adaptation, Calzado will be playing as the "first Darna" who will pass on her superpowers to her daughter Narda, played by Jane de Leon.

Production for the series has been delayed numerous times, even before the pandemic. Locsin was first tapped to reprise her role for a film back in 2014, but she had to exit the project due to a back injury and health reasons in 2015.

Fellow Kapamilya actress Liza Soberano was then cast for the role, but she backed out in 2019 after suffering from a finger injury.

Meanwhile, director Erik Matti was supposed to direct the "Darna" film, but he decided to leave the project due to creative differences. Matti was replaced by Jerrold Tarog, who also eventually let go of the project last January, this time due to scheduling conflicts.

The project has since been turned from a movie into a television series. It will start filming in September, after De Leon exits the long-running series "FPJ's Ang Probinsyano." ■

Kris Aquino hints at new love, greets mystery man on special day



"Queen of All Media" Kris Aquino

"Queen of All Media" Kris Aquino hinted at having a new love as she greeted the mystery man a happy birthday.

In her Instagram account on Wednesday, Kris said she thought long before uploading her greeting because she will know that it will start a speculation.

The mystery man, however, is Kris' savior, according to the host. Kris' younger son also likes the guy so she decided to post her greeting.

"I thought long and hard whether to upload this, because I know what kind of speculation I'll be starting... BUT he really did come when my grief was unbearable; he continues to give me unselfish support & comfort; he's been around for all my ups and downs, health woes, and tears- plus Bimb likes him... most of all he makes me feel taken care of, secure, and SAFE," Kris wrote.

"So he is deserving of this birthday greeting that all of you are now seeing (care bears na kung among iisipin ninyo) BECAUSE for me he is #special," she added.

Kris' followers were intrigued regarding the post as they thought of former Quezon City Mayor Herbert Bautista, lawyer Gideon Pena and Kapuso host Willie Revillame. The three, however, have different birthdays.

A quick Google search bared that celebrities that are celebrating their birthdays today include host Jhong Hilario, basketball player Rabeh Al-Hussaini and business tycoon John Gokongwei. ■

Janine Gutierrez dedicates award from NY Asian film fest to movie fans



Janine Gutierrez with her Rising Star Award trophy from the New York Asian Film Festival

Janine Gutierrez has finally received the Rising Star Award trophy from the New York Asian Film Festival (NYAFF) for her performance in “Dito at Doon.”

Gutierrez shared the good news by sharing photos of her with the trophy via Instagram yesterday, Aug. 23, as she dedicated her win to movie supporters despite the pandemic.

“[Thank] you so much to the @newyorkasianfilmfestival for the Rising Star Award [white heart emoji] so grateful for your support of Filipino films and creatives, for sharing your platform and getting our stories out into the world,” Gutierrez said.

She also thanked TBA Studios and the team behind “Dito and Doon,” including co-star JC Santos and director JP Habac, among others.

“[Our] little lockdown film is so special to me at mas special pa na maraming naka-relate kay Len at Caloy at sa walang sawang ECQ,” Gutierrez emphasized.

(Our little lockdown film is so special to me and is even more special that many were able to relate to Len and Caloy and the never-ending enhanced community quarantine.)

“[As] we kept saying nung press days namin for the film, sana magsilbi itong paalala na kung ano pa man ang pinagdadaanan mo, hindi ka nag-iisa,” the actress added.

(As we kept saying during the press days for the film, I hope this will serve as a reminder that no matter what you are going through, you are not alone.)

Gutierrez then dedicated her award to those who continue to support Filipino films despite cinemas being closed during the pandemic-induced lockdown.

“[Hindi] madali pero andito ka. [Sa] mga bumibili ng ticket online, sumusuporta sa mga streaming sites at naglalaan ng oras para sa mga virtual premiere — salamat,” she said.

(It is not easy but you are here. To those who buy tickets online,

who support the streaming sites and make time for our virtual premieres — thank you.)

“[Thank] you for supporting the industry and everyone who works in it. [You] mean everything to us. [Thank] you for coming with us on this journey,” Gutierrez added.

She also extended her gratitude to the team behind “Babae at Baril,” which was included in the NYAFF last year. Gutierrez shared that

she felt like “part of this recognition is also because” of the said movie.

“Dito at Doon,” internationally titled “Here and There,” tells the story of Len (Gutierrez) and Cabs (JC Santos), two friends who develop a romantic relationship amid the pandemic.

It will be available for streaming via Netflix worldwide starting Sept. 2, according to Gutierrez. ■

JaMill deletes YouTube channel with 12M followers to save relationship



YouTube sensations Jayzam Manabat and Camille Trinidad or popularly known as 'JaMill.'

Camille Trinidad and Jayzam Manabat, known as the vlogger couple JaMill, have officially quit YouTube today for the sake of their relationship.

Trinidad announced that JaMill has signed off from vlogging through a series of Twitter posts today, Aug. 19.

“JaMill is now signing off. [But Jayzam and] Camille is [infinity],” she told fans while thanking the video-streaming platform.

Trinidad stressed that the deletion of the YouTube channel was not a gimmick, explaining that she and Manabat have decided to focus on their relationship.

“Di naman natin mape-please lahat ng tao na sabihing issue lang ito or what. It’s about our relationship. Mas pinili namin mas maging okay ang relationship namin,” she said, at the same time asking for the public’s respect.

(We can’t please everyone by saying this is only an issue or what. It’s about our relationship. We chose to have a better relationship rather

than anything else.)

For his part, Manabat explained that he and Trinidad just want to live a “normal” and “simple life” together privately, as seen on a video on his Facebook page.

“Gusto na namin ‘yung ganon na simpleng buhay gaya nu’ng dati. Ayaw na namin ng masyadong mataas, ang daming nakakakita sa’min,” he told fans. “Gusto namin kami na lang nakakakita sa relasyon namin.”

(We now want a simple life, just like before. We don’t want to be so high anymore, too many people are seeing us. We want our relationship to be more private.)

It was Trinidad who deleted the YouTube account, but Manabat said it was their way to prove to themselves that their relationship could go on outside vlogging.

JaMill admitted they felt sad over the memories deleted with the vlog, but hope their fans will understand that this will make for a healthier relationship. ■

Showbiz Gossip Continued from p.15

Jinkee writes an emotional letter to husband Manny Pacquiao after defeat to Ugas in Las Vegas



Sen. Manny Pacquiao and wife Jinkee

Jinkee Pacquiao wrote an emotional letter to her husband Sen. Manny Pacquiao after his defeat to Cuban boxer Yordenis Ugas in Las Vegas, Nevada last Saturday night (Sunday morning Manila time).

On Instagram Aug. 22 Jinkee wrote:

“To my dear husband Manny

“Words cannot express how proud I am of the Man you are. I’m proud to be your wife. You mean the world to me and all our children. We love you so much.

“We, your family, have seen how much you have toiled, sacrificed and given of yourself blood sweat and tears since the beginning when you dreamed of becoming world champion.

“You never think of yourself and not afraid to risk your life on the ring time and time again because you love to make the people happy. You have achieved by the Grace of God far more than you ever imagined. Yet, you never stop working to be your best.

“Over the years we have become even more proud to be by your side as you inspire us to be kind, giving and helpful to all. More

than your record feats in Boxing, it is your love for God, dedication to the Word, and desire to share Jesus to every person you meet that makes us admire you more. Always here for you, my babe!



“Win or lose on the ring You are Forever the Champion of our hearts. To all Our kababayans all over the world, thank you for loving Manny . He loves you more than you know.

“To You LORD, we continue to Offer our lives.

“To God be all the glory!” ■

Matteo Guidicelli hints at possible Sarah Geronimo pregnancy



Sarah Geronimo and Matteo Guidicelli planting a tree during their recent honeymoon.

Actor Matteo Guidicelli stirred speculations that his wife Sarah Geronimo might be pregnant following a cryptic post on social media.

G??” @wilvie_11 commented. “Is this another endorsement from Nissan or just a hidden message to your caption?” @mitchnepacina_salalila wrote.



In his Instagram account, Matteo posted that he’s thinking of buying a bigger car for his family.

“I’m thinking of getting a new family SUV,” Matteo wrote.

One of his photos showed him playing hopscotch or piko.

Instagram users commented that Sarah might be expecting and Matteo might be hinting at playing with their baby soon.

“Omgee! Preggy na si Sarah

“Family means a baby on the way...” @shappopay commented.

Last July, a video of Sarah blowing the candles in her birthday cake was posted online. Matteo was watching from the side and reminded Sarah to wish for “babies.”

“Babies! Babies, ha?” he said.

Sarah and Matteo celebrated their first wedding anniversary last February. ■

Kim and Jerald on the advantages of real-life couples doing a movie



Jerald Napoles and Kim Molina

While there are some show biz couples who are wary of being paired together for a project, the opposite is true for Kim Molina and Jerald Napoles, who have starred in two movies this year. “I didn’t have second thoughts. It’s always nice to work with your partner in real life. I enjoy working with her, not just because she’s my girlfriend, but because she’s a talented actress,” Jerald told the Inquirer in a recent Zoom interview for their latest film, “Ikaw at Ako at ang Ending.”

“I feel confident that, whatever they give us, we will be able to deliver to the best of our abilities,” he added.

The first time Jerald and Kim worked with each other was in the musical play “Rak of Aegis” in 2014. Last June, they top-billed the comedy drama “Ang Babaeng Walang Pakiramdam,” their debut film as a screen tandem. “I have been working with him for quite some time, so I know his capabilities, talents and what he can offer. I’m always excited working with brilliant actors like Je, whom I learn a lot from. I started out in this business as a singer, so I still consider myself a newbie actress.”

In “Ikaw at Ako,” which is now available for streaming on Viva Entertainment’s one platform Vivamax, Jerald plays Martin, a hit man on the run who ends up hiding at a beach resort in Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte. There he meets Mylene (Kim), a prostitute running away from her past and searching for someone who will give her genuine and unconditional love.

The end is near

Directed by Irene Villamor, the action-drama film is set in precarious and uncertain times that have people fearing that the end is near. “The two characters believe that they can survive on their own. But then they fall for each other. They wonder how can they love each other when you feel like the world is ending anyway,” she said.

One advantage of doing a movie with your real-life boyfriend, Kim said, is that there’s no more ice to break. She and Jerald are comfortable with each other from the get-go, allowing them to focus on their respective characters or scenes—especially those that require them to be intimate.

“There’s no more awkwardness, so I don’t have to worry about building rapport anymore. And that means we get to work faster, too,” Kim pointed out. “If Je weren’t my partner, I wouldn’t have been comfortable with some of the blockings we needed to do for this movie. In my past projects, with other actors, the director had to be more careful.”

But while Kim, Jerald and Irene are close friends and goof around on the set when the cameras aren’t rolling, they made sure to keep things professional when it was time for work. “Direk Irene was respectful. Even if we’re friends, she would talk to me and ask for my permission when she wants to use certain camera angles when shooting intimate scenes,” Kim related. “Afterwards, she would let us see the footage, ask for our thoughts, or if we’re OK with it.”

Action scenes

They also enjoyed filming the action scenes, which was a first for the director. “We were excited because Direk Irene has always dreamed of doing action. Just because she’s a woman doesn’t mean she can’t do that genre. So we’re very proud of what we did here,” Kim said.

“Doing action isn’t something new for me,” Jerald said, “but I have always enjoyed it because there’s a sense of choreography to the genre.”

Another plus to Kim and Jerald’s professional dynamics is that they can assess each other’s work without taking it personally—something they have grown accustomed to in theater. “We don’t necessarily criticize each other; we try to understand each other’s thought process in the scenes.

It’s not personal. We were used to it from the theater, where we do company calls and get notes about our performances,” Jerald said. “We can’t settle for anything less.”

With the recent work they have done, Jerald and Kim would like to believe that they have managed to prove to people that their acting talents aren’t just for comedy. “The best thing about our projects, I feel, is that we were able to give good vibes and make our audience happy while humanizing our characters,” he said.

“Aside from comedy or romantic comedy, ‘dramedy’ is a genre we want to pursue. We want to make people laugh, pero pipigain namin sila sa dulo. And now they get to see us doing serious action and drama,” Kim said. ■

CLEANERS NEEDED
Daytime or evening (after 6pm)
office cleaning 5 days per week
(Monday to Friday)
Car required, \$19 per hour. Call
Michael 514 624-3437

From Page 7 Trudeau calls

above those of Canadians who are once again facing another wave of COVID-19 cases, all sides have already been engaging in pseudo-electioneering all summer long.

Given the ongoing pandemic, parties have had to map out public health parameters in an effort to safely crisscross the country pitching themselves, their candidates, and their platforms. This has included various elements of protections depending on each campaign, including mandatory vaccination and regular rapid testing.

O'TOOLE CAMPAIGN

Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole is participating in virtual-only events in Ottawa for the first day of his campaign.

Responding to the election trigger, O'Toole said Canadians shouldn't have to risk the gains they've made over the last year and a half for "political games."

"I hope that [Justin Trudeau's] decision doesn't cost Canadians too dearly. My wife Rebecca and I had COVID-19, we know the fears and uncertainties that are out there. But let's be clear, this election is not about next week, next month, or even next year, it's about the next four years," he said.

O'Toole positioned himself as the leader with a "fresh" approach.

"I'm going to be presenting Canada's recovery plan. I have a track record of bringing people together from my time in the military, my time in the private sector as a volunteer. I'm in this for my children and your children," he said.

He said there are only two options on the ballot for Canadians to choose from this election: "Canada's Conservatives or more of the same from the Liberals and the other parties."

Making use of the party's studio setup in Ottawa, the leader who his running his first federal race at the helm of his party, has two scheduled "telephone townhalls" with supporters in Quebec and British Columbia.

The first was hosted by Saint Laurent candidate Richard Serour and included voter call-ins.

BLANCHET CAMPAIGN

Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-Francois Blanchet meanwhile was in Montreal, wishing his candidates a successful campaign but also underlining that an election is "very irresponsible" amid the pandemic.

"Until recently, the prime minister was swearing that no, everything he was doing was not with the perspective of an election and that his only objective was to protect the health of Canadians. He's suddenly realized in August, two months after Parliament was in recess that suddenly it's dysfunctional," he said, speaking to supporters in French.

SINGH CAMPAIGN

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh also started his campaign in Montreal and later attended a Pride event.

He used the moment to present the NDP as the most progressive option for voters, namely as it relates to the country's post-pandemic recovery.

"We are the only party saying very clearly that there's a third option,

which is to make the ultra-rich pay their fair share...and invest that into health care and to housing and to justice for Indigenous people," he said.

He also accused Trudeau of using the election to gain more power, and walking away from important issues like climate change.

"He wants a majority, but why does he want a majority? It's certainly not because he wants to help more people, or help people more, it's only because he wants to help people less and people end up paying the price. The reality is that he's fed up with New Democrats pushing him to deliver more help to more people," he said. "It's clear that in calling this election he's walking away from a lot of things that could be done."

PAUL CAMPAIGN

Green Party Leader Annamie Paul launched her campaign from her coveted riding of Toronto Centre with a rally, "mainstreeting," and a virtual evening launch party with candidates.

She said she's approaching this election the same way she approached the party's leadership campaign.

"With hope, with humility, with humour... and most of all, from start to finish, I hope with a great deal of honesty and honour and I extend the same invitation to all Canadians," she said. "To every person that is ready to be daring, to every person that is ready to strike out in that new direction toward a better future, I say 'welcome', I say 'now is the time,' and I say, 'join us.'"

Paul will spend most of the 36-day campaign in her riding, where she is trying for a third time to win the seat and ultimately make her way to Parliament Hill.

In the 2019 federal election, voters reduced the 2015 Liberal majority to a minority and now Trudeau is ready to gamble that his handling of the pandemic—and the unprecedented financial support doled out—will propel his party back to majority territory.

However, polling data issued Friday by Nanos Research showed Liberal support dropping out of majority territory after the election call was reported.

While the next fixed election date isn't until October 2023, minority governments rarely last the full four years between elections.

With Elections Canada embarking on a series of new public health measures to ensure that the vote is conducted safely amid a fourth wave, the price tag for the election is estimated to be \$610 million.

Canada's Chief Electoral Officer Stephane Perrault has previously spoken favourably about of having a longer writ period—campaigns can be up to 50 days in length under current rules—to allow Elections Canada to have a longer runway to get all elements of a national election in place. Nevertheless, the agency says it will be ready to safely conduct a vote that's expected to include much more uptake in mail-in ballots.

After a last-minute crunch to pass as many key bills as possible before the House of Commons and Senate adjourned in June given the rampant speculation of a summer election call, all outstanding business in

both chambers has died with the dissolution of Parliament, leaving it up to the next government to restart a legislative agenda.

During the process of dissolving a Parliament there are three main steps: dismissing the senators and members; calling the next Parliament and ordering the writs to be issued; and setting the date for when Parliament will next meet after the writs are returned with the results.

Writs are written orders instructing the returning officer in each of the 338 federal ridings to hold an election to select a member of Parliament.

The government, and the bureaucracy in each federal department and agency, will now enter a "caretaker" mode in which major decisions are limited.

Heading into the campaign, here's the current seat breakdown in the House of Commons:

Liberal: 155

Conservative: 119

Bloc Québécois: 32

NDP: 24

Independent: 5

Green Party: 2

A party needs to win 170 seats for a majority government.

With files from CTV News' Sarah Turnbull

From Page 5 Montreal 2024

imposed by the city center (some boroughs were added). And despite the acrobatics that were necessary to balance the figures in times of pandemic, the City still presented in November 2020 a balanced budget of 6.17 billion for the current year.

In three years, according to these forecasts, the city's budget should reach just under \$7.1 billion. That's almost a \$900 million spending increase over three years, up 14.6% from this year's budget.

On the other hand, during the same period, the financial picture of the City forecasts higher revenues of barely \$120 million for 2024, an increase of less than 2% compared to this year. According to these forecasts, the City's currently foreseeable revenues would even decline slightly in 2023. The calculation of municipal tax revenues was established on the assumption of an annual increase equal to inflation of about 2%.

A real hole of \$311 million

The figures above show a hypothetical "deficit" of \$779 million in 2024 between the planned expenditures and the anticipated revenues by the City. Although this portrait remains largely theoretical and is called upon to be improved and adapted to the priorities of the moment, it shows a tendency to increase expenditure of almost 5% per year, on average, and the apparent absence of new sources of income to finance it.

This is the case for the 2022 municipal budget, already in preparation, where there is currently a real "hole" of \$311 million. City Manager Serge Lamontagne recalled that a shortfall of such an amount, at this stage of the preparation of a budget, is not uncommon, "but that we still always manage to present a balanced budget".

Neither the officials present nor the chairman of the executive committee wanted to comment on the administration's intentions on the eve of the municipal poll.

The potential "strategies" for balancing the budget, presented in the City's document, remain rather vague: review activities, change the administration's investment priorities or reduce spending, for example.

The negotiation of possible agreements with higher levels of government, in particular for the financing of public transport, an increase in property taxes, the implementation of eco-tax measures to promote the ecological transition's goals and revenues higher than expected from property transfer taxes are among the avenues considered to increase the City's revenues.

Budgets and revenues in 2021–2024

According to the City of Montreal, the current 2021 budget is of \$6,166,498,700. The anticipated budgets of 2022, 2023 and 2024 are \$6,516,448,000, \$6,728,604,700 and \$7,065,145,400 respectively.

2021's actual revenue is of \$6,166,498,700. The anticipated revenue for 2022, 2023 and 2024 is of \$6,205,019,000, \$6,183,741,100 and \$6,285,923,000 respectively.

From Page 5 Biden owns

Afghan army whom they had funded, trained and armed to the teeth for 20 years just gave up without a fight. The result was not surprising but still shocking. The Taliban occupied the entire country effortlessly in just a few days.

World historians have a lot of sympathy for the people of Afghanistan, which for centuries carried the dubious name "graveyard of empires." Most generations of Afghans never saw their country at peace. It was always at war, and always occupied and oppressed.

Although the Afghan crisis is now Biden's problem, at least six past US presidents share part of the blame. A brief historical perspective may help in understanding how we came to this. Unbeknownst to many, both Saddam Hussain of Iraq and Osama Bin Ladin of Al-Qaeda were original creations of the U.S. Incredible but true. Saddam and Iraq were supported and supplied with massive military equipment by the U.S. during the Iraq-Iran War. Before that, the US under Ronald Reagan supported Bin Ladin and the Afghanwarlords against the occupying Russians. Then they ended up turning against America, biting the hands that fed them. Such is the history of American foreign policy that always relied on the myth of military supremacy which in the end is no match against the enemies' enormous and fanatical will to fight. The US should have learned from the painful lesson of South Vietnam that folded against the inferior military but ferocious fighting spirit of the North Vietnamese. In retrospect in Afghanistan, President Obama, while celebrating the US victory against the Taliban and the eventual elimination of Osama Bin Ladin, should have started the withdrawal process from the God-forsaken country 10 years ago instead of perpetuating the nation



building strategy of his predecessors. The trillions of dollars wasted could have been better spent re-building America.

Looking back a few decades, Ronald Reagan funded the Mujahideen “holy warriors” in their fight against the Russians. After the Russians were defeated and driven away, the US government under George H. Bush allowed the Taliban to take power. Bill Clinton adopted an appeasement strategy and did not do anything to stop the Taliban from their oppressive rule and extreme implementation of Islamic laws that were detrimental to women and children. The Taliban at the same time harbored the Al-Qaeda who exported terror to the US mainland. George W. Bush started the 20-year U.S.

war in Afghanistan by invading the country after 9/11 and driving away the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. What followed was 20 years of civil war and nation building that cost the U.S. billions of dollars every month, propping up corrupt regimes and building a huge military machine to keep the Taliban at bay, invoking memories of South Vietnam and pre- Castro Cuba. After Osama Bin Ladin was killed by US special forces 10 years ago, Barack Obama chose to stay in Afghanistan and fight the Taliban, and in fact ramped up the US presence with troop deployments of more than 100,000 at its peak, continuing the nation building, and coddling of corrupt and ineffective leaders. Biden claims that he was

consistently and vocally against the US’ policy of nation-building. Then came the infamous “capitulation meetings” in 2019 and again in November of 2020 between the Trump administration and the terrorist organization (deliberately excluding from the negotiations the inept but legitimately-elected Afghan government whom they sold out and demoralized). Trump even wanted to invite the Taliban leader to Camp David in the U.S. but his advisers objected. While giving undeserved legitimacy to the murderous Taliban at the meeting at Doha, Trump and then State Secretary Pompeo promised the complete withdrawal of the US troops by end of March 2021 and agreed to release 5,000 Taliban and Al-Qaeda prisoners who quickly re-joined the Taliban army. What concessions did Trump and Pompeo extract from the Taliban in return? Practically nothing. The prospects of a Taliban re-invasion of Afghanistan that eventually ensued was not even discussed.

So, since Biden has always been against nation-building in Afghanistan, strongly going against his boss Obama 10 years ago, he made his unfortunate choice of honoring the Trump’s agreement to withdraw in 2021 instead of keeping the already minimal 3,000 US forces in place and preserving some stability and preventing escalation of hostilities. Biden’s mistake was underestimating the Taliban, ignoring the CIA’s warning, and his misplaced confidence in the US-built and funded Afghan security forces. Only last month

he said: “How can an insurgent force of 70,000 defeat a well-trained and well-equipped Afghan army of more than 300,000?”

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Undoubtedly, Biden now owns the Afghan problem, including the refugee humanitarian crisis that could soon follow. But historians will agree that his six predecessors from both parties were also to blame. All the way back to Reagan who armed the warlords against Russia, to Bush Sr. and Clinton who did nothing about the ruthless reign of the Taliban, to George W. Bush who ordered the invasion and started the nation building process, to Obama for ramping up the military occupation to more than 100,000 US troops only to draw down later as the enemy became stronger, and finally to Trump who essentially gave the country back to the Taliban last year by all accounts unconditionally.

Understandably, the truth is often hard to accept for some who are mainly focused on current events and what they see on CNN. Nation building in a devastated country and re-molding it according to western values and ideology might have been successful in the Philippines, Japan and Germany after World War II, and South Korea after the Korean War. But nation building in current times and in countries that are deeply entrenched in medieval ideology will not work and can be self-defeating. (Reactions to this article may be sent to gusmercadotx@gmail.com)

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Autorisé par l'agent officiel de / Authorized by the official agent of: Steven Guilbeault, Emmanuella Lambropoulos, Sameer Zuberi, Annie Koutrakis, Anthony Housefather, Justin Trudeau.

Lahat tayo ay nais malaman ang higit pa tungkol sa COVID-19 na pagbabakuna



BAKIT DAPAT AKONG MAGPABAKUNA?

Pumoprotekta ito laban sa COVID-19 at tutulong sa iyo na makaiwas sa pagkakasakit. Kahit na maraming tao ang gumagaling nang hindi ginagamot, ang ilan ay maaaring mamatay dahil sa COVID-19 o makaranas ng mga problema sa puso o baga tulad ng pneumonia. Maaari ring maapektuhan ang nervous system.

Ituloy natin ang pagprotektang sa ating mga sarili!

Sa pagdating ng mga buwan, hangga't hindi pa nababakunahan ang karamihan ng populasyon, mananatili ang COVID-19.



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