



Please note that the QCGN office will be closed for the holidays from 5 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 16 and will be back in the office on Tuesday, Jan. 3.

President's Message

By James Shea
QCGN President

Last week the QCGN was in Ottawa to participate in the final roundtable for the **Cross-Canada Official Languages Consultations** hosted by the **Minister of Canadian Heritage Mélanie Joly** and her **Parliamentary Secretary Randy Boissonnault**. It was great to see a strong delegation of our member organizations and stakeholders at the table defending the interests of our community of communities from Quebec.

Participants in the forum and the consultations are seeking to bolster the vitality of Official Language Minority Communities, more promotion of official languages and more concrete measures for boosting bilingual and second-language learning across the country. The federal government's strategy on official languages is essential to the vitality of our minority community and we are looking forward to increased support for our minority communities in the next action plan. (See full story below.)



House Committee Report on Official Languages

The next action plan was also the subject of a recently released report from the **House Standing Committee on Official Languages**. Entitled **Toward a New Action Plan for Official Languages**

and Building Momentum for Immigration in Francophone Minority Communities, the report includes a number of excellent recommendations with regards to transparency, accountability, and the involvement of official language minority communities in the Government of Canada's official languages strategy. However, the QCGN was somewhat concerned about a recommendation that could let federal institutions off the hook in areas that require intergovernmental cooperation because of the need to "respect Quebec's prerogatives." Good relationships between the federal and provincial government are key to supporting official language communities and we are disappointed our community was somewhat sidelined by that recommendation. To read the report click [here](#). For more on the QCGN's reaction read our press release [here](#).

Moving Closer to Provincial Liaison for English-speaking Community

Speaking of the Government of Quebec, the media have been pressuring **Premier Philippe Couillard** on what he plans to do to better liaise with the English-speaking community since the QCGN met with him in Quebec City in early November. While reporters seem stuck on the notion of what they have dubbed a "Minister for Anglo Affairs," the QCGN is most concerned about having a door in Quebec City to knock on to discuss the concerns of Quebec's English-speaking community at a policy, not a political level "so the government doesn't come up with something (policies, bills, regulations) that doesn't respect our communities' histories and needs," **QCGN vice-president Geoffrey Chambers** explained to Global Montreal. Premier Couillard said that when he met with the QCGN, he was asked to undertake specific action and that he committed to doing so. He also told reporters that he would like to have someone on his staff that would act as a contact person for the English community rather than having us "knock at all the doors in order to get results." When pressed on the issue of a minister, Couillard replied, "I'd rather have a broad engagement of my government, including in my staff, towards issues that are important for the English-speaking community." He also said that "a lot of people are interested, interestingly enough, to play that role." The Premier also said "rather than Anglophones, I'd rather say English-speaking Quebecers which for me reflects the reality much better and in a much more positive way. The QCGN could not agree more on his choice of designations for our community that we consider far more inclusive and reflective of the individuals we serve. Click on [The Gazette](#), [Global Montreal](#), and [CTV](#) to see the coverage.

QCGN Holidays Open House



Despite the inclement weather last Monday, about three dozen members and stakeholders of the QCGN were on hand for our staff's Third Annual Holiday Breakfast and Open House. While I was unable to attend, our guests included **Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre**, **Pierrefonds-Roxboro Borough Mayor Dimitrios (Jim) Beis** and **D'Arcy-McGee MNA David Birnbaum**. Our staff-led holiday tradition which is coupled with a

fundraising activity to support one of our member organizations, collected more than \$150 to support the activities of **Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre**. More donations were made online by guests who had to send their regrets because of the weather or because they were under the weather. If you want to show your support for Tyndale St. Georges, you can donate online at the following [link](#).

Quebec Invests in English-speaking Youth

While staff served breakfast at the QCGN office, our **Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge** was in Quebec City with **Bishop University's Principal Michael Goldbloom**, Bishop's **Dean of Education Marie-Josée Berger** and representatives from the **Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)** for the unveiling of the provincial government's 2016-2021 youth

strategy. The five-year \$200-million plan, announced by **Premier Philippe Couillard** and his **Secretary for Youth Karine Vallières**, includes measures to help young English-speaking Quebecers. Among our projects that received the green light was a civic leadership institute in collaboration with Bishop's University in Lennoxville. (Read our joint press release with Bishop's [here](#)).

Additional funds, distributed via CHSSN, will support a pilot project that would foster links between our youth and the employability services offered by **Carrefours jeunesse-**

emploi (CJE) and help the government-run youth employment centres better serve English-speaking youth. I congratulated CHSSN, **Townshippers' Association**, and the **Committee for Anglophone Social Action** (CASA) for their successful pitch to the Secrétariat à la jeunesse du Québec and making this project possible. More details on the government's youth strategy can be found by clicking [here](#).



Treasury Board Reviewing Official Languages Regulations



In mid-November, I was on hand with **Treasury Board President Scott Brison** and **Canadian Heritage Minister Mélanie Joly** for an announcement that the federal government will undertake a review of the regulations pertaining to the Official Languages Act which deal with communicating to the public. The QCGN was pleased to be invited to attend the announcement and welcomes an open process that ensures the regulatory framework supporting our Official Languages

Act remains relevant, and flexible while preserving continuity of the federal government's duty towards the linguistic rights of Canadians. Read our press release [here](#). Click [here](#) to read our opinion piece on this issue that was published in **The Hill Times**.

Early Bird Registration Open for Metropolis Montreal 2017

Registrations are now open for the **National Metropolis Conference** that will be held in Montreal from March 16-18, 2017, under the theme **Looking Forward: Migration and Mobility in 2017 and Beyond**.

Metropolis Montreal 2017, which is being organized and hosted by the **Association for Canadian Studies** (ACS), is expected to be the biggest, best and most important Metropolis conference to date, attracting delegates from every part of Canada and every sector of society. The National Metropolis Conference is an annual forum for researchers, policy makers, representatives from community and settlement organizations to get together to share and exchange knowledge and experience in the field of immigration and settlement. The 2017 National Metropolis Conference will focus on future immigration trends and policies and the challenges and opportunities that they create for Canadian society. The conference will include plenary panels with distinguished speakers and workshop and roundtable sessions on a wide variety of topics related to immigration and diversity. Participating this year will be federal and provincial immigration ministers **John McCallum** and **Kathleen Weil** as well as **Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre**. For details about Metropolis click [here](#). To register click [here](#). (Program will be posted on the site on Tuesday.)



Pre-forum to Focus on English-speaking Community

The QCGN is working with ACS and **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada** (IRCC) to prepare a pre-conference on March 15 that will focus on the issues of newcomers and Quebec's English-speaking communities. Details on that part of the event will be available in early January.

MINORITY COMMUNITIES SEEKING MORE SUPPORT FROM NEXT ACTION PLAN



By Rita Legault
QCGN Director of Communications

Canada-wide consultations on official languages wrapped up last week in Ottawa as the **Minister of Canadian Heritage Mélanie Joly** and her **Parliamentary Secretary Randy Boissonnault** met with representatives of key organizations from the English-speaking communities of Quebec and francophone minority communities as well as organizations promoting linguistic duality, bilingualism, and second-language learning.

“French and English are at the heart of our identity,” commented Joly as she launched national roundtable discussions seeking concrete measures on how to rally all Canadians to the cause.

Participants in the final one-day forum on Dec. 8, including three dozen representatives from English-language organizations in Quebec, were invited to share their concerns and propose solutions. Many highlighted the issue of stable, predictable and flexible funding to strengthen the capacity of organizations supporting the vitality of official language minority communities. This issue came up often during consultations across the country.

The Cross-Canada Official Languages Consultations, which ran from June to December, included a series of 22 roundtables held in the country’s main regions including Sherbrooke, Quebec City and Montreal. Chaired by Joly or Boissonnault, more than 370 participants and more than 130 observers participated in the roundtables.

Not surprisingly, the issue of funding for minority language organizations has largely taken centre stage. By the end of the consultations, there was a clear expectation that the current envelope of \$1.1 billion over five years be expanded.

“This is important because it has been 10 years since there has been no increase,” commented Boissonault during the hearings. “But for any request for additional funding we must provide a solid case and these consultations were important to give us arguments to put on the table.”

Bringing the two major linguistic communities closer together was among the most often repeated themes during the roundtables, including the final one in Ottawa. Participants suggested that the government should promote both official languages as a Canadian value that is rooted in Canada’s identity and history. They also suggested that more efforts be made to promote the benefits of bilingualism as an economic and cultural asset for individuals and society as a whole.

Also suggested was the creation of more opportunities for exchanges and networking between English- and French-speaking Canadians; more second-language learning resources to meet growing demand; and the creation of opportunities to practice one’s second official language outside of school. Supporting the creation and dissemination of minority-language cultural content to the majority-language public was also a common suggestion.

Over and above the important issue of adequate and stable funding, English- and French-language groups prioritized further investments in education and social infrastructure, including schools, school daycares, community and cultural centres and post-secondary institutions. These investments should consider the remoteness, distance and northern context of some communities.

Issues specific to the English-speaking communities of Quebec included building bridges with the Quebec government and working to achieve recognition of the specific realities of English-speaking communities; supporting employability and improving access to employment for young people in these communities — particularly in the regions, so that fewer of them leave; providing greater support for organizations supporting the integration of newcomers for whom English is their first official language spoken; as well as further support for economic development, entrepreneurship and skills recognition.

Other issues discussed included the revitalization of Indigenous languages, the state of the French language in Quebec and linguistic peace; linguistic insecurity, particularly among young people, and community diversity, multiculturalism and plurilingualism.

More than 6,000 Canadians completed an online questionnaire — three times more than the previous consultation on official languages. Of that, more than 1,800 were from Quebec. Half of that number identified themselves as English-speaking and 11 per cent said they were bilingual.

Preliminary results of the online questionnaires indicate that 53 per cent of respondents backed better support for Official Language Minority Communities; 44 per cent supported promotion of official languages as languages for integrating Canadians and new arrivals of diverse backgrounds; and 39 per cent said there should be more ambitious targets and more concrete measures for boosting the bilingualism rate throughout the country.

Respondents noted the advantages of being bilingual were 1) Better job prospects (66 per cent); 2) A greater appreciation and understanding of the other’s culture (42 per cent); and 3) Easier communication among us (35 per cent).

On the best ways to promote second official-language learning, respondents agreed with making regular school second-language programs more effective (57 per cent); supporting learning initiatives in schools, from primary through university levels (43 per cent); and increasing access to second-language immersion programs (40 per cent).

On the best ways to promote the vitality of official-language minority communities, respondents listed 1) Education in the minority language, from early childhood through post-secondary level (62 per cent); 2) Access to quality public services in the language of one’s choice (58 per cent); and 3) Access to quality federal services in the language of one’s choice (43 per cent).

Additionally, more than 90 briefs and other correspondence were submitted by representative and community organizations, individuals, experts and institutions. For preliminary results from the Official Languages consultation, click [here](#). For a list of our community’s expectations for the next action plan on official languages, click [here](#). For more information about the consultations, click [here](#).

GOLDBLOOM AWARD WINNER FATHER JOHN WALSH PUBLISHES AUTOBIOGRAPHY



By Alan Hustak

Father John Walsh, the former pastor of Saint John Brebeuf parish in LaSalle marks the 50th anniversary of his ordination with the launch of his forthright autobiography, *God is Calling, Don't Leave him on Hold*.

Perhaps best known as the CJAD talk show host who once served as an Episcopal Vicar of Saint Jean-Longueuil, he continues an active social ministry although he retired five years ago.

"The church in which I minister today is not the same church that it was then and I am not the same person or the same priest," he writes in his memoirs. "There have been times over the past five decades when I wondered why I remained in the priesthood."

Walsh, who admits to "disappointments" but "no regrets," chronicles his progressive ministry over the past 50 years. The book

traces his childhood growing up in the Villeray district of Montreal, talks about his decision to go into the priesthood, and details the subsequent studies in Rome and in Israel that shaped his tolerant views.

As a CJAD talk show host he built a faithful listening audience and befriended Jews and Muslims alike with his practical approach to ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue. "Ministry for me has always been a question of multi-tasking, of taking risks. Risk is everywhere," he writes. "Throughout my ministry the call to serve has meant attempting to do unexpected things. Consequently I have never had only one ministry."

Walsh has lived through five papacies, celebrated Eucharist at the Vatican with pontiff Saint John Paul II, and tells how each of the popes, beginning with John XXIII, have influenced, inspired and at times frustrated his ministry.

The book is a battle cry for the church to become subversive and to build itself up from the bottom instead of following the top-down hierarchal approach.

"There is a spiritual revolution going on when we realize that the Word of God is subversive, the message of Jesus is subversive, and now as the People of God, the Roman Catholic Church, is becoming subversive," he says.

God's message is there in scripture, he says, but few care to listen.

"It is a book that is at once lyrical and meditative, comical and philosophical," says Peter Stockland, editor of *Convivum Magazine*. "It is the story of a life lived in eyes open, totally engaged love of Christ's church. It is in all its layers, Father John Walsh."

Copies of the book are on sale at the author's discount for \$20 through the office of QCGN or for \$24.95 at Paragraphe books on McGill College Avenue.

Reprinted with permission from Le Metropolitan

PETER SCHIEFKE TO CLOSE YOUNG QUEBECERS LEADING THE WAY FORUM



By Lisanne Gamelin
QCGN Youth Coordinator

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's **Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Peter Schiefke** will be on hand for the closing ceremony of the third and final **Young Quebecers Leading the Way** forum on Sunday, March 12 in Gatineau.

Entitled *A Plan for the Future: Quebec Youth and Canada in 2067*, the third year of this bilingual project will provide dozens of youth from across the province with an opportunity to offer their views on the significance of youth engagement in shaping the future of their country.

When Schiefke came to our second annual forum at Montreal's Concordia University last spring, he expressed an interest in coming back to meet with youth and he kept his word. Schiefke will be part of a lineup of special guests, including provincial and federal politicians, who will be on hand to engage with youth.

Our six regional youth coordinators — some of whom are finishing their fall semester — have begun recruiting delegations from their regions and preparing for their first of three regional workshops that will take place on Jan. 25 from 6 to 9 p.m. Our regional coordinators are Anthony Beer, Gaspésie; Citlalli Elizalde, Outaouais; Kelly Lacroix, Abitibi-Témiscamingue; Alice Lam, Greater Montreal area; Guillaume Lévesque, Eastern Townships; and Olivier Mutegetsi, provincial capital region.

Youth can register **online** and we will put you in contact with your regional coordinator. Act now because some of our delegations are already close to capacity.

The project is open to English- and French-speaking youth between the ages of 15 and 25. Participation requires the attendance of three regional workshops on Jan. 25, Feb. 15, and March 22 from 6 to 9 p.m. (dates and times may vary depending on region) as well as our third annual provincial youth forum that will be held in Gatineau from March 10 to 12, 2017.

Although attending the three workshops is free, a \$25 fee for transportation and accommodation will apply this year for attendees from outside the Gatineau area.

Participants must be between the ages of 15 and 25 and be a Canadian citizen.

More details on the Young Quebecers Leading the Way website by clicking **here**. For additional information, please contact **Lisanne Gamelin** at lisanne.gamelin@qcgnc.ca.

GASPESIAN YOUTH LOOK TO FUTURE AT YOUTH 4 ACTION SUMMIT



Submitted by the Committee for Anglophone Social Action

Seventy-two young leaders from the English-speaking community gathered at the **Youth 4 Action Summit** in Paspébiac to help shape the future of the region.

Carried out by **Committee for Anglophone Social Action** (CASA) and funded by the **Department of Canadian Heritage** and the **Sociétés d'aide au développement des collectivités** (SADC), the project has been ongoing for the last 18 months.

During this time, project coordinators Kathy Gallon and Shannon Marsh met with youth in each MRC to hold roundtable discussions and gather information on the five main topics that affect youth in the region — education, employment, community life, bilingualism and identity and belonging. The summit was the culmination of this work.

Designed by young people, for young people, the purpose of the evening was to allow 18 to 35-year-olds to speak up on the issues they cared about by sharing ideas, developing solutions, and engaging in open discussions.

Although priorities differed in each MRC, participants came together to discuss concrete ways for the community to move forward.

CEDEC was a key partner in the event and CEDEC Youth Start-Up Animator, Lori Albert, spoke on the importance of entrepreneurship, including how to deliver an elevator pitch. Many of the participants' ideas for start-ups were validated by Albert, who felt that several ideas were “doable.”

“Change is possible, and it is only by working together that we can attain a better future for everyone,” commented participant Justin Flowers. “Last night we proved it was possible, now let's continue to move forward in unity and hope.”

“Great job on the event tonight, this felt like a breath of fresh air,” added Dean Boudreau, commenting that there were “lots of great ideas from the youth and the older people. I would love to see more communities do this; it's definitely an idea worth sharing.”

Project coordinator Kathy Gallon was overwhelmed with the participation rate, quality of discussions and the positive feedback from participants — not only at the summit but at all of the meetings held throughout the region. “The sense of pride in being an English-speaking Gaspesian was, and is, apparent,” she said.

CASA will now begin work with these young leaders and community partners to create an action plan based entirely on the solutions and ideas that these young leaders have put forward.

GRAND DÉFI CONTEST OPEN TO ENGLISH-SPEAKING STUDENTS FROM GASPÉ AND MAGGIES

Submitted by the Committee for Anglophone Social Action

Entries are now open for the youth entrepreneurship contest **Le Grand Défi : Bâtir ma région!** The 2016-2017 edition will enable participants from the region's English-speaking community to participate for the first time.

Students from the elementary, secondary, adult education and trade level are invited to register as soon as they have an idea for a social or entrepreneurial project which can improve their community. They then engage themselves in a project management process with the support of their local Carrefour jeunesse-emploi and an accompanying adult such as a teacher or a member of the community. More than \$40,000 will be given out as cash prizes throughout the Gaspé and Magdalen Islands. Entries will be accepted until Jan. 20, 2017.



To improve the participants' experience even more, the *Grand Défi: Bâtir ma région* team will offer them new material as of this year. A new "participant's handbook" will help guide students and their accompanying adult through the project by offering useful information and activities adapted to the students' age.

As an added perk, the activities proposed in the handbook will help make entries easier for the students wishing to participate in *Défi Osentreprendre*, a provincial-wide entrepreneurial contest which can offer even more recognition and chances to win more cash prizes.

This year, Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi de La Côte-de-Gaspé, in partnership with the **Committee for Anglophone Social Action** (CASA) and the **Eastern Shores School Board**, will take part in a pilot project to extend entries to English-speaking students in the MRC de La Côte-de-Gaspé. This partnership will enable the translation of contest materials such as the website.

Carrefour Jeunesse-emploi de La Côte-de-Gaspé will also benefit from the help of the **Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation** (CEDEC) to ensure the success of this initiative. This pilot project should lead to access region-wide for ESSB students in the 2017-2018 school year.

The contest was created to help integrate entrepreneurship in schools. Participating students carry out a project with a positive impact on their community as well as develop their entrepreneurial skills with the support of local resources. Established in 2012 in the MRC de La Côte-de-Gaspé, the contest has since been opened to students from the MRC of Rocher-Percé, of Avignon, of Bonaventure and of the Madgalen Islands.

Le Grand Défi : Bâtir ma région! is coordinated by the Carrefours jeunesse-emploi MRC La Côte-de-Gaspé, Avignon-Bonaventure and Des Îles; as well as Carrefour Jeunesse Option Emploi Rocher-Percé in partnership with René-Lévesque, des Îles, Chic-Chocs and the Eastern Shores School Boards.

It's also made possible by the support of major partners including CASA; CEDEC; Défi de l'entrepreneuriat jeunesse; Complice Persévérance scolaire Gaspésie-Les Îles; Réseau de développement social Rocher-Percé; the MRC of Avignon, Bonaventure, of the Gaspé Coast and of Rocher-Percé; Hydro-Québec; the Société d'aide au développement de la collectivité de Baie-des-Chaleurs, of the Gaspé Coast and of Rocher-Percé; the Caisses populaires Desjardins of Secteur Chaleurs, Secteur de la Côte-de-Gaspé, Centre-sud gaspésien and Littoral gaspésien; as well the

Collectif action-jeunesse Rocher-Percé and the Groupe en persévérance scolaire GPS des Îles-de-la-Madeleine.

Thank you for reading our regular newsletter. For up-to-date news about the Quebec Community Groups Network you can visit our website at www.qcgn.ca or follow us on [Facebook](#) and/or [Twitter](#).

You're receiving this newsletter because you are a member or important stakeholder of the QCGN or have signed up for our Daily Briefing or other news.

The QCGN is funded by the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage.

1819 René-Lévesque West
Suite 400
Montreal, QC H3H 2P5
info@qcgn.ca
514 868-9044

[Edit your subscription](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)