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## **QCGN/COMMUNITY LEADERS MEET WITH MINISTER WEIL**

**By Jim Shea**  
QCGN President

The QCGN was pleased to host a first major meeting between **Kathleen Weil, Quebec's Minister Responsible for Relations with English-speaking Quebecers**, and community leaders.

High on the agenda for our meeting on Nov. 6, was the creation of a Secretariat that will respond to the policy and program needs of Quebec's English-speaking community. The Secretariat will be an historic first for our community and, as we previously stated, the QCGN is very pleased that Weil, an experienced and capable minister, will be responsible for setting it up. Weil, who sat down with the QCGN's

Government Relations Committee and other QCGN leaders and stakeholders to discuss her new role, thanked our organization for its persistence in advocating for a minister or a mechanism to represent the community in the Quebec government. She also expressed her commitment to making a difference for our community. Throughout the two-hour meeting, the QCGN argued that the dialogue that leads to good policy needs to be founded on good evidence, and we discussed how the QCGN and the community can assist the new Secretariat in establishing a realistic demographic and socio-economic portrait of our community as well as its needs and priorities. Weil recognized that by their very nature, linguistic minority communities require an asymmetrical approach in Quebec. We discussed a number of priorities that we can work on together, including the longstanding need to ensure a larger presence of our community in the provincial civil service. The Minister also



allocation of material and financial resources in the short and long term. Read our [press release](#).

## QCGN Leaders to Meet with MNAs

As the QCGN works with Minister Weil on the creation of a Secretariat, next week the QCGN will be holding its fourth annual information evening for Members of the National Assembly. The event, which will take place in the Library of the National Assembly next Tuesday, aims to bring together community leaders and MNAs from all parties to have an informal discussion about the needs and priorities of Quebec's English-speaking communities.

## Premier Names Weil to Act For and With Our Community

Earlier this fall, the QCGN welcomed the nomination of **Kathleen Weil** as Quebec's **Minister Responsible for Relations with English-speaking Quebecers**. The QCGN is pleased that **Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard**, who refused to consider a minister when he was running for the Liberal leadership, has reversed his position. Couillard has acknowledged that our community does not want special treatment, but truly needs a team in place to ensure its needs and priorities are well understood by the government and most especially by the bureaucracy where our community is notoriously underrepresented. Our community has been asking for an interlocutor in government for many years and the Secretariat will be an important mechanism to get serious and sorely-needed policy input from our community. We also note that one of Minister Weil's first public events was the QCGN's annual Community Awards banquet on Oct. 26. Read the QCGN's [press release](#), [The Gazette's editorial](#) as well as reporter Phil Authier's coverage [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). Also view and listen to coverage on [CBC](#), [CTV](#), [Global](#) and [CJAD](#).

## QCGN Meets with Parliamentarians



Meanwhile in Ottawa, the QCGN hosted a cocktail for Parliamentarians in the Commonwealth Room of Centre Block in Ottawa as the new session got underway in the House of Commons on October 16. Enthusiastically attended by more than 30 Members of Parliament and

delegation that included executive committee members **Geoffrey Chambers**, **Walter Duszara** and **Eva Ludvig** as well as **Brian Rock**, President of the **Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations** (QFHSA), **Richard Tardif**, from the **Quebec Community Newspapers Association** (QCNA), and **Leslie (Laszlo) Acs** and **John Buck** from the **Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation** (CEDEC). QCGN was pleased to bring along some young community leaders including **Malcom Lewis Richmond**, runner up for our Young Quebecers Leading the Way Award; **Chelsea Craig**, President of the Young Liberals of Canada (Quebec); and **Jonathan Seifert**, from the Conservative Club of Concordia University. Also with us to explain the issues faced by our Official Language Minority Community were the Interim Commissioner of Official Languages **Ghislaine Saikaley**, Assistant Commissioner **Mary Donaghy** and Quebec Representative **David Johnston**.

Prior to the evening's event, I took advantage of our presence in Ottawa to introduce the QCGN to the newest members of the House Standing Committee on Official Languages, **Stephanie Kusie** (Calgary Midnapore), and **Alupa Clarke** (Beauport — Limoilou).

## Senators Planning Visit to Quebec

The QCGN was contacted recently by the **Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages** which is planning a visit to the English-speaking community of Quebec in the Spring. The visit, tentatively planned for March, is to do research to support their study regarding the future of the Official Languages Act. The last time the Senate Committee visited our community, Senators produced a seminal report entitled ***The Vitality of Quebec's English-Speaking Communities: From Myth To Reality***. Replete with useful recommendations, the Senators' report provided the QCGN, our organizations and our community with a wealth of evidence that has been used in our advocacy efforts with governments at all levels.

## Court Challenges Program Expert Panel Selection

Earlier this year, the Government of Canada announced the reinstatement of the **Court Challenges Program** (CCP). Since then, the **University of Ottawa** was chosen to implement and manage the program, and a selection committee was appointed to make recommendations on the composition of two independent expert panels, seven individuals on the linguistic expert panel, and seven on the equality expert panel. Last week, the **Department of Canadian Heritage** launched the ministerial appointment process to fill these 14 positions. Full details regarding this appointment opportunity are available [here](#). QCGN stakeholders are encouraged to distribute this notice throughout their networks. The QCGN is willing to consider supporting the application of qualified individuals with a proven track-record defending and enhancing the linguistic rights of English-speaking Quebecers.

## GUEST EDITORIAL

**By Guy Rodgers**  
**English-Language Arts Network**

Culture is an unpredictable, volatile business. Just ask any of the three Ministers of Culture and Communications who have held the portfolio in the past 18 months. H el ene David launched Quebec's first Cultural Policy review in 25 years, then was moved to Higher Education in the 2016 cabinet reshuffle. Luc Fortin made a valiant effort to walk the tightrope of promoting French-language culture while recognizing that English-speaking artists are also part of Quebec's culture, before being moved to the Family Ministry in October. Now the Cultural Policy dossier has been entrusted to a new face, Marie Montpetit.

The cultural policy review got off to a dubious start when invitations to participate in the process somehow failed to reach the English-speaking arts community. Warning bells tinkled when none of the briefing documents for the cultural policy review mentioned English-



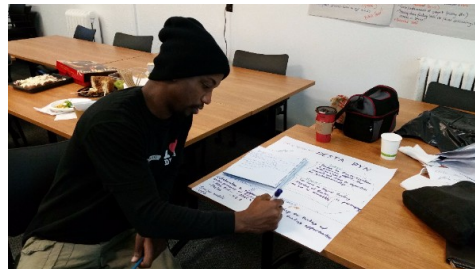
a question about how to deal with the “problem” of artists creating work in English - presumably aimed at francophones choosing to tap into the international English-speaking market. Throughout the process, Minister Fortin assured ELAN that despite administrative flaws in the review process, his government was committed to a robust policy recognizing and supporting English-speaking artists. The key point ELAN emphasised in its final presentation for the cultural policy review is that culture in Quebec will always be subject to misunderstandings, questions and suspicions, especially for artists in a minority situation. It is essential for English-speaking artists to have a place to take their questions and complaints. A designated cultural

ombudsman would go a long way toward eliminating an on-going feeling of marginalization shared by many English-speaking artists.

Meanwhile, the optimism surrounding CALQ’s 2016-19 **Cultural Diversity Action Plan** turned to confusion, disappointment, and anger for many culturally diverse artists and organizations when this summer’s funding results were announced. During the question period at CALQ’s annual information session for arts service organizations in October, I asked CEO Anne-Marie Jean if she was aware of negative responses to funding decisions. She replied that a Cultural Diversity Action Plan does not mean that every culturally diverse organization will be funded. Fair enough. But that doesn’t explain why award-winning culturally diverse artists and organizations were cut or not funded.

Additionally, the Quebec Drama Federation, a venerable arts service organization, has been granted one final year of reduced funding before being cut completely. How could such a drastic decision be made without asking the English theatre community if it collectively benefits from the work QDF does? CALQ has agreed to meet with QDF and PACT (Professional Association of Canadian Theatres) and ELAN to discuss the complaints. We hope these meetings will restore confidence in how CALQ’s decisions are made. And we hope that the new Cultural Policy and Action Plan will create a permanent mechanism which can address this kind of grievance quickly and directly.

## COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE TO BECOME NEXUS FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COLLABORATION



**By Jordan Black**  
**CIF Fund Coordinator**

The 10 groups whose projects were funded through the **Community Innovation Fund** found out they had more in common than they first thought when they met in early November for the kick-off meeting of the **Community of Practice on Sustainability**.

A central tenet of the \$1 million CIF initiative, the community of practice is designed to create a culture shift in the minority official language community sector by encouraging open collaboration between groups, including the sharing of resources and best practices relating



The word of the day was diversity, with the groups' target populations varying from small maritime communities to highly diverse inner-city immigrant populations and organizations from on and off the Island of Montreal. Some are well-established while others are just getting started.

During a round of ice-breakers, it came out that a surprising number of participants had been with their organizations for longer than some of the groups had even existed.

"This wide range of projects and organizations is a sign of the vast potential for social innovation to transform community organizations," commented **Beverly Caplan**, a senior adviser on the CIF project. However, many felt it might also represent a challenge in terms of finding common themes around which to unite.

Later, in a series of workshops and activities designed to allow the group to feel their way towards a common sense of purpose, participants discussed the challenges they face in their specific milieus as well as some of the success stories they've had so far. Through this exercise, it became apparent that some groups had more in common than they initially thought. For example, when one group from an isolated community mentioned fears about government programs creating perverse incentives for youth, they were met with agreement from inner-city groups who initially seemed to be in quite a different situation.

By meeting face-to-face, the hope is that CIF recipients will be able to build strong bonds of cooperation in order to leverage the overall impact of their joint endeavours to drive greater investment from the private sector, as well as to share ideas around the establishment of social enterprise and alternative revenue generation.

As one participant mentioned during a plenary session, "we're starting to see where issues we're having might overlap with some other groups, and hopefully we can find a way to work together on that." One fortuitous outcome of the community of practice would be for these groups to join forces to push for more tailored service delivery from the government to meet the specific demands of local communities.

The meeting kicked off with a word from **Sylvia Martin-Laforge**, executive sponsor for the CIF initiative. She discussed with candour the years of work that fed into the development of the CIF project.

"Seeing you all gathered here together in this room is the culmination, for me and my team, of more than three years of hard work," Martin-Laforge said, adding that, as a pilot project funded through **Employment and Social Development Canada**, various stakeholders will be watching closely to learn from the CIF model. "We need you to help us make a case for a renewal of this project to ensure that these funds keep coming into our English-speaking community, whether through the QCGN or another intermediary."

Martin-Laforge said the newly announced provincial Secretariat for Relations with English-speaking Quebecers, to be headed by Minister Kathleen Weil, signalled a turning of the tide for relations with the provincial government. "The QCGN will continue to work for renewed investment in the wider English-speaking community in Quebec from all levels of government," she said, adding that she hopes the province will agree to match any additional federal funds paid into the CIF program.

Facilitated by **Emma Legault** and **Sarah Manolson**, whose expert services were provided to the CIF by **Learn Quebec**, the meeting concluded with a round of thanks to various stakeholders and a discussion of key takeaways and lessons that will inform the design of the next meeting, to be held in March. The plan is for the community of practice to become a nexus for knowledge sharing and collaboration among various groups serving the needs of the English-speaking and other non-Francophone minority communities in Quebec.

The CIF team received outstanding support from Concordia University. Professor **Lorraine O'Donnell**, a CIF project partner, arranged a warm and inviting room for the meeting in the **School of Community and Public Affairs** and lunch was sponsored by the university

## EXCEPTIONAL QUEBEC LEADERS FÊTED AT ANNUAL QCGN BANQUET



**By Irwin Block**

Activists and supporters of Quebec's English-speaking community, including politicians from three levels of government, gathered on Oct. 26 to pay tribute to five people for their extraordinary contributions to improving the lives of community members and the broader society.

**Clifford Lincoln, Sid Stevens and Earl De La Perralie, and James Carter** are the winners of this year's Victor and Sheila Goldbloom Distinguished Community Service awards. They, and **Claudia Di Iorio**, winner of the Young Quebecers Leading the Way Award, were fêted at a banquet at Montreal's Club Saint James.

**QCGN President James Shea** praised this year's winners as "extraordinary leaders who have made exceptional contributions to our community of communities. All are devoted visionaries who have served their community and their causes."

The main award was created by the QCGN nine years ago and named for the late physician and political leader Victor Goldbloom and his wife Sheila, a social worker and tireless community volunteer. Speaking at the ceremony, Mrs. Goldbloom singled out two of the award winners for a personal connection: Jim Carter, who had been her student at McGill's School of Social Work, and Clifford Lincoln, a cabinet colleague of her husband while Robert Bourassa was premier in the late 1980s.

Goldbloom thanked all the winners for how they have helped Quebec and Canada.

**Kathleen Weil**, the newly named provincial Minister responsible for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers, said she knows first-hand "the enormous impact dedicated volunteers have on society."

Weil said the creation of a secretariat to deal with issues affecting Quebec's English-speaking community has "enormous potential" and shows the Liberal government is ready "to bolster

its future.”

**Emcee Mutsumi Takahashi** said she has enormous respect for Clifford Lincoln, and cannot forget the moment when he resigned from cabinet in 1989 over his government’s refusal to accept a Supreme Court ruling on the language of commercial signs. “I still can see him standing in the National Assembly, when he said there is no such thing as inside rights and outside rights, rights are rights are rights,” she said.

“He is a man with an unwavering sense of justice, a master in balancing the needs and aspirations of this community,” Takahashi added. “He has made and continues to make a real difference in areas such as English-language rights, the environment, education, public transit, health and social services, and the rights of the intellectually handicapped.”



In response, Lincoln expressed his love for Montreal and Quebec, adding “we are really true Canadians if we are good Quebecers, and good citizens of Montreal.”

Lincoln paid tribute to both Goldblooms, and the late Gretta Chambers, whose recent passing was marked during the awards ceremony. “They are people who crossed thresholds between one community and the other, that believe English- and French-speaking communities belong to each other. There is no way that we should divide ourselves in sterile conflicts.”

Lincoln said he hoped “the young generation will take over from us the old ones, that they will stay here ... and show that it is possible to live here, in English, defend our culture and be proud of it, and at the same time be also Québécois, Montréalais, et Canadiens.”

Sid Stevens accepted the award for himself and Sun Youth co-founder Earl De La Perralle, who built and developed the organization since its founding as a community newspaper in 1954.

“The best testimony on how effective Sun Youth is, is the number of people who return as adult volunteers,” said Takahashi. “They were once helped by Sun Youth, they now want to give back.”

Stevens thanked Sun Youth’s 1,500 volunteers and all levels of governments for their support, which he noted was a crucial element in the success of the organization.

The key to its success, he said, is “dedication, determination, pride, teamwork, and discipline” and people ready to make sacrifices to improve the lives of others.

“There are three types of people: those who watch things happen, those who are wondering what’s happening, and the people in this room who have made things happen,” he said, thanking the QCGN for the award.



James Carter, recognized for a lifetime of advocacy for improved access to health and social services in English, was credited for his “determination, vision, patience, and talent as a negotiator over many years. He has the ability to harness the talent and the dedication of



prominent leadership role.”

Carter was described as second only to lawyer Eric Maldoff in his knowledge of the legislation and various regulations and practices governing access in English to health and social services in Quebec.

Carter said his credo is “community action for social change” and that the award was a celebration of that credo. He noted that Sheila Goldbloom was an important influence in his development.

The QCGN praised Claudia Di Iorio, winner of the Young Quebecers Leading the Way Award. The QCGN noted the second-year McGill law student, was “brilliant, resilient, courageous, a young woman who has overcome so much to become a highly visible and influential advocate of safe

driving.”

Di Iorio recovered from a month-long coma and severe injuries from a car accident seven years ago at the age of 16. She noted that though traffic fatalities in Quebec have been decreasing, almost one person a day dies in a car accident, and that is “one too many.”

Di Iorio described her award as “a symbol of hope, strength, unity, and innovation,” and urged audience members to “be careful on the way home, drive safely, but most importantly, have fun!”

To view the CTV Montreal features on our winners, the awards booklet and more photos of the event, visit our website: <http://qcgnc.ca/2017-goldbloom-awards/>.



## McGILL PROFESSOR DEVELOPS TOOL THAT MAKES ROOM FOR ENGLISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY IN TEACHING OF QUEBEC HISTORY

Dr. Paul Zanazanian of the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University has developed a pedagogical tool designed to complement the provincial history program and to make room for the diverse presence and contributions of English-speakers to Quebec.

“The tool empowers English-speaking youth to discover who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed,” said Dr. Zanazanian.

Based on a prior study, Zanazanian created an interactive narrative framework that helps teachers engage their students in learning the history of English-speaking Quebec. The main objective is for students to produce their own stories of belonging through investigative historical research.

This pedagogical tool includes a core story line, or underlying narrative pattern, that helps students frame their researched perspectives within a larger understanding of the history of the English-speaking community, thereby strengthening their connection to Quebec.

The key turning points in the history of English-speaking Quebec help structure the tool while two guiding themes — diversification through immigration, and working together to build a common civic project — act as narrative threads.

“Teachers can guide students to develop their own histories by helping them think and weave their stories like historians do,” Zanazanian explained. “This allows students to



To help them defend the ideas they put forth, the tool further assists students to situate their stories within larger understandings of how societies use history. "Not only does this allow them to validate their stories of belonging, it also helps them better understand and be more open to the history program they are being taught," said Zanazanian.

Zanazanian is currently conducting a research study on Secondary 3 and 4 history teachers in English schools. The goal of the new study is to understand how they make room for the presence and contributions of English-speaking Quebecers when teaching Quebec's history curriculum. He is seeking English-language history teachers for the study. For details contact [paul.zanazanian@mcgill.ca](mailto:paul.zanazanian@mcgill.ca).

## QFHSA FALL CONFERENCE LOOKS AT NEXTSCHOOL



### Submitted by the Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations

Bringing about culture shifts is not easy. Overhauling a system requires innovation, engagement, and a high degree of risk. This is certainly the case in education, where it is easy to stick with the traditional system that has existed for decades. But educators **Noel Burke** and **Michael Canuel** think it is entirely possible.

These two men, both leaders in the field of education in Quebec, delivered the keynote address at the 73rd annual **Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations** (QFHSA) Fall Conference to an audience of home and school representatives from across the province. Held in Vaudreuil-Dorion on Oct. 28, the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary gymnasium was full for the presentation, which focused on ways in which Quebec's education system is, to state it simply, behind the times.

The architects behind the NEXTSchool project, Burke and Canuel, spoke at length of how the system must change should teachers, parents, and most importantly students, want to succeed in a rapidly changing society.

Canuel, CEO of LEARN Quebec and founder of the Canadian e-learning network, opened the address by discussing the challenges that children face in a globalized society. Burke, an educational consultant, school commissioner, and instructor at McGill University and Concordia University, echoed Canuel's calls for change in his portion of the presentation.

Burke explained how NEXTSchool project seeks a proactive approach to meeting the needs of students in the classroom. Its primary objective is the decompartmentalization of learning. Student expectations are the focus in this system, with the teacher acting as a navigator. An emphasis is placed on collaboration, autonomy, relevant learning, and a sense of belonging, providing more opportunities for students and staff alike.

Burke described it as giving the students and teachers a voice in what is taught. "It's like turning the whole thing upside down."

Diamond Relation Between Home and School, Governing Board, Administration and School Boards; Online Payments for Home and School Activities and Email Etiquette) addressed issues that can help Home and Schools run more efficiently and effectively. The afternoon workshops (Teen Depression, Art Feels Good and Full of Character) offered information to parents on how to help the psycho-social development of their children.

Three Regional Council Meetings rounded off the day, giving representatives of Home and School associations in different school boards across the province, an opportunity to exchange ideas and concerns. We were especially pleased to have representatives from Baie Comeau Home and School come down for the conference and share their perspectives.

The first Home and School meeting was held in Quebec at Macdonald High School in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue in 1919. In 1944, the local Home and School Associations formed the Québec Federation of Home and School Associations. Home and School has served, over the years, as a valuable institution for encouraging and supporting parental involvement in education in Quebec.

In 2019, the Québec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) will be celebrating the centennial (100 years) of its first Home and School meeting in Quebec as well as 75 years of networking as a federation.

## FRANÇAIS AND ENGLISH SPOKEN AT VEQ'S LANGUAGE EXCHANGE CAFÉ

By **Cassandra Kerwin**  
Courtesy of the **Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph**

Newcomers improve their pronunciation and enunciation skills in both French and in English at the second Newcomers' Language Exchange Café presented by the **Voice of English-Speaking Quebec** (VEQ).



After moving to Quebec City, newcomers have to learn to communicate mainly in French but, if they are not anglophones to begin with, also in English. For the evening, VEQ newcomers' activity coordinator Jessica Price prepared a series of games specific to each language.

Price welcomed 20 newcomers to Quebec City to the second Language Exchange Café where they gathered to enjoy coffee and bilingual games at the Jeffery Hale Pavilion on Oct. 26. "The goal of tonight is to speak another language," she said.

People become more anxious and shy, when learning a new language, especially when speaking in front of others, she said.

"Everyone makes mistakes, in English and in French. We all have trouble finding words. Don't be shy about your accent; we all have one," said Price. "However, accents and definitions of certain words change from one culture and language to the next."

She told participants that bilingual volunteers were there to help them learn but also have fun.

Price and her team organized a series of games placed on different tables, half of which were designated as either French or English. Some people had fun sticking to one language, when it was easier and more comfortable to stick to the other.

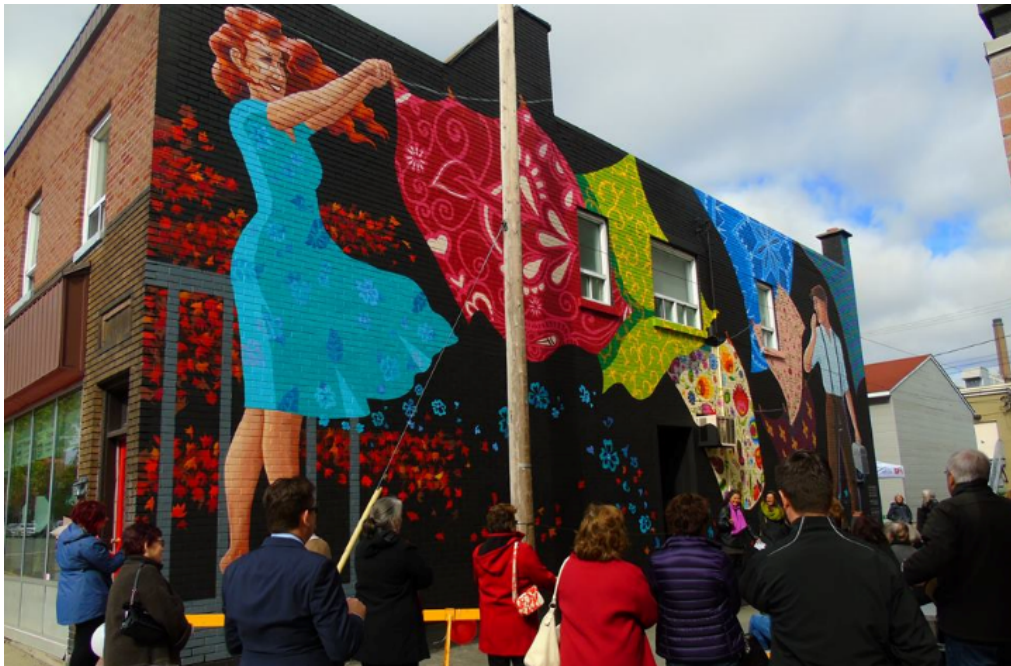
Throughout the evening, people playing Qui suis-je? or Who/What Am I? had to ask "yes" or "no" questions to determine the name of the person and the object or animal written on a

Newcomers improved their French and their English as they learned about different cultures.

Listening to them speak, one comes to realize that certain syllables taken for granted in one language are hard to pronounce in a foreign language, with the most evident being the “th” sound in English and the “euil” sound in French. As the evening progressed, levels of anxiety and shyness diminished greatly, while levels of pronunciation and enunciation gradually increased.

VEQ is offering a Winds of Change Workshop for Newcomers on Thursday, Nov. 23, at 6:30 p.m. in the Jeffery Hale Pavilion. For more information and to register, visit [www.veq.ca](http://www.veq.ca) or call Jessica Price at 418-683-2366 ext. 225.

## NEIGHBOURS COMMISSION MURAL TO CELEBRATE CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF ROUYN-NORANDA



As part of the Canada 150 Celebrations, **Neighbours Regional Association of Rouyn-Noranda** commissioned a mural to highlight the heritage and cultural diversity of the city.

The mural was officially inaugurated during the Canada Cultural Days on Sept. 30. It depicts a red-haired woman hanging out linens as her husband blows her a kiss before going off to work. From the lunch box he is carrying, it is suggested that he works at Noranda Mines.

The premise of the mural is that neighbourhood ladies are getting together for a community picnic and have each supplied a table linen or blanket from their own country of origin; hence flying in the wind on the clothesline you find motifs representing Polish, Ukrainian, French, Scottish, Italian, Russian and German immigrants. The motifs were contributed or approved by Neighbours who are members of that culture.

On hand for the inaugurations were **Ghislaine Saikaley**, interim Commissioner of Official Languages, **James Shea**, President of the Quebec Community Groups Network and chair of the Western Quebec School Board; **Christine Moore**, MP for Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Parliamentary Critic for Rural Affairs & Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec; **Luc Blanchette**, Quebec’s Minister responsible for Forests, Wildlife and Parks and Rouyn-Noranda-Témiscamingue; **André Tessier**, acting Mayor Ville de Rouyn-Noranda; as well as **John Buck** and **Grant Myers** of the Community Economic Development

## GET READY TO DIVE INTO LOCAL LIT AT THE HOLIDAY POP-UP BOOK FAIR

Submitted by the  
Quebec Writers' Federation

Expect hundreds of new titles for sale, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, books for kids, award-winners and bestsellers as the **Association of English-language Publishers of Quebec** (AELAQ) and the **Quebec Writers' Federation** present their annual Holiday Pop-Up Book Fair at Le Café in the Monument National on Nov. 25 and 26.

The free event encourages booklovers of all ages and interests to browse, buy, and get books signed — just in time for holiday gift-giving. There will also be fun readings, festive celebrations and the chance to meet acclaimed local authors.

"It's not just about selling books — it's also about celebrating the vibrant literary scene by bringing together writers, publishers, translators and the public in a two-day feast of local lit," said **Anna Leventhal**, executive director of AELAQ. "The book fair is a great way to try out the hundred-mile literary diet. People are very interested in discovering and supporting local culture; for the holidays we want to offer Montrealers an opportunity to give the gift of a book from here."

"This is a rare occasion for readers to see the impressive output of Quebec's writers in English over the past year, all in one place, and to meet so many of those writers!" adds **Lori Schubert** executive director of the Quebec Writers' Federation (QWF).

This year's special guest is lauded writer **Kathleen Winter**, author of *Lost in September* who was shortlisted for the **2017 Governor General's Literary Award** and **QWF's Paragraphe Hugh MacLennan Prize for Fiction**.

"It's a joyful, festive and friendly time where indie local publishers and authors share what we love most: story and community," said Winter, who attended the last two fairs. "It feels impromptu and informal, yet you'll learn a lot and leave feeling warm and connected."



Winter will be on hand for a Festive Wine and Cheese where bookworms can meet the acclaimed author and raise a glass to local lit. Winter will be introduced by **Montreal Gazette publisher Lucinda Chodan** at the event which takes place Saturday, Nov. 25 from 4-6 p.m. Fair-goers will also toast the **50th anniversary of Tundra Books**, publisher of **Roch Carrier's** iconic *The Hockey Sweater*. Tundra was founded by Westmounter **May Cutler**, the first woman publisher of kids' books in Canada. Birthday cake will be served!

Another festival highlight will be the **Rapid-Fire Reading, Ricochet Writing, mRbillia** edition that takes place on Sunday, Nov. 26, from 2-3 p.m. During this event, 20 writers celebrate 20 years of the **Montreal Review of Books** in a fast-paced reading and writing bonanza. Authors read for only two minutes each while the next writer adds a sentence or two to a collectively created text that will be read aloud. Writers representing 20 years of mRb history include **Lorina Mapa, Alex Manley, Mary Soderstrom, Sherry Simon, Gillian Sze, Trevor Ferguson, Ariela Freedman, Christopher DiRaddo, John Kalbflesich, Karen Nesbitt, Colleen Curran** and more.

Also on hand for this year's fair will be **jia qing wilson-yang**, 2017 Lambda Literary Award winner for Transgender Fiction, *Small Beauty*; **Sylvain Neuvel**, sci-fi sensation slated to adapt the popular dystopian *Black Mirror* series into a book; **Jocelyn Parr**, shortlisted for a 2017 Governor General's Literary Award and the QWF's Concordia University First Book Prize



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Mystery/Crime author. They will be joined by **Guillaume Morissette, Greg Santos, Marcela Huerta, Xue Yiwei, Peter Kirby, Robert Everett-Green, Connie Guzzo-McParland, Jonah Campbell, Mary Soderstrom, Licia Canton, Larissa Andrusyshyn, Carolyn Marie Souaid, Claire Holden Rothman, Cason Sharpe, and Lazer Lederhendler.**

Local publishers at the event include **McGill-Queen's University Press, Linda Leith Publishing, Véhicule Press, Metatron, DC Books, Metonymy Press, Black Rose Books, Shoreline Press, Longbridge Books, Baraka Books/QC Fiction** and more. "The Fair is exciting for us because we get to actually meet the readers who are interested in the books we publish," commented **Simon Dardick** of Véhicule Press.

When asked why people should come to the Holiday Pop-Up Book Fair, author **Alejandro Saravia** said: "The fair presents new voices and ways to imagine Quebec. In a moment in history in which the winds of ethno-nationalism seem to blow harder in our province, literature and the exercise of imagination may be ways to find strength in diversity."

"Books open your mind and change the world for the better," adds writer **Rahul Varma**. "Montreal has writers from all over the world; at the book fair you meet writers who show you what you already have inside you."

"People still have the need for stories, for narratives that help describe their world, their time and place," said writer **Jacob Potashnik**. "A book fair is a way to not only touch the paper tapestry but to meet the people who weave it. Book fairs at their best achieve a critical mass of information, excitement and exposure to new stories and ways of seeing."

Author **Branka Petrovic** said: "People will not only be supporting local artists, they will be giving (themselves or someone they love) a unique, potentially life-transforming object that can rival the latest iPhone (and they're less expensive!)... priceless, inexpensive, beautiful things that can be passed down for generations to come. It's a little like going to the craft fair," comments writer author **Jack Hannan**. "I find something that happily surprises me every year."

As an added bonus, provincial sales tax doesn't apply to books - considered essential goods - a decision made to encourage literacy and support book publishers in the province.

The 2017 Holiday Pop-Up Book Fair takes place on Saturday, Nov. 25 from noon till 6 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 26 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Le Café in the Monument National, 1182 Blvd St. Laurent. The site is wheelchair accessible and family friendly.

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