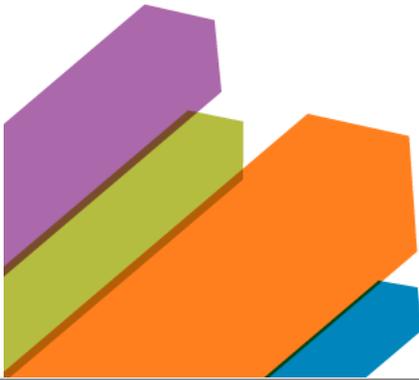


Network News Feb-March 2018

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COMMUNITY SHARES CONCERNS AND EXPECTATIONS WITH MINISTER WEIL



By James Shea
QCGN President

Our community is making incremental but positive steps forward in getting the provincial government to recognize and address longstanding issues facing Quebec's English-speaking minority. Over the past month the Quebec Community Groups Network, our member organizations, as well as stakeholders from all corners of the province participated in a series of consultations with **Kathleen Weil**, the new minister responsible for relations with English-speaking Quebecers. Minister Weil, who is overseeing the creation of a **Secretariat for Relations with English-speaking Quebecers**, crisscrossed the province to meet with English-speaking Quebecers and organizations and held a series of eight regional and sector online exchanges with her **Assistant Secretary William Floch**.



At the forum, Weil reiterated her understanding of the community's priorities: access to health-care services, employability and retaining the young English-speaking Quebecers to prevent a brain drain that impacts our community, but also the province. These are some of our concerns, but only the tip of the iceberg. QCGN participated in all of the online exchanges and many of the regional consultations and we heard a lot of familiar issues: concerns about access to government services of all kinds – especially health and social services; lots of preoccupations about the socio-economic challenges faced by anglos – high unemployment and poverty rates; the vitality of our institutions and maintaining control and management of our schools. Also discussed was the continuing matter of our desperate lack of representation in Quebec's civil service and our all too frequent absence at government discussions/consultations as the province develops policies and programs.

be armed with a visionary but realistic plan to address many of these enduring concerns and ensure that the Secretariat is built to last. We are counting on Minister Weil to come up with an action plan that will make a real difference for English-speaking Quebecers – and one that will last beyond the next election, no matter the result. Given the many myths surrounding our community – we are all rich and we all live in Westmount – we also expect the Secretariat will be armed with data and facts that support effective and evidence-based interventions within the civil service on behalf of our community. Weil announced that **Finance Minister Carlos Leitão** will be holding what appears to be a first-ever pre-budget consultation with our community. The consultation takes place this Wednesday at McGill. Our expectations from the new Secretariat are high. We will not be satisfied with sprinkling a little money here and there to appease our community in the short term. See coverage of the forum in [The Montreal Gazette](#), on [CJAD News](#), on [Global Montreal](#), and on [CTV News](#). Also view [Premier Couillard's message](#) to forum participants.

Federal Budget Foreshadows Action Plan

Speaking of budgets, we are optimistic about hints dropped in last week's federal budget concerning the upcoming **Action Plan for Official Languages**. **Finance Minister Bill Morneau's** third budget revealed an additional \$400 million in new funding over five years to support official language programs critical to the vitality of English-speaking Quebec. Our favourite line in the budget was money for "improved access to services for English-speaking communities in Quebec in their official language." Morneau announced funding for French and English-language minority community radio stations and newspapers as well as new money for cultural, artistic and heritage activities, including community theatre, art workshops, and activities showcasing local heritage or history. Minority language schools will receive \$20 million for a variety of early learning and child care initiatives. There is also new money for community organizations to ensure they can continue to provide services for individuals in their communities, to welcome newcomers, and to foster early childhood development. As noted by our **Director General, Sylvia Martin-Laforge**, the degree to which English-speaking Quebecers will benefit from the initiatives contained in the federal budget rests on the Government of Quebec's willingness and commitment to ensure our communities can access them. We are very fortunate that the Government of Quebec chose this year to establish a Secretariat for Relations with English-speaking Quebecers, added our **Vice-President Geoffrey Chambers**. We will work closely with the province to ensure that English-speaking Quebec receives equitable access to initiatives and we await details of the Action Plan for Official Languages. Read our [press release](#).

Journal de Montréal Polls English-speaking Quebecers

Earlier this month, **Le Journal de Montréal** featured a vast poll on English-speaking Quebecers with numerous stories and columns that provided French readers with insights on Quebec's English-speaking community and its concerns. The poll conducted by Léger for Quebec's largest daily newspaper indicates that one in three English-speaking Quebecers believe that relations with Francophones are bad and that they will deteriorate. Half of those were youth under the age of 35. The poll also found that an alarming 60 per cent of our youth who were surveyed have considered leaving Quebec. On sober second thought, that number is not so surprising considering the mobility of youth in a global marketplace. As the expression goes, the world is their oyster. However, QCGN is concerned that many want to leave because they do not consider their French skills are strong enough to work in Quebec. Poll participants also said it's time for Bill 101 to be softened. They wanted more bilingual signs and, in the aftermath of the Bonjour-Hi fiasco, to be welcomed in businesses in both languages. QCQN **Vice-President Geoffrey Chambers** commented on the poll and the series of articles on [CTV Montreal](#) and [City News](#). For links to the series of articles and opinion columns click [here](#).

Seniors Action Quebec is leading a coalition of English-language groups demanding that the city of Montreal do better in consulting senior citizens for its age-friendly city program. **Kim Sawchuk** of the **ACT team** (Ageing + Communication + Technologies) at Concordia University criticized the process noting that Toronto and Ottawa recently held seniors' consultations and provided information in multiple languages. The city has struggled to translate part of its website into English and reluctantly agreed to additional consultations in boroughs with larger English-speaking populations. But that's not enough, said Seniors Action Quebec President **Michael Udy**, who noted that many seniors and the elderly are not present or active on the Internet. As Sawchuk noted, how can seniors trust the city to create an age-friendly city when they cannot create an age-friendly consultation? Seniors Action Quebec, with support from multiple groups including the QCGN, demanded the consultations be broadened to be more inclusive and include English-speaking seniors and those from a variety of cultural communities. They have also asked that the city extend the consultations by several months to include seniors who have a hard time getting around in the ice and snow and those who flew south for the winter. Demands by Montreal seniors are supported by an in-depth research project conducted by the QCGN in collaboration with the **Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network** (QUESCREEN). Funded by the Government of Quebec, **Building Research Capacity Related to Quebec's English-Speaking Seniors** was a participatory action research study that produced a solid evidence base supporting issues related to the priorities of English-speaking seniors.

Montreal is Canada's Most Trilingual City

While Quebec nationalists fret over the perception Montreal is becoming too bilingual, data from the 2016 census reveals the city is by far the country's most trilingual city. **Statistics Canada's** figures indicate more than 21 per cent of Montrealers can speak at least three languages, compared with 11 per cent of Torontonians and 10 per cent of people in Vancouver. Nearly 850,000 Montrealers know at least three languages and more than 40 per cent of the city's immigrants are trilingual.

QCGN's Sylvia Martin-Laforge Awarded Senate 150 Medal



On behalf of the QCGN, I want to congratulate our **Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge** for being awarded the Senate's 150th Anniversary Medal by **Senator Judith Seidman**. The medal commemorates the first time that senators sat in Parliament, on November 6, 1867 - four months after the creation of Canada. Issued by Senators to commemorate Canada's Sesquicentennial, the medals were awarded to "Canadians or permanent residents actively involved in their communities who, through generosity, dedication, volunteerism and hard work, make their hometowns, communities, regions, provinces or territories a better place to live". "As the Senate celebrates a milestone anniversary of its own, this is an appropriate time to celebrate the volunteer work of Canadians," commented Senator Serge Joyal, co-chair of the Advisory Working Group on the Senate 150th Anniversary Medal. "Not only are the medals highlighting the contributions of Canadians – from coast to coast, from all walks of life and from varied backgrounds – they also highlight the wide diversity of the people whose efforts make Canada great. Senators each received 12 medals to award. The bronze medal, which was struck at the Canadian Mint, features the Senate's emblem on one side and the Senate Chamber, along with the recipient's name, on the other.

Father John Walsh Joins Order of Canada

Goldbloom Award winner **Father John Walsh** was among 125 Canadians who will be inducted later this year into the Order of Canada, **Governor General Julie Payette** announced in late December. The honour was created in 1967 to recognize outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation. Father Walsh, a popular Catholic priest, is being honoured for his "ability to forge ties and encourage dialogue between faith communities and for his



longstanding commitment to charitable causes." Father Walsh, who runs an interfaith blog called Faith Blender with an Imam and a Rabbi, says he hopes this honour will draw attention to the importance of interfaith relationships. Other English-speaking Quebecers named to the Order of Canada include actor **William Shatner** of Star Trek fame; McGill University Vice-Principal of Research and Innovation **Martha Crago**, an internationally

in January before he could receive this medal. Before retiring from The Montreal Gazette in 2012, Fisher covered the Montreal Canadiens for nearly 60 years, first for the Montreal Star and then The Gazette. For more on these and other inductees, visit: www.gg.ca/honours.

PLANS UNDERWAY FOR SECOND ANNUAL YOUTH FORUM FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Intensive planning is underway for the second edition of the Bishop's Forum that will be held from August 12-17, 2018 at Bishop's University.

Russell Copeman, the former MNA and past borough Mayor of Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, has been named Director of the 2018 forum, a week-long civic engagement forum for youths between the ages of 18 and 24.

"I like to think of this as boot camp for civic engagement for young English-speaking Quebecers," said Copeman, who discussed the Forum and helping English-speaking youth feel more grounded in Quebec in this [interview](#) with Global Montreal's **Jamie Orchard**.



During the second week of August, dozens of English-speaking youth from throughout the province will converge on the campus of Bishop's University for a week-long immersion into Quebec's society. The youth will have an opportunity to meet movers and shakers and learn about how Quebec works.

Through the week, participants will meet with a broad cross section of Quebec's political, community, business and other leaders and will work in teams to identify key changes they would like to effect on Quebec society and make their case to a mock Parliamentary Commission.

"The goal is to motivate our youth to become more active and involved citizens," said Russell Copeman, who is hard at work planning activities that will help Quebec youths hone their knowledge and leadership skills and work to improve the future for themselves, their community and all of Quebec.

"To borrow a line from Mahatma Gandhi, we want them to be the change they wish to see," said Copeman, noting the Forum aims to inspire young English-speaking Quebecers and give them an understanding of the inner workings of the fundamental institutions of Quebec and Canadian society.

"The Forum will help our youth better understand our province and get to know the English-speaking community," he said. "We want them to talk about their future in Quebec and help them feel like they really belong here."

"We hope our community's youth will make connections that will last a lifetime," said QCGN Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge, who sits on the advisory board of the Forum. "We need our youth to gain a better understanding of our history, our contributions and recognize they can have a promising future here in Quebec. Our youth are our future and we must do everything in our power to ensure their economic and social integration into Quebec."

This Bishop's Forum is supported by the Quebec government as part of its Stratégie d'action

Quebec's English-speaking youth need specific policies and programs.

Participation in the forum is free of charge. Travel, residence, meals, program content and evening events are included. The Bishop's Forum has also created a small discretionary fund to help successful applicants who might not otherwise be able to participate in the conference due to financial need.

The application deadline for the Forum is May 5. More information on the Bishop's Forum can be found at www.bishopsforum.ubishops.ca or call Denise Lauzière at denise.lauziere@ubishops.ca

QCGN HOSTING COMMUNITY FORUM ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENGLISH

Entitled ***No Justice Without Access: Working Together to Ensure Access to Justice in English***, the theme of QCGN's Community Forum on Access to Justice in English could not be clearer. The forum will begin a collaborative community/justice system conversation on barriers to justice services in English in three specific areas, and what can be done to address them.

Scheduled for **April 16 at Batshaw Youth and Family Centres in Westmount**, the Community Forum will mobilize expert, community, and justice system stakeholders. Employing a people-centered approach, the project was conceived from outside-in and not inside-out.

"The project's driving principle is that the people seeking justice services in English in Quebec need to shape the system that serves them," explained lawyer Bruce McNiven, chair of the steering committee overseeing the forum. "It's about people first and always. English-speaking Quebecers need to be treated not just as clients and consumers of justice services, but as the bearers of rights."

Funded by Justice Canada, the QCGN's Access to Justice in English in Quebec project is currently focused on youth protection and young offenders; access to justice for seniors and the elderly; and labour relations and employment. The forum is a first opportunity for community and justice system representatives to explore together how to improve access to justice in English.

"This forum is the beginning of a very important conversation. It is a first step in positioning the community to pursue more comprehensive access to justice in English initiatives as the new Official Languages Road Map comes on stream in 2018/2019," commented QCGN Vice-President Geoffrey Chambers, who sits on the steering committee.

The steering committee also includes private practice lawyers **Eric Maldoff** (Lapointe, Rosenstein, Marchand, Mélançon), **Marlene Jennings**, lawyer and former MP, **Jonathan Nuss** (Dentons) and **Matt Aronson** (Kenneth S. Adessky Attorneys); **Arthur Ayers**, lawyer and president of the Regional Association of West Quebecers; **Fo Niemi**, co-founder/executive director, Center for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR), and **Sarah Dougherty**, lawyer, writer and plain language specialist at Éducaloi.

For more information on the Community Forum and the link to register, click [here](#).

COMMUNITY INNOVATION FUND PROJECTS WELL UNDERWAY

By Rita Legault
QCGN Director of Communications

One program by the **Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders** (CAMI), is motivating young people to complete high school and providing them with job skills specific to opportunities on the Îles-de-la-Madeleine. Another, run by the **NDG Senior Citizens' Council** in the Montreal neighbourhood of Notre-Dame-de-Grace, is enhancing the employability of English-speaking baby boomers and newcomers to act as companions and advocates in the health-care sector by accompanying seniors to medical appointments.

"Our CIF projects in urban, rural, and isolated communities are really improving the future prospects for vulnerable English-speaking youth, seniors and newcomers," said John Buck, co-chair of the CIF Governance committee. "These projects are truly transformative for English-speaking youth, seniors and newcomers who are battling isolation. Many of them are eager to work and contribute to society, but as members of a linguistic minority they face multiple challenges integrating into the workforce."

SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP

The Community Innovation Fund is a pilot project which is part of the Social Partnership Initiative in Official Language Minority Communities of the Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018: Education, Immigration, Communities. It began in May 2016 and runs until May 2019. The fund is injecting \$1 million of federal funding into our communities over the next two years.

Administered by the Quebec Community Groups Network, CIF has funded 10 projects from community groups with the goal of improving employability or maintaining basic socioeconomic security for vulnerable youth, seniors or newcomers in English Quebec's English-language communities.

"We are impressed by how our projects are improving the quality of life for our most vulnerable seniors, youth and for newcomers," said Ian Kott, co-chair of the CIF Governance committee. "A stirring example is the project partnership developed between DESTA school and the Community Service Initiative of Concordia University's MBA program, whereby workshops and courses in entrepreneurship have been developed for Black youth in Montreal. All the funded projects are truly making a difference in our communities."

"The buzz being generated by the creation of this fund, along with the new partnerships forged by our community groups, is truly inspirational," said Christine Boyle, project manager, who has touched base with the projects as they are getting off the ground.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING

"The QCGN is working to empower the community groups through knowledge-sharing activities focused on providing the skills needed to build collaborative partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders," Boyle explained, noting that an important component of the CIF is the development of non-traditional partnerships, that is non-governmental funders, to ensure the sustainability of the projects moving forward. To that end a community of practice has been established, whereby groups are sharing best practices.

Earlier this month Le Journal de Montreal featured **Phelps Helps**, one of our funded projects that fights high school drop-out rates in the Stanstead area of Quebec, as part of its series on Quebec's English-speaking community. Read the story [here](#). Over the next year, Network News will be featuring stories about our CIF funded projects showcasing how the fund is making a difference in the lives of vulnerable English-speaking Quebecers.

To read about the Community Innovation Fund, please visit our [webpage](#). For further information about the CIF please contact **Christine Boyle** at 514-868-9044, ext. 257.

SHOULD TÉLÉ-QUÉBEC PRODUCE AND BROADCAST STORIES ABOUT QUEBEC'S

By Guy Rodgers
Executive Director of the
English-Language Arts Network

Télé-Québec's mandate includes 'promoting Quebec's artistic and cultural life,' and 'reflecting regional realities and the diversity of Québec society.'

The **English-Language Arts Network** inquired of Marie Collin, CEO of Télé-Québec (TQ), if English-speaking Quebecers are part of that diversity. She replied that TQ recognizes its responsibility to reflect the complete diversity of Quebec society, and that it already takes positive action to do so. For example many English-speaking artists are guests on the popular variety program Belle et Bum.

We are a long way from 1968 when Télé-Québec (originally Radio-Québec) was created in a society bitterly divided along linguistic lines. In 2018 most cultural agencies have developed policies on inclusion, and serious efforts are being made to eradicate the old solitudes. One of the most inspiring examples of this new openness is **MAtv**, Vidéotron's community channel, which decided two years ago to devote 20 per cent of its programming to English-language production in response to ELAN's interventions with the CRTC. Rather than protest the change, francophone viewers have been watching programs produced by their English-speaking neighbours.

Where is a better place to share stories across ethno-cultural-linguistic frontiers than community TV? The only better place is an educational TV station. In this spirit, ELAN submitted an intervention in Télé-Québec's CRTC licence renewal.

PART OF THE CONVERSATION

La Presse journalist **Vincent Brousseau-Pouliot** wrote **an article** about our desire to see stories about English-speaking communities broadcast on Télé-Québec. La Presse's article accurately reflected our message: that it is less important that the programs be filmed in French or English, dubbed or subtitled, than that our stories become part of the public conversation.

Brendan Kelly, on CBC radio, was credulous that ELAN could seriously expect to see stories about English-speaking communities broadcast on Télé-Québec. When La Presse posted its article on social media, the conversation quickly exploded in many directions.

Parti-Québécois culture critic Pascal Bérubé stood up in the National Assembly to accuse ELAN of pressuring the CRTC to allocate funding to English-language productions, and he demanded that **Minister of Culture Marie Montpetit** 'shut the door' on ELAN's demands. Mme Montpetit replied that 'Télé-Québec will continue promoting Quebec culture and representing its diversity,' which did not shut the door to Mr. Bérubé's satisfaction. (See coverage in **Le Journal de Montreal**.) He and his colleagues in the Parti-Québécois tabled a motion in the National Assembly demanding that 100 per cent of Télé-Québec's content be produced in French. (Read the PQ **press release**.)

The point had been lost that the object of ELAN's intervention was about how Télé-Québec represents – and includes – diversity: not the language in which it does so. By the time the Gazette's **Don Macpherson** and Pascal Bérubé started trading Twitter barbs, as reported in Le Journal de Montréal, it was a reminder that 1968 is not as distant in the rear-view mirror as we like to think.

It was also a reminder of why Quebec recently created a Secretariat for Relations with English-speaking Quebecers. The Secretariat's first public meeting in mid-February may not have signaled the dawn of a new social contract, but it did open up a dialogue with Quebec's government that is welcome.



Team Caribou – (standing) Guy Roux, Angelica Montgomery, Jennyfer Plourde, (seated) Wallace Robertson, Diane Bird, Joanne Coleman-Robertson, Caroline Joll and Aiden Roberts – were the winners of the word-game treasure hunt at the Morrin Centre. They sit around the campfire in College Hall to enjoy their fresh new coffee mugs. (Photo: Shirley Nadeau, Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph)

By Shirley Nadeau
Reprinted courtesy of the Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph

The staff of Quebec City's Morrin Centre treasure its volunteers. In fact, they need s'more just like you!

Founded in 1824, the **Literary and Historical Society of Quebec** is the oldest existing learned society in Canada. The Society led the restoration of the Morrin Cultural Centre, which it now runs.

As an English-language cultural centre located in the historical quarter of Quebec City, the Morrin Centre strives to be a leading cultural institution providing the French- and English-speaking public with rich, engaging programming in the areas of heritage interpretation, education, and the arts.

Building upon the heritage building's history and key institutions, programming at the Morrin Centre provides historical perspective on Quebec City's unique French-English heritage, develops educational opportunities for youth, and acts as a springboard for artistic creativity. Through its community outreach, it also serves as a bridge between the French- and English-speaking communities of Quebec City, helping them to understand their common past and envision their future.

The Literary and Historical Society of Quebec is managed by a volunteer council composed of 13 people and it counts on numerous other volunteers to manage activities and events at the Morrin Centre.

with dinner, fun and games in College Hall. This year's event featured a word-game treasure hunt, with volunteers going from the hall to the library to the gaol cells in search of clues to unscramble jumbled letters and test their knowledge of the Morrin Centre's history.

First the 30 volunteers were divided into three teams which then had to create a name for themselves. The Bookies, the Caribous and the Actual Asses (don't ask...) then set off on their quest to see which team was the best informed and good at solving puzzles.

The Caribous, who were only one or two points ahead of the other teams, were awarded Morrin Centre insulated coffee mugs. There were some great door prizes just for being there, and everyone went home with a delicious treat, a cellophane wrapped s'more (graham cracker, chocolate and marshmallows) with a tag that read, "We need S'More volunteers like you!"

You too can be a volunteer at the Morrin Centre! Just speak to one of the staff to see where you might fit in or visit the Centre's [website](#) to see a list of areas where you can help. There is also a [Volunteer Application Form](#) you can download and fill in.

Then, maybe you can join the party next year!
shirley@qctonline.com

EXCEL IN THE ESTRIE ESSAY CHALLENGE GOES DIGITAL!

Submitted by Townshippers' Association

After six years of encouraging high school seniors to share their educational trials and triumphs, the Excel in the Estrie! essay challenge from [Townshippers' Association's Make Way for YOUth Estrie](#) project is getting a new twist: the video essay.

The new video category in essay challenge gives high school seniors another way to share success stories and inspire others to persevere in school!

The graduating class of 2018 is being asked to write an essay or shoot a short video that shares (1) any academic, social or personal obstacles they faced on their way to graduation and what they did to overcome them; and (2) what they would like their future to look like in the Townships.

"We were excited to add this new take to our essay challenge in time for the annual Hooked on School Days week (Feb 12 to 16)," said Rachel Hunting, executive director of Townshippers' Association. "This was a great chance for high school grads to let their personalities shine through, and in the process, remind themselves of what they have managed to accomplish before starting on the next phase of their lives."

CONQUERING OBSTACLES

Essays will be accepted in either a written essay of 500 to 600 words or in a short video of less than three minutes. There's no fancy equipment required for videos— they can be shot using a cell phone camera, but they must be filmed in landscape/horizontal orientation.

Along with Make Way for YOUth Estrie, the essay challenge partners include Cass Funeral Homes, Global Excel Management, and the Government of Canada. Winning submissions will also be featured in a future edition of Townshippers Journal and students could earn up to \$500 towards their post-secondary studies!

The essay challenge is open to all graduating high school seniors in the historical Eastern Townships' English-speaking community who are attending an English language secondary

no later than April 20, 2018, at 5:00 p.m., using the online submission form found at Townshippers.org/Essay or emailed to mwfy@townshippers.org, or by mail to Excel in the Estrie! c/o Townshippers' Association, 100-257 Queen, Sherbrooke, QC J1M 1K7. For more information, and for the complete guidelines visit Townshippers.org/Essay, or contact Holly McMillan at mwfy@townshippers.org, or call 819-566-5717 (toll-free: 1-866-566-5717).

Make Way for YOUth Estrie is an initiative of the province-wide Place aux jeunes en region, which encourages the migration and settlement of youth in areas outside of Quebec's large city centres and is offered to the English-speaking community by Townshippers'. Activities are made possible thanks to the financial support of the Secrétariat à la Jeunesse du Québec and numerous businesses and organizations throughout the Estrie region.

Townshippers' Association is a non-profit, non-partisan community organization that has been serving the English-speaking community of the historical Eastern Townships since 1979. For more on the Association and its activities, connect online at Townshippers.org or contact Townshippers' in Sherbrooke at 100 – 257 Queen St. 819-566-5717, toll-free: 1-866-566-5717 or in Lac-Brome at 3-584 Knowlton Rd. 450-242-4421, toll-free: 1-877-242-4421.

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.



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