



# Neighbours Newsletter

April 2021

NEIGHBOURS REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ROUYN-NORANDA

## Covid-19 Vaccinations Proceeding Smoothly in Our Region

Vaccinations to protect the population against Covid-19 are being administered to citizens and reports from our members who have received their first dose are very encouraging! They say that the process is well-organized and quite quick and easy. Much information is given to each person receiving their vaccine, and after their first dose has been given, they get the date for their second dose, as well as a certificate of proof of vaccination.

The CISSSAT says they're confident that they can vaccinate the whole population of Abitibi-Témiscamingue by the end of June.

As of now, almost 12% of our population has received their first dose of the vaccine, the Pfizer. The majority of people aged 80+ have been vaccinated, and the majority of the 65+ age group have their appointments for their first dose, and this age group should all have received their vaccinations by May 1st.

Abitibi-Témiscamingue is still an Orange Zone for now. Doctor for Public Health, Dr. Sobanjo, explained that there is a good thing for our region about this fact, as some regions which were declared a Yellow Zone are seeing their vaccines re-directed to Montreal. As we are Orange, we are considered in need of them here. A factor in the decision to keep us an Orange Zone for now is that our Covid-19 situation is stable, but not completely under control.



Neighbours member Mrs. Suzanne Chevrier receiving her vaccine against Covid-19 last month.

Even after being vaccinated, it is important to keep wearing a mask in public places, and washing our hands often. There is light at the end of the tunnel, we're getting there.

*Visit Neighbours' website and Facebook page for daily updates*

[www.neighbours-rouyn-noranda.ca](http://www.neighbours-rouyn-noranda.ca)

<https://www.facebook.com/neighbours.rouynnoranda>



# The Towns of Rouyn and Noranda Both Turn 95 Years Old This Year!

The boardwalk on the shore of Lake Osisko today, showing our hospital and the smokestacks of the Horne smelter in the background.

Each was officially constituted as a city in

1926, then merged 35 years ago in 1986 to become the small city of Rouyn-Noranda that we all know and love.

The city of Rouyn (named for Jean-Baptiste Rouyn, a captain in the Regiment Royal Roussillon of Louis-Joseph de Montcalm and a hero of the Battle of Ste. Foy) appeared after one of the richest copper and gold deposits was discovered in 1917. Noranda (a contraction of “North Canada”) was created just a little later around the Horne Mine and Smelter.

In the mid-1920’s, discovery of copper and gold deposits in Northwestern Quebec resulted in an epic mining rush.

Prospectors, followed by thousands of men and women, of different nationalities and from all over, including Southern Quebec, Ontario, and many people of Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Finnish, German and Austrian descent, as well as some Jewish and Chinese, gathered there to work and live. Two neighbouring mushroom towns (boomtowns) with many fundamental differences, **Rouyn** and **Noranda**, quickly came to life in the boreal forest, becoming populous and organized communities.

Rouyn and Noranda merged and were then no longer known as the “Twin Cities” or “Sister Cities”, but as **Rouyn-Noranda**, then in 2002, about 15 nearby villages merged with the town, which now covers over 6000 square kilometers!

Today, Rouyn-Noranda is a lively city, holding many yearly festivals, with great parks and lots of family activities, with all the shopping and services of larger centers. It’s a wonderful place to live and raise a family!

*Sources: communitystories.ca, cldrn.ca,*

Here are few Rouyn-Noranda trivia questions. If you were raised here, you might find them easy! If you weren’t, it’s a fun way to discover a bit of history about our town!

1. Originally built to hold a water supply for the towns, now a unique apartment building on a hill overlooking the city.
2. Name of a road that starts across from Noranda School (used to be Fredric Hebert School) and winds its way in front of Osisko lake. Actually, the lake used to have this name in the 1920’s!
3. These two streets meet in the middle of “the crescent”. One is the main street in “old” Noranda, named for the first mayor, the other named after another mayor of Noranda in the 1930’s and 40’s.
4. Starting where the Osisko lake shore ends, you can travel out of Rouyn using this avenue, which joins highway 117, on your way to Val d’Or!
5. Once a main pioneer road between Lake Pelletier and lake Osisko, today the Rouyn-Noranda City Hall sits at the corner of Taschereau and this avenue.



Once, a tenacious and shrewd prospector discovered invaluable resources on the shores of Lake Osisko. Little did he know that his discovery would lead to a mining and metallurgical company that would pioneer the Canadian industry, and the creation of two diversified towns who would eventually become one exceptional city.

6. Named for the Quebec Minister of Colonisation and Mines at the founding of Rouyn in 1926, it was one of the first streets developed in Rouyn. It is still one of the major commercial streets today!
7. Little lake that today the Parc Botannique a Fleur d’Eau is built around.
8. Avenue named for a dairy which served the towns for many years.

**Answers on page 5**

“  
The sun was warm  
but the wind was  
chill. You know  
how it is with  
an April day.

”

- Robert Frost

Neighbours is pleased to say that our first Book Club meeting was a great success! Members met over Zoom to discuss the book which was read, “Where the Crawdads Sing”, by Dalia Owens. The discussion was intense at times, owing to members who either loved it or didn’t!

But that’s all part of the fun!














Our next book is “If You Tell” by Gregg Olsen, a true story of murder, family secrets, and the unbreakable bond of sisterhood. We have a few copies to lend if you’d like to read it and take part! Just call the office at 819-762-0882



Date of next discussion to be determined.

## April 22nd is Earth day!

Every day should be a day to take care of the Earth, though! If you feel this way, here are some easy actions you can take to make a difference on a daily basis for a cleaner Earth for everyone.

-  Use environmentally-friendly, non-toxic cleaning products.
-  Donate old clothes & home goods instead of throwing them out. Consider buying used.
-  Use reusable bottles for water, and reusable mugs for coffee.
-  Pack your lunch in a reusable bag, and use reusable containers instead of baggies and plastic wrap.
-  Reduce your meat consumption to curb carbon emissions from the livestock industry
-  Keep your car’s tires properly inflated and get better gas mileage
-  Change your car’s air filter regularly
-  Use cold water to wash your clothes and line dry
-  Turn off lights when you leave a room
-  Turn off electronics and appliances you’re not using
-  Lower the temperature on your water heater
-  Recycle batteries from electronics and small appliances, or use rechargeable batteries
-  Buy organic produce if you can, it keeps the environment AND your body free of toxic pesticides



Many small gestures done by many people will all add up!  
Let’s show the Earth some love, she deserves it!

Source: [earthday.org](http://earthday.org)

# Do We Smell Taxes or Spring in the Air?

It's that season again! But, like everything else, Covid-19 will have an impact on our taxes this year! First let's start with the filing and payment dates:

- **Feb. 22nd, 2021:** was the earliest you could file online
- **April 30th, 2021:** deadline to file your taxes
- **June 15th, 2021:** deadline to file your taxes if you or your legal spouse are self-employed
- **April 30th, 2021:** deadline to pay your taxes



## What's New for 2020 Federal Taxes

- Tax brackets: For 2020 the federal brackets will be: zero to \$48 535 of income (15 per cent); above \$48 535 to \$97 069 (20.5 per cent); above \$97 069 to \$150 473 (26 per cent); above \$150 473 to \$214 368 (29 per cent) and anything above that being taxed at 33 per cent
- Basic personal amount will be \$13 229 up from 2019 which was \$12 069. This means you can make up to \$13 229 and not pay any federal income tax
- CPP contribution rates for employees and employers will each increase to 5.25% in 2020, up from 5.1% in 2019. Result: contributions can now max at \$2989

## What's new for 2020 Quebec Taxes

- QPP contributions at a slightly higher rate - 5.70% in 2020 (up from 5.55% in 2019). Result: contributions can now max at \$3146
- All basic personal amounts have risen slightly,; \$15 532 from \$15 269 for an individual, but for the age amount, person living alone and retirement income from \$34 610 to \$35 205
- The total amount that an individual can withdraw from a registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) under the Home Buyer's Plan (HBP) has been increased from \$25 000 to \$35 000 for withdrawals made after March 19th, 2019

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed how Quebecers work, with many employees now working from home part-time or full-time. So you may be eligible for the **Home Office Expenses for Employees**. The government is offering two means to apply for this;

1. **Flat rate:** this method simplifies your claim for home office expenses. You are eligible to use this new method if you worked more than 50% of the time from home for a period of at least four consecutive weeks in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. You can claim \$2 for each day you worked from home during that period plus any additional days you worked at home in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The maximum you can claim using the new temporary flat rate method is \$400 (200 working days per individual).
2. This method, which requires all the proper documentation, will allow you to claim the **actual amounts** you paid and not just \$2/per day.

*Source: Sharleen Sullivan*

## Changes in Scheduling for the Festival des Guitares du Monde



Based on the situation surrounding Covid-19, the Festival Announced the postponement of the 2021 edition.

Originally scheduled from May 29 to June 5, the event will move to the fall and be held around the end of September or early October. The exact dates are yet to be confirmed.

The event's team is looking into the best possible options, and a fall festival seems the most plausible. The scenario is to offer a festival with concerts by artists on stage, hosting spectators indoors (limited audience) and with an online broadcast.

In terms of programming, it will be adapted and the focus will be on Canadian artists. Some virtual performances from international artists are in the works, and if the situation allows it, a one-day event in May will be organized, foreshadowing the fall edition.

The organizing committee is continuously working to refine its 2021 scenario over the coming weeks in order to announce specific details shortly. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1776076/spectacles-musique-noranda-jean-royal>



## Easter Fun Facts!



Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the first day of spring, which is why the date always changes!

Easter baskets have a special symbolism, they represent nests and new life! So they are perfect for filling with yummy candy or chocolate eggs!

Most North American Easter dinners feature ham, which came about because of timing. Years ago, hams cured over the winter months would have been ready to eat in the spring.

Consumers spend billions of dollars on Easter candy. It's the biggest candy holiday after Halloween.

Cadbury's makes 500 million Crème Eggs a year! If you piled them on top of each other, it would be 10 times higher than Mount Everest!



Answers to the Rouyn-Noranda trivia questions from page 4:

1. La Tourelle
2. Tremoy Road
3. Murdoch Avenue and Carter Avenue
4. Lariviere Avenue
5. Du Portage Avenue
6. Perreault Street
7. Lake Edouard
8. Dallaire Avenue



# Neighbours Proudly Presents Winners of Poetry/Short Story Contest

Within the framework of the Bright Beginnings program, this past winter Neighbours held a Poetry/Short Story contest aimed at secondary school-aged students. With a theme to coincide with Family Literacy Day - which was celebrated at Golden Valley School (Val d'Or) in January and at Noranda School in February –children in high school were invited and encouraged to write either a poem or a short story, with prizes and winning entries to be published in an upcoming newsletter!

We were very delighted to receive many wonderful submissions! All students except one opted to write poetry, and what such young people expressed with their words was indeed moving to read.

The one short story which was submitted was strongly praised by our judges.

The Bright Beginnings program is an adapted approach to supporting English-speaking children and families by working with regional and local partners, communities, and government and service providers.

With a strong base of collaboration, the Bright Beginnings framework encourages and supports partners such as our local English schools to linguistically and culturally better meet the needs of English-speaking children and families.

Neighbours is happy to help motivate budding young writers!

Congratulations to all our winners!

Winning entries can be read on the following pages.

By: Laurie Ann Boast



Sandrine Couillard, a Secondary 3 student at Golden Valley School in Val d'Or, is the winner of a 100\$ Indigo gift card for her riveting short story "Gasoline and Old Socks." She wrote it for the thriller/suspense unit in her English Language Arts class.



Our colleague Maggie from the CLC (Community Learning Centre) based in Val d'Or presenting Sandrine with her prize and certificate on behalf of Neighbours.



# Gasoline and Old Socks

Sandrine Couillard

I run through the empty hallways, my schoolbag bouncing up and down on my back. I'm going to miss my bus.

I burst through the doors that lead outside, and as predicted, my bus is nowhere to be found. Eerily enough, no one is there. Nothing's there. Great, I whisper through my teeth. I fish my cellphone out of my pocket to call my grandfather to pick me up, but my cellphone is dead. I lean my head back and sigh. I'll have to walk.

I start the 15km journey back to my house, and it doesn't take long before I am out of town. I follow the abandoned town dump road. I take a deep breath, inhaling the cool, crisp autumn air. The smell of leaves tickles my nostrils, and the chilly breeze makes my nose and cheeks turn bright pink. The only sound is the noise of my shoes hitting the paved road, forming a soothing beat. Some cars pass by, blinding me with their headlights, then fading away behind me. I look back and I can only see the road vanishing beneath a thin layer of fog. My legs and feet are starting to ache, and it feels like I've been walking forever. The sun is slowly starting to set, which darkens everything around me. The air grows colder and thicker, so I decide to stick out my thumb and try to hitch a ride home. It doesn't take long before a beat-up pick-up truck pulls over beside me and beckons me.

"Where ya headed?", he drawled.

"Over on Sweeney Todd Road, Sir," I nervously state.

"Hop in. It's on my way."

I open the door and plop myself down on the passenger seat. I warm my hands near the radiator. The edges of the side windows are subtly fogged over. The truck has an overpowering smell of gasoline and old socks. The man was probably in his mid-30s, and wore a used Red Sox cap. He had long, stringy, blond hair, and a patched beard that immediately made me uncomfortable. He donned a plaid vest with a stained white shirt, and some dirty jeans on. He also wore some old muddy Nike shoes, and a fake gold chain hung around his neck. I turned around and the back of the truck is filled with empty beer bottles and what looks like body bags? My eyes widen

and I get a sick feeling in my stomach. I quickly look at him, but he stares straight ahead. I look back again and see two, big transparent plastic bins filled with baseball caps. I slowly turn around and catch him staring at me. He turns on the radio and the song "Sunshine, Lollipops and Rainbows" starts blasting at full volume. We sit in silence, and suddenly the song cuts. An annoying static fills the air. He slows down and stops the truck. I look around nervously and wonder why we have suddenly stopped. He lets go of the steering wheel and turns to face me. He lifts an eyebrow.

"Get out. I'll give you a five-minute head start," he whispers.

I look at him in shock. Why does he want me to leave? In the middle of nowhere? I slowly gather my things and head out of the vehicle. I stand on the side of the road and watch him zoom off. I still have a long way to walk, and it's getting late. What did he mean, head start?



***For space's sake, because this is a rather long short story, we have left it on a cliffhanger for now! The rest of the story can be read on our Neighbours Facebook page!***

***We will provide a printed paper copy to anyone without internet access who wants to read it!***

***It is a great piece of descriptive writing, although we warn that the content might not be to everyone's taste, so read at your own discretion.*** -Neighbours



Sandrine, a happy student rightly proud of her wonderful writing skills.

*The First Day of Winter*

by Christy Tshikala

I can see the *tiny* snowflakes *sprinkling* off my **FROZEN**  
eyelashes,  
my fingers sense less and sore,  
That **CRUEL** cold breeze on my legs as the snowflakes  
*danced* in the air,  
but *winter* I still adored.  
The taste the warm *tender* hot chocolate,  
*sizzling* on my tongue  
and the whiff of that *sweet* pinecone,  
before my nose goes numb.  
The sound of laughter and joy in the *distance*,  
I *envy* their *childish* fun,  
as I stand outside *smiling* to myself,  
*Winter* has just begun.

Christy Tshikala is a Secondary 2 student at Noranda School. She is the winner of a 100\$ Indigo gift card for her creative poem "The First Day of Winter".



Life Is,  
A bowl of sunshine tainted by that one bad apple  
The apple not knowing what it's contaminating  
The magnificent beauty of the rest of them  
Being infected by the one  
Slowly becoming more than one  
Some may survive  
But most will not  
Fruit flies will destroy anything left  
Without the fruit  
The bowl loses meaning  
And without reason to shine  
All is lost

Unless...



Mael Lafreniere is a Golden Valley School student in Secondary 2. He is the winner of a 100\$ Indigo gift card for his touching poem "Life Is".





# The Process of Winter

The plants are put to sleep.

The ground freezes.

Water stills.

Animals are fast asleep hibernating.

As everything slows down

Life seems to have been frozen.

Winter has come.

The process of nature's rebirth has begun.

As time seems to freeze in the world.

A new process begins.

Animals awake from their self-induced comas.

As the snow melts

A new wave of life is seen in the forests.

And the birds come back music fills the air.

Spring emerges and life is being breathed.



The Noranda School Winners pose with Neighbours' Nathalie, who presented them with their prizes and certificates.

Jason Fosso is a Secondary 2 student at Noranda School. He is the winner of a 50\$ Indigo gift card for his impressive poem "The Process of Winter".



Marilou Brisson is a Secondary 1 student at Noranda School. She is the winner of a 50\$ Indigo gift card for her delightful poem "Mistletoe".



## Mistletoe

*Landing under the mistletoe*

*A chance to kiss your crush*

*Allowing tingles to your toes*

*Soon you start to blush*

# Spring Election?

Normally around this time we would be talking about elections; and even now it seems possible with the Liberals slightly leading in the polls.

All parties are preparing for this possibility - the Conservatives held their party's policy convention in mid-March, Liberals and the NDP will be gathering on April 9/10 virtually but not together!



With Covid vaccinations taking place in all provinces, the idea of a spring election is still very unpopular with voters. As Canadians focus on an end to this pandemic life, summer is also considered too soon by 63 per cent. Two thirds say an election between September and December would be more appropriate.

According to the latest data from the Angus Reid Institute, half of Canadians (49%) say it's time to switch governing parties in Ottawa, led almost entirely by past conservative voters and at least one-in-three past NDP (39%), Green (35%) and Bloc Quebecois (40%) voters, respectively. Notably, more than one-in-seven (17%) of those who supported the Liberals in 2019 say the same. About a third of the country (35%) disagree.

So almost half of Canadians express a desire for a change in government, yet show little want for an election before fall! So I think it is safe to say that we will not be forced into an election before most Canadians have been vaccinated! Which also means that our party leaders still have lots of time for puppy petting and kissing babies -oh wait- that would be lots of time for waving and virtual town halls!

So Mr. Trudeau - what will it be - Spring or Fall?

Source: Sharleen Sullivan

Please find an exclusive invitation to Portage's free webinar titled: Teens and Drugs - Your Questions Answered! On April 12th, hear experts in the industry provide information on signs to look out for when it comes to your children's exposure to drugs and alcohol. Having an open and honest discussion with your teen about this topic can be tricky territory. Our speakers provide concrete tips on how to open up that dialogue.

Hear one family's first-hand experience during our live testimonial and learn how Portage services have provided help for their child and family. Questions are welcome throughout the webinar and will be addressed in the second portion of the presentation. **Link:**

[https://ca01web.zoom.us/webinar/register/2116165992571/WN\\_2Qn2ajlBRKS\\_Qt43RDJ8FQ](https://ca01web.zoom.us/webinar/register/2116165992571/WN_2Qn2ajlBRKS_Qt43RDJ8FQ)

## TEENS AND DRUGS WEBINAR

Join Portage's team of experts as they guide you through your teens' relationship with drugs and alcohol. Hear about one family's experience during our live testimonial, followed by an interactive Q&A period.

APRIL 12TH AT 7:00PM

**PORTAGE**  
FREEDOM FROM ADDICTION

REGISTER AT  
THE LINK PROVIDED

# Community Services Offered by the Centre d'Action Bénévole

Our local volunteer center provides some services you may not have heard about!



## Transportation and Accompaniment

-service is mainly used by seniors for medical appointments (hospital tests, chiropractor, dentist, optometrist, etc.) and young children (due to Covid-19 for daycare and school)

## Eligibility Criteria

- reduced mobility or mental incapacities (permanent or temporary, i.e. broken leg)
- must be living in their natural home (not for seniors in residences, since their meals are already included)
- age
- local \$11.00 if paid by user; \$12.00 paid via social assistance
- fee per km for non-local or flat rate between \$93 to \$112 (for hospital tests in Amos or Val d'Or)

## La Popote Roulante (Meals on Wheels)

- service of warm healthy balanced lunches made at the hospital kitchen.  
-local ( includes McWatters, Evain, Noranda North). Meals are delivered between 11:30 and 12:30.

## Eligibility Criteria

- reduced mobility or mental incapacities (permanent or temporary)
- must be living in their natural home

## Costs:

- \$5.50 per meal

## La Caravane Alimentaire (Food Caravan)

- service of cold or frozen healthy balanced meals made by Le Café des Transformeurs. Deliveries are done 3 business days after order has been made. Orders can also be made for specific days, example meals can be delivered every Monday, or Tuesdays and Thursdays. This is not for low income (will be referred to Centre Bernard Hamel), or Covid-19 patients, as they can use the grocery delivery service, since they can make their own meals but just have to isolate.

## Eligibility Criteria

- reduced mobility or mental incapacities (permanent or temporary)
- must be living in their natural home

## Costs:

- \$2.00 to \$14.00 per food item (ex. A bowl of soup \$2.00, a salmon pie \$14.00)

**Minimum order of \$30.00**

## Aide aux Courses: (Grocery Delivery)

- service of shopping and delivery in collaboration with IGA Famille Julien

## Eligibility Criteria:

- seniors and vulnerable people prioritized

## Costs:

- free delivery; groceries to be paid on delivery by cheque, cash or bank transfer.

**Call them at 819-762-0515 \*Please Note: All volunteers have a photo ID card to identify themselves**

# April 2021

| Sun   | Mon   | Tue  | Wed  | Thu   | Fri                           | Sat |
|---|---|--|--|---|-------------------------------|-----|
|   |   |  |  | 1<br>                 | 2<br>Good Friday<br>No School | 3   |
| 4<br>Easter Sunday<br> | 5<br>Easter Monday<br>No School   | 6<br>P.D.Day<br>No School  | 7<br> | 8   | 9                             | 10  |
| 11<br>                 | 12<br>Portage's<br>Teens and Drugs<br>Free Webinar<br> | 13   | 14   | 15  | 16                            | 17  |
| 18  | 19  | 20   | 21   | 22<br>Earth Day<br> | 23                            | 24  |
| 25  | 26  | 27<br>Full Moon<br> | 28   | 29  | 30                            |     |



*Our Health*  
IS IN OUR HANDS



*In partnership with*



Patrimoine  
canadien

Canadian  
Heritage