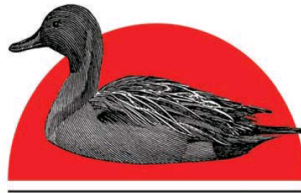


# Brome County NEWS



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2021



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## Voters lean towards continuity in municipal elections

BCN Staff

The 2021 Quebec Municipal Elections provided several heated mayoral and councillor races across the Eastern Townships and concluded with many familiar faces in the local politics scene.

In Lac-Brome, Mayor Richard Burcombe was elected by acclamation, as well as a number of the councillor seats. However, Shelley Judge shocked District 2 West-brome - Iron Hill incumbent Ronald Myles accumulating just over 54 per cent of the vote.

Judge finished with 177 votes compared to Myles' 80 votes, ending his two-term reign in the district. Fred Enns came in third with 67 votes. David Taveroff was also ousted from the municipal council, losing to Patrick Ouvard, 194 to 149 votes, in the District 6 Foster race.

In Sutton, Robert Benoit's political party, Action Sutton, swept every councillor position. Benoit won the mayoral race, crushing his opponents with 1,477 votes. Louis Dandenault was the runner-up with 624 votes. Sutton had a 54 per cent voter turnout in the election.

Over in Potton, in one of the more hotly contested mayoral races in the Townships, there was just over 65 per cent voter turnout, with the majority of votes, 630, going to newly elected mayor Bruno Côté. Stansje Plantenga finished a close second with 559 votes.

There were 22 candidates in the Potton election, and no one had the luxury of winning by acclamation.

CONT'D ON PAGE 3

## Knowlton students smash pumpkins for compost initiative



By Michael Boriero

It was like a scene out of a horror movie outside Knowlton Academy on Thursday afternoon, as students spent their lunch hour using a pitchfork, shovels, and sheer brute strength to maim, crush, squash, and dismember unsuspecting pumpkins.

However, standing among the guts and seeds strewn across the parking lot pavement, Jennifer Ruggins Muir, the school's garden project coordinator, told The Record that it wasn't simply

a complete disregard for pumpkin safety, but rather part of an annual composting tradition.

"They learn about greenhouse gases, so we started doing this a few years ago where we were wondering how many pumpkins go in the garbage after Halloween every year and how much greenhouse gas it creates, so we decided to try a pumpkin recycling situation here," she said.

Ruggins Muir runs several green initiatives at the school, including a rhubarb drive, where residents

drop off the red vegetable stalks to be transformed into edible treats in the cafeteria. She started collecting pumpkins four years ago because she was concerned about food waste.

According to a CBC article in 2018, while many Canadians choose to compost their carved up pumpkins after Halloween, most people can't be bothered, and instead throw their rotting pumpkins into the garbage, amounting to thousands of tonnes of waste every year.

CONT'D ON PAGE 3

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## municipal elections

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

Plantenga put together a strong campaign with her political party, Un avenir pour tous à Potton, sternly opposing Côté and preaching for a change in leadership.

However, her party, which consisted of three other candidates, failed to gain much ground. The only member to win was Christine Baudinet, who took councillor position 2 with 588 votes, narrowly defeating Edward Mierzewski, who finished with 569 votes.

Meanwhile Jason Ball, Francis Marcoux, André Ducharme retained their municipal council seats. Emilie Hébert-Larue and Cynthia Sherrer round out the remaining councillor positions. This packed electoral race was in stark contrast to Frelighsburg.

Municipal candidates in small border town went mostly unopposed, with Lucie Dagenais winning the

mayoral race by acclamation. Her political party, Équipe Lucie Dagenais, nearly claimed every councillor position, except for Marie Côté.

Côté was edged out by Catherine Marsan-Loyer, who received a majority with 140 votes. Up the road in Dunham, with a 47 per cent voter turnout, Pierre Janeczek was re-elected mayor, defeating outgoing councillor Léo Simoneau by a wide margin; 1,005 votes to 370 votes.

And in Bedford, Claude Dubois leapt over his mayoral opponent Normand Dérageon with 554 votes compared to Dérageon's 368 votes. There was a 42 per cent voter turnout, according to the Quebec municipal elections website.

In Notre-Dame-de-Stanbridge, Daniel Tétreault was re-elected mayor, winning by acclamation. And

over in Saint-Ignace-de-Stanbridge, Dominique Martel was also re-elected mayor, defeating Josée Goyette by seven votes.

Vinciane Peeters was elected the new mayor of Bolton-Est, overcoming her opponent Gaetan Hamel. Alain Déry barely defeated Sylvain Moreau to keep his position on the municipal council. Pierre Grenier and Pierre Piché also kept their spots on the council.

Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton saw a complete, unopposed sweep by the political party, Équipe stéphanoise, with David Auclair taking the mayoral seat. And in Bolton-Ouest, Denis Vaillancourt was introduced as mayor, having defeated Pierre Godbout by 120 votes.

Similar to Saint-Étienne-de-Bolton, Waterloo went unopposed and the political party Avenir Waterloo took

every councillor position. Jean-Marie Lachapelle was re-elected mayor by acclamation. Down in Cowansville there was only a 31 per cent voter turnout.

But that didn't stop Sylvie Beauregard from retaining her mayoral duties as she trounced Jean-Yves Hinse by more than 1,000 votes. Farnham also saw a low voter turnout with 32 per cent, but voters re-elected mayor Patrick Melchior over Christian Labrecque.

In East Farnham, Sylvie Dionne Raymond was also re-elected mayor by acclamation. Bromont Mayor Louis Villeneuve also won by acclamation, and with the lowest voter turnout at 24 per cent, Éric Chagnon was re-elected mayor of Shefford (Township).

## Smashing pumpkins

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

The article also explains that there are more than 2,500 farms with pumpkin patches in Canada, according to Statistics Canada. And they often combine to produce roughly 80,000 metric tonnes of pumpkin — about two-thirds are sold to customers.

Although Ruggins Muir was forced to cancel the annual pumpkin smashing last year, Knowlton residents remembered the composting initiative. Not only did she receive enough pumpkins for students to joyfully smash into the ground, but there were leftovers to be used for food.

"The small ones are all fine for cooking, they have

not been cut open, they're just halloween displays and stuff, so we've already taken about 30 or 40 of those away. They're good for muffins, breakfast programs, soups, and things in the cafeteria," said Muir.

When the The Record spoke to the garden project coordinator, she had already sent a van load of edible pumpkins over to the cafeterias at Waterloo Elementary School and Heroes' Memorial Elementary School in Cowansville. She is also distributing some pumpkins to local hunters.

Muir said she will send a load over to the hunters to be used as bait. In return, they

will provide the school with venison, which will be used in a chili offered to students during the cold winter months. There was a lot of heavy lifting Thursday, but students also got a warm break.

The school set up a small fire pit near the pumpkin smashing site, where students were able to roast marshmallows together. Ruggins Muir said that with the help and effort of everyone involved, the destroyed pumpkins will turn into organic fertilizer for the garden in two years.



MICHAEL BORIERO

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