

# The Townships

## Lennoxville: Thumbs down on Ascot fire deal

By Scott Verity Stevenson

LENNOXVILLE — Lennoxville has closed its negotiations with Ascot Township over fire protection, but opened new ones Monday night with *Sentier Massawippi* over the former Canadian Pacific railway line between Sherbrooke and Beebe.

At Monday's town meeting Lennoxville council decided not to extend the deadline on an offer to share fire protection service with Ascot.

Council also moved to support the objectives of the *Sentier Massawippi* group, which wants the abandoned rail line converted into a "green corridor."

According to trail activist Tom Vandermeulen, Lennoxville is the first municipality to support their proposal by resolution.

"We are very happy with Len-

noxville's support," Vandemeulen said. "They are now an important example to all the other municipalities covered by the railroad track."

### PRESERVE GREEN SPACE

Lennoxville has already set aside \$25,000 for a recreational track along the St. Francis river to Sherbrooke, proposed by the "Recreational Track Committee" of Lennoxville.

Last night's resolution said Lennoxville will "consider participating financially in the acquisition of the railway right-of-way on its territory," if the Quebec government fails to do so.

*Sentier Massawippi's* immediate goals are to preserve the corridor as a green space and right-of-way, and to explore possibilities for the creation and management of a recreational trail along that

corridor. Lennoxville resolved to endorse these goals and will encourage other municipalities to do so.

The Quebec government is currently deciding whether it wants the land, and Lennoxville will ask the province to study the feasibility of a trail and help pay for it.

### NO MORE NEGOTIATIONS

On the issue of sharing fire protection with Ascot, Lennoxville has decided not to give the township 45 extra days to consider its final offer of last month.

Negotiations have gone back and forth for several months, and Lennoxville decided its last offer, received by Ascot on June 29, was good until last week's July 4 deadline.

Ascot responded by asking for another 45 days to consider the offer, but Lennoxville decided against that.

Asked if Ascot could still accept the offer, town manager Jacques Gagnon said no. "Our offer is finished."

The decision was not made by resolution, however, unlike past bargains with Ascot.

In a previous interview, Gagnon said Lennoxville was becoming impatient. "We insist on a resolution from Ascot. These were resolution-to-resolution negotiations. We're not operating on word of mouth here."

The ball rests in Ascot's court. "They can do what they want," Gagnon said.

Township councillor Raymond Roy said Ascot council is largely in favor of closing the file with Lennoxville. "We are disappointed. We believed in the quality of Lennoxville's services. But negotiations are finished," said Roy, who is head of the Ascot security committee responsible for fire protection.

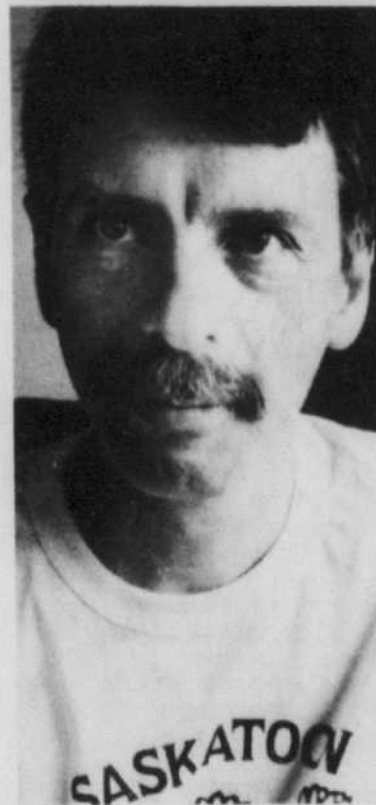
"Ascot will continue to protect its citizens through our deal with Sherbrooke," he said.

Lennoxville councillor Pierre Massé said the town can do without Ascot for fire protection. "We have our own service, we don't need Ascot to protect our citizens."

Rural Ascot residents may feel they need Lennoxville for adequate fire protection, however. Since Ascot made a deal with Sherbrooke for their services instead of Lennoxville, some residents think protection will be inadequate because of the longer distance Sherbrooke firemen have to travel to reach rural Ascot.

Although Lennoxville had

bought a \$137,000 pumper fire truck specially designed to serve rural areas such as Ascot Township, Gagnon said Monday's decision will not cost Lennoxville any more for fire protection, but "there will be less revenue."



Tom Vandermeulen... 'An important example.'



Lennoxville councillor Pierre Massé tells town clerk Johanne Henson council's final verdict: No deal with Ascot Township.

## LRA: Grant for composting

SHERBROOKE (DH) — The Lennoxville Residents Association has gone from a budget which amounted to "nickels and dimes", to one which totals close to \$9000, thanks in part to the federal government.

Helena Brodie, the association's volunteer co-ordinator, said the money follows an application to the federal Environmental Partners Fund.

In a telephone interview Monday, Brodie said the Ottawa money will subsidize "soil-saver compost bins."

Brodie said the bins will be sold to Lennoxville residents at a substantial saving.

She said the association ordered the bins this week from an Ontario company. They are expected sometime in August or September, she said.

Brodie said the bins normally retail for about \$90 but the association paid about \$55 each and will sell them to Lennoxville residents

for about \$30. Senior citizens will pay about \$20, she said.

### CUT DOWN GARBAGE

"The idea is to encourage people to compost and to reduce their garbage," she said.

Brodie added that the association will also host public information sessions on the topic of composting.

"Part of this project is educational," she said.

The federal contribution amounts to \$4400 in cash, and is a "matched fund." In other words, said a press release from Sherbrooke MP Jean Charest, the association had to "come up with same amount in time and money."

Brodie said Lennoxville town council contributed \$1000, while numerous people volunteered time.

The Environmental Partners Fund is an Environment Canada project, which in its first year supplied \$6.8 million to local projects across the country.



Helena Brodie... 'To encourage people.'



RECORD/KATHY MERCIER

**Wild downhill ride:** Many resorts in the Eastern Townships have the basics for silly summer fun: mini putt, bike trails, hiking paths, riding trails, croquet courts — you name it. But Hatley Township's Montjoye has something a little different.

The resort took the seats off one of its ski lifts. If you show up with a go cart, you're hooked on and hoisted up the hill. Next thing you know, you're coming down at an incredible speed. At \$3 a lift, or three for \$10, it looks like a lot of fun.

## Lawsuit: Asbestos Corp. shareholders won't quit

By Allan Swift

MONTREAL (CP) — The minority shareholders of an asbestos mine, who claim they lost \$100 million when Quebec nationalized the company, are not disheartened by a Supreme Court of Canada setback in their legal battle.

Lawyer Carmand Normand said

Monday that the minority shareholders have several avenues left to them, although the Supreme Court blocked one last week when it refused a request for a class-action suit by a Quebecer against provincially owned Asbestos Corp. Ltd.

Asbestos Corp. later became the core of the Crown-owned *La So-*

*ciété nationale de l'amiante*, based in Thetford Mines.

"It's a little sad for that case, it's cut off one route for a minority shareholder," said Normand, who represents a group of Asbestos minority shareholders.

But he says it may make it easier for the group to pursue two other routes it is currently working on.

This week the group will deposit its documents for an appeal in Quebec Court of a 1988 decision by the Quebec Securities Commission.

The commission ruled then the Quebec government acted within its rights when it bought majority control of Asbestos Corp. from General Dynamics Corp. of St. Louis, Mo., in 1986, without extending the offer to some 200 Canadian shareholders.

Normand said that decision means "that the Quebec government is above the law."

### HURT MARKETS

Quebec paid General Dynamics \$88 a share. General Dynamics resisted the hostile takeover, and between the initial offer and the time the payment was made the

share value had dwindled to \$2 a share. Health fears over the mineral dried up world markets.

Normand said those share today would be worth \$135, at 10-per-cent annual interest.

"It's the worst discrimination of minority shareholders on any exchange in Canada, and it's being done by one of our proudest governments," Normand charged bitterly.

A second route being followed by the minority shareholders is through the Ontario Securities Commission, since Asbestos shares are also traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

The Ontario Commission, after reviewing the case, decided about two years ago that the minority shareholders may have grounds for complaint and decided to hold a

public hearing.

The Quebec government, alleging that the Ontario Securities Commission has no right to intervene in the Asbestos case, has sought an injunction in Ontario Divisional Court to stop the hearing. The injunction hearing is scheduled for late August.

Quebec's main defence is that under the British North America Act it has the right to minerals without intervention of the Ontario Securities Commission, said Normand.

"If a government can go on the TSE and buy anything it wants without following the law that means any city government or communist government can come here and do anything it wants, which is nonsense."

## Mother electrocuted in bath

SHERBROOKE — Police, forensic scientists and Hydro Quebec engineers are investigating the electrocution of a 25-year-old Wottonville homemaker while she was taking a bath late Sunday.

The woman's three-year-old daughter, who was in the tub with her, was unhurt in the bizarre acci-

dent.

The woman apparently died instantly when she reached for the hot-water tap while sitting in the bathtub.

Police believe a short-circuit may have been caused by faulty

wiring of the water heater in the old house. It appeared to have no ground connection.

Specialists from the provincial crime laboratory in Montreal, Hydro Quebec's safety division and the Quebec Police Force detachment in Weedon are working together to solve the mystery.

## Green party: Leader wants a seat at the big table

By Dan Hawaleshka

SHERBROOKE — The leader of the Quebec Green party wants to sit on Premier Robert Bourassa's legislative committee planned to help map the province's constitutional future.

"I think we have the political legitimacy to be represented on the committee," Jean Ouimet said Monday.

"I'm looking for people to endorse my candidacy," said Ouimet, who arrived in Sherbrooke from Mansonville on a province-wide bicycle tour.

Ouimet said he hopes today to convince Claude Beland, president of Caisse Populaire Desjardins, to put in a good word for him.

"I'm going to contact his press agent," said Ouimet, whose tour is scheduled to last five weeks.

Ouimet started the 1300 kilo-

metre promotional tour in Montreal on Friday. He said the 67,000 votes the Green party collected in last fall's provincial election makes the group legitimate. The Green turnout translated into two per cent of all votes cast.

### SECOND TOUR

Last year Ouimet travelled about 1500 km on a similar tour to promote his fledgling party. He said one of his goals for this year's trip is to "appeal to the public to form a common front."

Ouimet said the environment should always be taken into account. "An ecological society will have at its centre ecologically-based decisions," he said.

In the same breath Ouimet criticized Hydro-Québec. "They're proposing to increase energy production by 40 per cent by the year 2006," he said. "We're proposing a

reduction in our consumption through efficiency."

"One of the best ways is to reduce our pace of life," he said. "The faster we have to go from point A to point B, the more energy we consume."

Ouimet also said a slower lifestyle would greatly improve Quebecers' quality of life by allowing more time with friends and family.

Ouimet said the United Nations' Commission on Environment and Development called for industrial countries "to reduce their energy consumption by 50 per cent by the year 2030."

"From an economic point of view, an accelerated pace of life is good for the economy. From an ecological point of view, it's negative," Ouimet said.

### POLLUTION

"We can produce waste at a cer-

tain rate, which the environment can absorb. Beyond that, it becomes pollution," he said.

Ouimet said the Green party stands for proportional representation in elections, and multi-party sharing of government powers.

He also said the party will field a complete slate of 125 candidates in the next provincial election. Last fall the Greens ran 46 candidates. In 1985 they ran only 10.

"In 32 out of 46 ridings we placed third," Ouimet said. In 10 of those 32 ridings there were only three candidates.

Ouimet said the party's candidates will be as varied as "professors, students, entrepreneurs and retired people."

He said the party has about 1000 members and about 130 of them live in the Eastern Townships.

After his stay in Sherbrooke, Ouimet plans to head out to Lake Megantic, St-Georges de Beauce, Quebec City and Rivière du Loup. A ferry ride across the St. Lawrence River will start him on his way to Lac St-Jean, Rimouski and finally to Sept Isles, where the bike trip will end Aug. 8.

In last year's election the Greens had a strong showing in the riding of Saguenay, with 15.4 per cent of the vote. In the Montreal riding of Outremont they received 8.1 per cent.

Ouimet finished third in his eastern Montreal riding of Sainte-Marie-Saint-Jacques, with 1443 votes. The Parti Québécois candidate won with more than 15,000. Second place went to the Liberal, who had more than 10,000.



Jean Ouimet... 'Reduce our pace of life.'