THE GLOBE AND MAIL

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Air Canada CEO rebuked over English video

Rousseau's French abilities face fresh scrutiny as Carney, other leaders criticize message of sympathy after LaGuardia crash

NICOLAS VAN PRAET MONTREAL
ERIC ATKINS TORONTO

Political leaders expressed dismay with Air Canada's chief executive officer, and in some cases called for his ouster, after his English-language video message of sympathy to those affected by a Sunday plane crash that killed two pilots revived questions about his ability and willingness to speak French.

Among Air Canada CEO Michael Rousseau's critics on Wednesday was Prime Minister Mark Carney, who said he expected a response from the airline's board. The outrage was fiercest among politicians in Quebec, where the French skills of the head of Canada's flag carrier have long been a sore point.

Antoine Forest, the pilot in command of the Air Canada Express flight when it collided with a fire truck on the runway at New York's LaGuardia Airport during landing, was a francophone from Coteau-du-Lac, Que. His co-pilot was Mackenzie Gunther from Ontario. The jet departed from Montreal.

On his way into the House of Commons on Wednesday, Mr. Carney said that Canada is a bilingual country and that Air Canada has a responsibility to communicate in both official languages, regardless of the situation.

"I'm so disappointed by the video message by Air Canada's CEO," Mr. Carney said. "It lacks judgment and compassion."

Parliament's official languages committee decided late Tuesday to summon Mr. Rousseau to allow him to explain himself. The summons asked him to appear before May 1.

In the four-minute video uploaded to the airline's website Monday, Mr. Rousseau offered information on the accident and expressed his "deepest sorrow for everyone affected." In French, he said only two words: "Bonjour" at the start and "merci" at the end.

Mr. Carney said he would follow Mr. Rousseau's appearance at the committee closely, "as well as comments which I expect in due course" from the airline's board of directors.

"This is a major crisis now" for Air Canada, said François Dauphin, president of the Institute for Governance of Private and Public Organizations.

▪ AIR CANADA, A17

FOLIO

Betty Tetso sits with grandson Mason, 5, at their kitchen table in Déline, NWT. As Mason's main caregiver, Ms. Tetso must regularly inspect his teeth; the closest dental clinic is more than 500 kilometres away. TATE JUNIPER/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

In NWT, residents and government pay the price for dental-care deserts

Many forced to travel far away for treatment – or suffer without

TAVIA GRANT DÉLINE, NWT
CLAIRE McFARLANE TORONTO

Wind whips along the shores of the Northwest Territories' Great Bear Lake as Déline is blanketed in the season's first snowfall. The fly-in Dene community, located just below the Arctic Circle, is the only settlement on one of the biggest lakes in the world.

In her lilac-painted living room with a view of the water, Betty Tetso wraps her arms around her grandson, Mason, as the five-year-old settles on her lap beside the woodstove, his gloves hanging to dry.

As his main caregiver, Ms. Tetso gets him to kindergarten, fixes his meals and tucks him in at night. She also regularly inspects his teeth.

She has to. Déline has no dentist. The closest clinic is more than 500 kilometres away, in Yellowknife. No dentists have visited in more than three years. None are scheduled to come.

Ms. Tetso's vigilance is also rooted in an experience about two years ago with another grandson, a 10-year-old whose cavities had become so severe that she had to take him all the way to Edmonton so he could be sedated for fillings.

Mason only has a small cavity, but she's worried. "He has to be checked because the cavity's going to get bigger," says Ms. Tetso, a former community health representative.

Most Canadians living in the south, whether in big cities or small towns, have their pick of local dentists, who they can conveniently visit for the recommended twice-yearly checkups.

▪ NWT, A9

Canadian says he was beaten in Ethiopian prison over past comments

GEOFFREY YORK
AFRICA BUREAU CHIEF
JOHANNESBURG

A Canadian man has suffered severe beatings at the hands of Ethiopian police who have imprisoned him for more than five months on allegations that he supported a banned militia, the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission says.

The man, 39-year-old Esubalew Birhanie, is a ground technician at Toronto's Pearson airport. He was visiting family in Ethiopia when he was pulled off an airplane last October. Police are accusing him of links to Fano, an ethnic-based militia in Ethiopia's Amhara region that has been banned by the government.

In an interview in prison, Mr. Birhanie said the police are persecuting him for comments he made at a meeting in Toronto six years ago.

"The Constitution of Canada allows me to speak freely as a citizen," he told The Globe and Mail. "To be judged in Ethiopia for what I said in Canada is wrong."

He and his supporters are concerned that the Ethiopian government is seeking to control the behaviour of Ethiopian-Canadians by monitoring and policing their comments in Canada.

A nine-page report by the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission says it investigated the case and concluded that the Canadian man was "beaten by officers, resulting in significant physical injuries to his waist and ribs."

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Rogers fights payment to MLSE's Tanenbaum for managing mother's estate in latest sign of friction

IRENE GALEA

Edward Rogers, executive chairman of the telecom giant Rogers Communications Inc., has triggered a clash over his mother's multimillion-dollar estate with an attempt to deny payments to his partner in pro sports, Larry Tanenbaum.

Mr. Rogers has objected to the $11-million in total compensation that Mr. Tanenbaum and the estate's two other trustees are claiming as executors of the $250-million estate of his mother, Loretta Anne Rogers.

Mr. Rogers has also objected to any payment to Mr. Tanenbaum, saying it appeared he had "delegated" his duties to his co-trustees.

Mr. Tanenbaum's company, Kilmer Sports Inc., owns a 25-per-cent stake in Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment, which Rogers Communications has the right to acquire in July, giving it full ownership of the sports company.

Mr. Rogers's objection to Mr. Tanenbaum's compensation is the latest sign of friction between the two businessmen, who have a history of disagreement over some aspects of their jointly held and managed sports empire.

The sparring over the management of Ms. Rogers's estate also follows a feud within the family several years ago, as she and two of her daughters found themselves opposing Mr. Rogers both in the boardroom and the courtroom over the leadership of the telecom company that bears their name.

Mr. Rogers laid out his objection to the compensation in legal filings earlier this month, in response to a detailed account of the trustees' yet-unfinished administration of Ms. Rogers's sprawling estate between her death in 2022 and the end of 2024.

The estate encompassed numerous real estate holdings, a wide range of other physical assets and significant financial holdings.

▪ ROGERS, A8

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INSIDE

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PODCAST James Griffiths explains how the war in Iran is rippling across Asia, from oil markets to labour forces tgam.ca/TheDecibel

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NIAP'S BEAUTY IN OUR LINES

NIAP (1986–), BEAUTY IN OUR LINES, 2019, WATERCOLOUR AND INK OVER TRACES OF GRAPHITE, THREAD EMBROIDERY. THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, PURCHASE, SERGE DESROCHES BEQUEST. MMFA

Throughout March, we are showcasing artworks from the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Founded in 1860, it is Canada's oldest art museum. MMFA's collection includes close to 47,000 works in a wide range of mediums. www.mbam.qc.ca

Women's face and body tattoos (tunniq and kakiniq, respectively) mark and relate the different stages of an Inuk woman's life. Banned for years after Inuit communities converted to Christianity, the practice was forced underground. Committed to restoring visibility to this tradition and ensuring its survival, Kuujjuaq-born artist Niap adorned this drawing of her grandmothers' untouched skin with stitched tattoos that symbolize connection and community.

COLUMNISTS

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My old e-mail address was an extension of my identity, writes Suzanne Westover A15

CATHAL KELLY OPINION

This MLB season, it's time to wholeheartedly dive in and believe in the Blue Jays B13

CLARIFICATION

A March 20 news article about the Online Streaming Act did not specify that the Motion Picture Association is only challenging the Online Streaming Act over the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission's order to contribute 1.5 per cent of Canadian revenues to the production of local news.

The Globe and Mail is committed to maintaining the highest ethical, legal and editorial standards.
SANDRA E. MARTIN, STANDARDS EDITOR, standardseditor@globeandmail.com

FIFA cancelling thousands of hotel bookings in host cities, including Vancouver and Toronto

JESSE WINTER

Organizers of the coming FIFA World Cup have begun cancelling thousands of their hotel-room bookings in Toronto, Vancouver and other host cities across North America, a move industry observers say is not uncommon during large events.

The British Columbia Hotel Association said FIFA organizers have cancelled between 70 per cent and 80 per cent of their booked hotel rooms in Vancouver, accounting for roughly 15,000 hotel-room nights during the tournament period between June 11 and July 19. Those freed-up rooms can now be booked by regular travellers, the association said.

Such cancellations are standard practice for large-scale events, as organizers adjust their allocations closer to the event, association president Paul Hawes said in a statement to The Globe and Mail.

"In this case, however, the volume released is higher than typically expected. It appears consistent with what is being seen in other host cities across North America," Mr. Hawes said.

Hotels in Toronto are also seeing blocks of rooms cancelled, according to Greater Toronto Hotel Association president Sara Anghel.

She said she didn't yet have specific estimates on the numbers, but had heard about block cancellations from some of the association's membership.

"No one is happy with the decision to drop the blocks [of rooms], and as we see, it's becoming a pattern across North American cities. So, you know, let that be a lesson … for future host countries or cities," Ms. Anghel said.

According to ABC News, FIFA also cancelled around 2,000 of its original reservation of 10,000 hotel rooms in Philadelphia. Mexican newspaper El Financiero reported that FIFA had also cancelled blocks of rooms in Mexico City.

FIFA organizers did not immediately respond to The Globe's requests for comment.

The Globe also reached out to the ministries of tourism in both British Columbia and Ontario. In a statement, the B.C. Tourism Ministry said it was "thrilled to be welcoming visitors to Vancouver and B.C." for the World Cup, and that the host committee and Hotel Association of Vancouver are "working directly with FIFA" on accommodations. Ontario's Tourism Ministry did not respond.

June and July are the height of tourist season in Toronto and Vancouver. Both Ms. Anghel and Mr. Hawes said demand for hotel rooms in their respective cities remains high, and there is no concern the newly available rooms won't get filled.

In 2025, Airbnb commissioned a report from professional-services company Deloitte, which estimated that Vancouver would be short 70,000 hotel-room nights during the games. In response, the city began encouraging homeowners to become registered short-term rental hosts and consider making their spaces available for tourists and fans during the games.

In Toronto, booking demand is about 30 per cent higher than usual for the month of June, Ms. Anghel said.

Toronto's hotel capacity is around 20,000 rooms, with an additional 4,000 rooms available in neighbouring municipalities, Ms. Anghel said. According to a 2024 Destination Vancouver report, the Metro Vancouver area has about 23,000 hotel rooms available.

Along with the cancelled room bookings, Ms. Anghel said Toronto and Vancouver hosting the World Cup has also meant some potential profit losses for hotels in both cities, because conference and convention planners have been choosing other destinations during their busiest summer period.

Vancouver has also seen business events, corporate travel and tours displaced by FIFA, Mr. Hawes said in his statement. "However, with an estimated 350,000 incremental visitors expected across the seven matches, the World Cup remains one part of a broader mix of business during an already busy period."

Jury finds Meta, YouTube negligent in addiction case

Verdict validates novel legal theory that social-media apps can cause personal injury

CECILIA KANG
RYAN MAC
ELI TAN

Social-media company Meta and video streaming service YouTube harmed a young user with design features that were addictive and led to her mental-health distress, a jury found Wednesday, a landmark decision that could open social-media companies to more lawsuits over users' well-being.

Meta and YouTube must pay US$3-million in compensatory damages for pain and suffering and other financial burdens. Meta is responsible for 70 per cent of that cost and YouTube for the remainder.

The bellwether case, which was brought by a now 20-year-old woman identified as K.G.M., had accused social-media companies of creating products as addictive as cigarettes or digital casinos. K.G.M. sued Meta, which owns Instagram and Facebook, and Google's YouTube over features like infinite scroll and algorithmic recommendations that she claimed led to anxiety and depression.

The jury of seven women and five men will deliberate further to decide what punitive damages the companies should pay for malice or fraud.

The verdict in K.G.M.'s case – one of thousands of lawsuits filed by teenagers, school districts and state attorneys general against Meta, YouTube, TikTok and Snap, which owns Snapchat – was a major win for the plaintiffs. The finding validates a novel legal theory that social-media sites or apps can cause personal injury. It is likely to factor into similar cases expected to go to trial this year, which could expose the internet giants to further financial damages and force changes to their products.

Amy Neville, third from left, reacts alongside other mothers and supporters in Los Angeles on Wednesday after a jury found Meta and YouTube liable in a landmark case accusing the companies of harming children's mental health through addictive platforms. MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS

The personal liability argument draws inspiration from a legal playbook used against Big Tobacco last century, in which lawyers argued that the companies created addictive products that harmed users. The companies have largely dodged legal threats by citing a federal shield that protects them from liability for what their users post.

TikTok and Snap both settled with the plaintiff for undisclosed terms before the trial started.

Wednesday's verdict follows a ruling by a New Mexico jury in another case brought by the state attorney-general there, which found Meta liable for violating state law by failing to safeguard users of its apps from child predators. That jury decided Meta should pay US$375-million in the case.

The lawyers, parents and consumer interest groups supporting plaintiffs in other suits hailed the jury's decision as a major step to rein in social-media giants, which have largely fought off regulations. The trial in the California Superior Court in Los Angeles County began last month, with the jury taking more than a week of deliberation to reach its verdict.

"This is a breakthrough because it validates a new theory that platform design can be a defective product," said Kimberly Pallen, a litigation partner at the law firm Withers, who does not have clients in the cases.

"This is the first time in history a jury has heard testimony by executives and seen internal documents that we believe prove these companies chose profits over children," said Joseph VanZandt, one of K.G.M.'s lawyers.

"We respectfully disagree with the verdict and are evaluating our legal options," a Meta spokesperson said. YouTube did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The cases have been compared to those against Big Tobacco last century, when Philip Morris and R.J. Reynolds were accused of hiding information about the harms of cigarettes. The companies reached a US$206-billion master settlement with more than 40 states in 1998 that led to an agreement to stop marketing to minors.

Though the California Superior Court of Los Angeles County verdict is an initial victory against tech giants, legal experts said it was unclear if the decision would represent a similar turning point. Eight other cases brought by individual plaintiffs are slated to go to trial there. A set of federal cases brought by states and school districts in Oakland, Calif., at the U.S. District Court of Northern California, are scheduled for jury trials this summer.

"There is a long road ahead, but this decision is quite significant," said Clay Calvert, a non-resident senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, a centre-right think tank, and expert on media law. "If there are a series of verdicts for plaintiffs, it will force the defendants to reconsider how they design social-media platforms and how they deliver content to minors."

Concern about social media use has mounted globally. In 2024, the U.S. surgeon general called for adding warning labels to social media explaining that the platforms were associated with mental health harms for adolescents. In December, Australia barred children under 16 from using social media. Malaysia, Spain and Denmark are considering similar rules.

But most efforts to regulate social media in the United States have failed. Social-media companies have largely dodged legal threats by citing the federal shield – called Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 – that protects them from liability for what their users post.

K.G.M., whose first name is Kaley, filed her lawsuit in 2023 against Meta, Snap, YouTube and TikTok. Kaley, who lives in Chico, Calif., said she had begun using social media at age six and claimed the sites caused personal injury, including body dysmorphia and thoughts of self-harm.

Her case, which was presided over by Judge Carolyn Kuhl, represented one of the strongest personal injury cases among the thousands of suits filed.

While Snap and TikTok settled, lawyers for Meta and YouTube proceeded, saying they had a strong legal defense. It was too hard to prove social media was addictive and caused personal harms, the companies said.

During opening arguments, one of K.G.M.'s lawyers, Mark Lanier, presented the jury internal company documents from Meta and YouTube that showed tech executives knew of and discussed the negative effects of their products on children.

Meta countered that K.G.M.'s mental-health issues were caused by familial abuse and turmoil. YouTube argued that it was not a social media company and that its features were not designed to be addictive.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

[RELIGION]

Making Church of England history

Sarah Mullally is formally installed as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury during a service in Canterbury Cathedral in England on Wednesday. She is the first female to hold the position

JORDAN PETTITT/WPA POOL/GETTY IMAGES

Leaderless corporate watchdog still 'important,' Foreign Affairs Minister says

Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise was established in 2019 to investigate allegations of human-rights abuses and environmental harms

STEVEN CHASE
ROBERT FIFE

Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Anand says a federal watchdog that polices Canadian corporate conduct abroad remains "important" and said Ottawa is trying to find a new top executive to lead the office that has lacked a permanent head for nearly two years.

The Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE) was established in 2019 under then-prime minister Justin Trudeau to investigate allegations of human-rights abuses and environmental harms by Canadian companies operating overseas in the mining, petroleum and garment sectors.

Its first and only permanent ombudsperson finished her term in April, 2024. An interim replacement left in May, 2025, and the post has been vacant for 10 months under Prime Minister Mark Carney's government.

Former ombudsperson Sheri Meyerhoffer and ex-Liberal MP John McKay, who previously spearheaded legislation to combat forced labour, have both said they are worried that the Canadian government is going to let the watchdog wither and disappear.

Ms. Anand, during a conference call with journalists Wednesday, said the office is still vital after being asked whether Ottawa would fill the ombudsperson post.

"The office remains important. We are working with alacrity to fill numerous positions across the government, both externally and internally," the minister said, adding later: "We are working on the issue that you raised in your question."

Among its past investigations, CORE probed the alleged use of Uyghur forced labour in China.

Aidan Gilchrist-Blackwood, co-ordinator of the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability, said it's a positive sign that Ms. Anand appears to be supportive of CORE.

But he said the government needs to give a timeline for when the new ombudsperson would be appointed and to commit to expand CORE's investigative responsibilities.

"That 10-month delay has been unacceptable, but we are glad the commitment is being made," he said. "Recognizing that the office is important, the government has to put its money where its mouth is and grant the office long-needed independent, investigative powers, which were committed to when the office was first created and not delivered."

Georgina Alonso, senior research and advocacy officer of Above Ground, a human-rights and corporate-accountability project, has said that without an ombudsperson in place, CORE is hampered from moving forward on new complaints about companies.

CORE itself declined to say how many staff are employed at the watchdog now. Kristina Jelinic, director of public affairs at CORE, said the office has 12 funded positions but declined to say how many people are working there at this time.

"Through our flexible staffing model, we ensure that we have sufficient resources at any given time to meet the operational requirements of the office as we await a decision on its future," Ms. Jelinic said in an e-mailed statement. "As these requirements fluctuate, so too does the number of staff assigned to CORE business"

The federal government's online employee directory lists only three employees at CORE right now.

Earlier this week, the United Nations Human Rights Committee, which includes representatives from the United States, France and Spain, criticized Ottawa for failing to fill the top job at CORE.

The UN expert panel said Monday it is troubling that the Canadian government has left the position vacant for close to a year. It called on Canada to "strengthen mechanisms to ensure that business enterprises under its jurisdiction respect human-rights standards, including when operating abroad."

DEMOCRATS WIN FLORIDA ELECTION IN DISTRICT THAT INCLUDES MAR-A-LAGO

WASHINGTON Democrat Emily Gregory won a Florida special election on Tuesday, flipping a state legislative district that is home to Mar-a-Lago, the Palm Beach estate that President Donald Trump counts as his residence.

The President had endorsed Ms. Gregory's rival, Jon Maples. In a social media post Monday, he urged voters to turn out, saying Mr. Maples was backed "by so many of my Palm Beach County friends."

Democrats celebrated the victory as the latest sign voters are turning against Mr. Trump and Republicans ahead of the midterm elections in November. Tuesday was the latest in a series of lopsided or improbable victories in special elections across the country since Mr. Trump returned to the White House more than a year ago.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ottawa clashes with Ontario and Alberta at Supreme Court in landmark Bill 21 case

DAVID EBNER
JUSTICE REPORTER
OTTAWA

The federal government clashed with Ontario and Alberta at the Supreme Court of Canada on Wednesday as they argued over potential limits on the Charter's notwithstanding clause.

The federal government called on the Supreme Court to impose, for the first time, limits on repeated use of the notwithstanding clause. Ottawa is also asking for courts to have the ability to issue declarations saying that laws that invoke the clause have violated Canadians' rights, even if the clause prevents judges from overturning those laws.

Ontario and Alberta argued staunchly against any limits on the clause and opposed the idea of judges looking at potential rights violations – asserting that the invocation of the clause means there is no role for the courts.

Lawyers for the governments appeared by Zoom at the country's top court in the landmark case on Quebec's secularism law, known as Bill 21. Quebec shielded the law, enacted in 2019, from court challenges with the notwithstanding clause in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The tool allows governments to override a long list of rights, including freedom of religion and the right to equality. The law was twice upheld in the lower courts.

The eventual ruling in the Bill 21 case will likely reverberate for years to come. It will decide key questions on how the Charter operates, sharpening the boundaries between governmental powers and Canadians' rights.

On Wednesday, Ottawa and the provinces pointed to the political history of the early 1980s, when the Charter became part of the Constitution. Back then, Ottawa made a crucial compromise with the provinces to include the notwithstanding clause in the Charter. Each government had 15 minutes to convince the judges of their views.

Guy Pratte, senior counsel at Borden Ladner Gervais in Ottawa, argued on behalf of the federal government. He said the provinces have a "broad margin" to use the clause without any prior justification, but insisted the political compromise of the early 1980s didn't mean that governments could repeatedly use the clause to effectively eliminate Charter rights.

"That would not at all be the intention of the framers," Mr. Pratte told the judges, referring to the politicians that decided on the details of the Charter.

Ontario Attorney-General Doug Downey said arguments from Ottawa and other challenges to Bill 21 amount to a call "to rewrite the Constitution."

Mr. Downey said the Supreme Court should reject the proposal of judicial declarations on rights violations when the clause is used in law.

"Courts should not provide opinions," said Mr. Downey, describing judicial declarations as an "academic exercise" that could mislead Canadians.

Alberta deputy minister of justice Malcolm Lavoie said the notwithstanding clause is a fundamental feature of the Constitution that ensures provinces can "chart their own course in a united Canada."

He repeatedly argued against judges declaring rights violations if the clause is used. In a concluding statement, he said such a move would "step well outside the judicial role," something that would be "unprecedented and unnecessary."

On Parliament Hill on Wednesday afternoon, Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet challenged Prime Minister Mark Carney about the Bill 21 case, and the separation of church and state, during question period in the House of Commons.

"It is the responsibility of the federal government to defend [the] Charter," Mr. Carney told the House of his government's arguments at the Supreme Court. "We will await the result."

The seven judges hearing the case at the top were mostly quiet on Wednesday, compared with the volley of questions that were asked on Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday, when the governments presented their arguments, Justice Malcolm Rowe interjected five times on issues such as the interplay between courts and elected politicians. None of the other judges asked a question of the various governments.

Wednesday in particular saw top legal and political names at the Supreme Court.

Mr. Pratte, speaking for Ottawa, is a leading appellate lawyer and his father Yves was a Supreme Court judge for two years in the late 1970s.

Mr. Downey's appearance on behalf of Ontario was unusual. Elected officials rarely present arguments at the Supreme Court. Jack Fazzari, a spokesperson for Mr. Downey, said the Attorney-General chose to personally make the arguments because of the case's "lasting implication for our country."

Mr. Lavoie, a law professor on leave from the University of Alberta, became deputy minister of justice in Alberta two years ago. It is also unusual for a deputy minister to make arguments at the Supreme Court. Mr. Lavoie has helped drive the Alberta government's strategy on the notwithstanding clause at the Supreme Court and in practice. Alberta last fall used the clause to shield four different laws from court challenges.

Wednesday marked the third of four days of hearings on Bill 21, one of the longest hearings in the Supreme Court's history. Challengers to Bill 21 appeared on Monday. Quebec defended its law on Tuesday.

All of the arguments on Wednesday were presented on Zoom. The judges, lawyers and everyone else in the full courtroom in Ottawa spent the morning looking at screens mounted on the walls.

Since 2022, the main parties attend in person in the courtroom – all the lawyers for the appellants and respondents have been present throughout the week – but outside interveners groups, including other governments, are relegated to Zoom, a court policy put in place by Chief Justice Richard Wagner.

Last summer, the provincial and federal governments had asked for a one-time exemption from the interveners-on-Zoom rule for the Bill 21 case, given the significant constitutional stakes, but Chief Justice Wagner said no to the request last December.

Anti-hate bill advances to the Senate

C-9 would make it a crime to obstruct someone's access to religious, cultural places

MARIE WOOLF OTTAWA

Jewish groups welcomed the government's anti-hate bill passing through the Commons Wednesday evening after months of filibustering and fractious debate about whether it threatens religious freedom.

Bill C-9, as it's known, would make it a crime, punishable by up to 10 years in prison, to obstruct someone from accessing a place of worship or other sites where Jews, Muslims and other identifiable groups gather.

The bill also criminalizes the willful promotion of hatred toward religious and ethnic groups by publicly displaying terror or hate symbols.

Conservatives have railed against the bill which they have said would limit religious freedom, holding it up for months in committee with lengthy filibusters.

Their opposition focused on the bill's proposal to remove a religious exemption in the Criminal Code allowing someone who quotes from a religious text to escape prosecution for hate speech. Bloc Québécois MPs have argued for years that the exemption can be used as cover for promoting homophobia, racial abuse and antisemitism and they tabled an amendment to the bill which the Liberals supported.

But Conservatives argue that removing the exemption could curb religious freedom. Last year, several Conservative MPs brought Bibles to the justice committee, where the bill was scrutinized for months, to reinforce their arguments.

On Wednesday in a third reading debate, Conservative Andrew Lawton, who once single-handedly filibustered an entire meeting of the justice committee to hold up the bill, said he has heard from scores of people of faith who were concerned that it would hamper religious expression.

The Conservatives tried to send the bill back to the Commons justice committee in an 11th hour attempt to halt its progress. But their attempt was defeated.

In the final Commons debate on the bill, Larry Brock, the Conservative justice critic, said the removal of the religious defence, which has existed for 56 years, was not in the original bill, but appeared late in its progress through the Commons through the unexpected amendment.

Mr. Brock said millions of Canadians, including Jews, Christians, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus, had expressed concern about removing the religious exemption.

He accused the government of shutting down debate about the change to the Criminal Code which he said had been rushed through "for political reasons only."

Earlier this month, the government, after months of delay in committee, moved a motion to fast-track the bill so it can move onto its next stage in the Senate, which is expected to begin after Parliament returns from its Easter break.

But Mr. Brock accused the government of choosing "speed over scrutiny, process over principle and politics over clarity."

The Conservatives tried to send the bill back to the Commons justice committee in an 11th hour attempt to halt its progress. But their attempt was defeated.

However, Conservatives in the Senate are expected to continue to oppose the bill.

Kevin Lamoureux, parliamentary secretary to the Government House Leader, accused the Conservatives of spreading misinformation and fear among members of religious communities. He said the bill would not take away the religious rights of Canadians or hamper their ability to quote from scripture.

Bloc Québécois MP Gabriel Ste-Marie said his party supported freedom of expression and freedom of religion, but not if it goes so far as inciting hatred.

Liberal MP Anthony Housefather said he had been arguing for years for protections contained in the bill in the face of rising attacks on the Jewish community. And he noted that in the past month three synagogues in Toronto have been shot at.

He said the bill gives special protection for people seeking to worship, including in churches, synagogues and mosques, making it harder for people "screaming and yelling" and carrying hate symbols from obstructing people entering and leaving.

Speaking in the debate, Mr. Housefather argued that an intimidation and obstruction offence was needed to ensure that people could freely enter and leave their places of worship and schools.

Mr. Housefather added that existing laws to combat hate were not always used by police.

A number of Jewish organizations, including the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center and B'nai Brith Canada, welcomed the adoption of Bill C-9 by the House of Commons.

In a joint statement, they said "Jewish communities across Canada have faced escalating threats, intimidation" for more than two years.

They urged the Senate to "move quickly to pass Bill C-9 and help ensure that all Canadians can live in safety and security."

However, the advocacy group Independent Jewish Voices Canada warned that the bill could curb legitimate protest and risks criminalizing dissent.

In a statement, it said "heinous acts" such as the targeting of Jewish religious premises and businesses in Toronto and Montreal should not be used to justify legislation that could suppress activism, "particularly when associated with criticism of the State of Israel and support for Palestinian human rights."

Tim McSorley, national co-ordinator of the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group, expressed concern that the prohibition on publicly displaying terror symbols could capture imagery that looks similar but is unrelated.

He said images related to the Ku Klux Klan would not be covered by the bill's provisions.

CULTURE

Quite a bull run

A jockey competes in pacu jawi, a traditional Minangkabau bull race held in harvested paddy fields, in Tanah Datar, West Sumatra, Indonesia, on Wednesday

WILLY KURNIAWAN/REUTERS

Alberta health authority trying to recoup millions it paid MHCare

CARRIE TAIT
TOM CARDOSO

Alberta Premier Danielle Smith said the province's health authority is now trying to recover tens of millions of dollars it paid MHCare Medical Corp. for drugs the company never delivered.

Alberta Health Services, Ms. Smith told reporters, has abandoned its previous strategy of trying to recoup value for some of the money it paid MHCare by purchasing even more medication from the company, which is at the centre of the province's procurement controversy.

"They were looking at one pathway to get an alternative product, and it appears that they have exhausted that avenue," Ms. Smith said of Alberta Health Services. "And AHS is now looking at means to be able to recover the outstanding balance."

In response, MHCare's lawyer reiterated that the medical-supply company intends to make good on the terms of the contract.

"There is a contract in place. Its terms were negotiated by AHS and approved by AHS at the highest levels," Scott Hutchison said in a statement to The Globe and Mail. "MHCare remains of the view that it will be able to fulfill the terms of its contract with AHS in full, as has always been its intention."

The health authority in late 2022 signed a $70-million deal with MHCare for five million bottles of children's acetaminophen and ibuprofen manufactured in Turkey. But Heath Canada limited how much medication MHCare could import and the company delivered only 30 per cent of the provincial health authority's order. Alberta Health Services and MHCare then signed a subsequent deal for intravenous acetaminophen, under which the health authority paid the company the balance of the original contract.

By July, 2023, Alberta Health Services had paid MHCare $49-million for drugs that have yet to be delivered.

Prior to Wednesday, Ms. Smith has defended the intravenous acetaminophen deal as a way for Alberta Health Services to recoup value while also procuring a drug she argued could replace some opioids in hospitals.

Mickey Amery, Alberta's Justice Minister, said he believes the health authority is in talks with MHCare to recover some of the money.

"I think that they're engaged in mediation," he told reporters Wednesday.

Matt Jones, the Minister for Hospitals and Surgical Health Services, in the legislature on Tuesday said the health authority is pursuing ways to get cash back.

"They're going through a process through contract tools, arbitration and ultimately are evaluating legal options to recover the $49-million."

Alberta Health Services declined to comment on whether it is pursuing reimbursement through mediation, arbitration or other legal avenues.

Meanwhile, Health Canada is still processing MHCare's application to import intravenous acetaminophen. MHCare's lawyer noted that the company has no control over the timing.

"MHCare is in active communication with Health Canada," Mr. Hutchison said. "Regulatory approvals can be frustratingly long but are beyond our control."

The import deal for children's painkillers and the subsequent agreement for intravenous acetaminophen came under renewed scrutiny last year when Alberta Health Services's former chief executive, Athana Mentzelopoulos, in court documents alleged that government officials interfered in the health agency's procurement processes. She alleges that Ms. Smith's government fired her in early 2025 for investigating potential conflicts of interest, inflated contracts benefiting private companies and MHCare's deals with the organization.

The government denies the allegations and argues that it fired her for incompetence. None of the allegations have been tested in court. MHCare and its owner, Sam Mraiche, have denied any wrongdoing and are not party to Ms. Mentzelopoulos's $1.7-million wrongful-dismissal lawsuit.

RCMP last week searched MHCare's offices in Edmonton as part of their year-long investigation into allegations of procurement irregularities in Alberta's health care system. The Mounties also searched an accounting business belonging to Sam Jaber, who in 2022 was listed as MHCare's chief financial officer, according to documents obtained by The Globe.

Alberta Auditor-General Doug Wylie is conducting a separate probe, which will be completed by his successor. Mr. Wylie's term wraps up at the end of April, and the governing United Conservative Party rejected his offer to stay on for two years to finish the investigation.

On Wednesday, an Alberta Legislature committee voted to recommend that Ms. Smith's cabinet appoint Phillip Peters as the province's next auditor-general.

Mr. Peters is the general counsel and ethics officer in the agency, and he previously worked for the Justice Ministry as a tax lawyer.

NDP Leader Naheed Nenshi told reporters he trusts that the new auditor-general will follow up on the health care contracting investigation and that he "will not let that get shelved."

The auditor-general is an independent officer of the legislature responsible for auditing the books of every government ministry, department, regulated fund and agency.

A spokesperson for Mr. Wylie last week told The Globe that the investigation was taking longer than anticipated "due to the ongoing receipt of relevant documentation and the availability of key interviewees."

Cheryl Schneider also said that Mr. Wylie expects his "document review and interviews will be complete, and findings determined" before he leaves on April 28.

With reports from The Canadian Press

TERREBONNE BY-ELECTION TO USE WRITE-IN BALLOTS

OTTAWA Voters in Terrebonne will use a write-in ballot in the upcoming by-election, as the Longest Ballot Committee has made the Quebec riding its latest target.

Elections Canada's advisory committee of political parties says voters will have to write in the first name, or initials, and last name of their chosen candidate, as is done on a special ballot.

It says a list of candidates will be provided to voters at polling stations during advance voting and on election day.

The same write-in ballot plan was used in a by-election in Alberta last summer that elected Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre, when the protest group recruited nearly 200 people to run against him in protest of Canada's first-past-the-post system.

That was at least the fourth time the group pulled the move, but the first time Elections Canada instituted the write-in ballot to avoid an incredibly long ballot that delays the voting and vote-counting process.

Terrebonne is expected to be the most hotly contested of three by-elections taking place on April 13.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

BBC NAMES FORMER GOOGLE EXECUTIVE AS NEXT DIRECTOR-GENERAL

The BBC named former Google executive Matt Brittin as its new director-general on Wednesday, replacing Tim Davie who quit last year after a misleading edit of a speech by U.S. President Donald Trump.

The BBC is facing a US$10-billion lawsuit from Mr. Trump, who accuses the publicly funded broadcaster of defamation over how it spliced together footage of parts of a speech he gave on Jan. 6, 2021, before his supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol.

The broadcaster has argued the lawsuit should be dismissed, saying Mr. Trump's subsequent re-election showed the alleged defamation did not harm his reputation.

Mr. Brittin joined Google in 2007 as head of U.K. and Ireland before rising through the ranks to become Europe, Middle East and Africa president in 2014. He stepped down in 2024 and will take on the new role from May 18. REUTERS

Iran rejects U.S. ceasefire plan, issues its own proposal

Officials from Pakistan say 15-point American plan addresses sanction relief, and a rollback in Iranian nuclear program

JON GAMBRELL
MIKE CORDER
MUNIR AHMED
AAMER MADHANI DUBAI

People examine the damage to an apartment building a day after it was struck by an Iranian missile in Bnei Brak, Israel, on Wednesday.
OHAD ZWIGENBERG/AP

Iran on Wednesday dismissed an American plan to pause the war in the Middle East and launched more attacks on Israel and Gulf Arab countries, including strikes that hit a fuel tank at Kuwait International Airport, sparking a fire.

Iran's defiance came as Israel launched air strikes on Tehran and as the United States deployed paratroopers and more Marines to the region.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in an interview on state TV that his government has not engaged in talks to end the war, "and we do not plan on any negotiations." That followed a report from Iranian state TV's English-language broadcaster quoting an anonymous official as saying Iran rejected America's ceasefire proposal and has its own demands for an end to the fighting.

Earlier, two officials from Pakistan, which transmitted the U.S. plan to Iran, described the 15-point proposal broadly, saying it addressed sanctions relief, a rollback of Iran's nuclear program, limits on missiles and reopening the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's oil is shipped.

An Egyptian official involved in the mediation efforts said the proposal also includes restrictions on Iran's support for armed groups. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not yet released.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt insisted the U.S. and Iran are in talks even as Iranian officials deny it. "Talks continue. They are productive, as the President said on Monday, and they continue to be," Ms. Leavitt said at a White House briefing Wednesday.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in an interview on state TV that his government has not engaged in talks to end the war, 'and we do not plan on any negotiations.'

Ms. Leavitt warned that if talks with Iran don't pan out President Donald Trump "will ensure they are hit harder than they have ever been hit before."

Some of the points in the U.S. ceasefire proposal were nonstarters in negotiations before the war: Iran has insisted it won't discuss its ballistic missile program or its support of regional militias, which it views as key to its security. And its ability to control passage through the Strait of Hormuz represents one of its biggest strategic advantages.

Iran's attacks on regional energy infrastructure, along with its restrictions on the strait, have sent oil prices skyrocketing, putting pressure on the U.S. to find a way to end the chokehold and calm markets.

At least 1,000 troops from the 82nd Airborne Division will be sent to the Mideast in the coming days, three people with knowledge of the plans told The Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive military plans.

The paratroopers are trained to jump into hostile or contested areas to secure key territory and airfields.

The Pentagon is also sending about 5,000 more Marines trained in amphibious assaults and thousands of sailors to the region.

Most Americans believe the U.S. military action against Iran has gone too far and many are worried about the cost of gasoline, according to a new AP-NORC poll.

The survey indicates that while Mr. Trump's approval rating is holding steady, the conflict could be swiftly turning into a major political liability for his Republican administration.

Mediators are pushing for possible in-person talks between the Iranians and the Americans, perhaps as soon as Friday in Pakistan, the Egyptian and Pakistani officials said.

Mr. Trump has said the U.S. is "in negotiations right now" and that the participants include special envoy Steve Witkoff, Mr. Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Vice-President JD Vance. Mr. Trump has not disclosed who from Iran they are in contact with but said "I can tell you, they'd like to make a deal."

Press TV, the English-language broadcaster on Iranian state television, quoted an anonymous official as saying, "Iran will end the war when it decides to do so and when its own conditions are met."

It cited an Iranian five-point proposal that includes a halt to killings of its officials, safeguards against future attacks on Iran, reparations for the war, the end of hostilities and Iran's "exercise of sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz."

Those measures, particularly reparations and its continued chokehold over the Strait of Hormuz, likely will be unacceptable to the White House.

While Iran and Oman both have territory in the strait, its narrow shipping channels are viewed as international waters through which all ships can travel.

Any talks between the U.S. and Iran would face monumental challenges. It's not clear who in Iran's government has the authority to negotiate – or would be willing to, as Israel has vowed to continue killing the country's leaders.

Iran remains highly suspicious of the United States, which twice under the Trump administration has attacked during high-level diplomatic talks, including on Feb. 28.

The Israeli military said Wednesday it had carried out waves of air strikes in Tehran, following strikes a day earlier targeting an Iranian submarine development centre in Isfahan.

Missile alert sirens sounded multiple times in Israel as Iran and the Iranian-backed militant group Hezbollah in Lebanon launched attacks. Hezbollah has fired rockets into northern Israel around the clock since the war began.

Iran also kept up pressure on its Gulf Arab neighbours. Saudi Arabia's Defence Ministry said it had destroyed at least eight drones in its oil-rich Eastern Province, and missile alert sirens sounded in Bahrain. Kuwait said it shot down multiple drones but that one hit a fuel tank at Kuwait International Airport.

Meanwhile, six people allegedly linked to Hezbollah were arrested in Kuwait for planning to assassinate Gulf leaders, Kuwait's Ministry of Interior said in a statement. Fourteen associates had fled the country, officials said.

More than 1,500 people have been killed in Iran, its Health Ministry says. Twenty people have been killed in Israel; two Israeli soldiers have also been killed in Lebanon. At least 13 U.S. military members have been killed. More than a dozen civilians in the occupied West Bank and Gulf Arab states have also died.

Nearly 1,100 people have died in Lebanon, authorities said. In Iraq, where Iranian-supported militant groups have entered the conflict, 80 members of the security forces have been killed.

The news of potential negotiations drove down the price of oil. Brent crude oil, the international standard, was trading around US$100 a barrel Wednesday, after nearing as high as US$120 earlier last week. That's still up around 35 per cent from the start of the war.

Economists and leaders have warned of far-reaching effects if energy prices remain high – from rising prices on food and other basics to higher rates for mortgages and auto loans.

Iran has allowed a small number of ships through the Strait of Hormuz but has said no ships from the U.S., Israel or countries seen as linked to them can pass.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

‘Kingmaker’ to decide Danish government

PM Frederiksen will need to negotiate a deal with the Foreign Minister to lead new coalition

KOSTYA MANENKOV
STEFANIE DAZIO
JAMES BROOKS COPENHAGEN

Denmark’s Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, left, and Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen talk during a walk in Copenhagen on Friday. MADS CLAUS RASMUSSEN/REUTERS

Denmark’s Foreign Minister and his centrist party are expected to decide who will lead the Scandinavian country’s next government after Tuesday’s parliamentary elections ended without a clear majority for any party or bloc.

Centre-left Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen could survive for a third term, despite a disappointing result. But she will need to negotiate a deal with the kingmaker, Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen, if she is to lead a new coalition.

“The Danes have spoken. They have given us a playing field that, to put it mildly, is a bit tricky to handle when it comes to forming a government,” Ms. Frederiksen said Wednesday. “But a government must be formed. The world out there doesn’t wait for us, and it has only become even more unsettled than when the election was called.”

The campaign focused on bread-and-butter issues rather than the crisis over U.S. President Donald Trump’s ambitions toward Greenland.

The outgoing government resigned Wednesday. Leaders from each party debated their positions in a round table setting and met with Danish King Frederik X to discuss the country’s future.

Denmark’s single-chamber parliament, the Folketing, is elected for a four-year term. Lawmakers from Denmark hold 175 of its seats, while two each go to representatives from thinly populated Greenland and the kingdom’s other semi-autonomous territory, the Faroe Islands.

More than 4.3 million people were eligible to vote in a country of six million people. Nearly 84 per cent of the electorate cast their ballots.

Official results showed that Ms. Frederiksen’s centre-left Social Democrats lost ground compared with the last election in 2022, as did her two partners in the outgoing government.

No single party won a majority in parliament, which was expected. Denmark’s system of proportional representation typically produces coalition governments, traditionally made up of several parties from either the “red bloc” on the left or the “blue bloc” on the right, after weeks of negotiations.

Because neither the left-leaning nor right-leaning blocs won a majority, Mr. Rasmussen is now in the role of kingmaker. His centrist Moderate party, with 14 lawmakers in the 179-seat parliament, is in a position to determine whether Ms. Frederiksen can serve a third term at the helm of the European Union and NATO country. It takes 90 seats to form a majority.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ethiopia: Canadian now in prison where journalists, political prisoners often held

FROM A1

Canadian Esubalew Birhanie, 39, says he boarded a Toronto-bound flight at Addis Ababa airport in Ethiopia to return home, but a police officer pulled him off the plane and took him to a notorious detention centre, where he was severely beaten.

The report has not been publicly released but was obtained by The Globe after it was shared with Mr. Birhanie’s family and lawyers this week.

The commission is calling for a full criminal investigation into the Ethiopian police who perpetrated the abuse. It also recommends compensation be paid to Mr. Birhanie for the “physical and psychological trauma” he suffered.

The Toronto man says he was beaten severely and tortured by the police. “They stomped on my neck and my body to break me into confessing what they wanted to hear,” he said.

“I am worried about losing my livelihood. I’m afraid that my case will be prolonged in a broken justice system that disregards human rights.”

Mr. Birhanie appeared in a federal court Tuesday in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, to pursue his challenge to the criminal charges. Wearing a dark yellow uniform and handcuffed to a fellow prisoner, he stumbled as he was pushed into a dimly lit courtroom by heavily armed guards. His two sisters, sitting in the public gallery, wept when they saw him.

In the courtroom, judges read his complaint that he was beaten by police to force him to confess. The case was adjourned to a future date.

Mr. Birhanie travelled to Ethiopia last August to visit family. On Oct. 4, he says, he boarded a Toronto-bound flight at Addis Ababa airport to return home, but a police officer pulled him off the plane and took him to a notorious detention centre, where he was severely beaten. He says the police offered to release him for a bribe of about $23,000.

The police, he says, have repeatedly shown him a video of a meeting sponsored by the Ethiopian government in Toronto in 2020, at which he described the plight of Amhara people who were killed or displaced in Ethiopia’s Oromia region.

He has been charged with inciting terrorism and propagating disinformation and hate speech, with the 2020 video and social-media posts cited as evidence. He denies the charges and says the social-media accounts do not belong to him.

Ethiopian authorities have often used anti-terrorism laws as a pretext to prosecute and imprison dissidents and journalists, according to multiple reports by human-rights groups in recent years.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019, shortly after releasing some political prisoners and reaching a peace deal with neighbouring Eritrea. But since then, his government has waged a brutal two-year war in northern Ethiopia, his military has been accused of war crimes and ethnic cleansing, and his police have arrested large numbers of journalists, human-rights defenders and opposition figures.

A spokesperson for Ethiopia’s Foreign Affairs Ministry, Nebiat Getachew, said he was unaware of the case of the imprisoned Canadian. A police spokesperson in Addis Ababa said the case was outside the city’s jurisdiction. Mr. Abiy’s press secretary, Billene Seyoum, did not reply to repeated messages from The Globe seeking comment on the case.

Mr. Birhanie said the Canadian embassy in Addis Ababa sent officials to assist him in detention and sought to halt the beatings by police. He was later transferred to Kilinto prison, on the outskirts of the capital, where political prisoners and journalists are often held.

“Global Affairs Canada is aware of a Canadian citizen detained in Ethiopia,” said Thida Ith, a spokesperson for the department.

“Canadian officials are providing consular assistance and are in contact with local authorities,” she said. “Due to privacy considerations, no further information can be disclosed.”

In a letter to Global Affairs after he was pulled off the plane, Mr. Birhanie’s family said his detention has caused hardship, prolonged uncertainty and emotional distress for his family.

“We are very stressed about his ordeal,” one of his cousins in Canada told The Globe. “He travels every year to visit his family, and we never expected that something like this could happen to him.”

The Globe is not identifying the cousin out of concern for potential retaliation by Ethiopian authorities.

With reporting by a Globe and Mail freelancer in Addis Ababa whose name is being withheld from publication for safety reasons.

Rogers: Filings show objection to Tanenbaum receiving ‘any compensation’

FROM A1

Lawyers for the three trustees and for Mr. Rogers did not reply to a request for comment, while representatives for Mr. Rogers and for Mr. Tanenbaum from Rogers Communications and Kilmer Sports, respectively, declined to comment.

The trustees’ report outlines their calculations of compensation, as well as the remaining assets to distribute among beneficiaries, including Mr. Rogers and his three sisters.

Ms. Rogers, the family matriarch, was the longest-serving director of the Toronto-based telecom and media conglomerate that she co-founded alongside her late husband, Ted, who died in 2008.

Her will, included in the filings, authorized her trustees to take anticipated compensation at “reasonable intervals,” and allowed them to charge professional fees and an hourly rate for services rendered.

Ms. Rogers’s other two trustees are Mary Filippelli, who spent two decades as partner at KPMG LLP and later served as a partner at Deloitte LLP, according to LinkedIn, and Jim Reid, the former chief human resources officer for Rogers Communications. Both have served on the advisory council of the Ted Rogers School of Management at Toronto Metropolitan University.

The trustees’ compensation includes two components. For the first, the trustees applied a fee of 2.5 per cent of all funds entering or exiting the estate, resulting in fees of about $10-million. In Ontario, this rate is often considered a standard guideline. While Ontario’s Trustee Act does not prescribe a set fee scale, it says that compensation must be “fair and reasonable.”

In the objection, lawyers for Mr. Rogers said the trustees’ claim is “neither fair nor reasonable.” In “circumstances where the magnitude of the estate is very large,” the objection alleges, the 2.5-per-cent guideline resulted in “grossly excessive compensation” and the fee should be significantly reduced.

Mr. Rogers also objected to the second component of the compensation: care and management fees for maintaining the estate’s value, which the trustees said had amounted to $1.1-million.

His objection also alleges the trustees were wrong to use $14.5-million of the estate’s funds to purchase executor liability insurance coverage, given that any risk was “wholly offset by explicit indemnities and strong limitations of liability” included in Ms. Rogers’s will. This is despite the fact that the will authorized them to purchase the insurance using her funds if they deemed it appropriate.

A table provided by the trustees as part of the executors’ report states they collectively spent about 2,650 hours administrating the estate from 2022 to 2024. Mr. Rogers’s objection calls this amount “excessive,” particularly in light of what filings called the “slow pace” of the disbursements, he alleged.

In the filings, Mr. Rogers specifically objects to Mr. Tanenbaum receiving “any compensation,” “as he appears to have delegated the administration to his co-estate trustees.”

According to filings, Ms. Filippelli’s time accounted for 66 per cent of the total hours spent managing the estate, while Mr. Reid contributed 29 per cent and Mr. Tanenbaum contributed about 5 per cent. Lawyers did not respond to a question about how the total compensation will be divided between the three trustees.

Mr. Rogers also alleged he had identified millions of dollars’ worth of capital disbursements, such as for home security and yachts, that were missing certain supporting documentation, and he objected to a number of payments made to law and consulting firms.

The estate report shows more than $2-million has been paid to Aird and Berlis LLP, the firm representing the trustees, as well as $565,000 to Baytree Advisors Inc., for which the CPA Ontario website lists Ms. Filippelli as an employee. The report does not outline the purpose of these payments.

Mr. Tanenbaum and Mr. Rogers have at times disagreed over the management of their joint sports empire.

Their companies have also sparred over their sports holdings. In 2023, Rogers and Bell, which at the time held equal stakes in MLSE, challenged Mr. Tanenbaum’s plan to sell a portion of Kilmer Sports, in which he holds his MLSE stake, to the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System pension plan.

The sale of that stake to OMERS put a higher price on Mr. Tanenbaum’s portion than the telecoms anticipated, The Globe and Mail has reported.

As of March, significant work remains to be done to settle Ms. Rogers’s estate. As of the end of 2024, the estate was worth about $120-million, including about $20-million in original unrealized assets such as real estate and personal property, and about $100-million in investments, receivables and cash on hand.

Ms. Rogers’s assets are divided into numerous buckets, including both Canadian and American-dollar denomination primary and secondary estates and various other trusts. Of those assets, as of June, 2022, she held more than $50-million in real estate properties in Toronto, Muskoka and the Bahamas, dozens of vehicles including cars and boats, personal and household items worth $5-million, and artwork and jewellery worth $1.6-million.

The trustees’ report shows they disbursed funeral expenses of more than $360,000, as well as legacy payments to more than a dozen individuals each worth between $15,000 and $500,000.

Ms. Rogers had given a $200,000 personal loan to “Children’s Books,” and also left money for the Canadian Lyford Cay Foundation, eating disorder support charity Sheena’s Place, the Bishop Strachan School Foundation and the University Health Network Foundation, the documents show.

In her will, Ms. Rogers stipulated that the residue – the remainder after all taxes and other obligations – of the primary estate was to be divided equally among all four of her children. However, only Ms. Rogers’s three daughters, Lisa, Melinda and Martha, are beneficiaries for her registered funds, including her retirement funds, pension plans and annuities.

It’s unclear who is named as a beneficiary in the other portions of the estate, which contain the majority of the assets.

The year before she died, the Rogers family became divided when Mr. Rogers tried to fire the company’s then-chief executive officer, Joe Natale, and replace him with chief financial officer Tony Staffieri. Ms. Rogers backed her daughters Melinda and Martha, as well as a majority of the company’s independent directors, who opposed the move. The conflict eventually landed in a B.C. courtroom, which handed Mr. Rogers a victory, allowing him to appoint Mr. Staffieri as CEO.

At the time of Ms. Rogers’s death, Mr. Rogers owed his mother almost $30-million in personal loans for two properties known as “Timoca House” and “Yellow House.” It’s unclear how much he still owes on these loans.

In her will, Ms. Rogers included a provision stating that the trustees would be protected from losses or liability that arose from any legal proceedings commenced against them, specifically referencing those proceedings “by or for the benefit of Edward Rogers.”

She also noted that any beneficiary who took steps to challenge the validity of any provision of the will, other than for its proper interpretation, would be deemed to have predeceased her and would therefore waive their entitlement to her primary assets.

With reports from Alexandra Posadzki and Andrew Willis

To get to a dental appointment in Yellowknife, this child and his mother had to travel 1,090 kilometres from Inuvik, where they live. The dentist, Hasnain R. Dewji, centre, is from even farther away. He and his team are from ABC Dental, based in B.C.'s Fraser Valley.

NWT: Goal of equitable care not met, with dental program drawing criticism

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TATE JUNIPER

FROM A1

The reality is vastly different for remote First Nations and Inuit communities in the NWT. For them, access to dental services, which for decades has been sporadic and at times inadequate, has worsened since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dentists, who used to visit these communities in the NWT on a regular basis, have stopped travelling to them – and seven communities of the 32 outside of Yellowknife haven't been visited in six years or more.

Previously, some people could take a winter road to regional hubs in the territory to see a dentist. All but one regional clinic has closed, however, leaving Yellowknife as virtually the only reliable place for dental care in the NWT – a land mass bigger than France and Germany combined.

As Ms. Tetso did for her older grandson, residents must travel thousands of kilometres for treatment, after waiting to have that travel approved for federal funding.

But many living in remote communities, particularly elders or single parents with child-care pressures, are unable to travel, or can't afford to take the time off, leaving them and their families without any treatment at all.

The Globe and Mail spent months examining the dental-care system in the Northwest Territories, visiting two fly-in communities – Déline and Tulita – and interviewing current and former health ministers, community leaders, dentists, other health care workers and researchers.

The investigation also included surveying communities and obtaining data on dental visits through access-to-information requests.

Community members described harrowing experiences, including a man in Tuktoyaktuk who pulled out his own tooth with a Leatherman multitool and a Tulita resident whose elderly mother had to fly three times to Yellowknife to get a painful abscess treated. One pediatric dentist in Yellowknife described needing to extract 12 adult teeth from a 13-year-old girl.

Dentists, The Globe learned, aren't visiting because of faulty equipment, a dearth of adequate dental spaces and what they see as underfunding that affects both facilities and their compensation.

As First Nations and Inuit peoples are forced to travel thousands of kilometres for care, the costs to the federal government have skyrocketed.

Indigenous Services Canada told The Globe it spent $11.1-million on NWT dental travel in the fiscal year ending in 2025 – up nearly tenfold from six years earlier.

Access is a core principle of Canada's health care system, and the federal government has said improving oral health care services is a key priority. But the most recent funding agreement that includes dental care for First Nations and Inuit living in NWT and Nunavut expired a year ago, and now governments are tussling over responsibilities and who should pay for what.

In the meantime, many in remote NWT communities are going without this essential service. Even Fort Smith – a town on the border with Alberta, which has all-season road access – lacks a clinic.

"We are dental orphans," said Michael Miltenberger, a local resident and former minister of health.

Julie Grondin, a dentist who has worked in Canada's North, but also abroad in Mauritania and Guatemala, said the condition of services in some northern communities was comparable to the humanitarian missions she's worked on overseas.

"And yet, we're talking about Canada."

The lack of infrastructure, poorly maintained equipment and absence of continuity of care – all of this exists within one of the wealthiest countries in the world, she said. "It forces us to question how we value oral health, and who gets access to it."

'THEY'RE REALLY ASKING TOO MUCH OUT OF A DENTIST'

Dr. Hassan Adam first landed in Yellowknife in 1980, by way of England and Malawi. He was initially disappointed to find just two aging dental clinics in town, both with outdated equipment. Still, as he opened a new clinic and the others were modernized, he recalls plenty of skilled dentists came to Yellowknife, including from other countries. He says some of them flew to remote communities as well.

An affable and well-regarded dentist, Dr. Adam fell in love with the North – but was dismayed at the levels of oral disease he saw among Indigenous patients.

Research has found that, before colonization, oral health in Inuit communities was strong. As one 2023 article from the International Journal of Circumpolar Health noted, "Past Inuit populations were almost immune" to dental decay before 1950. Many factors changed that, including colonization causing a shift in diet away from traditional foods and to processed foods, and boil-water advisories driving people to consume soda pop and juice instead.

Dr. Adam was especially heartbroken to see the impact on children. "Kids – young kids – had no teeth, or teeth with lots of cavities, and I soon learned that this was a responsibility of the federal government," he said in an interview at his Yellowknife clinic.

That responsibility dates, in part, to the 1876 Medicine Chest clause in Treaty 6, which said that a "medicine chest" be kept for First Nations – a clause that has since been interpreted by some courts as a government pledge for health care provisions.

In 1979, the year before Dr. Adams's arrival, the federal government introduced the Indian Health Policy in response to pressure from Indigenous leaders, who saw health services as a federal responsibility, based on treaty rights. The policy forms the backbone of Ottawa's current-day non-insured health benefits (NIHB) program, coverage that includes dental care for eligible First Nations and Inuit residents across the country. Under a renewed 1997 mandate, its objective is to help them reach an overall health status "that is comparable to the health of the Canadian population."

As part of that program, which is typically renewed every few years, the federal government pays for dentists to visit remote communities and funds travel for dental patients who need to seek treatment in bigger cities.

While the NWT co-ordinates logistics of visiting dental services and medical travel, it doesn't employ dentists or oversee their practice.

The goal of equitable care was never quite achieved, and the NIHB dental program has for decades drawn criticism over red tape, restrictions and costs. The Auditor-General of Canada has issued 11 audits since 1979, raising concerns – in many cases over costs and effectiveness – and making recommendations.

In a 2017 report, the Auditor-General said that Health Canada had known for many years that the oral health of First Nations and Inuit populations across the country was much poorer than that of other Canadians, yet hadn't finalized a strategic approach to help reduce those differences.

That report cited surveys showing more than 90 per cent of First Nations and Inuit adolescents had one or more teeth affected by cavities, compared with 58 per cent of adolescents who were not Inuit or First Nations – and that they were more likely to have their dental issues left untreated.

CONTINUED ON A10

Flights taken by NIHB clients for dental services

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA; OPENSTREETMAP

A Dene elder is helped across the snowy tarmac at the Déline Airport in November. Those in need of travel for dental care say the NIHB program is hampered by preapprovals and long wait times.

Left: Pirjo Friedman, a retired dentist, stands outside the door of a dental-treatment room at Adam Dental Clinic in downtown Yellowknife in October.

Below: With vacancy issues at the medical travel boarding homes, remote-community residents have been sent to stay at the Yellowknife Lodge, an overflow trailer lodging on city's outskirts.

Right: Déline, NWT, is seen last fall after the first snowfall of the year. Dentists aren't visiting because of faulty equipment, a lack of adequate dental spaces and what they see as underfunding.

FROM A9

Still, at that time, NWT residents were able to access some level of care closer to home. Most remote communities were visited regularly by dentists, and were served by regional hubs in places such as Inuvik and Norman Wells.

When COVID-19 hit, the dental visits stopped, and the system never quite recovered.

Pirjo Friedman, a dentist who has worked in fly-in communities on behalf of the Adam Dental Clinic since 2011, witnessed how a challenging situation worsened.

When dental visits restarted in 2021 and 2022, Dr. Friedman returned to communities only to find missing or broken equipment. During a 2023 trip to Fort Good Hope, the facility's pipes froze, flooding the treatment room. In the same year, a compressor that powers dental instruments broke down in Déline; a replacement was flown in, but a day and a half was lost on what was already a short five-day visit. The following year, in Fort Simpson, broken equipment and water leaking onto the floor ultimately made work impossible.

Dr. Friedman and other dentists who spoke to The Globe described further obstacles to delivering their services. A stringent cargo allowance set by Ottawa meant dentists had to pay out of pocket to haul compressors and other heavy equipment, and a lack of dedicated dental spaces in communities meant they often had to practise in crowded health-centre rooms.

A huge problem, said Dr. Adam, is that "the dental equipment is so bad," and that no spare parts are on hand to fix them. "They're really asking too much out of the dentist."

Pay is also an issue, he said. Dentists are not compensated for extra days in the event that they are grounded because of weather conditions. And he estimated that NIHB rates for many procedures are about 20 per cent lower than the territory's dental association fee guide.

All together, these conditions eventually led Dr. Adam and others to stop bidding on the contracts – and the territory stopped posting them, too.

The NWT hasn't awarded any formal dental-service contracts in at least three years. It approved some visits under the terms of previous contracts, but since last summer, no dentist has gone into any remote communities.

The federal and territorial governments of the NWT and Nunavut are currently wrangling over costs. The last NIHB agreement between the governments expired in March, 2025, and have not been renewed. In the NWT, this leaves no one to take responsibility for equipment and maintenance costs – and has left residents to suffer the consequences.

'CATASTROPHIC' DENTAL-CARE GAPS

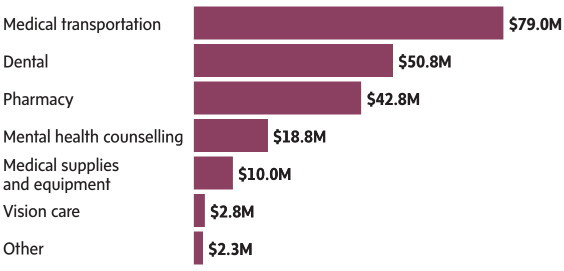
Tim Tutcho arrives to the Grey Goose Lodge by snowmobile. After sitting down at a table in the restaurant, he talks about how he has to be careful about what he eats.

The resident of Déline, a community of about 570 people, says he has suffered for half a year with dental problems. He needs a filling and it hurts when he chews. He's worried the enamel on his teeth has eroded, and his teeth haven't been looked at in years.

"I haven't had a regular checkup since the spring of 2019," he says, adding that difficulty eating has led to a decline in his health.

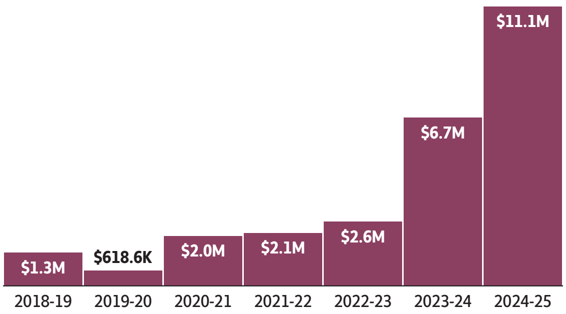
Although some people in his community travel for dental care, for him that's not an option. Mr. Tutcho, who has a baby at home, works at the local airport and can't take time off. He says many of his friends are in the same situation.

Net increase in NIHB expenditures, by benefit
From fiscal year 2023 to 2024



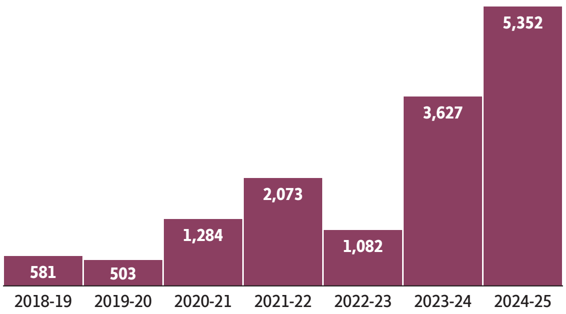
THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA

Claims in NWT for NIHB client medical travel for dental services, and eligible escorts
By fiscal year



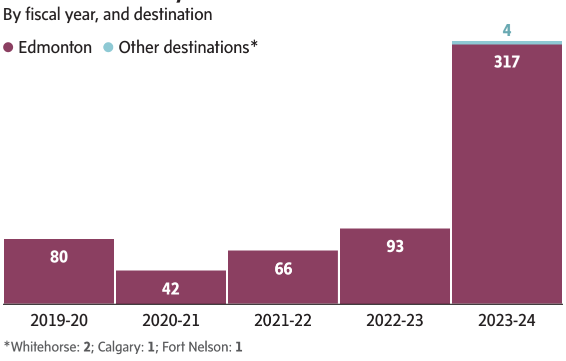
THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA

Number of instances in which NIHB clients in NWT have had to travel to receive dental treatment
By fiscal year



THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA

Number of instances in which NIHB clients in NWT have had to travel out of territory to receive dental treatment
By fiscal year, and destination



*Whitehorse: 2; Calgary: 1; Fort Nelson: 1

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SOURCE: INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA

In Déline, outside of a single, brief visit from a travelling dentist in 2022, residents haven't had regular care since February, 2020 – six years ago.

Mr. Tutcho has spent months reaching out to health authorities, seeking an appointment closer to home. In an e-mail to the Health Minister last April, which Mr. Tutcho provided to The Globe, he explained that he can't spend "2 or 3 days in Norman Wells or Yellowknife for a one hour appointment," and asked why he can't go to the health centre in Déline for dental service.

A response from the minister's office in May cited concerns over dental equipment as a factor in pausing services. The e-mail said the goal was to resume dental services in Déline "in the coming months." (They haven't been restored yet).

In October, Mr. Tutcho wrote again to express concerns that his overall health is being affected by a lack of treatment. "I have not received any dental service and I have developed sinusitis and now I have GERD."

A short flight away from Déline, in the hamlet of Tulita, residents have gone three years without a dental visit.

The whole community is affected, said Samantha Bayha, the hamlet's senior administrative officer. "I've seen when people have a minor tooth issue, and not getting treatment right away or it's delayed – it worsens into a more serious issue," she said.

Ms. Bayha's mother, who is 67 years old, had a serious dental abscess in October, and had to travel to Yellowknife on three separate occasions for treatment. A 12-year-old family member, too, suffered from cavities that were eventually taken care of in Edmonton. "It was just heartbreaking, seeing the pain. And all we could do was give him Orajel or Tylenol until he got treated."

Previously, Déline and Tulita residents had access to a dentist a few months of the year, as they could travel by winter roads to the regional hub of Norman Wells, which had a dental office and occasional visiting clinics. That office closed around a decade ago and in its place is a cannabis shop.

Now, they must take an 18-seater regional plane to get to Yellowknife. A round trip costs about $2,265.

A Globe survey of 32 communities outside of Yellowknife found at least six have not had a regular dental clinic come in six years or more. Two said they didn't have records for when the last dentist came. And an access-to-information request filed by The Globe shows that another seven communities have not had a dentist visit in two years or more.

Darrell Nasogaluak, in Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Ocean coast, pulled out his own tooth with a Leatherman multitool in 2020. "It was out of desperation that I did that," he said. "It hurt a lot, but I was able to go out and not worry about having a bad tooth when I was out hunting."

He said people in Tuktoyaktuk usually have to travel the 1,100 kilometres to Yellowknife to get dental work. "Over all, dental health is really deteriorating here in the community."

In a phone interview from Fort Good Hope, Gabriel Kakfwi described a reality that's not uncommon for most people living in NWT's fly-in communities. "I've been going through a few days of a bad toothache, like a borderline infection," he said. "If I was in the city and that pain was there, I would have just gone to a dentist right there. But I can't really do that."

The hardest part, he said, is the wait times. "I've heard some horror stories of some friends and family that have had a cracked or broken tooth, and they're told that they had to wait two and a half to three weeks until they could get out to Yellowknife or Inuvik."

Those in need of travelling for dental care say the NIHB program is hampered by preapprovals and long wait times; others pay out of pocket because of exclusions, ineligibility or because they feel they simply can't delay treatment any longer.

The need for dental travel means nurses are tied up seeing people with toothaches in order to make referrals. Flights are so full with dental patients that, at times, those needing to leave for medical travel can't get seats on the limited-capacity flights, health care workers said.

In the 2024-25 fiscal year, in a territory with a population of 46,000, about half of whom live in Yellowknife, patients made 5,352 trips for dental purposes.

Adam Dental Clinic in Yellowknife is currently fielding about 50 emergency referrals from across the territory every week.

The town's medical boarding homes are often full, in part because of the influx of dental patients. Overflow has gone to hotels in the past, but they've also been inundated with a growing number of global tourists visiting to see the Aurora.

Last March, the territory advised residents with non-urgent dental plans to delay travel to Yellowknife, citing lack of places to stay, or to go to Whitehorse instead.

When facilities in Yellowknife are full or more complex procedures are required, clients are referred to Edmonton. The number of people in the NWT travelling to that city for dental treatment jumped to 317 in the fiscal year ended 2024, a fourfold increase from four years prior, federal figures show.

For those who can't travel, the consequences can be profound. Oral diseases are linked with other serious health issues such as diabetes, heart disease and pneumonia. Untreated dental infections are excruciating, and poten-

Left: Chief Frank Andrew of Tulita poses for a photo after delivering remarks on the community's radio station in November.

Below: Tulita resident Fred Andrew is seen last year speaking on the dental-access issues his community faces.

Right: A resident drives their ATV through Tulita's streets on a November morning. A round trip on an 18-seater regional plane for Déline and Tulita residents to get to Yellowknife costs about $2,265.

tially fatal. Oral disease and tooth loss can also cause severe mental-health issues, including depression, anxiety and social isolation.

Dr. Friedman called the current situation "catastrophic," especially for small children. As well as suffering the long-term implications from lack of preventative care, untreated oral health issues can affect their ability to sleep, eat, speak and learn.

Dr. Hasnain Dewji, a Vancouver area-based pediatric dentist who travels to Yellowknife every month or two, said the current wait time for a procedure is six months.

A year or two ago, what would have been just a filling is now a nerve treatment on that tooth and a crown, he said. "Decay does spread from area to area. And then it gets worse and gets harder to fix. So some of those teeth, in some cases, that could have been saved are now not being saved or being taken out instead."

On his last trip to Yellowknife in November he had to extract 12 adult teeth, including the front teeth, from a 13-year-old girl. "If she could have gotten care earlier, there would have been a better chance of that being avoided," he said. "It was devastating case where you thought, this never should have happened."

LOOKING FOR LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS

Lesa Semmler, the NWT Health Minister, spent 15 years as a frontline nurse in Inuvik and has seen the challenges people endure in accessing health and dental care. She recalls managing an operating room full of kids needing dental surgery. As an MLA, before becoming minister, she regularly pushed for better quality dental care.

But access, she said, has only worsened in recent years. "We need to be treated the same as all other Canadians. When you talk to somebody in downtown Ottawa, and say you had to spend $8,000 to fly to get a dentist appointment, they would be shocked."

Even before the territory's NIHB agreement with Ottawa expired last March, Ms. Semmler said her priority has been negotiating a longer-term deal – one that will bring services closer to communities and ensure Indigenous peoples have equitable access to care.

"We have to have the funding to be able to run those programs better," she said in an interview in the NWT Legislative Assembly in Yellowknife, stressing that dental services for Indigenous peoples are a federal responsibility.

Specifically, she thinks the feds should invest in new equipment, cover freight costs and pay dentists if they're stranded in communities because of weather conditions. Ultimately, she said, enabling in-community care will cost the federal government less.

Without a renewed NIHB agreement with Ottawa, the territory is footing the bill for dental-travel costs. Last month, the territory estimated the funding shortfall for the NIHB program, including dental care, was $13-million in 2024-25, costs that the territorial government incurred.

A key sticking point is deciding who will pay for dental equipment. Ms. Semmler said the territory does not receive allocated funding to purchase any.

ISC said it has provided $508,000 to the NWT for equipment and retrofits since 2020, even though that, as well as infrastructure and maintenance, are not eligible expenses under NIHB. It said that, historically, the territory has maintained community dental clinics.

ISC told The Globe it is aware of problems in dental-care access. The department said it's working with the territory to resume in-community dental services, "recognizing that potential cost efficiencies may increase" when services can be provided locally.

But according to recent Auditor-General's reports, the ISC isn't is fully aware of the scope of the problem.

In October, the Auditor-General reported that the ISC still didn't know how much of an oral health gap existed between First Nations and Inuit populations and other Canadians. As a result, it said ISC didn't know "which oral health services were needed most, where they were needed, and the number and type of oral health professionals needed to deliver the services."

When asked if it has ever assessed the effectiveness of NIHB dental coverage in improving oral health, ISC said the program does not collect any data specific to oral health outcomes because "health monitoring doesn't fall under the program's purview."

ISC said it will work with partners "to explore the possibility of developing a national oral health data strategy" for all Canadians.

Beyond funding, other solutions have been explored in the past. In the 1980s, more dentists from abroad were allowed to practice in the North. And in the 1990s, residents were trained in oral health to work in their own communities, with a focus on prevention. (Government cuts and policy changes ended both of those programs).

Governments have introduced some recent changes: The federal government said in November it will fund a new dental-therapy program in the NWT, and as of December, the territory is allowing dental hygienists to practise without a dentist.

But while residents of the territory wait for governments to come to an agreement that will bring dentists back to their communities, Dr. Adam in Yellowknife said the current situation is both frustrating and wasteful.

"They're willing to pay millions of dollars in flights, but they can't even set up one or two clinics with that money," he said, adding that if new facilities were funded, "there would be a chance that more dentists would go."

He estimated a new office with good equipment could be set up for $60,000.

Ultimately, he said care closer to communities will be more effective – and more cost efficient. "It may be a little more expensive upfront, but it's going to pay off huge later."

The long-term benefit also applies to people's health. During The Globe's visit to remote communities, in casual conversations in grocery stores and lodges, residents almost universally said dental-care troubles are an ever-present issue. Virtually everyone had a niece or nephew, grandchild, cousin or friend who needs care and is struggling to get it.

Mr. Tutcho's relatives and friends have had to travel long distances for dental care, or they've done without. "All we want is basic health," he said.

EDITORIAL

The subject who is truly loyal to the chief magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures - Junius

Ottawa needs a remedial lesson on immigration

A report from the federal Auditor-General this week paints a picture of an immigration system that continues to spiral out of control. The report revealed that the immigration department identified 153,324 international students between 2023 and 2024 who were potentially not complying with study permit conditions.

But the department only investigated 4,057 cases, citing limited funding. The measures were largely limited to contacting the students for more information. Just 50 students were confirmed to be non-compliant, in part because of the department's lack of follow-up. In 1,654 cases, students did not respond to inquiries, and the department took no further action. And then there are the more than 149,000 cases not investigated at all.

The report also shows how staff at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada determined that 800 people approved for international study permits between 2018 and 2023 used fraudulent documentation or misrepresented information. Many claimed to have attended overseas educational institutions later determined to be non-existent or selling qualifications.

However, no action was taken. Even worse, 351 were later approved for study permit extensions or other temporary permits, 105 received permanent residency and 110 submitted asylum claims. Another 63 had no known location and no immigration status.

These jarring examples show the immigration department isn't doing much to enforce the basic rules of the system. The Liberal government needs to do more to ensure that study permits are only issued to genuine students, and not used as backdoor work visas.

The numbers of new international students entering the country rose dramatically during the Trudeau years, contributing to a steep rise in temporary residents. Looser restrictions on working while studying, particularly a change waiving the cap on work hours, turned student visas into de facto work permits and a side-door to permanent residency. New restrictions in the last couple of years have caused a big drop in new study permits, but more scrutiny needs to be applied to extensions issued to people already in the country.

In particular, the Auditor-General Karen Hogan found that the department was slow to act on problems on the expedited Student Direct Stream, which was "being targeted by non-genuine students seeking entry to Canada." The stream was eventually shut down, but that didn't prevent officials from extending permits that were already issued, under the faulty assumption that these individuals were low risk as they had been screened upon initial entry to Canada.

The department did take some steps to verify that acceptance letters from postsecondary institutions were genuine and to obtain compliance reports. However, 50 institutions failed to supply information on their students, and so far, they haven't had any consequences imposed, such as suspensions on accepting new international students.

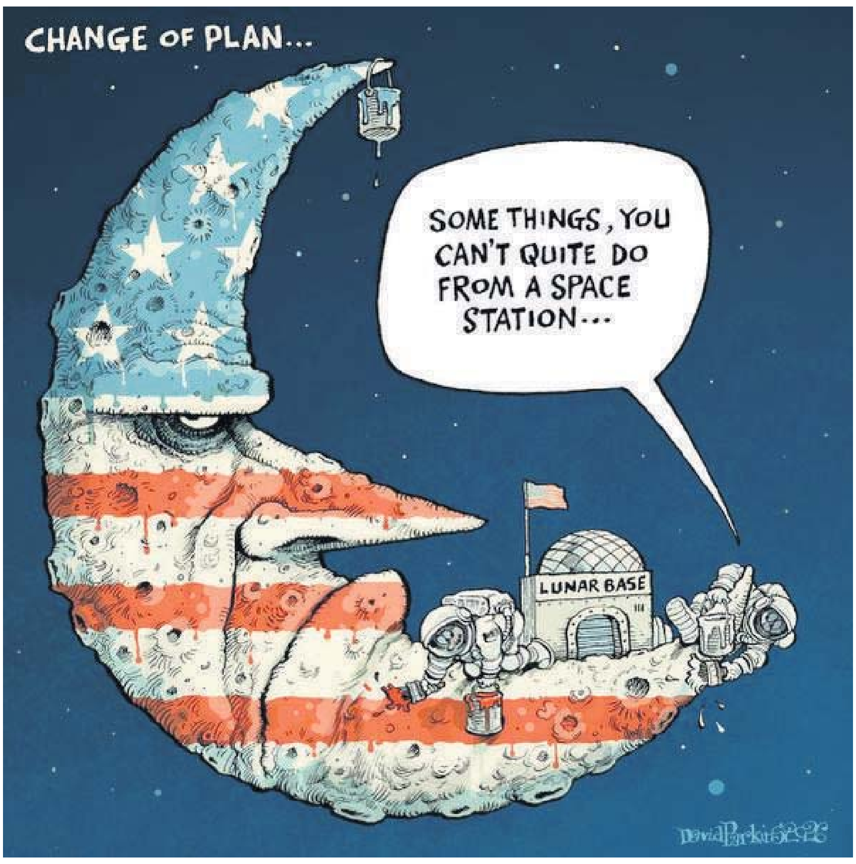
Another concern is that the department doesn't know if students are leaving Canada after their permits expire. While most people with expired permits found another means to legally remain in Canada, the report identified around 40,000 who should have left the country. Only in 40 per cent of cases could the Canada Border Services Agency confirm that the students required to leave the country had done so.

Lena Metlege Diab, the Immigration Minister, has said she accepts the Auditor-General's recommendations. She needs to clearly articulate a path to return the international student program to its original purpose – not as a ticket to citizenship, but to allow foreigners to study here temporarily.

Canada shouldn't promote study permits as a pathway to permanent residency, and it should restrict the hours students can work off-campus. While the lax issuing of student visas in recent years has been useful to employers seeking low-cost labour, and postsecondary institutions keen to fill budget holes, it has distorted the program.

The immigration department needs to be able to quickly root out cases of misuse and fraud to ensure the system's integrity. This requires closer scrutiny of renewals of people already in Canada and better co-ordination with the CBSA.

After years of mismanagement of the immigration file, the Liberals have lost any benefit of the doubt. Immigration is an essential ingredient in Canada's success, but it can't be run on the honour system.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UP THE MIDDLE

Re "America's efforts to topple the Cuban regime have lost the plot" (March 20): There is a way forward. It would require middle powers, with a pro-active role for Canada, to successfully implement three types of action.

First, relieve the suffering of Cubans by breaking the oil embargo and providing humanitarian support.

Second, push Cuba to adopt major economic reforms, some of which are actually being considered by the regime.

Third, require the government to hold a United Nations or otherwise internationally supervised referendum on the establishment of a multiparty electoral system and standard freedoms of expression and assembly. Then, a year or so later, a supervised general multiparty election.

Though no publicly available opinion polls exist for Cuba, my estimation is that a solid majority would vote to eliminate communist control of the country. There also are many talented Cubans who could lead and campaign successfully in a coalition for democracy and human rights.

Archibald Ritter Professor emeritus, department of economics and Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University; Ottawa

WHOSE RIGHTS?

Re "Quebec defends Bill 21 at Supreme Court, says no role for judges in political debate" (March 25): The Canadian government is arguing before the Supreme Court that whenever the override provision of the Charter is used by any legislature, the court should explain whether or not its use violates our rights.

Why? "Voters and their representatives are not always necessarily in a position to determine for themselves whether a law respects Charter rights and freedoms."

It seems only nine unelected judges can decide if Charter rights have been violated. Has this government's contempt for its elected MPs and the people it serves ever been more obvious?

Paul Keery Brampton, Ont.

Re "At stake" (Letters, March 24): A letter-writer opines that Bill 21 "does not impose an unreasonable limit on freedom of religion." This strikes me as an argument against Quebec's use of the notwithstanding clause in this case, given that Section 1 of the Charter permits "such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society."

In order to truly be free and democratic, we ought to demand that our governments justify limits on Charter rights as reasonable ones, rather than vitiating them based on any manner of political whim by way of the notwithstanding clause.

Nicole Chrolavicius Lawyer and lecturer, constitutional law, Osgoode Hall Law School; Toronto

Re "In Quebec, laïcité has become its own kind of religious orthodoxy" (March 23): I support the self-determination of all people, yet find it ironic that Quebec is striving to protect the identity of Quebeckers by penalizing the expression of identity by "others."

The application of *laïcité* by curtailing access to employment implies that the exercise of religion by some inherently infringes on the right of others to be nontheistic. This to me is the same argument used by those opposed to same-sex marriage: that somehow the personal choices of others limits another person's differing self-expression.

Is there not also an implication that positions of authority cannot be filled by those who "wear their religion on their sleeve," because they are somehow less able to deliver services in an impartial way?

All people have biases that they should overcome for the sake of the greater good.

Baghael Kaur Brampton, Ont.

ON MAID

Re "Ottawa can decide that MAID is not a crime. Provinces have the right to decide that it is not health care" (March 23): Alberta's effort to limit its citizens' autonomy around end-of-life decision-making is regrettable. A majority of Canadians believe that health care covers the full spectrum of beginning, middle, late and end-of-life stages.

Medical assistance in dying allows Canadians to die on their own terms and achieve the same "softer exit" we can offer our ailing pets and work animals. This hard-won human right should never be subject to interference by special interest groups.

I believe that because of doctrinal teachings imbued with misogyny, racism, homophobia and a need for societal control, these groups have historically objected to many human rights we now consider basic.

Sandra Neill Cobourg, Ont.

I support medical assistance in dying with proper guardrails, but I am writing because of the references to suicide.

As a volunteer for more than 10 years in a program offering support to survivors of suicide, one of our goals is to help them deal with stigma. Suicide no longer is and should never have been considered a criminal act.

So I cringed when I read that "the criminalization of MAID is a valid state objective where it protects the vulnerable from being induced to commit suicide in moments of weakness."

John Childs Toronto

Alberta's proposed legislation restricting medical assistance in dying is framed as strengthening safeguards and clarifying eligibility. Such framing risks obscuring a more consequential shift.

Canada's MAID framework already includes provisions for individuals who are not near death. The delayed 2027 implementation relates specifically to mental illness as a sole condition, allowing time to develop safeguards and oversight.

The concern is not whether safeguards are necessary, but whether the legislation, which includes limiting physicians' ability to refer patients for assessment outside Alberta, goes beyond safeguards and into limiting access to a legal medical option available elsewhere in Canada.

MAID should remain a last resort following rigorous assessment. But for the small number of individuals whose suffering is truly grievous and irremediable, the issue is whether access will be permitted at all.

Kathryn Andrusky MD, CCFP; Edmonton

Alberta's proposed legislation restricting medical assistance in dying risks undermining a carefully balanced national framework.

It intrudes on federal jurisdiction, ignores court rulings, duplicates existing safeguards and will limit access to timely, informed end-of-life care. Canada's MAID system is already highly regulated and widely supported by people across Canada, including in Alberta.

Adding barriers does not enhance protection; it prolongs suffering for eligible people seeking compassionate end-of-life choice.

Helen Long CEO, Dying with Dignity Canada; Toronto

STEEPED WITH CARE

Re "Our tea ritual kept us close even when my wife was dying" (First Person, March 24): Some years ago, I visited a friend who was dying in hospital.

It was midafternoon and, while we were conversing, a volunteer entered the room carrying a silver tray with a teapot, china cups and saucers and cookies. We were both thrilled!

The volunteer told me that, of all the services they provided for people in palliative care, afternoon tea was by far the most popular.

So glad the essay-writer could find comfort from a tea ritual before and after his wife's death. Where there is tea, there is hope.

Dorothy Watts Vancouver

OPINION

The NDP has become a party of puppy dogs

To survive, it needs to toughen up and get its bark back

LAWRENCE MARTIN

OPINION

You'd never know it, given the scarcity of attention accorded the NDP leadership race, but there is so much riding on it.

There's the question of whether the party can survive, whether the sagging left in Canada can keep it alive. There is, ipso facto, the question of whether Canada is reduced to an American-styled two-party system, with less choice at the ballot box.

How the NDP fares is critical to the fortunes of the two main parties. If its support continues to drift to the Liberals the way it did in the last election, Conservative Party chances of success are dimmed.

The NDP's remarkable faceplant in the last campaign, during which it garnered a record low 6.4 per cent of the popular vote, had many causes but its primary mistake politically was entering into a partnership with the Liberal Party. This won the NDP some governing influence and it used that well enough to advance its social program priorities. But politically the alliance was a disaster, blurring the party's identity, submerging it in the wokeism and identity politics of the Liberals as Justin Trudeau's support tumbled.

The NDP lost its militant edge, its bark, its reputation for standing up against establishment forces. It became a party of puppy dogs.

An opportunity for a rebuild presents itself. One positive is that the Liberals have moved so far into the mushy middle of the political spectrum that there's a yawning gap to be filled on the left. Another is the likelihood that the new leader to be chosen this weekend will be an improvement over Jagmeet Singh, who never grew while in the job.

A third and most significant advantage is that a towering issue has emerged that is tailor made for the blue collar party: the artificial-intelligence upheaval.

AI represents the most significant economic transformation in generations, an unprecedented threat to jobs of every type. With AI, everything can be automated, said Wyatt Tessari L'Allié, head of the group Artificial Intelligence Governance and Safety Canada, in an interview. "There isn't a single thing it isn't going to disrupt in the coming years."

Non-human forces taking over the economy from people's control is a powerful argument for left-side activism and market regulation. How many jobs will digital systems and Elon Musk's robots be taking over? Shouldn't real people have a say on this?

Though Mr. Tessari L'Allié said New Democrats might well be natural leaders on the issue as it impacts employment, AI is moving so fast "nobody's ready," he said.

Avi Lewis, a leading leadership candidate, has proposed a moratorium on new AI data-centre construction, something Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders has done in the U.S. "Corporate AI success," Mr. Lewis charges, "is predicated on mass unemployment in Canada and around the world."

Right-side populism has had a big run. AI opens the door to populism on the left.

Zohran Mamdani's successful run for New York mayor provides a pathway as well. "There's a large Mamdani-type base in Canada," says EKOS pollster Frank Graves. "It is politically orphaned right now," but the NDP could capitalize on it, he added.

Since its collapse in the last election, the party has modestly improved its standing. It now polls around 10 per cent, but returning to its customary support level at near 20 per cent will be a daunting task.

The first priority is survival. Reclaiming its distinct identity on the left would help. Being Liberal-lite is a path to irrelevance. Mr. Lewis of Leap Manifesto fame is the most ideologically hardened candidate. No one will confuse him with a Liberal. He shows signs of being a mobilizer, leading the campaign in new membership sign-ups and fundraising.

But his eco-radicalism leaves him open to the extremist tag. He also has the major disadvantage of not holding a seat in Parliament. By contrast, Edmonton MP Heather McPherson, the other leading candidate, brings parliamentary experience and respect and a less risky platform. But if the party needs a jolt, she is less likely to provide it. And while Mr. Lewis speaks some French, she is more unilingual.

The NDP is still strong in the provinces, forming the governments in British Columbia and Manitoba. With the next election maybe as much as three years away, there is time to get back on track, especially if the AI revolution strengthens its appeal.

An NDP with teeth, one that has decoupled from the Liberals, has a good chance of recovery, one that is necessary for preventing the country being reduced to a two-party system and the polarization that comes with it.

The world should have seen the horrors in El Fasher coming

PAYAM AKHAVAN
ROMÉO DALLAIRE
MUTASIM ALI
YONAH DIAMOND

OPINION

Payam Akhavan is the Human Rights Chair at Massey College, University of Toronto and former International Criminal Court special adviser on genocide.

Roméo Dallaire is chair of Genocide Prevention and Peace at Massey College and served as UN Force Commander during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Mutasim Ali and Yonah Diamond are senior legal advisers at the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

Newly arrived Sudanese refugees wait to be registered to collect food aid at a refugee camp in Oure Cassoni, Chad, in February. Last month, the UN Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan confirmed that the Rapid Support Forces' atrocities in Sudan bear 'the hallmarks of genocide.' DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES

As unimaginable atrocities in Sudan are met with indifference – amidst the world's largest humanitarian catastrophe – we write with despair at how far the world has fallen from the promise of "never again." A new investigation into the genocidal campaign by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), targeting non-Arab groups in Darfur, revealed that the militia razed more than 40 farming communities to the ground before massacring the besieged people of El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur.

Last month, the UN Fact-Finding Mission for Sudan confirmed what was already clear – the RSF atrocities bear "the hallmarks of genocide." This authoritative finding should move Parliament to recognize the genocide in a unified voice. But symbolic condemnation will not by itself protect those vulnerable communities still facing destruction.

The non-Arab communities targeted in Darfur were already living in famine-imposed conditions and displaced by earlier genocidal violence. Starting in April, 2024, the RSF deliberately blocked food, aid and medicine from entering El Fasher for 18 months, while destroying its main sources of sustenance. When the RSF stormed the city last October, they murdered at least 6,000 civilians in just three days in what is being called "the fastest and largest killing spree this century." Deeply disturbing accounts describe survivors being raped in front of the lifeless bodies of their loved ones. Not even children have been spared.

The RSF does not hide its genocidal intentions, repeatedly declaring its plan of "extermination… like we did to Masalit [in West Darfur]." One notorious commander, known as the "Butcher of El Fasher," called his victims "locusts" and boasted one day of "planning to kill 2,000 … but lost count so I will start again."

> Symbolic condemnation will not by itself protect those vulnerable communities still facing destruction.

Yet world leaders have chosen to look away. By 2024, dozens of experts already determined genocide was under way. In January, 2025, the U.S. reached the same conclusion. So has the UN.

The international community had years to act on Darfur. What's more, in the decades of "lessons learned" since the historic failures of Srebrenica, Rwanda, and Darfur's first genocide, we are now equipped with far more advanced technology, which had long warned of and recorded the mass killing in real time.

This continuing genocide did not happen in a vacuum. As each massacre unfolded, the RSF and their external backers saw that they would not face any consequences.

The UN Security Council has not adopted a single resolution since June, 2024, and the only two conflict-related resolutions left out any measures to stop the violence. Major powers have absolved themselves of responsibility by treating the situation as an "internal" civil war, overlooking the outside actors clearly fuelling the atrocities in a cynical struggle for regional dominance.

More than two decades ago, when prime minister Paul Martin sent General Roméo Dallaire to Darfur, Canada was one of the world's leading humanitarian donors, while providing helicopters and vehicles to the African Union's mission to move supplies throughout the region. Though Canada still serves as a leading source of humanitarian funding for Sudan, Ottawa can do more.

First, Canada should expand the use of targeted sanctions against the perpetrators and enablers of atrocities, among both the RSF and Sudanese Armed Forces, starting with those already sanctioned by our allies, including RSF commanders on the UN Security Council sanctions list. It has been nearly a year since Canada issued any such sanctions.

Second, Canada should support efforts before international courts against the main actors implicated, including external weapon suppliers.

Third, Canada should increase emergency immigration measures for Sudan commensurate with the magnitude and urgency of this catastrophe, expedite pending applications and raise the caps to reunite affected Canadian-Sudanese families.

Finally, Canada should join the new international atrocity-prevention coalition and play a lead role in co-ordinating policy responses.

While the world could have prevented the massacres of El Fasher, it's not too late to protect the Sudanese communities that remain. Canada now has a chance to stand up for the values it has long espoused, at a time that so desperately calls for principled leadership.

B.C. is becoming a wolf in sheep's clothing on Indigenous rights

TANYA TALAGA

OPINION

British Columbia used to be a province that seemed more enlightened than anywhere else in Canada.

It was the first province to align itself with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), introducing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) in November, 2019, two years before Canada's UNDRIP legislation became law.

Now, the realities of that decision – of promising free, prior and informed consent to Indigenous peoples – have apparently spooked B.C. Premier David Eby into thinking he can dial back human-rights legislation when there is public outcry.

On Tuesday, The Canadian Press reported that Mr. Eby was informing some First Nations leaders of plans to narrow the scope of DRIPA after two recent court decisions that sided with First Nations appellants: Cowichan Tribes v. Canada (Attorney General) and Gitxaala v. British Columbia (Chief Gold Commissioner).

There was also a March agreement between the Musqueam First Nation and Ottawa to create a framework to exercise the Musqueam's jurisdiction in their traditional territory – the densely populated area of the western half of Greater Vancouver.

Land rights – who owns what and who is entitled to what – are a topic of intense conversation in B.C. right now, and the outcomes are being watched around Canada. But the principles of UNDRIP and DRIPA do not equate land grabs. (That already happened, a century or so ago.) They reaffirm what international law lays out around the rights of Indigenous peoples. They are tools of reconciliation, working toward a fairer country. They should be respected not watered down.

The Cowichan decision by the B.C. Supreme Court last August upheld the Nation's claim to about 800 acres in Richmond, B.C. This ruling sent fear throughout most of non-Indigenous British Columbia, with some arguing that this could be the end of private property ownership as we know it, even though the band has repeatedly said it was not seeking to do so.

And in December, 2025, the B.C. Court of Appeal said that the province's Mineral Tenure Act – which created a system where anyone can register a mineral claim on Crown land – did not align with UNDRIP, which the court said had to be applied to provincial law because of DRIPA. While this decision is B.C.-specific, the broader implications throughout Canada could be welcomed by many First Nations. As Prime Minister Mark Carney's major projects initiative accelerates, mining claims are popping up all over the place, including in Ontario's Ring of Fire.

If Mr. Eby is really considering amending DRIPA, he is going down a dangerous road. On Feb. 2, the Law Society of B.C. warned of the precedent Mr. Eby's changes would set as they would "constrain the role of the courts in interpreting the legislation. Meaningful access to the courts is foundational to a democratic society so the public can seek a judicial review to defend legal rights and resolve concerns, including those relating to government and laws."

Making sure provincial laws align with UNDRIP is what DRIPA was all about. It was supposed to open up decision-making power to First Nations and make people listen. B.C. needs to honour this.

The province should have been listening, for instance, to the Allied Clans Coalition, Gitxsan titleholders and caretakers of our Lax'yip (territories), regarding the B.C. wolf cull. Between 2015 and 2025, more than 2,500 wolves were killed as part of "predator reduction" in the caribou recovery program, according to the Pacific Wild environmental group. But shooting wolves from helicopters is not a viable long-term strategy for saving caribou; habitat rehabilitation is.

Last month, the Allied Clans formally told the province that B.C.'s wolf cull and similar activities "do not have our consent and are not authorized within our Lax'yip." Wolves are not just predators, they said, but kin – a teacher in their "understandings of family, cooperation, territory, and balance."

There's a lesson to be found here. The way the wolves are being treated is connected to how we who live on this land should understand our own responsibilities. We must all be caretakers. Instead, a loss of trust, a misalignment of values, is occurring.

Relations with the wolf – and relations with each other – hold meaning. Remember that, as this principle threatens to be eroded in the months ahead.

KONRAD YAKABUSKI will return.

LIFE & ARTS

Cyrano retelling ought to work – but doesn't

Writer Virginia Gay's Cyrano is a lesbian retelling of Rostand's 129-year-old play

AISLING MURPHY

THEATRE

Cyrano
AT THE CAA THEATRE IN TORONTO

Written by Virginia Gay, after Edmond Rostand
Directed by Clare Watson
Performed by Eryn Jean Norvill, Madeline Charlemagne, George Ioannides, Mona Goodwin, David Tarkenter, Mackenzie Gilbert

Madeline Charlemagne, left, plays Roxanne while Eryn Jean Norvill appears as Cyrano in the North American premiere of the queer interpretation of the classic. DAHLIA KATZ

If you were to survey an average theatre in Canada – for argument's sake, let's say you're completing this experiment in Toronto, with a full audience on opening night – how many people do you think would recall intimately the plot of *Cyrano de Bergerac*?

A handful of showoffs might know the 1897 play, about the 17th-century poet with the big nose and unrequited crush, by heart. A few more might only remember the sniffer, or that the play explores the risks of catfishing. It's possible, as well, that some might have seen it at the Stratford Festival in 1962, 1963, 1994 or 2009.

But in Canada, the play is nowhere near as ubiquitous as, say, *Hamlet*, or *The Cherry Orchard*. Which makes the North American premiere of Virginia Gay's *Cyrano*, a sapphic adaptation of Edmond Rostand's 129-year-old play, a bit of a tough sell, made tougher by the fact that Gay's script oscillates between unspecific references to the original – mostly nose jokes – and clumsy summaries of the plot that approach being funny, but which never seem to land with an audience largely unfamiliar with the source material.

"It starts in a theatre," the show begins, making clear from the jump that Gay's *Cyrano* isn't just the story of the poet and his schnoz, but a treatise on what it means to consume and create a play.

From there, a three-person chorus (Mona Goodwin, David Tarkenter and Mackenzie Gilbert) debates how *Cyrano* ought to unfold, in an opening sequence that drags on far too long. *The Woman in Black*, which played the CAA Theatre in December, had a similar problem: Both shows bookend their stories with lengthy pontifications about how they should start, and, later, how they should end.

Cyrano's ending is particularly clichéd: Wondering aloud onstage how a play should end hardly ever absolves a playwright from picking an ending. Gay's far from the first writer to embrace such a meta style of a conclusion, but her frame narrative regularly keeps *Cyrano* – and the bits of brilliance embedded within – from sparkling.

When we meet Cyrano (a warm Eryn Jean Norvill, dressed in punky lace-up boots and a black muscle tank), it's not immediately clear why the sweet-talking poet's pursuit of Roxanne (an engaging Madeline Charlemagne) is so doomed – until it is. Gay soon makes clear that Cyrano's affliction here isn't a nose or some other physical imperfection, but her gender. The ache becomes sharper when Roxanne falls for Yan (George Ioannides), a bumbling adonis whose muscular beauty equals Cyrano's vast intellect. Cyrano can't possibly compete with that – or, with Yan's help, could she?

It's an interesting idea that ought to work – *Cyrano* and its themes of self-othering easily translate to a queer interpretation of the story.

But Gay and director Clare Watson regularly bring *Cyrano* back to that fabled nose, a confusing choice even for those familiar with the original play. While she laments her lovesickness, Norvill mimes some sort of Pinocchio-esque appendage on her face, blaming the phantom snout for her troubles. It's mildly amusing the first time she does it but downright grating by the end of the play – it's as if *Cyrano* is somehow afraid to lean into its own concept, which, as mentioned, ought to be a slam-dunk.

A few gorgeous moments help elevate things: Gay wraps up the choked romance between Cyrano and Roxanne with a festive fête with the audience (complete with party hats), and Norvill and Charlemagne possess palpable, yearning chemistry. Charlemagne, in particular, is among *Cyrano*'s highlights – she has some of the best-written monologues in the script, and delivers them with grounded aplomb.

But on the whole, *Cyrano* feels like a misfire, confusing in both its intention and execution. Amanda Stoodley's set, for instance, suggests the exposed-brick back wall of a theatre – why not use the exposed-brick back wall of the CAA Theatre? It takes close to 40 minutes for *Cyrano*'s story to really take off – why not nix the frame narrative, especially when the show's stronger material rests in its back half?

It's a shame *Cyrano* doesn't work better. A lesbian rework of Rostand's play sounds like a great idea, and in truth, it's one I've been looking forward to seeing for months. And at times, the team seems to understand the central questions they're trying to ask – *Cyrano*'s preshow playlist includes Boygenius' *Not Strong Enough*, whose rousing bridge repeats "always an angel, never a god" on loop, a line a certain de Bergerac might relate to with every fibre of her being.

But this *Cyrano*'s not an angel, either. It has its moments, but in the end, we're left feeling like that lovesick word-wielder, aching to feel something just out of reach.

Cyrano runs to April 5.

And here's the pitch: The best baseball songs aren't all about the game

BRAD WHEELER

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

It's not that hard to write a baseball song. Take the Rogers Centre seventh-inning staple *OK Blue Jays* – please. Written by Jack Lenz and Tony Kosinec, the joyful cheer is basically Baseball for Idiots: "You've got a diamond. You've got nine men. You've got a hat, and a bat, and that's not all."

Other baseball songs are not so simple. The old-time game is often used as a metaphor for nostalgic loss or, occasionally, as a double entendre for romantic pursuits. In honour of baseball's opening day, here's a list in descending order of the 20 greatest baseball songs that are – at least in part – about things other than baseball.

■ **The Greatest**, by Kenny Rogers (1999): Kenny Rogers knew when to hold 'em and when to fold 'em, and when to take a chance on an earnest song about perseverance from Don Schlitz, who also wrote Rogers's hit *The Gambler*.

■ **(If I Used to Be a) Brooklyn Dodger**, by Dion (1978): "Didn't I just turn 16 in May? Now 35's just around the bend." This balladic midlife crisis was co-produced by Terry Cashman, best known for his 1981 hit *Talkin' Baseball*.

■ **Home Run King**, by Gene Clark (1977): A twangy comment from the Byrds co-founder on the societal wealth, celebrity and status gap: "You are either just the newspaper boy or you're either Babe Ruth."

■ **America's Favorite Pastime**, by Todd Snider (2009): A story-song about the no-hitter thrown by Pittsburgh Pirates hurler Dock Ellis in 1970 while under the influence of LSD doubles as a message about appearances that can be deceiving.

■ **Sometimes I Dream of Willie Mays**, by the Baseball Project (2008): The ballyards and baseball heroes of one's youth live on in the cornfields of our minds. One of dozens of baseball odes recorded by the nine-inning-long rock supergroup of Peter Buck, Mike Mills, Scott McCaughey, Steve Wynn and Linda Pitmon.

■ **Roses and Blue Jays**, by Buck 65 (2003): The Canadian rapper associates flowers, fandom and his father with himself.

■ **Baseball, Baseball**, by Jane Morgan (1954): "I tried to get him in my sweet embrace, but all he had on his mind was the pennant race." The zinging, swinging singer earned the respect of baseball widows everywhere during the sport's glory years.

■ **3rd Base, Dodger Stadium**, by Ry Cooder (2005): Bruce Cockburn has his song about stolen land; Ry Cooder has his. The song's narrator reminisces about what lies beneath the home of the Los Angeles Dodgers: a Mexican-American neighbourhood bulldozed by developers in the 1950s.

■ **Negro Leagues**, by Natural Resource (1996): "The industry is all over the mound, pitchin' but nobody's makin' any hits." Funny how this rapped, racially charged indictment of the baseball and music industries never gets played between innings.

■ **I Can't Get to First Base with You**, by Fred Fisher and Eleanor Gehrig (1935): Dedicated to slugger Lou Gehrig (and co-written by his wife), the lovestruck tune was all in good fun: Hall of Famer Gehrig, who famously proclaimed himself "the luckiest man on the face of the Earth," had no trouble getting on base.

■ **Lou Gehrig's Disease**, by Dan Bern (2012): A satirical comment on steroids, conspiracy theories and revisionist history, from the American troubadour's baseball-centric *Doubleheader* album: "Next they'll be sayin' Grant isn't buried in Grant's Tomb."

■ **Fantasy Baseball at the End of The World**, by John K. Samson (2020): There is fantasy baseball, and there are fantasies much more serious. The former frontman of Winnipeg indie-rockers The Weakerthans poignantly wishes for a president's pain.

■ **Right Field**, by Peter, Paul and Mary (1986): Written by Willy Welch for all the non-athletic children banished to baseball's least-demanding Little League position, where distracted minds wander to clouds, dandelions and young thoughts that matter.

■ **Glory Days**, by Bruce Springsteen (1984): Points subtracted for using "speedball" instead of "fastball."

■ **Bill Lee**, by Warren Zevon (1980): A 97-second ode to individualism, inspired by titular iconoclastic pitcher who finished his career with the Montreal Expos and whose nickname is Spaceman.

■ **Our Song**, by Joe Henry (2007): With this thoughtful ballad about the burden of dreams, the U.S. producer/songwriter mourns the decline of America and a humbled baseball hero ("I saw Willie Mays at a Scottsdale Home Depot") but resolves that it will make him a better man.

■ **Centerfield**, by John Fogerty (1985): A hit single about rebirth, possibly in reference to the rocker's return to the music business after a self-imposed exile: "Put me in, coach, I'm ready to play, today."

■ **Mrs. Robinson**, by Simon & Garfunkel (1968): In which Joe DiMaggio stands in for an America that no longer exists. Paul Simon also wrote baseball songs *Night Game* and *Cool Papa Bell*.

■ **Paradise by the Dashboard Light**, by Meat Loaf (1977): Ain't no doubt about it, the Jim Steinman-written classic showcased the greatest heavy-petting play-by-play (by Phil Rizzuto) of all time.

■ **Boys of Summer**, by Don Henley (1984): In a list of the best baseball songs that aren't about baseball, it only makes sense that the No. 1 tune, about incongruous bumper stickers and the loss of innocence, isn't a baseball song at all. As for the title, Henley has said he hadn't heard of Roger Kahn's bestselling baseball book *The Boys Of Summer*, and that his inspiration came from a Dylan Thomas poem which begins: "I see the boys of summer in their ruin."

CBC's North of North leads nominations for 2026 Canadian Screen Awards

BARRY HERTZ

The postapocalyptic thriller *40 Acres* and the Iqaluit-filmed sitcom *North of North* lead the nominations for the 14th annual Canadian Screen Awards, organizers announced Wednesday.

With 20 nominations, including Best Comedy Series and Best Lead Performer (Comedy) for star Anna Lambe, *North of North*, a co-production between the CBC, APTN and Netflix, scored the highest number of CSA nods in both the television-focused categories and the awards overall.

The series' haul is closely followed, though, by Crave's breakout hit *Heated Rivalry*, which earned 18 nominations, including Best Drama Series and two nominations for Best Lead Performer (Drama Series) for stars Hudson Williams and François Arnaud. *Heated Rivalry*'s American star Connor Storrie, however, was not nominated, owing to a change in eligibility rules that the Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television instituted late last year, in which "all categories honouring certified Canadian productions will be restricted to Canadian citizens or permanent residents only."

The CBC sitcom *Small Achievable Goals* followed *Heated Rivalry* with 12 nominations, including Best Ensemble Performance (Comedy), but oddly not Best Comedy Series. The five programs nominated in that category consist of *North of North*, Crave's *Late Bloomer*, CBC's *Son of a Critch*, Crave's *The Trades*, and CTV's *Children Ruin Everything*.

Prior to Wednesday's announcement, it appeared as if *Heated Rivalry*, which has picked up global acclaim and is available in the United States via HBO Max, would not be eligible for this year's CSAs. According to the Canadian Academy's 2026 regulations, an eligible television program "must have its first Canadian commercial release between September 1, 2024, and November 15, 2025." The series premiere of *Heated Rivalry*, created by Jacob Tierney, first streamed on Crave on Nov. 28, 2025.

Yet according to the Canadian Academy, the submission process includes an ability to appeal. While the details of that process are confidential, the organization's internal review system ultimately deemed that *Heated Rivalry* would be eligible for this year's awards.

On the feature film side, director R.T. Thorne's thriller *40 Acres*, which takes place in a near-future Canadian dystopia, earned 10 nominations, including Best Motion Picture, Achievement in Direction for Thorne, and the John Dunning Best First Feature Film Award.

Three films followed with eight nominations a piece: Eric K. Boulianne's French-language sex comedy *Follies*, Madeleine Sims-Fewer and Dusty Mancinelli's dark romantic thriller *Honey Bunch*, and Matt Johnson's time-travel buddy comedy *Nirvanna the Band the Show the Movie*. Meanwhile, Chandler Levack's Montreal-set comedy *Mile End Kicks* and Sophy Romvari's coming-of-age drama *Blue Heron* each picked up seven nominations each.

The nominees for Best Motion Picture are *40 Acres*, *Blue Heron*, the French-language thriller *The Cost of Heaven*, *Follies*, the French-language wedding-day comedy *Lovely Day*, the Turkey-set thriller *The Things You Kill*, the Igloolik-set fantasy drama *Wrong Husband*, and *Nirvanna the Band the Show the Movie*. That last title recently delivered the largest opening at the domestic box office for a live-action English-language Canadian film since the 2023 comedy *BlackBerry*, which was also directed by Johnson (and who this year has been denied a nomination for Achievement in Direction).

Eligibility rules for feature films stipulate that a production must have had its "first commercial release" in a Canadian theatre or eligible online platform between Jan. 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026.

■ AWARDS, A15

My e-mail address was a keeper of secrets

FIRST PERSON

Migrating to a new account was like a purge, liberating and final in equal measure, **Suzanne Westover** writes

ILLUSTRATION BY CATHERINE CHAN

If your e-mail ends in Yahoo, Hotmail or Sympatico.ca, I see you. We were early adopters. And now, if we're still clinging to our once-era-defining handles, we're Luddites of the highest order.

I set up an e-mail account in university. But that doesn't mean I trusted it to do its job. In April of my fourth year, Ottawa was blanketed with winter's last storm, so my then-professor suggested I e-mail him my final assignment.

I guffawed. What ludicrousness. There was no way I was going to trust the lion's share of my grade to the internet. So I got in my car and white-knuckled it across the city. A 20-minute drive took well over an hour and a half, before I finally slipped my manila-envelope-clad essay through a little iron slot.

In the years since, e-mail became a de facto filing system for my entire life. And soon, an extension of my identity.

Asked to provide contact information – to friends, employers, promotional campaigns, charities – I'd recite my Yahoo address with alacrity. That e-mail was encoded in my DNA alongside my childhood phone number. Anyone I'd come into contact with over the years could find me at the same digital co-ordinates where I'd planted my flag at 22.

In real life, I'm a minimalist. Ruthlessly unsentimental. Baby clothes listed on the resale market when my daughter outgrew them. When my dad died, I limited my memento to a single item: a favourite watch. We donated the rest.

But my digital inbox was a maximalist's dream. I filed everything. Not always neatly. Not always logically. But it was all there.

Maybe I could be unsentimental with physical objects *because* I was hoarding everything digitally. My e-mail was a stand-in for a cobwebby attic.

"Cruise Life," a folder from my years working at sea, contained correspondence with friends I'd met sailing around the world. Dozens, if not hundreds, of e-mails to my parents, sent from a tiny crew internet café where I watched waves crash against a porthole as I dashed off quick missives from below deck. A US$20 internet card bought you 20 minutes – 10 of which were gobbled up by the dial-up modem.

"Making Waves," a folder dedicated to my first book. Correspondence with my then-agent, elation at getting representation. Devastation when the would-be publisher shuttered and rights returned to me.

A folder labelled "Fertility," stuffed with all the hopes and dreams of starting a family. My now-14-year-old daughter the result.

The list goes on. Jobs accepted and outgrown. Relationships maintained, then fizzled out.

Over time, my e-mail became the keeper of all my secrets.

But not too long ago things began to glitch. E-mails would seemingly disappear. Sent items were getting snatched up in recipients' trash folders with alarming regularity. And the spam. A relentless influx. Hot dates, miracle cures, it never ended.

The idea of making a switch felt inauthentic. I was my e-mail address. But I needed my e-mail to function. And, if I'm honest, that once-modern Yahoo suffix now felt … dated. A digital tell that I hadn't kept pace with the times.

Change of this magnitude was no small thing.

To start, I was shocked at the sheer number of businesses I needed to alert. Newspaper subscriptions, phone companies, mortgage holders. Then there were schools, doctors, workplaces. The list of people who needed to reach me – to invoice or communicate – ran well into the double-digits.

My address book came next. Some people I spoke to regularly, others to whom I was barely tethered and only by the thinly stretched thread of a once-familiar e-mail address.

I migrated what I could. Went folder by folder, dragging files that felt freighted with meaning. Some things didn't transfer cleanly. Attachments went missing. I made choices. Promotional e-mails from 2009? Gone. Threads with long-lost acquaintances? Deleted.

It felt like a purge, liberating and final in equal measure.

Yet, somehow, I felt more sentimentality at changing digital addresses than I ever did picking up stakes and moving physical homes. In a world of change, there was a comfort in knowing I was, in theory, in the same place I'd always been. A collision of past and present, stored somewhere in a digital cloud.

Now that the hard work is done, I'm getting used to my new, swankier, more relevant e-mail address.

Yet, despite my best intentions, I can't bring myself to shut down the old one.

I check it maybe once a month now. Sometimes less. It's mostly the digital equivalent of junk mail piling up on a crumbling stoop.

But every so often, there's something real. Proof that these digital co-ordinates – so central to my identity for so long – still matter. At least a little.

My new address still doesn't feel like home – at least not yet. But maybe I'll grow into it.

Either way, you can still find me. The old me, and the new me. Both somewhere in the cloud.

Suzanne Westover lives in Nepean, Ont.

First Person is a daily personal piece submitted by readers. Have a story to tell? See our guidelines at tgam.ca/essayguide.

TODAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTION

8	3	1	2	7	6	4	5	9
6	9	7	4	1	5	2	8	3
2	4	5	9	3	8	7	1	6
4	7	8	5	2	3	9	6	1
1	6	2	7	8	9	5	3	4
3	5	9	1	6	4	8	2	7
5	2	3	6	9	7	1	4	8
7	1	6	8	4	2	3	9	5
9	8	4	3	5	1	6	7	2

TODAY'S KENKEN SOLUTION

15× 3	5− 1	6	11+ 5	2÷ 4	2
5	30× 2	3	6	2÷ 1	24× 4
5+ 1	5	1− 4	3	2	6
4	12+ 3	2÷ 2	1	2÷ 6	6+ 5
6 6	4	5	2− 2	3	1
3÷ 2	6	1 1	4	8+ 5	3

Awards: Actor Andrew Phung will host the gala

FROM A14

Finally, on the digital media side, the six-part comedy series *Settle Down*, from OUTtv, led the category with nine nominations, including best web program and best lead performance for Alexander Nunez.

While the number of nominations scored by *North of North* and *40 Acres* are impressive, they fall short of the all-time CSA record-holders *Schitt's Creek* (which received 26 TV-category nods in 2020) and *BlackBerry* (which earned 17 nods in 2024).

A total of 153 CSAs (including Special and Fan Choice Awards) will be handed out during a series of Toronto ceremonies running May 27-31, with the number of awards down slightly from 2025, when the Canadian Academy handed out 158 (itself a reduction from 2024's slate of 171 awards).

This year's CSAs gala will be hosted May 31 by actor Andrew Phung (*Kim's Convenience*, *Run the Burbs*) and, for the first time ever, be simulcast on CBC, CTV and Global, as well as live-streamed on those broadcasters' respective streaming services, CBC Gem, Crave and STACKTV.

WORLD FORECAST

	TODAY		TOMORROW		SATURDAY	
AMSTERDAM	7/2	SH	10/6	PC	10/4	PC
ATHENS	17/12	S	16/8	SH	15/8	S
BANGKOK	35/28	S	35/28	S	35/28	S
BEIJING	26/11	S	20/9	PC	20/11	PC
BERLIN	8/-1	SH	9/0	SH	11/2	PC
BRUSSELS	6/0	SH	10/7	PC	9/3	R
COPENHAGEN	7/1	PC	8/4	S	7/3	C
FRANKFURT	6/-3	SH	6/-2	PC	9/1	PC
HONG KONG	24/21	SH	24/22	SH	24/22	SH
JERUSALEM	10/8	R	12/8	SH	17/11	S
LAS VEGAS	34/18	S	32/19	S	34/20	S
LONDON	10/5	S	13/5	SH	11/4	S
LOS ANGELES	30/16	PC	30/17	S	31/18	PC
MADRID	17/4	S	19/6	S	17/5	S
MIAMI	27/22	S	27/21	SH	28/21	SH
MOSCOW	6/-2	S	8/1	S	10/2	PC
NEW DELHI	34/22	PC	33/21	T	34/22	PC
NEW YORK	18/12	PC	12/-2	R	5/0	S
NICE	16/6	PC	15/8	S	16/10	S
ORLANDO	28/18	SH	30/19	S	28/19	SH
PARIS	9/2	SH	10/8	C	11/3	SH
PHOENIX	37/20	S	38/22	S	37/24	PC
ROME	12/6	SH	12/6	PC	15/3	S
SAN FRANCISCO	18/12	PC	21/10	PC	17/11	S
SEOUL	18/6	S	18/6	S	20/8	S
SINGAPORE	31/25	R	31/25	SH	31/25	T
SYDNEY	29/16	SH	19/15	R	22/15	S
TOKYO	13/9	R	16/9	PC	16/10	PC
WASHINGTON	24/18	PC	18/2	R	8/1	S

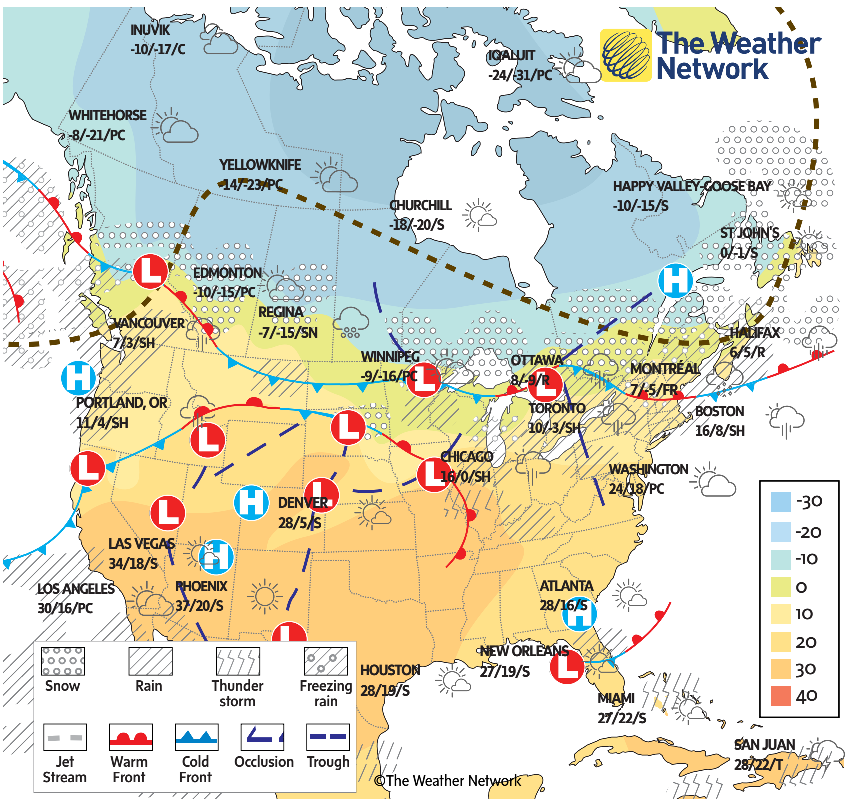
LEGEND

Daytime high, overnight low, and conditions

C CLOUDY
FG FOG
FR FREEZING RAIN
HZ HAZE
NA NOT AVAILABLE
PC PARTLY CLOUDY
R RAIN
RS RAIN/SNOW
S SUN
SN SNOW
SF SNOW FLURRIES
SH SHOWERS
T THUNDERSTORMS
W WINDY

NATIONAL FORECAST

	TODAY		TOMORROW		SATURDAY	
BANFF	-1/-11	SF	3/-10	S	8/-6	S
BARRIE	9/-8	R	-3/-7	S	-1/-5	SN
BRANDON	-7/-16	S	-5/-15	S	1/-6	S
CALGARY	-6/-11	SN	6/-5	S	9/-3	PC
CHARLOTTETOWN	3/2	RS	2/-9	SH	-6/-10	PC
CHICOUTIMI	-2/-14	SN	-12/-25	PC	-8/-14	PC
CHURCHILL	-18/-20	S	-14/-18	SN	-10/-16	SN
CORNER BROOK	-1/-1	SN	2/-8	RS	-8/-14	SN
CORNWALL	10/-6	R	-2/-10	S	-1/-6	PC
EDMONTON	-10/-15	PC	-3/-10	S	-1/-10	PC
HALIFAX	6/5	R	6/-8	R	-1/-7	S
HAMILTON	14/-3	SH	1/-6	S	3/-3	SN
HUNTSVILLE	6/-13	R	-5/-13	S	-2/-11	SN
IQALUIT	-24/-31	PC	-25/-34	PC	-25/-33	PC
JASPER	0/-8	SN	5/-8	PC	7/-5	RS
KELOWNA	9/-2	S	12/1	S	14/3	PC
KINGSTON	8/-5	R	-1/-7	S	0/4	SN
LONDON	14/-3	SH	1/-6	S	3/-3	RS
MONTRÉAL	7/-5	FR	-2/-13	S	-2/-8	PC
NIAGARA FALLS	13/-2	SH	0/-5	S	2/-2	SN
NORTH BAY	2/-17	RS	-7/-15	S	-4/-13	PC
OTTAWA	8/-9	R	-4/-12	S	-1/-7	PC
PRINCE GEORGE	-1/-6	SN	6/4	RS	5/-7	SN
PETERBOROUGH	11/-7	R	0/-8	S	0/-5	SN
QUÉBEC	3/-9	SN	-5/-22	S	-8/-16	S
REGINA	-7/-15	SN	2/-8	S	8/-3	PC
SASKATOON	-11/-21	PC	-5/-14	S	3/-7	PC
SAULT STE MARIE	1/-15	RS	-5/-7	S	-4/-12	SN
SAINT JOHN	6/3	R	3/-11	SH	-3/-8	S
SEPT-ÎLES	-6/-8	SN	-6/-20	S	-10/-13	S
ST JOHN'S	0/-1	S	5/4	R	-2/-5	PC
SUDBURY	1/-17	RS	-6/-15	S	-3/-15	SN
THUNDER BAY	-3/-16	SN	-5/-12	PC	-1/-13	SF
THOMPSON	-13/-21	S	-10/-16	PC	-4/-15	S
TORONTO	10/-3	SH	0/-5	S	2/-1	SN
VAL-D'OR	-4/-22	SN	-12/-21	S	-6/-14	SN
VANCOUVER	7/3	SH	10/3	PC	10/5	PC
VICTORIA	8/4	S	11/4	S	9/6	PC
WHISTLER	3/-3	RS	8/-3	PC	7/-1	SH
WHITEHORSE	-8/-20	PC	-7/-19	S	-4/-18	S
WINNIPEG	-9/-14	S	-7/-15	SN	-3/-9	S
YELLOWKNIFE	-14/-24	PC	-11/-21	S	-8/-15	PC



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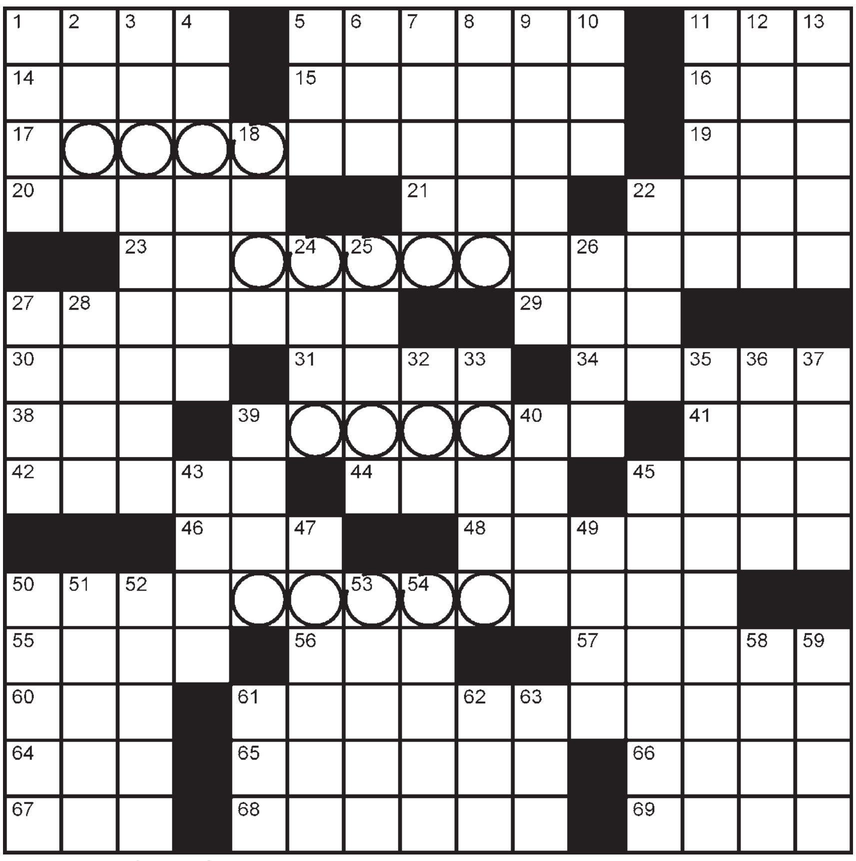
UNIVERSAL CROSSWORD
ICE CREAM SANDWICH BY CHARLIE DEAN

ACROSS
1 Part of a process
5 First name in 2024 politics
11 Slalom, say
14 Remove the rind from
15 Tranquil
16 Emptied one's hand first, in Uno
17 What to say if you're on fire? (In this answer, note letters 2-5)
19 "Please, dig in!"
20 Emotionally demanding
21 Nickname that rhymes with "Ray"
22 Word after "yard" or "garage"
23 Space mission launch site (... letters 3-7)
27 Yogurt addition
29 Battering ___
30 Prime Video option
31 Variety of M&Ms
34 Tactic in a war of attrition
38 Hoppy brew
39 Made exhausted (... letters 2-5)
41 Straight pretzel shape
42 Sabin vaccine target
44 Front page filler
45 Lily pad visitor
46 Male swan
48 Sea otter's snack
50 "Creature" that might "attack" a child (... letters 5-9)
55 Exclusively
56 Ax thrower's asset
57 Hajj destination
60 Kerfuffle
61 Exclusive information, and a theme hint
64 Sermon topic
65 Attacked by mosquitoes
66 Undo's menu
67 Shirt fired from a cannon
68 ___ with (teased)
69 Remote locations?

DOWN
1 Swivel
2 Control, as frizzy hair
3 Waterway not supported by Jefferson or Madison
4 Necklace dangler
5 Metric speed meas.
6 The "A" of 38-Across
7 "Zoom-Zoom" automaker
8 Squirrel's nut
9 Like the equation y = 3x - 20
10 Suffix with "Gator"
11 Trigger a bleep
12 Stuffed "bear" sold in an Australia airport
13 Big name in chips
18 Feature of htis clue
22 Frozen Four game
24 Muppet who refers to himself in the third person
25 Terrier type
26 Boundless
27 Tennis racket hold
28 Seized auto
32 Formerly known as
33 Early caucusgoer
35 404 Not Found, for one
36 "Continue ..."
37 Border
39 Cashmere or angora
40 Common PC ports
43 Like Brussels sprouts, to many kids
45 Swindled
47 ___ Babies
49 PIN requesters
50 A "ting, ting, ting" may signal its start
51 Like Sundance films
52 Personal copy?
53 Waterfall sprays
54 Fails to mention
58 Makeshift screwdriver
59 Many NYC homes
61 Pioneer in chess engines
62 Poor grade
63 This clue's position



EDITED BY DAVID STEINBERG

BRIDGE
BY STEVE BECKER
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026

NORTH
♠ A 9 7 4 3
♥ J 6 2
♦ Q 8
♣ Q J 9

WEST
♠ 5
♥ A K Q 10 8 3
♦ 10 7 3
♣ 10 8 6

EAST
♠ K 6
♥ 9 4
♦ J 9 6 5 4 2
♣ K 5 3

SOUTH
♠ Q J 10 8 2
♥ 7 5
♦ A K
♣ A 7 4 2

West dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

The bidding:

West	North	East	South
2 [H]*	Pass	Pass	2 [S]
Pass	3 [S]	Pass	4 [S]

*weak two-bid
Opening Lead – king of hearts.

An elimination play can save many a contract. Its purpose is to force a defender to make a play advantageous to his side.

Here is a simple illustration. South is in four spades, and West starts by leading three high hearts, declarer ruffing the third.

South now leads the queen of spades, on which West plays the five. It would be wrong to finesse the spade in view of West's weak two-bid, which he would scarcely make if he had the guarded king of spades and the A-K-Q of hearts.

South goes up with the ace of spades, hoping to catch the singleton king, and also planning to develop an endplay against East if the king does not fall.

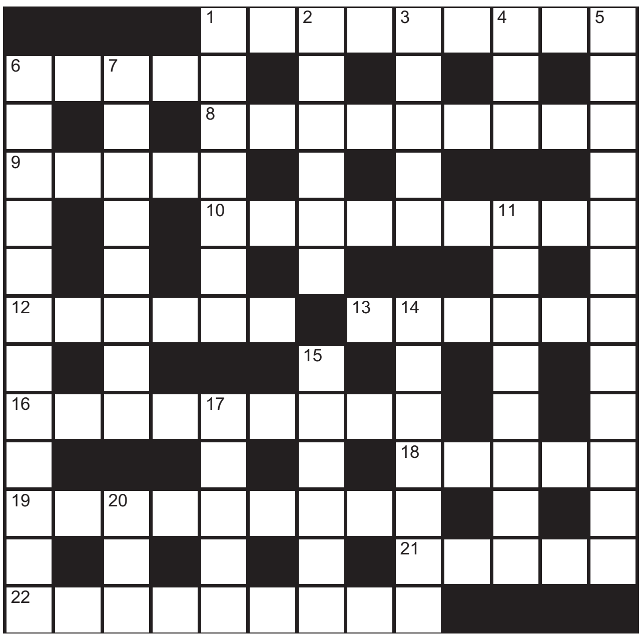
When the king does not appear, South cashes the A-K of diamonds, eliminating that suit from the dummy and his own hand, and then throws East on lead with a spade.

East cannot afford to lead a diamond, which would allow South to ruff while discarding a club from dummy, so he returns a club. Declarer wins the club in dummy (with the nine or jack, depending on what West plays) and takes another club finesse to make the contract.

If South takes the spade finesse, he goes down. East would be able to exit with a spade or a diamond, and East-West would score a club trick with proper defence.

The contract can be defeated by an unusual play. If East foresees the impending endplay, he can thwart it. All he has to do is to trump the third heart lead with the king of spades – even though he is trumping his partner's high heart – and then return anything but a club. Against this defence, declarer is helpless.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



ACROSS
1 Sport that Lion developed involving resistance (9)
6 Doorkeeper and drug dealer leaving quietly (5)
8 Unusual flies circling old chap's insular location (4,2,3)
9 Saying taken from go-ahead agency (5)
10 Party platform ignoring last thing affected by Reform (4,5)
12 Woman's concealing corroded radiator? (6)
13 Fix fight against European (6)
16 Reportedly study good article on gold musical instrument (4,5)
18 Type of paint Gloria half used outside in stages (5)
19 Game I lost unfortunately leading to a rage (9)
21 Son Kelvin that is heading for ruin — someone going downhill fast? (5)
22 Total in writing correct (9)

DOWN
1 Samples tagliatelle on vacation somewhere in Italy (7)
2 Quite afflicted state (3,3)
3 Ancient character's a spiky thing (5)
4 Meat reduced to pound (3)
5 No news there, I broadcast, still in ignorance (4,3,5)
6 Writer in university's meeting editor without permission (12)
7 Violent, appealing person owned box containing ecstasy (8)
11 Cheerful Simon regularly observed 51 plants (8)
14 Tory visitor avoiding United crowd (7)
15 Travel up with Heather casting amorous glances (6)
17 Aquatic mammal having excessive energy on river (5)
20 Vulgar animal noise (3)

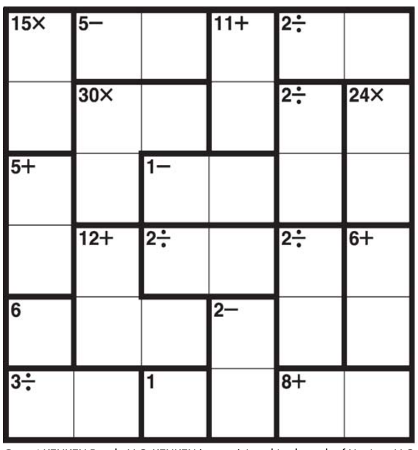
SUDOKU
DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

INSTRUCTIONS
Fill in the grid so that each row of nine squares, each column of nine and each section of nine (three squares by three) contains the numbers 1 through 9 in any order. There is only one solution to each puzzle.

				7	6			
	9			1		2		
2		5					1	
4				2		9		1
		2	7	8	9	5		
3		9		6				7
	2					1		8
		6		4			9	
			3	5				

3/26

KENKEN



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 through 6 without repeating.
2. The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.
3. Freebies: Fill in single-box cages with the numbers in the top-left corner.

SOLUTIONS

YESTERDAY'S UNIVERSAL CROSSWORD

YESTERDAY'S CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Solutions to today's Sudoku and Kenken can be found in the Life & Arts content area of the A section. Crossword solutions will be with tomorrow's puzzles.

Air Canada: Federal language watchdog received nearly 800 complaints about CEO

FROM A1

It will take a significant communications effort to repair the situation, he said.

The storm enveloping Canada's largest carrier highlights how quickly the winds can change for business leaders in the country, and particularly in Quebec, where language has always been a prickly subject and occasionally spills over into the corporate world.

Air Canada is headquartered in Montreal. Although it is subject to Canada's Official Languages Act and other laws, Ottawa's management oversight of the airline is limited. It has no power to dictate who should run the company or sit on its board, but it has in the past made suggestions about its governance.

Jacques Roy, a professor emeritus of logistics and operations management at HEC Montreal, said the matter puts a squeeze on Air Canada's board of directors to consider replacing Mr. Rousseau. "If you're going to be a CEO of an officially bilingual company in Canada with a history like Air Canada, obviously you should learn to say a few words in French and use these occasions to show that you've made some progress," he said.

Federal Industry Minister Mélanie Joly said Mr. Rousseau's video showed "a lack of empathy and a lack of sensitivity," given that some of the victims and their families are French-speaking.

"I think it's a question of moral leadership," she said, adding the CEO now needs to show he understands the message.

Others called for a change at the top of Air Canada. Bloc Québécois Leader Yves-François Blanchet said Mr. Rousseau should quit, adding that Mr. Carney should put pressure on Air Canada's board to get him to leave. "There is a limit" to the number of insults francophone Quebeckers should have to endure, he said.

In Quebec City, Premier François Legault also said Mr. Rousseau should step down, pointing out that he pledged to learn French years ago.

"If he will not speak French today, it's a lack of respect towards his employees and towards his clients," Mr. Legault said. "I think if he does not speak French, he should resign."

Quebec Justice Minister Simon Jolin-Barrette said Air Canada should force Mr. Rousseau to step down, calling him a "repeat offender" for failing to respect Quebec's official language. "This is contemptuous," he told reporters.

Aircraft maintenance workers in a boom lift cut away debris hanging from the wreckage of an Air Canada Express jet on Tuesday, just off the runway where it had collided with a Port Authority fire truck on Sunday night at LaGuardia Airport in New York. YUKI IWAMURA/AP

Air Canada spokesman Christophe Hennebelle said Mr. Rousseau is not resigning.

"It's important that he's at the helm" at this time, he said by phone. Air Canada is going through one of the worst events that can hit an airline, namely a crash that cost the lives of two pilots, on top of the financial strain of soaring fuel prices, he said.

Mr. Hennebelle said he could not say whether the board planned to hold a meeting over the language controversy because such meetings are kept confidential. The Globe and Mail contacted several company directors for this story but received no replies.

Mr. Rousseau recorded the video on Monday before departing for the crash site in New York, Mr. Hennebelle explained. "Despite his efforts, his ability to express himself in French does not allow him to convey such a sensitive message in that language as he would wish," Mr. Hennebelle said. "We have therefore used subtitles to ensure that everyone can receive his message directly."

> If he will not speak French today, it's a lack of respect towards his employees and towards his clients. I think if he does not speak French, he should resign.
>
> FRANÇOIS LEGAULT
> QUEBEC PREMIER

He said all information about the crash has been provided in both official languages on the internet, social media and news releases. "His primary aim was to speak in person," Mr. Hennebelle said.

Mr. Rousseau's French skills have come under scrutiny before.

Not long after he became CEO in 2021, Mr. Rousseau made a speech to the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal that was mostly in English.

Questioned by reporters after the speech, the CEO said he had managed to live in Montreal for 14 years without speaking French, and suggested he was too busy to learn the language.

His comments shocked politicians in Quebec City and Ottawa, and triggered more than 2,500 complaints to the office of Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages. Justin Trudeau, who was prime minister at the time, called the situation "unacceptable."

Mr. Rousseau later apologized for the remarks and said he was beginning to take French lessons. "The fact that this iconic company is headquartered in Montreal is a source of pride for me and our entire executive team," he said at the time. "I reiterate Air Canada's commitment to show respect for French and, as a leader, I will set the tone."

In the midst of the Rousseau uproar in 2021, then deputy prime minister Chrystia Freeland said learning to speak French should become part of the CEO's performance review. She wrote a letter to Air Canada's chairman Vagn Soerensen urging the airline to make the ability to communicate in French one of the qualifications of anyone holding a senior position at the company.

The chairman responded that Mr. Rousseau was committed to learning French and that it would be "an integral part" of his performance evaluation. However, the company has provided scant details on that evaluation in its public filings, Mr. Dauphin said.

Mr. Rousseau has "continued to act on his personal pledge to learn French," according to the company's 2025 management proxy circular.

Mr. Rousseau was born in Cornwall, Ont., and trained to become an accountant at Toronto's York University. He joined Air Canada in 2007 after leaving retailer Hudson's Bay Co. Despite boasting a common Quebec surname and having a wife and mother who speak French, he is not proficient.

In comments before a parliamentary committee in December, 2024, Mr. Rousseau said he continued to take French courses but that at his age, learning the language was "difficult."

Conservative MP Joël Godin said that more than a year later, it's clear now that little has changed in the way the CEO views his language responsibilities. "It's a question of principle, of values, and of intention," Mr. Godin said, adding the CEO has once again shown his "lack of sensitivity."

As of Wednesday afternoon, the federal language watchdog's office had received nearly 800 complaints about Mr. Rousseau's statement.

Parti Québécois Leader Paul St-Pierre Plamondon is using the outrage to argue in favour of Quebec's sovereignty.

"Let those who are fed up with federal institutions disregarding the French language … join the movement for Quebec independence, because Canada has been treating the French language this way for decades, and it's not going to change," he said.

With reports from Maura Forrest, Marie Woolf, Stephanie Levitz and The Canadian Press

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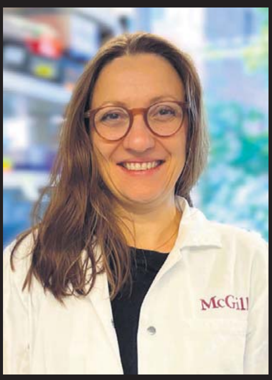

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THE GLOBE AND MAIL

REPORT ON BUSINESS

OTTAWA/QUEBEC EDITION ▪ THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026 ▪ GLOBEANDMAIL.COM

S&P/TSX	DOW	S&P 500	NASDAQ	DOLLAR	GOLD (oz.)	OIL (WTI)	GCAN (10-YR)
32,382.60	46,429.49	6,591.90	21,929.83	72.46/1.3801	US$4,552.30	US$90.32	3.48%
+441.01	+305.43	+35.53	+167.94	-0.21/+0.0040	+150.30	-2.03	-0.08

Under current federal rules, only first-time buyers who plan to live in their new homes are eligible for a rebate on the 13-per-cent harmonized sales tax for homes priced up to $1-million. Ontario announced expanded relief on Wednesday. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ontario to expand HST rebate to more buyers of new homes

SHANE DINGMAN
RACHELLE YOUNGLAI
JEFF GRAY

Ontario's building industry says the province's plan to rebate the sales tax on newly built homes for more buyers – including some investors – has the potential to be a "game changer" for the preconstruction home market, which is suffering from a prolonged downturn in sales.

Under current federal and Ontario rules, only first-time buyers who plan to live in their new homes are eligible for a rebate on the 13-per-cent federal-provincial harmonized sales tax for homes priced up to $1-million, or a partial rebate on units valued up to $1.5-million.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford announced on Wednesday that the rebate would now be expanded to more buyers, including repeat buyers who plan to live in their newly purchased units, as well as some investors who plan to rent out their units. Partial rebates will be extended to homes worth as much as $1.85-million.

The change will be included in Thursday's provincial budget. The rebate will be available over the next year, starting with purchase agreements signed April 1.

Mr. Ford said the move will be supported by a deal with the federal government that would approximately cover Ottawa's portion of the foregone tax bill.

"We believe this to be a game changer," Justin Sherwood, chief operating officer with trade group Building Industry and Land Development Association, said in an e-mail.

Mr. Sherwood said the expanded tax rebate is "precisely what the industry needs right now to increase affordability, increase sales, stimulate construction activity and protect jobs."

The province's media briefing document said investors who purchase new homes to use as rental properties could qualify for the tax rebate if construction began before March 31, 2026, and will be substantially completed before Dec. 31, 2029. That suggests tax relief for investors is primarily aimed at the unsold stock of new properties and not future launches.

"It will help anyone with standing inventory, which is good, but not for new builds," said Jeff Paikin, president of New Horizon Development Group, which has been developing new homes in the Hamilton and Toronto region for more than three decades.

Historically, investors have made up the vast majority of buyers of preconstruction condos. And developers such as New Horizon are typically required to sell about 70 per cent of the units in their condo buildings before they can get the financing to start construction.

REBATE, B6

With prediction markets, Canada edges into a murky world of risk and regulation

MEERA RAMAN

Canadian investors are a step closer to being able to legally bet on real-world events – a controversial type of trading that regulators have long kept at arm's length. With financial companies such as Wealthsimple Inc. obtaining regulatory approval, Canada is edging into new territory, raising questions about how prediction markets will be regulated and what's ahead for everyday investors.

Online investing platform Wealthsimple received regulatory approval from the Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization to offer what are known as forecast contracts, opening the door to prediction trading in Canada, The Globe and Mail reported Tuesday.

Questrade Financial Group Inc., one of Canada's first online trading platforms for retail investors, also intends to offer event contracts "as early as this summer," Salim Naran, Questrade's president of growth portfolio, said in an e-mailed statement. The company said it does not currently have CIRO approval.

The moves signal a shift in Canada, where the betting products have largely been restricted. While prediction trading has exploded in popularity in the United States, Canada's stricter rules and a murky regulatory framework have made it difficult for firms to offer it here.

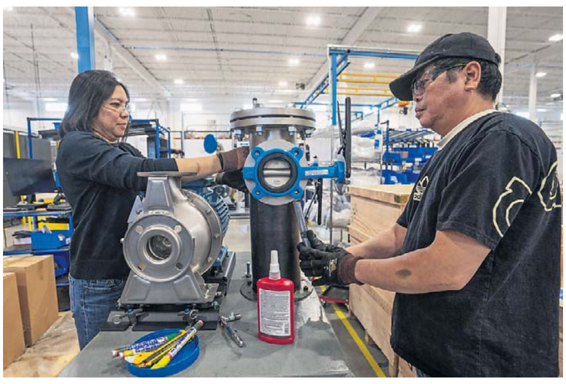
The prediction markets industry has rapidly expanded in recent years, with annual revenue of about US$2-billion, and could reach more than US$10-billion by 2030, analysts at Citizens Financial Group Inc. said in late 2025.

The sector has been met with scrutiny in the United States, where lawmakers and regulators are debating whether these products resemble gambling and are raising concerns about insider trading.

Prediction markets let users trade on whether specific events will happen, from geopolitical developments to economic data releases.

A typical contract poses a yes-or-no question, such as whether the Bank of Canada will raise interest rates on a certain date. Prices fluctuate based on what traders think will happen. If a "yes" contract is trading at 30 cents, that usually implies a 30-per-cent chance of the event occurring. If the prediction is correct, the contract pays out $1; if not, it expires worthless.

PREDICTION MARKETS, B8



TECHNOLOGY

CoolIT employees to receive massive cash payouts after $4.75-billion sale to Ecolab B2

TODD KOROL/
THE GLOBE AND MAIL

PERSONAL FINANCE

As gas prices soar, which loyalty programs should you turn to for relief? B10

INVESTING

Why this might be the right time to focus on neglected stocks B11

Brookfield, Caisse to pay $3.8-billion for energy firm Boralex

ANDREW WILLIS
JAMES BRADSHAW

Brookfield Asset Management Ltd. and the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec have teamed up to buy **Boralex Inc.** for $3.8-billion, the latest in a series of renewable power acquisitions by deep-pocketed fund managers.

On Wednesday, Montreal-based Boralex announced it had accepted an offer to take the company private after its board concluded the two institutional investors were the best sources of capital for its $6.8-billion, five-year expansion plan.

"Two patient investors like Brookfield and the Caisse have the long-term view and expertise in our sector that offered the best way to realize our strategic goals," Boralex chief executive officer Patrick Decoste said in an interview.

Brookfield owns a global renewable power business with 7,000 facilities and assets of US$143-billion. Mr. Decoste said being owned by the Toronto-based asset manager will give Boralex reliable access to capital, better prices on equipment and its first access to data centre owners such as Microsoft Corp. and Amazon.com Inc., which are major consumers of power.

BORALEX, B8

LNG Canada to take lead on potential B.C. pipeline expansion

BRENT JANG VANCOUVER

LNG Canada has agreed to take the lead role on the potential expansion of the Coastal GasLink pipeline across northern British Columbia, a move designed to spur construction of two major projects.

Shell PLC-led LNG Canada is expected to make a final investment decision by the end of 2026 on whether to proceed with its own Phase 2 expansion, which would double capacity for production of liquefied natural gas at the export terminal in Kitimat, B.C.

If LNG Canada forges ahead with its Phase 2 plan for the Kitimat terminal, it will require Coastal GasLink to double pipeline capacity.

TC Energy Corp. operates the existing Coastal GasLink project that transports natural gas from northeast B.C. to Kitimat.

On Wednesday, Calgary-based TC said Coastal GasLink (CGL) has signed commercial agreements with LNG Canada, which will take responsibility for managing front-end engineering and design for increasing the pipeline's capacity.

"Under the agreements, LNG Canada will lead project construction as CGL Phase 2 execution manager and CGL will provide LNG Canada technical advisory services," TC said in a statement.

LNG, B8

COMPANIES

SPORTS

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BASEBALL Mark Shapiro won't say it, so Cathal Kelly is: This is the Jays' year B13

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CoolIT employees to get massive payouts

The supplier's sale to EcoLab is one of the largest exits ever in tech sector in Canada

MATTHEW SCACE CALGARY

Hundreds of employees at a Calgary tech company are about to get a cash windfall.

On Wednesday afternoon, about 650 workers at CoolIT, a cooling technology supplier, learned they're getting cash payouts averaging US$240,000. The monster bonuses follow the company's announcement of its blockbuster sale to a Minnesota-based business last week.

"I cannot even process it – to set it in my mind this is actually happening," CoolIT employee Kenneth Kong said on Wednesday afternoon, clutching the ripped envelope revealing his payout amount. Mr. Kong, a quality-assurance specialist, started at the company in 2011 when it had 22 employees and its technology was focused on cooling gaming consoles – entirely different from its tech that now cools the toasty, high-powered computers inside data centres.

Last Friday, CoolIT was purchased by **Ecolab Inc.** of St. Paul, Minn., for US$4.75-billion in cash. Rivalled by only a handful of deals over the past 20 years, the sale is one of the largest exits ever in Canada's technology sector.

CoolIT builds efficient cooling systems for data centres, which have surged in demand since the late-2022 rollout of ChatGPT and widespread adoption of artificial intelligence.

CoolIT's 650 employees became owners in the business in 2023, when private equity giant KKR & Co. Inc. acquired the company.

As a result, employees are set to receive between one to eight years of annual pay, based on tenure and salary, the company said in a statement after markets closed on Wednesday.

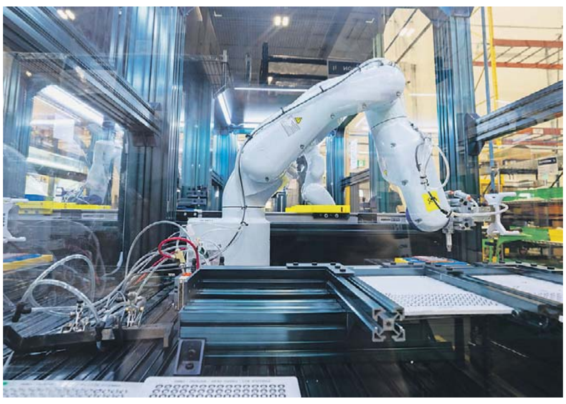
The payouts, to be delivered in the fall, were announced Wednesday afternoon by CoolIT and KKR executives in a white tent planted atop the company's parking lot.

KKR managing director Kyle Matter unveiled the payout amounts on an elevated stage like a game-show host, with employees' responding to the news with ear-splitting cheers. Some colleagues huddled and jumped together; others exchanged hugs with tears in their eyes. Executives stood on the sidelines, filming with their phones.

The newest employees who started in 2026 are set to earn at least $35,000. Those payouts increase dramatically, up to a minimum $95,000 for those who started in 2025 – jumping to at least $490,000 for those, like Mr. Kong, who joined CoolIT in 2016 or earlier.

"This is a one-in-a-lifetime moment for people. It's like winning the lottery," said Jerin Varghese, a test-team lead who started with the company in 2021. Employees who joined that year will be paid at least $275,000, or six times their annual salary.

Employees work on the manufacturing floor at CoolIT-Liquid Labs in Calgary on Wednesday. The company was purchased by EcoLab Inc. last Friday for US$4.75-billion in cash. PHOTOS BY TODD KOROL/THE GLOBE AND MAIL



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KKR, CoolIT's owner, bought the company in 2023 for US$270-million, just as spending on massive global data centres supporting the widespread adoption of AI was taking off. KKR will earn about 15 times the original equity it invested in CoolIT.

"We knew the data centre world was moving to liquid cooling," Mr. Matter said. "We thought it would play out over four, five, six, seven years. It played out in 12 months."

"We had the right thesis, and we got very fortunate with how quickly things played out."

The Calgary company is also partly owned by Abu Dhabi-based sovereign wealth fund Mubadala Investment Co.

Ecolab, the Minnesota company, is a New York Stock Exchange-listed provider of water, hygiene and infection-prevention products and services with US$16-billion in annual sales.

Founded 25 years ago, CoolIT started by making liquid cooling technology for gaming computers before expanding in 2012 to serve the supercomputer business. It entered the AI business a decade later.

It says liquid-cooled data centres use between 30 and 40 per cent less energy for cooling while also reducing water consumption.

The company worked with equipment manufacturers in the years before data centres surged in demand, said Patrick McGinn, CoolIT's president and chief operating officer. That primed the company to respond to the rapid acceleration in large language models, as AI companies turned to liquid cooling for their hot, energy-intensive sites.

"The industry really took on a new meaning – a new turn – at that point," Mr. McGinn said.

CoolIT's growth has made it one of Canada's largest privately held technology companies in recent years, and one of at least 25 to surpass US$300-million in annual revenues, according to a recent Globe and Mail survey.

Mr. McGinn said the company recently signed a lease for 150,000 square feet of new space in Calgary. The company may see optimizations in the near future, he said, but there are few signs that its footprint in the city will change.

"If I have anything to say about it, we'll be here," he said.

Ottawa, Alberta agree on methane-emissions reduction plan

JEFFREY JONES
ESG AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCE REPORTER

Ottawa and the Alberta government have struck a deal in principle on reducing methane emissions from oil and gas production, a key provision of a memorandum of understanding that could pave the way for a new oil pipeline to the West Coast.

Under the proposal, Alberta would combine regulations, offset credits and targeted investments with the goal of cutting emissions of the potent greenhouse gas by 75 per cent below 2014 levels by 2035, Prime Minister Mark Carney's office said in a statement.

By the end of 2024, Alberta's oil and gas industry had reduced methane emissions by 51 per cent from 2014, through a combination of technology, regulation and financial incentives, according to government figures.

In exchange for cutting the emissions, Alberta would be exempted from federal methane regulations, providing that reductions are equal to those mandated by the federal rules, the statement said.

The agreement in principle means that two of the four MOU provisions that the two sides had targeted for an April 1 deadline are in place. Alberta and federal government officials previously agreed on another provision, a co-operation deal that gives the province jurisdiction over regulatory approvals for major projects in its territory.

Two more remain unresolved, and Alberta Premier Danielle Smith said on Tuesday that those may not meet the schedule. However, negotiations on those items – an industrial carbon-pricing regime and a multibillion-dollar CO_2-capture project in the oil sands – are constructive, she said.

The MOU, announced by Mr. Carney and Ms. Smith in November, envisions Ottawa backing Alberta's proposal for a one-million-barrel-a-day pipeline to the Pacific Coast in exchange for dozens of provisions to lessen the environmental impact of the province's energy sector. Ms. Smith said she expects the details to be worked out by June.

B.C. Premier David Eby has said he opposes any pipeline project that would require lifting a federal moratorium on tankers loading crude on his province's northern coast. He has said an expansion of the Trans Mountain Pipeline to Burnaby, B.C., from Alberta is a more "realistic" option.

The proposed pipeline is still without a private-sector proponent or defined route, though discussion has mostly centred on an export terminal on the north coast, including the Port of Prince Rupert, which is subject to the tanker ban.

That location faces staunch opposition from a number of B.C. First Nations, which have also called for the moratorium to remain in place.

Wednesday's agreement in principle would see the appointment of an independent third party to assess reductions in emissions of methane, a gas with as much as 30 times the heat-trapping intensity of carbon dioxide. Alberta has agreed to publish information on emissions sources covered by the deal, and the two sides agreed that as-yet unspecified corrective action could be taken if reductions fall short.

Once Alberta and the federal government finalize their agreement, the deal will undergo a 60-day consultation, with a goal of putting it into force on Jan. 1, 2027.

The deal signals an end to disputes between Alberta and the federal government over a key aspect of climate and energy policy, and should lead to more employment as companies work to meet the target, said Amanda Bryant, manager of the oil and gas program at the Pembina Institute, an environmental think tank. It should also help ensure access to global natural gas markets that are calling for lower emissions from fossil fuels, such as the European Union, South Korea and Japan, she said in a statement.

Corus wins court approval to continue recapitalization plan

IRENE GALEA

Corus Entertainment Inc. has received court approval to proceed with its recapitalization plan to reduce debt and liabilities, after a January shareholder vote to approve the plan failed to gain the necessary level of support.

Corus said in a release Tuesday evening that it had received an order from the Ontario Superior Court of Justice allowing it to proceed with the transaction, which will reduce the beleaguered media company's total debt and liabilities by more than $500-million, and decrease its interest payments by up to $40-million.

The company has said the plan will strengthen its financial foundation and support its long-term strategy, allowing it to maintain its television, radio and content operations. It's the company's latest effort to find a reprieve from its heavy debt load and the decline of its legacy advertising businesses.

Despite efforts to cut costs, the company has continued to see its overall revenue and profit decline in recent quarters, a challenge facing the broadcast industry as a whole.

The recapitalization plan is subject to various regulatory and stock market approvals. Corus said it is working to gain those approvals and complete the recapitalization plan "as soon as reasonably practical."

Until then, Corus said, it will continue to operate in the normal course with no changes for its clients, supporters or employees.

While the vast majority of Class A shareholders and the company's senior debtholders voted in favour of the arrangement in January, only 61 per cent of Class B shareholders approved, just below the two-thirds threshold that would have allowed the proposal to pass.

However, the company had been given the right to seek a court order for approval of the recapitalization plan in a December interim court order.

The recapitalization plan involves exchanging senior unsecured notes for equity in a new parent company, NewCo, that will own Corus. The note holders will own 99 per cent of the new company's shares. The recapitalization is being done through a plan of arrangement under the Canada Business Corporations Act.

STOCKS END HIGHER, OIL DROPS, AS INVESTORS BET ON MIDEAST DE-ESCALATION

Major indexes closed higher on Wednesday as oil prices fell while Iran reviewed a U.S. proposal to end the war in the Middle East, feeding investor hopes for de-escalation in the fourth week of a war that has disrupted global energy flows and stoked inflation concerns.

While Abbas Araqchi, Iran's Foreign Minister, said that authorities were reviewing the U.S. proposals, he added that Tehran has no intention to hold talks with Washington. Initially, Iran said it considered U.S. proposals delivered by Pakistan as excessive and demanded sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz. The mixed messages led to choppy trading. Any signs of communication between the countries provided some hope for investors, after signals that Washington has been seeking a ceasefire and restoration of shipping through the crucial strait, which about 20 per cent of global oil shipments pass through.

"There is optimism that the proposal and counter-proposal are setting the stage for more negotiations," said Gene Goldman, chief investment officer at Cetera Investment Management. But until there is clarity on when the war might end, Mr. Goldman said he expects "volatility to remain elevated given the impact of higher oil prices on inflation."

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 305.43 points, or 0.66 per cent, to 46,429.49, the S&P 500 gained 35.53 points, or 0.54 per cent, to 6,591.90 and the Nasdaq Composite gained 167.93 points, or 0.77 per cent, to 21,929.83.

The S&P/TSX composite index ended up 441.01 points, or 1.4 per cent, at 32,382.60, marking its third straight day of gains and its highest closing level since March 17.

Shares of Boralex jumped nearly 11 per cent after the company agreed to be acquired by Brookfield and La Caisse.

REUTERS, GLOBE STAFF

Quota split to continue for contentious eel fishery

Total allowable catch increase runs counter to Ottawa's own science advice

JENN THORNHILL VERMA

Canada is reopening one of its most contentious fisheries for its second year under strict new rules, the federal government announced Wednesday, attempting to balance Indigenous rights and commercial livelihoods against mounting concerns about the survival of a threatened species.

The 2026 elver season – a high-value spring hunt for juvenile American eels, known as elvers, along Nova Scotia and New Brunswick rivers – will open around April 1, continuing the near-equal split of quota between Indigenous and commercial harvesters introduced last year.

The 2026 elver season will open around April 1, continuing the near-equal split of quota between Indigenous and commercial harvesters introduced last year. DARREN CALABRESE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The total allowable catch, first announced in February, will increase by 22 per cent, from 9,960 kilograms to 12,180 kilograms, marking the first change to the quota in 20 years.

"The Government of Canada is committed to sustainable and orderly fisheries that support rural, coastal and Indigenous communities," the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) said in Wednesday's news release.

It was a pointed choice of words for a fishery that is so disorder-prone that DFO cut the 2023 season short and cancelled it altogether in 2024. The fishery has been plagued by violence and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, fuelled by a landed value of $2,800 per kilogram, worth more per kilogram than bluefin tuna or beluga caviar.

The department returned in 2025 with new possession and export regulations and a mandatory Elver Monitoring and Traceability app, requiring everyone fishing, possessing or exporting elvers to log their activities digitally for the first time.

The 50-50 quota split was also introduced last year. DFO said Wednesday it was undertaken "in support of First Nations' interests to fish in pursuit of a moderate livelihood" – the constitutional entitlement Mi'kmaw harvesters were affirmed under the Supreme Court's Marshall decision a quarter-century ago, and one that remains legally undefined. For the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs, the percentage was never the central issue.

"DFO's approach has negatively impacted the delicate balance of our natural environment and put harvesters in danger," Chief Wilbert Marshall of Potlotek First Nation, co-lead of the assembly's fisheries portfolio, said in a January, 2025, release. The following day, the assembly rejected DFO's proposed management framework outright. "Our Treaty Right to fish is not a commercial fishery," Mr. Marshall said.

The assembly – the aggregate governance body for Nova Scotia's 13 Mi'kmaw communities – had submitted its own harvester-centred model, built on Mi'kmaw governance and self-determined river allocations. DFO proceeded with its own plan.

The quota increase runs counter to the government's own science advice. Options presented to the Scotia-Fundy Region Elver Advisory Committee ranged from no increase to 10 per cent. DFO chose more than double the upper bound.

A 2025 report from the Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat flagged that the population model used to set catch limits does not account for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing – a significant omission in a fishery that has faced years of heavy poaching. The same report noted that robust conservation advice will ultimately require a range-wide assessment framework reflecting the species' shared population structure across more than two dozen countries.

That framework does not yet exist. Last year, Canada also voted against a proposal to list eels under CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, which would have imposed tighter global trade controls. And Canada declined to list American eels – of which elvers are the juvenile stage – under the Species at Risk Act.

"The stock is not increasing, there is uncertainty around the science, and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing remains an issue," Katie Schleit, fisheries director at Oceans North, a conservation advocacy group, said in a February release. "We question whether an increase of this size can be justified or sustained."

Peter Lambertucci, DFO's new national chief enforcement officer – a role elevated to report directly to the deputy minister – says last year represented a turning point, nonetheless.

"I would like to say, yes, we have turned a corner. It's a more orderly fishery. I believe that wholeheartedly," he told The Globe and Mail.

In 2025, his officers conducted 3,839 river patrols, 1,078 inspections and 478 airport checks at facilities in Halifax, Moncton, Montreal and Toronto, seizing 225 kilograms of elvers – worth roughly $630,000 at landed value – along with 253 nets, and making more than 100 arrests under the Fisheries Act. Sixty-five charges are currently before the courts.

The fishery remains extraordinarily difficult to police. It runs at night, on riverbanks often deep in the woods, with crowds sometimes gathered within 100 metres of residential homes. The barrier to entry is almost non-existent – hip waders, a headlamp, a dip net.

"That could be a $4,000 night to you," Mr. Lambertucci said.

The complexity deepens when a harvester presents a First Nation community fishing plan rather than a DFO licence. In those moments, an officer at 2 a.m. must attempt to reach that community's designated data contact to verify the fisherman is operating under a communal licence. The department's position does not bend to the circumstances.

"Unauthorized is unauthorized," Mr. Lambertucci said. "If it is unauthorized, we enforce through the continuum."

Sheldon Jordan, co-founder of the Canadian Environmental Crime Research Network, sees Canada's predicament as one chapter in a repeating global story. In Asia in the 1970s, and then in Europe and Africa in the 2000s, eel populations collapsed after decades of heavy harvesting and they have never recovered.

"If the pattern is indeed repeating for a third time," he said, "it suggests Canada has a quickly closing window of opportunity to get this right."

For 2026, DFO is setting aside 180 kilograms of quota – roughly 1.5 per cent of the total catch – for science. Whether that investment arrives in time to inform the next round of decisions is another question.

Special to The Globe and Mail

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OPINION & ANALYSIS

Multilateralism champion Carney must help save the World Trade Organization

The intergovernmental organization languishes in a crisis of neglect and lack of faith

ROBERT WOLFE
PETER UNGPHAKORN

OPINION

Robert Wolfe is professor emeritus of policy studies at Queen's University. He has written extensively on WTO reform issues.

Peter Ungphakorn is a former journalist and a former information officer at the WTO Secretariat. He writes Trade Beta Blog, to which Mr. Wolfe is a contributor.

Prime Minister Mark Carney said in Davos the World Trade Organization was among multilateral institutions that are greatly diminished.
SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The World Trade Organization is in crisis and badly needs proper attention, and that's going to be a struggle. The danger is that the world's leaders will simply let it sink.

At a political level, the WTO is ignored. It languishes in a crisis of neglect and lack of faith.

U.S. President Donald Trump loves tariffs and has hit the headlines regularly by wielding them arbitrarily and with nonsensical excuses at friend and foe alike. Mr. Trump trampled over treaties the U.S. had itself negotiated, not only the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, but crucially the rules and principles of the 166-member WTO.

Since the WTO deals with global trade, we'd expect governments to rush to its defence. Instead, leaders seemed to join in the WTO-bashing. Last year, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen called the WTO "defunct." German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said, "The WTO hasn't worked for years."

In his famous speech to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Prime Minister Mark Carney said that the WTO was among multilateral institutions that are greatly diminished, which is why "we are championing efforts to build a bridge between the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the European Union."

But since then, judging by the readouts he releases, Mr. Carney has barely mentioned the WTO with other leaders. International Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu's news release as he left for Yaoundé, Cameroon, was remarkably empty, considering what he faces at the WTO Ministerial Conference.

These leaders are wrong. World trade needs the WTO. Canada does, too.

The WTO may sometimes seem ponderous and technical. Decisions require consensus, which takes time with such a large membership. The impact is never immediate.

At the conference this week in Yaoundé, ministers from member countries will spend almost half the time discussing how to deal with fundamental problems that are preventing the WTO from moving ahead, including their recent inability to build consensus.

One proposed solution, to allow subsets of members to reach agreements among themselves within the WTO (known as plurilaterals), is blocked, primarily by India.

A major issue: Dispute settlement, the arbiter of whether countries' trade measures are legal under WTO agreements, is disrupted because the U.S. is blocking appeals. Sixty countries, including Canada, have found a less formal stopgap (known as the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement), but fewer than half of the membership are using it.

Many people think the U.S. has cast the WTO aside. That's certainly untrue at a day-to-day technical level, despite the political rhetoric. It attends meetings and submitted almost 1,000 documents in Mr. Trump's second term. It has paid its outstanding contributions to the budget. With Mr. Trump, the WTO is in a better position than the many international organizations from which he has withdrawn.

But despite months of preparation in Geneva on various ideas for WTO reform, and on specific subjects such as agriculture and fisheries subsidies, member governments are still too far apart to agree on anything in Yaoundé other than to continue talking afterward.

Without decisions on substance, the conference could appear to have achieved nothing except promising further talk. Yet, if by treading water the conference manages to keep the WTO afloat, that would be a success under the circumstances, until a better opportunity presents itself. Conversations in Yaoundé might even encourage the ministers present to pay more attention to the WTO and understand where the difficulties lie in work after the conference.

We should think of the WTO as world trade's operating system, helping almost US$35-trillion flow smoothly every year. When it works, it's quietly ticking over in the background – hundreds of delegates meeting in Geneva daily, examining Indonesia's new regulations on microbiological and chemical contaminants in food, or how Canada has reacted to other countries' subsidized exports.

The system makes trade policies more transparent and predictable, lowering costs. For example, the basic principle of countries treating their trading partners equally, known as most-favoured-nation (MFN) treatment, sounds abstract, but it simplifies trade and trade negotiations considerably.

Mr. Carney got a lot of attention talking about a "rupture" in world affairs. But he and his Trade Minister must help save the WTO. If the organization is allowed to fade away, and world trade fragments into multiple small agreements, that will increase costs for everyone. It won't be as instantaneous as closing the Strait of Hormuz, but it will still be bad.

Should Canada follow the U.S. in letting banks take more risks?

CHRIS GAY

OPINION

Contributing columnist for The Globe and Mail. He is a former Wall Street Journal staffer and writes the newsletter Figure at Center.

Canada's banks should pay close attention to what its counterparts are doing south of the border, where U.S. regulators are loosening the rules dictating how much capital banks must maintain as a cushion against shocks. It's a move some see as a slippery slope to the next financial crisis, and one that could encourage Canada to take similar measures, in a kind of regulatory race-to-the-bottom.

The U.S. Federal Reserve provisionally approved a measure on March 19 that would ease capital-adequacy regulations tightened after the 2008 financial crisis in an effort to make Wall Street safe for capitalism. The proposed rules – put out for a standard 90-day comment period – would lower capital requirements for the biggest banks, for instance, by up to 4.8 per cent on average in dollar terms, freeing up about $40-billion in core capital for lending, dividends and share buybacks. The changes would be among the most significant liberalizations since the crisis.

But the specifics are less important than the change in direction. Recall that stricter capital rules were imposed after undercapitalized American financial institutions collapsed into the arms of taxpayers in 2007-09 when their reckless bets went south. Congress responded with the Dodd-Frank Act, which among other things raised mandated capital-to-asset ratios as a buffer against future shocks.

Some see the move toward lower ratios as a first step in the time-honoured American process of manufacturing financial crises, which goes something like: 1) easy credit, lax regulation and overpriced assets, 2) market crash and recession, 3) government bailouts, 4) a new round of prudential regulations. Closing the circle, once steps 2 to 4 are well down the memory hole, Wall Street has an easier time securing deregulations that loop back around to step 1.

The American bank lobby, which has chafed against Dodd-Frank for years and resisted tighter requirements proposed by the Biden administration, understandably applauds last week's proposal. But there are critics, like lone dissenting Fed board member Michael Barr, who says the new rules "would harm the resilience of banks and the U.S. financial system."

Canada has fairly tight capital rules that make its banking sector one of the world's most stable. There's also a more concentrated landscape, with the country having some 80 banks compared with the United States' more than 4,000.

But all the same, some say stability comes at the cost of suppressing lending, and warn that Canadian banks will suffer a disadvantage vis-à-vis less-restrained American banks unless its rules are eased, too. National Bank of Canada chief executive officer Laurent Ferreira is calling for some form of looser capital constraints to bolster lending to small businesses. The country's regulator, the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions, is leaning in a similar direction.

They might want to be careful what they wish for. While such loosening in Canada would still be far from U.S. levels of permissiveness, the slope is slippery. The narrative arc of boom-bust cycles, particularly in the U.S., persists despite a well-known history of financial crises and their antecedents. Many blame the 2008 crash on a series of deregulations that left American banks overleveraged and undercapitalized. Many on the political right deny that deregulation had much, or anything, to do with the crash of 2008, arguing that poorly conceived regulation itself was to blame.

These arguments – often by people who get paid to denigrate government and extol markets – tend to discount the relentless logic that drives unrestrained financial institutions toward ever higher risk in order to reap ever higher returns, putting innocent bystanders at risk. This is what Citigroup chief executive Chuck Prince had in mind when he famously said in 2007 that "as long as the music is playing, you've got to get up and dance." Financial regulation exists partly to protect banks from themselves.

American banks complain that excessive capital requirements raise costs and constrain profits. Maybe, but the vast majority of them exceed current requirements and net profit margins remain strong. Yet the Fed may prove correct: Looser rules don't necessarily guarantee a crisis. Indeed, one hopes that a decade from now, people like Mr. Barr will simply look like alarmists.

But it's prudent to consider that regulation is vulnerable to criticism partly because of the "preparedness paradox," which renders its successes invisible: You don't see the crises that never occurred, precisely because regulations prevented them, allowing critics to say the rules are unnecessary. It's true that regulations can create perverse incentives and moral hazards, but given the lamentable history of financial crises and the mass immiseration they can cause, it's prudent to privilege public safety over maximal profits.

Society doesn't typically erect complex institutions and elaborate rules for no reason. That's why people eager to weaken the regulatory edifice might want to acquaint themselves with an aphorism often attributed to the early 20th-century British critic G. K. Chesterton: "Do not remove a fence until you know why it was put up in the first place."

Defence bank offers political benefits, but it probably won't save us money

KEVIN YIN

OPINION

Contributing columnist for The Globe and Mail and an economics doctoral student at the University of California, Berkeley

This week, Montreal is hosting negotiations for a new multilateral financial institution, the Defence, Security and Resilience Bank. The aim of the DSRB would be to offer stable and affordable financing for defence-related projects as rearmament is once again becoming the norm. Establishing the bank is a good idea, but it is important to be clear-eyed about what Canada is getting out of it.

The DSRB claims that it will offer "long-term, low-cost financing without adding pressure to national balance sheets." But it still needs to be funded by those national balance sheets. For Canada, it is unlikely that borrowing through a new multilateral institution could offer cheaper financing than it currently gets.

The logic of borrowing through the DSRB is that the bank can get lower interest rates by pooling the default risk of borrowing countries, get preferred-creditor status and benefit from institutional scale.

The logic of borrowing through the DSRB is that the bank can get lower interest rates by pooling the default risk of borrowing countries, get preferred-creditor status and benefit from institutional scale. For example, France itself may default on defence loans so investors charge a higher interest rate to lend for those projects. By contrast, the DSRB could borrow at a lower group rate because its default risk is diversified across many member countries. If France were to instead borrow through the DSRB, the bank could then pass its savings on to France. This works since the DSRB's objective is not to earn the spread on returns but rather to finance defence spending.

But Canada is one of the most fiscally frugal of the advanced economies by net debt-to-GDP and it has never defaulted. As such, Canada's debt is already rated AAA by S&P Global and Canadian bond yields are already among the lowest in the G20. We are beaten only by the famously thrifty Germany, and by Japan and China, which also benefit from extremely low inflation and high savings rates. It would be hard for Canada to borrow much more cheaply from the DSRB than from international investors.

Of course, the DSRB could offer borrowing terms even better than those implied by diversification and institutional structure. But this can only happen if member countries, such as Canada, are willing to subsidize that credit. Thus any "cheaper" borrowing that Canada would be getting from the DSRB would ultimately be paid for by Canada itself, or other key members. This is especially likely given that Canada is taking a lead in the bank's establishment and that its borrowing terms are among the best. In other words, this is just spending taxpayer money with extra steps.

Buying in bulk could provide another possible economic benefit. The reasoning goes: If Canada and Spain both want to pay for similar aircraft, the companies manufacturing the aircraft can sell at a lower unit price to both because they get a large, guaranteed order. This effect is what economists call "economies of scale," where producing larger quantities can sometimes reduce the marginal cost of each unit. By offering a place to co-ordinate such joint procurement, the DSRB could in theory save its member countries money.

But here, too, the gains are uncertain. In practice, different organizations have very different requirements for their military purchases, and the costs of co-ordinating these can erode or even eliminate any savings.

For example, in the early 2000s, the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, alongside international partners, started a joint program to develop and procure the Lockheed Martin F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. The motivation was much the same – cut down on duplicate tasks and benefit from economies of scale. But a RAND Corporation study on this program and similar ones found that they did not offer savings relative to programs designed for specific branches of the military. The study pointed out that accommodating the design needs of multiple stakeholders often caused costs to balloon. In other words, they might have been just as well off procuring their own fighters.

What Canada does stand to gain from the establishment of the DSRB is political in nature. A leading role at a new multilateral institution would give us an influential seat at the table for global defence co-ordination. The DSRB can extend the reach of Canadian foreign policy by funding projects that serve our interests under a multilateral umbrella. Subsidies from Canada buy goodwill from our allies. A leadership role would allow us to influence global priorities by setting key agendas and give us an easy platform to build coalitions geared toward our objectives. Headquartering the bank in Canada would help define a Canadian city as a centre of global policy.

Together, these gains are worth the price of entry. But we should be sober about the economics.

Some SpaceX investors in the dark about what they own

As company readies IPO, some who have invested via secondary markets wait to see if their stakes in the company are real

ECHO WANG
DAVID JEANS NEW YORK


A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off carrying Starlink V2 Mini satellites into low Earth orbit from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Fla., in May. JOE SKIPPER/REUTERS

Entrepreneur Tejpaul Bhatia is confident he owns a slice of Elon Musk's SpaceX. But he can't be 100 per cent sure. When the former Google executive entered the space industry in 2021, SpaceX was already one of the world's most sought-after private companies, valued at about US$75-billion, with shares largely locked up by early backers and institutions close to Mr. Musk.

Mr. Bhatia couldn't buy shares directly, so he turned to the secondary market, where a loose network of brokers buy and sell the shares of privately owned companies.

Now, with SpaceX preparing for a stock market debut this year at a valuation near US$1.75-trillion, Mr. Bhatia could be sitting on a lucrative investment, but his shares were bought through brokers that make ownership hard to verify.

"I hope I didn't get duped," said Mr. Bhatia, the former chief executive of space company Axiom Space. "I don't think I did, but again, there's no way to know."

He declined to share the value of his investment, or the broker's name.

The potential payoff from owning SpaceX shares before it goes public is big enough that many are willing to pay a premium for access and live with the uncertainty. "It's the hottest IPO opportunity in history," he said.

Mr. Bhatia is among a growing swell of investors who have poured money into SpaceX through the opaque market for private company shares. These deals often rely on special-purpose vehicles, or SPVs, which don't own shares in the company. They pool investor money to buy the rights to purchase the shares at a later time.

"You are relying on the counterparties in these transactions and their reputations," said Mitchell Littman, a New York-based lawyer who advises SPV managers and secondary market investors. He added, "Every time there is hype around these type of things, inevitably the fraudsters come out of the woodwork because they smell an opportunity." The intense demand for SpaceX shares has led investors to accept unusually complex arrangements, according to 10 investors, industry experts and analysts interviewed by Reuters.

SpaceX, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Department of Justice didn't respond to comment requests.

The rise of SpaceX and other hot private companies like OpenAI has reshaped the initial public offering landscape. Today many of the world's most valuable firms are staying private for years – building brand recognition and creating intense demand from investors – unlike in years past when fast-growing tech companies went public relatively quickly.

That has pushed investors eager not to miss out into secondary markets, where shares change hands before an IPO. As demand has surged, so has the use of layered investment vehicles. Shares can pass through as many as five intermediaries, each with its own layer of fees, obscuring who ultimately owns what, according to two brokers.

"It's getting a little looseygoosey," said Namek Zu'bi, who manages a fund with more than US$500-million in assets. He said he turned down requests from his own investors to buy into SpaceX deals because of fraud concerns.

"A lot of people are going to make a lot of money," Mr. Zu'bi said. "But you're also going to get a lot of people who are surprised or shocked" that they don't own any shares.

In many SPV deals, investors can see only the entity directly above them, not whether the shares at the top actually exist. "That's not enough to be certain the shares exist," said one senior executive in the secondary market industry.

Increased layering adds costs, which effectively compresses the potential profit margins and upside for investors in the IPO.

"The bigger dangers are overpaying and then multiple layers of fees," said Jay Ritter, a University of Florida professor emeritus who researches IPOs, adding that starting from an already high valuation leaves limited upside for investors, with history showing that companies at elevated revenue multiples – even the biggest – have tended to lag the market.

As SpaceX's valuation climbs, some investors fear that many could be holding little more than paperwork when it goes public. In recent years, SPVs have drawn closer scrutiny after a string of high-profile pre-IPO fraud cases. In December, financier Giovanni Pennetta was arrested at New York's JFK airport on charges alleging he set up a fake investment vehicle to sell non-existent shares in defence technology company Anduril. Mr. Pennetta pleaded guilty earlier this month to wire fraud charges. In 2023, a financier was sentenced to eight years in prison after defrauding more than 50 investors who gave him almost US$6-million to buy pre-IPO shares in multiple companies, including SpaceX.

The Department of Justice has not publicly announced a pre-IPO fraud case involving SpaceX since then. But investors and industry executives said the company's popularity has heightened the risks.

Last month, Peter Wright, who sometimes acts as a middleman between investors and brokers, received a text message from another broker acting for an Emirati sheik who wanted to take a large stake in SpaceX.

"We have a family office interested in buying about $1.2 billion of SpaceX stock immediately, and are looking for a seller," said the message, which was seen by Reuters.

Yet even an offer of that size did not open the door to a deal. Mr. Wright and the sheik's broker told Reuters the client couldn't buy shares directly; the transaction didn't close.

Mr. Wright said his firm refuses to work with deals that sit behind more than one intermediary, citing the difficulty of checking ownership. "At that point, diligence is impossible," he said.

REUTERS

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MEETING NOTICES

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Oil price shock ripples across U.S. economy

Elevated energy costs, if they persist, could lead to other sticker surprises for consumers

SYDNEY EMBER

Shortly after the U.S.-led war in Iran began in late February, Ondrey Lawson noticed the surge in gas prices.

Mr. Lawson, who owns Phrostbite Italian Ice with his wife, Mia, went to fill up the heavy duty pickup truck that they use to haul their sweet frozen treats around Houston.

The cost stopped him cold.

A tank of regular unleaded gas usually ran him US$70. The total this time was US$90.

"Within a couple of days, things already started to skyrocket and get out of control," he said.

The Lawsons serve Italian ice at festivals, weddings, birthday parties and other events. They soon found themselves altering their schedule and redrawing delivery routes to save money on fuel. In some cases, they tried to offset the rising cost of gas by scooping their own cups of saddle-up strawberry and wrangler watermelon, instead of paying employees to serve customers.

But as soaring gas prices continued to sap Phrostbite's profits, the Lawsons realized they would need to take a more drastic approach: They had to raise prices.

"He and I both fought tooth and nail – we wanted to absorb as many costs as we could," Mia Lawson said. "Finally, I had to give in."

Their decision shows how elevated energy costs, if they persist, could bleed into more than just higher prices at the pump for consumers in the coming months.

Oil prices are now around US$100 a barrel for the international crude benchmark. While that is down from their recent peak of nearly US$120 a barrel, prices remain significantly elevated from before the war, ratcheting up the price of gas, diesel and heating oil. The average price of gasoline in the United States reached US$3.98 a gallon Wednesday, according to data from AAA, up more than 30 per cent since the war began.

Rising energy prices have pushed up costs for American businesses, big and small, though it is an open question when, and even whether, they will pass on the extra burden to customers. Airlines are raising ticket prices to compensate for the ballooning cost of jet fuel, with Scott Kirby, chief executive of United Airlines, warning Tuesday that the carrier could increase prices by 20 per cent if oil prices remain elevated.

Economists anticipate that the spike in oil prices will push up inflation at least marginally, and not just at the pump. Goldman Sachs estimates that every US$10 increase in oil prices lifts "core" inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy costs, by 0.04 percentage points. As of January, the Core Personal Consumption Expenditures Index, the Federal Reserve's preferred inflation index, was 3.1 per cent. That is far higher than the Fed's 2-per-cent target.

It's also possible that higher gas prices could lead consumers to pull back on other purchases as they reduce spending on discretionary goods and services. If that happens, businesses could be constrained in their ability to raise prices.

"There are just lots of ways that oil and derivatives of oil get into the production and transportation of many, many things," Jerome Powell, the Fed chair, said at a news conference last week after the Fed held interest rates steady. "They're big effects in headline inflation, but things like that leak into core as well."

"You just don't know how big this will be, and how long it lasts," he added.

Unlike large corporations that are better capitalized to weather price shocks, smaller companies are more vulnerable. As a result, their customers could feel the ripple effects from the war-driven energy price spikes more acutely.

"Larger businesses just have more levers to pull and more flexibility to keep from raising prices," said Justin Weidner, U.S. economist at Deutsche Bank. "Whereas smaller companies may not have that flexibility and so would almost have to pass through those increased energy prices to stay afloat."

The spike in oil prices has come at a particularly unfortunate moment for small businesses. Many of them have already been stretched by President Donald Trump's tariffs, along with years of high inflation. A survey from the Small Business Majority, an advocacy group, found 64 per cent of the roughly 250 businesses it polled said expenses had risen in the past three months.

The Lawsons started Phrosbite in 2021 after Ondrey Lawson first tasted Italian ice during the depths of the pandemic. It hit the spot.

After having a baby last year, the couple focused less on the business. But 2026 was supposed to be a revival of sorts. The Lawsons were ready to ramp back up, with plans to expand. They had survived Mr. Trump's tariffs that had lifted the cost of materials including cups and spoons, with relatively small price adjustments to their menu. They were considering opening a brick and mortar store and franchising.

"We really want to grow," Mia Lawson said.

While their long-term plans remain intact, they have been forced to confront the reality of yet another unknown in the economy outside their control. They have been calculating their profit margins under different scenarios, using the period after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022, when the global price of oil reached about US$125 a barrel, as a reference point.

"We'll look at some sociopolitical data to kind of extrapolate what we think a high price will be," Ondrey Lawson said.

The Lawsons plan to increase the price of their starter catering package to US$150, from US$100. They are also thinking about raising the cost of a small cup to US$8.50, from US$8.

More than anything, they are trying to build in enough of a cushion with this price increase that they won't have to raise prices again this year no matter what happens in the global economy.

"We try to just operate as efficiently as possible," Mr. Lawson said. "One thing we don't want to do is keep raising our prices for customers."

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Mia, left, and Ondrey Lawson who own Phrostbite Italian Ice, say they want to grow their company, but the current price of gas has them raising prices and finding alternate routes for deliveries. LEXI PARRA/NYT

U.S. import prices rose 1.3% in February, marking largest gain in four years

WASHINGTON

U.S. import prices increased by the most in nearly four years in February as energy costs surged in anticipation of conflict in the Middle East, adding to signs that inflation is poised to accelerate in the months ahead.

Import prices jumped 1.3 per cent last month, the largest increase since March, 2022, after an upwardly revised 0.6-per-cent gain in January, the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics said on Wednesday.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast import prices, which exclude tariffs, increasing 0.5 per cent after a previously reported 0.2-per-cent rise in January. In the 12 months through February, import prices advanced 1.3 per cent. That was the largest year-on-year increase since February, 2025, and followed a 0.3-per-cent increase in January.

"Having not been a factor in the inflation story recently, import prices are beginning to be an issue ahead of the surge in fuel prices that is to be expected in March with the conflict with Iran and the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz," said John Ryding, chief economic adviser at Brean Capital.

The government last week reported that producer prices increased by the most in seven months in February, driven by broad increases in services and goods. A survey from S&P Global on Tuesday showed businesses paid more for inputs in March and asked higher prices for their goods and services, blaming soaring energy costs and supply chain disruptions.

The U.S.-Israeli war with Iran has boosted oil prices by more than 30 per cent since the conflict started at the end of February. Fertilizer prices have also increased, which will feed through to higher food inflation. The strain from the war is on top of import tariffs, which businesses continue to gradually pass on to consumers. Imported fuel prices rebounded 3.8 per cent last month, the largest rise since April, 2024, after dropping 1.2 per cent in January. There were increases in the prices of petroleum and natural gas.

Food prices increased 0.8 per cent amid rises in a range of goods, including vegetables, distilled alcoholic beverages, meat and oilseeds. Excluding fuels and food, import prices shot up 1.2 per cent. The so-called core import prices rose 0.7 per cent in January.

In the 12 months through February, core import prices jumped 3 per cent, partly reflecting prior dollar weakness against the currencies of the main U.S. trade partners. The trade-weighted dollar declined 1.6 per cent from the start of 2026 until the outbreak of the war in late February. It decreased 7.37 per cent in 2025. Prices for imported capital goods vaulted 1.3 per cent, the largest gain since the government started tracking the monthly series in 1988. That reflected higher prices for computers, peripherals and semiconductors as well as industrial and service machinery. These are likely related to an artificial-intelligence spending boom by businesses.

Imported consumer goods excluding motor vehicles rose 0.5 per cent, driven by higher costs for apparel, footwear and household goods. Prices for motor vehicles, parts and engines climbed 0.2 per cent.

Economists are forecasting the Core Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index, one of the inflation measures tracked by the U.S. central bank for its 2-per-cent target, rose by 0.4 per cent in February, which would translate into a year-on-year increase of 3 per cent. Core PCE inflation increased 0.4 per cent in January and advanced 3.1 per cent year-on-year. The government will publish the delayed PCE inflation report for February next month.

REUTERS

Rebate: Change means $2.2-billion in tax relief for buyers from both governments, Ford says

FROM B1

Sales of preconstruction condos are down across the country, with particularly large drops in Southern Ontario. In the Toronto region, last year's sales were 89 per cent below their 10-year average, while sales were 86 per cent lower in Hamilton, according to data from Altus Group.

Speaking to reporters at a housing site in Mississauga to announce the measure, Mr. Ford praised Prime Minister Mark Carney for supporting his plan, which he said involved months of negotiations.

The Premier denied a reporter's suggestion that Ottawa only agreed to backstop the measure on Tuesday, when Mr. Ford said he spoke to Mr. Carney. No minister from the federal government spoke at the announcement.

Mr. Ford said the change would mean $2.2-billion in tax relief for buyers from both governments.

"I don't like divulging our personal conversations, but I can tell you, the Prime Minister promised something, he delivered," he said.

Federal Housing Minister Gregor Robertson said the deal with Ontario has been a "work in progress" when asked when it was struck.

"First and foremost, we're in a housing crisis and we've got to use all the tools we have available to support the market and to build as much affordable housing as we can," he said in an interview.

"We've been working with the provinces and all our partners to do those things, and this is the latest step to advance that work," he said.

Asked if the federal government is striking deals with other provinces, Mr. Robertson replied: "Stay tuned."

Mr. Ford urged Ontarians to take advantage of the discounts on new homes.

"This is like a big, you know, you go by these big retail stores, big sale sign saying 13 per cent off," Mr. Ford told reporters. "So if I were people out there, I'd be buying these new homes, and do it right away."

Michael Waters, chief executive of Minto Group, said the rebate could help bring the market back from its current extreme.

"We're just whipsawing Canadians back and forth with housing market volatility, soaring rents and soaring prices, now alternating with soft markets. It's not good for the industry. It's not good for Canadians," he said in an interview, noting that the limited timeline for eligibility for the rebate might also get some buyers off the sidelines.

"People that might have waited 18 months or two years now really will have to make a decision a little bit sooner."

Ontario says the tax rebates will cost almost $1.4-billion in lost revenue. But the province estimates the move will result in 8,000 more homes built annually.

Buyers of homes worth more than $1-million would also still be eligible for some tax relief.

Under the plan, new homes in Ontario worth up to $1.5-million would remain eligible for a maximum $130,000 rebate, while reduced rebates would be available for homes worth as much as $1.85-million. New homes worth more than that, under existing rules, would still qualify for a $24,000 rebate, the government says. To be eligible, construction must be completed by 2031.

Last fall, Ontario and Ottawa announced plans for similar rebates that applied only to first-time buyers of new homes.

Amid slumping housing starts, Ontario Housing Minister Rob Flack had previously said the province's goal of building 1.5 million new homes by 2031 had become a "soft target."

According to numbers from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., Ontario saw an uptick in new-home construction early this year, after months of declines. In 2025, the province recorded just over 67,000 new starts, far below the levels needed to build anything close to 1.5 million homes a decade.

With reports from Stephanie Levitz

If the extension of the tax rebate passes, Ontario estimates the move would result in 8,000 more homes built in the province annually. CHRISTOPHER KATSAROV/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

INTERNET PROVIDER COX NOT LIABLE FOR USERS' ILLEGAL MUSIC DOWNLOADS: U.S. SUPREME COURT

WASHINGTON The U.S. Supreme Court on Wednesday sided with internet service provider Cox Communications Inc. in its copyright fight with record labels over illegal music downloads by Cox customers.

The justices ruled unanimously that Cox bears no liability for the copyright violations of its customers, reversing a jury verdict and lower-court rulings.

The company, in a statement, praised the court for affirming that internet-service providers "are not copyright police."

The court acted in a lawsuit led by Sony Music Entertainment that said Cox did not do enough to deter or cut off customers who downloaded music they did not pay for.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boralex: Energy company's shares jumped 11% in trading on Wednesday

FROM B1

Brookfield and the Caisse are offering $37.25 a share for Boralex, a 32-per-cent premium to its share price prior to media reports this week the company was up for sale. With debt included, the takeover is valued at $9-billion.

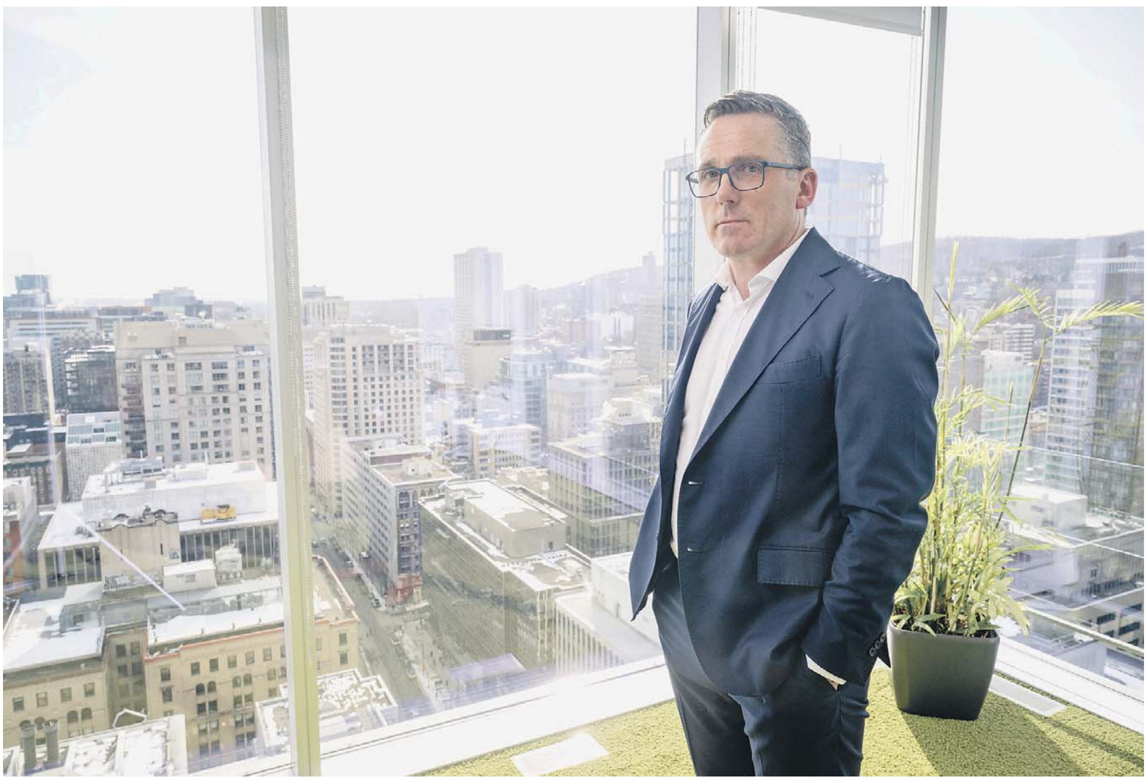
The Caisse is already a significant shareholder in Boralex, with a 15-per-cent stake.

On Monday, Boralex disclosed its board was running a strategic review that could lead to the sale of the company. The news prompted a rally in Boralex's share price and analysts estimated the company could sell for up to $4-billion.

If Boralex shareholders approve the offer, Brookfield will own 70 per cent of the company and the Montreal-based Caisse will own the remaining 30 per cent.

"We are excited to partner with La Caisse to accelerate the delivery of Boralex's development pipeline in its next phase of growth," said Jehangir Vevaina, global chief investment officer for energy at Brookfield.

Brookfield has more than US$1-trillion in total assets under management, while the Caisse oversees $517-million on behalf of a number of Quebec institutions.



Boralex CEO Patrick Decostre says that with Brookfield Asset Management and the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec's backing, the company will accelerate growth plans in Ontario and Quebec. ANDREJ IVANOV/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

On Wednesday, Boralex's share price jumped 11 per cent to close at $36.62 on news of the potential transaction. The takeover is expected to close by the end of 2026 and requires regulatory and shareholder approval.

The Caisse has committed to voting its 15-per-cent stake in Boralex in favour of the takeover, which makes a rival bid unlikely. Boralex's board has agreed not to seek another offer for the company.

"We view the transaction as a highly probable event given the backing of Boralex's largest shareholder," Bank of Nova Scotia analyst Robert Hope said in a report.

"This transaction highlights that private markets continue to highly value renewable assets, especially those with development pipelines," Mr. Hope said.

Boralex has a number of publicly listed Canadian peers and Mr. Hope said the takeover "has positive valuation read throughs for Northland Power, TransAlta and to a lesser extent Capital Power."

Boralex has agreed to pay a $115-million termination fee to Brookfield and the Caisse if it does accept a superior offer. The two fund managers will pay Boralex a reverse termination fee of $172-million in certain circumstances if the takeover fails to close.

Boralex builds and runs renewable energy projects in Canada, France, Britain and the United States. They include wind and solar farms, as well as battery energy storage systems. Mr. Decostre said with Brookfield and the Caisse's backing, the company will accelerate growth plans in Ontario and Quebec.

The company is aiming to add seven gigawatts of capacity by 2030, and has an 8.2-gigawatt pipeline of wind, solar and battery storage projects in development or construction.

That would add to its current installed capacity of nearly 3.8 megawatts, which is up more than 50 per cent over the past five years.

Last year, the Caisse acquired one of Boralex's rivals, Innergex Renewable Energy Inc., in a deal worth $10-billion including assumed debt. Pension plans and other institutional investors are acquiring renewable power producers because they value the predictable cash that flows from long-term contracts with dependable customers such as utilities.

Earlier this month, a consortium made up of Global Infrastructure Partners and EQT agreed to buy U.S. power company AES Corp. for US$33.4-billion, including debt, in one of the largest acquisitions ever seen in the sector.

Stock market valuations for renewable energy companies have come down since the Innergex deal was struck last year, as the industry has faced political and supply chain headwinds.

Boralex and its renewable power peers have faced stock market headwinds since U.S. President Donald Trump won reelection and began cancelling permits for wind farms and endorsing coal and natural-gas-fired plants. Governments in many European and Asian countries continue to back renewable projects.

Prediction markets: Wealthsimple unable to offer contracts in Canada tied to sports or elections

FROM B1

In contrast to traditional betting, users can typically buy and sell these contracts as new information emerges, allowing them to adjust their positions in real time.

Unlike in the U.S., where a federal entity has exclusive jurisdiction over, and governs, prediction markets, Canada's regulatory landscape is fragmented.

There is the Canadian Securities Administrators, an umbrella organization of provincial and territorial securities regulators, and CIRO, the investment industry's national self-regulatory body. But each province and territory has its own securities regulator, and each one typically has power over which firms can operate in its jurisdiction.

In 2017, the CSA banned the sale of short-term, yes-or-no contracts, typically known as "binary options," citing fraud and the high risk of harm to investors.

That ruling came before prediction markets entered the mainstream, said Matthew Burgoyne, a partner at Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP in Calgary and a chair of the firm's digital assets and blockchain practice. But the products generally fall under the same definition, leaving their legal status in Canada unclear.

Ontario's securities regulator cracked down on U.S.-based platform Polymarket in 2025 after it operated in the province for three years.

At the same time, regulators have begun allowing certain firms to offer limited versions of event contracts under strict conditions.

Wealthsimple's approval allows it to offer contracts tied to economic indicators, financial markets and climate trends, but not sports or elections, which are among the most popular categories in the U.S.

It is the second firm to receive such approval, after Interactive Brokers Canada Inc. last year.

Interactive Brokers' offering is already live in Canada, with contracts traded on a U.S.-based exchange, ForecastEx LLC. The contracts have the same restrictions as those that will be on Wealthsimple.

These contracts are "non-advised products, meaning firms are not required to assess suitability for individual investors," Joanna Nicholson, a spokesperson for CIRO, said in an e-mailed statement.

That means it's largely on the shoulders of the investor to evaluate the risks associated with these contracts. "Investors should always ensure they are dealing with a CIRO-registered firm and review all disclosures carefully before trading," Ms. Nicholson said.

The CSA also encourages investors to check the registration on its website of any person or company that makes available event contracts, binary options or prediction markets to Canadians.

Jean-François Bernier, managing director of Interactive Brokers Canada, said these contracts can also be used as a hedging tool for investors.

"I think the mentality needs to evolve beyond this notion of, it's all speculating, it's all gambling," he said. "It's also hedging against economic risks."

Mr. Naran at Questrade said that when his firm starts delivering prediction trading, it will be delivered to "clients with the same safety and soundness they have come to expect from our brand."

But critics warn the line between investing and gambling can be thin.

Werner Antweiler, an associate professor at the UBC Sauder School of Business, who ran a not-for-profit prediction market for more than two decades, said many retail participants are drawn to these platforms for the wrong reasons.

"The people from the retail side that participate in prediction markets are very much looking for gambling in disguise," he said, warning that the products can expose users to significant financial and behavioural risks.

While the versions approved in Canada come with tighter restrictions, focusing on outcomes that are harder to manipulate, he called the shift a "slippery slope" that could expand over time.

Despite the scrutiny, Mr. Burgoyne said the regulatory shift that has opened up Canada to prediction markets creates "a safe place for Canadian residents to trade these types of contracts," particularly given that many Canadians are already accessing them using virtual private networks, which can make it appear as though they are logging in from other countries.

LNG: Coastal GasLink will still be the permit holder for future pipeline facilities

FROM B1

"The commercial structure includes limits on CGL's capital commitments and overall liability for construction cost and schedule risks."

Industry experts say it could cost roughly $6-billion to add five compressor stations to double capacity along Coastal GasLink's 670-kilometre route.

"Doubling the transmission of natural gas through the existing pipeline will help further strengthen Canada's role as a reliable supplier to global LNG markets," TC chief executive officer François Poirier said in a statement.

LNG Canada started shipping the fuel to Asia from Kitimat last June.

Cost overruns dogged Coastal GasLink, which cost $14.5-billion to build, compared with a previous price tag of $6.2-billion in 2018, when construction began.

Although LNG Canada will shepherd the pipeline expansion plan, Coastal GasLink will still be the permit holder for future pipeline facilities.

A group of Wet'suwet'en Nation hereditary chiefs has led a campaign that opposes Coastal GasLink. In 2020, demonstrators staged rail and highway blockades across the country in support of the hereditary chiefs' position.

Climate activists say the focus on fossil fuels such as LNG ends up delaying the global transition to renewable energy.

But Prime Minister Mark Carney, as part of his quest to reduce economic dependence on the United States, announced last September that LNG Canada's Phase 2 terminal expansion plan made the list of major projects of national interest to be considered for fast-tracking.

> Doubling the transmission of natural gas through the existing pipeline will help further strengthen Canada's role as a reliable supplier to global LNG markets.
>
> FRANÇOIS POIRIER
> TC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

TC operates Coastal GasLink and owns 35 per cent of the pipeline. In 2020, TC sold a 65-per-cent stake to Alberta Investment Management Corp. and KKR & Co. Inc.

TC has agreed to set aside a 10-per-cent interest in the contentious pipeline for a planned equity sale to as many as 20 elected First Nation councils along the B.C. route.

Qatar, the world's second-largest LNG exporter after the U.S. last year, halted its production in early March after the U.S. and Israel began assaults on Iran on Feb. 28, triggering the virtual shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz.

Before the war in Iran, about one-fifth of the world's oil and LNG supplies passed through the strait.

Iran has launched multiple strikes against the Ras Laffan LNG hub in Qatar, inflicting heavy damage in a bombardment last week.

"Increasing LNG exports presents an extraordinary opportunity to transform our economy and establish our country as the number one LNG exporter to Asia," Mr. Poirier said.

The U.S. has been the largest exporter of LNG in the world for the past three years. Eight U.S. LNG export terminals have opened since 2016, and another four are slated to be exporting by 2028.

By contrast, LNG Canada became this country's first export terminal for natural gas in liquid form when it started shipping to Asia last June.

London-based Shell has the largest stake in LNG Canada at 40 per cent, followed by Malaysia's state-owned Petronas (25 per cent), Japan-based Mitsubishi (15 per cent), PetroChina (15 per cent) and South Korea's Kogas (5 per cent).

META LAYS OFF 700 EMPLOYEES, WHILE REWARDING TOP EXECUTIVES

Meta Platforms Inc. on Wednesday laid off around 700 employees, a person with knowledge of the company said, the latest downsizing as the Silicon Valley giant shifts its priorities toward artificial intelligence.

Less than 24 hours earlier, the company unveiled a new stock program for six top executives that could increase compensation for some of them by as much as US$921-million each over the next five years. Meta said the move was a way to retain talent in the AI era and push it toward ambitious growth.

The dichotomy – cutting some employees while rewarding high-ranking executives – underlines how much AI has changed the tech industry. In recent years, Meta has been trying to move beyond its social-media and metaverse businesses. Mark Zuckerberg, Meta's chief executive officer, has declared that he is striving to create "superintelligence," or a godlike AI that can act as the ultimate personal companion.

Last year, Mr. Zuckerberg shelled out billions of dollars to hire a team of AI specialists. At the same time, the company planned to cut 10 per cent to 15 per cent of Reality Labs, its division making virtual reality and metaverse products.

Before the job cuts, Meta shared details of its new stock program for six top executives. They were Andrew Bosworth, the chief technology officer; Chris Cox, the chief product officer; Susan Li, its chief financial officer; Javier Olivan, the chief operating officer; Dina Powell McCormick, the president and vice-chair; and C.J. Mahoney, the company's chief legal officer.

The program allows the executives to buy additional Meta stock options if the company hits certain growth targets. The most aggressive target is for Meta to become a US$9-trillion company by 2031. Its current market capitalization stands at around US$1.5-trillion.

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

Why did we stop talking about the AI apocalypse?

Researcher Nate Soares views the technology as an existential threat to humanity

TAYLOR OWEN
MITCHELL STUART

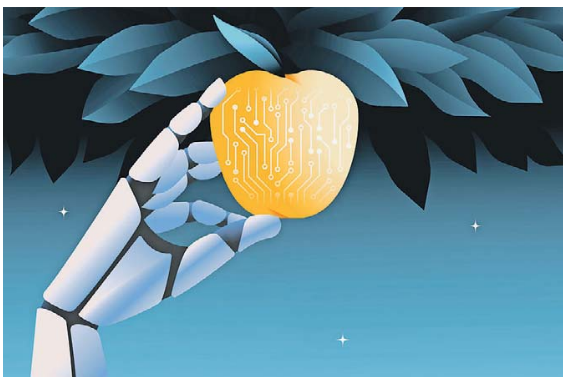


ILLUSTRATION: THE GLOBE AND MAIL/SOURCE: GETTY IMAGES

Just a few years ago, it seemed like all anyone in AI wanted to talk about was existential risk – this idea that an artificial superintelligence could eventually break containment and destroy humanity. More than 30,000 experts signed an open letter demanding a pause on AI development; bills were drafted that would constrain the most powerful new models; and the "godfathers" of AI were travelling around the world, warning anyone who would listen that we were hurtling toward our extinction.

And then: We moved on. We started using AI for work, and school, and to plan our kids' birthday parties.

But Nate Soares didn't move on. Last year, the researcher wrote a book with Eliezer Yudkowsky called *If Anyone Builds It, Everyone Dies*. The book is unequivocal: If we keep going down the path we're on, it will almost certainly lead to the end of our species.

This is an excerpt of that conversation, from the latest episode of *Machines Like Us*, The Globe's podcast about technology and people.

TAYLOR OWEN: The book is called *If Anyone Builds It, Everyone Dies*. What's the "it" you're talking about?

NATE SOARES: We're talking about a superintelligent AI that is smarter than the smartest human at every mental task. So, better than the best chess player at chess, better than the most charismatic politician at being persuasive, better than the smartest mathematician at solving math problems. If you had an AI that had all of these mental skills, things would get wild. But things will probably get wild before then. It's sort of like saying if you dropped a 500-tonne weight on a chicken, the chicken would die. I'm not saying smaller weights wouldn't work. I'm like, this weight is definitely big enough.

OWEN: If AI is designed by humans, why can't we design it to be safe?

SOARES: AI is not designed by humans. AI is grown like an organism. So humans design the machine that grows the AI. That's the part humans understand. What comes out? The machines start talking. We don't really understand how or why. So when the AI starts threatening a reporter with blackmail – which happens from time to time – that's not because a programmer made a mistake on line 73 and said, "Oops, I set 'threaten reporters' to true." There is no line 73.

OWEN: But why can't we tune it to have more strict constraints?

SOARES: That's a little like saying, "My child keeps trying to get into the cookie drawer. Why can't I tune them to have more strict constraints?" You can discipline all you want, but that's a very different paradigm than knowing what every neuron does in this kid's brain and being able to rewire it directly. We don't have that power with children's brains and it's even worse with AIs, because they aren't running human brain architecture. The kids have empathy, sympathy, human emotions. The machine is a radically different architecture that doesn't have that stuff. So we can train them, but can we etch a law of robotics in there? Not any more than you can etch a law of humanity into a human's brain.

AI is not designed by humans. AI is grown like an organism. So humans design the machine that grows the AI. That's the part humans understand. What comes out? The machines start talking. We don't really understand how or why.

NATE SOARES
RESEARCHER, AUTHOR

OWEN: What are the signs that these models are already behaving in worrying ways?

SOARES: It often surprises people which signs I find worrying. So when you train an AI, you'll often train in drives that are related to the training target, but aren't exactly the same as the training target. The best example of this is hallucinations. Next time an AI makes something up, ask, "Is that a hallucination?" Often the AI will say, "Yes, I made it up." And if you say, "Do you think I wanted you to hallucinate?" it'll say, "No, of course not." So this AI in some sense knows whether it's hallucinating, and knows whether you want it to – and it hallucinates anyway. What you're seeing there is some drive to produce text that's shaped like what you wanted, even if it's factually inaccurate, that runs deeper than its drive to give you what it knows you want.

OWEN: Why do these strange drives signal that a superintelligent AI might want to harm us?

SOARES: It probably wouldn't. The argument here is not about AIs wanting to harm humans. It's similar to how humans don't really want to harm chimpanzees. Why is their habitat shrinking? It's not because we hate them. It's because what we wanted was the wood from those trees, the metals in the ground. The foremost danger from AI is not that it hates us, but that it wants this other stuff, it wants weird stuff, it wants to make a giant farm of synthetic users that are easier to please, or some stranger thing.

OWEN: So the fact that it doesn't care about us one way or another is actually the risk.

SOARES: Exactly. The danger is utter indifference and great technological might. That combination is lethal to other things that happen to share a planet.

OWEN: There are a lot of people working in AI who do think that these systems can be made safe, though. Anthropic has trained its models on a "constitution" that they think will align it with human values, for example. Are they wrong?

SOARES: I'm not saying it's impossible. I'm saying it's hard and that we're not on track for it. One piece of perspective that I think is important to have is that the head of Anthropic thinks there's a 25-per-cent chance AI goes catastrophically wrong.

OWEN: That's an astounding thing to pause on – that the people building it think there's a 10- to 25-per-cent chance it leads to our extinction. Why are they just barrelling ahead with it?

SOARES: The standard answer is, "If I don't do it, the next guy will, and the next guy will do it even worse." It's like they're building this airplane. I'm like, "This airplane has no landing gear. Maybe we shouldn't fly in it." And the people building it say, "Don't listen to that crazy doomer. It's true the plane has no landing gear, but we're gonna figure out how to build it while we're flying. We think there's a 75- to 90-per-cent chance we succeed." I can tell you all day about how this is not how engineering works. But also, it doesn't matter. You don't get on that airplane.

OWEN: But they're building it and we're on the plane.

SOARES: The situation is ripe for the world to take note and say, "We're slowing this down internationally, everywhere." If you just step back – people figured out how to make machines that talk. They can make novel physics contributions and solve novel math problems. And now people are saying, "We have no idea what's going on inside here. We're going to make them smarter than the smartest humans." It's just common sense that that's a very novel technological development you don't race into and expect to go fine.

Special to The Globe and Mail

AI tools assisted with condensing the original podcast transcript, which was then reviewed and edited by the *Machines Like Us* team.

GLOBE INVESTOR

Life's milestones mean tax savings – if you plan

TIM CESTNICK

OPINION

TAX MATTERS

FCPA, FCA, CPA(IL), CFP, TEP, author, co-founder and CEO of Our Family Office Inc.

My wife, Carolyn, says I never listen – or something like that. But honestly, our marriage is great. I'm even trying to remember to open the car door for her when we go out. When you see a guy opening the car door for his wife, you know either the car is new, or his wife is new. In my case, neither are new – we celebrated our 25th anniversary three years ago.

Maybe you've reached some milestones in life over the past year. How will this impact your taxes? Last week, I talked about becoming an adult, starting a career, and homeownership. Today, I'll finish with a few more life events to consider.

GETTY IMAGES

TYING THE KNOT

If you got married recently, there are some things you should consider. First, you should let the Canada Revenue Agency know about the change in your marital status. You have until the end of the month after the month of the change to the let the taxman know.

Now you're married, consider splitting income with your spouse if you're in different tax brackets. Lending money to your spouse (at the prescribed rate) to invest, paying your spouse a salary from your business, using a spousal RRSP to save for retirement, and having the higher-income spouse cover household expenses to enable the lower-income spouse to invest some of their earnings can all make sense – among other ideas.

BECOMING A PARENT

If you've welcomed a child into your family, there are several benefits and credits to consider. The Canada Child Benefit (CCB) is key – worth up to $7,997 this year for a child under six – and you can apply when registering the birth, through My Account, or using Form RC66. And your GST/HST credits may increase.

Once daycare begins, you may qualify to claim child-care expenses, and you may be eligible to claim medical expenses for fertility treatments, childbirth or pediatric care. It's also smart to start saving for your child's education through a registered education savings plan (RESP) and benefit from the Canada Education Savings Grant (up to $7,200 per child). If you own a corporation, consider income planning to support your spouse during a leave, or reduce personal income to help maximize the CCB.

MARRIAGE BREAKDOWN

Sorry you're going through this. To make life easier financially, consider claiming the amount for an eligible dependent (line 30400 of your tax return) if you have children. Be aware that child support payments are not deductible to the payer and not taxable to the recipient, but spousal support is both deductible and taxable, respectively. Transfers of assets like a principal residence or registered plans can be made tax-free between spouses when you settle things. Separation is a good time to use any capital losses you might have and update beneficiaries on your registered plans or insurance policies, revise your will, and consider insurance needs.

INHERITING MONEY

If you've inherited money, consider whether you might be on the hook for any taxes owing by the transferor, which can be the case if taxes were owing to the CRA at the time of the transfer. Then, consider how you'll use the money you've received.

Good options include: paying down debt; investing the money (it's a good time to revisit your asset allocation); making donations; or spending the money. If you use the money to renovate your principal residence, you might increase its value, which could be a tax-free benefit to you later if you sell.

REACHING AGE 65

Getting older can come with financial opportunities. You may be entitled to the age amount (which can save up to $1,381 in federal taxes for 2026), and the following tax credits where they apply: Pension credit, medical-expense tax credit, disability tax credit, Canada caregiver credit and the home-accessibility tax credit. You should also think about splitting up to one half of eligible pension income with your spouse. It's also a good time to consider how you'll draw income from your various accounts (see my articles from Feb. 4, 12 and 19).

LOSING A LOVED ONE

I'm sorry for your loss. The final tax return for your deceased loved one is due the later of April 30, 2026 (for a death in 2025), or six months after the date of death. The executor might also have to file a T3 trust tax return for the estate itself if any income was earned, or capital gains realized, in the estate after the date of death and before the assets were distributed to the beneficiaries. The estate might qualify as a Graduated Rate Estate for up to three years after the date of death, which can save tax for the family since income in the estate can be taxed at graduated tax rates. Check with a tax professional for more. See my article from March 12 for a checklist of things to do.

As gas prices soar, which loyalty programs should you turn to for relief?

BARRY CHOI

OPINION

Personal finance and travel expert at moneywehave.com

When the U.S. and Israel first bombed Iran last month, the national average for gas was $1.29.9 a litre. By Tuesday, it was sitting at around $1.73.9 – a 44 cent jump. And with the war in the Middle East dragging on, prices could climb higher.

Canadians are feeling the pain at the pump. Short of driving less, the most effective way to get some relief is to maximize gas-station loyalty programs, where the right strategy can deliver real savings.

PETRO-CANADA: BEST FOR FREQUENT FUELLERS

Anyone with a long commute or who frequently drives, such as delivery drivers, real estate agents or tradespeople, may find Petro Canada's new Platinum tier rewarding.

To qualify, you'll need to pump 1,000 litres every three months – a fill up roughly twice a week. Hitting that threshold unlocks extra perks including 50 per cent more Petro-Points, $25 in CT Money each quarter, and exclusive offers through both RBC and Triangle Rewards.

Those Petro-Points can be redeemed for five cents off per litre, while CT Money can go toward everyday purchases at participating retailers, such as Canadian Tire, SportChek and Mark's.

And if you use an RBC credit or debit card, you'll automatically save three cents per litre and get 20 per cent more Avion points, as long as you link your Petro-Points number and pay at the pump with your RBC card.

ESSO AND MOBIL: BEST FOR GROCERY SAVINGS

Among gas-station loyalty programs, Esso and Mobil's team-up with PC Optimum arguably offers the most flexibility, since you can also rack up points at Loblaws-owned grocery stores and Shoppers Drug Mart.

At Esso and Mobil stations, PC Optimum members earn 10 points per litre – a 1 per cent return. That jumps to 30 points with a PC Mastercard and 70 points with a PC Insiders World Elite Mastercard.

Redeeming points takes a bit of strategy. You can cash in 4,000 PC Optimum points for 10 cents off per litre, up to 40 litres. Fill up with anything less, and you won't get full value.

Alternatively, you can bank your points and use them during Shoppers Drug Mart bonus redemption events. For instance, during a recent promo, you could redeem 250,000 points for $300 off – normally worth $250 – an extra $50 in value.

This won't lower your gas bill, but it can definitely help offset other household expenses.

SHELL: BEST FOR STACKING REWARDS

If you fill up at Shell, you've probably noticed a big change. Air Miles is out, and Scene+ is in. The switch is already live in Alberta and rolls out nationwide in May. With the right mix of cards, the savings can really stack up.

Under the new partnership, you'll earn one Scene+ point per litre on all Shell fuel just by scanning your Scene+ card. If you link your Scene+ account to Shell Go+, you'll get 10 per cent more points, plus double points on Shell's top premium fuel.

For more savings, paying with a Tangerine credit card instantly gets you three cents off per litre. Since Tangerine lets you choose your own cash back categories, and gas is one of the options, there's potential to earn up to 2 per cent additional cash back. That's on top of the three cents per litre you can save as a CAA member.

PARKLAND: BEST FOR TRAVEL REWARDS

Parkland Corp., which operates Ultramar, Chevron, Fas Gas and Pioneer gas stations, collaborates with Aeroplan – the loyalty program of Air Canada.

Aeroplan members who link their accounts to Journie Rewards will earn one Journie Point per litre on gas. Journie Rewards can go toward discounts at Parkland-owned gas station stores. Once you've earned 300 Journie Rewards points, you also get 300 Aeroplan points. Unlinked Aeroplan members who enter their account number at the pump will earn one Aeroplan point per three litres.

On the redemption side, you can use 300 Aeroplan points for seven cents off per litre, up to 50 litres. That means you're getting a maximum value of $3.50 or a cost per point of 1.17. However, since one Aeroplan point typically has a cost per point value of 1.5, you may be better off saving your points for flights.

STICK TO A SINGLE CREDIT CARD

Some people aren't interested in juggling loyalty programs or planning their fill ups.

If you prefer to gas up wherever it's convenient, your best money-saving move is to use a credit card that gives you a strong return on fuel purchases.

The CIBC Dividend Visa Infinite and the American Express SimplyCash Preferred both offer 4 per cent cash back on gas, with annual fees of $120 and $119.88 ($9.99 billed monthly), respectively. If you'd rather avoid fees altogether, the RBC Ion Visa and Tangerine Money-Back World Mastercard cards are excellent no-fee alternatives.

Barry Choi was previously affiliated with Petro-Canada, Canadian Tire, RBC, PC Optimum, Air Miles, Tangerine, Aeroplan and American Express but currently has no relationship with any of the brands.

Iran war rattles foundations of the Gulf 'petrodollar'

MIKE DOLAN LONDON

OPINION

Whatever the outcome of the Iran war, one question is already inescapable for the Gulf's energy-rich economies: Is the U.S. security umbrella still worth the price?

Since the U.S. and Israel launched strikes on Iran on Feb. 28, it's been its Gulf neighbours who have suffered most from missiles and drones that followed – tearing through energy infrastructure, damaging economies, and exposing the limits of a supposed U.S. security umbrella.

That reckoning carries consequences far beyond the military.

At stake is a potential rethink of the financial, trade and military ties at the very heart of their dollar-based economies – and of the hundreds of billions in dollar reserves underpinning them.

For decades, Washington and the Gulf states relied on an implicit bargain: U.S. protection in exchange for access to Gulf energy, oil priced in dollars, and the recycling of hundreds of billions of those "petrodollar" windfalls back into U.S. arms, technology, and American stocks and bonds.

The arrangement – built up since the 1970s – underpins the dollar's status as the world's reserve currency and has been central to U.S.-Saudi relations ever since.

The numbers built on that bargain tell their own story. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain all peg their currencies to the dollar, requiring large supporting reserves – estimated at around US$800-billion.

But that is dwarfed by sovereign wealth funds from the Gulf Cooperation Council, estimated to manage more than US$6-trillion invested worldwide in bonds, stocks, private equity and other U.S.-heavy investments.

The U.S. Treasury lists Saudi Arabia and UAE funds among the top 20 national holders of Treasury securities, with almost US$250-billion between them.

And there's likely to be billions more sitting in dollar deposit accounts in financial centres like London and other offshore havens.

The petrodollar system rests on three pillars – America's need for oil, the pricing of oil in dollars and the Gulf region's security relationship with Washington. All three are now under strain.

First, America's newfound position as a net energy exporter means it doesn't strictly need Middle East oil any more.

Second, dollar pricing of oil was already eroding before the war. Many countries, mainly China and Russia and Iran itself, have pushed for years to denominate energy trade in their own currencies and have had limited success in that at the margins.

Third – and most acutely – the war has thrown the U.S. security umbrella – and Gulf confidence in it – up in the air.

Former Goldman Sachs economist and U.K. Treasury minister Jim O'Neill argues the war could push GCC countries closer to China, India and other major oil-consuming nations.

"If this war has shown anything so far, it is that allying yourself with the U.S. no longer guarantees security," Mr. O'Neill wrote earlier this month. "The economic opportunities offered by rising Asia are growing more attractive by the day."

The numbers support that view. Saudi sells four times as much oil to China as it does to the U.S., according to a Deutsche Bank report on Tuesday on the fate of the petrodollar universe.

Deutsche strategist Mallika Sachdeva argues the petrodollar regime was already under pressure before the war: Most Middle East oil now flows to Asia; sanctioned Russian and Iranian oil was trading in non-dollar currencies; and Saudi Arabia had been both localizing its defence industry and experimenting with non-dollar oil payments.

The war could accelerate all of this, both by undermining the security umbrella and by forcing the liquidation of dollar assets to cover the economic damage across the Gulf.

A reorientation from a strictly petrodollar world toward pools of "petroyuan," "petrorupee" or even "petroeuro" reserves is a deeper, longer-term issue.

And if the global energy shock from this conflict accelerates a shift away from fossil fuels altogether, the long-term impact on petrodollar power could be even more profound.

As Deutsche Bank concluded in its report: "The huge strategic importance of the Middle East to the dollar's role as the world's reserve currency should not be underestimated. The current conflict could test the foundations of the petrodollar regime."

Reports of oil tankers possibly being allowed to pass through the otherwise blocked Strait of Hormuz if the oil is denominated in yuan are one of the many strands markets are watching closely with long-term ramifications.

And Gulf investor shifts also now require intense scrutiny – whether the war ends soon or not.

REUTERS

Couple want children to be equal executors

Planner says having a non-resident executor may trigger additional probate requirements

VIVIAN VASSOS

SIMONSKAFAR/GETTY IMAGES

Q: My husband and I have appointed our three children as the executors of our will, but our eldest daughter works in and is a citizen of the United States. Can we still ensure that she is an equal executor?

We asked Jason Heath, CFP, managing director, Objective Financial Partners Inc., to answer this one.

According to Mr. Heath, your daughter can, in fact, act as your executor. Her U.S. citizenship does not prevent this. The primary consideration, however, is not her citizenship, but her residency.

"The complication with a non-resident executor is that they may trigger additional probate requirements," Mr. Heath said. "Provincial courts often require a bond to be provided for executors who live outside of Canada. This estate trustee security can be substantial because it is often set at more than the value of the estate assets." Because you have appointed three children as co-executors, two of whom live in Canada, Mr. Heath noted that is very helpful in this situation. "This Canadian resident majority is key as it supports the tax residency of the estate, where its 'central management and control' is exercised, as being in Canada," he said. This can ensure the estate remains a Canadian resident for tax purposes, thus avoiding unnecessary cross-border tax complexity. It also means the provincial court is more likely to waive the bond requirement for the estate.

It should be understood by all your children that your daughter can still be involved in all the decisions made for your estate settlement. Meanwhile, your other children might be primarily signing documents and handling in-person requirements. Some other considerations to take include a bond-waiver clause and clear instructions to keep management of the estate in Canada – both could be useful in a will update, Mr. Heath added.

It also bears mentioning that you do not have to be an equal estate executor to be an equal beneficiary. According to Mr. Heath, parents do not always name all their children to be executors.

He advised you to seek estate legal advice to make sure all the bases of your situation are covered, especially the question of a non-resident executor.

Special to The Globe and Mail

Do you want advice on a financial planning or retirement issue that's affecting you? Send us an e-mail.

Twenty-three well-performing Canadian ETFs with reasonable fees

IAN TAM

NUMBER CRUNCHER

CFA, director of investment research for Morningstar Canada

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR

Geopolitical conflict has a way of focusing the mind for investors, especially against a backdrop of noisy markets and shifting expectations. Balanced funds continue to offer a practical solution. At their core, they package equities and fixed income into a single, professionally managed portfolio.

For many investors, that delivers three key benefits: First, diversification. Exposure is spread across asset classes and regions, helping smooth outcomes over time. Second, simplicity. Instead of building and maintaining a multifund portfolio, investors can rely on a single holding. Third, automatic rebalancing. As markets move, portfolios are reset to target weights – enforcing discipline without requiring constant oversight. That combination has kept balanced funds at the centre of Canadian portfolios for decades.

More recently, the arrival of balanced ETFs has made these strategies even more accessible – offering intraday liquidity, low minimums, and seamless implementation through any brokerage account.

What was once primarily a mutual fund solution is now available in a more flexible, often lower-cost format.

Costs, in turn, have moved meaningfully lower. Morningstar research shows fees in this category have steadily declined, with mutual fund expenses falling close to 1.3 per cent from roughly 1.5 per cent, while ETF-based balanced solutions have dropped to well below 1 per cent.

More broadly, Canadian fund fees have trended lower over time, reinforcing the link between cost and investor outcomes.

With that in mind, I used Morningstar Direct to screen for balanced funds available to Canadian investors that pair strong risk-adjusted performance with reasonable fees.

To do so, I screened the universe of now over 1,900 Canadian-listed ETFs for those that Morningstar broadly classifies as "balanced" or "allocation" products (meaning they hold some mix of stocks and bonds) and have:

■ received a five-star Morningstar Rating for Funds (Star Rating), indicating historical outperformance versus peers (which include both mutual funds and ETFs) on an after-fee, risk-adjusted basis. The rating incorporates up to 10 years of performance history, with greater weight placed on the most recent three years.

Noting importantly that five stars place these funds in the top 10 per cent of performers after adjusting for risk and fees.

OR

■ a Morningstar Medalist Rating of Gold, reflecting Morningstar's forward-looking view that the fund has the ingredients to outperform peers on an after-fee basis. This assessment incorporates our evaluation of parent (stewardship quality), people (portfolio management experience), and process (the robustness and repeatability of the investment approach).

Only Canadian-domiciled ETFs were considered in today's screen. By no means is an exhaustive list, but merely a good starting point for further research.

WHAT WE FOUND

The ETFs that met the above requirements are listed in the table accompanying this article alongside tickers, management expense ratios, trailing performance, inception dates, and asset allocations. Importantly, readers should note the category to which each fund belongs. Broadly speaking, Canada's fund category system divides this universe of funds into three buckets based on asset allocations, setting an upper limit of 40 per cent fixed-income balanced, 60 per cent neutral balanced, and 90 per cent equity balanced in stocks. Conservative investors (or those who have a short time horizon until which they must start withdrawing funds) might consider funds with lower exposure to stocks, while investors with a longer time horizon might consider the opposite.

This article does not constitute financial advice. Investors are urged to conduct their own independent research before investing in any of the ETFs listed here.

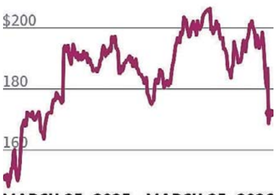
Ticket to ride

NAME	TICKER	MER (%)	MORNINGSTAR RATING OVERALL	MORNINGSTAR MEDALIST RATING	TOTAL RET YTD (%)	TOTAL RET 1 YR (%)	TOTAL RET ANNLZD 3 YR (%)	TOTAL RET ANNLZD 5 YR (%)	CANADIAN EQUITY (%)	U.S. EQUITY (%)	INT'L EQUITY (%)	FIXED INCOME (%)	CASH (%)	OTHER (%)
iShares ESG Conservative Bal ETF Port	GCNS-T	0.25	5 Stars	Gold	-1.8	7.7	10.1	5.8	12.0	20.3	8.6	57.9	1.2	0.0
Fidelity All-in-One Consrv ETF CAD	FCNS-NE	0.39	5 Stars	Neutral	-0.4	7.4	10.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mackenzie Conservative Allocation ETF	MCON-T	0.19	5 Stars	Neutral	-0.6	8.2	9.5	5.3	13.1	17.7	10.9	55.6	2.7	0.0
Vanguard Retirement Income ETF Portfolio	VRIF-T	0.32	4 Stars	Gold	-0.2	7.9	7.9	4.2	9.3	7.6	13.7	69.0	0.4	0.0
Vanguard Conservative ETF Portfolio	VCNS-T	0.25	4 Stars	Gold	-0.6	8.0	8.9	4.7	12.7	17.7	10.9	57.9	0.8	0.0
TD Conservative ETF Portfolio	TCON-T	0.17	4 Stars	Gold	-0.7	7.7	8.7	4.9	15.6	14.9	10.2	58.7	0.6	0.0
iShares Core Income Balanced ETF	XINC-T	0.2	3 Stars	Gold	-0.5	4.6	6.2	2.9	4.9	8.9	5.9	79.8	0.4	0.1
Vanguard Conservative Income ETF Port	VCIP-T	0.25	2 Stars	Gold	-0.6	4.3	5.5	2.2	6.6	9.1	5.8	77.6	0.9	0.0
iShares ESG Balanced ETF Portfolio	GBAL-T	0.25	5 Stars	Gold	-2.6	10.5	13.4	8.1	20.0	29.2	12.7	37.0	1.0	0.0
Fidelity Global Monthly High Income ETF	FCGI-T	0.64	5 Stars	Silver	1.8	12.0	12.2	8.3	12.7	30.1	23.2	28.5	3.5	2.1
Mackenzie Balanced Allocation ETF	MBAL-T	0.18	5 Stars	Neutral	-0.7	11.9	12.9	7.9	19.3	26.2	16.1	36.5	1.9	0.0
Fidelity All-in-One Balanced ETF	FBAL-NE	0.4	5 Stars	Bronze	-0.5	10.3	13.8	9.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
TD Balanced ETF Portfolio	TBAL-T	0.17	5 Stars	Gold	-1.0	11.0	13.0	8.3	20.1	24.7	14.9	39.5	0.3	0.4
iShares Core Conservative Balanced ETF	XCNS-T	0.2	3 Stars	Gold	-0.6	8.1	9.4	5.3	10.1	18.1	12.1	59.3	0.4	0.1
iShares Canadian Fncl Mthly Inc ETF Comm	FIE-T	0.74	5 Stars	Gold	-2.8	24.8	20.9	12.0	68.8	0.0	0.0	10.3	0.4	20.6
iShares ESG Growth ETF Portfolio	GGRO-T	0.25	5 Stars	Gold	-3.2	13.4	16.6	10.3	24.6	37.6	17.4	19.4	0.8	0.1
iShares Core Growth ETF Portfolio	XGRO-T	0.2	5 Stars	Gold	-0.8	14.7	15.7	9.9	19.9	36.4	23.3	19.7	0.6	0.1
Brompton Enhanced Multi-Asset Income ETF	BMAX-T	2.62	5 Stars	Neutral	-1.5	13.9	16.5	-	9.0	49.4	20.0	7.6	1.2	12.8
BMO Growth ETF Fixed Percentage Dis	ZGRO.T-T	0.2	5 Stars	Neutral	-1.0	14.3	15.3	-	20.7	38.7	21.1	18.8	0.7	0.0
Mackenzie Growth Allocation ETF	MGRW-T	0.18	5 Stars	Neutral	-0.8	15.5	16.3	10.5	25.3	34.4	21.2	18.0	1.0	0.0
Fidelity All-in-One Growth ETF	FGRO-NE	0.42	5 Stars	Bronze	-0.6	13.9	18.1	12.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
TD Growth ETF Portfolio	TGRO-T	0.17	5 Stars	Gold	-1.5	15.0	17.5	11.9	25.2	39.5	19.9	14.8	0.3	0.3
iShares Core Balanced ETF Portfolio	XBAL-T	0.2	5 Stars	Gold	-0.7	11.1	12.5	7.6	14.9	26.6	18.2	39.6	0.7	0.1

Source: Morningstar Direct | Data as of March 23, 2026

EYE ON EQUITIES DARCY KEITH

PAST YEAR



MARCH 25, 2025 MARCH 25, 2026

SOURCE: BARCHART

DOLLARAMA (DOL-TSX)

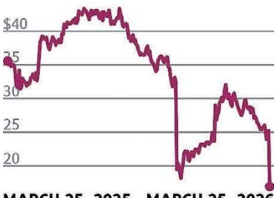
CLOSE $172.01, UP $3.35

Dollarama Inc.'s nearly 10-per-cent share price decline on Tuesday in the wake of fourth quarter earnings was "overdone," said Desjardins Securities analyst Chris Li, who said his long-term positive thesis remains intact.

Mr. Li was one of several analysts cutting his price target even as he was still recommending the stock as a buy. Investors punished the stock largely because of softer-than-expected fourth quarter same-store sales growth and heavier-than-expected losses in Australia.

Targets: Mr. Li cut his price target to $205 from $218. The average analyst target is C$197.94.

PAST YEAR



MARCH 25, 2025 MARCH 25, 2026

SOURCE: BARCHART

AG GROWTH INT'L (AFN-TSX)

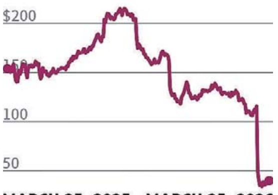
CLOSE $16.89, DOWN $8.27

Raymond James analyst Steve Hansen downgraded **Ag Growth International Inc.** to "market perform" from "outperform". The move came after a surprisingly weak fourth quarter report and a lacklustre outlook, alongside major restructuring plans that included a suspension of the dividend.

"Despite modest revenue growth, adjusted EBITDA plummeted 38 per cent y/y to $48.3 mln," he said. "Consolidated EBTIDA margin collapsed 830 basis points y/y to 12.2 per cent ... Our faith in the company's outlook has again been materially eroded with this latest print."

Target: His target went to C$30 from $52. The average analyst target is $33.29.

PAST YEAR



MARCH 25, 2025 MARCH 25, 2026

SOURCE: BARCHART

GOEASY (GSY-TSX)

CLOSE $39.76, DOWN 18¢

Shares in **goeasy Ltd.** appear oversold, said Scotia analyst Phil Hardie.

The company on Tuesday announced amended financing deals with its lenders, which are expected to help stabilize its funding base and allow it to remain compliant with covenants.

"We had expected to see syndicate lenders revise covenants but still view the announcement as a positive for the stock given that it 1) removes an immediate default overhand and reduces liquidity tail risks and 2) provides more breathing room for the company to organically de-lever," said Mr. Hardie.

Target: He cut his target to $61 from $68 and kept a "sector outperform" rating.

PAST YEAR

MARCH 25, 2025 MARCH 25, 2026

SOURCE: BARCHART

AIRBOSS OF AMERICA (BOS-TSX)

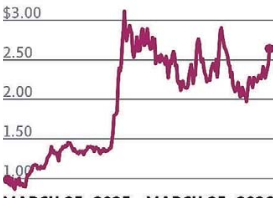
CLOSE $6.89, UP 26¢

TD Cowen analyst Tim James raised his price target on **AirBoss of America Corp.** "based on shifting forward valuation period by one quarter to Q1/27-Q4/27, slightly higher forecasts (carry forward of Q4/25 impacts and updated forex, rubber, and other assumptions) and lower forecast net debt."

"We remain bullish on AirBoss given deleveraging, increasingly stable earnings, reasonable valuation, and defense backdrop, he said.

Target: His target went to $8 from $6.50 and he reaffirmed a "buy" rating. The average analyst target is $7.53.

PAST YEAR



MARCH 25, 2025 MARCH 25, 2026

SOURCE: BARCHART

ANAERGIA (ANRG-TSX)

CLOSE $2.64, UP 20¢

National Bank analyst Baltej Sidhu initiated coverage on **Anaergia Inc.** with an "outperform" rating.

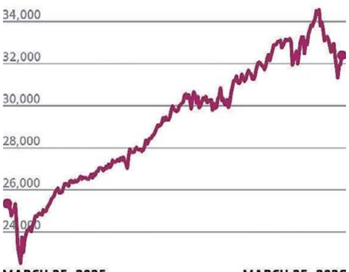
Anaergia is an integrated waste-to-value platform converting landfill-diverted organic waste into renewable natural gas, electricity, clean water and fertilizer.

"With a capital-light strategy, expanding recurring revenue base and exposure to policy-driven end markets, we see Anaergia as transitioning toward a more scalable, higher-quality earnings model with improving returns," Mr. Sidhu said.

Target: He set a $5 price target. The average analyst price target is $5.06.

S&P/TSX COMPOSITE INDEX
PAST 12 MONTHS

32382.60 | 441.01 | 1.38 % | 2.11 % YTD | 312606 VOL(000)

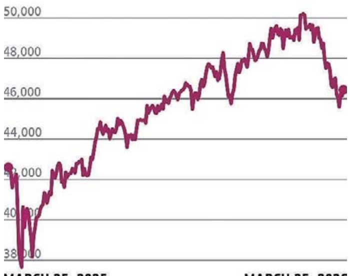


S&P 500
PAST 12 MONTHS

6591.90 | 35.53 | 0.54 % | -3.70 % YTD 2919894

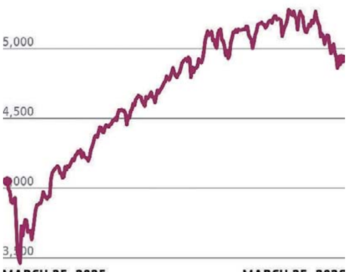
DOW JONES INDUSTRIAL AVERAGE
PAST 12 MONTHS

46429.49 | 305.43 | 0.66 % | -3.40 % YTD | 462991 VOL(000)



S&P GLOBAL 100 INDEX
PAST 12 MONTHS

4925.13 | 41.76 | 0.86 % | -4.30 % YTD



TSX INDEXES AND SUB INDEXES

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
TSX COMPOSITE IND	32382.60	441.01	1.38	312606	2.11
TSX 60 INDEX	1887.54	23.37	1.25	149702	1.48
TSX COMPLETION IN	2176.32	40.21	1.88	162904	4.65
TSX SMALLCAP INDE	1313.23	20.28	1.57	125475	9.75
TSX VENTURE COMPO	947.64	8.66	0.92	70018	-4.06
TSX CONSUMER DISC	372.50	4.26	1.16	5486	-2.64
TSX CONSUMER STAP	1255.07	0.84	0.07	5216	1.36
TSX ENERGY CAPPED	418.19	3.41	0.82	75458	39.20
TSX FINANCIALS CA	610.60	5.68	0.94	38917	-2.69
TSX HEALTH CARE C	20.49	0.18	0.89	1715	-6.44
TSX INDUSTRIALS C	464.43	5.81	1.27	18830	-0.55
TSX INFORMATION T	264.85	1.73	0.66	14412	-18.91
TSX MATERIALS CAP	784.71	24.89	3.28	85100	4.67
TSX REAL ESTATE C	297.97	2.15	0.73	6612	-5.82
TSX GLOBAL GOLD I	843.84	27.01	3.31	144973	3.27
TSX GLOBAL MINING	223.67	6.11	2.81	336404	6.70
TSX INCOME TRUST	225.25	1.85	0.83	8146	2.28
TSX PREFERRED SHA	689.96	0.43	0.06	832	-0.90
TSX COMMUNICATION	167.30	-0.26	-0.16	13029	6.66
TSX UTILITIES CAP	383.54	4.49	1.18	20177	8.87

TSX VOLUME
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
CNQ CDN NATURAL R	68.00	0.52	0.77	20871	46.27
TRP TC ENERGY COR	88.76	0.52	0.59	10838	17.44
ABX BARRICK MININ	53.92	1.49	2.84	10066	-9.82
CVE CENOVUS ENERG	35.85	0.83	2.37	9981	54.39
HOD BETAPRO CRUDE	1.75	0.04	2.34	8981	-69.78
XIU ISHARES SP TS	47.67	0.60	1.27	8006	1.45
SU SUNCOR ENERGY	89.42	1.19	1.35	7212	46.78
TD TORONTO-DOMINI	130.32	1.62	1.26	6805	0.74
BLX BORALEX INC.	36.62	3.62	10.97	6597	44.57
T TELUS CORPORATI	17.88	-0.23	-1.27	6291	-1.16
BTO B2GOLD CORP.	5.81	0.15	2.65	6265	-5.99
BTE BAYTEX ENERGY	5.78	0.12	2.12	6129	30.18
WCP WHITECAP RESO	14.64	0.05	0.34	5934	27.30
ARX ARC RESOURCES	29.42	0.13	0.44	5724	14.25
GRA NANOXPLORE IN	1.98	0.15	8.20	5597	-22.66
BNS BANK OF NOVA	96.63	0.97	1.01	5528	-4.54
BCE BCE INC.	35.22	-0.32	-0.90	4910	7.57
MFC MANULIFE FIN	47.82	0.40	0.84	4852	-4.05
BITF BITFARMS LTD	3.06	0.01	0.33	4586	-5.26
IVN IVANHOE MINES	11.76	0.56	5.00	4465	-24.66

TSX 52-WEEK HIGHS
STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
VNP 5N PLUS INC.	34.76	1.48	4.45	611	96.16
ARE AECON GROUP I	43.74	1.28	3.01	459	39.83
BOS AIRBOSS AMERI	6.89	0.26	3.92	52	48.49
ACO-X ATCO LTD. C	67.38	1.45	2.20	425	19.51
ATH ATHABASCA OIL	9.77	-0.21	-2.10	3093	38.98
CAGE AVANTIS CIBC	20.31	0.29	1.45	119	0.79
BDT BIRD CONSTRUC	37.94	1.87	5.18	345	33.03
BLX BORALEX INC.	36.62	3.62	10.97	6597	44.57
BN-PF-L BROOKFIEL	16.60	0.10	0.61	4	3.23
BNKR BUNKER HILL	0.56	-0.03	-4.40	13	
CFW CALFRAC WELL	6.50	0.12	1.88	178	55.88
CVE CENOVUS ENERG	35.85	0.83	2.37	9981	54.39
CGO COGECO INC. S	76.61	0.40	0.52	7	19.72
ENS E SPLIT CORP	18.01	0.09	0.50	53	18.80
ENB-PR-G ENBRIDGE	23.87	0.19	0.80		4.05
FLNT FLINT CORP	1.75	0.19	12.18	18	28.68
GEV GE VERNOVA CD	62.60	1.01	1.64	63	40.61
KEY-R KEYERA CORP	53.25	0.60	1.14	51	25.29
GUD KNIGHT THERAP	7.11	0.30	4.41	114	17.52
MFC-PR-P MANULIFE	19.75	0.00	0.00		3.95
MTEK METATEK-GROU	4.95	0.04	0.81	7	0.41
MX METHANEX CORP	80.84	0.00	0.00	1594	48.49
OBE OBSIDIAN ENER	12.53	0.08	0.64	454	48.81
OXY OCCIDENTAL PE	26.02	0.25	0.97	15	49.45
OVV OVINTIV INC	83.08	1.90	2.34	253	54.45
PPL PEMBINA PIPEL	63.05	0.95	1.53	2766	20.58
PHX PHX ENERGY SE	13.99	0.19	1.38	286	86.53
QBR-B QUEBECOR IN	60.08	0.19	0.32	724	16.21
RSI ROGERS SUGAR	6.71	-0.03	-0.45	468	12.77
SIS SAVARIA CORP.	26.33	0.52	2.01	151	15.58
SOBO SOUTH BOW CO	47.20	0.61	1.31	2526	25.03
SDE SPARTAN DELTA	12.69	0.22	1.76	787	75.03
SWP SWISS WATER D	4.77	-0.25	-4.98	12	8.16
TOT TOTAL ENERGY	23.54	0.53	2.30	115	57.99
VCM VECIMA NETWOR	13.17	0.00	0.00		25.31
WTE WESTSHORE TER	34.11	0.75	2.25	146	30.99

TSX 52-WEEK LOWS
STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
ABT ABBOTT LABS C	18.36	-0.08	-0.43		-17.63
FAP ABRDN ASIA PA	2.94	0.01	0.38	59	-7.37
ADBE ADOBE CDR (C	9.19	-0.04	-0.43	79	-32.33
AFN AG GROWTH INT	16.89	-8.27	-32.87	1178	-27.20
BEK-B BECKER MILK	12.42	-0.78	-5.91	3	-4.09
BCHT BIRCHTECH CO	2.88	-0.02	-0.69		-42.17
LCS-PR-A BROMPTON	10.47	-0.03	-0.29	28	-6.10
BNKR BUNKER HILL	0.56	-0.03	-4.40	13	
CLCH CLINCH RESOU	1.90	-0.10	-5.00	182	-24.00
DTOL D2L INC	7.64	-0.27	-3.41	27	-43.45
ECO ECOSYNTHETIX	3.31	0.14	4.42	84	-17.25
FISV FISERV CDR (	5.73	-0.05	-0.87	15	-13.96
GFL GFL ENVIRONME	54.81	0.56	1.03	611	-7.04
IMP INTERMAP TECH	1.27	-0.01	-0.78	106	-31.35
LULU LULULEMON CD	6.95	-0.10	-1.42	155	-23.96
MTEK METATEK-GROU	4.95	0.04	0.81	7	0.41
PET PET VALU HOLD	21.39	-0.26	-1.20	300	-23.31
PNP PINETREE CAPI	8.64	-0.11	-1.26	4	-21.81
MSFU SAVVYLONG 2X	11.81	-0.05	-0.42	16	-43.92
SXP SUPREMEX INC.	3.56	0.05	1.42	33	-3.00
TINY TINY LTD	5.79	0.15	2.66	24	-39.69

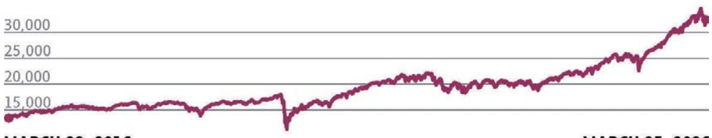
TSX GAINERS
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
RUA RUA GOLD INC	1.48	0.23	18.40	240	18.40
DLCG DOMINION LEN	9.00	1.17	14.94	129	-9.55
PRN PROFOUND MEDI	8.04	0.89	12.45	29	-25.35
FLNT FLINT CORP	1.75	0.19	12.18	18	28.68
CGMU MEGALONG 3X	12.49	1.31	11.72	100	-16.20
AII ALMONTY INDUS	22.58	2.30	11.34	951	87.08
BSX BELO SUN MINI	1.29	0.13	11.21	2764	138.89
BLX BORALEX INC.	36.62	3.62	10.97	6597	44.57
SBI SERABI GOLD P	5.22	0.49	10.36	38	-12.27
FOM FORAN MINING	5.75	0.48	9.11	2761	14.09
ANRG ANAERGIA INC	2.64	0.20	8.20	517	16.81
GRA NANOXPLORE IN	1.98	0.15	8.20	5597	-22.66
SMCI SUPERMICRO C	7.85	0.58	7.98	566	-18.40
FFM FIREFLY METAL	1.63	0.12	7.95	83	-12.83
GDXU BETAPRO CDN	108.11	7.88	7.86	82	-2.68
MAU MONTAGE GOLD	13.78	1.00	7.82	1094	39.47
PDN PALADIN ENERG	10.92	0.78	7.69	200	25.81
ISO ISOENERGY LTD	15.00	1.07	7.68	287	20.10
ASCU ARIZONA SONO	6.74	0.48	7.67	1032	41.00
AMDY HARVEST AMD	19.52	1.34	7.37	52	-1.71

TSX LOSERS
TOP 20 FOR STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
AKT-B AKITA CL B	4.11	-2.79	-40.43	1	91.16
AFN AG GROWTH INT	16.89	-8.27	-32.87	1178	-27.20
CGMD MEGASHORT -3	12.83	-1.27	-9.01	3	-38.02
CSCI COSCIENS BIO	1.16	-0.11	-8.66	2	-59.15
GDXD BETAPRO CDN	12.60	-1.09	-7.96	186	-22.89
ACX ACT ENERGY TE	7.12	-0.58	-7.53	280	42.69
SLVD BETAPRO SILV	4.07	-0.31	-7.08	1858	-52.45
GLDD BETAPRO GOLD	7.99	-0.51	-6.00	54	-17.12
JOY JOURNEY ENERG	5.64	-0.36	-6.00	354	77.36
BEK-B BECKER MILK	12.42	-0.78	-5.91	3	-4.09
XMF-PR-C M SPLIT	4.07	-0.24	-5.57	1	-9.56
BGAU BLOSSOM GOLD	2.06	-0.11	-5.07	50	28.75
CLCH CLINCH RESOU	1.90	-0.10	-5.00	182	-24.00
SWP SWISS WATER D	4.77	-0.25	-4.98	12	8.16
GFP GREENFIRST FO	2.14	-0.11	-4.89	4	18.89
CTC CANADIAN TIRE	204.32	-10.18	-4.75		-7.13
MDA MDA SPACE LTD	38.45	-1.85	-4.59	2973	44.33
BIR BIRCHCLIFF EN	7.65	-0.36	-4.49	1493	2.41
BNKR BUNKER HILL	5.65	-0.26	-4.40	13	
IFA IFABRIC CORP	3.35	-0.15	-4.29	24	82.07

TSX COMPOSITE INDEX
PAST 10 YEARS



SOURCE: BARCHART

S&P/TSX COMPOSITE INDEX STOCKS
LARGEST STOCKS BY MARKET CAPITALIZATION

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
VNP 5N PLUS INC.	34.76	1.48	4.45	611	96.16
AAV ADVANTAGE ENE	11.88	0.05	0.42	746	1.19
ARE AECON GROUP I	43.74	1.28	3.01	459	39.83
AEM AGNICO EAGLE	265.81	13.24	5.24	1439	14.20
AC AIR CANADA	18.58	0.53	2.94	2641	-3.68
AGI ALAMOS GOLD I	57.89	1.59	2.82	976	9.23
AQN ALGONQUIN POW	8.66	-0.02	-0.23	2817	2.61
ATD ALIMENTATION	78.62	0.65	0.83	1068	4.88
AAUC ALLIED GOLD	43.01	0.20	0.47	1389	36.76
AP-UN ALLIED PROP	9.19	0.05	0.55	622	-31.26
ALA ALTAGAS LTD.	47.91	0.07	0.15	893	14.48
AIF ALTUS GROUP L	47.34	0.47	1.00	115	-16.52
ARX ARC RESOURCES	29.42	0.13	0.44	5724	14.25
ARIS ARIS MINING	24.13	1.10	4.78	920	8.40
ATZ ARITZIA INC	115.17	3.03	2.70	553	-1.86
ACO-X ATCO LTD. C	67.38	1.45	2.20	425	19.51
ATH ATHABASCA OIL	9.77	-0.21	-2.10	3093	38.98
ATRL ATKINSREALIS	94.72	1.93	2.08	628	6.91
ATS ATS CORPORATI	42.01	0.62	1.50	209	11.11
AYA AYA GOLD AND	18.82	0.50	2.73	1027	-4.18
BTO B2GOLD CORP.	5.81	0.15	2.65	6265	-5.99
BCE BCE INC.	35.22	-0.32	-0.90	4910	7.57
BDGI BADGER INFRA	64.79	0.64	1.00	118	-11.40
BMO BANK OF MONTR	189.47	1.72	0.92	1555	6.29
BNS BANK OF NOVA	96.63	0.97	1.01	5528	-4.54
ABX BARRICK MININ	53.92	1.49	2.84	10066	-9.82
BHC BAUSCH HEALTH	7.02	0.14	2.03	378	-26.34
BTE BAYTEX ENERGY	5.78	0.12	2.12	6129	30.18
BIR BIRCHCLIFF EN	7.65	-0.36	-4.49	1493	2.41
BDT BIRD CONSTRUC	37.94	1.87	5.18	345	33.03
BITF BITFARMS LTD	3.06	0.01	0.33	4586	-5.26
BB BLACKBERRY LIM	4.54	0.08	1.79	2808	-12.36
BEI-UN BOARDWALK	63.83	0.49	0.77	172	-1.01
BBD-B BOMBARDIER	246.47	10.49	4.45	401	5.55
BLX BORALEX INC.	36.62	3.62	10.97	6597	44.57
BYD BOYD GROUP SE	190.23	-2.18	-1.13	235	-12.99
BAM BROOKFIELD AS	60.39	1.37	2.32	1368	-16.01
BBU-UN BROOKFIELD	45.14	2.87	6.79	67	-7.06
BN BROOKFIELD COR	55.16	1.17	2.17	2467	-12.47
BIP-UN BROOKFIELD	49.14	0.23	0.47	762	3.00
BEP-UN BROOKFIELD	43.78	0.68	1.58	412	18.04
DOO BRP INC	89.53	0.30	0.34	254	-7.75
CAR-UN CDN APARTM	36.00	0.01	0.03	632	-2.36
CNQ CDN NATURAL R	68.00	0.52	0.77	20871	46.27
GIB-A CGI INC	100.02	1.11	1.12	635	-21.11
CRT-UN CT REAL ES	16.49	0.10	0.61	176	1.35
CAE CAE INC	37.00	0.88	2.44	1124	-11.36
CCO CAMECO CORP	150.61	1.99	1.34	583	19.84
CM CANADIAN IMPER	134.53	1.33	1.00	3159	8.12
CNR CANADIAN NATI	140.69	1.66	1.19	1973	3.64
CP CANADIAN PACIF	110.59	1.50	1.38	1737	9.44
CTC-A CANADIAN TI	183.44	1.88	1.04	111	5.46
CU CANADIAN UTILI	48.22	0.43	0.90	531	12.85
CPX CAPITAL POWER	65.80	1.45	2.25	581	12.38
CS CAPSTONE COPPE	10.27	0.39	3.95	2729	-25.47
CJT CARGOJET INC.	83.31	1.64	2.01	74	-0.75
CCL-B CCL INDUSTR	87.50	0.71	0.82	305	0.92
CLS CELESTICA INC	417.61	3.00	0.72	375	2.86
CVE CENOVUS ENERG	35.85	0.83	2.37	9981	54.39
CG CENTERRA GOLD	23.41	0.89	3.95	893	18.47
CEU CES ENERGY SO	18.34	-0.04	-0.22	845	49.47

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
CSH-UN CHARTWELL	19.78	0.20	1.02	583	-1.59
CHP-UN CHOICE PRO	15.36	0.06	0.39	373	3.71
CCA COGECO COMMUN	76.79	0.34	0.44	68	15.53
CIGI COLLIERS INT	141.57	1.57	1.12	95	-29.83
CSU CONSTELLATION	2406.75	-34.36	-1.41	79	-27.10
CRR-UN CROMBIE RE	15.66	0.02	0.13	171	2.55
CURA CURALEAF HOL	3.17	0.01	0.32	400	-7.04
DFY DEFINITY FINA	66.75	-1.00	-1.48	160	-12.09
DML DENISON MINES	4.93	0.11	2.28	3683	35.44
DSG DESCARTES SYS	96.76	-0.97	-0.99	309	-19.64
DSV DISCOVERY SIL	8.35	0.26	3.21	2858	-0.36
DOL DOLLARAMA INC	172.01	3.35	1.99	1070	-16.15
DPM DPM METALS IN	45.35	1.88	4.32	643	6.91
DIR-UN DREAM INDU	12.50	0.15	1.21	465	-0.64
EQB EQB INC	110.37	-0.02	-0.02	99	6.24
ELD ELDORADO GOLD	47.65	2.00	4.38	958	-3.41
EFN ELEMENT FLEET	31.09	0.21	0.68	499	-13.76
EMA EMERA INCORPO	70.55	0.95	1.36	1109	4.30
EMP-A EMPIRE COMP	49.20	-0.20	-0.40	494	3.10
ENB ENBRIDGE INC	75.29	0.38	0.51	3082	14.63
EDR ENDEAVOUR SIL	12.70	0.35	2.83	1137	-1.63
EFX ENERFLEX LTD	29.95	0.59	2.01	774	41.54
EFR ENERGY FUELS	25.80	0.95	3.82	1091	29.78
EQX EQUINOX GOLD	18.01	0.71	4.10	2541	-6.64
ERO ERO COPPER CO	35.05	1.06	3.12	354	-9.73
EIF EXCHANGE INCO	105.42	2.77	2.70	251	28.62
FFH FAIRFAX FINAN	2336.96	-7.90	-0.34	87	-10.66
FTT FINNING INTL	88.10	0.94	1.08	319	18.46
FCR-UN FIRST CAPI	20.52	0.10	0.49	337	8.57
AG FIRST MAJESTIC	28.77	1.13	4.09	1820	25.63
FM FIRST QUANTUM	32.53	1.14	3.63	2541	-11.60
FSV FIRSTSERVICE	190.35	2.32	1.23	82	-10.82
FTS FORTIS INC	76.48	0.64	0.84	1218	7.17
FVI FORTUNA MININ	13.11	0.41	3.23	980	-2.53
FNV FRANCO-NEVADA	323.25	5.26	1.65	366	13.62
FRU FREEHOLD ROYA	17.66	0.00	0.00	629	16.26
GMIN G MINING VEN	43.53	2.86	7.03	744	4.92
GFL GFL ENVIRONME	54.81	0.56	1.03	611	-7.04
GEI GIBSON ENERGY	30.03	0.17	0.57	1259	19.55
GIL GILDAN ACTIVE	80.00	1.18	1.50	506	-6.75
GSY GOEASY LTD	39.76	-0.18	-0.45	485	-69.72
GRT-UN GRANITE RE	81.77	0.60	0.74	76	0.07
GWO GREAT-WEST LI	64.74	0.96	1.51	1020	-4.36
HWX HEADWATER EXP	12.80	-0.04	-0.31	1003	36.61
HR-UN HR REAL EST	9.97	0.04	0.40	365	-2.54
HBM HUDBAY MINERA	27.67	1.64	6.30	2520	1.54
H HYDRO ONE LIMIT	57.40	0.31	0.54	1107	5.05
IAG IA FINANCIAL	152.94	1.76	1.16	374	-14.00
IMG IAMGOLD CORP	24.51	1.06	4.52	1764	8.21
IGM IGM FINANCIAL	65.12	1.17	1.83	715	5.36
IMO IMPERIAL OIL	180.13	2.41	1.36	944	51.91
IFC INTACT FINANC	251.14	-1.61	-0.64	418	-12.11
IPCO INTERNATIONA	35.73	-0.06	-0.17	97	43.90
IIP-UN INTERRENT	13.27	-0.03	-0.23	713	0.61
IVN IVANHOE MINES	11.76	0.56	5.00	4465	-24.66
JWEL JAMIESON WEL	34.45	-0.12	-0.35	128	2.38

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
KNT K92 MINING IN	23.17	0.91	4.09	1256	2.12
KEL KELT EXPLORAT	9.35	0.05	0.54	562	21.90
KEY KEYERA CORP	54.41	0.78	1.45	1267	23.66
KMP-UN KILLAM APA	16.25	0.22	1.37	559	-0.91
KXS KINAXIS INC	138.78	4.79	3.57	175	-19.82
K KINROSS GOLD CO	40.14	1.65	4.29	2918	3.83
LIF LABRADOR IRON	28.55	0.33	1.17	249	-4.42
LB LAURENTIAN BAN	40.18	0.01	0.02	328	-0.30
LSPD LIGHTSPEED C	12.19	0.10	0.83	773	-26.39
LNR LINAMAR CORP	86.75	1.75	2.06	71	4.57
LAC LITHIUM AMERI	5.61	0.07	1.26	1142	-6.03
L LOBLAW CO	62.42	-0.16	-0.26	1479	0.60
LUG LUNDIN GOLD I	99.92	2.91	3.00	387	-12.37
LUN LUNDIN MINING	33.27	1.48	4.66	2532	12.78
MG MAGNA INTERNAT	77.51	2.09	2.77	1531	5.93
MFC MANULIFE FIN	47.82	0.40	0.84	4852	-4.05
MFI MAPLE LEAF FO	29.77	0.05	0.17	326	19.41
MDA MDA SPACE LTD	38.45	-1.85	-4.59	2973	44.33
MX METHANEX CORP	80.84	0.00	0.00	1594	48.49
MRU METRO INC	94.17	-0.11	-0.12	484	-4.68
MTL MULLEN GROUP	17.18	0.40	2.38	281	9.15
NA NATIONAL BANK	181.23	1.75	0.98	1633	4.99
NGD NEW GOLD INC.	12.16	0.39	3.31	56527	1.67
NXE NEXGEN ENERGY	16.18	0.22	1.38	1312	28.11
NFI NFI GROUP INC	19.32	0.32	1.68	730	24.48
NGEX NGEX MINERAL	25.23	1.58	6.68	607	-1.45
NPI NORTHLAND POW	23.16	0.65	2.89	1583	29.75
NWH-UN NORTHWEST	5.66	-0.01	-0.18	578	10.76
NG NOVAGOLD RES I	11.35	0.17	1.52	536	-11.33
NTR NUTRIEN LTD	105.91	0.19	0.18	2100	25.01
OR OR ROYALTIES I	48.01	0.32	0.67	506	-1.25
OGC OCEANAGOLD CO	42.22	-0.04	-0.09	1231	8.53
ONEX ONEX CORPORA	101.29	2.33	2.35	110	-10.33
OTEX OPEN TEXT CO	30.53	0.26	0.86	1458	-31.70
OLA ORLA MINING L	20.16	0.41	2.08	1040	9.21
PAAS PAN AMERICAN	71.16	2.45	3.57	1087	0.00
POU PARAMOUNT RES	29.67	-0.17	-0.57	202	22.65
PXT PAREX RESOURC	26.09	-0.79	-2.94	1639	41.41
PPL PEMBINA PIPEL	63.05	0.95	1.53	2766	20.58
PPTA PERPETUA RES	36.20	1.56	4.50	202	8.94
PET PET VALU HOLD	21.39	-0.26	-1.20	300	-23.31
PEY PEYTO EXPLORA	28.18	-0.09	-0.32	633	24.09
POW POWER CORPORA	67.74	1.77	2.68	2632	-7.14
PSK PRAIRIESKY RO	32.43	0.06	0.19	527	19.98
PBH PREMIUM BRAND	87.32	0.30	0.34	129	-14.15
PMZ-UN PRIMARIS R	17.20	0.29	1.71	275	10.33
QBR-B QUEBECOR IN	60.08	0.19	0.32	724	16.21
RBA RB GLOBAL INC	134.58	1.80	1.36	221	-4.76
QSR RESTAURANT BR	100.64	-1.02	-1.00	1086	7.45
RCH RICHELIEU HAR	42.37	0.59	1.41	98	7.10
REI-UN RIOCAN REA	19.01	0.08	0.42	595	1.66
RCI-B ROGERS COMM	53.98	0.64	1.20	1034	4.19
RY ROYAL BANK OF	224.51	1.33	0.60	3210	-4.05
RUS RUSSEL METALS	48.11	0.38	0.80	198	9.84
SAP SAPUTO INC.	43.03	-0.41	-0.94	778	4.16
SEA SEABRIDGE GOL	36.42	0.62	1.73	146	-10.49

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
SES SECURE WASTE	22.32	0.01	0.04	598	29.24
SHOP SHOPIFY INC	163.72	3.88	2.43	1849	-25.92
SIA SIENNA SENIOR	22.01	0.05	0.23	353	7.73
SVM SILVERCORP ME	14.28	0.87	6.49	1836	24.39
SKE SKEENA RESOUR	37.68	-0.16	-0.42	529	15.58
SRU-UN SMARTCENTR	26.84	0.15	0.56	272	4.23
SOBO SOUTH BOW CO	47.20	0.61	1.31	2526	25.03
SII SPROTT INC.	192.65	3.78	2.00	81	43.30
SSRM SSR MINING I	36.01	2.38	7.08	544	19.67
STN STANTEC INC	122.41	1.62	1.34	327	-5.49
SJ STELLA JONES I	93.85	0.44	0.47	121	10.24
SCR STRATHCONA RE	37.47	-0.93	-2.42	355	32.26
SLF SUN LIFE FINA	86.74	-0.07	-0.08	894	1.24
SU SUNCOR ENERGY	89.42	1.19	1.35	7212	46.78
SPB SUPERIOR PLUS	6.92	-0.01	-0.14	619	-1.70
TRP TC ENERGY COR	88.76	0.52	0.59	10838	17.44
X TMX GROUP LIMIT	48.71	-0.70	-1.42	828	-6.74
TVE TAMARACK VALL	11.04	0.04	0.36	2550	38.35
TKO TASEKO MINES	8.57	0.39	4.77	738	10.30
TECK-B TECK RESOU	69.67	2.81	4.20	988	6.03
T TELUS CORPORATI	17.88	-0.23	-1.27	6291	-1.16
TVK TERRAVEST IND	140.69	1.84	1.33	62	-14.48
TFII TFI INTERNAT	147.34	3.08	2.14	274	3.86
NWC THE NORTH WES	54.11	-0.07	-0.13	79	10.63
TRI THOMSON REUTE	120.87	0.46	0.38	601	-33.27
TPZ TOPAZ ENERGY	31.05	-0.45	-1.43	875	12.75
TXG TOREX GOLD RE	58.77	1.29	2.24	522	-10.33
TIH TOROMONT IND	193.77	-0.55	-0.28	327	16.69
TD TORONTO-DOMINI	130.32	1.62	1.26	6805	0.74
TOU TOURMALINE OI	68.51	-0.80	-1.15	1550	11.27
TA TRANSALTA CORP	18.06	0.48	2.73	1516	4.03
TCL-A TRANSCONTIN	5.07	0.10	2.01	2791	-77.68
TFPM TRIPLE FLAG	44.86	0.97	2.21	106	-1.64
TSU TRISURA GROUP	43.58	-0.31	-0.71	98	2.01
VET VERMILION ENE	18.24	-0.12	-0.65	1016	59.72
VZLA VIZSLA SILVE	4.48	0.17	3.94	1177	-40.43
WSP WSP GLOBAL IN	221.86	4.36	2.00	741	-10.73
WCN WASTE CONNECT	216.95	-0.33	-0.15	353	-9.87
WDO WESDOME GOLD	23.04	0.97	4.40	670	1.32
WFG WEST FRASER T	88.38	1.40	1.61	130	5.25
WN WESTON GEORGE	96.20	0.35	0.37	247	1.59
WPM WHEATON PRECI	169.53	3.55	2.14	717	5.06
WCP WHITECAP RESO	14.64	0.05	0.34	5934	27.30
WPK WINPAK LTD	46.90	-0.15	-0.32	108	5.13

ETFS
STOCKS $1 OR MORE

	CLOSE	NET CHG	% CHG	VOL 000s	YTD %CHG
CASH GLOBAL X HIG	50.04	0.01	0.02	397	0.12
DLR-U GLOBAL X US	10.19	0.00	0.00	681	0.49
DLR GLOBAL X US D	14.08	0.05	0.36	928	1.15
HHIS HARVEST DIVE	10.47	0.18	1.75	568	-14.46
HND BETAPRO NAT G	4.24	-0.08	-1.85	3899	-43.69
HNU BETAPRO NAT G	12.30	0.25	2.07	1708	-24.54
HOU BETAPRO CRUDE	20.33	-0.54	-2.59	2528	131.81
MSTE HARVEST STRA	3.71	0.10	2.77	607	-13.72
QQD BETAPRO NASDA	7.25	-0.10	-1.36	1189	9.02
QQU BETAPRO NASDA	26.99	0.37	1.39	608	-10.39
SLVD BETAPRO SILV	4.07	-0.31	-7.08	1858	-52.45
SQQQ BETAPRO -3X	14.86	-0.30	-1.98	358	13.09
TQQQ BETAPRO 3X N	22.82	0.42	1.88	654	-16.65
UMAX HAMILTON UTI	13.59	0.07	0.52	366	3.19
VEQT VANGUARD ALL	53.87	0.68	1.28	361	0.30
XCB ISHARES CORE	20.09	0.13	0.65	335	-0.69
XEG ISHARES SP TS	26.88	0.23	0.86	2011	39.85
XEQT ISHARES CORE	40.00	0.55	1.39	570	0.28
XGD ISHARES S&P/T	52.96	1.71	3.34	787	3.60
XIC ISHARES CORE	51.89	0.75	1.47	656	2.65
XIU ISHARES SP TS	47.67	0.60	1.27	8006	1.45
XUT ISHARES SP TS	34.78	0.41	1.19	2727	8.99
ZAG BMO AGGREGATE	13.72	0.11	0.81	534	-0.44
ZEB BMO EQUAL WEI	59.37	0.59	1.00	1583	1.84

COMMODITIES

	PRICE	NET CHG		PRICE	NET CHG		PRICE	NET CHG
GOLD	4552.30	150.30	**LEAN HOGS**	90.90	-0.15	**CORN**	467.25	4.75
SILVER	72.64	3.07	**COFFEE**	316.10	-1.75	**SOYBEAN**	1171.75	16.75
NATURAL GAS	2.95	0.01	**ALUMINUM**	3135.00	-3.00	**CANOLA**	727.20	3.30
CRUDE OIL WTI	90.32	-2.03	**HKFE NICKEL CNH**	115900.0	-830.0	**S&P 500 COMM SRVS**	587.55	1.70
CRUDE OIL BRENT	104.49	4.55	**WHEAT**	597.75	7.75	**FEED WHEAT**	181.90	0.40
HIGH GRADE COPPER	5.56	0.11	**LUMBER PHYSICAL**	597.50	12.00	**BITCOIN FUTURES**	70860.0	1505.0

Gold, Silver (USD/oz), Nat gas (USD/mmbtu), Oil (USD/barrel), Copper (USD/lb), Coffee (USD/lb), Aluminum (USD/tonne), HKFE Nickel (in Renminbi-Yuan/tonne), Canola and Barley (in Cdn dollars/tonne), Feed Wheat (in Br. pounds/tonne)

BONDS
CANADA

TERM	YIELD	CHG
2-YEAR	2.90	-0.08
5-YEAR	3.13	-0.09
10-YEAR	3.49	-0.08
30-YEAR	3.90	-0.06

RATES	RATE	CHG
BOFC OVERNIGHT TARGET	2.25	UNCH
CANADIAN PRIME	4.45	UNCH

Source: wires

U.S.

TERM	YIELD	CHG
2-YEAR TREASURY	3.84	-0.06
5-YEAR TREASURY	3.96	-0.07
10-YEAR TREASURY	4.33	-0.06
30-YEAR TREASURY	4.89	-0.05

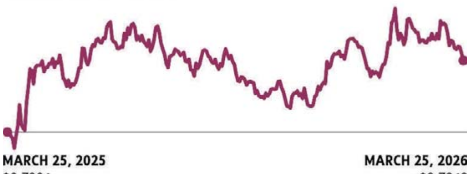
RATES	RATE	CHG
FED TARGET RATE	3.5-3.75	UNCH
U.S. PRIME	6.75	UNCH

Source: wires

CURRENCIES
FOREIGN EXCHANGE CROSS RATES

	CAD	USD	AUD	EUR	GBP	JPY	CHF
CAD	-	0.7242	1.0421	0.6264	0.5419	115.45	0.5735
USD	1.3808	-	1.4390	0.8649	0.7482	159.40	0.7918
AUD	0.9596	0.6949	-	0.6011	0.5200	110.77	0.5503
EUR	1.5963	1.1562	1.6637	-	0.8651	184.28	0.9155
GBP	1.8454	1.3365	1.9231	1.1560	-	213.04	1.0584
JPY	0.0087	0.0063	0.0090	0.0054	0.0047	-	0.0050
CHF	1.7436	1.2629	1.8170	1.0923	0.9449	201.31	-

CANADIAN DOLLAR $0.7240 +0.0237 (3.3781%)
PAST YEAR, AS OF 4:43 P.M.



DATA PROVIDED BY BARCHART, EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

SPORTS

St. Clair aims to be Canada's starting goalkeeper, writes **Paul Attfield** ■ B15

Toronto Tempo will take part in expansion draft on April 3, writes **Rachel Brady** ■ B17

MAPLE LEAFS VS. RANGERS

Cellar dwellers

Maple Leafs forward Benoit-Olivier Groulx, right, poke checks New York Rangers defenceman Matthew Robertson during Wednesday's game at Scotiabank Arena in Toronto. Going into the game, the Rangers and Maple Leafs both sat in last place in their divisions. For the game story, go to ■ GLOBESPORTS.COM

JOHN E. SOKOLOWSKI/IMAGN IMAGES

Mark Shapiro won't say it, but Jays fans should believe this is their year

CATHAL KELLY

OPINION

Toronto Blue Jays president Mark Shapiro possesses a remarkable consistency of tone. Whether he's explaining away a 90-loss season or basking in a near-championship one, he still sounds like a guy trying to sell you term life insurance.

Few executives in Canadian sports history have taken the consistent kicking Shapiro has, and fewer still have come out the other end of it on top (or near enough). You would have to forgive him for rubbing it in just a little. But during a Q and A on Wednesday, there was zero hint of an I-told-you-so. Instead, Shapiro headed in the opposite direction.

In the midst of launching the most exciting season of Toronto baseball in the 21st century, the man in charge came in with one clear agenda – make it much less exciting.

"I think it's a dangerous thing to think you have to build off last year," Shapiro said.

Dangerous for whom? Sports executives?

Elsewhere, "There is no such thing as running it back."

Someone let the Dodgers know that they imagined those two titles in a row.

And yet elsewhere, "We're chasing excellence. Excellence doesn't have a benchmark. Excellence doesn't have an end point."

Who said that again? Was it Moe, or was it Shemp?

Excellence doesn't have a benchmark if you're the president of a modern dance troupe. It does in baseball. They call it the standings.

Maybe it's in Shapiro's nature to talk up the bad things, and talk down the good ones. It's hard to say, since last October was the first really good thing of his tenure. But even so, what a bummer – one we recognize around these parts.

In his approach and aesthetic, Shapiro is about as American as it gets. When he slips into metaphor, it almost always winds back toward football. But 10 years of drinking our water has done the trick. He's caught Canada Disease.

Canada Disease is never looking forward to anything, because it might not work out. It's never saying you expect good things, because what if bad things happen?

Canada Disease is the triumph of small dreams and never getting ahead of the median. It's why we have such a nice country, and also the reason no foreigner dreams of vacationing here.

Shapiro has professional reasons to indulge us in our biases toward mediocrity. He's under contract until 2030. The guy underneath him just got a new deal that takes him to 2031.

If they win this year, you know what's happening by 2030? They're both losing their jobs. Because in that case, it'll be 'Mission Accomplished' and let's start a new storyline because the old one, however well it's gone, is getting boring. Time for new characters.

However, if they can push the ultimate release off for a year or five? That's a more interesting proposition, consistent-employment wise. Less pressure, too.

■ KELLY, B15

An employee fixes merchandise in the Jays Shop during a media tour of Rogers Centre on Wednesday ahead of the Toronto Blue Jays' 50th season.
COLE BURSTON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada coach saw pop culture possibilities via home World Cup

NEIL DAVIDSON

When Jesse Marsch interviewed for the job of Canadian men's soccer coach, he noted a home World Cup opened the door to a myriad of ways to connect with Canadians, including pop culture.

Little did he know his voice would be featured on the Perfect Pitch music project, helmed by Canadian producer Boi-1da (pronounced Boy Wonder), with proceeds going to the Canada Soccer Foundation.

Perhaps the good news is that the 52-year-old American coach doesn't sing. Instead, a sample of his message to the players in a huddle makes the grade.

"I'm already embarrassed. … You have time to take it out," a smiling Marsch told Boi-1da at an invitation-only dinner on Tuesday to promote the project.

"It sounds good," said Boi-1da. "When you hear it, you're going to enjoy it."

Canadian artists contributing music include Nelly Furtado, The Tragically Hip, Alessia Cara, City and Colour, Loud Luxury and Charlotte Cardin.

There are currently 13 tracks, but more could be added.

"We've got every type of vibe," said Boi-1da.

Furtado's contribution, named *Electric Circus*, will be the first song released on April 10, with additional tunes to come each Friday. The full album, titled *What If It All Goes Right?* is scheduled to be released June 5.

Proceeds from the music go to the Canada Soccer Foundation, which supports Canada Soccer in promoting the sport across the country.

Marsch, Boi-1da and the entire Canadian team attended a dinner in Toronto on Tuesday night, with Marsch divulging the origins of the project.

"When I did my interview, I was like, 'With a home World Cup how do we wrap the nation around what we're trying to achieve?' " Marsch explained. "I knew Canada has these incredible artists, actors, singers, musicians whatever.

"[Canada Soccer CEO] Kevin [Blue] has talked about this since Day 1."

The idea has mushroomed since.

The 39-year-old Boi-1da, who has worked with the likes of Drake, Eminem, Rihanna, Justin Bieber and Beyoncé, says the result is special.

"It's beyond incredible. It's better than I even thought it would be," said the producer, who is a soccer dad thanks to his 15-year-old daughter.

"We worked with all Canadian artists. All different genres of music. It's so Canadian … there's a song on there for everybody."

Marsch, meanwhile, tugged heartstrings with a passionate take on Canada.

"I can say this as a fricking American, I'm jealous of what the Canadian mentality is, the kindness that you showed each other, the belief you have in what this country represents.

"And that's what we want to do," he said, throwing in an expletive for effect. "I'm proud to be a part of this.

The Hip provided their entire catalogue to Boi-1da to use as he wishes. He says the remake of *Ahead by a Century*, featuring City and Colour's Dallas Green, is a "tearjerker."

"It's just a beautiful song, man," said Boi-1da, noting Green was one of the last musicians to work with late Hip front man Gord Downie.

■ SOCCER, B15

Canada's Winter Games results draw attention to sport commission report

Leaders optimistic about funding changes after recent Carney comments

DONNA SPENCER

Canada's Jay Dearborn, front, starts for a four man bobsled training session at the 2026 Winter Olympics. AIJAZ RAHI/AP

How athletes competing on the world stage are funded was just one piece of an omnibus report on the state of Canadian sport, but a key one given the country's performance at the recent Olympic Winter Games.

Of the 98 calls to action in the Future of Sport in Canada Commission's final report issued Tuesday, increased core funding for national sport organizations was an urgent one.

"The sport system is facing a funding crisis, which contributes to the safe sport crisis," said Lise Maisonneuve, a former chief justice of the Ontario Court of Justice, who headed the commission.

"We need to increase the investment in sport to match our expectations of what the sport system ought to be. We therefore call on the Government of Canada to urgently increase core funding to national sport organizations and to regularly review and adjust funding levels.

"Our national-level athletes continue to face significant financial pressures. Athletes struggle to meet basic living expenses while balancing their competition and training demands."

The Canadian Olympic and Paralympic committees have asked on behalf of national sport organizations in two successive federal budgets for an increase in core funding, which they say has been stagnant since 2005 and hasn't kept up with inflation.

The most recent ask was for a $144-million increase in core funding, which is annual money NSOs count on to fund operations, athletes, coaches and support staff.

Canada had a banner 2024 Summer Games in Paris. Nine gold medals and 27 medals in total were both records for a non-boycotted Summer Olympics. Ten Paralympic gold and 29 medals beat the 2021 totals in Tokyo by a large margin.

But there was a precipitous drop in the Milan Cortina Winter Games. Canada fell out of the top five countries in total medals for the first time since 1994 with 21 Olympic medals, including five gold.

Both gold and total medals fell for Canada's Paralympic team from 10 and 25 in Beijing in 2022 to three and 15 in Italy.

That's without Russia, a winter sport powerhouse, competing in Italy because of sanctions from its invasion of Ukraine.

Norway dominated the Olympic Games with 41 medals, including 18 gold. China topped the Paralympic table with 44 gold, including 15 gold.

Momentum from the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver and Whistler, B.C., where the host team won 14 Olympic and 10 Paralympic gold medals, has faded.

Moguls skier Philippe Marquis entered high-performance sport just before 2010 and was an Olympian by 2014.

He now coaches the next generation of moguls skiers and says the difference between the treatment of athletes he coaches now and how he was nurtured is "shocking."

"It is very different and I was lucky in the sense that I kind of started high-performance sport just before Vancouver 2010," Marquis said. "There was this wave of momentum around Vancouver and hosting Games and the funding injected in sport at that time.

"Post-2010 we kind of rode that tailwind for a couple quads. Right now … we're just running out of breath from that kind of 2010 momentum."

Canada's performance at the Winter Games earlier this year "is maybe the first domino to fall," Marquis said.

Athletes now pay out of pocket for training camps, therapists, sports psychologists and nutritionists, which were costs Marquis didn't face.

"Athletes quit prematurely the sport system," said the 36-year-old from Quebec City.

"Athletes don't necessarily have the financial resources to keep going and they find themselves at a crossroads where it's not the talent that is the limiting factor, but it's more, 'Can I still pay my bills? Do I need to go back to school? It's probably time to go find work.' "

Prime Minister Mark Carney indicated more money may be forthcoming in comments he made March 14 to Canadian athletes competing in ski events in Norway.

"One of our takeaways is we need to revamp … our athlete funding," Carney said in a video posted on CPAC's YouTube channel. "We're going to do it very deliberately over the next six months.

"Playground to podium. We'll do it right. We're going to be more like Norway in that regard."

When asked about the funding demand in the commission's report, secretary of sport Adam van Koeverden replied Tuesday in Ottawa that "as the Prime Minister said in Holmenkollen and Oslo the other day, our government is focused on revamping the Canadian sport system from playground to podium.

"We want to ensure that that increases funding at all levels of government. I strongly believe that sport isn't exclusively a federal jurisdiction," he said.

"One of the main reasons I put my name on a ballot eight years ago was to ensure that we continue to use sport as a strong-nation building activity which certainly requires more funding at the federal level, provincial territorial level, as well at the municipal levels right across our country."

Canadian Olympic Committee chief executive officer David Shoemaker felt encouraged by Carney's comments in Norway.

"I interpreted it to mean that we are going to be absolutely excellent on the world stage and support our Canadian athletes the way they deserve to be supported in the way that Norway does its athletes, but that we are also going to make sure that the investments are in place that we can broaden the number of participants in organized sport throughout the country," he said. "That's what Norway does so well."

His Canadian Paralympic Committee counterpart, Karen O'Neill, believes the convergence of the Winter Games, the commission's report and Carney's comments point to significant change.

"We're really hoping that the table's been laid to make some announcements and follow up and reaffirm some substantive investment that will certainly transform the leadership, the investment, and quite honestly, the horizon for sport in Canada, because it is time," O'Neill said.

"It is so long overdue."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION	GP	W	L	OT	GF	GA	Pt
Buffalo	71	44	20	7	251	207	95
Tampa Bay	70	44	21	5	257	195	93
Montreal	70	39	21	10	249	230	88
Boston	71	39	24	8	236	221	86
Ottawa	71	38	24	9	239	216	85
Detroit	71	38	25	8	207	211	84
Florida	70	35	32	3	211	233	73
Toronto	72	30	29	13	225	252	73
METROPOLITAN DIVISION							
Carolina	71	45	20	6	252	211	96
Columbus	71	38	22	11	231	217	87
Pittsburgh	71	35	20	16	243	225	86
N.Y. Islanders	72	40	27	5	209	206	85
Philadelphia	70	34	24	12	204	214	80
Washington	72	35	28	9	220	211	79
New Jersey	70	36	32	2	193	213	74
N.Y. Rangers	71	28	34	9	199	226	65

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION	GP	W	L	OT	GF	GA	Pt
x-Colorado	70	47	13	10	263	177	104
x-Dallas	71	43	17	11	244	196	97
Minnesota	72	40	20	12	236	208	92
Utah	72	37	29	6	225	203	80
Nashville	71	34	28	9	215	235	77
Winnipeg	71	30	29	12	203	220	72
St. Louis	70	29	30	11	184	225	69
Chicago	71	27	31	13	187	228	67
PACIFIC DIVISION							
Anaheim	71	40	27	4	240	245	84
Edmonton	72	35	28	9	250	246	79
Vegas	72	32	26	14	225	225	78
Los Angeles	71	28	25	18	189	216	74
Seattle	70	31	29	10	200	218	72
San Jose	69	32	31	6	211	249	70
Calgary	71	30	34	7	180	219	67
Vancouver	70	21	41	8	182	262	50

Wednesday
Boston at Buffalo
N.Y. Rangers at Toronto

Tuesday
Chicago 4, N.Y. Islanders 3
Columbus 3, Philadelphia 2
Ottawa 3, Detroit 2
Montreal 5, Carolina 2
Florida 5, Seattle 4, SO
Toronto 4, Boston 2
Colorado 6, Pittsburgh 2
Tampa Bay 6, Minnesota 3
Winnipeg 4, Vegas 1
New Jersey 6, Dallas 4
Nashville 6, San Jose 3
St. Louis 3, Washington 0
Calgary 3, Los Angeles 2, SO
Edmonton 5, Utah 2
Anaheim 5, Vancouver 3

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Chicago at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Columbus at Montreal, 7 p.m.
Dallas at N.Y. Islanders, 7 p.m.
Minnesota at Florida, 7 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Ottawa, 7 p.m.
Seattle at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m.
Colorado at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
New Jersey at Nashville, 8 p.m.
San Jose at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Anaheim at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Washington at Utah, 9 p.m.
Edmonton at Vegas, 9:30 p.m.
Los Angeles at Vancouver, 10 p.m.

AHL

Wednesday
Bridgeport 3 Charlotte 2
Toronto 4 Manitoba 1
Providence 2 Springfield 1
Utica at Laval
Chicago at Iowa
Calgary at Coachella Valley
Ontario at Henderson
Texas at San Jose

Tuesday
Milwaukee 5 Grand Rapids 4

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Grand Rapids at Cleveland, 7 p.m.

OHL PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE QUARTERFINALS

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Niagara at Barrie, 7 p.m.
North Bay at Peterborough, 7 p.m.
Guelph at Windsor, 7 p.m.
Owen Sound at Flint, 7 p.m.

Friday
Sudbury at Brantford, 7 p.m.
Kingston at Ottawa, 7 p.m.
North Bay at Peterborough, 7:05 p.m.
Saginaw at Kitchener, 7 p.m.
Sault Ste. Marie at London, 7 p.m.

WHL PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE QUARTERFINALS

Friday
All Times Eastern
Red Deer at Prince Albert, 9 p m.
Regina at Medicine Hat, 9 p.m.
Saskatoon at Edmonton, 9 p.m.
Brandon at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Portland at Everett, 10:05 p.m.
Seattle at Penticton, 10:05 p.m.
Spokane at Prince George, 10 p.m.

PWHL

	GP	W	OW	OL	L	GF	GA	Pt
Boston	22	11	5	2	4	51	34	45
Montreal	22	11	4	2	5	56	32	43
Minnesota	22	11	3	3	5	67	45	42
Toronto	22	8	1	5	8	43	55	31
Ottawa	22	5	7	1	9	53	61	30
New York	21	8	0	3	10	49	57	27
Vancouver	22	6	1	4	11	41	53	24
Seattle	21	5	1	2	13	41	64	19

Wednesday
Montreal 3 Minnesota 0
New York vs. Seattle (at Rosemont, Ill.)

Tuesday
Boston 2 Vancouver 0

Thursday
No Games Scheduled

Friday
All Times Eastern
Boston at Toronto, 7 p.m.

QMJHL PLAYOFFS

CONFERENCE QUARTERFINALS

Thursday
All Times Eastern
Cape Breton at Newfoundland, 5:30 p.m.

Friday
Saint John at Moncton, 6 p.m.
Halifax at Chicoutimi, 7 p.m.
Quebec at Charlottetown, 6 p.m.
Gatineau at Rouyn-Noranda, 7 p.m.
Victoriaville at Blainville-Boisbriand, 7 p.m.
Val-d'Or at Drummondville, 7 p.m.
Sherbrooke at Shawinigan, 7 p.m.

MLB SPRING TRAINING

Tuesday
Atlanta 3, Tampa Bay 2
Minnesota 15, Boston 6
Texas 4, Kansas City 1
N.Y. Yankees 8, Chicago Cubs 3
Detroit 11, Colorado 8
Cleveland 10, Arizona 5
Milwaukee 4, Cincinnati 1
L.A. Angels 3, L.A. Dodgers 0
Houston 6, Sugar Land 5
San Francisco 8, de Monterrey 2

REGULAR SEASON

Wednesday
N.Y. Yankees vs. San Francisco

Thursday
All Times Eastern
AMERICAN LEAGUE
Minnesota at Baltimore, 3:05 p.m.
L.A. Angels at Houston, 4:10 p.m.
Cleveland at Seattle, 10:10 p.m.

INTERLEAGUE
Chicago White Sox at Milwaukee, 2:10 p.m.
Boston at Cincinnati, 4:10 p.m.
Detroit at San Diego, 4:10 p.m.
Tampa Bay at St. Louis, 4:15 p.m.
Texas at Philadelphia, 4:15 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE
Pittsburgh at N.Y. Mets, 1:15 p.m.
Washington at Chicago Cubs, 2:20 p.m.
Arizona at L.A. Dodgers, 8:30 p.m.

UEFA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

QUARTERFINALS

FIRST LEG
Wednesday
Manchester United 2 Bayern Munich 3
Real Madrid 2 Barcelona 6

WOMEN'S EUROPA CUP

SEMIFINALS

FIRST LEG
Wednesday
Eintracht Frankfurt 0 BK Häcken 3
Sparta Prague 2 Hammarby IF 3

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Detroit	52	19	.732	—
Boston	47	24	.662	5
New York	48	25	.658	5
Cleveland	45	27	.625	7½
Toronto	40	31	.563	12
Atlanta	40	32	.556	12½
Philadelphia	39	33	.542	13½
Orlando	38	34	.528	14½
Charlotte	38	34	.528	14½
Miami	38	34	.528	14½
Milwaukee	29	42	.408	23
Chicago	29	42	.408	23
Brooklyn	17	55	.236	35½
Washington	16	55	.225	36
Indiana	16	56	.222	36½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Oklahoma City	57	15	.792	—
San Antonio	54	18	.750	3
L.A. Lakers	46	26	.639	11
Denver	45	28	.616	12½
Minnesota	44	28	.611	13
Houston	43	28	.606	13½
Phoenix	40	33	.548	17½
L.A. Clippers	36	36	.500	21
Portland	36	37	.493	21½
Golden State	34	38	.472	23
New Orleans	25	48	.342	32½
Memphis	24	47	.338	32½
Dallas	23	49	.319	34
Utah	21	51	.292	36
Sacramento	19	54	.260	38½

x-clinched playoff berth; **y**-clinched division

Wednesday
Atlanta at Detroit
Chicago at Philadelphia
L.A. Lakers at Indiana
Miami at Cleveland
Oklahoma City at Boston
San Antonio at Memphis
Washington at Utah
Houston at Minnesota
Brooklyn at Golden State
Dallas at Denver
Milwaukee at Portland
Toronto at L.A. Clippers

Tuesday
Charlotte 134, Sacramento 90
New York 121, New Orleans 116
Cleveland 136, Orlando 131
Denver 125, Phoenix 123

Thursday
All Times Eastern
New Orleans at Detroit, 7 p.m.
New York at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Sacramento at Orlando, 7 p.m.

NBA INDIVIDUAL LEADERS
Not including Wednesday's games

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Doncic, LAL	60	647	473	2005	33.4
G-Alexander, OKC	60	655	477	1889	31.5
Edwards, MIN	58	585	340	1710	29.5
Maxey, PHI	61	616	333	1767	29.0
Brown, BOS	64	662	377	1825	28.5
Leonard, LAC	56	550	338	1587	28.3
Mitchell, CLE	63	616	338	1780	28.3
Jokic, DEN	57	568	353	1591	27.9
Brunson, NY	67	622	330	1756	26.2
Durant, HOU	68	626	350	1763	25.9

ATP/WTA WORLD TOUR

MIAMI OPEN

Wednesday
At Miami Gardens
Purse: $9,415,725
Surface: Hardcourt outdoor
MEN'S
SINGLES — QUARTERFINALS
Jiri Lehecka (21), Czechia, def. Martin Landaluce, Spain, 7-6 (1), 7-5.

DOUBLES — ROUND OF 16
Edouard Roger-Vasselin, France, and Hugo Nys (8), Monaco, def. Kevin Krawietz, Germany, and Neil Oberleitner, Austria, 6-2, 6-4.
Mate Pavic, Croatia, and Marcelo Arevalo (5), El Salvador, def. Fabien Reboul and Sadio Doumbia, France, 6-4, 6-4.
Nikola Mektic, Croatia, and Austin Krajicek, United States, def. Rafael Matos and Orlando Luz, Brazil, 7-5, 6-4.
John-Patrick Smith, Australia, and Sander Arends, Netherlands, def. Lloyd Glasspool and Julian Cash (2), Britain, 6-7 (3), 6-2, 10-4.

WOMEN'S
SINGLES — QUARTERFINALS
Elena Rybakina (3), Kazakhstan, def. Jessica Pegula (5), United States, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.
Aryna Sabalenka (1), Belarus, def. Hailey Baptiste, United States, 6-4, 6-4.

DOUBLES — QUARTERFINALS
Sara Errani and Jasmine Paolini (1), Italy, def. Asia Muhammad, United States, and Erin Routliffe (6), New Zealand, 6-3, 6-1.
Zhang Shuai, China, and Elise Mertens (4), Belgium, def. Jessica Pegula, United States, and Storm Hunter, Australia, 2-6, 6-3, 14-12.

WTA TOUR

DUBROVNIK OPEN

Wednesday
At Dubrovnik, Croatia
Purse: $115,000
Surface: Red clay
WOMEN'S
SINGLES — ROUND OF 16
Maiar Sherif Ahmed Abdelaziz (3), Egypt, def. Mia Ristic, Serbia, 6-4, 6-3.
Leyre Romero Gormaz, Spain, def. Suzan Lamens (6), Netherlands, 6-3, 7-5.
Tamara Zidansek, Slovenia, def. Sara Sorribes Tormo, Spain, 6-7 (6), 6-2, 6-1.
Veronika Erjavec (2), Slovenia, def. Kaitlin Quevedo, Spain, 6-2, 6-2.

DOUBLES — QUARTERFINALS
Anastasia Detiuc and Dominika Salkova, Czechia, def. Magali Kempen, Belgium, and Elena Pridankina (2), Russia, 0-6, 6-3, 10-7.
Ana Konjuh and Lucija Ciric-Bagaric, Croatia, def. Peangtarn Plipuech, Thailand, and Momoko Kobori, Japan, 2-6, 6-4, 10-7.

NCAA BASKETBALL

MEN'S TOURNAMENT

REGIONAL SEMIFINALS
Thursday
All Times Eastern
Purdue vs. Texas, 7:10 p.m.
Nebraska vs. Iowa, 7:30 p.m.
Arizona vs. Arkansas, 9:45 p.m.
Houston vs. Illinois, 10:05 p.m.

WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT

REGIONAL SEMIFINALS
Friday
UCLA vs. Minnesota, 7:30 p.m.
LSU vs. Duke, 10 p.m.
Notre Dame vs. Vanderbilt, 2:30 p.m.
North Carolina vs. Connecticut, 5 p.m.

Saturday
Michigan vs. Louisville, 12:30 p.m.
Texas vs. Kentucky, 3 p.m.
Oklahoma vs. South Carolina, 5 p.m.
TCU vs. Virginia, 7:30 p.m.

NLL

WEEK 18

Friday
All Times Eastern
Halifax at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.

TELEVISION

THURSDAY (ALL TIMES EASTERN)

GOLF
DP World Tour, Golf Channel, 3:30 p.m.
PGA Korn Ferry, Golf Channel, 11 a.m.
LPGA Tour, Golf Channel, 7 p.m.

BASKETBALL
NBA G-League: Wisconsin vs. Raptors, NBA TV Canada, 11 a.m.
NCAA: Texas vs. Purdue, CBS, TSN 1, 4, 7 p.m.
NBA: N.Y. Knicks vs. Charlotte, NBA TV Canada, 7 p.m.

BASEBALL
MLB: Pittsburgh vs. N.Y. Mets, TSN 4, NBC, 1 p.m.
MLB: Cincinnati vs. Milwaukee, SN Ontario, East, West, Pacific, 2 p.m.
MLB: Boston vs. Cincinnati, SN 1, 4 p.m.
MLB: L.A. Angles vs. Houston, SN West, 5 p.m.
MLB: Arizona vs. L.A. Dodgers, NBC, 8 p.m.

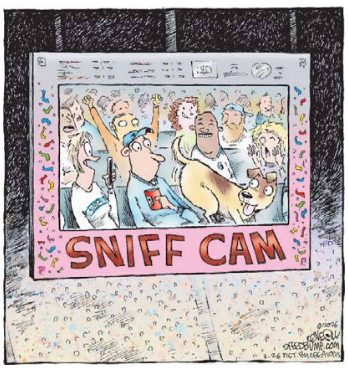
HOCKEY
NHL: Seattle vs. Tampa Bay, SN Ontario, East, 7 p.m.
NHL: Minnesota vs. Florida, SN Pacific, 7 p.m.
NHL: Columbus vs. Montreal, TSN 2, 7 p.m.
NHL: Colorado vs. Winnipeg, TSN 3, 8 p.m.
NHL: Edmonton vs. Vegas, SN 1, East, 9:30 p.m., SN Ontario, 10 p.m.
NHL: Anaheim vs. Calgary, SN West, 9 p.m.
NHL: Los Angeles vs. Vancouver, SN Pacific, 10 p.m.

RESULTS AS OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 9:35 P.M.

CORNERED

OFF THE MARK

SPEED BUMP



BIZARRO

Canadian ’keeper St. Clair banks on the Messi effect helping him at World Cup

Reigning MLS goalkeeper of the year won’t be thrown by the spotlight when the world gathers in June

PAUL ATTFIELD

Dayne St. Clair, who joined Inter Miami CF in the off-season, is looking to secure the starting goalkeeper job for Canada’s national team at this summer’s World Cup. He will start for Canada in a friendly against Iceland on Saturday at BMO Field in Toronto. SCOTT TAETSCH/GETTY IMAGES

There are myriad reasons why someone would want to play goalkeeper for Inter Miami right now.

The pitch-level view to watch arguably history’s greatest soccer player go about his business on a daily basis is one perk, to say nothing of the year-round sunshine and lack of state income tax.

But for Dayne St. Clair, currently embroiled in a two-horse race with Max Crépeau to start in goal for the Canadian men’s national team at this summer’s World Cup, there is an added bonus to playing alongside Lionel Messi in Major League Soccer.

“Every game I play now is the most-watched game in the MLS, you know what I mean, whether it’s in the stands or whether it’s on TV,” St. Clair said Wednesday. “So that amount of eyes and pressure is something that I knew that going into it would help me prepare for something that’s like the World Cup, where everyone’s watching.”

Those onlookers have seen the 28-year-old Pickering, Ont., native have something of a torrid start to his playing career in South Florida. After conceding three goals against Los Angeles Football Club in his first start for Miami – a 3-0 loss in the season opener – the reigning MLS goalkeeper of the year has settled down somewhat, giving up six goals in the five starts since.

However, he was unable to prevent the defending MLS Cup champions from crashing out of the CONCACAF Champions Cup on away goals to Nashville SC earlier this month, as Miami’s high-powered attack mustered just one goal over 180 minutes.

St. Clair says that while it’s easy to judge a goalkeeper based on the goals he lets it, those statistics don’t always tell the full story.

“No, not necessarily,” he said. “I think as a goalkeeper, of course, the easiest thing is to judge by goals, but I think that doesn’t always tell the story of the game. … There’s so much more that goes into being a goalkeeper than just the keeping the ball out of the net.”

In contrast to his club form, his international résumé is almost unblemished of late. St. Clair has conceded just two goals in his last seven starts for the national team, spanning 630 minutes. He will get a chance to build on that impressive run on Saturday, when he gets the start against Iceland at Toronto’s BMO Field.

Crépeau, who has been hampered this training camp by a nagging injury, is currently slated to start against Tunisia on Tuesday.

The national-team rivalry between the two goalkeepers has turned into an intrastate rivalry domestically too, with Crépeau joining Orlando City for the 2026 season. St. Clair says the competition between the pair can be overblown at times, particularly given that the decision of who starts this June is out of their hands.

“I think the media has probably blown it up as this huge competition of me versus him, or him versus me, but internally we push each other and we support each other, and we know at the end of day we’re both putting our best foot forward,” he said. “But at the end of the day [head coach] Jesse [Marsch] is going to be the one that makes the decision.”

Although St. Clair and Crépeau’s teammates have a vested interest in who ends up winning the starting job, Liam Millar, for one, says that the team will do just fine whatever the outcome.

“It doesn’t make a difference for me,” said the Hull City midfielder. “I think both the goalkeepers – all the goalkeepers – that are coming here, are more than capable of playing at this level. So I have full trust in Max, full trust in Dayne, also in Owen [Goodman] as well. Owen’s a good young goalkeeper as well coming up.”

While much of Canada frets over the goalkeeper position, arguably above any other area of the pitch, many would like Marsch to have anointed his No. 1 by now. But unfortunately that isn’t the reality of the situation, and St. Clair simply takes it in stride.

“I’m not surprised,” he said. “Of course, I’d love him to pick me today or yesterday or tomorrow, but at the same time, I know my job doesn’t change, because even if he picks me tomorrow, that doesn’t guarantee me for June 12 or the rest of World Cup.”

But with a few more months of playing alongside Messi – and often against him in training – St. Clair knows he can only benefit from that situation.

“I think going there was going to be something that was going to be able to challenge me, obviously, being on the defensive side of the ball,” he said. “But it’s been definitely nice to be able to play with the best player in the world.”

Blue Jays aim to clear World Series hurdle in 2026

GREGORY STRONG

The Toronto Blue Jays will kick off the 2026 regular season on Friday against the visiting Athletics. Here’s a look at some key talking points ahead of the new campaign.

CONTRACT EXTENSIONS

Blue Jays president Mark Shapiro, general manager Ross Atkins and skipper John Schneider were all rewarded with contract extensions after helping the team reach the World Series last year.

Now they hope to get over the final hurdle in 2026.

The Blue Jays won the East Division title last season and defeated the New York Yankees and Seattle Mariners in the playoffs before falling to the Los Angeles Dodgers in the Fall Classic.

Toronto had a one-run lead in the ninth inning of Game 7 but ended up dropping a 5-4 decision in 11 innings.

DEPTH TESTED

A deep pool of starting pitchers has already paid off for the Blue Jays after several injuries in recent weeks.

Right-handers José Berríos (elbow), Trey Yesavage (shoulder) and Shane Bieber (forearm) aren’t ready for the start of the season.

Kevin Gausman will get the opening day start. He’ll be followed by Dylan Cease and Eric Lauer over the weekend.

Cody Ponce and Max Scherzer are tabbed to start next week against the Colorado Rockies.

BYE BYE, BO

The Blue Jays will have a new-look infield this year after the departure of Bo Bichette to free agency.

Face of the franchise Vladimir Guerrero Jr. returns as an anchor at first base while defensive whiz Andrés Giménez moves to shortstop from second base.

Ernie Clement is tabbed to be the regular second baseman, and Kazuma Okamoto, who signed in the off-season after an impressive run in Japan, will play third base.

SPRING SENSATION

Centrefielder Daulton Varsho enters a contract year with some momentum after a strong spring.

He hit .380 and had a 1.246 OPS over 19 preseason games with five homers and 14 RBIs.

Considered one of the finest defensive outfielders in the game, Varsho also showed some pop at the plate last year with 20 homers and 55 RBIs over 71 games.

The 29-year-old was limited due to injuries, but if he can stay healthy this season, he could see regular time in the top half of the batting order and help replace some of the offence lost after Bichette’s departure.

BULLPEN ARMS

Jeff Hoffman will serve as closer despite an uneven campaign in 2025.

The Blue Jays signed submariner Tyler Rogers to a three-year deal in the off-season. His unique arm angle should play nicely in conjunction with hard-throwing high-leverage options like Hoffman and Louis Varland.

Injured reliever Yimi Garcia (elbow) is also expected to contribute in a setup role when he returns to the lineup.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kelly: Blue Jays fans should bask in the possibility of the team winning it all

FROM B13

Let’s just take a couple of years to find our footing before we go doing anything too crazy, like winning a whole bunch of important games and setting unrealistic targets going into next year.

Near the end of an hour, Shapiro did say he hoped the team would be “championship calibre,” but was clear that didn’t mean winning an actual championship. He seemed to suggest that mid-October was a good date range to target, rather than early November.

He’s not the only one with this problem. See also every single person in charge of a Canadian sports franchise, ever.

For once, can we not do this to ourselves?

Is it wise to think that the Jays can win again? Not if you’ve got a serious amount of money on it, no. But from a purely rooting perspective, why not? What other point is there to being a fan?

You thought they had a chance three years ago, when they were total crap. Why not do yourself the same favour now?

Truly believing that your team can win it all when that is a valid proposition is one of the greatest, and rarest, inheritances of sport. How many times in your life have you had it? Especially if you’re a hockey fan as well as a baseball fan? Five, 10? Just because it doesn’t work out doesn’t mean it wasn’t fun to try.

Most of your life, this has been the time of year where you celebrate the imminence of spring and admit that baseball is probably going to suck. You’re making a deal with yourself to enjoy the thing of itself, its out-of-time rhythm and reassuring sameness, rather than any particular result. If they lose, you are okay with that. Well, not really, but you’ll save your rage and complaining for August. That’s when you’ll need your strength.

This year, finally, the Jays are in it for real. Not ‘might get out of the AL East if the Yankees and Red Sox buses T-bone each other after a game,’ but genuinely in with a shot to win. They almost did it last year, and then they got better. Theoretically.

Do yourself the favour of taking a moment to bask in that possibility. Is it likely? Maybe not. Is it possible? Very. For now, let’s say immensely.

The guy who has to answer for it if it goes the other way doesn’t want you going too far down that road. Fair enough. This is work for him, not play.

For you, it’s play. Whether you’re right about it turning out doesn’t matter in the least. What matters is that you allow yourself the capacity for maximum joy in your pastimes. The greater the expectation, the greater the eventual payoff. That’s the calculus that keeps people coming back.

So are the Jays going to win it all? Of course they are. Excellence has a benchmark. This is it. For the purposes of this moment right now, it’s as good as guaranteed.

Soccer: National team players offered up musical suggestions

FROM B13

Boi-1da is also set to record the Canadian players for a bespoke goal celebration that will play every time they score at the tournament.

The Canadian men have provided suggestions with captain Alphonso Davies and forward Promise David, both currently injured, keen music buffs.

“They would both be rapping if they were here right now,” said fullback Richie Laryea.

Boi-1da and Davies took in a Drake show together in Germany.

Marsch enjoys his music. He shared an eclectic playlist last month on social media that included U2, Eminem, DMX, The Cure, Guns N’ Roses, Rick Springfield, Bob Marley, Pitbull and Avicii.

“Let’s rock baby,” he wrote.

While attending Princeton University, Canadian friends helped turn Marsch on to the likes of Crash Test Dummies and The Tragically Hip.

Marsch, who is currently splitting time between a new condo in Mexico and his existing home in Pisa, Italy, expects to be in Europe for a good chunk of time ahead of the World Cup to keep an eye on his players.

The 29th-ranked Canadian men host No. 74 Iceland on Saturday and No. 47 Tunisia on Tuesday in a pair of BMO Field friendlies.

Marsch’s squad plays its final World Cup warm-ups against No. 52 Uzbekistan on June 1 in Edmonton and against No. 59 Ireland on June 5 in Montreal.

The Canadians open World Cup play June 12 in Toronto against a yet-to-be determined European side.

Boi-1da, who has taken in three Canadian training sessions, has high hopes for Marsch’s team.

“I’m really excited about these guys and I’m confident they’re going to do some damage in the [World] Cup.” he said.

“These guys are all dogs in their own right,” he added. “It’s about belief and them just believing in themselves that they can do it. … I know they’re going to make us proud.”

Grenier calms nerves to win giant slalom

Canadian picks up her third career World Cup victory in final event of 2026 season

DANIEL RAINBIRD

Valérie Grenier was so anxious, her arm trembled just from reaching for her water bottle.

The Canadian alpine skier was leading after the first giant slalom run at the Lillehammer World Cup Finals in Hafjell, Norway, and couldn't hide her nerves as she waited for the decisive second race down the mountain.

"I was shaking, a little jittery, and felt weird. I hadn't felt like that before," Grenier said. "Hoping no one noticed and trying to pretend like it wasn't happening.

"I wanted it so badly because it would just be a perfect moment, and I knew that if I messed up, it could be gone just like that."

A little positive self-talk and deep breaths helped Grenier overcome those butterflies and close the alpine season with a victory, posting a combined time of two minutes 16.79 seconds to stand atop the podium in the final race of the World Cup calendar Wednesday.

Canada's Valérie Grenier competes in the World Cup Finals in Hafjell, Norway, on Wednesday. Grenier delivered the third-fastest second run to secure the win by 0.43 seconds. ALEXIS BOICHARD/AGENCE ZOOM/GETTY IMAGES

The 29-year-old from St-Isidore, Ont., who started 15th, led after the opening run with a time of 1:07.90 – just 0.02 seconds ahead of Sweden's Sara Hector – and held her edge in the second. She delivered the third-fastest second run to secure the win by 0.43 seconds.

"I was pretty nervous, but then to see that I was actually able to hold on to the lead, it was the best feeling ever," she said in a phone interview from Norway. "I knew that if I just gave it my all, I had a lot to gain, but nothing to lose."

Norway's Mina Fuerst Holtmann finished second, while Austria's Julia Scheib was third. Britt Richardson, of Canmore, Alta., placed 20th.

It was Grenier's third career World Cup victory, with her first two coming at Kranjska Gora, Slovenia, in January, 2023, and 2024.

The win follows a pair of disappointing results for Grenier, who placed 13th in the giant slalom at last month's Milan Cortina Olympics and did not finish her first run in Are, Sweden, on March 14.

"Recently, my confidence hasn't been as high as I would like it to be, so I think today I felt good but not that good," Grenier said. "But once again, at the same time, I knew I had nothing to lose, so I could really kind of go all out and send it."

Grenier ended the season ranked seventh in the World Cup giant slalom standings and 22nd overall with 384 points, best among Canadians.

She celebrated at the finish with Canadian teammates Richardson and Laurence St-Germain before the whole team raised a glass at a hillside bar. Making the moment even more special, it was Grenier's final race with her technician of three years, Nicolò Carpentieri.

Grenier will return to Tremblant for a brief break before getting back on skis in May in France. She's already looking forward to next season, especially after finishing on top.

"Ending on a high note like that is amazing," she said. "It's perfect because it makes me hungry already for next season, and it shows me that I'm in a good spot."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

'The game is so fast': Players, coaches divided on use of iPads on NHL benches

JOSHUA CLIPPERTON TORONTO

Macklin Celebrini is often looking down on the bench.

The San Jose Sharks star centre isn't in pain or checking his laces. He's usually going over what just transpired – on an iPad.

"If a play didn't work out how I wanted," Celebrini explained. "Or if one of my teammates was talking to me about something and I didn't see it, I think it's good just to be able to go back and look."

Technology and sports have countless intersections. One trend in the NHL over the better part of the last decade has been the use of digital tablets in-game that can provide coaches and players with near-instant replays.

Montreal Canadiens captain Nick Suzuki is a big fan.

"Love the iPad," he said. "We have a rule on our team where you only get to watch it during TV timeouts. … You don't want to be on the iPad when you're trying to make a change."

That's where the bench balancing act comes into play.

"Sometimes we feel as coaches we're working at the Apple Store when the guys are asking for iPads, but I get it, in a sense," Sharks bench boss Ryan Warsofsky said. "I don't really appreciate it when they look to see how much they missed the net by."

Seattle Kraken captain Jordan Eberle said there's no such thing as too much information, but tablets can become a distraction.

"The game is so fast, mistakes are going to be made," he said. "If you're looking on the iPad to see the mistake, it should already be forgotten and move on to the next shift."

New Jersey Devils head coach Sheldon Keefe said while there are plenty of benefits when it comes to parsing technique or structure, the tech can be overused.

"A goalie that made a big save or you flubbed on a pass – don't waste your time on that," he said. "Let's stay in the moment and then move quickly on."

Keefe, however, added the league's younger generation grew up with screens and expects immediate intel from the video coaches splicing tape.

"They've come up in an era where they're used to having things at their fingertips," he said. "They want the information."

San Jose Sharks centre Macklin Celebrini admits he relies heavily on the in-game use of a tablet. GODOFREDO A. VÁSQUEZ/AP

Minnesota Wild forward Matt Boldy will only really look at the iPad, which officials also use at the timekeeper's bench on coach's challenge and other replays, after specific sequences.

"I'm not a huge believer in nitpicking every shift and saying, 'Why didn't you pass it to me right here?' " he said. "I'm sure they have plenty of clips of me not passing to them, too."

Celebrini's screen time last season as a rookie got some attention.

"It was pretty public that I used the iPads quite a bit," he said. "I think I got caught [on camera] every time I used it, so it looked like I was on it more than I was."

Anaheim Ducks head coach Joel Quenneville, who played more than 800 NHL games and owns over 1,000 victories behind the bench, has had a front-row seat to plenty of change in hockey.

"Not a fan [of iPads]," said the three-time Stanley Cup winner, who mostly searches out replays for calls by on-ice officials. "I'm not gonna discourage it, but I don't promote it."

Devils centre Jack Hughes said screen use can negatively impact players in the moment.

"You miss a big chance, and you're upset about it," he said. "You go back and look at look at it, but then you just get more frustrated. Every guy's different, but think it's very useful for some parts of the game."

"Anything's good in moderation, right?" New York Rangers winger Will Cuylle added. "But you don't want to be like a little kid out there on his iPad."

Toronto Maple Leafs head coach Craig Berube, another former NHLer from a different era, noted players are sometimes only interested in tablet-based replays when it makes them look good.

"I love the iPads," he said in a muted, sarcastic tone. "They want the iPads after a shift when they have a scoring opportunity, but they don't want the iPad when they screwed up defensively.

"That's when the assistant coach goes down and shows them."

TIME CRUNCH

The NHL's return to the Olympics offered fans a riveting mid-season tournament. That 2½-week break has also left coaches with even less time for on-ice preparations throughout 2025-26 due to a compressed schedule that offers little wiggle room.

"Our morning skate is, a lot of times, our practice," Quenneville said. "We just go 15, 20 minutes."

He added that making sure players are ready for important games down the stretch is paramount.

"The other team's in the same boat," Quenneville said. "Rest, I think, is probably not a bad idea. … We've been trying to be aware of that."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Scheifele sets example in Jets' fight to make playoffs

JEFF HAMILTON WINNIPEG

Mark Scheifele is the Winnipeg Jets' leading scorer, known for his elite offensive production rather than his toughness.

But when Vegas Golden Knights forward Brett Howden took a run at linemate Kyle Connor late in the second period of Tuesday's 4-1 victory at Canada Life Centre, Scheifele didn't hesitate to respond.

The veteran centre dropped the gloves for his first fight of the season, and just the 10th of his NHL career. Scheifele also registered a pair of assists and sealed the two points against Vegas with a late empty-net goal, completing the fourth Gordie Howe hat trick of his career.

"Just the thing to do. That is my boy," Scheifele said of sticking up for Connor. "It is a brotherhood in here and especially K.C., like I said, that is my boy and I don't like when he gets hit, plain and simple."

The Jets are fighting for their playoff lives, and seeing their top offensive weapon put his body on the line provided a notable lift for a team that also snapped a five-game home losing streak to Vegas.

"Obviously, you don't want a guy like Scheif fighting very often," Jets forward Cole Perfetti said. "He's obviously not afraid to jump in and that shows a lot about him and our team and our culture."

> I'm a terrible fighter. I think I did catch him with a left, so I don't think anyone was expecting me to throw a left tonight.
>
> **MARK SCHEIFELE**
> WINNIPEG CENTRE

Perfetti added: "We're a family in here. No matter the score, the outcome, where we are in the standings, whatever it is, we're going to be in this fight together. And I think when one of your best players does that, it really shows that."

Scheifele, for his part, was quick to poke fun at his lack of fighting experience.

"I'm a terrible fighter. I think I did catch him with a left, so I don't think anyone was expecting me to throw a left tonight," said Scheifele, who was then asked if he has someone to give him tips on scrapping. "If someone did show me, they would have done a terrible job because I am not a very good fighter and I don't have much technique at all."

For Jets head coach Scott Arniel, the sequence of events represented exactly the type of collective buy-in required to navigate the final stretch run.

"Coming out of the Olympic break, we've given ourselves a chance here to stay in this race and the emotion is there – every shift matters," Arniel said. "They're feeling really good about what we have to do each night and when you do what we did tonight. … The growth and positive upbeat builds on the bench and in the room."

Arniel pointed out that securing a playoff berth requires contributions that often go beyond the score sheet, with players stepping outside their comfort zone when moments call for it. "We knew that that's what it was going to take," he said. "It's going to be taking guys that are checkers to score goals, it was going to be goal scorers to check, it's kind of emotional moments like that where it's sticking up for each other. It takes all that stuff and that's what gets you in."

The victory improved Winnipeg's record to 30-29-12, bringing the club to 72 points on the season. That's five points back of the Nashville Predators (77 points), who occupy the second and final wild-card playoff spot in the Western Conference.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian pair Pereira, Michaud sit third after short program at skating worlds

PRAGUE, CZECHIA

Lia Pereira and Trennt Michaud are in podium position at the world figure skating championships.

The Canadian pair finished third in the short program with a personal-best score of 75.52 in their romantic routine to *Say You Love Me* by Jessie Ware.

Pereira, of Milton, Ont., and Michaud, of Trenton, Ont., also placed third in the short program in their Olympic debut at last month's Milan Cortina Winter Games, but fell to eighth following a series of mistakes in the free skate.

"This second half of the season for us has just been a real confirmation that we are doing the right things and our coaching staff has been alongside us," the 22-year-old Pereira told reporters at O2 Arena. "We're doing the right training, we're doing the right preparation.

"It's just nice to always come out and do a great performance and just show that, 'Hey, we're here.' "

Olympic bronze medalists Minerva Fabienne Hase and Nikita Volodin of Germany stood in first Wednesday with 79.78 points, just 0.33 ahead of Milan silver medalists Anastasia Metelkina and Luka Berulava of Georgia.

Pereira and Michaud, who also won their first national title in January, sat 5.6 points clear of fourth-place finishers Maria Pavlova and Alexei Sviatchenko of Hungary heading into Thursday's free program.

Michaud, 29, said their approach will be "to let the skating take over."

"When it showed at the Olympics, when we focused on the skating, we got the results that we wanted," he said. "We feel great. When we finish a program and we're like, 'Yes, that felt really good' … our goals will happen."

Fellow Canadians Kelly Ann Laurin and Loucas Éthier were 12th (63.99).

The post-Olympic world championships feature a slightly weakened field, with gold medalists Riku Miura and Ryuichi Kihara of Japan withdrawing from the event.

Canada's former world champion pair of Deanna Stellato-Dudek and Maxime Deschamps was also absent. The duo almost missed the Olympics after Stellato-Dudek hit her head on the ice during a training session in late January.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

What to know as NBA begins getting serious about expansion

Entry fee, start time still to be determined, commissioner says

TIM REYNOLDS NEW YORK

The NBA is now officially looking at expansion, with Seattle and Las Vegas the two targeted cities.

A vote Wednesday by the league's board of governors – part of a two-day series of meetings in New York – cleared the way for formal talks between potential ownership groups in those two cities and NBA officials to take place, a process that likely will start before too long.

Commissioner Adam Silver wants the league to know by the end of 2026 if expansion will happen.

The league said investment bank PJT Partners has been brought on "as a strategic adviser to evaluate prospective markets, ownership groups, arena infrastructure, and the broader economic implications of expansion."

Paul Taubman, the bank's chairman and CEO, has worked with the NBA on a number of matters in the past – and when former NBA commissioner David Stern stepped down more than a decade ago to allow for the start of Silver's time as commissioner, Taubman even brought Stern on as an adviser.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Silver said the league hasn't struck any deals yet, which means the bidding is wide open at this point.

"If you are interested, and I'll say that now to people who may be listening or watching this, if you're interested, call the league office, call PJT Partners directly in New York," Silver said at a news conference Wednesday.

"I just want to make sure everybody understands there's been no handshakes on the side. There's been no commitments. There's no promises to anyone. This is a completely transparent process."

PJT Partners and the league will vet candidates, find the best plans, then start the process of actually seeing if a deal can be struck. Given the expected expansion fee – US$6 billion or more – it won't be a quick process.

ARE LAS VEGAS' AND SEATTLE'S CHANCES TIED TO EACH OTHER?

Put simply, no.

There are no guarantees that the league will expand, first of all. And while it would create some interesting schedule scenarios if an odd number of teams were in the league – 31 instead of the current 30 – there have been unbalanced conference lineups before.

They could add both cities. They could add just one. They could add none.

WHAT'S THE TIMELINE FOR ADDING TEAMS, IF IT HAPPENS?

Another unknown, but it won't be next season. And probably not the one after that, either.

The commonly held theory is that it would take at least 18 months if not longer to get a new team up and running.

That would suggest 2028-29 would be the earliest season in which new teams could be added.

"Our goal was in 2026 to resolve this issue one way or the other," Silver said. "So, my timeline – we weren't so specific with the board – is that we need to know by the end of this calendar year what it is we're doing. It may not be that every 'I' is dotted, but that would be our goal, this year."

HOW WILL THE ENTRY FEE BE DETERMINED?

If the league decides to expand, it'll be selling equity in the current product.

And business in the NBA is booming, with franchise values soaring – the Boston Celtics recently sold with a valuation of just over US$6-billion and the Los Angeles Lakers' valuation was US$10-billion.

"The only discussion in the room was understanding the math around dilution in terms of projections and what's the direct reduction in existing revenues to teams if we were expanding beginning in '28-29," Silver said. "We did not discuss franchise value per se in these meetings. Of course, certainly with our bankers, we have a sense of where we think that value exists, but at the end of the day, the marketplace will determine that."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Eighth grader from Pittsburgh all alone with perfect women's NCAA bracket

DAVE SKRETTA

The only perfect bracket left after the opening weekend of the men's and women's NCAA tournaments – from more than 40 million entries across all the major contests – was produced not by some college basketball expert or betting guru but an eighth grader from suburban Pittsburgh.

His name is Otto Schellhammer. He is 14 years old.

"I know people say this a lot about March Madness," Schellhammer told The Associated Press, sitting beside his mom, Amy, between school and a lacrosse practice on Wednesday, "but it was 100 per cent luck. I know basically nothing about any type of basketball.

"I play with my friends," he added, "but I don't really watch it."

Oh, he'll be watching now. Schellhammer has correctly picked the first 48 women's games in ESPN's Tournament Challenge, leaving him 15 away from perfection. He has Texas cutting down the nets on April 5 in Phoenix.

While it's impossible to know whether there are any other perfect brackets across the country, the NCAA has tracked seven of the largest contests for years, said Mike Benzie, the senior director of content for NCAA Digital. This year they totaled about 36 million men's entries and 5.2 on the women's side, which means Schellhammer's is better than one-in-a-million.

He's one in 41.2 million.

"I think it's absolutely hilarious," said Amy Schellhammer, who actually did play high-school ball. "It's just so fun to see. It's exciting. I'm excited he's into women's basketball now. He's been watching and it's making him more excited about it."

Most people have heard that picking a perfect bracket is harder than winning the lottery, but exactly how hard is it? The late DePaul mathematics professor Jeffrey Bergen calculated the odds at 1 in 9.2 quintillion, assuming every game is a 50-50 proposition, or about 46 million times the number of stars in our galaxy.

But unlike Schellhamer, most people have some basketball knowledge. Factor that into the equation, Bergen wrote in 2013, and the odds of going 63-0 drop to about 1 in 28 billion – or, roughly 96 times harder than winning the Powerball jackpot.

"Even in the women's tournament where the favourites predominantly advance, there are outliers, and it only takes one if your bracket leans into favourites," said Charlie Creme, the resident women's bracketologist for ESPN. "Being able to pinpoint just those two or three upsets, knowing they will happen, but just in such a small number, is the maddening part of perfection."

In the ESPN competition, the quest for a perfect men's bracket ended Sunday night when No. 6 seed Tennessee beat third-seeded Virginia 79-72 in the 44th game of the tournament. (If that hadn't done it, surely No. 9 seed Iowa's upset of No. 1 seed and defending national champ Florida later that night would have taken care of anybody else).

Still, that run of 43 consecutive winning picks broke the record on the ESPN platform for its men's contest.

On the women's side, the NCAA found 235 perfect brackets among the major contests going into Monday, when the last games in the second round were played. That number fell to seven when No. 10 seed Virginia beat second-seeded Iowa. When No. 6 seed Notre Dame knocked off third-seeded Ohio State, Schellhammer was the last one left.

"The first game I watched of March Madness was on Monday," Schellhammer said. "I came home and I was like, 'I'll check and see how my women's bracket is doing.' Then I watched Virginia beat Iowa, and that was pretty cool. And then I watched Notre Dame."

Schellhammer still has a long way to go: The best start in the ESPN women's competition is 57 correct picks, which happened last year. To beat that, he would need to win each of the Sweet 16 games on Friday and Saturday to reach 56-0, and then win the first two games in the Elite Eight starting Sunday – though at that point, why not just win 'em all?

Even if Schellhammer wanted to, there's no turning back now. His bracket is locked.

"TCU and South Carolina is definitely one I would probably go back, and not to knock Texas but I'd probably re-pick the championship, because UConn is a powerhouse," he said. "You never know. If there's ever going to be an upset it's going to be in March Madness."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WNBA releases key dates for 2026 off-season

RACHEL BRADY

The Toronto Tempo will finally get to select its first players next week.

The WNBA will hold its 2026 expansion draft on April 3 as the league's two expansion teams, the Tempo and the Portland Fire, begin building their inaugural rosters before tipping off their inaugural seasons in May.

Now that the WNBA and its players association have agreed to a new collective agreement, a flurry of off-season business begins.

The expansion draft will have two rounds. The Fire and Tempo will alternate selections from a group of unprotected players made available by the WNBA's 13 existing teams. It will be a snake-style draft, with the team who gets the first pick in the opening round selecting second in the next round.

ESPN will broadcast the expansion draft in the United States, with coverage starting at 3:30 p.m. ET.

A coin toss between Portland and Toronto on March 27 will determine which team gets to pick first. The winner of the coin toss gets to choose between the first selection in the expansion draft or the sixth pick in the first round of the college draft, set for April 13. The other team will get the seventh pick in the college draft.

Leading up to the expansion draft, the league's existing teams will submit a roster list by March 29, including all players under its control at the end of the 2025 regular season. The clubs may protect up to five players and all others will be eligible for selection by Toronto or Portland.

In each round, the Tempo and Fire will alternate picks and receive the right to acquire the player contract of, or the negotiating rights to, one player listed on the unprotected list of each of the existing 13 teams.

The WNBA will also hold free agency in April.

It's a whirlwind off-season that will culminate in training camps for WNBA teams starting April 19 and opening day on May 8.

BIRTH AND DEATH NOTICES

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DEATHS

IAN CHRISTIE CLARK

Diplomat, arts executive, francophile, poet, outdoorsman.

Our father died at the Riverpath Retirement Residence in Ottawa after a long illness. Predeceased by his wife of 62 years, Nancy Cynthia Clark (née Blachford). Survived by his children, Brenda Trenholme (Quentin Ogier) and Graeme Christie (David Ireland).

Brought up in privilege in Toronto, he attended Upper Canada College and then McGill University (BA, 1952, MA 1958), where he was a published poet and wrote his graduate thesis on Ezra Pound.

He entered Canada's Foreign Service in 1958, serving in Brussels (2nd Secretary and Consul), Paris (Counsellor, Information and Cultural Affairs), London (Cultural Counsellor) and again in Paris as Ambassador to UNESCO in the mid-80s.

He pursued his strong interest in culture as founding Chair of the Canadian Cultural Property Export Review Board (CCPERB), possibly his most important contribution to the preservation of our cultural heritage as a nation; and as Secretary General of the National Museums Corporation.

He left public service in 1990 to become President of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, during which time he was also Chairman of the ICOM Foundation, before returning to Ottawa for a final decade as Chair of the CCPERB, from which he retired in 2004.

He was passionate about the arts and Canada's heritage, a keen outdoorsman (swimming and canoeing well into his 90's), and a convinced Francophile with fluent French acquired in mid-life.

A celebration of life will held this summer.

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JEFF WEBB

ENTREPRENEUR, 76

FOUNDER OF VARSITY SPIRIT BUILT COMPETITIVE CHEERLEADING EMPIRE

Businessman turned what was once a sideline activity into a multibillion-dollar industry now vying for inclusion in the Olympics.

ADEEL HASSAN

Jeff Webb, who transformed cheerleading from a sideline school-spirit activity into a multibillion-dollar industry, almost every aspect of which is dominated by the company he founded, Varsity Spirit, has died. He was 76.

Varsity Spirit confirmed the death in a video on social media Friday. The company did not cite a cause or say where or when he died. The International Cheer Union, which Mr. Webb also founded and led, said in an e-mail that he had "suffered a tragic accident resulting in a severe head injury."

Competitive cheering as it exists in the United States today, with high-school and college students performing routines of cheers, tumbling and jumps set to music, is largely the product of innovations brought about by Mr. Webb.

For decades, he exerted broad control over competitive cheerleading. He created the camps where teams learned routines, the competitions where they performed and the governing bodies that set the rules. He even sold the pompoms and the uniforms that the teams used.

The makeover for cheering that he set in motion was swift. Starting in 1984, just 10 years after he founded the company that would become Varsity Spirit, ESPN gave national exposure to competitive cheerleading by airing the National High School Cheerleading Championship.

By 2004, Varsity Spirit, which is based in Memphis, Tenn., said that it had annual revenue of more than US$150-million and that it controlled 90 per cent of the market in outfitting the nation's estimated 3.5 million cheerleaders, in addition to managing the largest camps and the most prestigious competitions for scholastic and all-star cheerleaders.

Staff members at Varsity nicknamed the private jet that Mr. Webb travelled on Cheer Force One.

His dominance of cheerleading also made him a target for critics. He was called "John D. Rockefeller with glitter" and the "Dark Sith Lord" of cheer by some of his detractors, according to a New York Times Magazine article published in 2024.

That article also reported that stunts had become increasingly dangerous, with cheerleading accounting for a higher rate of catastrophic injuries, including skull fractures and paralysis, than all other high-school girls' and college women's sports combined.

Jeff Webb exerted broad control over competetive cheerleading in the United States for decades. He created camps where teams learned routines, competitions where they performed and the governing bodies that set the rules. RYAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES

Varsity Spirit was able to keep its grip on cheerleading because of Mr. Webb's insistence that it was an "athletic activity," not a sport, which allowed it to bypass some Title IX regulations and NCAA oversight. That enabled the company to keep control over competition schedules and training standards, which otherwise would have been overseen by school athletic associations. Varsity's control of competitive cheerleading translated into added revenue for the company from competitions and its cheerleading camps.

Jeff Webb was born Jan. 19, 1950, and grew up in Dallas, where his father was an accountant with an oil company. Jeff joined his high-school cheer team when he was a senior.

He was a yell leader as a student at the University of Oklahoma when Lawrence Herkimer, who patented the pompom and was known as the grandfather of modern cheerleading, was hiring hundreds of instructors for more than 150 cheerleading camps. Among them was Mr. Webb, who in 1971 joined National Cheerleaders Association, founded by Mr. Herkimer. Mr. Webb worked for Mr. Herkimer in college and then after graduation, eventually becoming head instructor at his largest camps. When he was 23, he became the association's general manager.

Frustrated that Mr. Herkimer appeared stuck in the past, Mr. Webb founded his own company, initially known as the Universal Cheerleading Association, in 1974, when he was 24. He ran the business out of his apartment for the first several years, he said in the remembrance video that Varsity shared on Instagram on Friday.

From his new perch, he spearheaded the techniques that brought more acrobatics and athleticism to modern cheering. In the mid-1980s, a new category of cheerleading known as all star emerged, fuelling additional growth driven by routines with ever more daring stunts performed by teams not attached to schools. In January, 1992, Varsity Spirit, which he created as an umbrella company for his growing cheer empire – went public.

Varsity was sold to a private-equity firm for US$1.5-billion in 2014, and Mr. Webb left in 2020. Varsity and the United States All Star Federation, a membership organization it helped create, have since been accused in at least four antitrust lawsuits of building a monopolistic juggernaut that inflated prices for families and drove rivals from the business. At least two of those suits were settled out of court, and one was dismissed with prejudice by a judge.

Mr. Webb moved on to the International Cheer Union, an organization that he founded that is also based in Memphis. In recent years, he turned his attention to making cheerleading an Olympic sport. In 2016, when it received provisional recognition from the International Olympic Committee, he said the announcement reflected "the culmination of my life's work."

He leaves his wife, Gina Webb; a son, Jeffrey; a daughter, Caroline Webb Mason; a brother, Greg Webb; a sister, Jenna Webb Hill; and two grandchildren.

"How lucky am I?" he said at the end of the Varsity Spirit social-media video. "How fortunate have I been to be able to have this idea, and to build on it and have fabulous people kind of hook their star to my vision and for us together to build this great thing."

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

VALERIE PERRINE

ACTOR, 82

Former Playboy Playmate earned an Oscar nomination

ALEX WILLIAMS

Valerie Perrine, an Oscar-nominated actress who both capitalized on and transcended her bombshell image as a former Playboy Playmate, winning critical acclaim for sassy yet vulnerable performances in 1970s films like *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *Lenny* and a memorable turn in *Superman*, with Christopher Reeve, died Monday at her home in Los Angeles. She was 82.

Her death was confirmed by her close friend Stacey Souther, who directed a 2019 documentary film about Ms. Perrine. He said the cause was complications of Parkinson's disease, which was diagnosed in 2015.

Ms. Perrine amassed nearly 70 film and television credits over more than four decades, playing opposite some of the biggest male stars of her day, including Dustin Hoffman, Gene Hackman and Jack Nicholson.

A former Las Vegas showgirl who posed for Playboy pictorials in 1972 and 1981, she was rarely shy about displaying her sexuality – or her nude body on-screen.

"She looks and sounds like a sensual Betty Boop, with her cherubic blue eyes, button nose and rosebud lips strangely coexisting with a snug-fitting blouse unbuttoned almost to the navel and a lispy way of speaking," Judy Klemesrud wrote in a 1974 profile in The New York Times. She called Ms. Perrine "one of the first avowed sex kittens to come down the Hollywood Freeway since Raquel Welch."

Still, Ms. Klemesrud added, "unlike most sex symbols of the past," Ms. Perrine "has almost always been singled out by the critics for her acting rather than her anatomy."

Ms. Perrine's breakout performance came in George Roy Hill's 1972 film adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's time-hopping 1969 novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five*. She played Montana Wildhack, an adult film star turned intergalactic temptress.

The film, like the book, blends a harrowing anti-war message with postwar suburban satire and science fiction. The protagonist, Billy Pilgrim, finds himself "unstuck in time," bouncing between periods of his life, including the Second World War, where he (like the author) was a prisoner of war who survived the devastating Allied firebombing of Dresden, Germany, in 1945.

Valerie Perrine attends the Cannes Film Festival in 1975, at which she won the best actress award for her role in Lenny about comedian Lenny Bruce. WWD/GETTY IMAGES

Mr. Pilgrim eventually is swept away by aliens, who also pluck Montana Wildhack to serve as his mate in a breeding experiment light-years from Earth. Time magazine called her performance "charming, sensual and funny."

She earned further plaudits the next year playing Marge, the racing groupie and love interest of Jeff Bridges's stock car racer in *The Last American Hero*, based on the life of bootlegger-turned-NASCAR-star Junior Johnson.

Her critical peak came in 1974 with *Lenny* (1974), Bob Fosse's film version of Julian Barry's Broadway play about the boundary-shattering work, legal travails and drug-induced death of 1960s comedian Lenny Bruce, played by Mr. Hoffman.

Ms. Perrine turned heads as Honey, Mr. Bruce's wife, an exotic dancer wearied by her husband's turbulent life. Her performance radiated "a certain tarnished sexuality," critic Roger Ebert noted, "and she gives us at last a stripper without a heart of gold."

Ms. Perrine's performance brought her a best actress award at the Cannes Film Festival and an Academy Award nomination in the same category. (The Oscar went to Ellen Burstyn, for Martin Scorsese's *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*.)

Valerie Jane Perrine was born Sept. 3, 1943, in Galveston, Tex., one of two children of Kenneth I. Perrine, a lieutenant-colonel in the U.S. Army, and Winifred (McGinley) Perrine, a one-time dancer in the Earl Carroll Vanities, a Broadway revue in the spirit of the Ziegfeld Follies.

At 19, she moved to Las Vegas, where she performed in glittery revues at casinos like the Stardust. After eight years in that gambling mecca, and a stint living in Europe, she resettled in Los Angeles. At first, she had no designs on a screen career.

"Acting wasn't something I pursued," she said in an interview last year with the Parkinson's Europe organization. "I was at a small dinner party where an agent was looking for someone to play the role of Montana Wildhack," and the agent "saw something in me and thought I would be perfect for the part. That's how I became an actress."

While she made her name in edgier fare like *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *Lenny*, Ms. Perrine made a mass-market splash with Richard Donner's 1978 film *Superman*, starring Mr. Reeve in the title role and Margot Kidder as Lois Lane.

Ms. Perrine turned in a winsome performance in the movie as the villain Lex Luthor's moll, Eve Teschmacher, who ends up saving not only the Kryptonite-weakened superhero, but also Hackensack, N.J., where Eve's mother lives, from a missile attack, foiling Luthor's plot. Two years later, she reprised the role in *Superman II*.

Other prominent roles included the ex-wife of Robert Redford's over-the-hill rodeo star in Sydney Pollack's *The Electric Horseman* (1979); and the vapid, materialistic spouse of Jack Nicholson's Border Patrol agent in Tony Richardson's gritty drama *The Border* (1982).

Later, Ms. Perrine earned laughs in a small but memorable role as a mind-reading office worker in Nancy Meyers 2000 hit comedy *What Women Want*, in which Mel Gibson plays a womanizing adman who is suddenly able to hear women's internal thoughts – and not always to his liking.

She leaves her brother, Kenneth. Ms. Perrine – whose fiancé, Bill Haarman, died in 1969 – never married.

Given her sexpot image and many skin-baring roles, Ms. Perrine was asked in a 1980 interview with the Los Angeles Times if she considered herself a feminist and whether she supported the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

"I don't believe in the ERA at all," she said. "Women aren't equal, they're superior."

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