COMMON THREAD

THE VEQ NEWSLETTER

WINTER WONDERS

A NEW YEAR AND CONTINUED CONNECTIONS

Welcome to the first *Common Thread* of 2026! A new year is here, and we're excited to share what's happening across the community.

In this issue, catch up on recent Out & About adventures, see how our Newcomers' Program is helping members feel at home, dive into highlights from our Holiday Happy Hour at the Morrin Centre, and much more.

Spring Fest is coming soon, so watch our calendar for the date. Here's to more threads, more connections, and more community in 2026!

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Canada Québec

SCAN ME

ALL OUR LINKS IN ONE PLACE!

We have made it easier for you to connect with us! Here is how it works:

If you receive the newsletter by mail:

- Simply point your smartphone's camera towards the QR Code, and tap on the pop-up link that appears.

If you receive our newsletter by email:

- Simply click/tap on the QR Code.

Subscription

To help us promote a greener future with fewer print copies, please take a moment to contact us at (418) 683-2366 ext. 221, or at *info@veq.ca*, and tell us you would like to receive the newsletter electronically.

Connect with us

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W: www.veq.ca

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Shannon, QC G3S 1N5

The VEQ Column

HOLIDAY HAPPY HOUR 2025

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us for our Holiday Happy Hour! It was wonderful to see so many of you come together to celebrate the season, while supporting an incredible cause.

We hope you enjoyed the evening, and had a blast with our 360° camera photobooth! Your participation helps make a real difference in our community through the **Québec City Community Christmas Hamper Campaign**.

A special shout-out goes to CBC Quebec for the amazing entertainment. If you missed it, local band *Irish Tree* delighted the crowd once again this year!

Holiday Happy Hour wouldn't have been the same without the Morrin Centre, our dedicated volunteers, generous raffle prize donors, and of course, all of you.

Relive the fun from start to finish, and check out the full album here:

www.tinyurl.com/7ndkutf2

SEE MORE MOMENTS CAPTURED BY JOLENE BATEMAN HERE

YOUR VEQ NEWSLETTER IS PREPARED WITH CARE BY THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE *R.I.S.E.* PROGRAM!

VEQ is proud to collaborate with the R.I.S.E. Program, who help assemble your newsletters for mailing every couple of months. The R.I.S.E. Program, an initiative by JH Partners, is a full-time program designed for English-speaking adults with special needs. Its mission is to maximize each individual's potential and foster a sense of purpose and community through activities that cultivate life and social skills.

To R.I.S.E. participants—thank you for your invaluable help and enthusiasm. We look forward to continuing this partnership and witnessing the amazing growth of all involved.

Newcomers' Corner

NEW TO THE CITY? WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Get in touch with Viktoria Poulin Gareau at
(418) 683-2366 ext. 225 or newcomers@veq.ca

Is it really almost February already? This winter has been flying by so fast and has been so full of events that we barely had time to blink… and here we are in 2026!

We warmly welcome you and your families, and look forward to seeing you at our activities.

Looking back at our Halloween event, which took place for the second time at the Morrin Centre, we can confidently say: If you didn't come, you truly missed out! Guests in bright costumes wandered through the centre with lanterns, listening to stories about its time as a prison and the medical procedures that once took place there. Be sure to join us next time to experience this spookily interesting evening.

In December, we held our annual History of Québec Info Session, where we explored the history and development of our beautiful province. This workshop is always fascinating, as we discover something new every time.

Also in December, we visited the magical Québec German Christmas Market, enjoyed a puppet theatre performance, listened to L'Odyssée Vocale choir, and warmed up in a cozy café with a classic Canadiano!

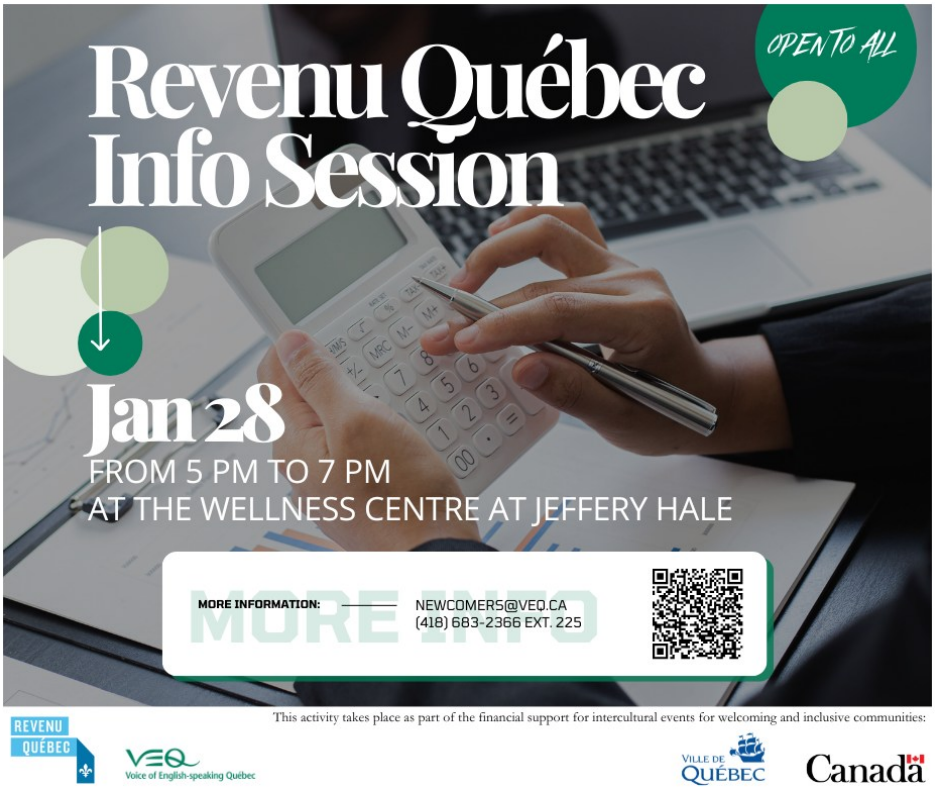
We wrapped up the year with our Festive Potluck, sharing delicious dishes from different countries and reflecting on the year that had passed, all in a truly festive holiday atmosphere.

And now, exciting (and practical) activities await us for the end of January and February!

Mark Your Calendars

UPCOMING NEWCOMER EVENTS YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS!

PLEASE CHECK OUR CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR MORE DETAILS ON HOW TO REGISTER FOR THESE EVENTS.



Jan 28

Revenu Québec Info Session

Join us at our pavilion for an informative discussion with representatives from *Revenu Québec*. This workshop is equally valuable whether you come from another province in Canada, as well as from another country.

Jan 31

Tour of Parliament and Library

Learn about the system of governance, history, and the many fascinating corners of Québec's Parliament and Library.

Feb 4

Fraud Awareness Workshop

Protecting your safety and that of your loved ones is important. Don't miss this information session, where an expert from *Educaloi* will guide us on how to recognize and prevent fraud.

Feb 5, 19

Game Nights

Game nights are a fun way to socialize in a relaxed atmosphere. Bring your own games, or choose one from our extensive collection. All are welcome!

Mar 1

Snowshoeing at the Plains

In partnership with *Accès Loisirs*, we're excited to offer you this unique experience right in the heart of the city. Bundle up with your warmest pants and gloves!

Never miss an event again.

Sign up for our emailing list:

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Employability Initiatives

We ended 2025 on a high note with Hannah and Emma successfully completing the French immersion in the workplace pilot project. We supported their progress in French by providing job-specific vocabulary, conversation practice, and helpful exercises. Interested? Stay tuned for the next phase of this project.

Upcoming Events

Feb 11

How to Apply for Government of Canada Jobs

This info session is a must for anyone interested in working for the federal government. Learn all the ins and outs of the application and recruitment process! Join us in person. Reserve your place today:

www.forms.office.com/r/SWc1ghANJS

Feb 26

5 à 7 Networking Event

It's a networking night *en français*! Intermediate and higher -level French speakers are invited to a 5-à-7 featuring a talk by Lindsey Kettel, President of Davie. It's also an evening to learn more about the Circonflexe Mentorship Program. Brought to you by RDN (Regional Development Network), in partnership with VEQ and PERT (Provincial Employment Roundtable). Keep an eye on our socials for event registration info!

French for the Workforce

Want to feel confident speaking French at work or during your job search? This program is perfect for anyone with basic French skills aiming to improve their language abilities for job applications and workplace success.

More details here:

www.yesmontreal.ca/employment/french-for-the-workforce/

Get in touch for more information about VEQ's employability initiatives

Susanna Tang

(418) 683-2366 EXT. 222

SUSANNA.TANG@VEQ.CA

Podcast Broadcasts

Check out the My Québec City podcast—your city, your stories! Hear new episodes regularly, with recent ones including a worldwide French-language journey, the harmony of sport and beyond.

Want to record your own episode? Let us know! You simply need to be a local resident, a willing storyteller, and comfortable speaking in English.

Kevin Bottaro

(418) 683-2366

KEVIN.BOTTARO@VEQ.CA

Don't miss any of our episodes on YouTube!

SUBSCRIBE

50+ Services

A WINTRY *OUT & ABOUT*

As the holiday season approached, festive and cozy outings were embraced by participants in the Out & About program, bringing warmth, joy, and a sense of togetherness, and helping everyone get into the spirit and feel ready for the holidays.

November

Plains of Abraham Museum (Nov 4), Neon Mini Golf (Nov 11 & 18), Monastère des Augustines (Nov 21), Lunch Bagel Maguire (Nov 25), Marché Noël Allemand (Nov 28) & CWL Community Breakfast (Nov 30)—
A mix of culture, fun, and festive cheer kept November busy, beginning with visits to the Plains of Abraham Museum and Neon Mini Golf, followed by a peaceful outing to the Monastère des Augustines.
Cozy moments were continued with lunch at Bagel Maguire, a stroll through the Marché de Noël Allemand, and were brought to a warm conclusion with the Catholic Women's League Community Breakfast.

December

Grand Marché de Québec (Dec 9 & 16), Laurier (Dec 12)—
Holiday spirit was encouraged through December outings, with delightful visits to the Grand Marché de Québec and a trip to Laurier that was perfect for seasonal shopping.

Looking Ahead

We hope the new year has started positively for everyone. Please note that Out & About will be paused for most of February as Léa will be on vacation. However, a variety of activities have been planned for the end of February and March, including bingo, visits to Laurier Mall, an outing to the Pôle Culturel du Monastère des Ursulines, bowling, and more. Registration for any upcoming activities, or requests for additional information, may be made by phone or email.

Sincere thanks to everyone who has participated over the past few months. The presence and enthusiasm shown have made each outing truly special, and these shared moments are greatly appreciated.

Are you interested in participating in our 50+ activities?

Contact Léa Bureau at

(418) 683-2366 EXT. 229

LEA.BUREAU@VEQ.CA

Northern Perimeter

What's new?

We're excited to kick off 2026 with you! Our regular winter programming has resumed since mid-January, offering a mix of wellness, creativity, learning, and social activities in our Community Space and throughout the region. This year, we also look forward to collaborating once again with the Regional County Municipality, local municipalities, schools, and community organizations to create opportunities that benefit everyone in our community.

Looking back at late 2025, VEQ joined the newcomer evening *Ma Ville, Mes Services* in Shannon on Nov 12. We had the pleasure of meeting new residents and families, as well as local representatives and organizations, to introduce VEQ's services. On Dec 18, we proudly sponsored Dollard-des-Ormeaux (DDO) School's Holiday Run, providing 400 cups of hot cocoa to warm the spirits—and bodies—of DDO elementary students running laps around the school.

On Jan 20, VEQ had a special delivery for DDO School: 25 wool hats, neck warmers, gloves, and scarves that were lovingly, and generously, made by the *In Stitches* knitters that meet every Monday at our Community Space. Thanks again to knitters for their compassion, and for making this "DDO-VEQ-Knitters" initiative a warm and happy one!

In the Arts & Crafts realm, participants enjoyed Holiday Card Making on Dec 4, creating original cards with stencils and imprints, just in time for the holidays. Thanks go to Ursula for sharing her expertise and materials. Don't miss our next Arts & Crafts session on Jan 27, where we'll be painting sceneries of winter! And in February, we'll be thinking hearts and love while we make original Valentine's Day cards.

Our Movie Matinées are back for the winter! On Dec 12, a group of five enjoyed *The Holdovers* with Christmas cookies. Next up, *Murder on the Orient Express* will screen on Jan 28 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., offering a wild Wyoming winter murder-drama experience. And we have a special Valentine's movie planned for Feb 12. Matinées are free, but registration is required as space is limited. Popcorn, light snacks, and coffee or tea will be available.

If you are interested in volunteering in 2026, or know someone who may be, please reach out. We would be happy to discuss opportunities in, and around, our community. Registrations are also still open for the Seniors Pathfinder Training course, a three-hour workshop offered by our colleagues at JH Partners and led by France Gaudet, Senior Care Navigator. A group of 10 will be taking this training in Saint-Gabriel-de-Valcartier in early 2026. VEQ has put its Community Space to France's disposal if another group forms in Shannon or its vicinities.

Finally, we want to extend a heartfelt thank-you and warm *au revoir*—but not *adieu*—to Pamala Hogan-Laberge, who retired as Valcartier's Municipal Sports, Leisure, and Community Director on Dec 23, 2025. Pam and the Valcartier municipality have been incredible partners of VEQ's Northern Perimeter office since it opened in 2021, and we wish her all the best in this new chapter.

Here's to a vibrant, creative, and connected 2026!

Get in touch with our Shannon team!

Dominique Paddack

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Tel: (418) 683-2366 ext. 227

David Zhu

Email: david.zhu@veq.ca

Tel: (418) 683-2366 ext. 228

50+ Northern Perimeter

Out & About

In December, we wrapped up the year with a festive outing to the German Christmas Market in Québec City... and what a magical experience it was! Twinkling lights, cozy wooden kiosks, and the sounds of holiday music set the perfect atmosphere. Participants enjoyed browsing artisan goods, warming up with seasonal treats, and soaking in the cheerful spirit of the season together. It was a wonderful way to celebrate the holidays and close out the year with good company and plenty of smiles.

Brain Power

Brain power is ongoing, and sessions occur on the first Wednesday of every month.

Origami Workshops

Our Origami sessions are back as usual in the VEQ Community Space. Spots are limited, so advance registration is required. We're currently working on new dates that better suit everyone's schedules. Updates coming soon!

Chair Yoga and Knitting

We celebrated our end of season last year with an afternoon spent over home baked goods, and now we are back to start the season anew!

Chair Yoga: Tuesdays (Shannon) and Thursdays (Valcartier)

Knitting: Mondays (Shannon)

Crust Collective

Rye and shine, bread lovers! Our baking club continues to grow, bringing together beginners and seasoned bakers alike. From kneading dough to sharing tips and laughs, each session is a true community experience. If you're interested in joining the next bake, be sure to reserve your spot! Our next session will be on Wednesday, Mar 18.

Community Kitchen

If you enjoy learning about different cuisines and cooking alongside friends (new and old), Community Kitchen is for you! We cook together, clean together, and everyone takes a portion home to share. Our next session in on Friday, Feb 27 and we'll be cooking up some Ethiopian cuisine!

Coming up...

There's plenty to do to meet those new year resolutions! Look forward to our upcoming outings as well as our many unique offerings.

To register or receive updates about 50+ Northern Perimeter Out & About activities, contact David Zhu.

Stay tuned for more details on what's ahead. You won't want to miss it!

David Zhu

(418) 683-2366 EXT. 228

DAVID.ZHU@VEQ.CA

Community Happenings

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR YOU

JH Partners

JH Partners promotes the personal and shared well-being of English-speakers in the Québec City region.

The Family Matters program is proud to offer another round of **Triple P Parenting**. This is a 3-part program that started in January. Missed previous sessions? You can still attend the **Feb 16** and **Mar 16** sessions!

Parents and Petits Get-togethers are still happening every Friday!

Caregivers' Circle programming are also on-going with book clubs, coffee chats, seminars and more.

Join **Young and Empowered** activities for young English-speaking adults to get involved in their community, engage with their peers, find support, and access valuable resources.

Visit **jhpartners.net** for more information about programs, activities and volunteering.

Questions? Please email: *info@jhpartners.net*

The Morrin Centre

The Morrin Centre is a nationally recognised heritage site and leading English-language cultural centre located in the heart of historic Old Québec.

From book clubs to literary events, find out all that's happening at the Morrin!

Visit **www.morrin.org** to learn more about the Morrin Centre.

E: *info@morrin.org*

T: (418) 694-9147

QCRC

Quebec City Reading Council is a volunteer-based not-for-profit organization that provides literacy resources and services.

Family Programmes

Connect with others at activities specifically designed for children.

Upcoming events:

Feb 13—TTT: Family

Feb 26—Early Learning Café

Lifelong Learning (LLL)

Lifelong Learning provides opportunities for growth and intellectual stimulation for mature learners.

Upcoming events:

Feb 5—Straight Talk About End of Life Issues

Feb 10—Valentine's Candle Making

W: **www.qcrc.org**

E: *info@lifelonglearningquebec.org*

T: (418) 681-1258

All these events (and more!) here:

SCAN ME

… More

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR YOU

Y4Y Québec

Y4Y Québec is a non-profit organisation committed to addressing the issues facing English-speaking youth (ages 16-30) across Québec.

www.y4yquebec.org

Community Forum

Join Y4Y's Community Forum on **Feb 3**. Connect with colleagues from across the province, whose organizations serve the English-speaking youth communities of Québec, for this exchange.

Find out more here.

Local Vocals

Calling all lead vocalists, shower singers, karaoke enthusiasts, and everyone in between!

Join the Local Vocals Singing Ensemble every Wednesday from 2:00pm to 3:00pm at the Jeffery Hale Pavilion.

All levels and ages welcome.

Questions? Please email: *k.urbschat@gmail.com*

The Singing Birds, courtesy of Alexandra Saunders.

Employment +Entrepreneurship

COACHING DATES

Are you an entrepreneur or have aspiring ideas to start your own business?

Sign-up for the next YES Business Coaching session:

Feb 9, 10

Mar 9, 10

Apr 13, 14

(418) 683-2366 EXT. 225

NEWCOMERS@VEQ.CA

PLACE YOUR EVENT HERE

Would you like to see your event in this section?

Melissa Wan

(418) 683-2366 EXT. 226

MELISSA.WAN@VEQ.CA

Email the Québec Chronicle-Telegraph to advertise your event:

editor@qctonline.com