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Neighbours rally to rescue missing dog

The 1019 Report

A new resident of the Town of L'Île Perrot discovered last week that old-school neighbourly kindness is alive and well after members of the community rallied to help him find his dog that had escaped from his yard and wandered for four hours, ending up along busy Highway 20 before being rescued by a young couple who was driving by and spotted the panicked dog.

"When the couple (that saved the dog) rang my doorbell, I broke down and cried in front of them," said an emotional Eric Serre, 64, who spent the entire afternoon of April 14 on foot, searching for his six-year-old pooch, Patchouli, through a wooded area and swamp.

The drama began at about 11 a.m. when Serre was testing his new home's smoke alarms. The noise frightened his dog, which escaped through a hole at the base of the fence on the property. When Serre went outside to check in on his dog, he was gone, prompting the hours-long search.

Serre was worried that the dog, an Australian Shepherd-Japanese Spitz mix, wasn't familiar with his surroundings because Serre and his wife had only moved into their rented home last month.

See **MISSING DOG**, Page 2.

One year after the fire



The 1019 Report

Exactly one year and two days after flames ripped through the roof of St. James Church in Hudson, a small group of media representatives and elected officials were given a glimpse inside the 183-year-old stone church last Wednesday as work to complete the new roof continued. How to preserve the charm of the building's architectural heritage, which provides links to the town's past, and plan for a new future for the site are part of the rebuilding process. See story, Page 9.

Mayoral race is on in Hudson

BRENDA O'FARRELL
The 1019 Report

Municipal elections are still a little more than six months away, but the race for mayor in Hudson has been triggered, as a challenger has stepped forward looking to unseat incumbent Chloe Hutchison.

"I know I could do much better to make Hudson the gem it should be," said resident Chantal Perreault, a lawyer who has launched her campaign for the top job on the town's municipal council.

"I'm not there to add a title to my CV," Perreault said in an interview with *The 1019 Report* last Sunday. "I want to be there to get results, to accomplish things."

A resident of Hudson since 2013, Perreault says she has gotten to know the community, has been involved with a number of groups and has watched how the current administration has failed to deal with a list of issues – from putting a solid administrative team together to handle the day-to-day operations at town hall, to Sandy Beach, to continuing to rack up budget surpluses, a sign, she says, that shows residents are being overtaxed for services they are not receiving.

"It's not because you're small," she said, referring to the size of the town, "that you can't accomplish great things."

"It's a lack of leadership and vision," she added. "We have to put the car in drive. I feel we have been idling for four years."

Hutchison yesterday confirmed she will seek re-election, but has yet to turn her attention to the election, which is scheduled for early November.

See **HUDSON**, Page 2.

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HUDSON: Challenger seeks top job on town council

From Page 1

Her focus at the moment is to put a new director-general in place, she said, ensure the treasury department is functioning at full capacity and continuing to focus on ongoing projects.

Perreault, a 66-year-old mother of two who has two grandchildren, has a priority list of what she would like to tackle if elected.

Improving the town's parks is at the top of that list.

"There is pretty much nothing" for young families when it comes to parks, Perrault said.

That will change within the first year, she pledges. Changes are also needed to how the vast trail network in Hudson is maintained, she said.

She also aims to settle the Sandy Beach issue.

"We need to find a solution to preserve Sandy Beach and guarantee access for the summer of 2026," she said.

That solution includes striking what she described as a reasonable agreement with the current owners of the waterfront site and "exercising the power available by the law."

"The cost of securing that land for public use has become lower than it has ever been," she said. "We can make it an asset for our youth."

Perreault also points to the need to put an end to what she called "the revolving

door" at town hall, referring to the constant turnover of personnel in key positions.

In February, Hudson hired a new treasurer, its third in two years, and is currently looking to hire a new director-general after a deal was struck last month to part ways with the previous top administrator who had been on a leave that began only months after she was made permanent.

Other changes Perreault believes are needed include instilling a different approach to dealing with taxpayers. They need to be treated as clients, she said. And the administration has to ask: "How can I serve? How can I help? It has to come from the top."

Perreault also wants to tackle the issue of water, improving the quality and quantity of tap water available and extending the waste water network to where it can feasibly be done within the town's core.

She also wants to put added emphasis on governance issues, including the way the town drafts its budgets and plans its priorities.

Perreault believes her experience as a lawyer, a former school commissioner, volunteer and administrative judge who dealt with issues of ethics and professional governance will lend itself to her role if elected. She wants to put her skills to work for her town, she said.

"I'm not running against anybody. I am running for Hudson. I am rooting for Hudson."



Patchouli, a miniature Australian Shepherd-Japanese Spitz mix, was rescued from Highway 20 and returned home safely.

MISSING DOG: Neighbours helped without being asked

From Page 1

An hour later, Pincourt resident Pamela Lecavalier posted a message on the Pincourt Peeps Facebook community page, saying she was driving on Highway 20 and spotted a "white fluffy dog" running across Highway 20 between Boulevard de L'Île and Don Quichotte Boulevard near the train tracks.

Upon reading Lecavalier's post, other local residents joined the search, including Donna Le Blanc and Pauline Proulx, who posted updates on the Facebook page. Neighbours who saw the post alerted Serre, saying his dog was walking along the highway and that people were looking for him.

That's when Vicky Pegiel and her boyfriend were driving along Highway 20 and immediately stopped when they saw the dog walking along the side of the highway. They opened their passenger door and the dog immediately jumped in.

Pegiel then posted on the Facebook group page that she had the dog, prompting others to deliver the good news to Serre, who was reunited by his dog around 4 p.m., when Pegiel dropped him off.

"The neighbours here are incredible," Serre said. "They searched through the streets and the forest between Don Quichotte and de L'Île. Even Refuge Vaudreuil – Patrouille Sécurité called me the morning after to get news of Patchouli. Class acts!"