

# EDITORIAL

*It is no small tragedy to sacrifice the natural environment and a resource as important as water in favour of a recreational activity like golf.*

## Organic golf courses?

No more chemicals in our waterways, please—from golfers or others

By Scott Stevenson

When I was a kid, I swam in ponds on golf courses with my brother to dive for golf balls. I cringe now at the thought of what chemicals we were swimming in. My children's grandfather, a long-time pro at Laurentians golf clubs, used to tell me not to touch my face with my hands while playing golf due to the chemicals my ball would have picked up on the course; he associated some cancers he saw in avid golfers with this, unscientific though he was in making the assumption.

I expect golf clubs have improved somewhat today, but the report last February in Brome County News about phosphates in the streams feeding Brome Lake suggests we have a ways to go yet.

"Fertilization at the Inverness Golf Club is definitely a contributing factor to the presence of phosphorus in the Inverness Stream," wrote reporter Ann Davidson in a story about Renaissance Lac Brome's environmental study of Brome Lake's watershed.

A Lac-Brome municipal bylaw re-

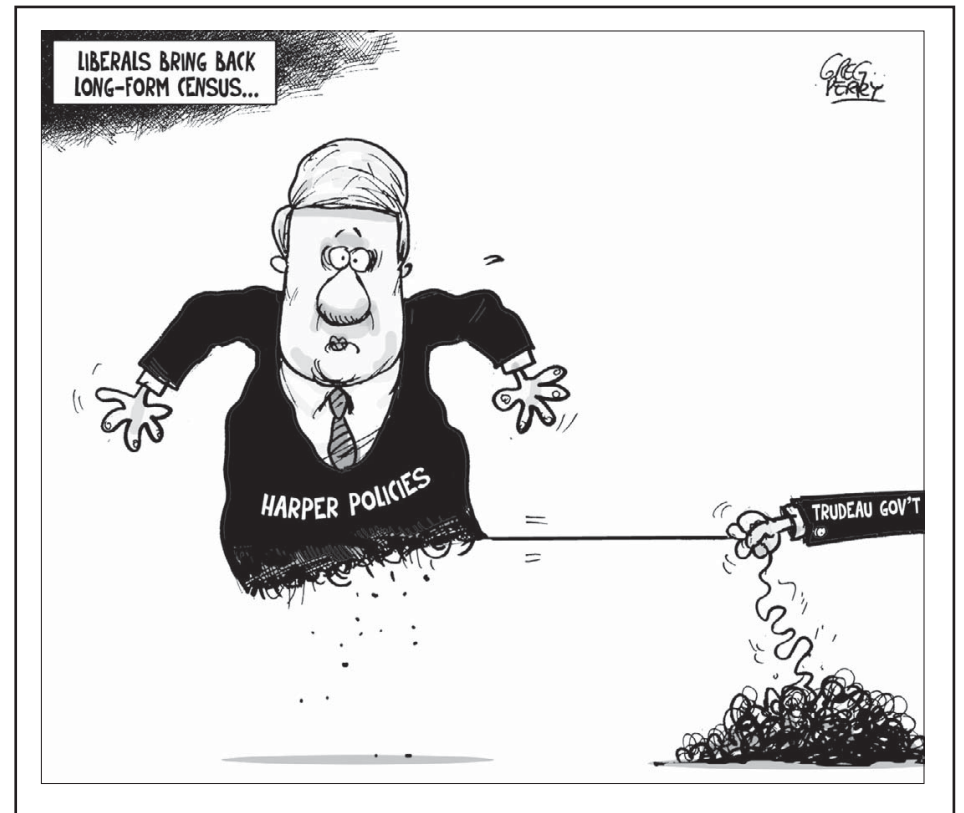
quires the owners of the three golf courses near the lake to report every three years on their spraying of fertilizers. Both the 2012 and 2015 reports were overdue at the time of Ms. Davidson's report this year.

Now the golfers are out again as are the fertilizers—on golf courses, farm fields, and suburban lawns. And our streams, rivers, and lakes are alive with spawning fish, migrating and nesting birds, and anglers.

It is no small tragedy to sacrifice the natural environment and a resource as important as water in favour of a recreational activity like golf.

Golfers, golf courses, citizens, and municipal and provincial authorities must be more responsible in protecting our waterways. Put pressure on the decision-makers by inquiring about your favourite golf course's practices; ask questions of your municipality; do not allow important environmental reports to go three and more years overdue; take legal action if necessary to hold polluters accountable!

The Eastern Townships region was a pioneer in organic farming decades ago already, with people like Russell Pocock



and Thérèse Shaheen leading the way. How about pioneering a movement of organic golf courses now? The Townships is the perfect place to set the example.

I hope kids today aren't foolish enough to swim in golf-course ponds anymore. More importantly, I hope they can actually do so soon without fear of

chemical contact. Future generations—and the rest of us—deserve that freedom from the fear of poisoned waters. They do not deserve to inherit our legacy of reckless environmental damage and debt.

Our waterways are sacred.

## Mobile parking payment offered this fall

Record Staff  
SHERBROOKE

The City of Sherbrooke has announced that it is about to unveil a mobile application for the payment of parking spaces. The app will be available this fall. The City believes the app will offer many benefits to Sherbrooke citizens and gradually incorporate several other services.

"Instead of quickly providing an application just for the payment of parking spaces, as we find in other cities, we took the time to identify our needs, says the City's IT Director, Yves Seney. "As a 'smart' community, we have chosen to develop a single new and innovative platform that will be of interest to other

citizens and other Sherbrooke institutions."

To develop this scalable platform, City Council signed a service agreement with firm B-CITI Solutions. This agreement, for \$632,500 over eight years, includes several phases. B-CITI Solutions is a division of Métix company and a partner of the École de technologie supérieure and the City of Brossard. It specializes in the development of intelligent tools of interaction between cities and their citizens. B-CITI has several towns and Quebec public organizations among its clients.

Beginning in the fall, motorists will be able to download an application that allows mobile payment for parking spaces in the Sherbrooke area.

"In addition to the basic features, this

application will use a QR code to quickly identify the space. Drivers can also buy a bank of hours, which will give them greater flexibility," says Finance Department Director François Poulette.

Secondly, the app will offer the ability to request and pay for a parking permit online.

The City is in talks with several potential partners; including the Société de transport de Sherbrooke, to expand the use of this tool.

Achieving these first two components of the project will establish the bases for the third component, the development

of an integrated digital system with an online bill payment service. In a few years, citizens will be able to pay the majority of the bills submitted by the City through this application, and could be able to engage in several other interactions with the City.

"We are now taking a first step toward a broader vision of the services we intend to offer to citizens," says Mayor Bernard Sévigny. "The City is once again positioned as an intelligent and dynamic community, eager to offer innovative and quality services to its citizens."

### Letters

The Record welcomes your letters to the editor. Please limit your letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity, legality and taste. Please ensure there is a phone number or email where you can be reached, to confirm authorship and current town/city of residence. Names will not be withheld but the address and phone number of the writer are not published, except by request. Preference is given to writers from the Eastern Townships.

### THE RECORD

1195 Galt East, Sherbrooke, Quebec J1G 1Y7  
FAX: 819-821-3179

E-MAIL: newsroom@sherbrookerecord.com  
WEBSITE: www.sherbrookerecord.com

SHARON McCULLY PUBLISHER ..... (819) 569-9511  
STEPHEN BLAKE CORRESP. EDITOR ..... (819) 569-6345  
SERGE GAGNON CHIEF PRESSMAN ..... (819) 569-9931

DEPARTMENTS  
ACCOUNTING ..... (819) 569-9511  
ADVERTISING ..... (819) 569-9525  
CIRCULATION ..... (819) 569-9528  
NEWSROOM ..... (819) 569-6345

KNOWLTON OFFICE  
5B VICTORIA STREET, KNOWLTON, QUEBEC, J0E 1V0  
TEL: (450) 242-1188 FAX: (450) 243-5155

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