



## A Word from the Vice President

Here we are in the heart of summer and in the middle of another season of cleaning up. Again, this year, Action Saint-François has received precious aid from the Federal Government's Eco-Action 2000 Program in order to help us out in achieving our goals. Since the beginning of May, our coordinator, Mr Robert-Léo Gendron, has been providing a diligent presence, both on our premises (18 Wellington North, Room 8), and on the terrain. A renewed board of directors has been elected at our last general assembly, April 30th: continuity has been provided for and a puff of fresh air instilled! Some important projects have already started that will help Action Saint-François increase its visibility, and its involvement during the coming months.

### ***Pierre Dansereau, vice-President***

We had reported, in our last edition of May 1998, that our organization had lost its general coordinator since the previous month of September. We succeeded in maintaining our activities, thanks to our volunteers' remarkable work and efforts. Some delay was unavoidable, notably in the delivery of our journal initially planned for mid June.

New perspectives for action are being proposed for the coming months, some of which have already been introduced to the general assembly. It goes without saying that we maintain our priorities for the clean up operations, which go on as planned with our coordinator (please, refer to the article on the subject). Before the end of the season, we shall endeavour to take stock of what remains to be done and thus, have a better idea of what action to take as concerns those sites that have already been listed.

Another perspective is our ongoing pursuit of new recruits in the municipalities usually visited. A very good team of strongly motivated young people is already at the difficult

and highly worthy task of making the different populations aware of the subject through door to door contacts. In order to illustrate this, let me point out in our journal the chat we had with Yesim Sökmen, a young and recent Turkish immigrant to our country, who is experimenting with a cultural integration process that has been sped up through the task described above.

As regards associative life, we are going forward with the creation of an electronic forum which is being activated in the context of the current debate on water management. A short article on the subject is published on the involvement of Action Saint-François in the ongoing historical process which will influence Québec's future policies on water management. Please note that a document is made available for consultation at our office, to those of you who are interested in finding out what is at stake in the management of water resources in Québec. We want to know what you think and what your opinions are on the subject; we shall then introduce as soon as next Fall, a memoir that would reflect our members' ideas on the subject.

A fourth perspective of action is the necessity of maintaining our alliance with other organizations. Let us mention our collaboration with the Association of the Tomifobia River for which, last winter, we worked on cleaning up a log jam south of Ayer's Cliff. We also have regular contacts with the RAPPEL (Regroupement pour la préservation de l'environnement des lacs\*) and the CREE (Conseil régional de l'environnement\*\*). Finally, Action Saint-François was recently invited to participate in the creation of a committee for the Magog River basin (please, take note of the article on the subject).

In ending this communication, I wish to thank the following persons who have left the board of directors as of the last general assembly: Ginette Favreau, Mansoor Danis, Simon Trépanier. Continuity has been established by Yannick Boulanger, Charles Coulombe (our new President), Jean-François Denis (Secretary), Robert-Léo Gendron, William Lucy (Treasurer), Guillaume Paul Lismoges, and your humble servant,

Ecologically yours,

\*Assembly for the preservation of the environment of lakes.

\*\*Regional Council for the Environment.

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## Clean up operations by Action Saint-François, in 1999

For the sixth consecutive year, Action Saint-François gets a series of clean up operations going on the banks of waterways and the adjacent meadows susceptible to flooding, that make up a part of the sloping basin of the Saint-François River.

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**Robert Léo Gendron**  
**Coordinator**

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This year, we have risen to the challenge of cleaning-up 16 waterways located in the following municipalities: Canton d'Eaton, Canton de Brompton, Canton de Hatley, Lennoxville, Saint-Denis-de-Brompton, Stoke and Waterville. It has been estimated that some 24 tons of scrap will be taken out of those waterways. In fact, 11 tons of scrap have already been removed in 9 weeks of operations. Often, a layer of scrap exposes another layer and we are often struck by the magnitude of certain sites when we start the task.

In 1999, our first clean up operation was held on the first of May and the last one should take place on the thirtieth of October; that represents 27 different operations, nine of which have been completed. Chores are done on Saturday morning, between eight o'clock in the morning and noon



Picture by Robert-Léo Gendron

*Our volunteers at the Key Stream in the Spring of 1999*

(unless it rains) or, on occasion, during the week. Everybody is welcome! Already, 60 volunteers have come forth, and many of them have come back more than once, claiming that they had enjoyed themselves! It really is on site that one can get the feel of the importance of what Action Saint-François is doing! Some are so astonished by certain sites that they immediately feel an urge to do something about making all the rubbish disappear. Others become conscious of the fact that our society in Québec (and all humans for that matter, when they can afford it), is a great consumer of goods that it cannot manage properly, nor ecologically, for that matter!

Action Saint-François'role is to provide everyone with an opportunity to intervene in the repair of the immense damage done by

decades of bad habits and neglect. Furthermore, our chores help prevent the further use of the banks of the waterways as dumping grounds, even if this phenomena is much less seen today. Problems caused by waste have not stopped growing by the year. That is why we must stike at the heart of the matter by diminishing our consumption of material goods. It is our way of live that we must change and we must do it fast, if we are not to sink under the pile of waste we have created.

So! if you want a great opportunity to participate and do a good deed, and if you want to meet interesting people who share your concerns about the environment, you are always welcome to join us in our Saturday morning chores. Call us at 563-5362.

Until we meet again.



**An appeal is made to members in order to produce a memoir**

## **A public consultation on water management in Québec**

<http://www.asf-estrie.org/asf/>

**A**ction Saint-François and its members are the creators of a water management concept that bears all the qualifications to become the norm in the field. To better define this approach, it has been decided to call for the collaboration of our members, in order to produce a memoir that will represent what Action Saint-François has accomplished so far. In the context of the ongoing public consultation on water management, an opportunity to speak out and make ourselves heard has arisen because a travelling commission from the Bureau des Audiences publiques en Environnement\* has been at work since last spring, throughout the territory of Québec.

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### **Luc Loignon**

Since 1992, the numerous efforts made by our organization to improve on the quality of water have almost become impossible to count. This state of affairs speaks for itself. Although the clean up operations along the banks of streams of the Saint-François River lower basin, has become its best known achievement, Action Saint-François has done far more. What's more, after having cleaned up 32 streams amongst the 316 on which an inventory has been made, down to earth action has been carried out in order to make the population become more aware of the situation. Let's just think of all the kiosks in our public schools and the information booths at all the shows for the population. Let's think also about the journal that the organization publishes in French and in English, which is

then sent to all the homes of its members. Thanks to its 800 members and the work accomplished on the terrain, it can be said that Action Saint-François has become both an expert in water management, and "the" creator of a concept to manage such a system.

### **Financial support**

In order to promote and facilitate the participation of other organizations in the public consultation being held on water management, the Ministry for the Environment has offered a financial support program. The project submitted by Action Saint-François has been retained and an amount of \$1500 allotted for the production of a memoir.

### **Elaboration of a memoir**

The board of directors has decided to submit a memoir to the

BAPE\*. To do so, it was decided to go forward with a formula that would promote the participation of all the members. A document has been written and submitted for discussion to all the members and sympathisers of the organization. In spite of the short delays and limited resource, the board decided upon an innovative formula which will promote the use of a chat line on the Internet.

### **An electronic forum**

Pierre Dansereau and Luc Loignon are busy at putting in place the process that will elaborate on the memoir submitted by Action Saint-François. Members and sympathisers are called upon to visit our site (<http://www.asf-estrie.org/asf/>) in order to consult with the information already available and to participate in the process being put into place. Pertinent information will be found there.

Members who wish to obtain a printed copy of the work document can order one by calling the office of Action Saint-François, at 563-5362. It will be a pleasure for us to comply.

Members who do not have access to the Internet and who wish to transmit their comments or the decisions they have taken, may make use of the regular mail system in order to convey them. Our address is: Action Saint-François, 18, rue Wellington Nord, C.P. 291, Sherbrooke (Québec), J1H5J1.



## DOOR TO DOOR: a school for integration

Since the very beginning of the organisation in 1992, door-to-door has been an essential part of the activities of Action St. Francois (ASF). It is an opportunity for us to visit our members and to sensitize new people about our action. Besides, the funds collected are essential to pay the basic expenses of ASF (office, truck, equipments, telephone, etc.). Your annual contribution, your support as volunteers and the donations of the citizens show the interest of the public for the organisation and make us eligible to government aid programs. Furthermore, door-to-door is an excellent opportunity for a lot of young people as their first part-time job and to gain an interesting experience to work with public. To illustrate this aspect, we had in interview with Yesim Sokmen, a young lady of Turkish origin who has been living in Sherbrooke for less than one year and who has been working for ASF as recruiter



Picture by Majid Blai

Yesim Sökmen

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### **Interviewed by Pierre Dansereau**

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ASF : To begin, Yesim, can you please tell us what brought you to Sherbrooke?

Yesim : I came here the first time in 1995 for a traineeship organised by an international student association. I was looking for an opportunity to spend a couple of months in another country and Canada attracted me a lot. I had seen

documentaries about this country and I was impressed by the vastness of wilderness. Also, I knew that French was one of the official languages of Canada and I wanted to improve my knowledge of this language. I came to Sherbrooke for a traineeship of three months, finally I stayed nine months. To tell you the truth, I fell in love with the region of Sher-

brooke. I made a lot of good friends and I appreciated a lot the importance that people give to nature and environment in general. Then, I went back to Turkey to finish my university studies, but I never forgot my friends in Quebec and living in Canada attracted me still. So I decided to come back with an immigrant visa. I arrived last fall. First, I looked for a job in Montreal, but after a couple of months, I realized that I was missing Sherbrooke too much, so I came to spend the winter... As you see I am still here.

ASF : How come did you start to do door-to-door for ASF?

Yesim : One of my friends who is very much devoted to this organi-

sation told me about it. As I love the nature, I was interested in working for ASF. Obviously, I wouldn't become rich with this job, but I believe that I gained(?acquired?) a very special experience doing door-to-door for ASF.

ASF : So tell us about this experience.

Yesim : In the beginning, I wondered what the reaction of the people will be and I should admit that I was very much surprised with their welcome. It was not easy for my to tell people that we needed money, but luckily, the motivation was there as I believed in our action. I found out that the public is open and intersted in the subject and that many people do not hesitate to open their door and listen. What was interesting for me is getting in contact with many different people seeing them at their door and being invited to enter so that they might listen to me more attentively. Since my arrival in Sherbrooke, I met mostly people with whom I share the same cultural and musical interest as well as certain values. Doing door-to-door, I had to opportunity to discover other types of people that I would never meet otherwise. I talked to many Quebecers from various cultural and economic backgrounds and I realised that the sensibility to

environment may be a good point of understanding between these people who are obviously different in other

aspects. Finally, another interesting point for me, I improved my French amazingly during the last couple of months!

## Something new for the protection of the Magog river

**A** very important committee for the lower basin of this section of the Magog River, which is downstream from Deauville and upstream from Sherbrooke, was formed recently at a meeting at the Rock Forest city Hall. Bank dwellers along this river, have long been known to endure its slow deterioration as a result of siltation.

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**Pierre Dansereau**

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As an organization that represents 800 citizens from the region, Action Saint-François was invited to participate in the activities of the new committee that will regroup all those who are most involved in the matter at municipal level, at the MRC of Sherbrooke, at the regional level of the Ministry of the Environment, at the Regional Council for the environment, CHARMES, RAPPEL\* and the Association of the Magog River bank dwellers.

The meeting that took place, on the nineteenth of July last, was mainly led by Mr Norbert Gillis, from the association of river dwellers and Mr Robert Benoit, Deputy for Orford. The

answer provided by the mayors and the Prefect of the MRC was positive in that all claimed to have finally become aware of the damage caused by erosion, and by the necessity of providing protection to vegetation along riverways and ditches.

I was the representative for Action Saint-François and I asserted our pledge to offer protection to the Magog River and added that we were ready to take part in clean up operations on the terrain, as we had done in that same sector for the clean up of the old dump on Nick's Stream. Here, at last, might we see an opportunity that should allow us, within the coming years, to start working at restoring river banks with the collaboration of town councils and proprietors along the river banks.

Another committee meeting is to be held at the beginning of September; you surely will hear about it through our main regional media. To be followed....

\* RAPPEL: Assembly for the Protection of the Environment and the Lakes



# The new members of Action Saint-François from October the 1st, to June 30, 1999

## Ascot

CÔTÉ, VÉRONIQUE

## Fleurimont

MILLETTE, ÉRIC  
ST-JEAN, MARTIN

## Lennoxville

AUCLAIR, LUC  
BERTRAN, JOHN C.  
BOSSÉ, HÉLÈNE  
CHABOT, LINDA  
JONES, NORMAN  
KERDALL, DOUG  
LABRECQUE, DOMINIQUE  
MARTEL, JEAN-FRANÇOIS  
MAYRAND, COLETTE  
MC KINLEY, DONA  
MCCONNELL, BURTON  
PICARD, GUYLAINE  
RENSON, NICOLE  
SPARKES, M. AND J.  
STANEK, ELA

## Magog

RANGER, PAULINE

## Rock Forest

AUDET, DENIS  
AYOTTE, MARTINE  
BOUDREAU, JEAN-CLAUDE  
BOULANGER, PIERRE  
BOULANGER, STÉPHANE  
CADIEUX, JEAN-FRANÇOIS  
CASTONGUAY, REYNALD  
CUSTEAU, MARIO  
DÉSILETS, OLIVIER  
DESLAURIERS, MICHEL  
DUBUC, NICOLE  
DUCHARME, ÉRIC  
DUCHARME, LINDA  
FAVREAU, GINETTE  
FORTIN, DANIEL  
FRASER, MARC  
GAGNON, HÉLÈNE  
GINGUES, LOUISE  
JACQUES, DANIEL  
JOLIN, GINETTE  
LABRÈCHE-GAUTHIER, LISE  
LABRECQUE, LINE  
LACHANCE, YVES  
LUNEYS, RENÉE  
MALTAIS, STEEVE  
NANTEL, GILLES

PELLERIN, GILLES  
PELLETIER, JEAN-GUY  
POULIOT, CHANTAL  
PRÉFONTAINE, PIERRE  
SAUVÉ, JOCELYNE  
SIMONEAU, DIANE  
ST-LAURENT, FRANCINE  
ST-PIERRE, DANIEL  
ST-PIERRE, MARIO  
THIBAUT, RONALD  
TURCOTTE, FRANCE  
VILLENEUVE, LOUIS  
VINCENT, MARTINE  
VISCIOGLIOSI, CHANTAL

## Sherbrooke

ABRAN, YVES  
AUGER, SYLVAIN  
AURAY, SERGE  
BAILLARGEON, BRIGITTE  
BANKS, LAURA  
BARTHÉLÈME, CHARLES  
BEAUCHESNE, STÉPHANE  
BEAUDOIN, JEAN  
BÉLANGER, MANON  
BELLAVANCE, BENOIT  
BERNIER SMITH, FRAN-  
COISE  
BILODEAU, PIERRE  
BLAIS, ANDRÉ-RÉMY  
BLAIS, ÉLISABETH  
BOISVENU, DIANE  
BRISEBOIS, MAURICE  
BROCH, SYLVIE  
BRODEUR, MARYSE  
BUREAU FORTIER, LISE  
CADMAN, THOMAS A.  
CHAREST, FRANCINE  
CÔTÉ, BERTRANDS  
CÔTÉ, JACQUES  
CÔTÉ, GUILLAUME  
CÔTÉ, YVES  
DEMERS, ALAIN  
DESMARAIS, VINCENT  
DUBÉ, DANIEL  
DUBÉ, YVON  
DUMAS, BRIGITTE  
GAGNÉ, PIERRETTE  
GAGNON, RAYMOND  
GAUTHIER, CÉLINE  
GENDRON, ROBERT LÉO  
GUERTIN, JEAN-FRANÇOIS  
HÉBERT, RENÉ



*Some volunteer youths enthused by one single day at the Key Stream.*

LABORDE, PIERRE  
LACHARITÉ, LOUISE  
LACROIX, CHARLES  
LANGEVIN, JUDITH  
LAPOINTE, BERNARD  
LEGER, JEAN-FRANÇOIS  
LEMAY, NICOLE  
LEMIEUX, MARTIN  
LÉTOURNEAU, SIMON  
LONGPRÉ, MARC  
MARQUIS, RICHARD  
MERCIER, MICHEL  
MERMINOD, HENRIETTE  
NOËL, RICHARD  
PARÉ, DOMINIQUE  
PLANTE, DENIS

POTHIER, ANOUK  
POTVIN, DANIEL  
PREFONTAINE, CHANTAL  
QUIRION, ROCH  
RICHARD, LÉOPOLD  
RIOU, MARTIN  
SAINTONGE, YOHANN  
SIMONEAU, ALAIN  
TÉTREAU, PIERRE  
THEORET, SUSAN  
TRUDEL, DR. LOUIS  
VACHON, RENÉ  
VAILLANCOURT, MIREILLE  
VIAU, HÉLÈNE  
VINCENT, BERTRAND  
VITON, FRÉDÉRIC

YARGEAU, SYLVAIN

## St-Élie d'Orford

BLANCHETTE, MICHEL  
COUTURE, GUYLAINE  
DÉCARY, JEAN  
LACHANCE, PIERRE  
ROBILLARD, DANIEL  
TREMBLAY, LOUISE

## Stoke

HÉBERT, LISE

**137 people have join for the first time, Action Saint-François, since October 1<sup>st</sup> 1998.**

**Les membres qui ont une adresse électronique peuvent nous la faire parvenir en  
envoyant un message au [asf@asf-estrie.org](mailto:asf@asf-estrie.org)**

**Consultez le site web d'Action Saint-François à l'adresse suivante :  
<http://www.asf-estrie.org/asf/>**



**ACTION  
ST-FRANÇOIS**

C.P. 291  
Sherbrooke (Québec) J1H 5J1 - (819) 563-5362  
ISSN 1197-043x  
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**Lay out :** Luc Loignon.

ACTION SAINT-FRANÇOIS A NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION FOUNDED IN AUGUST 1992 BRINGS TOGETHER CITIZENS CONVINCED OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT. THE GROUP IS INTERESTED IN THE RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION OF AQUATIC MILIEUS OF THE SAINT-FRANÇOIS RIVER WATERSHED. CLEAN UP, EROSION CONTROL AND REPLANTING PROJECTS ALONG WATERWAYS AND FLOOD PLAINS ARE ORGANIZED BY ACTION SAINT-FRANÇOIS. WE WANT TO HEIGHTEN AWARENESS OF THE POPULATION TO THE NECESSITY TO ACT IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE HYDROLOGICAL NETWORK OF OUR TERRITORY. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE 25\$. FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL US AT (819) 563-5362..