

WHO WON THE FIRST DEBATE?

Snap poll aside, PQ had rough night, Mulcair argues **A6**



CANADIENS BUZZ BUILDS

Fans aren't only ones with high hopes: Cowan **NP9**



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POSTMEDIA

Bilingual election cards to be readied

Judge says English reminders needed, but no time to revise other mailouts

KALINA LAFRAMBOISE

Élections Québec must prepare bilingual reminder cards to mail to voters ahead of the provincial election, but it won't have to send out English versions of the registration notice and voter's guide, a Quebec Superior Court judge ruled on Wednesday. The decision came after a hearing for

a lawsuit against the Quebec government and Élections Québec took place last week over French-only mailouts. Judge Sylvain Lussier ruled on part of the legal challenge, partially granting the demand for a provisional interlocutory injunction. "The evidence indicates a serious risk that a large number of anglophone seniors will be unable to exercise their

right to vote due to a lack of understandable information," Lussier wrote. The 10-day injunction means the provincial election authority must prepare the reminder cards, but Lussier says the statutory date for mailing "falls outside" the duration of his ruling. "If necessary, the parties may appear before the court to seek a renewal of the order, at which time the court could order the mailing," Lussier wrote. He noted the court, however, "will not order the mailing of an English version of the registration notices

and the voter's guide. The evidence on record convinces the court that this would be an unrealistic and extremely costly undertaking." Last week, a lawyer for Élections Québec told the court it was too late to send bilingual versions of those two documents. Élections Québec announced on Sept. 1 it wouldn't mail out English-language versions of the provincial election guide, the notice of voter registration and the reminder card. The French-only mailers will include a QR code and contact information to access English versions. SEE ELECTION ON **A2**



JOHN MAHONEY

GIVING BACK IN GRATITUDE

Claudia Martino, 25, spends time with Yacoub Ghantous, 10, in the hematology-oncology day treatment centre at the Montreal Children's Hospital. It's a place Martino knows well: She was treated there for cancer. Twice. She tells *Susan Schwartz* about returning as a volunteer. **A4**

With Santé Québec's fate uncertain, front-line staff fear another reform

ABBY McLAUGHLIN

Dr. Raja Hatem says getting a new cardiac device into his Sacré-Coeur lab used to take about two weeks. Now, he says, it can mean repeated emails and layers of approval. Santé Québec was created to make Quebec's sprawling health network more efficient by putting day-to-day operations under one provincial organization. Less than two years later,

the Parti Québécois has promised to abolish it and return more authority to the regions if elected. The reality inside hospitals is less tidy. "Please give power back to the people who are doing the actual work with the patients," Hatem said. Hatem, an interventional cardiologist at Sacré-Coeur Hospital, recently tried to introduce a Ringer perfusion balloon catheter, a device used during complex coronary procedures. Before

Santé Québec, he said, he could submit a local request, assess it with colleagues and, if they wanted to adopt it, have it available within weeks. Now, because the device falls outside existing purchasing arrangements, the request is on hold. "If I keep pushing and I keep yelling and writing emails, I'm going to end up getting my product," Hatem said. "I'm losing so much time just for pure administrative reasons."

Centralized buying can save money, Hatem said, but he argues province-wide rules can be too rigid for specialized hospitals. "Every single hospital has a completely different population, completely different expertise," he said. At a Quebec City hospital, a clinical nurse described the pressure from another part of the system. "Nurses are tired and some take sick time for their health, so the already low resources become even lower," she said. She said her hospital has frozen the hiring of new nurses, with existing staff increasingly being asked to do more with less. SEE SANTÉ QUÉBEC ON **A3**

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