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# Keep the Seine clean



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## ST. VITAL

It was a sunny morning in August when four River Keepers met with Ryan from Shurwood Tree Services.

The City had approved the cutting of seven large trees that were partially or fully obstructing the river.

The team moved quickly from tree to tree allowing Ryan, an approved arborist, to make the necessary cuts. At each site, a rowboat was carried to the river and dragged across several feet of muck to reach the water. The river was so low the boat had to be pulled over mudflats at times.

The cutting was done in three hours. It took another day to haul the cut pieces out of

the muck. The large woody debris was left on the riverbank to enhance wildlife habitat.

Every year, Save Our Seine spends about \$35,000 to look after 26 kilometres of river and its associated greenway. A quick calculation determined that it cost approximately \$2,000 to remove the fallen trees. Shurwood generously donated the arborist's time again this year.

Removing natural debris like fallen trees from the river is one thing. Having to remove garbage from the river every year is more difficult to accept. As the river dried up, more large trash became visible and accessible. By the end of the season, the River Keepers had pulled out 32 shopping carts, 21 tires, seven construction signs, five bicycles, two televisions, two homemade docks, several pallets, and one large mattress.

A few years ago, I paid \$10 to have a tattered old armchair picked up by the city and taken to the dump. The same low fee still



Photo by Michele Kading

**Workers cut seven large trees that were partially obstructing the Seine River. Save Our Seine often contends with garbage and other debris that should be disposed of properly.**

applies for a mattress, television, or bicycle. It cost over \$1,200 to pull the water-logged mattress from the river.

Speedy Cart Services Ltd. (204-786-7600)

picks up abandoned shopping carts and returns them to stores at no charge. It cost an estimated \$5,000 to remove shopping carts from the river.

Unfortunately, there is no "Seine River BIZ" to keep the river and greenway clean. The provincial Urban Green Team program has provided funding since 1996. Casera Credit Union has been the main corporate donor since 2007. Additional corporate and individual donors are needed in 2018 to ensure this unique and valuable program continues.

Why contribute? To borrow from my favourite MasterCard commercial:

- One water-logged mattress: \$1,200;
- 46 bags of litter: \$6,000;
- 32 shopping carts: \$5,000;
- 21 tires: \$3,100;
- Seven large trees: \$2,000

One clean and navigable river: priceless!

*Michele Kading is a community correspondent for St. Vital and the executive director of Save Our Seine — [www.saveourseine.com](http://www.saveourseine.com)*