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Examiner
 Transcontinental

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Local News

**COLD SNAP
 BREAKS HYDRO
 LOAD RECORD**

Martin C. Barry

Exremely low temperatures recorded in the Montreal region last month resulted in a costly new record peak load for Hydro Westmount.

On Jan. 15 at 5:30 p.m., 87.25 megawatts used by the power utility exceeded the record of 85 megawatts, which had been set in January the year before.

Westmount borough officials were happy to report that the electrical grid held up extremely well during the cold snap, with no power failures reported. But the bad news was that the one-time peak load resulted in a penalty of \$283,000 which Hydro Westmount must now pay Hydro Québec, its supplier.

During periods of intense cold when the temperature drops below -18 degrees Celsius, Hydro Westmount has been encouraging Westmounters to reduce power consumption during peak hours. At such times, sandwich board ads warning residents of the situation are placed in public places throughout Westmount. Although the penalties incurred for exceeding the consumption limit are not reflected back on clients' electrical bills, Hydro Westmount is unable to re-invest those amounts in the power network's infrastructure as it normally would.

Marc Roy, Hydro Westmount's director of operations, said the impact of last month's penalty would not be passed on directly to Hydro Westmount customers. In fact, Hydro Westmount cannot transfer penalties to clients' bills.

The company has always managed to operate in the black. Westmount used to benefit when it was an independent municipality. Roy noted, however, that Hydro Westmount's profits now go directly to the megacity administration.

(continued on page 13)



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**SILENCING THE
 TRAINS?**

*Federal government may grant communities
 some say in regulating railway noise.*

Page 3

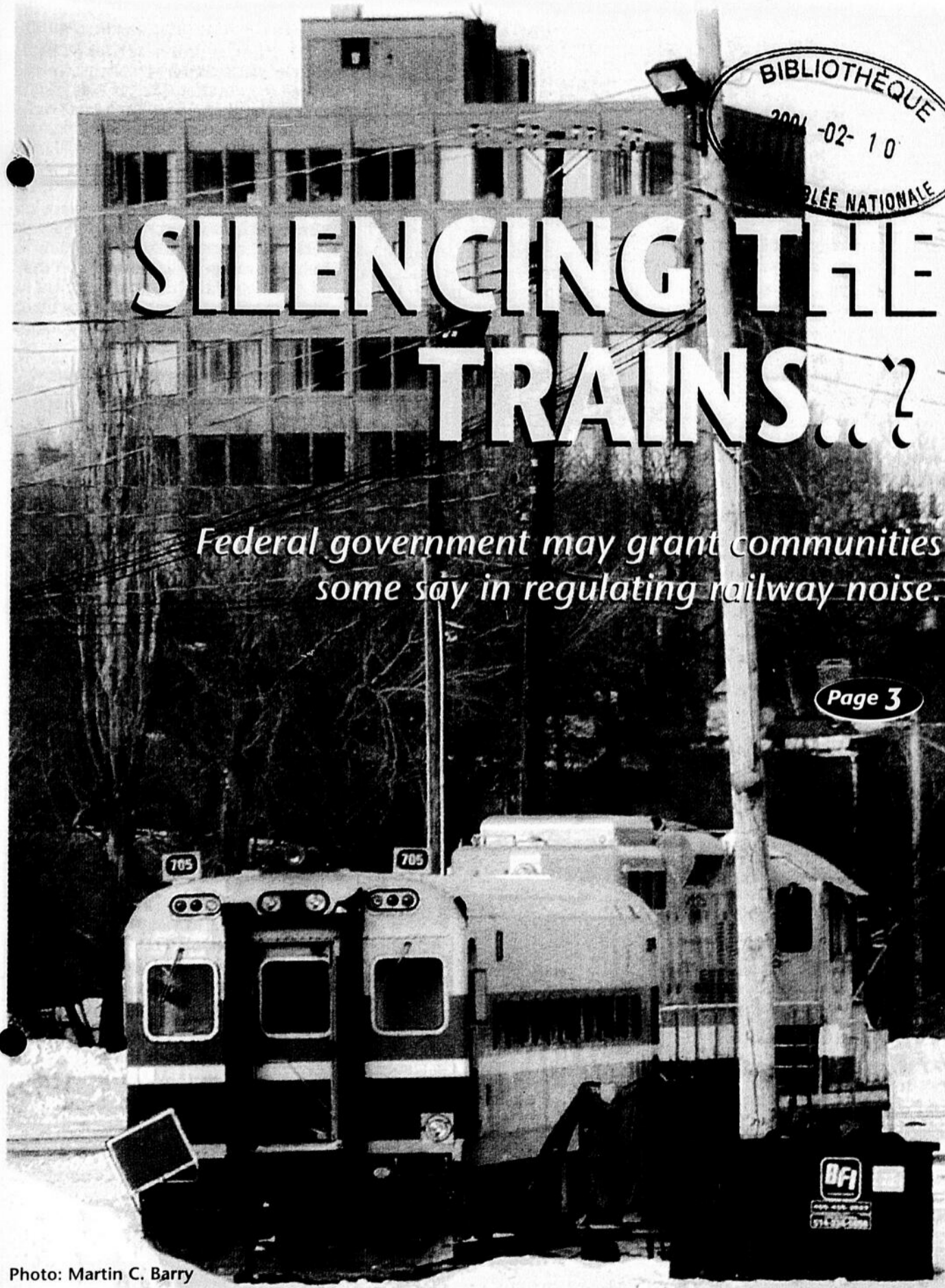


Photo: Martin C. Barry



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POLICE DEAL WITH MORE VEHICLE BREAK-INS

Martin C. Barry

A rash of grab-and-run car break-ins, which started last year with vehicles parked on streets surrounding Westmount Square, is continuing.

Between Jan. 16 and 21, a dozen such incidents were reported to local police.

"Since Christmas, this area has been targeted," said Constable Julie Jutras, community relations officer at Station 12. She adding that the affluence of the area and its proximity to downtown may be attracting the thieves.

"It could be somebody who lives in this area, somebody who doesn't live too far away, who goes to school in this area or something of that kind," she said.

On Jan. 21, a car parked at Greene Avenue and de Maisonneuve Boulevard was broken into through a rear window around 8:30 a.m. The thieves made off with \$1,600 worth of valuables, including a camera and a sports bag. The same *modus operandi* was used in all cases. According to Jutras, police have had little success so far in coming up with any suspects.

"We did follow somebody the other day who was wiping off cars and looking in, but he never attempted to break in," she said. Last year, police did make some arrests related to the incidents, she added.

Theft at Westmount Y

When working out at the local gym, always store valuables in a locker that's been secured with a padlock, a member of the Westmount YMCA learned the

hard way recently.

While the woman was exercising and then taking a shower at the Y on the evening of Jan. 16, someone removed her coat from her locker—which had no padlock—took out a wallet, then placed the coat back in another locker nearby.

The woman found the coat after searching through the other lockers, but never recovered the wallet.

"She lost her wallet, cards and some money," said Jutras. There were no witnesses and police so far have no suspects in the case.

Burglaries on Claremont

During the afternoon of Tuesday, Jan. 20, two homes on Claremont Avenue were broken into. The suspects, who entered the first house through a window which they smashed, used a flower box they found there to break windows and gain entry to the second house.

More than \$7,000 worth of valuables, including jewelry and currency, was stolen from the second home. Police were unable to determine the value of property taken from the first home because the owners were on vacation

and could not confirm what was taken.

Purses stolen in local malls

Purse snatchers have been active at Westmount Square and Alexis Nihon Plaza, where four incidents were recently reported.

"People are sitting in restaurants and a person will come in, take off his jacket, put it down on the floor, then pick it up with the purse at the same time and leave," Jutras said, explaining the technique typically used by the thieves.

In other incidents, pickpockets simply reached into an open purse and fished out a wallet. The Nickels restaurant at the plaza has been the scene of a number of recent purse snatching incidents, Jutras added. People taking the metro at Atwater have also been targeted.

Jutras offered the following advice: "Be careful with your purse, keep it on you at all times and keep an eye on it. People are very careless about that. They'll leave their purse hanging on the back of their chair. They'll put it on the floor, go to the bathroom. come back—and the purse is gone."

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DEMERGER CAMPAIGNERS HIT THE STREETS

Martin C. Barry

Défusion Westmount's demerger campaign is being waged "on the ground... door to door... one household at a time," says Westmount Municipal Association president Kathleen Duncan.

"Canvassers are absolutely crucial," Duncan said this week, following the official opening late last month of Défusion Westmount's campaign headquarters on Ste. Catherine Street, which the WMA is helping to sponsor.

Défusion Westmount hopes to convince as many Westmounters as possible to lend their support to the demerger cause in an upcoming referendum on the issue. More than 98 per cent of Westmounters favour merger, according to a public consultation made by the former City of Westmount three years ago. A register of residents' signatures, the first step toward a demerger referendum, will be opening at Westmount borough office, probably in May.

Défusion Westmount, which is renting office space in a storefront during the campaign, is concentrating most of its efforts for now on the recruiting and training of residents for canvassing duties.



Westmount Municipal Association president Kathleen Duncan (right) watches as Judy Clark of Lansdowne Avenue signs on to support the Westmount demerger effort.

As of last Monday, Défusion Westmount had 100 canvassers working on its behalf, about half of whom underwent

a brief training session. "When they come in, we sit them down and explain to them exactly what is in the kit and what each part of the kit is for—what they're to do with it," said Duncan.

At each household contacted, the canvassers are trying to determine whether occupants are of voting age, are on side with demerger, or whether they're against it or undecided.

The kit the canvassers carry contains registration forms, information cards and blue ribbons (symbolic of the Montreal Island municipal demerger movement) to be attached near supporters' homes with their permission, somewhere visible from the street. There is a \$5 registration fee per household for joining Défusion Westmount. When possible, canvassers are also gathering e-mail addresses so supporters can be kept up to date.

As for the requirements to become a Défusion Westmount canvasser, Duncan said it's important that "they must have good, warm clothing, for starters, and that they believe demerger is what they want for Westmount."

Arlene Sproule, a resident who is working as a poll captain supervising canvassers in the western part of the borough said the response she received so

far has been overwhelmingly positive.

"Most people are extremely sympathetic that we're out in such cold weather," she said, adding that the frigid temperature last week was making canvassing more difficult for many of the volunteers. "Because the weather's been so bad, I think it has slowed things down. Mostly we've been going in the evenings, and it's been pretty brutal."

Bob Asch, another poll captain who was out contacting residents on The Boulevard last week, said the response was 100 per cent in favour of demerger. "Everybody, in effect, said 'come on in' when we announced what we were there for," he said.

With the overwhelming support for demerger, Sproule has run into just one resident so far who wasn't completely certain where he stood. "He had been for the merger, but now he was wavering and thinking he was more for demerging," she said. "I would say most of the people have been for it."

• The Défusion Westmount office is located at 4431 Ste. Catherine St. W. between Metcalfe and Kensington. The phone number is 931-0885.

Westmount could have input on commuter train noise

Martin C. Barry

Despite a setback in efforts by municipalities to regulate noise, vibrations and pollution produced by nearby railway lines, the federal government may yet grant communities like Westmount some say in the matter.

With a busy train line and a partly active railway yard located nearby, residents of Westmount have been affected for decades by the various sounds, smells and reverberations of round-the-clock train operations.

Over the years, hundreds of complaints have come from residents of lower Westmount about noise from passing train engines, as well as from train maintenance done in the Glen Yards. Even though the yards are being used for much less maintenance than in previous years, an increase in the number of commuter trains running along the line has kept the noise level relatively high.

The Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA), a federal body dealing with issues concerning railways and other modes of transportation, ruled in 1996 that municipalities could issue compliance orders to railroads causing problems with their operations next to residential areas.

Four years ago, however, the Federal Court of Appeal stripped the CTA of its powers, maintaining that the Canadian constitution protects the railroads. Since then, municipalities across Canada have been lobbying and passing resolutions urging the federal government to restore the transport agency's powers. Now, however, a new federal transportation law is expected to be enacted by the Martin gov-

ernment with revisions.

Among the shortcomings in the old legislation noted by municipal representatives such as Westmount Borough Councillor Cynthia Lulham (who is a member of the Canadian Federation of Municipalities' transportation committee), the complaints process is too procedurally heavy. It places the burden on citizens to demonstrate to the CTA that all collaborative measures with the railways have been exhausted.

According to Lulham, Westmount tried using its anti-idling bylaw (normally applied in cases involving motor vehicles) in an attempt to regulate the various nuisances caused by train engines, which are often left running in the Glen Yards. The borough had also previously tried enforcing an anti-noise bylaw. However, the cases were all dismissed.

"The courts ruled that the Canadian Transportation Act does not give jurisdiction over noise pollution and vibration to cities—there's no mandate in it," said Lulham.

The federal government is proposing in Bill C-26 that the Canadian Transportation Act be amended to require that railways keep any adverse noise to a minimum when constructing or operating a railway, "taking into consideration the requirements of normal railway operations, services and the interests of respective communities."

Lulham believes that municipalities need to develop a cooperative framework with the railways if the issue is to be resolved. "Often they've co-existed for a long time together," she said. "So it's how can we create understanding between railway operations and the municipalities

with people who are living in proximity to trains?"

"We're not going to get the trains removed, but how can we get schedules

and even the type of equipment they use that creates less vibration and pollution? How can we get it to work together so that it works out for everybody?"

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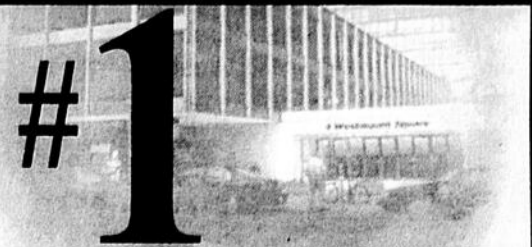
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A four-way improvement

For the past few months, motorists driving along the southwestern edge of Westmount have noticed a major change in the traffic lights at the corner of Claremont and de Maisonneuve.

Instead of the conventional lights that were in place for years, the intersection has now become a four-way stop with a perpetually flashing red light.

Commentary

Wayne Larsen

e-mail: larsenw@transcontinental.ca



What a great improvement! Now, with a four-way stop, drivers have to be much more alert. Whoever arrives at the intersection first has the right-of-way, so people have to pay attention to all corners, not just plough blindly ahead at the first sight of a green light. The old way, with conventional lights in place, that intersection was a menace to pedestrians—especially those heading east into Westmount along de Maisonneuve. For some reason, an unusually high number of drivers turning south down Claremont/Ste. Catherine would suddenly turn extremely aggressive. Perhaps it was the heady anticipation of that exhilarating thrill one gets when hitting that speedway-like curve onto Ste. Catherine Street, but far too many drivers took that green light as an open invitation to hit the gas. It was not uncommon to see cars lurching ahead and actually turning right in front of someone who was already halfway across the street.

After countless scrapes with these urban menaces, about three years ago I resolved to walk across that intersection only on red lights. This unconventional strategy worked like a charm. Never again did I have to exchange one-fingered unpleasanties with a cab driver or ask a seething woman if a house had just fallen on her sister. I may have turned a few heads—but I was much safer.

The new four-way stop may not put an end to all reckless motorists eager to let it rip along Ste. Catherine Street, but it does seem to have a more calming effect on them.



NOT ALL BY NUMBERS

Civic Alert

Don Wedge



Linda Gyulai, the Gazette's municipal reporter, is this week attempting to solve the merger puzzle by comparing services before and after the annexation. It's a massive job. The nine new boroughs and, especially to centre city have yet to show the famous "Montreal dysfunctionality." The 26 annexed cities still need to prove that they have not been infected by it.

At this stage, a comparative analysis may be like trying to settle the score on a football game when we are not yet at half time and the rules are being changed to benefit a desperate home team every few months.

Gyulai's big front-page articles coincided with the delivery of mega tax bills and Paul Martin's promises of real money for cities.

"At the least, the attention to municipalities will stimulate debate and

interest for the register and referendum," said veteran media observer John Sancton.

The seven-day series—due to run until Sunday—puts more attention on city halls than even the 2001 elections. It eclipses the Tremblay versus Bourque campaign that, by the time the actual polling came around, was mainly an unpopularity contest.

Gyulai's series is an attempt to go beyond "the overcooked slogans, competing absolutes and politicians who declare their side to be the truth."

She hopes to solve the puzzle with numbers. "If one were to compare the level of services delivered before the mergers and today, would the success of the merger be determined?" she wrote on Monday. Would comparisons of road salt use, library hours and flowers planted determine the forced-mergers' success?

Not likely. While democracy is impossible without money, which means taxes and budgets, statistics alone do not define a community.

Admittedly, numbers do have a certain fascination, however. On Tuesday, Gyulai reported that Montreal pretends it gets less snow

(180 centimetres on average) than most other places (Westmount, 214; Côte St. Luc, 230, Environment Canada, 214). She also unveiled another potential nightmare: the blue collar union wants snow clearing to be centralized!

Based on the first two days' installations, Gyulai's investigation awakens the realization that the old cities (and districts of the old Montreal) were different for good, natural reasons. How wrong were forced mergers!

Needs differ. A large part of Westmount is built on a steep hill and cleaning of snow in winter, dirt in summer and leaves in fall is rather more challenging than say St. Leonard, which is flatter. Lachine has the problem of finding safe parking near its train station; Westmount has already made a small green park in front of our station.

Ready access to downtown means we have no need for a major art gallery or entertainment palace. Homework, leisure study and 13 schools justify a major investment in our library. So far we have managed without a large indoor pool. Some think that the time has come to build one, while other want more ice facilities.

These are local needs and decisions about them are best made locally.

Buying a home is the big investment in most people's lives, closely followed for many by cars, the super toys of the age. Where we live and how we get to the supermarket, school, and work are the big life-style decisions that dominate a family's lifetime.

I often think that the key measure for any municipality is what it does—or does not do—for children. That more than numbers determines the Brownie points.

Looking for apples-to-apples numbers is going to be very frustrating. Municipalities do not manufacture tires or sell the latest fashions or make profits. They deliver intangible. Feeling of security, neighbourliness, access, clean water, trees, places to (politely) let off steam.

It is called quality of life. They are hard to measure except as an appreciation index and that doesn't show up in balance sheets and budget tables.

• Don Wedge compiles the Civic Alert e-mail newsletter.

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Bush re-election far from guaranteed

Uncensored

Tommy Schnurmacher



George W. Bush is in trouble. While it is true that his administration has succeeded in toppling the Taliban and capturing Saddam Hussein, that may not be enough to get him re-elected.

The Democratic vote will hold firm. Americans who voted for a lacklustre candidate like Al Gore in 2000 haven't changed their mind about Bush since then. If anything, they hate the man more than ever. They will have no problem voting for Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts.

Nor will all those fresh-faced young people who may originally have supported former Vermont Governor Howard Dean.

A desperate Dean has now taken to describing Kerry as a Republican. This is obviously meant as a grievous insult and Kerry, of course, makes a point of demanding an apology.

It's all for show. For all intents and purposes, Kerry now has the nomination in the bag. Being labelled a

Republican may very well help him to appeal to an ever-increasing number of Republican voters who are unhappy with George Dubya.

Kerry only needs a handful of disgruntled Republicans and independents to vote Bush right out of the White House.

Let's face it. Bush has given his supporters plenty of reasons to be angry.

The 9/11 attack on America was planned, financed and perpetrated by Saudi citizens and Bush is still way too cozy with the Saudi royals.

Isolationist Republicans are none too pleased that more than 500 American soldiers have been killed in a multi-billion dollar Iraq war, with weapons of mass destruction nowhere to be found.

There's also a problem of money. Bush may have a personal war chest swimming in tens of millions, but the United States is also swimming.

Swimming in massive debt. Bush has turned out to be a social conservative and fiscal liberal who is spending billions of dollars America does not have.

Republicans would never switch from Bush to a man like Dean who is so out of tune with Middle America that he felt it imperative to point out that Osama Bin Laden was innocent until proven guilty.

But Kerry is another story. Dean's a draft dodger who would rather ski than fight, but when it comes to bravery in the field, Kerry has it all over Bush.

Republicans will never admit it in public, but you can bet a hanging chad that many of them are disappointed that Bush is spending billions of dollars of borrowed money on an ungrateful Iraq. Others are upset with a president whose job-creation record is abysmal. Fiscal conservatives are unnerved by a president who does not seem to have the slightest interest in maintaining a balanced budget.

In his State of the Union address, Bush found time to talk about steroids—hardly the most pressing issue facing the average American.

Dean would have been easy for Bush to beat. Kerry is another story.

On the day that the United States captured Saddam Hussein, the second saddest man in the world was Howard Dean.

On the day the Dean campaign fell apart, the second saddest man in the United States was George W. Bush.

• Tommy Schnurmacher is heard weekdays 9 a.m. to noon on CJAD 800 Radio. His e-mail address is tommys@total.net.

Old News

(from the examiner archives)



One Year Ago
January 30, 2003

GOOD NEIGHBOURS: As a way of expressing its gratitude towards its partners and Westmount neighbours, the new Downtown YMCA will host its official opening next Wednesday, Feb. 5. Present at the event will be Borough President Karin Marks and representatives from each of the Y's partners, including the CLSC and the Régie régionale de la Santé. The Downtown Y, a housing project for people seeking refugee status in Canada, was opened in November 2001 and occupies the former Reddy Memorial Hospital building on Tupper Street. Since its inception, the centre has made painstaking efforts to earn the approval of the Westmount community, and on Wednesday, it wishes to respond. 'We want to thank our partners and the Westmount borough,' said residence director Pascal Alatorre. 'We want to show that we have stayed here more than 15 months and everything has been good and we have good relationships with our neighbours.'

Five Years Ago
January 28, 1999

PRIESTS' FARM CONDOS: "Plans for a sprawling condominium development on a tract of historical land has alarmed a number of Westmounters living near the city's eastern border. But since the property in question—commonly known as Priest's Farm—is entirely in Montreal, the City of Westmount may have little say in how the land is ultimately used. Montreal developer Le Groupe Lépine plans to build 74 residential units on the 25,732 square metres of sloping terrain bordered along the north by St. Sulpice and Piquet Roads, Atwater Avenue to the east and the end of de Lavigne Road to the west. One of the residents' primary concerns is that Lépine's current plans call for the opening of de Lavigne Road as a throughway to Atwater Avenue. This, they fear, would turn the quiet cul-de-sac into another busy traffic artery leading downtown."

Fifteen Years Ago
January 26, 1989

ROTARY BUYS UNITY CENTRE: "The Greene Avenue Unity Club building is on the verge of becoming a community centre, thanks to the combined efforts of the Rotary Club of Westmount and local citizens. A tentative agreement has been reached whereby the Rotary Club will purchase the building at 1090 Greene from the Unity Boys and Girls' Club for \$1 and considerations. Rotary will retain ownership of the building—which it erected in 1949 on land donated by the

city and gave to Unity—while turning over day-to-day management to a new board that will run the facility as a community centre, Rotary president James Griffin said Tuesday."

Twenty Years Ago
January 26, 1984

KIDS' PRESS CONFERENCE: "Mayor Brian Gallery reflected on his first two months in office Monday, singling out taxes and parking as two problems in the city. He said the job of mayor took more time than he realized and that it was 'very hard' for him to know if he would seek a second term in office. The 'trade secrets' were revealed in a candid interview at city hall with two 11-year-old Westmount reporters, Thea Grivakis and Elizabeth Gallery, the mayor's youngest daughter. They represented the Eager Beaver, a publication of Miss Edgar's and Miss Cramp's School."

Thirty-Five Years Ago
January 30, 1969

NIHON TOWER: "Westmounters can expect another change to appear on their local skyline in the months ahead, as work got under way this week on the 600-apartment tower to complete the original plan for the Alexis Nihon Plaza. A big gantry crane was erected this week atop the existing plaza, to ascend floor-by-floor with the 26 additional storeys. First work is on the transition floor, in which there has been some change in design to accommodate a change in the relation of the apartment tower to the already completed structure.

Transitional beams are required to switch the new load to existing columns."

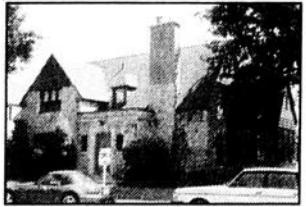
Forty-Five Years Ago
January 30, 1959

STE. CATHERINE EXTENSION: "Westmount will probably start construction in the spring of the Saint Catherine street extension westward. This was revealed this week when the city was granted prior possession of part of a property on York avenue which they had not been able to obtain in direct negotiation with the owner. The decision was given by Mr. Justice Tellier January 14. The city was able to purchase all the property needed for the extension of St. Catherine street through Albert place, York avenue and north on Claremont avenue to Western avenue by means of mutual agreement with the owners, except in one instance."

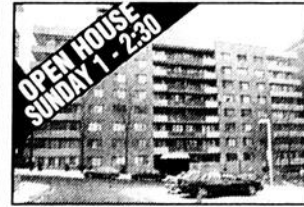
Sixty-Five Years Ago
February 3, 1939

WESTMOUNT THEATRE: "This week the Montreal Repertory Theatre won its first major step in its endeavour to construct a theatre in Westmount with approval by the City Council of a lease that will rent it land for a twenty-year period at the reported nominal charge of one dollar per year. Once the lease is ratified by the adoption of a by-law, the MRT will be empowered to construct and operate a theatre and school of the drama on property between Olivier and Greene avenues, north of Western avenue. While no definite announcement has been made regarding the building, it is understood that it will have a seating capacity of about 800 people and be equipped with the latest apparatus for the presentation of amateur plays and concerts."

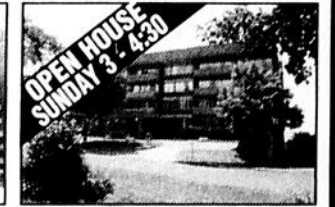
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THE WESTMOUNT EXAMINER - Thursday, February 5, 2004 - Page 5

WINTER THRILLS ARE ICEBOUND



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Double axles, triple toe loops, triple lutzes...

Do you recognize those skating terms? For many fans the fascination of these ice feats reside within the graceful complexity of figure skating. Integrating the intricate details of style and dance, this activity demonstrates that skating is much more than a gliding maneuver.

Athletically challenging, skating has evolved into a popular sport of our Canadian Winter Olympic dreams. There's the speed skating venue, hockey and figure skating. A truly wonderful way for all individuals to combat the yearly frigid temperatures is to take a spin on the ice. As residents of a very long winter season, we are most fortunate with the availability of the many outdoor rinks in our locality. But on blustery days, the Westmount Arena is an ideal alternative for keeping warm while attempting to perfect those ice skills. So lace them up tightly and begin the adventure.

The History of Skating

Skating can be traced back over 20,000 years. The very first skates were ribs or tibias of animals attached under shoes. They allowed their wearers to move (with the help of a pointed pole) more easily and rapidly over the frozen surfaces of lakes and rivers. The word "skate" comes from the Dutch "schaats" which means leg bone.

Eventually, in the 15th century, bone skates were replaced by wood. Around 1750, in Holland, iron and steel blades replaced the bones due to its reduced friction and increased rigidity, which enabled the skater to apply more pressure and attain higher speeds. Finally the rough means of travel was transformed into true recreation.

On the lakes of Scotland and the canals of Holland, skating for enjoyment caught on. It remained popular among all social classes, but as a competitive sport, only the extremely well to do could afford to participate.

In 1742, the first skating club was founded in Edinburgh, Scotland. The advent of "modern skates" with their blades permanently attached to special boots helped the sport increase in popularity. Figure skating traces its origins directly back to an American from New York, Jackson Haines who was born in 1840. Just before the

United States Civil War, a total skating craze swept through America and Jackson Haines leapt into the icy limelight with his mastery of expressive skating and dance movements. Although he suffered criticism for his freethinking concepts in the skating world, in 1863 and 1864, he won the Championships of America. Due to his lack of popularity in America, he moved to Europe and was an immediate success. In Vienna, he gave birth to the so-called "International Style of Figure Skating." But it was not until the turn of the century that his influence secured its place in the American Figure Skating community.

Louis Rubenstein of Montreal was one of the first individuals who recognized the merits of the international style and the need for organization in a sport, which had largely existed as an informal collection of skating clubs. It was through his efforts that the first attempts to form a national governing body began. Other individuals such as George H. Brown and Irving Brokaw put forth Rubenstein's work into action by means of the first International Figure Skating Championships of America.

Ice hockey developed from English field hockey and Indian lacrosse, and was spread throughout Canada by British soldiers in the mid-1800s. Research then turned up mention of a hockey like game, played in the early 1800s in Nova Scotia by the Micmac Indians, which appeared to have been influenced by the Irish game of hurling which included the use of a "hurley" (stick) and a square wooden block instead of a ball. It was probably

fundamentally this game that traveled throughout Canada via Scottish and Irish immigrants and the British army. The players adopted elements of field hockey, such as the "bully" (later the face-off) and "shinning" (hitting one's opponent on the shins with the stick or playing with the stick on one "shin" or side); this evolved into an informal ice game later known as shinny or shinty.

The name hockey, as the organized game, has been attributed to the French word hoquet (shepherd's stick). The term rink, referring to the designated area of play, was originally used in the game of curling in 18th-century Scotland. Early hockey games allowed as many as 30 players a side on the ice, and the goals were two stones, each frozen into one end of the ice. The first use of a puck instead of a ball was recorded at Kingston Harbour, Ontario, in 1860.

Speed skating was in style since the beginning of the 17th century in Holland. Races were organized in North America from the start of the 19th century and rapidly became a favourite sport in Canada and the United States. The first World Speed Skating Championships were held in 1893. It is interesting to note that speed skating was one of the original disciplines in the first Winter Olympic games held in Chamonix in 1924, although women were only allowed the right to participate in 1960. Short-track racing became an Olympic event at the Albertville Winter Olympics in 1992.

(continued on page 10)

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Summer Camp & Education Guide

Would your kids enjoy summer camp?

Some parents wonder if they should send their kids to summer camp. Will they have fun? Will they be safe? Will they survive without my Wednesday night meatloaf?

In fact, summer camp is a special treat for kids. There are no parents, no homework and no responsibilities. But that doesn't mean one summer camp is just as good as the next. For kids to get the most out of the experience, it has to satisfy their needs, whether it is discovering new things, improving their talents, or simply having fun. It should also give kids a chance to be alone with their thoughts once in a while.

Many summer camps give kids a chance

to push their abilities, to excel and to measure up to others, whether it be through cultural or sporting activities. Through these challenges, children learn more about their own strengths and weaknesses and learn how to be at peace with both. Naturally, these fun and stimulating challenges must be provided in a safe and comfortable environment.

Kids who enjoy their time at summer camp will talk about their experiences at length once they are back at home. It's normal for them to go on about their adventures, how great the counselors were and how they can't wait to go back next year.



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 April 21, 2004 at 7 p.m.
- NDG YMCA
 February 25, 2004 at 7 p.m.
 April 28, 2004 at 7 p.m.
- West Island YMCA
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Conquer the Summertime Camp Blues

Participating in group activities, like swimming, can help young campers conquer homesickness.

School is out and it's time for many kids to head off to sleepaway camp for a summer of fun, new friends and taking everything the Great Outdoors has to offer. While living away from home for a few weeks can be a great opportunity for children to develop independence and social skills, new campers may find the idea of being away from home surrounded by new faces scary. Whether they miss the familiarity of friends and family or are having a hard time making friends, homesick children can experience alternating bouts of sadness, anxiety and even physical symptoms like nausea.

However, despite the fears or tears, parents should resist the urge to hop in the car

immediately and drive to the mountains to rescue their homesick youngsters. Most children can overcome their feelings with a little time and some help from Mom or Dad. Following are a few pointers to help children overcome their homesickness:

- * Emphasize the positive aspects of camp -- new friends, swimming, outdoor fun. Participating in activities with other children, especially ones that are physically oriented, can help alleviate the "sleepaway camp blues."
- * Stay in touch by letter, phone or e-mail. It's important that children know that their parents aren't sending them away because they don't care. Try to send mail daily; even a simple "Hi" on a postcard can work wonders. Ask family and friends to write so that children receive even more mail.
- * Provide writing paper and self-addressed stamped envelopes so children can write home with ease. Make sure children understand that they can and should write a letter when feeling homesick.
- * Pack a camera or scrapbook. Have children fill the pages with keepsakes, pictures or notes of their activities at camp. When they return home, parents and children can share the scrapbook -- and the experience -- together.
- * Nighttime can be the hardest for kids. Send children off to camp with a favorite stuffed animal, blanket, pillow or CD for comfort.
- * Before going away, parents and children can spend an afternoon making a special "camp calendar" to help keep track of the days until they return home.

For children who continue to feel miserable after several days, refusing invitations to participate in activities or isolating themselves from cabin mates, parents should speak to camp staff before ultimately deciding what to do. Remember, children develop at different rates, and some may be ready for camp before others are. It's important that parents not ridicule, embarrass or make children feel guilty for being unable to "stick it out" away from home. Instead, them for suggestions about how they can enjoy the rest of their summer vacation.

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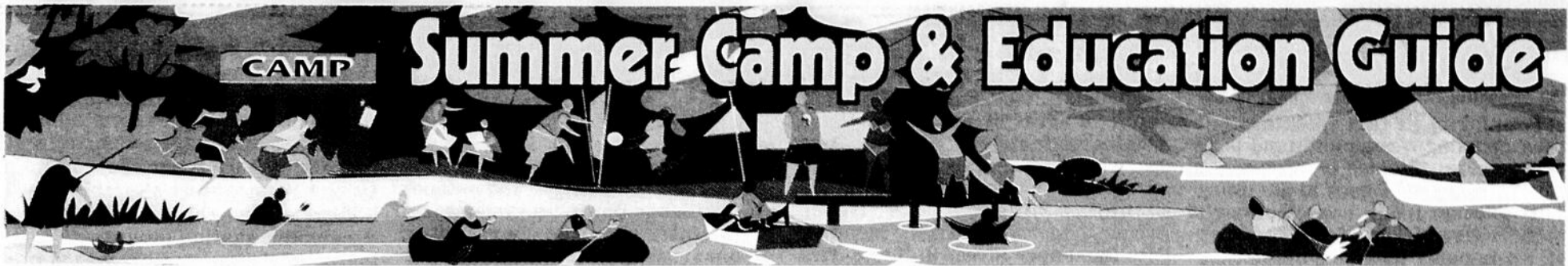


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Choosing a camp

When you have a list of the camps you think would be best for your camper, you should contact the camp directly. Consider these questions:

- What is your background in camping? The OCA recommends that a camp director have a minimum of 8-10 years of camping experience as a staff member and 4-5 years in a senior staff or supervisory capacity.

- Find out about the philosophy that guides the program and leadership of the camp.
- How old are your counsellors? What is your camper-to-counsellor ratio? Ask about the training of the staff, the rate of staff turnover and the experience of the senior staff.
- What percentage of your campers return each year?
- Can the camp accommodate special-needs campers?
- How do children get to and from the camp?

- What facilities do you have for dining, health care and sanitation? What kind of meals can the camper expect? What health care staff does it have on site? What kind of washroom and bathing facilities will the campers use?

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(continued from page 6)

Westmount skaters past and present

Popularity in this sport has not been a passing Westmount trend. The rinks that are situated in most of our parks today existed back in the 1930's. This excerpt from Aline Gubbay's book, 'A View of Their Own, The Story of Westmount,' depicts a bit of skating history: "You could pay to skate at the big MAAA (Montreal Amateur Athletics Association) rink, but there was free skating at all the rinks. There were shelters where you could put on your skates and warm up, with someone always on hand in case help was needed. There was usually a rink close to someone's home where you could be with your friends and not have to go far afterwards for hot chocolate or hot Bovril made with milk."

But we can even go further back to the days of the Côte St. Antoine Village

to the earlier days of the MAAA Open Air Rink. In 1886 the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association bought about 10 acres of land in Côte St. Antoine for an athletic field, which was opened to its members in the autumn of 1887. This was during that Ste. Catherine Street ended at Greene Avenue to Metcalf as did the Montreal City Passenger Street Railway. With the yearly increase in population, the Village of Côte St. Antoine finally developed into the present city of Westmount and for many ensuing years the MAAA rink was one of the great winter attractions.

In 1930. Westmount was known to be as the only city in Canada that provided figure-skating facilities for its residents with a professional instructor in charge. Her name was Miss Helma Karik, a native of Estonia, and she

had more than 150 pupils of all ages practicing at the Westmount Athletic Grounds.

The rich history of skating instruction has continued in Westmount at the arena besides all the free skating and hockey occurring at the outdoor rinks. Claude Danis, programme and community services coordinator, emphasizes the real goals of their programs. "Here we have true teamwork between the coaches. The focus is for the kids to have fun and if extra ice time is required, there is never any additional expense for ice rental. Private lessons are between the coach and the student."

Avid Westmount skating enthusiast, 11-year-old student of The Study Chloe Tait, has been on the rink since three years of age. When she was six, she took lessons at the arena and has

continued. In March 2002, she participated in La Federation du Patinage Artistique de Quebec a competition for first time competitors from all over Montreal and won. At the end of every winter she is one of the skaters in the Westmount skating show. "Chloe is very athletic and busy. The Westmount skating program is wonderful, as the girls aren't pushed in a competitive way. It's a program designed more for pure enjoyment," said her mother.

For an overview of all activities, check out the Sports & Recreation booklet for a clearer explanation of Westmount's seasonal programs. Residents should explore this family activity, and if you choose the arena for your skating destination, there's that special musical accompaniment and the inexplicable feeling of weaving skating dreams as you twirl and daringly attempt a double axle.

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W.H.A. LECTURES TO FEATURE LOCAL ARCHITECTS

Edward Maxwell, Percy Nobbs and Jean-Omer Marchand will be among the featured topics when the Westmount Historical Association launches its spring lecture series next month.

Prepared by Doreen Lindsay and Caroline Breslaw, the subject of the upcoming series is 'Architects Who Chose to Build Their Own Homes in Westmount.'

It begins on Thursday, Feb. 19 with speakers Megan Henderson and Doreen Lindsay, who have researched the wooden clapboard house at 370 Landsdowne Ave., built around 1888, before the area was urbanized. Although the architect is not known, this single family home has an L-shaped gallery across the front and south side and two dormer windows in the front. It was altered in 1922, 1923 and 1956.

The series continues on March 18 with a look at architect Edward Maxwell (1867-1923), who built his own house at 184 Côte St. Antoine Rd. in 1895, attached to his father's larger house.

Designed in the Queen Anne style,

the house has built on what was the site of one of the Metcalfe Terrace houses. In 1904, Edward and brother William built two banks in Westmount—the Bank of Montreal at the corner of Greene and de Maisonneuve and the Royal Bank at Greene and Ste. Catherine. Some other private homes which they designed in Westmount can be seen at 4103 Sherbrooke Street (1908), 47 Rosemount Ave. (1907), and 35-37 Côte St. Antoine Rd.

The speakers for this lecture will be Alison Sorbie and Christopher Dunkley, architects and owners of the house.

On Thursday, April 15, the featured architect will be Percy Erskine Nobbs (1875-1964), who built 38 Belvedere Rd. in 1913-14.

A leader in Canadian architecture and planning before World War II, Nobbs came to Montreal in 1903 to head the McGill School of Architecture. He designed a number of houses in Westmount, including his own, as well as important buildings for McGill such as the Student Union (now the McCord Museum) and

Macdonald Engineering Building. He also worked as far afield as the University of Alberta.

Guest speaker for this lecture will be Susan Wagg, architectural historian and author of the 1982 book 'Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman.'

The series ends on May 20 with a look at Jean-Omer Marchand (1872-1936), who designed 486 Wood Ave. in 1914.

Marchand was the first Quebec architect to study at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He returned to Montreal in 1902, and over the next 30 years designed a series of important

public buildings. In Westmount, his work includes la Maison-mère de la Congregation Notre-Dame (now Dawson College) in 1904-08, and l'Institut pédagogique on Westmount Avenue (now occupied by the Congregation Notre-Dame) in 1925. He built his own house in Westmount on Wood Avenue in 1914. The speaker for this lecture will be architect Peter Lanken.

All lectures take place in the Westmount Room of the Westmount Public Library, 4574 Sherbrooke W. from 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free for WHA members, \$5 for non-members at the door. Info: 925-1404 or 932-6688

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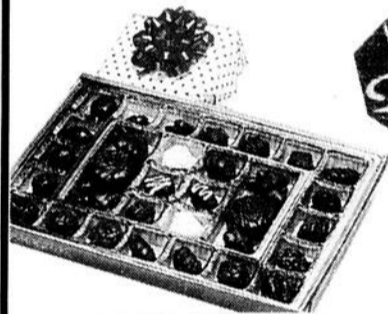
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Aline Gubbay



In 1849, Governor-General Lord Elgin suffered the consequences of signing into law the Rebellion Losses Bill. Opposition violence had led to the destruction of Parliament (housed in St. Ann's Market near Youville Square) and the removal of the capital from Montreal.

One of Elgin's most vehement critics was a fellow Scotsman, William Murray, whose home 'West-Mount' later gave its name to the municipality.

"I am ashamed of my countrymen," fumed William Murray, and he fought hard to have the bill repealed. In this he failed, but he was instrumental in having Lord Elgin ostracized from several social institutions with a large Scottish membership, such as the St. Andrew's Society and the Thistle

Curling Club.

In the same year, 1849, in which the uproar over the bill was still reverberating, William Murray was presented, by his admirers with a handsome silver epergne in thanks for his efforts to have the hated bill repealed.

At this time Murray was 51, with an impressive list of successful business and community enterprises to his name. His interest in marine and fire insurance had led to an involvement in commercial shipping and the founding of the Canada Shipping Company—whose flag, carried by the company's five sailing vessels, displayed a beaver on a white background. Hence the name 'The Beaver Line.'

Community interests were wide-ranging, from the founding of the High School of Montreal to the Protestant Home of Industry and Refuge (the institution is still functioning today and a portrait of William Murray hangs in the entrance lobby), and the relocation of the Protestant Cemetery from the east end of the city to the slopes of Mount Royal.

In 1857, Murray decided to acquire a country estate and bought some farmland, the property of Louis Leduc, whose family had farmed the land for almost 200 years.

The home built by William Murray was an expansive Victorian mansion with a broad verandah, set in grounds landscaped to take advantage of the open prospect to the river and beyond. He called the house 'West-Mount' because of its location, a name so appropriate to the whole area that many years later it was adopted for the entire district.

In his will, Murray stipulated that his wife and any of his children who wished to do so, might continue to live in the house. Two of his daughters, Grace and Annabella, who never married, occupied the house until they died—Grace in 1896 and Annabella, with her dozens of cats, in 1916.

Aline Gubbay is the author of two books on Westmount's heritage and a former president of the Westmount Historical Association.

Borough's use of road salt up

The Borough of Westmount is monitoring its use of road salt because of heavier use of the abrasive this past winter.

In a typical winter, according to Borough Director Bruce St. Louis, Westmount Public Works uses 4,116 metric tons of salt from October to January. Thus far, more than 4,900 tons have been spread—a 19 per cent increase. The variance of 784 tons costs \$51,200.

"While we have not yet exceeded the annual budget for the season, we have to monitor the situation quite closely if significant salt is required in February and March," he said.

Senior residence project on track

Excavation work has begun in a vacant lot next to Fire Station No. 2 on The Boulevard, where a new 12-storey apartment complex for seniors will soon be rising.

Because the seniors' residence will be located entirely outside Westmount in the neighbouring Côte des Neiges/Notre Dame de Grâce borough, building permits have all been issued in that jurisdiction.

As many residents of the area will recall, developers of the complex had originally contemplated integrating the old fire station into their design.

After public consultations held by Westmount indicated residents were not happy with the proposed use for the fire station, the developers changed their plans.

New plans for the seniors' complex call for it to be a 'stand alone' project, with the fire station to be developed for smaller-scale residential use.

Bill 33 raises questions

A workshop on Bill 33, attended by members of Westmount's borough council last month, is leading to an analysis of Westmount's decision-making processes over the next few months.

Councillors and senior management staff of the borough attended the two-hour information session presented on Jan. 28 by the City of Montreal legal services department. They were shown an executive summary of key articles in the new legislation and their impact on Montreal's municipal charter.

"Needless to say, several of the points presented generated a number of questions, especially in the areas of Human Resources (and the delegation of hiring posers to the Borough Council), local financing (the adoption of loan bylaws locally for capital works projects), and various administrative procedures and levels of responsibilities," Borough Director Bruce St. Louis wrote in his monthly report to the borough council tabled earlier this week.

"The next step will be an internal analysis of the implications of Bill 33 on Westmount's operations and decision-making processes, which we project will be ongoing for a few months at least," he added.

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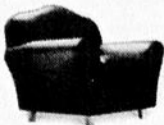
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Speech from the Throne 2004

MP



Lucienne Robillard

After a very interesting and productive stay in Davos, Switzerland, I returned to Canada last week with a broader view of the international economic state of affairs.

The World Economic Forum proved to be an enriching experience where I was able to notice the high stature of credibility that our Prime Minister has on the international scene. I had the opportunity to assist the speech he gave, seated beside the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, on 'The Future of Global Interdependence,' available on the Prime Minister's website (www.pm.gc.ca) or by calling my office at (514) 283-2013.

Earlier this week, the Parliamentary session reopened with a Speech from the Throne, given by Her Excellency the Right

Honourable Governor General Adrienne Clarkson, which sets out the broad goals and directions of the Canadian government.

The Government of Canada is determined to return Parliament to the centre of national debate and decision-making, where we can restore the public's faith and trust in the integrity and good management of government. To that end, the government will, as a first step, immediately table in Parliament an action plan for democratic reform. Democratic renewal must also restore trust. Democratic renewal means that government programs deliver on objectives, that they deliver what matters in people's lives. Canadians want to have the confidence that public money—their money—is wisely spent.

Moreover, the government's commitment to health care rests on one fundamental tenet: that every Canadian have timely access to quality care, regardless of income or geography. The government is committed to this goal: universal, high-quality, publicly funded health care, consistent with the principles of

medicare, as set out in the Canada Health Act. Looking forward, we will work with our provincial and territorial partners on the necessary reforms and long-term sustainability of the health system.

Where do we want to be in a decade? We want a Canada that is a world leader in developing and applying the path-breaking technologies of the 21st century—biotechnology, environmental technology, information and communications technologies, health technologies, and nanotechnology. Applying these capabilities to all sectors to build globally competitive firms, from start-ups to multinationals. And creating high-quality jobs that will meet the ambitions of young Canadians—keep them in this country, working to build an even greater and stronger Canada. I am pleased to be called upon to take up this challenge as Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada of the regions of Quebec.

On the international stage, we want to see greater collaboration among nations to ensure that

economic policies go hand in hand with stronger social programs to alleviate hunger, poverty, and disease, and to help to raise the standards of living in developing countries. Canada can contribute to achieving these goals. We will play a distinctive role based on our values—the rule of law, liberty, democracy, equality of opportunity, and fairness. As others have said: the world needs more Canada.

The Canadian Government seeks to ensure a stronger relationship with all our partners, to strengthen Canada's social foundations, and to safeguard our natural environment, which is a responsibility that will belong to all Canadians and their government in the 21st century.

I also invite you to read the Prime Minister's reply to the Speech by visiting www.pm.gc.ca, where you can also learn more about the government's plan.

• *Lucienne Robillard is the Liberal MP for Westmount-Ville Marie, Canada's Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the regions of Quebec.*

Cold snap breaks Hydro record

(continued from page 1)

"Prior to the mergers, the profit was going back directly to the City of Westmount and then they had a reduction of tax with this," Roy said.

"When we ask our customers to reduce power during peak time, it's to reduce penalties," he added. "If we do not have to pay penalties, the return on the profit level would be higher and the return to the residents would be better."

Besides the effect of penalties on profits, Roy said that overloading the electrical network eventually requires that capacity must be added to the grid. "And if we have to add capacity to it, then we have to make some investment," he said.

That can't be done, however, if the necessary funding has already been spent on penalties. "So we are asking our customers to help us to control the peak especially when it's very cold and help us to run the business better," said Roy.

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Bulletin Board

Deadline for submissions is Monday at noon preceding the next publication. No exceptions. Submissions may be edited or omitted for space.

Thursday, Feb. 5

Winter Carnival, Valentine Luncheon and Birthday Celebration at Contactivity Centre, 4695 de Maisonneuve. Come in from the winter cold for an afternoon of fun featuring BBQ chicken, homemade pie, door prizes and music, all for \$6.50. Reservations are necessary. Info: 932-2326.

Friday, Feb. 6

Art and Handicraft exhibition/sale to benefit Maison l'Envol organized by EUROCAN at Westmount Park Church, 4695 de Maisonneuve W. from 2 to 9 p.m. Free admission, donations welcome. Info: Louise Limoges at 932-7307.

Tu BiShevat Seder: Spring arrives mystically this year when the New Year of Trees is celebrated at Temple Emanu-El-th Sholom, 4100 Sherbrooke, at 8:15 p.m. Info: Rhona at 937-3575.

Saturday, Feb. 7

Art and Handicraft exhibition/sale to benefit Maison l'Envol organized by EUROCAN at Westmount Park Church, 4695 de Maisonneuve W. from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission, donations welcome. Info: Louise Limoges at 932-7307.

Tuesday, Feb. 10

The Westmount Horticultural Society presents 'Cooking with Fresh Herbs from the Garden' with chef Max Pompili of La Cucina, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Westmount Library, 4574 Sherbrooke W. Join the society or renew your membership: annual dues \$15 (Jan.-Dec. 2004); guest fee \$5. Info: 487-2245 or whs@hotmail.com

Wednesday, Feb. 11

Knitting Sale organized by the Auxiliary of the Montreal Children's Hospital from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. 2300

Tupper, second floor, B Wing. Info: 412-4400 ext. 22384.

The University Women's Club of Montreal presents 'Low-Down on Low-Fat, Low-Carb...' with nutritionist Sandra Cohen Rose at the Atwater Club, 3505 Atwater. Cash bar at 6, dinner at 7 p.m. Info and reservations: 934-1362.

Thursday, Feb. 12

St. Valentine's Chocolate Sale organized by the Auxiliary of the Montreal Children's Hospital from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. 2300 Tupper, second floor, B Wing. Info: 412-4400 ext. 22384.

Wednesday, Feb. 18

Author Elaine Kalman Naves will read from her latest book, 'Shoshanna's Story' at 2:30 p.m. at Chateau Westmount, 4860 de Maisonneuve. Refreshments will be served. Admission is \$1, to benefit the Gazette Christmas Fund. All welcome. Info: 369-3000.

Ongoing

Temple Pre-School Open House: Find out what you need to know about this fabulous bilingual pre-school program, Feb. 9 through 13 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. 395 Elm Ave. Info: Beverly Scherzer at 939-5696.

Introduction to Judaism: A popular 12-week course offered by Rabbis Lerner and Bykova that teaches the reading of Hebrew and explains Jewish holidays, life cycle and traditional history, beginning Feb. 10 at 5:45 p.m. at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, 395 Elm Ave. Info: Rhona at 937-3575.

Harmonia, a women's choir that meets Tuesday evenings at Victoria Hall, is looking for members. If you enjoy singing a variety of multilingual music, call 274-4854 or 365-3610.

ARTS

Beauty, destruction and surveillance

Thought-provoking exhibitions brightened a bleak January

Melanie Porco

Life greets you at the door, but death sees you out... That was the predominant theme at the Gallery at Victoria Hall this past month as Westmounters were treated to the fascinating exhibition 'Ash and Roses' by local artist Dana Velan.

It was one of two local exhibitions that provided a warm respite from an especially cold winter.

Using oil sticks on mylar, the Czechoslovakian-born Velan mounted a 20-piece exhibition that rendered roses as "beautiful, fragile, and innocent."

As viewers walked through the gallery, they were repeatedly confronted by images of fire ravaging the flowers. "We only see beauty in things society deems as beautiful, but we have to find beauty in everything," Velan said. "I find beauty in destruction... Something always comes out of death. The cycle of life is rebirth."

Although a Montrealer since 1968, symbols of Velan's native Czechoslovakia are hidden throughout her work. "These are pieces of barbed wire," she said, pointing to black markings on the show's first piece. "There used to be a barbed wire around my country; it was communist then, but in 1989 it went through some changes (government and social). They took it down and pieces of the wire were

scattered all over the ground. It was a sign of freedom, a rebirth."

Not only could 'Ash and Roses' be seen on the walls, but white roses sat on the table at the entrance while a black box of ashes and burned roses awaited viewers at the end—a fitting touch to a fascinating show.

Someone's always watching

Over at the McClure Gallery, Eric Simon's recent exhibition took an interesting approach to the 'Big Brother' idea that seems to permeate our technologically advanced society.

More than ten different images showed the head of a young Asian man in a red turtleneck and brown coat on a lime green background. In every painting, the man has the exact same expression. He doesn't change, but the angle in which the viewer sees him does. It's as if the viewer is watching this man without his knowledge.

The paintings resembled a series of mug shots, as Simon expresses his concern for the ever-popular idea that we are always being watched. It seems like governments and corporations are constantly gathering new information on individuals in order to better control them. Identification cards, customs controls, credit research and the increased presence of surveillance cameras are part of our everyday lives.

Yes, Simon is saying, we are always being watched.

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FEBRUARY

Monday 9th

Discover Nacara with a professional make-up artist

Tuesday 10th

Clarins Demo Day

Wednesday 11th

Clarins Demo Day

Decleor Demo Day

Mini-facial in our new personal cab

Discover Nacara with a professional make-up artist

Discover Vichy

skin analysis / by computer

Thursday 12th

Discover Lancôme with a professional make-up artist

Discover Dior with a professional make-up artist

Discover Cover FX and their new flawless fondation

Friday 13th

Discover Orlane with a professional skin analysis

Discover Guerlain with a professional make-up artist

Discover Cover FX and their new flawless fondation

Saturday 14th

Discover Orlane with a professional skin analysis

Discover Biotherm with a professional make-up artist

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**DOWNTOWN - REDPATH ROW - Asking \$899,000
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