



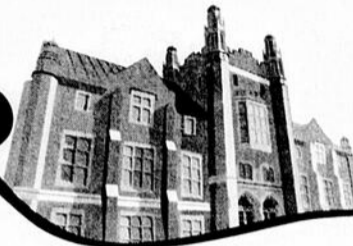
COMMUNITY LIFE
FROSTY FUN!
 Check out this weekend's Winter Carnival activities.
 Page 7



SPORTS
TOURNAMENT CHAMPS
 A thrilling win for Westmount's Atom A Wings
 Page 8

Transcontinental Vol 74, no 6 • Thursday, February 5th, 2009

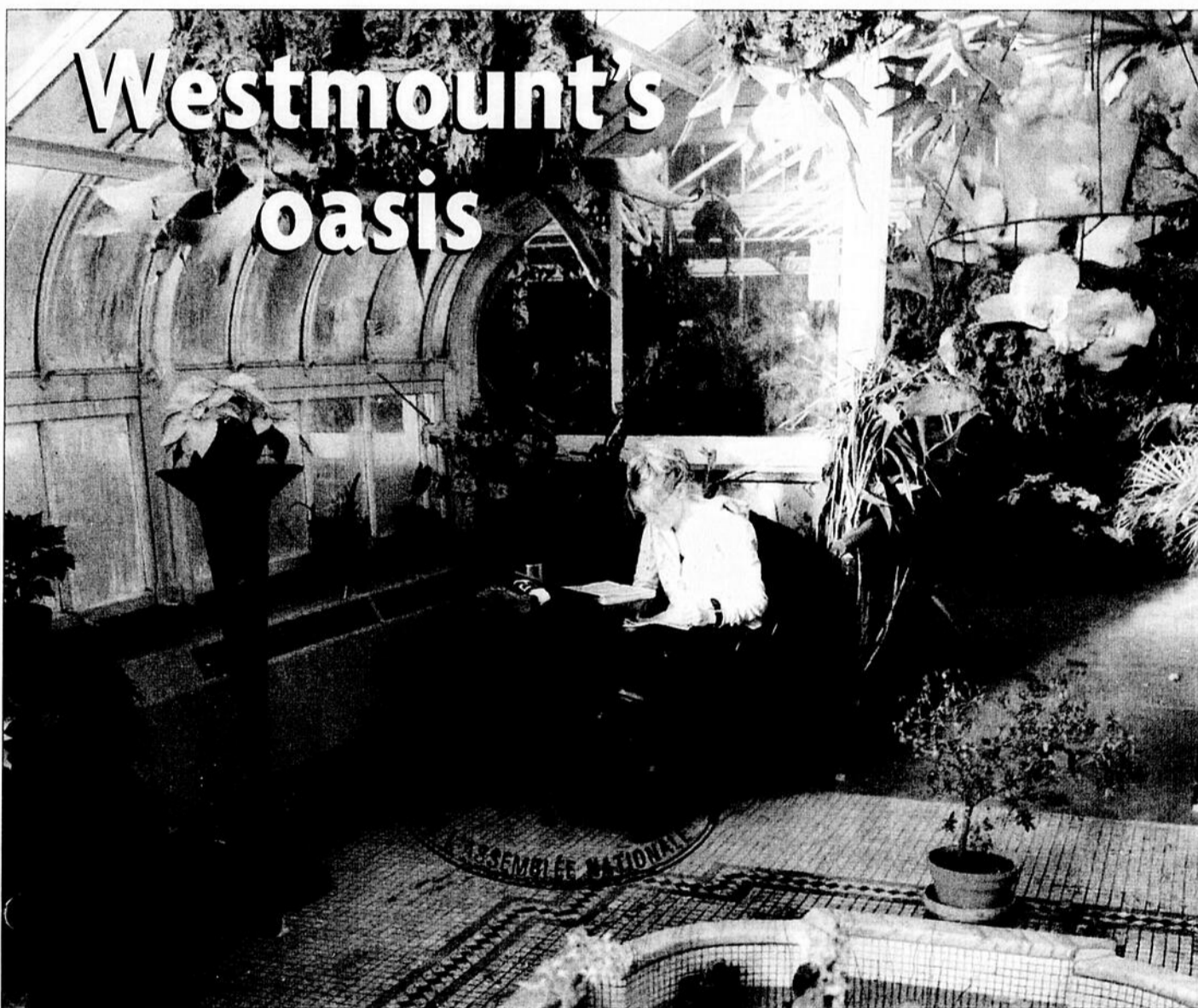
Westmount
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This week on the
INTERNET
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REAL ESTATE

Ted Wright
 explains the 2009
 rent increases.



Westmount's
Oasis

It may be cold outside, but in Westmount's conservatory it's like taking a brief trip to the South Seas. Here Abby Brooks of NDG studies in comfort on a cold Saturday afternoon. Photo: Martin C. Barry

City launches
Phase Two of
arena/pool
project

Martin C. Barry

Westmount city council has given the green light for Phase Two of the arena/pool renewal project — involving the preparation of designs, drawings, architecture and engineering — to proceed at a cost of \$271,000.

During council's monthly meeting last Monday, a contract was awarded to Services intégrés Lemay et associés, the consortium that completed the first phase, concept development, for \$138,000. The engineering group's mandate for the \$25 million project is taking place in five steps.

Continued on page 3

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LOCAL NEWS

Council pushes for sideguards on snow trucks

Martin C. Barry

Westmount city council has passed a resolution asking Transport Canada to adopt a national standard making the installation of sideguards on snow removal trucks mandatory, in order to protect cyclists and pedestrians.

The motion was initiated by Councillor Cynthia Lulham at City Hall last Monday — ironically, on the eve of a traffic accident involving a snow removal truck in east-end Montreal on Tuesday, in which two

pedestrians were run over and killed.

Despite support from municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador, and the adoption of mandatory guardrails on trucks in Europe, Westmount is the first city in Quebec to pass such a resolution.

On Dec. 19, 2005, 21-year-old Westmount resident Jessica Holman-Price lost her life when she fell under the wheels of a snow truck cutting the corner too tight at the intersection of Strathcona Avenue and Sherbrooke Street. She managed to prevent her 10-year-old brother from being killed.

Lulham said she met Jessica's mother at

a meeting of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in November, where Mrs. Holman-Price was giving a presentation on the Jessica Campaign, which seeks to assure that others do not suffer the same fate.

For the last 19 years in Europe, trucks have been obliged to have side rails so that pedestrians and cyclists don't end up accidentally sliding underneath. One of the campaign's goals is to have Transport Canada adopt the same policy.

According to Lulham, the original resolution was passed by the City of

Continued on page 6



City Councillor Cynthia Lulham displays the Jessica Campaign web site.

City launches Phase Two of arena/pool project

Continued from ARENA, page 1

The current arena/pool complex was built in 1957 and has long been on a list of municipal buildings slated for renewal. According to a funding application made to the province by Westmount last year, the City had anticipated construction starting this spring, although the scenario changed following an extensive public consultation last April.

"At that time, although there were many enthusiastic ideas and comments, some of those who were there expressed concern that we had not brought any designs for participants to look at and discuss," said Mayor Karin Marks, referring to the focus group sessions held at Victoria Hall.

Marks said officials with the City concluded, after looking at all the possible sites in Westmount, that it would be impossible to move the arena/pool complex from its current location at the south-western end of Westmount Park, without removing considerable green space or adding enormous costs.

She said the City's design team was told during Phase One by the architects that "we

could not have everything on the wish list, because some of it could not fit into the site and we were informed that the cost would significantly pass the budget we had discussed."

They talked about scaling down and diminishing the number of multi-purpose spaces (since there already are such rooms at Victoria Hall), decreasing some of the Teen Centre space, and having two ice rinks, of which only one would be NHL-size and the other slightly smaller. A proposed third floor was also discarded.

Although Phase One gave a better sense of what can be built and what it should cost, Marks said it didn't provide a building design "which we as a community can discuss and on which we can make a decision." She said Phase Two will fulfill that task, following which the City will be conducting a poll among residents to determine whether they want to proceed with the project.

The City will be presenting the design at public information sessions to be held in mid-April, where residents will be given a chance to question the architects on the details. At the same time, a comprehensive

package will be sent out to all residents, with information about the design, costs, and impact on taxes, traffic and additional data on other options.

Transparency questioned

During question period, Victoria Avenue resident John Dorey asked how much of the more than \$400,000 cost for the first two phases could go "down the drain" if Westmounters decide not to go ahead with the project. "I think we should know what the fallback in this issue is before you go ahead," he said. "Is any of that applicable to a reduced cost?"

"Oh, yes, absolutely, the four-hundred is spent, but going forward," said Councillor Patrick Martin, who is playing a leading role on the design team because of his extensive background in civil engineering.

"It would be applicable and it would depend on what the project is worth," insisted Marks.

Despite the City's efforts to consult residents, Henry Olders, a member of the Westmount Municipal Association, still finds fault with the level of transparency. "If

there was a document that was produced by Phase One as a public document, then I think it would be useful for the citizens in Westmount to have access," he said.

"Give us the time to put together the information, so it is complete information, and then we will put it out to everybody so everybody has a chance to comment and question it at the same time," replied Marks.

Olders responded, "The assumption that we are not able to make public that information until it has been put together and made complete I think is diminishing the capacities of Westmount residents to understand and make use of partial information. I personally feel that's a putdown of our capacities."

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OPINION



Commentary
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WAYNE LARSEN

Gimme the shelters

Commuters can rejoice in the recent announcement that Montreal's public transport commission intends to install 400 new bus shelters. This is good news at the best of times, but there is now the added bonus that some would be equipped with solar panels in order to run electric signs informing passengers when the next bus is expected.

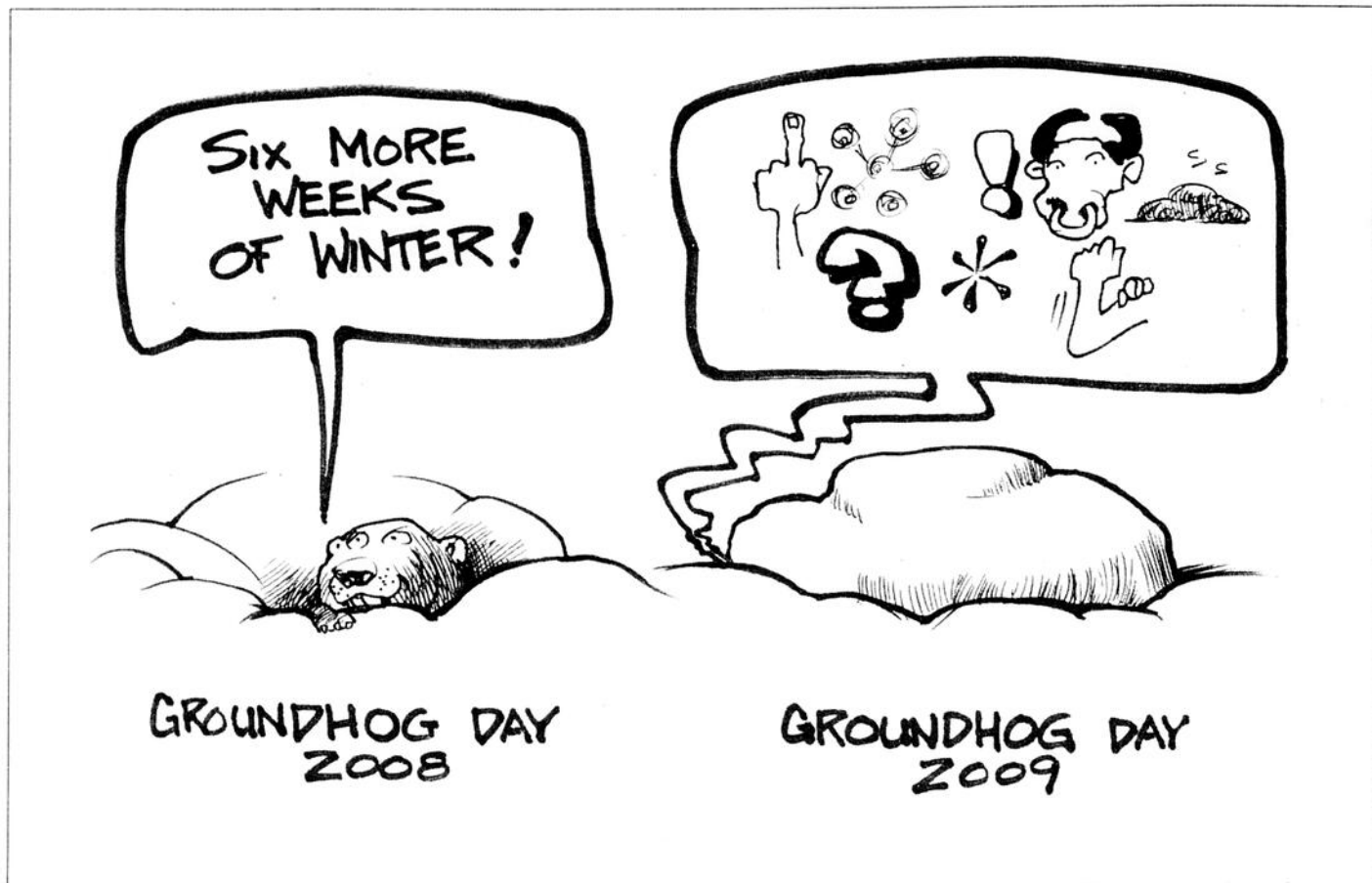
A more sophisticated version is already in place in several metro stations; now you can stand on the platform and be entertained by news clips, sports highlights and other bytes of eye candy while waiting for the train, all the while knowing that the next one is due to pull into the station in two minutes.

While it's too early to know if these new bus shelters will be just as technologically advanced, the Société de transport de Montréal's (STM) \$14 million plan is certainly a step in the right direction. Any added convenience to commuters is a plus for the environment, for it helps to encourage the use of public transportation.

But high-tech innovations are always risky. Take, for example the STM's recent switchover to the new Opus cards, which replace the monthly passes. I have had one for several months now, and although it works very well at metro turnstiles, I have lost count of how many times it has failed to set off the green lights on scanners on each bus. Luckily, drivers will usually wave you past, explaining that there's something wrong with the scanner. Hardly a fool-proof system!

Perhaps the most daunting problem facing designers of high-tech bus shelters is how to discourage vandalism. Existing bus shelters, consisting of four simple transparent walls and a roof, are already prime targets for graffiti taggers and those who take perverse pleasure in shattering entire walls into millions of tiny glass cubes. STM work crews are kept busy cleaning up these messes, and there is a risk that their services will be even more in demand with the emergence of electronic screens. Don't forget, the big screens in metro stations are mounted well out of reach.

Like the Opus card, electronic bus shelters are a great idea in theory, and if the right precautions are taken and all the bugs worked out, they could be a welcome addition to our public transport system.



GROUNDHOG DAY
2008

GROUNDHOG DAY
2009

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Neighbours' objections were ignored

To the editor:

Two meetings were held at Westmount City Hall (Nov. 3, 2008 and Jan 14, 2009) regarding demolition and proposed construction of a new house at 310 Côte St. Antoine Road.

At these two sessions, close neighbours made objections regarding noise, air pollution, environmental and health hazards in the course of a demolition and construction. They also voiced complaints about obstruction of views and loss of light, as well as the enormous size of the proposed building.

However, unfortunately, after 15 minutes of deliberation behind closed doors, the final decision of the Council to

grant the demolition was announced without answering any of the objections raised by the appellants.

I find it difficult to understand why the councillors heard but did not listen to the neighbours, who, after all, are their electors. On the contrary, since 2007 they have sided with the owner of 310 Côte St. Antoine, who is not a Westmount resident. After he bought the property, the new landlord did not take any care of it. He let weeds grow all over, did not mow the lawn, and let the garden become a jungle where rubbish accumulated for more than three years.

The City did nothing to counter this neglect. Now it rejects the appeal made by a number of neighbours without any explanation.

Westmount is made up of various neighbourhoods, each having its own distinctive character. The proposed building, due to its oversized footprint, would clash with our small community.

City Council should not have based its

decision solely on by-laws, thus dismissing all the concerns of the immediate neighbours.

Joe Der
Arlington Avenue

Send us your letters

The Examiner welcomes letters from readers on issues of local interest. Letters should be sent to larsenw@transcontinental.ca (preferable), by fax to 514-484-6028 or by mail to Letters to the Editor, The Westmount Examiner, 345 Victoria Ave. suite 508, Westmount, Qc. H3Z 2N2. Only letters bearing the writer's full name, address, and a daytime contact phone number will be considered for publication. Handwritten letters will not be accepted. Letters may be edited for length and/or clarity.

4 Thursday, February 5, 2009 www.westmountexaminer.com

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News director: Marc Lalonde
Bureau chief: Florence Reinson
Editor: Wayne Larsen
larsenw@transcontinental.ca
Contributors: Stanley Baker, Martin C. Barry, Marilyn Smith Carsley, Andy Dodge, Bram Eisenhal, Ferg Gadzala, Patrick Lavery, Jessica Murphy, Matthew Surridge, Marilyn Vanderstaay, Robert N. Wilkins, Ted Wright

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WHA's spring lectures focus on the century in Westmount

Following a year of significant centennials throughout Westmount, the local historical association has based its 2009 spring

lecture series on a few of the 100-year-old institutions that have played key roles in Westmount's history.

Developed by Caroline Breslaw and

Doreen Lindsay, the series of monthly lectures is titled 'Westmount: Becoming a City in 1908'.

On Thursday, Feb. 19, Joan Rothman will present the history of Roslyn School's French Immersion program. The former city councillor and school commissioner (from 1970 to 2003) was one of the Roslyn parents who helped initiate an extra-curricular French Immersion program in 1965 amidst heightened language tensions and bomb scares in Westmount.

The following month, on March 19, current city councilors and Tom Thompson and Kathleen Duncan will present 'The Westmount Municipal Association: Celebrating a Centennial'. The WMA was formed in January 1908 to encourage discussion on municipal affairs by concerned citizens. In the beginning, it was active in developing city policies and in choosing council members. More recently, the WMA was a major player in the fight against the forced mergers and in the subsequent demerger process. Thompson will provide an historical perspective of its evolution and Duncan will describe the recent merger/demerger.

Both are former WMA presidents.

On April 16, the WHA will feature a presentation on the history of the POM Bakery, which was a landmark in the Glen for many years before being converted into an apartment building. 'POM Bakery: Pride of Montreal or Pain Orgueil de Montréal' will follow the story of the Harrison family and their business. The speaker has yet to be announced.

The series winds up on Thursday, May 21 with 'The City of Westmount: 100 Years Ago.' Caroline Breslaw and Ruth Allan Rigby of the WHA will present the Westmount of a century ago, using many archival images and recollections. The municipal government and services, public institutions, commercial establishments and homes of the time will be examined, giving us a view of our community at this important time in its history.

All lectures take place in the Westmount Room of the Westmount Public Library, 4574 Sherbrooke St. W. from 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free to WHA members, \$5 at the door for non-members. For more information, contact the WHA at 514-925-1404 or 514-932-6688.

Study students shine in ski event



Talya Boisjoli (left) and Amanda Debruyne, both of The Study, after winning the Jan. 26 GMAA meet on Mount Royal.

Two students from The Study took first place in each of their respective divisions at the Greater Montreal Athletic Association (GMAA) cross-country skiing meet on Mount Royal last week.

Westmount resident Amanda Debruyne finished the 5-km event in first place in the juvenile girls division, while Talya Boisjoli finished first in the midget girls division. Jonah Palevsky, from Selwyn House School, finished first in the midget boys division.

"Each year the number of schools participating grows, this year there are 11 schools and some 150 students" said Don McEwen, executive director of GMAA. He went on to add that the GMAA is one of the few school sports organizations to offer Cross Country Skiing as a winter sport. The remaining season includes one more half-day meet on Mount Royal as well as a Loppet race on Feb. 16 in Morin Heights. Complete results can be found on the GMAA website at www.gmaa.ca

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Westmount

APPEL AUX ARTISTES

Les artistes de Westmount sont invités à déposer leurs soumissions pour la 10^e saison d'exposition de la galerie du Victoria Hall qui se tiendra de septembre 2009 à août 2010.

Ce concours s'adresse aux artistes amateurs et professionnels. Les candidatures sont acceptées pour des expositions solo ou partagées.

DATE LIMITE : 2 mars 2009

INVITATION TO ARTISTS

The Gallery at Victoria Hall welcomes proposals from Westmount artists for its tenth exhibition season, which will take place from September 2009 to August 2010.

This competition is open to amateur and professional artists. Applications are considered for solo and group exhibitions.

DEADLINE: March 2, 2009

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Continued from SNOW TRUCKS page 3

St. John's, Newfoundland, of which Mrs. Holman-Price is a native. Her husband has also done extensive work in retrofitting trucks with the sideguards.

"It's not difficult," said Lulham. "The sideguards are bars that hang. They're hooked on and they can be taken off very easily."

"It saves many lives, it costs very little. Most new trucks come with it. So it's a matter of adopting it. And I also would further

urge that in our own City of Westmount, where possible and when we are buying new vehicles, that we buy vehicles with these guards."

Westmount Director General Duncan Campbell has been mandated to look at what can be done to install guardrails on trucks in the City's existing fleet.

"I think it's one way that we can also pay tribute to a young woman who lost her life in our community — to be among the first to really try to do something about this," said Mayor Karin Marks.



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Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed — Francis Bacon



Get ready for frosty fun this weekend!

Valeria Nekhim

If cold temperatures have been keeping you inside all winter, it's finally time to bundle up and come take part in the City of Westmount's 26th annual Winter Carnival celebrations, which take place from Feb. 5 to 7.

Kicking off the festivities is the popular family tobogganing evening, on Thursday from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at King George Park. Come equipped with your favourite toboggan, or try sliding down the slopes in an inner tube provided by the Sports and Recreation Department. If you're worried about being cold, there will be a bonfire and copious amounts of free hot chocolate to keep you warm.

If you're especially keen — and over age 18 — head over to Victoria Hall after a few trips down the hill, for a 'Speakeasy' themed Casino Night organized by the City and its numerous volunteers. From 8 p.m. to midnight, you can engage in roulette, blackjack and poker while enjoying a typical 1920s showgirl performance by Team Burlesque.

"Events like 'Casino Night' generate a venue where people can get out and celebrate together," said Virginia Elliot,

coordinator of Community Events. "It brings people out during a time of year when we tend to be isolated in our homes."

Friday's main attraction is a Space Odyssey Carnival beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Victoria Hall. All ages are invited for an evening of dinner, dancing and games. Tickets are going fast, Elliot said, so don't wait until the last minute.

On Saturday, the real games begin, starting at 10 a.m. with the first annual Termite Mini Hockey Tournament for five- and six-year-olds, at the Arena.

"This is something we're trying for the first time this year," said Sports Coordinator Bruce Stacey. "Normally, we don't get that many five- and six-year-olds, so we thought this would be a good way to get the younger kids more involved in the Carnival."

Other activities include face painting, horse-drawn sleigh rides in Westmount Park (main field), a figure skating show, a

free hot dog lunch, a puck-shooting contest, family skating and tug of war.

Stacey's favourite activity is by far the tug of war, which has residents living north of Sherbrooke Street and residents living south of Sherbrooke Street face off against each other in a best two-out-of-three competition.

"There's snow and it's cold, but the residents really get into it and the competitive spirits truly come out," said Stacey. "We have a trophy, and we take a group photo of the winning team. It's a lot of fun."

Win or lose, the Winter Carnival is primarily about having fun, and shaking off those winter blues.

"It's a long winter, and this is something to get people out and to give them something fun to do on weekends instead of being stuck inside all day," said Stacey.

For more information go to www.westmount.org

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The Atwater Library and Computer Centre, 1200 Atwater Ave. at Tupper, marks the Chinese New Year with a talk on China by Johanna Ransmeier, historian of modern China, Assistant Professor of History, McGill University, at 12:30 p.m. Free admission. Info: 514-935-7344.

Groundhog Day reunion and silent auction at Marianopolis College, 4873 Westmount Ave., from 6 to 9 p.m. Dozens of goodies are up for grabs as the Marianopolis College Alumni Association hosts its annual silent auction and reunion. A fun evening featuring former classmates, beer and pizza. Info: 514-931-8792 ext. 202.

The Bimetallic Question, consisting of local Sherlockians, will hold a session at 6:30 p.m. in the Westmount Room of the Westmount Public Library, 4574 Sherbrooke St. W. There will be serious fun and discussion and an optional quiz on His

Last Bow, which deals with Holmes activities just before the first World War. All are welcome. Info: 514-931-8690.

Saturday, Feb. 14

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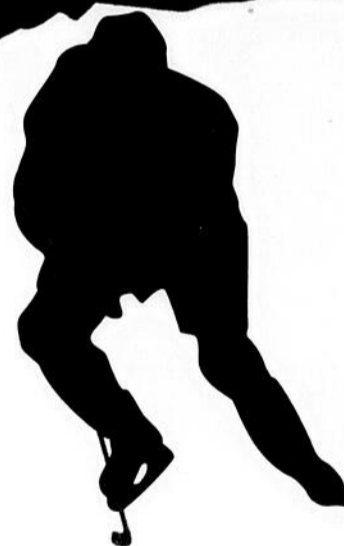
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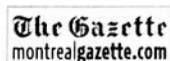
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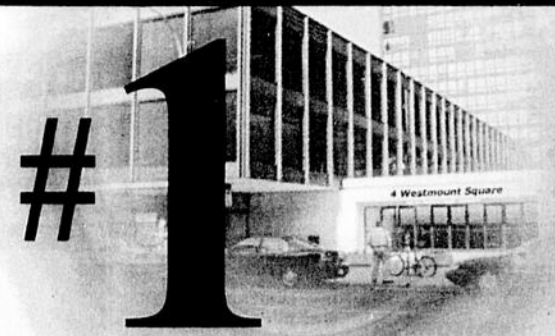
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