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■ Toula's Take: It's the most wonderful time of the year! Or is it? p.4

WESTMOUNT
EXAMINER
 VOLUME 78, NUMBER 48 - THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2012 - 9 911 COPIES

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Budget 2013:
taxes, spending
up slightly **3**



Outdoor league
hockey in
Westmount
this year! **11**

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Getting into the Holiday spirit!

Cynthia (left) and her mother Charlotte Veilleux decorated their home on Clandeboye Ave., in time for the Holidays. Charlotte has been an avid reader of the Westmount Examiner since 1948. (Photo: Peter Ford)

Tantalizing offers in your SUPER HEBDO

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Matelas Bonheur 2	Fletcher Leisure Group 4	Plaza St-Hubert..... 4

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300 Léo-Pariseau Street,
9th Floor
514-281-1722

Clinique médicale Diamant
5885 de la Côte-des-Neiges Road,
Suite 201
514-731-5994

Clinique médicale Métro-Médic Centre-Ville
1538, Sherbrooke Street West
514-932-2122

Groupe Santé Westmount Square
1 Westmount Square, Pavillon A,
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514-934-2334

The Centre de santé et de services sociaux de la Montagne (CSSS)

for many services without appointment

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5700 de la Côte-des-Neiges Road
514 731-8531

CLSC Métro
1801 Maisonneuve Boulevard West
514 934-0354

CLSC de Parc-Extension
7085 Hutchison Street
514 273-9591

	DECEMBER							JANUARY		
	Monday 24	Tuesday 25	Wednesday 26	Thursday 27	Friday 28	Saturday 29	Sunday 30	Monday 31	Tuesday 1	Wednesday 2
Psychosocial counselling and nursing care in the CLSC										
CLSC de Côte-des-Neiges	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	Closed	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm
CLSC Métro	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm
CLSC de Parc-Extension	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	Closed	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 4 pm	8 am - 4 pm
Blood test										
CLSC Métro	N/A	N/A	N/A	7:30 am - 11:30 am	7:30 am - 11:30 am	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Family Medicine Group (GMF) for registered patients only										
Côte-des-Neiges	12:30 pm - 8 pm	9 am - 1 pm	9 am - 1 pm	12:30 pm - 8 pm	12:30 pm - 8 pm	9 am - 1 pm	Closed	12:30 pm - 8 pm	9 am - 1 pm	9 am - 1 pm
St. Mary	7:30 am - 7:30 pm	9 am - 1 pm	9 am - 1 pm	7:30 am - 7:30 pm	7:30 am - 7:30 pm	9 am - 1 pm	9 am - 1 pm	7:30 am - 7:30 pm	9 am - 1 pm	9 am - 1 pm



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Budget 2013: taxes, spending up slightly



Councillor Timothy Price reading the budget.

MORGAN LOWRIE

Owners of an 'average single-family dwelling' in Westmount can expect to pay about \$11,871 in property taxes in 2013 – about \$244 more than in 2012, or a 2 percent increase.

While unveiling Westmount's 2013 operating budget and 2013-2015 Capital works budget, city councillor Timothy Price stressed that the city had stuck to its objectives of limiting the tax increase for local services to inflation plus one percent, and sought to increase revenue from sources other than property taxes.

One of the main sources of non-property tax revenue remains parking fees and court fees, and the December 17 meeting included a bylaw to raise parking fees in the lots on Tupper and Ste. Catherine streets to \$150 a month. Overall revenues from sources other than taxation will be \$10.7 million, up from \$10 million last year.

The overall operating budget of the city is \$93,076,100, which represents a 2.8 percent increase. Almost \$32 million of that money is for delivery of local services. Approximately 55 percent of the budget goes to Montreal in the form of a metropolitan community contribution and the agglomeration quote-part.

Capital Works spending will be up 4 percent in 2013, increasing from \$6.7 million to \$7 million, with money earmarked for upgrades to roads, sewers, and Hydro Westmount.

These numbers do not include the cost of the Westmount Recreation Centre, which will make a significant dent in the city's funds this year. The centre will cost the city \$12 million dollars in 2013, after subsidies (the total cost will be \$20 million). This includes \$1 million taken from the city's Pay-As-You-Go fund, which the city has promised to cover by fundraising.

The \$200 per family property tax increase to cover the cost of the recreation centre will only take effect in 2014.

The budget ends with a warning: that although the city will try to keep property tax

increases to a minimum, "the pension deficit and structure of our pension plan will have to be addressed in the coming years."

Wishing you all the peace, joy, and love of the season!



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Patricia Hinojosa

Dear Readers and Clients,

Please note that our office will be closed from December 25-26 and from December 30 to January 2. We'll return on January 3. This doesn't mean that we won't be publishing over the holidays. We're working hard to make sure you have your Examiner on January 3. They'll be small but mighty issues! From the staff at Westmount Examiner, we'd like to take this opportunity to say thanks so much for your support this past year. We're excited about continuing to work hard in 2013 and striving each week to bring you an informative, interesting and unique perspective on our community. We wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season and a happy and healthy new year!

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- Harvey Aisenthal

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It's the most wonderful time of the year! Or is it?



"You guys, I finished all my Christmas shopping in September!"

If you're one of those people gleefully sharing this awesome piece of news with me, I won't lie: I pretty much hate you.

I'm one of those last-minute shoppers. The one with the frazzled look on her face and absolutely no sign of a coherent list. I'm blatantly winging it. I'm not proud of it, but it's what I do. Every year I tell myself that next Christmas I'll get organized and plan months in advance. Every year, I procrastinate and get knocked over sideways by the sudden realization that it's December 18th and OH MY GOD why did I do this to myself again?! Not to worry, though. It always works out. I perform well under pressure.

The Holidays, however, have a way of bringing out stress even in people who haven't elevated procrastination to an art form. Between the incessant shopping (that we've been conditioned and brainwashed into believing is required), the relentless back-to-back social events (you will put on the sparkly top and engage in Christmas cheer for the fifth night in a row if it kills you!), and the expectations of what these oh-so-Holy days should be, we're bound to be at the losing end of it all.

In "A Charlie Brown Christmas", poor Charlie exclaims: "I just don't understand Christmas. Instead of feeling happy, I feel sort of let down." I've got news for you, kid. So do the rest of us.

Our expectations are what usually set the scene for the hundreds of emotional meltdowns about to unfold. Holiday blues happen every year, as people suddenly realize the unbridgeable gap between what they have been conditioned to expect (thanks Hollywood and Hallmark TV specials!) and their reality. That moment when they realize that the picture in their head simply doesn't match the picture in front of them. In most cases, there's absolutely nothing wrong with their reality, even though everything around them is

conspiring to delude them into believing it pales in comparison to everyone else's (it's called commercialism, folks).

I can assure you that every family has some variation of sibling rivalry, of that weird uncle who gets drunk and utters nonsense at the table, the disappointing family dynamics that resemble nothing of George Bailey's home life. It's enough to make you rush to the nearest mall, point an accusatory finger at Santa and yell: "You sit on a throne of LIES!" but you shouldn't. Christmas doesn't disappoint. You just need to readjust your expectations.

Our silly pre-conceived notions are what make us long for snow during the Holidays. We could care less if the white stuff came down the rest of the year, but it better be falling by December 24th or panic sets in! After all, Irving Berlin's I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas has set the standard for what to expect. We humans are such a delightful case study in emotional manipulation, aren't we?

No matter. I love the Holidays. I love this time of year that suddenly makes it ok for people to be a little kinder, a little gentler, a little more forgiving towards one another. When I hear I'll be Home for Christmas on the radio my heart melts. I want to be home. I want to be sitting on the couch in my PJs on Christmas morning with my silly imperfect family, finishing off the last of the shortbread cookies, drinking hot cocoa, and watching Elf for the third time. Something in me

EDITORIAL CARTOON

PASCAL ÉLIE



desperately wants what I don't really mind not having the rest of the year.

Because Christmas, at its most elemental, is about connecting. The gifts, the calorie-laden elaborate meals, the alcohol-infused parties... All they really are, is us telling one another: "I love you. You mean something to me. My world would be a little less happy without you in it."

Sometimes the approach is clumsy and

commercial. Sometimes it's unsuccessful. But what gives the Holidays their magic is the attempt. The attempt to be transported back to a time when we had no worries, no social filters, no heartache... Back to a childhood when the Christmas tree towered over our little kid bodies and we believed Santa was real and our parents would live forever. A place that no longer exists, but we so desperately wish still did...

Letters to the Editor

Take the matter up with the experts

Dr Barry Pless takes issue with my statement that 83% of Westmounters pronounced themselves in favour of the Westmount Recreation Centre. It seems I must, yet again, recite the facts upon which I based my statement.

Fully 28% of Westmount households responded to a questionnaire in our April 2010 mailing: 83% of them were in favour of the project as described. While households with children were 91% in favour, seniors were 81% in favour, people living alone were 77% in favour, and even non-users were 73% in

favour.

Ipsos Descarie, who received and tabulated the responses, calculated that, with such a high participation rate, had every single Westmount household responded, the overall approval rate would have been somewhere between 81% and 85%.

So if Dr Pless wishes to call into question the science behind my figures, he should take the matter up with the experts: Ipsos Descarie.

Mayor Peter F. Trent
Westmount City Hall

SEND US YOUR LETTERS!

The Examiner welcomes letters from readers on topics of local interest. While we only publish the writer's name and street, all letters must include the writer's name and address, as well as a daytime phone number for verification. Letters may be sent by e-mail to: examiner@tc.tc

We look forward to hearing from you!

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Questions about bidding in Westmount

In a meeting of Westmount City Council on Dec. 3, 2012, Councillor Patrick Martin introduced a motion empowering the City to pay Genivar Inc. a new tranche of \$454,196 for their services in connection with the Westmount Recreation Center (WRC) in their capacity as project manager.

Citizens need to pay close attention to these payments. As the Council Resolution explicitly mentioned this December, when Genivar won the project management contract, on April 20, 2011, it did so under interesting circumstances.

In response to an access to information request from me, then City Clerk, Mario Gerbeau (now gone to St. Lambert), informed me on June 2, 2011, of the background to that initial project management contract in April 2011: 10 companies submitted tenders; one was refused for tardiness; 7 were rejected outright by the selection committee; and that left only two bidders, Groupe Axor and Genivar Inc.

Groupe Axor bid \$646,100 for "professional services of the construction project."

Genivar Inc. entered a bid of \$383,500 that was 40% below Axor. Note was taken at council of the substantial difference.

Now, in December 2012, Genivar Inc. will,

it seems, receive an extra \$454,196 added to \$383,500 for a current total of \$837,696. That includes \$115,000 for helping with the "call" for tenders for the design-build construction contract for the WRC.

During the process of shifting to a design-build approach in late 2011, after Westmount terminated the contract of Lemay Associates as architects, the expertise of Genivar and the judgement of the 5-person selection committee, helped oversee another interesting result—the bidding process for the construction of the WRC.

6 construction consortia filed bids. The selection committee, whose members remain unknown to the public, rejected 4 outright – Decarel, Giffels, Magil, and Opron. – all very well-known, respected firms. That left only two competitors: SNC Lavalin and Pomerleau Inc. On Nov. 28, 2011, SNC Lavalin officially withdrew its bid, "for business reasons," according to Mayor Peter Trent. That left Pomerleau Inc. as the sole-bidder for the largest construction contract in Westmount's history.

Reporter Lauren Sweeney wrote in another local paper of Dec. 21-22, 2011: "One well-placed industry source who asked not to be named, told us, a week earlier that it was 'no secret' that Pomerleau would bid and probably

be the only one. Some of the firms were 'upset and disappointed, but not surprised,' given 'the way the industry works' and that the Pomerleau team includes CIMA engineers familiar with the project."

For its part in this result, Genivar is being paid at least \$115,000 for helping provide expertise for the "call."

In my opinion, as soon as SNC Lavalin withdrew, the process should have been started anew, because a contract of this size should not have been awarded with only one real bid to consider. And Genivar's fee is – at least \$155,000 too much to pay for such a result.

Patrick Barnard
Westmount



Ville de Westmount
City of Westmount



Services municipaux période des Fêtes

Pendant la période des Fêtes de 2012-2013, l'horaire des bureaux et des services municipaux de la Ville de Westmount sera modifié comme suit :

Bureaux administratifs

Les bureaux administratifs de l'hôtel de ville, Hydro Westmount, Victoria Hall, des Travaux publics et de la Sécurité publique, y compris le bureau des permis de stationnement, seront fermés :

du 24 au 26 décembre; et
du 31 décembre au 2 janvier

L'horaire normale reprend le 3 janvier.

Conservatoire et serres

Ces installations seront ouvertes au public selon l'horaire suivant :

du 22 au 24 décembre : de 10 h à 17 h
le 25 décembre : fermé
le 26 décembre : de 10 h à 17 h
les 27 et 28 décembre : de 10 h à 21 h
du 29 au 31 décembre : de 10 h à 17 h
le 1^{er} janvier : fermé
le 2 janvier : de 10 h à 21 h
les 3 et 4 janvier : de 10 h à 17 h

Bibliothèque publique de Westmount

Fermée du 24 décembre au 26 décembre et du 31 décembre au 2 janvier.

Centre communautaire Victoria Hall

Fermé du 24 au 26 décembre et du 31 décembre au 2 janvier.

Services de collecte

Les collectes de résidus alimentaires et d'ordures du 25 décembre et du 1^{er} janvier sont remises au lendemain et la collecte de matières recyclables aura lieu selon l'horaire normal.

Le recyclage mobile pour les commerçants est annulé les 25 décembre et 1^{er} janvier. Le service sera disponible sur la rue Sherbrooke les 26 décembre et 2 janvier si les conditions météorologiques sont favorables.

La collecte sélective du mardi sur l'avenue Greene est remise au lendemain à compter de midi.

Municipal Services Holiday Period

During the 2012-2013 holiday season, the operating schedules for the City of Westmount's municipal offices and services will be modified as follows:

Administrative Offices

Administrative offices at City Hall, Hydro Westmount, Victoria Hall, Public Works and Public Security, including the Parking Permits office, will be closed:

December 24 to December 26 and
December 31 to January 2

The regular office schedule resumes on January 3.

Conservatory and Greenhouses

These facilities will be open to the public according to the following hours:

December 22 to 24: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
December 25: Closed
December 26: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
December 27 & 28: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
December 29 to 31: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
January 1: Closed
January 2: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
January 3 & 4: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Westmount Public Library

Closed from December 24 to 26, and from December 31 to January 2.

Victoria Hall Community Centre

Closed from December 24 to 26 and from December 31 to January 2.

Collection Services

The kitchen waste and garbage collections of December 25 and January 1 will be moved to the following day and the recycling collection will follow the regular schedule.

The mobile recycling for merchants is canceled December 25 and January 1. The service will be available December 26 and January 2 on Sherbrooke Street, weather permitting.

The Tuesday recycling on Greene Avenue will be moved to the next day beginning at noon.

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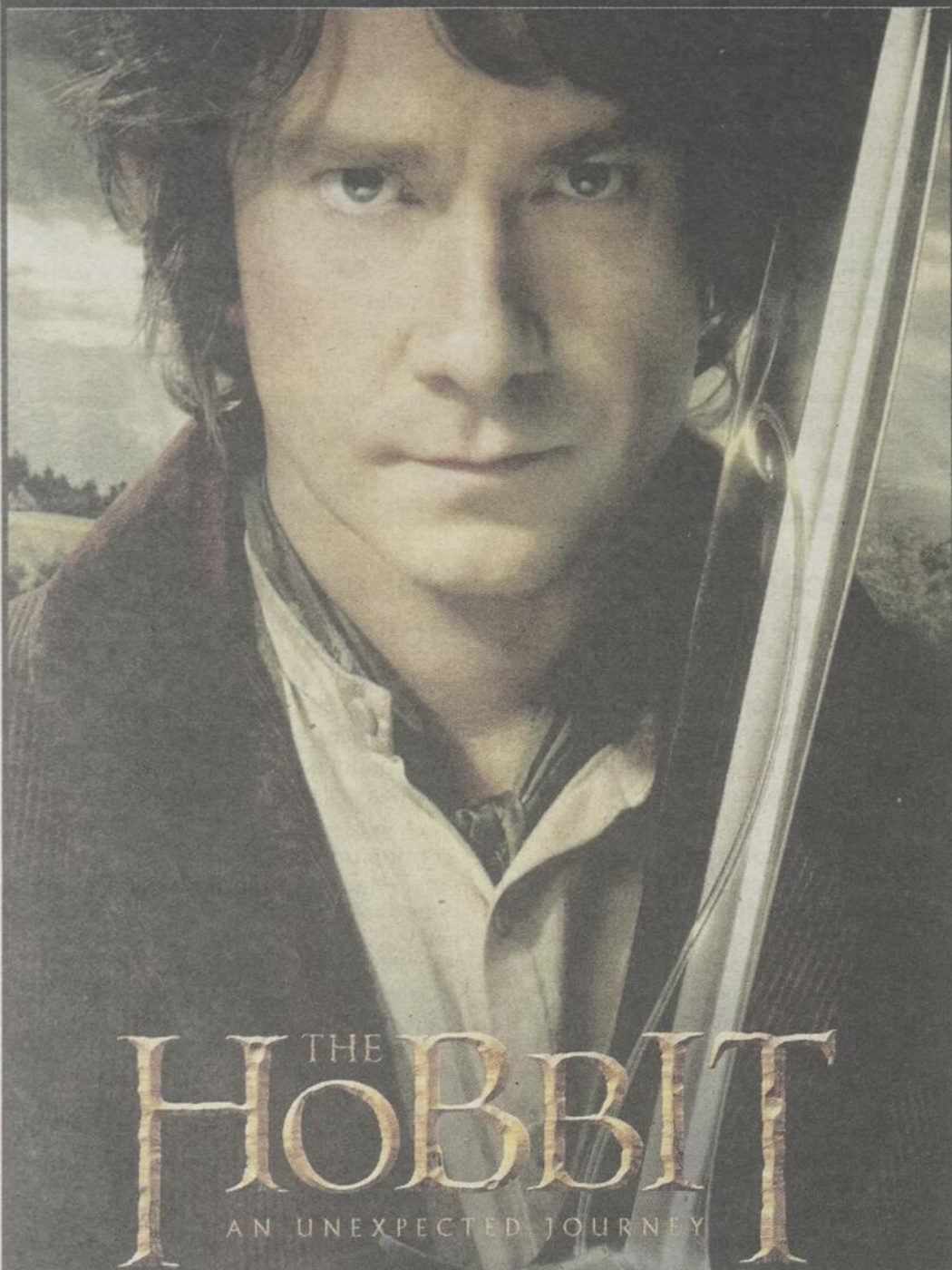
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Holiday food drives help Westmount's neediest citizens

■ MORGAN LOWRIE

The holiday season can be particularly difficult for those in need, and even an affluent community like Westmount has its share of struggling citizens.

The NDG Food Depot, which is in the midst of a holiday food drive, serves 15-20 fam-

ilies from Westmount every month, or about 50 each year, worker Bonnie Soutar said.

“There is a lot of invisible poverty that exists,” she said. “It looks nice when you drive down the street, but you never know what choices people are having to make.”

She said that often, people who seek help from the depot have recently undergone a sudden change in their lives, such as illness, unemployment, or the loss of a spouse.

“People go through rough patches,” she said. “We don’t want people having to choose between buying medications and food.”

She said that citizens in Westmount are becoming increasingly aware of the need to help their neighbours. On December 1st, workers stationed in the Metro supermarket on

Victoria Avenue collected over \$3,000 in cash, plus food donations. The depot also sent envelopes to every home in Westmount, which are being returned with contributions.

“People like to step up, they like to support a truly local cause,” said Soutar. “They know that it could be their neighbours they are helping.”

She said that people in Westmount have been very generous this year, which is fortunate since the demand is always rising – up 13 percent last year, and probably the same again in 2012.

An increase in poverty is everyone’s concern, she says.

“The isolation that comes from poverty can cause a downward spiral,” she said. “If people can’t eat, they can’t start to think about jobs and health, and are more likely to need public services such as hospitals and psychiatric services. Poverty affects us all.”

She said that there are many ways to help: by volunteering or by donating food, cash, or even bus tickets.

In Westmount, non-perishable food items

and cash are collected by public security officers at various events in throughout the year. The kickoff to the holiday food drive was the recent Artisans’ Festival, which raised \$2,531 and five or six recycling bins full of food,

Assistant Director Gregory McBain said.

Boxes for food items are also placed in city buildings, and residents who attend city functions such as the recent Christmas tree-lighting ceremony are asked to bring donations.

The Public Security officers work with the CLSC to identify needy families in Westmount, who are given food baskets, vouchers to buy groceries, and a Christmas turkey. This year, there are 20 families on the list, McBain said.

“They really appreciate everything we do for them,” McBain said. “I have run across families that we helped 15 or 20 years ago, and they still come up to hug me,” he said.

“It really helps them have a good Christmas.”



SUNDAY DECEMBER 23
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
 8:00 am Holy Eucharist
 10:30 am Choral Eucharist

MONDAY DECEMBER 24
CHRISTMAS EVE
 5:00 pm Children’s Pageant
 10:00 pm - Candlelight Choral Eucharist

TUESDAY DECEMBER 25
CHRISTMAS DAY
 10:30 am - Festive Choral Eucharist

St. Matthias’ Anglican Church

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 Director of Music: John Wiens

4813805

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Welcomes all to our Christmas Celebrations!

Sacrament of Reconciliation:
 Saturday, December 22nd from 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve - Monday, December 24th
 Family Eucharist: 7:30 p.m.
 Choral Service - Ascension Choir
 under the direction of Dr. David Szanto: 9:30 p.m.
 Solemn Eucharist: 10 p.m.

Feast of the Holy Family
 Saturday, December 29th: 5:00 p.m.
 Sunday, December 30th: 10:30 a.m.

New Year’s Eve - Monday, December 31st - 5:00 p.m.
New Year’s Day - Feast of Mary, Mother of God - 10:30 a.m.

We invite all parishioners, former parishioners and visitors to join in celebrating with us this Holy Season.

-Msgr. Sean Harty, Parochial Administrator
 Rev. Patrick Donnelly, Associate Pastor



4814152

Celebrate the Season at Westmount Park United Church

Christmas Eve Carol Service



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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!



Saint Matthias Church raises more than \$10,000 for Montreal community groups

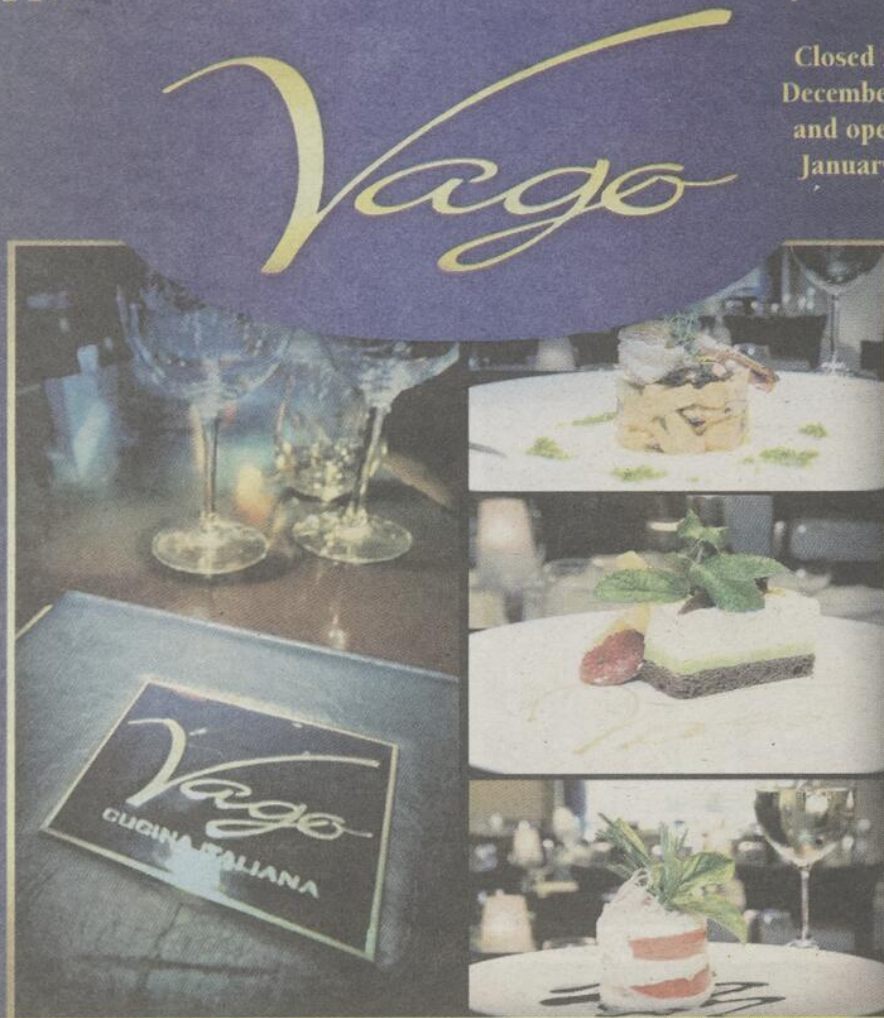
Two rummage sales and a Christmas Fair gave the people of Saint Matthias (Anglican) Church the opportunity to donate more than

\$10,000 to Montreal-area community groups last week. "I'm thrilled, just thrilled that we can do

this," said Rev. Kenneth Near, rector of the church. The Saint-Matthias Spring and Autumn

rummage sales and its November Christmas Sale have become popular events in the
Continued on page 9 ▶▶▶

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

▶▶ Continued from page 8

Westmount calendar.

The church's Fellowship Guild which organizes fund-raising and volunteer activities for the parish agreed to distribute money to the Montreal Children's Library, Tyndale-Saint George's Community Centre, Saint Michael's Mission, the Old Brewery Mission, the Open Door program at Saint Stephen's Church, the Mile-End Mission, Chez Doris Women's Day Shelter, the Auberge Madeleine Women's Shelter, the NDC Food Bank, Dans la Rue and the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal. Volunteers from the Fellowship Guild also

served meals at the Old Brewery Mission and worked at its Patricia McKenzie Pavilion, the largest shelter for homeless women in Canada.

Other proceeds from the three sales went directly to the parish.

The decision on disposal of the funds was made at a meeting of the Fellowship Guild after worship Sunday, December 9th.

"There is a lot of effort involved in this," said Rev. Near.

"Dozens and dozens of volunteers did a huge variety of different tasks to bring this about and I am filled with gratitude for their efforts."

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4813555

Sawed-off shotgun found in guitar case

MORGAN LOWRIE

A pair of station 12 police officers on a routine patrol came across something you don't see every day in Westmount: a man driving around with an illegal weapon concealed in a guitar case.

According to Officer Adalbert Pimentel, the incident occurred at 11 p.m. on December 11th. The officers were stationed on Victoria Avenue when a routine license plate scan on a passing car showed that the driver had a warrant out for his arrest.

After pulling over the car, the officers searched the suspect, and found that he was carrying bullets.

"At this point, he became very co-operative," Pimentel said. He admitted to the two officers that the guitar case sitting on

the back seat of the car contained a gun. Inside, the policemen found a .22 calibre rifle with a sawed-off barrel.

Pimentel said that the gun was likely modified to make it more concealable. It is a common thing to do when a weapon is intended for use in a crime.

"It's illegal in many ways," he said. "You can't do that to a gun. And firearms have to be transported safely, in a locked case in the trunk of the car."

He said that the man had been arrested before, and the warrant for his arrest included several serious charges including possession of property obtained by crime, conspiracy to commit a criminal act, and possession of break-in instruments.

The man was taken into custody, where he is expected to be formally charged in court on a number of offenses. Until that time, his identity cannot be revealed.



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Outdoor skating rink up and running

■ MORGAN LOWRIE

For the first time in decades, there will be outdoor league hockey in Westmount this year.

December 14th marked the opening of the city's new artificial ice rink, located at the Westmount Athletic Grounds.

"Because we don't have an arena this year, we didn't want people to have to miss out on hockey and skating," said David Lapointe from the Westmount Sports and Recreation Department.

The system is an "outdoor portable system," purchased secondhand from another city. PVC pipes under the ice's surface pump the coolant glycol, meaning the ice surface is useable up to 8 degrees celcius.

"With our current climate we have a lot of temperature swings," Lapointe said. "The company tells us that we can run this system up until mid-March."

The rink will play host to adult and youth hockey leagues and school skating programs, with plenty of time for community skating as well. The hockey games will have to be played 3-on-3 or 4-on-4 to accommodate the size of the rink, which at 125 by 70 ft is smaller than standard.

"It will not be a typical hockey situation," Lapointe said. He explained that the rink was cut down to a smaller size because originally, it was supposed to be placed in the tennis courts at King George Park. The rink was moved to the WAG once it was discovered that the courts were too sloped.

Nevertheless, Lapointe says that registration for hockey leagues is strong. The adult leagues have 70 percent of their normal registration, and children are at 50 percent, "quite good, all things considered," he said. The city has also added lights and heated changing rooms to the site for the benefit of the players.

Lapointe said he is not sure whether the outdoor rink will continue in future years once the new arena is built.

"The issue is to find a permanent location for it," he said. "Putting it up and putting it down causes a lot of wear and tear, so it's better to find a permanent home. Once we see the costs of running it, we'll decide."



Photo: Peter Ford

He said that the city made a deal with the company that would allow them to sell the rink back after a year if they choose not to continue.

For now, however, interest is high. Lapointe said that this is the first year that there has been an outdoor hockey league in Westmount in the 20 years he's been working for the city, and may be the first since the former Westmount arena was built in 1958.

"The interest in hockey in Westmount is very high," he said. "It's very important to have this rink, since for many residents, this is the only hockey they will have."

Holiday Cheer!



Last week's Victoria Avenue holiday party was a great success. Seen here are merchants Nee Nah (above) and Astri Prugger spreading some holiday love. Photos: Serge Boisvert

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