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Robillard resigns

Lucienne Robillard, Westmount's federal MP (under various riding configurations) since 1995, announced her resignation in the house of commons on December 12, effective January 25.

Robillard spoke briefly, thanking both her electors and the leaders she worked with. She also explained her overarching political view, saying (among other things): "I dream of a Canada where respect and belief in the potential of every individual are the driving forces behind every government action and the inspiration for every parliamentarian. [...] I dream of a Canada where our country's history is taught to children and new immigrants so that they come to understand that the presence of francophones throughout Canada, their attachment to their language and culture, and Quebecers' determination to affirm their unique identity have resulted in Canada being open to cultural diversity. And I dream of a Canada where Quebecers take their rightful place in this country that belongs to them."

Robillard had already announced her intention not to run again. Her senior assistant, Nathalie Dallaire, explained to the *continued on page 6*

Sharing yuletide spirit



Westmount's Public Security Unit began delivering food baskets this week to local families in need under the coordination of PSO Jennifer Chabot, newly appointed community relations officer, and Sgt. Denis Proulx. Volunteering last Saturday to fill the boxes were Robert, Laura and Sarah White, Anne Renaud, Lucille Angers, Robert Forbes, Kim Colquhoun, Chris Rogers and Pierre Thibault.

Solution found for renewal of playing fields

Work to start next summer

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The year is ending with what appears to be a solution to the rehabilitation of the playing fields in Westmount Park.

At press time, Councillor Cynthia Lulham told the *Westmount Independent* that the committee of citizen representatives had endorsed a proposal Thursday that she hoped to be able to announce at the city council meeting Monday. She planned to present it first to council members.

"Our goal is to move forward now and

start work over the summer after the end of the soccer season, usually with the St. Jean Baptiste holiday."

Starting with a plan to redo the fields in natural turf rather than artificial surfacing, Lulham said the group came up with a proposal that would take into account the city's soccer program, Westmount Park School and usage by the public.

"We're pleased that together we were able to come with a plan, bearing in mind there is no one perfect solution that will please everyone."

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St. Margaret's opens palliative care rooms

BY MATTHEW BRETT

St. Margaret's long-term care facility on Hillside Ave. near Westmount High inaugurated its palliative care program Tuesday. The palliative care program will

enable family members to stay at the centre with their loved ones overnight in one of three newly furnished rooms.

"Hopefully it will just be a pilot project that will enable other projects to follow," said Meredith Webster on behalf of the R.

Howard Webster Foundation. "It is a thing that we need in our community, and it has to be done in a much bigger way."

The need for palliative care became clear after 90 percent of St. Margaret's residents who died during the last four years chose to spend their final days at St. Margaret's instead of being moved to a hospital.

The three rooms available on the second, third and fourth floors are furnished with flat-screen televisions, microwaves, refrigerators and DVD players along with fold-out double-beds and sofas.

A model team

Many of the staff were trained in pallia-

tive care through the McGill University Health Centre and the West Island palliative care residence.

The palliative care team will consist of physicians, nurses, nurse's aides, social workers, therapists, dieticians, recreational staff, clergy and volunteers.

"The effect of this program will serve as a model for our few other homes," said David Gregory, president of St. Margaret's board of directors.

St. Margaret's will also see significant changes in 2008 following \$2 million earmarked by the provincial government in November for renovations to the common areas in the facility.



R. Howard Webster Foundation representative Meredith Webster (centre), Henry Moïse, a representative of the provincial Health and Social Service (left), and St. Margaret's executive director Carole McDonnough in one of three new palliative care rooms.

Centre Greene turns a healthy 18



Standing from left: Vice President Malcolm McRae, DeeDee Russell, Willem Westenberg, President Peter Marcovitz, Treasurer Michael Harrison, Celia Lang, Erica Bloom and Paul Billette. Seated from left: Jackie Neville, Executive Director Anna-Sofia Johansson and Secretary Michele Beacom.

Photo: Irwin Rapoport

"Eighteen is a lucky number for Jewish people. It represents life," said Centre Greene board member Erica Bloom at the centre's December 7 annual meeting. The local community centre, which turned 18 this year, is certainly full of life. Everyone from toddlers to seniors can find something to do or help with. At the short meeting, board members exuded a quiet pride in the centre's accomplishments. Treasurer Michael Harrison said it was a year of light capital expenditure as the City of Westmount reviewed what improvements it would be making to the Centre Greene building, which it owns.

One of the centre's major challenges seems to be finding programs with con-

sistent appeal. One program (Tumbling Tots) did not do well in fiscal 2007 (ending in August) - only to roar back this fall. The unaudited accounts showed a gross income of \$284,298 (from fundraising, program fees and rentals), a net income of \$10,661 and a much-reduced debt level (owed to the City of Westmount) of \$12,453, which continues to be paid off at the rate of \$800 a month. Harrison - ever the conservative financier - called fiscal 2007 "good, but not great."

President Peter Marcovitz took good-natured issue with Harrison's assessment.

"All the things that I saw were successful," he said. "The centre is now a norm for com- continued on page 12

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Sotheby's Westmount launch focuses on Leucan

BY MATTHEW BRETT

Sotheby's International Realty celebrated its first anniversary in Montreal and the opening of its new office in Westmount Square on December 11 by announcing a new partnership with Leucan, the association for children with cancer.

"Everybody in Sotheby's is going to participate with them all year," said Liza Kaufman, the Westmount office's managing director.

Kaufman explained Sotheby's new partnership with Leucan, which helps in the healing and recovery process of children with cancer, supporting their families in the process, to the audience of over 300. "Leucan is a wonderful cause that deserves more attention," she said. "Our goal is to help Leucan to continue their good work on a broader basis."

From Canada to Italy and France

Leucan is celebrating its 30th anniversary soon and sees its partnership with Sotheby's as a way of increasing visibility within the anglophone community.

Leucan is present in St. Justine UHC, in the Centre Mère-enfant du CHUQ (Quebec City) and in the CHUS (Sherbrooke). It also offers its services at the



Sotheby's Westmount managing director Liza Kaufman and Mitsou



Some of the Sotheby's team (left to right) Hélène St. Laurent, Anna-Maria Retsinas, Tina Baer, Liza Kaufman, Karen Karpman of Sotheby's International Realty.

Montreal Children's Hospital of the McGill University Health Centre.

Leucan is also active on an international level, helping children in France and Italy, collaborating in research, massage therapy and organizing summer camps.

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Water, water, everywhere and not a drop to drink

BY EVE ASPINALL
MEMBER OF THE HEALTHY CITY PROJECT

A lot has been written lately about water. Canada has an abundant supply, but we can no longer rely on our lakes and rivers for fresh drinking water. Blue-green algae have invaded our lakes due largely to human folly. Our rivers and lakes are polluted by sewage. We are warned that global warming will dry up our lakes and rivers – already the water levels in the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence have diminished substantially over the past few years.

There are communities in Canada that do not have access to clean water. The lack of water elsewhere in the world is critical, most notably in Africa, but much closer to home are several states in the United States that are facing severe shortages.

A finite supply

Here, in Canada, we waste an inordinate amount of water – worldwide our water usage is second only to the US. The average use per person of 300 litres per day is worrisome. We have to learn to conserve before there is not “a drop to drink.” Our water supply is not infinite.

The City of Montreal is beginning to install water meters for commercial establishments.

It is still too costly for Westmount to meter the houses in our city, but the day will come. It is vital that we, individually, start now to conserve. It is not a matter of

dollars and cents; it is the footprint our generation will leave for the next.

Tips you can use

Here are some small but effective steps that are not difficult that we can all take:

- Promptly re-washer all taps that drip.
- Don't run the tap constantly while brushing one's teeth – 11 to 19 litres of water per minute go down the drain.
- Wait for a full load before turning on the dishwasher. (Washing dishes in the sink uses more water than a dishwasher.)
- Try to wash larger loads of laundry rather than several smaller loads.
- Take showers instead of baths (a four-minute shower uses 75 litres of water, a bath 115 to 175 litres).
- Never flush medications or chemicals down the toilet. Pharmacists will safely dispose of prescriptions. Hazardous Waste will take care of the chemicals.
- Install flow reducers for shower heads and taps. (Talk to Hydro Quebec.)

Reconsider your appliances

There are some very potent water conserving appliances on the market: two in particular deserve attention.

The first is the bathroom toilet. The majority of Westmount houses have old-style toilets that use 20 litres per flush. Even when toilets have been replaced, style rather than water conservation has been the principal consideration. There are several options for low-flush toilets

from the dual flush (three or six litre) to a single flush type of six or fewer litres. These newer models are quieter and remarkably more efficient.

The second appliance that should be considered is the washing machine. Top loading ones use 105 to 230 litres of water. The front loading machines use 45 litres. Admittedly they are more expensive, but if hot water is used, there is a 65 percent saving of heating cost. Front loaders are eas-

ier on clothes and more efficient. Consider replacing a machine that is over six years old or when the repair costs exceed 50 to 70 percent of the price of a comparably equipped new machine.

To deny global warming is foolhardy. It is easier to dismiss the need for personal water conservation when the infrastructure keeps breaking down, wasting vast quantities of water, but does that absolve us of our own responsibilities?

Letters to the editor

WESTMOUNT PARK PROPOSAL “LOOKS GOOD!”

On December 13, a new proposal for the Westmount Park playing fields was unveiled to the citizens' workgroup, and ... it looks good! Although it is only a proposal in principle that still must be presented to council, it had the approval of most of the workgroup members and will hopefully be adopted intact.

The goals of the proposal were manifold: to renovate the southern playing fields, to accommodate current city soccer demand and to provide a controlled area for a new soccer camp and inter-city soccer program. The constraints were also manifold: how to accommodate the more than 450 children at Westmount Park School and CPE Narnia who play on the field every day, and the many community members who use it for pick-up games? How to do this without unnecessarily compromising the beauty of the park?

In the new proposal, the northern field will stay open to city sports 15 hours per week during the soccer season, a compromise that is down from the current 21 hours per week, but up from the originally proposed 7 hours. If soccer demand merits it, the number of hours can always be adjusted.

On the lower fields, the proposal involves a single senior soccer pitch that would occupy half of the space and be enclosed by a four-foot fence and hedge. Although the fence was a surprise, it was balanced by a nice proposal to leave the eastern 40 percent of the field open to Westmount Park School, Narnia and the community at large. The children will have open grassy space to run, and will not lose their much-loved toboggan slope. Landscaping improvements are proposed for the edge of Westmount Park School, and new painted games are to be put on the asphalt.

Other positive developments: the proposal for a field width of 55 meters in com-

bination with the building of a retaining wall to accommodate the grade difference between the field and the bike path, will allow the preservation of most of the beautiful, mature trees that border the bike path. New trees are proposed along the eastern edge of the park. The outdoor ice hockey rink will be moved to inside the tennis courts, a clever idea that has worked up at Murray Hill.

Finally, the bike path would be moved slightly at the eastern and western ends. In anticipation of increased pedestrian and bike traffic, “chicaneries” (perhaps European-style bike stiles) are proposed at pedestrian crossings to increase safety.

Although the process isn't over, and those involved might agree that it was surprisingly arduous, this is a proposal that citizens can get behind. I am delighted that the council has found a means to develop the city soccer program while protecting the park aesthetics and being generous to the school, the daycare and the community. I look forward to presenting this new proposal to CPE Narnia.

GILLIAN O'DRISCOLL, PHD
CPE NARNIA WORKGROUP REPRESENTATIVE

INDEPENDENT REACQUAINTS LONG-TIME WESTMOUNTER WITH WESTMOUNT

Congratulations on all your efforts with the newspaper. The *Westmount Independent* has become a paper I reach for each week.

I find interesting and informative articles to read and I feel that through the paper I am getting reacquainted with the neighbourhood that I have lived in all my life. I used to get this feeling from the old *Westmount Examiner* under the tutelage of Don Sancton. In recent years there really hasn't been a newspaper that has reported the local events and the business of city hall.

The *Independent* has *continued on page 12*

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

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If you *don't want to get our publication*, Canada Post advises that you place a sticker on your mailbox that says, “No ad mail.” Si vous ne voulez pas recevoir notre publication: Malheureusement, nous ne sommes pas capable de bloquer une adresse individuelle. Il faut mettre une étiquette près de votre boîte à lettres qui lit « Pas de média-poste ».

If you *do want to receive our publication and you have a sticker on your mailbox* (or are outside our distribution area), please send a cheque for \$1.50 times the number of issues left in the year. We will mail them to you for the rest of the current calendar year.

Most frequently restocked drop sites: Lobby of 310 Victoria Ave.; Sherbrooke St. exit to Metro grocery store at Victoria Ave. and Sherbrooke St.

Drop notice: Snow conditions may delay us getting around to all of our drop sites on Tuesday of publication week. Whatever the snow conditions, we still aim to reach our “most reliable” drops (Metro on Victoria, Westmount Square and 310 Victoria lobby) on Tuesdays.

EDITOR:
David Price 514.935.4537
CHIEF REPORTER: Laureen Sweeney
laureen@westmountindependent.com
LAYOUT: Studio Melrose/Ted Sancton
OUR WEBSITE:
www.westmountindependent.com

Twice monthly
(1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month),
next issue: January 16
Westmount (H3Y and H3Z):
10,000 copies by Canada Post
1,000 copies distributed to over
40 waiting-room drops

ADVERTISING SALES:
Sandy Cobrin 514.670.0432
Annika Melanson 514.223.3567
Published by Sherbrooke-Valois Inc.
310 Victoria Ave., Suite 105
Westmount, QC H3Z 2M9
Fax: 514.935.9241

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At Second Glance: Literary freedom: Can we agree?

BY HEATHER BLACK



For many people, this is the time for purchasing last-minute holiday gifts. But for book lovers, one glance at Giller Prize nominees, and all questions on reasonable accommodation are answered.

The Giller list includes winner Elizabeth Hay, Alissa York, Michael Ondaatje, Daniel Poliquin and M.G. Vassanji. Canadians are all the richer for our cultural mosaic and there is no doubt as to each writer's contribution. So as I sharpen my red pencil, the only question is, can we protect each individual's right to creative expression?

The term "the arts" – and we enjoy many artistic and literary creations from around the world – is often confused with the word "culture," a concept which includes both legal culture and political culture.

In fact with current debate on environmental issues or with past elections on free trade, a certain level of global awareness and scientific knowledge is needed to make informed choices. Most citizens recognize the need for a scientific and technological education so that students from all backgrounds can contribute to our modern economy. Can we agree?

But while some like Ontario Conservative John Tory would strengthen religious schools, citizens question whether separate schools offer a similar "public-school" spirit of discovery and expression. The question is, will all our schools protect the free exchange of ideas?

Intercultural versus multicultural

In Canada, our cities are best described as a multi-ethnic communities, rather than multi-cultural. Many immigrants fleeing repressive regimes welcome our constitutional freedoms. Dress standards like the burka relate more to geography than religion. For instance, Afghan women adopted the burka as a protest to the Soviets. But after the liberation of Kabul, many wore multi-coloured burkas to protest the opal-blue of the Taliban regime.

And Canada is a country of free speech. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms provides a common value system as well as an "intercultural" code of conduct for all citizens. Can we agree?

Our government is quite right to describe Quebec as intercultural. And school programs based on human rights are an attempt to forge a cohesive value system and trust between citizens. But the question remains, will the courts make the distinction between cultural rights and individual rights?

Individual rights versus cultural rights

The fact is, courts in the West have not always supported individual rights. Less than a decade ago, the house of lords allowed the marriage of a 13-year-old African

immigrant. In fact, a bill prohibiting "forced marriage" passed only in June. Our own courts fail to distinguish between cultural symbols and the freedom of religious belief.

Our charter also protects freedom of religion. That means we do not require political candidates like Mitt Romney to explain their personal beliefs, nor do we persecute – like in Iran – the Muslim Sufi. Moreover, we want to protect authors like Vassanji, who tackled ethnic violence in Kashmir, or York who wrote on Mormon culture. Can we agree?

But in Alberta human rights tribunals

question free speech and publishers here respond to cultural pressures. The question is, will our government and courts protect the right of writers, artists or academics to comment on our world?

Most Quebecers want each individual to be free from repression. Moreover we want the freedom to create. But as I purchase another tantalizing read, I wonder if next year's list of Giller Prize nominees will include a Ms. Ondaatje or a Ms. Vassanji. But for this festive season, what we want is peace, good will to all!

Contact Westmount communications designer Heather Black at atcitizen@gmail.com.

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David Price, Editor

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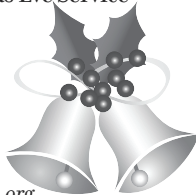
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From your EMSB commissioner

School board commissioner debuts *Independent* column

BY GINETTE SAUVÉ-FRANKEL



First I would like to thank you for returning me to office as your EMSB commissioner and to say how honoured I am to serve you for another four years.

One of the benefits of an electoral campaign is meeting people

and establishing a brief dialogue. Going door to door has brought forth some of your concerns regarding education and school boards, and gave me an opportunity to share what I am passionate about for our children.

Some of your concerns included whether our board had a nutrition policy. We do. It's available under Community Services Policies at http://www.emsb.qc.ca/en/governance_en/pages/boardpolicies_en.htm.

Others wondered about a green policy. We don't have one and that's something that I would like to see changed in this mandate. Others still asked about the role of school boards; funding of public and private schools; the need for graduating fluently bilingual students, the need for fine arts teachers; and much more.

Sharing a passion

I shared with you my passion for children, their rights, particularly their right to develop into fully expressed and contributing adults and my commitment to their success; the need for us to ensure the development of the whole child, not just pass on academic knowledge, but instill in them empathy, the respect of others and a need to give back to the community, and help them develop a sense of democracy

and a proper respect for the environment.

Keeping the dialogue going during this mandate is one of my priorities. To do so, I've committed to a monthly column in the *Westmount Independent*. I'm also working on getting a blog so you can ask questions, comment or share ideas more easily. Meanwhile, send any question or comment to gsauve-frankel@emsb.qc.ca. The fastest way to reach me remains the phone - 514.481.0387.

Elections frustration

So many of you found that you or members of your family were not on the list during the elections and had the exercise of your democratic right thwarted. Although some of you were put back on the list before the revision period ended, quite a large number of people are still not on the list of their choice. I have promised to follow up after the elections to help you get

your spouse or your children on the list. Those of you who are known to me I will call and make arrangements. For all of you who want to be put on the list, please read the instructions at the bottom of this column on what to do.

It is good to see students giving back to the community. During this holiday season, Westmount Park grade 2 students are going caroling to seniors at Place Kensington and at St. Margaret's, while the school choir will be entertaining the 50+ club. For 12 years, Westmount High students have had a tradition of cooking Christmas breakfast for people in the community. This year it's on Friday, December 21 from 7 to 9 am. Please come and enjoy their hospitality.

I wish you and yours the very best for the new year - a year of peace, health and fulfillment.

Robillard... *continued from page one*

Westmount Independent that Robillard had expected an earlier general election. When that didn't happen and the party found an "outstanding successor" in former astronaut Marc Garneau, she accelerated her departure.

A Liberal insider speculated to the *Westmount Independent* that Robillard's resignation is likely part of a nationwide Liberal push to have the Conservative government call simultaneous by-elections in a number of vacant, historically Liberal ridings.

For most of Robillard's career as a federal Liberal, her party was in power and she occupied a number of ministerial positions, including minister of citizenship, human resources, industry, intergovernmental affairs and infrastructure, as well as being president of the privy council and of the treasury board. She was most recently deputy opposition house leader.

Prior to her time in federal politics, she was a provincial cabinet minister (with various portfolios including cultural affairs, education and health) and a social

Getting on EMSB list

If you are a parent with a child in an EMSB school and your name was not on the list, make sure your name (and your address) is on your child's registration documents. If you are an elector with no children in any public school, please download the form EMSB_addto_list_en.pdf (temporarily) from <http://www.westmountindependent.com>, complete it and return it to: Ginette Sauvé-Frankel, English Montreal School Board, 6000 Fielding Ave., Montreal H3X 1T4.

worker.

Robillard last won Westmount-Ville Marie during the January 2006 election with 46 percent of the 41,340 votes cast. The Conservative candidate, Louise O'Sullivan, came in second with 18 percent.

According to Elections Canada's most recent information about the riding, 77,486 voters are registered amid a population of 100,360. The riding stretches from Hingston and Beaconsfield avenues to St. Lawrence Blvd. and the St. Lawrence River. Its northern limit is a line formed by Queen Mary Rd. and Pine Ave. To south, it reaches to the 720 and Bonaventure expressways.

The Green Party is set to have its candidate selection on Jan. 16 (see separate story, p. 7). No other party has announced a candidate or candidate meeting. The date of the by-election is not yet known.



Among the many new arrivals at Westmount Public Library singled out this week for special interest by the library staff are:

Magazines

"Holiday Gift Guide" in *Wired*, December 2007, page 123. Do you need gift suggestions this holiday season? Here is a 36-page gift guide of the coolest gadgets and gizmos for everyone.

"The Four Truths of the Storyteller" by Peter Guber in *Harvard Business Review*, December, 2007, page 53. Guber explores the power of storytelling from a business executive's point of view.

DVDs

Cousin Bette - A scintillating dramatization of Honoré de Balzac's novel about the fury of a woman scorned.

Aristocrats - Welcome to the world of the Lennox sisters, daughters of the Duke of Richmond, and the political and social change they witnessed in 18th century England.

English Adult

The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh: A Woman in World History by Linda Colley. Colley tracks the "compulsively itinerant" Marsh across the 18th century and several continents. Named by the *New York Times* as one of the 10 best books of 2007.

Antony and Cleopatra by Colleen McCullough. The acclaimed novelist presents her eagerly awaited seventh novel in her popular Roman series. Packed with battles on land and sea, politics, conspiracy, love affairs, mur-

ders, and a dazzling array of historical personages, this is historical fiction at its very best.

French Adult

Chicago by Alaa El Aswany. Translated from Arabic. El Aswany gives us this glimpse into a community of Egyptian exiles, post-September 2001.

Anticancer: prévenir et lutter avec nos défenses naturelles. David Servan-Schreiber proposes preventative strategies to build up our natural anti-cancer defenses. He is a professor of psychiatry and a co-founder of the Centre for Complementary Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Reference

L'année stratégique 2008: analyse des enjeux internationaux.

The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (60 volumes).

The Benezit Dictionary of Artists.

Children's

Le cadeau oublié by Angèle Delaunois and Claude Thivierge (6-9 years). When Santa Claus forgets to put one present on his sled on Christmas Eve, it is up to Hubert, the Chief Elf, to save the day.

The Christmas Song: Chestnuts roasting on an Open Fire by Mel Torme and Robert Wells (4-8 years). Enjoy singing this classic Christmas song to your little one while turning the pages of this beautifully illustrated picture book.

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Sacred Sites of South India Travel Retreat, January 24 - February 14 2008, \$5188. A journey to the Heart. Itinerary and powerpoint preview available. 514 271-5941, kyra@aei.ca, www.bodybeingheart.com

City holiday closures

Westmount city hall, the library and the parking permits office will be closed December 24, 25 and 26 for Christmas as well as December 31, January 1 and 2 for New Year's.

The arena will close only on December 25 and January 1.

The Fire Prevention Office will be closed from December 21 to January 3. Police Station 12 on Stanton St. will maintain regular hours through the holiday period.

Westmount Public Security can be contacted 24 hours a day throughout the holidays at 514.989.5222. The business office will close on the same days as city hall.

Parking amnesty

Overnight and time-restricted parking regulations will not be enforced from December 21 through January 3. The dispatcher will resume recording requests for overnight visitor parking permissions at 4:30 pm on January 3.

Parking meters will not be in force December 25, 26 and 27 and January 1, 2 and 3.

Snow removal signs and all other parking regulations apply throughout the holiday period.

Selwyn search is on

Selwyn House School is searching for its next headmaster. Headmaster William Mitchell is stepping down at the end of the current academic year, after 23 years at the helm. In a letter to the Selwyn House community, Jonathan Goldbloom '72, chair of the Head Search Committee, wrote: "We are currently in the midst of approaching potential candidates – some of whom have been recommended by members of the Selwyn community and others through [headhunter] research."

Greens ready to debate

The federal Green Party has challenged Liberal nominee Marc Garneau to a debate as soon as it chooses its candidate. "The Liberal record cannot be defended," said Green organizer Andrew Carkner. It will pick its candidate on Jan. 16. Garneau explained to the *Independent* that several factors kept him from accepting. Firstly, there is no election. Also, according to Garneau, any debate should include the Conservative, NDP and Bloc Québécois parties – and none have chosen candidates. Garneau did state that he would insist that the Greens be involved in any future debate, "given that the environment is a major issue for both ... parties."

Christmas caroling for all ages at Place Kensington



The Miss Vicky's pre-kindergarten class visited the residents of Place Kensington on December 12 to sing Christmas carols and spread holiday cheer. Miss Estelle, the school's music teacher, strummed her guitar and led the children in song.



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*Westmount vous informe...*
Westmount vous informe...

Westmount Page

Vol. 1/15
Publié par Westmount • Published by Westmount

TRAVAUX PUBLICS

Déneigement

Ne jamais placer la neige venant des entrées privées dans les rues, ruelles et trottoirs publics. Il est possible d'ajouter aux bancs de neige existants avant les opérations de déneigement, mais il faut toujours s'assurer que les trottoirs et la voie publique ne sont jamais obstrués. Autant les propriétaires que les entrepreneurs sont passibles d'amendes pour toute contravention. Info : 514 989-5311.

Lors de la collecte sélective, veuillez déposer votre bac bleu à la limite de votre propriété, derrière les trottoirs, de façon à ne pas entraver le déneigement.

Déchets électroniques

Recyclez-les dès maintenant ! L'élimination responsable et sécuritaire est actuellement en place à Westmount. Un dépôt permanent, situé aux ateliers municipaux de la rue Bethune, est ouvert de 7 h à 21 h, sept jours par semaine.

Collecte d'ordures

Veuillez noter qu'il n'y aura pas de collecte d'ordures les mardis 25 décembre et 1^{er} janvier.

Floralies des Fêtes

Rendez-vous au Conservatoire pour l'exposition de poinsettias au mois de décembre. Ces floralies se poursuivront pendant toute la période des Fêtes.

Arbres de Noël

Participez à la cueillette des arbres de Noël en plaçant votre arbre sur votre terrain à l'arrière du trottoir les jours de semaine à compter du 3 janvier. Assurez-vous de dépouiller l'arbre de TOUTE décoration, emballage ou sac de plastique. Nous vous prions également de faire preuve de patience en raison du déneigement et des autres tâches pouvant retarder la cueillette. Info : 514 989-5311.



PUBLIC WORKS

Snow Removal

Snow from private driveways and walkways must never be placed on public sidewalks, lanes or streets. During snow loading, snow may be added to the existing snowbanks prior to removal, but this snow must never obstruct the public roadways or sidewalks. Fines may be levied on home owners and/or contractors who violate these regulations. Info: 514 989-5311.

The City also asks that on recycling day, you keep your blue box off the sidewalk and out of the path of Westmount's sidewalk plows.

Electronic Waste

Recycle your e-waste now! Safe and responsible disposal is available today in Westmount. A permanent depot is now open at the Public Works Yard on Bethune Street from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week.

Garbage Collection

There will be no garbage collection on Tuesday, December 25 and Tuesday, January 1.

Holiday Flower Show

Enjoy the display of poinsettias in the Conservatory, continuing throughout the holiday season.

Christmas Trees

Christmas tree collection will begin on January 3. Make sure your tree gets composted by placing it right behind the sidewalk at the front of your property at any time. You must remove ALL decorations, wrapping or plastic bags. Please be patient, as collection is ongoing and it may take several days before the tree is picked up, especially during snow removal. Info: 514 989-5311. 🌿

Heures d'ouverture pendant le temps des Fêtes

Opening Hours during Holidays

Décembre 2007 *December 2007*Janvier 2008 *January 2008*

	Samedi 22 Saturday	Dimanche 23 Sunday	Lundi 24 Monday	Mardi 25 Tuesday	Mercredi 26 Wednesday	Jeudi 27 Thursday	Vendredi 28 Friday	Samedi 29 Saturday	Dimanche 30 Sunday	Lundi 31 Monday	Mardi 01 Tuesday	Mercredi 02 Wednesday	Jeudi 03 Thursday	Vendredi 04 Friday
Hôtel de ville et administration City Hall and administration			Fermé Closed			8 h 30 - 16 h 30	8 h 30 - 16 h 30			Fermé Closed			8 h 30 - 16 h 30	8 h 30 - 16 h 30
Bibliothèque Library	10 h - 17 h	10 h - 17 h		Fermé Closed		10 h - 21 h	10 h - 21 h	10 h - 17 h	10 h - 17 h		Fermé Closed		10 h - 21 h	10 h - 21 h
Conservatoire Conservatory	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 16 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45	10 h - 14 h 45
Aréna Arena	9 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 17 h	Fermé Closed	12 h - 19 h 30	9 h - 21 h 45	12 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 21 h 45	9 h - 17 h	Fermé Closed	12 h - 19 h 30	9 h - 21 h 45	12 h - 22 h 45
Victoria Hall et la galerie Victoria Hall and The Gallery											Fermé Closed			
Police - PDQ 12 Police Station 12	Tous les jours de 7 h à 23 h Every day from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.													

Westmount, à votre portée. Pour toute question ou commentaire, veuillez nous contacter :
Westmount at your fingertips. Contact us with any comment or question:

www.westmount.org
assistance@westmount.org

Westmount Profile: Alan Kulaga

Insider loves his community

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Alan Kulaga has many reasons for choosing to live in his native Westmount.

But as the number two man at city hall, it gives him the bonus of firsthand insight into the needs and desires of the community.

“I can’t think of a better place to live,” he says. “Westmount has so much to offer as a safe place with beautiful parks, special events, a diversity of people and a small village environment. I hope through my work I’ve been able to make improvements. Someday I’d like to be able to give back in another way – maybe even run for city council.”

Negotiating new labour contracts

Right now, however, as the human resources director and substitute director general, Kulaga is helping forge new ground for the future in his role as the city’s lead negotiator, hammering out the first demerger collective agreements with Westmount’s blue- and white-collar workers.

This is only the latest in a string of challenges he has faced in more than 25 years with the city and of accomplishments in his personal life.

A man of many hidden talents, Kulaga has been a competitive tennis player, a water-ski instructor, piano player, restorer of classic cars and a member of the Canadian Navy’s marksman team.

But it’s his drive and determination that have enabled him to earn his law degree and be called to the Quebec Bar while continuing to work fulltime. At the same time, he also served as the primary caregiver to his wife, Fern Greenfield, in her battle with scleroderma. This is a chronic disease that causes inflammation and hardening of the skin, among other complications.

Deeper appreciation of life

Fern, a water-colour painter, is enjoying an unexpected quality of life that Kulaga describes simply as “a miracle.” It has given them both, he says, a deeper appreciation of each day, an understanding of priorities and a heightened need to look

out for others.

Kulaga inherited a concern for others from his parents, who moved to the corner of Lansdowne and Sherbrooke at the end of World War II after arriving from Poland where his father had been an engineering student and his mother was the only woman in a faculty of medicine. She later graduated from McGill University’s School of Social Work and spent her career at the Montreal General Hospital.

“They were dedicated family people who held strong values. I learned from them how people interact and how to make people feel good about themselves.”

Baptized at Westmount Park Church, Kulaga grew up in N.D.G. and was involved in sports. He loved nature and cherished weekends and summers at St. Agathe, where he met Fern and spent one summer as a rifle instructor at Camp Maromac.

Pursuing criminology

He worked for a year at the head office of Pascal’s with the vice-president of finance before pursuing sociology and criminology at Concordia and Carleton universities.

On receiving his BA from the latter in 1981, he joined the city as accounts receivable clerk. Two years later, he transferred to the Municipal Court where he held successive positions leading to clerk of court and ultimately to director and assistant city clerk.

For close to 20 years, Kulaga sat through almost every court hearing, streamlined the process to accelerate the rendering of justice and interacted with residents, lawyers and judges as well as police, fire and Public Security personnel. “I’ve seen a whole range of people,” he says, “including those brought in in handcuffs.”

His fascination with the work drove him to study law over eight years at the Université de Montréal and UQAM. He was called to the Quebec Bar on the first try in 2003.

Merger’s changes and challenges

He played a key role in the city’s legal fight against the creation of the mega-city. With the forced mergers, he assumed the



Alan Kulaga

new borough position of director of administrative services for Westmount, in charge of finance, HR, IT and purchasing departments, all areas that experienced the brunt of the changes and challenges.

With demerger, Kulaga took on the HR and negotiating challenge. He was also named substitute director general last summer.

Now 48, Kulaga says that eventually he would like to try private-practice law focusing on legal issues involving families

and the aging society, which he sees as a critical emerging area within the legal system.

“My approach,” he says, “has always been to try to empower people and bring out the best in them, and they have never let me down. At the end of the day, our key goal is to provide an excellent level of service to our residents. I think it’s this challenge and my love of the community that continues to hold my interest.”

Precious pets



Westmounter Margaret Martin wishes her cats, Jade and Ash, a merry Christmas.

Westmounters love their pets. Precious Pets will regularly feature neighbourhood pets. If you would like to see your precious pet’s picture in the next issue of the *Westmount Independent*,

please contact Annika Melanson at 514.223.3567. The cost is \$30 per photo. Great for birthdays, anniversaries and other special occasions!

Westmount's arts scene

Paul Bourgault: A passion for prints

BY HEATHER BLACK

Luminous colour, texture, strong design – these words describe painter Paul Bourgault's new venture into the art of serigraphy. Although a thematic departure from the mythological "saints, guardians and muses" of his paintings, the Montreal artist retains their rich and vibrant colours.

Produced from collages of photocopied packaging, newspaper clippings or brush marks, Bourgault limits his output to eight prints per design. Working his magic at Montreal's Studio Graff, he makes art that is a joyful expression of printed textures and saturated colour on paper.

Evocative imagery

"El Paso," an abstract of vivid reds, blues and browns, evokes the swing of skirts and the rhythm of a brass band under the sunny blue skies of a Mexican border town. The first to catch my eye, this

vibrant design is unusual in its asymmetry and use of white space.

In contrast "Pétroglyphes," as the title suggests, is a bold pattern of undulating black and tan. Vivacious swirls characterized by sharp edges, fill the frame and create the drama of balanced tones.

This is art that visually delights. The dynamic elements of colour and texture stimulate memories – the impetus for imagination. And in the end, familiarity evokes pleasure.

Refreshed vision

But art is also about seeing anew and in "Bienheureux," Bourgault provides a fresh look to a familiar kitchen product. The open form of a cling wrap package, now washed in warm sepia tones, suggests an earlier era. Rid of the garish yellow and red, the familiar is made unfamiliar, and the result is strangely intriguing.

This graphic affect – the layering of

Women's Canadian Club celebrates 100 years



Past presidents of the Women's Canadian Club of Montreal. Front row: Marg Stronach, Barbara Whitley, Mary Whittemore (holding muff), Rosslyn Tetley, Fran Andrew. Second row: Dorothy Wyer, Cynthia Dinsmore, Lyn Goldman (president of the Association of Canadian Clubs), Connie Moisan, Andrée McNamara Tait (current president), Cecily Lawson-Smith. Top row: Kay Robb, Anne-Marie Larue.

More than 250 women gathered at the St. James Club on December 12 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Women's Canadian Club of Montreal. Many Westmounters were in attendance, including Barbara Whitley. They all wore hats, just as they did in 1907, the year

that the club was founded. "In 1907, women didn't go out without a hat, let alone to meetings," said Carolyn Roper, the club's publicity director. Westmounter Derek Drummond was the event's speaker.

colour and type – while unusual in art, is "de rigueur" for books and brochures. Yet with silkscreening the images retain a luminous clarity unique to the medium – a vibrancy of pigment on pigment.

In his current work, Bourgault reverts to the dynamic pop era of Andy Warhol and Jasper Johns. Retaining both the sharp-edge boldness of design and vibrant colours, he effectively maximizes this versatile yet under-utilized method of applying pigment to paper. A young painter – his first solo exhibit was held in 1997 – his art is compelling. With a sophisticated use

of colour and texture, he conveys, to our delight, a sensory joy.

Bourgault's work is available at Galerie D'Este (1329 Greene Ave., www.galeriedeste.com, 514.846.1515). An exhibit of his is scheduled for early in the new year.

RE/MAX Westmount once again this year will be collecting non-perishable food for **Share The Warmth**. Please help the less fortunate by dropping off your contributions in the lobby at 1330 Greene Avenue. Thank you one and all.
RE/MAX Westmount Inc.



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Virtual tour: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1381890



Westmount Elegant house on one of Westmount's most desirable streets. View from the sunroom is the finest of residential greenery. Landscaped garden, 2 fp's and much more. **Asking \$1,550,000**

Virtual tour: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1368728



Westmount Unbeatable price in Victoria Village. Lrg 3-bedroom+den w/fp. Woodwork! Bedroom has basement and family room. Exposed brick, decorative fireplace. Planned kitchen, pantry, adj. mudroom. Deck, garage. **Asking \$655,000**

Virtual tour: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1298227



Westmount Duplex in lower Westmount, walking distance to Greene Ave. Both units have 3 bdrs w/finished bsmts, independent parking. Both have outdoor area and balconies. Upper unit has been upgraded. **Asking \$685,000**

Photos: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1342727



Westmount adj. Wonderful, well-maintained and updated detached duplex with bachelor situated on tree-lined street. Offers 2 exterior parking spaces, and 2 revenues. Occupancy in the upper for the new owner. **Asking \$665,000**

Virtual tour: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1341867



Westmount adj. Situated in secure and convenient location in Fort de la Montagne. Large entertainment space, secluded private terrace with bright, clear cityscape view in the winter. Take advantage of the Fort's luxurious amenities. **Asking \$525,000**

Virtual tour: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1358278



St-Henri Great one bedroom corner loft-style condo in the Corticelli. Just off the bike path, this location is ideal for sports enthusiasts or people commuting downtown by bike. High ceilings, large windows, views, exposed brick walls. Garage, gym, locker. **Asking \$299,000**

Photos: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1345548



St-Henri Loft Sherwill. Spacious master bdr with walk-in cc. Mezzanine off lvr and dnr. 12.5 ft ceilings, large windows. Living area has a separate office space off kitchen and dnr. Walk to market, metro. **Asking \$282,000**

Virtual tour: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1368870



NDG Bright and clean upper co-op on quiet residential street, close Sherbrooke. Approx. 1,100 sq ft with 3 closed rooms. Eat-in kitchen, laundry, 2 balconies. Split is 40%. **Asking \$235,000**

Virtual tour: www.mcguiganpepin.com/1367058

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We extend our best wishes to you
and your family for a peaceful and
happy holiday season.

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THE WESTMOUNT LAURENTIDER

BY ROGER HAUGHEY

The snowfall has warmed everyone's spirits in the Laurentians. The region's economy has become more diverse in recent years but the ski industry is still one of the area's major economic engines and the mountains that dot the horizon are off to an excellent start.

One event that local skiers and boarders look forward to is Mont Tremblant's Demo Day, which was held last weekend. Skiers and boarders get the chance to try out the hottest new equipment and take advantage of special promotions in the various boutiques at Tremblant's pedestrian village. This year's great snow conditions made for a busy day, and I am sure that holiday gift lists across the Laurentians include some of the amazing new skiing and boarding gear on display.

A winter-weekend rental

The Laurentians are well prepared for holiday visitors, whether for a quick getaway or an extended celebration. Everyone knows that spending a week or two at a lakefront cottage is an excellent way to get out of the city in the summer. But a winter rental for a weekend or a whole week is a great way to gather with family and friends or just get away from the city and its winter smog alerts and enjoy a winter wonderland just a hour or so away.

Several websites offer cottage rentals, with the best being chaletsaint-sauveur.

com and cottagelink.com. Both offer online booking and extensive photos and descriptions of the cottages they feature. There are also bed and breakfasts (called *gites* or *auberges*) and hotels to suit any taste everywhere in the region.

Several towns offer holiday celebrations filled with warmth and charm, both secular and spiritual. Mont Tremblant has a Crazy Parade every day between now and New Year's Eve. St. Faustin, St. Sauveur and Val David have outdoor celebrations in their villages.

From churches to skiing

The Laurentians are also blessed with a number of historic Christian churches, in



Enjoying the great outdoors at Molson Park in St. Sauveur.

Susan Gyetvay

St. Sauveur, St. Adolphe and St. Adèle. Each evokes Quebec's rural past. All churches will hold extra services during the holidays and offer a beautiful and reflective way to celebrate the season.

All alpine and cross-country ski centres will be in full operation (and have been for a several weeks) but the public parks are also excellent. There is skating, snowshoeing and walking trails all over the Laurentians, with the best being Molson Park in St. Sauveur.

There is a spacious modern chalet to store your gear and dedicated rinks for skating and hockey complete with a miniature Zamboni to keep the ice smooth. There are also excellent trails for snowshoeing or walking, and best of all, glades for skating. Molson Park has nearly 10 kilometers of skating trails in the woods. These groomed trails let you skate into the woods on winding paths. While you will generally have company in most public areas, the breadth and variety of activities on offer this holiday season make it well worth the trip.

EVENTS

Santa's village, Val David, until January 7, (819.322.2146). This year marks the fourth annual holiday celebration at this famous Laurentian amusement park, featuring train rides, displays, skating and of course, Santa.

New Year's Eve Spectacle, Mont Tremblant resort, December 31 (819.681.3000). A

Letters... continued from page four

taken it even further by including what's going on with local retailers, highlighting interesting books, children's programs, real estate transactions and more.

I really appreciate the efforts of the contributing writers and look forward to watching this paper grow and grow.

Great to see it's working so well. I wish you continued success.

SHELLEY KERMAN

RELEVANT AND TIMELY NEWSPAPER

Thank you for starting up a local newspaper that is relevant and timely to citizens in Westmount.

The articles by May Cutler and Mayor Karin Marks are very good, and Lauren Sweeney is an excellent reporter. Your paper is the only one which truly delivers local information.

We sure hope you can attract enough advertisers to sustain the paper.

Best wishes,

JANET AND STEVE WEIR

WHAT IS THE MORAL?

We are two residents from District #7 who want to comment about troubling aspects of the process underlying the Advisory Work Group (AWG) for Westmount Park's playing fields, a consultative body whose shelf-life was a brief two weeks.

At the end of November, we explicitly followed the city's instructions about supplying citizens' feedback to the AWG. We made multiple hardcopies of our one-page proposal concerning the soccer fields project expressly for AWG members to receive, take home and consider. However, at the group's first meeting, on November 29, our very own District #7 councillor, Cynthia Lulham, exercising her discretionary power as co-chair, refused to allow such a distribution of our document.

What was the taboo character of our proposal? We think it was considered undesirable simply because it came from citizens and not from an "expert." And even more importantly, it presented a logical,

torchlight ski parade, fireworks and music highlight the regions largest outdoor New Year's celebration.

Festi-Neige, St. Agathe, until February 28, (819.326.3731). The village of St. Agathe will be open and accessible to all with sleigh rides, concerts and indoor and outdoor events throughout the winter.

Art for Christmas, Arts and Culture Centre, St. Faustin, until January 15, (819.688.2676). Local artisans are featured in this public marketplace.

but different opinion. The evening of November 29 was originally slated for a commissioned landscape architect to present a carefully pre-arranged presentation which the city expected the work group to rubber stamp.

That first city plan – subsequently modified on December 13 – proposed closing the north field as a senior and junior field, a strategic decision which significantly reduced the soccer playing area for young participants in complete contradiction with the objective of the city's Playing Fields Project.

Our proposal urged the city to do just the opposite – to keep the north field fully open to junior and senior play throughout the year. It was this simple, rational choice which the co-chairs, it seems, did not want the AWG to consider as an idea coming from citizens, at least not on Nov. 29.

Faced with this obstruction, we e-mailed our proposal directly to the members of the AWG, and this initiative apparently led the city to partially amend its plan and keep the north area open as a "temporary" soccer field, but only from May 1 to June 24 every year.

Our strange experience of following the process laid out for citizens, only to be thwarted, was part of a long pattern of such anomalies: another proposal, besides ours, could not be presented, and when alternative means were sought, e-mails went unanswered for days. Instructions from director general Bruce St. Louis were to filter material through Councillor Lulham. Also, the contact information for AWG members was unavailable under the pretext that distribution would violate their privacy – even though they apparently were the city's designated people for such feedback.

The AWG came to a decision on December 13 – but what is the moral here? That active, vigorous voices of citizens are viewed with suspicion unless and until they receive sanction from a higher power, be that a councillor, the bureaucracy or the mayor herself.

DAVID PARSONS
PATRICK BARNARD

Greene... continued from page two

community centres. People come here to see how to do things. And the answer is almost always 'yes' when [another community group] wants to collaborate with us."

Harrison told the *Independent* that one such instance was a Little Burgundy basketball team that had lost access to its gym. They called up and were playing at Centre Greene within a week.

"Everywhere else had presented obstacles of one sort or another," said Harrison.

St-Adolphe d'Howard

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The Westmount Parent

Kids home from school? Have no fear!

BY ANNIKA MELANSON



The holiday season is upon us and the kids are home from school. What are parents to do? Have no fear: Westmount and its surrounding area have some great shows, exhibits and activities.

Winter fun at the YMCA

The Westmount YMCA (4585 Sherbrooke St., 514.931.8046, www.ymcamontreal.qc.ca) will run a full-day program for children ages six to 12 on December 27 and 28 and on January 2, 3 and 4. These programs run from 8 am to 6 pm and include access to the pool, gym, classrooms, art activities, cooking and drama. Some day trips will also be offered.

For computer whiz kids and budding photographers

Looking for an original birthday party idea or workshop? daMedia (4110 St. Catherine St., 514.932.4791, www.damedia.ca), owned by renowned photographer and videographer David Lewis Sternfeld,

is a great alternative to the usual. Apart from offering services such as media transfers (moving old footage from VHS, tapes and film to CD and DVD), graphic design and tutorials in photo and video techniques, daMedia Kids explores children's curiosity as they learn about the digital world. daMedia Kids offers after-school programs, workshops and parties aimed at educating and inspiring budding computer whiz kids and photographers, either at daMedia or in your own home. Fun birthday party packages are available - kids learn to use photography and computers to create cool portraits, design their own cartoons and modify and revamp photographs.

Blastoff!

The Montreal Planetarium (1000 St. Jacques W., 514.872.4530, www.planetariummontreal.qc.ca) presents *Season of Light*, a multimedia show that examines celebrations and traditions around the world that commemorate light's return in wintertime. The presentation answers questions such as why the days are short or long at different times of the year and why seasons change. This show is suitable

for ages nine and up and is shown every afternoon. *The Quest for Galactium*, the adventures of two children exploring the galaxy and the Milky Way, will be presented every day at noon (except December 25 and January 1). Both shows run until January 6 and cost \$8 for adults, \$6 for students and \$4 for children five to 17. If you are a CAA member, be sure to show your card as it gets you a 10 percent discount.

IMAX and the Science Centre

Head down to Old Montreal and to the IMAX presentation of *Santa vs. the Snowman* in 3-D, suitable for all ages. The show lasts 30 minutes and 3-D glasses are provided for the duration. While you are there, be sure to visit the newly renovated Science Centre (514.496.4724, www.montrealsciencecentre.com). Although the area that used to host activities for ages four to seven no longer exists, there are plenty of fun activities for ages nine to 14. Admission is \$12 for adults and \$9 for children. Children under four go free but be prepared to provide proof. My daughter has been "carded" before. As always, remember to flash your CAA card for 15 percent off at the till.

Museum fun

The Musée d'Art Contemporain (185 St. Catherine St., 514.847.6226, www.macm).

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

The Vimy Foundation is a non-profit organization established in 2005 to make young Canadians more aware of their history.

The Position: The president and directors are seeking someone who will organize a central office, answer enquiries and follow up fundraising leads. This is a key position on an important project and a dynamic team.

The Candidate: Fully bilingual, the ideal candidate will have the usual office skills and be computer literate. They will also have some knowledge of and interest in the subject, which includes history, youth and education.

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Those interested should contact the president, with details, at: powell@vimyfoundation.ca

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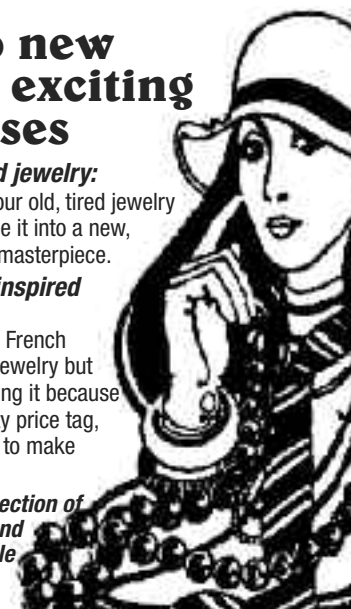
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org) will offer a new workshop, White on White, Sundays at 2 and 3 pm until January 20. Create a seasonal masterpiece by collage, painting and drawing using - you guessed it - only white. Admission is \$8 for adults and free for children up until age 12.

The McCord Museum (690 Sherbrooke St., 514.398.7100, www.mccord-museum.qc.ca) is offering two holiday workshops: "Shining Spirits" and "Waiting for Christmas to Come." The first activity is a workshop where kids make their own metal ornaments, 1 to 4 pm Saturdays and Sundays in December. "Waiting for Christmas to Come" is offered until 1 to 3:30 pm until Friday, December 21. A range of creative activities for children and their grandparents is offered. Discovery at the McCord, a regular workshop held every last Wednesday of the month for little ones ages six to 18 months, will be held 1 to 3:30 pm on December 26. Grab your CAA card for 10 percent off.

The Canadian Centre for Architecture (1920 Baile St., 514.939.7026, www.cca.qc.ca) offers its Families at Play workshop, "Once upon a Time," 10:30 am and 4:30 pm on Sunday, December 23. Enter the world of fairy tales and legends by building your own medieval castle, Greek temple or Japanese pagoda. This activity is suitable for children ages three to 10, accompanied by an adult. Admission is free and no reservation is necessary.

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Baby Boomers' Corner: The upside of aging



Sandra McLean, pharmacist and owner of the Greene Ave. Jean Coutu pharmacy, offers friendly service, advice and a discount to customers over 65.

Many neighbourhood retailers offer discounts to baby boomers and seniors. Jean Coutu pharmacy (1222 Greene Ave., 514.937.2836) offers a 10 percent discount to anyone over 65 and is a favourite with Westmounter Margaret Martin. She said,

"The service is always friendly and the pharmacists are very helpful at the prescription counter." If you have an age-sensitive discount to tell us about, please write to us at indie@westmountindependent.com.

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35th edition



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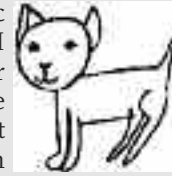
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9 Lives: Giving Cats a Second Chance

BY LYZANNE

I was at the vet clinic with my cat and I peeked into the carrier beside me on the bench: I saw the most handsome kitten, with incredible eyes. He was striking and docile: I had to find out more about him. His life story was sad, but with your help, we can give him a wonderful future.



Mishka is a five-month old male tabby who was saved from a feral cat colony. Several of his siblings had to be euthanized due to ailment or feral behaviour. Mishka was lucky. He was naturally friendly and tame, so it was decided to give this little guy a chance. He has already been neutered, vaccinated and de-wormed.

Mishka is like the Energizer Bunny: he plays until he runs out of energy and then comes over for cuddling. Sometimes, he carries his colourful ball around in his mouth like a tiny tiger. He uses his litter box faithfully and has a good appetite. Mishka is a loving, affectionate pet who craves a family environment. If you are interested in him, please contact Jean Le Marquand at 450.505.1741.

Artwork by Laura S. Cohendet

A portrait of the artist as a very young woman



Grade 4 ECS student Laura S. Cohendet, the Westmount Independent's youngest contributor, works on her art submission for the "Nine Lives" column at the Independent's Victoria Ave. headquarters.

Underdog

BY FERN BRESLAW



There are dogs who, despite being neglected, abused and chucked out on a whim, manage to maintain their spark and a jolly attitude. Emma is not one of those dogs.

She was dumped at the SPCA by a small puppy mill when it ran out of room and has never received any human love or kindness. She is a small black lab who is one and a half but has none of the regular energy of a dog her age. She is submissive around dogs and avoids eye contact with people, no doubt for very good and very sad reasons.

Because of how scared she is, the SPCA cannot keep Emma out for adoption where the crowds of people and barking dogs would be too much for her to take. She is in a back room where no one knows she exists.

Emma knows that the likelihood that someone will ask to see her, let alone be willing to put in the extra love and attention she needs, is very unlikely. Then again, maybe this holiday the act of giving will result in someone giving to Emma the gift of a home.

Find out more about adopting Emma by contacting the SPCA, 5215 Jean Talon W., 514.735.2711.



The world needs great women, especially on career day



Jeanne Olivier, Class of 2014, gets a hug from her mum, Isabelle Marcoux, at The Study's career day, December 5. Marcoux, Transcontinental Inc.'s Vice Chair of the Board and Vice President, Corporate Development, was the keynote speaker at the school's annual event. Transcontinental publishes one of Westmount's other newspapers.

Westmounters star in musical

Infinithatre is putting on its annual fundraiser using local professionals, including two Westmounters. Gus O'Gorman and Heidi Lubert Teller star in *Montréal Idle*, a musical spoof. O'Gorman is a radiologist dividing his time between the Montreal Children's Hospital and Westmount Square Medical Imaging. Lubert Teller runs Lubertex, the family business on the Plateau. Written by Tex Dawson and directed by Randy Davies, *Montréal Idle* takes place at 2 pm on Sunday, January 6 and 8 pm Tuesday through Thursday January 10 at the Leonor and Alvin Segal Theatre of the Saidye Bronfman Centre for the Arts. Tickets are tax deductible, cost \$100 and include the reception. Please call 514.987.1774 extension 104.

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Sweets for the sweet



Westmounter Abigail Ritchie eyes the tasty treats at the December 6 bake sale hosted by the Miss Vicky's pre-kindergarten class. The little ones sold goodies to their school friends. The proceeds will go toward buying new computers.

To grow, we need YOUR help

As of issue #14, the *Westmount Independent* is very healthy at its current page count and frequency. Given reader response, we know there is an appetite out there for more pages and more issues per month.

That's where YOU come in.

Advertisers have a lot on their minds and may not know what Westmounters are reading. If you like what we're doing and want to help, please promote us as an advertising venue to:

- Real estate agents, especially when you are listing your house for sale,
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- the City of Westmount's council members and staff.

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DAVID PRICE, EDITOR

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Westmounters help JDRF

The Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) is wrapping up its most successful year to date thanks to the stewardship and guidance of several Westmounters.

More than 350 guests attended the JDRF's Rockin' For Research Gala on November 14. The evening honoured JDRF Canada's largest donors, Westmounters Christine and Herschel Victor, and celebrated the first United Nations' World Diabetes Day. In no small part thanks to the generous support of the several Westmount residents involved, the fun and glamorous event raised an unprecedented

\$1,660,000 to help further JDRF's mission to find a cure for diabetes and its complications through the support of research. The Victors donated \$1 million.

"It was an amazing party," recalled Westmounter Dr. David Kozloff, JDRF chairman of the Quebec region.

Masters of ceremony and parents of a Type 1 diabetic child, Westmounters Samantha and Justin Vineberg, movingly told of how diabetes changed their lives.

The JDRF was founded in Montreal in 1974 by the parents of children living with juvenile (Type 1) diabetes. For more information, please see www.frdj.ca/montreal.



(Left to right:) Westmounters Justin Vineberg, Christine Victor, Samantha Vineberg and Herschel Victor and furry friends gather for a great cause.

How to lose a world championship

BY GEORGE RETEK

The last board of the final in the Transnational Team World Championship held in Shanghai is placed on the table. On the penultimate board you just bid an unmakeable slam C but your opponents decided to give you an early Christmas present: they found a lead that allowed you to make your slam. Now you are leading by four victory points (comparison of scores takes place only after each 16-board segment). You pray for a dull deal on the last board and then the championship is yours. Here is the hand as appeared on the Vugraph Screen. In the closed room your opponents bid and made three spades. How would you bid with your favourite partner? You, dear reader, and your partner would probably invite, and stop below game C to win the event.

Polish stars Zmudzinski and Belicki, who are rated among the top 50 players in the world, probably felt that either they needed another great result or they could play a hand one trick better, and bid to four spades. In fact, the contract went down by two tricks and they had a lot of explaining to do their teammates. If you and your

partner had stopped in a part-score, the World Championship would have been yours. Start practising for the next World Championship that would be part of the first World Mind Sport Games to be held in the first half of October in Beijing.

The play: There appear to be four obvious losers. However, it did not turn out that way.

Against East's four spades contract, South led the 9 of hearts to the Ace. At trick two, South won the heart continuation with King, then led the Jack, that was ruffed.

At trick four declarer played a small spade to the Queen, ducked by North. Dummy continued with the Jack of spades, taken by the Ace. Now there was no way avoiding another spade loser and declarer ended up two tricks short.

Should declarer pick up the outstanding spades by finessing the 10, South can cash good hearts, when he gets in with the King of clubs. Alternatively, declarer must allow North to trump one of his diamonds.

Obviously, declarer should have taken the Club finesse, prior to playing the Jack of spades to go down one only. Nevertheless, the World Championship was lost.

Rooted in Westmount

Guru's garden book goes green

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

In this day and age of heightened environmental awareness, being a green thumb means far more than simply having that magic touch in the garden.

And who better to fold both subjects into one than Stuart Robertson, Westmount's consummate gardening expert?

In his hot-off-the-press book *Stuart Robertson's Tips on Organic Gardening*, he presents a collection of questions and answers tailored to the average contemporary gardener and accompanied by the author's own informative sketches.

"Today's version of being organic uses many of the oldest gardening techniques but embraces many of the latest high-tech products," he said.

Robertson, whose columns appear in the *Westmount Independent* during spring, summer and fall, is a former Westmount city councillor and co-founder of the Westmount Horticultural Society. He is widely known as a longtime gardening columnist for *The Gazette* and a 30-year CBC radio commentator.

Gardeners who might be intimidated by the use of the word "organic" in the book's title, should not be misled, he said. Going organic is more a matter of "thinking organic" than sticking to a hard set of rules.

The book covers a multitude of topics ranging from soaker hoses and the sharpening of garden tools to the growing of paperwhite bulbs, ornamental grasses and veggie seedlings. It also provides a calendar for timely garden projects.

His dedication of the book sums it up aptly: "...to William Augustus Robertson, my grandfather, who showed me what a real gardener can do."

Westmount readers can take special pride in knowing that Robertson based a great deal of his information on the Westmount experience, especially Quebec regulations regarding pesticide control that stemmed in part from the Pesticides Task Force founded here by Westmounter Esther Goldenberg Heller more than two decades ago.

"Westmount has always been in the forefront of environmental projects," he said.

Along with recycling and pesticide programs, "the City of Westmount was way ahead of others in encouraging garden composting," he explained. "It subsidized my first composter. It also encouraged apartment dwellers to garden by creating community gardens and supported the Healthy City Project."

The book, Robertson's first, will be followed this spring by one on container gardening.




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The streets around The Study echoed with the sounds of caroling Monday December 10, from 6 to 8 pm. About 75 students from grades five to 11, accompanied by teachers, staff and parents, serenaded Westmount homes and spread holiday cheer. The girls collected \$800 in donations, which will be used for food baskets and given to St. Gabriel's Parish. "This event is student-driven and completely organized by the grade 11 girls," said Sylvie Bastien-Doss, head of the elementary school. When asked what the stu-



The Beta Lambda House girls serenaded the Takacs family at their Westmount Ave. home. Georgia Takacs, a grade seven Study student and great-granddaughter of Jack Cushing, Westmount's mayor from 1959 to 1962, greeted carolers at her front door.

dents like best about caroling for a good cause, grade five student Charlotte Nickels replied, "It's fun to spread holiday cheer" – and "to make other people happy," added classmate Eloïse MacIntosh. Grade 11 student Alessandra Fraquelli said that "raising money for a good cause makes the holidays special."

Que cette période de réjouissances soit empreinte de paix, d'amour et de sérénité!

May this festive season be a time of peace, love and joy!

Jacques Chagnon

M.N.A. Westmount-Saint-Louis
Vice-President of the National Assembly

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Chanukah at city hall and the Shaar



The City of Westmount and the Shaar Hashomayim and Temple Emanu-El synagogues organized a joint Chanukah celebration on December 5 starting with the lighting of the menorah at city hall to mark the second day of the eight-day holiday. Shaar Rabbi Adam Scheier lit the candles. More than 100 children and their parents proceeded to Shaar Hashomayim for a party featuring activity tables for various ages, a holiday quiz and traditional holiday fare.

Photo & story: Irwin Rapoport

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Simone Garneau explores weaponization of space

Launched into new film career

BY LAUREN SWEENEY

For someone to whom space exploration has been a way of life, Simone Garneau's transition to film-maker has come with the completion of her third film project which deals with the weaponization of space.

As head of research for the full-length documentary, she says she is already turning her sights to writing and possibly directing a film on a different subject that will launch her into an entirely new career.

"I realized that the creative side of my life has been missing," she told the *Westmount Independent*.

Working from her home in Westmount, Garneau had her formal training and first career in engineering and space science stem from her upbringing as the daughter of Marc Garneau. Canada's first astronaut in space and former head of the Canadian Space Agency is now the federal Liberal candidate in Westmount-Ville Marie.

First two Mars film projects

It was her space expertise that led her into research work more than three years ago as a consultant on two film projects dealing with Mars. Each appeared on TV as a multi-part series on the Discovery channel and ARTE, a European cultural broadcaster.

Race to Mars, a docudrama, and *Mars Rising*, a documentary, introduced Garneau to film-making and opened her eyes to a new world that has become just as exciting to her as space might be to others.

She views her recent project on the weaponization of space, however, as the springboard to her unfolding career in film.

Yet to be named, the feature is being edited for probable release next fall and deals with an important subject that is very close to her heart, as it is to her father's, she explained.

While both sides of the issue – peaceful and military uses of space – are explored in the film through numerous interviews around the world, "hopefully, people will come to the conclusion that space must be kept for peaceful purposes."

A double-edged sword

"Space benefits people everyday when you consider weather satellites and GPS tracking. Every time you withdraw money from an ATM, for instance, the timing of the transaction is tracked by GPS. But space also has military implications such as the proposed anti-ballistic missile shield for North America. And that makes it a double-edged sword."

The debate, she said, has been reignited by China's destruction of its old weather satellite creating numerous pieces of space

debris.

"Most people don't realize what a precious resource space is, in part because of the limited number of orbital slots. This is why it is so important to keep it free of debris. Over 10,000 pieces have already been tracked by NORAD."

Planned to become an astronaut

Garneau was born in Halifax when her father was posted there in the Canadian Navy. She grew up there as well as in Ottawa, Toronto and Houston as he moved around. But as much as she, too, aspired to become an astronaut, she benefited from the interesting travel experiences on Earth that she was privileged to enjoy while accompanying him on speaking engagements and other work.

"It certainly shaped my own career," she said. Her father's expertise and first-hand experience also became a great resource for her research.

Garneau obtained her bachelor of science degree in geological engineering from Queen's University in 1998 and a master of space science in 1999 from the International Space University in Strasbourg. This is where she met her husband, Özgür Gürtuna.

She undertook a three-month work



Simone Garneau

term at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, where the Mars Rover missions are controlled, and later worked with the Space Exploration Program at the Canadian Space Agency. In 1999, she became the co-founder and managing partner of Futuraspace.

While it would be "awesome to be teleported to Mars," she said, researching the red planet helped her transition into film.

Garneau's next mission: a film subject that's a complete departure from space. And, she added, helping campaign in a federal election.

Colourfully Yours: Finding the perfect martini table

BY AURELIEN GUILLORY
& GRETA VON SCHMEDLAPP



Well my darlings, what a whirlwind tour of the Big Apple and what choices! You all know the "grass is greener on the other side" syndrome, of course, but after returning to our little Montreal village, Aurel went to a few of his favourite sources here, and found the same table at a better price than NYC.

I was equally stunned, having had such a great exploration in the design centres of New York where Aurel shops for his clients. As I mentioned in my last column, we have found the perfectly comfortable armchair for me to rest my weary shopping bones in, but we really needed to find a support for the necessary mar-

tini within my arms' reach – not too big or imposing, and not too low – preferably really stable, not to spill a drop of my precious Bombay Sapphire gin.

Ready for Furniture History?

So, a tiny bit of Furniture History. A French *table d'appoint* is also called a *gueridon* by the more fancy shops (so that they can charge more.) But between us, dears, it's just known as an end table or an occasional table, to differentiate between those bigger ones like the coffee or cocktail table that can easily be three feet square or so.

The "occasion" of course, is to keep your martini close at hand. So, while we were at Moss, a super shop in Soho, I fell in love with a tripod leg table about 16 inches in diameter, with the top surface of Nero Assoluto granite, and the brass is cast in the form of tree branches. What a

surprise!

Because of the superb casting, the wood texture is replicated with knots and it looks at once antique and contemporary – perfect for my new chair – the black granite is resistant to any damage I might make and is a good accent punch next to the peachy ultrasuede of my new chair. As I was sad about shipping it back to Montreal, Aurel promised to find it for me – and he did.

But you, dear reader will have to sleuth it out yourselves. I won't tell where, as a lady has to have some privacy. I was happy that several shops here have already adjusted their prices because of our strong dollar and found it here, at a very similar price, with delivery included.

Here are some hints

Just to help you some, we did visit Casa Vogue up north of the 40 on St. Michel,

with their new Natuzzi leather boutique, and the Grande Dame Fraser's huge showroom out at Devonshire and Royalmount (wear your comfy shoes), as well as Chrysalis (on Ferrier, not on Pare as I mentioned last issue) near Decarie and super Thomasville.

So, we now have completed my special nook in my living room. Now, relax and put up your feet, plan your card list, my dears, because this is the season to send love and hugs to everyone that has made a lively and lovely difference to you this last year. Tell them you care now – who knows when the next opportunity will be?

We'll be chatting and shopping together soon in the New Year. Do let me hear from you via Aurelien's e-mail – aurelien@colorsbyaurelien.com – and, as he always says, colourfully yours. Happy winter solstice!

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Joan & Jill



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