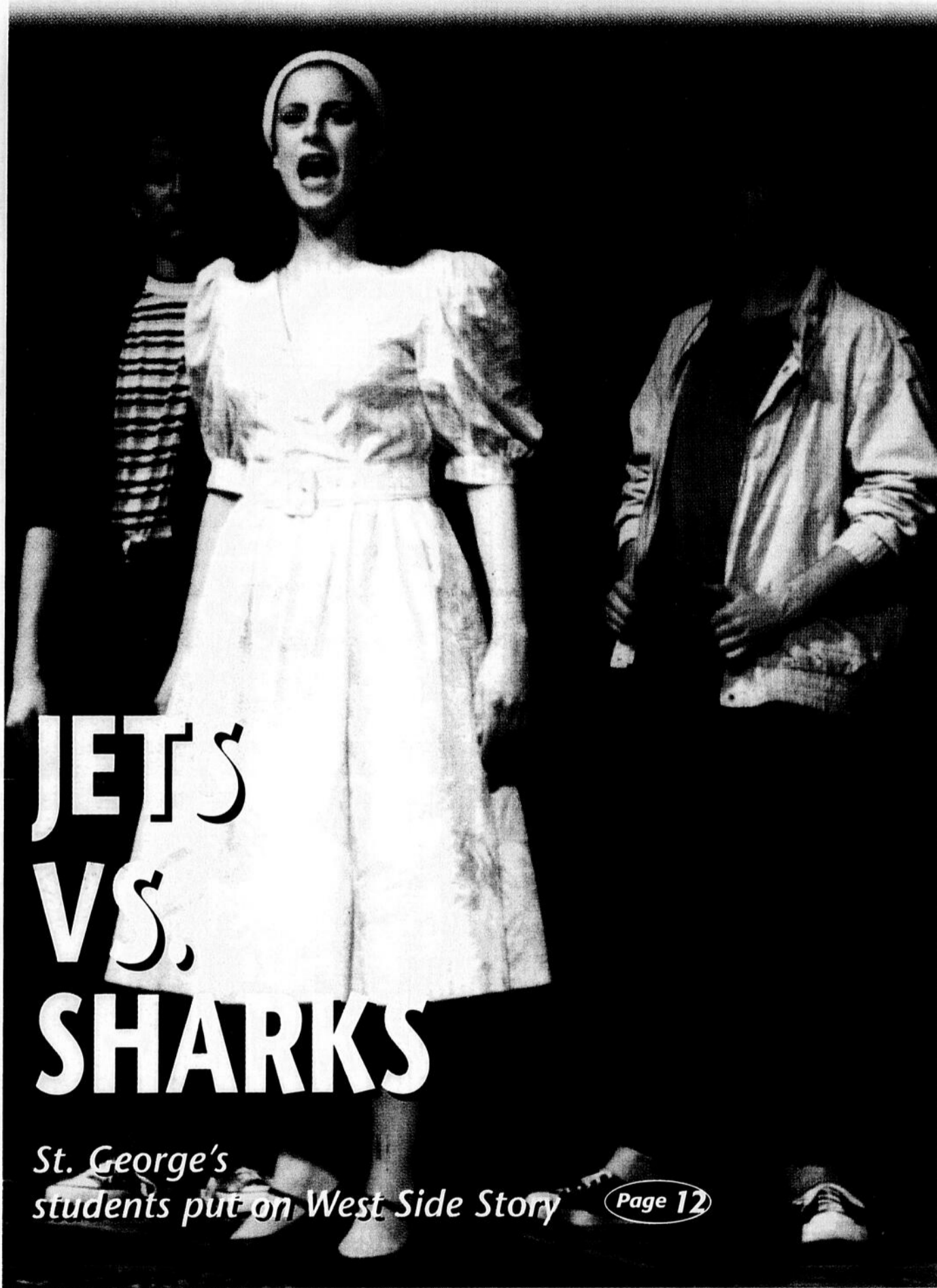


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Transcontinental WEEKLY

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# JETS VS. SHARKS

St. George's students put on West Side Story **Page 12**

## One mayor, one argument

*Trent addresses students  
at LCC conference*

Sidhartha Banerjee

**M**ayor Peter Trent took his one-mayor anti-merger show on the road to Lower Canada College last Wednesday, speaking to students on municipal mergers and the impact they will have on local communities.

His speech was part of Destiny Quebec 2001, a bilingual conference for Quebec youth that deals with topics affecting the immediate future.

It had originally been billed as Pierre Bourque versus Peter Trent in a showdown over the megacity. It was then downgraded to Trent versus Jean Fortier, chairman of the Montreal Executive Committee. When Fortier failed to show up, Trent was left to show students both sides of the argument.

"One of the problems is when people get into positions of power, they feel they have to do something," Trent said. "There's nothing more dangerous than a politician that feels they have to do something; sometimes you need to guide things, but you don't have to make radical changes. I believe in evolution, not revolution."

"I am a politician, and I can tell you that the thirst for power is a very dangerous thing," Trent added. "It's not just the people you elect who are part of democracy, you yourself must be part of democracy and in a small city you can be."

Trent began his address by correcting what he called a glaring error on a sheet given to the students—that municipal amalgamations are "sweeping" North America.

"That is absolutely false," Trent told the students. "In the United States, the last municipal amalgamation occurred 102 years ago, I wouldn't exactly call that sweeping North America."

(continued on page 2)

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(continued from page 1)

Trent said that what's happening in the U.S. is closer to de-amalgamation, using examples such as communities within greater Los Angeles, New York and Chicago as examples, with a slight difference. "In the United States you can't have an amalgamation without a referendum, because they're democratic in the U.S.," Trent said taking a swipe at provincial government.

Finding himself without a pro-merger counterpart to debate, Trent attempted to show both sides of the argument—but admitted it was going to be difficult. "What's frustrating about what I'm doing here today is that there are no good arguments for the megacity," Trent told the students.

The most recent amalgamations in Canada were in Halifax in 1996 and Toronto about two years ago. Both mergers have been so disastrous and costly that it prompted Ontario Premier Mike Harris to put a halt to any future amalgamations in the province about three weeks ago.

Trent also rebutted that municipal mergers were a 'international trend.' "The only place they are taking in North

America amalgamations are taking place are right here in Quebec," Trent said. "In fact, it is the only place in the world that amalgamations are taking place are here in Quebec."

Merger proponents usually refer to things like the economies of scale when promoting it—that things will be cheaper because its bigger. "But of economies of scale work, why is the City of Montreal spending 35 per cent more than the rest of the communities?" Trent asked. "The proof is right there in front of us." He added that no academic research has shown that economies-of-scale actually exist.

But the most ludicrous argument of all, Trent said, is the fact that since Toronto did it, so Montreal should too. "It's what I call lemming logic," Trent said. "But now that Toronto has merged, most Torontonians are in horror of amalgamations and they will tell you today that it was a failure in Toronto." Trent added that even the mayor of Toronto, Mel Lastman, has been quoted as saying that it's been a failure. Toronto was supposed to save \$300 million a year by merging communities, but instead they are \$305 million dollars in the hole.

"They have lost public services in Toronto and they're paying more taxes," Trent said. "That's the result of one-island, one-city, and that's what we're going to be doing here," he added.

Less politicians and fewer bureaucrats also won't necessarily equal less salaries, Trent added. If mergers go through, then employees tend to get the highest salary of the former municipalities.

As it stands, about 0.5 per cent of Westmount's budget goes towards the mayor and councillors. In the case of the city of Montreal, it costs 1.4 per cent. "So much for the argument that it will cost less for politicians—but an even more serious argument is that there will be one councillor for 25,000 people," Trent said. There is also a sense of community with events and parties and volunteers—that can't be recreated in city of 1.8 million people.

Trent said there was some justification for the idea of fiscal equity—that everyone should pay their fair share. "But they forget one thing, the created the Montreal Metropolitan Community only a year ago to do precisely that," he said. "The role of the MMC is to help Montreal out for services it provides of a regional nature, so the problem is being solved and there is no reason to merge."

Trent said some people may even say that mergers will counteract the trend of population moving to the suburbs—about 2 0 0 . 0 0 0

Montrealers in the last 20 years, but disagrees with this idea.

"People will leave in an even greater number because they will seek the same kind of small, controlled environment when they had their small cities," Trent said. "The problem of urban sprawl by definition occurs of the island and not on the island."

Everything will change in the smaller communities, and Trent told the students he didn't buy Bourque's claims that it wouldn't. "A borough cannot borrow, cannot tax, cannot hire, cannot fire and has no legal status. In my book, that means Westmount disappears," said Trent. "We will lose our fire department, our first responder, our Light & Power department, and even we did have some residual powers, a separate city would control our budget and our spending."

Trent also told students he was crossing his fingers that The World Charter of Local Self-Government, a bill the United Nations are trying to get countries to sign the legislation. An extension of a similar document adopted in Europe, the charter would prevent countries from conducting amalgamations without consultation or referendum.

"There is the possibility that a world charter will exist in a year or two that will say you can't wipe out cities around the world," Trent said.

Although Mayor Bourque did attend the event—only after Trent had left—his schedule allowed him only a few minutes to mingle with students and address them briefly.

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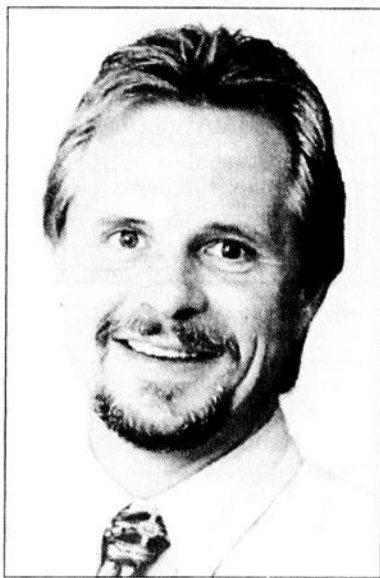
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## Examiner welcomes new publisher



Gordon Brewerton

Transcontinental Weeklies has announced the appointment of Gordon Brewerton as publisher of the Westmount Examiner.

In addition to his new duties at the Examiner, Brewerton will remain publisher of the West Island Chronicle, as well as serve as regional manager for western Montreal—an area that now includes the West Island, NDG and Westmount.

Brewerton took over as Examiner publisher on Monday, April 30. He replaces interim publisher Louis-Charles Ménard, who is now part of the management team of Metro, Transcontinental's French-language free daily distributed throughout the MUCTC's métro stations.

## Anti-merger rally set for May 11

Westmount is planning to make its presence known in a large lunchtime anti-merger rally in downtown Montreal next Friday, May 11.

Starting in Lafontaine Park at 11 a.m., demonstrators from across the island are scheduled to march down to René Lévesque Boulevard for a noon rally in front of Premier Bernard Landry's office at the Hydro Québec building.

City councillor Karin Marks said that Westmount's float from the St. Patrick's Day Parade will be a featured part of the march, and a large number of volunteers have been working hard over the past several weeks to ensure the participation of as many Westmounters as possible.

Among those helping to organize the event, she said, are members of the Westmount Municipal Association, city councillors and many of the volunteers who were involved in the organization of Westmount's Nov. 19 forced merger referendum.

"They've organized a very sophisticated network—the same as they did for the referendum—complete with poll captains and people to phone and make sure everyone is aware of the rally," Marks said.

Westmounters will be meeting at Victoria Hall at 10 a.m. and taking the 24 bus along Sherbrooke to Lafontaine Park. For more information, the City has set up a telephone hotline at 989-5236.

# A BLAST FROM THE PAST

A 1967 Plymouth Fury II will be among items up for grabs at Rotary antique show

Sidhartha Banerjee

It may very well be an item better suited for the archives of the Westmount Historical Association, except for one little problem—it probably wouldn't fit into the basement of the Westmount Public Library.

A 1967 Plymouth Fury II that has spent most of its existence on Roslyn Avenue is being donated to the Westmount Rotary Club for its first annual antique show and sale by its most recent owner, Gerry Leclerc.

The vintage automobile will be among the items that prospective collectors will be bidding on during a silent auction to be held this Friday evening and through out the weekend.

"What's interesting about the car is that it was there when Gerry bought the house," said Ted Sancton, president of the Westmount Rotary Club. "And the car was even bought at a car dealership that used to be in Westmount, so conceivably this car has never left Westmount," he added.

It was originally purchased at a Westmount dealership in 1967. Gerard Automobile, which would be located roughly where



Gerry Leclerc's 1967 Plymouth Fury II

Cantor's is now located on the west side of Victoria Avenue just below Sherbrooke Street.

The Canadian-made sedan has remained in Westmount ever since. It belonged to a woman who lived on Roslyn Avenue and drove it regularly. Leclerc purchased the property in 1993, not knowing that there was a large present waiting for him in the garage. The car was discovered during a final tour of the home before the purchase was to be finalized.

"We took a look in the garage and thought we'd find some junk in it and found that big thing sitting here," Leclerc said referring to the car. When he first saw it, he told the previous owners that he wanted them to get rid of it. After some negotiation, the previous owners got Leclerc to agree to keep the car, telling him it would be too

much trouble to move the automobile—which hadn't been started in a long time.

When Leclerc found the car, it was originally in terrible condition. Living much of the last few years in the garage where squirrels had made a home out of it, virtually every part that had rubber had deteriorated and needed to be replaced. Many of the mechanical components were also damaged because the previous owner hadn't stored it properly.

"It's 19 feet long and goes from one end of the garage to the other, you can barely clear the front door with the bumper, it's quite a monstrosity," joked Leclerc, who hung on to the car because of sentimental reasons—he had learned to drive in 1967.

"It's really a time warp because the car is pretty much in mint condition—it's been here 33 years and

hasn't gone much further than when it first left Gerard Automobile in 1967," he added.

According to Leclerc, the furthest the car may have gone is to Lachute, where the former owners had a country place. Leclerc found evidence of this when numerous pine needles were discovered while cleaning out the beast.

However, the car viewers will see this weekend at the antique show will be near perfect. The upholstery is like new and the car only has 45,000 km on its odometre, plus Leclerc put some dollars into getting the car running and roadworthy, essentially leaving it in its original 1967 condition. Leclerc only used the car a few times a year but said it passed its recent provincial auto inspection with flying colours. "It's not bad on gas either because it doesn't have a big V-8 engine, but it uses leaded gas which doesn't exist anymore, so you actually have to add lead to the gasoline," Leclerc added with a chuckle.

Hanging onto the car was not an option for Leclerc, with storage being a major hassle.

"But it would be nice if it would stay in Westmount and not leave the community," Leclerc said.

## YMCA residence relocates to Reddy building

Sidhartha Banerjee

The Montreal YMCA has announced that it will be moving its refugee residence to the former Reddy Memorial Hospital building on Dorchester Boulevard.

The planned move was discussed at an information meeting at Centre Greene last Wednesday, as the Y is eager to determine the impact of the move with Westmounters living in the immediate area of the former hospital.

But while there were some citizens and city councillors on hand at the meeting, there was a noticeable lack of local residents present.

"I'm a little concerned that there are very few residents," said John de Castell, city councillor for the ward that is immediately affected by the Y's move. "I would ask of you to consider holding another evening like this."

Despite the lack of residents, there was no real opposition to the arrival of the refugee residence in the neighborhood. The Y hopes to move into their new residence by Sept. 1. However, the date is tentative, as the building still has to be brought up to code, said Michael Weil, president and CEO of the Montreal YMCA.

"We wanted to have a residence for the refugee program close to the downtown Y, because many of our services are located downtown," Weil said. "We went to see the Regie Regionale about a building, and they immediately suggested the Reddy." The Reddy is ideal for the residence

because it is close enough that the downtown Y is accessible by walking or public transportation.

The Covered Garden program will be housed at the Reddy, a program that allows for the integration of newcomers into the Montreal community. The program is a joint partnership with the CLSC Côte-des-Neiges, MUC police, and the Service d'aide aux réfugiés et aux immigrants du Montréal métropolitain (SARRIM), among others.

Services offered include a first home for new arrivals, complete with beds, meals, counseling, information sessions, and support services. Many of those arriving are coming from precarious situations in their former countries and the program aims to reduce feelings of isolation, said Sheila Laurson of the YMCA.

"The average number of people we have in the residence at any one time is around 200 but at the Reddy we will have capacity for 260 beds," Laurson said, adding that families can be better taken care of in the new facility. "We have both individuals and families and that's why the Reddy is such an ideal place for us," she added. "Our residence (downtown) was not built to house families, it was built to house single men or students."

The refugees live at the residence for anywhere from one to three weeks, becoming familiar with the city and building a network of contacts.

"When they leave the Y—anywhere from seven to 21 days later—to go into an apartment, they do so with a web of support," Laurson said.

Paul Lubundi, who arrived four years ago from the Democratic Republic of Congo said that the first week at the Y had an enriching learning experience. "What I learned at the YMCA helped me climb the ladder, not to the level of the people of Westmount, but I did pretty well nonetheless," said Lubundi, now working in the information technologies sector. "There will be others who will integrate better than I did thanks to the YMCA," he added.

Komla Zafocé, who also met his wife at the Y when she came from Algeria at the same time, came to Canada five years ago. "It was like having a mother," said Zafocé of the treatment of the workers at the Covered Garden. "I know that without the Y's help, we would have ended up far worse than we did," he said.

"The downtown Y is a real meeting place, a real community centre," Weil said. "We're hoping that the old Reddy can be as a welcoming place for the refugees." But the bottom line is to get them on their feet so they can get on with their lives.

The physical impact of the move should be limited, Weil said. The residence employs between 10 and 15 full-time staff members and a number of volunteers. Traffic shouldn't be a problem as most refugees will walk or take public transit. Volunteers are also involved in the integration process, and Laurson hoped that people from the community would get involved.

Residents with questions can contact Sheila Laurson at the YMCA at (514) 849-8393, ext. 740

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# BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

*Fire station's fate remains undecided after cancelled rezoning referendum*

**Sidhartha Banerjee**

**L**ast week's cancellation of the rezoning referendum for Fire Station No. 2 has left the heritage building's future completely undecided—much to the chagrin of many area residents.

While the City of Westmount would have rather seen the May 13 referendum take place, councillor Karin Marks said the City was not willing to have residents go to the polls without an official offer to purchase the property.

"There were a number of conditions in the offer to purchase, and as it got later and later towards the referendum some of those conditions were things (the developer) was not comfortable doing and we were not comfortable taking them out of the offer," Marks said this week. "Finally, we had to make a decision to either stop the referendum or go through with it without an offer to purchase."

Real estate developer Aaron Gelber submitted the only tender for the heritage property at the corner of Victoria Avenue and The Boulevard when the City put it up for sale last year. Gelber planned to use the building as part of a seniors' residence he intends to build on Montreal property next door. The offer was for \$650,000, along with a zoning change. Marks said the conditions of sale from the City were not terribly complicated but had to be finalized before the referendum.

"I don't think there was any real ill will," Marks said. "We were just caught between not having the offer to purchase before we knew we had to go to referendum."

The referendum has been suspended indefinitely. Marks said that the process has strict deadlines, and if residents ultimately decide to go to referendum again, the whole process would have to begin anew. "We are and were willing to (go to referendum) because it's the only way to democratically decide the issue," Marks said. "But we would not go into something like that without a firm offer

because we wouldn't want to put the people through it."

Marks said she would have rather seen the referendum take place, particularly because there was such a split among residents.

"The City should look after its heritage buildings, but that corner is not Alexis Nihon—it's a residential area," said Victoria Avenue resident Philip Cercone, chair of the 'no' committee. "And to change it all of a sudden from residential to commercial is not what all the residents had bought into. The building could be put to good use by the City since they're always complaining about being tight for space."

The bottom line, he said, is that the 'no' committee wants the area to be kept residential.


"I feel we've been left in the lurch," said Colleen Gray, Cercone's wife. "I really think that this process should continue and the people should be allowed to decide whether that corner is going to be commercial or residential definitively."

Gray questioned why the City was not more organized and hadn't come to a final arrangement with the contractor beforehand.

"They're using this megacity business as an excuse, but it's time to get a little organized," Gray said. "They also took advantage of our time. We wasted a lot of time preparing for the referendum." She added that the station building should be taken off the market until a referendum will decide what will ultimately happen to it.

Robert White, who was on the 'yes' committee for the referendum, also expressed his disappointment that nothing happened, saying there has been a failure to take the station building seriously and that the issue of conserving heritage properties in Westmount must be revisited.

(continued on page 11)



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# NO REFERENDUM, NO PROGRESS

**W**ith last week's announcement that the City of Westmount was calling off the May 13 rezoning referendum for the old No. 2 fire station, many of those closely involved were taken by surprise.

After all, from all outward appearances, everything was running on schedule. The City Clerk's office was busy making all the necessary legal preparations for a referendum, and representatives of both sides of the debate were in the midst of their respective grassroots campaigns to win neighbours over to their side. The obligatory zoning referendum map was published, and everyone was settling in for a good old fashioned exercise in local democracy.

For a while there it appeared that the fate of one of Westmount's most charming heritage buildings—which has been the subject of conjecture for some 15 years—was finally going to be decided.

It was a big issue for a city council with much bigger issues to tackle, and the City's decision to call off the referendum and put the entire seniors' residence/fire station issue on hold was the only sensible move under the circumstances. The deal with the developer was too far from being finalized and it would have been a complete waste of time, money and effort if area residents went out to vote on a project that subsequently fell through. This would have certainly caused much more resentment.

Although this is will be viewed by some as a partial victory for those who had planned to vote 'no' on May 13, it does nothing to solve the more important question of what is to become of the old fire station. Many of those who had planned to vote 'yes' were not thrilled at having a new development going up in their backyards either—they were much more concerned about a significant heritage building being preserved rather than remain in its present state.

Hopefully there will soon be other proposals for the fire station's future, ideally something that most area residents would agree upon. Hopefully there will be a City of Westmount to which these proposals can be made.

## A millennium of Wednesdays

Last night marked a significant milestone in Westmount, more specifically on Rosemount Avenue, where David and Diana Nicholson celebrated their 1000th consecutive Wednesday Night Salon.

Yes, that's right—a thousand.

What began inconspicuously enough as an informal weekly get-together nearly 20 years ago has evolved into a Westmount institution, attracting an estimated 3,000 invited guests to the Nicholsons' home over the years to discuss everything from global events to local issues.

The list of names who have graced these weekly meetings may be impressive in itself, but it pales in comparison to the Nicholsons' achievement.

If you can imagine hosting a party for anywhere from 20 to 50 people each week without fail for a year, multiply that by 20 and you get an idea of what the Nicholsons have accomplished. It amounts to a monumental feat of hospitality, not to mention the effort involved in preparing an interesting program week after week.

Congratulations, David and Diana!

*Commentary*

Wayne Larsen



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2. He doesn't want to polarize the issue
3. Why debate when talking alone is neat
4. Nobody listens to him anyway
5. He can't be in one place at once
6. The experts are wrong
7. The studies are wrong
8. Two wrongs don't make a right
9. Haven't you noticed Trent is raving mad
10. Costs too much to fill the room with inflatable dummies supporting his stand



# HELPING HANDS KEEP SCHOOLS AFLOAT

Joan Rothman

**The students arrive in the cafeteria to prepare breakfast for their fellow students before classes start at Westmount High School. The Breakfast Club is now an institution, sustained by private donation and by the volunteer labor of students and staff.**

Teenagers generally find it difficult to rise early, but these students are dedicated! They even smile as they prepare, serve and clean up before the time that cafeteria employees move in to prepare lunch which is sold to students daily.

The Breakfast Club gratefully receives contributions from MAZON Canada and the Hylean and Hayes Foundation, all charitable organizations. Yes, the Minister of Education does give money to certain nutrition programs and by extension so do you! Your school tax dollars are used by the Island Council (Island of Montreal School Council) to subsidize lunch and snack programs in certain inner-city schools depending on the degree of economic deprivation of the families sending children to these schools.

These tax dollars of yours are limited and only go to elementary schools and the nutrition

budget from the Ministry of Education itself and the Island Council has not been increased for several years, while the rate of poverty has been increasing. Today, Montreal has the highest number of families living in poverty of any city in Canada!

The terrible thing about this degree of poverty is that no one speaks about it, not the government nor the opposition, not the media nor industry, neither the intellectuals nor the business and artistic elite. Recent fiscal planning reducing resources in health, education and municipal areas have added to the misery of Quebec children, who I fear, will not be able to compete in the brave new world of the global economy.

But on a happier note, let's get back to the people, students and the public, who are making a difference in the schools.

Westmount Park School, an elementary inner-city school, situated in Westmount Park, which draws on the south southeast and the southwest sections of Montreal for its student population has had a Breakfast Program for some years now. This program is funded by individuals in the community, by the EJLB Foundation, the

(continued on page 7)

Page 6 - THE WESTMOUNT EXAMINER - www.westmountexaminer.com - Thursday, May 3, 2001

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(continued from page 6)

Hylcan and more recently Share the Warmth, as well as other organized donor groups. A recent team effort with Share the Warmth supplied 11 schools last year with school supplies. Donations came from business, we had wonderful media coverage and the labor to pack and help deliver the merchandise came from the students of Westmount High and the Concordia Education Department. Mayor Trent lent Victoria Hall as a central depot. Thank you all!

Why school supplies? The budgets in public schools have been so reduced that parents have had to supply workbooks, pencils, crayons, compasses, rulers, erasers, etc. as well as lunchroom fees for supervision during lunch time at schools. Lunchtime is not voluntary since transportation is limited to twice a day because of a lack of government funding.

If one has a limited income or lives on welfare, the cost of lunchroom supervision and school supplies for a family of two or three children can be crippling or impossible.

The Minister of Education has responded to pleas by parents to reduce school fees by returning an amount to parents through the schools, that amounts to approximately \$20 per family. This is an official admission of need—but the amount given is almost an insult.

The Share the Warmth school supply team is at work again in preparation for next September. They do need delivery help, people who can drive and people who can load and unload backpacks. We would like to have some volunteer help at the end of August.

The public schools of the English Montreal School Board contribute at Christmas, Chanukah and during the rest of the year to the important charities and institutions that are important to the students. The kids raise money and gather food and other goods for non-profit organizations in Montreal like Le Bon Dieu Dans la Rue (homeless youth), Sun Youth, Share the Warmth, food banks in St. Henri and N.D.G., Generation 200, and many more. Roslyn School helps support a summer visit to Canada of a child who survived Chernobyl.

The teachers, principals, and parents respond to pleas for help in the community and act as models for the children, who enthusiastically join in efforts to help when adults show the way.

It takes a village to bring up a child—but our villages, if we think about it, will need the support of that child to continue to exist in the future.

Thank you to all the helping hands.

Joan Rothman is Commissioner for Ward 8 of the English Montreal School Board.

## A salute to our volunteers

Lucienne Robillard

**Last week was the National Volunteer Week in Canada. In recognition of the enormous social and economic contribution made by volunteers world wide, the United Nations General Assembly has declared the year 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers.**

Throughout the year, Canadians will have the opportunity to recognize the contribution that more than 7.5 million volunteers make to Canada's 175,000 not-for-profit organizations. Volunteers are fundamental to the social and economic landscape of Canada. Do you know how many hours Canadian volunteers contribute a year? Canada's volunteers contribute an incredible 1.1 billion hours of their time annually – the equivalent of 578 000 full-time jobs. Their contributions are estimated at \$16 billion annually, or 8 per cent of Canada's gross domestic product.

As a government, we have recognized that the voluntary sector represents the third pillar of our society – with the public and private sector. This is why we have committed ourselves to launch the Voluntary Sector Initiative to seek new ways to work together to enhance the quality of life of all Canadians. Last year, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien tasked me with the responsibility of being the lead Minister of this Government of Canada initiative. As a government and as society, we need to do more to support these individuals and the organizations they serve

because they contribute so much, to maintaining our social, economic and cultural well being.

The volunteer spirit has always been strong in the riding of Westmount-Ville-Marie, and all across the country. I am pleased to note that young people are becoming increasingly involved in volunteer activities. As an example, last Monday I visited a not-for-profit organization located on Guy Street, called Face-à-Face. It is a Listening and Referral Centre dedicated to addressing the ongoing concerns of those in need. I met with many students from McGill and Concordia who were volunteering at this organization. The energy and creativity they demonstrated to keep our communities strong and ensure the quality of life we enjoy as Canadians, was indeed impressive.

This weekend, Scouts Canada—Westmount District—will be holding their Fifth Annual Scout-a-thon at Westmount Park. Behind this great annual fundraising event, are the involvement, dedication and commitment of so many people of all ages and from all backgrounds. Each individual volunteer makes a difference in our lives; their combined efforts are a force for change in our society. The value of one, the power of many! I would like to take the opportunity to pay tribute and salute all those dedicated volunteers who take of their time and energy to assist their fellow citizens. And I encourage you to recognize and appreciate the invaluable contributions that our volunteers make to our society each and every day.

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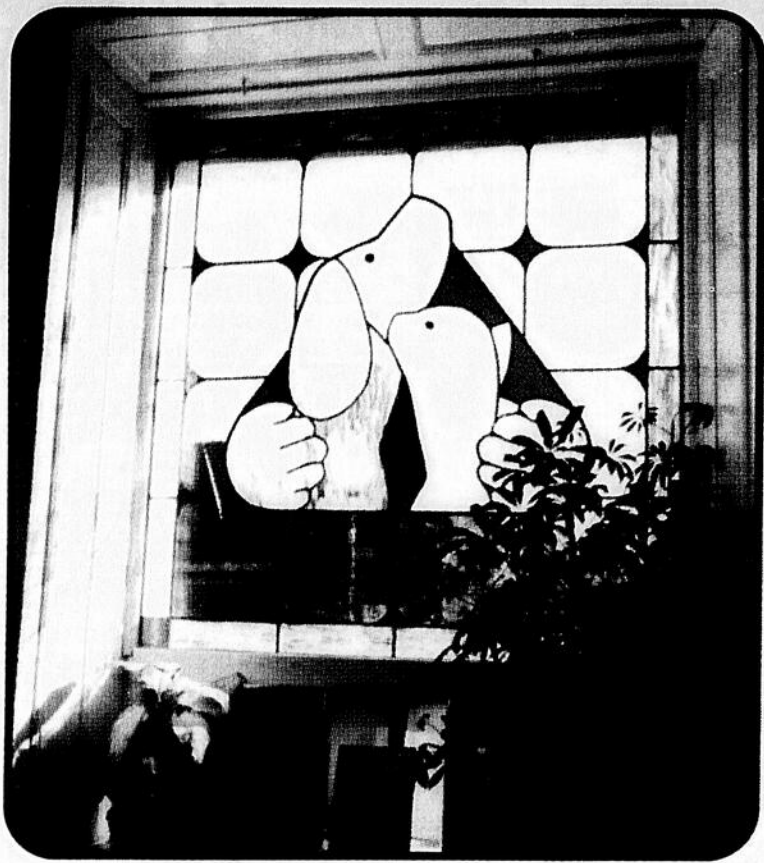
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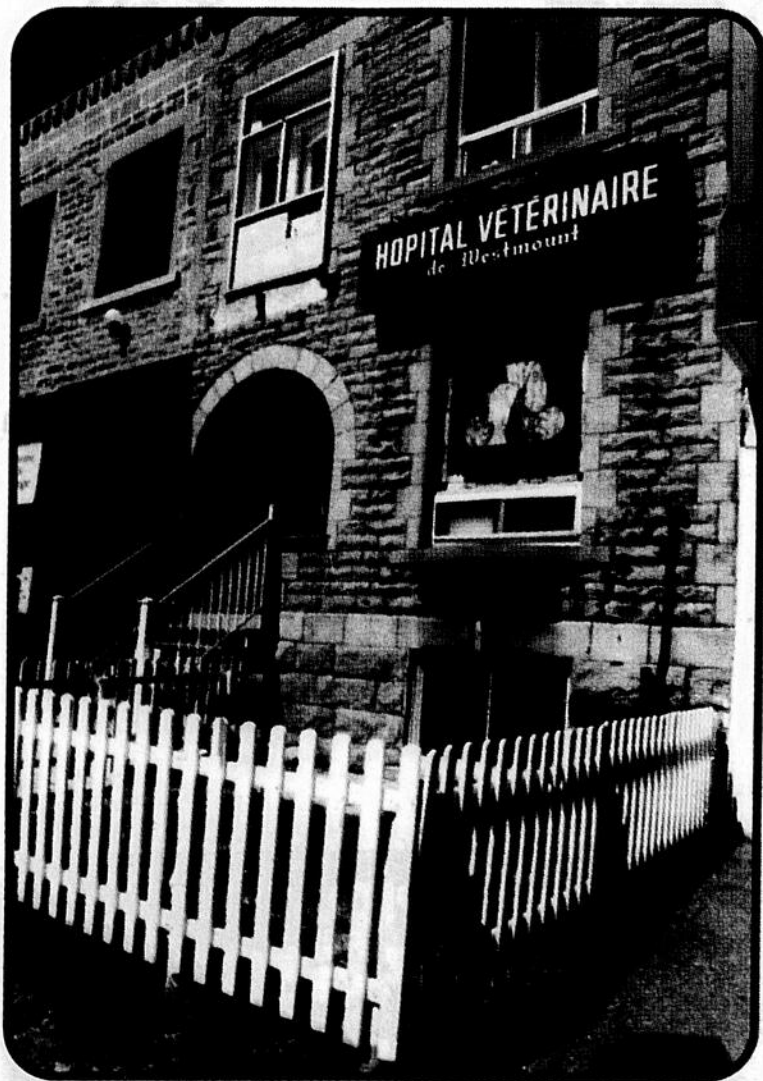
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As co-founder of the Canadian Institute of Zootherapy in 1983, Dr. Marc Vaillancourt pioneered the movement in Quebec to promote the positive role that animals may play in improving the quality of life.

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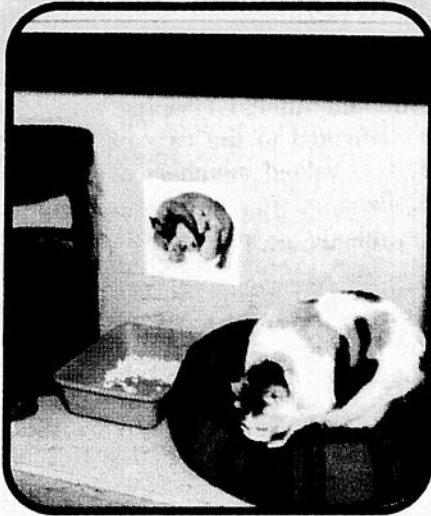
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# City modifies Lansdowne dog run

**Sidhartha Banerjee**

**A**fter months of complaints from residents living near the Lansdowne dog run, the City of Westmount has made some minor modifications to the area which it hopes will reduce the noise level for neighbours.

Changes include a move of the entrance to the run closer to Ste. Catherine Street. Also, a number of benches have also been moved down near the part of the run facing Ste. Catherine Street—further away from the apartments across the street.

"We'll be barring the Lansdowne gate for now," Director General Bruce St. Louis said this week.

The run is located at the corner of Lansdowne and Ste. Catherine, next to the Westmount Arena, and has been the subject of many debates among nearby residents due to the noise level generated by barking dogs. It is hoped that by moving the dogs and their owners roughly 150 feet further away from the apartment buildings, the amount of noise will be less audible to residents.

St. Louis doesn't know if the initiative will work for sure, but is certain it will cut down on at least some of the noise.

"Those kinds of issues are not the type of thing we want to be dealing with when we're trying to save this community," said city councillor

Karin Marks. Nonetheless, she feels the alterations will have the desired affect.

St. Louis said the changes were decided upon after a survey had been conducted of the area, adding that a local resident had suggested this course of action herself. By moving the gates, he said, owners and their dogs will be away from the apartment buildings across the street.

"The master-dog contact will ultimately end up being farther away," St. Louis said. "Part of the plan will also involve having the Dog Owners Association talking to people and telling them to limit the barking of their dogs because sometimes it is a result of the owner themselves."

"It's terrific to have the dog run, but we are a residential community and we have to balance the two," Marks said. "My understanding is that there are some people whose dogs are very noisy, and we're going to keep a watch on that to try to get them to keep their dogs under control."

Some residents think it would be better to move the run back to Westmount Park, but St. Louis said that is a decision that council has to make—and it isn't a decision they would be making in the near future. "Even to make it on the planning agenda, with everything that is ahead of it on the merger docket, I don't see it coming to the floor anytime soon," St. Louis said.

# Leptospirosis: What is it and why should we vaccinate

Leptospirosis has become of increasing concern to veterinarians and dog owners over the last year. It has now become part of the differential diagnosis of all cases of severe kidney failure in dogs. Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease, an animal disease that is transmitted to humans, of worldwide distribution and can affect domestic as well as wild animals. All veterinary clinics in Quebec received a notice from MAPAQ (Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries, et de l'Alimentation du Québec) about the disease and the steps to take when an animal comes in clinic with it. You may view this bulletin on the internet by searching for MAPAQ with your search engine or asking your veterinarian to view their copy. Leptospirosis is a disease which veterinarians are not required to report if found in clinic.

There have been 45 positives cases reported from the beginning of 1996 until the end of 2000. Two of these cases has been in Westmount, three in Montreal, one in Greenfield Park, and one in Longueuil. Spring 2001 has so far brought about 3 additional cases (2 dogs and 1 cat) with others pending. Veterinarians are suspecting many of their deceased patients of having had leptospirosis but refusal of the clients to investigate further has made finding the exact number of infected animals difficult. Another problem with determining the exact number is that veterinarians are not sending their samples to the same place so a pooling of information cannot easily occur.

The main contributing factor is believed to be responsible for the resurgence of the disease is the direct or indirect contact of dogs with wildlife, such as raccoons, skunks, and squirrels, in an urban setting. The bacteria are spread through the urine of infected animals, which can get into water or soil and survive there for weeks to months. Animals may present with such symptoms as fever, depression,

vomiting, loss of appetite, eye infection, abdominal pain, jaundice, and kidney infection. Fatalities as a result of leptospirosis do not usually exceed 10% and occur 5 - 10 days after initial onset of the disease. Some animals do not exhibit any signs of illness but shed the virus in their urine. They can remain in this carrier state for several months to several months to several years. People that have been infected usually exhibit severe flu-like symptoms.

Treatment for leptospirosis, if done in the early course of the disease, consists of an antibiotic therapy using penicillin for 2 weeks and doxycycline for 2 weeks. The penicillin is used to treat the disease, while the doxycycline is used in the hope of eliminating the shedding carrier state of post-disease animals. Testing of the latter theory has proven the bacteria very resilient and unresponsive to the therapy.

The vaccines available to the veterinarians for dogs are recently developed as of early this year. They are made against the serovars most commonly seen at the moment, which are Pomona and Grippotyphosa, as well as the of the past, which are Icterohemorrhagiae and Canicola. They cause very few side effects and most are seen in dogs with a previous history of vaccinal reactions. The vaccines can be administered to puppies 6 weeks of age and provide the dogs with 1 full year of protection. It is important to note that those dogs vaccinated against leptospirosis can still become asymptomatic carriers for the disease so care must still be taken in avoiding possible sources of contamination. Since most of the cases are seen in the early spring and fall, vaccination should be done before these times occur. There is presently no vaccine on the market for cats. Leptospirosis is not considered an epidemic at the moment and with a little luck and yearly vaccinations that will never happen.

—Cheryl Martin, AHT

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(continued from page 5)

"The City should do as much with its heritage properties as it does for its own properties," White said, adding that he told Marks the same thing. White said that the City should try to get the sale over with because another offer for the building may only come through in another 15 years.

"All considerations should be made to try to reach an agreement instead of following an artificial set of conditions that were constrained by time and may have been resolvable or not," White said. "The bottom line of trying to protect the building was not paramount."

White's main concern is that the City look after its heritage property, something it has failed to do with both Fire Station No. 2 and the old Westmount train station. The legacy of this City administration—if amalgamation happens—should be that they left the city in the highest possible state of conservation in all aspects—its heritage aspects especially," White said. "If they can't do that, I think their bargaining position with the City of Montreal is undermined."

At this point the City is not sure if Gelber is still interested in the property,

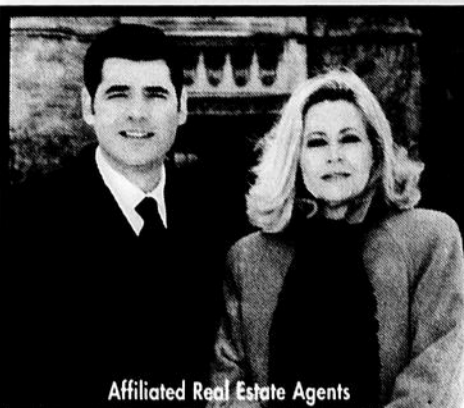
but Marks said the issue would have to be revisited if he still wanted to purchase the land. "We don't have any commitment to him at this point," she said. "If he chooses to come back, then we will have to look at it anew."

Gelber, who may still build his seniors residence on the Montreal property adjoining the station, was unavailable for comment this week.

"In effect, any discussions we have (with Gelber) are over at this point," St. Louis said. "If there is no referendum, there's no discussion." He added that the clock has been wound back 18 months, and city council reserves the right to do look at other options with the property—including putting it back on the market.

The City has been trying to sell of the building and the property for nearly 15 years. "We put it up for sale many years ago and had an offer to purchase with a deposit," said Marks, but at the same time the real estate market took a nose dive and the potential buyer walked away from the sale. The original purchase offer was to make three condos—which is why the property's current zoning is for that purpose.

The entire process has been marred with controversy, and Gray said she wants a full explanation. "I don't think it has been properly explained, and as our elected officials they owe us a proper explanation for it," she said.



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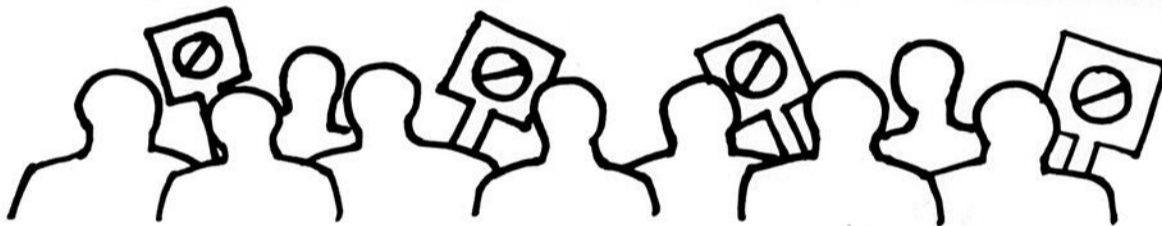
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Information : 514.393.9981 / e-mail: antifusion2001@yahoo.com

## St. George's students dazzle with classic musical

Jennifer Cox

**A**fter four decades, 'West Side Story' is still packing them in.

The popular musical updating of Shakespeare's classic tale of two constantly feuding gangs was presented by students of St. George's High School last weekend, complete with songs and carefully choreographed gang fights.

Students ranging from the seventh to eleventh grades put on a musical that had the audience tapping their heels and drumming their knees. With a cast of more than 30—not including the technical team or parents who helped with makeup and costumes—'West Side Story' was a big production that proved to be a big hit.

Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim's ageless tale of the Jets and Sharks, and the unexpected romance that brings together the two rival gangs, was presented in St. George's comfortable Bahadur Bhatla Studio, complete with a live pianist and a brightly-colored backdrop creating a dramatic city street setting.

"I hear last night went better than the night before," one student said to another in the ticket line. "It just keeps getting better."

Zach Miller, who played one of the lead roles of Tony, a Jet, expressed his strength in performance with numerous songs, including a few solo parts, and his capabilities to sing on varying levels. His character's newfound love,

Maria, the sister of a Shark, was played by the talented Joanna Caplan, who possessed fluid body movements in acting as well as dancing, and exhibited great chemistry with her co-actors, especially Tony.

As the Sharks' girls gathered during the middle of the first act and performed the number 'America', both Anita and Rosalia, acted by Amy Ruggles and Sara Wexler, captured the stage with their flamboyant personalities, lively voices, and amusing characters. Bright orange, purple, green, and pink skirts lit up the stage with their movements. This song, in particular, demonstrated the true essence of the musical, which is that of entertainment dispersed amongst the drama.

The stage direction was also first rate. During the famous rumble scene, where more than 15 actors break into a giant brawl, what could have been confusing mess was instead an intriguing, action-packed scene filled with emotional intensity.

Fabio Avella, who played The Sharks' Bernardo, illustrated great portrayal of character not only in this scene, but throughout the musical.

Grade difference couldn't be determined by watching this production, nor was talent between grades distinguishable. All those involved in 'West Side Story' obviously worked hard and acted hard, danced hard and sang hard, and it paid off with sold-out performances full of applause and, hopefully, a sense of great accomplishment for the actors and crew.

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Time: 12:00 p.m. - Montreal or  
6:30 p.m. - Laval

Featured speaker: Alain Ostiguy, Director  
Arrow Hedge Partners Inc.

Date: Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001

Time: 9:00 a.m. - West Island

RSVP: Please contact Christiana Kavadas at 1 888 575-4776 for reservations and details. Each seminar is limited to 20 people.

Hosted by:  
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# Bulletin Board

**Thursday, May 3**

**Spring Music Concert and Spaghetti Dinner** at Westmount High School, 4350 Ste. Catherine. Featuring Geraldine Hunt and the Preville Big Band. Info: Sandra Emberly at 486-2230.

**An Evening of Poetry** at the Double Hook Book Shop, 1235A Greene Ave., at 7:30 p.m. Readings by Judith Avinger, Eileen Ballard and Anne Cimon. Info: 932-5093.

**Friday, May 4**

**Annual Used Book Sale** at Centre Greene, 1090 Greene Ave., from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Info: 931-6202.

**Saturday, May 5**

**Arts Festival and Sale** at The Study, 3233 The Boulevard, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info: 935-9352.

**Spring Rummage Sale** at St. Matthias' Church, 131 Côte St. Antoine, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Rummage Sale** at Church of the Advent, 326 Wood Ave., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Annual Used Book Sale** at Centre Greene, 1090 Greene Ave., from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info: 931-6202.

**Sunday, May 6**

**The Westmount Lawn Bowling Club** holds its semi-annual meeting at 2 p.m. in the clubhouse, corner of Kensington and Sherbrooke.

**Tuesday, May 8**

**Entre Nous Senior Group** at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, 395 Elm Ave., presents 'The Healing Power of Optimism' Brown bag lunch at noon, program at 1 p.m. Info: 937-3575.

**The Westmount Horticultural Society** meets in the Westmount Room of the Westmount Public Library, at 7 p.m. Info: 989-7939.

**Wednesday, May 9**

**The Double Hook**, 1235A Greene Ave., launches Edward O. Phillips's latest novel 'No Early Birds' at 6 p.m. Info: 932-5093.

2001

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**Stuart McLean**

January 25, 2001  
Author of *The Vinyl Cafe* (1990), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (1991), *Home from the Vinyl Cafe* (1993), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (1994), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (1995), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (1996), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (1997), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (1998), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (1999), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (2000), *Stones from the Vinyl Cafe* (2001).

**Mark Kingwell**

April 19, 2001  
Award-winning political and cultural theorist. Professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto and author of five books including *The World We Want: Virtue, Vice and the Good Citizen*.



**Wendy Mesley**

May 10, 2001  
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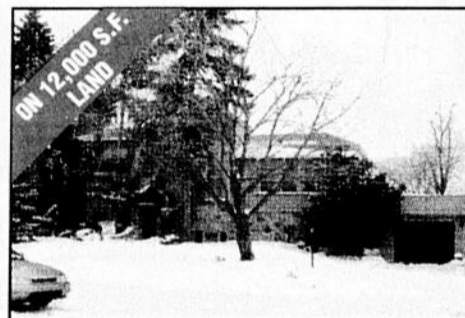
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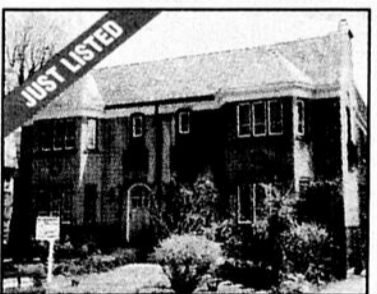
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