

Plans for new condo project at Prince Albert/de Mais. await new zoning by-law

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Newly revealed plans for a condo development at the southeast corner of de Maisonneuve and Prince Albert are on hold pending adoption of the city's proposed zoning by-law for approving specific non-conforming projects, the *Independent* learned last week.

This development plan calls for demolishing the office building at 4898 de

Maisonneuve and replacing it with a condo building extending onto the adjacent parking lot, owner Guy Laframboise confirmed January 13.

The new building would "match" the height of adjacent Château Westmount at the corner of Victoria of about five-plus storeys, he said. It would include underground parking if feasible and incorporate greenspace to create "something nice that will fit into the neighbourhood."

Laframboise said he had been working with the city on the project but had retracted his plans pending approval of the by-law on Specific Construction Alteration or Occupancy Proposals for an Immoveable *continued on p. 8*



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City to use drones to assess safety of greenhouses

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The future of Westmount's historic greenhouse complex appears to be hanging largely on the findings of remote-controlled robots. It is currently closed for safety concerns.

Drones are to be used to inspect and photograph the condition of the conservatory and greenhouses inside, outside and overhead, Councillor Cynthia Lulham told



Keith Lacoste, left, and Filippo Tortorici from Public Works prepare the ice at Queen Elizabeth Park January 15 around 4:45 pm. The temperature was minus 10 °C with a strong northern wind. The city's "e-westmount" newsletter said the outdoor skating rinks were expected to open the week of January 18.
Photo: Ralph Thompson

the *Independent* last week as commissioner of Parks and Sustainability.

"The goal here is to assess the state of the structure, to see if it requires only a few repairs or a total rebuild," she explained. An analysis will also include the city's needs moving forward.

The complex remains closed to the public after glass panes fell from the roof September 20 (see story October 20, p. 1.) In the *continued on p. 13*



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Questions raised over hydro outages, upgrades

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

In the wake of power outages December 29 to January 6, Mayor Peter Trent opened the council meeting January 11 reporting on the council's plan to increase capital investment in the aging Hydro Westmount's network.

As reported in last week's edition, he said capital investment for 2016 would be 2.5 times more in today's dollars than the average annual amount in the 2000s.

Hydro Westmount profits – sometimes as high as \$3 million – have historically been plowed back into general city revenues rather than invested in upgrades, he explained. The utility has had “a pretty solid legacy of underfunding,” he said.

“That was the problem. We looked at Hydro Westmount as a cash cow.” Nevertheless, he said, “Had we invested the

proper amount, it doesn't mean we might not have had the [recent] problem.”

Councillor Victor Drury then explained the failure of two circuits feeding the same west-end district and the overloading of the common back-up circuit (see also story January 12, p. 1).

Grosvenor Ave. resident Paul Marriott, Westmount Municipal Association president and one of the residents who was affected by the recent outages, asked how much it would cost, and how long would it take, to bring Hydro Westmount infrastructure up to the same standard as Hydro Quebec.

Utility director Benoit Hurtubise, who attended the meeting in the audience, said he had no figures or timeline, but it would be “extremely expensive” and would require changing not only circuits but also most network equipment including trans-

formers.

The needs of the two utilities can't be compared, he further explained. Hydro Quebec services expanding areas of new development whereas Westmount is already a mature, built-up community.

While the city's utility needs to replace aging equipment in the network and some additional capacity in certain areas, Hurtubise has regularly maintained the demand for electrical consumption has not reached the network's maximum capacity.

Renovated gym at Centre Greene



Seen in the photo cutting the ribbon are, from left, Centre Greene board chair Deborah Adler, member Morgan Greenberg and Mayor Peter Trent.

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Officials from the city of Westmount, including Mayor Peter Trent and three city councillors, were at Centre Greene on January 12 for the inauguration of the community centre's newly renovated gymnasium.

According to the centre's assistant director and special events coordinator Matt-

son Griffiths, work on the gym included a new roof, improved lighting, fresh paint and brand new flooring.

The \$32,000 project was realized with the support of the city, with additional support provided by private donors. Some were among the approximately 35 mostly adult attendees who, along with staff and board members, were at the afternoon reception.



Hydro Westmount director Benoit Hurtubise, left, leaves the audience at the council meeting January 11 to find a mic for replying to questions from Paul Marriott, right. Hurtubise was attending the meeting as “back-up,” Mayor Peter Trent explained.

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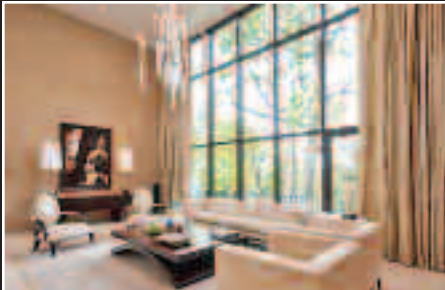
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

HARD NUMBERS PROVE IT

Your correspondent Thomas LaPierre once again accuses council of “spending money like it’s going out of style.”

His assertion is offered up completely unadorned, without any figures to support it. As someone who has been behind decades of Westmount’s annual budget-making – including a whole bunch of budgets that froze taxes and spending – I would like to let hard numbers intrude into this insubstantiality.

Westmount’s 2016 budget calls for spending \$101 million. \$51 million of this disappears downtown to Montreal, paid to the agglomeration. In spite of my efforts as president of the suburban municipalities to keep this annual payment in check, there’s been an increase *after inflation* of \$5 million (or 11 percent) since we got our first agglomeration bill* in 2009.

That leaves \$50 million budgeted for local spending. In today’s dollars, we’ll spend \$5.3 million more in 2016 than we did in 2009. But 70 percent of this increase is simply added cash to pay for increased infrastructure investments. The rest is made up of increased costs of employee pensions.

So Westmount’s increase from 2009 to 2016 is principally a result of augmented efforts to fix things like roads and Hydro Westmount – and paying for the Westmount Recreation Centre (WRC). And, yes, we spend more on recreation because of the increased scope of the WRC. However, these costs are being offset by charging the users more, which fulfills a promise we made back in 2010 – when 83 percent of Westmounters said to go ahead and build the WRC.

Mr. LaPierre also complains of “incandescent property tax increases.” Hummm. Had the agglomeration increases just kept pace with inflation and had we not boosted infrastructure investment (including building the WRC), the average tax on a Westmount single-family dwelling in 2016 would be the same, after inflation, as it was back in 2006. QED.

PETER TRENT, MAYOR OF WESTMOUNT
* When Westmount first demerged in early 2006, the agglomeration sent out its own tax bills directly to each homeowner. Only starting in 2009, following Bill 22, did the aggro bill the city of Westmount in one lump sum, and the city in turn in-

cluded everyone’s share of it in its tax bills. Also, because certain new responsibilities such as arterial roads were assigned to the

demerged cities with Bill 22, one cannot compare the 2006-2009 situation with that of 2009-2016.

Police Report

ID and cash stolen from car, assault on teens reported

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

The following news story is based on information from police reports provided by a Station 12 constable in an interview with the reporter.

Staff at the Montreal police department’s Station 12 on Stanton St. report that the first few weeks of 2016 were relatively quiet in terms of crime, although there were a few incidents.

On January 6 around 8 pm, a car parked on Victoria Ave. near the corner of Sherbrooke St. was broken into and some of its contents were stolen.

According to the police report, the owner, a US citizen visiting Montreal, returned to his rented vehicle after a stop at a restaurant and found the rear passenger window shattered. A backpack containing some personal belongings had been stolen. The victim lost personal IDs, a passport, an iPod and some cash.

“You should never leave any valuables inside a car in the open,” said Station 12 community relations officer Adalbert Pimentel.

He suggested that valuables should be left in a vehicle’s trunk so as not to leave them exposed in the passenger area.

Mugging

On January 10 at the corner of St. Catherine St. and Redfern Ave., two teenage boys walking along the north side of St. Catherine were approached by two slightly older males who struck up a conversation.

Suddenly, five other young men who were inside a vehicle that had been parked nearby converged on them. The two teenagers were assaulted and some of their belongings, including IDs and a cell phone and some cash, were stolen.

Although several similar incidents have

been reported by the police in recent months, community relations officer Stéphan Laperrière noted that the description of the perpetrators in the earlier incidents doesn’t match the suspects in this latest one.

“A report has been sent to investigators, and they have been in contact with the victims so they can get a better description and more information,” he said. The victims’ injuries were minor, he added.

Graffiti

Police have been scrutinizing some recent graffiti incidents in Westmount for information that might lead to the perpetrators, who in some cases could be members of street gangs.

One of the incidents was committed on January 1 on the side of a building on St. Catherine St. sometime between 3 am and 8 am.

Another graffiti event took place in the early hours on the same date on the side wall of a residence on Dorchester Blvd. And there was another incident sometime from January 1 to January 6 on the outer wall of a building on St. Antoine St.

According to Pimentel, every graffiti report is sent to a police department analyst who compares it to other incidents in a database to see if the signature “tags” are similar.

In some cases, Pimentel said, graffiti is created by street gangs and tracking them helps the police pinpoint gang activity across Montreal. Certain graffiti also involves hate crimes, he added, while noting that they are relatively rare.

“It’s always important to report graffiti and to get it removed as soon as possible,” said Pimentel, noting that the city of Westmount offers a service for graffiti removal.

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount.

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'Don't transport, buy locally'

Exploring firewood laws, best practices in Westmount

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

If you like the nice cozy warmth and ambiance of a winter fire on the hearth, then you may be extra happy you live in Westmount.

That's because Montreal's ban in 2018 on the burning of firewood in fireplaces and wood-burning stoves will not apply in Westmount, as previously reported (see story September 8, 2015, p. 1).

In fact, according to city officials, the city appears to have no municipal by-laws restricting types of firewood that can be burned, only "best practices."

"I don't have any by-laws regarding the use of firewood," confirmed Urban Planning director Joanne Poirier. And other department officials said any regulations would fall under Urban Planning enforcement.

Fire officials and the Canada Safety Council have long advocated against the burning of evergreen branches in the fireplace because of the build-up of creosote they generate in the chimney and the flammable resin they contain that can flare up and ignite existing creosote.

As well, Public Works officials ask residents not to transport ash wood, in particular, into the city from the country in an effort to slow or curb the destruction of ash trees by the emerald ash borer.

Even if the wood comes from an ash tree in your own backyard and does not need transportation, these logs should never be stored, explained city arborist Nick Mory. The beetle's larvae can survive under the bark for some three years.

"Regulated" zones charted by the Cana-

dian Food Inspection Agency within which ash wood can be transported for agricultural purposes are subject to change. Mory refers to a map of July 2, which shows much of Quebec and southern Ontario sharing the same already-infected area.

When it comes to firewood, however, the agency advises that no type should be transported but "bought locally and burned on site." Moving untreated firewood "even a few kilometers to or from a camp ground or a cottage is a common way for invasive insects and disease to spread," it states.

Buying firewood

So, how can conscientious Westmounters buy "good" firewood?

The generally recommended types of firewood appear to be well-dried hardwoods, such as maple, that can be bought locally in small easy-to-carry bundles or in bulk at some big-box stores and some nurseries.

The *Independent* found it in bulk at the Réno Dépôt on St. Jacques St. West and in small bundles from the neighbourhood Hogg store at Sherbrooke and Victoria, at Home Depot and some supermarkets, including the Metro Fletcher store. The packaged wood is labelled as being kiln dried, ostensibly killing pests.

Then there are the so-called "eco" logs made of various types of compounds such as sawdust and paraffin. "This is what most people are buying," said Russ Tishaw at Hogg's. To be used one at a time,

they burn cleanly without causing a mess but are more for ambiance than heat, he added.

Chimney maintenance

Regardless of the type of firewood used, Westmount's older homes – some with fireplaces and chimneys dating back to over 100 years ago – have been sources of a number of local fires over the years.

Some resulted from the transfer of fireplace heat to the

older, dried wood in the structure and under the hearth, as opposed to being confined to the chimney or flue.

The National Fire Code of Canada, which is incorporated into Westmount's fire prevention by-law, requires that "every chimney, flue and flue pipe shall be inspected to identify any dangerous condition annually..."

This could be an important consideration, especially in the event of an insurance claim arising from a chimney fire.

The onus is on the homeowner, however, now that Westmount no longer operates a contracted chimney-sweeping and inspection service. For many years, the city-licensed chimney sweep was mandated to clean and check chimneys and flues for fire hazards, including the accumulation of creosote, cracks in the mortar and blockages such as bird nests.

Fire inspectors then followed up when needed and on occasion condemned a chimney in dan-



Firewood may also be obtained locally in bulk at Réno Dépôt on St. Jacques St. W.

gerous condition.

This service was suspended in 1992 following a number of problems and was never re-instated.

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Russ Tishaw, one of the Hogg team, displays bundled firewood and kindling as well as "eco" logs (boxed) at the start of the firewood-burning season November 27.

More time needed to study citizens' requests

PPCMOI zoning by-law deferred again

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

For the second consecutive month, city council January 11 deferred adoption of its proposed by-law for approving non-conforming development projects meeting certain criteria.

Citizens have been asking for the by-law to include a schedule that would require information on such a project to be available to the public at a conceptual stage before the project goes to consideration by council.

Continued requests for earlier consultation in the by-law called Specific Construction, Alteration of Occupancy Proposals for an Immovable (SCAOPI/PPCMOI) led off the question period when Irma Alvarez of York St. asked about “a new development” at de Maisonneuve and Prince Albert (see separate story, p. 1).

Since this might be a submission under the new by-law, should it be adopted, she asked how the process for informing residents would be handled.

What was the timeline for the development? Had plans been submitted and when could the public access them?

Appearing to be taken somewhat by surprise since this development had not been discussed in public, Councillor Theodora Samiotis replied that “we haven’t received any file or update with regards to that file.”

She later told the *Independent* she meant that no plans had come before the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) on which she represents council as Urban Planning

commissioner.

A second question by Alvarez on why the city had again deferred adoption of the PPCMOI by-law, Samiotis explained she understood how residents wanted more transparency and “needed to know more” and that the city was taking the time to address this aspect.

She emphasized, however, that in this respect, the city was restricted by Quebec on what could be included in the by-law based on the provincial Land Use and Development legislation.

Alvarez later told the *Independent* she had been aware of the project for some time and had discussed it with Urban Planning. She said she leases use of a lane on the site and had been told by the owner the lease might not be renewable in March 2016 because of his development plans.

“I realize Urban Planning needs to assess if a proposal might be considered,” she explained, “but as it is now, public consultation does not come until the demolition [hearing].”

Marina Brezski of Grosvenor Ave., who is also advocating for changes in the PPCMOI by-law, expressed ongoing concerns about damage to the foundations of existing homes in clay that might be caused by the excavation of a new development and asked about city by-laws in this regard. She was told by Mayor Peter Trent and councillors Samiotis and Cynthia Lulham that the city had policies and procedures governing excavation. Problems had not been experienced in the past.



Irma Alvarez at council January 11.

(SCAOPI/PPCMOI).

“We’re putting together plans, hoping to speak with the neighbours and to file the plans with the city [shortly] once this PPCMOI matter is worked out.”

City Urban Planning director Joanne Poirier acknowledged “discussions have been under way,” but that “We have not received any revised plans.”

Laframboise, a Redfern resident and president of Subway Quebec, has owned the property for more than 13 years.

In September, he purchased a building it backs onto at 35 York. This was formerly occupied by radio station CFMB, which moved out in the fall (see story May 12, 2015, p. 9). He hopes to incorporate this property into the condo project; just how has not been determined, he said.

Laframboise outlined details of the plan after rumours of the development were brought into the public arena at the council meeting January 11 when a York St. resident asked about it in relation to the PPCMOI by-law.

Irma Alvarez, who rents access from him to her backyard parking area, asked council for a timeline. She also asked what review actions would take place behind closed doors before the public could have access to the plans. She later said she considered the answers to her questions to be “vague” (see separate story at left).

While the involved zone R3-27-01 allows for only one- and two-family dwellings of

Prince Albert/de Maisonneuve project cont'd. from p. 1

about two storeys in height, the building at 4898 de Maisonneuve has vested rights for office and medical use. These would be lost in any demolition.

“The city originally asked me to keep [the building] commercial,” Laframboise said.

Its vested rights expire in about nine months in any event, he explained. Current rentals in the building are month-by-month.

He called the building “an eyesore” and said his plan was for 100 percent residential, which he believed was more in keeping with the immediate neighbourhood.

Among the building’s previous occupants were Dr. Donald Taylor, a well-known orthodontist. The medical and dental offices in total would see 200 customers a day, he said. “It was crazy busy.”

Laframboise, who wants to move into the new condos with his wife, said he is working “on something that would benefit the neighbourhood and the city.” This is one of the criteria required of a so-called PPCMOI site under the proposed by-law.

Laframboise confirmed he had also purchased the semi-detached house at 49 York, near the northeast corner of Prince Albert. He said he plans to “fix it up to its original historic form” but not incorporated into the development project. He said he has an interest in history and heritage.



Shown January 15, 4898 de Maisonneuve at Prince Albert is separated by its parking lot to the left from Château Westmount at Victoria.

Photo: Westmount Independent

Residents notified of meeting

Neighbours of the 4898 de Maisonneuve office building received a letter January 14 from its owner (through a company), Guy Laframboise, and his developer, Peter Smale, BArch, inviting nearby residents to a “roundtable discussion” about its redevelopment.

The meetings were scheduled for January 18 and 19.

No details of their plan were shared in

the letter, but they stated their intention to share their “vision for the development” at the gatherings.

“At the same time, we would appreciate to have your input regarding how we can develop the project to the benefit of everyone concerned,” they wrote.

The local press was not invited.

– Westmount Independent

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2005, 2004, 2003, 2002, 2001

Glen Rd. re-opens after pumping

Good news came last week for Westmount motorists accustomed to using Glen Rd. between St. Catherine and St. Antoine.

The street was re-opened January 13 after being closed for work related to the Turcot Project November 23. The closure was required for the building of an underground retaining wall or dam at the Ville Marie expressway (see photos December 8, p. 12).



WESTMOUNT \$699,000 Spectacular 2 bdrm, 2 bath condo with soaring ceilings, granite kitchen, balcony, garage & locker in the prestigious 'POM' bldg

Noisy party brings out PSOs, police

A noisy party at an apartment on Hillside Ave. December 24 generated a ticket for \$148, according to Public Security reports. Checking out a complaint of loud music and talking at 12:20 am, officers reported the host to be uncooperative, they and called for police. She opened the door for police but closed it again. She was believed to have subsequently turned down the music because a second a complaint was not received. Officers had answered similar complaints there on previous occasions so a ticket was sent out by mail.



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Holman-Price benches now in place



The Jessica Holman-Price memorial bench across from the intersection of Arlington and Sherbrooke as seen January 11. It was dedicated December 18 in Jessica Holman-Price's memory, along with a second one near Sherbrooke to her brother Peter Luc, whom she rescued from slipping under the wheels of a truck involved in snow removal operations December 19, 2005 at Strathcona and Sherbrooke. She was 21, he was 10. (See story December 16, p. 5.)

Photos: Westmount Independent



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Place d'Armes

Many expired products had to be culled

Public Security food drive feeds 45 for holidays

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Public Security distributed food to 22 local families for a total of 45 people, department director Greg McBain said last week. The food “baskets” were delivered December 18.

Along with non-perishable items and toys for six children under age 12, a total of \$2,249 collected at various events was used to purchase 19 turkeys, three hams and food vouchers. This compares with \$3,297 collected the previous year and deliveries to 23 families of 49 people.

“Quite a few non-perishable items were

Syringe found in church lot

A syringe was found in the parking lot of the Westmount Baptist Church on Sherbrooke at Roslyn and turned over January 7 to a public safety officer. Public Security officials said it was dropped off at the CLSC Guy Metro for disposal.

collected at a city employees’ party,” he said.

The difference in cash donations resulted in part from a decrease of close to \$700 in the amount collected as the price of admission at the annual Westmount Artisans’ Festival. A total of \$1,523 was collected at the door this time (see story November 24, p. 6).

Other amounts consisted of \$300 from the Church of the Ascension of Our Lord, \$260 from a hockey game between Public Security and local police station 12, \$133 from the city’s employee children’s party and \$34 in anonymous donations.

“I was surprised how much expired food was found among the non-perishable items,” McBain said. “All of it was removed before the distribution.” What was left over, however, was in fact taken to Moisson Montreal whose personnel know what expired products can be used safely.



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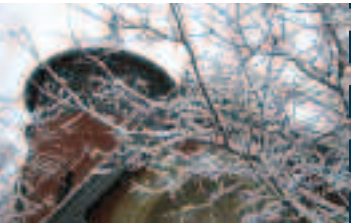
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TRAVAUX PUBLICS

Collecte de sapins de Noël

Jusqu'au 31 janvier. Placez l'arbre, dépouillé de toute décoration, à l'arrière du trottoir en tout temps. S.V.P., faites preuve de patience pendant les périodes de déneigement. Info : 514 989-5311.

Rappels pour le déneigement

La neige provenant des entrées privées ne doit jamais obstruer une rue, ruelle ou trottoir public, mais peut être ajoutée aux bancs de neige existants avant leur enlèvement. Une amende est imposable pour toute infraction.

Les jours de collecte, déposez vos matières de façon à ne pas entraver le déneigement des rues et des trottoirs.

En stationnant, portez une attention particulière dans les jours suivant une importante chute de neige. Les opérations d'enlèvement de neige sont annoncées à l'aide de feux clignotants ou fixes sur les artères principales et de pancartes spéciales dans les rues secondaires. Tout véhicule entravant les opérations de déneigement sera remorqué.

Patinoires extérieures

Les patinoires sont désormais ouvertes dans les parcs suivants : Devon, King George, Prince Albert, Queen Elizabeth Gardens, Stayner et Westmount.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE

Ateliers de poésie avec Ann Lloyd

Le mercredi 20 janvier, 10 h 15. Le Groupe de poésie de Westmount compose des poèmes à partir de thèmes proposés par les membres. Bienvenue à tous. Info : 514 989-5299.

Conférences de 14 h : Sumra Kureishy

Le mercredi 20 janvier, 14 h. *Importance of Bone Health for Postmenopausal Women.* Info : 514 989-5299.

Cercle de lecture *Finnegans Wake de Joyce: The Boaters and Sifters of ALP*

Le mercredi 20 janvier, 19 h. Vous êtes invités à vous joindre au groupe de lecture afin de plonger tête première dans une discussion passionnée sur l'œuvre magistrale de James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*. Découvertes et surprises au rendez-vous. Apportez votre copie du livre. Info : 514 989-5299.

Film : Labyrinth (8 ans et +)

Le vendredi 22 janvier, 18 h 30, Salle Westmount. Veuillez vous inscrire au comptoir des enfants. En anglais. Gratuit. Info : 514 989-5229.

Club de lecture en français

Le lundi 25 janvier, 13 h. Œuvres de Michèle Lesbre. Info : 514 989-5299.

Club de lecture anglaise

Le mardi 26 janvier, 19 h. *East of Eden* de John Steinbeck. Info : 514 989-5299.

Prochaine séance du conseil le lundi 1^{er} février

Rencontres d'auteurs : Yann Martel

Le mercredi 3 février à 19 h, Victoria Hall. Venez rencontrer Yann Martel, qui discutera de son nouveau livre *The High Mountains of Portugal*, en compagnie de Joseph Rosen. Billets : 5,75 \$, disponibles à la Bibliothèque et au Victoria Hall. Événement présenté en collaboration avec la Librairie Drawn & Quarterly. Info : 514 989-5299.

Teen Tour Theatre : « *The Secret Life of Girls* »

Le dimanche 28 février, 13 h 30, Victoria Hall. Une pièce de Linda Daugherty avec mise en scène par Aviva Wolman-Wener. Un aperçu honnête de la vie des adolescentes et du monde de l'intimidation juvénile. Pour les jeunes de 10 à 17 ans. Info : 514 989-5229.

Films pour la semaine de relâche

Le lundi 29 février et le mardi 1^{er} mars, 14 h, Salle Westmount. Veuillez vous inscrire au comptoir des enfants. En anglais. Gratuit. Info : 514 989-5229.

ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

Carnaval d'hiver de Westmount

Les jeudi, vendredi et samedi 4, 5 et 6 février, parc King George et Victoria Hall. Fêtez l'hiver lors du 33^e Carnaval annuel de Westmount avec des activités pour tous : patinage, promenades en traîneau, soirée familiale et plus. Info : 514 989-5353.

Soirée familiale du carnaval : Autour du monde

Le vendredi 5 février, 17 h 30 à 21 h 30, Victoria Hall. Souper et soirée dansante familiale. N'oubliez pas vos chaussures. Billets : adultes 12 \$, enfants de 12 ans et moins, 6 \$, disponibles au Victoria Hall, au CLW et à la Bibliothèque. Bar payant. Faites vite ; les places sont limitées. Info : 514 989-5226.



HYDRO WESTMOUNT

Consommation d'électricité pendant les périodes très froides

En raison de la forte demande en périodes de grands froids, Hydro Westmount demande à ses clients de réduire leur consommation d'électricité pendant les heures de pointe, soit entre 7 h 30 et 9 h 30 et entre 16 h 30 et 19 h les jours de semaine. Il est recommandé notamment de reporter l'utilisation de sècheuses et de lave-vaisselle pendant ces périodes.

PUBLIC WORKS

Christmas Tree Collection

Until January 31. Remove all decorations and place the tree behind the sidewalk at any time. Please be patient during snow operations. Info: 514 989-5311.



Snow removal reminders

Snow from private property must never obstruct public sidewalks, lanes or streets, but may be added to the existing snowbanks prior to their removal. Fines will be issued for contravening the by-law. **On collection days,** please ensure that materials are kept out of the path of all plows. **When parking,** pay attention to advance warning of snow removal operations (flashing or fixed lights on arteries, and special signage on side streets), particularly in the days following a heavy snowfall. Vehicles blocking snow removal operations will be towed.

Outdoor Skating Rinks

Skating rinks are now open in the following parks: Devon, King George, Prince Albert, Queen Elizabeth Gardens, Stayner and Westmount.

LIBRARY

Poetry Workshops with Ann Lloyd

Wednesday, January 20, 10:15 a.m. The Westmount Poetry Group meets to compose poetry together working with themes proposed by members. All welcome. Info: 514 989-5299.

2 O'Clock Series: Sumra Kureishy

Wednesday, January 20, 2 p.m. *Importance of Bone Health for Postmenopausal Women.* Info: 514 989-5299.

Reading group for Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*: The Boaters and Sifters of ALP

Wednesday, January 20, 7 p.m. Join the circle skimming the surface or sifting through the layers of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. Bring an open mind and a copy of the book. Info: 514 989-5299.

Film: Labyrinth (ages 8 and up)

Friday, January 22, 6:30 p.m., Westmount Room. Please sign up at the Children's desk. In English. Free. Info: 514 989-5229.

French Book Club

Tuesday, January 20, 7 p.m. Works by Michèle Lesbre. Info: 514 989-5299.

Next Council Meeting

Monday, February 1st

English Book Club

Tuesday, January 26, 7 p.m. John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*. Info: 514 989-5299.

Author Lecture series: Yann Martel

Wednesday, February 3, 7 p.m., Victoria Hall. Yann Martel discusses his new book, *The High Mountains of Portugal*, with Joseph Rosen. Tickets: \$5.75, available at the Library and Victoria Hall. Event presented in collaboration with the Drawn & Quarterly Bookstore. Info: 514 989-5229.

Teen Tour Theatre: *The Secret Life of Girls*

Sunday, February 28, 1:30 p.m., Victoria Hall. A play by Linda Daugherty, directed by Aviva Wolman-Wener. In this honest and unflinching dramatization of young teen-girl angst, a window is opened into the tumultuous and destructive world of girls' bullying. For ages 10 to 17. Info: 514-989-5229.

March Break Movies

Monday, February 29 and Tuesday, March 1, 2 p.m., Westmount Room. Please sign up at the Children's desk. In English. Free. Info: 514 989-5229.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Westmount Winter Carnival

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, February 4, 5 & 6, King George Park and Victoria Hall. Celebrate the winter season at Westmount's 33rd annual Carnival, with activities for everyone, including skating, sleigh rides, family night and more. Info: 514 989-5353.

Family Carnival Night: Around the World

Friday, February 5, 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Victoria Hall. A dinner and dance evening for families. Please bring indoor shoes. Tickets: adults \$12, children 12 and under \$6, available at Victoria Hall, the WRC and the Library. Cash bar. Places are limited, so don't delay. Info: 514 989-5226.

HYDRO WESTMOUNT

Electricity consumption during periods of intense cold weather

Due to extreme demand during very cold weather, Hydro Westmount asks its customers to reduce their electricity use during peak periods (weekdays, 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m., and also 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.). Where possible, please delay using major appliances, particularly dryers and dishwashers, until after these peak periods.



Greenhouse report weeks away

cont'd. from p. 1

meantime, special netting and wood enclosures allow staff only to access the eight “grow” greenhouses but not the 1927 conservatory and adjoining frog pond, which remain out of bounds.

The drones are expected to go to work in the coming week, depending on the weather. Five days without snow or very cold temperatures are required for the work when an operator will work from inside outfitted in protective gear.

It will then take another 10 weeks for a report to be prepared based on an analysis of the photos, Lulham said. This brings the time line through March.

Meanwhile, she said, ways have been found to care for the plants. The gold fish are self-sustaining (see separate story).

After seeking inspection advice from international greenhouse firms, the city accepted the drone solution proposed by the local firm of MDA Architects.

“This is also a good opportunity to assess our current needs and uses, and decide what we want moving forward,” Lulham said. “Do we want to use the greenhouses for more educational benefit? We have to look at all that.

“It is our intent to restore the two historic structures,” she explained. This portion forms an important part of the city’s heritage. It is one of only two remaining examples of Victorian-style “cascade” conservatories in Canada. The other is in Toronto.

Times change

But over the years, “our needs have changed,” she said.

Originally, the city grew all the plants used for city parks and displays. Now, most of these annuals are purchased ready for planting or as young ones to be fully grown in the city greenhouses.

Among the options being considered,

Lulham said, is making the grow houses “more useful to the community, possibly for educational purposes.” In determining the city’s future needs, groups such as the Horticultural Advisory Committee and the Westmount Horticultural Society will be consulted as well as the public, she said.

The original use of wood framework for the glass houses is no longer used, she notes, because metal is more sustainable. The rounded structure of the greenhouses gives them a particularly historic character.

Originally, the complex had 10 greenhouses. Two were dismantled in 1994 as part of the restoration of the Westmount Public Library and the construction of its addition to the south. At the same time, two of the remaining eight were enlarged. Since then, the glass has been removed from another, Lulham said.

Horn can’t be silenced

A Public Security patroller managed to track down the owner of a Jeep Liberty whose horn was sounding continuously January 9 outside 285 Metcalfe at about 8:16 am. Department officials said the horn could not be stopped, and the female owner decided to drive it to the Esso service station at Sherbrooke and Grosvenor. She was escorted by the officer.

Plants now watered, fish survived

While closure of the greenhouses has resulted in the loss of plants that could not be watered, Councillor Cynthia Lulham said, others have survived due to the heating, which was maintained, as well as the infiltration of rain and resulting humidity.

All plants in the working greenhouses, now accessed by staff, are being cared for as usual. Those in the conservatory are watered from a distance using hoses. Some also have been moved to other city

Batshaw Children Needing Homes

16-month-old says ‘hi’ to everyone

A long-term foster home is being sought for 16-month-old Annabel, a Caucasian baby.

Annabel is a lively, outgoing and friendly child who, after an initial shyness, will invite visitors to hug her teddy bear and play games with her. She loves peek-a-boo and any game that involves movement since she thrives on action.

No sooner had she learned to walk than she started to experiment with walking backwards and then she quickly learned to run everywhere.

An easy-going child, Annabel eats and sleeps well and is usually smiling. However, like other children her age, she is learning to test if you really mean it when you say “no.” If advised not to do something, she will try it again a few times and may resort to tears and screaming.

Annabel responds well to distraction and loving correction.

On track developmentally in most respects, Annabel is a little slow in learning to speak. She has a few words and will enthusiastically say “hi!” to all passers-by, but she may need help with language devel-

opment.

While Annabel is not able to return to live with her family, they are very involved in her life and she will always maintain a connection with them. A one- or two-parent family, able to understand and support Annabel’s link with her birth family, would be ideal for her.

For more information about Annabel, please call Batshaw Youth and Family Centres at 514.932.7161, extension 1139.

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December sales: Down market



Mood of
the Market

ANDY DODGE, CRA

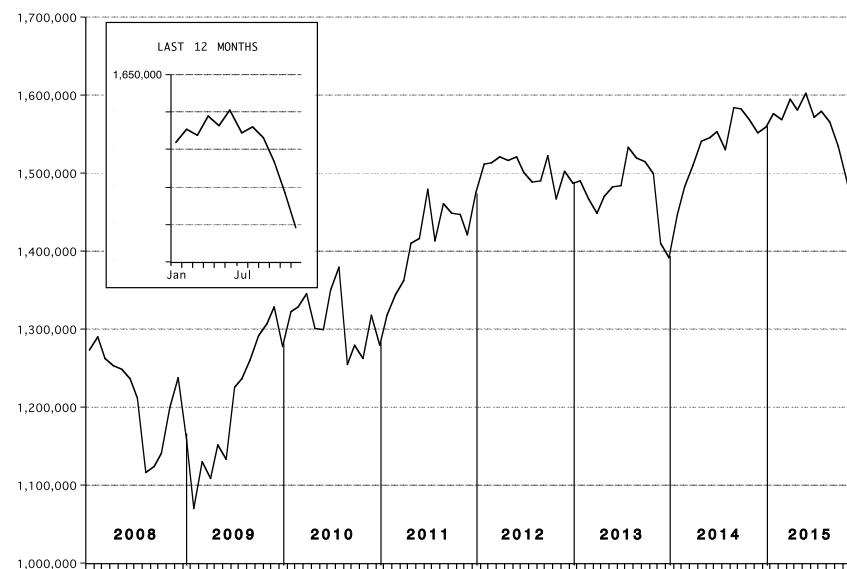
The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings that were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in December 2015. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses cannot be made public but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph offers a picture of these trends over time.

The slide in the Westmount real estate market turned into freefall during the last few months, as the market has now dropped some eight percent since September. Though there is often a downturn at the end of the year, and this resembles the fall of late 2013, the prospects for a recovery in the local real estate market, as the stock market tumbles and the Quebec economy struggles, appear dim.

Seven sales, all with prices between \$1,040,000 and \$1,685,000, were posted by local agents in December, a slight increase in volume from November but with an average mark-down of one percent, the first average mark-down since December 2014 and only the second such mark-down since February 2014. It is perhaps interesting that December 2014 was also the last month that showed no sales below \$1 million, but in fact that month featured three sales over \$2 million and an average price of \$1,827,803, while this time the average was \$1,355,714.

Mark-ups last month ranged from -12 to +13 percent; the latter was one of the lowest top-of-ranges since the new valuation roll came into effect in 2014. Volume actually improved by one sale over November, and in fact the seven sales are one

Average adjusted price of a 'typical' Westmount home by month, Jan. 2008 to Dec. 2015, based on accepted offer dates



more than in December 2014 and three more than in December 2013. Only two of this December's sales followed exposure time of less than 100 days; in fact, the median listing time was 157 days and the longest was 298.

Total volume for 2015

For the year 2015, total volume was 148 sales of one- and two-family dwellings, exactly the same as in 2014, and the average mark-up was 7 percent, up slightly from only 1 percent in 2014. The raw average price was \$1,522,671 compared to \$1,527,906 in the previous year, so it is clear there was relatively little movement of the overall market between the two

years.

One more condominium sold in December, bringing the total for the last quarter to six, with an average mark-down of 1 percent and a year's average mark-up of 6 percent, about the same as for one- and two-family dwellings. This does not include two new apartments sold in the last quarter for which valuations have yet to be established, both at 175 Metcalfe Ave. corner Hillside.

Only two new sales of houses in adjacent-Westmount appeared on the December sales list, one in eastern NDG and the other in the Square Mile; house prices last year were generally higher than in 2014, except for the

continued on p. 16

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Are you jury material?

On the Lighter Side

INGRID KOVITCH-DANNENBAUM



A recent article in the *Gazette* helped shed some light on the process of jury selection. As one who has always sought to broaden my range of excuses should I ever need to shirk this duty, the article proved invaluable.

Most of the information covered the seemingly arbitrary and mystifying list of infractions which would *not* disqualify one from serving. These included:

- Disturbing religious worship. (Even a Habs pep rally?)
- Failing to keep watch while towing a person on water skis. (The suspicion that many would sacrifice their children to a wee water collision if it would grant immunity from duty was not unfounded.)
- “Minor” offences carrying a maximum penalty of \$5,000 and/or six months in jail. (There went that scheme!)
- Pretending to practise witchcraft (which

might be fun in addition to providing the elusive exemption). Strangely, it said nothing about *legitimately* practising witchcraft. Nor – of vital importance – how to distinguish between the two. Would a judge be required? A jury? Perhaps Dumbledore called upon to testify? “You! Muggle!”, he would boom, pointing accusingly, “Bogus hocus pocus! Nice try, but you’re still in.”

Ready to confess

I was similarly ready to confess all manner of indiscretions, presuming that they demonstrated wanton lack of judgment, sufficient to prevent me from being chosen to *render* judgment. Among others, I was ready to spill the beans about:

- Joking in airport security. (A definite no-no.)
- Failing to rinse before loading the dishwasher. (Whoever is without sin, let he be first to cast a stone.)
- Using peculiar objects as floatation devices despite clearly printed warnings. (Would *you* want someone who has strapped a toaster to their wading toddler – even if unplugged first – to sit in judgment?)
- Burning rice. (Anyone with that degree of

inattention should not hold someone’s fate in their hands.)

- Yelling at my kids. (See “sin,” “stone” above.)
- Allowing cats on counters. (Yuck. Just yuck.)

But clearly I would need to ramp it up. Fortunately, there was still plenty I would be willing to do.

I could rant with impenitent bias. “Guilty as charged! Lock him up! And throw away the key!”

Bribing the judge was another oldie but goodie. Either it would work outright – or it would not. In which case, it would. Guaranteed success.

I discovered that one could be dismissed if serving might cause “serious hardship.” (Do cynicism and erosion of faith in the inherent goodness of mankind count?)

Medical exemption? I’m in clover!

In truth, the article forced me to acknowledge how challenging this selection process could be. As such, I was impressed with the heroic efforts to enumerate and elaborate the limitless circumstances and criteria.

But no one can think of everything. Luckily, there’s always the Sorting Hat.

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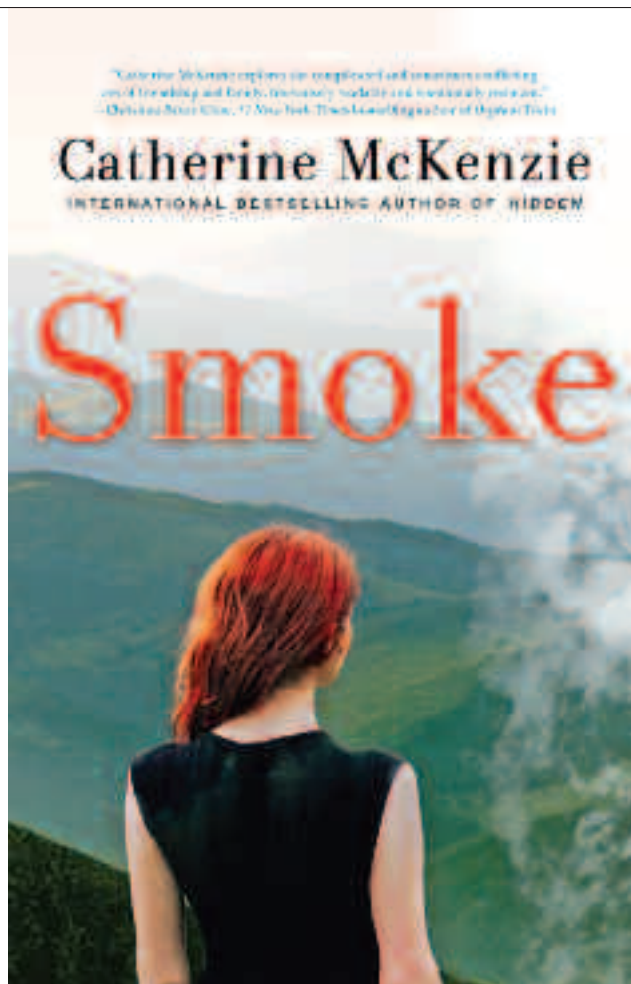
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DECEMBER BUILDING PERMITS What's permitted

The following permits for demolition, exterior construction, alteration and renovation were approved at the December 7 meeting of city council.

49 Arlington: at a Category I house, to modify openings on the rear wall and reinstate a condemned window opening in the kitchen;

451 Mountain: at a Category 1* house, to replace the roof;

4460-4464 St. Catherine: to install signs for "Homecare Assistance;"

4830 Sherbrooke: to modify the front façade temporarily for interior repairs and re-establish the façade after the work;

16 Renfrew: to modify an opening at the rear, renovate the rear deck and replace the garage door, provided the patio doors are aluminum-clad wood;

3 Winchester: at a Category I house, to replace windows, create a new window opening and new basement access at the rear, and enclose rear balconies, provided the front windows are wood;

1225 Greene: at a Category I building, to install awnings as signage on the front ground floor windows;

80 Somerville: to replace two doors;

353 Roslyn: to replace windows, enlarge a window opening on the side and modify a rear opening;

424-426 Prince Albert: to replace a rear door;

61 Bruce: to replace windows;

433 Victoria: to do landscaping work in the rear yard;

4771 Sherbrooke: to install three storm windows;



4830 Sherbrooke, next to Mont Victoria, displays work permits on the door January 15.

1090 Greene: at Centre Greene, to replace the front doors.

The following permits for demolition, exterior construction, alteration and renovation were approved at the December 14 meeting of city council.

51 Sunnyside: exterior modifications to include openings, demolishing a solarium and balcony and building a new roof deck;

577 Grosvenor: to replace front windows and modify openings at the rear;

615 Belmont: to replace windows and

doors and modify openings;

340 Metcalfe: at a Category I house, to replace front windows;

356 Olivier: at a Category I house, to erect a fence at side property lines;

4130 Dorchester: at a Category I building, to erect a fence at west and south

property lines;

486 Wood, at a Category I house, exterior modifications to include garage structure and roof deck, demolishing a solarium, installing new doors in an existing window opening at the rear and renovating the existing roof deck, provided a panel is included at the base of the French doors at the rear;

22 Winchester: to replace rear kitchen and basement doors;

317 Roslyn: to erect a fence at the side property line and around to the back;

620 Murray Hill: to rebuild the garage at the rear;

3249 Cedar: to replace the front door;

22 Thornhill: to replace the garage door.

Mood of market cont'd. from p. 14

sector of Montreal just east of Westmount, but lower among condominiums.

Here's hoping the spring brings new buyers to Westmount. Many sellers have taken their houses off the market for now; the number of active listings in Westmount dropped dramatically from 135 in mid-December to 117 last week, almost all in the \$1-million to \$2-million range.

One more rental was posted in December, bringing the total for 2015 to 29 house rentals, with 19 still available.

Comin' Up

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21

First lecture in the Westmount Historical Association's winter/spring series "The Beaver Hall Group: Some Westmount Links" with Elena Kruger, 7 to 9 pm at the Westmount Public Library. Free to members; \$5 non-members.

MONDAY, JANUARY 25

The Montreal Camera Club's guest speaker Linda Rutenberg presents "The Inquisitive Eye – A Thirty-Year Passion," 7:30 pm at Westmount Park Church, 4695 de Maisonneuve. Rutenberg will also provide tips on winter shooting. Info: montrealcameraclub.com.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28

The Atwater Poetry Project presents newly appointed poet laureate of Canada

George Elliott Clarke and Armand Garnet Ruffo who will give the first reading, 7 pm at the Atwater Library, 1200 Atwater Ave. Free.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

As part of the Westmount Public Library's author lecture series, Yann Martel discusses his new book, *The High Mountains of Portugal*, with Joseph Rosen, 7 pm (doors open 6 pm) at Victoria Hall. Tickets: \$5.75 (available at the library and Victoria Hall). Reserve: 514.989.5299.

THURSDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 5 AND 6

City of Westmount's winter carnival takes place at King George (Murray) Park and Victoria Hall. Activities include skating, sleigh rides, a family night and more.

The ever curious kitten



Here he is, adorable little Simon at his best, posing for the photograph on his cat tree. He is very handsome, with blond marmalade colouring, his white tuxedo and stylish white gloved and bootied feet.

Simon was saved from abandonment outdoors as a 4-month-old, along with his mother, sister and brother. He is now in foster care for the Montreal SPCA and, at 8 months of age, he is ready for a forever home.

This cat is very healthy and on track with his vetting as he has been inoculated and neutered. Simon is social with other cats and dogs, and enjoys playing with people and following them around. So many things are new to him as a kitten, and he is still looking to bond with a special person.



Hopefully, with your help, we can find someone for him in our neighbourhood. If you would like to have more information on Simon, please contact Fabienne at his foster family at fmcbeach@aol.com or 514.430.8706.

Your neighbour, Lysanne

Lambert hosts chamber music cocktail/concert



Social Notes from Westmount and Beyond

VERONICA REDGRAVE

On a dark and stormy night, well, pouring actually, a cocktail dinatoire was held at the home of **Phyllis Lambert**, who hosted the evening. Held on October 13, the annual event was a benefit for Montreal Chamber Music Festival, founded by **Denis Brott**, who welcomed music lovers with his wife **Julie**.

Guests stepped carefully over Old Montreal's crooked cobblestones, some of which were actually being replaced that evening, making getting from A to B more than the usual challenge.

The evening featured the Dover Quartet, which won all three prizes at the 2013 Banff International String Quartet Com-

petition. Played that night was Franz Schubert's "Cello Quintet in C Major," with the Dover Quartet's **Joel Link** and **Bryan Lee** (violins), **Milena Pajaro-Van de Stadt** (viola) and **Camden Shaw** (cello). Cellist Brott performed second cello.

Professor of cello and chamber music at the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal and artistic director of the award-winning Montreal Chamber Music Festival, Brott recently received the Order of Canada. He played a pivotal role in the creation of the Musical Instrument Bank of the Canada Council for the Arts, which lent him a magnificent 1706 Tecchler cello for his lifetime use.

The festival board has as honorary patron David Johnston, governor general of Canada.

Attending were festival board president **Michael Boer** and his daughter, photographer **Elise**, as well as board members Westmounters **Clarence Epstein** and **Michael McAdoo**, along with **Michel Saint-Cyr**, **Gilles Jarry**, **Sylvie Demers** and **Dominique Bélisle**.

Enjoying the eensy-weensy delicious bite-size canapés by Maître et Chef were Westmounters **Theodora Samiotis**, city councillor, **Barbara Bronfman**, and **Sharon Azrieli** with her husband **Avi Perez**, as well as former local res **Peter McAuslan** and his wife **Ellen Bounsall**, Concordia pres **John Shephard**, **Julie Payette**, **Renée Morneau**, **Joseph Rouleau**,



From left: Milena Pajaro-Van de Stadt, Denis Brott, Phyllis Lambert, Bryan Lee, Camden Shaw and Joel Link.



From left: Julie Brott, Jane Skornya and Jill de Villafranca.



Clarence Epstein, left, and John Shephard.

continued on p. 18



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Social Notes cont'd. from p. 17

Mark Bissell, Kelly Albert, Louise Pelletier, Alberto Perez-Gomez, Gail Malone, Jane Skornya and Jill de Villafranca.



The sold-out night raised \$30,000 for the festival.

Theodora Samiotis

Cyclist circles suspiciously

A man on a bicycle raised the suspicions of a resident on Grosvenor December 23 when he was seen riding around in circles in the east-west lane north of Sherbrooke between Grosvenor and Victoria. Public Security officials said officers were called to check out the man at 4:53 pm. When they asked what he was doing, the man picked up a backpack he had placed in the lane and rode off down Victoria. He was followed but lost at the intersection of Sherbrooke.

Gervais attends throne speech



From left: Senator Serge Joyal, governor general David Johnston, Westmounter Richard Gervais, honorary consul of Mauritius, and Matthew Rowe of the Prince's Charities Canada were at Rideau Hall on December 4, following the new government's first speech from the throne, read by Johnston, a former Westmounter.

Photo courtesy of Rideau Hall

Dogs accidentally knock woman over in new dog run

Large frolicking dogs were reported to have knocked over a woman in the dog run at Westmount Park January 8, Public Security officials said. An officer found the woman had already applied ice to an injured knee cap but had difficulty standing. Her husband arrived and waited with the officer for the arrival of Urgences Santé. The woman stated the dogs had been playing around her and one had hit her causing her to fall as "a pure accident." The woman lives on Lewis.

Woman falls at Sherbrooke/Victoria

A woman was reported to have "lost her footing" and tripped on the sidewalk at Sherbrooke and Victoria January 11, Public Security officials said. Officers were dispatched at 11:04 am and found the woman lying on the ground where a city worker for Public Works had placed a personal coat over her while waiting for Urgences Santé. The woman suffered pain in the left leg. The sidewalk was described as dry and in good condition. It was not known where the woman lived.

O Way celebrates 5 years



O Way Coiffure Spa, a hair salon specializing in organic products, recently rang in five years on Sherbrooke St. During its anniversary celebration from December 8 to 10, owner and hair stylist Patricia Soussana welcomed guests, offering tea from David's Tea and energy snacks created by the staff. Jane Iredale mineral make-up, carried by O Way, had a team on hand to offer make-overs and make-up ideas. O Way is expanding to also offer massages. "We want to offer our busy clients a soothing moment," said Soussana. The origin of the salon's name, she explained, comes a line of hair products from Italy, which is carried exclusively by the salon, which means she is allowed to use the name. Of O Way on December 11, were from left: Ana Arenas, owner Patricia Soussana and Marija Spasojevic.

Photo: Veronica Redgrave

Jarislowsky foundation establishes first chair in contemporary art at MMFA

By VERONICA REDGRAVE

A \$2-million endowment from Westmounter Stephen Jarislowsky's foundation is to create a chair for Quebec and Canadian contemporary art from 1945 at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (MMFA).

A major collector and philanthropist, Jarislowsky created the Jarislowsky Foundation in 1991. It has more than 30 chairs in Canada, primarily at universities.

This is the first chair in a museum to be

supported by the foundation. The Gail and Stephen A. Jarislowsky Chair in Quebec and Canadian Contemporary Art will support activities such as acquisitions and research related to the collection, including private collections

During the December 1 presentation ceremony at the MMFA, Jarislowsky commented that he is "convinced that it will contribute to the renown and promotion of Quebec and Canadian art, as well as its artists and collectors."



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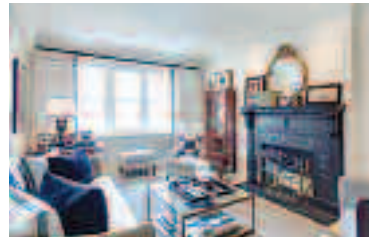
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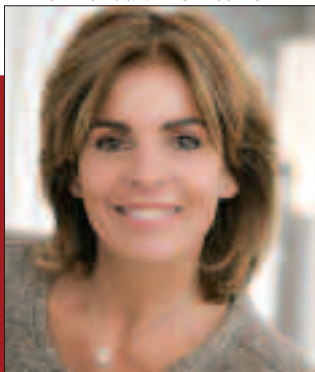


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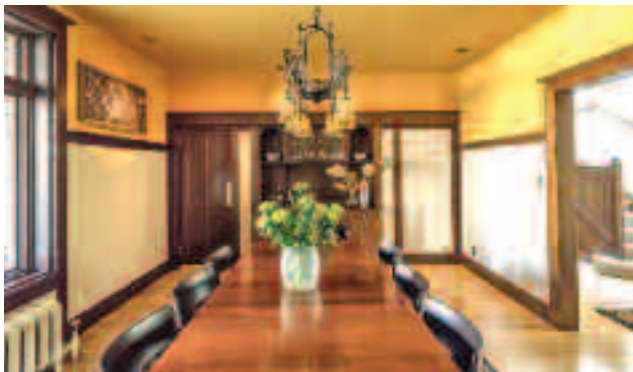
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