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## Getting in a Sunday game

Westmount has lots of options for outdoor winter fun. The skating rink at the corner of Sherbrooke and Wood was the site of an action-packed hockey game this past Sunday afternoon. Photo credit: Jacques Pharand

## Slow snow clearing undermines winter bike path experiment: cyclists

Wayne Larsen

Winter cyclists frustrated by icy and snow-covered bike paths in Westmount will have to put up with the inconvenience for now, City officials said this week in response to complaints about snow-removal procedures.

"When we agreed to try out the bike path in winter, we did say that it would not get the top priority that pedestrians get — we made that very clear at the time," Mayor Peter Trent told Lansdowne Avenue resident Daniel Lambert at Monday's city council meeting.

Lambert, president of the Westmount Walking and Cycling Association, attended the meeting to point out that the local section

of the bike path is often only partially cleared of snow and ice — a hazard that is having a negative impact on the experimental opening of the bike path this winter.

"While the City does an excellent job of keeping sidewalks and streets clear of snow and having them salted and sanded, it has been leaving snow on the bike path until the

Continued on page 3

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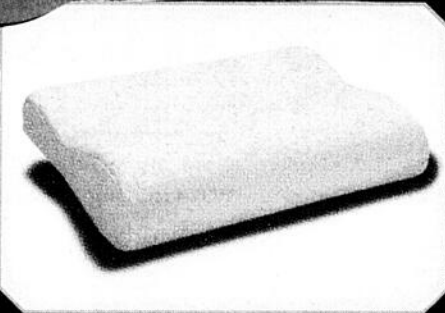
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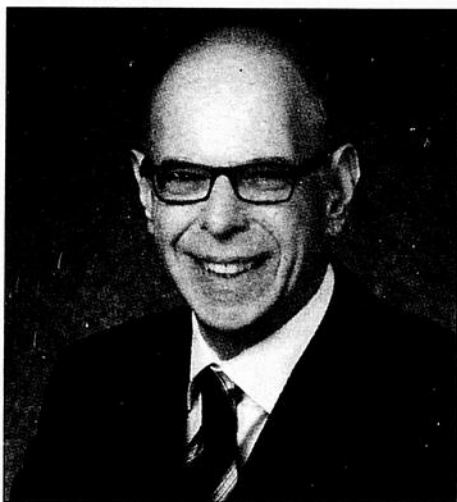
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# Slow snow clearing undermines winter bike path experiment: cyclists

Continued from page 1

City undertakes its snow removal process, which is often several days later, and leaves a residue of snow, particularly on the eastbound lane, which then turns to ice," Lambert said.

"This has seriously undermined the test of the bike path, which the City had intended for this winter, and really gives the impression that the City doesn't care about winter cycling — and this is in sharp contrast to the very high standard that we see on the



Westmount has made significant progress with cycling over the past year, says City Councillor Gary Ikeman.

sidewalk and street adjacent, which cyclist see as soon as they hit the Montreal section of the bike path at Atwater."

Lambert added that if the City intends to facilitate winter cycling, it should remove snow from the two kilometres of Westmount bike path to the same standard it regularly clears its approximately 100 kilometres of sidewalks.

"This is really a lose-lose situation for the City," Lambert said. "It's losing the \$65,000 of parking revenue (from parking meters removed from de Maisonneuve Boulevard between Greene Avenue and



Ice and slush — which accumulate in the eastbound lane (right) — are a hazard to cyclists, says Daniel Lambert, president of the Westmount Walking and Cycling Association.

Atwater) and it's also losing the opportunity to try a winter bike path."

### Paths should be cleared three to five days after a storm

City Councillor Gary Ikeman was quick to defend the winter bike path as a work in progress.

"We are transitioning towards more and more cycling, but we must set reasonable expectations so we don't get people disappointed when we compare ourselves to other places," Ikeman told Lambert. "This year, Westmount is much further ahead on the cycling file than it was last year. We have made great progress in spite of the fact that our (snow) clearing might not be up to the standard you would like. Nevertheless, I think we've made great progress, we're doing very well, and I want to continue that.

"If there's a snowstorm, I think we should set a reasonable expectation of three

to five days for snow to be cleared from most bike paths and those who wish to cycle in the winter can do so. If the weather is inclement, they can take public transport. I don't believe we should be setting standards that the City cannot meet this year with respect to the fiscal obligations and other responsibilities we have. It's most important that we compare ourselves this year to where we were last year and celebrate our wins. We're moving forward — little baby steps at a time."

City Councillor Cynthia Lulham

disagreed with Lambert's assertion that the bike path is not cleared properly, stating that as a frequent dog walker she has noticed how well it has been ploughed, although the pedestrian path in Westmount Park has been neglected.

"I've been most impressed," Lulham said. "I agree with Councillor Ikeman that as a first year we're doing very well. It is winter, and if you expect it to be asphalt all the time, you don't have the right expectations — but it's certainly cycle-able."

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# OPINION

## Beware of Summit Park thieves

examiner@transcontinental.ca

**A** letter we received from a reader this week (read below) reminded us of how easy it is to become the victim of opportunistic thieves. Even when we take all the necessary precautions, we sometimes can't avoid being victimized, so why make it even easier on them by leaving valuables in our cars?

Year after year, police remind us that items stolen from vehicles comprise a huge chunk of all reported crime in our city. The most frustrating part about this is that almost all of these thefts could have been avoided. The key to prevention? Simply not leaving items in your car.

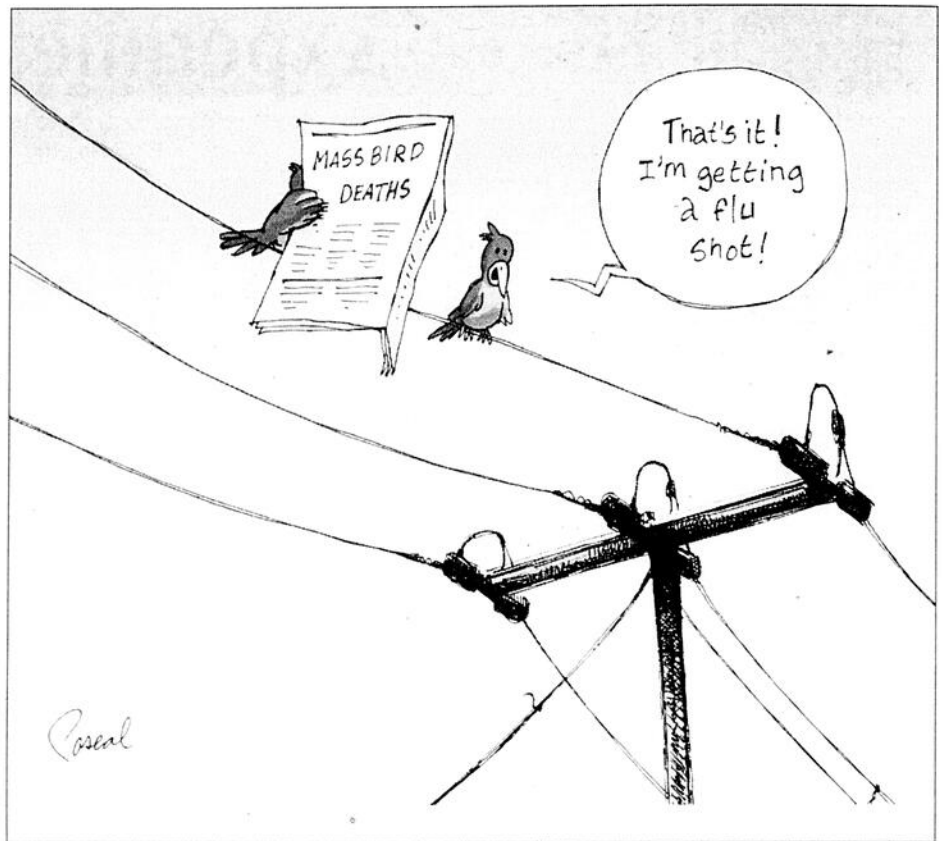
Even carefully hiding your belongings (as our reader did) isn't enough to detour thieves, who know exactly what they're doing, targeting an affluent community and individuals who are leaving their cars (and their belongings) unattended for a solid amount of time in order to walk their dog(s). Even if you

think you are being prudent in hiding your purse and locking your doors, someone may be watching you and that someone who is going to steal your purse probably has few misgivings about breaking your window.

Most of the time, police are unable to recover the stolen property. Our reader was actually quite lucky that some Good Samaritans found his Medicare card and driver's license, saving him the trouble of having to replace them.

As Sherlock himself would say, this is all elementary, and most of us already know quite well what we need to do to decrease our chances of becoming victims of a car break-in, but we often become complacent and lazy; smug and wrapped up in our "it won't happen to us" thinking.

The Summit Woods have been targeted because they hold the opportunity for an easy "smash and grab". We agree with the reader that a sign reminding those who park there of the dangers of leaving anything in their car would be a welcome addition, but, in the meantime, you've been warned.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### The great arena mystery

To the editor:

Let's face it – someone in this community very much wants another arena. The mystery is, who?

Just who managed to persuade Westmount city council to obsessively pursue this bloated project, entailing millions of dollars in sunk costs and encumbering residents with reductions in other services and property tax increases for years to come?

In this, as in any mystery, you have to go back to the beginning. Initially the case for two brand new hockey surfaces was floated on the usually winning formula that some kids could not participate in hockey programs due to lack of space/time and that our facilities compared poorly with other communities. It rapidly became obvious that these claims could not be substantiated. Moreover, headlines such as 'Sports registration guaranteed for most activities' and '...waiting lists a thing of the past...for hockey' did nothing to bolster the clamour for millions of dollars for new rinks. Obviously, if the idea of two new rinks was to be sold to the population, another rationale had to be manufactured.

The new rationale was provided in the form of a flawed 'needs analysis' which amazingly, not to mention conveniently, predicted that a veritable explosion of growth in the under-15 population was going to take place, right here in Westmount. And guess what those under-15s are going to need most? Of course, another NHL-sized hockey rink!

Does anyone actually believe this? The only demographic explosion we can realistically expect in Westmount is in the over-60s! Despite the smoke-and-mirrors 'statistics,' there is no evidence of the kind of future growth in the under-15 cohort which might justify this project.

On the contrary, in the same literature which accompanied the 'polling' document, Étude de besoins – Complexe Sportif, on page 14, lies this nugget of information: the CSLC Metro population (of which Westmount is a part) should increase by 4.15 % during the period 2006-2031; that works out to an increase of 34 people a year. Is this not obviously at odds with the claim that population growth in the future necessitates an immediate doubling of hockey capacity?

The mystery is, if the evidence doesn't justify it, what is the real reason council is determined to build an extra rink? As the Romans put it — it's always a good idea to consult the Romans, as they generally have something shrewd to say which is pertinent — "Cui bono?" This translates as "to whose benefit?" or, in the less elegant non-Latin version of the 20th century as, "follow the money," meaning that the party that benefits is not always immediately obvious.

So who is the real beneficiary in this case? What club, association, entrepreneur, special interest group or school is this new arena really going to serve? Who will be the major beneficiary of a fully taxpayer-funded and underused hockey rink? Westmount taxpayers should be asking themselves this question now because they are the ones who will be paying for it — forever.

*Mavis Young  
Melville Avenue*

### Beware of Summit Park thieves

To the editor:

Last Sunday morning, a misty New Year's Day morning, I parked at the small parking lot at Summit Circle and Summit Road to walk my dog in the woods. When I returned 45 minutes later, my car window had been smashed and my purse stolen. I had carefully hidden it under the seats, completely out of sight through the tinted glass windows.

Since this has happened to me, I have met several other Westmounters who have also been victims in almost exactly the same circumstances. It seems these thieves have a

foolproof system and are pretty sophisticated, picking quiet weekends and holidays, keeping watch and studying if you hide anything before you leave the car. They seem to be adept at using credit and debit cards without knowing pin numbers to withdraw money.

When I made my police report, I asked if the police could make a point of keeping an eye on that area. It would probably help as well if there were a large sign warning the dog walkers and other visitors to the Summit Woods of the danger in leaving anything of value in the car.

I would like to thank the very kind couple that found my wallet in the snow the next day and walked up the hill to return it to me. It was missing the cash and the credit cards but my driver's license and medicare card were there.

I walked all over Westmount searching garbage bins to try to find my purse, which I thought might have been tossed aside, but with no luck. In the spirit of "paying it forward" in terms of good turns, I did find another abandoned wallet near the Summit and returned it to its appreciative owner. It had been taken from a car in a break-in at the same spot two weeks before.

*Nicola Pelly  
Cedar Avenue*

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# A fowl start to 2011



Nat  
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I'm not a conspiracy theorist. Until recently, the only thing I theorized about was who kept stealing my yogurt from the fridge at work (I'm working on a grassy knoll thing.) But I have to tell you - these mass bird deaths? They're starting to creep me out.

At first when 4,000 dead birds turned up in Arkansas, I thought, *Man, that's a lot of birds.* Then, when hundreds of dead blackbirds turned up on a highway in Louisiana, I thought - *Man, that's a lot of birds too.* But then it seemed like birds started spiraling earthward all over the place: Sweden, Kentucky, Italy, Quebec City... and I thought: *Say, maybe I oughta Google this and really hunt down some amateur, questionably-sourced material that will freak me out and good.* So I did. And I did (get freaked out.) Thank you internet, for planting a healthy dose of hysteria.

Let's not forget the fish. There are literally *tons* of those washing up on shores too. Fish and birds are particularly sensitive to many things: climate, loud noise,

insults. Experts say marine life is dying because of temperature changes in the water. Last week, several manatees died near Orlando due to the recent cold snap there. It's sad. But how do you pre-

*"There are a pant-load of theories. The shortlist includes: global warming, electromagnetic waves, pole-shifting, disease, government-testing, poison (I say leave Bret Michaels out of this)."*

vent a cold snap? When I was a kid, we used to float our goldfish in a baggie before releasing it in the bowl to prevent temperature shock. It definitely works, but I don't think Ziploc makes a baggie big enough for a manatee.

So, what's *really* going on? There are a pant-load of theories. The shortlist includes: global warming, electromagnetic waves, pole-shifting, disease, government-testing, poison (I say leave Bret

Michaels out of this), fireworks, biblical prophecies, power lines, earthquakes, lightning, and Justin Bieber (not really but he's just a little too squeaky clean for my taste.) Or as a great deal of scientists have concluded - there's nothing to fear. It's perfectly natural for mass animal deaths to occur. Although, not usually so close together. Is it simply an anomaly or are we at the earth's environmental tipping point?

Honestly, I don't know what to believe. Are we creating undo anxiety because we're choosing to focus on it? Lately, any time a couple of feathers so much as drift earthward, the media cries "Aflockalypse!" I remember this happening with shark attacks a few years ago.

News outlets clamped down on every shark story and swam with it, even though the number of attacks wasn't at all out of the ordinary. They blew it out of proportion and created panic, where there was none.

If this is creeping *me* out, I can't imagine what *birds* must be thinking. Flying can't seem very tempting right about now. Taking their chances with earth-bound predators must be a lot more appealing than whatever strange hell is going on at a higher altitude. All I know is, if this keeps up don't be surprised if you see a change in local avian behaviour. That pigeon at the bus stop might just be looking for a seat instead of breadcrumbs.



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Completely unprompted; and out of a deep sense of public duty, I have come up with New Year's resolutions for an assortment of people living in the City of Westmount, its suburbs, and beyond:

For Westmount real-estate agents: to stop referring to Murray Hill Park - it's called Murray Park; that is, unless you feel sovereignist - then it's King George Park.

For my stockbroker: to stop using the term "correction" in the same way a dog owner uses the word "accident."

For Dr Arthur Porter: to ensure the MUHC is not too MUCH to bear, to be a CHUM: think of the patient suffering during construction, not just the suffering patient after.

For Serge Losique: to stop wearing your baseball cap with a black-tie dinner-jacket - it makes you look absent-minded, not cool.

For verbicides: to say "I feel bad," not "I feel badly" - unless someone has sanded off your fingertips, that is. And say "I'm well," not "I'm good" when greeted - unless while entering a seminary. And, please, why have you let a grammatical term - "gender" - replace "sex"? Moreover, "kudos" is singular, "grow" is intransitive, and I'm losing patience.

For my wife: to deal with the seemingly spontaneous propagation of jars of hand

cream on the nightstand, pillows on the bed, and candles around the bathtub.

For me: to make younger acquaintances; I get more news of my friends in the obituary column than in the social column.

For drivers on cell phones: to realize you do a patently miserable job of mono-tasking; multitasking is clearly beyond your ability.

For diners on cell phones: to understand that the people at the table next to you want you to eat your words. And choke.

For advertisers: to realize that "classic" refers to antiquity. The word has nothing to do with credit cards, soft drinks, and dental floss.

For Louise Harel: to admit that "amalgamation" was a mistake. Forced city hall marriages did not result in welded bliss.

For Premier Jean Charest: to admit the demergers amounted to one massive suburban maul. In fact, they're still a work in progress.

For Westmount recyclers: To avoid unintended airborne distribution of the contents of your blue box. Unlike at the grocery shop, put the heavy stuff on top.

For the AMT's Joel Gauthier: to continue to come up with imaginative explanations why suburban trains are late. A city de-icing truck threw sand into a switch? Du sable dans l'engrenage? Right.

For Westmount contract gardeners: To get rid of your polluting, noisy leaf-blowers and bring back the naked besom. (A besom, I quickly add, is a broom made with twigs.)

For students in the metro: to unslung your backpack. The nubby fabric scratches, the buckles catch, and its weight can pack the wallop of a punching bag.

For Marc Garneau and Jacques Chagnon: to realize that at least some of us know how much time you guys put in. Westmounters are well represented in both Ottawa and Quebec City.


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# Luxury condos on Greene to be one of the city's most prestigious

Carmen Marie Fabio

Scant months after the completion of the Greene Avenue refurbishment project, area residents and merchants will again be facing the effects of another area improvement endeavor as the luxury condo unit at 1250 Greene is set to break ground this coming spring.

"It's going to be one of the most prestigious buildings on the entire island," said Sotheby's Real estate broker, Jill Prévost of Jill & Joan Prévost Realty. "It's really going to be something special."

Along with Sotheby's team member and interior designer Anne-Marie Turcotte, the Prévosts are fielding visits from potential clients and have already sold one-third of the 18 condo units.

Seven years of meetings and negotiations have culminated in a design which will see the original 5 Saisons Grocery store maintaining residence on the ground floor and a six-storey luxury condo unit being built on what is one of the island of Montreal real-estate's most coveted locales.

"The citizens rallied to keep the grocery store," said Prévost, "to the point where Metro (5 Saisons' Owner) had to sit down with the project developer (Ramco Construction) and Mayor Trent to hash things out." Ramco's president Jacob Attias of was able to work with all concerned parties to reach a mutually satisfactory solution to the project.

The existing parking lot for 5 Saisons will be replaced by the condo structure. Customer parking will in future be underneath the store as will residential condo parking through a separate entrance.

"The public will be able to come in via de Maisonneuve and take an elevator up to the store, do their shopping and never have to step outside," said Prévost.

Architect Brian Burrows has incorporated design elements of the neighboring area structures to arrive at a harmonious façade that reflects typical Westmount architectural details. The zinc-coated copper cupola on



Courtesy photo

the corner of the building mirrors a similar detail in the facing Westmount Post Office. The grey limestone used in the exterior of the structure is sourced locally, the lighter stone known as Indiana Buff comes, as per its namesake, from Indiana. Both echo the traditional building facades of the townhouses along de Maisonneuve Blvd.

The condo living units themselves are unique in design and no two floors are identical in layout. While all units include a terrace, one wrap-around terrace on the fourth floor is 1,500-sq-ft.

"We've tried to design it so all the units have 2 balconies," said Burrows, pointing out how this allows for more than one view and brings in more daylight and natural ventilation.

All units have high-performance triple insulated windows and energy systems within the units incorporate heat recovery.

Plenty of open terraces and inclusion of greenery add to the community feel that

exemplifies Greene Avenue. The second floor of the structure will feature a large green space for all residents of the building. As much as possible, attempts are being made to source local products for the project completion.

"Green on Greene is what we're trying to be," said Prévost. "There's no better street where it should happen than this street."

The smallest unit in the building is a 1,877-sq-ft condo with an asking price of \$1.5 million plus taxes but most units will exceed 2,800-sq-ft. The project is aimed at buyers who are downsizing from large scale homes and who wish to maintain a residence in the city.

"It's a lifestyle," said Prévost. "Every bell and whistle, your wish is my command." The residence will benefit from 24/7 security and a concierge on-site 40 hours a week. Further services will be determined as per owner request, to be decided when the majority of the building's 18 units have been sold.

"We're open to the input of all of the owners in order to tailor (the building services) to their request," said Prévost.

With the amount of interest already generated, the Sotheby's team is confident that the brisk sales will continue and foresee all units being sold within the near future. Construction is set to begin in April 2011 and building completion is projected to take 15 months.

Having a small number of units in the building differentiates it from a towering condo to be more of what Prévost describes as a community. The second floor of the condo project will include a full service gym which will look out onto the terrace and potentially a spa, the latter to be determined by clientele consensus. A meeting room is also planned for the second floor.

"We're still working to finalize (services to match) the requests of the buyers coming in," said Prévost. "At the end of the day, we're going to deliver what they want."

The Town Square on the corner of Greene and de Maisonneuve will be bigger than it was previously and will remain a public space with tables and umbrellas. Plans, though not yet finalized, are in the works for a fountain or similar water feature to be incorporated with the surrounding environment.

Area residents stand to benefit from the rezoning that was done to accommodate the condo development. Delivery hours to 5 Saisons will be reduced and the reverse-beeping noise will no longer be an issue as delivery trucks will be relegated to a loading dock within the underground garage.

Prévost maintains that the battles faced for zoning issues and design disagreements have all been worth the effort.

"Everyone living around here is going to benefit from this," said Prévost. "With most of the traffic now going underground, it's really going to make the area look that much better."

For more information on the project:  
[www.1250avenuegreene.com](http://www.1250avenuegreene.com)  
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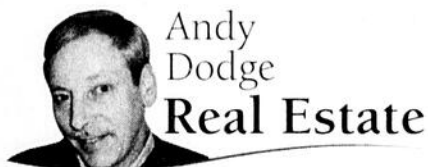
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# Westmount

## Real Estate Section

### Volume up, but prices down in October



Andy Dodge  
Real Estate

**R**eal estate sales volume revived in October last year but prices appear to be tailing off somewhat, as the average markup over the 2007 valuations (still in force until January this year) was only 18.7 percent, its lowest point of 2010.

Still, we are talking about an average Westmount house value of some \$1.2 million but this is lower than the averages around \$1.33 million last spring. The 12 homes which changed hands are up from eight in September, but otherwise the lowest volume since February.

Only one price surpassed the \$2 million

mark, that for 3777 The Boulevard which changed hands for \$2.3 million, though another six had prices over \$1 million. The lowest price involved 529 Lansdowne Avenue, a small attached cottage just south of Côte St. Antoine Road, which went for \$778,000; two others sold for \$800,000. Of the 12, the average price was just under \$1.25 million but the prices were only 19 percent above their respective 2007 valuations (still in effect during 2010), with two sales at less than those valuations; in fact, the highest price of \$2.3 million represented a 10-percent markdown from the \$2,568,800 valuation for 3777 The Boulevard. The markdown for 30 Surrey Gardens was almost the same, at 8.5 percent. On the high side, 337 Elm Avenue had a 2007 valuation of only \$603,400 but sold for well over \$1 million

Four condominiums, all apartments, changed hands in October, three for prices

between \$399,900 and \$527,000, but including one apartment at Westmount Park Towers, 4700 St. Catherine Street, which sold for \$995,000, sixth-highest price for a Westmount condominium this year and by far the highest price this year for an apartment in the former Pom Bakery building.

All four of the condos sold for more than their 2007 municipal valuation, with the average markup 22 percent boosted mainly by the highest-priced apartment which went for 38 percent more than valuation, while the others ranged from 10 percent to 18 percent above valuation.

Both flats at 305-07 Elm sold off in the October transfers, though in fact the buyers of the ground floor, 305 Elm, had been there since June, and the buyers of the upper floor, 307 Elm, had lived in the flat for about two weeks prior to signing.

Other sales included a 10-foot strip of

land between 530 and 534 Lansdowne Avenue, which had once been a common driveway for the two houses at 534 and 536 Lansdowne; another transfer in the month involved a seizure through judgment of 536 Lansdowne and the transfer of title of the lot in question. The driveway is evaluated separately from both houses and has a lot size of 137.8 square metres (1,483 square feet), which means the purchase price of \$150,000 represents just more than \$100 per square foot.

A commercial building at 4918 Sherbrooke Streer West, former home of Décor Marie Paul among others, sold in October for \$1.2 million, some 77 percent more than its municipal evaluation.

*NOTE: The preceding article relates to the registration of deeds of sale for Westmount property in October, 2010, provided by city officials.*



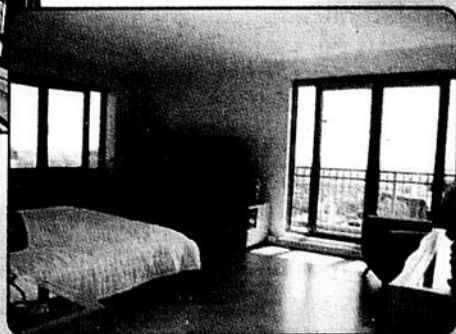
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\$5 million	to	\$6 million	1 transaction
\$3 million	to	\$4 million	3 transactions
\$2 million	to	\$3 million	9 transactions
\$1 million	to	\$2 million	30 transactions
\$900,000	to	\$1 million	7 transactions
\$700,000	to	\$900,000	10 transactions
\$500,000	to	\$700,000	6 transactions
\$1	to	\$500,000	13 transactions



**SOLD**  
WESTMOUNT \$3,950,000



**SOLD**  
WESTMOUNT \$2,995,000



**SOLD**  
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**SOLD**  
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# Westmount

## Real Estate Section

### HOME TRANSFERS IN OCTOBER 2010 2007

ADDRESS	FROM	TO	PRICE	VALUATION
611 Belmont	Malgorzata Plech	Michel Greiche & Alexandra Dawson	\$1,375,000	\$1,206,000
167 Edgehill	Teresa Groves	Fang Chen & Xiao Wei Wang	\$1,260,000	\$1,143,700
530 Grosvenor	Ofer Tal	Noah Stern	\$1,870,000	\$1,092,600
5 Grove Park	Angela Minicucci	Françoise Benso	\$1,220,000	\$962,000
529 Lansdowne	David Oliver & Christine Tomaszuk	Anthony Doyle & Pierre Raymond	\$778,000	\$593,600
222 Metcalfe	Eric Shoubridge	Oscar Rodriguez & Marie-Jeanne Godbout	\$800,000	\$556,200
465 Mount Pleasant	Richard G. Gervais & Marie Elizabeth Chevrier	Harry Alexander Grivakis & Amanda Tsatsoulis	\$960,000	\$829,900
30 Surrey Gardens	France Carmel	Matthew Auerbach & Samantha Pelletier	\$1,495,000	\$1,633,500
3741 The Boulevard	Eudice J. Geffin	Yunes Boucetta	\$800,000	\$672,900
3777 The Boulevard	Simon Gameraff & Jordana Wax	Ru Ying Qi & Wen Li Huai	\$2,300,000	\$2,568,800
426 Wood	Sajida Malik & Sabir Alvi	Pamela Rosenberg	\$985,000	\$770,000
<b>DUPLEXES</b>				
337 Elm	Olivier Martin	Anthony Camus Amiel	\$1,150,000	\$603,400
<b>CONDOMINIUMS</b>				
4855 de Maisonneuve, #503	Mary Suzanne Wolfkill	Phyllis Legatos	\$487,000	\$438,500
200 Lansdowne, #603	Jacques Poulin	Azin Eskandari	\$527,000	\$475,100
4410 St. Catherine, #3B	Jane Betty Tamor	Saul Henrique Feirrer	\$399,900	\$337,500
4700 St. Catherine, #414	estate Madeleine Oulimar	Monica Wolf	\$995,000	\$720,500
<b>COMMERCIAL PROPERTY</b>				
4918 Sherbrooke	Domenico, Leopolda and Maria Pedicelli & Luco Pietracupa	GWLF Property Corp.	\$1,200,000	\$674,400
<b>VACANT LAND</b>				
Land, Lansdowne	Catherine Christine Dominique Gerols	Benthom Investments Inc.	\$150,000	\$117,100
<b>SHARE SALES</b>				
305-07 Elm, 47%	Lesley Pretula	Mark Jan Krasny & Lina Tamara Muhtadie	\$640,000	\$359,8792
305-07 Elm, 53%	Lesley Pretula	Pamela McGovern	\$750,000	\$405,8213

1Strip of land 3.05 m wide next to 534 Lansdowne. 2Occupancy of 305 Elm. Valuation is 47% of \$765,700. 3Occupancy of 307 Elm. Valuation is 53% of \$765,700.

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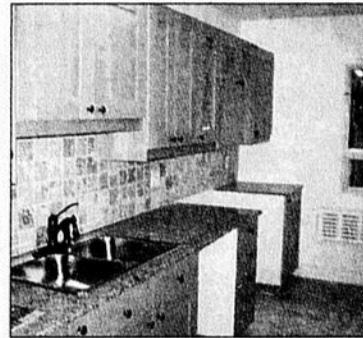
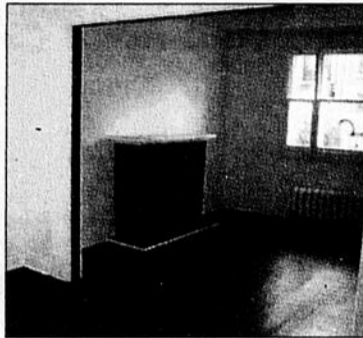
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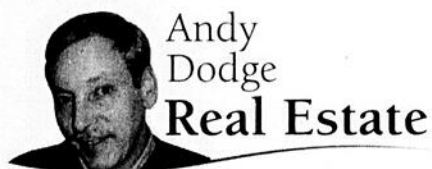


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## December sales: Cleaning up



**Andy Dodge**  
Real Estate

**W**estmount real estate agents stayed busy in December, getting settlements on some houses which had been on the market since early spring.

Nine sales contracts were announced last month, all but one for prices over \$1 million and all for more than their 2007 valuations, though four sold under the new 2011 municipal values. Volume is about average for December, in a year which generally has been below average in output, with only 146 one- and two-family sales during the year compared to an average 185.6. The number of days-on market leapt to 227, with all but three of the marketing times over 100 days, compared to an average 109 days in

November. The highest price was \$1,573,000, making this the second straight month and the third this year that nothing in Westmount sold above \$2 million. There is still plenty of Westmount real estate being offered in that category (22 houses by our count), but buyers so far are scarce.

The adjusted average price of the 146 sales last year is \$1,290,471, higher than the annual average for 2008 of \$1,251,646 and up seven percent from the \$1,209,430 figure for 2009. This is an indication that, so far as Westmount real estate is concerned, the recession of 2009 is officially behind us.

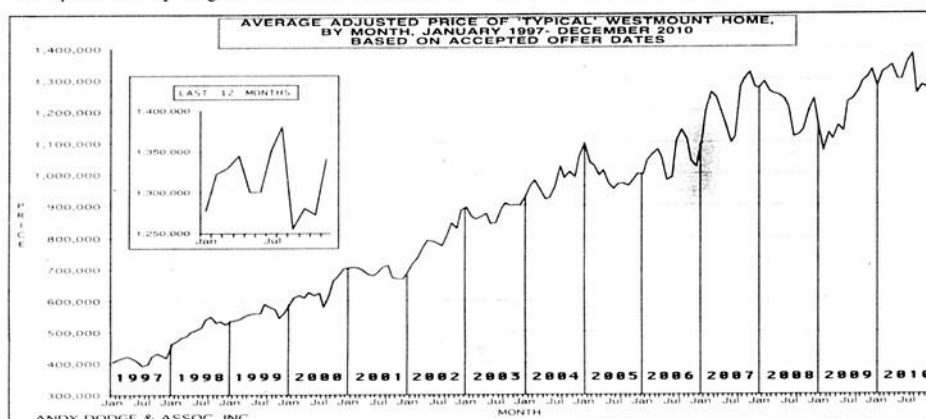
Only one condominium — a townhouse — sold in December and only three have been posted for the last quarter of 2010. Prices and markups stayed generally stable during all of last year, but the 37 posted transactions are up by about 9 percent from 2009, mainly because prices were much lower earlier that year.

One house sale was posted for the adjacent-Westmount districts last month, along

with two flats in duplexes and one apartment at Fort de la Montagne, 3577 Atwater Avenue. This is an indication that buyers still are far more interested in investing inside the Westmount city limits, and prefer the investment value of houses to the lower prices for condos.

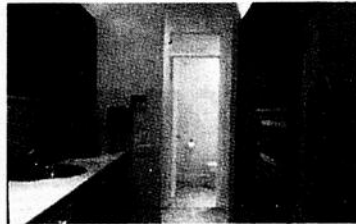
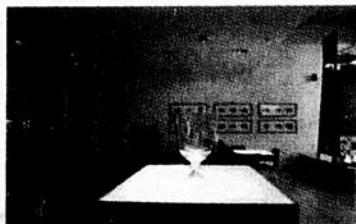
Now that the new year has passed we can expect demand to increase as buyers get ready for the spring market in Westmount.

NOTE: The preceding article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings which were reported by the local real estate agents as having been accepted in December 2010. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses and prices cannot be made public, but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph on this page offers a picture of these trends over time.



### OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY 2-4 PM

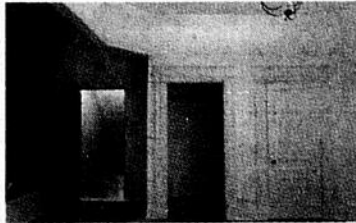
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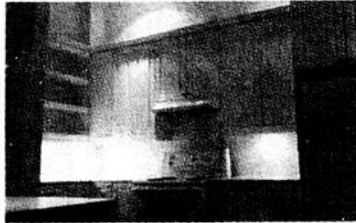
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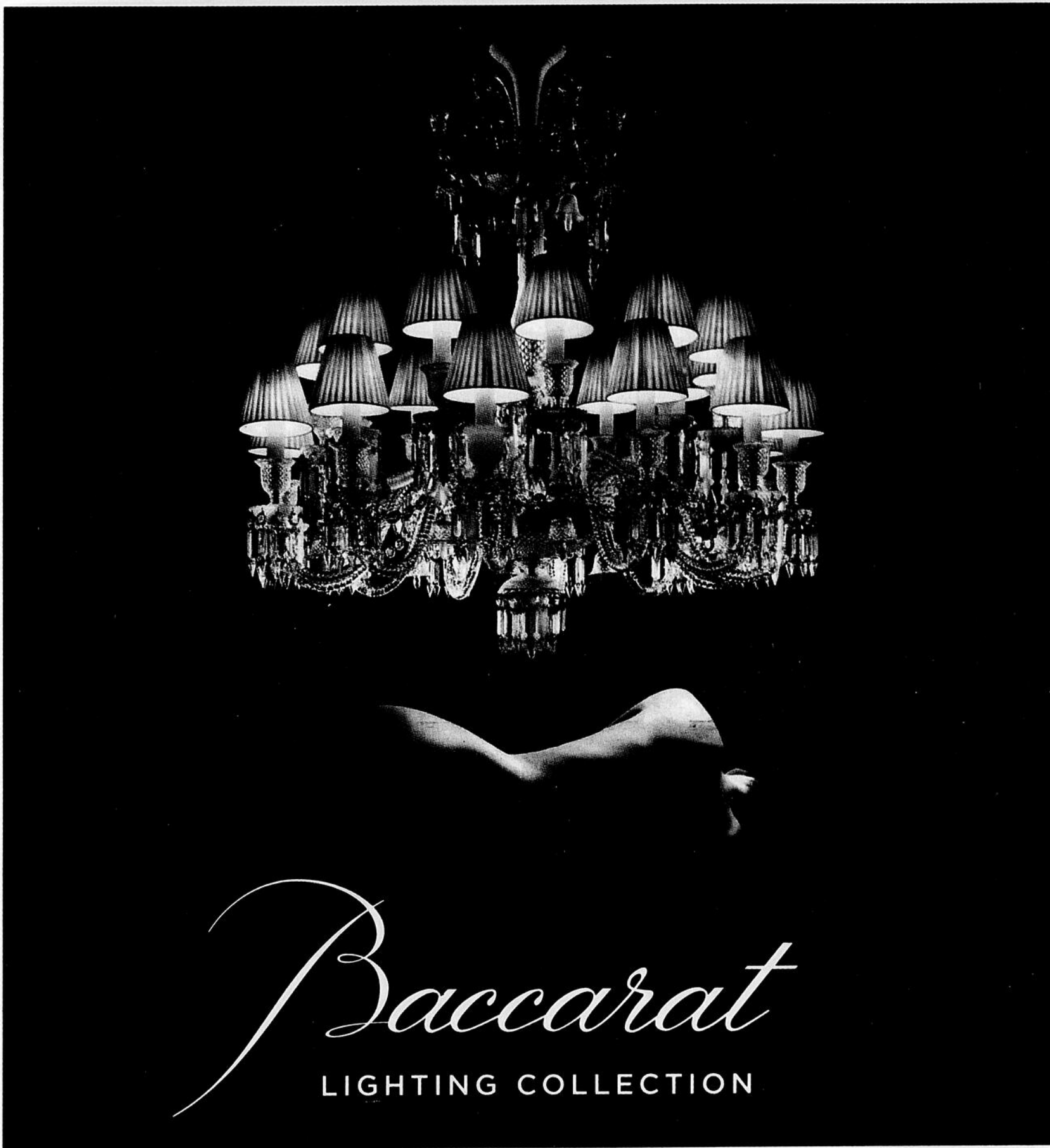
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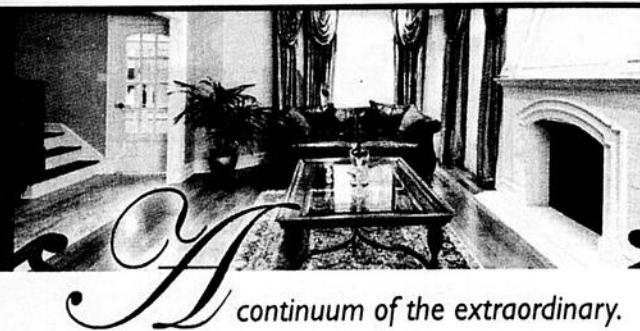


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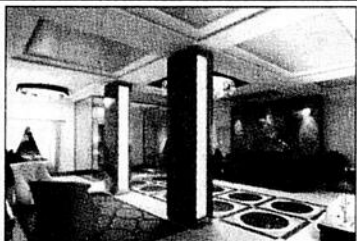
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# Organizing your life in the New Year



Marilynn Vanderstaay  
**Around Westmount**

**N**ow that the New Year festivities are over and resolutions have been broken, Tom Forestell, owner of Westmount Stationery, has green ideas to keep 2011 on track.

The Friction, an erasable pen by Pilot, has been such a great seller he couldn't keep it in stock. This amazing pen not only erases on the spot but should you need to make a change in your agenda, even six months later it will erase completely.

Forestell has reordered and will give a discount of \$1 off the price of \$2.99 to anyone who mentions *Around Westmount* when they make a purchase at the store, 4887 Sherbrooke Street W.

Pilot also has a pen that is made of 100 per cent recycled water bottles, so much so they have even maintained the bumps in the plastic.

Quo Vadis is a line of agendas and journals that are highly recycled. The agendas, covers and pages, are made of 100 per cent post consumer materials. The company that manufactures them is Canadian and uses bio fuel in its factory.

Moleskin journals, great for the writer within, are also popular again this year, sold out and are reordered.

A really fun product this year is Bucky Balls, a desk top toy without a purpose other than to entertain and relieve stress. Each set contains 216 powerful Rare Earth magnets that can be shaped, moulded, torn apart and snapped together in unlimited ways. Users can make sculptures, puzzles, patterns, and shapes, stick stuff to the fridge, or invent a new game. Their slogan is "trying to find something more useful is useless." After Forestell received a sample at a trade show, his staff had such a good time playing with them he knew he had to order them. When the display of 18 sets sold out he reordered and has reordered again.

"Bucky Balls are just one of those things," said Forestell. "Something gim-

micky like the Rubix Cube that could even be used at dinner parties."

### Lectures at Atwater Library

January is shaping up to be a busy month at the Atwater Library, with a diverse selection of activities scheduled. The popular Lunchtime Series is back, and is offering a smorgasbord lectures for the community to enjoy.

On Thursday, Jan. 13 at 12:30 p.m., Peter Trepanier, the Reader Services Librarian at the National Gallery's Library and Archives, will give an illustrated talk on his library's collection of Canadian and international artists' books and other resources.

The following week, on Jan. 20, to help celebrate the birthday of the immortal bard Robert Burns, Ray Baillie will give a presentation with slides on his new book, *Scottish Imprints in Quebec*. On the anniversary of Burns's birth, Scots both at home and abroad celebrate him with a supper, where they address the haggis, the ladies, and whisky.

*Scottish Imprints in Quebec* is the first book for Baillie, a descendant of Scots, Irish and French immigrants, who grew up in a home where Scottish culture was dominant. His book traces the role of the Scots in Quebec from 1757 to the Great War.

On Jan. 27, art historian Cecily J. Hilsdale of McGill University will be on hand to discuss "The Gift in Later Byzantium: Art and Diplomacy in an Age of Decline."

All lectures begin at 12:30 p.m.

Admission to the lunchtime lectures is always free, with donations invited.

### A wide variety of computer courses

From January through April, the Atwater Library Computer Centre is offering a variety of computer courses and workshops designed to help users of all levels and all ages work more easily and productively with 21st-century technology.

New this season is a 12-hour course Introduction to Web Design, as well as eight-hour courses Introduction to Windows and Email, Introduction to Excel, Introduction to Word, PowerPoint

Presentations, and Picasa: Digital Photo Editing.

A four-hour workshop Searching the Internet and Online Job Searching and two-hour workshops in Mail Merge and Labels, Organizing Your Computer, Facebook: The Basics, Computer Security, and Booking Travel Online will also be offered.

For the full schedule, fees and registration, contact Nisa Malli at 514.935.7344 or nisa@atwaterlibrary.ca.

### Library delivery service available

New last year was a service that provides home delivery of Atwater Library materials including books, magazines, DVDs and/or books on tape to downtown residents with reduced autonomy.

A team of volunteers helps select appropriate materials and delivers them in a snazzy Atwater Library backpack to the client's home. Many of the volunteers are youth who deliver on foot or on bike, by car or public transit and often spend some time in addition just visiting with the shut-in. As a result intergenerational friendships have been made. For more information about use of the service or in volunteering, phone Beth Symansky at 514.935.7344.

### Become an Atwater Library member

The Atwater Library and Computer Centre is a centre without borders. It welcomes everyone as members and users, regardless of municipal address. The membership fee is \$20. Depending on age and stage, the \$20 covers a six-month membership or a full-year membership. Members can borrow from the Library's collection of 38,000 titles, including the latest releases,

prize-winning books, audio cassettes and DVDs. For the online catalogue [gwww.atwaterlibrary.ca](http://gwww.atwaterlibrary.ca). There is little or no waiting time for bestsellers.

Members receive discounts on computer rentals at \$2 per hour instead of \$4 per hour. They also receive discounts on fees for computer courses and special events.

The Atwater Library and Computer Centre is located at 1200 Atwater Ave. For information about its services, or to rent space for an event or program, phone 514.935.7344.

### It's a new year at Victoria Hall's art gallery

Portraits, landscapes and florals will be the main themes at the Gallery at Victoria Hall's first exhibition in 2011, which opens Thursday, Jan. 13.

Works of Westmount artists Lindsey Fryett, Bram Rubinger, and Christine Stonehewer will be on display in the gallery through February 5. The gallery is located at 4626 Sherbrooke Street West, adjacent to Victoria Hall. For more information phone 514.989.5521.

### Mummies List presents Boot Camp

The online Mummies List is a site that offers activities, a discount shopping card and an updated website for mothers of all ages. Starting this week, the Mummies List is starting a new boot camp — exercise classes — that will run for 10 weeks.

Classes are held on Tuesday and Friday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Saint-Leon de Westmount Church, 4311 de Maisonneuve West, at the corner of Clarke Avenue. The fee is \$150 for all 20 sessions. For more information log into [www.mummieslist.com](http://www.mummieslist.com)

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www.westmountexaminer.com Thursday, January 13, 2011 15

# Rant Demon is Cutler's finest hour — so far

Actor spoofs his own "verbally aggressive intermittently explosive disorder"

Wayne Larsen

It makes no sense!!

We've all uttered those words in various stages of exasperation, but Keir Cutler has taken this catchphrase to a new level of artistic meaning in his latest one-man show, currently on the boards at the Centaur Theatre as part of its annual Wildside Festival.

It makes no sense!!

Directed by frequent collaborator T.J. Dawe, Rant Demon is Cutler's most autobiographical piece to date. It is also his finest work; instead taking on a fictional persona to argue about Shakespeare or some other point of cultural contention, he speaks frankly about his childhood, his family, and his relationships with women. From childhood trips to McDonald's and his tryout with the Montreal Alouettes to later experiences as a stage actor, Cutler rants about his frustrations in a way that rarely falls short of hilarious — punctuated along the way by his favourite four words.

It makes no sense!!

"I even rant about my ranting," Cutler confesses during his hour-long therapy session with the audience as he attempts to

come to terms with his ranting — or as he prefers to call it by its clinical term, "verbally aggressive intermittently explosive disorder."

Rant Demon works on all levels because, in Cutler's hands, somehow it all makes perfect sense.

## Still intrigued by the Bard

But Cutler has not only been devoting his time to ranting. He also produces short video pieces, and one of his latest can be seen on YouTube. "Shakespeare: Why Was I Never Told This?" has Cutler revisiting familiar territory — the ongoing debate over whether Shakespeare was actually the author of the plays and sonnets that bear his name.

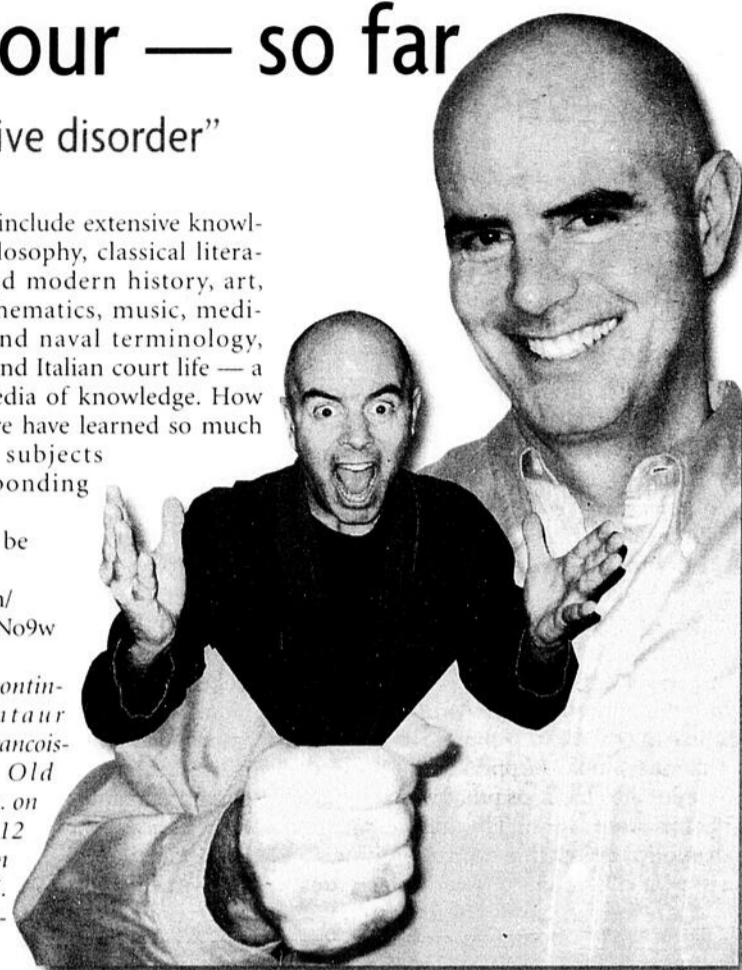
Describing himself as a proud signatory of a petition entitled Declaration of Reasonable Doubt About the Identity of William Shakespeare ([www.DoubtAboutWill.com](http://www.DoubtAboutWill.com)), Cutler points out that there are many valid reasons for all the doubts — foremost among them the curious fact that there exists not a single play, poem or even a letter written in Shakespeare's hand.

"Shakespeare was not only a great writer, he was a brilliant scholar," Cutler

says. "His works include extensive knowledge of law, philosophy, classical literature, ancient and modern history, art, astronomy, mathematics, music, medicine, military and naval terminology, English, French and Italian court life — a virtual encyclopedia of knowledge. How could Shakespeare have learned so much about so many subjects without corresponding with others?"

The video can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyVjR9FN09w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyVjR9FN09w)

*Rant Demon continues at the Centaur Theatre, 453 St-Francois-Xavier St. in Old Montreal, at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 12 and 9 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 15. For tickets, call 514-288-3161.*



Keir Cutler and his angry alter ego in Rant Demon.

Photo: Evelyne Soulard

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# The Lieutenant of Inishmore is painfully funny

Gory comedy continues at the Segal until Jan. 23



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**TOULA'S 'TAKE'**

If Quentin Tarantino had directed a movie about a deranged Irish terrorist seeking revenge for the murder of his... cat, it would look a lot like Oscar-winning Martin McDonough's play, currently showing at the Segal Centre.

The Lieutenant of Inishmore in its Quebec premiere is gory, violent, full of expletives, and one of the funniest and most entertaining farces I've seen on a Montreal stage in a long time. To be fair, an Irish brogue can make even murder and psychotic tendencies appear delightful.

Directed by temenos productions artistic director, Kate Bligh, The Lieutenant of Inishmore is the story of a sadistic INLA terrorist who kills and tortures people without losing a single night's sleep. When he hears, however, that his cat, Wee Thomas, has been killed, he goes into a murderous rage and goes back home to exact the most gruesome of revenges.

Back home, his father Donny and young Davey, both so stupid they couldn't find their way out of a paper bag, desperately try to cover up their tracks and save their hides. A series of misunderstandings and happenings take place in this quick-paced play that

*"What the feck are you fellas doing out this way? Come on in, I'm just in the middle of shooting me dad."*

— Padraic

are almost absurd and slapstick in nature, but have subtle and not-so-subtle undercurrents of sexual identity, gender roles and the barbarity of untamed masculinity.

There can be no question that, while still presenting an entertaining farce, McDonough is undeniably commenting on Ireland's perpetual cycle of suffering and how oppression, injustice and victimization have affected the country's psyche—and created terrorist groups like the IRA and a number of equally dangerous splinter groups. But none of that social commentary would be worth a lick if the production were boring.

It's not. It's laugh-out-loud funny, sarcastic, gritty, absurd, over the top, and always keeps you interested.

#### Young cast delivers

The play has a large cast of seven men and one woman and calls for most of the characters to be quite young. The actors, gifted theatre school graduates or soon-to-be graduates, impressed me with their comedic timing. Sure, there were times when you were reminded that these are young actors with limited professional

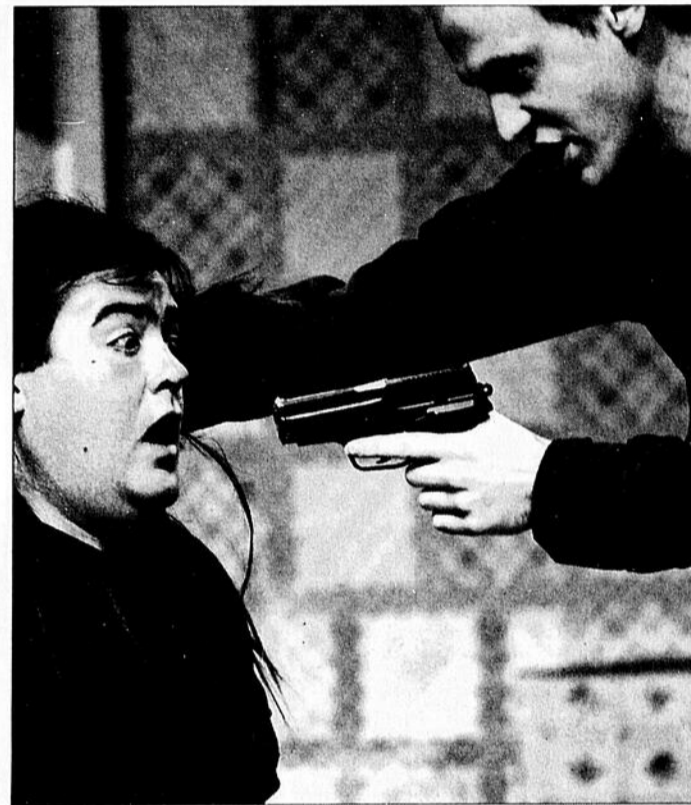


Photo credit: Alain Décarie

experience, but overall the play delivers.

Geoff Aucoin (in the highly entertaining and endearing role of Davey) in his first real break from community theatre, manages to create such a likeable character, I found myself personally worried that he wouldn't escape the bloodbath.

#### Exploring identity

The Lieutenant of Inishmore was first performed by the Royal Shakespeare Production in London in 2001, winning the Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. Director Kate Bligh first saw the production in New York five years ago.

"Five minutes into the play I was laughing and crying at the same time," she says. "I knew half-way through the performance that I wanted to direct the play myself, sensing that its preoccupations with identity in so many of its forms—national, gender, and sexual—would have resonances with the unique cultural reference points of Montreal theatre-goers."

Make no mistake; this play is dark and violent, downright cringe-inducing. So much so at times that, during the media premiere, I heard rumours of a spectator having walked out in the middle of a rehearsal. But it's also painfully funny, poignant and a nice break from the usually prim and proper offerings we get in this town. Don't be a goob; go see it.

If you're a Martin McDonough fan, keep your ticket stub and get a 10% discount on a full-price ticket to McDonough's *Le Pillowman* being performed at the moment at Théâtre du Rideau Vert.

• *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* is running at the Segal Centre for Performing Arts 5170 Chemin de la Côte Ste. Catherine) until January 23.



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# Stamp connoisseurs, circle Jan. 25 on your calendar

**W**hether you're a serious stamp collector or just curious, dropping by a meeting of the Philatelic Club of Montreal is an excellent way to meet others who share a passion for this age-old hobby.

The local group of stamp collectors will hold their next meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 25 at 7 p.m. in the Westmount Room of the **Westmount Public Library**. This month's guest speaker will be Tom Burpee, president of Canadian Stamp Auctions, who will discuss the United Kingdom and British North American stamps of William Gross.

For those who cannot attend the January event but are still fascinated by the colourful world of stamp collecting, the Philatelic Club of Montreal meets in the Library on the fourth Tuesday of each month throughout the year, except July and August.

Admission to each meeting is free, and all stamp-collecting enthusiasts are invited to attend.

Based in Westmount, the Philatelic Club of Montreal is affiliated with la Fédération Québécoise de Philatélie, the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, and the Montreal chapter of the Society of Israel Philatelists. The Westmount Public Library is located at 4574 Sherbrooke St. W. For more information on the club and how to join, call 514-735-3941.



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In the photo are some of the team members (front row left to right): Shannon Ropeleski, Registered Nurse and Massage Therapist; Joan Berri, Holistic Nurse and Therapist; Julia Di Nardo, Psychologist and Weight Therapist; Johanne Pothier, President and Founder of Inspira Crea Wellness Center (back row left to right): Diane Racette, Reception and Administration; Annie Kindts, Integral Development Coach; Michèle Savoie, Holistic Psychologist; Nevine Echibini, Gourmet Health Chef and Naturotherapist; Jessica Weisz, Osteopath; Mario Lecaldare, Executive Vice-President.

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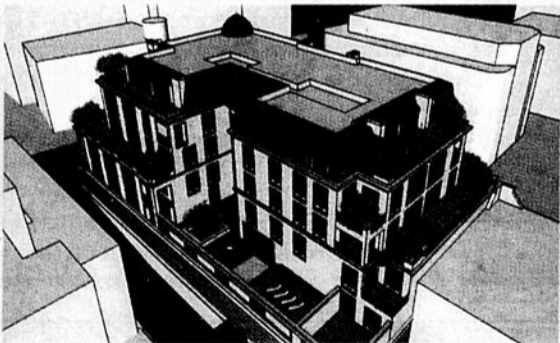
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