

The Westmount
Examiner

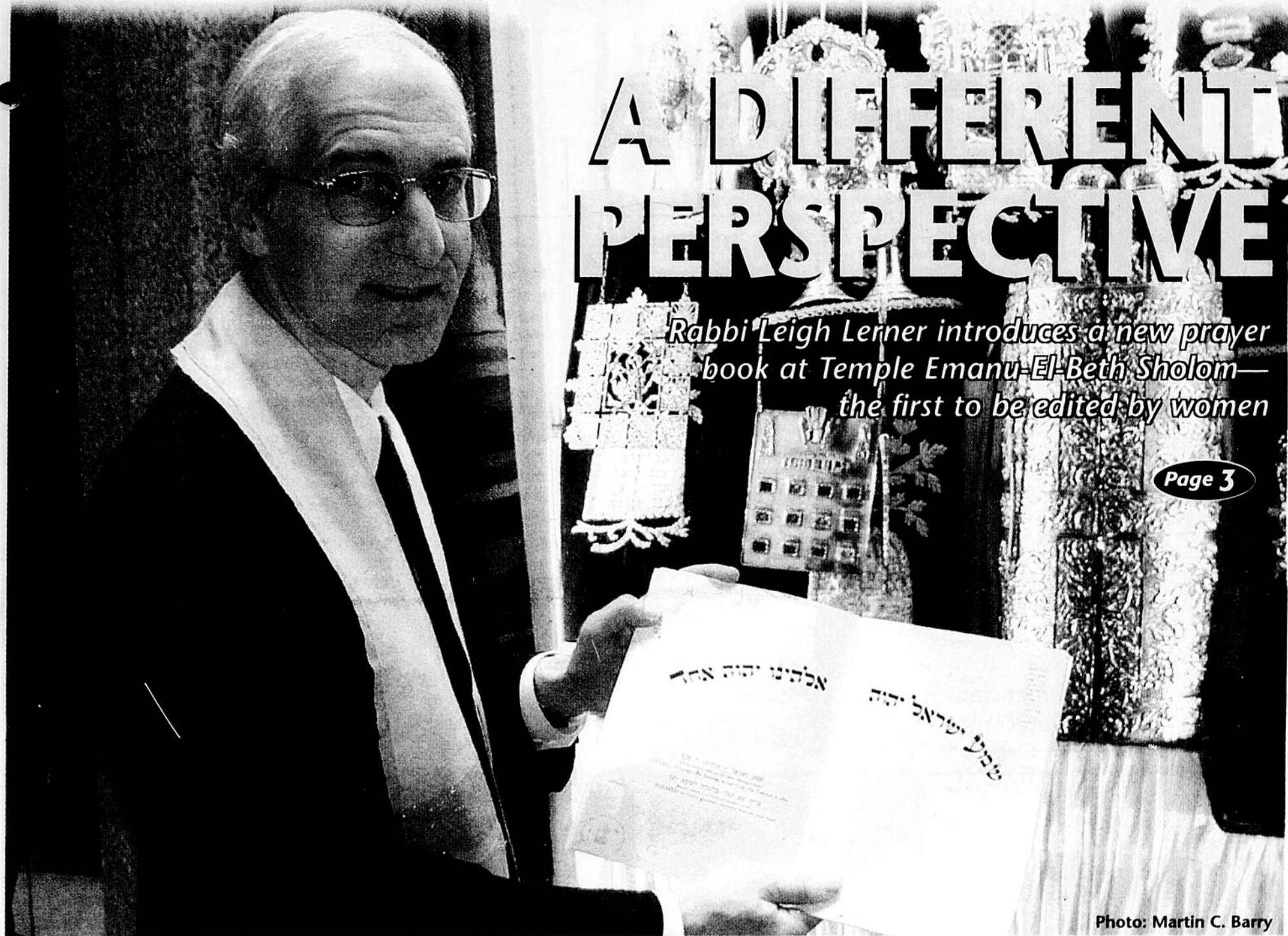
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A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Rabbi Leigh Lerner introduces a new prayer book at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom—the first to be edited by women

Page 3

Photo: Martin C. Barry

Montreal council narrowly defeats Marks contract motion

Martin C. Barry

A motion by Westmount borough president Karin Marks at Montreal City Hall, which would have opened the Tremblay administration's controversial 'city contract' for public scrutiny, was defeated this week—although four Tremblay councillors supported it.

Marks had proposed that the Centre City council's standing committees hold open hearings before the contract with the province was approved.

The deal included the sale of Île Notre Dame and the central library's book collection to Quebec, in exchange for \$587 million from the province over five years.

In a 28-36 vote, only one city councillor on the opposition side, which is dominated by former mayor Pierre Bourque's supporters, voted against Marks' suggestion. With a six-seat majority on the 74-seat council, most of Tremblay's councillors voted against. But four of them—Bill McMurchie of Pointe Claire, Luis Miranda of Anjou, as well as

Marvin Rotrand and Jeremy Searle from Côte des Neiges-NDG—supported Marks's motion.

(continued on page 2)



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WMA visits megacity boss

Because the megacity wouldn't come to Westmount, the Westmount Municipal Association recently went to Montreal City Hall to see executive committee chairman and budget chief Frank Zampino.

"We've not weakened on our wish to de-merge," WMA president Kathleen Duncan said this week. "If anything, we came away more convinced that the megacity is not feasible."

For several months last summer and fall, Duncan negotiated with Zampino's office for the former St. Leonard mayor to speak at one of the WMA's public meetings. After several false starts, he eventually declined—but instead agreed to meet the group at his office.

"We made it clear throughout that we want our city back," Duncan added. "However, we know we'll still be part of the larger entity and have dues to pay. We'd like to know what happens to our taxes that don't come back to support us."

"Besides, we've participated in the MUC, the transit board and other regional bodies for more than a decade."

The WMA delegates also made it clear to Zampino that the WMA was no way undermining Westmount borough president Karin Marks.

"In my opening remarks, I pointed out that we knew she talked to him about things like cuts to the capital budget and the greenhouse repairs," Duncan said.

Instead, the WMA concentrated on wide megacity financial issues such as the planned tax increases, money kept in the center which is earmarked for boroughs and the huge debt that the former Montreal has bequeathed to the new megacity.

For the Zampino visit, the association chose a group to represent various demographics of the borough: Kathleen Duncan, Peter Hall, Jill Hugessen, Patrick Martin, Douglass McDougall, Derek Walker and Don Wedge. The City Westmount's last two finance commissioners, former councillors David Laidley and Gérard Limoges, contributed to the preparations for the visit. The WMA's report on the visit can be found on page 8.

(continued from page 1)

"The criticism from many of the members of the opposition—and one which I certainly support—is why are we selling off assets to deal with the City's debt?" Marks told the borough council last Monday evening. She said the City of Montreal currently has an enormous actuarial deficit because it was given a holiday from contributing for many years, which the Quebec government itself approved.

"One of the things that Mr. Tremblay wanted to do was to get this new money in... (so) he could start to pay off the \$1.3 billion debt from the actuarial deficit and begin to pay it down so we wouldn't be paying such high interest," Marks said.

In defending her motion, Marks asked, "How can anybody understand this in such a short amount of time?" She said it was perfectly logical that the commissions established by the Tremblay administration should be given the opportunity to look carefully over the City's contract with Quebec, to hold public consultations and hear the concerns of citizens before a vote was taken in the Centre City council.

As it is, Montreal's contract with the province "is full of vagaries," she claimed. "It gives the Quebec

government more power than it had before—more power to create structures, more power to come in and make overall decisions and let the City then manage those decisions."

Marks compared the deal Montreal has made with the province to the one Westmount received when it was forcibly merged. "It's not all that different from what was done to us," she said. "When the mergers took place, the City of Montreal was given the power of making the decisions, we were given the power to manage those decisions, and I think we're just pushing those things upward and upward."

She also expressed disappointment in Tremblay. "In terms of democracy, I'm disappointed," she said, referring to a commission to reform democratic procedures in the City of Montreal which Tremblay had chaired just before the megacity election.

"He mentioned how important public consultation was, and he was really the one who insisted that the new nine boroughs of the City of Montreal have the right to public consultation on zoning change. I think he had the right idea, I just don't think he was willing to carry it far enough."

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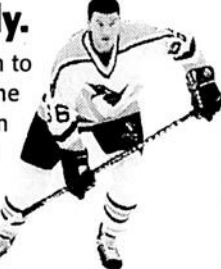
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Daycare and borough tangle over park

Martin C. Barry

The owner of a Westmount children's daycare centre made an angry appearance before the borough council last Monday evening, demanding to know why borough personnel have been asking the provincial government questions about her establishment.

Evelyn Wajcer, who runs K.I.D.S. Academy on Ste. Catherine Street, said an official with the Quebec ministry which oversees daycare centres informed her that he had received calls from Westmount Borough Director Bruce St. Louis as well as Joanne Poirier, director of the borough's permits and inspections department, during which they sought information about the daycare's operation.

According to provincial regulations, licensed children's daycare centres are obliged to have a fenced-in yard either on the centre's grounds or within a short walking distance.



Evelyn Wajcer of K.I.D.S. Academy addressing council last Monday

Wajcer said that until recently, K.I.D.S. Academy had a fenced yard of its own, but that following an expansion, the daycare centre began to take the children to nearby parks, including a small one on Somerville Avenue below Sherbrooke Street.

Wajcer said she was told by the ministry official that Poirier and St. Louis had inquired about the provincial regulations obliging her to provide a yard with a fence. Wajcer denies having received any complaints from residents, except for a single incident some time back. "Other than that, we had no idea what was brewing," she said.

Responding to Wajcer during question period, St. Louis said the purpose of his calls was for "fact finding."

Borough President Karin Marks said the inquiries were only made after K.I.D.S. Academy changed its plans to put a play area on the roof of its Ste. Catherine Street building and, instead, started using the park. "When she first submitted her plans, there were very clear plans to have it

on the roof," Marks said.

"When there were concerns expressed that this tiny little park was now being used by a large number of kids on a regular basis, Joanne Poirier called to find out what the regulations were and whether they were meeting the regulations."

Marks acknowledged there had been some complaints from residents, but denied Wajcer's claims that the borough was about to settle the matter by taking down the fence. "There were some residents who did complain," she said. "We've made absolutely no recommendations or no decisions about anything that has to do with it."

"We're a residential community," added Marks. "We have to balance residents' needs and institutions' needs and schools' needs and it's always a balancing act. When there are people who have complaints because there is a small area like that being used by a particular institution, we have to look into it and see what's reasonable, what's fair."

Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom introduces new prayer book

Martin C. Barry

Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom has taken one of its most important steps forward in the past 30 years, with the introduction last week of a new prayer book.

The New Reform Siddur, presented for the first time to members of the congregation at Shabbat eve service last Friday evening, is the first prayer book in Reform Judaism to have been edited by women. More than 30 years ago when the last prayer book was introduced, the Reform Movement had not yet begun ordaining women rabbis.

"This is a prayer book which represents the best thinking, poetry and attempts at inspiration of the latter half of the 20th century, hoping that it will be good for the first half of the 21st century," Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom's spiritual leader, Rabbi Leigh Lerner, said in an interview following the service.

Rabbi Lerner acknowledged that the occasion was momentous. "We're taking part in an experiment," he said, adding that the congregation's members will be surveyed by an international body about their reactions to the new siddur.

"They're a focus group," he said. "Part of an actual survey that one would do launching anything. The demand is on us as leaders of this service to provide five or six different approaches showing that this book is able to handle all kinds of situations and is flexible."

As Rabbi Lerner noted during the service, the history of prayer books in the Reform Movement goes back to the 19th century. In the beginning, every rabbi and every congregation published its own prayer book, but in North America, two siddurim by two prominent rabbis became popular. Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise's Minhag America was published by Reform Judaism's two continental groups, the Union of American Hebrew

Congregations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis.

A second siddur, written by Rabbi David Einhorn, represented the radical reformers. His siddur, Olat Tamid, contained much more English than Hebrew.

In the 1890s, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) decided to publish one prayer book for Reform Judaism.

The result was the Union Prayerbook, which was used from 1894 until 1975 in several editions. It contained more Hebrew than Einhorn's. Lerner acknowledged that many Reform Jews, including himself, "grew up on this prayer book and its graceful language and its formal settings which lent themselves well to choral music of a refined nature."

The most recent prayer book, Gates of Prayer introduced in the early 1970s, had a "warmer" feeling that is almost traditional in its contents, with such important additions as the traditional prayer for the new month and a shabbat eve service included. But the one great flaw with Gates of Prayer, Rabbi Lerner added - an error which subsequent editions sought to correct - was its male-dominated language referring to God.

Among Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom's members last Friday evening, the initial reaction to the new prayer book was mostly positive. One woman said she enjoyed its poetry, while another said that being able to follow the Hebrew so easily because of the English translation alongside "makes me feel so clever."

Rabbi Lerner said he was surprised the congregation's reaction was so positive. "I was delighted with the reaction, actually," he said. "I didn't know what to expect. I know that because the book is laid out so differently from our other books, it took a great deal of effort to see that it was launched properly. So it felt good to know that effort had smiles coming back from it."

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Événements communautaires Société d'horticulture

La prochaine réunion de la Société d'horticulture de Westmount aura lieu le mardi 11 février de 19 h à 21 h à la bibliothèque. La conférencière invitée Gwynne Basen parlera de la préservation des semences Info : 487-2245 ou w_hs@hotmail.com.



Bibliothèque Club de lecture française

Le club de lecture française se réunira le mercredi 12 février à 18 h 45 dans la salle Westmount de la bibliothèque pour discuter des œuvres de Victor-Lévy Beaulieu. Info : 989-5386.

Bonbon Bonanza

Joignez-vous à nous pour une célébration de la Saint-Valentin pleine de contes et de chansons avec le musicien pour enfants Micky Farkas et ses amis, à la galerie du Victoria Hall le samedi 15 février à 14 h. Info : 989-5229.

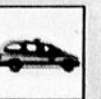
Atelier de création littéraire

Ne vous contentez pas d'y penser, écrivez-le ! Les enfants de 9 et plus sont invités à se joindre à Andrew Katz dans le cadre de son atelier de création littéraire, qui aura lieu le samedi 15 février. La séance s'adressant aux enfants de 9 à 12 ans se déroulera de 10 h à midi, et celle s'adressant aux 13 ans et plus de 13 h à 15 h. Comme les places sont limitées, veuillez vous inscrire sans tarder au comptoir de la section des enfants. Info : 989-5229.



Hydro Westmount Périodes de grands froids

Voici revenu le temps de l'année où il faut prendre des précautions chaque fois que le mercure descend sous la barre des -18°C. Il importe d'établir des priorités à l'égard de la consommation d'électricité, notamment durant les heures de pointe, de 16 h 30 à 19 h 30. Vous aiderez ainsi à réduire les risques de panne attribuable à la surcharge des circuits et contribuerez en outre à diminuer la pénalité élevée imposée par Hydro-Québec.



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les écoles de Westmount sont invités à s'inscrire au programme annuel de jeunes pompiers et de jeunes officiers de la sécurité publique. Le programme vise à sensibiliser les jeunes à la prévention des incendies et du crime.

Les cours se tiendront les mercredis soirs, de 18 h 30 à 20 h 30, du 19 février au 7 mai inclusivement à la caserne des pompiers, 19, rue Stanton. Info : Michel Tassé au 280-0709 ou James Novak au 989-5468.

Permis de stationnement

Veuillez vérifier si votre permis de stationnement de Westmount est toujours en vigueur. Des contraventions seront émises pour toute voiture stationnée dans un espace réservé affichant un permis qui n'est plus valide. Vous pouvez obtenir un permis ou le renouveler au Service de la sécurité publique, 19, rue Stanton, entre 8 h 30 et 16 h 30 du lundi au vendredi. Info : 989-5225.



Sports et loisirs Carnaval d'hiver de Westmount

Venez participer aux différentes activités du Carnaval d'hiver de Westmount qui auront lieu les 6, 7 et 8 février. Vous trouverez un horaire détaillé des activités dans votre courrier. Info : 989-5353.

Dates à retenir

Jusqu'au 12 février
Rituels quotidiens
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La galerie du Victoria Hall

Les 6, 7 et 8 février
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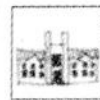
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Gwynne Basen, Bibliothèque

Le 12 février, 18 h 45
Club de lecture française
Œuvres de Victor-Lévy Beaulieu
Bibliothèque

Le 15 février, 14 h
Bonbon Bonanza, Contes et chansons
Victoria Hall

Le 15 février
Atelier de création littéraire
9 à 12 ans à 10 h, 13+ à 13 h
Bibliothèque

Le 18 février, 19 h
Club de lecture anglaise
White Oleander de Janet Fitch
Bibliothèque



Community Events Westmount Horticultural Society

The next meeting of the Westmount Horticultural Society will be held on Tuesday, February 11 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Westmount Library. Guest speaker, Gwynne Basen will talk about *Seed saving - national and local endeavors*. Info: 487-2245 or w_hs@hotmail.com.



Library French Book Club

The French Book Club will meet in the Westmount Room of the Library on Wednesday, February 12 from 6:45 to 9:00 p.m. to discuss books written by Victor-Lévy Beaulieu. Info: 989-5386.

Bonbon Bonanza

Join us for a fun-filled Valentine's afternoon of stories and songs with children's entertainer Micky Farkas and friends in the Gallery at Victoria Hall on Saturday, February 15 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. As places are limited, please sign up at the Children's desk or call 989-5229.

Creative Writing

Don't just think about it, write it! Children aged 9 and over are invited to join Andrew Katz for a workshop in creative writing on Saturday, February 15 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (age 9-12) and 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. (age 13+). As places are limited, please sign up at the Children's desk or call 989-5229.

English Book Club

Join the Library's English Book Club on Tuesday, February 18 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., as they discuss *White Oleander* by Janet Fitch. Info: 989-5386.



Public Security Junior Firefighter and Junior Public Security Officer

Registration has begun for the 37th annual edition of the *Junior Firefighter* and *Junior Public Safety Officer* programmes. These 'hands on' courses are open to 9 - 12 year old boys and girls who either live or attend school in Westmount. The courses will be held on ten Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. beginning February 19 through May 7 inclusively. The classes will take place at the Fire Station, 19 Stanton. Info: Michel Tassé at 280-0709 or James Novak at 989-5468.

Parking Permits

Please ensure that your Westmount parking permit is still valid. Tickets will

Datebook

Until February 12

Evidence of Ritual
Frankie Miller & Gabrielle Pilot
The Gallery at Victoria Hall

February 6, 7 & 8

Winter Carnival - Frosty Fun

February 11, 7 p.m.

Westmount Horticultural Society
Seed Saving - National and Local
Gwynne Basen, Library

February 12, 6:45 p.m.

French Book Club
Works by Victor-Lévy Beaulieu
Library

February 15, 2 p.m.

Bonbon Bonanza, Stories and songs
Victoria Hall

February 15

Creative Writing Workshop
10 a.m. for 9 to 12 years, 13 p.m. for 13+
Library

February 18, 7 p.m.

English Book Club
White Oleander by Janet Fitch
Library

be issued in reserved areas and time parking zones with an expired permit. Permits can be obtained or renewed at the Public Security Office at 19 Stanton Street between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Info: 989-5225.



Hydro Westmount Conserve during peak periods

When the temperature drops below -18°C, the demand for electricity increases significantly especially during the evening peak period (4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.). To help reduce the possibility of system overload and to minimize the severe monetary penalties imposed by Hydro Quebec if the peak load is too high, we ask your cooperation to conserve electricity during these peak periods.



Sports & Recreation Winter Carnival - Frosty Fun

Come and celebrate with us at this year's Winter Carnival on February 6, 7 and 8. Watch your mailbox for a list of Carnival activities. Info: 989-5353.

Robert Walsh is number one — with a bullet

Around Westmount

Marilynn Vanderstay



Congratulations to Westmount resident Robert Walsh, president of Forensic Technology, who was named 'Personality of the Year in Business' by La Presse and Radio Canada recently for his innovative research and development of its Integrated Ballistics Identification Systems.

The digital system is used by law enforcement agencies in 29 countries to create and access a database of bullets and cartridge cases used in crimes using what Walsh calls 'ballistic fingerprints.' That information can be used to solve crimes that once stumped police and has been used in solving and in evidence in over 15,000 individual crimes, including the Bosnia war crimes trials in de Hague, and more recently to track the casings across the country that eventually led to the arrest of the alleged Maryland snipers.

Walsh will be discussing his personal path to success at the Youth

Employment Services Sixth annual Entrepreneurship Conference that will be held Saturday March 29. He will be one of Montreal's most successful personalities who will be presenting workshops to offer opportunities to "Making the Connection with Successful Entrepreneurs. For more information phone 898-9788 or go to www.yesmontreal.ca.

Many happy returns

A big happy birthday to Westmount's 'Man Around Town' Derek Walker, who celebrated his 88th birthday on Monday, Feb. 3. The Manoir resident is involved in so many Westmount activities we don't have space to print them all. He is so involved in the Westmount Rotary he was made an honorary member in 1999, especially for his work with Rotary Life Line, having personally installed over 600 units himself. He is a Director on the Westmount Municipal Association, is on the advisory committee for the Borough of Westmount and is on the board of Friends of the Library, for whom he delivers books to shut-ins. Happy Birthday, Derek! We are blessed to have you in our community.

Fundraising at WHS

Students, families and teachers of WHS grade eight students in the

enrichment program have been busy fundraising for the students' exchange trip from The Queen Charlotte Islands in February.

Last month students weathered the cold and raised \$1,250 by car hopping at the Loblaws on St. Jacques Street. Working in shifts throughout the weekend, the bold students approached customers at the check out, explained their story and offered to take their carts to their cars for a donation. The proceeds will go towards the \$3000 they will need to entertain the 23 students coming to Montreal.

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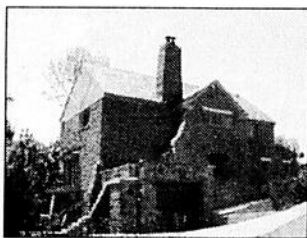
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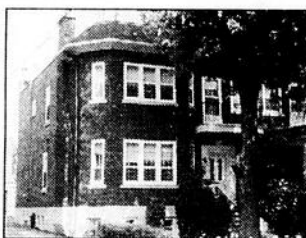
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A cold time for all

What a winter! If you're not already frozen, you must have a strong constitution.

This is the coldest winter in at least ten years. It is -27C in Quebec City as I write these lines and tomorrow I leave for Jonquière where it is between -35C and -39C, without the wind chill factor. Ever since they started telling us about the wind chill factor, it seems to have gotten even colder. When I was little—or at least younger—we had never heard of this concept. I think that refining our meteorological statistics has in itself created a cooling effect. In fact, I think that it's worse now than it ever was!



Jacques Chagnon



I mentioned that I will be going to Jonquière—this is because we have a caucus meeting which falls between the sittings of the National Assembly.

The meeting will be attended by almost 75 MNAs and official candidates that have already been chosen in their respective ridings. Obviously, by the time you read these lines, the caucus meeting will be history.

We have already chosen about two-thirds of our candidates for the next general election which could very well come sometime this spring. In this preelection context, we—the candidates and MNAs—are obviously going to discuss the final elements of our program. All issues—from organic produce to the environment and transportation will be discussed prior to the national council meeting which will bring together party members from all ridings to study these questions and integrate them into our election platform. Of course, these candidates will also be interested in discussing things such as campaign organization, advertising themes and communications issues.

We currently have somewhat of a head start over the Parti Québécois and the Action démocratique: the PQ has held about 50 nomination meetings while the ADQ has held close to 40. It doesn't mean much right now to be ahead; what is important is to keep this lead right up to voting day. Pierre Bourque has announced that he will run as a candidate for the Action démocratique, after apparently turning down a proposal to run for the Parti Québécois. In any case, he is telling anyone who wants to listen that he is running in order to defeat our position on forced municipal mergers. We shall see.

We have also managed to recruit what are considered to be some very interesting candidates. For example, Pierre Moreau, a lawyer who specializes in municipal law will be running in the riding of Marguerite d'Youville. Diane Legault, who up until last week was the Executive Director of the Ordre des chirurgiens-dentistes du Québec will be running in Chambly. We also have several other interesting candidates who will be introduced over time as we move closer to the beginning of the election campaign.

In order to prepare for the election, we have planned a fundraising blitz to ensure that each of the ridings can tap into all possible resources as allowed under the Election Act. The candidates have had their official pictures taken and we are beginning to rent space that will be used as campaign offices in each riding. This election campaign will probably be a little different from the ones we have experienced over the past two decades. This is because there will be a three-way election battle in many ridings. The Action démocratique seems to have crested, taking votes first and foremost from the PQ. The big question now is whether the ADQ will be able to hold onto its new followers. After rising to 40 per cent in the polls, they have now fallen to third place with about 30 per cent. Only time will tell.

Jacques Chagnon is the Liberal MNA for Westmount-St. Louis.



Letters to the editor

Maybe Westmount can be sold

To the editor:

Now that part of Montreal is about to be sold (I am referring to Île Notre Dame) by Mayor Gérald Tremblay, because of the city's shortage of funds, he might consider selling Westmount.

To whom? To Westmounters.

I am sure he will get more for Westmount than for Île Notre Dame! He might also look at it as a ransom: King Richard I of England agreed to be ransomed in 1194. He was a prisoner of the German Emperor Henry VI on his return from Jerusalem.

If Tremblay sells Westmount to Pierre Bourque, he should insist that Bourque, who is sort of leaving Montreal, allows for the reinstatement of Peter Trent as mayor, Tom Thompson, Gérard Limoges and all the other previous councillors to the positions they held in 2001 (with compensation for loss of earnings).

In politics, the enemies of yesterday can be our friends tomorrow. Your new political commentator Tommy Schnurmacher will no doubt agree with me.

Gerald Glass,
Metcalf Avenue

Say no to Tour de l'île

To the editor:

At last month's Westmount borough council meeting, I asked Westmount to advise organizers of Le Tour de l'île de Montreal bike event that it would no longer be welcome upon the streets of Westmount unless the event allowed Mayor Gérald Tremblay to invite participants to raise funds for the charities of the participants' choice.

I made the request for the following reasons:

1) The event is more than a major inconvenience to Montrealers.

2) The event costs the taxpayers of Montreal over \$150,000!

3) The traffic jam on the Decarie Expressway resulted in seven times the normal pollution emitted per vehicle for the distance travelled. (For each litre of fuel burned 2.26 kilos of greenhouse effect causing carbon dioxide alone is added to the atmosphere.)

4) Businesses on the route or nearby can lose over 90 per cent of their sales volume for the day. (Hogg Hardware on Sherbrooke lost 75 per cent of their sales when Le Tour passed by several years ago!)

5) The hotel industry reported that there is no increase in occupancy as a result of the event.

But most important of all is the fact that Le Tour de l'île de Montreal will not cooperate with hospitals and charities and has told over 100 of them "no!"

By comparison, the 43,000 participants of the London Marathon are invited to raise funds for charity. Seventy-six per cent of them chose to do so in '02 and they raised \$60 million.

I do not feel that the response of Westmount reflects the very charitable nature of Westmounters. I believe that for all of the inconvenience, public expense and harm caused by the event, the least the event could do is to cooperate with charity as does the London Marathon.

The only way that Le Tour is going to cooperate with charity is if they are denied the streets of the boroughs. The Tour de l'île is no longer welcome in Hampstead, Montreal West, Côte St. Luc, NDC, DDO and Laval. If Westmounters do not wish to have Le Tour in Westmount, then I urge them to call up Borough President Karin Marks at 989-5240 and tell her so!

Murray Levine
Côte St. Luc

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Bourque a nightmare for Charest, Landry

Uncensored

Tommy Schnurmacher



Pierre Bourque certainly won't win any popularity contests in Westmount or the West Island.

Nonetheless, watch for him to make a big difference in the outcome of the Quebec election that could very well be held on April 14.

Action Démocratique du Québec leader Mario Dumont is delighted to have bagged Bourque. Dumont is convinced that presence of the former mayor of Montreal will help his party pick up votes from the "cultural communities."

Of course, there is an impressively high number of anglophones and allophones that don't like Bourque. As a matter of fact, they can't stand the man.

Several callers to my radio show on CJAD insisted they had been considering voting for Dumont until they heard that Bourque had clambered on board the ADQ bandwagon.

Does this mean that Bourque could be a liability?

Far from it, he will help the ADQ in many ways. His presence is a direct response to the main criticism that has been levelled at the upstart party — lack of experience.

Bourque ran the city that is the engine of the province. Some may argue that he has practically run it into the ground, but he did run the place.

The man is a populist and a seasoned campaigner. Watch for him to set his sights on Liberal leader Jean Charest by doing everything possible to keep the merger issue alive.

Why?

First of all, Bourque does not want to see his 'One island, one city dream' undone. Secondly, he can use the hot-button topic to torment Charest who has promised to allow the former

municipalities a vote on de-mergers.

Charest is having a tough enough time making a breakthrough with francophones. The last thing he needs is to be constantly reminded of his promise to respect de-merger referendums.

The more Bourque keeps Charest entangled with undoing the merger, the more Charest will be depicted by the nationalist press as serving anglophone interests.

As for the erstwhile leaders of the anti-merger movement, many currently lead the life of Riley at Montreal city hall. They can hardly be expected to muster much enthusiasm for any attempt at ruining their lucrative gig.

The feedback I got last week from callers is that opposition to the mergers has waned considerably. If so, it may indeed cause Charest to back away from his promise.

Has it waned? Are you as opposed to the mergers as you were a year and a half ago? E-mail me your response. Not a scientific poll, but I would love

to hear from you.

No matter what happens with Charest, Bourque's decision to run for the ADQ is a slap in the face for Parti Québécois leader Bernard Landry.

Our premier's latest series of pompous predictions will enable both the Liberals and the ADQ to tell a long-suffering electorate that a PQ victory would guarantee us all two years of planning for a referendum—a move that would be anathema to three-quarters of the population.

Landry spent last weekend waxing poetic about Quebec independence. He promised his cheering followers that he was planning to achieve sovereignty in 1,000 days. This vow came about 150 days after the last 1,000-day promise.

In Landry's separatist math class, 1,000 minus 150 still equals 1,000.

• Tommy Schnurmacher is heard weekdays 9 a.m. to noon on CJAD 800 Radio. His e-mail address is tommys@total.net.

Old News

(from the examiner archives)



One Year Ago
February 7, 2002

SPLIT COUNCIL: "The political gap separating Westmount and the City of Montreal became more apparent last Monday evening as city councillor Karin Marks complained about partisanship and poor working conditions at Montreal City Hall. Marks, who represents Westmount in the megacity council and chairs Westmount's borough council, told the council that the intense schedule of Montreal city council meetings, combined with the adversarial politics downtown, have reached absurd proportions. She recounted how even meal times at Montreal City Hall are marred by partisan rivalry. 'Downtown, because everything is done on a party basis, even eating is done on a party basis,' said Marks. There generally had not been any provisions for dinner in previous council meetings downtown. Although, Marks added, 'I think with enough grumbling they decided that they would actually provide sandwiches prior to the 7 o'clock (session).'"

Five Years Ago
February 5, 1998

TRENT STEPS DOWN: "Deciding it was time for someone else to take over, Mayor Peter Trent announced last week that he was stepping down as president of the Conference of Suburban Mayors (CMSM). 'This was a very rewarding period and a very worthwhile personal experience,' Trent said of his term as president. His decision not to run for a third two-year term was made 'after some degree of soul searching. Most mayors spend only one term as president, he told Monday night's council meeting. 'After four years, it's enough.'"

Ten Years Ago
February 4, 1993

COTTAGE CONTROVERSY: "Dennis Kidd finally got his day in court Wednesday last week after more than three years of waiting to seek damages against Geoffrey Chambers and CP Rail for false representation. The former owner of one of Westmount's four railway cottages filed a \$311,000 lawsuit in Quebec Superior Court in 1989. Mr. Kidd said he was deliberately misled and did not know that Mr. Chambers was acting as an agent for CP when he asked to buy Mr. Kidd's house. Mr. Kidd sold the house to him for \$239,000. 'As a development property, it was worth considerably more,' Mr. Kidd said. A neighbouring house with less land, belonging to Helen Weil, was sold to CP around the same time for \$285,000."

Twenty Years Ago
February 3, 1983

OFFICERS PRAISED: "The year 1982 saw Westmount's two-year-old Public Security Unit evolve into a highly mobile group of officers who were the first on the scene in a number of emergencies. The force provided good co-operation with both the police and fire departments, according to its director Sidney Ashford who feels its strength lies in its mobility and keen observation of its officers. The year is best summed up by reporting that the unit's 20 public safety officers and four parking inspectors were quick to react on their own initiative on many occasions, he told The Examiner."

Forty-Five Years Ago
January 31, 1958

MASSEY OPENS ST. GEORGE'S: "School was out Monday for students at St. George's as they joined teachers, parents and visitors to welcome the Right Honorable Vincent Massey, Governor-General of Canada, on his arrival to open officially their new building on The Boulevard. The ceremony of such a visit was considerably lightened for the youngsters by the informal manner in which Mr Massey addressed them and his obvious pleasure upon meeting their representatives."

Space has nothing to hide



George Bowser

Following the disastrous destruction of the space shuttle Columbia, NASA has released a steady stream of information about the possible causes.

This is reassuring for all of us, whether our stake in the space program is personal or simply human. When you see the hopes and dreams of this planet explode before your eyes, you want to know why, and you want to know that it can be prevented from happening again.

There is no point in secrecy here. In the absence of any information, people would have leapt to the conclusion that the accident was the work of terrorists bent on another humiliation of the United States. It is not, and we have been told why: they do not possess the technology to attack a space shuttle, and the security around the machine while on it is on earth is simply too tight.

I think NASA is right to tell us all they know, and here's why.

A man who owned a furniture store once told me a simple rule that he taught all his salesmen. When assessing a new prospect, he told them to remember this: 'if they want to talk to you, you don't want to talk to them.' In his experience, a chatty customer was a time-waster. Serious buyers wanted to look, ask a few direct questions, or discuss a possible purchase with a companion.

I have since put this advice to good use. For example, while visiting a market place in sunny Cancun, I was constantly accosted, even harassed, by vendors. It made the experience unpleasant and tiring. On my next visit I used the salesman's advice, and met each encounter with a blizzard of BS, telling the vendor where I came from, what street, what the weather was like there, how many children I

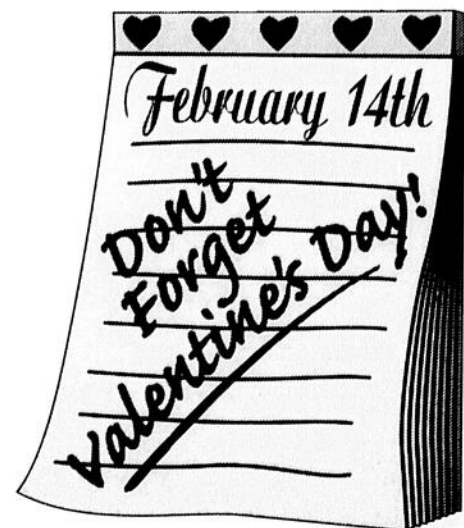
had etc. etc. After a few such encounters, the word seemed to get around and they all avoided me like the plague. If you are able to be as garrulous as this, I recommend the technique.

This may be the purpose behind the openness of NASA with regard to possible causes of the accident. If they give us a stream of information, we won't bother them with irrelevant questions and unrelated concerns, and their people can get on with their necessary work.

NASA asks for people to give them their home videos. They ask for people to search for debris. They tell all, they ask all, and almost one hundred percent of the people want to help. Who knows? Perhaps some citizen will offer an insight, an idea that will help. The space program is our business, after all.

The space program is not about politics, or nation-states, or religions. This is a chance for humanity to create a place where people no longer act out ten thousand-year-old grudges. Not just a physical place in space, but a virtual place in every mind. The space shuttle is real magic for all ages, and unlike stage magic, there are no secrets.

George Bowser is one half of the musical comedy duo Bowser & Blue.



An evening with Frank Zampino

What happened when megacity finance chief explained (nearly) all to the WMA

After several failed attempts to have megacity executive committee chair Frank Zampino address a public meeting in Westmount last fall, a delegation of Westmount Municipal Association members was invited as an alternative to visit Mr. Zampino. They wanted to hear first hand how the party in power viewed the forward progress of this megacity. As is often the case, things didn't turn out exactly as expected. The following is their report on the visit.

The logistics worked fine. When this intrepid gang of de-mergerites found its way on a bitterly cold January night to the basement security door, we were admitted, then turned loose, unescorted, into a seemingly deserted megacity hall to find a meeting room on the fourth floor.

Instead of guard dogs and body

searches, we found pleasant security personnel, good signage, and a room ready to receive us!

Our host arrived with Sammy Forcillo, once a dissident member of the Bourque executive and now director of Zampino's office. Both had arms full of budget files and were well-prepared for the discussion. The meeting lasted a full 90 minutes, during which time Zampino was courteous and candid in responding to our questions. He never looked at his watch, never ducked a query. When he wasn't sure of an answer, he still managed to provide as much background as could be hoped for from a skilled politician.

We left with a very positive impression of the welcome, openness and experience he brings to his task as a former mayor (of St. Leonard, now also demoted to a borough), and his understanding of just how daunting a

challenge Bill 170 has presented to us all.

There is also no reason for the WMA to change its position that the megacity will never function as effectively as most of the small cities that were forcibly annexed.

Our discussion focused on three topics: One— Where we can expect property taxes to trend over the next three years; Two— the Tremblay party position on decentralization as evidenced by current and budgeted spending priorities; and Three— Zampino's view on equitable treatment of new and old boroughs, particularly in relation to historical debt.

The news was not all good.

Taxes: What is not fully understood by many is that our tax bill is the product of the mill rate and the evaluation of our house. We discussed the Bill 170

promise of limiting the tax rate increase to five per cent per year. Or was it the total tax bill to be capped to five per cent? We're not sure which took precedence and, rather importantly, neither was Zampino!

Nevertheless, there are several facts that are relatively certain. Mill rates on the island will be made equal for residential houses over a ten-year period. This means that the Westmount mill rate will increase over time until it reaches the median rate on the island. It could take 10 years, although the megacity might try to reach it sooner.

The Tremblay party position is that the below-median rates will increase equivalent to the reduction in the above-median rates in order to maintain a revenue neutral position at constant evaluation values.

Simple enough? The problem is that Westmount house values are skyrocketing and the last evaluation role increases were moderated by spreading their effect over three years. The new valuation role will come into effect 2004 and will show the result of this last boom in house values.

(Continued on page 9)

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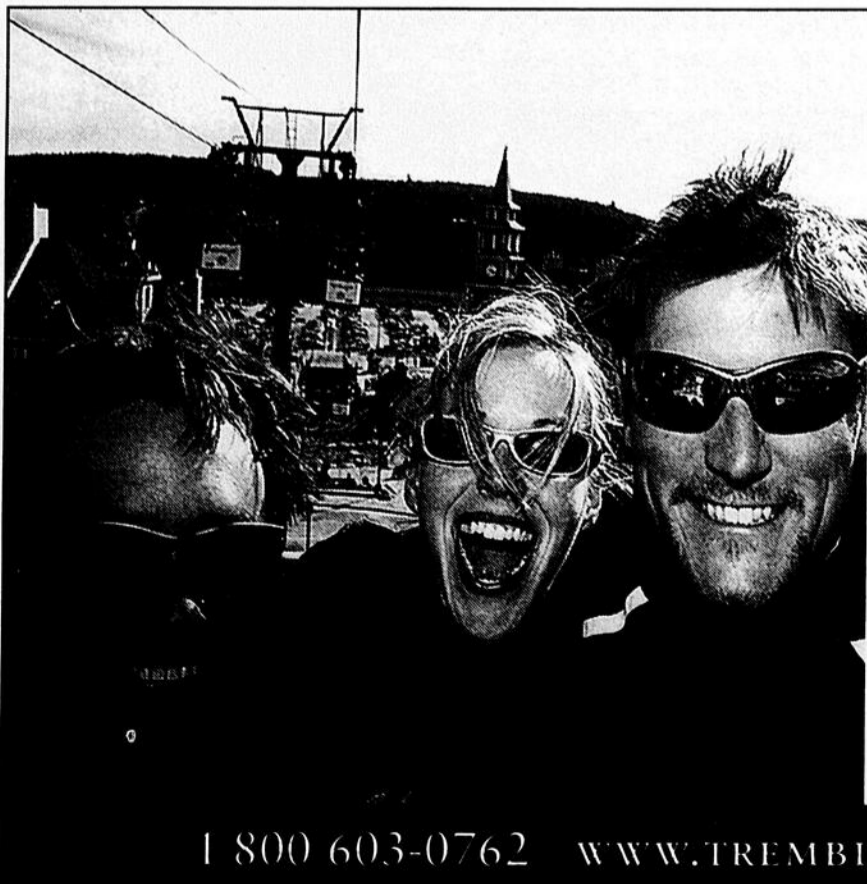
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(Continued from page 8)

There is not a lot of wiggle room for the City of Montreal because the island-wide evaluation system is prescribed in the forced merger law, as is the goal of equal residential mill rates. The net result is potentially five per cent per year increases in mill rates in addition to perhaps 50 per cent or more increases in house valuations. Everyone can do the math!

Decentralization: Almost good news! All, especially Zampino, realize what a long distance they have to go to establish anywhere near as effective management practices in the newly-created boroughs as was the case in St Leonard or Westmount. Zampino's estimate was that it would take the whole mandate of this administration. Our estimate is that it may not be doable ever; it is just too daunting a task!

The Tremblay party claims to be committed to decentralizing—as long as it doesn't cost more. Zampino illustrated the point with the need to distribute staff to the nine new boroughs. When the latter evaluated their needs to deliver engineering services, they came up with requests totalling 100 engineers. Unfortunately, the available pool in the former Montreal was 60. Where was the money for 40 engineers to come from?

The problem is that providing services near to the people by locating them at the borough level may cost more but are definitely more voter friendly. Even Pierre Bourque has joined the fund-the-boroughs bandwagon.

Zampino believed that his caucus would continue to promote decentral-

ization; next year's budget should show an increase in the total expenditures in the boroughs and a transfer of some central expenses.

We will all want to follow this closely. Interestingly, there is at least \$200 million in yearly expenses in this year's central budget that should have been transferred to the nine new boroughs. There is perhaps another \$200 million that might or might not be decentralized to all 27 boroughs. Only when these services are transferred will the budget more accurately reflect the relative costs of the new and old boroughs.

While these effects have been calculated they are not published. We hope the megacity will be more transparent in this regard before the 2004 budget.

We were encouraged that Zampino had not forgotten the promises made in the campaign nor his roots as mayor of an effectively-run city. There is still a big step between recognizing the issue and implementing the solutions.

Equity: A mixed message. Bill 170 specified that the old debts would remain where they had been incurred. Zampino was emphatic that these calculations have been appropriately made and that in fact extra charges to amortize the old debts would be billed to the taxpayers of the newly-created boroughs of the former Montreal.

Great! The devil is in the expectations of these newly-minted boroughs. We have new administrations starting off with a tax burden created by some distant administration for old expenses. Meantime, the populations of these new boroughs have become frustrated by the lack of the improvements

promised by the infamous Bill 170.

All this frustration is bottled up by a tight financial climate even before we settle the labour contracts island wide and find the funds for the underfunded liabilities in the pension plan—a huge \$1.7 billion liability, and growing, by the way. All this spells turmoil and dissonance. It describes the virtually insurmountable challenge created by Bill 170 and our ill-advised provincial government.

This balancing act between new and old boroughs, between the law and what makes sense, and within the political agenda of the party, doesn't make for an efficient resolution of the issues.

Certainly, not everything our intrepid gang found was as we expected. We were all impressed with Zampino's competence and candour. His grasp of some of the difficult problems and potential solutions to them was clear. It was also clear that he has no ready solution to some of the really sticky problems.

We remain unconvinced that integrating this new mega-city is feasible. This damage should be laid at the door of the Parti Quebecois who created this monster despite all the warning signs in Toronto and elsewhere in the world of municipal structures.

We are grateful to Chairman Zampino for his time and in the unlikely event that our politicians do

not allow justice and give us the right to demerge we wish him Solomon's judgment to find the right solutions the first time. If, in fact, they exist at all!

The WMA visitors were president Kathleen Duncan, Peter Hall, Jill Hugessen, Patrick Martin, Douglass McDougall, Derek Walker and Don Wedge. The City of Westmount's last two finance commissioners, David Laidley and Gérard Limoges, contributed to the visit's preparation, but could not attend the meeting.

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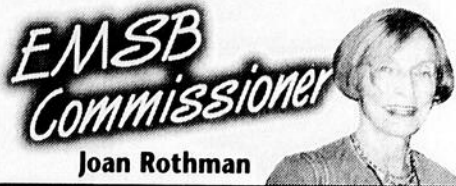
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What is old is new again!



Joan Rothman

Last year, in preparation for the recently announced school board elections on Nov. 16, 2003, the Director General of Elections and the Minister of Education ordered each school board across the province to redraw their electoral map.

To accomplish this reorganization the government stated that based on our student population the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) must now have 23 wards to replace the present 19. The government stipulated in the Act respecting School Elections that

each ward should have between 3,000 and 6,000 registered voters.

The EMSB commissioners added to these government guidelines that each ward should contain at least one school. In addition, the wards should reflect the neighbourhoods that make up the island of Montreal. The EMSB territory includes St. Leonard, Town of Mount Royal, Rivière des Prairies, Montreal West and Point St. Charles, to name a few of these communities. Woe to those who approve an electoral map that divides a community which sees itself as a whole.

To complicate matters even further, the government sternly told the school boards not to use the borders of former municipalities as outlines for next November's electoral wards.

Senior administrators of the EMSB, after consultation with the Council of Commissioners, the population of the school board territory and the

Commission de la représentation électorale produced a final version of the map which was approved by Council in November, 2002.

At this time as your school commissioner I represent Ward 8 of the EMSB. This ward has within its boundaries two high schools, six elementary schools, one Outreach school for drop-ins, three Social Affairs schools and one adult centre for young and older adults seeking academic qualifications. Three of these schools are in Westmount, having been built by the Westmount School Board before it was legally erased in 1973. I was part of this history as the last chairman of that small municipal board.

On Nov. 16, 2003 Westmounters, (I hope), will be voting for a school commissioner to represent the voters, the taxpayers, the parents and the students of new Ward 7. Ward 7 has three schools within its boundaries: Westmount Park School, Roslyn School and Westmount High School. We have come full circle!

The borders of Ward 7 are not exactly those of the former City of

Westmount. The western border is the Decarie Autoroute, the north is Côte St. Luc Road and Ridgewood, the eastern boundary cuts out the southeastern corner of Westmount. This part of Westmount moves to Ward 6. The southern border is the Ville Marie expressway. Thus, you can see that over 80 per cent of the borough of Westmount is included within the boundaries of this new ward.

Ward 7 has 5,892 registered voters and that is the maximum allowed by the government. You the citizens registered in such numbers in 1998 to vote for the first English school boards that in this area we have a very high number of voters within a small territory.

For this coming election please hold onto your belief that the education of every child in Quebec is important and that an English educational system must continue. A democracy relies on informed and involved citizens. Thank you for being such citizens.

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



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Thieves crack Dawson safe

Police at Station 12 are investigating a breaking and entering incident at Dawson College last month, during which thieves managed to crack open a safe.

On Jan. 21 between 7:30 p.m. and 6 a.m. the following day, burglars used a screwdriver to force open the door of the college's cafeteria on the third

floor. A crowbar was then used to break into the safe.

A security guard was on duty at the time. "A good amount was taken," said Michèle Boily, of Station 12, declining to elaborate.

Police have no suspects and there were no witnesses.

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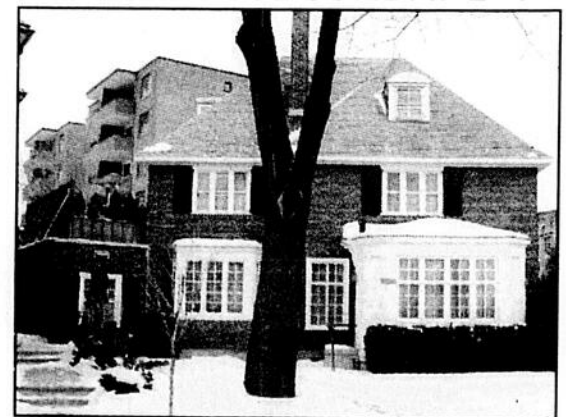
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Family cruise highlights winter carnival

Martin C. Barry

Get out the swim wear and tanning oil. The temperature will be rising at Victoria Hall tomorrow evening for a Family Carnival Cruise highlighting this year's Westmount winter carnival.

"We're going to be heating up the concert hall to give it the southern feel," said Claude Danis of the Sports & Recreation Department, a member of the committee which organized the simulated cruise.

During the evening, there will be a dinner, dancing and games on the inaugural voyage of a vessel that has been christened The Westmount of the Seas.

The cruise party will be geared to families, although there will also be a cash bar for adults, said Dave Lapointe, also with the borough's Sports & Recreation Department. Tickets, which must be purchased by Thursday Feb. 6 and are available at Victoria Hall, the arena and the library, are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 12 and under.

Danis said the idea for the party originated during discussions about an appropriate event that would serve as the winter carnival's focal point.

"We wanted to do some kind of family event, and when we said carnival we thought of Carnival cruises and how nice it would be to just go out in the winter months in beachwear and just enjoy a family evening

together."

Danis said the recommended attire for the evening will be beachwear. There will be a prize for best Hawaiian shirt. Changing rooms will be provided for those unaccustomed to Montreal during the winter while dressed lightly. "I'm assuming they're not going to show up in their shorts," she said.

While admitting that the ambience in Victoria Hall tends to be sombre, Danis added, "It can be a little dark, but it all depends on how we want our ambience."

Victoria Hall's main concert hall will be decorated like a cruise ship with a Lido deck. An adjacent room will serve as an activities centre for the children. Danis said the decor will include simulated portholes and a gangplank which 'passengers' will walk over to board the cruise.

There will also be a disc jockey playing salsa, meringue and other types of music, and two animators to lead the passengers through many of the activities typical of a cruise on an ocean liner.

Other activities during the carnival include:

On Thursday Feb. 6 from 12:30 to 3 p.m., Contactivity Centre opens the three-day event with a luncheon for seniors. Tickets are available at Contactivity Centre for \$6.50 per person. That evening from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., there will be family tobogganing at King George Park, followed by a bonfire, skating, and free hot choco-

late. Helmets are recommended.

Saturday from 10 a.m. until 9:45 in the evening, there will be a wide range of activities, beginning with broomball and ball hockey tournaments for kids at the arena, and outdoor skating, sleigh rides and a sugar shack with maple taffy in Westmount Park most of the day.

A puck shooting contest will take place at the arena from noon to 12:30

p.m. Also at the arena, there will be free hot dogs and general skating from noon to 1:30 p.m., and races and games on ice until 2:30 p.m., followed by an evening of family skiing in Bromont from 4 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Tickets for the skiing trip (including bus and lift ticket) are available at the Sports & Recreation office in the arena for \$25 and must be purchased by Feb. 6.

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Kids who are well prepared for summer camp will have a much better time.

The decision has been made: your children are heading to camp this summer. Whether or not they have a great time will largely depend on how ready they are. Here are a few things to keep in mind if this will be their first time at summer camp.

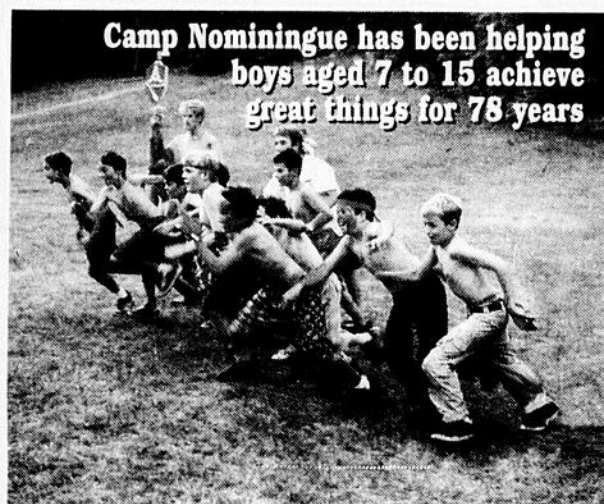
Choosing the right summer camp starts with research. Most camps have a Web site or freely distribute material on their facilities and programs. It's not a bad idea to get your children involved in the selection; after all, they are the ones who will be going there, so if none of the activities interest them, it won't be much of a vacation.

Next, enrolment. It's important to carefully read, understand and agree

with all the terms and conditions. You also need to tell the camp directors if your children have health, mobility, allergy or vertigo problems, if they must take certain medication, or if they are terrified of water, bogeymen or anything else that could turn a fun time into a nightmare. Giving the camp directors the name of your children's doctor is another good idea.

In the weeks leading up to camp, buy whatever items your kids will need. Can you imagine summer camp at a lake without a swim suit? If the camp provides a list of required items, be sure to respect it; these items are on the list for a reason. Let your kids pack their own bags—under your close supervision, naturally. Knowing how to pack for a trip is a great life skill to have.

In the days leading up to camp, it's natural for kids to experience a bit of nervousness. Remind them that they will make lots of friends and have a ton of fun.



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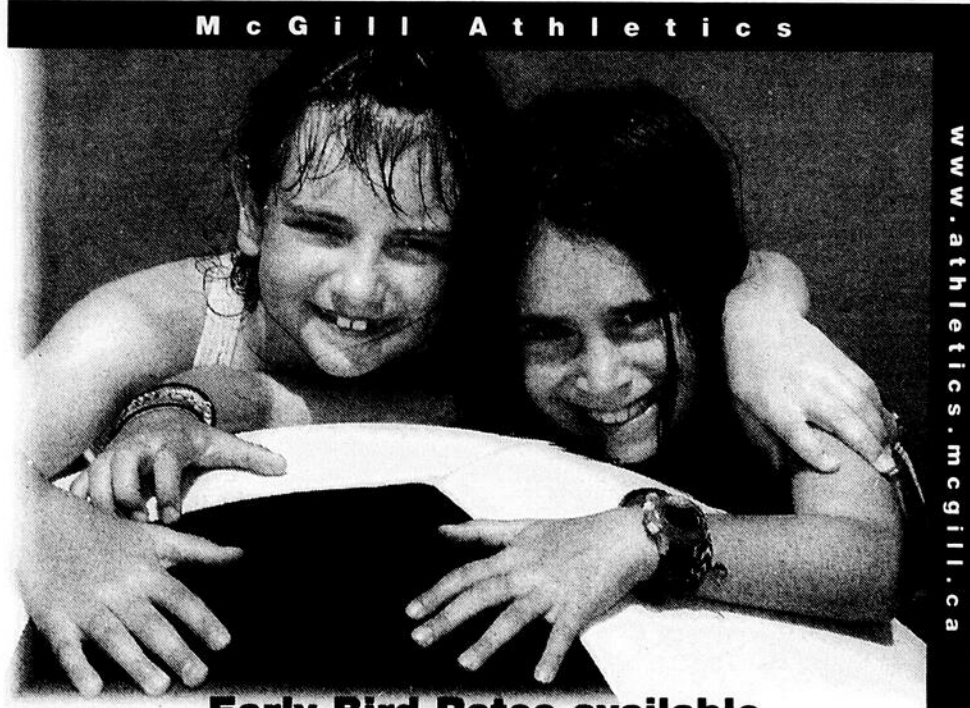
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Would your kids enjoy summer camp?

Some parents wonder if they should send their kids to summer camp. Will they have fun? Will they be safe? Will they survive without my Wednesday night meatloaf?

In fact, summer camp is a special treat for kids. There are no parents, no homework and no responsibilities. But that doesn't mean one summer camp is just as good as the next. For kids to get the most of out the experience, it has to satisfy their needs, whether it is discovering new things, improving their talents, or simply having fun. It should also give kids a chance to be alone with their thoughts for a while.

Many summer camps give kids a chance to push their abilities, to excel and to measure up to others, whether it be through cultural or sporting activities. Through these challenges, children learn more about their own strengths and weaknesses and learn how to be at peace with both. Naturally, these fun and stimulating challenges must be provided in a safe and comfortable environment.

Kids who enjoy their time at summer camp will talk about their experiences at length once they are back at home. It's normal for them to go on about their adventures, how great the counselors were and how they can't wait to go back next year.

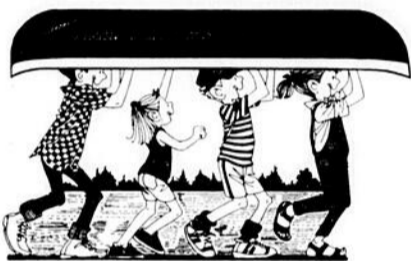
Have you consulted with your children?

Winter is slowly coming to an end and you're already starting to consider summer camps for your children. But before you make a final decision, ask them what they think!

Summer camp is a time for kids to have fun, so the camp you choose should meet their needs, not yours. You might have a summer science camp in mind, but maybe your kids are thinking more along the lines of swimming, canoeing and singing around a campfire.

If your children don't want to go to a particular summer camp, do you really think they will have a good time? Throughout the year they have to handle the responsibilities of school, extracurricular activities and homework; summer camp is a special time for them to let loose and just have fun. So ask your kids what they want to do!

Make a list based on what your kids tell you and start researching summer camps that offer these kinds of activities. There are provincial associations and websites that can help provide you with an appropriate list of camps. Talking to parents who have already sent their children to the particular camp you are considering is a great way to ensure that your children's safety and comfort will be a priority. That way, your kids will have fun and you'll have peace of mind.



Summer camp is a time to have fun, make friends and learn new things.

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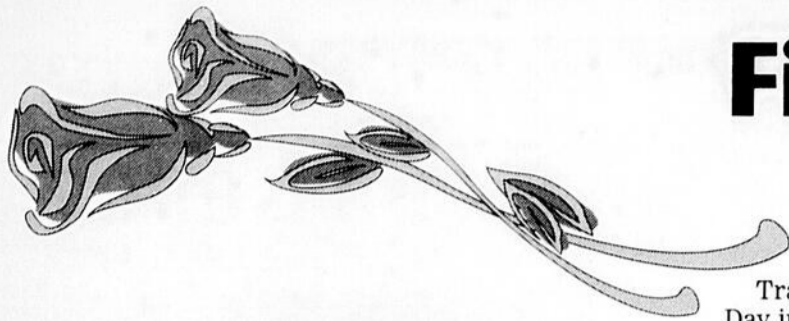
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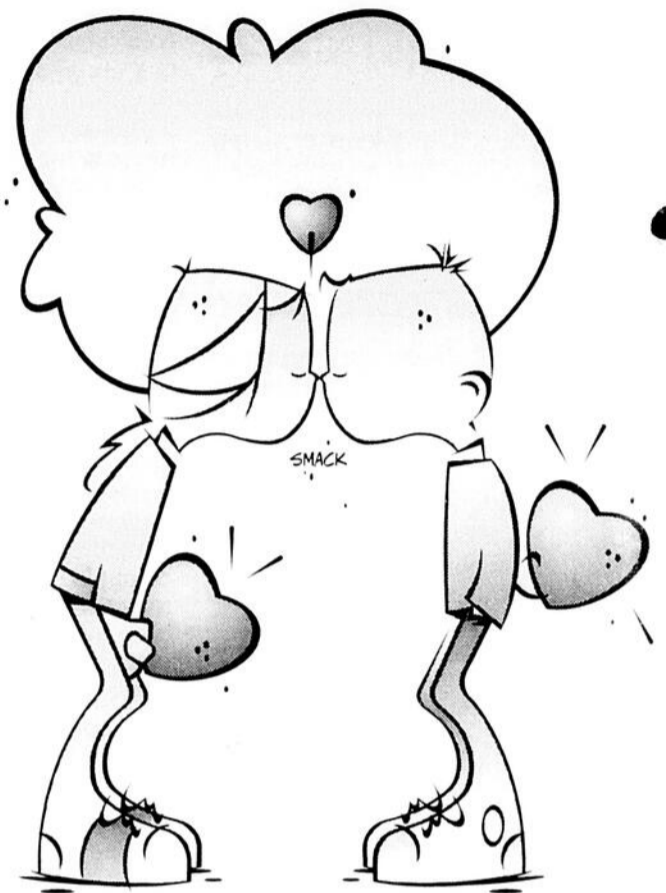
Finding the words

to express your love

Tradition has it that on St. Valentine's Day in medieval times, lovers created cards and wrote declarations of love that they would anonymously send to those they loved. And while most traditions tend to change over the centuries, this one has not. Unfortunately, not all of us have the poetic skills of Cyrano De Bergerac. Thankfully, however, there are little tricks that can help.

For some people, the words "I love you" can seem a bit clichéd and uninspired. And yet, who does not enjoy hearing them! If you can't find other words to express your feelings, why not find other ways of saying, "I love you." You can write it hundreds of times on paper used to wrap a gift, or write these words on small pieces of paper and scatter them throughout the house, such as in your beloved's favourite coffee mug and in his or her coat pocket. You can even look up on the Internet how to say, "I love you" in a variety of languages; it will certainly add a bit of exotic romance to your message!

You can also use quotes or poems written by famous authors, just don't try to pass them off as your own. Deception is not a suitable declaration of love! And if you're really stuck for time and inspiration, your local card store has a wide selection of St. Valentine's Day cards; there's surely one that has a message that reflects how you feel. And if you are a person of few words, love can also be expressed silently with candles, soft music and a romantic meal.





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Celebrate St. Valentine's Day with the family!

Since ancient times, St. Valentine's Day has been the celebration of lovers. The exchange of gifts, declarations of love and evenings of romance are staples of this amorous annual event. But for many people, particularly children, St. Valentine's Day has a much larger meaning of friendship and love in general. So why not celebrate the love that your entire family shares this St. Valentine's Day?

friendship on St. Valentine's Day has become a long-standing tradition in many schools and homes. It's a great occasion for children to learn how to express their feelings for others, and preparing these cards is a fun and enriching experience. What's more, it is extremely validating for children to receive a valentine because it lets them know that they are appreciated. Exchanging valentines among the members of your

family can be a touching activity—not just for children, but for parents, too.

You can also come up with original activities for your family to enjoy, such as creating St. Valentine's Day decorations, making heart-shaped cookies and cakes, organizing a treasure hunt or playing games with a St. Valentine's Day theme. To enjoy this special day with your family, all it takes is a little bit of imagination and a lot of love.

Exchanging messages of



The story of Cupid

Cupid is a mythical creature that has long been associated with the celebration of St. Valentine's Day. Depicted as a young winged child armed with a bow and arrow, Cupid has the power to fill people's hearts with love. But where does Cupid come from?

Cupid is none other than the beautiful young son of Venus, the Roman goddess of love. You may recognize the similarity of their relationship to that of Eros and Aphrodite from Greek mythology. Legend has it that Venus was jealous of a beautiful young mortal girl named Psyche (which signifies "soul"), so she ordered her son to make her rival fall in love with the most ugly and nasty man on earth. But Cupid fell head over heels in love with the young mortal and disobeyed his mother. Instead, he took Psyche to a



Cupid's arrow can pierce your heart with love when you least expect it!

secret palace where he came to court her each night, on the single condition that she could never see his face. Overcome with curiosity, Psyche lit a lamp one night as her lover slept. He immediately abandoned her to her fate as Venus' slave. Unable to deny his love for the beautiful Psyche, Cupid eventually returned to claim her as his wife. Jupiter, the king of gods, even granted Psyche immortality.

Let's hope that this year Cupid will remember all of us who are still looking for love and will pierce our hearts with his arrows of desire!

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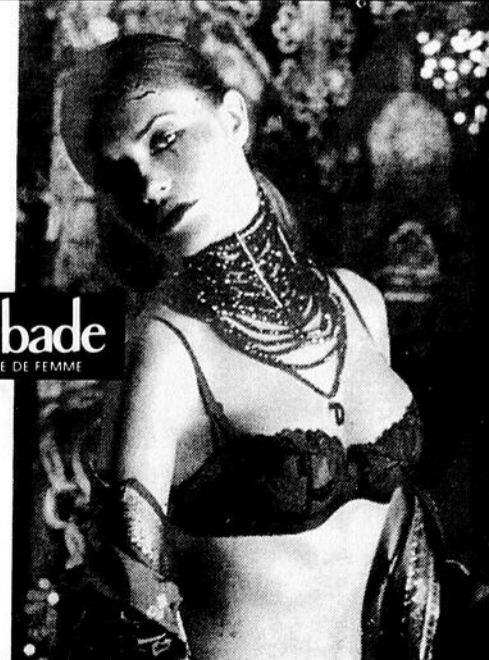
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Teenage students hit the airwaves

Marilynn Vanderstay

While CHOM FM was on the air last Monday, there were five students sitting in the control room—watching and listening to the pros.

They were preparing for their work as deejays and producers on Westmount High School's in-house radio station, which went on the air daily last week.

Disc jockeys Ahmed Hossain, Noah Weigensberg, Chris Hagemeyer and Noah Weigensberg and producers Aaron Kaufman and Hugh Nimmons, accompanied by WHS teacher Ralph D'Orio, one of the founders of the WHS

station, watched attentively as the CHOM hosts Terry di Monte and Ted Bird went through their routine from 8 to 10 a.m.

The students were the guests of WHS grad and CJAD general manager Rob Braide to give them the opportunity to see an actual radio station production in progress. A tour of the facilities at the Fort Street station included a meeting with movie reviewer John Moore and on-air personality Danger Boy.

Weisenberg thought it was beneficial to see a professional disc jockey in action. "It was good to see how Terry di Monte kept the music filed, how he had it set up and how well prepared he is in

advance," he said.

It gave Weisenberg, who usually works on the fly, something to think about. "I would like to go back sometime to watch a live interview and to perhaps be involved in the actual show."

Fifteen-year-old producer Hugh Nimmons appreciated the whole technical equipment thing. "It was interesting to learn, for instance, the strengths of MPD computerized players versus CD players," he said, adding that he realized he has a lot more learning work to do.

WHS Radio is the idea of Special Education Technician C.J. Turner, who made the suggestion last fall to Principal Claude Dansereau. When he overheard some kids talking about it, D'Orio, who is also a musician, asked Turner if he needed a hand. The two started planning and auditioning interested students.

"The students had to make audition cassettes on which they pretended they were announcing a song. We looked for how comfortable they were doing the tape and how they sounded," said D'Orio.

While they were working out the details, a friend of the school contacted

Braide to let him know about the idea. Braide contacted the school and after a brainstorming meeting assisted the school with set up and by donating equipment.

"It was a thrill for me to be involved in this project after my years at Westmount High," said Braide. "Especially since it is a first for the school. It is wonderful that the kids will be able to enjoy the station both musically, which is the most important, and to have an opportunity to look at career possibilities."

Radio WHS was first launched at the annual WHS family Christmas breakfast on Dec. 20, where Weigensberg spun discs and chatted with the students from his booth in the cafeteria. The program was broadcast in the cafeteria and in the student lounge.

This week Radio WHS got off the ground daily with broadcasts every morning from 7:30 to 8:05 and at lunch from 12:50 to 1:45 p.m. The deejays play music, make school announcements and just chat.

Potential advertisers in the community can contact D'Orio or Turner at WHS at 933-2701.

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A cultural exchange at Westmount High



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Imagine this scene—a small community of 400 individuals, and their solitary school of 44 students from Kindergarten to grade 11. There are no malls, no theatres, no highways, one general store and a gas station. Where is such a place and could you live there?

Twenty-three grade eight students, part of an enriched academic program at Westmount High, will be fortunate to live an experience one may only have the opportunity to read about. From April 27 to May 4, they will be guests of the Agnes L. Mathers School of Sandspit in the Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, as part of a special youth exchange. How? Here's the fascinating story:

With the hope of two teachers who adamantly believed in learning by experiencing, this first time project at Westmount High became a reality. They had contacted the YMCA Youth Exchanges Canada for an opportunity to travel with their students to a remote Canadian landscape. If successful, the school would then build upon this concept and develop it further each consecutive year.

"We wanted the students to learn about different cultures, and geographical areas in Canada," said Angela Corinthios, one of the teachers orchestrating this project. "We thought about the Yukon area, or somewhere in the North that was completely different, so we were delighted when this place was chosen for us."

So far, this venture and its intensive preparation have crossed over into many subjects including art, history, geography, and math.

"We've designed maps, and a book on the Mohawk territory where everyone was responsible for a chapter. Models were also built to exemplify any outstanding features."

These two teachers—Corinthios and Brenda Bourdeau—were confident that a project of this nature would instill in their students a sense of leadership, responsibility and appreciation of others. They knew about YMCA Youth Exchanges Canada, which is connected to the Department of Canadian Heritage, where students from schools in Canada are paired with others. This organization promotes this cross-cultural awareness and a sense of belonging among Canadian youth ages 12 to 18. Due to the enormity of the cost, the Government of Canada through Exchanges Canada funds the airfare.

Exchanges are sponsored between two groups of equal size in very diverse communities. Each group hosts the other, provides an itinerary of events and covers all entertainment and living costs by raising money. The kids visit each other for approximately a week and share their lives through activities and their home environments.

"We opened this concept up to students going into the enriched grade eight and we outlined the commit-

ment that they were to be in," said Bourdeau. "First, the kids had to apply, but only if they were seriously interested. In August 2002, we interviewed them and warned them about weekly meetings after school, and the tremendous amount of hours that would be necessary for fund raising."

An enthusiastic student response ensued.

Thrilled with their twinning, Westmount High was paired with a school in Sandspit, one of the archipelago of more than 150 Queen Charlotte Islands. This area has gained its reputation for outstanding natural beauty and as a remarkable First Nations culture.

Car washes, pizza sales, bake sales, bottle drives, have kept the students busy gathering the means to host their twin school and would welcome any additional help from the public to defray some of the costs. With so much to arrange and due to the fact that this is a first time project, the planning is endless.

Besides the direct organizational plans, these Westmount High students spent a few days at a Leadership/Peer Mediation workshop from Nov. 28 to Dec. 1 in Massawippi.

"There the kids also came up with the idea of holiday baskets for two anonymously adopted families through their school community because they wanted to focus on others as part of their appreciation about being part of this exchange," said the English Montreal School Board's spiritual animator Gladys Batten-Baldwin. "Being responsible for these visitors will be a wonderful experience in learning how to deal with others and their needs. The workshop gave expression to the furthering of their expectations and how to deal with them." Although Gladys is available only one day a week at Westmount, she has been fully supportive and active in the preparation for this exchange.

Arriving in Montreal on Feb. 8, the Sandspit students will encounter their first glimpse of a big city. For most of them, it will be a real eye-opener, as their life has been sheltered from all the symbols of any large metropolis. Many of the students have never ventured out of their logging community except perhaps to take the ferry to school.

"We've been busy matching the kids up, and it can be very tricky as allergies, ages and other factors must be taken into consideration," said Bourdeau. "We're not quite finished, and Angela and I will be billeting some kids as well."

E-mails, letters, the communication between the two schools are ongoing to ensure all the proper details. The Montreal plan for their forthcoming visitors is replete with excitement. Arriving at Dorval airport, all students will meet and escort their guests home to get adjusted. From Sunday until their departure time on the 16th, the students will be participating in winter activities at Parc Jean Drapeau on Île Ste Helene, sugaring off, a carnival day, an Old Montreal tour, a day trip to Quebec City, a visit to Mount Royal, movies, shopping and hopefully even a hockey game. Completing the itinerary is an additional list of free time activities so that the visiting children will experience the flavor of Montreal.

Bourdeau and Corinthios along with some parents and the students have been focusing on some of their qualms concerning this exchange, such as the kids getting along, the strangeness of the Montreal environment (the visitors have never seen snow), the matching of children to host family, homesickness, the long plane ride, plus other concerns. One of the students arriving is visually impaired but she will be accompanied by a 'shadow.' When she resides at the host's home, a friend, not the 'shadow,' will remain with her.

"We're a little nervous about meeting each other, and being able to look after our guests so that they'll enjoy the trip," said both Hannah and Suh Jung, two students who are part of this exchange.

Commendable appreciation for this wonderful opportunity should be bestowed on leaders Angela Corinthios and Brenda Bourdeau for their exemplary dedication. They saw

beyond the textbook to the tangible realities of real life experimentation. Together they gained an occasion to demonstrate to their students about another people, another culture and another way of life.

Sequels depicting the outcome and reactions of the Montreal visit and the Westmount High students, spring venture to Sandspit will follow in Kidzness. Any donations would be welcomed and appreciated towards their future trip to the Charlotte Islands in April.

To everyone participating, good luck and we'll be waiting to hear all about it.

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Bulletin Board

Deadline for submissions is Monday at noon preceding the next publication. No exceptions. Submissions may be edited or omitted for space.

Friday, Feb. 7

'Ballots and Bombs: Prospects for Arab-Israeli Peace' with guest speaker Mark Rosenblum, founder and political director of American Friends of 'Peace Now,' at 8:15 p.m. Shabbat services at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, 4100 Sherbrooke W. Info: 937-3575.

Saturday, Feb. 8

WARM Writers presents a talk by Me Barbara Noetzel, lawyer and columnist, 'Family and Estate Law: Background Material for All Writers' at 2 p.m. in the Westmount Library, 4574 Sherbrooke W. WARM members free, visitors \$5. Info: (450) 468-5410.

Sunday, Feb. 9

The Westmount Dog Owners Association and the SPCA Montérégie are holding an adoption clinic for dogs and cats from noon to 4 p.m. at Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke. Come and meet a potential new family member. Info: 934-0474 or www.spcamontérégie.com.

Monday, Feb. 10

The Westmount Quilters Guild holds its first regular evening meetin at 7:15 p.m. at Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke West. Theme of the month is 'Piecing.' This newly formed quilting group welcomes all quilters and quilt lovers to come and join them. Regular evening meetings will be held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month throughout the year, excepting July

and August. Annual membership dues are \$5. Info: 989-7939.

Tuesday, Feb. 11

The Westmount Horticultural Society meets in the Westmount Room of the Westmount Public Library, 4574 Sherbrooke W. at 7 p.m. Guest speaker is Gwynne Basen, filmmaker and a director of Seeds of Diversity and Eco-initiative. She will discuss seed saving, both national and local endeavours. All are welcome. Annual membership is \$15, guest fee is \$5. Info: (514) 487 2245 or w_hs@hotmail.com.

Entre Nous senior group at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, 395 Elm Ave., presents Stuart Nulman, who will speak about his latest book 'Beyond the Mountain.' Brown bag lunch at noon, program at 1 p.m. \$1 admission. Info: 937-3575.

Thursday, Feb. 13

Montreal Children's Library holds its annual general meeting at 10:30 a.m. in the Atwater Library, 1200 Atwater. Speaker: Margaret Blair of Interact Educational Support Services. Followed by free lunch. Info: 931-2304.

Saturday, Feb. 15

Bon-Bon Bonanza: a fun-filled afternoon of stories and songs with children's entertainer Mickey Farkas and friends at 2 p.m. in the Gallery at Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke. Refreshments will be served. Places are

limited, so please sign up at the children's desk at the Westmount Public Library or call 989-5229

Tuesday, Feb. 18

The Westmount Public Library's English Book Club meets in the Westmount Room at 7 p.m. to discuss the novel 'White Orleander' by Janet Fitch. 4574 Sherbrooke W. All welcome. Info: Donna Lach at 989-5386.

Tuesday, Feb. 25

Entre Nous senior group at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, 395 Elm Ave., presents Anat Uzzan and Aliyah Shlich, who will speak on 'The Jewish People and the Land of Israel: An Ongoing Relationship.' Brown bag lunch at noon, program at 1 p.m. \$1 admission. Info: 937-3575.

Ongoing

Evidence of Rituals, a joint exhibition by Frankie Miller and Gabrielle Pilot continues in the Gallery at

Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke W., through Feb. 12. Info: 989-5226.

Persons raised in Dysfunctional or Alcoholic homes, calling themselves Adult Children, or ACA's and ACOA's, and using the 12 Steps Way of Life, meet every Tuesday night at 8 p.m. at Westmount Baptist Church, 4755 Sherbrooke St. W., corner Roslyn. Sherbrooke bus #24 from Villa Maria Metro. Visitors are invited and newcomers will be introduced to ACA. Tel.: Jacques at (514) 721-6777.

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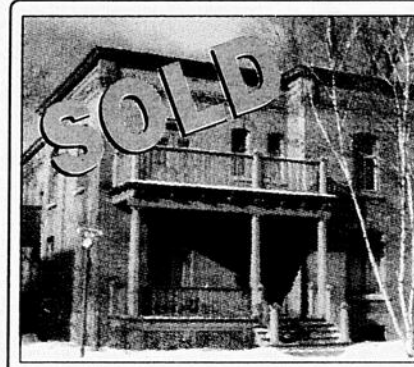
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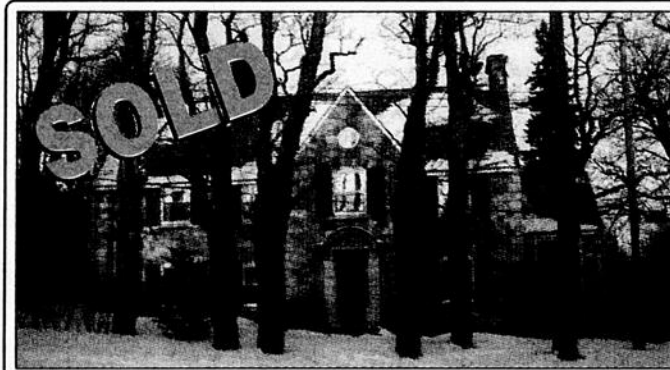
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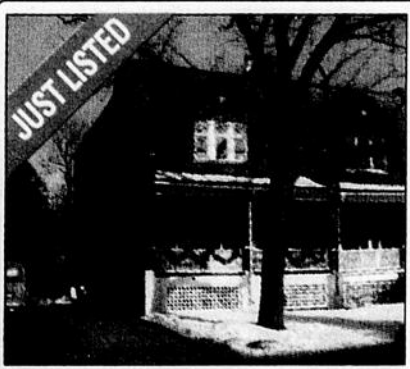
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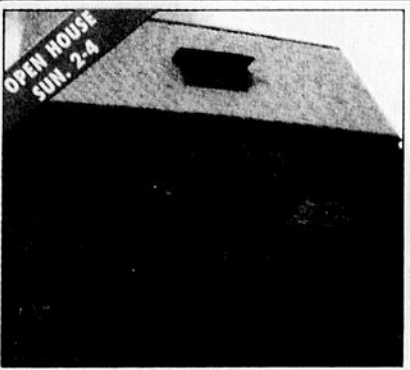
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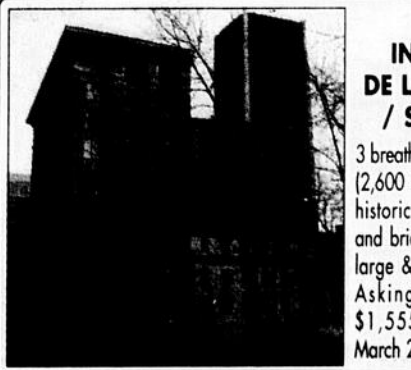
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