

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount.

May 16, 2007 – Vol. 1 No. 1

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Building projects push limits, heading for a busy year

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

With the construction and renovation season shifting into high gear, Westmount could be headed for another trend-setting year.

In the first quarter alone, the value and number of building permits issued for alterations to one- and two-family dwellings are already running well ahead of those for the same period last year. And building activity in 2006 was higher than at any other time in the last five years.

The renovation boom can largely be attributed to the aging of homes and the desire of residents to increase living space, explains Joanne Poirier, urban planning director.

“With the building envelope maximized, people are starting to look for new ways to make their houses grow from the inside,” she said.

These are reflected in requests to recover space in attics and under sloping roofs, to build roof-top decks, and even excavate deeper to create sub-basements and multi-car garages.

It's this trend toward so-called monster houses – pushing upward and underground – that is raising new challenges for Westmount's city planners con-

continued on page 2



This imposing home being built by Paul Nassar directly east of the lookout can be seen from Sherbrooke St. Following the curvature of the road, it occupies the former site of 22 Summit Circle and an adjacent property.

Freak peat moss fire damages apartment

In a rare occurrence, all the right conditions combined May 5 to ignite peat moss in a balcony planter causing damage estimated at \$4,000 to both the exterior and interior of an apartment at 3033 Sherbrooke St. (near Vignal).

Fire officials said the heat was so intense that it broke the window, allowing smoke to enter the dwelling on the fifth floor.

No injuries were reported.

Caused by spontaneous combustion, the fire was quickly doused by firefighters using a portable extinguisher from the building.

Such an unusual fire is difficult to prevent, says local Fire Prevention Chief Daniel de Vries.

“You need the right combination of perfect humidity, compaction at a certain temperature and strong sun.” The wind also played a factor.

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How much larger, higher – even deeper?

BUILDING PROJECTS, *continued from page 1*

cerned about the impact on neighbours, the environment and quality of life.

How far down is too far? Where is the limit? How does this affect drainage and infrastructure?

Claiming livable space in attics brings the addition of dormer windows. With the creation of roof decks comes the need for

proper access by inside stairs with a rooftop enclosure as well as storage rooms for cushions and other furnishings.

To date, the city's approval of such rooftop additions generally hinges on the roof being sufficiently lower than neighbouring ones, usually conditioned by the slope of the land.

"These are all areas being looked at by the Planning Advisory Commission," Poirier explained. "We're proud of our mountain, and we have a responsibility to preserve its integrity."

When permit requests are made to maximize the existing building envelope, they often require lengthy and very careful attention because "there's no room for error."

In keeping with the

growing building activity, the Urban Planning Department has recently created and filled three new positions in newly expanded quarters at city hall.

"This is all part of an effort to improve customer service," she said.

Figures for the first quarter of 2007 show the number of permits up 17 percent over last year, representing an increase in the estimated value of proposed work of 23 percent.

With many Westmount houses now nearing the 100-year mark, many features, such as slate roofs, have reached the end of their lifespan.

Many permits are also being issued for the replacement of windows and doors.

A few interesting building projects carrying over from last year, or receiving starter permits, include the house on the site of the former 22 Summit Circle. Currently known as number 20, this is a large home immediately east of the lookout that is also being built on a vacant adjacent lot.

The heritage Bronfman house at 15 Belvedere Rd. is also undergoing extensive renovations, a green project that received city council approval this year.



Joanne Poirier



At the newly renovated permits counter in city hall are, from left: technicians Sylvia Gadzinski and Kathleen Durity, agent Guillaume Longchamps and clerk Mark Bibeau.

2006 activity tops \$37 million

Construction in Westmount last year reached a level unprecedented in at least five years.

In total, 636 work permits for all categories of buildings were issued by the city at an estimated construction value of more than \$37.1 million.

The total compares with \$30.2 million the previous year and does not take into account minor renovation work not requiring a permit.

The 30 per cent increase does, however,

reflect a growing trend toward increased building starts and home extensions that seems to be continuing into 2007.

More than half of the total 2006 construction values (\$16.5 million) pertained to the alteration and repair of one- and two-family dwellings (private homes or duplexes).

Extensions and kitchen work figured prominently among the work.

The building of four new homes accounted for another \$7.1 million. Some of these remain under construction.

Highlights of institutional projects undertaken last year include work at the new Marianopolis College site on Westmount Ave. (\$6.1 million), and alterations to the gymnasium and kitchen at Selwyn House School (\$750,000-plus).

Construction of a theatre at Dawson College also was estimated at close to \$1.2 million.

Repairs following fire damage at the condominium building at 4500 de Maisonneuve Blvd. accounted for \$800,000 and for \$82,000 at a home at 501-503 Roslyn.



Work continues on this new semi-detached house immediately east of 536 Côte St. Antoine.

What's Going On?

The following work permits were approved by Westmount city council at its last meeting April 23:

531 Claremont: to extend deck in the side yard;

167 Hillside: to build a sunroom and terrace on the roof, and create roof access;

4175 St. Catherine/1201 Greene: to erect sign for Joallier David Plotnick;

327 Redfern: landscaping to include pond, pergola and terrace;

125 Clandeboye: to enlarge two window openings and replace some windows;

10 Rosemount: to replace windows on 5th and 6th floors;

358 Kitchener: to renovate ground floor balcony and enclose one on second floor;

470-472 Argyle: to renovate sunroom adding new wood fascia and replacing windows and doors;

436 Wood: to replace some windows;

510 Prince Albert: to replace storm windows;

8 Willow: to build a rear deck;

29 Thornhill: to replace storm windows;

324 Elm: to replace some windows;

455 Strathcona: to redo front walk and create secondary walk linked to parking area;

26 Anwoth: to replace some windows and create new openings for side and rear doors;

638 Victoria: to replace windows and rear kitchen door;

3197 The Boulevard: to replace railings on upper and lower terraces;

1304 Greene: to restore façade by replacing front doors and some windows, and upgrading woodwork;

392 Grosvenor: to replace basement windows and doors;

4636-4638-4640 St. Catherine: to replace windows and some doors;

707 Grosvenor: to replace some windows.

The following were also approved at a special meeting of city council on May 8:

Vacant lot on Edgehill: to cut some trees;

42 Forden Cres.: additions at rear and west;

4463 Montrose: to renovate and extend garage, block and/or replace several windows;

53 Sunnyside: window replacement plus landscaping to include new retaining walls, stairs and fence;

369 Redfern: mudroom extension at rear and replacement of some front windows;

370 Kensington: alterations including replacement of some windows and doors, demolition of chimney and shed, addition of second garage and deck;

54 de Lavigne: to build a rear addition;

Alexis Nihon Plaza (Canadian Tire): replacement of new street window and doors;

105 Upper Bellevue: to erect a chain link fence enclosed within a hedge;

50 Summit Circle: alterations to rear façade, replacement of some windows and doors;

655 Roslyn: front landscaping to include new garden beds, landing and steps;

473 Argyle: to replace front door;

28 Thornhill: to replace some windows;

652 Roslyn: to replace some windows and doors;

126 Abbott: to landscape, including relocation of back fence, and replacement of hard surface with grass, and balcony steps and patio;

531 Grosvenor: to enlarge back balcony, build new retaining walls, a new fence and patio;

723 Upper Roslyn: to replace some doors;

448 Lansdowne: to block an opening on rear façade and recreate new door opening, and replace some doors;

11 Burton: to replace some windows and doors;

400 Côte St. Antoine: to replace some windows;

83 Holton: to replace some doors;

559 Lansdowne: to replace some windows;

1 Church Hill: to replace some windows as well as garage roof;

476 Mountain: to replace some windows.

Best wishes to the WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Brian O’N. Gallery, mayor, 1983-87

Peter F. Trent, mayor, 1991-2001

Sally Aitken, former city councillor, and Allan Aitken, St. Catherine St.

Peter Duffield, former city councillor, Clandeboye Ave.

John Shingler, former city councillor, Burton Ave.

Rhoda Vineberg, former city councillor, and Robert Vineberg, Forden Crescent

Marty Algire and Lindsay Holmgren,
Burton Ave.

Stewart Arbuckle, Metcalfe Ave.

Phil Aspler, Victoria Ave.

Joe and Marilyn Blankfort,
Lansdowne Ave.

Herb Bercovitz, Sherbrooke St.

John Bridgman, Bruce Ave.

Thane Calder, Argyle Ave.

Thea and Bill Calder, Clarke Ave.

Dr. Charles Casey, Sherbrooke St.

Chloé Chapoulie, Pom’Canelle,
Sherbrooke St.

Jake Chadwick and Mary Brierley,
Roslyn Ave.

DC Books

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Mila Felcarek and Katherine Hope,
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Barry Friedberg, 310 Victoria Inc.,
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Peter Govan, Victoria Ave.

John and Karma Hallward, Carleton Ave.

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Keith Henderson

Anne Holloway, Lansdowne Ave.

Suni Hope-Johnston, York Ave.

Gerhard Jacob, Olivier Ave.

Bob and Celeste Johnston, de
Maisonneuve Blvd.

John Johnston, de Maisonneuve Blvd.

Shelley Kerman, Church Hill

Sarine and Ray Lawson, Clarke Ave.

Mollie and Ray Lawson, Church Hill

LMNOP, Sherbrooke St.

Richard Lord, Clarke Ave.

Jack Martin, de Maisonneuve Blvd.

Margaret Martin, de Maisonneuve Blvd.

Ngairé Metcalf, Kensington Ave.

Susan McGuire, Montrose Ave.

Neil and Catharine McKenty,
Somerville Ave.

Michael McKenzie, Lansdowne Ave.

Brian Mitchell, Lansdowne Ave.

Victoria Naday, Miss Vicky’s School,
Church Hill

D. O. Newnham, Metcalfe Ave.

Allen Nutik, Redfern Ave.

My-Trang Nguyen and Michael
Ballantyne, Somerville Ave.

Tom Nicoll, Bruce Ave.

Peter Norris, Roslyn Ave.

Colin Paterson, Melville Ave.

Stephanie Pascal, Le Pays d’Oz, Victoria
Nicholas and Tracey Powell, Sherbrooke
St.

Sara Provencher, Clarke Ave.

Derek Price, Montrose Ave.

Merne Price, Lansdowne Ave.

Michael and Jennifer Price, de
Maisonneuve Blvd.

Tim and Denise Price, Murray Hill

Geoff Proppe, de Maisonneuve Blvd.

Mary Sancton, Sherbrooke St.

Peter Schwarz, Grosvenor Ave.

Sharyn Scott on Consignment,
Sherbrooke St.

Ruth Shine, Bead Emporium,
Victoria Ave.

Tiga Sontag

Nicholas Synnott, Grosvenor Ave.

Justin Vineberg, de Casson Rd.

Mackenzie and Rena Watson,
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Joan Winser, de Maisonneuve Blvd.

Christina Vroom, Stanton St.

Anthony J. Zitzmann, Anwoth Rd.

To add your name to this list,
please contact Stuart Woods at
stuart.woods@pricepatterson.com
or 514.223.3578.

Barbecues OK on apartment balconies under certain conditions

Yes! There’s good news for apartment dwellers wanting to use propane barbecues on their balconies.

It’s okay just as long as they adhere to provincial fire regulations and Westmount’s municipal nuisance by-law concerning smoke.

The warm weather has ushered in a slew of inquiries from Westmount apartment dwellers regarding the use of barbecues, fire officials said this week.

“We’ve been flooded with calls,” explained Chief Daniel de Vries, Fire Prevention Section. “Everyone wants to barbecue.”

Fire regulations, he said, require propane units to be operated in conformity with manufacturers’ instructions. These typically call for larger units to be set back at least two feet from a window or combustible material



Firefighter Olivier-Rostand Lussier demonstrates the need to measure the distance of a barbecue from a wooden wall or other combustible item. In this case, the barbecue at the Westmount fire station has even been set well back from a brick wall.

such as wood.

As well, the propane tank must be connected to the unit at all times. This means a reserve tank cannot be kept on hand – either on the balcony or inside the dwelling. It is prohibited to use or keep a propane tank indoors.

Excessive smoke that causes a nuisance is also prohibited under Westmount municipal by-laws enforced by the Public Security Unit.

Chief de Vries warns that at no time can any type of barbecue be operated if it constitutes a fire hazard.

Hibachis and other charcoal units may also be used on balconies and wooden decks as long as they pose no danger. Avoid a windy day.

Extinguish hot coals soon after use if left unsupervised, Chief de Vries cautions. The coals and ashes can remain hot for a long time.

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Independence Day

The *Westmount Independent* aspires to be good by having well written, relevant, interesting content. But it also aspires to be *independent*. What does this mean?

Firstly, it means that we are not part of an impersonal, unresponsive megacorp. The *Independent* is published by a single, hands-on entrepreneur.

As a result, the *Independent* will be able to react more quickly to the pulse of the city than many weekly and monthly publications. The fact that we are local should help, too: our operation is entirely headquartered at Victoria and de Maisonneuve. If you have something to drop by, you'll be able to reach us easily.

Independence brings another, less obvious, benefit: originality.

Companies run by professional managers will always have trouble being as interesting as ones run by owners. This dictum applies as much to restaurants and computer companies as to newspapers. Employees will always tend to play it safe, to fall into a routine, to be dull.

Committee decision-making also waters down ideas. And "accountability" often means punishing employees for projects that don't work - even if they were risks worth taking. "No one ever got fired for buying IBM" - but no one ever made a great breakthrough that way either.

There is also the issue of media concentration. BCE/Bell owns CTV and *The Globe & Mail*. CanWest owns Global TV and the old Southam newspaper chain (including *The National Post* and *The Gazette*). And CBC is a major TV and radio network. How much of Westmounters' news comes from just these three sources?

Through the years, Westmounters have shown that they too are independent and independent-minded. In terms of municipal services, Westmounters have long led the way. For instance, Westmount founded Quebec's first municipal library. And, when it comes to municipal government, Westmount and Westmounters led the way in the demergers.

So, when it comes to newspapers, aren't you glad there's a new kid in town?

DAVID PRICE, EDITOR

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount.

Twice monthly
(1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month),
next issue: June 6

Westmount (H3Y and H3Z):
10,000 copies by Canada Post
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30 waiting-room drops

Vivva MONTREAL

What are you doing tonight?

Monthly (last Wednesday of the month), next issue: May 30

Westmount & eastern NDG
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Opinion

The bigger they get, the less service they give

MAY EBBITT CUTLER

Whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad. The corporation gods must be trying to destroy me. They have certainly made me mad. You who are into *schadenfreude*, go ahead and laugh.

First, let me have a little *schadenfreude* of my own. Transcontinental Inc. is one of the biggest printing-publishing companies in North America. But three months ago, it abruptly moved the editorial office of one of its smallest newspapers, *The Westmount Examiner*, out of Westmount to a central office in LaSalle.

I screamed. As the former mayor, I feel protective of my city. *The Examiner* has been edited here for more than 70 years and been a place where we could drop in just as we do the library. I wish I could say it was all the protests, including that by our current mayor, that caused an abrupt return of the office here, but more likely it was their discovery that another Westmount paper (this one) was starting up.

And so it begins...

The corporate attack on my sanity started when I turned 83 and decided to downsize. I got a small apartment and hired SEARS to redo the kitchen. I'm not only old, but so old-fashioned that I pay off all my credit cards each month.

When \$700 for the floor covering appeared for the second time on my monthly bill, I phoned. "Are you sure," I was asked, "you didn't put down *two* floors?"

The following month the same double charge of \$700 appeared, this time with interest added. Since Sears wasn't paying attention, I detected down the subcontractor that had installed the floor. After a search, the accountant there said: "Oh, Sears seems to have paid us *twice*."

Luggage woes

Last Christmas, AIR CANADA lost my luggage on a trip I took to Newark to visit a son. Through three days of phone calls, we discovered that Air Canada runs its lost luggage department from "somewhere north of Mumbai" in INDIA!

Company policy alone could have forbidden them giving us the phone number of the luggage room at the Newark airport.

On the third night, in desperation, we drove out there. In the Air Canada luggage office, amid a floor full of other bags, sat my big red suitcase. I was so happy to be able to give my grandchildren their

presents before I returned to Montreal that I was ready to dump the whole episode into my Alzheimer's bin. Until the next morning. When a delivery man from Air Canada turned up at my son's door to give me *somebody else's luggage!*

Communicating with the phone company

Then there was BELL. Phone not to ask for whom Bell toils. It toils NOT for thee. In my new apartment, I needed two wall jacks moved. After two weeks of phone calls during which I waited home two days for no-shows, it was finally done.

My bill from Bell came with a \$209 charge. To move two wall jacks. I complained. Never heard back from them. I paid the bill. Finally, they called. They would be giving me a credit. But it hasn't appeared on my latest phone bill. More phone calls required.

These calls took hours of time that, at my age, I can't afford to waste. They start with the spirit-crusher: "In order to serve you better..." This euphemism is the equivalent to corporations what "correction" is to stock brokers, "friendly fire" to the military and "we're making progress" to George Bush.

I'm asked to "choose one of the following..." In multi-choice questions on exams, I knew that one of the choices was correct. But corporations will let you choose over. And over. And over. To reach a "please call back" at the end.

How things (don't) work

Why was I asked so often for my ID? I was requesting a correction, not asking for a loan.

They warned me that "this call may be monitored." By whom? And for what? Not for efficiency, that's for sure.

I tell myself I shouldn't get paranoiac, that it's nothing personal. The mismanagement of these monster corporations may cost me time but it costs them MONEY. And isn't making money their raison d'être? So should I care? Should you?

Yes! Because the bigger they get, the less service they give, and the more it costs them to give it. That extra cost they pass down to me AND you.

You think I'm exaggerating? The CRTC, which is supposed to protect the consumer, has just given Bell permission to raise the rate for pay phones and rural services and charge whatever it wants for call waiting and call forwarding.

So maybe you should have held back on that *schadenfreude*.

At Second Glance

Playing fields in the balance

HEATHER BLACK

The City of Westmount's proposal to install artificial turf in Westmount Park will be discussed at a public meeting on May 16. As field maintenance appears to be a frequent challenge, I wondered what municipalities have chosen elsewhere, particularly in soccer-obsessed, eco-friendly Europe.

New turf techniques

Many European field managers now grow grass year-round, even in indoor stadiums. According to the European Seed Association, new grasses and new methods of constructing root zones in sports fields makes the muddy field "a thing of the past." But are there Canadian wear-resistant grasses? A call to Eco-Lawn developer Wildflower Farms, revealed that indeed an ecoturf is in the works. But for now, what about "root-zone" solutions?

Other synthetic solutions

A British company, Support in Sport, has developed a synthetic mesh that is placed on soil, then seeded with grass. As the blades grow through the webbing, both the plant and root zone are protected. This Coventry, UK solution allows "up to 1,000 hours of playing time," is "cost-effective" and, as goal or base lines can be repainted over time, fields can support multiple sports.

Surrey, BC chose a hybrid solution with synthetic turf for the goal areas only. The installer, Canadian manufacturer Marathon Athletic Surfaces, priced two goal areas at \$25,000 per field, a fraction of what a total installation costs.

Some other considerations

Field longevity is not the only issue. Many players believe that playing on artificial turf causes more injuries. Research cites an increase in concussion, turf burn, turf toe and anterior cruciate ligament injuries on artificial turf.

There are macro-level ecological issues, too. The effect of grass on the carbon dioxide-oxygen balance is well known. One pitch produces more oxygen than one hectare of forest, or enough oxygen for 120 people per year. And, one acre of natural grass fixes 4.5 tons of carbon dioxide. Another consideration is heat reduction. Research at Brigham Young University pegs the average daily surface temperature of artificial turf at 47°C with a high of 69°C, compared to grass at 26°C with a high of 32°C. And, because of the synthetic content of artificial turf, vandalism is a concern.

Perhaps these or other, as-yet-undiscussed, alternatives will help solve our turf question. It's up to you!

Heather Black is a communications designer. If you have a topic, please contact her at: atcitizen@gmail.com

The Contrarian

Recycling in the wind

You've gotta love spring. Warm weather, flowers, melting snow – and garbage, here, there and everywhere. It is ironic that the recycling movement has led to a truly dirty city. (Speaking of irony, I often wonder if the net effect of all the truck traffic and energy used to recycle is a net negative, but that's a whole different opinion piece.)

For the gold medal in loose garbage, I invite you to check out the stretch of de Maison-neuve between Atwater and Guy. The garbage is unbelievable. It is even caught up in the trees, almost looking like intentional Christmas tree decoration.

Ah ..., you might say, but Westmount is different. Umm ... not really. Check out any Westmount street on recycling day. The recyclables blow around freely. And then they accumulate in (slightly) hidden places: hedges, gutters and so on. Westmounters spend a lot of money to live here: why can't we figure this one out?

Here are my suggestions:

(1) **Firewood.** If everyone were required to put a piece of firewood on top of everything in the recycling box, virtually no garbage would get loose. The Town of Mount Royal has implemented nets to keep the garbage from blowing around. I applaud their initiative, but nets seem a little fragile and less able to fit over a very full load. Firewood: solid, versatile, cheap, low-tech and heavy.

(2) **Fines for dirty yards.** Once (1) has been implemented for a while, there will be no excuse for dirty yards or blowing recyclables. Would we permit other kinds of waste to blow around indiscriminately?

Firewood: simple, cheap and effective. Let's get it done.

The Inquisitor

Question: Why are new hydrants being installed so high above ground so as to expose the vertical connector pipe?
Answer: The installation of hydrants is governed by regulations concerning the height of the collar (connection to the main pipe) above ground. While this regulation has been in force for some years, it is becoming more apparent as older hydrants are replaced. In fact, since Westmount assumed ownership of its water system last year for the first time, some 30 new hydrants have been installed.



Questions: Now that the city no longer provides compost for residential gardens, what happens to the leaves and other garden debris it picks up as part of the Green Collection?

Answer: These items are composted elsewhere and returned to the city for municipal garden use. The city also receives free disposal in return.

Question: What items can now be put out for curbside recycling in Westmount?

Answer: There's no short answer except to state that no food or items with food residue are allowed. A complete list of do's and don't's may be found on the city website at www.westmount.org. Here are some basic examples:

Paper: acceptable items include newsprint, cardboard boxes, egg cartons, paperbacks and envelopes with windows. Do not include waxed and plasticized papers or soiled pizza boxes.

Plastic, metal and other: acceptable items are glass and plastic bottles, separate tops, foil containers, grocery and dry-cleaning bags tied in a bag, and milk and juice cartons. Unacceptable items include wood, Styrofoam, sheet glass, mirrors, pots and pans, porcelain and china, light bulbs, clear plastic confectionery containers, and all hazardous materials (paint, oil, electronics, batteries, etc.).

Question: Does paper still have to be separated from the rest?

Answer: In Westmount, yes.

Please send your questions for the Inquisitor to stuart.woods@pricepatterson.com.



1 Wood

This 2000 sq foot condo was fully remodeled by a known decorator and offers 3 bedrooms, large living area, dining room, 2 full bathrooms, a gourmet kitchen with granite counter and hood, a large area and high-end appliances plus 2-car garage.



CLAUDE BOULAY

Associated Real Estate Agent, Groupe Sutton Centre-Ouest

Meet the new auxiliary PSOs Innovating to improve patrol coverage



New auxiliary PSOs, from left: Robert Forbes, Patrice Dion & Nick Bouchard. Absent: Tina Lanzon.

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A new concept of "auxiliary" public safety officer has been introduced this month to Westmount's Public Security Unit to provide additional patrol coverage.

The four recruits to the new position will work a different schedule from the regular shifts on a weekday basis, either 8:30 am to 4:30 pm or 4:30 pm to midnight.

"This gives us continuity of coverage on the street during shift changes and lunch periods," explains Public Security Captain John Everatt.

Three of the four new auxiliary officers have previous experi-



Capt. John Everatt

ence in the public security forces of Beaconsfield, Dollard des Ormeaux and Verdun, while the fourth is a recent graduate of the police technology program at John Abbott College and the Nicolet training centre.

The new position is part of an on-going reorganization by Director Richard Blondin, a former Montreal police veteran, who replaced the retiring director, Richard McEnroe, almost a year ago.

Other initiatives

Among the other changes are the creation of the position of captain and the assignment of special projects and major initiatives to the PSU's five sergeants along with their regular role as patrol supervisors.

As well, retired PSOs (also being called auxiliaries) are being brought back on a part-time basis as needed to fulfill various functions and cover for fulltime patrollers on holiday or sick leave.

"This will all heighten our visibility on the road," Capt. Everatt says. "We're trying to find new ways to accomplish more."

Proofing Contest

The *Westmount Independent* cares about quality. We hereby offer a prize of \$25 to the reader who finds the most typos by May 23. A typo is an error or misspelling rather than a deviation in usage, such as Ave./avenue. To collect the prize, the winner must be photographed for the next issue. In the event of a tie, all winners will be credited, but one prize will be awarded (by coin toss). Please send your entry to stuart.woods@pricepatterson.com.

City plant exchange launches garden season

Features eco-friendly tips

Westmount gardeners are being offered a record variety of perennials grown by the city greenhouse staff this year.

The city plants are produced to augment those brought in by residents at the city's yearly Perennial Plant Exchange that takes place in the arena on May 16.

The event is structured so that residents can deliver their plants from 4 to 5:30 pm in exchange for coupons to be redeemed between 5:30 and 6:30 pm.

Plants that remain after 6:30 will be offered for sale for the next hour.

Those unsold after the event may be purchased at Family Day, May 26.

"The city plants are a good size this year and ready for transplant," said city horticulturist Claudette Savaria.

Last year, proceeds from the sale of plants at both events generated \$955 toward the refurbishing of the greenhouse totem pole.

The Plant Exchange provides information on tomatoes, heritage plants, composting, green gardens and other areas of sustainable development. A list of garden books at Westmount Public Library is also available.

Marina Peter, environmental coordinator, will be on hand to provide residents with details on curbside recycling, disposal of batteries and e-waste as well as tips on easy-to-grow plants.

It is organized by volunteer members of the city's Horticultural Advisory Committee (HAC).

How to plant city-grown offerings

Residents who acquire the following city-grown perennials are reminded to protect them from wind and strong sun for a few days before planting since they have come directly from the greenhouse. The addition of a transplanting fertilizer will help them adjust. This year's choices are listed by light requirements, including typical flowering times:

SUN

Echinops ritro (globe thistle), blue, July-Sept., 90 cm.

Leontopodium alpinum (edelweiss), white, June-July, 15 cm.

Delphinium "King Arthur", deep blue with white bee, 150+ cm.

SUN/HALF SHADE

Armeria "Joystick", lilac, June-July, 40 cm.

Asclepias "Silky Formula", (butterfly



City gardener Sébastien Raymond with tray of delphiniums.

Composters now available

Westmount residents may purchase backyard composters at the city-subsidized price of \$30.

The upright Earth Machine stationary models stand 33 inches high and have a diameter of 23 inches.

They may be bought and picked up along with composting instructions at the Westmount Public Works office, 1 Bethune Avenue. This is located in the Corporation Yard (access under the railway overpass immediately east of the apartment building at 4700 St. Catherine St., near Lansdowne).

weed), red, yellow or orange, June-Sept., 60-70 cm.

Achillea "Colorado" (yarrow), mixed, June-Sept., 60 cm.

Corydalis lutea (bleeding heart), yellow, May-Aug., 40 cm.

Veronica "Hybrid Blue Bouquet" (speedwell), blue, June-Aug., 50 cm.

Melinis "Savannah" (ornamental grass), blue, June-Aug., 50 cm.

Primula japonica "Miller's Crimson" (primrose), crimson, May, 55 cm.

Monarda "Hybrid Panorama", reds, July-Aug., 100 cm.

HALF-SHADE/SHADE

Polemonium viscorum "Blue Whirl"

(Jacob's ladder), blue June-July, 35 cm.

Sun or shade

Bergenia cordifolia, hot pink, April-May, 35 cm.

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FINANCES

**Date d'échéance
Taxes municipales**

Le deuxième versement de vos taxes municipales 2007 est exigible le vendredi 1er juin. Veuillez noter que vous devez libeller votre chèque à l'ordre de la Ville de Westmount. Info : 514 989-5226. ☎



SÉCURITÉ PUBLIQUE

**Parc Summit
Période migratoire**

Rappel aux propriétaires de chiens : durant la période migratoire des oiseaux, soit du 15 avril au 15 juin, les propriétaires promenant leur chien au parc Summit doivent le tenir en laisse en tout temps. Les officiers de la Sécurité publique feront des patrouilles et donneront des contraventions de 25 \$ aux personnes qui ne respectent pas ce règlement. ☎



ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES

La galerie du Victoria Hall

La galerie est fière de présenter les œuvres de l'artiste Eva Prager jusqu'au 26 mai. Info : 514 989-5226.

DATES À RETENIR

Le 16 mai – 16 h

Triangé de plantes vivaces.
Aréna

Le 16 mai – 19 h

Séance de consultation publique
Projet des terrains de jeux au parc Westmount
Victoria Hall

Le 17 mai – 10 h 30

Cercle de lecture
Bibliothèque

Le 23 mai – 14 h

Conférence de 14 h
My Sister, My Self (Vikki Stark)
Bibliothèque

Le 28 mai – 20 h

Séance du Conseil
Hôtel de ville

Visite de jardins secrets

Le jeudi 14 juin 2007
Une occasion de découvrir et d'explorer une des plus beaux jardins répartis un peu partout à Westmount, hors de la vue des passants. Organisée par le comité consultatif d'horticulture. Billets en nombre limité. Info : 514 989-5226. ☎



FINANCE

**Installment Deadline
Property Taxes**

The second installment of your 2007 municipal taxes is due on Friday, June 1. Please note that payments should be made to the City of Westmount. Info: 514 989-5226. ☎



PUBLIC SECURITY

**Summit Park
Migratory Period**

Dog owners should take note that during the bird migratory period – April 15 to June 15 – dogs in Summit Park must be kept on leashes at all times. To ensure that this regulation is respected, Public Security Officers will be carrying out random patrols and issuing \$75 tickets to any violators. ☎



COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Gallery at Victoria Hall

The Gallery at Victoria Hall is pleased to present the works of artist Eva Prager until May 26. Info: 514 989-5226.

DATEBOOK

May 16 – 4:30 p.m.

Perennial Plant Exchange
Aréna

May 16 – 7 p.m.

Public Consultation Meeting
Westmount Park Playscapes Fields Project
Victoria Hall

May 17 – 10:30 a.m.

Cercle de lecture
Bibliothèque

May 23 – 2 p.m.

2 O'Clock Series
My Sister, My Self (Vikki Stark)
Bibliothèque

May 28 – 8 p.m.

City Council Meeting
City Hall

Secret Garden Tour

Thursday, June 14, 2007
An opportunity to discover and explore 11 of the most exceptional gardens in Westmount not visible from the street. Organized by the Horticultural Advisory Committee. Tickets are limited. Info: 514 989-5226. ☎

Journée familiale 2007
au parc Westmount**Le samedi 26 mai**

Depuis 32 ans, il n'y a rien de mieux pour fêter l'arrivée de l'été à Westmount.

Activités pour tout âge

Nous vous invitons à participer à de nombreuses activités tout au long de la journée incluant jeux gonflables, zoo pour enfants, kiosques d'amusement, exposition d'artisanat ainsi qu'un ensemble Dooeland.

Pour de plus amples informations, procurez-vous un exemplaire du dépliant bientôt disponible dans les édifices municipaux. La programmation complète est aussi disponible sur notre site Web.

En cas de pluie, plusieurs des activités auront lieu à l'Aréna.

Family Day 2007
in Westmount Park**Saturday, May 26**

For 32 years, there's been no better way to start off your summer in Westmount.

Activities for all ages

Enjoy inflatable games, a petting zoo, carnival booths, handicraft exhibitions and much more throughout the day, including music by the Dixieland Band.

For more details, pick up a copy of the Family Day pamphlet available soon in all municipal buildings. You can also find the complete programme on our Web site.

In the event of rain, many of the activities will be held at the Aréna.



Bought & Sold: Real estate since April 1

For real estate transactions,
please see paper copy

Mayor Marks addresses WHOBA

By MARILYNN VANDERSTAAY

Five years after inviting women into membership, Mayor Karin Marks was the first woman to grace the podium of the Westmount High Old Boys' Association annual dinner on May 10 at Selwyn House, one of the school's former sites.

"Karin is all about her community, on the streets, in your face, everywhere she is," said former neighbour and alumnus Rob Braide. "But most significantly as mayor she recaptured our city."

Putting aside politics, the Westmount High alumna chose to speak about how Westmount High affected her love for her community. She shared stories about former Manoir resident Vera Jameson, who was her music teacher and how she was able to keep in touch with her until she passed away. How chemistry teacher Art "Buckie" Buckmaster tutored her in her home after school. And how she can still hear Latin teacher Miss Lane reciting "hic, hac, hoc." "Going to school in my community gave me a sense of belonging, of community," she told her peers.

As a parent of a student at Westmount High in the 1980s, Marks' first foray into politics was fighting to keep the school open. That same commitment would lead her into municipal politics and eventually to being a leader in fighting to resist the merger and then for the demerger. "We continue to fight for the total control of our community."

48 dog owners fined

Dogs and their owners are out in force after the winter but are being kept away from migratory birds and tender young plants in Summit Park until June 15.

Public Safety Officers are not only patrolling the flora and fauna sanctuary but are also checking dogs throughout the city for 2007 licences.

During an initial warning period in April, owners were given 48 hours to obtain a new licence if required, but offenders are now being ticketed for violation of the municipal by-law.

By the end of April, 48 fines had been issued, according to Public Security officials.

Work at 400 Lansdowne

Elaborate scaffolding has been erected alongside an apartment building at Sherbrooke and Lansdowne as contractors attempt to repair deteriorating concrete.

The problem is limited to the building's balconies, which contractors have been dismantling with the help of a jackhammer, the noise of which prompted one resident to complain, "It sounds just like they're in the apartment." Roy Grette, the building's longtime doorman, commented that repairs seemed to be proceeding at a sluggish pace.


Norman Hacker - vice president of Casco Inc., which manages the property - countered that work was going smoothly, even though he has yet to visit the site. He added that all the balconies should be rebuilt by the end of May.

The repairs are the most significant work ever undergone by the building, which was built in the late 1960s. The work, says Hacker, is preventative, and wasn't prompted by complaints from residents: "If you're not doing work after 40 years," he said, "then after 50 years you're going to have a mess."



Replacing balconies at 400 Lansdowne.

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On the market: 522 Clarke Ave.

BY STUART WOODS

The late Cynthia Moore was a keen gardener, and it shows: the 48-foot-deep backyard of her former home is a gardener's paradise. At this time of year, perennials she planted years ago are just beginning to bud.

Quaint details like this lend the detached brick home in upper Westmount the distinctive charm of country living.

The home takes advantage of its natural setting, with good southern exposure and large bay windows that front the street.



The ground level comprises a bright and spacious open living and dining room, and a small den. The kitchen looks onto a large sun-soaked back deck. Blond hardwood floors run throughout the home, adding to its rustic charm.

Upstairs, the space feels a little tighter, with four smallish rooms (plus a narrow bathroom) clustered around a small hall-

way. The master bedroom is bright, but has limited closet space. One of the smaller rooms – which could serve as a study or nursery – gives onto a balcony with a view of downtown and the river beyond.

Due to its limited space, the house is ideally suited to empty-nesters (like the previous owners) or a small family. It is not the kind of home that could be easily renovated to accommodate a new owner's whims: very few changes have been made since it was built in 1912, and it seems likely to stay that way.

A real turnoff for prospective buyers is the kitchen and upstairs bathroom, which haven't been remodelled since the 1970s. If you want to walk into a house and have everything up to date, then this isn't the house for you.

Among the house's attributes is its attractive price. At \$759,000, it's what the listing agent described as upper Westmount living at a lower Westmount price. He even surmised that condo fees in some of Westmount's swankier buildings would equal the cost of living in the house.

This home could be a real find. As Palmer pointed out, it's the kind of house that makes you feel instantly at home.

Dwelling details

Address: 522 Clarke Ave.
Asking price: \$759,000
2007 taxes: \$8,596

"On the market" is written by the WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT and not paid for by, or approved by, real estate sellers. Houses are chosen randomly.

New fire evacuation rules for apartment dwellers

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Apartment residents who may be accustomed to evacuation advice from the former Westmount Fire Brigade now have different procedures to follow under Montreal's island-wide fire service.

The new directives are to vacate the building as soon as the fire alarm rings, said Daniel de Vries, Fire Prevention Section Chief.

Previously, when Westmount firefighters responded with smaller fire crews, residents were generally advised to remain in their apartments (unless the fire was in their own unit) and await further instructions.

This, he said, prevented them going unassisted into smoke-filled hallways and greater dangers than they might face by remaining inside.

"Now we're asking them to leave because we have the number of firefighters to help."

In the case of buildings having two-stage alarms – usually highrises and schools – residents should prepare for evacuation during the pre-alarm so they can leave quickly if and when the general alarm sounds.

The pre-alarm period can be used to turn off the stove or computer and get dressed, he said.

The general alarm is sounded once a fire condition has been confirmed.

Under the Montreal response system,

at least 18 firefighters from several nearby stations – including Westmount's on Stanton Street – are simultaneously dispatched to alarm calls involving smaller local apartment buildings.

Ice cream



Entrepreneur Nancy Master just might have a surefire recipe for success: "Everyone," she says, "loves ice cream." Westmounters have flocked to Master's new ice cream parlour on Sherbrooke, just a few storefronts from Dairy Queen. The store is the first franchise of Le Bilboquet, a popular Outremont hangout.

Colourfully Yours: The John, the Marsha and the Skylight

BY AURELIEN GUILLORY

Westmount homes have peculiar traits and in many ways form a unique architectural district of Montreal. They also have unique problems.

To tackle them, I will bring to bear over three decades of design experience, but I also have an unusual colleague: Ms. Greta von Schmedlapp. For years, I taught a design course at the Saidye Bronfman Centre of the Arts. At that time, Greta was the students' "client" for the year's thesis project. (Each student was required to re-design her awkward living, dining and vestibule areas.) Since the School of Fine Arts has closed, Greta has agreed to become a shopper, sleuth and assistant designer to me, in order to help West-

mounters and their idea-hungry friends (or fiends).

Often, as Greta and I make an initial tour of a new client's home, we are confronted with the upstairs main bathroom separated into two sections: the John and the Marsha.

The status quo

The John-toilet-water closet is often just that – a closet! – with very little elbow room and half of a skylight above. On the other side is what I call "the Marsha", otherwise known as the washbasin and the tub (often with a primitive shower arrangement) that also has half – usually the bigger half – of a skylight. My dilemma is always how to create space and luxury without breaking the family

budget – and to get it done within the same space.

First, get your contractor and his structural engineer to determine that the wall between is not holding up the roof, and then demolish it. But wait! *Measure and plan*, then demolish. And only if you are certain that all the new porcelain fixtures you have selected are all measured and drawn to scale!

When things go wrong

I have dozens of tales where I was called to rescue the mess caused by inaccurate measurements. A scale drawing might cost some money up front, but later, *ad hoc* adjustments are often much more expensive...

Also, be certain that the ceramic and

marble tiles, as well as the fixtures, faucets and towel bars, are in stock and preferably delivered to the site before demolition. There will then be no delays. You don't want the whole project screeching to a halt as you wait for the essential missing part – and the contractor, plumber or tile-layer scoot across town to work on another project!

Next month, we will reveal one of our favourite lighting solutions costing less than \$10!...

Ms. Greta von Schmedlapp and I are waiting for your questions and challenges. Don't hesitate to comment or help us with solutions. We can be reached at aurelien@colorsbyaurelien.com.

Westmount Profile: Charles Bierbrier

Building a dream

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Driven by a passion for beer and a love of business, Charles Bierbrier has single-handedly built his own brewery from scratch and into a thriving operation.

In less than two years, the life-long Westmounter has converted an abandoned warehouse into a business that supplies Montreal stores and bars, and is now shipping to many regions of Quebec in a competitive and hot market.

“The more the competition plays tough,” he says, “the stronger I come back.”

At age 31, Charles is already past president of the Rotary Club of Westmount, a current director of the Westmount Municipal Association and the president of the McGill Young Alumni.

He holds an MBA from the John Molson School of Business (Concordia) and has played trumpet – another passion – at the Montreal Jazz Festival.

Charles loves brewing so much that he refers to it as a “life-path” rather than career. He initially intended it to be a retirement hobby.

“But it’s a good thing I decided to do it now,” he explains, “because it requires so much strength and energy.”

Jeans-clad in the brewery office, Charles has just helped unload a large truck delivering empties to Bierbrier Brewing at the foot of Guy St. off William.

He keeps a suit and tie handy for visiting clients and changes clothes at a rate worthy of Superman.

Guiding the visitor through the brew house, he proudly describes the process, gesturing to the stainless-steel tanks custom made by a leading manufacturer in

PEI. “We do everything in-house,” he says.

And until relatively recently, the word “we” has meant Charles himself.

Drawing up his own business plan, he hunted down and adapted the building, helped pour the concrete and install the state-of-the-art equipment, and worked through a long regulatory process to obtain his permits.

For the first six months of operation, “I was it,” he recalls.

“I’d spend the day brewing, then hop in the car and head for the bars to try and sell it. And only after that could I get to the record keeping.

“I had a cell phone and a beach chair. That was my office. But I had a brewery. And I was happy.”

The business grew quickly through word-of-mouth.

Soon he was able to hire a brewmaster, and then add a sales team and other assistants.

Since Day 1 in October 2005, Charles has built a team of 10, and quadrupled output. He considers himself a “downtown brewer” rather than a micro-brewer. “We are an independent local brewery – and probably the smallest in the province.”

He’s also proud that Bierbrier ale was selected for inclusion in the 2007 edition of *Le Petit Debeur*.

“We’re not a household name yet, but we will be!” he says, breaking into a wide smile.

The recipe is his own, a golden ale that he describes as “very smooth, well balanced, refreshing and thirst-quenching.”

With the start of the barbecue season, Charles is already receiving requests for individual kegs.

At first, he says, he wondered how he would ever lift the filled kegs, each weighing about 150 pounds. “Now I can hoist them over my head!”

The entire brewing process takes place in about 1,000 square feet – a concrete room specially built to create a sterile environment. This brew house, as it is called, contains large, custom-made stainless steel kettles and fermenters, pumps and other equipment.

“A large part of the day is devoted to cleaning,” Charles says. “Every-



Charles Bierbrier

thing is sterilized at the end of the day and again in the morning.”

“I had a passion for business,” he remembers. So after graduating from Selwyn House in 1993, and studying commerce at Marianopolis, he obtained a BA in economics at McGill in 1998. He was undergraduate president of the McGill chapter of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity,

which he now serves as alumni advisor.

“I’ve always been very involved in community leadership,” he says.

After graduation, Charles worked briefly in banking at the Royal Bank before taking the Canadian Securities Course and starting to build a client base at the brokerage firm of Merrill Lynch.

“I was the rookie, and loved it. But one morning

I woke up and said I’m leaving to do an MBA and later return to corporate finance.

“But the idea of brewing kept coming to me as a life path. It reached the point where I was so obsessed that I had to do it.”

Armed with his new MBA from Concordia, he began to build his dream.

“There’s no guide to setting up a brewery. No one is there to help you in such a competitive market. You have to do it yourself.”

“I knew what I was getting into,” he says, “but you can’t stop when something goes wrong like construction delays or missing machine parts.

“My parents (Ed Bierbrier and Anne-

Marie Larue Bierbrier) played an important role in encouraging me to just take a deep breath and move forward.”

Despite working long hours, Charles still makes time to go out evenings with friends and attend events including a number of promotional nights and beer tastings.

Friends are important to Charles. Many of them – some, doctors and lawyers – helped him with the construction and installation of equipment.

“They used to joke that it would have cost me a fortune if I’d had to pay their professional fees.”

Charles says he is always mindful that the business comes first. “In such a hot business, there’s no room for error. But I’ve always regarded business as an art, just as brewing is.

“So being able to bring the two together to create something of quality is indeed a dream.”

How it’s brewed

The two-week process starts from the time the malted barley is poured into the mash tun. This is a large hot water tank or kettle. During this first pre-brewing step, hot water is poured on the grain in a similar way to brewing tea.

Once the desired rich liquid is obtained, it is transferred to a brewing kettle and hops added. The result then goes to fermenting tanks where the addition of yeast converts the sugar into alcohol.

After the yeast is filtered out, carbon dioxide is added and the beer is bottled or kegged.



Filling a keg in the brew house of Bierbrier Brewing Inc., 310 Guy St.

Two fined for beer in the park

Youths and their parents are reminded that under Westmount by-laws it is prohibited to bring beer or other alcoholic beverages into parks.

This advisory from the Public Security Unit comes in the wake of eight youths being ejected recently from Westmount Park. Two of the group, 17-year-olds from Pointe Claire and Val d'Or, received tickets

in the amount of \$37.

Partying in the parks is a recurring seasonal problem, Public Security Captain John Everatt explains.

Helmets required

Cyclists caught without helmets may now receive \$37 tickets for the by-law infraction.

After a 10-day warning period this month, offenders are now being ticketed.

A month-long safety campaign to sen-

sitize cyclists to the dangers of not wearing helmets is being carried out by the Public Security Unit in conjunction with Montreal police.

Graffiti now brings criminal charges

A 17-year-old has discovered the hard way that acts of graffiti are now bringing criminal charges rather than being dealt with under Westmount municipal by-laws.

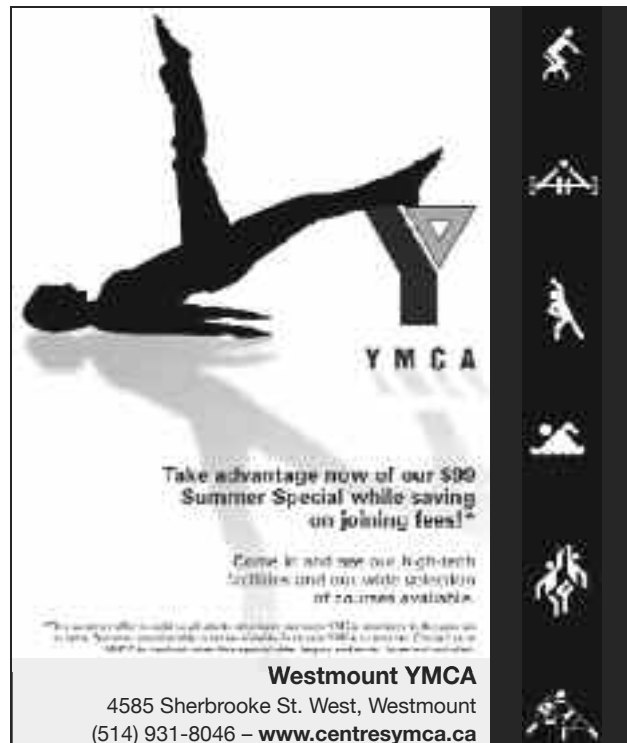
Public Security officials report the

young NDG man was among a group of five in Westmount Park, Sunday afternoon April 29, when PSO Steve Payne noticed fresh red paint on a park bench.

The youth refused to empty his pockets and Montreal police were called to the scene. A red paint marker was recovered.

With the proliferation of graffiti in Westmount, explains Public Security Captain John Everatt, "we have asked police to charge offenders under the criminal code. We have that option."

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...support this community event...

Family events

By ANNIKA MELANSON

Have you considered enrolling your child in music classes? The **Westmount String Ensemble** is led by a dynamic duo of string teachers consisting of Jean MacRae (violin and viola) and Sylvie Lambert (cello). The goal of the ensemble is to give beginning musicians (ages 6 and up) the opportunity to play and enjoy making

music together. The repertoire is selected and arranged so that musicians of all skill levels can. Sessions cost \$140. The ensemble meets on Saturday mornings from 11:15 am to 12:45 pm at Victoria Hall. No audition is required. The ensemble's **spring concert** will be held on Saturday, May 12, at 11 am in Victoria Hall and will feature the music of Vivaldi, Brahms and Dvorak. Admission is free. For more information call Jean MacRae, 514.481.1089. Don't forget that **Westmount Family**

Day is on May 26 from 9:30 am to 4 pm in Westmount Park. There will be a parade, games, activities, face painting and food, as well as a chance for parents to undergo a child car-seat inspection by the officers of Westmount's Police Department Station 12. For more information call 514.989.5353 or go to www.westmount.org.

Turf war

City Hall is proposing to convert two of Westmount's playing fields to synthetic

turf. Residents can have their say at a public meeting at Victoria Hall on May 16 at 7 pm. Those who wish to formally present must register in advance.



The Rotary Club of Westmount

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THE WESTMOUNTERS

BY MARILYNN VANDERSTAAY



Westmount's internationally renowned artist and officer of the Order of Canada, **Eva Prager**, is the feature artist at the Gallery at Victoria Hall this month. The vernissage held on May 2 enjoyed a steady stream of friends and acquaintances, including son **Vincent Prager**, **Sasha Trudeau**, **Mayor Karin Marks**, **Stratton Stevens**, **James Robb**, **Mary Stikeman**, **Marc Garneau** and **Archbishop Daniel Bohan**. "It was great to see her beautiful art nicely hung and appropriately displayed," said good friends **Sally** and **Allan Aitken**.

Prager said the exhibition included works she created from the pram to very recently. She began painting as a young child in the studio of her father, artist **Joseph Oppenheimer**. "Seeing the actual exhibition gave me a very strange feeling. I couldn't believe that I have actually done all this."

At 94, the fifth generation artist said, "I have to paint. It is part of how I live." She still carries sketching crayons in her purse: "There might be something beautiful I need to get down on paper."

Eva Prager: Artist continues at the Gallery at Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke St. West until May 26. For more information phone 514.925.1403.

Principal Dansereau leaving Westmount High

After seven years at Westmount High, Principal **Claude Dansereau**, has been promoted to Lauren Hill Academy in St. Laurent, a school of 1,500 students.

Secret Garden Tour returns

For the first time in three years the Westmount Horticultural Advisory Committee will host its Secret Garden Tour on Thursday, June 14. The tour of 11 residential gardens will start at 9:30 am at the Gallery at Victoria Hall. The cost is \$35 and includes lunch.

"Proceeds from the event will go to restoring the totem in the Westmount greenhouse," said committee chair **Valerie Aitken**. The totem pole was a gift to the city by the **Campbell** family, who brought it to Westmount from British Columbia in 1927. It was the star feature in the Campbell gardens on Edgehill until they sold the property.

Tickets are limited to 125 and can be purchased at Victoria Hall during the third

week of May. For more information phone 514.989.5226.

Tree planting at Montreal Oral School for the Deaf

As part of their program to revitalize the gardens at the Montreal Oral School for the Deaf at 4676 St. Catherine St. West, volunteers from the University Women's Club, with the assistance of students, planted a tree on Wednesday, May 9. The ivory silk lilac tree is part of the city's special tree distribution program.

Westmount Historical Association May meeting to feature Michael Ellwood

Westmount architect **Michael Ellwood** will present "Greenhythe, a Country Home" at the Westmount Historical Association meeting Thursday, May 17, starting at 7 pm at the Westmount Public Library.

Ellwood will tell the story of his family home that was built on Dorchester Blvd. in 1845 by his great-great-grandfather Captain Phillip Durnford and will trace his genealogy to General Elias Walker Durnford, who remodeled and rebuilt the Citadel at Quebec City.

Generations Foundation fundraiser next week

The Generations Foundation will host its biannual fundraiser breakfast at La Stanza, 1132 Marcel Laurin, on Thursday, May 24 from 6 am to 10 am. The Foundation receives 100 per cent of the \$10 ticket price.

Directors **Adrian** and **Nathalie Bercovici** operate the Foundation, a non-profit organization that was seeded by Westmounters **Colin Spence** and **Glenn Ellis**. Daily, Generations provides nutritious breakfasts, hot lunches and snacks to over 6,500 school children in 61 schools and 11 centres on the island of Montreal, including Westmount High.

For more information phone 514.933.8585 or email charity@generations-foundation.com.

Paul Henry exhibition at West End Gallery

Westmount gallery owner **Michael Millman** will host an exhibition of communities and landscapes painted by **Paul Henry** from May 26 to June 5 at the West End Gallery, 1358 Greene Avenue. "Paul Henry's canvases are crisp emotional vignettes of rural life past and present of the Ottawa Valley captured with high realism and precision," said Millman. A vernissage will be held on Saturday, May

26 starting at 1 pm. For more information phone 514.933.4314.

Westmount Healthy City Project to host information breakfasts

The environment sub-committee of the WHCP will host two breakfast talks starting at 8 am at Victoria Hall this month. Former Quebec minister for the environment **Thomas Mulcair** will discuss "Quebec and the Environment" on Thursday, May 17. On Wednesday, May 30 **Scott McKay**, leader of the Green Party of Quebec will discuss the "Montreal region and the Environment". Admission is free. To reserve your place email whcp@westmount.org; or fax 514.989.5481.

Call for baked goods made with dandelions

Recognizing that dandelions are as nutritious as spinach, the Healthy City booth at Family Day will host a contest of baked goods made with dandelions. Participants are invited to bring in their favourite cake, loaf, cookies, quiche or other baked good that is made with dandelions as a significant ingredient. The entries will be judged by a jury of dandelion gourmands. Recipes will be available at the booth.

Interlink Choir Concert at Contactivity Centre

Members of the Interlink Choir will present a concert at the Contactivity Centre, 4695 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, on Thursday May 17 starting at 7 p.m. Directed by **Ian Lebofsky** and accompanied by **Steve Corber**, the choir is made up of residents at Place Kensington senior resi-

dence, members of the Contactivity Centre and students at Westmount Park Elementary School. Admission is free. For more information phone 514.932.2326.

Imaging The Brain – Cats, Pets, MRIs and more

Dr. William Feindel, emeritus director of the Montreal Neurological Institute, emeritus director general of the Montreal Neurological Hospital and curator of the Wilder Penfield Archive, will present "Imaging the Brain – Cats, Pets, MRIs And More" at the Atwater Library lunch-time series on Wednesday, May 23, starting at 12:30 pm. For more information about the biweekly lunch time series phone Tanya at 514.935.7344 or email tmayhew@atwaterlibrary.ca

Celebrating babies at Westmount Park School

A meeting of teachers and sponsors got together early Wednesday, May 9 at Westmount Park Elementary to celebrate the babies who participated in the school's first Roots of Empathy program. ROE founder and president **Mary Gordon** was on hand to congratulate participants for completing the program. During the last 10 months through pilot ROE programs at both Roslyn and Westmount Park elementary schools, babies have helped students develop emotional literacy and empathy by visiting the classrooms with certified instructors who coached the students to observe the babies' development, celebrate firsts and generally interact. For more information go to www.rootsofempathy.org

ON THE SHELVES

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

Magazines

Dwell "A complex story" May 2007, p. 206.

A comment on Habitat by Oren Safdie, the son of the architect.

Québec Science "La mer sans poissons?" mai 2007, p. 34

Fiction:

Returning to Earth by Jim Harrison. A dying man recalls his life and his family copes in different ways.

Crimes horticoles by Mélanie Vincelette, a Montrealer living in Paris, who won the Anne-Hébert 2007 prize for this book.

Non-fiction

Fashioning Reality: A New Generation of En-

trepreneurship by Ben Barry. A young Canadian takes on the perception of beauty in the media.

Sauvegardez vos VHS et vos films super 8 sur DVD by Tiburce.

Children's

The Wizard, the Ugly and the Book of Shame by Pablo Bernasconi. A tale of a very special magician written and illustrated by an Argentinian (4-8 years).

Astronomie pour les enfants by Joe Rhatigan. For children 7-12 years.

Movies

Midsomer Murders. The library now has the 3rd set of these British mysteries.

Un dimanche à Kigali. The DVD of the novel by Gil Courtemanche about the love of a journalist and a Rwandan during the genocide.

Adventures Next Door to Westmount

Restaurant Review: Bofinger smokes competition

BY PHIL PRICE

Like Schwartz's, Beauty's, Milos and Chez Magnan, Bofinger has a chance of putting itself firmly on the map and becoming the BBQ standard bearer in Montreal's food scene.

The basics of barbecue are now not so basic. There are the marinating and curing (brining) processes, the applications of rubs, cold smoking, hot smoking, indirect and direct heat grilling, and on and on.

The basic rule of thumb is to infuse a maximum amount of flavour into tougher cuts of meat – like ribs and shoulders – and through dry rub, marinating, smoking and grilling, break down the collagen in the meat to create a gorgeously tender piece of barbecued goodness.

Aside from the limp barbecue sadly offered by chains like Bar-B-Barn, Swiss Chalet and their ilk, barbecue has never been well represented in Montreal.

The arrival of Mesquite a few years back on Decarie Blvd. showed a glimmer of grilled and smoked hope, however, its barbecue and the restaurant itself fell flat. But, don't fret; great BBQ is here, hopefully to stay.

Bofinger BBQ and Smokehouse ♥♥♥♥½
5667 Sherbrooke St. W.
514.315.5056

I could immediately tell that the owners (also behind La Louisiane) are big barbecue fans. Their love is pasted on the walls and fills absolutely every plate their kitchen turns out. Bofinger is a clean, well-

designed space with super-comfy chocolate leather booths and some of the best barbecue I have ever tasted. The place has got it all: ribs (both beef and pork), pulled pork, chicken, turkey, beef and lamb brisket, po' boy sandwiches and mind-blowingly good chicken wings.

Any form of meat offering can be dressed with one of six different types of barbecue sauces representing all forms of barbecue style, ranging from sweet and tangy to hot and spicy. The meat is so well executed that the sauces are just a bonus to finish the package. I was a huge fan of both the beef and the pork ribs. Nothing flimsy comes out of the Bofinger kitchen; everything is huge, served Flintstone-style, on plates with checkered picnic-patterned paper, a great touch that tells of the owner's eye for detail and love of the real BBQ deal.

For fans of authentic brisket you will certainly find it there. I have had the chance of sampling almost everything the menu has to offer and I am impressed.

The meat is top-notch, the pork and beef ribs are beyond ample, and the chicken wings are so perfect that they nearly fly off the plate towards culinary heaven.

The pulled pork has that perfect bal-

ance of salty and sweet, thrown on a bun and dressed with any one of the sauces. It will make you think you're at some side-of-the-road BBQ joint in Kansas or the deep south. I think that the delicate mixture of seasoning and the taste of smoke that the gang at Bofinger has managed to create is simply intoxicating.

Issues

There have been some hiccups. On two separate occasions, I showed up, salivating for a plate of wings and ribs, and, to my surprise, the kitchen was closed, citing running out of food as the reason. On another occasion, they weren't serving any booze, no clear explanation given.

If there is one thing lacking at Bofinger, it's the sides. The fries are limp, the cucumber side dish lacks a certain zing that a swish of vinegar could easily cure, and the mac-and-cheese is just good, when it could easily be made great. But I really don't care what's lacking in the sides, because they got the barbecue so right that the sides snag melts away when the main event shows up. The other incredible bonus is the price. It's beyond reasonable, it's actually shockingly cheap, and, I can say, with absolute certainty, it's the best deal in town.

Party Review

Getting girly at Mlle Pinki

ANNIKA MELANSON



My 4-year-old daughter, Amel, was recently invited to a party at Mademoiselle Pinki. The pink VIP invitation arrived complete with a photo of the birthday girl, who was too cute for words.

The event was a drop-off party, which means that parents are supposed to drop off their children and leave. I was lucky enough to get to stay and hang out with the birthday girl's parents.

Walking into Mademoiselle Pinki is like walking into a little paradise of all things pink, frilly and fairy-like. This is definitely a "girls-only" venue ... sorry, boys!

Behind the pink curtain

The staff rounded up the girls and had them sit in a circle and talk about their favourite colours (pink!) and who their favourite princess was (Cinderella!). This went on until all of the party-goers had arrived. Then it was off through a mysterious pink curtain to the land of make-up and costumes.

The staff applied sparkles, tattoos and lip gloss to the next generation of movie stars and then equipped them with costumes and fairy wands. For those of you who are neurotic about germs (like me!), I did notice that for each child, make-up was applied with a fresh, new Q-tip.

A magic show

After being glammed up, the girls sat down and watched a magic show performed by the Amazing Todsky. Participation was encouraged and Todsky incorporated use of the girls' magic wands to complete his magic tricks, which they enjoyed.

After the show, it was time for karaoke: we were serenaded with duets of "Wheels on the Bus," "Eensy Weensy Spider" and "The Alphabet Song." Last but not least, it was time to eat. Pizza was served and then a pyramid of delicious, pink-frosted cupcakes adorned with candles.

Mademoiselle Pinki parties cost \$300 for ten children at the boutique and \$200 at home. There are four themes to choose from: Princess Party, Pop Star Party, Tea Party or Pinki Spa Party. Pretty snazzy!

**Wine: What's In Store?**

Cordoniu, Henry of Pelham & Deinhard

BY CAROLA PRICE

Whether you love wine or just drink it to please others, this column will give you the heads-up as to what's in store at the two Westmount SAQs – or a little further afield in some cases.

To start the day off right, I sampled a sparkling **Pinot Noir** from **Cordoniu**. This Spanish bubbly is slightly bitter and yet delicate with some strawberry and rose in the nose and some tobacco and red berry in the mouth. The pink hue and refreshing bubbles scream out for shellfish. A great value at \$16.05. SAQ#10499167. Available at the Victoria SAQ.

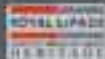
The newest release (on May 3) proved to be quite an eye-opener. I was blown away by some of the Niagara wine selections, notably the **Cabernets/Merlot** from **Henry of Pelham**. With its slightly jammy plum and smoke character, it needs a bit of time in the glass to really open up. At \$16.95 this is great value and is perfect for



those slightly chilly nights we see in May. SAQ#10745452. Unfortunately, only available locally at the 155 Atwater SAQ (across from the Atwater Market).

And lastly, a delicious white that finds its way to my table a few times a year. At \$12.95 the **Deinhard Pinot Gris** matches beautifully with so many fish dishes that it is hard not to recommend it. Its floral nose leads to a great taste full of citrus peel and spice with a zippy character overall. SAQ#00473595. Available at the Westmount Square, Victoria and Atwater SAQs.

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Our number one goal is to give full satisfaction to our clients. By working together with integrity and diligence, pooling our personal strengths in a spirit of cooperation and being creative and efficient in our marketing strategies, our team intends to stay at the forefront of Montreal's real estate industry.

*We have climbed to be the number three team in Westmount – in less than three years!**



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