



Left, an anonymous artist left a positive message in Murray (King George) Park January 5, 2020. Right, shoppers line up January 5, 2021, outside the Metro grocery store on Victoria, which limits the number of shoppers due to COVID-19.

LEFT: RALPH THOMPSON; RIGHT: INDEPENDENT.

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## \$5.7M contract awarded to rebuild heritage greenhouses

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The end seems to be in sight! City council at its December 21 meeting – the last of the year – mandated the execution of rebuilding the city’s heritage greenhouses

Province's COVID curfew affects city's rinks, toboggan run  
See p.2 for story

that were closed for safety reasons more than five years ago.

The contract was awarded to St-Denis Thompson Inc. for the “restoration and execution of the work” at a maximum cost of \$5.7 million including taxes. At \$4.9 million excluding taxes, it was the lowest conforming bid of three that ranged to a high of \$7.7 million.

“This is very good news. We are now finally ..... continued on p. 2

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# Rinks, toboggan changes reflect curfew

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The 8 pm curfew and new month-long COVID restrictions and guidelines for Quebec announced January 6 have forced the city once again to modify or discontinue some services, especially those that Westmount specifically tailored to benefit residents during the pandemic.

As of January 9, the Westmount recreation centre was closed to all public skating, while hockey and other team sports were not to be allowed on outdoor rinks.

As well, all rinks and the King George (Murray) Park toboggan run will shut down at 7:30 pm when lights will be turned off.

No changes had been made last week at the library including its curbside service whose hours already adhere to the curfew regulations.

### Many tobogganers

Given the large numbers of people congregating in Murray Park to use the new toboggan run without regard, in many in-

stances, to social distancing, the run was closed Friday morning, January 8 for re-grooming and to improve the safety of users.

"We will also add barricades and reconfigure the open portion at the top for better crowd control and distancing," said city director general Benoit Hurtubise.

### Park cadets

The city is also hiring park cadets as part of the Public Security workforce that will patrol the area over the weekends.

"The popularity of the toboggan run is a clear indication of how desperate the kids are to get outside," Mayor Christina Smith said. "It's important that people do not use

the part of the park that is fenced off to the west of the toboggan run" to prevent sliding onto Côte St. Antoine. "Our insurance company has made this very, very clear.

"I am also asking parents to please respect social distancing," she said, referring to numbers of users noticed crowding together and socializing while watching their children. "The last thing we want is to have to close the park, but people have to respect the rules. Our goal is that we always keep our parks open."

She also asked residents to be especially vigilant regarding overnight parking signs, especially given the curfews. "We won't be using warning sirens overnight."

### Greenhouses, cont'd. from p. 1

at the stage to start work," stated Mayor Christina Smith. The end of the project is planned for October.

The project is to kick off with a meeting between the contractor and city officials at the end of this month, city director general Benoit Hurtubise said last week.

The cost of the current mandate will be paid from the city's appropriated surplus for the greenhouse restoration, he confirmed. Smaller professional services contracts along the way have been financed by capital works budgets.

The complex has been closed to the public since September 2015 while the city undertook studies on its condition, options for rebuilding and searched for professionals deemed to have expertise in restoring the 1927 conservatory and frog pond structure.

Details of the project presented by Councillor Cynthia Lulham on awarding the contract called for "a specialized contractor to tackle the complete restoration of the building including its steel structure, replacement of the glass-roofing system with new tempered and laminated panels, and restoration of the wood."

Also specified is a new interior layout as adopted by city council in 2019. This includes an accessibility ramp to link the interior with the library (see story and preliminary diagram, June 4, 2019, p. 1).

The project also includes a new mechanical room in the basement of the production greenhouses as well as new lighting.

The heritage conservatory and the production greenhouses were closed to the public after an overhead glass panel fell beside a citizen seated on a bench September 20, 2015. This led to the discovery of other panes that had either slipped or were in danger of falling (see story and photos October 20, 2015, p. 1).

When the glass first fell, Lulham recalled, "we were told we had to demolish the entire structure."

This led to a series of studies and professional services mandates that included those from ARUP for technical feasibility (2017-2018), Nadeau Nadeau Blondin architects for interior design planning and restoration strategy, and Affleck de La Riva architects for design development, execution drawings and site supervision (2019-2021). (See story October 15, 2019, p. 11 for more detail on these efforts.)

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## Toboggan run a hit!

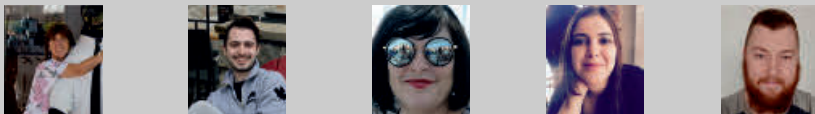
The toboggan run at Murray (King George) Park has been a huge success this season, as seen on January 2. The run itself is not new, although the addition of man-made snow is (see December 8, p. 1). “I hope you got a photograph of that. We should have done this a long time ago,” said former mayor Peter Trent to the *Independent* the same day. On a less positive note, some Westmounters have worried that social distancing is not being respected on the slope. The straight run format was changed to a curved one last week (see story, p. 2), as seen from above January 8 (inset).

PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

METRO'S SANDRO & RAYMOND SAYING GOODBYE SOON

After 40+ years of service with both Steinberg Inc. and Metro Inc. in Westmount, Sandro Patulli and Raymond Genier are retiring on February 19 and February 20 respectively. We would like to thank our loyal customers who were not just customers but friends. To name a few: Nancy Bloomfield, Valerie Chait, Linda Lubner, Rosemary Shapiro, Carrie Garbarino, Dr. Marilyn Goldenberg, and hundreds and hundreds more.

We would also like to thank and congratulate Metro director Fiorello Vellucci, who at all times gave 100 percent to satisfy his customers during very difficult times with store renovations and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Editor's note

RIP Bruce Kent

It was with sadness that I heard last week of the passing of our client, money manager Bruce Kent, on December 26. I did not know him personally, but I appreciated his steadfast support of this newspaper and noticed his frequent appearance in Social Notes, often in support of good causes. My condolences to his family, many of whom have also appeared in these pages, and to his team at RBC Dominion Securities. – DP.

We are saying goodbye but will never forget each and every one of you who were not mentioned but know who you are.

SANDRO PATULLI AND RAYMOND GENIER,  
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THANKS FOR THE OUTDOOR FACILITIES!

Skating outdoors when the temperature hasn't been below freezing long enough to make the usual outdoor rinks? Creating a toboggan run when the grass is still green in the parks? Congratulations and thanks to those people who came up with these ideas and put them into action at a time when we need to be outside and having fun, even if it is winter. I find myself smiling every time I walk by or stand and watch awhile.

ANNE HOLLOWAY, LANSDOWNE AVE.

COVID PAUSES TRADITION, BUT NOT ITS SPIRIT

This photo of lower Westmount's annual neighbourhood carolling evening appeared in *The Westmount Examiner* December 19, 2002 to mark the 25th anniversary of neighbours getting together for an evening of carolling, Christmas treats and donations for local charities.

You might recognize a couple of former mayors and other noteworthy residents.

This infamous year of 2020 marks the first time since 1977 that friends and neigh-



bours had to forgo this worthwhile event. People are still encouraged however to donate to Chez Doris, The Open Door, The Old Brewery Mission or other needy organizations.

VIRGINIA ELLIOTT, HILLSIDE AVE.

LET THE CHILDREN PLAY

What a pity that a Westmount school [St. Leon] saw fit to lock up its playground during the difficult Christmas season! There were big chains with locks on all four entrances! This has put an end to children playing, broomball and foot hockey, even when they supplied their own hockey net.

The school yard was definitely safer than the street. Why did St. Leon's school board decide to restrict this school yard to everyone, except the squirrels?

P.S. I missed the *Indie* during the holidays! Looking forward to more news from you, and definitely a better 2021. Stay safe.

BEVERLEY HUTCHISON, KITCHENER AVE.

PRINCE ALBERT PARK 'IMPROVED' FOR NO REASON

Much to my dismay, there has been yet another encroachment on our beloved Prince Albert Park, the area of which is entirely fenced off for future [playground] construction.

First there was the "water park" sprinkler system with its large concrete floor. The surrounding grass remains soggy and muddy. But I digress, and I understand our children's need for fresh air and sunshine as well as relief from the heat.

Now, we sadly see park space being taken over by an unsightly project – a concrete and plastic eyesore: a new play structure.

Was anything wrong with the old one? Perhaps I missed the public consultation on this.

Last but not least, whose idea was it to replace the park garbage bins, while in the meantime leaving nothing in their place except one temporary bin in the middle of the park? This temporary one is not easily (or safely) accessible after dark. The older,

missing bins were at each outer end of the park, easily accessible from the sidewalks of Claremont and Prince Albert.

It is now January and still the new garbage bins are nowhere in sight ...

The planning and execution of these initiatives are disappointing

D. BACKMAN, WINDSOR AVE.

HILLSIDE TRAFFIC

I'm sending this letter in the hope that someone can address this issue. We moved to Hillside Ave. two years ago and since then I have observed some major issues with the high school students' parents.

Unfortunately, most of the time they don't properly respect the residents. They create traffic jams as they want to drop their kids right at the door in Hillside Lane. They park on the sidewalk and disturb people by blocking it. Most of the time, they ignore the stop sign at Hillside Ave.

They drive fast on Hillside Ave. and don't respect speed limits.

NIMA EBRAHIMZADEH, HILLSIDE AVE.

DORCHESTER & GREENE TRAFFIC

On December 8 at around 1:30 pm, I was working at my desk when I heard the screech of tires and the violent sound of metal hitting metal at the intersection of Greene and Dorchester.

A cyclist delivering an UberEats order was hit by an SUV. There were screams, multiple car horns blaring and, in the middle of the intersection, the cyclist lying motionless on the road, her bike mangled. Pedestrians were trying their best to calm the panicking cyclist and control the traffic. Soon, several police cars, an ambulance and a firetruck were on the scene.

After about an hour of chaos, the cyclist was rushed to the hospital, witnesses were walking home and the traffic was gone.

Then, a few minutes later, looking out my window, seeing the cars rush by this intersection, drivers speeding and honking at each other, pedestrians jay-walking to save a few extra seconds, cyclists dangerously maneuvering through vehicles, it was as if this horrific accident never happened. It was as if we all didn't just witness a person almost lose her life in such a violent, yet preventable way.

I've lived and worked on the corner of this intersection for many years and I can't tell you the number of close calls that there have been.

This incident, however, was a shocking wake-up call. Because this accident, and all accidents that have occurred on this corner, could have easily been prevented if we had a more organized and efficient traffic system.

This intersection needs continued on p. 12

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# City adopts \$114.3M budget New tax rate brings 2% hike for 'average' homeowner

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

When Westmount property owners open their municipal tax bills, which are to be mailed out at the end of the month, those owning single-family dwellings will find, on average, an increase of 2 percent for 2021, according to the city's new budget adopted December 21.

This translates into an increase of \$277 and a tax bill of \$14,126, based on the average valuation of a dwelling now at \$1,954,819, announced Councillor Kathleen Kez, finance commissioner, in delivering the budget speech.

The budget of \$114.3 million compares with last year's \$114.1 million. It uses a surplus appropriation of \$15.9 million to reduce the cost of local services to \$52.2 million.

Another \$62.1 million goes for the shared costs of island-wide Montreal agglomeration services such as police, fire and transit; and the regional Montreal Metropolitan Community, the combination of which are up \$1.3 million.

"Our goal for 2021 has been to limit the tax bill increase of the average single-family dwelling to two percent," Kez explained.

This is the largest group of taxpayers. This two-percent increase, however, would have been only 0.48 percent "had it not been for the two-percent increase in the agglomeration charges to Westmount," she added.

## Tax rates, highlights

Tax rates per \$100 of valuation were set at \$0.7226 for residential properties containing five housing units or less (which includes the single-family dwelling), \$0.7320 for apartment buildings of six or more units and \$2.8726 for non-residential (commercial) properties.

Highlights of the city's own \$68.1 million in expenses include \$25.6 million for the remuneration of city workers, another \$15.5 million for departmental expenses and \$24.3 million allocated to pay-as-you-go for funding the capital works budget for infrastructure renewal.

This amount is offset by the surplus appropriation of \$15.9 million, an increase from last year's budgeted appropriation of \$10.2 million.

"Council remains committed to its pay-as-you-go policy for funding capital works rather than relying on borrowing," Kez said. This year's increase contributes to an

increase in the 2021 record-setting capital works budget of \$27.2 million adopted November 16.

An increase in remuneration allows for five new positions in Urban Planning. Others include costs related to parks and green spaces, insurance premiums and building maintenance.

## Revenues

Of the total revenues ..... required to balance the *continued on p. 7*

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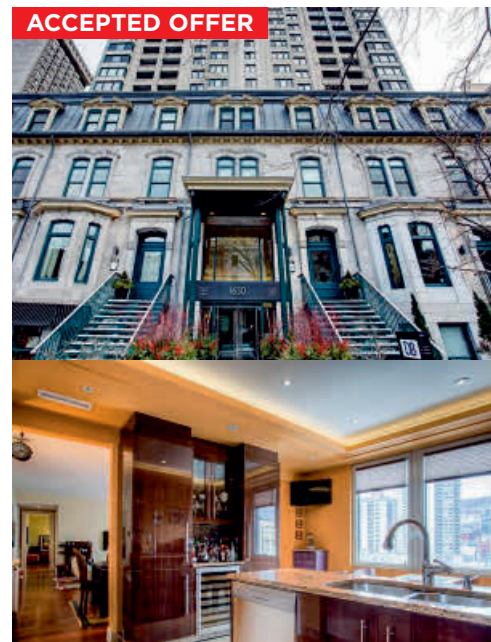
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## Resident Lipovenko: 'Neighbourhood under assault'

# Construction of NDG seniors' residence gets permit for temporary use of land

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A holiday lull in the construction of a seniors' home in NDG by Groupe Maurice brought some peace for nearby Westmount residents from the noise and vibrations of pile-driving on the property at de Maisonneuve, Claremont and St. Catherine.

### Tax rate, cont'd. from p.5

budget, most (\$94.1 million) will come from the collection of taxes and another \$3 million from compensation in lieu of taxes on provincial and federal property.

Sources other than taxation include transfer duties (known as the welcome tax) projected at \$7.3 million, and another \$11.4 million from parking meters, tickets and fines, and permits and licences. Nearly \$2 million is expected from recreational activities.

Details of the budget and budget speech may be found on the city's website under Resident Zone/taxation and valuation/2021 budget.

ine.

At the same time came news Westmount's Urban Planning department had issued a temporary permit December 17 for three of the worksite's trailers to occupy some of the CP land located in Westmount on the south side of St. Catherine near its intersection with York.

This permit included noise by-law conditions that give the city the right to enforce the by-law and work hours at this particular strip of land, District 5 councillor Marina Brzeski told the *Independent* last week.

The six-month permit requires that the land be restored back to its original state once the trailers vacate the area, that a damage deposit be paid for the sidewalks (located in Westmount) and that the workers respect the city's noise By-law 1387 and permitted working hours.

### Hydro lines in

As well, the occupation permit allowed the city to install hydro lines to power the trailers in place of generators, which has eliminated that noise, explained Brzeski who emailed the information December 17 to Dorothy Lipovenko, whose house on York St. is one of the most directly affected.

The noise and vibrations from the pile driving at the actual worksite had been so strong that they could be heard and felt by many in the Victoria village, reportedly causing at least one resident of Burton to retreat to her home office in the basement.

The noise also could be heard as far west as Grosvenor near Sherbrooke, where Brzeski lives.

Construction hoarding around the site (rather than wire fencing) might help dampen the noise, suggested one resident.

City director general Benoit Hurtubise emphasized that the permit issued by

Westmount applies only to the site used by the trailers that happens to lie in Westmount, but not to the actual location of the pile-driving and the eventual residence, which is entirely in NDG.

### Residents to communicate directly with Groupe Maurice

At the November 2 council meeting, before the trailers had moved onto the land in Westmount, Brzeski stated that Westmount residents neighbouring the worksite are to be communicated with directly by Groupe Maurice. This was explained during a presentation it made to the city council in a general committee session (see story November 17, p. 17).

But, Lipovenko told the *Independent* last week, she has asked the city in vain to arrange a meeting between Groupe Maurice and Westmount residents. She also contended that information to residents should be relayed by the city, and that the onus should not be on residents to relay their concerns to the builder.

"We're a neighbourhood under assault," she said. Especially given the grief that residents experienced with previous NDG construction projects such as the MUHC's Glen super-hospital and the STM's Vendôme tunnel work that is still ongoing.

"I want to know why, after all we've been through, it's the residents who have to deal with Groupe Maurice," though she added she had "a good relationship" with them.

Brzeski, who has been making regular information updates on the construction project at council meetings, reported at the December 21 session that the construction would take a holiday break from December 20 to January 2 "with some flexibility to extend to January 10."

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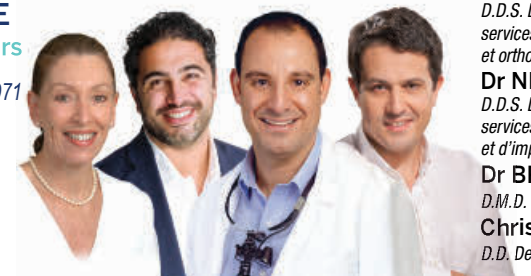
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## Take care of yourself

- Rely on your personal strengths and have confidence in your abilities.
- Remind yourself of the winning strategies you used in the past to overcome difficulties. There is no one-size-fits-all solution! Each and every one of us must take steps to foster our own well-being.
- Enjoy life's little pleasures, such as listening to music, taking a warm bath, reading, exercising, etc.
- If you live close to nature, make the most of it. Breathe deeply and slowly as you walk.
- Learn to delegate, and allow others to help you.
- Ask for help when you feel overwhelmed. **It is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of strength when you are strong enough to do what is necessary to help yourself.**
- Lend a hand in your community in a way that respects your personal limits and public health directives. By helping others, you can improve their wellness and your own as well.
- Think about what has meaning and value for you. Reflect on the important things in your life that you can hold onto in hard times.
- Reduce the stressors in your life.
- While it is important to stay informed, limit the amount of time spent reading about COVID-19. Information overload can increase stress and anxiety, and even cause depression.



## The *Getting Better My Way* digital tool

*Getting Better My Way* is a digital self-management tool for emotional health. If you are experiencing stress, anxiety or distress, this tool can help improve your well-being by identifying practical things you can do to feel better. Learn more at [Québec.ca/Gettingbetter](https://Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter)





## Give voice to your feelings

- Keep in mind that having a range of emotions is normal. Feelings play an important role in life, and it is essential to experience them without passing judgment.
- Use words to express what you are going through. Do you feel alone? Are you worried?
- Allow yourself to share your feelings with a trusted friend or family member. It might also be helpful to write down how you're feeling or call a helpline. Find what works for you!
- Those closest to you may not necessarily be able to "read" you. Express your feelings.
- Leave space in your life for your feelings and those of your loved ones.



## Make judicious use of social media

- Use critical thinking before sharing something on social media. Ill-advised information can have harmful effects and be detrimental to everyone's efforts in these times.
- Use social media to share positive actions.
- Watch videos that make you smile.



## Choose healthy living habits

- Try to keep to a routine for eating, resting, sleeping and other daily activities.
- Take time to eat well.
- Go to bed at an hour that lets you get enough sleep.
- Be physically active on a regular basis, while complying with public health directives.
- Reduce your consumption of stimulants like coffee, tea, soft drinks, energy beverages, chocolate, etc.
- Drink lots of water.
- Lower your alcohol, drug and tobacco consumption, or simply say no to them entirely. The same goes for gambling.

## Help and resources

We are all going through unprecedented times that can intensify our emotional reactions. For example, you might feel greater fatigue or have fears that you can't shake, or even have trouble just dealing with the day-to-day. Focus on these signs of a problem and, as soon as you can, contact resources that can help you to better manage your feelings and develop new coping strategies.

- **Info-Social 811**  
Info-Social 811 is a free and confidential telephone consultation service available 24/7
- **Regroupement des services d'intervention de crise du Québec**  
Provides 24/7 referral services for people in distress (French): [centredecrise.ca/listecentres](http://centredecrise.ca/listecentres)
- **Suicide prevention crisis helpline**  
Crisis helpline that provides suicide prevention services 24/7:  
1 866 APPELLE (277-3553)

**For a host of other helpful resources, visit [Quebec.ca/gettingbetter](http://Quebec.ca/gettingbetter)**

**[Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter](http://Quebec.ca/Gettingbetter)**

 **Info-Social 811**

**Québec** 



# infoWESTMOUNT

2021.01.12 • Vol. 2/1

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Published by the City of Westmount

NOUVELLES

PROCHAINE SÉANCE  
DU CONSEIL

Lundi 18 janvier

NEWS

NEXT COUNCIL  
MEETING

Monday, January 18



### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

#### COVID-19 : nouvelles mesures

De nouvelles mesures sanitaires du gouvernement du Québec sont entrées en vigueur le 9 janvier, dont l'interdiction des activités d'équipe, l'annulation des activités intérieures au Centre des loisirs de Westmount et la fermeture des parcs à 19 h 30 en raison du couvre-feu.



### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

#### COVID-19: new measures

New sanitary measures from the Gouvernement du Québec came into effect on January 9, including a ban on group activities, the cancellation of indoor activities at the Westmount Recreation Centre and the closure of parks at 7:30 p.m. due to the curfew.

#### Collecte de sapins de Noël les mercredis 13 et 20 janvier

Placez l'arbre, dépouillé de toute décoration et non emballé, sur votre terrain en bordure de rue avant 7 h le jour de la collecte, ou après 20 h la veille de la collecte. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org)

#### Respectez les règles pour les pistes de luge du parc King George

Les pistes de luge du parc King George font fureur, mais la pandémie est toujours omniprésente et le respect des consignes sanitaires est de rigueur. Nous faisons appel à tous de lire et de respecter les règles affichés sur le site afin d'assurer la sécurité de tous. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org)

#### Carte d'accès aux installations 2021

Est-ce que votre compte est à jour? Vous devez activer votre compte en ligne à chaque année et pour certaines activités, obtenir une nouvelle carte d'accès aux installations. Les activités d'hiver débutent le 8 janvier. [westmount.org/carte](https://westmount.org/carte)

#### Revitalisation du parc Westmount

Le sondage sur les concepts d'aménagements proposés par la firme Stantec a été prolongé jusqu'au 18 janvier. [engage.westmount.org](https://engage.westmount.org).

#### Emplois d'été 2021 à la Ville

La date limite pour soumettre sa candidature est le 31 janvier. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org)

#### Christmas tree collection

**Wednesdays, January 13 and 20**  
Place the tree, free of all decorations and unwrapped, on your property next to the curb before 7 a.m. on collection day or after 8 p.m. the evening before. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org)

#### 2021 Facility Access Card

Is your account up to date? you must activate your online account each year, and for some activities, obtain a new Facility Membership Card. Winter activities begin January 8. [westmount.org/card](https://westmount.org/card)

#### Respect the toboggan run rules at King George Park

The toboggan runs in King George Park are a big hit, but the pandemic is still around us and it's essential to continue to respect the sanitary guidelines in effect. Please read and respect all of the rules posted on site and keep this activity safe for everyone. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org)

#### Westmount Park Revitalization Project

The survey on the design concepts proposed by the firm Stantec has been extended until January 18. [engage.westmount.org](https://engage.westmount.org).

#### 2021 summer employment at the City

The deadline for submitting an application is January 31. [westmount.org](https://westmount.org)

## BIBLIOTHÈQUE

#### Service de cueillette sans contact

La Bibliothèque demeure fermée au public, mais vous pouvez réserver vos items en ligne ou par courriel. Une fois votre réservation confirmée, vous aurez 2 jours pour les ramasser. Horaire : Lundi et mercredi : 13 h à 17 h  
Mardi et jeudi : 13 h à 19 h  
Vendredi : 10 h à 17 h. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Sessions en studio au Victoria Hall

**Samedi 16 janvier à 20 h** en ligne. Athena Holmes (roots/blues/jazz). Savourez nos concerts intimes en direct sur YouTube. Vous aurez les meilleurs sièges! [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Les marionnettes s'amuse au gré des saisons : Search for the Blizzard Wizard

**Vendredi 23 janvier** sur YouTube. Création et interprétation par l'artiste et éducateur primé Jesse Stong. Sammy the Puppet est de retour avec une nouvelle série de courtes histoires originales pour les enfants! (en anglais). Les séances seront affichées sur notre chaîne YouTube. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Soirée de quiz virtuel

**Samedi 23 janvier 19 h** en ligne. Ce mois-ci, le quiz virtuel propose 5 séries de 10 questions chacune – jouez sur votre ordinateur ou votre appareil mobile. Inscriptions : [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Trousses de bricolages pour enfants

**Lundi 25 janvier.** Vive la neige! Inscris-toi pour participer à un atelier de bricolage à faire chez toi. Une trousse te sera remise à la Bibliothèque. Nous t'enverrons les dates de cueillette de trousse par courriel et des instructions détaillées seront affichées sur Instagram. Le nombre de places est limité et la pré-inscription est requise. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Concours littéraire McEntyre

**Thème : Vise haut, une marche à la fois.**  
Cette année, nous te demandons d'écrire une histoire, un poème ou un essai décrivant comment une petite action peut faire une grande différence dans une communauté. Invitation aux élèves du primaire et du secondaire. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org).

## LIBRARY

#### Contactless pickup service

The Library remains closed to the public, but you can reserve your items online or by email. After the reservation is confirmed, you will have 2 days to pick up your items. Schedule: Monday and Wednesday: 1-5 p.m.  
Tuesday and Thursday: 1-7 p.m.  
Friday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Virtual Quiz Night

**Saturday, January 23, 7 p.m.,** online. This month's live online quiz features 5 rounds of 10 questions each – play on your computer or mobile device. Sign up at [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Take and Make Craft Kits for Kids

**Monday, January 25.** Winter Wonderland! Sign up for a fun craft kit to do at home. Kits will be available for curbside pickup. We will send you pick-up dates for kits via email and detailed craft instructions will be posted on Instagram. Space is limited and pre-registration is required. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Victoria Hall Studio Sessions

**Saturday, January 16 at 8 p.m.** online. Athena Holmes (roots/blues/jazz). Enjoy our intimate concerts live on Youtube from the best seats in the house! [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### Puppet Shows by the Season - Search for the Blizzard Wizard

**January 23** on YouTube. Created and performed by Jesse Stong, award-winning artist/educator. Sammy the Puppet is back to act out a new series of short original stories for kids. New stories will be posted on our YouTube channel. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org)

#### McEntyre Literary Competition

**Theme: Think Big! Start Small!** This year, we would like you to write a creative story, poem or essay about how a small act can make a big difference in a community. Elementary and secondary students are invited to apply. [westlib.org](https://westlib.org).



## Remembering Irene Marks (1917-2020)

# Strong-willed community leader faced last battle just short of 104

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

"I did everything and anything," Irene Marks had told the *Independent* at age 91 in 2008. And with these words, she proudly summed up her own life, which she continued to pursue as an active community leader and volunteer known for her independence, spunk and determination.

She died at home December 17 of complications from COVID-19 less than a month shy of turning 104.

It was only after a minor fall in November that sent her briefly to a hospital emergency room that she contracted the coronavirus that took its toll as she continued to live alone in her apartment on Kensington, according to daughter Karin Marks.

"She wanted desperately to live out her life at home," said Marks, who served as city councillor from 1991 to 2001 and mayor from 2002 to 2005.

As a result, Karin, along with her sister Isobel, were able to be with their mother during her last days, "for which we're so grateful," she said. Irene is also survived by granddaughters Sue Ann and Carmen Puddington, grand-daughter Kylie Savage



Irene Marks at home in 2008.

and Karin's husband Brian Puddington. She is predeceased by Isobel's husband, the late Ross MacCormack.

### Fled Nazi Germany

Irene Marks, whose strong will was apparent from her teen years in Dresden, fled Nazi Germany in 1939 at age 22 with her parents. She had quit high school because she refused to carry out the "Heil Hitler" salute in the school's hallways and later, while working in the kitchen of a sanatorium, contemplated how she might poison him on his visit there (see story November 18, 2008).

Coming to Canada, she married lawyer Lawrence Marks and moved to Grosvenor, where they raised their daughters.

She worked at the former Reddy Memorial Hospital in Westmount, rising to become laboratory chief, managed a large apartment building and ran a not-for-profit handicraft store.

Immersing herself in the community, she co-founded the Golden Age Association that evolved into the Cummings Jewish Centre for seniors and chaired a seniors' group at Temple Emanu-El Beth Shalom.

In her late 80s, she was a familiar figure down on hands and knees tending the front garden of Karin and Brian's house on Lansdowne Ave. She was also still driving voters to the polls and volunteering for Meals on Wheels.

### 'Helping people'

"My whole life has been helping people," she said. "I don't know how to say 'No' if I know I can help."

In 2016 age 99, she fell, lying in the hallway of her apartment building for many hours awaiting transport to hospital by Urgences Santé (see story February 23, p. 1). Months later after a lengthy rehabilitation from a broken wrist, pelvis and hip in the fall, she continued to pursue many of her regular activities.

It was the more recent fall at home near the end of November that sent her to the Jewish General Hospital for an overnight stay, where both she and daughter Karin were believed to have contracted the coronavirus, Karin said. "It was just a mild case, but it weakens you and takes so much out of you. It was just too big an illness for her."

A celebration of her life is to be held at a later date.



## Atwater Library Financial Literacy resources for you

We're offering a variety of information sessions on personal finances and estate planning. Live online by Zoom with moderated discussion.

### Learn from experts for free.

This winter's topics include Powers of Attorney, Protection Mandates, Advance Medical Directives, Wills, Estates, and Income Tax Preparation and Filing Your Return Online.

Our staff are eager to tell you more.

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## COVID-19 – TOGETHER WE CAN HELP!

### • Groceries – Not Venturing out for Groceries?



We're providing a grocery shopping and delivery service for at-risk and self-isolating seniors in the Westmount area. A volunteer will do the shopping for you and deliver the items right to your door!

If you'd be interested in receiving a delivery, send us an email at [volunteer.contactivity@gmail.com](mailto:volunteer.contactivity@gmail.com) or call us at 438 699-9927.

### • Outreach Services



Need information about resources and services? Contactivity's Outreach worker (ITMAV Program) can be reached at [fsmithcontactivity@gmail.com](mailto:fsmithcontactivity@gmail.com) to 438 920-3460 to refer seniors to the resources and services available to them.

**CONTACTIVITY CENTRE**  
4695 de Maisonneuve Blvd W.  
Westmount, corner Lansdowne

514 932-2326 | [contactivitycentre.org](http://contactivitycentre.org)



Letters, cont'd. from p. 4

speed-bumps, longer red lights, security cameras, and police and security\* cars stopping drivers for speeding and ticketing pedestrians for jay-walking.

If people refuse to respect the rules of the road, then the city of Westmount needs to do a better job enforcing the law.\*

For the sake and safety of Montrealers, this must be done immediately.

This type of preventable accident must never happen again.

And to the dear cyclist whose life was altered due to this incident, wherever you are, I hope you are doing well and I am sorry this happened to you. This city let you down.

NADIME RAHIMIAN, DORCHESTER BLVD.  
\*Editor's note: For clarity, Westmount Public Security does not have the power to stop cars and issue speeding or other moving violation tickets. The Montreal police have that power, but the city of Westmount does not control the Montreal police force, which is an agglomeration power. The agglomeration is effectively run by the city of Montreal, where it has the vast majority of the votes. – DP.

PLEASE: MORE CIVILITY,  
LESS SPEED

When I first arrived in Westmount, I was told by locals that Westmount was nice

but that it had changed. Although people were still proud of living in the city, they wanted to make a point to me: "Westmount had changed." Upon arrival, I couldn't make sense of that assessment.

Now entering into my 14th year in Westmount on Grosvenor Ave., I think I could make sense of what they meant to say at the time. At least, I can certainly talk about what has changed in the past 13 years, which is probably the continuation of what people had seen changing before I arrived. What comes to mind to describe what has changed is civility, the dictionary definition of which is: "formal politeness and courtesy in behaviour or speech."

Let's give a few examples of that. There is not a day that I am not stunned by car speed in the streets of Westmount. Not a day. People have money. People have big cars and people don't care. It's the "me, myself and I" attitude, men and women alike. It is stunning to see them drive fast without paying any attention to where they are and the risk they bear to others. In fact, there have been a few times when I approached some drivers and asked them to slow down. In both cases, they gave me the finger! Yes, in Westmount; yes, in our great city! Isn't that a lack of courtesy in behaviour?

Another example is linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 2020, I have never seen so many people walking and jogging in the streets of Westmount. The resilience of people has been remarkable. However, on numerous occasions, people would lack courtesy. Without even saying "Hi," people would say: "You should wear your mask or you should walk on the other side of the street."

It is just like if what had always been remarkable in this city, a sense of civility, even when facing adversity, has completely escaped people and been replaced by rude language or behaviour.

While reflecting on the situation I asked myself what could explain this lack of civility. What could be the root cause? I am not sure that I found anything significant to share but one thing is for sure, the city of Westmount is not doing much to help.

While driving around Montreal, you see more initiatives in Rosemont or TMR, not to mention the Plateau, to slow down cars. In fact, the city of Westmount should have launched a long time ago an awareness campaign to sensitize people to car speed. The city is remarkably quiet and inefficient in that regard. In the summer, they add a few speed bumps but in too many cases, they pack them away for winter. Coercive measures should also be part of the solution. When is the last time you saw the police\* do anything in Westmount? And when they do distribute tickets, it is the same speed traps that allow them to fill their quota quickly. What does it do to influence future behaviour? Not much!

As far as courtesy in speech is concerned, I am not sure what needs to be done although I am a firm believer that education is key. Be nice to people and expect that life and people will give it back to you! In these years where individuality is king, perhaps gaining back a sense of collectivity wouldn't hurt. This might be what has changed in Westmount!

Happy New Year!

PAUL LEVESQUE, GROSVENOR AVE.

\*Editor's note: For clarity, the city of Westmount does not control the Montreal police force, which is an agglomeration power. The agglomeration is effectively run by the city of Montreal, where it has the vast majority of the votes. – DP.

CYCLISTS' BEHAVIOUR  
SHOULD CHANGE

This is my reply to the three critical letters published in your December 8 issue (p. 10) responding to my earlier letters on the subject of cyclists' demands and behaviour.

I am not and never have been against cycling. My wife and I had bicycles for years. All I am trying to do is get cyclists to reform their behaviour and show a little respect for pedestrians as well as having some regard for their own safety. Is this "ludicrous" to quote a word favoured by critic No. 3 [Juliana Yang]? No motorist wants to harm a cyclist, but when they run lights and stop signs, go the wrong way on

one-way streets, ride on sidewalks and down one-way streets, wear dark clothing at night without lights or reflectors, there is bound to be trouble. I would have thought that promoting good practices in these matters would have been at the top of a cyclists' association's mission, but no. All the so-called Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists of Westmount (APCW) does is clamour for more and more privileges. They are in denial when it comes to bad practices.

It is ironic that the "P" in APCW stands for pedestrians, given the disrespect shown by cyclists for pedestrians. I believe that I have supported the pedestrians' position more effectively than the APCW.

It is true that I have also decried cyclists' demands to reduce already scarce parking spots. The elderly are not able to cycle (as has been pointed out many times in these columns) and the adverse effect of reduced parking on small merchants already struggling because of COVID and internet purchasing is well documented. Montreal has already gone far too far in this direction, for which the Plante administration has taken considerable flak and plummeted in the polls. To equate the effort to stem this movement with destroying the planet is beyond the pale. That is "ludicrous." Electric cars will be replacing fossil fuel-powered cars, possibly quite soon. But there will be just as many cars, if not more, with which cyclists will have to share the road.

I also point out that I have never said that cyclists should have no privileges. I was pleased to hear recently, for example, that snow clearing on the Lachine canal bike path had been announced. They have been given plenty to date and I am not seeking to have those withdrawn. I have merely said "no new privileges" until we see some major improvement in their behaviour. A modest enough position, I submit.

There are some good cyclists just as there are some jay-walking pedestrians and bad motorists. In the spirit of the New Year let us hope for improved comportment from all categories.

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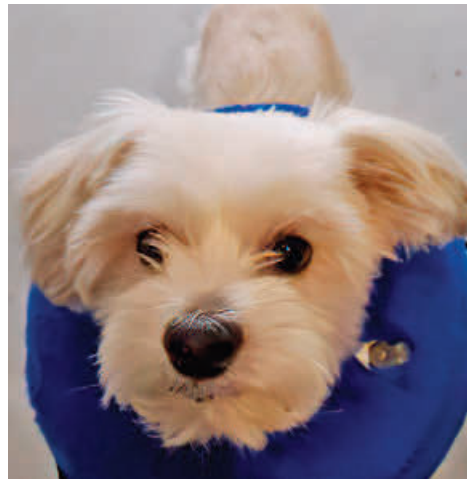
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## Westmount A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

## 'C' is for Cookie



within 24 hours for a telephone interview, followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA.

Your neighbour, Lysanne

To start our New Year off right, what better than to welcome adorable Cookie? He is waiting now for a loving family at the Montreal SPCA kennel. Cookie is a cuddly white lap buddy with warm eyes and a delightful personality. He is affectionate with all and friendly with other dogs. He is as healthy as can be at eight years of age, up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped. His identification number is A46300690 and you can refer to it when you visit the Montreal SPCA website at [www.sPCA.com](http://www.sPCA.com) and fill out the adoption application for Cookie on the attached link. Once submitted, you will then be contacted

## Twila for a loving Home



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

This is our first cat adoption of 2021. Let's make him the first of those special cats brought into our neighborhood families for this New Year.

Twila is a perfect grey-and-white domestic longhair, so elegant and affectionate. He is waiting so patiently at the Mon-

tréal SPCA cattery with great hope of a cuddly, peaceful family to spend his days loving.

Twila is very healthy, a senior 14 years of age, up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped. His identification number is 46339884 and you can refer to it when you visit the Montreal SPCA website at [www.sPCA.com](http://www.sPCA.com) and fill out the adoption application for him on the attached link. Once submitted, you will then be contacted within 24 hours for a telephone interview, followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA.

Your neighbour,  
Lysanne

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## HOW TO GET THE WINTER TO FLY BY

*Great online courses and workshops for seniors  
that will fill up your mind, heart and your time!*

- "The Beatles + the British Invasion," "Classical Music of the Romance Period."
- Intergenerational Zoom Visits and Tech Assistance – what a treat to have a high school student pop by weekly on Zoom to chat and also help you with digital dilemmas
- Intergenerational Death Café – sounds morbid but it's not. Just people of all ages talking about life and death and everything in between

**NOT INTO VIRTUAL GET-TOGETHERS?** We have community story sharing happening by phone and that might be just the ticket for you!

(Or... sign up with us to get some free tutoring so that you can one day venture boldly forth into the world of Zoom.)

**WE HAD MANY ADDITIONAL WINTER COURSES** which have already filled up with members because they receive our newsletter. How about joining Contactivity so you don't miss out in the future? Plus you could then join our famous parties (now on Zoom of course). For members we will have a Valentine's Party and a St. Patrick's party, both with live entertainment.

There's even a virtual tour of Santa Fe in March, animated by a guide who is right down there in New Mexico. Also, wellness guest speakers.

Check out our website at [www.contactivitycentre.org](http://www.contactivitycentre.org) for more details and to register. You can also leave us a message at **514-932-2326**

**CONTACTIVITY CENTRE**  
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Programmes et services pour les aînés  
Programs and services for seniors

## LOCAL CLASSIFIEDS

### Snow & Yard Work Available

Snow shoveling (no driveway), Gardening, Weeding, Trimming, Adding Mulch, Yard Cleaning, and Raking Leaves. Contact Vince at 514-294-5562.

## Classifieds in the Independent

Why list your goods (or services) on fly-by-night, who-knows-who-is-replying websites when you can list (and sell) locally?

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## Colourful Beauté



### Return to Retail

VERONICA REDGRAVE

*This series began as coverage of Westmount retailers’ adaptations and stories during and after the initial, spring lockdown occasioned by COVID-19. Unfortunately, we are now in another lockdown, but we hope the information remains helpful and inspiring to our readers.*

Natalie Beauté is owned by the husband-and-wife team of Natalie Dang, right, and Lam Dao.

“We opened just in time for the Christmas holidays last year [i.e. 2019],” explains Natalie. “And, of course, like everyone, we then closed for three months. Luckily, our landlord, Cromwell, has been very understanding, and our customers have returned.”

Having worked in the area for seven years prior, the team had clients who followed them to their new venture. During the lockdown, the couple went online, learning how to sterilize tools for the new environment, earning a Barbicide COVID-



19 Certificate.

The peaceful salon is full of light, which falls on an elegant white orchid and a cheerful little cactus. The collection of colours for manicures and pedicures ranges from standard ruby reds and pretty pinks to a true rainbow range – even black.

“In the warmer months, customers ask for bright colours as well as baby pinks, but now the tones are darker. Burgundy is popular, as are dark green and grey.

“We are now offering a gentler gel for nails. Instead of acrylic, we use tip powder: the colour is in the powder itself, which

has no smell and doesn’t need LED lighting.”

Although the shop has five stations, due to the challenging moment, the team only uses two, leaving spaces between. Each bears a plastic shield. The popular space has recently been open every day and until 8 pm on Friday and Saturday as “clients come in after their workday to prepare for the weekend. They tell me, that, having worked at home all day, it gives them a ‘lift’ of glamour!”

NATALIE BEAUTÉ  
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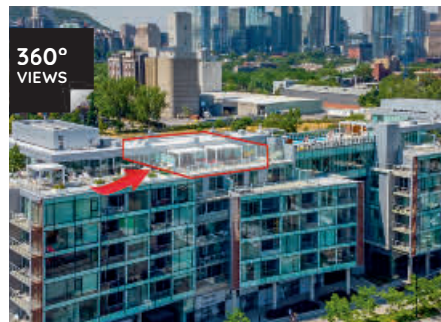
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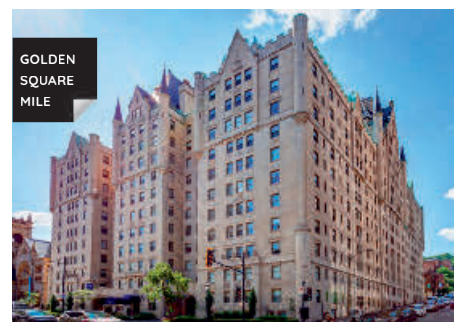
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"The process was very smooth and seamless. We really appreciate Lydia's professionalism, patience and her effort to go the extra mile."

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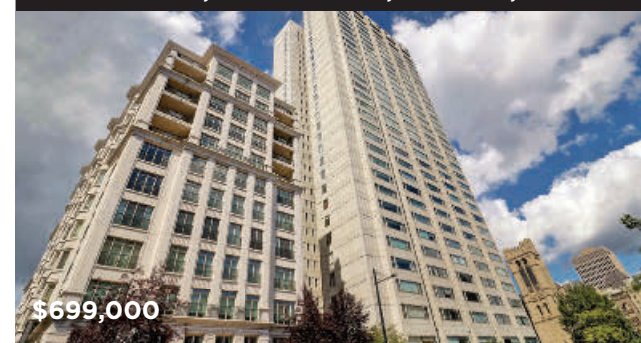
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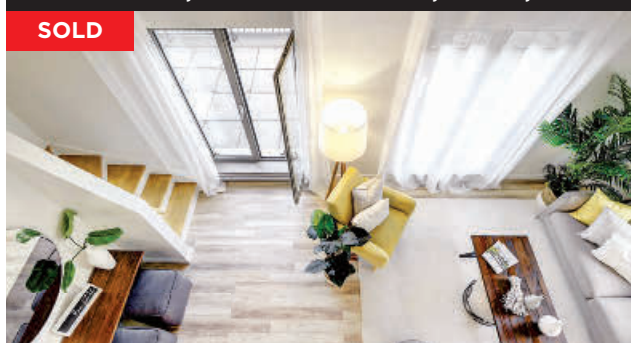
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