Weekly. Vol. 15 No. 3e We are Westmount March 30, 2021

Hard-surface tennis courts to open April 12

# City's camps, tennis lessons, soccer training get okay for summer

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

An updated Sports and Recreation brochure is expected to be available this week offering information on the department's programs for summer camps and tennis lessons as well as soccer training involving eight or fewer participants, according to

Contracts awarded to prep city's fields, parks for summer. See p. 14 department director Dave Lapointe.

The updates coincide with a city announcement March 25 that the city's hard-surface tennis courts would open Monday, April 12 for general use under strict COVID restrictions, temperature permitting. This year, one of the courts near the Westmount recreation centre will be dedicated to pickleball rather than providing it as a tennis option.

The department received many calls as soon as the Quebec government announced that some gyms would be allowed

to open by March 26, Lapointe said.

The changes did not apply to any of the city's in-person fitness-type programs, however, "so it looks like we'll run with [only] the Zoom programs. Unfortunately, we've done everything we've been given permission to do."

Permission had already given for the summer camps based on bubble groups and other restrictions, so the city is already planning on that, he emphasized, repeating what was reported the week before (see story March 16, p. 1).

## Done with snow?



"Good riddance"? Or "thank you" for a job well done, right till the end? "Let's hope we won't need one of these for a while," said one Westmounter. This shovel was spotted on Sherbrooke St. near Lansdowne March 24.

Photo: Ralph Thompson

## In support of recreation and culture

# Council awards \$130,500 to six non-profits

By Laureen Sweeney



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Six community organizations are to share in a total of \$130,500 in annual grants awarded by city council at its virtual meeting March 15. This compares with \$143,000 last year when one-time special allocations were given to Atwater Library and the Contactivity Seniors' Centre but it is up from \$128,000 in 2019.

This year's grants were announced as follows, with the 2020 amount in brackets:

- Atwater Library: \$25,560 to help finance its operating costs (\$45,500);
- Centre Greene: \$10,000 to help finance its operating costs (\$7,000);
- Contactivity Centre: \$75,000 to help finance its operating costs (\$140,000);
- Visual Arts Centre: \$4,823 for services provided to the city (\$6,500);

- Westmount Historical Association: \$3,375 to help finance its operating costs (\$6,000);
- Westmount YMCA: \$11,742 for programs provided to the city and the community at large (\$13,500).

"I know these groups are working very hard in very challenging times," said Councillor Mary Gallery, Westmount's commissioner of library, culture, sports and recreation.

The supporting grants are given for recreation and culture to local non-profit community groups and organizations that provide services that the city does not. Applications for this year's grants were reviewed by the administration and the general committee of council.



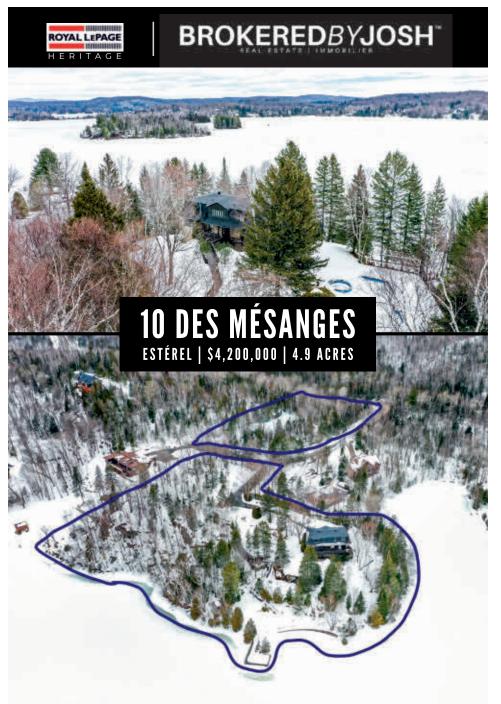


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# Refrigerated rink 'well used'

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

With removal of the refrigerated rink March 15 in Westmount Park, a daily tabulation of its use last week revealed just how busy it had been, Sports and Recreation director Dave Lapointe said last week.

On an average basis, 190 skaters a day were recorded over the busiest period from December 27 to January 4, the last day of most school holidays. "It was very, very busy," he said. Its use was limited to 20 skaters an hour.

The daily numbers averaged 135 in December, declining to 79 in January when the night lights were turned off at 7:30 pm

with the onset January 9 of the COVID curfew and to 48 in February.

These numbers were recorded by student monitors hired by the city to supervise the pandemic social distancing restrictions.

The rink had been set up for the time of its rental period of November 15 to March 15.

The city had rented the rink at a total cost of \$99,993 including tax credits to provide residents with an opportunity to access as many outdoor activities as possible during the COVID restrictions, including the toboggan run in King George (Murray) Park (see story October 13, p. 1).



The site of the refrigerated outdoor rink on March 25.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.





### FÊTE DE PÂQUES : Heures d'affaires et services municipaux

Les bureaux administratifs de la Ville de Westmount, soit l'Hôtel de ville, le Victoria Hall, Hydro Westmount, et les Services de la sécurité publique, des sports et loisirs et des travaux publics seront fermés le vendredi 2 avril et le lundi 5 avril 2021 en raison de la fête de Pâques.

La Bibliothèque publique de Westmount sera fermée du vendredi au lundi inclusivement.

Les collectes régulières d'ordures et de résidus alimentaires auront lieu selon l'horaire habituel.

# **EASTER HOLIDAY: Business Hours and Municipal Services**

Administrative offices of the City of Westmount, including City Hall, Victoria Hall, Hydro Westmount, Public Works, Public Security and Recreation, will be closed Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> and Monday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 for the Easter holiday.

Westmount Public Library will be closed from Friday to Monday inclusively.

Garbage and kitchen waste collection will take place as usual, according to the regular schedule.

westmount.org

#### Allowing for more, larger ones

# No zoning register required for restaurant changes

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

In the absence of any applications to hold a zoning register in opposition to the city's proposed lifting of restaurant restrictions in the commercial districts, draft Bylaw 1568 is expected to be approved at the council meeting April 6. It amends zoning By-law 1303.

Councillor Cynthia Lulham, whose urban planning commissionership in-

cludes zoning and economic development, released the results last week after the deadline March 17 for people to apply for a register from the affected zones leading to a possible referendum.

The draft by-law removes longstanding restrictions on the numbers, types and sizes of restaurants in the five commercial zones in Victoria village and three in the Greene/St. Catherine district. In the Greene area, a previous regulation has also

been lifted that required table service (see story January 26, p. 1).

Lulham has consistently maintained that the city wanted to remove the restrictions to be prepared for the opening of more and larger restaurants to help revitalize the commercial areas.

This results from a survey of all residents in December 2019 in which 80 percent of the 737 respondents agreed with allowing more restaurants.

Letters, p. 6

Police Report, p. 18

Westmount A-dog-tions, p. 22

**9 Lives,** p. 22

Social Notes: Bronfmans support contemporary art, p. 21



The Myriade café on Victoria, background left, and Boss Grill on Somerville, right, both opened in Victoria village last year, as seen March 25.



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Québec.ca/COVIDvaccine

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The vaccine. A safe way to protect ourselves.





# The stuffed menagerie/dashboard zoo



A large group of stuffed animals on the dashboard of a truck parked on Arlington March 22.

#### PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON

# Identifying St. Joseph's guest



"Can one of your readers help me identify the bird nesting on a ledge of the Oratory?" wrote reader Harry Bloomfield (hbloomfield@field bloom.com) about this bird, pictured on March 15. PHOTO COURTESY OF H. BLOOMFIELD.



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#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON

#### A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

The gentleman seen wearing shorts in your "Spring is here" photo (March 23, p. 1) was also wearing gloves. He wasn't quite committed to spring yet. He is "a man for all seasons."

ROBIN C. MORTON, DOWNTOWN Editor's reply: Or maybe just two? – DP.

# COMPOST COLLECTION POINTS FOR WESTMOUNT, PLEASE

The Ville de Montréal has established a number of food waste collection points in city neighbourhoods like the one pictured above right on St. Ambroise near de Courcelle. Westmount is offering bins and curbside pick-up service for apartment build-



ings with 9 to 30 units under phase 2 of its composting programme, but not all small buildings have the space for storing food waste. In these buildings, residents who want to compost have few options.

I encourage Public Works to seriously consider including compost collection points as part of Westmount's efforts to reduce the amount of organic waste going to landfill, where it generates methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.

Marie-Christine Dufour, Victoria Ave.

# THANKS FOR THE LOADING ZONE

Thank you, Mr. Bruce St. Louis [interim assistant director general], for your rapid response on setting up the loading zone for the National grocery store on Sherbrooke.

Although recommended by the Transportation Advisory Committee seven months ago, the intended action was never taken. After receiving my note, within hours, you had Public Works put up the signs for the 10-minute zone. I greatly appreciate your take-charge approach to getting things done.

Thank you again and welcome back to Westmount as interim assistant director general.

Denis Biro, Burton Ave.

# CONTROL THE RETAIL RENTS, PLEASE

One idea that keeps coming to me is for the city to put in rent control for business

premises. Obviously, landlords should be able to make a profit and have adequate rental income to apply to repairs, renovations and good maintenance. However, in our two shopping areas, rent increases for good tenants have been exorbitant and resulted in businesses leaving. So shopping areas that are convenient for Westmount residents, that could be a commercial success, are now devoid of many former businesses.

I wish we had instituted rent control for these properties years ago!

Carla Laufer, Victoria Ave. *Editor's note*: The mayor has explained in the past (see April 9, 2019, p. 3) that the city does not have the power to implement rent controls. – DP

# We welcome your letters

We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week.

email us at:
editor@westmountindependent.com

# WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

#### We are Westmount

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# **Grace Dart Foundation donates \$300,000 to Neuro**

The Grace Dart Foundation announced March 15 that it is donating \$300,000 over two years to The Montreal Neurological Institute-Hospital ("the Neuro") in support of the Neuro-CareAxis Spine Program for Seniors.

The funds aim to help create a "virtual care module" enabling physiotherapists to offer telemedicine, personalized online exercise plans and a pilot program for inhome surgical assessment and follow-up.

"Spine pain disproportionately impacts the elderly," said a press release the same day.

"Patients can spend six months or more in pain waiting for a surgical consultation

only to learn they are not a candidate for surgery and should be treated through physiotherapy. Many seniors also face agerelated barriers to care, which have significantly worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic."

The Grace Dart Foundation aims to support warm and personal environments for the well-being of the elderly through its various donation efforts in five areas of giving: basic needs, loneliness and isolation, socialization and personal development, cognitive disorders, and living environment.

It has been located on Greene Ave. since September.





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Pedestrian corridor also sought

# Mark shared bike lanes on Sherbrooke St.: Lambert

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again, according to the adage based on a spider's determined re-building of its web.

And, after several years of asking for a dedicated bike path on Sherbrooke, a suggestion to at least paint bicycle symbols on the street met with a more receptive reply

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from Mayor Christina Smith at the city council meeting March 15.

"Sherbrooke remains a very hostile environment for residents who choose to travel by bicycle," explained Dan Lambert, president of the Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists of Westmount.

He said in a question submitted to the virtual meeting that drivers impatiently honk, pass too close or shout at cyclists to get off the road.

"To at least inform drivers that cyclists have the legal right to ride on Sherbrooke, will the city paint chevrons with bike symbols along the right-hand driving lanes?" he asked.

Calling it a "good and timely recommendation," Mayor Smith said the city would look at how it might be integrated.

Councillor Philip Cutler said he would be happy to bring it up to the Transportation Advisory Committee, adding that it might lead to a discussion and policy on the matter.

Lambert also stated that at the January 18 meeting he had raised the issue of finding an "alternative corridor" for pedestrians, joggers and users of wheelchairs heading east to Greene during the closure this summer of de Maisonneuve with its pedestrian corridor between Melville and Clarke for water main work. He was suggesting a parallel corridor on the south side of Sherbrooke along to those blocks.

According to the city's website, the Clarke/de Maisonneuve water main work will begin the week of March 29 and run until October. Lanes of traffic will be closed from time to time until June, when de Maisonneuve west to Melville will be closed to all but local traffic and the bike path diverted to St. Catherine on weekdays (see March 23, p. 19).



Bike symbols suggested for shared lanes on Sherbrooke.

Courtesy of Dan Lambert



A cyclist on Sherbrooke mid-afternoon on March 25. He did not have many fellow cyclists for company, despite the beautiful day.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT



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# Going, going ...





Above: the conventional rink at the Queen Elizabeth Gardens at Sherbrooke and Wood is almost gone, as seen March 19 and 25, while the toboggan run at King George (Murray) Park, below, is holding up more to the sun and heat, as seen on the same days.





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# We all want to know more about COVID-19 vaccination



COVID-19 vaccination in Québec began in December 2020 as part of a massive effort to prevent serious complications and deaths related to COVID-19, and stop the virus from spreading. Through vaccination, we hope to protect our healthcare system and allow things to return to normal.

#### A VACCINATION OVERVIEW

#### Why get vaccinated at all?

There are many reasons to get vaccinated (all of them good), including protecting ourselves from health complications and the dangers stemming from infectious diseases, as well as making sure they don't resurface.

#### How effective is vaccination?

Vaccination is one of medicine's greatest success stories and the cornerstone of an efficient healthcare system. That said, as with any medication, no vaccine is 100% effective. The efficacy of a vaccine depends on several factors, including:

- The age of the person being vaccinated
- Their physical condition and/or state of health, such as a weakened immune system

# THE IMPACT OF VACCINES AT A GLANCE

- The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that vaccination helps **prevent over 2 million deaths** every year, worldwide.
- Since the introduction of vaccination programs in Canada in 1920, **polio has been wiped out** across the country and several other illnesses (such as **diphtheria**, **tetanus** and **rubella**) have virtually disappeared.
- Smallpox has been eradicated throughout the world.
- The main bacteria responsible for **bacterial meningitis** in children-Haemophilus influenzae type B-has become **much rarer**.
- Hepatitis B has for all intents and purposes disappeared in young people, due to their having been vaccinated in childhood.





### **COVID-19 VACCINES**

#### Are the vaccines safe?

**Definitely.** COVID-19 vaccines have been tested for quality and efficacy on a large scale and passed all necessary analysis before being approved for public use.

All required steps in the vaccine approval process were stringently followed, some simultaneously, which explains why the process went so fast. Health Canada always conducts an extensive investigation of vaccines before approving and releasing them, paying particular attention to evaluating their safety and efficacy.

# Who should be vaccinated against COVID-19?

We aim to vaccinate the entire population against COVID-19. However, stocks are limited for now, which is why people from groups with a higher risk of developing complications if they are infected will be vaccinated first.

# Can we stop applying sanitary measures once the vaccine has been administered?

No. Several months will have to go by before a sufficient percentage of the population is vaccinated and protected. The beginning of the vaccination campaign does not signal the end of the need for health measures. Two-metre physical distancing, wearing a mask or face covering, and frequent hand-washing are all important habits to maintain until the public health authorities say otherwise.

# On what basis are priority groups determined?

The vaccine will first be given to people who are at higher risk of developing complications or dying from COVID-19, in particular vulnerable individuals and people with a significant loss of autonomy who live in a CHSLD, healthcare providers who work with them, people who live in private seniors' homes, and people 70 years of age and older.

As vaccine availability increases in Canada, more groups will be added to the list.

# Order of priority for COVID-19 vaccination

- 1 Vulnerable people and people with a significant loss of autonomy who live in residential and long-term care centres (CHSLDs) or in intermediate and family-type resources (RI-RTFs).
- Workers in the health and social services network who have contact with users.
- Autonomous or semi-autonomous people who live in private seniors' homes (RPAs) or in certain closed residential facilities for older adults.
- 4 Isolated and remote communities.
- **5** Everyone at least 80 years of age.
- 6 People aged 70-79.
- 7 People aged 60-69.
- **8** Adults under the age of 60 with a chronic disease or health issue that increases the risk of complications from COVID-19.
- **9** Adults under the age of 60 with no chronic disease or healthcare issues that increase the risk of complications but who provide essential services and have contact with users.
- 10 Everyone else in the general population at least 16 years of age.

# Can I catch COVID-19 even after I get vaccinated?

The vaccines used can't cause COVID-19 because they don't contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus that's responsible for the disease. However, people who come into contact with the virus in the days leading up to their vaccination or in the 14 days following it could still develop COVID-19.

# Is COVID-19 vaccination mandatory?

**No.** Vaccination is not mandatory here in Québec. However, COVID-19 vaccination is highly recommended.

# Is vaccination free of charge?

The COVID-19 vaccine is **free**. It is only administered under the Québec Immunization Program and is not available from private sources.

# Do I need to be vaccinated if I already had COVID-19?

**YES.** Vaccination is indicated for everyone who was diagnosed with COVID-19 in order to ensure their long-term protection.

Québec.ca/COVIDvaccine

**1877 644-4545** 



#### Warmer times beckon

# Preparing playing fields, parks for spring/summer use

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

With the onset of warmer weather, the city's playing fields as well as parks and greenspaces are set to undergo preparation now that city council awarded two contracts for their maintenance at its meeting March 15.

The first contract, for maintenance of the soccer and other playing fields, went to Techniparc (9032-2454 Quebec Inc.) for \$79,722, including tax credits. The second,

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The junior soccer fields in Westmount Park on March 25.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT

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for parks and greenspaces, went to NCR Landscaping Inc. at a cost of \$215,973 including tax credits.

This one included a three-year option listed at a maximum of \$723,841 taxes included.

#### Inclusions

This work on the parks and greenspaces was detailed by Councillor Cynthia Lulham to include landscaping, labour, equipment and supervision required to maintain the parks and green spaces identified in the specifications.

The work will take place from April to

November.

It also calls for the maintenance of public stairs, hedges, planting beds, shrubs and perennials as well as annual flower beds, bulbs, hanging baskets, the planting areas of sidewalk bump-outs and public squares, and the installation or removal of snow fences for winter protection.

While this year the city has separated out the "supply of annual plants" from the contract awarded in previous years, the supply of these plants is combined with the plant order for the horticulture team in a separate contract as already awarded (see story February 23, p. 5).

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Areas of King George (Murray) Park that appear to need work, as seen March 26.



PHOTOS: RALPH THOMPSON



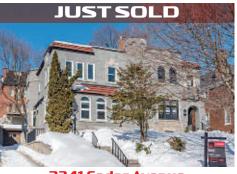
**3634-3638** Av Coloniale Le Plateau-Mont-Royal. Triplex with revenue over \$85,000/year. Asking price \$1,988,000



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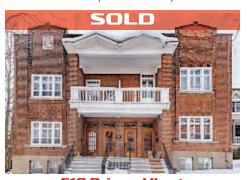
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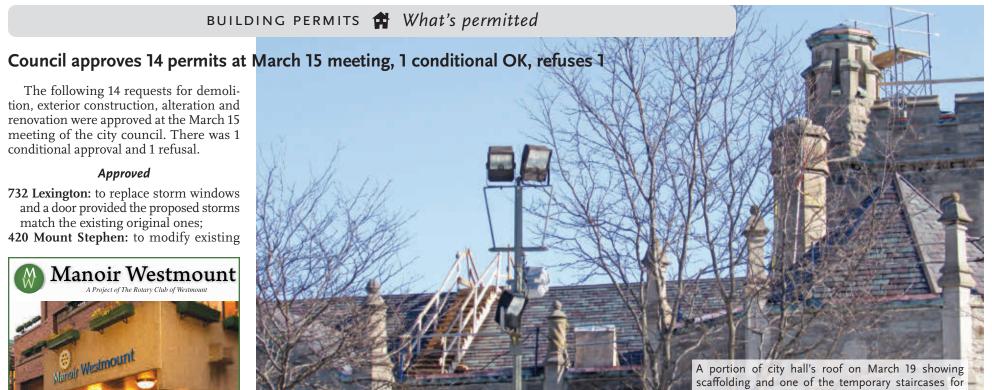


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openings and to install a new window on the rear facade:

28 Summit Cresc.: to reinforce the retaining walls and create new ones in the rear yard;

**4825 Sherbrooke:** to modify the front façade storefront in order to install new sliding doors;

775 Lexington: at a Category I house, to do landscaping work and install a new pool and pergola in the rear yard;

**3217 The Boulevard:** to install a new pool in the side yard;

**4298 Montrose:** to replace windows and doors:

**50 Aberdeen:** at a Category I house, to create a new window opening on the rear façade;

**451 Strathcona:** to build a new deck in the rear yard;

**37 Windsor:** to replace a patio door and door leading to a front balcony;

**638 Murray Hill:** to repair a section of the roof as per option 2 of the application;

95 Côte St. Antoine: at Selwyn House School, a Category I building, to replace a fence in the front yard facing Argyle Ave.:

**33 Rosemount:** to modify a roof terrasse on the garage;

**3215 The Boulevard:** to replace windows provided the divided lites of the proposed windows match those already existing.

#### Conditional approval

One permit received "conditional approval" given what was described as "the state of structural failure of the rear portion of the building.

**49 Aberdeen:** at a Category I house, to add a single-storey and split-level addition on the rear and lateral facades provided that 1) the proposed new stone (Adiron-

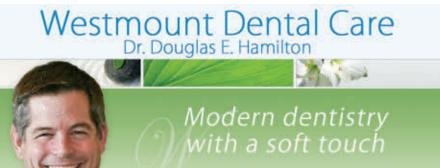
dack sandstone) be similar to the existing stone in type, dimensions, tone and texture; and 2) that the proposed windows be in wood and recessed in the openings as per the placement of the existing ones.

workers, viewed from Kensington Ave. PHOTO: INDEPENDENT

It was further noted that the stone from a demolished section be reused in the proposed addition "and considering that the addition harmonizes with the existing structures and the stylistic concept of the architecture."

#### Refused

4333 Sherbrooke: at city hall, a Category I building, to revoke a part of last year's permit that called for portions of copper around the crenellated top row of stones of the coronet of the castle-like roof. Councillor Conrad Peart said the city wanted to treat itself "in the same way it would others and where we hold ourselves to the same high standards."



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# Spring cleaning

# kils who cran clean an the snow meits, reil and want to le We WILL Yell kids who clean

Seen on Sherbrooke St. near Victoria: "Kids who clean – My name is Taylor and I'm 8 years old. I'm on a mission to keep our streets clean as the snow melts. If your a kid and want to help, ask your mom or dad to call my mom and we will tell you how. 514-241-1890 #kid who clean"

hoto: Ralph Thompson.



# Wrong way on Park Place



This car was seen going the wrong way on Park Place March 17.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT





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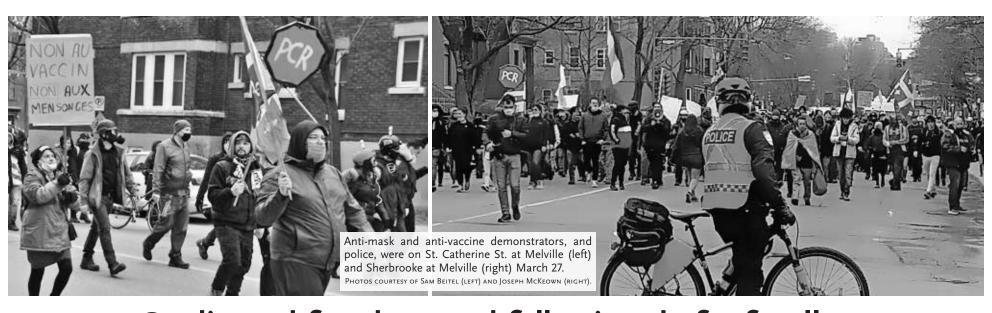


1308, av. Greene across from BMO





lartglacier.ca



# Police Report: Credit card fraud averted following theft of wallet

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

A worker at an office on Sherbrooke near the corner of Grosvenor whose wallet was stolen on March 19, then reported it almost immediately to her bank, learned that the perpetrator tried unsuccessfully to use her credit cards in the few hours since the theft.

According to an account of the incident provided to police at Station 12, the victim



# **Arthur Younanian**

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Tel.: 514 931-2531 info@aynotary.ca www.aynotary.ca had just finished making change for a customer and had left the front area for another room.

"When she came back, she noticed that the wallet was gone," said Station 12 community relations officer Adalbert Pimentel.

He said the suspect tried to use one of the cards before they were reported stolen, but was unable to because he didn't know the PIN number.

By the time the card owner realized the wallet and cards were missing and notified her bank, the bank told her there had been three attempts to use the card with incorrect PIN numbers, after which the card was automatically cancelled.

Pimentel said the best thing anyone who has lost or misplaced their wallet can do, whether or not it has been stolen, is to immediately notify the bank or credit card issuers.

#### Identity theft foiled

Sharp-eyed bank employees were able to prevent an identity theft involving branches in Westmount and Laval just north of Montreal on March 22.

According to Pimentel, the victim re-

ceived a call that day from the manager of his bank branch, informing him that a suspect identifying himself with the victim's name had been at the branch and attempted to change the phone number in the account information.

"The manager found that abnormal and so did not follow through with the request," said Pimentel.

That same day, the suspect went to a different branch of the bank, in Laval. There, he allegedly identified himself with identification pieces bearing the name of the victim, although with a photo of someone else.

The suspect told staff at the Laval branch that he wanted them to create a new debit card to replace an older one in his possession.

However, a bank employee noticed that the card holder was a man in his 60s and the person claiming to be him seemed much younger. As a result, the request was declined.

Despite the proliferation of online fraud and data breaches over the internet, Pimentel said that anyone who wants to safeguard against I.D. theft should simply destroy all personal and financial documents

(including bills, statements and correspondence) in an electric shredder before disposing of them in the recycling bin or the garbage.

#### **COVID** quarantine okay

As in past weeks, officers from Station 12 continued last week to carry out inspection visits at the Westmount homes of families and individuals recently returned from abroad and who are expected to follow COVID-19 14-day quarantine rules.

A visit by the police to a Grosvenor Ave. home on March 19 revealed that everyone in the household had been following the quarantine regulations and their paperwork was all in order.

# Street cleaning starts April 1

The city posted a reminder to its website last week stating that its regular street cleaning would begin Thursday, April 1 and continue until November 30. Check your street for its schedule!

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# 4898 de Maisonneuve fenced off



In the last week's issue (p. RE-24), we wrote that all was "quiet on Westmount's 'Western Front,' meaning that the construction site of two "grand" townhouses and six townhouses at 4898 de Maisonneuve (corner Prince Albert) was not active. No sooner had last week's paper hit the streets, than we noticed that a fence had been put up around the property (above). Then, on March 29, a tree-cutting crew came to cut down the tree of front of the current parking lot and future site of the grand townhouses (below).



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### **FÊTE DE PÂQUES: Heures d'affaires et services municipaux**

Les bureaux administratifs de la Ville de Westmount, soit l'Hôtel de ville, le Victoria Hall, Hydro Westmount, et les Services de la sécurité publique, des sports et loisirs et des travaux publics seront fermés le vendredi 2 avril et le lundi 5 avril 2021 en raison de la fête de Pâques.

La Bibliothèque publique de Westmount sera fermée du vendredi au lundi inclusivement.

Les collectes régulières d'ordures et de résidus alimentaires auront lieu selon l'horaire habituel.

#### **EASTER HOLIDAY: Business Hours and Municipal Services**

Administrative offices of the City of Westmount, including City Hall, Victoria Hall, Hydro Westmount, Public Works, Public Security and Recreation, will be closed Friday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> and Monday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 for the Easter holiday.

Westmount Public Library will be closed from Friday to Monday inclusively.

Garbage and kitchen waste collection will take place as usual, according to the regular schedule.

westmount.org



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PENNY WESTMAN

Environment Canada has said that in Quebec wood burning is the main source of fine particles contributing to winter smog, and the World Health Organization has clearly established that fine particles from wood burning are carcinogenic.

Experts at Asthma UK and the British Lung Foundation have cited growing evidence of air pollution links to heart and lung disease, diabetes, dementia and depression. The US Environmental Protection Agency concluded in a 2019 study that the lifetime cancer risk from wood stove smoke is 12 times greater than that from an equal volume of second-hand tobacco smoke. In light of these serious health and environmental issues linked to wood burning, I asked Westmount council at its December meeting why Westmount has not banned the use of wood burning appliances and fireplaces, as Montreal did.

#### Awareness campaign?

Marina Brzeski, the councillor in charge of environmental matters, responded that this issue was discussed by Westmount council about a year ago and, although it is true that particles emitted by wood burning are an air pollutant, rather than create a bylaw to restrict or eliminate their use, it was decided to create awareness campaigns to communicate the dangers to residents and to encourage them to curb their use.

Councillor Brzeski maintained that wood burning is not prevalent in Westmount and suggested that if your neighbours are burning wood you might want to build awareness with them. However, I could not find information on the usage of fireplaces or the dangers of wood burning on the city's website. Councillor Brzeski also mentioned that the Montreal Metropolitan Community is looking at harmonizing regulations and Westmount will leave this process up to them.

Two years after I initially raised the issue of wood burning and its health and environmental impacts to the city, nothing has been done. The awareness campaign that the council discussed over a year ago has not been set up, nor has any attempt been made to survey residents on the extent of wood burning in Westmount, residents' awareness of the health and environmental impacts of burning wood or their support for a by-law similar to Montreal's existing by-law.

We are so concerned over second-hand cigarette smoke. Yet, we don't have the same concerns about second-hand smoke

# Why are we still burning wood in Westmount?

from wood burning, even though it is worse for our health. Wood smoke is highly toxic, especially for those who are doing the burning. Moreover, there is no practical way to prevent wood smoke from seeping into nearby homes.

This is all about rights and responsibilities; the right to clean air and the responsibility to ensure you aren't harming your neighbours. The city of Montreal has recognized this and so why can't the city of Westmount do the same?

If you agree that Westmount city council should, without delay, pass a by-law concerning the use of wood burning appliances and fireplaces, similar to Montreal's by-law, please make your opinion known by sending an email to Mayor Christina Smith at csmith@westmount.org, Councillor Marina mbrzeski@westmount.org or to your city councillor.

Penny Westman is a committee member of the Westmount Healthy City Project.

From the Indie's archives: September 8, 2015

# Wood-burning stoves, fireplaces spared from ban

By Laureen Sweeney

Westmounters who enjoy lighting up the fireplace will not be affected by a recent Montreal by-law prohibiting the use of traditional wood-burning stoves and fireplace wood that do not meet new emission standards.

Councillor Cynthia Lulham, [then] commissioner of parks and sustainability, said last week that Westmount saw no need to adopt the same measures, a position also taken by other demerged municipalities, where wood is not commonly used to heat homes.

Montreal's by-law ban was adopted August 17 [2015] and applies to all woodburning devices that do not use cleaner alternatives than wood. These include gas-fired units or pellet burning stoves. It applies after October 1, 2018.

"What drove this change was people using wood-burning stoves for heating," Lulham explained. "I'd be surprised if any home in Westmount is heated this way."

See our September 8, 2015 issue, p. 1, for the rest of this story.



Social Notes

Veronica Redgrave

Local philanthropists Claudine and Stephen Bronfman are moving into their 11th successful year of SéminArts. Founded in 2010 by the Claudine and Stephen Bronfman Family Foundation in collaboration with the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (MAC), the program is an introduction to collecting contemporary art. It aims to empower all those who aspire – but possibly haven't yet dared – to build their own collection.

It is a marvellous opportunity for participants to demystify this sometimes-intimidating world. The series includes The Museum Collection; meeting with a curator of the MAC to learn what and why the organization collects. Then you can stream The Artists, and learn how they develop their work, a great opportunity to "visit" a studio!

The Gallerists explains the role of a gallerist and how to buy art. The Private Collectors presents how to start a collection as an individual, and what it means to buy and own artwork. The Corporate Collection involves meeting the curator of a cor-

# Contemporary art, contemporary program



porate collection, who describes why and how a company collects contemporary art. SéminArts started March 10, 7 to 8:30 pm. but it's never too late! A lovely way to end your at-home evening. Mac.org.

PS With the arrival of spring days, you can visit local galleries and museums without mitts, gloves and puffy winter coats!







9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Orio has such a sweet face. A delightful growing kitten, he is so adorable in his white shorthaired coat and black accents, with huge green eyes and pink nose. He is very loving, cuddling and purring easily.

As he is at the Montreal SPCA cattery, he is not in a home environment so he is fearful at times, expecting that when he transitions to a home he will be more confident.

Orio is very healthy but he suffers from ataxia, which makes it important that he keep away from stairs and remain an indoor-only cat. Thinking of small details, his litter box will have to be a lower sided one as his balance is not always perfect.

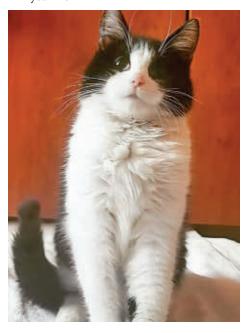
Westmounters have a wealth of knowledge and experience with their pets, accepting and adapting to health needs easily, so I have no worries that Orio will not be chosen because he is not "perfect."

Orio is growing still, so on his program for inoculations, he is neutered and microchipped. Please refer to his identification number 4661961 when you visit the Mon-

# **Hugging Orio**

treal SPCA website at www.spca.com and fill out the adoption application for him on the attached link. Once submitted, you will then be contacted for a telephone interview, followed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA.

Your neighbour, Lysanne





Westmount A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

If you look at this precious photograph, towards the lower left you can see the shadow of the companion's hand, holding out the best treat ever for this cute shot! Yes, Roxy may be a shy girlie but she is on her way to a being most confident white-and-caramel shorthaired sporting companion.

Still young at two years and 10 months of age, she is at the Montreal SPCA kennel and is waiting for a family where she will be a single pet with adults. We know that so many dogs suffer before the process of re-homing and adoption, we cannot look the other way at what kindness and patience can bring forth in them as they settle in to a new life of stability and affection.

Roxy is very healthy, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped. Please refer to her identification number 40297424 when you visit the Montreal SPCA website at www.spca.com and fill out the adoption application for her on the attached link. Once submitted, you will then be contacted for a telephone interview, fol-

# Roxy will go from Miss Shy to Miss Confident

lowed by a visit by appointment at the SPCA.

Your neighbour, Lysanne





# Leftover ice & snow? No issue for these ducks

This pair of ducks in Westmount Park's lagoon, seen March 25, were the first ones the *Independent* has noticed this year.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

# Another squirrel feeding site



There seems to have been some serious squirrel feeding in King George (Murray) Park, as seen the morning of March 24. Several large spreads of what looked like animal food were seen in the lower west side of the park. The *Independent* published pictures of Victoria and de Maisonneuve feeding sites in its March 16 issue (p. 19) and was told last week that the de Maisonneuve one has not been replenished since. It is illegal to feed wild animals in Westmount.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.







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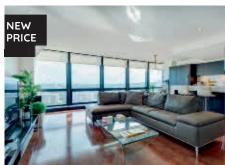
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