## WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly. Vol. 17 No. 12b

We are Westmount

December 12, 2023

Advisory group to have 2-year renewable mandate

## City launches new committee on environment, sustainability

### By Laureen Sweeney

After many months of discussion and talk about the city's plans to create an environment and sustainability committee during the current council term, the nuts and bolts of the new group were announced in a new business resolution December

## Holiday schedule

This issue is the last one before our usual Christmas break No issues: December 19 & 26 and January 2 & 9 First issue of 2024: January 16 4. The committee is to have a two-year mandate to December 31, 2025, renewable by resolution.

Modelled on the previous citizen accessibility committee, this new committee would be composed of up to seven members including up to three members of council, one member of the city administration and up to three members of the community.

### Cllr. Aronson: 'Environmental issues pressing'

Councillor Matt Aronson, whose commissionership includes climate and sustainability as well as citizen engagement and economic activity, moved the resolution creating what is called the "Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Com- *continued on p. 24* 





Out of over 9,000 students in his category of the worldwide Caribou Cup contest, math wiz Noam Étienne Caron, centre, was one of only 314 #1s. He is pictured with Roslyn principal Joanna Genovezos, left, and vice principal Mireille Tehbelian. See p. 17 for story.



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## Cllr. Roux is 'happy people will be heard' Consultation contracted out for work on the 'Fordens' & Claremont

### By Laureen Sweeney

City council December 4 awarded a contract for public consultation to a professional firm in connection with re-development of Claremont Ave. as well as Forden Ave. and Forden Cresc.

This went to Conscience Urbaine at its bid price of \$97,154. Though three firms had submitted bids, it was reported that the decision was based on the conforming bidder having obtained "the best score" in a grid system used in some cases by the city. The other two submissions came from BC2 Groupe Conseil and Englobe Corp.

When asked during question period by John Fretz, of Lansdowne, why a professional firm had been hired, pro-mayor Kathleen Kez pointed out in the absence of Mayor *continued on p.* 19



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With mild temperatures and a steady rainfall, umbrellas and hoodies were the right apparel for the evening of December 1. Photos: RALPH THOMPSON.

Left, Nathan (blue jacket) and Antoine (red jacket) along with mum (red phone) assisted Mayor Christina Smith to light the Christmas tree December 1 in front of city hall.

Left below, November 29, 2021. The Shaar Hashomayim's Rabbi Scheier, left, and Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom's Rabbi Grushcow light the first two candles of their menorahs as councillors Conrad Peart, left, and Matt Aronson look on. This year's menorah lighting on the steps of city hall was to occur December 11, after the *Independent*'s noon press time.

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## Happy holidays!

\*Not intended to solicit sellers whose properties are currently listed with a broker, it's not allowed!

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## Food, donations added from Lawn Bowling and Croquet Club Contributions reach \$6,700 to PSU's holiday food drive

### By LAUREEN SWEENEY

For the third consecutive year, the Westmount Lawn Bowling and Croquet Club held a holiday food drive to help augment Public Security's annual collection.

This year, the club's collection of nonperishable food, along with a total of \$690 was raised by club volunteers and donated over the weekend of December 2-3. "Thank you to all who donated!" said organizers Naomi Sharpe and Izak Rubin. This amount compares with last year's \$275, reported at the time as approximately 10 percent more than the initial year (see story December 13, 2022, p. 4).

This is the third year the club has carried out its own campaign to add to Public



Volunteer coordinators Naomi Sharpe and Izak Rubin from the Westmount Lawn Bowling and Croquet Club with the non-perishable food collected for the Public Security's holiday food drive.

Security's drive for non-perishable food and monetary donations that reached a total of some \$6,700 last week, according to organizer Kim Colquhoun, assistant Public Security director.

This started off with proceeds of \$2,265 in admissions to Artisans Westmount and was added to by \$1,400 from outside Metro grocery store and \$944 from the 5 Saisons store. Other amounts came from a hockey fundraiser of \$500, \$182 from an employee scone breakfast event with another \$700 from a "dunk tank" as well as from other recent anonymous donors.

### Scouts donate a tree

"The cash is used to purchase grocery gift certificates, turkeys, hams and other items required depending on dietary restrictions," she said. "We try to honour what the donor asks we put the donation towards," Colquhoun added, using one specific note as an example (see photo at at right).

"A tree was donated by Westmount Scouts and will be dropped off to one of our holiday basket families tomorrow (December 7)." (See photo on p. 9)

There is one family "we love delivering



A donor's note addressed to Public Security assistant director Kim Colquhoun. PHOTO COURTESY OF PUBLIC SECURITY.

to," Colquhoun explained. "The kids come to the door very excited and try to take the heavy boxes from us to help. We have seen them grow up over the past years and every year the boxes are easier for them to lift."

Delivery to 47 families starts December 18.



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THANKS, PUBLIC WORKS

My thanks to the crew at Public Works who managed to clear a path for vehicles on Weredale Park road following the recent storm despite having to deal with several fallen and overhanging tree branches. The first storm of the season is always a challenge but the fallen limbs added to the complexity.

JIM RICHARDS, DORCHESTER BLVD.

### **GARBAGE-COLLECTION ANNOUNCEMENT BEYOND ARROGANT – AND SUBSTANCE** BAD, TOO

I've never been so much enraged with a municipal decision. Waste collection is the basic-of-basics in terms of municipal responsibility, and the manner in which the municipality has announced this is beyond arrogant.

For most of us, waste collection is the only service we consistently receive for our taxes. And they are asking us to let our trash sit in our home for two weeks?

I hope there is a one-issue candidate at the next election to reverse this.

Why live in a separate city if the same craziness that we see in Montreal is enacted here? It started with some picnic tables, then fireplaces, now this. Just look at what will be coming next in terms of municipal activism.

Make Westmount great again.

### WE CAN RECYCLE PLASTIC BAGS, AND SHOULD

I was disheartened to read that the company handling recycling for Westmount households is unable to recycle plastic bags and other polyethylene packaging (November 7, p. 24) since it is so easily recycled.

The numerous plastic bag manufacturers located in the greater Montreal area recycle the scrap poly generated during production. They do so because scrap poly is easily transformed into new packaging, which gives it value and prevents it from going to landfill.

To not recycle poly bags and other flexible polyethylene material is a waste that can and should be avoided.

STEPHEN SIMCO, ROSLYN AVE.

### FORGET LEAF BLOWERS -WHY NOT BAN SNOW BLOWERS?

Can someone please explain why we restrict the use of leaf blowers by gardeners by daylight but allow private snow clearing services to use snow blowers to clear front walkways overnight?

If we can encourage the use of rakes in the fall, can we not encourage the use of shovels in the winter? Leaf blowers do not wake me up in the wee hours of the morning; snow blowers at 2 am most certainly do.

I have raised the matter with city representatives. However, they only made the JEREMIE MARTIN, GREENE AVE. case for clearing snow in general, as a

matter of safety (with which I agree!) without addressing the disturbance caused by snow blowers on private property at night. Claudette Bellemare, Strathcona Ave.

### ARE MANDATORY RECYCLING, COMPOSTING NEEDED?

Thanks to Richard Dufour for his thoughtful and informative letter (November 28, p. 9), explaining the logic of the city's new garbage collection plan. For example, too few people know that the blue recycling bags are not themselves recycled - so, no more blue bags in the recycling!

And thanks to the editor for pointing out my error in thinking that recycling and composting are mandatory when, in fact, good waste management habits rely on citizens' interest, conscience and good will.

Is that good enough? Maybe we do need regulation and enforcement of better recycling, composting and garbage disposal before it's too late to save the planet.

PATRICIA RILEY, ARGYLE AVE.

### PLEASE KEEP GARBAGE **COLLECTION POINTS AS THEY ARE**

A recent notice delivered from the city of Westmount's Waste Management Team, under the heading "Collection points," informs us that as of May 1, 2024 that there will be no collection in lanes inaccessible to collection trucks and that "All materials will be collected curbside."

This means that we will have to move cans of garbage or composting from the back lane to curbside at the front of our homes, which I estimate in my case is 50 to 75 meters. The lane is difficult to negotiate since the pavement is broken up that has led to falls reported to the city. Many of us are in our 70s or 80s and it is daunting to imagine us all trying to negotiate the broken-up back lane with a potentially full garbage can or composting bin under the best of times, and unimaginable when it's covered with ice and snow.

What is particularly disturbing about the decision to change waste collection policy is that it took place without any public consultation, especially with those who will be affected. What is particularly egregious is that this notice is presented under the guise of a campaign to produce less waste and smarter habits. In fact, changing the points of collection has nothing to do with a cleaner environment, rather it's a means of reducing budget. In fact, the two-week pick-up does not reduce waste, it actually doubles the amount of garbage the city expects us to transport curbside.

Westmount owns a small garbage truck that should be able to negotiate the "inaccessible lanes." Perhaps this or some other

strategy could be considered to avoid the increased risk to the public. ALVIN SHRIER, ABBOTT AVE.

WHAT IS A COUNCIL MEETING? WHAT IS THEIR PURPOSE?

City council has decided to reduce public meetings to one per month (November 28, p. 1), but will continue to hold "general committee" meetings, closed to the public, mid-monthly.

How does this respect the Quebec Cities and Towns Act (C-19), which requires (para. 322) "The sittings of the council shall be public." ou en français, « Les séances du conseil sont publiques. »?

Or does council believe that by calling it "general committee" it therefore magically is no longer a council meeting? If council's goal is to circumvent the provincial law, it would make more sense to have an English-only meeting where everyone stands, so that it will not be a "sitting"!

Transparency in government is essential to democracy. While holding in-person meetings that are poorly attended by the public may not be very efficient, the pandemic has shown that online broadcasting of meetings, whether in person or virtual, is highly practical.

HENRY OLDERS, LANSDOWNE AVE.

### THANK YOU, PSO LECCESE

Following the first major snowfall of the year, I was in the process of digging my car out of a snowbank when a man approached and asked if he could help. I gratefully accepted and explained that I was off to the hospital to see my husband.

He took off what appeared to be a parking-ticket dispenser from around his neck, hung it on a pole nearby and proceeded to shovel around my car until I could get in and drive off. Before leaving, we shook hands. I thanked him and introduced myself. He said his name was Michael.

Later, I learned while reading the Westmount Independent (December 5, p. 4) that this angel of mercy is Michael Leccese, one of Westmount's public safety officers, who also volunteered at the recent food drive.

We are privileged to have people like him working in, and contributing to, our city. Thanks again, Michael, for your kindness. It was an honour to meet you.

NICOLE SALTIEL, PRINCE ALBERT AVE.

### COMMENT ABOUT COMMENTS, PLUS ONE ABOUT GARBAGE

eWestmount can be quite useful for the people of Westmount, as it seems to itemize all sorts of things about what is to happen to the citizens of Westmount.

Plus, of course, they ..... seem to allow people to continued on p. 7

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT We are Westmount

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

make comments. My problem seems to be that whenever I want to make comments, it allows me to make the comment, but when I want to enter it, it tells me I am too late!!

We have, through experience, found that keeping our garbage and recyclables in separate metal cans with tight-fitting metal lids and placing these cans in a thick plywood box having a slightly heavy hinged lid to be successful in keeping out the night vermin.

Note, we have had and still have a variety of skunks, racoons, groundhogs, rats and squirrels visit our place and when we first moved into our house and tried to place a metal container at the curb, these vermin were quite successful in distributing the contents all over the place.

Of course, our wooden box is not at the curb, but partway into our driveway near the kitchen door.

So now, of course, we must place everything back at the curb?

Alfred Edel, Victoria Ave.

### LET'S GET THE FACTS STRAIGHT **ON LANGUAGE**

In March, I wrote a letter to the editor of the Journal de Montréal to try to correct some "facts" as enunciated by some of its writers. Pierre-Olivier Zappa had written "...le français est en déclin au Québec" (March 9, 2023); Denise Bombardier wrote "La situation du français au Québec...catastrophe" (February 28, 2023); Danièle Lorain wrote "Il faut s'attaquer au déclin du fran*cais*" (July 30, 2023); and so on.

Among other points mentioned below, I wrote in my letter to the Le Journal de Montréal that, on an historic basis, the French language is not in decline, as it is used by more and more people: in 1971, 80 percent of Montrealers spoke French and by 2021, this percentage was 90 percent (source: Statistics Canada).

Le Journal chose to not publish my

letter. I then sent it to La Presse with the same result. Lastly, I sent an English version to The Montreal Gazette, which refrained from publishing it. Okay, that is its prerogative, but I asked the Gazette (as a 40-year subscriber), "Why not?" The Gazette replied, "We do not need it." So I am submitting an updated version (with information from a recent poll) to the Westmount Independent to ask Westmounters their views on a number of fronts.

Let me re-state the statistics with an addition: in 1971, 80 percent of Montrealers spoke French; by 2011, 91 percent did and then by 2021, the number was 90 percent (Statistics Canada). So a small decrease from 2011 to 2021. By most measures, an increase from 80 percent to 90 percent would be considered a huge success. Bill 101 enacted to reinforce French was "mission accomplished," right?

However, that success came at a great cost to Quebec society:

- Between 1971 and 2015, Quebec had a net out-migration of 582,470 people (source: "Interprovincial Migration in Canada – Quebecers Vote with their Feet", source: Fraser Institute) and
- Quebec's gross domestic product (GDP) as a percentage of the national total fell from 25 percent in 1971 to 20 percent in 2021 (Statistics Canada).

So, back to the original question: How could political commentators allege that French in Quebec is in decline? The small decline from 2011 (91 percent) to 2021 (90 percent) in French speakers? Or another decline (1-2 percent) in the number of Quebecers speaking French at home? This latter possibility surely reflects that Frenchspeaking Quebecers are not having many children. It has little to do with English speakers. 90 percent of Montrealers now speak French so the initial objective of Bill 101 was reached, so now ultra-nationalists have had to "move the goalposts" to another objective. What is their motivation?

To correct or question "facts" on which

political decisions are made is important, but the following results from a recent poll raise very serious questions as to why the "language issue" has come to life after most Quebecers thought that it had reached an equilibrium.

In the August 26, 2023 edition of the Journal de Montréal, the results of a Jean-Marc Léger poll were published. The question revolved around the present concerns of Quebecers...The top issues were: (1) price of food, (2) extreme climate events, (3) price of gas, (4) level of interest rates, (5) construction and resulting congestion on our roads.

The war in Ukraine and concerns about Donald Trump were even ahead of Quebecers' concerns regarding French!

This issue ranked ninth and only 8 percent of Quebecers listed it as a concern! Stunning, but we hear little on this poll... So why has the Quebec government raised this divisive issue? What can concerned Ouebecers do to reverse these misconceptions. etc.?

I have my own opinions, but have tried to keep my thoughts "factual." I look forward to seeing your readers' points of view. DAVID TAIT, ST. MARGUERITE

### Corrections

Last week, in the text of the Social Notes column (p. 22), it should have read that Sarah Broccolini and her husband, Gordon Milligan, attended the Milos fundraiser. The p. 6 photo used in the City Views showed Courtney Prieur on the far left. She is director of experiential education at Selwyn House. - DP.



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## Mayor's Column

Christina Smith

### Dear residents,

In light of the upcoming new garbage contracts for waste collection, which are scheduled to take effect on May 1, 2024, I want to address the concerns that have arisen and emphasize the positive impact these changes will have on our community and the environment.

Waste management is one of the most important things that a city does, and every three years we renew these contracts.

We should have better communicated the challenges of the waste contracts. The past few years have seen severe increases in costs and challenges with managing the current contracts. We should have shared those with the public.

For a long time, Westmount had the same contractor doing this work; the last time we awarded a contract, we had to change contractors because of our public tendering system.

This highlighted some of the challenges, particularly around 25 percent of houses in Westmount that have different locations for their bins. With changing crews that do the work, many of these homes get missed because of the different locations. There is very little change for the remaining 75 percent of the households that bring their bins to their walkways or driveways.

While it's understandable that any modification may raise questions, it's crucial to recognize the broader benefits these changes will bring. The primary adjustment involves moving all collections, including garbage, recycling and compost, curbside to the street or accessible alleys.

## We needed to communicate better on garbage plan – Here are the ecological, financial benefits

Therefore, residents with waste bins in alleys inaccessible to collection trucks will need to place their bins or bags curbside on the street. Only homes with lanes inaccessible to the trucks will be affected.

With this procedure, collection trucks will no longer have to remain idle with their engines running while employees run to the back of a few residences to retrieve waste bins. This move aims to enhance efficiency, reduce CO2 emissions, and prevent oversights during collection.

It is a measure designed to enhance the overall well-being and better serve the collective interests of our community.

I want to highlight some of the changes regarding the frequency of garbage collection.

For buildings with nine to 29 housing units, there will be only one garbage collection per week. The second garbage collection will be replaced by a mandatory collection of food waste (compost).

For single-family homes and buildings with less than nine housing units, there will still be one garbage collection every week from May to September and one garbage collection every two weeks from October to April.

I understand that these measures can raise some questions, particularly regarding cleanliness. It's important to remember that bi-weekly collection will only take place during the colder months. This timeframe is chosen strategically, as waste decomposes more slowly in colder weather. Furthermore, most household waste is food waste you can dispose of in the weekly compost collection. This will generally avoid producing foul odours and attracting rodents.

This initiative aims to encourage resi-

## City's tax increase on homeowners to be less than 3.1%

### By Laureen Sweeney

In the city's 2024 operating budget to be presented at the council meeting December 18, the average tax increase on a singlefamily dwelling for non-agglomeration/ city of Westmount operations is expected to be "less than the 3.1 [percent] increase" being charged to Westmount for its share (*quote-part*) of agglomeration services.

The two pieces – local and agglomeration – are roughly equal portions of Westmount's total budget/tax bill to residents, to which a small amount for the regional Montreal Metropolitan Community (MMC) is added to make the whole budget.

In presenting this advance look at the budget, Mayor Christina Smith told the *Independent* that the city was in the process of finalizing the budget. "We know our agglo portion is a 3.1-percent increase" (see also November 21, p. 9).

As for the capital works budget, she said, "there will be an increase in work next year as it is needed. We will use surplus to fund it through the city's pay-as-you-go (PAYG) portion as well as through other sources." dents to better sort their waste by participating in our food waste, recycling, green waste, bulky items and hazardous waste collections and to diminish their overall waste production.

In our province, more than half the materials in our garbage bags could be recycled by another type of collection.

The 2022 Agglomeration Waste Management Report indicates that over 40 percent of the content in garbage bags is organic materials (food and green residues), and 20 percent is recyclable materials. Only a limited number of items should be sent to landfill.

Landfilling food waste generates methane, a major source of greenhouse gases (GHGs), whereas composting emits significantly fewer emissions.

There is an absolute connection between waste management and the climate crisis. We must take concrete actions and adopt more eco-responsible habits. Currently, only 40 percent of Westmount is composting, and we need to improve that rate. We cannot continue to send compostable waste to landfills.

Changing our habits is not easy, but it is necessary to be consistent with our commitments to make real waste improvements and be mindful of increasing costs.

We must do our part to achieve the agglomeration of Montreal's and the province's objectives in terms of reducing the amount of waste sent to landfills and raising the recuperation rate of recyclables and organic materials (food and garden

waste).

The spacing out of garbage collection as an ecological management measure has proven successful in several cities and communities. For example, Toronto, Vancouver, Longueuil, Sherbrooke, Trois Rivières and some boroughs of Montréal have already adopted similar measures. We have made big changes before in Westmount, going from twice-a-week garbage to once a week, and I believe we can be successful at this as well.

Most of the residents I have spoken to want to contribute to the collective effort to combat climate change and allow future generations to benefit from less of our waste going to landfills.

We will host public information sessions and meet with residents to increase our composting participation and better use our recycling programs. We will continue raising awareness and support our community to facilitate this transition. I invite you to visit engage.westmount.org/ westmounteco for more information on the subject.

How we treat waste has dramatically changed, and we need to ensure we keep up with that change.

The status quo would have been a significant cost increase to residents, and there are better things to do for the environment.

We needed to communicate that better. I hope this information helps clarify this important issue.

## Scouts contribute Christmas tree



A Christmas tree was donated by the Scouts of Westmount to Public Security's holiday food drive and was to be dropped off to one of the recipient families December 7.Photo COURTESY OF DOUGLAS LEAHEY.



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## **APPAREILS À COMBUSTIBLE SOLIDE** RAPPEL : DÉCLARATION OBLIGATOIRE

Avez-vous un appareil de chauffage, de cuisson ou un foyer à combustible solide (ex. foyer ou poêle à bois) ? Si vous souhaitez continuer d'utiliser votre appareil, vous devez le déclarer **avant le 30 décembre 2023**.

À partir du 1<sup>er</sup> septembre 2024, il sera interdit d'utiliser ces appareils dans tous les bâtiments résidentiels de Westmount, sauf si l'appareil est certifié pour garantir un taux d'émission égal ou inférieur à 2,5 grammes de particules fines par heure dans l'atmosphère.

Note : La déclaration est obligatoire uniquement si vous utilisez votre foyer à bois. Les foyers électriques/gaz n'ont pas à être déclarés et peuvent être conservés.

Pour en savoir plus sur la nouvelle réglementation et la déclaration : **westmount.org/combustiblesolide**.

## **SOLID-FUEL APPLIANCES** REMINDER: MANDATORY DECLARATION

Do you have a solid-fuel heating, cooking or fireplace appliance (e.g. wood-burning fireplace or stove)? If you wish to continue using your appliance, you must declare it **before December 30, 2023**.

As of September 1, 2024, it will be prohibited to use these appliances in all residential buildings in Westmount, unless the appliance has an emission rate equal to or inferior to 2.5 grams of fine particles per hour into the atmosphere.

Note: The declaration is mandatory only if you use your wood-burning fireplace. Electric/gas fireplaces do not have to be declared and can be kept.

Learn more about the new regulation and the declaration: **westmount.org/solidfuel**.

## Permit denied for house on Prince Albert City: New windows must resemble originals in close detail

### By LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council denied a permit November 20 for the replacement of windows at 446 Prince Albert Ave. This was based on Bylaw 1305 and resulted in part from an unfavourable opinion from the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). The semi-detached brick house is located just south of Chesterfield.

While the permit request dated back to 2022 according to some accompanying information, a former owner told the *Independent* that the windows "leaked" and had needed to be padded against winter cold.

The council resolution's preamble stated in part that the architectural plans and revisions as submitted did not take into consideration the original windows or their "elements." It added that the design of windows and doors helps to "define the architectural character of an existing building and must be preserved." As well, those previously altered must be restored.

The windows, it stated, "must be treated in the same manner" (as the original ones). This includes the type of material, oper-



446 Prince Albert on December 8.

ation, proposed divisions, depth of inset into the wall and that the trim elements surrounding the frames should be retained or replaced to match the original.

No description of the originals was included in the resolution.



### PÉRIODE DES FÊTES 2023-2024

Les bureaux de la Ville seront fermés **du 22 décembre au 2 janvier** inclusivement. La Bibliothèque publique de Westmount et le Conservatoire seront fermés les **22, 25, 26, 29 et 31 décembre** et les **1**<sup>er</sup> **et 2 janvier**.

Le Centre des loisirs de Westmount sera fermé le **25 décembre** et le **1**<sup>er</sup> **janvier**, et suivra un horaire modifié les autres jours.

Les collectes de résidus alimentaires et d'ordures qui ont lieu le lundi seront déplacées aux **mardis 26 décembre** et **2 janvier**.

### 2023-2024 HOLIDAY PERIOD

The City's offices will be closed **from December 22 to January 2** inclusively. The Westmount Public Library and the Conservatory will be closed **December 22, 25, 26, 29 & 31**, and **January 1 & 2**.

The Westmount Recreation Centre will be closed **December 25** and **January 1**, and will follow a modified schedule on other days.

Food waste and garbage collections that usually take place on Monday will be moved to Tuesday on **December 26** and **January 2**.

### westmount.org

## Gentile, times two, turns '10'



Retail Review

Veronica Redgrave

Another Westmount celebration.

On November 30, Café Gentile had balloons, canapés and music for its 10th anniversary party.

The much-loved restaurant "was launched seven years ago and the pizza parlour three, so we added the two together," explained Anthony Gentile, welcoming fans with his sister Anna Maria.

### Roots going back to 1959

Their father, Ignazio Gentile, who arrived in Canada from Sicily, opened the first Café Gentile in 1959.

Building on his legacy and carrying on his passion for food and coffee, his children decided to open the St. Catherine St. space.

It quickly became a hotspot, often with line-ups outside the indoor/outdoor terrace.

Complimenti!



Siblings Anna Maria and Anthony Gentile.

## Hope the Holidays Fill Your Home With Joy From Floor to Rafter!



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### First performance since COVID St. Andrew's pre-schoolers sing at Place Kensington seniors' residence



Three-year-olds from CPE St. Andrew's pre-school sang December 5 to seniors at Place Kensington and were planning another performance at St. Margaret's Residence December 7. The children are from the The Busy Singing Bees, according to teacher Sue Goh. It was the school's first post-pandemic holiday performance.



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FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ANTOINE DUFORT-PLANTE, CAMILLE HAMEL, PETER HIGGINS, NATHALIE MAZLOUM, PASCAL COUILLARD, STEPHANIE MURRAY, CHRISTINA MILLER, JONATHAN MARTINET, KURT CARO, MARIE-ALICE COURET, JULIE LACROIX, FRANCESCA SGAMBETTERRA & JUDY LITVACK.

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donna decides on downsizing to determine her dazzling downtown destiny SOLD cute chicago couple, adam & kaitlin, chooses to change course, clinching a colossal casa on trafalgar SOLD loving laurent closes on a cozy condo in welcoming westmount square SOLD ambitious andrea looking for a new lair, lands a light-filled lodging on lansdowne SOLD lolita & mike buy & sell, securing a splendid semi so sweet mom can serenely settle in SOLD d'une main de maître, marc quitte côte-st-antoine & trouve un nouveau toît sur thornhill SOLD mira & julia graciously glide out of grosvenor, gearing towards great new goals SOLD lachine locals, patrick & caroline lovingly let go of their cute condo, closing their city-centric chapter SOLD sarah says 'so-long' to beautiful beaconsfield, setting sail across the ocean for sensational new surroundings SOLD dominique, christopher & their bunch break out of bruce beelining to their brand-new abodes SOLD after ample anticipation, dr. b & a, adeptly accomplish the sale of their sunny semi, eagerly exiting to a nearby enclave SOLD julie jovially jets from grenville, journeying jubilantly to her next juncture SOLD the elkins depart their de maisonneuve dwelling, fleeing fast & freely down the four-0-one SOLD heirs hand over holton to happy homeowners who hope to make it their new homestead SOLD panagiota & emond part with their pad on bruce, pacing peacefully toward promising prospects SOLD stepping away from their penfield place, sheila & howard sail smoothly into a sunny subsequent sojourn SOLD eric elegantly exits mary-robert, embarking on a fresh foray beyond familiar frontiers SOLD joseph & ivana initiate their impressive exit from la marquise, magically manoeuvring a memorable milestone SOLD relinguishing her reign on prince-arthur, rachel wanders west to wonderful new ways SOLD the héberts hustle out of hudson, happily heading to their heaven-like habitation SOLD m&d, depart their dazzling digs on de lavigne for even dreamier destinations SOLD julia & sébastien say 'sayonara' to st-ambroise, setting their sights on soon selling more suites SOLD jason & holly proficiently part with their pleasant property on stayner, setting sights toward vermont's verdant valleys SOLD after accruing ample memories on grosvenor, alexander accelerates to his next adventure SOLD radiant rozalia, relinquishing her residence on montrose, readies for remarkable new realms SOLD gorgeous gwen bids bye-bye to belvedere & is relieved to relish in her resplendent redfern residence SOLD a trusted & patient panel packs up parkside place in preparation for a plethora of possibilities SOLD blyse, bercée par la beauté de mirabel, bâtit brillamment son bonheur dans son havre harmonieux SOLD friendly francine & andré, divesting from des pins, aspire to amazing & awe-inspiring adventures SOLD waiving au revoir to westmount ave., the gracious goldenbergs are giddy to get going SOLD darling fred & debbie decisively depart from their dwelling, daring to dream their new digs SOLD lured by westmount's charm, laura & cherif, leave life on the canal for a marvellous maison on murray hill SOLD adriana, adeptly auctioning her atwater investment, anticipates an alluring array of alternatives SOLD jaurès jubile sur henri-bourassa, jouissant joyeusement de son joli premier achat SOLD ha & alexandre acquire an alluring asset, lavishing in their lovely investment SOLD massimo & judith journey joyously from italy, jubilantly joining the dr. penfield precinct SOLD david & thalia tie their tale together on montrose, merging their lives magnificently SOLD babak, nima & ana ambitiously approach a mcm marvel on roxborough, ready to revel in a remarkable renovation SOLD kind-hearted kate keenly kicks out of her casa, downsizing to a dwelling on edouard-montpetit & dreaming of delightful decorating SOLD sasan, sur parkside, se passionne pour un projet de rénovation, ravivant remarquablement sa résidence SOLD steadfast in her search for the perfect plex, sam secures a splendid spot in le sud-ouest, SOLD daniel & annie annoncent adieu à irène, abandonnant leurs appartements & avancent vers d'autres avenues SOLD après avoir conclu avec courage, lyne & jacques guittent leurs cocon de chateauguay, pour commencer un nouveau chapitre SOLD beloved bohdanowicz bunch bids a bittersweet bye-bye to their beautiful abode, closing a cherished chapter on claremont SOLD antoine & camille, chers complices, choisissent notre-dame pour construire leur cocon commun SOLD lyka & adam, each exploring exciting endeavors, leave a lasting, luminous legacy on eliot SOLD caroline, quittant old orchard, capte une nouvelle vie sur grey SOLD duo dynamique délaisse de maisonneuve & cèdent dix-huit années dinstinguées derrière eux SOLD julia, conall, cara, & cashell call it quits in quebec city for a captivating cottage on belmont SOLD carole crafts her cozy corner condo in the charming old city, SOLD stephanie & matt's married life begins in

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their benny bungalow SOLD tudal, transformé de colocataire à propriétaire, triomphe sur malo, marquant majestueusement son mouvement memorable SOLD matt & marianne make their momentous move back from the maritimes SOLD cedric & claudia cherish their cozy charon catch SOLD susan toasts 'toodaloo' to montreal, heading out to toronto, SOLD eric squats no longer & secures a splendid sanctuary SOLD super siblings say so-long to somerville & secure something serene on saranac SOLD melanie, bonnie, & stella, bounce from benny soaring into to a spectacular sky house SOLD heidi & allen elegantly enter into an enchanting condo SOLD larry & henri divest into different dynamic opportunities SOLD peter & mary slip out of stratford, pacing themselves towards more peaceful days SOLD deciding to downsize & biting the bullet, bobbi & steve are destined for simpler surroundings SOLD larry says so long to sherbrooke & steps into his next chapter SOLD shayne sells his sensational home & says arrivederci vendome SOLD the shines don't shy away from upgrading suites on sherbrooke street SOLD patricia parts with her pretty fleet property for a parkside palace SOLD oli & rim, ravis, se rejoignent & réalisent leur rêve sur cusson SOLD linda & lauren launch into life on brixton, beginning a bright & blissful chapter SOLD catherine captures a charming pied-à-terre on st-ambroise, creating her cozy, coveted retreat SOLD michèle & pierre pursue their pastoral paradise when procuring a picturesque property on iron hill SOLD joanne & john jubilantly join prospect st., joyously acquiring a cute cottage with a captivating courty and SOLD benjamin & jacqueline judiciously journey from duneau, destined for new dreams SOLD amélie & marc-andré astutely arrange their advantageous exit from des éclaircies, affirming their investment insight SOLD partie de la petite-patrie, anis avance audacieusement & aspire aux aventures de québec SOLD marie-france, moving from old orchard, makes a momentous shift to a serene, simplified setting SOLD motivated to move closer to family, marie-claire meticulously makes her move from anatole-carignan SOLD max & sim, savouring a shift to simplicity, sell rivermere, relocating to revel in a rural respite SOLD joseph joyfully jumps at the chance for a westward waterside wonder, fulfilling his aquatic aspirations SOLD jessie & nicolas nimbly nail their nirvana in verdun, complete with a workshop for whimsical wonders SOLD fabuleux 'friends' s'installent sur florent, fleurissant dans la fondation d'une famille toute fraîche SOLD audrey & david décident doucement de délaisser jeanne-d'arc-renaud, se dessinant un nouveau départ SOLD se séparant sereinement d'aubry, asma & mohamed, maîtres de leur destin, marquent leur mouvement memorable SOLD sarah & daniel, standré's sweethearts, settle in a stylish condo, sparking a symphony of shared serenity in their snug sanctuary SOLD sarah & sam, savvy seekers, secure a stayner condo, shaping a space where shared stories & sweet serenity seamlessly sway SOLD anissa & alexis artfully arrange their adieux from saranac, sailing into st-laurent while swooning over their sweet sasha SOLD francis & bianca font leur fabuleuse première acquisition sur girouard, forgeant leur futur en commun SOLD dan & irina daringly dive into a dynamic dwelling on st-denis, securing a savvy investment SOLD dylan & alicia decisively depart their condo, diving into a dream domicile on o'bryan SOLD calin & andéa, avec ambition, alignent leurs aspirations, acquérant une agréable adresse sur l'avenue gertrude SOLD grégoire gagne un grand condo, émerveillé par une vue vaste & vivifiante SOLD michael makes a meaningful move back to montreal, minting memories on earnscliffe SOLD mark magnificently migrates from toronto, marking a milestone on ch. côte-st-luc SOLD maude, matérialisant le mouvement de son mode de vie, migre vers molson, marquant un moment mémorable avec un majestueux jardin SOLD julie & andré jubilantly return to the city, joining the jovial jamboree on mcgill SOLD philippe & nancy naviguent vers un nouveau quartier sur rivermere, nourrissant une nouvelle aventure SOLD george & inas, seize a splendid opportunity on elizabeth, elegantly upgrading from amberley SOLD nicolas, not far from his old niche, nets a notably nicer nest on rené-lévesque SOLD alexandrine, acquéreuse avisée, s'approprie un attrayant appartement au cœur d'un agréable guartier SOLD carmen & charles, captivés par le charme campagnard, choisissent une charmante chaumière, établissant leur nid dans un havre hors de la ville SOLD the witty wares wave & wiggle out of westwood permanently prepped for the promise of the plateau SOLD maryse, maîtresse de sa vente sur somerville, s'oriente avec optimisme vers un nouveau chapitre chatoyant SOLD jim & maude dive into kitchener, enthusiastically embracing a promising project SOLD gaëlle gagne généreusement sur leblanc, glissant gracieusement dans son nouveau gîte SOLD deep, blown away by the breathtaking views, declares his dwelling on de lavigne SOLD andrea parts with her pleasant redpath pad, closing a classy city chapter SOLD gerald gracefully gives his goodbye to his historic homestead on lakeshore SOLD gregor & beverley transition from their traditional townhome, weaving their way to the welcoming west island SOLD parting ways from picturesque prince-albert, tim & laura claim a classy casa on claremont SOLD philippe wisely waives au-revoir on wonderful wilson SOLD nick & nada nimbly navigate to muir, making a meaningful purchase for mom SOLD lucy commences a captivating new chapter on coursol SOLD victoria picks the perfect pied-a-terre, landing at the lovely linton SOLD monica makes her mark on bassins with a bright new beginning in a bewitching abode SOLD dick & joan, departing montrose, gracefully gravitate towards a restful retirement residence SOLD saalim & amna slip out of sunnyside to charming des chênes, creating a cozy cove where cherished connections & cheerful conversations cascade in a captivating chorus SOLD chris & krysta calmly conclude their moments on marquette, opting over to ottawa SOLD alec, announcing his adieu to the trafalgar, transitions towards new terrains SOLD simon & nadia say so long to burton, seeking splendid new surroundings overseas SOLD kirk's kids conquer a quirky condo on redpath SOLD janny jumps for joy, landing a lovely lair on leduc SOLD the monaco & ross bunch brilliantly buys a beautiful abode on boyer SOLD benji buoyantly bids on a breathtaking dwelling on st-denis SOLD kristin & stephen sell their family's cherished estate in the city center SOLD kate bids 'bye-bye' to her boulevard beauty **SOLD** sophisticated vincent stunningly secures a charmer with stellar cityscapes.

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DAYS ON MARKET (MEDIAN)	50	46	88	55	↑ <b>10%</b>
# OF LISTINGS SOLD	61	81	56	52	↓ 15%
OVER \$1M	26	37	27	21	↓ 19%
UNDER \$1M	35	44	29	31	↓ 11%
# OF NEW LISTINGS	116	144	121	136	↑ <b>17</b> %
OVER \$1M	48	77	56	73	↑52%
UNDER \$1M	68	67	65	63	↓ 7%

## WESTMOUNT SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

	2020	2021	2022	2023	% CHANGE 2020 TO 2023
MEDIAN SALE PRICE	\$2.043M	\$1.998M	\$2.385M	\$2.05M	↓ 0.9%
DAYS ON MARKET (MEDIAN)	69	32	51	78	↑ 13%
# OF LISTINGS SOLD	144	145	106	107	↓ 26%
OVER \$1M	141	144	106	106	↓ 25%
UNDER \$1M	3	1	0	1	↓ 67%
# OF NEW LISTINGS	205	204	215	195	↓ 5%
OVER \$1M	201	204	214	193	↓ 4%
UNDER \$1M	4	0	1	2	↓ 50%

Source: Centris.ca and Christina Miller Group data @ December 8th, 2023



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## Caron of Roslyn #1 in math contest

### By Veronica Redgrave

Westmount's Roslyn School has a proud student. Noam Étienne Caron just won the Caribou Cup. He was awarded first prize, in the world!

Caribou is an online educational platform offering math learning resources and competitions for students from the start of elementary school to the end of high school. Participation and many resources are free.

The Caribou Mathematics Competition/Caribou Cup is an international online math contest held six times over the school year. Each contest is run at seven contest levels: grades K/1 through to 11/12.

All participants receive certificates for participation and achievement, and topscoring students can earn cash prizes. The contests are designed to be accessible and enjoyable to students of all levels, not just those who excel in mathematics.

They feature mathematical puzzles rather than strictly knowledge-based questions. Each student's ranking in the Caribou Cup is determined by their performance in their best five of six contests. The challenges focus on problem solving and mathematical reasoning. This year, so far 65,972 students worldwide from 30 different countries have participated from grades K/1 to 11/12.

Roslyn student Caron, age 10, ranked #1 for grades 3/4. Worldwide 9,059 students from 20 countries participated (in nine different languages!) in this specific round and age group, and there were only 314 "number ones" like him in this cohort. Chatting with Caron, I learnt that he

"practised every day and really likes math."

To the query of his dream adult profession, he replied "video game designer," but he added that although he had learnt coding (at Roslyn) now he has no time as he chose another class: reptiles.

"We handled snakes and salamanders in the program. It was really fun!"

Roslyn's enrichment program includes math, English language arts and global issues. It was brought in a couple of years ago with the help of the school's governing board and is led by Dr. Camelia Birlean, McGill lecturer and EMSB consultant for gifted and exceptional learners.

Another Roslyn student, Oliver Mansour, also ranked #1 worldwide in a round of Caribou Math in 2022 (see November 22, 2022, p. 1).

See photo on p. 1.

## Vengeance, vandalism or negligence?



This crushed cone was photographed on Victoria Ave. at the entrance to the Metro grocery store's parking lot December 1. Montrealers are not known for their love of these inanimate objects, but the cause of its current state is not known. It covers the electrical wiring of a long-absent city lamppost that was hit March 8, 2022 (right).





## Schweitzer's anniversary homage to Restaurant Toqué! 'in female form'

By JENNIFER BALL

Artist John Schweitzer has been pairing fine art with haute cuisine for the past 26 years.

To celebrate the 30-year anniversary of Montreal's Restaurant Toqué!, the duo behind the gastronomy powerhouse, Normand Laprise and Christine Lamarche, commissioned the Westmount-based artist to create a work of art for the occasion.

Schweitzer first accepted commissions in 1997 for Toqué following the opening of their St. Denis location in 1993. His original commissions were entitled The Totem and *The Ribbon*, and both were seamlessly integrated into the new location of the restaurant at Place Jean-Paul Riopelle by designer Jean-Pierre Viau.

To mark the 30th anniversary on May 27 of this year, Toqué once again commissioned the artist - as the owners have done to celebrate every decade. The resulting collage is titled "If Toqué! was a woman."

### Poetry too

The work in acrylic, collage and pastel on paper is not only singular in its vintage ephemera relating to the restaurant, but is also accompanied by a poem that Schweit-

zer wrote expressly for the occasion:

"Si Toqué! était une femme de 30 ans... she would seduce with worldly charm, pulsate with fecund energy and beguile with nuanced mystery."

This anthropomorphizing of the restaurant as female is a homage to the innovative cookery of Toqué. "Vernal eternal, eternal vernal," Schweitzer said.

A suggestion of spring and green, alluding to the fact that it was one of the first restaurants in Canada to espouse terroir (the effect of environment and soil on food's taste), is illuminated by Schweitzer's choice of colours for the artwork.

"International restaurateurs focussed on vertical food and foam in the 1990s and

the aughts," he reminded the Independent. Schweitzer chose green paper as the ground for the collage "to intimate the mystery of the menu with each visit, but also, to allude to the fluid and feminine form in its curvilinear sepia lines over the



"If Toqué ! was a woman." The restaurant is located at 900 Place Jean-Paul Riopelle in Old Montreal. PHOTO COURTESY OF RICHARD-MAX TREMBLAY.

actual collage elements."

He is fascinated with the marriage of text and image, and his use of everyday found objects and historical ephemera connects the future with the past. "I'm always amazed at the parameters of collage...

"I often do not tear the materials, but I know the menus are of a certain size,

which I consider felicitous. But the truly magical moment occurs when I discover a vintage envelope - retained for years and years - that can now be utilized as a visual bridge."

### Three decades, three sections

The artist described his work as "a tripartite structure representing Toqué's history of three decades, using a Matissian metaphor to suggest a reclining female nude."

In this province - his studio is in Westmount -Schweitzer's commissioned works are installed at the MUHC Glen site, Mount Sinai Hospital, Bell Astral

Media, among others (see April 30, 2013, p. 8 and June 20, p. 23).

Currently, Jacques Archambault, director of the Canadian Heritage of Quebec, is in communication with the artist on the subject of a 65th anniversary commission. Another felicitous collaboration may follow.



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## **Consultation,** cont'd from p. 1

Christina Smith that in the case of Forden a cyclist had been fatally injured on Forden Crescent (see story July 14, 2020, p. 10).

While the city had already implemented many recommendations of the coroner, now that reconstruction is required, several councillors weighed in for the two streets to be made as safe and functional as possible.

These included District 2 councillor Elisabeth Roux, who said she had found Forden residents very unhappy over the volume of traffic from Westmount Ave. when she went door to door during the election campaign. "I'm just happy people will be heard."

Emphasizing the value of public consultation over street re-design, District 1 councillor Antonio D'Amico added that two recent public consultations on Upper Lansdowne had been well attended.

### 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



Leafy trees this year?

In a very unscientific way, the *Independent* noticed that last week during the first major snow of the year that many trees still had leaves or fruit on their branches. Was this so? Did it contribute to the amount of downed vegetation? If yes, was this situation caused by a mild and/or unbreezy autumn? The photos are from Prince Albert on December 8. Circle added by *Independent* PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



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## Used COVID lockdown period to write Silent Voices Soskin pens, workshops new play about female music composers

### By JENNIFER BALL

Gabrielle Soskin, a local playwright, theatre production company CEO and amateur pianist, did not keep still during the COVID epidemic.

She took advantage of the somnambulance caused by the emergency to pen a new play and to create a new theatre production company to produce it.

The play is titled Silent Voices, and the company is GNS Productions.

Silent Voices centres on seven highly accomplished female composers spanning centuries from the Middle Ages to the 20th century who struggled to have their works recognized in a male-centric canon.

### Encouraging further study

She said she hopes it will inspire theatregoers because it's a play about hope. "I hope that they will find out more than they realized about these seven composers, and then look them up and read about them."

She encouraged the select audience that has seen the play to "just open their eyes to all the cultural possibilities that can now be open for women today, including [musical composition]."

The play's hook is how an aspiring conductor must grapple with challenges in her vocation due to her gender. Driven by a longing for peers and mentors, she launches into magical thinking to summon seven composers from the grave so she can meet allies that history has forgotten.

The playwright said the work is a metaphor for all female artists who've been silenced and whose talent has never been explored: "Those who have not been recognized as a genius, those who have lost confidence in themselves and those who

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have just vanished."

Soskin says it has taken her three and a half years to complete the play because "it's a sophisticated piece" and because the music and sound design that goes with it are crucial to the piece.

by Catherine Varvaro.

a tenacious person."

both have commissions.

for over 23 years.

Harder since COVID to mount plays

work.'



Gabrielle Soskin in her Westmount home. Photo taken on December 6.



## Mystery solved! **Traffic cameras** belong to city's contractor



This camera was photographed December 6 on the corner of Sherbrooke and Roslyn. There was also one on the corner of Sherbrooke and Lansdowne on that

### By Ralph Thompson

In September ("Big Brother or someone - is listening, without permission," September 26, p. 25), we wrote about and photographed cameras or microphones deployed on Sherbrooke at Prince Albert and Redfern, seemingly to monitor traffic. At the time, the city, the Société de transport de Montréal (STM) and the provincial ministry of Transport (MTQ) denied deploying them. The Independent noticed two more such installations recently on Sherbrooke, at the corner of Lansdowne and at Roslyn - and a man working on the Roslyn setup. He told the Independent that the city's Engineering department had contracted his firm. The sensors are strictly camera, according to him, and they are to gather traffic data.

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR 2024!

ennifer N [accarone

Your Member of Québec's National Assembly for Westmount—Saint-Louis



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## After October 7, what now? Jewish women mentor each other on how to mobilize

### By Jennifer Ball

"What Now? In the Aftermath of October 7" was an event to enable (mostly) Jewish women to mentor Jewish women that took place on November 20. The panel included former NDG-Lachine MP Marlene Jennings (who is not Jewish), Ariela Cotler, Lauren Lieberman, Judy Cramer and Monica Mendel. The event was moderated by Sylvie Bismuth.

Julia Peress, who is a programming and event specialist, brought about the event. It was held at the Shaar Hashomayim, which is located at the corner of Côte St. Antoine and Kensington Ave.

Peress said that it was important to meet because "on October 7, the lives of the people in Israel and the lives of Jews around the world changed forever during the terrorist attacks. Hamas deliberately targeted women...

"In the days following the attacks, we watched with heavy hearts and we cried with parents who faced the unimaginable challenge: going to bed at night, not knowing where their babies were...

"It was that pain that compelled us to act and act we did! The women of our com-



From left, Sylvie Bismuth, Marlene Jennings, Ariela Cotler, Lauren Lieberman, Judy Cramer, and Monica Mendel on November 20 at the Shaar Hashomayim.

munity rose to the occasion. We actively sought out opportunities to help and when those opportunities didn't exist, we created them."

### Montrealers, Westmounters got involved

Peress spoke about actions that Jewish women in Montreal and Westmount took. They baked, sewed and fundraised, and women who had never attended a protest in their lives went out onto the streets to express their outrage.

Jennings, Cotler, Lieberman, Cramer

and Mendel advised the packed audience on ways they could mobilize to not feel helpless while war flared up between Israel and Hamas and engulfed some of the congregation's overseas family members.

There were breakout sessions after the panel discussion for attendees to get into the nitty-gritty of tactics per each panelist's domain.

Cotler offered a lengthy explanation as to why Jews have land rights in Israel and Jennings explained how a postcard campaign is more effective than emails to your MP – if you want to effect change. Lieberman deconstructed social media's efficacy and Mendel shared her hope and optimism about the next generation of Jewish leaders.

"What has enabled the Jewish people to withstand hatred and such difficult times over and over again? Jewish mothers!...

"Jewish mothers unite – I apologize to the men in the room – but that mamma bear jumps out and we make sure that our kids are going to be educated, learn what they to need to learn, given the circumstances around us...

"We can choose to be doom-and-gloom or we can choose to see this challenge as an incredible opportunity for our young teens. They're the next generation of leaders of tomorrow. They are going to be the leaders of all of our institutions and it is up to us, the mamma bears, to make sure that we equip them with the tools that they need...

"We are giving them Jewish life... we are teaching them about Israel and the rights to the land and I think we can do it! I'm actually quite optimistic about the next generation."

## Local history teachers win Governor General's award for excellence

### By Martin C. Barry

Two teachers based at schools in Westmount were recently presented with what is arguably the country's most prestigious distinction in the field of teaching history – the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Chantal Clabrough, who teaches at Westmount High School, and Pascal Bureau, who teaches at Selwyn House School, were among six educators chosen from across the country to receive the award,



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administered by Canada's History Society, from Governor General Mary Simon during a ceremony on November 22 in Ottawa.

Through Westmount High School's Memorial Project, Clabrough got some of her history students involved in the preservation of their school's history. From 2014 to 2022, students researched the lives of 141 former Westmount High students who died in service to Canada during World War II.

After studying sources from the school, the city of Westmount and national and international digital archives, the students created profiles for each former WHS student who perished in combat.

They were able to tell the story of the former WHS students' youth, their hopes, and their lives during the war. The portraits were posted on the high school's

website in 2022, coinciding with the 150th anniversary of Westmount High, Quebec's oldest English-language public school.

"It's absolutely thrilling to be recognized



Pascal Bureau, left, a history teacher at Selwyn House School, is seen here in the school auditorium on November 30. Chantal Clabrough, right, a history teacher at Westmount High School, was one of six educators from across Canada selected to receive the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching.

for the work, and for the students and the school also to be recognized," Clabrough said in an interview with the *Westmount Independent*.

Pascal Bureau paired entrepreneurship with the study of the history of New France to present his students with a learning experience that was both authentic and immersive.

He challenged them to come up with fun and educational board games dealing with a theme from the history of New France, including mercantilism, colonization, exploration, the fur trade and the evangelization of natives.

The students were tasked with designing and creating a marketable board game on the subjects. With advice from authors and other professionals, they were able to develop an action plan, draw up rough sketches, build prototypes and produce a game board similar to those sold in stores.

"This award is a great honour," said Bureau. "I am fortu-

nate to work in an environment where I get a lot of support, without which I would not have been able to make it."



## Westmount A-dog-tions Lysanne Fowler

Tiny Capucine is part of a group of dogs that was taken in by the Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions rescue. A backyard breeding facility closed down and, yes, precious tiny dogs are now available for adoption in family environments.

Capucine is a two-year-old parti tea-cup poodle in shades of vanilla and chocolate, a delicate four-pound girlie.

She is sweet, fragile and loves to be held. She is irresistible and would be best in an adult family that is used to petite breeds. She is too tiny to walk outside in cold weather and is pee-pad trained.

Capucine is very healthy, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped. If you would like more information on her, please do not hesitate to contact the volunteers at Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions at their email info@gerdysrescue.org and also find out more about them from their

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## Tiny Capucine, let's give her a family life now



website at www.gerdysrescue.org.

Capucine came from a group of 10: there were also two shih tzus, three mini schnauzers, a mini poodle, a Pomeranian, a Yorkie and a Chihuahua.

If you would also have an interest in any others, it would be wonderful if you could reach out as soon as possible to enquire and find out more.

These are my last adoption columns of 2023, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for being there for our animals in need through adoption, fostering or donation to rescue organizations.

I wish you all the best throughout the holiday season. We will be back again in the New Year!

Your neighbour, Lysanne



Lysanne Fowler

## The beauty of kittie love: Hope and Tigron



To see them together brightens a day. The joy and playfulness of these two young cats who adore each other are wonderful to behold.

Hope is the darker black-and-grey tabby on the left of the photograph, playfully grooming her companion Tigron, the longhaired tabby in lighter shades of brown and beige on the right.

These adorable companions are presently in foster care for the Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions volunteer animal rescue.

Hope is two years old and Tigron is four. Both are very healthy, up to date with their inoculations, sterilized and microchipped.

Hope is a tripod, having been brought to the rescue with one hind leg amputated. It certainly does not stop her from being confident, curious and an energetic runner.

If you would like more information on Hope and Tigron, please do not hesitate to contact the volunteers at Gerdy's Rescues & Adoptions at their email info@gerdysrescue.org and also refer to their website at www.gerdysrescue.org. It is so wonderful to have a bonded pair of kitties in the family, heartwarming and hilarious!

Your neighbour, Lysanne

## **Police Report** Police anticipate a spike in break-ins over Christmas holidays

### BY MARTIN C. BARRY

With the Christmas holidays looming and gift shopping on many people's minds, police at Station 12 are advising home owners as well as motorists to be extra cautious when securing the house against burglaries and when locking up the car.

In an example of the latter, last week the owner of a Land Rover that was parked on Sherbrooke St. between Prince Albert and Claremont reported an attempted theft from the high-end vehicle in broad daylight, although the perpetrator fled after being spotted.

"Around 2 o'clock in the afternoon someone saw a man searching the car," said Cst. Mike Yigit, Station 12's community relations officer. However, by the time officers arrived, the suspect had managed to run off after the owner turned up.

There was no damage to the vehicle to

indicate a forced break-in, and the owner insisted that the all the doors were locked. He also reported that nothing in the vehicle appeared to have been stolen.

Cst. Yigit suggested that as a general rule, but especially during the Christmas holiday season, car owners should never leave shopping purchases or other valuables in the rear seat. "Always put it in the trunk," he said.

He offered another tip: cover any purchases in the rear seat with a blanket.

### Holiday security tips

Regarding household security during the holidays, he suggested that anyone going away for an extended period should take certain basic precautions.

"Before they leave, they should advise their alarm company or perhaps their neighbours, if they have a good relationship with them, to say they're leaving for

a while and to keep an eye on the house," said Yigit.

"Often times when it snows, there can be an accumulation of snow in the driveway and people can see if there's been movement in and out of the house," he added, while recommending that a neighbour or snow removal contractor be enlisted to clear away the snow during an extended absence.

He noted that an upsurge in car and home break-ins is usually seen during the Christmas season because perpetrators are constantly on the lookout for vulnerabilities.

"They know that a lot of people go away, especially in Westmount, for a week, two weeks, sometimes even longer," said Yigit. "That's why it's important to advise the neighbours when you're going away that they should keep an eye on the house."

## Old Timers/SWAT charity tournament finishes 32nd tourney





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A large part of the tournament in one picture: Westmount's SWATTOO in white shirts; the ADs in red shirts; Matossian family members; councillors Jeff Shamie, Mary Gallery and Matt Aronson; and volunteers and supporters.

### By Ralph Thompson

The finals and semi-finals of the 32nd annual Westmount Oldtimers Hockey Tournament took place at the Westmount recreation centre's Molson rink December 3.

Eight teams had battled it out beginning November 29 for the joy of hockey, but more importantly to raise funds for pediatric brain cancer research and neuro surgical equipment at the MUHC Children's

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hospital and the CHU St. Justine.

"I can't say how much we've raised so far this year. Some donations go directly to the hospitals and there's a silent auction, but last year we raised over \$60,000," said organizer Howard Hoppenheim.

Hundreds help out, from volunteers showing up and local businesses giving products and services, to the city donating ice and employees' time.

The fundraiser was inspired by the late Nicolas W. Matossian (1969-1987), a patient at the Montreal Children's Hospital diagnosed with terminal brain cancer who wanted to make a difference.

Along with his friends, he organized two golf tournaments that, in his remaining lifetime, raised over \$50,000. The spirit of young Nicolas lives on with his family, friends, the Westmount community and far beyond.

The final game was between Westmount's SWATTOO and the ADs. After much research amongst the Rive Sud AD players, the consensus was that AD stood for "Almost dead" or "All divorced." Regardless, the ADs were victorious, beating SWATTOO 3 to 1 in an even-sided game.

Fêtes!

(SWATTOO is the "scion" team of the Senior Westmount Allstar Team/SWAT, for which many organizers play).

Ken Sinclair was granted the Sportsmanship Award and François Proulx given the Howard Hoppenheim Award.

Mayor Christina Smith handed out the tournament trophy and councillors Jeff Shamie, Mary Gallery and Matt Aronson distributed gold(ish) and silver(ish) medallions.

### New committee, cont'd from p. 1

mittee." He explained that in "today's world, environmental issues have become increasingly pressing."

The far-reaching mandate of the new committee is expected to involve many concerns including the management of waste materials (such as landfill garbage, composting, recycling) and renewable energy sources.

A call for applications from the public is to be made by the administration "as soon as possible," he said and suggesting that anyone interested keep an eye out for an announcement.

Anne-Marie

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To you and yours / A chacun et à tous Happy Holidays! Joyeuses



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## Museum ball brings black-ties, black dresses



Veronica Redgrave

Social Notes

A new moon smiled down on the prestigious Montreal Museum of Fine Arts 63rd annual ball.

Honorary co-chairs were **Charles Emond**, CEO, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, and **France Margaret Bélanger**, president, Sports and Entertainment of Club de hockey Canadiens.

Exceeding expectations, the black-tie gala was visually arresting. Not only did guests enjoy the Marisol exhibit, but the museum's rooms were transformed from "A to Z": from Art to Zinnias.

And then there were the ball gowns. Anish Kapoor's famed colour "Vantablack," which is blacker than, well, black, has nothing on the pitch-dark gowns seen at this event, ranging from strapless to backless (the better to see tattoos); and floorsweeping to J. Lo thigh peeking.

Some ladies wore LBD (to-the-knee Little Black Dresses). There were also brights and beiges.

Elegant in pale bespoke beading, MMFA chief curator **Mary-Dailey Desmarais** greeted guests along with the MMFA

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Jo-Anne Duchesne, Stéphane Aquin, Sylvie Demers, Charles Emond, France Margaret Bélanger, André Dufour and Mary-Dailey Desmarais.

Foundation's president **Sylvie Demers** and director **Jo-Anne Duchesne**, and the MMFA's director **Stéphane Aquin** and president **André Dufour**.

Noted in the crowded rooms were **Paul Desmarais III**; Quebec premier **François Legault** and his wife **Isabelle Brais**; **Pierre Fitzgibbon**, minister economy, innovation and energy; Anne-Marie Gaudet and François-Philippe Champagne, minister of innovation, science and industry; Vanessa Germain and Maxime Ménard, CEO Fraser Limited; Josée Dufresne and Claude Marcotte, Carbonleo partner and executive vp; Mélanie Charbonneau, vp legal affairs Otera Capital and Yves Lalumière, CEO Tourisme Montréal; **Caroline Codsi**, CEO Women in Governance and **Michel Leblanc**, CEO Chamber of Commerce of Métropolitan Montreal; **Martin Cauchon**, former minister of Justice and attorney general of Canada; **Nathalie Maillé**, executive director Montreal Arts Council and **Bernard** *continued on p. 26* 

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André Dufour and Fanny Rodrigue.



and Laurent Duvernay-Tardif.

Social notes, cont'd from p. 25

Colas, partner CMKZ; Pascale Bourbeau and Pierre-Karl Péladeau, CEO Québecor; Tami-Jo Rice and Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer, Kahnawake's grand chief; and Geoff Molson, owner/CEO Club de Hockey Canadien, the Bell Centre and Evenko, who arrived with Montreal Canadien Yvan Cournover.

Noted during the shoulder-to-shoulder champagne cocktail were Helen Antoniou and Andrew Molson, chair Avenir Global; Carine Watier and Barry Lorenzetti: Isabelle Marcoux, Transcontinental Inc., and her daughter Jeanne Olivier; Cogeco's Animators

Tami-Jo Rice and Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer.

Louis Audet and Philippe Jetté, president; Florence-Agathe Dubé-Moreau, author and exhibition curator, and Laurent Duvernay-Tardif, co-founder of Fondation LDT; senator Serge Joyal; Michael Rousseau, CEO Air Canada; designer Scott Yetman and Jean Michel Lavoie, and Marie-Josée Desrochers, CEO, Société de la Place des Arts.

Ball décor meant gallery spaces were transformed. Rooms with a hue. Colour jostled with wit in the dramatic dining areas created under the artistic direction of Valentine Hinfray and Alexandra Briand-Soucy as well as artists Cyndie Belhumeur, Nicolas Grenier, MissMe and the architecture/design firm NOS.



Hannah Rose Dalton, Miss Me and Steven Raj Bhaskaran.

The locally inspired haute cusine was by chef Gabriel Molleur-Langevin, of the Fairmont Le Chateau Frontenac hotel's Champlain Restaurant, and executed by the team from the Fairmont The Queen Elizabeth, under the direction of Armando Arruda, executive chef Jean-Mark Leon and catering chef Pablo Gonzalez.

Pastel-pretty animators (see photo) enlivened the museum's monumental marble staircase.

Design duo Hannah Rose Dalton and Steven Raj Bhaskaran (aka Fecal Matter) added punch to the party. A record \$2 million was raised.





Nathalie Maillé.



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