

New synthetic soccer pitch would avoid use of parks for site

Joint city/Marianopolis field planned on CEGEP's campus for next spring

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

With soccer season moving into high gear came news last week that a renewed partnership between the city and Marianopolis may very likely bring about the creation for late next spring of a synthetic-turf soccer field with organic infill.

"We're committed to moving forward with our motion from last night," Mayor Christina Smith told the *Independent* the day after the city council meeting June 19.

That's when a resolution was adopted unanimously to renew the partnership that had been created January 17, 2022 for Westmount to support the CEGEP's request for a provincial grant to improve its sports facilities "and make them accessible to Westmount's general population."

The latest resolution adds that the partnership is "for the construction of a syn-

thetic field."

Asked how quickly such a turf field could be realized, Mayor Smith said the aim was to have it finished in the spring of 2024.

"It's a perfect partnership, she continued. "The site is there. They have extra land and parking. It would be there for us to use in the evening. People are wanting better sports facilities. This is a perfect opportunity. It would not take away green space or space from a park."

Consultation meeting first

A resident of Columbia Ave. who spoke during the first question period before the agenda item was formally approved, thanked the mayor and asked whether there would be formal public consultation on the field, to which Mayor Smith replied *continued on p. 4*

Tall truck avoids low Greene bridge



The *Independent* is pleased to report its second-ever Greene bridge strike miss due to the warning boom, witnessed June 20 at 5:30 pm. (For the first known to us, see June 13, p. 12.) The driver of this truck was alerted to the low-clearance underpass below Dorchester by the warning boom – and turned around in time. Is a trend emerging? The *Independent* has chronicled at least 17 strikes since November 2020 (see December 13, 2022, p. 23).

PHOTO COURTESY OF HUGH RAY.

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No breakthrough in blue-collar strike by June 23 press time

Mayor Smith calls for return to negotiations, setting 'the record straight'

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

As a strike of the city's blue-collar workers began June 22, Mayor Christina Smith told the *Independent* June 23 there had been no breakthrough in the status quo, which she had hoped for, and the workers or picketers were playing volleyball on the front lawn outside city hall, on what was not a city holiday.

"I was optimistic we would have news

of a breakthrough," she said last Friday, which was also the *Independent's* earlier than usual deadline due to the St. Jean holiday.

At the city council meeting June 19, she had issued an appeal to the workers and their union, the Syndicat des cols bleus regroupés de Montréal – Local 301: "Dear union representatives, I ask that you come back to the negotiating table. Our credibility dep- *continued on p. 4*

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Jennifer Maccarone


**Your Member of Québec's National
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**Jennifer Maccarone, MNA for Westmount—Saint-Louis
Riding office**

1134 Sainte-Catherine Street West
Suite 801 Montréal (Québec) H3B 1H4
514 395-2929

Jennifer.Maccarone.WSL@assnat.qc.ca

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**ASSEMBLÉE
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DU QUÉBEC**

Teen warned of danger when caught on camera urinating at lookout

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

A Public Security dispatcher monitoring city surveillance cameras June 19 at 2:38 am noticed a young man standing “dangerously” on the summit lookout balustrade and urinating. On arrival at the lookout, a responding patroller saw a group of four teens, one of whom was standing on the balustrade and wearing a white hoodie and backpack as seen on camera.

The patroller explained how dangerous it was to stand on the high ledge. The young man was reported to have apologized and was given a ticket for \$171 for urinating in public. He was identified as a 17-year-old who did not live in Westmount.

Loose dog found and reunited with owner

A call to Public Security June 20 at 5:20 pm reported that a dog had been found running loose on Aberdeen near Montrose. After a patroller met with the finders at a home on Aberdeen, the small brown curly-haired dog was taken to the Animal Hospital of Westmount to be scanned for a possible microchip.

While still there, officials said, the officer was informed that the owner had gone to the station on Stanton looking for the dog and the two were subsequently reunited. The owner, a resident of Montrose, was told to purchase a licence for the dog “immediately.”

Help comes for man fallen in Summit Woods

A 70-year-old man fell in Summit Woods June 20 at 9:31 am, hitting his head and complaining of a sore nose, Public Security officials said. Otherwise, he told patrollers that he felt “pretty good.” Urgences Santé was called and fire department first responders attended. No other details were available.

Man ticketed for unleashed dog in woods

A Public Security patroller in Summit Woods witnessed a large dog off leash June 16 at 2:04 pm, Public Security officials said. Two people were then seen nearby, one carrying a leash, which a man immediately fastened to the dog. He identified himself as the dog’s guardian, which was also borne out by the dog’s licence tag.

The man was warned to take note of the signs at entrances to the park stating that dogs must be kept on leash between 10 am and 5 pm between June 16 and October 31. He was issued a ticket for \$230.

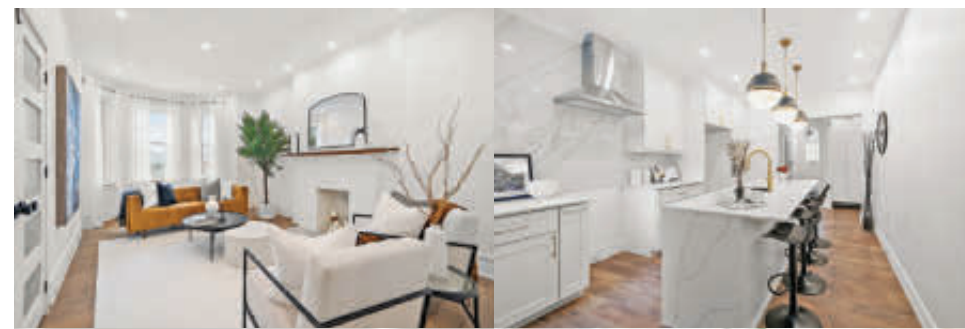
Second ticket for improper use of street on Edgell

A ticket for \$1,317 was given to a contractor June 16 for putting a pile of gravel on the public domain in front of 26 Edgell, Public Security officials said. Such use of the street or sidewalk is not allowed without a permit and its conditions for creating safe passage for pedestrians and traffic. The infraction was seen at 8:36 am.

It was only three days earlier that another contractor was also fined for construction vehicles blocking the street at the same location without the required permit for occupation of the public domain (see story June 20, p. 2.)

Checks at dog runs for valid licences under way

An ongoing check of dog tags at the runs at Westmount and King George (Murray) parks as well as Summits Woods in particular has been under way, Public Security director Greg McBain said last week. On June 15, for example, he said, of the six dogs in one check at KGP, one was found without a valid tag and the guardian was warned to obtain one immediately.



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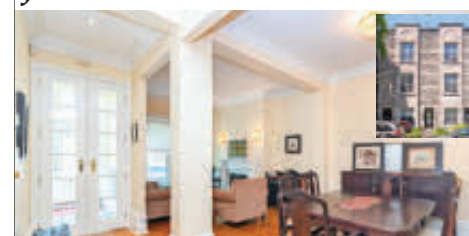
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Marianopolis, located on Westmount Ave. and Claremont, on June 22.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

Synthetic field, cont'd from p. 1

"absolutely."

The partnership now had to go back to the Marianopolis board, which she indicated would be in favour, saying it would keep the CEGEP students from going to Brébeuf in search of a field.

In moving the resolution, Councillor Mary Gallery, whose commissionership includes parks, and sports and recreation, said she was happy this partnership was moving forward.

The idea of a partnership with Marianopolis was originally proposed by Mayor Smith at the time of her acclamation October 1, 2021 (see story October 5, 2021, p. 6) and approved by the council January 17, 2022.

Since then, however, the proposed partnership had been stalled until an ownership issue at Marianopolis had been resolved, Mayor Smith explained last week. It has been reported recently that the Congrégation de Notre Dame (CND) would be selling the campus to Marianopolis, which has leased it from them since 2007.

Smith summarized: "This means we deal with Marianopolis and not the CND."

While the city has received opposition over the years to a synthetic turf field in both Westmount Park and the Westmount Athletic Grounds (WAG) as well as to the

sustainability issue of synthetic turf, the more recent creation of organic infill has been described as addressing this issue.

Such a type of field has been in use at ECS this year.

Strike, cont'd from p. 1

ends on it. Let's negotiate in good faith."

It was also time, she explained, for the city "to set the record straight," adding that the city had been "totally open and available for negotiation well before the expiry of the contract (December 31, 2019)."

She also denied allegations that the city had attempted "to unfairly influence" its blue-collar workers. In addition, she said that in comparing salaries with other municipalities, "the union fails to mention that it is comparing Westmount's 2019 salaries with the new salaries of others after 2020."

While a number of workers had attended two previous council meetings and representatives had spoken at each, none spoke during the question periods at the most recent (June 19) meeting.

A text of the mayor's full statement from council can be read on the home page of the city along with a list of city services that had been interrupted (see also story June 20, p. 1).



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Beekeeper to answer questions July 5 & 26

Library's bees moved down to garden for easier visibility

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The bees on the roof of Westmount Public Library since 2014 have been re-located to the Storytelling Garden to be more easily viewed by the public from either the Conservatory, the library or the garden itself.

The hive is situated on a mound just outside the Conservatory about on eye level with the top of the library's interior stairs leading up and down from the children's department.

"This is another step in the city's sustainability journey to foster a love and appreciation of our busy bees and ecological awareness of the important role they play in our world," said Donna Lach, assistant director of the library and Community Events.

Beekeeper François-Xavier Labrecque of Alvéole, the urban beekeeping services provider with which the city is partnered,



Beekeeper François-Xavier Labrecque at work at the library. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WESTMOUNT PUBLIC LIBRARY.

will be on hand in the garden July 5 and July 26 at 1:45 pm to answer questions as



The bee hive at its new location on June 22.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

he tends to the bees.

For the last few years, the city has had two hives, but this year Alvéole has moved away from being a honey producer to being one of promoting understanding of the bee in order to "demystify" them, Lach said.

The city's partnership with Alvéole is

based on a commitment to bring nature into cities and make urban agriculture an integral part of our city, she explained.

The city's jars of honey are usually sold in the fall at the library to help fund projects at the library and conservatory (see story May 8, 2014).

PAC chair appointed officer of the Order of Quebec

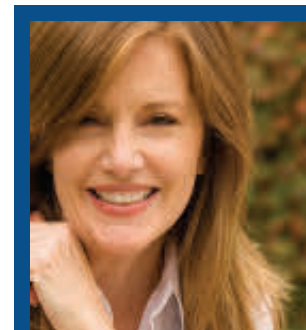
BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Clément Demers, who chairs the city's Planning Advisory Committee (PAC), has been named an officer of the Order of Quebec. "He follows a long line of very accomplished chairs of the PAC and is receiving a well-deserved recognition," Mayor Christina Smith said.

The National Order of Quebec, termed officially in French as l'Ordre national du Québec, and often abbreviated in English as the Order of Quebec, includes three grades (grand officer, officer and knight). It is conferred on men and women, either Canadian citizens or foreigners, for outstanding achievements in many fields.

"I owe this honour to all the people I meet with frequently and my many collaborators in projects that we made happen together," Demers wrote to PAC colleagues.

Architect and urban planner Demers is widely recognized as an expert in his field. He was appointed to the position of PAC chair on February 7, 2022 on the retirement of Julia Gersovitz. His career also includes 15 years with the city of Montreal, where he held positions such as deputy director of urban planning and assistant director of housing and urban development. He has also served on the advisory committee on planning, design and realty of the National Capital Commission in Ottawa.



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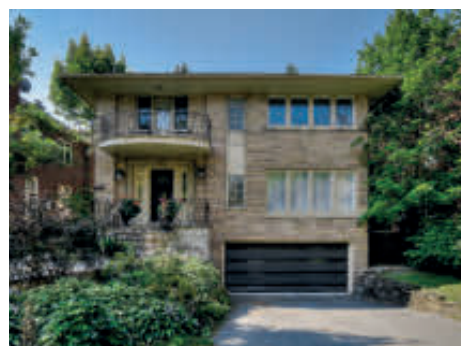
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Firepit found in Summit Woods



Users of Summit Woods noticed a very large fire pit in use last week, leaving embers found June 15 that had lasted long after the initial fire. Consumers of alcohol were found in the same place June 17. The firepit is near the concrete-block formation pictured above. These photographs are from June 18.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LYSANNE FOWLER.

Children's library signs up members to 'Check this out'

Summer reading club's theme focuses on 'cool stuff'

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The children's department of the Westmount Public Library launched its annual TD Summer Reading Club June 17 after hosting some 100 students from Roslyn School two weeks earlier as well as 25 from Westmount Park and 75 from The Study.

The national theme chosen for the reading club this year is "Check this out." The theme focuses on "cool stuff, amazing facts, exploring the world around us and everything that makes us curious," said children's librarian Wendy Wayling.

The club takes place throughout the summer offering a number of activities and challenges to encourage reading for newborns up to the early teens. In keeping with the theme, the children's desk is decorated like an "Olde Curiosity Shop."

"Each child who signs up for the club will receive a bag complete with a logbook, stickers, an activity booklet, and a reading incentive game, she said. "Those who participate will improve their reading skills while having fun over the summer." They may read books and ebooks or listen to audio or books on CD from the library or from home in either French or English.

All children who are members of the Westmount Public Library are welcome to join the club. All who live in Westmount or attend a Westmount school may apply for a free library card.



Grade 1 students from Roslyn hear about this year's TD Summer Reading Club May 31 from children's librarian Wendy Wayling, centre.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Coiffure Jean John

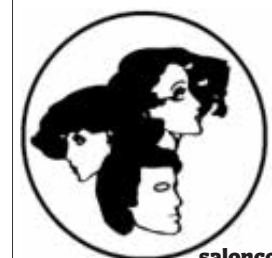
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WHERE WAS THE GREEN, BLOC COVERAGE?

Why did you only give space for three federal candidates (June 13, p. 26) and not for Jonathan Pedneault, who co-chairs the Green Party with Elizabeth May? Especially now, when the urgency of climate change is imminent.

And what about some words from the other candidates, e.g. the Bloc Québécois? Voters have a right to be informed about all points of views.

I was also disappointed that the debate was cancelled at the last minute at Westmount High School.

Thank you for consideration of equal coverage in the future.

GEMMA MATTHEIJ, GROSVENOR AVE.

Editor's reply: Our focus is municipal life, not federal politics, but we do cover the local federal races. However, given that Westmount is a very, very safe federal Liberal riding and that many people vote based on national issues (not local candidates), this coverage often feels more “for the record” or to fulfill only idle curiosity rather than for any useful purpose to voters.

This observation is not a slight on the Liberals. There are safe ridings for other parties all over this country and they are an unremarkable part of our system.

Also, we have other things to cover, including situations covered nowhere else and where things are more in flux.

Similarly, to my mind, the real race to be MP really ended when Anna Gainey defeated Fred Headon for the Liberal nomination (see May 2, p. 1, May 23, p. 5).

As a result, when it came to cover this election – itself a low-stakes by-election – I chose to focus on the candidates from the parties that have placed in the same, top-three order since this riding's creation: Liberals, NDP, Conservatives. The people, in their wisdom, chose these entities in this order three times, i.e. in 2015, 2019 and 2021, and, as it turns out, this time too (see p. 16).

Maybe for the next general election we will cover all parties, but – I am guessing – any such future information will be more for the curious than for the voter actually seeking information on how to vote. And, in the end, a Liberal will win. (No need for non-Liberal voters to despair. Their votes are part of their parties' mandates even if they don't elect someone here.)

In each of these four recent elections, the combined votes for *every other party* were not equal to the Liberals'. The improved showing of the Greens this time (13.4 percent vs 4 percent) was the wisp of a barely visible cloud on a sunny Liberal day. The people, in their wisdom, have been very consistent on this point, as well as about the #2 and #3 spots.

For clarity, the *Independent* had nothing to do with the planned and cancelled June 14 debate at Westmount High. – DP.

TWO YEARS OF HYDRO GOVERNANCE DISCUSSION – FOR WHAT?

I attended the city council meeting on June 19 to ask if the Hydro Westmount governance committee assembled by Mayor Smith on June 7, 2021, almost exactly two years ago (see June 22, 2021, p. 1), could tell us what the findings were that could address the financial deficit at Westmount Hydro. There were none.

This committee had a two-year mandate, was made up of 11 people to oversee an approximate \$7-million operating budget and an average \$2-million capital expenditure program. Two years on and what did they learn? Pretty much what they knew two years ago.

Westmount Hydro needs significant investment – money that it doesn't have – to upgrade an ailing infrastructure that provides no tangible benefit to Westmount residents. Another “nothing new committee.” Let's study what we already know. Two years on, millions of dollars of taxpayer money, with millions more to come spent on a zombie corporation.

Mayor Smith said, “Council spends a lot of time talking about Westmount Hydro” – which is what the Smith administration does excel at, useless studies and committees with no action plan.

The mayor didn't offer any insight, no plan or a way forward to make this operation break even (at best) because the economics just don't work. Profitability requires scale. Running boutique utilities simply doesn't work. There is no magic wand. Westmount has no industrial base and no population growth, so there is no revenue upside, other than a minor one at times if we have a cold winter. The cost of major capital expenditures is increasing at a far faster rate than any commensurate increase in revenues.

So we keep it going for nostalgia. Mayor Smith said, “It has been part of Westmount for 125 years.” The horse and buggy were also part of history for a very long time.

It is incumbent upon elected officials to move on, adapt to the times and spend taxpayer money responsibly. As the world evolves at an ever-increasing pace, the internet, data analytics and now AI, we seem to have an administration that is stuck in the past, unable to move quickly on any issue. We need decisions based on data, and critical thinking that reflect the needs of today, not yesteryear.

Westmount has spent \$15 million during the Smith administration and a total of \$18 million going back eight years on Westmount Hydro to keep the lights on. Imagine what Westmount would look like

if these funds had been invested in roads, sidewalks, parks, soccer fields, etc. Money could have been available for all sorts of improvements and proper maintenance of infrastructure. Perhaps city council should be reminded they are running a municipality with a myriad of needs, not a history project.

And when I questioned Mr. Leopold's letter on Westmount Hydro being an insurance policy (April 11, p. 8), which was obviously a misleading statement, she said “Mr. Leopold attended one meeting and doesn't speak for the committee.” So another committee, no action plan, a waste of time and taxpayers' money as Westmount Hydro continues to burn through millions.

JANIS KRAUT, THE BOULEVARD

SHAME ON INDEPENDENT!

Shame on the *Independent* for publishing the “Whale of a Chef's Tale” on June 20 (p. 15), without editing it for correct grammar and ensuring it was a critical review, rather than an infomercial as written. And if it was an infomercial, it should be so identified.

ELIOT GOLDWARG, ST. CATHERINE ST.

Editor's reply: It is an advertisement. Clues: Colour in the headline, by-line at the end of the article, “ragged” right justification, capitals in headline, small (and different) typeface – none of these are our style for articles. Another major clue: whole left-hand page (p. 14) was an advertisement for the same establishment, which also used some of the same colours. – DP.

GOOD WESTMOUNT MEMORIES, HISTORY

My good wishes to David Nercessian for reminding the citizens of Westmount the importance of preserving history of the city they live in, including through photography (“More lore concerning downtown's Edgemoor, eastern Westmount,” June 13, p. 24).

I am happy to have the opportunity to review photos of an early 20th century “time machine” covering Westmount.

I lived in Westmount for 10 years in the late fifties and early sixties. Several buildings shown in the report bring back memories of when I lived there. The photos illustrate a portion of the development of Westmount before my time living there and to my knowledge of an earlier time.

Thanks to everyone at the *Independent* for bringing to life this photo history of Westmount.

Fond memories and additional knowledge gained by me of my favourite city in this country, Westmount.

BERNIE MACDONALD, OTTAWA

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

We are Westmount

Editor

David Price: 514.935.4537
editor@westmountindependent.com

Chief reporter

Laureen Sweeney

Graphics

Ted Sancton

Advertising sales

Arleen Candiotti: 514.223.3567
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Construction sites at Prince Albert and de Maisonneuve, above left, and Lansdowne north of de Maisonneuve, above right, were active June 22, particularly on Prince Albert south to York St., which was closed to traffic, as it had been the day before. Two residences are being built on Lansdowne and eight at “Albert Square.” What about work at sites on Claremont and Windsor, bottom left, and the planned one at Dorchester near Greene, bottom right? Not so much, as seen the same day. The building at 500 Claremont is being turned into residential rental apartments, slowly. The current owner bought the building in 2015 and revealed its plans in November 2016 (see December 6, 2016, p. 1). Its demolition permit was extended until October earlier this year (see February 28, p. 1). The site on Dorchester received final council approval for 11 condos early this year (see January 24, p. 1).

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



Smith speaks to Rotary

Westmount's mayor has 'auxiliary homes' on her mind

By MARTIN C. BARRY

Saying she firmly believes no community always stays the same and municipalities should evolve and change to meet everyone's needs, Mayor Christina Smith told the Rotary Club of Westmount last week that one of the concepts she's been exploring is to allow "auxiliary homes" in Westmount's back yards.

"Should we allow more densification?" asked Smith, who was the Westmount Rotarians' guest speaker on June 21 at Victoria Hall.

The 'missing middle'

Noting that officials with the city of Toronto are currently discussing the possibility of amending their zoning by-laws to allow auxiliary houses, she wondered whether perhaps the time has come for Westmount to contemplate something along the same lines.

"We have to be a part of it," said the mayor. "We can't just stay static. You constantly have to evolve."

When asked by the *Independent* whether the auxiliary homes concept had reached the point of being discussed by the council,

Smith replied, "No. We haven't discussed it extensively in council. But we're following it closely to see how Toronto is managing it."

She pointed out that property zoning in Toronto now allows only single-family housing or large apartment towers, but not a segment known among urban planners as the "missing middle" (duplexes or smaller apartment blocks).

She repeated it's "not something council has discussed or debated, but something I'm following closely as to what's happening in Toronto."

Costs rising, labour diminishing

Addressing the issue of the skyrocketing costs the city of Westmount has faced over the past six years, Smith said what Westmount now pays for water infrastructure alone has fluctuated upwards by 233 per cent since 2017.

"We don't really have a choice when it comes to water. If we've got water lines breaking, we obviously have to deal with them and we have to plan for them."

She said labour shortages are another problem. According to the mayor, a park that has been under re-development since last year around Upper Lansdowne, Lexington and Devon avenues is still dragging on this summer because of a shortage of workers.

"People call me all the time saying they haven't shown up, they're not working today," said Smith. "So, the contractor says, 'It's because all my team is on another project and I don't have any workers and I don't have anyone who'll consider splitting the labour across different projects.'"

"So that is a major preoccupation of the city. And it's going to continue to be until we solve it."



Seen here on June 21 at Victoria Hall, Mayor Christina Smith told the Westmount Rotarians that cities need to evolve in order to meet changing needs.



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Art Show: Griffintown

Artist Martin Dansky invites you to an art show at the Montreal Art Center, 1844 William Street in Griffintown from 11am June 24 to July 1st. Free entrance. Check website for other details.

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Westmount A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER


Being a unique fellow is attention grabbing! Looking at Baker is a moment of fascination, *hmm* some beagle traits – *oh yes*, the brown-and-blue eyes of the husky *maybe ...*

A middle-sized guy, he is quite the handsome and affectionate buddy. Baker was in a family where there was a change in circumstances and he is now in foster care for Bri Care Adoptions.

He is a bit of an entertainer, and is loving and playful. He also enjoys being trained.

As Baker is certainly part hound, he is food motivated and he will keep learning as he keeps vying for treats!

Further to his change of circumstances, he is still a bit nervous of new things, so



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

A regal beauty, Lady Jane is a stunning long-haired tabby with a luxurious coat in contrasting shades of grey and black. She is in foster care for the Montreal SPCA and her foster family reports that she is affectionate and keen on attention, and on getting her ears and chin scratched. She also enjoys her daily brushing, a sweet moment of bonding.

Lady Jane is three years young, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped. She is offered for adoption at the reduced adoption fee of the humanitarian adoption category, as she is on a uri-

Fun Baker

nurturing and understanding are valuable in making him feel secure.

Baker is active, and he enjoys lots of play and running in the forest, which would make it easy for him to join the Westmount summit dogs and their families.

He is eight years young, up to date with his inoculations, neutered and microchipped.

For more information on Baker, it would be wonderful if you could follow the Bri Cares Adoption group on Facebook and Instagram.

Please do not hesitate to email Briana at their email bricaresadoption@gmail.com in order for her to answer any adoption questions you might have and forward more photographs of Baker being adorable.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne

Lady Jane


nary tract health diet and is encouraged to drink plenty of liquids.

If you would like more information on stunning Jane, please do not hesitate to refer to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, scroll to her information page by her identification number, 43201962, and click on the “Fill out the form” button on the right-hand side of the page to complete the basic contact information form. A member of the SPCA adoption team will get back to you to answer all your questions about her and discuss adoption.

Please consider adopting Lady Jane. She is waiting for a family at a time of year when so many are in need of families.


Your neighbour,
Lysanne

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City's youth baseball team wins 4-3 against parents

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The city's youth baseball program wound up the spring session at an M9/M11 clinic June 21 in which the players had the opportunity to show off their skills. This was a "very hotly anticipated game," according to Andrew Maislin, operations manager at Sports and Recreation. It was the first-ever parent/child game.

"These young athletes started off the season with very little knowledge of the game and throughout the season, worked on various skills from throwing, catching, fielding and running to beat the parents in a very close game of 4-3.

"It was amazing to see how far the players have come," he said.

Discussing their progress, he said they had started off the season with tennis balls instead of baseballs and used a baseball tee to hit. By the end of the season, however, they had transitioned to baseballs and players pitching.

"I am very proud to see how hard they worked, and I am very excited to see them move on to the competitive team's next season."

In singling out individual highlights from the game, Maislin said the game



PHOTO COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT SPORTS AND RECREATION.

started off with Daniel Burdick striking out various parents at the plate "with his exceptional pitches." They included a "spectacular play" by Xinlin Huang, "where she

threw the ball to third baseman Matthew Frenkiel who managed to tag out his own father, Stuart."

The parents put in Jessica Pathy as a

relief pitcher late into the third inning in an attempt to stem the hits but the youth team managed to eke out a win.

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Gainey elected MP

Federal Liberal candidate Anna Gainey was elected the member of parliament for NDG-Westmount in the June 19 by-election. The riding also includes Montreal West and a very small part of downtown. The results were:

	votes	percent
Liberals:	11,051	50.9
NDP:	3,001	13.8
Conservatives:	2,936	13.5
Green:	2,922	13.4
Bloc Québécois:	985	4.5
Alex Montagano:	510	2.3
People's Party:	141	0.6
Rhinocéros:	97	0.4
Christian Heritage:	65	0.3
Félix Vincent Ardea:	18	0.1
Spoiled:	165	

Turnout

2023 by-election:	29.9 percent (21,891/73,152)
2021 general election:	62.6 percent (46,037/73,595)

Nealy celebrates her 70th



Westmount beautician Nealy Chea, right, celebrated her 70th birthday on June 22 with, from left, colleagues Chantal, Elissa, Linda Nguyen and Sheda. One was heard to say, "70 years and still working. I can't believe it!" Chea's business has been a tenant at Nguyen's Illusions Concept hair and beauty salon on Victoria Ave. at Somerville for two years, but her links to Westmount go back to 2013 when she was based at the Westmount Medical Building on Sherbrooke at Claremont. In fact, Chea's birthday is next month, leading one attendee to exclaim: "Do we have to party for a month?" The *Independent* did not hear an answer.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.



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Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

The recent ICRF annual gala honoured **Michael Brownstein**, president of Browns Shoes, there with his wife **Therese Brownstein**.

Co-chaired by **Vivian Billick** and **Samantha Singer-Guindi**, the event was organized by **Alexandra Feifer-Wexelman**. Committee members were **Christina Arciero**, **Robert Bard**, **Jeffrey Bernstein**, **Noah Billick**, **Rich Bruggeman**, **Mark Caplan**, **Lynn Cohen**, **Yossi Cohen**, **Mark Edery**, **Shari Gordon Black**, **Leanne Greenberg**, **Bruce Isenberg**, **Amy Kornik**, **Philippe Mamane**, **Jodi Milgram**, **Noah Neudorf**, **Sam Pai**, **Peter Rosenthal**, **Karen Shebeth**, **Jamie Silver** and **Karen Zajdman**.

Held at the Ritz Carlton, the evening was hosted by businessman and philanthropist **Mitch Garber**.

Guests first enjoyed a meet-and-greet at the Cosner Art Gallery, followed by a cocktail party and five-course dinner.

The evening's highlight was a captivating Q & A session with Israeli TV sensation **Lior Raz**, co-creator and lead actor of Netflix's award-winning series *Fauda*.

ICRF Montreal celebrates 46th annual gala



Stuart Weitzman, Therese and Michael Brownstein.

(Please, please, produce another season!)

Singer-songwriter **Gabriella Laberge** gave a mesmerizing performance. Present among the many guests were ICRF's president **Jordanna Feifer** and former president **Jeffrey Bernstein**, and **Stuart Weitzman**.

ICRF, the largest non-profit in North America supporting Israeli cancer research, has generated more than \$87.5 million, empowering over 2,730 cancer research projects.

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unique volunteer scientific *continued on p. 18*

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Samantha Singer Guindi and Vivian Billick.



Lior Raz and Mitch Garber.

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Au Contraire Film Festival
coming August 21

I love to know our gentle readers. However, they quickly point out my errors. One was made in my column of June 12 (p. 29). The 11th Au Contraire Film Festival has NOT yet taken place. The event I wrote about was just the *launch* for the upcoming event, as well as the presentation of the annual Coupe Lumière award. The film festival, usually quickly sold out, takes place August 21.

Box office opens June 30. Visit www.acff.ca or contact devon.reid@urbanpardes.org. – VR



ICRF former president Jeffrey Bernstein.

Social notes, *cont'd from p. 17*

advisory board of the city's top oncology experts led by Dr. Walter Gotlieb. The branch also takes pride in offering a fully funded local fellowship program for Israel-

is keen on conducting cancer research in Montreal.

The evening raised over \$400,000 for cancer research.



Alexandra Feifer, Lior Raz and Les Wexelman.

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Police Report

'Local' suspects 'known to police' arrested in second breakthrough case

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Several suspects believed to be at least partly responsible for a string of burglaries committed at homes in upper Westmount over the last few months have been arrested, according to police at Station 12 on Stanton Street.

The alleged perpetrators are believed to have taken part in three recent household break-ins with theft in Westmount, with the value of stolen property estimated at more than \$250,000.

Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Mike Yigit told the *Independent* the stolen items consisted mostly of jewellery.

The suspects were linked to recent break-and-enter incidents in upper Westmount in which the *modus operandi* was to forcibly get in through weak points of entry found at the rear of homes. "From the patio, they would break the glass door and go in," said Yigit.

This was the second time recently that Station 12 scored a breakthrough with regards to the wave of burglaries. Two weeks ago, Cst. Yigit revealed the arrest of four South American suspects also believed to be connected to the upper

Westmount thefts.

While Cst. Yigit insisted that a preliminary investigation indicated the first suspects weren't connected with the ones apprehended more recently, the first group's *modus operandi* was similar as it also involved getting in through ground-level patio doors, while using a ladder to reach second-storey windows or balconies.

He described the suspects arrested most recently as "locals," rather than part of a wider organized network, saying "these are people that are known to police." He suggested that it is usually just a matter of time before burglars are caught.

"It's like a puzzle for us," said Yigit. "Every time there is a theft, the evidence we find, we kind of piece it all together." He said the clue that led to the most recent arrests was an image of a vehicle used in the burglaries that was taken by a nearby security camera.

Car thefts

At least two more thefts of high-end vehicles were reported in Westmount last week, following a series of car theft incidents recently.

In the first incident, around 6 am on

June 19, a GMC Sierra pick-up truck was stolen from a parking spot on St. Catherine St. near Lansdowne Ave.

Then on June 20, again during the early morning hours, a four-wheel drive Jeep Wrangler SUV was stolen from a parking spot near the corner of Sherbrooke St. and Lansdowne Ave.

Cst. Yigit suggested an easy way to prevent car theft – although it depends on whether vehicle owners are parking on the street or in a private driveway.

"If you know you have a make of car that's targeted, many people what they do is they take a second car and park it in front of the other one," he said.



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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Minor Exemption Application

1. The City of Westmount has received an application for a minor exemption for the building located at **779 Upper Belmont Avenue**;
2. The application will be reviewed at the regular sitting of the Municipal Council that will be held on **July 17, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.** in the Council Chamber of City Hall, located at 4333 Sherbrooke Street West, in Westmount and will be broadcast live on the City's website. The link for the sitting will be available at the following address: www.westmount.org/council-live.

The legal notice relating to the foregoing is available at: <https://westmount.org/en/resident-zone/legal-services-city-clerks-office/public-notice/>

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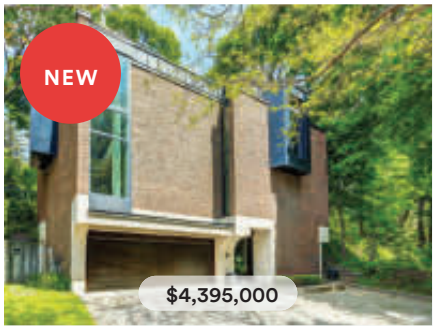
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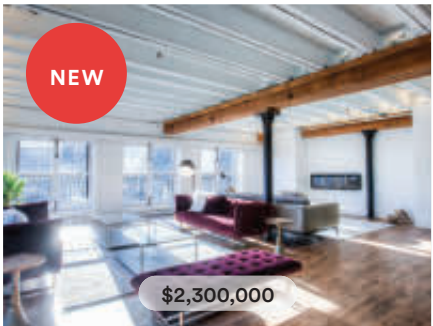


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