

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly. Vol. 3 No. 9e

We are Westmount

September 29-30, 2009

Remembering Stuart Robertson



The late Stuart Robertson with his wife, Donna Banks. See p. 2.

Update
Nicolas Smith is another candidate for District 5, see profile, p. 6.



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Arena meeting reveals many unanswered questions Surprise! Grant almost \$20M

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Word of a government grant for Westmount's arena/pool project came just in time for Mayor Karin Marks to spill the long-awaited news to more than 160 people attending the presentation of a new design concept September 26 at Victoria Hall.

Expected to be in the vicinity of \$17 million, she said, the amount of the Canada/Quebec infrastructure grant was officially announced at a press conference the next day at an unexpected \$19,969 million.

The project must be completed by March 2011.

News of the pending grant became one of the highlights of the arena meeting, even though the full extent of the amount was as yet unknown.

"I have to tell you it's pretty hard to keep down my enthusiasm and excitement," Marks said.

The grant would help defray the costs of the new design, projected at \$35.9 million, she pointed out.

It was later revealed during citizen questioning, however, that many aspects had not yet been studied. As well, the costing did not include a number of related costs such as street, sewer and water work, and relocation of the junior tennis courts. Management fees are also excluded.

Opening the meeting, Marks said the council had "promised deliver a preliminary plan, and it's come down to the wire." She said "some details" would have to be worked out by the newly elected council.

News flash
Mavis Young files in District 7,
Theodora Samiotis to run in
District 8. See p. 5.

Some 40 citizens' questions and comments ranged from hearty endorsement to a number of concerns that included overbuilding the

site, noise from the relocated pool, assessments of future needs and demographics, an indoor pool, optional sites and alternatives to chlorine use at the pool.

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Little, but strong



Dr. Harvey Guyda (right), physician-in-chief of the Montreal Children's Hospital, congratulates Westmounter Dr. Harry Rosen on his sculpture "Little Hercules," which was unveiled at the hospital's Tupper St. entrance on September 25. The plaque's inscription is "I will be strong." Rosen was profiled by the Independent in its April 21, 2009 issue (p. 22).

Candidates slow to file for council seats

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

As the countdown for candidate filing approaches the deadline on Friday, October 2, only six council hopefuls for Westmount's nine council positions had submitted their nomination papers by press time Monday.

"It's becoming very intense," said city clerk Mario Gerbeau, the city's returning officer, in reporting the figures.

Since candidates have already announced their intentions to the *Independent* for all electoral wards plus the mayoralty, the rush to submit their papers is expected to hit thick and fast this week.

Those officially registered were Victor Drury (District 3), Kathleen Duncan (District 4), René Pelletier, Georges Hébert and Nicholas Smith (District 5), and Mavis Young (District 7). In the event that no one is nominated in a particular district, the

process would have to be re-started in that ward, Gerbeau said. "But I've never experienced that."

Meanwhile, the current electoral list containing 14,152 eligible voters is now open for consultation at the city clerk's office. Citizens wishing to have their names added can do so during the revision period October 14 to 18. Notices to that effect will be sent to all addresses in Westmount starting October 5.

Stuart Robertson had far-reaching impact on Westmount

Dedication to his community lives on

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

The Westmount community has lost one of its most stalwart citizens with the death last Wednesday, September 23, of Stuart Robertson. He was 65.

Journalist, broadcaster, author, gardening expert and former city councillor, he was known far and wide to his various audiences. But it was perhaps his continued commitment to the Westmount community that will be one of his defining legacies.

Despite a stubborn 15-year fight against lymphoma, Robertson was always quick to pitch in where needed, working passionately in the background at Westmount's plant exchanges or registration desks at other events.

Those attending funeral services on Saturday, September 26, at Westmount Park United Church, came from many walks of life. Robertson is survived by his wife Donna Banks and son Jeremy.

Robertson was a former president of the Westmount Municipal Association (WMA), and the founder of most of the

city's horticultural and conservation programs including the first initiatives to prevent erosion on Summit Park.

Commitment continued

"Stuart's commitment to the city never ended with his formal time on council," Mayor Karin Marks said. "He felt he was always on call to look over a report, especially concerning the parks, and add a comment. He was exceptionally generous with his time, always available but never intrusive."

Typically, Robertson was advising in the current municipal elections and preparing his next gardening column for the *Westmount Independent* when he was struck with a bout of pneumonia. He died of related complications while hospitalized at St. Mary's.

"Stuart was an early and enthusiastic supporter of our paper," said *Independent* publisher David Price.

"When he first pitched the idea of a column for us, he contributed them for free in order to help out a new enterprise. We were proud to have him as part of our

team, if only for a short time, and the *Indie's* best wishes go out to his family."

Recognized others

Quick to recognize the achievements of others, Robertson also enjoyed helping friends and fellow Westmounters with their gardening problems.

"His contribution is evident in Westmount in every municipal garden and flower bed you look at," said Councillor Cynthia Lulham, who worked with him on many projects.

He was instrumental in the hiring of a city horticulturist, the start of the first community garden, the walking tours and the plant exchange. He founded the Horticultural Advisory Committee and co-founded the Westmount Horticultural Society where he was quick to pinch hit as a guest speaker on sudden notice.

"Summit Park was one of his passions," recalled Peter Trent, who served with Robertson on the council of mayor May Cutler. "He did a lot of work to mark paths and initiate steps to stop the degradation of the park.

"He told me only recently that had he been in better health, he would have loved to be on council again."

Memorable performance

During Westmount's 125th anniversary celebrations in 1999, Robertson played a memorable role as Councillor Joseph St. Germain, a founding city father, during a fanciful re-enactment of the first council meeting in 1874.

Born in Bournemouth, England, Robertson came to Canada with his parents in time to attend UBC, where he obtained a BA degree. He subsequently served in the navy in Halifax.

He worked in the fashion industry,



Robertson (right) with Tom Thompson in Victorian costume during city's 125th anniversary.

studied horticulture at the University of Guelph and opened an indoor gardening and lighting store.

Robertson served as president of the grounds committee of the Douglas Hospital and as president of the Writers' Association of Canada.

He subsequently served as WMA president, attending almost all council meetings. He was also a member of the city's beautification committee and was helping to set up a community garden when he decided to seek the District 5 seat being vacated by John Shingler in 1987.

It was in that ward that he maintained an office on Victoria as a writer-broadcaster while living in District 4. He later moved into his ward on Burton Ave. – where he continued to live.

On council, Robertson served as commissioner of Architecture & Planning until resigning near the end of the four-year term to avoid a conflict of interest with a new job awaiting him at the CBC. It was a decision he wrestled with but one that underlined his personal and professional principles.

Robertson retired from the CBC in July.

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New design very different from initial one

continued from p. 1

"Many questions raised should be brought up with the new council," said moderator Duncan Campbell, the city's director general.

New design more spacious

The new design is a more spacious layout than originally proposed for the two large rinks and auxiliary services. It provides for sloping metal roofs and slightly angled buildings. It repositions the pool area to the site of the current junior tennis courts and adds a pool pavilion across from the apartments on Academy Rd.

It also shifts access to and from the underground parking for 90 cars to Lansdowne Ave. (see story and design *Westmount Independent*, September 22, p. 1).

In many cases, he explained, studies had not yet been done or solutions found. "This is just a preliminary design," he said. In particular, "We don't have a solution for relocating the tennis courts." This is a central feature of the new design.

Other areas yet to be studied were possible construction phasing, impact of pile driving, traffic flows on Academy and Lansdowne, park safety, surveillance costs in the underground garage, and a review by the fire department to verify access to the campus-like area.

And, "no," the Quebec government had not been specifically asked if the Westmount part of the Glen Yard could be used as an optional site, Campbell said.

A similar reply was made to whether studies had been done on the beneficial impact such a development might have on real estate values.

"Is a second rink more beneficial to the whole community than an indoor pool?" asked one resident. Campbell replied: "We

Sharing arena costs



At a press conference September 27 at city hall, Mayor Karin Marks and Westmount MNA Jacques Chagnon presided during his announcement of a Canada/Quebec infrastructure grant of \$19,969,400 to Westmount "for construction of a sports complex." The two higher levels of government will each contribute half the amount with Westmount paying another equal amount or more. It was the maximum the city could have received. Marks paid tribute to Chagnon's "tireless" work on behalf of the city.

did not study that."

On the other hand, questioners were told the site would be "completely" handicap accessible, that the bike path would not be blocked, and that temporary stands could be installed at the 185-foot north rink if required. They are currently shown only at the south rink, a full-sized 200-foot NHL rink.

Other features, such as green roofs, might be considered but would add to the costs. "Anything is feasible if funds are unlimited," Campbell said.

In reply to several questions concerning inter-generational use of the rinks, Sports and Recreation director Michael Deegan cited as one example how the hockey program in two decades had gone from two to eight teams in the executive (age 35-plus) league.

In describing the concept of integrating the project into Westmount Park, architect Robert Hamilton of Lemay & Associés,

said the rule that governed the new design was "let the park govern." The challenge involved trying "to find a balanced solution" between this, and the services and constraints requested by the council.



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Marking the mayor's tenure

BY DAVID PRICE, EDITOR

Westmounters! Your last chance to see retiring city council members in action is this Thursday, October 1 at 8 pm. Mayor Karin Marks and councillors Tom Thompson, Guy Charette and George Bowser are not seeking reelection.

I extend my best wishes to all four retiring council members, but I would like to take a longer moment to thank Mayor Marks for her openness to this newspaper and to salute her 18 years on council, including four as mayor, four as borough mayor/president and 10 as a councillor.

And a hearty congratulations on the \$20-million arena grant!

I have only had a ringside seat of the municipal forum for two years now, but I can see what a tightrope walk being mayor is.

On one side, there are the people who want more resources for *their* cause: the hockey lobby, city workers, environmentalists, traffic enforcement advocates, garbage inspection lobbyists, snow removal enthusiasts. Even a seemingly uncontroversial idea like open government has a dollar cost, in addition to other ramifications that have to be thought out.

No free lunch

On the other side, there are the constraints: Westmount does not control many things that may seem "municipal"

(e.g. moving violations, bike paths, the fire and police departments), the agglom absorbs more than half of residents' municipal tax dollars, Westmount's debt skyrocketed as a result of the merger/demergement and taxpayers want to keep taxes where they are (or lower).

The mayor also has to work with council members to get things done, none of whom necessarily agree with the mayor.

While there have been many criticisms of Mayor Marks' substantive views and approach to process (as there is for any politician), no one can deny that she has always had Westmount's best interests at heart. And the last four years are only a fraction of her contribution.

As a councillor and commissioner for Urban Planning, she worked on defining Westmount's character areas and protecting streetscapes. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, she took a lead role in the merger/demergement fight. She then represented Westmount for four years as borough president/mayor when it was merged with Montreal. (Can that have been fun?)

In addition, she has represented the island's 15 demerged municipalities in their very complex dealings with the province and city of Montreal – two entities that seem to hold all the cards and have all the bargaining power.

If you have anything to say about Mayor Marks, we'd love to hear from you.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRAISE FOR CIVIC MINDEDNESS

Even though I do not live in District 5 where Gary Ikeman has declared his candidacy, I think that he is to be commended for considering a role in public service.

Weekly in the pages of your newspaper I have read of Mr. Ikeman's position on the arena project. He has stood, sometimes alone, but always for moderation, transparency and full disclosure of the facts. His arguments and submissions have been reasoned, civil and sensible, and I have no doubt that if elected, he will make an excellent councillor and a welcome addition to the city council.

Westmount would be well served, and I applaud his continuing civic-mindedness.

ALLEN RUBIN, LEXINGTON AVE.

KUDOS TO KARIN

The custom in Westmount is that an outgoing mayor be honoured with an appropriate gift.

Mayor Karin Marks, ever her own person, has reversed the usual order by obtaining for Westmount an astounding parting gift of almost \$20 million that will be translated into fabulous new public infrastructure for sports and recreation.

Bravo and kudos, Karin. What a wonderful legacy of your 18 years on council serving the citizens of Westmount.

PATRICK MARTIN, CLLR. (DISTRICT 1)

WHAT IS COUNCIL THINKING?

I have been a resident of Westmount for more than 40 years. At no time during that period have I seen greater evidence of the city's decline. Potholes and crumbling sidewalks have become part of the seemingly permanent landscape. A simple matter such as proper supervision of the senior tennis courts falls frustratingly short. The reader may add, as he sees fit, to this litany.

We all know that these problems stem from the perfidy of Jean Charest in failing to keep his promises during the last election campaign in which he offered unequivocal assurance that the merged municipalities would be restored to their former independent status.

In fact, the demerged suburbs have become vassal states under the hegemony of the city of Montreal. This has left the city chronically underfunded and, hence, financially incapable of maintaining the high standards for which Westmount was once justly famous.

It is amid this egregious fiscal condi-

tion that the mayor and council are proposing the grandiose arena project. Surely this is a time when our city fathers should be pulling in their fiscal horns and focussing on such obvious matters as reducing the debt and maintaining the infrastructure, not to mention managing the current burden of municipal taxes.

Thus, I am at a complete loss to understand why they would contemplate so costly a project, which will serve the interests of a small fraction of the citizenry.

In my view, what is contemplated suggests that the council has been mesmerised by this project to such an extent that it has lost sight of a fundamental moral issue, namely that it has a fiduciary duty to its citizens to husband their taxes.

May I end with a simple question to which a reply from Mayor Marks would be greatly appreciated. What is the council thinking?

ROGER ANGEL, MOUNT STEPHEN AVE.

ACADEMY CONCERN FALLS ON DEAF EARS

Once again, city council has come up with another asinine solution to the arena "complex." The new design (as it appears in the *Independent's* September 22 issue), which is similar to the old one, leaves out any consideration for the residents of Academy Rd. The addition of a changing pavilion to the pool area running along Academy shows the complete disregard for any comments and concerns that were expressed in the past.

A few years ago, it was requested that the fence around the dog run be raised for safety reasons. In many sections I was able to sit on the fence without my feet leaving the ground. I am only five foot two.

It was denied because it was stated that it would block the view of the residents on Lansdowne. Seeing as the view was the back of the arena, this made little sense. Now council seems to have no problem with blocking the view from Academy.

Most apartments along there have a balcony where many people sit and take in the view of the park during the summer and autumn.

At least six parking spots will disappear, even in winter, if the north arm of Academy is permanently blocked off. Also, the new position of the pool still does not address the parking problems along Academy. It will actually add to them during the summer months.

How much more of the taxpayers dollars are going to be wasted trying to fit an elephant into a Smart Car?

BELINDA BOWES, ACADEMY RD.

Civic Alert

Marks' initiatives echo Westmounters' changes

BY DON WEDGE



The adoption of Westmount's Sustainable Development Action Plan is expected when the present council meets for the last time on October 1 (8 pm, city hall). It will not only be the culmination of 18 years' of civic work by the retiring mayor, Karin Marks, but is paralleled by most Westmounters' own changing attitudes.

Becoming a sustainable city has not been a mere two-year concept: interest has grown over the last two decades. As citizens have become more aware of the issues, so council has supported many of them, culminating with an overall record that few, if any, Quebec municipalities can match.

Throughout, Councillor – and then Mayor – Marks has been at the forefront. Her long service as a legislator was increasingly accompanied by her own growing environmental awareness – like many fellow citizens.

In discussing the unfolding events of nearly two decades recently, she recounted her earliest motive for becoming involved in municipal affairs. It was what many would like to do – facilitate building permits – after getting a run-around while seeking to re-roof her heritage home.

Twice her plans were refused by the city without any guidance on what was acceptable. "It was like playing darts in the dark," she said.

Frustrated, Marks contacted then Alderman Peter Trent who arranged for the Architecture and Planning to, unusually, explain its decision. This led her to a successful application and a wish to have clearer guidelines for everyone. She ran successfully as Stuart Robertson's successor in District 5 in 1991. Trent, by then the newly-elected mayor, immediately appointed her planning commissioner.

With Mark London and others, Marks widened the planning perspective to include the streetscape – previously it had concentrated on individual houses. This was finally documented in the by-neighbourhood "character studies" that are the basis for today's decisions.

In doing so, the heritage approach was defined, so that now it is one of the five parts of the sustainable development vision statement.

While concentrating on her planning role, Marks was also supportive of a series of more direct environmental actions. An

underlying issue of the 1991 election was the previous council's support of the mega-incinerator plan, which she opposed.

Marks also recalled the early controversial debates over controlling pesticides following the pioneering work of citizen activist Esther Goldenberg. The first by-law was twice upgraded during the '90s to clarify it and make it more enforceable.

The local by-law to ban smoking from public areas and the workplace was a great success thanks to the efforts, largely educational, of the Public Security Unit. After a few years, provincial laws superceded Westmount's, but new habits were in place.

Not so successful was the idling engine by-law of 1993, which was difficult to enforce but was eventually strengthened in 1999. Both this new version and the pesticides law formed the basis of the Montreal-wide legislation introduced by the megacity after the forced merger.

As well as these laws, Marks was supportive of many other steps taken by council as both it and residents became more and more environmentally aware. Recycling facilities in apartments were made compulsory, and the service was offered to institutions. Backyard composters were subsidized.

A post was created for an environment coordinator. Various experiments were made with leaf collection and composting. An increasing number of indigenous plants were used in the parks.

The forced merger years and the subsequent needs to concentrate on financial matters meant there was little opportunity for progress.

In 2006, Marks became mayor of the reconstituted Westmount and with the office came the opportunity to build a sustainable city. "I had learned about Natural Step, a Swedish concept for building sustainability," she remembered, "and discovered that its Canadian director, Kelly Hawke Baxter, was a Westmounter. What is more, the system had been adopted by Whistler as part of the preparations to host the Winter Olympics.

"Whistler's mayor is also a former Westmounter – Ken Melamed, son of the late activist Lanie Melamed," she recollects.

When Westmount council met in Tremblant for their annual retreat in 2007, Marks had arranged for a sustainable city presentation. Her colleagues were won over – some a little reluctantly. Joshua Wolfe was eventually recruited to produce

the plan in conjunction with citizens, staff and elected officials.

Not everything has gone perfectly in the last two years, she admitted. "It took a long time to accept the need to recruit and then find Joshua. I am convinced it could not have been done without a coordinator – managers are too busy with their regular tasks," she explained.

"I wish we had been at the current stage sooner. There are other things I would like to have done – more about the reduction of waste, a solar-heated city building or a green roof, for instance – but there wasn't time for everything."

There are many changes to be made to turn the action plan into reality – both in city procedures and the way we citizens behave.

The initial reception of the latest plans for the arena renewal – and the sensational \$20 million in government grants – are providing another exciting end to Marks' term. This project itself with be measured for its sustainability, and council has mandated that the silver Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard be reached.

She finds her time in office "an absolutely wonderful experience. I cannot imagine what I could have done for the past 18 years that would have been as exciting, fulfilling and more rewarding. I'm very lucky to have had the opportunity."

Citizen activist Don Wedge's email address is dwedge@sympatico.ca

Young to challenge Lulham, Samiotis taking on de Castell

With the filing of papers for District 2 on September 25, Mavis Young entered the municipal election against incumbent councillor Cynthia Lulham.

Young, a resident of the ward, has a science background and works for Health Canada in regulatory affairs. She is a founding member of Save the Park! A profile of Young will appear in next week's issue.

As the *Independent* went to press, it found out that Theodora Samiotis intended to run against incumbent councillor John de Castell in District 8.

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Councillor's Column

The arena/pool project: Answers to the five Ws

BY TOM THOMPSON, CITY COUNCILLOR
(DISTRICT 2)

One of the mandates of the outgoing council was to recommend an upgrade and renewal plan for the arena (56 years old) and the pool (41 years young).

This challenge was accelerated by the mid-term opportunity to apply for infrastructure grants from the provincial and federal governments.

Who would develop this proposal was decided by public tender and the winning bidder was Lemay and Associates.

A government grant application was swiftly processed based on an earlier design and specifications from a previous council study. This was done to be first in line for consideration as of December 2007. The agreement stipulated **when** the project had to be finished: March 2011.

What would the renewed design be like?

The council members embraced the challenge and began extensive deliberations on policy, sports programs and construction issues in related sub-committees. They researched topics as diverse as traffic, parking, safety and security, program needs, amenities in the buildings, location, and so on.

Flurry of activity

This flurry of activity became the basis to invite feedback from citizens via an open meeting in April 2008, focus groups and through the city website. The resulting 525 suggestions were distilled and made fundamental to **what** the project might include.

Where it would be located was reaffirmed to be the site used for over 50 years!

There was constant reporting, review and discussions, first by the original steering committee (Mayor Karin Marks and councillors Cynthia Lulham, Patrick Martin and Nicole Forbes), then by council as a whole. And council regularly produced some insightful questions and thoughtful concerns.

The constant coordination of new wrinkles in the plan through contact between Lemay and Associates and council became more demanding as expectations increased on all sides.

A stroke of good fortune for the city was to be able to engage Bruce St. Louis to be the key project coordinator for the new director general, Duncan Campbell. So, on the largest construction project in the his-

tory of Westmount, the city had a knowledgeable and dedicated coordinator.

Former DG proved his worth

Bruce, the former director general, is an engineer and has had extensive experience dealing with construction projects, was familiar with the by-laws, the city procedures, citizen input, program needs, and was sensitive to the council process. He also had brought the Victoria Hall and library projects in on time and on budget. He proved his worth, time and again, by assisting the steering committee and their reporting to council as a whole. His competence came cheap at the rate he charged. This was especially obvious after the spring of 2009 presentation by Lemay and Associates fell short of their encouraging outline given in December 2008 at the open council meeting.

An agreement at each stage of the decision-making was not easy. The concerns of council and citizens demanded more precision in the anticipated costs and in such areas as parking spaces (the daily demand in a six-block radius), the safe flow of traffic to and from the site, the typical seasonal sun pattern on the pool area, which influences its location, the trees to be affected, park impact, height of buildings and more.

Perhaps the most important question to confirm was the soil suitability and to verify the costs of the Lemay estimates. This was easy. A firm was contracted to measure the soil suitability. Another was enlisted to verify the construction costs of the Lemay design options. Another firm identified and verified every parking space in surrounding streets and the daily demand at present.

These contracts provided answers to **why** underground parking must be considered, why there is a need to move the pool site, why the location was acceptable and **why** the costs of the constantly changing design increased!

The independent analysis of the Lemay construction costs was essential. This was critical information for council to plan on **how** to pay for such a project.

Certainly a positive government grant response would be a source of great encouragement. However, for the record, council said it could not accept an increase of its indebtedness of more than \$18 million for this project.

This is in light of the legacy of demerger debt *continued on p. 12*

District 5: Nicolas Smith – computer/math graduate, arena worker

'Insider' looks to new ways and updating city processes

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

He's the fifth candidate to express a desire to enter the race for the District 5 council seat. But Nicolas Smith believes he can present a fresh approach to issues based on today's reality.

"Obviously, as a young person who has worked at the arena, I've been around the community and can provide an insider's point of view," he told the *Independent*.

At 23, the recent McGill graduate in math and computer science is already known for speaking out at council meetings on issues such as the bike path and playing fields. He has been a news editor at the *McGill Daily*, president of the undergraduate math society, and an executive member of the university's bridge club.

During his student years, Smith worked for the city's Sports and Recreation department as a baseball umpire, soccer referee, hockey scorekeeper and latterly as an auxiliary blue-collar worker driving the Zamboni at the arena.

To avoid conflict of interest while he campaigns, he says, he has taken a leave of absence from his arena work, adding: "It's not my career job."

Raised on Burton Ave. where he continues to live, Smith is no stranger to the political arena either. He has worked in four federal and provincial elections in charge of different riding electoral lists and computer technology.

So why does he want to run in the November 1 municipal election?

"We hear that young people should take a more active role in politics," he replied. "Well, what better time for me than now? I have many years ahead of me to get into a career, and I feel this is the right time for me to be part of the council."

"My background in math and computer science enables me to think critically, provide an analytical approach and be cognitive of important details. I do like to think out of the box."

While he expressed concerns over many issues, the future of the arena is at the top of his list – especially from a background analysis perspective, he says.

"Really, the whole process seems to be a little unfocussed. The pool and building are very old by today's standards. Either we

go all the way with two full-size NHL rinks or renovate at the current site. Or move to another site. I don't mind looking at options. But we just need to get it finished."

Smith also has other concerns related to city processes. In this day and age of internet registrations, he said,

"it's a waste of time for hundreds of people to line up for a couple of hours to register for sports and recreation activities. We need to reduce frustration, increase efficiency and cut costs. There are lots of ways to improve existing processes."

He's also concerned about safety on the bike path and its role in sustainability. It bothers him to find "walls" set up in connecting the east-west bike path. "We can't ignore the realities of being part of a broader community."

He also believes many by-laws need updating to ensure they continue to be relevant and that they are well-founded. "I've been questioning the curfew in the parks. If you are going to limit their use to law-abiding citizens, it should be based on a good analysis rather than because it's what Public Security wants."

Smith, who attended Roslyn School, Royal West Academy and Dawson College before university, plans to serve as his own official agent. "As an independent, you're allowed to be your own agent. I'm not expecting donations. I feel if you want to run as an independent, then you should truly be independent."

"That's who I am."



Nicolas Smith

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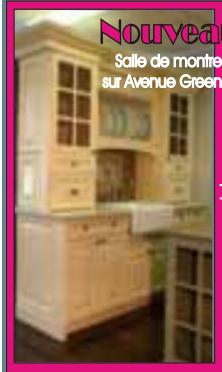
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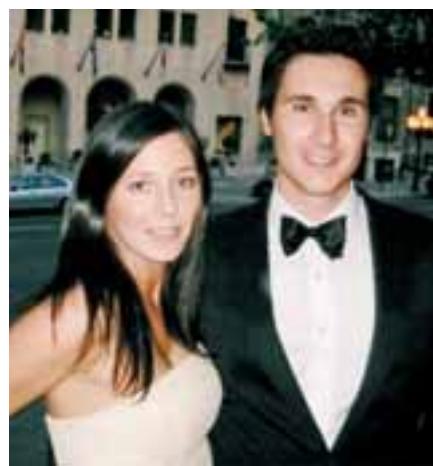
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Mr. and Mrs. Allan Mass of Westmount and Mr. and Mrs. Michael Sannella of Rosedale, Toronto are delighted to announce the engagement of their children; Miss Catherine Mass and Mr. Justin Sannella.

Catherine, granddaughter to the late Mr. and Mrs. Peter Blahey and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mass, and Justin grandson of Lora Jean Goodchild, the late Mr. Joseph Goodchild, and Mr. and Mrs. Dominic Sannella were engaged May 12th at the Chateau des Hauts de Loire, in France's Loire valley. A June wedding has been planned.

Westmount for the cure



The 14th Girls for the Cure event saw 2,800 high school students walk five kilometers up Mount Royal on September 24 in a gesture of solidarity and support in the fight against women-related cancers. Among the Westmounters participating from Villa Maria were (from left) Jessica Mancuso (NDG), Claire Smale, Kerkeslin Keillor (NDG), Nadia Johnston and Jessica Johnston. Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau, who supported the walkers this year, is at top right. ECS, Queen of Angels, Sacred Heart, The Study and Trafalgar also participated in the event, which raised \$125,000.



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Social Notes from Westmount and beyond

Westmount MP chairs Centaur Fundraiser

BY VERONICA REDGRAVE



Marc Garneau, MP for Westmount-Ville Marie, chaired an elegant event at Centaur Theatre. The Fly Me to the Moon gala on September 15 was hosted by Roy Surette, Centaur's artistic and executive director. The soirée offered a cocktail dînatoire (complete with blue vodka martinis), silent and live auctions and a performance. Media celeb, Westmounter **Aaron Rand** of Q radio, emceed the live auction with witty panache.

Patrons attending were **Marc Barbeau** (there with his wife **Victoria Robinson**), **Janet Black** (with **Hans Black**), **Carolyn Renaud**, **Josie Scalia** (with hubby **Alexander Khalifa**), **Patrick Shea** (with his wife **Sara Pedersen**) and **Robert Yalden** (with his wife **Pearl Eliadis**). Gracious donors were **Joan Ivory**, **Phyllis and John Rae**, **Jeannie and Nelson Saunders**, **Dorothy Reitman**, **Westmounter Hugh Alcorn**.

Other guests included **Alison Silcoff**, **Joan and Robert Bora**, **Norma Hayes**, **Barbara Mackenzie-Molson**, **Hubert Marleau**, **Sabina Radu** and **Ashok Narang**, **Beth**



Photo: Phil Miresco

prepared by **Derek Dammann**, chef at DNA Restaurant (won by **Guy Cournoyer**, attending with **Nathalie Goodwin**).

Committee members were **Kika Ar-**

Noel and Hartland Paterson, Centaur board member.

Among many tempting items, the silent auction featured a week's stay at the former New Brunswick home of **Lord and Lady Beaverbrook**, "Dayspring", which later belonged to **Sir James Dunn** and his family. Time at the nine-bedroom mansion was donated by lawyer **Vincent Prager** who purchased the heritage property a few years ago. Other in-demand prizes were an evening with **Marc Garneau** (won by **Janet and Hans Black** and **Carolyn Renaud**) and a five-course dinner for eight



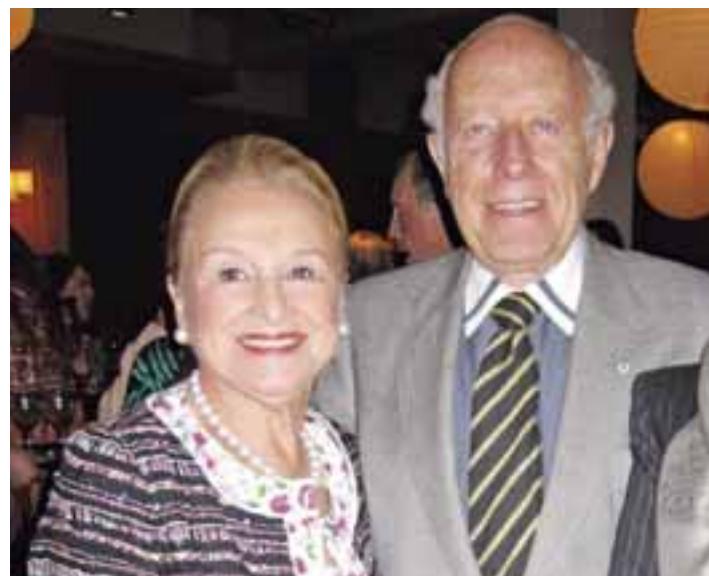
Westmounter Aaron Rand

mata, **Francine Blackburn**, **Mitchell Davey**, **Ariel Dayan-Medalsy**, **Howard Golberg**, **James Grant**, **Belle Grivakis**, **Christopher Kim Playle** and Centaur director **Roy Surette**.

Other patrons supporting the exceptional evening were Fednav Ltd., Interinvest Consulting Corporation, Ogilvy Renault, Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt, Carolyn Renaud and Stikeman Elliott. Sponsors were **Sean Flynn** (Cruiseshipcenters, representing Oceania Cruises) and **Kelly Kenselaar** (Spadirect). Entertainers included **Kim Zombik** and her trio, and the cast of *In Piazza San Domenico*. Raves were overheard about the food (*Bon Appétit*), the décor (*Mitchell Davey*) and the flowers (*Flore*). The event raised \$100,000 which goes towards producing world-class theatre for Montrealers.



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No one cares?

Tenants of at least one Westmount apartment building apparently have little interest in these phone books, which have been stacked on the front steps for nearly two weeks.

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LCC, one hundred years later

Four young Westmounters, students at Lower Canada College (LCC), arrive at their NDG-based private school after an 8.7-km walk from the Church of St. John the Evangelist on President Kennedy Ave., where it was founded in September 1909. Despite the rainy weather, LCC made the walk as part of the school's centennial birthday party on September 22. From left: Ingrid Hagen-Keith, 17, Daniel Wiseman, 15, Sasha Cukier, 15, and Julien Miller, 14.

Photo: Isaac Olson

Glen Rd. one way for now

Victoria Village resident Nancy Dunton, a Heritage Montreal guide, tells her tour participants the story of Westmount's first civic construction – the Glen bridge. Repairs to the rail bridge are causing short delays through the temporarily one-way Glen Rd.

Photos: Don Wedge

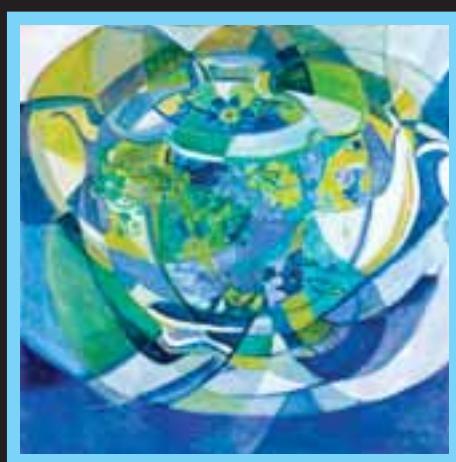
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Catharine McKenty releases latest book



Former Westmounter Twinkle Rudberg (left) having her book signed by author Catharine McKenty.

Westmounter Catharine McKenty launched her latest book, *Polly of Bridgewater Farm: An Unknown Irish Story* on September 20 at the Unitas Centre in Little Burgundy.

The book is the story of McKenty's great-aunt, who emigrated from northern Ireland to Montreal and Toronto in the midst the Great Famine of the 19th cen-

tury. She and her husband, John Verner, eventually owned the Cabbagetown Store, which became a Toronto institution, and was made famous through books and newspaper articles.

Is the book a family history? "Yes," said McKenty, "but embedded in the Irish story."

The book is available locally at West-

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mount Stationery, Folklore and Nicholas Hoare. Profits will go to Fields of Life and The Spirit of Paul McGirr, two Irish charities active in Africa.

The occasion was also used to mark the birthdays of McKenty (79th) and husband Neil (85th). Neil, well known in Montreal from his days on radio, deflected the *Independent's* attention and questions towards Catharine. "She is the chief cook and bottle-washer of this event... Tell them I'm shy. Incommunicado."

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Thompson: Project to suit the site

continued from p. 6

from the city of Montreal.

Part of the equation of how to pay will depend on a successful development of an arena/pool project that suits the site, blends into the park, and is of a quality which Westmounters can be proud.

Extra community support for a deserving and valued project has been part of the tradition of Westmount, from parks, to the battalions in World War I, the armoury, the library, Victoria Hall and much more through the years.

Numerous citizens' workshops voiced the potential for named gift opportunities and tangible city-wide support for a valued improvement of our infrastructure.

In summary, the councillors who were instrumental in requesting extra contracted studies and additional expenditures during the planning, spoke eloquently of the need for such studies. As commissioner of Finance and Administration, I supported their demands for verifiable information on all issues before going to the public. You could ask why 'shoehorn' the renewed infrastructure project into the site at the edge of the park?

In fact, a sustainable plan for our city

includes the prudent use of both natural and financial resources. If an acceptable and functional design can be effectively developed on the current site, I am confident it will be the best use of our limited city space.

But this is all hypothetical now, as a former Montreal mayor would say, since the new council will carry the project forward with the community.

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Garneau asked and answered Westmounters



Genevieve Lamarche asks Marc Garneau about the internet and safety issues.

Photo: Heather Black

Member of parliament Marc Garneau met with Westmount constituents at Westmount Park Church on the evening of September 23 to take questions from residents. Introduced by André Du Sault of the riding executive committee, Garneau's first question was on his private member's bill to establish a Children's Commissioner at the federal level.

He also answered questions on current Liberal policy regarding the environment, arctic sovereignty, the Afghan mission,

civil liberties and municipal infrastructure projects. Recent trends such as internet regulations and the sale of Nortel were also discussed.

The Westmount assembly was the first of three gatherings billed as "town-hall" meetings to be held throughout the riding.

The next day at a similar event in NDG, Garneau was officially nominated to be the Liberal candidate in the next federal election. All sitting MPs have been re-nominated by leader Michael Ignatieff.



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– THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, July 16, 2004

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

• Council meeting (the last of the current council), at city hall, 8 pm.
• The local **Sherlock Holmes Society**, a.k.a. The Bimetallic Question, meets in the Westmount Room of the Westmount Library, 6:30 pm. All sleuths and potential sleuths are welcome. Info: 514.931.8690.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2

• Period for **candidates' registration** ends at 4:30 pm for the Nov. 1 municipal elections.
• Atwater Library and Computer Centre fall fundraising **book sale**, 10 am – 5 pm and Oct. 3, 10 am – 2 pm. Quality used books and magazines on sale. Info: 514.935.7344.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3

• **Allstars Night** at Victoria Hall, 6:30 pm., featuring student and professional dance shows, buffet and general dancing. Cost: \$30 for buffet dinner and show; \$15 for

Something for everyone at QWF's fall writing workshops

The Quebec Writers' Federation (QWF) starts its fall writing workshops series on Monday, October 5. Eight different evening workshops are each eight weeks long and take place at the QWF office at the Atwater Library (1200 Atwater, #3), unless otherwise indicated on the organization's website (www.qwf.org).

Several new classes are offered this fall including Adam Gollner on "Narrative non-fiction: Creating scenes". A selection of intensive classes are also offered in subjects ranging from making a living as a writer to fine tuning the story. Westmount resident and QWF executive director Lori Schubert said the QWF is offering a young writers' course again this year, which will

dessert and show. Reserve: 514.286.5483.

• One-hour guided heritage tour of **Dawson College building**, 2 and 3 pm for English tour; 2:30 and 3:30 pm for French tour, at Dawson College (3040 Sherbrooke St. W.). Free. Info: Community Events, 514.989.5226.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

Montreal Camera Club invites photographer Jeff Fuchs to talk about his book *The Ancient Tea Horse Road*. At Westmount Park United Church (4695 de Maisonneuve, corner Lansdowne, rear entrance), 7:30 pm. Free for members; guests are welcome with a donation.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6

ArtNow speakers: Artists David Farsi and Jennifer Hornyak. Westmount Public Library, 7 pm. Free admission.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

"Suicide and the Book of Job" led by **Shelly Kagan**, Clark Professor of Philosophy at Yale, with Rabbi Leigh Lerner, 5:30 pm at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom. Cost: Dinner, \$10 per session; study no charge.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

Historian **Aaron Krishtalka** discusses the ways current concepts of time have been transformed by evolutionary biology, 12:30 pm at the Atwater Library. Free; donations invited.

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ECS volunteers use their skills at Underdog Gallery

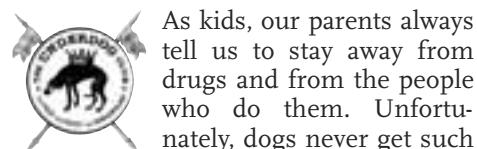
The Underdog Club has just added 25 recruits from ECS. Each student is assigned a different role in order to promote and place dogs that need adopting. These dogs are called "underdogs" because they are harder to place due to physical blemishes, age, handicaps or behaviour issues.

Students are involved in writing (including the occasional Underdog column in the *Independent*), photography, web content production, liaison with rescue shelters on information about new dogs and adoption status, and fundraising. The gallery space (4922 Sherbrooke St.) has become the home base for the girls to meet after school, as well as the rescue directors, potential dog adopters and the dogs themselves during the day. The dogs are removed from the rescue shelters or their foster homes and spend the day at the gallery. Four or five different dogs are "on display" at the gallery each day.

The gallery is expected to be open on weekends only after the original exhibit was set to close on September 27, according to Fern Breslaw, director and founder of the Underdog Club.

Underdog Crack baby – Mckenzie

BY SUSANA BEAUDIN, GRADE 11, ECS

As kids, our parents always tell us to stay away from drugs and from the people who do them. Unfortunately, dogs never get such sage advice. McKenzie is one such example. This eight-month old rednose pit bull never stood a chance against the crack heads she lived with, and neither did the seven other animals who also had to survive through hell in that apartment.

After living with these horrible owners for too long a period of time, all eight animals, including McKenzie, were abandoned after the drug addicts were evicted. Six days later, the landlord discovered McKenzie and the other cats and dogs



Sophie Fournier, who runs Sophie's Dog Adoption, describes to ECS volunteers the life story behind each of the dogs for adoption at the Underdog Club Gallery, September 22. From left, Susana Beaudin, Leanne Ottoni, Ann Nguyen, Sabine Elian and Giuliana Masi.

Photo: Kristin McNeill

starving to death. That was six days without food, water, fresh air or a chance to go outside to take care of their natural functions.

Most people and animals would have died at this point, but McKenzie was and is a fighter. Luckily enough, the landlord found the animals and nurtured them as best he could, providing them with food, water and a safe shelter.

A couple of days later, one of the drug addicts came back to the apartment claiming that a homeless man had offered her \$500 for McKenzie who she now wanted to sell. Thankfully, the landlord refused to let the previous owner near the dog so McKenzie was already on her way to a better life.

It's a miracle McKenzie even lived, let



Mckenzie

Photo: ECS Underdog photographers

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alone came out of it as well as she did. Sure, she suffers from intense separation anxiety and cannot be left alone, even if she is in a cage, without becoming destructive (even to herself), but she is getting better and can now be left alone for about half an hour. She loves people, dogs and cats.

She needs constant confidence boosters and someone to be with her, but what she gives back is worth so much more.

This is a dog who has been through so much and still manages to be the happiest and friendliest of companions. Show her the love and attention she needs and she'll shower you with more gratitude than one could ever ask for.

To find out more about McKenzie visit her on www.underdogclub.org or call Sophie's Dog Adoptions at 514.523.5052.



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WESTMOUNT – 543 Lansdowne

Location, location, location. This 3 bedroom attached home feels like home! You'll want to fall into the sofa with a good book and cozy up to the fireplace. Walk to Victoria Village and Murray Park.



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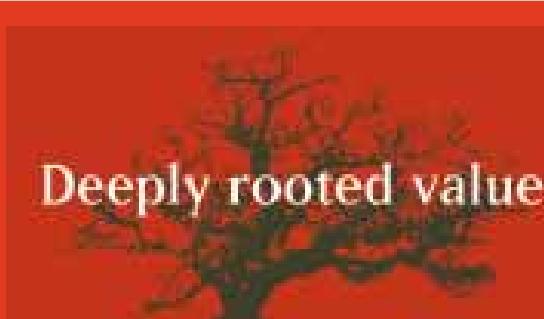


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