

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT

Weekly, Vol. 13 No. 11c

We are Westmount

November 19, 2019

At Westmount Park Church

Fun Academy wins legal action to open as a full daycare

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

After a fight of almost two years, Garderie Fun Academy has won a legal case against the Quebec Family ministry that will allow it, pending authorized renovations, to operate a full private daycare for up to 60 preschoolers at Westmount Park United Church, the *Independent* learned last week.

"I refused to give up," said applicant Jacinthe Deschênes after receiving written confirmation November 7 that a ruling October 23 from the Tribunal administratif du Québec was now official.

This is a forum created to examine an application contesting a decision of a Quebec government department, approved agency or municipality.

Deschênes, who has been operating a "mini" Fun Academy for six kids at the church during the legal action, recalled how the city of Westmount had issued her permits in 2017 to renovate the church's basement quarters as per the ministry's standards for a larger operation (see story December 5, 2017, p. 1)

Soon after, however, unforeseen circumstances set her back to "Square 1." These were a

Lubarsky named first 'Player of the Month'

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Something new was launched last week for minor hockey in Westmount: recognition of a player of the month. The selection for the first month, October, is 11-year-old Jake Lubarsky as announced in an email to all 160 players.

A member of the Pee wee BB Wings team, Jake "has demonstrated exemplary skills" and dedication to his team, respect and focus, it states. "Jake is always attentive when

continued on p. 9

► Jake Lubarsky has been recognized as Westmount minor hockey's first player of the month.

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City consults residents before refurbishing Westmount Park

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

A public consultation held by the city of Westmount on November 13 in Victoria Hall to gather Westmounters' views on potential changes to be made in Westmount Park drew up to 70 residents.

An online and printed survey on residents' use of Westmount Park had gathered up to 500 responses by last week. The survey and consultation processes are

being carried out by landscape/urban design consultancy Stantec.

The city expects to hold a second consultation in March based on the information gleaned from the survey and first consultation.

A final report will be used for the creation of designs and plans for the refurbishment of the park, said Councillor Cynthia Lulham, the commissioner of zoning, urban

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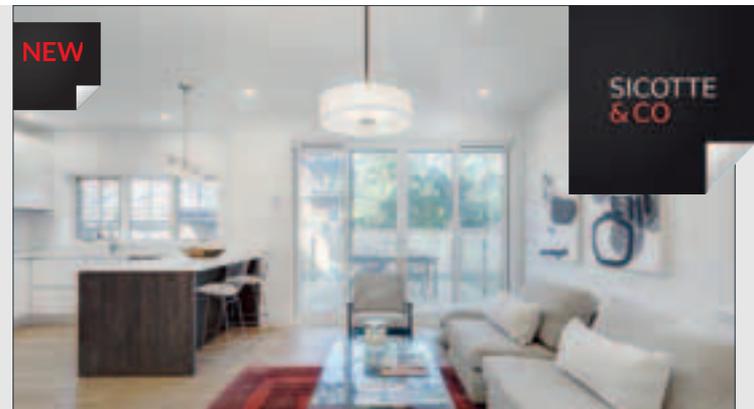
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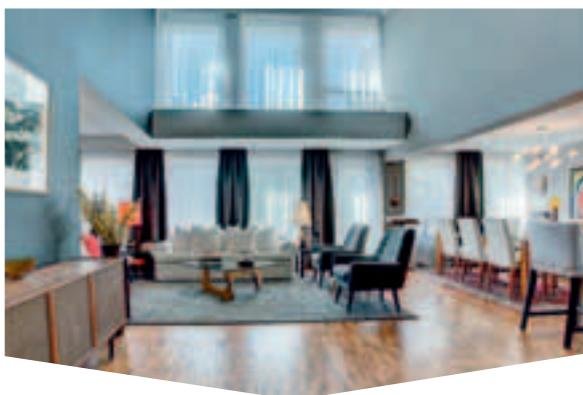
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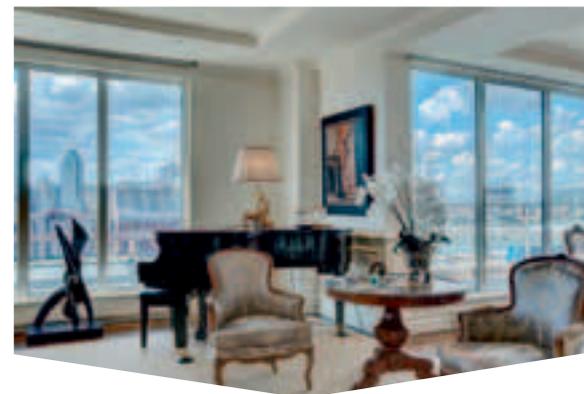
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Resilience Montreal shelter opens on St Catherine St.



Seen here with members of the Montreal aboriginal community and other guests, Westmount mayor Christina Smith, right, speaks during the official opening on November 14 of the Resilience Montreal.

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Westmount mayor Christina Smith joined officials from the government of Quebec and the city of Montreal for the opening on November 14 of the new Resilience Montreal homeless persons' day centre at the corner of Atwater and St. Catherine St.

While most of the centre in a former restaurant is in Westmount, a smaller part of the property is on city of Montreal territory.

The project, arising from the closure of The Open Door homeless day shelter last year, is the result of efforts largely led by Native Women's Shelter of Montreal executive director Nakuset and Nazareth House executive director Sheila Woodhouse.

"When Open Door closed last year, it created a crisis and there was fallout, which

is unacceptable, and we all knew it could not go on like this," said Montreal mayor Valérie Plante.

She said the opening of Resilience Montreal was an example of municipalities being able to work together for a good purpose. "This is not about where one city starts and another ends," said Plante. "Ultimately, we need to find solutions together."

Mayor Smith said the new day shelter "provides essential relief for this community and addresses an increasingly worrying situation. But that should not make us forget that this can only be part of the solution and that of course more needs to be done."

"The situation at Cabot Square is a complex one," she continued, referring to the park across the street in Montreal, which has become a gathering place for many

homeless people with aboriginal roots.

"Mental health, homelessness, neighbourhood safety, social exclusion, marginalization and a great many other issues are concentrated in this small square." She said the shelter is "only one step" towards finding a permanent solution.

"Westmount commits to work with the city of Montreal, all levels of government and the many, many organizations involved to find a long-term location to support this vulnerable population," said Smith.

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160 young players travel to Boston area 27th Cape Ann hockey tourney called 'best one ever'



Sophie Cohen and Margot Duffar played for two of Westmount's teams: the Pee wee BB Wings, a co-ed team, and the U14 girls' team. PHOTOS COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT'S SPORTS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT.

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

This year's 27th annual hockey tournament between Westmount and Cape Ann teams in Massachusetts was "the best one ever," according to Andrew Maislin, Sports and Recreation operation manager.

"The spirit and energy was incredible. No one was hurt. It was fun for everybody. Cape Ann did a marvellous job and a number of events saw the players fully integrated, not because they were forced, but because it just happened."

All 160 players aged 6 to 15 in Westmount's competitive intercity youth hockey

program travelled with a group of parents to Gloucester on Cape Ann, Massachusetts, Friday, November 8, he said. The tournament takes place in alternate years in Westmount and Cape Ann, located 30 miles northeast of Boston.

"Our parents were terrific," Maislin said. "They drove the kids down on the Friday and home on the Sunday. After the 12 Westmount teams played their games, the final outcome came down to the last five minutes of the last game.

"It was tied to the very end with 12 wins for Westmount, 13 losses and 3 ties."

continued on p. 5

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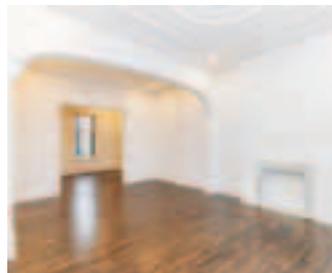
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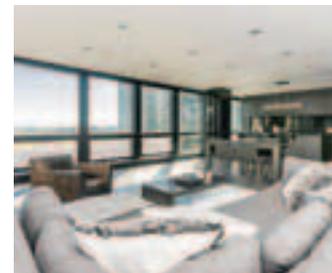
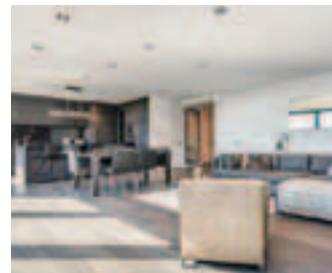
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At the end of their game: the Westmount Atom B Wings in their white jerseys and the Cape Ann equivalent, called the Squirt 3 team.

Of the 29 games, one was played between the coaches and won by Westmount.

As a result, the cup that had been won by Westmount last year – the first time since 2015 – went back to Cape Ann but, Maislin said, “I told them jokingly I’m

lending you the trophy for a year!”

A testament to the tournament’s tradition, he said, was when they happened to be in Rockport (a town on Cape Ann) and “a merchant hearing they were from Westmount, recalled how his son and daughter

had once played in the event.”

Building on the momentum from the success of the tournament, Maislin said they have already set the date for the return to Westmount next year: November 6, 7 and 8.



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Editorial

Make Westmount Park easily traversable on foot

I applaud city council for opening the Pandora's box of consultation on Westmount Park. Yes, consultations are usually a good idea in principle, but they can also lead to all sorts of unfulfillable expectations and disputes before anything is even proposed formally by the city. In the case of Westmount Park, which is very heavily used, and loved, but which has not been changed much for many years, or decades, the risk seems worth it. A good five-year plan would be better than a design-online, or make-it-up-as-you-go-along, approach.

We can learn from the Turcot-Glen hospital-new Champlain bridge fiasco. Note to planners: don't increase traffic to an area, and then tear up the two largest nearby pieces of transportation infrastructure at the exact same time. Have a plan that makes sequential, budgetary, quality and popular sense.

In Westmount Park's case, what should that plan be? After the recent survey and consultation, city council members and full-time city staff now know many people's answer to that question and can repair to their bunkers to start coming up with some proposals.

Before they do, let me add my two cents.

Over the life of the *Independent* (2007 to now), much noise has been made by council members and citizen advocates, past and present, about encouraging cycling and walking. The cyclists have obtained many new paths over this period, but the pedestrians have been pretty much left with the infrastructure of 2007, or 1997, or 1987...

One pedestrian route that I think needs attention is the east-west one through Westmount Park at de Maisonneuve. When the blacktop of de Maisonneuve was



A runner on the bike path in Westmount Park, October 23.

transformed into parkland in the 1980s, the planners of that time opted not to keep the sidewalks, but to create a meandering park path by what is now the dog run, the "Shakespeare in the Park" dell and the gazebo.

It's a nice path, but it is not practical. I often use it to go from Victoria village to Greene. It is not straight or level, so for the walking commuter it feels slow. I am not the only one walking this path and finding it so. I see many pedestrians, often those with mobility issues, choosing to walk, or roll devices, on the straighter bike path, much to the chagrin of cyclists. (Going up to Sherbrooke is not efficient, and St. Catherine is not either, plus it has the "Glen dip.")

And that's in summer. In winter, the path is not maintained to the quality level

demanding for sidewalks in Westmount and parts (or even all) of it can be treacherous, especially the frequently wet or slushy spot one finds at the low point next to the "Shakespeare in the Park" dell.

Unlike many government initiatives (by other, less wise governments, of course, not the city of Westmount), walking is not pie-in-the-sky wishful thinking based on what planners want residents to be or to do. Westmounters and non-Westmounters in Westmount do walk. I am one. I see many others. This important commuting route – between our two retail districts, between the two nearest Metro stations, near many of our apartment and office buildings – should be as straight and level as possible, and maintained in winter as benefits the important sidewalk that it is.

I am not an engineer, but I see a straighter route even if other park landmarks remain where they are, and an even straighter one if the dog run is moved north towards Sherbrooke a bit and the gazebo moved out of the way. And I think the memorial trees can be avoided.

Creative people can come up with ways to keep bikes off this new pedestrian highway. (I have a few ideas, but I doubt that they would meet today's standards of safety).

If things are kept as they are, I've got a few years left of being able to scramble over snowbanks, but I think we can do better for our less agile, and more encumbered, neighbours.

Best of luck with your plans, council members.

David Price is the editor of the Independent.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CANADIAN TRAPPED IN HONG KONG

Dear Editors:

Please check out these two screen caps regarding a desperate Canadian exchange student who is stuck in the PolyU campus [in Hong Kong] and who tried to call for help on Facebook. And here's the response [reportedly received] from our dear consulate general of Canada in Hong Kong & Macao besides the robot posts:

"I called the consulate general of Canada in hk asking for help those who are inside PolyU. They just said Canadian shouldn't protest in HK and should go somewhere safe."

Can you follow up on this before our people die in Hong Kong!

FREE HK MTL

Editor's note: I will forward the screen grabs to our federal member of parliament, Marc Garneau. – DP

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Downey to take over from Hannaford at SHS

Mike Downey will become the ninth headmaster of Selwyn House School, taking over from current headmaster Hal Hannaford in June, the school announced by press release November 14. He is currently the assistant headmaster and head of the senior school, and has worked there as a science teacher, coach and administrator for 30 years.

"We scoured the world," board chairman Jonathan Goldbloom said in the release. "We interviewed people from Hong Kong, California, Ontario and here in Montreal. And what we discovered is that the best candidate is right here in our own backyard. We have someone amongst us who knows and loves Selwyn House. He knows all the staff and faculty, he knows all the students, he knows all the parents and he knows all the alumni. And one

thing that came through in the process is the enormous amount of respect all of us have for him."

Hannaford had the following to say when asked by email of his future plans, "After 40 years in education – 31 years as a head of school – I am retiring, and very grateful to be leaving on my terms. I am focusing on having another successful year at Selwyn House, so no definite plans, but many ideas in the works. Susan [Doherty] and I will continue our work supporting mental wellness issues, and I will be carrying on my quest for helping schools become truly great. I will always advocate for the importance of relationships, connection, and faculty culture as the top strategic priorities for any school. It can't be anything else. And I plan to drum much more!"



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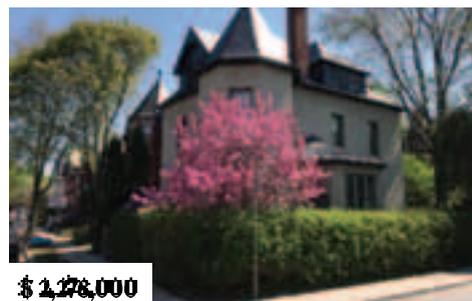
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Council reps witness driving violations Safety message taken to 3 schools' morning drop-offs

▼At Villa Ste. Marcelline October 29, Councillor Mary Gallery helps a child out of a car.

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

For the second year, Westmount city council members turned out at local schools to “drive home” a safe-driving message to parents and other motorists around school zones. This year, the schools chosen for the morning visits were Roslyn, Villa Ste. Marcelline and St. Léon.

“It was a great success,” according to Councillor Anita Bostock, public security commissioner. One of the messages they relayed to parents, she told the council meeting November 4, was the importance of putting a car in park while letting children out.

And some hazardous driving habits were observed first hand, she later told the *Independent*.

At Roslyn School, October 28, some people were seen driving through the pedestrian crossing at Grosvenor and Westmount Ave. as the light transitioned to red and a motor scooter got a ticket for driving in the bike lane. Present at this drop-off zone were Bostock, Conrad Peart and Philip Cutler.

At Villa Ste. Marcelline, October 29, some children were not wearing seatbelts

as they got dropped off, noted by Bostock, Cutler and Mary Gallery.

The following morning at St. Léon, where Mayor Christina Smith, Bostock, Cutler, Gallery, Jeff Shamie and Kathleen Kez participated, some parents were seen dropping off young students on the east side of Clarke, which they crossed with the kids but without going to the crosswalk.

“Parents were appreciative of this initiative and wished that we could come out more often,” Bostock said. “This is something I am very proud of. I feel that it really unites all areas of the city and gives visibility to everyone.”

Also present at the drop-off safety events were police and Public Security (with its mascot Bee-Safe) as well as Dan Lambert and Malcolm McRae of the Association of Pedestrian and Cyclists of Westmount, and school administrators.



The group at Roslyn School October 28 including councillors, Public Security, police and representation from the Association of Pedestrians and Cyclists.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF A. BOSTOCK.



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Player, cont'd. from p. 1

his coach is instructing, first on the ice and always takes the initiative in filling up the water bottles.”

According to Andrew Maislin, Sports and Recreation's operation manager, the player of the month program is a campaign aimed at showcasing young athletes who illustrate talent both on and off the ice.

“Each month, we will recognize a minor hockey player in Westmount who has demonstrated strong passion, dedication and leadership on the rink and in the community.”

He said it was important “to acknowledge the opportunities and skills that

minor hockey, and sports as a whole, can offer young people. Through hockey, children are able to develop sportsmanship, teamwork and discipline, which they can transfer to other areas of their lives, such as academics and community service.”

By “highlighting those whose talents have had a positive influence on their teams and peers,” he said, “we will continue to support the recognition of young talent in the hopes that it will encourage and reinforce their participation in athletics, education and the greater community.”

See photo on p. 1.

Daycare, cont'd. from p. 1

retroactive change in the ministry's application process, then a refusal on grounds the large daycare region in which Westmount is situated had enough daycares.

Not only was Deschênes, who already had a waiting list of 80 at the time and was not asking for any government subsidy, baffled by the refusal, so was Mayor Christina Smith who called it “absolutely absurd” (see stories August 21, 2018, p. 1 and September 4, 2018, p. 1).

Mayor Smith discussed it with then-premier Philippe Couillard when the provincial election was called for October 1, 2018. This caused another delay.

‘Our voice’

The election brought in Jennifer Maccarone, however, as Westmount's new

provincial legislator. “She has been terrific,” Deschênes said. “In her first speech in the National Assembly, she said Westmount needed a daycare and needed Garderie Fun Academy. She never gave up. She was our voice.”

In the meantime, Deschênes had filed legal action. The recent decision is now seen as good news not only for parents seeking a daycare but also for Westmount Park Church, whose existence depends largely on the rental revenue of its large basement quarters (see August 21, 2018, p. 1).

What's ahead now? “I have contacted my contractor and after authorization by the ministry, we hope to start the renovations after Christmas and to open in May or June,” she explained.

Food drive opens with donations of \$2,117

The holiday food drive held every year by Public Security was launched as usual at the Artisans Festival November 9 and 10 when the price of admission at Victoria Hall was either a non-perishable food item or cash donation of \$2.

The total amount raised at the door this year was reported by Public Security officials as \$2,116.52 with “a good amount of

donated non-perishables.” The cash is typically used to purchase turkeys and hams as well as food vouchers for other perishable items.

Food boxes are to be placed December 2 at most municipal buildings, including city hall, the Westmount recreation centre, library and Victoria Hall.

See p. GG-1 for more.

\$330 for Leucan collected at haunted house

Donations made to the city's Halloween haunted house November 1 totalled \$330, Public Security officials said. The money goes to Leucan, the foundation that supports children with cancer, who are typically unable to go trick-or-treating, and their families.

“The haunted house went well considering the weather this year,” stated Public Security's assistant director Kimberley Colquhoun, adding “I still don't know how we pull off a different theme every year in such a small building!” The theme of “Dark Chapel” was created by PSOs Sabrina Tremblay and Paris Papadatos (see story October 22, p. 4).

Council declares ‘Giving Tuesday’ Dec. 3

The Tuesday following US Thanksgiving was designated again this year by Westmount city council as “Giving Tuesday,” a global day of giving that supports activities in support of charities and non-profit organizations. The event falls on December 3.

It is now celebrated by more than 6,500 Canadian charities as “opening day of the holiday gift-giving season,” according to the council resolution.



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Should all votes be equal in Quebec?

In 2017, Quebec's director general of elections reversed a decision and suddenly removed one of the three provincial ridings in our part of Montreal. The local councils of Côte St. Luc, Hampstead, Town of Mount Royal, Outremont and Côte des Neiges-NDG protested. Over 500 West End residents took part in a rally and a legal contestation was launched. While the ridings in our part of town now have an average of nearly 58,000 voters each, six ridings in the regions of Quebec have fewer than the minimum number of voters allowed by law. One riding actually has just 28,000 voters.



This is unfair and gives some rural areas twice the political weight of residents of our part of the province.

Minority communities tend to be concentrated in some parts of the island of Montreal and the current electoral map devalues their votes. On December 3 and 4, the court will hear the complaint against the director general of elections. However, the ability to see the case through resides on the continued support from ordinary citizens. I am seeking contributions from residents and supporters to help win this struggle.

Your contribution to help this cause can be made by:

- Making out your cheque to our lawyer, Julius Grey: “Julius Grey in Trust,” care of: 5160 Decarie #710, Montréal (Québec) H3X 2H9
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- www.gofundme.com/f/electoral-map-contestation-darcy-mcgee

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Westmount Park Consultation: Greener by design



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HEATHER BLACK

At the October 13 public consultation on Westmount Park, over 70 citizens took on the role of landscape designer with markers, stickies, tracing paper and a park map. Divided into groups of five and six – each with a city councillor – participants considered sustainability, access and public space as well as usage by children and seniors. After an hour a spokesperson from each group presented ideas or concerns. The result was a consistent call for more sustainable and nature-oriented Westmount Park.

Ideas and comments

The Victoria Jubilee Park opened in 1898 where – according to historian Aline Gubbay – “There were ducks in the water and children could pick wild flowers to their hearts’ content.” At the event spokesperson Susan Grundy said: “We need to see beyond the playground boundaries to encourage children to discover nature throughout the park.” She also reminded participants of climate change and the need to plant more trees, plants and perennials, and to replace concrete with greener, porous pathway.

Park design in Westmount – a National Historical District – should also maintain continuity with the past. Early park photos indicate streams – now underground – surrounded by vegetation and in 1912, the park was landscaped by M. J. Howard Manning in the spirit of Frederick Law Olmsted – an advocate of natural beauty. At the event spokesperson Mike Hodgins said: “To cre-

ate a richer and healthier experience for park users we need to restore the natural hydrology and biodiversity with plants such as ferns or trilliums.”

Aesthetics – park beauty and maintenance – was also an issue for many. One participant Maureen Tracey also urged community ownership: “The greenhouse is the heart of the park and could provide indigenous flowers or seeds for seniors or children to plant nearby as well as information on sustainable gardening.”

As a former teacher, I can confirm that ecology – and nature-related activities increase youth curiosity, creativity and interest in the environment.

Not only do natural landscapes filter car emissions, reduce noise and provide shade, but also benefit park goers. Moreover, watching wildlife – from somersaulting squirrels to ducklings learning to fly – instills delight and awe. Research conducted in 2017 indicates that peak nature experiences are a predictor of pro-environmental behaviour in young adults. Time in nature also increases observational and sensory skills which improves reading, math and science skills.

Another study entitled “Children With Attention Deficits Concentrate Better After Walk in the Park” found that 20-minute walk per week resulted in increased attention comparable to reported methylphenidate results. Citizen perceived naturalness of a park also contributes to higher aesthetic values and increased well-being. In fact to reduce healthcare costs, governments worldwide are investing in urban parks.

Other research shows benefits of nature on the pro-social behaviour of all citizens while walking on rough terrain – such as our path around the pond – improves cognitive function in seniors.

A 2016 Australian study led by researcher Danielle Shanahan determined that a dose of 30 minutes or more in nature per week reduced rates of depression by 7 percent and high blood pressure by 9 percent. But in order for citizens to benefit, parks must be serene and safe. At the consultation, participants also noted the need for better security with electronic surveillance of the pond area and for a park attendant.

Our commissioner of zoning, urban planning, economic development and parks, Cynthia Lulham, and other councillors should be commended for initiating this instructive – and fun – event by Stantec Inc. Design consultants. And kudos to those who attended and spoke up for a Westmount Park that all can enjoy.

City works to catch up

Tree blitz to plant 50 takes place this fall, 250 to follow

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

Despite the recent snow, Westmount hopes to plant 50 trees this fall including six or seven on the Dorchester median, said city director general Benoit Hurtubise last week after the issue was raised at the council meeting November 4.

“The contractor has until the end of the month to plant trees,” he explained. “If the temperature gets warmer, we will proceed; otherwise, we will delay to the spring.”

Another 500 had already been planted over the last three years from 2017-2019, he later told the *Independent*, clarifying figures reported during the meeting.

This leaves another 250 more to be planted to replace those that have been

taken down for which a large contract will be awarded probably this winter, he said. “There will be still more to take down,” he added, “but we’ll be doing a real blitz to catch up.”

The city has been explaining that it had been without an arborist for some time, which accounted for some of the delay.

The need to take down trees and replace many was raised at council by Patricia Dumais, of Greene Ave., who also asked how many would be planted on the Dorchester median. David Searle, of Kensington, had also raised the issue of dead trees still standing and others never replaced at the meeting of September 3 (see September 17, p. 7).

Westmount Park, cont'd. from p. 1

planning, economic development and parks.

During the consultation, residents were asked to present their ideas based on five themes, while also expressing themselves through drawings and illustrations they could create while seated in groups.

“To us, this is the moment of really learning from the community everything there is to know about this park that we didn’t already find out by looking at each tree, understanding each pathway,” said Brenda Webster, a senior associate at Stantec who grew up in Westmount.

Webster suggested that what Stantec has in mind for Westmount Park “is really just a shining up, doing all the things that need to be done to bring it holistically together and just amplify its beauty.”

The five themes explored were:

- Play for Landscape. Does the park’s infrastructure meet the needs of children? Are

there facilities that can be upgraded or added? The participants were also asked to identify unsafe areas used by children in the park.

- Accessibility and Mobility. Should Westmount Park’s paths and their designs be reviewed? They were asked whether there are any security or accessibility issues and what they thought of the entrances to the park.
- Public Space. How is Westmount Park positioned within the community? They were asked to describe its identity as a public space.
- Environment, Sustainable Development and Heritage. How can the notions of sustainable development be introduced through a heritage park? How can the contemporary and the heritage cohabit?
- The Elderly. Do Westmount Park’s facilities meet the needs of seniors? Are there facilities that can be upgraded or added?



Around 70 Westmount residents took part on November 13 in a public consultation to determine their views on an upcoming refurbishment of Westmount Park.

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Holiday Gift Guide 2019

Artisans Westmount brings 1,284 to Vic Hall

BY RALPH THOMPSON

Artisans Westmount was held in Victoria Hall November 9 and 10.

This popular event has been held annually for almost 25 years, but for the past four years it has been re-established more formally. Volunteers Liz McCallum and Christine Loiseau and others collaborated with the city's Community Events division to create this year's gathering of artisans. The admission fee was \$2 (minimum), which will be put towards the Westmount Public Security food basket fund for less well-off Westmounters (see story, p. xx). Vendors had to pay a fee of \$125.

Over 100 artisans applied and were shortlisted to a list of 75, which was then whittled down to a final 35 (reduced to 34 after one dropped out).

The goal was to have quality merchants with affordable handmade products chosen by an independent, anonymous jury.

"We didn't know who was in the jury and the jury didn't know who the vendors were, although they might have guessed in some cases," said McCallum.

Merchandise included jewelry, ceramics, stationery, accessories, toys, leather goods, wood carvings, scents and more.

See photos, p. GG-2 to GG-4.



Emily Gauthier and Jean Larose from Montreal Machin with an array of lamp shades and bird feeders made from the bark of dead birch trees.

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Gyu Oh (left), an artist herself, born in South Korea but living in Nunavut for the past 30 years, looks at the knitwear made by Sophie Marino (right) whose five-year-old business LF&M employs two people in Dunham in the Eastern Townships. Formally a stylist, Marino knits all her clothing from high quality material, all the articles on sale were made from “baby alpaca” imported from Peru (“baby” refers to the fine grade of the fibre).

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Westmount artisan Wendy Hayden holds the first, rather quirky traditional bear she ever made, from an old hat, for her daughter. Each bear is unique, made of new or used mohair and includes a repair kit of the same material sewn inside the bear in case it's damaged, for example if an ear gets torn off.



Westmounter 6-year-old Charlotte Egger and her dad Patrick check out the wool and cloth rag dolls by Créations Nadine. They bought the tooth fairy doll.

Summer transport, winter weather



This Lime scooter, Jump bike and Bixis were photographed on Victoria at de Maisonneuve on November 8.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.



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Tobogganing begins



On November 16, trendy orange cones lined the bottom of the toboggan run at Murray Park, no doubt placed to make drivers feel more at home, as though they were navigating around real Montreal streets. Tobogganers were out!

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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First snowman of the season



Sebastian Saba, father of Samantha Rose (left), describes her creation with friend Aimee as “the first snowman of the season in Westmount.” He continued in an email to the *Independent*, “There wasn’t much snow, but these two girls were determined to get a head-start on the season – while dad raked the leaves...”

PHOTO COURTESY OF S. SABA.



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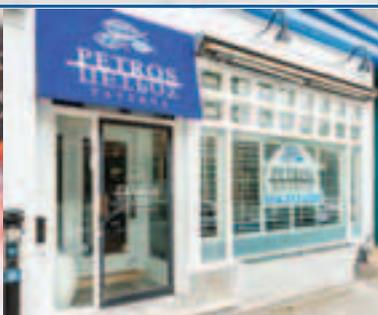
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Beer Review – The Connoisseur and the Philistine

Avant Garde – Artisans Brasseurs

(Hochelaga-Maisonnette)

5500 Hochelaga St.

DAVID PRICE, The Philistine:
Beer drinker

Ideal beer: stronger-than-average lager, even if it's commercial Canadian beer. He dislikes too much hops flavour or aroma in beer (e.g. most India pale ales or IPAs), and does not like roasted malts (e.g. stouts). He also dislikes wheat beers, which remind him of toothpaste and candy canes, which he doesn't normally consume.

Favourite beer: Sapporo, or St. Ambroise Pale Ale if he's looking for something with a bit more aroma and flavour.

GREG DUNNING, The Connoisseur: Beer drinker, homebrewer, and beer hunter.

Ideal beer: The one that is manufactured by people who care more about the beer than the money AND it depends on the season.

Favourite beer: for Fall 2019 – Brasserie Vrooden Oktoberfest 6 percent, Brasserie Broumont Rousse à l'érable 5.5 percent.

September 4, 2019

The Connoisseur

Open since 2016, Avant Garde is owned by two young entrepreneurs, Renaud Gouin and Shawn Duriez. Renaud describes his role as a “co-founder, chief aes-

thete and production manager”; Shawn, “co-founder, outstanding master planner and strategist.”

I like these guys already, without having met them. They share brewing equipment in a cooperative arrangement with other breweries, whose products also show up on dépanneur shelves: Oshlag, Vox-Populi, Glutenberg, Jukebox, Shelton, l'Espace Publique, Matera and Memphre.

They self-describe their creation and execution as follows: “Each of our products comes from a painstaking process of self-analysis, accompanied by a descent into the underworld of artistic creativity, a vertiginous dive into the abyssal depths of *poiesis* [creativity]. It usually begins with a furtive but dangerously bright spark that springs from the unexplored darkness of our interior. Then follows a complex work of conceptual integration of the reference universes revolving around the incandescent sun of our genius, the desegiotisation of visual, linguistic and taste references, followed by their reorganization into an organic whole of vibrant organoleptic significance. Then we take a break for dinner, then we bottle.”

THE CONNOISSEUR: BZ – Bière sûre au miel de fleurs sauvage (3%) – summer specialty

After our most mammoth bike ride ever to a Montreal brewery (13.2 km via the Notre Dame St. bike path), my thirst was overpowering, so – without hesitation – I am reaching for a low-alcohol sour for life to continue. Nice balance of lemon and sour, with the right amount of light carbonation. Light and sour beers often lose their carbonation quickly. So, with a ¼-inch head holding all the way down the glass, we have evidence of a brewer who is not letting his product loose until it is truly ready to be served. Releasing beer before its time is a “best practice” at most beer factories (i.e. the macrobrewers) because it moves inventory quicker, frees up equipment, and pries money from consumers sooner –



all choices made when quarterly profitability trumps long-term product excellence. To me, this is the business dichotomy of our generation in most industries. Our esteemed colleague from the Netherlands, a respected arbiter of light beers, derived from his adolescent consumption of Heineken and Stroopwafels, was overheard, far from Westmount, saying “Almost not beer; a juicebox gone bad.”

THE PHILISTINE: Jet Set (5%) – Pilsner Française

A lager! We're off to a good start, but I can also see that there is not much “runway” left for me after this one. I found this beer a bit fizzy and citrusy, and very light. I guess that approach goes with summer, and it is *not* a wheat beer (*phew!*), but it lacks that “silkeness” that I love in lagers, and often find. Another way to describe the same desirable characteristic would be a thickness: not watery, not soft-drink-y. This beer also lacks the “bite back” flavor that I think a good, crisp Pilsner should have. (Note to our one or two fans: Greg and I, independently, wrote that same phrase – “bite back” – for the same reason in our notes. Are we becoming the Connoisseur and the Connoisseur? C-squared? Or the Philistine and the Philistine? P-squared?) I really shouldn't be looking a gift horse (or lager) in the mouth, though. Most microbrewers don't have any on offer. Thanks for this one.

THE CONNOISSEUR: Le Funk et le Furie (5.1%) – Farmhouse Américain

Saison is a style that I know little about. It's a puzzle to categorize because so many diverse ingredients, yeasts, fermentation processes, and alcohol-by-volume (ABV) variations are allowed. Randy Mosher

wrote this August in *Craft Beer and Brewing* that, “The story of Belgian farmhouse ales could fill a book – that is, if there were any real historical information available to fill the pages.”

The only consistencies are Belgium and *saison*, where “farmhouse” is an acceptable replacement word, if *saison* is too hard to pronounce. This one is orangey, tangy and sour in mild amounts, and marries well with the cheese board we ordered. Our Vermont delegate, who is a sour freak, detected minerality as well. I asked our server and she told us there are kumquats in it. If you are expecting a genuine beer taste, you will not find it here. It's not beer, nor wine, nor cider, nor Champagne, but it shares characteristics of all of these, which is why it is so very interesting. It is like you are drinking a beverage you have never had before. That's a better life experience than ranking your current beverage against something similar that you have had before.

THE PHILISTINE: Jet Set (5%) – Pilsner Française

Reading the beer menu, I knew I would be in for a rough night (flavour wise, anyway) so I had a second Jet Set. Don't you find that two is better than one?

THE CONNOISSEUR: Fashionista (6%, 35 IBU) – New England IPA

Unfiltered, so it is very hazy, banana-milkshake-looking in the glass and I am expecting a super-citrus grapefruit explosion. But it is pleasantly understated, which makes it much more session-able. Since this is a variant on an IPA officially originated in Vermont, I turn again to our own “Bernie” Sanders for guidance and he concludes, “This is not a juicy IPA with

AVANT-GARDE BIÈRES		Distillation (Cans) / Verres (16oz)	
1. BZ. Bière sûre au miel de fleurs sauvages (AG) 3%		3.00 / 6.50	
2. Jet set. Pilsner française (AG) 5%		3.00 / 6.50	
3. Jukebox. Bière blonde au sucre (Jukebox) 5%		3.00 / 6.50	
4. Sous Blaux. Bière belge au pain, levée de levure et aromatisée (AG) 4.8%		3.00 / 6.50	
5. Le funk et la furie. Farmhouse américaine (AG) 5.1%		3.00 / 6.50	
6. Chicoutic. Pale ale américaine (Jukebox) 5.5%		3.00 / 6.50	
7. Mr Brown. Brown ale britannique (AG) 4.5%		3.00 / 6.50	
8. Distortion. IPA américaine de la côte ouest (Jukebox) 7%		3.25 / 7.00	
9. Slam Rock. Stout IPA (Jukebox) 5.8%		3.25 / 7.00	
10. Superstar. NEIPA (Jukebox) 6%		3.25 / 7.00	
11. New wave. Milkshake IPA, levée et lactose (Jukebox) 6.2%		3.25 / 7.00	
12. Fashionista. NEIPA (AG) 6%		3.25 / 7.00	
13. Polydipic. Saison IPA sûre (Collabo AG et BrewWokey) 3.8%		3.00 / 6.50	
		Distillation (Cans) / Bouteilles (16oz)	
14. Double Distortion. Double IPA (Jukebox) 8.5%		3.50 / 8.00	
15. Funkaléologie britannique. Assemblage de IPA brassées avec levure (Jukebox) 7.5%		4.00 / 7.00	
16. Assomblage bleu pâle. Assemblage de bières sûres allongées en brasseries (AG) 6.5%		4.00 / 7.00	
17. Chien Paléon. Assemblage de bières sûres allongées en brasseries (AG) 6.1%		4.00 / 7.00	
18. Johnny Truant. Dry stout inspiré (AG) 8.2%		4.00 / 7.00	

the classic grapefruit peel aftertaste but it's still f – – good." I revisited Avant Garde's website later to unearth any nuggets of the recipe on Fashionista but there were none, since this beer has already been retired from the summer rotation. You can still find it in bottle format at the IGA at Alexis Nihon. I saw it last week.

THE PHILISTINE: BZ – Bière sûre au miel de fleurs sauvage (3%) – summer specialty

"Light! Lemony! Fizzy," say my notes. Unfortunately, from me, these words are not compliments. There was none of the sweetness than one finds in a wheat beer, but many of that style's other characteristics were here. To repeat: lightness of body and fizziness. One of our gang said, "Definitely not a beer," which is almost certainly untrue and probably overly harsh. Nevertheless, if you grew up on a "Murray Park cocktail" of 80 percent Brador and 20 percent Molson Ex, like someone I know, you might have a hard time seeing, or saying, that this is the same drink.

THE CONNOISSEUR: Jet Set (5%) – Pilsner Française

Our Czech double agent on duty in Prague will never hear me speak about this bastardization of his national drink. I will deny everything. But what I can't deny are Saaz hops in taste and aroma in milder quantities. Perhaps this is the French nuance to the style. It's lighter bodied, sweeter and more watery than a regular Pilsner, which makes it more of a crushable drink. Maybe that's why it is called Jet Set because it's kind of a Pilsner poser. This is the only non-ale on the menu, so please refer to my lager-henchman's notes (above) for his deeper analysis.

THE PHILISTINE: Mr Brown (5%) – English Ale

If you are a regular and careful reader of this column, you know that brown ales occupy an iffy space for my palate. They can be very drinkable, or too roasted. That roastiness gets them close to the dreaded stouts (e.g. Guinness) for me. This one had

a taste that was "very brown" according to my notes, which is an in-between taste for me. Right after, though, came a second wave of flavour: burnt coffee. Not for me.

THE CONNOISSEUR: Cheval Palomino – Assemblage de bières sures affines en barrique. (6.1%) – Belgian Barrel Aged Sour Ale

Approaching the closing stages of our session and noticing several oak barrels behind the showroom window displaying the brewing operation, we descend into Avant Garde's barrel-aged program. Cheval Palomino is a drink with no discernible hop aroma or bitterness, more on the juice and sour side, and no boozy alcohol taste whatsoever. Mr. Holland weighs in with "Like a beer salad." I think he is tasting so much sour that he thinks it's balsamic vinegar. The bottled Belgian sours (SAQ – Boon Oude Geuze, Duchesse de Bourgogne), that I have been weened on do not taste like this, so it's hard to say if this is a sour variant or a brewer that is learning the sour craft.

THE PHILISTINE: Jet Set (5%) – Pilsner Française – 3rd time

I went back to the lone lager on the menu. There was no blonde or red/rousse to try, so I came home to this very drinkable offering. Note to microbrewers: this outing shows the advisability of a practice that I have long advocated for you. Have a good lager or blonde on the menu (or a few) for the many Philistines of the world. We have friends who are connoisseurs, and we can enjoy your venue and our friends' company at the same time if there is *something* on the menu for us.

THE CONNOISSEUR: Johnny Truant (8.3%) – Dry Stout Impérial

A barley wine sipping finisher would really be ideal but this stout is the next best thing. I think it is a bit of a shill to call an 8.3-percent beer "imperial," although it does have a nice strong alcoholic kick, which you want. It has a nice creamy finish with a motor-oil-like weight. Nice raisin, date and dark chocolate aromatics and

Change of job for editor?

Photographer Ralph Thompson sent me this photo with the note: "An opportunity for you if the newspaper business 'goes south.' It was taped to the Metro supermarket's Sherbrooke St. window on September 18." Luckily for me, and I hope to the joy of our readers, our newspaper business is not "going south," especially at 52 pages last week and 32 pages this week. But it's tempting...

– David Price,
editor/The Philistine.

PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

bitter. This will be a huge seller when winter kicks in. You can use it as your session finisher or have it when you come in from the cold to warm up. I can imagine the soldiers from CFB Long Point next door draining a keg of this every day. Desperately hoping for a Life-cereal-Mikey moment, we offered "the man who drained hundreds of high-ABV concoctions at Marcos and Pepes" a microscopic taster of the highest alcoholic drink on the menu, but we were spurned with, "OMG, this is terrible," his last words of the evening.

THE PHILISTINE Johnny Truant (8.3%) – Dry Stout Impérial

To buttress that final comment: yes, for my sins, I tried this stout as a taster at the end of the evening. My notes? "This is coffee." Or as one of our group put it, "That's like a bad chocolate bar." It might in fact be a great stout. I don't know and what can I say? I am The Philistine.

SUMMARY

THE CONNOISSEUR: This is your classic neo-taproom. Avant Garde's primary reason in this reclaimed industrial space, with 30-foot ceilings, is to brew and bottle for distribution. After three years, they have enough name recognition and free cash flow to build a beautiful clean and expansive taproom to serve their year-round and seasonal beers on 24 lines. During the day, you can witness the brewing through the huge plate-glass showroom windows while lounging in easy chairs or ordering from the slate tables with barroom stools. Food is limited to cheese and charcuterie boards. We ordered three fine pizzas for dinner from one of the many restos that deliver right to your table.

This order-in method is trendy in the HOMA zone where we did the same thing a few years back at L'Espace Publique, which also happens to brew its year-round

offerings here.

There are two large fridges with most of their offerings in cans that you can walk out with.

Lastly, I'm barging in on my fellow henchman's usual territory, but I can't help myself complaining about the electric hand dryer in the very sleek industrial-cool bathroom. Everything was 21st century except for a crappy GH Wood electric hand dryer. I hate those 20th century electric hand dryers that work half the time, take 10 minutes to semi-dry your hands after pushing the silver button five times. This penny-farthing of a hand dryer must have been left there for the retro looks because the Dyson and Xlerators that blow the skin off your hands are affordable, everywhere, and infinitely more efficient.

THE PHILISTINE: This bar has a very basic décor. It reminded me of the eating area of a roller-skating arena, or a bowling alley or ski hill. It is just east of the Olympic Stadium in a building that houses or used to house auto repair shops. I do not know this area well, but I guess that it is a great addition to the neighbourhood. The space, while Spartan, is clean and airy, with high ceilings. The plate-glass windows that Greg mentions probably offer the best view of brewing operations of anywhere that we have visited.

I guess that locals will cherish this taproom for years to come. But, with its current beer offerings and scanty menu, I can't see other Montrealers making the trip, even if the nearby Assomption Metro station allows visitors to cover the long distance quickly and efficiently. If bringing in non-locals matters to Avant Garde, I would advise them to beef up the food and beverage menus. If it doesn't matter, keep on trucking, best wishes and best of luck to you.

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Art Scene

HEATHER BLACK

Thomson, Pinchevsky, Krausz: Beyond Face Value

self-portraits include a myriad of facial expressions from sober reflection to wry humour. Painted in watercolour – at times enhanced with pencil – mouths or chins and eyes or brows dissolve into the frame. A visual diary of life's ups and downs, each painting is unique in detail.

Within the series, translucent washes convey emotional fluidity. The sorrowful, red-rimmed eyes and pale delicacy of “Oct, 2016” contrast with the gremlin-like smirk of “Nov, 2010.” Dried watercolour edges add interest and depth to convey a fierce determination in “July, 2012.” Painted from 2010 to 2019, Thomson's consistent use of medium, size and framing creates an intimate yet expressive series.

Pinchevsky's series *Seven Sisters (India) to Senegal* invites viewers to consider the

life – or circumstance – of his photographed subjects. The informal portrait “Kolkata Wrestlers, Grandfather, Father & Son” captures both family tradition and cultural fidelity. Inside a hut doorway, the four “Nagaland Children” look out and up in four different directions. In comparison, the averted gaze of the tribal elder – replaced as educator by missionaries – is downward in “Nagaland Heroin Smoker.”

In the colourful “Dakaar Fishmarket Shopping, Senegal,” the subject – a woman with a plate of fruit on her head – is photographed in profile amid boats with elaborate, painted designs. For “New Best Friend, Senegal,” an elder in traditional dress stares at – or confronts – the viewer. Pinchevsky's central placement of subjects within the frame and contrasting colour



“July, 2012” by Colin Thomson.

create continuity throughout the powerful series.

Obstacles or wall

Krausz's elongated landscapes recreate a vast surround of mountain ranges and fertile valleys. In “Temporale No.3” blue mountain peaks and autumn foliage are punctuated by majestic gold fields to create a sense of elation. In contrast, the sky is blocked by a rock-face in “Le Chant de la Terre” to evoke blocked pathways or historic European boundaries that many fleeing communism – including Krausz – faced.

Destruction of the environment is evident in the exposed rock face of an open-pit mine in “Cariera.” The fragility of natural landscapes – and the build-up or breakdown of surfaces – is mirrored in Krausz's use of secco – transparent pigments applied to plaster. His choice of elongated – and unusual – portrait and landscape format also serves to personify nature and the journey of life.

Challenge of art

Thomson, Pinchevsky and Krausz draw viewers into their work through the use of detail, colour contrast or dramatic line. Creating an emotive or historic connection in their work, these artists echo painter Francis Bacon: “I would like, in my arbitrary way, to bring one nearer to the actual human being.”

Thomson's and Pinchevsky's dual exhibition continues until November 26 at The Gallery at Victoria Hall, while Krausz's exhibition continues until November 19 at Galerie de Bellefeuille, 1455 Sherbrooke St.



“Temporale No.3” by Peter Krausz.

terior, they left with “personal items,” although the police report didn't elaborate.

Hit-and-run

A motorist who damaged the bumper of a parked car around 4:20 pm on November 7 near the corner of Strathcona Ave. and Sherbrooke St. might have gotten away clean except for one thing.

A child was in the damaged car at the time.

According to the police report, the owner of the damaged vehicle had gone into a nearby dwelling for a minute or so. Upon returning, she noticed that her front bumper was now broken.

The driver's daughter informed her that while she was gone another vehicle had backed up into theirs while trying to park.

“It was a hit-and-run with no one injured,” said Laperrière, adding that no further information was available as the incident remains under investigation.

Looking for crossing guards

The Montreal police department is cur-

rently holding a recruitment drive for people willing to join the force as school crossing guards. The part-time job pays \$17.89 per hour.

The responsibilities of those hired will include stopping traffic and escorting children safely at school crosswalks, explaining safety rules and signs to children, reporting unusual incidents and individuals to police when necessary, and calling emergency personnel should any child require it following an accident.

Candidates should be available to work during the school year (end of August to end of June) during hours that can vary depending on the school.

A typical school day's schedule could be from 7:30 to 8:30 am, 11 am to 1 pm, and 3 to 4 pm.

Candidates must complete all the stages of a selection process that includes a written exam, a medical, a security check and one day's training. Applications can be made online at simenligne.ville.montreal.qc.ca.

Faces – and expressions – prevail in Colin Thomson's watercolours and in Marcel Pinchevsky's photographs of India and Senegal. Peter Krausz's landscapes feature, on the other hand, dramatic rock faces at Galerie de Bellefeuille III. However all delve beyond beauty to emotive and historic truths.

Colour and circumstance

Thomson's series of 36 small-format



“New Best Friend, Senegal” by Marcel Pinchevsky.

Police Report

Burglars discouraged by dog bark, say police

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Police at Station 12 say the barking of a dog left at home by the owners of a Sherbrooke St. house that was broken into during the early afternoon of November 8 was enough to scare the intruders into leaving empty-handed.

According to Station 12 community relations officer Stéphan Laperrière, the would-be burglars did a lot of damage to the front door while trying to force it open.

“There was a lot of damage,” he said, adding that they searched the house although nothing was reported stolen afterwards. Laperrière said the dog was a definite asset.

Connected break-in?

Also around the same time on November 8, a home on St. Catherine St. near Westmount Park was broken into and robbed by perpetrators using the same *modus operandi*.

“They forced the front entrance door,” Laperrière said. After searching the in-



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9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Ready for a chat!
Miss Alezane is so poised, curled up with her little legs crossed and looking up at you with her huge kitten eyes, ready to give you all her attention.
She is a young black-and-white domestic shorthair, a tiny four-month-old girlie. She was taken in by the SPCA Mon-

Miss Alezane

térégie in mid-August with her nine brothers and sisters, and placed soon after in a foster home. She is growing beautifully, playing with her brothers and sisters, and gaining confidence when cuddled.

Alezane has received all the inoculations and treatments for her age and is on the kitten program for spay when she is older. As she is with a foster family, please contact Cindy at info@spcamonteregie.com to make arrangements for more information, photographs and visits.

Your neighbour, Lysanne



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Westmount A-dog-tions

LYSANNE FOWLER

Tim is a shy fellow at the shelter, not being able to imagine the wonderful home life he will have after adoption from the SPCA Montérégie.

He is a 3-year-old boxer and Labrador mix, and yes I see a lot of blond Lab in him with his expressive puppy face. Tim is quite affectionate yet uncertain still. He will be great with a couple that has an active walking and playing lifestyle. Things

Tim

will look up for him in a family, and he will likely be the most engaging dog on the block once given the security and affection he needs to be confident in his new surroundings.

Please reach out to find out more about him by emailing Cindy at info@spcamonteregie.com or drop by the SPCA Montérégie shelter at 178 Chemin du Vide in St. Angèle de Monnoir on Thursdays and Saturdays between 2 pm and 4 pm, if not on appointment.

Your neighbour, Lysanne



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September, October sales: Strength and weakness



Real Estate

ANDY DODGE,
CRA (RET.)

so weak, the adjusted value went up. The adjusted value of the “typical” Westmount house has been over \$2 million since May last year and is now pushing \$2.4 million.

Condos

Six condominiums sold in September and four more in October. The September sales rounded out the third quarter of 2019 which saw a total 15 sales for an average price of \$898,933, two sales over \$2 million but then no others higher than \$1 million, with an average mark-up over 2017 valuation of 35.1 percent. In October, the average price dropped to \$773,500, only one sale was over \$1 million and that was only \$1,116,000; the average mark-up was half of the previous quarter, at 15.0 percent.

Westmount adjacent

Adjacent-Westmount areas were almost busier than Westmount proper, with six single-family homes and a duplex selling in September, then nine more single-family cottages selling in October. Prices are up substantially year-over-year in most areas, especially the Circle Rd.-Cedar Crescent district north of Westmount. Finally, the average sale price of one- and two-family dwellings is more than \$1 million in every area of adjacent-Westmount.

As we move into the holiday season, the number of homes available for sale in Westmount is down slightly from a peak of 132 in September to 128 by mid-Novem-

Average adjusted price for ‘typical’ Westmount house, by month, January 2014 to October 2019, based on accepted offer dates



Note: The following article relates to offers to purchase Westmount residential dwellings that were reported by local real estate agents as having been accepted in September and October 2019. Because they are not final registered sales, the addresses cannot be made public, but give a good idea of current trends in local real estate activity. The graph at right offers a picture of these trends over time.

Real estate agents appear to have been very late – perhaps because of the Jewish holiday season – in posting sales for September, and what we had announced as a reasonably strong 9-sale month doubled to 18 sales, two of which were in the \$4-million range and three more in the \$3-million range. The average mark-up had been announced as 34.9 percent; that has now ballooned to 45.4 percent, with one house on Oakland Ave. selling for more than 2½ times its 2017 municipal valuation.

That explosion appears, however, to have dwindled as September moved into October, where agents (so far) have posted only five sales, all between \$1,000,000 and \$2,525,000, with the average mark-up on 2017 valuations moving back down to 35.8 percent, though because the volume was

jumped from 24 in mid-October to 29 a month later, though only one new rental was announced by local agents in the previous month.

ber, with most of the drop in the \$3-million-plus categories, while the number asking less than \$3 million stayed fairly static. The number of houses available for rent

Who's buying real estate?

China-married buyers down to 16.7 percent

BY ANDY DODGE

The number of buyers of Westmount real estate who were married in China waned considerably in the first six months of 2019, and the number who were married in France is on the rise.

Property title deeds often indicate the place of marriage of buyers, since this is generally an indicator of the type of marriage licence the buyers have, which may determine the fate of the property in the case of death or marriage breakdown. Though it is by no means gospel as to nationality, it can give us an idea where the buyers began their adult lives or careers.

The Montreal registry office recorded 115 residential property sales transactions in Westmount in the first six months of 2019, counting houses, duplexes, condominiums and co-ops, 60 of which have information in the deeds about where the buyers were married. In other cases, the

buyers may have been a corporation or family trust, the buyer or buyers were not married, or the notary simply did not include the information on the deed.

Of the 60, exactly half involved buyers who were married in Quebec, up slightly from a year ago (44 percent for all of 2018) while only 10 – or 16.7 percent – were married in China, down from 26.2 percent for all of 2018 and 35.9 percent for all of 2017. The next highest number was six in France, then three in the United States and two in Mexico. Those married in other provinces included one in Ontario and one in British Columbia.

Some interesting anomalies are included in the tally: one house was purchased by two couples, one of which was married in Quebec and the other in China (so we counted one each); another was bought by three brothers, all of whom were married in Quebec (we counted only one for Quebec). Another couple was married

in Benin, in western Africa, but they were both residents of France at the time so were married under the French civil code (count one for France). Two buyers were divorced, in another case two divorcees bought a house together, and in one more

case a divorcee joined with a single person to purchase a Westmount house (none of them count in the “married” tally).

Lending proof to the diversity that is Westmount these days, the “other” countries where local buyers were married (one each) included Hong Kong, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

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Les Ensembliers wins

Ouellette, Vandal named 'designers of the year' by House & Home

Richard Ouellette and Maxim Vandal have won an award: again.

The local couple was just named in the latest issue of *House & Home's* 2019 designers of the year.

Partners in Les Ensembliers, which handles not only interior design but architecture and construction projects, their talent has been noted in international publications such as *Architectural Digest*, *ELLE Décor* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

Embassies, houses

The duo's multidisciplinary design experience is based on working on mandates ranging from embassies, the Kips Bay decorator show in New York and private residences in Canada and the US.

The team was invited by the prestigious Brunshwig et Fils brand to create a line. Les Ensembliers is the first – and only – licensee for fabric and trim.

Their next step with the venerable French firm is a collection of wallpaper. Apart from their start-from-zero design projects, they renovate houses, including recently a turn-of-the-century home in Westmount. – VR.



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Social Notes

VERONICA REDGRAVE

MAC gala a 'candid' success

ing ambiance including a party playground – for adults, of course!

The Fairmont Queen Elizabeth served seafood platters and artisanal pastas, with mouth-watering mignardise desserts by Jean-Marc Guillot.

The ball was under the honorary presidency of **Éric Bujold**, president National

Bank Private Banking 1859 (attending with **Marie-Eve Lemay**) and **Kim Thomassian**, executive vp legal affairs and secretariat Caisse de dépôt.

Host presidents were MAC foundation board chair **Justin Méthot** (with **Catherine Beauregard**), committee ball chair **Marie-Josée** *continued on p. 18*



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Stephen and Claudine Bronfman, and Mitch Garber.



Justin Méthot and Catherine Beaugard.



Marie-Josée Simard and Alain Bellemare.

Social notes, cont'd. from p. 17

Simard (with Alain Bellemare), the museum's director John Zeppetelli (with Katharine Bourne) and board chair Alexandre Taillefer (with Debbie Zakaïb).

Committee members were Marie-Josée Simard (president), Mélanie Aubut, Sophie Banford, Christine Boivin, Elizabeth Camiré, Nathalie Goyette, Stéphanie

Larivière, Sharon Stone and Nicolas Urli.

Westmounters noted amidst the glam crowd included Claudine and Stephen Bronfman, and Anne-Marie Boucher and Mitch Garber.

Enjoying the unforgettable night were provincial ministers Pierre Fitzgibbon (Economy and Innovation), Nathalie Roy (Culture and Communications); and

Éric Girard (Finance), as well as Christian-Dubé, Ruby Brown and Richard Speer, Josée Noiseux and Sid Lee CEO Bertrand Cesvet, and Emmanuelle Dupéré and Daniel Lamarre, CEO Cirque du Soleil.

The sold-out soirée raised \$700,000 to support MAC's educational activities.

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Comin' Up

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

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- ▶ 1100 Atwater public consultation. City hall. 7 pm.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

- ▶ Westmount Historical Association presents "Marian Dale Scott: A Studio of Her Own" by Gwendolyn Owens, McGill University. \$5. Westmount Room, Westmount Public Library. 7 to 9 pm.
- ▶ "Same Yids, New Shtick!" by the Yiddish Yentlemen comedy and music show. No knowledge of Yiddish required. Tickets: <https://www.templemontreal.ca/product/yidlife/> Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom, 4100 Sherbrooke St. Show: 8 pm.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22

J.S. Bach's *The Brandenburg Concertos* by AKAMUS Orchester Berlin. \$25 to \$105. St. Léon Church, 4311 de Maisonneuve Blvd. 7:30 pm.

Also: J.S. Bach's *The Orchestral Suites*. Saturday, November 23. 7:30 pm.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

St. Matthias' Anglican Church's annual christmas fair, including baked goods, jams and jellies, crafts and \$10 lunch. Bring your own bags. 131 Côte St. Antoine.

10 am to 2 pm.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Sundays the Shaar presents Dr. Victoria Kaspi, astrophysicist, McGill University on "Cosmic Observations." \$5 per person. Registration required 514.937.9474 x 139. Congregation Shaar Hashomayim, 425 Metcalfe Ave. 12:00 noon.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Westmount Toastmasters' club contests in international speech and table topics. Victoria Hall, 4626 Sherbrooke St., Club Room, second floor. 7 to 9 pm.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27

Manoir Westmount bazaar. 4646 Sherbrooke St. 11:30 to 2:00 pm.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

The Ascension of our Lord choir presents its Christmas concert, include excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*. 375 Kit-chener Ave. (corner Sherbrooke). 3 pm.

ONGOING

Parenthood drop-in. Free. Two Doulas is partnering with Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom to offer a weekly drop-in for coffee, cookies, and company with your babies (one year and younger). Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom. Wednesday mornings from 9:30 am to 12:00 noon.

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